

The Semaphore

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The Semaphore is the monthly (except July) newsletter of the South Shore Model Railway Club & Museum (SSMRC) and any opinions found herein are those of the authors thereof and of the Editors and do not necessarily reflect any policies of this organization. The SSMRC, as a non-profit organization, does not endorse any position. Your comments are welcome! Please address all correspondence regarding this publication to: *The Semaphore*, 11 Hancock Rd., Hingham, MA 02043. ©2022
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Directors.....Bryan Miller ('22)
.....Bob England ('22)
.....Roger St. Peter ('23)
.....Gary Mangelinkx ('23)

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ON THE COVER: This month’s Spring Show and Open House. More pics on last page. (Joe Dumas)

FORM 19 ORDERS

MARCH B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, March 28th 8 p.m.

APRIL BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, April 4th 8 p.m.

DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Thursday, April 14th 8 p.m.

APRIL NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

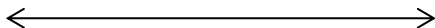
Sunday, April 24th

APRIL B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, April 25th 8 p.m.

CONTESTS

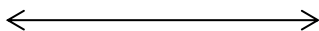
Congratulations to **Chris Barlow** on winning this month's "50-50 Raffle!"



13 members correctly completed Al Taylor's "word find" contest, "Amtrak VI":

Fred Foley	Bob Farrenkropf
Ron Clough	Al Munn
Jim Ferris	Will Baker
Don Pierce	Dan Peterson
Fred Lockhart	Bryan Miller
Roger St. Peter	Paul Cutler, Jr.
Savery Moore	

Congratulations to **Jim Ferris** on winning the drawing for a Rutland Pullman-Standard Boxcar by Kadee.



For the May Business Meeting, and to celebrate Amtrak's 51st birthday, please answer this question: Because of Amtrak mismanagement on several fronts, six long-distance trains remain on a 5-day/week schedule and one is still discontinued entirely, running into the busy summer season. **Name those seven trains.** Use answer forms in train room, email or any piece of paper and don't forget your name!

CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

Earlier this month the club had its Spring Open House and Show; we were able to operate over the new section and overall the railroad performed well. As usual, we had quite a few trains operating at any

given time, with members adjusting well to some of the new operating details associated with the reverse sections, in regards to train-spacing and length. I do wish we had a couple more weeks before the Show to fine tune the reverse blocks. As with previous shows in recent history, we seem to always have some DCC meltdown after lunch on Sundays. It's not if, but when. This year we did not have any of those major problems, which makes me think the DT602 throttles and the UR93 receiver made for them is really an upgrade; we were operating the entire railroad on one receiver, which we started doing after the fall show. The other item that could have improved performance was all the electrical fixes made in power district #2 under Middleton. There were eight or nine electrical blocks that were cross-wired with other blocks in the same district, so who knows what problems that could have caused to the DCC signal!

Getting back to work on the railroad: Bob England and I are first going to concentrate on the reverse section next to the Boston yard. We have several ideas as to why it may be inconsistent with how it reverses polarity and shorts out and we'll keep you posted. Deferred maintenance will be brought up-to-date. We did repair some mainline problems before the show, but we have some turnouts to look at in Hudson Falls and Essex Junction yard. Mike Dolan will be installing the new bridge on the flyover track in the near future, but that should only put that track out of service for a short time. Other items on the list include making Great Lakes Yard double ended, which will help a lot with show ops; finishing the new industrial area between the bridge on the flyover and Bryant city. And **let's not forget** the trolley on the new section; I'd like to! (Only kidding!)

That's it for this month--questions or comments are always welcome.

Fred Lockhart
Chief Engineer

Semaphore Memories

MARCH 2017 (5 years ago)

✱Some Tortoise switch machine internal contacts failing, causing search for fix without replacing motors.



✱Scenery beginning at Steel Mill and swamp area in W. Middleton.

✱CPR's new CEO Keith Creel begins to "de-Harrisonification" the railroad, after previous leader Hunter Harrison ruined employee morale.

✱Member Dom Russo passes away.

✱MBTA plans \$7.9-million on historic Mattapan-Ashmont trolley line, with most of the money going to refurbish the 7 active PCC streetcars.

✱E. Hunter Harrison named CEO of CSX

Transportation, less than 7 weeks after leaving CPR.

✱After \$95-million of renovations, Springfield's Union Station reopens 40 years since closed. "Grand Opening" to take place in June.

✱Plans for new NY Penn Station and transformation of Farley Post Office Building next door released; \$1.59-billion project.

✱Transit managers at the MBTA Commuter Rail services outline plans for installation of PTC program.

✱MBTA to install "Fare Gates" at North Station, South Station and Back Bay to enhance fare collection.

✱Bid requests go out to replace 101-year-old, ex-B&M Annisquam River Bridge in Gloucester on Commuter Rail line to that city.

✱B30-7 C&O loco #8272 repainted into Heritage Chessie System colors.

✱MassDOT decides to build South Coast Rail in two phases; first phase will be through Middleborough and phase two will be electrification through Stoughton.

MARCH 2012 (10 Years Ago)

✱Removal of the temporary third peninsula to begin after Show and Open House.

✱"Patriot Corridor Double-Stack Clearance Initiative" begins between Mechanicville & Ayer on ex-B&M main.

✱Eastman Kodak announces end of production of slide film.

✱Norfolk Southern announces that 18 of its brand-new locos will be dressed in commemorative schemes of historic RRs that have formed NS over the years.

✱Casinos that bankrolled special luxury train service between NYC and Atlantic City end service after 3 yrs.

✱Construction slated to start on second track between Rensselaer and Schenectady, removing delays of single track operation between those two busy stations.

MARCH 2007 (15 years ago)

✱Canadian government makes Canadian Railway Museum in Montreal suburb, called "Exporail", the "National Railway Museum of Canada", guaranteeing continued funding.

✱EPA unveils plan to clean-up emissions from railroad locomotives and large marine diesel engines. This promotes GE and EMD to produce the "e" engines—for "environmentally friendly".

✱The first of VIA's rebuilt F40 locomotives, number 6400, released from CAD Railway Services of Montreal, who will rebuild all 64 locomotives over time.

✱Last MBTA Green Line LRV type-6, built by Boeing, withdrawn from service, ending an era on the T.

✱Maine State Senator from Freeport suggests extending Downeaster to Brunswick, to connect with Maine Eastern excursion service to Rockland.

✱Fascia panels and Lexan installed around leg 1, along with several detection panels.

✱Passenger Train Journal magazine returns as a quarterly publication.

✱Sakonnet River railroad swing bridge blown up and scrapped. Built in 1899, it connected the island of Newport, RI, with the mainland and a direct rail connection to Boston via the Old Colony & Newport Rwy

✱Cape Cod Central RR president John Kennedy decides to bid on the contract to run all Cape trains.

MARCH 2002 (20 Years Ago)

✱Proto1000 brings out RDC-1 and BLI brings out the Pennsy M1 and the T1--the—famous 4-4-4-4 steamer.

✱MBTA puts out bid specs for operation of Commuter Rail.

✱Amtrak president George Warrington resigns to take over operations of NJ Transit.

✱Greenbush contractors choose site for project engineering office at the old "Bowl-a-Wey" in lower Jackson Square. (Now the E. Weymouth parking lot.)

✱\$5.6-million "Hyannis Intermodal Transportation Center" completed and expected to open in summer.

✱Quincy Wholesale Grocery reefer produced as club car.

MARCH 1997 (25 Years Ago)

✱Norfolk Southern and CSX agree to split Conrail.

✱Philip Morris Co. cancels \$50-million "Marlboro Unlimited" promotional train project.

✱Cape Cod RR sells Parlor Car "Nobska", famous for its full-length bar and stools.

CPR's one-of-a-kind Alco RSD-17 operates for the last time and placed in museum in Ontario. Nicknamed "The Empress of Agincourt", after its last operating location.

✱Power-short Canadian National leases 50 Amtrak F40s to haul freight trains.

✱Kato finally announces HO-scale SD45, after years of speculation and production of N-scale version.

✱Amtrak adds first "RoadRailer" to back of passenger train—used for carrying mail. "Amtruck" nickname given to some trains with multiple RoadRailers on rear of trains

MARCH 1992 (30 Years Ago)

✱Quinoil 10,000-gal tank car by Walthers produced as Club Car. First under chairmanship of Ye Ed.

✱State of Maine selects Amtrak to operate proposed train between Portland and Boston.

✱Federal Transit Administration gives MBTA approval to publish final environmental impact statement (FEIS) on Old Colony Lines project.

MARCH 1987 (35 Years Ago)

✱"Back on Track" organization formed to promote restoration of Old Colony branches to Plymouth, Middleboro and Greenbush.

✱Wolfeboro RR's 2-6-2 sold to Clark's Trading Post of North Woodstock, NH.

✱MBTA orders 40 subway cars from Bombardier for Red Line and buys 5 geeps from SEMTRA of Maryland.

✱North Abington station re-opens as a pub, three years after a devastating fire nearly destroyed it.

✱CSX acquires Sea-Land Corp.

✱MassCentral opens container loading/unloading facility in Palmer, Mass.

• Amherst Railway Society Show at “Big E” has record attendance of 8,200 during one-day event held in only one building, the “Better Living Center”.

MARCH 1982 (40 Years Ago)

• “The Gov” (John Governor-decd.) institutes first “All Steam” operations.

• Portable Layout, known as “The Filene’s Layout”, goes to Greenberg’s show in Woburn for first time.

• New metal front door installed at the Club (Weymouth), replacing wooden one.

• “New” tonic machine donated, replacing “honor system” of tonic in refrigerator.

• Contest to name new yard in South Division “Cedar Hill” won by Mark Hall, out of 11 names suggested.

POTPOURRI

SOUTH SHORE LINE: The street-running train in Michigan City, Indiana, has long been a favorite of railfans. In fact, it has been serving Michigan City since 1908, that’s over 100 years. But as of February 28, 2022, it has essentially come to an end. The South Shore is working to double-track its main line between Gary, Indiana, and Michigan City. As part of that project, commuter trains have been replaced by buses between the Carroll Avenue station in Michigan City and the Dune Park station in Porter, Indiana. For the time being, freight operations will continue overnight. This is also when passenger equipment will be ferried between the shops in Michigan City and Dune Park, the endpoint for operations to and from Chicago. But it is no longer possible to ride a South Shore train down the street. By the time rail service resumes this fall, the vast majority of the street-running train will be no more. (TN)

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ALAN G. “DUSTY” DUSTIN, the last president of the Boston & Maine as an independent entity prior to its purchase by Guilford Industries in 1983, has died. Dustin died at age 93 on Feb. 27. A career railroader who began his career as a baggage clerk at age 16, he worked for the Delaware & Hudson before moving to the Bangor & Aroostook as vice president and CEO in 1970, and then became Boston & Maine’s president in 1974. He led the railroad’s recovery from a 1970 bankruptcy, repairing infrastructure, acquiring new locomotives (18 GP40-2s), and improving service. Following the purchase of the B&M, he became NJ Transit vice president from 1984 until his retirement in 1988. (TN)

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A RARE GMD1 LOCOMOTIVE donated by Canadian National to the Waterloo Central Railway in April 2021 has emerged in new paint. The former CN No. 1437 made its first appearance on the heritage railway on March 5, 2022, as WCR No. 1012. “It’s all because of the volunteers; they did an amazing job,” said Waterloo Central General Manager Peter McGough, who had nothing but superlatives of praise for the volunteer crew that hand-painted the green-and-gold scheme inspired by CN’s 1950s design. Built in 1958 at General Motors Diesel in London, Ont., the locomotive would have had a similar scheme upon birth, but would have featured A1A trucks and a smaller fuel tank. These features were changed in a 1980s rebuild by CN. (TN)



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SOME 30 MILES of New York rail line formerly operated by the Saratoga & North Creek Railroad has been sold for \$3.33 million to a couple whose company plans to ship titanium ore from a mine on the route. Doc N Duchess Rails LLC, owned by Carol and John McClean-Wright, outbid two competitors in a bankruptcy auction held in by a Denver court for the San Luis & Rio Grande Railroad and subsidiary Saratoga & North Creek, former Iowa Pacific Holdings properties that went into receivership in 2019. Carol McClean-Wright told the newspaper that, with the backing of financial partners, the company has rail equipment and is in the process of buying a mine at Tahawaus, N.Y., from Mitchell Stone Products. The site has been mined for iron and titanium in the past but currently serves as a gravel pit; McClean-Wright said there is titanium that can be extracted from tailings at the site. Doc N Duchess outbid Revolution Rail, which had entered a stalking-horse bid of \$700,000 in January and has operated a rail-bike attraction on the route, and the Sierra Railroad. McClean said the new owners would try to work with Revolution to allow the rail-bike operation to continue. (TN)

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TRAVELERS ALREADY BOOKED on some Amtrak long-distance trains in April and May are being advised today (Thursday, March 3) to rebook their trips as the passenger carrier extends its frequency reductions on seven routes. Amtrak had cut service from daily to five days a week on most

of its long-distance routes in January, making the change on less than a week's notice. At the time, it said the cuts would be effective through March 27. The company had offered no details on further cancellations before it began notifying passengers, but in a midday Thursday email to Trains News Wire, said it was extending service reductions to the *Silver Meteor*, *Empire Builder*, *California Zephyr*, *Southwest Chief*, *Lake Shore Limited*, *City of New Orleans*, and *Crescent* beyond that date. Thursday's announcement, unlike the one in January, offered no tentative dates to restore daily service. "We continue to work on further frequency additions for the coming months as staffing and other resources allow," today's statement reads. The company used similar language in announcing the January reductions, inferring that some trains might return before March 27, although none did. Daily service will return March 28 for the *Capitol Limited*, *Texas Eagle*, and *Coast Starlight*. In addition, all seven Milwaukee to *Hiawatha* weekday round trips and full weekend service will be restored, as will nine weekday trips each way between New York City and Albany-Rensselaer, N.Y. Other state-supported and Northeast Corridor cuts announced in January are to continue indefinitely. (TN)

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MID-AMERICA CAR of Kansas City has completed the cosmetic restoration of former Santa Fe SD45-2 No. 5704 — donated to the Southern California Railroad Museum in Perris, Calif., in 2021 — to the eye-catching bicentennial paint scheme it wore in the mid-1970s. Mid-America's craftsmen took several months to recreate the appearance of the



locomotive as it was painted by Santa Fe's shops in San Bernardino, Calif. Stephen Priest, the project manager in Kansas City, notes the attention to detail involved in the project. "Sherwin-Williams replicated the paint color formulas for Santa Fe's bicentennial locomotives," Priest said in a press

release. "They not only replicated them for this restoration project, they donated the paint. It's been meticulously applied, with three coats of each color, plus clear coat to preserve the color integrity and protect the paint from the elements. Sherwin-Williams and Eagle Graphics of Wichita, Kan., can take much of the credit for ensuring 5704's appearance in 2022 is true to its appearance in 1976. The collaboration and enthusiasm amongst all involved has truly been inspiring." (TN)

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AT AN EVENT with Vice President Kamala Harris, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today announced that it will award \$2.2 billion to 35 recipients in 18 states through President Biden's American Rescue Plan. The funds will help public transportation agencies pay for day-to-day operations as they continue to provide essential service for frontline workers and keep tens of thousands of employees on the payroll. "Essential public transit workers have been on the front lines of the pandemic for two years, keeping our economy moving and helping Americans get where they need to go," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. "This additional funding from the American Rescue Plan is helping communities across the country keep transit workers on the job and keep their trains and buses running." "Millions of Americans rely on their local transit systems to get to work and school, access medical care and critical services, relieve congestion, and reduce pollution," said FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez. "The pandemic has shown that public transportation is more essential than ever, which is why these funds are crucial to avoid drastic service cuts and layoffs that would damage the economy and public health."

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THE MBTA'S ELECTRIC TROLLEY-BUSES, which have glided down the streets of Cambridge and surrounding towns for nearly 90 years, were permanently disconnected from their overhead wires earlier this month and replaced with buses that belch diesel fumes. The buses, which ply routes between Harvard Square and Watertown and Waverley squares, will be sent to the scrapyard. Taking their



place, for about two years, will be diesel hybrid models — which, in turn, will be replaced by battery-powered buses, T officials say. The decision has frustrated climate and transit advocates, but won the support of some local elected officials. They say the T's plan to build-out a garage for battery electric buses so they can replace the diesel hybrid ones by 2024 is sensible, and two years of diesel buses replacing electric ones is a small price to pay for progress toward electrifying the MBTA's whole fleet. (BG)

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RAILWAY AGE HAS NAMED Vermont Railway (VTR), part of the Vermont Rail System, as the magazine's "Short Line of the Year". In 2019, it embarked on an ambitious tunnel reconstruction project led by the state of Vermont, in conjunction with the town of Middlebury, New England Central Railroad (NECR), VHB, Kubricky Construction, Engineers Construction, and numerous other parties, following years of planning and design work. The Middlebury bridges, often referred to as tunnels, were built in the 1920s, and had become structurally deficient. They provided more than access over the railroad tracks; they tied together the downtown business district. The VTR main line was out of service for 10 weeks during construction, which included severing 2,500 feet of



track. To guarantee rail customers uninterrupted service, all traffic through Middlebury was diverted onto an alternate route that ran along the opposite side of the state. For close to a year prior to the shutdown, VTR had to adjust its daily train operations to accommodate the 20-hour work windows. VTR, working closely with the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and NECR, established a plan for two detour trains each day. The trains were powered by eight GMTX GP-38-2s leased by VTR and operated over NECR from Burlington to Bellows Falls; additional train crews were also brought in, and trained and qualified on both railroads. In some cases, partial off-loading or complete transloading of product from railcar to

truck was required at VTR's Riverside Reload Center in Bellows Falls, Vt., before cars could be accepted onto the detour route. VTR had one important goal: No direct impact to customers. Thanks to years of planning and strong VTR-NECR communication, there were no customer complaints, VTR reports. While work continued in and around the tunnel until spring 2021, the rail line through Middlebury officially reopened on Sept. 18, 2020. The project was a success—for VTrans, Middlebury, and VTR and its customers, who now enjoy state-of-the-art infrastructure that not only accommodates the "high and wide" shipments of tomorrow, but also significantly enhances a historic Vermont town, VTR says. It also helped pave the way for Amtrak's service extension into Burlington. (RA)

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CANADA'S PUBLIC PASSENGER railway VIA Rail has been pulled back from pandemic-induced oblivion by a federal government now framing the scheme for a dedicated, electrified right-of-way linking Quebec City and Toronto as a certainty for the first time since the project was first revealed in 2015. "High Frequency Rail (HFR) will transform passenger rail service in Canada through the creation of a faster, more frequent, more accessible and more sustainable rail service among the major centers of Québec City, Trois-Rivières, Montréal, Ottawa, Peterborough and Toronto," Transport Canada declared March 9. VIA Rail's single shareholder thus invited the global passenger rail industry to submit ideas for private-sector participation in the provision of train services over the eventual network to be woven from strands of abandoned 19th century routes and still-operating branch-line freight trackage. Private-public partnerships were part of the original concept unveiled to *Railway Age* in 2015 by then CEO Yves Desjardins-Siciliano. The Montreal lawyer became Canadian CEO of Siemens Mobility in 2020. Siemens won a separate contract in 2018 to modernize VIA Rail's existing "Corridor" service and the first trainsets have been delivered for testing along the Quebec City to Windsor trackage over which VIA Rail rents running rights from CN. VIA owns outright the portion of the route from Coteau, QC west of Montreal to Ottawa and Brockville, ON where it rejoins CN. For the first time, Transport Canada declared that the new dedicated Corridor line would be electrified. This did seem inevitable given Quebec's abundant and renewable hydroelectricity and VIA Rail's specification of dual-power locomotives for the 32 new trainsets to

replace its current museum-grade Corridor fleet. (RA)

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THE MBTA ADVISORY BOARD will consider asking for commuter rail trains to run from South Station to the South Shore after evening Red Sox games. The idea started from rail advocate Rich Prone, who said that no commuter rail trains run from Boston to the Greenbush or Kingston lines late enough to get people home from night baseball games. Prone wants the MBTA and Keolis, the contractor that operates the commuter rail, to consider running at least one late train when the Red Sox play at night. (PL)

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WITHOUT FANFARE, VIA Rail Canada this week began allowing passengers on the *Canadian* and other trains to again sit under glass in dome car seats and have access to onboard lounge facilities. Both had been off limits as a result of health restrictions imposed by the carrier and various provinces since March 2020. As of March 1, full dining service for sleeping-car passengers has also been restored to the Toronto-Vancouver, B.C. streamliner and the Montreal-Halifax, Nova Scotia, *Ocean*, according to VIA spokeswoman Jamie Orchard. The *Canadian* will also regain a second weekly round trip. It has been operating one trip per week since December 2020, departing Vancouver on Monday and Toronto on Sunday. A second eastbound trip departs on Fridays beginning April 29, with a second westbound trip resuming Wednesday, May 4. Orchard also says, "In the summer, we generally operate HEP-1 *Chateau* cars [ex-Canadian Pacific stainless-steel sleepers converted to head-end power] on the *Ocean*; this is scheduled to begin April 4." It is unclear when, or if, the *Ocean's* Wednesday and Sunday departure days in each direction will be adjusted to restore a third weekly round-trip. With cross-province travel completely banned in the Maritimes for more than a year, the first frequency didn't return until September 2021, and the second until December. At that time, the company said a third round trip would start this June. (TN)

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THE OWNER of the Mount Washington Cog Railway is proposing stationing railcars near the summit of the mountain to serve as overnight accommodations and a restaurant. Owner Wayne Presby's project would cost nearly \$14 million, and would station 18 cars at an elevation of about 5,800 feet from mid-May through mid-October. Nine sleeping cars would accommodate up to 70 guests.

The project was presented earlier this month to the Mount Washington Commission, and Presby says it has the support of the state. The plan would include piping sewage down the mountain; in exchange, the Cog railway would agree not to pursue further expansion at the summit. Presby had proposed a 25,000-square-foot, 35-room hotel at the summit several years ago, but that proposal was scrapped in the wake of criticism from environmentalists and hikers. (TN)

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IN A BRIEF CEREMONY in Chicago, Amtrak CEO Stephen Gardner has recognized Canadian Pacific for its sixth straight year with the industry-leading A-grade on the passenger carrier's annual Host Railroad Report Card. The report card measures the freight railroads' performance in keeping Amtrak trains on time. Gardner presented a plaque commemorating the top ranking to Canadian Pacific CEO Keith Creel at Chicago Union Station. (TN)

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RAILWAY AGE'S 2022 RAILROADERS of the Year, Keith Creel, President and CEO of Canadian Pacific, and Pat Ottensmeyer, President and CEO of Kansas City Southern, were honored March 15 at the Union League Club of Chicago at the annual Railroader of the Year dinner, hosted by the Western Railway Club. The 59th annual award went to Creel and Ottensmeyer, two exemplary and visionary North American rail industry leaders who are reconfiguring the North American rail landscape by completing, if all goes as planned, what will be the first Class I merger in more than 20 years, and creating North America's first transnational freight railroad, Canadian Pacific Kansas City, CPKC. CPKC is a landmark combination that will enable seamless, single-line freight rail service linking Canada, the United States and Mexico, opening up new opportunities for rail market share growth and vastly improved customer service. Merging these two iconic railroads, each with a unique history and legacy, required strategic planning, cooperation, enthusiasm and execution. (RA)

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FLUSH WITH CASH, as its vast tar sands oil field suddenly lurched from environmental pariah to savior of western civilization, the Alberta government (Canada) is looking more favorably upon a scheme to build a new, independent passenger railway, connecting Calgary International Airport (YYC) to the Rocky Mountain's global tourist destination, Banff National Park. Off-the-shelf hydrogen trainsets, already in the catalogs of European railcar builders, would be ideal for the

short, 150-kilometer (93-mile) link between YYC's currently rail-less terminal, Calgary city center, and Canadian Pacific's (CP) picturesque Banff Station. Calgary is already the focal point for CP's development of hydrogen locomotion and trackside fuel generation. Both the Alberta and Canadian governments are aggressively encouraging hydrogen generation, whether "grey" from natural gas, or "green" from wind and solar. The most compelling argument for train service from Calgary's flatland airport to the peaks of the



CP's *Canadian* arriving Banff in May 1970. (DNC photo)

Continental divide is the hope it would mitigate the traffic deadlock of Banff townsite in summer, while winter skiers could avoid the often snow-blown TransCanada Highway. Indeed, the railway's primary promoters operate one of the park's ski resorts, as well as holding a long-term lease to Banff Station and surrounding rail lands. (RA)

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THE DURANGO & SILVERTON has agreed to pay \$20 million and adopt fire mitigation plans in a proposed settlement to a lawsuit over its role in a massive 2018 Colorado wildfire. The money will settle a suit filed in 2019 by the federal government, which claimed cinders from one of the railroad's locomotives started the 416 Fire, which burned more than 54,000 acres. The railroad continues to deny it started the fire and the settlement is not an admission of liability. Meanwhile, the Durango Herald is reporting that the railroad has also reached a settlement in the civil lawsuits arising from the same fire. Under the federal settlement announced Monday, the railroad will make an initial lump-sum payment of \$15 million, then pay an additional \$5 million plus interest over 10 years. The government had sought to recover \$25 million for costs of fighting the fire. (TN)

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HITACHI RAIL will build a new factory in Washington County, Maryland, to build the new 8000-series railcars for the Washington

Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, the company has announced. Hitachi Rail will build a new factory for its order to build up to 800 new railcars for DC Metro. The \$70 million factory, near the Hopewell Valley Industrial Park adjacent to Hagerstown, Md., is projected to employ up to 460 people, and will be able to produce up to 20 railcars per month. The 307,000-square-foot plant will be on a 41-acre lot that will also include an 800-yard test track. The factory will be 90 minutes from Metrorail's Greenbelt Yard, where the finished cars will be located. "The creation of a new American train factory reflects our ambition to deliver for the United States," Andrew Barr, group CEO, Hitachi Rail, said in a press release. Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan said the announcement "is outstanding news for Washington County and the entire state of Maryland." The new plant is projected to be in operation in winter 2023-24, and will be capable of producing multiple types of equipment for the wider North American rail market. Its first project will be construction of the 8000-series Metrorail cars. (TN)

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THE SEASHORE TROLLEY MUSEUM will use a \$1 million donation — the second largest in its history — to replace an aging building providing covered storage for its cars. The anonymous gift will allow replacement of the 66-year-old Burton B. Shaw South Boston Car House, which is leaning and must be replaced. The current structure, which stores six cars, is open at the front, leaving the first car on each of its three tracks exposed to the elements. Its replacement will have a nine-car capacity, and will have roll-up doors and insulation allowing more complete protection for the trolleys. It will primarily be used for the cars the museum currently operates. (TN)

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SHARED TRAINSETS, running through between Washington D.C. and San Antonio, Texas, via Chicago, are part of the plan when the *Texas Eagle* and *Capitol Limited* resume daily operation on Monday, March 28. This will end a reduction to five-day-a-week departures that began in January. The *Eagle*, between Chicago and San Antonio, and the Chicago-Washington *Capitol* will join the Seattle-Los Angeles *Coast Starlight* in returning to a daily schedule. (TN)

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I ENJOYED THESE ARTICLES in this month's RR magazines and can suggest them to you:

TRAINS

- Farewell Canadian Pacific, Kansas City Southern
- Considering Canadian Pacific
- Landmark Locomotives

E7, GP7 and F7

Gallery

Beautiful photos by Grady McKinley

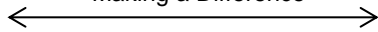
MODEL RAILROADER

Smooth Track and Wiring that Works

Weather Passenger Cars Piecemeal

Trains of Thought

Making a Difference



News sources: Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Trains "Newswire", Railway Age, Railpace Newsmagazine, RRE "Callboy", "The 470", Patriot Ledger, Rail Passenger Assoc.

LIBRARY CORNER

New books will be displayed on the table in the Break Room for a month and can be checked out, by using the check-out sheet on the Break Room counter. They will be filed alphabetically in the Library afterwards.

Don't forget we have a great DVD collection in the mailroom. Filed alphabetically. No need to sign out but please return to the book return tray in the Break Room when you're done. Happy reading and viewing!

Dave Clinton, Librarian

END OF TRACKLESS TROLLEYS IN BOSTON

Ron Clough

The end of Trackless Trolleys on the Waverly Line 73 and Watertown Line 71 occurred on Saturday, March 12, 2022, although they actually ran into the early morning hour of Sunday the 13th, so as to get back to the carhouse for end of service. Although the MBTA says this is just a 5-year shut down to allow for road construction on Mt Auburn Street in Watertown, the T plans to convert the North Cambridge carhouse to accommodate battery buses during this shutdown period. That means to me that trackless trolleys out of North Cambridge and through Harvard square tunnel are done. The third line out of North Cambridge was the Huron Avenue line #75 but that was suspended in 2013 and has never operated since.

One can still ride under overhead 2 wire on the Silver Line out of South Station to either Dry Dock (SL1) or Logan Airport (SL2), but that is coming to a close also very soon. The T is replacing the current small fleet of dual-mode articulated buses (overhead wire for tunnel use and diesel power for

above ground use), as they are constantly in need of repair.

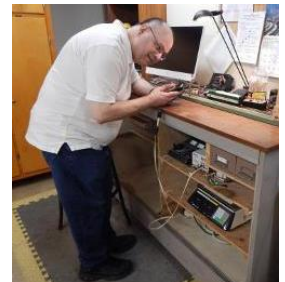
Once the T has enough new battery/diesel articulated buses with extended battery life delivered (on order and delivery expected to be complete by June) to run the Silver Line, 2 wire overhead will be gone in Boston; an 86-year run of probably the most environmentally- friendly method of public transportation. And I got my last ride in on the Trackless Trolleys, but not on the fan trip the Boston Street Railway Association (BSRA) ran on Feb. 19, 2022.

For those not familiar with 2 wire overhead operation: 2-wires are needed because the rubber-tired vehicles do not offer the ground (negative), as the single wire trolleys offer with their steel wheels. At least the trolleys that we know as the Green Line will be around for quite a while, especially with the opening of the first phase of the GLX (Green Line Extension) to Union Sq. in Somerville on March 21st.

DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Three members attended this month's clinic—all with different projects.

Joe Dumas brought his "new" E7 by P2K in the beautiful Southern "Silvan Green" and white paint scheme. A good deal from the Show, he was anxious to get it DCC-enabled. Luckily, this loco was from the second-run and had an 8-pin plug, into which he plugged the Digitrax DZ123PS. Changing the plastic couplers to Kadee "Whiskers" was all that was needed for him to be "off to the races" with his streamlined racer! He also brought his new "Trackmobile" from Broadway Limited to "show and tell". This little mite came with DCC and moved right along...just perfect to shift the cars at a customer's siding. A "fun" addition to Joe's "stable".



Chris Barlow came with a real doozy of a project: replacing the motor in a Bowser M636. The Quebec Cartier-decorated monster included DCC and Sound and the motor was covered with weights and wires. The defective factory motor was replaced by Bowser but you are "on your own" from there! He spent the whole evening but was successful and had a beautifully-running loco for a road, that no one else in the Club models...good going, Chris!



Eric Mercer has quite a collection of nice Kato SD40-2 locos, mostly in the SOO Line scheme—speaking of roads modeled by only one of our members. Even though Kato locos of its day were considered the



“Cadillacs of locomotives”, they have a piss-poor method of conducting power from the trucks to the motor; a very flimsy, brass or bronze strip, with nothing soldered and kind of a “nightmare” to fix. As it was this night. After soldering various joints and getting the locomotive to run decently, every time we replaced the shell we were “Barlowed”—a term which developed from many past clinics, when the same thing would happen to Chris Barlow. (Frequently, Chris would complete the installation of DCC and when he put the shell back on the model it wouldn’t work; so the expression stuck.) Despite our taking the shell on and off and fooling with the contacts, we were not successful and it was getting late. So, Eric packed it up and agreed that next clinic he would strip out the rinky-dink strips and hard-wire the trucks to the motor/DCC supply contacts. Wish him luck!

Special thanks to **Paul III** for cleaning up the Shop before the clinic. He presented a very inviting session, by straightening everything out on the table and sweeping the floor!



The next clinic will be Thursday, April 14th. In order to reserve a spot at the clinic, please email, call, text or see me and let me know what you want to work on (such as “Atlas GP38”) and what you want to do with it (such as “install decoder”). I will confirm all requests. For reservations--email me at: daveclinton@verizon.net. Please feel free to email or speak to me with any questions about the clinic.

EDITOR’S NOTES

1. **“Honest Organic Ice Tea”** is back in our machine! The “Berry Hibiscus Flavored Ice Tea” is delicious; a “tad sweet”, with no artificial anything. Try it--a good substitute for carbonated drinks!
2. Jack reports that we had 650 paid attendance at our **Spring Show and Open House**.
.....*David N. Clinton*

“And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”
(John 8:32)

MEMBER NEWS

(Note: The “Health & Welfare Committee”, Ye Ed, would like to hear of any member who is ill, hospitalized or special occasion news, so we can keep the membership advised of these happenings.)

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The following members have made it through another year and deserve congratulations on their special day:

- David Galbraith April 3
- Chip Mullen April 7th
- Bob Knapp April 8th
- Dick Grimm April 15th
- Rick Pearson..... April 20th
- Tom Ross..... April 25th
- Jack Doyle April 27th
- Ed Sisk..... April 30th



PROJECTS

From **Peter Palica**:
“After many months I finally completed my N-scale assembly of the 480+ piece Custom Model Railroad kit of the Hotel Belvedere in Baltimore. I may still add first floor awnings; however, this Gilded Age beauty is now ready to receive guests. This was one of the most challenging projects I have ever undertaken.”



RUNNING EXTRA

Continuing Amtrak service cuts reflect lack of national network investment: Analysis

By Bob Johnston, *Trains* magazine | March 4, 2022

Personnel and equipment shortages, management's failure to focus on revenue growth are factors in ongoing issues

Amtrak management is blaming “staffing and hiring shortages for skilled technical employees caused by the pandemic” for the continuation of five-day-a-week service on six long-distance routes and discontinuance on one after March 27, when it originally said full schedules would be restored. The cutbacks began in mid-January to: the *Silver Meteor* (discontinued), *Empire Builder*, *California Zephyr*, *Southwest Chief*, *Lake Shore Limited*, *City of New Orleans* and *Crescent*.

Only the Chicago-Washington *Capitol Limited*; Chicago-San Antonio, Tex., *Texas Eagle*; and the Seattle-Los Angeles *Coast Starlight* will resume daily operation on March 28. Full Chicago-Milwaukee *Hiawatha* service and increased New York *Empire Corridor* frequencies are also returning.

Amtrak spokesman Marc Magliari told News Wire that as of mid-February, “vacancies in the mechanical department are acute.”

The diminished shop forces mean many locomotives and passenger cars, sidelined since 2020 frequency cuts attributed to the pandemic, have not been returned to service. Increasingly over the last few months, cancellations or late departures from terminals when inbound equipment is delayed or malfunctions occur when spares aren't available.

“There is a direct connection between our staffing levels and sizing of our consists,” Magliari says. “We've said it will be many months before we will have full availability of the active fleet and that remains the case, including our own staffing challenges and those of our suppliers.”

But is the problem the pandemic, or did management have more proactive options to preserve revenue and mobility?

Cuts came despite long-distance strength

When the bottom dropped out of the travel market in March 2020, the company abruptly cancelled all in-progress training programs and hiring. Given the uncertainty of revenue from then-decimated Northeast

Corridor service, Amtrak instituted voluntary and forced buyouts for fiscal 2021 to conserve cash.



Sideline equipment has led to smaller trains. The *Texas Eagle* leaves Chicago on Jan. 4, 2022, with two coaches, one sleeper, a combination diner-café, and a baggage car. Limited capacity pushes prices higher and sellouts curb revenue by turning away prospective passengers. (Bob Johnston)

Also part of the initial corporate survival plan was cutting back most long-distance trains to triweekly departures in October 2020. This came even though ridership during the first pandemic summer — prior to the availability of vaccines, but when the full national network continued to operate — showed long distance was the most resilient segment of Amtrak's business.

That strength has been consistent. In January 2022, as the new cutbacks were taking effect, long-distance trains generated \$30.3 million in ticket revenue compared with \$31.1 million for all Northeast Regional and *Acela* service. This was despite substantially reduced long-distance capacity and the raging Omicron variant.

But Amtrak stuck with its original plan shrinking national network service and employment, rather than adjusting its 2021 operating, hiring, and maintenance plans to reflect opportunities created by obvious demand. This was in spite of receiving \$4.4 billion in various forms of federal funding (\$1.5 billion in CARES Act funds in March 2020, \$1 billion in the December 2020 Consolidated Appropriations Act, and \$1.9 billion from the American Rescue Plan passed in March 2021). The total is nearly twice what had been Amtrak's annual appropriation.

The last COVID-related grant made Congress' intention clear: it was meant to “prevent further employee furloughs and to prevent further reductions to the frequency of rail service and on any long-distance route,” according to a summary by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Still, the company continued to languish in the inertia created by employee buyouts depriving the company of valuable institutional knowledge; de-emphasized

marketing; cost-focused management incentives; and onboard amenity elimination — moves that began in late 2017 under board chairman Tony Coscia, then-CEO Richard Anderson, and current CEO Stephen Gardner.

Even as 2021's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law targeted an additional \$16 billion for Amtrak national network investment over the next five years, management was playing catch-up in rebuilding its workforce.

Auto Train vs. Silver Star



Viewliner II sleeper *Westfield River* is one of five sleeping cars on the northbound *Silver Star* as it pauses next to the *Carolinian* at Richmond, Va., on Feb. 25, 2022. A significant portion of the train's sleeping-car inventory went unsold as pricing did not reflect increased inventory. (Bob Johnston)

Amtrak has since stepped up hiring, but the company won't say whether capacity will be expanded or if sidelined Superliners like Sightseer lounges or transition sleepers will ever return to the *Capitol Limited* or *Texas Eagle*. Meanwhile, it is prudent to not overextend the ability to reliably serve passengers if there isn't sufficient equipment and personnel to answer the bell.

But *Trains News Wire* has also observed evidence that management has failed to effectively manage inventory in the assets that are available. Doing so could capture a greater share of an intercity travel market poised to surge in the months ahead.

When Amtrak announced it was eliminating the New York-Miami *Silver Meteor* through the busy winter and early spring Florida travel season, *News Wire* questioned the wisdom of dropping its second biggest long-distance winter revenue producer and the only same-day connection option to and from other routes.

With *Silver Star* serving the same endpoints via a different route, Amtrak vowed to increase that train's consist to accommodate more riders by adding the *Meteor's* coaches and sleeping cars. Instead of three coaches and two Viewliner sleepers, the train would operate with four coaches and five sleeping cars. This presented an opportunity for Amtrak managers to

actively pursue revenue by departing from a rigid pricing strategy dictated by limited capacity elsewhere.

What happened? A check of pricing for each northbound *Silver Star* from Orlando, Fla., to Washington, D.C., for a month prior to a planned Feb. 24, 2022, trip revealed roomettes for one adult costing \$447 or \$607 (except for \$706 on three dates). Much more limited bedrooms cost \$1,209 to \$1,589. Coach seats stayed constant at \$139, but dipped to \$111 weeks in advance until bookings rose above 30%, and increased to \$182 when bookings surpassed 70%. Most roomettes, including the Feb. 24 departure, held at \$508 every day during the preceding month. This is the second-to-lowest pricing "bucket" offered, unchanged from when both the *Star* and *Meteor* operated.



An *Auto Train* line for lounge-car service stretches back two cars on Feb. 28, 2022. The coach diner has been eliminated, so coach passengers must buy food from the café, and sleeping car patrons must eat in their rooms. (Charles St. Clair)

In contrast, prices were actively managed on the Sanford, Fla., to Lorton, Va., *Auto Train* over the same time frame. Excluding vehicle transport costs, roomette fares were adjusted

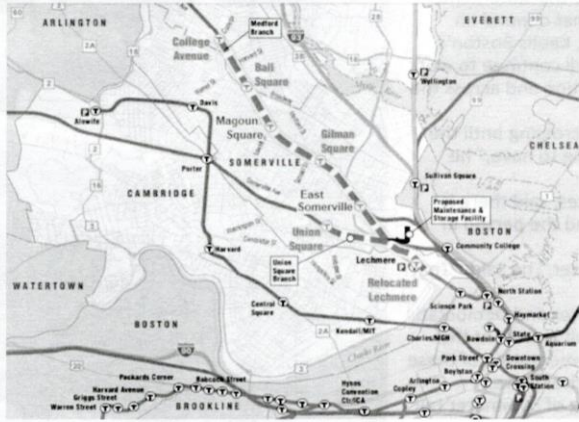
from \$382 to \$652 if demand warranted as departure dates approached, while bedroom pricing ranged from \$665 to \$1,254. The limited number of Superliner family rooms started at \$611 and topped out at \$1,043. *Auto Train* northbound coach fares during the period generally remained steady at \$115, though some dates dipped temporarily to the oft-promoted \$89.

Every departure has different demand. If there is sufficient capacity, pricing can be lowered to attract more customers; if people don't buy an accommodation by the time a train leaves the station, the company gets nothing. Lower fares also can provide promotional value, as a recent *Auto Train* \$29 coach fare promotion attests. Had management employed the same fare manipulation with the *Silver Star's* five Viewliner sleepers, more rooms could have generated revenue. There were no sleeping car sellouts on the northbound *Silver Star* in February. It isn't possible to determine how many rooms went unsold on every departure by making a daily pricing check, but an onboard survey of that Feb. 24, 2022, trip from Orlando showed 16 roomettes and at least three bedrooms unoccupied overnight. The decisions management has made over the last two years have hobbled Amtrak's ability to effectively operate its national network through the remainder of 2022, but it is not too late to develop and implement a plan that redistributes equipment and personnel to regain the ground that has been lost.

Green Line extension to Union Square will open March 21

By Taylor Dolven, Globe Staff

The long-awaited Green Line extension to Union Square in Somerville will open for passenger service on the afternoon of March 21, MBTA General Manager Steve Poftak announced Thursday. New stations at Lechmere and Union Square will welcome passengers that day, marking a major milestone for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, which has been discussing extending the Green Line for decades.



(MBTA.com)

"It's a really proud moment for the T, a really important moment for the region, and really a symbol that we can do big things and we can get things done," said Poftak at a MBTA board meeting.

The timing of the opening of the separate and much longer Green Line extension branch to Medford, which includes five new stations, was tentatively scheduled for May, but may not start carrying passengers until summer.

Both branches, which cost the MBTA a whopping \$2.3 billion, have faced a seemingly endless series of delays dating back decades.

In 1990, the state promised to extend the Green Line to "Ball Square/Tufts University" as part of an agreement with the Conservation Law Foundation, a legal advocacy group, to mitigate the environmental impacts of the Big Dig, which buried Interstate 93 beneath the center of the city. The foundation sued the state in 2005, accusing it of stalling the project, and settled in 2007 when the government agreed to complete it by 2014.

Further delays dragged the project into 2015 when the budget swelled to \$3 billion. Massachusetts considered scrapping it entirely. The MBTA cut costs and eventually won approval from its then-oversight board to continue with the project in 2017.

The 4.7-mile extension to Somerville and Medford began in 2018 with the goal of beginning passenger service at the seven new stations by December 2021.

But last year, the MBTA pushed back the Union Square branch opening to March 2022, citing complications in building its substations, and the delivery date on the Medford branch, which terminates at Tufts University, citing supply chain impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The T expects shuttle buses to continue to replace subway service between Lechmere and North Station until the night before service begins on the new branch, said MBTA spokesperson Joe Pesaturo last month.

Test trains have been running along the tracks since Jan. 16.

