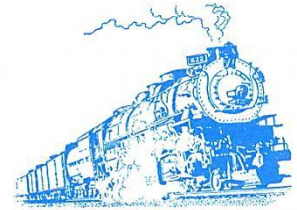


The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



MARCH 27, 2023 ■■■■■■■■■■ **VOLUME 43** ■■■■■■■■■■ **NUMBER 3**



The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



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“The Chief’s Corner”	Fred Lockhart
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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. ©2023
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VOLUME 43 ■■■■■ NUMBER 3 ■■■■■ MARCH 2023

CLUB OFFICERS

President.....	Jack Foley
Vice President.....	Rich Herlihy
Treasurer.....	Will Baker
Secretary.....	Eric Mercer
Chief Engineer.....	Fred Lockhart
Directors.....	David Galbraith ('24)
	Bob England ('24)
	Roger St. Peter ('23)
	Gary Mangelinkx ('23)

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ON THE COVER: Pics from our March 11-12th Show and Open House. (Joe Dumas, Club Photographer)

FORM 19 ORDERS

MARCH B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, March 27th 8 p.m.

APRIL BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, April 3rd 8 p.m.

DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Thursday, April 6th 8 p.m.

OFFICIAL OPERATIONS

Monday, April 10th & Thursday, April 13th 7:30 p.m.

TROLLEY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, April 17th 8 p.m.

TRAINS 'N TAXES

Saturday, April 22nd Free-running 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

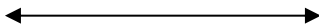
Sunday, April 23rd

APRIL B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, March 27th 8 p.m.

CONTESTS

Congratulations to **Fred Lockhart** on winning this month's "50/50" drawing!



Al Taylor's "Some 8-section Canadian Pacific RR Cars" word-find puzzle was completed by 13 members:

Ron Clough	Savery Moore
Will Baker	Doug Buchanan
Al Munn	Bob Farrenkropf
Bryan Miller	Dick Grimm
Fred Lockhart	"Gunny"
Dom Mirabello	Jim Ferris
Dan Peterson	

Congratulations to **Al Munn** on winning the drawing for the CP Rail cylindrical, aluminum Covered Hopper from Rapido Trains.

BTW...do you know what Al Taylor meant by "8-section" Canadian Pacific RR Cars?



Puzzle for the **May Business Meeting** is "Amtrak's Long-Distance Trains". This "word-find" is *my* first try at imitating Al Taylor's puzzles, which were a favorite of puzzle folks. Extra copies are in the train room and please don't forget to put your name on your entry. We will celebrate Amtrak's 52nd birthday with a delicious cake from the Beech Grove Shops, as usual! Good luck and have fun!

CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

As usual, here I am sitting in front of my laptop with a blank page and a blank mind. Our March show brought most work on the railroad to a halt, so there is little or no progress to report on. This past Monday the Scenery Committee was able to set up their work tables again but the workers have not returned yet, unfortunately they lose about two months a year with the two shows; a solution to that is being worked on. As a result of decisions made by the Trolley Committee earlier this month, work has resumed on the trolley this past week. Ron will give a detailed report at our April Business meeting--I don't want to steal his report. One scenery item comes to mind is that Dave Galbraith is re-working the pavement around the trolley tracks in the town scene at Highland Oaks.



On another subject that is being talked about recently by a few of us is the subject of signals on the railroad. One thing that the experiment (which has been going on for a while on the mainline near the new industrial area) has proven to us is that a "homemade" system is not for our club. The only way to do this is with commercially available components and support from the manufacturers. So as this goes to press, the homemade system will be removed and the same area will be re-done with commercial components--to demonstrate the positives of signaling. After that, a solid plan will have to be developed for other parts of the railroad, along with budgets and phases of construction, and with club members' approval, of course.

On another note, most of you have noticed the LEDs that I added just before the show to turnouts #73 and 74, leaving Boston and entering Great Lakes yard. I would like to do that to the other mainline turnouts along the railroad as time permits. I feel it is well worth the time for the added visual benefit to see the condition of the turnout before a train gets to the turnout.

Well, that is it for this month, your questions or comments are always welcome.

Fred Lockhart
Chief Engineer

Semaphore Memories

MARCH 2018 (5 years ago)

- First time a Show without electrical or track problems.
- 77-year-old SW1, originally B&M #1113 delivered to Berkshire Scenic RR in Adams, Mass.
- Amtrak AEM-7 "Mighty Mouse" #945 donated to IRM.
- UP's restoration of "Big Boy" #4014 continues with boiler work and training truck repairs.
- U.S. DOT awards \$16-million grant towards trackwork to maintain route of ex-Santa Fe route for Amtrak's *Southwest Chief*.
- Honorary member Dick Kozlowski passes away, after visiting the Club for our Show and Open House.
- The Canadian Parliament approves legislation that would allow a new security clearance facility to be built in Montreal's Central Station, where passengers would be screened as they come and go between US and Canada. The U.S. Congress already approved a similar measure.

MARCH 2013 (10 years ago)

- Gov. Patrick proposes \$850 million expansion of Boston's South Station.
- Track and signal up-grades on the New England Central result in increased speeds for Amtrak Vermonter to St. Albans.
- UP and Southern California Chapter of Railway & Locomotive Historical Society working to find a suitable "Big Boy" for restoration to operation.
- MBTA seeking proposals to provide WiFi service on commuter rail and at stations.
- BNSF to test LNG-powered locomotives.
- Waterville, ME, looking for proposals to build roof over MEC steam loco #470, to display it in a "museum-type" setting.
- Study finds that passenger rail service between Maine's two most populated areas, Portland and Lewiston-Auburn, would cost \$138 million.
- First New England Central diesel painted into Genesee & Wyoming "family" paint scheme.
- Cedar Hill has 5 tracks available for staging, along with "Classification Yard A".
- Scenery being installed in Richmond Mills area.

MARCH 2008 (15 years ago)

- NY-NJ Port Authority Trans-Hudson celebrates 100th anniversary. Nicknamed "The Tubes".
- MBTA looking to extend Haverhill Commuter line to Plaistow, NH, with new layover station north of Haverhill, instead of the present Bradford station.
- UP building "Golden Spike Observation Tower" in the world's largest freight yard, North Platte, Nebraska.
- British hedge fund tries to take over CSX. □100-ft wind turbine built to power new Saco, ME, railroad station.
- Cape Cod Central takes delivery of new "Energy Train" loco and trash car.
- Massive work going on in Bare Cove Park, creating new DPW headquarters/garage and ball fields.

MARCH 2003 (20 years ago)

- P1K introduces first decent Alco RS2.
 - MBTA agrees to "whistle ban" for Greenbush Line.
 - Amtrak puts "Acela" name only on Acela Express trains; no longer using on Regional trains.
 - Jon Delli Priscoli buys out other two partners of Edaville RR.
 - CSX relocates corporate headquarters to Jacksonville, FL, from Richmond, VA.
 - Port Authority of NY and NJ to spend \$125 million rebuilding ferry slips at Hoboken Terminal for restoration of ferry service to Manhattan.
 - Cog Railway announces change from coal to heating oil for their steam locos. (Never happened-Ed.)
 - Peter Palica re-joins SSMRC.
 - Fred Alexander (D) becomes member or SSMRC.
- ### **MARCH 1998** (25 Years Ago)
- Conrail sells Business Train.
 - Conway Scenic acquires ex-GN dome car from Cape Cod RR.
 - Amtrak approves design of new high-speed train and names it "American Flyer".
 - Ex-Green Mtn., ex-Rutland RS1 #400 donated to Danbury Railway Museum and painted NH #0763.
 - GE rolls out 1000th locomotive.
 - Worcester Union Station rehab project receives \$39 million.
 - Design work begins on new Mansfield, MA, station, replacing "temporary" 50-year-old structure.
 - UP in middle of "service problems", after acquiring Southern Pacific.
 - Amtrak receives approval to use Talgo trains made in Spain for Pacific Northwest service.
 - Last Operations in old "South Division", which was scrapped after the Spring Show.
- ### **MARCH 1993** (30 Years Ago)
- New CN president, Paul Tellier, cuts 3,000 jobs, considers selling Central Vermont subsidiary and talks about privatizing in five years.
 - Conrail takes delivery of first locos with "ditch lights", the SD60M.
 - Amtrak awards contract to Bethlehem Steel for eight 800-ft, high-speed crossovers for the Northeast Corridor.
 - Maine and Canadian officials fight CP Rail's proposed abandonment of 375-mile mainline from Sherbrook, Quebec, across northern Maine to Saint John, New Brunswick.
- ### **MARCH 1988** (35 Years Ago)
- SSMRC holds "50th Anniversary Show".
 - Cog Railway begins spring ski runs, allowing skiers to "do" Tuckerman's Ravine.
 - Conrail considers selling Beacon Park and moving to Westborough.
 - Amtrak's Montrealer, using Guilford tracks, in jeopardy of being discontinued.
 - Lionel develops "Rail Scope" video camera inside model locomotive.
 - Amherst Railway Society one-day show in one building; 13,000 people attend.
 - Metro North Commuter Rail Road awards contract to rebuild 10 ex-NH FL9 locos.

- ✳️ Last rails removed from Commercial Street in Portland, Maine—the former Portland Terminal RR.
 - ✳️ Willey Section House” in Crawford Notch purposely burned down, due to heavy vandalism.
 - ✳️ Presidential candidate Jesse Jackson makes “Whistle-stop tour” on Winnepesaukee RR special from Concord to Plymouth, NH.
 - ✳️ President Reagan again proposes Zero funding for Amtrak.
 - ✳️ Virginia, last state to require cabooses, repeals law.
- MARCH 1983** (40 Years Ago)
- ✳️ WBZ’s “Evening Magazine” cameraman spends 10-hours at Club shooting for future 5-minute segment.
 - ✳️ Trolley committee achieves having trolley make complete loop in North Division without assistance.
 - ✳️ CNR puts CV up for sale.
 - ✳️ 10 million for rehabilitation of tracks from Attleboro to Hyannis for restoration of Cape Cod Amtrak service.
 - ✳️ Only E-units purchased by a Canadian RR (3 CPR E8s) retired by VIA Rail Canada.
 - ✳️ ACE 3000” project, using steam locomotive, begins testing in West Virginia.
 - ✳️ NJ Transit takes delivery of eight ex-Pennsy E44 electrics.
 - ✳️ MEC and B&M start new intermodal piggyback train called “East Wind”, between Bangor and New Haven, CT.
 - ✳️ Agreement reached on restoration of Washington, D.C. Union Station to original transportation purpose.

POTPOURRI

BIGGEST NEWS of the month is that Federal regulators gave the green light to the historic merger of Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern on March 13th. Their \$31.6 billion deal — thought to be the last merger between two Class I railroads — redraws the North American rail map by creating the first railroad linking Canada, the U.S., and Mexico. The Surface Transportation Board, in its 212-page decision approving CP’s acquisition of KCS, said the merger will increase railroad competition and help take trucks off the highway. The board’s decision was not unanimous: four members backed the merger, while board member Robert Primus voted against the combination. The merger will become effective on April 14, although there was no word on when CP and KCS will begin to mesh their operations. CP said it is reviewing the board’s decision and will announce its plans for the creation of Canadian Pacific Kansas City in the coming days. Federal regulators imposed a number of conditions on the merger of Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern, including a novel way of enforcing the railways’ promise to not tamper with current interchanges. Nearly all of the conditions were

proposed by CP and KCS themselves as part of the Surface Transportation Board’s merger review process. “This seems like a clear win for CP without any material conditions,” Wolfe Research analyst Scott Group wrote in a note to clients. “CP will not be required to divest any track, and the decision didn’t grant any trackage rights or competitive access like in prior mergers.” The conditions the board did impose will be monitored through an unprecedented seven-year oversight period, during which CPKC will have to provide data that will allow regulators to determine whether the merged railroad is living up to its promises. Chief among them: Keeping gateways open on commercially reasonable terms and to create no new bottlenecks at interchanges such as Laredo, Texas; Chicago; and Kansas City, Mo. To enforce CPKC’s pledge, the STB will require the railroad to provide a shipper with a written justification for any interline rate increase that’s higher than the rate of inflation. CPKC also will be required to arbitrate gateway rate disputes with shippers. Shippers rarely bring rate complaint cases to the STB because the agency’s processes are so complicated, expensive, and time-consuming. (TN)

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EARLY RIDERSHIP numbers show that there’s strong interest in the 6-month-old Ethan Allen Express rail service between Burlington and New York City. Using statistics from Trains in the Valley, a rail advocacy organization in western Massachusetts, Vermont rail booster Carl Fowler reported that the extended Ethan Allen Express route — which began service to Burlington on July 29 — surpassed advocates’ expectations by transporting 7,800 riders in October and 8,000 riders in November, the last month for which figures are available. “To put it mildly the news is good,” Fowler, a member of the Vermont Rail Advisory Council, announced on Facebook on January 20. He was celebrating not only the interest in the Burlington service but also evidence that extending the route — which used to terminate in Rutland — didn’t siphon passengers from the existing Amtrak train in northern Vermont, the Vermonter. In fact, the Vermonter saw its highest one-month ridership numbers ever, 11,700 riders, in November, Fowler said. The Ethan Allen Express travels up the western side of the state, stopping in Castleton, Rutland, Middlebury and Ferrisburgh on the way to Burlington. The Vermonter runs once a day between Washington, D.C., and St. Albans, traveling up the eastern side of the state through Brattleboro, White River Junction and Essex Junction. “Historically, we’ve seen all over the country [that] when Amtrak adds additional services, they don’t cannibalize each

other,” Fowler said. “Rather, they grow the market.” (470)

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A BIPARTISAN GROUP of senators has filed legislation designed to prevent derailments like the Norfolk Southern wreck that released toxic chemicals and upended life in East Palestine, Ohio. But the Rail Safety Act of 2023 also goes much further by proposing rules that would limit train length and tonnage, mandate a crew size of at least two people, and require railroads to prevent blocked grade crossings. “Through this legislation, Congress has a real opportunity to ensure that what happened in East Palestine will never happen again. We owe every American the peace of mind that their community is protected from a catastrophe of this kind,” said Sen. J.D. Vance, R-Ohio, one of the bill’s sponsors. NS train 32N derailed in East Palestine on Feb. 3, just moments after a wayside defect detector warned of a hot axle on the 23rd car in the 149-car train. The National Transportation Safety Board has said the catastrophic failure of a wheel bearing on the hopper car likely caused the derailment, which released hazardous chemicals including vinyl chloride. (TN)

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THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION Safety Board on March 7th said it would be conducting what it’s calling a “special investigation of Norfolk Southern Railway’s organization and safety culture.” “Given the number and significance of recent Norfolk Southern accidents, the NTSB also urges the company to take immediate action today to review and assess its safety practices, with the input of employees and others, and implement necessary changes to improve safety.” NTSB’s announcement came one day after NS announced a six-point plan to immediately enhance the safety of its operations. The initiatives are based on the NTSB’s preliminary findings on the East Palestine, Ohio, derailment. (RA)

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INSTALLING SENSORS on freight cars is the only way to prevent another disastrous derailment like the Feb. 3rd Norfolk Southern hazardous materials wreck in East Palestine, Ohio, a wheel bearing expert says. Constantine Tarawneh, a mechanical engineering professor who heads the University Transportation Center for Railway Safety at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, says adding more wayside hotbox detectors won’t be enough to eliminate derailments caused by wheel bearing failures. “Temperature is just not the way to measure the condition of a rotating object. Period. It’s a good secondary measure, but not a primary measure. And

so I don’t care how close you space them ... it’s not going to help,” Tarawneh said in a recent interview. (TN)

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AFTER HITTING SPEEDS of 130 mph, Brightline is officially the fastest train in Florida and the Southeastern U.S. Brightline achieved this while train testing along its new 35-mile rail corridor between Orlando International Airport and Cocoa, Florida, a release said. The new tracks are built along the Beachline Expressway/SR 528, which is fenced and has no grade crossings. “Reaching 130 isn’t just another milestone to our team, but the continuation of a dream that we’ve been working towards for several years,” said Patrick Goddard, president of Brightline Trains. “More importantly, this historic feat brings us one step closer to launching Brightline service between Orlando and Miami.” By hitting 130 mph Brightline beat its previous record of 110 mph, which the agency accomplished last fall during testing through Martin and St. Lucie Counties in Florida’s Treasure Coast. (RA)

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A LONGSTANDING New Hampshire law that prohibits serving alcoholic beverages unless the liquor was purchased in the state will now be enforced on Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority’s *Downeasters* by the New Hampshire Liquor Commission. The train’s liquor license is held by Portland-based NexDine, the outsourced food service company the rail authority uses to staff and supply the *Downeaster*’s cafe cars instead of contracting directly with Amtrak for that service. Patricia Quinn, NNEPRA’s executive director, notes patrons can purchase alcohol before the train passes into New Hampshire from Maine or Massachusetts and continue drinking; the law only prohibits people from being “served” *Downeasters* make stops at Dover, Durham, and Exeter in the state and spend about 45 minutes traversing New Hampshire on a 3-hour, 20-minute run from Boston’s North Station to Brunswick, Maine. The current dust-up is about licensing and revenue, yet it is valid to point out that New Hampshire has never contributed funding to the *Downeaster*’s operating support even though its residents regularly ride the trains. After the unpopular decision went public, the commission backpedaled, saying that alcohol sales could continue while they search for a “creative solution.” When asked about the commission’s decision, New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu said, “Not happening. First drinks are on me.” (TN)

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SIEMENS MOBILITY OFFICIALS said that they intend to construct a \$220 million passenger railcar manufacturing facility in Lexington, North Carolina, designed to complement the company's existing Sacramento, Calif., plant. Dr. Roland Busch, CEO of parent company Siemens AG, told reporters, "Sacramento on the West Coast is very successful and coming to its limits, so we are adding, in Lexington on the East Coast, roughly 30% of the capacity we already have, in phase one." Busch says 500 workers will be employed on the 200-acre site; it is estimated the facility will have a \$1.6 billion impact for North Carolina. (TN)

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AMTRAK STARTED early construction work for the B&P Tunnel Replacement Program. The nearly 150-year-old, 1.4-mile tunnel that connects Baltimore, Md., and Washington, D.C., is a single point of failure for both MARC commuter rail and Amtrak intercity passenger rail service, according to "America's Railroad." It is said to suffer from a variety of age-related issues such as excessive water infiltration, a deteriorating structure, and delays that impact more than 10% of weekday trains. The early construction work will include replacing aging wooden ties with new concrete ties, installing new rail, and completing track drainage improvements in the Halethorpe and West Baltimore areas. (RA)

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The Cape Cod Canal Region Chamber of Commerce visitor center in Buzzards Bay is about to undergo a makeover along with the adjacent tower, which is owned by Mass Coastal Railroad. The state Department of Transportation will replace the original 1916 roof tiles on both the visitor center and adjacent tower, according to Marie Oliva, chamber of commerce president and CEO. The work should be completed by mid-May, Oliva said. MERRILY CASSIDY/CAPE COD TIMES

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Amtrak's long-idle New York-Montreal Adirondack service — the only train still not running after being suspended by the passenger

operator at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic — will resume operation on April 3rd, according to New York's two U.S. senators.

U.S. Sens. Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand made the announcement Friday afternoon, the Albany Times-Union reports. Schumer wrote on Twitter that Amtrak will restore full service "as soon as April 3." Last May, an Amtrak spokesman told *Trains News Wire* that "ongoing challenges with operations, border facilities, security and staffing" had prevented resumption of service to Montreal, while "servicing, staffing and train operations challenges" kept Amtrak from running the U.S. portion of the route as far north as Plattsburgh, N.Y. The train's return is expected to boost Montreal tourism, given that New York state is one of the city's biggest sources of U.S. tourists. It reports that the province of Quebec set aside \$1 million in its budget last year to study and plan for a customs center at Montreal's Central Station, a move that could eliminate the Adirondack's long stop at the Canada-U.S. border and cut an hour or more from the train's travel time. (TN)

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THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION Authority's New York City Transit placed its first R211 subway cars into service on Friday, March 10, the first new additions to the New York subway fleet in five years.

The Kawasaki-built R211 cars, placed into service on the A Line (8th Avenue Express), are the first in a 535-car order placed in 2018. That includes 15 five-car trains for the Staten Island Railway and 20 cars piloting the open gangway feature. The new cars feature 58-inch doors — 8 inches wider than the current standard — to help speed boarding, along with security cameras, more accessible seating, digital displays with more detailed station information, and brighter lighting, among other amenities. (TN)



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THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION Board recently approved Montana Rail Link's plan to terminate its lease with BNSF Railway, paving the way for BNSF to regain control of the former Northern Pacific main line between Jones Junction, Mont., and Sandpoint, Idaho. Although the STB's decision is effective on April 7, the date for BNSF to take over remains up in the air. "With the STB

decision, MRL and BNSF will begin the transition which is estimated to be complete by the end of the year,” BNSF said in a news release. MRL announced in January 2022 that it was terminating the 60-year lease that was scheduled to expire in 2047. The STB decision allows MRL to discontinue service over 656.47 miles of non-contiguous rail line, which are leased from BNSF, and to discontinue MRL’s bridge-only trackage rights over 96.04 miles of rail line owned by BNSF. The former MRL will become the MRL Subdivision of BNSF’s Montana Division. BNSF has pledged to retain all MRL’s 1,200 union and non-union employees in their current jobs, with similar pay, benefits, and seniority, and has reached agreements with the labor unions representing MRL employees. (TN)

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THE BNSF RAILWAY on Thursday, March 16, delivered two Boeing 737 Max 8 fuselages to the aircraft manufacturer’s Everett Plant, the first such delivery up the Boeing Plant Spur, which features a 5.7% grade and is said to be the steepest active freight line in the U.S. (The line features three derails that downhill trains must stop and line as protection against runaways.) Aviation journalist Jon Ostrower that the move was a test of fuselage arrival and handling at the plant, as Boeing plans to add an additional 737 assembly line at the Everett facility, which previously has been the home of production for wide-body 747, 767, and 777 aircraft. (TN)

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NORFOLK SOUTHERN has agreed to sell 31 miles of right-of-way for its dormant Saluda Grade — formerly the steepest main line in America — to the Saluda Grade Trail Conservancy for conversion to a trail. The line last saw a through train in December 2001. The Saluda Grade, which included a 4.7% incline with a brief stretch of 5.1% grade, first saw rail service in 1878 and was considered the nation’s most dangerous stretch of mainline railroad. Following its closure, part of the route was sold to Watco, which operates it as part of its Blue Ridge Southern Railroad. (TN)

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BEGINNING WITH THE NORTHBOUND *Silver Star* on Wednesday, March 15, and the southbound train on Friday, March 17, Amtrak returned full dining car meals to the *Star’s* Viewliner II diner. It will be the train’s first such food service since “traditional dining” was replaced by “flexible” meals in a bowl on two New York-Miami trains and the New York-New Orleans *Crescent* in October 2019. “The *Silver Star* pilot will be offered for approximately a three-month period and positioned onboard as a ‘surprise and delight’ to First Class customers,” the company

says in a statement to *Trains News Wire*, adding, “The Amtrak team will be offering the success of this new dining offering and may modify the service before a more formal announcement of a permanent rollout or potential expansion to the *Silver Meteor*.” (TN)

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TWO MORE 80-TONNERS arrived on the property of the Connecticut Valley Railroad in Essex, CT. Both units were last assigned to Seal Beach, Calif., where they have been in storage since 2008, when the location switched to trucks. Originally owned by the U.S. Navy, the two will be a great addition to the Valley’s fleet of three operational steam locomotives and several other 80-ton centercabs.

●●●●●●
A TWO-YEAR ANALYSIS of potential rail service between Scranton and New York City estimates the service could carry more than 470,000 riders per year and generate some \$111 million annually in economic benefits. The study released by Amtrak and the Pennsylvania Northeast Regional Railroad Authority includes development of a sample schedule, economic impacts, and an infrastructure assessment for the 60 miles owned by the PNRRA between Scranton and the Delaware Water Gap. “Restoring and expanding this corridor with daily multi-frequency service would dramatically boost mobility and economic development for residents of Scranton and northeastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and the broader Northeast region,” Amtrak CEO Stephen Gardner said in a press release. (TN)

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

- TRAINS**
 - VIA Rail Reaches a Crossroads
 - Strong as Steel
 - Train-Watching
 - Hot Spot: Fort Madison, IA
- MODEL RAILROADER**
 - Rural New England in a Coffee Table
 - DCC Currents
 - Powering Turnout Motors and Frogs
 - Trains of Thought
 - The Learning Never Stops
- PASSENGER TRAIN JOURNAL** (2023-1)
 - Back on Track
 - Credit Where Credit Was Due
 - Jonesy’s Big Adventure, Part 6
 - Transport Action Canada

News sources: Boston [Globe](#), Boston [Herald](#), [Trains](#) "Newswire", [Railway Age](#), [Railpace](#) Newsmagazine, RRE "Callboy", "The 470", [Patriot Ledger](#), Rail Passenger Assoc., Attleboro [Sun Chronicle](#).

Under the Wire

Ron Clough

This will be the first in an occasional column about doings on the Trolley Line at the club. I choose the name of the column to sort of mimic Savery's Behind the Scenes column and because all, or almost all, early trolley lines ran from overhead wire.

The Trolley Committee held its first meeting in a long time on February 13th, with 10 members present. As chairman of the committee, I was very impressed with turnout and interest. We discussed many items and other items were put off for future meeting discussions.

Three important items that came out of the meeting are as follows:

1. The committee decided to officially name the Trolley Line the *Boston & South Shore Traction Company*. Some years ago, Al Taylor made up a number of T-Shirts with that name on it to raise money for the committee, so that is an appropriate way to continue his legacy--plus that name is already on the power plant outside of Highland Oaks.
2. The committee voted in favor with one opposed to make the trolley line operate via DCC, with the overhead wire system non-operational and only for show.
3. The goal of the committee is to at least have a continuously-operating line for shows that would loop through Highland Oaks and the "beach" loop.

Because a decision was reached as how to operate the trolley line, Fred has done some track/switch work and has started to bond the rails accordingly, where there were none. I also see that the main road in Highland Oaks has been "repaved". I hope that doesn't present an issue as we learned the hard way back when Ross Hall put the initial plaster road down on top of girder rail on wood ties that the wet plaster threw the rails out-of-gauge. We will see, but

in the future, I suggest no more wood ties under roads that will be "paved" with plaster.

Our next committee meeting was originally scheduled for April 10th, but because Operations comes alphabetically before Trolley in Committee reports at the business meeting, their motion to hold operations on April 10th pushed us back a week to April 17th, 8pm at the club. All are welcome to join in as the more input we get the better we can come up with a really unique part of the club.

DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Dave Clinton

We had three members and one former member attend this month. The first time both our "Eric's" were together!

Eric Tedeschi brought two new UP diesels needing decoders. The first was an Athearn Genesis SD80MAC, which had a mother board with a 21-pin plug. So, he used a convenient "adaptor" on the Digitrax DH123PS with 8-pin input and 21-pin output. His second loco was an Atlas U30C, with an 8-pin plug, so again used the DH123PS and away he went with his two locos ready for work on the East Coast Lines.

Newer member **Eric Mercer** brought three F-units for work. The first was an Athearn, dressed in Northern Pacific colors, which needed new axle gears. The problem was that the wheel diameter with the new gears was wrong, so he managed to swap wheelsets with Lenny at our Show. A project for another time. His two Stewart New York Central F-units need the special Kadee couplers, formerly the "30-style", with the weirdo springs, which were a real pain to install. They were replaced with a new box and used the "whisker"-style couplers. The new box snaps together, so there is no need for glue...which always seemed to get in with the couplers and mess them up! Eric was thrilled.

Will Baker brought his New Haven "Comet" to fix the power feed wires from the rear truck. The had broken off from heavy use. The problem is that the contact that they were soldered to is amazing that they were soldered in the first place, as it was made of the shiny metal, that does not hold solder. So, we were unable to solder the wires back on it. Since the power is supplied by all wheels on the locomotive, the front truck was still supplying power. Also, all of the cars are plugged together

and all have lights, so it appears that all the wheels of the train pick-up power and he should be good for a while!

Former member **Ross Hall** brought his brass steamer by Balboa. This B&M "Atlantic" has been a "project" for about a year. At a prior session, he installed a decoder but couldn't get the loco boiler back on the chassis. Bob England assisted with that, and he was successful but this time he found that the rubber drive-coupling had deteriorated. So, his next project is finding a supplier for a replacement...to be continued!

Thanks to **Bob England** for his assistance with the clinic. The next clinic will be Thursday, April 6th.

Please contact me with any questions about the clinic.

EDITOR'S NOTES

1. After 6 years of no train travel, it's time to experience the fun of the *Downeaster*. See attached flyer !

.....*David N. Clinton*

"Some friends play at friendship but a true friend sticks closer than one's nearest kin." (Proverbs 18:24)

MEMBER NEWS

Bryan Miller is recovering at his sister's from brain surgery last week. He is doing well and will be having rehab for a while and, hopefully, will return to being with us soon. Our prayers go out to you, Bryan.

(Note: For 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 3rd
- Chip MullenApril 7th
- Bob Knapp.....April 8th
- Dick Grimm.....April 15th
- Rick Pearson.....April 20th
- Tom Ross.....April 25th
- Jack Doyle.....April 27th



What are you Doing?

Peter Palica: "We are putting the finishing touches on my future 20'x20' N -scale train room in the carriage house behind my caboose located in Marshfield Center. This will be the culmination of decades of mental planning. Better late than never. My New York Central locomotive bell has been installed overhead in the stairwell leading to the 2nd floor. Jan will have a finished smaller room on the same level for her doll collection and projects."



Running Extra

Genesee Valley Transportation Acquires Historic Alco PA

By Justin Franz, *Railfan & Railroad Magazine* 3/2/23



Doyle McCormack and Genesee Valley Transportation President Michael Thomas shake hands in Portland, Ore., on Wednesday, March 1, after finalizing a deal to bring Nickel Plate Road PA 190 east to Pennsylvania's Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad. —Photo Courtesy of GVT Rail.

Genesee Valley Transportation has purchased one of the only surviving American Locomotive Company PAs, "Nickel Plate Road 190," which has been restored to near-operating condition in Portland, Ore., by preservationist Doyle McCormack.

The deal was completed this week and the locomotive will soon be relocated across the country

to Scranton, Pa., where GVT's Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad maintains a fleet of Alco and MLW locomotives. In some ways, the move to Pennsylvania is a homecoming for 190, which was built for Santa Fe but became famous as Delaware & Hudson 18, one of four PAs owned by the eastern road in the 1960s and 1970s.

On Thursday morning, GVT officials likened the acquisition of PA 190 to buying the plane of famous aviator Charles Lindbergh. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to obtain the *Spirit of St. Louis* of locomotives," said Michael Thomas, president of GVT Rail. "On behalf of our ownership group and the entire team at GVT Rail, we are ecstatic that Doyle has entrusted us with the stewardship of his great gift to rail preservation."



ABOVE: While it was built for Santa Fe, locomotive 18 and its three sisters didn't become famous until they were purchased by the Delaware & Hudson in the late 1960s. The locomotive's last act in the U.S. before heading south to Mexico in 1978, was working in commuter service out of Boston. —Photo by Jim Boyd, WRP Collection

GVT officials said its shop crews will evaluate the locomotive when it arrives in Scranton in the coming weeks and figure out exactly what needs to be done to make it operational. Once 190 is put into service, it will lead excursions in Northeastern Pennsylvania, including on former D&H trackage operated by DL.

The locomotive was built for Santa Fe and sold to D&H in 1967, where it was used to power passenger trains between Albany and Montreal, as well as excursions across the system. In 1977, the Alcos had a brief stint in commuter service in Boston for Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority before being shipped to Mexico in 1978. The PAs were used in Mexico for a few years but were eventually retired.

Two of the PAs remain south of the border in museums.

In 2000, McCormack — perhaps best known as the caretaker for Southern Pacific 4-8-4 "Daylight" 4449 — teamed up with Smithsonian Curator of Technology and Transportation Bill Withuhn to bring two of the PAs home to the United States — or at least what was left of them. That year the skeletons of D&H 16 and 18 headed north to Oregon. The remains of 16 eventually went to the Museum of the American Railroad in Texas, which is currently working on a cosmetic restoration of the locomotive into its original Santa Fe appearance.



ABOVE: For the last two decades, Doyle McCormack has restored former Delaware & Hudson 18 from a wrecked skeleton to an almost operational Alco PA. McCormack is seen painting the lettering on NKP 190 in April 2014. —Photo by Justin Franz

D&H 18 was moved to Portland's Brooklyn Yard and later the Oregon Rail Heritage Center where for the last two decades, McCormack has been spearheading its restoration in his spare time. McCormack acquired a set of A1A trucks to replace the ones that had been lost in Mexico and purchased a wrecked BC Rail M420B to harvest its 12-251C engine, traction motors and electrical system to be installed in the PA. When it came time to paint the PA, McCormack drew inspiration from his childhood. His father worked for the NKP and when McCormack was 12, he got a cab ride on the original 190. He said he became fascinated with the PAs, and specifically 190, so painting his locomotive into the blue and white of the NKP was a no brainer.

"When I got the engine, it needed a paint job, and I figured I'd put it in my paint job: I needed a Nickel

Plate fix,” McCormack said in a 2014 interview. “You now how kids are, they get obsessed with something and, well, I never let that obsession go.”

By 2014, the locomotive was far enough along that it was able to attend “Streamliners at Spencer” in North Carolina. Upon returning to Portland, McCormack continued to work on the locomotive. While 190 has been started up, it has not yet run under its own power.

Charlie Monte Verde, GVT’s vice president of strategic planning, said the railroad had been in talks with McCormack for a few years about possibly bringing the streamlined Alco “home” to the Northeast.

“We appreciate Mr. McCormack’s efforts and vision in returning the locomotive to the U.S. and are honored that he chose ‘The ALCO Road’ for the PA’s permanent home,” Monte Verde said. “We look forward to a day in the very near future when the PA makes her first main line run in more than four decades, on home rails, with Mr. McCormack at the throttle.”



Three of the PAs on a fan trip in 1977.

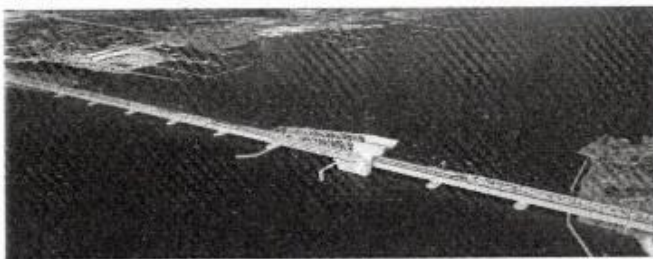


ABOVE: In the spring of 2014, Nickel Plate Road 190 was far enough along that it was able to attend “Streamliners at Spencer,” a gathering of two dozen streamlined diesel locomotives at the North Carolina Transportation Museum. The locomotive is seen heading east through Whitefish, Mont., on a BNSF Railway manifest on May 14, 2014. The locomotive will likely follow the same route in the coming weeks. — Photo by Justin Franz

EDITED FROM RTANDS.COM, FEBRUARY 17, 2023

Amtrak shares plans for new Connecticut River bridge

By Kyra Senese



Amtrak recently presented its plans for a new Connecticut River Bridge that will have a longer movable span and enhance navigational clearances for boaters.

The new bridge will also open and close more quickly than the current bridge. The presentation detailed a new two-track electrified rail bridge, which will be erected to the south of the current two-track electrified rail bridge. Amtrak expects the new structure to bolster service reliability and allow trains to travel at speeds of up to 70 mph.

At a virtual information session on Feb. 15, Amtrak displayed a preliminary rendering and went into detail about the

construction time frame, the necessity of replacing the bridge, the background of the project, and construction impacts, according to a local news report.

Work on the new bridge connecting Old Lyme and Old Saybrook is scheduled to begin in 2024 and be finished in 2029, including the demolition of the current bridge, Amtrak said.

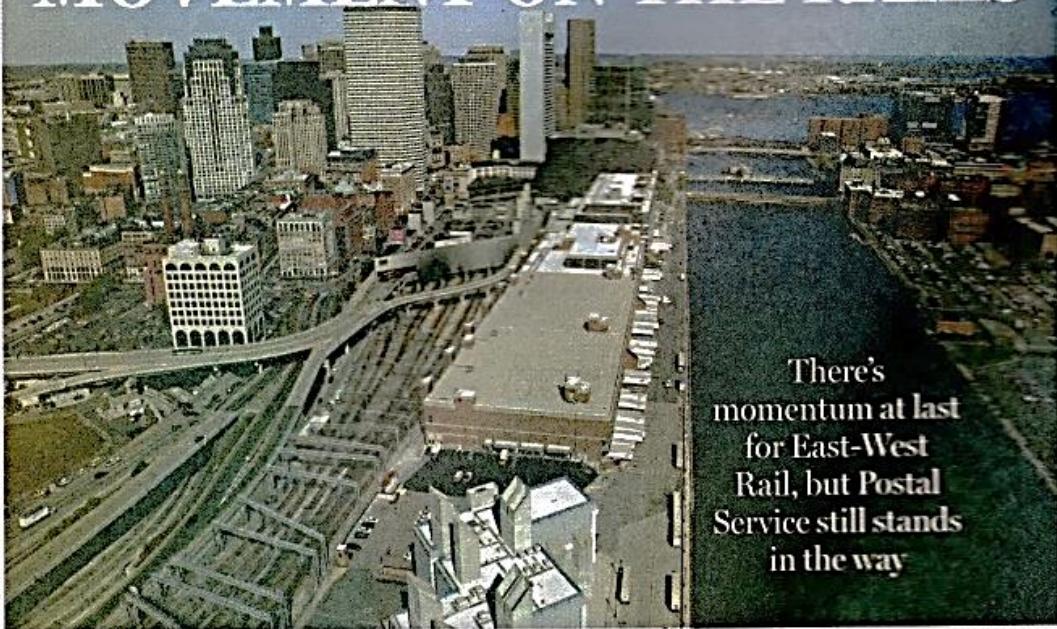
According to a representative of engineering firm Hardesty & Hanover, the new bridge design has a 204-foot-long moveable portion—an increase of 44 feet—that is intended to be kept in the open position during the busiest boating season.

The steel and concrete bridge will be built with easy maintenance and inspection in mind, the firm said. The Connecticut River Bridge typically handles 38 Amtrak trains, 12 Shore Line East trains, and six Providence & Worcester freight trains each day.

Stakeholders and the public will have additional chances to comment on the project as Amtrak works with the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Coast Guard to develop permit applications and seek authorizations under the Clean Water Act and the Rivers and Harbor Act, the report said.

MOVEMENT ON THE RAILS

Boston Globe 3/18/23



There's momentum at last for East-West Rail, but Postal Service still stands in the way

DAVID L. STANGLORNE STAFF/FILE 2014

State lawmakers have long urged the US Postal Service to move the mail-sorting facility to allow expansion of South Station.

JON CHESTO

CHESTO MEANS BUSINESS



After years of being stuck on the siding, East-West Rail sure seems like it's on the right track now.

Just look at what's happened lately. MassDOT is seeking \$108 million from the feds for rail improvements between Springfield and Worcester. Governor Maura Healey set aside \$8.5 million in her first proposed state budget for track upgrades in Pittsfield and \$4 million for a station study and design in Palmer. A new commission reconvenes on Tuesday to hash out the best governing structure for passenger rail operations in Western Massachusetts. Amtrak and CSX are finally all aboard. And Senate President Karen Spilka was just out touring Palmer, where she pledged that it's a matter of "when, not if" improved train service between Pittsfield and Boston gets done.

But there's one big obstacle no

one seems to be talking about: the US Postal Service's sprawling mail-sorting complex along the Fort Point Channel. State officials can do all the track and station work they want out west. With the massive USPS facility blocking a South Station expansion in Boston, East-West Rail could be going nowhere.

This isn't just an issue for adding to Amtrak's meager one-train-a-day, east-west service. The upcoming commuter rail expansions to Fall River and New Bedford can't reach their full potential without more South Station capacity. Dreams of running frequent, subway-like service on the Fairmount line through Dorchester can't really come true, either. South Station is jam-packed, at capacity. That's why MassDOT has spent years nudging forward a South Station expansion, one with space for up to 10 tracks to augment the 13 there today. However, to pull it off, the USPS needs to move.

Representative Bill Straus, the longtime point person for transportation issues in the House, plans to raise the issue on Tuesday to the Western Massachusetts Pas-

senger Rail Commission in Springfield. He wants to draw attention to the logjam while East-West Rail is in the spotlight.

Trying to dislodge the USPS from Fort Point has been a saga that has lasted for years, if not decades. Several previous state transportation secretaries told Straus they were optimistic a deal would get done. But it never has. And while the USPS no longer needs to be near rail lines, Straus notes there's only one place South Station can expand: the property next door.

About eight years ago, MassDOT seemed to be closing in on a deal that involved a land swap with the Massachusetts Port Authority. The USPS would have moved to Massport land in South Boston, off Pappas Way by the Reserved Channel, while Massport would have received some land that the USPS uses for parking near A Street, closer to downtown. Talks broke down as the value of the Postal Service's land grew amid a development boom.

MassDOT hasn't given up. Spokeswoman Jacque Goddard said "high level discussions" were held last fall with the USPS about

a relocation, and "the lines of communication remain open." In other words, the ball is with the people who run the Postal Service. No word yet from them.

Straus said he hopes Healey and her transportation secretary, Gina Fiandaca, will find a receptive audience with rail fans in the Biden administration, including possibly the president himself, and that the USPS can be convinced of the broader public good. (Trump-era appointee Louis DeJoy is still in charge, though.) The focus, Straus said, shouldn't be on making a killing in the real estate market.

When asked about her East-West Rail efforts, Healey said she wants a fully functioning transportation system for the entire state. Translation: It's not just about Greater Boston, and the beleaguered MBTA.

To ensure that vision doesn't get derailed, Healey is going to have to reckon with the South Station dilemma — and that means dealing with the post office.

Jon Chesto can be reached at jon.chesto@globe.com. Follow him on Twitter @jonchesto.

EDITED FROM [ATLASOBSCURA.COM](https://atlasobscura.com), POSTED FEBRUARY 23, 2023

Now that's a train station! Mōka Station, Moka, Japan

The Japanese Moka Railway Line has been in operation for over 110 years, with its eponymous Moka Station opening on April 1, 1912.

In the small city of Moka, the station building company headquarters stands out. Moka Station is not distinguished simply for its large size, the iconic punctual trains it serves, or the preserved locomotives it displays. Instead, the most distinctive feature of this station is the result of its 1997 transformation, a reimagining of the site that turned this centennial station into a four-story replica steam train.

Complete with a smokestack, headlight, and window wheels, the Moka Station is an architectural artwork that serves not only as a train station but also contains a fourth-floor observation deck, and a ground-floor local information center. [Contributed by Bill Costa]



The nearby engine house continues the locomotive design theme, at a smaller scale, of the main station building.



AMTRAK'S LONG-DISTANCE TRAINS

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AUTOTRAIN

CARDINAL

CRESCENT

SILVERMETEOR

SUNSETLIMITED

CALIFORNIAZEPHYR

CITYOFNEWORLEANS

EMPIREBUILDER

SILVERSTAR

TEXASEAGLE

CAPITOLLIMITED

COASTSTARLIGHT

LAKESHORELIMITED

SOUTHWESTCHIEF

Find the word in the puzzle.

Words can go in any direction.

Words can share letters as they cross over each other.