

The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



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| Boston Globe & <u>Wall Street Journal</u> Reporters | Paul Bonanno, Jack Foley |
| Rhode Island News..... | Tony Donatelli |
| Empire State News..... | Dick Kozlowski |
| Amtrak News..... | Rick Sutton |
| “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. ©2018

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CLUB OFFICERS

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| President..... | Jack Foley |
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| | Roger St. Peter ('19) |
| | Rick Sutton ('19) |

BILL OF LADING

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ON THE COVER: Hope you can make it to what has become the largest model RR show in North America—at “The Big E” in West Springfield this weekend.

FORM 19 ORDERS

AMHERST RAILWAY SOCIETY TRAIN SHOW

Saturday & Sunday, January 27-28th

JANUARY B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, January 29th 8 p.m.

“TRAINS ‘N TOUCHDOWNS”

Saturday, February 4th 11 a.m.

FEBRUARY BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, February 5th 8 p.m.

SPECIAL SOUND DECODER CLINIC

Thursday, February 8th 8 p.m.

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Saturday, February 24th

FEBRUARY B.O.D.

Monday, February 26th

CONTESTS

Congratulations to **Jim South** on winning this month's 50/50 Raffle!

Our traditional “Train Calendar Exchange”, contest was a real fun one, with trying to match the member to the picture! Everyone who entered had a good time. Thanks to these folks for donating calendars:

| | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Al Taylor | Jim Ferris |
| Fred Lockhart | Dan Peterson |
| Roger St. Peter | Jack Foley |
| Jim South | Ron Clough |
| Ye Ed | |

Here's who got many/most of the names correct:

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Dan Peterson | Al Taylor |
| Roger St. Peter | Jack Foley |
| Ron Clough | Jim South |
| Brendan Sheehan | Doug Buchanan |
| Bob Farrenkopf | Savery Moore |
| Barry Doland | Paul Cutler III |

And here's who got **ALL 26** correct:

| | |
|--------------|---------------|
| Bryan Miller | Fred Lockhart |
| Coley Walsh | |

Good going guys! We'll do this again in 25 years.

Correct matches:

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1=Barry Doland | 13=Doug Buchanan |
| 2=Bob Farrenkopf | 14=Will Baker |
| 3=Bryan Miller | 15=Dave Clinton |
| 4=Al Gray | 16=Savery Moore |
| 5=Jack Foley | 17=Ron Clough |
| 6=Don Pierce | 18=Rich Herlihy |
| 7=Chip Mullen | 19=Stan Rydell |
| 8=Roger St. Peter | 20=Peter Palica |
| 9=Rick Sutton | 21=Paul Agnew |
| 10=Paul Cutler III | 22=Tom Wylie |
| 11=Paul Cutler, Jr. | 23=Steve Wintermeier |
| 12=Dan Peterson | 24=Kevin Linagen |

FOR MARCH, we have one of Al Taylor's “word find” puzzles “**Names of Some Boston & Maine RR Cars**”. The puzzle can be found near the back of the newsletter and there are extras in the Contest Entry rack in the train room. Good luck and don't forget your name on the form!

CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

It is a new year and we are off to a good start working on the railroad, first off, updates on some committees. The Benchwork Committee is working on the frame for the new staging yard. It will extend a couple of feet under the wye, so they have had to alter some existing benchwork and support the wye temporarily; no big deal for them. Access to the staging yard will eventually be walk-in.

The Scenery Committee has had some help with ballasting; they could still use some more help. The focus of their work is on the Cedar Hill engine terminal area. Savery has kit-bashed a yard office out of DPM wall segments, I believe. It looks good, so far, and when done will be placed near the roundhouse. As I mentioned Last month, the Larson Branch is being re-located; most of the track has been laid. The Trackwork Committee will now be installing turnouts to access the new track. The first part of the turnout installation will be to install a crossover between the inbound and outbound passenger leads to Cedar Hill passenger terminal, so those tracks will be out of service for a while.



Once the crossover is in, wired, and turnout motors installed, the passenger terminal will be back in service with access limited to using the inbound track for both directions until the new turnout off the outbound track is built to connect the Larsen Branch. That turnout must be built in place because it isn't a standard configuration.

The Electrical Committee has been wiring the new Larson Branch track. They are also re-locating some wiring to accommodate the construction of the new staging bench work. This past week they also had to deal with one of those strange electronics happenings: with the railroad power OFF, a component on one of the LNRP's blew up like a small fire cracker???? It also damaged a circuit breaker, after some deep thought, we thought of three possible sources from which an electrical surge could have come from and those sources have been disconnected or plugged into an outlet that goes off with the rest of the railroad. So much fun! Bob replaced the damaged components and the railroad is back up and running, Thanks Bob! Stan is working on installing model boards in the Middleton pit-- one at each end. They will have a diagram of the yard ladders with LEDs to show turnout position. There will also be a LED for each electrical block in the yard that will light when there is a short. It will be a nice improvement for the members who work Middleton Yard. So if you see two feet sticking out from under Middleton, say hello to Stan, because he will be under there for a while; good luck Stan!

Again as last month, the Scenery Committee can use some help with finishing some spots, mostly ballasting; they did get some help, but there is more to do. A lot of members spend their time in the Model Shop on their own projects but if you could spare an hour or so from your personal work and help out on the railroad, that we all enjoy, it would be much appreciated.

That is it for this month.

Fred Lockhart
Chief Engineer

SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

JANUARY 2013 (5 years ago)

- Trackwork completed from junction of Larson Branch and extending to Mountain Division, enabling continuous operation, while Cedar Hill Yard trackwork installed.
- Cedar Hill arrival/departure yard wiring in process.
- FEC announced plans to reintroduce privately-operated rail passenger service to south Florida.

- EMD closes London, Ontario plant, in favor of new facility in Muncie, Indiana.
 - London, England underground, called "The Tube" celebrates 150th anniversary.
 - STB approves Genesee & Wyoming's acquisition of RailAmerica.
 - China opens world's longest high-speed rail line, running 1,428 miles from the capital to Guangzhou.
 - Lewiston, Maine's historic Grand Trunk Station to be turned into restaurant, after years of neglect.
 - CNR completes merger of EJ&E into its WC subsidiary
 - SSMRC begins 75th Anniversary Year.
 - Grand Central Terminal to celebrate 100th in February.
 - 1st new locomotive to come off assembly line at new GE plant in Fort Worth, TX.
 - Boston Globe article features member Jack Bryant (deceased) as part of "Tuskegee Airmen". Jack shows movie "Red Tails" at the Club to audience of 26.
 - Four new Club Cars introduced at "Big E", including two 75th Anniversary cars by Accurail.
- JANUARY 2008** (10 years ago)
- MBTA Board votes unanimously to extend Commuter Rail contract with MBCR.
 - AMT, Montreal's commuter rail, orders first bi-level cars. To be built by Bombardier.
 - State of NY grants \$500,000 to "Walkway Over the Hudson" to begin work transforming the ex-New Haven Poughkeepsie Bridge into pedestrian walk.
 - Ashmont-Mattapan "High-Speed Trolley Line" reopens after 18 months due to work to Ashmont and Mattapan stations.
 - George Warrington, Amtrak's sixth president, passes.
 - Wireless communications comes to the first four MBTA subway stations.
 - 2-10-2 steamer, purchased by R.J. Corman RR from China, arrives in the U.S.
 - 500-car parking garage planned at Worcester Union Station.
 - Report titled "Transportation for Tomorrow" concludes that transportation in this country is in a "death spiral", with spending at 40% of what it should be.
 - MBTA Blue Line cars from Siemens Transportation finally begin arriving, after three-year production snags.
 - First "rumblings" of Maine Narrow Gauge RR Museum having to leave its waterfront location.
- JANUARY 2003** (15 years ago)
- MBTA Board approves 5-year contract for Commuter Rail with MBCR.
 - GE unveils "Evolution Series" 12-cylinder, environment-friendly locomotives.
 - Connecticut Railroad Historical Assoc. buys Canaan Station and begins fund-raising for restoration from devastating fire.
 - Russia celebrates completion of electrification of 5,758-mile Trans-Siberian Railway. Railway also celebrating 100th anniversary.
 - Amtrak begins 5-year upgrade of 104-mile "Keystone Corridor" from Philadelphia to Harrisburg, PA.

✳Great Northern Paper closes plants in Maine, threatening brand-new Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railroad's existence.

✳Amtrak *Downeaster* begins daily stop at Durham, NH.

✳Addition of three new stations on Worcester Commuter Rail line brings 80% increase in riders.

✳Vermont selects Vermont Rail System to operate former CPR line between White River Jct. and Newport.

JANUARY 1998 (20 Years Ago)

✳Gridlock on the UP, since absorbing the SP; leases 60 stored Amtrak F40PHs.

✳New MBTA Operations Center opens at 45 High St.

✳CPR places order for 261 GE locomotives; largest ever for a Canadian RR.

✳Custom-made train returns home to Gillette Castle in E. Haddam, CT.

✳Gov. Celucci orders suspension of Cape Cod RR's license, due to dumping of raw sewerage along the track

✳Worst ice storm in history of eastern Canada and northern New England causes havoc, with all transportation and life.

✳MBTA announces that Greenbush rail service to begin in the summer of 2001. (actual: October 2007)

JANUARY 1993 (25 Years Ago)

✳Phineas Sprague, owner of The Portland Company, signs purchase/sales agreement for Edaville equipment to go to Portland, ME.

✳Swedish "X-2000" train tests on Northeast Corridor.

✳Amtrak chooses Morrison-Knudsen to build their 50 "Viewliner" sleepers.

✳VIA Rail Canada equips two Montreal-Halifax trains, the *Atlantic* and the *Ocean*, with all restored, stainless-steel fleet, including HEP and shower in each sleeper.

✳"Five College Bikeway" completed, using ex-B&M Wheelright Branch between Amherst and Northampton, MA, and 10-span through truss railroad bridge over the Connecticut River.

✳Steamtown announces it will restore B&M Pacific #3713 to operation over the winter.

✳Pennsy GG1 #4876, famous for "taking a dive" through the floor at Washington Union Station in 1953, donated to B&O RR Museum in Baltimore.

JANUARY 1988 (30 Years Ago)

✳North Abington RR station reopened as restaurant, after almost being destroyed by a fire.

✳Santa Fe Southern Pacific Corp. agrees to sell Southern Pacific Transportation Co. to Rio Grande Industries.

✳VIA Rail Canada sells its last FP4-A locomotives.

✳Amtrak sells 38-acre Readville Yard to MBTA.

✳Canadian Pacific loses much of east-west container traffic to CNR, when most shipping lines opt for Halifax as port of preference over Saint John, New Brunswick.

JANUARY 1983 (35 Years Ago)

✳SSMRC celebrates "30 years in Weymouth", with invitations to other local model RR clubs and friends/family with movies/slides, old Club memorabilia and refreshments.

✳"Official Club Colors" voted: "Depot Buff", "Roof Brown" and "Reefer Orange".

✳UTU agrees cabooses can be eliminated on most trains.

✳Supreme Court denies request to halt merger of UP, WP and MoPac. 22,000-mile system will serve 21 states under UP shield.

✳MBTA and Montachusett Regional Transit Authority team up to offer a "Ski Train" from North Station to Fitchburg, with connecting buses to/from the ski slopes.

✳113-year-old Cog Railway sold for \$600,000 to businessmen from Littleton, NH area, ending the Teague family ownership since inception.

✳Judge approves B&M bankruptcy reorganization plan, moving it a step closer to being acquired by Timothy Mellon, already owner of Maine Central.

✳State completes \$2 million rehabilitation projects on Plymouth and West Hanover freight lines.

✳P&W purchases six coaches from Amtrak for future excursion service.

✳Scranton, PA, begins \$2 million fund drive to move Steamtown USA to the city from Riverside, VT. Meanwhile, Scranton's ex-DL&W station being converted to hotel at a cost of \$13 million.

✳New England Southern begins service on former B&M line between Lincoln and Concord, NH, using ex-Portland Terminal Alco S1 #1008.

✳"The Semaphore" begins publishing using old "stencil scanner", purchased from a church.

ENGINE TUNE-UP CLINIC

This month, **Barry Doland** brought his New Haven Horizon-type cab car for decoder/lighting. **Paul Cutler III** had offered to do this unique installation and installed a DH126D, along with a "Power Extender", to prevent the "flickering" associated with lit passenger cars, especially light-weight ones. Barry had obtained replacement trucks for this Walthers car, which are superior to the factory-supplied ones. Instead of "wipers" on the axles, the new trucks allow for "all-wheel" pickup of power.

New member **Tom Brewer** returned with his Conrail SD70 from Athearn Genesis. In the last session, he had installed the motion part of the decoder and this time he would finish up wiring the lights (all six of them!) and the speaker, as this was a sound decoder. Everything got wired and worked but it was decided to wait for the next session to complete the installation, which involved putting the loco back together with all the wires—an "electrician's nightmare".

Former member **Ross Hall**, now living on the Cape, brought a B&M E7 by Model Power and

hardwired a DH126D. The nice thing about the lighting is that the model came with a huge 14v bulb, which fit in the headlight opening perfectly--- and didn't need any resistors!

Thanks to **Paul Cutler III** for preparing the Model Shop beforehand. Our next clinic will be **Thursday, February 8, 2018**. This will be a "special" occasion, with two guests, who are design engineers specializing in sound decoder installations. Sign-up sheet on Bulletin Board. Everyone is welcome!



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STEAMTOWN NATIONAL HISTORIC Site will be prominently featured on a commemorative stamp in 2018, the Scranton Times-Tribune reports. Eastern National, a nonprofit support group for the Park Service, has decided to include Steamtown in its annual Passport to Your National Parks Regional Stamp Set. This is the first time Steamtown has been featured on the stamp in its 32-year history within the service. Steamtown Superintendent Debbie Conway says being featured in the stamp set will help bring more attention to the park. "It brings more awareness," Conway says. "There are a lot of people who definitely have their national park passport wherever they go." The stamp features a photo by Steamtown volunteer James Benetzky with a locomotive on the museum turntable. (TN)

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CN ANNOUNCED it will acquire 200 new locomotives over the next three years from GE Transportation to accommodate future growth opportunities and drive operational efficiency across its system. The order includes Tier 4 ET44ACs and Tier 3 ES44ACs (Tier 4 certified) locomotives to be equipped with GE's GoLINC Platform, Trip Optimizer System and Distributed Power LOCOTROL eXpanded Architecture. The exact split of the new locomotives between ET44ACs and Tier 4 certified ES44ACs isn't known at this time. Industry sources anticipate delivery to start in the third quarter of 2018. We are bullish on the North American economy and on our ability to compete and win new business with our superior service model," says Luc Jobin, CN president and

CEO. "In the years ahead, these GE Transportation locomotives and their digital technology will support and enhance our operational efficiency. We are proud to continue our partnership with GE Transportation and look forward to adding these units to our fleet as part of our commitment to operational and service excellence." The locomotives will be produced at the GE Manufacturing Solutions facility in Fort Worth, Texas, beginning in 2018. CN's order is the largest among class I railroads since 2014. The first units are expected to be delivered in 2018 with the balance delivered in 2019 and 2020. (TN)

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NEW JERSEY GOVERNOR-ELECT Phil Murphy called the state's transit agency a "national disgrace" on Wednesday after a newspaper reported that political allies of outgoing Gov. Chris Christie were frequently given huge raises while the railroad struggled to make ends meet. Murphy, who was elected in November, vowed to "knock it down" and rebuild the agency. The Bergen County Record and NewJersey.com reviewed legislative testimony, court documents and state employee salary data to find that those connected with Christie were hired for premium positions while some career employees were overlooked. According to the report, nine of the 10 Christie allies who were hired by NJT all made more than \$100,000. Some even got pay raises ranging from \$13,000 to \$70,000 annually. Critics say the situation is similar to how Christie's administration gave jobs to loyalists at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. (TN)

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AN OIL LEAK was discovered on one of Japan's iconic bullet trains last week, the "first serious incident" on the high speed Shinkansen rail network in 40 years, Forbes reports. While a crack and an oil leak may be considered minor in some parts of the world, Japan Railways Group officials are concerned about losing public trust and a nearly spotless safety record. "It is an extremely serious incident," says Norihiko Yoshie, Japan Rail's vice-president. "It is an accident that betrays the trust over the safety of Shinkansen. The Shinkansen lines have had a flawless safety record since it opened in the 1960s and there has never been a passenger fatality. The train with the crack was taken out of service immediately. (TN)

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THE BAY AREA'S famous cable cars have been decorated for the holiday season. For more than a century, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, better known as MUNI, has

decked out its cable cars with holiday cheer, with boughs of holly, garlands, wreaths, ornaments, glitter, and spangles. This week, five cars are decorated on the Powell-Mason and Powell-Hyde lines. "It's that time of year again when the air gets crisp, the nights get longer, and Muni's cable cars get festively decked," says MUNI's Jeremy Menzies. MUNI officials say the cable cars were decorated for the holidays as early as 1910 and it has become a cherished holiday tradition ever since.



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FOR AMTRAK'S 450-odd, 40-something-year-old Amfleet I passenger car fleet, the Budd-built cars are newsworthy yet again, and the news is passenger comfort. The new interior redesign brings the 21st century to the Northeast and the Midwest. Trains recently toured Amtrak Business class car No. 81546 at Penn Station New York; it's one of more than 90 cars with the new Amtrak interior, and it was sitting alongside an unmodified Amfleet I coach for a stark comparison. Duncan Copland, director of industrial design at Amtrak, and Alison Simon, director of Amtrak's Northeast Corridor Business Development Group, explained the new interior. "What had been done with the previous interior modifications of the cars took 9 years to finish all the work. This time around, we intend to complete all the work in 12 months," Simon said. She indicated that the refresh for more than 450 cars would be done at a multiple Amtrak shops to get the job done faster. Copland says more cushioning was added to the seats; a quick test shows them to be more comfortable than the current Amfleet seats and firmer. Fabric is out, and imitation leather is now the material of choice, with seat frames untouched. The seat back cushions have a slight rounding at the top, instead of being straight, and should be easier to clean. Business class seats are light and dark grey, with a blue

accent in the middle top of the seat; coach seats are solid light gray. New overhead LED lighting provides sufficient light for reading after it gets dark; cove lights above the luggage racks are to be refitted with LED lighting as well in the future. The lavatories will also boast of LED lighting. (TN)

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THE MBTA will be issued the first installment of federal grant, \$100 million for the Green Line Extension (GLX) light-rail project. MBTA signed a \$996-million Full Funding Grant Agreement with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in January 2015 for the 4.7-mile light-rail line from Cambridge to Medford with a total estimated cost of \$2.3 billion."[Massachusetts] Gov. Charlie Baker's commitment to responsibly manage taxpayer dollars in the building of this project was persuasive," said U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao. "The region can now look forward to an enhanced transportation network as the Green Line is extended to serve tens of thousands of area residents daily." (TN)

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CANADIAN PACIFIC'S 19th annual holiday train made another successful tour across North America this year, spreading cheer by raising more than C\$1.5 million (US\$1.18 million) and 300,000 pounds of food for local food banks. The company said the holiday train has collected more than C\$14.5 million (\$11.4 million) and 4.3 million pounds of food since the train began touring in 1999. (RA)

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THE T's WORCESTER LINE, the worst-performing of all commuter rail lines for most of 2017, vaulted into third place for December, with an on-time record of nearly 95%. It was 89% in November; both are way up from September and October, neither of which cracked 80%. The MBTA targeted the Worcester line for improvement, as part of a new strategy to manage the mammoth contract with Keolis Commuter Services, the company that operates Commuter Rail. With input from T officials, Keolis identified ways to speed trains up and reduce delays. Some involved infrastructure improvements, like upgraded signals. Others were perhaps long obvious to beleaguered riders: adding more staff on trains to better handle crowds, and adding another car to cut down on crowding on one of the busiest runs of the system. Meanwhile, the Fitchburg line has dropped to the bottom of the standings for reliability. Usually averaging about 90% on-time performance, it was just 70% in November and close to 80% in December. (BG)

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TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY Elaine L. Chao on Jan. 2 sent letters to executives of 47 railroads and transit agencies urging them to take “all possible measures” to meet the Dec. 31, 2018, deadline for implementing positive train control. “The coming year is filled with an agenda of safety-oriented initiatives, and among the most important is advancing the implementation of positive train control,” Chao’s letter states. “Upon review of latest data provided by the industry, we are concerned that many of the nation’s railroads must greatly accelerate their efforts to achieve the congressionally mandated requirements.” Data that the Federal Railroad Administration released in September show a wide gap in the degree of compliance freight and passenger railroads have achieved so far, from nearly 100 percent down to near zero. In 2008, Congress passed, and President George W. Bush signed, the Rail Safety Improvement Act that set a December 2015 deadline for PTC implementation. When it was apparent that railroads would not meet the deadline, lawmakers extended it three years with the warning there would be no further postponement. The rail industry tends to view a December 2020 alternative deadline for railroads showing good faith progress as the ultimate deadline to meet. (TN)

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THE MBTA HAD MORE commuter train breakdowns in 2016 than any other transit system in the country, this despite the fact the T operates less than half the number of miles if its New York and New Jersey counterparts, MTA and NJT. The MBTA logged 338 mechanical failures in 2016, which eclipsed by far the next closest systems in New Jersey and New York, reinforcing local complaints about an aging fleet of trains, carrying 121,000 riders daily. The federal data, released in November, cast a harsh light on the T and its contract operator Keolis, which holds a \$2.69 billion, contract to manage commuter rail for the state authority. After the T’s 338 breakdowns, much-maligned NJ Transit had 236—30% fewer, followed by the MTA’s Long Island Rail Road, which had just 132. But both those systems logged far more passenger miles than the T. The Long Island system recorded 76.2 million miles last year, while NJ Transit had 64.7 million, with the T logging just 24.1 million passenger miles. (RP)

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A COLLISION between two Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority streetcars the first week of

the month means the agency is down to just five operating PCCs on the Ashmont–Mattapan High Speed Line. The two PCCs that were damaged in the collision near the Cedar Grove station on Dec. 29 have joined three other historic streetcars in the MBTA deadline at Mattapan. With five PCCs out-of-service, the agency has reduced service on the 2.6-mile route through Dorchester, Mass. This week, the Mattapan line was running with four PCCs and one standby. MBTA has struggled in recent years to maintain service on the Mattapan route, the last line in the city to still use PCCs from



the 1930s and 1940s. In 2017, it announced it would spend nearly \$8 million to upgrade some of the PCCs to ensure they can run at least another decade, while simultaneously studying whether or not to eventually replace the historic streetcars with buses. MBTA officials have said getting parts for the fleet of 10 PCCs is nearly impossible at times and on occasion they have had to buy parts from museums. MBTA officials say that the collision was the result of an “operator error.” (TN)

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THE \$13 BILLION Gateway Tunnel Project between New York Penn Station and northern New Jersey is now a debate between the Federal government and New York and New Jersey state officials. “We consider it unhelpful to reference a nonexistent ‘agreement’ rather than directly address the responsibility for funding a local project where nine out of 10 passengers are local transit riders,” K. Jane Williams, Federal Transit Administration Deputy Administrator wrote to New York State officials Dec. 29. Williams was referring to a cost-sharing agreement worked out in December between New Jersey, New York and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. It was originally negotiated by then-President Barack Obama’s Department of Transportation, which included the FTA in 2015. Then N.J. Gov. Chris Christie; N.Y. Gov. Andrew Cuomo; and U.S. Senators Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., and Corey Booker, D-N.J., agreed with Obama-era officials to split the project’s cost 50-50 between the states and the federal government. Under President Donald Trump’s administration, federal underwriting

for new tunnels is gone, while the lone existing tunnel built decades ago needs massive repairs. “To refer to the Gateway Program as a ‘local project’ is unrealistic as its breadth influences the entire country and our economy,” says Rail Passenger Association President and CEO Jim Mathews. Of the total of almost 80 million people a year traveling through the Hudson River Tunnel, the 10 percent that ride Amtrak are about 25 percent of the total Amtrak passengers. Of those 86 percent who arrive or depart from New York Penn Station, many travel from states other than New Jersey or New York. (TN)

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CANADIAN NATIONAL regained its mojo in 2017 and was once again the fastest-growing Class I railroad, according to a review of weekly carload reports and data from the Association of American Railroads. CN’s 10.4-percent gain in carload and intermodal traffic in 2017 was more than double the industry average. Its intermodal traffic was up 16 percent, while merchandise business was up 9 percent. BNSF Railway’s volume was up 5.4 percent last year, largely due to 6-percent growth in both intermodal and coal. Kansas City Southern was just behind BNSF, with its traffic up 5.2 percent. Its big growth driver was carload traffic on KCS in the U.S., which was up nearly 9 percent. Norfolk Southern rode intermodal growth into fourth place, with its traffic up 4.9 percent in 2017. Canadian Pacific saw its volume rise 4.4 percent on strong growth in potash and frac sand traffic. Union Pacific posted a 2 percent increase in traffic, thanks largely to coal and frac sand. CSX Transportation, which suffered through a summer of service problems amid broad operational changes under then-CEO E. Hunter Harrison, brought up the rear. CSX traffic was up 0.2 percent. Its carload traffic was down 1.4 percent, while intermodal was up 2.2 percent. Overall North American rail traffic was up 4.8 percent in 2017, according to the AAR. The year was a rebound from 2016, when overall traffic was down. (TN)

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THE THREE RAILROADERS at the center of 2013’s deadly Lac-Mégantic oil train wreck were found not guilty on all charges after a months-long criminal trial in Quebec. Canadian media outlets reported Friday afternoon that the 12-person jury announced their verdict after nine days of deliberation. Montreal, Maine & Atlantic engineer Thomas Harding, manager Jean Demaître, and dispatcher Richard Labrie were each charged with 47 counts of criminal negligence causing death

following 2013’s fatal oil train wreck. Government prosecutors argued that the actions of the three men directly led to the derailment and explosion that killed 47 people and leveled more than 30 buildings. (TN) Too bad, IMHO, because these guys caused 47 innocent people to die due to their laziness, incompetence and lack of common sense. The owner of the railroad, Ed Burkhardt, should go to jail for the rest of his life ...asshole.- Ed.

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GE TRANSPORTATION SIGNED two contracts, valued at more than \$900 million, with Kazakhstan’s state-run railroad Kazakhstan Temir Zholy — the company’s largest international rail customer — as part of its long-term commitment to develop the country’s railway infrastructure. The contracts include the delivery of 300 switching locomotives and an 18-year service agreement to manage the maintenance and repair of 175 passenger Evolution Series locomotives. (TN)

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THE PACIFIC PARLOUR CARS, which were built by Pullman-Standard for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway as hi-level lounge cars and have been a regular part of Amtrak Los Angeles-Seattle *Coast Starlight* consists since the mid-1990s, will be permanently retired after Feb. 4, Amtrak spokeswoman Kimberly Woods confirmed Thursday. Amtrak had initially planned to take the cars out-of-service for about a month for major repairs and return them to service in mid-March, but made the decision not to return them to service “due to safety concerns and the rising cost of maintenance,” according to an employee bulletin sent Tuesday. Woods attributed the decision to “an ongoing effort to modernize equipment.” The Pacific Parlour Car currently offers the only lounge space and food service car that was open only to sleeping car passengers on the Amtrak system, outside of the Auto Train. It was also one of the last pieces of equipment built before Amtrak’s creation that the company still used in regular revenue service, other than the fast-disappearing Heritage dining and baggage cars. It and the baggage car have been the only non-Superliner cars in the *Coast Starlight’s* consist. The Pacific Parlour Car is staffed by a dedicated attendant who serves lunch and dinner in the car by reservation, using a unique menu separate from that served in the adjacent dining car, and serves an afternoon wine and cheese tasting on both days of the *Coast Starlight’s* daily overnight journey. The wine and cheese tasting had initially been included in the fare for Sleeping Car passengers, but since 2015 it has

cost \$7 per person for wine plus an extra \$5 per person for cheese, and has been open also to Business Class passengers. (TN)

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THE JIM FOOTE-ERA at CSX Transportation began with a rumble that emphatically signaled his commitment to following through on what the late CEO E. Hunter Harrison began. In a symbolic move, Foote's first decision after being named chief executive in December was ordering the hump bulldozed at Tilford Yard in Atlanta. The yard was one of eight humps converted to flat-switching last year under Harrison, who died in December. "Atlanta hump yard today is flat," Foote says. "There is no turning back." Foote made the remarks in the opening minutes of the railroad's fourth-quarter earnings call on Jan. 16. "Hunter was a true legend, and CSX would not be in the position it is today without the tremendous changes that he was able to make during his time here," Foote says. "I am committed to seeing his vision through and making CSX the best railroad in North America." New operations chief Ed Harris, who joined CSX just last week, says the railroad will continue to follow Harrison's operating plan, including running fewer trains, putting more locomotives in storage, moving the same tonnage with fewer freight cars, and having a more fluid network. (TN) Time will tell if CSX becomes "the best railroad in North America." – Ed.

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IT'S A CITY THAT LIKES to think of itself as full of contrasts, freethinkers, and originality. Now Berlin, Germany has inspired a sneaker that acts as a train ticket. A limited edition of Adidas Originals EQT Support 93/Berlin sneakers doubled as an annual train pass. The sneakers cost \$220. Public transport company Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe worked with Adidas to include its \$890 pass on its city and suburban network. The ticket is a fabric version sewn into the tongue of the sneaker. The pattern of the transport company's seat covers feature on elements of the sneakers, making the model a collector's item. So popular was the release, which was limited to 500 pairs, media reports showed that hundreds camped overnight to purchase a pair at the Adidas Originals flagship Store and at Overkill in Berlin. They are now sold out. The train ticket is valid from Jan. 16 to Dec. 31. (TN)

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

TRAINS

Ocean to Ocean

On Via Rail Canada

Route of the Rockets

California's Dreamin'

Trains without Crews

MODEL RAILROADER

Weeds and Junk

Replacing a Factory-installed Sound Decoder

RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

Consider the Commuter

Signs of the Times

CLASSIC TRAINS (Winter 2017)

Emergency Engine Transplant on a PA

The Old Man

Jim Shaughnessy

By Train to the Railroad Fair

Best of Everything

Gil Reid's paintings

Thanks Dad

"Just Write Daddy"

Phoebe to the Rescue

Summer Job for Life

News sources: [Boston Globe](#), [Boston Herald](#), [Amtrak "News"](#), [Trains Newswire](#), [Railway Age](#), [Railpace Newsmagazine](#), [RRE "Callboy"](#), "The 470", [Patriot Ledger](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), [The Schenectady Daily Gazette](#).

MEMBER NEWS

Condolences to Honorary Member **Jim O'Brien**, who now lives in Virginia. His wife of 57 years passed away last year; I just found out. He hopes to visit "The Big E" next weekend, so we look forward to seeing him!

Welcome aboard to our two newest members, who were elected membership at this month's meeting:

Ed Bulman has been a long-time customer of Barry's W.E.T., and has long wanted to join the Club but hasn't had the time until recently. Finally, Ed, you are now able to join in the real fun and we've gotten to know you better in the last few months, to boot!

Tom Brewer, Jr. is our first younger member in several years and brings some new perspectives along with him. Having palled-around with a good friend, who is a member of the North Shore club, Tom saw how much fun club membership can be but the distance to the NSMRR club is a bit too much from Marshfield, so he joined with us!

We're all so pleased that you both are now part of our happy group and both took such interest in your applicant learning period...welcome and full steam ahead for many happy times in the SSMRC!

Welcome to our newest applicant, **Joe Corsaro** of Middleboro. We look forward to getting to know you, Joe, and showing you why being a member of the SSMRC is so worthwhile and fun!

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The following members have made it through another year and deserve congratulations:

- Bob Farrenkopf..... February 2
- Jeremy Cahill..... February 3
- Don Pierce..... February 5
- Steve Wintermeier February 5
- Roger St. Peter..... February 6
- Paul Agnew February 18
- Martin Melamed..... February 21
- Ray Welliver (H) February 29

EDITOR'S NOTES

1. Welcome to this **first issue of Volume 38**. Glad to have you aboard and a good time to remind everyone that we always appreciate train articles, whether from general publications or from your own pen and ink. This is your newsletter and the goal is to make it as interesting as possible, so that you want to read it from cover-to-cover, before using it to line your bird cage or cat litter box! ☺ Remember, also, that an electronic version is available, if you'd like to save us paper and time.
2. I try to keep on top of any **news about our members**, and that includes illnesses. If you know of anyone of our members who is ill, please let me know. Sometimes a get-well card is just what the doctor ordered!

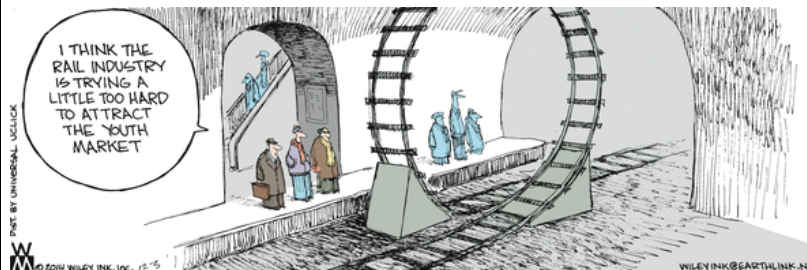
And this goes for the member himself...please let me know if you're going to be out of commission, due to operation or other circumstances, as we miss you!

3. Please stop by at "**The Big E Show**" this weekend and drop your coat off, if you'd like to walk around without. We are still in the BLC but have moved to in front of the snack bar and are more visible than we were at our previous location.
4. We have a **new addition to the Club Store**—a nice embroidered Club logo, ready to be stitched or sewn onto any clothing you so choose. Now you can customize anything you wear! Available at \$10 each



..... *David N. Clinton*

RUNNING EXTRA





OPERATIONS REVIEW

by Paul A. Cutler III

Guess what? I'm all caught up! Yep, this is the latest operation session and I'm only publishing it two months after the fact. That's practically express service! This was a Sunday (all-day) Operation, which is divided into two tricks.

Operations Review: November 12th 2017, 1st Trick

Up in the big chair was **yours truly** as the Mountain Division Dispatcher and **Will Baker** on Boston Division.

Peter Palica grabbed a throttle and ran a couple trains (HB-2 and 524). He said, "No problems, but in the New Haven tradition ran a few minutes late on all departures & arrivals." ☺ *Ooooh, them's fightin' words.* **Paul Agnew** replied that if it was in the Penn Central tradition, "It wouldn't have made it." 🤔

Bob Farrenkopf ran a bunch of trains, some of which were quite interesting, but we'll address that in the 2nd Trick report 'cause we didn't keep track of which trains were in which trick. **Bob** did have some communication trouble as somehow his radio got set to Channel 1-13. *Huh?* But we straightened it out.

Dave Clinton ran three trains, 101, 701 and HB-6. All three trains ran well. Unlike several other people, he had no throttle problems at all.

Engineer **Al Munn** ran four trains. HB-4 was late because he was held and MH-3 was 90 minutes late because it, too, was held. Sorry **Al**, but that can happen when you run freights. But did he have fun? He said yes but with **Al** you can never tell.

Paul Cutler, Jr. got six trains over the pike. Train 510 was on time but Train 716 was delayed leaving Cedar Hill due to an inbound train. The next three commuter trains were all on time. In fact, all Dad ran were commuters and local passenger trains. Oh, well; the luck of the draw.

Engineer **Savery Moore** got out of the yards (for once) and ran seven trains. His first, CH-2, got delayed by the Larson local, HX-1, going by. His 5th, Train 525 somehow was on Track 3 in Boston instead of on Track 6. It had come in as Train 524. It wouldn't be a problem except another train, #58, had pulled in behind it. So, after a little helicopter action, **Savery** managed to get the two RDC's on the correct track. The rest of his trains ran without incident.

In Middleton, MX-3 was piloted by **Bryan Miller**. He said he worked great with **Jack Foley**, the Yardmaster. Things went okay until throttle problems forced Bryan to use a long LocoNet throttle cable (which worked). The yard job went fine, but he did want to "strangle" me for putting some

freight cars behind a number of locomotives in the engine facility. *Hey, where else would you expect to find engines?*

Chris Barlow was ready to shoot his throttle while he was running MX-2, the Essex Jct. job. He was getting the Steal Zap error with constant problems selecting addresses and the like. He struggled through it and completed the work. **Chris** reported that every engine he operates through switch #5 in Richmond Mills splits the points. On paperwork, there were some problems. The car card for Essex Freight House was missing and the Essex Team Track and Interchange track still had September's waybills. **"Oops!" Ops Set Up Crew.**

Huddled in Hudson Falls was **Paul Agnew**. His ECL 44tonner was D.O.A. and wouldn't start, so he borrowed a club ECL engine. One car was Bad Ordered because of a missing knuckle spring. In front of Semaphore Publishing, the track needs a deeper cleaning than he could do. He also had throttle issues as it took him six tries to reverse direction from time to time.

In Cedar Hill, HX-4 was operated by **Al Taylor**, who also had throttle problems. **Stan Rydell** was his brakeman, and they finished the pick-ups but not the set outs.

John Sheridan started late on HX-2, not getting the wheels rolling until noon on the fast clock (about an hour late in real-time). Obviously he didn't finish in the 1st Trick, but more on him later on the 2nd Trick.

Down in Larson, **Jeremy Cahill** ran and completed HX-1. He suffered some minor derailments on switches 1 to 4 on the yard side, and had another derailment on the way back to Cedar Hill through the Staging Room due to a loop of LocoNet cable (since removed) that was dangling above the track. **Jeremy** also said that he had two tourist cars on his train...they had cards but no waybills. So they made the trip just to have a look around, I guess. **"Oops!" Ops Set Up Crew.** *It's hard to get good help these days.* ☺

The aforementioned **Jack Foley** ran Middleton and had a "blast" according to him. He did throw E-2 under **Al Munn**, however. **"Oops!" Jack.** Also, certain threats were made against notifying the media to prevent photographic evidence being taken to document said derailment. ☺

The Cedar Hill Stationmaster was **Skip Burton**, who had no troubles. All trains ran in and out without any real issues or delays.

On the freight side of things, **Fred Lockhart** got all the local freights ready and classified CH-2 for HX-4's set outs. All his freights ran in and out without troubles.

For the first time, **Joe Dumas** handled the Trainmaster's clipboard. All Train Orders were handed out and **Joe** didn't run screaming into the night, so all things considered, things went well. It went even better when he got a radio halfway through and was able to call the tower and tell us who got what train.

Up in the tower, radio walkovers were an occasional problem for **Will** and **me**, and so was the issue of engineers calling the wrong dispatcher. Fortunately, we can hear both channels in the tower so it wasn't too bad. Throttle issues were the biggest challenge in the 1st Trick, but oddly not so much for the 2nd Trick.

Operations Review: November 12th 2017, 2nd Trick

Al Munn engineered again, with TOFC HB-6 having a spot of trouble with E-6 (someone forgot to call for the switch, didn't they?). He should have crossed over to Track 2 instead of staying on Track 1. He didn't get too far as E-7 was still thrown, so **Al** entered West Middleton to the surprise of just about everyone. **Al** figured it out pretty quick, backed up and continued...on the wrong mainline track. No one caught it until **Al** hit **Bob Farrenkopf** head-on at Richmond Mills.

BOOM! **“Oops!”** **Al**. *“That was bad,”* he said. He backed up to crossover E-18 to let **Bob** go by. Then on LM-2, he forgot to check the position of Switch 1 in Great Lakes. The engines got through it but all the cars derailed. **“Oops!”** **Al**. This delayed his departure for a spell. ☺ And when **Al** derailed leaving Middleton through no fault of his own, the yard crew was in the process of rerailing the cars when a tremendous earthquake hit, causing the backdrop buildings at West Middleton to fall on **Al's** train derailing even more cars. *Sigh.* At least we can say that the Operation was not boring for **Al**.

Savery Moore doubled his train count with another seven trains. With an RDC train, one of the plow pilots fell off...somewhere. *If anyone finds it, please let me know...it's one of mine.* BM-3 was delayed by the “TOFC standoff” with **Al** and **Bob** as outlined above. Then with 547 and BH-1, **Savery** and **Will Baker** pointed out that while 547 leaves Boston 5 minutes before BH-1, it arrives in Middleton 4 minutes after BH-1. That'd be a pretty good trick as the freight would have to pass the commuter train for that to happen. *Hmm...* **“Oops!”** **me** for that one. He also said that he had no throttle trouble at all, unlike the 1st Trick. On another train, **Savery** left Cedar Hill freight and missed E-61, heading right for Bethlehem Freight House siding at speed. **BOOM!** This resulted in some smashed boxcars and a *testing* of the track bumper.

Bob Farrenkopf returned to run more trains. On ML-1, he took the wrong turn out of Middleton, going towards Cedar Hill instead of Great Lakes. I called and asked him if he was going up the Mountain Division. He said, “I guess I am.” I said, “Aren't you supposed to go to Great Lakes?” HE replied, “Oh.” We got him backed down to E-5 and got him crossed over to the correct mainline. Unfortunately, this delayed **Al Munn** with #701, who was also leaving West Middleton at the time.

Engineer **Dave Clinton** ran 5½ trains. It's not easy to run ½ a train, but that's because he only got the Extra halfway around the layout before he outlawed on time. All his trains ran well except for #58. As he was crossing over at E-6, the switch got cleared right under his train, derailing it. At the time, there was a bit of confusion up in the tower. The Mountain Div. computer suddenly stopped talking to the layout. **Paul Agnew** was a trainee dispatcher on the Boston

Div. computer, so while I'm trying to reset my PC, I'm telling **Paul** what to throw on his screen, which is awkward because the Boston PC is set up for one CTC window not two. This means **Paul** had to hunt through two schematics to find each switch number, made more difficult by the fact that this was the first time he'd really tried to use them. So after **Chris Barlow** transited E-6, I told **Paul** to clear it. By the time he found it and cleared it, **Dave**, who was following **Chris**, got halfway over it before it threw. *Oh, well.*

Middleton's MX-3 was finished by **Bryan Miller**, who had very few 0-5-0's. *Um, you shouldn't have had any.* Using the long throttle cable helped him out in the pit again, and things went well with his MEC RS-3. The only trouble was that when he was done, he tied down his loco on one of the arriving tracks and left. **Bob Farrenkopf** ran in with a freight train and had to move the RS-3 so he could go to beans himself. ☺

Al Taylor & **Stan Rydell** did more work on HX-4 in Cedar Hill, getting all the pick-ups and half the set outs done.

Returning to Larson, this time with HX-3, **Jeremy Cahill** had an easier time as he had cleaned the track with his engine during the 1st Trick. ☺ He still had derailments on switches 1 to 4 in Larson Yard, and almost got T-boned by **John Sheridan's** HX-2 at the Governor Jct. (the dual gauge diamond). **Jeremy** asked permission to cross, and I gave it, thinking **John** was switching around in the White River wye. Next thing I know, here's HX-2 flying towards the diamond. Let's just say, it was a close call.

Speaking of **John**, he finished up HX-2, the first time the job was done with car cards and waybills. Of course, he had to remember how to use them 'cause it's been a while. He pointed out that this map for HX-2 was woefully out of date as it still referred to Larson and Larson Freight House instead of the new name, Highland Oaks. **“Oops!”** **me**. I'll update the map for the next ops. Back to **John**, he did leave me a problem between Tricks as he left a string of gondolas on the Coke & Ore lead at the Steel Mill after the 1st Trick. This made it rather difficult to turn the trains or to have them leave at the beginning of 2nd Trick.

Skip Burton returned to Cedar Hill Stationmaster and had no troubles.

Paul Cutler, Jr. stepped in for **Fred** at Cedar Hill Yardmaster. “No problems, really,” said Dad, but BH-7 and HB-2 tried to use the same track at the same time. They figured out quickly that it wouldn't work, so one was held for the other. In between trains, Dad switched around in the Coach Yard for fun.

Chris Barlow doubled dipped by running MX-4 and being the Yardmaster, too (first time for him!). He reported that Blue 7 is very, very sluggish when throwing and needs to be checked out. **Chris** would also like a notice on his yard sheet to turn the ore train (done!).

Another double dipper was **Joe Dumas**, who was both Trainmaster and photographer. All Train Orders were handed out including the Extra. The only trouble was when he stepped away from his clipboard to take pictures, engineers were grabbing an order without signing in. It's probably better to bring the clipboard along as the engineers will find you.

Paul Agnew was a trainee dispatcher, originally just watching me and following along on the Boston computer. When my PC stopped working he got pressed into a larger dispatching role, but he handled it well. Boston Division is actually rather easy to dispatch being a double tracked pike, but it takes a few sessions to get it all down.

As Dispatcher, I'd like to remind the engineers that they should only call for a switch when they need it. If you call for it, a dispatcher is likely to throw it immediately. Many times, we can't see the switch in question, so we're relying on the engineers to know if it's clear or not. Thanks! Otherwise, things went okay but the throttle problems in the 1st Trick were frustrating. They all but disappeared in the 2nd Trick, which is just weird. Still, we ran all local freights (one of the first times that's ever happened!), plus all mainline trains including the Extra. We had about 20 guys sign in, which is a good turn-out any day. Fun was had!

Next Ops session probably won't be until after the March Show. It's pretty busy for us this time of year, and the Scenery, Track and Electrical Committees all need some Track Warrant time to make a few upgrades, changes and repairs. See you then!

Paul Cutler III 

Rail industry warned of break-system deadline

BY ASHLEY HALSEY
The Washington Post

The Trump administration has fired a warning shot to the nation's railroads, saying it plans to hold them to a December deadline to install an automatic braking system that might have prevented last month's fatal Amtrak accident in Washington state, the Philadelphia derailment that killed eight passengers in 2015 and scores of other train wrecks.

The implementation of the system known as positive train control was postponed by Congress, which extended a deadline to have the systems in place from 2015 until December of this year and left open the possibility of an additional extension to 2020.

But Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao has warned the railroad industry that they are expected to meet the deadline at the end of this year.

"We are concerned that many of the nation's railroads must greatly accelerate their efforts to achieve the congressionally mandated requirements," Chao said in a letter addressed to the executive officer of each railroad.

A progress report released by the Federal Railroad Administration in September showed that some major railroads — notably BNSF Railway — had completed installation of onboard hardware, trackside sensors and trained crews to use them. Other big railroads, and some transit systems, lagged well behind.

Chao told the railroad executives of the need "to help create an increased level of urgency to underscore the imperative of meeting existing expectations for rolling out this critical rail-safety technology."

The FRA said that eight of the 37 railroads required to install the systems have fully complied with the congressional mandate. Congress has granted the FRA leeway to approve extensions to 2020 for railroads who apply, provided that they have the necessary hardware in place.

There have been dozens of train wrecks that might have been avoided were positive train control in place, but the two Amtrak crashes in Washington state and Philadelphia stand in high relief because of the fatalities and

mass injuries. In both cases, an engineer allowed the train to enter a curve at more than twice the posted speed limit.

Three people were killed last month and more than 100 injured in DuPont, Washington, when one of two engines and 12 cars derailed, many of the rail cars tumbling onto a busy interstate highway below.

Installing positive train control is a daunting task for the railroads, requiring that hardware be added in 25,000 locomotives and sensing trackers be placed along the railway beds. The payoff is that it will help prevent train collisions and high-speed derailments.

When the industry appealed to Congress for relief from the looming deadline in 2015, it said it had already in-

vested more than \$6.5 billion, anticipated a total price tag of \$10.6 billion, and needed additional time to put the system in place.

If the Trump administration remains steadfast, and Congress does not again buckle to railroad industry pressure, the year-end deadline and possible fines for those not in compliance, will bring closure to a long and arduous debate over railroad safety.

The National Transportation Safety Board says it has investigated 146 rail accidents since 1969 that positive train control could have prevented, with a toll of 291 people killed and 6,574 injured.

Congress was debating the need for positive train control in 2008. With their

lobbyists in overdrive, the railroads might have persuaded lawmakers to delay the mandate. But in the middle of that debate, a head-on train collision in California killed 25 people and injured 102 others. The NTSB said positive train control could have prevented the accident, and that moved Congress to settle on Dec. 31, 2015, as its deadline.

The Association of American Railroads, a trade group for the freight lines, has said that member railroads expect to meet the current deadline.

A number of transit agencies, which rely on passenger fares and government subsidies, are among those furthest behind in meeting the deadline, according to the September FRA report.