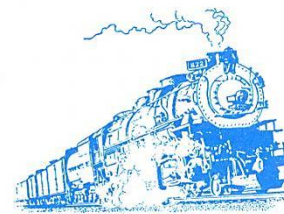


The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



Time is drawing near

**'til the highball for our
March Show and Open
House is given.....**



Less than two weeks away!

**Your support of this fun
fund-raising project is
requested: from flyer
distribution to ticket
sales to operating
trains—please help!**



The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



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Western Massachusetts.....	Ron Clough
Rhode Island News.....	Tony Donatelli
“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. ©2019
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CLUB OFFICERS

President.....	Jack Foley
Vice-President.....	Dan Peterson
Treasurer.....	Will Baker
Secretary.....	Dave Clinton
Chief Engineer.....	Fred Lockhart
Directors.....	Bill Garvey ('20)
	Bryan Miller ('20)
	Roger St. Peter ('19)
	Gary Mangelinkx ('19)

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ON THE COVER: Our Big March Show and Open House is less than two weeks away!

FORM 19 ORDERS

FEBRUARY B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, February 25th 8 p.m.

MARCH BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, March 4th 8 p.m.

SPRING SHOW AND OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, March 9th 9-4

Sunday, March 10th 10-4

DECODER/EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Thursday, March 14th 8 p.m.

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Saturday, March 23rd.

OFFICIAL OPERATIONS

Sunday, March 24th 11 a.m.- 4 p.m.; lunch 1-2

MARCH B.O.D.

Monday, March 25th 8 p.m.

CONTESTS

Congratulations to _____ on winning this month's 50/50 raffle.

For the APRIL Business Meeting, we have another one of Al Taylor's "word-find" puzzles: "Steam Loco 6", with some unusual part names. See if you can find them...extra entry forms on old showcase inside RR room. Don't forget to put your name on the form and Good luck!

CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

When this hits the press, our Spring show will be less than two weeks away. The Spring and Fall shows are probably our largest income-producing events next to the White Elephant table, which is part of both shows. Without these events, we could not support our club. Most members help in some way, which is very much appreciated but is there something a little extra you could do to make each show better than the last?



Progress on the railroad has been very good this past month. Our visitors will see a lot more scenery in the Cedar Hill freight yard, and around the Larson and Middleton areas. Our new staging yard is coming together nicely. As soon as a detection system is installed on the lead track, that section will be installed and the trackwork will be finished, along with the last of the electrical, and the yard will be put into service. The Boston Division benchwork, that is part of this project, is also moving along. Many of you have seen it being worked on separate of the railroad. After the show, it will be re-assembled on the tables again and have roadbed, track and be pre-wired before being installed permanently. The Electrical Committee has been removing Loco-net equipment from the staging room and re-locating the devices to improve the Loco-net distribution to each leg of the railroad. They have also been doing some preliminary work in West Middleton yard for the installation of a future model board for that end of the yard. We have been making good progress on the railroad and will maintain the momentum after the show.

That's it for this month. I'm always interested in hearing your questions and comments.

Fred Lockhart
Chief Engineer

DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Dan Peterson was first up--and the first to be disappointed, as the decoder that he needed, a 21-pin LokSound had been given to Chris Barlow and it was the last of the supply. Dan had brought his new NS SD60E by Athearn Genesis, which had a dummy 21-pin. Next time, Dan...it's back in the display case in the lobby!

Speaking of **Chris Barlow**, he brought a Cartier RR (Canadian) Alco M636 by Bowser, who now uses 21-pin decoders. He took the last LokSound decoder in stock and turned his loco into a nice sound unit. He also brought in an older P2K GP7, decorated in Maine Central green and gold. It came with a QSI sound board, which made sounds but the loco wouldn't move. Paul Cutler III helped him out by resetting the board to factory specs, which worked, as his loco worked on address 3 then and

he was able to set the address to the one he desired. A good thing to remember: re-setting to factory settings frequently cures problems you have created by messing around with the CVs.

Bob Farrenkropf brought in an old open-frame motor, similar to the Pittman DC70X, to figure out how to isolate the brushes from the chassis. One side is already isolated, with the power wire soldered directly to the brush. On the other side, he unsoldered the brush spring, which had been soldered to the metal screw securing the brush spring through the motor to the chassis. Replacing the metal screw with one of the Kadee plastic 256-size screw worked great, and then the other power wire was soldered directly to that brush. This was to go on an older brass model.

Former member and invited guest **Ross Hall** brought his Overland B&M 2-8-0 to continue his decoder installation. Large, 12-v bulbs had been installed but next time those will be replaced with "mini-bulbs" fed through the boiler.

Ed Bulman brought an Athearn R-T-R SD45-2 "Tunnel Motor" dressed in Southern Pacific. He had already installed the DCC decoder and this night was spent installing many "mini-bulbs" (1.5v) to make up the famous SP "light show". Thing is, each bulb needs its own 680-ohm resistor and the wiring mess inside is an "electrician's nightmare" and became "Ed's nightmare", trying to get the shell back on the chassis and squish in 6-pair of wires over the motor and decoder. He was not successful but will try again next month.

Paul Cutler III brought his friend's B&M RS3 blue "dip job" by Atlas. The loco had sound professionally-installed several years ago but now there was no sound coming out...decoder or speaker? Paul tried the cheapest method first...replaced the speaker...and it worked fine. He used one of the cell phone speakers that he learned about from the special sound clinic we had last year. These are also the speakers that Rapido uses in their sound locos and has a great reproduction of sound, considering their under \$5 cost.

Thanks to **Paul Cutler III** for all his assistance with the clinic. **Our next Clinic** will be **Thursday, March 14th, after the Show**. Sign-up sheet on Bulletin Board. All are welcome!

SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

FEBRUARY 2014 (5 years ago)

- Amtrak's newest locomotive, ACS-64 "Cities Sprinter" makes first revenue Boston-Washington run on Feb. 7th.
- Cedar Hill trackwork and electrical completed except for turntable and transfer table areas.
- Railroad Acquisition Holdings buys Montreal, Maine & Atlantic RR out of bankruptcy, changes name to Central Maine & Quebec Railway.
- BNSF Railway plans to purchase 5,000 crude oil tank cars, built to safety standards exceeded industry standard CPC-1232.
- Massachusetts House proposes changing name of South Station to "Michael S. Dukakis Transportation Center" but he doesn't want it to happen.

FEBRUARY 2009 (10 years ago)

- Canadian National completes acquisition of Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway in Illinois.
- "ACES" non-stop train service starts between New York City and Atlantic City.
- American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009 includes billions of investment dollars for rail projects, both passenger and freight.
- Brand-new English 4-6-2 Steam locomotive dedicated by Prince Charles and named "Tornado".
- New York's MTA begins first subway expansion in 50 years, to new station at 34th Street on Manhattan's far west side.
- Roger St. Peter joins SSMRC.
- Joe Dumas joins SSMRC.

FEBRUARY 2004 (15 years ago)

- MBTA installs 4th track over Fort Point Channel at South Station.
- QBT's GE U18-b #21 sold to CT Southern RR.
- Lamaille Valley RR in VT files for abandonment of complete 96-mile railroad.
- VT Rail System celebrates 40th anniversary.
- Montreal, Maine & Atlantic RR celebrates 1st anniv.
- Amtrak president David Gunn tells press that President Bush's proposal for Amtrak funding will shut down the railroad.
- Brand-new station opens in Mansfield, MA, after 50-years of passengers using a "temporary" station.
- Amtrak's *International* between Chicago and Toronto, Ontario, cut back to Port Huron, MI and renamed the *Blue Water*.
- Honorary Member Ray Welliver retires from the USPS and moves to Florida.

FEBRUARY 1999 (20 Years Ago)

- LDC begins design work of Benchwork for integration of the two sections of the old Middleton Yard into the new railroad.
- Original Japanese "Bullet Trains" retired, after 35-years of service.
- Lionel Corporation celebrates 100th anniversary.

- *California Zephyr* celebrates 50th anniversary.
- CPR sells final MLW (Alco) units off roster to New Brunswick East Coast Railway.
- Conrail's Altoona, PA, shop builds first GE "kit" locomotive; one of 58 C40-9Ws for NS, it's new owner.
- CSX closes famous Hyndman Tower, at the base of the Sand Patch Grade.
- Cranrail Corp. announces it will re-open Edaville by the summer.

FEBRUARY 1994 (25 Years Ago)

- Morrison-Knudsen opens Pittsburg, CA, plant for building "California Cars" for Caltrans and new BART cars.
- Spanish Talgo trainset sent to U.S. for testing in Pacific Northwest.
- D&H's Oneonta, NY, 52-stall roundhouse, one of the largest in the World, is demolished.
- MBTA begins construction of Neponset River Bridge for Old Colony Lines restoration.
- Boston-Worcester Commuter Rail Service approved for fall start-up.
- "Big E" train show attracts 18,000 people; last year for one-building show.

FEBRUARY 1989 (30 Years Ago)

- *Metroliners* celebrate 20 years of service.
- Seasonal train service from Braintree to Hyannis, started in 1984, discontinued.
- Subway fares rise from 60¢ to 75¢.
- 11,200 admissions to "Big E" train show.
- B&M's leased GP38s returned to owner.
- Florida's "Tri-Rail" commuter line starts.
- Bombardier begins delivery of 50 Amtrak "Horizonliners". (Glorified commuter cars.-Ed.)
- B&A brick freight house in Palmer, MA, demolished. Was last to have "B&A" sign.
- NYS&W wins bid to operate bankrupt D&H for 18 mos.

FEBRUARY 1984 (35 Years Ago)

- A&D Toy Train Museum opens in Middleboro.
- Bay Colony RR signs 30-year lease to haul trash from the Cape to Rochester incinerator/power plant.
- First locomotives arrive in Scranton, PA, from Steamtown's move from Bellows Falls, VT.
- "Superliner" Baggage-Coaches converted to straight coach configuration for increased capacity.
- MBTA scraps last ex-Pennsy P70 coaches.
- Ron Clough spearheads volunteers sewing new black curtains for side of layout.
- Giant fire destroys bridge piers for tracks leading out of North station. Temporary terminal set up across river in Summerville.
- Timothy Mellon consummates deal to buy whole D&H for \$500,000, with condition that Guilford would not liquidate it. (A big lie!-Ed.)
- Clarendon & Pittsford Railway purchases D&H branch from Whitehall, NY to Rutland, VT for \$600,000.

POTPOURRI

THE RAILROAD MUSEUM of Pennsylvania in Strasburg, PA, has reached its \$250,000 goal for the "Ready for the Roundhouse" fundraising campaign for the preservation of five historic steam locomotives. The nonprofit Friends of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania took the lead in the Ready for the Roundhouse campaign, which was kicked off with a special \$50,000 matching fund challenge from the Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society. The campaign began in November 2016 and the \$250,000 goal was met in December 2018. The five steam locomotives that are part of the Ready for the Roundhouse campaign are keystone pieces which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and are part of the famed Pennsylvania Railroad Historic Collection. They include Pennsylvania Railroad M1b No. 6755, K4s No. 3750, L1s No. 520, H10s No. 7688, and B6sb No. 1670. These engines, along with the restored E6s No. 460, are slated to take their place in the Museum's to-be-built roundhouse, for which ground could be possibly broken this year. (TN)

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AN UNDER-THE-RADAR restoration project to cosmetically restore the first streamlined Electro-Motive diesel passenger locomotive is well under way at the B&O Railroad Museum. Built in 1937, B&O EA No. 51 was the first unit with a rakishly sloped front end, which later evolved into the more familiar EMD "bulldog" nose. When it emerges from the shop, it will sport original details later removed. According to Jamie Partridge, restoration shop manager, a composite replica of the original pilot, which featured a cowling over a retracting front coupler, and a long gone stainless steel ornamental device that wrapped around the leading edge of the hood will be included, along with stainless steel trim around the doors and windows. At some point in the unit's service life, the original sheeting on the body was replaced with aluminum, and the resulting electrolytic reaction with the steel frame members caused the sheeting to crumble from the inside out, Partridge pointed out. All the sheeting on both sides of the locomotive has been removed, and new sheeting is being prime painted on both sides before installation. The steel framing was needle sanded and treated with rust preventative

paint. In addition, cushioning strips have been glued to the frame to insulate the sheets from the framing. While seeking original paint, Partridge and his crew found on the rear of the locomotive, the original number 51-A in gold leaf, a detail that will be replicated. The original colors — royal blue, medium gray, and a pale yellow gold — have been analyzed and matching modern formulations found. The restoration of No. 51, while not an operational restoration, is one of the most important projects in railway preservation today, since museum visitors will see all the original details of the locomotive that overcame the steam locomotive just as people saw it when it was delivered in 1937. (TN)



BNSF RAILWAY is deploying high-speed onboard cameras capable of recording images, at speeds up to 70 mph, of rail surface defects and other visible flaws like missing bolts. BNSF's Track Health Optical Recognition program, which is nearing the end of a year-long, 3,000-mile pilot program, was one of many technologies showcased by the company at the North Dakota Capitol on Jan. 22. "We're using this opportunity to talk about the technology we have begun to leverage and continue to leverage," said spokeswoman Amy McBeth. Asim Ghanchi, BNSF's general director of technology services, said that the roughly 1,200 individuals working in technology services for BNSF—including 30 data scientists—developed a data analysis system internally that uses artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning to analyze the millions of images the railroad gathers gathering on their equipment each day. BNSF has also begun testing photo technology to pinpoint maintenance issues on its trains through its Machine Vision System, which takes 1.5 million images daily. Since September, the system has found cracks in 14 wheels using the images. Ghanchi said the system allows BNSF to receive alerts regarding the cracked wheels within four to eight hours of their identification. Beginning in March, BNSF plans to send crews out to install hardware alongside the tracks to reduce the identification time to less than an hour, with a goal of eventually making the alert time "instantaneous." (RA)



THE MASS BAY RAILROAD ENTHUSIASTS has awarded its annual \$10,000 H. Albert Webb Memorial Preservation Award to the Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington Railway Museum to

purchase track materials and contract labor for the museum's Mountain Extension Project. The award was made at the Amherst Railway Society's Railroad Hobby Show on Jan. 26. The annual show is one of the largest such shows in the country, annually attracting more than 22,000 visitors, who come to view all sorts of railroad hobby activities showing in over 400,000 square feet of exhibit space. Leigh Webb, son of H. Albert Webb, presented the award to David Buczkowski, president of the WW&F Railway Museum. The award will be used to purchase track materials and contract labor for the museum's Mountain Extension Project. The Mountain Extension Project is a multi-year effort to re-lay track on three-quarters of a mile of the original WW&F Railway's grade, a scenic descent of a mountainside that brings the railway to the former Boston & Maine Railroad Howe pony truss bridge installed by the museum over Trout Brook in 2018 and beyond to a new station adjacent to Maine Route 218. Last fall museum volunteers laid more than 1,900 feet of track over three days, and in October 2019, they intend to lay another 2,000 feet of track. The entire Mountain Extension will be completed and opened for operation in 2021, following construction of a run around track and other facilities adjacent to the Trout Brook Nature Preserve. (Railfanlegal.org)



A RESTORATION SHOP in Kentucky is branching out to produce new open-air passenger cars for tourist lines. Crossroads Railcar Services, which refurbishes passenger cars in the former Kentucky & Tennessee Railway steam shop in Stearns, Ky., has begun construction on the prototype for what is planned to be a full line of all-steel, open air passenger cars designed specifically for use on tourist and scenic railroads. The cars, dubbed the Crossroads Thoroughbred Line, will feature many aspects of standard heavyweight or streamlined passenger equipment, blended with the design elements of the type of cars tourist lines have traditionally constructed out of old freight car frames. The Thoroughbred name for the line of cars is in honor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky's long history with horse racing. Steven Richards, president of Crossroads, has been working on the design for more than four years. "I started noticing that a lot of small scenic railroads were limited to small cars. They were using old freight car chassis and building bodies on them. This limits them on what type of event they can have, which limits their revenue, so I started designing an open air

passenger car that is for scenic railroads.” The cars will feature diaphragmed crossovers, making them compatible with standard passenger equipment; LED Emergency Lighting; and 480 or 240 Volt electrical, depending on the buyer’s power needs. The car roofs will also have options, with each individual road being able to choose between a stainless steel roof cover or a standard steel roof painted to their liking. The cars will also feature a brand new seat design. “We designed our own crossover seats that have a very special locking feature to keep the seat back locked,” Richards says. While they are designed to look historic, the cars will meet all the latest FRA standards. They are designed to be lightweight enough to ship by tractor trailer, but will also fit all the interchange standards to allow them to be shipped by rail to the buyer. Both a 60-foot 72-seat standard gauge version and a 40-foot 3-foot narrow gauge design will be available. The car empty weighs 78,000 pounds and the base price is \$330,000. (TN)

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THE MBTA IS PROPOSING 2019 fare changes that amount to a 6.3 percent increase and would take effect July 1. If approved, the changes would be the first since 2016 and the fourth since 2012. By state law the agency is allowed to increase fares no more than 7 percent once every two years. (TN)

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BURLINGTON NORTHERN’S Cascade Green paint scheme was consigned to history with BN’s merger with Santa Fe in 1995, but the colors are making a comeback on Minnesota short line Northern Lines Railway. Two GP15-1s are being overhauled for service on the railroad and painted in a version of BN’s Cascade green colors.



Northern Lines was formed in 2005 by Anacostia Rail Holdings Company to operate about 25 miles of mainly ex-Great Northern trackage in the St. Cloud area. (TN)

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THE END OF THE LINE APPEARS to be in sight for Boston’s historic streetcars. MBTA officials revealed last month that they want to replace the decades-old Presidents’ Conference Committee streetcars in service on the Mattapan-Ashmont High Speed Line with modern light rail vehicles in the next decade. Although beloved by locals and enthusiasts alike, the 2.6-mile Mattapan route on



the end of the Red Line has become an historic oddity for the MBTA. The line has been plagued with service problems in recent years and MBTA officials have said it is hard to find parts to keep the fleet of 10 PCC cars – all

built more than 70 years ago – on the rails. In 2017, the MBTA decided to spend \$7.9 million to upgrade eight of the PCC cars in order to keep them in service for at least another decade. The agency also hired an outside firm to work with the community to create a roadmap for the route’s future. This week, that plan was finally presented to MBTA’s Fiscal and Management Control Board, which will have the final say on what happens to the route. The outside consultants considered a number of different options for the Mattapan route, including continuing the repair the existing PCC fleet; replacing it with historic replicas; replacing it with modern light rail vehicles; or ripping up the track and replacing it with a bus route. During a number of community meetings along the route, the idea of replacing the streetcars with a bus was widely dismissed by the public. According to the report given to the management board – and shared with *Trains Magazine* – the preferred option is to replace the PCCs with Type 9 light rail vehicles from the Green Line. (TN)

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SOUTH SHORE LAWMAKERS are pushing the MBTA to speed up its rollout of expanded commuter rail hours along the three Old Colony Lines, hoping to see trains run late enough to shuttle residents back from late-night concerts, Red Sox games and other Boston activities. They would like these later trains to begin running this spring, rather than the fall, which is what is planned. Plan for our Greenbush Line would be moving the last train from 10:55 p.m. to 11:20 p.m. (PL)

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FROM ABC to the British Broadcasting Corp. with Stephen Colbert in between, the national and international media is obsessed with Metra's "tracks on fire." With the Polar Vortex bringing deep subzero temperatures to Chicago the past few days, the commuter rail agency fired up the natural gas heaters to keep switches operative and free of ice. The heaters proved to be an eerie and irresistible visual backdrop for news outlets to illustrate how Chicago's commuter railroad was coping with the deep freeze. CNN reported: "When it's this cold, Chicago sets its tracks on fire." United Kingdom's Daily Mail: "Crews light Chicago tracks on FIRE to keep trains moving."



"Chicago's so cold they had to deliberately set the train tracks on fire," said Colbert on his CBS talk show Wednesday night. Not so fast, says Metra spokeswoman Meg Reile, who posted on Facebook: "Ok national and international media, repeat after me: we do not set the tracks on fire in Chicago. You are looking at gas-fired switch heaters. We have guys out there actually making sure the tracks don't catch fire." Reile points out that the flames come from a gas-fed system that runs adjacent to the rails, generating heat on the critical areas where the switches are supposed to make contact. Without that contact, the switches default to a failsafe mode, and train movements are halted. On Thursday, Reile says she heard from more a dozen media outlets from around the world, including Norway's Dagbladet and BBC 5. "Just crazy," she noted. Granted, the array of burners at the sprawling Metra interlocking near its Western Avenue yard is a dazzling sight. The burners there are critical to keeping more than 300 trains a day passing through. And despite the media attention, the heaters aren't just used in subzero cold. The system is turned on when temperatures are between 40 and 32 degrees Fahrenheit, and stays on when it's below 32 degrees. Chicago's media sees the flames every winter and reporters know how the heating system works, but the out-of-town media loves to perpetuate the "tracks-on-fire" myth, Reile says. Of all those reports, Reile credited

Canada's CBC Radio for reporting "Why Chicago's commuter train tracks appear to be on fire." "CBC got it right," she said. (TN) Good for Canada—they at least have some smarts!-Ed.

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THIS IS THE 150TH SEASON of the Cog Railway at Mt. Washington, NH. They are using the former Issacson Steel Plant in Berlin, 42 miles from the Cog, as a temporary work shop. A new diesel is being built there now and for this season the Cog will have 7 diesels and two steam locomotives in service. A new all-season workshop will be built at the base station this year. Over the next two years the rails of the railway will be replaced with new heavier rails. A new work car was built. It is 56' 6" long, 12' 9" high and 9' 8" wide and has a knuckle boom crane and a variety of power tools. Floor of car has a 33' long opening in the floor that will allow crews to work on the rail and track 24-7, while being shielded from the elements. Thanks to a heavy-lift crane and 68 bolts, the largest vehicle ever built by the Cog Railway in its 150-year history — more than 56 feet long and weighing 20,000 pounds — was placed on the track on February 11th and prepared for imminent duty. Costing "a couple hundred" thousand dollars, the open-floored, retractable-sided, all-weather rail-laying car will allow crews to work 24/7, regardless of the season or conditions outside, to re-rail the Cog from top to bottom as part of a \$1 million upgrade, said Cog owner Wayne Presby. The car's body was built by Cog workers in the sprawling workshop at Presby Steel in Berlin, which before being bought by Wayne Presby's brother, David, had operated as Issacson Structural Steel. A flatbed tractor-trailer ferried the car the 42 miles from Berlin to the Cog's maintenance shed, which is about a half-mile below the base station. The Cog will again be open year-round. It will open this April for weekends only. They also purchased a dual rotary snow blower. (Whatever that is?-Ed) New Hampshire Union Leader

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THE MBTA'S COMMUTER-RAIL network was swamped by record ridership earlier this month, as fans attended the New England Patriots' Super Bowl victory parade — despite advance planning that included more than two dozen extra trains. The Boston Globe reports that MBTA authorities said ridership was about double the usual 127,000 trips. "We are seeing extraordinary ridership levels across the entire network, notably higher than seen for previous parades and almost certainly the

highest ridership ever seen on the network,” spokesman Tory Mazzola of Keolis Commuter Services, contract operator of the commuter trains, told the *Globe*. Authorities believe unusually mild weather, with temperatures in the 60s, helped swell the crowds. Regular commuters found it difficult to reach work, as packed trains skipped normal stops. Some riders watched multiple trains pass without anyone being allowed to board. Some subway lines also saw heavy crowding. For the afternoon commute, the MBTA and Keolis created lined up passengers outside stations, organizing them by transit line, and allowed them in only when their trains arrived. (TN)



THE EUROPEAN UNION'S central administration, the EU Commission, has announced it will not permit the proposed Siemens-Alstom merger, which originally had been targeted to be complete by the end of 2018. The antitrust review of the deal began in July 2018. The planned merger of Alstom with Siemens' transport businesses was first announced by the companies in September 2017. It initially appeared European regulators would permit the deal, as the French and German governments supported the plan strongly. Trade unions representing workers at the two firms had different views: in Germany, the planned deal was broadly welcomed; in France, unions objected. The companies and the French and German governments argued the deal would create a European company able to compete with the world's biggest rail equipment manufacturer — Chinese conglomerate CRRC, which is focused on exporting worldwide. Multiple European governments (including Britain, Netherlands, Belgium, and Spain) objected on the basis the deal would reduce competition in their countries for equipment — passenger trains and locomotives plus servicing/maintenance of them, as well as positive train control systems — as Siemens and Alstom already account for much of the market. Australian authorities raised similar concerns. (TN)



BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT and Amtrak are joining forces to study the possibility of a second San Francisco Bay rail crossing, creating the possibility of one-seat Amtrak rides between Sacramento and downtown San Francisco. The San Francisco *Chronicle* reports the concept is to run two sets of tracks across the bay, either in a tube (as with the existing BART crossing) or on a bridge). Each operation would have its own set of

tracks, since BART uses 5-foot-6 broad gauge. In November, BART sent a \$50 million contract to bid for a feasibility study of a second crossing. David Kutrosky, managing director of the authority that operates Amtrak's Capitol Corridor trains, tells the *Chronicle* that goal is to open up a “brand-new market by offering a one-seat ride from Sacramento to San Francisco.” Even with the current need to transfer to a bus or BART, the Sacramento-San Francisco city pair accounts for about 750,000 trips per year. The new connection might also be able to accommodate California's high speed rail project, and could make possible direct rail connections to Caltrain locations between San Francisco and San Jose. (TN)



UNION PACIFIC'S BIG BOY is another step closer to running this year after it passed a federally required hydrostatic test. Union Pacific posted a video on YouTube Wednesday showing workers knocking on the locomotive with hammers while pressurized water filled the boiler. One scene shows a pressure gauge at 300 pounds per square inch. (TN)



THE UPGRADE OF FORMER Boston & Maine Railroad trackage that allowed the *Vermont* to be rerouted via Greenfield, Mass., will begin paying additional dividends this summer, with two more Amtrak round trips to Greenfield. The new service is made possible by a \$73-million, stimulus-funded infrastructure project that allows the *Vermont* to serve Massachusetts' “Knowledge Corridor” communities of Holyoke, Northampton, and Greenfield. That route entered service in August 2015 on former Pan Am Railway's trackage. It is far more direct than the prior path on CSX Transportation and New England Central via Palmer and Amherst, Mass. The Pioneer Valley Planning Commissioner, Timothy W. Brennan, confirmed with Massachusetts DOT officials that the service might start as early June, pending completion of high-level Platform C at Springfield Union Station and tie replacement and bridge repairs on the route. A firm start date and schedules have not been finalized, but Brennan says there will be both morning and afternoon round trips. Additional trains were always part of Massachusetts' plan to re-establish stations at Holyoke, Northampton, and Greenfield along with a \$1 million operating grant. The new stations' tiny platforms skirted the Federal Railroad Administration's full length (of train) accessibility

preferences but do offer level boarding. However, Massachusetts' commitment is only for a two-year pilot project. It isn't clear what criteria will be used to determine whether the operation is deemed "a success." The state purchased the tracks from Pan Am Railways for \$17 million in 2015, paving the way for already-planned capacity-expanding trackwork and signaling. Pan Am retains trackage rights. (TN)

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THE 56th ANNUAL RECIPIENT of Railway Age's "Railroader of the Year" was awarded to CN President and CEO Jean-Jacques Ruest, the leader of one of North America's best performing Class 1 railroads. Ruest took a railroad plagued with service problems and serious network capacity shortages and implemented aggressive capital investment and service quality programs. These efforts have produced outstanding results, in terms of traffic growth and profitability. (RA)

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NICKEL PLATE 2-8-4 NO. 757 has begun its long journey back to Bellevue, Ohio, to the Mad River & NKP Railroad Museum, after more than 50 years at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania. It left the museum for the last time on Monday morning. The Strasburg Rail Road delivered it to its interchange track at Leaman Place Junction, where Norfolk Southern picked up for a special 25 mph move back to Ohio. A freshly painted NKP caboose will travel with the engine, carrying lubricants and tools and providing shelter for the crew. Its return to Bellevue will be a homecoming for the locomotive. The 1944 Lima engine, based in Bellevue, was retired in mid-1958, and along with several other identical engines, was stored in the Nickel Plate Road yard there. It was promised to a city park, but it was never moved. Two years after the Norfolk & Western acquired the Nickel Plate in 1964, the engine was donated to the fledgling Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania. Its companion engines were not so fortunate and were scrapped. It will be cosmetically restored. (TN)

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BOILER AND FIREBOX WORK is just about completed on Reading No. 2100, the famed 4-8-4 leased by American Steam Railroad. The new firebox side sheets, welded in place and drilled and reamed, await new staybolts, says Steve Harvey, president of the non-profit. "We can just about smell the coal smoke," Harvey told Trains on Thursday. The project needs about \$29,000 to see the firebox and boiler phase completed, he said. In

total, about \$255,000 is still needed in the Fire Up 2100 campaign to return the 1960s eastern Pennsylvania fantrip favorite to service. The engine has been undergoing restoration since it arrived in Ohio in 2015. Harvey said a crew of 8-12 volunteers is working on the tender, preparing to reinstall the stoker that was removed during an unsuccessful conversion to oil-firing. Fortunately, the stoker and its engine were not scrapped and are on hand. In addition to tender work, repairs are necessary to the running gear, Harvey reported. At least one roller bearing in the pilot truck must be replaced, and rod brasses must also be modified or replaced. There is air brake and plumbing work remaining, and all the front-end screening removed must be replaced before a fire is lit. (TN)

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AS THE METAL ROLLING DOOR arose on the paint shop building at CSX's Huntington Heavy Repair shops last Tuesday, anticipation among members of the Kentucky Steam Heritage Corp., was high. The group was at the shops by CSX's invitation for a special reveal that would not have been possible without some generosity, extra effort,



and a lot of determination by Huntington shops employees. After a nearly six-month restoration, CSX released a newly-refurbished caboose to its new owners. Chesapeake & Ohio caboose No. 3203 was donated to Kentucky Steam. The restoration project on the 50-year-old caboose, which was undertaken by CSX, began in June 2018 when the cab arrived at Huntington. "It's simply stunning," says Kentucky Steam President Chris Campbell upon seeing the caboose for the first time. A new, sparkling paint job adorned the caboose, which once again proudly displays the elegant "C&O For Progress" logo on its carbody. But it was the work under the blue and yellow paint that made the project a remarkable accomplishment for the employees at Huntington. When the caboose was donated to KSHC last year, the then-out-of-service car was worse for the wear.

The 1969 International Car Co.-built cabin entered service for the C&O upon delivery and was retired from CSX in 2018 after having dwelled on a siding in Cordele, Ga., for an extended period of time. CSX Director of Network Planning Eric Hendrickson said crews had to cut trees in order free the 3203 from its place of rest. The caboose — then adorning the number 903203 — still wore the same Chessie System livery it had received following a repaint in 1979 that took place at Huntington. Only upon its return to Huntington in summer 2018 was it entirely evident how time and the elements had taken their toll. The caboose had its windows plated over following conversion to a shoving platform. Holes had rotted in areas of the floor. Other areas had water damage. Those issues, coupled with decades of use and millions of miles rail traveled left No. 3203 in a state of disrepair, one suitable for an appointment with a scrapper's torch. According to a statement from KSHC, the initial plan was for a light restoration, including new paint. Officials with CSX told KSHC members, however, that employees at the Huntington shops embraced the project, refusing to settle for just a quick paint job, and they restored the caboose to like-new condition, performing a top-to-bottom restoration. The crews working on the project removed the plating from the windows and sand-blasted the faded vermilion paint and the iconic Chessie Cat logo down to the bare metal. They fabricated new metal components to replace rusted and rotted areas of the carbody, sealing the caboose tight in anticipation of its new paint job. The interior was also meticulously refurbished and detailed, and new windows were fabricated and installed. The project, the railroad said, was a "labor of love" for the Huntington shops employees. (TN)

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CALIFORNIA GOV. Gavin Newsom, citing budget pressures, says the state will not move forward with plans to connect Los Angeles to San Francisco by a high-speed rail link. Rather than the full high-speed line, Newsom said the state will build only the Central Valley segment of the line, linking Merced and Bakersfield. Newsom's remarks, made during his first State of the State address Tuesday, were not widely expected. "I know that some critics are going to say, 'We'll, that's a train to nowhere.' But I think that's wrong and I think that's offensive," Newsom told legislators, according to local media sources. "It's about economic transformation. It's about unlocking the enormous potential of the Valley. Let's level

about the high-speed rail," Newsom said. "Let's be real, the current project as planned would cost too much and, respectfully, take too long. Right now, there simply isn't a path to get from Sacramento to San Diego, let alone from San Francisco to L.A. I wish there were." Newsom's decision comes less than three months after the state's auditor issued a scathing report on costs associated with the project. (RA)

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FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, California's high-speed rail project is dead. At least that's the consensus among several observers of the U.S. high-speed rail scene, which, sadly, appears to be based more upon fantasy than reality. The irony is that the California High-Speed Rail Authority itself, aided and abetted by the State's governor, appears to be the project's primary demolition expert. On Feb. 19, one week after California's Democratic Governor, Gavin Newsom, announced that the State would build only the 119-mile Central Valley portion of the HSR system, the Federal Railroad Administration issued a Notice of Intent to Terminate Cooperative Agreement No. FR-HSR-0118-12-01-0 1, and de-obligate nearly \$1 billion in funding, effective March 5. FRA also said it is "actively exploring every legal option to seek the return from California of \$2.5 billion in Federal funds FRA previously granted for this now-defunct project." In a letter to CHSRA CEO Brian P. Kelly signed by Federal Railroad Administrator Ron Batory, the FRA cited the Authority's failure to comply with the terms of the funding agreement and to make "reasonable progress" on the project, whose costs have more-than doubled from initial projections, from \$32 billion to \$70 billion. (RA).

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IF ALL THE RECOMMENDATIONS laid out in Boston University's "Carbon-Free Boston" report are implemented, transit use in the historic city will grow 43 percent by 2050 while use of private vehicles will shrink 58 percent. The report was produced under the aegis of the Boston Green Ribbon Commission at the request of Mayor Marty Walsh. Looking at transportation, buildings, electric power generation, and waste, it outlines options to get Boston to its goal of becoming carbon neutral by mid-century. About a third of greenhouse gas emissions in Boston are from transportation, with private vehicles accounting for three-quarters of that. Every workday, the peak morning commute hour sees 400,000 people in

motion to widely-dispersed destinations across the region. While most of those trips originate outside city limits, with 36 percent on public transportation, reverse commutes have become common. Nearly 100,000 people head out of the city to work, with three-fifths driving. The city's Go Boston 2030 mobility plan, issued in 2017, envisions adding 35 new urban rail miles. New Green Line, Orange Line, and Red Line rail vehicles are entering service this year as part of the MBTA's five-year, \$8 billion capital investment program. But even with an expanded and upgraded transit system, getting commuters out of their cars will require a culture change, the report finds. (TN) "Pie-in-the-sky" IMHO.-Ed

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THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE has added five additional subjects to the 2019 Stamp Program, including the Golden Spike. More details on dates and locations for the first-day-of-issue ceremonies are coming. Three new stamps in a pane of 18 mark the 150th anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad, a massive engineering feat that reduced travel time across the country from as many as six months to about one week and made the American West an integral part of the nation. Two different stamps feature the *Jupiter* and the No. 119 locomotives that powered the trains carrying the officers and guests of two railroad companies to the Golden Spike Ceremony, held when the two rail lines were joined at Promontory Summit in Utah. A third stamp portrays the famous golden spike that was a prominent part of the ceremony. (TN)

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IT HAS BEEN ALMOST TWO YEARS since NJ Transit stopped paying Amtrak for use of the Northeast Corridor between Trenton and New York Penn Station, but the transit agency will now make good on what it owes - \$182 million. Following a series of derailments at Penn Station, former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie ordered NJ Transit to halt payments to Amtrak, but current Governor Phil Murphy said that will no longer be the case. On more than one occasion, Murphy has criticized Christie for not prioritizing public transit during his years in office. "Investing in our infrastructure, improving customer experience, and enhancing the safety of the traveling public are among the highest priorities of our Administration," Murphy said in a press release. "The announcement today establishes a partnership that will achieve these goals now, and lays the financial foundation for

continued improvements into the future. After eight years of disinvestment in, and mismanagement of, NJ Transit, collaborative partnerships like the one we are announcing today will go a long way to restoring the agency to its former preeminence." NJ Transit is set to pay Amtrak \$7 million a month for capital expenses and \$3 million for operating expenses. NJ Transit and Amtrak said the owed \$182 million, as well as future payments, will go towards current and future infrastructure projects along the NEC to benefit both NJ Transit and Amtrak passengers. This will include the Portal Bridge, which both organizations said they are ready to begin full construction on Portal North as soon as federal funding is secured. "Moving this partnership between Amtrak and NJ Transit forward is critical for the future of the Northeast Corridor and establishing a foundation for future infrastructure projects to keep service running safely and reliably," said Rail Passengers President Jim Mathews. (RPA)

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THE USE OF TRAINS to carry crude oil is surging, after dropping in recent years amid concerns about safety, as drillers in parts of North America produce more oil than area pipelines can accommodate. An average of 718,000 barrels of crude a day traversed America's railways as of October, an 88% increase from a year earlier. That compares with a peak average of about 1.1 million barrels in October 2014. Much of the recent oil train growth is due to record shipments from Canada, where pipeline expansion projects, including Keystone XL and Trans Mountain have stalled amid environmental opposition and legal delays. Crude-by-rail shipments also have ticked up from North Dakota's Baaken region and the Permian Basin of West Texas and New Mexico. (WSJ)

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THE RETIREMENT OF AMTRAK'S last Solari train announcement board at 30th Street Station in Philadelphia has inspired the restoration of another Solari board to operation. Members of the Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum are exploring how to make operational the Boston Route 128 station Solari board that Amtrak donated in 2015, said Brent Bette, the museum's senior project manager. It has been in storage for the last four years. "They disassembled it, removing all the modules to transport it," he said. Two members drove a rented van to an Amtrak warehouse in Rhode Island to pick it up. "I called Solari Corp. and asked if it could be resurrected," Bette said. The

Long Island City, N.Y., company has agreed to send two technicians to Massachusetts for three days to overhaul the machine. “We need to raise \$6,000 to cover the cost, but I’m confident we’ll get that quickly,” Bette said. Bette said the museum is working on a display plan for the machine, once it’s operational again. The current plan would program the machine to display the trains that would have stopped at Lenox in 1900 under the Housatonic Railroad ownership, and then show trains under New Haven ownership, and finally display the last years of service under the Penn Central flag. To contrast the flip-board machine, on the opposite wall of the proposed display is the original chalkboard from the station, on which the stationmaster would have written the arrivals and departures. “This will be a great interpretive display,” Bette concluded. As the Berkshire museum’s plans to exhibit their Solari board are coming together, the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania took delivery of the Philadelphia 30th Street Station Solari board on Feb. 14. It was placed in temporary storage until a base can be constructed to display it. Since the machine is on loan from Amtrak for three years, it will not be made operational and will appear as it did when it was shut down on Jan. 26. (TN)

One of the “flippers” with numbers 0-9. The letter flippers had all 26 letters stored inside each!



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IT WOULD BE AN UNDERSTATEMENT to say that Norfolk Southern’s views on Precision Scheduled Railroading have evolved. In November 2015, Jim Squires had been chief executive for barely six months when the wolf — dressed as Canadian Pacific CEO E. Hunter Harrison — came banging on the door. CP wanted to merge with NS and “Hunterize” its operations by implementing Precision Scheduled Railroading. Squires unleashed full-throated criticism of Harrison’s operating model, calling it a “short-term, cut-to-the-bone strategy that could cause Norfolk Southern to lose substantial revenues from our service-sensitive customer base.” The PSR hyperfocus on a lower operating ratio, Squires contended, would drive away truck-competitive traffic. Now — after Harrison slashed costs and boosted profits at NS

rival CSX Transportation — NS has changed its tune. “We decided to adopt Precision Scheduled Railroading because it works,” Squires said in kicking off the railroad’s investor day presentations last week. (TN) Bet the Claytors are “turning over in their graves”!-Ed.

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METRA EARLIER THIS MONTH approved a \$71 million contract to purchase 15 remanufactured locomotives from Progress Rail Locomotives with options to buy up to 27 additional locomotives if



more funding becomes available. According to a Metra announcement, Progress Rail will take existing EMD SD70MAC freight locomotives and upgrade and configure them for passenger use. All components will either be refurbished, upgraded or new. The newly remanufactured locomotives will be designated as SD70MACH locomotives. (TN)

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

TRAINS

Changing Faces, but no Loss of Wonder
 LA Union Station

Modern and Spectacular

NS’s new bridge over the Genesee River Gorge

Not All Spikes are Golden
 Gallery

Tribute to photographer John Gruber

RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

Shipping Lumber on CBNS

Bridge Signal Heads

MODEL RAILROADER

It Started with a Train Ride

PASSENGER TRAIN JOURNAL (43-1)

Holiday on Rails

What’s Missing?

The Empire Corridor

PTJ Reader Survey Results

CLASSIC TRAINS (Winter 2018)

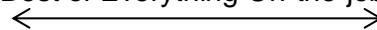
Canadian Pacific’s Rural Gem

Quebec Central

My Conrail Beginnings

Pullman’s Summer Swan Song

Best of Everything On-the-job Training



News sources: Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Amtrak “News”, Trains Newswire, Railway Age,

Railpace Newsmagazine, RRE "Callboy", "The 470", Patriot Ledger, Wall Street Journal. The Sun Chronicle.

EDITOR'S NOTES

1. **Do you have a favorite picture that** you'd like to see on the cover of *The Semaphore*? Please submit a print or slide of that picture to me for scanning and consideration. Your picture or slide will be returned next time I see you!
2. Nineteen members and guests attended the third annual "**Trains 'n Touchdowns**" meet at the Club. As usual, it was a great time "just running trains" (and trying to stay out of each other's way). Will Baker caused extra excitement by operating the opposite direction from everyone else, so we got a taste of "real life"! Join us for the next special session at "Trains 'n Taxes" in April.
3. **Sign-up sheets for Show duties** and Open House Operations are on the glass door of the office. Please sign up and help out...the festivities are less than two weeks away!

..... *David N. Clinton*

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." Galatians 5:22

MEMBER NEWS

Welcome aboard to **Ed Carter**, who was voted into membership at this month's Business Meeting. Ed has been a hard worker during his applicant period and finally gets to be "official" and pay dues! Great to have you with us officially, Ed!

Bill Garvey has been in and out of the hospital on several occasions, during the past month, so it's good to see him back at Club. Keep up the good work, Bill!

Congratulations to **Paul Cutler III**, who was recently named publisher of the New Haven Railroad & Technical Association's quarterly magazine Shoreliner. He will also be editor and

publisher of the organization's modeling magazine Speedwitch.

Congratulations are also due **Jeremy Cahill**, whose contributions to the recently-released new book, New England Southern Railroad, include many of his own photographs taken over the past 20 years.

Good going to two of our younger members!

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The following members have made it through another year and deserve congratulations starting off the New Year:

- Joe Dumas..... March 4th
- Bob England..... March 7th
- Larry Strumpf March 13
- Peter Palica..... March 28th

RUNNING EXTRA

California's High-Speed Rail Decision is Prudent Politics But It Tells Us Uncomfortable Things About the State of American Ambition

By Sean Jeans-Gail, Rail Passengers Vice President of Government Affairs 2-15-19

The United States is incapable of building big things.

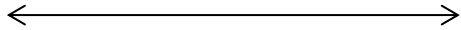
That is an uncomfortable thing to say about the country you're from, but in the year 2019 it is an undeniable truth.

In that light, California Governor Gavin Newsom's announcement that his administration would be narrowing the project's scope—refocusing on the Central Valley spine between Merced and Bakersfield—may be vexing to advocates, but it's just good politics. The project has been beset by outside difficulties and poor internal management: a series of lawsuits by NIMBYs and environmental groups (the latter of whom should know better); an indifferent federal partner in Congress, including an actively hostile contingent within the GOP segment of California's congressional delegation; a poorly chosen corridor, selected to win political support from Central Valley cities afraid they would be left

stranded in favor of the state's twin economic behemoths, Los Angeles and the Bay Area (and let's be honest, there's plenty of historical precedent underpinning that fear). If you want a full rundown of everything that went wrong, Jeff Davis at Eno Transportation has a fair—albeit incomplete—summary of the avoidable mistakes.

Faced with these obstacles, none of which he created and most of which were beyond his ability to solve, Gov. Newsom made the politically sensible decision to adjust the California High Speed Rail Authority's (CAHSRA) focus to the only segment currently under construction. It eases worries in the state legislature and among the public that the project is spiraling out of control and brings a finish line within touching distance.

And despite the headlines you may have read, the Governor demonstrated clear and unequivocal support for increasing passenger rail service in the state.



"Precision Scheduled Railroading" brings layoffs and cuts to US railroads

By Jeff Lusanne, 2-19-2019, RailfanLega.org

Railroads in the United States have announced or begun the layoffs of thousands of railroad workers, alongside the closure of facilities and a reduction in assets. The actions come under the moniker of "Precision Scheduled Railroading," (PSR), a corporate operations policy that is the darling of Wall Street, as it extracts short-term gains in the financial performance of the railroads.

Last week, Norfolk Southern announced that it intended to reduce headcount by 500 in 2019, and up to 3,000 by 2021, while it would idle 500 locomotives by 2021. On Wednesday, February 13, Union Pacific announced it would lay off 250 employees, mostly at its Omaha, Nebraska, headquarters. Since fall of 2018, it has furloughed (temporarily laid off) 450 mechanical workers, as engine shops in Butler, Wisconsin; Hinkle, Oregon; El Paso, Texas; South Morrill, Nebraska; and Pine Bluff, Arkansas, have been closed or cut back.

Union Pacific laid off 500 workers in 2018, mostly in management, as well as 200 contractors; in 2017, it cut 750 jobs, chiefly in Omaha. Meanwhile, Union Pacific's announcement in January that it would implement PSR in the "Unified Plan 2020" boosted its market value by \$9 billion in one day.

Union Pacific has furloughed 450 mechanical workers it says are no longer needed after putting 1,000 locomotives in storage.

The industry-wide cutbacks are not due to a loss of traffic, or a lack of profits. Traffic volume was up 1.1 percent in January 2019 compared to January 2018, and the shortage of drivers in the trucking industry would be a source of traffic if the railroads cared to obtain it. In 2018, each of the four largest US railroads—Union Pacific, Norfolk Southern, CSX, and BNSF—usually made over \$1 billion in profits per quarter.

Instead, the central focus of PSR is to "sweat the assets" of a railroad, by reducing the headcount, idling locomotives and equipment, closing shops and facilities, reducing maintenance, curtailing service, and selling off routes. The stock market joyfully responds to every cutback, pumping the stock price up in the short term, while the physical infrastructure decays, morale sours, and customers are chased away.

The policy was first implemented in the early 2000s at Canadian National, under the direction of E. Hunter Harrison. He retired for a time with \$40 million in benefits but was then installed as CEO of Canadian Pacific Railroad in 2012 after a push by Pershing Capitol Management. Under his tenure, he cut employment from 15,000 to 12,000, while implementing widely hated policy changes for operating employees.

In 2017, activist fund Mantle Ridge installed Harrison as CEO of CSX railroad, handing him \$84 million up front to implement PSR and boost the stock price of the railroad. CSX is one of four major railroads in the United States, and as the WSWS noted at the time, "his installation at CSX marks a turning point, as it signifies that whatever cuts are achieved will set the national pattern, with Wall Street demanding the same from workers at the other major US railroads—Union Pacific, BNSF, and Norfolk Southern." For railroad workers, PSR is more like a spreading virus that, no matter how disastrous its results have been, continues to spread from railroad to railroad. Harrison died in December 2017, but since that time, Norfolk Southern, Union Pacific, and Kansas City Southern have adopted the PSR policies and begun or announced cutbacks. BNSF, which is privately owned, is now the only large railroad that is not openly implementing PSR, although it has made operational changes that harshly impact operating crews and dispatchers.

In each case, these railroads announce that PSR will lead to "operational efficiencies" and "better service," with the financial and trade press providing universal praise. It is a preposterous, proven lie. The concept of PSR is that railroads can do more with less—they can get rid of workers, reduce maintenance, close repair shops and sorting yards, cut train frequency, and supposedly provide better service while still making more money. Only the latter is true, and only for a short

time—until the long-term consequences emerge. When CSX implemented these policies in 2017, service to customers plummeted so drastically that the industry-friendly Surface Transportation Board was pushed to criticize the delays and demand regular reporting on performance. Meanwhile, CSX invented its own metrics for measuring its performance that didn't match the rest of the industry, making it impossible to determine how bad it had gotten.

The railroads are a near-monopoly form of transportation in many cases, as many shippers only have access to one railroad and are therefore stuck with whatever rate and service (or lack thereof) the railroad wants to provide. Over recent decades, the railroads have sought only the most profitable traffic, a tendency that PSR emphasizes. The policy works to make railroad operations "efficient" only in the sense of how the railroad can spend as little as possible to provide service. For example, they may cut a train that provides the only service over a route, and instead reroute traffic hundreds of miles out of the way on another higher-traffic route to consolidate operations, in an effort to save on crews and shutter trackage. Yet the customer sees transit times that take days or even weeks longer.

Another method is to run fewer trains that are longer and heavier than ever before and save on the reduction of crews and locomotive usage—assuming that massive trains don't suffer more frequent problems that cause more frequent delay. Traffic gets held for longer amounts of time for the fewer, more "efficient" trains that do run, which adds to transit time.

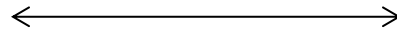
If customers complain about the service, the railroad might decide they aren't even worth the trouble—the emphasis is on the highest-margin traffic that the railroad can run with the lowest costs, and in effect, customers are chased away. In 2017, when CSX implemented PSR, its total yearly carloads fell by 1.4 percent compared to 2016, with almost every type of traffic showing declines, yet the stock price doubled. That feeds into the cycle that allows further reduction of employees, equipment, and maintenance.

For railroad operating employees, the PSR rampage across the industry has only deepened the endlessly unaddressed issues: continual attempts to reduce employees, seasonal furloughs, utterly unscheduled job assignments, the contracting out of jobs, dangerous conditions during work and travel, rising health care costs and intrusive, intimidating management practices. Through all of this, the railroad unions have stopped nothing, and continue to push rotten, sellout contracts.

At CSX, engineers, conductors, machinists and others who faced a regime of harassment as PSR was implemented did not find their unions contesting new interpretations of work rules or the push for hourly pay. In the absence of an organized fight, workers felt the only thing they could do was to keep their heads down

until the storm passed, but PSR has continued to rage across the industry.

If railroad workers are to defend their jobs and conditions, they must form rank-and-file committees, independent of the existing unions, that can unify rail workers across North America with teachers, autoworkers, UPS delivery drivers, Amazon warehouse workers and other sections of the working class fighting against the decades of cuts and rapacious dictates of Wall Street.



Maine narrow gauge museums to collaborate on collections

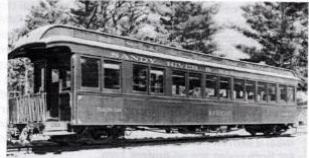
By Wayne Laepple

PORTLAND and ALNA, Me. — Two Maine two-foot gauge railway museums today said they will collaborate to preserve and share several important artifacts. The Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad Co. & Museum and the Wiscasset Waterville & Farmington Railway Museum will develop an exhibition to be called the Narrow Gauge Railway Collection.

The Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad's core collection, which includes the only two-foot gauge parlor car ever built, has been displayed in a building near the city's waterfront that was originally part of the Portland Co., a manufacturer of locomotives, ships, rail cars, and other machinery. That property has been sold for development and the building is scheduled for demolition.

With the demolition deadline approaching, the two museums negotiated an arrangement to move the four cars long displayed in the Portland Co. building, along with three other pieces, to the WW&F's Sheepscot Station campus in Alna, about 50 miles northeast of Portland. The equipment, which will remain the property of Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad & Museum, will be housed in the WW&F's car house and will be on display, along with other select artifacts from the two-foot gauge railways of Maine. It will also be used from time to time on the WW&F's 2.6-mile line.

The crown jewel of the core collection, Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes parlor Car No. 9 Rangeley built by Jackson & Sharp of Wilmington, Del. in 1901, is the only two-foot gauge car of its type ever built. It is scheduled to be the first car moved to Sheepscot in May. Two additional passenger cars and a cabooses date back to 1882 complete the "core collection." In addition, Bridgton & Saco River Railroad No. 8, a 1924 Baldwin 2-4-4RT, a tank car and a snowplow will move to Sheepscot.



Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes parlor Car No. 9 Rangeley, built by Jackson & Sharp of Wilmington, Del. in 1901, is the only two-foot gauge car of its type ever built. (MNGM)

[Contributed by Doug Scott]

Amtrak unveils images for new NY Penn Station lounge

By Brendan Dorsey

Spending as little time as possible in New York's Penn Station is a goal for nearly any New Yorker. The dark, dirty maze of a station is home to the regional train lines: New Jersey Transit and Long Island railroads, as well as Amtrak and some of its most profitable routes along the Northeastern Corridor.

In 2016 it was announced that Penn was finally getting a much needed renovation and now Amtrak is upping its game too, enough to where Amtrak passengers may actually want to spend time at the station before their ride. Penn Station will expand into a building across the street from its current location, the historic James A. Farley Post Office, transforming into Moynihan Train Hall.

The refresh of the Penn Station will cost \$1.6 billion and hopefully be completed by early 2021. Amtrak says the station will feature massive improvements to the passenger experience, "including more spacious boarding conditions, dedicated customer waiting areas with private restrooms, complimentary Wi-Fi in all customer spaces, dedicated lactation lounge for nursing mothers, combined ticketing and baggage area." (See PENN, page 15)



The Moynihan Train Hall will be the centerpiece of the improved Penn Station (Amtrak)

PENN (Continued from page 9)

With this renovation, the train operator has released renderings of the its new lounge, called the Metropolitan Lounge, that will be located in Moynihan Hall. It will be replacing the current Club Acela, which lacks windows and features sparse amenities and food offerings.

Amtrak plans on opening the space in 2021, which will be available for passengers traveling in Amtrak's premium cabins, including passengers traveling in Acela First Class, sleeping cars, plus Amtrak Guest Rewards Select Plus and Select Executive members.

"The Metropolitan Lounge at Moynihan Train Hall will also include priority boarding, dedicated customer service agents, comfortable seating and tables with access to electrical outlets and USB ports, a dedicated family seating area, expanded food and beverage offerings, a business center and multiple conference rooms as part of the Executive Conference Center, and a 20 feet tall balcony overlooking the Train Hall," Amtrak said in a press release. Conde Nast Traveler reports that unlike the current ClubAcela, booze will be available at the Metropolitan Lounge.

There will be multiple conference rooms that look out onto New York City's streets.

The renderings show off plenty of seating options and the modern, open design lends itself to a more inviting atmosphere than the current ClubAcela. Lounge guests will have access to balcony seating for those who want to check out all the action below.



The Lounge will feature balcony seating overlooking the Train Hall. (Amtrak)