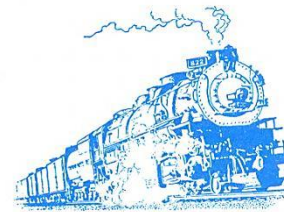


The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



MARCH 25, 2019 ■■■■■■■■■■ VOLUME 39 ■■■■■■■■■■ NUMBER 3



The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



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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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VOLUME 39 ■■■■■ NUMBER 3 ■■■■■ MARCH 2019

CLUB OFFICERS

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	Roger St. Peter ('19)
	Gary Mangelinkx ('19)

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**ON THE COVER: March 9-10th Show
and Open House memories.**

(Photos by Joe Dumas)

FORM 19 ORDERS

MARCH B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, March 25th 8 p.m.

APRIL BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, April 1st 8 p.m.

DECODER/EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Thursday, April 4th 8 p.m.

MOVIE NIGHT

Monday, April 8th 7:30 p.m.

“TRAINS ‘N TAXES”

Saturday, April 13th 11 a.m.- with lunch

APRIL NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Saturday, April 20th.

APRIL B.O.D.

Monday, April 29th 8 p.m.

CONTESTS

Congratulations to **Doug Buchanan** 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!

For MAY, in celebration of Amtrak's 48th Anniversary, everyone wins even if it's just a piece of cake! For the contest: Give your favorite, weirdest, or the one you remember most of AMTRAK'S PROMOTIONAL SLOGANS over the years. You've heard them on the Radio; saw them on TV or on posters...there were many of them the past 48 years. Use the contest entry forms available on the old display case inside the train room door or any piece of paper but don't forget your name. Should be fun to make a whole poster of them for 48 years of memories.

CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

The past month has been mostly about our Spring Show, we have just got back to working on the railroad this past week so there is not any real progress to report on. The railroad did run well for the two days of the Show, except for an hour or so on Saturday afternoon, when quite a few of us were having problems with our throttles. It has been suggested that someone could have been using an older throttle that, for some reason, has not been updated; we have updated twice but could have missed someone??? So we will have to work on that to make sure everyone's throttle is updated.

Going forward we will be finishing the staging yard and putting that into service, at the same time we are working on the portion of the Boston Division that will reside above it. While track work and wiring is being completed off the railroad on that section, I want to get the Benchwork Committee started on the benchwork for the new area on the outside of the third peninsula, that will replace what's there from Bryant City to the end of Boston staging. We also have to extend the trolley line out behind the steel mill to get to the new section mentioned above.



Before ending this for this month, I want to thank everyone who is working on the railroad, as the person responsible for overseeing the construction of the railroad it means a lot to me to see the progress being made in several areas, Thanks to all of you.

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

Fred Lockhart
Chief Engineer

DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

Jim Ferris brought a nice D&H RS11 by Atlas, in the famous "lightning-stripe" scheme. A decoder had been installed years ago and now the lights didn't work. After trying a "factory re-set", which didn't work, Paul checked out the wire connections at the board and found some "errant" strands of wire, which could have contacted the ground and/or power leads and shorted out the light functions (read: "let the smoke out" of the decoder, as far as

auxiliary functions). We checked both LEDs, too, and they did not work, so Jim replaced the board with a DH165AO and new LEDs to heat-shrink around the light tubes. With the new board, it was not necessary for him to worry about installing resistors for the LEDs, as the new boards include a resistor for LEDs or one mini-bulb for each direction. The power connections were properly heat-shrunked, so there was no way of cross-over of power to the wrong contacts. He also brought two new Bochmann locos, which he programmed on the DCC Test Track: a CPR SD40-2 (they owned the most) and a cute, little Mogul painted DL&W. He had a productive evening!

Brendan Sheehan returned to the clinic scene, after being away for quite a while with a foot injury, and brought a new Walthers "Evolution"-series loco, ES44, dressed in the famous BNSF "Pumpkin" livery. Inside, he found a 9-pin plug, like Athearn, and plugged in the DH126D, which worked just fine. There is lots of room to tuck the wires, too. Another "happy camper"!

Ed Carter brought one of the nice Broadway Limited PRR P70 coaches, which includes lights. He wanted this car to be the end of his train, so it needed "markers". Tomar has "just what the Dr. ordered", with their new LED markers—no more worrying about blowing out mini-bulbs, when you use LEDs. After finding the proper connecting places on the factory light board, he was able to cut into the power leads from the trucks. He used the supplied "bridge-rectifier" and resistors and was able to squeeze the markers between the vestibule doors and first set of windows. Looks nice on the back of the train...all red and green!

Barry Doland brought a Bochmann 70-tonner, which he got off the WET, and which he will name "C&L", which is his "home road name". After taking apart the trucks, he found old lubrication, which seemed worse than no having any...gets gummy and pasty. So, he cleaned the gears and re-lubed with proper Labelle products. Later, he found that some of the gears were "cracked", like happens with Athearn and P2K Geeps. He will have to look into obtaining replacement gear sets for this unit.

Ed Bulman brought one of his older switchers, a Walthers SW-1, dressed in SP grey and red. He found, surprisingly enough, that this model maybe wasn't as old as he thought, because it came with

an 8-pin socket. After removing the dummy plug, he plugged in a DZ123PS decoder and away he went, complete with working, reversing lights.

Last, but not least, was our old friend, and former member, **Ross Hall**. Tonight, he brought an old Stewart FTA&B-units dressed in B&M maroon and gold. With Paul's help, he hard-wired the DH126D and used the new "warm white" Nano LED headlight, which comes pre-wired with rectifier and resistor for AC or DC voltages from 7-19.

Thanks to **Paul Cutler III** for all his assistance with the clinic. **Our next Clinic** will be **Thursday, April 4th**. Sign-up sheet on Bulletin Board. All are welcome!

SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

MARCH 2014 (5 years ago)

- Cedar Hill passenger terminal operating in time for Show.
- Demolition crews start on preparation for rehab of Springfield Union Station.
- First new PATH station platform opened at World Trade Center, since 9/11 attack.
- Central Maine & Quebec Rwy begins operation over bankrupt Montreal, Maine & Atlantic tracks, which it bought at auction in January.
- Keolis North America awarded \$2.6-billion, eight-year contract to manage, operate and maintain MBTA Commuter Rail.
- Amtrak president and CEO Joe Boardman receives "Railroader of the Year" award from Railway Age mag.
- Changchun Railway Vehicles Co., the largest maker of transit and rail passenger cars in the world, plans to build 126,000-sq.-ft. rail car assembly plant on 40-acre former Westinghouse site in Springfield, MA.
- Worcester gets 9 more weekday round-trips to Boston, upping the total to 20.
- BNSF plans to add 500 locomotives and 500 new employees during the year, as business is "booming".
- With the purchase of MEC Pacific #470 from the City of Waterville, New England Steam Corp. looks to raise \$100,000 to move the locomotive to a sheltered location for restoration.

MARCH 2009 (10 years ago)

- New RR station opens in Saco, ME, replacing 135-year-old structure.
- CSX closes Framingham yard, moving operations to new yard in E. Brookfield, MA.
- MBTA introduces "Next Train" LED boards technology at North & South side Commuter stations.

● Surface Transportation Board clears way for NS and Pan Am Railways joint venture called "Pan Am Southern"

● BNSF takes delivery of first ES44C4 loco and ES44AC, with only four of its six axles powered.

● Trolley line named "South Shore & Boston Street Railway".

MARCH 2004 (15 years ago)

● New Hampshire Northcoast RR receives replacement power for GP9s, in the form of ex-Conrail GP38-2s.

● MBTA buys ex-Ohio Central GP40 for switching.

● Amtrak donates F40 #307 to North Carolina's Transportation Museum in Spencer.

● Edaville RR's parent, Cranrail Corp., put into Chapter 7 bankruptcy. Edaville operated by Delli Priscoli's "Caboose Entertainment".

● Funding for Fall River/New Bedford Commuter Rail considered 5 years away.

● MBTA agrees to install quad gates at some Greenbush Line crossings.

MARCH 1999 (20 Years Ago)

● Old Middleton Yard from Weymouth installed in Bldg. 51, with 6-foot-extension inserted in the middle.

● Washington County RR of Montpelier, VT becomes part of New England Central RR.

● Amtrak unveils new high-speed train for Northeast Corridor and names it "Acela".

● Amtrak and VIA Rail Canada offer "North American Rail Pass".

● State signs contract with Cape Cod Central to run tourist and dinner trains.

● MBTA rehabs 1944-era PCC trolleys for service on Mattapan-Ashmont "high-speed trolley line".

MARCH 1994 (25 Years Ago)

● Bob Knapp voted into membership in SSMRC.

● Amtrak prohibits smoking on all non-overnight trains.

● Rumors of BN and Santa Fe merger.

● \$11-million auto distribution center planned for E. Brookfield on Conrail mainline.

● 125th anniversary of Cog Railway, with new museum opening at Base Station.

MARCH 1989 (30 Years Ago)

● Northampton St. station of Orange Line "E1" donated to Seashore Trolley Museum in Kennebunkport, ME.

● MBTA orders first "double-deckers", with Kawasaki to build 75 cars.

● Amtrak announces new Philly to Atlantic City service.

● Study begins on restoring Commuter Rail to Worcester

MARCH 1984 (35 Years Ago)

● BN reopens Stampede Pass line, due to congestion through Cascade Tunnel.

● VT Historical RR starts tourist train from Bellows Falls to Chester, VT, taking over where Steamtown left off, with its move to Scranton, PA the previous year.

● North Abington depot destroyed by arsonist.

● MBTA acquires GP9s from BN.

● C&NW's massive Chicago terminal to be torn down for high-rise office building.

● VIA Rail moves out of CPR's Montreal "Windsor Station" consolidating trains in CN's "Central Station".

Commuter trains continue to use Windsor.

● *Gulf Coast Limited* inaugurated for service during New Orleans World's Fair.

● UP scraps DD40X locos, preserving one.

● BC Rail receives first of GF6C electric locos from EMD, for Tumbler Ridge electrification.

● Scranton Hilton Hotel opens in old Delaware, Lackawanna & Western station in Scranton, PA.

● N&W "J" class loco #611 named "National Landmark" by American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

● MBTA adds 30 trains to 84 already feeding into South Station, many using unpopular ex-GO Transit (Toronto) single-level cars with bus interiors.

● "Berkshire Scenic Railway" of Lenox, MA, is newest tourist line to open in New England.

POTPOURRI

UNITED RAIL, Inc. has acquired the New England Southern Railroad (NES) in Concord, New Hampshire. United Rail, a short line consolidator and owner of the SmartRail brand for electronic precision railroading and brand licensor, announced the acquisition late last month. "Our plan is to consolidate the smaller and sometimes overlooked short lines and consolidate them under the United Rail banner," said United Rail Chief Executive Officer Michael Barron in a press release. The acquisition of NES fits United Rail's plan to "aggressively" grow in other markets, he added. "With the inclusion of NES under the United Rail umbrella, we now have a presence in the Northeast, an area where we feel there are great growth opportunities," Barron said. A short line operator, NES provides rail transportation services such as transloading, private industrial rail-car switching and rail-car storage. The company leases and operates 22 miles of rail line in the Concord area. (PR)

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A PIECE OF RIO GRANDE'S famous, long-dormant Tennessee Pass route saw freight traffic on it again briefly on Monday, February 25th. A pair of BNSF Railway units pulled a train of some 130-plus stored coal hoppers from Spikebuck, Colo., about five miles west of Parkdale, Colo., where Royal Gorge Route tourist trains terminate. The cars have been stored for years, and having been sold, were on their way to a new owner. Rio Grande's Tennessee Pass line has been out of

service since 1997 following Union Pacific's takeover of the combined Rio Grande and Southern Pacific systems. It was deemed surplus, given the Rio Grande's mainline west of Denver and UP's own original route across the Rockies at Sherman Hill, Wyo. The rails of Tennessee Pass are still in place for future use, and for a few moments yesterday, a short section felt the passage of steel wheels once more. (TN)



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THE DEED IS DONE. GE Transportation and Wabtec are now a single, merged company. In documents released on February 25th, officials with the combined company expect Wabtec Corp.'s divisions to earn about \$8.4 billion in revenue producing locomotives and parts, mining equipment, heavy-duty diesel engines, railroad components, information services, and transit systems. "We are very excited to complete the merger of our two companies," Raymond T. Betler, Wabtec's president and CEO, said in a statement. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to bring together nearly four centuries of collective experience to create a technologically advanced leader with a highly complementary set of capabilities to move and improve the world." GE Transportation will now be called Wabtec Freight, but will retain its headquarters in Chicago and its current CEO, Rafael Santana. The group will also include the Wabtec Freight group, which makes track and freight car components. Wabtec will keep its global headquarters in Wilmerding, near Pittsburgh, though a Transit group will be headquartered in Paris. Wabtec President and CEO Ray Belter will stay on as Wabtec chief and work as interim transit leader. The finality of the merger is bittersweet in Erie, Pa., which has hosted one of GE's plants for more than 100 years. Locals tell the Erie Times-News that they hope for the future but fondly remember generations of well-paid

work making locomotives for the world. The merger combines two of the longest standing business of former competitors General Electric and Westinghouse, whose 19th century founders, Thomas Edison and George Westinghouse battled for dominance in industrial progress during their lifetimes. While GE is famous for locomotives and prime movers, it has expanded its expertise to include software for freight applications and locomotive control. Wabtec has branched out from air brakes and electrical controls to a menu of parts for new-built and refurbished freight cars and locomotives, as well as positive train control systems. Most Class I railroads and several large commuter railroads now use Wabtec's I-ETMS systems. (TN)



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AMTRAK HAS INFORMED federal, state and local officials along the route of the daily *Southwest Chief* that, with the enactment of the recent full-year funding bill by Congress, it *will* provide matching funds to enable a federal grant to be awarded for safety and reliability upgrades on the train's route in Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico. Earlier this month, Congress passed and the President signed into law the [fiscal year] 2019 Appropriations Act, which included critical funding for Amtrak and intercity passenger rail. The legislation set aside at least \$50 million of its National Network grant for improvements to the *Southwest Chief* route. Amtrak is using \$3 million of these funds to match a \$16 million grant successfully sought by these states, counties and cities and awarded to Colfax County, N.M. The grant and matching funds from the partners will result in an investment of more than \$26 million. (TN) In other words, Amtrak finally agreed to keep their end of the bargain, that was agreed upon last fall! -Ed.

●●●●●●
A NEW COMMUTER RAIL station has opened in Boston. The Blue Hill Avenue stop, on the Fairmount Line, opened in Mattapan, at the end of last month. The station took two years to build and cost \$16.9 million. (PL)

●●●●●●
ONE OF THE MOST UNIQUE steam locomotives ever built is hitting the road this month to mark the 150th anniversary of the world's first cog railroad. A cosmetic restoration of the Mount Washington Cog Railway's first mountain-climbing steam locomotive – dubbed "*Old Peppersass*" because of its similarities to a hot sauce bottle – was recently

completed in New Hampshire and will start a three-city tour of the Northeast. Locomotive No. 1 will make stops in Philadelphia; Scranton, Pa.; and Washington, D.C. Afterwards, the locomotive will come home to the White Mountains for a summer of celebration on the world's oldest mountain climbing railroad. (TN)

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THE MBTA HAS UNVEILED the first of 10 rebuilt F40PH locomotives for its commuter rail service. The Boston Globe reports that the program, costing about \$3 million per locomotive, will extend the life of each unit about 20 years. Positive train control equipment has been added as part of the refurbishment, along with other safety equipment. The F40PH-3C locomotives are being rebuilt by Motive Power Inc. in Boise, Idaho. All 10 are expected to be in service by September of this year. What that means for customers," MBTA General Manager Steve Poftak said, according to



the Globe, "is there's going to be greater reliability in terms of fewer breakdowns

and more reliable trains. ... This was one of the lowest performers and we expect it will be one of the highest performers now." (TN) Photo by Wayne Johnson.-Ed.

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FEDERAL LEGISLATION has changed the status of perhaps the most significant railroad historical site in the United States. Also affected is the Golden Spike Historic Site, which under the new bill, will be re-designated as a National Historical Park. According to Lee Lonsberry, a spokesman for Congressman Rob Bishop, one of the sponsors of the bill, Golden Spike's designation will be similar to the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park in Ohio and Women's Rights National Historical Park in New York. "The world was changed when those two railroads came together; the world was changed when man took flight; the world was changed by women's suffrage. These parks recognize those areas that have significant historical significance," Lonsberry said. The bill, which enjoyed bipartisan support in Congress, passed by a margin of 363-62, and will now go to President Donald Trump's desk, where it is expected to be signed into law. The legislation

previously passed the Senate by a 92-8 vote. Bishop originally introduced legislation to re-designate Golden Spike Historic Site to national park status in 2018. He filed the bill in the 149th anniversary of the completion of the nation's first transcontinental railroad. The status change elevates the visibility of the park and is expected to boost tourism at the site. A 150th Anniversary celebration is planned at the park in May to commemorate the completion of the transcontinental railroad. (TN)

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THE CALIFORNIA HIGH SPEED Rail Authority responded strongly on March 4th to a Federal Railroad Administration intent to cancel funding and seek the return of federal grants, calling it "unwarranted, unprecedented, and harmful" to the state and nation. Those were the words of Brian Kelly, CEO of the authority, in a statement accompanying the two letters in response to the FRA's announced plan to cancel \$929 million in funds and seek the return of another \$2.6 billion in grants. In a 10-page letter to Jamie Rennert, director of the Office of Program Delivery at the FRA, Kelly responded to each of the points laid out in the FRA notice. A separate letter to Administrator Ron Batory emphasized that "Governor Newsom is committed to building a transformative, visionary high speed rail project in full compliance with federal grant requirements." Kelly also stated that the authority is "making progress" and has "met its commitments" in accord with the terms of the federal grants. Kelly outlined the state's commitment to completing a high speed rail link from downtown Bakersfield to Merced as an early operating segment. He warned that termination of federal funding would put at risk 2,600 jobs in the Central Valley and impact 488 small businesses that have worked on the project. "It is hard to imagine how your agency — or the taxpayers — might benefit from partially constructed assets sitting stranded in the Central Valley of California," Kelly wrote. "This infrastructure legacy would be a travesty forever." Sean Jeans-Gail, vice president of policy for the Rail Passengers Association in Washington, told *Trains News Wire* that they hoped the U.S. Department of Transportation would approach California's response "with an open mind." But, he added, "It certainly seems like they had already made up their mind on which way the project was trending based on their initial letter." (TN)

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AN EFFORT TO ESTABLISH "ONE SEAT" train service from New York City to Berkshire County in Massachusetts took a large step forward recently, when the group overseeing the effort issued a 40-page report calling for a two-year pilot program to begin in 2020. The *Berkshire Flyer* would start as a seasonal, weekend train running between New York Penn Station and Pittsfield, Mass. The key connection point would be Amtrak's Albany-Rensselaer, N.Y., station, where the north-south Empire Corridor connects with the east-west line to Boston. One train would run from New York to Pittsfield on Friday, and another would run the opposite way on Sunday. The service would run from Memorial Day through Columbus Day weekends. A ticket would cost about \$70 each way. The pilot project grew out of a desire to boost tourism in the western part of Massachusetts, says state Sen. Adam Hinds, D-Pittsfield. "One priority has been linking the region with regional economic centers," Hinds says. The area is home to attractions such as the *Tanglewood* music venue and the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art. Berkshires officials had for years contemplated establishing passenger service to New York City using Housatonic Railroad tracks that run from Pittsfield through Connecticut, Hinds says. Estimates to bring the line up to code for passenger rail service were \$300 million. About two years ago, Hinds says he learned that since Amtrak connects Pittsfield to Albany- Rensselaer through the daily Lake Shore Limited, it might be possible to use those tracks to run trains that would continue to New York City. He introduced legislation in 2017 directing the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to create a working group to study the feasibility of service that would use Empire Corridor tracks as the backbone for service to Pittsfield. "They reported back that it was, in fact, feasible, would be beneficial economically, and would require no new capital investment for the infrastructure," Hinds says. (TN)

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THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE subcommittee on railroads is calling on Amtrak's CEO to thoroughly explain the "human error" that caused a major service breakdown at Chicago Union Station last month, disrupting plans for an estimated 100,000 Amtrak and Metra passengers. U.S. Rep. Dan Lipinski (D-Ill.) also wants to know if Amtrak contemplates reimbursing those who had to pay for alternate means of commuting home. Chicago media reported that ride-sharing services Uber and

Lyft were charging stranded Metra commuters as much as \$125 as a result of "surge pricing." Lipinski has given Amtrak CEO Richard Anderson until the end of March to respond to nine detailed questions concerning the Feb. 28 incident that brought service to a halt for more than 12 hours. One of the questions, which has been posed repeatedly by rail passengers, tech experts, and other public officials, is why did Amtrak decide to launch a software upgrade on the computer server that controls the dispatch control system at the station during the morning rush hour? Normally, experts say, upgrades are launched overnight or on weekends to minimize the harm from a system crash, which is what Amtrak said occurred. Lipinski also demanded to know how an Amtrak employee ended up "falling (into) or colliding with" the circuit system, an incident which has been reported as a contributing factor to the fiasco. (TN)

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THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S proposed 2020 budget calls for refocusing Amtrak on routes of less than 750 miles and would slash discretionary funding for the U.S. Department of Transportation by 21.5 percent, a decrease of \$5.1 billion. "Simply put, Amtrak trains inadequately serve many rural markets while not serving many growing metropolitan areas at all," the plan states. Instead, the administration envisions a partnership between Amtrak and bus operators to serve rural areas and requests \$550 million in "transitional funding" to help states take over these routes. Grants to Amtrak for the Northeast Corridor would also be cut in half from \$650 million to \$325.5 million. There is no funding for the Gateway Tunnel project. In all, the budget's \$1.49 billion in Amtrak funding represents a 22 percent cut from the 2019 figure of \$1.9 billion. The Capital Investments Grant program, which funds commuter rail, light rail, and streetcar systems along with bus rapid transit and ferries, would be cut by \$800 million. In general, the budget seeks to shift much of the responsibility for transportation project to state and local entities. "The 2020 Budget continues certain important transportation infrastructure investments," the document states in its summary of the DOT, "but in a way that also recognizes that the federal government is not — and should not be — the primary funder of the nation's transportation systems." (TN) So, what about the Interstate Highway System being a "national transportation system...who paid for that?-Ed.

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SHORT LINE OPERATOR Genesee & Wyoming is seeking an investment partner or considering the outright sale of the company, according to a published report. G&W, which operates 120 railroads in North America, Europe, and Australia, is in early talks with potential suitors, including Toronto-based Brookfield Asset Management, Bloomberg reported. Brookfield Infrastructure Partners has deep pockets and is one of the world's largest owners of transportation and utility infrastructure, including railroads, ports, and toll roads. The company could easily buy G&W outright if it wanted to, says independent rail analyst Anthony B. Hatch of ABH Consulting. G&W, whose stock market value is around \$4.9 billion, has a history of growth through acquisition of short line and regional railroads. The company did not score any deals in 2018, however, as prices rose and made potential acquisitions unattractive. "They have said that the same high valuations that make it near impossible for them to continue to buy assets also make their very own assets more valuable," Hatch says. G&W executives have said that they would consider finding an investment partner for large acquisitions, Hatch says. The Carlyle Group, a private equity firm, invested \$350 million in G&W in 2012 to help fund G&W's \$2 billion acquisition of RailAmerica, for example. Fortress Transportation & Infrastructure Investors aims to sell the Central Maine & Quebec this year, CEO Joe Adams told an investor conference last week. Why? Short lines prices are no longer attractive, making future acquisitions unlikely, and the CM&Q is an odd duck as the lone remaining railroad in the company's portfolio. Fortress bought the former Montreal, Maine & Atlantic out of bankruptcy in 2014 in the wake of the Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, oil train disaster. (TN)

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TWO CONGRESSMEN HAVE ANNOUNCED plans for legislation that would force the federal government to produce a "doomsday" contingency plan in the event of a major failure of Amtrak's aging tunnel under the Hudson River. Reps. Peter King (R-N.Y.) and Josh Gottheimer (D-N.J.) announced their plans Monday at New York's Penn Station. The Associated Press reports the legislation is sparked by frustration over slow progress in building a new tunnel to connect New York and New Jersey. The proposed \$13 billion tunnel is part of the Gateway Project to upgrade the Northeast Corridor. "This is being slow-walked by the [Department of Transportation]," King said. The

two congressmen hope the legislation will bring more attention to the project, which has been stalled during the Trump administration. The two tubes of the existing tunnel, which opened in 1910, are used by roughly 200,000 passengers a day. The tubes were damaged by saltwater flooding during Superstorm Sandy, and could require extensive repairs within a decade. If one tube is shut down, it will reduce peak-hour service by 75 percent. "Just give us a plan," Gottheimer said. "... We think this will actually just keep ratcheting up the pressure to get it done." (TN)

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GENESEEE & WYOMING'S Providence & Worcester Railroad plans to reopen 8 miles of state-owned rail line in Hartford, Wethersfield, and Rocky Hill in April. The north end of P&W's Wethersfield Secondary, which last carried trains 11 years ago, is part of the former New York, New Haven & Hartford Valley Line that connected Hartford with Old Saybrook. The portion of the line that is being reopened has been mostly dormant since 1982, when Conrail stopped serving it. For about four years ending in 2008, Providence & Worcester ran a weekly train from Middletown to Hartford and return, hauling construction and demolition debris cars to exchange with Connecticut Southern Railroad in Hartford. P&W has continued to serve a lumber customer midway on the line in Rocky Hill, running trains north from Cedar Hill Yard near New Haven, through Middletown. Most P&W Middletown-area traffic has made a lengthy roundabout routing via Worcester, Mass.; Groton; and New Haven. Genesee & Wyoming now both P&W and Connecticut Southern. G&W expects the shortened routing for Middletown-area freight will enable Connecticut-based business to decrease the travel time of shipments and allow for a much more competitive and improved supply chain. In 2018, Genesee & Wyoming spent \$750,000 upgrading the 16 miles between Middletown and Hartford, replacing 12,000 ties and adding 500 tons of ballast. Further right-of-way cleanup is scheduled for this spring. (TN)

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TRUCK DRIVERS IN GEORGIA will now be routed around a troublesome railroad crossing, thanks to a near-collision this month between a Norfolk Southern freight train and a manufactured home stuck on the tracks. On March 8, a portion of a manufactured home being shipped through Temple, Ga., became stuck on a grade crossing at milepost 675.6 along Norfolk Southern's busy

Atlanta-to-Birmingham, Ala., mainline. Approaching westbound NS freight train 187 was able to stop just short of striking the stranded home, coming just feet from plowing through the structure. Temple Police Lt. James Hollowood tells *Trains* that GPS routing is to blame for the incident.



A Norfolk Southern train stopped within feet of striking a modular home stuck on railroad tracks in Georgia on March 8.

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THE RAPID TRANSIT LINE in the nation's capital was brought to a stand-still thanks to an unconventional, yet patriotic, rescue mission. Crews rescued an injured Bald Eagle found lying along the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority rail line in the afternoon of March 13th. According to Metro's Twitter account, the eagle was found near Morgan Boulevard, and train traffic was shifted in order to coordinate the rescue operation. When animal control personnel arrived, they were taken by train to the area where the eagle lay injured. The rescue team of eight people recovered the eagle just before 4 p.m. Wednesday, and it was turned over to City Wildlife in Washington, D.C. By 4:05 p.m., train traffic was being restored on all tracks and in both directions.



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THE \$13 BILLION HUDSON RIVER TUNNEL project, aimed at building a new rail tunnel between New York and New Jersey, is again facing funding problems after federal authorities announced a rating that means the project remains "ineligible for critical grant funding." The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) released ratings March 15 for infrastructure projects throughout the U.S. Those ratings determine what funding sources are available to any given project. According to the Associated Press (AP), the agency rated the Hudson River tunnel project at medium-low, which gives the project the same rating the FTA gave it months ago. FTA guidelines mandate that projects

with the medium-low rating are ineligible for Capital Investment Grants, AP reports said. The tunnel project partners, who include New Jersey Transit, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and Amtrak, have been working to secure such grants, but the project remains ineligible for the funding. The existing 106-year old tunnel is owned by Amtrak, with both NJ Transit and Amtrak operating about 450 trains during each weekday through the tunnel. FTA documents explain that in addition to safety and reliability concerns, the project is also intended to preserve the current functionality of Amtrak's NEC service and NJ Transit's commuter rail service. New Jersey Democratic Sen. Bob Menendez reportedly said he believes the latest rating is "ludicrous," AP reports state. New York and New Jersey Democratic congressional delegations have also suggested that the Trump administration may be intentionally holding up funding for the tunnel for political purposes. At the same time, the federal Department of Transportation (DOT) has reportedly said the project requires additional financial commitments from both of the states. "The U.S. DOT is further delaying this critical infrastructure project and putting the region and the entire national economy in jeopardy," said New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo in a statement. "Only a dysfunctional Washington could reject \$6 billion in state funding to rebuild federally-owned tunnels, which are in dire condition." (RA)

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AT LEAST \$232 BILLION NEEDS to be invested during the next 10 years in public transit, according to a report released this week by the American Public Transportation Association. The study draws from three sources. A U.S. Department of Transportation infrastructure status report, issued in 2015, identifies an \$89.8-billion backlog of spending needed just on state of good repair transit projects. APTA also includes \$51.2-billion worth of projects in the pipeline, awaiting funding under the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grant program. Then, the DC-based trade association surveyed its members, asking them to identify other unfunded priority projects. Not all transit agencies responded, but the 55 that did named 169 additional projects total \$91 billion, bringing the total to \$232 billion. (TN) Ya...that'll happen in this country. Not!-Ed ☹

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THE MBTA WILL HOLD THREE PUBLIC meetings in the coming weeks to gather input about

the future of Boston's historic Mattapan-Ashmont High Speed Line. Earlier this year, MBTA officials announced that they want to replace the Mattapan line's aging Presidents' Conference Committee streetcars with more modern light rail vehicles in the next decade. On Monday, the 18th, MBTA announced the dates of three meetings where the public can learn more about the proposal: March 27 at ABCD Mattapan Family Service Center, April 2 at the Milton Council on Aging, and April 4 at the Lower Mills Branch Public Library in Dorchester. All three meetings start at 6 p.m. 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. (TN)

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TWO AMTRAK PACIFIC PARLOUR CARS will soon join Steam Railroading Institute's passenger car fleet. The cars were built as Santa Fe Hi-level lounges by the Budd Co. in 1956 and used until last year by Amtrak on the *Coast Starlight*. They are set to become "Pere Marquette Parlor" first class cars on the Institute's popular North Pole Express holiday excursions behind 2-8-4 No. 1225, the engine that starred in the Polar Express movie and books. (TN)

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NEW JERSEY COMMUTERS can expect cancellations and delays this summer for a lack of qualified locomotive engineers. After taking a tour of NJ Transit's Emergency Operation Center in Maplewood, N.J., earlier this month, New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy told media members present that having just eight graduates in May from engineer training will not offset engineers being diverted from regular commuter operations to test positive train control. Another factor in the shortage will be engineers taking summer vacations. At the conclusion of the tour, NJ Transit Executive Director Kevin Corbett indicated to the press that potential problems will continue until 25 to 30 engineer-trainees graduate by October. Reduced service since June 2018 was dictated by a smaller number of available engineers. Retirements, PTC

installation needs and those who left NJ Transit before the end of 2017 to work elsewhere meant full schedules for its rail lines were impossible. (TN)

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THE MBTA HAS ASKED AMTRAK about the possibility of leasing electric locomotives for testing on its commuter rail service, Joseph Aiello, chairman of the Fiscal and Management Control Board that oversees the MBTA, mentioned the request at recent event, but an MBTA spokesman said the discussion is in its early stages. "The Authority has had preliminary discussions with Amtrak about leasing electric locomotives," spokesman Joe Pesaturo told the Globe. "The scope of such a pilot and the equipment needed to operate it is yet to be determined." The paper reported that Amtrak would not confirm that discussions had taken place. The MBTA's commuter trains are diesel powered, even on electrified lines. Officials are reviewing whether some or all lines could be converted to electrified service as part of a study of the commuter system. (BG)

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

TRAINS

Rocky Domes Ready to Roll
Main Street of the Northwest
Northern Pacific RR

In My Own Words
Portrait of a Road Foreman

RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

Ladder Track System
MODEL RAILROADER
Build the N-scale Canadian Canyons
An Industrial Area in 4 X 12 Feet
DCC Corner
Automating routes and ladders with DCC



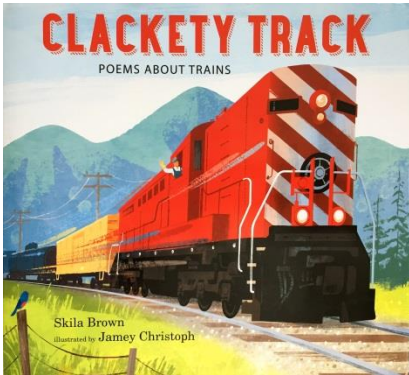
News sources: Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Trains Newswire, Railway Age, Progressive Railroading, Railpace, RRE "Callboy", "The 470", Patriot Ledger, Wall Street Journal, The Sun Chronicle.

BOOK REVIEW

By Savery Moore

Clackety Track – Poems about Trains by Skila Brown,
Illustrated by Jamey Christoph Candlewick Press, Somerville, MA

I know quite a few of our club members have grandchildren (and in some cases children) who



are at that “impressionable” age, where the love of trains can be nurtured. While a trip to our model railroad club, or having a small train layout in the basement, can go a long way toward developing

that affinity to railroads, there are other paths to impart the passion we all share. One of these ways is through books.

A friend of mine, who knows of my lifelong interest in trains, recently sent me a very nice children’s book about railroads, entitled “Clackety Track – Poems about Trains.” This large-format book is filled with colorful illustrations, with accompanying poetry. What first impressed me about the book was that it covered myriad different railroad-related themes, from the basic “steam engine” and “freight trains,” to the less common “sleeper,” “subway,” and “ballast cleaner.” The poetry itself is clever, and relates well to the illustrations. At the end of the book is a spread that gives unique facts about railroads against the silhouettes of various freight cars.

I showed the book to a few of our members, and they all thought it was a book that they would enjoy reading alongside their younger family members. They felt that the words in the poems were sophisticated enough to have children ask questions and that, in turn, would make the reading time educational, too. There was also a common theme of “having my grandchild on my knee while going through the book page by page.” I think this book would appeal most to those children in the 4-8 year-old range, but the illustrations are certainly shareable with those who are younger. There are enough different themes of railroading to pique the

interest of young minds, and keep a child’s attention.

The book hit the shelves on March 12th, and can be purchased online on sites such as Amazon (Amazon Smile, in our case!) and Barnes and Noble, and can also be purchased at bookstores nationwide.

I highly recommend “Clackety Track – Poems about Trains” for anyone who has young people in their families - especially those children who need an introduction into the wonderful world of trains.

EDITOR’S NOTES

1. **Bryan Miller** thanks everyone who brought in “goodies” for “**Jack’s Red Tail Café**” and who helped serve during the Show and Open House this month. As usual, there were lots of delicious items to choose from and our sales were a great success!
2. **Thanks to everyone** for participating and helping make our Spring Show and Open House a great success. **Over 1400 paid admissions** over the two days! Another great job of organizing and production by Show Chairman Jack Foley!

..... *David N. Clinton*

“You are the light of the world.” Matthew 5:14

MEMBER NEWS

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

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

Dave Galbraith April 3rd
Chip Mullen April 7th
Bob Knapp April 8th
Skip Burton April 13
Rick Pearson..... April 20th
Al Gray April 21st
Jack Doyle April 27th

RUNNING EXTRA

Joe Boardman, former Amtrak president, dies

By [Bob Johnston](#) | March 7, 2019, [Trains Magazine](#)



Joe Boardman, Amtrak's second-longest-serving CEO, on a Southwest Chief inspection trip in 2016.

Joseph H. Boardman, Amtrak's second-longest-serving president and CEO, died on March 5th. Boardman, 70, suffered a stroke, while vacationing with his wife and family in Florida. A U.S. Air Force Vietnam veteran who served as New York State Transportation Commissioner for 8 years beginning in 1997, Boardman was named Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration in 2005. He became familiar with Amtrak operations while sitting on its board of directors as the Department of Transportation's representative, and was named in 2008 to succeed Alexander Kummant as the company's ninth non-interim president.

His eight-year tenure was surpassed in duration only by W. Graham Claytor, Jr. (1982-1993). During his time as CEO, Boardman initiated equipment purchases of 70 Siemens ACS-64 electric locomotives for the Northeast Corridor; 130 Viewliner II baggage, baggage dorm, sleeping, and dining cars (though he was troubled by CAF, USA's repeated production failures); and 28 Alstom Avelia Liberty electric trainsets that are to replace Northeast Corridor Acela Expresses beginning in 2021.

Boardman championed Amtrak's efforts to encourage state and local community grant applications to help pay for needed infrastructure improvements along the *Southwest Chief's* route. Although he was criticized for not acting on

efficiency and mobility improvement recommendations to other long-distance routes, such as converting the *Sunset Limited* and *Cardinal* to daily operation, Boardman told *Trains* in an interview last September that there was no way he could convince Amtrak's board at the time to find and spend the necessary money on the national network.

Boardman had been outspoken about the direction current Amtrak management was taking the company since his departure in September 2016 [see "Boardman talks to *Trains*," March 2019]. In retirement, he became sharply critical of his successors' jettisoning of institutional knowledge with management buyouts, food service downgrades, and attempts to weaken the performance of long-distance trains.

"He was very hands on with employees and respected their expertise," one current Amtrak employee tells *Trains News Wire*. Recently-retired car attendant Lou Drummeter, a 32-year Amtrak veteran, traveled with Boardman on business car *Beech Grove* during dozens of inspection trips and facility visits. "He believed in boots on the ground — getting out on the railroad to see the operation and listening to employees," Drummeter says. The car was always positioned on Superliner trains adjacent to a transition dorm; when passing through the train Boardman encouraged employees to come back to tell him what was on their mind. "With Joe, you could always speak freely," recalls Drummeter. "And when he had tough decisions to make, you could see his angst."

Boardman is survived by his wife, Joanne, three children and several grandchildren.

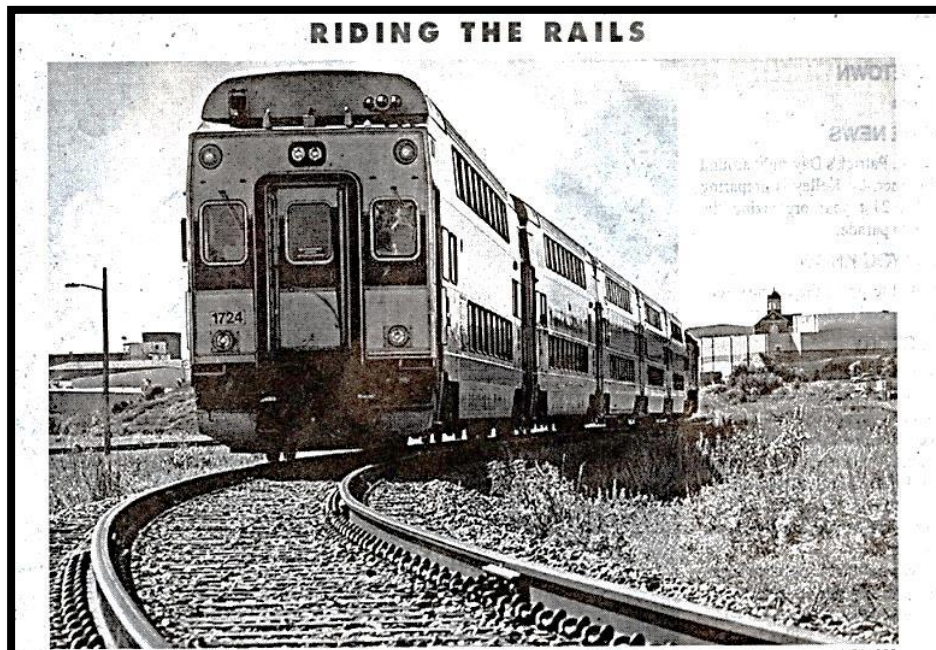
About the status of Amtrak P42DC locomotive No. 42, the "Salute to Veterans" diesel named for Joe Boardman: Amtrak spokesman Marc Magliari reports that the locomotive is currently at Amtrak's Beech Grove (Ind.) Heavy Maintenance Facility. It is not



currently

serviceable but is being used as a training vehicle for the passenger railroad's electricians. "You know how strongly he felt about the importance of Beech Grove and the people who work there," said Magliari, "so it is appropriate that the locomotive is there." Boardman was indeed known for his support of the Beech Grove facility, and in the wake of his passing, there are any number of stories on the internet about how he would go out of his way to interact with rank-and-file Amtrak employees, both there and elsewhere.

The future of the locomotive, part of a group delivered from GE Transportation between December 1996 and February 1997 is unknown. But with Siemens Charger locomotives already having replaced a number of P42s in regional service, and more Chargers on the way for long-distance service, there may not be a compelling reason to return it to service. The locomotive received the special paint scheme in 2013. It was dedicated to Boardman in a September 2016 ceremony at Washington Union Station, following his retirement from Amtrak. Added below the cab windows was the message "Amtrak Honors: Joseph H. Boardman, President and CEO 2008-2016, U.S. Air Force Vietnam Veteran."



■ The MBTA \$10 weekend commuter rail pass began as a pilot program in June 2018.

Fare is fair: MBTA makes permanent \$10 weekend commuter rail pass

By Joe Difazio
THE PATRIOT LEDGER
3-15-19

BOSTON

There was at least one silver lining to the bemoaned MBTA fare hikes announced earlier this week. In addition to raising train fares, the MBTA's Fiscal and Management Control Board also made permanent a \$10 unlimited weekend commuter rail pass. The \$10 pass allows riders to take as many trips as they want on any weekend on all commuter rail line trains, beginning with the first scheduled ride Saturday until the last one on Sunday. "This is a tremendous bargain," said Richard Prone, a Duxbury representative on the MBTA

Advisory Board. "It's cheaper than driving and it's great for families and other people."

The unlimited-trip pass program began as a six-month pilot program in June 2018 which was later extended. The MBTA said 180,000 passes were sold in the first six months of the pilot, making up 23 percent of all weekend sales.

During the initial pilot, weekend ticket sales were 4.6 percent higher than the same period in 2017, according to the MBTA. The transit authority noted that the direct year-to-year comparison wasn't perfect due to some weekend construction issues. "The MBTA is pleased that many people have responded favorably to the \$10 weekend fare,"

MBTA General Manager Steve Poflak said in a statement Thursday. "We thank the Fiscal and Management Control Board for its support of this initiative as we continue our efforts to grow ridership on the MBTA."

The MBTA breaks commuter rail prices into 10 zones. Riders who start or end their trip at stations farthest from Boston pay the highest prices. The MBTA said the \$10 weekend passes were used most by those traveling to and from Zone 8, which on the South Shore includes Kingston and Plymouth on the Kingston-Plymouth line. The other South Shore commuter line, Greenbush, doesn't extend past Zone 6.

While weekends fares will remain inexpensive

for commuter rail riders, weekdays will become more expensive. The MBTA approved a 5.6 percent overall hike in fares beginning July 1. For commuter rail users, one-way fares will increase 25 cents for zones 1 and 2, 50 cents for zones 3 through 7 and 75 cents for zones 8 through 10. Monthly passes were also increased respective to zone.

One-way subway rides went up 15 cents, but local buses were unaffected.

The only ride on the MBTA that got cheaper was Hingham/Hull ferry service to Logan Airport, which dropped from \$18.50 to \$9.75 for a one-way ticket. Tickets for the ferry from Hingham and Hull to Boston went up 50 cents to \$9.75.