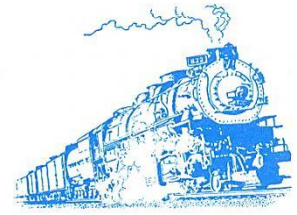


# The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

## NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



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DECEMBER 23, 2019 ■■■■■■■■■■ VOLUME 39 ■■■■■■■■■■ NUMBER 12

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*Season's Greetings from the  
Semaphore Staff!*

# The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief



## CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Southeastern Massachusetts.....	Paul Cutler, Jr.
“The Operator”.....	Paul Cutler III
Boston <u>Globe &amp; Wall Street Journal</u> Reporters	Paul Bonanno, Jack Foley
Western Massachusetts.....	Ron Clough
Rhode Island News.....	Tony Donatelli
“The Chief’s Corner”.....	Fred Lockhart
Mid-Atlantic News.....	Doug Buchanan

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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 12 ■■■■■ DECEMBER 2019

## 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 ('21)
.....	Gary Mangelinkx ('21)

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**ON THE COVER:** “For two decades, 1930-1950, this magnificent Mountain Type, oil-burning locomotive was used by the Great Northern Railway to serve the Northwest. Here, in the pre-dawn light of a cold winter morning, this handsome train from an era long past rolls through a small station in western Montana. Let us share a moment to reminisce, knowing that times change and we with time, but not in the ways of friendship.” (Leanin’ Tree Publishing Co. Christmas card. Painting by Howard Fogg)

## FORM 19 ORDERS

### DECEMBER B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, December 30<sup>th</sup> 8 p.m.

### DECODER & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP

Thursday, January 2<sup>nd</sup> 8 p.m.

### JANUARY BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup> 8 p.m.

### ANNUAL HOLIDAY AUCTION

Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup> after Business Meeting

### SCOUT & FAMILY NIGHT OPEN HOUSE

Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup> 6-9 p.m.

### JANUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Saturday, January 18<sup>th</sup>

### AMHERST RAILWAY SOCIETY TRAIN SHOW

January 25 & 26 – “BIG E” West Springfield

### JANUARY B.O.D.

Monday, January 27<sup>th</sup> 8 p.m.

## CONTESTS

Congratulations to our Applicant **Dick Grimm** on winning this month's 50/50 raffle!



**For the January contest**, by tradition, prizes will be 2020 Railroad Calendars supplied by those who enter the contest—kind of a “swap”. So, when you're ordering your RR calendar, why not add an extra for donating to the contest? Here's the Contest question:

**Name the famous Viaduct: a blind arcade cavity wall railroad viaduct built in 1834-35, that is still in daily use by a railroad.** When completed, it was the longest and tallest railroad viaduct in the World and, today, is the last surviving viaduct of its kind. Answer sheets in train room or any paper with correct answer will work. Don't forget your name and good luck!

## CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

Picking up where we left off last month with progress on the railroad, the largest project is the new bench work that will be installed in the space that the Boston staging yard occupies. It has grown from sixteen feet in length to forty feet. There will be an



accommodation to separate the unit into shorter sections for easier handling, for when it comes time to move it into place. We are starting to lay out the track centerlines and will be starting on the sub-roadbed shortly. Our goal is to have this new section operational before we install it into the existing railroad, so we can limit the down time to the railroad and focus on the re-connections. The Scenery Committee has mocked up a mountain behind the steel mill out of a web of cardboard strips to show their idea of replacing the curved backdrop of the steel mill with the mountain scene. It also helps to hide the service aisle and blends very well with the scenery proposed for the area where the Larson Branch and the narrow gauge go through the wall. They are still working on the Cedar Hill area as well as the area near “Knapp's” trestle. Bob England has re-built a turnout on the Larson Branch where the narrow gauge enters its yard. It has always been problematic and now is very smooth through the turnout. On the trolley line, a switch block and roadbed has been installed for the future car barn.

I want to acknowledge Jim South's passing; He left his family and his fellow club members 'way to soon. We all will miss him. Rest in peace Jim, rest in peace.

Fred Lockhart  
Chief Engineer

## DCC & EQUIPMENT TUNE-UP CLINIC

**Our next Clinic** will be **Thursday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>** and we will be following an “**every second month**” schedule from now on. Sign-up sheet on Bulletin Board. All are welcome!

## SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

**DECEMBER 2014** (5 years ago)

- Berkshire Scenic RR takes delivery of locomotive and cars for start of service out of North Adams.
- Norfolk & Western “J” #611 has new flue sheet installed as restoration to operating condition continues.
- Bombardier, the maker of Amtrak's *Acela Express*, decides not to bid on next-generation trains for Amtrak.
- Amtrak's Vermonter begins service on new line, ex-B&M CT River main through Northampton and Greenfield, as route switches from NECR through Amherst.

● Amtrak's new Viewliner Baggage Cars shipped from CAF USA plant in Elmira, NY. Carry three-stripe paint scheme of the 1980's (phase III) and include "Amtrak America" logo.

● Federal government pledges \$1-billion to help finance expansion of Green Line from Cambridge to Medford.

● Weekend service on the Greenbush and Plymouth/Kingston lines returns after 2 ½-year absence.

● Edaville RR owner Jon Delli Priscoli tells Boston Business Journal he has pumped \$25 million into Carver attraction to get the theme park "back on track".

**DECEMBER 2009** (10 years ago)

● CPR's famous "Spiral Tunnels" celebrate 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of opening.

● Mass and CSXT reach agreement for Mass Coastal RR to take over freight rail activities on former CSXT South Coast lines, being purchased by the state.

● Amtrak plans to replace AEM7 "Mighty Mouse" electrics.

● NMRA and California State Parks sign agreement to develop 3,500-sq.-ft model railroad exhibit at the California State RR Museum in Sacramento.

● Florida legislature supports bill to construct "SunRail" commuter rail in central Florida.

● MBTA receives \$10.2 million to upgrade Fitchburg Commuter Rail line.

● G&U completes trackwork and starts preparation for development of 22-acres in West Upton.

● Mr. Washington Cog Rwy puts loco #3, "Agioncochook" on Ebay.

● Digitrax offers up-date of older throttles to DT402D.

**DECEMBER 2004** (15 years ago)

● Ex-QBT SW9 #20 purchased by New England Southern for Bow Power Plant switcher.

● Ex-B&M Pacific #3713, undergoing rehab at Steamtown planned for 2007 steam-up.

● Phase I of *Flying Yankee* restoration completed by Claremont Concord Shops.

● MBTA halts payment for Breda-made Green Line trolleys, due to numerous problems.

● Intermodal volume tops 10 million trailers and containers in U.S. for the first time.

● New England Automotive Gateway opens in East Brookfield, along CSX main (ex-B&A).

● Amtrak mothballs re-built "Turboliners".

● KCS agrees to acquire control of Mexico's largest railroad, Grupo TFM.

**DECEMBER 1999** (20 Years Ago)

● Worcester's restored Union Station dedicated.

● Amtrak rebuilds three F40PH locos into "Cab-baggage" cars for Portland, ME service.

● Canadian Pacific operates first "Holiday Train" tour of Canada to support Canadian Food Bank.

● Repair/rehab of the Cape Cod Canal railroad bridge at Buzzards Bay gets final approval.

● Demolishing of RTE 128 station (eastbound side) begins.

● Conway Scenic RR steamer Prairie #108 loaded onto two flatbed trailers for trip to new owner in Texas.

● EMD's London, Ontario shop begins work on largest locomotive order ever—1,000 SD70s for the U.P.

**DECEMBER 1994** (25 Years Ago)

● Amtrak's "Superliner II" cars begin delivery.

● "Silver Bullet Ski Train" runs again from Portland to Bethel, ME, on STL&A Railway.

● Union Pacific attempts to take over Santa Fe in \$3.6-billion "hostile bid".

● MassCentral intermodal business booming; completes \$400,000 facility near Palmer for plastic pellets.

● MBTA approves \$47 million contract with Modern Continental for the Middleboro Old Colony Line.

● MBTA plans to build 1,000-car parking garage in Mansfield, MA.

● Work to begin widening top of Canton Viaduct, to allow two high-speed trains to pass each other on the Viaduct.

● Central Vermont sold to RailTex, Inc. of Texas for \$40 million.

● Maine Narrow Gauge Museum runs first passenger train along Portland's waterfront.

Inaugural runs of London-Paris train through the "Chunnel" under English Channel.

**DECEMBER 1989** (30 Years Ago)

● Crumbling concrete ties made by San-Vel of Littleton, MA, found on Amtrak, Metro-North and CSX tracks 2-year-old ties supposed to last 50 years.

● MBTA ends use of Budd RDCs, after 37 years of service.

● Guilford files for abandonment of the "Lower Road", ex-MEC from Augusta to Brunswick, ME.

● Last train runs on North Stratford RR in NH.

● MBTA study finds feasible an extension of Commuter Rail from Framingham to Worcester.

● P&W buys new office in Worcester and moves headquarters from Woonsocket, RI.

● French National Railroad breaks World speed record with TGV train reaching 299.7 MPH.

● Northampton Street Orange Line "El" station moved to Seashore Trolley Museum, mainly by barge.

**DECEMBER 1984** (35 Years Ago)

● New Red Line stations at Porter Square and Dave Square open.

● White Elephant commission rises from 10% to 15%.

● Atlas introduces first plastic RS3, with drive made by Kato in Japan.

● Union Pacific begins installing device called "Trainlink" on last coupler of train, in order to do away with cabooses. (The first "FRED"-Ed.)

● Transfer of Alaska RR from Federal to State ownership scheduled for January 5, 1985,

● High trestle in Greenville, NH on ex-B&M Greenville Branch torn down.

● Chrome Crankshaft in Illinois rebuilds ex-New Haven FL9 locomotives for Connecticut D.O.T.

● CV signs contract to haul wood chips to country's first power plant to burn them in Burlington, VT.

# POTPOURRI

**THE MOST IMMEDIATE** threat to railroads is not autonomous trucking but electric powered trucks, which will arrive much sooner and will be significantly cheaper to operate than diesel rigs. That's the conclusion of transportation consultant Rod Case, a partner at Oliver Wyman who spoke at the RailTrends 2019 conference. "We would like to reinforce the issue is not the driverless truck," Case says. "The issue is competing on the energy inputs and the rate this gets adopted." (TN)

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**THE COMPANY INTERESTED** in buying Union Pacific's dormant Tennessee Pass line through the Colorado Rockies would do so to provide a more direct route for grain shipments from eastern Colorado and Kansas, according to the company's lawyer. Colorado Pacific Railroad, which bought the former Missouri Pacific Towner Line in eastern Colorado, notified Union Pacific of its interest in buying the former Denver & Rio Grande Western line earlier this month, and UP said it would entertain offers. Attorney William Osborn said Colorado Pacific owner Stefan Soloviev "is taking this step because a substantial portion of the time, eastern Colorado and western Kansas grain producers will get better prices if they ship using the shortest railroad route to the West Coast, instead of the Texas Gulf Coast, for the export market ... This is part of a continuing effort to open up eastern Colorado farm ground to west coast and pacific export markets for wheat and milo." (TN)

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**CANADIAN NATIONAL ANNOUNCED** today that it has successfully met the federal requirement to operate positive train control on all 35 of its U.S. subdivisions required to be equipped with PTC. This important achievement comes 13 months ahead of the December 2020 deadline. (TN)

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**PULLING OUT TRAIN TRACKS** is like removing the spine of the economy. That's what several people expressed during a Laconia (N.H.) City Council meeting. City officials want to remove train tracks in favor of extending a recreational trail. Ben Clark, president of Plymouth and Lincoln Railroad, was one of many expressing opposition to the move. The Plymouth and Lincoln Railroad pay \$100,000 in fees to the state of New Hampshire

every year. Clark says a study done by Stone Consulting revealed many of the passengers that ride the Plymouth and Lincoln Railroad boost the region's economy through retail purchases. The WOW Trail Committee, however, has its own numbers. According to an Alta Planning & Design report, a completed trail in place of tracks would generate \$6.3 million annually. Plymouth and Lincoln Railroad would still be able to take passengers to Meredith (from The Weirs) and Lincoln. However, the railroader would lose its connection to the main line track, which runs through New Hampshire and beyond. The WOW study also revealed it would be less expensive to pull the track rather than run a trail alongside of it. The WOW Trail is currently 8 miles long, but there are 10 miles worth of gaps, including a 4-mile section between Lakeport and The Weirs. The Aeronautics, Rail and Transit for the New Hampshire Department of Transportation owns the railroad corridor and controls what happens in it, and is in opposition of the trail extension. At the end of the night the Laconia City Council agreed to table the discussion of the track so it could review both studies. (RA) Another case of "Rails to trails" going overboard without consideration of the future—the organization has become a "monster".-Ed.

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**THE COMPANY OVERSEEING** the embattled Iowa Pacific railroads has requested that the Massachusetts Coastal Railroad be placed into receivership. The Massachusetts Coastal, also known as the Mass Coastal, operates freight and passenger service on Cape Cod and nearby portions of southeastern Massachusetts. It was the only Iowa Pacific railroad not to be placed into receivership earlier this fall when it was revealed the company owed millions of dollars to numerous creditors and contractors. A company or property is placed in receivership to protect the assets of an organization when it cannot meet its financial obligations or enters bankruptcy. On Nov. 26, Nova Advisors, the receiver appointed earlier this year, filed a motion in U.S. District Court to have Iowa Pacific's "Massachusetts assets" placed in bankruptcy protection, along with more than two dozen other companies already in receivership. It is expected that the judge will approve the motion at an upcoming hearing. The "Massachusetts assets" also include companies associated with Massachusetts Coastal, including Cape Rail, Inc. and the Cape Cod Central Railroad. According to

court documents, Massachusetts Coastal has been operating independently of Iowa Pacific since 2018 and that a minority partner, railroad president and chief operating officer Christopher Podgurski, has recently made an offer to purchase the entire railroad. Nova Advisors was appointed receiver over the railroads earlier this fall and, according to officials close to the railroad, is managing Iowa Pacific's day-to-day operations. Iowa Pacific founder and former president Ed Ellis is no longer with the company. Mass Coastal is one of three Iowa Pacific railroads where operations are continuing as normal despite the company's legal troubles. The others are Colorado's San Luis & Rio Grande and Oregon's Mount Hood Railroad. (TN)

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**PIECE BY PIECE**, Canadian Pacific wants to reacquire routes it cast off east of Montreal two decades ago. In November, CP said it would acquire the 401-mile Central Maine & Quebec, a deal that includes former CP trackage from Montreal to Maine and a link with Irving-owned short lines that reach the Port of Saint John, New Brunswick, via former CP trackage. Now CEO Keith Creel has hinted that CP would be interested in purchasing its former route to Quebec City as well. Creel did not name the railroad in Quebec, but was likely referring to the 301-mile Quebec Gatineau Railway that G&W acquired from CP in 1997. It links Montreal and Quebec City with the Ottawa, Ontario, area. The only other G&W property in Quebec is the Saint Lawrence & Atlantic, the former Grand Trunk route from the Montreal area to Portland, Maine. It connects with Canadian National outside of Montreal. CP would only be interested in purchasing connecting short lines, Creel says. Creel also said there are former CP routes in the U.S. that the railway may be interested in bringing back into the fold. None of the potential short line acquisitions would equal the potential of the CM&Q deal, which gives the railroad access to deep water ports at Searsport, Maine, and better access to Saint John, Creel says. The CM&Q deal is exciting because it will offer shippers a competitive option into Saint John for the first time in 25 years, Creel says. Saint John is the busiest port in Eastern Canada, Creel notes, and CP's route across Maine is significantly shorter than CN's. CP will invest to bring the 25-mph CM&Q up to CP main line standards. (TN)

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**FROM TOWNS OF 900 PEOPLE** to large cities in the U.S. and Canada, each November and December, the Canadian Pacific *Holiday Train* continues its annual run to help combat hunger, and provide some entertainment along the way. The arrival of the train, decorated with glowing holiday scenes and writing, can be a big event for towns, and the food banks that serve them. "We use it as our holiday event. We bring Santa Claus in, and give chili and hot cocoa away to people who bring a donation," says DeeAnn Bilben, a member of the Hankinson, N.D., Commercial Club, which coordinates the event in Hankinson. As with all other stops on the CP train's route, people are asked to donate a non-perishable food item or cash. There are actually two trains that make the trip each year. One goes through parts of Canada, and the other travels through the U.S. The project has been running since 1999 and has gathered nearly \$12 million in monetary donations and generated 4.5 million pounds of food in those 19 years. In 2018, the monetary donations were nearly \$1 million, while people donated 200,000 pounds of food along the train's route. A big part of preparing for the runs is installing the lights and decorations on the cars. Each year, the railroad tries to add some new decorations in with the ones it uses regularly, says CP representative Andy Cummings. At each stop, there is also a short concert by country-music themed bands. (TN)

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**THE MBTA** and its Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB) today accepted a report from the MBTA Safety Review Panel that offers 34 recommendations with 61 corrective actions to improve safety for MBTA riders and staff. The panel, commissioned by the FMCB in June after a series of derailments and other safety incidents, comprises 3 nationally recognized experts in transit safety: former US transportation secretary Ray LaHood; former Federal Transit Administration acting administrator Carolyn Flowers; and former NYC Transit president Carmen Bianco. "While the agency performs the necessary core functions to be considered a relatively safe system, many aspects of the T's approach to safety and operations need immediate attention," the report states. "In almost every area we examined, deficiencies in policies, application of safety standards or industry best practices, and accountability were apparent." MCB Chairman Joseph Aiello praised the Safety Review Panel's 63-page report. "I want to personally thank

Secretary LaHood, Carolyn Flowers, and Carmen Bianco for their diligent, thoughtful, expert work. The findings are significant, the recommendations are far-reaching, and the report provides a roadmap of the actions we need to take to ensure a best in class safety culture.” Chairman Aiello added: “For the past 3 years, we have been advancing safety through our investment in repairing aging tracks, signals, and power systems through the State of Good Repair program. It is, in a very real sense, a safety program. The Safety Panel’s report underscores that we also need to invest in the operating managers and workers who operate these systems to instill a culture that makes safety our highest priority.” MBTA General Manager Steve Poftak said, “The MBTA has been working aggressively to improve safety across the board, and we have already implemented or begun implementing many of the recommendations of the Safety Review Panel. This has been a constructive and collaborative process that focuses on the highest priority of the T, the Control Board, and the SRP: Making the T a world leader in transit safety while we provide reliable, dependable, attractive service every day to our 1.3 million riders.” (RA)

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**THE FINAL VERSION** of a defense funding bill in Congress would ban federal funding for transit equipment from Chinese companies — but would also delay that ban for two years in most cases. The final draft of the defense bill, created in a conference of House and Senate members, must still pass both houses of Congress and be signed by President Donald Trump. (TN)

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**EARLIER THIS MONTH**, the much anticipated battery powered locomotive from Wabtec made its first trial run on the test track near Erie. The locomotive is the first unit to rely mainly on batteries for propulsion and the first such unit to enter domestic mainline service. Identified as GECX 6000, it is built to BNSF Railway specifications including the C4 truck. Once testing is complete in the next few months, observers expect it will wear Wabtec demonstrator colors. (TN)

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**UNION PACIFIC** says it has completed positive train control implementation by activating the final segment of track requiring the safety system. More than 17,000 miles of the railroad are now operating with PTC in 22 states. (TN)

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Ridership on the MBTA’s new service from its Gillette Stadium station is well under the target figure to retain the pilot program. Through seven weeks, an average of 70 people per day are using the station, state Department of Transportation spokeswoman Lisa Battison, who said the program needs more time: “Given that the Foxborough pilot service is less than two months old, it’s too early to determine if or when the pilot would be made permanent, though staff continues to closely monitor the pilot’s progress.” The 11-month trial program began Oct. 21, with 210 passengers per day as the average needed to consider the pilot program a success.

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**FARE GATES ARE COMING** to Boston’s three busiest commuter rail stations in an effort to improve fare collections. Keolis Commuter Services, which operates the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority’s commuter trains, will install the gates at North Station, South Station, and the Back Bay station in 2020, with North Station likely to receive the gates first. Those three stations are where about 90 percent of all commuter trips begin or end. A Keolis spokesman told the Globe the company is still determining how the gates would be placed, with an eye toward using the placement to manage crowds. The addition of the gates — already used on MBTA subways — will mark a change for passengers used to dealing with ticketing once onboard their trains, and could be an obstacle for those rushing to catch trains at the last moment. “People will have to slightly adjust their behavior,” Keolis spokesman Justin Thompson told the newspaper. “It certainly is a change, and we’re confident passengers will adapt. We hear from passengers all the time that fare collection is important to them.” (TN)

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

**TRAINS**

Going Big

In My Own Words

Maine Central

**RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN**

Shipping Butane by Rail

Collector Consist

P2K’s first loco: the BL2

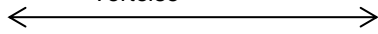
**MODEL RAILROADER**

Planning a Realistic Freight Car Fleet

Stretching Structure Proportions

Ask MR

How do I color a riverbed and tint water?



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

## EDITOR'S NOTES

1. This is a **happy time of the year**, and a **sad one**, also, considering the loss of three long-time members in the past four months. My wish to you is a Merry Christmas and may the year 2020 be a better one for us all—Happy New Year!
2. The **deadline for the January** Semaphore will be one week early—the 18<sup>th</sup>—due to the Big Train Show at the "Big E", where we have tables to promote the Club, the following weekend; our normal publishing weekend.
3. 20 members enjoyed "**Junk Food Jollies**" at the editorial offices on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to everyone who attended and to Doug Buchanan and Al Taylor for sharing their fun RR slides. Thanks for all the donations to JFJ, too. Everything was delicious!

..... *David N. Clinton*

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:55)

## MEMBER NEWS

Long-time member **Jim South** passed away on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Our condolences to Alice and his family on this sudden and sad loss. (An "In Memoriam" will be in next month's newsletter.)

Our thoughts and prayers for a speedy recovery to **Coley Walsh**, who has ten treatments to go, before being evaluated for his brain cancer.

**Bill Garvey** continues to move between the Brockton VA and West Roxbury VA, depending on the treatments that he needs. We continue to keep

you in our thoughts and prayers and wish for a speedy return to "the fold"!

Note: The "Health & Welfare Committee" (Ye Ed.) would like to hear of any member who is ill or hospitalized, so that we can help "cheer them up" and keep their fellow members advised.

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

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

Paul Cutler III .....	January 7 <sup>th</sup>
Ed Carter.....	January 20 <sup>th</sup>
Jesse Collins.....	January 20 <sup>th</sup>
Mark Hall.....	January 21 <sup>st</sup>
Eric Tedeschi .....	January 25 <sup>th</sup>



## RUNNING EXTRA

