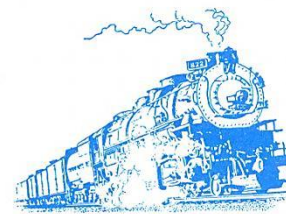


The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



FEBRUARY 22, 2021 ■■■■■■■■■■ VOLUME 41 ■■■■■■■■■■ NUMBER 2



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. ©2021
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VOLUME 41 ■■■■■ NUMBER 2 ■■■■■ FEBRUARY 2021

CLUB OFFICERS

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Chief Engineer.....	Fred Lockhart
Directors.....	Bill Garvey ('22)
	Bryan Miller ('22)
	Roger St. Peter ('21)
	Gary Mangelinkx ('21)

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ON THE COVER: The inaugural run of Amtrak’s *Lake Shore Limited* #449 on Halloween 1975. South Station; Tail Sign; shirt button; rounding curve into Ashland on another day; Eastbound #448 inaugural servicing at Albany-Rensselaer, NY.

FORM 19 ORDERS

FEBRUARY B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, February 22nd 8 p.m. on Zoom

MARCH BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, March 1st 8 p.m. on Zoom

FREE TRAIN RUNNING (Show CANCELLED)

Saturday, March 13th 11 a.m.- 4 p.m. (No lunch)

MARCH NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Saturday, March 20th

MARCH B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, March 29th 8 p.m. on Zoom

CONTESTS

For the **May** Business Meeting, we have a favorite word-find contest from Al Taylor, "Amtrak IV". We are going to have a new puzzle in the Feb-Apr issues, so you will have four chances of winning the drawing in May, if you enter each! This month's is "Amtrak V". Extra copies available inside the Train Room and don't forget your name. Good luck!

CHIEF'S CORNER

Fred Lockhart

Railroad Progress

This past month we have finished the track work on the new section and the electrical feeders have been finished, also. Very shortly, we will be splitting the bench work into two pieces, as we did for the last show, with the longer section placed up on tables and stabilized so all the work that is needed on the underside can be done while standing or sitting in a chair. The Electrical Committee is really happy with this decision and, as the person installing the switch motors for a while now; it will be a lot easier than on a creeper.

New Products testing

Paul Cutler III has been testing a Rapido Uncoupler at the end of the Boston staging yard. He mentioned his work in last month's Semaphore in the "What have you been doing" section. After trying different spacers between the uncoupler and the underside of the ties, he has got it to "delay" the couplers pretty consistently, so we will be installing them on the new section after we determine the best spots.

I have recently purchased a Rapido switch motor to test; it is round and so, like their uncoupler, it fits into a drilled hole and can be accessed from above for adjustment or replacement. The turnout I recently installed on the trolley line to service a future car barn would be difficult to use a Tortoise machine on and worse to access for future service, so we will test it out and let you know what we think.

New Projects

Mike Dolan has taken on the project of building the bridges for the track that will crossover the Boston Division on the new section we are building. As part of the planning stage, he has made a mockup of the two bridges and set them in place for evaluation.

Bob England is installing working grade crossing flashers in Essex Junction; on the area he did the scenery on a while ago. It is one of the features that got left to do later--keep going, Bob, with some Tortoises you can make the gates go up and down.

Moving Forward

In the next couple of months, or so, I hope we can see a more "normal" start to return at the club so we will have more accomplished in a shorter time. But, believe me, I am very thankful for everyone who has found time in these uncertain times to get done what we have.

That is it for this month. As always, your questions or comments are always welcome.

Fred Lockhart
Chief Engineer

SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

FEBRUARY 2016 (5 years ago)

- Saratoga & North Creek RR plans increase in dining car services on route.
- MBTA opens new South Acton station.
- Long freights with "distributed power" becoming the norm on many Class 1 roads.
- After 10-year, \$15-million rehab, The Flying Scotsman returns to the rails. The first locomotive in the World to be recorded at 100-MPH.
- First "Tier 4" low-emission locomotives, EMD F125 "Spirit", delivered to Southern California's Metrolink.
- First new Metro (Montreal) cars since 1970s enter service.
- Keolis reports it lost over \$29-million during first year of its contract to provide MBTA Commuter Rail service.
- First "Trains 'n Touchdowns" held Saturday before the Superbowl.
- "Layout Place names" survey being accepted for future vote by members.

FEBRUARY 2011 (10 years ago)

- Amtrak re-paints P42 "Genesis" loco into historic Phase III scheme to commemorate Amtrak's 40th B'day.
- Amtrak joins NJ Senators to advance plan to build new trans-Hudson tunnels to Penn Station, NY.
- Great Smokey Mtn. RR purchases ex-Belfast & Moosehead Lake Swedish-built 4-6-0 and pass. Cars.
- "Solari Board" in New Haven station to be replaced with high-tech digital; going to Danbury RR Museum.
- FL Gov. Rick Scott shuts down state's plan for high-speed rail between Tampa and Orlando; returns "stimulus funding".
- CSX spends \$100 million revamping yard in Worcester; plans to close Allston Yard.
- NJ begins reconstruction of 7-miles of "Lackawanna Cutoff" trackage between Port Morris and Andover.
- MBTA leases four MARC GP40WH-2s from Baltimore area commuter rail.
- Member Vic Vogel dies suddenly.

FEBRUARY 2006 (15 years ago)

- Old South Weymouth RR station moved away from tracks; restored and opened as "General store".
- Grafton & Upton RR for sale @ \$2-million.
- Maine D.O.T. agrees to allow "Downeast Scenic RR" to operate on 29-mile portion of ex-MEC Calais branch.
- "Charlie Card" arrives at Red Line subway line.
- Four new owners take over operation of Cape Cod Central RR, one of whom is John Kennedy.
- Construction begins on new "transportation center" in Warwick, RI, including RR station and "people mover" between station and T.F. Green airport.
- Fore River Transportation takes delivery of ex-Conrail GP38-2 from Juniata Shops in Altoona, PA.
- New Hampshire lawmakers turn down proposal to spend state money to help run *Downeaster* stations in New Hampshire.
- Wilton Scenic RR Budd RDCs (ex-BC Rail) sold to Old Colony & Newport RR.
- MBTA plans to close Ayer and Shirley stations and build consolidated station in Devens. (Never happened)
- Rapido Trains of Canada announces it will produce R-T-R plastic, lightweight passenger cars in HO scale, with super-detailed underbodies and interiors.
- Ford closes auto unloading facility in Ayer and signs 10-year lease to unload cars at old GM plant in Framingham.
- Three locations named by vote on ECL: "White River Jct.", "Richmond Mills" and "Bethlehem Tower".

FEBRUARY 2001 (20 Years Ago)

- Temporary wall comes down, which had divided last 1/3rd of building; work starts on that section.
- BAR in financial difficulties and looking for buyer.
- Running out of loco numbers, UP negotiates a new reporting mark: UPY.
- Alaska RR ends unusual "Whittier Shuttle", where cars were driven onto flat cars and passengers remained in them for trip between Whittier and Anchorage.
- Lionel announces transfer of manufacturing from Michigan to China, after 100 years of USA-made.
- Famous RR photographer O. Winston Link dies.
- Amtrak retires its last two FL9s: #485 & #486.

FEBRUARY 1996 (25 Years Ago)

- Amtrak's Beech Grove Shops convert Heritage coaches into mail-express cars.
- EMD builds locomotive plant in Scotia, NY.
- Wisconsin Central begins operating Britain's Rail Express Systems Ltd.
- Green Mountain RR RS-1 donated to Danbury Railway Museum, leaving #405 as last of original Rutland RR fleet.
- Amtrak's AutoTrain begins carrying motorcycles.
- Amtrak ends naming trains on Northeast Corridor.

FEBRUARY 1991 (30 Years Ago)

- MBTA approves design of type-8 streetcars, which will replace Boeing-Vertol LRVs.
- Bombardier to build 86 new Red Line cars, which will replace Pullman-Standard "Bluebirds".
- Conrail pays \$460,000 in damages for destroying famous "Coca-Cola" sign, that was a city landmark at the Allston bottling plant, where a large hotel is now located.
- New D&H owner Canadian Pacific plans to spend \$50-million to upgrade railroad property.
- Horseshoe Curve in Altoona, PA, closed for the year, in order to build new "visitor center".
- Gov. Weld signs \$4.4-billion transportation bond bill, supporting restoration of all three Old Colony Lines.
- Amtrak introduces "Air-Rail Travel Plan", in conjunction with United Air Lines.

FEBRUARY 1986 (35 Years Ago)

- Show admission rose to \$2 from "traditional" \$1.
- Restoration of Old Colony Lines getting "hot", with MBTA planning to end service at Braintree Red Line, with "across platform" transfer.
- Amtrak's Adirondack re-routed from Montreal's Windsor Station (CP) to Central Station (VIA Rail), ending intercity service from Windsor Station.
- MBTA purchases 50 new trolleys from Kinki-Sharo & Co. of Japan.
- France and Britain announce agreement to build \$3.3-billion rail tunnel under English Channel.
- Guilford closes Mechanicville and Oneonta, NY yards.

FEBRUARY 1981 (40 Years Ago)

- Kurt Kramke (H) joins SSMRC.
- MBTA runs "Ski Trains" on Saturday mornings from North Station to Fitchburg.
- Editor purchases used mimeograph machine, in order to "run off" copies.
- Spring Show at Saint Jerome's Church in N. Weymouth on Saturday only; Club open both days.

POTPOURRI

SCALETRAINS.COM[™], Inc., a leading manufacturer of HO and N Scale model trains, announced the acquisition of M.T.H. Electric

Trains® HO Scale and S Gauge tooling assets. “MTH is recognized as a leading manufacturer of HO scale steam locomotives. The purchase of MTH’s HO products also allows us to broaden our product line into passenger cars, track, and more. We believe there is an opportunity to grow the S market as well.” said Shane Wilson, President of ScaleTrains.com. The acquisition includes steam and diesel locomotives, freight cars, and track in both scales. The HO tooling also includes turbine and electric locomotives, subway sets, passenger cars, and more. Engineering schematics for several all-new steam era HO projects were also received as part of the agreement. Both scales are being melded into ScaleTrains.com umbrella of brands including Rivet Counter™. Several molds have been transferred to the ScaleTrains.com factory and testing is already underway. Over the next few months design will begin to convert the models to accept the ScaleTrains.com motor and change to ESU-LokSound® electronics including DCC & sound. The first models are expected to be available in 2022. (Announced at Amherst Railway Society virtual Show)

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THE SENATE CONFIRMED on February 2nd, by a vote of 86-13, Pete Buttigieg as the 19th Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation. “I’m honored and humbled by today’s vote in the Senate—and ready to get to work @USDOT,” Buttigieg, 39, tweeted on Feb. 2. Buttigieg’s nomination cleared the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation by a 21-3 vote on Jan. 21st, just over a month after being selected by then President-elect Joe Biden. Buttigieg tweeted the same day that he looked forward to working with the Committee as “we get to work on infrastructure and building our economy back better.” He is the first Senate-confirmed LGBTQ Cabinet Secretary. Expected to report to Buttigieg are former New York City Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, who has been tapped as U.S. Deputy Secretary of Transportation, as well as Amit Bose and Nuria Fernandez, who the Biden Administration recently appointed as Deputy Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Deputy Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), respectively. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA), American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA), Amtrak, Association of American Railroads (AAR), Railway Supply Institute (RSI), and New York MTA are among those in the industry that have voiced their support of Buttigieg. (RA)

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UNION PACIFIC’S presidential commemorative locomotive, SD70ACe No. 4141, will arrive at the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and



Museum in College Station, Texas, this spring following approval of a lease that will allow the

museum to expand. The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents approved a \$1-per-year lease to allow a 2-acre expansion of the facility, making room for additional displays including the locomotive and a former Marine One helicopter. (TN)

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BALTIMORE & OHIO RAILROAD No. 51, the first Electro-Motive Corp. streamlined diesel locomotive, was placed on display in the B&O Museum’s historic roundhouse on Jan. 29 following completion of the locomotive’s restoration. The 1937 EA model set the standard for art deco



locomotive design by EMC, which later became the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors that lasted for three decades.

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WHILE INTERMODAL’S ROLE in boosting North America rail volume has been in the spotlight, grain traffic has also been impressive. Canadian National and Canadian Pacific have set a series of records for Canadian grain tonnage, but global trade in U.S. grain particularly that destined for China has far exceeded what was predicted in the first half of 2020. The U.S. surge began materializing as soon as the 2020 harvest was under way. By mid-November, business journal Forbes reported, “U.S. [soybean] exports to China were up 34% when compared to the previous September.” Hellenic Shipping News, which covers the maritime industry, reported in December that China was the third-largest buyer of U.S. wheat in 2020-21, with the week ending Dec. 17 marking the fifth straight week importing more than 60,000 metric tons. An agricultural trade journal and the USDA reported China has total commitments for 2.2 million metric

tons of U.S. wheat, up from just 200,000 metric tons in 2019.

During October 2020, 73% of U.S. soybean exports went to China, the sales figure of \$3.5 billion coming very close to the previous monthly record of \$3.51 billion set in November 2013. The USDA now expects total U.S. soybean exports for 2020-21 to reach nearly 61 million tons. More than 1 million tons was shipped to China in the first week of FEBRUARY 2021 alone. (TN)

●●●●●●

A NEW HAVEN, VT, railroad station dating to the 1850s may have to be torn down to make room for planned Amtrak service because it is too close to the railroad tracks. The building, owned by the Vermont Agency of Transportation, has been identified as a safety risk for planned Amtrak operations to Burlington, Vt., because of its proximity to the tracks. The building's tenant, Roundtree Construction, has been told it must vacate in June, and any effort to move the building



would have to occur by this fall — which could be cost-prohibitive, especially on such short notice, although an effort to save

the building is underway. The structure, built for the Rutland & Burlington Railroad, is believed to have been built in approximately 1852-53, although an exact date is unknown. (TN)

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DEVELOPMENT WORK is nearing completion in central England for a prototype Very Light Rail system drawing on design and component expertise from the auto industry. The project aims



to build an autonomous rail-based streetcar system in the British city of Coventry by 2024, which along with nearby Birmingham is one of the main centers of the UK auto industry;

Marques such as Jaguar and Land Rover are made locally. Coventry wants a light rail system to reduce the number of cars and buses on its streets but decided it could not afford a conventional system due to the high construction costs for both track and vehicles. The Very Light Rail system aims to offer the benefits of a conventional streetcar line for

a small city like Coventry, but without the cost. Very Light Rail has been defined by its designers as less than one metric tons of vehicle weight per linear meter of the vehicle (in U.S. terms, think one ton per yard, although the conversion is not exactly equivalent).

Plans are for the first route to be double track and around 9 miles long, using a fleet of 20 VLR cars, each able to carry around 70 people (20 seated). The VLR cars, weighing no more than 17.6 short tons (16 metric tons) fully laden, will be battery-powered using lithium titanate batteries, chosen as the most stable and safest lithium battery. The VLR cars will recharge their batteries at the end of each trip using an overhead charger system already widely used in Europe for electric buses; the recharge process will take no longer than 2 or 3 minutes. (TN)

●●●●●●

ALSTOM'S ACQUISITION of Bombardier Transportation became effective last month, creating a company with 75,000 employees in 70 countries with revenue of about 15.7 billion Euros (\$19.06 billion) and an order backlog of 71.1 billion Euros (\$86.3 billion). In a press release, Alstom CEO Henri Poupart-Lafarge says completion of the acquisition creates "a new global leader centered on smart and sustainable mobility" that can help the world "address the great challenges of urbanization, equal opportunity to economic development, and climate change ... Our responsibility, tighter with the 75,000 people of Alstom today, is to transform our unique set of assets created by this transaction into the enabler of the necessary transformation." (TN)

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A VERMONT ENTREPRENEUR who bought and refurbished a set of Budd RDCs in hopes of launching a commuter rail service in the state is now looking for funding to converting one of the cars from diesel to Tesla battery power. AllEarth Rail, founded by environmental entrepreneur David Blittersdorf, has applied for a grant from the state Department of Environmental Conservation to convert one of the company's 12 RDCs to electric power. The funding would come from Vermont's share of the settlement between the U.S. and Volkswagen over the automakers' violation of pollution laws. The application seeks a \$198,840 grant for a conversion estimated to cost \$284,200. (TN)

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A BIPARTISAN GROUP of Maine state legislators have proposed funding for a feasibility study to examine the possibility to extend rail passenger

service to Bangor. The proposal would examine the cost of infrastructure improvements, station locations, and projected ridership if service is extended northeast from Brunswick, the current northern terminus of Amtrak's *Downeaster*. Similar proposals have failed in the past, most recently in 2017. State Sen. Joe Baldacci, one of the leaders of the effort, says the timing for the proposal is favorable with pro-rail Pete Buttigieg now heading the U.S. Department of Transportation. (TN)

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METRO-NORTH SEEKS TO ABANDON Beacon Line, remnant of New Haven's Maybrook Line Metro-North Railroad seeks to abandon its Beacon Line, a 41-mile remnant of the New Haven's Maybrook line, and the commuter railroad has informed the Surface Transportation Board. A portion of the route will become part of the 750-mile Empire State Trail. In its filing with the STB, Metro-North notes it received an exemption from most abandonment rules when it acquired the line, and is requesting an STB waiver and exemption from discontinuance rules only as they address the trackage rights of the Housatonic Railroad, which has not operated on the route for at least two years. The move will leave just two active segments of the Maybrook Line— a short segment in Maybrook, N.Y., operated by Middletown & New Jersey, and a portion between Danbury and Derby Junction, Conn., owned by Housatonic. (TN)

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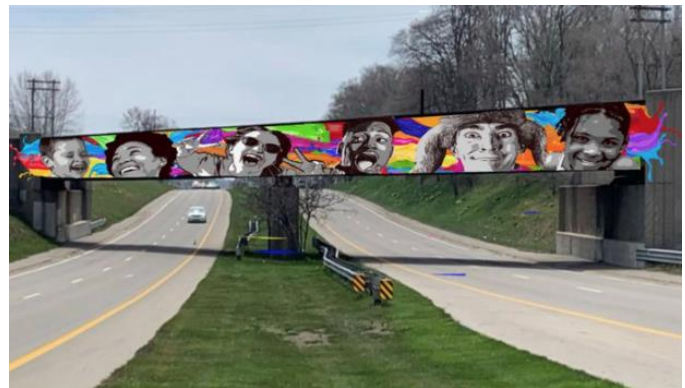
THE MBTA WILL REPLACE commuter trains with buses on part of its Fitchburg line for about two months beginning March 1. The move is to allow work related to positive train control. Trains will operate between Wachusett and Littleton, with buses providing service between Littleton and Alewife, where passengers will be able to board the Red Line subway to connect to the rest of the MBTA rail system. The bus substitution is scheduled to continue on weekdays through May 2. Weekend service on the line was discontinued as part of recent MBTA service cuts. (TN)

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BNSF RAILWAY has received a patent for a virtual track block system that has the potential to significantly boost existing mainline capacity, raise average train speeds, and improve the detection of broken rails. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office approved the patent application last month, and credits the invention to BNSF employees Mitchell Beard, Kent Shue, Jerry Specht, and Ralph Young. The system would divide existing fixed-length physical track blocks into multiple virtual blocks. Train spacing would be reduced and would be

based on train braking capabilities rather than the typical 2-mile length of a fixed signal block. A moving block system essentially puts a safety envelope around trains, with distance between trains determined using real-time data on the speed, location, and braking performance of trains moving over the main line. By allowing trains to follow one another more closely, the capacity of a main line would be increased. Moving blocks could boost the capacity of about 8,000 route-miles in the U.S., enabling railroads to avoid adding track and signals on main lines that are at capacity, according to a 2004 report on the benefits of positive train control that Zeta-Tech Associates prepared for the Federal Railroad Administration. The report said moving block systems would be particularly beneficial on main lines where traffic moves at different speeds. A moving block system would improve BNSF's ability to pace its premium trains around slower moving freights. A high-priority Z-train, for example, could come up closely behind a merchandise train and then leapfrog ahead at quadruple-track crew change points such as Needles, Calif., and Amarillo, Texas. The system also would eliminate the need for wayside signals. "Among other things, the present principles alleviate the need for wayside signals, since train braking distance is maintained onboard the locomotives instead of through wayside signal aspects," the patent summary says. "In addition, by partitioning the physical track blocks into multiple virtual track blocks, broken rail can be detected within an occupied physical track block. (TN)

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SOMETIMES RAILROAD BRIDGES just need a little paint. However, what is going on in Muskegon, Mich., is more than your standard paint job. Back in December, the Muskegon City Public Art Initiative (MCPAI) started a fundraiser for murals to be painted on both sides over railroad overpasses on Seaway Drive between Laketon and Hackley avenues. The overpasses are owned by CSX. The fundraiser has successfully met a \$50,000 goal,

which will be matched by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's Public Spaces, Community Places.

•••••

WORK AT EAST BROAD TOP uncovers, removes decayed dynamite. Stabilization work on a building at the East Broad Top Railroad took an unexpected turn this month, with the discovery of five cases of material labeled as explosives. After work halted, analysis determined the material was probably decayed dynamite, estimated to be 100 years old. While it was determined the material posed no imminent danger, removal and disposal is taking place under supervision of several authorities. (TN)

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RESPONDING TO HEAVY DEMAND, the East Broad Top added several trips during this past Saturday's Winter Spectacular, a revival of the event held 1966-81. Scheduled trips with Brill gas-electric M-1 and a caboose all sold out within hours of tickets going on sale, so the EBT added trips, and



Gas-electric car M-1 pulls a caboose during Saturday's East Broad Top Winter Spectacular.

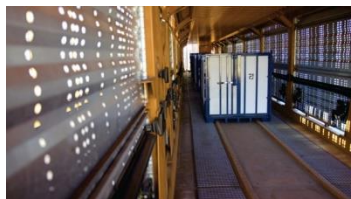
sold all those out, as well. The railroad also brought out railbus/motorcar M-3, built from a 1928 Nash, and offered rides on that, as well. The one-day event also saw operations at the neighboring Rockhill Trolley Museum. The EBT continues to work toward the resumption of regular operations this spring. (TN)



A 1926 St. Louis Car Co. car from Johnstown, Pa. (left) a Newark PCC car meet during Rockhill Trolley Museum operations during Saturday's EBT Winter Spectacular.

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A DETROIT-AREA COMPANY aims to use its patented shipping containers to put loads of auto parts into multilevel railcars that otherwise would return empty to assembly plants. Pro-Tech Group, which has designed containers to fit within the confines of auto racks that carry finished vehicles, has successfully completed pilot



runs carrying pallets of wheel rims from California to Dearborn, Mich. "The benefit of this process is to eliminate the 66,000 railcars that come back empty" each year, Pro-Tech CEO Earle B. Higgins tells *Trains News Wire*.

•••••

NEW TRAINSETS and a new snow blower for the Broadmoor Manitou & Pikes Peak Cog Railway in Colorado have begun their journey from Switzerland. The Stadler equipment, along with a snow blower built by Zaugg at its Eggwil, Switzerland, factory, was taken by truck from Stadler's factory in Erlen, Switzerland, to Basel, where they will be loaded onto a barge for a trip up the Rhine to Rotterdam, Netherlands. From there, they will travel by ship to the U.S. and by truck to Colorado. The new locomotive-hauled trains are part of a \$100 million rebuild of the 8.9-mile railway, which has included a change of its cog system. The snow blower will be capable of cutting through drifts up to 10 feet tall and 20 feet wide. (TN)



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PHASE 1 OF THE MBTA'S South Coast Rail construction is alive and well. About \$600 million of work is currently taking place and the section is fully funded through Massachusetts' Capital Investment Plan. Construction began in late 2020. Phase 1 will extend commuter rail service on the Middleboro/Lakeville Line to New Bedford, Fall River, and Taunton, and is expected to be complete by the end of 2023. Twenty-seven miles of track and four new stations will fill the line. The MBTA says crews have been clearing the right-of-way near the track and replacing four railroad bridges, and that work is almost complete. In Taunton, work on encroachments and demolition to prepare the right-of-way are under way. When Phase 1 is complete a ride to get to Boston on the Middleboro/Lakeville Line will take 70 minutes. (RA)

•••••

THE MBTA HAS DECIDED to maintain late-night commuter rail service on weekdays, and is planning a new round of schedule changes this spring that will be "closer to regional rail," according to MBTA General Manager Steve Poflak. MBTA officials told the Fiscal and Management Control Board on Monday that, instead of ending service after 9 p.m., commuter service will continue until about 11 p.m. to maintain service for "key workers and transit-

critical populations.” While only a small number of people use the late-night service — an estimated 535 passengers — they represent more than 18% of pre-pandemic ridership, while overall commuter ridership is down almost 90 percent.(TN)

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MAINE’S transportation department and the agency which operates Amtrak’s *Downeaster* are seeking a site for a new Portland station to replace the current station, which adds 15 minutes to each trip because of its location off the main line used by the train. Nate Moulton, director of freight and passenger rail services for the state department of Transportation, said his agency has “come to a point where the department is willing to pass the baton on to [the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority] to work on whether we can get a facility located on the main line.” A state study identified a location on St. John Street as the ideal location, but rail authority executive director Patricia Quinn said quick action is needed, as other potential sites have already been developed. Quinn also said the agency is looking to restore a fifth round trip to Boston by late May. (TN)

•••••

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

TRAINS

One Good Turn

Santa Fe Turntable

Flathead Tunnel

After PTC

In My Own Words

Growing Up with a Mallet

RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

Easy-to-Model Tank Head Loads

Diverging Points

Laser Adventures!

Perspective

Building a Layout for a Cause

MODEL RAILROADER

Build an Adjustable Track Cleaning Car

A Fresh Start

DCC Currents

DCC, DC, or Both

Trains of Thoughts

Visiting Mystical Places

PASSENGER TRAIN JOURNAL (2021-1)

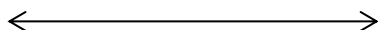
Moynihan Train Hall Opens

Intercity: The Trains We Rode

Last Hurrah for Trains in 1960s

Trail Blazer to South Central Pennsylvania

Horseshoe Curve



News sources: Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Trains “Newswire”, Railway Age, Progressive Railroading, Railpace Newsmagazine, RRE “Callboy”, “The 470”, Patriot Ledger.

EDITOR’S NOTES

1. I have found the writings and pics in the “What are you doing?” column pretty interesting and, sometimes, inspiring. Some great projects, so thanks to those participants. Maybe next issue for some of you who have been hesitant? This has become a very popular addition to the newsletter over the past year.
2. Since Amtrak will be celebrating it’s 50th on May 1st, we’re going to have “heritage” Amtrak photos on the covers through May. This issue’s cover shows the inaugural trip of the Lake Shore Limited on October 31, 1975. A friend and I rode from South Station to Albany and back on the inaugural eastbound the next day. A very interesting back-up move from Chatham, NY to the Hudson River mainline was involved, until the “Roger Lewis Memorial Trackage” was replaced several years later. Thus, the floodlights on the “Tail Sign”. A story for another time.
3. If you have any “heritage Amtrak” pics you’d like to share, please send to me; I would love to have and share with all.

..... *David N. Clinton*

“Remember that from dust you came and from dust you shall return.” (Genesis 13:4)

MEMBER NEWS

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:

Joe DumasMarch 4th
 Bob Engand.....March 7th
 Larry Strumpf.....March 13th
 Peter Palica.....March 28th
 <><><><><><>



Meanwhile, I've heard from these folks on
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

Mike Dolan: *Whitman-Southern Coal Tipple*
 A couple of years ago I designed what I wanted for a Coal Facility, not a complete Coalery but a segment that fit the area I planned. Things changed as I built out the area and then mocked up the Tipple. Wasn't working as I planned so I had to make some modifications. I had the Track plan as I wanted it, but the structure just didn't fit correctly. I



must have had a premonition this was going to be the situation.

I purchased a Walther's New River Mining Company kit when they had it on sale with the intention to build it as is. At a train show prior to Covid, I saw another New River kit for sale at a reasonable price, so I bought it thinking I may need some additional parts. Good thing I did when it came time to assemble. Because the area for the Tipple was larger, I needed to increase the size. The only option, kitbash the 2 kits and make a better facility. Looking at the Front view of the structure, the right side of the structure was the first modification. I rearranged and added the structure on stilts for individual car loading of specific grades of coal. The original opening for the shoot is under the New River Sign. The chute for the opening shown carries product to another remote building for distribution. A second chute will mount to the right on the back building. This chute leads to an overhead Mine Track and is supported by a Steel Truss. I added some additional details to increase the interest in the building, namely the vents, Ladders and Walkway.

The structure encompassing the 1st 3 tracks is basically stock from the front to the back. The left to loading spaces were what was added from the

additional kit. Parts were cut and assembled to fit the area. The center chute is a lower level chute to facilitate small truck loading for local deliveries.

The stock roof was cut to fit the opening. The rear roof had to be fabricated and covered with Tar Paper.



Not many parts left when I got to this point. The roof makes it look like an expanded structure that may have been required at that time.

Overall, I'm satisfied with the final product. Because I'm getting over a Double Hernia operation, progress on the final area has been slow this past month. My goal in the next month is get the surrounding area scenery finished and the structure mounted in its final position.

I will write an additional article to explain the scenery methods I used.

Chip Mullen: "I was asked by Coley Walsh's widow to try to liquidate his train collection and his basement layout. It soon became apparent that with Covid 19 restrictions the usual approach of offering it through the White Elephant table was impractical, since we are unlikely to stage an event that would draw buyers any time soon. I contacted a couple of estate liquidators and didn't particularly care for the responses I got from them so I decided to see what the Ebay market would bear. I initially offered Coley's Montana Raillink equipment and



then a batch of his Union Pacific stuff. All of it sold at very respectable prices, so I have decided to continue in this way for Phyllis's benefit. Coley had a lot of stuff and the vast majority is really high-quality. Coley was primarily into Union Pacific but he also had some B&M, PRR, and a wide-scattering of other interesting engines and rolling stock. If club members are interested in seeing what we are offering they can look for my Ebay

seller name "aclcowboy" I plan on putting between 10 to 20 items up for auction every Saturday and Sunday in 5-day auctions, until everything is either gone or I collapse from exhaustion. Here's a picture of one of the first things sold. An Athearn Genesis MRL SD70Ace with Tsunami sound. The winner got it for \$315.55."

Jesse Collins: "Dave you can put this in the newsletter if you like. Not sure if you have a picture of this engine yet." (I have never seen a picture of



this P42 before...didn't even know they were going to paint one up like this...good "catch"!-Ed.)

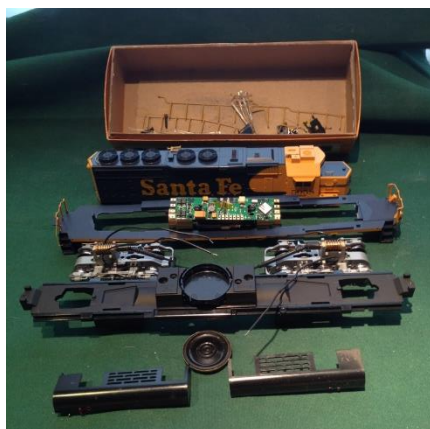
Kurt Kramke: "I have started to take down the old HO layout in preparation of the new build. Also, working on my O scale version of Brett's brewery and I built a crossing for the



On30 layout, as well as tuning up locomotives that were in storage for so long."



Bob Farrenkropf: "I'm putting sound in a Kato Santa Fe SD 40-2 Mid. One inch round speaker goes in the fuel tank, which requires complete disassembly of the loco. I'm using a Soundtraxx



Econami #882004."

Ron Clough: "Still trying to deal with this pandemonium that is keeping us all sort of house-bound. I'm still dealing with Mom's estate (today would have been her 97th birthday!) but I'm making progress. I've got to get up there in the next day or two to check on the snow, make sure the house is okay and bring the mail in, etc. And, also, do more shoveling at home in the morning! I hope this is the last of the snow. We need a break! One railroad thing of interest to me, I wonder if anyone, other than Bob Farrenkopf, since it is "his back yard", seen the new bridge to carry Rte. 18 over the commuter rail tracks near the South Weymouth train station? The old bridge was at about a 30° skew angle to roadway and the new bridge will be at a 90° angle. The new bridge is completed but only one lane of traffic goes over it, as they are now building the new southerly abutments and then will slide the new bridge into its permanent location. I find it to be an interesting engineering project, due to the limited room to work in because of wetlands and adjacent residences."

Ed Carter: "I've only been to the club a few times over the last couple months, due to Covid spiking. I hope to get back to a more frequent schedule over the next couple weeks, so I can do some scenery related work around the steel mill on the layout. For one thing, most of our photo industrial backdrops depict a blue sky that is considerably darker than what we've painted behind them. I trust that a local paint store can get us closer to something that will be a match. Then I can repaint that small area that we intend to keep behind the mill. Other than that, I've been weathering some Pennsy hoppers, that I've had for some time and also getting more familiar with some of the Digitrax functions as they relate to sounds available over the various decoders."

Ross Hall: "Now a Cape Cod 'wash-a-shore', I've gathered the necessary components for DCC/DC hookup on my new garage layout. I still have to wire it up and also finish registering the rolling stock, then organize operations."

I can also give a vague report on the construction activities at Hyannis. The crossing over the Rt. 28 bypass has been isolated with the connecting tracks (Track 9 and the Cape Main) on either side having been removed. The rebuilt crossing will be doubled to four tracks. The western side of the yard is now torn up to be graded for new turnouts

and spurs; the eastern side had been rebuilt several years ago to accommodate the CapeFlyer during its summer layover times. I see an SSMRC day trip down here in the future!"

John Sheridan: "I decided to get into 3d printing. So I purchased an Anycubic Mono X printer & wash station. Now I can make whatever parts I want. I have many projects that I need to create parts for. Now all I need is the time to finish all of them! The printer is the one that says ANYCUBIC on it. Other than that, Rapido is keeping me very busy with various projects that occupy most of my time. Lots of new stuff coming!"



Eric Tedeschi: "I'm custom-building some vehicles for a military train I'm building. Here is a pic of one of them. I've got more at



home but haven't taken pics yet. I will for the next newsletter. Anyway, this is my version of an M-123 10-ton tractor truck. Nobody makes one in HO so I built this one from 4 different vehicles and sparks parts I had on hand. I actually built 2 of them. I've attached pics I have of them and a pic of a real one."



Roger St. Peter: "I'm working on home layout,



rebuilding a couple rooms at work and helping our daughter with some new oak cabinets to box out her fireplace."



Gary Mangelinkx: "This month had been busy. Hunting season is over and Ice Fishing is starting up. I will be teaching hunter safety class next month and I start working Tuesday at the Gun range as range Safety Officer. I am sending a few photos of Sophia & Hayden, my grandkids, who are painting HO figures for the "AM-BROKE R&R."



Bob Knapp: "After years of patching up Paul Feeney's bathroom floor, lifting mosaic sheet tiles and rotted, delaminated plywood, it was time for a complete tear out. Was quite the project, the 3 Stooges had done the plumbing in 1967...what a mess! Pipes directly under floor boards and when I nailed off loose boards, I put 2 nails through the 1/2" pipes. Had to tear up subfloor, the plumber repaired pipes and replaced toilet valve. Replaced boards, 1/2" hard board and layer 12x12 porcelain tiles. Definitely a marked improvement."



Savery Moore: "I've been at the club, and I've been working around the oil delivery area in Cedar Hill Yard – new fencing,



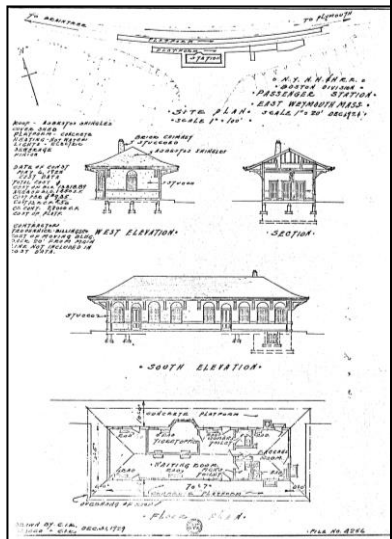
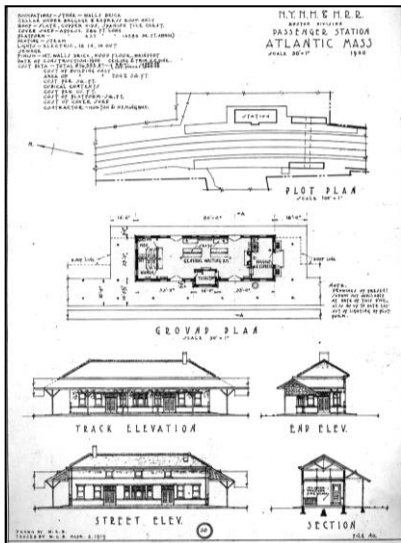
pipings, shrubs, and oil stains on the concrete pad.



I've also enclosed a photo of the bare plywood at the end of the Cedar Hill receiving/departure yard. I'm looking for ideas as to what can go there. Whatever we put there needs to be very low,

since there is a lot of coupling/uncoupling done there and errant hands and elbows could damage anything high."

Paul Cutler III: "This month, I've been polishing up the next issue of the *Shoreliner* magazine. I've also been trying to pull together another *SpeedWitch* magazine. Our last issues of both magazines were mailed



out on December 7th and only within the last two weeks are they arriving in mailboxes across the U.S.A. We do ship Third Class Mail,

but still it shows how messed up the Post Office was over the holidays.

A train show dealer I know put me in contact with a friend of his. This friend is a retired Amtrak employee who hired on with the New Haven back in the 1960s in the civil engineer department, and moved up the ladder at PC, CR and Amtrak. He worked in the NH's General Office Building when PC took over and he rescued a lot of NH paperwork from the dumpster as PC was cleaning house. As he's now permanently moved to his vacation home on the Cape, he's decided to thin his collection. Through me, the NHRHTA has been purchasing small lots of his collection for eventual digitizing over the past month with the goal of these

items being used for research and/or, publication in magazine or book form. The most interesting items to me have been a number of different station building plans from all over the system, and inventorying them has taken up a bunch of my time. See the attached Atlantic (Quincy) and East Weymouth plans for examples.

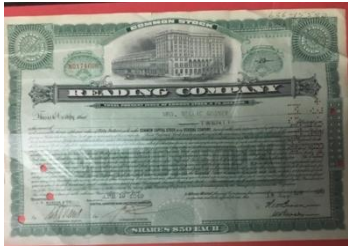
I've only been up to the club a couple times due to weather or family, but while there I finished work on the Rapido Rail Crew remote uncoupler in Boston yard. I consider it a successful installation with a 1/8" thick Masonite shim between the magnet and the bottoms of the ties (thanks to Fred Lockhart for making the experimental shims). It will now both uncouple and delay the Kadee coupler without pulling so hard that the couplers miss each other."

Tony Donatelli: "Here are some shots of the building of the emergency pop-up access that I needed at the curved trestle. The photos are in



order, and start with the area that I wanted to add emergency access to tracks that would be difficult to reach. The lift-out section was formed and then moved to my workbench to do the scenery and details. It was then fitted in place - removed - and the stream completed. The last photo shows the completed project."

Peter Palica: “Decades ago when Edaville still hosted an annual model railroad show under a tent in their park, I made my first purchase of an antique railroad stock certificate. Over the years I have accumulated several hundred of these beautiful

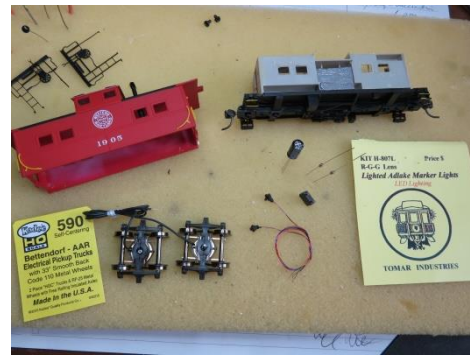


historical documents with lovely vignettes many of which were printed by the American Bank Note Company which at times

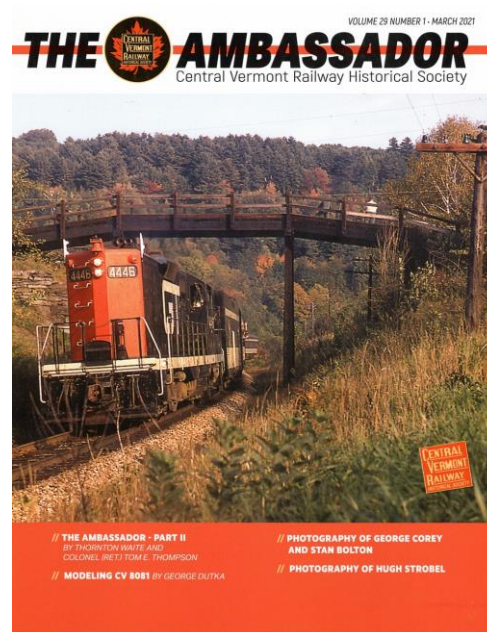
also printed our National currency. Such collections are called Scripophily. Here is a fun group of certificates that I assembled representing the four railroads featured in the iconic Monopoly game. Those of you who are familiar with the hidden corridors of South Station may have passed enlarged copies of stock certificates of the various railroads that were once served at South Station off the Red Line entrance leading to the elevator that leads to the main concourse. Those were produced from copies of originals that are part of my collection. I hope some of you may find this an interesting adjunct to our hobby and interest in railroading. Keep your eyes open. You might someday unearth a Standard Oil Company of New Jersey certificate signed by John D. Rockefeller. If you do, note that it is worth tens of thousands of dollars.



Ye Ed.: I've been installing operating L.E.D. marker lamps in Tony Donatelli's three Northeast-style WM caboose. I enjoy the electrical end of the hobby and am not fond of what Tony loves—scenery. As you can see by the pics above, Tony does magnificent scenery. That's the nice thing about this hobby, especially in a club, where you can do what you like and others like what you don't! Tomar makes both types of markers: Red-Green-Green, which is most typical and Red-Yellow-Yellow, which was the New Haven's rule. The markers come with the necessary Bridge Rectifier and two proper resistors. I add a small capacitor to keep the lamps from “flickering” over dirty track or dead frogs. Both Kadee and Athearn offer replacement trucks for “all-wheel pickup” of power, so no need for “wipers” that drag on the axles.



I've also become the membership chairman for the Central Vermont Railway Historical Society, where I have been a member for many years. The organization puts out a great quarterly magazine called *The Ambassador*, which is what the CV's day train between Boston/New York and Montreal was called, with the two sections combining in White River Jct., VT. The latest issue just published:



From **Doug Buchanan:**



EDITORIAL

Massachusetts needs a strong transportation vision and a leader who can carry it out

Stephanie Pollack's departure is a chance for the governor to move past small-bore thinking on transit and congestion.

By The Editorial Board Updated February 7, 2021
Boston Globe

As he manages the state through excruciating fallout from the coronavirus pandemic, Governor Charlie Baker has a lot on his plate. So much, that getting behind a strong and creative transportation agenda may not seem like a front-burner issue. But it should be — along with choosing a strong and creative transportation leader to carry it out after the departure of Secretary of Transportation Stephanie Pollack.

After Pollack announced she was leaving Baker's cabinet for a position in the Federal Highway Administration, Jamey L. Tesler, head of the Registry of Motor Vehicles and former chief operating officer at the Department of Transportation under Pollack, was promoted to acting secretary. The Baker administration declined to discuss any post-Pollack plans for the agency. But whether Baker wants to talk about it or not, when it comes to transportation, he's at a critical fork in the road. Will he move beyond the small-bore thinking of the past six years — or stick with it and doom Massachusetts to a future of failing infrastructure and inadequate public transit?

Decisions made now about public transit, highway congestion, and major infrastructure projects will affect how people move around in Massachusetts for the next 30 or 40 years. And those decisions, "as much as the governor's COVID-19 response, will determine his legacy," said Representative William M. Straus, who chairs the joint legislative Committee on Transportation.

Politically, this is a great time to forge ahead with big thinking. The stars are aligning in a way that Massachusetts hasn't seen since the days when House Speaker Tip O'Neill, Representative Joe Moakley, and Governor Michael Dukakis got behind the Big Dig. President Biden is "an infrastructure and train guy," said state Senator Eric Lesser, the

vice chair of the transportation committee, and "the Biden domestic agenda goes right through Richie Neal's desk," he added, referring to US Representative Richard Neal, the powerful House Ways and Means chairman. Representative Katherine Clark, another member of the Massachusetts delegation, recently became assistant speaker; and as a Harvard graduate, even Pete Buttigieg, Biden's transportation secretary, has a Massachusetts connection.

So the time is right for Baker to put his foot on the gas pedal when it comes to transportation policy. Unfortunately, that has never been his passion, perhaps because way back in the administration of Governor Bill Weld, Baker was the one who came up with a way to pay for Big Dig overruns — by shifting the debt to the T. During his first term as governor, he was forced to confront longstanding public transit deficiencies after record snowfall brought the T and commuter rail to a halt. Since then, the Baker administration has worked to bring down costs at the T and ramp up some capital programs, such as the Green Line extension and South Coast Rail, and taken on some worthy causes like creating bus lanes. That's fine, but as transit advocate Chris Dempsey sees it, none of it is "transformational" — and a lot of what Baker says and does is contradictory.

Baker has resisted congestion pricing aimed at reducing traffic and pollution, arguing that it hurts people with the least commuting flexibility. After proposing a fee increase on Uber and Lyft trips in 2020, he vetoed a proposal that would do just that. He has also been unenthusiastic about a proposal to expand rail service between Central and Western Massachusetts. Infrastructure plans are also on hold. Last November, Pollack put off a decision on replacing a deteriorating stretch of the elevated Massachusetts turnpike at the I-90 Allston interchange. Meanwhile, service has been slashed on the T and commuter rail in ways that undermine their long-term viability, due to the short-term decrease in ridership connected to the coronavirus. By doing that, Baker is sacrificing his own "transit-oriented development" plans, which link housing development to public transit access.

The Baker administration actually produced a well-executed, forward-looking plan, released in December 2018 by the Commission on the Future of Transportation — a group headed by Steve Kadish, who served as Baker's chief of staff for

to a speed which would produce roughly 375 kilowatts of power at 60 hertz (well below the locomotive's maximum power of around 2,000 horsepower) which is the alternating frequency the North American power system runs on, and is what all of our electronics are expecting. The diesel engine produced enough electricity to power several municipal buildings at the same time allowing the local authorities to better organize their emergency and recovery planning.

A second locomotive was also brought in with the intention of using its output to power a local high school that was to be used as an emergency warming station for local residents. But getting to the shelter would have required the engine to cross an overpass, and it was eventually decided that there was a very good chance the overpass would collapse under the weight of a 260,000-pound locomotive, leaving the city with yet another emergency to deal with, and some concerned phone calls from the Canadian National Railway. As a result, it was left parked down the street on Boulevard de Montarville as an emergency backup. When power was eventually restored to the region the two diesel engines were returned to the rails and put back to work hauling cargo, but not before being sent for repairs to damage caused to their gear cases after their unorthodox cruises through Boucherville.

As much as the city would have liked to keep the trains around for the next emergency (during their stay the locomotives also became quite a tourist draw with locals stopping by to have their pictures taken with the trains parked on the street) a diesel locomotive can cost well north of two million dollars and keeping one sitting idle "just in case" is a tough sell, especially when you're borrowing someone else's.

(Article from Kevin Linagen. Kind of appropriate for this time in history—maybe Texans should consider this, to go along with their "independence" from "Federal interference" with their electric supply!-Ed.)

Entrepreneur proposes bus-light rail hybrid system

While hard-hit transit agencies are struggling to find money to keep trains running and undertake



construction projects, a Canadian entrepreneur believes he has a new solution.

Steve Ostrowski says he's "in the good idea business."

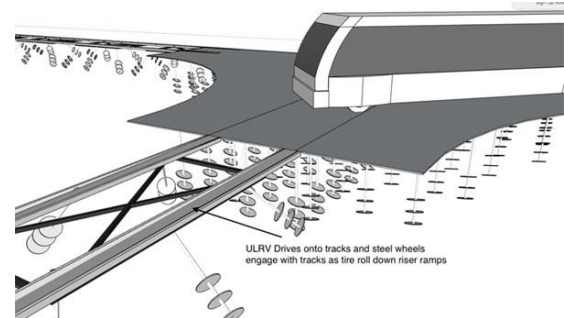
He's started companies and developed products ranging from snowmobile shock absorbers to deck awnings, and now he wants to reinvent light rail.

The way Ostrowski sees it, light rail is attractive but expensive to build, and new lines take years to make their way through environmental reviews, funding, and construction. Bus routes and bus rapid transit are cheaper to develop but may not attract riders out of their cars. So, he wants to blend the two modes.

He calls it ultra-light rail or ULRT. He proposes putting a bus on steel wheels where it can run on rails but retain the rubber tires to drive off-rail for more flexibility. Think of a Hi-Rail vehicle that's a city bus.

Instead of traditional street-running or a dedicated right-of-way for trains, the lighter weight of a bus enables a less costly roadbed.

Rails are set into a 12-inch wide concrete channel, which provides clearance for the road wheels and tires.



Where rail ends, the channel slopes up, bringing the rubber tires into contact with the roadway. From there, the operator drives to the next rail segment or can go off-route as needed.

Ostrowski envisions this system to be all-electric. Using off-the-shelf electric buses from existing manufacturers, the running gear would be modified to add steel wheels inboard of the road wheels.

About half the batteries will be replaced with ultra-capacitors, which enable flash charging. Every three miles, an overhead charger would contact the vehicle at a scheduled station stop and recharge the bus in as little as a minute, enough to get it to the next charging station, eliminating overhead wires. Regenerative braking also recharges the capacitors along the way.

Ultra-capacitors have advanced in recent years and are already in use in transportation, energy storage systems, laptops, and wind turbines. They charge almost instantly, are long-lasting and much lighter than lithium batteries.

"What's in it for the city is the lowest carbon footprint of any technology out there," Ostrowski says. "It also operates at a lower cost." He asserts that the construction timeline is much shorter than traditional light rail and avoids most environmental reviews.

Ostrowski has filed a provisional patent application and will make a full patent application in May. Based in Ontario, Canada, his firm, Municipal Transit Solutions (MTS), has made proposals to Ontario's Metrolinx, the city of Albany, New York, and spoken with other municipalities. They haven't got any takers yet, but he's planning to build a demonstration site on 10 acres to showcase his idea to wary buyers. ([Trains Industry Newsletter](#))

AMTRAK V

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AMTRAK CASCADES

BLUE WATER

CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR

CAPITOL CORRIDOR

CARL SANDBURG

COAST STARLIGHT

EMPIRE BUILDER

HEARTLAND FLYER

ILLINOIS ZEPHYR

PACIFIC SURFLINER

PERE MARQUETTE

SALUKI

SAN JOAQUIN

SOUTHWEST CHIEF

SUNSET LIMITED

TEXAS EAGLE

WOLVERINE

NAME _____