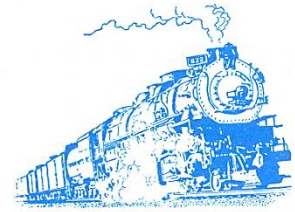


The Semaphore

South Shore Model Railway Club

NEWSLETTER

Home of the "East Coast Lines" since 1938



March 28, 2011 ■■■■■ VOLUME 31 ■■■■■ NUMBER 3



The Semaphore

David N. Clinton, Editor-in-Chief

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Southeastern Massachusetts.....	Paul Cutler, Jr. Paul Cutler III
Central & Western Massachusetts.....	Robert Buck
Cape Cod.....	Skip Burton
Greenbush Corridor.....	Ron Clough Jack Foley
Boston Globe Reporter.....	Brendan Sheehan
Boston Herald Reporter.....	Jim South
Rhode Island.....	Tony Donatelli
Empire State.....	Dick Kozlowski
Industry News Reporter.....	Jack Bryant
The Chief's Corner.....	Mike Dolan

PRODUCTION STAFF

Photographer	Dick Labonte
Publication.....	Al Taylor Al Munn John Governor
Web Page.....	Joe Dumas
Guest Contributors.....	



The Semaphore is the monthly (except July) newsletter of the South Shore Model Railway Club, Inc. (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. E-mail: daveclinton@verizon.net Club phone: 781-740-2000. Web page: www.ssmrc.org

VOLUME 31 ■■■■■ NUMBER 3 ■■■■■ MARCH 2011

CLUB OFFICERS

President.....	Jack Foley
Vice-President.....	Dan Peterson
Treasurer.....	Bill Sims
Secretary.....	Matt Sisk
Chief Engineer.....	Mike Dolan
Directors.....	Dennis Hart ('12)
.....	Bill Garvey ('12)
.....	Ron Clough ('11)
.....	Fred Foley ('11)

BILL OF LADING

Chief's Corner	5
Contests	3
Decoder Clinic Fun	3
Editor's Notes.....	9
Member News	9
Memories.....	4
Operator	13
Potpourri.....	5
Running Extra.....	10

On the cover: Last weekend's Show and Open House. A good time was had by all! (dnc pics)

FORM 19 ORDERS

MARCH B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, March 28th 7:30 p.m.

APRIL BUSINESS MEETING

Monday, April 4th 8 p.m.

DECODER CLINIC

Thursday, April 7th 8 p.m.

OFFICIAL OPERATIONS

Monday & Thursday, April 11th & 14th

75th ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

Monday, April 18th 8 p.m.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Saturday, April 23rd

APRIL B.O.D. MEETING

Monday, April 25th 7:30 p.m.

CONTESTS

Congratulations to **Doug Buchanan** on winning this month's "50-50" Raffle !

Contest question for our **May meeting**, when we will be celebrating **Amtrak's 40th anniversary**:

Who is Amtrak's president and CEO ? Answer forms on top of wooden display case in train room, or any piece of paper will do.

DECODER/ENGINE TUNE-UP CLINIC FUN

We almost had a "full house" this month.

Brendan Sheehan brought "James" from "Thomas the Tank Engine" fame. I was a little frightful of how a decoder might fit in this locomotive, and if the motor was isolated from the frame. No problem...just remove the factory board and hard wire a DZ125, paying attention to the colors of the decoder wire, as the wires from the motor and power supply are not color-coded. There's no light to worry about, so it was, actually, "simple"!

Dan Peterson tuned-up his SD38-2 demo model, which had become crappy-sounding. This Kato loco normally ran beautifully but he found that the magnet of the speaker, located in the fuel tank, had picked up numerous metallic pieces, including spikes, which were now "stuck" to the speaker. After cleaning the speaker, with alcohol and "Q-tips", he placed a piece of toilet tissue (unused) inside the speaker opening in the fuel tank. This will, hopefully, prevent future problems with foreign material on the speaker, which affected the sound terribly.

Paul Cutler III brought his New Haven RS11, an old Atlas-Kato unit, which he had decoded last month but the decoder was defective, so he put in a new DH165KO and decided to use LEDs for the lights. The 165 decoders have on-board current-limiting resistors, so he didn't have to fool around with resistors and successfully cut the light bar to the correct length, so that the diodes worked in the right direction. Remember, these locos came with a single bulb in the middle of the hood and had constantly-on front and rear lights. So, this was a big improvement and he should never have to replace the LEDs!

Eric Tedeschi brought an Athearn GP40X in UP dress. He replaced the DH123D with the DH163, as he wanted to be able to program some functions that the original decoder doesn't have. It was an easy un-plug one and pug in the other into the factory 9-pin plug. Now he will be able to some fancy lighting!

Mike Dolan brought his B&M P1K RDC3. He installed a TCS-1, which is similar to the Digitrax DH123D, with a 9-pin plug. This is a hardwire job, but not too difficult. We have the plug numbers and wire colors. The directional lighting is protected with one 270-ohm resistor in series in the blue line, which goes to both bulbs. Since only one bulb is on at a time, it is not necessary to protect each bulb with its own resistor, which is normal procedure. With his success, he plans on putting in the NW Shortline gear set to speed up the RDC to 72 MPH, much better than the un-prototypical 40 MPH, that it can do from the factory; a job for the next clinic.

Paul Agnew completed the "crew", with his Guilford, ex-MEC, ex-RI U25b from Bowser/Stewart. For once, he had a fairly easy install with an 8-pin plug-in DZ125PS. He would like

to work on the lights, which show some “cook-out in the cab” (Athearn “blue box”) sights. Maybe a small charcoal grill, compared to a large gas grill! He planned on doing that another time, since time was getting short and he wanted to install the handrails and new couplers, to make the unit road-worthy.

Thanks to **Paul III** for setting up the clinic table and making it nice to work at.

Our next clinic will be on **Thursday, April 7th**.

Sign-up sheet on the Bulletin Board. Come and enjoy the fun and learning experiences that decoder installation and loco tune-up can present.

SEMAPHORE MEMORIES

MARCH 2006 (5years ago)

- ☛ Fortune Magazine names U.P. “most admired railroad
- ☛ Ex-QBT U23b #21 now on Conway Scenic RR.
- ☛ Irving Oil Tank Car newest Club Car offering.
- ☛ Turntable kit in Middleton Engine Terminal to be replaced with AAA Precision Turntables of CT.

MARCH 2001(10 years ago)

- ☛ 1st Business Meeting of the year held, due to both Jan and Feb meetings being “snowed out”.
- ☛ BC Rail ends “Royal Hudson” steam trips.
- ☛ NJ Transit and NJ D.O.T. finally win ownership of ex-DL&W “Cutoff”, which is needed for Scranton, PA service restoration.
- ☛ CNR buys Wisconsin Central.
- ☛ Scituate tells T they don’t want N. Scituate station stop on Greenbush Line.

MARCH 1996(15 years ago)

- ☛ Bombardier of Barre, VT, awarded contract to build new “Acela” trains for Amtrak.
- ☛ H.P. Hood plant closes in Charlestown.
- ☛ “Flying Yankee” stored at Glen, NH, sold to the State of New Hampshire for \$1.
- ☛ Pocono Corridor Study recommends restoration of rail between Scranton, PA, and New York City.
- ☛ Last “Wig-Wag” signal on B&M saved for preservation
- ☛ Ross Rowland cancels plans for “21st Century Limited”, which was supposed to criss-cross U.S., using ex-C&O #614 and 20-car train.
- ☛ Conrail shows interest in transferring over 400 miles of rail in Eastern Mass to Shortline RRs.

- ☛ Hingham sues to stop Greenbush restoration.

MARCH 1991 (20 years ago)

- ☛ Ray Stoddard, one of “founding fathers”, dies.
- ☛ Maine Coast RR considering start of commuter train from Wiscasset, ME, to Brunswick.
- ☛ Bangor & Aroostook RR celebrates 100th anniversary.
- ☛ Art Deco-style Cincinnati Union Station opens as a museum, after \$68 million restoration.
- ☛ Housatonic RR acquires ex-NH line from Canaan, CT, to Pittsfield, MA, from Guilford.
- ☛ Amtrak decides to permanently route *Montrealer* through New London and up NECR.
- ☛ D&H vacates Colonie Yard and moves headquarters to Clifton Park, NY.
- ☛ Amherst Railway Society celebrates first 2-day “Big E” show; patronage over 16,000, an increase of 4,000 over previous year.
- ☛ MBTA begins random drug testing of operating employees.
- ☛ Old wooden escalator at Downtown Crossing Red Line station donated to Smithsonian Institute in D.C.

MARCH 1986 (25 years ago)

- ☛ Amtrak planning “Cape Codder” service for summer months.
- ☛ Needham Branch out of service for complete rehabilitation.
- ☛ White Pass & Yukon RR, shut down for three years, considering reopening for passenger service only.
- ☛ Guilford plans to close Waterville, ME shops in two months. (never happened)
- ☛ New Hampshire Northcoast RR takes over B&M’s Conway Branch from Rochester, NH to Ossipee.
- ☛ State installs crossing gates at all crossings from Attleboro to Hyannis, in preparation for restored passenger train service by Amtrak.
- ☛ Talk of restoring Ipswich to Newburyport Commuter Rail service.
- ☛ Amtrak reaches agreement with BLE and UTU to take over employment of engineers, conductors and assistants from the railroads.

MARCH 1981 (30 years ago)

- ☛ One-day Saturday Show held at St. Jerome’s Church in N. Weymouth; breakfast at “Bickford’s” in Braintree. Club open both Saturday & Sunday. (Ye Ed chairman)
- ☛ RRE operates “Constitution Flyer” circle trip from S. Station to Springfield, New Haven and return—cost \$35, with side trip to Steam-powered Valley RR in Old Saybrook, CT.

CHIEF'S CORNER

Mike Dolan

I want to thank all those who worked so diligently to get the club ready for the show last week. I believe we made a pretty good impression. Comments were generally about how much work had been done and how fast the layout was progressing. The progress we make helps keep people coming back and when attendees are impressed, they tell other people and so on and so on. The number of people that came thru the doors is a tribute to everyone in the club.

Once again I think we saw some great results from all the flyers that were placed at the local train stations. Jack did all the vehicles at Greenbush, Dan took care of Cohasset and Ed Sisk was all over the place from Braintree to Hingham.

We had a visit from George Selios on Saturday and he was very impressed with the work that has been done. For all those who have never visited his Franklin and South Manchester railroad he begins his Saturday open houses in April. You just need to call him to find out the dates he is open and make a reservation. Make sure you mention you are a member of the club. It's a great reason to take a Saturday to do some training and visit a few out of the way hobby shops. His layout is on Main Street in Peabody.

During this next phase of construction, it will be hard to make the appearance of progress match the actual progress. Electrical is tedious and time consuming; no doubt about that. I will do my best to plan accordingly for the coming months to have signs of improvement register with the public and with the members. For our October show I am thinking that being able to operate the small switching area at the end of the leg would be an achievable goal; being able to set some sidings and move cars in the yards would be impressive. Bob England is going to build a couple of crossovers below the new yard on the trackwork leading to the tunnel. I think we can get the lift up table working and be able to demonstrate that during the fall show. The benchwork committee is going to build a platform in the new yard area similar to what they did at Larson. Let's not also forget the scenery work

toward Richmond Mills and a few other areas. Pretty ambitious, but i think we can do it.

POTPOURRI

ATLAS MODEL RAILROAD CO. Inc., Hillside, NJ and Branchline Trains Inc., East Hartford, CT formally announced on March 3rd the sale of all Branchline rolling stock assets, including molds, inventory and other items to Atlas.

●●●●●●
THE MASSACHUSETTS D.O.T. said this month that it has approved a land exchange agreement to facilitate extending the Green Line north of Lechmere Station to Somerville and Medford, Mass., while also advancing the NorthPoint mixed-use development project. The agreement between the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority and Pan Am Railways, approved by the MassDOT Board of Directors, allows for construction of a new Lechmere Station on the east side of O'Brien Highway in East Cambridge across from the current station location. MBTA is also obtaining crucial track and property rights necessary for MassDOT and the MBTA to build and operate the Green Line Extension, among other projects. In exchange for granting those rights to the MBTA, Pan Am is acquiring the property on which the existing Lechmere Station is located.

●●●●●●
PATRICK ADMINISTRATION officials are eyeing new management – and possibly a state takeover – for the commuter rail system after a winter marred by a string of delayed and canceled trains and equipment failures. Lt. Gov. Tim Murray said the MBTA, a state agency, is eyeing a potential takeover of commuter rail operations when the Massachusetts Bay Commuter Railroad Company's contract expires in June 2013. "We're going to look at all the options," Murray said. "Can we do things more efficiently and at the same time ensure that we're meeting the needs of our customers? Is it something we can do internally? Is it something we want to do internally? What are the pros and cons of it?" A new solicitation for commuter rail service is

expected to begin in late 2011 and extend into 2012. Murray said at least two or three private entities had expressed interest in managing the commuter rail.

●●●●●●

BILL GATES, founder of software giant Microsoft, recently spent \$8 million to increase his stake in Canadian National Railway Co., Gates' firm said in a statement. Gates is the largest shareholder in CN. Gates now controls 10 percent of CN directly or indirectly. He first bought into CN in 2000 and has gradually increased his stake in the company since.

●●●●●●

THE FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION

has agreed to review its rules governing which rail lines will need positive train control under a Congressional mandate, the Wall Street Journal has reported. The agreement, which came from a settlement with the railroad trade group Association of American Railroads, will see a public rulemaking process to determine which routes will require installation of the advanced signaling system. Positive train control is a technology that anticipates conditions that could cause train crashes, then overrides engineers as needed to prevent such crashes. Last year, the FRA released guidelines for which routes would need to have PTC under a 2008 law. The railroads objected to one condition that required all routes carrying inhalation hazards in 2008 to be equipped with PTC. The railroads sued, saying toxic shipments could be consolidated to fewer routes, saving money. Railroads estimate a revised rule could mean 10,000 fewer miles of track needing to receive positive train control. The industry believes that could save \$500 million.

●●●●●●

AN EXCEPTIONALLY LARGE NUMBER of deer and antelope have died on BNSF Railway's "High Line" across northern Montana this winter, the Associated Press has reported. Herds have been gathering on the track because trains keep the right-of-way relatively snow-free during a heavy-snow winter. "The numbers are getting close to 800 animals reported, and I'm sure there are a fair number of animals killed by trains that we don't know about," said Mark Sullivan, an official with Montana's fish, wildlife, and parks department. He said a single train killed approximately 270 pronghorn antelope near Vandalia, Mont., recently.

●●●●●●

FORTUNE magazine has named Union Pacific the most-admired company among major transportation providers. The magazine publishes its list annually; this year's appears in its March 21 edition. BNSF Railway parent company Berkshire Hathaway ranked No. 3 among all companies, behind on Apple and Google.

●●●●●●

THE LATEST TECHNO-THRILLER motion picture to include a railroad as a major component in its plot is "Source Code." Jake Gyllenhal, as Capt. Colter Stevens, wakes up in the body of someone he doesn't know on a Chicago-bound commuter train to find he's part of a mission to locate an onboard bomber. When he doesn't find the bomber in time, the train explodes and everyone dies. Then, he wakes up and finds himself in the same unknown body on the same train trying to find the same bomber. And fails again. Over and over again, he gradually works his way through the maze of identifying the right person. Consider it a combination of "Quantum Leap" with "Groundhog Day," but with deadly serious overtones. Principal exterior photography was in Montreal and the Millennium Park area of Chicago. Metra is the setting for the train, the Windy City the ultimate target of the bomber. The commuter car interior used in the filming was specially constructed to be easily disassembled to facilitate camera placement and enable unlimited movement. "Source Code" is scheduled to be released April 1 by Summit Entertainment.

●●●●●●

CSX HAS COMPLETED the land acquisitions that will enable it to expand its Worcester operation into a major intermodal terminal, the Worcester Telegram has reported. The railroad plans to begin demolition work at the site next month. The railroad is undertaking the project because an expansion of Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's commuter service is forcing CSX from its Beacon Hill terminal in Boston. The \$120 million yard expansion will make Worcester CSX's New England freight hub.

●●●●●●

RAILWAY AGE magazine Wednesday named Blacklands Railroad, based in Sulphur Springs, Tex., the 2011 Short Line Railroad of the Year, and the Reading & Northern Railroad, Port Clinton, Pa., its 2011 Regional Railroad of the Year. The two railroads will be honored at the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association's annual meeting in San Antonio, Tex.

●●●●●●

WARREN BUFFETT'S Berkshire Hathaway has received a \$1 billion dollar dividend from BNSF Railway, Bloomberg News reported. On top of last year's \$1.5 billion dividend, this brings Berkshire's earnings from BNSF to \$2.25 billion since it acquired the railway 13 months ago.

●●●●●●

AMTRAK SAID its February ridership rose 7.6% to 2,099,010 riders, up more than 147,000 passengers, from levels of February 2010, making the gain the 16th consecutive month of ridership growth.

●●●●●●

MAINE D.O.T. RECEIVED five responses to its request for proposals on operating the ex-MMA trackage, which the state purchased: Myles Group, which operates the Wellsboro & Corning RR; Rail America, a holding company which operates the CB&CNS, New England Central and Connecticut Southern in our area; Patriot Rail, which operates 13 short line freight railroads; Springfield Terminal, a subsidiary of Pan Am, which operates Maine Central and Boston & Maine; and Eastern Maine RR, which is a sister company of New Brunswick Southern, a subsidiary of Irving Oil in New Brunswick.

●●●●●●

THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE has unveiled a stamp dedicated to "Owney," a stray dog who became the mascot of the Railway Mail Service late in the 19th century. The terrier mix appears on the stamp in a painting by artist Bill Bond of Arlington, Va. The real-life Owney wandered into the Post Office in Albany, N.Y., where postal clerks took a liking to him. He followed mailbags onto trains and began riding with them across the country. The Railway Mail Service was a dangerous business at the time, but legend says no harm came to workers on the trains Owney rode. An 1895 New York Times article



described how Owney's journeys began: "When the mail is sent to the station, Owney jumps on the wagon, and stays there until the last bag is thrown

into the car. If he feels like taking a journey, he then jumps aboard the car, barks good-bye, and away he goes. Once on the train he is the guest of the clerks at the office along the road." Owney's body is preserved at the Smithsonian Institution's National Postal Museum.

●●●●●●

GO TRANSIT'S parent agency has placed an order for 50 new Bombardier bi-level coaches for delivery starting late this year. The C\$125 million order will be constructed at the company's Thunder Bay, Ont., plant. Bombardier designed its first bi-level cars in 1978 in conjunction with GO, and the cars are now the most popular commuter cars in North America. The latest order will push the total number of Thunder Bay-manufactured bi-level to more than 1,000.

●●●●●●

THE MBTA HAS FINALIZED a deal to lease five locomotives that once belonged to the Maryland Area Regional Commuter Train. Two of the GP40WH-2 locomotives, all of which date to about 1995, could be in service soon, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority spokesman Joe Pesaturo said. Although retired by the Maryland agency, the locomotives are newer than all but two of the 82 engines that make up the MBTA's fleet and could help the T improve service on its beleaguered commuter rail, where engine failure is a regular source of delay. The locomotives, leased at \$300 a day each, represent a stopgap measure until delivery in 2013 of locomotives being built by MotivePower Inc. at \$115 million. The T is paying an additional \$9 million to a separate consulting team to manage that contract. **Update:** The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority says two of five ex-MARC GP40WH-2 diesel locomotives it is leasing aren't mechanically suitable for service, the Boston Herald has reported. The agency has sent one back to the manufacturer, MotivePower, while the other will be used to provide parts for the three that are able to run. "They are not in as good shape as I would have liked, but they are younger than what we have," said Richard Davey, MBTA's general manager. The harsh winter caused myriad mechanical problems for the agency, and the lease deal with MotivePower was aimed at keeping trains running. MBTA inked the lease deal March 11 for \$45,000 per month for the five. MBTA spokesman Joe Pesaturo said the agency will not pay for the locomotive it is now cannibalizing for parts.

●●●●●●

THE MBTA PLANS to more than double the number of three-car trains on its Green Line, effective March 21.

Three-car trains will increase the number of weekday trips on the Green Line from 13 to 32 to increase capacity for new riders, MBTA officials said in a prepared statement. MBTA will more than double the number of three-car trains on the line's B and D branches, and introduce three-car trains to the E branch for the first time. In 2010, MBTA reintroduced three-car trains to the Green Line, which serves 200,000 riders each weekday.

●●●●●

AT A PRESS CONFERENCE, Senators John Kerry (D-Mass.), Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas), and Mark R. Warner (D-Va.) announced legislation to create an infrastructure bank that would help close America's widening infrastructure-funding gap, create millions of American jobs in the next decade and make the United States more competitive in the 21st century. "This is a bipartisan moment to make a once bipartisan issue bipartisan once again," said Sen. Kerry.

●●●●●

REPUBLICANS IN THE NEW HAMPSHIRE House of Representatives have voted to shut down a rail authority that would operate commuter trains to Concord, Manchester, and Nashua, N.H. The bill now goes to the state Senate for action. The authority was set up to study a commuter rail link to Boston. It's already obtained \$4.1 million in federal funds to study the economic impacts of expanded service. "We need to tighten our belts and do more with less, but the message just isn't getting through to rail aficionados," said Rep. John Hikel, R-Goffstown.

Peter Burling, the authority's chairman, called the vote "sad," but said he'll make the case for the authority at the state Senate.

●●●●●

ONE OF FOUR SURVIVING ALCO PA passenger diesel locomotives is navigating BNSF's network this week on its way to a new home in Texas. The Museum of the American Railroad has acquired ex-Santa Fe No. 59L from the Smithsonian Institution, and it's traveling atop a flatcar to the museum's future home in Frisco, Texas.

The 59L served on Santa Fe and Delaware & Hudson, and was sold with three sisters to Mexico's FNM Railroad in 1979. Rail equipment collector Doyle McCormack repatriated two, No. 59L and sister 62L, in 2000. He's restoring 62L to operation; it now wears Nickel Plate colors. The Smithsonian

acquired 59L to preserve it. Both shipped to Union Pacific's Albany, Ore., roundhouse. However, the Smithsonian hasn't progressed work on 59L, and it's in tough condition. So it's gifted the engine to the Texas museum, where it'll be restored. William Brotherton, an attorney for the museum, said it shipped from Albany last Thursday, with the carbody on one flatcar and the trucks on another. He said the unit is to arrive in Fort Worth, Texas, within a week, then be shepherded to Frisco. It'll sit there in an unused siding until the new museum site can be formalized and track can be laid. The City of Dallas is suing to force the museum off its current site at Fair Park even as museum officials carry out their plan for the new site. When the new museum is up and running, Brotherton said cosmetic restoration work will begin. The museum plans to restore No. 59L to Santa Fe "Warbonnet" colors. There's no prime mover inside, so one will have to be acquired before it can run.



●●●●●

J.B. HUNT TRANSPORT SERVICES, Inc. announced this month that its year-to-date Intermodal segment (JBI) volume exceeds one million loads for the first time since it entered into a historic agreement with the Santa Fe Railway, now part of BNSF, 21 years ago.

●●●●●

GENERAL MOTORS has honored Union Pacific with a 2010 Supplier of the Year award at its annual awards presentation. "Union Pacific is honored to be recognized for our contributions to General Motors' parts and vehicle transportation," said Julie Krehbiel, Union Pacific vice president and general manager Automotive.

●●●●●

THE FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION'S ban on the use of cellphones and other electronic devices—personal and carrier-issued—becomes

permanent today, Monday, March 28. The ban applies to all on-duty train crew members.

●●●●●●

A THIRD SOUTHERN RAILWAY 2-8-0 is back in steam within a year's time after Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum's 1904 Alco, No. 630, began test runs Saturday after a 13-year rebuild and a period of inactivity that dates back to 1989. The engine and a wood Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis caboose went for break-in runs on the museum's railroad. Other SR Consolidations restored in the past year include No. 154 in Knoxville on the Three Rivers Rambler excursion line, and No. 401 at Illinois' Monticello Railway Museum. Two other SR Consolidations are in North Carolina. No. 722 is disassembled awaiting repairs at Great Smoky Mountains Railway, and No. 542 will debut its cosmetic restoration in May at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer.

●●●●●●

THE CUMBRES & TOLTEC SCENIC RAILROAD

plans to resume train service over its entire line when its season begins, thanks to a quick replacement of a burned bridge, the Associated Press has reported. The Lobato Trestle should be replaced with a new structure in time for the railroad's May 28 opening. The New Mexico Department of Transportation has picked a bidder to conduct the work, and has drawn up plans for the reconstruction. Actual replacement of the trestle's steel girders and wooden deck can be done in three to four weeks. The 1883 trestle burned in June, forcing the railroad to curtail trips out of Chama, N.M. Federal funds obtained by New Mexico will pay for much of the work.

●●●●●●

VICE PRESIDENT JOSEPH BIDEN received the honor of having a station named for him. The dedication comes in the wake of a \$37.7 million renovation. Biden frequently boarded Amtrak trains at the Wilmington station during his 36-year Senate career. The Delaware democrat said he had developed friendships with other riders and Amtrak employees, a group of people he calls his second family. Biden estimates he made 7,830 round trips between Wilmington and Washington on board the train.

●●●●●●

I found these articles interesting in this month's magazines and maybe you will, also:

TRAINS

Breakthrough in the World's Longest Tunnel
America's Finest Railroad Station

The Railroad War

RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN

Machinery Loads for Gons
Scratchbuilder's Corner: Distress
A New Material for Flat Benchwork

MODEL RAILROADER

Headlights and DCC
More Fun with 4 X 8s
Operation on the Franklin & South Manchester

News sources: [Trains](#) "Newswire", [Patriot Ledger](#), [Boston Globe](#), [Boston Herald](#), [Worcester Telegram & Gazette](#), [Springfield Republican](#), [Railpace](#) Newsmagazine, "The 470", RRE "The Callboy", [Railway Age](#), [Providence Journal](#), [Portland Press Herald](#).

EDITOR'S NOTES

1. Our **next Official Operations** will be Monday and Thursday, April 11th and 14th. Hope you can join in the fun.
2. The first meeting of the "**75th Anniversary Committee**" will be held the following Monday, the 18th. If you're interested in the planning for events in 2013, commemorating our 75th year of existence, please join the committee!

.....*David N. Clinton*

MEMBER NEWS

Our thoughts and prayers go out to **Joe Dumas** and his family, on the death of his dad and fellow member **Jim Dumas**. We will miss "Santa Clause" and his wonderful, happy outlook on life!

Please continue to keep **John Governor** in your thoughts and prayers, as he recovers, now living near his daughter in southern Connecticut.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

These members will be celebrating their birthday during the next month. Congratulate them on making it through another year!

Bob Moger..... April 4th
Dave MacDonald..... April 5th
Bob Knapp April 8th
Skip Burton April 13th
Ben Saint-Cyr..... April 14th
Dick Labonte..... April 19th
Al Gray April 21st
Jack Doyle..... April 27th
Ed Sisk April 30th

RUNNING EXTRA

BRIAN MCGRORY

Just in time: the T store

Let’s give MBTA executives the benefit of the doubt and assume that it may never have occurred to them that anyone would be in a rush to get to Worcester. But even taking that into account, and even by the T’s winter standards, the four-hour ride Monday night seems a trifle long, considering passengers could have left Logan Airport at the same time and been in Cancun about five minutes faster.

But all is not lost, for the T is opening up its new online store before too long, offering merchandise that highlights everyone’s favorite public transit agency. And just as long as they don’t adopt one proposed slogan “We put the T in CommuTe,” they can use it to blunt the impact of these delays.

Think 30-ounce coffee mugs to keep commuters warm and sated as they wait for all those late trains? Combine that with MBTA logo fleeces to wear on those wind-whipped platforms and you have a winning combination.

How about special MBTA Sudoku books for passengers to while away the hours during the next delay? *It’s only been two hours that I’ve been sitting on this train? Boy, does time ever fly with my new T Sudoku puzzles!*

There are the obvious T key chains for when people make that decision to start driving to work, just to

remind them of the pain they left behind. Or how about a souvenir T snow shovel to remind passengers of that winter of havoc.

Truth is, I thought I killed off the MBTA store about 10 years ago when I wrote a column about how T pajamas (“Snuggle up with our ultra-soft nightshirt”; seriously, it’s an exact quote from the T’s website a decade ago) and T money clips (“We’re on a roll — your money roll that is”) weren’t selling as fast as T officials thought they would. The state secretary of transportation shut the store down by lunch that day. In some far-flung village in China, the locals are still using millions of MBTA cufflinks as currency.

But even bad ideas deserve a little mercy, so here we are again, courtesy of the T’s relatively new general manager, Richard Davey. He’s got ancient equipment. He has no money. His agency is groaning with debt. And he’s just trying to make a few bucks any way he can.

To his credit, this new store has few risks. Unlike last time, an outside vendor pays for all the merchandise and sells it online; the T takes a cut.

So count me in, provided they sell MBTA train sets — and no, not some models, but the 20-year-old locomotives and coaches that keep breaking down.

Yesterday, an apologetic Davey was on the line accepting blame. Well, actually, he was blaming the Massachusetts Bay Commuter Railroad, the private company that runs the commuter train system for the T, but close enough. They were all in this together, he noted.

“What occurred yesterday was preventable,” Davey said, adding a moment later, “It was tantamount to putting a locomotive with a check engine light on one of our busiest trains.”

The MBCR hardly covered itself in glory in its initial response, when officials issued a written statement pointing to aging equipment as the problem. The loud noises you heard from Park Square were T officials discussing the matter with their commuter rail subordinates. By afternoon, like magic, the MBCR was falling on its sword.

“This morning’s statement was a lazy excuse,” Davey said at day’s end.

This has been a rough winter for T commuters in general, and Davey specifically, the latter of whom deserves time to get his train legs before critics take him out at the knees. The weather has been abysmal. And there’s no pot of gold to change decades of neglect overnight.

In the meantime, perhaps they could make millions selling T-subsidized Kindle downloads of “War and Peace” (“Long enough to last through our worst delays!”). MBTA T-shirts could carry the slogan: “Better late than never.”

The store is scheduled to be online in June, meaning, well, by Christmas.

Brian McGrory is a Globe columnist. His e-mail is m McGrory@globe.com.

(Portland Press Herald 3/5/2011)

Our View: Rail Project Should Take Preference Over Trail

If the two uses can't coexist, the one that boosts our economy should come first.

With the price of gasoline on the rise and the money available to build and maintain highways growing scarce, the case for maximizing Maine's use of freight rail is easy to make.



Old railroad lights sit idle where the Sebago to the Sea Trail ends for now in South Windham.

A revival of a five-mile section of the Mountain Division line between Westbrook and Windham would get trucks off local roads and give manufacturers an opportunity to find a lower-cost way to get products to market.

This has the potential to spur development at a time when it's really needed, and it opens the door for future rail expansion. The state has enough money to start the project, thanks to a voter-approved bond issue that was passed last June.

But not everyone is happy. Recreational users who have built a trail along the rail bed for cycling and snowmobiling would be displaced, and they are fighting the restoration of the rail line. They say it would disrupt their vision of a recreational link between Portland and Fryeburg, and are trying to get the state to put a halt on the project.

If they win, it would be a loss for all Mainers.

Even though a recreational trail would be an asset to the local community and a potential tourist attraction, the revival of freight -- and maybe someday passenger rail -- would be even more valuable.

It would be nice if the two uses could coexist, but the reality may be that there isn't enough space. And a recreational trail can be built anywhere, but rail lines have to follow established rights-of-way if they are to be financially viable. If the state has to choose, our transportation and economic needs should take priority over our recreational wants -- it's not even a close call.

State transportation officials should not lose sight of the long-term savings that would come from an East-West freight rail link and let this important project move forward.

Officials favor Stoughton route for rail extension

By Michael Norton and Kyle Cheney ([Patriot Ledger](#))

Top Patrick administration and MBTA officials told lawmakers during a briefing yesterday morning that the Stoughton route is the preferred path for the proposed extension of commuter rail service to Fall River and New Bedford, based on a 2,500-page environmental impact report issued by the US Army Corps of Engineers. "They pretty much said that Stoughton is the preferred route," said Representative Louis Kafka, a Democrat who represents Stoughton and opposes the proposed route through that community. Kafka, who prefers the use of buses, said the Stoughton route has been at the "head of the list" for likely paths since 1994, but said his concerns about environmental and public safety effects remain.

Supporters of the Stoughton route argue that it carries more riders than a bus route, would get to Boston more quickly, and would be more cost-effective.

"I didn't have any doubt even before they started this whole process," said Representative Antonio Cabral, a New Bedford Democrat. "I think that's very good news. Now, we can move forward; the state can move forward."

Those who attended yesterday's meeting at the State House said lawmakers heard presentations from Kristina Egan, director of the South Coast rail project for the MBTA, and two other top Patrick administration transportation officials.

Kafka estimated the rail project's cost at more than \$1 billion and wondered how much more it would cost when, according to his estimates, construction begins in 5 to 10 years. "Cost becomes prohibitive at some point," Kafka said.

Governor Deval Patrick has been a steady proponent of extending rail to Southeastern Massachusetts, although he has been dogged by questions about how the project would be funded. During his reelection campaign last year, his opponents criticized the administration for a \$100 million purchase of rail lines from Taunton to New Bedford, which included rights to operate trains on the line.

Senator Brian Joyce, a Milton Democrat who is chairman of the Senate Bonding Committee, said the route would link Easton, Raynham, Taunton, Fall River, and New Bedford. He said he has concerns about its funding.

"For the life of me, I can't figure out how we would pay for such an expenditure," he said, adding that he is encouraged that the administration continues to analyze the project.

THE OPERATOR

FEB. 21 & 24/11

ECL OPERATING DEPARTMENT

NO. 152



STEAM & DIESEL



OPERATION REVIEW

By Paul A. Cutler III

Wow, did we have a lot of Operators on Monday! I think we had the most ever, with 23 members signed up. All trains were run, including all the local freights (something that hasn't happened in a good long while). It was all EMD night, so trains were powered by models of Electro-Motive Division of General Motors equipment. So let's get it rollin' with 2-stroke power!

Operations Review – Monday, February 21st

The dispatchers for the evening were **yours truly** as Mountain Div. Dispatcher and **Roger St. Peter** returning as Boston Div. Dispatcher. Said **Roger**: *"Everybody did well, I had fun. Not too many screw ups. Dispatching is easy!"* See? You too can be a dispatcher! Sign up today!

Staging Yardmaster **Bill Garvey** had a pretty good session. He had to yell at a few people, and routed one train to the wrong track, but he had fun in a non-walking position.

Our first local freight of the night was MX-1, with engineer **Skip Burton** and **Jack Doyle** as his brakeman. Neither reported any problems, and finished all switching in time. *"I had fun. Skip's a nice guy to work with,"* said **Jack**.

MX-3 got around half of the switching done with **Bill Roach** in charge. His problems were with dirty track, dirty wheels, dead switch points, and balky switching machines. **Bill** also had some trouble getting out of the way of incoming freights, but didn't delay too many trains. ☺

Chris Barlow ran JX-7, but had all kinds of trouble getting out of Essex Staging. Even though the loco was freshly cleaned, it wouldn't run. A replacement loco was flown in, but then had power problems in the yard. Despite all his trouble, **Chris** did get all cars switched out.

Old friend (but long absent) **Bob Knapp** made a rare appearance to run local JX-2, the Hudson Falls job. He said that he had never run it before, and now understands why. There are multiple trackwork problems with busted points and throw bars in the area (he had to solder a few joints), plus lots of dirty track as hardly anyone cleans the area between sessions. Then there were the power problems when **Bob** couldn't figure out the diamond polarity toggles. It looks like the area needs to be gone over with a fine tooth comb before we can schedule operations in there again.

Eric *"It's all good in the hood"* **Tedeschi** was at the throttle of HX-2 out of Cedar Hill. He said everything ran fine, and didn't even get hit by a train. *Hooray!*

A hockey game almost broke out on the job on the fightin' HX-1 crew in Larson. ☺ **Ed Sisk** and **Bill Sims** had some different ideas on how to switch out this complicated area according to witnesses, but they still got about half the work done on Monday despite that. They did report that they had to switch out the GP9 power for SW's and could not run any engine singly due to the dirty track and/or wheels they encountered (one engine was needed to bump the other to get it to go).

Jim South once more was soloing in Middleton Yard. He wrote that he is taking some of the blame for Wrong Way **Peterson's** commuter excursion up the Mountain Division instead of going to Boston as directed on **Dan's** Train Order (the wrong train in the wrong direction). **"Oops!" Jim**. Of course, **Dan** needs to take some of this, too, because his Train Order clearly says "Boston" not "Cedar Hill", which he didn't read until he got into the Gallery a half mile out of the yard. **"Oops!" Dan**. *Wait, there's more!* Seems what lead to all this was some confusion on the Train Order's DCC address for train 532. Ops Set-Up crewman **Dave Clinton** wrote the DCC address for 719 on 532's Train Order, even though **Dave** was given a clearly labeled chart on proper DCC numbering. **"Oops!" Dave** (he still blames the paperwork). *Sheesh...3 oopsies on one action? Must be a record...* ☺☺☺

Speaking of **Dan**, after backing his errant commuter back into Middleton, ran 4 more trains. On 705, he almost caught a head on with the passenger train when someone left E-7 thrown at Middleton, but no collision occurred. With JH-1, he left a little early. **Dan** claims the clock said it was time, but for whatever reason he left 13 minutes early. **"Oops!" Dan**.

Jack Foley operated 4 trains, strangely enough (*he runs trains?!).* **Bob Moger** was his Fireman/Engineer Trainee. They operated 3 passenger trains and one freight (with 2 late and 2 on time), each taking turns with the throttle.

Engineer **Rich Herlihy** had 3 trains. MH-1 was on time by Amtrak standards, Train 28 was on time by MBTA standards, and the drag freight extra would be considered late by any standard after it's *"kerfluffle in the tunnel"* under Larson. However, since it's an extra train, there is no timetable. ☺

Gary "Gunny" Mangelinkx had some trouble on the beer train (ML-1). It seems there were two cars with low couplers and they were taken out of service. On Train 35, the **Gunny** almost dropped a drawbar on the 2nd unit (it unscrewed itself), then the engine died.

Engineer **Al Munn** got MB-2 over the road, but not before breaking in two before leaving the yard...twice. It did it again at Hudson Falls...twice. Then he managed to derail a half dozen cars at Essex when it split the switch backing up.

Finally, he managed to get out of there and get to Boston an hour late. On his next train, he had a passenger car uncouple in the tunnel under Larson...twice. The car was removed and the train continued without issue. **Al's** next two trains were on time...twice (if you can believe it). ☺

Nick Nickerson had three trains under his belt. Train 719 and 544 went well, but HB-2 left without telling the dispatcher. "**Oops!**" **Nick**. He also found that Cedar Hill freight train HB-2 had the wrong DCC address (a Boston passenger train, in fact). "**Oops!**" **Ops Set-Up Crew**.

Train 101 was tons of fun for **Dave Clinton**. Too bad he had all kinds of throttle problems that slowed him down to a crawl. **Dave** switched out the Dairy at high speed when he delayed the couplers to spot the cars and they ran away from him down grade. No crash, though (*lucky*). Then he had a little trouble getting into Cedar Hill because the Ops Set-Up Crew made the freight too long in front of it. "**Oops!**" **myself** on that one. **Dave's** other two trains were fine, and he got a Fireman to help out when **Brendan Sheehan** got into the act as an Engineer Trainee.

Finally, **Paul Agnew** got one of the last trains with LM-2, and made an interesting meet with **Skip** over at West Middleton. It made it a busy area for a few minutes.

Trainmaster **Paul Pando** handed out all Train Orders, and noted that E-6 was not throwing all the way.

As Dispatcher, I think we had a great night overall. I did have to make a few trips down from the tower 3 or 4 times, once for **Jack F.'s** radio batteries, once for **Dan's** errant commuter, once to help **Al M.'s** derailment, **Bob K.'s** dirty engine, etc. But after that, things settled right down and went pretty smoothly the rest of the night. My only complaint was that folks were forgetting to change radio channels when changing divisions, but overall communications were good. It was a fun time with a full 1/3rd of our members participating.

Operations Review - Thursday, February 24th

Once more **yours truly** was in the hot seat as the Chief Dispatcher, supervising 13 total operators.

Rich Herlihy got the ball rolling with 3 trains. Train 755 had a small derailment at E-61. On JH-3, he had to wait for traffic on the Mountain Div., but was only 11 minutes late. But then there was BS-1... These were ECL GP50's with a road slug. Right from the first, the lead engine was stuttering. By the time they got to Essex, **Rich** had to pull the lead unit and put the rear engine in the front ahead of the slug. Things went well until the tunnel at Mt. View. It crashed to a stop and uncoupled the train, but then continued into the tunnel sans train...where the other GP50 then died. Since one can't run a train with a slug alone, some new road power had to be flown in to rescue the train. As he got to Larson, the new engine also started to cough and wheeze. Slowly & painfully, **Rich** staggered into his siding at the Steel Mill, glad to be finished with that run. ☺

Jack Foley also ran some trains. Train 98 almost left an hour early due to a lack of eyeglasses on the part of the engineer. ☺ With LJ-4, he left half his train behind at Great

Lakes. Then when backing up he lost control and then derailed to boot. It then went downhill from there...

Engineer **Al Munn** got 4 trains over the pike: 582, MB-4, 78, and 571. He reported no problems...for once (*around the world, small children dance with glee over this joyous news!*). Too bad it wasn't true. He passed the red signal at E-53, almost causing a head-on in the Gallery. Fortunately we were able to back **Rich** up to get out of the way. "**Oops!**" **Al**.

Dave Clinton was operating a few mainline trains, and his only real problem was with 790 (the VIA train). It had an engine at either end, and kept dropping the MU. **Brendan Sheehan** was his Fireman/Trainee, and **Brendan** had some issues with his throttle (since sent back to Digitrax-land for repair).

Roger St. Peter had to check out early, but he ran two trains before he did. Both left and arrived on time.

Gary "Gunny" Mangelinkx hit the jackpot with 4 trains run and he didn't have any throttle problems. *Woo-hoo!* **Fred Alexander** was his Fireman/Trainee. The **Gunny** got HB-4, the double stack train, into Boston 12 minutes early. *Well done!* As he said, "*Drive it like you stole it.*" ☺

Middleton was totally in the control of **Chris Barlow**, who did triple-duty as Yardmaster and MX-3's Engineer and Brakeman. He almost got all the industries finished up (just two left) and all trains were dispatched and received. **Chris** noted that there were several bad spots with track power and that dirt was still an issue in places.

HX-2 local freight was once again run by **Eric Tedeschi**. He did lose control of his train a couple times with his DT400R throttle, and he left E-64 thrown for **Dave** to find ("**Oops!**" **Eric**). And then he locked his radio on with a hot mic, after he snagged the mic wire on **Al Munn**.

Bill Garvey returned to the Staging Yard, and got all trains in and out of all three staging yards smoothly and quickly.

Trainmaster **Dan Peterson** got all Train Orders handed out except for the last one. That he took himself, as all other available engineers were exhausted or had gone home. I think that's the first time a Trainmaster has ever run a train on the ECL.

As Dispatcher, I think we had a good night. Radio discipline was well done, and there were no major disasters. I didn't even have to leave the tower. ☺ Above all, both nights went very well for us.

Next Ops will be in April on the 11th and 14th at 7:30PM with the Fast Clock starting at 8:00PM. See you then!

Paul Cutler III 