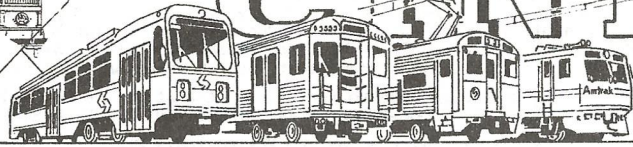




# CINDERS



**MARCH 1998**

## IN THIS ISSUE

Philadelphia Chapter News.....	1, 2
ON THE SCENE, by El Simon.....	3
Extra List.....	5
PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS, by Frank Tatnall.....	6
New Jersey Backs Conrail Merger.....	9

Volume 59

Newsletter of the

Number 3

**PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER**

**National Railway Historical Society Inc.**

**Post Office Box 7302**

**Philadelphia, Pa. 19101**

## MEETING NOTICE:

FRIDAY EVENING, MARCH 20, 1998

Eakins Lounge, Alumni Hall, Thomas Jefferson University,  
1020 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA (three blocks south  
of Market East Station)

Dinner at 6:15 PM (\$19.50 per person), Meeting at 7:30 PM  
Parking in Wills Eye Hospital garage, 9th Street above  
Locust (\$5.00 after 6 PM), or Parkway Garage, also 9th  
above Locust (\$5.75 after 6 PM), Downtown Garage, Walnut  
Street east of 10th (\$5.00 after 6 PM)

Our March 20 meeting will feature a narrated slide lecture presented by Alfred H. Harf, Assistant Executive Director of Planning, New Jersey Transit Rail Operations. Mr. Harf is expected to detail for our audience the Waterfront Connection in North Jersey, the Midtown Direct service, Secaucus Transfer. He is also expected to touch on some of the potential South Jersey developments as well. This program is a unique opportunity to get an inside look on the rapidly changing NJ Transit rail operations scene.

Our usual sit-down dinner will be held in the Eakins Lounge, Alumni Hall, Thomas Jefferson University, at a cost of \$19.50 per person, beginning at 6:15 PM. DINNER RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY TUESDAY EVENING, MARCH 17, 1998 to National Director Frank Tatnall at 610-828-0706. This is a strict deadline, and we ask that you please specify when ordering if you desire a fish dinner.

Looking ahead, our April 17 meeting will feature a narrated slide lecture by Member Paul Kutta on the Reading Railroad. Get your income tax return mailed, and relax with us on April 17!

## Winners Named in Chapter Slide Contest

Eleven members entered the annual Ray Muller Slide Contest at Philadelphia Chapter's monthly meeting on February 20, and all entrants won at least one prize. Film prizes will be awarded in the following categories:

- Steam - (1) George Metz - N&W 1218  
(2) Albert Alecknavage - East Broad Top  
(3) Roger Cole - Mount Washington Cog Railway
- Diesel - (1) Lee Schultz - Union Pacific E9's  
(2) Dave Kopena - Whippany Museum diesels  
(3) (Tie) Rodger Fredrick - MARC Oakland, MD  
Roy Soukup - Richmond (VA) triple crossing  
George Metz - Conrail SD80MAC's Lewistown
- Heavy Electric - (1) George Metz - X-2000 tilt train  
(2) Rob Mandeville - Capitoline Downingtown  
(3) Albert Alecknavage - AEM-7's Sharon Hill
- Light Electric - (1) George Metz - Peter Witt 8534  
(2) Rob Mandeville - San Francisco Muni track  
(3) Gerry Williams - Fort Smith (AR) Birney
- Other - (1) Rob Mandeville - Hell Gate Bridge  
(2) George Metz - Circus train on Conrail  
(3) Lee Schultz - Starrucca Viaduct
- Oldies - (1) Gerry Williams - Reading RDC's  
(2) Rodger Fredrick - Red Arrow center door car  
(3) George Metz - Conrail Safe Harbor

Once again, Phil Mulligan organized and emceed the contest. He, Dick Barben, Frank Tatnall and Doug Volk served as judges.

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS, Inc.  
Post Office Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

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**MEETINGS:** 7:30 PM, third Friday of each month (except second Friday in December), at Eakins Lounge, Thomas Jefferson University Alumni Hall, 1020 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA. Dinner at 6:15 PM (\$19.50 per person), Meeting 7:30 PM.

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES:** \$31.00 per person, which includes Chapter and National dues. Chapter-only dues \$16.00 per person per year. Membership applications should be forwarded to: Post Office Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302. Membership in the parent National Railway Historical Society is required to hold Chapter-only status.

**ADDRESS CHANGES** should be sent to the Editor at Post Office Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. PLEASE INCLUDE NEW PHONE NUMBER!

CINDERS is published 11 times a year by Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, Inc. Correspondence regarding Cinders should be directed to the Editor at P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302.

**EXCHANGE COPIES SHOULD BE SENT TO:** R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Editor, P. O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353

**MEETING CANCELLATION ALERT!**

In the event of snow, sleet or freezing rain on a Philadelphia Chapter meeting night, Chapter officers will make a decision as to whether to hold the scheduled meeting. If in doubt, members should call 215-947-5769 for a recorded advisory on the meeting.

**Support Urged for Rockville Bridge Stamp**

The Pennsylvania Railroad built the Rockville Bridge in 1902, to carry its mainline across the Susquehanna River near Harrisburg. With its 48 graceful arches, Rockville at 3,280 feet is the longest stone-arch bridge in the world, still carrying heavy Conrail traffic.

The famed span now is being proposed for a commemorative U.S. postage stamp to be issued on its 100th anniversary in 2002, and a committee has been formed in the area to mount a campaign for the stamp. The Rockville Bridge U.S. Stamp Committee (116 Williams Street, Marysville, PA 17053-1433) is urging NRHS members and everyone interested in the PRR or in classic railroad structures to write letters in support of the Rockville stamp. The address is:

Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee  
U. S. Postal Service  
Stamp Development, Room 4474E  
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW  
Washington, DC 20260-2437

**Update of Shortline/Regional Railroad Rosters**

The following additions and changes should be made to the shortline and regional railroad rosters published in the September through January issues of Cinders:

- Change** DELAWARE-LACKAWANNA RAILROAD (RL), Scranton, PA  
2005 C420 Renumbered from 310
- Delete** NEW YORK REGIONAL RAIL (NYRR), New York, NY  
21-22 S1 Units scrapped
- Add** 1337 B-B SW1200RS D/E GMD 1958 Former Ohio Central 1337
- Delete** NEW YORK, SUSQUEHANNA & WESTERN RAILWAY (NYSW), Ridgefield Park, NJ  
3618 SD45 Transferred to Toledo, Peoria & Western
- MITTANY & BALD EAGLE RAILROAD (NBER), Bellefonte, PA  
Correct road number for former Conrail GP10 #7569 is 1804
- Delete** UPPER MERION & PLYMOUTH RAILROAD (UMP), Ivy Rock, PA  
9008 NW Now owned by Penn Eastern Rail Lines (PRL)
- Add** WILMINGTON & WESTERN RAILROAD, Marshallton, DE  
58 0-6-0 Steam BLW 1907 Former Virginia Blue Ridge 4

**ABBREVIATIONS**

- D/E - Diesel-electric
- BLW - Baldwin Locomotive Works
- GMD - General Motors Diesel, Ltd. (Canada)

**Chapter Name Badges are Available**

Chapter members are urged to wear identifying name badges, which once again are available at a cost of 75 cents each. These blue and white badges feature the Philadelphia Chapter name and NRHS emblem. Larry Eastwood will have a supply at the March 20 Chapter meeting, and will be prepared to cut plastic name strips to affix to the badges.



EL SIMON

President Clinton's Fiscal Year 1999 budget has eliminated any operating assistance for Amtrak and has proposed that capital funding be taken from the balance approved just months ago. Part of the proposal suggests that \$621 million be provided for capital assistance from the Highway Trust Fund, a source which Congress has strongly resisted in the past. While it should be stressed that the budget submission is only the first round, it can be a long, sometimes contentious process.

Meanwhile, production lines are currently busy with several Amtrak orders. First to come will be 21 new F59 diesel locomotives for Amtrak West. They will replace virtually all of the remaining F40's being used at Amtrak West. Amtrak West will also receive three Talgo trainsets, to be used on Pacific Northwest routes. The State of Washington has expressed a strong commitment for this equipment. Curiously, earlier Talgos were operated by the Rock Island, New Haven and Boston & Maine during the 1950's-1960's while ACF built the pioneering sets for Spain almost 50 years ago!

Amtrak West operated a special train between Los Angeles and San Diego on February 18. Consist was F40 #340, Amcafe 43040, full-dome 9302, Custom Coach 44887 and F40 372. The Custom Coach is used in service now marketed as "Pacific Club" service. The purpose of the train was to announce an order for 40 new cars to partially re-equip the San Diegan service. These cars will be built by GEC Alstom at their Hornell, NY shop. The cars have been ordered as eight five-car trainsets to be pulled by the F59's now being built. Each set will include a coach-baggage-cab car, two straight coaches, one snack-bar coach and one Custom Class car. Seating is similar to five existing Amcoaches. Curiously, though, the five existing "low-level" San Diegan consists all run with six to nine cars each. Either Amtrak will restrict capacity by reserving seats or some of the eight new consists will be split to strengthen other sets. (Perhaps we may see a low-level set retained for weekend duty, as well.) Nothing was said about the introduction of a dome-lounge on the San Diego-San Luis Obispo route, even though the special train included such a car.

Closer to home, eight additional dual-mode P32 Genesis locomotives (#710-717) are under construction for use on Empire Service and other routes. They will replace the worst of over forty F40's assigned to the Northeast Corridor, but the remainder must soldier on until the 15 new electric locomotives arrive and the new American Flyer high-speed trainsets commence service during the next two years.

As we proceed into the spring of 1998, introduction of electric service between New Haven and Boston is just two years away. Certainly, Amtrak's plans are being developed to maximize the potential of the new technology. It will be many months before a definitive description of Amtrak's schedule plans becomes available. However, we can make some educated guesses about what we'll see.

Pride of the Northeast Corridor will be the new high-speed American Flyer sets now under construction. Although 12 sets have been ordered, it is expected that an option for six additional units will be exercised.

Amtrak agreed to a limitation on the number of trains it will operate over the electrified Boston-New Haven route in order to mollify critics and secure approval of maritime interests. As I recall, the agreed total was 17 trains each way, so there is one restriction on service frequency. That number must include both the premium-fare high-speed trains, on which Amtrak would want to maximize revenues, as well as conventional trains, which presumably would also continue to attract a considerable following. Since Amtrak has built up a long-time travel pattern of scheduling Metroliners out of both Washington and New York, logic suggests this would continue, with some trains extended to Boston. Not every train would be extended, however, because 18 trainsets would not be sufficient, and also, remember that frequency limitation Amtrak has agreed to.

If power on Boston trains will no longer change at New Haven, is there any need to retain a major facility at this location? Well, there are the Springfield trains, including an Inland Route train to Boston and the Vermonter. There are several connecting trains, as well. Since Sunnyside yard at New York already handles dual-mode units and trains have major dwell time at New Haven, logic suggests that dual-mode units such as the P32's would make sense here, too.

I cannot recall exactly how far the third rail extends east of the East River tunnel, but it goes some distance because the Long Island trains use the same trackage. You'd therefore have enough length to switch between electric and diesel power. Any units operating between Springfield and New Haven could be cycled into Penn Station or even to Albany-Rensselaer for attention.

Some need will remain for straight diesels, such as the Corridor routes south of Washington, and possibly west or north out of Albany. To free up units now running to Harrisburg, these trains could revert to electrics the entire route, as there should be some spare AEM-7's.

Think back, however, to the high-speed demonstrator trains, with the German ICE train in mind. It was capable of making excellent time without tilting due to high rates of acceleration and deceleration. If only 12 American Flyer high-speed trainsets are received, it's logical to assume that existing push-pull Metroliner cars, perhaps with an AEM-7 on each end, could supplement the new trains.

Amtrak has released ridership figures for the first quarter of FY 1998, with some gratifying results on many routes, but with some disturbing decreases. The Northeast Corridor's four product lines saw an overall increase of 8% in ridership, broken down as follows: Metroliners (-2.1%), NortheastDirect (7.2%), Empire Service (13.8%) and Clockers/Keystone (17.8%).

(Continued on Page 4)

## ON THE SCENE (Continued from Page 3)

Intercity ridership increased 1.5%, with the greatest gains shown by the California Zephyr and Empire Builder, which were both restored to daily service. Some eastern routes experienced declines and are worthy of mention (and concern): Capitol Limited (-2.2%), Carolinian (-0.7%), Lake Shore Limited (-5.9%), Pennsylvanian (-22.7%), and Three Rivers (-31.7%). Amtrak West, however, experienced an average increase of 12.2%, with the Coast Starlight showing a 23.7% increase in ridership.

Amtrak inaugurated a through Chicago-Los Angeles service via Texas on February 6. On Fridays, the Eagle leaves Chicago as a fourth frequency on the route. At San Antonio, the consist continues west to L.A. on the schedule of the Sunset. Both trains were previously tri-weekly. As such, this increase represents the first increase in service frequency since the Southern Pacific reduced the Sunset's pattern some 30 years ago!

Amtrak operated an "inaugural special" train on the regular schedule with events scheduled at various stops. As often happens, the best-laid plans can go awry, as a coal train derailment near Little Rock forced a detour over the former Cotton Belt via Pine Bluff and a resultant five-hour delay. Special arrangements were made by Intercity for the consist of the train, which included P42's 21, 22 and 23 (the trains are numbered 21-22!), baggage car 1215, transition sleeper 39010, sleepers 32093-Missouri, 32071-Arizona, 32073-California, coaches 34138, 31519, lounge 33020, diner 38065, sleeper 32072-Arkansas, lounge 33026, sleeper 32111-Texas, inaugural coaches 34061, 34010, 34032, 34131 and box-express car 71036. An extra revenue sleeper was operated, and two sleepers, a lounge and four coaches were intended for the invited guests.

The Eagle will offer through coach and sleeper service between Chicago and Los Angeles on the three days it now terminates in San Antonio each week (remember, too, that one day the entire consist runs through).

Switching back to the Northeast Corridor, it's hardly a surprise, but AEM-7 #901, damaged in 1996 in the "Portal" derailment in North Jersey, has been designated as one of the first of 30 of the speedy electrics to be remanufactured and upgraded. An option has been taken to rebuild the remaining 22 units (remember that 900 and 903 perished in the 1987 collision with Conrail locomotives at Chase, MD).

On February 5 and 6, the famous New Jersey Chamber of Commerce special train operated between New York and Washington. E60's 607-608 led 14 Amcoaches, two Amcafes and two Amclubs (marshalled mid-train with the two club ends adjoining). To permit availability of so many Amfleet cars on a weekday, NJ Transit provided a trainset for Clocker trains 624 and 629 on February 4-6. This consist included ALP-44 #4413 and Comet coaches 5657, 5812, 5624, 5620, 5676, 5619, 5635 and 5817.

As the first eight Metroliner club cars are refurbished, the lavatories are modified to meet ADA standards. The cars are accordingly renumbered from 20970-20977 (or 48970-48977) to the series 20986-20993. So, since November 1, car 20972 became 20988 and 48973 became 48989. Six of the eight Amfleet cars assigned to Custom Class service have been recently refurbished to Metroliner standards and seventh is currently in Bear. As information, California Car trainsets out west use a Superliner baggage-coach for this purpose.

The Auto Train equipment pool is to receive electronic brake controls this spring to provide for smoother, more responsive action. Eight locomotives, 43 Superliners and all 64 auto carriers will be equipped. Auto Train's facility at Sanford, FL is rebuilding a third Superliner I diner into a lounge for Auto Train service. Diner 38013 will become lounge 33102.

The latest Heritage sleeper-dormitory conversion is car 2507, the former 2893-Pacific Northwest.

NARP has reported that Amtrak has restored full breakfast and dinner service on the Silver Meteor between New York and Washington, answering the most vocal critics of "family style" dining. By the way, the service never reached the rumored level of self-service bowls on each table.

In some other Intercity equipment notes, records suggest that perhaps six Superliners stored after wreck damage have been moved to repair lines. If so, this would be a tangible reflection of the funds that have recently been made available.

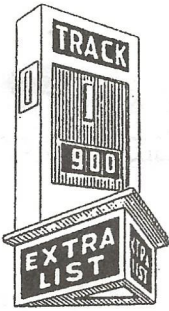
The 1400-series MHC's are being returned to regular service as trucks are inspected and modifications made. The fleet was withdrawn in early January after an incident on Conrail. The case appears to still be somewhat in dispute, but Amtrak has agreed to modifications to the cars.

P42 #118 was damaged in a grade crossing accident on the West Coast recently, and was moved to Beech Grove on January 22 for repairs. To help ease the Union Pacific motive power shortage, F40's 298 and 388 have been leased to power the Rio Grande ski trains this winter between Denver and Winter Park, CO.

The famous Reno Fun Train and its midday twin, the Snow Train, has begun its 35th season. Now operating between Emeryville, CA and Reno, NV, the train is largely made up of Amtrak West's small fleet of Amcoaches. Private car Royal Gorge serves as a dance car with snack and bar service. Also, full-dome 10030 is assigned through mid-March, when the Fun Train will end, and this car will join the 9302 on the San Diego-San Luis Obispo route.

Amtrak's current equipment assignment to the San Diegan route includes three California Car trainsets and five Horizon/Amfleet sets. Each makes one round-trip except that two Horizon sets make two round-trips daily. The Super Bowl held in San Diego this year resulted in a special 14-car extra to Los Angeles on Monday morning to return most of the private cars in attendance.

The Coaster commuter service out of San Diego has acquired six additional coaches from Canada. These cars are numbered 2401-2406. The new Altamont Commuter Express east out of the Oakland area is receiving four coaches (3201-3204) and four cab cars (3301-3304). Moreover, Caltrain has just ordered six cab and 13 trailer gallery cars from Sumitomo and will acquire three more locomotives. Plans include refurbishing their existing fleet of 20 locomotives and 73 cars.



MARCH 14, 1998: 17th annual Canal History and Technology Symposium at Lafayette College, Easton, PA, sponsored by the National Canal Museum and Lafayette College. Lecture topics include "James Buchanan Eads and His Proposed Ship Railroad," "The Switchback Railroad, Part I," "Incline Planes of the Allegheny Portage Railroad" and "The Great Embankment of New York's Erie Canal." Registration begins at 8 AM, the first session at 9 AM, lunch at 12 Noon and reception at 4:30 PM. Registration fee is \$55 after March 6 to: National Canal Museum, 30 Centre Square, Easton, PA 18042-7743 (telephone 610-559-6613).

MARCH 16: "Plying the Waters of the Delaware River" illustrated talk by Francis M. Carlin, chairman and CEO of Wilson Cruise Lines, at the main campus of Delaware County Community College, 901 South Media Line Road, Media, PA, starting at 7:30 PM. Admission free. This is part of lecture series "Getting Around: Transportation in Delaware County through the Centuries," sponsored by Delaware County Historical Society. For information, telephone 610-359-1148.

MARCH 19-APRIL 25: "Railroad Men" display of vintage 1950's black-and-white photographs by Simpson Kalisher, at Keith de Lellis Gallery, 47 East 68th Street, New York, Wednesday-Saturday 11 AM-5 PM. For information, telephone 212-327-1482.

MARCH 22-25: Annual Commuter Rail Conference of American Public Transit Association at Philadelphia Marriott Hotel. For information, telephone Daniel Poth at 202-898-4113.

MARCH 28-29: "Easter Bunny Extras" on West Chester Rail Road. Diesel-powered trains leave West Chester, PA (Market Street) at 11 AM, 1 and 3 PM for Glen Mills and return. Fares: \$9 adults, \$5 children (2-12). For information and reservations, telephone 610-430-2233.

MARCH 28-29: Women's History Month presentation on Olive Dennis, Baltimore & Ohio's influential civil engineer, 11 AM-3 PM at B&O Railroad Museum, 901 West Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD. Regular admission charges apply. For information, telephone 410-752-2490 (web site www.borail.org).

THROUGH MARCH: "Art for the Chessies" exhibit of 12 works commissioned by the C&O Railway in the 1940's, at the B&O Museum, 901 West Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD. Regular admission charges apply. For information, telephone 410-752-2490.

APRIL 4: 8th annual Museum Symposium at Drew University Hall of Science Auditorium, Madison, NJ, 9 AM-5 PM, sponsored by Friends of the New Jersey Railroad & Transportation Museum and United Railroad Historical Society. Admission: \$35 (includes lunch, refreshments and one-year membership in the Friends group). For tickets, write to: Friends of New Jersey Museum, c/o Capt. Bill McKelvey, 103 Dogwood Lane, Berkeley Heights, NJ 07922 (telephone 908-464-9335).

APRIL 4-5: "Easter Bunny Extras" on West Chester Rail Road, West Chester, PA. See March 28-29 item for details.

APRIL 4, 5, 11: "Easter Bunny Express" diesel-powered excursions from Whippany Railway Museum, Route 10 West, Whippany, NJ at 12 Noon, 1, 2, 3 and 4 PM for ten-mile round-trip over Morristown & Erie Railway. Fares: \$7 adults, \$4 children under 12. Advance tickets for other than Noon trips may be ordered by sending check to: Whippany Railway Museum, P. O. Box 16, Whippany, NJ 07981-0016, enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope. For information, telephone 973-887-8177.

APRIL 14: Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Blue Unit circus train (55 cars) will arrive South Philadelphia from Long Island, NY for 12-day circus engagement at the CoreStates Center. Expected route is via Conrail Trenton Line through West Trenton, for probable afternoon arrival.

APRIL 20: "The Railroads Come to Delaware County" illustrated talk by noted Artist and Historian Ted Xaras, at the main campus of Delaware County Community College, 901 South Media Line Road, Media, PA, starting at 7:30 PM. Admission free. This is part of lecture series "Getting Around: Transportation in Delaware County through the Centuries," sponsored by Delaware County Historical Society. For information, telephone 610-359-1148.

APRIL 25-26: "All Aboard Days" at B&O Railroad Museum, 901 West Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD, featuring live steam operation, 10 AM-5 PM. Regular admission charges apply. For information, telephone 410-752-2490.

MAY 2: "Delmarva Special" rare-mileage excursion from Washington, DC and Baltimore, MD to Pocomoke City, MD, and return via Amtrak Northeast Corridor to Newark, DE and Conrail Delmarva secondary track, sponsored by Washington, DC Chapter NRHS. Amtrak train leaves Washington Union Station 7:30 AM, Baltimore Penn Station 8:15 AM, arriving Salisbury, MD 12 Noon, Pocomoke 1:30 PM. Train will return to Baltimore 8 PM, Washington 8:45 PM. Food service available on the train, and at Salisbury a Spring Festival will feature crafts, food and entertainment. Pullman Dover Harbor will offer first-class service. Coach fares: \$69 adults to Salisbury, \$49 children (3-15); \$84 adults to Pocomoke, \$64 children. First-class fare: \$189 per person. Order tickets from: Delmarva Special, Washington, DC Chapter NRHS, P. O. Box 151, Alexandria, VA 22313-0151 (telephone 703-273-8440).

MAY 16: 10th annual Delaware Transportation Festival at Amtrak station, Wilmington, DE, originally advertised for this date, is expected to be rescheduled during the fall. Further information will be published in Cinders when available.

MAY 16: Rail Expo at Haluwasa Shoreline two-foot-gauge railroad at Camp Haluwasa, off Route 30, Ancora, NJ. For information, telephone 609-561-3081.

MAY 16: Tentative date for NJ Transit's Try Transit Festival (formerly Hoboken Festival), 10 AM-5 PM at Hoboken Terminal, Hoboken, NJ. Admission free.

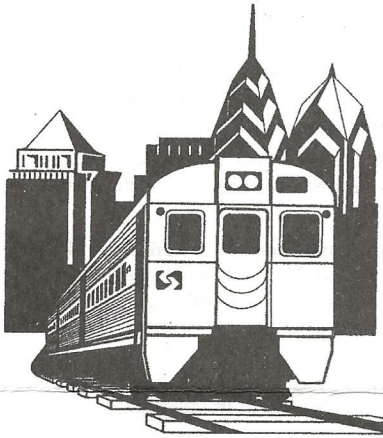
# PHILADELPHIA



## FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

SEPTA's Railroad Division is gearing up for a major challenge, if the Transport Workers Union carries out a strike against the City Transit Division on March 15. This is *deja vu* for many RRD people, most recently during the two-week transit strike in 1995 when the railroad was called upon to move half again as many customers as in normal times. This year, however, regular ridership is substantially higher than in 1995, up to 88,000 weekday passengers in January, meaning that fewer extra cars will be available to add to the trains. And crew shortages will severely restrict the number of extra trains that can be operated.

As part of RRD's emergency plan, all 35 Bombardier push-pull cars will be made available for service, and a five-car trainset with AEM-7 electric locomotive is expected to be loaned by Maryland's MARC system for the duration of the strike. To the extent that they are available, extra MU cars will be added to regular trains, and certain trains terminating in center city during the morning rush hour will be extended to short-turn points such as Bryn Mawr. This will help with the crush of displaced commuters at Overbrook and other locations.



SEPTA's dispute with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (see February *Cinders*) remains unresolved. A Federal judge last month ordered the parties to submit the matter of crew assignments to binding arbitration, but as of late February an arbitrator had not been selected. It is not expected that the BLE dispute will affect the Railroad Division's ability to deal with a transit crisis this month, but it's always possible that some type of limited protest could occur.....Reportedly, SEPTA has extracted some sort of assurance from AMTRAK that the intercity carrier will limit its recruitment of SEPTA engineers. The loss of qualified train operators to higher-paying jobs on Amtrak is in part responsible for the current shortage of engineers on SEPTA's Railroad Division.

The City on February 22 reopened the lobby of the Reading Terminal headhouse, after a \$9.5-million restoration. New escalators were installed leading down to SEPTA's Market East Station and up to the former trainshed area, now the Grand Hall of the Pennsylvania Convention Center. Except for one brief period, this entrance had been closed since train service at the terminal ended in 1984. Among the decorative features added are three large murals on the Grand Hall level, picturing a Reading Camelback locomotive, a stainless-steel-sheathed *Crusader* Pacific and FP7 diesel #902 (the actual unit now owned by Lancaster Chapter NRHS). The new Hard Rock Cafe also has an entrance from the lobby, and other retail space awaits development. Plans have even been made to return the famed Reading Terminal clock, which is stored offsite in refurbished condition. Total cost of revitalizing the 1893 headhouse, now owned by the City's Redevelopment Authority, will approach \$58 million, including some \$43 million contributed by the Marriott Corp. to install 200 hotel rooms in the building's upper floors. City officials fully expect the revived headhouse to help draw more local and tourist traffic to the East Market Street district.

SEPTA's Railroad and City Transit Divisions expected a surge of extra travel during the March 1-8 run of the Philadelphia Flower Show at the Convention Center. Much of the added travel would come during off-peak hours and weekends, lured by the SEPTA Bouquet Pass and discount admissions for regular SEPTA passholders. It was decided not to operate a special train from New York to the show, as was done last year.....After current trackwork on the Norristown Line is completed, work will begin on the \$10-million reconstruction of the Cresson Street viaduct in Manayunk.....Two major delays affected Regional Rail riders on February 25. First the catenary dropped on the R5 Doylestown Line near Link Belt about 9 AM, forcing SEPTA to bus the route during midday until repairs were made. Then, a pair of blown transformers shut down Media-Elwyn service about 2:30, again bringing out the buses. Full service was restored about 5 the next morning.

Restoration of the 1903 Lansdale station could begin as early as this summer, and the wood-frame station at Whitford may be converted into a combination mini-mart and ticket office.....Parking capacity was increased by nearly 600 spaces at three SEPTA rail stations last year, plus the new 1,600-space-lot at Cornwells Heights. Construction is underway on a 200-space expansion at Whitford, and elsewhere 900 spaces are programmed for this year. These include 450 spaces at the new Thorndale station, 150 at Malvern and 100 at Spring Mill.....The new Big River Fish Company restaurant has supplanted the Central Bar & Grill in the former Pennsy freight station building at Bryn Mawr.....The SEPTA Board last month approved new lease agreements for the Ambler inbound and Ardsley stations.....SEPTA issued new R3 timetables effective February 22, restoring through midday service between the Elwyn and West Trenton sides. On some lines crews will report to outlying terminals rather than to center city yards, which may allow extra trips.....New rail timetables will be effective April 5.

(Continued on Page 7)

## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 6)

SEPTA and the Transport Workers Union appear to be on a collision course toward the strike deadline of March 15. TWU Local 234 and the Authority are locked in a bitter, high-profile struggle over a drastic revision in work rules that SEPTA contends is absolutely necessary to cut costs and avoid a staggering increase in its deficit. But the union, which represents 4,900 City Transit Division employees, has made it clear that it will resist any such "givebacks," citing former Deputy General Manager Howard Roberts who allegedly praised the existing work rules and declared that if other cities had the same rules "they could save millions."



At the two-week-and-counting mark, the negotiations had produced virtually no progress on even the minor issues--except for an agreement for round-the-clock negotiations. Local 234 President Steve Brookens has repeatedly declared that wages are not the big problem. He said that if the work-rules dilemma can be solved, "we can agree on a pay increase." Meanwhile, his union, supported by most of organized labor in the City as well as the NAACP and a gaggle of civic organizations and politicians, has been vocal in its denunciation of SEPTA management. At a February 26 rally outside of SEPTA headquarters at 1234 Market Street, some of the signs displayed had incendiary messages such as "The SEPTA board is run by outsiders who don't give a damn about Philadelphia" and (referring to General Manager Jack Leary and Chief Negotiator David Cohen) "Leary and Cohen are hit men for the SEPTA board." The union has published a booklet entitled "SEPTA on the Eve of Self-Destruction," which attempts to rebut the positions set forth by SEPTA in its proposed contract and charges that management is trying to provoke a walkout. TWU 234 also has been distributing to the public a flyer headed "Transit Rider Alert" in which it characterizes SEPTA's five-year plan as a "smokescreen" for cutting service and privatizing routes. A union-sponsored radio commercial belittled SEPTA's much-hyped strategic plan, alleging that management is trying to shift the blame for its own failures onto the backs of hourly workers.

For its part, SEPTA's top officials were touring the suburbs in an attempt to gain broad political support for their cost-cutting drive. The Authority issued a brochure addressed "To All SEPTA Riders" stressing its key objectives to "dramatically decrease absenteeism" among workers, to adopt a "zero-tolerance policy for the use of drugs and alcohol" and "to give managers reasonable flexibility in assigning work to meet service demands." In return, SEPTA pledges that it will be an "employer of choice" in the region by offering good wages and solid benefits, and guarantee job security to all existing employees.

The nasty undertone to the negotiations surpasses anything seen in recent years, leading many to believe that there is a better-than-even chance that a strike--perhaps a long one--will begin this month. To prepare for this eventuality, SEPTA is taking the unprecedented step of training some 75 supervisory employees to operate subway trains and trolleys, with the intent of maintaining base service on the Market-Frankford and Broad Street Lines, as well as on the subway-surface route between Juniper Street station and the 40th Street portal. Union contracts on Suburban Transit Division expire April 1 (Red Arrow) and April 7 (Frontier).

SEPTA's board last month voted to award a five-year contract to Universal Outdoor, Inc. for its vehicle and station advertising program, with guaranteed minimum revenues to SEPTA of \$51.2 million over that period. One of the attractions of Universal's bid is that it specifies that no more alcohol or tobacco ads will be accepted, which pleases the many community activists who have long sought the removal of such ads. Present contractor TDI has filed a protest.....Thomas Hayward of Delaware County has been re-elected chairman of the SEPTA board and Richard Voith of Philadelphia as vice chairman.....January was a good month for SEPTA, with passenger revenues of \$20.3 million or 9.1 percent ahead of budget. Average weekday one-way ridership averaged 683,000 during January, exceeding budget by 6.3 percent. Regional Rail produced revenues 17 percent better than budget and transit six percent, resulting in a surplus after subsidies of \$821,000. While the cumulative deficit for seven months of Fiscal Year 1998 stands at \$4.3 million, SEPTA hopes to finish the year in balance.

By late February ADtranz had delivered 18 of the 220 new M4 Market-Frankford cars, with another pair enroute from the Elmira Heights (NY) plant. One six-car set is in regular revenue service using a one-person crew.....DVARP reports that 18 security cameras have been installed at the Tasker-Morris station of the Broad Street subway. If successful, the joint City-SEPTA demonstration will be extended to other stations.....SEPTA has asked for bids on 155 articulated 60-foot buses and 200 low-floor 40-foot buses. It also plans to order additional small buses.....The City is planning a major investment study for the Roosevelt Blvd. corridor, once again to explore the feasibility of extending rapid transit into the Greater Northeast. Also to be considered are construction of a reserved busway or expressway in the center of the boulevard right-of-way. A consultant award for the 18-month study is expected in July.

Route 13 trolleys will resume their detour route between 49th and 58th Streets via Woodland Avenue effective March 8. Replacement of the Chester Avenue bridge over the Media/Elwyn rail line will force this detour, extending through the fall of 1999.....Route 10 cars will begin to detour via 63rd Street and Girard Avenue on April 5, to allow for trackwork on Lancaster Avenue.....For the moment, SEPTA has given up on plans to hold another TrolleyFest celebration this year.....Newly-painted Kawasaki car #9095 was decorated by its operator for Valentine's Day, as it was for the Christmas season.....New Philadelphia Police Commissioner John Timoney has said that he wants eventually to integrate the SEPTA and Housing Authority police forces into the City's force. Timoney carried out a similar merger at the New York City Police Department.....Total transit ridership in the U.S. increased 2.6 percent during the third quarter of 1997 over third quarter 1996, according to the American Public Transit Association. The total number of trips on all modes exceeded two billion in the quarter.

As reported here last month, President Clinton's \$43.3-billion budget for the Department of Transportation contains no money for AMTRAK operations in Fiscal Year 1999 beginning October 1. Administration budgeteers say that Amtrak can divert \$292 million of its \$2.3 billion tax credit intended for capital projects to support operations, but this idea has drawn widespread opposition among lawmakers. Under the law, Amtrak is to

## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 7)

receive \$1.1 billion of those funds this month. DOT also is proposing that Amtrak receive \$621 million in capital funding from the Highway Trust Fund, which naturally raised a howl of protest from highway lobbyists.



AMTRAK's plan to become an electric power wholesaler, through an agreement with the Enron Corp., is in jeopardy because of the refusal of the Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Maryland Interconnection to open its system to Enron. If the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission rules against the PJM power pool, Amtrak will be able to substantially reduce the \$40 million it now spends each year for electricity along the Northeast Corridor, and ship power to other customers (NARP).....Five of the 11 members of the AMTRAK Reform Council (see December Cinders) were named last month by Congressional leaders. One of the appointees is Joseph Vranich, the well-know author who has called for the elimination of Amtrak (NARP).....In late February Senate debate began on the long-delayed reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), which expired last September.

AMTRAK this year will begin reconstruction of a building along Roosevelt Blvd. in Northeast Philadelphia, to house an enlarged National Reservation Center. As announced last year, Amtrak made the decision to relocate its Fort Washington center to the City after receiving the promise of \$9 million in low-interest loans. ....AMTRAK's Lancaster station, built by the PRR in 1928, will get a \$5-million facelift over the next three years (DVARP).....AMTRAK revised its long-distance fare structure last month to resemble the Northeast Corridor format, eliminating round-trip fares and imposing "yield management" pricing (NARP).....AMTRAK was offering a ten-percent discount for one-day passengers traveling to the Philadelphia Flower Show..... An AMTRAK conductor died February 5 following the derailment of his ballast train on SEPTA's line at Glen Mills quarry. A heart attack was the apparent cause.

AMTRAK reports that its ridership grew 6.8 percent and revenues 3.4 percent in the October-December quarter, compared with the year-ago period (Railway Age).....AMTRAK and VIA RAIL CANADA have begun selling a 30-day North American Rail Pass for \$450 (Canadian \$625) through May 31, good for unlimited use on trains of both carriers. Sleeping car space may be purchased at extra cost subject to restrictions. A higher price will apply during the summer season (Central New York Chapter).....AMTRAK is offering a "Brandywine Valley Express" package via Wilmington for tourists interested in touring the area.....Current AMTRAK rules require that trains carrying both passenger and "non-passenger" cars (baggage, material handling, express or RoadRailer) must not exceed 80 mph on the Harrisburg mainline if there are more than three non-passenger cars in the consist. If there are fewer than five passenger-carrying cars, the train must not exceed freight train speeds. Express cars must be placed behind the passenger cars (because they have no electric power cables) and the RoadRailers must always be at the extreme rear of the train.



CONRAIL reported net income of \$464 million for the year 1997, compared with \$435 million in the previous year, these figures exclusive of various special charges and merger-related costs. While the press release claimed that this was an all-time record for Conrail, it seemingly overlooked the \$500 million in net income reported for 1984, the fourth year after former Chairman L. Stanley Crane was brought in to rescue the foundering company. Revenues for 1997 were \$3.765 billion, versus \$3.714 in 1996. By comparison, revenues in 1984 were \$3.379 billion (in 1984 dollars). For the full year of 1997, traffic volume increased by five percent over the previous year, with intermodal up 11 percent and automotive 7.7 percent.

At the end of February six of CONRAIL's 15 new SD70MAC locomotives were under construction at Juniata shop in Altoona (#4130-4135). After these will come 24 SD70 units, which will be numbered in the NORFOLK SOUTH-ERN series as 2557-2580 rather than 5655-5678 as previously announced.....Railpace reports that CONRAIL is testing a radio device called Helperlink which permits helper locomotives to maintain the same brake pipe pressure as their train without the need to couple the air hoses. This allows helpers to safely cut off "on the fly" by means of a remote-controlled coupler pin.....Triple Crown Services, the RoadRailer operator owned jointly by CONRAIL and NS, has placed an order with builder Wabash National for 940 of the 53-foot-long rail-highway vehicles. Triple Crown added over 900 units in 1997 and with the addition of the 1998 order will own about 5,300 RoadRailer trailers (Danville Junction Chapter).

NJ TRANSIT's board has approved a capital budget of \$1 billion for Fiscal Year 1999 beginning this July 1, which includes funds for the Camden-Trenton light-rail route. NJT will also hold the line on fares for the eighth consecutive year. Riders now pay 48 percent of NJT's operating costs, with the State and other sources making up the balance (Jersey Central Chapter).....At long last NJT will relocate the parking lot at the Cherry Hill rail station to former Garden State Park property adjacent to the station. This will eliminate the long walk to and from the present parking area (G. Gerrish Williams).....NJT's board has awarded a \$210,000 consultant contract to again evaluate the three potential sites for New Jersey's Railroad & Transportation Heritage Center. The contenders are Phillipsburg, Port Morris and Plainfield (Railpace).

NJ TRANSIT last month decided to continue operating the Atlantic City rail line until June 2000, in spite of disappointing ridership. But patronage recently has been growing, largely because of the opening of Atlantic City's new convention center adjacent to the NJT station. Presently, the State subsidizes 76 percent of the line's operating costs.....On February 4 a three-car inspection train hauled by SUSQUEHANNA and MORRISTOWN & ERIE power covered several NJT and CONRAIL lines in North Jersey and southern New York. With representatives of NJT, CSX, NS, CONRAIL, METRO-NORTH and Susquehanna on board, the train operated as far south as West Trenton, proposed terminus of a new NJT commuter service.....NJT has announced that it will install first-aid kits in every one of its 800 rail coaches, 150 locomotives and 1,900 buses, following the apparent random shooting of a passenger on January 26 (Jersey Central Chapter).

The Reading Company Technical & Historical Society has voted to establish a museum on a 20-acre site in Schuylkill Haven. A roundhouse-type display building and other trackage would allow all of RCT&HS's fleet



## NEW JERSEY BACKS CONRAIL MERGER

### Officials Named for Shared Assets Area

After extended negotiations with both CSX and Norfolk Southern, the State of New Jersey last month endorsed the proposed takeover of Conrail by the two big Virginia-based railroads. New Jersey thus joins Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware in backing the plan, leaving New York, Ohio and Indiana as the only major states in Conrail territory not yet supporting the \$10.2-billion merger.

"New Jersey holds the position as one of the largest markets in the world and is a major hub of goods distribution in the nation," said Governor Christine Todd Whitman. "We also have one of the finest public transit systems serving a critical transportation corridor linking the Northeast. Throughout the talks (with CSX and NS), my goal has been to ensure that both will continue to flourish under this merger proposal." Transportation Commissioner John J. Haley added that "we have now arrived at the point where we can stand behind (the) plan to acquire Conrail knowing that we have fostered competitive access to all of our key markets, as well as assuring the compatibility and safety of intercity, commuter and freight service for shared track." Haley praised the agreement as a "breakthrough in the relationship between the freight and passenger rail communities," and claimed that New Jersey will be the only state in which 80 percent of its industry will have access to two major freight railroads.

The State will be the scene of two of the three "shared assets areas" proposed by CSX and NS, one covering the South Jersey-Philadelphia region and the other centered in busy North Jersey. Both are to be operated by a terminal railroad known as Conrail. To head this new Conrail, CSX and NS last month appointed three experienced railroad executives. They are Timothy T. O'Toole, president; Donald N. Nelson, senior vice president-operations; and Ronald L. Batory, vice president-operations. O'Toole, who joined Conrail in 1980, is currently the railroad's senior vice president-law & government affairs. Nelson, who began his railroad career as a brakeman in 1954, rose to become general manager of the Jersey Central and later head of Conrail's Eastern Region before going to Metro-North Commuter Railroad in New York where he served most recently as president. Batory, a 26-year railroad veteran who worked at the Grand Trunk, Southern Pacific and other carriers, is president of the Belt Railway of Chicago.

The appointments are effective March 5, although the three executives will serve in an advisory capacity until the Conrail Shared Assets Operation is activated some time after the expected approval of the CSX-NS takeover later this year. The South Jersey CSAO will be based at Pavonia yard in Camden, while its headquarters and dispatching center may be located in the present Conrail Philadelphia Division offices in Mount Laurel, NJ. The surviving Conrail entity, to be controlled equally by CSX and NS, will also serve a second function, that of lessor of the lines to be operated by the two owner railroads. According to Traffic World Magazine, this arrangement will allow CSX and NS to avoid exposure to capital gains taxes.

New Jersey's agreement with CSX and NS assures that both railroads will have access to its port areas and that all 13 shortlines in the State will be able to connect with the two Class 1 systems. NS and CSX will retain Conrail's existing NORAC book of rules rather than extending their own operating rules to New Jersey, in order to remain compatible with NJ Transit and Amtrak. The two railroads also agreed to honor existing commuter rights on the lines and to cooperate in the development of future passenger services.

Meanwhile, CSX reported that it will boost its 1998 capital spending program to \$806 million, a 25-percent increase over last year. This amount will be in addition to its three-year program to spend \$488 million on improvements related to its acquisition of 42 percent of the Conrail system. For its part, NS said that it will invest \$903 million in capital projects this year--a figure which includes \$149 million in Conrail-related improvements. The largest capital program in the company's history, it represents a 16-percent increase over the previous year's outlay. These announcements may serve to dampen some of the fears among industry observers that the huge cost runup in the price of Conrail stock last year had redirected vital capital funding into the pockets of shareholders and Wall Street speculators.

During February, NS issued a colorful 28-page booklet touting the safety and environmental benefits of the "Conrail Transaction," meaning the combined takeover with CSX of the Conrail system. Then the U. S. Departments of Justice and Transportation weighed in with their conditional endorsement of the split, urging that safety and service issues be fully addressed and that CSX give NS trackage rights to reach certain coal consumers in Maryland and Indiana.

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## Reading Plans 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Excursions

To celebrate the 250th anniversary of the City of Reading, PA, three special Amtrak diesel-powered excursions are planned during September 1998. All of the trips will be sponsored by the Historical Society of Berks County.

The first special is scheduled to operate from 30th Street Station, Philadelphia, to Reading on Friday, September 25 via Conrail's ex-Reading Harrisburg Line, at a fare of \$99 per person (includes bus connection from Reading). On Saturday the 26th the train is to run from Reading to Penn Station, New York City, via the Conrail Reading and Lehigh Lines through Allentown, with a round-trip fare of \$125. Then, on Sunday the 27th the train will operate from Reading to Washington, DC via Philadelphia and the Amtrak Northeast Corridor, with passengers returning by chartered bus. The fare for that trip is \$99.

Tickets may be ordered from: Historical Society of Berks County, 940 Centre Street, Reading, PA 19601-2198, with tickets to be mailed after June 1. For further information, telephone 610-236-0488, or visit the Society's web site at [www.readingtown.com](http://www.readingtown.com). Copies of the brochure and ticket form will also be available at Philadelphia Chapter's March 20 meeting.

# Chapter Publicity Chair Needed

A new chairperson for Philadelphia Chapter's Publicity Committee is needed, President Douglas Watts announced last month. The recent resignation of Dave Mears, due to family and work commitments, has left this position open. Anyone interested should telephone Doug Watts at 610-259-4226.

## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 8)

of cars and locomotives to be moved from the present cramped site at Leesport. Part of the proposed land is owned by the READING & NORTHERN RAILROAD and part by the Borough of Schuylkill Haven.....A list of U. S. railroad stations currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places may be obtained by writing to the National Register, c/o National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127 (Jersey Central Chapter).....The Altoona Railroaders Memorial Museum has announced the grand opening on April 25 of its new museum located in an historic ex-Pennsy building.

VERMONT RAILWAY #202 appeared last month as ST. LAWRENCE & HUDSON's Delaware Avenue switcher in South Philadelphia. It's not known how long the bright red GP38-2 will remain here (Bert Pennypacker).....PennDOT plans to build a new connection for PENN EASTERN's ex-Chester Valley Railway switching operation near Bridgeport, PA. By building a short connection to CONRAIL's Dale secondary track (former Trenton Cut-Off), PennDOT can eliminate the hazardous at-grade crossing over a section of Route 202 which soon is to be rebuilt.....Buckingham Valley Trolley Association, which last year removed all of its remaining Penn's Landing equipment from Pier 9, is looking for a new home. BVTA recently met with a group in Reading that's trying to establish an historic trolley operation along the Schuylkill Riverfront in that city (BVTA).

## EXTRA LIST (Continued from Page 5)

MAY 16-17: Spring Open House at Reading Society of Model Engineers 15-inch-gauge Laurel Run Railroad off Mount Laurel Road, Temple, PA, 12 Noon-5 PM. Admission by donation. Live steam and diesel-powered trains will operate. For information, telephone 610-929-5444.

MAY 16-17: Railroad/Transpo Heritage Days at Hagerstown Roundhouse Museum, 300 South Burhans Blvd., Hagerstown, MD, 10 AM-5 PM. Admission: \$3 adults, 50 cents children (12 and under). Features include miniature steam railroad rides; model trains; locomotive, caboose, antique truck and fire engine displays; plus food and gift shop. For information, telephone 301-739-4665.

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