



# CINDERS

JUNE 2003



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## SEPTA IN CRISIS:

### *Will the Cuts Happen?*

SEPTA often has been a favorite target for public outrage, usually over such issues as higher fares or poor service. But today few can remember a time when the agency has taken such a battering from private citizens and public officials alike—and when the very future of public transit in Philadelphia appears to be at stake. At the center of this turbulence is SEPTA's proposed \$888-million operating budget for Fiscal Year 2004, beginning this July 1.

The current unrest, of course, is focused on SEPTA's financial plight, and its proposal to close a gaping hole in its operating budget with draconian service cuts, yet another fare increase and additional cost reductions. Because it is required by law to adopt a balanced budget each year, the SEPTA staff decided to address a projected \$55-million deficit for FY 2004 in three ways: save \$25 million by reducing or eliminating service on a host of routes, raise \$15 million through higher fares and slash costs by another \$15 million.

The proposed cutbacks in service have created a storm of criticism, with hundreds of distressed riders showing up at a series of public hearings last month to testify in opposition. Many of them had heart-rending stories of the hardships that would be created by elimination of certain lines, such as the Route C bus on Broad Street which is essential for those unable—or afraid—to use the subway. Philadelphia City Council went so far as to threaten to withhold its \$56-million annual appropriation to SEPTA, in protest of the service cuts. "There will be repercussions for years to come," warned City Councilman Michael Nutter at one hearing. "We will not forget. We will be unforgiving." Chapter Member John Wireman told the examiner at a hearing in West Chester that it would be foolish to eliminate the four Regional Rail lines proposed by SEPTA (R1 Airport, R2 Warminster, R6 Cynwyd and R8 Chestnut Hill West). "Once a rail line is discontinued, the service is gone forever," he said.

One reason for the crisis is Governor Rendell's proposed State budget for 2003-2004, in which he was forced to deal with a looming \$2.4-billion deficit. Among the Governor's across-the-board cuts was a reduction in funding for the 97 transit agencies statewide, ranging from 3.7 to 11.8 percent. SEPTA

would suffer a six-percent cut or \$16 million in State and local matching subsidies during the upcoming fiscal year. The proposed reduction is exacerbated by the fact that these subsidies have remained constant during the last six years in spite of general inflation and higher costs for labor, healthcare and other obligations. The State, meanwhile, has hired Arlene Friner, the former chief financial officer of Amtrak, to examine SEPTA's budget situation and make recommendations.

One glimmer of hope that appeared late last month was the news that Pennsylvania will receive about \$900 million over the next two years in additional Federal aid, part of the tax cut bill signed into law by President Bush on May 28. The President's original proposal contained no such provision but the Senate insisted upon adding \$20 billion in funding for cash-strapped states. Most states, in fact, have suffered severe revenue shortfalls during the continuing economic slump as well as added costs for homeland security and other needs. Governor Rendell said that he intends to spend about \$400 million of the \$900 million this year for medical assistance programs and other needs, but as of *Cinders* presstime he had not indicated what portion, if any, would go to restore the budget cuts at SEPTA and other transit systems across Pennsylvania. Rendell also said that he might be willing to cut back the proposed increase in the State income tax, which is designed to reduce property taxes and boost aid to education. But even if the State restores the six-percent cut in SEPTA funding, it appears almost certain that a fare increase averaging five percent or more will become effective next month.

The SEPTA board must approve a balanced budget for FY 2004 at its next regular meeting on June 26, or the system could be forced to shut down. Some speakers at the public hearings, including an official of SEPTA consultant Urban Engineers, Inc., suggested instead that the Authority simply continue to run full service until the money runs out, and then close its doors. This action, it is thought, would provoke emergency legislative measures to restore transit service, and thus avoid devastating the economy of the State's largest urban area. If carried out, the proposed cuts would end or limit service for about 40,000 riders in the five-county area, SEPTA said, and a five-percent fare increase would cause a 1.5-percent loss in ridership. According to the American Public Transportation Association, almost 90 percent of the nation's large transit systems have either raised fares during the past year or plan to, while 34 percent have reduced services.

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## PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS WEBSITE: [www.trainweb.org/phillynrhs/](http://www.trainweb.org/phillynrhs/)

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**MEETINGS:** 7:30 PM, third Friday of each month (except second Friday in December), at Faculty Club, Second Floor, Thomas Jefferson University Alumni Hall, 1020 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA. Dinner (optional) at 6:15 PM (\$20.00 per person), Meeting at 7:30 PM. No meeting July or August.

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES:** \$35.00 per person, which includes Chapter and National dues. Chapter-only dues \$16.00 per person per year. Membership applications should be forwarded to: Membership Chair, P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302. Membership in the parent National Railway Historical Society is required to hold Chapter-only membership.

**ADDRESS CHANGES** should be sent to the Editor at Post Office Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. **PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER** and E-mail address so our Membership List is complete. We will notify the NRHS National Headquarters of the change.

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**EXCHANGE COPIES** should be sent to: R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Editor, P. O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353.

## MEETING NOTICE:

### FRIDAY EVENING, JUNE 20, 2003

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

Dinner at 6:15 PM (\$20.00 per person), Meeting at 7:30 PM  
Parking in Wills Eye Hospital garage, 9<sup>th</sup> Street above Locust  
(\$6.00 after 6 PM), Parkway garage, also 9<sup>th</sup> above Locust  
(\$5.75 after 6 PM), or Downtown Garage, Walnut Street east of  
10<sup>th</sup> (\$4.00 after 6 PM) *(Please note that some of the above  
parking prices have been adjusted and we will update them for  
September Cinders)*

Our June 20 meeting will feature Chapter Member J. William Vigrass with a narrated slide show on his walking tour through the Port Authority Trans-Hudson tubes between Exchange Place in Jersey City and the site of the former World Trade Center in New York following the disaster of September 11, 2001. This will provide an unusual perspective on what would need to happen to restore this vital transportation link following one of the darkest days in the history of the United States.

The evening begins with our usual sit-down dinner in the Faculty Club, Alumni Hall, Thomas Jefferson University, beginning at 6:15 PM, at a cost of \$20.00 per person. **DINNER RESERVATIONS ARE MANDATORY and MUST BE MADE BY TUESDAY EVENING, JUNE 17, 2003 to Dinner Chairman Bill Gardiner at 215-632-7016.** The dinner entrée choices this month are **Chicken Wellington** or **Broiled Flounder with grilled Tomato**. A tossed garden salad with garnish, herb blended rice and lemon pepper baby asparagus, topped off with double layer chocolate cake round out the meal. **You must specify when ordering whether you wish a MEAT or FISH dinner.** Please call **Bill Gardiner** with your reservation. **NO-shows will be responsible for payment for meals ordered!**

Please note that all meetings in the 2002-2003 year are scheduled in the Faculty Club, on the second floor of the Alumni Hall.

## Bill Wagner Summer Dinner August 15 at Trolley Car Diner

Philadelphia Chapter's annual Bill Wagner Summer Dinner will be held this year on Friday evening, August 15, 2003 at the Trolley Car Diner at 7619 Germantown Avenue in Mount Airy. A happy hour will begin at 5 PM (individual settlement) with a buffet dinner beginning at 6:30 PM.

The buffet-style dinner will consist of three entrée courses, two desserts and one beverage. Total cost for the diner will be \$24.00 per person. The Trolley Car Diner contains numerous photos of old trolley car scenes from Philadelphia. In addition, former SEPTA PCC car #2134 has been placed on site where it will ultimately become the "Ice Cream Shoppe", but probably not in time for our August event.

Reservations and payment of \$24.00 per person, payable to **Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS** need to be made on or before August 1, 2003 to: Annual Summer Dinner, Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302. Come out and join your fellow members for the annual Bill Wagner Summer Dinner on August 15, this year held in the pleasant surroundings of Philadelphia trolley nostalgia.

## No Cinders in July

Following our usual practice, we will publish only one issue of *Cinders* during the summer months.

With the **Star Spangled Rails 2003** NRHS Convention taking place in Baltimore on the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend, and Editor Larry Eastwood's absence to run **Basic RailCamp 2003** (this year's one session is sold out) at Steamtown in Scranton from July 20-26, plans are to publish *Cinders* in early August.

Members will want to make special note of the August 15 Bill Wagner Summer Dinner (see above) and remember to make their reservations, as the mention in this issue is the only reminder members will receive.



## Builder's Plates from Reading FP7's 900, 902 and 903 Show Up on eBay

Members of the joint Lancaster-Philadelphia NRHS Joint FP7 Committee, as well as officers of the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society reacted with surprise and a flurry of electronic mail activity after EMD builder's plates from former Reading FP7's 900, 902 and 903 showed up for sale on eBay on Saturday, April 19. One plate each from the 902 and 903 were offered at a starting price of \$225 and two plates from the 900 were offered at a starting price of \$400 in three separate lots.

NRHS Senior Vice President Larry Eastwood, acting on behalf of the parties mentioned above, questioned the seller (who is never identified on eBay lots) regarding the legitimacy of the sale these plates, which have been missing from the units for many years. The seller's only response to the E-mail message was to suddenly withdraw all of the lots from sale on Monday, April 21.

The FP7 Committee did some research and was able to determine the name of the seller. Eastwood, meanwhile, contacted the senior fraud investigator at eBay, stating we have reason to believe the plates were not legally removed from the units.

At the Chapter's May 16 meeting the members voted to authorize legal action as might be appropriate to recover the plates, if determined illegally removed from the three locomotives.

On May 19, 2003, a certified letter was written to the seller asking him to (a) return the plates to us or (b) provide proper documentation, in the form of a letter of permission or bill of sale, that gives the possessor the right to the plates. At presstime, the possessor of the plates had not responded to the certified letter, and it is expected the next steps will be taken in early June.

## Reading Quiz Draws Many Experts

The "Take a Ride on the Reading" quiz published in our May issue must have been too easy, or perhaps we have many experts on "America's Largest Anthracite Carrier" among our membership.

Your editor apologizes for an unintentional goof in the Quiz. Quizmaster Roy L. Hudson's #19 was originally worded "In December, 1937, the Reading's stainless steel train was named....."; the correct response was "I. nothing". However, in assembling the issue, Editor Larry Eastwood changed the date to February, 1938, which is when the *Crusader* was actually named, as the result of a contest held by the Reading. The winner received a \$250 prize from the railroad.

Member Sam James took Mr. Hudson to task for his stating in #14 that "This anthracite area passenger train had a "snack bar", referring to the *Schuykill* (Clue "Y"). The correct term for the car used on that Philadelphia-Pottsville train was a "grille-coach". The car, #2060 (Class DCLA) was converted from Class Pbm coach #1337 (Bethlehem, 1922) at Reading shop in 1948. We must however, remember that Mr. Hudson was at one time an employee of a railroad which used "snack bar" coach equipment, and thus we'll forgive him.

At any rate, the correct answers for the Quiz were: 1-P; 2-T; 3-G; 4-W; 5-M; 6-D; 7-N; 8-Q; 9-K; 10-A; 11-O; 12-U; 13-V; 14-Y; 15-B; 16-S; 17-E; 18-H; 19-I; 20-C; 21-J; 22-X; 23-F; 24-R; 25-L.

The following members all scored 100 on the Quiz: Rick Bates, John Brasch, John Bustard, Charles D. Cole, Dave Engman, Sam James, Dave Kopena, Frank Kozempel, Jack McNally, Doug Rowland, Dave Walter and Jerry Wilson.

## Steamtown Rail Excursion Season Begins

Steamtown National Historic Site in Scranton has announced an expanded selection of destinations in this year's rail excursion operating schedule. The familiar rumble of vintage steam locomotives will resonate throughout the Lackawanna Valley – and beyond – bringing additional variety to the "Live Steam" experience.

While regularly scheduled excursions, which have operated since 1995 between Scranton and Moscow have been popular among visitors to the Park, the overwhelming response to special trips featuring alternate destinations has indicated that those visiting Steamtown wanted more diversity in their experience. The Park has responded with a more comprehensive operating schedule in the year 2003.

The 2003 operating season will include trips operating on Saturdays and Sundays, through the end of June; Thursdays through Sundays, July through August as well as Labor Day Monday. Throughout September, trips will operate Saturdays and Sundays, but from the beginning of October through November 1 trips will be scheduled Fridays through Sundays, with a special Columbus Day outing set for Monday, October 13.

Incorporated into this year's schedule in addition to the traditional Scranton-Moscow runs will be alternative trips to points such as Carbondale, Tobyhanna and the Delaware Water Gap.

Three trips will be scheduled to Tobyhanna: July 13, July 27 and August 17. Enroute to the small Pocono Mountains town, passengers may enjoy views of some of Northeast Pennsylvania's most scenic waterways, lakes and woodlands, a region rich in natural resources and a favorite vacation destination.

Excursions between Scranton and Carbondale, utilizing the newly-reopened Strawberry Hill branch line, will operate on Saturdays from August 2 through 23. Traveling through the heart of the Lackawanna Valley, this historic ride along the former mainline of the Delaware & Hudson Railroad will offer passengers a unique perspective, as they discover evidence of the Valley's long industrial history – coal mines, breakers, silk mills and railroad facilities.

Finally, Steamtown forces will combine with those of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area to conduct an especially historic even with a rail excursion to the Point of Delaware Water Gap on Saturday, August 30. In this symbolic linking of the two National Parks, rangers from both sites will join passengers on the Pocono Mainline (formerly the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western (DL&W) Railroad), to interpret the story of the rail link between New York City and Scranton.

Steamtown's regular hours are from 9 AM to 5 PM daily. Details on special events, interpretive and educational programs, rail excursions and group rates may be obtained by calling 1-570-340-5200 or (toll-free) 1-888-693-9391. Steamtown's website address is [www.nps.gov/stea](http://www.nps.gov/stea).



# PHILADELPHIA



## FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

### SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL



As advertised, SEPTA began the final phase of its \$17-million Rail Power Project on Saturday, May 10, with the goal of replacing all catenary between Suburban and 30<sup>th</sup> Street Stations by early July. The project took on an added dimension with the weekday shutdown of one of the four mainline tracks between the stations, in order to speed the work. As noted in last month's *Cinders*, this reduction in capacity led to the restructuring of some train service, with certain rush-hour trains eliminated effective Monday, May 12. The R6 Cynwyd line was to be temporarily converted to an all-bus service to and from center city.

What was not advertised, however, was the sudden reinstatement of Cynwyd train service. With the reluctant agreement of AMTRAK, a last-minute decision was made to operate four inbound and four outbound trains between Cynwyd and the Lower Level of 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station, reportedly due to pressure from the small but influential group of Bala Cynwyd riders. Not only were they dissatisfied with the bus substitution but many felt that once the trains were removed they would never return. So for the first two weeks, trains departed Cynwyd for 30<sup>th</sup> Street at 6:32, 7:35 and 8:32 AM and 5:20 PM, while the previously announced bus service continued to operate ten trips to center city to accommodate passengers who had not heard about the rail revival. R6 bus timetables had already been issued, and the hastily-organized train service was shown only in a one-page handout. The return trips from 30<sup>th</sup> Street were scheduled at 7:56 AM, 4:44, 5:35 and 6:26 PM. A combined rail-bus timetable was issued effective May 27, showing the same four trains in each direction but reducing the bus shuttles to six round-trips..... SEPTA plans to reissue its Regional Rail timetables on July 7.

The final contract for the construction of 104 new Silverliner V MU cars is not expected to be signed until sometime this fall..... SEPTA was forced to suspend R2 service at the Churchmans Crossing station in Delaware from May 12 to June 6, while AMTRAK installed new track along the Northeast Corridor. DeIDOT operated shuttle buses between Churchmans Crossing and Wilmington during that time..... Shuttle buses were scheduled to substitute for R3 trains on Sunday, June 1 and Sunday, June 8, between West Trenton and Trevoise stations. This was due to additional construction work at Neshaminy Falls following the CSX freight train derailment on April 23, which damaged SEPTA catenary structures and other facilities. A new crossover also will be installed at "Neshaminy".....R5 Thorndale-Paoli riders experienced severe delays on the morning of May 20 because of late-running trackwork west

of Paoli. SEPTA explained that AMTRAK work crews normally clear up by 5 AM but on that morning they did not release the tracks until almost 7 AM. Similar but less serious delays also have occurred on other occasions .....There could be an expensive side effect in SEPTA's plan to abandon service on four Regional Rail lines (see story elsewhere in this issue). The Federal Transit Administration may seek repayment of the undepreciated value of certain federally-funded assets, such as the Cresheim Creek bridge on the R8 Chestnut Hill West Line.

Chapter Member William Stickel has been honored by SEPTA as one of two Ticket Agents of the Year. In the words of the SEPTA news release, Bill has "established great relationships with his customers at Jenkintown station over the past 12 years. His ability to speak several different languages has been extremely helpful in serving SEPTA's diverse ridership." He began his career at Oreland station in 1990 before transferring to Jenkintown in 1991 .....SEPTA reports that it has installed inter-track fencing at all eight R3 stations from Noble to Trevoise. This is part of a two-year improvement project on the R3 West Trenton line which includes replacement of 26 miles of catenary wire, a new cab signal system on segments of the line and completion last fall of the new Woodbourne station and 500-space parking lot.....About 11:15 AM on May 22 a masked man brandishing a handgun robbed the ticket agent at the R5 Fort Washington station. He got away with about \$900 in cash and a supply of passes and tokens. No one was injured..... SEPTA is advertising for bids to operate freight service on its ex-Pennsy Octoraro branch between Chadds Ford and Nottingham, PA. The current operator of the 27-mile line, BRANDYWINE VALLEY RAILROAD, apparently wishes to give it up, but will continue to run the ex-Reading Wilmington & Northern branch between Coatesville and CSX's Wilmersere yard near Wilmington.



### SEPTA TRANSIT

SEPTA last month held a series of public hearings on its controversial \$888-million operating budget for Fiscal Year 2004 beginning this July 1. As reported in a separate article in this issue, the hearings were like nothing seen in recent years. They brought an outpouring of riders, transit advocates and public officials, virtually all of whom blasted SEPTA's plan to balance its budget by cutting service and raising fares. SEPTA foresees revenues and subsidies totaling only \$833 million, leaving a gap of \$55 million which by law must be closed before the new fiscal year begins. The 2004 operating budget represents a 4.9-percent increase over the 2003 budget of \$846.6 million. All SEPTA departments will be forced to absorb funding cuts except for police and business services, which includes information technology .....Reports indicate that the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), which provides Federal funding for highways and transit, will be extended by Congress into 2004 by means of a so-called continuing resolution. It was due to expire this year.

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# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 4)

By contrast, the May 21 hearing on SEPTA's Fiscal Year 2004 capital budget and 12-year capital program attracted little public attention. The 2004 budget proposes \$458.1 million in capital projects, representing a slight decrease from last year's budget of \$465.3 million. The largest items in the new budget are \$70 million for the Market Street Elevated Reconstruction Program; \$50 million for New Starts projects, including the Schuylkill Valley Metro and extension of the Route 100 to King of Prussia; \$45 million for vehicle overhauls and \$38 million for bus purchases. For the year, \$24.1 million is set aside to begin the acquisition of 104 new Silverliner V railcars, a program expected to cost a total of \$310 million.....Brookville Equipment plans to deliver the first of 18 rebuilt PCC cars for the Girard Avenue light rail project by late this month. They will be numbered in the 2320 series following SEPTA's most recently acquired PCC's, the 19 ex-Toronto, ex-Birmingham Pullman- built cars in the 2300 series which arrived in 1975 but have since been scrapped.

SEPTA plans to purchase 100 new 40-foot low-floor diesel buses from New Flyer in each of the next three years, with options for 20 additional buses each year. These are intended to replace 14 to 16-year-old Neoplan buses which are beyond their useful lifespan. SEPTA also plans to acquire 30 low-floor diesel-electric "hybrid" buses by the end of this year, in addition to the two experimental 5600-series hybrids now in service..... SEPTA is budgeting \$1.8 million to demolish the abandoned Luzerne depot in North Philadelphia, clearing the property for commercial development.....Steve Brookens, a onetime trolley motorman who became the feisty president of Transport Workers Local 234, died last month from kidney failure. He was 54. Brookens led his union on a crippling 40-day strike against SEPTA in 1998, but was forced out of the leadership in 2001 following charges of financial chicanery brought by the international TWU.....SEPTA's 200 police officers voted last month to strike if contract disputes over salary levels and healthcare are not resolved. The SEPTA police force is the fourth largest in the State.....An Elmwood depot trolley operator and a maintenance team from the Overbrook Regional Rail shop took first-place honors in SEPTA's 2003 Rail Rodeo in April, and will represent SEPTA at the International Rail Rodeo this month in San Jose, CA.

Refurbished ex-SEPTA PCC #2134 was placed last month at the Trolley Car Diner on Germantown Avenue in Mount Airy, where it will become the "Ice Cream Shoppe." The diner will be the location of Philadelphia Chapter's summer dinner on August 15 (see separate item in this issue).....SEPTA received some unwanted publicity in the *Daily News* last month, which reported that there were at least 31 non-working emergency call boxes in Broad Street subway and Market-Frankford Line stations. SEPTA blamed most of the problem on underground cable failures, but within a few days had repaired 23 of the phone boxes.....SEPTA has been installing new soot filters in its buses during their mid-life overhauls. This, combined with the low-sulfur diesel fuel used by SEPTA, has significantly reduced particulate, hydrocarbon and carbon monoxide emissions .....SEPTA could be affected by some high-profile real estate decisions to be made in Philadelphia over the next few years. Media giant Comcast reportedly is looking for a site on which to build a new office tower, which is important because 60 to 70 percent of its current employees commute via public

transportation. Meanwhile, the *Inquirer* reports that several major center city firms are being urged to relocate to New Jersey or Delaware when their leases expire in the next three years. These include insurance titan Cigna and food service provider Aramark, each of which now employs more than a thousand people in the City. In an unfortunate coincidence, Mega-Developer Willard G. Rouse III, builder of the Liberty Place complex which houses Cigna, died May 29 of lung cancer at the age of 60.



AMTRAK's five-year strategic capital and operating plan, mentioned here last month, calls for \$1.8 billion in Federal subsidies in Fiscal Year 2004, but declining to \$1.4 billion in 2008. The plan, which can be downloaded from the Amtrak website, goes into considerable detail as to what needs to be done to return the railroad to a "state of good repair" and to improve its operational reliability. About half of the funds would be spent on improving the 1,959 miles of track and other infrastructure that Amtrak owns, as well as upgrading its rolling stock which would be reduced from 2,278 cars and locomotives to 2,057 in 2008. (Amtrak says that today only 81 percent of the cars assigned to Northeast Corridor trains are available for revenue service on any given day, and only 71 percent of the long-distance fleet.) "While there has been much discussion of 'reforming' Amtrak in recent years, no matter what reforms policymakers may want, you have first got to get costs and reliability under control," said President David L. Gunn. "This strategic plan focuses on running a fiscally-tight business and bringing the railroad to a state of good repair so that it costs less to operate and costs less for the taxpayer to support it." Gunn revealed that from 1997 through 2002 Amtrak spent an average of \$1.5 billion a year more than its income, which includes passenger and other revenues, government grants and borrowed money. (Amtrak now pays more than \$250 million annually for debt service.) Gunn said last month that he is already ordering materials for the 2004 capital program.

The Bush Administration, however, does not appear willing to support AMTRAK's strategic plan. The Transportation Department released an outline of its own plan under which the Federal government would put up 50 percent of the capital funding (much less than the 80 percent Federal share for highway projects), no funding for operations and would give the states the right to decide where rail passenger service should operate. The government plan, to be released within two months, also envisions the assignment of operating rights over freight railroads to other operators besides Amtrak and would transfer the Northeast Corridor to a Federal-and-state-run entity. In addition, it would encourage states to create their own regional passenger systems. But the freight railroads have made it crystal clear that they wish to deal with only a single long-distance passenger operator (NARP).

AMTRAK has picked up support from two influential sources, AARP and the American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials (AASHTO). AARP, the giant organization for seniors, said in its new policy manual that "(p)assenger rail is" another mobility option for midlife and older people who travel both within congested corridors and between cities separated by long distances...Amtrak estimates that nearly a quarter of its national ridership (4.7 million people) is age 55 and older. Congress (and states) should...support nationwide passenger rail service that is integrated and coordinated with regional, state

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## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 5)

and local passenger rail; and establish a dependable funding mechanism that ensures continuing passenger rail service." Earlier, AASHTO issued a paper entitled "Intercity Passenger Rail Transportation" which expresses support for both corridor and long-distance rail services (NARP).

A "Build America Bonds" bill was introduced in the Senate last month with both a Republican and a Democratic sponsor. The measure would offer \$50 billion in bonds with Federal tax credits for transportation projects, including "roads, rail, transit, aviation and water." A 20-percent state match would be required (NARP).....AMTRAK is offering an Internet-only 25-percent discount on many rail fares through June 15. These can be accessed through [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com)..... UNION PACIFIC of late has been sounding very unfriendly about AMTRAK. At a shipper-sponsored conference in Washington last month, UP President Ike Evans expressed his frustration at having to allow Amtrak to operate on its lines while competing with Amtrak for mail and freight business. CANADIAN NATIONAL President Hunter Harrison chimed in, saying that passenger trains in Canada are "willing to pay their way. The Amtrak model is broken," he asserted. "There has to be a long-term approach to what the passenger business is going to be" (*Traffic World*).

But David Gunn responded at a later session in Washington that AMTRAK's host railroads have big problems of their own. "We're having trouble with our infrastructure but the freight railroads are in real trouble," he said. "We run on their track. We know what's going on out there," pointing to antagonist Union Pacific as an example of a road having severe capacity constraints in some areas which affect Amtrak trains as well as its own traffic. Now the freight carriers have "got themselves in a position where the volume is growing and they don't generate enough cash to provide adequate plant and equipment," Gunn said. "There are places all over the country where you need multiple mains and extra sidings, and they don't have the cash to put it in." He warned that "you need some equality of treatment (from the government) between the modes or you're going to lose a big part of the rail network" (*Traffic World*).

AMTRAK last month installed a new interlocking plant east of Newark, NJ, and named it "Rea" in honor of Pennsylvania Railroad President Samuel Rea. As a PRR vice president in the early 1900's, Rea supervised the railroad's massive project to extend its mainline into New York City. "Rea" is at a location formerly part of "Hudson" interlocking, which is on the site of the old Manhattan Transfer where the original DC electrification from New York ended. General Superintendent W. R. Ernst of Amtrak's New York Division issued a unusual two-page memo to all employees describing the history of the area and why the name "Rea" was chosen.....On Tuesday, May 20, Penn Station in New York was partially shut down and evacuated, after police received word that a Liberian man with a suspicious package was arriving on a train from Washington. The report proved false but the man was found to be an illegal immigrant and was turned over to the Bureau of Immigration for possible deportation. Train service was interrupted for nearly three hours (NARP).....The next afternoon, a tanker truck carrying a hazardous chemical became wedged in an AMTRAK underpass in Elizabeth, NJ, causing a two-hour delay to Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT trains while authorities checked for leakage and damage to the bridge. There was none.....Reports abound that

AMTRAK had decided to demolish the long-idle Pennsy steam plant at Penn Coach yard north of 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station .....AMTRAK is running a contest to choose a picture for its 2004 wall calendar. Color photos in 8"x10" size (no digital images) may be submitted up to July 7. See Amtrak's website for entry rules.



CSX,  
NS  
OTHER ROADS

NORFOLK SOUTHERN is negotiating with AMTRAK for the right to operate a fast intermodal train from North Jersey to Washington via the Northeast Corridor. The actual startup of the service will depend on a number of factors, including a "window" on the busy Corridor and the possible renewal of the connection at "Zoo" interlocking in Philadelphia to allow the train to gain access to the High Line and avoid running through 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station .....A group of local businessmen is proposing to build a harness racetrack and casino at the east end of the 1,300-acre Philadelphia Naval Base, on the site of the old Mustin airfield. Willard Rouse's Liberty Property Trust is already developing an office park complex on the former Naval base, and has undertaken a \$1.5-million land use study of the area. In a May 23 article on the subject, the *Inquirer* pointed out that the racetrack in particular could create serious traffic problems, especially with the nearby CSX intermodal terminal at Greenwich, NS's new railyard just to the north of Mustin Field due to open in 2005 and a planned expansion of the Port of Philadelphia to the east. A heavy volume of truck movements in the area is expected.

CSX has found itself in a bitter dispute with the State of Delaware over three railroad-owned highway bridges in Wilmington and one near Newport. Three of the bridges have been partially closed because of their deteriorated condition and the question of who will pay to repair or replace the spans may be decided by an arbitrator.....CSX has been cited by General Motors as a "Supplier of the Year" for its "overall business performance in providing GM with parts and services" during 2002 (*Railway Age*).....CS has ordered 75 SD70MAC locomotives from the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors (*Railpace*).....NS has shut down its former Pennsy and CONRAIL Phoenixville industrial track between Oaks and Devault, PA, because of the closure of its major customer, a corn syrup processor at Devault. Production has been shifted to the Staley plant in Morrisville (John Petko) .....The Worthington Steel plant near Malvern, PA, which closed last year, will be razed and a retail and residential development is planned for the site along U.S. 202. After the former Reading Chester Valley branch was abandoned a decade ago, the plant was served instead via a new S-shaped siding constructed by CONRAIL off the nearby Dale secondary track (ex-Pennsy Trenton Cut-Off).

For the 14<sup>th</sup> year in a row, NORFOLK SOUTHERN has won the E. H. Harriman Memorial gold medal for employee safety among major ("Group A") U.S. railroads. CSX won the silver award. In Group B ILLINOIS CENTRAL was the gold medal winner and METRA the silver; in Group C GUILFORD RAIL SYSTEM took top honors and ELGIN, JOLIET & EASTERN second place. In the switching & terminal category,

(Continued on Page 7)



## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

(Continued from Page 6)

the TERMINAL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION OF ST. LOUIS won the gold and CONRAIL Shared Assets the silver. The groups are determined by the number of employee hours worked .....Harrisburg Chapter reports that NS has pushed back the startup of its new humping operation at Enola yard near Harrisburg from April to at least August (see April *Cinders*).....NS has negotiated a ten-year labor agreement with its train dispatchers union. A general wage increase will be paid in 2004 but after that the dispatchers will begin to participate in the NS bonus program, the same as management employees and engineers represented by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers (*Railpace*).

NS has begun to apply its new paint scheme to locomotives emerging from Juniata shop in Altoona. While still basically black, the new scheme includes the Thoroughbred outline in the NS herald, a white frame stripe and a white area around the locomotive numbers (*Railpace*).....NS is taking delivery of 33 new SD70M locomotives from EMD, and will send them to Juniata shop for painting (*Trains*)..... Hershey Foods Corp. has presented an Award for Outstanding Service to an NS train crew which switches its three plants in the Hershey (PA) area.....NS has moved 17 of its former CONRAIL General Electric B36-7 locomotives to Penn Terminal at Eddystone, PA, for shipment to Brazil. CSX also sent 17 ex-Conrail B36-7's to Penn Terminal for export (*Railpace*) .....A group of GECX C30-7's has been exported to Australia through the Port of Philadelphia (Harrisburg Chapter).....NS participated in several moves of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Red Unit circus train in recent weeks. The show played at Hershey May 21-26, then went to Trenton (May 29-June 1) and was scheduled for an appearance in Wilkes-Barre (June 4-8). This is the same train that was in South Philadelphia from April 14 to 28.....At a shipper-sponsored panel in Washington mentioned above, officials of UNION PACIFIC and BURLINGTON NORTHERN & SANTA FE were noncommittal on a subject of great interest to their customers: Is a merger of their roads with CSX or NS or anyone else in the cards within the next few years? BNSF Chairman & President Matthew Rose, however, said that "railroads can talk all they want about the success we're having in getting trucks off the road, but the industry is still losing market share to trucks. That's the reality and we have to change that around."

NJ TRANSIT has announced that the one-way fare on its new light rail line between Camden and Trenton will be a bargain \$1.10, about one-third of the present NJT bus fare between those cities. The much-delayed 34-mile rail line is scheduled to open this fall.....MIDDLETOWN & HUMMELSTOWN is rebuilding ex-CN 2-6-0 #91, and in April performed a successful air test on the locomotive. Old 91 has been in storage for the past 15 years (Harrisburg Chapter).....Steamtown will expand its steam excursion program this season beyond the traditional runs from Scranton to Moscow, PA and return. Trips to Tobyhanna are set for July 13, 27 and August 17, while an historic run all the way to Delaware Water Gap (over former Lackawanna trackage recently acquired from NORFOLK SOUTHERN) will take place on August 30. Trips to Carbondale and return over the ex-Delaware & Hudson mainline are schedule on four Saturdays from August 2 through the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The regular runs to Moscow begin this month on weekends but will operate Thursdays through Sundays in July and August (*Railpace*).....The all-

volunteer Whippany Rail Museum at Whippany, NJ is in a financial crunch and will be closed to the public this season. However, it will open for special train rides in the fall (Jersey Central Chapter).....The Wayne County Historical Society is looking into the possibility of firing up the replica of the **Stourbridge Lion** locomotive which it has on display at Honesdale, PA. The occasion would be next year's 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the original **Lion** making the first commercial run of a steam locomotive on American rails. The replica was built by the Delaware & Hudson in 1933 for display at the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago (Harrisburg Chapter).

### Short Lines of Pennsylvania Quiz Answers

Listed below are the answers to the **Short Lines of Pennsylvania Quiz** on Page 9 of this issue. No cheating, please! Do the Quiz first, and then check your answers!

1-H; 2-R; 3-U; 4-O; 5-X; 6-D; 7-W; 8-F; 9-Y; 10-V; 11-J; 12-P; 13-T; 14-L; 15-N; 16-S; 17-E; 18-I; 19-A; 20-Q; 21-C; 22-K; 23-G; 24-B; 25-M.

## Steamtown Sets New Programs

Steamtown National Historic Site has an exciting variety of new interpretive programs this year. A newly developed series began on May 28 and will continue through Labor Day.

The new series includes:

**A Day in the Life of a Locomotive**, in which visitors are guided by NPS Rangers as they experience a sampling of the average day in the life of a steam locomotive. Visitors will interact with the train and roundhouse crews as they perform daily tasks, including turntable operation, dumping ash, taking on water and coal and creating the day's consist in the yard.

**Yard Operations**, a guided interpretive tour which provides a broad visual perspective of the yard and allows the public an unobstructed view of the train and roundhouse as they carry out the various tasks associated with yard operations.

**Turntable Demonstrations**, which include discussions about the purpose and use of the turntable as well as the context of this phase of operations, relative to the overall function of the yard.

**Building a Mixed Train Consist**, a demonstration which addresses industry linkages (rail, coal, iron, lumber and textile) and their resulting interdependence, as well as the relationships that evolved between the people who were employed therein. A typical mixed train consist may include passenger cars, coal hoppers, flatcars, boxcars and a caboose.

**Cab Tours** create an opportunity for visitors to board a steam or diesel locomotive to experience rail history from an especially inique perspective. NPS Rangers discuss the purpose, function and history of motive power, presenting comparisons\*to highlight similarities and disparities.

In addition, other related programs included **From Stone to Iron** and **Tech Tours**, which provides interaction with skilled craftsmen as they perform blacksmithing demonstrations and the way in which anthracite coal was used.

(Continued on Page 8)





**JUNE 12-15:** "Steam Locomotives in American Railroadings" four-day seminar at University of Scranton, Scranton, PA, sponsored by Penn State Altoona. Several presentations, tours of Steamtown and Electric City Trolley Museum, films, meals and steam excursion are included. Various options are priced from \$175-\$525 per person. For descriptive brochure and registration form, contact Penn State Altoona, Continuing Education & Training, 1444 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 2A, Altoona, PA 16601-3313 (telephone 814-949-5722 or FAX to 814-949-5314).

**JUNE 15:** Walk Philadelphia will sponsor "Electric Streetcar Tour" following a walking tour in Chestnut Hill. Guided tour will highlight transportation history and architecture along Germantown Avenue, as well as walking tour in Germantown. Tour is co-sponsored by the Center City District, the Chestnut Hill Community Association and Philadelphia's Historic Northwest Coalition. Cost: \$25 per person, with pre-registration required. Tour runs from 1-4 PM and organizes at the Chestnut Hill bus loop at Germantown Avenue and Bethlehem Pike. For reservations and information, telephone 215-625-9255 or 215-247-1836. Website information can be had from: [www.centercityphila.org](http://www.centercityphila.org).

**JUNE 21:** "Blue Mountain Express" excursion from Hagerstown, MD to New Oxford, PA and return via CSX's ex-Western Maryland Dutch Line, sponsored by Hagerstown Roundhouse Museum and Hagerstown Chapter NRHS. Special diesel-powered MARC train will depart Hagerstown Roundhouse Museum at 8 AM, returning at 6 PM. Four-hour layover in New Oxford will allow passengers to enjoy an antiques market and craft show, as well as lunch. Fares: \$42 adults, \$38 seniors (65 and over), \$25 children (4-12), first class \$75. Order tickets from: HJTC, P. O. Box 4175, Hagerstown, MD 21741-4175, making checks payable to "HJTC" and adding \$2 mail order charge. For information, telephone 301-739-4665.

**JUNE 22:** "Blue Mountain Express" excursion from Hagerstown to Westminster, MD and return via CSX and Maryland Midland's former Western Maryland mainline, sponsored by Hagerstown Roundhouse Museum and Hagerstown Chapter, NRHS. Special diesel-powered MARC train leaves Hagerstown Roundhouse Museum at 8 AM, returning at 6 PM. For fares and ticket information, see item above.

**JUNE 30-JULY 6:** "Star Spangled Rails" national convention of NRHS and Railway & Locomotive Historical Society in Baltimore, MD, sponsored by Washington, DC Chapter NRHS and R&LHS, celebrating the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of railroading in the United States. Three major excursions, a series of seminars and the annual banquet are among the planned events. Brochure and order form were to be mailed to registrants during March. Convention headquarters will be the Wyndham Inner Harbor Hotel. NRHS members may register for the convention by sending check or money order for \$45 per person or family, payable to "Baltimore Rail Convention 2003," to: Star Spangled Rails, P.O. Box 441668, Fort Washington, MD 20749-1668. For information, visit website [www.starspangledrails.org](http://www.starspangledrails.org).

**JULY 3-6:** Reading Railroad Days at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, co-sponsored by Reading Company Technical & Historical Society. Tours of Reading equipment, a huge operating model railroad and special presentations will be featured. Hours: Thursday through Saturday

9AM-5 PM, Sunday 12 Noon-5 PM. Regular museum admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628.

**JULY 20-26:** Basic RailCamp 2003 at Steamtown National Historic Site, Scranton, PA, sponsored by NRHS and National Park Service, with assistance from Canadian Pacific Railway and University of Scranton. **RAILCAMP 2003 IS SOLD OUT.** For information on Basic RailCamp 2004 when available, contact Basic RailCamp 2004, NRHS, P.O. Box 58547, Philadelphia, PA 19102-8547 (telephone 215-557-6606), or visit website: [www.railcamp.com](http://www.railcamp.com).

**JULY 19-20:** Private car excursion from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh and return using Juniata Terminal open-platform **Pennsylvania 120** and newly-rebuilt parlor-buffet-lounge **Warrior Ridge**, on rear of Amtrak trains 45 and 44 **Pennsylvanian**. Train leaves 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station at 8:45 AM Saturday, returning at 8:55 PM Sunday, a trip which includes two scenic daylight rides over Norfolk Southern's ex-Pennsy Middle and Pittsburgh Divisions. Passengers may board or detrain at any scheduled station stop enroute. Accommodations will be in the **Warrior Ridge** but passengers will be permitted to use the rear end parlor of the **Pennsylvania 120** on a rotating basis. Complimentary food and beverage service will be provided in both directions. Round-trip fare: \$400 per person. Hotel rooms are available for Saturday night at the Pittsburgh Marriott at the group rate of \$69 single or double (plus tax), which includes transfer from and to the Amtrak station. Order tickets from: Juniata Terminal Company, P. O. Box 822, Washington Crossing, PA 18977-0822 (e-mail: [juniataboss@att.net](mailto:juniataboss@att.net)).

**AUGUST 15:** Annual summer dinner of Philadelphia Chapter NRHS at Trolley Car Diner, 7619 Germantown Avenue in Mount Airy. See details on Page 2 of this issue.

**AUGUST 16:** Stewartstown Railroad Excursion, covering the entire 7.4 miles of the route, sponsored by Harrisburg Chapter NRHS. Trip will include dinner stop in New Freedom (individual settlement or bring your own). Trip leaves Stewartstown Railroad Station just off PA Route 851 in Stewartstown at 2 PM, return trip departs New Freedom at 6:30 PM. Capacity extremely limited. Fare: coach tickets \$15 per person, caboose seats \$25 per person. Order tickets from: Harrisburg Chapter NRHS, c/o Bill Gingrich, 536 Ridge Road, Elizabethtown, PA 17022-2751, enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope. For printable flyer, visit: [www.nrhs-hbg.pennsyr.com](http://www.nrhs-hbg.pennsyr.com).

**THROUGH DECEMBER 7:** "On the Road to Paradise: A History of the Strasburg Rail Road," display of photos and artifacts from America's oldest shortline, at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628.

## Steamtown (Continued from Page 7)

According to Steamtown Superintendent Kip Hagen, these new programs are related to an extensive five-year planning initiative, creating things to interest a diverse visiting public. Hagen also said that Steamtown would continue to conduct locomotive and restoration shop plus living history tours as has been done in prior years. Schedules, however, will vary and visitors should check availability prior to arrival in Scranton.

Steamtown is open daily from 9 AM to 5 PM and information may be obtained by calling 1-570-340-5203 or (toll-free) 1-888-6939391, or the website at [www.nps.gov/stea](http://www.nps.gov/stea).



# Short Line Railroads of Pennsylvania Quiz

**By Roy L. Hudson**

Last month, Quizmaster Roy L. Hudson provided you with a really too easy "Take a Ride on the Reading" Quiz. This month, we're see how well you do with a quiz on the short line railroads of Pennsylvania. Because it will be some time before the next issue of **Cinders** is printed, we won't ask you to submit the answer sheet, but just check it against the clues found on Page 7.

STATEMENT

CLUE

- |                                                                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Nittany Lions fans could care less their short line is gone                  | A. East Broad Top                  |
| 2. A Bethlehem Steel road that never got to the "Hoosier State"                 | B. Middletown & Hummelstown        |
| 3. They handle zinc ore and once connected with the CNJ & L&NE                  | C. Warner Company                  |
| 4. This four-mile line was owned by the Duquesne Light Co.                      | D. Strasburg                       |
| 5. Diesel #100 (iron ore line) had the road's name in script on its flanks      | E. Brandywine Valley               |
| 6. The oldest short line (1837) still operating                                 | F. Northampton & Bath              |
| 7. Incorporated in 1907 by the Alan Wood Steel Company                          | G. Juniata Terminal                |
| 8. A 7-mile line owned by Atlas-Portland and Universal Atlas Cement             | H. Bellefonte Central              |
| 9. Mostly operated by the Reading but owned by a city                           | I. Tuscarora Valley                |
| 10. This railroad operated only in Bucks County                                 | J. Ironton                         |
| 11. In 1924 all the stock of this line was owned 50/50 by RDG and LV            | K. East Erie Commercial            |
| 12. This railroad operates only in Bucks County                                 | L. Wellsville, Addison & Galetton  |
| 13. When built, the I-83 overpass cost more than this railroad was worth        | M. Wawa & Concordville             |
| 14. The "Sole Leather Line" served tanneries                                    | N. Huntingdon & Broad Top Mountain |
| 15. The Everett Railroad (not the present one) took over part of this line      | O. Cheswick & Hamar                |
| 16. Gone by 1940, it made passenger connections at Lewistown with thePRR        | P. New Hope & Ivyland              |
| 17. This steel road connects with the NS and CSXT                               | Q. Octoraro Rwy.                   |
| 18. Lost in 1934, this narrow gauge line ran parallel to its namesake mountain  | R. Cambria & Indiana               |
| 19. Narrow-gauge coal route quit as a freight railroad in 1956                  | S. Kishacoquillas Valley           |
| 20. Originally part was built by Philadelphia & Baltimore Central in the 1860's | T. Stewartstown                    |
| 21. It worked the sand pits near Morrisville                                    | U. Chestnut Ridge                  |
| 22. This multi-gauge line uses General Electric locomotives                     | V. Quakertown & Eastern            |
| 23. A one-mile switching road serving a passenger repair shop                   | W. Upper Merion & Plymouth         |
| 24. A former Reading branch, it still runs freight in the middle of the street  | X. Cornwall                        |
| 25. Operated an ex-U. S. Navy Vulcan 2-6-0T on the PRR!                         | Y. Philadelphia Belt Line          |

## Short Line Railroads of Pennsylvania Quiz Answer Sheet

1. _____	7. _____	13. _____	19. _____
2. _____	8. _____	14. _____	20. _____
3. _____	9. _____	15. _____	21. _____
4. _____	10. _____	16. _____	22. _____
5. _____	11. _____	17. _____	23. _____
6. _____	12. _____	18. _____	24. _____
25. _____	YOUR NAME _____		



## SEPTA in Crisis (Continued from Page 1)

The *Inquirer* reported on May 29 that the SEPTA board held a secret meeting the previous week to discuss the possibility of raising fares high enough to avoid the much-criticized reductions in service. SEPTA managers told the board that a 15-percent increase rather than the advertised five percent would raise up to \$40 million, erasing most of the service cuts, even with the expected loss of riders. The board also considered an alternative plan to continue operations beyond June 30 with a budget deficit, if it received assurance that funding relief was on the way from Harrisburg.

The seriousness of the transit problem to the City of Philadelphia was emphasized in an *Inquirer* editorial on May 27 and an opinion column on the 29<sup>th</sup>. The editorial pointed out the obvious conflict between the State's plan to spend \$2 billion to encourage economic development in cities and towns, while at the same time pushing a budget which strangles vital transit systems. Columnist Inga Saffron bemoaned the "inscrutable game of political poker involving Governor Rendell and the State Legislature," which could gut SEPTA's network and result in the exodus of more businesses from the City. "Say what you will about SEPTA's frequent ineptitudes," said Saffron. "(T)he transit network is the envy of American cities. You can get almost anywhere in the Philadelphia region by riding SEPTA." That may not be true in the future, if the proposed service cuts are implemented.

—Frank Tatnall

## Ohio Central Ends an Era

The Ohio Central Railroad ended its regular excursion passenger train service on May 24, with the last daily steam-powered trains based out of Sugarcreek, OH making their run at 3:30 PM.

At the time of the announcement, OC said that its "Rails to the Circus" train would run from Columbus to Coshocton, OH, powered by vintage diesels, also on May 24. A May 31 excursion using 4-8-4 #6325 was scheduled to run from Dennison to Newark, OH, with return trip diesel-powered.

OC's Steam Department said that the "very emotional and difficult decision was based mainly on skyrocketing liability insurance costs and a sluggish tourism economy. This was a very hard choice to make and one that we had hoped (we) would never have to make."

OC will operate a diesel-powered "Ohio Bicentennial" train ride on June 21, but all Fall, 2003 excursions are currently on hold pending further discussions with the insurance agent. Those cancelled trips included Pittsburgh excursions, murder mystery and riverboat cruise trips.

No decision has been made as to what will happen to the steam locomotives, passenger equipment and tooling. However, OC said, the decision to shut down daily passenger operations is final. The railroad expressed its appreciation to everyone who had supported their excursion program over the past 15 years.

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