



CINDERS

FEBRUARY 2008



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Volume 69

Number 2

Newsletter of the
PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
Post Office Box 7302
Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS WEBSITE: www.phillyNRHS.com

Reading FP7's Finally at Strasburg

Philadelphia Chapter's ex-Reading FP7 locomotive #903 and its mate #902 arrived at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania in Strasburg about Noon on Wednesday, January 9, after a long journey from East Greenville, PA. Norfolk Southern delivered the two units to the Strasburg Rail Road, which quickly hauled them to the Museum where they were placed inside the fence at a spot easily seen from the highway. In its January 11 edition, the Lancaster *Intelligencer Journal* published a front-page story on the locomotives' arrival, complete with photograph.

An inspection by the Chapter's crew found both units to be in good shape, except for the Nathan K5LA horns that were stolen while the units were parked at East Greenville following their excursions on the East Penn Railroad in October. Chapter Member Frank Lancaster already has obtained one replacement set of K5LA horns. The sponsor of the East Penn excursions, the Upper Perkiomen Valley Chamber of Commerce, contributed \$250 to the owners of each locomotive to help defray the cost of replacements.

Museum Director David Dunn has informed our Chapter and the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society, the new owner of #902, that the units may remain there indefinitely. They will become a major display at the "Reading Days" event in July and it is hoped to arrange a series of excursions with the two units on the Strasburg Rail Road and perhaps beyond. Chapter members are encouraged to visit the Museum to view these handsome locomotives.

Did You Receive a 2008 Dues Bill?

During January, some Chapter members have called, stating they have not received their 2008 dues bill from NRHS. Because of the turnover of Membership Records functions to the outside firm of Fernley & Fernley, internal controls on dues bills no longer exists. In prior years, Chapter personnel would verify each dues bill for address accuracy, etc., prior to mailing. Bills are now sent out "sight unseen", and with no local control.

Members who have not received their 2008 bills are asked to contact Editor Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769 or by E-mail to reastwood2@comcast.net and we will follow up.

MEETING CANCELLATION NOTICE!

In the event of snow, sleet or freezing rain on a Philadelphia Chapter meeting day, Chapter officers will make a decision on whether to hold the meeting as scheduled. If in doubt, members should telephone 215-947-5769 after 12 Noon on the day of the meeting for a recorded advisory. Thank you.

MEETING NOTICE:

FRIDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 15, 2008

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, 9th Street above Locust
(\$6.00 after 6 PM), Parkway garage, also 9th above Locust
(\$5.75 after 6 PM), or Downtown Garage, Walnut Street east of
10th (\$4.00 after 6 PM) (*Note that some of these parking prices
have changed and will be adjusted in a future issue of Cinders.*)

Our February 15, 2008 meeting will feature a member participation slide night. About two years ago, we held a similar event, and it was very successful. We would ask members to pick ten (10) slides each they have taken in the 1960's, 1970's, 1980's and 1990's to be screened before your fellow members. If you've taken an interesting short visit to a rail event or location, and have some interesting views that aren't enough for a program, then this is the place to screen them where we can all enjoy them. Bring them from the decades above from which you have these slides and share them with your fellow members.

The evening begins with our usual optional 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, FEBRUARY 12, 2008 to **Chapter Dinner Chair Marie Eastwood** at 215-947-5769. The menu choices were not known at presstime, but the dinner always includes salad, entrée, dessert and beverage. **N0-shows will be responsible for payment for meals ordered!** (*Meetings for the 2007-08 year are held in the Faculty Club, on the 2nd Floor of the Alumni Hall.*) Why not come out for dinner before our meeting. It's an enjoyable full meal, plus interesting conversation always is a part of it, and it's priced at only \$20.00 per person. Try it!!

**NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, INC.**
Post Office Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

Founded 1936, incorporated 1973 as a 501c3 non-profit corporation

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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: \$50.00 per person, which includes Chapter and National dues. Chapter-only dues \$17.00 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.

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. If your *Cinders* is received damaged or incomplete, contact the Editor at the address shown below for replacement.

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

Chapter Members to Receive Membership Awards March 14

Philadelphia Chapter will have a total of 15 members receiving NRHS award pins in 2008, according to information received from NRHS Membership Awards Director Joseph Maloney.

Member **Donald R. Riegel** of Wilmington, NC will receive the coveted 60-year NRHS pin, having joined in 1948.

A total of 14 members will receive their 25-year pins, they being: **John F. Brasch, Jr.** (Fort Washington, PA), **Joseph E. Casey, Jr.** (West Haven, CT), **James L. Dent** (Oakland, NJ), **David O. Dure** (Verona, NJ), **Burton Eisenberg** (Wyncote, PA), **Stanley N. Feldman** (Philadelphia, PA), **Glenn W. Fresch** (Cranston, RI), **William C. Garrow** (Bryn Mawr, PA), **Stephen Klabish** (Chicago, IL), **John A. McConnell** (York, PA), **George S. McElhinney** (Erdenheim, PA), **Stuart Palmer** (Medford, NJ), **James L. Ripley** (Las Cruces, NM), **Gary L. Spohn** (Collegeville, PA) and **Nicholas J. Staffieri** (Philadelphia, PA).

Presentation of the anniversary pins and letters will be made to the above members at the March 14, 2008 meeting, and each will be contacted to determine if they are able to attend.

The Chapter congratulates each member on their long years of service to NRHS and Philadelphia Chapter.

Historical Rail Vignettes Wanted

Do you have some historical rail memories that would be of interest to *Cinders*' readers? Did you take an interesting rail trip (with particular emphasis on the Philadelphia area)? Do you remember a rail transportation event from the past?

If you have sufficient material to provide a short rail history vignette that would fit on one page or less of an issue of *Cinders*, kindly contact Editor Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769 or E-mail reastwood2@comcast.net. We'd like to have it to share with the Philadelphia Chapter membership.



FEBRUARY 9-10, 2008:

Greenberg's Train & Toy Show at Sun Center, 63 Concord Road, off Route 452, Aston, PA, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM both days. Operating layouts, model train sales, clinics and modeling seminars. Admission: \$7.00 adults (good for both days), children 11 and under free with adult. For additional information, visit www.GreenbergShows.com.

FEBRUARY 16-17: Northeast Rail Passenger

Conference, in Houston Hall, 3417 Spruce Street on the University of Pennsylvania campus, Philadelphia, coordinated by Delaware Valley Association of Railroad Passengers and NARP. For complete information, which was not available at presstime, telephone 215-RAILWAY or E-mail: conference@dvarp.org.

FEBRUARY 23-24: Annual Spring Thaw Train Meet

at Agricultural Hall, Allentown Fairgrounds, 17th & Chew Streets, Allentown, PA, 9 AM-3 PM both days, sponsored by ATMA. Over 600 tables of model trains and railroadiana, with operating layouts, displays and train races for kids. Admission per day: \$6 adults, children 12 and under free.

MARCH 2: Annual Train Show & Sale sponsored by

Jersey Central Chapter NRHS, at Mother Seton Regional High School, Garden State Parkway Exit 135, Clark, NJ, 9 AM-4 PM. Circus train display will be featured along with model trains, books and railroadiana for sale. Snacks and hot food available. Free parking. Admission: \$5 adults, \$8 family. For information, send stamped, self-addressed envelope to Jersey Central Chapter NRHS, c/o Mitchell Dakelman, 334 S. 3rd Avenue, Highland Park, NJ 08904-2515.

MARCH 15: 22nd Annual Harrisburg Railroad Show &

Collectors Market, sponsored by Harrisburg Chapter NRHS at I. W. Abel Union Hall (Steelworkers), 200 Gibson Street, Steelton, PA 17113, 9 AM to 3 PM. Railroadiana, movies, model railroad items, train layouts, workshops and seminars and snack bar will be featured. Admission: \$5.00 at door, children under 12 free. For information and vendor table reservations, contact Mark Irvin, 3814 Leyland Dr., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-7634 (telephone 717-732-3867).

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PHILADELPHIA

EXPRESS



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.



**SEPTA
TRANSIT**

New General Manager Joseph M. Casey took over the reins at SEPTA on February 1. He said that one of his top priorities will be to establish a new Customer Service Division, to be headed by a high-level manager. Casey also looks forward to improved relations between SEPTA and the City of Philadelphia. One of Mayor Nutter's first actions last month was to reestablish the office of deputy mayor for transportation & utilities, which was long vacant under former Mayor Street. Named to the position was Rina Cutler, an experienced state and municipal official whose prior job was deputy secretary for administration at PennDOT. Last month, departing General Manager Faye Moore posted her farewell message on SEPTA's website. She had served in the job for six years, during which she contended with many problems, both financial and operational. She was proud that numerous outside audits concluded "that the Authority was a fiscally responsible, well-managed organization that simply lacked dedicated funding." The goal of dedicated funding was achieved during the final year of her tenure.

SEPTA's proposed operating budget for Fiscal Year 2009 beginning this July 1 will contain no fare increases. As a result, the public hearings scheduled for March 31 through April 4 will probably turn out to be relatively non-controversial, in marked contrast to last year's sessions. The Philadelphia hearings will be held on Thursday April 3, and the capital budget hearing on Monday, April 7.....Revenue and ridership figures for the first six months of Fiscal Year 2008 ending December 31 show increases across the board, as compared with the previous year. Consolidated passenger revenues of \$186 million were one percent above budget and 11 percent over last year, while daily linked ridership of 774,000 trips was on budget and four percent higher than a year ago. The 122,000 weekday riders on the Railroad Division (Regional Rail) represented an 11-percent increase over the year-ago period, while both City Transit and Suburban Transit Divisions were up by two percent. SEPTA reported a surplus after subsidies of \$694,000.

On January 22 work began on the reconstruction of Germantown Avenue between Allens Lane and Mermaid Lane in Mount Airy. The \$17-million project, expected to last up to a year, will include the installation of new rail—in the event that Route 23 trolley service is ever resumed—and relaying of the historic Belgian blocks (see October *Cinders*). In the meantime, Route 23 buses and most auto traffic are being detoured via Mount Airy, Stenton and Willow Grove Avenues. Effective February 10, Route 23 will be split into two routes on weekdays, with buses operating between South Philadelphia and Germantown & Westview Avenues (near the old Germantown depot), and shuttle buses in service between Westview and Chestnut Hill. One business adversely affected by the construction project is the Trolley Car

Diner, located on Germantown Avenue just south of Cresheim Valley Drive.

The testing of trackless trolley #800 was successfully completed last fall, and the unit returned to builder New Flyer. It is the first of 38 new low-floor coaches which SEPTA now officially refers to as "trackless trolley buses." The first production unit is due to be delivered this month and the final ones in August, which will fully restore electric service to Routes 59, 66 and 75 operating out of Frankford depot. The new coaches will be equipped with video surveillance systems—a first for SEPTA—and ten will have automatic passenger counting devices in a test program. All will be capable of limited off-wire operation, using a bank of rechargeable batteries.....Delivery of 400 hybrid diesel-electric low-floor buses will begin next month, also from New Flyer of St. Cloud, MN. The order specifies delivery of 100 buses per year, with an option for 20 additional units annually, which will replace SEPTA's NABI buses built in the early 1990's. However, due to increased ridership the existing buses will not be retired immediately on a one-for-one basis. All of the new hybrids will be equipped with video surveillance systems and 80 will have the automatic passenger counters.

SEPTA last month resumed the weekend shutdowns of the Market Street elevated, but this time Market-Frankford trains continued to operate as far west as the new 56th Street station. The Friday evening-to-Sunday shutdowns were scheduled on January 25-28 and February 1-4, with shuttle buses operating between 56th Street and 69th Street Terminal.....During certain late-evening periods last month, all trains operated on the eastbound track at the 34th and 40th Street subway stations to allow work to proceed on the "smart stations" project (see November, December *Cinders*).....A major warehouse fire on North Front Street in Kensington on January 20 disrupted Market-Frankford el service for nearly two days. Shuttle buses were operated between the Berks and Spring Garden stations during the outage, which occurred over a Sunday and the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday. Regular el service resumed on Tuesday morningThe new northbound platform at the Route 100 Gulph Mills station was finally opened last month, but much work remains to be done at the site.

SEPTA again this year will offer its popular Bouquet Pass when the Philadelphia Flower Show comes to the Pennsylvania Convention Center March 2-9. The pass allows unlimited one-day travel on the entire SEPTA system, and can be obtained from SEPTA ticket and sales agents. The agents also will have available discounted tickets to the show itself, whose theme will be "Jazz It Up!" (The regular weekday adult admission at the door will be \$24.).....Renovation work at the Juniper Street subway-surface station appears to be complete, including a new elevator from the Market-Frankford platform. The once-grubby Juniper station seems much brighter and cleaner now,

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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with tasteful green tiles on the pillars helping to enhance the interior of the station.....SEPTA has extended its contract with Titan Outdoor for six more years, retaining Titan to handle advertising on the railroad and transit systemsPhiladelphia has received a \$656,000 Federal grant to help start a \$10-million project designed to upgrade communications between SEPTA police and Philadelphia police. Currently, the two police forces use different radio systems, which can be a severe handicap when an emergency occurs underground.

SEPTA and PATCO are talking about a partnership to build a surface light rail line along Columbus Blvd., a scheme that the Port Authority has been mulling for the past three years. According to an *Inquirer* report, the venture is aimed at spurring economic development along the Delaware River waterfront, and could take the form of either of two alternative plans. One proposal, known as PA-1, envisions a trolley line connecting with PATCO at the out-of-service Franklin Square station at 6th & Race Streets and extending east to Columbus Blvd. There one leg would turn north to Penn Treaty Park and another south to the Pier 70 commercial complex. In so doing, it would serve the sites of the planned Sugarhouse and Foxwoods Casinos. The line also could be extended west to City Hall and a connection with SEPTA's existing subway-surface lines—possibly utilizing two segments of the long-forgotten subway tunnel under Arch Street. (During the 1920's these holes in the ground were envisioned as part of a subway loop around the center city area, along with the Locust Street subway which is now a part of the PATCO system.) Another plan, PA-2, would extend the subway-surface lines eastward under Market Street to access the Columbus Blvd. route. A future extension south to the Navy Yard and the sports stadiums is included in both plans. Cooperation between SEPTA and PATCO could eliminate any competition for Federal "New Start" funding to help finance the project, which is expected to cost over \$1 billion and not become a reality for another eight to ten years.

SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL



SEPTA desperately needs additional equipment to handle the surging ridership on its Regional Rail system. The first of 120 new Silverliner V's are not due for delivery until late next year, but daily ridership jumped 11 percent in 2007 over the previous year to 121,000 while the number of available cars actually decreased. One short-term solution being considered is the purchase or lease of surplus cars from other agencies, possibly NJ TRANSIT.....In last month's issue *Railway Age* published its five-year outlook for new passenger cars (2009-2013). The magazine forecasts that SEPTA will order 231 more commuter rail cars, an obvious reference to the proposal to replace the aging Silverliner IV's with a fleet of "Silverliner VI's" (see June *Cinders*). In addition, 141 new light rail cars are needed to replace the existing Kawasaki LRV's. One report indicates that SEPTA may float a bond issue to help pay for the Silverliner V's.

SEPTA plans to reissue all of its Regional Rail timetables effective March 9. Among the changes designed to

cope with standing loads on some rush-hour trains, six locals will be converted to express service. Two of these will be on the R2 Warminster Line, one on the R3 Media-Elwyn, one on the R3 West Trenton and two on the R5 Lansdale-Doylestown lines. In some cases, new local trains will be scheduled to serve stations bypassed by the expresses. Cars also will be added to four peak trains on the R6 Norristown Line to address the overcrowding problem. SEPTA reissued its R7 timetable on January 20 to reflect revised connections with NJT trains at Trenton, as well as the R3 West Trenton timetable to correct an error in the fare chart (but the same error appears in all the other timetables as well) SEPTA staff had been working on plans for alternate service in the event of a strike at AMTRAK threatened for January 30, which fortunately was avoided with the settlement announced last month (see below). All SEPTA services which operate on Amtrak property, including the R1 Airport, R2 Wilmington-Newark, R5 Paoli-Thorndale, R6 Cynwyd, R7 Trenton and R8 Chestnut Hill West would have been halted by a strike, affecting nearly half of SEPTA's total commuter ridership.

SEPTA has put together a railroad signal modernization plan which will have automatic train control, bi-directional signaling and a cab signal system in place on all of its lines by 2015. In-house forces already have completed work on the Mainline between Philadelphia and Lansdale, on the R8 Fox Chase Line and on a segment of the R3 West Trenton line. On several other lines existing hand-operated crossovers will be replaced with new remotely-controlled interlockings. A new passing siding will be installed on the R5 Doylestown Line south of Chalfont, replacing the present "Forest" siding, and a new connection for the R6 Cynwyd branch will be built off of AMTRAK's Harrisburg line in order to allow removal of the ancient overhead "Valley" bridge at 52nd Street.

Construction started last month on SEPTA's new "K" interlocking west of Spring Garden Street in West Philadelphia (see October-December *Cinders*). Expected to continue for a year, the project is designed to speed service on four SEPTA routes, but in the short term will cause some delays and the lengthening of certain train schedules. R5 Paoli-Thorndale midday service will not return to its usual half-hourly timing until "K" is completedOngoing catenary replacement on the R5 Lansdale line will require the continuation of hourly midday service, but when completed will allow an increase in track speed between Glenside and Lansdale from the current 55 mph to 60 or possibly 65 mph.....Lower Merion Township has selected Philadelphia-based EBL&S Development to design and construct the proposed Ardmore Transit Center and spearhead the controversial redevelopment of the downtown business district. Part of EBL&S's plan is to link the downtown area with the Suburban Square retail center by building a glass-enclosed atrium over the four-track AMTRAK mainline, along with a badly-needed new rail station.

SEPTA has agreed to lease 2.4 miles of its long-out-of-service Newtown branch right-of-way to Montgomery County for use as a pedestrian and bicycle trail. The segment in question runs from the Philadelphia city line near Fox Chase station to Pennypack Creek in Lower Moreland Township.....Plans are well along for building the proposed pedestrian tunnel at the R5 Malvern stationSEPTA will purchase a new diesel locomotive from National Railway Equipment for \$1.4 million, replacing #52, an ex-Milwaukee Road SW1200 built in

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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1954..... The January issue of *Main Line Today* Magazine features an article by Jim Waltzer entitled "Where the Tracks Lie," relating to the history and importance of the R5 Paoli-Thorndale line. Your reporter is quoted regarding the feasibility of operating multilevel cars on SEPTA's Regional Rail system (considering tunnel clearances it could be done with locomotive-hauled cars a la NJ TRANSIT, but not with pantograph-equipped MU's).

Over the past few weeks SEPTA experienced its usual quota of cold-weather equipment problems. In-service failures, especially power-related, were common occurrences on MU cars, with January 9, 10 and 17 being especially bad days. Trains on the R3 West Trenton, R5 Lansdale, R5 Paoli-Thorndale and R7 Chestnut Hill East were frequently involved. On the 17th R3 train #383 had to be annulled at Langhorne when a fire broke out between cars, but it was extinguished and the train allowed to proceed to Fern Rock where passengers transferred to train #4163. AMTRAK switch and signal failures also caused problems for SEPTA. On Monday, January 7, a switch failure at "Phil" interlocking on the Northeast Corridor delayed a number of R1 Airport and R2 Wilmington trains. At least four R1 trains had to be rerouted over the little-used Escape Track from the Airport Line to bypass the problem area. One Monday the 14th vandals cut signal cables at "Clearfield" interlocking near North Philadelphia station, delaying Amtrak service and a host of R7 Trenton trains. Two days later, on the evening of Wednesday the 16th, "Frazer" interlocking became disabled, delaying two R5 Thorndale trains.

Errant automobiles also caused some anxiety. On Wednesday evening, December 26, an auto became stuck on the tracks at the Turner Road crossing in Wallingford, delaying two R3 Media-Elwyn trains. Fortunately, northbound train #394 was able to stop before striking the car. On Friday, January 11, an auto somehow ran onto the AMTRAK mainline at Cornwells Heights station, blocking #1 and 2 tracks. It took more than an hour to remove the vehicle, during which time two Amtrak trains and five R7 trains were delayed and #772 from Trenton had to be annulled. Then, on the night of Sunday the 13th another auto became stuck at the River Road crossing in Miquon, delaying R6 train #6637 for 16 minutes. A switch failure at "Wayne" interlocking in North Philadelphia early on Friday, January 4, resulted in a host of delays, and on the afternoon of Wednesday the 2nd a brief power failure on the ramp near Suburban Station and another in North Philadelphia delayed several trains. During the afternoon of Friday, December 28, vandalism to a hand-operated switch was reported at the "Drive" crossover near Wissahickon on the R6 Norristown Line, and 45 minutes later a pile of cinder blocks and bricks was found on the #1 track just north of the East Falls station and removed. Unidentified teenagers were seen in the area.



The threat of a first-ever strike against AMTRAK ended last month with the announcement of an agreement between the railroad and the leaders of nine of its unions. The strike could have begun as early as January 30, and not only would have shut down Amtrak service but also have had a devastating effect on commuter agencies such as SEPTA which operate over Amtrak's

railroad. The agreement is said to mirror the recommendations of the Presidential Emergency Board which was convened last fall in accordance with the provisions of the Railway Labor Act—recommendations which gave the unions much of what they had been seeking in the way of retroactive wage increases and retention of work rules. The wage and healthcare package demanded by the unions is similar to that already agreed to by the Class 1 freight railroads.

Some 10,000 hourly employees had been working without a contract for the past eight years while protracted negotiations were carried on. But once the labor organizations were released from mediation last November they threw down the gauntlet and said they were prepared to walk out. (Actually, the new agreement is tentative, because it still must be ratified by the rank-and-file members themselves.) Funding the settlement—which will give the employees an average 35-percent pay increase over the life of the contract from January 2000 through the end of next year—will cost AMTRAK an estimated \$150 million. Several other unions already had settled with the carrier.

In line with its policy of publishing four timetables each year, AMTRAK issued the winter edition of its system timetable effective January 21. The cover of the 128-page timetable features a night color photo of downtown Seattle with King Street station and three Cascade trains in the foreground. In our area, some adjustments have been made to Northeast Corridor schedules and the northbound Silver Meteor and Silver Star now run on later schedules. The new timetable will be in effect through April 6.....Before his term expired late last year, former AMTRAK Chairman David Laney told the Associated Press that "probably some people [in the White House] think I should have wiped Amtrak off the map, but that wasn't my job." A Bush appointee, Laney also said that he had considered an Administration proposal to separate the Northeast Corridor from the rest of Amtrak, but this "didn't make sense and it's doubtful anyone could run it better than Amtrak" (Trainorders.com)Those impressive posters depicting the history of 30th Street Station and that area of the City have been on display near the ticket windows for some time, but if you haven't seen them it might be worth your while to take a look.



CSX,
NS,
OTHER ROADS

NORFOLK SOUTHERN has reported record net income of \$399 million for the fourth quarter of 2007, while net income for the full year 2007 of \$1.5 billion was down one percent from the previous year. Railway operating revenues for 2007 rose to \$9.4 billion although traffic volume declined by four percent. For the full year, the operating ratio of 72.6 percent represented a slight improvement over 2006.....The Surface Transportation Board reports that NS had the best return on investment (ROI) of any Class 1 railroad during the 12 months ended last September 30. NS's ROI of 14.16 percent was up from 13.7 percent in the previous year, besting CSX (8.06 percent) and all other major U.S. roads (*Railway Age*).....An *Inquirer* article published on January 16 explains how the rising

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price of diesel fuel is hitting the trucking industry hard. Railroads have an advantage here because of their greater efficiency in terms of ton-miles hauled. NS is specifically cited for developing a system called LEADER (Locomotive Engineer Assist Display Event Recorder) which helps the engineer determine the most fuel-efficient throttle settings.

CSX also had a good fourth quarter with net income of \$365 million. Full-year earnings were \$2.2 billion and operating revenues broke the \$10-billion mark for the first time. CSX didn't reveal precisely its 2007 operating ratio, except to say that it was in the mid-to-low 70's and was the best in a decade.....CSX is still battling the TCI hedge fund and its new ally, 3G Capital Partners, which are mounting a proxy fight to elect five directors to the CSX board (see January *Cinders*). The consortium collectively owns 8.3 percent of CSX's outstanding common stock (*Traffic World*). Many industry observers are deeply suspicious of the motives behind this effort and feel it should be resisted for the good of the railroad industry. In its December issue, *Railway Age* ran an editorial headlined "Take your hedge fund and shove it"NS announced that it will spend \$1.425 billion this year on capital improvements, a six-percent increase over the \$1.34 billion invested in 2007, which will include \$119 million for locomotives. CSX has not yet announced its capital plans.

CSX will receive a \$3.33-million grant from PennDOT to help improve clearances at 16 locations on its mainlines so that double-stack container trains can directly access Philadelphia (Harrisburg Chapter).....The Federal Railroad Administration last month announced that it will fine CSX nearly \$350,000 for some 200 safety violations uncovered in an FRA inspection blitz early last year (*Traffic World*).....CSX suffered another serious accident on January 22 when intermodal train Q117 enroute from Boston to Chicago derailed 13 cars at Canastota, NY, only five miles from the scene of the major derailment and fire on March 12, 2007 near Oneida that blocked the ex-CONRAIL Water Level Route for a week. The Canastota wreck was much less severe and there were no injuries and no fire. A few freights were detoured and AMTRAK was forced to bus passengers between Albany-Rensselaer and Syracuse until one track was reopened the next day (Trainorders.com).

NJ TRANSIT has ordered 27 more ALP-46 electric locomotives from Bombardier at a cost of \$244.6 million, with delivery to begin in 2010. They will be essentially identical to the 29 existing ALP-46's from Bombardier, and will bring NJT's fleet of electric units to 88 including the 32 older ALP-44's. With 234 new multi-level coaches in service or on order, NJT obviously feels the need for more electric locomotives, as it already has decided to overhaul 20 of its original ALP-44's delivered in 1989 and 1995.

Substantially higher investments in highway and railroad infrastructure was a principal recommendation of the National Surface Transportation Policy & Revenue Commission, whose report was released last month. The Commission was created by Congress two years ago to provide guidance for enacting a new transportation reauthorization bill due next year, when the present Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA) expires. The report states that the U.S. should be investing anywhere from \$225 billion to

\$340 billion each year in its transportation infrastructure but that "we are currently spending less than 40 percent of that." One member stated that America is "investing in the transportation system at the same rate as a third-world nation." Among the Commission's recommendations are a 25-cent to 40-cent per gallon increase in the Federal gas tax over five years, the creation of public/private partnerships to operate major highways and the use of so-called congestion pricing in major cities.

Also recommended in the Commission's report is a streamlining of the Department of Transportation, reducing the agency's 108 current programs into ten new ones. These would include "Rebuilding America: A national asset management program," "Congestion Relief: A program to improve urban mobility" and "Intercity Passenger Rail: A program to serve high-growth areas by rail." Passenger rail service is vital to the nation's future, the report said, as is rail freight, but a tax should be imposed on interstate freight shipments while railroads are made eligible for capital funding for projects with a public benefit. Ten of the 12 Commission members testified before Congress last month to support their findings, but DOT Secretary Mary Peters, a Bush appointee who served as chairwoman, refused to sign the final document and did not testify. On January 19, a bipartisan group of political leaders, including New York City Mayor Bloomberg, Pennsylvania Governor Rendell and California Governor Schwarzenegger, met in Los Angeles to unveil a new "Building America's Future" campaign. The effort is intended to make the infrastructure crisis an issue in this year's presidential election (*Traffic World*, NARP).

The headline on a lead article in the January issue of *Railway Age* reads: "Bye-bye Bush-League transportation?" The article goes on to speculate that a shift in power in the White House next year "could mean more dollars flowing into passenger rail coffers".....The year 2007 marked the end of a long period of growing rail freight volume in the U.S. As the economic slowdown took hold, freight shipments fell 2.3 percent from the 2006 level, with carloads off 2.5 percent to 16.95 million units and intermodal down 2.1 percent to 12.0 million trailers and containers, according to figures from the Association of American Railroads. Among the obvious losers were automobiles and building products, but even shipments of such industrial-use commodities as chemicals were affected (*Traffic World*)The United Transportation Union and more than 30 freight railroads last month reached a tentative agreement on a new contract, retroactive to January 1, 2005. With this agreement, the major U.S. railroads will have concluded negotiations with unions representing 95 percent of all their unionized workers (*Trains*).

Have you noticed that a new 2007 U.S. 25-cent coin honors the State of Utah, with a scene of the two famous locomotives meeting at Promontory in 1869 and the golden spike?The Artrain, which has traveled by rail since 1973 bringing displays of art to cities and towns around the nation, has decided to switch to trucks. This will give the Michigan-based organization a "chance to reach more communities" (*Weekly Rail Review*).....The READING & NORTHERN once again has received a grant from the State, this time for \$2.5 million to construct a new bridge over the Lehigh River at Jim Thorpe. The bridge will allow head-on moves between R&N's Lehigh and Reading Divisions (Harrisburg Chapter).....Chester County officials said last month that they fully intend to complete the Chester Valley hiking and biking trail, which will

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ODDS AND ENDS.....by Roy L. Hudson

(This column will appear from time to time to provide *Cinders* readers with some hopefully interesting, yet useful information which has been gathered from miscellaneous sources).

On January 25, 1890, New York World reported Nellie Bly completed her trip around the World on its 72nd day. She became world-famous and later, even the mighty Pennsylvania Railroad named one of its New York-Atlantic City trains after her (*History Channel Magazine*).....On April 25, 1937, the PRR established Trains #48 and #49, **The General** between New York and Chicago. The trains were named in honor of former PRR President W. W. Atterbury. He reorganized the PRR's vast system on lines of the military, bought a fleet of more than 300 Class M1 4-8-2 locomotives and carried out the New York-Washington electrification project (Bert Pennypacker)....."The Pennsylvania RR freight trains you have passed on this trip are some of the more than 1,200 scheduled trains which operate every 24 hours over 24,000 miles of track. Huge quantities of perishable foodstuffs are speeded from farms to markets in which 40% of the population of the United States lives and works" (on the back of a PRR New York-Washington menu, circa 1960).

The passenger and freight station of the Pennsylvania Railroad at Atglen, PA was entered on the night of November 1 by burglars, who blew open a window in the waiting room and also the ticket office door. The explosion broke all the windows and lamps in the building, split doors and desks, and made the building a wreck. Valuable papers were destroyed. The thieves did not get much of monetary value! (Rick Bates/*Railway Gazette*, 1892).....Is this a record? The most countries traveled through by train in 24 hours – On May 1-2, 1993, Alison and Ian Bailey and friends trained through eleven (11) countries: Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, France, Luxembourg, Belgium and, 22 hours later, in the Netherlands (*Guinness Book of World Records*).....The United States Mint has been producing "state" quarters for several years now. The Utah coin, issued in late 2007, shows the driving of the Golden Spike with steam locomotives which makes it the first U.S. coin showing a train or locomotives (CRRofNJ Historical Society).

Freight Car America is closing its carbuilding facility in Johnstown, PA, which employs 390 people. FCA will continue its manufacturing capacity at its other two plants in Danville, IL and Roanoke, VA (*High Green*).....With over 100 years of serving the railroad industry, operating Car & Foundry is North America's oldest continuously operating manufacturer of railcars. They have a number of plants around the country, including the original site at Berwick, PA that makes tank cars and covered hoppers (*Encyclopedia of American Railroads*).....John Travolta and Denzel Washington will be at odds in the remake of the 1974 subway hijacking film *The Taking of Pelham 123*. Look for the new edition in theaters in 2008-09 (*Laurel Lines*).....If you drive Pennsylvania Route 6 from one end to the other, you can dine graciously at sixteen (16) roadside diners. Most were built in the 1940's and 1950's by the typical highway manufacturers (Mountain View, Silk City, etc.), but the Crossroads Diner (that's right, spelled with an "o") in Edinboro, PA is the masterpiece. It is a former trolley built by the Niles Car Company (1901-1917). (Roy).

The Reading Company Technical & Historical Society is in the process of arranging trips on the Reading & Northern's Schuylkill

The West Chester Street Railway Company

(A 1924 Roy L. Hudson Snapshot)

prepared by R. L. Eastwood, Jr.

President – Charles B. Cooke, Jr. (Philadelphia, PA)

Vice President – Colonel A. M. Holding (West Chester, PA)

Office – 14 S High Street, West Chester

Shops/Barn – West Chester

Miles of Line – 37 (West Chester-Coatesville-Kennett Square)

Connections – West Chester (Phila. & West Chester Traction)
Coatesville (Conestoga Traction)

Gauge – 5' 2-1/2"

Cars – 13 passenger motors

Fare – 7 cents or 16 rides for \$1.00

Amusement Park – Lenape Park (with short spur track to
The Reading's Lenape station on the
Wilmington & Northern Branch

Last Day of Operation – November 30, 1929

Division to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the P&R in 2008. Meanwhile, the Berks County Historical Society would like to run a mainline excursion between Reading and Philadelphia to celebrate the event. We also learn that a new ½-mile trail has opened in Ephrata on the former Reading & Columbia Branch of the RDG. Also, BARTA, owner of the RDG Franklin Street Station in downtown Reading, has received \$1.2 million to renovate the almost 80-year-old former bus/rail depot (*The Crusader*).....Bound for Baltimore! Two ex-Baltimore & Ohio Budd RDC's have languished on a storage track at CSX's Brunswick (MD) yard for more than ten years. Maryland's MARC has now donated them to the B&O Museum, and by the time you read this, they may well be in Baltimore (*High Green*).....In 2007, the Middletown & Hummelstown Railroad ran trips for members of "TRAIN" (The Tourist Railroad Association). They operated ex-Canadian National steamer #91, Alco T6 diesel #106 and M&H trolley #441 made its first run. This puts the M&H in a rather small group of operators that can offer, steam, diesel and traction trips (*Harrisburg Rail Review*).

The writer says the last regularly-scheduled steam-powered passenger trains in the United States were run on March 29, 1960 and they were operated by Canadian Pacific 2-8-2 #5107 on Mixed Trains M517/M518 ("scoots") that operated between Brownville Junction, ME and Megantic, Quebec (Kevin Holland).....Infrequent Service Department: In 1944, the *Official Guide* shows Canadian Pacific's Timetable #88 with Train #462 operating between North Battleford and Ravenhead, Sask. on the second Friday of each month with #455 returning the following Saturday. If you miss the train it's only a 30-day or so wait!! (A. C. Kalmbach).....During June, 2007, a great day came for Dobein, Germany. The City Horse Tram began operation, the first in Germany since 1933, when the last closed at Stadshagen, near Hannover. The eco-friendly line uses no diesel or electric power, and the "road apples" can be used in the garden!!! (Les Dean).

Extra List

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MARCH 15: Annual Canal History & Technology Symposium at Lafayette College, Easton, PA, sponsored by National Canal Museum. Panel of speakers will present programs on historic canal and bridge subjects. Advance registration (by March 3) \$60 per person, which includes continental breakfast, buffet lunch and copy of the proceedings. Send check to: National Canal Museum, 30 Centre Square, Easton, PA 18042-7743. For information, telephone 610-559-6616.

MARCH 29: EastRail 2008 slide and video multi-media show at Warren Hills Regional High School, 41 Jackson Valley Road, Washington, NJ, sponsored by United Railroad Historical Society. Admission: adults \$12 in advance or \$15 at door, children under 12 \$8 in advance or \$10 at door. For tickets, write URHS, 36 Banstead Way, Jackson, NJ 08527-4495, making checks payable to URHS. For information, visit website www.urhs.org.

APRIL 5: Reading Company Technical & Historical Society 3rd Annual Convention, Leesport, PA Fire Hall. Details in March *Cinders*.

APRIL 6: Reading Company Technical & Historical Society Train Meet, 9 AM-3 PM at Leesport Farmer's Market, Route 61, Leesport, PA. Adult admission: \$4.00, children age 12 and under free with an adult admission. Vendor tables \$20, which includes one adult admission. For additional information, contact Dale at 610-372-3759, or write: RCT&HS, P. O. Box 15143, Reading, PA 19612-5143.

APRIL 12: Dedication of Reading Railroad Heritage Museum at Hamburg, PA. Details in March *Cinders*.

THROUGH MAY 4, 2008: "Spanning Centuries: Railroad Bridges of Pennsylvania" exhibit at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, including historic photos, blueprints and artifacts. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628 (website: www.railroadmuseumpa.org).

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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follow 11.5 miles of an abandoned Reading branch between Exton and King of Prussia. According to an *Inquirer* report, construction of the \$16-million paved trail should begin within a year. To date, only two short segments have been completed. Montgomery County likewise is working on plans for a four-mile, \$7-million extension linking King of Prussia with the existing Schuylkill River Trail in Norristown.

NRHS National Address Change

Effective February 1, 2008, all mail addressed to the NRHS National office must be mailed to:

National Railway Historical Society
100 N. 20th Street, 4th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1443

Please note this change on your files.

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