



CINDERS



SEPTEMBER 2008

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Volume 69

Number 8

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

Television Alert!!

It is reported that ABC's "Good Morning America" television show (Channel 6 in Philadelphia) will feature a railroad theme, starting Monday, September 15, 2008. The show airs weekdays from 7 to 9 AM.

MEETING NOTICE:

FRIDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 19, 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 September 19, 2008 program will feature a PowerPoint presentation by Editor Larry Eastwood on **Market Street Subway-Elevated Centennial, 1907-2007**. Larry and fellow Chapter members John Calnan and Harry Garforth worked on the creation of the PowerPoint, which was presented to a local civic group during 2007. Come out, and see what went into the historical preparation for the Market Street event.

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, SEPTEMBER 16, 2008 to National Director Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769.** The menu for the September dinner will be choice of maple bourbon chicken, garlic mashed potatoes or tortilla crusted filet of fish, rice pilaf, served with sautéed green beans. Dessert will be chocolate cake with raspberry sauce. Rolls and butter, plus coffee and tea complete the meal. Why not come out for dinner before our meeting. It's an enjoyable full meal, plus informal and interesting conversation, plus it's priced at only \$20.00 per person. Try it!!

Come out and start the meeting year off with a friend and introduce them to Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS.

November 1 Strasburg Ramble Plans Advance; Tickets on Sale

Plans have been slowly advancing for the proposed Strasburg Rail Ramble with former Reading FP7's #902 and 903, scheduled for Saturday, November 1, 2008.

Sponsored by the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society, with Philadelphia Chapter assistance, the trip will be very similar to the highly successful trip operated by Philadelphia and Lancaster Chapters on September 8, 2001.

The trip is scheduled to leave 30th Street Station (Upper Level) at 9:00 AM, making a passenger stop at Paoli at 9:30 for the benefit of suburban riders. The trip should arrive at East Strasburg on the Strasburg Rail Road at about 11:00 AM. The train is expected to return to Paoli about 4:30 PM, and 30th Street at 5:00.

The train will consist of the two FP7's, a SEPTA RL1 locomotive for head-end power, and five SEPTA Bombardier push-pull coaches.

Tickets for the trip are \$95 for adults, and \$65 for children 12 and under, and the ticket includes admission to the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, immediately across Route 741 from the Strasburg Rail Road complex. VISA and MasterCard will be accepted for ticket purchase, and all tickets will be sold through the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society. Deadline for mail order tickets is October 20, 2008.

A trip flyer will be found on Page 9 of this issue of *Cinders*. Before the cold winter weather sets in, take advantage of this opportunity to ride behind the 903 and 902 and enjoy a day in the Pennsylvania Dutch Country at Strasburg.



**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.

NRHS Making Plans for 2009 Dues Renewal - Will It Work??

NRHS, through its management contractor, Fernley & Fernley, of Philadelphia, has issued its timetable for the preparation and issuance of 2009 dues bills for the Society and its Chapters. F&F's timetable for issuance of individual chapter rosters to membership contacts was August 18. While the E-mail forwarding the rosters was dated as above, Philadelphia Chapter's did not arrive until the week of August 25. F&F's E-mail server had been known to have some difficulty in their transmissions.

Of about 440 dues bills for 2008 issued by a third-party contractor to Fernley & Fernley, more than 25 were never received by Philadelphia Chapter members, for which there has been no explanation. Accordingly, we have requested of NRHS management that Philadelphia Chapter's dues bills for 2009 be delivered to us in bulk and we will handle their mailing to insure that we may verify them. Our request to NRHS was dated August 12, and as of September 1, we have received no response.

According to the schedule we have been provided, the third party contractor who is to print and mail the bills will drop them into the Postal Service mailstream on Friday, October 3.

As of the week of August 25, Philadelphia Chapter was still receiving a trickle of 2008 renewals, with a number of members chagrined at receiving "Past Due" notices when they never received the initial dues bill last Fall.

There is, too, turmoil at the National level. Ontario & Western Chapter, a loyal NRHS chapter since 1963 (45 years!) has withdrawn from NRHS. In August, Little Rock Chapter (a.k.a. Arkansas Railroad Club) distributed ballots to its members asking if the Chapter, affiliated with NRHS since 1969 (39 years), should remain part of the Society. Another 11 smaller chapters have been placed on inactive status due to insufficient membership. As these events unfold, it is feared that NRHS will become the victim of the "domino effect", with other chapters dropping out.

We will keep you advised in the October issue of any progress in the 2009 renewal process.

JOSEPH H. GILLIES August 4, 2008

It is with regret that we inform you of the passing of longtime NRHS member Joseph H. Gillies, of Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania on August 4, 2008.

Mr. Gillies had been a member of the Society since the year 1955, and while it is believed he did not attend our Chapter meetings, he nevertheless remained a faithful member for more than 50 years.

Joseph was survived by his wife, Rose, three daughters, six grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Services were private.

We extend our condolences to Joseph's family.

RALPH E. STEVENS, JR. August 23, 2008

It is with regret that we inform you of the sudden passing of Chapter-only member Ralph E. Stevens, Jr., of Wilmington, Delaware, on Saturday, August 23, 2008 at Wilmington Hospital. Ralph was 62 years of age.

Ralph's primary NRHS membership was through Wilmington Chapter and he also belonged to our Chapter for quite a number of years. Ralph was retired from the U. S. Postal Service and was a U. S. Air Force veteran. He held numerous other railway association memberships.

Ralph had an extended family, mostly in the Wilmington area. Funeral services and interment were held at Gracelawn Memorial Park in New Castle, DE on August 28.

We extend our condolences to Ralph's family.

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.



**SEPTA
TRANSIT**

SEPTA last month unveiled the “largest expansion of public transportation in its history.” It listed 65 individual initiatives designed to expand or enhance its services, as referred to in the \$1.095-billion operating budget for Fiscal Year 2009 approved by the SEPTA board in June (see July *Cinders*). The new initiatives, which will cost an estimated \$10 million annually, include more frequent service, additional peak, off-peak and weekend service and new Friday/Saturday late-night trains on the Regional Rail system. Twenty-six of the changes are aimed at reducing overcrowding on bus routes, such as assigning larger 60-foot articulated buses to Route 14 along Roosevelt Blvd. The addition of 100 new fuel-efficient hybrid buses over the next few months will allow increased peak-hour service on ten routes to help alleviate overcrowding. Service also will be enhanced on 12 other lines, and Route 201 which connects with the R5 rail line at Fort Washington station will see 14 new weekday round-trips. These improvements will be implemented on various dates between August 25 and November 3.

The impetus for this expansion of service is the upsurge in ridership which SEPTA has experienced over the past year (see August *Cinders*). Said General Manager Joseph M. Casey, “We need to respond to increased ridership and other customer needs.” He credited the State Legislature’s action last year in approving Act 44, which for the first time gives transit agencies in Pennsylvania a permanent and predictable source of funding. “We again express our appreciation to the many citizens and legislators who championed this historic legislation, and especially Governor Rendell, who made it a top priority and fought hard to assure its enactment.” During Fiscal Year 2008 ended June 30 SEPTA’s ridership grew by approximately 38,000 daily trips—25,000 of them by transit riders and 13,000 by new Regional Rail customers. To accommodate this growth, SEPTA plans to hire 184 new employees—bus and rail operators, mechanics, cleaners and customer-service agents—in this fiscal year.

The last extended shutdown of the Market Street el ended on August 25, with all of the new guideway now in place between 46th Street and the end of the structure near 63rd Street. But weekend service outages will resume September 12-15 with shuttle buses again operating between 69th Street Terminal and the 40th Street subway station. The \$710-million el project, already two years behind schedule due to contractor-related and other problems, is due for completion next year. SEPTA has applied full-wrap Nestea ads to at least two Market-Frankford el cars. This follows the full wraps on Kawasaki trolleys #9079 and 9081 advertising a recycling campaign (SEPTA Watch, *Railpace*). Those 38 new trackless trolleys being placed in service on three routes out of Frankford depot are equipped with diesel-powered generators for emergency off-wire

operation. The original proposal was for off-wire operations to be battery-powered.

In July SEPTA’s new communications-based train control (CBTC) system in the subway-surface tunnel was activated on a round-the-clock basis (see July *Cinders*). The impetus to do this may have been the rear-end collision between three trolleys at the Juniper Street station on July 22, which probably would have been avoided had CBTC been in service at that time. The system—which electronically controls the speed and spacing of cars—had been operational much of the time but not continuously. SEPTA is looking to set up a new “Bus View” display on its website, similar to the existing “Train View” which allows customers to check the on-time status of their Regional Rail trains. SEPTA is budgeting \$100-million for renovating the dingy City Hall station on the Broad Street subway and the 15th Street station on the Market-Frankford Line. Some design work has been done, but actual construction probably will not begin until 2010. Nearly 60,000 passengers use the two stations each weekday.

An inbound Route 101 trolley was struck by a falling tree about 9 AM on Thursday, July 31, near Thomson Avenue in Springfield. Kawasaki car #127 suffered a cracked windshield, and five of the 20 passengers on board were treated for minor injuries. The overhead wire also was knocked down, forcing SEPTA to operate shuttle buses between Media and Woodland Avenue station until repairs were made. SEPTA ran only local service on the Route 100 Norristown High Speed Line on the morning of Friday, August 15, due to signal problems caused by overnight electrical storms. With the new Route 100-101-102 timetables effective August 25, SEPTA has reverted to picturing contemporary equipment on the covers, rather than the historic photos of recent issues. The rebuilding of Germantown Avenue between Allens Lane and Cresheim Valley Drive in Mount Airy is still in progress. Starting last January, PennDOT began restoring the street’s historic character, including replacement of the unused Route 23 trolley tracks and wires. Fortunately, the Trolley Car Diner, located in the midst of the construction zone, has managed to survive as attested to by this writer’s visit on August 27.

SEPTA’s proposed “smart” card for payment of fares (see December, March *Cinders*) is intended to be interchangeable with other transit systems, including PATCO and NJ TRANSIT. Creation of a so-called “contactless” card (which simply can be waved at the fare device) as part of a new fare collection system, is a top priority of General Manager Joseph Casey. Although a contract for the new system has not yet been awarded, it is hoped to have the state-of-the-art technology in place within two years. SEPTA conducted a two-week survey on “passenger etiquette” via its website last month. Over half of the respondents said that the conduct of their fellow passengers was “mixed, sometimes courteous and other times disruptive,” while by

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far their biggest gripe was passengers who carry on loud cell-phone conversations.....The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission will launch a campaign to promote older "inner-ring" suburbs, such as Lansdowne, Ambler and Collingswood, as good places to live. DVRPC has designated nine communities as the "Classic Towns of Greater Philadelphia," which offer many advantages over the newly-developed "exurbs" including public transportation. It is hoped that this effort—together with high fuel costs—will help slow suburban sprawl.

SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL



Regional Rail customers also will benefit from the major expansion in service which SEPTA announced last month (see above). With the September 7 timetable changes, new after-midnight service will be introduced on Friday and Saturday nights between center city and Malvern-Thorndale (R5), Norristown (R6) and Trenton (R7). A notable addition are the late-evening trains operating Friday and Saturday evenings from Trenton to Philadelphia, leaving Trenton Transit Center at 1:32 AM on Friday nights and at 1:47 AM on Saturday nights to accommodate NJ TRANSIT passengers from New York. One new late-night round-trip will run Fridays on the R5 West and two on Saturdays. One after-midnight train will operate between Norristown and center city on Fridays and two on Saturday nights for the convenience of restaurant and club-goers in Manayunk. Early-morning R5 train #514 will be extended west of Malvern, leaving Thorndale for Philadelphia each weekday at 4:55 AM. A later express also has been added, leaving Thorndale at 8:14 AM on weekdays and running non-stop from Bryn Mawr to 30th Street. Meanwhile one R5 push-pull set will be shifted temporarily to the R2 Warminster Line, becoming trains 6215 and 6246 until October 24. This will free up additional MU cars pending the addition of the eight Comet 1 cars newly-purchased from NJ TRANSIT (see August *Cinders*).

New timetables will be issued effective September 7 for the R2 Warminster, R5 Paoli-Thorndale, R5 Lansdale-Doylestown, R6 Norristown, R6 Cynwyd (September 8) and R7 Trenton-Chestnut Hill East lines......By reassigning equipment to where it is most needed and repairing some out-of-service cars, SEPTA has added 1,700 peak-hour seats to its Regional Rail trains since last December. The practice of "spinning" trains to close-in terminals for an extra trip—rather than shunting them to the yard for midday storage—is also a factor in increasing capacityThe Red Bull Soapbox Derby scheduled for Manayunk on Saturday, September 6, is expected to draw a large crowd. SEPTA will run six cars on some of its regular R6 Norristown trains to help meet demand.....The eight ex-NJT Comet 1 cars (plus an additional parts car) were to be delivered to SEPTA after Labor Day weekend. They will move to Frazer shop to be spruced up before entering service on the push-pull trains effective with the October 26 timetable change. The seats will be sent out to a contractor for refurbishingSEPTA plans to retire damaged Silverliner II's #264 and 9017 and Silverliner III #224.

The full-size Silverliner V mockup, bearing the number 701, was unloaded from a ship at Tioga Marine Terminal on August 20 and hauled to SEPTA's Liberty yard at Wayne Junction early on the 22nd. After being placed on trucks, it was moved to Wayne Electric shop for inspection, before going to Roberts yard for its unveiling to the press on September 10. It will be displayed at Suburban Station later in the month (see August *Cinders*). For photos of the car, visit the Chapter website at www.phillynrhs.comWhile much of the major work has been completed on the new "K" interlocking in West Philadelphia, some construction will continue into the fall. Half-hourly midday service is restored to the R5 Paoli-Thorndale line on weekdays effective September 8. However, trains on the R5 Paoli-Thorndale, R7 Trenton and R8 Chestnut Hill West lines will experience slow-going through the "K" area on seven weekends this month and in October, as some tracks will be out of service for construction. Work on AMTRAK's "Shore" interlocking at Frankford Junction also will affect R7 Trenton serviceSEPTA provided shuttle bus service for R8 passengers between Fox Chase and Fern Rock on Sunday, August 10, due to a track construction project.....SEPTA bused R5 passengers between Doylestown and DelVal College stations over the Labor Day weekend due to a bridge replacement project at the DelVal campus.

SEPTA had its share of operational problems last month—many of them occurring on AMTRAK rails. But there were two trespasser fatalities early in the month on SEPTA's own lines, the first late on Sunday, August 3, when Fox-Chase-bound R8 train #2866 struck a 16-year-old girl as she crossed the tracks near Lawndale station around 10:30 PM. Two nights later, about 10:25 PM on Tuesday the 5th, R3 train #393 ran over a 19-year-old Bristol man who was sitting on the track west of Langhorne station. Starting at 9:20 on Monday morning, August 11, a 25-minute power outage on Amtrak delayed numerous R1, R2, R5, R7 and R8 trains, as well as 15 Amtrak trains. On Tuesday the 19th a signal power failure between Woodbourne and West Trenton around 7 PM delayed several R3 trains from three to 33 minutes. Two mornings later a signal outage on the northbound #2 track between Jenkintown and Neshaminy delayed a few trains, but the signals were back in service by 8 AM.

Another of those unexplained low-voltage incidents on AMTRAK's Northeast and Keystone Corridors occurred on the morning of Monday, August 11. Numerous Amtrak, SEPTA and NJ TRANSIT trains were delayed until normal power was restored about 11 AM. Delays on SEPTA ranged as high as a half-hour or more and Amtrak fared no better. Corridor trains including Acelas were arriving at 30th Street 20-30 minutes behind schedule. At 5:15 PM on Wednesday, August 20, a fire was reported in a SEPTA electrical substation near Allen Lane on the R8 Chestnut Hill West Line. Amtrak had to de-energize the catenary and all service on the line was suspended. The fire was extinguished by 7:30 PM and power restored, with train #853 to Chestnut Hill the first to run through the area soon after 8 PM.

Problems on AMTRAK's Harrisburg line caused major delays on two mornings last month. Early on Tuesday, August 12, an Amtrak maintenance vehicle pulled down the catenary east of Frazer, causing delays to SEPTA's R5 rush-hour service of up to 30 minutes, as well as the annulment of push-pull train #7295 to Newark, DE, which deadheads out of Frazer yard. With all trains operating on a single track west of Paoli, the delays to both SEPTA

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and Amtrak trains lasted for four hours. Two weeks later, on Tuesday the 26th, the AEM-7 on #640, Amtrak's first morning train out of Harrisburg, suffered a road failure on #1 track near Exton at 6:15 AM. Passengers had to be transferred to SEPTA push-pull #5526 **Great Valley Flyer**, after which the disabled train was pulled into the clear by SEPTA's Frazer-based switcher #50. The #1 track was reopened by 8:30 AM, but in the meantime SEPTA had to reverse its R5 trains at "Frazer" interlocking to serve the stations from Malvern east. That same evening, a brief power outage on Amtrak's Northeast Corridor in Philadelphia and on the entire line to Harrisburg delayed six R5, R7 and R8 trains, as well as three Amtrak trains. The power failed at 8:35 PM but was restored after only seven minutes.

A huge trackside fire in Conshohocken on the afternoon of Wednesday, August 13, forced SEPTA to suspend service on part of its R6 Norristown Line for the rest of the day. Two buildings of the relatively-new Riverwalk at Millennium apartment complex were destroyed and two others severely damaged in the eight-alarm blaze, which was only a short distance from SEPTA's tracks. Soon after 5 PM SEPTA suspended service west of Miquon, where trains could turn back at the hand-operated "River" crossover. It is understood, however, that some trains were permitted to advance another mile and a half to Spring Mill station. Full service resumed the next morning with some slow running through Conshohocken as firefighters still worked to put out the last hotspots.

SEPTA is looking to change the design of its Regional Rail timetables next year, possibly using a map on the cover rather than the present photographs......*Railpace's* September issue contains an interesting article on SEPTA push-pull trains, including a number of excellent photos. But the issue is marred by a fuzzy, distorted telephoto on the cover, as well as by some factual errors and misspellings (e.g., "Nobel" station). Several of the train numbers and departure times said to be correct as of July 2008 are actually wrong.*Railpace* reports that Montgomery County has let a contract to remove rails and other track materials along 2.4 miles of SEPTA's long-idle Newtown Line north of Fox Chase. The right-of-way has been leased to the county for conversion into a multi-use trail (see February *Cinders*).....SEPTA is advertising for "expressions of interest" in purchasing its Silverliner II and III MU cars, which will become surplus after the new Silverliner V's are delivered beginning in late 2009.....Last month SEPTA received a \$500,000 Federal grant toward its long-planned Paoli Transportation Center. Congressmen Joe Sestak and Jim Gerlach presented the check in a ceremony at Paoli station on August 30.

SEPTA and NJ TRANSIT announced last month that they have begun selling tickets to stations on each other's lines. The expanded agreement permits SEPTA offices to sell tickets to many NJT stations, and NJT ticket offices and vending machines can sell tickets to all points on SEPTA's Regional Rail system, including Philadelphia International Airport. Examples of the joint fares are Philadelphia to New York \$20.50 and Paoli to Princeton \$14, but a change of trains at Trenton is still necessaryNarberth has installed Pennsy-style keystone-shaped signs around the perimeter of the town, which read "EST.

1895 - BOROUGH OF NARBERTH." They are painted bright red (not true to PRR) and cream (Wayne Bode)..... DVARP reports that PennDOT and Jenkintown Borough plan to replace the Greenwood Avenue overhead bridge at SEPTA's Jenkintown station, beginning in the fall of 2010. The year-long project will make it more difficult to reach the SEPTA parking lots.....Tredyffrin Township will install a pedestrian traffic light at the intersection of Old Eagle School Road and Strafford Avenue, adjacent to the R5 Strafford station. The busy intersection long has been a hazard for "herds" of SEPTA passengers trying to reach the station, according to a story in the local *Suburban & Wayne Times*.



**NORTHEAST
REGIONAL**

AMTRAK

In July AMTRAK set an all-time monthly ridership record, 2.75 million passengers, nearly 14 percent more than the previous July. It was highest number for any single month in Amtrak's 37-year history. Total ridership for the first ten months of Fiscal Year 2008 reached 23.7 million, topping the 21.3 million passengers from the same period last year. "Increasing fuel prices, highway congestion, airline issues and environmental awareness continue to make intercity passenger rail extremely relevant and popular," observed Amtrak President Alex Kummant. In this area, Acela Express service showed a 5.5-percent increase in July versus the same month a year ago, and ticket revenues in the Northeast Corridor climbed to \$79 million, up 16-percent. Ridership on Northeast Regional trains rose 8.8 percent in July, and New York-Philadelphia-Harrisburg Keystone Service experienced strong growth with a 26 percent increase in ridership, reaching 109,000 in July.....Updated figures from the U.S. Department of Energy show a 2.2-percent increase in AMTRAK's energy efficiency, making Amtrak 17.9-percent more efficient than airlines per passenger-mile (NARP).

The selection of Delaware Senator Joseph Biden as vice presidential running mate for Barack Obama could be a hopeful sign for AMTRAK. Both Obama and Biden have mentioned Amtrak in recent speeches and some call Biden "Amtrak's most famous passenger." He has long been known as a regular rail commuter between his home near Wilmington and Washington, DC, and many Amtrak employees and officials are said to be on a first-name basis with him. MSNBC conducted an interview with Biden on board an Acela train headed for Wilmington, calling him the "Amtrak Senator" (Trainorders.com)..... AMTRAK President Kummant told Bloomberg News last month that Acela service is "out of capacity." He said that additional Acela coaches need to be acquired, the cost of which possibly could be met by adding a \$1 surcharge to each Acela ticket (*Trains*) Kummant led off his column in the July-August issue of *AMTRAK Ink* by saying that "(n)ever in Amtrak's history have the stars been more aligned for passenger rail to flourish. Given the current climate, the prospects for passenger rail growth are excellent and it is up to us and policymakers to seize the opportunity."

In late July the Bush Administration released a transportation "reform" plan to outline its policy wishes prior to the expected reauthorization of surface transportation legislation next year. The plan makes no mention of AMTRAK or intercity passenger trains but, as noted Conservative and Transit Advocate

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Paul Weyrich has said, the views of the Bush DOT will not have much impact next year regardless of who wins the election (NARP).....Senate Majority Whip Richard Durbin of Illinois has introduced the "Train CARS Act," designed to provide immediate funding to AMTRAK for new rolling stock in order to meet growing demand. The bill would authorize Amtrak to issue \$2.8 billion in bonds over four years for the purchase of new equipment and a Federal matching grant program for states wishing to buy new cars. It would also create a Rolling Stock Trust Fund by dedicating a quarter-cent of existing Federal motor fuels taxes, raising about \$400 million annually. Existing retraining programs would be changed to help workers laid off from the automobile and aviation industries transfer into work relating to the "manufacturing, rehabilitation and maintenance" of passenger trains. Durbin also highlighted the need to quickly return damaged cars to service (NARP).

AMTRAK will begin a project to reconfigure "Shore" interlocking at Frankford Junction, which will have an effect on Amtrak and SEPTA Corridor services as well as NJ TRANSIT's Atlantic City trains. Presumably, NJT will contribute to the cost, since it is the primary beneficiary of the improvements. Speeding traffic through this junction will benefit the planned New York-Atlantic City "casino express" service, which must reverse directions at "Shore" (see March *Cinders*).....In its August issue *Railway Age Magazine* carried an article entitled "AMTRAK's NEC: Healthy hybrid," which described how a varied mixture of traffic is moved efficiently over the 457 miles of electrified Northeast Corridor between Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Washington. Nearly 2,000 trains—intercity, commuter and freight—compete for space each weekday on this very busy railroad. Amtrak owns 363 miles of the NEC, METRO-NORTH controls 56 miles and the State of Massachusetts owns 38 miles.

Thirty-Year Veteran Steve Alleman has been named as general superintendent of AMTRAK's Mid-Atlantic Division, which extends from Torresdale in Philadelphia to Washington, DC. His most recent position was as deputy chief engineer of construction. Alleman said that Mid-Atlantic will be the first division to install the new server-based CETC dispatching system, which will be more flexible than the existing 20-year-old CETC operation.....PennDOT and AMTRAK have launched a new website, www.catchthekeystone.com, as part of an expanded marketing campaign for the New York-Philadelphia-Harrisburg Keystone Service. Radio ads have been heard in the Philadelphia area and elsewhere promoting the recently-expanded service "Take the road less frazzled" is a new slogan for AMTRAK's Northeast Regional service..... AMTRAK has set back the date for the 100th anniversary celebration of Washington Union Station from September 27-28 to October 4-5, with several special activities planned (see August *Cinders*).Boston-to-Washington Regional train #169 was to terminate at Philadelphia early on September 7, due to work on the Susquehanna River bridge at Perryville, MD. Similar work will take place on other dates to be announced (NARP).

Tropical Storm Fay dumped up to two feet of rain on some parts of Florida last month, and played hob with AMTRAK service. Amtrak cancelled all Silver Service trains and the **Auto Train** originating both in the Northeast and in Florida on August

19, 20 and 21. When service resumed on Friday, August 22, it was fraught with delays. Train 92 **Silver Star** due to arrive 30th Street Station at 5:27 PM on Saturday the 23rd actually pulled in at 5:19 the next morning, almost 12 hours late, and #98 **Silver Meteor** due at 10 AM actually arrived at 12:13 AM the next day, 14 hours and 25 minutes late. Train 52 **Auto Train** due at the Lorton, VA, terminal at 9:30 AM Saturday arrived at 10:38 PM, over 13 hours late.....On August 29 AMTRAK announced that Train #19 the **Crescent** would be turned at Atlanta at least through September 4, as Hurricane Gustav bore down on the Gulf Coast. With memories still fresh of devastating Hurricane Katrina in August 2005, other Amtrak trains and many freight trains also were to be held out of the area.....The shutdown of GrandLuxe Limited tour train service last month (see below), would appear to force AMTRAK to cancel any plans for adding GrandLuxe cars to its long-distance trains this winterAMTRAK is teaming up with BayRunner Shuttle to provide Thruway bus service between BWI station near Baltimore and several towns on Maryland's Eastern Shore. There are seven daily departures in each direction.

AMTRAK President Alex Kummant told the *Wall Street Journal* last month that extending high-speed rail service to Richmond, VA, and North Carolina should have a higher priority than speeding up trains on the Northeast Corridor. The obstacles to 200-mph running on the Corridor are the ten commuter agencies and 50 freight trains that use the NEC daily, he said, not to mention the probable \$50 billion that it would cost. Some members of Congress have been pushing for the faster service between New York and Washington, but Kummant thinks the money would be better spent in creating new corridors nationwide or to expand existing corridors (*Trains*).....Acela train #2150 struck and killed an AMTRAK signal inspector near the New Carrollton (MD) station early on Wednesday, August 20Since 30th Street Station is considered a "high-risk" location, AMTRAK has set up a Station Action Team (SAT) there to handle crisis management in the event of an attack or natural disaster. There are nine other SAT stations, including Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Harrisburg, Los Angeles, New York, San Diego, Washington, DC, and Wilmington, DE What was that six-car Acela trainset (without power cars) doing in Penn Coach yard near 30th Street during the last two weeks of August?



**CSX,
NS,
OTHER ROADS**

In late July it was announced that four of the TCI hedge fund's candidates had been elected to the CSX board of directors (see August *Cinders* and previous issues). But two of the board seats apparently won by TCI at the CSX annual meeting on June 25 are still in play because of an appeal filed by CSX before a U.S. court of Appeals challenging the legitimacy of TCI's ownership of 6.4 percent of CSX's outstanding shares. A final decision is expected before CSX reconvenes its annual meeting September 24.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN's new system book of rules was placed in effect on the Harrisburg Division in July, replacing the NORAC rule book which it inherited from CONRAIL. But

(Continued on Page 7)

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

(Continued from Page 6)

NS crews still must observe the NORAC rules when operating on AMTRAK or SEPTA-owned rails.....Four NS business cars appeared at the Democratic National Convention in Denver last month, arriving in the same train with several BNSF office cars (Trainorders.com). Presumably, they were to head from Denver to St. Paul, MN, for the Republican convention starting September 1.....NS will send its famed F-units to Strasburg on September 27 for display at the Friends of the Railroad Museum's annual Members DayOn July 28 NS formally conveyed a 23-mile portion of the abandoned Enola branch to six townships in southern Lancaster County. This ends a protracted battle over the disposition of the line, which the county originally had wanted to convert into a hiking-biking trail. That plan met with spirited opposition from township residents.

PATCO fares will rise by ten percent effective September 14, following approval by the Delaware River Port Authority board last month. Round-trip tolls on DRPA's four bridges also will go up by \$1 to \$4, and a phaseout of the commuter discount will begin. Bridge tolls will rise by another dollar in September 2010 along with yet another ten-percent increase in PATCO fares. This is the first fare increase on PATCO since 2001, when a 16-percent hike went into effect. DRPA pledges that all funds realized from the increases will be spent on improvements to the bridges and PATCO facilities, including the rebuilding of its aging car fleet. In June 2008, PATCO ridership grew by ten percent over the previous June, to 867,000, while motor vehicle bridge crossings declined by 2.6 percent to 4.7 million.

NJ TRANSIT has ordered an additional 50 bi-level commuter rail cars from Bombardier, expanding the fleet to 329 cars. The shiny new bi-levels first entered service in December 2006 on the Northeast Corridor Line, replacing single-level Comet cars, but today 143 are in service on both diesel and electrically-powered routes. Riders like the bi-levels, especially for their 2-2 seating instead of the much-maligned 3-2 seating in the single-level cars (*Trains*).....NJT has ordered 26 dual-powered (diesel-AC catenary) locomotives from Bombardier, at a cost of \$310 million. These will be cutting-edge units, since until now no successful diesel-AC locomotive has been produced. The new units are intended to haul trains from non-electrified lines to Penn Station and eventually through the proposed Trans-Hudson Express tunnel into Manhattan. NJT also has 27 ALP46A electric locomotives on order (*Railway Age*)NJT wants to increase ridership at its "hidden jewel" station, Cherry Hill. About 20 new directional signs are being posted along major Camden and Burlington County roads pointing the way to the station. Cherry Hill now sees about 300 daily boardings.

GrandLuxe Rail Journeys suddenly went out of business in late August, apparently a victim of the declining economy. GrandLuxe had acquired its luxury passenger car fleet from the former American Orient Express (originally American European Express). It was uncertain whether persons who have already paid for future trips will get their money back (*Trains*)Bennett and Eric Levin took their private cars **Pennsylvania 120** and **Warrior Ridge** from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh and return on AMTRAK's **Pennsylvanian** August 9-11, as a charter for the Philadelphia Chapter PRRT&HS. The cars also are expected to operate Philadelphia-Pittsburgh October 18-20 for

the Erie Lackawanna Dining Car Preservation Society (see "Extra List"). Nothing has yet been announced regarding a possible repeat of the very-successful "Liberty Limiteds" which the Levins organized to bring wounded veterans from Washington, DC, to the Army-Navy football games in Philadelphia in 2005 and 2006. The game will return to Philadelphia this year.

The historic Valley Forge railroad station is being converted by the National Park Service into a museum dedicated to General George Washington. The station was built by the Reading in 1911.....Chapter Member Bob Clearfield has been re-elected chairman of SEPTA's Citizen Advisory CommitteeSteamtown National Historic Site has opened a new exhibit commemorating the ex-Lackawanna passenger station in Scranton, which now serves as a luxury Radisson Hotel.....Chapter Member Bill Vigrass authored a full-page article in the August issue of *Railway Age* on the need to create "A national system of interstate and defense railroads".....Former SEPTA PCC car #2739 that we said in July would be restored for service in Lancaster isn't going there after all. It was scrapped in Brooklyn before it could be moved. But the so-called "Lancaster Streetcar Company" now has purchased three ex-SEPTA PCC's from the Baltimore Streetcar Museum, one of which has gone to Warren, PA, for rebuilding (Harrisburg Chapter).

Former Philadelphia Chapter President Doug Watts is returning to Philadelphia! Doug resigned from CONRAIL in 1999 to take a transportation management job with BNSF RAILWAY in Fort Worth, TX, but recently asked to be assigned back to Philadelphia. Effective this month, Doug will become sales manager-industrial products for BNSF based locally. We hope to get him re-involved with Philadelphia ChapterThe large Regional Produce Market in South Philadelphia has finally found a new home. The *Inquirer* reports that the market will move to a new \$200-million State-subsidized facility on Essington Avenue, near Philadelphia International Airport. It was not mentioned whether the new site will have freight rail access off SEPTA's Airport Line, but it's likely market operators will insist on itMitchell's store near Wilmington, known for its well-stocked train hobby department, reportedly will close in October (Trainorders.com).

That long-neglected ex-Reading dining car #1186 parked at Broad & Noble Streets in Philadelphia may be saved after all. For years the old car appeared to be abandoned, but a recent visit reveals that it has been freshly painted in red, white and blue, all windows replaced, and construction materials can be seen inside, apparently confirming rumors that it may be restored as a diner or some sort of eatery. Parked on a disconnected siding off the Reading's abandoned City branch, the car sits across Broad Street from the Inquirer Building and the headquarters of the School District of Philadelphia. Efforts to move the car for preservation elsewhere were given up years ago as too costlyThe Lehigh Economic Development Corp. has set aside \$100,000 for a study to determine the feasibility of establishing rail commuter service between the Allentown-Bethlehem area and New York City. The study is expected to cost \$250,000. Oddly, nothing was mentioned about restoring rail service between the Lehigh Valley and Philadelphia, a much shorter distance (*Trains*).

NRHS Convention 2009
Duluth, MN - August 10-16



SEPTEMBER 12-14, 2008: Rail Photographer's Weekend on the Maine Eastern Railroad. Friday evening excursion, rare mileage trip Saturday, night photo session, special photo freight and other items Sunday. Price: \$199.00 per person. For complete information visit [website](http://www.maineeasternrailroad.com) www.maineeasternrailroad.com.

SEPTEMBER 27-28: Annual Railfan Weekend at New Hope & Ivyland Railroad, New Hope, PA, featuring excursions with 2-8-0 locomotive #40. For information, telephone NH&I at 215-862-2332 (website: www.newhoperrailroad.com).

SEPTEMBER 27-28: 60th anniversary event commemorating the end of Connecticut Company trolley service in New Haven, CT will be marked by Shore Line Trolley Museum at their location in East Haven, CT, 10:30 AM-4:30 PM. Display of New Haven trolleys, photos, movies and public operation of several Connecticut Company cars. Regular admission rates apply. For additional information, telephone 1-203-467-6927 or visit website: www.bera.org.

SEPTEMBER 28: Annual Train Show & Sale at Dieruff Senior High School, Irving & Washington Streets, Allentown, PA, 10 AM-4 PM, sponsored by Lehigh Valley Chapter, NRHS. Admission: \$3 per person. For information, telephone Pete Terp at 610-824-7730.

OCTOBER 4: Joint Shore Line Trolley Museum/New York Model Transit Association Mass Transit and Trolley Meet at Rutgers University Gym, New Brunswick, NJ, 9:30 AM-5 PM. Layouts, dealers, clinics, model contests. Admission: \$20, spouse and children under 18 free. Rutgers Gym accessible by NJ Transit to New Brunswick station and campus bus connection. For additional information, telephone 1-860-620-9118 or visit New York City Model Transit Association website for more info.

OCTOBER 4, 11, 19, 25: Excursions Scranton to Tobyhanna and return, departing Steamtown Station 11:00 AM, returning 3:00 PM. For fares and details, contact Steamtown National Historic Site at 1-570-340-5204 (9:30 AM-4:30 PM daily) or visit website: www.nps.gov/stea.

OCTOBER 5, 12, 18, 26: Excursions Scranton to Moscow, PA and return, departing Steamtown Station 1:00 PM, returning 3:00 PM. For fares and details, contact Steamtown National Historical Site at 1-570-340-5204 (9:30 AM-4:30 PM daily) or visit website: www.nps.gov/stea.

OCTOBER 11, 18: Steam excursions from Port Clinton to Jim Thorpe, PA and return via Reading & Northern Railroad, using recently-restored 4-6-2 #425. Special train leaves Port Clinton at 9 AM, returning about 6 PM, with a three-hour layover in Jim Thorpe. Coach fare: \$69 per person. Order tickets from: Reading & Northern Railroad, P. O. Box 218, Port Clinton, PA 19549-0218, making checks payable to the railroad, or purchase online at www.rbmnrr.com/passenger. For additional information, telephone 610-562-2102 between 9 AM and 5 PM weekdays.

OCTOBER 11-12: "Model Railroading Days" at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania and the National Toy Train Museum, Strasburg. Special one-day tickets good at both museums are available for adults 18 and over for \$10 and

youngsters (6-17) for \$6. Regular museum hours apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628.

OCTOBER 12, 19: Diesel-powered excursions from Port Clinton to Jim Thorpe, PA and return via Reading & Northern Railroad. Special train leaves Port Clinton at 9 AM, returning about 6 PM, with a three-hour layover in Jim Thorpe. Coach fare: \$39 per person. For ticket ordering information, see October 11 item above.

OCTOBER 18-20: Private car trip from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh and return using Bennett Levin's **Pennsylvania 120** and **Warrior Ridge**, sponsored by Erie Lackawanna Dining Car Preservation Society. Cars will be attached to Amtrak's **Pennsylvanian**, leaving 30th Street Station Saturday at 12:42 PM. Fare: \$785 per person, which includes rail fare, all meals on train and two nights (double occupancy) at Courtyard by Marriott Downtown in Pittsburgh. Reservations may be made by website www.eldcps.org. For information, telephone Barb Colangelo at 570-575-9202.

OCTOBER 19: Trackless trolley charter over SEPTA Routes 59, 66 and 75, using one of the new 800-series coaches, sponsored by Friends of Philadelphia Trolleys. Fare: \$35 per person. Excursion leaves SEPTA Frankford depot at 11 AM, returning about 3 PM. Order tickets from: Chuck Greene, 122 Biddle Drive, Exton, PA 19341-1706, making checks payable to "FPT, Inc." For further information, E-mail Harry Donahue at had2709@aol.com.

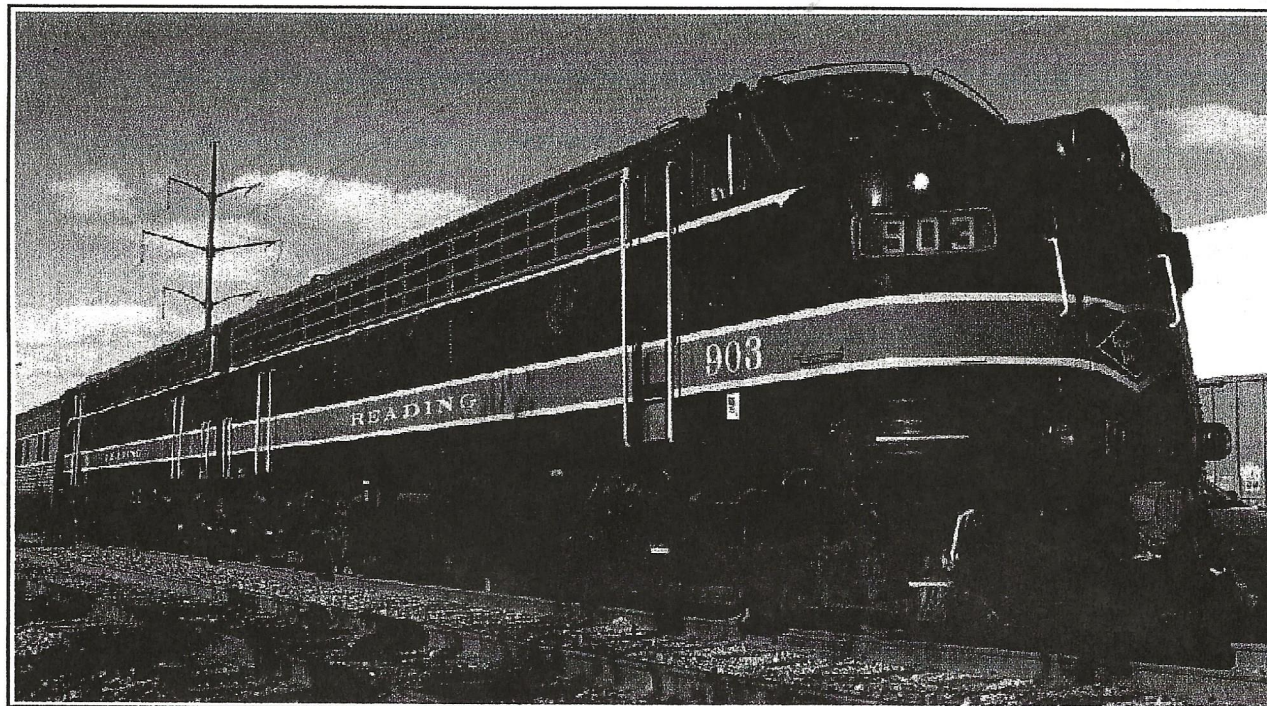
OCTOBER 27: NRHS Member Russ Jackson will present a slide program on the history of PATCO Transit, featuring the years 1968 and 1969, at regular monthly meeting of West Jersey Chapter, NRHS. The meeting begins at 7:30 PM, and is held at Haddonfield Borough Hall, 242 Kings Highway East in Haddonfield, NJ, several blocks east of the Haddonfield PATCO station.

NOVEMBER 1: Special train powered by ex-Reading FP7 locomotives from Philadelphia (30th Street Station) to Strasburg and return, via SEPTA, Amtrak and Strasburg Rail Road, sponsored by Reading Company T&HS and Philadelphia Chapter NRHS. Train leaves 30th Street at 9 AM, Paoli 9:30 AM, returning to 30th Street about 5 PM. See separate article and flyer elsewhere in this issue.

NOVEMBER 1: Rare mileage excursion over freight-only Housatonic Railroad from Danbury to Kent, CT and return, sponsored by Danbury Railway Museum. Two-hour stop in Kent to explore town. Metro North will be used. Train departs Danbury 10 AM, returns 4:30 PM. Tickets \$50 per person. Order tickets from website: www.danbury.org/drm or by phone at 1-203-778-8337 Tuesday-Saturday, 10 AM-5 PM, Sunday 12 Noon-5 PM.

OCTOBER 18: "Fall Circle Tour" special train over Providence & Worcester Railroad from Worcester, MA to Groton, CT, returning from Providence, RI to Worcester, using Amtrak Northeast Corridor between Gorton and Providence. Fare: \$79, children 12 and under, \$39. First Class accommodations subject to availability. Optional box lunch available for \$11. Special train leaves P&W headquarters, 75 Hammond St., South Worcester at 9:00 AM, returning at 5:30 PM. For tickets and information, contact Mass Bay RRE at P. O. Box 4245-BV, Andover, MA 01810-0814. Order form is posted on Mass Bay RRE website: www.massbayrre.org, or call 1-978-470-2066. (Cont. on P. 10)

READING FP7 RAMBLE



SATURDAY NOVEMBER 1, 2008

Philadelphia to the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania
at East Strasburg, PA

Departs Amtrak's 30th Street Station 9 am, Paoli 9:30 am
Returns to 30th Street 5 pm, Paoli 4:30 pm

Adults \$95, Children 12 and under \$65
Ticket price includes admission to the Railroad Museum
Air conditioned coaches

Ticket Orders: RCT&HS, P O Box 15143, Reading, PA 19612-5143

Name _____ Address _____ Phone _____

Number Adult tickets _____ @ \$95 Number Child tickets _____ @ \$65 Total \$ _____
Include a self address stamped envelope with check. Tickets are non-refundable Deadline for mail orders is October 20, 2008

Master Card/VISA Accepted Card # _____ Exp. Date Mo. _____ YR _____

Signature _____

Sponsored by the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society
Philadelphia Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society.

Extra List (Continued from Page 8)

NOVEMBER 20: Historian Donald S. Young will present a program on Bethlehem Steel Company and its railroads at the National Canal Museum, 30 Centre Square, Easton, PA, beginning at 7:30 PM. Admission is free. For information, telephone 610-559-6616.

THROUGH DECEMBER 31: "The Railroad Art of Ted Rose: A Retrospective" exhibit at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, featuring the watercolor paintings and photographs of the late Artist Ted Rose. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628.

THROUGH JANUARY 10, 2009: "All Aboard! The 175th Anniversary of the Reading Railroad" exhibit at the Historical Society of Berks County, 940 Centre Avenue, Reading, PA, sponsored by Norfolk Southern. A wide variety of photographs and artifacts from the Reading System will be on display. Hours: Tuesday through Saturday 9 AM-4 PM. Admission is free. For information, telephone 610-375-4375 (website: www.berkshistory.org).

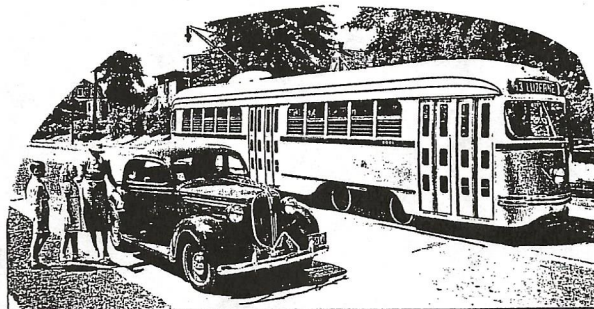
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ODDS AND ENDS

by Roy L. Hudson

does not appear in this issue of *Cinders* because of space considerations. It will return in the October, 2008 issue.



The drive to compete with automobiles in America took place and shape in the 1930s, when the presidents of transit companies in major cities met to discuss strategies to gain more riders after the Depression. The streamlined, comfortable design of Presidential Conference Cars (PCC) won over the Philadelphia public in droves. A combination of aircraft and train technology made them first-class vehicles. They debuted on the Route No. 53 Wayne Avenue line. (Courtesy of Malcolm Kates.)

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