



# CINDERS

**OCTOBER 2011**



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Newsletter of the  
**PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER**  
**NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**  
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## **Hurricane, Record Rain, Earthquake Batter Delaware Valley Region**

### *Rails, Highways, Airlines Hard Hit over Wide Area*

During August and September, while the southwestern U.S. continued to suffer through a crippling drought, the Northeast was deluged with record rainfalls. Twenty-five inches of rain were officially reported in Philadelphia between August 1 and September 15, and set 2011 on a course to smash the one-year record of 56.5 inches of precipitation set in 1996. An additional headache was the 5.8-magnitude earthquake that rippled up the Northeast Corridor just before 2 PM on Tuesday, August 23. While scary at the time, it actually caused very little serious damage in the Philadelphia area and now seems to have been a minor inconvenience as compared with the high winds and disastrous flooding that soon were to follow.

August was a particularly damp month, its most significant wind and rainfall event being the arrival of Hurricane Irene. Downgraded in wind speeds but still packing a violent punch, the storm traveled up the East Coast during the week of August 22, striking the Delaware Valley on Saturday and Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, then wreaking more havoc all the way up to Vermont. Rail service was disrupted over a wide area, as was highway and air travel. Less than two weeks later, on September 6-8, came the remnants of Tropical Storm Lee from the Gulf of Mexico, which gave Philadelphia a good dousing but caused much more serious flood damage in the Susquehanna Valley from Binghamton, NY, down through the Wilkes-Barre area, Sunbury, Harrisburg and south. One of Lee's local accomplishments, however, was to establish a Philadelphia rainfall record for Thursday, September 8, 3.65 inches, eclipsing the record of 2.94 inches set in 1929. Once again, Lee caused severe disruptions of travel in all modes.

Below is a summary of the transportation problems caused by natural events since mid-August.

**Sunday, August 21:** Heavy rain and thunderstorms in the afternoon and evening caused many delays on SEPTA Regional Rail. A downed tree blocking both tracks north of Somerton station was discovered about 3:30 PM, forcing two West Trenton trains to be terminated and holding up several others until the tree was removed two hours later. High water on the Chestnut Hill West and Warminster Lines also caused train cancellations and delays that afternoon. Airport Line service was affected as well. At 9:45 that evening a tree toppled onto West-Trenton-bound #4360, but the train was able to proceed after a half-hour delay.

**Tuesday, August 23:** The tremor that shook Philadelphia and the surrounding area at 1:51 PM originated in central Virginia, and was felt in 22 states from Georgia to northern New England. A fair amount of damage occurred in Washington, DC, where the Capitol, White House, Washington Monument and other government structures were evacuated. Some cracks were found in the Main Hall of Washington Union Station. Even though the earthquake was the strongest felt in Philadelphia in 114 years, it had little noticeable effect in the City other than rattling the nerves of thousands of people including those who poured out of center city office buildings. Amtrak, SEPTA, NJ Transit and PATCO suspended service for a time as track and structures had to be inspected. Philadelphia International Airport briefly halted takeoffs and landings as its control tower was temporarily closed, while area nuclear power plants activated their emergency response systems. Amtrak evacuated employees from its CETC control center high in 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station for about 25 minutes. There was little effect on highway traffic in the area and a few aftershocks that afternoon were barely felt.

By 3 PM most rail service had resumed on Amtrak and the commuter lines. SEPTA instructed its train crews to watch for track damage and imposed speed restrictions initially of 25 mph, then 50 mph. This caused five annulments and a long list of delays, some of them lengthy, but most service resumed once the

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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 and June), at Thomas Jefferson University Alumni Hall, 1020 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA. Check at Security Desk in Lobby for exact dinner and meeting room location. Dinner (optional) at 6:15 PM (\$20.00 per person), Meeting at 7:30 PM. No meeting July or August.

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES:** \$54.00 per person, which includes Chapter and National dues. Chapter-only dues \$18.00 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 a Chapter-only membership.

Individuals interested in supporting Philadelphia Chapter and its local rail preservation activities may become a part of Philadelphia Railfriends. This non-membership category is available for an annual contribution of \$25.00. Forward remittance, payable to "Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS" to the Chapter's P. O. Box above, indicating it is for "Philadelphia Railfriends".

**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 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. **EXCHANGE newsletters should be sent to:** R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Editor, P. O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353, or by electronic mail to [ayrestower@comcast.net](mailto:ayrestower@comcast.net).

If your *Cinders* is received damaged or incomplete, please contact the Editor at the address above to receive a replacement copy. Requests may also be made by telephone to 215-947-5769, or by E-mail to [ayrestower@comcast.net](mailto:ayrestower@comcast.net).

### Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS Board of Directors Meeting- Fall, 2011

**Tuesday, October 18, 2011  
7:00 PM to 8:30 PM**

**Passenger Services Conference Room  
Amtrak 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station**

**Members of Philadelphia Chapter are  
welcome and encouraged to attend**

### If your *Cinders* Arrives in Bad Condition

If your *Cinders* arrives damaged or with pages missing, contact Editor Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769 or [reastwood2@comcast.net](mailto:reastwood2@comcast.net) and a replacement copy will be promptly be sent to you.

### EARLY MEETING TIME ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21: 7:15 PM!!!!

## Meeting Notice

#### FRIDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 21, 2011

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 7:15 PM**

Parking in Wills Eye Hospital garage, 9<sup>th</sup> Street above Locust (\$6.00 after 6 PM), Parkway garage, also 9<sup>th</sup> above Locust (\$9.00 after 5 PM). There is a new underground garage directly across from the Jefferson Alumni Hall (entrance on 11<sup>th</sup> Street just above Locust) which is very handy. *(Please note that we are in the process of updating the garages and prices and this will be completed during the fall months.)*

Our October 21 meeting will feature the full-length Hollywood film, *Silver Streak*, starring Gene Wilder, Richard Pryor and Jill Clayburgh, and, more importantly, Budd-built **Canadian** equipment from the Canadian Pacific Railway. This 1976-vintage 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox film, ostensibly placed on "Amroad" between Los Angeles and Chicago, was actually mostly filmed in Canada, using CP branchlines in Ontario as well as Toronto's Union Station. CP Rail GMD FP7's #4070 and 4067 were the stars of *Silver Streak*, at least to the rail enthusiast community, and the film is overwhelmed with continuing rail operation. This is a don't miss film screening! **PLEASE NOTE THE EARLIER MEETING TIME - THERE WILL BE NO BUSINESS MEETING AS THIS FILM RUNS 1 HOUR, 54 MINUTES.**

The evening begins with our usual optional sit-down dinner in the Eakins Lounge, ground floor, Jefferson Alumni Hall, beginning at 6:15 PM, at a cost of \$20.00 per person. **DINNER RESERVATIONS ARE MANDATORY and MUST BE MADE BY TUESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 18, 2011 to National Director Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769.** The menu for the October 21 dinner was not available due to the early press deadline for this issue of *Cinders*. It will be placed on National Director Larry Eastwood's answering machine on Saturday, October 15, 2011. The Chapter needs to meet a minimum guarantee of 18 meals in order to provide a meeting room for members. Come out for dinner before our meeting. It's an enjoyable full-course meal, plus informal conversation, all priced at an affordable \$20.00 per person. Optional glasses of wine, \$2.00 each.

Looking forward, our meeting on Friday, November 18, 2011 will feature Roger Thorne, President of the Tredyffrin Easttown Historical Society, with a program on "Nazi POW's on PRR Trains Through Paoli" during the World War II years 1943-1945. You will not want to miss this historic program - mark your calendars now for November 18.



## Hurricane, Rain, Earthquake Batter Delaware Valley Region

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center city tunnel was reopened. Trains ran on the Market-Frankford Line and trolleys continued to operate after inspections were conducted, but Broad Street subway trains were turned back at Walnut-Locust station until the tunnel to AT&T station at Pattison Avenue was reopened. Amtrak that afternoon maintained service along the Northeast Corridor but speeds were reduced between Baltimore and Washington and diesel locomotives were added to some trains because of fears the electrical grid might fail. Many NEC trains were delayed and several trains operating between Washington, Richmond and Newport News, VA, were cancelled. Most NJT trains, light rail and bus lines continued to operate with delays, but PATCO did not resume service from Philadelphia until late afternoon.

Norfolk Southern and CSX sent out track inspection teams, with special attention to their lines in Virginia, but no serious damage was reported. The epicenter of the quake was about a half-mile below the surface near the small town of Mineral, VA, east of Charlottesville. The town is located on CSX's former Chesapeake & Ohio line between Doswell and Gordonsville, VA, now operated by the Buckingham Branch Railroad.

Saturday, August 27: By early evening Irene, the worst hurricane to strike the Philadelphia area since 1999, roared into Delaware, southeastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Anticipating high winds and heavy rains, residents of Philadelphia and surrounding counties had battened down—and they weren't disappointed. The storm, which already had caused severe damage along the coasts of North Carolina and Virginia, continued its path of destruction all the way up to Vermont, where highways and railroads suffered horrendous damage. Flooding conditions and power outages for hundreds of thousands of customers were widespread in the Philadelphia area, causing Peco to report that Irene was the third worst storm in the history of the utility.

Amtrak announced that it would shut down service on the Northeast Corridor at 5 PM on Saturday, and there would be no trains operated Sunday on any lines north of Jacksonville, FL, or east of Toledo, OH. Numerous Corridor and long-haul trains already had been cancelled during the day on Saturday. SEPTA—for the first time in its history—said it planned to suspend all rail and bus service by 12:30 AM Sunday, although most lines were shut down about two hours earlier in the face of tornado warnings. (One of the last trains running, #866 headed to Fox Chase, struck a downed tree at Lawndale just after 10:30. With extensive damage to the front car, the train was terminated and remaining passengers shuttled by auto to their stations.) NJ Transit cancelled all railroad service as of 12 Noon on Saturday, with light rail and bus service to end by 6 PM. PATCO said that no trains would leave the 16<sup>th</sup> & Locust station after 12:05 AM Sunday. Fortunately, the immediate impact of these shutdowns was lessened because the storm arrived on a weekend.

After the rain ended Sunday morning the high winds on the "back side" of Irene picked up in the afternoon, making recovery more difficult. Amtrak said that there would be no service Sunday on the NEC, while SEPTA workers struggled to resume some operations that day. Regional Rail remained closed but the Market-Frankford and Broad Street Lines began to run by 10 AM with some delays, and trolley service resumed slowly

during the morning along with some buses. NJT routes for the most part were still out of service although PATCO was operating normally. Many streets and highways were blocked by flooding as the Schuylkill River crested at 19.8 feet in Norristown and 13.6 feet in Philadelphia, with Conshohocken and Manayunk also taking a lot of water. Main Street in Manayunk and the river drives in Philadelphia were closed. CSX tracks along the river park in center city also were flooded, which is not unusual. (Of course, CSX can use the High Line as an alternate route.) The Airport remained closed in the morning but some arrivals began that afternoon. As the week went on, the Delaware River also caused serious flooding in Yardley, New Hope and other towns.

By Monday morning the 29<sup>th</sup> Amtrak was running a reduced service between Philadelphia and Washington but there were no Acela Expresses and no service whatsoever east of Philadelphia. By early Sunday at least four feet of water from the notoriously flood-prone Assunpink Creek had covered the tracks at Trenton station—making the right-of-way look like a river and impossible for Amtrak, SEPTA or NJT to resume service. In perhaps the biggest error in judgment during the emergency, SEPTA officials had decided that it was not necessary to evacuate a push-pull set consisting of one AEM-7 locomotive and seven cars which were stored over the weekend on #7 track at the station, or the five Silverliner IV MU's stored on #5 track. As a result, all of these cars were engulfed in floodwater nearly up to the floor level! (Four other MU's stored at a siding east of the station were not damaged.) In a public statement SEPTA later claimed that Amtrak's 5 PM shutdown and a signal failure prevented the cars from being moved to higher ground. Assistant General Manager Luther Diggs told the *Inquirer* that the loss of those cars "should be invisible to our passengers" because of the arrival of new Silverliner V's. On Tuesday the 30<sup>th</sup> SEPTA sent two diesel locomotives to Trenton to rescue the stranded equipment, but could not do so because of inoperative switches. The AEM-7 and cars were finally pulled back to Philadelphia later in the week. New York City, which was spared the severe flooding predicted earlier, had shut down its subway system entirely at noontime on Saturday, but reopened it at 6 AM Monday. NJT's River Line trains between Camden and Trenton were operating, except in the flooded area of Camden between Walter Rand Transportation Center and the riverfront, where shuttle buses were used. PATH service between New Jersey and New York resumed at 4 AM on Monday.

SEPTA did manage to restart train service Monday morning on all Regional Rail lines except for Paoli-Thorndale, Trenton, Manayunk-Norristown and Cynwyd (Norristown started up around 2 PM after floodwaters receded in the Conshohocken-Miquon area). Amtrak restored Keystone Service to Harrisburg at 2 PM Monday and trains #43-42 **Pennsylvanian** to and from Pittsburgh made their first post-storm trips on Tuesday. NJT's commuter trains remained parked on Monday except for the Atlantic City Line which was back in service, and the River Line and other light rails were operating on weekend schedules. On Tuesday morning SEPTA resumed service on the Paoli-Thorndale, Cynwyd and Trenton lines, the latter trains being turned back at Morrisville because of what SEPTA described as a "damaged signal house" at Trenton. Thus, passengers at all stations from Levittown west regained their service. (Beginning Thursday, September 1, shuttle bus service was provided between Trenton and Levittown but full SEPTA rail service to and from Trenton did not resume until Tuesday, September 6, the day after Labor Day.) As it had for several weeks previously, West Trenton service continued to be plagued with delays because of signal and switch problems on the CSX-owned portion of the line between Woodbourne and West Trenton. (Continued on Page 4)



## Hurricane, Rain, Earthquake Batter Delaware Valley Region

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On Tuesday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, Amtrak still was not running between Philadelphia and New York due to the track outage at Trenton and downed wires elsewhere, but was operating between Philadelphia and Washington and between New York and Boston. NJT Corridor trains from New York were terminating at New Brunswick although most of its other lines were back to full service. Finally, on Wednesday morning the 31<sup>st</sup> all main tracks were reopened at Trenton, with speed restrictions, and Amtrak was able to resume through service between Washington and Boston. All Acela Expresses were restored and just a few Regional trains were annulled. After a four-day suspension NJT once again was running its Trenton-New York commuter service. SEPTA said that Irene had cost it more than \$2 million, with at least \$1.5 million of that going toward repair of the push-pull train and five MU's caught in the flood at Trenton. AEM-7 #2305, coaches #2503-2506-2508-2509-2512 and cab cars #2401-2405 were being worked on at Frazer shop, and the Silverliners at Overbrook shop. The cars reportedly suffered corrosion damage while electrical repairs also will be needed on the locomotive and MU's.

Norfolk Southern, CSX and a number of shortlines sustained damage from Irene, but were hoping to get their trains back in service quickly—the exception being the hard-hit lines in Vermont. By Wednesday the 31<sup>st</sup> CSX was still working to repair washouts on its “Water Level Route” mainline west of Albany, NY, which also had forced the cancellation of Amtrak Empire Service and the **Lake Shore Limited**. CSX brought in diesel generators to power signals and grade crossing protection where commercial power was still out. In southern New York State and on the Delmarva Peninsula NS was repairing track washouts, and Conrail in both North and South Jersey had to deal with flooding and downed trees. The Maryland & Delaware shortline had two washouts near Millington, MD, on its ex-Pennsy Centreville branch which serves a feed mill. Amtrak managed to get its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary display train, powered by repainted P42 #145 and P40 #822, to the Steamtown Railfest in Scranton on September 3-4, but had to detour from Albany to Syracuse via CSX, then down the New York, Susquehanna & Western to Binghamton and Canadian Pacific to Scranton. CP's direct ex-Delaware & Hudson line from Albany to Binghamton had been closed due to washouts near Central Bridge, NY.

Tuesday, September 6: The second in Mother Nature's one-two punch arrived when the heavy rains generated by Tropical Storm Lee descended on eastern Pennsylvania. Lee dumped 6.35 inches on Philadelphia, more than the 5.65 inches from Irene, but its impact was far more serious in the Susquehanna River Valley than in the Delaware Valley. Cities from Binghamton, NY, to Harrisburg suffered heavy flooding, with many highways under water for days and miles of railroad track either washed out or submerged. Thousands of residents were forced to evacuate. Governor Corbett declared a state of emergency in Pennsylvania, the first since 2001, and President Obama offered Federal disaster assistance to victims of both Irene and Lee, including many in the Philadelphia region. Canadian Pacific had numerous washouts on its former Pennsy line between Wilkes-Barre and Sunbury, less than two weeks after CP's ex-D&H mainline had been knocked out by Hurricane Irene (see above). NS reported damage on its Buffalo and Southern Tier Lines and had to shut down the Royalton and Port Road branches along the east bank of the river between Harrisburg and Perryville, MD, but was able to maintain

east-west freight service through Harrisburg. CSX again closed parts of its mainline in New York State.

Flooding on CSX near Alexandria, VA, forced Amtrak to cancel all service between Washington and Richmond on Friday the 9<sup>th</sup>, but the Lynchburg service, **Crescent** and **Auto Train** continued to operate. CSX also had flooding problems in Philadelphia, Baltimore and the North Jersey areas. Other disruptions occurred on the North Shore Railroad east of Northumberland, PA, where heavy damage was reported, while sister road Lycoming Valley lost a bridge at Montoursville. At least two feet of water covered Amtrak's mainline in the Shipoke area of Harrisburg, just east of the passenger station. (The station itself was not damaged.) There even was flooding in Hershey, 12 miles east of Harrisburg, which did not block the NS mainline, and 40 miles of the Pennsylvania Turnpike were closed for a time west of the Reading interchange. The Susquehanna crested at 42.7 feet at Wilkes-Barre on Thursday the 8<sup>th</sup>, higher than the flood caused by legendary Hurricane Agnes in June 1972, but the new levee system pretty much kept the water out of the downtown area while nearby towns were inundated. The river crested at 25.2 feet at Harrisburg on Friday, six feet above flood stage, forcing authorities to move furniture out of the Governor's mansion along Front Street. Floodwaters blocked I-81 northeast of Harrisburg and U.S. highway 22 was under water at Clarks Ferry, the confluence of the Juniata and Susquehanna Rivers. Even the railfan favorite Bridgeview Inn bed-and-breakfast near the Rockville bridge had 2-1/2 feet of water on its first floor.

On Tuesday afternoon, September 6, SEPTA placed a precautionary speed restriction in effect, delaying many trains. That evening water was reported over the railhead near Trevoise station, delaying two West Trenton trains until the water receded. Early the next morning a downed tree at Berwyn knocked out service on all four tracks of Amtrak's Harrisburg mainline, forcing the suspension of both the Harrisburg trains and SEPTA's Paoli-Thorndale service. The Keystone line also was flooded near Mount Joy and by Friday, as mentioned above, the tracks were underwater at Harrisburg. On Wednesday afternoon Amtrak chartered buses for express service from Philadelphia to Harrisburg, returning with passengers off train #42 **Pennsylvanian** which was terminated at Harrisburg. The tree was removed at Berwyn by evening and SEPTA resumed service the next morning (Thursday). Amtrak partially restored its Keystone service on Friday, reducing the number of trains west of Philadelphia to seven, but these trains turned at Lancaster until full service to Harrisburg was resumed on Monday morning the 12<sup>th</sup>. The **Pennsylvanian** started again the same day.

In the Philadelphia area, flooding was widespread, with several major highways closed to traffic on Thursday the 8<sup>th</sup> including the Schuylkill River drives and portions of Lincoln Drive, Roosevelt Blvd. and Columbus Blvd. The Schuylkill Expressway near West Conshohocken was blocked by a mudslide. A section of Ambler was under five feet of water and flood-prone Fort Washington also was hit, but SEPTA rail service already had been suspended for the day due to the washouts at Jenkintown described below. As happened during Irene, the Delaware River rose above flood levels in Yardley and other communities. NJ Transit again had flooding problems on the River Line in Camden, substituting buses to and from the riverfront Entertainment Center.

Meanwhile, SEPTA was having disruptions on its own lines. A washout near Trevoise on Wednesday the 7<sup>th</sup> forced

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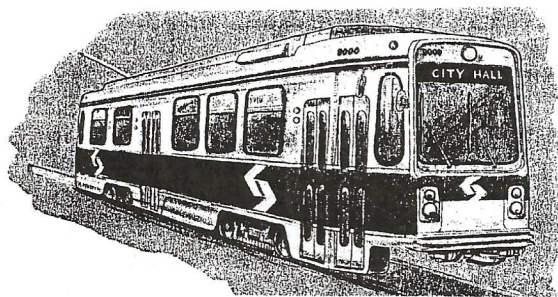


# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

## SEPTA TRANSIT

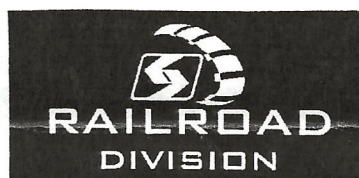


If the Phillies win the World Series later this month, will SEPTA be ready to handle the throngs flocking to the victory parade? It will be recalled that when the championship parade took place on October 31, 2008, the fans were urged to use public transportation to get there, and the result was unmanageable loads on many Regional Rail lines. We're sure that the folks at SEPTA and the City are already making plans to do a better job of moving the multitudes—if the Phillies win it all again..... Philadelphia police have promised to step up their efforts to insure the safety of SEPTA bus drivers and other transit employees, following two recent shootings in which bus drivers were injured. Mayor Nutter also called for new State legislation to increase penalties for attacking transit workers to the same "aggravated assault" level as applies to police officers. SEPTA officials said that assaults on SEPTA operators have doubled from last year, to more than 50 in the first nine months of 2011. About a third of SEPTA buses are now outfitted with security cameras.

Congress last month passed an extension of the SAFETEA surface transportation funding bill that was due to expire on September 30. This will maintain the current level of highway and transit funding through next March, but industry officials warn that when a new law eventually is passed Federal support for transit may be cut by at least 20 percent..... As of this writing Congress appears ready to approve a continuing resolution to extend the current Federal budget authority and prevent a shutdown of the government when the new fiscal year begins October 1.....President Obama's \$447-billion "American Jobs Act," which he proposed last month, would contain \$50 billion for new transportation funding compared with \$48 billion in the stimulus law approved in 2009. Various highway, rail, transit, airport and maritime projects would be in the \$50-billion pot, which is key to the President's drive to rebuild the nation's deteriorating infrastructure and put construction workers back on the job. Transit alone would get about \$9 billion for capital projects and passenger rail \$2 billion. While industry organizations such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce generally back the plan, some said there should be more curbs on government regulation. And Obama's push to increase taxes on high-income people and eliminate some industry tax loopholes is sure to generate controversy as Congress considers the jobs bill.

On Tuesday, September 27, the inbound track on the Norristown High Speed Line was restored to service from Radnor

to Bryn Mawr, following the September 8 cave-in of an embankment north of the Roberts Road station in Bryn Mawr during Tropical Storm Lee (see the storm story elsewhere in this issue). But permanently stabilizing the high fill will likely require the construction of a retaining wall at the site. Speed restrictions remained in effect through the area as well as a special reduced schedule, but two-car trains no longer were being run during midday hours as they were while single-track operation was in place.....SEPTA planned to hold an emergency drill exercise with local first responders at Norristown Transportation Center on Sunday morning, October 2, with shuttle buses substituting for NHSL trains between Norristown and the Bridgeport station.....One of SEPTA's newest hybrid buses is #8450, which carries large signage indicating that it is the 30,000<sup>th</sup> bus built by New Flyer Industries.....Phase II of the track replacement project along trolley Route 13 will continue through the end of this month, with shuttle buses operating between the Mount Moriah loop and Yeadon.



## SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL

As of late September, 45 Silverliner V's had been delivered to SEPTA with married pair #831-832 the most recent arrivals. A September inspection tour of the Hyundai-Rotem assembly plant in South Philadelphia revealed at least 25 more cars or car shells in the plant in the process of being assembled. Car #702 also was there, having returned from a long testing period in Canada. The target date for delivery of the final car in the 120-car order is June 2012. A total of 26 Silverliner V's were in revenue service during the last week in September on nine different lines, with the Wilmington-Newark line claiming the most with 11 trains. Weekend service may begin this month. A retrofit program for some of the new cars is planned, probably with #703 and 809-810 going to Frazer shop. The Silver V's are now being serviced at Powelton yard near 30<sup>th</sup> Street, where certain trips originate. It was almost a year ago that SEPTA operated the first revenue run with the new cars, as #701-801-802 made a round-trip to Cynwyd on October 29, 2010.

The *Daily News* carried a front-page story on September 16 examining the rash of suicides by train which have taken place recently in the Delaware Valley area. "Philadelphia Express" has documented these tragic events on SEPTA, AMTRAK and NJ TRANSIT as they were reported. One unfortunate side effect pointed out in the article is that the engineers and crews on the trains may endure sadness and remorse long after the actual occurrences for which they were in no way responsible. What drives depressed people who are bent on killing themselves to take their lives on a railroad track? "One of the

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# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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reasons is simply because of the general accessibility and availability of this, a highly-lethal method," said the director of the American Association of Suicidology. AAS is working with the Federal Railroad Administration in wrapping up a four-year study on rail-related suicides. *Cinders'* own tabulation of rail trespasser deaths in the Philadelphia area and New Jersey over the past 12 months includes seven suicides on SEPTA (plus three other non-suicidal trespasser deaths), three on Amtrak (plus three non-suicides) and one on NJT. But this total does not include the horrifying deaths of two teenage girls who stood in front of a speeding Acela Express at Norwood, PA, in February 2010, or the spate of five suicides at or near the Hamilton station outside of Trenton between February and August of 2010. NORFOLK SOUTHERN also reported seven suicides on its railroad in Pennsylvania during the first six months of 2011, and CSX reported four, according to the newspaper article.

SEPTA will reissue some or all of its Regional Rail timetables effective December 18......SEPTA will conduct its rail annual emergency drill with local first responders on Sunday, November 6, at a location on the Manayunk-Norristown line.....SEPTA will be busing passengers between Doylestown and Lansdale on a weekend in December, to complete installation of the modernized signal system on the Doylestown Line. All of this is tied in with the opening on August 28 of a new half-mile-long controlled siding between "County" and "School" interlockings near Link Belt station. The old "Forest" passing siding north of Chalfont has been retired (see September *Cinders*) .....SEPTA will begin its annual fall leaf campaign in mid-October. As in past years, three work trains will spray water at high pressure to remove those slippery leaves from railheads and dispense a special gel to improve traction.....Recent public meetings show there is little support for the idea of placing tolls on U.S. Route 422 west of Valley Forge, with the funds to be spent on rebuilding the highway and instituting rail commuter service to and from Reading via the NORFOLK SOUTHERN mainline (see August *Cinders*).

SEPTA last month formally celebrated the end of the renovation project at historic Queen Lane station on the Chestnut Hill West Line. The \$4.1-million project restored the classic station built by the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1885, the second ex-PRR 19<sup>th</sup> Century station on the line to be restored (the other is Allen Lane). Restoration of a third CHW station, Tulpehocken, is underway.....Trackwork has been completed at "Walnut" and "Arsenal" interlockings south of 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station, which necessitated weekend busing of the Airport Line, partial busing of the Media-Elwyn line and diversion of Wilmington trains into and out of 30<sup>th</sup> Street Lower Level (see August *Cinders*).....SEPTA is still working to promote its popular QuietRide car, which is the first car in weekday trains of three or more open cars. Last month SEPTA placed small reminder cards in the ticket holders on the back of seats, reminding passengers that QuietRide cars are intended to be free of cell phone use or any other kinds of annoying conversations.....On October 15 the FRA was due to release its final rule covering maximum hours of service and minimum off-duty periods for passenger train crews.

Another fatality was reported on Saturday, September 10, when the crew of Fox Chase-bound train #862 spotted the body

of a man lying beside the tracks near Cheltenham station. It was not known if the person had been struck by a CSX train at a point where the SEPTA and CSX tracks are adjoining. Train #3437 hit a trespasser in the tunnel just outside of Market East Station on the afternoon of Sunday, September 18. Oddly, the person was able to get up and leave the scene. Train #774 ran into the bumper on #2 track at Chestnut Hill East station on Friday night, September 16. A conductor and one passenger were injured, and turn #775 had to be annulled. An on-board computer reported an overheated axle on the 57<sup>th</sup> car of westbound CSX train Q439, forcing it to stop on #1 track at West Trenton around 5:50 PM on Thursday, September 22. But inspection revealed no defect and after an hour's delay the train got moving with a ten-mph speed restriction. Single-tracking around the freight delayed five SEPTA trains. SEPTA operations also were affected last month by several switch failures. On Wednesday, September 21, a faulty switch at AMTRAK's "Girard" interlocking in West Philadelphia delayed numerous Trenton and Chestnut Hill West trains during the AM rush hour, forcing them to reverse and operate over the Berry tracks in front of "Zoo" tower. That evening, failures at "Phil" interlocking and another at "Girard" also delayed several SEPTA trains. Warminster-bound train #442 was slowed for nine minutes on Friday, September 23, when it was forced to follow an unconcerned dog walking in the gauge north of Crestmont.



## AMTRAK

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced last month that AMTRAK will receive \$745 million toward upgrading sections of the Northeast Corridor. The money comes from the \$2 billion in Federal high-speed rail funds that were rejected earlier this year by Florida Governor Rick Scott. Almost \$450 million will be spent on track and signal improvements to allow speeds of up to 160 mph on the 24 miles of the NEC between New Brunswick and Trenton (see June *Cinders*). The other \$295 million will be used to build a flyover and other improvements at "Harold" interlocking on Long Island (*Trains*) .....AMTRAK has chosen the KMPG consulting firm to develop a business and financial plan for the proposed next-generation high-speed rail line between Washington, New York and Boston. The \$117-billion line would require much new right-of-way and take at least 30 years to complete .....DOT has awarded \$22 million for preliminary engineering work on a new railroad bridge across the Susquehanna River at Perryville, MD, to replace the existing span opened in 1906 by a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania Railroad (NARP).

Improvements are coming to AMTRAK's Philadelphia-Harrisburg Keystone Corridor. In addition to starting to remove the last three highway grade crossings, Amtrak has extended bidirectional signaling east from Leaman Place to just west of Coatesville and is working to bring the new system as far east as Paoli. PennDOT has announced plans to build a new \$30 million station at Middletown, and a groundbreaking ceremony was held September 12 at Mount Joy for a \$12-million project to include a new station and parking lot improvements. The restored station at Elizabethtown was opened in May, but the proposal to build a station at Leaman Place (Paradise) apparently is in limbo .....The Association of American Railroads is suing the U.S. DOT to void the rules for enforcing on-time performance of AMTRAK trains on freight railroads. The Passenger Rail

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# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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Investment & Improvement Act of 2008 allows Amtrak to set the standards for its on-time performance. The complaint states that Amtrak is a "financially-interested private party that stands to directly benefit from violations of the rules it created" (*Trains*).

AMTRAK's motive power situation on the Northeast Corridor has improved somewhat since we reported on it in the last issue. As of September 27, 36 AEM-7's were available for 34 daily train assignments, and 11 others were out of service, as compared with only 32 available and 16 out of service in mid-August. Two AEM-7's involved in recent fires, #911 and 933, will probably be written off. The HHP-8 situation also has improved, with 11 available and four shopped as compared with seven available and eight out of service in August.....On Wednesday, September 7, southbound Regional train #127 was terminated at "Bacon" interlocking near Elkton, MD, when lead AEM-7 #910 shut down. Trailing unit #912 had previously been taken offline. The 300 passengers were transferred to other trains, causing a host of delays at this location where three tracks merge into two. After the transfer was completed, technicians managed to revive #912 and the train deadheaded south to "Prince" where #910 was set off.

A major power outage near New York's Penn Station around 9 AM on Thursday, September 22, delayed many AMTRAK and NJ TRANSIT trains. The failure occurred on #2 track in the south tunnel under the Hudson River, between Penn Station and "Bergen" interlocking 3.7 miles to the west, forcing single-track operation through the north tube. Four eastbound NJT trains were disabled in the outage zone, three of them inside the tunnel, but no Amtrak trains were stalled. The cause was found to be a damaged pantograph on NJT Arrow III MU #1513, one of 11 cars in train #3126. Passengers on this train were transferred on the ground at the west portal to following train #3712, which had switched over to #3 track and operated into Penn Station via the north tunnel. An Amtrak diesel, #712, towed another NJT train into the station and a third NJT train was able to run to the station unassisted when overhead power was temporarily restored. NJT diesel #4200 later towed disabled train #3126 westward to free the #2 track for an Amtrak catenary car, which repaired the damaged wire in the tunnel and allowed normal operations to be restored at 2:15 PM.

The University of Pennsylvania's newly-opened Penn Park, a large greenspace between Walnut and South Streets, affords excellent views of AMTRAK's mainline and the freight High Line......AMTRAK last month marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Baltimore Penn Station, a classic Beaux Arts-style building opened by the PRR in 1911 .....AMTRAK and many transit agencies including SEPTA beefed up security prior to September 11, the tenth anniversary of the terrorist attacks on New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon. There had been reports of plots to detonate explosives in New York City and Washington but anti-terrorist efforts evidently warded off any planned attacks.....Once again this fall AMTRAK is operating its only full-dome car, #10031, for sightseers on both the **Adirondack** and **Cardinal** through October and into early November. The ex-Great Northern car now wears Amtrak's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary Phase III striped paint scheme.



## CSX, NS, OTHER ROADS

NORFOLK SOUTHERN is installing new switches and signals on the mainline in Altoona, to prepare for the remoting of "Alto" interlocking. The former PRR tower is expected to be closed by early next year (see August *Cinders*).....NS is planning to celebrate its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2012, and one event will be to stage a photo of GP30 diesels from its three predecessor roads. CONRAIL will be represented by GP30 #2233 borrowed from the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania..... NS's updated exhibit car, which rolled out of Juniata shop at Altoona last month, will barnstorm the system in the next few weeks. It will be at Strasburg November 18-20, also a Thomas the Tank Engine week on the STRASBURG.....NS has bought a genset locomotive kit from R.J. Corman RailPower and will assemble the 2,000-hp unit at Altoona shop for use in CONRAIL's North Jersey Shared Assets operation (*Trains*) .....Early in the morning of August 20 a westbound NS train struck and killed a 38-year-old man who was lying on the track at "Phoenix" interlocking in Phoenixville.....The announced closures of the Sunoco refineries in Philadelphia and Marcus Hook, as well as the ConocoPhillips refinery in Trainer, will cost CONRAIL, NS and CSX some business, unless other companies take over the plants.....Twelve years after its shared takeover of CONRAIL, CSX finally has repainted or retired all of its Conrail blue locomotives (Trainorders.com).

New shortline PENNSYLVANIA NORTHEASTERN is using two of its ex-NS, ex-CONRAIL locomotives, C39-8's #8211 and 8212, in local service out of Lansdale. It also is using ex-CANADIAN PACIFIC SD40-2 #5577. The big C39-8 six-axle units were built by General Electric in 1986. In a bulletin order effective August 22, SEPTA has prohibited the operation of all PNR locomotives on Mainline #2 track between Glenside and "Gwyn" interlocking at Penllyn and between "Tabor Junction" in Philadelphia and Jenkintown, unless the catenary is de-energized. NS has assigned to CSX its trackage rights on 4.9 miles of SEPTA's Stony Creek branch out of Norristown, in order to facilitate CSX's interchange with PNR at Lansdale..... An aerial view of the Steamtown roundhouse in Scranton will appear on a 2012 U.S. postage stamp, as part of the Postal Service's "Earthscapes" series.....The Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania is sponsoring a Boy Scout Merit Badge program, with a special patch to be awarded to Scouts completing the course.....The ex-Reading dining car stored for years at the museum in Strasburg was moved out last month and eventually will go to its new owner, the Reading Company T&HS.

The first 26 PATCO cars have been delivered to the Alstom plant in Hornell, NY, where the 120-car fleet will undergo a complete rebuilding over the next few years (Bill Vigrass). See also the April 2011 issue of *Cinders*.....PATCO has introduced a prepaid Visa card that can be used to pay train fares and for retail purchases. This contactless "Wave & Pay" card is

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## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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the same type that SEPTA plans to use as part of its new payment program (see May *Cinders*).....The ACES express train service between New York and Atlantic City was discontinued last month, apparently for good. Operated by NJ TRANSIT since 2007, the service was subsidized by three Atlantic City casinos to draw more patrons from New York City.....Kevin Tankersley of Washington, DC Chapter was a visitor at Philadelphia Chapter's September 16 meeting, having just arrived back in Philadelphia after working a private car trip to Pittsburgh and return on AMTRAK's **Pennsylvanian**. The cars were the Levins' **Warrior Ridge** and **Pennsylvania 120**.

The WILMINGTON & WESTERN tourist railroad was the subject of a lengthy article—complete with color photos—in the Magazine section of the *Inquirer* on August 23. Title of the article was “Steaming through the valley”.....STRASBURG RAIL ROAD has gone back to its roots, hauling freight cars from the NS interchange at Leaman Place to Strasburg where it has built a new transloading track and offers a high-level platform for working boxcars. For most of the time since it became a tourist hauler in 1957, Strasburg has concentrated on the passenger business, only dabbling occasionally in freight. Now it expects to handle up to 300 cars a year, most of them tank cars and covered hoppers.....Regional Rail, LLC, a shortline holding company, has acquired the TYBURN switching line in Morrisville. Regional Rail also operates an industrial track in York, PA, which it leases from NS, and the MIDDLETOWN & NEW JERSEY RAILROAD which leases 36 miles of line and trackage rights from NS in southern New York State.

## Chapter's September 25 Excursion Cancelled Due to Low Ticket Sales

Philadelphia Chapter's "Farewell to the Faithful Silverliners" excursion on SEPTA's Regional Rail lines, scheduled for Sunday, September 25, was cancelled because the Chapter had experienced a poor ticket response, in spite of intensive efforts to publicize the trip throughout the Northeast Corridor. Chapter officers had to make the decision a week before the trip, when only 64 tickets had been sold. A total of 125 passengers was needed just to cover the costs of the all-day trip.

The trip would have utilized one-each former Reading and Pennsylvania Budd Silverliner II, bracketing a St. Louis "Airport" Silverliner III. Because of ongoing weekend track renewal at "Walnut" and "Arsenal" interlockings below 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station, operating constraints were necessary to keep our trip out of the way of normal SEPTA service, much of which was originating and terminating at 30<sup>th</sup> Street.

The trip would have covered the Chestnut Hill West, Fox Chase, Norristown and Cynwyd Lines, with some quality photo stops on each route. A special full-color commemorative ticket had been prepared as a souvenir from the trip.

With a membership of nearly 400 members, Chapter officers were disappointed with the lackluster ticket sales, given that this might have represented the last opportunity to operate a trip with these cars. Their removal from service is being accelerated with the ongoing deliveries of new Silverliner V's.

## 2012 Dues Bills Mailed; Financial Help Needed

Philadelphia Chapter members may expect to receive their 2012 dues bills from the National Railway Historical Society at about the same time as this issue of *Cinders* is delivered to you. The bills are mailed by Fernley & Fernley, the NRHS contractor located in Philadelphia.

Those individuals holding Chapter-only membership in Philadelphia Chapter (with National membership through another chapter) should have received their 2012 dues bills during the first week of October.

While chapter officers had not seen the 2012 NRHS dues package at presstime, it will most likely include an appeal for financial support for the NRHS national organization. At the same time, Philadelphia Chapter has had a very tight fiscal year in 2011, and our financial needs are pressing, as well. Because the dues bills are directly mailed by NRHS, we are unable to include a financial appeal letter for our needs with the dues bills.

Philadelphia Chapter membership (\$18.00) basically covers the cost of this newsletter, as well as miscellaneous meeting expenses, and the Chapter's archive storage space in Willow Grove. Above and beyond these items, the Chapter has to cover liability insurance premiums on our activities (\$1,500 per year).

Additionally, we have a premium of \$1,050 per year to cover damage to FP7 #903, based at Steamtown National Historic Site in Scranton, Pennsylvania. The 903 (and sister) 902 have been out of service during much of 2011 because there are some routine repairs needed to the units to keep them in operating condition. While the Chapter's volunteer Mechanical Committee performs many maintenance items, there are some repairs the Chapter will need to pay for. We are uncertain exactly what those costs will be, but we need to be prepared to handle these as they arise, and we do not at present have sufficient financial reserves to do so.

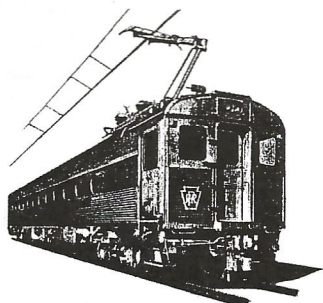
With so many people feeling financial constraints in a rather tight economy, we are appealing to each member of Philadelphia Chapter to assist us with any financial contribution, large or small, above and beyond the normal \$54.00 National and Chapter dues. Our need is rather urgent this year, in order that we may continue to maintain our activity schedule.

Please take the time to process your 2012 NRHS and/or Chapter membership renewal as early as possible. NRHS maintains a strict deadline for renewals, and those who do not renew in time must be processed as new members, complicating what is a relatively routine operation for chapter officers.

## RR Police Phone Numbers

AMTRAK	800-331-0008
CSX	800-232-0144
CONRAIL Shared Assets	800-272-0911
NJ TRANSIT (NJ only)	800-242-0236
NORFOLK SOUTHERN	800-453-2530
SEPTA	215-580-8111



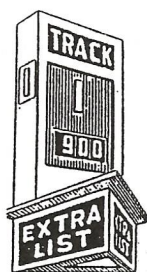


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## Silverliner Update

October is here, and we'll provide another in our series of SEPTA Silverliner updates. Minor changes will be noted from last month. As Frank Tatnall has reported in *Philadelphia Express*, as of September 30 there were 45 Silverliner V's on the property, as follows: single cars #701 and 703-716, and married pairs #801-826 and 829-832. No word on married pair 827-828.

There are now 17 Silverliners shown as retired: Budds #201, 204, 205, 206, 208, 251 and 257, plus St. Louis #220, 222, 224, 228, 231, 232, 233, 234 and 237. This list can be expected to grow at a rather fast pace as the new Silverliner V's are delivered and accepted for service. The following cars are shown as "inactive": Budds #201 and 9011, as well as St. Louis 238. Two St. Louis (former "Airport") cars, #235 and 239, are in active service again. No further scrapings have taken place since #214 last spring.



**OCTOBER 15, 2011:** SEPTA's annual public Rail Rodeo & Exhibition at Fern Rock Transportation Center, 9 AM-2 PM. Admission free. Several pieces of Regional Rail equipment will be on display, including Silverliner II, III, IV and new Silverliner V cars, and possibly locomotives. Separate tours and displays at the Broad Street subway Fern Rock car shop are limited to those who signed up in an earlier "lottery". For information, telephone 215-580-7842 or E-mail: [railrodeo@septa.org](mailto:railrodeo@septa.org).

**OCTOBER 15:** "OcTrolleyFest" at Darby Library and Darby Recreation Center, 10:15 AM-4 PM, featuring displays, art contest, parade and musical concert. Announced plan is for free rides on a PCC-II trolley out of Darby loop 11 AM-1 PM. For information, telephone 610-583-0788 or visit website: [www.octrolleyfest.org](http://www.octrolleyfest.org).

**OCTOBER 15:** Special Steamtown train from Scranton to East Stroudsburg, PA and return, to rededicate Dansbury Station rebuilt from old Lackawanna passenger station. Power will be either ex-Reading FP7 diesels or Lackawanna-painted F3 diesels. Train leaves Steamtown at 9 AM, returns about 5:30 PM. Fares: \$54 adults, \$49 seniors (62 and over), \$32 children (6-15). For reservations and information telephone Steamtown at 570-340-5204.

**OCTOBER 27:** *All Aboard! Railroads and New Jersey, 1812-1930* in the Pane Room, Archibald S. Alexander Library, Rutgers University, 169 College Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1163. Lecture by Philadelphia Chapter Member Loretta Treese will take place at 5:00 PM, and is coupled with a major exhibition running through January 6, 2012. For additional information, contact Fernanda H. Perrone, Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University, 169 College Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1163, telephone 732-932-7006, extension 363, or E-mail: [hperrone@rulmail.rutgers.edu](mailto:hperrone@rulmail.rutgers.edu).

**THROUGH OCTOBER 30, 2011:** "The P&R Railroad and the Civil War: Pulling for the Union". Special exhibit explaining the Reading Railroad's role in the Civil War, with displays of Philadelphia & Reading Railroad artifacts, takes place at the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum of the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society, 500 South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Hamburg, PA. Museum is open 10 AM to 4 PM Saturdays and Noon to 4 PM on Sundays. For additional information, telephone 610-562-5513 or visit website: [www.readingrailroad.org](http://www.readingrailroad.org).

**NOVEMBER 5:** Lackawanna & Wyoming Valley Chapter, NRHS will sponsor 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Sentimental Journey Slide Show at Jenkins Township Fire Company, 2 Second Street, Jenkins Township (Pittston), PA, 10 AM to 5 PM. Presenters include Jim Hertzog (*Railfanning the Reading as a Teenager*), Mike Bednar, George Gula (*Wilkes-Barre Transit*), Bob Mohowski, John Gabriel (*Wyoming and Lackawanna Rails before Conrail*). Ticket price of \$20 includes all-day refreshments, lunch, door prizes. Order tickets from: EdPhilbin, 36 East Cole St., Pittston, PA 18640, making checks payable to L&WV Chapter, NRHS. Please include E-mail address or telephone number for confirmation. Additional information from: Ed Philbin (570-954-7981), [edlvrr@gmail.com](mailto:edlvrr@gmail.com), or Tony Verbyla, Jr. (570-760-4344), [crjeep9@yahoo.com](mailto:crjeep9@yahoo.com). Doors open 9 AM for coffee and donuts.

**NOVEMBER 5:** Railfan Day on Belvidere & Delaware River Railroad, Phillipsburg, NJ, hosted by NYS&W T&HS. Admission includes unlimited rides on excursion train with photo runbys, night photo session and other events. All-day pass: \$30 adults, \$15 children. Unlimited train rides only: \$22 adults, \$11 children, evening picnic additional. For information, telephone 877-872-4674 weekday afternoons or 908-454-4433 weekends.

**NOVEMBER 12:** New York Transit Sampler, sponsored by Washington, DC Chapter, NRHS. Activities will include NYCTA subway routes 1, S and A, Metro North, NJ Transit, PATH and Long Island Rail Road. Visit passenger hubs at New York Penn Station, Grand Central Terminal, Newark Penn Station, LIRR Jamaica Station and PATH World Trade Center Station. Tour starts New York Penn after arrival of Amtrak Train #162 from Washington at 9:42 AM, concludes about 6:00 PM. Fare: \$49 Washington, DC Chapter members, \$69 non-members. Reservations should be made to: Washington, DC Chapter, NRHS, c/o Mike Martin, Reservation Agent, 503 Mayfield Avenue, West Chester, PA 19380-5211.

**NOVEMBER 12-13:** Bordentown Railroad Days, a weekend celebration of railroad history in authentic Victorian-era Bordentown, NJ. Events will include operating model train displays, art exhibits and other activities. For complete information, visit website [www.bordentownrailroaddays.org](http://www.bordentownrailroaddays.org).

**THROUGH DECEMBER 31:** "Rail Traffic Control" exhibit on railroad communications and signaling at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg. Displays, photographs, artifacts and videos will tell the story of railroad "C&S" over the years. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628 (website: [www.rrmuseumpa.org](http://www.rrmuseumpa.org)).



## Hurricane, Rain, Earthquake Batter Delaware Valley Region

(Continued from Page 4)

single-track running on the West Trenton line, which combined with continuing signal problems between Woodbourne and West Trenton meant extensive train delays. Then early on Thursday morning floodwaters rose over the platform at Jenkintown station and several washouts were discovered just south of the station. All service north of Fern Rock was suspended for the rest of the day as crews struggled to install new drainage pipes and rebuild the track. Not only did ballast and ties need to be replaced but switch machines had to be dried out and repaired. Regular service resumed Friday morning with speed restrictions through the area. Service also was suspended Thursday on the Manayunk-Norristown, Chestnut Hill West and Cynwyd lines due to local flooding and a mudslide at Cheltenham Avenue on CHW. All lines were back in service on Friday. At least 20 bus routes had to be detoured due to flooded streets and highways.

A major disruption also occurred on Thursday the 8<sup>th</sup> when a high embankment on the Norristown High Speed Line collapsed just north of Rosemont (Roberts Road) station in Bryn Mawr. The inbound track was damaged, forcing single-track operation between Bryn Mawr and Radnor stations. A special half-hour schedule was placed in effect with all trains operating on the outbound track through the slide area. Private contractors were called in to stabilize the embankment and the damaged track was restored to limited service on September 19 with continuing speed restrictions and modified schedules. But more work needed to be

done at the site, which is near the Conestoga Road tunnel underpass, forcing SEPTA again to close the inbound track beginning September 23 to allow for shoring up the embankment. Two-car trains were being used on the less-frequent NHSL runs.

At *Cinders'* presstime, SEPTA was still working on a cost estimate for all the repair work attributed to Tropical Storm Lee. The costs from both storms to other carriers including Amtrak and the freight railroads also were expected to be high.

Thursday, September 15: The 0.2 inch of rain that fell this day—on top of already saturated ground—caused few rail or road problems. But it did bring the rainfall total for the month to seven inches, 25 inches since August 1 and a record 49 inches for the year to date. Anyone who has responsibilities for maintaining the transportation infrastructure will hope that the final 2-1/2 months of 2011 will be more benign.

---Frank Tatnall

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