

CINDERS

JULY 2014



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NRHS Braces for Big Changes Amid Financial Woes, Declining Membership

(Editor's Note: This piece was written by Justin Franz for Trains News Wire and issued on July 10, 2014. It is reproduced here, with permission of Trains Magazine; without comment. Appropriate editorial thoughts on the NRHS National situation will be forthcoming in the September issue of Cinders.)

PHILADELPHIA – One of the largest railroad enthusiast groups in the world must brace for “fundamental change” or face extinction, according to its president. This week, a five-person committee tasked with reinventing the National Railway Historical Society in less than three months convened near Philadelphia for the first time since being formed earlier this summer.

NRHS President Greg Molloy tells *Trains News Wire* that it is too early to know what changes will be made to the organization in the coming weeks and months, but notes something must be done before it's too late. “The business model we have is not practical for the modern era,” Molloy says. “Changes have to be made.”

The initiative to reinvent the 80-year-old nonprofit comes as its membership dwindles and its financial coffers continue to shrink. In 2013, the NRHS had 11,573 members, a 7.2-percent drop from the previous year and nearly half the members it had in 1994, when the group reached an all-time high of 21,842. Meanwhile, the group lost \$72,000 in 2013 and more than three times as much in 2012.

The number of chapters also continues to ebb and flow. In 2013, according to the June 2014 *NRHS News*, the organization added two new chapters in Kentucky and Tennessee. However, four other chapters either disbanded or disassociated from the NRHS. In the same issue of *NRHS News*, the organization states it “has at most a year to reinvent itself.”

The beginning of that reinvention arrived this week, when the NRHS announced the formation of a New Business Model Committee, headed up by five members of the board of directors: Molloy, Wes Weis, Bob Ernst, Jeff Smith and Steve Barry. Molloy says the committee has two months to come up

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PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS Board of Directors Meeting Summer, 2014

**Passenger Services Conference Room
Amtrak 30th Street Station**

**Tuesday, August 12, 2014
7:00 PM to 8:30 PM**

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

2014 Summer Dinner at Moonstruck on August 15; Reservation Deadline August 1

Members are reminded of the August 1 reservation deadline for the 2014 Bill Wagner Summer Dinner, being held this year at Moonstruck Restaurant, 7955 Oxford Avenue, Philadelphia, a short walk from SEPTA's Fox Chase Regional Rail station and across Oxford Avenue from the Fox Chase bus loop.

The menu will be Caesar salad, choice of chicken or salmon entrée, and selection of one of Moonstruck's desserts. Cocktail hour begins at 5:30 PM (individual settlement) and dinner begins at 6:30 PM. The price is \$48.00 per person. Reservations, with check payable to **Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS** should be sent to **Summer Dinner, Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302**, by August 1, 2014.

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 ayrestower@comcast.net and a replacement copy will be promptly be sent to you.

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2014 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$68.00 per person, which includes National (\$50.00) and Chapter (\$18.00) dues. Additional Chapter membership 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 an Additional Chapter membership. Members joining this category are required to furnish Philadelphia Chapter with their home chapter and membership number.

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.

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NRHS Braces for Big Changes Amid Financial Woes, Declining Membership

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with a new vision and business model for the organization that will be presented to the full board of directors for an up or down vote no later than September 15. Meanwhile, a second committee, made up of the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and general council (sic – counsel), will reevaluate the NRHS's finances to ensure that it "stays afloat" for the next few months, according to Molloy.

Molloy insists that it is far too early to know what type of changes would be made to the organization and he was hesitant to speculate what the new business committee would do, noting that the other four members will be making most of the decisions. However, he says it is possible that the NRHS will move away from being a "social" organization and focus more on supporting railroad preservation projects. In a press release issued Wednesday, July 9, the organization says it intends to continue its Railway Heritage Grants program, the RailCamp summer program for young enthusiasts, and its annual "Most-at-Risk" list of endangered railroad landmarks. The organization also plans to continue to produce its two publications, *NRHS News* and the

Bulletin, but the frequency and format may change in the future. It also says that the 2015 NRHS Convention, being held in Rutland, VT, will go on as planned.

"We want to move in a direction that does more to support rail preservation," Molloy says. "Railroad preservation often happens in small corners and there are few centralized voices to support it."

Molloy says one of the reasons the NRHS may move away from being a social club is that fewer and fewer people, especially younger people, are interested in joining such an organization in the internet age, especially when the membership base is predominantly older. "There was a time when you needed to join a local club because if you wanted to know what was going on at your local railroad you needed the club's newsletter to find out," he says. Now you can find out on the internet."

Molloy says the past few years have seen some changes to the organization and its structure, most notably the board of directors. In previous years, the board of directors had one representative from every chapter and at times had as many as 180 members. Today, the board of directors has 25 members.

Molloy has been involved with the NRHS for more than 30 years and has been president since 1994. He is up for reelection this year and, for the first time ever, is facing a challenge from Al Weber of the St. Louis Chapter. Ballots in the biannual election are due August 1 and the results will be announced two weeks after.

Norfolk Southern Will Not Operate Steam Trips This Fall

NORFOLK, VA – Norfolk Southern will not run 21st Century steam trips for the remainder of 2014, NS spokesman Rob Chapman announced on July 16. He confirmed that steam trips will resume in Spring, 2015. Freight traffic is up significantly on NS and road crew availability is tight, leading to the decision not to run steam this fall, according to those familiar with the operation. That doesn't mean that the stars of the show will take the season off, however.

In the South, Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum's overhaul of Southern Railway 2-8-2 #4501 is expected to be completed in August, and the famous Mikado or stablemate Southern 2-8-0 #630 will lead Summerville (GA) Steam Specials October 4, 11, 18, 19, 25, 26 and November 1. Details and tickets are available at the Museum's website, www.tvrail.com.

Meanwhile, in the Midwest, Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society's Nickel Plate Road 2-8-4 #765 will return to Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad September 6-7 and September 13-14. Details will be posted soon at www.765.org.

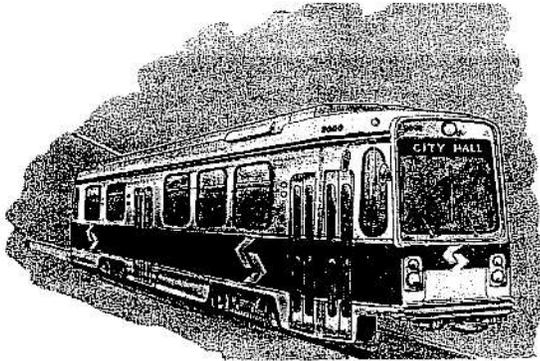
Work continues on the Virginia Museum of Transportation's Norfolk & Western Class J #611. The 4-8-4's engine at tender were separated this month at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer, and the engine placed inside the roundhouse for the next phase of work, which includes ultrasonic testing of the boiler shell. The locomotive should be ready for the main line in Spring, 2015. –David C. Lester, *TRAINS News Wire*.

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

SEPTA TRANSIT



The rollout of all-night weekend service on the Broad Street and Market-Frankford Lines has been warmly welcomed by the riding public. On the first night, Sunday, June 15, nearly 5,800 passengers rode the trains between midnight and 5 AM. SEPTA staff reported “a lot of young people” using the service. Trains on both lines ran every 20 minutes, with operators collecting fares and a visible police presence at stations and on the trains. The pilot program, advertised to operate through Labor Day, is intended to complement the increasing after-hours dining and entertainment activities in center city. (Since 1991 late-night service on the two high-speed lines has been provided by NiteOwl buses.) During the first three weekends, midnight-to-5-AM ridership on both lines averaged 7,417 on Saturdays and 6,708 on Sundays, although these numbers spiked upward over the Fourth of July weekend. Ridership is nearly 50 percent higher than when the buses were running. Given this response it is likely that SEPTA will extend the all-night service beyond Labor Day.

Bad weather struck the Delaware Valley on several days in June and July, knocking out electric power to thousands of customers and causing some transportation tieups. Perhaps the worst storm struck the area on Tuesday night, July 8, with high winds, lightning and heavy rain putting some 260,000 Peco customers in the dark for anywhere from a few hours to a few days. Most of them were in the suburban counties rather than in Philadelphia proper. Five days earlier, on Thursday night the 3rd, another 150,000 Peco customers lost power, bringing the total of outages reported by Peco thus far in 2014 to 1.7 million. Flash flooding also was a major problem in many areas. Yet another dangerous storm in this chain of extreme weather hit the region on Tuesday afternoon, July 15, with heavy rains flooding roadways in Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey. SEPTA’s transit lines for the most part were able to keep operating through the numerous storms, but Regional Rail trains suffered some serious delays (see below). AMTRAK service also was affected, highway travel was disrupted in several areas and some flights at Philadelphia International Airport were delayed by these severe storms.

SEPTA General Manager Joseph M. Casey told Metro readers in June that pilot testing of the New Payment Technology

(NPT) fare collection system will begin around the end of this year. This represents a substantial delay in launching the NPT fare system, which has been in development for the past three years and centers around the introduction of “contactless” fare cards. Casey said that when “a significant percentage of our passengers have electronic fare cards in hand we will start to reduce the availability and sale of tokens [but] will continue to accept tokens until the new fare system is fully tested and installed...” The startup of NPT on Regional Rail may prove more difficult, and is expected only after installation on the high-speed lines and surface transit vehicles has been completed.

SEPTA has released a special commemorative poster to mark its 50th anniversary. The custom-designed poster is a collage of logos, vehicles, employee photos, buttons, badges and advertisements that help make up the history of SEPTA over its half-century existence. Copies may be made available for purchase at the Transit Museum Store in the SEPTA headquarters building.....A 57-year-old man was killed by a northbound Broad Street subway train at the Snyder station on Sunday evening, June 1. The man reportedly was sitting on the platform with his legs in the track area when he was struck.

SEPTA reports that it saved \$11 million in injury claims during Fiscal Years 2012 and 2013 as a result of surveillance cameras installed in its vehicles and stations, according to a report from Philly Plan. SEPTA now has 17,659 surveillance cameras in service, which have become invaluable in denying fraudulent injury claims filed against SEPTA. The agency works closely with the Philadelphia district attorney’s office in having these claims rejected. In addition, SEPTA benefits from a change in the State’s liability law, which now requires that SEPTA be found 60 percent at fault in an accident with another vehicle, rather than just one percent, before being required to pay the full cost of a claim.....President Obama in mid-July said that he would support a bill passed in the Republican-controlled House to extend the Highway Trust Fund until May 2015. This short-term measure authorizes spending \$10.8 billion to replenish the fund and prevent it from running out of money this month, which would have a devastating effect on highway, bridge and transit construction projects. The Senate is likely to go along.

SEPTA will close the subway-surface trolley tunnels from August 1 to August 18 to perform major construction and repair work. During this period all cars will be diverted to the 40th & Market subway station. Work in the five-mile-long tunnel will include installing thousands of feet of new rail, four miles of new trolley wire, new switches and emergency lighting—not to mention a major cleanup of the track and station areasTrack renewal work continues on the outer end of Route 11 between Island Avenue and the Darby loop. It should be completed by Labor Day (see June *Cinders*). Shuttle bus service is being provided.....Rebuilding work on I-95 in the Port Richmond area was expanded northward in June. This \$212-

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million phase of the I-95 project will reconstruct and widen the 1.5-mile northbound section between Girard and Allegheny Avenues, while bridge repair work is underway. Highway travel in the area will become even more difficult, but when the project is completed in 2018 Route 15 trolleys could return to a relocated Richmond Street on new trackage.



SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL

The \$30-million project to restore the Wayne Junction station (see January *Cinders*) is now 75-percent complete, SEPTA announced last month. The project is divided into three phases, the first including construction of a high-level platform north of the station headhouse, and the second restoring the station building, the main entrance on Windrim Avenue, the tunnel under the tracks and installing inbound and outbound elevators. The third phase will see the balance of the high-level platform south of the station completed and the Wayne Avenue access stairs repaired.

Radnor Township's Planning Committee has approved SEPTA's plan to upgrade the Villanova station with high-level platforms, an expanded parking lot and improved pedestrian tunnel. The chairman of the committee also requested that SEPTA install charging stations for electric automobiles..... Norristown-bound train #6212 struck and killed a trespasser at Indian Queen Lane in East Falls just after 6 AM on Monday, June 9. Police said that the man jumped in front of the train. Service on the line was suspended for nearly three hours and full service was resumed at 10:30 AM. Twelve trains had to be annulled and ten others were delayed.

As of late June all but two of SEPTA's old Silverliner II and III cars had been shipped off to the scrapper in North Jersey. The only ones remaining are ex-Reading Budd #9001 destined for the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania and another burned-out Budd held at Overbrook for unknown reasons..... SEPTA may be interested in acquiring five of AMTRAK's AEM-7AC electrics when they are retired, perhaps to serve as backups when SEPTA's own AEM-7's are sent for a much-needed overhaul. The units being earmarked for SEPTA are #934, 936, 939, 942 and 944.....The new Greenwood Avenue bridge over the SEPTA Mainline at Jenkintown opened to traffic on June 30, even though some trim work remains to be done.....It's interesting to note that seven of SEPTA's 13 Regional Rail lines have no public grade crossings!

The heavy weather in June and July provided many challenges to the people who run the Regional Rail system. The Control Center issued frequent Rule F-S1 speed restriction orders, these among them: Monday, June 9 for high water on parts of the Main, Warminster, Norristown, Airport, Fox Chase, Chestnut Hill East and West Lines due to heavy rainfall; Friday, June 13 for high

water on the Main, Warminster, Norristown and Airport Lines; Tuesday and Wednesday June 17-18, Wednesday and Thursday, July 2-3 and Tuesday, July 8, due to temperatures in the 90's. A major rain and windstorm on the evening of July 3 created havoc in several areas, especially on AMTRAK's Northeast Corridor south of Philadelphia. Signal failures resulted in wholesale delays and cancellations in SEPTA service to Wilmington and Newark, as well as serious delays to Amtrak's own Corridor trains. That same evening a downed tree south of Melrose Park station delayed many SEPTA trains due to the need for single-track operation.

A severe electrical and windstorm on Tuesday, July 8, caused major damage around the region and disrupted Regional Rail service on several lines. In the evening a tree fell onto AMTRAK's Harrisburg line just east of Wayne station, causing Amtrak to suspend service around 8:45 PM, forcing SEPTA to cancel several Paoli-Thorndale trains. Other trees fell at Cheltenham and Fort Washington and a tree branch fell on top of Malvern-bound train #585. Chestnut Hill East service had to be suspended because of overhead power being knocked out, another tree fouled the catenary on the Norristown Line south of Conshohocken and Airport Line service also was suspended due to storm damage. The result was a long list of annulments and delays around the system. Buses were dispatched to rescue stranded passengers from certain stalled trains. Service to and from Chestnut Hill East did not resume until 3:30 PM the following day, July 9, as passengers were advised to use the CH West Line. Car shortages were reported on numerous trains throughout the system. Yet another F-S1 was issued on Monday evening, July 14, due to high water on several lines, resulting in many train delays.

In addition to the weather-related problems from the previous day, Regional Rail passengers encountered many delays on Friday, July 4, when holiday ridership was high. On-time performance that day was a miserable 55 percent. Running on a holiday schedule, dozens of trains were jammed with people going to and from the events in center city, a situation exacerbated by a signal failure at "Carmel" interlocking in Glenside. Among other problems was a disruption in service in the late morning of Monday, May 31, when a diesel-powered wire train caused catenary damage on #3 track at Suburban Station. This caused numerous delays and annulments. Repairs were completed early the next morning. Then, around 8 AM on Tuesday, July 8, a low voltage problem on AMTRAK caused five Trenton and Chestnut Hill West trains to be annulled, and several others were delayed. On Friday, July 11, a bizarre accident at Frazer shop damaged MU's #455 and 456 as they passed through the car washer. The steel frame of the washer came loose and scraped along the car, causing severe door damage to #455.



AMTRAK

AMTRAK has issued a request for proposals to acquire up to 28 new high-speed trainsets "to supplement and eventually replace its aging Acela Express equipment." All current manufacturers of high-speed rail equipment—defined as capable of operating at 160 mph or more—are eligible to bid. Earlier, Amtrak and the California High-Speed Rail Authority said that they had cancelled their joint agreement to acquire high-speed trains for both organizations (see February *Cinders*).

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PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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Several Pennsylvania Congressman are supporting a bill to mandate the renaming of 30th Street Station in honor of the late Representative William H. Gray III of Philadelphia. This follows an abortive attempt in 2011 to rename the station for Benjamin Franklin. At almost the same time, *Trains* reported that Toronto, Canada, has turned down a proposal to rename that city's Union Station in honor of Canada's first prime minister, Sir. John A. MacDonald. The city's staff said in a report that the station's "name and edifice are iconic and both are considered to be core components of the city's history and heritage." It will be recalled that AMTRAK several years ago officially dubbed the Wilmington station as the "Joseph R. Biden, Jr." station, but hardly anyone including Amtrak actually uses the name.

AMTRAK is preparing to retire the last of its somewhat unreliable HHP-8 electric locomotives as new ACS-64 units are placed in service. Of the 15 HHP-8's (650-664) leased from Bombardier at least eight have already been retired or set aside while the survivors are running out their last miles on the Corridor. They are relatively new, having been built in 1998-1999AMTRAK's traveling display train was scheduled to make its only appearance in the Tri-State area on July 19-20, when it visits the Delaware State Fair in HarringtonTrain #43 **Pennsylvanian** carried a rather unusual car out of Philadelphia on June 14. It was Tuscan-red DOTX 221, a safety car owned by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The car was headed to Harrisburg, then to its home base at Letterkenny Army Depot near Chambersburg.....P42 #42 with its special "Veterans" commemorative paint scheme deadheaded from Philadelphia to Harrisburg in train #43 on July 7. It returned as the sole power on Keystone train #648 on July 9 but broke down at Middletown, so the train had to be hauled back to Harrisburg by diesel #514. Passengers were transferred to following train #650.

The first of 130 new "Viewliner II" passenger cars ordered by AMTRAK, baggage car #61000, arrived in Philadelphia in late May. Painted in the retro three-equal-stripes paint scheme, the car began testing in Northeast Corridor service. The builder, CAF USA of Elmira, NY, shipped three more cars to Albany in early July. Some of the new cars should enter revenue service by the end of the year.....AMTRAK, the Federal Railroad Administration and Maryland DOT are cooperating in a study on how to replace or improve the 141-year-old Baltimore & Potomac tunnel in Baltimore. The present tunnel is seen as a low-speed bottleneck for Northeast Corridor service. The ongoing engineering and environmental study, to be completed in 2017, is intended to examine the various alternatives for eliminating this bottleneck.....The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to hear a case involving a Federal law which allows AMTRAK to set performance standards for its host railroads. A lower court ruled in favor of the freight railroads which had said that such an arrangement is unconstitutional, but Amtrak and the FRA have appealed that ruling, arguing that the FRA as a government agency exercises sufficient oversight of Amtrak.

AMTRAK had a number of notable train delays on the Northeast Corridor over the past few weeks. At 4:30 PM on Wednesday, June 25, southbound Acela #2163 struck and killed a trespasser near Sharon Hill station. Service on the Corridor had to be suspended for a time, with delays to many Amtrak trains. One track was released at 5:16 for restricted speeds. Ten SEPTA

Wilmington-Newark trains were annulled. Early on Tuesday, July 8, a power supply problem in North Jersey stalled both Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT trains for over an hour. During the outage NJT diverted some Penn Station trains to Hoboken Terminal, while other passengers suffered up to one-hour delays. On Friday, July 6, eastbound train 184 became disabled at Torresdale and its passengers had to be transferred to another train. Then, on Thursday, July 17, HHP-8 #661 became disabled near Metropark with train #95, and had to be rescued by another HHP-8. The train was over three hours late arriving in Philadelphia. Meanwhile, there were locomotive failures on the Harrisburg line. Train 644 from Harrisburg broke down at Rosemont station on the morning of Monday, June 30, its passengers transferred to SEPTA train #550. The next evening train 618 became disabled at Downingtown. Power was restored to the AEM-7 in a half-hour and the train was on the move. And as mentioned above, P42 #42 died at Middletown on July 9, forcing train 648 to be annulled.



CSX,
NS,
OTHER ROADS

Power-short Norfolk Southern has purchased 16 secondhand locomotives, all of them former BNSF units that were returned at the expiration of their leases. Nine of them are SD60M's and seven are ex-Santa Fe SD75M's, the latter a new model on NS. The units will be sent to Juniata shop for reconditioning but will not be repainted immediately (*Trains*)In late June and July NS ran its Lifesaver Safety train through Pennsylvania and Delaware to make the public aware of safety around railroad tracks. The train, which visited places such as Reading, Pottstown, Harrisburg and Altoona, did not come to Philadelphia. It was powered by two locomotives bearing the "Operation Lifesaver" logo, two coaches, the NS exhibit car and the NS research and test car. Public safety advocates and media representatives were invited to ride along to view a live video of the tracks and grade crossings ahead via cameras mounted on the lead locomotive.

NS President James A. Squires visited the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania in June, continuing the close relationship between the railroad and museum as established by CEO Wick Moorman. Squires, who was named president in 2013, recently was given additional responsibility over the Operations and Marketing Departments.....A totally clueless truck driver stopped his 18-wheeler on the NS mainline tracks in downtown Topton, PA, on May 28, while he went into a nearby store to ask directions. A westbound freight traveling at 45 mph plowed into the trailer, scattering debris and flipping over the tractor. No one was injured but some \$35,000 in damage was done to the locomotive and the crossing protection was destroyed. The Florida-based driver was jailed on charges of causing a catastrophe, criminal mischief, recklessly endangering another person and related offenses.....The 4.4 inches of rain that fell on Philadelphia April 30 not only flooded the CSX tracks along the Schuylkill River in center city (see June *Cinders*) but shorted out the motors that control the pedestrian gates at Race Street. These gates allow walkers and bikers to cross the tracks to access the river trail, but close when a train is approaching. The Streets Department said that the gates will remain closed indefinitely until repairs can be made.

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Presidential Order Halts SEPTA Rail Shutdown After 1 Day

The members of two SEPTA unions went on strike at 12:01 AM on Saturday, June 14, shutting down the entire Regional Rail system. The walkout came at the end of a 14-day "cooling-off period" as the National Mediation Board declared an impasse in contract negotiations between SEPTA and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. The two unions, which together represent about 430 Railroad Division employees, have been in a contract standoff with SEPTA for a number of years.

In response to an urgent request from Governor Corbett to intervene, President Obama signed an Executive Order on Saturday afternoon creating an emergency board to examine the dispute. Under Federal law this action forced the strikers to return to work immediately and remain on the job for 240 days while the special panel studies the issues and makes its recommendations. Service was restored quickly on Sunday morning and SEPTA promised that by rush hour on Monday all scheduled trains would be operating.

The strike was precipitated on Monday, June 9, when SEPTA announced that effective the following Saturday it would unilaterally impose the contract terms it had previously agreed to, including a series of wage increases. But union officials said that SEPTA's action would guarantee a strike, and it did. In spite of widespread warnings in the media, the Saturday morning walkout caught some riders by surprise, as they waited for trains that would not come. It was fortunate that the strike occurred on a Saturday, when ridership is less than normal. Weekday ridership on Regional Rail is more than 125,000.

During the week of June 23 the three-member emergency board met with both SEPTA and union officials, and submitted its report on July 14. The panel's recommendations, which are non-binding, generally favored SEPTA's final offer. Rail workers, it said, should receive the same 11.5-percent wage increase that transit employees won in their last five-year contract with SEPTA. But the board concluded that the engineers and electricians are not entitled to any retroactive pay, as their unions had demanded.

The first phase of the proposed settlement would include an immediate pay increase of 8.5 percent, with another three percent due next year. Engineers also should receive an additional 35 cents per hour to maintain the traditional ten-percent wage differential over conductors, bringing their top pay to \$33.09 per hour this year. They also would be entitled to a \$270-a-year allowance for uniforms if they agree to wear them, which up to now they have not. On top of the 11.5-percent pay increase all of the involved employees would get a \$1,250 signing bonus, as did transit workers in the previous contract.

It is hoped that the mediators' recommendations will provide the basis for settling this long-running dispute. But if the negotiations remain deadlocked, a second emergency board will be appointed in an attempt to hammer out a contract agreement before the 240-day grace period expires on February 9, 2015.

Two other unions representing employees on the City and Suburban Transit Divisions also are working without contracts, and are free to strike at any time. This raises the possibility that all of SEPTA's services could be shut down at the same time next winter, something that has never happened before. The previous strike by Regional Rail workers occurred in 1983 after SEPTA had taken over the service from Conrail. It lasted for 108 days, but riders adapted as best they could by carpooling or using the subways, buses and trolleys which continued to operate normally during the period.

SEPTA commuters will be watching closely over the next several months to see if an amicable settlement can be reached in the current dispute.

--- Frank Tatnall

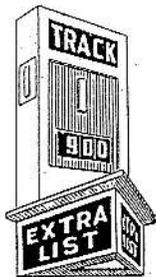
PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

(Continued from Page 5)

The NJ TRANSIT board last month approved an operating budget of \$2.0 billion along with a \$1.2 billion capital budget for Fiscal Year 2015. Fares will be held stable for the fifth consecutive year. Fare revenues are anticipated to increase by about one percent over the previous year to \$928.6 million, accounting for nearly half of the operating budget, while most of the balance will come from State and Federal subsidies. The capital budget allocates \$76 million for improvements on the Northeast Corridor, NJT's most heavily-used line, as part of its ten-year, \$1-billion NEC investment program that includes construction of the Mid-Line Loop, a new flyover track to be built just west of New Brunswick.....NJT will receive an additional \$66.8 million from the Federal government to help cover the huge recovery costs from Hurricane Sandy in October 2012. The funding includes the construction of a new emergency operations center to replace the current inadequate facility. NJT also has developed a comprehensive Emergency Management Plan which details how it will protect its rolling stock during severe weather events—something which was sadly lacking when Sandy struck. The new plan also addresses procedures for dealing with other emergencies such as terrorist acts and earthquakes.

Work continues on PATCO's \$103-million project to rebuild its railroad across the Ben Franklin bridge (see June Cinders). A new timetable was issued on May 30 to deal with the single-track operation on the bridge.....PATCO riders soon will be able to use their cell phones in underground stations and tunnels. PATCO has contracted with Verizon to install transmission equipment in those areas, so that by November riders will be unimpeded in using cell phones over the entire PATCO system.....The Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania has received State funding for several special projects, including the repainting of ex-AMTRAK E60 electric locomotive #603, repairing a second ex-Pennsy wooden baggage car and upgrading the restoration shop.....Harrisburg Chapter reports that READING & NORTHERN President Andrew Muller is fed up with graffiti, which has become endemic on railroad cars. In March, R&N began a "war on graffiti" to eradicate the illegal "art," so that when an employee spots these scrawlings on company rolling stock he or she is to report the fact and the car will be sent to the nearest shop to have the graffiti removed.

Friday, August 15, 2014: Annual Bill Wagner Summer Dinner of Philadelphia Chapter at Moonstruck Restaurant, 7955 Oxford Avenue, in the Fox Chase section of Philadelphia, one block from SEPTA's Fox Chase station, and across from the Fox Chase bus loop. Details on Page 1, this issue. Our Summer Dinner was at Moonstruck in 2011.



Sunday, August 17: 39th Annual Train Meet, sponsored by Central Pennsylvania Chapter, NRHS at the Warrior Run Fire Department Social Hall, Second Street, Allenwood, PA (convenient to U. S. Route 15), 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Admission: \$3.00 per person. Model trains and railroadians for sale. Food available on site.

Thursday, August 21: Tanger Outlets of Lancaster, PA presents "Wags & Whistles" Fall Fashion Show at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Route 741, Strasburg, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Tickets are \$10.00 in advance, \$12.00 day of show. Proceeds benefit KPETS (Keystone Pet Enhanced Therapy Services) and Friends of the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania. For ticket information, telephone the Museum at 1-717-687-8628, Extension 3008 (credit card only) or visit their website at www.rmmuseumpa.org.

Friday, August 29-Sunday, August 31: Steamtown Railfest 2014 at Steamtown National Historic Site, Scranton, PA, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM each day. Regular Park admission charge of \$7.00 for adults, 16 and older required. Yard shuttle train rides and caboose rides available for \$5.00 for anyone 6 years and up. Diesel-powered excursions from Scranton to Moscow, PA and return, departing Steamtown 12:30 PM Saturday and Sunday. For additional information, telephone 1-570-340-5200.

Monday, September 1: Lehigh Gorge Railway will operate "Anthracite Express" excursion Port Clinton-Jim Thorpe, PA and return. See separate article this page for details.

Sunday, September 21: United Railroad Historical Society 2014 New Jersey Transportation Heritage Festival at Boonton, NJ. Full details in September *Cinders*. See "Branford Bound on Long Island Sound" by the late Philadelphia Chapter Member Willard H. Hart on Page 8, this issue.

Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway Sets "Anthracite Express" Photo Train

PORT CLINTON, PA – The Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway is sponsoring a special photo freight powered by Reading & Northern's former Gulf, Mobile & Northern 4-6-2 #425 Labor Day, Monday, September 1, 2014. The special will include four coal hoppers, two passenger cars and a caboose. The train will depart Port Clinton at 9:00 AM and return at 5:30 PM, and will make several photo runbys enroute.

Only 100 seats are available for the special. Tickets are \$200 each. Two cab ride tickets are available at \$400 each. For tickets or information, telephone Allen Keller at 1-717-273-9932

Amtrak's On-Time Performance Has Dropped Sharply This Year

A combination of factors has conspired to send the on-time performance of Amtrak trains plummeting by nearly 12 percent in the current fiscal year, as compared with the previous year. For the first eight months of FY 2014, which began last October 1, trains systemwide were on time an average of only 74 percent versus 86 percent for all of FY 2013.

Obviously, among the worst performers were the western long-distance trains, with the **Empire Builder** racking up a terrible on-time record of only 21 percent, while the **California Zephyr** reached destination just 34 percent on time. But an equally poor performer was the Washington-Chicago **Capitol Limited** at just 29 percent on time. Amtrak's definition of "on time" varies according to the length of the route, with trains traveling less than 250 miles considered on time if they arrive up to ten minutes behind schedule, but the cushion increases to 30 minutes for trains running more than 550 miles.

Bad weather, of course, is a factor, as are locomotive or equipment failures, but one major cause which is out of Amtrak's control is delays occurring on host railroads, such as freight train interference, slow orders and trackwork. Slowdowns on host railroads have accounted for about two-thirds of all Amtrak delays, according to Amtrak's performance report. This factor is responsible for roughly two-thirds of all Amtrak delays, which appear to have spiked upward since a court decision last year nullifying Amtrak's legal authority to set performance standards for the freight railroads. The case has been appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which could reverse the decision.

But even service on Amtrak's own Northeast Corridor has worsened this year. In May 2014 the Acela Expresses had an 80-percent on-time record, down ten percent from May 2013, and Northeast Regional train performance was at 78.5 percent on time, down nine percent from the previous May. The new ACS-64 electric locomotives now coming on line may help improve the latter, but aging infrastructure will not be so easily replaced. Thus, improving on-time performance systemwide and thereby attracting more customers to its trains will continue to be a major challenge for Amtrak in the future.

(From an Atlantic CityLab Report)

between 6:00 and 9:00 PM, Eastern Time, or Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railroad at 1-570-325-8485, website www.lgsrv.com.

Baldwin built #425 for the Gulf, Mobile & Northern in 1928. It later became Gulf, Mobile & Ohio #580 and was retired in 1950. It was sold to steam enthusiast Paulsen Spence, who amassed a collection of more than 30 steam locomotives of various designs in the 1950's. Shortly after his death in 1961, his relatives unceremoniously had all but four of the locomotives scrapped, with #425 one of the survivors. Malcolm Ottinger purchased #425 in 1962 and it became the main power of the Valley Forge Scenic Railroad of Kimberton, PA, where it was renumbered back to #425. In the 1970's, it was purchased by Brian Woodcock and others, and moved to the Wilmington & Western Railroad, though it never operated there. In 1983, it was sold to Andrew J. Muller, Jr. to power tourist trains on his newly-formed Blue Mountain & Reading Railroad, now Reading & Northern. Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway is an affiliate of Reading & Northern.

Branford Bound on Long Island Sound

By Willard H. Hart

(This piece, written by the late Willard H. Hart, long-time member of Philadelphia Chapter, who joined in 1937 and passed away in 2004, is provided by William J. McKelvey from his archive of New Jersey fantrip notices. The article is printed as it was written by Willard in 1959.)

On September 21, 2014, at the United Railroad Historical Society of New Jersey Heritage Festival at Boonton, NJ, "restored" GG1 #4879 will be featured. We print this article by Willard Hart for your enjoyment, and thank Bill McKelvey for providing it. The trip was operated from Philadelphia to New Haven, CT on Sunday, May 17, 1959, following affixing of a 25-year plaque on #4800. This notice was obviously handed out to passengers on that trip.)

The Philadelphia Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society welcomes you aboard its "GG-1 Silver Anniversary Special".

Our locomotive, No. 4800, - the first GG-1, - was introduced in 1934. To celebrate this, our chapter presented to the Pennsylvania RR two bronze commemorative plates, which were affixed to No. 4800 yesterday, at a brief ceremony. Following No. 4800, 138 additional GG-1s were built. Each is 79.5 feet long, weighs 238 tons, develops 4620 horsepower (rewinding of the motors with modern insulation on some GG-1s increased this figure to 4800), and can pull the heaviest passenger trains at better than 90 miles per hour

Our route today takes us over the Pennsy's New York Division. After leaving Philadelphia, we go through Bristol, Levittown and Morrisville, and across the Delaware River into Trenton. Beyond Trenton we can see the spires of Princeton University to the left of the train as we pass Princeton Junction. We diverge from the main line at Monmouth Junction, proceeding east over a secondary line to Jamesburg where we stop for fifteen minutes to take photos. We then turn north here on to the original line of the Camden & Amboy Railroad. The C. & A., *New Jersey's first railroad*, was built by Col. John Stevens and opened in 1832. Today the route still sees a few freight trains, and one local passenger train Monday through Friday over part of the line. An 18th-century stagecoach route between New York and Philadelphia ran through here.

At South Amboy, coming in from the North Jersey Coast and on our right, is the New York & Long Branch Railroad, jointly owned by the PRR and Jersey Central. We swing onto it, heading north-westward across the long Raritan River bridge, through Perth Amboy and Woodbridge to Rahway, where we rejoin the Pennsy's main line. Leaving Newark Station, we slowly cross the Passaic River on what is probably the world's most impressive drawbridge. Heading across the "Meadows", we see the electrified Lackawanna, later the Erie, more Lackawanna, and the Susquehanna. At Secaucus we dive beneath Bergen Hill in a tube that takes us under the Hudson River and into Pennsylvania Station, New York, Gateway to a Continent".

A short pause is made here to change to locomotive and crew of the New Haven Railroad, upon whose Shore Line we will now be the rest of the way. Leaving Penn Station we continue through another set of tubes that take us beneath the East River, emerging in Long Island City. On our left are the vast Sunnyside passenger

car yards, entered by a loop track which can be seen to pass under our route. The Long Island Railroad bears away to our right while in a few moments we are over the Astoria section of New York City, entering the famous Hell Gate Bridge. This giant bridge was opened April 1, 1917, and at its center rises 320 feet above the East River near Hell Gate Channel. Its extremely long approaches eliminate steep grades at either end.

We leave New York City and pass the New Haven's Van Nest shops, and at New Rochelle we join trackage from Grand Central Terminal which bears in on our left. On our left, for the next few miles, may still be detected the abandoned roadbed of the New York, Westchester and Boston. This was a very high grade electric suburban railroad, whose lack of an in-town New York terminal eventually led to its demise. Our special continues through Rye and Port Chester, New York, crossing into Connecticut, through the expensive commuter suburbs of Greenwich, Cos Cob (where the railroad's power plant for its electrification is seen on our right), Riverside, Old Greenwich and Stamford. Norwalk, Westport, and Saugatuck follow as we hug the shore of Long Island Sound into Bridgeport, a manufacturing center.

Our Shore Line Route traverses many interesting drawbridges, as it crosses- near their mouths - numerous streams which empty into the nearby Sound. We are due in New Haven at 1:00 PM (DST). This is the end of the New Haven's electrification, 71 miles from New York's Grand Central Terminal. Except for a suburban run in the New York area, this 11,000 volt A.C. electrification is to be scrapped; the New Haven Railroad will attempt to dispose of its fleet of fine, modern electric locomotives.

Leaving the train at New Haven, we go down the stairs, through the tunnel and the station waiting room, and outside to board our chartered buses. At the buses, an announcement will be made as to which buses are for the trolley museum, and which are for the city tour. At Branford, our genial hosts will be the members of the Branford Electric Railway Association. At the conclusion of the visit to Branford, please board buses promptly to return to the railroad station. The railroad's tight scheduling requires our train to be ready to leave New Haven at 5:00 (DST) sharp. Returning to Philadelphia, our only change from the morning route will be a fast run down the PRR main line all the way from New York to Trenton and Philadelphia.

Sandwiches, coffee and soft drinks are available on our train between Philadelphia and New York in both directions, and are also on sale at the trolley museum. They will not be available on the train between New York and New Haven, in either direction.

Philadelphia Chapter LCL (Less-than-Carload)

The Delaware Valley lost a longtime transit legend on Monday, July 14 with the passing of **Edson L. Tennyson**, at the age of 92. He had a long career as a public advocate for mass transit, serving as City Transit Engineer for the City of Philadelphia, later as Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Deputy Secretary for Transportation. Tennyson was quoted on two Pittsburgh projects, the South Busway (a big mistake), and the Sixth Avenue subway for light rail (increased patronage by 50%). While at PennDOT, he fiercely promoted improved service on then-Penn Central's Philadelphia-Harrisburg service, which has evolved into Amtrak's highly-successful Keystone Corridor service. Services were held on Tuesday, July 22 at the Vienna Presbyterian Church, Vienna, VA.