

# THE FLATWHEEL

The Official Monthly Publication of the Central Florida  
Railway Historical Society, Inc.



## January 2013

### January Meeting

Monday, January 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM  
Central Florida RR Museum  
101 S. Boyd St., Winter Garden, FL

**Program:** The Valley RR, the African Queen  
& a Ford Tri-Motor **By:** Addison Austin  
**Refreshments Provided By:** Jerry & Ginger Honetor

### February Meeting

Monday, February 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM  
Central Florida RR Museum  
101 S. Boyd St., Winter Garden, FL

**Program:** Dispatching on the ACL's  
Ocala District  
**By:** Warren McFarland  
**Refreshments Provided By:** Dan & Janet Crusie

### Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc.

#### Central Florida RR Museum Host Duty Schedule — January 2013

DAY	DATE	HOURS	MUSEUM HOST
Saturday	1/5/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Jarrod Reynolds
Sunday	1/6/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Gary Dettman
Saturday	1/12/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Irv Lipscomb
Sunday	1/13/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Jerry Honetor
Saturday	1/19/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Phil Baker
Sunday	1/20/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Gary Dettman
Saturday	1/26/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Bill Dusenbury
Sunday	1/27/13	1 P.M. – 5 P.M.	Clarence Hurt

### CFRHS Membership Statistics

Society Members	46
Society Century Members	0
Society Corporate Members	0
Society Friends	0
Society Family Members	19
Society Student Members	1
<b>Total Members</b>	<b>67</b>

# HAPPY NEW YEAR

### January Museum Work Session

**Saturday, January 26, 2013  
8:30 AM to 3:30 PM**

**Please come out and help  
with the many chores that  
need to be done!!!!**

### January Birthdays

Patricia Swiston 1/6  
Bill Dusenbury 1/17  
Irv Lipscomb 1/18  
Al Weber 1/31

# Al Pfeiffer's Photo Corner

This feature focuses on photos taken by our own Society Friend Al Pfeiffer. Over the years, Al has taken thousands of photos related to our favorite hobby and he would like to share some of them with us. Each month, three of Al's photos are featured.



Tradewater Ry. GP 9 #4549 at Foley FL on 1/14/10.



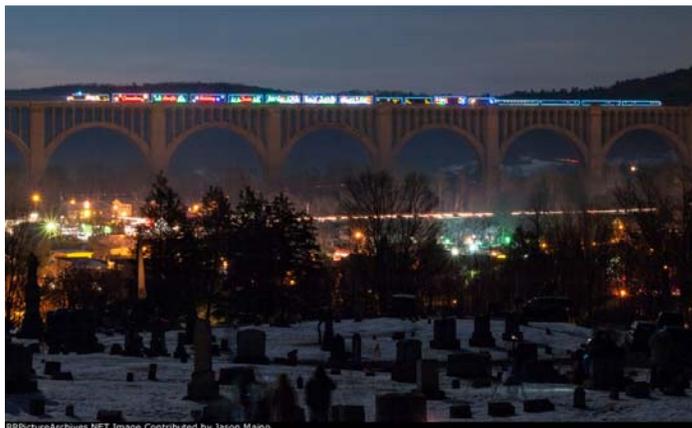
Atlantic Coast Line SW 8 #648 at Davenport FL on 2/27/10.



Amtrak Train #91 southbound with #61 at Barberville FL on 9/17/09.

Thanks to Society Member Jerry Hardwich for sending in the following photograph.

## CP Holiday Train on Nickleson Viaduct



Thanks to Society Member Roger Wilson for sending in the following two photographs of the Polar Express at the Maine Narrow Gauge Museum.



## Upcoming Events

**January 5&6, 2013 — Deland, FL** — 42<sup>nd</sup> Florida Rail Fair, Volusia County Fairgrounds, 3150 East New York Avenue, 9 am – 4 pm, Admission: Adults \$7.00, Under 12 Free. Contact: Charles Miller, 386-736-8185, [rrshows@aol.com](mailto:rrshows@aol.com). Website: <http://www.gserr.com>.

**January 14, 2013 — Winter Garden, FL** — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**January 16-19, 2013** — Florida Flywheelers Antique Engine Club's 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Swap Meet, 7000 Avon Park Cutoff Road, Ft. Meade, FL, 33841. Admission: \$7.00 per day. Call 863-285-9121. Website: <http://www.floridaflywheelers.org>.

**February 11, 2013 — Winter Garden, FL** — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**February 16, 2013 — Jacksonville, FL** — 35<sup>th</sup> Jacksonville Rail Fair, Railroadiana and Model Train Show, 9:00 to 4:00. Admission \$7 (under 12 free), Prime Osborn Convention Center, 1000 Water Street (former Jacksonville Terminal). Details: Charlie Miller, 3106 N. Rochester St., Arlington, VA 22213-1348, (703) 536-2954, [rrshows@aol.com](mailto:rrshows@aol.com). Website: <http://www.gserr.com>.

**February 20-23, 2013** — Florida Flywheelers Antique Engine Club's 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Antique Engine & Tractor Show, 7000 Avon Park Cutoff Road, Ft. Meade, FL, 33841. Admission: \$7.00 per day. Call 863-285-9121. Website: <http://www.floridaflywheelers.org>.

**March 11, 2013** — Winter Garden, FL — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**April 8, 2013** — Winter Garden, FL — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**April 13, 2013 — Deland, FL** — 43<sup>rd</sup> Florida Rail Fair, Volusia County Fairgrounds, 3150 East New York Avenue, 9 am – 4 pm, Admission: Adults \$7.00, Under 12 Free. Contact: Charles Miller, 386-736-8185, [rrshows@aol.com](mailto:rrshows@aol.com). Website: <http://www.gserr.com>.

**May 11-12, 2013, The Villages, FL** — The Villages Spring Train Expo, at the Savannah Center, 9 am – 4 pm Saturday, 10 am – 3 pm Sunday. Contact: Alan Goldberg, 352-205-4322, [amgold15@hotmail.com](mailto:amgold15@hotmail.com), Website: <http://villagerailclubs.blogspot.com>.

**May 13, 2013** — Winter Garden, FL — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**June 10, 2013** — Winter Garden, FL — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**July 8, 2013** — Winter Garden, FL — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**August 12, 2013** — Winter Garden, FL — Monthly Meeting of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society at 7:00 PM in the Central Florida Railroad Museum, 101 South Boyd Street.

**August 17-18, 2013, The Villages, FL** — The Villages Summer Train Expo, at the Savannah Center, 9 am – 4 pm Saturday, 10 am – 3 pm Sunday. Contact: Alan Goldberg, 352-205-4322, [amgold15@hotmail.com](mailto:amgold15@hotmail.com), Website: <http://villagerailclubs.blogspot.com>.

**Thanks to Society Member & TE&G RR General Manager Neil Bagaus for sending in the following story.**

## **Construction Begins on Replica Depot of the St. Johns & Lake Eustis Railway at Tavares**

On October 26, 2012, construction began on a new train station in Tavares, Florida. The station is being built on the corner of Main Street and St Clair Abrams next to the 120 foot covered train loading platform already in place. On the outside, the station will be a replica of the St. Johns & Lake Eustis Railroad station that sat on the same spot. It was built in 1886 and burned down in July 1988.

The station is being financed by the City of Tavares. When completed, the station will be the home of the Tavares Chamber of Commerce and the Tavares, Eustis & Gulf Railroad. It will provide a waiting room, gift shop, restrooms, and offices for the tourist line. Construction is scheduled to be completed in April 2013.



**Original St. Johns & Lake Eustis Railway Depot at Tavares**



**Artist Rendering of New Replica St. Johns & Lake Eustis Railway Depot at Tavares**



More than worth to fly from Japan.” He arrived back in Japan on November 21. Operations Manager, Neil Bagaus, said, “it is great to see someone who loves steam engines have so much fun. To have Yoshi come from Japan is amazing!”

The Tavares, Eustis & Gulf Railroad operates tourist trains out of Tavares, Florida on lines owned by the Florida Central Railroad.



Yoshitaka Matsuo poses in front of the TE&G's "Two Spot"



The "Two Spot" letting off steam at Lake Jem.

**Thanks to Society Member & TE&G RR General Manager Neil Bagaus for sending in the following story.**

**How Far Would You Travel??**

How far would you travel to photograph a 1907 wood burning steam locomotive? For Yoshitaka Matsuo, it was all the way from Tokyo, Japan.

Yoshi, as he likes to be called, flew in for the photo run of the Orange Blossom Cannonball in Tavares, Florida. After traveling 4 days, he arrived on November 16 to shoot pictures of the crew preparing the locomotive for the trip. Once the 3 hour special on November 17 arrived back at the station, he spent the rest of the day shooting pictures of the train on its regular runs. Matsuo said "it was an unforgettable experience.



The "Two Spot" smokes it up for the photographers.

## December 2012 Museum Report

By Ken Murdock, Museum Curator

Our monthly museum workday on December 8, 2012 was light in participation, partly due to so many other activities leading up to Christmas, but we were able to accomplish a lot with those who could come. Phil Cross and Joe Lehmann took care of the house cleaning chores both inside and out. Being open 7 days a week, this is a never ending need.

Jerry Honetor continued his work of inventorying the library. Jerry, with help from Roger Wilson, has now inventoried more than 1400 items! That's quite amazing when you realize that Jerry gets quite involved in most every book, reading and skimming over parts of each one. He is searching for railroad names mentioned in each book and inputting those names into the library data base so they can be found in the future when someone wants to do a search for a particular railroad. We have an incredible resource at our finger tips and I encourage all of you to use our library more.

Al Sharp and I worked on rewiring the small showcase adjacent to the host's desk which had been unplugged for several years due to bad wiring. Phil helped us empty it and move it to the meeting room where it could be laid on its face for better access to the wiring conduit, ballast and fluorescent light. High temp wiring was donated by Al's nephew, Steve Thompson, of Brighter Futures Electrical Contractors in Ocoee. Steve donated enough wire to rewire all of the showcases when needed. We also installed a state of the art electronic ballast which did away with the need for the prehistoric starter once required.

While Al and I worked on the showcase Phil and Joe worked on the Society's new web site. Joe has also been putting in a number of hours at home on our web site and it is really shaping up to be something that will give a very good first impression of our new organization and our museum. Joe has incorporated a lot of the preliminary work that Phil had done earlier. Thanks Joe and Phil for all of your hard work. Phil also spent time producing the January issue of the Flat Wheel and helped us place the displays back in the showcase once it was finished.

The museum made a purchase of another Seaboard Air Line cast iron Maintenance Limit sign. Since we have one in the museum, Phil has already found a buyer for it and we should double our original investment. Good work Phil!

We have continued with our Wednesday workdays on the inventory and had one on December 12th. As reported earlier we have finished the Meeting Room and are now concentrating on the front room and hope to complete it by the end of January. Thank you to each of you who participated and have made our December workday successful and have helped to improve the quality of our organization and our museum.

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## 2012 Chapter Annual Banquet

The 2012 Chapter Annual Banquet was held at the 801 City Grille in downtown Clermont on Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. A total of 34 members, spouses and guests attended and enjoyed the evening's activities and entertainment. Entertainment was provided by pianist Armando Velasquez. After dinner, the Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc. Officers for 2013 were sworn in by Lloyd Brown. Ken Murdock presented the Ken Murdock Glad Hand Award for 2012 to Jerry Honetor for his efforts in the cataloging of the library's collection of books, periodicals, tapes and DVDs.

The following story was sent in by Chapter Friend Al Langley.

## NS Acquiring More F-Units.

Three CN F7Au's sold to NRE over 20 years ago have been resold to Norfolk Southern. CN 9177 has been relettered to SOU 9177 at NRE Dixmoor, the other two are at NRE Silvis shops.

The units are heading to Altoona, PA for overhaul/rebuilding. Moving with SOU marks to avoid conflict with the C40-9W same #s.

Components already on hand for their rebuilding. There's word these may also be used with some of the steam trips as the diesel support units.

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The following information has been provided by Chapter Member David Rhea.

## Possible Society Visit to Savannah, GA

At the last quarterly board meeting, I volunteered to check on the Savannah field trip.

Here is what I found:

If we choose to drive, the route is almost straight up I-95, about 300 miles, MapQuest says should take 4 hours and 30 minutes each way.

If we choose to take an Amtrak, the cost is about \$ 47 each way if tickets are purchased soon. We would take Amtrak # 98 up and # 97 back. # 98 leaves Winter Park at about 1:45 PM, arrives Savannah about 7:30 PM.

# 97 leaves Savannah about 6:45 AM, arrives Winter Park about 12:30 PM. Ticket prices increase as the date gets closer.

Terry Koller, who is Director of Railroad Operations of the Coastal Heritage Society, has sent me a substantial package of materials.

If we choose to go in March, the Association of Railroad Museums ( the ARM), of which we are a member, is having their annual convention in Savannah March 21-23, a Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. We are invited to the convention, and the Coastal Heritage Society has put together a package deal which includes the convention cost, field trips to the museums, and bus transportation.

I would like to present all this to the Society at the January meeting.

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## Ken Murdock Receives WGHF Railroad Museum Volunteer of the Year Award

On Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, five Chapter members and guests attended the Annual Meeting and Volunteer Appreciation Night for the Winter Garden Heritage Foundation which was held at the Attic Door in downtown Winter Garden. Chapter Member and Museum Curator Ken Murdock was recognized as the 2012 Railroad Museum Volunteer of the Year for his many contributions and hours of hard work. Ken has contributed over 550 hours to the Museum through November.

## January Museum Work Session

**Saturday, January 26, 2013  
8:30 AM to 3:30 PM**

**Please come out and help  
with the many chores that**

## T&G DVD

**The Whistle Blows No More....A History  
of the Tavares & Gulf Railroad 1881-1969**

**Available at the Railroad Museum for \$20.00  
Get your copy today!!**

## Outline History of Central Florida's Railroads

**By Ken Murdock**

**Available at the Railroad Museum for \$15.00  
Get your copy today!!**

**The Flatwheel** is the official monthly publication of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society. Opinions and views expressed in this publication are those of the editor and contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the members, officers or directors of the Society.

Material for the Flatwheel (including exchange newsletters) should be sent to the editor via e-mail at:  
[Crossrails@earthlink.net](mailto:Crossrails@earthlink.net).

**Please Note:** Material from The Flatwheel may be reprinted in other publications provided credit is given as to the source.

**The Central Florida Railroad Museum** is located at 101 South Boyd Street, Winter Garden, FL, 34787 (downtown Winter Garden, immediately north of the water tower).

The Museum is open daily from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM (excluding selected holidays) or by special arrangements. Large groups are encouraged to contact the Museum at 407-656-0559 to arrange for their tour in advance.

The Central Florida Railroad Museum is operated under a cooperative agreement between the City of Winter Garden, the Winter Garden Heritage Foundation and the Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc..

**The Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc.** meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 7:00 PM at the **Central Florida Railroad Museum**. The Museum is located at 101 South Boyd Street in downtown Winter Garden immediately north of the water tower. Guests and visitors are welcome and encouraged to attend.

All correspondence and other materials for the Society should be mailed to:

Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc.  
PO Box 770567  
Winter Garden, FL 34777-0567

Or e-mailed to the Society at: [info@cfrhs.org](mailto:info@cfrhs.org)

Web page: [www.cfrhs.org](http://www.cfrhs.org)

**Mission:** The mission of the Central Florida Railway Historical Society, Inc. is to Promoting railway heritage and preservation; educating members and the public about rail transportation, its history and impact, with a focus on Central Florida.

**Purpose:** The purpose for which this Society is formed and the business or objects to be carried on and promoted by it are mainly historical, educational and not-for-profit. The more particular objects are:

- Preserve the historical materials of rail transportation of all kinds and issue publications relative to the subject.
- Acquire by donation, purchase, lease or otherwise, real or personal property, and to maintain, sell, lease, deed or otherwise manage in a manner appropriate for the Central Florida Railroad Museum and the above mentioned purposes.
- Plan and run a series of programs and events for Society members' education and participation.
- Work and support the activities of the Winter Garden Heritage Foundation. Assist in any and all group projects which benefit the goals and activities of the Society and the Winter Garden Heritage Foundation.

President: Phil Cross  
[Crossrails@earthlink.net](mailto:Crossrails@earthlink.net) 407-509-4572

Vice President - Membership & Programs: Jerry Honetor  
[JerryHonetor@yahoo.com](mailto:JerryHonetor@yahoo.com) 407-957-8788

Vice President - Education & Public Relations: Irv Lipscomb  
[ilipscomb@cfl.rr.com](mailto:ilipscomb@cfl.rr.com) 407-895-4749

Secretary: Les Westlake  
[LesWestlake@comcast.net](mailto:LesWestlake@comcast.net) 352-434-6160

Assistant Secretary: Joseph Lehmann, Jr.  
[joelehmann@cfl.rr.com](mailto:joelehmann@cfl.rr.com) 856-912-8628

Treasurer: David Rhea  
[rhead34761@yahoo.com](mailto:rhead34761@yahoo.com) 407-656-8749

Assistant Treasurer: Frank Milmore  
[fmilmore@earthlink.net](mailto:fmilmore@earthlink.net) 407-366-8941

Museum Curator: Ken Murdock  
[rmurdock4@cfl.rr.com](mailto:rmurdock4@cfl.rr.com) 407-277-5719

Historian: Phil Cross  
[Crossrails@earthlink.net](mailto:Crossrails@earthlink.net) 407-509-4572

Immediate Past President: Bill Dusenbury  
[sclbill@hotmail.com](mailto:sclbill@hotmail.com) 352-360-0136

Flatwheel Editor: Phil Cross  
[Crossrails@earthlink.net](mailto:Crossrails@earthlink.net) 407-509-4572

Webmaster: Phil Cross  
[Crossrails@earthlink.net](mailto:Crossrails@earthlink.net) 407-509-4572

# Rail News Courtesy of Society Member Roger Wilson

From the *TRAINS, Railroad & Railfan* and AAR Web Sites

## No Anomalies Found in Texas Crossing Accident

Published: November 19, 2012

MIDLAND, Texas – The National Transportation Safety Board has found no anomalies with the train or the track in Midland, Texas, where a trailer carrying military veterans participating in a parade crossed into the path of an oncoming train on Nov. 15, killing four and injuring sixteen. The agency has conducted interviews with the engineer and conductor of the eastbound Union Pacific train involved in the incident, and said both were cooperating fully with investigators.

The NTSB obtained all the paperwork about the locomotive and documented damage to it. The agency also obtained information on the air brakes and mechanical condition of the cars, and no anomalies were found. It also obtained records on and conducted a full inspection of the track. No defects were identified with it.

The agency said it has obtained two videos of the accident, one from the camera in the locomotive cab and a second from a dashboard camera in a police cruiser that was behind the trailer that the train struck. The agency also obtained the event recorder from the lead locomotive. Based on the information from these sources the NTSB assembled a timeline of the events:

Twenty-one seconds before the collision the south traffic light at the crossing turned green as it was supposed to.

Twenty seconds before impact the bells and lights activated. The agency said this time period met federal minimums for grade crossing protection. At that time the lead truck, which was ahead of the truck and trailer involved in the collision, was crossing the south rail.

Thirteen seconds before impact the crossing gates began coming down.

Twelve seconds before impact the front of the accident truck crosses the north rail.

Nine seconds before impact the engineer sounds the locomotive horn as a warning for four seconds. The crossing is part of a quiet zone in Midland.

Seven seconds before impact the crossing gate hits the trailer/float carrying the veterans, impacting flagpoles on it.

Five seconds before impact the engineer places the train into emergency. Seventy-five seconds later the train comes to a complete stop.

NTSB investigators said they would conduct a sight distance test Tuesday. A locomotive and a truck will be at the crossing in Midland to recreate what could be seen at the time of the incident, including at what point the engineer could actually see the truck on the tracks, as well as what the truck driver could see.

## Group Did Not Have Permit for Midland Parade

Published: November 21, 2012

MIDLAND, Texas – The organization that sponsored a parade through Midland last week did not have a permit for this year's parade, in which a Union Pacific train struck a float, killing four veterans a city spokesman told the San Antonio Express-News. "The city of Midland did not issue a permit nor did the city receive a permit application from the Show of Support organization," said Ryan Stout, city spokesman.

During this year's parade, a truck pulling a flatbed trailer carrying a dozen veterans, their wives, and two escorts tried to cross the UP tracks as the crossing warning signals activated and was hit by the train. Although the parade didn't have a permit, police officers, mostly with the Midland County Sheriff's Office, were escorting the procession. Union Pacific has said that it was unaware of the procession.

Bob Pottruff, an attorney representing a U.S. Army sergeant who was injured in the crash and his wife, said the permit is somewhat irrelevant. "They knew it was going to happen, because there was a police escort. This process doesn't have anything to do with crossing safety," he said, adding that he believes the main issue was that safety devices at the crossing weren't properly timed to give motorists enough advance warning.

However, National Transportation Safety Board member Mark Rosekind said Nov. 18 that preliminary information indicates all of the signals at the intersection – including traffic lights, warning bells, crossing arms and flashing red lights at the crossings – were functioning as designed and timed within federal standards at the time of the crash.

Rosekind also said that, based on preliminary data, it appeared that the driver of the Smith Industries Inc. flatbed, Dale Andrew Hayden, 50, also a veteran, entered the crossing seconds after the warning lights and bells were activated, and one second after the crossing arms began to descend.

Yesterday the NTSB conducted a sight distance test at the scene of the collision to collect more data for its investigation, said spokesman Peter Knudson. A UP train with 10 cars and a locomotive and a Smith Industries tractor-trailer each traveled back

and forth through the intersection several times during the three-hour test. "We want to understand what each operator saw and heard at various points," Knudson said. "That will help us understand what their perspectives were."

## **BNSF Sells Four-Axle Power**

Published: November 21, 2012

BARSTOW, Calif. – BNSF Railway has sold a group of four-axle power to Larry's Truck Electric in McDonald, Ohio. BNSF has begun transferring 75 locomotives to Chicago for movement to Larry's via CSX. The majority of the sold locomotives are former Santa Fe GP30s and GP35s. Three Los Angeles Junction CF7s, No. 2619, No. 2563, and No. 2568, are also included in the sale. Los Angeles Junction is a subsidiary of BNSF and the retired CF7s were moved to Barstow for storage earlier this year.

The first move of 22 GP30s and GP35s departed Barstow, Calif., on Nov. 9 carrying symbol D-BARCSX1-09. The 22 units were split into two trains for movement by CSX east of Chicago, departing as CSX trains X791-14 and X791-15. The first train departed Barstow with C44-9W No. 4311 and ES44DC No. 7794 on the head end and C44-9W No. 4328 and ES44DC No. 7325 on the rear.

The second train is symbolized D-BARCHI1-18 with ES44DC No. 7447 and C44-9W No. 5336 leading 23 locomotives and C44-9W No. 4357 and ES44C4 No. 6893 on the rear. This train was in Arizona today en route to Chicago and should arrive Friday night or Saturday.

## **Shore Line Trolley Museum Begins Work to Elevate Its Collection**

Published: November 21, 2012

EAST HAVEN, Conn. – The Shore Line Trolley Museum has broken ground for its "Elevating the Collection" campaign, which the state awarded \$1 million to construct two buildings in which to house the museum's collection, the New Haven Register reported.

"We had two feet of water during (Tropical Storm) Irene, three feet of water during (Hurricane) Sandy. And the 100-year flood stage is three feet higher than that," said Jeff Hakner, president of the Shore Line Trolley Museum. Hakner said the museum sits on a floodplain and the collection is vulnerable to storms like Sandy and Irene. Hakner said that before Irene, the museum had 60 trolley cars that operated under their own power. Today, after much hard work, Hakner said only 14 cars are currently operational. Flooding ruined the electric motors of the rest.

The two barns will be placed above the 500-year flood line, and hopefully above the reach of the next storm. Hakner said the museum still is looking for donors to help reach the \$2 million needed to build the new barns. Donations to the Shore Line Trolley Museum can be made at [elevatingthecollection.org](http://elevatingthecollection.org) or [shorelinetrolley.com](http://shorelinetrolley.com).

Shoreline Trolley Museum is the oldest operating trolley museum in the United States. Originally known as the Branford Electric Railway Association, it began operations in March 1947 over 1.5 miles of Connecticut Co. rails that were abandoned just days earlier. Over the years the museum has assembled the third largest collection of cars in the country.

## **Iowa Interstate Willing to Host Passenger Service in Home State**

Published: November 20, 2012

SOUTH AMANA, Iowa - The Iowa Interstate Railroad remains willing to host new passenger rail service across Iowa if the state and Amtrak can reach an agreement to develop and fund it. Henry Posner III, chairman of Iowa Interstate and of its parent company Railroad Development Corp. told KCRG-TV. "The railroad is more than willing to work with Amtrak, the states, or anybody else that's involved in passenger service. Our main business is freight, but one of the benefits of being a railroad is you can do more than one thing at once," he said.

A feasibility study on new passenger service between Chicago and Omaha picked the Iowa Interstate's ex-Rock Island route across Iowa from Davenport through Iowa City and Des Moines. Public meetings on the study will be held next month in cities along the line.

Iowa Interstate is already working with Amtrak and Illinois to restore passenger service between Chicago and Moline, Ill., by 2015. Former Iowa Gov. Chet Culver was an enthusiastic supporter of extending that service to Iowa City, but current Gov. Terry Branstad and state house Republicans oppose the \$3 million annual subsidy that would require.

"We're back to, does Iowa want to be a part of it?" said Posner. "If Iowa's interested, we can work it out."

## **Scranton Yankees Become "Rail Riders"**

Published: November 20, 2012

SCRANTON, Pa. – The Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Yankees International League baseball team has a new name: the Rail Riders. The new moniker, which references Scranton's claim as the birthplace of the electric streetcar, beat five other finalists in a name-the-team contest that took place over the summer, MLB.com reported. Rail Riders is the third name in the history of the franchise, following Red Barons (from 1989-2006, when the team was a Phillies affiliate) and Yankees.

"We have a big trolley barn on our property in left field, and fans can take the trolley in to the game," said Scranton/Wilkes-Barre President Rob Crain. "Rail Riders ties right in with that and I think that the fans found that very appealing."

The name-the-team contest was conducted online and fans were able to choose their top three candidates. Rail Riders received the most first-place votes, but the name that appeared on the most ballots was Porcupines. That helps explain why the team's primary logo features a porcupine straddling trolley tracks atop the word "Rail Riders" in a stylized red and gold font.

Scranton was known as the "Electric City" in part to the introduction of electric streetcars by E.B. Sturges in 1886. His was recognized as the first system in the country to run exclusively on electric power.

## **High Speed Rail Workshop Scheduled for January**

Published: November 20, 2012

SAN JOSE, Calif. – The Transportation Research Board's Intercity Passenger Rail Committee and the Mineta National Transit Research Consortium will conduct a workshop on the future of high speed and intercity passenger rail at board's annual meeting in Washington, D.C., this January.

Economic and Social Impacts of High-Speed Rail Systems" will be held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. The session opens at 9:00 a.m. on Jan. 13, 2013, with a keynote address, followed by six panel sessions. Audience participation will be encouraged.

The program will cover the current status of high-speed and intercity rail nationally and internationally; the variety of possible public and private funding sources; challenges and opportunities; design and operational integration; a discussion of the benefits; and the status of international programs. The goal is to focus attention on the evolving national network of high speed and intercity passenger rail corridors that include a variety of performance objectives, such as trains that will travel more than 200 miles per hour.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has been invited to deliver the opening keynote address.

"High speed rail is coming to the U.S.," said California High Speed Rail Authority Board Chair Dan Richard. "California is breaking ground for the country's first true high-speed rail corridor. Others are in line to follow, including Texas, the Upper Midwest, the Northeast Corridor, and more."

Those wishing to attend who are not otherwise registered for the meeting may do so upon payment of a "one day" meeting registration fee. Registration and conference details are available at <http://www.trb.org/AnnualMeeting>.

## **Norfolk Southern Names Rail Welding Plant in Honor of Engineering Executive**

Published: November 19, 2012

ATLANTA – Norfolk Southern has named a rail welding facility in Atlanta after the late Hubert L. Rose, former senior assistant vice president maintenance of way and structures and planning. Rose retired in 1991 after a 43-year career with NS and predecessor Southern Railway.

Rose, who died in January 2012, headed the railroad's maintenance of way group for 15 years, during which he led the railroad in its transition from jointed to continuous welded rail. Rose joined the Southern Railway in 1948 as a surveyor. In 1971, he was named chief engineer, and in 1976, he was promoted to assistant vice president of maintenance of way and structures, the position he held until retirement.

The Atlanta rail fabrication plant opened in 1958. The complex stretches over 30 acres and includes equipment for rail welding, rail renewal, switch panels, track panels, and rail reclamation.

## **City of Winter Haven OKs Rezoning Near CSX Project *New Rail Terminal Expected to be Operational in 2014.***

By Ryan E. Little, THE LEDGER

November 26, 2012

WINTER HAVEN | Winter Haven city commissioners Monday night unanimously approved a rezoning request that will make another 672 acres near the future home of the CSX rail terminal developable.

The land is owned by Stokes Grove Inc.

The land currently consists of woodlands, pasture and groves, but now can be home to residential, industrial and retail uses along the newly expanded Pollard Road, which leads to the new rail terminal. The area being rezoned also includes land south of State Road 60 and east of Alturas Road.

But some feel the land use change could conflict with nearby landowners, some of whom spoke against the request at a planning commission meeting in October, saying the development will affect their homes, which typically stand on multi-acre lots.

Commissioner Pete Chichetto asked whether residential development could be limited to one house per acre in the planned unit development zoning district.

But Community and Economic Development Director David Dickey said that wouldn't be the most efficient use of the land, nor fit with the scaling down of development intensity from the terminal.

The rail terminal is being built on 318 acres and will load and unload freight trains. It is expected to be operational by May 2014.

A business park is planned for 932 acres surrounding the rail terminal. CSX has had a tentative deal to buy the land from the city for \$14.9 million since 2005.

A memo to commissioners in the meeting's agenda packet said project development is anticipated to start in one to three years.

## **Train Plunges Off Rail Bridge in New Jersey**

*By Douglas John Bowen, November 30, 2012*

A bridge in Paulsboro, N.J., collapsed early Friday morning, causing at least three cars of an 84-car Conrail Shared Assets train to fall into Mantua Creek. At least one car was leaking vinyl chloride, a toxic and flammable substance.

At least 18 people reportedly were treated at nearby hospitals with respiratory problems, but no life-threatening injuries were reported as of 1:00 p.m. Friday, Nov. 30.

Evacuations took place in a small radial area surrounding the bridge, while local schools placed students in a lockdown. Larry Hajna, a spokesman for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, said, "It appears that all of the vinyl chloride that was in the particular car has dissipated," adding, "There's no more release going on" into Mantua Creek. But NJDEP advised caution.

John Burzichelli, a spokesman for the Borough of Paulsboro, said two cars are hanging off the bridge, in addition to the one car fallen into the creek. Burzichelli described the bridge as "a very old structure."

Paulsboro, in Gloucester County, lies roughly 14 miles southwest of both Camden, N.J., and Philadelphia. The Mantua Creek empties into the Delaware River.

Documentation provided by the New Jersey Department of Transportation's Bureau of Environmental Services identifies NJDOT itself as the owner of the bridge. But an April 20, 2004 item listed in the Federal Register, involving a final ruling on "Drawbridge Operation Regulation" and involving both the Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security, identifies Conrail as the owner of the bridge.

The bridge also failed in August 2009, prompting 16 coal cars to fall into the creek, according to State Senate President Stephen Sweeney, whose district includes Paulsboro. "This is a bridge that was repaired in '09," Sweeney said to local media. He added, "This is a railroad bridge. This is Conrail's responsibility."

Conrail operates over roughly 372 miles of right-of-way in the Philadelphia/South Jersey area, including on the Paulsboro Industrial line. Conrail is a jointly owned subsidiary of CSX Corp. (42%) and Norfolk Southern Corp. (58%), with each Class I parent holding an equal voting interest.

## **Electro-Motive Diesel Opens Plant in Brazil**

*Published: November 30, 2012*

SETE LAGOAS, Brazil – Electro-Motive Diesel, a subsidiary of Progress Rail Services, opened a new locomotive plant in Sete Lagoas, Minas Gerais, Brazil. Progress Rail and EMD announced the site selection in July 2011. Sete Lagoas is the first EMD locomotive plant in South America. The company will produce the EMD SD70ACe locomotives in its new Brazilian plant, among other models.

In the last two years, EMD has increased capacity with additional factories for assembling locomotives in Muncie, Ind., and Sahagun, Mexico. EMD also announced a new joint venture with Bombardier in India. It also closed a locomotive plant in London, Ontario, and moved its manufacturing to Muncie.

## **Northeast Corridor Meetings Scheduled Next Week**

*By Bob Johnston*

*Published: November 30, 2012*

WASHINGTON — The Federal Railroad Administration's outreach initiative, NEC Future, will hold two Internet-based seminars and a series of meetings next week in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia as the next phase of a process that began earlier this year to get public input on how the 457-mile Boston-Washington Northeast Corridor might be improved to meet the region's long term transportation needs.

Nine initial "scoping" meetings were held at various locations from Boston to Washington in August, and feedback was accepted through mid-October. The purpose of those discussions was to define the geographical boundaries of the environmental review area and what other issues need to be addressed in developing a comprehensive infrastructure investment and service delivery plan for high-speed, regional, and commuter rail, while taking into account freight movement needs. The seminars and meetings next week, dubbed "December Dialogue," will summarize the findings and allow participants to provide additional comment as NEC Future staff and consultants establish development alternatives for further discussion.

Anyone can attend the meetings. They will take place 5-7 p.m. at the following locations:

- BOSTON: Monday, Dec. 3. Mass. State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza
- PHILADELPHIA: Tuesday, Dec. 4. SEPTA Board Room, Mezzanine level, 1234 Market St.
- NEW YORK: Wednesday, Dec. 5. Room 4500, Farley Post Office/Moynihan Station, 380 West 33rd St.

The two Internet-based seminars will be conducted next Thursday Dec. 6 between 3-4 p.m., and 6-7 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, but advance registration is required and participation is subject to space availability. Those interested should email a request as soon as possible to [rsvp@necfuture.com](mailto:rsvp@necfuture.com). If space is available, instructions for joining will be sent back in a reply. Those unable to attend any of these sessions are urged to visit the website, [www.necfuture.com](http://www.necfuture.com), where additional meetings in other cities and future seminars will be announced.

## **Conrail Derailment Near Philadelphia Includes Hazmat Spill**

Published: November 30, 2012

PHILADELPHIA – A Conrail Shared Assets train derailed on a bridge in Paulsboro, N.J., at about 7 a.m. Friday morning. At this time it is unclear if the train derailed first, causing the bridge to collapse, or if the bridge gave way under the train. The bridge crosses Mantua Creek about a mile south of its outlet into the Delaware River.

A number of tank cars derailed on the bridge and one is presumed to be leaking vinyl chloride. Residents nearby are being evacuated and school has been locked down, according to WCAU-TV. People near the scene at the time of the derailment have been transported to nearby hospitals, complaining of respiratory ailments.

The same bridge was involved in another derailment in 2009.

The former Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines route serves a number of chemical plants and other industrial complexes along the Delaware River southwest of Philadelphia.

## **General Electric Tier 3 Locomotives Suffer Engine Fires**

Published: November 30, 2012

CHICAGO – General Electric locomotives constructed in 2012 with the new Tier 3 locomotive emissions have been suffering major engine fires recently. The locomotives differ from Tier 2 engines in many ways including higher pressure fuel lines, which are reportedly operated at 20,000psi. These lines have been prone to break, spraying the prime mover with fuel which subsequently catches fire. General Electric is working with all customers who received Tier 3 locomotives in 2012 to correct the situation.

Railroads have taken differing approaches to the usage of the engines in the interim until repairs can be made. BNSF Railway continues to use the locomotives on trains, but has restricted affected engines from leading trains. Union Pacific has taken a more conservative approach and temporarily stored their affected Tier 3 locomotive until modifications can be made. Repairs are performed at various Class I locomotive shops and temporary facilities setup by GE to expedite the repairs, such as the temporary tent at Union Pacific's Global 4 intermodal facility near Joliet, Ill., to work on affected UP locomotives.

## **Repairs Nearly Complete on NJ Transit Gladstone Branch**

Published: November 29, 2012

NEWARK, N. J. – NJ Transit will complete repairs to the Gladstone Branch of the Morris & Essex Lines by Nov. 30, and test trains are scheduled to begin operation at that time. The test trains are needed to ensure all systems are operating as intended and to remove rust build-up on the rails.

Five catenary poles on the line snapped during Hurricane Sandy. The poles, which exceed 90 feet in length, are custom-made. New poles were installed late last week, and more than five miles of overhead wire was installed along the length of the Gladstone Branch this week. Crews removed 49 trees across the tracks, and are in the process of finalizing repairs to the line's infrastructure, such as signals and switches.

When service is restored, the agency plans to use electric trains for Midtown Direct service into New York and diesel trains into Hoboken. Hoboken's Mason power substation sustained significant damage from the storm. As a result, only diesel-powered trains can operate into the terminal. This will require operation on a special schedule, as diesel trains do not have the acceleration capabilities of NJ Transit's electric fleet.

## **Norfolk Southern Completes Upgrade of Norfolk Coal Facility**

Published: November 29, 2012

NORFOLK, Va. – Norfolk Southern has completed a major upgrade to its Lamberts Point export coal facility in Norfolk. Commonly known as Pier 6, the facility transfers coal moved by NS from Appalachian coalfields to ships bound for world markets.

The \$18 million upgrade took place over a 90-day period, with work beginning in August. The work included major overhauls of the facility's dumper system, which transfers coal to a conveyor system, and its two loaders that deliver the coal to ships.

The dumper system consists of two pairs of dumpers, each of which can rotary dump two cars at a time into a conveyor system that transports coal to the pier. The upgrade consisted of replacing the structural steel that supports the north set of dumpers

and the hopper bins that funnel coal onto the conveyor belts. The dumpers, at 500,000 pounds each, were lifted by cranes and placed on the ground. While the steel support structure was being replaced, the dumpers also received an electrical and mechanical overhaul. The south set of dumpers will receive the same upgrade in the spring of 2013.

Concurrent with the dumper overhaul, both loaders received complete electrical overhauls, including replacement of the main generator sets with solid-state drives and new power transformers and control and monitoring systems. The loaders received other significant overhauls, including a new braking system for their numerous moving parts.

The upgrades coincide with the 50th anniversary of Pier 6, originally served by NS predecessor Norfolk & Western, which began operations on one loader in December 1962. The second loader was completed the following year. Norfolk Southern is planning an anniversary celebration in April 2013.

Pier 6 has an annual throughput capacity of 36 million tons of coal. With both sets of dumpers and both loaders operating, Pier 6 can handle up to 8,000 tons of coal per hour. It takes an average of 30 hours to load one ship with a typical load of 80,000 tons. In January 2012, Pier 6 loaded a record 159,941.45 net tons of coal onto a ship bound for China, completing the job in less than 48 hours.

## **New Station Under Construction for Florida Tourist Line**

Published: November 29, 2012

TAVARES, Fla. – Construction has begun on a new station in Tavares that will serve the Tavares, Eustis & Gulf tourist railroad. It will provide a waiting room, gift shop, restrooms, and offices for the line. The station, financed by the City of Tavares, will also be the home of the Tavares Chamber of Commerce. Construction is scheduled for completion in April 2013.

The station will sit on the corner of East Main Street and St. Clair Abrams Avenue next to a 120-foot covered loading platform already in place. The station will be a replica of the St. Johns & Lake Eustis Railroad station that sat on the same location. It was built in 1886 and burned down in July 1988.

The Tavares, Eustis & Gulf Railroad operates tourist trains out of Tavares on lines owned by the Florida Central Railroad. For more information, go to [www.orangeblossomcannonball.com](http://www.orangeblossomcannonball.com).

## **Boardman Discusses Amtrak Restructuring Philosophy**

*By Bob Johnston*

Published: November 28, 2012

WASHINGTON — Today, Amtrak president Joe Boardman used the latest hearing of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, titled “Getting Back on Track: A Review of Amtrak’s Structural Reorganization,” to further define how the company is restructuring itself into a “modern matrixed organization.”

In prepared testimony sent to reporters just as Chairman John Mica brought the meeting to order, Boardman said that the new blueprint “won’t look like a traditional railroad structure, with the system organized in three or four rigidly ‘stovepiped’ functions,” such as mechanical, operating, and marketing departments. “It also won’t look like the idea of a completely decentralized organization,” he noted, “with a small corporate headquarters presiding over a handful of mini-Amtrak’s,” as it was during the geographical business unit model of the mid-1990s under then-president Tom Downs.

“We will retain the traditional railroad technical functions,” Boardman continued, “but handling of the core business will be integrated. The business lines and technical organizations (the mechanical department, for example), will be aligned and incentivized to ensure they’re working together to help the company accomplish larger corporate goals, rather than (operate as) semi-independent fiefdoms.” [His complete testimony is available to download online.](#)

Departing from his prepared remarks, Boardman said that, although general managers of the Northeast Corridor, long-distance, and state-supported railroad operation business lines have been named, it is possible that the fourth and final general manager position, commuter services, may not be filled but instead be integrated elsewhere. When pressed for more specifics by lawmakers, however, Boardman said that because restructuring was in progress, it was “very early” in restructuring to discuss details. “The problem is, you have to operate the railroad while you’re making changes,” he said.

Chairman John Mica refrained from the combative tone he has taken at previous Amtrak hearings he presided over in the past year. Mica did get in a few jabs, bragging that he saved taxpayers money by not ordering a hamburger from the café car on a recent Amtrak trip from New York.

Conspicuously absent from the hearing room was the Railroads and Pipelines Subcommittee chairman, Rep. Bill Shuster, who will assume Mica’s roll as chairman of the full Transportation and Infrastructure Committee when the next Congress takes over in January. Despite his “lame-duck” status, Mica announced two more Amtrak hearings over the next two weeks: one on the Federal Railroad Administration’s high-speed and passenger rail grant program on Dec. 6, and the other on Northeast Corridor operations on Dec. 13.

## **Sandy Damage to PATH System: \$300 Million**

Published: November 28, 2012

HOBOKEN, N.J. – The damage that Hurricane Sandy inflicted on the Port Authority Trans-Hudson rail system linking New Jersey and Manhattan will cost \$300 million. The damage is the most extensive in the line’s history and will keep the Hoboken

station closed "for weeks," officials said. Eight-foot deep floodwaters destroyed critical electrical equipment, and scattered mud and debris. More than 50 trains also suffered damage, NorthJersey.com reported.

The repair estimate is more than double what the rail system collects in revenues each year. Governors of both New Jersey and New York are seeking federal help with a rebuilding effort across both states expected to cost at least \$71 billion, a figure that does not include damage to the Port Authority's facilities. Port Authority officials said they would also seek federal disaster aid. The PATH system has resumed service except at the Hoboken station. Hoboken was the fourth busiest of the PATH's 13 stations last year, with nearly 8.5 million riders.

One of the delays in reopening the Hoboken station is being caused by damage to a small room about a quarter-mile from the station. The room, called Caisson 3, is ringed from floor to ceiling by circuit boards are used to direct trains to the appropriate tracks. Well below sea level, the room filled when water rushed down the steps of the Hoboken station and into tunnels.

Crews are working to replace and test the thousands of circuits, one by one, while not interrupting restored service between lines that connect stations in Jersey City to the World Trade Center and 33rd Street stations in Manhattan. Two stairways descending into the Hoboken station are being rebuilt, as are the turnstiles and an elevator whose glass was broken out by rushing water.

In the longer term, the agency said it would harden walls to keep groundwater from leaking through the tunnel walls, replace high-capacity pumps, and move some equipment susceptible to water damage to less flood-prone areas. The Port Authority has also contacted the U.S. Navy to get information about watertight doors, like the ones on submarines, to install on the rooms with electrical switching equipment.

## **Three Companies Invest in Rail to Move Crude to Northeast**

Published: November 27, 2012

PHILADELPHIA – Enbridge is partnering with Canopy Prospecting to create Eddystone Rail Co. to jointly develop a unit train unloading facility near Philadelphia. The facility would be used to deliver Bakken and other light sweet crude to Philadelphia area refineries. It will handle 80,000 barrels per day by the third quarter of 2013 and could be expanded to eventually handle up to 160,000 barrels per day in the future.

Enbridge will own 75 percent and be the operator of the \$68 million facility. The project requires leasing a portion of Exelon Generation's Eddystone power plant and reconfiguring the existing track to accommodate 120-car trains.

"The Eddystone Rail Company will be the largest unit-train facility able to receive North Dakota Bakken and other light sweet crudes directly into Philadelphia area refineries" said Jack Galloway, president of Canopy. "At nearly one million barrels per day, the region is second only to Houston in the concentration of light sweet refining capacity. Eddystone will be the first to provide access directly to those refineries from a rail facility."

Also in the Northeast, PBF Energy is expanding rail capacity at its Delaware City, Del., refinery to accept up to 110,000 barrels per day by January 2013. The refinery handles about 190,000 barrels per day arriving by all modes of transportation.

"These new crude fields in the U.S. and Canada are game changers for our East Coast refineries. In addition to being the only refiner in [the Northeast] that can run heavy Canadian crudes, we are the sole refiner in [the Northeast] with on-site rail discharging capability, which puts us well ahead of the competitive curve." said Tom Nimbley, CEO of PBF Energy. "To ensure consistency of supply, we have committed to lease a significant number of coiled and non-coiled tank cars." A recent report by Reuters says the company will lease 2,400 railcars.

## **North Carolina Legislature Examines State Railroad**

Published: November 26, 2012

RALEIGH, N.C. – North Carolina's lawmakers want to reexamine the state's relationship with the 317-mile state-owned North Carolina Railroad Co., reports the Roanoke Rapids Daily Herald. The legislature's Program Evaluation Division says the state has contributed much to the railroad, but has seen little direct reward from its ownership.

A proposal for next year's legislative session would generate more state oversight of the railroad and require regular cash dividend payments for ownership. Lawmakers are considering requiring a one-time dividend payment of \$15.5 million in 2013 followed by regular annual payment of at least \$3.7 million. The railroad's lease agreement with Norfolk Southern generates \$14 million in annual revenue. Under the current law the dividend payment is optional. Draft legislation also includes a requirement for the railroad to create a strategic plan, explain to lawmakers why objectives weren't met, and forfeit 14 tracts of currently unused land to the state.

The railroad was built in the 1850s with the state owning 75 percent. It acquired full ownership in 1998. The Greensboro to Charlotte portion of the railroad is a key component of NS's Washington to New Orleans main line and hosts Amtrak's *Crescent* as well as the state-supported *Carolinian* and *Piedmonts*.

## **The Interstate 95 Conundrum**

By Fred Frailey  
Saturday, December 1, 2012

I spent much of this week watching trains on the CSX North End Subdivision, between Richmond, Va., and Rocky Mount, N.C. Usually, you can count on spotting on this heavily trafficked, mostly single-track line the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, their

names being Hunger, Death, Pestilence, and Unexpected Delays. But they and their black stallions were nowhere to be seen this time. The North End Sub operated like a well cleaned watch, the dispatchers seemingly trained by Peter Josserand (*Rights of Trains*, 1945), or maybe the fictional Eddy Sand (*The Boomer*, 1942).

No, what's different about the North End Sub this trip is local politics. Every front yard — even the water tower in sleepy Stony Creek — seems to spout a sign, NO TOLLS. Virginia's governor, Bob McDonnell, is proposing to turn Interstate 95, the Maine-to-Florida highway, into a toll road through his state, as is already the case north of Virginia. A similar proposal is being debated in North Carolina.

Two things are immediately apparent. First, the idea is immensely unpopular in Southside Virginia, one of the poorer parts of the state. It's as if British redcoats had returned. Second, the state has an expensive road to maintain and expand, but not the money to do so. Something has to give, in other words. To put it in concrete terms, Virginia projects the need for \$12.1 billion to maintain and enlarge the busy highway over the next quarter century, but can expect only \$2.5 billion in funding.

This is the whole interstate highway problem in microcosm. Our interstates are crowded and crumbling, and we lack the money to maintain and expand them.

Of course, Interstate 95 has a competitor from New Jersey to Florida: CSX. The railroad takes no position in the toll proposal, perhaps wisely. Clearly, it's to the advantage of CSX to block tolls and starve the highway. By the way, that's the likely outcome. It is politically possible to finance new limited-access highways with tolls. But I can think of few roads (actually, none at all) that were built as freeways and later turned into toll roads.

On the other hand, why isn't CSX exploiting its crumbling competitor? Driving home to suburban Washington, D.C., traffic in the opposite direction south of the capitol city grinds to a standstill. Trucks seem to occupy half of the space — hundreds, thousands of them.

The answer, unfortunately, is that CSX does a poor job capturing this highway traffic. It does best going wooing trucks that ply I-95 the entire distance to and from Florida, which describes but a fraction of the traffic. It is poorly equipped to market intermediate origins and destinations.

CSX is not alone in this. Railroads as a whole are best in dealing with the J.B. Hunt Transports and Schneider Nationals of the trucking world over the highest-volume, longest-distance routes. But institutionally, they all seem to lack the ability to pick at the smaller origin-destination pairs and to reach out to the smaller truck lines. To put it another way, the huge Class I railroads are no \*\*\* good at all retailing. Wholesaling is what they know.

This I do know: It would be tragic for this nation to have the worst of all worlds, that is, crumbling, overcrowded highways *and* railroads unable or unwilling to taking advantage of that opportunity. There has got to be a better way to go at this.

## **Fred Frailey's First Darwin Awards**

By Fred Frailey  
Friday, November 30, 2012

As you know, Englishman Charles Darwin (1809-1882) was a naturalist who popularized the idea of survival of the fittest. Those species who could evolve and deal with change survive, he said, while those that cannot perish. These two awards honor his memory.

First, to the docks at the Port of Los Angeles. The 800 members of Local 63 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union are perhaps the highest paid clerical workers in the world. To shuffle paper, they are paid \$165,000 to work eight and a half months of the year, getting the remaining weeks off. And they have job guarantees.

Still, they are not happy. They rejected an offer from the port that would raise their salaries to \$195,000 and this week began picketing one of the nine piers. Other ILWU workers honored the picket signs, and in a wink the strike spread to the other piers and to the adjacent Port of Long Beach.

For self-destructive behavior, this is right up there with the bomber pilot who says "I wonder what this button does?" and pushes it. Container ships were diverted to Oakland and to ports in Mexico. The credibility and reputations of the two ports were battered. And forget efficiency. One wonders what Matt Rose, the CEO of BNSF Railway, thinks of all this. BNSF and Union Pacific are heavily dependent upon these two ports remaining competitive. After all, in just two years an enlarged Panama Canal will open and efficient deepwater ports on the East Coast will be wooing the ships that now call on the West Coast. The Los Angeles Times says up to 100,000 cargo jobs in Southern California are threatened by the Panama project.

Not even a year ago, a video produced by the Jobs1st Alliance showed dock workers and managers saying together, "Beat the Canal."

So long, farewell, been good to know you, Local 63. Even if the strike wraps up quickly, the damage has been done.

Now on to the second Darwin Award.

It's profits are slumping, as is its stock price. Plus, its biggest commodity handled is falling off a cliff. Meanwhile, the economy is barely growing, and unless a miracle occurs in Washington, D.C., at year's end taxes will rise for most Americans, meaning a recession could be right around the corner.

So what does Norfolk Southern do? Why, it publicly celebrates this week an \$18 million investment to upgrade its Lamberts Point export coal transload facility in Norfolk! This would have truly been a landmark achievement 20 or 30 years ago. But with coal loadings off 13 percent during the first three quarters of 2012, compared with 2011, you've got to wonder if NS just shot itself in the foot.

In fairness, capital investments of this sort are planned far in advance. Plus, it could be that the export business for Norfolk Southern is holding up better than the loadings for U.S. customers. And NS spokesperson Robin Chapman, unbowed, fires back: "Coal is and will remain an important business for Norfolk Southern. Long after the current economic crises settle down, we expect the worldwide demand for coal to be strong for many years to come, and we are committed to providing superior service to our export coal customers. These upgrades were necessary to maintain that capability."

Still, the timing couldn't have been worse. And because the work didn't start until August, it's not as if NS didn't know the coal business was going to the dogs.

Railroads: Be careful what you brag about. These are my first Darwin awards for self-destructive acts, but surely not my last.

## **The Day We Import Corn . . .**

By Fred Frailey  
Tuesday, November 27, 2012

The U.S. is the world's biggest producer of corn. To put this in its most basic perspective, corn is a major foundation of our economy. We export oceans of the stuff. The portion we feed to livestock keeps meat affordable. So I was struck by a press release I read the other day. A ship containing four trainloads of Brazilian corn had docked at Port Manatee, near Tampa, Fla., to sell to American customers, for animal feed.

Hello? What kind of bad dream is this? *We sell you* corn, you being the rest of the world. And yet it has come to this. This year's corn crop, affected by drought, is down 13 percent from that of 2011, and is the smallest since 2006. Interstate Commodities Inc. plans to import 10,000 truckload equivalents of corn through Port Manatee.

Now the good news, for railroads, at least: CSX will deliver this corn throughout its network and elsewhere in the U.S. Still, you have to wonder: What is going on, for this to happen? Your comments are welcomed.

## **LaHood Defends Rail Investment at DC Hearing**

Published: December 7, 2012

WASHINGTON — Tempers flared at Thursday's high speed rail hearing in the U.S. House of Representatives. In response to a question by Rep. Jeff Denham, R-Calif., asking why there are no private investors in California's high speed rail initiative, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said, "We're not going to get this project fully funded as long as there is language in (appropriation) bills that says it can't have any money." Denham had admitted "these amendments are not meant to help you—we agree on that—the amendments are meant to stop this project until we see a plan." LaHood noted that "the last time we talked about it, I suggested that you sit down with (Chairman Dan) Richard (of the California High Speed Rail Authority) and review in detail what the plan is. I'll be happy to have him call you," LaHood responded.

The exchange took place at Thursday's House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee hearing on the Federal Railroad Administration's high speed and intercity passenger rail program called by committee Chairman John Mica, R-Fla.

During his testimony, Association of American Railroads' President and CEO Edward Hamberger reiterated his organization's contention that passenger trains traveling above 110 mph must operate on sealed rights-of-way, separated from slower moving freight trains. Additionally, he suggested that five key principles must be followed any time higher speed rail between 79 mph and 110 mph is implemented on freight corridors: putting safety first, protecting present and future capacity, compensating freight carriers fairly for use of tracks, complete liability coverage, and evaluating each project on a case-by-case basis.

State department of transportation secretaries Paula Hammond of Washington and Ann Schneider of Illinois discussed how investments were leveraged in their states with federal funds, urging continued support. Also testifying on the high speed rail program were representatives from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Inspector General, the Government Accountability Office, and two U.S. House of Representatives members from the California delegation taking opposite sides on that state's high-speed rail proposal.

The final Transportation and Infrastructure hearing of 2012 will take place in Washington on Dec. 13 at 10 a.m. The hearing, titled "Northeast Corridor Future: Options for high-speed rail development and opportunities for private sector participation," will be the last one Mica will host before Rep. Bill Shuster, R-Pa., becomes chairman with the new Congress in January.

## **Union Pacific Studying Big Boy Restoration Project**

Published: December 7, 2012

POMONA, Calif. – Union Pacific may be bringing back the ultimate steam machine, an Alco-built 4-8-8-4 Big Boy, the last of which steamed more than 50 years ago.

Company spokesman Mark Davis told Trains News Wire Friday that the company has been approached by and is working with a third party interested in restoring and operating a Big Boy. He said the railroad is evaluating the condition of preserved UP Big Boy locomotives and that it believes two might be available for restoration. Davis declined to name the other party or give a timeline for the project. But at least one organization is already talking about its potential to put a Big Boy back on the main line.

The treasurer of the Southern California railroad club that owns a displayed Union Pacific Big Boy 4-8-8-4 says his group hopes to learn more Saturday about a UP offer to acquire No. 4014 for restoration and operation.

In an exclusive interview with Trains News Wire, John Mastrobuoni from Prescott, Ariz., said the Southern California Chapter of the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society is eager to find out if the railroad can meet its requirement that a replacement piece take the place of the Big Boy at the Los Angeles County Fairgrounds in Pomona. The engine is one of eight survivors of the 25 locomotives that Alco built beginning in 1941 for freight service between Cheyenne, Wyo., and Ogden, Utah until the last steamed in 1959.

Mastrobuoni said he participated by phone in a meeting Tuesday in which Ed Dickens, who manages UP's fleet of historic operating steam and diesel equipment, appeared at a chapter meeting in California to pitch the idea. He said Dickens on Saturday is expected to provide more details about what UP would offer and called discussions "preliminary."

The idea is already controversial, as some board and chapter members consider the Big Boy as the centerpiece of the club's exhibit. The 4014 was donated to the chapter in 1962. The exhibit also includes a UP DD40X Centennial diesel No. 6915, UP 4-12-2 No. 9000, Southern Pacific 4-10-2 No. 5021, and Santa Fe 4-6-4 No. 3450.

"If we can come to an agreement with the railroad, an operating Big Boy is better than one on display," Mastrobuoni said. "We'd lose the engine for display, but we'd be known everywhere as the group that helped make one run again."

He added that rebuilding the No. 4014 would take several years with the aim of operating for the 150<sup>th</sup> celebration of the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in 2019. The coal-burning engine would be converted to oil firing.

The railroad has not publicly announced plans to expand its operating steam locomotive fleet, which includes the never retired 4-8-4 No. 844, which made an extensive system-wide tour this year for the company's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding, and 4-6-6-4 No. 3985, which is undergoing a major overhaul.

Contrary to Internet reports that UP has vetted the other seven Big Boys, representatives of the National Railroad Museum in Green Bay, Wis., the Forney Museum of Transportation in Denver, and the Steamtown National Park Service site in Scranton, Pa., said Friday that none have been officially contacted. On its face, the engine in southern California, with its dry climate, would be among the best condition.

In addition to 4014, the following UP Big Boys are still in existence: 4004, in Holliday Park, Cheyenne, Wyo.; 4005, Forney Transportation Museum, Denver, Colo.; 4006, Museum of Transport, St. Louis, Mo.; 4012, Steamtown, Scranton, Pa.; 4017, National Railroad Museum, Green Bay, Wis.; 4018, Museum of the American Railroad, Dallas, Texas; 4023, Kenefick Park, Omaha, Neb.

## **Trains Magazine Taking Part in Railroad History Tweetup**

Published: December 7, 2012

WAUKESHA, Wis. – Trains Magazine is proud to take part in a Tweetup, a Twitter-based discussion of railroad history, planned for Dec. 11, between CSX Transportation, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Museum, and railroad historian and Trains Magazine columnist Don Phillips. The event, scheduled for 7-8 p.m. Eastern, is part of CSX's partnership with the History Channel's show "Mankind," airing Tuesday at 8 p.m. Eastern.

The conversation will cover the railroad industry's impact on the development of the U.S. in terms of its technology, economy, and culture.

## **Florida East Coast Railway Acquires 200 New Containers**

Published: December 7, 2012

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The Florida East Coast Railway recently acquired 200 new 53-foot containers to expand its domestic customer intermodal business. "This acquisition will help accelerate the conversion of Florida East Coast trailers to containers in order to provide double stack transportation service between Jacksonville and Miami," says the railroad's CEO Jim Hertwig. The railroad says, by utilizing double stack containers, it will be able to save on train length and transport more densely built trains.

The railroad will feature one of its new containers on the 2012 Toys for Tots Christmas Train operating between Jacksonville and Miami Dec. 8. The new container will be filled with toys for the US Marines to deliver to children.

## **Cass Scenic Employees Charged in Scrap Metal Theft**

Published: December 7, 2012

CHARLESTON, W. Va. – Officials have charged 11 current and former Cass Scenic Railroad employees with the theft of more than \$30,000 in scrap metal from the state-owned operation, according to the Charleston Daily Mail. A grand jury indicted the 11 this week on felony conspiracy charges, but some also face multiple counts of grand theft.

The metal was sold to two scrap yards, one of which was suspicious of the sale, even though the items came with a letter from the railroad's superintendent. The owner of Elkins Metal thought it was odd to receive railroad scrap when his business doesn't normally deal in it.

Some of the accused claim they had permission to sell the material. West Virginia State Police Cpl. Mark Agee told the newspaper, "What items were taken from there belonged to Cass Railroad, so any profit that came from that should have come back to Cass Railroad State Park and not pocketed for personal gain."

## **NASA Uses Former Shuttle Facilities for Railroad Duties**

*By Mike Harbour*

Published: December 6, 2012

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. – Despite the loss of the Space Shuttle Program, the Kennedy Space Center facilities that once served it have taken on new life, this time helping NASA's 38-mile short line in Central Florida.

Late last month, the NASA Railroad used a set of cranes originally created to offload solid rocket motor segments that arrived via flatcar to instead perform a truck swap between two of its three ex-Toledo, Peoria & Western Railway EMD SW1500s. No. 3, rebuilt and repainted in-house a few years ago, handles most of the work today but No. 2 had fresher trucks. The task, which took place Nov. 28, marked the first time Kennedy's Rotation, Processing, and Surge Facility had been used for something other than shuttle-related chores.

"Normally, to do this kind of work, we'd have to go outside of NASA and rent mobile cranes to do the lift," said NASA Railroad Manager Mike Theirs. "My thought was, 'Why use rented cranes when we have a facility that has overhead cranes and a railroad track already running into it?'"

The job, which involved lifting No. 2 off its trucks, then placing No. 3 atop them, didn't tax the 400-ton cranes, since the switchers only weigh 124 tons. Because it went quickly, the units, along with No. 1, made it back on the line the same day. The biggest challenge was the months of planning, since the use of the RPSF had to be approved by the staff of Kennedy's Ground Systems Development and Operations Program.

"They were all for it because it would show other uses for that building, and it worked out great for us," said Mike Stephens, the railroad lead for contractor Yang Enterprises. "Now locomotive No. 3 is in it for the long haul. It's good for 25 years at the blink of an eye."

In an effort that will greatly impact the future of the railroad, NASA hopes to change Kennedy from a site focused mainly on the shuttle to a multi-user launch complex for both NASA and commercial programs.

## **Entertainment News Exclusive: Pullman Porter Blues Review**

*By Alexander D. Mitchell IV*

Published: December 5, 2012

WASHINGTON – The typical rail enthusiast has a difficult time enjoying almost any railroad-themed movie or theater production. From Buster Keaton's "The General" to the comedy classic "Silver Streak" and the more recent "Unstoppable," the typical rail-themed theatrical production takes such liberties with the history, geography, railroad technology, or even the laws of physics, that the departure from reality becomes unpalatable.

"Pullman Porter Blues" is a stage play by Cheryl L. West that premiered in Seattle and is now playing at Washington's Arena Stage. Upon first glance, it threatens to mandate that same suspension of credulity. The spectacular eight-wheeled copper and brass stage backdrop, topped by an over-sized Pullman Co. nameboard floating above, is far more evocative of an 1890s wooden passenger coach than the cars in use during the 1937 setting of the play. The train's conductor is portrayed as a drunk, constantly violating "Rule G," and the idea that a blues troupe could find enough room to perform as they do in even the most spacious of parlor cars is laughable, to say the least.

But do suspend at least some credulity, for this is, after all, a big-ticket stage play with music, and perhaps half the audience came more for the big, bold, and brassy performances of several blues standards such as "Sweet Home Chicago" and "Wild Women Don't Get No Blues" rather than a history seminar.

The story of "Pullman Porter Blues" centers around three generations of Chicago African-American Pullman porters: Monroe Sykes (Larry Marshall), the grandfather raised in the old post-slavery days where subservience meant survival; Sylvester (Cleavant Derricks), a fiery union organizer taking a stand for social justice, but who is also struggling with guilt from his past; and Sylvester's son Cephas (Warner Miller), who with the help of Monroe has found himself a summer gig on Pullman. Cephas is also rebelling against the future his father has mapped out for him as a doctor. All three of them find themselves working the same train on the same run, and not necessarily by design.

The action takes place on the southbound run of the Illinois Central's Chicago-to-New Orleans *Panama Limited* on the night of June 27, 1937, the night of an historic heavyweight prize fight between Joe Lewis and James Braddock. In between various diversions that include bombastic and gregarious female blues singer Sister Juba (played by E. Faye Butler) and a backing band, a stowaway passenger, and a tipsy and troublemaking conductor, the main thrust of the story revolves around a combination of intergenerational strife between the three generations of porters and the still-evolving face of both labor relations and civil rights of African-Americans during the turbulent pre-World War II era. (The Pullman Co. granted recognition to the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters with a collective bargaining agreement in August 1937, less than two months after the play's setting.) Tex, the train's conductor, spares no effort to remind the porters of their second-rate status, on the train or off it, even as the family argues over whether Cephas should return to college to pursue his studies, an opportunity the older men have worked hard to assure that he would have, at one of the few lucrative jobs available to blacks in the era.

Playwright West certainly did not intend for this play to be a documentary, but at the same time the play relies heavily upon the train and Pullman for the story and setting. The Pullman Co. played a crucial role in raising the social and economic status of African-Americans throughout its century of existence, as highlighted in several recent books (*Railroads In the African-American Experience*, by Theodore Kornweibel and *Rising From the Rails*, by Larry Tye) and the exhibit, *Pullman Porters: From Service to Civil Rights*, at the National Railroad Museum in Green Bay, Wis. The stage production features many props and decorations to evoke Pullman travel, including lighted call boards for the porters, an onboard bar lounge, a mock-up of an upper and lower berth being prepared by the porters in one scene, and a rear observation platform with a *Panama Limited* diamond sign. Through the play, a map of the train's route is projected discretely over the stage, slowly scrolling to depict the progress of the train through the night. In addition, a display case in the Arena Stage's lobby outside the theater displays Pullman artifacts and ephemera, such as an HO scale model of a Pullman car, a Pullman Thermos flask, china, a uniform, photos, a rule book, menus, and the like. Arena Stage has also cooperated with off-site discussions of the play and the civil rights and labor struggles involved in the play's story.

The play is not perfect. At times it appears to be trying to decide whether to be a musical or a play about issues and conflict. The dialogue is also a bit forced or stilted, and the play ends abruptly, before the train even reaches New Orleans. The distraction of bold musical performances of blues standards aside, "Pullman Porter Blues" joins the expanding inventory of overdue examinations of the African-American railroading experience.

*Pullman Porter Blues* appears through Jan. 6 at the Arena Stage Kreeger Theater, 1101 Sixth Street SW, Washington, D.C., 20024. Tickets are \$45-99 and are available at [www.arena-stage.org](http://www.arena-stage.org).

## **Amtrak Sends Inoperative Units to Beech Grove**

*By Chase Gunnoe*

Published: December 5, 2012

BEECH GROVE, Ind. – Yesterday, Amtrak moved eight inoperative GE P40DC locomotives to its Beech Grove shops. The locomotives include Nos. 805, 803, 811, 839, 802, 801, 800, and 806, along with powered GE P42 units Nos. 172 and 125. The locomotives will be salvaged for usable parts for use on other operable P40DCs.

The train operated through Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana over the regular *Cardinal* route with CSX symbol P935-03.

## **Steam Into History Plans Historic Steam Attraction in Pennsylvania**

*By Wayne Laepple*

Published: December 5, 2012

NEW FREEDOM, Pa. -- Steam Into History has big plans for the Northern Central Railroad corridor between New Freedom and Hanover Jct. By June 1, 2013, a replica 4-4-0 steam locomotive and two coaches will make three daily round trips on 9.9 miles of the historic railway.

Robert Gotwols, vice-president of the nonprofit SIH, said this week that the new locomotive, No. 17, under construction at Klocke Locomotive in suburban Chicago, "is well on its way. It recently passed the first hydro test." Gotwols said two wooden coaches have been leased for the 2013 season, but by 2014 he expects to replace the leased equipment with two replicas of 1850's-style coaches.

The Northern Central line is quite historic, Gotwols said. President Abraham Lincoln traveled the route in 1861 on his way from Springfield, Ill., to Washington for his inauguration. He stopped briefly at Hanover Jct. on his way to Gettysburg to deliver his immortal Gettysburg Address in November 1863, and, in April 1865, his funeral train made its way slowly up the line.

Plans call for a runaround siding and turntable to be built at Hanover Jct., along with a second turntable, engine shed and car house at New Freedom. Initially, though, the train will operate push-pull with a diesel on the south end of the train. Gotwols said the new operation would have about 10 paid employees, with as many as 80 volunteers helping with all phases of the operation.

More information and photos can be found on the organizations website at [www.steamintohistory.com](http://www.steamintohistory.com).

## **A Contest: Get Fred to Vancouver**

*By Fred Frailey*

Tuesday, December 4, 2012

My friend, Bill Schafer, retired recently as a Norfolk Southern poobah, is having a party on February 22. You're invited, by the way. The party starts on VIA Rail Canada's *Canadian* leaving Vancouver, B.C., on that evening and ends four nights and three days later in Toronto, unless the 55 travelers signed up so far raise such a ruckus that we're all expelled to the clutches of the Mounties in some inaccessible spot on the Canadian Shield and get thrown into a Northern Ontario dungeon.

Here is your opportunity. I can leave Sarasota, Fla., anytime on Tuesday, February 19. The *Canadian* leaves Vancouver at 8:30 pm Pacific Time on Friday, February 22.

My question: How to get from here to there. I've identified a couple of interesting ways, but suspect I am missing some opportunities. Which option for going from Sarasota to Vancouver is most attractive for a railfan? Money is not really an object. I mean, an air fare is required no matter what, and I possess enough Amtrak Guest Rewards miles for the rail portion. It's the railroad experience that predominates.

So pretend you are me. Get me from Sarasota to Vancouver with the most railroad enjoyment. The person who first proposes the trip I actually book (or gets closest to it) gets a reward of 5,000 Amtrak Guest Reward points.

I am not kidding, about the AGR points or about being invited. This is not a private train. It is your chance to trap Fred W. Frailey in a dome car seat for 80-odd hours of nonstop questions. And to meet Bill Schafer, who is definitely worth the trip.

## **Amtrak Plans Next-Generation HSR Trains**

Railfan & Railroad, December 13th, 2012

In order to better meet strong and growing ridership demand on the Northeast Corridor (NEC), Amtrak plans to acquire new next-generation high-speed train sets and has scrapped its plans to purchase 40 additional high-speed passenger cars to add to the existing Acela Express fleet. Early next year Amtrak will issue a Request for Information (RFI) to start the process that will replace the existing 20 Acela train sets and additional train sets to expand seating capacity and provide for more frequent high-speed service on the NEC. "Moving directly to new high-speed train sets is the best option to create more seating capacity, permit higher speeds, and maximize customer comfort all while improving equipment reliability and reducing operating costs," said President and CEO Joe Boardman. He explained that the previous plan to add 40 new passenger cars with newer technology to the older Acela train sets was a stop-gap measure, posed technical challenges, and was determined not to be cost effective and insufficient to handle new ridership growth projections.

## **New Railroad Park to be Created in Silverton**

Published: December 13, 2012

SILVERTON, Colo. – The Durango Railroad Historical Society has entered into an agreement with the San Juan County Historical Society to create the Silverton Railroad Historical Park, the Association of Tourist Railroads and Railway Museums reports. It will be centered on the San Juan County Historical Society's Silverton Northern engine house, which the Durango group currently leases. A track connection to Durango & Silverton rails has been re-laid, along with a 1700-foot demonstration track that parallels the D&S in the right-of-way of Cement Street from 7<sup>th</sup> Street to 10<sup>th</sup> Street.

For the park, the engine house will be restored, upgraded with full utilities, and used to house and restore equipment. A car storage pavilion will be built next door. Besides Denver & Rio Grande 2-8-0 No. 315, which has been restored to operating condition, the Durango Railroad Historical Society has restored D&RGW side-dump gondola No. 871, and is in the midst of restoring another gondola. Volunteers are also well into a rehabilitation of the *Emma Sweeny*, a movie prop replica of Rio Grande Southern 4-6-0 No. 20. Both appeared in the 1949 movie *Ticket to Tomahawk*. The Durango group also owns a wood-bodied motorcar named the *Casey Jones*, is restoring a Silverton Northern caboose, and has other unrestored pieces.

## **Florida's Capital Yearns for Sunset Limited**

Written by Douglas John Bowen  
Monday, December 17, 2012

Tallahassee, Fla., is urging Amtrak to restore passenger rail service to the state capital.

Service on Amtrak's *Sunset Limited* east of New Orleans was curtailed in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina inflicted extensive damage on rail rights-of-way skirting the Gulf Coast. The train also linked New Orleans with Pensacola and Jacksonville, Fla.

Tallahassee Mayor John Marks, backed by the Florida Coalition of Rail Passengers Association, is calling for resumption of service, and believes Amtrak, which has balked at the idea in recent years, may be shifting its stance.

"The focus has changed to the extent the focus is on economic development opportunities in various cities and how passenger rail can help those economic opportunities," Marks said to local media.

Restoring the Florida portion of a *Sunset Limited* also would re-establish Amtrak's only transcontinental train. Amtrak long-distance service relies heavily on Chicago as a hub station, requiring a transfer to and from trains originating on the U.S. East or West coasts.

But Amtrak and its supporters will need to fend off critics of passenger rail service who bemoan federal funding assistance to the national passenger carrier in general, and often to the *Sunset Limited* in particular.

## **FEC, Port Everglades Sign Intermodal Site Pact**

Written by Douglas John Bowen  
Friday, December 14, 2012

Florida East Coast Railway (FEC) said Friday it has signed a joint marketing agreement with Port Everglades to promote a new 42.5-acre near-port intermodal container transfer facility (ICTF), to serve south Florida as a major international and domestic freight hub.

The agreement calls for joint promotions including international business development, the creation of promotional materials, shared sponsorships and milestone events.

Groundbreaking for the site is scheduled for early next year, with completion expected in the spring of 2014.

"The ICTF with new technology will allow FEC to efficiently and effectively deliver superior transportation service between South Florida and the eastern United States," said FEC Chief Executive Officer Jim Hertwig. "This agreement enables FEC and Port Everglades to be in a competitive position for additional freight and jobs beyond the completion of the Panama Canal."

The ICTF, to be adjacent to the Southport container terminals at Port Everglades, will facilitate containerized cargo transfer through the port to/from the FEC main line. The facility will handle both domestic and international cargo, resulting in what FEC says will be advantageous transfer and shipping fees for Port Everglades customers. In addition, by relocating the intermodal cargo from the current rail facility on Andrews Avenue, two miles from the port, traffic congestion on State Road 84 will be reduced significantly, FEC says.

"An ICTF adjacent to the Port Everglades pier operations will not only ensure our seaport remains competitive with other U.S. East Coast gateways, but will give our port a cost and time-to-market advantage over many of these gateways, thereby putting more and more South Florida residents to work as a result of the additional business opportunities it will generate," said Port Everglades Chief Executive & Port Director Steven Cernak.

FEC signed a lease agreement with Broward County in March 2012 to build and operate the ICTF for 30 years. Broward County contributed the land for the facility to serve its domestic and international business segments. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) recently provided FEC with \$18 million in grants through its Strategic Intermodal System program. The remaining costs, \$35 million, will be covered by the FEC with \$30 million from an FDOT State Infrastructure Bank loan and \$5 million from FEC capital plan.

## **Class I Railroads' Outlook for 2013 is a Smidgen on the Optimistic Side**

By Jeff Stagl, Managing Editor, *Progressive Railroading*

Steady, albeit slow business growth. A U.S. economy that continues to expand, but at a moderate rate. Weak fundamentals in most markets in the first half.

Those are some of the comments provided by Class I chief executive officers last month on their outlook for 2013. Similar to the past few years, *Progressive Railroading* emailed questions to each CEO seeking their take on economic- and traffic-growth prospects for the coming year. All seven top execs provided emailed responses, which also included a few key goals and issues pegged for 2013.

Union Pacific Railroad President and CEO Jack Koraleski best summed up the execs' take on next year: Remain slightly upbeat — and yet cautious — about increasing volume. He also summarized a growth strategy echoed by his counterparts: Stay focused on business fundamentals, market diversity, service performance, productivity and innovation to drive financial results and lower the operating ratio.

"Ever-changing markets, regulatory uncertainty, tax issues and other financial challenges weigh heavily on business leaders and consumer confidence, impacting hiring and capital investment decisions by companies across many industries," said Koraleski. "Regardless of how the economy takes shape, we will remain disciplined and focused on providing excellent service to our customers and strong returns to our shareholders."

For Kansas City Southern, 2013 likely will bring "impressive growth" in revenue and volume, said President and CEO David Starling. But it will be a bridge year to what he projects to be even stronger business growth in subsequent years.

"KCS' task will be to capitalize on the growth opportunities that we project for 2013 and beyond, while maintaining strong operational metrics and continued margin improvement," said Starling.

BNSF Railway Co. Chairman and CEO Matt Rose concurs. He projects more of a traffic bump well beyond next year.

"Although there is much uncertainty in the marketplace, the economy seems to be continuing on a modest growth track. While we do not think we will hit overall peak volumes until late 2014 or 2015, we do see the business continuing to grow," he said.

But for CN President and CEO Claude Mongeau, last month wasn't yet the proper time to read any tea leaves. It was too early to characterize CN's prospects for 2013, he said, adding that the Class I plans to provide guidance in January.

Nonetheless, the railroad generally will continue growing faster than the overall economy or base markets, said Mongeau.

## **From Containers To Crude Oil**

He believes growth will be driven next year by a range of initiatives, namely expanding overseas and domestic container markets; taking advantage of bulk commodity exports, including coal, grain and potash; capitalizing on crude oil, frac sand and other energy-related opportunities; and leveraging the U.S. housing industry's recovery, particularly in forest product shipments.

"Crude oil shipments, which were just 5,000 carloads in 2011, are expected to exceed 30,000 carloads in 2012, and we believe we have the capacity to reach 60,000 carloads of crude in 2013, said Mongeau.

In addition, CN's frac sand market has grown nearly 70 percent over the past three years, reaching \$100 million in revenue in 2011.

"We hope that our end-to-end service focus will help us grow this market to become a \$300 million business for CN in the next three- to five-year horizon," said Mongeau.

Norfolk Southern Corp. also is counting on the energy and intermodal sectors since competition from low natural gas prices and reduced electricity demand will keep impacting utility coal volumes, and weaker metallurgical and steam coal demand in Europe and Asia will continue to challenge export coal traffic, said Chairman, President and CEO Wick Moorman.

"One of the great strengths of Norfolk Southern's network is the diversity of our business portfolio and the opportunities to participate in emerging markets. A great example is the transportation of inbound sand, pipe, chemicals and drilling machinery into the Marcellus and Utica shale regions of Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York to support natural gas drilling," he said.

Another market offering considerable potential: unit trains of crude oil moving from Bakken Shale oil fields in North Dakota and western Canada over the Chicago gateway to Northeast refineries, said Moorman.

"Together with our western rail partners, we become a rolling pipeline to supply lower-cost crude oil to these refineries," he said.

In terms of intermodal, NS will increase capacity to handle additional highway conversions and East Coast imports by establishing new Crescent Corridor terminals in Memphis, Tenn., Birmingham, Ala., and Greencastle, Pa., said Moorman.

In January and through the first half, NS also will introduce new long-haul service lanes through Birmingham to the West, Mexico and the Northeast via terminals in Greencastle and Harrisburg, Pa., he said.

## **Seeking More Converts**

Although automotive volume appears to be sustainable — after increasing 18 percent in the third quarter — and shales will continue to present opportunities, intermodal will remain a vital part of any economic expansion, said CSX Corp. Chairman, President and CEO Michael Ward.

"Our strategic network investments and strong service delivery will support highway-to-rail conversions. We also will continue to leverage our connections with more than 70 ocean, river and lake ports through which intermodal and other global freight is channeled," he said.

This year, CSX continued to devote dollars to work on the National Gateway double-stack intermodal corridor from Mid-Atlantic ports to the Midwest. New or expanded intermodal terminals are under way in Columbus, Ohio; Charlotte, N.C.; Cincinnati; and Worcester, Mass., while CSX affiliate Evansville Western Railway is building an intermodal terminal in Winter Haven, Fla.

"This expanded intermodal capacity will be an important part of competing for an estimated 9 million truckloads that currently [have] a length of haul of more than 550 miles in CSX-served markets," said Ward.

Canadian Pacific already is reaping benefits from an intermodal network change. In September, the Class 1 launched new, faster intermodal services connecting Vancouver, British Columbia, to Toronto and Chicago.

"We've cut a day off transit times, [which] has produced a great response from customers," said CP President and CEO E. Hunter Harrison.

Encouraging responses are anticipated from more energy sector shippers, as well.

"Early in 2013, we expect to hit 70,000 annualized energy carloads. That's up from the 13,000 we handled in 2011," said Harrison. "We'll be expanding our crude-by-rail model in Saskatchewan and Alberta, and we expect heavier grades of oil to begin moving this way in addition to the current sweet, light crudes we're now hauling."

## **Shale Plays In Play**

BNSF is high on crude-by-rail traffic, too.

"There is no indication that production from the Bakken and other oil shale formations in the Williston Basin will slow next year, and we anticipate growth coming from the other emerging shale plays throughout the central and western U.S.," said Rose.

Likewise, intermodal will provide a boost, as over-the-road conversions continue in long-haul lanes because of trucking companies' ever-present challenges and shippers' savviness about their transportation options, he said.

A Next Generation Intermodal (NGI) initiative should help propel volume, Rose believes. Launched several years ago, NGI offers different transit speeds and multi-modal rail options in the same shipping lane that can be tailored to a shipper's needs.

Through NGI, "we will continue to collaborate with our trucking partners to help identify new ways in which intermodal can be incorporated into shippers' supply chains," said Rose.

While additional highway conversions and busy shales factor heavily into UP's prospects, volume also will be buoyed by strong automotive and Mexican markets, said Koraleski.

"Over the next five years, finished vehicle sales are projected to return to near pre-recession levels," he said. "And increased manufacturing fueled in part by significant foreign direct investment in Mexico presents significant opportunities."

Ditto for KCS. A near-sourcing phenomenon will continue to gain traction as many companies locate production facilities in Mexico near the Class I's network, said Starling. In addition, favorable credit conditions will prompt more consumers to make auto purchases that might have been deferred during the recession.

As of mid-November, KCS' auto volume was up 21 percent year over year, and much of that growth came from Mexican auto production, said Starling.

"We expect that growth to continue in the first part of 2013 and to accelerate into the first quarter of 2014, when new Honda and Mazda plants, and an expanded Nissan plant come online," he said.

KCS' strong container growth at the Port of Lázaro Cárdenas in Mexico and solid cross-border intermodal volume — which ballooned 98 percent in the third quarter — also figure to keep mounting, said Starling.

"We believe that the entire addressable market for cross-border truckloads is 2.9 million. Of that total, we have less than a 2 percent market share," he said.

## **It's All Cyclical**

Just as the CEOs are approaching volume growth from several angles, they're addressing cost control from a number of slants. Controlling expenses — which is essential for CP to reduce its operating ratio to the low 70s or high 60s — comes down to a "virtuous cycle," said Harrison.

"When you provide better service, you turn assets [and] you lower your costs," he said. "In 2012, we returned more than 5,400 leased freight cars simply by making the most of our assets."

CP also redesigned how trains are assembled and car blocks connect, which enabled the railroad to close four hump yards and alter flat-switching operations. In addition, the Class I improved train scheduling, resulting in a need for fewer locomotives, said Harrison.

"When you add it all up, you've got more efficient trains running on time, you're maximizing assets and providing better service for the customer, and [you've got] a falling operating ratio," he said.

To reduce its ratio, KCS plans to scale costs well below volume- and revenue-growth projections, and use latent capacity to absorb new growth, said Starling.

"We will also continue to expand our overall network capacity in both the U.S. and Mexico in order to efficiently handle the business growth we anticipate during the rest of this decade," he said.

## **Reformation Act**

BNSF plans to continue pursuing robust capital investment programs — a *la* 2012's \$3.9 billion budget — to expand and maintain its network.

But regulatory reform on the permitting of new projects is necessary to make it easier and more attractive for private companies to invest in infrastructure, said Rose.

"Large highway projects can take 12 years to get permitted. Our own projects — which don't include public funding — take too long," he said.

For example, BNSF is in the eighth year of the permitting process in the Los Angeles area for its proposed Southern California International Gateway intermodal terminal.

"The project will remove 1.5 million trucks from a major local freeway in southern California and provide good-paying jobs," said Rose, adding that BNSF plans to invest \$500 million in the terminal.

Jobs are a top-of-mind issue for CN's Mongeau. The Class I plans to hire more than 5,000 workers over the next two years, assuming business trends hold, he said.

Federal regulations are on his mind, as well. The Canadian government should stay the course with a commercial approach to rail service, and avoid additional regulation that could stifle innovation and "chill the positive momentum we've developed," said Mongeau.

In the United States, Congress needs to carefully weigh any moves to modify the economic regulation of the rail industry or eliminate roads' limited immunity from antitrust laws, he said.

The other Class Is also support a balanced regulatory environment.

"We continue to hear from federal, state and local governments, and from the customers and communities we serve that there is a real need to get more freight off the highways and onto the rail system," said Ward. "Any actions to limit long-haul freight-rail movements and force the opening of our private networks would artificially constrain profits and scale down our investment plans and job creation."

## **Safer Situations**

Another issue that warrants stronger consideration next year is safety. UP expects to focus more on it because the No. 1 goal is always zero incidents, said Koraleski.

"To run an incident-free network, we focus on activities such as risk reduction, standard processes and our peer-to-peer, behavior-based Total Safety Culture initiative," he said. "First and foremost, we want and need engaged employees who have each other's backs and are committed to making sure each of us goes home safely every day."

Employee engagement is one of the main reasons NS began to change its safety culture this year — an effort that will continue in 2013 (see the cover story in Progressive Railroading's November issue for more details on the cultural shift).

"We're focusing on positive recognition to reinforce safe work habits and constructive coaching to address unsafe situations," said Moorman.

The culture change also incorporates efforts to improve the Class I's service performance.

"One big change has been to expand the role of local safety committees to include service," said Moorman. "All across the railroad, teams of employees are helping us to improve operations, provide better service to our customers and win new business."

## **An Opportunistic Bent**

Better service also will help CSX earn more business by not only meeting, but exceeding customers' expectations, said Ward.

"We have visited all 5,000 of our customers to discuss growth opportunities and to view first-hand the potential infrastructure changes that could improve efficiencies for both our customers and CSX," said Ward. "We're now concluding a second wave of customer visits to further explore those possibilities."

Exploring — and seizing — opportunities will be key to volume and revenue growth for all Class Is next year. Although the economy isn't anywhere near full health, opportunities should abound in 2013, CEOs believe.

And UP, for one, is potentially in its best position to capitalize, said Koraleski.

"In my 40-year career, the future has never been more promising for Union Pacific than it is today," he said. "We are creating great value for our customers, engaging employees to provide the safest work environment in company history, making positive contributions to our more than 7,000 communities and generating record shareholder returns."

## **Passenger Rail Across Iowa Could Attract 1.3 Million Riders**

Published: December 14, 2012

DES MOINES, Iowa – A proposed high speed rail corridor between Chicago and Omaha, Neb., would attract 1.3 million passengers a year, reports the Des Moines Register. The planned route would serve Iowa City, Des Moines, and Council Bluffs. The state of Illinois is starting new Chicago to Quad Cities service in 2015.

Republicans in the state recently refused to provide \$20.6 million in matching funds to secure an \$87 million federal grant awarded in 2010 to extend the Illinois-sponsored service to Iowa City. The current study, provided by HDC Corp. of Omaha, cost \$2 million and examined an incremental approach to adding rail service.

Trains would start operating at 79 mph, with an eventual 5 daily round trips operating at 110 mph. Train travel between Chicago and Omaha would take 6.5 hours, compared to 9.5 hours by car.

The trains would use Iowa Interstate Railroad tracks west of a connection with BNSF Railway at Wyanet, Ill. The former Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific route is the only east-west route to serve Des Moines, the state's largest city and its capitol.

Last month, Henry Posner III, chairman of Iowa Interstate and of its parent company Railroad Development Corp. told KCRG-TV, "The railroad is more than willing to work with Amtrak, the states, or anybody else that's involved in passenger service. Our main business is freight, but one of the benefits of being a railroad is you can do more than one thing at once."

Amtrak's daily *California Zephyr* currently operates between Chicago and Omaha on a nine hour schedule. The train runs over BNSF Railway and misses Des Moines, instead stopping at Osceola, 50 miles south.

## **AAR Reports Mixed Rail Traffic for November**

Published: December 12, 2012

WASHINGTON – The Association of American Railroads reports U.S. rail monthly rail traffic continued to show mixed results in November. Intermodal traffic in November saw an increase for the 36th straight month, totaling 934,595 containers and trailers, up 1.2 percent compared with November of 2011. Carloads originated in November totaled 1,130,770 carloads, down 4 percent. Carloads excluding coal and grain were up 5.5 percent for the month. This continues a trend seen through most of 2012.

Commodity groups that saw carload gains in November 2012 compared with the same month last year included petroleum and petroleum products, up 56.9 percent; motor vehicles and parts, up 14.1 percent; and crushed stone, sand, and gravel, up 7.4 percent. Commodities with carload declines in November were led by coal, down 12.8 percent; grain, down 10.7 percent; and metallic ores, down 10.7 percent.

"Coal and grain together account for almost half of non-intermodal U.S. rail traffic, so they are obviously very important to railroads. But coal and grain carloads often rise or fall for reasons that have little or nothing to do with the economy. Other commodity categories like autos, lumber, and crushed stone, sand and gravel that are more highly correlated with economic growth have been growing, which we hope is a good sign for the economy moving forward," said AAR Senior Vice President John T. Gray.

## **Union Pacific Opens New Information Technology Center**

Published: December 12, 2012

AUSTIN, Texas – Union Pacific has opened a new information technology center in Austin, bringing the railroad closer to the top talent located in one of the country's hottest technology hubs. The new information technology office is located in northwest Austin, where it will serve as a software development and engineering research and development center for the railroad's technology group. The office has the capacity to support more than 40 programmers and engineers and is equipped with a lab and an audio/visual training room.

"We continue to pursue aggressive recruiting efforts within the Texas university systems and found many of the candidates prefer to live and work in Austin," said Lynden Tennison, Union Pacific senior vice president and chief information officer. "Having an office in the heart of Austin will help us bring exciting new opportunities to the exceptional talent being developed in Texas."

The railroad coordinates recruiting and outreach programs with the University of Texas at Austin, Texas A&M University, and the University of Texas at San Antonio, among others.

UP has one of the world's largest privately owned telecommunications networks, which supports the company's 10,000 customers and 32,000-mile rail network across 23 states. Its information technology team conducts leading-edge work in areas such as real-time and predictive analytics, hardware engineering, sensor-based mote technology, and train communications. The railroad also develops and builds its own proprietary hardware, software, and systems.

## **Passenger Trains Return to Norfolk**

By Fred W. Frailey

Published: December 11, 2012

NORFOLK, Va. – The reach of Amtrak's Northeast Corridor grew by 113 miles today with the introduction of direct service to Norfolk from Boston, New York, and Washington. By extending a daily train each way from Richmond, Amtrak put Norfolk back on its system map for the first time in 35 years.

Today's special inaugural run from Washington to Norfolk carried invited guests, including Amtrak President Joe Boardman and board chairman Tom Carper, Norfolk Southern CEO Wick Moorman, and Sean Connaughton, Virginia's secretary of transportation. They were joined in Norfolk by Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell. En route, the train stopped for ceremonies in Ashland, Richmond, and Petersburg. Regular commercial service begins tomorrow. Despite the fact that the northbound train leaves Norfolk at 4:50 a.m. on weekdays, demand for tickets was such that Amtrak added four extra coaches for Wednesday morning's train.

In the Amtrak era, Norfolk was briefly served by the *Mountaineer*, which ran to Ashland, Ky., where it connected with the James Whitcomb Riley out of Washington, for Chicago. The *Mountaineer* bid farewell to Norfolk in 1977.

In recent years, Virginia's Amtrak service has blossomed, as an extension of the Northeast Corridor. In addition to long-distance trains to Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and Louisiana, Virginia hosts five NEC trains each way to Richmond (two of which extend east to Newport News, across the Hampton Roads waterway from Norfolk) and one to Lynchburg in southern Virginia.

Amazingly, the state-supported trains to Norfolk and Lynchburg were created in record time, just six months for the Lynchburg run and 24 months for Norfolk. At today's ceremony in Ashland, Boardman said, "Virginia is a state we can work with to deliver passenger service. These people get it, that we need a balanced transportation system."

Added Moorman at the ribbon-cutting in Richmond, "This is a great day for the long-suffering citizens of Hampton Roads. By the time we drive to Richmond we're exhausted."

The Norfolk service is an extension of existing New York-Richmond and Richmond-Boston trains. The weekday morning northbound train from Norfolk to Boston, No. 174, previously originated in Richmond, just as No. 125 on weekdays previously terminated there from New York. Weekend service will operate on different schedules. Amtrak held its winter timetable, traditionally issued in October, so the Norfolk service could be added. The updated national timetable will be issued in January.

The route uses CSX Transportation tracks from Washington to Petersburg, 28 miles south of Richmond. In Petersburg, a new connecting track, paid for by the state, joins Norfolk Southern's east-west main line for the 85-mile run to Norfolk. The state and city of Norfolk spent \$114 million on the connecting track and for signal and track improvements on NS and to construct service facilities in Norfolk. A permanent new station, financed by the city, will open in 2013.

## **St. Maries River Railroad to Run Excursions in 2013**

*By Justin Franz*

Published: December 10, 2012

ST. MARIES, Idaho – For the first time in 52 years, a regularly scheduled passenger train will be stopping in St. Maries, Idaho. The St. Maries River Railroad plans to operate excursion trains between St. Maries and Plummer, along 19 miles of former Milwaukee Road trackage.

The St. Maries emerged from the ashes of the Milwaukee's iconic Pacific Coast Extension in 1980. Owned by Potlatch Corp. until 2010, the railroad once moved logs from Avery and Clarkia. Now owned by the Williams Group, the railroad's primary purpose is to move finished lumber from St. Maries to the Union Pacific interchange at Plummer.

General manager Bill Barnholt said the railroad hopes to start running excursions in the spring or summer of 2013. The train will utilize six passenger cars from the McCloud Railroad's defunct Shasta Sunset Dinner Train. The first three cars arrived this fall and on Dec. 1 were opened up for a public showing. Barnholt said about 490 people came in just five hours.

"We want to help the local economy and it's a scenic area," Barnholt said. "An excursion train will work well here."

The round trip excursion between St. Maries and Plummer will last about three hours and most likely be powered by one of the STMA's three GP9s.

Shirley Ackerman, director of the local chamber of commerce, said the passenger train would be a welcomed addition to the St. Maries economy. She hoped the chamber and railroad could join forces to market the train, especially in conjunction with the town's 2013 centennial.

The last time a regularly scheduled passenger train stopped in St. Maries, Idaho, was on the night of May 23, 1961, when the final Milwaukee Road *Olympian Hiawatha* ran west.

## **Amtrak P40s Ready for Rehab at Beech Grove**

*By Bob Johnston*

Published: December 10, 2012

BEECH GROVE, Ind. — Trains News Wire has learned more about the movement of Amtrak's GE P40 locomotives from yard tracks behind its Bear, Del., shops, where the locomotives have been in dead storage for about a decade. The locomotives were recently moved to company's Beech Grove, Ind., heavy maintenance facility in suburban Indianapolis.

A total of 14 P40s made the trip in three separate moves over several weeks, with the final eight arriving last week. Of the 44 original "Genesis" units built by General Electric in 1993, three had been wrecked and 11 were sold to either New Jersey Transit or the Connecticut Department of Transportation. The P40s had been sidelined in favor of P42s with electronic braking and higher horsepower beginning in 2002 after Amtrak's mail and express initiative failed to grow. When \$13 million of stimulus funding became available in 2009, the stored P40s deemed to need the least amount of rehabilitation were upgraded to P42 standards, except for braking, and received a modern signal package [see "Beech Grove to the rescue," Oct. 2010]. Those requiring more work, like No. 806 above, were left behind at Bear.

Meanwhile, Amtrak has been systematically paying down loans and assuming ownership of equipment from previous lease holders. Once that happened, and with the possibility that more of these locomotives could be returned to service by Amtrak, a state partner, or another entity proposing to run passenger trains, the decision was made to move the remaining units from Bear to Beech Grove, where the expertise and necessary plant exists to do the work.

Some parts might be used from the newly-arrived units, since neither model is currently manufactured. (This is also the case with stored Superliners on the property that require extra funding to be brought back to operation. Twenty of the best coaches, sleepers, diners, transition dorms, and Sightseer lounges were remanufactured as part of the stimulus program.) But as with the remaining passenger cars still in need of repair, Amtrak has no plans to scrap or cannibalize the locomotives for parts as long as it is possible they could be returned to service.

## We Have a Winner

By Fred Frailey  
Sunday, December 16, 2012

Thanks to all of you for acting as my travel agents. A week ago I asked for your best ideas for getting me from Sarasota, Fla., on February 19 to Vancouver by 8:30 p.m. on February 22, to ride VIA Rail Canada's train No. 2, the *Canadian*, with 55 of my nearest and dearest friends.

I thought I had all the best ideas covered. How much I underestimated you. I was offered dinners, cab rides, and even speaking engagements. One of you, I believe, even remembered my love of a dry martini. Your imaginations knew no bounds. I was overwhelmed and thank you for stepping up to the challenge.

In the end I chose the option first suggested by traindude001, which is to fly from Sarasota to Washington, D.C., take the *Capitol Limited* to Chicago, the *Empire Builder* to Seattle and an Amtrak bus to Vancouver.

Well heck, most of the rest of you must be saying. That's the simple solution. Let me explain why it's also the best one for me.

Flying home to DC for a few hours lets me dump my dirty clothes of the past week and repack my bag for the next. Now I've eliminated laundromats or extra luggage. The rest is almost all rail over two of my favorite routes, the *Empire Builder* being made more attractive because I've never taken it all the way west.

But as several of you made note, I am cutting it close. The *Builder* is due into Seattle at 10:25 am on the day of the *Canadian's* departure from Vancouver, and the last Amtrak-affiliated bus to Vancouver leaves just 200 minutes later. It's winter, as you warned.

Therefore, if there's any doubt of making the Seattle connection. I'll pull the pin in Spokane the night before and take any of many Alaska Airlines flights to Seattle to make my bus connection.

And if we're later than that? Oh c'mon. The next *Canadian* leaves in three or four days. My wife will surely forgive me, if I surrender the diamond bracelet I've been holding for just such moments, and you'll be rewarded with so many exciting blogs of my misadventures that you'll forget I ever staged a contest.

But one of you shouldn't forget. Traindude001, get in touch with me at [ffrailey@gmail.com](mailto:ffrailey@gmail.com) to collect your 5,000 Amtrak Guest Reward miles. Again, thanks to everyone for joining in the fun.

## A Republican Governor Who Gets It

By Fred Frailey  
Thursday, December 13, 2012

A happy group of people rode what I dub The Celebration Train to Norfolk this week, the day before start of daily Amtrak service between points on the Northeast Corridor and Norfolk, VA. Nobody was happier than I. You see, Virginians love passenger trains and prove it every day. And we have a conservative Republican governor, Bob McDonnell, who understands this and is supportive.

Six short-distance trains, all of them extensions of NEC trains to or from Boston or New York, now ply CSX and Norfolk Southern tracks in Virginia. Two go to Newport News, across Hampton Roads from Norfolk and Virginia Beach, two go to Richmond, the state capital, and one each run to Lynchburg in southern Virginia and to Norfolk.

I said earlier that Virginians prove they love trains. Here is what I mean: One of the Richmond trains, plus the ones to Norfolk and Lynchburg, are state-supported, meaning that Virginia pays Amtrak for the losses the trains create. But get this: So far, Virginia has not paid Amtrak a dime. Through the first 11 months of fiscal 2012, which ended this September 30, the Lynchburg train averaged 261 passengers each way per day, producing revenue of \$11 million that after fully allocated costs left a profit of \$3.6 million. This more than covered the small loss of the state-supported run to Richmond.

Come next October 1, Congress requires that states pay the fully allocated losses of all short-distance trains, plus a capital cost. That shouldn't represent much of a problem for Virginia. Kevin Page of Department of Rail & Public Transportation told me the state has millions of appropriated funds in the bank that so far haven't been needed for losses that never materialized.

Infrastructure investments Virginia made to NS tracks between Petersburg, Va., and Norfolk "bought" slots from that railroad for two more round trips to Norfolk. CSX has hinted that the price it will demand for its portion of future Norfolk runs, between Richmond and Petersburg, will be a new double-track bridge over the Appomattox River in Petersburg. Given the number of Amtrak trains already crossing the present single-track bridge (12 a day), CSX probably has a good case to make.

Bob McDonnell could have taken a leaf from fellow Republican governors of Florida, Ohio, and Wisconsin, who spurned commitments to passenger trains (and brought very little glory upon themselves, I might add). But he did not. Instead, he boarded The Celebration Train near Suffolk and joined the party. Like I said at the start, we were a happy bunch.

## Cargo Continues Moving on the Mississippi River, But Perhaps Not for Long

By JOHN SCHWARTZ  
Published: December 23, 2012

A Midwestern drought has brought the river, one of the world's largest navigable inland waterways, to water levels so low that they threaten to shut down shipping. The Mississippi, which handles some \$7 billion in trade in a typical December and January,

is expected to be closed to navigation between St. Louis and Cairo, Ill., when water levels dip toward the nine feet of depth that is necessary for most tugboats to clear the river bottom.

Those who ship goods up and down the river have asked the federal government to do two things: destroy rock formations known as pinnacles in Southern Illinois that hinder navigation when the water is shallow, and release more water from reservoirs along the upper Missouri River.

The Army Corps of Engineers has begun meeting the first request, using excavating equipment to break down the formations. Officials said the work should take 30 to 45 days.

Getting the corps to release the water has been more difficult. The corps has rejected requests for large-scale water releases from the upper Missouri, saying it does not have the authority to use that water to aid navigation on the Mississippi.

Senator John Thune, Republican of South Dakota, applauded that decision and called it “unlawful” to release water that states like South Dakota need and use. He said that his region, too, has suffered “significant negative impact” because of the drought.

The Waterways Council, a group that lobbies on behalf of inland carriers, operators and ports, had initially warned that traffic would come to a halt by Monday. But so far, the water levels have dropped more slowly than expected, in part because of small water releases by the corps. A coalition of businesses involved in trade along the Mississippi and sympathetic lawmakers have asked President Obama to order the water released.

“It would cripple our national economy to shut down the Mississippi River,” said R. D. James, a Missouri farmer and a member of the Mississippi River Commission, which manages uses of the river with the corps.

But without action from the president, Congress or the courts, the water will stay behind the reservoirs of the upper Missouri.

“When they get a little water in those reservoirs,” Mr. James said, “they don’t want to give it up.”

It could soon be too late to prevent a partial closing. Water takes two weeks to make its way from the upper Missouri River reservoirs, and predictions released by the corps over the weekend suggest that without substantial rainfall, the water levels could dip below nine feet by Jan. 11.

With the threat of a shutdown ahead, farmers might decide to hold their grain instead of shipping it in a more expensive manner, said Gregory L. Guenther, a farmer and corporate consultant. Since farmers tend to pay for the coming year’s supplies like fertilizer with those sales, they will have to borrow instead, and “that means paying interest on it.”

Transporting goods by rail is a less attractive option, Mr. Guenther said, because shipping and storage facilities that use the river are not necessarily near rail lines, and rail capacity is limited. Altogether, shifting transportation modes would drive up prices, he said, adding, “Rail is not the answer.”

Rick Calhoun, the president of Cargo Carriers, a part of Cargill, noted that carriers were already loading barges to a lighter weight to deal with the water depth, which also ends up raising costs.

“We put less product in the barge, it takes longer to get there, and we use more fuel per barge,” Mr. Calhoun said, adding, “We’re going to be running into very difficult issues.”

Col. Christopher G. Hall, the commander of the St. Louis District of the corps, said, “We’re doing everything that we possibly can to keep that channel at the authorized depth so that they can continue to operate.”

Intense dredging, tweaks and luck have helped push the crisis “to the right” on the calendar, Colonel Hall said, but it is unclear how long that will last.

The low water conditions could persist into the spring, when it generally rains more.

Steven L. Stockton, the director of civil works for the corps, said, “The only long-term solution is more rain.”

## **New EMD Passenger Locomotives Will Have New 4,700 HP Caterpillar Engines**

By Chris Guss

Published: December 19, 2012

LOS ANGELES – The Metrolink board of directors approved the purchase of up to 20 new EMD passenger locomotives last Friday. The southern California commuter agency received bids from a number of companies interested in constructing the new locomotive, eventually choosing EMDs design due to a number of factors, such as overall cost savings and preferable contract terms.

The new four-axle F125 locomotives will be powered by a Caterpillar C175-20 prime mover, which will be the first EMD passenger locomotive to utilize a Caterpillar engine. The 20-cylinder engine will produce 4,700 hp. Caterpillar first announced the engine in April 2012. It is a larger version of the C175-16 engine currently found in Progress’ PR43C locomotives.

Metrolink’s order is for 10 locomotives, with an option for 10 additional units when and if funding is available. The first three locomotives are scheduled to begin testing on Metrolink in the fall of 2015. Each locomotive will cost approximately \$6.3 million dollars.

EMD first announced the new passenger locomotive model in October 2011 at the American Public Transportation Association's meeting in New Orleans. EMD last built 20-cylinder passenger locomotives in 1967 and 1968 when the FP45 and SDP45 were produced for a handful of railroads.