



CINDERS

APRIL 1992



IN THIS ISSUE

Philadelphia Chapter News.....	2
Extra List.....	3
PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS, by Frank Tatnall.....	4

Volume 53 Newsletter of the Number 4

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

National Railway Historical Society Inc.

Post Office Box 7302

Philadelphia, Pa. 19101

SEPTA ENGINEERS LAST-MINUTE SETTLEMENT WITH CITY TRANSIT UNION But Dissenters Question Cost of Pact

With a citywide transit strike looming at 12:01 AM on Sunday, March 15, SEPTA and the Transport Workers Union hammered out a veritable 11th-hour settlement which was announced just 60 minutes before the walk-out was to begin. SEPTA General Manager Louis Gambaccini and Union President Harry Lombardo made the dramatic announcement amid unaccustomed smiles and handshakes at the Holiday Inn in Old City.



Although the news media in the weeks preceding had continually reported no progress in negotiations, hard bargaining traditionally does not get underway until the final 48 hours. SEPTA is known to be in serious financial straits and had publicly asserted that it could afford no pay increases for the 5,100 City Transit Division operators, cashiers and mechanics represented by TWU Local 234. Further, SEPTA wanted a freeze on pensions, co-payments for health insurance, an end to the current no-layoff clause and the right to hire part-time employees.

The union for its part was insisting on "reasonable" pay increases for SEPTA workers, who earn less than comparable employees on several other large U.S. transit systems (top wage for an experienced driver is \$14.41 per hour). It also demanded higher pensions, calculated on the same formula as that used for management personnel, better medical benefits, a continuation of the no-layoff clause for workers with over one year of service, and no hiring of part-timers.

The new three-year agreement must be approved both by union members and the SEPTA board. It has already evoked criticism from a few board members and politicians who feel it is too generous, given SEPTA's \$28-million deficit projected for the current fiscal year and the \$106-million shortfall for the year starting this July 1. In fact, SEPTA relented on virtually all of its earlier proposals, although the 10.5-percent pay increase agreed to is "back-loaded" in increments of 3.5 percent starting July 1, 1993, with nothing in the first 15 months. Each employee, however, would pocket an immediate \$500 "signing bonus" upon ratification. The union also won a hefty boost in pension benefits based upon management's own formula, and retained the no-layoff and no-part-timers clauses. On the subject of health insurance, SEPTA and the union crafted a new cost-containment strategy based on seeking competitive bids from insurers.

Overall, the price of the new package was put at \$25.3 million over the life of the contract, with \$2.8 million for the signing bonuses and only \$1.9 million in the upcoming fiscal year. But the cost increases sharply in the later years. General Manager Gambaccini promised that SEPTA would hold the line on fares for at least 15 months, acknowledging that "our ability to pay for this contract...depends upon an economic revival, including an upturn in our ridership," and upon higher state and federal subsidies. He concluded that "the only clear winners are our riders, the economy of Philadelphia and the region, and the collective bargaining process."

(Continued on Page 3)

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION

The annual meeting of the Philadelphia Chapter, National Railway Historical Society will take place on Friday, April 10, 1992, one week earlier than our normal third Friday due to conflict with Good Friday and Passover religious holidays. Election of officers for the 1992-93 year will take place at this meeting. Members interested in the positions of President, Senior Vice President, Vice President and Treasurer, Secretary and National Director should make direct contact with the Chairman of the Nominations Committee:

Mr. Gerald Wilson
2033 Ripley Street
Philadelphia, PA 19152-3208
215-725-3484

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS, Inc.
Post Office Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

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Senior Vice President.....Douglas W. Watts
Vice President & Treasurer.....David L. Kopena
Secretary.....Marie K. Eastwood
National Director.....Frank G. Tatnall, Jr.
Historian.....Larry DeYoung
Editor.....R. L. Eastwood, Jr.

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Membership.....Sheila A. Dorr
Newsletter.....R. L. Eastwood, Jr.
Program.....Douglas W. Watts
Publications.....Peter M. Senin, Jr.
Publicity.....Thomas F. Moran
Trip.....Frank G. Tatnall, Jr.

MEETINGS: 7:45 PM, third Friday of each month (except second Friday in December) at Eakins Lounge, Thomas Jefferson University Alumni Hall, 1020 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA. Dinner at 6:15 PM (\$18.00 per person), cash bar 5:30 PM, Meeting 7:45 PM.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$25.00 per person, which includes Chapter and National dues. Chapter-only dues \$12.00 per person per year. Membership applications should be forwarded to: Post Office Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302. Membership in the parent National Railway Historical Society is required to hold Chapter membership.

ADDRESS CHANGES should be sent to the Editor at Post Office Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. PLEASE INCLUDE NEW PHONE NUMBER.

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EXCHANGE COPIES SHOULD BE SENT TO: R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Editor, P. O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353



We regret to report that El Simon underwent emergency abdominal surgery on March 11, and is unable to provide a column for us this month. We expect that El will be released from the "backshop" shortly, and following some "road tests" may be able to provide a column for our May issue.

Members wishing to send El a "get well" card may direct it to:

Mr. Elbert W. Simon, Jr.
6 Riverside Drive, Apt. #1-E
Binghamton, NY 13905-4634

OUR MEETING:

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 10, 1992
Eakins Lounge, Alumni Hall, Thomas Jefferson University,
1020 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA (three blocks south
of Market East station)
Dinner at 6:15 PM (\$18 per person); Meeting at 7:45 PM
Parking in Wills Eye Hospital garage, 9th Street above
Locust (\$5.00 after 6 PM), or Parkway Garage, also 9th
above Locust (\$5.75 after 6 PM), Downtown Garage,
Walnut Street east of 10th (\$4.00 after 5 PM)

Our guest speaker at our April 10 meeting will be Anthony L. Giobbie, Division Manager-Customer Service, Philadelphia Division, Conrail. Mr. Giobbie's presentation will feature the Philadelphia Division of CR and the important role it plays in the overall system. Mr. Giobbie will outline the role of his office and staff and how they function to insure that Conrail provides the freight service its customers need in our area.

Our usual sit-down dinner will be held in the Eakins Lounge, Alumni Hall, Thomas Jefferson University, at a cost of \$18 per person, beginning at 6:15 PM. DINNER RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY TUESDAY EVENING, APRIL 7, 1992 to National Director Frank Tatnall at 215-828-0706. This is a strict deadline, and we ask that you please specify when ordering if you desire a fish dinner. There will be a cash bar beginning at 5:30 PM.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT OUR APRIL MEETING IS BEING HELD ON THE SECOND FRIDAY so as to avoid conflict with Good Friday and Passover religious holidays.

We invite you to attend our April 10 meeting and find out how Conrail serves its customers in the Philadelphia area.

Our May 17 meeting will feature another in our continuing series of professional film nights.

ADDENDUM TO LIST OF "TALKING" DEFECT DETECTORS

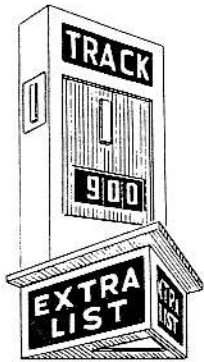
The following change should be made in the list of radio alarm defect detectors on Conrail, as published in the February issue of Cinders:

Pittsburgh Line

Harrisburg, PA - Detector on controlled siding relocated from milepost 108.6 to 107.4

BOOK ON OUTER STATION IS OFFERED

The Outer Station is a 100-page book of photographs covering the history of the Reading Company's important Outer Station at Reading, PA. Assembled by Benjamin L. Bernhart, the book will be available at the Chapter's April 10 meeting at a price of \$15.00 per copy, tax included. Those not able to attend our meeting may purchase the book for \$18.40, which includes tax and shipping, from: Outer Station Project, P. O. Box 13972, Reading, PA 19612, making checks payable to "Benjamin L. Bernhart." Those desiring a copy from the Chapter store at the April 10 meeting should telephone Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769 and reserve a copy.



APRIL 24-26, 1992: Horseshoe Curve Dedication Weekend to celebrate opening of the new visitors center at Horseshoe Curve National Historic Landmark, Altoona, PA. Numerous events are scheduled, including Friday reception at Railroaders Memorial Museum, 8:30 PM (cost \$20), ribbon-cutting and dedication ceremony at the Curve at 1 PM Saturday, and dedication dinner at Lakemont Park Sunday at 4 PM (cost \$20). Tickets for Friday and Sunday events may be purchased in advance for \$37.50, including commemorative program book. Order from: Railroaders Memorial Museum, 1300 Ninth Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602 (telephone 814-946-0834).

MAY 2: Rail tour of all Morris & Essex electrified lines of NJ Transit, sponsored by Tri-State Chapter NRHS. Train will consist of new ALP-44 electric locomotive and Comet cars, leaving Dover, NJ 8:45 AM and making intermediate stops to Hoboken, where it will depart at 10:15 AM. Train returns to Dover at 5 PM (Hoboken passengers will be accommodated free on regular trains from Dover). Numerous photo stops and a lunch stop are planned. Fare: \$27.50 per person. Order tickets from: Tri-State Railway Historical Society, P. O. Box 1217, Morristown, NJ 07962-1217. For information or credit card orders, telephone 201-488-5429.

MAY 9: Amtrak excursion from Harrisburg, Lancaster and Paoli to West Point, NY and return, sponsored by Lancaster Chapter NRHS. Special train will leave Harrisburg 5:30 AM, Lancaster 7:15, Paoli 7:55 and arrive West Point at 1 PM. Returning, train leaves West Point 5 PM, arrives Paoli 10 PM, Lancaster 10:45 and Harrisburg 12 Midnight. Routing will be via Amtrak to Newark, NJ and Conrail's ex-New York Central River Line along the west bank of the Hudson River. Fare: \$85 per person, which includes rail travel and bus tour of U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Order tickets from: Lancaster Chapter NRHS, 72 Stuart Run Road, Quarryville, PA 17566, enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope. For information, telephone 717-786-4932 or 717-299-6405.

MAY 16: Railfan Day on South Branch Valley Railroad to begin the second operating season of the "Potomac Eagle" diesel-powered train over scenic route along the South Branch of the Potomac River. Powered by specially-painted GP9 #6506, train will leave Romney, WV (West Virginia Route 28) at 9 AM, returning about 5:30 PM. Numerous photo stops will be made and food is available aboard the lounge car. Fares: \$35 per person in coach, \$49 in "classic club." Order tickets from: Potomac Eagle, 2306 35th Street, Parkersburg, WV 26104 (Visa and MasterCard accepted).

MAY 30: Spring excursion from Baltimore to Charlottesville, VA and return via CSX lines, sponsored by B&O Railroad Museum. Train will use MARC equipment. For information, write: B&O Railroad Museum Excursions, 901 West Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD 21223-2699 (telephone 301-752-2393). (NOTE: Trip rescheduled from May 16.)

MAY 30: Railfan Day on the New York Cross Harbor Railroad, Brooklyn, NY, including runbys with rail equipment and inspection of facilities at 65th Street yard, Atlantic Terminal and Greenville yard in New Jersey. Night photo session scheduled. Bus leaves Pennsylvania Station, New York, at 10 AM, returns at 6 PM (11 PM for night photo participants). Meal stops will be made. Tickets are priced at \$45 per person (\$55 including night photo session). Order from: Bernard Ente, P. O. Box 568, Maspeth, NY 11378, making checks payable to "Vanderbilt Transportation Associates" and enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope.

JUNE 1: Ringling Bros. 49-car Blue Unit circus train will operate from Hershey, PA to South Philadelphia via Conrail, prior to the circus' two-week engagement at the Spectrum. Estimated arrival time 12 Noon.

JULY 22-26: NRHS national convention at San Jose, CA, featuring Union Pacific trip with 4-6-6-4 #3985 to Stockton, CA and return, excursion to San Francisco and return with ex-Southern Pacific 4-6-2 #2472, SP trip headed by "Daylight" 4-8-4 #4449 to California State Railroad Museum at Sacramento, 4449 trip to Watsonville, CA and return, tour of Niles Canyon tourist railroad, excursion on new San Jose light rail line with vintage cars, and Friday evening banquet. Members who pre-registered should have already received their complete convention brochure. For further information, write the sponsoring Central Coast Chapter NRHS, P. O. Box 36301, San Jose, CA 95158-6301 (telephone 408-253-2798).

JULY 27-29: Nevada-Colorado Rails post-convention tour sponsored by Overland Chapter. Complete information may be obtained from: Overland Chapter NRHS, 1412 12th Street, Moline, IL 61265-3075 (telephone 309-764-1834).

SEPTA ENGINEERS LAST MINUTE SETTLEMENT WITH CITY TRANSIT UNION

(Continued from Page 1)

Later comments indicated, however, that some influential leaders believed that SEPTA had gone too far in its zeal to avert a strike, which by most estimates would have cost the City upwards of \$2.5 million a day. State Senator Vincent Fumo of South Philadelphia, one of the principal backers last year of new dedicated taxes for transit, was outraged. Saying that perhaps it was time for Gambaccini "to move on" because "he blew it," Fumo told the Daily News that Gambaccini "may know train schedules, but he doesn't know budgets. For anybody in authority to say they're coming to Harrisburg for more money, that's a lie...There is absolutely no money for SEPTA in Harrisburg, other than what they're getting now." And what SEPTA is getting from the new tax package has raised only two-thirds of the predicted revenue of \$145 million a year, already \$15 million less than expected in the current fiscal year. SEPTA Board Member Andrew Warren of Bucks County said that based on the information he had, he planned to vote against the new contract at the April board meeting. But other board members such as State Representative Gordon Linton of Philadelphia and Governor's Representative Patrick McCarthy, expressed satisfaction with the tentative agreement. The City's two members did not comment.

It's also a safe bet that most of the 450,000 daily City Division riders were happy that they could still ride SEPTA to work, rather than trying to drive or fight their way onto crowded commuter trains. The price is something they could confront later. The last contract settlement, in 1989, was also achieved without a strike, but it cost SEPTA \$65 million and produced an immediate fare increase request.

PHILADELPHIA



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

Last month, as SEPTA's Railroad Division was busily gearing up for RailWorks, the last things it needed were the crush loads and emergency service resulting from a transit strike. Nonetheless, plans were made to run extra cars on many trains and to use the push-pull sets for special rush-hour trips from Holmesburg, Glenside and Bryn Mawr. Additional trains were to run from Overbrook and Cheltenham, and all Airport trains would operate as far as the new Fern Rock Transportation Center. Many other trains were to make special stops at Overbrook, Angora, Frankford Junction, Wayne Junction, Logan and other stations. RRD people heaved a collective sigh of relief when the March 15 strike did not happen. It also ruled out any delay to RailWorks, which would have been costly to SEPTA because of penalties due to contractors.



Now comes RailWorks. With the shadow of a possible transit strike removed, the Mainline will be shut down as advertised for six months effective Sunday, April 5, to allow contractors to rebuild four miles of the line unencumbered by traffic. The long-delayed Fern Rock station opened March 12, which will provide an easy transfer to and from the Broad Street subway for R2-Warminster, R3-West Trenton and R5-Lansdale-Doylestown passengers. SEPTA will operate its Broad Street express trains every five minutes during rush hours between Fern Rock and center city, while local train headways will remain unchanged. R6-Norristown and R8-Fox Chase rail service will be discontinued for the duration, with some alternate bus arrangements in place. R7-Chestnut Hill East trains will also be halted, but the paralleling Chestnut Hill West Line will be beefed up with half-hourly service all day and up to six-car trains during peak hours.

The Railroad Division plans a full dress rehearsal on Sunday, April 5 for its reconfigured RailWorks service. All trains will operate just as they would during a regular weekday schedule. R1-Airport and R6-Cynwyd trains will turn back at Suburban Station, as will several rush-hour trains, while other "Penn"-side service will reverse at "Vine" or "Juniper" interlockings in the tunnel or at Market East Station. Signs advising of RailWorks have been erected at all suburban-area stations.

Meanwhile, a flurry of preliminary work has been going on prior to the April 5 shutdown. Long segments of welded rail have been laid out and new concrete curbing is being installed along elevated sections, apparently to be used as a base for protective fencing. Work is well along on the new maintenance facility at Port Liberty yard, just south of Wayne Junction (see January Cinders). Concurrent with the opening of the Fern Rock TC, old Fern Rock and Tabor stations were closed and Tabor was quickly demolished. Two new diesel switchers are due to arrive this month.

Controversy over the effect of RailWorks on Regional Rail ridership continues unabated, led by the Delaware Valley Association of Railroad Passengers. DVARP has predicted serious consequences for SEPTA, both short and long-term, unless more is done to reduce the inconvenience caused by the subway transfer and alternate busings. Indeed, an internal SEPTA study cited by DVARP shows that of the more than 18,500 daily rail riders affected by RailWorks, about 3,500 will leave SEPTA entirely during the shutdown, while 7,200 will use the Fern Rock transfer, 3,600 will switch to other Regional Rail lines and 4,200 will use bus service. The Broad Street Line is projected to gain 12 percent in ridership, Market-Frankford five percent and surface lines two percent.

SEPTA last month sold nine of its remaining 19 Blue cars, with ten more to go out for bid on the second round. Sold to STEWARTSTOWN RAILROAD were #9105, 9108, 9120; to Rail Tours of Jim Thorpe #9101, 9102, 9107; and to an entity called Valley Forge Railroad #9114, 9117 and 9124.....Ice and snow caused a tree to fall on eastbound SEPTA train 558 near St. Davids March 19, knocking down the catenary and trapping two dozen passengers for an hour.....The U.S. Supreme Court last month affirmed that Penn Central Transportation Company and successor Penn Central Corp. may be held liable for toxic contamination at SEPTA's Paoli yard, which was operated by Penn Central prior to 1976. SEPTA, CONRAIL and AMTRAK had been named by the Environmental Protection Agency as responsible for the cleanup costs (Traffic World).....Boston's MBTA has donated ex-Reading, ex-SEPTA RDC-1's #9152 and 9162 to the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society.....Private-sector operators have been given another extension, until May 1, to submit bids for operation of SEPTA's out-of-service Newtown branch (DVARP).....SEPTA issued new R2, R3 and R5 timetables effective January 19 to coincide with the opening of Fern Rock Transportation Center, which didn't occur until March 12.

Philadelphia's Art and Historical Commissions have approved a scaled-down plan for rebuilding the Reading Terminal trainshed as the showpiece of the new Pennsylvania Convention Center. The original low bid for the work came in at \$67.6 million, some \$10 million more than the convention center authority had budgeted. This forced architects to come up with a new plan calling for fewer skylights and windows and generally less historical opulence. Meanwhile, merchants in the famed Reading Terminal Market beneath the trainshed floor are up in arms over the Authority's proposal to shut them down on a rotating basis while work proceeds on the

(Continued on Page 5)

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 4)

trained. Top City officials have agreed to look into their complaints. City Council also promised a public hearing on another plan advanced by neighborhood groups to beautify the convention center area with more open space, trees and a fountain.



Now that the City Transit Division contract is behind them (see page 1), SEPTA officials were turning their attention to Suburban Transit where the contract covering 280 drivers expires April 1. These Red Arrow drivers, represented by the United Transportation Union, often follow the lead of their City counterparts, but have occasionally engaged in long strikes..... "Try Transit Week," sponsored by the American Public Transit Association, is set for May 11-15.Drug testing of mass transit workers nationwide will begin this fall, Kiplinger Washington Letter reports.....SEPTA has extended its Bike-on-Rail program to the Broad Street and Market-Frankford Lines. For an annual fee of \$5, cyclists can take their bicycles on board after 7 PM weekdays and all day on weekends (DVARP).

The prototype N5 car, #451, has been spending a lot of time in 72nd Street shop, but should be out test running again early this month. It also may appear at Morrissett Transportation Center when Philadelphia Chapter's Bombardier excursion arrives there on March 29. The car cannot be cleared for revenue operation until it passes a State-mandated inspection, and that awaits completion of an inspection manual for the 26-car fleet. Meanwhile, Morrison Knudsen is to begin assembling the second N5 car this spring at its Hornell (NY) shop.....Bid opening for 220 new Market-Frankford cars is now scheduled for June 19.....SEPTA has established an Engineering Development Department to spearhead projects in the Authority's ten-year capital plan. It is headed by former Regional Rail Chief Jerome Kirzner, who now plans to leave SEPTA for a West Coast operating position.

A Route 13 Kawasaki trolley ran into the rear of a stopped Route 36 car just west of the 22nd Street subway-surface station at 9 AM March 4, injuring 21 passengers and both operators. Only the operator of the second trolley, who admitted to inattention, was held overnight in the hospital. Both cars #9036 and 9055 received about \$20,000 in damage. The next morning all subway-surface cars had to be diverted to 40th & Market Streets when gasoline from a service station tank at 38th & Baltimore Avenue was found leaking into the tunnel beneath Spruce Street.....SEPTA's annual report for Fiscal Year 1991 features on its cover an aerial photo of the Fern Rock complex.

One of the issues raised by the union during last month's contract talks with SEPTA was the pay of General Manager Louis Gambaccini. The Daily News later published a list of salaries, including deferred compensation, paid to the chief executives of big U.S. transit agencies, and Gambaccini was indeed #1 at \$191,724 per year. Next in line were Washington (\$158,400), Chicago (\$153,200), NJ TRANSIT (\$150,000), Dallas (\$149,800) and New York (\$149,500).....The widow of a SEPTA signal maintainer killed by a Broad Street subway train in February 1990 has sued SEPTA and five of its employees for \$100,000. The death set off a dispute over SEPTA's alleged laxity in enforcing safety rules.....SEPTA has sold its stock of Bullet car parts to the Orange Empire Railway Museum, Perris, CA, and to other museums with Bullet cars. Orange Empire has an ex-Bamberger Bullet, originally built by Brill of Philadelphia for the Fonda, Johnstown & Gloversville, which is somewhat shorter than SEPTA's P&W cars.

Trolley route 34 is to be single-tracked on Baltimore Avenue between 54th and 55th Streets until May, due to a street construction project. The original plan was to bus the line.....Route 13 track will be rebuilt in Yeadon this summer, requiring bus operation between Mount Moriah loop and Darby.....Route 23 may return to rail operation this month over the southern section of the line. Undermining of Germantown Avenue caused by a water main break in Mount Airy prevents the use of trolleys to Chestnut Hill.....As mentioned last month, Route 56-Erie Avenue will be bused this summer.

Amtrak



AMTRAK President W. Graham Claytor, Jr. has asked Congress to establish a capital improvement trust fund for intercity rail passenger service. Representative Al Swift of Washington, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Transportation, has introduced legislation to establish a \$5-billion fund for Amtrak by setting aside one cent of the 2.5-cent Federal fuel tax currently used for deficit reduction (Amtrak Newsbreak).....AMTRAK revenues in January 1992 were \$103.6 million, a one-percent improvement over the previous January even though passenger miles declined from 470 million to 468 million. The revenue-to-cost ratio rose from 69.4 percent to 71.5 percent while systemwide on-time performance improved from 79.5 percent to 82.3 percent (Newsbreak).

AMTRAK began testing its three experimental RoadRailer vehicles last month, basing them at Philadelphia's Penn Coach yard. They performed well in 100-mph Corridor runs.....Republic Locomotive of Greenville, SC is proposing to build for AMTRAK a state-of-the-art gas turbine locomotive called the RTX (Republic Turbo Express), which would weigh only 81 tons and operate at sustained speeds of 125-150 mph.....CANADIAN NATIONAL's Point St. Charles shop in Montreal reportedly is rebuilding two HeM-owned former CSX GP40 locomotives with HEP and high-speed gearing, for lease to AMTRAK (Bytown Railway Society).....AMTRAK's new police phone number is 800-331-0008, which can be used for reporting incidents anywhere in the U.S.

High winds blew a commercial power line onto AMTRAK's Northeast Corridor at Newark, DE at 6:05 AM March 11, halting service for more than two hours. All four tracks were reopened by 10:40 AM but not before 23 trains were delayed and three annulled. Both Federal Railroad Administrator Gilbert Carmichael and Conrail Chairman James A. Hagen were aboard delayed trains.....AMTRAK AEM-7 #932 derailed on a crossover at "Wine" interlocking in Wilmington February 25, while making a runaround move with train #626. After rerailling, super-

(Continued on Page 6)

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 5)

visors made a test run through the same switch and the unit again derailed. It was towed to Wilmington shop for inspection.....DVARP reports that NJ TRANSIT has purchased property near Garden State Park in Cherry Hill and will build a \$1.2-million station to serve its Atlantic City trains...The Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees is threatening a strike this month against AMTRAK and CONRAIL.

Philadelphia Chapter Members John Burke, Ron and Karin DeGraw, David McWerther and Pat Purcell joined the writer and two other friends on board AMTRAK's "Keystone Classic Club" March 7-8. Service aboard the luxury private car J. Pinckney Henderson from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh and return was uniformly excellent, as expected. Amtrak recently dropped the Club's service charge from \$195 to \$145 per person.....AMTRAK seemingly has had little adverse reaction to its discontinuance last fall of free wine and "TrakPaks" for sleeping car passengers. The packs containing crackers, cheese, nuts and a mint were hard to keep in stock (Bull Sheet).....The return of ceramic dinnerware to the Capitol Limited and two other trains has evoked an "overwhelmingly positive response" from both passengers and employees, AMTRAK said. The experiment, begun in 1989 to replace disposable dinnerware, also includes glass glasses, metal flatware and linen tablecloths (Mohawk & Hudson Chapter Call Board).



Delaware River Port Authority has announced that it will open its new intermodal container terminal in South Philadelphia on May 15. Though built on 20 acres leased from CONRAIL, the yard will also be served by CSX and DELAWARE & HUDSON. Construction was completed late last year but a dispute arose over which union would get the work, the Teamsters Union or the International Longshoremen's Association.....The regional office of the National Labor Relations Board last month declared the Teamsters strike at several CONRAIL intermodal terminals to be unlawful. Work soon resumed at the Morrisville facility near Trenton, with a new contractor replacing PTL Transportation Services for whom the picketing Teamsters had worked. Conrail, depicting itself as the victim of an illegal secondary boycott, filed suit against Teamsters locals in several cities seeking compensation for lost business and added costs.

A nine-car CSX inspection train operated over CONRAIL from Philadelphia to Harrisburg and on to Hagerstown, MD March 4, with an interesting consist. Leaving East Side yard just before 1 PM, the special was made up of Conrail E8's #4021-4020, CSX baggage car 362, Conrail office car 1, CR sleeper 8, leased American European Express sleeper Paris, CSX sleeper 363 Kentucky, CSX office car 308 Florida, leased AEE diner Zurich, CSX conference car 315 Indiana and CSX theater inspection car 318. Member John Petko reports on speculation that CSX will close its bridge at Perryville, MD next year for heavy repairs, and may be looking to detour its Philadelphia traffic over Conrail.....Members of the United Transportation Union have ratified a new contract with CONRAIL which will mandate two-person crews on all through trains. Most local trains and yard jobs will continue with three-person crews until 1995, when Conrail can begin phasing out those brakemen. Employees signing up for voluntary separations will receive \$65,000 in cash.

CONRAIL has put up for sale its abandoned Cumberland Valley bridge across the Susquehanna at Harrisburg (Harrisburg Chapter Rail Review).....READING, BLUE MOUNTAIN & NORTHERN will purchase two to four retired U23B locomotives from CONRAIL. In the group of CR #2789, 2791, 2793 and 2798, the first two reportedly will be renumbered 2398 and 2399. They are needed because RBMN plans to take over the Schuylkill County branches above Lofty, PA, formerly served by CARBON & SCHUYLKILL out of Jim Thorpe. The two lines connect at Haucks, PA (Bert Pennypacker, John Petko).....CONRAIL has received a million-dollar contract to rebuild five GP9 units purchased by the U.S. Army (Horseshoe Curve Chapter Coal Bucket).....CONRAIL has ordered 1,600 more kits from Johnstown America Corp. for converting triple-hopper cars into "bathtub" coal cars.....CONRAIL, Inland Steel and Thrall Car have combined their talents to build a prototype "CoilSHIELD" car designed to deliver coiled steel in perfect condition (Railway Age).

NJ TRANSIT recently told its riders that they face a fare increase of up to 15 percent if President Bush's FY 1993 budget is approved. This budget would cut NJT's Federal operating assistance from \$38 million to \$4 million during the year. About 54 percent of NJT's operating funds come from farebox revenues..... Lettie Gay Carson, the well-known mass transportation activist, died March 18 in Newtown at age 91..... Ferry service was due to begin March 31 between Philadelphia and Camden, exactly 40 years after the last PRR ferry was removed from service.

BLUE MOUNTAIN & READING is planning a series of steam fantrips over the Colebrookdale line between Pottstown and Boyertown on September 19 and 20 (Sheila Dorr).....Member Bill Vigrass has joined the Bermuda Railway Museum, which has opened a rail museum on the island resort, whose railroad was abandoned in 1948.....CSX last year earned \$7.5 million in on-time incentive payments from AMTRAK.....As of early March CSX had equipped 12 of its GP40's with train control equipment for operation on the former RF&P.

DELAWARE & HUDSON has exercised its option to purchase Conrail's Southern Tier Line between Buffalo and Binghamton, NY. As the heaviest user of the ex-Erie line under trackage rights granted in 1976, D&H will now be responsible for maintaining the 200-mile line. A formal purchase agreement and government approval are still required.....Baltimore's Central Light Rail Line is scheduled to begin limited service April 6, at the same time as the Baltimore Orioles baseball begins in the new Oriole Park at Camden Yards.....The Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees is seeking Federal protection for its members from the alleged effects of silica dust which is stirred up during trackwork (Traffic World).

BVTA TO SPONSOR "ALMOND JOYS TO NORRISTOWN" EXCURSION

A two-car train of converted Budd-built subway-elevated cars will be featured on a SEPTA excursion Sunday, June 14, 1992 on the Norristown High Speed Line. To be sponsored by the Buckingham Valley Trolley Association, operators of the Penn's Landing Trolley, the excursion will leave 69th Street Terminal (P&W platform) at 1 PM and numerous photo stops have been scheduled.



Built in 1960 as part of a new stainless steel fleet for the Market-Frankford Line, the cars were immediately nicknamed the "Almond Joys" because of the ventilator humps on the roof which remind people of the famous candy bar. Two years ago five of the cars were standard-gauged and otherwise modified for the third-rail Norristown Line, to back up the seven existing sets of ex-Chicago cars until the new N5 cars arrived for service. In May 1991 the first N5, #451, arrived but due to a multitude of technical reasons has not yet entered revenue service, and has yet to be joined by any additional cars from Morrison Knudsen's Horneil (NY) plant.

Accordingly, the five Budds continue to soldier on in unfamiliar territory, which inspired BVTA to schedule an excursion while the cars are still available in this unusual environment.

Tickets are priced at \$20 per person (\$15 for BVTA members) in advance, or \$25 on day of trip if available. The fare includes a free Almond Joy candy bar for each passenger. Order tickets from: George Metz, 130 Springton Lake Road, Media, PA 19063-1826, making checks payable to "BVTA" and enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

CUPPER TO AUTOGRAPH HIS HORSESHOE CURVE BOOK

Horseshoe Heritage is the name of a new book written by Journalist Dan Cupper to coincide with the dedication of the new visitors center at Horseshoe Curve on Saturday April 25 (see "Extra List"). Cupper, a member of Harrisburg Chapter, will autograph the book at the visitors center near Altoona between 3:30 and 5:30 PM. The book will be on sale at that time.

UPDATE OF AREA SHORTLINE/REGIONAL MOTIVE POWER ROSTERS

BALTIMORE & ANNAPOLIS RAILROAD - Delete, operations discontinued

CARBON & SCHUYLKILL RAILROAD/RAIL TOURS, INC.

Add 44 B-B F3A D/E EMD 1948 Bangor & Aroostook 44 (Note 4)

Add Note 1 to D F7B

Add Note 4: Owned by Tri-State Chapter NRHS

LACKAWANNA RAILWAY (LWRY), Scranton, PA

Add 1801 B-B RS18 D/E MLW 1959 Canadian National 3124 - Transferred from Lackawanna Valley 1801

LACKAWANNA VALLEY RAILROAD

Delete 1801 RS18

MARYLAND & PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD

Add 1504 B-B CF7 D/E EMD 1951 Santa Fe 2425 (F7A 261L) - Transferred from Yorkrail 1504

MARYLAND STATE RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION

Add 4327 ATA-ATA E8A D/E EMD 1951 New Jersey Transit 4327 (Note 4)

Add Note 4: Owned by private lessor

JUNIATA TERMINAL (JTFS), Philadelphia, PA

Add 9251 B-B NW2 D/E EMD 1947 Conrail 9199

MIDDLETOWN & HUMMELSTOWN RAILROAD

Delete Note: Locomotive also based at Columbia, PA

NEW YORK, SUSQUEHANNA & WESTERN RAILWAY

Add 142 2-8-2 SY Steam Tang Shan (China) 1989 Valley 1647

OCTORARO RAILWAY

Delete 735 SW1

SHORE FAST LINE RAILROAD - Change name to: SOUTHERN RAILROAD OF NEW JERSEY (SRNJ)

STOURBRIDGE RAILROAD

Add 4039 0-6-0 Steam Alco 1942 Virginia Blue Ridge 5 (Note 2)

Add Note 2: Owned by private individual

WESTERN MARYLAND SCENIC RAILROAD

Add 6780 B-B FPA4 D/E Montreal 1959 Canadian National 6780

YORKRAIL

Delete 1504 CF7