

# CYNDERS

## DECEMBER 1999



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Volume 60

Newsletter of the

Number 11

PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER

National Railway Historical Society Inc.

Post Office Box 7302

Philadelphia, PA 19101

## SEASON'S



## GREETINGS

The Holiday Season is here and we find ourselves making plans to share time with family and friends and give thanks for our many individual blessings. At the same time, we also are reflecting on the events of 1999 and anticipating Year 2000!

While we each prepare for our Holiday traditions let us take time to reflect on how we have helped one another and our Chapter in the preservation of rail history during 1999. Just think, when we participate in rail-related events with friends, we are helping them and ourselves to preserve rail history, acquire knowledge, make new friends and have fun! The events may be a National Convention, fan trip on a local shortline, mainline extravaganza or spending a day at your favorite photo location(s). Assisting our Chapter at one of its many endeavors during the course of the year is also a way to help preserve rail history, acquire knowledge, make new friends and have fun! Take your pick from several: volunteering at a transportation festival or train show, spending a day with the FP7's, becoming a member of a Chapter committee, suggesting creative methods of fund-raising, being a guest presenter at a Chapter meeting and the list goes on.

We have a talented, knowledgeable membership that is proud of our tradition of being in the forefront of rail history preservation. So, I challenge each of you to think of ways in which you can help OUR Chapter to continue preserving rail history in year 2000 and beyond!

During this time of reflection and giving thanks, I would like to personally thank our Board of Directors and Philadelphia Chapter for its participation in RailCamp 1999 at Steamtown in Scranton, PA. Having the opportunity to work with 24 energetic, knowledgeable high school students from across the United States in July was quite a treat. It was also a great opportunity for me to give something back to the rail history community. Many, many thanks!

The officers of Philadelphia Chapter join in extending to you and your families every wish for a Safe and Joyous Holiday Season. We thank all who helped make 1999 a success and look forward to continuing to witness and preserve history in 2000!

DOUGLAS W. WATTS  
President

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**MEETINGS:** 7:30 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 (\$19.00 per person), Meeting 7:30 PM.

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES:** \$31.00 per person, which includes Chapter and National dues. Chapter-only dues \$16.00 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-only status.

**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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## MEETING NOTICE:

FRIDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 10, 1999

Eakins Lounge, Alumni Hall, Thomas Jefferson University,  
1020 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA (three blocks south  
of Market East Station)

Dinner at 6:15 PM (\$19.00 per person), Meeting at 7:30 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 (\$5.00 after 6 PM)

Our December 10, 1999 meeting features a narrated slide lecture by NRHS Senior Vice President Larry Eastwood entitled "RailCamp 1999--NRHS's Investment in the Future". This program will be a review of the two sessions of RailCamp 1999 conducted this past July at Steamtown National Historic Site in Scranton, PA. The evening begins with our usual sit-down dinner in the Eakins Lounge, Alumni Hall, Thomas Jefferson University, at a cost of \$19.00 per person, beginning at 6:15 PM. DINNER RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY TUESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 7, 1999 to Dinner Chairman Bill Gardiner at 215-632-7016. This is a STRICT deadline, and you MUST specify when ordering if you desire a fish dinner. PLEASE CALL BILL GARDINER to make this reservation!

Looking ahead, our January 21, 2000 program will feature Richard Jahn and a narrated slide lecture on the Lehigh Valley Railroad. Mark your calendar now to be sure you'll be on hand.

### Members Urged to Pay Dues; Donations Needed

Bills for Year 2000 Chapter and National NRHS dues were mailed in October, and by late November more than 200 members already had renewed. Many members also are including donations over and above the dues level, to be used in the continuing restoration of the Chapter's ex-Reading FP7 locomotive #903. Chapter officers urge all members to pay their dues promptly, and if possible add a donation for the Chapter and/or the National.

Basic dues remain at \$31 per person, with an additional \$3 for each family member. (For Chapter-only members who pay their national dues through another chapter, Philadelphia Chapter dues are \$16.) Payments should be mailed in the pre-addressed envelope to: Membership Renewals, Philadelphia Chapter NRHS, P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302.

### Drawing for Crusader Model will be December 12

That beautiful 0-gauge trainset modeled on the Reading's *Crusader* will be the top prize in this year's Philadelphia Chapter fundraising raffle. The lucky winner will be drawn at the end of Greenberg's Great Train Show at the Fort Washington Expo Center on Sunday, December 12. Second, third and fourth-prize winners will also be selected in the drawing, and it is not necessary to be in attendance to win.

The trainset consists of a streamlined Pacific steam locomotive, two coaches, diner and two observation cars, donated to the Chapter by Boscov's Department Stores.

Each Chapter member has received in the mail a set of five raffle tickets, to either purchase or sell to neighbors and friends. Tickets are priced at \$5 each or six for \$25. Everyone is urged to enter the raffle, as a means to support the continuing restoration of Philadelphia Chapter's FP7 locomotive #903.

### So What's All the Fuss About "Y2K"?

Tabloids, doomsayers and some "experts" are predicting that the world will come to an end at midnight this New Year's Eve, when computers will not recognize the new millennium and take us all from 1999 to "1900." So what's so bad about that?

Just think what it would be like back in 1900. The O&W was earning a profit. Camelbacks were heading up passenger trains. Plans were being made to double-track the busy mainline to Cadosia. The Scranton Division, Northfield tunnel and Middletown station were all in their first decade. And there were no computers, TV's, cell phones or jet planes.

I'll take 1900 over 2000 any day!

(Reprinted from the *Mountaineer*, newsletter of the Ontario & Western Chapter (O&W Railway Historical Society). Editor's note: Most of the NYO&W Railway (the "Old & Weary") was abandoned in 1957.



On November 8, Amtrak and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania announced a program to spend \$140 million to upgrade the Philadelphia-Harrisburg Keystone service.

The five-year project will feature all-electric service to Harrisburg, upgraded tracks and signals, 90-minute travel to Philadelphia on certain trains, and three hours Harrisburg-New York. Also included are station improvements at Harrisburg, Elizabethtown and Lancaster, as well as a new intermodal station serving Harrisburg International Airport. Improved safety features will be provided at the three remaining grade crossings on the line, and catenary upgrades.

The \$140 million to be expended will be broken down to \$41.5 million for upgraded electric locomotives and passenger cars, \$40 million for new ties and welded rail, \$20 million for an upgraded signal system, \$15 million to rehabilitate the overhead catenary, \$12 million for bridge repairs and \$5 million for stations. Keystone Service has experienced an ridership increase of 150 percent over the past four years to nearly one million passengers per year, the Northeast's fastest-growing Amtrak route. Next year, of course, the route will be rebranded as Acela Regional.

Amtrak General Order 502, effective October 31, covered a number of changes other than schedules. For instance, "New Haven" and "Fair Street" interlockings in the Connecticut city are redesignated as CP273 and CP274, respectively. Several interlockings have been reconfigured or deleted in the Attleboro, MA area. Under Rule 562, additional segments between Shore Line Junction and Cranston, RI (west of Providence) are now equipped for operation with cab signals absent wayside signals. Route 128 station is now equipped with high-level platforms.

"Harold" tower, newly built only a few years ago, has been remoted to the Penn Station (NY) Control Center. "Allied" interlocking at MP 4.0, is part of the new Allied Junction transfer station under construction in the New Jersey Meadowlands. "Haynes" interlocking has been added at MP 11.3 in connection with the new Newark Airport station, also under construction.

Bombardier and the FRA are teaming up to build a 4,000-hp prototype turbine-powered locomotive. It will weigh 100 tons and will be 65 feet long. A top speed of 150 mph is expected and the power plant will be an Allied Signal TF-40, later to be augmented by a flywheel. The aim is to provide Acela Express-type high-speed capabilities to non-electrified routes around the country.

Beech Grove is rebuilding three more F40's to cab-baggage units for the forthcoming Boston-Portland service. The units are 213, 214 and 220, to become 90213, 90214 and 90220. The latest (seventh) Canadian Atlantic F40 rebuild is 456, formerly Amtrak 378, released during October.

Amtrak's E60's are regularly assigned only to Northeast Corridor trains 622, 624, 629 and 633, as well as several Intercity trains. Paired AEM-7's are limited to the following NEC trains: #12 (daily), 67, 66/76 daily, 171-172 daily, 173 Monday, Saturday, 174 Friday and Sunday, 175 Monday and Saturday, and 176 Friday and Sunday.

The Capstone 2001 cars are suffering from recurring problems with wheel-slip sensors. Every day, there have been cases of flat wheels enroute which require retruing before the car can be used again. However, the Capstone program is continuing and, on November 4, the following cars were at Bear, and should be released in the order they arrived: 21125, 21009, 21607, 21608, 21611, 21609, 21610, 21612 and 21613. These cars should become 82028-82036. Custom Class car 44927 will be released as 81505. Four half clubs (20131, 20132, 20128 and 20142) ought to become cafe cars 85000-85003, while club-dinette 48157 will become 85500.

With Capstone 2001 production cutbacks, cars are receiving four-year brake overhauls without getting an interior and exterior upgrade. The cars will presumably remain in service in the old livery for some time since Bear will be occupied with cars requiring subsequent attention. Latest Capstone releases are the 82024 (ex-21604, 10-22-99), 82025 (ex-21258, 11-02-99), 82026 (ex-21098, 11-04-99), 82027 (ex-21606, 11-99), and 82502 (ex-44664, 11-19-99).

Trains 317-318, the Chicago-Indianapolis "shop train" have been renumbered to 850-851. This follows Amtrak's practice of adding an "8" ahead of the "parent" train's two-digit number when a train operates over only a portion of a route. Since this train operates on the schedule of Trains 50-51, the Cardinal, on that train's off-days, it is now 850-851.

Another Amfleet II lounge has been rebuilt with an enclosed smoking room: 28001-Atlanta Club.

Recapping some Superliner items, five Superliners have been retired: sleepers 32004, 32008 and 32010, and two coaches (34068 and 34083). There are, of course, some other wreck victims which may well join this list.

There have been numerous Superliner conversions to different type cars. For instance, diners 38012, 38002, 38013, 38029 and 38027 have become Auto Train lounges 33100-33104. Coaches 34094, 34100 and 34060 have been converted to smoker-coaches 31590-31592. Snack coaches 35001-35011 are former coaches 34003, 34007, 34009,

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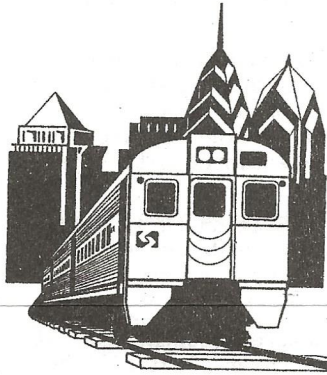
# PHILADELPHIA



## FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

SEPTA issued its fall-winter Regional Rail timetables, effective November 21. Among the changes are easier-to-read type in some and the much-heralded debut of the R5 Thorndale station, midway between Downingtown and Coatesville. Also introduced was the Great Valley Flyer, trains 7565 and 9526, which makes all stops Paoli and west but run express between Paoli and 30th Street. Renumbered Bryn Mawr locals 4624 and 9569 were extended to Paoli, running non-stop Wayne-Bryn Mawr to help fill the gap left by the conversion of two Wayne limiteds to the Great Valley Flyers. In September and October, SEPTA managers visited many R5 stations during the morning rush hour, handing out information and answering questions from riders on the upcoming service changes. Reportedly, Chapter Member and well-known Author Bert Pennypacker coined the Great Valley Flyer name.....To accommodate the new Thorndale station, AMTRAK has converted eastbound track #1 to Rule 261 bi-directional signaling over the 1.6 miles between "Thorn" and "CaIn" interlockings.

SEPTA last month said that it will build an \$8-million, 500-car parking garage at Norristown Transportation Center, to provide space for the growing ridership on the R6 rail line. Congressman Joseph Hoeffel was on hand at the November 15 ceremony to announce a \$1-million Federal grant to help design and build the structure. On weekdays, the present 135-space lot is filled to overflowing.....The \$4.3-million restoration of historic but fire-damaged Strafford station got underway in October. Completion is expected next winter.....On November 8 a plaque was unveiled at Wayne station showing that the 1885-vintage building now is officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the result of efforts by the Wayne Station Historic Preservation Association and Philadelphia Chapter of the PRR Technical & Historical Society. SEPTA, meanwhile, has filed an application for \$1 million in Federal and State restoration funding to supplement the station group's efforts.



On November 11 a four-car work train began laying fiber-optic cables along SEPTA's West Chester Line. Operated by a Danella Construction crew, the train consists of GP38 locomotive NREX 2001 (ex-Chicago Central & Pacific), equipment flatcar DCIX 53242, plow car DCIX 53164 and two reel cars, Southern 152085 and 152106. By mid-month the train was working in the area of Swarthmore station, and after progressing north to "Arsenal" interlocking in Philadelphia it will move to the Neshaminy Line north of Jenkintown. Actually, the train is burying 12 plastic cable ducts, which will have the fiber-optic cables inserted at a later date.

The archaic train register system on the Ivy Ridge Line to Cynwyd has been eliminated, after SEPTA installed two-way signalling. The new interlockings known as "CP-Jeff" and "CP-Cyn" are remotely controlled from "A" tower on the R1 Airport Line.....Manual train control continues in force on the Airport Line because of extensive damage to the signal system in the Eastwick area caused by Hurricane Floyd in September.....The Airport Line now has two new trains providing early-morning service. Train 0101 from Fern Rock arrives at the Airport at 4:49 AM, while 102 departs at 5:09 for Glenside seven days a week, primarily to serve Airport employees.....A 51-year-old homeless man was killed by SEPTA train 4119 November 8, as he was walking on the track in Hatboro.

One of SEPTA's three SW120C diesel switchers, #50, returned from Brookville (PA) Locomotive on November 17, having been overhauled and equipped with a new Caterpillar prime mover.....By mid-November, work had not yet begun on the restriping of SEPTA's MU car fleet (see October Cinders). The new R1 timetable continues to feature a front-panel photo of an Airport "yellowbird" car, which will lose its distinctive appearance with the restriping program.....SEPTA last month had a couple of bad service days attributed to the annual plague of wet leaves on the rails.....SEPTA commuter cars have new stickers affixed to their sides, reading "Bicycles welcome on all non-peak trains".....The Market Street entrance to the former Reading Terminal headhouse has received a large new marquee for the Pennsylvania Convention Center. But there is no sign as yet indicating that it also provides access to Market East Station.....With Mayor Rendell presiding, a new McDonald's restaurant opened November 5 in Suburban Station.

There will be no holiday trolley service in center city this year, because of power problems and the removal of some overhead wire for building construction.....SEPTA is in the last round of negotiations for the purchase of 12 new articulated light-rail vehicles. The contract, which should be awarded in January, will include an option for 60 more cars.....

**SEPTA**   
SERIOUS ABOUT CHANGE.

.....In mid-November the last of 220 new M4 cars for the Market-Frankford Line were ready to be shipped from the ADtranz plant in Elmira, NY. A special ceremony was planned for the arrival of married pair 1219-1220. Retrofitting of the door mechanisms on earlier cars will be performed on site by ADtranz (see November Cinders).

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## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 4)

Only a few weeks are left until New Year's Eve and the onset of the dreaded "Y2K" bug. SEPTA officials believe their computer systems are ready, but just to be on the safe side all trains will be parked at the nearest station a few minutes before the midnight hour. In order to accommodate the thousands of expected revelers in center city, the plans are to operate the Market-Frankford and Broad Street Lines all night in lieu of the usual owl buses, but there will be a hiatus in service during the pre-midnight period.....The famous Garden Railway from Morris Arboretum once again has been moved into the concourse level at SEPTA's 1234 Market Street building, transformed from its warm-weather appearance into a snow-covered "Magical Holiday Railway." It will be open to the public daily until after New Year's, admission-free.

SEPTA has hired Richard Maloney from KYW Channel 3 as its new director of public relations, replacing the resigned Stephan Rosenfeld.....In January, a contractor will begin distributing Metro, a free tabloid newspaper aimed toward SEPTA riders with national and city-related features, SEPTA news and ads. SEPTA will share in the ad revenue from the five-day-a-week publication. Already, a new-format SEPTA News is being mailed to employees.....SEPTA is now selling a new "CityPass," good for admission to six major local attractions such as the Franklin Institute and New Jersey Aquarium during any nine-day period. It is priced at \$27.50, half of the normal admission charges, but is not honored on buses or trains. SEPTA also will jointly promote such mega-events as the upcoming Philadelphia Flower and Boat Shows with "super tickets" good for both admission and SEPTA transportation (DVARP).

SEPTA is projecting a four-percent increase in Federal capital funding in current Fiscal Year 2000, versus ten-percent growth nationwide. During FY 1999 SEPTA received \$159.9 million from Washington, with a total of \$167.2 million expected this year, representing 80 percent of the \$209.7 million in project costs.....Average daily ridership in October was 722,000, which was 4.4 percent below budget and 1.7 percent under October 1998. The best performance was turned in by Regional Rail, which carried an average of 96,000 weekend riders, or 0.9 percent below budget and 1.6 percent below the year-ago period. Consolidated passenger revenues for October 1999 were \$22.9 million, 2.9 percent below budget but 0.4 percent better than October 1998.....SEPTA and other transit systems in the State are banking on the Legislature to replace income lost under the recent deregulation of electric utilities. Because of a change in taxing policy on the utilities' property, SEPTA stands to lose some \$11 million per year, with a statewide total of more than \$60 million.

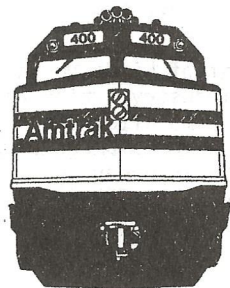
SEPTA finally has issued a new suburban street and transit map, replacing the map dating from 1989. Sporting a blue cover, it is in the same size and format as the City map issued in 1997, and initially will be available only at SEPTA locations.....Delaware Car Company of Wilmington will receive a \$728,000 contract to repair new M4 cars #1034 and 1074, which were damaged in a collision at 69th Street last winter.....The first of SEPTA's new articulated buses, #7101, on display earlier this year in Philadelphia, appeared at the Transit Equipment Expo in Orlando, FL last October. Neoplan expects to deliver most of the 155-vehicle order next year (Bill Volkmer).....SEPTA Neoplan bus #3253 is still carrying a full wrap-around ad for AMTRAK's Acela service. The sides of the bus are black with a drawing of the train and the inscription "Depart from your inhibitions...Life on Acela."

The controversy over building the Schuylkill Valley Metro light-rail line to Reading continues to heat up (see November Cinders). Area newspapers and politicians have weighed in on SEPTA's side in its efforts to obtain an easement to operate on NORFOLK SOUTHERN's right-of-way between Norristown and Reading, which initially NS vowed it would not allow. Responding to an anti-NS editorial in the Inquirer, Cinders Editor Larry Eastwood had a lengthy letter published in the November 10 edition of the newspaper, strongly advocating a commuter rail operation instead of the much more costly light-rail alternative favored by SEPTA. Consultant Urban Engineers is expected to issue its modal recommendation sometime next month.

The City Planning Commission and the Federal Transit Administration have held a number of community and technical meetings on a Roosevelt Blvd. Corridor Transportation Investment Study, the current incarnation of the 40-year-old dream to extend rapid transit service into Northeast Philadelphia. The next step, according to a Daily News report, will be to hire a consultant to do an "alternatives analysis".....A 16-year-old girl was struck and killed by a Route 36 trolley at Island Avenue & Lindbergh Blvd. on November 16.....A white consultant has filed suit against SEPTA, charging that he lost a \$4.6-million contract to two black women because of racial bias, according to an Inquirer report. The contract covers a public awareness campaign in West Philadelphia in connection with the \$370-million rebuilding of the Market Street el.

In a November 8 press conference, AMTRAK and the State announced a five-year, \$140-million project to upgrade the 104-mile-long Keystone Corridor between Philadelphia and Harrisburg. Half of the funding will come from Amtrak and half from PennDOT which will include a Federal contribution. The use of electric locomotives could mean the return of Harrisburg trains to SEPTA's Suburban Station in center-city Philadelphia, with 90-minute service being the goal. Present trains require two hours or more.

A total of \$41.5 million will be spent to rebuild four of AMTRAK's AEM-7 locomotives for the service and to upgrade Amfleet cars to Acela Regional standards, \$40 million to replace ties and install welded rail, \$20 million to upgrade the signal system, \$15 million to rehabilitate the catenary power system, \$10 million for bridge repairs and \$5 million for station improvements at Lancaster, Harrisburg and Elizabethtown. A new station will be built at Harrisburg International Airport, but nothing was said about the proposed station at Leaman Place or Paradise. All three remaining highway grade crossings will be eliminated.



Since Amtrak and the Ridge Administration negotiated an agreement in 1995 to save the ailing Keystone service, ridership has mushroomed from less than 400,000 a year to nearly one million.....The drawn-out negotiations between PennDOT and ADtranz for seven diesel MU trainsets, originally to be used on the Philly-Harrisburg line, are continuing. Reportedly, PennDOT would assign these trains to Harrisburg-Pittsburgh service or elsewhere in the State.

(Continued on Page 6)

## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 5)

AMTRAK once again issued a special Thanksgiving holiday timetable for the Northeast Corridor, in effect between November 22 and 28. It includes numerous "Holiday Special" extra trains.....Accusing NORFOLK SOUTHERN of a "so-what" attitude in running AMTRAK trains on time, Trains Magazine reports in its December issue that the on-time percentage for the Pennsylvanian plummeted from 75 percent in the last month under CONRAIL operation to 12 percent on NS in the July 1-September 23 period. The Three Rivers dropped from 83 to 25 percent on time.....AMTRAK continued its Paoli-Bryn Mawr tie replacement program into last month, with #4 track being removed from service during the Monday-Thursday period and later #2 track.....AMTRAK P42 unit #1 was seen on the point of Train 89 Silver Palm leaving 30th Street on November 5.

Traffic World in its November 8 issue reported that Cincinnati Financier Carl Lindner holds 9.4 million shares of AMTRAK common stock. It seems that the Lindner-owned firm American Premier Underwriters, which acquired the non-rail assets of Penn Central following its takeover by CONRAIL, also inherited the 53 percent of Amtrak common that had been owned by Penn Central. Thought to be worthless, the stock now may bring Lindner as much as \$50 million under a Congressionally-mandated capital restructuring of Amtrak, intended to give the railroad a clean slate in exchange for the hoped-for ending of Federal operating subsidies in 2002. This would entail the retiring of all common stock at "fair market value" (some is also held by BURLINGTON NORTHERN & SANTA FE and other carriers), and eliminating the voting rights of preferred stock now held by the U.S. DOT.

The governors of 26 states, including 13 Democrats and 11 Republicans, have signed a letter to President Clinton urging that he include full funding for AMTRAK in his Fiscal Year 2001 Federal budget request. A total of \$989 million is authorized under the recent TEA-21 legislation. The governors of Delaware and New York were signatories, but not those of Pennsylvania, New Jersey or Ohio.....AMTRAK announced last month that it was entering the business of transporting refrigerated produce, in partnership with Michigan-based ExpressTrak. Ultimately, they expect to place in service 350 57-foot refrigerated boxcars for handling on Amtrak passenger trains. Amtrak also reports that its mail and express business produced \$98 million in revenue during Fiscal Year 1999 ended September 30, an 18-percent increase over the previous year. The express portion alone grew by 93 percent.....AMTRAK is introducing new-style uniforms for both its on-train and station employees. The new uniforms will first be implemented as part of its new Acela service on the Northeast Corridor, and later be modified for use elsewhere.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN's service on its former CONRAIL lines again showed incremental improvement last month, but delays and shipper complaints persisted. NS's weekly report to the Surface Transportation Board on November 5 claimed an increase in average train speed and a slight decrease in the number of cars on line. But on its "monitored" corridors, 116 trains were held due to terminal congestion, 27 were held for crews and 31 held for power. In Conrail Shared Assets Territory, 14 trains were delayed for lack of power and 15 held for crews.

In a remarkably candid speech reported in Traffic World, NS Senior Vice President for Strategic Planning James W. McClellan acknowledged that poor planning caused the massive disruptions that have plagued his railroad since the takeover of Conrail in June. "We sold this on the basis of diverting traffic from the highway to the railroad," he said. But shippers have had to find other ways to ship because of tieups on NS. "We thus far have converted traffic from the railroad to the highway...Nobody in their right mind would use the railroads right now." McClellan repeated an earlier statement "that we weren't going to solicit (new) traffic until we're running right." He went on to say that things will get better when NS starts operating more like a scheduled railroad such as Conrail, which "ran a very tightly scheduled railroad, and they were very good at it. We took a scheduled railroad that was very predictable and made an unscheduled railroad work very unpredictably."

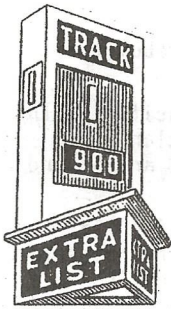
Last month AMTRAK posted a notice in its stations addressed to its "guests," apologizing for the wildly unreliable performance of its trains on NORFOLK SOUTHERN lines. Signed by Amtrak President George Warrington and NS Chief Operating Officer Stephen Tobias, the statement said that in the past NS had been one of the best performing railroads for Amtrak, and that a "significant improvement" in passenger-train on-time performance is expected by the end of this year.....CONRAIL suffered two more local accidents last month. On November 4 two tank cars carrying liquified petroleum gas derailed and overturned in the Valero Energy refinery in Paulsboro, NJ. Several homes near the former Mobil facility were temporarily evacuated but there was no leakage from the cars. Then, on November 19, two tank cars derailed on the Trenton Avenue Elevated spur at Tioga Street in the Port Richmond section of Philadelphia. They contained a highly-flammable chemical but there was only a minor spill and residents evacuated from nearby homes were allowed to return in a few hours. The derailment occurred just a few blocks north of Allegheny Avenue, where a tank car containing phenol derailed September 14 and fell into the street.

After several months of indecision, the Senate last month confirmed the reappointment of Linda Morgan as chairman of the Surface Transportation Board. This represented a victory for the railroad industry, which had fought for her return to the STB, while rail labor unions generally opposed her. The approval came after the railroads and unions negotiated an agreement to halt the so-called practice of "cram-down," in which STB decisions in the past were used by merging railroads to abrogate existing collective bargaining agreements in order to fully realize the potential efficiencies of the mergers.....CANADIAN PACIFIC sent massive new EMD SD9043MAC #9114 to Scranton for display at the NRHS directors meeting there November 13-14.

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Concluding my last column of 1999, I'd like to wish all my readers--and all Chapter members--the best possible Holiday Season and a Happy New Year! Let us hope that railroading and our hobby will continue to grow and prosper in the new millennium (if indeed that is what it is).

*Frank Tattall*



DECEMBER 4-5, 11-12, 1999: "Santa Claus Specials" on Morristown & Erie Railway, sponsored by Whippany Railway Museum, Whippany, NJ. Diesel-powered trains leave Whippany hourly from 12:30 to 4:30 PM for 45-minute trip. Fares: \$7 adults, \$4 children. For complete information, telephone 973-887-8177.

DECEMBER 4-5: Annual Holiday Train Show & Sale at historic Music Pier, Boardwalk & Moorlyn Terrace, Ocean City, NJ, 10 AM-5 PM Saturday, 11 AM-4 PM Sunday. Show will feature operating displays, buying and selling of model trains of all gauges. Admission: \$3 adults, \$1 children. For information, telephone 609-525-9300.

DECEMBER 4-5: GATSMELines HO and HO3 model railroad open house in basement of New Horizons Montessori School, Prospect & Madison Avenues, Fort Washington, PA, 12 Noon- 4 PM both days. Admission by donation. For information, telephone 215-646-2033 Thursday evenings only. This event will be repeated January 8-9 and 22-23, 2000.

DECEMBER 4-5: Abington Lines Model Railroad Club HO-scale open house at 2066 2nd Street Pike, Richboro, PA, 1-4 PM both days. Admission by donation. For information, telephone 215-598-7720. This event will be repeated January 8-9, 2000.

DECEMBER 11-12: Greenberg's Great Train & Collectible Toy Show at Fort Washington Expo Center, Virginia Drive, Fort Washington, PA, 11 AM-5 PM Saturday, 11 AM-4 PM Sunday. Admission: \$5 adults, \$2 children (6-12). For information, telephone 410-795-7447. Philadelphia Chapter will be represented with an information and sales table.

DECEMBER 11-12, 18-19: "Santa's Express" on West Chester Railroad from West Chester to Glen Mills, PA and return. Diesel-powered, heated trains leave Market Street station, West Chester, at 11 AM, 1 and 3 PM each day. Fares: \$10 adults, \$6 children. Reservations suggested. Lunch with Santa on 11 AM and 1 PM trips: \$20 adults, \$14 children, including train ride and lunch, with reservations required. For reservations and information, telephone 610-430-2233.

THROUGH DECEMBER 23: New Hope & Ivyland Railroad will provide special train rides with Santa Claus. Santa trains run November 26-December 19 on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Trains also operate Monday-Thursday, December 20-23. Trains depart New Hope station 9:30 and 11:30 AM, 1:30 and 3:30 PM. Price: \$12.95 for adults, \$7.95 children (2-11), and \$2.95 children under 2. For reservations and informations, call NH&I at 215-862-2332 (E-Mail: www.newhoperailroad.com). Parking available at New Hope station.

DECEMBER 31: New Year's Eve party at newly-renovated Pennsylvania Railroad freight station, Christiansburg, PA, sponsored by Lancaster Chapter NRHS. Social hour begins at 6 PM followed by catered buffet dinner at 7. Entertainment includes a barbershop quartet and dancing to music supplied by a disc jockey. Big-screen TV will allow revelers to view millennium celebrations in cities around the world. Door prizes, raffles and a millennium gift for everyone will be included. At midnight there will be a New Year's toast followed by continental breakfast. Price: \$75 for one, \$140 per couple. Order tickets from: Ron Irwin, 15 Highland Drive, Lancaster, PA 17602-3313, making checks payable to "Lancaster Chapter NRHS." Visa, MasterCard and Discover cards also accepted. For information, telephone Ron Irwin at 717-299-6405. Lancaster Chapter has leased the station building as its headquarters.

JANUARY 8-9, 2000: Cheltenham Hills Model Railroad Club HO-scale open house at 8000 Old York Road, Elkins Park, PA, 12 Noon-4 PM both days. Admission by donation. For information, telephone 215-635-9747. Event will be repeated January 15-16.

THROUGH JANUARY 8, 2000: "Magical Holiday" winter garden railway display at concourse level, 1234 Market Street, Philadelphia, sponsored by SEPTA and Morris Arboretum of University of Pennsylvania (closed Christmas and New Year's Days). Admission free.

THROUGH JANUARY 9: "A Brandywine Christmas" at Brandywine River Museum, Route 1, Chadds Ford, PA, featuring operation O-scale model railroad display. Hours: 9:30 AM-4:30 PM (closed Christmas Day). Admission: \$5 adults, \$2.50 seniors and children (6-12). For information, telephone 610-388-2700.

JANUARY 28: Railroad Film Night at National Canal Museum, Two Rivers Landing auditorium, Easton, PA, beginning at 7:30 PM. Movies of Pennsylvania and New York Central Railroads will be shown by NRHS Media Director Mitchell Dakelman. Donation of \$5 per person requested. For information, telephone 610-559-6613.

FEBRUARY 19: EastRAIL 2000 multi-media railroad slide programs at Warren Hills Regional High School, Washington, NJ. Admission: \$10 per person in advance by mail, \$12 at door. Event is co-sponsored by Friends of New Jersey Railroad & Transportation Museum and United Railroad Historical Society. Order tickets from: URHS, P. O. Box 711, Clark, NJ 07066, making checks payable to "United Railroad Historical Society" and enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope. For information, telephone 732-671-9644 evenings.

FEBRUARY 26: Annual "Snow Train to Vermont" excursion sponsored by Massachusetts Bay RRE will operate from Boston to Brattleboro, Bellows Falls and return via chartered Amtrak train. Train leaves Boston (South Station) 7:40 AM, Back Bay 7:45, Wellesley Square 8:10, West Natick 8:20 and Worcester 8:55. Return to Boston approximately 9:00 PM. Optional covered bridge tour, sleigh/hay ride or Green Mountain RR excursion additional. Fares: \$70 adults, \$40 (children 12 and under). Order tickets from: Mass Bay RRE, Inc., P. O. Box 4245-B.V., Andover, MA 01810-0814, making checks payable to "Mass Bay RRE", enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelope. For additional information, telephone 978-470-2066, or E-Mail: www.massbayrre.org.

**MEETING CANCELLATION ALERT!**

In the event of snow, sleet or freezing rain on a Philadelphia Chapter meeting night, Chapter officers will make a decision as to whether to hold the scheduled meeting. If in doubt, members should call 215-947-5769 after 12 Noon on meeting day for a recorded advisory.

## ON THE SCENE (Continued from Page 3)

34011, 34013, 34015, 34017, 34019, 34021, 34023 and 34025. Thirty-three baggage-coaches have been rebuilt as smoker-coaches, with their middle digit changed from a "zero" to a "five" (31000 became 31500).

As Thanksgiving approaches, it was known that the fixed-consist Talgo trainsets in the Pacific Northwest were to be supplemented by an extra train of Horizon fleet equipment, operating north from Portland to Seattle November 24-29 and south from Seattle to Portland November 23-28, running ahead of Train 750 and behind Train 725. Equipment is Horizon coaches and cafe service.

In a couple of Empire Service notes, the one Turbo set runs weekdays only, running on Trains 256 and 259 Monday through Thursday and Trains 246 and 253 Fridays. The practice of assigning Metroliner trainsets to a weekend Empire Service train continues with a set operating west on Train 283 Saturdays and returning as Train 288 on Sunday.

In theory, nine club-dinettes are required for Metroliners, plus two more on weekends. But, actually no more than eight of the ten cars of this type are available for service, so their places are taken by spare half club cars. Only two consists are assigned half clubs (in Business Class service).

My alma mater, Penn State, was first on a recent list of colleges whose students use Amtrak's "Student Advantage" discount promotions.

NRHS's Long Island-Sunrise Trail Chapter operated a special train on Saturday, October 30 between Jamaica and Montauk. Billed as a farewell to the old LIRR cars and locomotives, it also served as a retirement celebration for their trip chairman, Gene Collora, retiring from a long career with the railroad. The consist of the special trains was GP38-2 #252, MP1500 171P, parlors 2018 and 2021, bar cars 2829 and 2833, parlors 2012, 2013, 2014 and former Alco FA1 power car 614. A caterer boarded at East Hampton and provided lunch in the two bar cars at Montauk and a Hampton Jitney bus shuttled to and from the dock area. This was almost certainly the last revenue trip for everything except the first two units, with the 614 being the last cab control unit.

With its November 15 schedules, Long Island added a second through train to Penn Station behind dual-mode power. This train, from Speonk, arrives Penn Station 8:23 AM, and the return train leaves New York 5:10 PM.

NJ Transit has plans to acquire new commuter rail equipment in two phases. Phase I will include 200 single-level cars (98 with cabs), 24 electric locomotives and 33 diesel units. These should arrive by 2002. Phase II will add 200 bi-level coaches by 2004.

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