



CINDERS

APRIL 2007



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Volume 68

Number 4

Newsletter of the
PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
 Post Office Box 7302
 Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

NEW!! NEW!! PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS WEBSITE ADDRESS: www.phillyNRHS.com

MEETING NOTICE:

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 20, 2007

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

Dinner at 6:15 PM (\$20.00 per person), Meeting at 7:30 PM
Parking in Wills Eye Hospital garage, 9th Street above Locust
(\$6.00 after 6 PM), Parkway garage, also 9th above Locust
(\$5.75 after 6 PM), or Downtown Garage, Walnut Street east of
10th (\$4.00 after 6 PM) *(Note that some of these parking prices
have changed and will be adjusted in a future issue of Cinders.)*

At our meeting on Friday evening, April 20, 2007, we will present
membership awards to those in attendance who have earned the
recognition (see February *Cinders*) for a complete list of names.

The program portion of the meeting will feature Dick Bell, with a
fine slide show on Swiss Railways. For those thinking of travel
during the coming year, this lecture is sure to whet your appetite
for a trip to beautiful Switzerland to see its fascinating railways.

The evening begins with our usual optional sit-down dinner in the
Faculty Club, Alumni Hall, Thomas Jefferson University,
beginning at 6:15 PM, at a cost of \$20.00 per person. **DINNER
RESERVATIONS ARE MANDATORY and MUST BE MADE
BY TUESDAY EVENING, APRIL 17, 2007 to Chapter
Secretary Marie Eastwood at 215-947-5769.** The menu for April
is Caesar salad, choice of Pan-seared grilled Yellowfin tuna with
lemon caper sauce, herb rice pilaf, OR Maple Bourbon chicken,
with garlic mashed potatoes. Spring grilled vegetables and lemon
layer cake come with both meals. **N0-shows will be responsible
for payment for meals ordered!** *(Please note that meetings for
the 2006-2007 year are scheduled in the Faculty Club, on the
second floor of the Alumni Hall.)*

Notice of Annual Meeting & Election

Notice is hereby given of election of Chapter
officers for the year 2007-2008, to be held at the Annual
Meeting of Philadelphia Chapter, National Railway Historical
Society on Friday evening, April 20, 2007, at the Faculty Club,
Thomas Jefferson University Alumni Hall, 1020 Locust Street,
Philadelphia, PA 19107, beginning at 7:30 PM.

Any member in good standing who is interested in
service as President, Senior Vice President, Vice President &
Treasurer, Secretary or National Director, may be nominated
from the floor at the March 16 or April 20 meeting, or by
placing your name in nomination by writing, before April 1,
2007 to: Mr. C. Bruce Irvin, Chairman, Nominating
Committee, Philadelphia Chapter NRHS, 116 Linden Drive,
New Holland, PA 17557-9490.

Summer Dinner Set for July 20; Summer Cinders in August

The annual Bill Wagner Summer Dinner will be held
this year on Friday, July 20, according to information supplied by
Les Dean, who chairs the event each year. Because the NRHS
National Convention at Chattanooga, TN begins on Tuesday,
August 21, it was decided to shift the dinner to July. We will
repeat last year's location, which was the Main Street Café,
immediately across Lancaster Avenue from SEPTA's R5
Paoli/Thorndale Line at Berwyn, PA. Many favorable comments
were received at last year's dinner. Complete information will be
available in the June issue of *Cinders*.

Also looking forward to summer, we generally skip one
month of *Cinders* during the vacation season. This year, we expect
to issue an August issue of *Cinders* about August 1. The deadline
for that issue will be July 21.

Chapter Has New Website Address

Chapter Webmaster John Almeida has advised that a
new, easier-to-remember address has been assigned to the Chapter
website. The new address is: www.PhillyNRHS.com. John
periodically posts current events photos; members should
remember to check when surfing rail sites.



Chattanooga Rails 2007
NRHS Convention
August 21-25, 2007
Chattanooga, TN

www.chattrails.com

(Pre-Registration Deadline: April 15, 2007)

**NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, INC.**
Post Office Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

Founded 1936, incorporated 1973 as a 501c3 non-profit corporation

CHAPTER OFFICERS

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MEETINGS: 7:30 PM, third Friday of each month (except second Friday in December), at Faculty Club, Second Floor, Thomas Jefferson University Alumni Hall, 1020 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA. Dinner (optional) at 6:15 PM (\$20.00 per person), Meeting at 7:30 PM. No meeting July or August.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$37.00 per person, which includes Chapter and National dues. Chapter-only dues \$16.00 per person per year. Membership applications should be forwarded to: Membership Chair, P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302. Membership in the parent National Railway Historical Society is required to hold Chapter-only membership.

ADDRESS CHANGES should be sent to the Editor at Post Office Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. **PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER** and E-mail address so our Membership List is complete. We will notify the NRHS National Headquarters of the change.

Cinders is published 11 times a year by Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, Inc. Correspondence regarding *Cinders* should be directed to the Editor at P. O. Box 7302, Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302. If your *Cinders* is received damaged or incomplete, contact the Editor at the address shown below for replacement.

EXCHANGE COPIES should be sent to: R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Editor, P. O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353.



THROUGH APRIL 15, 2007: "A Moveable Feast: From the Farm to the Table by Train," exhibit at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, showing how the railroads have delivered food to Americans over the years, and how they served millions of passengers in their dining cars. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628 (website: www.rrmuseumpa.org).

APRIL 16: Ringling Bros. And Barnum & Bailey Red Unit circus train arrives in South Philadelphia from New York via CSX. "Greatest Show on Earth" will play at Wachovia Spectrum April 18-29, then depart via CSX for Providence, RI.

APRIL 19: Slide lecture "Furnaces, Coal Breakers & Factories" in the Pennsylvania and New Jersey area, by Henry Schmidt, photographer and retired Muhlenberg College professor, at National Canal Museum, 30 Centre Square, Easton, PA, starting at 7:30 PM. Admission free. For information, telephone 610-559-6613.

APRIL 23: West Jersey Chapter, NRHS regular monthly meeting at Haddonfield Borough Hall, 242 Kings Highway East, Haddonfield, NJ (several blocks east of PATCO station), 7:30 PM. Program will feature **1969 on the Southern Pacific**, by Ron Baile. The program begins in Arizona in 1969 and then fast-forwards to the mid-1980's for more SP and Santa Fe.

MAY 5: "Mason-Dixon Line Ramble" motorcoach tour to Walkersville Southern Railroad at Walkersville, MD and Pioneer Lines Scenic Railway at Gettysburg, PA, sponsored by Friends of the Railroad Museum. Bus leaves Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, at 8 AM, returns at 10 PM. Tour includes round-trip train rides on both lines, buffet lunch at Thurmont, MD, an dinner on board the Pioneer Lines train. Fare: \$160 per person (\$145 for Friends members). Order tickets from: AAA Central Penn Travel, P. O. Box 1354, Harrisburg, PA 17105-1354, making checks payable to "AAA Travel". Payment is due by February 20. For information, telephone 717-898-6900+2+2228.

MAY 18: Grand opening of new front entrance at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg. Regular museum

hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628 (website: www.railroadmuseumpa.org).

MAY 19 THROUGH APRIL, 2008: "Spanning Centuries: Railroad Bridges of Pennsylvania" exhibit at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, including historic photos, blueprints and artifacts. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628.

MAY 20: Centennial charter on SEPTA's Norristown High Speed Line to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Philadelphia & Western Railway's first run on May 22, 1907, sponsored by Rockhill Trolley Museum. Special two-car N5 train leaves 69th Street Terminal at 9:45 AM, returning about 1:30 PM. Several round-trips to Norristown will be made, including runbys and photo stops. Fares: \$35 adults, \$20 children (12 and under). Order tickets from: Railways to Yesterday, Inc., P. O. Box 1601, Allentown, PA 18105-1601. Tickets will be held for pickup at the terminal. For information, telephone Gerhard Salomon at 610-965-9028.

MAY 20: "Otter Valley Limited" rare mileage excursion over Vermont Railway from Burlington to Rutland, VT and return, sponsored by Massachusetts Bay RRE. Special train originates at former Union Station in downtown Burlington at 10:30 AM, expected return to Burlington at 6:30 PM, with several photo stops and layover at Rutland. Fare: Adults: \$59, Children (12 and under) \$39. Optional box lunches available. Order tickets from: Mass Bay RRE, P. O. Box 4245-BV, Andover, MA 01810-0814. Additional information available by calling 978-470-2066 or E-mail to trips@massbayrre.org.

MAY 22: Anticipated date for official observance of Centennial of original Philadelphia & Western route to Strafford, at 69th Street Terminal. Details in May *Cinders*.

JUNE 1-3: "Pennsy Days" honoring the Pennsylvania Railroad, at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg. The Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society will participate. Noted railroad artists and photographers will display and sell their works. Special presentations, operating layouts, memorabilia and tours of PRR equipment will be featured. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628.

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.



SEPTA
TRANSIT

As expected, SEPTA last month unveiled a fare-increase and service-cut package designed to close the looming \$130-million deficit in the next fiscal year. Public hearings on the \$1.022 billion operating budget for FY 2008—including the fare and service proposals—will be held from April 10 to April 16, with the Philadelphia hearings scheduled for the 12th at 11 AM and 5 PM in the Pennsylvania Convention Center. These promise to be very lively, with many members of the public and various organizations signing up to testify. More information can be obtained by visiting the SEPTA website at www.septa.org. The SEPTA board is scheduled to vote on the budget at its May 24 meeting, with the changes to become effective with the start of the new fiscal year on July 1.

This time around, Governor Rendell has warned that there will be no stopgap financial aid from Harrisburg, as there was over the past two years when he “flexed” \$412 million in Federal highway funds to bail out the State’s cash-starved transit systems. To solve the long-term funding problem the Governor has proposed a permanent new tax on oil company profits, which could raise an additional \$760 million annually for transit systems across the State (see March *Cinders*). But SEPTA General Manager Faye Moore said that “We have to plan for the worst.”

The “worst” is that, in the absence of timely help from Harrisburg, fares are to be raised by an average of 31 percent. A 20-percent across-the-board cut in service also would be imposed, and at least 300 employees would lose their jobs. These draconian measures include a hike in the base cash fare from \$2 to \$2.50 and tokens from \$1.30 to \$1.80. TransPasses and TrailPasses also would increase sharply, as would all Regional Rail fares. Monthly TransPasses, for example, would jump from \$70 to \$95. SEPTA expects that the result of these actions would be to chase away at least 20 percent of its riders, or some 40 million passengers a year. An alternate scenario presupposes that the State will boost its funding for FY 2008 from \$300 million to \$400 million, not enough to cover the entire deficit but sufficient to require a fare increase of only 11 percent. Variations of these plans also are being considered to “simplify” the fare structure, which would include the elimination of transfers and a cut in the number of Regional Rail fare zones.

In early March General Manager Moore and other SEPTA officials testified before the House Appropriations Committee in Harrisburg. And, according to an *Inquirer* report, “they were greeted mostly with sympathy and concern, not with accusatory questions about the Authority’s spending habits.” The report concluded that SEPTA finally “has gained some legitimacy in the eyes of lawmakers.” Earlier, Moore said that if the Legislature seemed to be close to some favorable action, the fare

hikes and service cuts might be deferred for a time, or could be rolled back if new money is forthcoming after the fiscal year begins.

SEPTA also is working on a \$426-million capital budget for FY 2008. Hearings on this proposal will be held on April 5 at 11 AM and 5 PM in the Board Room at SEPTA’s 1234 Market Street headquarters. The biggest slice of the budget will be \$100.6 million in additional funding for the Market Street el reconstruction, now projected to cost a total of \$710 million by the time it’s completed late next year or early in 2009. Other major funding will be \$49.5 million for new buses, \$47 million for the vehicle overhaul program and \$15 million for improvements on the R5 Paoli-Thorndale line. The budget also includes \$10 million for the just-starting project to acquire 104 new Silverliner V commuter rail cars. Last year’s capital budget of \$438 million was not entirely spent because of a \$50-million shortfall in Federal funding and the diversion of \$37 million to close the FY 2007 operating deficit.

Weekend shutdowns on the Market Street el resumed last month, with rail operations suspended west of 46th Street from 8 PM Friday to early Monday morning. As before, shuttle buses are operated between 69th Street Terminal and the 40th Street subway station via Chestnut and Walnut Streets. The outages were scheduled for three weekends in March starting on the 9th, then April 13-15, 20-22, 27-29, May 18-20 and the first four weekends in June. During the summer, as was the case in the previous two years, extended shutdowns are set for July 13-23 and August 10-27. This will permit removal of sections of the 100-year-old el and their replacement with a new single-column structure. The last station to be rebuilt will be 63rd Street, with work to begin in spring 2008.....SEPTA has taken a major step in its \$8-million project to upgrade the 13th Street subway station. New elevators between the street and both the eastbound and westbound platforms were placed in service early last month, making them fully accessible to handicapped passengers. This is the 15th Market-Frankford station to be made ADA compatible.

“The great I-95 divide” was the headline on a March 5 *Inquirer* article, which called the highway the largest impediment to redeveloping Philadelphia’s riverfront. “Just get it out of our sight,” said the planners and architects who attended a recent meeting to deal with the “great highway canyon that cuts off the City from the river of its birth.” The planners suggested a smaller version of Boston’s infamous “Big Dig” project, which would involve burying the busy highway in a trench and doing one of two things: cover I-95 and “stack” a relocated Columbus Blvd. above it, or cover both I-95 and Columbus Blvd. with a huge concrete deck from Spring Garden Street south to create new space for redevelopment and allow the current street grid to be extended to the river. The meeting was called by a University of Pennsylvania group that is preparing a master plan for the long-underutilized

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waterfront, a plan that might include a new electric trolley line running down Market Street from 30th Street to the river, then looping north and south along an improved waterfront boulevard.

SEPTA now is offering an online shopping service on which computer users can purchase monthly passes, special passes, tokens, event tickets and selected items from the Transit Museum Store. The website is www.shop.septa.org.....SEPTA's Transit Store was honored last month by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society prior to the opening of the Philadelphia Flower Show. A retired SEPTA employee, George Rice, designed the award-winning "Best Museum Store Display"..... A man was killed on February 21 when he tried to jump onto a moving train at the Olney station of the Broad Street Line. Bus shuttles were substituted for trains between the Olney and Erie stations during the disruption.....On March 16 a woman was critically injured when she reportedly jumped in front of a Market-Frankford train at the 40th Street station, and three days later a man was injured when he jumped in front of a train at the 30th Street subway station. Neither attempted suicide was successful.....A 60-year-old man was arrested last month after he shot and wounded another man on a Route 33 bus in North Philadelphia. The victim, who apparently knew the attacker, miraculously survived the March 13 shooting.....On the morning of March 26 a Route 100 N5 car hit the bumper post at Norristown Transportation Center. The low-speed accident caused only a few minor injuries.



SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL

SEPTA last month introduced its new Train View service which allows Regional Rail passengers to access a report showing the on-time or delayed status of all Regional Rail trains (see February Cinders). Currently, it is available online at the website www.trainview.septa.org. For purposes of using Train View, knowing the train number is the key to checking the performance of any given train. This service is particularly useful for passengers who can access Train View on their PDA's or other hand-held devices. Comments can be e-mailed to SEPTA at septaweb@septa.org.....SEPTA made several changes and enhancements to its Regional Rail service during the period of the Philadelphia Flower Show, which occupied the Pennsylvania Convention Center from March 3 to the 11th. Extra cars were added to many trains and on the two Sundays all R5 trains originating at Frazer yard were assigned four or more cars.

Regional Rail timetables will be reissued with a tentative effective date of May 6, except that the R7 schedule was reissued on April 2 to show updated NJ TRANSIT connections and the R8 will be revised effective April 15. The R5 Lansdale-Doylestown line will be reduced to hourly service in middays north of Glenside as a single-track operation is in effect. This is due to the planned installation of a new signal system between Gwynedd Valley and Lansdale and tie and surfacing work between Glenside and Gwynedd Valley. AMTRAK is due to begin work next month

on replacing the #1 track east of Paoli with welded rail and concrete ties, forcing R5 inbound trains to operate on the #2 express track. Loading and discharging passengers at the extended wooden platforms often result in delays and will require some schedule adjustments.

The news that February 2007 was the coldest February in 28 years certainly did not warm the hearts of SEPTA people, especially when contrasted with an unusually warm January. And as if the Valentine's Day snow and ice storm was not enough, a month later the Philadelphia region suffered through a paralyzing assault of snow and sleet on March 16. These events were tough ones for SEPTA, both on the transit and the Regional Rail sides. The Valentine's Day storm caused a total of 103 commuter trains to be delayed or annulled on Wednesday, February 14, plus 21 other trains slowed by weather-related switch failures.

Here is a partial list of the storm-caused delays. On Valentine's Day morning a fallen tree on AMTRAK's Northeast Corridor mainline near Newark, DE, forced six R2 trains to turn back at Churchmans Crossing station, and delays occurred all day on the R5 Paoli-Thorndale line due to a series of switch and signal failures. Multiple switch failures at "Phil" interlocking on the NEC in Southwest Philadelphia resulted in delays to several evening R1 Airport and R2 Wilmington trains. The next day, Thursday, February 15, 86 SEPTA trains were delayed by weather-related problems, as rampant switch failures on both the NEC and Harrisburg mainline played havoc with SEPTA and Amtrak service. Interlockings at "Zoo," Thorndale, Marcus Hook and south of Wilmington were the major trouble spots, causing a host of delays and annulments. In addition, a loss of catenary power in SEPTA's Powelton yard during the afternoon resulted in substantial delays to more than 50 trains.

SEPTA also was encountering problems on its own railroad. On Friday, February 16, AEM-7 #2305 heading five-car push-pull train #6374 for West Trenton died at Yardley during the afternoon rush, delaying four other northbound R3 trains—one for nearly 50 minutes. That same day "Jenkin" interlocking at Jenkintown refused to operate, delaying 25 trains between 6 AM and 9:30 AM. At the same time, a cab signal outage on the Neshaminy Line delayed six R3 West Trenton trains. Then, during a cold snap on Monday, February 19, when the high temperature for the day was 32 degrees, switch failures at Overbrook and Bryn Mawr on the Harrisburg mainline caused several R5 delays and three annulments, as well as delays to AMTRAK Keystone Service trains. On Tuesday afternoon the 27th, SEPTA experienced yet another failure with ALP-44 locomotive #2308 as six-car push-pull train #6374 became disabled at North Broad station. The train was finally terminated at Fern Rock station, with passengers transferred to two following trains.

Severe weather returned in early March, this time with heavy rain and flood warnings. On March 2, at least 20 trains were delayed due to the warnings but there were no actual washouts. The next day, a Saturday, Doylestown passengers were inconvenienced when early-morning southbound train #1511 got a pantograph entangled in the catenary at Link Belt station. Buses were substituted all morning between Doylestown and Lansdale as the wire train had to be summoned to repair the catenary. Then, on Wednesday, March 14, a much more serious power failure occurred on the West Trenton line adjacent to CSX's Woodbourne yard near Langhorne. About 3:10 PM the pantographs on three of

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the four cars of westbound R3 train #357 snagged the catenary, tearing down the wire over both main tracks. All service, both SEPTA and CSX, was suspended east (north) of Neshaminy Falls, as the wire train had to be dispatched to the scene. Power was restored to the #2 eastbound track just after 6 PM, with express #6378 the first train to run through to West Trenton. With the completion of repairs, normal service in both directions resumed around 7:30 PM.

On Friday morning, March 16, just a month after the Valentine's Day event mentioned above, a much worse storm descended on the Philadelphia region—and virtually the entire northeastern U.S. The change in the weather was a shock to everyone—after the mercury had reached a high of almost 80 degrees just two days before! Sleet began falling in the morning, eventually turning into snow which dumped up to seven inches in the area. As might be expected, public transportation as well as automobile and truck traffic were severely disrupted for more than 24 hours. Most flights at International Airport were cancelled, at one point stranding more than a thousand would-be passengers in the airport concourse. Some of them were holed up for as long as three days, as reported on national television, while U.S. Airways and other carriers tried to get them out of town. On the 16th, SEPTA and AMTRAK passengers had less serious problems, but they definitely were impacted by the weather. SEPTA reported a grand total of 257 Regional Rail trains delayed on all lines (out of 729 scheduled), of which 169 were “weather related.” Problems ranged from frozen switches to icy platforms to heavy travel. Many bus and trolley riders also experienced less than normal service during the day and evening. Problems on Regional Rail continued into Saturday the 17th with 98 trains delayed (out of 480 scheduled), of which 33 were attributed to the weather.

A different kind of disruption occurred early on Sunday morning, March 4, as two R1 Airport trains had to be cancelled when the old Pennsylvania Hall near University City station was imploded. The station also was closed during the time of the demolition.....On the R8 Chestnut Hill West Line the brush cutting project continues through April 13. The cutting is accomplished with a hi-rail machine with a long boom, forcing SEPTA to operate on the #1 outbound track in both directions during midday hours on weekdays.



AMTRAK

The Democratic-controlled Senate last month approved a budget resolution which calls for \$1.78 billion in guaranteed funding for AMTRAK in Fiscal Year 2008. This is \$250 million more than Amtrak has requested and is close to the annual amount guaranteed in the bi-partisan Passenger Rail Investment & Improvement Act, the six-year Amtrak reauthorization bill now being considered in the Senate. The Bush Administration's proposed budget for FY 2008, however, provides only \$800 million for Amtrak, which it says would force Amtrak to operate more like a business but in fact, critics say, actually would result in a shutdown of service. Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph Boardman told a Senate subcommittee that the White House has “serious reservations” about the reauthorization bill and that the Federal government must stop subsidizing Amtrak. “Amtrak is an

outdated monopoly that is based on a flawed business model,” he told the lawmakers. The bill “does not fundamentally reform Amtrak, but provides a higher level of subsidy and is not an acceptable outcome [to the Administration].” But the DOT's inspector general testified that Amtrak achieved \$61 million in savings from operational reforms in 2006, and “deserves credit for recent progress.” He agreed that the Administration funding request of \$800 million for FY 2008 was not enough for Amtrak to continue in business (NARP, *Trains*).

Locally, a coalition of Philadelphia-area business leaders is lobbying hard for the reauthorization bill, calling the Northeast Corridor “critical to our region's economic future.” Countering the Administration's demands, the *Inquirer* reported, AMTRAK President Alexander Kummant last month told a meeting of the CEO Council of Growth in Philadelphia that “We will never have a balanced budget” and that debate over Amtrak “has to shift away from ‘will you make money?’ That's not realistic.” He also defended Amtrak's long-distance services, which account for 80 percent of the railroad's operating losses. “We're on a path to develop a national network,” he continued, “and it only costs about \$1.50 a year for each person in the country to keep that option open.” In further testimony, Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell called the reauthorization proposal “the best piece of [Amtrak] legislation I've seen in 30 years.” One of the bill's sponsors, Senator Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey, said “Amtrak should be among the greatest passenger systems in the world,” citing the litany of flight delays recorded by the airline industry last year (NARP).

To add injury to insult, the Bush Administration last month proposed slashing AMTRAK funding in the current fiscal year by \$383 million, in order to help pay for Bush's plan to close certain military bases. NARP characterized the request as “dead on arrival” in Congress.....President Kummant, asked recently about AMTRAK's on-time performance problems, said that he has met with executives of the four largest U.S. railroads to seek their cooperation in running Amtrak trains closer to schedule. He said he would soon meet with the two Canadian roads. A recent Associated Press story also focused on the problems Amtrak has had with its freight railroad hosts, and emphasized that many of these issues are outside of Amtrak's control. By contrast, on-time performance on the Northeast Corridor, most of which Amtrak dispatches, has improved dramatically and is now nearly 90 percent (NARP).

AMTRAK's new spring-summer system timetable became effective on April 2. And it is bigger in size, printed in a larger format to match the Amtrak Vacations travel planner. More vivid colors will be used throughout, Amtrak said, to make the timetable grids easier to read. Numerous schedule changes have been made, including the addition of two new weekend Keystone Service trains, #610 departing Harrisburg at 7:05 PM on Saturdays and #615 leaving Philadelphia at 1:45 PM on Sundays. (An adjustment in Keystone schedules can be expected next month when track replacement work begins between Paoli and Philadelphia.) A new Regional train, #121, will leave New York for Washington at 5:45 AM on Saturdays to allow a full-day visit to Philadelphia, Amtrak said. Some slowdown in Corridor service will also be needed due to a major trackwork project on the Susquehanna River bridge at Perryville, MD. On the long-distance scene, eastbound #48 **Lake Shore Limited** now leaves Chicago two hours later, at 10 PM, allowing for better connections from the West and South, and Cleveland at 7 AM (NARP).

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After a long investigation AMTRAK has released a report on the cause of the massive electric power failure which shut down the Northeast Corridor for more than two hours last May 25. The outage stranded thousands of riders on 112 Amtrak, SEPTA, NJT and MARC trains along the entire length of the NEC between New York and Washington. Rather than pointing the finger of blame at any of the substations installed by the Pennsylvania Railroad more than 75 years ago, the report identified a four-year-old electronic control device at a frequency converter in Philadelphia which was designed to control system overloads. Senior VP of Operations William Crosbie told the New York Times that the failure would have been much less likely in the pre-computer era. "In the old days, you had switches and gauges," he said, "and a glance would show if one was not as it should be." Last May, however, one of six substations on the Corridor was out of service for maintenance when the automatic electronic device cut in to restrict power output during the morning rush period. Attempts by other substations to compensate for this loss caused them to overload and shut down. This was the first power failure of this magnitude in the history of the NEC, but Amtrak says it has instituted new programming to avoid the possibility of another such outage, and all six substations now are manned during rush hours (*Trains*, NARP).

Another recent source of headaches for AMTRAK has been the increasingly frequent breakdowns of its P42 diesel locomotives. These units are the backbone of AMTRAK's locomotive fleet except in electrified territory and in state-supported services on the West Coast. The problem has been traced to the premature failure of pinions and bearings in their traction motors, which are warranted for 750,000 miles but often fail after 100,000 miles. Amtrak wants builder General Electric to repair or replace many of traction motors on the P42's. One of the worst cases occurred on March 15 when the eastbound **Capitol Limited** was stranded on the NORFOLK SOUTHERN mainline near Waterloo, IN, after its P42 shut down. The train was held for nearly 12 hours until a replacement locomotive arrived (*Trains*).....Nine railroad stations, two of them owned by Amtrak, have made the list of the 150 best works of architecture in America, according to a poll conducted by the American Institute of Architects. The century-old Washington Union Station placed #37 and 30th Street Station in Philadelphia was #137. The top-rated rail station, at #13, was METRO-NORTH's Grand Central Terminal in New York.

Ridership on the Keystone Corridor increased sharply after the expanded schedules were introduced last October 30. In January 2007, the Philadelphia-Harrisburg line handled 73,604 passengers, up 17.8 percent from the previous January.....Acela Express ridership also is growing. The premium Acela trains running between Boston, New York and Washington carried more than one million passengers during the four-month period from October 2006 to January 2007, an increase of nearly 20 percent from the same period a year earlier. Ticket revenues jumped by 22 percent to \$127 million. "We've worked hard to improve the on-board experience and the reliability of the Acela Express trains," said AMTRAK President Alexander Kummant. "Our on-time performance was more than 88 percent for the October-January period and is trending up with more than 3,000 Acela Express trains operated." Systemwide, Amtrak ridership

increased about four percent, with a total of 8,155,748 passengers carried in the four-month period.....In testimony before a House Appropriations Subcommittee on March 28, AMTRAK President Kummant said that he may consider the possibility of allowing a private company to operate sleeping car service on certain long-distance trains, similar to how American Orient Express got started by running its luxury sleeping cars on the rear of the **Capitol Limited** in the early 1990's (NARP).

AMTRAK Board Member Enrique Sosa resigned last month. He was appointed by President Bush in 2004 but the Senate never acted to confirm him, so he was reappointed in 2006. With a strong business background, Sosa played a role in developing Amtrak's Strategic Reform Initiatives which were approved by the board in 2005 and have helped make Amtrak more cost effective. A Florida resident, Sosa once admitted that he had never been on a train.....Eleanor D. Acheson has been named as AMTRAK's new general counsel. A former assistant attorney general with some 30 years of legal experience, Ms. Acheson is the granddaughter of former Secretary of State Dean Acheson.....Anne Hoey Witt has rejoined AMTRAK in the newly-created position of vice president of strategic partnership & business development. Previously, she had been a vice president of service standards, sales & customer relations and other departments.....It looks like an oldtime AMTRAK critic finally is getting his just reward. David Stockman, who in the 1980's headed President Reagan's Office of Management & Budget, has been charged with securities fraud by the U.S. attorney in Chicago. In his days at OMB Stockman tried hard to shut down Amtrak, but was thwarted by Congress (*Trains*).

AMTRAK has announced that the entire Northeast Corridor soon will have "wi-fi" Internet access for passengers wishing to use computers while on board trains. Vice President Marketing Emmett Fremaux added that Amtrak plans an "e-ticketing" service that will allow passengers to print out tickets on their home computers. The railroad also is installing wireless credit card terminals in dining and café cars for the instantaneous processing of credit transactions.....AMTRAK has launched its "RailAgent" online sales system, designed to enable international travel agents and tour operators to book Amtrak rail passes and tickets in real time via a direct Internet connection to the railroad's own reservation system. RailAgent was developed by Wandrian, a leading global travel distributor for rail servicesPeople who think AMTRAK is "money-losing socialism" should check the airline industry, which some of these same people believe is run by noble capitalists. In fact, a recent article in the *Washington Post* reveals that since 1947 the airlines in this country have lost a total of \$14 billion. And after the 9/11 tragedy in 2001, the Federal government pumped billions in emergency grants and loan guarantees into the airline industry, but none to the railroads (*Trains*).

AMTRAK was forced to suspend its Empire Service for six days following the disastrous derailment of a CSX freight train on March 12 near Oneida, NY. The former New York Central Water Level Route was shut down after 28 cars of eastbound train Q390 derailed and five cars carrying propane exploded, causing a huge fireball which forced the evacuation of nearby residents. The fire was allowed to burn itself out but the cleanup and track repair extended through the following weekend. Not only were the Empire Service trains suspended west of Albany but also passengers on the **Lake Shore Limited** and **Maple Leaf** had to be

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bused over the 300 miles between Albany and Buffalo. A paralyzing snow and sleet storm on March 16 hampered the repair work and delayed reopening of the line. The **Lake Shore** and **Maple Leaf** ran through the area for the first time on Sunday, March 18. During the shutdown, CSX detoured several freight trains over the SUSQUEHANNA between Syracuse and North Jersey, as well as over CANADIAN PACIFIC's Delaware & Hudson. Full Empire Service finally resumed a week after the accident (*Trains*, NARP).

Efforts to achieve high-speed operation on the Northeast Corridor go back to the PRR days. AMTRAK's Acela Express can operate at a maximum speed of 135 mph in certain areas between New York and Washington, and at 150 mph in parts of Rhode Island and Massachusetts, but even faster speeds were attained in tests during the late 1960's. Exactly 40 years ago, on April 2, 1967, four U.S. DOT test cars reached a speed of 155.2 mph and on December 20, 1967 a United Aircraft TurboTrain was clocked at 170.8 mph in an acceptance test. In 1968-1969 all 61 of the PRR's original Metroliner self-propelled cars exceeded 160 mph in tests before entering regular service. These runs were conducted on a track laid with welded rail on the mainline between Trenton and "County" tower west of New Brunswick, NJ (Al Buchan, PRRT&HS). Prior to that time, the PRR always claimed the highest speed ever recorded on an American railroad, when in 1904 the old **Pennsylvania Special** was timed at better than 127 mph over the 21 miles between Ada and Elida, OH. The four-car train was powered by 4-4-2 steam locomotive #7002.



CSX,
NS,
OTHER ROADS

As a result of the Oneida derailment (above) and other recent incidents, the Federal Railroad Administration has begun an inspection of 1,300 miles of CSX mainline track. Said FRA Administrator Joseph Boardman, "A safe railroad begins with safe track, but it doesn't end there. Railroads need to embrace a 'culture of safety' and find new ways to prevent the kind of accidents that have disrupted lives and commerce and shaken our confidence in the safety of tracks." FRA has dispatched its inspection vehicles T-16 and T-18 to conduct the tests. In response to this action, and a previous inspection of CSX track in New York State conducted by the FRA in January, CSX CEO Michael Ward announced that the railroad would step up its own efforts to address safety concerns through increased inspection standards. CSX said it had already remedied the defects identified in the January FRA inspection and would begin operating three ultrasound test cars on all mainlines in New York State to search for internal rail defects. CSX also will run track geometry cars on the mainline between Erie, PA, and North Bergen, NJ, via Buffalo and Selkirk, NY, and conduct additional weekend visual inspections between Erie and Selkirk. The FRA inspections had found a total of 376 major defects and 3,500 minor defects on CSX track in New York State (*Trains*, CSX, NARP).

NORFOLK SOUTHERN and BNSF will begin testing a new electronically-controlled pneumatic braking system (ECP), which promises to reduce train-stopping distances by as much as 50 to 70 percent over conventional air brake systems (see October *Cinders*). ECP uses electronic signals to instantaneously apply brakes throughout the length of a train, as opposed to the application of regular air brakes which progresses from the front of the train to the rear. ECP thus would eliminate slack action which sometimes causes damage or even derailments. NS plans to equip 30 locomotives and 400 rapid-discharge coal cars with ECP this year and use the equipment in dedicated coal service (*Trains*) CSX has become the first railroad to join the Environmental Protection Agency's Climate Leaders program, under which it promises to publicly report its greenhouse gas emissions and establish a voluntary goal for reducing them. Since 1980 CSX says that it has improved the fuel efficiency of its locomotive fleet by 73 percent, cutting its annual use of diesel fuel by 30 million gallons (*Trains*).....CSX has begun handling units trains of Venezuelan coal from the former U.S. Steel docks at Fairless Hills to a power plant on the Hudson River at Tomkins Cove, NY (*Railpace*).

CSX will haul the Ringling Bros. Red Unit circus train from New York to South Philadelphia on April 16. The circus plays at the Wachovia Spectrum April 18-29, after which it will again move via CSX to Providence, RI. It will return to Trenton for shows May 16-20, then move via NORFOLK SOUTHERN to Hershey, PA for a May 23-28 engagement and on to Wilkes-Barre via NS-CANADIAN PACIFIC for shows May 30-June 3CSX and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen have reached a tentative agreement to apply across the entire CSX system. It is subject to ratification this month by the 5,500 BLET members on CSX, and includes a performance bonus program instead of general wage increases, based on the railroad reaching its financial goals. It is similar to an agreement that BLET negotiated with NS, which has been well received by employees there. BLET's president said that if his members on CSX become dissatisfied with the bonus program, they can elect to revert to the general wage increases provided under a tentative national agreement which BLET has negotiated with all major U.S. railroads (*Railpace*).

NS has announced that its Harrisburg Division achieved the best safety record in 2006 of any of the 11 operating divisions on the system. The Harrisburg Division, with more than 1,800 mainline route-miles, reported an injury ratio for operating employees of .31, bettering the corporate goal of .89One employee who did not contribute to the Harrisburg Division's safety record is the engineer of a train that derailed near Keating Summit, PA, in June 2006, spilling caustic lye and chlorine into nearby creeks and causing more than \$1 million in damage to railroad property. The engineer is suspected of being under the influence of drugs when he ran his train at more than 70 mph through a 15-mph zone. He was arrested and jailed last month in Smethport, PA, on two counts of risking a catastrophe and for committing second-degree felonies (*Trains*).

NS's Juniata shop at Altoona is completing work on its newly-acquired A-B-B-A set of F-units, which will be used in inspection train service (see November, December *Cinders*). On March 28 three of the four units, renumbered in the 4270-series

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and resplendent in their Southern-style black-and-white paint with gold striping, made a test run from Altoona to Gallitzin and return via Horseshoe Curve. The next day they left Altoona with an office car special (*Railpace, Trains*).....NS assisted in locating 70 new industries on its lines last year and 45 expansions of existing facilities, representing an investment of \$2 billion by NS customers which is expected to eventually generate more than 95,000 carloads of new rail traffic annually (*Railpace*).....NS is purging most of its ex-CONRAIL 1,500-hp GP15-1 locomotives from its roster. Many of them will be sold to shortlines or leasing organizations..... Philadelphia city planners want to relocate the Regional Produce Market to a new \$150-million terminal in the former Navy Yard in South Philadelphia, adjacent to an as-yet-unopened NS freight yard. According to an *Inquirer* story, the market relocation would keep the 35 businesses and 1,500 jobs in the City but possibly conflict with a possible expansion of the port. It would also require building a new highway bridge from Pattison Avenue over CSX's Greenwich rail yard.

NJ TRANSIT has been having problems with many of its 33 brand-new PL42 diesel locomotives built by Alstom, which have developed a disturbing habit of shutting down on the road. The fault appears to lie in the computer system that controls engine power, resulting in 322 locomotive-related delays during 2006. The computers are being fixed with modified software under the manufacturer's warranty (*Trains*).....NJ Transit Executive Director George Warrington was due to step down at the end of March (see February *Cinders*), following his resignation in January. At presstime, no successor had been named..... The Transportation Security Administration has released its final rules governing the new Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC). Ultimately, some 750,000 seaport, railroad and truck employees will be issued TWIC's, but only after they pass a thorough security check (*Weekly Rail Review*).

"Thomas the Tank Engine" will be packing 'em in again this season at the STRASBURG RAIL ROAD. The dates are June 16-24, September 15-23, November 30 and December 1-2. When Thomas (actually a former Brooklyn Eastern District Terminal tank engine converted in the Strasburg shop) struts on the SRC, huge crowds of kids and parents normally turn out. This Thomas is a real working steam locomotive, but his alter egos which appear on tourist railroads around the country are dummy engines which have to be pushed or pulled by a diesel.....

The Environmental Protection Agency has announced plans to require sharply reduced locomotive emissions, by implementing a series of emission standards for new and remanufactured locomotives beginning in 2009. An EPA spokesman said that over a 25-year period the new standards will require a cut in particulate emissions of 90 percent and nitrogen oxide of 80 percent (*Trains*). But the *Wall Street Journal* reported that General Electric tried to weaken the proposed controls, contending that the catalytic converters used to reduce emissions in trucks have limitations that would reduce their durability on locomotives.

Railroads have been the subject of several recent hearings before Congress and at least three pieces of proposed legislation. In mid-February the House Subcommittee on Transportation Security held a hearing on rail security, which heard witnesses from the AAR, AMTRAK, New York's MTA and

several labor groups. The Chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, Bennie Thompson of Mississippi, said "Rail security from a Federal perspective is non-existent. State and local governments have taken the lead, and the Federal government needs to step up. We only spend two cents on every rail passenger [per year] for security." Meanwhile, the Senate Commerce Committee approved the Surface Transportation & Rail Security Act of 2007, which authorizes \$1.25 billion for security measures and makes the Transportation Security Administration the lead agency for rail and public transit security. Still another bill, the Improving America's Security Act of 2007, would implement the remaining recommendations of the Federal commission which investigated the 9/11 disaster. Senator Joseph Biden of Delaware introduced an amendment to this bill which would have forced railroads to reroute hazardous shipments of toxic inhalation hazard (TIH) chemicals around high-risk urban areas such as Washington. But the Senate defeated the amendment by a vote of 73-25 (NARP, *Trains, Weekly Rail Review*).

Another bill, the Railroad Antitrust Enforcement Act of 2007, was introduced in the Senate last month. This bill, which is being strenuously opposed by the rail industry, would subject railroads to the antitrust laws they currently are exempt from. The legislation is being promoted by Consumers United for Rail Equity (CURE), a group composed mostly of bulk commodity shippers.....An effort is underway in Congress to find ways to reduce fatigue among railroad workers. This has taken the form of a new rail safety bill empowering the FRA to review and recommend changes to the Hours of Service Act, which has not been substantially changed for 40 years. Train service employees currently are restricted to 12 hours of continuous duty, with provisions for additional time after a certain rest period. But the FRA reports that 40 percent of all train accidents are caused by human factors, and one in four of these is due to worker fatigue (NARP, *Weekly Rail Review*).

Public transportation ridership rose to 10.1 billion trips in 2006, a 2.9-percent increase over the previous year, according to a report from the American Public Transportation Association. This was the highest level of ridership since 1957. Light rail increased 5.6 percent, heavy rail 4.1 percent and commuter rail 3.2 percent.....The FRA reports that train accidents in 2006 declined by 12.4 percent from the year before, and the number of highway-rail grade crossing collisions fell by five percent, although grade crossing fatalities increased by 1.4 percent to 362. Trespasser deaths rose by 14.5 percent to 530 and are the most frequent of all rail-related fatalities. Pennsylvania last year recorded 96 train accidents, which included derailments and collisions, down from 111 the previous year (*Trains*).

On March 16 the last of the troubled Boeing light rail vehicles made their farewell run on Boston's MBTA. Built by Boeing-Vertol at Eddystone, PA in the mid-1970's, the LRV's at the time were touted as the new look in rail transit equipment. But, plagued by a series of design defects, they never achieved an acceptable level of reliability and were being phased out over the past several years. (Some Philadelphia Chapter members may recall participating in the Chapter-sponsored tour of the Boeing-Vertol plant in 1977.) Introduced in Boston in 1977, many of MBTA's original 175-car order were assigned to the Riverside Line which was built on an old Boston & Albany branch. San Francisco's MUNI was the only other system to opt for the Boeing LRV's, ordering 100 of the articulated units plus taking 30 more which had been rejected by MBTA. The last of the Muni cars were retired in 2001 (*Trains*). (Continued on Page 10)

ODDS AND ENDS.....by Roy L. Hudson

(This column will appear from time to time to provide Cinders readers with some hopefully interesting, yet useful information which has been gathered from miscellaneous sources).

Recently, the *Wall Street Journal* showed a "House of the Week" in the Real Estate section. It was the Harry Packer mansion in Jim Thorpe, PA. Harry's father was Asa Packer, who was the builder and one-time president of the Lehigh Valley Railroad. They were asking only \$1.75 million (Rick Bates).....Chicago, Aurora & Elgin interurban car #315 at the Rockhill Trolley Museum is being virtually rebuilt. One of the aesthetic changes in the restoration of its original stained glass window décor. These had been covered for many years with plywood (*The Retriever*).....At auction in Manchester, NH was a rare copper weathervane of a steam locomotive and tender on a track. It was originally on the Providence & Worcester station at Woonsocket, RI, from 1882 to 1971 and the lucky (?) bidder got it for only \$1,216,000! (*The 470*).....The famous Hotel Pennsylvania, a New York City fixture (from 1919 with 2,200 rooms) and once the largest hotel in the world will be torn down for a new office building. It was designed by the architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White, who also designed the old Pennsylvania Station, directly across the street. The grand old hotel was immortalized in Glenn Miller's big band hit "Pennsylvania 6-5000". (*New York Daily News*).

The Fall 2006 issue of the Tredyffrin Easttown Historical Society Quarterly has a seven-page article on the Reading's Chester Valley Branch by Chapter Member Jim Brazel (who presented a PowerPoint presentation at the March 16 Chapter meeting). Also included is an article on the narrow gauge railroad that transported quartzite from Mount Misery to a crusher located on the Reading at Valley Forge. Copies may be ordered for \$7.00 from: TEHS, 244 Vincent Road, Paoli, PA 19301-1127 (*Crusader*).....The equipment program for the upgrade of 38 of the Reading's multiple-unit cars was recently completed. The work and painting of the "Bluebirds" was done at Reading shop with the transformers installed at Wayne Junction. Nine of the cars were air-conditioned. (*Reading Railroad News*, Nov., 1965).....The Reading Company Technical & Historical Society is working with the Upper Perkiomen Chamber of Commerce in planning a potential excursion to celebrate the Chamber's 50th anniversary. RCT&HS coaches and locomotives would be used for trips on the old Perkiomen Branch in September 2007. Plans are very preliminary at this time. (*Crusader*).

Walter Justin Sherman was a construction engineer for the Pennsylvania Railroad in the Philadelphia area and on the Main Line. In the 1880's he went to work for the Santa Fe building their new railroad between Fort Worth, TX and Oklahoma City, OK. That line was built, but through sparsely populated "Indian territory" and Sherman was given wide latitude for naming the new stations. So, today, one can look at the highway or railroad map and see the following Oklahoma railroad towns in order south-to-north (along Interstate 35): Overbrook, Ardmore, Berwyn (new Gene Autry), Wynnewood, Paoli and Wayne (W. L. Seigford).....A former tackle shop near the west end of Rockville Bridge is being renovated and converted into a railfan-oriented bed-and-breakfast. Look for a mid-2008 opening (*Harrisburg Rail Review*).....The "bigness" of the Pennsylvania Railroad—the PRR rostered more diesel models of more builders than any other railroad. It took 3,100 diesel units to replace its huge steam fleet. During World War II, its own shops

in Altoona constructed a brand new steam locomotive nearly every week, producing 177 large, modern engines within a span of four years. One hundred 2-10-4 J1's rolled out of the erecting shop alone (R. A. LaMassena).

Sure! You remember that Pennsylvania Railroad prints that were for sale in the 1960's, but do you also recall the Reading Company prints of watercolors by the late Ranulph Bye? In 1966 there was a set of four available for \$1.50 per set with the purchase of train tickets. Those who remember the prints will agree that the best one was titled "Across Neshaminy" with Blue liners on a girder bridge near Chalfont. It was also on the cover of the 1965 RDG Annual Report (*Reading Railroad News*).....Attention Baltimore & Ohio fans: the Library Company of Philadelphia has an internet album of 129 photos of bridges and stations on B&O's Philadelphia Division in 1891. Try the site at [www.LCPgraphics.org/inventories/B&O Railroad](http://www.LCPgraphics.org/inventories/B&O_Railroad). (Rick Bates).....Saved Department: Mechanicville, NY's classic concrete-and-brick "XO" tower that controlled movements for the Delaware & Hudson and Boston & Maine is undergoing restoration. For a time, it also acted as a station for Amtrak/D&H (*Rail Times*).....British Understatement: "Many important foreign missions have arrived at Victoria, but never before in this manner" (official report of the crash of a German aircraft on the roof of Victoria Station, London, late 1940).

Recently a report reached Roy's editorial staff about the railfan location at Rochelle, IL. On this particular day between 9:30 AM and 11:30 PM, 57 freight trains (BNSF and UP) passed by the Railfan Park, averaging a train every 15 minutes, which included locomotive lashups of ten different railroads and marked lessor units. There were ten trains alone between 2:00 PM and 3:00 PM (*The Mixed Train*).....The Spring issue of *Classic Trains* has an article on a number of Chicago-area fan trips including an April 1969 trip on the Santa Fe named the **Chico Chief**. It was brought to Roy's attention that the illustrated coach diagram for car RC-2 shows Philadelphia Chapter members Paul Kutta and Bob Oliphant boarding at Joliet and sitting in seats 17 and 19 (Thanks to sharp-eyed Member Dick Barben).....The longest Pullman car name was National de Mexico's **General Pedro Antonio de Leon** (12-section, one-drawing room) which was the ex-Chesapeake & Ohio **Martha Washington**. The shortest Pullman names were **Fez**, **Gem** and **Guy** which were Canadian Pacific tourist sleepers (R. J. Wayner).

In 2006, U. S. freight railroads broke records, carrying 17,380,102 carloads (+1.2%), 12,282,221 intermodal units (up more than five percent) and 324,476 carloads of coal (+4.7%). (Association of American Railroads via *The Fast Mail*).....What goes around comes around: About eight years ago Canadian National sold a 345-mile line that went north from Jasper, AB. Recently, CN bought it back from its third owner, Savage Alberta Railway for \$25 million (*Railroads Illustrated*).....Even though the sign warns "Danger - Keep off Tracks - No Trespassing", teenager Robert Castro was on the tracks at Mansfield, MA, when struck by Acela Express Train #2167 at 125-plus mph recently. Roy says "I don't even want to think about it!" (*The Callboy*).

Two Chapter-only Members Reach Milestones

In addition to the 17 members receiving membership pins this April, we offer congratulations to two Chapter-only members who are receiving awards through their home chapters:
DONALD W. KEHL, Central Coast Chapter (60 years)
JOHN B. CIAVATTA, Wilmington Chapter (25 years)

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WILMINGTON & WESTERN plans to reopen its entire 10.2-mile line between Marshallton and Hockessin, DE, in June, after much of the line was destroyed in a flash flood on September 15, 2003. All six of the road's wooden trestles along Red Clay Creek were washed out in the flood and several miles of track swept off the right-of-way, leaving only about two miles of operable track for W&W's excursion trains. The \$8 million needed to construct new steel bridges was furnished by Federal, State and county governments, and through a local fundraising campaign. On Saturday, June 30, a double-headed train with W&W 4-4-0 #98 (Alco 1909) and 0-6-0 #58 (Baldwin 1907) will make the first passenger run over the new track to Hockessin and return. W&W's parent, Historic Red Clay Valley, Inc., purchased Baltimore & Ohio's scenic Landenberg branch when it was threatened with abandonment, renamed it W&W and began operating tourist trains there in 1966 (*Trains*).

READING, BLUE MOUNTAIN & NORTHERN has begun restoring its Pacific-type steam locomotive #425 for a possible return to service this fall. The engine has been out of service for a number of years (*Railpace*).....A concrete deck for a bikeway is being installed on R&N's ex-Jersey Central bridge across the Lehigh River north of Jim Thorpe (*Railpace*).....The *Inquirer* reports that an additional five miles of the Schuylkill River Trail is under construction in northern Berks and Schuylkill Counties, between Hamburg and Auburn. This segment is being built using the abandoned right-of-way of the PRR's Schuylkill branch, which at one point passes

above the R&N shop and yard complex at Port Clinton. When completed, the trail will run the entire length of the river from Philadelphia to Pottsville. The section between Philadelphia and Valley Forge has been in use for several years and work continues on other parts of the proposed 130-mile-long trail, much of it on the old PRR branch paralleling the present NS Harrisburg Line.

Chapter Board Meets with RCT&HS; New FP7 Agreement to be Worked

Philadelphia Chapter held its First Quarter, 2007 Board of Directors Meeting on Wednesday evening, March 21 at Amtrak's 30th Street Station.

Present were Chapter Members Dave Kopena, Larry Eastwood, Frank Lancaster, Bruce and Ginny Irvin, Dave McGuire, Bill Thomas, Bill Faltermayer, Rich Copeland and Bob Morris. Also present were Dale Woodland and John Brown, representing the Reading Company Technical & Historical Society. Woodland is a Philadelphia Chapter member.

It was agreed that a new operating agreement would be forged between the two groups, now that RCT&HS owns the 902. Philadelphia Chapter will continue to own the 903.

It is hope that the units can be moved sometime in the early summer of this year from their present location at Pocopson, PA to South Hamburg, PA. Also to be explored were a couple of operating opportunities later in 2007. Further details will follow as they become available.

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