



# CINDERS

AUGUST 2007



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Volume 68

Number 7

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

## Chapter Board Opposes NRHS Dues Increase

At its Second Quarter, 2007 meeting, the Board of Directors of Philadelphia Chapter held considerable discussion on the proposed 50-percent increase in NRHS National dues, which will be voted on at the National Board of Directors meeting at Chattanooga, Tennessee on August 24, 2007. At the end of the discussion, the Chapter board registered its unanimous opposition to the increase, because of its size, and instructed Alternate National Director Frank G. Tatnall to exercise Philadelphia Chapter's four votes against the increase. National Director Larry Eastwood will be unable to attend the Chattanooga meeting.

The Board considered other options, including withdrawing from NRHS and going independent. This remains a future option for Philadelphia Chapter.

In spite of a large amount of "spin" information sent to members through *NRHS News* attempting to justify the large increase, there remains the fact that some poor decisions were made during 2003 and 2004 at the very top of NRHS regarding membership records processing which has cost untold thousands of precious member dollars. NRHS has decided to outsource membership records to Fernley & Fernley of Philadelphia at a base cost of nearly \$70,000 per year. At the Spring NRHS Board of Directors Meeting in Greenville, SC, the NRHS board was asked to "rubber stamp" the contract with Fernley & Fernley, since it had already been signed.

In reaching their decision, the Chapter's board exercised serious concern over potential loss of members because of the proposed increase. Philadelphia Chapter's membership has declined by some 20 percent over the past three-to-four years because some members had to cut back on their discretionary spending due to increased personal expenditures in areas of little control. From a high of slightly over 500 "home" chapter members, membership has declined to just about 400 in 2007, and it is feared that this number would drop to between 300 and 350 in 2008. Philadelphia Chapter has not increased its dues level for quite a number of years, although a minor adjustment seems inevitable for 2008.

National Director Larry Eastwood is requesting all members to withhold circulating applications for membership until after the issuance of the September issue of *Cinders*. By that date, the dues rate for the year 2008 will be firmed up

## Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS New Website Address:

**[www.phillyNRHS.com](http://www.phillyNRHS.com)**

## September 21 Meeting to Feature Reading Railroad

Philadelphia Chapter's September 21, 2007 meeting will feature a narrated slide program by Member Frank Tatnall entitled **Reading Railroad – The Last Decade**, and will chronicle the Reading's 1971 fall into bankruptcy and its absorption into Conrail on April 1, 1976.

Throughout its last decade the RDG remained a reasonably well-maintained property, and the railroad probably possessed the most modern motive power fleet of the six railroads that made up Conrail.

Mark your calendars for Friday, September 21, 2007 as Frank Tatnall provides what are now vintage views from the "Road of Fast, Friendly Service".

## ODDS AND ENDS Takes a Summer Vacation.....It Will be Back!!

"Odds and Ends" columnist Roy L. Hudson has decided to take a well-deserved summer vacation from his column, and it does not appear in this issue. But, be assured, the column will return in the September, 2007 issue of *Cinders*.

As Chapter members know, Philadelphia Chapter issues only one issue of our newsletter during the Summer months. The mailing date for this issue is expected to be August 1. The September issue should be mailed about September 10.

**Wanted: Program Material for 2007-2008  
 Philadelphia Chapter Meetings.  
 Contact Bill Thomas at 215-545-3198**

**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*

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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:** (NOTE: The 2008 dues level will be announced in the September, 2007 issue.) 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.

9 AM, returning about 6:30 PM, with 3-1/2 hours layover in historic Jim Thorpe. Coach fare: \$99 per person regardless of age. (Telephone 610-562-2102 weekdays for limited first-class reservations.) Order tickets from: Reading & Northern Railroad, Passenger Department, P. O. Box 218, Port Clinton, PA 19549-0218, making checks payable to the railroad. For further information, visit website [www.rbmnr.com](http://www.rbmnr.com).

**OCTOBER 13-14:** "Model Railroading Days" at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, with operating layouts, model building workshops and demonstrations of new products by leading model manufacturers. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628 (website: [www.rrmuseumpa.org](http://www.rrmuseumpa.org)).

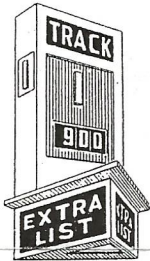
**OCTOBER 20:** Autumn leaf diesel-powered excursion on Reading & Northern Railroad from Port Clinton to Jim Thorpe, PA and return. Train leaves Port Clinton at 9 AM, returning about 6:30 PM, with 3-1/2-hour layover at historic Jim Thorpe. Fare: \$39 per person regardless of age. (Telephone 610-562-2102 weekdays for limited first-class reservations.) Order tickets from: Reading & Northern Railroad, Passenger Department, P. O. Box 218, Port Clinton, PA 19549-0218, making checks payable to the railroad. For further information, visit website [www.rbmnr.com](http://www.rbmnr.com).

**NOVEMBER 2-4:** "Lackawanna Railfest 2007" at Steamtown National Historic Site, Scranton, PA, featuring visiting locomotives and private cars, mainline excursions, night photo session and banquet at Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel. As details are firmed up, information will appear on the museum's website ([www.nps.gov/stea](http://www.nps.gov/stea)).

**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 (website: [www.railroadmuseumpa.org](http://www.railroadmuseumpa.org)).

**2008 NRHS National Convention**  
**Fort Worth, Texas**  
**June 16-24, 2008**  
*(Mark your calendars now!)*

**AUGUST 21-25, 2007:** NRHS 2007 national convention at Chattanooga, TN, to be headquartered at Chattanooga Choo-Choo Holiday Inn located in former Terminal Station. Events include excursions on Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum mainline through Missionary Ridge tunnel, shop tour, night photo session, Civil War battlefield tour and annual banquet. NRHS members will receive the official convention brochure. Hotel rate for conventiongoers is set at \$89 per night. The Convention Committee's address is: Chattanooga Rails 2007, 2025 Zumbel Road, St. Charles, MO 63303-2723 (website: [www.chattrails.com](http://www.chattrails.com)).



**SEPTEMBER 15:** Western Maryland Photo Special over 28 miles of West Virginia Central Railroad from Elkins to Tygart Junction, WV, and return (ex-WM/B&O), sponsored by Mountain State Railroad & Logging Historical Association. Power for the train is expected to be F7A-B and BL2 painted in WM livery. Only 150 tickets are available. Tour begins at 4 PM at ex-WM Elkins station, and includes visit to Durbin & Greenbrier Valley shop at Belington, WV, and night photo session upon return to Elkins station. Fare: \$75 per person, including on-board dinner. Order tickets from: Bob Hoke, 6304 Kaybro Street, Laurel, MD 20707-2621 (telephone toll-free 866-795-2607, or visit website: [www.msrlha.org](http://www.msrlha.org)).

**SEPTEMBER 15-23:** "Day Out with Thomas" at Strasburg Rail Road, when the only real steam "Thomas the Tank Engine" will operate trips from the East Strasburg station. For information, telephone 717-687-7522 (website: [www.strasburgrailroad.com](http://www.strasburgrailroad.com)).

**SEPTEMBER 30:** Annual model railroad show & Sale sponsored by Lehigh Valley Chapter NRHS at Dieruff Senior High School, Irving & Washington Streets, Allentown, PA, 10 AM-4 PM. Admission: \$3 per person, \$5 per family. For information, contact Paul Kuehner, P. O. Box 300, Laurys Station, PA 18059-0300 (telephone 610-261-0133).

**OCTOBER 13-14:** Autumn leaf steam excursions on Reading & Northern Railroad from Port Clinton to Jim Thorpe, PA and return, using recently-restored 4-6-2 Pacific #425 and open-window coaches. Saturday and Sunday trains leave Port Clinton at

# PHILADELPHIA



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.



**SEPTA  
TRANSIT**

July 18, 2007. It was a day that SEPTA people, transit advocates and riders have been waiting for at least since the early 1980's. It was the day that Governor Rendell signed into law House Bill 1590, which at long last establishes a dedicated source of funding for SEPTA and transit agencies statewide. Locally, the immediate effect is that the State will provide SEPTA with about \$155 million in additional operating subsidies during the current fiscal year, more than enough to eliminate a looming deficit of \$94-million (see June *Cinders*). This action will allow SEPTA to scrub its proposed "doomsday" plan which would have become effective on September 2, in which fares were to be raised by an average of 24 percent and 20-percent across-the-board service cuts imposed. Most importantly, for at least the next ten years the new legislation should end SEPTA's annual scramble for operating funds. Rendell signed the bill at public ceremonies in Altoona, Pittsburgh and finally at SEPTA's 69<sup>th</sup> Street Terminal in Upper Darby.

The story of how this major shift in State policy finally came about is a combination of political intrigue in Harrisburg and pressure from the public and business sectors—plus unwavering determination on the part of the Governor. The first step was to finalize a \$27.3-billion budget agreement on July 9, after weeks of battling between the Democratic Governor and Republican leaders in the Legislature. (Unfortunately, because State law requires that a budget be in place by the start of the fiscal year on July 1, the continued standoff forced a one-day furlough of some 24,000 "non-essential" State employees on July 9.) "This is an historic transportation agreement," the Governor said, "where all sides can say they have achieved some of their goals." While Rendell did get much of what he wanted, the Republicans were happy that they avoided any new taxes and held the increase in total State spending to around four percent. Embedded in the agreement was a plan to commit some \$750 million in additional annual funding for mass transit and for repair of the State's deteriorating highways and bridges.

In the week that followed, the Legislature wrestled with the task of implementing the budget agreement through specific legislation. The agreement itself was ratified in the Senate by a vote of 46-2 and in the House 140-63. The transportation segment, contained in House Bill 1590, was a bit more contentious but passed the Senate by 30-19 on July 16 and in the House the next day by a vote of 124-79. It was clear that unified support from southeastern Pennsylvania lawmakers was the key to putting the bill over the top. All Senators of both parties in the five-county area voted yes and the vast majority of area House members, including 24 of 28 Republicans, also voted in favor. (Only four Republican Representatives from outside the region registered

favorable votes). One local legislator, Democratic Representative Dwight Evans of Philadelphia—fresh off an unsuccessful bid for the mayoral nomination—was able to increase pressure on his colleagues by virtue of his position as chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. During the weeks leading up to the final debate, he repeatedly said that he would block consideration of a new State budget if it did not include dedicated funding for transit. He and the Governor prevailed.

The legislation replaces an inadequate "patchwork" system of subsidies with a new Public Transportation Trust Fund, the State's first dedicated funding source for mass transit. It provides a total of \$1.08 billion in annual statewide funding for transit, including existing sources such as "Act 3" capital appropriations, Lottery money and a fixed 4.4 percent of the State sales tax which now will be specifically set aside for transit. As a part of this, there will be an infusion of \$300 million in additional funding in the current fiscal year (\$155 million going to SEPTA), which increases by \$50 million in each of the next two fiscal years and thereafter by 2.5 percent annually from 2010 to 2047. The funding match which local governments are required to provide is increased to a minimum of 15 percent of total transit funding, and they are given additional taxing authority. This should not cause a severe impact in the SEPTA service area where the match now averages 14.4 percent. Highway spending will increase by \$450 million in this fiscal year, increasing to \$500 million in each of the next two years.

The major source of new funding will be State-issued bonds backed by a 25-percent increase in tolls on the Pennsylvania Turnpike beginning in 2009, and the planned tolling of Interstate 80 which runs across the northern part of the State. Earlier, Governor Rendell had dropped his proposal to lease the Turnpike to private operators and to impose a tax on oil companies operating in Pennsylvania.

With the new law providing a 44.5-percent increase in its operating subsidies, SEPTA's total State funding for operations in this fiscal year will be \$507.8 million. Together with dedicated capital funding of \$57.8 million, SEPTA this year will receive a grand total of \$565.6 million from Harrisburg, which should be a cause for celebration among transit customers in southeastern Pennsylvania. (By contrast, the State's second-largest operator, the Port Authority of Allegheny County in Pittsburgh, will receive a \$55.7-million increase to \$184.4 million in operating funds plus \$12.8 million for capital projects—a grand total of \$197.2 million.) Yet beyond the euphoria of balancing this year's budget is the reality that the public and the politicians who represent them will now expect a noticeable improvement in their transit experience. As Governor Rendell said when he signed the legislation, SEPTA and the other agencies must use the extra money not only to avoid fare hikes and service cuts but also to "enhance some services."

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Already many suggestions have been made as to where the extra money should be spent, as on new equipment and safer stations, but General Manager Faye Moore warned that SEPTA will not “rush into something just for the sake of doing something.”

On the same day as the budget agreement was struck in Harrisburg, SEPTA raised its fares by an average of 11 percent (see June *Cinders*). This was “Hybrid Plan A,” the first step in a two-phase program to cover its Fiscal Year 2008 deficit in case the State failed to approve additional funding. The program was vetoed by Philadelphia’s two representatives on the SEPTA board at its May meeting, but the veto was overridden at the June 28 meeting. Instead of implementing Plan A on July 1 as originally intended, the effective date was pushed back a week to Monday, July 9, but the good news is the draconian fare increase and service cuts planned for September 2 now have been withdrawn. Another reported “goodie” resulting from the Legislature’s action is the elimination of the one-hour blackouts for senior citizens, who no longer will be forced to pay regular fares during rush periods.

Since the 11-percent average increase actually is less than the rate of inflation since the last SEPTA fare hike in 2001, the new fares will stand. They are expected to produce \$35 million in additional revenues per year in spite of an estimated drop in ridership of about 2.5 percent, and would reduce SEPTA’s FY 2008 deficit to \$94 million before the action in Harrisburg. The base cash fare for transit riders remains at \$2 and token at \$1.30 each, but the price of TransPasses and TrailPasses as well as Regional Rail fares increased. The proposal to consolidate certain Regional Rail fares zones was dropped, but the controversial plan to eliminate all 60-cent paper transfers on transit routes is still set for August 1. Although only about seven percent of SEPTA’s transit riders use the transfers, the elimination has sparked considerable resistance on the part of City politicians, DVARP and rider groups. SEPTA said that the board would “discuss” the matter at its regular July 26 meeting, but there was no indication that the plan would be scrapped. SEPTA did say, however, that it was negotiating with the Philadelphia School District to continue free transfer privileges for school students, as subsidized by the District. Another change was the introduction of a new Convenience Pass, replacing the former DayPass, which now is good for eight trips on subways, buses or trolleys in a single day but not on Regional Rail. Conductors on Regional Rail trains will sell single tickets at the regular fare without a penalty charge whether or not the station ticket office is open, but will not sell discounted ten-trip tickets.

As reported here in the April issue, SEPTA shut down the Market Street el for ten days from July 13 to 23, to allow sections of the elevated structure to be replaced. The usual shuttle bus service was operated between 69<sup>th</sup> Street Terminal and the 40<sup>th</sup> Street subway station, and a more extended outage is planned for August 10-27. The current status of the el stations is as follows: 46<sup>th</sup> Street—closed; 52<sup>nd</sup> Street—new station partially open; 56<sup>th</sup> Street—new station complete; 60<sup>th</sup> Street—new station complete; 63<sup>rd</sup> Street—old station still in service; Millbourne—closed .....SEPTA says that the introduction of a new electronic fare collection system is now a top priority, and it’s likely that the startup will coincide with the next fare increase .....Because of the financial crisis this spring, SEPTA did not produce a Fiscal Year 2008 service plan, but has

begun work on a 2009 plan .....Due to better than expected operating results, SEPTA is returning \$10 million of the \$36.8 million in capital funds which were diverted last December to fill a hole in the FY 2007 operating budget.

Several of SEPTA’s current light rail timetables are sporting an historic look. The Route 101 timetable effective June 18 shows Red Arrow arch-windowed Jewett car #42 at Media in 1948, contrasted with a Kawasaki car in 2007. The Route 102 timetable shows a Brill-built “80” car at Sharon Hill in 1981 and a “K” car at the same location in 2007. The June 18 timetable for the Route 100 Norristown High Speed Line—which is marking its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year—likewise sports an historical contrast. Philadelphia & Western’s St. Louis-built wood-bodied car #42, photographed at Bryn Mawr in 1907, shares the cover with a contemporary N5 car at the same station. The Market-Frankford Line, continuing to celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, has on the cover of its June 17 timetable a scene with two of the 1907 trains on the el contrasted with a present-day shot of the stainless-steel M4 cars. This follows up the February 11 folder which had a photo of a three-car train of original el cars and the logos of PRT, PTC and SEPTA.

The Route 15 Girard Avenue trolley line continues to suffer from delays due to street problems and car failures. The June issue of DVARP’s newsletter documents some of the problems, including electrical fires in the cars. Because so many of the 18 PCC’s are out of service at any one time, SEPTA often operates a combination of trolleys and buses on the eight-mile-long route. Kawasaki cars also have frequently been seen on the line, even though they are not equipped to handle disabled passengers as are the rebuilt PCC’s. Infrastructure failures, such as water main breaks and trucks knocking down the trolley wires, also at times have forced the suspension of streetcar service. As a result, the \$85 million project to restore rail service cannot yet be counted as a success, nearly two years after its startup. A recent incident occurred July 10 near the Zoo, when a PCC collided with a State Police cruiser at 34<sup>th</sup> & Girard.....The *Daily News* in its June 18 edition carried a two-page spread on Philadelphia-area trolleys. One story explores SEPTA Route 101, the 69<sup>th</sup> Street to Media line, and another is titled “Once considered outmoded, trolleys on the rebound,” which cites the increasing popularity of light rail in numerous U.S. cities.

In June SEPTA received the pilot vehicle in its order for 38 new low-floor trackless trolleys from New Flyer. The coach has been testing out of Frankford depot. Delivery of the 37 remaining coaches is due from January to July of next year..... Be sure to visit the lobby of SEPTA headquarters at 1234 Market Street. The display of 12 large posters entitled “The Market Street Elevated 1907-2007—100 years” includes an amazing display of historical photos of the line.....SEPTA has withdrawn its proposal to wrap the lower portion of its headquarters building in a giant ad (see June *Cinders*). The idea drew widespread criticism and may not have gained approval from the City’s Zoning Board.....The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission has announced a \$100,000 grant for a study of the proposed 1.5-mile extension of the Broad Street subway from Pattison Avenue to the expanding Navy Yard industrial district.

SEPTA will spend \$33 million in this fiscal year on its infrastructure renewal program, which includes projects such as laying new welded rail on track #4 of the Broad Street subway

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from Walnut-Locust station to Snyder Avenue, and on track #3 at City Hall station. Also in the program is street track renewal on Route 13 from Woodland Avenue to 49<sup>th</sup> Street and installation of new specialwork on Route 11 at Island and Woodland Avenues. Completed last month was the installation of 700 feet of welded rail on Route 36 track in Island Avenue. Numerous power projects also are underway or planned, including replacement of 19 miles of trackless trolley wire on Routes 59, 66 and 75, and replacement of trolley wire on Route 34 along Baltimore Avenue from 49<sup>th</sup> Street to 61<sup>st</sup> Street.....It appears that the installation of new seats in all Market-Frankford M4 cars has been completed .....The four-story, \$18.5-million parking garage at Norristown Transportation Center is nearing completion, and should be open for business in December. It will contain 522 parking spaces and a Greyhound bus station on the ground floor.



## SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL

AMTRAK is on schedule in its track replacement project along the Harrisburg mainline. During the week of July 2 the Track Laying System completed work on #1 track from Paoli to Bryn Mawr, allowing SEPTA to restore inbound R5 service on that track. By mid-month the big machine was installing new concrete ties and welded rail on #1 east of Ardmore station, as all inbound SEPTA service was operating on #2 track to Overbrook. Metal crosswalks were installed at several stations while others received bright new yellow wooden extensions to allow passengers to access trains loading on #2. Shuttle buses were provided when the TLS was working directly in front of a station, but when some of the smaller equipment was parked at the stations a group of Amtrak workers picked up an aluminum bridge and placed it across the #1 track to allow passengers to board and detrain on #2.

By the third week of August the new, smooth-riding #1 track should be in place all the way to Overbrook, and the machine will begin working west on #4 toward Paoli. This will require a rejiggering of SEPTA and AMTRAK schedules to "fleet" westbound trains on #3, with a new timetable issued effective August 12. Unfortunately, there will be less flexibility in handling westbound trains, since #3 is the only track signaled in both directions between Overbrook and Paoli and it will be needed for westbound moves exclusively. Any Amtrak or SEPTA trains operating west on #2 will require the issuance of "Form D" train orders.

Over the past couple of months, in addition to the Paoli-Overbrook construction, SEPTA has experienced numerous difficulties on AMTRAK's lines. Here are some of them: Early on Thursday, June 14, a tractor trailer ran off of I-495 north of Wilmington, blocking the Northeast Corridor #3 track at milepost 21.5 (the other main track, #2, is elevated at that point). R2 Wilmington-Newark service was suspended until 11:30 AM when the truck was removed, and several Amtrak trains were delayed.

For about 20 minutes around 9 PM on Tuesday, June 19, Amtrak suffered major electric traction problems on the entire Northeast Corridor, delaying Amtrak, SEPTA and (no doubt) NJ TRANSIT trains as well. About the same time, traction power failed on the Harrisburg mainline west of Malvern and was not restored for nearly three hours. In the evening of Wednesday, June 27, Amtrak lost all traction and signal power on the Corridor between Holmesburg Junction and Wilmington, and power was intermittent for the next half-hour. R1, R2, R7 and R8 service was affected. Later that evening, catenary power was lost for an hour west of Paoli, delaying R5 trains. Several R7, R8 and Amtrak trains were delayed on Saturday, June 30, when a crazed trespasser on the tracks near North Philadelphia station was threatening suicide. Police were called to remove him. At 4 PM on Monday, July 2, Amtrak reported that a piece of its track laying apparatus fell off the machine and was fouling the #2 track at Bryn Mawr station. Delays ensued for the next two hours.

Problems continued on AMTRAK. At 4:30 PM on Wednesday, July 11, a signal failure at "Frazer" interlocking west of Malvern delayed several R5 trains, #578 for nearly an hour. About the same time, Amtrak train #19 the **Crescent** became disabled near Trenton, delaying two R7 trains. The next morning, the CTC Center lost control of "Phil" interlocking south of 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station for two hours, and a similar situation occurred two days later, with the expected delays. "Bryn Mawr" interlocking also was locked up for 25 minutes during the morning rush on Friday, July 13, and the same thing happened again during the AM rush on July 17. A month earlier, at 5:50 PM on Tuesday, June 19, SEPTA AEM-7 #2302 hauling Thorndale limited train #9559 became disabled on Amtrak west of Paoli station, with smoke reported billowing from the locomotive. Paoli local #9561 was pressed into service to rescue passengers from #9559. The following **Great Valley Flyer** #7565 was held for 50 minutes and other SEPTA and Amtrak trains were delayed as all trains had to run on eastbound track #1. A rescue train from Frazer yard finally pulled the disabled #9559 into the clear.

SEPTA also was encountering trouble on its own lines. In the evening of Sunday, May 27, severe thunderstorms caused signal outages on the West Trenton line, delaying a host of R3 trains. At 11:10 PM on Sunday, June 10, R2 train #2168 struck an automobile fouling both tracks north of Ardsley station. No one was injured and a rescue train picked up the passengers. The SEPTA report listed the cause as "automobile being operated on tracks instead of the road." Early the next day the dispatchers lost control of several interlockings on the Mainline from "Newtown Junction" north, and on the Norristown Line. At least 50 trains were delayed during the AM rush. That same afternoon signal power was lost for a time on the West Trenton line and the often troublesome "Newtown Junction" interlocking malfunctioned, forcing signal maintainers to assume local control. Continued bad weather on Tuesday the 12th caused more signal problems on the West Trenton line, and at 3 PM a fallen tree was reported fouling the #2 track on CSX's Trenton Subdivision just north of Yardley station. R3 trains in both directions were forced to use #1 until CSX crews cleared the tree at 4:30 PM.

The following day, at 7:35 PM on Wednesday, June 13, the CTC control system went down between "Newtown Junction" and "Carmel" interlocking at Glenside. Normal operations were restored at 10 PM but not before at least 44 trains were affected. Train #390 out of West Trenton chalked up a 53-minute delay. At

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6:20 AM on Monday, June 30, southbound train #4109 reported running over a trespasser at Somerton station, but he was rescued alive and conscious. Apparently he was lying in the gauge and was not struck by the train. Ten R6 Cynwyd trains were annulled on Monday, July 9, when inspectors discovered three bridge timbers missing on the #4 Valley track in West Philadelphia. Silverliner MU #458 and mate #457 proved troublesome when they lost traction power three days in a row. The first time was on Tuesday, July 3, as they were leading R2 train #6215 at Hatboro, resulting in a 40-minute delay. The next day the same cars were heading train #2115 when they again shut down at Hatboro, causing a 53-minute delay. The third time was not the charm, since the same married pair were the lead units on R7 train #757 near Levittown when they failed, losing 36 minutes. During the PM rush hour on Monday, July 16, catenary wires dropped onto train #9747 just west of 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station, knocking out power on #4 track from there through the center city tunnel. After 45 minutes power was restored but 29 other trains were delayed.

Track and signal work continues on the Mainline from Glenside to Lansdale, with replacement of the 70-year-old catenary between Glenside and "Gwynedd" interlocking to follow. A new R5 North timetable will be issued effective August 12 but hourly midday service will remain in effect. The Butler Avenue grade crossing in Ambler was being rebuilt last month and the Mount Pleasant Avenue crossing in Ambler and the Hancock Street crossing in Lansdale also will be renewed. Formal dedication of the now-completed Fort Washington station likely will occur next month .....Other improvements on the railroad programmed for this fiscal year include completion of the high-level platform at Cheltenham station on the R8 Fox Chase Line, designing high-level platforms at Ryers station, performing improvements at three stations on the R7 Chestnut Hill East Line, replacing the catenary over the #2 track on the Airport viaduct, retiring the spring switch at "CP Lynn" at Roslyn on the R2 Warminster Line, and taking over maintenance of AMTRAK-owned tracks from the Spring Garden Street bridge to a new "K" interlocking to be built near "Zoo".....SEPTA plans to purchase four parcels of land for a new parking lot on the outbound side of Croydon station, on the R7 Trenton line .....SEPTA handled more than 9,000 passengers on its R6 trains during the annual International Cycling Championship race on Sunday, June 10. Half-hourly service was operated throughout the day between Norristown, Manayunk station (adjacent to "the Wall") and center city. As in past years a special one-day timetable was issued and the new ticket office at Manayunk was opened in time for the event.

On July 11 AMTRAK President Alexander Kummant testified before the House Transportation & Infrastructure Subcommittee on the railroad's capital needs. Responding to questions, he told the Congressmen that even with a \$7-billion investment in the Northeast Corridor, travel time between New York and Washington could be reduced only by about 25 minutes. He said that the most critical improvements needed on the Corridor are new tunnels in Baltimore and New York, several new bridges and replacement of the aging catenary system. One Congressman complained that the Acela service is not truly high speed because it averages only 82 mph, and he offered a \$32-billion plan to build an all-new European-style high-speed line between New York and Washington, using private capital (NARP, *Trains*)..... Earlier, Kummant told Congress that one obstacle to expanding AMTRAK service is the lack of U.S.-based railcar suppliers, and even the few foreign carbuilders are busy filling orders from other countries (*Trains*).

AMTRAK and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen last month announced a tentative labor agreement covering Amtrak's 1,300 locomotive engineers. Many Amtrak unions have been working without contracts for several years and this appears to be the first breakthrough. In the past, some unions have even talked about the possibility of a strike (NARP).....AMTRAK has announced that it will introduce a new generation of Quik-Trak self-service ticketing machines. When installation is complete, the number of machines available nationwide will increase from the present 176 in 67 stations (including 30<sup>th</sup> Street) to more than 300 in 150 stations. The machines, which allow passengers to purchase and print tickets without going to a ticket counter, last year generated 31 percent of all Amtrak tickets issued (*Trains*).

Because of bridge construction on the NORFOLK SOUTHERN mainline at New Brighton, PA, and elsewhere, the eastbound Pennsylvanian #42 will operate 30 minutes later than scheduled until August 24. Evidently, this is being done to preserve the connection with the eastbound Capitol Limited #30 from Chicago, which is affected by the bridge projects. The Sunday Pennsylvanian #44 will run normally (NARP)..... AMTRAK is expected to reissue its Philadelphia-Harrisburg timetable effective August 13, due to the trackwork between Paoli and Overbrook.....AMTRAK last month announced an agreement with private train operator GrandLuxe (formerly American Orient Express) to operate GrandLuxe cars on the rear of the Silver Meteor between Washington, DC, and Miami, FL, every third day in November and December. Fares in the luxury sleeping cars with full meal service will range from \$789 to \$2,000 per person. GrandLuxe will also attach its cars to the California Zephyr and Southwest Chief during the same period.

E.S. (Stan) Bagley, Jr., 61, who served as president of the Northeast Corridor from 1999 to 2001 and later as AMTRAK's chief operating officer, died last month of cancer...... The July issue of *Trains* carried an interesting article by Scott A. Hartley entitled "Local freight where it shouldn't be," the story of how CONRAIL and other operators manage to serve industries along AMTRAK's busy Northeast Corridor.....AMTRAK operated its annual "Rail to the Fair" excursion on July 21 from Philadelphia to Harrington, DE, and return for the Delaware State Fair. Sponsored by DelDOT, the train ran via the Corridor to Newark, DE, then over NS's Delmarva branch.....The long-discussed renovation of AMTRAK's Lancaster station on the Harrisburg line should go to bid by the end of this year. The



The U.S. Department of Transportation appropriations bill considered by the full House of Representatives last month contained \$1.4 billion for AMTRAK in Fiscal Year 2008. A Senate committee earlier approved \$1.375 billion for Amtrak, but passenger advocates warned that lawmakers will be under heavy pressure to reduce non-defense spending, even facing a veto threat from President Bush if they exceed the limits in his FY 2008 budget. Bush has requested only \$800 million for Amtrak, which would force the railroad into bankruptcy (NARP)

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## PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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project is expected to cost more than \$12 million (*Trains*) .....The North American Rail Pass this year is priced at \$999 for adults and is good for 30 days of unlimited rail travel on most AMTRAK trains and all VIA RAIL trains in Canada. For details, visit [www.railpass.com](http://www.railpass.com) (*Trains*).



CSX  
NS  
OTHER ROADS

A special train was operated from Harrisburg to Altoona and Pittsburgh on Saturday, July 7, via NORFOLK SOUTHERN's mainline, in connection with the Railroaders Memorial Museum's "Railfest 2007". The ten-car special also made three round-trips from Altoona to Gallitzin and return via Horseshoe Curve on Saturday and three more on Sunday the 8<sup>th</sup>, before returning to Harrisburg that afternoon. The train was hauled by JUNIATA TERMINAL's two spotless ex-Pennsylvania Railroad E8A's, #5711 and 5809, with the following consist: MKT 403 private car, SEPTA push-pull coaches 2515, 2503, 2501, 2525, cab car 2403, AMTRAK coach 82568, private cars **Kitchi Gammi Club, Warrior Ridge** and open-platform **Pennsylvania 120** .....NS ran another office car special through eastern Pennsylvania on June 25 with its newly-rebuilt A-B-B set of F-units. The route was from North Jersey through Allentown, Reading, Harrisburg, Altoona, Pittsburgh and on to Chicago .....On June 1 NS celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its formation. NS said that in 1982 it operated an average of 1,066 daily freight trains but today, after purchasing 58 percent of CONRAIL, it runs about 1,800 daily trains. NS also renamed its headquarters in Norfolk, VA, the Arnold McKinnon Building, honoring a former chairman of the railroad.

CSX has announced that it will continue to decentralize most dispatching functions away from its headquarters in Jacksonville, FL. Apparently reacting to the proven success of basing dispatchers at the divisional level, as demonstrated by NORFOLK SOUTHERN and CONRAIL, CSX will relocate Baltimore Division dispatchers back to Halethorpe, MD. Other relocations will be made to Nashville, TN; Atlanta, GA; Cincinnati, OH; Huntington, WV and Florence, SC, with the Dufford facility in Jacksonville being converted into a regional center. Former Conrail offices at Selkirk, NY, and Indianapolis, IN, will continue to function, as will a newer center at Calumet City, IL. It is interesting to note that CSX said the realignment "will result in more effective and efficient decision-making, improved system reliability and improved train performance." This sounds like the same rationale offered when CSX created its Jacksonville dispatching center in 1982 (*Weekly Rail Review, Trains*).

NS is pushing an ambitious proposal to create a 1,300-mile-long "Crescent Corridor" from New Orleans and Atlanta through Hagerstown and Harrisburg to North Jersey. Viewed as a public-private partnership similar to the Heartland Corridor project between Norfolk and the Midwest now underway, the Crescent Corridor calls for the upgrading and expansion of existing NS lines

to offer a viable alternative for the heavy truck traffic now congesting Interstate 81 and other highways. The State of Virginia already has committed \$40 million to the \$3-billion project and NS is now seeking support from other Federal, state and local sources (*Railway Age*)..... NS has purchased two low-emission "gensets" from RailPower, Inc., to convert out-of-service 1,500-hp EMD SW1500 switchers to 1,400-hp RP14BD twin-engine units at Juniata shop in Altoona. NS already has converted two former GP38's to three-engine, 2,000-hp RP20BD units with kits supplied by RailPower (*Railway Age*) .....NS and CSX are among five major U.S. railroads that have reached new contract agreements with five unions representing about 30,000 workers, agreements that will boost pay by 17 percent over five years. Earlier agreements were reached with five other unions representing about 85,000 workers, but the largest single union, the United Transportation Union with some 81,000 members, is still holding out, and has filed suit to try to enforce its demands.

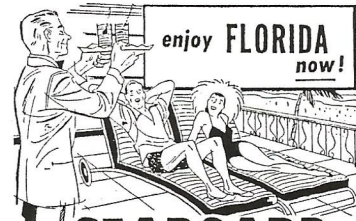
CSX last month took delivery of #5501, its 300<sup>th</sup> Evolution Series 4,400-hp diesel-electric locomotive from General Electric. The model ES44DC units, numbered 5200 and up, are designed to reduce fuel consumption and cut emissions .....On June 29 eastbound CSX train Q174 struck and killed a teenage boy who was sitting on the track near Bustleton Avenue in Northeast Philadelphia..... CSX has entered into a "rail security partnership" with the States of New York and New Jersey, under which the railroad will share information in its Network Operations system with law enforcement agencies in those states.....CSX announced that in the three years ending last June 30, the value of its common stock nearly tripled from \$16.39 to \$45.08, "placing our growth among the top five percent of all stocks in the S&P 500," the railroad said.....The writer has just noticed that the connecting track built by CONRAIL through the onetime Budd property in North Philadelphia has been removed. It linked the former Pennsy Midvale yard along SEPTA's Chestnut Hill West Line with "Nice" interlocking on the former Reading.

NJ TRANSIT will purchase an additional 45 multilevel railcars from Bombardier, bringing the total order to 279 cars. NJT said that the purchase will be more cost-effective than overhauling older Comet III cars. For several months, one 11-car set of multilevels has been running in Northeast Corridor service between Trenton and New York, and a second eight-car set was placed in service on July 16 (*Railpace*).....The NJT board last month approved a \$1.6-billion operating budget and a \$1.3-billion capital budget for Fiscal Year 2008. The operating budget is funded by passenger and other revenues (\$825 million), State and Federal reimbursements (\$464 million) and State operating assistance (\$298 million). The capital budget includes \$100 million toward the building of two new tunnels under the Hudson River and other rail expansion projects such as the proposed Lackawanna Cutoff service to Pennsylvania, \$57 million for rail station improvements, \$47 million for the purchase of 1,171 new buses and \$22 million for replacement of the aging Portal bridge on AMTRAK's Northeast Corridor. NJT also enjoyed record ridership in Fiscal year 2007 ending June 30. Light rail ridership spiked 22 percent over FY 2006 to 18.8 million, commuter rail jumped six percent to 73 million, and bus was up 1.4 percent to 159.1 million. The 250.9-million annual trips is 41.7 percent higher than when NJT was formed in 1980.

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PATCO will spend \$180 million over the next five years to rebuild its 121-car fleet. PATCO said the stainless-steel carbodies "will be around forever [but] everything else will be replaced." Seventy-five of the cars were delivered by Budd in 1969 and the other 46 came from Canadian Vickers in 1980 (*Weekly Rail Review*).....The Railroaders Memorial Museum said last month that it suspended work on ex-Pennsy K4 locomotive #1361, which has been under restoration at Steamtown in Scranton for the past decade. Delays in reimbursement payments from the State were cited as the cause. The Museum said that restoration work will be completed at its new roundhouse complex in Altoona, which is still under construction.....The STRASBURG RAIL ROAD will place ex-Reading business car #10 back in service, after nearly 50 years as a static display. The 1913-vintage car will be used to provide luxury service on SRC's regular trains (*Trains*).....The Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania at Strasburg has restored three historic PRR freight cars to their original appearance. They are an H34A covered hopper, a G39A ore jenny and an X54 insulated boxcar.....Work has been completed at Ringoes, NJ, on restoration of ex-CONRAIL E8A #4022 to its as-delivered Erie Railroad livery. Now owned by the NEW YORK & GREENWOOD LAKE, the unit has been renumbered 833 and will be moved to Port Jervis, NY, then to NY&GL's new operation on an ex-Erie branch out of Lackawaxen, PA ([Trainorders.com](http://Trainorders.com)).



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