



# CINDERS

MAY 2009



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Volume 70

Number 5

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

**PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, NRHS WEBSITE: [www.phillyNRHS.com](http://www.phillyNRHS.com)**

## OUR MEETING

**FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 15, 2009**

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, 9<sup>th</sup> Street above Locust  
(\$6.00 after 6 PM), Parkway garage, also 9<sup>th</sup> above Locust  
(\$5.75 after 6 PM), or Downtown Garage, Walnut Street east of  
10<sup>th</sup> (\$4.00 after 6 PM) (*Note that some of these parking prices  
have changed and will be adjusted in a future issue of Cinders.*)

The program for our meeting on Friday May 15 will be Chapter  
President Frank Tatnall with a narrated slide lecture entitled **How  
the PRR Moved Its Commuters in the Waning Years, 1955-  
1968**. Frank promises that his program will include steam trains,  
doodlebugs and electric MU's. Mark your calendars—this  
promises to be an excellent show with many vintage views.

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, MAY 12, 2009 to National Director  
Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769.** The menu is Chicken  
Francaise, sweet potato rosettes and grilled vegetables, or broiled  
flounder, baked stuffed potatoes served with grilled tomatoes. The  
salad will be Mescul and romaine blended with feta cheese,  
cranberries and walnuts (balsamic dressing). Carrot cake on a  
painted plate, rolls, butter and beverages round out the meal. Why  
not come out for dinner before our meeting. It's an enjoyable full  
meal, plus informal and interesting conversation, plus it's priced at  
only \$20.00 per person. Bring a friend, enjoy a leisurely dinner,  
and introduce them to Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS.

Our program on Friday, June 19 will be very special – **Just  
Yesterday – A Mythical Tour of the Philadelphia Transportation  
Company (PTC) System via Color Slides**. This program was  
originally presented at Philadelphia Chapter's **January 15, 1960**  
meeting (nearly 50 years ago). Editor Larry Eastwood has  
reassembled this program from the script and slides from the  
collection of the late Joseph M. Mannix, who left that collection to  
Philadelphia Chapter. Don't miss this program of nearly 250  
vintage slides. Meanwhile, don't forget Frank Tatnall's look back  
at PRR commuter service on May 15.

## BERT PENNYPACKER

**April 22, 2009**

The rail history community lost a true legend with  
the passing of Chapter Member Charles Bertrom Pennypacker  
on Wednesday, April 22, at the age of 85. Bert had recently  
been hospitalized with an aneurysm and did not recover.  
Pennypacker had been an NRHS member since 1987.

Born in Philadelphia, Bert's early years were filled  
with tragedy, beginning with the passing of his mother when he  
was nine years old. The Great Depression took his  
Philadelphia home, and he was forced to move to his  
Grandmother's home in Coatesville. His father passed on  
when Bert was in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. He credited his grandmother,  
the ability to graduate from high school and becoming a railfan  
as all having a great impact on his life.

I met Bert at Reading's Wayne Junction station on  
April 26, 1958, the last day of the Baltimore & Ohio's  
Baltimore-Jersey City passenger service. He befriended this  
then 15-year-old aspiring railfan, taking me on PTC trolleys to  
Park Junction, where we watched some passing B&O trains.  
We corresponded actively for several years following that.

Bert's first big railroad article was in December,  
1960 *Trains* Magazine, the subject being the Reading's T-1 4-  
8-4's, of Iron Horse Ramble fame. He penned some 25 articles  
for *Trains* and *Classic Trains* between 1960 and 2000. A  
notable hard cover book was Morning Sun's *Reading Company  
in Color, Volume 2*, on which he was assisted by Chapter  
Member Harry Garforth. These works were all the more  
notable due to his longtime visual handicap. He was honored  
during the 1980's by the Railway & Locomotive Historical  
Society for his writings, the award presented by Frank Tatnall  
and myself at his home. He had a longtime reader and research  
assistant, Joan McGee, who was invaluable to him.

Bert married his wife, Theresa, in 1953, settling in  
Philadelphia's Juniata Park section. We extend our deepest  
sympathy to Theresa, as well as to Joan. We are all more  
knowledgeable rail historians because of Bert Pennypacker.

--R. L. Eastwood, Jr., with assistance from Rick Bates

**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:** \$50.00 per person, which includes Chapter and National dues. Chapter-only dues \$17.00 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.

**If your *Cinders* Arrives in Bad Condition**

If your *Cinders* arrives damaged, contact Editor Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769 or [reastwood2@comcast.net](mailto:reastwood2@comcast.net) and a replacement copy will be promptly sent to you.

**EDWARD K. MORLOK**

**April 18, 2009**

It is with regret that we inform you of the passing of Member Edward K. Morlok, of Swarthmore, Pennsylvania on Saturday, April 18, 2009, following a long struggle with colon cancer. Ed was 68 years on age, and had been a member of NRHS since 2005.

Born in Philadelphia, Morlok graduated from Yale University in 1961, completed his doctorate at Northwestern University in 1967, teaching transportation engineer at Northwestern until relocating to the University of Pennsylvania in the 1970's. Ed's specialty was the economics and logistics of freight transportation, coordinating the various modes for package transport. He was Penn's UPS Foundation Professor of Transportation.

He took particular interest in the Leiper Railway, built in 1809-1810 along Crum Creek in Ridley Township, Delaware County. He wrote an article on the Leiper Railway, which was detailed in the March, 2007 issue of *Cinders*. The line had been purchased by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad in 1887 and became the B&O's Crum Creek Branch. In the late 1930's, an effort was undertaken to turn part of the line into a tourist railroad, and early NRHS members were involved.

Dr. Morlock is survived by his wife, Patricia, daughter Jessica Prince, stepson John Conboy and stepdaughters Patricia Kuzyk, Elizabeth Sheslow, Peggy Wagman and Nancy Burke.

Funeral services were held on Wednesday, April 22 at the Cavanagh Patterson Funeral Home in Media. Philadelphia Chapter extends its condolences to Dr. Morlock's wife and extended family.

**ANDREW C. KOVAL**

**May, 2008**

We have, somewhat belatedly, been informed of the passing of Chapter-only Member Andrew C. Koval, of Chicago, IL, in May, 2008, at the age of 67.

Andrew was retired Postal Service employee whose career spanned 40 years, including Railway Post Office service. A. U. S. Navy veteran, Andrew was a member of the Railway Station Historical Society, and we learned of his passing from their newsletter.

He is survived by two sisters. Interment was in St. Mary Cemetery in Chicago.

**Incumbent Chapter Officers Re-Elected**

All of Philadelphia Chapter's officers were re-elected to another one-year term in office, based on a vote of the members present at the Chapter's April 17 Membership Meeting. There were no nominations from the floor from those present.

**Hot Weather Disrupts Regional Rail**

On Monday, April 27, as *Cinders* was being prepared for the printer, unseasonably hot weather and other problems disrupted SEPTA's Regional Rail operations. The normal RS-1 heat restriction was placed in effect at 2:20 PM.

At 10:28 AM, a static converter problem at Wayne Junction caused delay to 11 trains north of the phase break before being resolved about 40 minutes later. Beginning at 3:15 PM, multiple incidents, including loss of electric traction power at Glenside, caused many lengthy delays to evening rush hour trains, particularly on the R5 Lansdale/Doylestown Line, but service did continue. Compounding the problem, at 5:45 PM a passenger fell off the platform to track level on Track 1 at Market East station, with apparent serious injuries.

# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.



**SEPTA  
TRANSIT**

SEPTA has big investment plans for Fiscal Year 2010 beginning July 1. Its proposed \$418-million capital budget—a \$50-million increase over this year's figure—will fund 23 projects, with an additional \$191 million to come from the Federal stimulus program (see April *Cinders*). State of good repair projects in the FY 2010 budget total \$171.7 million, normal replacement work is estimated at \$139.8 million, system improvements at \$87.8 million and expansion projects at \$8.7 million. The stimulus program, formally known as the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), will pay for 27 projects on Regional Rail and transit. On April 21 SEPTA officials held a public hearing on the FY 2010 capital budget and the 12-year capital program, the details of which are contained in a 92-page document made available at the hearing.

The capital budget includes \$14.4 million in preliminary funding for the proposed "smart card" fare collection system. Some other major line items are \$54.2 million for the purchase of 100 additional hybrid buses from New Flyer, \$53.6 million for vehicle overhauls, \$12.3 million to complete the "smart stations" project and \$30 million to finally wrap up the Market Street elevated reconstruction, the total cost of which is around \$740 million. The elevated guideway sections were completed last December, but some related work still needs to be done. The long-running project—which began seven years ago and is seriously over-budget—should be finished by September of this year. SEPTA expects the new 63rd & Market el station, last of the six rebuilt stations, to be opened for service later this month.

The ARRA section of the budget, which contains \$191 million in Federal funds, includes an array of both Regional Rail and transit improvements. Among the Regional Rail projects are stabilizing the sidewalls of the Gwynedd cut on the R5 Lansdale line, construction of a new R8 Fox Chase station, new standardized signage on 17 stations along the R5 Paoli-Thorndale line, roof replacements on the R2 Warminster, the R3 Philmont and the R2/R5 Glenside stations, rehabilitating the historic R5 North Wales station, repairs to seven stations on the R8 Chestnut Hill West Line (including the historic but dilapidated structure at Tulpehocken) and the rebuilding of four bridges on the Mainline north of Philadelphia. Also funded are stabilization of the track bed on the West Chester Line near Glen Riddle (which will be the path of the future extension of R3 service to Wawa), additional parking at the R3 Elwyn station, new high-level platforms and parking improvements at the R7 Croydon station, and construction of a pedestrian tunnel, new lighting and expansion of the parking lot at the R5 Malvern station.

On the transit side, repairing the piers on the 98-year-old Route 100 bridge across the Schuylkill River at Norristown

will be funded by ARRA, and more welded rail will be placed along the Routes 101 Media and 102 Sharon Hill trolley lines. The steel catenary poles also will be repainted, new fiber optic cable installed along the right-of-way and highway crossing protection upgraded at 19 locations on the two routes. Warning devices at ten crossings on the Media line will be rebuilt with new computerized traffic signals controlling trolley and automobile movements. The latter project will see the removal of barrier gates at certain crossings where motorists have been complaining about delays (see March, April *Cinders*). Some \$36.7 million in ARRA funds will be spent to refurbish the Girard and Spring Garden stations on the Broad Street subway, and \$4.2 million to fix the malfunctioning CBTC control system in the trolley subway. Other planned improvements include the upgrading and expansion of the Darby terminal, new trackwork at the Fern Rock yard on the Broad Street subway, renovation of the restrooms at 69<sup>th</sup> Street Terminal, the purchase of 40 additional hybrid buses and design work on the twin projects to renovate City Hall station on the Broad Street Line and the 15<sup>th</sup> Street station on the Market-Frankford Line.

The budget document also contains a summary of the numerous transit planning studies in this area currently underway or recently completed. These include the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's Long Range Regional Transportation Plan due for release late this spring, AMTRAK's Northeast Corridor Infrastructure Master Plan to be completed this fall, PennDOT's Pennsylvania Mobility Plan released in 2007 and the Delaware River Port Authority's alternatives analysis for extension of rail transit service along the Philadelphia Waterfront to be finished by this summer. Other studies which directly affect SEPTA include an update of the 2006 study on extending Route 100 to King of Prussia, a 2007 DVRPC study for extending the R5 Regional Rail line from Thorndale to Atglen, Montgomery County's feasibility study for extending R6 service along the Route 422 corridor to Reading, studies on extending the Broad Street subway to the Navy Yard and along Roosevelt Blvd. to Northeast Philadelphia, and an alternatives analysis for restoring rail service to Quakertown.

A group of South Philadelphia civic organizations is strongly supporting the restoration of trackless trolley service on Route 29 Tasker-Morris Streets and Route 79 Snyder Avenue. For years SEPTA has resisted this pressure, while at the same time putting 38 new coaches in service on Routes 59, 66 and 75 in the Northeast. SEPTA officials now say that they will take another look at the pros and cons of buying 23 additional coaches to restore electric service on the two South Philly crosstown routes. This would involve the extension of wires on Route 29 across Columbus Blvd. into the Pier 70 Shopping Center. Officials also acknowledged the need to eventually replace the 18 rebuilt PCC-II cars operating on Route 15 Girard Avenue as well as 141 Kawasaki light rail vehicles used on the five subway-surface routes and suburban Routes 101 and 102.

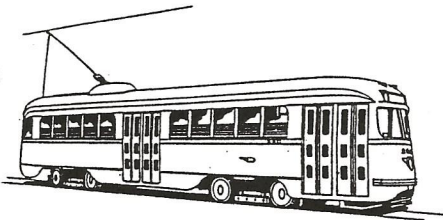
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# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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The authoritative *Kiplinger Letter* for business executives predicts that Congress will not enact a big new highway and transit funding bill this year. Instead, it is likely that the current SAFETEA law due to expire September 30 will be extended into next year. When it is passed, says *Kiplinger*, the new six-year, \$400-billion legislation will emphasize reducing congestion in metropolitan areas, with more Federal funding for mass transit and intercity rail lines rather than huge increases for building and maintaining highways.....SEPTA last month began selling its new One-Day Independence Pass (see April *Cinders*), which will be good for unlimited rides on *all* SEPTA routes as well as the center city Phlash buses. Cost is \$10 per person or a "Family Independence Pass" priced at \$25 for up to five family members. However, the passes will not be good on Regional Rail trains arriving at center-city stations before 9:30 AM. Passengers may purchase the passes at all Regional Rail ticket offices and at SEPTA sales offices including the Transit Museum Store at 1234 Market Street.

Philadelphia's two representatives on the SEPTA board, Jettie Newkirk and Christian DiCicco, said their farewells at the March meeting, but their replacements have not yet been seated. The *Inquirer* reports that Mayor Nutter's new appointees to the 15-member board, Deputy Mayor for Transportation Rina Cutler and Community Activist Beverly Coleman, have not been approved by City Council, apparently due to an unrelated dispute between Nutter and Council President Anna Verna.....SEPTA last month conducted hearings on its \$1.13-billion operating budget for Fiscal Year 2010, which contemplates no fare increases or service cuts. It will be submitted for approval to the SEPTA board at its May 28 meeting.....There has been no recent word on the status of contract talks between SEPTA and Transport Workers Union Local 234 (see April *Cinders*).



That shutdown of Route 36 trolley service between Eastwick and 49th Street, mentioned here last month, has turned out to be a much bigger problem than at first anticipated. The street cave-in at 62<sup>nd</sup> & Elmwood Avenue was originally caused by a water main failure but the sinkhole has continued to grow in size, preventing the resumption of trolley service. The Water Department has brought in an outside contractor to repair the street, but bus substitution is likely to continue at least until mid-May.....Track replacement work on Baltimore Avenue caused Route 34 to be bused for a weekend last month, and continued weekday trackwork on the Route 101 Media line forced single-track operation between 9:30 AM and 1 PM from Drexel Hill Junction to Springfield Road..... Track replacement on Route 36 between Buist Avenue and the Eastwick loop will begin at the June 15 schedule change and last most of the summer. This is the area in which the tracks are in a center reservation on Island Avenue.



## SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL

SEPTA's decision to expand its QuietCar service to *all* peak-hour express trains has met with an overwhelmingly favorable response (see April *Cinders*). The quiet cars are always the first car in any train of three or more cars, offering a respite from the often-pervasive chattering of cell phone users and other distracting noise. Only one unpleasant incident related to the quiet cars so far has been reported. At 5:20 PM on Tuesday, April 7, the day after the new service was extended to the R5 Paoli-Thorndale line, a dispute arose aboard Bryn Mawr local #9563 when one passenger asked another rider to be quiet in the quiet car. Police had to be summoned to Suburban Station to resolve the quarrel, and both passengers were allowed to remain aboard. Train #9563 was held for eight minutes and six other trains behind it were delayed.....The *Inquirer* reports that there has been a further delay in delivery of the three Silverliner V pilot cars, which were supposed to arrive in April to begin testing. The first production cars, to be built at a Hyundai Rotem plant in South Philadelphia, are due this fall but SEPTA General Manager Joseph Casey told the newspaper that there would be a new schedule. He insisted, however, that all 120 cars in the \$274-million order would be delivered by early 2011 as promised.

As of late April, SEPTA still had not taken control of its newly-completed "K" interlocking just west of 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station (see April *Cinders*). The delay in shifting control of the interlocking to the SEPTA Operations Center reportedly is due to AMTRAK's slow response in initiating the cutover from "Zoo" tower to SEPTA. Oddly enough, it is Amtrak that will be relieved of maintaining this section of railroad which is used only by SEPTA trains.....Montgomery County has set aside nearly \$16,000 as its share of a \$625,000 study to determine the feasibility of charging tolls on the congested U.S. 422 expressway between Douglassville and King of Prussia (see March *Cinders*). Part of the proceeds would be used to fund the extension of SEPTA's R6 rail service beyond Norristown, possibly all the way to Reading as SEPTA wanted to do in the rejected Schuylkill Valley Metro plan.....Work continues on rebuilding the R5 Wayne station in Delaware County, with the outbound high-level platform partially completed and the old outbound shed removed. Some piers for the inbound platform are already in place. The \$14-million project, to be completed next year, will include restoration of the historic 1885-vintage station building. Villanova will be the next Main Line station restored.....Replacement of the bridge over Tacony Creek just south of Jenkintown station, originally set for the weekends of April 25-26 and May 2-3 (see April *Cinders*), has been postponed until next month. Passengers will be bused between Fern Rock and Jenkintown.

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# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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Local community organizations in the neighborhoods surrounding the Jenkintown station are expressing their displeasure with SEPTA's plan to build a high-rise parking garage adjacent to the station. The groups represent residents of Jenkintown Borough and the Wyncote section of Cheltenham Township. The five-story, 700-space garage, currently in the design stage, would be built on the site of the existing south parking lot, with construction to *begin* in 2011 (not completed as stated here last month). Neighbors, however, complain about the increased traffic such a facility would attract to a station which already is SEPTA's busiest outside of center city. Two spokespersons for the groups appeared at the SEPTA capital budget hearing on April 21, testifying that the new garage would simply increase the flow of commuters who drive past their more-distant stations to take advantage of the greater frequency of train service at Jenkintown. The project includes the refurbishing of the 1932-vintage station building, a new ticket office and high-level platforms. SEPTA is looking to build a similar parking garage at Glenside station, 1.2 miles north of Jenkintown.

In mid-April Regional Rail riders suffered through three major service disruptions, none of which were SEPTA's fault. At 7 PM on Tuesday, April 14, AMTRAK reported that the AEM-7 on Keystone Service train #656 from Harrisburg apparently had gotten its pantograph entangled in the catenary at Thorndale, bringing down the wires and knocking out power. SEPTA push-pull train #7565 and Amtrak #618 were able to get by the scene on #4 track but soon all service through the area was suspended. SEPTA was allowed to run some trains as far as Malvern station while passengers for stations to the west were bused from Paoli. Repair work went on through the night, with full service not restored until 6:25 Wednesday morning. Then around 8:30 PM on Friday evening the 17<sup>th</sup> Bucks County police reported that a male had jumped or fallen into the catenary wires from an overhead bridge near Neshaminy Falls station. He died at the scene. The catenary had to be de-energized and R3 West Trenton service suspended until 10:27 PM. Four trains were annulled or partially annulled and another delayed, which affected several Philadelphia Chapter members traveling home from the monthly meeting in center city.

A more extended disruption occurred on Saturday, April 18, when an abandoned industrial building on the west side of the SEPTA right-of-way in Norristown caught fire about 2:50 PM. All R6 train service north of Conshohocken had to be suspended while several fire companies fought the blaze and laid their hoses across both tracks. Route 97 buses were pressed into service to transport passengers between the Norristown stations and Conshohocken. By 9:30 PM the fire was out and train service resumed, although the #1 southbound track remained shut down. Two trains out of Norristown were annulled and five others were turned at Conshohocken, while eight northbound trains were annulled beyond Conshohocken. Numerous other trains were delayed due to the single-track operation between "River" crossover at Miquon and Conshohocken.

Two other trespassers and a trespassing motor vehicle were luckier than the catenary jumper mentioned above. Late on Sunday evening, April 5, a trespasser apparently was struck by an AMTRAK train near the R7 Levittown station. All trains were held until the person was removed to a hospital. Train #2738 was

annulled out of Trenton and #9740 operated a half-hour late. Around 6:30 PM on Thursday the 9<sup>th</sup> someone tried to drive his car across the SEPTA tracks just south of Neshaminy Falls station, even though there is no highway crossing there. The vehicle became stuck on the #1 track but trains in both directions were able to operate past the scene on #2. Then, on Monday morning the 20th R3 train #9334 struck a trespasser at Primos station, but the "victim" reportedly got up and walked away from the scene. The train was released by police after 20 minutes and two other trains were delayed. On Friday night, April 3, westbound R7 train 778 struck a fallen tree branch at "Morris" interlocking in Morrisville. The engineer was injured and the headlight and ditchlights on MU #455 damaged; the train returned to Trenton station and was annulled. A signal failure on the R3 Media-Elwyn line between 49<sup>th</sup> Street and Secane delayed at least ten northbound trains during the morning rush on Thursday the 9<sup>th</sup>.



AMTRAK has submitted a grant request to Congress for \$1.84 billion to cover operating and capital funding in Federal Fiscal Year 2010 beginning October 1. Among "near-term" equipment needs over the next few years as set out in the employee publication *Amtrak Ink* are: 60 new electric locomotives for the Northeast Corridor (total estimated cost \$540 million), 25 single-level sleeping cars for long-distance service (\$87.5 million), 25 single-level dining cars (\$87.5 million), 130 bi-level cars for non-NEC corridors (\$550 million) and 75 baggage cars (\$150 million). Amtrak is setting up a joint committee with states and others to establish designs and specifications, with initial procurement of standardized equipment to occur in 2010..... AMTRAK's Mechanical Department has developed a new electronic system which provides real-time data on the health and performance of Acela Express trainsets and the 14 HHP-8 electric locomotives. Dubbed "MEAP," the system includes on-board computers and modems installed in each unit to perform the diagnostics. Any defect is reported within seven minutes to the Operations Center in Wilmington, and the unit's health status every hour. If MEAP's performance is found to be successful, it will be expanded to other locomotives, according to an *Amtrak Ink* report.

On April 16 President Obama and Vice President Biden joined Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood to unveil the Administration's strategic plan entitled "High-Speed Rail in America." Obama emphasized that the \$8 billion contained in the new stimulus law for high-speed rail "is just a first step," but he said that he wants to do for passenger rail service what President Eisenhower did for the Interstate highway system. Pennsylvania Transportation Secretary Allen Biehler, who attended the meeting, said that he would move quickly to identify the best projects in the State for grants under the program. One of the ten potential high-speed corridors spotlighted for funding is the **Pennsylvanian** route between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh (NARP, *Inquirer*). Two weeks earlier, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation held a hearing on "The Future of High-Speed Rail, Intercity Passenger Rail and AMTRAK," at which Amtrak President Joseph Boardman was one of the witnesses. One major topic was the need for a national intermodal transportation plan (NARP).

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# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

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## CSX, NS, OTHER ROADS

AMTRAK has postponed the issuance of its new National timetable until May 11, but made several changes in train service along the Northeast Corridor effective April 20. Most of the adjustments result in only a few minutes added to the running times of existing Acela and Regional trains, with departure times from New York and Washington remaining the same. These schedule changes will ease congestion on the NEC as replacement of some 50,000 defective concrete ties on #2 track is carried out between New Brunswick and Newark, NJ, and later another 75,000 ties in New England. The only folders reissued on April 20 were for Boston-Newport News, Springfield-Washington, the New York-Harrisburg Keystone Service, the **Pennsylvanian** and the **Vermont**—but not the basic New York-Washington folder which may be reissued in July as conditions change. Amtrak said that the new National timetable would not contain Northeast Corridor timetables because of the need to change those schedules frequently through September. Several weekends of trackwork on the Harrisburg mainline in April and May near Downingtown (see April *Cinders*) also affect Keystone schedules.

AMTRAK's on-time performance for its long-distance trains has increased dramatically in recent months. In March, these trains had a 79.6-percent on-time record compared with 54.6 percent a year earlier. This may be due both to improved dispatching by the host railroads and by the fewer number of freight trains operated during the current recession. But Amtrak's ridership also has taken a hit, down 8.87 percent in February from the previous year (1.849 million passengers compared with 2.029 million). Ticket revenues were down 10.7 percent in the same period. During the first five months of the current fiscal year ridership declined by two percent and revenues by 2.36 percent. The decreases were especially noticeable along the Northeast Corridor, with the cutback in business travel affecting Acela ridership in particular (NARP, *Railway Age*).....In connection with AMTRAK's plan to redesign its Centralized Electrification & Traffic Control (CETC) system for the Northeast Corridor (see July 2008 *Cinders*), the CETC center is to be moved from the top floor of 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station to the Amtrak complex in Wilmington, DE.

The reauthorization of AMTRAK by Congress has increased the size of the board to nine voting members, now including the president of the railroad. R. Hunter Biden, son of Vice President Joseph Biden, has resigned. The National Association of Railroad Passengers has endorsed three new board members including Philadelphia Private Car Owner Bennett Levin, who has had long experience in dealing with Amtrak (NARP) ..... Train Day at 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station on May 9 should be a rousing time (see April *Cinders*). Among many events that day, America's first black dining car steward, 95-year-old Willie Varnado, Sr., of Florence, MS, will be honored by AMTRAK in a special ceremony. Other Train Day celebrations will be held at Amtrak stations in Washington, Chicago and Los Angeles. (NARP).....Effective last month, AMTRAK restored the time-honored practice of placing the sleeping cars at the rear—instead of the front—of several long-distance trains, including the **Crescent** and New York-Florida Silver Service trains. This action presumably will give first-class passengers some relief from the sound of locomotive horns (Trainorders.com).

CSX and NORFOLK SOUTHERN continue to trim their sails in the face of the nation's widespread economic downturn. Both railroads, along with other Class I carriers, have furloughed thousands of employees, reduced train starts and otherwise cut costs. At the close of trading April 24 on the New York Stock Exchange, CSX shares traded at \$30.97, up \$3 from a month ago but less than half their 52-week high. NS stock closed at \$37.79, up nearly \$2 from the previous month but also less than half its 52-week high. In the first three months of 2009, CSX's revenues of \$2.2 billion were down 17.7 percent from the prior year and net income of \$246 million was off by 23 percent. The operating ratio (ratio of costs to revenues) was at a respectable 76.8 percent. NS reported operating revenues of \$1.9 billion, down 22 percent from the previous year, and net income of \$177 million which was 39 percent below the first quarter of 2008. Both railroads issued their 2008 annual reports last month, the NS report including a DVD showing some employees talking about their jobs and how they work to help the company succeed.

Railway Age Magazine has named CSX CEO Michael Ward as its 2009 "Railroader of the Year." In his acceptance speech at Chicago's Union League Club, Ward said that CSX is moving forward with its capital investment plans "because we know traffic is going to come back and continue growing, and we have to be prepared for it." In the week ended April 18, U.S. carload freight traffic fell 24.3 percent from the same week a year ago, and intermodal container and trailer volume fell even more sharply, down 28.3 percent. But the railroads aren't alone in believing that freight business is sure to rebound. One port official was quoted in *Trains* as saying that "By completing our projects during the downturn, we will be in a better position for when the economy turns around and cargo starts flowing at [higher] levels again."

A reminder that the circus train is soon coming to town. The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Red Unit train is due to move via CSX from Hartford, CT, to South Philadelphia on Monday, May 11, for shows at the Wachovia Spectrum beginning May 13. The train will then move from Philadelphia to Trenton on Monday, May 26, for shows at the Sovereign Bank Arena beginning May 28. While the show is in Trenton much of the train usually is parked in CONRAIL's Morrisville yard across the river.....CSX is storing hundreds of unneeded freight cars in many locations, often on shortlines. Trainorders.com reports that CSX has delivered almost 100 empty sulfur tank cars to EAST PENN for storage between Perkasio and Quakertown. This is in addition to hundreds of other cars stored on South Jersey shortlines. Trainorders.com also reports that NORFOLK SOUTHERN currently has a total of 408 locomotives and slugs in storage, including 113 General Electric Dash 9-40C's and 87 GE Dash 8-40C's.....MIDDLETOWN & HUMMELSTOWN has repainted its Alco S6 #151 into an early Western Maryland-style black-and-gold paint scheme (Harrisburg Chapter).

(Continued on Page 8)



MAY 9: National Train Day at Philadelphia's 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station, 10 AM to 3 PM. This year's event will mark 140 years of connecting travelers from coast to coast, and will coincide with similar events at Amtrak stations in Washington, DC, Chicago, IL and Los Angeles, CA. See more detailed article on Page 10 this issue.

MAY 9: Bee Line Festival at Reading Railroad Heritage Museum, Hamburg, PA. Possibility of short rail excursions among the many activities. Complete details may be found on Page 2 of this issue.

MAY 16: "Steaming the Rails" excursion from Tunkhannock to Jim Thorpe, PA and return, sponsored by Wyoming County United Way, using Reading & Northern Railroad's newly-restored 4-6-2 Pacific #425. Special train will depart Tunkhannock 9:00 AM, returns about 8:00 PM, with three hours at historic Jim Thorpe. Tickets: \$69.00 coach, limited seating available. Order tickets from: Wyoming County United Way, P. O.; Box 399, Tunkhannock, PA 18657-0399, making remittances payable to Wyoming County United Way. For information, telephone 1-570-836-1661 or E-mail: [steamingtherails@yahoo.com](mailto:steamingtherails@yahoo.com).

MAY 16: "Housatonic Flyer" special excursion from Canaan to Danbury, CT and return via Housatonic Railroad, sponsored by Mass Bay RRE. Special train departs restored Canaan Union Depot 10:00 AM, returns about 6:00 PM. Fare: MBRRE members, \$69.00, non-members \$79.00, child (4-16) \$39. Optional box lunch \$10 each. For additional information, contact sources for Mass Bay RRE are in May 2 trip, shown above.

MAY 16-17: Keystone N-trak Model Railroad Club Spring Open House at basement auditorium of Burholme Baptist Church, 905 Cottman Avenue (PA Route 73) just west of Rising Sun Avenue, one block east of SEPTA's R8 Ryers station. Hours are 1-5 PM both days. Admission free, with donations appreciated. For information, telephone 215-722-4250, or visit website: [www.keystonetrak.us](http://www.keystonetrak.us).

MAY 16 THROUGH DECEMBER 31: "Trains in Motion Pictures," a presentation on the role of trains in Hollywood movies over the years, at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg. Included will be video clips of some of these movies, plus photographs and artifacts. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628 (website: [www.rrmuseumpa.org](http://www.rrmuseumpa.org)).

MAY 20: West Jersey Chapter, NRHS monthly meeting (changed from normal May 25 date due to Memorial Day), Haddonfield Borough Hall, 242 Kings Highway East, Haddonfield, NJ (several blocks east of PATCO station), 7:30 PM. Program will feature slide lecture by William J. Vigrass entitled *Akron Transportation – Last Days of Operation – 1947*.

MAY 29-31: 19<sup>th</sup> National Model Trolley Meet sponsored by East Penn Traction Club at Villanova University Pavilion, Ithan & Lancaster Avenues, Villanova, PA. Numerous clinics, operating layouts in several scales, model trolley contests, videos, dealer tables and sell/swap tables will be featured. Hours: Friday opens 6 PM, Saturday 9 AM-11 PM, Sunday 9 AM-12 Noon. Registration fee: \$18 per person (\$20 after May 1). Send check or money order payable to "East Penn Traction Club" ro

Charles Long, 17 Lanfair Road, Cheltenham, PA 19012-1810. Pavilion is within walking distance of SEPTA Route 100 Stadium station and R5 Villanova station. For further information, visit website [www.eastpenn.org](http://www.eastpenn.org).

MAY 29-31: "Conrail Days" at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, featuring displays and presentations on Consolidated Rail Corp., in cooperation with Conrail Historical Society. Regular museum hours and admissions apply. For information, telephone 717-687-8628 (website: [www.rrmuseumpa.org](http://www.rrmuseumpa.org)).

JUNE 5-7: "Pennsy Days" highlighting the heritage of the Pennsylvania Railroad with special presentations, displays, sales, operating layouts and sales of art, in cooperation with the PRR Technical & Historical Society. Regular museum hours and admissions apply. For information, see previous item.

JUNE 20: "History of Railroads of Gloucester City, NJ" lecture, presented by West Jersey Chapter President Rich Magee. Extensive history of the railroads in Gloucester and surrounding Camden County railroads. Optional lunch (individual settlement) at 12:30 PM in the historic former PRSL Gloucester station, which is now a restaurant at 12:30 PM. Lecture will follow at approximately 1:15 PM. For further information, contact Rich Magee at 856-547-5324.

JUNE 26-28: Railfest 2009 at Altoona, PA, sponsored by Railroaders Memorial Museum. As usual, this annual event will feature excursions both on Saturday and Sunday from Altoona to Gallitzin and return via Horseshoe Curve on Norfolk Southern's Pittsburgh Line, departing both days at 10:20 AM, 12:30 and 2:45 PM. Fare: \$30 per person in coach, \$50 first class. Power will be Juniata Terminal ex-PRR E8's #5711 and 5809, coaches and JTFS equipment. Other events will include a musical program, tours of equipment in the Museum's rail yard and bus trips to the East Broad Top Railroad. For further information, telephone 888-425-8666 (website: [www.railroadcity.com](http://www.railroadcity.com)).

JULY 1-5: Annual "Reading Railroad Days" at Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, with cooperation of Reading Company T&HS. Features include a huge operating model train layout and tours of former Reading equipment. Regular museum hours and admission charges apply. For information, see "Conrail Days" item above.

JULY 17: Annual Bill Wagner Summer Dinner will be held at Main Street Café, Lancaster Avenue, Berwyn, PA, across street from SEPTA's R5 Berwyn station. Complete details will appear in June *Cinders*.

JULY 18-19: Annual "Train Days" at Williams Grove, PA, sponsored by the Williams Grove Historical Steam Engine Association. Hours: 9 AM-4 PM Saturday, 9 AM-1 PM Sunday. Steam train rides with ex-PRR B4a 0-6-0 #643, model train display, horn and whistle blow, railroadiana sale and flea market will be featured. For further information, visit website [www.wghsea.org](http://www.wghsea.org).

AUGUST 11-16: "Steam on the Range 2009" NRHS National Convention at Duluth, MN, highlighted by steam and diesel excursions, tours of iron ore region, rail facility tours, seminars, annual banquet and night photo session. Convention brochure and order form have been mailed to pre-registered members. For further information, telephone 612-770-8958 (website: [www.steamontherange2009.com](http://www.steamontherange2009.com)).

# PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS (Continued from Page 6)

Look closely at the cover photo on the just-issued NRHS Yearbook 2007. The couple sitting in the vintage white convertible at a grade crossing as Tennessee Valley 2-8-0 #610 steams by with a convention train is Philadelphia Chapter Member Paul Myers and his wife Donna of Doylestown. We understand that Paul and Donna don't really own the classy-looking car! ..... The Disney Studio is preparing a special train for a nationwide tour to promote its new movie "A Christmas Carol," with Jim Carrey. The diesel-powered train will depart L.A. in late May, visiting 41 cities, no doubt including Philadelphia (*Trains*) .....The State has announced a \$2-million grant to the Railroaders Memorial Museum in Altoona, which will be used to finish the museum's long-delayed quarter-roundhouse and launch a one-of-a-kind railroad engineering course at the Penn State Altoona campus. When the parts and pieces of ex-Pennsy K4 locomotive #1361 are moved back from Steamtown to Altoona they will be reassembled and stored in the quarter-roundhouse .....The Railroaders Memorial Museum last month announced its 2009 Railfest, which will be earlier than usual on June 26-28 (see "Extra List" elsewhere in this issue).

PATCO had to suspend service on Friday, April 3, between Philadelphia and City Hall station in Camden due to an electrical failure. All trains terminated at City Hall station during the outage. Service was suspended at 11:15 AM but was restored by the afternoon rush hour.....New Jersey's Office of Smart Growth has recommended that the long-proposed

extension of PATCO service into South Jersey utilize the existing CONRAIL right-of-way from Camden to Glassboro via Gloucester City. The agency said that it makes better sense for the line to serve existing municipal centers rather than run in the medial strips of freeways further to the east, but what type of rail service would be provided remains unclear. Local citizen groups along the proposed route are likely to voice their continued resistance to any kind of passenger train service in their towns (*Railway Age*).

The U.S. Senate last month held hearings on President Obama's nominations of Joseph Szabo as Federal railroad administrator (see April *Cinders*) and Roy Kienitz as undersecretary of transportation for policy. The President also has nominated John Porcari to become deputy secretary of transportation and Peter Rogoff to be the new Federal transit administrator. Porcari currently heads the Maryland Department of Transportation while Rogoff worked for 22 years on the staff of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Rogoff in particular was known as a friend of AMTRAK during the years when the railroad was under heavy attack in Congress (NARP) .....The CONRAIL Historical Society will bring its annual convention to Philadelphia in October. Events will include an AMTRAK special train headed by Bennett Levin's ex-Pennsy E8's to be routed via Perryville, MD, the Port Road branch to Enola yard near Harrisburg and Amtrak's Keystone Corridor back to Philadelphia.

**2009 BILL WAGNER SUMMER DINNER**  
**Main Street Café – Berwyn, PA**  
**Friday, July 17, 2009**

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