



CINDERS

May-June, 2026



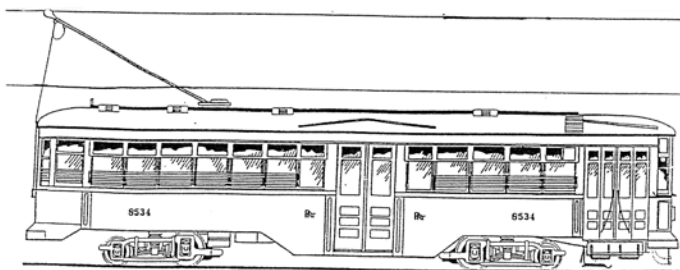
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Newsletter of the
PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
 Post Office Box 7302
 Philadelphia, PA 19101-7302

Volume 87, Number 3

SEPTA REGIONAL RAIL



Meeting Notice

THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2026

SEPTA Elkins Park Regional Rail Station, Elkins Central Meeting Venue, 7679 Spring Avenue, Elkins Park, PA 19027. PLEASE USE THE SPRING AVENUE ENTRANCE TO THE "ELKINS CENTRAL" MEETING ROOM. PLEASE DO NOT USE THE TRACKSIDE ENTRANCE. THANK YOU!!!!

Philadelphia Chapter's meeting on Thursday, June 18, 2026 will feature noted **Author and Photographer BRIAN SOLOMON**. Brian's subject for this talk will be the **CONWAY SCENIC RAILROAD** in New Hampshire where Brian is the Marketing Director. Solomon earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in photographic illustration from the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Brian produces a daily blog about railroad photography his articles and photography have appeared in many rail magazines among them *Trains*, *Railway Age*, *Railroad Explorer*, *Railfan & Railroad*, *NRHS Bulletin*, *Germany's Modelleisenbahner* *The UK's Rail Magazine*. Brian was presented with the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society's prestigious **Fred A. & Jane R. Stindt Photography Award** in 2020 for his lifetime achievements in railroad photography.

Solomon is the author of more than 70 books and writes a monthly travel column and feature articles for *Trains*. Brian lives with his wife, Kris, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.



CORPORATE ADDRESS:

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 WEBSITE: For current Chapter information, as well as vintage views of Chapter trips and activities, visit website: www.nrhsphiladelphia.org

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2025-26 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES: Effective September 1, 2025, \$25.00 per person, which covers Philadelphia Chapter dues through December 31, 2026. (NRHS National membership dues for 2026 are \$50.00, billed directly by NRHS.) NRHS chapters bill their members separately for Chapter dues. Donation requests for Philadelphia Railfriends were mailed during November, 2025 via separate mailing from *Cinders*. Become a member of Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS by forwarding remittance, in the amount of \$25.00 payable to **Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS** to Post Office Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. *Please be sure to include your name, valid mailing address, telephone number and E-mail address, as applicable.*

ADDRESS CHANGES: Send to Editor at Post Office Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. (Include your **CURRENT TELEPHONE NUMBER** and **E-MAIL ADDRESS** so our records are complete.) Beginning in early 2023, we have effected electronic delivery of *Cinders* to those who elect to receive same.

Cinders is published bi-monthly six times a year by Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS, Inc. Correspondence regarding *Cinders* should be directed to the Editor at P.O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353. **EXCHANGE newsletters should be sent to:** R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Editor, P. O. Box 353, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353, or by electronic mail to reastwood2@comcast.net.

WANTED!!

**Members are invited
to submit short railroad or
traction history articles (up to one
page) for publication in *Cinders*.**

Please contact:

**R. L. Eastwood, Jr., Editor
with complete details on articles to
Post Office Box 353,
Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006-0353**

GARY R. KRAUS**November 25, 2025**

In a belated notice, we regret to inform you of the passing of longtime Chapter Member Gary R. Kraus, of Chester, PA on November 25, 2025 at Riddle Hospital, after suffering from Kidney disease. Gary was 67 years of age, and was a 1976 graduate of Chester High School.

Gary joined Philadelphia Chapter in 1986, spending 40 years as a member. He had been involved with the Boy Scouts for many years, having served as the final Scoutmaster of Trip 184 in Chester. He was a supporter of the Chester Historical Society and several different railroad history groups.

Remembrances should be directed to Christ United Methodist Church, 600 E. Dutton Mill Road, Brookhaven, PA 19015-1028 and directed to the food bank which Gary started.

**DO WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT
AND/OR CORRECT E-MAIL ADDRESS?**

If you are not receiving CINDERS by electronic delivery, we recommend that you consider making this change now. For the fourth time in two years, the Postal Service has increased the one-ounce postage rate and this affects Philadelphia Chapter members who receive CINDERS by U. S. Mail.

The Postal Service snuck another SURPRISE postage increase to everyone, including its own employees on July 21, 2025 when First Class was hiked from 73 cents for the first ounce to 78 cents for the first ounce. There was no advance warning what so ever, either to employees, customers or news media.

More and more Chapter members have changed their monthly delivery of CINDERS to electronic delivery. At present over 100 members have signed up for eCINDERS.

It is more important now that we have on file your CURRENT and CORRECT E-mail address. To that end, we would ask that you E-mail your correct and current E-mail address to mkecat@comcast.net upon receipt of this issue of CINDERS. We need to keep control the cost of mailing CINDERS to both members and, more importantly, to "exchange" newsletter recipients, from whom we have no revenue source.

MARIE K. EASTWOOD, Secretary
June 1, 2026

If your *Cinders* Arrives in Damaged Condition

If your *Cinders* arrives damaged or with pages missing, contact Editor Larry Eastwood at 215-947-5769 or reastwood2@comcast.net and a replacement copy will be promptly sent to you. The incidence of damage has been virtually eliminated through the use of envelopes for mailing each issue, although there is an additional cost involved.

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS



FRANK G. TATNALL, JR.

SEPTA General Manager Scott Sauer was the subject of a front-page story in the June 1 edition of the *Inquirer*. The article made particular note of Sauer's rise from trolley operator through the ranks to the top job, with particular emphasis on the fact that he gained considerable experience about the organization while rising up the ladder at SEPTA. Originally hired in 1990, Sauer followed in the footsteps of his father who also drove trolleys, but as far as anyone knows Sauer is the first person in SEPTA's 52-year history to rise from an operator's job to run the agency. As might be expected, he maintains good relations with union leaders and membership, but is respected as well by SEPTA's top officers and board members.

SEPTA has released its service plan for handling the thousands of visitors expected to visit Philadelphia during the much-hyped FIA World Cup soccer competition in June and July, as well as the FIFA Fan Festival at Lemon Hill in Fairmount Park. Philadelphia is one of several U.S. host cities for the event, with six matches to take place at the Sports Complex in South Philadelphia. The last match here is scheduled for Independence Day, July 4, the date of America's semiquincentennial or 250th birthday. Extra trains will operate on the Broad Street Line as well as on other lines before and after some of the matches. Regular SEPTA fares will be collected, in contrast to certain other agencies such as NJ TRANSIT which will charge special \$98 round-trip fares to and from matches at Met Life Stadium in East Rutherford. SEPTA expects to spend about \$21.5 million to provide extra service for the World Cup events, and will receive about \$5.5 million in Federal funding to help pay the bills. The huge international tournament happens every four years, but rarely comes to America.

Just in time for the FIFA matches, SEPTA has reopened the long-closed South Broad underground concourse connecting the 15th Street/City Hall subway stations with the Walnut-Locust station.

Almost as soon as the excitement about the nation's 250th birthday—and FIFA—tapers off, here comes Major League Baseball with its annual All-Star Game. This year it will be played at Citizens Bank Park in South Philadelphia on Tuesday, July 14, presenting another challenge for SEPTA.

Another series of events that will require SEPTA's best crowd-handling efforts is Wawa's annual citywide festival dubbed "Welcome America." There will be numerous fireworks displays, concerts, community events and free outdoor movies. It will culminate with a concert and fireworks Saturday, July 4, on the Ben Franklin Parkway.....SEPTA's famous antique PCC trolleys were taken out of service on Route 15 Girard Avenue (The G Line) in early May, due to a large sinkhole that developed on West Girard Avenue at 49th Street in West Philadelphia. But the sinkhole was filled and the old green and cream cars were back in service on Monday, May 18.

The SEPTA board on May 28 voted to approve the Annual Service Plan for Fiscal Year 2027, which begins this coming July 1. The plan includes the first three phases of a comprehensive bus route redesign program. Between 2021 and 2024 SEPTA held more than 200 public meetings and other community events to help gauge reaction to the plan, which has been modified several times. Further efforts were made to gain public input in more recent years. Phase I of the program will be implemented this August, which will include frequency improvements on six lines, improved routings as well as some reduced service and various eliminations of inefficient, low-ridership routings. The streamlined design of some routes will allow for faster service while staying reasonably close to areas where passengers actually live. With eventual full implementation of the plan over the next 16 months the number of frequent routes, those coming every 15 minutes or better seven days a week, will increase by 30%. Originally dubbed the "bus revolution," the original plan was shelved in 2024.

SEPTA did play a part in the much-anticipated PGA Championship golf event which was held at the Aronimink Golf Club in Newtown Square beginning on May 14. With travel to the event by automobile impossible for most spectators and/or fans due to heavy parking restrictions at the Club, SEPTA offered assistance to those coming from Philadelphia and other Main Line stations. It operated five special trains from center city to Paoli and four returning on weekdays May 11-15 and extra trains on the weekend. Complimentary shuttle bus service was provided over the five miles between Paoli station and the golf course for those showing proof of a Championship ticket. SEPTA issued a special timetable for its service. (Continued on Page 4)

PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS

(Continued from Page 3)

While the new \$60.6-million station at Ardmore was opened to the public on March 23 (see March-April Cinders), the official ribbon-cutting ceremony did not happen until Friday, April 10. Among the attendees were SEPTA General Manager Scott Sauer, State Transportation Secretary Michael Carroll, the chair of the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners Jamila H. Winder, and AMTRAK AVP Tom Moritz.

The Northeast Corridor Commission has created a new website to help FIFA World Cup fans and visitors use the extensive rail network in the Northeast region of the country. It can be found at *NE-rail-guide.com*. The guide includes information on both AMTRAK services and those of commuter railroads during the summer seasonAMTRAK in May debuted its new "Freedom 250" NextGen trainset, painted red, white and blue with the locomotive bearing a special "1776" paint scheme.

AMTRAK carried a record 34.5 million passengers last year, the highest annual ridership in its history and a 5.1% increase over the previous year. Amtrak is starting to deploy the \$66 billion it will receive under the current Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (*Rail Passengers Association*). And Amtrak hit a notable milestone on May 24 when it reached one million passenger trips on its new NextGen Acelas.

Northeast Corridor service was disrupted for several hours on Wednesday morning, May 20, when two large brush fires near the tracks in North Philadelphia forced both AMTRAK and SEPTA's Trenton line service to be suspended for a time. The smoke was so thick that the City was testing air quality over the entire area. Train service resumed around 3:30 PM..... NJT riders may be enjoying some of their fleet of new electric Multilevel III cars by the end of this year. The 112 Multilevels were ordered in 2018 to replace the aging 1977-vintage Arrow III cars. The new Multilevel power cars will each be able to haul two unpowered trailers.

NJ Transit was forced to shut down ten of its 11 commuter rail lines—including Atlantic City—for over an hour on Sunday afternoon, May 31. A fire on the roof of the main building at the Kearny Operations Center in North Jersey prevented dispatchers and other personnel from entering the building, which houses not only the dispatching center but also supervisory offices for functions such as signal operations systemwide. However, NJT service on the Northeast Corridor was not affected because that line is controlled by AMTRAK. Fortunately, the Kearny fire did not coincide with the massive disruption of service

into and out of New York Penn Station that occurred on Friday morning the 29th, which was caused by a fire in an Amtrak work car in one of the Hudson River tunnels. That fire hampered both Amtrak and NJT service during the day on Friday.

Important Phone Numbers

Cinders lists below the telephone numbers which should be used to report suspicious sightings, emergencies or other conditions affecting rail operations, including trespassers, vandalism, fires, defective equipment, etc.

AMTRAK	800-331-0008
CSX	800-232-0144
CONRAIL Shared Assets	800-272-0911
NJ TRANSIT (NJ only)	800-242-0236
NORFOLK SOUTHERN	800-453-2530
PATCO Transit	856-963-7995
SEPTA	215-580-8111

(Members may wish to photocopy and or clip this notice and keep a copy in your wallet as you are out watching or riding trains. Please send corrections to the Editor.)

SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!

Union Pacific Railroad Sending 'Big Boy' to Philadelphia July 4

Union Pacific Railroad, in a seeming act of patriotism, is sending its famed "Big Boy" #4014, the world's largest steam locomotive, to Philadelphia to help celebrate the nation's 260th Anniversary. The massive 4-8-8-4, which still travels under its own steam, will be on public display Saturday, July 4, Independence Day, on Norfolk Southern tracks at the Navy Yard along League Island Blvd., which no doubt will draw a lot of traffic. The 4014 will remain there the following day before departing for Reading, Harrisburg, Altoona and on to Chicago via NS, enroute to its home base in Cheyenne, WY.

Prior to July 4, the 4014 will make its way to Philadelphia over a circuitous route, using NS rails most of the way. A number of stops are planned enroute for the big locomotive, including at Steamtown in Scranton and on the Reading & Northern to operate its only public excursion. The special train is scheduled for Sunday, June 14, with the Big Boy running one way from Nesquehoning to Pittston, PA. The famed locomotive also is scheduled for a brief stop at King of Prussia on its westbound trip from Philadelphia.

This event turnout out to be a good chance for the historic Union Pacific Railroad, whose founding dates to the Civil War, to join with NS in celebrating the memorable birthday of America on July 4. UP and NS currently are attempting to merge into a single system which if successful would establish the first truly transcontinental railroad in the United States!-*

Along the RDG-CNJ route between Philadelphia and Jersey City



TOP PHOTO: A view of the Bethayres station area, undated, but prior to 1931, when electrification was installed as far as West Trenton, NJ. Today, only the station building (right rear) remains. Left to right: Freight house, outbound platform shelter, watchman shanty for Welsh Road crossing. Original photo by BRUCE G. SAYLOR, Collection of Larry Eastwood.



BOTTOM PHOTO: Reading train from Jersey City, NJ to Reading Terminal, Philadelphia, PA passes Woodbourne station on the West Trenton Line, on February 7, 1937. From the Collection of HARRY GARFORTH. From the Library of Larry Eastwood.



TOP PHOTO: FP7 #903 crosses York Road bridge near Elkins Park, PA while on Train #620, Philadelphia (Reading Terminal) to Jersey City, date unknown and photographer unknown; **BOTTOM PHOTO:** Alco FA #304 and unknown CNJ FM H24-66 pass CN Tower, West Trenton, NJ in August, 1962. MARTIN ZAK Photo; Both Photos, Collection of LARRY EASTWOOD



TOP PHOTO: RDG FP7 #903 heads a long passenger consist underneath a large semaphore signal bridge just east of Cranford, NJ in an undated photo. Significant is that the 903 has been restored and still operates today (some 76 years after its EMD manufacture) in excursion service in Southern New Jersey after a decades-long restoration by Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS. Photo by RAILROAD AVENUE ENTERPRISES, Collection of LARRY EASTWOOD. **BOTTOM PHOTO:** RDG FP7 #902 and a mate head a Sunday morning train into Jersey City Terminal in a 1950's view. Photo from the Collection of LARRY EASTWOOD.



BALTIMORE & OHIO special passenger train on the Reading's New York Short Line at Frankford Junction (Olney), PA on April 28, 1958 – likely a special move three days before end of service. Photo by RAILROAD AVENUE ENTERPRISES. Collection of LARRY EASTWOOD



PENNSYLVANIA-READING SEASHORE LINES Budd RDC at Albion, New Jersey on May 8, 1954, last run of Train #613. Photo by the late photographer R. L. Long, West Jersey Chapter, NRHS. Photo from Collection of LARRY EASTWOOD