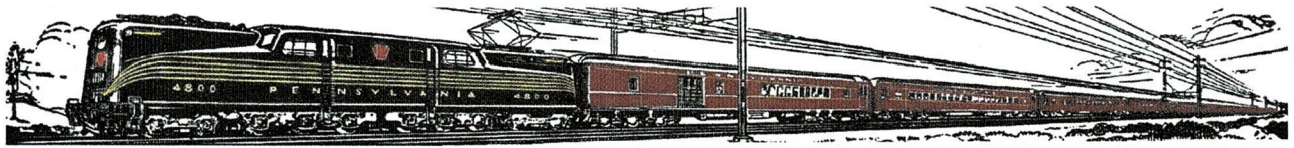


**LANCASTER
DISPATCHER**

1935 - 2020



LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC., NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 51 Number 12

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December 2020



Holiday Greetings



From each and every one of us who serve you
... Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

PENNSYLVANIA-READING SEASHORE LINES

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC., N.R.H.S.



THE POWER DIRECTOR

“NEWS FROM THE RAILROAD WIRES”

Holiday Greetings



AMTRAK CEO TELLS HEARING COMPANY PROJECTS 72% DECLINE IN RIDERSHIP

WASHINGTON, Oct. 21, 2020. By Dan Zukowski Trains News Wire — Amtrak is projecting fiscal 2021 ridership of just 9 million, a 72% decline from 2019's record 32.5 million passengers, CEO

William Flynn told members of the Senate Commerce Committee, who expressed skepticism and concern over the move to three-day-a-week service for most long-distance trains.

In testimony submitted Wednesday morning, Flynn qualifies his estimate by saying that “these assumptions rely on an effective and widely-distributed vaccine becoming available by the middle of next calendar year — which we know is not a guaranteed outcome.”

At that low passenger level, revenues would come in at just \$598 million, 75% below 2019's \$2.4 billion. Without drastic cuts to schedules and staffing that Amtrak has begun to implement, Flynn said the railroad would burn through \$250 million a month in cash. He made it clear that Amtrak was on a path to insolvency if that continued.

“At this rate of cash depletion, Amtrak would be forced to take even more drastic measures with long-lasting impacts on our company, our employees, and our network,” Flynn told the committee. He noted that while ridership has improved from April lows of 4,000 daily riders, Tuesday's passenger count was 17,000, far below pre-pandemic levels of 80,000 per day.

Senators questioned Amtrak's decision to cut long-distance service to three times a week for all but the daily Auto Train and four-times-weekly Silver Meteor.

“Part of the skepticism that occurs at least with me, and maybe my colleagues, is that previous CEOs of Amtrak were less committed to long-distance passenger service,” Sen. Jerry Moran (R-Kansas) pointedly told Flynn. “So when the three-day [operation] arrives it raises concerns that this is another circumstance in which we're just being played, that this is the continued effort to eliminate or significantly diminish the service.”

Committee Chairman Roger Wicker, R-Miss., repeatedly questioned Flynn on restoration of train service along the Gulf Coast: “Mr. Flynn, are you as committed as I am to restoring service to the Gulf Coast route from New Orleans to Mobile as soon as possible?”

That it has been 15 years since the Sunset Limited last ran east of New Orleans due to damage caused by Hurricane Katrina, in what was supposed to be a temporary discontinuance, haunts members of Congress, raising fears that recent service cuts may also become permanent.

Ranking Democratic committee member Sen. Maria Cantwell of Washington said, “We don't want to see what the Chairman's talking about — some incident that basically sets a course where service is curtailed and then it takes you 15 years to get it re-established.”

Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.) worried that in the absence of reliable, daily train service, people would choose other travel modes and may not return to Amtrak when full service is restored.

Flynn said the company would evaluate ridership and finances in February to make any adjustments in schedules for the May timetable and insisted Amtrak would restore daily long-distance service “when financially possible.”

Under questioning from Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), Flynn admitted that major infrastructure projects along the Northeast Corridor, including the Gateway program, are at risk. “There is certainly a potential for delay in

moving forward with these long-needed projects absent a level of funding to support those capital investments,” he said.

Lack of funding for capital projects could cause a further 700 layoffs, with 1,600 more due to lose their jobs without additional funding to maintain state services. Amtrak is currently furloughing 2,000 union workers and 100 managers, bringing the potential total to 4,400.

Dennis Pierce, testifying for the Teamsters Rail Conference, said that Amtrak expects to furlough nearly a quarter of its passenger engineers, including all student engineers.

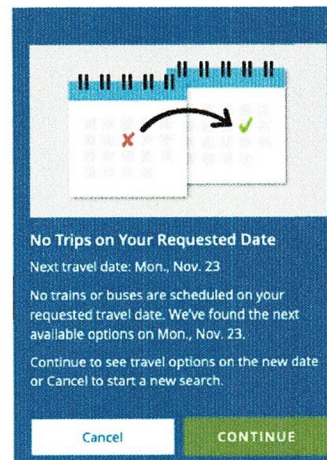
AMTRAK INTRODUCES 'NEXT DAY TRAVEL' BOOKING FEATURE

Updated downloadable schedules for long-distance trains also part of changes to reflect triweekly service

WASHINGTON, Oct. 29, 2020, By Bob Johnston, Trains News Wire — With all long-distance trains except Auto Train now running on less-than-daily schedules, Amtrak has finally introduced a booking feature on its website that automatically directs customers to the next available day when they request tickets on a day a train is not running.

Downloadable and printable schedules that reflect days of service for each station on a long-distance route are also available, though retrieving them is a somewhat cumbersome process.

“Our internal target was for both of these improvements to be made by the end of (October) and I am pleased to say that we achieved that goal,” Amtrak spokesman Marc Magliari tells Trains News Wire, adding, “Other enhancements are underway.”



A SCREENSHOT SHOWS THE MESSAGE PASSENGERS RECEIVE ON THE AMTRAK WEBSITE WHEN THEY ATTEMPT TO BOOK TICKETS FOR A DAY WHEN A TRAIN DOES NOT OPERATE.

'Next travel day' feature

Although the message, “At least one portion of your trip is unavailable. Please try a different date and time,” still greets travelers on the Amtrak mobile app, a pop-up screen now appears when reserving on the “Find Trains” portion of the full website that suggests the next date the proposed trip can be made.

The new feature works in conjunction with daily trains that operate on one connecting segment, such as a Detroit-Dallas itinerary, and will even direct passengers trying to reserve an Orlando-to-Chicago trip on a Wednesday to the following Tuesday, the only day of the week such a transfer from Florida through Washington or New York is possible. However, trying to book a

Pittsburgh-to-Little Rock, Ark., journey generates a “No Amtrak service between the stations you selected” advisory because a same-day connection with the Texas Eagle isn't possible on any day from any train from the east.

Some apparent glitches remain. When trying to book a train that is fully sold out, as was the case Wednesday for the eastbound Capitol Limited from Chicago to Pittsburgh on both Thursday and Saturday of this week, the message, “Cannot read property 'alternate day option' of undefined”

appears instead of "sold out." Coach seats were sold out until Thursday, Nov. 5, but a bedroom was available for \$542 on Monday, Nov. 2. Magliari says the company is investigating this issue.

NEW BUFFALO AMTRAK STATION OPENS



EXTERIOR AND LOBBY OF THE NEW AMTRAK STATION AT EXCHANGE STREET, BUFFALO, NY
JOHN HICKEY, BUFFALO NEWS

BUFFALO, NY, Nov. 9, 2020, Trains News Wire & Buffalo News - Amtrak's new downtown Buffalo, N.Y., station opened Sunday, Nov. 8. The new \$28 million station was built on the site of the old station, which dated from 1952. However, the new one is three times as large, about 4,800 square feet, and has a covered platform to protect those waiting for a train from the weather. It's also closer to the street, to improve access and visibility, officials said, and it has more seating, more parking and designated drop-off and pick-up zones.

The station's first scheduled train was the 12:55 p.m. *Maple Leaf*, which in pre-pandemic days ran from Toronto to New

York City with a stop in Buffalo.

But now, with nonessential border crossing barred by the Canadian government, the run begins and ends in Niagara Falls, Amtrak workers said.



CSX EARNINGS FALL, BUT EXECUTIVES PRAISE RAILROAD'S HANDLING OF HISTORIC SWINGS IN VOLUME

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., Oct. 21, 2020, By Bill Stephens, Trains News Wire — CSX Transportation's third-quarter earnings sagged

under the weight of pandemic-related traffic and revenue declines.

The railroad's operating income fell 11%, to \$1.1 billion, as revenue declined 11%, to \$2.6 billion. Earnings per share slumped 11%, to 96 cents. The railroad's operating ratio was 56.9%, a 0.1-point increase compared to the quarterly record set a year ago.

"The last six months have truly been surreal," CEO Jim Foote told investors and analysts on the company's earnings call on Wednesday afternoon. "On last quarter's call we discussed the largest and most rapid sequential volume declines in CSX's history. Now, just three months later, record sequential increases. Think about that: Volume declines and increases twice as steep as the largest swings we experienced in the Great Recession in the span of just a few months."

Managing the volatile traffic was a feat while maintaining what Foote called the railroad's high service levels. On-time performance deteriorated in the quarter, however, compared to the second quarter as well as last year's third quarter.

But Foote says that just a few years ago large volume swings would have tied railroads in knots.

"If you'd had this kind of traffic surge across the rail network in North America four or five years ago, we would be now talking about gridlock across all the major cities in the country. And we wouldn't be doing anything," Foote says. "And now with the common mindset of how you run a railroad, we're able to respond, we're able to pivot, we're nimble, we can add capacity, we can shrink capacity, we can right-size our business and we can do that much more effectively and much more logically and

thoughtfully."

CSX's volume was down 3% for the quarter, with intermodal growth of 7% more than offset by a 5% decline in merchandise traffic and a 27% drop in coal.

But volume has increased 3% when measured from March 1, before the onset of the pandemic, to the end of the third quarter. CSX is doing more with much less: It's handling that traffic in longer but fewer trains, using 6% fewer crews, an active locomotive fleet that's 8% smaller, and train starts have been reduced by 11%.

Average train velocity and terminal dwell both increased compared to a year ago, while on-time performance declined. Although it had rebounded by the end of September, CSX's trip plan compliance was 73% for merchandise, down from 80.5% in the second quarter, and stood at 87.4% for intermodal, down from 94% earlier this year.

CSX set another company record for fuel efficiency in the third quarter and ran more trains with distributed power. Use of distributed power, which set a record for the quarter, averaged 100 trains per day as September wound down.

With the CSX sitting on \$2.9 billion in cash, the railroad's board approved an additional \$5 billion share buyback program, making the total share repurchase program worth \$6 billion as it aims to return cash to investors.

CSX WANTS PAN-AM. NS SAYS 'NOT SO FAST'

Nov. 9, 2020, By William C. Vantuono, Editor-in-Chief, Railway Age - Shades of the battle between CSX and Norfolk Southern that occurred some 25 years ago over Conrail, but on a smaller scale: CSX is in negotiations to acquire Pan Am Railways, the 1,700-mile Class II previously known as the Guilford Rail System, itself the amalgamation of the Boston & Maine, Maine Central, Portland Terminal Company and Springfield Terminal Railway. NS, in a Nov. 6 filing with the Surface Transportation Board, is opposing the transaction.

NS has a \$140 million joint venture with Pan Am called Pan Am Southern (PAS), which gives the former access to New England via trackage rights on the former Boston & Maine Mechanicville, N.Y.-Ayer, Mass., main line, the "Patriot Corridor." In its STB filing, NS noted that "one of the main benefits of ... joint control and ownership of PAS was to strengthen competition with CSX Transportation. Any CSXT effort to acquire Pan Am would threaten to materially undermine this existing competition, thus impacting not only NS, but also rail shippers and other railroads. NS is concerned with CSXT's potential acquisition of Pan Am, specifically its interest in PAS, and is further concerned with CSXT's potential use of a voting trust to acquire Pan Am," which NS said would create "competitive harm."

NS added that CSX would require STB authority to place Pan Am into a voting trust, which places all voting shares in the hands of a neutral trustee that maintains, during the STB's merger review, the independence of the separate railroads.

BMO Financial Group is handling Pan Am's sale for principal owner Timothy Mellon, 78, and other investors.

Pan Am was founded in 1981 as Guilford Transportation Industries. Mellon controls the privately held company, whose railroad system stretches from the Albany, N.Y., area to Maine. A haulage agreement with J.D. Irving Ltd. subsidiary NBM Railways—Class II's Eastern Maine Railway Northern Maine Railway, and New Brunswick Southern—extends Pan Am's reach into northern Maine and Saint John, N.B.

Pan Am Southern

Pan Am and Norfolk Southern formed PAS, which consists of 437 miles of rail lines and trackage-rights agreements, in 2008. Pan Am's Springfield Terminal subsidiary operates PAS. CSX's ex-Conrail Boston & Albany line connects with Pan Am in Worcester, Mass.



NS, SHORT-LINE OWNERS, RAIL-CAR FIRMS LAUNCH VENTURE TO TRANSFORM SHIPPING

Oct. 22, 2020, Progressive Railroading - Norfolk Southern Railway, GATX Corp., Genesee & Wyoming Inc., TrinityRail and Watco Cos. LLC yesterday announced a venture to create a technology platform that will help transform rail shipping.

The new venture, Rail Pulse, will facilitate and accelerate the adoption of GPS and other telematics technology across the North American rail-car fleet, NS officials said in a press release.

In addition to funding from the Federal Railroad Administration, the venture will receive investments from Pennsylvania as well as from the venture members to support the platform's development.

The venture members, which collectively own nearly 20% of the North American rail-car fleet, aim to accelerate the adoption of telematics to meet two specific objectives. The first is safety. Early phases of the platform will incorporate hand brake and impact data, both of which could provide important safety data for the railroads, car owners and shippers, NS officials said.

The second objective is to increase rail's competitiveness relative to other modes by improving visibility into rail-car status, location and condition, which can contribute to rail-industry growth, they said. Telematics capabilities will include data capture to support real-time track-level visibility, whether doors or hatches are open, whether the car is loaded or partially loaded, and other key performance metrics.

Rail Pulse is being launched for the benefit of the entire rail ecosystem, venture members said. The venture intends to provide a neutral, open-architecture, industry-wide rail-car telematics platform to make it easier to shop by rail and track rail shipments while ensuring the safety and security of proprietary car-owner data, they added.

"Rail Pulse is another example of how the freight-rail industry is using advanced technology to enhance safety and service to shippers," said Jennie Granger, deputy secretary of for multimodal transportation at the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. "We look forward to this platform being implemented throughout the North American rail-car fleet."

The Rail Pulse partners will begin developing the platform later this year and expect a full-service platform to be available by the end of 2022.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN REPORTS THIRD-QUARTER 2020 RESULTS

NORFOLK, VA., Oct 28, 2020, NS Press Release - Norfolk Southern Corporation today reported financial results for the quarter ended September 30, 2020. During the quarter, the company achieved net income of \$569 million, diluted earnings per share of \$2.22, and an operating ratio of 66.5%. These results include a previously announced \$99 million non-cash impairment charge. Excluding the effects of the impairment charge, adjusted third-quarter net income was \$643 million, adjusted diluted earnings per share were \$2.51, and the adjusted operating ratio was 62.5%, which reflects a 240 basis point improvement compared with third-quarter 2019.

"Since launching our Precision Scheduled Railroading strategy, we have significantly enhanced Norfolk Southern's operational and financial performance and delivered superior returns for shareholders," said James A. Squires, Norfolk Southern chairman, president and CEO. "Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our industry and the broader economy, we quickly executed a plan to align our assets and resources with demand and generate sustainable margin improvement. In addition to maintaining outstanding service levels with fewer resources and reduced headcount, we successfully idled our fifth hump in the last five quarters, helping Norfolk Southern achieve record productivity. With the resilience of our railroad, strong customer relationships and the hard work of our team, including new Chief Operating Officer and PSR veteran Cindy

Sanborn, we are confident in our ability to achieve our goal of a 60% operating ratio with more to come, while delivering enhanced free cash flow and further value creation for Norfolk Southern shareholders."

Third-quarter summary

Railway operating revenues of \$2.5 billion decreased 12% compared with third-quarter 2019, driven by a 7% decline in total volume and 5% decline in revenue per unit.

Railway operating expenses were \$1.7 billion, including a \$99 million non-cash impairment charge related to an equity-method investment.

Excluding the impairment charge, adjusted operating expenses declined \$278 million, or 15%, compared with third-quarter 2019, driven by lower compensation and benefits, fuel, purchased services, materials, and the absence of last year's \$32 million receivable write-off.

Income from railway operations was \$840 million and the operating ratio was 66.5%.

Excluding the impairment charge, adjusted income from railway operations was \$939 million, while the adjusted operating ratio improved to 62.5% versus the third-quarter record of 64.9% set in 2019.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN TO IDLE ITS SIXTH HUMP AT YARD IN MACON, GA.

NORFOLK, Va., Oct. 28, 2020, By Bill Stephens, Trains News Wire — Norfolk Southern will idle the hump at its yard in Macon, Ga., next week and close several local yards around Atlanta as part of a redesign of its carload and intermodal networks in the South.

Macon will be the sixth hump NS has idled since 2019 under its shift to a Precision Scheduled Railroading operating model that has reduced reliance on major terminals.

Chief Operating Officer Cindy Sanborn, who joined NS 58 days ago, is accelerating operational changes at the railroad. Converting Macon to a flat-switching yard was originally planned for next year.

"We have a strong foundation in place but we still have a lot more work to do and we need to move faster," Sanborn told investors and analysts on the railroad's Wednesday morning earnings call.

By pre-blocking more traffic at origin and focusing on block-swapping en route, NS has siphoned switching volume out of its hump yard network. The reduced volume at some classification yards means it's more efficient to convert the hump yards to flat-switching facilities.

Over the past year NS has idled the humps at Allentown, Pa.; Sheffield, Ala.; Linwood, N.C.; and Bellevue, Ohio, which had been the largest classification yard in the East.

"In September we stopped using the hump at Enola, Pa., the fifth hump to go down since last year," Sanborn says. "The change in Enola avoids an upcoming capital investment and will result in a more reliable and faster operation."

"Next week we are kicking off a much larger set of changes in the South, when we stop hump operations at our yard in Macon, Ga.," Sanborn says. "Concurrently, we will also close several local yards in the Atlanta area. These changes enable us to rework many of our Southeastern intermodal flows for improved service, lower cost, and additional growth capacity."

The move will leave NS with two hump yards in the north — at Elkhart, Ind., and Conway, Pa. — and two in the south, at Birmingham, Ala., and Chattanooga, Tenn.

Under Sanborn NS is putting additional focus on railcar velocity. "This scrutiny at the most granular level represents a big opportunity to convert structural change into gains in fuel efficiency, train size, equipment utilization, and service levels," Sanborn says.

Sanborn came to NS from Union Pacific, where she had served as a regional vice president and vice president of network planning. She previously was chief operating officer at CSX Transportation.

"My experience has included driving change and achieving what PSR is all

about: Being efficient, consistent, and improving the operating ratio," Sanborn says. "What drew me to Norfolk Southern are the significant opportunities ahead. Each railroad is different in terms of markets and customer mix, but I believe we can and will operate at the very best levels of the industry."

NS aims to close its operating ratio gap with the rest of the industry. In the third quarter, its adjusted operating ratio was a record low 62.5%, but all of the other publicly traded Class I railroads reported operating ratios below 60% and Eastern rival CSX reported a 56.9% operating ratio, 5.6 points lower than NS.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN REDUCES DIVISIONS

NORFOLK, Va., Nov. 6, 2020, Trains News Wire – Norfolk Southern has reduced its number of operating divisions to six from nine, continuing an industry trend toward larger divisional territories.

The move was effective Nov. 1, Chief Operating Officer Cindy Sanborn wrote in a memo to employees.

The Southern Region, which previously included the Alabama, Georgia, and Piedmont divisions, is now composed of the new Gulf and Coastal divisions. The Gulf Division is based in Birmingham, Ala. The Coastal Division is based in Atlanta.

The Central Region, which previously included the Illinois, Lake, and Pocahontas divisions, is now composed of the new Midwest and Blue Ridge divisions. The Midwest is based in Cincinnati, while the Blue Ridge division is headquartered in Roanoke, Va.

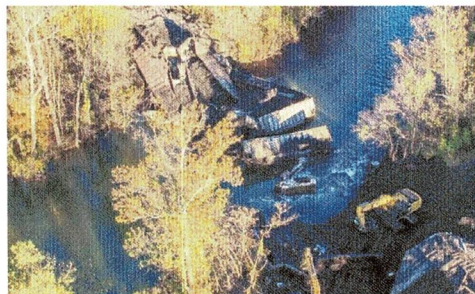
The Northern Region, which previously included the Dearborn, Pittsburgh, and Harrisburg Divisions, now includes the new Great Lakes and Keystone divisions. The Great Lakes Division is based in Toledo, Ohio, while the Keystone is headquartered in Harrisburg, Pa.

Train dispatching territories did not change, but that's subject to change at a later date, the memo says.

The railroad's engineering and communications and signals departments will retain the nine-division alignment.

NS DERAILMENT SPILLS COAL INTO THE ROANOKE RIVER

GLENVAR, VA., Nov. 2, 2020, By David C. Lester, Managing Editor, Railway Track & Structures - This past Friday night at about 10:15, Norfolk Southern suffered a train derailment near Salem, Va., resulting in 22 cars leaving the track, with 12 loaded coal cars ending up in the Roanoke River, dropping about 2,000 tons of coal in the water. The Roanoke Times reports that NS spokesperson Rachel McDonnell Bradshaw said the train crew did not suffer any injuries, and no hazardous materials were involved.



AT LEAST A DOZEN NORFOLK SOUTHERN COAL CARS DERAILED IN THE GLENVAR AREA OF ROANOKE COUNTY LATE FRIDAY EVENING. A TRESTLE BRIDGE CROSSING THE ROANOKE RIVER WAS DESTROYED, AND SENT AT LEAST A DOZEN COAL CARS OFF THE TRACKS. THERE WERE NO REPORTED INJURIES TO THE TRAIN CREW, AND THE INCIDENT INVOLVED NO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS.

DAVID HUNGATE/SPECIAL TO THE ROANOKE TIMES

The bridge over the river was destroyed during the derailment. The train was traveling eastbound toward Norfolk according to NS, and the cause of the derailment is being investigated.

Norfolk Southern is working with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, as well as the Virginia Department of Environmental

Quality to remove the cars and the coal from the river.

The county released a statement which said "Any environmental impacts

from the coal are expected to be largely physical in nature. However, DEQ is coordinating with local, state and federal agencies and Norfolk Southern to collect samples to determine whether there have been any impacts to water quality."

Monday afternoon update: Norfolk Southern released the following updated statement regarding the derailment this morning –

Following the derailment on Friday, Oct. 30, in Salem, Virginia, Norfolk Southern continues to make progress on the site cleanup and recovery. Swift environmental mitigation is our priority, and, at this time, all rail cars have been removed from the Roanoke River. Our environmental team is removing coal from the river and adjacent shoreline and installing additional erosion control measures to restore the riverbank and protect against runoff.

Norfolk Southern is coordinating closely with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality to implement a water monitoring plan, which has been approved by the state. We appreciate the rapid response and ongoing coordination with DEQ, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, state and county health departments, and other local, state, and federal agencies on these efforts.

Norfolk Southern's engineering team is in the preliminary stages of planning and preparing for bridge reconstruction, which will be ongoing over the next few weeks. Norfolk Southern freight traffic will continue to operate on an alternate route during this time.

The investigation into the cause of the derailment is ongoing.

NS DONATES HISTORIC 'MARCO POLO' TO SOUTHEASTERN RAILWAY MUSEUM



NORFOLK SOUTHERN IS DONATING OFFICE CAR MARCO POLO, ONCE USED BY PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, TO THE SOUTHEASTERN RAILWAY MUSEUM IN DULUTH, GA. - NORFOLK SOUTHERN, VIA FACEBOOK

DULUTH, GA., Nov. 10, 2020, Trains News Wire - Norfolk Southern is donating private car Marco Polo, used by President Franklin D. Roosevelt while in office, to the Southeastern Railway Museum in Duluth, Ga. The car is scheduled to

arrive at the museum at 11 a.m. on Nov. 14 and be part of a brief unveiling ceremony. The car was built by the Pullman Co., in 1927 as part of a small fleet of cars for charter by VIPs. Roosevelt used the car both as governor of New York and as president, using it on trips to and from Warm Springs, Ga. It was purchased by the Central of Georgia in 1944 and converted to an office car, becoming Southern Railway property in 1963 with Southern's merger with the Central of Georgia. The car has been displayed at various locations, spending more 25 years at Washington, D.C., Union Station. "The Marco Polo is a critical piece of railroad history, and we are honored Norfolk Southern has entrusted us to help preserve the railcar and its story for future generations," Sue Kelly, interim executive director of the Southeastern Railway Museum, said in a press release.

brightline

BRIGHTLINE TO BEGIN WORK ON TAMPA ROUTE IN 2022; REACHING DISNEY WORLD A PRIORITY

Oct. 26, 2020, Trains News Wire - Work on Brightline's planned Orlando-Tampa line will not begin until 2022, with a goal of operation beginning in 2025. The Tampa Bay Business Journal reports Michael Cegelis, Brightline's executive vice president of rail infrastructure, laid out that timeline during a recent meeting in which he also said Brightline would study potential shared operations on some of the route with Orlando commuter railroad SunRail. If Brightline and SunRail reach agreement,

Brightline would use existing SunRail tracks on part of its route to reach Disney World, while building right-of-way along Interstate 4 to reach Tampa. SunRail would gain the ability to reach Orlando International Airport via Brightline's tracks. Reaching Disney World has become a higher priority than the Tampa route, playing a part in the current timeline.

brightline
west

**LAS VEGAS HIGH SPEED PROJECT
POSTPONED BECAUSE OF INABILITY TO
SELL BONDS**

Nov. 1, 2020, Trains News Wire - Just days after launching a website with construction details of the rebranded project, Fortress Investment Group is postponing plans for its Las Vegas-to-Southern California high speed rail project after failing to sell bonds to provide financing.

Bloomberg reports the effort to sell \$2.4 billion in debt to be financed through agencies in California and Nevada — reduced from original plans for a \$3.2 billion sale, has been “postponed until market liquidity improves,” according to an email from California Treasurer Fiona Ma. *Brightline* spokesman Ben Porritt confirmed the postponement but told *Bloomberg* in an email that the company “will continue to move the project forward.”

California had given Fortress until Dec. 1 to sell the bonds; the bond capacity will now be returned to the state and used for other projects, such as affordable housing. Ma said she did not know when Fortress would return to request bonds again, saying that would be the subject of discussions with the company over the next several weeks.

Last week, the project launched a new website announcing the rebranding of the project — previously known as Xpress West — as Brightline West, and outlining plans to construct the rail line in six segments, with work to begin later this year on two segments

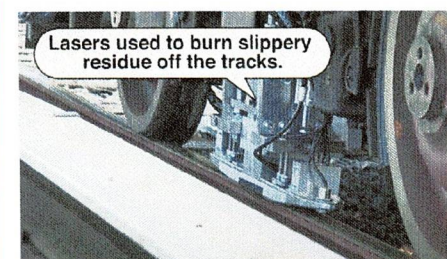


**FASTER, STRONGER: LIRR's LASER
TRAIN CUTS DOWN 'SLIP-SLIDING'**

Oct. 30, 2020, by Bill Wilson, Editor-in-Chief, Railway Track & Structures - The MTA Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) announced that its industry-leading laser train is working even faster and harder to battle the danger of fallen leaves on the tracks. The LIRR has added another laser train and increased the speed to 25 mph, up from 15 mph, covering more of the system and minimizing the number cars from being taken out of service during the fall season.

Like other railroads that operate in seasonal environments, the LIRR experiences leaf fall-induced low adhesion. This condition is created by a slick substance, called pectin, left by crushed leaves on rails that gets even more slippery with light rain. When a train attempts to speed up or slow down, the pectin can cause the wheels to slip or slide along the rails. In severe cases the train will automatically make an emergency stop, because the on-board computer system perceives “slip-sliding” as the train not slowing down when it should. This slip-sliding and emergency braking also creates flat spots on the train's wheels, forcing the LIRR to take much-needed equipment out of service for repairs.

“We have already seen this past month, with several days of misty mornings, nearly zero slip-slide events and estimate that we prevented 60 to 100 cars being taken out of service,” said Long Island Rail Road President Phillip Eng. “We know we cannot control Mother Nature but we can take steps to better prepare and mitigate the impacts. Having these laser trains in our toolbox is a game-changer.”



Lasers used to burn slippery residue off the tracks.

Since 2018, the LIRR Maintenance of Equipment Department (MoE) has transformed how to tackle the negative effects of leaf fall season with innovative solutions such as partnering with

Amsterdam-based manufacturer Laser Precision Solutions who pioneered the technology. The laser train works by using high-intensity lasers to remove contaminated layers from railway tracks, requiring only one pass to leave a smooth, clean rail behind. With the addition of a second train, all vital parts of the network can be cleaned every 24 hours. With an effect lasting at least 24 hours, this means that slip-slide will be minimized to a very low level.

The laser train is one part of the three-pronged approach to mitigate delays, short trains and subsequent cancellations that can occur due to slip-slide conditions. Other parts of the initiative include:

> Two high-pressure water trains—the LIRR has increased the psi from 4,000 to 20,000, as well as increasing the train speed from 20 mph to 40 mph, allowing more territory to be covered on a daily basis.

> Four-wheel truers—since 2018, wheel truing capacity has increased by 66 percent by adding another truer at West Side Yard that can true two axles at the same time. That gives the ability to maintain the fleet on both the east and west end of the system.

In addition, the LIRR has enhanced its computerized train-tracking system to allow for automatic, real-time reporting of low adhesion conditions from the M7 fleet, enabling the MoE department to take corrective action more quickly. On-board sanders are on diesel trains to help improve traction when wheel slippage appears to occur. Plus, crews manage vegetation along the right-of-way as a preventive measure.

In 2019, the number of canceled trains fell 48 percent. The LIRR had 32 percent fewer shortened trains last fall compared with 2018. Weather-related delays in November fell about 65 percent compared with November 2018. While the laser train was only deployed on specific branches, it helped reduce slip-slide for the entire network by 17.4 percent. On its specific branches slip-slide was further reduced by between 53 and 65 percent. While it is still early in the 2020 leaf-falling season, so far the LIRR has not experienced any wheel damage from slip-slide conditions on wet or windy days.



**NJ TRANSIT ADOPTS FISCAL YEAR
2021 OPERATING BUDGET AND A
FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN**

NEWARK, NJ, Oct. 21, 2020, NJ Transit Press Release -- The NJ TRANSIT Board of Directors today adopted a Fiscal Year 2021 (FY 2021) operating budget and a Five-Year Capital Plan that supports continued investments in frontline personnel, infrastructure and equipment to maintain the system in a state-of-good repair, helps advance its 10-year Strategic Plan (NJ2030) and includes additional spending due to the ongoing effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19, all without raising fares for a third straight fiscal year.

“The budgets presented today allow NJ TRANSIT to continue to provide necessary service to our customers and make improvements to an aging system,” NJDOT Commissioner and NJ TRANSIT Chair Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti said. “We are grateful for the Federal CARES Act relief that is integral to continuing NJ TRANSIT's operations during this challenging time. We look forward to implementing a robust capital program that will provide both the service and facilities that our customers deserve.”

“These spending plans reflect Governor Murphy's commitment to NJ TRANSIT, and allow us to continue building on the significant progress we've made at NJ TRANSIT over the past two and a half years,” said NJ TRANSIT President & CEO Kevin Corbett. “We're especially pleased to be able to keep fares stable this year, as we know how critically important mass transit is for essential workers and our transit-dependent customers, many of whom are facing financial uncertainty as a result of the pandemic.”

The FY 2021 Operating Budget and a Five-Year Capital Plan help advance the 10-year Strategic Plan, NJ2030, by ensuring the reliability and continued safety of our transit system; delivering a high-quality experience for all customers with their entire journey in mind; powering a stronger and fairer New Jersey for all communities; promoting a more sustainable future

for our planet; and building an accountable, innovative and inclusive organization that delivers for New Jersey.

The Board adopted a \$2.6 billion FY21 operating budget and A Five-Year Capital Plan consisting of \$11.21 billion worth of projects already funded, including \$1.4 billion in funding appropriated in FY2021 to various projects throughout the Five-Year Capital Plan, and another \$5.78 billion worth of proposed projects for which funding has yet to be identified but vital to NJ TRANSIT's service delivery.

This budget does not include a fare increase for FY 2021.

Approximately 14-percent of the revenue in the FY 2021 operating budget comes from passenger revenue. The remaining amount comes from a combination of commercial revenue and state and federal resources, which includes \$1.4 billion in CARES Act funding. The three-year cumulative State Operating Subsidy under Governor Phil Murphy is \$836 million more or 73 percent higher than during the three-year period of Fiscal Years 2016-2018.

NJ TRANSIT will continue to build on achievements, which include increasing locomotive engineers to 373 on active roster, up from a low of 331 just two years ago; hiring more than 800 bus operators since January 2018 and saving more than \$28 million in targeted health benefit reforms.

The Capital Plan funds continue state-of-good-repair investments in transit stations and infrastructure, investments in the Northeast Corridor, fare modernization, safety initiatives, bus and rail car purchases, Positive Train Control installation, and support for local mobility programs.

Operating Budget

Approximately \$1.53 billion of the operating budget is dedicated to costs associated with labor and fringe benefits. Other significant expenses include contracted services, materials, fuel, power and utilities. Additionally, costs associated with COVID-related response measures, such as enhanced cleaning and disinfecting, materials and supplies, and employee testing are included in this budget.

The budget also provides for the hiring of additional safety and field investigative staff, additional Locomotive Engineer Training Program (LETP) classes, an increase in New Jersey Transit Police Department members to allow for an improved police presence along the transit network, enhanced customer engagement and feedback capabilities, technology upgrades, and additional staff development and training programs.

Capital Program

The FY 2021-2025 Capital Program continues to prioritize investments in infrastructure to maintain an overall state-of-good repair, enhance reliability, safety, and resiliency as well as improve the overall customer experience on the system.

A Five-Year Capital Plan contains two sets of projects – the first set includes \$11.21 billion of projects already funded by existing or expected resources. The second set identifies another \$5.78 billion worth of proposed projects for which funding has yet to be identified but vital to NJ TRANSIT's service delivery.

Capital Plan construction activity continues at a brisk pace with two major construction projects that started this calendar year: the Long Slip Fill and Rail Enhancement Project (total project cost \$195 million) and the Raritan River Bridge Replacement project (total cost \$595 million). Other major active construction projects remain on schedule, including the Elizabeth Station project (total cost \$76 million), the Hoboken Depot Substation (total cost \$34 million) and the Henderson Street Substation (total cost \$39 million). Two other station rehabilitation projects – Lyndhurst Station (total cost \$35 million) and Perth Amboy Station (total cost \$47 million) are scheduled for award during this current fiscal year.

This year's procurement and construction activity also continues to support critical rolling stock renewals, such as 1,104 cruiser buses, 110 articulated buses, 113 multilevel III rail vehicles and 16 battery electric buses. Other infrastructure improvements include improved lighting, bathroom upgrades and additional ADA elevators at Newark Penn Station.

NJ TRANSIT HEADS INTO HOMESTRETCH TO IMPLEMENT SAFETY SYSTEM

NEWARK, NJ, Oct. 24, 2020, By Larry Higgs | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com - Train service or no train service? The looming Dec. 31 deadline for NJ Transit to have a federally mandated safety system approved and running is close to two months away.

Blowing that deadline could bring rail service to a halt, but NJ Transit officials reiterated their past mantra that the agency would meet the Positive Train Control deadline. The agency is nibbling away at live testing with 66% of the agency's track miles being tested, said Terry Fedders, Parsons Inc. project manager during an update at the board meeting.

"There will be more when the North Jersey Coast Line enters testing on Nov. 19," he said.

Of NJ Transits 12 rail lines, 8 are in extended revenue testing. That's testing in actual service with passengers on board. Four lines are undergoing field testing of PTC equipment.

Fedders hinted that they want to start testing PTC on the 45-mile Coast Line earlier. That would represent 80% of NJ Transit's rail lines in final PTC testing, he said. The Coast Line is NJ Transit's third-largest in terms of ridership. The last rail line to undergo revenue service testing will be the Atlantic City Line, in December.

"We are on target for 100% completion before Dec. 31," Fedders said.

PTC uses a network of transponders, radios and computers on trains and in back offices to determine if a train operator is speeding or has violated a signal. PTC stops the train if the operator doesn't take action.

NJ Transit has been constantly warned by the Federal Railroad Administration in quarterly PTC reports as being in danger of not meeting the PTC deadline. However, NJ Transit officials contend those reports do not reflect current progress.

Failure to meet the Dec. 31, 2020 deadline could result in rail service being shut down. If NJ Transit opted to operate trains on its own line, it could face fines up to \$27,000 a day. In April, NJ Transit increased the number of trains involved in PTC testing as ridership declined due to the coronavirus

"PTC is one of the most important issues facing NJ Transit," Cederic Fulton, board member and acting board vice chairman said Wednesday night's meeting. "I'm pleased to hear the positive report. We're keeping our eye on it."

FRA GRANTS ANNOUNCED FOR RAIL PROJECTS

State of Good Repair grants to improve bridges, station, right-of-way

Oct. 27, 2020, Trains News Wire and FRA - In New Jersey, a news release reports the funds go to NJ Transit for upgrades to the Trenton Transit Center, a \$27 million project to rehabilitate the station's two island platforms, restore the canopies for those platforms, and meet Americans With Disabilities Act standards by constructing a high-level platform with an elevator to facilitate expansion by Amtrak, NJ Transit, and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority. The platforms, canopies, and vertical circulation elements being rehabilitated were rated adequate to poor in the applicant's most recent assessment. Among other work, the current wood platforms will be replaced with concrete surfaces. The station, served by Amtrak, the NJ Transit Northeast Corridor line, and SEPTA's Regional Rail Trenton Line, handled about 3,700 NJ Transit passengers daily and 430,000 Amtrak passengers monthly prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

FY 2020 FEDERAL-STATE PARTNERSHIP FOR STATE OF GOOD REPAIR GRANT PROGRAM

Oct. 28, 2020, FRA Press Release, Pennsylvania — Harrisburg Line Signal System Renewal: Paoli to Overbrook, Up to \$15,910,000
Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation



Authority (SEPTA), Amtrak and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Replaces and upgrades train control signal systems to a state of good repair between Paoli and Overbrook on the Amtrak-owned Harrisburg Line in Pennsylvania. The line serves Amtrak intercity service, SEPTA commuter service, and freight rail. Project replaces antiquated signal system with modernized equipment, enabling greater operational flexibility, higher operating speeds, and bi-directional train movement on all tracks in the project area. Increases signal blocks, enhancing line capacity and operational fluidity, while reducing delays.

THIS MONTH ON THE PENNSY

PRR, PRSL & LIRR EVENTS IN DECEMBER

Dec. 20, 1904 - PRR announces acute water shortage in central and western Pennsylvania; Altoona is short 1.5 million gallons a day, and traffic on Pittsburgh and Middle Divisions delayed. Water trains of tank cars used to bring water from east; leads to new major program to provide adequate reservoirs, beginning in 1905; the PRR begins forming or buying water companies throughout Lines East, particularly in Pennsylvania.

Dec. 17, 1909 - No. 120, first all-steel business car in U.S., outshopped at Altoona; only wood is in chairs and tables.

Dec. 29, 1914 - PRR obtains trackage rights over Wilkes-Barre Connecting Railroad between Buttonwood and Hudson and over Northern Coal & Iron Company's Railroad (D&H) between Buttonwood and Wilkes-Barre.

Dec. 8, 1919 - USRA orders a 10% cut in passenger service in the East because of coal miners strike, effective Dec. 10; includes *Broadway Limited* (also *Twentieth Century Limited*) and *Atlantic City Limited*, 8 New York-Washington trains, all second sections, special movements and excursions, and all parlor cars except those on the *Congressional*, *Colonial Express*, and *Federal Express*.

Dec. 9, 1924 - Special Committee on Philadelphia Passenger Terminal Improvements reports to Board; describes negotiations with city; total estimated cost is \$54 million, of which PRR share is \$42 million; recommends as first step the electrification of suburban service on Wilmington, Media-West Chester, Phoenixville, and possibly Trenton lines.

Dec. 1929 - PRR displays new company flag, a red keystone within a white keystone on a red field.

Dec. 29, 1934 - PRR takes delivery of No. 4780, first of 28 "modified" Class P5a electric locomotive, from Juniata; has streamlined steeple cab derived from that developed for the GG1 and R1.

Dec. 2, 1939 - PRSL authorizes equipping 22 coaches with Dunlop-pillo seats, metal sash and safety glass and 2 combines with metal sash and safety glass.

Dec. 14, 1944 - Dog-leg eliminated in tracks No. 3 & 4 south of Wilmington, Del., station; center platform extended south 285 feet to accommodate 18-car trains.

Dec. 1949 - PRR establishes an award program of special lapel buttons for 25-50 years of service.

Dec. 22, 1954 - President Symes briefs PRR Board on lightweight train projects; Pullman has no orders for "Train-X"; General Motors Corporation is building two lightweight trains (the "Aerotrains") using modified bus bodies and a special 1200 HP diesel.

Dec. 17, 1959 - PRR Board authorizes \$719,000 for Penn Center Concourse; authorizes advance to Trailer Train Company for 500 flat cars; improving tunnels at Baltimore and Washington to increase clearance for TrucTrain.

Dec. 5, 1964 - PRR announces it will extend piggyback service to Puerto Rico and Latin America in connection with the Grace Line, Seatrain Lines, Inc., and Transamerica Steamship Corporation.

Dec. 13, 1967 - *Broadway Limited*, Train Nos. 28-29 consolidated with *The General*; loses all-Pullman status and special observation lounge cars Mountain View and Tower View with master room and shower; train Nos. 48-49 is the old *General* operating under the *Broadway* name on a 16:10 schedule eastbound and 16:40 westbound; last run of old *Broadway* is Dec. 12; it survives its old rival the *Twentieth Century Limited* by 10 days; consist of the new *Broadway* is 5 coaches, 6 sleeping cars and a twin-unit diner.

CHRISTOPHER T. BAER, HAGLEY MUSEUM AND LIBRARY VIA PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER, PRRT&HS - USED WITH PERMISSION

SANTA AND CHRISTMAS TRAINS

The following railroads ran Santa and Christmas trains in 2019. They are shown here as information only. Please check with the railroad to ensure that the Covid-19 pandemic hasn't curtailed operations.

Allentown & Auburn - 570-778-7531 - www.allnrr.com

Cape May Seashore Lines - www.seashorelines.org

Colebrookdale Railroad - 866-289-4021 - www.colebrookdale railroad.com

Middletown & Hummelstown Railroad - 717-944-4435 - www.mhrrailroad.com

New Hope & Ivyland Railroad - 215-862-2332 - www.newhoperailroad.com

Railway Restoration Project 113 - 570-544-8300 - www.rproject113.org

Reading & Northern - 610-562-2102 - www.rbmrrr-passenger.com

Steam Into History - 717-942-2370 - www.steamintohistory.com

Steamtown National Historic Site - 570-340-5204 - www.nps.gov/stea

Stewartstown - 717-746-8123 - www.stewartstownrailroadcompany.com

Strasburg Rail Road - 1-866-725-9666 - www.strasburgrailroad.com

West Chester Railroad - 610-430-2233 - www.wcrrailroad.com

Wilmington & Western Railroad - 302-998-1930 - www.wwrr.com

RAILROAD MUSEUM OF PENNSYLVANIA

300 GAP ROAD, ROUTE 741 EAST

ALL EVENTS ARE CANCELLED

STRASBURG, PA 17579

WWW.RRMUSEUMPA.ORG

717-687-8628



STRASBURG RAIL ROAD

301 GAP ROAD, RONKS, PA 17572

WWW.STRASBURGRAILROAD.COM

1-866-725-9666

Friday & Saturday, Dec. 4-5, 2020 - Christmas Tree Train

Saturday, Dec. 5 - Dec. 24, 2020 - Santa's Paradise Express

Various Dec. 4 - Dec. 23, 2020 - Santa's Christmas Trolley

Dec. 4, 11, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 2020 - The Night Before Christmas Train



AFTER \$750K RENOVATION, CAFÉ 1832 OPENING
NOV. 14 AT STRASBURG RAIL ROAD WITH
REVAMPED MENU, EXTRA SEATING

STRASBURG, PA., Nov. 9, 2020, By Chad Umble, Staff Writer, LNP Media Group, Inc., - Lancaster Following a complete renovation to the former Tracks Café at Strasburg Rail Road, Café 1832 opens Saturday, Nov. 14, with a scratch-made menu that includes a variety of family-style meals as well as grab-and-go items.

With Café 1832, Strasburg Rail Road is now directly managing food service at a restaurant space that had previously been leased to an outside operator. The new café will offer a variety of sandwiches, burgers and salads, with meatloaf, rotisserie chicken, lasagna and other family-style meals also available.

Before creating a new menu, the tourist railroad oversaw a roughly \$750,000 renovation that completely gutted the area and rebuilt it with all new equipment and furnishings. The work, which began in December, raised the ceiling of the café and added more seating area by opening up the former kitchen area. A parking area was also added in the back to facilitate curbside pickup of food orders.

With room at tables and window counters looking out to the railyard, Café 1832 has inside seating for around 60. There's room on a deck for around 30 more.

Café 1832's menu was designed and will be overseen by Phillip Ponticelli, who most recently worked at Disney, where he helped open several restaurants and was in charge of food service at Disney's Golden Oak Club, its residential community. Strasburg Rail Road general manager Tony Gebbia also used to work at Disney.

The new Café 1832 is part of an overall revamping of the food service at Strasburg Rail Road, which includes changes to food served on train cars and as part of special events.



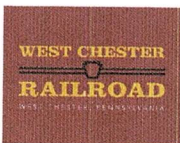
COLEBROOKDALE RAILROAD
 64 S. WASHINGTON ST.
 BOYERTOWN, PA 19512
WWW.COLEBROOKDALERAILROAD.COM
 610-367-0200

Dec. 4-5, 11-13, 18-20, 2020 - 'Twas The Night Before Christmas Train
 Saturday - Sunday, Dec. 5-6, 12-13, 19-20, 2020 - Santa's Polar Bear Express
 Saturday, Dec. 26 - Thursday, Dec. 31, 2020 - Snowflake Special



WANAMAKER, KEMPTON & SOUTHERN
 42 COMMUNITY CENTER DRIVE
 KEMPTON, PA 19529
WWW.KEMPTONTRAIN.COM
 610-756-6469

Friday, Dec. 4, 2020 - Story Time with Mrs. Claus
 Saturday-Sunday, Dec. 5-6, 2020 - Santa Claus Express



WEST CHESTER RAILROAD
 230 EAST MARKET ST.
 WEST CHESTER, PA 19380
WWW.WCRAILROAD.COM

Saturday-Sunday, Dec 5-6, 12-13, 19-20, 2020 - Santa's Express
 Sunday, Dec. 6, 13, 2020 - Christmas Tree Train



WILMINGTON & WESTERN RAILROAD
 2201 NEWPORT GAP PIKE - RT. 41 N
 WILMINGTON, DE 19808
WWW.WWRR.COM
 302-998-1930

Various, Dec. 5 - Dec. 23, 2020 - Santa Claus Express
 Friday, Dec. 4 - Friday, Dec. 18, 2020 - Holiday Lights Express
 Saturday, Dec. 26 - Wednesday, Dec. 30, 2020 - Holiday Lights Express

**NOVEMBER, 2020
 CHAPTER MEETING MINUTES**

There are no Chapter Membership Meeting Minutes to report. The Annual Chapter Banquet was cancelled due to the Covid 19 pandemic.



**LESS THAN CARLOAD SHIPMENTS
 LOCAL AND NATIONAL NEWS**



**METRO TRAIN OVERRUNS END OF TRACK, IS
 CAUGHT BY SCULPTURE**

ROTTERDAM, NL, Nov. 2, 2020, Trains News Wire -
 A Rotterdam metro train ran through the end of an

International News



elevated section of track early Monday morning, but was saved from plummeting to earth when it landed on a sculpture of a whale's tale, leaving the lead car some 30 feet above the water below the station. *Euronews* reports that the accident occurred about 12:30 a.m. Monday at the De Akkers station in Spijkenisse, on the outskirts of Rotterdam. No injuries were reported. The driver was taken to a hospital as a precaution and has subsequently been arrested. Removing the railcar could take some time; *SkyNews* reports a spokeswoman for a local security agency said "a team of experts is investigating how we can make it safe and get it down. It's tricky."

been arrested. Removing the railcar could take some time; *SkyNews* reports a spokeswoman for a local security agency said "a team of experts is investigating how we can make it safe and get it down. It's tricky."



**EAST BROAD TOP EYES RESTORATION OF COLES
 VALLEY BRANCH**

ROCKHILL FURNACE, Pa., Oct. 27, 2020, By Dan Cupper, Trains News Wire — The nonprofit organization that now owns the East Broad Top Railroad is considering rebuilding a mountainous branch line that's been inactive since the 1940s, a

move that would provide spectacular ridge top vistas and increase the number of destinations available to visitors.

The nonprofit EBT Foundation, Inc., owner of the historic narrow-gauge line in south-central Pennsylvania, is considering revival of a 2.5-mile-long branch known variously as the Coles Valley Branch, Midvalley Branch, or Joller Branch, Joller being the postal designation for the former mining community at the top of Wrays Hill. Perched at an altitude of 1,600 feet, the town was named for the first and last letters of the name of a mining operator there, John Miller. Both deep and strip mining eventually played out, and reclamation projects have erased most of the evidence of structures that once stood on the site.

The foundation is currently working to restore the tourist-era portion of the main line about 4 miles north of its headquarters at Rockhill Furnace (elevation 630 feet), to a wye and picnic area at Colgate Grove, but the more scenic part of the line lies in the mountains south of there.

Foundation Chairman Henry Posner revealed the Joller proposal during a Friends of the East Broad Top virtual reunion a few weeks ago. This is the first time plans have been discussed that involved a location other than along the 32-mile-long main line of the EBT. The foundation owns the southernmost 27 miles of the main.

The foundation board hopes eventually to reopen the line to its southern end at Robertsdale/Woodvale as it was when the railroad ceased common-carrier operation in 1956. To that end, the railroad has relocated three EBT steel hopper cars to Robertsdale to signify its interest. But Posner believes that offering multiple rides and destinations increases interest and opens opportunities for greater tourism investment.

He cited the Harz Mountain narrow-gauge railroad in central Germany as an example where tourists engage in multiple-day stays, spending money in

hotels and restaurants. "The East Broad Top can be a driver of tourism that is good not just for the towns but for the region," he said. "We want to appeal to as broad a range of people as possible, to give people a reason to stay and boost the local economy."

"When Henry mentioned Joller, there was a great deal of enthusiasm from the Friends of The East Broad Top," said EBT Communications Manager Lawrence Biemiller. The 1,300-member, nonprofit Friends group has been instrumental in restoring buildings and rolling stock, a role for which Biemiller described the railroad as "deeply grateful." The Friends group maintains the Robertsdale station and recently announced an \$86,000 grant to the foundation to restore the carpenter's shop that is part of the historic Rockhill Furnace shops complex.

The Foundation is still shaping its Master Plan, which includes numerous options without timelines, all of which will depend on funding. Joller is a possibility as an interim destination before restoring the railroad all the way to Robertsdale/Woodvale because of the condition of the Wrays Hill Tunnel, one of two mainline tunnels that would require work to clear. Foundation General Manager Brad Esposito said the other tunnel, Sideling Hill Tunnel, would require "moderate" work to reopen, but Wrays Hill would take "extensive" work. The Coles Valley Branch leaves the main line at a point between the two tunnels, just south of East Broad Top's own version of Horseshoe Curve.

Thus, the railroad could, if funding allowed, reopen its main line southward from Rockhill Furnace to Joller via the less-difficult-to-restore Sideling Hill Tunnel. Reopening Wrays Hill Tunnel and extend operations to Robertsdale/Woodvale could be a longer-term project.

When the foundation board began looking at options, Esposito noted the railroad still owned the Coles Valley Branch right-of-way "in fee simple," though the track had been removed in the 1950s. That is not the case with other former EBT branches, such as much of the Shade Gap Branch, where abandonment allowed landholders to reclaim the property from easements granted by the original owners.

Esposito said the foundation has conducted preliminary engineering inspections of all bridges and tunnels, including the largest span on the line, the 275-foot-long Pogue Bridge 3 miles south of Rockhill Furnace. The bridge inspections turned out much better than expected, he said, meaning that reopening the line and rebuilding the Coles Valley Branch becomes feasible, given enough money to pay for it.

THIS MONTH'S BANNER PHOTO

Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines GP38 No. 2002 at Bulson Street Yard, Camden, New Jersey, January, 1968.

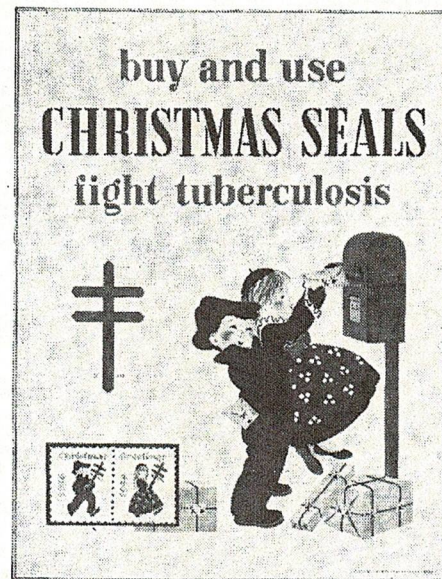
CHAPTER SENIORITY LIST

Traditionally, railroads recognize an employee's years of service milestones. The National Railway Historical Society also honors this tradition. Service pins are awarded to the following Chapter Members, who have achieved a significant membership milestone.

25 YEARS

- Rosalee Kurtz
- Joseph G. Shannon
- Daryl L. Witman.

Congratulations and sincere thanks for your many years of loyal membership.



How the Christmas Seal Was Born

ON A cold Christmas Eve many years ago—1903 to be exact—a Danish post office clerk saw two coughing children shivering in the snow. The sight so stirred him he went to the King of Denmark and asked him whether it wouldn't be possible to strike off a special stamp to raise money to help the sick.

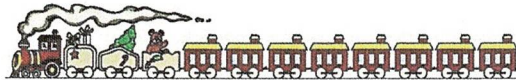
The King authorized the stamp and the next Christmas the first Christmas Seals appeared—and the money used to fight tuberculosis.

In 1907 the Christmas Seal idea spread to the United States, and today virtually all the work of the tuberculosis associations is supported by the sale of these stamps.

Reading Railroad Magazine
December, 1956



"INSIDE THE BACK PAGE"
UPCOMING LANCASTER CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



DECEMBER 21, 2020 - MONDAY, 7:30 PM - CHRISTIANA FRT. STA. - ANNUAL CHAPTER CHRISTMAS PARTY

Please bring cookies, snacks or a covered dish to share. There's no better way to get into the festive holiday spirit with food, fun and holiday merriment! Meeting is subject to possible cancellation due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

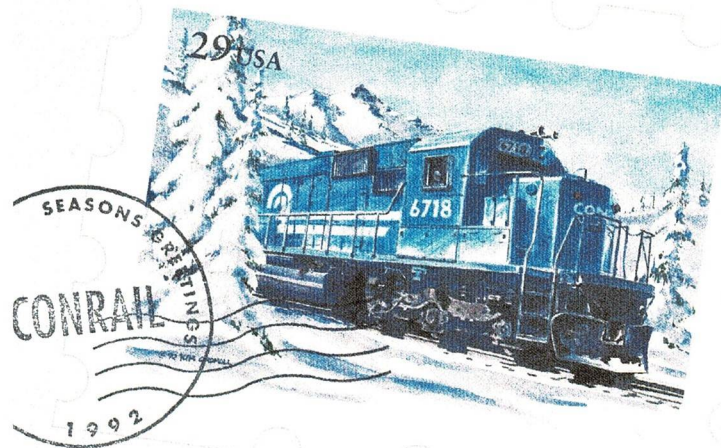
JANUARY, 2021 - NO CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING THIS MONTH

FEBRUARY, 2021 - NO CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING THIS MONTH

MARCH 14, 2021 - SUNDAY, 2:00 AM - DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS. TURN CLOCKS AHEAD ONE HOUR

MARCH 15, 2021 - SUNDAY, 2:00 PM - CHRISTIANA FREIGHT STATION - CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Join us for the first Chapter Membership Meeting in the New Year.



PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD-LOGANSPORT
CHRISTMAS PARTY
 REFRESHMENTS
 GIFTS FOR THE CHILDREN
 ENTERTAINMENT DANCING
December 16, 1955-7:30 P.M.
 AT
 Indiana National Guard Armory-Logansport

W I S H I N G Y O U
A J O Y O U S H O L I D A Y S E A S O N A N D
A P R O S P E R O U S N E W Y E A R
C O N S O L I D A T E D R A I L C O R P O R A T I O N



Reading Railroad Magazine

December, 1956

Illustration by Kim Gromoll

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ANNUAL CHAPTER CHRISTMAS PARTY

LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC., N.R.H.S.
 CHRISTIANA FREIGHT STATION
 10 RAILROAD AVE., CHRISTIANA, PA.
 MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2020
 STARTING AT 7:30 PM

LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC.
 NATIONAL RAILWAY
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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 PHONE: 610-593-4968
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