

The Bulletin



New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association

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The Bulletin

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NYC TRANSIT'S HUGE BUDGET DEFICIT

We checked the Internet and we found that NYC Transit is having difficulty balancing the budget.

In December, 2009, MTA-wide revenue projections from fares, tolls, government subsidy, and dedicated taxes worsened appreciably. This was caused by a reduction of \$143 million in 2009 state subsidy, lower revenue from dedicated state taxes, and a cumulative 11.3 percent three-year wage increase to certain union-represented employees. Therefore, the budget deficit was expected to be \$383 million in 2009-10 and \$297 million in 2011. (This number has since been revised to over \$750 million for 2010 alone because of further deterioration of tax receipts and revisions to the proposed fiscal 2011 state budget.) Because MTA must adopt a balanced budget, it is planning the following service reductions. These curtailments will affect the fewest number of riders, minimize longer waiting times, maintain network coverage, and operate within existing guidelines:

- Off-peak service levels would be revised. At the present time, off-peak guidelines specify that trains should be scheduled to provide seats for all passengers. The revised guidelines will allow 10-18 standees per car, depending on car type (125 percent of seated load). The rush hour guidelines allow for 66-105 standees per car depending on car type (250-290 percent of seated load). As a result of this guideline change, service would be curtailed on **1**, **7**, **A**, and **L** middays; **1**, **7**, **A**, and **F** evenings; **7** and **L** Saturdays; and **7**, **J**, **L**, and **M** Sundays (**M** would be replaced by **V**).

On weekends, service would be reduced on other lines because of construction work. At the present time, trains often operate on a 12-minute headway. The new schedules would adjust scheduled headways to match those required by construction work. Service would be reduced from an 8- to a 10-minute headway on **D**, **F**, **G**, **J**, **M**, **N**, **O**, and **R** on Saturdays and **A**, **D**, **E**, **F**, **G**, **N**, **O**, and **R** on Sundays. Headways on **1** would be reduced from 6 to 8 minutes on Saturdays and Sundays. Because of high ridership, **A** and **E** Saturday service would not be curtailed. During busy hours on Saturdays, loads on **1**, **F**, **N**, and **O** would exceed 10-18 standees per car at the maximum load point. During busy hours on Sunday, loads on **1** and **N** would also exceed 10-18 standees per car.

During the Depression, the Transit Commission ordered the solvent BMT and the bankrupt IRT to operate non-rush hour trains with 75% of the seated load. The companies complied and your Editor-in-Chief could always find a seat in the front or rear cars

- **G** trains would operate between Court Square and Church Avenue at all times. **G** trains are schedule to operate to 71st Avenue-Continental Avenue evenings, nights, and weekends, but they are usually turned at Court Square because of construction work. In 2009, service was extended to 71st Avenue on only three weekends. Under the new sched-

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NEXT TRIP: STATEN ISLAND RAILWAY DIESEL FANTRIP—APRIL 17

A HISTORY OF **F** (AND **V**) TRAIN SERVICE (Continued from March, 2010 Issue) by George Chiasson

GENESIS OF THE **F** TRAIN, PART III: THE CULVER LINE AND BMT (1918-1975)

In May of 1918, a lone "el" car shuttle was reinstated from Culver Depot to Norton's Point, even as the Culver Line overall was in the midst of being relocated to a long steel elevated structure from end to end. The first portion of the new three-track Culver elevated line was placed in service on March 16, 1919 as far as Kings Highway, completely replacing surface operations to Park Row via the original PP&CI right-of-way. The equipment and basic operations remained unchanged otherwise, with the same trains of wooden cars running to and from Park Row via the Fifth Avenue "El," express in rush hours and all stops otherwise. *(Editor's note: BMT records reveal that wooden platform nosings on the Culver Line were removed on May 21, 1931, just before the Nassau Street Subway was opened. A B-Type clearance train was operated at 4 PM the same day from Ninth Avenue to W. 8th Street. A D-Type clearance train was operated at 2 PM the next day. Therefore, we can conclude that there was no gap between the wooden elevated cars and the platforms until May, 1931. But there was a gap between the wooden cars and the platforms during joint operation of steel and wooden cars.)* From Kings Highway, BRT employed streetcar shuttles on the surface to Culver Depot (W. 5th Street), which were again cut back when Culver operations on the elevated structure were extended from Kings Highway to Avenue X on May 10, 1919. This was the temporary end of construction on the newly-minted structure as BRT had exhausted its available resources and was somewhat at odds with the city regarding the disposition of its ultimate terminal at Coney Island. Shortly though, BRT was able to continue further south by re-using surplus structural steel from the East New York complex, which was then being reconstructed. As a result, the Culver Line's gap was closed and the new route completed from Avenue X to the W. 8th Street station, which replaced the Culver Depot, then via the lower level of the new elevated built to carry the Brighton Line into the multi-track terminal at Stillwell Avenue-Coney Island, on May 1, 1920. At this stage the dedicated surface car shuttles from Avenue X to Culver Depot were discontinued, and the old surface line on Gravesend Avenue assumed by a BRT surface route until it was abandoned in 1956. Meanwhile the Norton's Point shuttle car had been changed again from one "el" car to a streetcar in October, 1919, though provision was made to feed it into the upper level at Stillwell Avenue if necessary. Ultimately, the Culver Line from Stillwell Avenue to Norton's Point became part of the present B74 bus line starting in November, 1948. Another little-known fact is that the

Culver Line's steel trackway was raised approximately six feet and heavily modified immediately north of the Neptune Avenue-Van Sicklen station sometime around 1938 to provide for vertical clearance of the Belt Parkway (which opened in 1940).

Even so, the now-struggling BRT was hard-pressed to meet the intensifying needs of its newly-configured system and suffered a great shortage of equipment. To conserve cars and crews, it was necessary to operate supplementary service from the lower level of Ninth Avenue, where connection was available with the West End Line, to the Kings Highway station in the evening rush (and at that time Saturday noon as well). Beginning on October 17, 1920 all non-rush hour Culver service from Park Row was cut back to Kings Highway station, with shuttles composed of wooden "el" equipment being operated from Kings Highway through the Coney Island terminal to the Bay Parkway station on the West End Line. This became an annual operating regime during winter seasons through 1931, with through trains to Coney Island being reinstated each summer from May to September into 1930.

Between a lack of capacity (especially on the Broadway Subway) and a lack of flexibility (due to the stub-end nature of operations into the Chambers Street terminal), there was little impetus to upgrade the Culver Line to the use of steel subway cars until the controversial Nassau Street Loop was completed through Lower Manhattan. This had been part of the 1913 Dual Contracts agreement, but was delayed by the implementation of higher priority routes and financial and construction issues for well over a decade. These were finally resolved and work had commenced as the last round of Dual Contracts improvements got underway in 1926, but it was not until several years later that operations were finally slated to begin.

Another issue that remained was the lack of equipment, as BRT had never truly expanded its roster to meet the enlarged requirements of the Dual Contracts. As a result, when the Culver Line finally did start running into the BMT subway system on May 30, 1931 it employed a unique loop-style operation into the Chambers Street station and was terminated at Kings Highway during the rush hours. The following data was printed on the back of the 1931 BMT map:

When the Nassau Loop opened on May 30, 1931, Culver subway trains operated via Nassau Street at all hours. Non-rush hour locals were routed between Coney Island and Chambers Street via tunnel and Nas-

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A History of F (and V) Train Service*(Continued from page 2)*

sau Street. During weekday rush hours except Saturday PM, trains operated between Chambers Street and Kings Highway via bridge and Nassau Street, returning to Brooklyn via tunnel. Trains operated on the Fourth Avenue express tracks, bypassing DeKalb Avenue (in both directions) and Myrtle Avenue. They also operated non-stop between Kings Highway and Ninth Avenue in the direction of light traffic. (Effective April 25, 1934, these rush hour expresses stopped at 18th Avenue.)

Non-rush hour "el" trains ran between Sands Street and Ninth Avenue. During weekday rush hours, "el" service was extended to Coney Island with trains operating non-stop from 36th Street to Ninth Street to Atlantic Avenue. When the summer schedule went into effect on June 29, 1931, service was extended and trains operated between Park Row and Coney Island during midday and evenings.

Existing rush hour "el" service to and from Park Row was used to cover the Culver Line from Kings Highway to Coney Island as the new subway operation commenced, being turned at Sands Street in the fall, winter, and spring until 1940. Finally, off-peak "el" service was cut back to operate strictly between Park Row/Sands Street and the Ninth Avenue station with connections available to the West End Line and the new Culver-Subway Local.

As the summer of 1931 arrived, the new Culver-Subway service proved to be popular among patrons destined to Coney Island for its almost-all-express routing, with delays resulting. In July, non-rush hour Culver trains were curtailed at Kings Highway as a result, feeding into wooden "el" car shuttles from that point to Stillwell Avenue and Bay Parkway (West End). This became an annual summertime operating strategy in both 1931 and 1932, but starting in June, 1933, at the height of the Great Depression, evening, overnight, and Sunday Culver-Subway service was eliminated completely in favor of re-extended Culver "el" trains from Park Row to Coney Island. As a result Subway Locals from Coney Island to Chambers Street were reduced to weekday midday and Saturday non-rush hours. In turn these were turned at Kings Highway from May-September each year through 1940, with corresponding "el" car shuttles from Kings Highway to Coney Island. Further cuts were in store even later on, with single-car Fifth Avenue Locals to and from 65th Street in Bay Ridge being combined with Culver trains at 36th Street during non rush hours starting on October 1, 1934.

When the city's Board of Transportation assumed control of the BMT lines on June 1, 1940, the Fifth Avenue "E" was one of two closures on the Brooklyn "el" system (Fulton Street being the other). This forced a truncation of rush hour Culver via "el" service from Park Row/Sands Street to Ninth Avenue, and its outright

elimination otherwise. As a result the Culver-Subway Local was restored between Coney Island (Kings Highway in summer, with "el" car shuttles to Coney Island) and Chambers Street via Tunnel during all non-rush hours. Saturday morning rush hour service was dropped as of June 24, 1950 with the usual Subway Local in effect and on June 26, 1952 the rush hour "el" shuttle from Coney Island to Ninth Avenue (last vestige of the original service to Park Row) was cut back to Kings Highway at one end and extended to Bay Parkway (West End) on the other. The summertime non-rush hour shuttle from Kings Highway to Coney Island that had been in place since June, 1940 was also extended through to Bay Parkway for both 1952 and 1953, but all operation past Coney Island was discontinued on December 10, 1953.

Starting on November 1, 1954 IND's "D" train assumed operation of the Culver Line from Ditmas Avenue (where a ramp was opened to connect with the Smith Street Line). As a result all trains began running through to Coney Island and all "el" car shuttle" service from Kings Highway to Coney Island was discontinued. "BMT" operations were then accommodated by the addition of a siding at Ditmas Avenue, which was added to the west side of the "el" structure, and continued running as it had been on weekdays (express via Nassau Loop in rush hours, local to Chambers Street via Tunnel middays), albeit only as far as Ditmas Avenue. "Reverse rush hour" use of the center track beyond Ninth Avenue (from Manhattan in AM and to Manhattan in PM) was forsaken completely, while at all other times (nights and weekends) the "Culver Shuttle" came into being between the Ditmas Avenue siding and the lower level of Ninth Avenue. Through succeeding years ridership on the "BMT" side of the Culver Line fell off and all through trains were discontinued as of May 28, 1959, after which only the shuttle was operated. Even so, continued ridership declines and fiscal troubles dogged what was left and in 1964 the Culver Shuttle was reduced to one set of equipment roaming back and forth on what had been the southbound track. Finally, this remnant was abandoned, just one month shy of what would have been the Prospect Park & Coney Island Railroad's centennial, on May 13, 1975.

ROLLING STOCK OF THE PROSPECT PARK & CONEY ISLAND RAILROAD (1875-1899)

At its beginning, PP&CI was equipped with 12 double-truck excursion coaches and three (3) 2-4-0T steam locomotives, all built by Baldwin. The exact nature of the motive power (Forney or Cross Compound) is not known, but their diminutive scale was typical of the early motive power used on such operations, as well as the elevated railways of Manhattan. The coaches as well were fairly miniature in nature, and more resembled an oversize horse car than railway carriage. All 12

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A History of F (and V) Train Service

(Continued from page 3)

were built by the J.G. Brill Company of Philadelphia, 10 being open-bench types for outdoor riding in spring, summer, and fall, while a pair had enclosed bodies for the limited year-round service provided through the winter.

Each year as its business grew so did PP&CI's fleet of rolling stock, though most of the coaches were of the open type for its core constituency. By the time of the 1879 season there were seven locomotives and 41 coaches altogether; a high of nine engines and 42 cars was finally reached by 1887. That off-season, on November 14, some twenty of PP&CI's own coaches and one locomotive were lost in the Greenwood Depot fire

and not immediately replaced. In succeeding years LIRR would step in with additional rolling stock if needed, not just conventional coaches but in 1888-9 parlors and sleepers as well to service the Brooklyn Jockey Club. Extravagant as this may have been, PP&CI received 12 new cars from Brill and two locomotives in time for its routing into the Union Depot in June of 1890, which enabled it not to rely on LIRR for equipment. Ultimately, its stable of 34 coaches and 10 locomotives was sold off quickly in April, 1899 as the Culver Line was converted to electric traction under BRT. Meanwhile, steam-powered Pullmans and Parlors continued to ply the Culver Line to Manhattan Beach on behalf of LIRR through the 1909 racing season.

(Continued next issue)

NYC Transit's Huge Budget Deficit

(Continued from page 1)

ules, trains would operate at all times between Court Square and Church Avenue, and three evening trips would be added

- Astoria service would be revised by discontinuing **W**, which operates only on weekdays. It would be replaced by **C**, which would be extended from 57th Street-Seventh Avenue to Astoria. **N** trains would make local stops in Manhattan at all times and **C** would stop at 49th Street. **N**, **C**, and **R** trains would be more crowded, but the loads would be within the guidelines
- **M** and **V** trains would be through-routed. **V** service would be discontinued. **M** trains would operate via the present route from Metropolitan Avenue to Essex Street. Then they would be routed to Broadway-Lafayette Street on the BJ tracks that have been out of service since the last **K** train operated on August 27, 1976. They would continue to 71st-Continental Avenue on the current **V**

route. Late-night and weekend **M** trains would continue to operate between Metropolitan Avenue and Broadway-Myrtle Avenue. Trains would be 480 feet (8 cars) because of shorter platforms on Broadway and Myrtle Avenue (**V** trains are currently 600 feet long). Trains would be more crowded along Queens Boulevard, but loading would be within guidelines. The brown **M** signs would become orange (for Sixth Avenue)

- Staten Island Railway Baseball Specials to the Stadium station would be discontinued and the station would be closed. This service operates only on game days with one round trip between Tottenville and Stadium in addition to shuttle trains between Stadium and St. George. Approximately 70 passengers per game would be required to take a bus or walk less than 1/3-mile from the St. George station to the stadium.

The service changes listed in this article would reduce the deficit by \$17.6 million.

The changes were passed by the MTA Board on March 24. Barring additional financial aid, the changes will take effect starting in late June.

THE LONGEST AND SHORTEST TRAIN RIDES IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA
By Larry Kiss

During the recent trip to Bay Head with Barry Zuckerman and Randy Glucksman, the subject of what would be the longest and shortest train ride in the New York

metropolitan area came up. I checked the latest timetables and came up with the following:

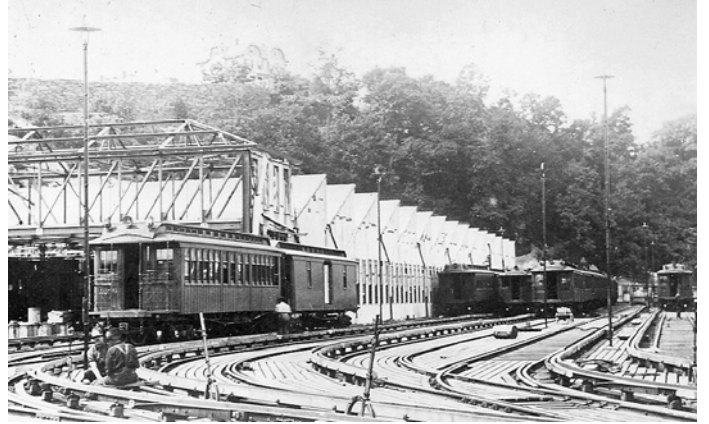
RAILROAD	STATIONS	MILEAGE	AVERAGE TIME (HH:MM)
Long Island Rail Road	Valley Stream-West Hempstead	4.6	00:15
	Hunterspoint Avenue-Montauk	114.9	03:05
Metro-North	Stamford-New Canaan	7.9	00:19
	Grand Central Terminal-Wassaic	82.0	01:57-02:03
NJ Transit	Princeton Junction-Princeton	2.7	00:05
	Hoboken-Port Jervis (via Main Line)	95.1	02:05-02:26

IRT 159TH STREET YARD AND SHOP

(Photographs from Bernard Linder collection except where noted)



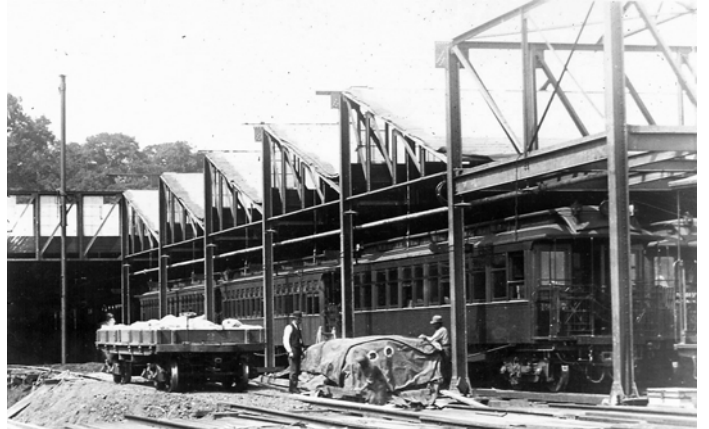
159th Street Yard, W. 159th Street and Eighth Avenue in Manhattan.



A portion of the yard in 1903. Note that the supply car has glass in its windows.



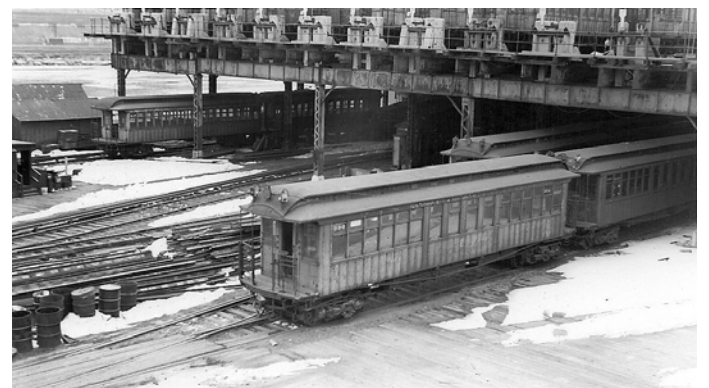
Inspection shed under construction in June, 1903.



Inspection shed under construction in summer, 1903. Note new motor car 1307.



South end of the yard in 1937.

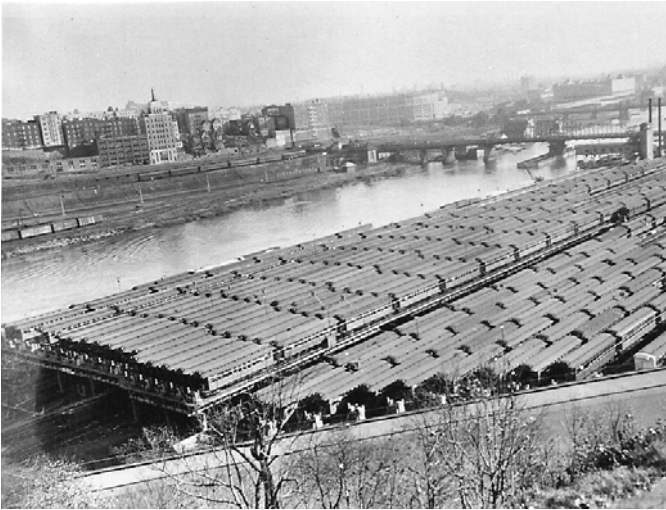


Car 396 in December, 1938. This car was built by Gilbert and Bush, delivered in October, 1886, and scrapped in 1940.

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159th Street Yard and Shop

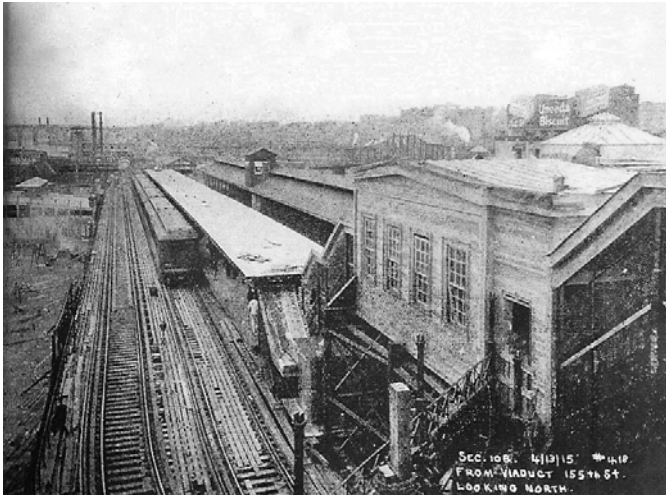
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159th Street Yard.



155th Street-Eighth Avenue station on October 30, 1914, before reconstruction.



155th Street-Eighth Avenue station looking north on April 13, 1915, after reconstruction.



155th Street-Eighth Avenue station looking south.



155th Street-Eighth Avenue station on May 10, 1958.
Bernard Linder photograph



155th Street-Eighth Avenue station on May 10, 1958, with the Polo Grounds on the left side.
Bernard Linder photograph

NEW YORK CITY SUBWAY CAR UPDATE

by George Chiasson

Hello, Everybody!

Gloom and Doom seem the order of the day on many fronts as this year gains momentum, regarding life's daily struggles both within MTA New York City Transit and without. In all the years since this chronicle was begun, this month finds the state of things as discomfited and unsettled as it has ever been. Nevertheless, we will try to walk through the current situation regarding subway equipment as best we can, and hopefully along the way offer more clarification than hypothesis, albeit in abbreviated form. And, again, the two "side projects" involving the R-62As on **7** and the R-44s of Staten Island Railway have definitely moved forward, neither of which involve any guesswork whatsoever. So, after waiting in vain for some possible aspects of this report to jell (and which never did to a satisfactory level so have been omitted...for now), herewith is this month's Update.

Subdivision "A" Happenings

Through February 19, 2010 the following single unit R-62As have received the modified WABCO brake valve at the #1 end and joined the pool of north motors: 1906, 1916, 1966, 1976, 1986, 2006, 2036, 2046, 2056, and 2076. In addition, the modified brake valve was added at the #2 end of four-tripper cars 2012, 2022 and 2016. This completed the program at 80 cars total (a reduction from the original objective of 88), and with all but very few exceptions, unmodified single units no longer are used as the north motors on **7** consists. In late January car 1915 was one exception, though it sports a New York Air brake valve variation from its days on the **S** 42nd Street Shuttle, and unmodified single unit 2049 was seen in the north motor position as well on February 17. As for the single-unit R-62A s assigned to the Shuttle and also the ten running on **1**, only cars outfitted with full-width cabs at one end are used in control positions, and each (1920, 1921, 1925, and 1926 on **1** and 1930, 1931, 1935, 1936, 1940, 1941, 1945, 1946, 1950, 1951, 1955, and 1956 on the **S** 42nd Street Shuttle) retain a slightly modified version of their original New York Air Brake installations.

R-160 Progress

Through January 31, 2010 Option II R-160A-2s 9723-42 had been delivered, while Option II R-160A-2s 9693-9702 went into service on **E** and **F**. As of February 22, 2010 Option II R-160A-2 9743-72 had been delivered, while 9703-32 had entered service at Jamaica. As of February 22, 2010 Option II R-160Bs 9893-9907 had been delivered, with cars 9873-82 entering **E** and **F** service as of January 29. CBTC-equipped R-160A-1s 8313-76 remain confined to **L** and now display red dots over their number boards. On February 11, the

"seatless" train composed of R-160Bs 8713-22 (with fiberglass flip-up seats installed on "B" cars 8714-6 and 8719-21) was at last transferred from Coney Island to Jamaica, and entered a long-term period of experimental revenue service on **E** starting February 22.

As of January 16, 2010 deliveries totaled 340 R-160A-1s, 600 R-160A-2s, and 630 R-160Bs for a combined quantity of 1,570. Of the overall total as of January 16, 340 R-160A-1s were in service at East New York on **J**/**Z**, **L**, and **M**; 60 R-160A-2s plus 420 R-160Bs at Coney Island on **N**, **O**, and **W** (for 480 total); and 500 R-160A-2s plus 180 R-160Bs at Jamaica on **E** and **F** for a combined total of 680.

60-Foot SMEE News

Things still haven't settled completely with regard to the remaining BMT/IND 60-Foot SMEEs, but it looks like the base fleet of Phase I R-32s over the long haul (should they be retained another five years or so) will be 246 and not 252, as there has been no action to reactivate six previously retired cars from Jamaica. Otherwise their assignments remain unchanged through February 22 with 26 at Jamaica to support two trains for **R** and **V**; 10 at Coney Island and usually on **B**; and the remaining 210 at 207th Street for **A** and **C**. One train of the latter (cars 3446/7, 3810/1, 3818/9, 3834/5) was briefly at Fresh Pond Yard over Valentine's Day weekend and is believed to have made at least one "simulation run" of the proposed **V/M** combination between Metropolitan and Continental Avenues while there.

There has been no change in the status of remaining Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42s since our last look, with 50 still roaming **J** and **Z** out of East New York and 14 more in stir at 207th Street. Other Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42s are still on the property with their end bonnets removed as part of the (previous) reefing program, which will probably be included in its next phase sometime this coming spring. To recap once more, as of February 22, 2010 there remained 246 Phase I R-32s and 50 Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42s active for a total of 296.

The 75-Footers of MTA New York City Transit (R-44, R-46, R-68, R-68A)

The R-44 evaluation study was completed, as projected, by the end of January, 2010 and as of February 22 remained under official review, with the ultimate decision regarding their fate as yet to be made. In the meantime another round of R-46s were transferred in from Jamaica (as replaced by new R-160s) and a select few have actually begun operation on **A**, still so designated by a blue diamond at the number board. To sum-

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New York City Subway Car Update*(Continued from page 7)*

marize, R-46s 5846-9 and 5870-3 were moved to 207th Street in January and 5794-7, 5802-5, 5834-7, 5842-5, 5858-61, 5862-5, 5926-9, 5942-5, and 5946-9 by February 22, 2010. Of the 72 R-46s thus far assigned to 207th Street, 5850-3 and 5894-7 were the first to see revenue **A** train service on February 5, followed by 5834-7, 5842-5, 5922-5, 5926-9, and 5946-9 through February 22. The reason for the odd total (7 4-car sets) is that 5922-5 was joined to Pitkin-assigned 6126-9 when it first appeared on February 19. The 44 207th Street-assigned R-46s that had not yet appeared in service by February 22 were expected to be activated at any time, but there is as yet no word of when (or even if) these will be moved to Pitkin as a group. In the past couple of months (since about mid-December, possibly before), R-46s have also begun to appear rather regularly on the **S** Rockaway Park Shuttle, but still not on a daily basis, and remain in combination with R-44s on the midnight OPTO shuttle from Euclid Avenue to Leferts Boulevard. On the flip side, the number of R-46s at Jamaica has now been steadily reduced to 576 and they appear far less often on **F** than even a couple of months ago.

R-44 Retirements

As for the R-44s, there were signs that at least a handful of additional cars could be facing the end of their service career, but (absent the official decision to pursue their overall retirement) from January 15 through February 22, 2010 only one more unit was definitely dropped out of the service rotation. This is listed below, but may (as always) be subject to later revision.

The following were taken out of service through February 22, 2010:

January, 2010: R-44 5354/5/7/6 withdrawn from Pitkin (**A**).

The R-44s of MTA Staten Island Railway

Arriving at Coney Island Overhaul Shop between January 17 and February 22, 2010 were SIR "A" cars 442, 448, and 462, along with "B" car 409. "A" car 408 and "B" car 403 remained in process at Coney Island, while returning to the Staten Island Railway upon completion were "A" cars 426 and 434 along with "B" car

435. This raised the overall number of completed cars to 51.

Miscellaneous Notes and Reefing Renewed, Again

Perhaps the most decisive change which accompanied the December, 2009 suspension of 60-foot SMEE retirements was a sudden, if temporary, conclusion to the reefing program. The empty Weeks Barge was back at 207th Street immediately after the previous Update (arrived January 18) and during the following week was re-loaded for what seemed to be the "final" time. The following weekend (January 23), these 44 Morrison-Knudsen-overhauled R-42 bodies departed with Barge 29 for the Del-Jersey-Land Reef off Delaware: 4556, 4557, 4570, 4571, 4576, 4577, 4582, 4583, 4584, 4585, 4606, 4607, 4630, 4631, 4636, 4637, 4638, 4639, 4656, 4657, 4658, 4659, 4660, 4661, 4672, 4673, 4702, 4703, 4710, 4711, 4732, 4733, 4734, 4735, 4742, 4743, 4746, 4747, 4752, 4753, 4760, 4761, 4770, and 4771.

A small number of shells were left behind as a result, with no real indication as to Transit's plan for equipment disposition going forward. Finally, as part of the R-44 evaluation and cost-benefit process, the decision was made to renew the reefing program yet again, though in no way does this (as yet) indicate the R-44s will actually be reefed as a class. As of this writing, its former area at 207th Street Shop has been returned to former use for overhaul work, the sole exception being the preparation of wrecked Staten Island R-44 402 for eventual reefing, whenever a barge does return. In addition the Weeks Crane remains on site at the Harlem River dock and the program's various personnel are gradually being re-assigned. In sum, absent official, decisive action on which way equipment dispositions will proceed, the reefing program at this point is definitely not dead (though its next load will be the beginning of its third incarnation), but rather in a state of suspended animation.

Conclusion

Will Gloom and Doom soon give way to a renewed sense of Boom and Zoom? One never knows but just as the first soft shadows of February foretell the inevitability of spring (despite New York's harshest winter in a few), so do a scattering of positives diminish the seemingly endless flood of negatives these days. So, let's grab on to what we can and hope for the best next time, and until then...try to make the best of it!

ERA MEMORIES by Ray Crapo

Since its founding in 1934, the Electric Railroaders' Association has had a long history, and it is its members who have kept it going and growing. Below is what is hoped will be the first in a series of first-person reminiscences from a member who had an interesting story to share. Please email your stories to the News Editor at NYDNewseditor@aol.com.

During my early years at ERA in the 1950s (1953 was when I began to attend), the meetings were held in Penn Station New York. Every meeting began with a litany of freshly abandoned electric lines. Herbie Frank was the "Chief Undertaker," since he would be asked by

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Commuter and Transit Notes

No. 257
by Randy Glucksman

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

On February 23, MTA Chairman Jay Walder announced plans to reduce costs and operate more efficiently, beginning with the elimination of more than 600 represented and non-represented administrative positions. These cuts represent 15% of administrative payroll across MTA with deeper cuts at MTA Headquarters. The agency also has begun the process of laying off up to 500 NYC Transit Station Agents. In an interview on WCBS-880, Mr. Walder hinted at further layoffs even assuming the proposed service reductions are approved and take effect. In December, 2009, the shortfall was \$400 million without state funding and subsidies, but by February, 2010, adding the lost tax revenues, the deficit had grown to \$750 million. Mr. Walder offered this analogy of the financial crisis – “It’s like running up a down escalator.”

The news got worse, because on March 2, MTA announced that an additional 100 Station Agents would be laid off. There were plenty of angry riders who attended the service reduction hearings, which were held around the MTA region. MTA reported that about 2,500 people attended the hearings and about 500 spoke.

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (EAST)

For only the third time in its 27-year history, not surprisingly, ridership fell last year by 4.1%. Still, 80.5 million riders were carried vs. 83.95 million in 2008. It should go without saying that this falloff can be blamed on job losses and the economy. Ridership also fell in 1991 and 2003. Still, there were some pluses – the Yankees-E. 153rd Street station, which is open 365 days a year, drew 500,000 riders, of whom 450,000 were attributable to the New York Yankees. In the first year of New Haven Line service to Giants and Jets games at the Meadowlands, 5,800 riders were carried.

Member Larry Kiss rode round-trip from Grand Central Terminal to New Haven on March 2, and wrote: “I noticed a mostly completed station between Fairfield (50.6) and Bridgeport (55.6). Research on the Internet revealed that this station is to be called Fairfield Metro Center. It is located near Exit 24 of the Connecticut Turnpike at the Black Rock Turnpike overpass. The station is part of a large commercial development of offices, restaurants, and retail stores. However, because of financial problems completion of the station and the rest of the development have been stopped. As of now there is no anticipated completion date and trains bypass the two side platforms, which are fully covered.”

Signs were posted around Grand Central Terminal to advise riders that the October 18, 2009 through March 27, 2010 timetables have been extended until April 10.

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (WEST)

Checking Metro-North’s website on February 28, I found that ferry service had been restored on the Haverstraw-Ossining route, but the Newburgh-Beacon line was still being operated by shuttle buses. After several days of long-awaited spring-like temperatures, service resumed March 10.

MTA LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

New timetables were issued effective March 8 and will remain in effect through May 16. Weekend track work will affect all branches except Port Washington on April 10-11 and 17-18. Special timetables will be issued. Mid-days on weekdays, construction activities take place as follows:

- PORT WASHINGTON: One of the two tracks is out of service for tie replacement between Woodside and Bayside. Five eastbound and six westbound trains are canceled, resulting in hourly service. A note in the press release advises that this is not part of the (proposed) 2010 fiscal service reduction in service. Late-night trains depart 30 minutes later to accommodate bridge work in the Queens Boulevard area
- PORT JEFFERSON, RONKONKOMA, OYSTER BAY, AND HEMPSTEAD: Midday and overnight schedules adjusted between three and eleven minutes for track work at Queens Interlocking
- LONG BEACH: Bridge replacement work continues over the weekends of March 20-21 and 27-28 and May 1-2 and 15-16. Buses replace trains to Valley Stream and a special timetable covering these weekends was published
- BABYLON: One of the two tracks between Wantagh and Babylon is out of service for state-of-good-repair work. Seven eastbound and five westbound trains terminate at Freeport. East of Freeport, trains operate hourly.

Train #2776, 5:10 PM Babylon, has been extended from Patchogue to Speonk with a stop at Mastic-Shirley.

An extra train operated from Jamaica to Montauk on March 21 for the Montauk St. Patrick’s Day Parade, and a green timetable card was issued. The train, simply called “Extra,” departed from Jamaica at 8:43 AM with a stop in Babylon, then all stops to Montauk.

Sperry Rail Testing on the Port Washington Branch caused issuance of a special timetable for March 20. Bus/van service was provided between Great Neck and Port Washington.

The first Mets-Willets Point timetable of 2010, for the period April 5-May 16, was issued.

The March edition of *TrainTalk* contained a chart

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Commuter and Transit Notes

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showing by branch the costs of carrying passengers over each of the railroad's branches. I copied this data and created the table below. Please note that there are some minor mathematical differences in the totals. According to LIRR, the Greenport Branch generated \$726,304 in revenue while the Babylon Branch was the highest, generating \$134 million.

BRANCH	ANNUAL CUSTOMERS	TOTAL AVERAGE COST PER PASSENGER	TOTAL COST	ESTIMATED FARE BOX OPERATING RATIO BY BRANCH
Greenport	69,986	\$ 85.91	\$ 6,012,368	12%
Montauk	2,569,535	\$ 56.43	\$ 144,988,870	17%
Port Jefferson	3,427,763	\$ 28.68	\$ 98,304,632	23%
Oyster Bay	2,112,962	\$ 26.91	\$ 56,852,522	24%
West Hempstead	853,049	\$ 20.79	\$ 17,731,000	28%
Far Rockaway	4,187,372	\$ 15.08	\$ 63,157,735	38%
Hempstead	4,348,497	\$ 14.48	\$ 62,973,978	40%
Babylon	19,682,188	\$ 13.25	\$ 260,734,446	51%
Huntington	12,194,069	\$ 12.51	\$ 152,537,858	54%
Long Beach	6,509,587	\$ 11.95	\$ 77,784,615	54%
Ronkonkoma	14,007,203	\$ 11.96	\$ 167,474,270	63%
Port Washington	13,369,790	\$ 8.49	\$ 113,489,961	67%
LIRR System-wide	83,332,000	\$ 14.68	\$1,222,042,255	44%

NJ TRANSIT

NJ Transit announced that it too had financial difficulties to the tune of \$300 million for the coming fiscal year. Besides reduced ridership, Governor Christie, in an effort to help alleviate state budget problems, is cutting a state subsidy of \$32.7 million. Executive Director James Weinstein implemented a 5% salary reduction for 12 senior executives, announced elimination of 200 jobs (about 2% of the work force), reduced contributions to employees' 401k plans by one-third, and will investigate ways to reduce the cost of parts, fuels, and utilities. But that will not close the gap, so eleven public hearings were held at various locations in New Jersey and also at the Port Authority Bus Terminal on March 25 and March 26. Potential service reductions were announced on March 5, with most of the changes planned to take effect May 1. NJ Transit expects to generate more than \$140 million in revenue.

The proposed fare hikes are as follows: One-way rail tickets would increase about 25%, subject to rounding and the Off-Peak Ticket (OPT) would be eliminated. Rail fares on the Main/Bergen County and Pascack Valley Lines would be authorized to be raised to levels that provide parity with pricing on other similar-distance NJ Transit rail lines, based on future changes in Metro-North fares. (Since 1984, these fares have appeared separately in the fare charts from comparable New Jersey stations so as not to exceed the fares charged at

New York stations). One-way fares would rise from a range of \$1.25-\$13.25 to a range \$1.50-\$16.50. Using Metropark as an example, a trip to New York Penn Station, which is currently \$8, would rise to \$10. The most expensive monthly ticket is from Bay Head to New York Penn and would increase from \$259 to \$324. A one-zone local bus trip or one-way ticket on Newark Light Rail or the *RiverLine* would increase from \$1.35 to \$1.70 per ride. HBLRT tickets would increase from \$1.90 to \$2.40 per trip. All routes would see service reduced and a minimum of two trains would be eliminated on each rail line. All are weekday trains, unless otherwise indicated.

- ATLANTIC CITY LINE: Approximately 100 customers affected
#4600 and 4609 (12:46 AM and 4:24 AM from Atlantic City)
Weekends – Approximately 425 customers affected
#4646/4696 (11:47 PM from Atlantic City)
#4653 and 4665 (1:50 AM and 7:54 AM from Philadelphia)
#4660 (5:45 AM from Atlantic City)
- MAIN/BERGEN COUNTY: Approximately 400 customers affected
#1211 and 1270 (4:50 PM and 9:15 PM from Hoboken)
#1218 and 1281 (6:10 PM and 10:26 PM from Waldwick)
- MONTCLAIR-BOONTON LINE: Approximately 150 customers affected
#1024 (10:21 AM from Hackettstown)
#1025 (12:18 AM departure from Montclair State University)
#1028 (1:44 PM from Mount Olive)
#1029 (3:15 PM from Montclair State University)
#247 (2:27 PM from Hoboken)
#244 (3:37 PM Montclair State University)
Trains #247 and 1029 would be replaced with a new train (#1001)
Train #1000 would be extended to start in Hackettstown as train #1070 (replacing Hackettstown and Mount Olive stops from Morris & Essex Lines train #870)
- MORRIS & ESSEX LINES: Approximately 1,000 customers affected
#870 (5:27 AM from Hackettstown)
#813 and 873 (6:40 AM and 7:57 AM from Hoboken)
#323 (11:20 AM from Hoboken)
#348 (3:06 PM from Summit)
#465 (5:06 PM from Hoboken)
#464 (6:43 PM from Murray Hill)
Montclair-Boonton Line train #1000 would be extended to start in Hackettstown as train #1070 (replacing the Hackettstown and Mount Olive

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stops on #870)

- NORTHEAST CORRIDOR: Approximately 2,700 customers affected
 - #3916 (6:18 AM from Trenton)
 - #3171 (5:41 PM from New York)
 - #3933 (10:01 AM from New York)
 - #3868 (5:28 PM from Trenton)
 - #3801 (12:43 AM from New York)
- NORTH JERSEY COAST LINE: Approximately 1,000 customers affected
 - #2306 (6:41 AM from Bay Head)
 - #2309 (5:10 PM from Hoboken)
 - #3517 (7:42 PM from New York)
 - #3518 (9:13 PM from South Amboy)
- PASCACK VALLEY LINE: Approximately 330 New Jersey customers affected
 - #1600 (4:56 AM from Spring Valley) would either be discontinued or no longer serve New Jersey stations
 - #1639 (6:55 p.m. departure from Hoboken) would either be discontinued or no longer serve New Jersey stations
- RARITAN VALLEY LINE: Approximately 900 customers affected
 - #5724 (7:19 AM from High Bridge)
 - #5903 (4:55 PM from Newark Penn)
- HUDSON-BERGEN LIGHT RAIL: Thirty-six trips would be eliminated on weekday evenings, beginning at 8 PM, by expanding headways from every 20 minutes to 30 minutes on each line. Approximately 4,000 customers would be affected.

On weekends and holidays, direct service between Tonnelle Avenue and Hoboken Terminal would be discontinued, resulting in longer trips for some customers. All stations would continue to be served. Approximately 4,800 customers would be affected.
- NEWARK LIGHT RAIL: On Sundays, headways would be increased to every 25 minutes, from 20 minutes. Approximately 5,500 customers would be affected.

On weekdays, off-peak service between Broad Street and Newark Penn Stations would be from 20 to 30 minutes. Approximately 500 customers would be affected.
- RIVERLINE: On weekdays, four peak-period trips would operate as a single-car train, rather than a double-car train. Approximately 330 customers would experience increased crowding.

Late night trips that operate only between the Entertainment Center and Pennsauken Route 73 stations would operate for concerts and special events only, rather than nightly.

According to **enroute**, an electronic edition of an em-

ployee newsletter, during January, NJ Transit took delivery of its 329th and final multi-level car, cab 7051, and also the first of 36 ALP-46A electric locomotives. These units will be numbered 4629-4664, right above the ALP-46s. NJ Transit's Board awarded Bombardier a contract for 27 on February 22, 2008 and exercised an option for 9 on June 10, 2009.

On March 8, NJ Transit was awarded \$52 million in stimulus funds for construction of the Pennsauken Transit Center and to improve pedestrian and vehicle traffic at Newark Penn Station. United States Senator Bob Menendez, who made the announcement, said that these projects would result in the creation of 4,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Also on March 8, NJ Transit closed its Eighth Avenue ticket windows at New York Penn Station.

PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON CORPORATION

At about 7:20 AM on March 10, a car crashed through a fence near Journal Square in Jersey City and landed on the tracks, causing service to World Trade Center to be suspended. Passengers at Newark were advised to use NJ Transit, which was cross-honoring PATH tickets. Service was resumed around 8:47 AM with 10-minute delays.

AMTRAK

As was reported last month, Wi-Fi service was in fact rolled out on March 1, on all *Acela* trains. Wireless service is also available inside the gate areas of Washington Union Station, Baltimore Penn Station, Philadelphia 30th Street Station, New York Penn Station, Providence, and Route 128. Wilmington will be Wi-Fi equipped once station renovations are completed in 2011. For now, the service is free.

The third National Train Day will be celebrated on May 8. Details may be found at <http://www.nationaltrainday.com/>.

MUSEUMS

In the early days of incandescent bulbs, many transit operators employed various tricks in order to prevent bulbs from being stolen, because they were relatively expensive. Some operators used bulbs with a left-handed thread, which would make them useless in household sockets. The January edition of *The Tripper*, published by the Shore Line Trolley Museum (Branford), reported that the arrangement in Brooklyn Rapid Transit 4573 differed in that the company used a special socket where the inner threaded shell "free-wheels" unless a special key is inserted into the side of the socket. This car was built in 1906, and although it has been well maintained, Branford reports that the lighting in this car has been troublesome because of this socket design. One of its members has been repairing the sockets so that all lights will be working.

INDUSTRY

NOR'EASTER III (FEBRUARY 25 THROUGH FEBRUARY 27)

I asked Division member and WCBS Newsradio-880

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meteorologist Todd Glickman to write an introductory paragraph and he willingly did so. "An unusual winter storm affected the metropolitan area February 25-27. This kind of storm happens here on average just once a decade, where the cyclone is so intense, it looks like a hurricane. It was positioned in just the right spot — and became stalled — to bring precipitation to the area for more than two days. At first it was heavy rain over Long Island with a mix in the city and snow over New Jersey and in the Hudson Valley. Then, as the storm drew in colder air, it changed to snow everywhere. Accumulation totals ranged from a foot over Long Island and Connecticut to near two feet in the city and upwards of three feet north and west." Todd remarked on-air that this was among the most impactful storms he's worked in his 31 years on-air there. News of the two previous Nor'easters, February 6 and February 10, were published in the March **Bulletin**.

LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD: Thursday February 25 – Eight extra trains were operated from Penn Station between 2:09 PM and 3:48 PM for passengers leaving work early: Port Washington (1), Port Jefferson (3), Far Rockaway (1), and Babylon (3).

Friday morning, February 26, 10-15 minute delays were reported. Midday, there were minor delays on the Port Jefferson and Montauk Branches. The same extra service that operated on Thursday was repeated Friday. Later, two afternoon trains to Port Washington and one to Wantagh from New York Penn were canceled as well as one from Flatbush Avenue to Babylon. There were minor delays that evening.

METRO-NORTH: February 25, the railroad announced that it would be operating a regular schedule throughout the afternoon and evening. Additional trains/cars would be added as needed to address increased volume from customers wishing to depart early. Some delays were reported on the Port Jervis Line.

February 26 – A reduced inbound schedule, similar to what was used on February 10, was operated. Seven each, Hudson and Harlem Line trains were canceled/combined, while nine New Haven Line trains were canceled/combined. Metro-North then went to two trains/hour on each line until 4 PM as follows:

- HUDSON: Locals to/from Croton-Harmon, expresses to Poughkeepsie
- HARLEM: Locals to/from North White Plains, expresses to/from Southeast with three shuttles to Wassaic
- NEW HAVEN: Locals to/from Stamford, expresses to/from Stamford then local to/from New Haven. There were two shuttles to Danbury and three to Waterbury

Between 4 PM and 8 PM, the following service was operated:

- HUDSON: Nine local trains made all stops to Croton-Harmon and eight express trains ran non-stop to Croton-Harmon then made all stops to Poughkeepsie
- HARLEM: There were six local trains, which made all stops to North White Plains, plus nine other trains that were various combinations of expresses and trains that made limited stops
- NEW HAVEN: Twenty-nine trains were operated: locals to Stamford plus expresses to Stamford and then local to New Haven

After 8 PM, and continuing until the end of service, the hourly local and hourly express service pattern was in effect on all lines. All of these schedules were available on the Internet. The regular Saturday schedule was operated on Saturday, February 27.

PORT JERVIS: Most of this line is located in Orange County, which was particularly hard-hit by the storm and in fact, its County Executive had declared a state of emergency the evening before to keep all but emergency vehicles off the road. Some parts of the county received up to three feet of snow. Early in the morning of February 26, NJ Transit (and Metro-North) reported no service west of Harriman, but that was soon changed to all service being suspended west of Suffern.

The story below sounds like an event that could take place in the midwest or western part of the United States. Additional details came from **The Times Herald-Record**. At about 11:30 AM, WCBS-880 reported that eight passengers and three crew members who were aboard Train #68 (9:28 PM Port Jervis/Hoboken) had been stuck on that train for eleven hours. The train actually departed at 11:30 PM and was stalled behind trees that fell across the tracks. It had been inching along the tracks from Port Jervis, becoming disabled at 5:40 AM Friday about 3½ miles west of the Salisbury Mills station. According to NJ Transit spokesman Dan Stessel, help came in the form of Hoboken Division Superintendent Joe Meade and two of his staff, Manny Couto and Jimmy Halloran. The men flagged down the Salisbury Mills Fire Chief en route to the train and asked for his assistance. The Fire Department then mustered on Station Road, about a mile and a half from the train, while Meade and his colleagues walked through two and three feet of snow on the tracks to reach the consist. Halloran crawled under the train, located a punctured hose, and patched it with debris at the site. The temporary fix was sufficient for the crew to move the train back toward Station Road. Firefighters used all-terrain vehicles and a borrowed backhoe to carve a path in the snow down a 45-degree embankment between the train and the road and then led the passengers off the train to waiting cars. They were taken to the Salisbury Mills firehouse for coffee and doughnuts.

Metro-North spokeswoman Marjorie Anders said MTA police and Metro-North staff then drove four New York

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City-bound passengers to the Beacon train station, one Albany-bound passenger to the Poughkeepsie train station, and the other three passengers to their homes in Orange County. "Having people onboard for such a long period of time is unacceptable to either railroad, and we offer our apologies to the eight passengers," Anders said, adding, "and we express our gratitude to all the emergency service personnel who assisted us." Stessel said the crew warned the passengers before they boarded in Port Jervis that the trip could be slow and rough because snow-heavy trees had been falling across the tracks all evening. The eight, however, chose to make the trip to Hoboken. Anders said the incident still prompted MTA Chairman Jay Walder to call NJ Transit Executive Director James Weinstein to initiate a bi-agency review of how it occurred and how a repeat could be prevented.

Metro-North crews worked around the clock to clear 55 fallen trees that were along the right-of-way and then had to restore power and provided eight generators to power the signal system so that trains could operate safely. Service did not resume until Monday morning, March 1.

NJ TRANSIT: On February 24, it was announced that cross-honoring of rail and bus tickets would be in effect as of 5 AM February 25, and it was subsequently extended through 5 AM Saturday, February 27. On February 25, there were minor delays on the Montclair-Boonton, Pascack Valley, and Port Jervis Lines.

February 26, there were some train cancellations and 10-15 minute delays on many lines. For the return trip home, all 3700-series (Jersey Avenue) trains as well as selected trains on the Bergen/Main Line, Gladstone Branch, Morristown Line, and Pascack Valley Line were cancelled.

Bus service was canceled in Central and Northern New Jersey until 1 PM, at which time limited service was resumed with the exception of Routes: 64, 68, 71, 73, 75, 93, 97, 111, 120, 131, 133, 134, 135, 138, 196, and 321. Service on these routes was resumed by 4:30 PM.

NOR'EASTER IV (MARCH 13-15)

Yet another nor'easter affected the major cities of the Northeast. From New York City to Boston, rainfall amounts were in excess of six inches in places, with wind gusts over 50 mph. Flooding, downed power lines, and other damages were evident, but this time there was no snow — but lots of rain and high winds. In one news report that I saw, JFK Airport clocked a wind gust at 75 mph and some areas received as much as six inches of rain. Hundreds of thousands of homes lost electricity due to trees toppling onto power lines. All local transit operators experienced problems that caused suspensions of service on parts of all their lines. One

train of Arrow III's lost power west of the Rahway station, stranding passengers for five hours until a diesel engine arrived to tow the train. Hoboken Terminal was flooded, so trains were being terminated at Secaucus Junction. Raritan Valley Line trains bypassed the Bound Brook station due to flooding as this column was being completed.

From Boston, Todd Glickman reported that on Sunday evening, the nor'easter affected three of the four rapid transit lines. The storm brought over four inches of rain and winds gusting to over 40 mph. The Green Line's Riverside Branch was suspended between Kenmore and Reservoir as the Muddy River was overflowing and flooding the portal near Fenway station. On the Red Line, service was suspended between JFK/UMASS and Ashmont, due to flooding. On the Blue Line, a wire problem near Orient Heights suspended service between Wonderland and Airport. In all cases, MBTA's website said substitute bus service would be provided. The D/Riverside was suspended between the Newton Highlands and Reservoir stations as a significant wash-out occurred below the right-of-way in the Newton area. Bus service replaced the trolleys between Newton Highlands and Reservoir. Normal service resumed on March 19.

Member Dave Safford sent this report from *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. "Heavy rains and winds played hob with area rail service over the weekend. Downed utility poles took out PATCO service Saturday (13th) afternoon. Service is expected to be restored Monday (15th) after the morning rush. The Princeton shuttle was suspended, and Amtrak service to New York was out for about six hours Saturday. 2.57" of rain in Philadelphia Saturday was a record breaker, but Newark, New Jersey received 3.99 inches, an inch over the previous record for the date."

OTHER TRANSIT SYSTEMS**BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

Long overdue is the purchase of new diesel-electric locomotives. In 2007, 38 were to be acquired, but then a challenge to "Buy America" requirements was made by Motive Power Incorporated over the awarding of the \$148.5 million contract to Vossloh Espana S.A., a Spanish unit of a German company. Last September, MBTA issued a request for proposals, and the closing date was February 5. Since this is a negotiated RFP (Request for Proposals) (vs. a lowest cost IFB (Information for Bidders)), MBTA will not announce the winner and results until negotiations have been completed, which could take many months.

Beginning July 1, the Orange Line will have only one crewmember. There is a precedent because on June 22, 1996, Guards (Bostonian for Conductor) were removed from Blue Line trains. For now, the Red Line will retain its Guards. Thanks to Todd for these two reports.

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Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 13)***PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA**

After floating the idea that the "R" route designations would be removed from Regional Rail trains, the decision was announced on March 5. Also gone are the various colors that were assigned to each of the lines. They will all now be a "bluish-gray." SEPTA's 13 lines were numbered R1-R8, and planned to pair one ex-Pennsylvania and one ex-Reading line. R4 was not used and R1 was assigned to the Airport Line. Some examples, the R2/Warminster Line will become the Warminster Line and the R8/Fox Chase Line will be known as the Fox Chase Line. There is one exception, the R6/Norristown Line, which will be called the Manayunk-Norristown line to highlight Manayunk's popularity and distinguish the Regional Rail line from the Norristown High Speed Line, formerly known as Route 100. When all of the names are known, they will be published in this column. A SEPTA spokesman said, "This is just a rebranding. Service will not change. The new schedules would indicate which trains ran through the tunnel to the other end of the paired lines so passengers could ride all the way through if they chose." The changes become effective in July.

A friend wrote: "I think that the use of the 'R' route numbers for regional rail routes made a lot of sense when the Center City Tunnel opened in 1984, but SEPTA has watered down the through operation of the tunnel in the last decade, both by terminating more trains in Center City or just outside Center City and by having trains change routes in Center City (i.e., having an inbound R3/West Trenton train turn to an outbound R1/Airport train). It makes sense now, since the system is becoming more and more radial, rather than regional, to do away with the 'R' route numbers. I think it's open to debate as to whether or not it's been the right decision for SEPTA to change the nature of the system from a regional through-running system to a strongly CBD-oriented radial system (which it was before the opening of the Center City Commuter Tunnel)."

New timetables went into effect on the R3/Elwyn Line on March 7 due to midday track maintenance and brush cutting work. Member Lee Winson wrote that the cover features two St. Louis Car Company Silverliner IIIs (1967). The January 17 editions remain in effect on the other lines, where six trains were renumbered or re-timed. Suburban timetables were changed on March 15. Norristown Line (formerly Route 100) express trips no longer stop at Ardmore Avenue. Route 101 service is replaced with shuttle buses between Drexel Hill and Media, as part of a continuing project. Lee also wrote that the January 17 R2/Warminster timetable has a Budd Silverliner II (1963) on its cover, while the others feature Silverliner IVs.

Member Bob Kingman found posted on the Philadel-

phia NRHS web site, photos of single-unit 701, a Silverliner V, being delivered to Liberty Yard at Wayne Junction on March 3. The website mentioned that the mock-up wore the same number.

On March 5, Transportation Secretary LaHood announced the last distribution of federal stimulus funds. This includes \$12.5 million to SEPTA, \$9.23 million for a makeover of the R5 Malvern station, including the addition of 46 parking spaces, with the balance for other projects on the R5 Line. Contracts are already let, and work is to be completed by June, 2011.

SEPTA, on March 12, announced plans, subject to approval by its Board, for fare hikes and other cost increases to be effective July 1. Base fares will rise 6% and midday off peak discount fares will be canceled. Some fare zones may also be consolidated. Increases are intended to track inflation since the last hike in 2007. Public hearings are scheduled throughout April.

SEPTA warned that big ticket capital projects not funded by federal stimulus monies will be deferred if the federal government does not approve placing tolls on I-80, which crosses the entire width of the northern part of the state. Toll proposals have been rejected twice before, but hope springs eternal. Thanks to Dave Saford for the three last reports.

WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

MARC reported that effective March 15, Amtrak began a tie replacement project between New Carrollton and Baltimore on northbound Track 1. Similar to what took place in New Jersey over the past few years, schedules are to change every 4-5 weeks over the next six months, but none were issued. Initially, four trains (#400, 402, 450, and 538) are affected by either adding or dropping certain station stops and with minor re-timings. Thanks to member Steve Erlitz for this report.

Beginning March 10, Virginia Railway Express held public hearings on proposed service changes to take place this July, which were reported in last month's **Bulletin**. In order to determine which trains would terminate at L'Enfant, VRE initiated a public outreach campaign on February 1 to seek comment. Staff suggested that Manassas Trains #330 and 333 and Fredericksburg Trains #304 and 301 would terminate at L'Enfant in the morning and originate at L'Enfant in the evening. Numerous comments both supporting and opposing the proposal were received, as were many questions. After a preliminary review of the comments, it became obvious that a full comment period would benefit both VRE and riders.

CHESTERTON, INDIANA

Public hearings were held between March 8 and March 15 on proposals to raise fares by 2% on June 1, 2010 and June 1, 2011 at all stations except Hege-wisch. Contrast this to the proposed 25% increase NJ Transit is seeking. NICTD would also change the family fare policy, which currently permits up to two children 13

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years of age or younger to ride free with each parent/adult on off-peak weekday and weekend/holiday trains to just one. In addition, eastbound Train #11 (3:58 PM Millennium Station) would be re-designated from an off-peak train to a peak hour train. If approved, the most expensive monthly ticket to South Bend, presently \$303.40, would increase to \$309.45 this June and to \$315.65 in June 2011.

Member Jim Beeler sent copies of a NICTD timetable issued effective February 1, to account for the fare increase at Hegewisch. This was reported in last month's **Bulletin**.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Jim also sent copies of Metra Electric timetables in the NEW FORMAT! After all that was written, every Metra timetable once again has the same format. This edition, which is dated November 22, 2009 has "0210" on the reverse, but does not have the larger date as have the Milwaukee District North Line (Fox Lake) and the North Central Service (Antioch), which are dated February 1, 2010 (March **Bulletin**).

AUSTIN, TEXAS

On March 5, Capital Metrorail announced that its 32-mile Red Line connecting Leander and Austin would open on March 22. Nine trips starting at 5:25 AM have been scheduled in the morning (six southbound and three northbound), as have ten trips in the afternoon (six northbound and four southbound). Free rides were in effect for the first week, March 22-26. Service will operate weekdays only. A number of start-up dates were missed, beginning in December, 2008.

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Lots of changes have taken place since the last RailRunner report. On the Internet, I found that on Memorial Day Weekend, 2009 (May 24), Sunday service consisting of two round trips was operated for one day and then began regularly on Labor Day weekend, September 6, 2009. In addition, in order to comply with Federal Transit Administration regulations requiring "reduced" fares to be half the amount of "full" fares, weekday one-way fares were raised by \$1-\$2 effective February 15. The three-zone day pass went up by \$1, and the fares are the same every day. One-way fares range from \$2 (one zone) to \$8 (6 zones), and reduced fares (over age 65, students with valid I.D. and disabled) are half of those amounts. Monthly fares are \$35-\$100 with reduced monthly fares also half.

Due to a budget shortfall caused by lower-than-expected gross receipts taxes that fund RailRunner operations, the Rio Metro Board made some fiscal adjustments. Effective February 20, Saturday service was reduced by five trips so that there are now 4½ round-trips.

A new station, Kewa (Santo Domingo Pueblo), located

between SF County/NM 599 and Sandoval/US 550, opened on March 22, and new timetables were issued. There remain two unopened stations: Zia Road and Sandia Pueblo.

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

The Las Vegas Monorail Company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection on January 13 but will continue to operate. The 3.9-mile system links casinos and the Las Vegas Convention Center east of the Strip. Its economic woes were blamed on a 30% decline in convention traffic to Las Vegas. Company officials said the debt has prevented them from getting financing to secure an additional \$500 million that would enable the line to be extended to McCarran International Airport. The largest creditor is Bombardier Transit Corporation, which operates and maintains the trains. A comprehensive article written by members Raymond Berger and Raymond Mercado appeared in the January-June, 2003 **Headlights**. Thanks to member John Pappas for sending this report from **The Las Vegas Sun**.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

On February 9, a groundbreaking ceremony was held to mark the beginning of construction of the \$1.6 billion Central Subway in the city's South of Market District. Scheduled for completion in 2018, the subway will provide service below the SoMa, Union Square, and Chinatown neighborhoods. Tunneling is scheduled to begin in 2012. A trip is projected to take 8 to 10 minutes between Chinatown and the Caltrain station at Fourth and Brannan Streets, compared to about 20 minutes on a bus. Thanks to member Phil Hom for this news.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Bi-level cab car 638 was pictured in an article I found on line that reported that the first two new cars for Metrolink service had arrived at the Port of Long Beach on March 2. This part of an order of 117 that were constructed with a crash energy management system by Hyundai Rotem. This firm is also building SEPTA's Silverliner Vs. Metrolink has had two crashes, which resulted in 36 fatalities. The first took place on January 26, 2005 when a driver bent on suicide abandoned his SUV on the tracks in Glendale and the other on September 12, 2008 in Chatsworth, when the Engineer ran through a red signal. The investigation found that he had been distracted – texting while operating the train.

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

The Valley Transportation Authority held a public hearing on January 13 to discuss plans for a 1.57-mile extension of the Vasona LRT from Winchester to Hacienda. The original Vasona Corridor LRT Project was proposed to extend from downtown San Jose through the city of Campbell to the Town of Los Gatos with nine new stations and four park-and-ride lots. The first portion of the project was completed in 2005 and extended LRT to the Winchester station in Campbell. The \$175 million project would construct two tracks, expand park-

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Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 15)*

ing capacity, and add pedestrian access at the Winchester station. A new Hacienda station with an optional park-and-ride lot would also be built, along with end-of-the-line facilities. Six existing station platforms along the Vasona Corridor alignment (Winchester, Campbell, Hamilton, Bascom, Fruitdale, and Race) would be lengthened.

OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA

The Ottawa Citizen reported that the City Council, on January 13, voted 19-4 in support of a plan that includes about 12.5 km (7¾ miles) of LRT with 13 stations between Tunney's Pasture and Blair Road. Included is a 3.2 km (2 miles) tunnel, all of which is to last Ottawa into the 2030s. Funding of the estimated C\$2.1 billion project was not addressed.

MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA

Railway Age reported that AMT has awarded Quebec-based Bombardier Transportation with a three-year, C\$34 million (US\$31 million) contract to provide locomotive and passenger car maintenance effective July 1, 2010.

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Inauguration of the Olympic Line was on January 21. Attendees were advised to ride the Canada Line to the Olympic Village station. The latter opened on August 17, 2009. Thanks to Raymond Berger for sending this information.

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

Member and Jerusalem resident David Klepper happily reported seeing bright bronze trolley wire being installed above the tracks over a Jerusalem street, while riding an Egged Route 28 bus. "The installation looks beautiful and neat. Not catenary, but single wire with ears that could accommodate trolley shoes or wheels! A miracle! Span wires between opposing simple poles, elsewhere brackets and center poles and elsewhere brackets from one side, but those don't have the wire yet."

He continued: "All stages of light rail construction can be viewed at once now, except that we have completely passed the preparation stage such as relocation of utilities and the basic excavation stage. In parts of Jerusalem one can see rail being installed, in others exact gauging, pavement infill, etc., right up to trolley wire. Parts of downtown Jerusalem have the tracks paved over temporarily to permit better traction for the buses and taxis using the lanes; in other areas the track areas are pedestrian zones, and traffic is rerouted every few weeks as major construction moves from one area to another. The line appears double-track all the way, starts in the north at Pizgat Zave, uses some major streets in that area before entering on the 'Main Road North' at the pair of road junctions at the west side of French Hill, or Givat Tzarfadit, where it runs on the west

side of that road south three stops to Shimon HaTzadik, near Or Samaiach Yeshiva. At the stop before, at the El Hussein Arabic Language Technical High School, there is a cutback crossover. Just north of the French Hill Junction stop there is a single-track wye and branch running east to the yard and shops, with a short tunnel on this branch. South of Shimon HaTzadik, there is a shift to center reservation, which last all the way south to the junction with Niviim intersection, not far from the USA Consulate (a few blocks east). At that point the tracks shift to the east, bordering the Arab commercial center, run along the Old City Walls in a grassed reservation, and then go to a short bit of street running through Safra Square, into Jaffa Road. At the City Hall, the cars will use Jaffa Road, mostly on the south side, through the main downtown area to the Central Bus Station, cross the big intersection west of the bus station on the artistic suspension bridge, and then follow a mostly center reservation on Herzl Boulevard to Mount Herzl. All track uses girder rail, and everything is paved except for the area next to the Old City walls." David reported that the first trial run was successfully made on February 24.

BEIJING, CHINA

Todd Glickman had a business trip to Qingdao, China, passed through Beijing, and sent the following report. "While I didn't have an opportunity to ride the subway, (*Editor's Note – I didn't either during my 2007 trip*), I read an article in the English edition of a local newspaper that a major subway upgrade has been approved. Taking place over the next four years, the system that now handles five million riders per day will see the following: Stations along Lines 1 and 13 and the Batong Line will all be equipped with screen doors. Some 114 trainsets that are more than 20 years old will be replaced. One hundred and seventy four newer trains built in 1998 will be retrofitted with air conditioning. Intervals on Lines 1, 4, and 5 will be shortened to two minutes by adding new trainsets. In addition, a new transfer link will connect Lines 13 and 10 at Zhichunlu Station, and two new stations, Tsinghua Donglu and Jiancaicheng East, will be added to Line 13. Longer platforms are being constructed at stations on Lines 6, 7, and 14 to accommodate longer trainsets."

FROM THE HISTORY FILES

150 Years ago: On April 23, 1860, the first Staten Island Railroad Company passenger train departed from Eltingville Station to Vanderbilt's Landing (Clifton), a distance of 7½ miles. On June 2, 1860, service was extended to Tottenville.

100 Years ago: On April 13, 1910, the Long Island Rail Road operated a test train through the East River Tunnels between New York Penn Station and Queens. Construction had been completed earlier in the month.

News items and comments concerning this column may be emailed to NYDnewseditor@aol.com.

GREAT NOTCH STATION CLOSES

by Larry Kiss

On January 15, 2010, service to the Great Notch station on NJ Transit's Montclair-Boonton Line was discontinued, with the last train scheduled to leave westbound at 7:41 PM. I decided that I wanted to ride into history that day, so I boarded Train #1003, due out of Hoboken at 3:34 PM. Since October 13, 1956, trains to Great Notch left from the Lackawanna's Hoboken terminal. Prior to that date trains left from the Erie's terminal at Pavonia Avenue in Jersey City.

As my four-car train followed the Morristown Line, it passed the sites of abandoned stations at Harrison (closed September 15, 1984) and then Roseville Avenue (closed September 14, 1984), where the train entered the Montclair Line. Continuing up the Montclair Line it then passed the abandoned Ampere station (closed April 8, 1991). After Bay Street in Montclair, the train traversed the short connection onto the former Erie Greenwood Lake Line (opened September 29, 2002) and continued north on its way to Great Notch.

The main reason why Great Notch was closed goes back to August 22, 2004, when the nearby Montclair State University station opened with a high-level platform, many more trains, and a huge parking garage. Great Notch, which had opened in 1905, had very limited parking and few trains. (A table of train service over the years was published in the October, 2008 *Bul-*

letin.) The light ridership was borne out as I was the only passenger to get off at 4:18 PM. Fellow Division member Barry Zuckerman and a couple of other observers were there to greet me. The 4:18 PM would be the only one of the final four PM trains to arrive in daylight.

As the 4:18 PM pulled away, we reminded ourselves of some of the historical dates in Great Notch's history. The station burned down on January 20, 1988. It was now a low-level platform on the outbound side with a bus shelter. Great Notch was also a junction for the Caldwell Branch until passenger service ended on September 30, 1966. Those tracks were ripped up in 1979. After a few minutes, Barry drove me to the Montclair State University station to board an electric *Midtown Direct* train to Penn Station New York. This was something that could never be done at Great Notch as all service was diesel even though the overhead electric was installed to the west of the station. When the M&E was re-electrified in the 1980s, it was done with 25Kv a.c., and then extended to west of the Great Notch station after the Montclair Connection was built. This was another nail in the coffin for Great Notch. And so Great Notch has now been added to the long list of abandoned stations. Rest in peace.

ERA Memories

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George Kuhn, who presided at the monthly meetings, to report on the month's line closures. Herbie Frank travelled extensively and personally rode almost every last electric train or trolley, rendering detailed reports. Herb had a "sad" voice pitch and narrated each last run right down to the final wheeze of the air pumps - no kidding! He used a romanticist style. George Kuhn, who presided at the meetings, was quite the opposite. George had a genuine "Brooklyn accent," something much talked about but rarely found. This energetic man had a lot of rough edges and most of us were surprised to learn that he worked for the Board of Education. We could not imagine how a man like that would behave in front of a class. It turned out many years later that we discovered he worked for the Board of Education's Supply Division and was not teaching classes. There was much relief among the members when this fact became widely known! The foundation of a major traction library was one of his ardent desires. His sister worked enthusiastically alongside him on this project. George himself was extremely knowledgeable about all things traction. He answered all my questions patiently and gave thorough explanations of details that folks my age were not

likely to know. He was all in all, a capable, competent, and friendly leader who built up the organization. The meetings were usually crowded and it was quite clear that Mr. Kuhn was in charge. He moved the sessions along in a timely manner.

One interesting young fellow, whose name has faded from my memory, carried a heavy binder with line drawings of all the tracks in the New York subway system. Whenever any speaker made an error about the number of tracks during a movie or slide presentation, he would immediately interrupt the presenter and correct the number of tracks mentioned. He became a part of the scene for many years. The meetings were very well attended and generally had informative presentations. There were also many vendors of photographs, books and traction memorabilia. One of the first times that New York, Westchester & Boston movies were to be shown by Frank Schlegel, the photographer, Mr. Kuhn got into a harangue with several members about the route of a particular Brooklyn trolley line at some given past time. The issue got out of hand and Mr. Schlegel soon quietly departed without the movie being shown! We were greatly disappointed and those movies were not offered again for several years.

We were graced by E.J. Quinby's presence infre-

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Around New York's Transit System

Rebuilt Avenue U and Neck Road Southbound Platforms in Service

On January 18, 2010, the new southbound Avenue U and Neck Road (Brighton Line) platforms were placed in service and the northbound platforms at the above stations were closed for rebuilding. This project should be completed in approximately one year. The original southbound platforms were closed on Friday evening, December 5, 2008, after which they were demolished and rebuilt.

At the present time, southbound **B** and **Q** trains stop at the above stations while northbound trains bypass them. Special B3K bus service no longer operates on weekday afternoons, but operates on weekdays from 5:50 to 9:10 AM on Avenue U between Gerritsen Avenue and Ocean Avenue to/from the Kings Highway/Brighton station.

Campaign for Additional Station on **7** Extension

The **7** subway extension will have only one station, the terminal at 34th Street and 11th Avenue. Another station at 41st Street and 10th Avenue, which would have cost \$800 million, was planned but not constructed because there was only enough money for one station.

Meanwhile, a building with 395 apartments on the east side of 10th Avenue between 37th and 38th Streets and a two-tower building on the west side of the avenue with 865 apartments are nearly completed. Another large residential tower is being built at 41st Street and 10th Avenue. To provide transportation for these residents, the Real Estate Board of New York started a campaign to obtain money for a station from Washington.

The new 34th Street station is expected to encourage high-rise construction where warehouses, factories, and parking lots once stood.

New York City Transit's Snow Fighting Equipment

February, 2010 was the snowiest month ever recorded in New York City and the February 25-26 snowstorm, which dumped 20.9 inches of snow on the city, was the fourth largest. It was only 0.1 inches less, but less windy, than the famous Blizzard of 1888, which disrupted all rail and vehicular traffic.

NYC Transit was able to keep the trains running during this cold, snowy winter. But service was curtailed slightly, and the Franklin Avenue and Rockaway Park Shuttles were out of service for brief periods during the February 25-26 snowstorm.

Staten Island Railway, which is not a part of NYC Transit, was out of service for a longer period during the same snowstorm.

The Department of Subways maintains a fleet of snow and ice-breaking equipment that keeps outdoor tracks and the third rail clear of snow and ice during severe winter weather. This fleet, which is designed to keep the trains moving, includes snow throwers, jet-powered snow blowers, and specially-built de-icing cars.

When there is a forecast of heavy snow, all out-of-service trains are moved from outdoor yards and stored underground. There are 220 miles of outdoor track, including Rockaway, Sea Beach, Brighton, and Dyre Avenue, which are vulnerable because they are on the surface or in open cuts. The following equipment is available for snow removal:

- Four snow throwers equipped with a two-stage impeller and side-mounted rotating brushes that throw snow up to 200 feet. This machine can remove 3,000 tons of snow an hour
- Five jet blowers use a jet engine to remove accumulated snow from the roadbed
- Six de-icer cars are equipped with scraper shoes that scrape off the ice from the third rail. These cars spray a stream of de-icing fluid to melt and prevent ice buildup on the third rail
- The ballast regulator uses brushes or brooms to evenly sweep and push up snow onto an undercab conveyor
- Rider cars are heated and insulated cars that transport crews and equipment to snow removal sites. Cars are equipped with ice scrapers to keep the third rail clear
- All diesel locomotives are equipped with small snow plows at both ends. Attached to the locomotives are scraper shoes that remove the ice from the third rail.

ERA Memories

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quently and he was a treasure. A talk by Mr. Quinby was an experience in humor. He wore a signature western style bow tie and with his height, you could not miss him. His nickname was "Stretch." Few rail fans could

write as compellingly as he did, and his ability to make you part of his experiences was extraordinary. His natural humor pervaded all of his excellent writings. He and Herman Rinke deserve special attention as founding fathers and organization leaders. We will write about them at a later date.