The Bulletin

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The Bulletin

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For general inquiries, contact us at bulletin@erausa.org or by phone at (212) 986-4482 (voice mail available). ERA's website is www.erausa.org.

Editorial Staff:
Editor-in-Chief:
Bernard Linder
News Editor:
Randy Glucksman
Contributing Editor:
Jeffrey Erlitz

Production Manager:
David Ross

GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL IS 100 YEARS OLD

The new Grand Central Terminal, which opened on February 1, 1913, was large enough to handle New York Central's long distance and suburban commuter trains.

About 1902, it became evident that the old Grand Central Station could not be expanded to accommodate future increased traffic without building a new, larger terminal. To build this new station, additional land adjoining Lexington, Park, and Madison Avenues was purchased, increasing the terminal's total area from 23 acres to 79.

The November, 1921 ***Transit Record***, a Transit Commission publication, informs us that the terminal has two levels. There are 32 tracks adjacent to platforms on the upper level and 17 tracks adjoining platforms on the lower or suburban level. The suburban level, which is about 44 feet below the street, has 14.1 miles of track and an area of 32.8 acres. The upper level, 20 feet below the street, has 19.5 miles of track and an area of 46.4 acres. There are two loops south of the platforms. The upper level loop is above the lower level loop and is nearly at the same level as the IRT subway.

Excavation for the new station began in August, 1903. Before construction started, a temporary station was built on the east side of the yard, where suburban trains terminated. The waiting room was relocated to the first floor of the Grand Central Palace. Express service was moved from the west side of the yard. Excavation material was used to widen the embankment for a fourth track to Croton and excess material dumped in the Highbridge marshes before a yard was built there. To build the terminal, the railroad was allowed to close a portion of Park Avenue, but it was not allowed to interrupt traffic on this busy thoroughfare. It solved this problem by building an elevated circumferential highway.

A January, 1902 collision in the smoke-filled Park Avenue Tunnel forced management to adopt electric traction. The New York State Legislature reacted promptly and passed a law stating that all trains south of the Harlem River must be operated by electricity after May 1, 1905.

On September 30, 1906 the Vice President of the railroad drove the first electric train from Highbridge to Grand Central. An electric locomotive pulled two private cars and five Pullman coaches. On board was a party of 100 people including electrical engineers, railroad men, and representatives from Westinghouse and General Electric. The train departed from Highbridge at 2:40 PM and arrived at Grand Central at 2:58 PM, after reaching 55 miles per hour on the viaduct. Because there was a 1,000-foot third rail gap at 56th Street, the train ran up a 1½-percent grade at speed to avoid stalling. Regular electric service began on December 11, 1906 with four trains operating between Highbridge and Grand Central. Because of great demand, the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad started electric service before it was ready, with five trains to New Rochelle on July 24, 1907 increasing to ten trains as far as Port Chester on August 5. A few electric trains started running to Stamford on October 6, but full electric service was not operated until July 1, 1908. Because of the slow delivery of electric car equipment, steam locomotives continued to power trains into Grand Central Terminal until June 27, 1908, three years after the original deadline but long be-

(Continued on page 6)

NEXT TRIP: NYCT CONEY ISLAND SHOPS (RESCHEDULED) — SATURDAY, MARCH 2

THE GENESIS OF "DASHING DAN"
Part One—Rapid Transit and Early Electrification on the Long Island Rail Road
by George Chiasson
(Continued from January, 2013 issue)

Finally, on July 26, 1905, with the same pressure to attract seasonal patronage being brought to bear that had motivated railroading to the Rockaways for decades, excavation work at the underground Flatbush Avenue terminal was cleared away enough to begin electrified train operations from its first two tracks, which consisted of artificially shortened versions of 5 and 6 on its north side. Effective immediately, half of the service between Brooklyn and Rockaway Park was converted from traditional steam-drawn trains of locomotives and coaches to the new steel MUs along with their wooden-bodied gate car companions — a complete changeover being delayed until September 20, when enough electric rolling stock was on hand. Thus was opened the fourth and final section of the Atlantic Avenue improvements committed to in 1897, comprising the new Flatbush Avenue terminal (with attached and nearby yard facilities to be completed over the next two years) and a tunnel 1.3 miles in length between Flatbush and Bedford Avenues, where trains rose straight onto the steel elevated structure that had originally opened in November, 1903. Steam-powered "rapid transits" to Rockaway Junction, what remained of the steam-powered service to Rockaway Park, and traditional consists to Far Rockaway continued to originate at the temporary surface level terminal on Atlantic Avenue and the BRT el stub above for several more months. They continued to call at the existing surface level stop at Bedford Avenue, then made their way onto the 1903 elevated structure through temporary track connections by the new tunnel's incline. Trains from both Flatbush Avenue terminals (above and below ground) also passed through the site of the new Nostrand Avenue station (then still under construction), descended into the 1904 tunnel near Ralph Avenue, and then re-emerged to serve the existing low-platform stop (as relocated to the west side of the Bay Ridge Division connection in 1902) at Manhattan Beach Junction. There were not yet any signals in the (temporarily ventilated) tunnel between these two stops; interim block stations were set up at either end of it (Ralph Avenue-west and Stone Avenue-east) until 1906. One other note of interest regarding the newest tunnel connecting Flatbush Avenue terminal and that as-yet-unopened stop at Nostrand Avenue: Provision was included along its south wall for a two-track, grade-level cut-off to BRT's "Brighton Line" (originally the Brooklyn, Flatbush & Coney Island Railway), should such through service be desired at a future date. This is particularly intriguing given that by 1905 it had been 25 years since the last trains between Coney Island and Hunters Point passed through "Bedford Junction" in its prior incarnation at street level.

Upon departing East New York, electric Rockaway Park trains ascended to the elevated structure opened in May and July, 1903 and rumbled above Atlantic Avenue, passing the future location of "PR" Cabin, the Luzerne Coal siding, and the site of the Warwick Street station (which was also still under construction). Back at ground level, they paused at Norwood Avenue and Tower 64, then proceeded onto the new "local" iron of the four-track segment that began immediately beyond the Chestnut Street BRT ramp. The two extra tracks were provided to expedite runarounds between "local" rapid transit trains (now including the electrics to Rockaway Park) and special expresses such as those to the beaches or race tracks, as well as freights. The first LIRR electric trains then made consecutive stops at Railroad Avenue (where the new Tower 65, later known as "CN," was then still being built), Union Course, and Woodhaven before gliding into the switches at Woodhaven Junction. There they diverged to the Rockaway Beach Branch and paused at the existing, but now slightly realigned, low station platforms located on the curved connecting tracks. Steam-powered trains also still remained at this time between Long Island City and both branches in the Rockaways, many of them running express from at least Fresh Pond, if not Long Island City itself and making their first stop at Hammels. In this instance that junction became a major connection point between the different termini, with the locomotive-driven trains between Long Island City and Far Rockaway often (but not always) being looped through Jamaica Bay and Valley Stream in both directions.

At the time of its initial electrification in July of 1905, the Rockaway Beach Branch was still at grade through the Ozone Park station, which then consisted of three tracks paralleled by two outside low-level loading platforms plus an 1884-vintage wood stationhouse. Tower 91 (later "RK"), which had originally been built in 1890, was contained therein, and was coordinated with Tower 66 at Woodhaven Junction (later "WT") to control all moves between the Rockaway Beach and Atlantic Divisions. The line then spread to four tracks, with Tower 92 ("LR") at the Liberty Avenue crossing next in sight, followed by the "local" stops at Aqueduct (established in

(Continued on page 3)

The Genesis of "Dashing Dan"

(Continued from page 2)

1883) and Ramblersville (opened in June, 1899). Both had been reconfigured by March, 1904 with low-level loading platforms (plus small shelters on each) positioned against the outer tracks of the four-track main in that area. The Ramblersville location had grown out of a swampy wilderness where the New York, Woodhaven & Rockaway was originally located on a trestle in 1880, and was set on a massive fill created in part by using excavation output, or "spoil," from the Pennsylvania's Terminal project in Manhattan. As on the Atlantic Division main line, the four-track layout through Aqueduct and Ramblersville was to allow "through" trains (meaning specials and those from Long Island City) to by-pass "local" trains (also known as "rapid transits" or "suburbans") en route to and from the Rockaways.

South of the Ramblersville depot, the main line squeezed back from four tracks to two at Tower 93 (later known as "WD," then later still as "Beach"), which was located at the "West End" of the first long trestle across Grassy Bay (a part of the larger body known as Jamaica Bay). The area at "WD" would also later be known as Hamilton Beach and have a station of its own, but in July, 1905 it was only contiguous to the extended pier work that stretched well onto the water and supported the Hotel Howard resort complex. This was still a fairly exclusive adult summer destination at the time (in more contemporary terms a "pleasure palace"), that was ultimately involved in a spectacular blaze that lit up the area for miles on the night of October 23, 1907. Most of the buildings were destroyed, though it was early in the off-season so no one was there except three very surprised security guards. An army of firefighters were brought out to the site from Brooklyn by a special LIRR train and, incredibly, service was maintained on the Rockaway Beach Branch through much of the fire's duration. To enable this, the hotel's underpinnings had been axed and sawed away from the railroad trestle fairly soon after the fire started in a smoldering boat storage shed. Thus as the complex burned, its buildings and pier work fell into the bay one by one over a period of several hours while LIRR's trestle stood intact. Neither the train station nor any of the buildings were rebuilt afterward, though this might be seen as a chilling preview of what was to come 43 years later.

The Goose Creek station and its tight attendant cluster of marina, hotel, and beer halls was next to be encountered at the south end of the long Grassy Bay trestle in July, 1905, followed by Signal Station 94 ("EC") at the Goose Hill Channel swing bridge. This channel and areas near The Raunt and Broad Channel stations were also filled using spoil from the Pennsylvania Terminal project starting in January of 1906, at which time the Goose Hill Channel swing span was permanently closed. The small, secluded low-platform station at The Raunt was sandwiched between block stations 95 (later "WU," located approximately at Rulers Bay Hassock) and 96 (later "ER," at the *eastern* end of The *Raunt*'s multiple crossings) before trains arrived at the large, low platform of Broad Channel station, which was rebuilt and expanded markedly as part of an earlier fill project in 1900. There was then a swing bridge in the middle of the North Channel trestle controlled by "BC" cabin, followed by a swing span at Tower 101 (later "HJ," then "Draw"), which was located at the south end of the trestle across Beach Channel. This installation controlled the bridge and the busy north side of Hammels Junction, where trains bound for Rockaway Park and Far Rockaway diverged. It had also been the location of the Beach Channel station from 1888 until the station and its surrounding shanties, bars, and rented bungalows were destroyed by fire on the night of December 13, 1903. Devoid of its destination value, trains were no longer stopping there after January 11, 1904 and the stop was finally, formally abandoned on May 31, 1905. By 1908, in the advent of Rockaway Beach operations to Penn Station, a full automatic block signal system was finally installed on the busy Jamaica Bay trackage between WD Tower and The Raunt, which enabled retirement of the existing "Signal Stations" at "EC" and "WU." It was extended from there through Hammels Junction two years later to reach both branches in the Rockaways and the overall installation thus completed.

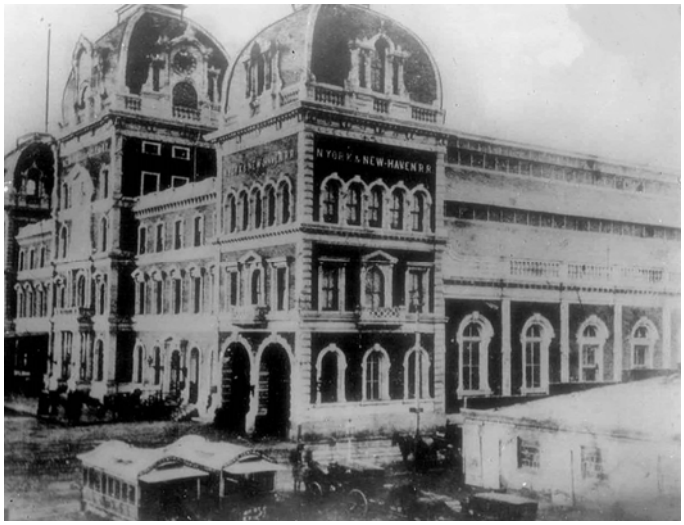
LIRR's initial electric trains then stopped at the curving, low-level station platform on the westerly side of Hammels (note that the apostrophe ['] in "Hammel's" was now gone) and continued their turn onto the Rockaway Park Branch, making their next stop at Holland. Following that was the Steeplechase station, which was by then one of the busiest on the system (at least in the summer). The next stop was Seaside, beyond which the right-of-way passed through "SE" interlocking, spread from two tracks to four, and entered the Rockaway Park terminal, which was under the control of "AY Cabin," located in the ticket office. There all regularly scheduled LIRR trains terminated at one of two low platforms at ground level, but BRT and beach specials were reversed using the upper level loop and its wooden low-level platforms. At least since the improvements of May, 1899, the Rockaway Park terminal had also contained a medium-sized yard to lay over equipment (both regular trains for LIRR and trolleys for Ocean Electric), which in part was replaced by a large new "MU Shed" in 1904 to prepare for electrification. During the summertime LIRR had to use a pre-payment system of "pens" to guide the crowds onto trains at some Rockaway stations (Hammels, Steeplechase, and Seaside, for example) with the New York-bound track gated off and covered over as a platform extension to hold the milling swarms of humanity.

(Continued on page 4)

Grand Central Terminal is 100 Years Old

(Continued from page 1)

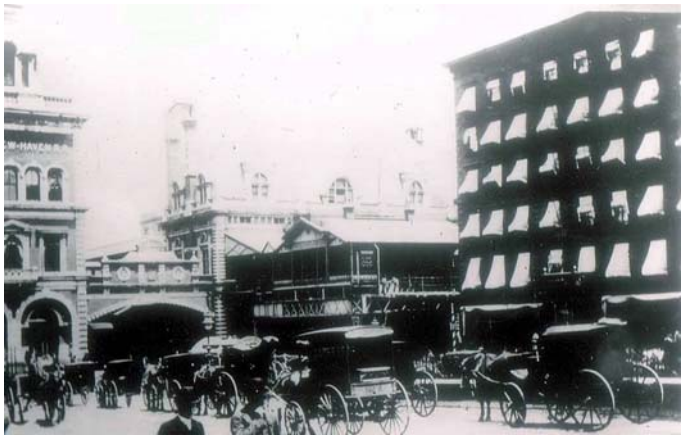
E. 42nd Street and Park Avenue, 1875.
Bernard Linder collection



E. 42nd Street and Park Avenue looking northwest, 1875.
Bernard Linder collection

E. 42nd Street and Park Avenue, 1878.
Bernard Linder collection

E. 42nd Street in 1885, looking east at Grand Central. Manhattan Railways' 42nd Street Shuttle is in the background.
Bernard Linder collection



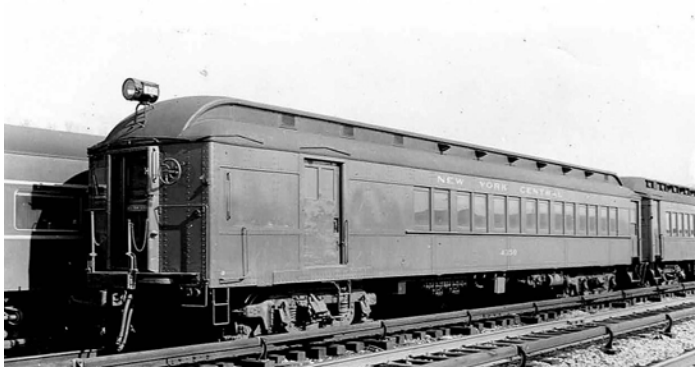
E. 42nd Street and Park Avenue looking northeast, 1887.
Bernard Linder collection

E. 42nd Street and Park Avenue looking north, 1887.
Bernard Linder collection

(Continued on page 5)

Grand Central Terminal is 100 Years Old

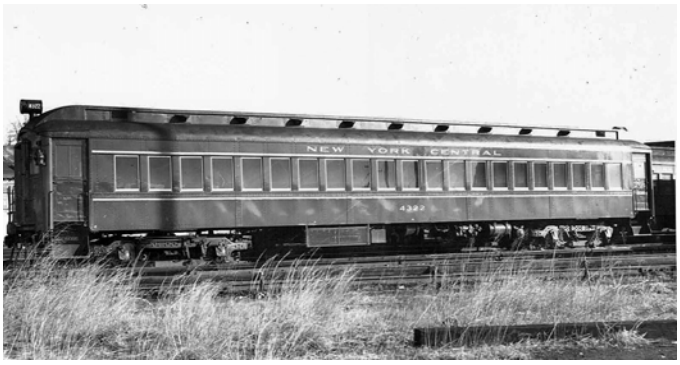
(Continued from page 4)



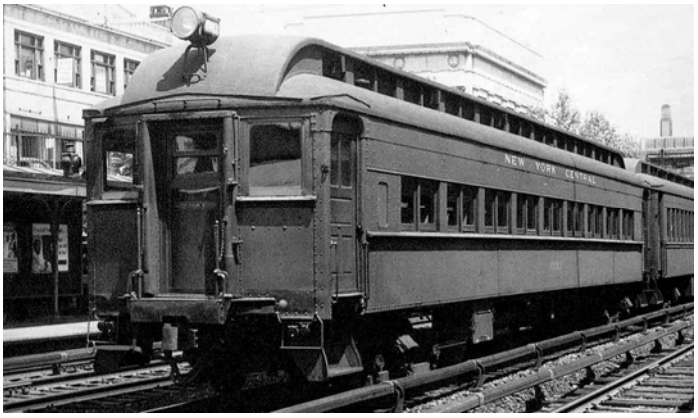
A New York Central baggage car, built in 1907.
Bernard Linder collection

A New York Central car built in 1907, North White Plains, 1937.
Bernard Linder collection

Lowerre (Yonkers Branch), 1943.
Bernard Linder collection



New York Central car 4322, January, 1963.
Bernard Linder collection



Tremont Avenue.
Bernard Linder collection

Unknown location.
Bernard Linder collection

fore the new terminal opened.

The new terminal was built largely of Stony Creek granite. Facing 42nd Street are three 33-foot-wide and 60-foot-high arched windows and a huge clock above the center window. Above the clock are figures of Hercules, Mercury, and Minerva. The large interior is 275 long, 120 feet wide and 125 feet high with the circular information booth in the center. An astronomical mural painted in the ceiling features thousands of stars, some of which are illuminated. Grand Central is still an important terminal and stands as a monument to the ability and foresight of the New York Central officials who planned it.

The Genesis of "Dashing Dan"

STEP TWO—THE LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD'S RAPID TRANSIT IS ELECTRIFIED

On August 29, 1905, electrified "suburban" service was initiated from the underground Flatbush Avenue terminal (at which Tracks 3 and 4 were opened) to the Rockaway Junction station along the entire length of the Atlantic Division mainline. This replaced the existing steam-powered rapid transit trains that had been running since 1877, and marked the next stage in LIRR's ultimate preparation for one-seat service from outer points in Queens, Nassau, and even Suffolk Counties to New York City. This new route's line-up of stops was the same as that used by Rockaway Park electrics, but at this point the new stations at Nostrand Avenue (between Flatbush and East New York) and Warwick Street (between East New York and Railroad Avenue) were also opened on the elevated structures initiated in 1903. All electrified trains were also shown using the new "local" tracks added between the foot of the Chestnut Street BRT ramp and Woodhaven Junction (and intended for runarounds by expresses), but the new Tower 65 at Railroad Avenue was not yet in use, so access to the outer trackage was still hand-operated.

After passing through the switches that led to the Rockaway Beach Branch, Rockaway Junction suburban electrics paused at the separate, newly raised platforms serving Woodhaven Junction (those which had been relocated in July, 1895), as the Atlantic Division main line compressed from four tracks back to two. Next came the existing station at Clarenceville, which was rebuilt with a pair of high-level wooden platforms, followed by the stop at Morris Park, which retained its low-level platforms. Leads from the Morris Park engine house, and the former South Side main line from Bushwick and Long Island City, joined the Atlantic Division at Tower 67 (renamed "MP" in 1907), which was located at Maure Avenue (130th Street), where the "Berlin Switch" had been installed back in 1876. Also surviving near Tower 67 was the "Engine Runaround Track," which, together with the easterly lead from the Main Line to the Atlantic Division connection at Tower 14, formed a full wye that had once allowed summertime trains of the Brooklyn, Flatbush & Coney Island Railway to cut directly across between the Atlantic Division and the Main Line between 1879 and 1880. Both the railroad facility and its immediate area were served by the Dunton station, a public flag stop located at Van Wyck Avenue since 1890. It had a short high-level wooden platform and was equipped with passenger-controlled signals that requested passing trains to stop.

Beyond Dunton, Atlantic Division trains passed anonymously next to a 26-track freight yard west of Jamaica (and the future site of "Jay" Tower and Jamaica Station), then continued on a very wide right-of-way (12 tracks, including the 8-track yard and its leads) by a turnout that led to the Beaver Street station of the "Old Southern Road." They then came to Tower 15 at Division Street (later called "JT"), which served as the western gateway into the first generation railway depot at "Old" Jamaica. Though its successor is now a major 8-track passenger hub for MTA Long Island Rail Road, the original Jamaica station at Church (153rd) Street had originally consisted of just a single main track plus a long siding, passing through two compact, ground-level platforms since its opening in 1836. The adjacent (Beaver Street) terminal of the "Southern Road" was established in 1867, but was not directly connected with Jamaica by a surface-level foot passage until the Poppenhusen consolidations of 1876, followed by a physical relocation of the Southern's depot building to LIRR's "Jamaica" station at Church (153rd) Street in 1877. A second main track (which also extended back through the Tower 67 convergence to Richmond Hill on the former Southern main line) was added through the station in 1880 and some enlargement of both existing platforms performed, but the first substantial expansion of Jamaica Station was not carried out until it was done in concert with the extension of LIRR "rapid transit" service to Rockaway Junction in June, 1890. At that time the entire facility was duplicated, with four platforms serving four tracks, two of which were shoehorned into the space available between irons, and connected to each other by surface walkways that produced the implied, very dangerous effect of human "flocking" as trains came and went. The facility had become quite overburdened by 1900 and with even greater stress forecast through the developing electrification and associated expansion of its suburban services, the railroad undertook a significant widening of its grade-level main line from just two tracks (as partially widened to four in 1890) to six all the way from Beaver Street (now Parsons Boulevard) to Larch (the present 175th Street), just shy of Rockaway Junction. This was a huge job that was completed on May 27, 1903 and included large new bridges at Prospect, Washington, and Union Hall Streets (now 159th, 160th, and 161st), as well as the installation of a block signal system from Jamaica to Floral Park. In turn this enabled the (old) Jamaica Station itself to be expanded, though in scope it was still quite cramped, to six tracks served by five platforms, all connected through an underground tunnel, by April of 1904. New east end switches were installed past Jamaica that were at first hand-operated as electrified rapid transit service began in August, 1905, with another set of crossovers controlled by the original Tower 41 interlocking next to the station at New York Avenue (now Guy R. Brewer Boulevard). This low platform rapid transit stop had opened at that grade crossing as part of the 1890 service extension to Rockaway Junction and lasted until December, 1905, when it was discontinued. At that time a new Tower 41 (later

(Continued on page 16)

Commuter and Transit Notes

No. 291
by Randy Glucksman

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

After former Chairman & CEO Joe Lhota announced that he would resign effective December 31, 2012, the newly-elected Vice-Chair, Fernando Ferrer, one of the latest appointees, was appointed Acting Chairman, while NYCT President Thomas Prendergast is the Interim Executive Director. Mr. Prendergast served as President of the Long Island Rail Road between 1994 and 2000. Of the ten men who have served as MTA Chairman, Mr. Lhota's tenure (January 9-December 31, 2012), was the shortest.

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (EAST)

The special timetable for Christmas & New Year's Holiday (December 24-26, 2012 and December 31, 2012-January 1, 2013) was available in Grand Central Terminal on December 20, 2012. The cover is the same as has been used since 2005. Details of the Pre-and Post-midnight services appear under **EVE AND POST NEW YEAR'S DAY SERVICE**.

For the third annual New Era Pinstripe Bowl that was held in Yankee Stadium on December 29, 2012, unlike Yankee games and some other events, there was no direct service from lines other than the Hudson, which had all of its trains calling there between 12:49 and 4:02 PM southbound and between 4:13 and 8:13 PM northbound. Attendees riding from the Harlem and New Haven Lines were told to transfer to shuttle trains at Harlem-125th Street. PDF timetables were available on the Internet.

ATU Local 1181, which represents New York City school bus drivers, struck on January 16. The union also represents Hudson Rail Link drivers, who operate buses that serve the northwest Bronx from the Riverdale and Spuyten Duyvil stations. That service was not affected by the strike.

When the Connecticut Department of Transportation increased fares on the New Haven Line, it created a dilemma for Metro-North's increase that is planned for March 1. At present, the cost of a monthly ticket from Greenwich, Cos Cob, Riverside, and Old Greenwich is $263, which is $6 less than the planned increase for Rye and Port Chester. It is permissable for riders to purchase a Greenwich ticket and board at Rye. So, to prevent this, Metro-North will only increase the cost of monthly tickets to $263. CDOT will reimburse Metro-North $6 for every ticket sold at Rye and Port Chester. This is the same as what takes place when NJ Transit fares on the Pascack Valley and Port Jervis Lines are lower in New York State. The practice is known as a "fare hold down."

Grand Central Terminal's Whispering Gallery recently underwent a $450,000 renovation. Located near the famed Oyster Bar restaurant, ***Mileposts*** reported, "the odd acoustics of the 2,300-square-foot gallery have always been impeccable, its iconic bisque-colored herringbone-patterned Guastavino tiles were in dire need of TLC." (Patented by Spanish immigrant Rafael Guastavino in 1885, this method of terra cotta tile construction graces many famous New York City domes and vaults built around the turn of the last century, including the former GCT taxi stand, the Oyster Bar, and St. John the Divine Cathedral.) Over the years, vibrations from passing trains and a 1997 fire have damaged it. The Guastavino family tile business closed in 1962, and Metro-North hired Boston Valley Terra Cotta located in Buffalo to fabricate the tiles and matched the exact size, texture, finish and color of the existing, century-old tiles. 1,600 of the original tiles were retained.

The new timetables that were issued for all lines effective January 5 will remain in effect until April 6. On the covers are a special logo to mark Metro-North's 30th Anniversary.

As has been reported previously, February 1 marks the beginning of Grand Central Terminal's year-long centennial celebration, with a special ceremony on that day. A handout was issued to describe some of these early events:

March 6-July 7: On Time-Grand Central at 100, Contemporary artists' views of GCT

April 10-11: Poetry In Motion & Music Under NY Celebration of Grand Central and Grand Central Talks

May 10-12: Grand Centennial Parade of Trains Weekend, Historic Trains come back to the terminal for a weekend filled with kid-friendly fun, performances and a "Railroadiana" show for enthusiasts

In September, celebrations will be held in a number of towns and villages with rail stations, including Yonkers and Brewster. Details will be published when known.

(Continued on page 8)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 7)

Please check http://www.grandcentralterminal.com/centennial/ for information on the latest events.

Member Lee Winson sent this link, http://www.iridetheharlemline.com/2013/01/07/the-mystery-of-grand-centrals-suburban-concourse/, to a story that addresses "The Mystery of Grand Central's Suburban Concourse," more familiarly known as the lower level. Today, the tracks are numbered 100 to 117, but the article gives evidence that the tracks were originally single- and two-digit numbers. Examples cited are Tracks 7 and 8, which are now 117 and 118. The upper level tracks are 1-42; however, Track 11 is the lowest number with a platform, and not every number has a platform. Two platforms were converted for use to access Grand Central North. For details, please check the aforementioned website.

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Instead of going to the Frontier Industries, Incorporated scrap yard, M-6s 9014-5 will be donated to the New England Disaster Training Center at Camp Hartell in Windsor Locks, Connecticut. ***The Hartford Courant*** reported: "the well-worn cars will be used by firefighters, police, EMTs, military personnel, and others as they practice handling mass casualty accidents and other disasters." When asked why two of the newer cars would be removed from service rather than the older M-2s, a spokesman said, "the older cars are mechanically more reliable, and many got emergency rehab work just a few years ago. On the other hand, the M-6s are more suitable for training." Thanks to member Howie Mann for sending this report.

Just in case you were wondering why the announcement of the January 1 fare increase took place without any hearings, the reason is this is the second of three annual approximately 4% fare increases that began last January 1. Connecticut's Legislature enacted these raises to have passengers help contribute toward purchase of the M-8s. The first increase was to take place on January 1, 2010, but it was deferred until after there were some M-8s in service.

Shore Line East issued new timetables effective January 7, that replaced the November 19, 2012 edition. Gone are the special trains that operated between Thanksgiving and the end of the year. Thanks to member David A. Cohen for sending copies.

The latest M-8 update, from January 7, shows 186 cars, with 156 in service and 20 undergoing Kawasaki inspection. Riders now have the opportunity to ride one or more of the 712 M-8 weekly trains (113 from Monday-Thursday, 105 on Fridays, 81 on Saturdays, and 74 on Sundays) operating in scheduled New Haven Line service. The M-8s represent 52.2% of total weekly New Haven Main Line service, with 50.2% Monday-Thursday, 46.3% on Fridays, 63.3% on Saturdays, and 67.9% on Sundays. As of mid-January, member Bill Zucker has observed 9100-9227, 9230-3, 9238-53, 9256-9, and 9264-5, 154 cars.

MTA LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

As I passed the timetable rack in front of the ticket windows at New York Penn Station on January 3, I noticed something unusual – a "Branch Timetable" for Forest Hills and Kew Gardens for December 17, 2012-March 3, 2013. Called Form 12, it is approximately ¼" wider and ⅜" shorter than LIRR's so-called "TDI" timetables, and also includes times for New York Penn Station, Woodside, and Jamaica (Main Line trains only).

I asked member Richie Schulman if he had ever seen them, and here is his response: "Yes, I've seen them. They're issued with each timetable change by LIRR and not CBS Outdoor as there isn't any advertising in them. Form 12 - TPSS - fits in with the large Branch timetables. Why they're called Branch TTs is beyond me. The earliest one I have is November 10-December 14, 2008. I'm sure the were issued before, but that's when I started collecting TTs. I get them at Jamaica, always available there. Occasionally they're available at Penn Station. If you ask the people at Penn they'll tell you they don't exist. I've never seen them at Woodside. I don't know if they're available at either Forest Hills or Kew Gardens. It's basically the same as the TDI CT1, except the CT1 includes trains that stop at Woodside but skip Kew Gardens and Forest Hills."

A special timetable was issued for bus service east of Speonk between 2:17 AM January 15 and 2:30 AM January 18, 72 hours. This operation is the same as what was done in November to rehabilitate three LIRR bridges in Hampton Bays.

NJ TRANSIT

On December 20, 2012, Richie Schulman rode to Hoboken via PATH and reported: "The station looks better than before the storm and all the electric panels, cases, and boxes appear to be new. The only thing old is the steel conduits. Unfortunately, the elevator is out of service. However, NJ Transit is still a disaster. All the stores, Station Master's and Customer Service office, waiting room, and ticket windows are closed. There are two trailers, one housing ticket sales and the other for Customer Service and the Station Master's Office.

Related to this story was a report that was sent to Jack May on January 11, who forwarded it to me. That person wrote: "I was in Hoboken yesterday, and it is no better than it was two weeks ago. The trains are running, and there are temporary trailer-like structures for the ticket office and for customer service and operations (a combined office). The first floor of the building is still locked up, including the stores. The closing must have come quickly, because the liquor store is fully stocked, and the refrigerator cases for the beer still have electricity. The second floor of the building was not closed

(Continued on page 9)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 8)

down; apparently the alleged mold contamination is confined to the first floor. The operations office on the second floor is still functioning, and the crew room has been moved upstairs. However, there is no place for passengers to wait, except outside, between the end of tracks and the building. That means passengers must stand out in the cold until their trains are ready for boarding. I don't know when any of this will be remedied, and NJT does not want to say anything."

In advance of a predicted snowstorm, systemwide cross-honoring was put into effect between noon and the end of service on December 26, 2012, then later extended to December 27, 2012.

The Raritan Valley Rail Coalition, a commuter advocacy group, requested that NJ Transit initiate one-seat service for Raritan Valley Line trains using the new dual-powered locomotives. NJ Transit spokesman John Durso Jr., on January 4, said NJ Transit had only been using these locomotives for less than a year and any potential discussions about expanding their use would not happen until they had been in service for at least a full year. There were no immediate plans to run dual power locomotives on the Raritan Valley Line for one-seat service, but that option has not been ruled out in the future. Still, agency officials also have to contend with the limited train capacity at New York Penn Station.

Since being retired on March 27, 2009, many Comet Is have been sold or leased to transit agencies in Philadelphia, Salt Lake City, Los Angeles, and Montreal. Some have been scrapped. Believe it or not, a number still remain on NJ Transit property. I recently received information about Comet Is about to depart for new homes (5100s are cab cars, 5700s are trailers). 5714 was re-purchased to settle a parts dispute and then scrapped.

- Small Mining Company in Canada: 5707, 5717, 5733, 5743
- Indiana Railroad: 5731
- Unknown buyer: 5105, 5108, 5129, 5715, 5721

There are two trains of partially wrapped cars operating that advertise Ameri-Health of New Jersey and the National Football League/Budd Light Beer. The Ameri-Health train is composed of 6579-6505-6507-6210-6526-6036, the latter 6208-6572-6599-6545-6541-6078. All are Comet Vs. Other wrapped cars: Multi-level 7022 for The Rockettes and Comet-II for Tanqueray Gin. These two sightings courtesy of member Bob Vogel photos.

At the December 13, 2012 Board meeting, an agreement was approved to build the proposed Westmont station in Wood-Ridge, between the Garfield and Rutherford stations on the Bergen County Line. This station will be constructed on the site of the former Curtis-Wright plant with an apartment house complex. As originally planned, the Westmont station would have been on a slight curve; however, under the this agreement, the station has been moved approximately 750 feet to the south so as to be on tangent (straight) track. Presently the five-acre site has an NJ Transit maintenance facility. Under the agreement, the site developer will build a replacement rail maintenance facility in Clifton. The Westmont station will have all of the amenities that riders need, high-level center island platform, pedestrian overpass, lighting, landscaping, and 215 parking spaces. No opening date was specified.

A new station and (loop) flyover track has been proposed for North Brunswick on the Northeast Corridor Line. According to ***The Star-Ledger***, the projects would be done in conjunction with North Brunswick's plans to turn the former Johnson & Johnson complex on Route 1 into a residential and retail development centered around transit. Amtrak would make upgrades to the catenary and signals. Construction of a flyover track would enable a number of trains to be turned south of New Brunswick instead of going all the way to Trenton. The station would be located between Princeton Junction (MP 47.1) and Jersey Avenue (MP 33.1), with 1,000-foot platforms that could accommodate 12-car trains. At this time, the plans call for an opening in 2018.

Railroad Development Corporation (RDC), a private firm, has expressed an interest managing NJ Transit's Princeton Junction to Princeton "Dinky." According to the article in ***Railway Age***, the Chairman, Henry Posner, a Princeton alum, has privately mentioned that the Pittsburgh-based RDC might consider purchasing the three-mile line outright, but it is unclear whether the transit agency could or would entertain such an option. Princeton University is anxious to move the station 460 feet south of its present location. As can be expected, this proposal has caused an uproar pro and con. Mr. Posner is known to some of our members, who wrote in response to my emailing this news item.

Bob Vogel, photographing Newark Light Rail on January 10, wrote that with an off-peak headway of 30-minutes, only one LRV train is used. Another member added: "As Bob pointed out, it can often be faster to walk from one end of this short light-rail line to the other rather than to wait for the next train. I ride this line occasionally, and it is very lightly patronized. There is an off-peak headway of 10 minutes on the main Newark Light Rail Line from Branch Brook Park to Penn Station, and this part of the line is quite heavily patronized."

PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON CORPORATION

On December 26, 2012, the Port Authority announced that Hoboken residents with registered *SmartLink* cards would automatically be credited with 30 days of free rides. This was done to show appreciation after the damages caused by Superstorm Sandy knocked out PATH service for seven weeks to their city.

(Continued on page 10)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 9)

A freak accident occurred shortly after 9 AM January 8 at Exchange Place, when an escalator that was ascending suddenly reversed direction, sending commuters scrambling. Some jumped over the dividers between the adjacent escalators. When it was over, five passengers reported being injured. Two of the station's three escalators were immediately removed from service. They were returned to service the following day. PA officials believe that the problem stems from Superstorm Sandy damage. It is eight stories or 128 steps from train level to street level!

AMTRAK

Details of the 12 VIA cars leased by Amtrak for use on the *Adirondack* during Thanksgiving were published in ***Cinders***.

HEP-II COACHES	
4121*	Ex-Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac 851, Amtrak 5217, then 6028
4122*	Ex-Pennsylvania/Penn Central 4063, Amtrak 6806
HEP-I COACHES	
8101	Ex-Canadian Pacific 101
8112	Ex-Canadian Pacific 112
8116	Ex-Canadian Pacific 116
8118	Ex-Canadian Pacific 118
8120	Ex-Canadian Pacific 120
8125	Ex-Canadian Pacific 125
8140*	Ex-Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac 801, Amtrak 5420, then 6077
8142*	Ex-Pennsylvania/Penn Central 4055, Amtrak 5434
HEP-I (SLEEPER/BUFFET/-LOUNGE/DOME-OBSERVATION)	
8704	Ex-Canadian Pacific 15404 *Evangaline Park*
8716	Ex-Canadian Pacific 15416 *Tweedsmuir Park*

*Served private owners between their Amtrak and VIA careers

According to a report in ***Railway Age***, Amtrak has requested that the Federal Railway Administration (FRA) approve revisions to FRA safety standards that would enable lighter-weight high-speed rail equipment to operate. United States crashworthiness standards currently include reliance on heavier rail equipment compared with European or Asian counterparts, which lower top speed potential and energy efficiency. The U.S. approach is weighted toward crash survivability, as opposed to simply crash avoidance, as in other locales. This approach has been favored due to passenger and freight trains operating on the same tracks.

The ***Winter-Spring National Timetable*** (Form T-1) was issued effective January 14. Copies were available in New York Penn Station on January 10. On the cover is a photo of a Conductor greeting passengers boarding a Northeast Regional train at sunrise at Manassas, Virginia. Also on the cover are notes announcing the new service to Norfolk, Virginia, and Freeport and Brunswick, Maine.

Not included in this timetable is expanded *Acela* service that was added on January 28. Northbound Train #2128 departs from Washington, D.C. at 8 PM and arrives in New York at 10:45 PM. Train #2175 departs form New York Penn Station at 9:15 PM, arriving in Washington, D.C. at 11:59 PM. Previously this was Train #2193, but with its extension to D.C., it was renumbered. Thanks to member Al Holtz for sending this report.

METROPOLITAN AREA

In the wake of Superstorm Sandy, there has been a renewed interest in reactivating the former Long Island Rail Road Ozone Park Branch, which carried trains to Rockaway Park, for transit use. The 3.5-mile branch was abandonded June 8, 1962. There are also some who favor creating a Queens version of the successful High Line on Manhattan's West Side. Member George Haikalis, who is a civil engineer, is quoted in ***Crains New York*** as saying he foresees a high-speed rail link from midtown to JFK as well as to the huge Aqueduct racino in Ozone Park. "Providing transportation to these neighborhoods is an engine for economic development that's something these communities need. The hard part would be the estimated half-billion-dollar cost of replacing tracks, signals and bridges, as well as building new stations." Thanks to Howie Mann for this news.

MISCELLANEOUS

For those who commute by public transportation, there is good news. With the passage of tax legislation on January 2 that averted the "fiscal cliff", at least for now, the pre-tax federal transit benefit was increased from $125 to $240, equaling what those who commute by car have been receiving. Under the 2009 economic stimulus (February, 2012 ***Bulletin***), transit commuters could withhold up to $230 each month, but that legislation expired at the end of 2011. The $240 benefit is retroactive to January, 2012.

SUPERSTORM SANDY FOLLOW-UP

Picking up where I left off in the January ***Bulletin***, service restorations/changes took place as follows:

MTA NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT (SUBWAY)

On December 24, 2012, the 20-R-32s used on the Ⓗ shuttle were replaced by an equal number of R-46s. This was done to enable OPTO. Member George Chiasson provided the numbers: 5850-3, 5858-61, 5958-61, 6174-7, and 6198-6201

NJ TRANSIT

On December 22, 2012, the honoring of PATH Tickets on HBLR ended.

During a January 2 press conference, Governor Chris Christie defended Executive James Weinstein and his decision not to move trains to locations where they would have been safe from floodwaters delivered by Superstorm Sandy. Said Governor Christie: "If they knew it was going to flood, believe me, Jim Weinstein would have moved the trains. Sometimes people make

(Continued on page 11)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 10)

wrong decisions, it happens. It's not a hanging offense." This $100 million mistake caused damage to 63 locomotives and 261 coaches (January ***Bulletin***), and resulted in train cancelations that would continue possibly into February, four months after the storm.

On January 4, ***The Record*** reported that repairing Metro-North's seven locomotives and six coaches, damaged by floodwaters, would cost $1.7 million. NJ Transit will pay this expense and seek reimbursement from FEMA or its insurance policies. Repairs had been completed on all of the locomotives and two coaches.

On January 14, full service resumed on the Northeast Corridor, Pascack Valley, and Port Jervis Lines. Another set of modified weekday schedules was issued for the Main/Bergen, Montclair/Boonton, Morris & Essex, and North Jersey Coast Lines. NJ Transit reported that this restores the North Jersey Coast Line to 96% of pre-Sandy service levels, or 101 of 114 trains, with service to New York Penn Station now at 100%. Steve Lofthouse, after checking the modified schedule, wrote: "Only two Bay Head/Hoboken through trains have been restored each way, which I guess accounts for the 96% figure they cite. The normal schedule has 5 each way. The extra 10 minutes running times also on most of the other trains has been removed."

The Asbury Park Press reported that essential work that had to be done to restore more Coast Line trains included repairs made to the Raritan River draw bridge, which had been under a 5 mph speed restriction but has been raised to 30 mph. There was also additional track and signal work that had to be done between Matawan and South Amboy, where a speed restriction had been imposed on trains. Return of electric train service to Hoboken could happen by early March, when repairs to the Mason Substation were expected to be completed, spokesman John Durso Jr. said. The substation powers the overhead wires that electric-powered trains draw electricity from, in addition to Hoboken Terminal, which has been operating on generator power since the storm. Trains from other lines, such as the Gladstone Branch, have used diesel-powered trains instead of electric-powered trains. About 24 electric-powered trains have been temporarily replaced by diesel-powered trains on the Gladstone Branch due to the absence of the Mason Substation.

The additional trains were added as follows: Montclair-Boonton (6), Morris & Essex (9), North Jersey Coast (9), Pascack Valley (4), and Port Jervis (2). New modified weekend schedules were issued for all lines except the Atlantic City, Northeast Corridor, Pascack Valley, and Raritan Valley Lines. There were new modified weekend schedules for all lines except Atlantic City, Northeast Corridor, Pascack Valley, and Raritan Valley, which were using the October 14, 2012 editions.

PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON CORPORATION

Trains operated around the clock from 5 AM Monday December 31, 2012 through 10 PM Tuesday, January 1, 2013, and then resumed the 5 AM to 10 PM schedule.

On January 2, it was announced that over the weekend of January 5-6, service to 33rd Street would be suspended. In its press release, PATH reported that with this action, it anticipated restoring service 24 hours/day within seven to ten days.

On January 9, 24-hour-per-day service resumed on Mondays to Fridays, and on weekends between Newark and 33rd Street via Hoboken. This is also referred to as "The Around the World Service." 5 AM to 10 PM service continued between Hoboken/33rd Street, Journal Sq./33rd Street, and Newark/World Trade Center.

STILL OUT:

MTA NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT (SUBWAY)

1 Rector Street to South Ferry
A Howard Beach to Far Rockaway
S Broad Channel to Rockaway Park

NJ TRANSIT

Regular schedules on the Main/Bergen, Montclair-Boonton, Morris & Essex, and North Jersey Coast Lines; electric service to Hoboken

PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON CORPORATION

Service from Hoboken to World Trade Center; full-time service

EVE AND POST NEW YEAR'S DAY SERVICE

MTA LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD: Extra eastbound service operated on the Port Washington (3 trains), Port Jefferson (3), Ronkonkoma (3), Far Rockaway (1), Long Beach (1), Babylon (4), and Montauk (1) Branches

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (EAST): All lines operated post-midnight outbound service, which made Metro-North, for at least this night, a 24-hour railroad

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (WEST): Reported under NJ Transit

NJ TRANSIT: PDF timetables of the pre- and post-midnight service were posted on the Internet and were operated with departures from NY Penn Station (Northeast Corridor and North Jersey Coast Lines) until 4:15 AM, from Hoboken (Main/Bergen/Port Jervis, Morris & Essex, and Pascack Valley Lines) until 3:40 AM, and from Newark at 4:46 AM (Raritan Valley Line).

OTHER TRANSIT SYSTEMS

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

On December 21, 2012, MBTA sent a five-page letter to the Vice-Chairman & CEO of Hyundai Rotem with the subject line: "Re: Notice of Default." ***The Boston Globe*** obtained a copy of the letter. Details of missed delivery dates have been previously published in this column. As of mid-January, as this column was being completed, there was "radio silence," according to Member Todd Glickman.

Since May, 2008, there have been three crashes in-

(Continued on page 12)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 11)

volving Green Line LRVs that resulted in the death of one Train Operator and injuries to more than 100 passengers. Central to all is that had there been an automated system to track and control trains in place, these incidents could have been prevented. How much would such a system cost? MBTA estimates that it would cost $645 million to $721 million and require nine years to design, install, and test a modern collision avoidance system. That is a staggering sum for an agency with at least $3 billion in unmet repair and replacement needs.

An invitation to try the rail service from the recently opened Wickford Junction station (April 23, 2012) was extended to commuters for six Wednesdays January 23-February 27 until 3 PM. During this promotion, commuters will receive validated parking at the station and a round-trip ticket for travel to the Providence station from Wickford.

For the 20th time in the last 22 months, MBTA ridership has increased. In November, 2012, ridership was up 1.3% when compared to the previous November, to an average 1.329 million trips per day. Red, Orange, and Blue Line weekday ridership climbed by 5.6% and average weekday ridership on the commuter rail increased by 2.4%. Ridership was down on the Green Line by 1.6% and on buses by 1.5%.

MBTA officials will hold off until at least March before resorting to fare increases or service cuts, waiting for lawmakers as they debate potential tax hikes to address the state's long-simmering crisis in transportation funding. As of December 26, 2012, the deficit is $132 million for the next budget year that begins July 1. Past estimates suggest the state has a roughly $1 billion annual gap between how much it raises to fund transportation and what it should actually spend on highway and transit operations and upkeep, a problem partly masked through heavy borrowing.

As part of some budget cutting last July 1, MBTA ended weekend service on the western end of the E/Heath Street Line, terminating the cars at Brigham Circle. However, in October, 2012, weekend service was "quietly" resumed, as an experiment. As of December 29, 2012, this change has been made "permanent." Thanks to Todd for these reports from ***The Boston Globe***.

BUFFALO, NEW YORK

The 6.4-mile LRT has been described by some as "the train to nowhere," since it has never realized its full potential. A planned extension to Amherst was never built, but now, the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority plans to spend $1.6 million to determine ways of decreasing traffic congestion, and this extension may get another look. Thanks to the ***Buffalo News*** for this report.

LINDENWOLD, NEW JERSEY

PATCO announced that effective January 2, its Quiet Car program has been made permanent. The program was launched on March 1, 2012 (April, 2012 ***Bulletin***). They are last cars on designated trains and will be available on Monday through Friday from 6 until 9 AM and from 4 until 7 PM. Thanks to member Bill Vigrass for this news.

Member Bob Wright on this subject wrote: "I've been told by a few riders I know, that this doesn't really work all that well and they wonder why the first car isn't the quiet car (the only car with a PATCO employee on board who might be able to remind folks it's the quiet car). We shall see."

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

The specially wrapped Silverliner V in a scheme reminiscent of the "speakeasy days" (December, 2012 ***Bulletin***) is 702. Thanks to Member Alfred Gaus Jr., who provided the car number and commented: "The wrapping of the interior is just amazing. Seeing is believing."

Bob Vogel took part on what he described as the 12th Annual SEPTA Trip on December 27, 2012. Included in his email containing digital images was one showing Silverliner V 723 at 30th Street Station wrapped to advertise Bailey's. The balance of the trip took the group to the Philadelphia Airport, 69th Street, Media, Drexel Hill, Route 15 to its new terminus at Northern Liberties Loop, and Fern Rock. The trip ended at Walnut/Locust.

Back in November, proposals were made to use a now-abandoned 2.7-mile section of a former Reading Railroad freight branch that was last used in 1992. One idea is to convert it into a low-line companion to Philadelphia's planned high line. However, the city recently earmarked this same line for a high-speed bus route that would connect a string of cultural venues to the heart of downtown. Thanks to Alfred Gaus Jr. for this report from ***The Inquirer***.

From ***Cinders***: As of mid-December, 2012, SEPTA had received 115 of its 120-car order of Silverliner Vs. The final cars were due to be delivered during January or February. 21 Silverliner Vs that are wrapped in the Bailey's Irish Cream ads are in service. It was reported that four Silverliner Vs will be wrapped to advertise Tropicana Orange Juice.

WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

Member Steve Erlitz updated the Inauguration Day/ Martin Luther King Service that was reported in the January ***Bulletin***. "Because sales were not going well, the last two inbound Penn Line trains were canceled and there are only 8 outbounds between 2 and 7 PM. The second Martinsburg and Fredrick trains in both directions have been canceled too, and the special ticket price, $25 roundtrip, was available at selected stations. The second Martinsburg and Fredrick trains in both directions have been canceled, too."

(Continued on page 13)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 12)

SOUTH FLORIDA

Tri-Rail set a record for ridership in 2012, by carrying more than 4 million passengers for the first time since 2008. South Florida Regional Transit Authority officials attributed this to Florida's improving economy and high gasoline prices. Thanks to member Jack May for this news.

CHESTERTON, INDIANA

When METRA raised the price of 10-trip tickets on February 1 (January ***Bulletin***), fares also went up at the Hegewisch station, which is in the State of Illinois.

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

On December 13, 2012, local and elected officials held a groundbreaking ceremony for the first phase (1.5 miles) of a 9.3-mile extension to the Lynx Blue Line LRT from 7th Street to the UNC Charlotte Campus in the University area. Eleven stations will be added. Opening is planned for 2017. The project is funded with a $25 million grant from the Federal Transit Administration's Urban Circulator Grant Program. Thanks to ***Progressive Railroading*** for this news.

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

Legislation authorizing the creation of a regional transit authority for Southeastern Michigan was passed on December 6, 2012 by the State Legislature and went to Governor Snyder for his signature. Thanks to member Tom VanDeGrift for this news.

Member Julien Wolfe wrote the following on this subject: "The passage of the RTA bill by the House and Senate, which was then signed by Governor Snyder, a Republican who at one time worked in Chicago and commuted on Metra trains for a couple of years, is a step forward. SMART (Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation) is basically SEMTA, the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority, that came into being in 1967 but which changed its name in 1989 to SMART. While it is a regional transit authority, and was set up to be one, the powers that be have felt that it was not the format a new RTA should have, and thus the passage of the new RTA bill in the Michigan Legislature. However, I wonder how realistic it will be to assume that the license plate fee to support transit will pass in the various counties — I am unclear if it has to pass in all counties, or just county by county to have improvements made in those specific counties. Interestingly, the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority in Washtenaw County is now apparently in the RTA. Ironically, the original SEMTA had 6 counties, including Washtenaw County, and then went to 7 counties, but over the years (decades) was scaled back to Wayne (which includes Detroit), Oakland, and Macomb. There are those who think that D-DOTs financial problems are now solved, and some also think that the feds will now release $25 million that will allow a 'light rail line' to be built for 3 miles along Woodward Avenue in Detroit (which I think will really be a streetcar line like Portland, OR) as well as a start on Bus Rapid Transit for hundreds of millions of dollars, but I do not think it will be quite that simple.

"Just to keep this relatively accurate, the so called M-1 LRT line proposed for Woodward Avenue is JUST to be from the New Center (Grand Boulevard) area to downtown Detroit, around 3 miles. It is to be mainly privately funded by some Detroit based corporations and institutions, but apparently some funding from FTA will be necessary, too. At this time the papers and TV news programs are calling it LRT, but it is my guess (and only a guess) that the people behind it are more interested in a Portland-style streetcar line, with more stops than would be in place with a suburban-based LRT line. And while for a while there was talk of a LRT line to 8-Mile Road, and beyond, into Oakland County, this got dropped earlier this year in favor of a Cleveland Health Line-style BRT line. So the current talk of LRT on Woodward is ONLY for the short segment, but like everything else, this could change. I guess time will tell, but it is an improvement that will see the RTA, at least initially, coordinate SMART and D-DOT service. I wonder how the RTA will handle the merger of the city and suburban systems, if at all, which was a major goal of the SEMTA bill back in 1967."

DALLAS, TEXAS

Dallas Area Regional Transit (DART) awarded a contract valued at $9.4 million to Brookville Equipment Corporation for two streetcars that will be used on the 1.6-mile line between Oak Cliff and Union Station. The line is expected to open in 2014. Thanks to ***Railway Age*** for this report.

FORT WORTH, TEXAS

On December 17, 2012, the "T," a k a Fort Worth Transportation Authority, voted to purchase DMUs for the proposed rail line in a Southwest-to-Northeast Rail Corridor, which would cross Tarrant County. The proposed commuter route follows existing rail lines from Sycamore School Road in southwest Fort Worth, through downtown Fort Worth, northeast to downtown Grapevine, and then into the north entrance of Dallas-Fort Worth Airport. It has been planned for startup in 2016. One of the reasons cited was the earlier delivery time for such vehicles. A recent cost analysis found DMUs would be more expensive to purchase, but that would be offset by their lower operating cost: $88 million — about $25 million more than the present equipment. But the operating expense for DMUs is projected to be $4 million less per year than locomotive-hauled train operating costs. Presently, the "T" and service partner Dallas Area Regional Transit (DART); operate the Trinity Railway Express (TRE), which uses that type of equipment.

(Continued on page 14)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 13)

PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Al Holtz accompanied his wife on a business trip, and their visit coincided with a January 12 groundbreaking ceremony for the Northwest LRT, a 3.2-mile extension that is expected to open either late in 2016 or early in the following year.

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

On January 8, a ceremony was held in which United States Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood signed an agreement to provide $135 million in federal funding to extend the Blue Line 4.3 miles from its Meadowview Road terminus to Cosumnes River College. A September, 2015 opening date is planned. Thanks to Jack May and Bill Vigrass for this news.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

In November, 2012, BART began reviewing the early results of a proposed service called BART Metro. This initiative would increase capacity by 50% by the year 2025 by purchasing additional cars, instituting express service, and decreasing headways from 15 to 12 minutes during peak hours in 10-car trains. Those 10-car trains could be split into five-car trains to diverge at the Bay Fair station in Oakland. Frequencies on night, weekend, and Transbay service would be increased. Thanks to Jack May and Al Holtz for this report from ***mercurynews.com***.

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

The Valley Transit Authority announced plans for a 1.6-mile extension of the Vasona Light Rail Line from Winchester to the town of Los Gatos. The original Vasona Corridor Project proposed light rail service from downtown San Jose through the city of Campbell to the town of Los Gatos. The first portion, downtown San Jose to the Winchester station in Campbell, opened for revenue service on October 1, 2005. This extension added 5.3 miles and eight stations to the 36.9-mile system. A public hearing was held on December 4, 2012. Thanks to ***Railway Age*** for this news.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

In an election that was held on December 6, 2012, voters in downtown Los Angeles approved by 70%, financing for a proposed $125 million streetcar line that would run along Broadway, Hill, and Figueroa Streets, connecting various neighborhoods, including the old banking district, South Park, Civic Center, and Fashion District. The streetcar, which could be running by 2015, is one of two major transportation infrastructure projects planned for downtown Los Angeles. The other is the so-called "regional connector," a $1.3-billion Metropolitan Transportation Authority subway line that would run beneath 2nd Street, linking trains from Pasadena and East L.A. with the Blue Line and Expo Lines. The connector, scheduled for completion in 2019, would intersect with several spots along the proposed route for the streetcar. The connector is expected to carry about 90,000 riders daily. Thanks to Al Holtz for sending this report.

On December 18, 2012, Metrolink's Board of Directors awarded a $129.4 million contract to Electro-Motive Division for ten new locomotives and an option for ten. This order will comply with Tier 4 requirements, which are expected to reduce emissions by 86%.

The Los Angeles Times (December 18, 2012) reported that Metro and Los Angeles World Airports, which operates LAX, are working together to extend the Green Line into LAX. At present the closest stop, Aviation, requires a shuttle bus to reach the airport. Metro would contribute $1 billion towards the project, which will require an additional unspecified amount. It is hoped that the station would be in service by 2020.

HONOLULU, HAWAII

On December 20, 2012, in a tribute to the late Senator Daniel K. Inouye, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood signed a full funding agreement valued at $1.55 billion for Honolulu's 20-mile long rail project, which will run from Ala Moana Center to Kapolei. Opening Day is expected in 2019. Besides having been the longest-serving Senator at the time of his death on December 17, 2012, Senator Inouye was also a highly decorated WW II veteran.

Construction can continue on most of the HART project as the result of a ruling by Judge Wallace A. Tashmima on December 29, 2012. The decision did not affect on Phase 4, which requires Federal Transit Administration approval. Thanks to member David Erlitz for this report.

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

Metrolinx/GO Transit exercised options with Bombardier that retain the status quo in so far as fleet operations and maintenance services through 2023. Thanks to ***Railway Age*** for this news.

A fare increase that was approved on December 5, 2012 went into effect on February 1, as can be seen in the table below. Other fares were also raised.

INCREASE	EXISTING FARE RANGE
$ 0.35	$ 4.50 and $ 5.80
$ 0.45	$ 5.81 and $ 7.35
$ 0.55	Greater than $ 7.36

BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

The oldest active subway cars in the world are slated to be retired this spring. Built by La Brugeoise (Belgium) for the Subte (subway), they have operated on what is now known as Line A since the line's opening in 1913. Starting January 7, the line was shut down for approximately two months for renovations. Recently the city of Buenos Aires took over the Subte from the national government and determined that these 95 cars were too costly to maintain. The article from ***USA Today*** reported that parts must be custom-made and "are unsafe" despite the fact that tourists love them. The first time I

(Continued on page 15)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 14)

rode in these cars was in 1967; they already had 54 years under their belt. I photographed them operating on the street as they headed to the storage barn/yard. My second opportunity came in March, 2006 (May, 2006 ***Bulletin***). New cars that were built in China will operate when Line A reopens. Thanks to member Pete Donner for this news.

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

January 9 marked the 150th anniversary of the start of the original underground railway line. There will be numerous celebrations this year and a collection of special memorabilia will be available for sale. Thanks to Bill Vigrass for this report.

PLOIESTI, ROMANIA

Jack May forwarded an email containing a photo of an ex-Third Avenue Railway System lightweight car that had been sent to Vienna. Cars 634 and 640, owned by Museumstram Mariazell in Austria, are in Ploiesti, Romania, where labor is cheaper, for restoration. The email he received from an Austrian correspondent stated: "I presume, one will return in TARS, the other one in Vienna livery." Jack added that in 1948 he went away to summer camp, and when he returned, "my beloved Bronx streetcars were gone!" He also indicated that participants in the ERA trip to Romania in 2010 visited Ploiesti and saw and photographed the ex-TARS cars.

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

A bidders conference was held in Tel Aviv by NTA (Metropolitan Mass Transit System Ltd) for a bid for a fleet of LRVs. Representatives from 22 companies from Israel and several European countries. Specifically, an invitation to prequalify for a contract to supply and maintain 90 LRVs with an option for another 30 was issued on November 8, 2012 and the deadline for bids is the second quarter of this year. The LRVs will be used on the 22 km Red Line from Petakh-Tikva to Bat Yam, which is due to open in 2017. NTA wanted the bid to be for an additional number of cars, but as the project moves towards the delivery date, another bid will be offered. Detailed design has also begun on the 35km Green Line, which should be commissioned in 2020, while completion of the 34km Purple Line is scheduled for 2021. Thanks to ***Railway Age*** for this report.

A snowstorm stopped all of Jerusalem's public transportation on January 10, according to member Dave Klepper.

BANGKOK, THAILAND

Todd Glickman was in Bangkok in late December, 2012 and sent this report. "I saw a note in ***The Bangkok Post*** announcing the Board of the Mass Rapid Transit Authority of Thailand (MRTA) would conduct bidding for contracts to build the Green Line extension next year. This is a continuation of the existing BTS 'Skytrain' Sukhumvit Line northward from Mo Chit, the current terminal station. The 19 km route from Mo Chit to Saphan Mai and Ku Kot would be built at a cost of 26.5 billion baht (~US$866 million), according to MRTA Chairwoman Ratchanee Treepipatkul. The construction of the rail line will be spread over four contracts. The first contract is for the construction of the first section of the Green Line, from Mo Chit to Saphan Mai. The second is for the next section of the route, from Saphan Mai to Ku Kot. This section, which has the highest price tag of the four contracts, is valued at 16.4 billion baht (~US$536 million). The third contract is for the line's maintenance and repair center and its train layover building. The final contract is for the track system and other infrastructure. MRTA's board has also agreed to stick to its initial decision to construct the Pink Line from the Kae Rai area via the central government complex on Chaeng Watthana Road to Min Buri. This means the cost of constructing the 34.5km line would be capped at 58.6 billion baht (~US$1.9 billion), Ms. Ratchanee said."

BEIJING, CHINA

Todd also visited Beijing and spotted the following information in ***The China Daily***. China began operation of the world's longest "bullet train" line on December 26, 2012, on the 2,298 km (1,424-mile) route between Beijing and Guanzhou. Running time on the 300 km/hr (186 mph) service is about eight hours (including intermediate stops), compared with 22-hour service on previous conventional trains. The first departure was at 9 am local time; December 26, 2012 was chosen as the inaugural date to commemorate the birth in 1893 of former Chinese leader Mao Zedong. The new line's opening means that it will be in service over the Chinese Lunar New Year Holiday that falls in mid-February this year, when hundreds of millions of people travel across the country to visit home towns. I was on a business trip to China just before 2012's Lunar New Year, and had trouble getting seats on reserved trains even a week before the holiday officially began. China now operates 9,300 km (5,779 mi) of high-speed rail, with plans to expand that to 50,000 km (31,070 mi) by 2020 with four main lines running north and south and another four east and west. When I wrote to Todd that some news reports were calling the trainsets the fastest in the world, he wrote: "In testing, yes, but operational speed is 300 kph. As I recall the sets are rated at 380 kph."

FROM THE HISTORY FILES

110 Years ago: On February 25, 1903, ground was broken for the Pennsylvania Railroad's North (Hudson) River Tunnels. The first "official" trains operated through the tunne on August 1, 1910.

20 Years ago: On February 1, 1993, Shore Line East raised fares for the first time since opening on May 29, 1990. A 5.04% increase went into effect on January 1.

News items and comments concerning this column may be emailed to ERAnewseditor@gmail.com.

Around New York's Transit System

Inflated Balloons Might Stop River Tunnel Floods

Hurricane Sandy caused more damage in New York than any other storm in recent years. Its wind-driven surge of water shut down most river tunnels for several days. To block these surges, scientists in Morgantown's West Virginia University have been testing a huge 32-foot inflatable plug, whose initial cost could be $400,000.

After working on the project for five years and spending $8 million, the engineers perfected a three-layer, one-ton bag made of high-strength fabric, which could be inflated in 30 minutes.

But there are obstructions, which could cause gaps between the plug and the tunnel walls. To close these gaps, a short section of the tunnel must be modified. Flush tracks of the type used at grade crossings must be installed, third rails must be removed, and conduits must be made to swing against the ceiling. After these modifications are made, the plug can be placed in the tunnel wall, where it can be inflated by remote control.

Before this apparatus can be installed, the engineers need a few more years of testing and design work.

NYC Transit Repairs Storm-Damaged Signal System

When NYC Transit attempts to rebuild storm-damaged equipment, $770 million of the $5 billion requested in federal aid would be used to repair the signal system. This is the largest single expense.

Only 17 percent of the equipment is 0-9 years old, but 22 percent is over 70 years old and requires constant maintenance. The older equipment is difficult to replace and must be rehabilitated. Because the equipment was built at different times, it is not interchangeable. There are more than 300,000 relays in the transit system's signals along the 673 miles of track. In an upper Manhattan shop, 120 mechanics and electricians rebuild the old motors, switches, and relays that keep the signal system working properly. After parts are rehabilitated, they will fail more frequently than previously as corrosion eats away sensitive metal parts. Therefore there will be more work for maintenance and inspection crews.

NYC Transit hopes that money will be available to keep the signals in a state of good repair and modernize the oldest equipment.

Brighton Line Station Rehabilitation

A newspaper article reveals that southbound trains will bypass the Cortelyou Road, Beverley Road, and Parkside Avenue stations from May to October, 2013 and then northbound trains will pass through the same stations from November, 2013 to March, 2014 (direction subject to change). Work includes fixing broken cement, installing new handrails, lights, and columns, repairing stairways, and sealing, priming, and repainting the stations' concrete walls.

R-46s to Provide Ⓗ Service

Since the Ⓗ Rockaway Shuttle began on November 20, 2012, service was provided by three 4-car trains of R-32s. One such train stalled in a third rail gap near Hammels Wye, and, to ensure against more such service interruptions, the 20 R-32s were replaced by 20 R-46s (five 4-car sets) between December 19 and 22, 2012. The first quad of R-46s was placed on the line December 21, making for one day of transition as it shared service with the 8 R-32s then remaining. On that day there were railfans at each end of almost all R-32 trips made through the daylight hours, freely enjoying the front window views while they were still available. This indulgence came to an abrupt end when the R-46s assumed all service late that night, and so things shall remain as long as this route survives. Two more sets of R-46s were activated for service on December 22, by which time the last of the R-32s had already departed. In contrast to the R-32s, which were transported on flatbed trucks as the main stem of the Rockaway Line was then unavailable, the R-46s were moved in and the R-32s moved out between Rockaway Park and Pitkin by diesels (one at either end), which were walked along a partially-restored segment of Track 4 between Broad Channel and Howard Beach-JFK. This piece of trackage is temporary, unpowered, and without signals. It will also be used to stage materials for the reconstruction process and itself eventually be replaced by permanent trackage on a newly reconstructed right-of-way.

The Genesis of "Dashing Dan"

(Continued from page 6)

known as "JE") was opened at the east end of (old) Jamaica Station near Rockaway Road (150th Street) to control both the newer and older sets of "east end" switches. After passing through several more multi-track grade crossings, the early suburban electrics terminated their runs at the Rockaway Junction station (located at the Wheeler Avenue grade crossing, now 178th Place), which was adorned with "full length" high platforms astride the main line (probably capable of holding six 51-foot rapid transit-sized cars at the most), and linked by an overhead pedestrian bridge. As was typical of many rapid transit operations in that time, LIRR's electric trains proceeded to a relay east of Rockaway Junction after they were discharged (a process controlled by the adjacent Tower 42), and switched across to the westbound main track to reload for their return to Flatbush Avenue. *(Continued next issue)*