

WHEEL CLICKS

Pacific Railroad Society Inc.

APRIL 2007

FULLERTON RAILROAD DAYS by JOHN JAY ULLOTH

Pacific Railroad Society will exhibit our history, activities, and regalia for sale Saturday, May 5, and Sunday, May 6, at Fullerton Railroad Days. The popular two-day rail fair fills the parking lot at Fullerton's Amtrak Station, but fortunately many visitors arrive by train or bus. PRS members are needed to put the human dimension on our exhibit, and answer questions.

While PRS' static display is a great backdrop, it can't sign up new members by itself! – that takes personal contact and an invitation from our members. To sign up for a one-hour shift (that's long enough – we have plenty of members), please leave a message for me at my voicemail, (818) 380-1252, with your preferred day, hour, and your call-back number.

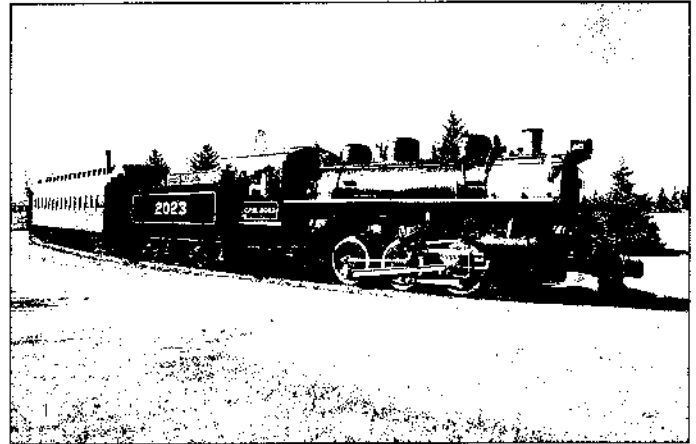
That said, this could be one of the last years for Fullerton Railroad Days – or at least in its present form. Fullerton's Redevelopment Agency is entertaining plans by a developer to redevelop multiple blocks around the station: from the tracks northward to Commonwealth Avenue, and eastward from the Harbor Boulevard undercrossing (around both historic rail stations), past the Lemon Street undercrossing (enclosing the entire site of Fullerton Railroad Days), as far as Lawrence Avenue. The bus transit platforms may be removed, and reconfigured parallel to the Amtrak station to make way for new retail shops and dense housing. The developer has expressed interest in building the rail museum long sought by Fullerton Railroad Days' sponsor Fullerton Railway Plaza Association, but it is unlikely to fit existing station functions (parking, bus transit platforms, museum, event grounds) plus room for them to expand, plus the new facilities (dense housing, retail, and lots of new parking) they will require to make a profit. The option of moving museum and event grounds to the south side of the tracks has already been cut off by a dense wall housing, construction well underway during last year's Fullerton Railroad Days.

AN EXCURSION WITH THE EMPRESS IN CANADA

by JEFF GELDNER [Accompanying photos are by the author]

On Monday, October 9, 2006, I arrived in Calgary to start this adventure. The first order of the day was a trip on C-Train and the connecting shuttle to visit Heritage Park. Operating on the loop track was an ex-US Army Alco 0-6-0 built in 1942 and lettered as CP 2023 [Photo #1]. CP 2023 pulled a consist of two heavyweight coaches and a former Canadian National open-air observation car under sunny skies.

Heritage Park features a collection of historic and replica historical buildings from the Calgary region. Canadian Pacific railway stations, located along the loop track, include the Midnapore [Photo #2] and Laggan stations. The Laggan station was originally located near Lake Louise and has a log-cabin style. Of further interest to the railfan is a collection of historic cars in the



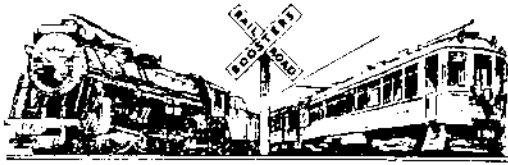
trainshed. The exhibit "The Dream" includes colonist cars from the turn of the last century. There is also a short streetcar operation, but the wires are down while the line is being rebuilt.

Included with admission was a sailing aboard the replica paddlewheeler, the S.S. Moyie, on Glenmore Reservoir. After a pleasant boat ride on the lake, it was time for a look at the historic CP Selkirk steam locomotive on display prior to returning downtown. My accommodations this evening were at the former CP- now Fairmont- Hotel Palliser. I enjoyed a tasty Canadian Thanksgiving dinner with a sunset view of the light rail and CP trains below from the Calgary Tower.

For the next two days I enjoyed Gold Leaf Service on board the Rocky Mountaineer (RM) to Vancouver. From Calgary to Kamloops, my Gold Leaf dome car was at the rear of the 12 car consist, affording an unobstructed view of the CP main line from the open rear platform. Breakfast and lunch were served each day in the lower level dining section on linen tablecloths with fresh flowers. The food and service were top drawer – no Amtrak diner-lite offerings on board the RM.

Wednesday the 11th dawned with a sunny day in Kamloops. Only one unit at the head end of the RM but 19 cars. With the addition of the Jasper section, my Gold Leaf dome was now situated mid-train. The baggage car was now located at the rear of the train. The CN dispatchers were kind to us, so our arrival was on time in Vancouver. An RM bus brought me to my overnight accommodations at the Fairmont Waterfront. A SkyTrain ride on the Expo line brought me to The Keg for dinner, located in the former CP New Westminster station.

It was another sunny day on Thursday so I enjoyed a walk along the sea wall at Stanley Park, followed by a visit to the Vancouver Lookout atop the Harbour Centre. The view is splendid – including a birds-eye perspective of SkyTrain, the West Coast Express and the SeaBus. Afterwards, I joined friends for an early dinner in North Vancouver after a trip on the [continued at EMPRESS on Page 9]



WHEEL CLICKS

APRIL 2007

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PACIFIC RAILROAD MUSEUM is operated by Pacific Railroad Society at 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas, CA 91773. Telephone (909) 394-0616. Museum e-mail: PRSTrainman@aol.com Open Saturdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Wednesdays 1-5 p.m.

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PRS NEWS — ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

- April 6 Board meeting, 7:30 p.m., Valencia Room at Fri. Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
- April 7, 14 Pacific Railroad Museum work party, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Bonita & Monte Vista Aves., San Dimas. Sats. Committee meeting: 28.
- April 7, 14 Rolling stock repair day, 6:30 a.m. to ?, Saunders Yard, Noakes & Herbert Sts., Commerce. Regular Sats. Day: 7, 21; Extra Day: 14, 28. Committee Meeting: 21.
- May 4 Board meeting, 7:30 p.m., Valencia Room at Fri. Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
- May 5, 6 Visit our table at Fullerton Railroad Days at Fullerton Depot, Pomona & Santa Fe Aves., Fullerton Sat., Sun.
- May 5, 12, Pacific Railroad Museum work party, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Bonita & Monte Vista Aves., San Dimas. Sats. Committee meeting: 26.
- May 5, 12, Rolling Stock repair day, 6:30 a.m. to ?, Saunders Yard, Noakes & Herbert Sts., Commerce. Regular Sats. Day: 5, 19; Extra Day: 12, 26. Committee Meeting: 19.
- May 11 Membership meeting, 7:30 p.m., Alhambra Room at Fri. Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
- May 18 Slide Night – Saunders Yard, 7:00 p.m., Noakes &

Fri. Herbert Sts., Commerce. Everyone welcome. Bring slides and refreshments.

MEETING PROGRAMS

by **RUSS DAVIES**

April 13 **The World's Premier of Mel Goyen's CD "Diesel 1,"** one of 11 now available for purchase from your **Pacific Railroad Museum!** Speaking of the Museum, we now have the projection equipment for screening programs of this type, as well as digital images, and slides that have been digitized. **Watch for coming attractions! Be there for this program, and bring slide briefs! (We'll continue to have a slide projector available at all meetings.)**

May 11 **More of Harvey Laner's unique, original video!** He'll feature recent steam action of the **"Winter Photo Freights"** on the **Nevada Northern**, including the **1909 Alco Consolidation and 1910 Baldwin Ten-wheeler.** We'll also see the **Heber Valley ex-UP 1907 Consolidation** performing in Provo Canyon. **Much snow! Be there and bring slide briefs!**

MEMBERSHIP

by **VIRGINIA GRUPP**

At the Board meeting on March 2, 2007, James A. Mills Jr. was voted into PRS.

ROLLING STOCK AT SAUNDERS YARD

The ex-ATSF Hi-Level transition car has arrived and is now on the Garden Tracks at Los Angeles Union Station, and will be there for the next several weeks. The repair of Roomette 6 in the *National Forum* has been finished. Work on the cupola caboose is "going great guns." There was an increase in visitors last year. [Info. from PRS Board Minutes for Feb. 2, 2007]

SAN DIEGO & ARIZONA EASTERN ENGINE 27 in the February 2007 issue of *Wheel Clicks* (Page 10, upper right) was a 4-6-0 Ten Wheeler Class T-58, built by Baldwin in 1907. The ex-Las Vegas & Tonopah Engine 11 was acquired by SD&AF in 1919, and scrapped December 12, 1950. [Info. from *San Diego & Arizona -- The Impossible Railroad* by Robert F. Hanft (Trans Anglo Books 1984) via Chard Walker]

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

by **VIRGINIA GRUPP**

The tally of ballots by PRS members for Fiscal Year 2007-2008 was counted at the meeting on March 9, 2007. The Election Committee counted 18 miscellaneous votes for various offices in addition to the listed votes. * indicates a winner. Approximately 37 percent of the membership voted.

President	.....	Vic Carlucci	.....	200*
Vice-President	.....	Vince Camarrano	.....	200*
Secretary	.....	Bill Smith	.....	205*
Treasurer	.....	Keith Ogle	.....	194*
Director	.....	Marti Ann Draper	.....	200*
Director	.....	Jerry Pass	.....	28
Director	.....	Will Walters	.....	198*

PACIFIC RAILROAD MUSEUM by **LINDSAY SMITH**

We have added two more DVDs to our series of old movie films. Steam 10 is a narrow-minded railfan's delight. The segments are long and they feature the Rio Grande Southern

steam engines working the Trestles at Ophis and a trip to Silverton. The scenes are clear and the runs are long. There is also narrow gauge steam in Steam 2 and Steam 6.

Steam 9 has two segments: "Steam on the Reading from 1933" and the UP steam engines, "Big Boy and His Brothers." This disc features smoke, steam, high wheels and flashing side rods. The UP engines are 1940s. Both have many pictures of Pacific Class engines speeding passenger consists over the rails. Mel Goyen continues to look for historical films that should be archived for the future and to entertain our current members and their friends.

Our Steam 7 DVD features snow. The "White Pass and Yukon," "Winter Railroading in the Sierras" and "Winter Railroading in the Colorado Rockies" add snow to the steam and smoke scenes.

Our price, \$19.95 each, includes shipping by Priority Mail. Buy 4 and get one free. Select 10 and pay for eight!

The April Meeting program will feature one of the new DVDs and we will project it with our new digital projector. If you have video or digital images for the monthly meetings, we can project them. Please pre-coordinate with us so that the projector will be at the meeting. At this moment I anticipate we can handle PowerPoint and the common image formats. Our new projector was recovered by Tim Muck from surplus at his work place. Jim Baker and Roger Fogt are competent in digital projection. We are convincing Russ Davies that digital has arrived; he may even try a digital camera this year.

We are beginning to archive 35 mm slides. Arie Korporaal has a small individual's set and will make a DVD. We will copy the original and archive sets of DVDs at more than one location. After we experiment further, we hope we can make images available to others. Although there are many critics of DVD records, they stop the degradation of the original film. On the other hand, we anticipate that recording technology will evolve and we may have to convert the records to future formats. Just in case we will store the original films and do our best to keep them healthy. We have over a hundred thousand slides at present; the task ahead is tremendous. However, if we do not make a plan and lists, they will never be appreciated. Digital access will speed archive searches.

Joe Moir has been making a paper list of the late Ralph Melching image collection. We can copy the list into a digital folder and make access to this collection easier.

We have had several serious researchers use our facility. They are either members or applicants if they use the collection. John Hockaday is selling his recently printed "From Indian Footpath to Modern Highway" on his site <http://www.buckthornpublishing.com/>. His book reports the cultural development of the Cajon Pass and the people who settled the area. Of course, the railroads are significant in the evolution of the lines of communication through the pass. As the Civil War occurred in the East, San Bernardino citizens were requesting the establishment of a fort in the pass to protect the ranches from rustlers, indians and other brigands. John and Dianne are working on another book. Several other people are writing books and researching railroad subjects.

We have surplus material for a new volunteer to sell on e-Bay or whatever. We could also use our Verizon e-mail ac-

count for a web page to list the museum archives and sell the VHS "For the Love of Trains," books and images for another new volunteer's program. Our PRS web master has brought our information up to date and the Museum Committee would like to help make more information available.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY RIDERS

During the month of January 2007, the average number of weekday riders traveling on trains going to, from, or within Los Angeles County, other than on Amtrak, was 278,930. This was a 16 percent increase over last month.

SANTA CLARITA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Three poles – the wigwag, order delivery pole, and semaphore – were recently raised after having been acquired with the Saugus Railroad Station 26 years ago.

The wigwag was the norm before railroad gate crossings. It swung a round banner and rang a bell when a train was approaching a road crossing. The order delivery pole was fitted for "order hoops" that delivered written messages to the engineer and other crew aboard a train that was not scheduled to stop. The semaphore indicated that such a message was available to be picked up.

The historical society invited the public to come see these poles during open hours, Saturdays and Sundays from 1 to 4 p.m. For information, call (661) 254-1275.

[Info. from *Daily News*]

S. CALIF. COMMUTER RAIL RIDERSHIP

by DICK FINLEY

Metrolink weekday, systemwide, average trips during January increased from December by 3,253 or 9 percent to 41,095. The 91-LA Line had a 25 percent increase over last month, and the Riverside Line had a 5 percent decrease over last month. Total system ridership increased over January of last year by 2 percent.

Metrolink weekday, systemwide, schedule adherence during January was 95 percent, which was the same as last month.

REVENUE

System-wide fare revenues have increased \$4.1 million, or 16 percent over the prior year. The overall increase over prior year is a result of increased ridership and the 5.5 percent fare increase, which took effect on July 1, 2006.

ORANGE COUNTY COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

The Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) board approved on Feb. 16 a Cooperative Agreement with the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) for management, design and construction of rail infrastructure improvements necessary for the implementation of rail service every 30 minutes between the Fullerton Transportation Center and the Laguna Niguel/ Mission Viejo station. OCTA.

OCTA has approved \$57,334,000 to fund this effort. The work will be incorporated into the SCRRA's FY 2007-08 new capital budget, subject to appropriate approvals.

QUIET ZONES

- The proposed Red Hill Quiet Zone on Red Hill Ave. near Edinger Ave. in the City of Tustin has lengthy medians on both sides of the crossing. However, a break in the median on one

side enables traffic to skirt the median to enter a commercial driveway and could cause queuing over the tracks. The proposed solution is the construction of new exit gates (quad gates), a pre-signal, and widening of the commercial driveway to facilitate truck turning.

- The City of Anaheim is considering the establishment of a quiet zone covering four at-grade crossings within 0.8 mile at Broadway, Santa Ana St., South St., and Vermont Ave. One of the reasons for the zone is the construction of approximately 60 high-density residential units on the easterly right-of-way between Santa Ana St. and South St. Initial diagnostic meetings have been held, and preliminary designs have been subjected to review by SCRRA, OCTA, and CPUC staff.

- The City of El Monte has begun consideration of a three crossing quiet zone. Two of the crossings, Cogswell Rd. and Tyler St., are shared with the Union Pacific Railroad, while the third, Arden St., is used by UP only. The Tyler St. crossing is adjacent to the El Monte Metrolink Station and is by a recently constructed multiple residential development. No formal diagnostic meetings have been held, and no preliminary designs have been submitted.

COVINA PARKING STRUCTURE

The city of Covina built the Covina Metrolink Transit Complex Parking Structure one-half block west of the Covina Metrolink Station. Construction began in Oct. 2004 and was completed in Dec. 2005. The structure is four levels above grade and has a total of 655 parking spaces. The total construction cost was approximately \$7.3 million.

SANTA ANA DOUBLE TRACK PROJECT

Track-roadbed construction is continuing along the railroad right-of-way where only a single track presently exists between the cities of Santa Ana and Orange. At the deadline time for the April 2007 issue of *Wheel Clicks*, completion of the second track was estimated to occur in June of this year.

The first of four complete weekend windows were to begin on Jan. 26 with closure between 11:15 p.m. through 3:30 a.m. on Jan. 29. Bus bridges were to be provided between Santa Ana and Orange stations to meet connecting train service. The first phase will consist of allowing two crossing panels to be installed, along with track realignment and grading.

HIGHGROVE STATION

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) board on Jan. 8 voted against a Highgrove Station just south of the Riverside/San Bernardino County line. It would cost at least \$15 million and possibly serve as few as 117 riders, according to a report. San Bernardino Associated Governments found that any potential new ridership would be outweighed by the cost.

RIVERSIDE DOWNTOWN PARKING LOT

On Feb. 20 the new Eastside Parking Lot opened at the Riverside Downtown Station. The lot is located off Commerce St. on the southside platform. This will be great for 91 and IEOC line riders who will not have to cross the pedestrian bridge. An issue is that there are over 500 people boarding on that platform and only 325 spaces so the overflow will need to go back to the main lot.

It was a \$5 million project with right-of-way costs. There will be no overnight parking in this satellite to make it easier to maintain security.

ORANGE COUNTY SERVICE EXPANSION PROGRAM

The SCRRA approved entering into a cooperative agreement with OCTA at the Board meeting on Feb. 23, for management, design and construction of rail infrastructure improvements necessary for the implementation of rail service every 30 minutes between the Fullerton Transportation Center and Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo Station.

OCTA proposes to reimburse SCRRA for work efforts directly associated with the Orange County rail service expansion projects. OCTA has approved \$57,334,000 to fund this effort. The budget for this infrastructure work will change as further engineering and cost estimates are developed. Any infrastructure projects must be completed by 2010 in order to meet a service start-up of December 2010.

SACRAMENTO HISTORIC TRAIN YARD

The railroad operators took 20 years hauling away polluted topsoil at Sacramento's historic downtown train yard. But Stan Thomas, the new owner of the 240-acre site, believes he can finish the last third of the job in just two years – all the time proceeding with plans for urban villages, public markets, museums, entertainment complexes and more.

Much of the yard is on reclaimed marsh and a lake known as China Slough or Lake Sutter, which the railroad routinely filled with debris through the early 20th century. Records on what was dumped are scarce. Rumors abound of old locomotives buried whole. When Union Pacific acquired Southern Pacific in 1996, it assumed liability for removing the toxic wastes that had leaked, spilled or been dumped in what was once the largest industrial center west of the Mississippi.

The first area targeted for cleanup is a northwest corner parcel next to Interstate 5, where Thomas Enterprises has landed its first retail tenant – Bass Pro Shops – a fishing and outdoors emporium. Excavators then move to the area planned for the 5th Street Emporium, with ground-level shops and restaurants, topped by residential units.

On track next would be the footprint that will be left after the planned relocation of the freight and passenger rails. The tracks are to move 300 feet north of the depot for a new transportation center. Crews then will attack the Central Shops, where locomotives were built and rebuilt. Thomas Enterprises plans to transform these cavernous old brick buildings into a public marketplace on the scale of the Ferry Building in San Francisco. [Info. from *Railroad Newslines* via Ken Ruben]

VICTORVILLE-VEGAS LINE

Victorville City Council members are getting ready to sign a deal for a 5,000-acre master-planned community and at its heart the first high-speed train built in California. The community will have a capacity of 80,000 living units, 130 million square feet of commercial space and 9 million square feet for industrial use.

Tom Stone, president of Desert Xpress Enterprises Inc. is expected to sign the agreement along with development partner Transit Real State Development LLC. Stone said the \$3 billion project is moving forward, with an environmental impact statement (EIS) underway.

Stone has said that Vegas-bound travelers can drive to Victorville, check into their hotel at a satellite-front desk, board

the high-speed steel-wheel-on-rails high-speed train and be in Sin City in little more than an hour. The line does not start in Los Angeles because the costs to put the rail up Cajon Pass – especially for a totally privately funded project – are prohibitive. He has, however, not ruled out an L.A.-Victorville extension in the future. Current plans are for ground-breaking in late 2008, Stone said. Ticket prices would most likely be \$110 round trip.

Although Victorville has said that no public funds would be used for the train project itself, the agreement calls for half of the tax revenue generated from the project to be used in the form of a bond issue to fund the project's infrastructure. The city and its development partners, which include Newport Beach-based Inland Energy are in the process of acquiring land north and east of Southern California Logistics Airport.

The high-speed train will cover 190 miles, with a schedule set to run every 30 minutes, at a speed of 125 mph. A draft EIS should be ready in 2007 with opening day projected for 2012.

The station in Victorville will be 60 acres with room for 10,000 automobiles along the east side of Interstate 15 between the two Stoddard Wells Road exits. In Las Vegas three possible locations include near the south end of the Strip, the center section of the Strip, and downtown.

The maintenance, storage and operations facility will be on 50 acres in Victorville within the Victor Valley Economic Development Area. It would include a fueling station, train washing facility, repair shop, and operations center – all employing 400 people.

[Info. from *Victorville Daily Press* via Chard Walker]

PASSENGER TRAIN UPDATES by CHARLES VARNES AMTRAK NEWS

On Feb. 5, President Bush sent his Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 budget proposal to Congress. The proposed Department of Transportation budget proposed \$900 million for Amtrak. The amount included \$300 million for operating expenses, \$500 million for capital expenses, and \$100 million for a new matching grant program to help States fund intercity passenger rail infrastructure improvements.

On Feb. 15, Amtrak sent its FY 2008 Grant and Legislative Request to Congress. The amount requested was \$1.53 billion (Operating expense \$485 million, Capital expense \$760 million and Debt service \$285 million). In addition Amtrak requested \$100 million for state corridor matching funds and \$50 million for the first phase of ADA station compliance. In its request Amtrak stated that during the remainder of FY2007 and FY 2008 Amtrak it intends to focus on seven critical areas. They are, as stated in the request, the following.

- Security – Coordinate and integrate security enhancements into capital investments and the protection of critical assets. Develop a comprehensive passenger screening methodology.
- Ridership and revenue – Expand the successful *Acela* customer service improvement and product test programs. Accelerate the e-ticketing program and expansion/upgrades of self-service ticketing kiosks.
- Long-distance services – Continue the implementation of more cost-effective, higher quality food and beverage services, and selective route adjustments.
- Corridor development – Work with state on service, infra-

structure and equipment planning, begin procurement of new diesel multiple unit (DMU) cars, and continue to focus the organization on corridor partnerships.

- Mechanical operations – Continue revamping of traditional maintenance practices through expansion of Amtrak's reliability centered maintenance program beyond *Acela* and restructuring of work at facilities, in order to improve equipment reliability and availability while reducing maintenance costs.
- Information technology – Development and implement a new IT architecture to replace outdated and ineffective legacy systems and business processes, and provide relevant, timely and accurate management information for decision making.
- Labor settlements – Strive to achieve labor agreements providing reasonable wage increases while insuring modernized workplace flexibility and cost containment.

Resignation and Appointments

Enrique Sosa, an Amtrak Director since 2004, resigned from the railroad's Board of Directors effective March 1, 2007. Sosa was appointed by President George W. Bush in August 2004 and again in January 2006. He noted an increasing number of other obligations as the reason for his resignation.

Richard Phelps was appointed Amtrak's Vice President, Transportation, effective March 15.

Phelps had a 33 year career with Amtrak, with 25 years in Operations. Since 2002, He has led the Southwest Division as General Superintendent and previously held position that included Chief Transportation Officer, Amtrak West; Assistant Vice President, Service Standards and General Manager, Commuter Operations.

In his new role, he will be responsible for directing the Transportation department's team of over 8,000 employees and providing safe and efficient train operations with an overall focus on safety and quality service.

Eleanor D. "Eldie" Acheson, Esq. has been appointed as the corporation's new Vice-President, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary. She has more than 30 years experience in the legal profession.

In her role as Amtrak's Vice President, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary, Ms. Acheson will oversee and manage the company's Law Department and legal work, including its Claims Division, and will support the company's Board of Directors in its governance of the company.

Acheson is a graduate of Wellesley College and the George Washington University Law School.

Amtrak has appointed Anne (Hoey) Witt, as Vice President of Strategic Partnerships and Business Development. She is a former Amtrak executive.

Witt rejoined Amtrak after serving as Director of the District of Columbia Department of Motor Vehicles and on the board with her state partners in the American Association of Motor Vehicles Administrators. Prior to her work at the DMV, Witt held the position of vice president in a number of Amtrak Departments including Service Standards; Service Operations; Reservations, Sales and Customer Relations; Customer and Corporate Communications; and Corporate Management.

The newly formed Strategic Partnerships and Business Development department focuses on Amtrak's growth strategy

and is charged with finding synergies and mutually beneficial expansion opportunities to increase ridership and revenue. The department will absorb the pre-existing Contract and Business Development; Corridor Project Planning; Real Estate Development; and Host Railroad Contract Administration groups.

Assistant Vice Presidents reporting to Witt include Gil Mallery, spearheading client-focused approaches for developing and delivering state-supported services; Paul Nissenbaum, providing national leadership on corridor expansion; Paul Vilter, enhancing freight railroad partnerships; and Bruce Looloian, maximizing Amtrak's real estate potential.

Witt received her master's degree in city planning from Harvard University.

INTERCITY TRAINS

Empire Builder

DigEPlayer onboard entertainment units became available for rent on board the *Empire Builder* on February 21. The unit can be rented aboard the train from the Lead Service Attendant (LSA) in the Lounge Car. Passengers can return the digEPlayer to the LSA at the end of their trip, or send it back in a pre-addressed FedEx package for an additional charge.

Texas Eagle

Effective with the April 2 timetable change, Carlinville, Ill. will become a flag stop for the *Texas Eagle*.

Heartland Flyer

To celebrate Oklahoma's centennial, Amtrak, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and the Oklahoma Centennial Commission have joined to offer a free companion ticket for travel aboard the *Heartland Flyer*. The offer extends through Dec. 13. Each passenger purchasing a regular adult fare can bring a companion along for free. Up to two children ages 2-15 may accompany each adult at half the regular adult fare or travel as the companion. To obtain the free companion ticket refer to discount code H711. Blackout dates for the special fare are April 5-9, May 25-28, and Nov. 20-27, 2007. Other terms and conditions may apply.

Oklahoma celebrates its 100th anniversary of statehood on November 16, 2007.

WEST COAST CORRIDORS

Pacific Surfliner

During the four months ending January 30, nearly 819,000 passengers rode *Pacific Surfliner* Service trains on the San Diego-Los Angeles-San Luis Obispo/Paso Robles corridor, an increase of nearly 2 percent from the same period a year earlier. Ticket revenue is up by more than 11 percent and is in excess of \$14 million for the four months that begin the current Amtrak fiscal year.

San Joaquin

During the four months ending January 30, more than 254,000 passengers rode Amtrak *San Joaquin* Service trains on San Francisco/Oakland-Sacramento-Bakersfield corridor, a decrease of 1 percent largely due to train cancellations due to a track improvement project on a segment owned by the BNSF Ry. Ticket revenue is up by nearly three percent and is in excess of \$1.7 million for the period.

The BNSF San Joaquin corridor track renewal project was mentioned in the last month's column. It included installing

77,150 wood ties, eight miles of new rail, 100 miles of track resurfacing, and four miles of undercutting. It required the use of three tie gangs, two rail gangs, the RM80 on-track undercutter, several specialized work gangs, and local workers. The project's cost was \$17.5 million.

Capitol

During the four months ending January 30, more than 465,000 passengers rode Amtrak *Capitol Corridor* Service trains on the San Jose-San Francisco/Oakland-Sacramento-Auburn corridor, an increase of more than 11 percent from the same period a year earlier. *Capitol Corridor* ticket revenue is up by more than 18 percent and is in excess of \$5.7 million for the period.

Cascades

A second Amtrak *Cascades* train between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. should be operating by summer 2008. The construction of a passing track on the BNSF New Westminster Subdivision north of the United States-Canadian border will permit the addition of the train. The project will be funded by the province of British Columbia, BNSF and Amtrak, with the Province providing approximately half of the funds. Tr. Nos. 513 and 516, which currently operate between Bellingham, Wash. and Portland would have their route extended north to Vancouver, B.C.

During the four months ending January 30, more than 200,000 passengers rode the ten daily trains, and one Monday-Saturday Amtrak *Cascades* trains, an increase on the Vancouver, B.C., Seattle, Portland corridor of nearly 5 percent from the same period a year earlier. Ticket revenue is up by nearly 18 percent and is in excess of \$5.9 million for the four months that begin the current Amtrak fiscal year.

MIDWEST CORRIDORS

Illinois Routes

In figures for the four months ending January 30, 137,882 passengers rode on the ten trains on the Chicago-St. Louis corridor, an increase of 29 percent from the same period a year earlier, when there were six trains on the route. Ticket revenue is up by more than \$368,000 and is in excess of \$3.1 million for the first four months that begin the current Amtrak fiscal year.

The figure for the state-supported trains on this corridor during the period ending January 30 is 75,791, including 18,730 for January. That is an increase of almost 103 percent from January of 2006, when there was only one state-sponsored round-trip on the corridor.

On the Chicago-Carbondale route, 81,285 passengers rode on the six trains, an increase of more than 35 percent from the same period a year earlier, when there were four trains on the route. Ticket revenue is up by more than \$456,000 and is in excess of \$2.4 million for the period.

The figure for only the state-supported trains on this route during the period ending January 30 is 68,347, including 15,996 for January. That is an increase of almost 69 percent from January of 2006, when there was only one state-sponsored round-trip on the route.

At the same time, 59,124 passengers rode on the eight trains between Chicago and Galesburg, including four of them also operating to and from Macomb and Quincy, an increase of

almost 25 percent from the same period a year earlier, when there were six Chicago-Galesburg trains and two that also operated to and from Macomb and Quincy. Ticket revenue is up by more than \$180,000 and is in excess of \$1.3 million for the period.

The figure for only the state-supported trains on this route during the period ending January 30 is 49,976, including 11,126 for January. That is an increase of almost 45 percent from January of 2006, when there was only one state-sponsored round-trip on the route.

NORTHEAST CORRIDOR

For the four months ending January 30, 1,020,031 passengers rode Amtrak *Acela Express* trains, an increase of nearly 20 percent from the same period a year earlier. Ticket revenue increased by nearly 22 percent and is in excess of \$127 million for the first four months that begin the current Amtrak fiscal year.

DEPOT DOINGS

SAN LUIS OBISPO, Calif. The depot was closed for about three hours on Feb. 24 while investigators examined a suspicious package. An employee reported hearing a humming sound coming from a cardboard box. The box was thought to be unclaimed baggage which arrived on an earlier train. The San Luis Obispo County Bomb Task Force opened the box with a robot device. It contained mostly women's clothing. An electric toothbrush in the box was the source of the humming sound. The closure delayed two trains, *Pacific Surfliner*, Tr. No. 775, which was held south of the station and a southbound Union Pacific freight.

OTHER PASSENGER RAIL NEWS

Cheyenne Frontier Days Train

The Denver Post Cheyenne Frontier Days Train is scheduled to operate on July 21, 2007. It is the special's fifteenth anniversary. It was originally operated by the Union Pacific Railroad, and now is sponsored by the Denver Post newspaper. The May 2006 Passenger Train Updates column contained a history of the train. Information about the trip was to be posted on the web at <http://cfdtrain.com/>.

[Info. from Ken Ruben, Ed Von Nordeck]

UP LOS ANGELES BASIN TRACK PROJECTS COMPLETED AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

Union Pacific Railroad completed its \$38 million track improvement projects on two of its main line tracks in the Los Angeles Basin on March 16, nearly seven days ahead of schedule. The track improvements were made to rail lines through Industry, Mira Loma, Pedley, Diamond Bar, Hacienda Heights, Montebello, Commerce, Hobart, El Monte, Bassett and La Puente.

A toll-free telephone number, (800) 269-2059, was established during this year's project to provide motorists with information in both English and Spanish, regarding when crossings were closed temporarily to renew crossing surfaces. Plans are to keep the toll-free number accessible to residents in the Los Angeles Basin during future major Union Pacific improvement projects that may impact motorists.

Crews installed more than 93,000 concrete ties; spread

110,000 tons of rock ballast to ensure a stable roadbed; replaced the surfaces at 18 road crossings; replaced 33 turnouts; replaced 36 miles of straight rail and replaced 1,800 feet of rail in various curves on the lines.

The installation of concrete ties will enhance track strength to better handle the nation's growing demand for rail shipments. Also, concrete ties last longer than traditional wooden ties – reducing the time needed for future track maintenance.

[Info from uprr.com/newsinfo via Charles Varnes]

URBAN RAIL TRANSIT

by DICK FINLEY

LOS ANGELES METRO RAIL

RIDERSHIP

January 2007	Red Line	Blue Line	Green Line	Gold Line
Weekday Ave.	119,324	71,392	34,182	17,638
Saturday Ave.	79,152	51,186	20,252	12,232
Sunday Ave.	68,830	40,360	15,233	10,138
Monthly Total	3,285,893	1,977,171	909,174	487,650

METRO RAIL RIDERS

The subway line between Union Station and Wilshire/Western is now being designated as the Metro Purple Line, and is being shown in purple on maps. Rail service is unaffected by the designation and will continue to operate as scheduled.

PUBLIC TRANSIT RIDERSHIP

Public transportation ridership nationwide increased by nearly 3 percent in the first nine months of 2006, as Americans took 7.8 billion trips on public transit. Light rail had the highest percentage of growth among all modes of transportation with an increase of 5.4 percent.

In Los Angeles, ridership on the Blue Line increased 7.5 percent in the first nine months of 2006 over ridership during the same period of 2005. Green Line ridership grew by 12.6 percent, while ridership on the Gold Line shrank by 2.3 percent.

Heavy rail ridership on subways nationwide increased in the first nine months of 2006 by 2.8 percent.

2550 LIGHT RAIL CAR

[*Wheel Clicks* for Nov. 2006 has a photograph of the 2550 car]

The 2550 light rail vehicle (LRV) will soon debut on the Gold Line, but unlike earlier LRVs, it can operate on the Blue, Gold, Green, and Gold Line Eastside Extension. This is possible because the 2550's electronics can adapt to the signaling systems of each line. The 2550 prototype vehicle was flown to Los Angeles in June 2005, while the first three "production cars" were received from the manufacturer, AnsaldoBreda of Naples, Italy, recently. Two more cars, each costing \$2.9 million, were expected to arrive last February.

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) has ordered 50 of the 90-foot-long vehicles, each weighing 5.4 tons. The 2550 vehicle has a top speed of 65 mph and seats 76, including space for four wheelchairs. Enhanced security features include six video surveillance cameras and two silent alarms.

The last of the 50 cars from the current order will reach Rail Operations in 2008. The 2550 contract includes two 50-car options for the procurement of additional rail cars.

RED LINE

At the Metro Board meeting on Feb. 21, the Board approved

a joint development agreement with Vermont/Santa Monica, LLC, for the purpose of leasing approximately 1.1 acres of Metro owned property. Located at the Vermont/Santa Monica Red Line station, it is for development, in conjunction with adjacent property owned by the Developer, of a mixed-use residential/retail project.

The proposed development will be constructed on the combined area, which totals 1.5 acres. The Development will include between 140 and 200 for-rent residential units and between 16,000 and 24,000 square feet of retail space. The Development's site configuration locates the retail space in a single story adjacent to the Metro Red Line station portal, and locates the residential units in five additional stories above the retail structure. Auto parking is on a single story underground and on the surface.

LOS ANGELES MARATHON

The 22nd Annual Los Angeles Marathon was held on March 4, 2007. In 2006, 212 intersections were closed for the 26.2-mile marathon, but a new route this year will result in 320 intersection closures. Metro buses were rerouted from 4 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The MTA was to add more cars to its Red Line subway, which had stops near the marathon's start and finish lines. Metro typically runs nine four-car trains on the Red Line. On the day of the marathon, 14 six-car trains were to run at five minute headways, carrying a maximum of 7,500 people an hour.

GOLD LINE

Small pieces of concrete have fallen from beneath the Chinatown Station over the past 1½ years. While no one has been hit by the rubble, transit officials acknowledge the potential danger to pedestrians near the elevated station.

Metro recently agreed to make repairs, but doesn't know what went wrong. "Until we know what the cause is, we can't really come up with a fix," said Rick Thorpe, Metro's chief capital management officer. Repairs could cost as little as \$50,000, a small fraction of the railway's \$450 million price tag.

Black webbing has been hung under the viaduct to catch falling debris, and birds are using the webbing for nests.

SANTA FE STATION HISTORIC BENCHES

The 1935 Santa Fe Pasadena Depot, which was cut into pieces in 2001, stored across Raymond Ave. in Central Park, and reassembled near its original location beside the Gold Line tracks, is set to open in May as La Orange Restaurant, a centerpiece of the new \$40 million, 347-unit transit village. Since the old station closed, the huge modernistic oak benches – two singles and two back-to-backs, each seating six people – were brought back to the Del Mar Gold Line Station on Feb. 28.

It's not quite clear where the benches will end up since plans to include them in the restaurant have been put on hold, said Matthew Winsryg, assistant vice president for developer Archstone Smith. "A lot of items [from the depot] were not used, and we're keeping everything where it is until we can figure out a use for them."

"Amtrak first moved them out to Fullerton, where they have a beautiful historical station museum," said Sue Mossman, executive director of Pasadena Heritage. Just having the benches back in home territory is something of a victory,

Mossman said. Pasadena Heritage paid to have the benches shipped back to Pasadena and the quest to find storage began as the depot went through its own changes.

Maybe the Gold Line doesn't have the same glamour as in the heyday of cross-country train travel, but the depot and all its original fittings provide a link with the past, Winsryg said. "It's a great historical artifact," he said. "It lends a lot of authenticity to the plaza – its unique."

[Gold Line info. from *Pasadena Star-News*]

SAN DIEGO

These service statistics are for Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) Rail during October through December 2006. Ridership: Oct.: 3,279,670; Nov.: 2,844,827; and Dec.: 2,618,210.

On-time performance:

Oct.: 94.5%; Nov.: 94.8%; and Dec.: 96.1% .

Mean distance between failures in miles:

Oct.: 38,343; Nov.: 33,485; and Dec.: 28,361.

Collision Accidents per 100,000 miles:

Oct.: 0.3; Nov.: 0.2; and Dec.: -.

MTS EXPLOSIVES-DETECTING DOGS

The MTS has three explosives-detecting dog teams, financed by the Transportation Security Administration. The funding is \$120,000 annually for five years. It is part of a \$2 million-per-year national program to improve mass-transit security for the MTS and twelve other transit organizations. Elsewhere in California, dog teams have been deployed on the Metrolink transit system and BART for the San Francisco Bay area.

The three dog-and-handler teams have been patrolling the MTS since September. They ride trolleys and buses, and snoop around bags and packages, jackets, parking lots, waste receptacles and other possible hiding places for a bomb. "Our ultimate goal is to prevent the introduction of an explosive device into any of our transportation systems, whether its aviation or mass transit, and keep the traveling public as safe as they expect to be," said David Kootny, director of the National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program.

GROSSMONT TRANSIT CENTER

A groundbreaking in December was held for the Grossmont Transit Center off Fletcher Parkway. The massive asphalt parking lot, as big as six football fields, is being transformed into a mid-rise apartment complex with structured parking for residents and commuters. La Mesa will benefit from the addition of 527 high-end apartments with 80 of the units going at below market rates. The MTS will benefit from a pool of potential riders and a leasing deal that will bring in \$600 million over 99 years.

The apartments will open in two phases, Dec. 2007 and Dec. 2008. The complex will feature a clubhouse, swimming pools and ground floor retail.

People-oriented developments along transit lines are coming to San Diego County. North County Transit District is studying proposals for projects in Carlsbad, downtown Oceanside and Escondido, and is moving forward with projects in Solana Beach and northeast Oceanside. Other future MTS projects include system-owned parcels near transit lines in El Cajon, Grantville (East Mission Valley), Chula Vista and San Ysidro.

PORTLAND, OREGON

The North Clackamas Parks & Recreation District and

Clackamas County are designing and building a 6.6-mile Trolley Trail, which is a bicycle and pedestrian trail linking neighborhoods from Milwaukie to Gladstone. It generally follows the historic interurban line that ran between downtown Portland and Oregon City. Construction of the Trolley Trail is expected to begin in the summer of 2008.

More than 10,000 people rode the new aerial tram shuttling people between the South Waterfront to Oregon Health & Science University on Jan. 27-28, with no reported problems.

Metro had a public meeting about the environmental assessment phase of the Portland Streetcar Loop on Jan. 29. The project will extend the existing streetcar line from downtown Portland to the east side, crossing the Broadway Bridge and running along Grand Ave. and Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. [Info. from *The Oregonian* via Caroline Hobson]

FILLMORE & WESTERN RAILWAY TURNABLE

An 80-ton piece of rotating railway was dropped into place in downtown Fillmore on Feb. 7. When the turntable begins operating, probably near the end of March, it will allow Fillmore & Western to turn locomotives around at its railyard. Without the turntable, trains must go all the way to Ventura to turn around on a wye at Union Pacific's Montalvo Yard.

Once the railway finishes laying tracks to connect the turntable to the main tracks, locomotives will run onto the turntable, be turned 180 degrees, then roll off facing the opposite direction.

Fillmore & Western President Dave Wilkinson said the company bought the century-old turntable in 1996 from the Canadian National Railway. The turntable represents the first phase of a Railroad Interpretive Center project that also will include a roundhouse to display trains.

[Info. from the *Ventura County Star* via Ken Ruben]

[EMPRESS from Page 1]

SeaBus (ferry) Burrard Beaver. Returning to the historic CP station, I then boarded the last West Coast Express train of the day for the run to Mission. My conductor friend had my seat reserved in the rear cab with an open window. The ride included the scenic run along the Burrard Inlet before the sun set for the day.

[Photo #3 & #4] Friday the 13th proved to be a lucky day as I joined friends from Port Coquitlam for a chase of the 2816 steam special in the Fraser River Canyon under clear skies. GW Ltd. Tours from the United Kingdom had chartered the train for a round-trip from Calgary to Vancouver. I would later ride the special for the return run [Photo #5].

Canadian Pacific 2816, a 4-6-4 named the Empress by the railway, was built in 1930 by the Montreal Locomotive Works. As with Union Pacific 844 and 3985, the engine had been converted from a coal burner to an oil burner. At no time was a diesel helper used. CP 2816 pulled auxiliary tender 35508, tool car 29114 power/steam generator unit 96, club car 101 *Dominion*, coach 102 *Ernest "Smoky" Smith* VC (both cars ex-CN), sleeper 110 *H.B. Bowen* (ex-CN Enfield) and PRPX ex-Norfolk Southern business car *Lamberts Point*. As the special was running off-the-advertised, we only had a few photos in the sun

since the train was in the canyon's shadows from the service point of North Bend westward. Still, it was a wonderful sight watching 2816 as we chased her, and also drove ahead to countless locations such as Cisco and the Yale Tunnels. We followed 2816 to Mission where we broke off the chase, so I could return to Vancouver for a night at the Sandman Inn.

Saturday and Sunday were spent on Vancouver Island. I joined the Trains Unlimited Tours group for the sailing through Active Pass on the *Spirit of B.C.* ferry followed by a visit to always spectacular Butchart Gardens. Sunday was spent riding the Budd car (RDC) – otherwise known as Via Rail Canada's Malahat Dayliner – north to Courtney with a return to Nanaimo [Photo #6 & #7]. Return to the mainland was in rainy weather on board the *Queen of Coquitlam*. For Sunday night I was back at the Fairmont Waterfront in Vancouver.

Monday morning buses brought our group to the boarding location in the Port Coquitlam yard. Although no photo run-bys were staged, we were allowed to detrain during the service stop at North Bend. Our arrival into Kamloops was delayed as a broken rail was discovered ahead of us along the south shore of Kamloops Lake. A CP crew was dispatched to fix the problem so we steamed into town at 6:30 p.m. By 6:45 p.m. we departed again. This time on the *Spirit of Kamloops* train from the CN Station, now The Keg restaurant. CN 2141 is a 2-8-0 built in 1912 by the Canadian Locomotive Co. in Kingston, Ontario. She put on a fine show, pulling two ex-CN coaches, two open-air cars and an ex-BC Rail caboose. For a historic touch, Billy Miner robbed the train, as he did 100 years ago. After the run, we all had a good look at the engine under starry skies before we headed to dinner and our hotel downtown.

Tuesday morning featured photo run-bys at Sicamous and Revelstoke, where we all toured the museum with its fine collection of equipment and memorabilia. From this day throughout our trip until Calgary a helicopter would often follow us, filming 2816 in Imax for a movie to be released in theaters next year [Photo #8]. Tuesday night's stay was in Golden, with buses transporting us up the hill to our hotel overlooking the railway yard (and 2816).

Wednesday through Friday featured running on freight-only trackage along Columbia Lake, through the Crowsnest Pass and over the massive Lethbridge Trestle. At 53,257 ft. in length and 315 feet tall, it is the largest bridge in North America. Photo run-bys were staged at Wasa [Photo #9], Fernie and Lethbridge. At Cranbrook our group enjoyed an excellent buffet dinner, accompanied by musical entertainment in the Royal Alexandra Hall of the Canadian Museum of Rail Travel. Many of the CP heavyweight cars here have been beautifully restored to reveal varnished wood, plush upholstery and stained glass windows. The Hall was formerly part of the Royal Alexandra Hotel in Winnipeg, since demolished. Thankfully, the elegant dining room has been preserved at the Museum.

Our steam excursion concluded in Calgary after playing tag with the C-Train light rail line 201. We saw the Royal Canadian Pacific equipment at the CP Pavillion, reminding all that more rail adventures still await the tourist and railfan north of the Border.

