

WHEEL CLICKS

Pacific Railroad Society Inc.

APRIL 2015

KEN RUBEN'S PASSING

Pacific Railroad Society mourns the loss of Kenneth Ruben. Ken was our friend and served as a bridge between PRS past and present. He knew many of our original members, as well as all of today's officers. Ken served as Secretary or Director several times, and ambassador for PRS to the public. He had an encyclopedic knowledge of passenger trains and transit. In the late 1960s, this was expressed in a regular column in *Wheel Clicks*. Ken was active on excursions and reliably showed up whenever we had exhibits at National Train Day, San Bernardino Railroad Days and many other events.

Ken never owned a car and was known as Culver City's Number 1 bus rider. He was truly the definition of a Transit Advocate.

There was no one like Ken, nor will there anyone like him in the future. He claimed connections with just about everyone who was anyone in California rail and transit circles. The amazing thing was, he really had met all those people, and they all remembered him. Ken's passing leaves a gaping hole in the fabric of PRS.

METROLINK TRAIN 102 ACCIDENT IN OXNARD

By Charles Varnes

On February 24, 2015, Metrolink Train 102 departed the East Ventura station bound for Los Angeles. Its consist was Metrolink 645 Cab-coach/206 Coach/211 Coach/263 Coach/870 Locomotive. The train was being operated by a student engineer under the supervision of an experienced engineer. At about 5:44 a.m. it collided with an unoccupied 2005 Ford F450 utility service truck towing a two-axle utility trailer in Oxnard, California.

The truck was traveling south on S. Rice Avenue. Its driver intended to turn right onto E. 5th St., but turned right onto the railroad tracks, which were located approximately 55 feet before the intersection. After traveling about 80 feet on the railroad track the truck became stuck, and was abandoned by its driver.

The truck was struck by the Metrolink train.

Following the impact the train derailed with cars 645, 206, and 211 overturning. Coach 263 derailed but remained upright. Locomotive 870 did not derail.

There were numerous injuries among the passengers and crew. Glenn Steele, the trains engineer, was seriously injured, and passed away on March 3.

A memorial service for Steele was conducted in the former ticket concourse at the Los Angeles union Station on March 15.

The accident is being investigated by the National Transportation Board. Their preliminary report is located at http://www.nts.gov/investigations/AccidentReports/Pages/HWY15MH006_preliminary.aspx.

A RAILROADER'S REPORT OF THE METROLINK TRAIN 102 ACCIDENT IN OXNARD

By Mike Jarel

Brad Stein and I were just going on duty at Oxnard when 102, as usual and on time, went roaring past the yard office. A short time later several emergency vehicles went screaming past on 5th St. eastbound. We both looked at each other hoping 102 hadn't hit a vehicle at Rose Ave., the first crossing east of the yard. A few moments later our dispatcher (in Omaha) called on the office phone and asked Brad if it were possible for us to drive out to Rice Rd. since he was getting sketchy reports of an incident with 102 and couldn't raise the crew on the radio. We were able to get through the police barricade already set up at Rose. It was first light and the scene we encountered I've never experienced in my 37 years of railroading. In the smoke and flashing lights I could only see the silhouette of the locomotive and first car, both leaning at severe angles, and I remember asking Brad where the rest of the train was! As we closed in we could see one of the cars on its side across paralleling 5th St., another on its side away from the track, and the cab car on the opposite side of the track on its side completely spun around facing back towards Oxnard. The locomotive was still running along with the HEP generator (480 volts). It turned out we were the first railroad personnel on scene and Brad called in the first emergency report to the UP

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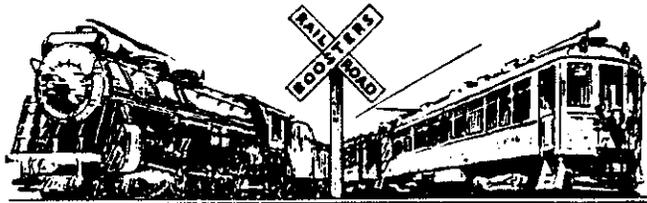
AMTK/METROLINK/AT&SF ENGINEER GLENN STEELE REMEMBERED

By Bob Johnson

I'm sure all of you have heard and/or know by now, that Metrolink/Amtrak and former Santa Fe (AT&SF) locomotive engineer Glenn Steele passed away March 3, after the Metrolink train he was working collided with a pickup truck and trailer at the first road crossing south of the south switch to the yard and siding at Oxnard on the UP Santa Barbara Subdivision a week earlier. I worked along side Glenn at the Amtrak 8th St. Coach Yard, when I first started my railroad career, 25 years ago, the 15th of March. Glenn and I got along quite well, and we enjoyed many conversations in my first 5 and one half years that I worked for Amtrak. In my off time, I got to ride on the head end of trains, mostly in the cabcar, with Glenn. Even before then, I used to wave at him and hear him on the radio on his runs to Santa Barbara in the late 1980s.

Not long after Metrolink started running over the UP LA Sub. between Riverside and Los Angeles in May 1993, Glenn took the "double run" on that line. This was the last train of the morning out of Riverside, that went to LA, then turned as a midday train to Riverside and back, and then ran as the first evening rush hour train back to Riverside. On my off day, I rode with him on this run. We made the first round trip without incident. However, on

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Railroads-The Backbone of America

WHEEL CLICKS

APRIL 2015 **VOLUME 79, NO. 4**
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Opinions expressed in unsigned articles are those of the editorial board, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Society, its officers or directors. Opinions in signed articles are those of the author only. All rights reserved. ISSN: 0043-4744.

Published monthly by PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY, INC.
 Address and telephone are the same as for Pacific Railroad Museum.

PARTICIPATING MEMBER. \$45.00 per year
 SUSTAINING MEMBER. \$60.00 per year
 CORPORATE MEMBER. \$110.00 per year
 LIFE MEMBER. \$500.00

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 Mondays: 12-5 p.m.; Wednesdays: 12-5 p.m.; Saturdays: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

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 INTERNET Home Page: <http://www.pacificrailroadsociety.org>

Pacific Railroad Society, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (e)(3) social organization staffed by volunteers. The Society supports rail car preservation and restoration; railroad excursions; a museum which preserves and displays railroad literature, photos, artifacts and a resource library; railroad related education; social events; and publications. The public is welcome to participate in the Society's events, operations, and facilities. The Society is funded by membership, donations, grants, and fundraising activities.

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PRS APRIL EVENTS

April, 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 PRM Open Wednesday, 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas
 April 1 PRS Board Meeting, Wednesday. 7:30 p.m.
 PRM. West Room. 210 W. Bonita Ave.,
 San Dimas
 April 4, 11, 18, 25 Saunders Yard Open Saturday, 8:30 a.m. – ?
 Noakes St. & Herbert Ave., Commerce
 April 4, 11, 18, 25 PRM Open Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas
 April 6, 13, 20, 27 PRM Open Monday, 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas

April 10 PRS Membership Meeting. 7:30 p.m.
 Friday Alhambra Room. Joslyn Center.
 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
 April 22 Wheel Clicks Mailing, Wednesday. 10:00 a.m.
 1240 Dominion Ave, Pasadena.
 (626) 794-0783
 May 2 PRS Excursion 551. *Springtime in San Luis*
 Saturday *Obispo* featuring PRS own *National Forum*

FROM THE EDITOR

The editor is receiving contributions for Wheel Clicks via postal mail at the Pacific Railroad Museum, and is beginning to receive contributions via email at wheelclickseditor@earthlink.net. Thanks to those who have contributed information. If you have a story, experience, memory, or photograph to share with PRS members please submit it. Contributions are welcome.

APRIL MEETING PROGRAM

By Russ Davies

The Great Japan Rail Tour "Tetsudo," Part II! Your humble "program guy" was fortunate to be one of the small group of enthusiasts on an October 1992 escorted Japan Air Lines' excursion. This will be an old-fashioned slide presentation, with actual slides of an in depth visit to Hiroshima and its amazing streetcar system.

PRS ELECTION OF OFFICERS RESULTS

The following candidates (and the number of votes they received) were elected as officers and directors of the Pacific Railroad Society for its fiscal year 2015/2016.

President	Virginia Grupp	118 votes
Vice-President	Will Walters	120 votes
Secretary	Rick Reyes	119 votes
Treasurer	Marti Ann Draper	124 votes
Director	Dave Housh	110 votes
Director	Al Novak	107 votes

The members of the Election Committee were John Stallkamp (Chair), Jim Baker and Robert Davis.

FEBRUARY MUSEUM REPORT

By David Housh, Museum Curator

February was another good month for your Museum. Attendance hit an all-time high, and donations followed suit. I was pleased to have volunteer support on every Saturday throughout the month, and the Saturdays in March are already covered too. I hope this momentum will continue into April and beyond. Contact me and sign up for April or beyond if you can help out.

In my continuing effort to publicize our fine facility to area residents, I recently addressed some 50 members of the San Dimas Senior Citizens. When I asked who had previously visited our Museum, very few hands went up. Hopefully that will change, and they will spread the word that our Museum is worth a look. I should add that they made a generous and welcome donation.

Should any one of you know of a group or club that needs a program, and it is within reasonable driving distance from San Dimas, I would be more than happy to make a presentation. Length can be adjusted to suit a group's needs.

My thanks this month for volunteer staffing and help go to

Russ Davies, Jim Baker, Harvey Laner, Ed Saalig, Andy Novak, Gerald Pass, Dave Abbott, Virginia Grupp, Dennis Gilkey, and Steve Crise. I hope I remembered everyone. Please consider joining our select group of volunteers, particularly on a Saturday. The more volunteers we have, the less often anyone would have to serve. . . unless by choice.

WE WOULD LIKE THE OLD KEN RUBEN BACK

By Ari L. Noonan

Were Ken Ruben, the Culver City transportation maven awake, alert, surely he would have appreciated the view – from high on a scenic hillside just east of downtown Los Angeles.

Rushed to gleaming County USC hospital on Sunday evening, for one day he was lying in a bright fourth-floor setting connected to an uncountable number of hoses and wires.

The stillness, the silence were numbing.

Just hours ago, at midnight, he was transferred to L.A. Community Hospital, East L.A., as hopes dimmed for reviving, restoring the diminutive, stout personality whose knowledge of busses and trains borders on peerless.

Seventy-one days after 72-year-old Mr. Ruben, a Culver City downtown personality for years, was walloped by a powerful stroke, he is comatose. His eyes have been closed for days.

A wide belt of eeriness has surrounded visitors to his room in various nursing homes and hospitals since he was found on Jan. 1.

A pocket full of friends – pals from his all-consuming railroad hobby – poured in over the weekend to his shared room at an East L.A. hospice. When they greeted him and attempted to converse with him, frustratingly, nothing happened.

If he comprehended, he was unable to indicate.

What would Mr. Ruben say if he could reply?

Speculation being perilous, we will report only what we have seen:

A vacuity of enthusiasm, an absence, a vanquishment of the gritty personality who stretched a dollar from here to San Francisco, and back, whether on rails or bus wheels.

In the 14 years I have known Mr. Ruben, he has logged thousands more miles than I, owing to the loyalty and camaraderie of intimates from his fiercely pledged rail circle.

Since there never may be another Ken Ruben, dear God, may we have the old edition back for a few more years.

Source: The Front Page Online, March 10, 2015. The author was a close friend of Ken Ruben. The article is reprinted with his permission..

A TRIBUTE TO KEN RUBEN

By Art Ida, Culver City Transportation Director

Ken loved Culver *CityBus*.

Actually, it is a known fact that former Culver *CityBus* Transportation Director Dave Ashcraft deemed Ken Ruben to be given a special honorary title as the No. 1 Culver *CityBus* passenger.

Ken was very proud of the title that Mr. Ashcraft gave him.

Upon my appointment as Transportation Director for the city, Ken quizzed me if I knew who was the No. 1 Culver *CityBus* passenger.

Luckily, I already knew the answer.

I told Ken that I knew it was him.

If I only had a camera to capture the smile on his face.

I will always cherish the memories of the interactions I had over the last 15 years since I met him.

The last memory I had with Ken was several weeks ago when I visited him at the hospital.

I brought him a little Culver City squeezey rapid bus.

I put the bus on the tray in front of him.

“Since you can’t come to the bus,” I said, “I thought I’d bring the bus to you.”

Ken began to cry with large tears.

He had a huge smile.

He grabbed my hand.

With every effort in his body, to the best of his ability, he muttered the words “thank you.”

I will truly miss Ken’s passion for Culver *CityBus*, his transit advocacy, but most of all his friendship.

I have been blessed to have known him.

GOLD LINE FOOTHILL EXTENSION MARCH UPDATE

Pasadena to Azusa

As of early March 2015, the Foothill Gold Line from Pasadena to Azusa is nearly 90% complete. Over the last several years of design and construction, the team has completed all design, 14 at-grade street crossings, 25 bridge structures (including the Gold Line Bridge over the I-210 Freeway), relocated the freight track in Irwindale and Azusa, completed installation of 28 miles of light rail track, began construction on all stations and station parking facilities, and much more.

Starting in February 2015 and continuing through the summer, testing is taking place in different segments of the corridor. During this period, a second shift of construction may be necessary to complete work in the railroad corridor when a test train is occupying the tracks during the main shift of the day.

Over the coming months, as the project moves closer to substantial completion and ultimate turn over to Metro in late-September, the team will complete work on the six light rail stations, 24-acre Operations Campus in Monrovia, the communication and OCS (Overhead Catenary System) systems, and the preparation of the rail for long-time use.

The project remains on-time and on-budget to be completed in late-September 2015, when it will be turned over to Metro for pre-revenue service. Metro will determine when the line opens for passenger service.

Azusa to Montclair

Coordination with all Azusa to Montclair corridor cities is now underway, as the Construction Authority continues to advance the design for the 12.3-mile light rail segment toward a shovel-ready project in 2017. Engineers are out along the corridor surveying the area and beginning geologic testing and other activities needed to provide information to the engineering documents for the project.

Additionally, the six Station Design and Art Review Committees have now provided the artists with enough information to create initial art concepts for review and feedback.

To provide an opportunity for the artists to receive feedback from the broader community, the Construction Authority will be hosting the following community open house events in each corridor city in April and May:

Regional Connector in downtown Los Angeles, and the first phase of the Westside Purple Line subway extension to Wilshire and La Cienega.

Leahy also launched a \$1.2-billion overhaul of the Metro Blue Line and guided the purchase of a new fleet of rail cars. And he helped transform the iconic Union Station into the hub of the region's expanding bus and rail transit network and led the agency's acquisition of the 75-year-old iconic facility.

Though Metrolink is a separate transportation agency from Metro, the two agencies work collaboratively to provide effective and efficient public transportation options for people throughout the region. For example, Metrolink and Metro worked together closely to ensure that Metrolink riders would continue to transfer seamlessly to all Metro subway, light rail and bus lines following implementation of the Metro TAP initiative.

Metrolink offers connections to nearly 30 other public transportation providers throughout Southern California at no additional cost. Other Metrolink transportation connections include the OCTA bus system, Riverside Transit Agency (RTA), Omnitrans in San Bernardino County and Ventura Intercity Service Transit Authority (VISTA). In addition, the Rail 2 Rail® program allows Metrolink Monthly Pass holders along the Orange and Ventura County corridors to travel on Amtrak *Pacific Surfliner* trains within the station pairs of their pass at no additional charge.

Prior to his tenure as Metro CEO, Leahy led OCTA (2001-2009) and served as the general manager of Metro Transit (1997-2001) in Minneapolis-St. Paul.

While at OCTA, Leahy led efforts to secure reauthorization of the \$12 billion Measure M sales tax proposal, which gained 70 percent approval from Orange County voters in November 2006. Measure M led to the expansion of the county's rail and bus systems, along with numerous enhancements of streets, highways, and traffic management systems.

Growing up Highland Park, both of Leahy's parents worked in transit and he followed in their footsteps. He started as a bus operator for the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) in Los Angeles in 1971 and rose through the ranks to become chief operations officer before taking the position in Minneapolis.

Prior to earning a Masters of Public Administration degree from the University of Southern California in 1982, Leahy completed a Bachelor of Arts degree from California State University, Los Angeles in political science (1974) and certificate in transportation management (1973) from UCLA.

[Source: *Southern California Regional Rail Authority*]

PHILLIP WASHINGTON APPOINTED AS THE NEW CEO OF METRO

L.A. Mayor and Metro Chair Eric Garcetti – on March 12, 2015 – announced that the Metro Board had appointed Phillip Washington as the new CEO of Metro.

Washington comes to Metro from Denver's Regional Transportation District (RTD) where he was unanimously selected as RTD's CEO in December 2009 after serving as interim CEO for 6 months and the Assistant General Manager for nearly ten years.

In Denver, Washington was implementing the FasTracks

program, one of the largest voter-approved transit expansion programs in the country.

He was responsible for a total agency budget appropriation of \$2.8 billion and managed more than \$5 billion in active transit expansion projects. Under his management, RTD's West Line Rail was completed eight months earlier and under budget and the award-winning Denver Union Station was completed 5 months ahead of schedule.

In 2012, Washington's emphasis on safety training led to a 40 percent decrease in preventable bus accidents and he has achieved an on time bus and rail rate of 90 percent and a 96 percent ADA on time performance.

Originally from the south side of Chicago, Washington is a 24-year veteran of the United States Army where he held the rank of Command Sergeant Major, the highest non-commissioned officer rank an enlisted person can achieve.

Washington holds a B.A. in Business Administration from Columbia College and a M.A. in Management from Webster University.

Source: *Metro via Ed Von Nordeck*

PASSENGER TRAIN UPDATES By Charles Varnes

LOSSAN Corridor Work Window

An absolute rail work window has been scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, May 2 and 3, 2015. Rail service will be shut down from the Orange County line to the Santa Fe Depot in San Diego to perform work on the Sorrento Valley and the San Onofre to Pulgas Double Track projects.

Metrolink Orange County and Inland – Empire Orange County Line trains will operate only as far south as San Juan Capistrano, and Amtrak *Pacific Surfliner* will operate to Irvine. Amtrak will provide a limited number of buses to bridge passengers to San Diego. Metrolink will not provide bus bridges.

Winter Park Ski Train

Amtrak operated a special 75th anniversary ski Train from Denver to Winter Park, Colorado on March 14, and another train the following day.

The March 14th train sold out within one day. Due to the unexpected response Amtrak scheduled the additional train.

Viewliner II Baggage Cars

Delivery of Amtrak's new Viewliner II baggage cars began in December 2014. Upon delivery, the cars were moved to Amtrak's Hialeah, Florida maintenance facility for inspection and acceptance. The first new baggage cars were expected to enter service on March 23.

Amtrak Train Days

This year Amtrak is replacing its National Train Day with Amtrak Train Days.

Amtrak is expanding its community program from multiple events on a single day to individual events over the course of spring, summer and fall.

Amtrak Train Days will demonstrate why "Trains Matter" by sharing with the local communities we serve the 'reasons to ride' the train. ATD will focus on reaching current and new audiences across America to reinforce the importance, benefits and value of passenger train travel.

ATD will officially kick off on May 9, 2015 at Chicago Union Station and then will travel across the country during the summer

and fall. ATD celebrations will feature a combination of outreach tools, including a dedicated tour of the Amtrak Exhibit Train in select markets, interactive displays of the Amtrak experience at events sponsored by community organizations, Amtrak employee guest speakers, media and event promotions, and an ATD toolkit to support local community activities.

A RAILROADER'S REPORT

From Page 1

dispatcher. Apparently initial calls were only sent to Metrolink - a long standing issue with emergencies in the field in joint territory. The fire dept. had amazingly already set up a command post and complete triage and was in full rescue mode. Brad and I identified ourselves to the Captain who was happy we were there since they had many questions about the equipment and were having difficulty figuring out which end was which with the train. I asked if the crew had been accounted for and he replied that they had just began rescuing and hadn't thought yet about the crew. I told him the engineer should be in the cab car (which I had to identify to the captain). That started a great amount of radio activity to the rescuers on board who I understand found Glenn pinned in the control compartment. It took a great amount of time to free Glenn and get him transported, but I was relieved to hear that he was conscious and talking. His heroic struggle to survive makes his passing all the more tragic. I never did find out when they found the conductor but was glad to also hear he was okay. It was my understanding that he suffered a heart attack through the ordeal but I never was able to confirm that. With most of the attention given to Glenn's struggle, not much has been reported on the conductor's condition, and I hope he is doing okay. I checked the locomotive and made sure the fuel tank hadn't ruptured from the unit riding the ties for quite a distance. I also climbed aboard and shut the unit down, including the HEP generator, and reported back to the captain that the equipment was safe to work around. Considering the wreck scene and the obvious violent nature of the derailment, Brad and I were happily astounded that everyone aboard had survived. Everyone was heartened to hear Glenn had been moved to Cedar Sinai as all hoped that was a sign that he was improving. The news of his passing was a real blow. Being so close to the end of his career and certainly looking forward to the rewards of retirement, it's so sad to have his life cut short from such a tragic circumstance. What Glenn encountered was every operating railroader's worst nightmare. I'm certain that the hearts of the entire railroading community go out to Glenn's family, and I truly hope that the lasting memories of Glenn are of his life and not his tragic ending.

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the second round trip, inbound to LA, we were out of City of Industry, doing 79 MPH on main track #1 and had to slow down for a 70 MPH Road X-ing on a curve in Rose Hills. When we

came out of that curve, we both noticed a tall object about a mile and a half ahead of us on the track. Glenn and I had ghostly looks on our faces. Since Glenn already had the train brakes applied for the 70 MPH curve, he kept them set and even started braking much harder, without throwing the train into emergency. When we came to a stop, about a half a car length away from a Hi-rail Burrow Crane that was on our track, about a half mile east of Pico Rivera! The Maintenance of Way Operator started taking the Crane off the track as we came to a stop. He was in total shock like we both were, his eyes were as big as Christmas Tree Balls and his mouth half way open. By this time, the Conductor had walked up to us to see what was wrong and Glenn told him we almost hit an On-track Burrow Crane! He told the Conductor to give him the cell phone, Glenn then opened the side door on the field side, got off the train and called UP Omaha LA Sub. Dispatcher Cindy. He told Cindy what he observed and did, then Cindy contacted the UP Foreman in Charge of work that had just released Track and Time on Main 1 about 10 minutes before we got there. Turns out that this Foreman released the Track and Time, but did not verify and/or tell the Hi-rail Burrow Crane Operator to get off the track. Once it was verified that all men and equipment were off the track, Cindy instructed Glenn to proceed. We only lost about 10 minutes because of this.

Another time, not long after that, I rode this same run with Glenn. As we were departing Riverside Station, some guy was apparently hanging on the side of the train. A local railfan, having observed the incident, decided to get on his walkie talkie radio and make his voice sound like a distressed woman, and say, "Oh no, Metrolink, you have a little problem here, oh no, oh no!!!" What the railfan didn't know, is that Glenn saw this in his mirror and stopped the train. The LA County Sheriff Deputies responded and corrected the situation and then we were on our way.

One thing you never wanted to do, was to have Glenn catch you sitting in "his" engineer seat when he arrived in the cab. Not knowing this, I indeed did this one afternoon at the Riverside Station and wow, did I get an ass chewing for it from him. I'd never seen him so mad before! Needless to say, I never forgot that one either and I never sat in any engineer's seat on any cabcar or locomotive when Glenn was nearby. Conductor Ed (I don't remember his last name to save my life) apologized to me and told me that he should have warned me about that before Glenn got there. This was O.K., because I know how sensitive I can get about certain things at times myself.

Although I hadn't seen him in many years, I miss Glenn and had often wondered where he was and what he was doing. It is just sad that he was at retirement age and didn't get to retire and enjoy life and instead, died 1 week after being in a train wreck that he should have never been in. I will always remember the above incidents and many other uneventful rides we made together. Rest in Peace my friend, Glenn.