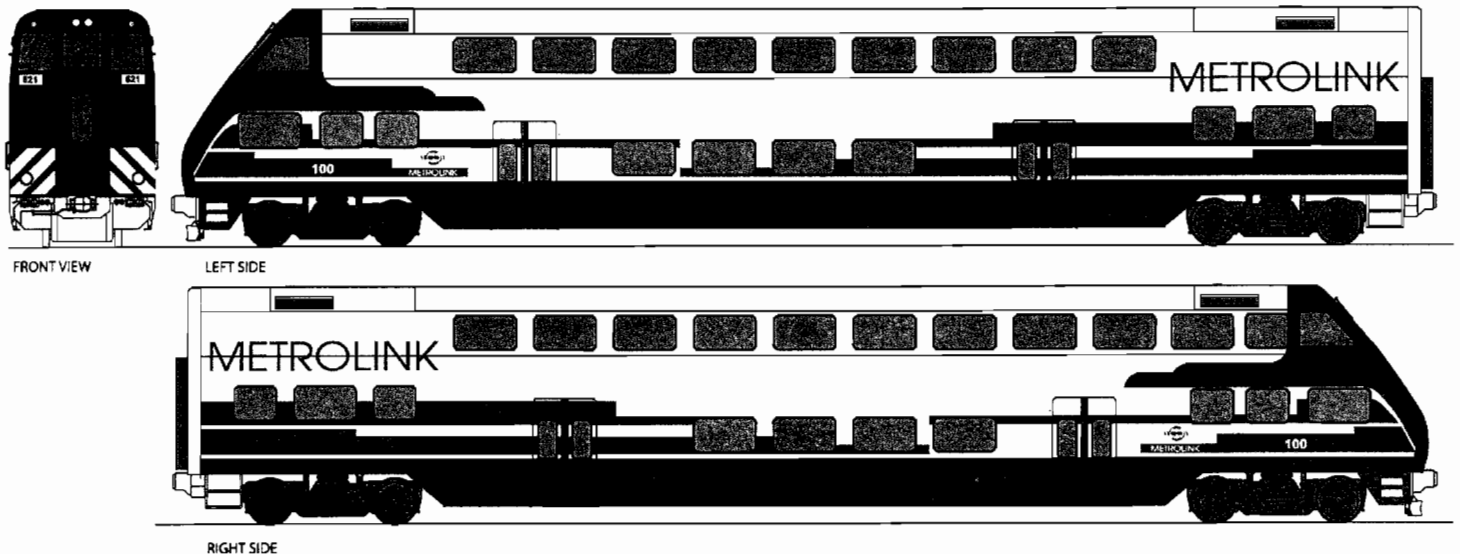


# WHEEL CLICKS

Pacific Railroad Society Inc.

AUGUST 2006



Metrolink recently purchased 87 railcars from Rotem Co. equipped with the latest crash energy management features, as specified by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Metrolink in summer 2005 asked the FRA for help in developing a specification to use in their next railcar procurement. The FRA formed an ad hoc working group to develop impact criteria to provide occupant safety. Metrolink's bid closed, with Rotem winning the award.

Photo from Metrolink and info. from Metro Magazine

## DESERT LINE

by DICK FINLEY

Carrizo Gorge Railway (CZRY) is the rail freight operator on the Desert Line by contractual agreement with RailAmerica/San Diego & Imperial Valley (SD&IV) and with the approval of San Diego & Arizona Eastern/Metropolitan Transit Development Board.

In June 2005 Simon Wong Engineering was hired by the CZRY to determine the structural integrity of 57 bridges and 17 tunnels on the Desert Line between Campo, Calif. and Plaster City, Calif. As a result of a Wong inspection report and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) inspection on January 17, 2006, CZRY prepared a Bridge and Tunnel Repair Program.

Since completion of the bridge report, five bridges have undergone initial repair raising their structural and overall rating. None of the bridges on the Desert Line will fall into the category of serious (rating 3), critical (rating 2), "imminent" failure (rating 1), or failure (rating 0), according to the National Bridge Inspection Condition Ratings as published by CALTRANS.

An additional 19 bridges are scheduled for repair and rehabilitation within the next five years. Thirty-three bridges were found to be in fair to excellent condition and will only require periodic inspection and maintenance.

At the time of initial inspection, the famous Goat Canyon Trestle (Mile Post 102.29) was rated 4 for overall substructure and rated 6 for overall superstructure. Following completion of the reconstruction of the inspection walkway, a more detailed

inspection will be completed on this structure. Reconstruction of the inspection walkway will commence in Aug. 2006 and be completed by Nov. 2006. Depending on the final inspection, CZRY anticipates completion of repairs on the Goat Canyon Trestle by the first quarter of 2007.

The Bridge Repair and Program Schedule will result in all bridges on the Desert Line meeting or exceeding a rating of 5 (Fair) as determined in the Wong Report by the end of 2006.

Although not required by the FRA, CZRY is planning to install portals on the west and east ends of Tunnel 16 within the next year at an estimated cost of \$200,000. For additional capacity and to create a passing siding, CZRY will recommend complete restoration of Tunnel 7 at an estimated cost of \$2.5 million as one of the desert line projects from the \$10 million in Federal TEA funding.

Although significant improvements and upgrades are planned for the future to meet additional freight demand, the bridges, tunnels, and culverts on the desert line of the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway meet all FRA regulations.

The railroad is approximately 60 miles long. It interchanges at the Plaster City, Calif. Union Pacific Railroad and at the west end with the Mexican railroad at the border near Tecate, Mex. The line re-enters the USA at San Ysidro, Cal. where the SD&IV Railroad continues the route to San Diego.

The primary customer handles sand in gondolas loaded near [continued at DESERT on Page 3]



**WHEEL CLICKS**

**AUGUST 2006 VOLUME 70, NO. 5**

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**TECHNICAL EDITOR ..... CHARLES VARNES**  
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**PRS NEWS — ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES**

Aug. 4 Board meeting, 7:30 p.m., Valencia Room at Joslyn Fri. Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.  
 Aug. 5, 12, Pacific Railroad Museum work party, 10 a.m. to 4 19, 26 p.m., Bonita & Monte Vista Aves., San Dimas.  
 Sats. Committee meeting on the 26th.  
 Aug. 5, 12, Rolling Stock repair day, 8:30 a.m. to ?, Noakes & 19, 26 Herbert Sts., Commerce. Regular day: 5, 19; Extra day: 12; OERM day: 26. Committee meeting: 19.  
 Sats. For more info. phone Will at 714-637-4676.  
 Aug. 11 Membership meeting, 7:30 p.m., Alhambra Room Fri. at Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.  
 Sep. 1 Board meeting, 7:30 p.m., Valencia Room at Joslyn Fri. Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.  
 Sep. 2, 9, Pacific Railroad Museum work party, 10 a.m. to 4 16, 23, 30 p.m., Bonita & Monte Vista Aves., San Dimas.  
 Sats. Committee meeting on the 23rd.  
 Sep. 2, 9, Rolling Stock repair day, 8:30 a.m. to ?, Noakes & 16, 23, 30 Herbert Sts., Commerce. Regular day: 2, 16; Extra day: 23; OERM day: 9, 30. Committee meeting: 16.  
 Sats.  
 Sep. 8 Membership meeting, 7:30 p.m., Alhambra Room Fri. at Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.  
 Sep. 15 Slide Night, 7:00 p.m., Saunders Yard, Noakes & Fri. Herbert Sts., Commerce. Everyone welcome. Bring slides and your refreshments.

**MEETING PROGRAMS**

by **RUSS DAVIES**

August 11: **US Railroading in the 1970s, a slide presentation** by member **Jerry Duncan**. A “mixed bag,” primarily western railroading, including **Utah**, with some **Midwest and East** mixed in. Many of you knew the late **Roger Bogenburger**. Roger and Jerry were good friends, and often times when Roger was on railfanning trips he’d take Jerry’s camera with him and shoot “dups” for Jerry. We’ll see some of Roger’s work either in this program, or a future PRS program that Jerry has committed to. **Be there, and bring slide briefs!**

September 8: **A Mystery Presenter** will provide our featured slide presentation. Only clue we’ll provide is that he’s a former **PRS Slide Contest Winner!** **The real reason for the mystery** is that he’s out of town as we go to press, and we can’t provide the details. **Full disclosure in the next *Wheel Clicks*, which will be out before this meeting. It will be good, be there, and bring slide briefs!**

**BOARD MEETING SYNOPSIS—JUNE 2, 2006**

**CALL TO ORDER—8:04 p.m.** on board *Starlight Cafe* in Saunders Yard.

**ROLL CALL—**All officers were present except President Vic Carlucci, Directors Owen Danaher and Lindsay Smith (all excused).

**TREASURER—**Marti Ann Draper reported that funds have been moved from one account to another.

**EXCURSIONS—**It was approved that we lease the *National Forum* to Bill Hatrick for the “San Diego Troop Train” on July 8, 2006. By consensus of the Board, Bill Hatrick shall be considered an “employee” regarding his services aboard the *Forum* during its transcontinental trip.

**MEETINGS—**Joslyn Center has been secured for Board and Membership Meetings during July, August, and September.

**PUBLICATIONS—**A mailing party for *Wheel Clicks* is scheduled for June 28.

**MEMBERSHIP—**Five applicants for membership were voted into PRS, and are listed in the July issue of *Wheel Clicks*.

**PROGRAM—**The June program will feature slides shown in the foyer prior to the 70th Anniversary Banquet.

**ROLLING STOCK—**The *National Forum* is on the Garden Tracks at LA Union Station ready for the San Luis Obispo trip. The two ex-Golden Gate Railway Museum cars are at Saunders Yard. The Board was thanked for meeting at Saunders Yard.

**ADJOURNMENT—**Meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

**MARTI ANN DRAPER**

Taken by photo journalist Spencer Grant, a photograph of Amtrak Conductor and PRS Treasurer Marti Ann Draper appears on Page 75 of the August issue of *Trains* magazine. “What a ride! Working for the Railroad today,” featuring portraits by him of modern-day railroaders, opened at the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento July 8.

**AXIS AT UNION STATION DEVELOPMENT DELAY**

Months before the expected move-in date, about 40 expectant buyers were told the condominium project would be delayed. Unspecified causes beyond the company’s control were blamed

for the holdup in acquiring title on the complex at Alameda St. and Cesar E. Chavez Ave. Buyers were tendered full down payment refunds, along with \$8,500 per unit for relocation and other costs. [Info. from *Los Angeles Downtown News*]

[DESERT from Page 1]

Plaster City and shipped to Campo, Cal. Some lumber car business also is handled with expectation of other commodities to be developed in the future. The train consist averages 15 to 20 cars and with a carload limit of 263,000 pounds. There is one train per day.

## A DAY IN SAN DIEGO

by CHARLES VARNES

[For photographs see Page 12]

The PRS *National Forum on the Surfliner* excursion on May 13, 2006, provided two opportunities for an enjoyable day. The first was the trip aboard the *National Forum*, occupying Roomette 3, when I wasn't riding in its vestibule with several like-minded PRS members. The second was a chance to make a circle tour of the San Diego trolley system, which had opened the Green Line since my last rides several years ago.

Following our arrival in San Diego was *Coaster* Tr. No. 642. It did not remain in the station long, returning to Oceanside as Tr. No. 637.

After arriving in San Diego, I photographed our train and then looked around the platforms and the depot for a short while. Chris Parker and I had discussed taking the trolley to Old Town for lunch, but he had enjoyed the ride from Los Angeles so much that he decided to ride back and return on the afternoon section of the excursion. I was tempted to do the same, but the desire to make a circle trolley tour via the Blue, Green, and Orange Lines with a stop to view the spectacular trolley station at San Diego State University took precedence. I did not plan to ride the Blue Line to San Ysidro because I had done that several times, and I was not sure that there were any interesting restaurants near the station.

The San Diego Trolley offers a \$5 Day Tripper pass which offers unlimited riding on the day of purchase. I headed for the ticket vending machines (TVM) on the depot platform to purchase my ticket. The first TVM declined to accept my well-worn \$5 bill. I had better luck with the other TVM. It accepted my bill and issued the ticket. Then I was off to the Old Town station aboard a Blue Line trolley. After arriving at Old Town, I looked around the depot, took a few photographs and headed for Old Town State Park and lunch at the Casa de Pico.

Upon entering the park I noticed that the area containing shops and restaurants had been renamed the Plaza del Pasado. As I soon found out, this was not a good omen! The Casa de Pico restaurant, a long-time family favorite when we visited San Diego, was no more. It had been replaced by another Mexican restaurant, the Casa de Reyes. Since I was there, I thought I would try the new restaurant. It turned out to be very tourist-oriented, with a different menu, and hurriedly serving extremely bland Mexican food.

All was not lost, however, because next to the restaurant was Rudolph Schiller's Photographs and Books. The store stocked an excellent selection of San Diego and California history books, and the staff was very pleasant. I enjoyed my visit, although I did not purchase any books. I had exhausted my current book

budget during a recent visit to the California State Railroad Museum bookstore. Carrying several books around for the rest of the day would have been a problem, also. Following my visit to Schiller's, I walked around Old Town and noticed that all of the restaurants were operating under new names, and that the menus and prices were similar. The shops in the park had changed, also. I wonder if the State Park system has a new concessionaire operating the restaurants and shops. The Wells Fargo museum and park visitor's center were the last stops on my way to the trolley station. Both had interesting displays, and were worth the visits.

At the trolley station I boarded a Green Line car for the Santee Town Center. The new cars have large windshields. The operator's area is separated from the passenger compartment by a wall with a large window on its right side. The front aisle seats on the right-hand side of the car provide a good view of the tracks ahead.

Departing Old Town, the line has an amusement-park quality, with numerous curves and rises and dips to accommodate the terrain and railroad crossings. The line runs through Mission Valley and along the San Diego River for some distance, with interesting scenery visible from the trolley. When I arrived at the SDSU Transit Center, I exited the train and walked throughout the station. Then walked out onto the SDSU campus and looked around for a few minutes. Returning to the station I took some photographs before a Santee-bound train arrived. The train I boarded for the ride to Santee had the older trolleys which do not provide a forward view. That was unfortunate because it impaired my viewing. I chose not wait for another trolley because I was not certain that it would be one of the new ones. From the SDSU Transit Center the Green Line continues east to a junction with the Orange Line near the large Grossmont Transit Center. The Green and Orange Lines share the tracks from that point to the Gillespie Field station where the Orange line terminates. The track continues to the Santee Town Center, the terminus of the Green Line.

Arriving at the Santee Town Center, I discovered that the line terminated in center of a large shopping center parking lot. The shopping center has a number of major stores, and several restaurants. After taking a few photographs I walked around the center while I waited for an inbound trolley to ride to the Gillespie Field station where I could transfer to an Orange Line trolley back to San Diego to complete my circle tour.

As I passed through La Mesa aboard the Orange Line trolley, I noticed that the San Diego Railway Museum La Mesa depot exhibit was open. I got off the trolley at Lemon Grove, the next stop, and rode back to La Mesa. But by the time I arrived back at La Mesa, the depot was closing, so I looked around the exterior of the depot, and at the locomotive and cars on exhibit nearby. Then I boarded another trolley to complete my tour by riding to the end of the line at the 12th and Imperial Transit Station in San Diego.

Turning away from the Green Line at the junction west of the Grossmont Transfer Center, the Orange Line runs through older areas. Before entering San Diego it passes through a large cemetery, and then enters an area that appears to be older, and less-prosperous, before arriving at the east side of the 12th and Imperial Transit Center. At the Transit Center the Orange Line

turns right and shares tracks with the Blue Line to the America Plaza station, which is adjacent to the San Diego Amtrak depot. At America Plaza the Orange Line turns and continues past the Amtrak depot, and the Seaport Village, Convention Center, and Gaslamp Quarter stations, terminating on the opposite side of the 12<sup>th</sup> and Imperial Transit Center.

The station is located in a position that provides good lighting and views into the trolley yard for photography in the afternoon. After taking more photographs I boarded a trolley and returned to the Amtrak depot, ending my circle tour.

While awaiting the 5:45 p.m. arrival of *Pacific Surfliner*, Tr. No. 580, which carried the *National Forum* on its second trip of the day, I walked around the station platforms and surrounding areas, making mental notes of locations from which interesting photographs could be taken another day.

Tr. No. 580 turns at San Diego to become Tr. No. 591 with a 6:20 p.m. departure for Los Angeles. After its arrival happy PRS members boarded the car for an enjoyable return trip to Los Angeles.

All things considered, it was a good day. I saw the things I wished to see, and acquired some ideas for another day of railfanning in San Diego.

#### LOS ANGELES COUNTY RIDERS

During the month of May 2006, the average number of week-day riders traveling on trains going to, from, or within Los Angeles County, other than on Amtrak, was 323,883. This is a 5 per cent increase over last month.

#### CALTRAIN NEWS

by MIKE GONDRO

During June, the Caltrain Board held three community meetings to take comments on a proposed fare and parking fee increase. The Board said it needs the increase to offset the recent spike in fuel costs. Following those three meetings, the Board decided to raise ticket prices by 25 cents per zone traveled, with multi-ride tickets and passes adjusted accordingly. The new fares will go into effect April 2, 2007.

The Board decided to raise parking fees by 50 cents, from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per day, and also granted authority to Caltrain Executive Director Michael Scanlon to raise or lower parking fees at specific stations a maximum amount of \$5.00 per day. Monthly parking passes will increase from \$15 to \$20. The new parking rates become effective October 1, 2006.

The month of July brought two more special events and more special trains. On July 4, Caltrain ran three special trains from San Francisco to San Jose Diridon to serve the thousands attending the fireworks show at Pier 39 in San Francisco. The first train departed San Francisco at 11:00 p.m., and ran express to San Carlos, after which it made all weekend stops to San Jose. The following two trains left at 11:15 p.m. and 12:01 a.m., and ran as locals, making all weekend stops to San Jose.

On July 29 and 30, special trains were to run from San Francisco to San Jose for the 2nd annual San Jose Grand Prix road race. Extra southbound limited stop trains would leave San Francisco at 7:45 a.m. and 9:45 a.m., and arrive at San Jose Diridon at 8:55 a.m. and 10:55 a.m., respectively, stopping only at San Bruno, Millbrae, San Mateo, Hillsdale, Redwood City, Palo Alto, Mountain View, Sunnyvale, and Santa Clara.

Extra northbound trains were to leave San Jose at 4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on July 29, and at 3:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. on July 30. These trains would operate as locals, making all weekend stops, and arrive in San Francisco approximately 90 minutes later.

On June 22, 23, and 26, Caltrain, along with other transit agencies, took part in "Spare the Air" days, which were declared due to high temperatures and poor air quality. Fares were not collected on these days, and Caltrain ridership increased about 5 percent

#### HIGH-SPEED TRAIN TO LAS VEGAS

An environmental impact statement (EIS) on a high-speed train between Las Vegas, Nev. and Victorville, Cal. has officially begun. Three public scoping meetings were scheduled for late July in Victorville, Barstow, and Las Vegas, said Andrew Mack, vice president of DesertXpress Enterprises Inc. With traffic expected to increase by 60 percent on Interstate 15 by 2030, DesertXpress sees the need for relief. The project, a steel-wheel-on-rail locomotive with a top speed of 125 mph, is to be privately funded.

The train has "possible future extensions" to the Los Angeles basin and the Antelope Valley, but the initial phase begins in Victorville, Mack said. "Geographically, Victorville makes a lot of sense for the DesertXpress project," he said. The EIS is expected to be completed by 2008, with opening day in 2012. [Info. from the *Victorville Press Dispatch* via Chard Walker]

#### KEEP AMERICA'S RAIL SYSTEM SAFE

"Keeping America's rail transportation network safe from crime and terrorist activity is a high priority for the railroad industry," says William Heileman, Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) general director, Police and Protection Solutions. "Every day across the country, rail fans photograph and watch trains as they pass through communities. It seems natural to harness their interest to help keep America's rail system safe."

Rail fans can register for the program by going to the Citizens United for Rail Security (CRS) Web site. CRS participants will receive an official identification card along with access to news and information on the BNSF CRS Web site. To report suspicious activity, CRS members and the public can call (800) 832-5452. The information will be taken by a BNSF representative and routed for appropriate response.

The CRS program is an outgrowth of another BNSF grassroots program, BNSF ON GUARD, which encourages employees to report suspicious activities, trespassers or individuals to BNSF's Resource Operations Call Center (ROCC). [Info. from *BNSF Today* via Ken Ruben]

#### S. CALIF. COMMUTER RAIL RIDERSHIP

by DICK FINLEY

Metrolink weekday, systemwide, schedule adherence during May increased 1% from April to 95%. The Riverside Line has the most percentage of trains not arriving within five minutes of scheduled time, which was 94% inbound toward Los Angeles and 91% outbound.

Trains during May carried an average, weekday, systemwide ridership of 42,764, a 5% increase from April. All lines had

some monthly increase of ridership. Inland Empire/Orange County Line had an increase of 18% from May 2005, and 91 Line (Riverside/Fullerton/Downtown LA) had an increase of 17% from May 2005.

#### CONSTRUCTION

The proposed Corona Transit Center is on 2.1-acres just south of the railroad tracks at Metrolink's North Main Street station. The bus terminal will be built next to the commuter rail line at 31 E. Grand Blvd. "Our (bus) passengers will have easier access to the Metrolink station," said Bradley Weaver, a Riverside Transit Agency spokesman.

[Info. from *Riverside Press Enterprise*]

The Orange City Council voted May 9 to allow the Orange County Transportation Authority to build an underpass at the city's Metrolink station. The \$8.4 million project would allow pedestrians to walk through an underpass directly to the platform instead of crossing railroad tracks at Chapman Ave. Council members expressed concern about security at the underpass and urged city planners to create designs to discourage crime.

Construction of the underpass and extension of the platform could begin next April. It's expected to open at the end of 2007. There are three stations in Orange County with underpasses: Anaheim, Laguna Niguel, and Tustin. The Buena Park, Santa Ana, San Clemente, and Fullerton stations have overpasses.

[Info. from the *Orange County Register*]

In Pico Rivera, city officials are moving ahead with the acquisition and destruction of five homes and an apartment complex to make way for the long-awaited Passons Blvd. underpass project which will allow vehicles to travel beneath the existing railroad tracks.

Funding has come from the state Transportation Congestion Relief Program, that provided \$28.2 million, and the state Public Utilities Commission, which provided \$10 million. In addition, the city has nearly \$3 million in federal funding and another \$2.2 million from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway.

The project dates to 2001 with complaints from residents about safety at the rail crossing. The project stalled after the state, faced with a budget crisis, withdrew its share of the funding in 2002. In 2005, however, after a student from El Rancho High School was struck and killed by a Metrolink train, officials again stepped up efforts to fully fund the project. Unless the underpass is built, problems will only get worse when a third track is added to the rail line as part of the Alameda Corridor East project, officials said.

[Info. from *Whittier Daily News*]

The California Transportation Commission on April 27 approved funding for San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, including \$30 million for the development of the Perris Valley Line of the Metrolink commuter rail service between Riverside and Perris. The funding is provided through the State Transportation Improvement Program, which is updated every two years and covers a five-year period.

[Info. from *Riverside Press Enterprise*]

#### OPERATIONS

The following trains were delayed on June 26, 2006, due to train congestion and dispatching problems on tracks owned by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) between Los Angeles and Fullerton: Orange County Line trains 604, 606,

684, 686, and 688; 91 Line trains 706 and 708; and Inland Empire-Orange County Line train 810. Ventura County Line train 119, Antelope Valley Line train 219 and Riverside Line train 412 were also delayed waiting for passengers from late trains. Metrolink apologized for the delays and is working with BNSF to make sure they are not repeated.

[Info. from Metrolink News Update via Charles Varnes]

#### BOARD MEETING

At the Board Meeting on June 23, 2006, and consistent with the adoption of the fiscal year 2006-07 operating and capital budgets by the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) Board, staff recommended the Board authorize the Chief Executive Officer to fund several items, some of their contracts follow.

- \$6,323,482 to the County of Los Angeles for law enforcement by the LA County Sheriff Department.
- \$20,026,983 with Bombardier Transit Corporation for maintenance of equipment and rehabilitation.
- \$10,804,753 with Herzog Contracting Corp. (HCC) for track and structures maintenance and capital construction projects.
- \$8,257,860 with Mass Electric Construction Co. for signal and communications maintenance.
- \$22,393,450 with Connex Railroad LLC for commuter rail operations and maintenance-of-way.

SCRRA currently has 39 locomotives in the service fleet, including spares required for preventive maintenance and performance of repairs and overhauls as needed. Due to SCRRA's increasing service levels, staff projects that 54 locomotives, including spares, will be required by 2010.

The Board approved acceptance of assignment of Utah Transit Authority's contract for four remanufactured locomotives. Contingent upon the approval of grant funds by the California Transportation Commission at its July 20, 2006, meeting, the Board would increase the funding authorization of the contract between SCRRA and MotivePower, Inc. by \$11,609,136 for a new total amount of \$43,537,560.

Staff recommended increasing the contract funding authorization with HCC by \$1,250,000 for right-of-way and property maintenance services.

The Federal Railroad Administration provided a \$250,000 grant to SCRRA to initiate a Sealed Corridor Program on the Antelope Valley Line between downtown Los Angeles and Sylmar, and between Burbank Junction and Chatsworth on the Ventura County Line. The grant agreement has been amended to extend the study area to Moorpark in Ventura County.

The Board authorized negotiations with DMJM Harris to award a contract for Sealed Corridor Engineering Design Services, and if successful, approve the not-to-exceed contract amount of \$350,000 for the initial three-year base term.

#### GE SHIPS 1,000TH EVOLUTION LOCOMOTIVE

General Electric Corporation (GE) shipped its 1,000th *Evolution Series* locomotive towards the end of May. The milestone was achieved just 17 months after GE began commercial production of *Evolution* locomotives. The 1000th unit, which bears road number 5972, was delivered to the BNSF Ry. It is one of nearly 750 *Evolution* locomotives ordered by BNSF.

*Evolution Series* locomotives achieve a 3- to 5-percent fuel



savings over the previous generation of GE locomotives and reduce, on average, regulated emissions by more than 40 percent. The locomotives were the first to meet the Environmental Protection Agency's Tier II emissions standards and they are among the first of 17 products in GE's *Ecomagination* portfolio. *Ecomagination* is a GE initiative to bring to market new technologies that will help customers meet their most pressing environmental challenges.

The *Evolution Series* was developed over seven years at a cost of more than \$250 million. The locomotive features a new 12-cylinder engine, an innovative hybrid cooling system and a brand new control system. GE expects to manufacture more than 850 locomotives in 2006, about 700 of which will be Evolution Series models.

Compared to locomotives manufactured 20 years ago, many of which are still in use, the GE *Evolution Series* locomotive reduces pollution by producing 67 percent fewer particulates and 60 percent fewer nitrogen oxide emissions.

As part of *Ecomagination*, GE has committed to double by 2010 its research investment into cleaner technologies including wind energy, water treatment products and coal gasification while also reducing its own greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent by the end of 2012.

[Info. from *BNSF Today* and GE Transportation via Charles Varnes]

#### **RAIL TRANSIT TEMPO** by TOM NELSON LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

A citizen task force's promotion of a 33-mile light rail transit (LRT) line from North Las Vegas, through downtown, along the Strip, and into Henderson appears to have been blocked. With an estimated cost escalating to a possible \$3 billion, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) in mid-April voted to squash the idea. Instead, RTC prefers planning an express bus network and removed from consideration a 15-mile LRT line through Henderson due to citizen opposition.

#### SACRAMENTO

The spring rains seriously affected Regional Transit's (RT) downtown LRT extension work. In mid-April the project was running five weeks behind schedule. Thus, RT's target date to open the line between the main railroad station, serving the Amtrak and Capitol Corridor trains, and K Street Mall may not be met by the end of September as previously planned.

RT is complying with the Federal Railroad Administration's 2005 horn rule by installing on all light rail vehicles (LRV) new 75 decibel gongs to replace the 100 decibel horns. This temporary measure to address the concerns of residents is being followed by moves to expand quiet zones so as to obtain waivers of the horn rule.

Siemens Transportation Systems plans to expand its Sacramento LRV production plant. This will provide space for at least partial fabrication of car shells. Also, the manufacture of S70 low floor and SD160 high floor LRVs will be added.

#### SPOKANE

Some downtown Spokane development advocates believe a streetcar line would spur business in that area. Near the end of April, a streetcar feasibility study was released by the Downtown Spokane Partnership. The study looked at centers the line would

serve and the costs involved, but a specific design and route were not selected.

#### VANCOUVER, B.C.

With the turn of the century from 1999 to 2000, a new public agency in the Greater Vancouver region, TransLink, took over public transportation, replacing BC Transit, as well as urban and regional roads. Since then, SkyTrain has expanded and continues to do so with the new Canada Line under construction. This latest SkyTrain route will run from downtown to Vancouver International Airport and Richmond Center. It is scheduled to open by late 2009. This new 11.8-mile line will have a communication-based train control system furnished by Alcatel.

#### OGDEN

The Utah Transit Authority on June 21 released a \$100,000 study of five possible transit modes in Ogden to determine which would best serve the route between a downtown Intermodal Transit Center and Weber State University. The analysis' scoring system gave electric streetcars 377 points, an aerial tramway 298, and two levels of bus service, the better one 202 points. LRT was not ranked due to cost. One factor in favor of a streetcar line was its short length of only four miles.

#### DENVER

By purchasing Denver's Union Station four years ago, the Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD) made a smart move. For \$50 million it obtained a centrally located depot and 19.5 acres to become an intermodal facility serving Amtrak and commuter rail, LRT, bus lines, the mall shuttle, and taxi cabs. (Salt Lake City allowed the Union Pacific depot to get away from transportation use, instead becoming an entrance to a shopping center.)

In April RTD had its first strike in 24 years. Union leaders had endorsed an RTD contract offer, but 55 percent of the union members were against it.

#### TUCSON

The voters of Tucson, Arizona, on May 16, 2006, approved two transportation ballot measures: Prop. 1, a Regional Transportation Plan (road/transit/streetcar) 60% yes, and Prop. 2, a half-cent sales tax to fund the plan, 58% yes. The Pima County vote was successful after transportation measures failed at the polls four previous times.

#### DALLAS

The Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) system celebrated 10 years of LRT service in June by receiving approval of its \$700 million grant application toward funding of a \$2.4 billion expansion. Approval came from the Federal Transit Administration and the Office of Management and Budget. Final approval is expected after a 60-day congressional review.

Work was to begin on the 45-mile Northwest-Southeast LRT connector in June. Completion is scheduled for 2013.

#### ST. LOUIS

A February '06 ground breaking marked the start of work on the multi-modal station at the present Amtrak depot. It will provide access between mainline trains and St. Louis Metro's MetroLink LRVs. Metro was running test trains on sections of the Cross County LRT line in April.

#### NEW ORLEANS

The resumption of streetcar service by the Regional Transit Authority April 2 on the full length of Canal Street in New

Orleans included the North Carrollton Ave. spur. This track runs to Beauregard Circle where Carrollton intersects with Esplanade Ave.

#### MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL

Momentum is building on the planning of the Central Corridor project to connect Minneapolis and St. Paul with a Metro Transit LRT line. A 45-day comment period on the project ended in early May during which the City of St. Paul, Minnesota, prepared a 28-page response. The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority wants to begin preliminary engineering later this year. A significant part of the route is to be on University Ave.

St. Paul wants several matters addressed. One in particular is additional LRT stations along the line, but this tends to lengthen the travel time for through riders. Wanted are bus stops between rail stations and efficient feeder buses to the rail line. Parking needs attention. Suggested are flexible construction phases to match the requirements of businesses and permit-parking for residences located near stations. Passenger comforts at stations were mentioned also in St. Paul's comments, such as displayed weather forecasts and real-time, next-train information. Coming to conclusions on these and several other points will be an effort.

[Contributors of info. for this column included Ed Von Nordeck, Frank Mares, Dick Finley, Charles Varnes, and Ken Ruben. Other info. came from Sacramento RT, *Ry. Age, Mass Transit, and Metro.*]

#### CALIFORNIA RAIL TRAFFIC by LINDSAY SMITH

Note: This information was on Train Orders, an interesting rail fans reporting Internet Site. You may notice that Southern California has become the center of rail freight traffic for the world!

Busiest segment – BNSF from Daggett to Barstow at 170 MGT (million gross tons per mile per year) plus UP trackage rights (t.r.) at 43 MGT equals 213 MGT. That is an increase from 86 MGT in 1980 and 117 MGT in 1994. No wonder they'll have a third track soon. BNSF shows this as having 108 trains per day (TPD). Shortly after 9/11/2001, the busiest UP segment in California was Niland to Colton with 37 TPD.

Busiest UP segment – Colton Xing to West Colton at 97 MGT (actually it's the segment between the junction of the Palmdale Cutoff (28 MGT) and the Sunset Route (69 MGT) and West Colton Yard—"Pepper Street." The paired track through Pomona is 95 MGT, although technically it's two lines, the Alhambra and LA Subdivisions. For mountain grades with a 2% grade and considerable single track – there's nowhere like Tehachapi with UP at 26 MGT plus BNSF t.r. at 57 MGT (28 TPD) equals 83 MGT.

Busiest mountain grade – BNSF Needles Subdivision over Ash Hill at 170 MGT (80 TPD). That is an increase from 53 MGT in 1980 and 90 MGT in 1994. Second busiest is Cajon Pass with 131 MGT (slightly more tonnage north of Victorville) plus UP t.r. at 35 MGT equals 166 MGT. BNSF shows 90 TPD, which would mean more TPD than Ash Hill due to helper moves and perhaps shorter trains between L.A. and Barstow, before being classified and combined into longer trains. With 2.2% grades and that many trains, the third track is definitely needed!

Busiest crossing – Colton Xing has UP at 118 MGT (83 Sunset Route and 35 t.r. on BNSF's Cajon Sub) plus BNSF at 102 MGT equals 220 MGT, which is definitely a good spot for a grade-separated crossing! There is only slightly less traffic at the wye west of Barstow Yard, but it's hard to come up with a number because traffic goes around all three legs of the wye. Alameda Corridor has 81 MGT (45 UP plus 36 BNSF with 17 BNSF TPD).

Main line tonnage increase since 1980 – Over this 25-year span, ex-Santa Fe's 3rd District from Fullerton to Riverside has increased 3.8 times, partly at the expense of the abandoned 2nd District through Pasadena. ATSF/BNSF from Cadiz to Needles has gone up 3.3 times. The Alameda Corridor (L.A. to the harbor) is up 3 times the combined tonnage of the previous SP (two lines), ATSF and UP. Keddie to Marysville (ex-WP Feather River Canyon) is up 2.8 times and Keddie to Nevada border is up 2.6 times (Note: parallel ex-SP Donner Pass is down 15%). The ex-WP, now BNSF, north of Keddie to the Oregon border is up 2.5 times. Cajon Pass is up 1.8 times (80%), and Tehachapi is up 1.4 times (ATSF/BNSF doubled, SP/UP down 20%). Bay Area tonnage has not grown like the Southern California area. Intermodal traffic is up, but manufacturing and perishables have declined. Only two routes of SP plus four of WP to/from the east are now in use, and tonnage is up less than 10%.

Secondary main lines have not fared very well – The ex-ATSF 4th District-San Diego Sub tonnage from Orange to Oceanside is down 40%, the ex-SP Coast Line is down 27% between Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, and the ex-SP Saugus Line (Burbank-Palmdale) is down 10%. Many lines are now out of service, abandoned, or sold to a shortline.

#### FIRST-EVER FEDERAL FREIGHT LOCOMOTIVE CRASHWORTHINESS STANDARDS

Train crews involved in a locomotive collision will have a better chance of survival with reduced injuries as a result of the first-ever federal freight locomotive crashworthiness standards. The regulation published on June 28, 2006, is intended to prevent the locomotive cab from being crushed during a head-on collision with another locomotive, or when it strikes the rear of another train, a shifted load on a train on an adjacent track, or a vehicle at a highway-rail grade crossing.

The crashworthiness standards include upgraded structural elements such as stronger collision posts and the addition of anti-climbing equipment to keep the locomotive upright and in-line on the tracks after a collision occurs. The interior of the locomotive cabs also will need to be reconfigured to soften many sharp edges and provide better emergency lighting and exits. In addition, fuel tanks will be strengthened to prevent spills that could lead to a fire. The rule changes will be required for locomotives newly manufactured or rebuilt beginning in January 2009.

This federal rule incorporates and expands on effective railroad industry standards, first implemented in 1989, that have significantly improved the crash performance of new locomotives. The rule is the result of a collaborative effort by the Locomotive Crashworthiness Working Group of the Railroad Safety Advisory Committee, an ongoing FRA-led cooperative

effort that includes representatives of all industry stakeholders.

A copy of the final rule can be found on the FRA web site at [www.fra.dot.gov](http://www.fra.dot.gov).

[Info from Federal Railroad Administration via Charles Varnes]

## UP CALIFORNIA TRACK IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

by CHARLES VARNES

### OAKLAND – NEWARK

In January the Union Pacific Railroad (UP) began a \$10.1 million track improvement project on its Niles Subdivision between Oakland and Newark, Calif. The project involves the removal and installation of 48,500 ties, spreading 23,656 tons of rock ballast, replacing the surfaces at 95 road crossings, and replacing 2,400 ft. of rail in various curves on the line. It is scheduled to be completed by mid-July.

The Niles Subdivision is used by the Amtrak *Capitols* and *Coast Starlight*. *Altamont Commuter Express* trains use the line between Niles Junction and Newark.

### CALEXICO – NILAND

UP is spending \$4.3 million this year on track improvements between Calexico and Niland, Calif. The project involves removing and installing 41,000 ties; spreading 13,400 tons of rock ballast; replacing the surfaces at 58 road crossings and installing walkways along the track between Dannenberg St. and McCabe Rd. in Calexico to improve the safety and efficiency of inspecting railcars by U.S. Customs and Border Protection. The tie and crossing improvement projects were completed on May 10, with the construction of walkway portion of the project scheduled to begin June 19.

UP and Ferrocarril Mexicano, S.A. de C.V. in conjunction with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, have finalized plans to change the time of the rail interchange between the U.S. and Mexico to earlier in the day which will eliminate blocked road crossings during peak morning hours in Calexico.

As a result of the construction of the trackside inspection walkways, northbound trains will no longer have to stop and be inspected in downtown Calexico. They can be moved just north of the downtown area to be inspected.

The projects are a part of the \$1.5 billion Union Pacific is planning to spend in 2006 to maintain its track across its more than 32,400-mile system.

## UP REGIONAL OPERATIONS REALIGNMENT

by CHARLES VARNES

Effective July 1, Union Pacific Railroad realigned its regional operating organization. The company established three operating regions and eliminated the Kansas City-based Central Region.

The regions are the: Northern, based in Omaha, Neb.; Southern, based in Spring, Tex.; and Western, based in Roseville, Calif. The abolished Central Region contained the Kansas City, North Little Rock, St. Louis, and Wichita service units.

The Kansas City and St. Louis service units were added to the Northern Region, and the North Little Rock and Wichita service units were added to the Southern Region. The Western Region, based in Roseville, California, remained unchanged.

The Northern Region realignment will provide unified management of all Central Corridor routes to the east, and UP's

two highest-volume eastern gateways – Chicago and St. Louis. The Southern Region alignment will result in the key terminals of North Little Rock, Pine Bluff and Houston being managed as an integrated operation.

## OREGON WINE-COUNTRY TRAIN PLAN

Rising gasoline prices and soaring tourism numbers are driving a new move to start a wine-country tourism train linking downtown Portland with the sprawling vineyards of Yamhill County. "We've dreamed of something like this for years," said Jim Patterson, city of Sherwood's assistant manager.

Backers are quick to acknowledge that the plan has significant obstacles. First, the three self-propelled train cars they want to buy, although owned by the state and used on the now-halted Lewis & Clark Explorer train, were slated to go out to bid in early July. Even if the tourism train's supporters can persuade state Transportation Department administrators to delay the sale process, they still must prevail over the 20 or so other parties who have also expressed interest in buying the train.

Second, the line in question, while not currently in use, is operated by Salem-based Portland & Western Railroad. The company specializes in hauling freight, not passengers. Although Portland & Western did contract with the state to operate the Lewis & Clark train, high insurance rates steer it away from getting involved with passenger operations, said Bruce Carswell, president and general manager.

Lastly, the track needs repairs that could cost as much as \$20 million. Finding that much money could be a problem, even with self-described fiscal conservatives leading the way.

Sen. Gary George, R-Newberg, and others say those hurdles can be overcome. A focused effort, involving area governments, winery owners and perhaps the Spirit Mountain Casino in Grand Ronde, could have the tourism train up and running in two years, they say.

"I'm sure there must be downsides, but I'm just not seeing them," said Kevin Chambers, chairman of the Oregon Wine Board, which represents the state's 350 commercial wineries. "The tourism segment of this business is really taking off. In terms of visitors, weekends in wine country are just amazing." [Info. from *The Oregonian* via Caroline Hobson]

## PACIFIC COAST RAILROAD ROUND-UP TRIP

by BURT ANDERSON, PRS #211

I left Martinez, Calif. on *San Joaquin* Train No. 712 at 8:23 a.m. on May 6, 2006, and arrived in Hanford, Cal. at 12:11 p.m. We passed over a dozen idle or working switchers on the route, and many freight trains between Stockton and the nice, newly renovated station at Fresno. At 12:30 p.m. I left Hanford on Orange Belt Stage Lines in Amtrak service with arrival at 3:30 in San Luis Obispo.

Near the 1,522 ft. Santa Margarita Pass I saw an 1880s type steam train running through the green hills to the east of US 101 (This railroad was the main objective of the trip.) At San Luis Obispo I obtained a rental car and then followed some of the Pacific Coast Railroad 3' narrow gauge right-of-way to Port Hanford (now known as Port San Luis) on San Luis Obispo Bay.

I arrived during a rebirth celebration for Avila Beach. A big crowd enjoyed the band music, speeches, exhibits, farmers



market and local restaurant food booths. I stayed in San Luis Obispo that night after traveling about 350 miles for the day.

On the morning of May 7, I did the picturesque downtown San Luis Obispo Creek-walk and well-kept 1772 Mission, then headed for the "Railroad Round Up" about 10 miles north in Santa Margarita, Cal., arriving 9:30 a.m.

Having just heard about the Pacific Coast Railroad only a month ago, I was *thrilled* to find *three* steam powered trains: one freight with 4-4-0, one passenger with Porter 2-6-2, and another passenger with 1927 Vulcan 2-4-0. They were ready to roll on 2½ miles of professionally placed *new* ballast, ties, and rail on an irregular loop and long span through low oak and willow covered green rolling hills with two bridges, 3% grade, Indian grinding rock outcrops – all in a pretty setting on the private 1774 Santa Margarita Ranch. Many other static and steamed-up displays were on hand.

Today's events at a price of \$12 were a fund raiser for developing the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum. I could hardly tear myself away from all this neat stuff at 12:30 p.m. I stopped at unique Madonna Inn in San Luis Obispo (I had done "Final Record Sampling" on many of Joe Madonna's highway jobs throughout So. Calif. 1960 to late 1970s.)

I looked around San Luis Obispo Railroad Square and future RR Museum in a large ex-SP Freight House, and arrived at the Amtrak station at 3:30 p.m. My *Coast Starlight* was already there and we left at 3:43 p.m. on time. I rode in the Sightseer Lounge Car all the way, observing scenery, such as the 16 miles of track from San Luis Obispo to Santa Margarita with six tunnels, horseshoe curves, and trestles as well as the neat fields of vegetables by Salinas and Castroville.

I arrived in Martinez at 11:30 p.m. (½ hour late) after traveling 285 miles for the day in a wonderful two-day trip.

**ANSWERS TO RAILQUIZ ON PAGE 12**

Number	Builder	Model	Class
3009*	EMD	GP9	EP418-4
4044**	EMD	GP20	EF420C-2
8601*	GE	U33C	GF633-1
5003**	EMD	GP30	EF423C-1

\* Southern Pacific.      \*\* Cotton Belt

**URBAN RAIL TRANSIT** by **DICK FINLEY**  
**LOS ANGELES METRO RAIL**

**RIDERSHIP**

May 2006	Red Line	Blue Line	Green Line	Gold Line
Weekday Ave.	143,830	84,554	39,134	18,078
Saturday Ave.	89,549	63,680	23,191	7,713
Sunday Ave.	72,608	50,610	18,112	7,559
Monthly Total	3,885,491	2,367,962	1,044,275	466,355

**TIMETABLE**

A new Green Line timetable was issued effective June 25, 2006. The schedules for all days are identical but the map has been simplified by locations being taken from the map and put in a table. Numbers of parking spaces previously at stations on the map have been replaced by FREE PARKING on a revised bus connections table.

A new Gold Line timetable was issued effective June 25, 2006. Express service morning and evening Monday through

Friday has been reduced from six trains to four, and intermediate stations have been increased from three to four. The new one is Lake – southbound morning and northbound evening, and Memorial Park – northbound morning and southbound evening.

**LABOR**

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)(Metro) and two unions representing 6,500 of its employees have arrived at a tentative contract agreement, which was announced the last week of June between Metro, the 4,500 bus and rail operators of the United Transportation Union, and the 2,000 mechanics and service attendants of the Amalgamated Transit Union. If ratified by the unions, final approval would be expected at the MTA Board's July 27 meeting.

**NEWS**

County Supervisor Gloria Molina replaced Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa as chair of the MTA Board on July 1. She joined the board in 1993.

[Labor and News from *Los Angeles Downtown News*]

**TRANSPORTATION AWARDS**

Metro Red Line Operator Vicky Maes-Melendez took top honors, April 22, in the 2006 Metro Rail Rodeo. Blue Line Maintenance Specialist Ronnie Burt won the maintenance event.

The Metro Rail maintenance team of Ronnie Burt, Eric Czintos, and Rafaele Mastrangelo took second place at the 2006 American Public Transportation Association (APTA) International Rail Rodeo in New York City June 10. Metro Rail Operators Vicky Maes-Melendez and Tu Phan placed eighth of 18 teams participating in the operators' competition.

Metro is the 2006 winner of the APTA's "Outstanding Public Transportation System" award, CEO Roger Snoble announced in mid-June. This is the first time Metro has ever received the honor, which APTA presents to transportation systems "that have demonstrated achievement in efficiency and effectiveness." Metro won in the category for properties that provide more than 30 million annual passenger trips.

**BLUE LINE**

Metro was cited also by APTA for the Blue Line between downtown Los Angeles and Long Beach. With an average of 80,000 weekday boardings, the Blue Line is considered the second-most successful light rail in the nation.

**GREEN LINE**

MTA officials declined to speculate about how much a Green Line link to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) might cost, but the agency is still hoping that a Green Line extension to the airport could be funded as part of the city's wider LAX renovation, said Carol Inge, MTA's chief planning officer.

Those efforts remain on hold as airport and community leaders revisit the overhaul as part of this year's settlement agreement that ended the lawsuits concerning the LAX Master Plan. Local officials are hopeful that some money for the project may be found in the \$37 billion infrastructure bond Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and the legislature recently placed on the fall ballot.

[Info. from the *Daily Breeze* via Jack Whitmeyer]

**GOLD LINE EASTSIDE EXTENSION**

At the MTA Board meeting on June 22, authorization was given for an exchange of properties required for the construction

of the Indiana St. light rail transit station on a portion of Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) property currently part of the Ramona Opportunity High School (ROHS). Also, authorization was given for acquisition activities to obtain construction bids for new construction and rebuilding of ROHS.

#### SAN DIEGO

In March, the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) carried 6,102,960 passengers with 2,607,595 passengers traveling on trolleys. MTS rail reported 98 percent of its trips on time. MTS rail reported one collision for a rate of 0.14 collisions per 100,000 miles.

The most recent update to the Mission Valley East operating plan was provided to the Board on April 13, 2006. In examining general ridership patterns, staff has determined that the core level of service on the Green Line is adequate. Implementation of pattern refinement is planned for Sept. in conjunction with the fall semester at San Diego State University (SDSU):

- Eliminate Blue Line Overlay to Green Line service in the corridor between Qualcomm Stadium Station and Old Town Transit Center. The enhanced service is provided for four round trips in the morning and six round trips in the evening Monday through Friday. Staff believes the existing ten-minute Green Line through service with 2-car consists would provide adequate capacity and a more cost-effective level of service.

- Modify late-night Orange Line service which terminates at Gillespie Field Station and operates during the evening until 12:47 a.m. Staff recommends that the last two eastbound trips be terminated at El Cajon Transit Center where the bulk of the ridership justifies late-night service. Note: an additional benefit from this adjustment would provide San Diego & Imperial Valley Railroad late-night operations with extra time to serve customers in El Cajon, which was adversely impacted after the Green Line opening.

- The last Green Line trip currently operated to SDSU departs Old Town Transit Center at 10:30 p.m. and departs westbound at 11:47 p.m. The recommended enhancement would extend service from Old Town Transit Center to SDSU with the last eastbound departure at 1:00 a.m. and westbound departure from SDSU at 1:45 a.m. with increased service every 30 minutes seven days per week.

The net annual savings for the combined service changes are estimated at \$4,827. Staff will retain this service on a trial basis for the entire fall semester and, depending on ridership, will determine whether to retain this additional service or if seasonal variations would apply such as when SDSU is not in regular session.

#### Mid-Coast Rail Transit Project

The mid-coast trolley extension starts at the Old Town Transit Center and extends 11 miles north to the University City community. The line travels parallel to and on the east side of I-5 with stations at Tecolote Rd., Clairemont Dr., and Balboa Ave. The line continues to the University Center Lane station at I-5 and Nobel Dr.

The new line crosses the I-5 freeway over to the University of California at San Diego (UCSD) west campus, which it traverses to the UCSD West station, located near the Price Center, serving the heart of campus.

Then the trolley will follow Voigt Dr. east crossing I-5 again

and on to the UCSD East station serving the east side of campus. The route continues to the Executive Dr. station and then to the University Towne Centre Transit Center (UTC). Two alignment variations occur from Voigt Dr. to UTC, one along Regents Rd. and Executive Dr., and another along Genesee Ave.

Through FY 2005, the San Diego region has invested a total of \$25.4 million on the Mid-Coast LRT Extension for planning, preliminary engineering, and right-of-way acquisition. The project will receive funding from *TransNet* ½-cent sales tax extension which was approved by voters in Nov. 2004.

The LRT project is part of a comprehensive multi-modal transit network, that also includes improvements to an existing Sorrento Valley commuter rail station and construction of a new Nobel Dr. commuter rail station in the Mid-Coast Corridor. The station and parking lot improvements have been completed at Sorrento Valley. The Nobel Dr. Coaster Station has completed final design and is ready for construction. Funding is still needed to complete this station.

To date (through FY 2006), Congress has appropriated \$19.2 million and SAFETEA-LU authorized an additional \$11 million.

The MTS Code Enforcement division recently welcomed three new additions to its security team. Three canines "Sgt. Bino," "July" and "Rony" will assist the MTS security efforts in the detection of explosives and in a variety of other security functions. The MTS was one of the ten light rail systems in the United States selected by the Transportation Security Agency (TSA) to participate in the National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program.

The new canine unit will enforce security measures and assist in the detection of explosives and investigation of suspicious packages throughout the 51.1 miles of track and the 53 light rail stations within the MTS. The MTS K-9 unit is highly trained and readily available to complete a variety of security functions needed by the MTS and other area agencies where TSA-trained canines may be required.

[Mid-Coast and K-9 info. from Charles Varnes]

#### ALTAMONT COMMUTER EXPRESS

The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission approved an Amended ACE Fare Program effective July 1, 2006. The plan includes a fare increase for ACE passengers of 7.5 percent and a fare increase of 9 percent for passengers originating in Stockton. Seniors, age 65 and older, Children, age 6 to 12, disabled passengers, and passengers carrying a Medicare card have a 50 percent discount of the regular fare.

Tickets purchased before July 1 will be honored until Aug. 15. After Aug. 15 ticket holders must turn in their tickets for credit toward a purchase of new tickets.

Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) will add a new, fourth, round-trip train beginning on Monday Aug. 28, 2006. The train will depart Stockton, Monday through Friday at 9:30 a.m. making all stops en route to San Jose and arriving there at 11:40 a.m. Returning, the new train will depart San Jose at 12:05 p.m. and arrive back in Stockton at 2:15 p.m.

Funding for the new service comes in part from Caltrans to help absorb congestion from motor traffic on I-205 during a three year construction project. Funding also will come from Amtrak, whose passengers connecting to and from *San Joaquin* Tr. Nos. 711 and 716, will be carried on this new train.

Bakersfield-Oakland Tr. No. 711 is scheduled at Stockton at

8:58 a.m. Oakland-Bakersfield Tr. No. 716 departs Stockton at 2:56 p.m.

ACE trains use the Downtown Stockton station located at 949 E. Channel St. *San Joaquin* trains use the Amtrak station located at 735 S. San Joaquin St. A connecting shuttle operates between the stations.

ACE annulled all train service on July 13 due to a fire in Altamont Pass. The annulment occurred following a telephone call from the Union Pacific Railroad reporting that the U.S. Department of Forestry and the Alameda County Fire Department requested that the Union Pacific Railroad close its line over the Altamont Pass due to smoldering railroad ties on the mainline at Midway, and in the siding at Midway. Railroad ties were also smoldering between Midway and Tracy on the Union Pacific main line tracks.

ACE Tr. No. 1, which had departed from Stockton at 4:20 a.m. and was approaching Lathrop/Manteca, was instructed to return to Stockton after its arrival at Lathrop/Manteca so riders could seek alternate forms of transportation to their destinations. No alternate rail service was provided, however, some riders chose to use the ACE/Amtrak Thruway bus departing Stockton at 9:05am.

Normal operations resumed on July 14, with all morning trains arriving in San Jose on time.

ACE service to Santa Clara is currently suspended due to a construction project at the station. Passengers going to the Santa Clara station need to detrain at the Great America station and take a bus shuttle provided by ACE to the Santa Clara station. [Info. from ACE via Charles Varnes]

**BART**

Santa Clara County voters' rejection of a sales tax measure dealt a crippling blow to plans to extend Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) from Fremont to San Jose, California. County Measure A, which would have levied a half-cent sales tax for 30 years for general county expenditures, was defeated June 6 when 57 percent voted no and 43 percent voted yes. The measure was seen as a way to provide consistent funding to operate BART to six new stops that would skirt the east side of San Jose at an estimated cost of \$4.7 billion.

Santa Clara Supervisor Donald Gage conceded that the extension project was "crippled," and "it's not going to be easy" to get it back on track. "We're back to the drawing board, basically," he said, suggesting that officials might need to consider pared-down versions of the project that they had previously ruled out.

One of the things that will keep the faltering project alive is the fact that it already has a substantial amount of committed funding, said Randy Rentschler, spokesman for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Nearly \$2 billion in money is available for the project.

[Info. from *Railroad Newsline* via Ken Ruben]

**PORTLAND, OREGON**

TriMet has awarded a \$75 million contract to Siemens Transportation Systems for 21 S70 low floor light rail vehicles (LRV), with an option for three additional ones. This will increase the LRV fleet to 126 railcars. [Info. from *Ry. Age*]

**SEATTLE**

The addition of the fourth Amtrak *Cascades* train on July 1,

2006 affected the Everett-Seattle *Sounder* service. The *Sounder* train schedules are unchanged. The Amtrak *Cascades* trains which are included in the Rail Plus program had their schedules adjusted. The Rail Plus program allows use of an Amtrak *Cascades* ticket, FlexPass, or full fare (\$3+) PugetPass and UPass on any of the trains shown in the following revised schedule.

Everett to Seattle Route				
Southbound				
	Tr. No.	Everett	Edmonds	Seattle
Sounder	1701	6:10 A	6:35 A	7:08 A
Sounder	1703	6:40 A	7:05 A	7:38 A
Amtrak	513	9:55 A	10:21 A	10:55 A
Amtrak	517	8:54 P	9:19 P	10:05 P
Northbound				
	Tr. No.	Seattle	Edmonds	Everett
Amtrak	510	7:40 A	8:07 A	8:31 A
Sounder	1700	4:33 P	5:01 P	5:31 P
Sounder	1702	5:13 P	5:41 P	6:11 P
Amtrak	516	6:40 P	7:07 P	7:31 P

Sound Transit will add two additional *Sounder* trains between Seattle and Tacoma in September 2007. One will be an additional peak direction train. The other will be a first ever "reverse commute" train with a morning train from Seattle's King Street Station and a return afternoon trip from Tacoma Dome Station.

The agency plans to expand the *Sounder* passenger rail service by 2010 to a total of nine trips between Seattle and Tacoma as well as four between Seattle and Everett. The Seattle-Everett leg currently includes two trains daily.

**CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY**

Bombardier Transportation announced on May 10th that it is the preferred bidder on a major car order from Chicago Transit Authority (CTA). The CTA Board issued a base order of 206 rapid transit vehicles and exercised a first option for 200 additional vehicles. The total numbers of cars involved could increase to 706 if CTA were to exercise all available options.

The new cars will be the first in the CTA fleet to utilize alternating current propulsion, a technology that permits dynamic braking regeneration, lower energy, lower maintenance costs, and improved reliability. The new fleet of cars also will be equipped with a special leveling system to meet requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The leveling system ensures that access to the car floor is level with the station platform during boarding.

The contract calls for delivery of ten prototype cars 30 months after official Notice to Proceed is given by the CTA. The prototypes will undergo nine months of revenue service testing before the delivery of production series cars begins.

The CTA operates the second largest public transportation system in the United States, covering the City of Chicago and 40 surrounding suburbs. CTA trains provide about 500,000 customer trips each day via seven routes, 222 miles of track and 144 stations.

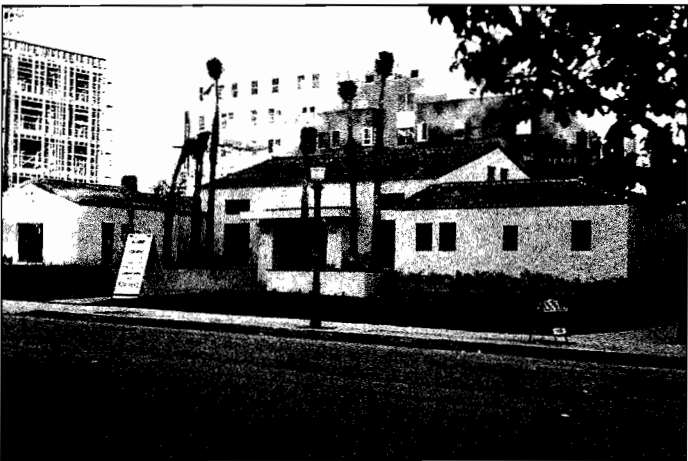
[Info. from Bombardier / Transportation via Charles Varnes]

**QINGHAI-TIBET RAILWAY**

The Qinghai-Tibet Railway, the highest railroad in the world, carried 2,569 passengers to Tibet Autonomous Region in the first three days of operation. Three passenger trains, starting from Beijing, Lanzhou and Chengdu pulled into the Lhasa Railway Station one after another on July 3. The Railway stretches 1215 miles from Xining to Lhasa with about 600 miles located more than 13,000 feet above sea level. [Info. from Railroad Newsline via Ken Ruben]



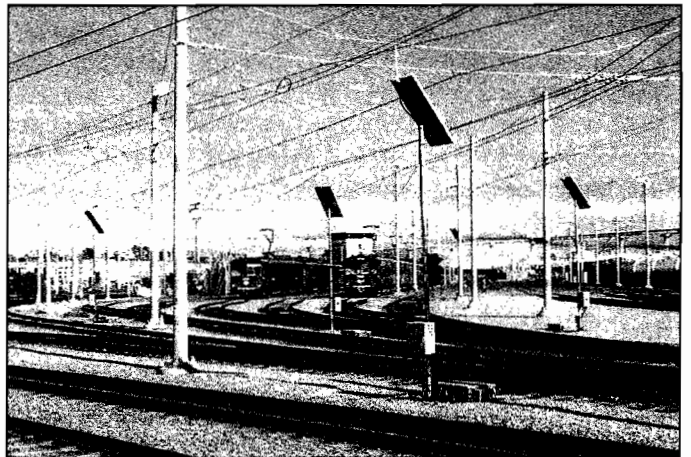
**RAILOUIZ** This photo, taken circa 1969 at the ESPEE Taylor Yard shops in Los Angeles, Calif., shows four locomotives, all of which are ostensibly posing as though they were competing in a simulated beauty contest. See if you can identify each of these engines by: (1) builder, (2) model, and (3) class. See Page 9 for the answers. Photo by John Petros



The rebuilt Pasadena Santa Fe Depot is seen on Raymond Avenue at the Del Mar Station of the Metro Gold Line in November 2005. The depot was split into sections and moved into the park behind the camera for construction of a four-level, underground parking structure between Raymond and Arroyo Parkway. The Gold Line tracks run on mainly undisturbed soil in the middle between the relocated and refinished depot and the completed housing units. The depot will be a restaurant when it opens after the finish of construction. Photo by John Petros



San Diego MTS light rail car 3006 and a sister car await a mid-day departure from Old Town on the Green Line for Santee Town Center in this view. Photo by Charles Varnes



The San Diego trolley yard can be viewed easily from the Orange Line Imperial Terminal station platform as illustrated in this photograph. Photo by Charles Varnes



San Diego MTS trolley 2052 and a sister car are seen laying over between runs on the Orange Line in this photo taken at the 12th and Imperial Transit Station. Photo by Charles Varnes