

WHEEL CLICKS

Pacific Railroad Society Inc.

JULY 2007

RIVER TOWNS UPDATE

by Tom Nelson

A cruise on the Mississippi River between New Orleans (N.O.) and Vicksburg, April 27 to May 4 provided an opportunity to note changes in rail facilities. See Rail Transit Tempo in the June 2007 issue of *Wheel Clicks*. It had been several years since a previous visit along this section of the river.

The Riverfront streetcar line in N.O. is double track, but an adjacent third track has no trolley wire, since it is for freight. It seemed busier than I recalled before. Both short and very long strings of freight cars pulled by N.O. Public Service locomotives were busy tripping crossing signals as they passed by. A fair-size rail yard, along the Mississippi River, not far from downtown was receiving and dispatching trains from and to this track which used to serve the Louisville and Nashville Railroad.

Our first riverboat stop was at Natchez, Miss. A short walk into town led to the former Mississippi Central Railroad terminal. It consists of two parallel brick buildings, one for freight and offices, the other for passengers. Deadend tracks were located in the open space between the freight and passenger wings. There were no-tracks when I was there before, as well as now, just souvenir, card, and miscellaneous goods shops. Imagine my surprise when I found that all shops had been cleaned out to prepare the ex-terminal buildings for conversion to condominiums.

The Vicksburg-Yazoo City Railroad depot in Natchez, with a caboose and boxcar behind it, is still a restaurant. Illinois Central Gulf was the last railroad to use it when the depot had tracks. It is on a bluff above the river three blocks north of M.C. Central's ex-terminal.

It was a disappointment at Vicksburg, Miss., to discover the few remaining visible streetcar tracks had been pulled up since the last visit. One of my prime interests was to see the Civil War iron-clad gunboat at the Vicksburg National Military Park, which had been salvaged from the river mud. At the park's Visitor Center, the lady staffing the Vicksburg City counter told me the city bought two streetcars, long after the lines were abandoned, with the intent to restart street railway service. One car was stolen and never found, ending the attempt. On the way back from the park, the bus passed a building which proclaimed it was the Illinois Railroad depot: no tracks and just north of the town center. Kansas City Southern freight trains were busy passing behind the levy wall in downtown.

Between our riverboat anchorage point, near the Mississippi River ferry dock, and downtown St. Francisville, Louisiana (LA), a railroad track crossed State Highway 10 at the time of my last visit. On one side of the crossing a caboose sat on a spur track, possibly as a station or railroad employee's work location for the West Feliciana RR or successor Illinois Central (IC). Upon the return visit of May 1, 2007, the rail line track was completely gone, except a short piece on the ex-R/W at State 10



On April 26, 2007, New Orleans Regional Transit Authority's Perley Thomas streetcar 904 is seen at the end of the Canal Street line branch to Cemeteries at Canal and City Park Ave. The car is ready to depart for downtown. The single track extends for less than a block before becoming double track.

Photo by Tom Nelson



On April 29, 2007, the former Mississippi Central Railroad terminal in Natchez, Miss., is seen. The original platform shelter and passenger depot are on the right. The freight depot and second-story railroad offices are on the left. Two or three tracks were between the buildings and dead ended at the far end of the terminal.

Photo by Tom Nelson

on which a caboose was standing and serving as a souvenir shop.

The riverboat's last stop of rail interest was at Baton Rouge, LA. Near the boat landing is the former railroad station bldg. which was enlarged and made into a science museum. With the [continued at RIVER TOWNS on Page 31



Railroads - The Backbone of America

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

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PRS NEWS — ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

July 6 Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Valencia Room at
 Fri. Joslyn Center. 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
 July 7, 14, Pacific Railroad Museum work party, 10 a.m. to 4
 21, 28 p.m., Bonita & Monte Vista Sts., San Dimas.
 Sats. Committee meeting: 28.
 July 7, 14, Rolling Stock repair day, 8:30 a.m. to ?, Saunders
 21, 28 Yard, Noakes & Herbert Sts., Commerce. Regular
 Sats. day: 7, 21; Extra day: 14, 28. Committee Mtg.: 21.
 July 13 Membership Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Alhambra Room
 Fri. at Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
 July 20 Slide night at Saunders Yard, 7:00 p.m., Noakes &
 Fri. Herbert Sts., Commerce. Everyone Welcome.
 Aug. 3 Board Meeting. 7:30 p.m., Valencia Room at
 Fri. Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
 Aug. 4, 11, Pacific Railroad Museum work party, 10 a.m. to 4
 18, 25 p.m., Bonita & Monte Vista Sts., San Dimas.
 Sats. Committee meeting: 25.

Aug. 4, 11, Rolling Stock repair day, 8:30 a.m. to ?, Saunders
 18, 25 Yard., Noakes & Herbert Sts., Commerce. Regular
 Sats. day: 4, 18; Extra day: 11, 25. Committee Mtg.: 18.
 Aug. 10 Membership Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Alhambra Room
 Fri. at Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
 Aug. 23 Exc. #530 Feather River Railroad Days Festival
 Thurs. leave L.A. 10:45 a.m. motorcoach to Bakersfield.
 Aug. 27 Exc. #530 return L.A. 6:40 p.m. from Bakersfield.
 Mon.

MEETING PROGRAMS

by Russ Davies

July 13 – **Tehachapi Loop in snow, December 1988, and "Trains, Trains, Trains."** Robert Fogt and his Video artistry will take us there. **Be there, and bring slide briefs!**
 August 10 – **The best of your Museum's slide collections!** You'll see action from the cameras of **Dave Cameron, Ted Damon, Bill Farmer, Herb Johnson, Ralph Melching, Vic Uzoff,** and more. **Don't miss this one! (And bring slide briefs.)**

MEMBERSHIP

by Virginia Grupp

Renewal memberships were assigned seniority numbers up to 429. Voted into PRS at the Board meeting on June 1, 2007, were Joseph Bonino, 430; Harry Peat, 431; Bob Krave, 432; Vicki Lynn Ranson, 433; John Bouman, 434; Pam Keyes, 435; and Ed Miller, 436. Welcome aboard.

ABRIDGED BOARD MINUTES — MAY 4, 2007

TREASURER: Keith Ogle resigned from the office of Treasurer. We need to eventually appoint a new Treasurer who will oversee bookkeeping and other duties. The Assistant Treasurer, Marti Ann Draper, will pay the bills and ordinary expenses of PRS. Marti Ann Draper was appointed chair of the Budget Committee. All financial items should be mailed to Pacific Railroad Museum, from which they will be forwarded to appropriate parties.

MUSEUM: Director Lindsay Smith reported the estimated new roofing cost of \$37,000. The San Dimas Historical Society will move to the Walker House in the future.

SPECIAL EVENTS: The Christmas Banquet will be held on Dec. 9, 2007 at the Chicken Dinner Restaurant at Knott's Berry Farm.

ROLLING STOCK: Director Walters reported that the Hi-Level car was spotted at Saunders Yard. People jumped to the task of initial cleanup and paint-stripping and other things. The blowers are functional. One of the dorm rooms will be used for food preparation. There are loads of room for storage.

As for the National Forum, the shop forces were looking at the end of June for excursion readiness.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Director Draper moved that the Board authorize the President, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer to sign checks and to eliminate the requirement that checks be countersigned by the President, Vice-President or the Secretary, and further that this resolution be a part of the Standing Rules of the Corporation. The resolution with second was adopted by voice vote.

Director Draper moved that the Board adopt changes to the Bylaws as stated in items 3-8 of the Bylaws Committee memo.

The motion with second was adopted by voice vote.

Director Draper moved that the Rolling Stock Committee chair be authorized to write a letter to the Utah Transit Authority asking for the donation of a former C&NW-Metra cab car. The motion with second was adopted by voice vote.

[Info. from complete Board Minutes by Secretary Bill Smith]

[RIVER TOWNS from Page 1]

old state capitol just across the street, it was quite convenient for the legislators. There were no readily apparent changes since the previous visit. The IC line remains between the building and the river and was quite active with passing freights.

A train was still displayed on a track at the south end of the ex-depot. The latter consisted of IC 0-6-0 steam locomotive 333 and four passenger cars, which had received little or no cosmetic attention for quite a while. Among the collection making up the consist were a railway post office car, a diner, sleeper (if I remember correctly), and an open-end, observation, business car. Except for the Southern Railway diner, all were identified as IC equipment.

PACIFIC RAILROAD MUSEUM by LINDSAY SMITH

Arie Korporaal has commenced digitizing our 35 mm slide collection. He took a book of Volkmer slides and made a list of the slides as well as a DVD of the set. Russ Davies, Bob Washburn, Tim Muck and others have been assembling our slides in archive boxes. Arie has started the digital record on Box 1 – the Melin excursion slides. A box will hold over a thousand slides and we have 43 boxes at present.

Joe Moir continues to make a list of the Ralph Melching negatives. He is assembling the negatives and prints when we can find them, so that the collection can be accessed.

Larry Aandahl has cleaned up the flood lights on the front of the Museum. The lights had stopped coming on in the evening. The light fixtures were corroded and the wiring was not professional. The lights now respond to a sensor and the old timer was removed. Larry maintains the building HVAC system and his skillful attention to the Museum systems have saved countless budgetary crises.

Matt Wyle has been working on the flat files. He is making a listing of the collection pieces in the twenty or more drawers.

MeI Goyen has made addition DVDs from our film collection. We have Added Steam 10 and 11. There is a new flier listing the contents of the Museum DVDs in this issue. We have sold about a hundred to our members and friends. Jim Baker and Roger Fogt continue helping on the book inventory.

Owen Danaher has been helping Marti Ann Draper keep the Society books. We have the books in the Museum Office Computer. Owen has also been receiving the Membership Drive Mail and passing it on to Virginia Grupp, the Membership Committee Chairperson. So we are fairly busy. We have frequent visitors to the Museum and enjoy showing communications and history of our local area.

We are currently negotiating the repair of the roof. We have to replace the window casements on the North Side because dry termites have infected more than one window sill. Then it will be time to repaint the exterior again. Although we "rent" the space for a dollar a year, maintenance of the building and resto-

ration to its original appearance is very expensive.

FREIGHT MOVEMENTS

There is good and bad news about freight movements. The railroads are working hard to increase capacity. Although the West is mountainous, the UP and BNSF are running 13,000-foot-long consists. The weather and changes in the economy caused unexpected changes. Intermodal trailers and containers have recently become more numerous than coal and commodity shipments.

SWIFT TRANSPORTATION INTERMODAL SALES

An Intermodal service provider for just the past two years, trucking firm Swift Transportation Co. Inc. is logging much container-on-flat-car (COFC) business. So far this month, the company has racked up new COFC accounts that are expected to generate more than \$70 million in annual revenue.

To keep up with the growing business, Swift recently placed orders for 750 additional 53-foot containers. Delivery is scheduled to be completed in time for the fall peak. Swift, which manages a fleet of 5,000 containers, retains an option to purchase an additional 2,000 containers this year. All of Swift's containers will be equipped with satellite tracking.

"We believe that intermodal is an exciting growth opportunity for us," said Jerry Moyes, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Swift holding company, Saint Corp., in a prepared statement. "Intermodal allows Swift to offer a full suite of services to its customers, including traditional line-haul, dedicated, brokerage and cross-border services into Canada and Mexico."

RAIL FREIGHT BELOW YEAR AGO LEVELS

WASHINGTON, May 17, 2007 – Rail freight traffic on U.S. railroads remained below last year's level during the week ended May 12, the Association of American Railroads (AAR) reported today. Severe weather conditions – including massive flooding in some sections of the country – contributed to the decline.

Intermodal volume totaled 232,435 trailers or containers, down 3.9 percent from last year, with container volume down 1.1 percent and trailer volume down 13.6 percent.

Carload freight, which doesn't include the Intermodal data, totaled 320,620 cars for the week, down 7.0 percent from last year. Loadings were down 8.5 percent in the West and 5.1 percent in the East. Total volume was estimated at 32.7 billion ton-miles, down 5.8 percent from last year.

Cumulative volume for the first 19 weeks of 2007 totaled 6,100,454 carloads, down 4.4 percent from 2006; 4,313,308 trailers or containers, off 1.1 percent; and total volume of an estimated 620.7 billion ton-miles, down 3.1 percent from last year.

Combined cumulative volume for the first 19 weeks of 2007 on U.S. and Canadian railroads totaled 7,569,442 carloads, down 3.9 percent from last year, and 5,167,932 trailers and containers, down 0.6 percent from last year.

Railroads reporting to AAR account for 89 percent of U.S. carload freight and 98 percent of rail Intermodal volume. When the U.S. operations of Canadian railroads are included, the figures increase to 96 percent and 100 percent. The Canadian railroads reporting to the AAR account for 91 percent of Canadian rail traffic. Railroads provide more than 40 percent of U.S. intercity freight transportation, more than any other mode, and rail traffic figures are regarded as an important economic indi-

cator. From the **AAR** web pages,

S. CALIF. COMMUTER RAIL RIDERSHIP by **DICK FINLEY**

Metrolink weekday, systemwide, average trips during April decreased only 114 from March to 42,859 or 0 percent. The San Bernardino Line decreased 2 percent to 12,170 trips.

Metrolink weekday, systemwide schedule adherence during April was 96 percent. The least schedule adherence was the Inland Empire/OC Line at 92 percent southbound and 93 percent northbound.

RAILROAD BRIDGE PROJECT

In July 2006 the Alameda Corridor-East Construction Authority began construction of a railroad bridge and roadway underpass on Brea Canyon Road adjacent to the Metrolink Industry Station. A temporary 'shoofly' detour track has been constructed immediately south of the existing tracks. A temporary platform waiting area then was constructed between the two sets of tracks with access to the north shoofly track from the parking area at the north.

Commuters started using the new platform on May 21, when Metrolink trains began using the shoofly track. Freight trains were to start using the southern-most shoofly track on May 19. Trains will travel on the temporary tracks for approximately one year, until the bridge construction is completed.

RIVERSIDE GRADE SEPARATION

In May the City of Riverside was to break ground on a new railroad grade separation project at Jurupa Avenue.

PERRIS VALLEY

A bill meant to help bring Metrolink commuter rail service to downtown Perris and Moreno Valley stalled at its first committee hearing in Sacramento over design-build. The bill would have allowed the transportation commission to hire one company to design and build the rail extension as a way to save time and money. Willie L. Pelote, a lobbyist for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, said he wants to put the brakes on design-build. "I don't think we need to continue to let people convince us that somehow taxpayers will benefit from the design-build," Pelote said.

The bill's author, Assemblyman John J. Benoit, R-Bermuda Dunes, pulled the Legislation from the Assembly Transportation Committee after it became clear the panel would reject the measure. Benoit plans to push it again in 2008. As a result, Metrolink – and not the Riverside County Transportation Commission – might become the lead agency to keep the Perris Valley Line extension on schedule.

PLACENTIA STATION PLAN

Orange County Transportation Authority agreed on Mar 27 to provide \$81,000 for the environmental portion of a Metrolink station on the 91 Line on Crowther Ave, between Melrose and Main Streets in Placentia. The project would cost more than \$31.7 million. The first phase is estimated to cost \$16.6 million and includes building a new station track, platform, shelters, parking and bus access.

LANCASTER LAYOVER

At the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) Board Meeting on May 11, 2007, a contract was authorized for the Lancaster Layover/Utility Services Enhancements to Atlas-

Allied, Inc, in the amount of \$1,065,392 plus a 10 percent contingency. Award is contingent upon approval of additional funding by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and resolution of any timely-filed protest

Construction of a sanitary sewer system along with water service stations and paved walkways at the Lancaster Layover is needed to provide utility service enhancements to allow SCRRA maintenance crews to service the Metrolink rolling stock.

CALTRAIN NEWS by **MIKE GORDON**

As of June 1, Caltrain has experienced a significant drop in trespasser fatalities compared to last year. The main reason for this is probably just luck, but it could also be attributed to public education and increased vigilance by train crews and law enforcement agencies.

As part of Caltrain's public education campaign, on May 30, Amtrak police joined with officers from 24 agencies from San Francisco to Gilroy to inform motorists and pedestrians about railroad safety. During the six-hour exercise, officers handed out 108 citations for rail related violations. Eight warnings were also issued.

In May, Caltrain was the recipient of the SAMCEDA Business *Award of Excellence*, presented by the San Mateo County Economic Development Association. The award recognized Caltrain for its "reinvention," which began in 2005 with a re-vamping of its schedule, including the addition of the popular Baby Bullet trains. The reinvention, coupled with an improving economy, led to a nearly 40 percent increase in ridership, after three straight years of decline.

Following the SAMCEDA Award, Caltrain also received accolades from the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, U.S. Congressman Tom Lantos, State Assemblymen Gene Mullin and Ira Ruskin, and State Senator Leland Yee.

Work will be starting this summer on a \$13 million upgrade of the Burlingame station. The finished product will resemble other station upgrades with the current center platform removed and separate platforms built for boarding on both sides of the tracks. New pedestrian gates and signals will be installed at both ends of the station.

The new configuration will allow two trains to occupy the station at the same time. This will speed up operations because one train will no longer have to "hold out" for another train to leave. The project should be finished by next summer and will include the installation of a gate at a pedestrian crossing about a half mile to the north, which now includes only a stop sign.

Caltrain carries more than 2300 bicyclists every weekday and greatly values their opinions. A Caltrain survey was conducted in May to gauge usage patterns and experiences of passengers who either bring their bikes on board, or park their bikes at or near Caltrain stations. Results will be available later this summer.

2006 HARRIMAN SAFETY AWARD WINNERS

The E.H. Harriman Awards celebrate the achievements of railroads with the best employee safety records by awarding twelve gold, silver or bronze awards in four categories at an annual luncheon and awards ceremony. Three categories are based on

employee hours worked in a calendar year. The fourth category, S&T is for switching and terminal companies.

Group A consists of line-haul railroads whose employees worked 15 million employee-hours or more during 2006. Norfolk Southern won the gold award for the eighteenth year in a row. CSX Transportation and the BNSF Railway won the silver and bronze awards respectively.

Group B is composed of line-haul railroads whose employees worked 4 to 15 million employee-hours in 2006. Kansas City Southern Railway won the gold award, moving up from silver last year. Canadian Pacific Railway (US operations) and the Long Island Rail Road won silver and bronze awards respectively.

Group C includes railroads whose employees worked less than 4 million employee-hours during the year. Florida East Coast Railway won the gold award. Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad and BNSF Suburban Operation in Chicago received the silver and bronze awards respectively.

Group S&T awards went to the Birmingham Southern Railroad (gold), Conrail (silver), and the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis (bronze).

Certificates of Commendation were awarded recognizing four railroads with continuous gains in employee safety improvements over a three-year period and showing the most improvement between 2005 and 2006. Certificates went to CN (US operations) for Group A. Kansas City Southern Railway (Group B), Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (Group C), and Birmingham Southern Railroad for Group S&T.

The Harriman Awards was founded by the late Mrs. Mary W. Harriman in memory of her husband, Edward H. Harriman. Today, the awards are administered under the auspices of the E.H. Harriman Memorial Awards Institute, with support from the Mary W. Harriman Foundation.

Railroads' commitment to safety is an integral part of the culture of railroading in America. Today, employee injury rates have declined sharply - down more than 80 percent since 1980. In fact, today railroad employees have injury rates comparable with employees working in the retail or food service industry and lower than those in other modes of transportation.

Harriman winners are selected by a committee of representatives from the transportation field and are granted on the basis of the lowest casualty rates per 200,000 employee-hours worked with a formula that accounts for volume of work performed as well as the number of fatalities and occupational illnesses. All data are documented by the Federal Railroad Administration. [Info. from www.aar.org via Charles Varnes]

ALLIED MODEL TRAINS TO RELOCATE

Driving along Sepulveda Boulevard in Culver City, one can see what Los Angeles Union Station. This is not a mirage, but a model train store built in the likeness of downtown's iconic bus and train depot, which offered everything from shiny red box car models made in the 1930s to the latest miniature locomotives with digitally-enhanced whistles. Closing its landmark Culver City location on May 12, Allied Model Trains was the brainchild of its owner for the last three decades, Allen Drucker, who turned a boyhood hobby into his life's work.

Fast-forward to 1974. The Long Beach State graduate and avid model train collector was five years out of college, when

he ran into a friend who had recently quit fixing cars to run his model train store full-time. When Drucker found out that the \$20,000 required up front to **buy** the business was more than he could afford, he sold his home, his car and his model train collection to scrape together the money to buy the Allied Model Trains business and inventory.

His first four years in business, Drucker worked in the store seven days a week, staying open as late as 9 p.m. and barely broke even. Drucker's revenues multiplied, but still he was not satisfied. He envisioned something bigger, something better.

Spotting a for-sale sign one day in front of a Sepulveda Blvd. property, Drucker bought the property and in 1989, opened Allied Model Trains in its present location, debuting as a single-story replica of Union Station and the world's only building specifically designed to house a model train store.

In 1992, he purchased another building on Sepulveda Blvd. and used it as a warehouse while adding the second story he had always wanted to his store, which became his office. Drucker had always imagined that when he was finished with Allied Model Trains, he would simply sell the business and stay on as landlord. However, locating a model train business that could afford the \$30,000 in rent per month that his business is now worth was all but impossible. So when Drucker sold his business to Fred Hill and Brian Brooks from Pasadena competitor The Original Whistle Stop, along with former Allied employee, Nick Barone, he did it knowing they would have to relocate to a new space.

The new Allied Model Trains store, opening in July at another Sepulveda Blvd. location, will be approximately one-third the size of the current store. "This worked out well for me because I built (the store)," he said. "but (small businesses) are drying up one by one. I don't like that." Drucker looks forward to catching up on traveling once the sale is finalized.

[Info. from *West Hollywood Independent* via Bob Drollinger]

LOS ANGELES COUNTY RIDERS

During the month of March 2007, the average number of weekday riders traveling on trains going to, from, or within Los Angeles County, other than on Amtrak, was 308,673. This was a 7 percent increase over last month.

QUIET ZONE IN BANNING, CALIFORNIA

The San Geronio Avenue railroad crossing in Banning, California, will become that city's first attempt at a Quiet Zone, which is an option that cities can employ to minimize disruption caused by freight train locomotives' loud horns. Railroad Controls Limited recommended a wayside horn system for the crossing. Other options for Quiet Zone crossings include temporary crossing closures during off-peak hours, four-gate crossings, and median strips on either side of the crossing.

"The wayside horns point their sound right at oncoming traffic, where you want it," Duane Burk, Banning's director of public works, said. "They also have a much smaller sound footprint than the railroad horns."

In the event that a wayside horn doesn't sound due to a malfunction, a strobe signal notifies the engineer, who then uses his locomotive horn as a backup. The wayside horn system will cost about \$75,000-\$90,000 for horn equipment and \$15,000 for the equipment to link it to Union Pacific communications.

[Info. from Railroad Newline via Ken Ruben]

UNION PACIFIC GREEN LOCOMOTIVES

From its very beginnings, the key to a locomotive's power has been its ability to convert fuel into motion. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, locomotives harnessed steam to move trains. Almost anything that would burn was used to fuel a fire under a water-filled boiler that created the steam.

In the early 1930s, electricity began replacing steam. Locomotives became electric power generators producing electricity to drive motors attached to axles and wheels. Diesel became the fuel of choice to power the on-board engine that helped generate the electricity.

In 2002, Union Pacific's Mike Iden, general director of car and locomotive engineering, thought it was time to take locomotive technology to the next level. Since many locomotives do not require maximum horsepower (1,200-to-2,100-horsepower for switch or yard locomotives and 4,000-to-6,000-horsepower for long-haul road locomotives) all the time, Iden investigated the development of a switching locomotive that would use modern off-road diesel engines. Modern off-road diesel engines would be capable of providing the lower power required by typical switching locomotives while reducing fuel consumption and, most importantly, exhaust emissions. Instead of having one large conventional locomotive diesel engine operating at various speeds, only one of which was most fuel efficient, why not use multiple smaller diesel engines, running in combinations of 1, 2 or 3 engines, to produce the required horsepower levels?

"My vision was to package the diesel engine, electrical generator and even the cooling system radiator in one compact, easily replaced module called a generator set or 'genset.'" Iden said.

He began work to find out if several gensets could be assembled together on one locomotive platform to produce the same power as one older conventional diesel locomotive engine. Mass-produced locomotives with multiple diesel engines had previously been manufactured in the United States, but never using the design concept of multiple, modular, easily replaceable gensets. The only exception was an experimental high-speed passenger locomotive built with modular diesel-generator sets in 1941; it was never sold nor were any other such locomotives built.

Iden started discussions about genset switchers with a small Illinois-based locomotive remanufacturing company, National Railway Equipment, and spent more than a year refining the concept and making preliminary plans for a prototype called the "Genset switcher."

In 2004, Union Pacific authorized construction of a prototype low-emission Genset locomotive. No manufacturer offered such a locomotive, and many doubted the feasibility or need for such a switching locomotive.

Undaunted, Iden moved forward and a prototype 1400 horsepower Genset was built for UP during 2005 and tested in Illinois and California. The prototype is powered by two generator sets, each with a 700-horsepower, ultra low-emissions off-road Cummins diesel engine that reduce nitrous oxide and particulate emissions by up to 80-90 percent, while using as much as 16 percent less fuel compared to other low-horsepower locomotives. The 16 percent less diesel fuel usage also translates into a minimum 16 percent reduction in greenhouse gases.

The entire Genset locomotive and each of its two generator

sets are computer controlled. One generator set is initially used when starting the locomotive. As the locomotive engineer goes to increasingly higher throttle settings, the second genset engine is quickly started and begins providing power. When that power demand is no longer needed, the second unit automatically shuts down. The prototype Genset locomotive also was equipped with Automatic Engine Stop Start (AESS) technology, that shuts down the locomotive when it is not in use. Most importantly, emissions tests on the prototype found that the 80-90 percent reduction in exhaust emissions was practical and could be achieved.

Though still being evaluated in early 2006, the prototype Genset locomotive worked well enough for UP to move beyond the prototype stage. In February 2006, Union Pacific expanded its use of Genset technology by ordering 60 bigger-and-more powerful production versions from National Railway Equipment – all for use in UP'S Los Angeles Basin rail yards. Each new Genset locomotive is powered by three 700-horsepower ultra low-emissions U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) non-road Tier 3-certified 6-cylinder Cummins diesel engines. All 60 of the Gensets, bound for Los Angeles, are expected to be delivered and working by July 2007.

Also in early 2006, Union Pacific ordered 98 2,000-horsepower Genset switching locomotives from Railpower Technologies. Each is powered by three generator sets with EPA Tier 3-certified 8-cylinder Deutz diesel engines. All 98 are being assigned to Union Pacific rail yards in Texas.

Genset locomotives are just one of the technologies Union Pacific is pioneering to help reduce locomotive emissions. By the end of 2007 Union Pacific will have invested more than \$5 billion to purchase new, environmentally friendly locomotives, and will have invested millions of dollars to test technologies that reduce emissions from older locomotives.

[Info. from <http://www.uuprr.com/newsinfo/> via Charles Varnes]

RAILFANNING TO DEVORE

by Dennis Giley

On April 21, 2007, a friend and I went railfanning, to Devore, where we had lunch at the restaurant by the railroad crossing.. A UP freight was stopped in the siding with a brakeman in the restaurant, getting a lunch to go.

The engineer was impatient and blowing long blasts on the horn. The brakeman came out and asked us how long he had been doing that. I said about five minutes. He left his paid for lunch and run back to the train. where he got on and they left. The waitress came out and said she would make sure he got it the next time he came in.

KOREAN BORDER TRAIN RUNS

The trains that rumbled through the frontier dividing the Korean Peninsula for a one-time test run of restored rail links on May 17, 2007, represent a symbolic stride for reconciliation between North and South Korea. North Korea took nearly seven years before allowing the test run of trains agreed to in June 2000. There is no telling how long it could take before people can buy tickets for trips to the North. It is unlikely that North Korea will allow its citizens to make the trip south.

The Korean war ended in a 1953 cease-fire that has never been replaced with a peace treaty, leaving the two Koreas technically at war. The tests enabled North Korea to secure an agree-

ment to receive \$86.6 million of raw materials to make clothes, shoes and soap to help its economy. In exchange, South Korea received rights to explore mineral resources in North Korea. The only fireworks that emerged that day across the DMZ were bursts of colored smoke send into the sky as the South Korean train headed north.

[Info. from *The Oregonian* via Caroline Hobson]

LOCOMOTIVE REPLICA AT NEVADA CITY, CALIF.

Four retirees are working together to re-create an old locomotive from scratch for the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad & Transportation Museum in Nevada City, California.

Team Leader Rolf Laessig and his other team members have machined most of the parts for the locomotive from an old 1910 lathe they found rusting outside of the museum and restored. The replica of the 1885 Porter locomotive is about one-third done. Laessig has raised almost \$14,000 for the project but figures he'll need another \$21,000 to complete the replica in 18 months. Since they started in July 2006, the wheels were the only part the men had to buy.

Jerry Hall helped complete a three-fourths scale model of the old Chicago Park railroad station along the famous narrow-gauge line to Colfax during the gold mining heydays. He used to run the computer center for Santa Clara County. Richard Schilling, a former detective with the Los Angeles Sheriff's Office, loves trains and doesn't mind getting his hands dirty.

The fourth team member, Dick Marundee, was a chemical engineer who has been volunteering at the museum for 17 years. He is shop foreman at the museum and field master when pieces are shipped for shows. "If you want to stay healthy and active, volunteer here; there's a lot of satisfaction," Marundee said.

[Info. from Railroad Newsline via Ken Ruben]

MCCLOUD RAILROAD NO. 18 ON MOVE

The showpiece of the Virginia & Truckee tourist railway – a 90-ton locomotive – rolled in and out of Carson City, Nev. on April 10. The McCloud Railroad No. 18 locomotive and its tender are on loan to Sierra Railroad's tourist rail in Oakdale, Calif., after sitting in storage for several years in a small town near Mount Shasta, Calif. The McCloud No. 18 ran on the Shasta Sunset Dinner Train near Mount Shasta.

The No. 18's operation on the Sierra Railroad Dinner Train and the Sacramento River Train are meant to generate interest in the future V&T. The 18-mile railroad from Carson City to Virginia City is expected to begin operating in 2010.

[Info. from The Railroad Newsline via Ken Ruben]

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) was to have the first Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) for the Los Angeles to Orange County Corridor on June 13, 2007. The purpose of the SWG is to foster open communication among differing interests and serve to move the proposed high-speed train project forward in the spirit of compromise and cooperation while providing regional involvement for this corridor. While it was not a policy body, the meeting was to produce valuable feedback to help the project team build consensus for the project's alignment, service, and public involvement program. The

CHRSA can be contacted at (877)724-5422 with any questions, or visit the web site at www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov.

URBAN RAIL TRANSIT

by Dick Finley

LOS ANGELES METRO RAIL

RIDERSHIP

April 2007	Red Line	Blue Line	Green Line	Gold Line
Weekday Aver.	135,215	76,275	36,861	18,518
Saturday Aver.	87,656	55,914	21,236	13,423
Sunday Aver.	74,291	42,616	17,275	10,977
Monthly Total	3,961,585	2,038,509	945,397	497,419

PERSONNEL

Melvin Clark, deputy executive officer for Rail Transportation, has been named acting general manager for Metro Rail Operations. Clark will report directly to Interim Chief Operating Officer Carolyn Flowers until a permanent rail operations general manager has been recruited. Clark, 49, has 26 years' experience in rail operations with regional transit agencies, rail engineering firms and railroad corporations. He joined Metro as director of rail activation in April 2002 and was named deputy executive officer in March 2003.

Beginning as a signal design intern at the Chicago Transit Authority in 1981, he later worked as a signal designer and signals engineer with two engineering firms, and in signals engineering and train control positions with Norfolk Southern in the 1980s and as train control engineer with Atlanta's MARTA system in the early 1990s. Prior to joining Metro, Clark served from 1996 to 2002 as manager of signals and communication and then as division director of rail systems with the Bi-State Development Agency, now known as metro, in St. Louis.

SECURITY

Local, regional, and national law enforcement and transit authorities ran a real-time test of security measures at the Union Station Gateway (USG) complex on May 5. According to the exercise's grim scenario, the Department of Homeland Security had raised its threat level to "red," following a simulated terrorist attack on a commuter rail system somewhere in the U.S. "Terrorist" teams tried unsuccessfully to penetrate USG's security forces to place mock explosive devices in five critical areas inside USG. The majority of the terrorist teams were "captured" on Metrolink trains.

According to Dan Cowden, the exercise was the transit industry's largest multi-agency drill since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. He estimated approximately 250 officers took part in the exercise, which lasted from 7 a.m. to noon. "I was very pleased with the results," said Sheriff's Lt. Leo Norton, co-planner of the exercise with Sheriff's Lt. John Herrera. In reviewing the exercise, Norton discovered that it delayed the Metrolink trains only 15 minutes.

Deputies from the Transit Services Bureau (TSB) and Metro Security officers screened bus and rail passengers and pedestrians – and their luggage – as well as vehicles entering the USG complex. K-9 units also were a key part of the exercise. The dogs examined luggage that participating passengers placed in the aisle of rail cars. Dogs from the TSB and Los Angeles Police Department discovered a mock explosive device transported via vehicle to the Alameda Street entrance to Union Station.

Officer Juan Alba, of the Los Angeles Airport Police,

searched Metro Gold Line trains at the Chinatown Station with Eno, a German shepherd. "People are more leery of the dogs. but they don't mind being searched." Other check points near USG included the Civic Center station, the Vignes Street pedestrian and vehicle entrances to USG, and multiple Metrolink stations.

[Personnel & Security info. from *MetroPeople*]

METRO FARE INCREASES

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) approved the first across-the-board fare increase in more than a decade. The new fares – which apply to both bus and rail service – are less than the Metro's staff had sought, but will still increase the amount riders pay significantly over the next two years. The plan gradually increases fares every two years, beginning July 1, when day passes rise to \$5 from \$3, weekly passes jump to \$17 from \$14 and monthly passes spike to \$62 from \$52. One-way fare hikes won't come until July 1, 2009, rising from the current \$1.25 to \$1.50.

Under the approved plan, seniors 65 and older and disabled can ride buses and rails for 55 cents from 45 cents, and for 25 cents during off-peak hours. The reduced rate applies from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then after 7 p.m. during the week and all day on weekends. The rate eventually increases to 35 cents by 2011. The monthly pass for senior citizens will rise to \$14 from \$12.

The fare hikes are designed to level the transit agency's deficit in up to eight years. Metro faces a \$1.8 billion deficit over the next 10 years. The plan puts up to 25 bus lines at risk of being cut for low performance.

A crowd estimated at 1,500 congregated in the Board Room, an auxiliary board room, the cafeteria and the first floor lobby. Throughout the six hours of testimony, members of the Bus Riders Union lambasted the Board with claims of racial inequality and said the transit agency's deficit was being balanced on the backs of minorities, a significant portion of public transportation riders.

CEO Roger Snoble's plan would have knocked down the agency's deficit in three years. He said the agency has prepared for a lawsuit. "We are likely destined for court," Snoble said. "We do feel that with any court challenge, we can be successful."

After meeting with Sacramento officials on May 23, Antonio Villaraigosa, Mayor of Los Angeles, said he got a commitment for some of the \$230 million in spillover money – a portion of money that comes from sales tax on gasoline – that Los Angeles County is counting on, but stands to lose in Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposed budget. Villaraigosa said there was also growing opposition among lawmakers to Schwarzenegger's call to divert \$1.3 billion in spillover funds from public transportation to other projects.

Even after winning the biggest fare increase in more than a decade, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority still finds itself in a cash crunch that leaves several rail projects in limbo. If it survives an expected legal challenge, the boost in fares will help stabilize the transit agency's deficit-ridden finances. But the increase is significantly less than what MTA staffers originally sought to close a projected \$1.8 billion deficit over the next decade. Although Roger Snoble believes the agency can afford to complete and operate the Expo Line to Culver City and

the Gold Line East L.A. extension, he said other transit projects now being considered could find significant delays. Among them:

- The Expo Line extension from Culver City to Santa Monica.
 - The Gold Line extension from Pasadena to Montclair.
 - The Green Line extension from Aviation Station to LAX.
 - The Orange Line (Bus) from Woodland Hills to Chatsworth.
 - The \$4.8-billion "Subway to the Sea" under Wilshire Blvd.
- MTA board member Pam O'Connor, a Santa Monica councilwoman, said boosting fares was a difficult decision – but a needed one for the future of mass transit in Los Angeles. "You have to have a solid foundation," she said. "And, frankly, we were on shaky ground."

[Info. from *Los Angeles Times*]

BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT

East Bay-bound BART passengers got a 15-second film clip-like advertisement plastered onto the transit system tunnel wall in March. Trains traveled at 35 mph past the series of posters.

"It's like a flipbook, SideTrack Technologies Chairman Rob Walker said. "When you flip through the pages the images turn into something like a film clip. We light the bunch of posters in synchronization with the speed of the train and it animates them." BART riders gave the ads a favorable review.

[Info. from Railroad Newsline via Ken Ruben]

PORTLAND, OREGON

The Portland aerial tram began Sunday operations from 1 to 5 p.m. from May 20 to Sept. 16. The tram ferries passengers between the South Waterfront district and Oregon Health & Science University. Officials reserved Sundays for maintenance when the tram launched operations in January, but ridership has surpassed expectations and requests for Sunday service have risen steadily. During the workweek, tram hours are from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

RAILROAD STATION

The Portland Union Station that was built in 1896 was set on 5,000 pilings and landfill. Reviewers loved the low cost of \$400,000 and "harmonious" design that combined an austere Romanesque tower with more ornate Italianate elements below. By the 1920s, 90 trains stopped daily at Union Station. In 1927 the central waiting rooms were redesigned, the ceiling reinforced, and interior walls were covered in travertine marble.

By 1943, with 100 trains a day, the city agreed to tearing down the station and replacing it with a more modern one, but never acted on it. Then came the long decline that, by the 1980s saw passenger trains drop to six daily. "It was a hellhole," said Bruce Allen of the Portland Development Commission (PDC). Transients slept inside. There was asbestos in the attic, phone booths were boarded up, and the ticket counter was surrounded by barbed wire.

The PDC bought it in 1987, making it part of its Downtown/Waterfront urban renewal district. The turnaround got a boost in the 1990s after the Transit Mall was extended north along Fifth and Sixth Avenues, connecting Union Station to downtown. In 1996 the partly renovated structure was rededicated for its 100th anniversary.

Rail use grew back to its current 12 trains daily with Amtrak's 1998 Cascades launch. Most recently, TriMet's Portland Mall Project started construction, aiming to connect Union Sta-

tion to Portland State by May 2009. "We took it from a pretty scary place to one of the nicest stations on the West Coast," Allen said.

Like any fixer-upper, the historic station has more work projects than the cash to get to all of them – at least \$20 million by moderate estimates. Despite all the needs, such as seismic retrofit, roof work involving 200 cracked joists, crumbling limestone sills, wood unable to sustain more paint around windows, patched mechanical and electrical systems, asbestos in the basement, Allen maintains that the building is sound.

He also points to the gains: a lounge built for Amtrak; the rebuilt newsstand and lunch counter; the restored original copper bathroom signs and waiting room ceiling; and the 30 tenants attracted since the 1990s. The main tenant, Amtrak, has a lease through 2010, with a renewal option through 2015.

Former restaurateur Ron Paul has wanted to install a public market at the station. For funds, "I think one of the things they need to do is put this on the ballot," Allen said.

[Portland info. from The Oregonian via Caroline Hobson]

SEATTLE

An enormous drill broke through the east side of Beacon Hill in the city's south end on May 8, almost a year and a half after it started digging a nearly mile-long tunnel for light rail transit (LRT). The Japanese-built tunnel boring machine (TBM), with its 21-foot diameter cutter head, slowly churned into view a little after 8:15 a.m. Nearly a football field in length, the TBM was equipped with a laser guidance system that dug the 4,388-foot-long tunnel within 5 millimeters of engineers' plans, said Pat Gould, who was driving the 375-ton machine.

Sound Transit, the mass transportation agency that serves King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties, runs express buses, a commuter train, park-and-ride lots, and an LRT line in Tacoma. Project leaders say the \$1.7 billion Central Link line, running 16 miles from Seattle to the Tacoma International Airport, is on schedule to open in late 2009.

Manufactured by Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, the TBM made about 50 feet of progress per day on average – 60 feet "once we really got going and once the crews got comfortable with the operation," Gould said. Next up, Sound Transit crews will finish laying the concrete rings that line the tunnel, then take the machine apart, move it back to the west side of Beacon Hill, reassemble it, test it, then start digging the second parallel tunnel.

In November, voters will have their say on a plan to add another 49 miles of LRT to the system, expand express bus service, and improve commuter rail stations. The plan has won approval by the Sound Transit board of directors. Cost of the expansion to the Tacoma Dome in the south, near Mill Creek in the north, and Redmond to the east by 2027 is currently estimated at \$10.8 billion, but could run to \$23 billion with inflation, financing costs and other factors, the board was told before the unanimous vote on May 24.

Besides adding to the 15.7 miles of LRT now under construction, the package includes four parking garages, a bus transit center in Bothell, two Sounder rail stations, and studies of potential light rail extensions to Everett, Issaquah, Ballard and Renton and in the Renton-Woodinville rail corridor east of Lake Washington.

The plan would boost the sales tax by a nickel per \$10 purchase. Michael Ennis of the conservative Washington Policy Center said the transit plan would not do much to relieve traffic congestion.

[Info. from The Spokesman-Review via Frank Mares]

BILL TO INCREASE NEVADA RAILROAD SECURITY

Supporters of a bill designed to increase railroad security in Nevada painted a disastrous scenario of what terrorists could do to Reno, Sparks, and Las Vegas at the State Legislature on April 3, Assembly Bill 340, sponsored by Bernie Anderson, would force railroad operators to inform state agencies of dangerous chemicals and compounds that move through the state, and require railroad yards and other installations to develop and submit security plans to state agencies.

The bill was heard for the first time at the Legislature just days after a report told of U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) plans to transport up to 4,500 casks of high-level nuclear waste through downtown Reno and Sparks every week for the next 24 years. The plan is part of the DOE strategy to build a rail line to the Yucca Mountain nuclear-waste repository just north of Las Vegas, Nevada officials said.

The Union Pacific Railroad, the only major railroad with yards in Nevada, often stores and transports dangerous substances such as chlorine and propane gas in the state, bill supporters told the Assembly Transportation Committee. With the current state of shoddy security, terrorists could easily sneak into a railroad yard in Sparks or Las Vegas and cause tankers, storage units – or both – to explode, they said.

The concerns about railroad safety are overplayed, said Scott Hinckley, general director of safety and security for UP. The bill singles out UP for terrorism breakdowns but does not address issues with other methods of transportation, Hinckley said. "I'm not convinced that enough is happening on this very important security issue," said Assemblyman David Bobzien, D-Reno. The committee will review the bill at a future meeting, he said.

[Info. from Railroad Newline via Ken Ruben]

GEORGETOWN LOOP RAILROAD UPDATE

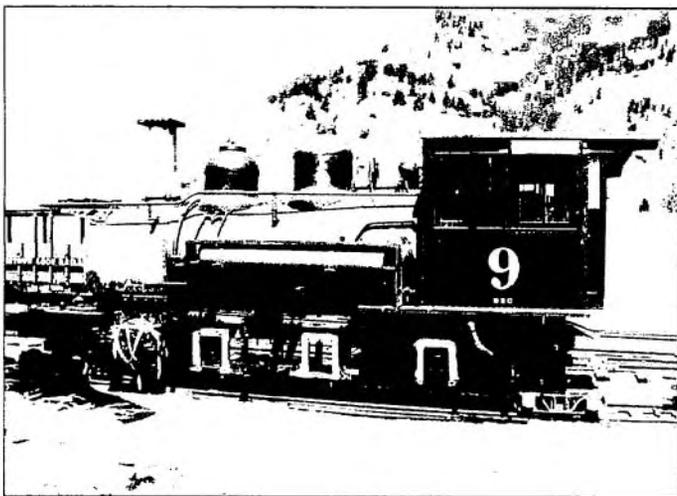
by BRIAN BLACK

This past winter has not been a good one for the Georgetown Loop Railroad. The G.L.R.R. is a small tourist railroad operating from Georgetown to Silver Plume, Colorado, over a 3.2 mile portion of the former Colorado Central in Clear Creek Canyon west of Denver. Its scenic highlight is the ride over the restored High Bridge.

As you will recall from an earlier article in Wheel Clicks, the railroads' steam engine No. 12 suffered a broken axle last summer, necessitating placing GE diesel No. 21 into service, and it promptly burned up a traction motor. The former Colorado and Southern No. 9 was placed into service.

The No. 9 operated for about two weeks, when a number of problems came up. About sixty staybolts started leaking, there were issues with the driver springs, and the crew had to constantly fight to get the injectors to work. It was now clear that the engine had been rushed into service too soon, and it was no

longer safe to operate with the engine in this condition. The No. 9 currently is sitting outside the shop at Silver Plume minus its drivers. It is sitting on shop trucks, and will not see service this year.



Georgetown Loop Railroad No. 9 was stored outside the engine house at Silver Plume awaiting repairs on May 16, 2007.

Photo by Brian Black,



General Electric diesel No. 21, is the Georgetown Loop RR backup locomotive. The railroad's operating season started late when it was decided not to use the locomotive due to its heavy axle loading and poor tracking.

Photo by Brian Black

When the No. 12 was in the shop during the off-season, the cause of the broken axle was discovered. When the engine was rebuilt, someone built up the journal surfaces on that driver axle by welding. This is a very questionable practice at best, but the sin was compounded when whoever worked on that axle failed to normalize the casting. Normalization is a heat treating process, whereby all internal stresses on a casting are relieved. Therefore, a stress point developed, and the axle failed.

Further inspection revealed that the other two driver axle journals had been machined beyond tolerances and needed to be replaced. Also, some flues looked questionable, and a patch in the firebox had been done in a sloppy manner.

The bottom line of this tale of woe is that the railroad faced the opening of the 2007 season with only the diesel No. 21 operating. The original plan was to operate from the Georgetown

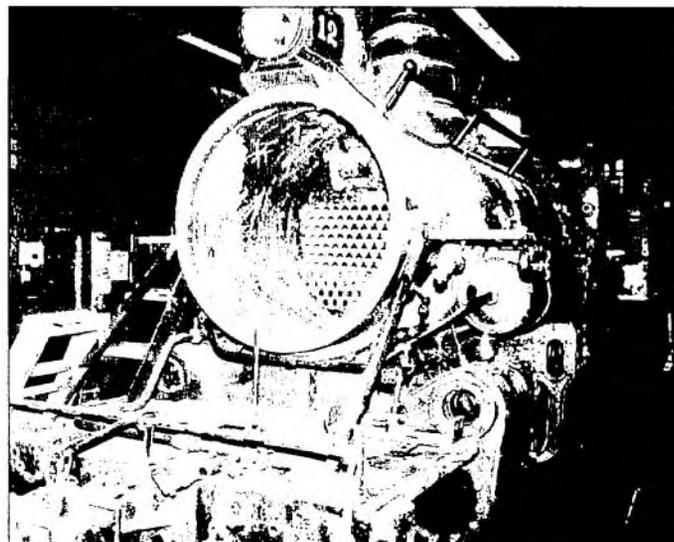
end only up as far as the Lebanon Mine. The rest of the railroad from the Lebanon Mine to Silver Plume encompasses some of the worst grades and curves on the railroad.

The problem with the 21 is that it only has two axles, and as a result, it has a very high weight per axle. It has a history of being very hard on the track due to its weight and rigid wheel-base. It was felt that it could do the least amount of damage between Georgetown and the mine.

The latest word is that the No. 12 will be ready to go by June 15. Plans were changed not to operate with the cantankerous diesel, but to wait until the 12 is ready. The season may open a bit late, but it will open with steam. The 12 is basically a sound, reliable engine. In its first season, 2005, it operated daily with no problems. It's only timeouts were for routine boiler washes.

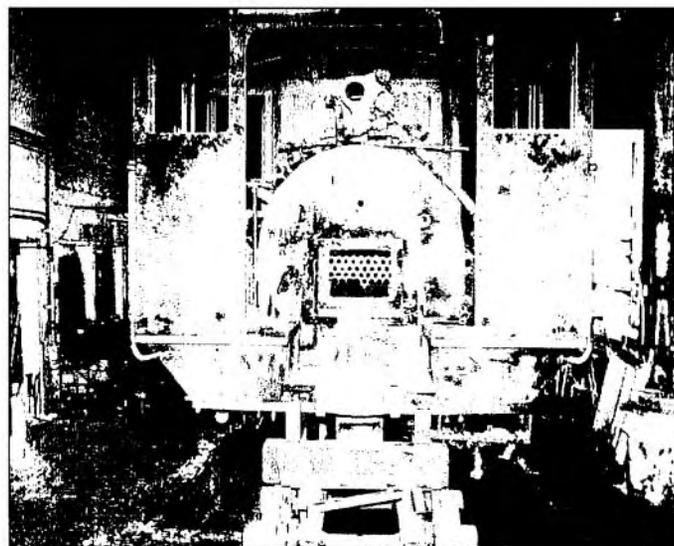
As a parenthetical note, your reporter may be working part-time this summer for the G.L.R.R. as a brakeman/conductor/fireman/engineer.

If you are in the Denver area this summer, a trip on this railroad is not to be missed.



This view of No.12's smokebox was taken during the installation of new flues.

Photo by Brian Black



The back flue sheet is visible in this view of No. 12's cab.

Photo by Brian Black