

WHEEL CLICKS

Pacific Railroad Society Inc.

SEPTEMBER 2009

SOUTH BAY ITEMS

by JACK WHITMEYER

RED CAR OPERATING HOURS

Operating hours for the Waterfront Red Cars changed according to the Port of Los Angeles. The new schedule from July 17 has the cars running from noon to 9:30 p.m. Friday through Sunday, and on select weekdays when cruise ships are in port. The \$1 fare has not changed.

WILMINGTON DEVELOPMENTS

A \$144 million development that will change the face of Wilmington over the next decade was approved June 18 by the Los Angeles Board of Harbor Commissioners. The 94-acre Wilmington Waterfront calls for a series of parks, shops, eateries and a 200-foot observation tower that will offer spectacular views of the working port and surrounding neighborhoods.

The first phase, while not listed in the port's budget for the fiscal year that begins July 1, is set for completion in 2015. It calls for building a 10-acre land bridge that would connect the development's northern area to a four-acre waterfront park. The public observation deck – designed to look like a large sail – will loom over the park, serving as a new local landmark.

Another green area, dubbed Avalon Triangle Park, will be built on the southeast corner of Harry Bridges and Avalon boulevards. Plans also call for building a Red Car Museum at Fries Avenue and West C Street, along with a nearby one-acre Railroad Park and 58,000 square feet of commercial development one block south of Harry Bridges Blvd., between Avalon Blvd. and Marine Ave.

The project's second phase, set for completion in 2020, calls for connecting Wilmington to San Pedro with a bike path and an extended Red Car line. An additional six acres of park space will be built along the waterfront, with about 12,000 square feet set aside for restaurants and shops.

Efforts to redevelop Wilmington's waterfront began more than 20 years ago, when port officials launched a series of studies examining how the industrial neighborhood could be spruced up. That eventually led to the construction in 1996 of Banning's Landing Community Center, which will serve as the waterfront's centerpiece.

Designs for the Wilmington Waterfront project moved along more smoothly than the San Pedro waterfront development, which has remained a contentious issue for about a decade. In San Pedro, a series of designs have come and gone. The most recent plan calls for adding new harbors, expanding Ports O' Call Village and building two new cruise terminals near Cabrillo Beach. The harbor commission is expected to consider a final environmental report for that project in September, according to port officials.

"Right now, my preference is to see the cruise ships stay where they currently are, because it brings a lot of business to the restaurants, and you lose all that when you move the cruises

to the outer limits," said Los Angeles City Councilwoman Janice Hahn, whose district includes the port.

CALTRAIN NEWS

by MIKE GONDON

Caltrain recorded its eighth fatality of the year on July 21 when Train No. 276 struck a trespasser south of the Blossom Hill station on Union Pacific tracks. Normally, eight fatalities by July 21 would not be exceptionally high, but considering Caltrain didn't have its first one until May 1, many people are trying to figure out why the spike. The latest victim was a well-known leader in San Jose's Hispanic community and his death has been ruled accidental.

Such incidents always call attention to the victim and his or her families, but little or nothing is said about the train crews who must deal with the event, often for many years afterward. Trying to address that fact, on August 2, the San Jose Mercury News ran as its lead story an excellent article about railroad fatalities from the engineer's viewpoint, including experiences from two Caltrain engineers. To its credit, the article also mentioned the trauma conductors experience when they must walk back to view a body that has just been run over. The article was well received by the railroad community and is one of the best I have read on the subject.

One subject that won't go away is the noise from Caltrain horns. After years of complaints by Peninsula residents, mostly from Palo Alto and Menlo Park, Caltrain adjusted the volume of its horns and relocated them from the roof, to below the car body. This seemed to satisfy most everyone except the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). The horns' decibel level fell below FRA standards, so Caltrain changed the horns again and put them back on the roof. Now the horns meet FRA standards, but residents are up in arms again over the noise. Now Caltrain is installing metal discs on the horns in an attempt to make them less annoying, but still FRA compliant. I'm sure this isn't the end of the story – just the latest chapter.

Caltrain stations have electronic message boards that pass along basic information to passengers. However, they don't have real-time capabilities, so when delays happen, passengers often get inadequate information. Now some tech-savvy commuters have employed the social networking site of Twitter to post and check delays, report lost items, and receive other information that had previously been hard to come by.

The twitter.com/Caltrain site was launched in May 2008 after riders grew frustrated with the lack of official delay updates provided on platforms and aboard trains. The site now has nearly 2000 followers who are notified when the Caltrain feed is updated.



WHEEL CLICKS
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PRS NEWS — ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

- Sep. 4 Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Valencia Room, Joslyn Fri. Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
- Sep. 5, 12, Pacific Railroad Museum work party, 10:00 a.m. to 19, 26 4 p.m., 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas.
- Sats. Committee meeting: Sep. 26.
- Sep. 4, 12, Rolling Stock repair day, 8:30 a.m. to ?, Saunders 19, 26 Yard, Noakes & Herbert Sts., Commerce. Regular Sats. Day: 5, 19; Extra Day: 12, 26. Committee Meeting: 19.
- Sep. 11 Membership Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Alhambra Room, Fri. Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
- Oct. 2 Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Valencia Room, Joslyn Fri. Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
- Oct. 3, 10, Pacific Railroad Museum work party, 10:00 a.m. to 17, 24, 31 4 p.m., 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas.
- Sats. Committee meeting: Oct. 24.
- Oct. 3, 10, Rolling Stock repair day, 8:30 a.m. to ?, Saunders 17, 24, 31 Yard, Noakes & Herbert Sts., Commerce. Regular

- Sats. Day: 3, 17; Extra Day: 10, 24, 31. Committee Meeting: 17.
- Oct. 9 Membership Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Alhambra Room, Fri. Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
- Oct. 16 Slide night at Saunders Yard, 7:30 p.m., Noakes & Fri. Herbert Sts., Commerce. All welcome; bring slides.
- Oct. 17 Excursion to Barstow. Leave: LAUS 8:00 am & Fullerton 8:40. Return Fullerton 7:00 pm & LAUS 7:45 pm

MEETING PROGRAMS by **RUSS DAVIES**

September 11: **“RENO The Biggest Little City In The World!”** You’ve all seen slides and prints of that famous arched sign. And, we’ll wager that many of you have your own, **with a train in the foreground.** That lighted sign, and long, grinding SP trains running through the center of the casino area were long-time Reno icons. No longer! On this evening we’ll see **John Lee’s CDC** about the **Reno Trench,** and how the trains now roll through without so much as a whistle toot. **Be there, and bring digital briefs!**

October 9: Long-time PRS member, **Dick Donat,** will be here, **all the way from Summit, New Jersey.** And if that name had a railroading ring to it, you’ve read about, or experienced, the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western, and perhaps even the **“Phoebe Snow.”** Dick will be sharing some of his now-digitized images with us in his presentation, **“Memo-ries of Summit and Cajon Pass.”** We’ll see some familiar faces, and of course, our own **Descanso!** **Be there, and bring digital briefs!**

MEMBERSHIP REPORT by **VIRGINIA GRUPP**

At the Board Meeting on August 7, Frank Drake was voted into PRS as a new member with seniority number 433. Late renewal members were assigned numbers 434 to 441.

CECELIA DITLEFSEN

Cecelia Ditlefsen passed away in August 2009. She and her husband, Chris Ditlefsen, were members of PRS for many years. Cecelia was a Director of PRS for 1976-78 and 1987. She was Vice-President for 1989, and President in 1990 and 1991. She also wrote PRS’s History for 1978 and 1987-96 in “50 Years of Railroading in Southern California.” In more recent years, Cecelia served PRS as a committee chair.

RICHARD HAMILTON (1949-2009) by **KEN RUBEN**

Although not a PRS member, Richard Hamilton, the late host of the weekly internet talk show, “Let’s Talk Trains” interviewed PRS officials and committee heads, such as Marti Ann Draper and John Ulloth, about PRS and its activities. Some of this was done at the former Fullerton RR Days and some via cell phone. I was a contributor for seven years and in my weekly talks mentioned PRS and many of its activities.

Richard lived in San Diego, but was interested in all kinds of passenger and freight railroading beyond his home.

TEHACHAPI REPORT UPDATE by MARGO PETROS

The latest information on the completion of the rebuilt S.P. depot in Tehachapi, California, indicates the target date will be on or about November 28, 2009.

The Tehachapi Centennial was to take place on August 13, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.

URBAN RAIL TRANSITLOS ANGELES METRO RAIL
RIDERSHIP

July 2009	Red Line	Blue Line	Green Line	Gold Line
Weekday Ave.	162,720	82,234	39,970	21,065
Saturday Ave.	99,928	58,606	22,449	10,896
Sunday Ave.	81,324	55,083	18,394	8,622
Monthly Total	4,448,964	2,342,617	1,078,617	560,290

[Info. From Ken Ruben]

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) board voted on July 23 to support the California high-speed rail project and the line's first segment, which would connect Los Angeles with Anaheim. The decision now makes the MTA a partner in a broad-based coalition of government agencies committed to building an 800-mile network of train lines.

DELAY OF DECISION ON RAIL-CAR DEAL

The MTA board on July 23 delayed for two months a decision on whether to extend the contract options of Ansaldo-Breda, an Italian rail-car maker that has pledged to build a plant in downtown Los Angeles if it gets the \$300-million deal.

The MTA's chief executive, Art Leahy, said agency staff and the firm had made significant progress this week in hammering out an agreement for 100 additional light-rail cars that includes up to \$300 million in guarantees. MTA staff members had previously favored seeking competitive bids for the new work, citing AnsaldoBreda's performance problems under its base contract for 50 light-rail cars.

AnsaldoBreda in 2003 was awarded a \$158.7 million MTA contract to deliver 50 light rail cars by 2007. It has delivered only 27 of the 50 – and each are 6,000 pounds over the MTA's limit, are incompatible with other cars, and cannot run on the Green and Blue rail lines. To make up for the problems, the company offered to provide the MTA a \$300 million financial guarantee. If the company does not deliver the cars properly, MTA could use the guarantee credit to recoup the cost of the contract, according to an AnsaldoBreda representative.

Several board members expressed concern that an attempt to cash in the credit would result in a lawsuit from AnsaldoBreda, and they also worried that even if the agency recouped its costs, it would still be left with a shortage of rail cars.

The board ultimately voted to delay action until September, giving its staff more time to further investigate the security of the credit guarantee. Supervisor Michael Antonovich was the lone vote against delaying action. He spoke in favor of sending the contract out to re-bid to find a new company to do business with. [Info. from *Los Angeles Times* and *Pasadena Star-News*]

BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT

A tentative contract agreement was reached Sunday evening, August 16, between Bay Area Rapid Transit managers and union

officials, averting a strike that would have stranded 340,000 riders August 17. The union, which represents about 900 station agents and train operators, called off the action after negotiations over the weekend.

[Info. from *Los Angeles Times*]

MTA ADDS TURNSTILES

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority is erasing its distinction as the only major transit agency in the United States that doesn't equip its stations with turnstiles and security barriers. Previously, the MTA has used a gate-free honor system where passengers walk unimpeded to train platforms without verifying that they have a ticket. To catch fare cheaters, the agency has relied on random checks by civilian inspectors and sheriff's deputies. The fine for lacking a ticket – up to \$250 – still hasn't deterred some riders from taking chances. Cheaters cost the system at least \$5 million a year in lost revenue.

Now, eight turnstiles are in use on a trial basis at the Alameda Street portal for the Red Line stop in Los Angeles Union Station, and five are operating at the Wilshire-Normandie station. By the end of August, 12 turnstiles are scheduled to be installed at the Pershing Square station and 10 at Westlake-MacArthur Park. MTA officials want to determine whether the gates improve security and clamp down on cheaters while moving thousands of daily riders quickly.

If the system works well – a progress report is due by the end of September – the MTA will proceed with a \$46-million plan to install 387 turnstiles and related security fences by early 2010 at all subway and Green Line light rail stations and at selected stops for the Blue Line and Gold Line light rail trains.

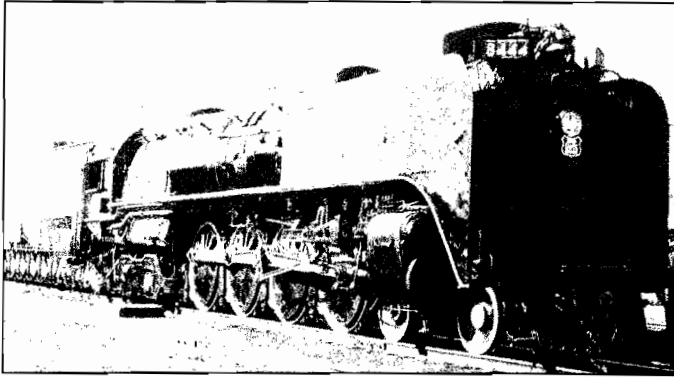
MTA officials say the turnstiles and fencing are especially needed because of the threat of terrorism, the system's increasing ridership, and the emergence of the Transit Access Pass (TAP) program. The latter is an automated fare collection system that relies on smart cards issued to riders.

The turnstiles now accept TAP cards, which can be read electronically. The MTA and Metrolink commuter rail service are developing one-way tickets, daily passes and Metrolink tickets that can be scanned by the new gates. Until then, riders must show those tickets and passes to MTA officials at the turnstiles before heading to train platforms.

At Union Station in August, subway passengers moved quickly through the four entrance turnstiles and four exit turnstiles, which include gates wide enough to accommodate strollers, bicycles and people in wheelchairs. Gaps between the banks of turnstiles were blocked with yellow-and-orange plastic barriers, which will be replaced with permanent fencing if the MTA proceeds with its plans.

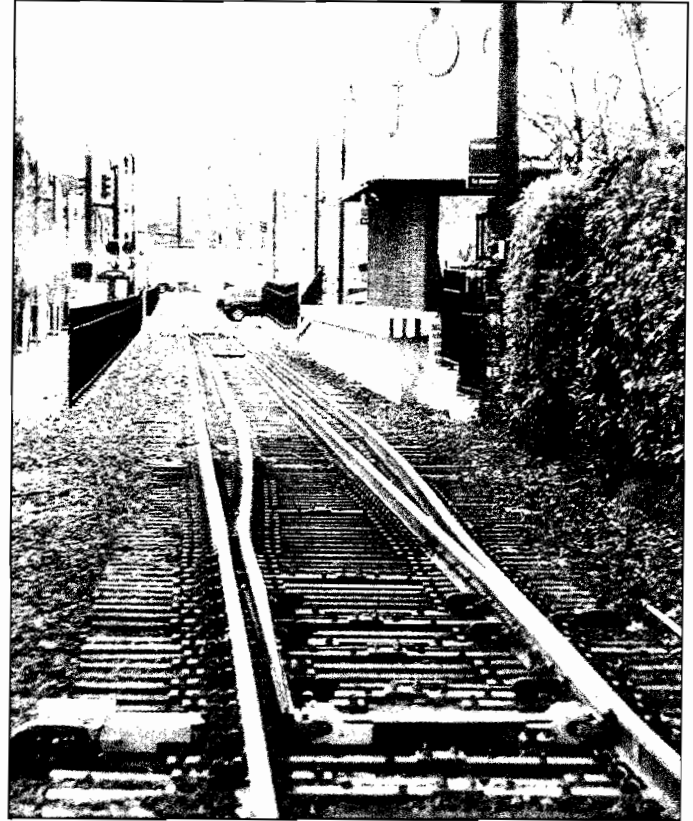
Agency officials in yellow-and-orange vests provided assistance to riders, and purple banners on walls instructed passengers how to place their transit passes over the turnstiles' sensors. Valid passes illuminate a green sign on the turnstile instructing the rider to proceed, while invalid tickets trigger a red sign to stop.

Another thing the MTA wants to determine is whether gates will create significant bottlenecks during heavy travel times. Officials say the gates have been operating efficiently so far. [Info. from *Los Angeles Times*]

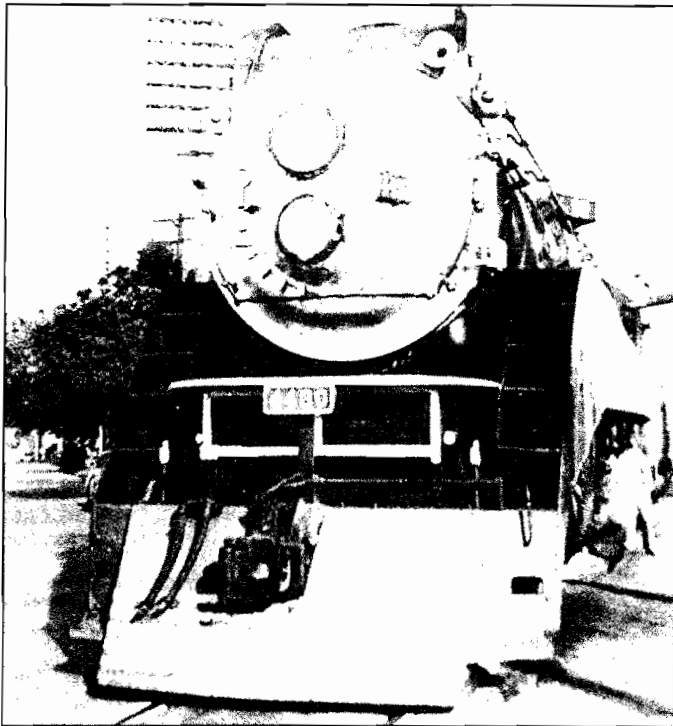


STEAM REPLACED DIESEL—Union Pacific 4-8-4 Northern No. 844 (temporarily numbered 8444) is shown ready and able to handle the PRS Special U.P. excursion train on the “Holiday in the Rockies” trip on Labor Day weekend, 1968.

At Green River, Wyoming, the E units that powered the train from Los Angeles, California, were cut off and replaced by the 1944-built Alco Northern. Photo by John Petros



Gantlet tracks are at Tualatin station. P&W demanded them because once every five years or so, an oversized freight load goes through here.



Southern Pacific Class GS-4, No. 4430, a 4-8-4 built by the Lima Locomotive Works in 1941, is shown on the point of Train 97, the Noon Daylight, at Santa Barbara, California in 1947. The stack talk of these “Northern” type locomotives at start up was always impressive. Also distinct and interesting to hear was the rapid exhaust sound of the Franklin booster mounted directly beneath the cab on the Delta trailing truck used to assist in getting the train started. Photo by John Petros

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

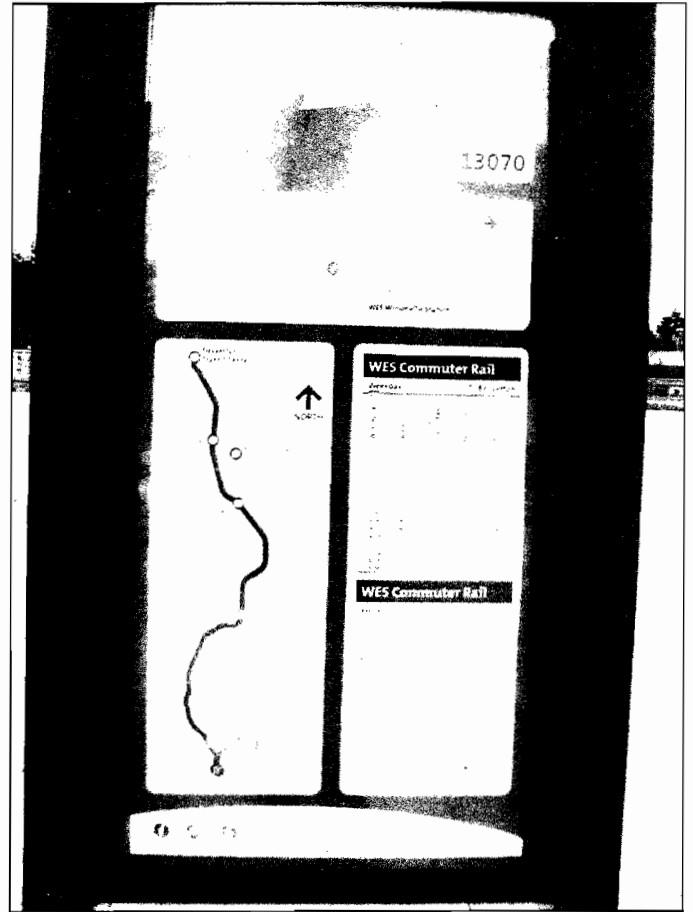
John Jay Ulloth wrote articles in the July and August issues of *Wheel Clicks* and photographs appeared in the August issue, all about his recent travels to Oregon. More photographs appear in the September issue by John, with unlisted authorship as before.



Tualatin station art is a tableful of shrunken heads.



Traditional conductors are not onboard. The staff's main job is ride-checks, making entries on a clipboard (at right). Ridership at the south end of the line is roughly double the north end's.



Route map and schedule for Westside Express Service (WES).



Replacement bridges carry hikers and bicyclists over the Springwater Corridor, former 1903 Portland General Electric/Portland Railway Light & Power rails converted to recreational trails. Passenger rail ended here in 1958.



Approximately 25 more miles in this direction (south) down Portland & Western tracks is Salem, Oregon's state capitol. TriMet is reviewing a prior study for DMU service.

S. CALIF. COMMUTER RAIL RIDERSHIP

Metrolink weekday, systemwide, average trips during May 2009 were 41,803, which was a decrease from the previous month of 2 percent. Amtrak riders on Metrolink during May were 244.

Metrolink weekday, systemwide, average trips during June 2009 were 41,458, which was a decrease from the previous month of 1 percent. Amtrak riders on Metrolink during June were 299.

PARKING AT NORTH MAIN CORONA

A new six-story parking structure with 1,065 additional parking spaces was to open in July, ahead of schedule. In addition to the parking upgrade, the station gets a new pedestrian bridge to both train platforms, a new ticket vending machine on the south platform, enhanced transit-bus access, and enhanced lighting and safety features. The Riverside County Transportation Commission funded the \$25 million project to upgrade the station, which opened in 2002.

RAIL 2 RAIL CHANGES COMING

Several changes to the Amtrak Rail 2 Rail Program in coming months will enable Metrolink, Caltrans, and Amtrak to continue this successful program despite budget challenges faced by Amtrak and Caltrans on the Pacific Surfliner inter-city service (subsidized by the state) and by Metrolink on its commuter-rail service. Metrolink will provide updates before they occur.

In about three months:

- Amtrak one-way and round-trip tickets will no longer be valid on Metrolink trains, with the exception of trips between Union Station and Burbank Airport, and on Metrolink/Amtrak code-share trains (Ventura County Line Trains 768 and 799).
- Amtrak 10-trip and monthly tickets will continue to be valid for travel on Metrolink, and Metrolink monthly passes will continue to be valid on Amtrak Pacific Surfliner trains within the station limits on the tickets or passes.

At some point in the future:

- The current Amtrak 10-trip ticket will be replaced with a new version that can be purchased only from Metrolink/Amtrak ticket vending machines and must be validated prior to boarding Metrolink and Amtrak trains.
- No refunds or exchanges of new Amtrak 10-trip tickets will be allowed.
- Metrolink will continue to accept current Amtrak 10-trip tickets until the new validation-ready tickets are available.

NORTH POMONA STATION EXPANSION

Improvements costing about \$10.5 million are being planned for the north Pomona Metrolink station, which is on the San Bernardino Line. The improvements involve lengthening and widening the station's platform, upgrading safety features and improving parking facilities, a Metrolink representative told Pomona City Council members recently.

Plans call for the project to be awarded to a contractor by the end of the year, said Darrell Maxey, director of engineering and construction for Metrolink. The expansion of the platform will make it possible for the station to accommodate longer trains, Maxey said. The current platform is 14 feet wide and 500 feet long, but it will be made 23 feet wide by 700 feet long.

Safety features – such as four gates, fencing and other improvements at pedestrian crossings – will be added, Maxey said. A 225-space parking lot will need 100 new spaces, he said. Metrolink will use existing property for additional parking space. Equipment and storage on the site will be moved to free up the space.

The project is expected to take about 15 months. City of Pomona administrators said the area around the station is expected to draw attention as a place for transit-oriented development. The area will have the Gold Line Foothill extension coming through in the future, said Mark Lazzaretto, the city's community development director.

Plans call for the next phase of the Gold Line, from Pasadena to Azusa, to be completed by 2013 and the Azusa-to-Montclair section to be ready by 2017.

Much of the land in the area is now used for industrial purposes, but changes could be made to accommodate housing and retail businesses. Such land-use changes would result in developments that appeal to people interested in increasing their use of public transportation, Lazzaretto said.

Councilman Steve Atchley said he is trying to create the conditions necessary to have a Foothill Transit bus stop on Garey Avenue near the north Pomona station. The bus stops on Garey Avenue now are at Foothill Blvd. and at Arrow Highway. That's terribly inconvenient for anyone trying to catch the Metrolink train, he said. Steps are being taken leading to the addition of a traffic light in that area, which will make it possible to have a bus stop there, Atchley said.

[Info. from *Pasadena Star-News*]

PASSENGER TRAIN UPDATES by CHARLES VARNES AMTRAK

Equipment Returned to Service

Using funds provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), Amtrak has begun repairing and overhauling stored, wreck-damaged cars, and returning P-40 locomotives to service. Sixty stored *Amfleet* cars will be rehabilitated at the Amtrak maintenance facility in Bear, Del., using \$58.5 million in ARRA funds. Twenty stored *Superliner* cars and one *Viewliner* car will receive similar work at the Amtrak maintenance facility in Beech Grove, Ind. Fifteen P-40 locomotives will be returned to service at a cost of \$13 million.

The first car restored to service is *Amfleet II* Coach 25103, which was unveiled on July 13, 2009 at Bear Del. It was damaged in a yard collision in Hialeah, Fla., and has been out of service since April 2005. Following repair of the wreck damage, it underwent a major overhaul to bring it up-to-date in standard design, colors, amenities, and federal safety requirements. This rehabilitation, known as a Level 3 Overhaul, included a complete update of the car's interior, exterior, mechanical systems, electrical systems, trucks, wheel assemblies, air brakes, and restrooms. It cost about \$687,000 to return it to as-new working condition.

On Aug. 6, *Superliner I Sightseer Lounge* 33016 was unveiled at Amtrak's Beech Grove, Ind., shop. It was damaged in a derailment at Home Valley, Wash., in April 2005 and has been out of service since then. Its damage was repaired and the car was modernized to bring it into compliance with all federal

rail safety regulations as well as with current Amtrak standards in design, colors and amenities. It also underwent a complete overhaul of the interior, exterior, mechanical systems, electrical systems, trucks, wheel assemblies, air brakes and restrooms. In addition, electrical outlets have been installed at every seat to charge or power DVD players, notebook computers, mobile phones, gaming systems and other electronic devices and booths for groups or families to sit together now occupy half of the upper seating level. It cost approximately \$709,000 to complete the repair and overhaul work.

Historical On-Time Performance

The July historical on-time performance percentages for selected routes were:

Route	July 2009	Last 12 Months
Sunset Limited	92.6%	79.79%
Texas Eagle	87.1%	81.6%
Southwest Chief	75.8%	86.5%
California Zephyr	54.8%	63.2%
Empire Builder	81.3%	75.6%
Coast Starlight	90.3%	87.7%
City of New Orleans	80.6%	84.4%
Pacific Surfliner	81.4%	84.6%
Capitol Corridor	90.9%	91.8%
Amtrak Cascades	70.1%	71.3%
Illinois Service	70.5%	74.1%
Missouri River Runner	90.3%	85.7%
Acela Express	86.4%	87.4%
Northeast Regional	80.9%	81.1%

BNSF Amtrak On-Time Performance Percentages

The Amtrak On-Time Performance Percentages posted on the BNSF News web page before column deadline were:

Amtrak On-Time Performance	2009-08-10	
TRAINS	MTD OTP	YTD OTP
Long-Distance Trains	90%	87%
Short-Distance Trains	98%	95%
Pacific Surfliners	100%	98%

LONG-DISTANCE TRAINS

California Zephyr

The *California Zephyr* which departed from Emeryville on Aug. 10 suffered a locomotive failure in the vicinity of Salt Lake City. At Salt Lake UP 1989, its Rio Grande painted heritage unit, was placed on the point and operated from that point to the train's destination, Chicago.

Coast Starlight

On Aug. 11, shortly after noon near Soledad, Calif., the southbound *Coast Starlight*, Tr. No. 11, struck a produce truck carrying 40,000 pounds of tomatoes. There were no injuries to the 279 passengers aboard the train, or to the truck driver and his seven-year old son.

One report of the accident stated that the driver told the California Highway Patrol that he did not see the train. Another report stated that the driver said he saw the train, but thought he could beat it across the tracks.

The *Starlight's* lead unit, Amtrak 4, was damaged and set out near the accident site. Amtrak canceled its southbound *Pacific Surfliner*, Tr. No. 798, at San Luis Obispo and operated its equipment to the accident site to move the *Starlight* back to that location. At San Luis Obispo passengers were put on buses to

complete their trips. Later in the day the Union Pacific San Luis Obispo helper locomotives (UP 8459 and 8447) were sent north to bring the damaged Amtrak 4 back.

On Aug. 12, both the San Luis Obispo *Surfliner* and the *Starlight* operated with make-up consists.

Every year during the Salinas Valley harvest season there are one or more collisions between trains and agricultural vehicles. Railfans in the area refer to them as "the annual Salinas Valley harvest time demolition derby."

Adirondack

Amtrak along with its partners, the New York State Department of Transportation and the National Park Service Trails and Rails program, commemorated the 35th anniversary of the operation of its *Adirondack* service with a special event at the Rensselaer station in Albany, NY, on August 5, 2009.

Ceremonies were held prior to the northbound train's departure from Albany. In addition, to help commemorate the milestone, specially wrapped candy bars, signifying this special date in rail history, were distributed on-board.

WESTERN CORRIDORS

Cascades

On Aug. 3, Seattle-Vancouver, B.C. *Amtrak Cascades* Tr. Nos. 510/517 had their Talgo equipment restored following its overhaul. With the return of the Talgo equipment Business class and bicycle space is available again.

On Aug. 19, a second *Cascades* train began operating between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. The second train is an extension of the currently-operating Portland-Seattle-Bellingham Tr. Nos. 516/513. The northbound train departs Seattle at 6:50 p.m. and arrives at Vancouver, B.C. at 10:45 p.m. The southbound train departs Vancouver at 6:40 a.m. and arrives at Seattle at 11:00 a.m.

The Canadian government approved the second train service on July 3 as a pilot project to start as soon as Aug. 1 and operate until after the 2010 Olympic and Paralympics Winter Games. According to this, Tr. No. 516's last day would be March 30, 2010, and Tr. No. 513's last day would be March 31, 2010, pending a new Canadian customs agreement.

During the Winter Olympic Games (Feb. 1, 2010- March 31, 2010) Tr. No. 517 will depart from Vancouver at 7:45 p.m., two hours later than usual.

NORTHEAST CORRIDOR

New Acela Express Trains

Beginning July 19, Amtrak added two *Acela Express* departures on Sundays between New York and Boston, one northbound and one southbound. *Acela Express* 2258 departs New York at 7:05 p.m. and arrives in Boston at 10:45 p.m. *Acela Express* 2297 departs Boston at 5:10 p.m. and arrives in New York at 8:45 p.m.

New Lynchburg Virginia Service

The new Lynchburg, Virginia-Washington, D.C., Service mentioned in the July Passenger Train Updates will begin on Oct. 1. It will be provided by extending existing *Northeast Regional* trains.

Southbound service from Washington, D.C. Monday through Friday will be provided by Tr. No. 171 which will depart Washington at 4:50 p.m. and arrive at Lynchburg at 8:36 p.m. Saturday service will be provided by Tr. No. 147 with departure

and arrival times of 4:00 p.m. and 7:39 p.m. respectively. Sunday service will be provided by Tr. No. 145 with departure and arrival times of 4:50 p.m. and 8:29 p.m. respectively.

Northbound service from Lynchburg Monday through Friday will be provided by Tr. No. 178 which will depart Lynchburg at 7:38 a.m. and arrive at Washington at 11:20 a.m. Saturday and Sunday service will be provided by Tr. No. 156 with departure and arrival times of 9:59 a.m. and 1:35 p.m. respectively.

Intermediate stops are scheduled at Alexandria, Manassas, Culpepper, and Charlottesville, Va.

The trains route is over the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Manassas Line. Stops are planned at VRE stations, also.

Currently Washington, D.C. the intermediate cities and Lynchburg are served by the Washington, D.C.-New Orleans *Crescent*. The southbound *Crescent* departs Washington, D.C. at 6:30 p.m. and arrives at Lynchburg at 10:06 p.m. The northbound *Crescent* departs Lynchburg at 6:07 a.m. and arrives at Washington, D.C. at 10:10 a.m.

VIA RAIL CANADA

VIA Rail Canada engineers went on strike at noon EDT on July 24. As a result, all VIA trains were canceled until a settlement was reached. No alternate transportation was provided. Trains on the Sudbury-White River and Victoria-Courtenay routes remained in service, as they are operated by third parties on VIA's behalf.

On July 26 VIA announced that it and the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference reached an agreement to go into binding arbitration. The parties also announced that VIA train services will resume that day.

When service resumed VIA offered a 60 percent off travel promotion on adult regular fares in Economy Class on all routes and in Business Class in the Windsor-Quebec City corridor.

The author and his wife were in Montreal when news of the strike broke. Our plans to take VIA Tr. No. 57 to Toronto and Tr. No. 1, the *Canadian* across Canada to Vancouver were suddenly derailed. Instead our return home was via the Amtrak *Adirondack* to Albany, the *Lake Shore Limited* to Chicago, and the *Empire Builder* to Seattle. Following a visit with relatives in the Seattle area, we returned home aboard the *Coast Starlight*. [Info. from Ken Ruben, Ed Von Nordeck, Carol Voss]

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RAILROADS FREIGHT TRAFFIC REPORT

On Aug. 13, 2009 the Association of American Railroads reported that rail traffic continues to reflect the down economy. For the week ended Aug. 8, 2009, U.S. railroads reported originating 274,633 cars, down 16 percent compared with the same week in 2008. Regionally, carloadings were down 14.1 percent in the West and 18.8 percent in the East.

Intermodal volume of 195,014 trailers or containers on U.S. railroads was down 16.6 percent from the same week last year. Container volume fell 10.8 percent and trailer volume dropped 38.1 percent. Total volume on U.S. railroads for the week ending August 8 was estimated at 29.3 billion ton-miles, off 14.8 percent from the same week last year.

All 19 carload freight commodity groups were down from last year, with declines ranging from 6.1 percent for chemicals to 48.3 percent for metals and metal products.

For the first 31 weeks of 2009, U.S. railroads reported cumulative volume of 8,159,672 carloads, down 18.9 percent from 2008; 5,764,816 trailers or containers, down 17.1 percent, and total volume of an estimated 868.3 billion ton-miles, down 18 percent.

Canadian railroads reported volume of 55,404 cars for the week, down 27.2 percent from last year, and 38,135 trailers or containers, down 20.1 percent. For the first 31 weeks of 2009, Canadian railroads reported cumulative volume of 1,846,410 carloads, down 23.9 percent from last year, and 1,243,289 trailers or containers, down 16.3 percent.

Mexican railroads reported originated volume of 11,533 cars, down 12.7 percent from the same week last year, and 6,005 trailers or containers, off 10.5 percent. Cumulative volume on Mexican railroads for the first 31 weeks of 2009 was reported as 351,153 carloads, down 15.3 percent from last year; and 150,740 trailers or containers, down 21.4 percent.

Combined North American rail volume for the first 31 weeks of 2009 on 14 reporting U.S., Canadian and Mexican railroads totaled 10,357,235 carloads, down 19.8 percent from last year, and 7,158,845 trailers and containers, down 17.1 percent from last year.

For the first 31 weeks of 2009, the AAR reported the following.

2009 TRAFFIC ORIGINATED			
Cumulative, 31 Weeks Ending August 8, 2009			
	2009	2008	Change
Major United States Railroads			
Carloads originated	8,159,672	10,066,771	-18.9 %
Intermodal units originated			
Trailers	982,796	1,509,880	-34.9 %
Containers	4,782,020	5,447,078	-12.2
Total	5,764,816	6,956,958	-17.1 %
Estimated Ton-Miles (Billions)	868.3	1,059.1	-18.0 %
Major Canadian Railroads			
Carloads originated	1,846,410	2,425,531	-23.9 %
Intermodal units originated			
Trailers	48,898	61,450	-20.4 %
Containers	1,194,391	1,424,507	-16.2
Total	1,243,289	1,485,957	-16.3 %
Major Mexican Railroads			
Carloads originated	351,153	414,757	-15.3 %
Intermodal units originated			
Trailers	613	1,884	-67.5 %
Containers	150,127	189,930	-21.0
Total	150,740	191,814	-21.4 %
Major North American Railroads			
Carloads orientated	10,357,235	12,907,059	-19.8 %
Intermodal units originated			
Trailers	1,032,307	1,573,214	-34.4 %
Containers	6,126,538	7,061,515	-13.2
Total	7,158,845	8,634,729	-17.1 %