

# WHEEL CLICKS

Pacific Railroad Society Inc.

FEBRUARY 2012

## HOLIDAY DAYLIGHT EXCURSION BIDS GOODBYE TO TRAINS 799 AND 792

by MARTI ANN DRAPER

On December 18, 2011, 58 PRS members and guests enjoyed a beautiful trip along the coast to San Luis Obispo on PRS Excursion 543. Participants rode in our own historic Pullman car, the *National Forum*, and Bill and Debbie Hatrick's restored ex-SP barbershop lounge, the *Overland Trail*. Both cars were part of the consist of Amtrak trains 799 and 798 during their last month of operation.

As the train left Los Angeles, Bill and his staff treated us to an all-you-could-eat buffet including Belgian waffles and herbed chicken sausages. We picked up more excursion riders at Glendale, Van Nuys and Simi Valley. The weather was crisp and clear. Bill's car was resplendent in red and green decorations, which did not detract a bit from the lovely early 1950's decor of his restored car.

At the time of the excursion, train 799 consisted of a P42 locomotive; the two private cars; three Amfleet coaches; a Horizon car specially outfitted with one end for business class (featuring leather seats) and the other end for cafe car seating; and a cab car formerly used on the Cascade service in Washington State. The cab car used to be an F40 locomotive but had the prime mover removed and the body is now equipped with doors to use as a baggage car. For this reason, it is commonly referred to by crews and railfans as a "Cabbage Car."

Although we were provided with all the food, snacks, and drinks we wanted from Bill's signature *Overland Trail* service, excursion passengers could walk through the Amtrak cars and could patronize the cafe car if they so desired.

We arrived in San Luis Obispo in plenty of time for a quick walk-around of the area surrounding the former SP passenger station. There are a number of eateries in the vicinity and most of our guests enjoyed sampling them. At the 2:00 p.m. departure time, everyone was back onto the same equipment, which departed town as Train 792.

As promised by the name of our trip, we were able to see most of the shoreline during daylight. Our sit-down dinner consisted of Caesar salad, rolls, and tortellini Alfredo, with an elaborate raspberry-crowned brownie concoction for desert.

Conductor Bill acted as Master of Ceremonies in the *Overland Trail*, assisted in the kitchen and behind the bar by Brendie Schaefer and Amanda Hatrick. Winston Lynn proved adept at serving and waffle making, among other talents; Matt Wiles ably balanced serving and clean-up duties; Rob Markowitz, Annette Markowitz, and Barry Draper filled in as necessary to serve food and direct passengers; Josh Thurmon drew trash duty; Larry Jennings was the Pullman porter aboard the *National Forum*; and Andrew Novak supervised the staff and

reservations.

Altogether, it was a pleasant way to spend holiday time away from the stresses of the season and to bid farewell to the underutilized 799 and 792. Starting on January 9, 2012, those numbers were abandoned and the low-level Amfleet/Horizon consist was relegated to rotation in the *Surfliner* trains. Now, the service is provided by train 1761 northbound and by train 1790, which goes all the way to San Diego, southbound. There is a chance of still getting the low-level trainset, but just as often the trains will be a regular *Surfliner* set. This appears to be the end, for now, of an attempt to make a *Surfliner* which would someday extend to the bay area and become a modern *Coast Daylight*.

Any proceeds from the trip left over after costs are paid will be applied towards the maintenance and upkeep of the *National Forum*.

We thank all who participated, with special thanks to Bill and Debbie Hatrick for generously offering to donate the opportunity to experience their *Overland Trail*.

## AAR JANUARY STORED FREIGHT CARS REPORT

by CHARLES VARNES

The Association of American Railroads reported that as of January 1, 2011, 273,390 freight cars were in storage, an increase of 9,478 from December 1, 2011, and equal to 18.0 percent of the North American fleet, excluding cars without a load since before 2005.

For 2011 the number of freight cars stored (and the percentage of the fleet) on the first day of the month was: January, 316,271 (20.8); February, 318,773 (20.9); March, 306,316 (20.2); April, 283,649 (18.7); May, 276,228 (18.2); June, 279,083 (18.4); July, 276,236 (18.2); August, 276,943 (18.2); September, 271,404 (17.8); October, 260,317 (17.1); November, 261,695 (17.2); December 263,912 (17.3).

In July 2009, 1.603 million cars were in the fleet, including cars without a load since before 2005. From July 2009 through December 2011, 62,107 new cars were installed, while 130,059 cars were scrapped or otherwise removed, yielding a net reduction of 67,952 cars in the North American fleet.

527,060 cars were in storage on July 1, 2009 (including cars that last moved loaded prior to 2005). By January 1, 2012, that was down to 285,388, for a reduction of 241,672. Subtracting the 130,059 cars scrapped or otherwise removed yields a net of 111,613 cars that have been returned to service.

Of the 502,853 cars that were in storage on July 1, 2009 (excluding those that last moved loaded prior to 2005), only 56,190 remained in storage continuously through January 1, 2012. Nearly 89 percent of the cars that were in storage at the peak have either carried a load since then (and perhaps subsequently returned to storage), or been scrapped.

[Info. from AAR Rail Time Indicators]



## WHEEL CLICKS

FEBRUARY 2012 VOLUME 75, NO. 11

EDITOR ..... DICK FINLEY  
 TECHNICAL EDITOR ..... CHARLES VARNES  
 MAILER ..... JOHN STALLKAMP

Opinions expressed in unsigned articles are those of the editorial board, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Society, its officers or directors. Opinions in signed articles are those of the author only. All rights reserved. ISSN: 0043-4744. ©2012 BY PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY, INC.

Published monthly by PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY, INC. The Society is a California chartered, nonprofit organization of those who share an interest in railroad operations, travel and history. Address and telephone are the same as for Pacific Railroad Museum.

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

PACIFIC RAILROAD MUSEUM is operated by Pacific Railroad Society at 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas, CA 91773. Telephone: (909) 394-0616. Museum e-mail: PRSTrainman@aol.com Open Saturdays: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Mondays: 12-5 p.m.; Wednesdays: 1-5 p.m.

MUSEUM CURATOR ..... DAVID HOUSH

EXCURSION DIRECTOR ..... MARTI ANN DRAPER

WEBMASTER ..... RUSSELL HOMAN

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY, INC.

PRESIDENT ..... MARTI ANN DRAPER  
 VICE-PRESIDENT ..... LINDSAY SMITH  
 SECRETARY ..... NEIL BJORNSEN  
 TREASURER ..... NICK TEEL  
 DIRECTOR (2011-2014) ..... LARRY AANDAHL  
 DIRECTOR (2011-2014) ..... DICK FINLEY  
 DIRECTOR (2009-2012) ..... DAVID HOUSH  
 DIRECTOR (2009-2012) ..... KEN RUBEN  
 DIRECTOR (2011-2013) ..... ROBERT WASHBURN

### PRS NEWS — ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

Feb. 1, 8, 15 PRM open Wednesdays, 12:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
 22, 29 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas.  
 Feb. 3 PRS Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Valencia Room,  
 Friday Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.  
 Feb. 4, 11, PRM open Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
 18, 25 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas.  
 Feb. 4, 11, Rolling Stock repair day, open Saturdays, 8:30 a.m.  
 18, 25 to ?, Saunders Yard, Noakes St. & Herbert Ave.,  
 City of Commerce.  
 Feb. 6, 13 PRM open Mondays, 12:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
 20, 27 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas.  
 Feb. 10 PRS Membership Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Alhambra  
 Friday Room, Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave.,  
 Alhambra.  
 Feb. 22 *Wheel Clicks* Mailing Party, Wednesday, 10:00  
 a.m., 1240 Dominion Ave., Pasadena, CA

### PROGRAMS

by RUSS DAVIES

February 10: Our own Ed Saalig, author of the PRS-published book, *The Amazing Journey of Santa Fe's RDC Cars*, will present a double feature, two RDC-related DVDs! The first will be "AT&SF's Two RDC" and the other will be a recreation of a Budd Company Promotional film about their RDCs. Be there, and bring digital briefs!

### ANGELS FLIGHT RAILWAY

Passengers on Angels Flight Railway were able to celebrate 110 years and ride the funicular all day on December 31, 2011, for the railway's original price in 1901 of one cent per one-way trip. For souvenir collectors or people who just want to support the nonprofit Railway, limited edition, one-way, 110th Anniversary commemorative tickets are available for one dollar. The only Angels Flight fares available on December 31 were those two – a cash ride for a penny or a commemorative ticket for one dollar.

The commemorative tickets went on sale at the Station House on December 16. There is no limit to the number of commemorative tickets a purchaser may buy, but there is a limit to the number available – only 1000. Holders of the commemorative tickets will be entered automatically in a special Angels Flight Railway Anniversary drawing. The winner will be entitled to a behind the scenes tour with an Angels Flight Railway director for up to four people, together with special souvenirs of the visit. Four additional lucky winners will receive a copy of the out-of-print Commemorative Book prepared for Angels Flight in 1996.

The drawing will take place after all 1000 tickets are sold (They were not all sold as of January 5, 2012). The winner need not be present to win. The winning ticket numbers will be posted at the Station House and also will be announced on [twitter.com/angelsflight](http://twitter.com/angelsflight). Winners need to show their winning, numbered commemorative ticket stubs to the Operator in the Station House to claim their prizes.

To purchase a commemorative ticket, send one dollar to Angels Flight Railway; P.O. Box 712345; Los Angeles, CA 90071. Angels Flight Railway is located on South Hill Street between 3rd and 4th streets.

Beginning January 10, 2012, Angels Flight Railway was to close for biennial maintenance, continuing for several weeks.

The Railway reopened for public service in March 2010. Angels Flight's two cars generally have operated for 16 hours, seven days a week, ever since. Most maintenance is performed in the evenings, after the usual 10 p.m. closing time. January is a period of lower passenger patronage, so the biennial maintenance will take place during the remainder of the month.

The present Angels Flight Railway steel track was installed in late 1995, and this maintenance period will provide time for rehabilitation or replacement of any worn rails or related track parts. In June 2012 all eight steel wheels that were installed on the two cars in 1995 were replaced with all-new steel wheels. The wheels and track are among the items monitored for wear regularly by railway staff, with oversight by the California Public Utilities Commission inspectors.

Other items expected to be addressed during the biennial maintenance include carpentry and painting on the approximately 100-year-old cars, *Olivet* and *Sinai*.

Angels Flight opened by Colonel J. W. Eddy on December 31, 1901. A ride cost only a penny then and the fare has been 25 cents per ride since the Railway's reopening in 1996. "After completion of the biennial maintenance, we may reopen with a higher fare – 50 cents," says Railway president John H. Welborne. "If we do increase the basic fare, we also intend to have a special 25-cent discount fare available for riders who are Metro pass holders.

Details about any new fare structure, as well as information about reopening dates, will be available at [www.twitter.com/angelsflight](http://www.twitter.com/angelsflight) and at [www.angelsflight.org](http://www.angelsflight.org).

## MILEPOSTS

by Marti Ann Draper

### BEHIND THE SCENES

Barbara Sibert once suggested that I should write an article for *Wheel Clicks* about the fantastic trials, tribulations, and adventures we went through putting on one of her excursions. She thought you would all enjoy being part of the story. I declined. Although we are volunteers working without pay, we try to provide a professional job. Every time we have a successful trip or event, it reflects well on our organization and contributes to what the economists call "goodwill" – the intangible quality of a business or organization that distinguishes it in the market from others. It doesn't make sense to tell the whole world about how we do business, or what challenges we face. That is not a sensible business plan. For that reason, I didn't want to tell any "behind the scenes" stories.

In contrast, Will Walters insisted to me that the participants on our excursions take it for granted that they will have a good experience. We are, in their minds, the same as any other commercial tour operator or vendor offering our services for hire. They expect professional standards of service. Wouldn't we have more success at recruiting volunteers if people understood that we are not the same as a commercial venture and that their efforts are needed to keep our cars and our excursions running?

In deference to that point of view, I hereby offer a brief synopsis of some of the tribulations involved in putting on a relatively simple excursion. This is the "behind the scenes" story of Excursion 543, our "Holiday Daylight" trip of 2011.

In April of 2011, the *National Forum* remained in Los Angeles after our special train, the *Diamond Jubilee* to Bakersfield. It made a trip to San Bernardino and back behind 3751. At that time, a bunch of taggers broke into our facility at Saunders Yard and defaced the sides of the combine, the DC 191, lounge 6101 (*Cajon Pass*), and other equipment. Because of the situation at Saunders Yard, I determined to wait to return the *National Forum* there. Amtrak therefore placed the *Forum* on the Garden Tracks at Union Station pending our next move.

Bill Hatrick, a PRS supporter and private car operator, also had his car, the *Overland Trail*, in the Garden last year. Bill had reserved space on Amtrak to run his car, and decided to offer PRS the chance to run an excursion using his car at no cost on a Saturday when he was not going to do his usual trip. We accepted this generous offer in October and PRS volunteers, including Andrew Novak, sprang into action, immediately doing

the calculations to price the trip, contracting for food services, coordinating the volunteers who would be working onboard the trip, and making a flyer to be distributed with the November *Wheel Clicks*. The flyers were written, printed, and enclosed by PRS volunteers. Russell Homan, our webmaster, posted the information on our website. Orders immediately began to pour in. These included mail, e-mail orders, and Paypal orders forwarded by Russell. Each of these orders was individually processed by me and acknowledged by Andy and myself. We had an excellent response and decided to ask Bill if we could possibly run the trip twice, both on Saturday and Sunday.

Things seemed to be going smoothly, but ten days before the trip, a snag developed. Amtrak had indeed cleared space for Bill's car on Saturday, but it had also approved the running of another private car on that same day. Because the consist of train 799 was limited, our excursion, as planned and sold, was impossible.

We immediately asked Bill to get approval from Amtrak to operate our excursion on Sunday. Until we heard back from Amtrak, we could not confirm any of our ticket orders! Two days later, he got the approval and I began to systematically contact each of the people who had ordered tickets. Not all of them had sent us phone numbers, some didn't answer the phone, some had sent e-mail addresses but some e-mails didn't go through. We had to send letters to people who we couldn't contact any other way, with less than a week to go.

Fortunately, most of the people who could go on Saturday could move to Sunday, but several could not. Those on the waiting list had to be contacted one by one until the excursion was again filled.

Andy and I met at the Museum and went out to purchase the materials for the customized name badges/tickets, which we produced that night using the printers at the Museum. We also wrote and assembled a "Welcome Aboard" packet, including a previous PRS membership information brochure which we had to hand-edit to put in the newly-revised dues amount.

Meanwhile, Will and Al Novak tended to the *National Forum* in the Garden track; including washing the car from the roof down, checking and refilling the distilled water in the batteries, vacuuming, dusting, and meticulously scrubbing each of the bathroom fixtures.

The evening before the trip, our staff met on Bill's car and Andy gave them their assignments. Will and I stayed with Bill's staff on the cars as the trainset from train 798 was coupled on and we were taken to the Amtrak Eighth Street Service and Inspection tracks. Again, it seemed as if things were going well. Before long, however, as Amtrak was conducting routine inspections and tests, we heard a loud "clank." The car inspector had found that one of the bolts which secures our center plate to the car bolster had broken. This is a problem which had to be fixed or the car would not be able to run. Will immediately went out and conferred with the Arman, the Supervisor of Operations, and the mechanics. Arman offered to have the car switched out and taken to the wheel pit, where the bolt could be replaced. Once this was decided, the Amtrak switch crew switched the *National Forum* out of the consist and took it to the south end of the yard. Still, nothing was easy, as the new bolt would not slide

in. The third shift crew had to enlarge the hole in thick steel to make the bolt work properly. At this time, I nervously started planning a call to Philadelphia to reserve dedicated space on the *Surfliner* and cordon off the last car in case the *Forum* had to be left behind. The repair was accomplished before 3:00 a.m. Once again, it seemed as if we would be able to go on our trip as planned. Two more sweaty hours elapsed, however. Bill Hatrick, who had finished preparing his car and fallen asleep, awoke at 5:00 a.m. to find that the *Forum* was not in the train! About then, the switcher came back, tugged us back up to the north yard, the train was put together and inspected, and we were finally set to go. During this time, Andy and the onboard PRS crew assembled in the station, and got everyone checked in.

As I hope you have already read in the accompanying article, the trip was a success.

After the trip, Will and Al cleaned up the *Forum*, including having to, unplug a sewer pipe, wiping off the bathroom walls, cleaning the floors and upholstery. I washed, bleached, dried, ironed and folded the linens. Will spent several hours repairing a slow flush which had developed in the men's room. I had to write to everyone who had paid for their tickets and refunded their money, meaning that I had to reverse their Paypal transactions, refund their credit card payments, and write checks to those who had sent us checks which we had deposited. The orders which could not be honored also had to be refunded and acknowledged.

Nick Teel checked and paid the bills owed to Bill and Amtrak.

After all that, I wrote the stories so that you would know what happened.

## ELECTION TIME

I have to make a big decision soon. It's time to decide whether or not I should run for president of this organization for the upcoming year.

I work six days a week for Amtrak, and help to contribute to the care and feeding of my beloved grandsons during my "time off." This doesn't leave much time for PRS. My passion for doing this has not diminished, only my time and ability.

If you would like to run for president, or indeed for any other office, tell a member of the nominating committee or show up at the February meeting so you can put your name up to run.

Thanks as always for your attention and for your support during the proceeding year.

## THIRD QUARTER 2011 PUBLIC TRANSIT RIDERSHIP UP

All three quarters in 2011 are up – first time since fall 2008. Nationally, 2.6 billion trips were taken on public transportation in the third quarter of 2011, according to a report released today by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). This is a 2.0 percent increase over the same quarter last year, representing an increase of nearly 52 million trips. Ridership in all public transportation modes increased, led by light rail which increased by 5.8 percent.

This is also the first time in three years that ridership has increased for all three quarters. The ridership increase is

attributed to a number of factors including high gas prices, improved real time passenger information, and a recovering economy.

"This increase in ridership shows that Americans want more transportation choices and will use public transportation if it is available in their community," said APTA President and CEO Michael P. Melaniphy. "Also, transit agency investments are paying off, resulting in riders experiencing a higher level of quality service."

Noting the important link between public transportation and the economy, Melaniphy said, "Nearly 60 percent of public transportation trips are taken for work commutes. In addition, whenever gas prices are high, people decide to save money by taking public transportation instead of driving."

### 2011 Third Quarter Ridership Breakdown

Nationally, heavy rail ridership increased by 2.0 percent. Thirteen out of fifteen heavy rail systems (subways and elevated trains) experienced ridership increases in the third quarter of 2011 over the same period in 2010. Cities with heavy rail systems showing the highest percentage of increases were located in the following cities: Cleveland, OH (9.7%); Philadelphia, PA (8.7%); Boston, MA (7.0%); and San Francisco, CA (6.1%).

Twenty-two out of twenty-seven light rail systems reported an increase in ridership for the third quarter of 2011. Overall, light rail increased by 5.8 percent in the third quarter of 2011. Light rail systems in six cities saw double digit increases in the third quarter: Dallas, TX (36.4%); Seattle, WA – King County Department of Transportation (35.8%); Salt Lake City, UT (21.0%); Buffalo, NY (19.5%); Oceanside, CA (16.0%); and Philadelphia, PA (10.0%). Other light rail systems showing significant percentage of increases were located in the following cities: Seattle, WA – Sound Transit (8.3%); Phoenix, AZ (7.8%); and Los Angeles, CA (7.6%).

Twenty-two out of twenty-seven commuter rail systems reported ridership increases and overall commuter rail increased by 2.7 percent. Austin, TX (Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority) saw triple digit increases in the third quarter due to added mid-day service, more reverse commute trips and offering more peak trips at all nine stations. In the third quarter of 2011, the following six cities saw double digit increases: Nashville, TN (30.2%); Oceanside, CA (22.7%); Portland, OR (16.2%); Seattle, WA (11.8%); San Carlos, CA (10.7%); and Salt Lake City, UT (10.1%).

Bus ridership increased nationally by 1.4 percent. The following two cities had double digit increases in the third quarter: Columbus, OH (10.8%); and St. Louis, MO (10.3%). Other ridership increases for large bus agencies were: Long Beach, CA (9.3%); San Antonio, TX (7.7%); Miami, FL (7.3%); Orlando, FL (6.8%); San Diego, CA (6.7%); Washington, DC (5.7%); Arlington Heights, IL (5.4%); Minneapolis, MN (5.4%); and Cleveland, OH (5.2%).

Demand response (paratransit) increased in the third quarter of 2011 by 2.6 percent. Trolleybus ridership increased by 3.2 percent.

[Info. from American Public Transportation Association via Charles Varnes]

**PASSENGER TRAIN UPDATES** by CHARLES VARNES

**RENO SNOW TRAIN AND FUN TRAINS TO END**

After 49 a successful seasons the *Reno Fun* and *Snow Trains* will make their last runs in winter 2012.

The demise of the trains is due to Amtrak’s decision to make fewer cars available for West Coast special trains, claiming that the cars used in charter service are needed for its regular intercity passenger rail services. Amtrak also increased the rate for moving cars out from Chicago, and doubled its insurance requirement.

“It was very apparent to me that Amtrak was doing everything they could to stop us from operating,” a Key Holidays spokesperson said.

The trains originate at Emeryville and travel over Donner Pass to Reno in daylight giving guests excellent views of the historic rail line.

During its last season the *Reno Snow Train* will operate on Tuesdays, Feb. 14, 21, 28, and March 6, with its return to Emeryville on the following Thursday.

The *Reno Fun Train* will operate on Fridays, Feb. 10 and 24, and March 2 and 9, with its return to Emeryville on the following Sundays.

The midweek *Snow Train* will be a smoke free train. A smoking car will be available on the weekend *Fun Train*.

The author and his wife rode the 45th Reno Snow Train. A heavy snow storm occurred on Donner Pass before the Snow Train’s run. The ride through Donner Pass created the illusion of being inside of a Richard Steinheimer snowy winter, photograph taken in the pass.

**AMTRAK GUEST REWARDS TRAVEL**

Effective April 1, 2012, some Amtrak travel redemption items will require additional points. Points required for free Amtrak travel have not increased since January 2006 and it is necessary to make some adjustments in order to stay in line with today’s costs. Amtrak redemption reservations that are made prior to April 1, 2012 for travel beginning on or after April 1, 2012 will not incur additional point costs unless the member requests a modification to the itinerary.

REDEMPTION ITEM	CURRENT POINTS / NEW POINTS
Acela Express First Class	10,500/12,000
Business Class - Northeast Zone	6,500/7,500
Coach Class - Northeast Zone	3,000/4,000
Business Class - Special Route	1,500/2,000
Coach Class - Special Route	1,000/1,500
Bedroom - One Zone	20,000/25,000
Bedroom - Two Zones	30,000/40,000
Bedroom - Three Zones	50,000/60,000
Rule Buster* - First Class - Acela Express	18,500/19,000
Rule Buster* - Business Class - Northeast Zone	1,500/13,000
Rule Buster* - Coach Class - Northeast Zone	5,500/7,000

\*Rule Busters allow Select Plus members to redeem for travel during blackout dates; Acela blackout times still apply.

**AMTRAK 2012 AGENDA**

Among the key actions planned in the New Year are building the first units of 70 new electric locomotives and 130 new single-level long-distance cars, the national roll-out of eTicketing to all trains, and the further integration and advancement of Northeast Corridor (NEC) planning efforts to improve the existing Corridor and develop a high-capacity, next-generation high-speed rail (NextGen HSR) system.

Other significant projects in 2012 include: upgrading NEC tracks, bridges and other infrastructure; pursuing efforts to expand *Acela Express* capacity; advancing initial planning work for the Gateway Program to provide additional capacity into Manhattan for intercity, commuter and NextGen HSR services; improving station accessibility under requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act; and continuing the development of a next-generation reservation system.

Details of Amtrak’s major projects in 2012 follow.

**NEXT-GENERATION HIGH-SPEED RAIL (NextGen HSR) AND NORTHEAST CORRIDOR (NEC) DEVELOPMENT**  
Updated NEC Vision Plan

Amtrak’s vision for developing a new high-capacity, 220 mph NextGen HSR system is being fully integrated within the NEC infrastructure and investment development program to bring together all funding, policy and planning decisions to ensure HSR projects are a critical element of NEC improvement efforts. Amtrak intends to release an update of the original Vision report in spring 2012 that will present further refinements to Amtrak’s phased, stair-step implementation of world-class HSR encompassing both upgrades to existing NEC infrastructure to enhance capacity at key chokepoints, improve reliability and advance a state of good repair for existing and new high-speed, intercity, commuter and freight rail services and the development of the NextGen HSR system.

**NEC HSR Business and Financial Plan**

By mid-2012, Amtrak will complete a business and financial plan for its NEC HSR Vision that will identify potential public and private funding sources as well as strategies for financing, including maximizing private investment opportunities. In addition, it will address a variety of project financing issues such as risk, credit, debt and investment phasing.

**8th World Congress on HSR**

Amtrak is a partner and co-sponsor of the 8th World Congress on High-Speed Rail that will be held in Philadelphia in July 2012. The event is expected to attract some 2,000 attendees worldwide to exchange views on the development and achievements of high-speed rail. It is being organized by the International Union of Railways, the American Public Transportation Association and the American Association of Railroads.

**FLEET REPLACEMENT AND EXPANSION**

**70 New Electric Locomotives for the Northeast**

The first units of a \$466 million order for 70 new electric locomotives will be built during 2012. They will operate at speeds up to 125 mph on the NEC (Washington – Boston) and up to 110 mph on the Keystone Corridor (Philadelphia – Harrisburg) replacing locomotives in service between 20 and 30 years with average mileage of 3.5 million miles traveled. The first units are expected to be in service in 2013.



### 130 New Single-Level Long-Distance Cars

The first units of a \$298.1 million order for 130 new single-level long-distance cars will be built during 2012, and includes sleepers, diners, baggage cars and baggage/dormitory cars. They will replace and supplement the existing fleet, improve financial and on-time performance, and allow Amtrak to retire the oldest cars still in service that date back to the 1940s. The first units are expected to be in service in 2013.

#### Updated Fleet Strategy Plan

Amtrak intends to release an updated fleet strategy plan in the spring of 2012 with the latest analysis on replacing and expanding its existing conventional and high-speed rail fleet. It also will include discussion on how Amtrak plans to manage capacity to meet the forecasted growth in ridership across its national network.

### NATIONAL NETWORK IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS National Roll-Out of eTicketing

Amtrak intends to roll-out eTicketing to all its trains nationwide by late summer 2012. Once fully deployed, passengers will receive their eTickets electronically which can either be printed at a location of their choice or opened on a Smartphone with the barcode displayed for the train conductor to scan. A successful pilot test of the technology was conducted in late 2011 on the Downeaster (Boston – Portland) and next will be tested in early 2012 on the Capitol Corridor (San Jose – Sacramento) and the City of New Orleans (Chicago – New Orleans).

#### ADA Station And Facility Accessibility Improvements

During 2012, Amtrak intends to spend \$50 million on construction at 10 stations, designing level-boarding platforms at 30 stations and interior designs at 57 stations, and beginning detailed assessments at an additional 53 stations to meet requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

#### Long-distance Route Performance Improvement Plans

Amtrak will undertake an in-depth evaluation in 2012 of the top performing long-distance routes to identify and implement changes where possible to improve key measures such as customer service, ridership and financial and on-time performance. The five routes being analyzed are *Auto Train* (Lorton, Va. – Sanford, Fla.), *Empire Builder* (Chicago – Seattle /Portland), *Southwest Chief* (Chicago – Los Angeles), *City of New Orleans* (Chicago – New Orleans) and *Coast Starlight* (Seattle – Los Angeles). A similar analysis was performed on the other 10 long-distance routes during 2010 and 2011.

#### Next-generation Reservation System

During 2012, Amtrak will continue a multi-year program to modernize its 30-year-old reservation system which is at the heart of passenger and train operations. The updated technology will make it easier for Amtrak to adapt to the rapidly changing needs of customers, enhance the customer experience by supporting new sales and reservation features such as enhanced shopping and booking functionality, and improve system performance and reliability while better integrating with other Amtrak business systems. The project is expected to be completed in 2014.

#### New Technology for Onboard Food Sales

In late spring 2012, Amtrak will begin a national roll-out of

its new point-of-sale (POS) equipment on café cars on all routes, replacing the current cash register and credit card processing machines with technology that streamlines many sales functions in the food service cars. Passengers will experience improved customer service as café attendants will spend less time doing paperwork, faster transaction speeds, and clearer sales receipts, and Amtrak can quickly discern what items are popular and adjust menus accordingly. POS has been deployed on *Pacific Surfliner* (San Juan Obispo – Los Angeles – San Diego), *Capitol Corridor* (San Jose – Sacramento) and *San Joaquin* (Oakland – Bakersfield) trains since Oct. 2010 and on *Acela Express* since Nov. 2011. Amtrak will complete outfitting all café and dining cars with POS by late 2012.

#### Seattle Maintenance Facility

Amtrak intends to complete in 2012 a \$42 million project to upgrade its Seattle King Street Coach Yard Maintenance Facility. It involves concurrent work on the first two phases of a four phase project designed to improve the capacity, efficiency and working conditions of the shops that perform inspections, testing and maintenance of locomotives and passenger rail equipment. Phase I consists of the construction of an enclosed structure over two tracks and large enough to allow an entire *Amtrak Cascades* train to be serviced indoors. Phase II consists of a new three-story structure that will include a materials warehouse for the storage of parts, administrative offices and other facilities for personnel who presently work out of mobile trailers.

### MAJOR NEC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS Advancing Gateway Program

Amtrak intends to spend \$15 million in 2012 for planning and other pre-construction activities on its Gateway Program to provide additional capacity into Manhattan for Amtrak intercity and New Jersey Transit commuter services, including the proposed NextGen HSR system. The overall scope includes building two additional tunnels under the Hudson River to access expanded terminal facilities serving New York Penn Station and the future Moynihan Station on the site of the former Farley Post Office. It also will replace and expand the century old Portal Bridge over the Hackensack River and increase from two to four the number of tracks between Newark and New York. Specifically, the funding in 2012 will be used for planning, design and preliminary environmental review for project elements as well as to begin utility relocation for the Portal Bridge project which is currently in the final design stage.

#### 160 MPH HSR Upgrades in New Jersey

In 2012, Amtrak will advance design, engineering and other pre-construction activities for a \$450 million project funded by the federal high-speed rail program that will boost top train speeds from 135 mph to 160 mph along a 24-mile section of the NEC between Trenton and New Brunswick, New Jersey. The project supports the goals of the Gateway Program and includes upgrading track, electrical power (frequency converter capacity and additional substations), signal systems and overhead catenary wires to permit the faster speeds and also reconfigures track switches at the western entrance to New York Penn Station to mitigate congestion issues. Major construction work will

begin in 2013 with project completion expected in 2017.

Niantic River Bridge Replacement

In 2012, Amtrak is continuing construction on this \$125 million multi-year project to replace the movable Niantic River Bridge originally built in 1907 and located between East Lyme and Waterford, Conn. Partially funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the new bridge will enable Amtrak to increase speeds and minimize traffic and delays. The project involves constructing a new two-track, electrified railroad bascule bridge just south of its present position, new track alignments on both approaches to the bridge and expansion of the navigation channel beneath the bridge and an increase in the vertical under-clearance above the water for the benefit of river traffic. Also, sections of the Niantic Bay Overlook boardwalk will be reconstructed and the beach replenished. The project is expected to be completed in May 2013.

New York East Tunnel Track Work

Amtrak will continue work on a \$72 million multi-year project in 2012 to replace track in all four of its East River tunnels that access New York Penn Station. The track structure for the full length of each tunnel will be replaced, including new ties, rail, and ballast plus other drainage improvements. The project will improve the reliability of both Amtrak intercity and Long Island Railroad commuter rail services and is expected to be completed in mid-2015.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Positive Train Control (PTC)

By the end of 2012 – three years ahead of a Congressional deadline for the rail industry – Amtrak intends to complete a \$12.8 million project to install PTC technology capable of controlling train movements to prevent collisions on sections of Amtrak-owned tracks along the NEC not already equipped with the sophisticated safety technology. Federal funds are covering 80 percent, or nearly \$10.3 million of the cost.

Enhancing Security

In 2012, the Amtrak Police Department will expand its comprehensive rail security efforts to provide increased right of way protection to detect and deter terrorists seeking to derail passenger trains, particularly those operating on the Amtrak-owned NEC. In addition, efforts will be made to re-engage passengers and the public as part of its Partners for Amtrak Safety and Security program and “If you See Something, Say Something... Hopefully, its Nothing” public awareness campaign to encourage individuals to report behaviors or activities that are unusual or out of the ordinary such as trespassers and suspicious packages by calling Amtrak Police at 1- 800- 331-0008.

AMTRAK

Historical On-Time Performance

The December 2011 historical on-time performance percentages for selected routes were:

Route	December 2012	November 2011	Last 12 months
Sunset Limited	73.1%	73.1%	73.8%
Texas Eagle	80.6%	72.6%	54.8%
Heartland Flyer	87.1%	*	70.0%
Southwest Chief	59.7%	*	68.1%

California Zephyr	40.3%	*	34.5%
Empire Builder	77.4%	*	48.1%
Coast Starlight	80.6%	*	79.5%
Pacific Surfliner	79.0%	74.2%	77.2%
San Joaquin	90.6%	*	88.4%
Capitol Corridor	94.7%	94.0%	94.3%
Amtrak Cascades	81.8%	*	71.4%
Illinois Service	79.4%	*	70.7%
Michigan Services	42.7%	*	29.4%
Hiawatha	91.9%	*	90.0%
Missouri River Runner	94.4%	*	85.7%
Acela Express	92.3%	90.5%	88.8%
Northeast Regional	89.7%	84.2%	81.9%

\* On-time percentages not available

LONG-DISTANCE TRAINS

Coast Starlight

Effective Jan. 3, 2012, the northbound *Coast Starlight* began departing from Los Angeles at 12:15 p.m., two hours later. The train’s arrival at Seattle is now scheduled for 10:45 p.m.

WESTERN CORRIDORS

Pacific Surfliner

A new timetable for the *Pacific Surfliner* corridor took effect on Jan. 9, 2012. It will remain in effect until Jan. 29. A new timetable will become effective on Jan. 30.

[Info. from Ken Ruben, Ed Von Nordeck]

CALTRAIN NEWS

by MIKE GONDON

December 3, 2011 turned out to be one of the deadliest days on Bay Area tracks in recent memory. The first fatality occurred in Fremont and actually involved a *Capital Corridor* train bound from Sacramento to San Jose. Less than an hour later, northbound Caltrain *Baby Bullet* Train No. 801 struck a trespasser at the California Avenue station in Palo Alto. The same train struck a trespasser at the same station just one week earlier. About an hour after that, southbound Caltrain No. 426 struck another trespasser just north of the Menlo Park station, only about three miles north of the California Avenue incident.

Caltrain tracks were opened to normal service after about a three hour delay, but trains didn’t get back on schedule until later in the day. The two fatalities in one day were the first on Caltrain in more than two years and marked the 15th and 16th fatalities of the year.

On January 16, Caltrain will have run its 28th annual Martin Luther King Freedom Train from San Jose to San Francisco. The train was to leave San Jose Diridon Station at 9:30 a.m. and arrive in San Francisco at 10:55 a.m., making stops only at Sunnyvale, Palo Alto, and San Mateo. Separate tickets were required and were to be honored on regular southbound trains.

Last month I mentioned the cancellation of Caltrain’s annual Toys for Tots Holiday Train due to budget cuts. Thanks to the Silicon Valley Community Foundation (SVCF), the train will return this year.

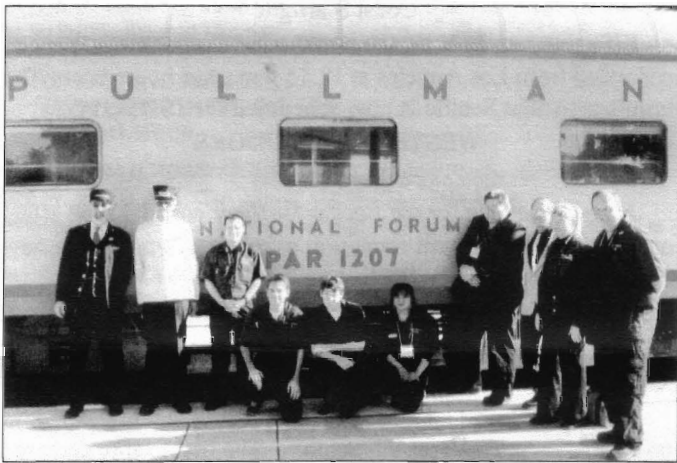
On December 21, “Santa” boarded Train No. 233 at the San Antonio station and rode to San Francisco, where a joint news conference was held by Caltrain and the SVCF to announce the

return of the Holiday Train for 2012. SVCF will help raise money for the charities the train helps, and will provide strategic and technical fund-raising assistance to ensure the future success of the event. SVCF and Caltrain will work together to encourage communities along the train's route to participate in the success of the train.

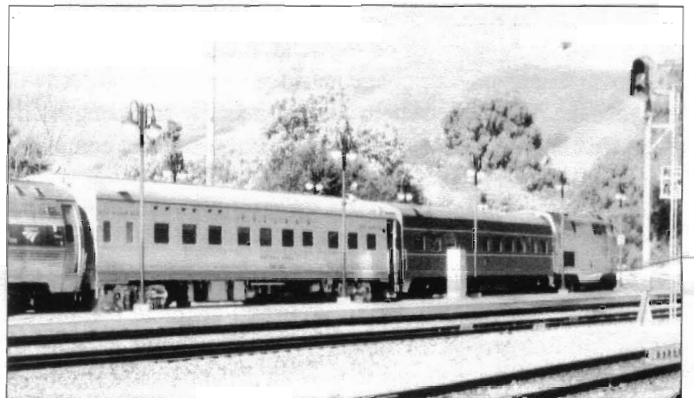
For 2011, the Marine Corps Reserve and Salvation Army set up collection booths at Samtrans headquarters in San Carlos and at Redwood City's Hometown Holidays event and were able to collect 509 toys for the area's needy children. During the Holiday Train's nine-year run, an average of 5000 toys were collected each year. Hopefully, next year's figure will approach that number.



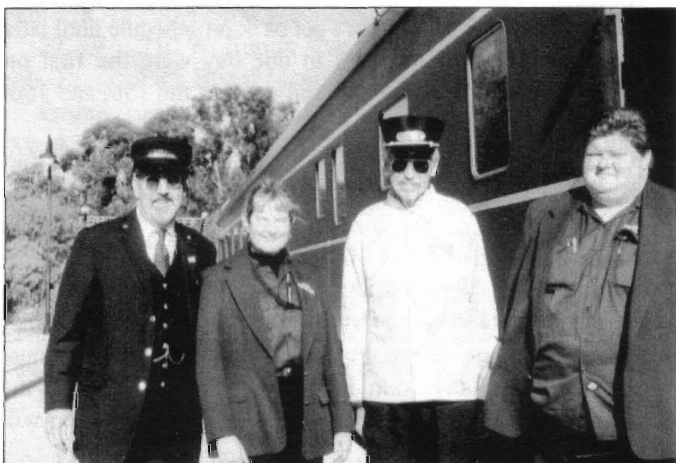
*"Cabbage car" 90230 was once an F40 locomotive, but now serves as a cab car with a baggage section. On December 18, 2011, it poses at the front of train 792, about to leave San Luis Obispo.*  
Photo by Marti Ann Draper



*The "Holiday Daylight" Excursion on December 18, 2011 put to work Bill Hatrick and PRS volunteers Larry Jennings, Josh Thurmon, Matt Wiles, Winston Lynn, Annette Markowitz, Andrew Novak, Barry Draper, Marti Ann Draper, and Rob Markowitz at San Luis Obispo in front of our National Forum.*  
Photo by Terrence Draper



*Pacific Railroad Society's former UP sleeping car, the National Forum, along with Bill Hatrick's Overland Trail, in the consist of Amtrak train 799 at San Luis Obispo on December 18, 2011.*  
Photo by Marti Ann Draper



*Bill Hatrick, Marti Ann Draper, Larry Jennings and Andrew Novak greet passengers returning to the Overland Trail at San Luis Obispo on December 18, 2011.* Photo by Terrence Draper



*"Conductor Bill" Hatrick is seen in the middle of the lounge section of the former SP Overland car which he has lovingly restored to its original configuration. That's John Blaubach glancing out at the scenery.* Photo by Marti Ann Draper