

# WHEEL CLICKS

Pacific Railroad Society Inc.

OCTOBER 2012

## PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

by NEIL BJORNSEN

And here we are... looking at Fall (already)!

Before we know it, the time for the annual PRS Holiday Banquet will be upon us. This year's event is scheduled to occur on Saturday, December 8, 2012, at the San Bernardino Railroad Museum (former AT&SF Depot). The museum will be open for touring at 3:00 p.m. with dinner at 4:30 p.m., followed by a program. This should be a grand event and reunion including fellowship and good cheer.

Please mark your calendars and I look forward to seeing you there. Enclosed with this issue of *Wheel Clicks* is a flyer which provides additional details. METROLINK service will be operating Saturday schedules on December 8th and train service is available to and from the San Bernardino Station (from Los Angeles), which dove-tails with the PRS Holiday Banquet. Your attendance is encouraged.

Remember, PRS is YOUR organization.

The PRS-owned, ex-AT&SF, high-level transition car No. 545 project is inching along. An initial committee has been formed consisting of members Larry Aandahl, Nick Teel, Marti Ann Draper and yours truly. Our mission is to prepare a "scope-of-work" plan which is the compass needed to provide the appropriate direction for the project. This plan must be completed prior to any budgetary consideration, PRS Board consideration or any actual work taking place.

The scope-of-work plan must contain a detailed inventory of requirements to restore the car to a level acceptable for excursion use by PRS (meaning "AMTRAK legal"). This will be no small undertaking and a goodly number of volunteers will be required in order to make the project a success. At this time I am making a personal appeal for volunteers who are blessed with technical knowledge concerning railroad passenger cars and what it takes to keep them "ticking." Please contact me at [PRS.exec@Ymail.com](mailto:PRS.exec@Ymail.com) to volunteer

What the committee accomplishes at this time and in the near future will set the tone for the duration of the project.

As mentioned last month in this forum, the PRS "Pullman Conductor" mannequin, who resides at the PRS Museum in San Dimas, is lacking a name. A photo of our Pullman Conductor can be viewed in the "photo section" of this issue of *Wheel Clicks*. A "Name Our Pullman Conductor" contest has been developed and the contest entry form/contest rules and the entry from submittal deadline of October 31, 2012. The winning entry will be announced at the PRS Holiday Banquet on December 8 and a prize awarded.

Have a great and safe month.

## GOLD LINE IMPACT REPORT RELEASED

The release of an 800-page environmental impact report in late August on a proposed 12.3-mile extension of the Gold Line from Azusa to Montclair is more about attracting funding for the \$800 million project than identifying serious environmental impacts. At least that's the impression left by many of the board members on the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority, as well as the six cities the extension would traverse.

The cities of Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne, Pomona, Claremont and Montclair have already bought into the project and have worked out many of the route details, according to the authority. Each city will have a station and some stations are already built or are old stations that have been re-purposed. Many cities have already begun constructing transit-oriented developments adjacent to those future stations and are welcoming the train as an economic engine.

Though the train extension is at least five years away from completion, many are optimistic the EIR will help move it ahead in the funding hunt. "With a completed EIR, who knows what kind of funding will be out there," said Sam Pedroza, Claremont City Councilman and first vice chair of the construction authority.

The Gold Line light-rail currently runs from East Los Angeles to downtown Los Angeles and north through Highland Park, South Pasadena and Pasadena. A second foothill phase – from east Pasadena through Arcadia, Irwindale, Monrovia, Duarte and Azusa to the Azusa-Citrus Avenue station near Citrus College and Azusa Pacific University – is under construction. The fully funded, \$700 million extension should be completed by fall 2015, according to the construction authority. But when the train line will extend beyond that is uncertain.

Those involved with the project see clear sailing for the EIR. The public has until Oct. 5 to comment. After incorporating those comments and answering questions, a final EIR could be ready for approval by the authority in December, said Habib Balian, chief executive officer of the authority. "We think it is a very clean project with very few impacts to the community," Balian said. The cities know the project, they know the impact, the crossings, the placement of the stations and the parking. They may have questions or comments, but we think it serves their needs."

[Info. from *Pasadena Star-News*]



**WHEEL CLICKS**

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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.; Mondays: 12-5 p.m.; Wednesdays: 1-5 p.m.

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**PRS NEWS — ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES**

Oct. 1, 8, PRM open Monday, 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
 15, 22, 29 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas.  
 Oct. 3, 10, PRM open Wednesday, 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
 17, 24, 31 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas.  
 Oct. 5 PRS Board meeting, 7:30 p.m., Valencia Room,  
 Friday Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave. Alhambra.  
 Oct. 6, 13, PRM open Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
 20, 27 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas.  
 Oct. 6, 13, Saunders Yard open Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to ?,  
 20, 27 Noakes St. & Herbert Ave., Commerce.  
 Oct. 12 PRS Membership meeting, 7:30 p.m., Alhambra  
 Friday Rm., Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel, Alhambra.  
 Oct. 26 Wheel Clicks November Mailing, 10:00 a.m.,  
 Wednesday 1240 Dominion Ave., Pasadena, CA 91104

**PROGRAMS**

by **RUSS DAVIES**

October 12: Once again, **Tom Grose** comes to the plate with one of his great videos, **Pentrex' "The Best of 2011, Chapter 4."** This segment features railroading in and around Southern California, including action at **Tehachapi Loop, and Beaumont Hill**, and wrapping up with **Metrolink's Christmas Train!** That's appropriate, it'll get us warmed up for the upcoming **PRS Holiday Meeting. Be there and bring Digital Briefs!**

**DOWNTOWN CULVER CITY DEVELOPERS**

A \$63 million retail and apartment complex in Los Angeles is going up near the new light-rail station on the edge of downtown Culver City as developers move to capitalize on the new Expo Line. The six-story project is being built by Santa Monica apartment landlord NMS Properties. The development at 9901 Washington Boulevard in Los Angeles across the street from Culver City, will known as **NMS@Culver City**. It will house 131 units over restaurants and shops.

The complex is across from the Kirk Douglas Theatre and Sony Pictures Plaza office building. Jim Anderson, president of NMS Properties, said, "We find the redevelopment program and streetscape emerging along Washington Boulevard in Culver City extremely attractive and believe our project will further enhance the streetscape renaissance occurring there."

The apartments are scheduled to open in spring 2014. The site was formerly occupied by Culver Plaza, a movie theater and retail center with three levels of below-grade parking. The underground garage will be seismically upgraded and reused with the new complex, said architect Wade Killefer

Hundreds of millions of dollars worth of real estate development linked to Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Expo Line are in the pipeline in Culver City. NMS and other developers are also targeting future station sites in Santa Monica and other stops along the light-rail line for construction of new mixed-use residential projects.

[Info. from *Los Angeles Times*]

**METROLINK NAMES NEW CEO**

At its monthly meeting, the Metrolink Board of Directors voted unanimously to appoint Michael P. DePallo, 58, a veteran transit leader with over 30 years experience, as Chief Executive Officer (CEO). DePallo currently serves as director and general manager for the Port Authority Trans Hudson Corporation (PATH), a heavy rail subsidiary of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey that transports over 250,000 passenger trips a day between Manhattan and neighboring New Jersey, far more than Metrolink's daily ridership.

"After a thorough national search, I am confident Michael is the right person to lead Metrolink as it continues to build on progress made in recent years. He has a proven record on safety and leadership, and has recently overseen his agencies efforts to modernize their fleet of railcars," said Metrolink Board Chairman Richard Katz. "He is familiar with the complex issues that a commuter rail agency faces; that safety is foundational, followed by customer service, funding issues, connectivity and security. In his current role, he is overseeing projects very similar to Metrolink's Positive Train Control, Guardian cars,

locomotive upgrades and fare media issues. We look forward to his leadership.”

“Metrolink is clearly one of the premier commuter railroads in the country and leads the nation in technological innovations such as Positive Train Control,” DePallo said. “It is a true honor to be selected to lead this highly progressive system, and I look forward to the challenge.”

DePallo led PATH to record ridership in 2011 after it plummeted in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. He chairs the Security Affairs Steering Committee for the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). Prior to PATH, DePallo held leadership positions at many of the largest passenger rail operations in the nation, such as Oakland’s Bay Area Rapid Transit District, Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority in Philadelphia and Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority in Boston.

“Mike DePallo is one of the best public servants I have ever worked with. Not since California took the Dodgers has New York and New Jersey suffered such a loss,” said Bill Baroni, Deputy Executive Director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. DePallo received his master’s degree at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Penn., specializing in transportation and land use planning. Michael will join Metrolink on October 15, 2012.

“I would like to thank the Metrolink staff, led by General Council Don Del Rio and Chief Operating Officer Dennis Marzec, for their leadership, continued focus on safety and customers throughout this interim period. We have a committed team and solid foundation for our new leader to build on. I am excited about the future of Metrolink and our service to our customers,” said Katz.

[Info. from *The Source* via Ken Ruben]

### TRAIN SAFETY SYSTEM IS PREVIEWED

Metrolink on September 10 previewed a pioneering, \$200-million crash prevention project for a top federal safety official, who expressed concern about railroad industry efforts to postpone deadlines for installing the sophisticated train safety system in other parts of the country.

Deborah A.P. Hersman, chairwoman of the National Transportation Safety Board, viewed a locomotive and a rail car equipped with positive train control technology and testing gear at a downtown Metrolink railyard. The system combines global positioning devices, digital radio communications and computers to track trains and take control of them if necessary to prevent collisions, derailments and other accidents.

Metrolink officials plan to install positive train control on their 500-mile Southern California commuter rail network by December 2013, two years ahead of a federal requirement for the system to be deployed nationwide. Field testing of the equipment is taking place on nights and weekends.

Hersman and other federal officials praised Metrolink and local transit leaders for their commitment to the project, which was fast-tracked after the 2008 Chatsworth crash, which killed 28 people and injured 135. NTSB investigators blamed the head-on collision with a Union Pacific freight train on a Metrolink engineer who was text messaging and failed to notice a red stop signal. The accident led the agency to renew a 20-year-old effort

to have the nation’s railroads install positive train control.

A 2015 deadline to deploy the safety system on passenger trains and freight trains carrying hazardous cargo was imposed by Congress after the Chatsworth disaster. But there have been recent efforts to relax the deadline by freight railroads and some transportation agencies.

Hersman described Metrolink’s progress on positive train control as “a historic milestone” and a “great model” for the nation. She predicted that more rail accidents would occur if the 2015 deadline is rolled back. “Critics still say that positive train control is too costly and won’t work,” Hersman said. “But Metrolink has committed capital to this and has shown it can be done.”

Last month, the Federal Railroad Administration recommended that Congress delay the deadline because most railroads will not meet it. FRA officials said freight and passenger have had difficulty installing the systems, partly because of a shortage of needed equipment and software.

Hersman said the complaints are similar to those once mounted by the aviation industry, which resisted proposals to install collision avoidance systems in aircraft. “We’ve been here before,” she said. Hersman noted that collision prevention devices are now a standard requirement for many types of aircraft and have dramatically reduced midair collisions.

Before a train begins a trip, data about speed limits, the track, construction zones, locations of other trains, etc., are loaded onboard via a wireless connection. While it is en route, the train’s position and speed are tracked via GPS. The train also receives information about signal status, broken rails, curves, etc. from wayside devices.

Using the data, the system tells the engineer when to adjust speed. If the engineer doesn’t act, the system takes over, adjusts speed and, if necessary, brings the train to a stop.

[Info. from *Los Angeles Times*]

### OREGON NEWS

#### HIGH-SPEED PASSENGER RAIL

Six open houses during September in Willamette Valley cities will explore the possibilities of future high-speed passenger rail service between Portland and Eugene. The Oregon Department of Transportation is leading a review that will affect decisions such as stations, daily trips and engine power.

The 125-mile line between Portland and Eugene is part of the federally designated Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor, which has been targeted for upgrades. The open houses were in Salem, Oregon City, Albany, Lake Oswego, Portland, and Eugene.

#### CLACKAMAS COUNTY RAIL INITIATIVE

The ferocious battle over Clackamas County’s role in the Portland-Milwaukie light rail project came just two weeks ahead of a contentious rail initiative on the Sept. 18 special election ballot. Measure 3-401, if approved, would require countywide voter approval before officials could spend money to finance, design, construct or operate any rail lines in the county. Generally, light rail opponents support the measure, and light rail supporters oppose the measure.

It’s unclear what effect the measure, if approved, would have on the under-construction Portland-Milwaukie light rail extension, especially as county officials actively worked to finance its

\$19.9 million payment to TriMet, perhaps before the vote. But the measure could go a long way in determining what role Clackamas County plays in the future development of rail in the county, including high-speed passenger rail that is in early stages of discussion.

Clackamas County's involvement in the project – or lack thereof – could also prove a harbinger of the county's future role in regional efforts. One of the two candidates in each of the two county commissioner races on the Nov. 6 ballot opposes the light rail project. If the measure passes, that could serve as an early indicator of November election results that could further steer the county toward opposing regional planning and transportation projects.

[All info. from *The Oregonian* via Caroline Hobson]

### RAILROAD BUFFS RIDE OBSCURE ROUTES

Some people collect stamps, others collect bird sightings and a few count the state capitol buildings they visit. Mike Rose is riding a train to a remote railroad junction in the White Mountains at Hazens, New Hampshire to track railroad miles. Mr. Rose's journey takes him past steep cliffs, towering trestles and cascading brooks. Vitally important is that he is riding over this track for the first time and can therefore add it to his collection. "I got the mileage – that's all that counts," says Mr Rose, a 65-year-old Toledo, Ohio, tool and die maker.

Mr. Rose is a "rare mileage" collector, one of about 300 in the country. Such collectors strive to ride as much of the U.S. rail system as they can, often chartering special trains to access routes ordinarily off-limits to passengers. Collectors mark off the routes they ride on rail maps and record interesting sights – an unusual bridge or a complicated track layout, for example. They are looking for the rare and difficult to see views from the rail system and add it to their wealth of experiences," says Ed Ellis, president of Iowa Pacific Holdings, which owns short-line railroads and rail-related businesses.

"I want to ride every track before I check out," says Bill Crawford, 68, a retired engineering manager for General Electric Co. in Nahant, Mass. He is one of several dozen collectors who paid \$8,000 each to go on a 2,500-mile, weeklong train trip in April 2012 from St. Louis to Tulsa, Fort Worth, El Paso and Kansas City. The train covered freight routes that hadn't seen regular passenger train service in decades. "I have lusted after that track for 35 years," Mr. Crawford said.

Mr Crawford collects unique, unduplicated miles – one time over one mile of railroad route. To qualify, collectors have to travel on steel wheels on steel rails. Riding along the track in an automobile or on a bicycle doesn't count.

Most collectors have been at it for decades. Young collectors are rare indeed. The most accomplished collectors have the time, money and freedom to respond quickly when, for example, a weather-related Amtrak detour takes passengers over a different route. Even if they wanted to, most young people can't do that. "The problem with younger people is that most of them have to earn a living," says Bart Jennings, 54, a professor of transportation in Avon, Ill., who organizes trips for mileage collectors.

Some of the oldest collectors have logged miles that now are impossible to get. Ed Graham, 84, a mileage collector in Daly City, Calif., rode the Olympian Hiawatha in 1959 or 1960 from

Minneapolis to Seattle, a good chunk of that route has been torn up. The most fanatical compete for bragging rights. "It's about who has this line, and not that one," says David Ingles, 71, senior editor of *Classic Trains* magazine and a Wisconsin buff whose collection of U.S. rail miles totals 116,000 miles.

Some collectors go to extraordinary lengths to get miles. "They fly in at great expense, ride and then take off," says Otto Dolnick, a Waukesha, Wis., collector. Collectors call that "parachuting in." Randy Jackson, 55, a retired manufacturing technician for Intel Corp. in Rio Rancho, N.M., covered rare mileage on both coasts in a single weekend in May 2012. He got off one rare mileage trip in California, caught an overnight flight to the East Coast and hopped aboard a rare-mileage train in Vermont. Mr. Jackson almost didn't pull it off. When the California train was running hours late, he bailed out in Barstow and accepted a ride from his friend and fellow mileage collector Chris Guenzler, who was chasing the train in his car (a different hobby). Mr Jackson made the flight. "Stars aligned, friends came through and I got mileage that may not be repeated for a while, if ever," he says. That made it a weekend to remember."

The U.S. railroad system has nearly 140,000 miles of routes. Passengers can ride about 26,000 miles of the system aboard Amtrak, commuter and tourist trains. The rest of the system is freight only and considered rare by mileage collectors.

Mileage collecting isn't new. Some collectors fancy themselves modern-day followers of rare-mileage pioneer Rogers E.M. Whitaker, the late *New Yorker* magazine editor who wrote stories in the 1960s about his rail-riding adventures under the pen name F.M. Frimbo.

Miles weren't so rare when passenger trains still blanketed the country. But when the passenger network shrunk, a cottage industry of rare-mileage charter trains emerged. Many of them are day trips in coach cars. At the high end is Clark Johnson, 82, a retired 3M Co. physicist in Madison, Wis., who operated lavish excursions under the name High Iron Travel Corp. The El Paso trip that he organized consisted of vintage sleeping cars, a dining car and observation car.

Collectors face obstacles. Trains show up late and equipment breaks down. A trip over bumpy track in Virginia and Maryland a few years ago, warned one buff online, will lead to "one heck of a bunch of seasick riders." Some rare mileage is boring.

Not every railroad is eager to accommodate mileage collectors. Canadian National spokesman Mark Hallman says the railroad puts its priority on serving freight customers. "It's the freight that pays the bills," he says. Gary Sease, a spokesman for CSX Corp., which operates in the eastern third of the country, says, "we are not able to host excursions on our busy network."

Rare is a relative term; if collectors have never ridden over a track, it is rare to them. Some miles are rarer than others. Among the most prized miles are picturesque, freight-only Tehachapi Loop in California, the Craig Branch in Colorado and the Inside Gateway in northern California.

The trip that tool and die maker took in July 2012 covered some rare miles. Tourist train operator Conway Scenic Railroad frequently covers most of the line – from North Conway to Fabyan, N.H. The rare sections are from Fabyan north to Hazens and the Redstone Branch, southeast of North Conway. The tourist train covers those miles only once or twice a year, and the

train stops along the way to allow passengers to photograph the train in scenic or historical settings.

Mr Rose wasn't the only mileage collector aboard. A few other collectors "needed" at least part of the route. Before he retired, Bob Heavenrich, 65, of Ann Arbor, Mich., tracked automotive mileage fuel efficiency for the federal government. Now he wears a floppy green hat with a Union Pacific Historical Society button and pins from mileage trips. For his part, Mr. Rose says he keeps working to afford the trips. Otherwise, he says, "I would have retired years ago."

[Info. from *The Wall Street Journal* via Ken Ruben]

#### AAR SEPTEMBER STORED FREIGHT CARS REPORT

The Association of American Railroads reported that as of September 1, 2012, 311,226 freight cars were in storage, a decrease of 3,745 cars from August 1, 2012, and equal to 20.3 percent of the North American fleet, excluding cars without a load since before 2005.

Of the 502,853 cars that were in storage on July 1, 2009 (excluding those that last moved loaded prior to 2005), only 40,634 remained in storage continuously through September 1, 2012. Approximately 92 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.

For the last 12 months the number of stored freight cars (and the percentage of the fleet excluding cars without a load since before 2005) on the first day of the month was: 2011: September, 271,404 (17.8); October, 260,317 (17.1); November, 261,695 (17.2); December 263,912 (17.3); 2012: January, 273,390 (18.0); February, 283,236 (18.6); March, 289,505 (19.0); April, 299,324 (19.6); May 307,957 (20.1); June, 312,938 (20.4); July, 317,681 (20.7); August, 314,971 (20.6).

A freight car is "in storage" if it has had a loaded revenue move since 2005, but not in the past 60 days. Rail cars are stored when they are not needed due to lack of demand; they come out of storage when demand improves. Figures are for the entire North American rail freight car fleet and include rail cars owned by railroads, leasing companies, shippers, and others. The total freight car fleet changes from month to month as new cars are added and old cars are scrapped.

There is a great deal of complexity in freight car usage patterns. For example, increases in demand for rail service for a particular commodity relative to another mean that some car types might be in very short supply at the same time that others are plentiful; a freight car might go through cycles where it is stored for a few months and then returned to service for a few months; and changes in scrap prices might make scrapping cars more attractive at one time than another.

[Info. from AAR Rail Time Indicators via Charles Varnes]

#### PASSENGER TRAIN UPDATES by CHARLES VARNES AMTRAK

Amtrak ridership is surging this year with 11 consecutive monthly ridership records. In each month of the current fiscal year, Amtrak has posted the highest ridership total ever for that particular month (i.e., the best October ever, the best November ever, etc.) with the final month of September also expected to be a new record. In addition, July was the single best ridership

month in the history of Amtrak.

Through 11 months of FY 2012 (October 2011 - August 2012), total Amtrak ridership is up 3.4 percent as compared to the same period last year. When the current fiscal year ends on September 30, Amtrak expects a new annual ridership record will be set, surpassing the current record of 30.2 million passengers established in FY 2011.

From FY 2002 to FY 2011, Amtrak ridership increased 44 percent and set new annual records in 8 of those 9 years. This long-term growth is occurring across the Amtrak national network and on all Amtrak business lines, including the Northeast Corridor, state-supported and other short-distance routes, and long-distance services.

#### Upgraded Seattle Maintenance Facility

The completion of Phase I and Phase II of a major upgrade of the Seattle Maintenance Facility was celebrated in August. The facilities support Amtrak operations and maintenance agreements in the Pacific Northwest for the *Empire Builder*, *Coast Starlight*, *Amtrak Cascades*, and *Sounder* commuter trains.

The upgraded maintenance facility (first phase of the four-phase project) is an enclosed structure over two tracks. It will be primarily used by *Talgo* to maintain *Amtrak Cascades* trains however, the Amtrak long-distance and *Sounder* commuter trains will benefit from this investment.

Phase II, completed in December 2011, is a new three-story maintenance warehouse and administrative office that replaced functions formerly performed in trailers. The \$37 million project was funded by Amtrak's annual capital program

Amtrak has approved \$1.4 million for the complete design of Phases III and IV.

Phase III will include a construction of a service and inspection building for Amtrak long distance and *Sound Transit* trains. Phase IV involves construction of a new locomotive servicing and repair building.

In the past year, Amtrak has completed major upgrades at two other maintenance facilities in Los Angeles, Calif., and Hialeah, Fla.

#### New Niantic River Bridge

Amtrak replaced the movable Niantic River Bridge in East Lyme, Conn., overnight on Sept. 7 and 8. All rail traffic was shifted to the new bridge and the existing 105-year-old bridge was removed from service.

The new bridge allows Amtrak to provide reliable rail operation, increase in speeds on and near the bridge, and minimize delays on a route that serves as a key link for passenger and freight rail service between New York and Boston.

The last train to operate over the old bridge was *Northeast Regional* Train 67 (Boston – Newport News) at about 11:39 p.m. Friday night. The first train to operate over the new bridge was *Northeast Regional* Train 66 (Newport News – Boston) at about 5:24 a.m. Saturday morning.

Initially, all rail traffic will share one track over the new bascule lift bridge. The second track is scheduled to be available for use in November. Amtrak will continue to open and close the old bridge for all maritime traffic until it is fully removed next spring.

Other major work elements of this project include new track

alignments for the east and west approaches to the bridge, and expansion of the navigation channel beneath the bridge and an increase in the vertical under-clearance above the water to benefit river traffic. Also, sections of the Niantic Bay Overlook boardwalk are being reconstructed and the beach replenished.

The three-year, \$140 million project began in April 2010 and remains on-schedule with an estimated completion date of May 2013.

#### Daylight Time Ends

Daylight time will end on Nov. 4, at 2:00 a.m. local daylight time, which will become 1:00 a.m. local standard time. Daylight time will resume on March 10, 2013.

#### Next National Timetable

The next Amtrak National Timetable is scheduled for Jan 14, 2013. The later than usual timetable issuance is due to several changes in December adjusted/faster schedules.

#### Historical On-Time Route Performance

The August 2012 historical on-time performance percentages for selected routes were:

Route	August 2012	July 2012	Last 12 months
Sunset Limited	77.8%	63.0%	59.1%
Heartland Flyer	24.2%	19.4%	56.1%
Southwest Chief	69.4%	64.5%	77.5%
California Zephyr	53.2%	50.0%	54.5%
Empire Builder	20.7%	13.2%	59.9%
Coast Starlight	67.7%	67.7%	76.4%
City of New Orleans	91.9%	91.9%	90.0%
Pacific Surfliner	67.3%	58.3%	73.7%
San Joaquin	67.3%	86.6%	73.7%
Capitol Corridor	92.2%	94.2%	93.4%
Amtrak Cascades	69.2%	71.8%	72.9%
Illinois Service	70.8%	47.7%	78.5%
Missouri River Runner	83.9%	57.7%	87.1%
Hiawatha	84.7%	79.1%	89.9%
Michigan Services	51.6%	47.7%	53.1%
Acela Express	86.2%	85.5%	89.7%
Northeast Regional	84.5%	81.5%	86.9%

#### LONG-DISTANCE TRAINS

##### Empire Builder

The East Glacier Park, Mont., station closes for the winter on Oct. 7. The stop is replaced by one at Browning, Mont., on that date. The East Glacier Park station will reopen for the summer season in 2013.

#### NEW NORTH CAROLINA THRUWAY BUS SERVICE

Starting Oct. 3, Amtrak established two new *Thruway* bus service routes to Eastern North Carolina, one serving the communities of Greenville, New Bern, Havelock and Morehead City, and a second serving Goldsboro, Kinston, Jacksonville and Wilmington. Both routes will connect with the Amtrak New York-Savannah, Ga. *Palmetto* train at the Amtrak Station in Wilson, N.C.

*Thruway* bus 6089 connects from the southbound *Palmetto* at Wilson, N.C. at 2:45 p.m. stops at Greenville at 3:47 p.m., New Bern at 4:56 p.m., Havelock at 5:26 p.m., and arrives at Morehead City at 5:57 p.m. Bus 6090 connects to the northbound *Palmetto* departing from Morehead City at 10:10 a.m., Havelock at 10:49 a.m., New Bern at 11:24 a.m., Greenville at

12:32 p.m., and arriving at Wilson at 1:27 p.m.

*Thruway* bus 6189 connects from the southbound *Palmetto* at Wilson, N.C. at 2:45 p.m. Goldsboro at 3:35 p.m., Kinston at 4:14 p.m., Jacksonville at 5:22 p.m., and arrives at Wilmington at 6:37 p.m. Bus 6190 connects to the northbound *Palmetto* departing from Wilmington at 9:48 a.m., Jacksonville at 11:08 a.m., Kinston at 12:13 p.m., Goldsboro at 12:57 p.m., and arriving at Wilson at 1:38 p.m.

The southbound *Palmetto* (Train 89) departs the Wilson Station at 2:22 p.m. and the northbound *Palmetto* (Train 90) departs the Wilson Station at 2:23 p.m.

[Info. from Ken Ruben, Ed Von Nordeck]

#### BLUE LINE TRAIN STRIKES METRO BUS

City authorities said they narrowly escaped disaster the morning of August 27 when a Blue Line train struck a Metro bus filled with passengers near downtown Los Angeles, injuring nearly three dozen people, none of them seriously. About 6:56 a.m., the southbound train clipped the back of a Line 51 bus in the intersection of San Pedro Street and Washington Boulevard, according to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

The bus – which runs between Wilshire Center and the Artesia Transit Center – was standing-room-only with about 50 passengers, according to Metro spokesman Marc Littman. “When the train hit it,” he said, “the bus then spun and hit a light pole.” At least 32 people were taken to nine hospitals, where they were listed in fair to good condition. Brian Humphrey of the Los Angeles Fire Department, described all but one of the injuries were minor, and the remaining person as “ill.”

The bus sustained major damage and there were delays on both the Blue and Expo lines until about 9:10 a.m. when normal service resumed. The accident could have been a catastrophe, Humphrey said. “The incident was every paramedic’s worst nightmare, a traffic collision between mass transit vehicles,” he said.

The Blue Line has been under scrutiny because of its recent record of accidents and fatalities. Earlier this month, officials said the light-rail line, which runs from Los Angeles to Long Beach, had 22 accidents and six fatalities so far in 2012 and is on pace for the highest number of deaths to its 22-year history.

Zev Yaroslavsky, a Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro board member, has said that a “good number” of the accidents along the line are pedestrian suicides. but that more can be done to improve safety. The Metro board created a Blue Line task force to study the issue. It will make its report in November.

[Info. from *Los Angeles Times*]

#### GOLD LINE VICTIM HAS BROKEN NOSE

Carla Smith of Pasadena, California, ultimately was not charged with either fare evasion or resisting arrest in relation to a violent accident on a Gold Line boarding platform in 2009, but Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department investigators determined that the deputies involved in that same incident had acted “within policy” in detaining and searching Sameth, then ramming her face into a steel post, breaking her nose, chipping a tooth and causing other facial, ear and neck injuries.

In a use-of-force report prepared three weeks after the Dec. 28, 2009 incident, Deputies David Ybarra, Veronica Baeza and Ronald Anderson were exonerated for their roles in the search and subsequent injuries inflicted by Baeza upon Smith, who was originally detained by Ybarra for allegedly riding on the Gold Line without a ticket. Sameth, who according to the report showed a receipt to Ybarra for a \$5 day pass, which was lost in her purse, was released from LA County USC-Medical Center after receiving treatment for her injuries more than eight hours following the incident.

"The non-compliant actions of the suspect led to her becoming off-balance and striking her nose upon the support pole. Although a significant injury, the nose injury could have been prevented had the suspect not resisted the simple pat-down search being conducted by the deputy. The deputy was acting within the scope of the law and department guidelines while conducting the search," the sheriff's report concludes.

In the estimation of the sheriff's Risk Management Bureau Coordinator Captain Shaun Mathers, "The incident was thoroughly investigated by representatives from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Transit Service Bureau North," states the document signed by Mathers on April 12. "The investigation concluded that the actions taken by the three deputies were reasonable, justified and in compliance with department policy. Consequently, no corrective action measures are recommended or contemplated."

In late June, Sameth, a Pasadena businesswoman and single mother to two teenagers, ended her federal civil rights lawsuit against the county and the Sheriff's Department for an out-of-court settlement of \$199,000. She insists she only lost her balance after Baeza forced her face into the pole. Sameth's harrowing first-person account of her ordeal, titled "One day on the Gold Line," ran in the Aug. 10 issue of the Pasadena Weekly and can be read online at [pasadenaweekly.com](http://pasadenaweekly.com).

In a June 20 report to Sachi Hamai, executive officer of the Board of Supervisors, Senior Assistant County Council Patrick Wu wrote that the county would agree to pay Sameth the money. In the document to the board, county officials calculated that \$47,125 in attorney fees and another \$21,789 in other costs associated with the case had already been paid.

Laura Inlow, the Torrance-based attorney representing the Sheriff's Department, said she was asked to allow the department to speak to the media about the case. Sheriff's spokesman Steve Whitmore was unfamiliar with the case, but said the situation involving Sameth and the deputies sounded regrettable. But Whitmore also said ideas for potential reform of the current system are welcome. Sameth's attorney, John Burton of Pasadena, said the deputies overreacted and had no business searching Sameth over a fare evasion claim, unless they had a reasonable suspicion that Sameth was armed which she wasn't.

[Info. from *Pasadena Weekly* via Ken Ruben]

### **MARCHERS WANT MORE SAY IN METRO PROJECTS**

More than 200 protesters marched through Los Angeles Union Station on September 13 afternoon, banging drums as they passed train platforms, loudly demanding more community say in how the region's transit agency manages and develops property along its rapidly expanding rail networks.

The demonstration, which did not affect transit services, was held as the Metropolitan Transportation Authority continues its plan to aggressively pursue several new rail lines in various areas of Los Angeles County, as well as housing and other developments around them. Speaking at the rally, Sunyoung Yang of the Bus Riders Union said Boyle Heights has been particularly affected by Metro development. "Over the years there has been a net loss in affordable housing," she said. "People have been displaced."

Metro officials said 110 units of Boyle Heights affordable housing removed to make way for two transit projects were replaced and that developing low-cost housing around transit lines is a top priority. "Metro is a major player in terms of delivering affordable housing... and there's a lot more in the pipeline," said Metro spokesman Marc Littman. Around rail stations systemwide, 1,222 affordable housing units have been built, are in progress or will be under construction within a year, he said.

Littman pointed to a recently completed development near a Red Line subway station in Westlake. It currently includes 90 units of affordable housing. Another pending project in Boyle Heights, at East 1st and North Lorena streets, will have up to 52 affordable units and 10,000 feet of retail space, he said.

Still, protesters, whose march wound from a park near Union Station to Metro headquarters and then on to Boyle Heights, accused Metro of seeking to bring big-box chain stores into neighborhoods, a change they contend pushes out local merchants. Roger Moliere, chief of property development for Metro, said the agency is not likely to partner with big-box stores because they don't fit with his agency's mission of transit-oriented development, partly because those types of stores rely more on customers arriving by car.

Isela Gracian of the East LA Community Corp., a nonprofit, whose focus includes affordable housing and economic development, said Metro needs to involve residents more in its development plans "from the very outset." Metro meetings with residents can be unproductive because the language used by transit officials is too technical, among other reasons, she said.

[Info. from *Los Angeles Times*]

### **A MUSICAL JOURNEY VIA A TRAIN**

Musicians were playing in front of Union Station in downtown Los Angeles and on a train during the third annual Meet Me @ Metro event. The event, which celebrated public transportation and the performing arts, staged small concerts and short plays along the Metro Gold Line route between Union Station and the East L.A. Civic Center. Performances were planned for two August weekends with a charge for tickets.

[Info. from *Los Angeles Times*]

### **GENESEE TO BUY RAIL AMERICA**

Genesee & Wyoming Inc. said it will buy Rail America Inc. for about \$1.39 billion in a deal that combines the two largest short-line and regional rail operators in North America. The combined company will operate 108 railroads in the U.S. and abroad.

[Info. from *Los Angeles Times*]



Pacific Railroad Society's "Nameless" Pullman Conductor at San Dimas Museum. Photo by Neil Bjornsen



The "Grand Canyon Limited" special steam excursion Train, taken on May 14, 2012 in the Cajon Pass area that is synonymous with the name - Blue Cut. Photo by Tom Geer



The rear cars of "Grand Canyon Limited" special steam excursion train, taken on May 14, 2012 in the Cajon Pass area that is synonymous with - Blue Cut. Photo by Tom Geer



PRS' "Nameless" Pullman Conductor on the job at the PRS Museum in San Dimas. Photo by Neil Bjornsen



The "Grand Canyon Limited" special steam excursion Train approaches the area of the Victorville, California, station on May 14, 2012. Photo by Tom Geer