

The Bulletin



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The Bulletin

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In This Issue:
Eighth Avenue Subway—Track Plans
(Continued)
...Page 2

CENTENNIAL OF NEW YORK CENTRAL ELECTRIFICATION

In the November, 2006 *Bulletin*, News Editor Randy Glucksman described Metro-North's special excursion to commemorate the 100th anniversary of electric operation into Grand Central Terminal. On September 30, 1906, an electric locomotive pulled a train into Grand Central.

Checking our files, we found summaries of newspaper and technical magazine articles describing this huge project.

Steam locomotive-hauled trains had been operating in the Park Avenue Tunnel since the 1870s, and there were several collisions in the smoke-filled tunnel. The January 8, 1902 collision was the worst. The smoke was so thick that the Engineer could not see the red signal or the train ahead. This accident forced management to adopt electric traction. Meanwhile, the State Legislature passed a law prohibiting steam operation south of the Harlem River after July 1, 1908.

The engineers specified third rails located so that the shoes made contact under the third rail. This installation was less hazardous to employees because the top and sides of the third rail were covered with wood.

Before operating trains in revenue service, the railroad tested the equipment. The new electric locomotives were tested on a six-mile track between Schenectady and Hoffmans. Each 65-ton locomotive could accelerate at 0.5-to-1-mile per hour per second. Its maximum speed was 60 miles per hour and it was driven by a gearless motor mounted directly on the axles. Additional tests were performed in the Bronx. A half-mile of third rail was set up on a track paralleling the main line. An electric locomotive hauled one car and a

steam locomotive all day. A steel MU car hauled an electric locomotive and a steam locomotive.

On September 30, 1906, the first electrically-operated train ran to Grand Central, leaving Highbridge at 2:40 PM and arriving at Grand Central at 2:58 PM. The train, which was able to run at 84 miles per hour, reached 55 miles per hour on the Park Avenue Viaduct. The railroad's Vice President drove the 100-ton electric locomotive 3405, which was coupled to four Pullman Palace cars, two day coaches, and two private cars. On the train were 100 guests.

To start operating electric service the following equipment was available:

- 35 electric locomotives with four General Electric 84A motors, each rated at 550 HP
- 125 MU cars for suburban service with two 200 HP GE 69C motors. Cars accelerated at 1 1/4 miles per hour per second and reached a maximum speed of 52 MPH
- 55 MU cars, probably trailers
- 6 MU motors, combination baggage and express cars, probably with two 200 HP motors

The railroad was delayed starting electric service because there was a shortage of Engineers who could understand the air brake system. Of the 700 people who took the exam, only 20 passed.

Regular electric service between Highbridge and Grand Central began on December 11, 1906. Schedule of the first train

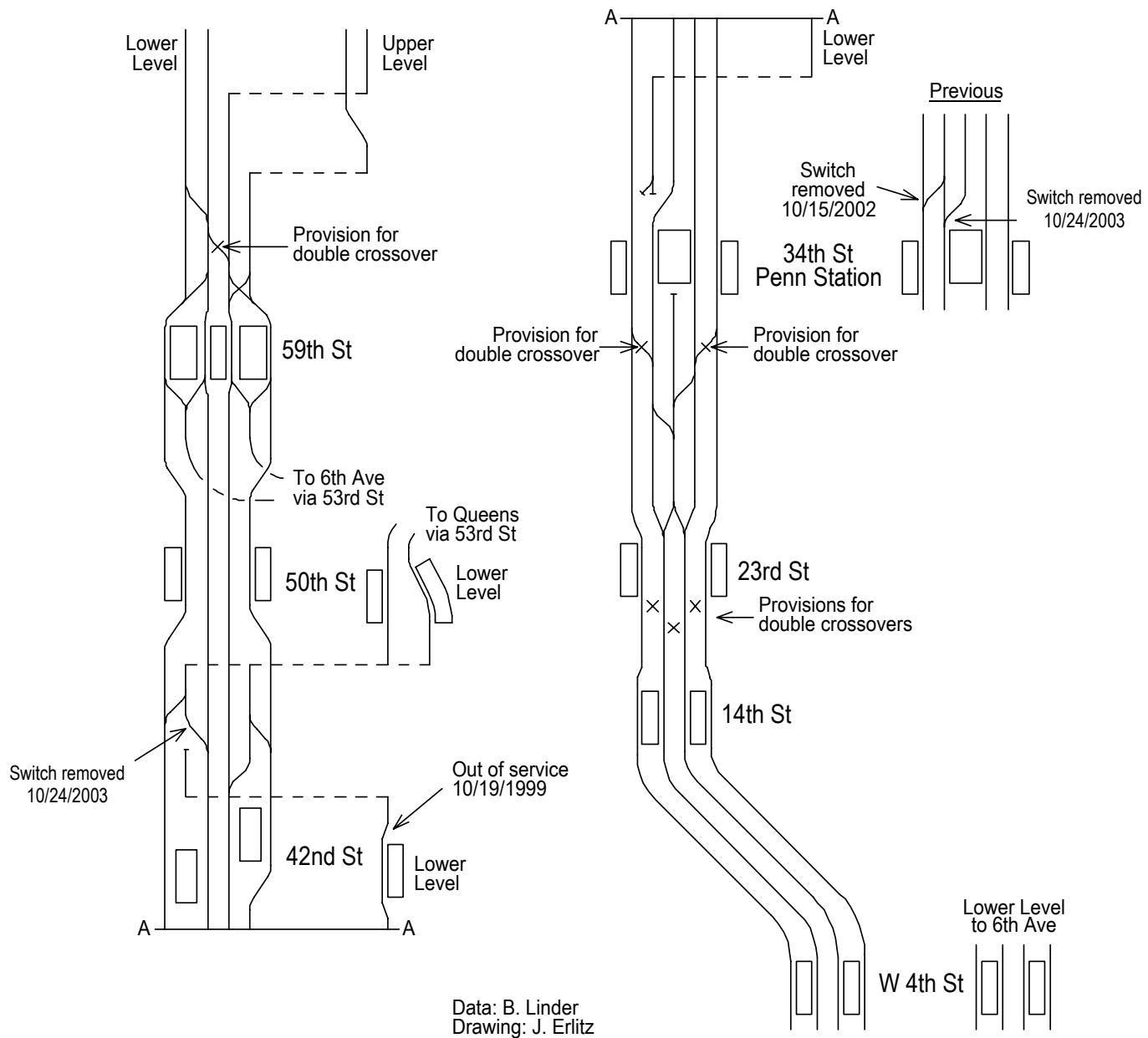
(Continued on page 4)

Next Trip: Grand Central Terminal Tour, February 17—Application coming next month!

EIGHTH AVENUE SUBWAY TRACK PLANS (Continued from December, 2006 Issue)

Eighth Avenue Line

59th-W 4th Street
1932 - Present



(Continued on page 3)

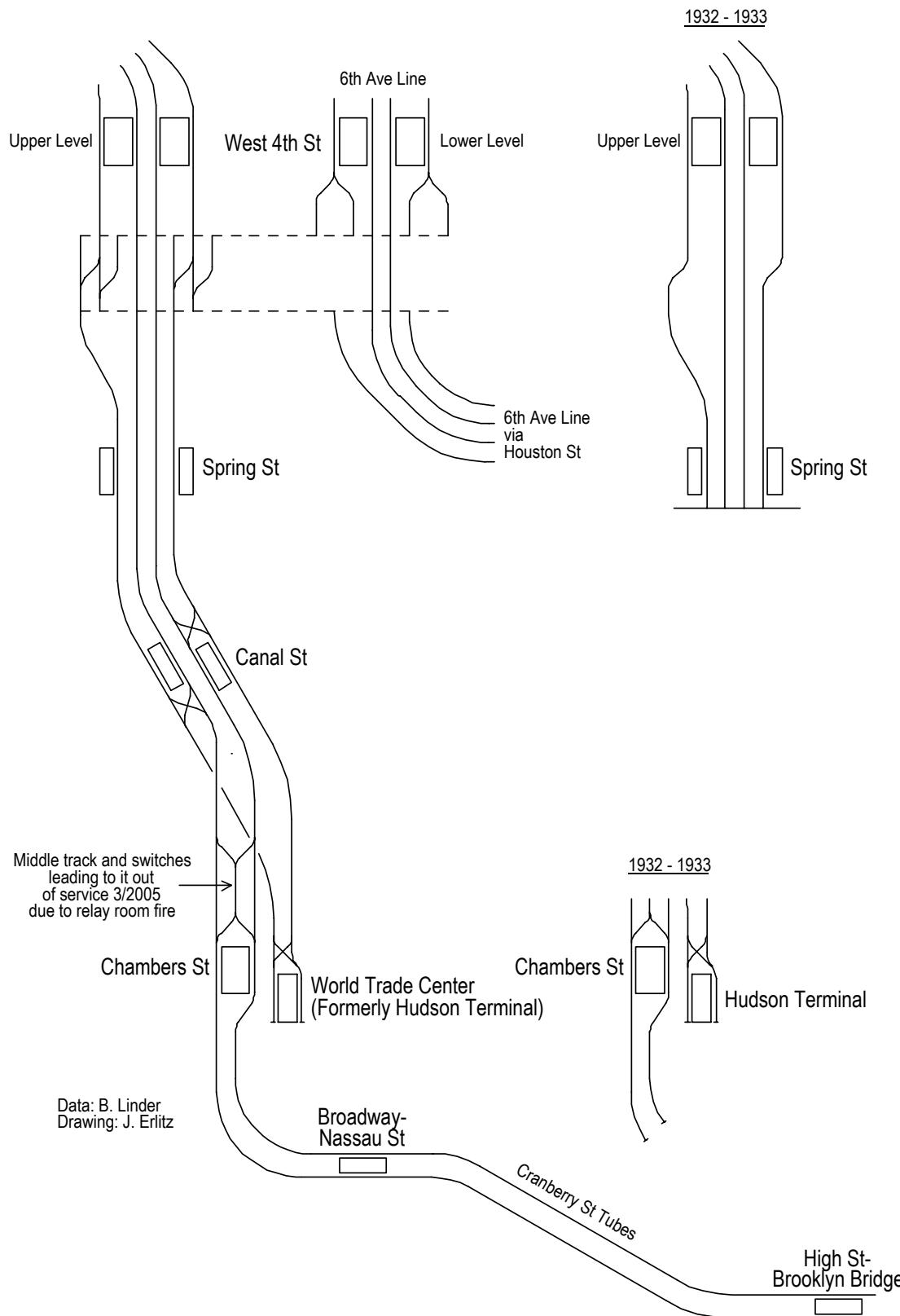
NEW YORK DIVISION BULLETIN - JANUARY, 2007

Eighth Avenue Subway Track Plans

(Continued from page 2)

Eighth Avenue Line

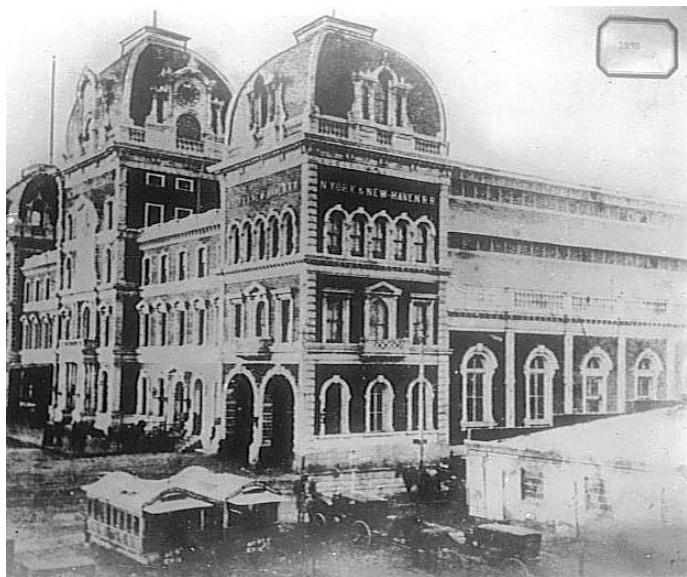
W 4th Street - High St
1932 - Present



NEW YORK DIVISION BULLETIN - JANUARY, 2007

Centennial of New York Central Electrification

(Continued from page 1)



E. 42nd and Park Avenue in 1875, looking northwest.
Bernard Linder collection



A different angle at E. 42nd and Park Avenue in 1875
Bernard Linder collection



E. 42nd and Park Avenue in 1878.
Bernard Linder collection



E. 42nd Street in 1885, looking east from Grand Central. Manhattan Railway's 42nd Street Shuttle is in the background.
Bernard Linder collection

(Continued from page 1)

was:

Leave Grand Central	12:11 PM
Arrive Highbridge	12:32 PM
Couple steam engine	
Leave Yonkers	1:38 PM
Arrive Highbridge	1:59 PM
Cut off steam engine	
Arrive Grand Central	2:20 PM

Both trains carried regular passengers and officials.
The railroad expected to run eight trains daily.

On January 28, 1907, the railroad started operating 15 Harlem Division electric trains between Grand Central and Wakefield (241st Street) and steam trains between Wakefield and White Plains. On February 17, 1907, electrification was extended to Mount Vernon West.

At the present time, electric operation from Grand Central extends 53 miles to Southeast (formerly Brewster North), Harlem Line, and 33 miles to Croton-Harmon, Hudson Line.

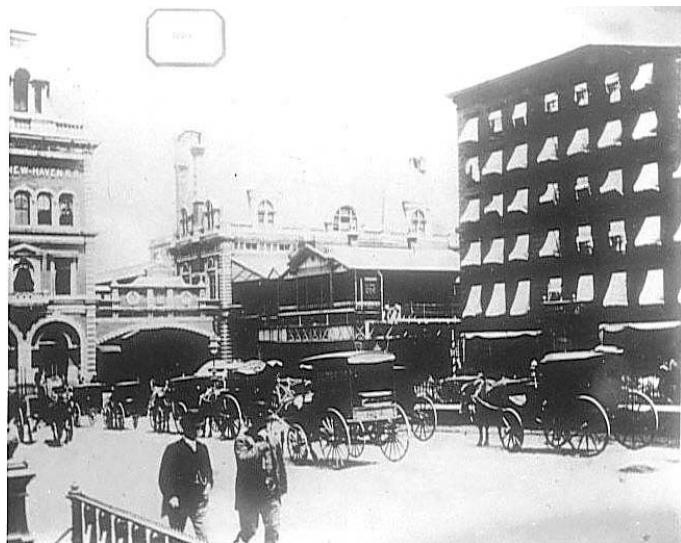
(Continued on page 5)

Centennial of New York Central Electrification

(Continued from page 4)



E. 42nd and Park Avenue in 1887. Compare and contrast this photograph with the one on the lower left on the previous page.
Bernard Linder collection



E. 42nd and Park Avenue in 1887, looking northeast.
Bernard Linder collection

(Continued on page 6)

148TH STREET-LENOX TERMINAL AND HOW IT GOT ITS NAME By Henry Raudenbush

Henry Raudenbush is an old friend of the Bulletin. His contributions, in fact, started with Volume 1, Issue 1 in May, 1958. This makes the first issue of our fiftieth year a most appropriate time to present this article.

One person doesn't make much in the way of big changes, but one can play a part, at least. One occasion where I did play a part resulted in changing the name of a station.

Since 1904, Seventh Avenue express trains (later ②) that went up Lenox Avenue and continued into the Bronx stopped at two important and well-known transfer stations, 149th Street-Grand Concourse and 149th Street-Third Avenue. Those that did not go to the Bronx (originally the locals, later the ③ express), went to 145th Street-Lenox Avenue. In the 1960s, the site of the IRT shops at 147th Street was sold to a developer, and the city agreed to provide a station in the yard, which would remain under the new apartment development on the

site.

Working as a draftsman at 207th Street Shop, I was asked to prepare artwork for a new reading on the destination signs of IRT cars for this new terminal. The proposed wording was "149th St-7th Avenue". While more or less accurately describing the location of the new terminal, which was on Seventh Avenue between W. 148th and 149th Streets, I could see that this would cause endless confusion, as regular riders seeing "149th St" would assume the train was headed to the Bronx. At the time I was way too junior to get much attention if I pointed this out within NYC Transit, so I called another ERA member who had close connections with the Transportation Department. Then I stalled on doing the artwork. In a couple of days, word came down to change the reading to "148th St-Lenox Terminal."

So the name of a station was changed by a link through the ERA.

NEW YORK DIVISION BULLETIN - JANUARY, 2007

Centennial of New York Central Electrification

(Continued from page 5)



A train passes the Tremont station.
Bernard Linder collection



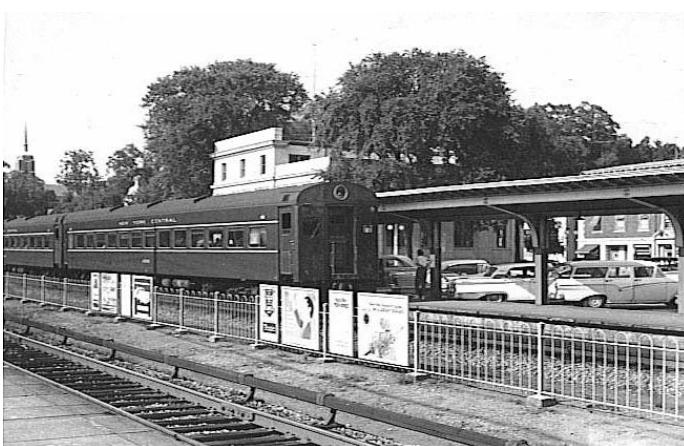
Yonkers station, June 7, 1969.
Larry Linder photograph



A former Third Avenue Railway car house, seen from the Yonkers station, June 7, 1969.
Larry Linder photograph



Tarrytown station, looking north, June 7, 1969.
Larry Linder photograph



Two shots of the Bronxville station, taken June 20, 1959.
Bernard Linder photographs



Commuter and Transit Notes

No. 218

by Randy Glucksman

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

All MTA riders got some good news at the end of November, 2006: there will not be a fare increase in 2007. The last one, which took place in 2005, was said to average 5% although some riders saw their fares go up 14%. At that time, MTA Chairman Peter Kalikow had planned to ask for 5% increases in alternate years, and 2007 would have been one of "those" years. *The Journal News* reported that for Metro-North, there would be no service cuts, and the early AM and late PM trains that were added last spring and last fall would remain. For the future, MTA is predicting deficits. The MTA Board approved the 2007 budget at its December 13 meeting.

A time-honored tradition might be coming to an end. MTA Board member Mitchell H. Pally, who represents Suffolk County, stirred up a hornet's nest on December 7, 2006 when he announced that he would propose a ban on the sale of alcoholic beverages on Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North trains and platforms. His chief concern was passengers driving home from the station after "having a few." He also said that it is "bad public policy to encourage people to drink." Mr. Pally's suggestion came four months after the tragic death of an 18-year-old woman who was killed at the Woodside station after falling through a gap between a train and the platform. Toxicology reports showed that she was intoxicated. At the December, 2006 MTA Board meeting, a task force was created to investigate this subject. It has been tasked to present a report in the first quarter of this year. However, there is a question whether or not this can actually take place because the contract between Metro-North and CDOT calls for the operation of such cars on CDOT trains.

Metro-North earns about \$680,000 in profit on \$5 million in revenues each year; the Long Island earns \$350,000 from these sales. However, most of Metro-North's revenue comes from the sales of soda and bottled water, according to *metro*. Under the present schedules, 17 afternoon/evening New Haven Line trains starting with Train #1526, 12:07 PM Grand Central Terminal/New Haven) have a symbol of a martini glass next to the train number denoting that this train is equipped with a bar car, which has snack and beverage service. Only four of those trains stop in New York State; for the others, the first stop is in Connecticut. Until 1986 ten of Metro-North M-2s were bar cars, but they were converted (and renumbered) to all-seat coaches. Hudson and Harlem Line trains do not have bar cars, but there is an attendant who stands at the entrance of pairs of tracks at Grand Central Terminal during the evening rush hours, selling beverages and snacks. Not

mentioned in all of this is the availability of liquor products in retail establishments in and around the terminals. Some of the M-8s will come with bar sections, but CDOT will pay the entire cost of those cars.

Member Larry Kiss told me that in December, 1958 and February, 1959, LIRR had purchased 30 cars second-hand for commuter service from the Boston & Maine. Fourteen were converted for use as bar cars. Seating capacity in these cars was originally 84, but the LIRR rebuilding put 117 seats in these cars. However, those for bar car service could only accommodate between 33 and 82. An additional three cars were purchased from the Bangor & Aroostock in 1962, and they wound up with 40 seats and a bar. All ran until the mid-1970s. Larry also has seen portable bars set up at Hunterspoint Avenue and at Jamaica during PM rush hours.

In New Jersey, ten Comet I cars, 1600-1609, when delivered in 1971, had the words "Bar Car" under the exterior number in the center of the car. The cars were overhauled with the other Comet Is in 1986-87, but by then the Bar Car function had been gone for years. Checking my timetable collection I found the following notes about this service.

- Main/Bergen Line – Until the February 13, 1979 timetables, there was this note: "Relax on your way home tonight with a man-sized thirst quencher served in our refreshment cars." Eleven evening trains had refreshment cars
- North Jersey Coast Line – The last mention of this service appeared in the December 16, 1979 edition with this note: "A REFRESHMENT CAR is assigned to this train serving coffee, juice and pastry on morning trips and beverages in the evening." There were four such trains. The timetable dated July 4, 1980 did not mention Refreshment cars
- Pascack Valley Line – One train, #1607, which departed Hoboken at 5:40 PM, had this note: (R) Refreshment car. The last timetable to mention this was dated October 9, 1978
- Raritan Valley Line – Refreshment cars were assigned to the *Wall Street* and *Crusader*, serving coffee, juice, and pastry on morning trips and beverages in the evening. This service disappeared after the August 7, 1978 timetables.

MTA Metro-North Railroad (East)

Metro-North provided details of several recently awarded contracts for motive power and rolling stock. The M-8 contract for 300 (210 plus first option for 90)

(Continued on page 8)

NEW YORK DIVISION BULLETIN - JANUARY, 2007

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 7)

cars, is being jointly funded by M-N and CDOT. An unexercised option for 80 cars still remains. Kawasaki, the firm that was awarded this contract, will deliver the pilot cars in the third quarter of 2009. Delivery of the production cars will occur in the fourth quarter of 2009 at the rate of 10 cars per month. This rate will permit a faster replacement of the aging M-2 cars, and at the same time reduce the number of M-2s that will go through CSR (critical system replacement). As of early September, 55 pairs (110 cars) had gone through this program.

Also in July, 2006, Brookville Locomotive was awarded a contract for up to 25 switching/shuttle locomotives equipped with HEP (head-end power). Delivery of the first 11 units is set for late this year, with the balance delivered by early 2008. There are also three as-yet unexercised options for Metro-North (5), CDOT (5), and Staten Island Railway (4 – without HEP).

Twenty-four former west-of-Hudson and 80 (40 M-N and 40 CDOT) push/pull cars are being overhauled by Bombardier. Some of the work will replace the lavatories, seating, glazing, floor covering, and evaporators. Trucks, door operators, and sliding doors will be rebuilt/overhauled. These cars are due back by early 2008.

It has been several years since I regularly commuted on the Hudson Line. A special work assignment gave me the opportunity to ride this line for two days in November, 2006. My NJ Transit monthly ticket to NY Penn Station (from a Metro-North west-of-Hudson station) enables me to ride to/from any Zone 5 Hudson Line station (Croton-Harmon to Tarrytown) at no additional charge. The first evening when I arrived at Grand Central Terminal, I was impressed by the fact that all (30) departing trains for nearly one hour already had track assignments. At Penn Station, where I normally board a train, track assignments are posted ten minutes (and sometimes less) prior to the train's departure. What a luxury Metro-North and its commuters have.

During the third week of November, 2006, ***The Journal News*** and other local media that picked up the story reported that one-third of the EMU fleet was out of service due to flat wheels. This autumn phenomenon is caused by fallen leaves on the tracks. The leaves, when crushed by the trains' wheels, produce an oily residue on the tracks, which causes the wheels to slip. It seems that the M-7s' computers interpret the slipping wheels as excessive speed, and automatically apply the brakes, resulting in flat wheels. Metro-North owns a special machine which blasts water at the rate of 20,000 lbs per square inch to clear this residue away. Sand is also applied to the tracks. In the meantime, commuters were forced to stand on many trains that ran short of their normal consists. On November 21, it was reported that 124 cars were so affected. In fact, on the two days that I rode the Hudson Line, there were only four cars

instead of six, and I was among many standees. Other railroads in the metropolitan area also have to contend with this problem. LIRR reported that 20% of its fleet was out of service for the same problem. NJ Transit's trouble-prone areas are the Morris & Essex and Passaic Valley Lines.

To help alleviate crowded conditions on some Hudson Line and Harlem Line trains, during the AM Peak between November 27 and December 22, 2006, some Poughkeepsie trains added stops at Ossining, Tarrytown, or Yonkers. All then continued as expresses to Harlem-125th Street and Grand Central Terminal. During the PM Peak these Grand Central Terminal trains stopped at Croton-Harmon, a station that they normally do not serve: Train #851 (5:12 PM to Beacon), Train #857 (5:50 PM to Poughkeepsie), and Train # 861 (6:15 PM to Poughkeepsie).

On the Harlem Line, in the AM Peak, four Wassaic trains stopped in Chappaqua, then ran express to Harlem-125th Street and Grand Central Terminal. During the PM Peak, the 5:59 PM train to Wassaic added White Plains as a stop.

On December 4, 2006, there was another ***Journal News*** report that even though Metro-North's shop forces were repairing nine cars with flat wheels each day, as of December 1, there were still 80 M-7s out of service. Each wheel can take up to 90 minutes to be fixed on the wheel truing machine. The top officials from Metro-North, the Long Island Rail Road, and Bombardier have been meeting to come up with a solution to this problem.

If you wondered what happened to Metro-North's fleet of SPVs, member Bob Underwood has a partial answer. Seven are in the yard at East Bridgeport. CDOT's are running on Shore Line East as push/pull cars.

Bloomberg News reported that Metro-North is considering the purchase of double-decker cars and/or DMUs when it makes its next equipment purchase. M-N President Peter A. Cannito told MTA's Metro-North committee: "What will come out of that process will be a specification for a vehicle that best suits our needs in a broader sense." DMUs, if purchased, could be used on the Danbury and Waterbury Branches of the New Haven line and the Upper Harlem and Upper Hudson Lines.

The (Stamford) Advocate reported that more of Metro-North's customers are choosing Connecticut stations for their destinations, and Stamford was cited as an example. New statistics from Metro-North show a significant growth in intrastate daily trips between New Haven and Greenwich when compared to the railroad's overall growth for the year. More than 3 million intra-state trips were made from January to October, 2006, which is an increase of 6.5% from the previous year. Overall, ridership on the New Haven Line, which includes trips into Grand Central Terminal and reverse-

(Continued on page 9)

NEW YORK DIVISION BULLETIN - JANUARY, 2007

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 8)

commuting out of New York City into Connecticut, has increased by 3% during the same period. Thanks to member Bill Zucker for this report.

The special timetables for Christmas-New Year's Day were issued, this year with a motif of a mid-19th century scene with a stage coach and people in period dress. This timetable was in effect for December 22, 29, and 31, 2006. Also included were the post-New Year's Eve trains. Because both holidays occurred on Mondays, the inbound commute on Friday was unchanged. From noon until 4 PM, extra trains were operated on all lines. Between 4 and 5 PM, there were minor changes to the regular schedule, and from 5-8:30 PM, there was a reduced schedule. After 8:30 PM, the normal schedule was resumed. On the Saturdays, the regular schedule was in effect, although the "Shoppers Specials" ended on December 23. On Christmas Eve, a Sunday schedule was operated, but on New Year's Eve, there was additional afternoon and evening inbound service and outbound service after midnight. Tickets were gate-collected at Grand Central Terminal. On both Holidays, a regular Sunday schedule was operated.

MTA Metro-North Railroad (West)

There are many reasons that trains can become delayed. Many are commonplace; however, the one that affected Train #50 (5:54 AM Port Jervis/Hoboken) on November 7, 2006 is rare. In a Customer Notice, NJ Transit reported that this train became disabled after striking a deer near the Harriman station. Because #50 is an eastbound train, the locomotive is on the west end, and the animal caused damage to the lead car, which was the cab car. Had it been the other way around, there probably would not have been such a problem, at least for the train. The crew was unable to correct the problem, so its follower, Train #52 (6:06 AM Port Jervis) coupled up to it, but not after experiencing additional mechanical problems. Finally, shortly after 8 AM, the combined train proceeded. Train #54 (6:54 AM Port Jervis) was also delayed. For a frame of reference, the aforementioned trains are scheduled to arrive in Hoboken at 8:01, 8:20, and 9:03 AM, respectively.

Getaway trains were operated on both the Port Jervis (1) and Pascack Valley Lines (2), which resulted in the cancellations of later trains. Additional pre- and post-New Year's Eve trains were operated between Port Jervis and Hoboken. There was no service on the Pascack Valley Line on either Christmas or New Year's Day.

To comply with the service agreement that was approved last July 1, Metro-North pays rental fees to NJ Transit when the required number of locomotives is not available, for a variety of reasons, including units undergoing overhaul. To this end, Metro-North will purchase four of NJ Transit's F-40s at a cost of \$450,000 apiece. At press time, the numbers of these four locomotives

were not available. The \$1.8 million purchase price will obviate \$1.3 million in rental payments to NJ Transit for the period 2005-09.

Connecticut Department of Transportation

Each year since 1995, CDOT has operated a "Candy Cane Express," which carries children who are suffering from cancer and blood diseases, but are well enough to take a train ride, to meet Santa. The train runs between New Haven and South Norwalk. Originally the train only ran from New Haven to Derby. This, the 12th year, the event took place on December 2, with the following consist: 6696 (GP-40PH-2)-1732-1730-1734 (ex-VRE rebuilt)-1697 *Sleeping Giant* (Bombardier)-1738 (ex-VRE)-1001 (ex-SPV Lounge/Cab Car)-6695 (GP-40PH-2). Thanks to Bob Underwood for this report.

MTA Long Island Rail Road

A Montauk Branch timetable with "Revised 11/06" was available during the week of November 13, 2006.

Another set of timetables was issued for the period December 18, 2006-February 25, 2007. All covers offer Season's Greetings with the wording that the timetable includes extra Holiday service for the Port Washington, Port Jefferson, Ronkonkoma, Babylon, Long Beach, and Montauk Branches. This extra service could be pre-Holiday, Holiday, or post New Year's Eve. It depends on the branch.

Just how much monetary damage have the armrests caused in the four years since the M-7s have been in service? The answer, which was reported in *The New York Times*, is \$102,009.17. M-7 armrests, which are made of a rubber-like material, are long and narrow and can slide easily into a trouser pocket as passengers sit down. Upon standing, the passenger's pocket can get snagged and become torn. The range of reimbursement has been between \$10 (minor tailor repairs) and \$1,000 (a new suit). A prototype of an improved version was due for testing last month. It will be shorter and made of a smoother plastic. Metro-North officials said replacing the armrests in its 336 M-7 cars could cost from \$1.5 million to \$2.5 million. The Long Island Rail Road did not have an estimate of replacement costs on its 836 M-7 cars.

A "Watch the Gap" brochure, which begins with the statement: "We're taking this opportunity to remind you that all Long Island Rail Road stations have gaps – the space between the train and the platform. This is necessary for the safe passage of our trains," was available during late November, 2006. The rest of the message deals with safety at stations and boarding and exiting trains.

While riding on the "Farewell to the M-1" trip on November 4, 2006, a member of the Long Island Sunrise Trail Chapter of the NRHS passed out recent copies of its publication, *Semaphore*. In the September 2006 issue, there was an article from *Long Island Newsday* about the demolition of PD Tower in Patchogue. Built in

(Continued on page 10)

NEW YORK DIVISION BULLETIN - JANUARY, 2007

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 9)

1912, it had been one of the three remaining operating signal towers on the LIRR. It is probably safe to say that at one time there were dozens. Now the remaining towers are at Locust Valley on the Oyster Bay Branch and in Fresh Pond (Queens). Local officials had considered its preservation, however this was complicated by the estimated \$30,000 cost to stabilize PD, which had become known as "The Leaning Tower of Patchogue." Another problem was that PD was located on railroad property, it could not be accessed by the public, and moving it to another location was not deemed feasible. PD was the last location on Long Island where train orders were "hooped up" to the engineer. A longstanding railroad tradition has come to an end.

LIRR will spend \$2.3 million to renovate the Shea Stadium station and to study the feasibility of linking it to the Main Line. \$1.6 million has been allocated for short-term improvements at the station.

NJ Transit

I received an e-mail on November 19, 2006 from member Bob Kingman that he had seen multi-level cars 7002, 7504, and 7506 at Kenwood Yards in Albany.

NJ Transit announced that all of its multi-level cars would receive a commemorative plaque to recognize "the strong ties between NJ Transit and the host communities." (Between December 13, 1972 and September 23, 1983, PATH did a similar thing; however, after the cars were overhauled, most of the plaques were removed.) The first nine cars will be named for Trenton, Hamilton, West Windsor, Edison, Rahway, Woodbridge, Elizabeth, Newark and Summit. Eventually a list will be compiled showing the names of each of the 234 cars, and it will be published in the **Bulletin**. Readers' help is requested.

Five days prior to their debut, color brochures on glossy paper were available describing the safety features of these cars. The two-sided brochure is printed in English and Spanish. Just in case you are interested, in Spanish, a multi-level car is "vagones multinevel."

On December 11, 2006, almost 15 months after the first multi-level car (MLV) was introduced, the first train operated. I was at NY Penn for the arrival on Track 11 of Train #3844 (12 Noon Trenton), which had the following consist: E-4627 (ALP-46)-7504-7506-7202-7505-7503-7002-W. There were numerous NJ Transit officials and police, as well as railfans, none of whom I knew. No one I saw was deterred from taking photos. A color brochure was produced by Bombardier and I picked up a few copies that had been placed on the seats. Most of the news reports spoke favorably that NJ Transit had eliminated the "dreaded" middle seats, but the seats, as colorful as they are in their two-tone blue, do not flip, so half of the seated passengers will always be riding backwards.

On December 11, there were only 9 cars on the property. The balance will be delivered at the rate of 10 cars per month beginning in February, and continuing until all 234 are in service.

In a paragraph above, I wrote that the cars will be named; however, on this day this process had not yet started. I was told that the plaque will be placed near the Bombardier builder's plate.

This first trainset was initially assigned to the following trains: #3910 (5:10 AM Trenton), #3817 (6:32 AM NY Penn), and #3934 (8:51 AM Trenton).

There is a correction to what appeared in the November, 2006 **Bulletin**. The cars to be transferred from the Newark Division to replace Comet Is in the Hoboken Division are the Comet IV and Comet V cars. There was no mention of the Comet IIIs.

The sole remaining commuter club car in the northeastern United States, and only one of two in the entire country, was the focus of an article in the New Jersey and Region section of **The New York Times** (December 10, 2006). Rebuilt Comet II, 5459 operates on Train #3269, 5:33 PM NY Penn/Long Branch. Nothing has changed since I wrote about this train in the May, 2005 **Bulletin**. The article reported that the annual fee to join the 28 members of the Jersey Shore Commuters Club is \$1,700 plus the regular commuter fare (monthly fare, Long Branch to NY Penn, is \$309), and there is one other detail. Prospective members must fill out an application and be approved by the Board. The car, which is leased from NJ Transit, has 32 seats in the club's section, so there was still space for a few additional members. In the morning, the car is part of Train #3224, which departs Long Branch at 7:11 AM. The other commuter club car operates on a Metra train in Chicago.

From my purely unscientific observations, most of the trains in the Hoboken Division are powered by the new Alstom-built PL-42s, and by mid-November, 2006, I had seen all 33 (4000-4032).

A Service Advisory was issued for the period December 22-29, 2006, as follows:

- Fridays, December 22 and 29 – Regular weekday schedule, with Getaway service operating in the afternoon on the Morris & Essex, Northeast Corridor, North Jersey Coast, Pascack Valley, and Raritan Valley Lines
- Saturday and Sunday, December 29-30 – Weekend schedule
- Monday, December 25 – Weekend/major holiday schedule on all lines except for the Montclair-Boonton and Pascack Valley Lines
- Tuesday-Friday, December 26-29 – Regular weekday schedule with two additional mid-morning/early afternoon trains on the Morris & Essex, Northeast Corridor, and North Jersey

(Continued on page 11)

NEW YORK DIVISION BULLETIN - JANUARY, 2007

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 10)

Coast Lines

NY Penn Station will be getting a new entrance at W. 31st St. & Seventh Avenue, allowing riders to bypass the congested main entrance at W. 32nd Street. Yonkers Contracting Company was awarded this contract, valued at \$13,750,000. Construction should begin soon and be completed by mid-2008. This new facility will be ADA-compliant, and include elevators, escalators, and stairs connecting to the existing NJ Transit concourse. The entrance will feature a barrel-vaulted ceiling with exposed, open trusses reminiscent of the original Penn Station. Also included are lighting, signage, train display information, and a public address system. NJ Transit is also funding other projects in the area of Penn Station, including lengthening of four tracks and the T.H.E Tunnel, which will feature a new terminal under W 34th Street between 8th and 6th Avenues.

Metropark, which opened on November 11, 1971, will be renovated under a \$29.8 million contract, which was awarded to Anselmi & DeCicco, Incorporated of Maplewood, New Jersey. Two new, longer, and wider high-level platforms will be capable of accommodating longer trains—up to 12 cars. There will also be wider wind-screen protection and canopies, climate-controlled waiting shelters, an expanded and refurbished station building, new staircases, a renovated pedestrian tunnel, and other customer amenities such as new customer communication systems, lighting, and signage. In addition, a new pedestrian connection from Route 27 to the station platforms will be constructed. Construction could already be underway and is to be completed in 2010.

Commuters have complained that the automated signs and public address announcements at Secaucus Transfer do not work very well, and improvements are on the way. On November 9, 2006, NJ Transit announced that it has been developing a new real-time customer information system, and Secaucus Transfer will be the first station where it will be installed. This system will automatically announce train arrivals and display this information on the electronic information boards that are located throughout the station. Future plans call for this system to be installed in other major terminals, such as Newark Penn Station.

Bob Underwood wrote that a "TROLLEY COMING" sign has been installed at Lombardy Street on Atlantic Street, just south of the Atlantic Street station. It lights up whenever a trolley approaches in either direction to warn motorists. Also, near the NJ Performing Arts Center, there is a sign for pedestrians which reads: "LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP." What Bob found interesting is that the sign appears as a composite – because the car that is shown is numbered in (HBLRT's) 2000-series, while the IDT building is shown in the background.

Here are some additional details of the one-mile

HBLRT extension from 22nd Street to W. 8th Street. The alignment will continue from the elevated 22nd Street station parallel to the Conrail right-of-way along Avenue E. A viaduct will carry the LRVs over local streets to an elevated platform at the new 8th Street station. In addition to the stairways, there will also be an elevator. The station will be located on the east side of Avenue C on the south side of 8th Street, as a result of meetings with members of the community. Architecturally, the building will be reminiscent of the CNJ station that once stood near the site. Construction is expected to start in 2008 with completion in late 2009.

Between the hours of 4 and 8 PM on Friday, December 8, 2006, a Homeland Security Preparedness Exercise was held along several of NJ Transit's rail lines. A Customer Notice informed passengers that rail service would not be affected during this time, but there could be emergency vehicles and personnel at stations. News reports told of similar exercises at LIRR and PATH.

Amtrak

Due to the derailment of a CSX freight train at Bowie, Maryland during the evening of November 16, 2006, the Amtrak Main Line was shut down. The train was a coal drag going to or coming off the branch to Indian Head. MARC lost the last few trips of the night and Amtrak suspended service. This is after a rush hour that saw flooding on all three lines and delays of 15 minutes on Camden, to 30-60 on the Penn Line, to 90 or more on the Brunswick Line. On November 17, New York metropolitan area traffic reports told of limited service to Washington, D.C. Thanks to member Steve Erlitz for this report.

Port Authority of New York & New Jersey

A \$26 billion, 10-year capital plan was approved by the Board on December 14, 2006. More than one-third of these funds are to be used for the upkeep of the agency's bridges and tunnels. \$8 billion will fund projects at the World Trade Center site, while \$2 billion has been committed to the T.H.E. Tunnel. Another \$2 billion has been allocated for MTA's Second Avenue Subway, #7 Extension to the Javits Convention Center, and East Side Access Projects.

Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation

I picked up a card at Hoboken that announced a new service for PATH riders, PATHAlerts. After registering, you will receive notifications to your computer, cell phone, pager, or PDA when delays of 15 minutes or more occur on your designated trip. PATH also plans to send service updates, construction advisories, and customer notices.

Thanksgiving 2006

The rail operators that normally issue special timetables for the Thanksgiving period did so again in 2006. Amtrak's was Form 5, and while last year it announced that 60 additional trains would be operated, in the 2006 edition, the number of extra trains was not specified.

(Continued on page 12)

NEW YORK DIVISION BULLETIN - JANUARY, 2007

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 11)

There was a mention that on Saturday and Sunday, Amtrak may use cars borrowed from commuter rail agencies to run the "Holiday Extra" (3000-series) trains, and that those cars might not be what can be expected from Amtrak. This is true, especially when it comes to restrooms. I can remember a Thanksgiving Day morning at Harrison, New Jersey many years ago where the "Holiday Extra" train was comprised of SEPTA Silverliners, which do not have accommodation.

On November 22, 2006, while waiting for a Metro-North train at New Haven, Bob Underwood saw Amtrak Train #495, which was composed of a pair of P-42s (104 and 102) on each end, with two CDOT former SPVs. Then on Sunday, November 26, he observed Train #463, which turned for Train #464. It was made up of P-42 133 with CDOT (SPV) 1671, Amfleet 44706, and CDOT cab car (SPV) 1675.

Metro-North published its usual special Thanksgiving timetables for each of its lines. This time, there was an antique bowl loaded with fruits on the cover. There was also a banner announcing lots of holiday service and that off-peak fares would be in effect Thursday through Sunday. On Thanksgiving Day 2005, Metro-North reported that it "gate-collected" the tickets of 25,000 customers between the hours of 10 AM and 2 PM at Grand Central Terminal and Harlem-125th Street. Here is another statistic: On Thanksgiving Day, the railroad expected that more than 100,000 would use its services. An analysis of ridership has shown that on the day after Thanksgiving, only 23% of commuters ride the trains, and discretionary ridership was up 103% over a normal weekday. This special timetable addresses that unique travel pattern and other needs during this four-day period. Service operated following the pattern that it has fine-tuned over the years.

West-of-Hudson, there was one extra inbound train, #94 (6:19 AM Port Jervis/Hoboken), and an outbound Train #91 (12:15 PM Hoboken/Port Jervis).

On Thanksgiving Day there were six additional inbound trains on these LIRR branches: Port Jefferson (1), Ronkonkoma (2), Wantagh (2), and Speonk (1). Outbound, there were nine: Port Jefferson (1), Farmingdale (1), Ronkonkoma (3), Babylon (3), and Speonk (1). Off-peak fares were in effect throughout the holiday.

NJ Transit Early Getaway Service for November 22 was operated on the Morris & Essex, Northeast Corridor, North Jersey Coast, Pascack Valley, Port Jervis, and Raritan Valley Lines. In some cases, later trains were cancelled. On Thanksgiving Day, NJ Transit operated weekend/holiday schedules with additional train service on the Morris & Essex and Northeast Corridor Lines, as was reported in the December, 2006 **Bulletin**. No service was operated on the Montclair-Boonton or Pascack Valley Lines.

Over the years, on several Thanksgiving Day mornings, I have stood on the Harrison platform to record (on paper and film) Amtrak's Holiday trains. However, this year, we accepted an invitation to spend Thanksgiving in Massachusetts with my daughter's future in-laws.

Scheduled for 2006

At the time that this column was submitted for publication, all of the data on the remaining openings, etc. for the month of December, 2006 was not available. It will appear in the February **Bulletin**.

Scheduled for 2007

The table below shows the best available information about transit projects/expansions of service that are scheduled to occur this year.

DATE	OPERATOR	CITY	LINE	NOTES
January 13	Muni	San Francisco	T/Third Street	4 th /King to Visitacion Valley; 5.6 miles, 18 stations (weekends only)
Early January	Mid-Council of Governments and New Mexico DOT	Albuquerque	RailRunner	Belen; 1 station
Late January	Mid-Council of Governments and New Mexico DOT	Albuquerque	RailRunner	Downtown Bernalillo; 1 station
March	Mid-Council of Governments and New Mexico DOT	Albuquerque	RailRunner	Rio Bravo/Airport; 1 station
April 7	Muni	San Francisco	T/Third Street	4 th /King to Visitacion Valley; full time
Mid-year	NJ Transit	Whitehouse	Raritan Valley	Whitehouse Siding
Summer	MBTA	Providence	Providence-Stoughton	Extension from Providence to T.F.Green Airport
Summer	MBTA	Boston	Greenbush	Braintree-Scituate; 17.7 miles; 7 stations
Summer	Metro	Seattle	Waterfront	Service restored
Fall	RTA	New Orleans	St. Charles	Service restored
November	CATS	Charlotte	South Corridor	9.6 miles, 15 stations
December	NJ Transit	Mount Arlington	Boonton	Mount Arlington station opens
December 31	NCTD	Oceanside-Escondido	Sprinter	22 miles, 15 stations

Other Transit Systems

Boston, Massachusetts

Just before Thanksgiving, 2006, the "T" installed fare
(Continued on page 13)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 12)

vending machines at every terminal at Logan Airport. One week earlier, it was announced that the long-anticipated *CharlieCard*, which became the least expensive way to ride on the "T" as of January 1, would be distributed beginning December 4. And they were. These free (plastic) cards were available at a number of retail outlets, including convenience stores and several supermarket chains. They were also distributed at key stations during rush hours, and are expected to last about three to five years. The *CharlieTicket* is on paper stock. Member Todd Glickman was kind enough to send me one.

Four days into the distribution, it was reported that by the end of Thursday (December 7), 284,000 of the cards had been distributed. From Monday to Wednesday, there were 21,336 *CharlieCard* transactions at fare vending machines. It is believed that riders seem to be biding their time, or using up their *CharlieTickets*, or have been unable to get a card. The average value added to a *CharlieCard* was \$6.51.

On December 6, at 10:23 AM at the Government Center station, a beaming and beautiful 47-year-old woman from East Boston became the last person to buy a token. The turnstiles at the station were removed later in the day. If you still have tokens, you can insert them into one of the *CharlieCard* vending machines and receive instant credit on a *CharlieCard*. For the time being at least, those who have tokens have not lost anything, and they have gained something depending on how much those tokens cost when purchased. *CharlieCards* offer free bus-to-subway transfers, while *CharlieTickets* do not.

For the second time in three years, fares went up on January 1 after the MBTA Board decided that there was no other way to balance its budget. This approval came over the objections of elected officials and the protests of riders, who booed the final vote. The fares for subways and trolleys went from \$1.25 to \$1.70, bus fares from 90 cents to \$1.25, and the cost of commuter rail passes rose between 22 and 28%. For those who do not use *CharlieCards*, it will cost even more: \$2 to ride subways and trolleys and \$1.50 to ride buses. Governor-elect Deval L. Patrick also opposed the fare increase, saying it does not make sense when the "T"'s ridership is falling, though he said he recognizes the transit agency's financial troubles. According to ***The Boston Globe***, he also said that "the MBTA revenue system needs a good long look and significant reform, but raising the fares is the wrong answer." In spite of all of this, Todd Glickman, who sent this report, noted that the media never mentions (when comparing to other cities) that Boston is one of the only cities -- if not the only city -- where a commuter rail monthly pass includes unlimited access to the subway and bus system. This

makes it a much better value.

Delivery of the new fleet of 94 cars for the Blue Line is now three years behind schedule. According to a report in ***The Boston Globe***, Siemens was awarded the contract in January, 2001, with the first cars to be delivered in January, 2004. A time extension was requested and granted which deferred that date until September, 2004. The company cited these reasons for the request: the company making the cars' suspension system went out of business; also, the upstate New York firm that was starting to assemble the cars changed ownership twice during the contract. Some of the problems that have been discovered in the pilot cars include leaking front and side doors, smoking air-conditioning systems, and the seams of floor coverings did not meet smoothly and had to be whittled down with knives. With regard to the latter, Daniel A. Grabauskas, general manager of the MBTA said: "It looked like a kid had done this. This is the equivalent of having linoleum installed in your kitchen, and they can't even do that...The word, in plain English, is sloppiness." When the order is delivered, the plan is to run 6-car trains instead of the present 4-car trains. The "T" still has problems with Breda, which is years behind in the delivery of the Type 8 LRVs.

Because of its distance from New York, Boston is one northeastern city where I have not ridden the entire commuter rail network. Since we were in Worcester for Thanksgiving, we decided to spend some time in Boston. Arriving in Boston on Friday afternoon, I went directly to South Station, where I left my wife and sister-in-law with the car. (They wound up at Quincy Market, as I learned after returning to South Station.) As we had an early invitation for dinner, I had to choose a line that was not too long, and the Fairmount Line fit the bill. Its 9.1 miles length requires about 20 minutes each way. All passengers were easily accommodated in one car of the six-car train. I did see that construction was well along for one of the four proposed new stations. This one was located between Uphams Corner and Morton Street. It appeared that some land clearing had been done at another site in preparation for a station.

The next day, I rode the Green Line from Science Park to North Station over the new alignment into the subway. At this station trolleys operate on two levels: outbound cars are above the inbound cars, which share the platform with Forest Hills-bound Orange Line trains. Oak Grove trains have their own platform on the same level. I exited the station to visit the "new" North Station, which is the terminus for the commuter trains that operate on the former Boston & Maine lines. What I found unusual was that here is a brand new station, and there is no direct access from one station to the other. Passengers must exit to the street and walk about 100 feet and then enter North Station. Thinking that maybe I might have missed seeing that and there was in fact a direct entrance from the subway into North Station, I

(Continued on page 14)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 13)

asked Todd to confirm this. He replied: "way back when, there was supposed to be a building on top of what is now the parking lot in front of the 'new' Garden (where the 'old' Garden was). But, for a variety of reasons, it never happened. So we must brave the elements as you noted." Some construction work was still going on and during my Saturday morning there was one train arrival and one departure. There were a large number of passengers awaiting the 12 Noon departure of *Downeaster* Train #693 to Portland, Maine. Its consist was 90220 (Cabbage), one café car, three Amfleet coaches, and 106 (P-42). *Downeaster* logos were on 90220.

Returning to the Green/Orange Line station, a customer service agent showed me how to "convert" my MBTA token into the \$1.25 *CharlieTicket* that I needed to pass through the fare gate. There were a number of *CharlieTicket* vending machines which are very much like NYC Transit's touch screen *MetroCard* vending machines. They accept cash, credit, and debit cards. There were also some metal stands with clear plastic bags designed to hold the used *CharlieTickets*, and I during my visit, I did not see any of them lying around on the station floors. After I got home, I compared the *CharlieTicket* with the SingleRide *MetroCard*, and found that the "T"s was made of a slightly stiffer stock that had a smoother feel to it. I made a round-trip on the E Line to Brigham Circle. According to the operator of the car on which I was riding, the line was cut back while the tracks beyond to Heath Street are rebuilt so that the Type 8 Bredas can operate there. By the way, all of the Type 7s that I saw had "Type 8" painted on their couplers to signify that the car can be coupled with that group of cars. After a quick turn we departed for Lechmere, and the operator permitted me to ride around the loop. I rejoined my wife and sister-in-law at the Science Museum, where they had just ended a sightseeing tour using one of the Duck Boats. For the remainder of our time in Boston, we visited the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

SEPTA timetables were issued for all lines not already mentioned in the December, 2006 *Bulletin*, also with an October 29 date. There was one exception, on R2/Warminster, which went into effect on November 24, 2006. Continuing a practice that was recently begun, the covers have a banner that explaining the major changes. In the case of the latter, weekday midday service was restored. Thanks to members David W. Saford and Greg Campolo for sending copies.

The replica trolley (September and November, 2006 *Bulletins*) has been installed at SEPTA's 37th Street Subway-Surface station on the University of Pennsylvania campus, and member Bob Wright sent a report.

"The 'trolley' serves as the kiosk for the west entrance stairway for the eastbound platform of the station. For those who may recall earlier days, this stairway was enclosed in a round glass pavilion for many years, and an escalator was located alongside the stairway. The escalator has long since been removed. The trolley is supposed to represent one of PTC's 8000-series Peter Witt cars (the number, 1956, and the Route, 56, cite the Class of 1956 which donated this gift). The real 8000s were single-ended and had sliding center doors, so the offside doors are not technically a prototype (and no Philadelphia double-enders had center doors - these are more akin to Brooklyn's 8000-series cars?), but the colors are fairly accurate and the PTC logo is dead-on."



Robert Wright photograph

From *Cinders*: Last November 15 marked the 75th anniversary of the day that the Philadelphia & Western placed its first *Bullet* cars into service between 69th Street and Norristown. Cars 200-209 ran until October, 1990, amassing a pretty remarkable record for longevity. At the end, a series of accidents took their toll on the fleet; nonetheless, several have been preserved at museums.

Raleigh, North Carolina

Member Joe Canfield sent an article from the *Carolina Journal* updating the report in the October, 2006 *Bulletin* concerning the Triangle Transit Authority's proposed 28-mile DMU operation. The article reported that TTA is attempting to go ahead with the \$810 million project despite lack of federal aid. Joe wrote that the agency appears to be using a technique used by private railways in Japan of having retail outlets at principal stations to raise revenue. This would be done with a private developer who would create business near the 12 proposed stations.

Chicago, Illinois

Member Jim Beeler sent copies of the Holiday Train schedule that was operated on November 18 and 19,

(Continued on page 15)

NEW YORK DIVISION BULLETIN - JANUARY, 2007

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 14)

2006 on the Red/Purple Lines. This train also operated on other lines November 24-26 and December 1, 6-9, 13-16, and 18-21.

Jim also reported that the Grand & Cicero station opened on Monday, December 11, 2006. At that time the Cragin and Hermosa stations on the Milwaukee District/West Line to Elgin were closed. New schedules were also issued for the Milwaukee District/North (Fox Lake) and North Central Lines to Antioch. Thanks, Jim, for sending copies.

Little Rock, Arkansas

Possibly in late November or early December, 2006 (there was no date on the press release), CAT announced the following: "Beginning Monday, Third Street at World Avenue will be closed for up to two weeks while the special track is installed in Third Street and on the Clinton Library/Heifer International Platform adjacent to World Avenue. World Avenue will remain open and access to Heifer International should be made via World Avenue from the south. After this work is complete, the final overhead power wire, final paving and striping, and signage will be completed and this will take until the end of December. Acceptance testing and training will take another two weeks. We will announce an opening day and associated events in a few weeks."

Kansas City, Missouri

Kansas City once again has a PCC. According to the web site www.kctransit.org/streetcar.htm, 551 was built by the St. Louis Car Company for Kansas City Public Service, where it ran from 1947 to 1957. It was then sold to the Toronto Transportation Commission, where it ran as 4752 (1957-73), and finally to San Francisco Municipal Railway as 1190 (1973-79). The car was then sold to the Bay Area Electric Railroad Association in 1979 and was moved to the Western Railway Museum, in Rio Vista, California, where it had been since. RTA purchased the streetcar from the museum for \$15,000. Restoration costs are approximately \$95,000. On November 22, the car was placed outside of Union Station. Thanks to member Frank Pfuhler for this report from

The Kansas City Star.

Denver, Colorado

Thanks to information that appears on a web site sent by member John Pappas, <http://forum.skyscraperpage.com/showthread.php?t=120343>, I learned that about 60% of the tracks for the recently opened Southeast Corridor LRT were made from steel recycled from the old Mile High Stadium. This facility was dismantled to make way for the Denver Broncos' current home, Invesco Field. To commemorate that fact, the tracks have this imprint in them: "MILE HIGH TO T-REX." The aforementioned site has lots of pictures that were taken on Opening Day, November 19, 2006.

Salt Lake City, Utah

On Election Day, November 7, 2006, voters in Salt Lake County voted to approve an increase in the sales tax by one quarter-cent to fund rail and road improvements. It was listed on the ballot as Proposition 3. Proponents emphasized that the rest of the money would help speed construction of four TRAX lines and the Salt Lake County leg of FrontRunner, the Utah Transit Authority commuter rail system. The next step was for the legislative Executive Appropriations Committee to approve the county mayors' system of choosing which projects would be built first. The matter was on the committee's November 17, 2006 agenda. The tax hike would yield about \$50 million a year, of which \$11 million would buy land for the west side Mountain View Corridor highway, with the rest going for new TRAX light-rail lines, commuter rail to Utah County and perhaps 23 small road projects.

Albuquerque, New Mexico

At the end of November, RailRunner once again revised the opening dates for some of its stations. Sandia Pueblo and Isleta Pueblo are now listed as "To Be Determined."

- Los Lunas – December 11, 2006
- Belen – Early January, 2007
- Downtown Bernalillo – Late January, 2007
- Rio Bravo/Airport – March, 2007

Seattle, Washington

On November 9, 2006, the Sound Transit Board approved a contract with North Link Transit Partners to provide civil engineering and architectural final design services for the University Link project. University Link is a 3.15-mile light rail extension from downtown Seattle to the University of Washington, with stations at Capitol Hill and on the UW campus near Husky Stadium. Preliminary engineering for University Link was completed last spring. Final design will begin after permission is received from the Federal Transit Administration. That was expected to occur last month.

Portland, Oregon

Construction began in October, 2006 on the Washington County Commuter Rail Project. This 14.7-mile line will connect Beaverton and Wilsonville. The planning for this line, which will utilize the existing trackage of the Portland & Western Railroad, goes back to 1996. Tri-Met officials are currently working with Colorado Rail Car to design and build the DMUs that will be used. When service begins in September, 2008, 30-minute headways are planned for the rush hours. The trip time end-to-end will be 27 minutes.

Sacramento, California

John Pappas sent some photos of the Amtrak extension, which opened on December 15, 2006. Test cars had been operating since November 19. Besides testing the LRVs, Pacific Gas & Electric 35 was also tested.

(Continued on page 16)

TECH TALK

by Jeffrey Erlitz

Back on December 16, 2006, there were only sixteen M-1s left on the Long Island Rail Road and only eight of them were in service. Due probably to the high out-of-service rate for M-7s with flat wheels, they are hanging on longer than we expected. On December 21, I personally rode train #1629 from Huntington to Penn Station with four of the remaining eight M-1s in the consist; 9533-4 lead and 9609-10 trailed right behind with eight M-3s following.

Though the new Mineola Intermodal Center opened back on October 16, 2006, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held there almost two weeks later, on October 27. The parking garage has 966 parking spaces and also includes a MTA Police facility as well as offices for Long Island Bus and the operator of the garage, Standard Parking.

October 18, 2006 saw the award of a \$1.6 million contract for the Valley Stream Parking Improvements project to Pioneer Landscaping & Asphalt Paving, Incorpo-

rated. Two parking lots to the east of the station will be reconstructed and will expand parking capacity by 194 spaces.

LIRR would like to do some additional parking rehabilitation work at Ronkonkoma. There is a lot located north of Railroad Avenue and east of the station building that apparently has fallen into a state of disrepair. Currently, the Long Island Rail Road owns and operates this lot, but if this facility is rebuilt, operation and maintenance will be turned over to the Town of Brookhaven. Around 380 parking spaces would be affected. By reconfiguring the spaces within the existing footprint, 21 new spaces would be created.

In a separate but related project at Ronkonkoma, the north parking lot, east of Smithtown Avenue, was opened for public use on November 27, 2006. This project rehabilitated 335 parking spaces.

The Long Island Rail Road received MTA Board approval
(Continued on page 17)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 15)

It will be used for a potential downtown streetcar line in the next year or two. John wondered when that car last saw the depot, and guessed that this probably was in the early 1940s.

Zurich and Basel, Switzerland

John also spent a long weekend in these two wonderful cities, and sent this report. "Got a chance to finish acquainting myself with the Zurich tram system, in my opinion one of the best designed and run in the world. It's the place one needs to go to every once in a while just to remind yourself how world-class streetcar systems are operated.

"Also got to Basel for one day, it was my first visit. It is quite a nice city, more French in architecture, although it is still in the German-speaking part of the country. It's located on the Rhine River, at the corner of both the German and French borders (both within a block of the end of a couple of tram lines). Basel allowed me to finally experience the somewhat troubled but universally purchased Siemens Combino. I actually found them very pleasant to ride, which is a first for 100 percent low-floor cars. The other ones I've experienced are noisy and rough riding. This particular order features the second longest Combino at 43 meters (141 feet). On the other hand, it was apparent as to why it's taken so long for Zurich to accept and mainstream its Bombardier Cobras...they've got all the defects mentioned previously plus a bunch of teething problems that are finally getting resolved.

"I also wanted to sample the trolleybus operations in both cities. Zurich still has a substantial operation, six or seven lines and something close to 50 buses, mostly Mercedes artics. Basel has only one line left out of three or four. They have rerouted most of the lines away from the wires and their 1993-era Neoplan artics are getting old with no replacement planned. Eight are in service on line 31, a relatively short line, but interesting in that it follows the Rhine. As with Dayton, Ohio and Edmonton, Alberta, there is a local advocacy group pressuring management to come up with plans to once again make use of the substantial amount of twin overhead still up and mostly unused."

From the History Files

100 Years Ago: On January 13, 1907, the first test train was operated in the Market Street Subway by the Philadelphia Transportation Company. At the beginning, it extended as far west as 23rd Street. Later extensions would reach 69th Street. Subsequently, the Frankford portion was added. The entire line is in the process of being rebuilt.

25 Years Ago: January 4, 1982, was the official date that MTA extended service from Brewster to Brewster North. The reason for this new station, which is located 1.4 miles north of Brewster, was to provide additional parking. As was reported in the October, 2006 **Bulletin**, town officials have reported that commuters are no longer shopping in the village. Brewster North was renamed Southeast effective with issuance of the October 26, 2003 timetables.

News items and comments concerning this column may be emailed to NYDnewseditor@aol.com.

NEW YORK DIVISION BULLETIN - JANUARY, 2007

Tech Talk

(Continued from page 16)

proval for short-term improvements at the Shea Stadium station and a feasibility study for a new Main Line link to Shea Stadium. For \$1.7 million, the railroad would install new lighting, canopy roofing, painting, platform and stair repairs, and other miscellaneous improvements. Work would be completed by August. The study would look at the feasibility of constructing a new link from the Main Line to the Port Washington Branch to enable direct service between Jamaica and Shea Stadium. It would like to start this study in February. On a historical note, during the 1964-5 World's Fair, the railroad operated several shuttle trains per day from Jamaica to the Fair, but not in rush hours. These trains had a second Engineer at the rear of the train, which would change directions at Win Interlocking at the junction of the Port Washington Branch and Main Line. There was also one train direct from Babylon to the Fair. Win Interlocking was discontinued in 1977, after a fire destroyed the interlocking tower, and all of the crossovers were subsequently removed. However, three new crossovers are supposed to be installed in that vicinity for a new Wood Interlocking to facilitate yet another reconfiguration of Harold Interlocking for the East Side Access project. Depending on how these new crossovers are laid out, the possibility may exist to simply replicate the World's Fair service from over forty years ago for a one-seat ride from Jamaica to Shea Stadium.

On November 20, the western 800 feet of high-level platform, complete with lighting, public address system, and tactile warning strip, was placed in service at Rosedale on the Atlantic Branch, thus reaching the interim beneficial use phase. Further work will include an elevator, and the platform will ultimately accommodate 10 cars.

The design firm of Daniel Frankfurt was awarded a contract on November 28, 2006 to extend the railroad's Maintenance of Way Repair Facility in Holban Yard. Holban Yard (a contraction of Hollis and St. Albans) is located along the Montauk Branch east of Jamaica. The design will include a building extension and contain two tracks and an overhead crane to service track equipment.

As of October, 2006, the railroad's mean distance between failure rates were as follows:

CLASS	MDBF
M-1	32,304
M-3	44,831
M-7	259,589
Diesel	49,331
<i>Fleet</i>	<i>102,122</i>

Metro North's mean distance between failure rates for November were:

CLASS	MDBF
M-1	64,125
M-2	83,030
M-3	59,614
M-4	43,708
M-6	38,534
M-7	95,261
FL-9,10,M	16,172
P-32	23,493
P-40	1,670
Coach	307,509
<i>Fleet</i>	<i>78,563</i>

Elsewhere on Metro North, bids for construction services were received on November 29, 2006 for Phase III of the Upper Harlem Station Rehabilitation project. This group includes the stations from Patterson through Wassaic.

Bids were received on November 13, 2006 for the Package I portion (Hastings, Dobbs Ferry, and Irvington) of Phase II of the Hudson Line Station Improvements project. The entire project covers the segment from Hastings to Ossining.

The walk-through for substantial completion was held on November 3, 2006 for Phase II of the Upper Harlem Station Rehabilitation project. This project covered the segment from White Plains to South East (formerly Brewster North).

Bids for construction services were received on November 29, 2006 for the rehabilitation of the Bridge Street bridge in Irvington.

Metro-North sought MTA Board approval to use the Request For Proposal process to solicit proposals from rail car manufacturers to overhaul eight F-40PH locomotives used in west-of-Hudson service.

Returning to the subway system, M.A. Angelides needed a little more time to complete the station rehabilitation project at Livonia Avenue on the 14th Street-Canarsie (**1**) Line, so the southbound platform remained closed from September 15 to September 22.

Under a separate contract (A-35857), M.A. Angelides is working on the station rehabilitation at Mosholu Parkway on the Jerome Avenue (**4**) Line. The northbound platform is closed and trains were schedule to bypass this station in this direction from October 30 to December 31. In previous work under this contract, both the Burnside Avenue and Bedford Park Boulevard stations were completely closed from June 17 to October 16, 2006.

(Continued on page 18)

Around New York's Transit System

Can't Tell the IRT Fleet Without A Scorecard

Some Subdivision "A" (IRT) equipment problems have resulted in a mixing up of the cars, with R-142 cars moving around among routes to which they are regularly assigned (for example, **4**-assigned cars on **2**), more R-62 trains than usual on **4** (from **3**), R-62A cars from **1** being seen on **4**, R-142A cars from **4** being seen on **2**, and R-142A cars from **6** being seen on **4**. This was first observed during mid-October, 2006 and was continuing at press time.

New South Ferry Station

The existing South Ferry station is antiquated; trains started running there on July 10, 1905. Its curved one-way loop accommodates only five cars and requires mechanical gap fillers. There is only one entrance to this station.

NYC Transit's October/November, 2006 **At Your Service** newsletter informs us that this condition will be corrected by building a new two-track terminal south of the existing station with platforms that can accommodate ten-car trains. Passageways will connect the new station with the ferry terminal and will provide a free transfer to the Whitehall Street **N R W** station.

Construction is extremely difficult. To build the turnouts to the new station, the existing tracks were underpinned and **1** service was suspended for several weekends. To accommodate the 500 commuter buses that serve this area during rush hours, the excavation was covered with deck plates. Because the tunnel is below the water table, an extensive dewatering plan was installed and is constantly monitored.

NYC Transit hopes that work will be completed in the summer of 2008, just 26 months after construction started.

Award for E. 180th Street Shop

This shop received a Unit Citation for outstanding maintenance of **5**'s R-142 cars. This fleet recorded the best Mean Distance Between Failures in 20 of 29 months through May, 2006 and achieved a fleet MDBF

in excess of a million miles a month five times.

Unusual Reroutes

The northerly Manhattan Bridge tracks were out of service again during the November 25-26, 2006 weekend. **D** trains from 205th Street were turned at Second Avenue and shuttles were single-tracked between W. 4th Street and Grand Street. **D** trains from Coney Island made local stops on Fourth Avenue and operated via tunnel to Whitehall Street. This was probably the first time that **D** trains were turned at this terminal.

To install welded rail on southbound Track B3 from W. 4th Street to Broadway-Lafayette Street, midnight **D** trains ran in two sections. From November 22-December 15, 2006 (except Thanksgiving Day), Tuesday to Friday, **D** trains from 205th Street were turned at Second Avenue, and **D** trains from Coney Island were turned at W. 4th Street. Southbound trains were single-tracked on northbound Track B4 from W. 4th Street to the crossover north of Broadway-Lafayette Street.

Subway Incident Responsible For the Green Lantern

Martin Nodell, creator of the Green Lantern comic, died on December 12, 2006 at the age of 91. **The New York Times** reported that in 1940, Mr. Nodell was looking for a new idea for a comic strip. While waiting for a train, he saw an "operator" waving a lantern displaying a green light. He imagined a young engineer, Alan Scott, a train-crash survivor who discovers in the debris an ancient lantern forged from a green meteor. Scott constructs a ring from the lamp, which gives him superpowers, and he becomes a crime fighter.

Mr. Nodell was born in Philadelphia and studied in art schools in Chicago and New York. He took his drawings and story lines to All-American Publications, which later became part of DC Comics. He drew it under the name Mart Dellon. The Green Lantern's first appearance was in July, 1940, an eight-page story in a comic book featuring other characters. Soon the character got his own series.

Tech Talk

(Continued from page 17)

Speaking of bypassed stations, Crescent Street (Broadway-Jamaica (**J Z**) Line) was closed from June 17 to November 21, 2006 to allow Ahern Painting, under contract C-33233, to rehabilitate the station.

A new circuit breaker house is being constructed on the Broadway (**R W**) Line at the Canal Street station. From May 5 through November 5, 2006, Tracks B3 and B4, the middle layup tracks, were out of service to facilitate this work. Environmental PAL, under contract E-

30812, is the contractor on this project.

On November 20 and 21, 2006, the new Dispatcher's indication panel and control console at Stillwell Avenue on the West End (**D**) Line was placed in service. This equipment was originally scheduled to be installed under the West End signal contract, S-32344, a few years ago but had to be postponed. It was installed now under the new Jerome Avenue Middle Track signal contract, S-32728. The joint venture of Judlau/TransiTec did the installation.

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