

# The Bulletin



***New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association***

Vol. 46, No. 4

April, 2003

## ***The Bulletin***

Published by the New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association, Incorporated, PO Box 3001, New York, New York 10008-3001.

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## **MTA FARES TO RISE IN MAY**

After a series of ten public hearings, on March 7 the MTA Board voted to increase fares on New York City subways, buses, and Access-A-Ride, as well as on MTA Long Island Railroad and MTA Metro-North Railroad, MTA Long Island Bus, and Able-Ride. In addition, tolls are to increase on MTA Bridges & Tunnels facilities. The railroad fare increases are to take effect May 1 and the subway, bus, and Access-A-Ride/Able-Ride fare increases are to take effect May 4, while the toll increases are to take effect May 18.

In November, 2002, the MTA indicated that it would have a deficit that would approach \$2.8 billion without fare increases and/or service reductions. After this figure was disputed by various elected officials and the New York City Independent Budget Office, the MTA revised its calculation downward, stating that actions it had already taken would reduce the anticipated deficit to \$952 million but that it would not be able to close that gap without receiving the increased fares and/or making the service cuts it had already proposed. The agency is also seeking additional federal and state funding but is not likely to receive any.

In February, the MTA held a series of ten public hearings (one of which was postponed because of the February 17 blizzard). At the hearings, many people (of whom it appeared the majority were elected officials or representatives of the Transport Workers Union and various community and "advocacy" groups) testified, with the chief target of their wrath being a proposal to close 177 token booths (now called "service booths" by NYC Transit). In response, the final proposal approved by the MTA Board cut the number of booths to be closed to 62. In many, if not all,

cases, the entrances/exits slated to lose their booths will still be available to customers, who will use HEETs and HXTs (High Entry/Exit Turnstiles and High Exit Turnstiles) to pass into and out of the station and MVMs (*MetroCard* Vending Machines) to purchase their farecards. Customers will be able to use these facilities 24 hours a day in many cases, whereas previously they were only able to do so when the booth was staffed or for only part of the day whether the booth was staffed or not.

The fare increases approved on March 7 are as follows:

- The base subway, bus (including MTA Long Island Bus), MTA Staten Island Railway, and Access-A-Ride fare rises from \$1.50 to \$2
- The NYC Transit express bus fare increases from \$3 to \$4
- The Able-Ride fare goes from \$3 to \$3.50
- The *MetroCard* one-day "Fun Pass" rises from \$4 to \$7; the seven-day card increases from \$17 to \$21; and the thirty-day card goes from \$63 to \$70
- The thirty-day "Express Bus Plus" *MetroCard* (priced at \$120 and offering free transfers to/from NYC Transit subways and local buses) is replaced by a seven-day pass priced at \$33
- The threshold for *MetroCard* pay-per-ride card bonuses is lowered from \$15 to \$10, and the bonus is increased from 10% to 20%. This works out to 6 rides for the price of 5 (equivalent to 12 rides for the price of 10), rather than 11 rides

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## BRIGHTON LINE SCHEDULE CHANGES (Continued from March, 2003 Issue) by Bernard Linder

### BRIGHTON LOCALS

When the new Chrystie Street Subway opened on November 26, 1967, the new schedules incorporated the most extensive changes in many years. Effective dates were November 27, 1967 (weekdays), December 2, 1967 (Saturdays), and November 26, 1967 (Sundays). Weekday midday, rush hour, and early evening QJ locals were through-routed with Broadway Brooklyn locals and ran between Brighton Beach and 168<sup>th</sup> Street, Jamaica. Several layups and put-ins ran between Brighton Beach and Eastern Parkway at the end of the morning and evening rush. For 45 minutes at the end of the evening rush, there were no northbound QJ trains from Brighton Beach. RJs from 95<sup>th</sup> Street provided service to Jamaica instead, after which QJs resumed operating from Brighton Beach for an hour and a half. During other times, D trains from 205<sup>th</sup> Street made local stops on the Brighton Line.

On the first day the new schedule was in effect, BMT Broadway riding must have been heavier than anticipated. The next day, November 28, NYC Transit added two QB morning rush hour trains, one of which replaced a QJ, and one QB evening rush hour train. To ease congestion at Brighton Beach, alternate QJ trains terminated at Kings Highway at the end of the evening rush starting about mid-December.

Effective July 1, 1968, the 45-minute gap in QJ service leaving Brighton Beach at the end of the evening rush was discontinued and QJs ran continuously until about 7:45 PM. The first morning rush hour QB train ran light from 57<sup>th</sup> Street to 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the second was extended to Astoria. Northbound evening rush hour trains ran light via the Sea Beach Line, picking up passengers at DeKalb Avenue.

The November 27, 1967 schedule provided for D expresses to Coney Island with QB and QJ trains terminating at Brighton Beach. Because of the track layout, locals and expresses delayed each other switching on the double crossovers north of Brighton Beach. The August 19, 1968 schedule eliminated switching delays by extending QB and QJ service to Coney Island. D expresses terminated at Brighton Beach during rush hours, midday, and early evenings on weekdays. At other times, D trains operated to Coney Island, making Brighton local stops.

About mid-October, 1968, QJ trains terminated at Kings Highway after the evening rush.

Two morning rush hour QJ trains started from Brighton Beach, unofficially on July 14, 1969 and officially on July 13, 1970.

Major schedule changes were made again on January

2, 1973. After Brighton and Broadway Brooklyn trains were through-routed and designated QJ in 1967, service on the Brighton Line became irregular because of the long run, nearly 90 minutes. To improve service, Brighton locals were through-routed with Myrtle Avenue trains instead and were designated M. Under the new schedule, M trains ran between Metropolitan Avenue and Coney Island during rush hours, midday, and early evening on weekdays. D trains from 205<sup>th</sup> Street made Brighton local stops at other times. Just before the morning rush, three M trains were put in service at Brighton Beach southbound and six trains at Kings Highway northbound. Two M trains were put in service at Brighton Beach northbound in the AM rush. In the evening, the last nine M trains arriving at Coney Island were turned and operated only as far as Brighton Beach. The first two morning rush hour QB trains arriving at 57<sup>th</sup> Street operated light to Astoria. In the PM rush the last southbound QB operated light from Astoria to 57<sup>th</sup> Street, where it picked up passengers.

Effective May 13, 1974, three early morning M trains that were put in service at Brighton Beach northbound were replaced by two additional trains put in service at Kings Highway northbound and one additional train at Brighton Beach northbound.

The M schedule was revised again on November 4, 1974. The last nine weekday M trains that were turned at Coney Island and laid up at Brighton Beach were discontinued. Instead the last nine M trains from Metropolitan Avenue operated only as far as Brighton Beach. One of our members saw M trains running to Coney Island during this period.

Starting January 19, 1976, all morning rush hour QB trains carried passengers to Astoria and most evening rush hour trains were placed in service at Queensboro Plaza. There was only one PM rush hour QB train operating from Coney Island to 57<sup>th</sup> Street.

The QB schedule was revised again on August 30, 1976. The first morning QB train still ran to Astoria, where it entered RR service, but the others terminated at 57<sup>th</sup> Street. Evening rush hour trains carried passengers from Coney Island to 57<sup>th</sup> Street. An RR arriving at Astoria returned as the last PM rush hour QB train.

Effective May 7, 1979, the first two morning rush hour QB trains ran to Astoria, where they returned as RR trains operating to 36<sup>th</sup> Street-Fourth Avenue. The next-to-last PM rush hour QB was put in service at Astoria. An RR from 36<sup>th</sup> Street-Fourth Avenue arriving at Astoria returned as the last PM rush hour QB.

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**Brighton Line Schedule Changes**

*(Continued from page 2)*

Effective December 3, 1979, four weekday M trains, which were formerly put in service at Kings Highway, started their runs from Brighton Beach between 6:30 and 7:00 AM.

The schedules were revised again on April 26, 1986, because the northerly pair of Manhattan Bridge tracks were taken out of service. M trains were rerouted to the West End Line and QB service was discontinued. Two Brighton tracks were out of service while the line was rehabilitated. Weekday rush hour, midday, and early evening trains ran skip-stop between Sheepshead Bay and Prospect Park. D trains operating between Coney Island and 57<sup>th</sup> Street-Seventh Avenue bypassed Avenue U and Avenue J. Q trains operating between Brighton Beach and 57<sup>th</sup> Street-Seventh Avenue bypassed Neck Road, Avenue M, and Avenue H. During the first phase of the Brighton Line rehabilitation, all southbound trains stopped at Beverley Road and Parkside Avenue while northbound trains bypassed these stations. D trains made all local stops in Brooklyn at other times. The 7:05 AM Q from Brighton Beach was routed to 71<sup>st</sup> Avenue and returned as an N train.

Starting May 26, 1987, the 7:08 AM **Q** from Brighton Beach operated to 71<sup>st</sup> Avenue and returned as an **R** train. The 7:12 AM **D** from Coney Island was routed to Astoria and returned as an **N** train. **D** trains stopped at Beverley Road and **Q** trains stopped at Cortelyou Road and Parkside Avenue.

Effective May 16, 1988, the 7:08 AM **Q** from Brighton Beach operated to 71<sup>st</sup> Avenue, returned as an **R** to Canal Street, and was laid up for an evening rush hour **Q** gap train.

The schedules were revised again on December 11, 1988 when all four Manhattan Bridge tracks were in service again. Skip-Stop Brighton service was discontinued and **D** trains operating between 205<sup>th</sup> Street and Coney Island made local stops on the Brighton Line and express stops on Sixth Avenue and Eighth Avenue.

Effective September 30, 1990, midnight **D** trains made local stops on Sixth Avenue.

A complicated schedule went into effect on May 1, 1995 for the next phase of the Brighton Line rehabilitation. Weekday **D** locals operated between Coney Island and 205<sup>th</sup> Street during midnights, rush hours, and evenings. **Q** locals ran between Coney Island and 21<sup>st</sup> Street-Queensbridge via tunnel and express in Manhattan during midday on weekdays and from approximately 4 AM Saturday to 10 PM Sunday.

Effective November 12, 1995, trains were operating on the same schedule that was in effect before May 1, 1995.

When the northerly pair of Manhattan Bridge tracks went out of service on July 22, 2001, **Q** trains provided service between Coney Island and 57<sup>th</sup> Street-Seventh Avenue. Trains made local stops on the Brighton Line and express stops in Manhattan.

A temporary schedule was in effect after the World Trade Center was destroyed. **Q** trains operated between Coney Island and 57<sup>th</sup> Street-Seventh Avenue during the midnight hours. At other times, service was extended to 71<sup>st</sup> Avenue with trains making local stops in Queens. This schedule was in effect from September 17 to October 28, 2001.

To allow the contractor to rebuild the Stillwell Avenue station, **Q** service was cut back to Brighton Beach on September 8, 2002.

**MTA Fares and Tolls to Rise May 4**

*(Continued from page 1)*

for the price of 10

- An insurance program for 30-day *MetroCard* pass users will be introduced. For a modest fee, pass-holders would be protected if their card is lost or stolen (anticipated to start in September)
- Tokens are to be phased out. It was later announced that NYC Transit will stop selling tokens on April 13 (sales are limited to two per transaction as of March 30) and that tokens will no longer be accepted in turnstiles as of May 4 (they will still be accepted on buses, at the value of \$1.50, until the end of 2003—people using them will be required to deposit 50 cents in addition to the token)

- A customer survey will be made to determine whether a bi-weekly *Metro-Card* should be offered, and, if it should, at what price
- A pilot program is to be undertaken to test the feasibility of a “City-Ticket” program under which people would be allowed to travel on MTA’s commuter railroads within the “City Zone” for 50 cents more than the nominal subway fare
- No service cuts or layoffs
- An average increase of 25% in Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North fares
- A toll increase of 50 cents in each direction on MTA Bridges & Tunnels’ major crossings and 25 cents on its minor facilities

The subway and bus fares were raised to \$1.50 from \$1.25 on November 12, 1995.

## THE R-44 STORY

### by George Chiasson

Thoroughly overhauled for more than a decade, and for years a ubiquitous presence on **A**, the 272 remaining R-44s are now 30-32 years old, and one of the more aged fleets to remain active on rapid transit systems in North America. They were conceived in notoriety during an age of promise, engineered for high speeds in anticipation of the Second Avenue Subway and regional rapid transit service, and finally birthed into a troubled, uncomfortable, and disappointing time. The R-44s also marked the demise of builder St. Louis Car Company, heretofore a stalwart supplier of long standing for the New York City rapid transit system over the better part of a century. There was labor strife, unfamiliar (and perhaps inappropriate) technology, cost-cutting, cost overruns, and change orders. Nevertheless, the R-44s carved out a unique and deserving status in the system's long history as the first 75-foot-long cars. The class also introduced full-width crew cabs, door chimes, and paintless interiors full of plastic molding and melamine panels embossed with the New York State seal. In their many incarnations through the years, perhaps the most enduring scar of the R-44s' early troubles is their mixed polished stainless steel and sheet metal body shells. This gives testament to a desperate attempt by the builder to get its finished product within required weight guidelines. This sheet metal "belt" was originally concealed as the MTA's trademark blue stripe, but since GOH it has been painted gray and clashes with the surrounding stainless panels.

As built, R-44s 100-387, along with a 52-car sister acquisition for Staten Island, were equipped with an advanced version of Westinghouse Cam Control. This was an extended, upgraded version of the system used on the R-42s. Cars 388-399 used General Electric SCM II, which was similar to the system provided for MTA's M-series Commuter MUs and was a prelude to its contract-wide application on the R-46s. The R-44s were set up as mated A-B units when delivered, forming 4-car A-B-B-A sets. They were also capable of A-B-A operation, which was the norm on SIRTOA. Following a series of initial delays, the R 44s were revenue tested on **A**, **D**, **E**, and **F** starting in late 1971, and also performed high-speed runs on the Long Island Rail Road mainline. Initial revenue testing reflected the planned distribution of the actual order, and the first train of R-44s to be accepted for Jamaica began **F** service on April 19, 1972. Successive deliveries of cars 100-259 continued to overtake **F** and eventually resulted in secondary shifts that led to removal of the R-1/9s from **D** service in September. R-44s 260-335, based at Concourse Shop, were assigned to **D** service beginning on December 20, 1972, while those at Jamaica began to make the

odd appearance on **E** starting on December 29. The last batch of R-44s (336-399) were allocated to 207<sup>th</sup> Street in early 1973, commencing **A** service on March 20. Technical problems persisted over the next two years, with stop-gap solutions offered as the order for 754 equally intricate R-46s quickly worked its way onto the production line at Pullman-Standard outside Chicago. R-44 availability sagged accordingly, and by mid-1976 the survivors seemed to be most concentrated on **D** and **F**.

Shifts resulting from the service cuts of August 30, 1976 resulted in the removal of R-44s from **A**. By December, the changes in route distribution and scheduling allowed Jamaica R-44s to show up for a brief period on **N**, which then operated in rush hours from Continental Avenue to Whitehall Street and Coney Island. In January, 1977, R-44s became more visible on **E**, which was then dominated by Slant R-40s supplemented by R-38s, R-40Ms, and R-42s. R-44s transferred back from Jamaica were restored to **A** service on May 24, 1977 as part of equipment reallocations in the wake of R-46 deliveries. The remainder were released from Jamaica in July and sent to **A**, where they replaced R-42s. As it turned out, many of the R-44s were often sidelined and R-10s relied upon all the more to cover **A** schedules.

Use of the oft-troubled R-44s on **A** and **D** continued through April, 1980, when the R-46 fleet began to disperse around the system to reduce wear and tear on their defective Rockwell trucks. This resulted in the R-44s being taken off **D** (April 27) and **A** (May 1) to return to Jamaica, where they once again ran on **E** and **F** for the duration. Some even wandered to GG and **N** locals as circumstances required, with at least one known trip on the JFK Express. On August 9, 1980 the use of R-46s was reduced even more as many were restricted to rush hour CC service. This forced some of the R-44s to come back to Concourse to replace them on **D**, and they again began to gradually depart Queens. In succeeding months, interim repairs were performed on the R-46s and need for the R-44s on **E** and **F** correspondingly reduced. On January 17 they left Jamaica for what has so far proved to be the final time and headed to Pitkin for **A**. On January 24, 1981 the Concourse R-44s from **D** followed, and all have been mainly concentrated on **A** ever since.

To avoid the pitfalls of using the R-44s themselves on the vital Queens Blvd. services, and preserve the R-46s as a backbone until replacement components arrived, all R-44s were gradually retired from **A** service be-

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## The R-44 Story

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tween March and July of 1982, their Buckeye Castings trucks used beneath the R-46s. The cars themselves were mounted on dummy trucks and could be found in storage around the system, particularly at 207<sup>th</sup> Street, Pitkin, and Rockaway Park. The first R-46 trains riding on replacement trucks were running on **E**, **F**, and JFK Express in August, and as soon as the situations were reversed, the R-44s began to reappear on **A** starting September 13, 1982. Even so, the R-44s were generally restricted to peak only usage on **A** through at least June of 1983, at which time they shared duties with R 38s and R-40s.

We next catch up with the R-44s in May, 1985, by which time several had already been retired from service. B-units 227 and 315 were destroyed by fire at 207<sup>th</sup> Street Yard in 1974, leaving their A-car mates "widowed" long-term. A-car 288 suffered a similar fate at 205<sup>th</sup> Street (Norwood) in December, 1974, which similarly abandoned its three companion cars to inactivity. In early 1981, R-44 290 was damaged in a derailment near Kings Highway on the Brighton Line and did not return to operation for over five years. B-car 385 was left behind when the R-44 fleet went through its storage period in 1982, reportedly suffering from irreparable hydraulic function problems. Subsequently, a fire in February, 1986 permanently claimed R-44s 109, 120, and 248, with 300 out of service for a year afterward.

On September 30, 1985 the graffiti-free Car Appearance Program was implemented on **A**, with freshly cleaned R-44s being used as the primary equipment to implement it. The entire fleet had been cleansed by July, 1986 and a major effort begun to replace the original WABCO braking system (by now modified many times over) with a more standard version supplied by Westcode. It was through this that the cars' original joystick type controllers were replaced by "Cineston" handles, the first on New York's subway system since the BMT Bluebirds left the system in 1955. In this form, the R-44s came to dominate **A** for several years, though General Electric cars 387-399 were withdrawn and departed for pilot rebuilding at American Coastal Industries of Newport News, Virginia in March, 1987. In time they would return and be assigned to the SIRT. With opening of the Archer Avenue Subway on December 11, 1988 the JFK Express was moved from Jamaica to Pitkin and the following 42 R-44s were assigned to it, outfitted with modified door controls: A-cars 100, 164, 182, 212, 224, 230, 232, 244, 246, 254, 266, 268, 286, 294, 306, 322, 330, 354, 368, 382, and 384; and B-cars 121, 123, 127, 139, 143, 159, 165, 173, 185, 191, 247, 255, 259, 269, 287, 291, 295, 307, 355, 369, and 383. These were returned to **A** when JFK Express service was discontinued after a 12-year run on April 15, 1990.

Another handful of mishaps claimed even more R-44s through this time as well, some permanently, some not. A-car 132 was gone by August, 1986 owing to structural problems, and idle B-car 229 was used as an air-conditioned "Rider Car" for about two years starting in August, 1987. Another fire in February, 1988 kept 134 and 198 off the road for up to 18 months, then on June 17, 1989 cars 176 and 215 were heavily damaged and retired when trailing on an **A** train that split the switch north of 59<sup>th</sup> Street-Columbus Circle and rammed into steel supports. There was also an unlikely respite for two full trains of R-44s caught in a flood between 34<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> Streets when a water main broke at Eighth Avenue and W. 53<sup>rd</sup> Street on September 3, 1989. Cars 124, 125, 190, 220, 221, 238, 239, 276, 281, 284, 312, 325, 361, 371, 376, and 377 were contaminated with asbestos deposits from adjacent steam lines and did not return to service for four months. Though more reliable than in their earliest years, time was not being kind to the R-44s in many ways, and by 1990 many cars exhibited broken or sagging ceiling panels and cracked and broken window moldings, and had secondary steel supports installed beneath the cantilevered seating to hinder separation from the wall mounts.

Through the late 1980s NYC Transit actively pursued the General Overhaul of each equipment type not being retired, which renewed the entire Subdivision "A" fleet and most cars on Subdivision "B." The R-44s were actually the last group to be included in this venture, through an arrangement with Morrison-Knudsen in Hornell, New York for 140, and by using its own shop forces at Coney Island as a contractor (with 207<sup>th</sup> Street as sub-contractor) for the balance of 138. A-B Units 166/167 and 242/243 were the first R-44s to be shipped to M-K in March, 1990, where they joined R-46s on the GOH production line. To conform to SMS requirements and enable the computerization of records and car tracking, all 278 R-44s were to be renumbered as part of the GOH process, the A-cars between 5202 and 5478 (even), the B-cars between 5203 and 5479 (odd), independent of the original identification sequence. They were also reconfigured as permanently linked 4-car sets in an A-B-B-A pattern. Three NYCT-rebuilt trains and one from M-K were back on the property by mid-summer and with no known ceremony, this first train of GOH R-44s was observed in **A** service on August 3, 1991: 5202/5203/5205/5204 (MK)-5358/5359/5361/5360 (CI/207). 96 GOH R-44s (36 MK and 60 NYCT) were in **A** service by the end of that year, made obvious by their new numbers and painted silver striping at the belt rail. These kept company with rebuilt R-38s and as-yet-unrebuilt (and fast-wearing) R-44s.

Through the next several months the proportion of GOH to non-GOH R-44s on **A** changed dramatically,

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**The R-44 Story***(Continued from page 5)*

and the final two trains of unrebuilt cars removed from service on May 12, 1992. The last cars from M-K (mismates 5246/5247/5337/5336) were accepted for service on December 10, 1992. The lateness of other cars through GOH had also resulted in mismates 5262/5263/5302/5302 (May 27) and 5260/5261/5277/5276 (June 17). The last set delivered from NYCT was accepted on January 15, 1993 (5474/5475/5477/5476), but 207<sup>th</sup> Street Shops also completed two extra cars (5478/5479, ex-256/257) which were set aside without mates on January 29. In fact, this completed the entire GOH program on all car classes below the 1980s-vintage R-62/62As and R-68/68As.

Six more R-44s were retired in subsequent years,

5319 and 5402 due to fires and unit 5282/5283/5285/5284 as the result of another spectacular (and tragic) derailment on the express tracks by the 135<sup>th</sup> Street station on July 3, 1997. This led to the activation of 5478/5479 as mates to 5404/5403, while 5405 was joined with the other fire survivors to form oddball set 5316/5317/5405/5318. After a long, controversial, and slightly convoluted history, the surviving 272 R-44s remain in daily **A** service at present. According to projected life-cycle documents they are expected to be around until the 2011-2013 period, when at the age of 40 they become eligible for replacement. Looking back, it seemed unlikely for a long time that the R-44s would live long enough to match the age of the revered R-1/9s they once replaced. Indeed, who could have predicted that the cars few seem to fancy would persist long enough to become "venerable" themselves?

**Around New York's Transit System***(Continued from page 16)***Mosaic Tiles in Astor Place Station**

The mosaic tiles in subway stations are usually symbols that are associated with landmarks or important people who lived in the neighborhood. Beavers were pictures on the Astor Place station's tiles because John Jacob Astor, who lived on Astor Place, made a fortune selling beavers.

He emigrated from Germany to this country after the Revolution and opened a small store in Manhattan in 1786. His American Fur Company had a monopoly on the American fur trade, especially beaver fur, by 1808.

Two years later, he was buying lots in uninhabited northern Manhattan. It is believed that John Jacob Astor was the first American millionaire.

**Coupling 60-Foot and 75-Foot Cars in Jamaica Yard**

An analysis of the minimum allowed coupler swing angle between 60-foot and 75-foot cars revealed that the maximum curve radius that can be negotiated if both car classes are coupled together is 152.8 feet for a single curve, 164.4 feet for a single curve plus a tangent, and 168 feet for a reverse curve. Because Jamaica Yard has several sharp curves whose radius is less than 160 feet, 60-foot cars must not be coupled to 75-foot cars in Jamaica Yard.

## R-143 UPDATE by George Chiasson

On February 25, 2003 R-143s 8281-8288 entered **L** service, which combined with the entry of 8121-8124 to total 176 cars. All other R-143s except the 12 devoted to CBTC testing and propulsion engineering continue to test and are getting closer to entering service, with essential conclusion of their introduction possible for sometime in April or May. In response to the most recent acceptance, R-40Ms 4520-4527 were transferred from East New York to Coney Island on February 24, while 4528/4529 were already there in the Shop, and re-entered service on **N** March 3. As expected, this move in turn spelled the demise for the 30 surviving R-32s at Coney Island (**N**), with 3674/3675, 3680/3681, 3700/3701, 3712/3713, and 3842/3843 also moving on

to Jamaica (**E**, **F**, **R**) February 24. The final two 10-car trains continued to see service on **N** until the PM rush of March 7, 2003 when the following consist ran on the N for the final time to close out the long run of R-32s at Coney Island: N-3622/3623-3648/3649-3627/3626-3599/3598-3638/3639-S. This train and extra pair 3808/3809 were relocated to Jamaica over the weekend and appeared on **E** starting March 10, while the last eight R-32s (3602/3603, 3608/3609, 3724/3725, 3816/3817) sat in Coney Island Yard until they, too were moved on March 12. Jamaica Shop attained a fleet in excess of 1,200 cars through these transfers, but at least two trains of Phase I R-32s are expected to move on to Pitkin in the near future.

## TECH TALK by Jeffrey Erlitz

Last month I left out one detail regarding the transfer of controls and indications from the old control panel to the new control panel at 38<sup>th</sup> Street Yard Master Tower. The track indications on the West End Line from south of 79<sup>th</sup> Street to Stillwell Avenue were not included as part of this work. This work will be done in the near future. That portion of the line will be controlled from the Stillwell Avenue Master Control Panel located in Coney Island Yard Master Tower.

I last mentioned contract E-34366 in the August ,2002 *Bulletin*. This was the project to install new station lighting in some IND stations that only had fluorescent lighting on their platforms. Apparently, as part of this project, the original station lighting control panels, located on the walls at platform level and long since covered over with dozens of coats of paint, were completely removed. Brand new tile work was installed over the spaces where these panel boxes were located.

The placing in service of the new Ninth Avenue Interlocking on the West End Line continued last month. The first two of eight phases were described in last month's *Bulletin*. Work continued as follows:

DATE	SIGNALS/SWITCHES PLACED IN SERVICE
February 24-28	Tracks C1, C3-4, D3, and D4 from north of Ninth Avenue to south of Ninth Avenue on both upper and lower levels
March 1-2	Tracks C2 and Y2 from the junction of the yard lead north of the station to the entrance to 38th Street Yard from the lower level south of Ninth Avenue
March 8-9	Tracks D2 and Y2 from south of Ninth Avenue to the junction of the yard lead north of Ninth Avenue
March 15-16	Tracks C2, D2, and D4 north of Ninth Avenue where all three of these tracks converge
March 22-23	Traffic control on Track D4 from Ninth Avenue to Fifth Avenue Interlocking
March 29-30	Traffic control on Track D3 from Fifth Avenue to Ninth Avenue Interlocking

This nearly completes the work necessary for the West End Line signal rehabilitation project. More to fol-

low next month.

While all of this work was proceeding at Ninth Avenue, a job of nearly the same complexity was going on the Flushing Line. During February and March, the new Willets Point Boulevard Interlocking was placed in service under the Flushing Interlockings-Phase I project (S-32702). The work proceeded as follows:

DATE	SIGNALS/SWITCHES PLACED IN SERVICE
February 15-16	Install new switch machines on Track 1 north and south of the station
February 22-23	Install new switch machines on Track M north and south of the station
March 1-2	Signals on Track 1
March 8-9	Signals on Track 2 and install switch machines south of the station
March 15-16	Signals on Track 2 and install switch machines south of the station
March 17-22	Install switch machines on Track Mc
March 22-23	Signals on Track M
March 29-30	Signals on Track Mc and all switches

A new Maintainer's control panel was placed in service in the new Willets Point Boulevard Relay Room. All of the controls and indications for Willets Point were transferred from the old US&S Style UR control panel and added to the new Mauell control panel in 111<sup>th</sup> Street Master Tower.

The final part of the project, Main Street Interlocking, should be done later this year.

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# Commuter and Transit Notes

by Randy Glucksman

## Metropolitan Transportation Authority

As mentioned on page 1 of this issue, commuter, subway, and bus fares, as well as tolls on TBTA bridges and tunnels, are going up next month, following approval by the MTA Board. Commuter rail fares were last raised on January 1, 1996.

## MTA Metro-North Rail Road (East)

The October 27, 2002 timetables were reissued effective January 27, 2003 with an ending date that is three weeks later, April 26. As has been done in other years, the extra holiday trains have been removed. On St. Patrick's Day, two extra trains, #7846 (8:43 AM Poughkeepsie) and 4644 (9 AM Brewster North), were operated. Outbound, Train #7841 departed Grand Central Terminal for Poughkeepsie, with its first stop at Beacon, at 3:53 PM. For Passover and Good Friday there are a number of trains which will not be operating, but also a few early departures. Until two years ago, heading the box that lists the fare structure was the date on which those fares became effective. In the current edition the wording now reads "Fares are subject to change," and by now we all know what that meant.

It has been a while since I reported on the Mid-Harlem Track Project. Some off-site work involving relocation of a gas main has been completed. Work continues on the installation of caissons for retaining walls, as well as on a switchgear building at Bronxville. There is excavation for retaining walls at Fleetwood and for truss bridges.

At Highbridge Yard, the Car Appearance Facility appears to be structurally complete, and on the interior, the contractor is working on installing a hydraulic elevator, interior painting, service platforms (70% complete), track pedestals (90%), high-bay fixtures (80%), and electrical raceway, gas, and HVAC piping. In the yard, third rail installation continues, along with cable pulling, equipment installation inside the substation, and gas, sanitary, and water lines.

Additional train services that were operated for special events were successful for the calendar year 2002. There were 167,300 additional rides, of which 123,900 were reported on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July – 10,000, NYC Marathon – 6,200, Thanksgiving Weekend – 73,700, and New Year's Eve – 34,000, which provided revenues in excess of one million dollars.

Metro-North operated one of its largest charters when a Connecticut-based peace group chartered an 8-car and a 12-car train to deliver some 2,000 members to the Peace Rally that was held in New York City on February 15. It was reported that some riders came from Massachusetts and Vermont. According to the report from *The New Haven Register*, the trains departed from New Haven at 9:45 and 9:52 AM, respectively, and

made limited stops. Thanks to member David A. Cohen for the report.

During a recent visit to Grand Central Terminal, I saw mismatched cars 8405/8812, which appeared to have been overhauled.

For a few days in early March, F-10s 410-413 operated "elephant-style" on the Danbury Branch. Normally one unit would suffice, but, as member Josh Weis reported, 413 experienced speedometer problems, and got 410 to assist.

A 2003 edition of *Manhattan Getaways* has been published.

## MTA Metro-North Railroad (West)

Haverstraw-Ossining ferry service, which had been suspended on January 14, was resumed on February 27.

When NJ Transit issued its timetables on January 26, Metro-North also reissued its Port Jervis & Pascack Valley Lines timetable.

## MTA Long Island Rail Road

New timetables under General Order No. 205 went into effect as of 12:01 AM March 17. They will remain in effect until May 18, except for the Montauk Branch, which will get a new timetable on April 26. At that time, work will begin to replace the North Sea Road Bridge in Southampton. On weekdays one track will be out of service and busing will be in effect on weekdays between Babylon and Speonk to enable track replacement, resurfacing, and grade crossing renewal to take place at Fifth, Saxon, and Islip Avenues. Hunterspoint Avenue service was increased by two AM and two PM trains. Other construction projects are taking place on the Long Beach Branch (tie replacement and grade crossing renewal in Oceanside), Hempstead Branch (third rail replacement between Queens Village and Hempstead), and Atlantic Branch (Jamaica to Flatbush Avenue – tunnel lighting work on weekends).

Because of excessive height, flatcars carrying decommissioned or new MU cars are restricted from the following locations: Montauk Branch – all tracks west of Fresh Pond Yard, including the west leg of the wye and first overgrade bridge west of Signal S51, Main Line Track 2 between Hall and Queens Interlocking, all tracks west of Jay Interlocking, and all eight tracks within Jamaica Station plus Track 9.

Passengers boarding trains at the Long Beach, Hempstead, and Port Washington stations are now benefiting from enhanced signage, which reports arrival/departure times and track assignments of trains. Updates are based on crew reports to Tower Operators at Lead and Queens Towers, and to the Section A Train Dispatcher.

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**Commuter and Transit Notes***(Continued from page 8)***NJ Transit**

Sunday, April 27 has been set as the day that the Union station will open. Establishment of this date follows authorization of a long-term lease and sublease agreement with Union Township. NJ Transit will collect \$1 per year for the next 60 years, plus a proportionate share of parking revenues. This station is the closest to Newark, and will add 467 parking spaces to the Raritan Valley Line.

Buckeye Steel Castings, the company that was building the trucks for the Comet V cars, filed for bankruptcy on October 15, 2002, and has been sold to Columbus Steel Castings. Buckeye was founded in 1881.

The Harmon Cove station may be closed as early as July. According to an email that was forwarded to me, plans are underway to set up a shuttle bus service to the new Secaucus Transfer station, which would only serve those passengers.

In order to construct the new Secaucus Interchange between the New Jersey Turnpike and Secaucus Transfer, a "Potter's Field" had to be moved. On February 9, a memorial service was held to honor the estimated 3,500 poor and forgotten souls who are buried on this site, which had been in use from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century until 1962. About a week later, archaeologists began the task of digging up the graves, which will be reburied in a cemetery in North Bergen. A similar situation occurred in 1994 in St. Louis before Metrorail could be extended from Hanley Road to Lambert Airport, although there were nearly 10,000 bodies at that location. A marker will be placed on the site, with information that directs visitors to the new burial site.

Before the Meadowlands, home of several sports stadiums, is rebuilt to its new incarnation, *Xanadu*, several local elected officials are pushing the developer to include public transportation in their plans. Assemblywoman Rose M. Heck, a strong advocate for public transit, is leading the charge for Mills/Mack-Cali to make provision and provide funding to enable HBLRT, the Pascack Valley Line, or the proposed West Shore Line to serve the area. Thanks to NJ-ARP for the report.

NJ Transit's much acclaimed Chief Designer, Cesar A. Vergara, has left his position, just over a year after he was appointed to it, for a job in the private sector. While at NJ Transit, he was responsible for the exterior and car body graphics for new equipment, including the Alstom PL42AC (the first of which should be on the property next March), the ALP-46, and the Comet-V.

As of mid-January, five of the 20 DMUs for SNJLRT had arrived and were being tested. The NJ Transit Board of Directors awarded an additional \$8.6 million to the consultants overseeing the building of the 34-mile-long line between Camden and Trenton. This, the seventh change order to the contract, now brings the cost

of this management contract to just over \$90 million. The contractor building the line is seeking \$140 million in cost overruns, and the project, which was originally budgeted at \$603 million, will exceed that amount.

One of our members reminded me that Newark City Subway service after 10 PM operates only as far as the Branch Brook Park station because freight service uses the ex-Erie Orange Branch during overnight hours. So, if you want to ride the extension to Grove Street, do it in the daytime.

A one-mile extension of the Newark City Subway, which includes an 850-foot tunnel, will extend the line from Newark Penn Station to Newark Broad Street Station. The extension should be under construction this spring. The tunnel begins beneath Raymond Boulevard and will continue to Mulberry Street before it surfaces at Center Street. There will be eleven grade crossings and four stations, including Broad Street Station, Washington Park (near the Newark Museum), Atlantic Street, and Center Street/NJ Performing Arts Center (near the tunnel's portal).

**Port Authority of New York & New Jersey**

The Port Authority approved its FY 2003 \$5 billion budget, and it is higher (by \$500 million) than last year's, a reflection of the economic times. Several PATH re-signaling projects have been delayed, as was a design and reconstruction project of a new bridge near the Goethals Bridge. Good news for commuters and motorists: there will be no fare or toll increases this year.

Hoboken's ferry slips, which have not been used since the Erie-Lackawanna abandoned its ferry service on November 22, 1967, will be restored, with the Port Authority providing \$8 million toward the design work and an additional \$44 million toward construction. The balance of the estimated \$125 million will come from NJ Transit and the Federal Transit Administration. NY Waterway, which began operating ferry service from Hoboken in 1989, loads its passengers at a location on the south side of Hoboken Terminal.

Using \$15 million in Port Authority funds, the city of Elizabeth plans to restore freight train service over the Arthur Kill Bridge by 2005. The bridge has not been used since 1991. Once repairs on the trestle have been completed, cargo will move between the Howland Hook Marine Terminal in Staten Island and New Jersey, thereby reducing the amount of truck traffic on the congested NJ Turnpike, and Routes 1 and 9. Officials estimate that as many as 55,000 truck trips could be eliminated each year. Thanks to Alan Kramer for the report from the (Newark) *Star-Ledger*.

According to the New York edition of *Newsday*, JFK *AirTrain*, which had been scheduled to begin operating its first phase last November, may start running in June. In the aftermath of the derailment that claimed the life of one of its test train operators on September 27, 2002,

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**Commuter and Transit Notes**

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operations were put on hold. The National Transportation Safety Board is also expected to release its final report in June.

**Metropolitan Area**

Mid-Hudson Pattern for Progress, a policy group representing industry, government, education, and several other areas, has proposed the creation of a seven-county transit authority in the Hudson Valley. Composing this agency would be Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester counties. Together, they presently have a population of 2.179 million, but that number is expected to grow to 2.575 million, by the year 2050. Some of the goals would be to control sprawl and increase road capacity, but require that new lanes be dedicated to high-occupancy vehicle or mass transit.

**Amtrak**

According to the NARP website, Amtrak's FY 2004 budget requests \$45 million for the acquisition of new DMU (diesel multiple unit) trainsets and shop improvements to maintain that equipment. President Gunn believes that DMU operation on lines such as New Haven-Springfield and Chicago-Milwaukee would be more efficient. So, there may be a place for the successful Colorado Rail Car DMU.

**Museums**

The Shore Line (Branford) Electric Railway Museum announced the following special events for 2003:

- Members Day – April 26
- Rapid Transit – May 17/18, June 21/22, July 19/20, August 16/17, September 20/21
- Trolley Era Showcase – May 31/June 1
- Working on the Railroad – September 27/28
- Railfan Weekend – October 18/19
- Pumpkin Patch – October 25/26
- Santa on the Trolley – Each weekend between November 29/30 and December 20/21

**Miscellaneous**

ISTEA was renewed as TEA-21 and the new authorization that Congress is expected to approve later this year will be known as "T-3."

**Railway Age** published its annual passenger car review and outlook, and this year the backlog of undelivered cars increased, as can be seen in the table below.

YEAR	DELIVERIES	BACKLOG
1997	496	1,894
1998	542	2,791
1999	816	3,121
2000	1,014	3,745
2001	1,935	3,921
2002	1,653	2,946
2003	N/A	3,973

New commuter cars were delivered to Caltrain (93), GO Transit (22), LIRR (8\*), METRA (2), Metrolink (27),

NJ Transit (97), and Sound Transit (15). Rebuilt commuter cars were returned to GO Transit (27), NJ Transit (40), and SEPTA (36). For its Amtrak California service, Caltrain received new 10 bi-levels and 17 from Sound Transit, plus Amtrak added 6 six-car *Acela* sets.

Many cities took delivery of new light rail cars: Denver RTD (17), LACMTA (52), Sacramento RTD (1), SF Muni (16), and Valley Transit Authority (21). New subway cars went to MARTA (52), NYC Transit (642), San Juan's Tren Urbano (74), and WMATA (60). In addition, rebuilt subway cars went to CTA (126), SF Muni (98), and WMATA (4). Vancouver's SkyTrain also received 60 cars. (\*There were more than 8 M-7s on the property by the end of 2002.)

Twenty-seven transit agencies, from MARTA to WMATA (Atlanta to Washington D.C.), have cars on order that make up the nearly 4,000-car backlog. New and rebuilt commuter, light rail, and subway cars are included in this total.

New orders are expected from MBTA, Metrolink, and SEPTA for commuter cars. Light rail cars could be ordered for Calgary Transit, DART, and LACMTA. There are also 26 EMUs for METRA and 20 bi-levels for GO Transit. Finally, CTA could be in the market for new subway cars, while Maryland MTA would be rebuilding 14 Baltimore Metro cars. An order for between 245 and 300 new PATH cars appears in the section titled "The five-year (2004-2008) outlook."

**The Blizzard of '03 – Aftereffects**

In the days that followed the Presidents' Day Blizzard, questions were raised about why commuter rail service in the Washington, D.C. area was suspended for so long. A report in *The Washington Post* by transportation editor Don Phillips reported that Virginia Railway Express officials are questioning whether CSX, the railroad over which most of their trains operate, was prepared for the storm. Manassas Line trains use Norfolk Southern trackage from Alexandria to Manassas, but were prevented from operating over the last seven miles into Union Station by CSX. VRE COO Peter Sklannik, Jr. voiced concern over the investment of hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayer moneys that were spent on infrastructure improvements, such as switch heaters, which should have enabled passenger trains to run. CSX officials defended their actions by citing concerns of manpower that was "stretched to the limit" and their inability to respond to stranded trains if that had occurred.

**Other Transit Systems**

*Boston, Massachusetts*

Member Todd Glickman reported on a Green Line car swap that took place in mid-February. "For many years, the C/Cleveland Circle branch was 100% Boeing LRVs. Leftover Boeings ran on the D/Riverside, but that line was mostly Type-7 Kinkis. As a result of this swap the C/Cleveland Circle branch is now 100% Type-7s, and

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all of the LRVs are assigned to the D/Riverside (supplemented by Type-7s). Here is the explanation that I have heard: You will recall a month or so ago (March **Bulletin**), all Type-7s were pulled for emergency inspections for a problem with the articulation joint. It turns out that the issue is only with the 3600-series cars, and not the 3700-series (newer) Type-7s. While some cars have been pulled from service, most of the cars are safe to run; the 'T' is waiting for some parts for the 3600s. Until they are received, the D/Riverside line will only see LRVs and 3700-series Type-7s. Perhaps this is due to the higher speeds on the D/Riverside (vs. B, C, E), but that's speculation on my part. From personal observations the past few days, it appears as though the car shortage continues on the Green Line. One-car 'trains' are in use at times even during rush hours, and I have not seen any 3-car trains in a few weeks. Normally, all rush-hour service is two-car trains plus four three-car trains."

In mid-March it was announced that next January, MBTA fares would be going up an average of 25%, so you could not say that they did not give much notice. A series of public hearings on the fare increases will be held this fall. MBTA officials cited a 5% decline in ridership over the past year as one of the reasons for the increases, which is expected to add the \$25 million that will balance the budget. Subway riders will pay an extra 25 cents one way, which will mean that the \$1 fare will cost \$1.25. Bus fares are going from 75 cents to \$1. Seniors/disabled will go from \$.25 to \$.35. Commuter fares that now range from \$2.50 to \$4.25 one way will cost \$3.25 to \$5.50. Commuter boats from Hingham and Quincy to Boston will increase from \$5 to \$6, and the boat from Hull to Boston will increase from \$4 to \$6. Space considerations do not permit the listing of all of the fares that are going up, but you can include the weekly, monthly and other types of passes. The article from the **Boston Globe**, which was sent by member Todd Glickman, also compared transit fares in other cities.

CITY:	BOSTON	NEW YORK	WASHINGTON, D.C.	CHICAGO
Current fare:	\$1.00	\$1.50	\$1.10 (minimum)	\$1.50
Proposed fare:	\$1.25	After May 3 - \$2.00	Proposed \$1.30	
Last Increase:	2000	1995	1996	1992

The MBTA issued a new edition of its System Map. Thanks to Todd for sending copies.

*Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

Member David Safford reported about several items in

the Philadelphia area. Market-Frankford EI reconstruction on the new west end has stopped for the winter. Work does continue at Frankford Terminal or Frankford Transportation Center, where he observed that new trolley wire has been installed for the Trolley Bus routes. This counters reports that these vehicles would not return to service. All work at the FTC is scheduled to be complete by December, 2004. On SEPTA's Rail Power Project, new catenary (not just the actual contact wire) is complete inside Suburban Station. As of the end of January, work continued in the tunnel but had not reached "daylight." Escalators that have been installed at various locations apparently are not up to the task of the use they require, and a project is underway to replace those with the worst breakdown records. Unfortunately, David wrote, the one he uses regularly at 8<sup>th</sup>/Market is out of service with "depressing regularity" but did not make the cut of the worst offenders.

There is lots of news from **Cinders**: Several proposals were received for the manufacture of the 104 Silverliner V cars and a decision should be made by this summer as to which company will be awarded the contract. The abandoned Logan station has been demolished as a part of the Wayne Junction-Glenside improvement project and Track 2 through that area will be straightened through the former platform area. Damaged Silverliner IV 382 will be repaired by the Delaware Car Company under a \$250,000 contract. SEPTA's RL-1 locomotives, 60 and 61, are to receive new control systems, which hopefully will make them more reliable. Brookfield, which is rebuilding the PCCs for the Girard Avenue LRT Line, got the contract. When completed, the cars will be numbered beginning with 2320 (ex-2750), which will appear in PTC Green. The city of Bethlehem requested and received SEPTA's release of its easement for Union Station. Under the terms of the agreement, if commuter service is restored, the city of Bethlehem will be responsible for providing a ticket office and waiting room. Service on this former Reading line ended on June 30, 1981. SEPTA and the State of Delaware have a new five-year agreement to continue providing service from Wilmington to Newark (pronounced "newARK" unlike the nearby city in New Jersey). Delaware Transit has proposed adding a 1.5-mile extension to the third main track south of Wilmington's yard to facilitate additional service and will relocate the present Newark station one-half mile north to Chapel Street at "Davis" Interlocking. For the first time, a nominee for PennDOT secretary, Allen D. Biehler of Pittsburgh, has transit experience.

**The Delaware Valley Rail Passenger**, which is published by the Delaware Valley Association of Rail Passengers, reported that that SEPTA had requested proposals by March 4 from "museums and other operators of historic streetcars" for 13 of its remaining PCCs. These nearly 55-year-old cars are stored at the Luzerne

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Car House, and SEPTA would like to get them out of there to enable the site to be redeveloped. DVARP would prefer that SEPTA retain the cars, as they could be rehabilitated, as are the cars at Brookville, which will soon be operating on the restored Route 15/Girard Avenue. Former SEPTA PCCs provide base service on SF Muni's F/Market Street Line, and can be found in numerous museums.

**Washington, D.C. area**

Due to a lack of storage space, Virginia Railway Express would like to operate only bi-level equipment. It is presently leasing three trainsets and is looking to lease a fourth set from Seattle's Sounder. Sounder is unable to schedule additional trains as it awaits permission from Burlington Northern, over whose tracks the trains run, to increase service. The gallery cars that were purchased from METRA are rough-riding, and they must be rebuilt with a better suspension system.

**Tampa, Florida**

My wife and I flew to Tampa, the departure point for a 7-day western Caribbean cruise, which would stop at Key West, Belize, Guatemala, and Cozumel. Arriving one day earlier provided insurance against weather delays and an opportunity to ride the TECO Line. Much has already been written about this heritage line, which opened last October, so I will include just a few observations. The operator of the car I rode told me that he got his experience operating streetcars at Branford, but had to first qualify as a bus operator. He also told me that the major difference is that there is no traffic at Branford. Most of the right-of-way is in concrete, although there are sections of ties/ballast and many sections of single-track, which slows down service, especially when headways are reduced. In the double-track sections, cars often wrong-rail to comply with a city traffic ordinance. What this means is that cars must operate parallel with the flow of vehicular traffic. The seven-car fleet (428-434) of Gomaco cars will be augmented by two more cars. 427 was Tampa Electric's highest-numbered car, and so the series was continued with 428. At a number of locations there are poles that have a traffic light preemption button, which the operator must detrain in order to activate. TECO also crosses CSX trackage, which in addition to carrying freight, is also used by Amtrak's *Palmetto* (89/90). At the car barn I saw Tampa historic car 163, a Birney that was built in 1923. After more than 10,000 hours of work by volunteers, 163 looks pretty good and is also operable. A building located across the street from the car barn will be rehabilitated for use as a museum.

Concerning the extension, member Karl Groh provided some detail. When funding is obtained the line would first be extended from the Southern Transportation Plaza along Franklin Street to Whiting Street This

could take place by 2004 or 2005. After that, the line would continue northward up Franklin Street to Tyler Street, then to the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center, north underneath I-275 to Palm Avenue and east on Palm Avenue and south on 20<sup>th</sup> Street, connecting with the present terminus in Ybor City, thereby completing a loop. Extensions are also planned for West Tampa and Hyde Park. Additional cars would certainly be required.

Second thoughts: Apparently many in Florida's legislature are having second thoughts about fulfilling the mandate approved in the 2000 election which requires that a high-speed rail system be constructed. With the state, like many others, facing budget deficits, it is believed that this is not the time to add the cost of a high-speed rail system. Governor Jeb Bush is also calling for the legislature to repeal the high-speed rail amendment. Then on February 10, bids for the 90-mile high-speed line between Tampa and Orlando (the first leg of the proposed system) were opened. Eighteen companies submitted bids, but four were left for final consideration. Those companies are Fluor-Bombardier, Global Rail Consortium, Georgia Monorail Consortium, and Et3.com. The first section could cost \$2.7 billion. A decision is expected by summer. Thanks to member Dennis Zaccardi for the reports from **The Suncoast News** and **The Tampa Tribune**.

**South Florida**

After the cruise (see above), we drove over to the east coast of Florida, where we joined other family members, to visit my father-in-law. My son Marc and I had a few hours that Sunday, and took a ride on Tri-Rail to Mangonia Park. (We had not ridden the section between West Palm Beach and Mangonia Park.) That station has a single track that branches off the main line. In cab car 510 many of the seats had been removed from the west side of the lower level, and baggage racks have been installed in their place. Tri-Rail has a \$4 all-day fare on weekends and holidays. The discounted fare is \$2. Again the August 14, 2000 timetable has been updated, this time in October, 2002. Work continues on the double-tracking project, and there was much evidence of this as we rode north. In fact, there was an article in **The Sun-Sentinel** reporting that work to install the second track at the Linton Boulevard crossing in Delray Beach would force a closure of that street for one month. This work is being done in conjunction with I-95 interchange work at the same location.

A story in **The Palm Beach Post** reported on some of the excuses that have been given by riders who did not have a valid ticket when they were stopped by one of Tri-Rail's security officers. Here are some of them:

- I found the automated ticket machine confusing
- I bought a discounted ticket I wasn't entitled to use because I was in a rush to catch the train
- I forgot to have the machine stamp my multi-ride

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ticket

- I was not aware I have to have the machine stamp my multi-ride ticket

Once a month, a special court session is held to adjudicate the summonses that are handed out for not having a ticket. Until January, the courthouse was not located near a Tri-Rail station, but now it is near the Deerfield Beach station. Violators have 30 days to pay or fight the ticket, and must appear in court on the date specified. In cases where a trial is held, an individual who is found guilty can be fined up to \$500 and sentenced to up to 60 days of jail time. By the way, on both trips, our tickets were inspected.

*Key West, Florida*

One generally does not think of rail when thinking of this, Florida's southernmost city, but reaching it was the goal of railroad magnate Henry Flagler, who built the Florida East Coast Railway as far as Miami in 1896. In 1905, the 75-year old Henry was not content to rest on his laurels. He pursued his dream of extending the FEC to Key West, and although it took nearly eight years, cost \$30 million, and resulted in the loss of hundreds of lives, the first train arrived in that city at 10:43 AM January 22, 1912. Henry Flagler died on May 20, 1913, but his dream was fulfilled. In those days, service was operated from New York to Key West, where passengers could transfer to boats for the 90-mile trip to Cuba. A devastating hurricane that struck the area over Labor Day weekend of 1935 claimed many victims, including the railroad. In later years much of its right-of-way was preserved and used for the highway that connects the Keys. I visited Flagler Station, which bills itself as the "Over-Sea Railway Historem." Besides a well-stocked gift shop, visitors can see several videos that tell the history of the line. There are numerous artifacts, which survive the short history of this railroad to the sea.

*Chicago, Illinois*

In late January, METRA announced that it plans to construct a 55-mile rail line, which would use DMU equipment, and provide service to nearly 100 communities in the Chicago area. Two segments of the STAR Line have been proposed.

- Outer Circumferential Segment (OCS) would connect Joliet to Hoffman Estates (at Prairie Stone) via the Elgin Joliet & Eastern Railway (EJ&E) Corridor
- Northwest Corridor Segment (NWCS), a new alignment, would connect the OCS to the I-90 Corridor via a connection at Prairie Stone east to O'Hare Airport along I-90 to the Des Plaines Oasis, then south on the freight railroad corridor to the CTA connection for the proposed Western Terminal at O'Hare Airport

The proposal was well received by elected officials in the areas that would receive this new service. METRA officials reported that the new lines are within a five-mile radius of many of the region's new housing developments, hospitals, college and university campuses, and large shopping malls.

Another proposal for which METRA is seeking funding is a new commuter line from Crete to LaSalle Street Station. This line, to known as the Southeast Service Line, would operate on UP/CSX trackage serving the communities of Dolton, South Holland, Thornton, Glenwood, Chicago Heights, South Chicago Heights, and Steger.

METRA also plans to add some improvements to the UP West Line that would create more flexibility in handling freight trains with the passenger trains. Another project, the "A-2 Interlocker," would alleviate a critical choke point by updating the configuration of tracks that lead to Chicago Union Station and the Ogilvie (C&NW) Transportation Center, and permit trains to travel at higher speeds through the area.

Continuing on the expansion theme, METRA's Board of Directors approved the purchase of 50 acres of land at a cost of \$1.5 million, on which a future Elburn station, storage yard, and 300-space parking lot would be built. This property is adjacent to the UP right-of-way. At present, trains are stored at the West Chicago Yard located east of the Geneva station. Evening trains must reverse directions to lay up, and in the morning, trains must do the opposite. Elburn is west of Geneva, and an additional (third) track would have to be constructed to serve this growing area in Kane County. The entire project is estimated at a cost of \$135 million. Service could begin by 2005.

New timetables were issued for the Elgin (16W replaced 15W) and Fox Lake (15N replaced 14N) Lines as of March 1, and for the North Central Service on March 3; the effective dates are those dates. Thanks to member Jim Beeler for sending copies.

The Chicago Transit Authority has signed a contract with a suburban Chicago firm that will equip 11.4 miles of underground tunnels with a wireless phone system that will enable cell phone users the ability to talk while they ride. Although many riders will be turned off by ringing phones and other riders gabbing, CTA officials point out that there are benefits including making riders feel more secure, especially when they are riding at night. In addition, the system will provide a backup to CTA's own communications network, plus provide capabilities for email, wireless Internet, paging, and text messaging that could provide a revenue stream to the transit agency. Although no cell-phone company has expressed an interest in leasing equipment, CTA officials expect that this situation will change once the infrastructure is in place late next year. Thanks to Dennis Zaccardi for the report.

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## REDBIRD UPDATE

### By George Chiasson

#### R-142s

Through March 14, 2003, Primary R-142s 6806-6815, along with Option R-142s 7156-7160, 7166-7170, 1106-1110, and 1121-1130 were delivered. No additional R-142s were accepted for service on ⑤, but on February 20 cars 6691-6700 were imported from ② to bring the fleet total up to 360 cars (36 trains). The 37<sup>th</sup> R-142 train was poised to enter passenger service at this writing, but it is unknown how many of the remaining unaccepted deliveries will be assigned to ④ or ⑤. Beginning with 1126-1130, the R-142s have been shipped without external number boards, which are being added at E. 180<sup>th</sup> Street. Arrival of the initial 1100-series cars winds up production of the Option I portion of the R-142 acquisition and clarifies their renumbering. Under the original scheme, 1101-1130 would have been 7181-7210, while 1131-1250 will be the Option II portion, which was originally supposed to be 7731-7850.

#### R-62/R-62A Notes

On February 17, Kawasaki R-62 unit 1506-1510 (5 cars) was discovered inside the inspection shed at Livonia. This was unusual for although ④ trains are often laid up there overnight and on weekends, inspection and repair of this equipment is nominally performed at Jerome Shop off the Jerome Avenue Line. As it turned out, 1506-1510 have been reassigned from Jerome (④) to Livonia (③) to accommodate Car Inspector training in the advent of R-62s moving from ④ to ③ later this year. This recalls the movement of single R-62A 2155 to Corona in mid-2001 as a training measure prior to the actual arrival of R-62As on ⑦. As best as can be determined, there was no corresponding R-62A reassignment from Livonia to Jerome for similar purposes, and it appears 1506-1510 (as was the case with 2155) will be staying at Livonia until some of its fleet sisters eventually join it.

#### Redbird Notes, Transfers, and Status

Two more of the non-SMS R-33s earlier removed from ⑤ (9108/9109) were restored to action on ④ on February 21. One additional pair (9094/9095) was also at Jerome but had not been reactivated and from present indications may not be. The shift of 10 R-33s to Jerome in early February was ostensibly done to replace the R-62 train to be "lost" through the removal of 1506-1510. These have not, as expected, led to any additional removals of the Jerome-based R-33 fleet, and has in fact resulted in the return of one or two Redbird trains to ④ in peak periods. It is possible, if not typical, to observe 3-4 trains of Redbirds on ④ during rush hours, along with 4-5 sets of R-142As.

On the other hand, the presence of Redbirds on ⑤

has gradually decreased in recent weeks to the point where it is highly likely they will be used exclusively as reserve equipment to the R-142s. There has consistently been little more than one or two trains of "SMS" (rehabilitated) R-33s seen in rush hours, and one 10-car set continues to appear on weekends when there is no General Order in effect, if only for a few round trips from Dyre Avenue to Bowling Green. With their usage curtailed, 30 of the 58 SMS cars were moved into storage at Concourse Yard on March 14, where they have attained "Reserve" status and will be activated when and where needed. They have also appeared in various Work Train duties based out of E. 180<sup>th</sup> Street and 239<sup>th</sup> Street Yards.

Through March 7, 2003 R-33s 9308, 9316, 9322, 9326, and 9336 re-entered ⑦ service, after being upgraded with the same GOH-II modifications pioneered on 9317, 9329, and 9343. Through March 14, singles 9309, 9318 and 9325 remain out of service at Corona and will presumably be going to 207<sup>th</sup> Street soon. There has been little change to the remaining World's Fair R-36 fleet on ⑦, but retired cars 9354/9355 have been inside the barn for an extended period during the winter.

#### Redbird Retirements and Restorations

2/21/03: GE R-33 9108/9109 back in service on ④

3/14/03: R-33Ss

Taken out of service through March 14, 2003 were:

SMS R-33: 8812/8813, 8816/8817, 8834/8835, 8888/8889, 8956/8957, 9010/9011, 9016/9017, 9020/9021, 9032/9033, 9038/9039, 9066/9067, 9068/9069, 9074/9075, 9138/9139, 9206/9207 off ⑤

Restored to service through March 14, 2003 were:

R-33: 9108/9109 on ④

R-33S: 9308, 9316, 9322, 9326, 9336 on ⑦

#### Redbird Reefing

Redbirds that have been reefed off Virginia were administered by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC), creating an opportunity to enhance its ability to homestead and retain undersea life. According to a local news report, the first 50 cars sunk (shipped from 207<sup>th</sup> Street on November 6, 2002) were cast off at Blackfish Bank off Chincoteague. The second 50 (shipped from 207<sup>th</sup> Street on November 23, 2002) were dumped at Parramore Reef, which is off the coast of Wachapreague, about halfway down the Delmarva Peninsula between Chincoteague and Virginia Beach. The bodies are stationed beneath the waves in clusters forming two approximate lines of 25 cars each, and are marked above by buoys.

On March 7, 2003 a barge loaded with 50 Redbird

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**Redbird Update**

*(Continued from page 14)*

bodies departed for Tower Reef, a location off the coast of Virginia Beach, Virginia southwest of Chesapeake Light. Included were:  
R-33: 8826, 8827, 8844, 8845, 8854, 8855, 8882, 8883,

8916, 8917, 8918, 8919, 8944, 8945, 8982, 8983, 8988, 8989, 9050, 9051, 9102, 9103, 9116, 9117, 9120, 9121, 9122, 9123, 9134, 9135, 9136, 9137, 9150, 9151, 9164, 9165, 9184, 9185, 9222, 9223, 9226, 9227, 9258, 9259, 9298, 9299  
R-36: 9412, 9413, 9550, 9551

**CORRECTION**

In John Pappas' March article about PATH's upcoming return to lower Manhattan, he mentioned that the World Trade Center terminal opened in September, 1972. The

actual date was July 6, 1971. See the August, 1971 *Bulletin* for details.

**Commuter and Transit Notes**

*(Continued from page 13)*

**St. Louis, Missouri**

The Metrolink extension to Belleville, Illinois, which began revenue service on May 7, 2001, has attracted a daily ridership of just over 12,000, exceeding the projection of 10,000. A 3.5-mile extension to the Shiloh-Scott station is under construction and scheduled to open next month. The St. Louis County Council approved a Memorandum of Agreement with Bi-State Transit for that agency to use Proposition M funds to build the 8.2-mile Cross County Metrolink extension to DeBaliviere, Clayton, and Shrewsbury. Construction should begin soon, with service operating by 2005. Thanks to member Joe Gagne for sending the report from the **IEEE Vehicular Technology Society Newsletter**.

**Dallas, Texas**

One of the former Tandy PCCs has found a new home, about 30 miles from where it has spent most of its life – the McKinney Avenue Transit Authority. Member Phil Hom reported that acquisition of the air-conditioned car (number presently unknown) was funded in part by a grant from the Uptown Improvement District.

**San Francisco, California**

Caltrain held a series of public hearings on its proposals to change the existing fare system. Under consideration is expanding the youth discount to riders between the ages of 5 and 17. This is presently only offered to children age 5 to 11. There would also be a senior/disabled/youth 10-ride ticket. The nine zones of varying lengths would be reduced to six equal zones. The validity periods of tickets would change. One-way tickets would only be valid for three hours, and a Day-Pass would replace Round-trip tickets. Ticket validators would be required with the use of 10-trip tickets and on-board ticket sales would be eliminated. These recommendations have come out of a series of passenger focus groups that Caltrain hosted. Thanks to Phil Hom for the report.

**Los Angeles, California**

Because of an objection raised by Kawasaki, the Federal Transit Administration challenged the decision by the Southern California Regional Rail Authority to exercise an option for additional Bombardier bi-levels through Sound Transit. Instead, Metrolink will develop its own specifications for 40 bi-level cars. The transit agency presently has an all-Bombardier bi-level fleet. Thanks to **Railway Age** for the report.

**Western Caribbean**

As mentioned earlier, we visited Belize and Guatemala, taking bus tours to reach the interiors of each country to visit Mayan ruins. In Guatemala, we paralleled their rail line during part of the trip. In answer to my question, our guide told us that there is but one freight train per day. Belize has no rail service. For those who are interested, most of the buses (MCIs) that were used for tours included some that formerly operated for NJ Transit (5097 was signed-up for Route 190) and several Coach USA companies including Olympic Trails, Suburban Transit, Leisure Line, and Hudson Transit (Short) Line.

**Paris, France**

Continental Airlines, which pioneered the use of rail transportation in the United States as a way of delivering its passengers to cities along the Northeast Corridor, has established its first such intermodal link in Paris. Recently an agreement was reached with SNCF, the French national railroad, to provide an air/rail code share partnership between Charles de Gaulle Airport with high-speed rail service to 13 French cities. One-pass<sup>®</sup> members also earn frequent flyer miles by riding these trains.

**From the History Files**

**170 Years Ago:** On April 4, 1833, the Reading Company received its charter from the State of Pennsylvania.

**30 Years Ago:** On April 8, 1973, the Broad Street Subway in Philadelphia was extended two stations from Snyder to Pattison, its present terminus.

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

## Around New York's Transit System

### Blizzard of '03

The blizzard of '03, a 19.8-inch snowstorm accompanied by winds exceeding 30 miles per hour, started about 3:30 PM Sunday, February 16 and continued until sundown the next day. It was the fourth heaviest snowstorm ever recorded in New York City.

Fortunately, riding was light because of the Presidents' Day holiday.

As usual, the trains were unable to keep running on portions of the lines that are on the surface, embankments, and open cuts. In the March issue, reporter Lexington Park mentioned some of the locations where service was suspended. Here is a more complete list:

LINE	AREA	SERVICE SUSPENDED	SERVICE RESUMED
Rockaway	Rockaway Boulevard to Far Rockaway and Rockaway Park	1:20 AM February 17	11:05 AM February 18 (A)
Myrtle Avenue	Myrtle Avenue to Metropolitan Avenue	8:37 AM February 17	1:58 AM February 18 (B)
West End	Stillwell Avenue to Bay 50 <sup>th</sup> Street	10:06 AM February 17	10:15 AM February 18
Dyre Avenue	E. 180 <sup>th</sup> Street to Dyre Avenue	10:20 AM February 17	9:48 PM February 17
Smith Street	Jay Street to Church Avenue	10:25 AM February 17	4:38 AM February 18
Crosstown	Bedford-Nostrand to Fourth Avenue	10:25 AM February 17	11:44 AM February 18
Brighton	Brighton Beach to DeKalb Avenue	10:29 AM February 17	Local February 18 Express February 19
Sea Beach	86 <sup>th</sup> Street to 59 <sup>th</sup> Street	11:32 AM February 17	5:30 AM February 18
Staten Island Railway	St. George to Tottenville	12:06 PM February 17	5:00 AM February 18
Franklin Avenue Shuttle	Prospect Park to Franklin Avenue	2:00 PM February 17	Probably February 19
Canarsie	Myrtle Avenue to Broadway Junction	3:23 PM February 17	11:00 PM February 17

(A) Resumed Rockaway Boulevard to Howard Beach; probably resumed to Rockaway Park and Far Rockaway February 19

(B)  service did not operate between Chambers Street and Bay Parkway until probably February 19

### Other Severe Snow Storms

The blizzard of '03 was a nasty storm, but it did not

break any records. The following were probably the worst ever recorded by the Weather Bureau:

The January 7, 1996 blizzard produced more snow and stronger winds than the blizzard of '03. The 20.2-inch snow, the third largest, and the 50-mile-an-hour gusts shut down the airports and clogged highways. NYC Transit's trains running in the subway were unaffected by the storm, but trains running outdoors were delayed or unable to continue running. Full service was not restored until January 10 (see February, 1996 *Bulletin*).

Our older readers will never forget the December 26-27, 1947 snow storm, which deposited 26.4 inches, the greatest ever recorded in New York City. It started snowing at 3:20 AM December 26 and did not end until 3:05 AM December 27. The heaviest snowfall, 3.2 inches, occurred between 3 and 4 PM. Surface transportation was paralyzed; trolley cars and buses were stuck in the snow for several days.

The blizzard of 1888 was the most severe snow storm to hit the Northeast. Snowfall totaled 21.0 inches, but the 50-mile-per-hour gales caused drifts of 20 feet in New York City. The temperature was only 6°F. The storm began as rain on March 11, turned to snow at 12:10 AM March 12, and snowed steadily until 6 AM the next day. There was occasional light snow from 2 PM March 13 until 2:40 PM the next day. All electric and telephone lines were down and the city was in complete darkness. No street cars ran for four days, and normal rail service was not restored for ten days. After the storm was over, it was apparent that the city could not rely on overhead wires. In Manhattan, electric and telephone wires were installed underground and power for the street cars was supplied by underground conduits.

Engineers started planning a network of subway lines that would provide reliable service in all kinds of weather.

### Third Avenue "L" Quit 30 Years Ago

The remaining portion of the Third Avenue "L," between 149<sup>th</sup> Street and Gun Hill Road, ceased operating on April 28, 1973, thirty years ago. Riding declined rapidly after service south of 149th Street was discontinued on May 12, 1955. Passenger traffic fell an average of about 160,000 a year from 8,357,406 fares collected for the year ending June 30, 1956 to 5,766,451 fares collected for the year ending June 30, 1972. The rush hour traffic, which had dwindled to 5,300 passengers per hour, could be handled by buses. When the "L" stopped running on April 28, 1973, it suffered the saddest fate imaginable — it was replaced by a bus line.

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