

The Bulletin



New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association

Vol. 47, No. 5

May, 2004

The Bulletin

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

For general inquiries, contact us at era@inch.com or by phone at (212) 986-4482 (voice mail available). ERA's website is www.electricrailroaders.org.

Editorial Staff:

Editor-in-Chief:

Bernard Linder

News Editor:

Randy Glucksmann

Contributing Editor:

Jeffrey Erlitz

Production Manager:

David Ross

©2004 New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association, Incorporated

In This Issue:
**Westchester
Electric
Railroad
Company
...Page 2**

INTERESTING EXHIBITS IN THE TRANSIT MUSEUM

The New York Transit Museum reopened to the public on September 16, 2003 after being closed for two years for extensive renovations. It is the largest museum in the United States devoted to urban transportation history.

The highlight of the museum is the vintage collection of 16 subway and elevated cars, which were refurbished by NYC Transit's Division of Car Equipment. These cars are in mint condition. Visitors may walk through the cars, sit in the rattan seats (in the older cars), and enjoy the surroundings. They may visit a working signal tower, located at the end of the platform.

Checking the Internet, we found details of other exhibits:

ON THE STREETS: NEW YORK'S TROLLEYS AND BUSES — This exhibit presents a history of surface transportation from the early 1880s through the 21st century. In the center is a simulated traffic intersection, complete with traffic lights coordinated with walk/don't walk signs, parking meters, and fire hydrants. Visitors will enjoy seeing a new wheelchair-accessible twelve-seat bus, a refurbished 1960s bus cab, and a child-sized trolley. Exhibition sidebars credit the two men who perfected electric traction. Frank Julian Sprague (1857-1934, ERA member #1) designed and operated the first streetcar system in Richmond, Virginia in 1887-88. Granville T. Woods (1856-1910) was an African-American inventor who patented more than 60 devices that helped develop telegraphs, telephones, and electric trains. The third rail, which was successfully demonstrated in Coney Island in 1892, was probably his most important invention.

The new Dr. George T.F. Rahilly Trolley and

Bus Study Center features over 50 detailed models of Brooklyn trolley and work cars.

A new exhibit on fare collection features the first paper ticket choppers used in 1904, turnstiles that accepted coins and tokens, and the *MetroCard* turnstile currently in operation, as well as a fifty-year history of the token.

ELEVATED CITY: A HISTORY OF THE EL'S IN NEW YORK was first shown in the Museum's Grand Central Terminal Gallery Annex in June, 2002. It was adapted and reinstalled in the Museum's mezzanine level. Photos show New York City's first mass transportation lines from their construction until they ceased operations.

STEEL, STONE, AND BACKBONE: BUILDING NEW YORK'S SUBWAYS 1900-1925, the Museum's popular exhibit, has been completely refurbished. Pictures taken over 100 years ago show the building of New York's first subway line, various tunneling methods, and the people who built it.

NEW YORK'S FORGOTTEN SUBSTATIONS: THE POWER BEHIND THE SUBWAY is an exhibition of the photographs showing the original substations that once housed rotary converters which converted alternating current to direct current to drive the subway cars.

MOVING THE MILLIONS, a new exhibit on the platform level, uses historical photographs, diagrams, cartoons, period maps, and newspaper clippings to demonstrate the magnitude and complexity of New York's rapid transit system.

The station in which the Transit Museum is located has an interesting history. When the IND Fulton Street Line was opened on April 9, 1936, a two-car HH shuttle was single-tracked on the southbound track between

(Continued on page 3)

WESTCHESTER ELECTRIC RAILROAD COMPANY **by Bernard Linder**

The Westchester Electric Railroad Company, a Third Avenue Railway subsidiary, operated most of the trolley lines in Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, and Pelham Manor. The following are the predecessor companies:

MOUNT VERNON & EAST CHESTER RAIL ROAD COMPANY

This company, which was incorporated on August 12, 1885, received a franchise for the east portion of the Yonkers Avenue Line and the Fifth Avenue Line. In its 1887 report, the company stated that it had constructed a 2.814-mile single-track main line with 0.263 miles of sidings between West Mount Vernon and Eastchester.

On August 2, 1887, the property and franchises of this company were sold at the White Plains courthouse under foreclosure proceedings to Leopold Wertheimer, president of the company, for \$37,000. The property and franchises were transferred by him to the Mount Vernon & Eastchester Railway Company in accordance with a deed dated November 17, 1887. The company was dissolved on September 7, 1888.

MOUNT VERNON & EASTCHESTER RAILWAY COMPANY

This company, which was incorporated on November 14, 1887, was substantially a reorganization of the Mount Vernon & East Chester Rail Road Company. On June 2, 1893, this company was merged with the New Rochelle Railway & Transit Company to form the Westchester Electric Railroad Company.

NEW ROCHELLE STREET HORSE RAILROAD COMPANY

This company was incorporated on September 25, 1885. Franchises were awarded for the North Avenue and Hudson Park Lines. The company was leased to the New Rochelle & Pelham Railway Company on November 1, 1887 and they were merged on June 29, 1888.

NEW ROCHELLE & PELHAM RAILWAY COMPANY

A franchise for the Glen Island Line was awarded to this company, which was incorporated on August 22, 1885. It was sold at auction for \$22,000 to Thomas E. Crimmins, trustee, at the White Plains courthouse on June 25, 1890 and was reorganized as the New Rochelle Railway & Transit Company, which was incorporated on September 12, 1890. It was merged with the Westchester Electric Railroad Company on June 2, 1893.

WESTCHESTER ELECTRIC RAILROAD COMPANY

Westchester Electric was incorporated on March 27, 1891. It acquired all the capital stock of the Mount Vernon & Eastchester Railway Company and the New

Rochelle Railway & Transit Company on June 2, 1893. This new company operated all but two trolley lines in Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, and Pelham Manor. Third Avenue assumed control of Westchester Electric by acquiring its capital stock in January, 1899.

J. Addison Young, who was appointed receiver on January 18, 1908, filed a petition with the Supreme Court of Westchester County requesting permission to dissolve the company's existence. On November 11, 1908, the court's referee reported that the company was insolvent and should be dissolved. The report showed that the company was financed by the Third Avenue Railroad Company and the Union Railway Company and that it was unable to pay for the construction to the former companies. It had not earned its expenses and there was an annual deficit. The report stated that the company had no cars of its own, but operated the cars of the Union Railway Company (for which no rental had apparently ever been charged), and that it obtained its electric power from Third Avenue's Kingsbridge power house in Manhattan. The company was not dissolved and the receiver was discharged on July 12, 1912.

The company continued operating trolley cars for the next two decades until buses became more profitable than trolley cars. There was an added inducement to substitute buses. Trolley franchises specified a five cent first zone fare, but the bus franchises issued in the early 1930s allowed the company to charge ten cents. During the 1930s, buses replaced trolley cars on the following lightly traveled single-track lines with passing sidings:

- C/Fifth Avenue-Mount Vernon: October 29, 1930
- E/Gramatan Avenue: February 8, 1931
- G/Pelham via Lincoln Avenue: February 8, 1931
- F/Fifth Avenue-New Rochelle: March 15, 1931
- M/Tuckahoe-New Rochelle: March 15, 1931
- D/North Pelham via Third Street: May 3, 1931
- F/Mount Vernon-Scarsdale: January 14, 1932
- H/Pelham Manor: July 31, 1937
- P/Webster Avenue: June 29, 1939
- J/Glen Island: August 1, 1939
- L/Hudson Park: August 1, 1939

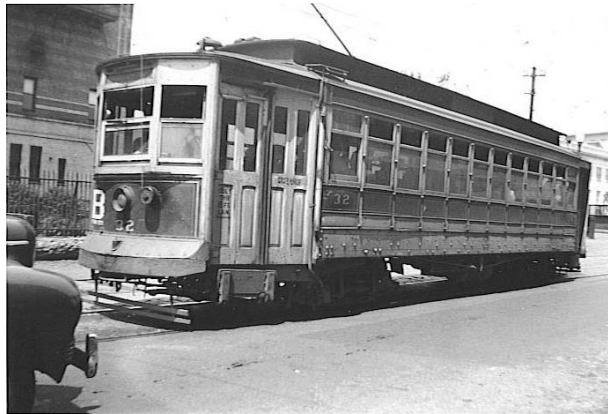
During the 1930s, the City of New Rochelle tried to force the company to substitute buses for trolley cars on the A line, but it was unsuccessful. A February 26, 1938 agreement between the City Council and Third Avenue Railway provided for a waiver of the 2½% franchise tax if the company reduced the bus fare from 10 cents to 5 cents. At a special meeting of the City Council held on March 26, 1938, the company was requested to substitute buses on the A line and to give free transfers. The company refused.

(Continued on page 3)

Westchester Electric Railroad Company

(Continued from page 2)

On March 8, 1939, a certified copy of a City Council resolution ordering the company to remove the tracks on Main Street and Huguenot Street in 30 days was mailed to Third Avenue Railway. The city decided to make a legal determination whether Third Avenue's franchises were perpetual. When the 30-day period ended on April 7, 1939, the trolley cars were still running on Main Street and on Huguenot Street because the company believed that the undated 50-year franchises were perpetual. Shortly afterwards the Corporation Counsel started a suit to invalidate Third Avenue's perpetual franchise. The city alleged that the franchise was owned by the original company, the New Rochelle Railway & Transit Company, and that Third Avenue never received consents to operate cars on Main Street and on Huguenot Street between North Avenue and Center Avenue and on Bridge Street between Huguenot Street and Railroad Place. The A line was pieced together through several franchises.



Car 32 at W. 1st Street and S. 5th Avenue, Mount Vernon, May 31, 1946.
Bernard Linder photograph

On June 19, 1941, the company refused to surrender its perpetual franchise. On June 23, 1941, the city's suit against the company was dismissed because the franchise could not be taken away without due process of law.

Trolley cars continued running on the busy A/New Rochelle-Subway and B/Mount Vernon-229th Street lines during World War II because buses were not available. As soon as the war was over, the company made plans to replace all the trolley cars in Westchester County. In March, 1948, the company ordered 300 Mack buses for the Bronx and Westchester County lines at a cost of \$5.2 million. A May 3, 1948 New Rochelle City Council resolution authorized buses on the A line and granted a

25-year franchise with a renewal option of 25 years. But the bus conversion that was scheduled for August 1, 1948 was delayed because Yonkers, Pelham, and Pelham Manor did not consent. Therefore, the 115 buses that were ordered for the Westchester County lines were sold to the New York City Board of Transportation. Later in the year, the company accepted local consents from New Rochelle, Pelham Manor, Pelham, and Mount Vernon providing for motorization of the A and B lines (which transported 30,000 passengers a day) and received authorization from the Public Service Commission. Although the authorization was null and void if the buses were not running by July 1, 1949, it was extended to December 31, 1950 because the company was bankrupt and was unable to spare the money. Westchester Electric was able to meet the deadline and buses replaced the trolley cars on both lines on December 17, 1950. Oddly enough, the new buses were lettered "Westchester Electric," which indicated that the subsidiary was still in existence. The company finally ended its corporate existence on December 4, 1956, when the Public Service Commission approved the merger of West-

chester Electric and the Westchester Street Transportation Company, Third Avenue's Westchester County bus subsidiary, took place. On July 23, 1956, the Securities and Exchange Commission approved the plan for merging Third Avenue Transit Corporation and Surface Transportation Corporation to form a new corporation, Surface Transit, Incorporated. On December 17, 1956, Fifth Avenue Coach Lines took over Surface Transit, Incorporated, creating the largest privately owned urban bus company in the country, with 2,000 buses. As a result of these mergers, the familiar red and cream trolley cars and buses finally disappeared from the streets of Westchester County.

Interesting Exhibits in the Transit Museum

(Continued from page 1)

Hoyt-Schermerhorn Street and Court Street from 7 AM to 7 PM. Riding was very light. After only 131,090 fares were collected in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1945,

service was discontinued at 7 PM June 1, 1946. The station was unused (except for the occasional movie shoot) until the Transit Museum opened on July 2, 1976.

Trains were signed as follows:

**COURT ST.-BORO HALL
BKLYN-HOYT ST.
HH FULTON ST.
LOCAL**

NOSTALGIA CORNER

This month, we continue with the Lexington Avenue "L," Brooklyn's first elevated line, which opened on May

14, 1885 and closed on October 13, 1950.

(All pictures Bernard Linder collection)



Broadway from Lexington Avenue Tower, looking east.



Broadway and Lexington Avenue looking west, September 15, 1950.



Lexington Avenue looking west from tower at Broadway, September 15, 1950.



Greene Avenue station, looking west, October 5, 1950.

(Continued on page 13)

TECH TALK by Jeffrey Erlitz

This month, I am presenting a photo essay of unusual recent scenes on the subway. Over several weekends, a special **J** service was operated from Chambers

Street in Manhattan to Prospect Park in Brooklyn. Here are several scenes of this operation, all taken on April 10, 2004:



R-42 4567 arriving at Prospect Park.



R-42 4783 comes to stop at the relay position in the Parkside Avenue station.



R-42 4919 leads a northbound train at Seventh Avenue.



View north of new switch #187 south of the Canal Street station on the Nassau Street Line. Current northbound **J** trains diverge to the right. Later this year, northbound trains will proceed straight into the station on what is now the southbound express track.

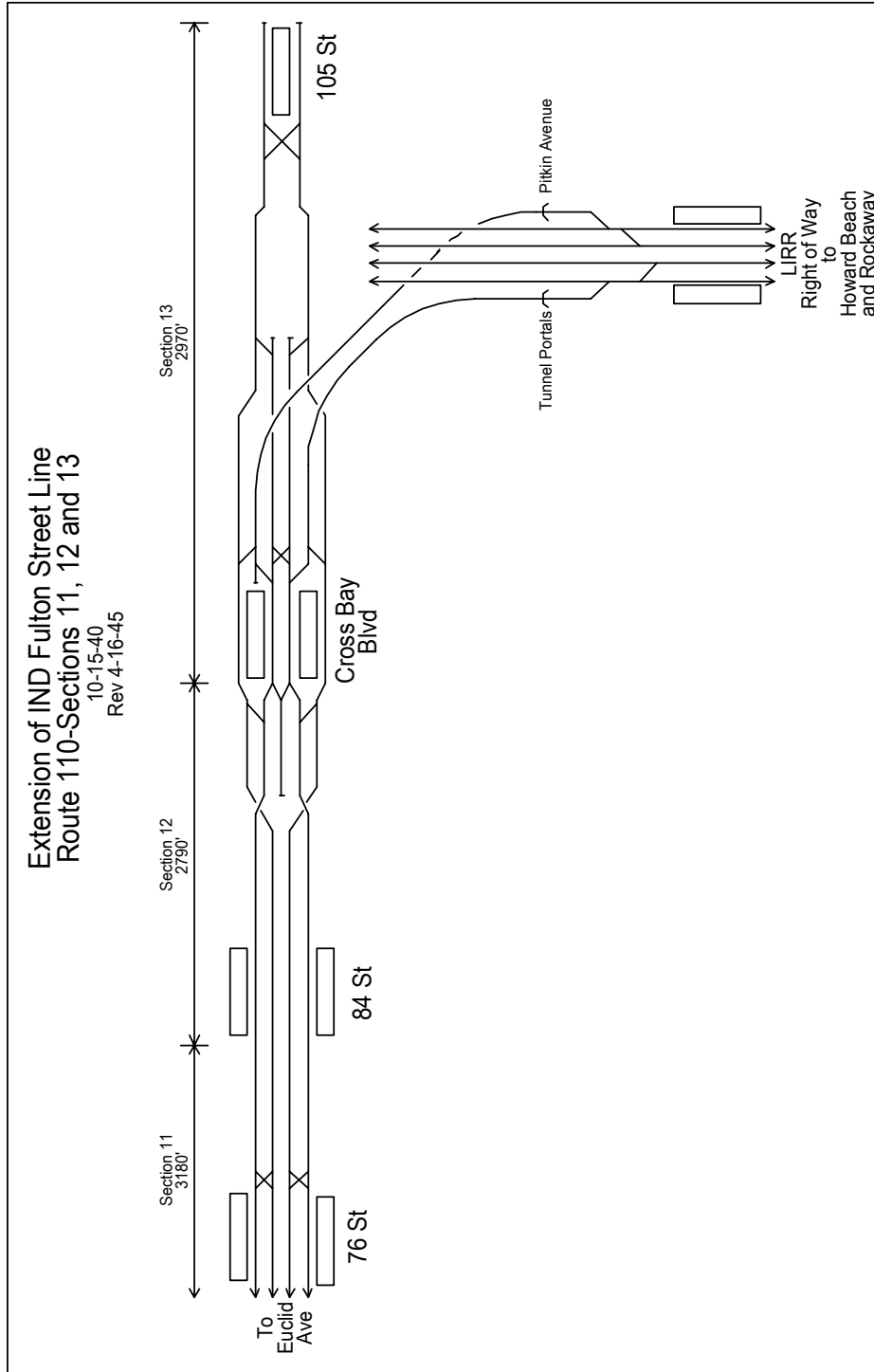
The next subway line covered in my new series of track diagrams of lines that were never built is the extension of the Fulton Street Line south of Euclid Avenue. There were probably several designs for this extension. The source for this drawing is a Board of Transportation drawing entitled, **Study for Alignment and Grades**

from Grant Avenue to 106th Street with Connection to Rockaway Division of the L.I.R.R. This drawing was dated October 15, 1940 and was revised April 16, 1945.

(Continued on page 6)

Tech Talk

(Continued from page 5)



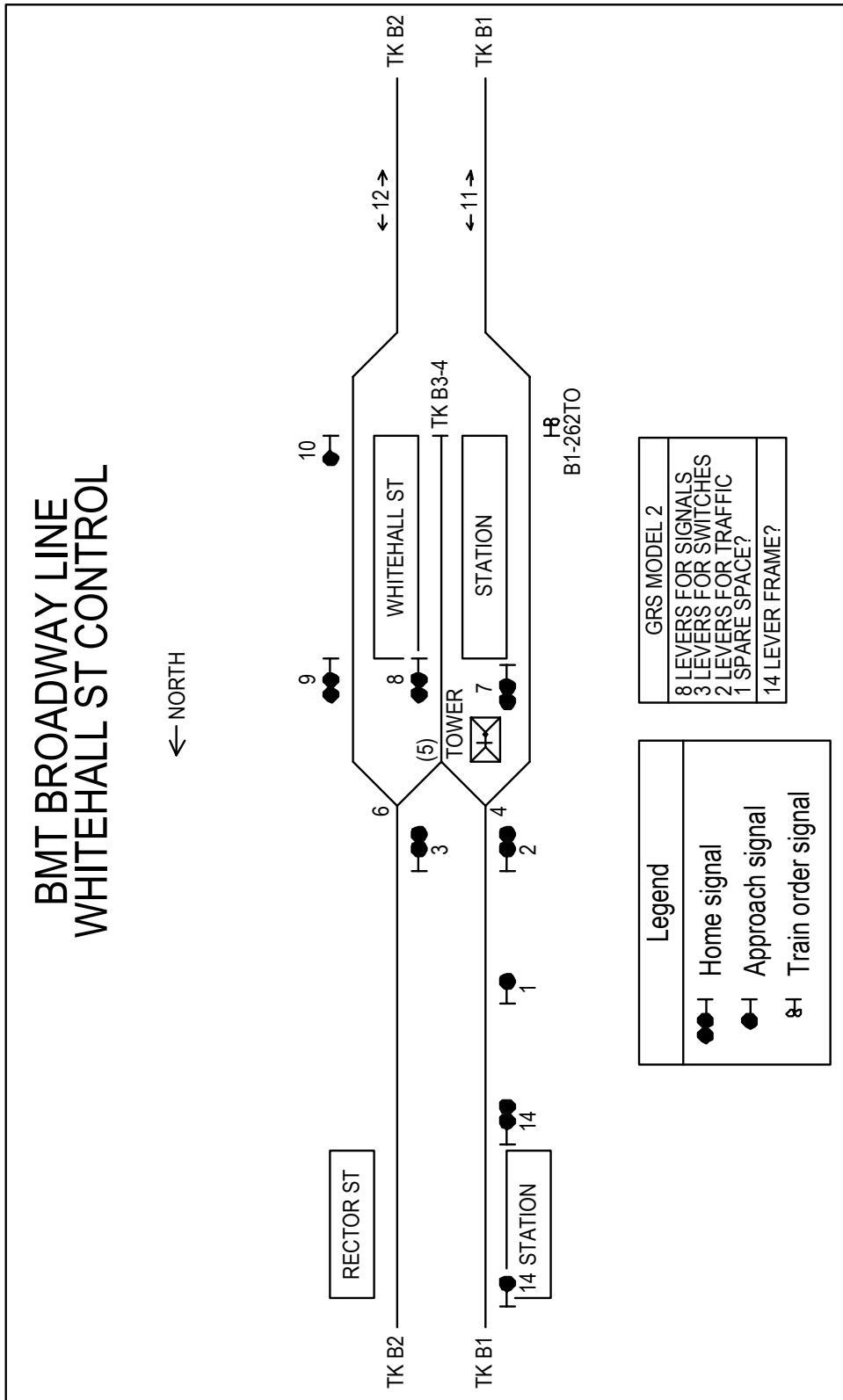
I goofed last month when I stated that City Hall was going to be the next historic interlocking diagram in this series. I do not have the old plan for City Hall. This month, we travel *two* stations farther south on the Broadway Line to Whitehall Street. This interlocking was a little simpler before the installation of the new signals in 1962. The middle track ended at a bumping block rather than connecting into Tracks B1 and B2 south of

the station. Nevertheless, there was traffic locking on both tracks through the Montague Street Tubes. Obviously, single-track operations used to be more complicated, requiring a relay move north of the station into and out of the middle track. Also added to Whitehall Street in 1962 was control of Nassau Cut, the junction of the Nassau Street Line with the Montague Street Tubes.

(Continued on page 7)

Tech Talk

(Continued from page 6)



Next month, we'll travel down to Myrtle Avenue Interlocking on the Fourth Avenue Line, which was featured

in last month's **Bulletin**.

Jeff may be contacted via e-mail at jerlitz@pipeline.com.

Commuter and Transit Notes

by Randy Glucksman

MTA Metro-North Railroad (East)

Newspapers carried headlines like "Bumper to Bumper," "A Vital Link, Suddenly Broken," and "A Nightmare on I-95." Metropolitan area radio and TV stations also provided extensive coverage of the aftermath of a tanker truck fire that occurred on the Connecticut Turnpike and damaged an overpass in Bridgeport. This event, the result of an accident between an automobile and tanker truck that was carrying 12,000 gallons of home heating fuel, began on Thursday March 25 at 7:45 PM. It was reported that the flames reached a temperature of 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit. Initially, Connecticut transportation officials were talking about a three-week closure of the Turnpike between Exits 25 and 27A, but on March 28 the undamaged northbound lanes were reopened. Less than one week later, a temporary bridge was put in place to handle southbound traffic, but with a 45 mph speed limit. Approximately 120,000 vehicles use that stretch of the Turnpike. Metro-North officials immediately geared up to accommodate any additional riders by having express trains make local stops in Fairfield County as required. At one point, it was reported that Amtrak would also be requested to stop its trains, but I have not heard that this ever took place. Three additional Shore Line East trains continued west of New Haven to Stamford at 6:20, 8:08 and 8:47 AM. Off-peak Waterbury service was operated with buses. The Port Jefferson-Bridgeport service used three boats, rather than two. Metro-North spokesman Dan Brucker reported that about 4,000 extra passengers were carried on Monday, March 29. Thanks to members David A. Cohen and Bob Underwood for their contributions to this news item.

At 4 AM Sunday April 5, Metro-North placed General Order No. 209 into effect, and new timetables were issued. They will remain in effect until the next time change on October 30. Incidentally, among the metropolitan area rail agencies, only Metro-North used the return to Daylight Saving Time as a reason to issue new timetables. Changes were made to accommodate various capital construction projects, improve service to growing markets, and in response to customer requests. This summer, track work and interlocking projects will take place on the upper Hudson and upper Harlem Lines, and all off-peak and weekend Poughkeepsie and Southeast (formerly Brewster North) trains have two additional minutes of running time. Trains leaving from Grand Central, now leave two minutes earlier than previously. There were also a few changes to the evening rush hour involving four Hudson Line trains.

Also on the Harlem Line, because the switches at Goldens Bridge are being replaced between April 4 and

May 23 (6 weekends), there is a 20-mile single-track operation between Chappaqua and Brewster. Bus replacement service is in effect on the Wassaic Branch on weekends so that bridge and grade crossing work can take place. The headways of weekend evening service from Grand Central to Wassaic have been adjusted so that there are departures at 3:48, 5:19, and 7:48 PM, instead of 3:48, 6:15, and 7:48 PM.

Train #1414 (8:35 AM Grand Central Terminal) has been renumbered to #1514 (8:32 AM Grand Central Terminal), and has been extended from Bridgeport to New Haven, bringing the total to nine trains that serve New Haven in the morning. Afternoon riders are benefiting from Train #1573 (3:33 PM New Haven), replacing Shore Line East Train #1671, which only operated as far as Stamford (now a deadhead move). These new trains now provide half-hour service in the 7-10 AM and 3-6 PM time periods.

The M-7s have been assigned numbers 4000-4399, and, like the M-1 to M-6 cars, are permitted to operate at a top speed of 100 mph.

How much does it cost to produce a monthly *Metro-Card/Commuter Rail Ticket* for the Mail & Ride Ticket Program? The answer is 56 cents. Metavante Corporation just won a new contract to continue this work, which involves producing the ticket and printing the origin and destination stations, the name of the customer, and the month for which the ticket is valid. In addition, they must also mail the ticket with an invoice and any advertising inserts. The ten year contract is for both Metro-North and the Long Island Rail Road, a total of approximately 75,000 tickets each month. The postage is extra.

Mileposts for March described the relationship that M-N has with the Connecticut Department of Transportation for the New Haven Line. This partnership came to be when Metro-North took over responsibility for operation of the trains from Conrail on January 1, 1983. Both agencies decide on the schedules and how many cars are assigned to each train. Exceptions are the New Canaan, Danbury, and Waterbury Branches, which are the domain of CDOT, although it is Metro-North crews who operate the trains. Each state sets its own fares for its portion of the line, and funding for capital projects is divided at the State Line. As an example, New York State completely upgraded the catenary over its 12 miles of the New Haven about 10 years ago, while Connecticut is still in the process of replacing its 47 miles. Purchase of new rolling stock is 65%-35% (CT-NY). Connecticut primarily relies on federal funding for capital expenditures, while Metro-North raises its funds through the sale of bonds backed by revenues and New

(Continued on page 9)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 8)

York State and federal aid. Any deficits for Main Line operation (the three branches are strictly Connecticut) are made up in the same 65/35 ratio. CDOT contracts with Amtrak for operation of Shore Line East under a separate agreement.

MTA Metro-North Railroad (West)

With the opening of Secaucus Junction, Metro-North has revised its rules on use of west-of-Hudson tickets on the Hudson Line. Monthly Pascack Valley Line tickets are honored from Tarrytown, weeklies from Irvington. Port Jervis Line monthlies are valid from Tarrytown, Croton-Harmon, or Peekskill, depending on at which station the ticket was issued. This reciprocity is due to the fact that the fares on each side of the Hudson River are now comparable.

The Pascack Valley Line received its first solid train of Comet Vs (6765-6766-6767) on April 5. As the Metro-North cab cars had not been delivered yet, the cab car was one of NJ Transit's, 6002. To my knowledge, not since the delivery of the first generation Comets in 1971 has brand new equipment ever been assigned to the line.

Connecticut Department of Transportation

CDOT will be scheduling public hearings to raise fares approximately 5% on its portion of the New Haven Line as of July 1. This fare increase would follow one implemented last July 1, which hiked fares 15%.

MTA Long Island Rail Road

Extra service was operated for the first two days of Passover (April 5 and 6) as well as Good Friday (April 9), on the following branches: three each on Babylon and Port Jefferson, and one each on Far Rockaway, Ronkonkoma, and Port Washington.

NJ Transit

Two months after the December 15, 2003 opening of Secaucus Junction, 4,500 passengers were using the station. This number is 800 more than were recorded in the first month.

At its March Board meeting, NJ Transit's Directors approved an amendment to the existing contract with Parsons Brinckerhoff to redesign a portion of the right-of-way along the Pascack Valley Line in East Rutherford which will allow direct access to the Meadowlands Sports Complex. Construction is expected to begin by the summer of 2005 and be complete by 2007.

NJ Transit's new Morrisville Yard in Pennsylvania went into service during March.

New timetables were issued effective April 26 – details next issue.

Who says that light rail does not attract residential housing? "In Jersey City, Condos Are to Rise Near Light Rail Line" was the headline of an article on residential

housing in *The New York Times* (March 26, 2004). Three 1940s industrial buildings that have been vacant for years have been bulldozed to make way for a \$40 million development that will ultimately have almost 700 homes. Located one block from the Westside Avenue station, the first part of the project will see construction of 172 condominiums from town houses to apartments and lofts. There will also be retail and office space.

Just short of two weeks after the opening of the River Line, specifically on March 27, I got to ride this newest transit operation in North America. Joining me on this trip were friends Steve Lofthouse and Alan Kramer, and two co-workers, Eric Volpe and Joe Black. We all met Joe at the Trenton station, having traveled by train from either Newark or Metropark. Since Joe got there first, he purchased the tickets, as we only had a seven-minute connection time. The regular fare is \$1.10, which works out to a penny a minute of scheduled running time. Senior and reduced fares are also available, and there is also a \$.45 feeder fare for those holding monthly/weekly tickets. River Line cars are boarded across the street from the Trenton Station on Clinton Avenue. Provision was made for a future 1.3-mile extension to the State Capitol. After validating our tickets, just like the Newark City Subway and HBLRT, we boarded car 3502, which departed on time. Leaving Trenton, the car meanders around a curve under a highway bridge and over the Northeast Corridor. Our seats in the front provided an excellent view through the lightly tinted windows behind the operator. We passed a small shed-type barn that can accommodate a few trainsets. At this time, we were paralleling Route 129, and, after making several stops, reached a private right-of-way and a 60-mph speed. There are some sections of single track, and, of course, passing sidings, which are located in stations where the double track ends. Except for crossovers, the tracks are of continuously welded rail, much of which sits atop concrete ties, but there are sections that use wood ties. At many stations, I saw between 20 and 30 riders waiting to board, and of course, there were some stations where there were fewer passengers. We crossed under NJ Transit's Atlantic City Line, but there is no station. At the Camden end of the 34-mile line are several sports and entertainment venues including the Aquarium, where the majority of the riders got off, Tweeter Center, and Campbell Field. We all enjoyed the ride, and are looking forward to riding again. Like HBLRT, many stations feature artwork by local artists. In fact, a *New York Times* article from last December 7, which I held until the system opened, reported that three artists, Katherine Hackl of Lambertville, Marilyn Keating of Gloucester City, and Hiroshi Murata of Santa Fe and formerly of Frenchtown, shared a \$525,000 commission to create art for The River Line. Because

(Continued on page 10)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 9)*

the project was exclusively financed with state money, NJ Transit was required to satisfy the state's Public Building Arts Inclusion Act that stipulates that up to 1.5% of the construction cost be used for art.

Joe and Eric were especially interested in the signal system. What they noticed while looking out the front window was that the signals seemed to be NORAC-compliant color light signals, of the type used on several Northeastern railroads, including SEPTA (on the ex-Reading Railroad side of the system). At one point, they even noticed an "Advance Approach" signal. The train operator, a former Conrail engineer, later confirmed that these were indeed standard NORAC-compliant signals. This is most likely due to the dual-use nature of the line - freights operate over a portion of it in addition to the River Line trains.

When we arrived at the Entertainment station, the train operator told me that one-day earlier, March 26, 15-minute headways were put into effect. Most trains were just single cars, but there were a few two car units as well. We rode to the Walter Rand Transportation Center, where we got off car 3512 and purchased tickets on PATCO for the ride over the Ben Franklin Bridge into Philadelphia. After lunch, an R-7 train brought us to Trenton where we said good-bye to Joe and boarded a New York-bound NJ Transit train. Both in the morning and afternoon, this service arrived and departed from Track 5 - the SEPTA train being positioned at the south end of the platform, with the NJ Transit train a few feet north of it.

About a week after making this trip I spoke with member Gary Grahl, who told me that he and his son (member) Andrew were on the first southbound revenue trip which left from the 36th Street Station. This train was also the first northbound revenue trip. Andrew supplied the photo of this train, cars 3511 and 3507, which was published in the April *Bulletin*. Gary gave me a copy of the Inaugural Program, which showed that the official ceremonies commenced at 11 AM with Governor James E. McGreevey christening the Inaugural train. It departed at 11:15 AM and made stops at many of the stations.

Member Lee Winson reported that with the opening of the River Line, NJ Transit has adjusted bus routes 604 in Trenton, 452 in Camden County, and 419 in Burlington County.

NJ-ARP reported that through the first two weeks of weekday service, about 3,700 riders were being carried, but over the weekend of March 27-28 (the one we visited) over 5,000 riders were carried each day.

Port Authority of New York & New Jersey

Member Bob Kingman reported that during ERA's tour

of the *AirTrain* shops on March 30 he came across a white board with a list of all the cars. It showed cars 101, 103-123, and 201-210. The gentleman giving the tour said that car (102) that was "damaged" in the September, 2002 accident was replaced (apparently with 123).

Amtrak

In mid-March, Amtrak settled its dispute with Bombardier and Alstom over the construction and delivery of the *Acela* trainsets. Under the agreement, the consortium will collect \$42.5 million of the approximate \$70 million that Amtrak has withheld. *The New York Times* reported that beginning in October, 2006, Amtrak would assume responsibility for maintenance for the 20 *Acela* sets. This is seven years earlier than was originally agreed to. On a given day, typically only 13 are available for service. Separately, Bombardier announced the closing of 7 of its 35 plants in Europe over the next two years. 6,000 jobs, or 18.5% of the rail work force, will be eliminated.

The Empire State Passengers Association (ESPA) reported that the project to rebuild the Rohr Turboliners for Amtrak Empire Services in New York State would be scaled back. An Amtrak spokesman said that only 4 Turboliners trainsets would now be rebuilt, instead of the 7 originally planned, but that the trainsets would have 6 cars rather than 5. The spokesman said that an additional car would be put in each trainset to increase seating capacity. New York State and Amtrak are funding the Turboliner project, with the rebuilding being performed by Super Steel Schenectady in Schenectady, New York.

Amtrak schedules were changed on April 26. Details next month.

On the morning of April 19, there was a collision between an Amtrak train and a Long Island Rail Road train in Penn Station (New York). My daughter and I arrived at NY Penn at 7:24 AM, and as we reached street level at Seventh Avenue we heard sirens, and saw lots of emergency vehicles headed to Penn Station. Moments later, my son Marc (an emergency service employee) called me on my cell phone to find out where I was, and informed me that there had been a collision between two trains. As soon as I arrived at my office, I turned on NewsRadio 880, which reported that an Amtrak and LIRR train had collided between Tracks 13 and 16. Service was initially suspended into Penn Station, and some trains were diverted to Flatbush Avenue. I later learned that the trains involved were Amtrak #183, which was deadheading to Penn Station from Sunnyside Yard, and Train #2099 (5:42 AM Ronkonkoma), which was due in New York at 7:02 AM. Initial reports gave the number of injured at 40, but by later in the day, that number had risen to 130. Video footage on TV

(Continued on page 11)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 10)

showed car 9200 was the car that was hit, and the reporter said that the collision had occurred in the tunnel while Train #2099 was waiting to enter Track 14.

Metropolitan Area

After first denying that Penn Station would be closed during the Republican National Convention, reports surfaced again during early April that the Secret Service would like to stop more than just the trains into and out of Penn Station, it would like to also halt NYC Transit's Broadway-Seventh Avenue and Eighth Avenue Subways. Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly is of the belief that a worst case scenario would result in a shutdown of two hours or so. If a total shutdown should occur, it would be a complete disaster to interstate (Amtrak) service, commuting (LIRR, NJ Transit, Amtrak), and just getting around the city.

Museums

This being the New York City subway's centennial year, you can expect extra media coverage. Branford's *Trippler* reported that on January 29, the museum received a visit from NBC's "Today" show. Correspondent Bob Dotson and his crew were there on one of the coldest days of this past winter. Two cars were featured: Manhattan Elevated "G" and Interborough "Mineola." Getting to these cars required moving other cars, and Third Avenue Railway 884 got to see the light of day for the first time in many years. This situation was only temporary, because by the next evening all were back under cover.

Other Transit Systems***Boston, Massachusetts***

Member Todd Glickman forwarded a report about the MBTA's new underground "Super Platform" station for the Green and Orange Lines at North Station. The new North Station SuperStation will open to partial Green Line service in June, 2004 and will offer commuters easier accessibility to the Orange and Green Lines. There will also be a new underground walkway scheduled to open in Fall, 2004 that will save commuters having to cross traffic on Causeway Street. The next phase of construction work will begin in June and includes the demolition of the elevated tracks between Science Park and North Station, along with the construction of a new Green Line trestle connecting the trackway with the Science Park station. During this one-year period, Green Line service will operate as far north as the new North Station SuperStation. A temporary replacement bus shuttle will operate between Lechmere, Science Park, and the subway system with stops near North Station, Haymarket, and Government Center during all regular service hours.

New commuter rail schedules went into effect on April 26, with minor adjustments made to many trains on all

lines except for Fitchburg, Newburyport/Rockport, Needham, and Fairmount. The Rapid Transit Spring timetable was issued as of March 27. Thanks to Todd for sending copies.

The November-December, 2003 edition of **ROLL-SIGN**, published by the Boston Street Railway Association, had a report on the Boston Region Transportation Plan 2004-2025. Here are some of what is being proposed:

- Restore Green Line (E) service between Heath Street and Arborway – 1.9 miles. PCCs last ran here in 1985
- Extend Green Line service from Lechmere to West Medford – this would be done partly via an existing freight line and partly beside the Lowell Line. It would be an alternative to a Blue Line extension to West Medford
- Blue-Red Connector – Extension of the Blue Line from the Bowdoin station (which would be closed) to the Red Line Charles/MGH station via a new subway. This would allow a direct transfer between these two lines
- North Shore Transit Improvements – A 4.5-mile extension from Wonderland (Blue Line) in Revere to Central Square, Lynn. The alignment would be either the abandoned narrow gauge right-of-way through Oak Island Center and Point of Pines Center or parallel to the Newburyport/Rockport Line
- Fairmount Line Improvements – Adding five new stations and increasing frequencies
- New Orange Line station at Assembly Square (Somerville) – Would be located between Wellington (Medford) and Sullivan Square (Charlestown)

Thanks to Gary Grahl for the report.

Buffalo, New York

Member Pete Donner visited Buffalo. He wrote that NFTA is in the process of repainting the LRVs in a scheme of white with blue and red trim. The transit agency has also renamed some of the stations, and he sent a copy of the (then) current timetable, which was in effect between December 28, 2003 and March 20, 2004.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

SEPTA issued new timetables for the former Red Arrow Lines on February 16, not February 11, as was reported in the March **Bulletin**. February 22 was the effective date for new timetables for the Subway-Surface, Market-Frankford Elevated, and Broad Street Subway Lines. On November 9, none was issued for the R-6 Cynwyd Line. When I was in Philadelphia, I asked at the Customer Service Office about this and was handed a plain paper copy dated November 27, 2003.

With the start of the 2004 Major League Baseball sea-

(Continued on page 12)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 11)*

son, the Phillies have a new stadium, Citizens Bank Park, which is located near the site of their former home, Veterans Stadium. SEPTA operated special Broad Street Express trains to their pre-season and to Opening Day. Riders received commemorative gifts of "stress baseballs" and chocolate tokens.

SEPTA City Transit workers ratified a one-year contract, avoiding a threatened strike. (City Transit runs the buses, subways, and streetcars of the former Philadelphia Transportation Company; other SEPTA units run suburban transit and the commuter trains.) The sticking point is having employees pay for escalating health care costs. SEPTA will continue to cover it for one year, hoping it will get more state funding next year. Thanks to Lee Winson for this report.

PATCO issued a new timetable on February 21, which member Gregory Campolo sent. The transit agency placed a clock on the cover, which was surrounded by the words "More Trains...Less Wait!" I wanted to see exactly what was added, but unfortunately the latest timetable that I had was dated May 12, 2003, and PATCO usually issues a Fall/Winter edition, which I do not have.

Each weekday morning until 12:15 PM, between March 15 and March 26, PATCO offered a free ride to all River Line ticket holders.

Washington, D.C. area

According to Virginia Railway Express' website, it is leasing P-40 830 from Amtrak, in addition to the pair of F-59s (V-40 and V-41) from Sound Transit.

New VRE schedules went into effect on April 26. Running times were adjusted on one Manassas train (#322) because it had less running time than other trains. With L'Enfant being added as a stop for Amtrak #84, surrounding VRE trains have had some adjustments made to their times to avoid the chance of "bottlenecking" at some key interlockings. Finally, some of the intermediate times at stations in the morning were changed to reflect growth in ridership and increased station dwell times.

Memphis, Tennessee

At 10 AM March 15, the Memphis Area Transit Authority reopened its Main Street Trolley Line, with a new two-mile extension to Madison Avenue. Members Bob and Judy Matten were there two days after and sent a report. Free rides were offered on all three lines (Madison Avenue, Main Street, and River Front) for one week. On Saturday and Sunday, the Madison Avenue cars were extended to the north end bus terminal. The headways are longer, which results in heavier loads. In celebration of 10 years of service, fares were reduced to 10 cents from April 25-27. Cash fares are \$.60, and there are also special fares for seniors/disabled (\$.30).

That fare is also available for all riders as the "Lunch Fare" between 11 AM and 1:30 PM. For those who plan to take more than one ride, there are various passes available: Two-trip (\$1), All-Day (\$2.50), 3-Day (\$6), and 31-Day (\$15).

South Florida

My family spent a few days in Florida in early April, and on one of the days my son (member) Marc and I rode Tri-Rail from Delray Beach to Miami International Airport. The last time we did a trip to the southern portion of the line, Hialeah was the last stop, 2.6 miles north of the present terminus. (You still need to take a shuttle bus to reach the Airport, but the ride is shorter.) Train P609 had six cars and although the train arrived about 11 minutes late, we were only 4 minutes late at the end. That train was removed from service, and a three-car train was substituted. We rode that train (P612) to Metrorail Transfer and boarded a northbound Metrorail train to the new Palmetto station. Midday service is provided by six-car trains; many have had the black window treatment removed, and are just stainless steel with striping below the window. My opinion - the cars look better this way. A single-track operation is in effect on Track 2 from south to north of Okeechobee Station while the structure on Track 1 is replaced. En route to Palmetto, the train passes a Metrorail yard and maintenance facility. The Palmetto station, which opened on May 31, 2003, has an island platform and is at ground level. I visited what would pass in New York as the "token booth," but which was staffed by Wackenhut Security personnel, to get some schedules. All I came away with were maps, as new schedules were "about to be issued." When he learned that we were from New York, one of the security guards told me that he grew up in Brooklyn. Returning to Metrorail Transfer, we walked over to the Amtrak station with hopes of photographing the assortment of rolling stock that was in the yard. Inside the station, there is an HO model display of the station, yard and surrounding area. The structure that carries Metrorail is also there, but instead of Metro cars, one track has two Metro-North Bombardier coaches, while the other has the power car of an *Acela* plus two coaches. Member Joe Gagne tells me that this display has been there for many years.

We did not receive permission, so it was back to the Tri-Rail station. Approaching the grade crossing, the lights began to flash, and the gates came down, signaling that a train was near. And what a train it was - the Colorado Railcar DMU (2002) pulling Tri-Rail cars 1002 and 503, running about half an hour late. We should have boarded the train, because unbeknownst to us, it did not return as we expected. Another trainset, the six-car set that we had ridden earlier, came out of the yard for Train P616, and ran south to the Miami Airport station. The next day we thought about riding the train just

(Continued on page 13)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 12)

for one station, but ultimately decided instead to photograph it in Delray Beach. This time, the train was 20 minutes late.

Blame it on the escalating price of gasoline and ongoing construction on I-95, but the average 10,151 week-day riders that were carried on Tri-Rail during February was the highest since April, 1994. Thanks to member Karl Groh for sending the report from the **Palm Beach Post**.

Tri-Rail's seemingly eternal August 14, 2000 schedule was reprinted with a "02.04" date.

Chicago, Illinois

In the March edition of METRA's customer monthly news letter **ON THE BI-LEVEL**, a rider wanted to know if there is a policy on how train crews should punch 10-ride tickets – is it done sequentially or randomly? The answer is that there is no formal policy; however, the vast majority do so in ascending or descending order. Does any member know if such policies exist on other railroads that use 10-trip tickets?

Los Angeles, California

Thanks to Pete Donner, there is an update to the timetable situation in Los Angeles. During my late-February visit (April **Bulletin**), the newest edition that I was able to obtain was for the Gold Line – February 1, but Pete also found Green and Red Line timetables with the same date.

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Siemens and its partners, who are building the *Tren Urbano*, have filed a lawsuit against the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico's Transportation Department over a dispute involving the completion of the project. \$50 million is being sought (\$10 million to accelerate construction,

\$3 million for not complying with a change order request, and \$37 million in damages). They are also seeking a 284-day extension of the opening date. PRDOT has fined the consortium \$3 million plus \$100,000 a day in liquidated damages since September 29, 2003. According to the report in **Engineering News Record**, the new opening date is this July 10.

Seoul, South Korea

South Korea became the fifth country in the world to operate high-speed train service, when 186 mph (300 kph) service began on April 1. Initially, service is being provided on the first three-quarters of the 253 miles between Seoul and Pusan. According to **The New York Times**, the trains are of French design, and the train pictured in the accompanying photo was indeed a TGV. There is a five-year, \$1 billion program to construct 12 "bullet train" stations, and completion of the entire high-speed rail network is set for 2010. The service is marketed as KTX – Korean Train Express. For the record, the other four countries that are operators of high-speed rail service are Japan, France, Germany, and Spain. Amtrak's (limited area) 150-mph *Acela* is not considered high-speed.

From the History Files

100 Years Ago: On May 11, 1904, construction began on New York's Pennsylvania Station. This magnificent facility was opened for service on August 1, 1910, and for the first time, trains from the west side of the Hudson River could arrive directly into New York City.

20 Years Ago: On May 20, 1984, the first section of Miami's Metrorail, between Dadeland South and Overton, opened. Over the next few years there were other extensions, the most recent being last May 31, when the Palmetto station was opened.

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

Nostalgia Corner

(Continued from page 4)



Sumner Avenue station, looking north on Sumner Avenue, October 5, 1950.



Grand and Lafayette Avenues, looking west, February 18, 1952.

THAT '70S SHOW

As part of the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the opening of New York City's first subway, NYC Transit has been painting vintage subway cars into various color schemes they wore over the years. In April, fan-trips were operated using R-33s 9010/11 bearing 1970s

MTA livery (which was usually not visible for long the first time around, as graffitiists often plied their "trade" on the cars right away). These pictures were taken at the 238th Street-Broadway station. Enjoy!

Andrew Grahl photographs



Around New York's Transit System

🚗 Train Collides with Bumping Block and Derails

At 1:37 PM on Sunday, April 18, 2004, an 🚗 train collided with the bumping block on Track Q2 at Eighth Avenue-14th Street as it was completing its trip from Broadway Junction (where it had originated, instead of Rockaway Parkway, because of track work). The collision caused the front truck of lead car (R-143) 8196 to leave the rails. The front end of that car rose about a foot and

a half, leaving it just over a foot from the ceiling of the platform level. One passenger claimed injury but left the scene, while another person reported an injury later.

Until the train could be re-railed and removed from the area, and an investigation into the incident could be conducted, all 🚗 service operated via Track Q1 in the Eighth Avenue-14th Street station. Normal service was restored just before 7 PM.