

The Bulletin



New York Division, Electric Railroaders' Association

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The Bulletin

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LATE DECEMBER BLIZZARD PARALYZES METROPOLITAN AREA **by Bernard Linder and Randy Glucksman**

On mid-Sunday morning, December 26, 2010, it began with light snow flurries, but by the time it ended the next afternoon, it was rated as the sixth worst storm to hit the metropolitan area. This storm was certainly one for the history books. The snowfall amounts ranged from 12 to 32 inches (Rahway, New Jersey), but with the high winds, the drifts accumulated to several feet. As could be expected, the railroads were especially hard hit, and below are summaries of each. It should be noted that railroad crews worked around the clock to restore service.

MTA LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

It is almost unbelievable, but there was a period of time during the blizzard when there were no LIRR trains in service. Service was suspended at 10:30 PM Sunday. Tickets were being honored by New York City Transit at New York Penn Station, Atlantic Terminal, and Jamaica. The railroad has a policy that it will not operate when snow accumulates above 10-13 inches to prevent trains being stuck on the road. That said, there was a report that 11 trains never made it to their terminals and were returned to the nearest stations or Jamaica, where passengers were put on buses to their stations. Trains with heat and light were available for those who were stranded in New York Penn Station and Jamaica. Partial service returned to the Port Washington Branch at 5:30 PM Monday, and the following morning on the Ronkonkoma, Huntington, and Babylon Branches. By evening, only the Far Rockaway, West Hempstead, Ronkonkoma to Greenport, and Spe-

onk to Montauk remained suspended. The next morning Far Rockaway and West Hempstead got their service back. As Wednesday dawned, trains ran on all branches, albeit with a few cancellations. Bus service was provided east of Ronkonkoma and Speonk. Rail service returned between Speonk and Montauk on Wednesday evening, while the service from Ronkonkoma to Greenport had to wait until Friday morning. Member Larry Kiss and his wife were aboard Train #203 (12:41 PM Greenport/Ronkonkoma) when he overheard the Conductor telling a passenger that it was a last-minute decision at 3 AM to restart train service. In fact he said that the replacement bus for the first trip out of Greenport had not been cancelled and was waiting at Greenport.

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD

At 5 AM Monday, with a Sunday schedule in effect, service was suspended on the New Haven Line due to equipment and switch failures related to the blizzard. The Harlem Line was next at 8:30 AM. At 9:30 AM, all service was halted while crews worked to inspect switches in the Bronx. There were hourly departures to Poughkeepsie at 12:45 PM, Southeast at 12:48 PM, and New Haven at 12:52 PM, making all stops. Inbound service resumed at roughly the same time, also making all stops. On Tuesday, a Saturday schedule was in effect. Normal service resumed on Wednesday morning.

NJ TRANSIT

An "enhanced" weekend schedule was in
(Continued on page 6)

BROOKLYN'S LITTLE BIRNEY CARS by Bernard Linder

The Birney car, named after Charles Birney, the master mechanic of the Stone and Webster Engineering Corporation, was a one-man, single-truck lightweight car. It was developed about 1915 and was usually purchased by companies that could not afford a double-truck car.

The safety equipment in most Birneys included a combination brake, sander, and door operator with dead-man controls. We do not know whether this type equipment was installed in the Brooklyn cars.

Birney was able to produce a lightweight car by specifying an arch roof instead of a deck roof and using steel instead of wood.

In 1919, Brooklyn Rapid Transit wanted to convert its lightly travelled lines to one man and replace its oldest single-truck cars. Instead of converting two-man to one-man cars, the company decided to buy one-man Birney cars, which cost only \$5,680 each. The company hoped that it would attract additional riders by running these small cars more frequently than the large cars.

Like all single-truck cars, Birneys were rough riding. We never rode the Brooklyn Birneys, but we rode Third Avenue's 100-series single-truck cars, whose front and rear platforms bounced up and down as soon as the car picked up speed. Passengers sitting in the center of the car were not as uncomfortable.

Before ordering several hundred cars, Brooklyn Rapid Transit tested six demonstrators. Cars 341-345 and 350, built by the American Car Company in 1918-9, arrived in Brooklyn on February 23, 1919. One car was placed in service at 9 AM February 23 on the 65th Street-Fort Hamilton (Third Avenue) Line. Three others were operated later in the day. At 5:50 AM the next day, three cars were placed in service and ran all day. Running time was 12 minutes with 3 minutes layover for changing ends, raising and lowering trolley poles, and reversing cross seats. Because the cars were smaller, service was increased from a 5- to a 3½-minute headway in the rush hour and a 10- to a 7½-minute headway in non-rush hours.

These six demos were sold to the Connecticut Company in early 1920 after the 7000s entered service.

The first shipment of the 7000s arrived in Brooklyn during the week of December 14, 1919. Roster is as follows:

CAR NUMBERS	MANUFACTURER	YEAR
7000-7199	J.G. Brill Company	1919
7200-7205	Cincinnati Car Company	1918

Cars 7200-5, which cost \$5,500 each, were purchased November 29, 1918 by the South Brooklyn Railway Company. Original numbers were 7000-5. They

were renumbered 7200-5 in 1919 and were operated on the Nortons Point Shuttle and Gravesend Avenue Lines.

The following cars were sold to F.B. Cutter Company of Terre Haute, Indiana on May 18, 1923, which sold them to several street railways: 7001, 7005, 7008, 7022, 7025, 7027, 7030, 7031, 7056, 7062, 7070, 7072, 7074, 7076, 7078, 7079, 7082, 7094, and 7101-7.

The following cars were renumbered to fill in the missing numbers in the 7000-99 series:

The new roster was 7000-82, 7108-7205.

ORIGINAL NUMBER	NEW NUMBER	ORIGINAL NUMBER	NEW NUMBER
7083	7082	7092	7031
7084	7079	7093	7030
7085	7078	7095	7027
7086	7076	7096	7025
7087	7074	7097	7022
7088	7072	7098	7008
7089	7070	7099	7005
7090	7062	7100	7001
7091	7056		

Car 7068 was rebuilt to surface rail grinder on September 30, 1930 and was renumbered 9998. It was scrapped March 26, 1955.

Car 7082 was rebuilt to rapid transit rail grinder on September 30, 1930 and was renumbered 5004. It was scrapped in July, 1954.

Car 7203 was sold to Bush Terminal Railroad on May 31, 1933.

Scrapping dates are as follows:

YEAR	NUMBER OF CARS		
	7000S	7100S	7200S
1923	18 (A)	8 (A)	—
1932	7	3	—
1933	31	9	6 (B)
1934	25	24	—
1935	9	13	—
1937	8	43	—
1954	1	—	—
1955	1	—	—

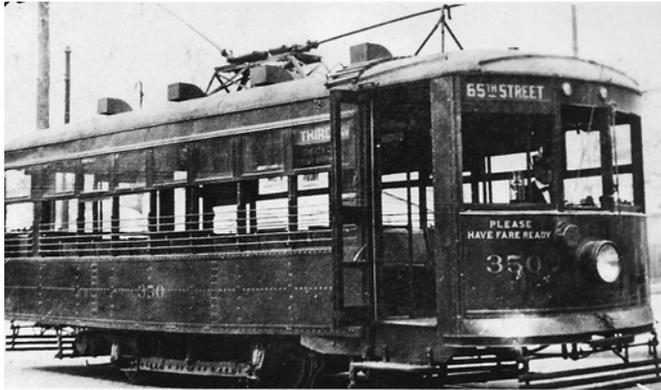
(A) Sold to dealer

(B) Includes one car sold to Bush Terminal Railroad

Because they were flimsy and rough-riding, most Birneys were scrapped long before the older, heavier, and smooth-riding double-truck cars. (Continued on page 3)

Brooklyn's Little Birney Cars

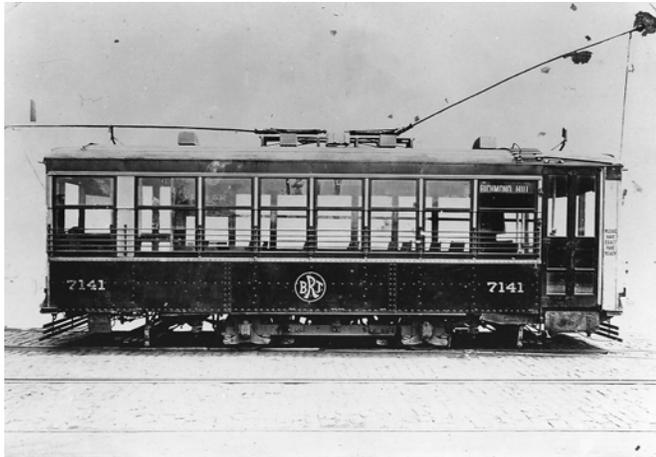
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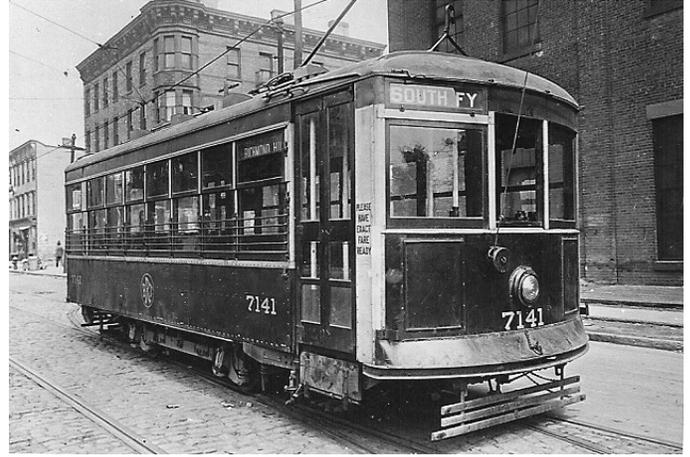
A Birney demonstrator on the Third Avenue Line in 1919.
Bernard Linder collection



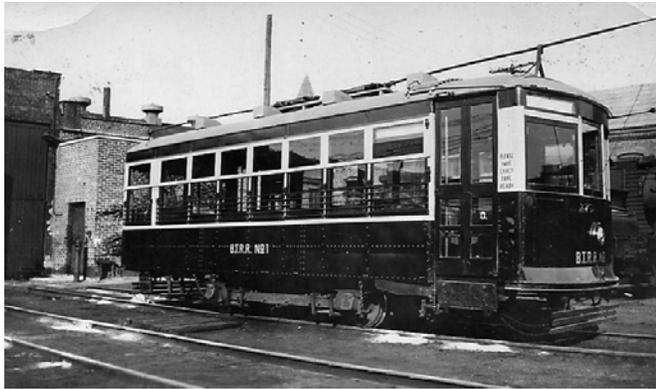
A Birney car on the Williamsburg Bridge during municipal operation (1923-31).
Bernard Linder collection



Birney 7141 in 1921.
Bernard Linder collection



Birney 7141 at Second Avenue and 58th Street in 1921.
Bernard Linder collection



Bush Terminal Birney 1 (ex-BMT 7203) at 43rd Street Yard in December, 1934.
Bernard Linder collection



Interior of Birney 7026.
Bernard Linder collection

(Continued on page 4)

Brooklyn's Little Birney Cars

(Continued from page 3)

BUSH TERMINAL RAILROAD COMPANY

This company was incorporated January 17, 1903. Construction began in July, 1905 and was completed in the fall of 1906. Operation began April 1, 1906. The company operated an electric railroad principally to transport freight between the buildings in the complex and lighters in connection with interstate traffic. It was awarded a franchise for the following route in Brooklyn: From 28th Street and Second Avenue via Second Avenue, 41st Street, and First Avenue to 58th Street.

The company also operated trolley cars. We do not know when this service began or ended, but we have the following incomplete record from Public Service Commission and Transit Commission reports:

CAR NUMBER	MANUFACTURER	TYPE	YEAR BUILT	REPORT DATE
1	Brill	Semi-convertible	1907	July 20, 1916-March 12, 1923 reports
3	St. Louis	Closed	1912	July 20, 1916-March 12, 1923 reports
579 (ex-BMT)	American Car	Closed	1898	First listed July 15, 1923 Returned to BMT June 30, 1924 report Listed again January 1-June 30, 1926 reports
2192 (ex-BMT)	Briggs Car Company	Closed	1899	June 30, 1924-July 24, 1925 reports January 1-July 1, 1927 reports
1	St. Louis	N/A	1927	In service December 17, 1927 March 7, 1928-January 18, 1933 reports
1	Cincinnati Car Company	Birney	1918	(A)

(A) Car 7203 was sold to Bush Terminal May 31, 1933 and was renumbered 1. It was operated only in rush hours from 58th Street and First Avenue to 39th Street and Second Avenue until 1936 and was probably the last trolley car operated by the company. It was scrapped in 1940.

PASSENGER TRAFFIC STATISTICS

In 1921 and 1922, the company owned three trolley cars operating on a 0.98-mile line, probably between 39th Street and 58th Street. The average number of pas-

sengers was 4 and the maximum was 24 in 1921 and 28 in 1922. The fare was only two cents. Passengers were lucky that the company subsidized this deficit.

MUNICIPAL OPERATION ON THE WILLIAMSBURG BRIDGE

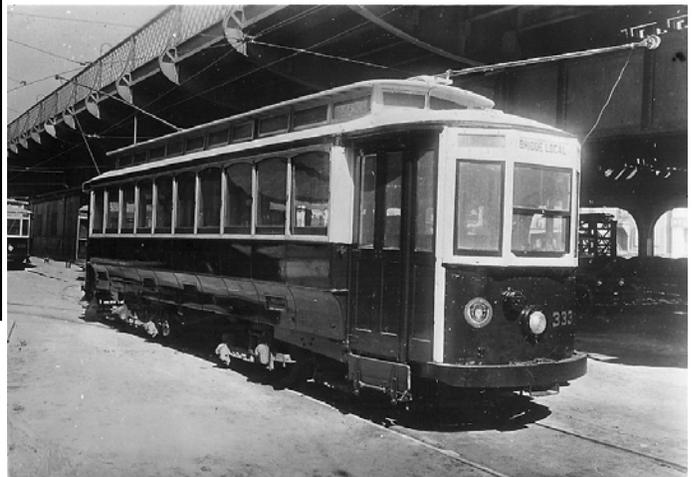
Birney cars were operated by the city on the Williamsburg Bridge from 1923 to 1931 because BMT refused to provide service. The company complained that through service was operated at a loss. Local service was profitable, but the city collected the profits. Therefore, the company refused to pay tolls amounting to \$60,000 per annum. By not paying the tolls, BMT diverted \$231,317 in tolls. The city obtained a judgment, but was unable to collect. The company was not required to run cars on the bridge because it had no franchise, but had only a permit.

Municipal operation began at 3:45 AM December 1, 1923 with 50 cars operating on a 30-second headway. Fare was 3 tickets for a nickel. Transfers were not issued to BMT cars.

The city assembled a fleet of 53 second-hand cars, including 20 box cars and 30 Birneys, 201-233, built by Brill in 1921. The next day, the city operated only 130 cars per hour during rush hours, much less than the 174 cars per hour previously operated by BMT. There was a 200 percent overload because the big BMT double-truck cars held almost twice as many passengers as the single-truck Birneys. Many passengers who formerly rode BMT trolley cars across the bridge took Third Avenue Railway cars or the train, which was overcrowded.

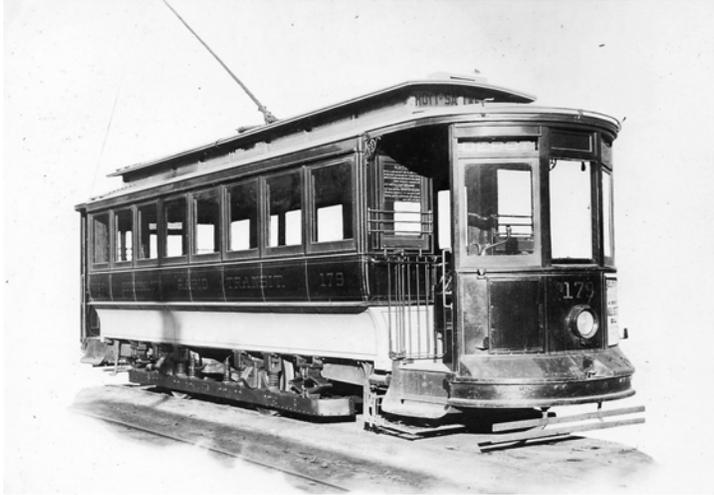
BMT trolley cars started crossing the bridge again on February 15, 1931 and transfers were issued to all intersecting lines at Bridge Plaza.

The Birneys were sold to several street railways and the 20 box cars were sold to the Eighth and Ninth Avenue Railroad Company.

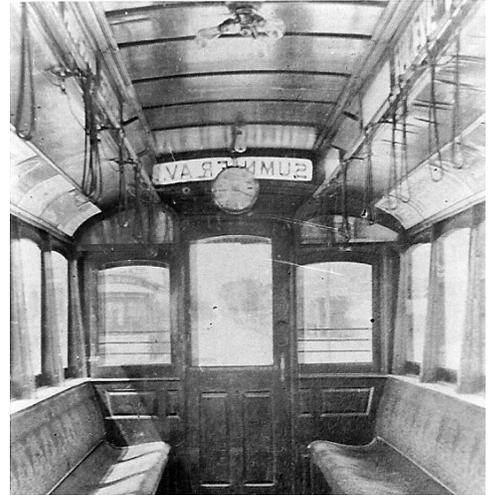


Box car rebuilt by Second Avenue Railway for municipal operation on Williamsburg Bridge. Bernard Linder collection

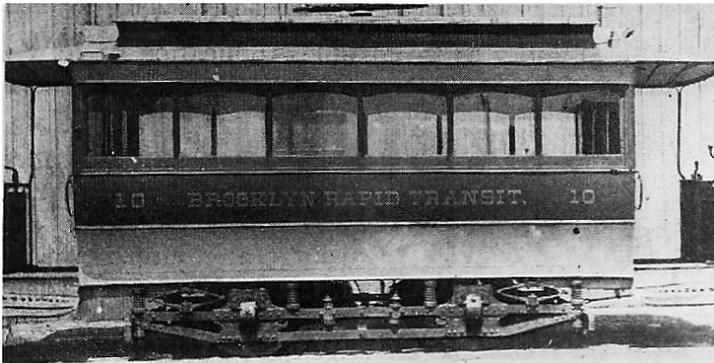
OLD SINGLE-TRUCK CARS (ALL PHOTOGRAPHS, BERNARD LINDER COLLECTION)



Single-truck car.



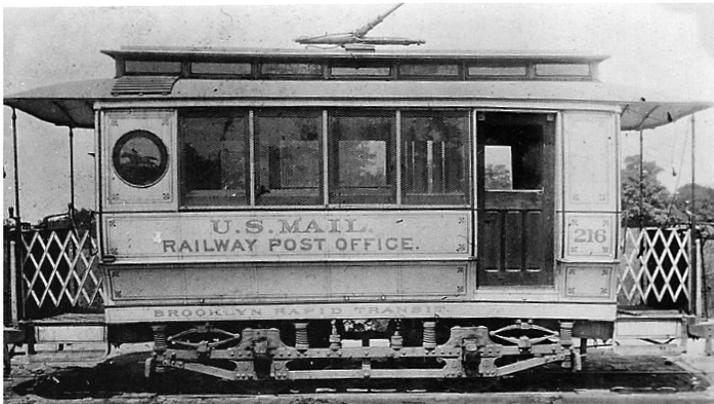
Interior of single-truck car 1141.



This was the first type of closed electric car, with a 12-foot body, 1892.



Interior of single-truck car 2382.



Mail car 216, built by the Brooklyn Heights Railroad in 1899.



Brooklyn Rapid Transit car 102.

Late December Blizzard Paralyzes Metropolitan Area*(Continued from page 1)*

effect on all lines except for Atlantic City, which ran its regular schedule. Passengers were instructed to use January 17 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day) as the basis for what trains would operate. This amounted to a handful of extra trains on all branches except for Atlantic City, Main/Bergen, and Pascack Valley. Traveling into and out of New York would prove to be difficult. Once at work, I kept receiving email alerts about train delays. Adding to the weather-related problems was a signal problem, which began after 4 PM and soon caused a suspension of service between New York and Newark. Passengers were told to go to Hoboken. NJ Transit tickets were being honored. PATH was not operating its normal schedule, and although I thought that I had allotted sufficient time for the 14-minute ride between 33rd Street and Hoboken, with the extremely crowded train and increased dwell times at the intermediate stations, a group of passengers including me missed our train by about one minute. I found out that the NJ Transit personnel on duty at Hoboken had not communicated with PATH regarding the very limited schedule that they were operating and so no trains were held. At that time of day on most lines there are one-hour headways. The next train, although scheduled to depart from Hoboken 1 hour and 9 minutes later, actually left 1½ hours later due to late arrival of the train and its crew. It was one trip home that I will not forget.

On Tuesday, the same "enhanced" weekend schedules were in effect and ridership was significantly greater. All four trains that I rode were extremely crowded, from the 4-car Pascack Valley Line to the 9-car multi-level Northeast Corridor Line. I barely made it on to the train at Secaucus Junction for the short ride to New York Penn Station. Thankfully, the regular schedules returned on Wednesday and it was once again a pleasure to ride the train.

PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON RAILROAD

On Monday morning at 1:44 AM, PATH service was limited to Grove Street via Hoboken to 33rd Street and Grove Street to World Trade Center on 30-minute headways. Shortly after 10 AM, the service plan was modified so that trains ran between Journal Square and World Trade Center. Starting at 6 AM Tuesday, trains were operating on 10-minute headways. (Under normal conditions, peak hour headways range from 4-6 minutes depending on the line.) Due to the lack of service at Newark Penn Station, passengers were advised to use NJ Transit to reach New York. Regular service returned on December 29.

MISCELLANEOUS

During the blizzard and its aftermath, during daytime hours, Newark Light Rail operated between Grove Street and Newark Penn Station on a 10-minute head-

way and to Broad Street every 25 minutes. The Hudson-Bergen Light Rail was suspended until 2 PM Tuesday.

Bus service in New Jersey was suspended from Sunday afternoon until Tuesday morning.

JFK AirTrain service was suspended for several days.

The one time that I checked SEPTA's website on Monday, Regional Rail was reporting 40-minute delays on all lines except for the Cynwyd Line, which was not operating. Member Bob Wright reported: "the snow event did cause a number of problems on the transit system, of course nowhere near what the New York area experienced. We got 12 inches in the immediate city area and the net result was that most Regional Rail lines were running with delays on Sunday and Monday. The Silverliner Vs were making a trip on my home line, Norristown, on Monday, and I was considering a ride, but the snow took care of that. When I resumed regular riding on Tuesday, there were many cars out of service and short trains, but this seemed to be remedied by Wednesday. SEPTA Transit was somewhat impacted and a number of bus routes were detoured or shortened until late in the week. The 36 trolley was not going beyond Elmwood Depot for a few days because of vehicles abandoned on Island Avenue."

AMTRAK

Normal service between New York and Boston, which was suspended on Monday, resumed on Wednesday.

MTA NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT

The blizzard deposited 20.1 inches of snow in Central Park. Wind gusts reached 59 miles per hour at JFK Airport and the barometer was unusually low, under 29.00, like the reading during a class 3 hurricane.

Because the National Weather Service originally forecast a light snowfall, city and transit officials were unprepared for the blizzard. When the revised forecast predicted severe weather, they could not respond promptly. Unfortunately, rail transit and vehicular traffic were disrupted.

As soon as it started snowing, IRT cars were transferred from the yards to the underground express tracks north of Times Square and Grand Central. Trains operating in the subway were unaffected by the storm and trains operating on the structure kept running because the snow fell through the ties. Service was curtailed or discontinued on all or portions of **5**, **A**, **B**, **D**, **F**, **L**, **M**, **N**, and **Q** operating on the surface, embankment, and open cut. There was no service to Coney Island, Franklin Avenue, the Rockaways, or Dyre Avenue. Unfortunately, we were unable to find out when service ceased or resumed. However, trains were probably running on all lines by December 30.

The Central Park record of 26.4 inches is still held by the December 26-27, 1947 blizzard followed by 21 inches during the famous March 12-14 Blizzard of 1888.

...AND ANOTHER MAJOR SNOWSTORM

by Randy Glucksman

Over the weekend of January 8-9, meteorologists were predicting a significant snowfall, and as Tuesday approached, the predictions wavered and finally settled at 12"-14", with higher amounts in eastern Long Island and Connecticut. When it was all over, Central Park recorded 9.1 inches. Here is a sampling of the amounts around the region: New Jersey (New Brunswick) 16 inches and Connecticut (North Haven) 29.5 inches. Tuesday evening, January 11, all railroads operated their normal schedules. Below are details on how the service operated during this storm.

MTA LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

In anticipation of the snowstorm, which, when compared to the one of December 26-27, 2010 (cover story), amounted to almost nothing, LIRR operated additional trains on the Port Washington (1), Port Jefferson (3), Far Rockaway (1), and Babylon (3) Branches. These trains are the same ones that operate on Holiday Eves.

In order to protect trains from becoming snowbound out east, there was no train service east of Ronkonkoma and Speonk. Buses were provided east of Speonk starting with Train #2720 (8:53 PM Jamaica/Montauk). On Wednesday, January 12, 23 westbound peak hour trains were canceled on all branches plus two reverse peak trains (one each from New York Penn and Atlantic Terminal). Throughout the day there were additional cancellations. Montauk train service was restored Wednesday night with the departure of the 8:53 PM train (the same one that had been cancelled the previous evening). Earlier, buses replaced some rail service due to winter storm conditions. Remember that LIRR does not run trains when the snow accumulates to 10-13 inches. Rail service east of Ronkonkoma occurred in time for Thursday morning's rush hour. However, a few hours later, buses replaced the midday trip between Greenport and Ronkonkoma due to snowdrifts.

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD

On Wednesday, a Sunday schedule was in effect, except for the Waterbury Branch, where there was no service. Special timetables, available on the Internet, were issued for Metro-North's connecting services: Newburgh-Beacon Ferry, Haverstraw-Ossining Ferry, and Hudson Rail Link (serving Riverdale and Marble Hill). This was done because a Sunday train schedule was in effect, and those services do not operate on Sundays. Between 8 and 10 AM, service was suspended on the New Haven Line east of Stamford due to a disabled train at Bridgeport. While that was going on, the Danbury Branch was closed due to snow conditions in Danbury.

In order to protect service, 7-car trains of push/pulls

(Bombardier coaches) were sent to the New Haven Line to replace aging M-2s. A couple of "mini-Bomb" sets were held as reserve trains for use as fill-ins for those sets. My son Marc observed one of these, a 3-car train powered by one of the Metro-North Brookville engines, at Marble Hill late Wednesday night. With the Hudson & Harlem M-7 fleet being reasonably reliable in heavy snow and the New Haven EMU fleet being so vulnerable, all of the longer push/pull sets were sent to New Haven, which totaled 6 sets of equipment to utilize in place of the EMUs. On Wednesday, an all-diesel shuttle service operated between New Haven and Stamford, with EMUs operating to Grand Central Terminal. Regular weekday schedules were back in effect the next morning, except for Waterbury, where busing continued through Thursday. On Friday, the rail service returned.

NJ TRANSIT

The regular weekday schedule was operated, but it was anticipated that Wednesday morning service would also operate with possible delays. The first change was to cancel all 3500-series (South Amboy) trains. Passengers were picked up by Woodbridge Expresses. Also canceled was Train #872 (6:43 AM Hackettstown/Hoboken). During the peak hour, 20-minute delays were reported, and by late morning, trains were reported as operating on or close to schedule.

PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON CORPORATION

Starting at 7 AM, PATH went on 10-minute headways instead of its usual 4-6-minute headways. At 9:30 AM, the regular schedules went back into effect.

AMTRAK

Ahead of the storm, five southbound and four northbound *Empire Service* trains were canceled. At 11:30 AM, Northeast Corridor service was suspended between New York and Boston due to a fallen tree near Sharon, Massachusetts that damaged the catenary wire. Amtrak also suspended service on its "Inland Route" via Springfield. Normal service resumed the next day.

MTA NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT

Subway service was not curtailed.

OTHER TRANSIT SYSTEMS

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Twenty-minute delays were reported on the Green Line. However on the D/Riverside Line, for a period of time, buses replaced the trolleys between Riverside and Reservoir due to a fallen tree. There were no reported delays on the Red, Orange and Blue Lines.

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

The only delays and cancellations that were reported occurred on a number of bus lines.

Commuter and Transit Notes

No. 267
by Randy Glucksman

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (EAST)

When the October 17, 2010 timetables were issued, included were a number of peak hour trains that were not scheduled to operate between December 27 and 30. Additional trains were scheduled later in the morning.

The 2010 edition of the *New Year's Weekend Timetable* was exactly that – Christmas was not included. I checked my timetable collection for the last time that New Year's Day occurred on a Saturday, and it was in 2004. At that time, Christmas week was included. Because of the post-New Year's Eve extra service, Metro-North, for at least this one day, became a 24-hour railroad.

If you were in Grand Central Terminal during the holidays, you might have noticed that the laser show on the ceiling was not there. Well it turns out that you were not alone because this very question was sent to fyi@nytimes.com. The answer is that no sponsor could be found for the event, which had been presented since 1998. In 2009, also absent a sponsor, Metro-North paid the almost \$200,000 cost. However, this year, given the economic problems facing MTA, it was felt that absorbing the cost would send the wrong message.

For the second consecutive year, new timetables without the Christmas-New Year's extra service were not issued.

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (WEST)

The locomotives in the west-of-Hudson engine fleet that were not overhauled under the program, which was done several years ago, are in the process of having that work done. All are model F-40 and will continue the 4900-series, which previously ended at 4906. 4907-10 were formerly 4191-4, while 4911-4 are ex-NJ Transit 4115, 4116, 4123, and 4125.

Last year, the icing of the Hudson River affected the Newburgh-Beacon Ferry on January 5. This year, service was suspended on January 17, with bus service replacement. So far, the Haverstraw-Ossining Ferry, which is 28 miles south, was not affected.

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

A New Shore Line East schedule with minor changes was issued effective December 13, 2010, replacing the October 18, 2010 edition. This was the seventh one for 2010. Thanks to member David Cohen for sending copies.

In this column I have written about the Connecticut Rail Commuter Council, who are advocates for Metro-North and Shore Line East commuters. The council, which was created by the Connecticut General Assembly, recently celebrated its 25th anniversary. According to *The Hartford Courant*, "Over the past quarter-century,

the council, ably led by Jim Cameron of Darien, has fought for new rail cars, much-needed station improvements and better station parking, and fought against steep fare increases. The council is in part responsible for increases in transit ridership, which lowers pollution and energy use and encourages transit-oriented development in towns lucky enough to be served by transit." Congratulations to the council.

MTA LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

Over the first weekend of 2011, a problem with Sprint communication lines rendered LIRR's TVMs unable to process credit or debit card transactions. Passengers were told to use cash at these machines. Metro-North was also affected.

An email that I received reported that 760 LIRR M-1s were purchased by Bombardier and removed on the same flat cars that delivered the M-7s. The first 350 went to Mexico and the rest to Quebec, Canada. Metro-North disposed of its 178, which went to Ohio for scrapping.

NJ TRANSIT

Where have all of the ALP-44s gone? During December and January, I did not see any, as all Northeast Corridor trains that were not Arrow-IIIs were powered by ALP-46s. According to one Engineer I asked, "They're still around."

Between December 27 and 31, 2010, Trains #3922 (7 AM Trenton/New York Penn), #3126 (7:36 AM New Brunswick/New York Penn), and #3218 (6:27 AM Long Branch/New York Penn) did not operate.

On December 31, 2010, a modified weekday schedule was in effect with additional eastbound service on all lines to New York Penn Station between 10 AM and noon. In addition, four Northeast Corridor, two North Jersey Coast Line, three Raritan Valley, and one Morris & Essex Lines train did not operate due to weather-related issues. On New Year's Eve, many lines had special late-night trains.

Unanswered in last month's *Bulletin* was the disposition of the 60 Arrow-IIIs that will not be rebuilt. Member Jack May learned that they will be offered for sale. Another recipient of the email suggested that SEPTA might purchase them, as they are newer than any of SEPTA's MUs. The Silverliner IVs are the equivalent of an Arrow II in terms of age.

During late December, members Larry Kiss and Barry Zuckerman took a ride to Hackettstown via the Morris & Essex Lines. At Port Morris, which is west of Netcong, they observed a group of Comet-Ibs (former Arrow-IIs).

In connection with the expansion of "Quiet Commute Cars" (January *Bulletin*), which began January 3, I

(Continued on page 9)

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

heard PA announcements being made on eastbound trains leaving Secaucus and on westbound trains departing from New York Penn Station informing passengers of the location of these cars (first and last) and the requirements for being in those cars. Some crewmembers even went so far as to identify the car numbers. This initiative is in effect weekdays between the hours of 6-10 AM and 4-8 PM on *Midtown Direct*, Morris & Essex, Northeast Corridor, North Jersey Coast Line, and Raritan Valley trains, essentially the entire Northeast Corridor.

A Newark Light Rail timetable was issued effective January 8, which replaced the September 4, 2010 edition. There were a few minor changes to some weekday trips.

On January 13, I was forwarded an email that announced that a ceremony to mark the opening of the HBLR 8th Street extension was scheduled for January 31.

In a change from previous years, where the regular schedule was used, an "enhanced" weekend schedule was operated on January 17 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day). Please see the cover story for details.

Having canceled the ARC Tunnel project, Governor Chris Christie put forward a plan on January 6 to fund transportation projects. He has asked for \$1.8 billion from the Port Authority to pay for four highway projects. \$4.4 billion in bonds would be issued, that would be repaid in equal payments over 30 years, and additional funds would be diverted from the NJ Turnpike Authority. The Governor would give \$672 million annually to NJ Transit and an additional \$200 million would be spent each year on local projects. Kate Slevin, the executive director of the Tri-State Campaign, would prefer that Governor Christie raise the state's gas tax to pay for road work.

Member David Safford sent this report: "***The Philadelphia Inquirer***, in a rather rueful editorial today (January 10), echoed my thoughts on Governor Christie's transit funding program. Given Christie's commitment to keeping NJ's low gas tax low, it was possibly the best that could be done in the short term, but it is still essentially identical to the funding system he excoriated during his campaign, and provides not even a hint of a long term solution."

What was described as a "glitch" caused a message to display on NJ Transit's website on January 13 that the domain name was for sale. NJ Transit spokesman Dan Stessel told the news media that the incident would be investigated, but that it owns the name for the next 20 years.

A note on the ACES website advises that the company is transitioning its service to a seasonal schedule and will not operate from the weekend of January 14 until

May 13. This is due to low ridership. Member Bob Vogel, who has frequently photographed the train, wrote that he had purchased a ticket for the "last train" on January 9 the previous week when it was \$29. Earlier in the week it the price was \$39 and on January 7, \$49.

PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON CORPORATION

The same email cited above (please see LIRR) reported that the PA-1 to PA-3s are being flat-bedded to Ashtabula, Ohio for scrap. Two PA-4s are destined to Branford, 18 will be retained for work trains, and 74 are being sold to Kawasaki, which will ship them to Lima, Peru either for rebuilding for a transit system or scrapping. Kawasaki delivered 94 PA-4s between June, 1986 and December, 1987.

As of January 11, the Pavonia/Newport station has been renamed "Newport." According to Port Authority spokesman Ron Marsico, "the name change is just one of many changes being implemented as part of the PATH modernization project and was done for simplicity's sake." New blue signs with "Newport" were installed, and changes have also been made to the automated voice announcements. The name change, he said, "would also make a stronger tie-in with the Newport Mall shopping center." ***NJ.com*** reported that Pavonia means "land of the peacock" and was part of New Netherland, the first European settlement on the west bank of the Hudson River.

There were comments on the Internet citing the loss of the "history" associated with this change. Opened on August 2, 1909 by the Hudson & Manhattan Railroad (H&M), it was originally named Erie Station and enabled passengers arriving upstairs at the Erie Railroad passenger terminal to use the Erie's own ferries or H&M to reach New York City. In late 1956, the Erie started shifting its trains to the Lackawanna's Hoboken Terminal. Pavonia closed on December 29, 1958.

METROPOLITAN AREA

Walkway Over the Hudson, the now-pedestrian bridge over the Hudson River, which opened on October 3, 2009, has recorded more than 750,000 visitors, including yours truly and his wife (October, 2009 ***Bulletin***). The non-profit group of the same name that operates the bridge has applied for a \$10,000 grant to be used to train volunteers who would provide information to visitors and lead tours that would be on this ex-New Haven Railroad bridge.

MISCELLANEOUS

Eugene K. Garfield, who started the *Auto-Train* and the *Florida Fun Train*, died on December 26, 2010, at the age of 74. According to his obituary in ***The New York Times***, while he worked for the Transportation Department in the Johnson Administration in the 1960s he conducted a study for that agency for an auto-ferry service between the northeastern United States and Florida. The conclusion was the service could be potentially profitable. After President Johnson decided not to

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run for re-election, Mr. Garfield returned to the private sector. His daughter was quoted as saying that, "he came home one day and said to my Mom, I'm going to run a train." The Auto-Train Corporation operated between Lorton, Virginia and Sanford, Florida, a distance of 855 miles, from December 7, 1971 until financial problems caused it to end the service on May 1, 1981. Amtrak restarted the service on October 30, 1983. While the *Auto-Train* had been profitable for most of its existence, *Florida Fun Train* was not, operating from October 15, 1997 until September 17, 1998. Here is another quote from his daughter: "He was a train nut. He just loved trains. He had a little sign in his room that said: I Still Play With Trains."

OTHER TRANSIT SYSTEMS**BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

MBTA officials are looking at several options to avoid raising fares. Under consideration are selling long-term parking revenue to investors in exchange for a lump sum, which could generate \$325 million. This would help close a projected deficit of more than \$100 million for the coming fiscal year. The "T" would also like to go to a single Operator on the Red Line. (On July 1, 2010, the Orange Line was converted to Single Person Train Operation (SPTO), something the Blue Line has had since about 1996.) Machines would replace parking lot staff, and in-house personnel would do some presently contracted maintenance work. Under the proposal, a subsidiary would be created to sell most or all of that projected parking revenue for a set period, e.g., 20 or 25 years, as tax-exempt debt, in exchange for an up-front payment of perhaps \$250 million to \$325 million. The "T" would retain control over its garages and lots, including the ability to set the parking fee, and would also collect any annual surplus that comes in on top of the parking revenue guaranteed to investors. About 46,000 parking spaces in 100 garages are owned by MBTA.

Last year, MBTA had successes with iPhone and Android phone apps when the agency put out real-time information displaying when the next bus or subway train would be arriving. In the first quarter of this year, the plan is to launch the commuter rail version. This year, MBTA would also add countdown information for its subway lines. Thanks to member Todd Glickman for these reports.

LINDENWOLD, NEW JERSEY

Bob Wright also reported: "the 10% PATCO fare increases that were scheduled for January did not occur. PATCO and its parent, the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA), are enduring a good deal of political gamesmanship these days and the scheduled bridge toll increases and PATCO fare hikes were delayed, possibly until September, while the political machinations

continue."

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Here is more from Bob: "The Silverliner Vs continue to show up in revenue service on various lines. SEPTA has published a schedule of where they will be on its website, although they don't always follow this. On December 15 they were supposed to make an evening rush hour run on Chestnut Hill West, but I saw them at 30th Street on a Newark, Delaware train, and the same run scheduled for December 29 had Silverliner IIs substituting for them. They did not run Christmas Eve or the following weekend. There are still a few minor teething problems being worked out. The second set of cars (703 and 803-4) were supposed to be moved from the Rotem facility in South Philadelphia to Wayne Junction on December 26, but the snowstorm canceled that, and they were finally moved December 29. Whether they will run as a separate 3-car train or be coupled up with the currently in-service cars to make some rush-hour runs remains to be seen. The Silverliner Vs have 2-2 seating between the doors and 3-2 seating from each door to the car end, with the exception of a longitudinal seat next to the left-side door (don't recall if this is at both ends of the car), which folds up for wheelchair accommodation. This is a deliberate reduction of seating capacity because, as we know if we are riders, the 3-seaters only get fully used in crush load situations (the 'dreaded middle seat'). I can't say it's SEPTA's official policy, but trains do seem to have cars assigned to account for this now, so the effective capacity of a 3-car Silverliner V train compared to the same length of Silverliner IVs is probably comparable. I do know one issue that may come into play is the crew size, where each Silverliner V car may need a Conductor to watch/tend the traps — on the Silverliner IIs, IIIs and IVs, a Conductor is usually expected to cover 1½ cars, so a 3-car train of Silverliner Vs may need one more Conductor than a 3-car train of IVs. We shall see.

"The new Frankford/Girard loop for Route 15 is taking shape — I walked on Frankford Avenue last week (first week of January) and noticed that all track is in and paved, for the most part (some paving remains to be done adjacent to the outer rails on Frankford Avenue and in the loop area). Poles are up except in the loop area and many span wires and hangers are in place, waiting for trolley wire to be installed. Our recent and expected snow may delay this to some extent, but the new segment of line is pretty far along and could probably be operational within a month."

Member Charles Anderson wrote that I should have mentioned in the report that appeared in last month's column that the primary reason that the Route 15 loop was constructed is that a total reconstruction of I-95 from the New Jersey to Delaware borders is now underway. He writes: "The interstate in the immediate area is elevated and will require substantial reconstruction..."

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beyond that normally encountered. Within a half-mile, Girard Avenue turns left into Richmond Street, which is directly adjacent to the elevated I-95 ROW. Since this area is difficult, it will be the initial part of the highway's reconstruction. Richmond Street will be shut down for the duration, resulting in the need for a new 'turn-back loop' to temporarily replace the existing loop at Richmond & Westmoreland. In addition, I-95 traffic will be seriously impaired and will be diverted to Columbus Boulevard, thus making a difficult situation impossible for a year or more! I wouldn't want to be in a position to cross the street from the trolley to the casino!"

Dave Safford sent the following two reports: "Another dream ends: the imposing, yet graceful, ex-PRR Manayunk bridge over the Schuylkill, for decades the key to SEPTA's planned extension to Reading, will become another foot/bicycle trail. The right-of-way from the end of service at Cynwyd is already cleared for rail use, and will now be extended over the bridge through Manayunk to tie in with an existing riverside trail which is largely also on old Pennsy right-of-way. With the Schuylkill bridge in Reading already a trail (a major roadblock to the extension to begin with), this appears to drive the final nail in its coffin. The extension has been delayed for over twenty years, despite heroic efforts from transit and governmental personnel, by a persistent lack of funding for transit projects.

"FAA has given final approval to a \$5.2 billion expansion plan for the Philadelphia Airport. The plan includes provision for an 'automated people mover' between the existing airport terminals and a new commuter terminal to be located some distance to the northeast. It is unclear how this would interface with the existing Airport regional rail line, which currently terminates at Terminal E, never having been extended to serve terminal F. I was unable to find any other details of this project."

From **Cinders**: A general reissue of Regional Rail timetables will take place on March 13. However, beginning on March 6, seven Sunday round-trips between Wilmington and Philadelphia will be added to take advantage of the opening of the annual Philadelphia Flower Show. These are the same trains that operate every two hours between 8:36 AM and 8:36 PM on Saturdays. Funding is provided by the state of Delaware. Norristown High Speed Line timetables will display the inbound and outbound trains on the same side of the timetable rather than the back-to-back format. Other notable changes will be reported when known. Among the better performing SEPTA routes are Market-Frankford and Broad Street Lines where the operating ratio (OR) is 45%; Warminster, 54%; and Media-Elwyn, 63%. To meet heavy ridership demand, a seventh MU car has been added to Train #6576, *The North Penn*

Limited (5:12 PM 30th Street/Doylestown) on Monday through Thursday afternoons.

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

Transit fares went up effective January 2. The base fare is now \$2.25 and the highest zone fare is \$3.25, a fifty-cent increase. The cost of a transfer went from 25 cents to \$1. Member Mel Rosenberg, who gave me this information, added that many bus routes have already been eliminated (January **Bulletin**), but there are still more to come. On the rail side, headways have been lengthened. This is all due to financial problems.

In fact, on January 12, the Port Authority approved a plan to reduce the current service levels by 15% starting March 27. Twenty-nine routes will be entirely eliminated, affecting 13,000 riders, about half of whom will shift to other routes. The Harmar and Collier bus garages will close, with a loss of 430 jobs.

WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

On December 30, 2010, WMATA received a \$150 million grant from U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. These funds, along with an equal amount from the states of Maryland and Virginia and the District of Columbia, will be used to as follows: \$79.3 million for the purchase of 300 7000-series cars to replace the original 1000-series cars and \$44.4 million for track rehabilitation and for other infrastructure and safety improvements. The 1000-series cars were identified by the National Transportation Safety Board as having contributed to the death of the Train Operator in the June 22, 2009 Red Line crash near the Ft. Totten station.

NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

"The Tide," the 7.4-mile LRT, will not open in May. Already 16 months behind (as of January) and \$106 million over budget, Hampton Roads Transit officials are still expecting an opening this year, barring any unforeseen catastrophe. The latest problem to surface is the upgrade of the communication system. Nonetheless, beginning January 10, HRT increased testing of its cars on Ballentine Boulevard to Newtown Road and from the NSU station to the EVMC/Ft. Norfolk station.

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

On September 25, 2010, MARTA reduced rail service by 14% and bus service by 10%. Not surprisingly, following a fare increase on October 3, 2009, rail ridership declined by 37,000 and bus ridership by 325,000. Comparing these two months, these numbers are 0.5% (rail) and 5.6% (bus) lower. Thanks to member Joe Canfield for this report from **The Atlanta Journal-Constitution**.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

On January 10, the first day of the Quiet Cars program, Rock Island District commuters were no different than other commuters as they welcomed the Quiet Cars (January **Bulletin**). The first and last cars of all Rock Island District trains between the hours of 6 and 9 AM and 3:30 and 6:30 PM are the cars where commuters are asked to refrain from using cell phones and other

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electronic media, to speak quietly, and to insure that headphones cannot be heard by anyone else. By all accounts, everywhere they have been introduced, riders are pleased. According to an article in *The Chicago Tribune*, it is an unqualified success and will likely be extended to all 11 lines once the 3-month pilot program is completed. Thanks to member Jim Beeler for sending this report.

A factory will be built in Rochelle, Illinois to manufacture the \$560 million, 160-car order of Highliners. Sumitomo and Nippon-Sharyo selected this location after reviewing the proposals from 50 other sites. N-S will invest \$50 million and the State of Illinois an additional \$12 million to build the plant. The 400,000-square-foot facility is expected to open in May, 2012 and employ 250 people. The first cars are expected to be delivered in late 2012.

Testing of the train of ten 5000-series cars moved to the Purple and Yellow Lines on January 17. It was most recently on the Pink Line and previously saw service on the Brown, Orange, Blue, Green, and Red Lines.

On January 8, a beta version of the CTA Train Tracker was launched. Using a desktop computer or mobile web-enabled devices, such as iPhones, BlackBerries, or smartphones will provide estimated arrival times for all eight rail lines. Thanks to Bob Hansen for these two reports.

AUSTIN, TEXAS

The Lone Star Rail District is a public agency created by the Texas State Legislature to study, plan, construct, and operate a new 120-mile regional intercity passenger rail service (called "LSTAR") from Georgetown through Austin to San Antonio. The agency recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Union Pacific Railroad to study an alternative through freight alignment between Seguin and Taylor (dubbed the "Austin Bypass") that will take 20 to 30 through freight trains per day out of the current UP route between San Antonio and Austin (Austin Mainline 1 Subdivision) to open capacity for future LSTAR passenger service. Future plans for passenger service include 15 to 20 round trips per day, featuring both local and intercity express trains. At the present time there is no date when the service will begin due to unresolved items such as freight relocation alignment and the Texas Department of Transportation's completion of a comprehensive state Rail Plan.

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

The table for "Scheduled in 2011" in last month's issue contained an error. The first item – Sacramento — should not have been written that it was an extension to the Sacramento Airport, which eventually it will reach, but as a 1.1-mile extension of the Green Line that will not take place until mid-year.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Weekend "Baby Bullet" service began on January 1, with two trains in each direction. Trains #801 and 803 depart from the San Jose Diridon station at 10:35 AM and 5:35 PM, while Trains #802 and 804 depart from 4th/Townsend in San Francisco at 11:59 AM and 6:59 PM. The intermediate stops are Sunnyvale, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Redwood City, Hillsdale, San Mateo, and Millbrae. The three-month pilot project has a goal of attracting 1,000 riders each day.

With the contract with Amtrak, the current operator of Caltrain service, expiring on June 30, last September 27, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB), which owns and operates Caltrain, received proposals from these firms: Keolis Rail Services America, Peninsula Corridor Rail Services (a joint venture of Amtrak and Bombardier), Peninsula Rail Services (a joint venture of Rail America and RATP-Dev), Transit America Services, Incorporated (a subsidiary of Herzog), and Veolia. Amtrak, which has had the contract since 1992, can continue to operate the service on a month-to-month basis. JPB has conducted evaluations of each proposal and conducted interviews with firms found to be in the competitive range. The current timeline calls for negotiations to be concluded in late spring and a recommendation of contract award to be presented to the board by early summer. The new contractor is expected to be on board by the end of the year.

Another change came to Caltrain riders on February 1, when 8-trip paper tickets were discontinued. They continued to be sold until January 31. Those who wish to continue to use them were told that they had to purchase them on the regional fare card – the ClipperSM card. ClipperSM is now fully operational on Caltrain, as well as on five other Bay Area transit systems – BART, SamTrans, Muni, Golden Gate Transit and Ferry, AC Transit, and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. Beginning March 1, Caltrain monthly passes will only be available on the ClipperSM card. Paper one-way tickets, Day passes and zone upgrade tickets will continue to be sold at Caltrain ticket vending machines.

Although demolition of the Transbay Terminal began last year with an expectation that construction would begin before the end of the year, that has not been done. According to an article sent by member Lee Winsor, the earliest date could be by the end of this year or early next year, and that is assuming that the economy picks up. Besides the centerpiece, a \$1.2 billion Transbay Tower, there will be at least six other high-rise buildings that could redefine that section of the city. Transbay Tower would also be the hub of transit for much of downtown San Francisco.

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

Member Dave Klepper reported that, "the opening of the light rail has again been moved from May to November of this year, and I think this time it will stick. The

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Mayor is trying to force the test operation to carry people, so riding may come sooner.”

TAIPEI, TAIWAN

Todd Glickman wrote: “I’ve been to Taipei a number of times, but this was the first time that I didn’t have with me colleagues who believe that a car and driver is better than taking public transportation. And so today, I got to ride the rails. I took the Taiwan High Speed Rail (HSR) from Taipei to Hsinchu, about 85km (53 miles), and the ride took 32 minutes. Top speed is 300km/hr (186 mph), and the trainsets are based on the Japanese Shinkansen and built by Kawasaki Heavy Industries. Trainsets have 12 cars, with car #6 being business class, and the rest standard class. Odd-numbered cars have restrooms. Southbound, I made a reservation for a standard car (290 Taiwan New Dollars, or about US\$10), and the ticket vending machine spit out a ticket marked with the car number and seat number — mine was Car 3, Seat 4A, a window on the ‘three side.’ Seating is 2x3, with limited recline. The car was about 70% full, but I had the three seats to myself. Northbound, I chose business class for 510 Taiwan New Dollars, or about \$17.50. Business class has 2x2 seating with much better recline, and you get free snacks and non-alcoholic drinks served by an attendant from a cart. There is in-seat audio and power supply. My seat was Car 6, Seat 4A; the coach was about 50% full, and I had no seatmate. Most occupants (both classes) were using their cell phones, but in muted tones.

“Returning from Hsinchu, I took the Taipei MRT back to my hotel, then the ‘Blue Line’ from the Taipei Railway Station three stops east, and changed for the ‘Brown Line’ one stop north. The one-way, single fare was 20 Taiwan New Dollars, or about \$0.70. The Red Line, opened in 1999, features modern heavy rail rolling stock with a.c. propulsion. There is a driver, but the train is under automatic train control. This line’s trainsets have six cars, with the ability for passengers to pass from car to car. Major stations have platform doors that come up to about five feet above the platform. The Brown Line, opened in 1996, runs two 2-car trainsets with rubber tires, though each car is self-contained and passengers cannot move between cars. It is a driverless system with a panoramic windshield giving great views. Imagine a JFK AirTrain-like ride 30 feet above a busy Manhattan avenue. There are numerous new lines and extensions under construction, and it seems as if most major thoroughfares in Taipei are impacted by the work.”

SHANGHAI, CHINA

This was another stop on Todd’s Far East trip. “Shanghai has one of the world’s largest metro systems, and it is expanding rapidly. Currently it has 12 lines, nearly 300 stations, and over 420km (260 miles)

of track. I had the opportunity to ride a few lines, mainly Line 2, that is one of the oldest and busiest. Fares are distance-based, and my ride from People’s Square to LongYang Road to get the Maglev (seven stations) was RMB4, or about \$0.60. This line runs eight-car unitized sets of Alstom-manufactured equipment, in ATO. There is a driver who opens the doors, monitors the flow of passengers, and then closes the doors. When the train platforms, he opens his cabin door, exits the train, surveys the platform, then reaches in to open the train doors (and platform screen doors at stations so-equipped). On the platform at his position is a set of TV monitors, allowing the driver to see the entire length of the platform. When ready to depart (which can be delayed by a countdown clock if the train is running early), the driver in military-like fashion points along the platform, then to the monitors, and closes the doors. Finally, he looks to the track ahead and the leaving signal, points to it, enters his cabin, and closes its door so that the train may proceed. This process is modeled after the Japanese safety system seen on their metro. I’ve made a video available that shows the actions of a driver at the end: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-4k918TuhY>.

“Next, I rode the world-famous Shanghai Maglev (Shanghai Transrapid) that runs between Shanghai Pudong Airport and a terminal in Pudong — 30km (18.6 miles) in under eight minutes. Top speed is 431km/hr (268 mph). The ride is remarkably smooth, though there’s a bit of a rumble. It can be hard to focus on the passing scenery at high speeds. There is a window into the driver’s cabin, and it’s possible to see out the front of the train. The driver sits at a desk, and monitors computer screens. I didn’t see any manual controls, though I assume it can be run manually if need be. The fare is RMB50 (about \$7.50) each way, or RMB80 (about \$12.15) round trip. I’ve made two videos available - inside the train and into the driver’s cabin: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EqbqY9-9dKI> and http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5st3hXKut4.

FROM THE HISTORY FILES

60 Years ago: On February 6, 1951, the San Francisco Municipal Railway ordered 25 PCCs from the St. Louis Car Company in what would be the final domestic delivery of PCCs. Cars 1016-40 were delivered between October and November, 1951. Several have been preserved, including 1040.

30 Years ago: On February 9, 1981, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority awarded the Budd Company a contract for 130 M-3s (70 for the Long Island Rail Road and 60 [M-3As] for the Metropolitan Region, which became Metro-North in 1983). Styled after the M-1, deliveries arrived between 1983 and 1986. Ultimately, LIRR would receive 174, and the Metropolitan Region 142, for a total of 316.

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

Around New York's Transit System

Increased Subway Fare

On December 30, 2010, NYC Transit increased its subway and bus fares. Base fare remained at \$2.25 and reduced fare also remained at \$1.10. To cover the printing costs, single-ride tickets were increased to \$2.50. The 30-day *MetroCard* was increased to \$104 and the 7-day *MetroCard* rose to \$29. The 14-day and 1-day *MetroCards* were discontinued. Passengers paying a minimum of ten dollars receive a bonus of 7 percent, which was reduced from 15 percent.

Rockaway Line Station Rehabilitation

On December 22, 2010, the rehabilitated Rockaway-bound platforms at the B. 105th Street-Seaside and B. 90th Street-Holland stations were reopened. The rehabilitation of these stations is part of a \$117 million project involving nine stations on this line. Work includes new canopies over the stairs and platforms, redesign of the area around the station booth, renewal of mezzanine and platform floors, replacing platform edges and ADA tactile warning strips, installation of vandal-resistant fluorescent lights, and a new high-fidelity public address system. ADA elevators will be installed at the Far Rockaway-Mott Avenue station.

Rockaway Line stations are a part of the grade crossing elimination project that began in 1939, reaching Hammels in 1941, and Far Rockaway in 1942. Trains operating on the surface reached Far Rockaway on July 29, 1869 and B. 116th Street-Rockaway Park on July 4, 1872.

The Manhattan-bound platforms of the B. 25th Street-Wavecrest, B. 44th Street-Frank Avenue, and B. 67th Street-Gaston Avenue stations were scheduled to reopen in January, 2011. The Manhattan-bound platforms of the B. 36th Street-Edgemere and B. 60th Street-Straiton Avenue stations closed in January, 2011 for approximately 18 weeks. Work on the Far Rockaway Branch should be completed by the end of 2011. Weekend closures of the B. 90th Street-Holland, B. 98th Street-Playland, and B. 105th Street-Seaside stations have ended, but work continues on other station components. It is anticipated that work on Rockaway Park Branch stations will be completed in the fall of 2011.

One Hundred Countdown Clocks are in Service

On or about December 21, 2010, the Houston Street station on 1 became the 100th station with countdown clocks. This exceeds NYC Transit's goal of 75 stations with clocks in 2010. This improvement is being activated in 195 stations along the numbered (former IRT) lines. These Public Address/Customer Information Screens, commonly known as countdown clocks, inform passengers when the next several trains will arrive at the station. Information distributed through this system originates from NYC Transit's Rail Control Center,

where Customer Service Agents provide subway riders with up-to-date service status.

Culver Viaduct Rehabilitation

Preparation work for the Culver Line rehabilitation project took place on the January 14-17, 2011 weekend. Free shuttle buses replaced F and G trains between Jay Street-Metrotech and Church Avenue while transit workers constructed temporary platforms at the Smith-Ninth Street and Fourth Avenue-Ninth Street stations. F trains operated in two sections — between Jamaica-179th Street and Jay Street-Metrotech then via Fulton Street Local to Euclid Avenue, and between Church Avenue and Coney Island.

From 5 AM January 17 to May, 2011, Manhattan-bound F and Queens-bound G trains will operate as follows: They will stop on the express track at Church Avenue, bypass Fort Hamilton Parkway and 15th Street-Prospect Park, stop on the express track at Seventh Avenue, and stop at a temporary platform accessed via the Coney Island-bound platform at the Fourth Avenue-Ninth Street station. Manhattan-bound F trains bypass Smith-Ninth Street, while Queens-bound G trains stop at a temporary platform at this station.

From late autumn, 2011 to spring, 2012, Coney Island-bound F and Church Avenue-bound G trains will stop at a temporary platform at the Fourth Avenue-Ninth Street station, then stop on the express track at the Seventh Avenue station, bypass the 15th Street-Prospect Park and Fort Hamilton Parkway stations, and stop on the express track at Church Avenue.

The Smith-Ninth Street station will be closed completely for rehabilitation from late May, 2011 to spring, 2012, after which Coney Island-bound F trains will bypass this station from spring to autumn, 2012.

"NO TOKENS" Message on Turnstiles

Someone asked *The New York Times* FYI why turnstiles still display the message "NO TOKENS" even though tokens have not been used since the end of 2003. The answer is money. According to spokeswoman Deidre K. Parker, "Eliminating the message is a costly software change that would require resources that are better utilized on other maintenance functions."

Broadway-Nassau Street Station is now Fulton Street

In December, 2010, the Broadway-Nassau Street station, Eighth Avenue Line, was renamed Fulton Street. This unifies the station names throughout the four-station complex (Lexington Avenue, Seventh Avenue, Nassau Street, and Eighth Avenue Lines) and ties the name to the Fulton Street Transit Center under construction above the complex.