

The Bulletin



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The Bulletin

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In This Issue:
The Long Island Rail Road Eyes Manhattan (Continued)
...Page 2

THIRD AVENUE'S CAR BUILDING PROGRAM

In the early 1930s, the company was operating approximately 900 obsolete, slow, wooden double-truck cars built in 1908, 1909, and 1911. Also operated were more than 100 newer single-truck cars. But the company could not afford new cars because the city insisted on maintaining a five-cent fare. Because PCCs were too expensive, the company found an economical way of modernizing its fleet. In 1934, Third Avenue began the rebuilding of 100 single-truck convertibles by lengthening them, installing bolsters, and converting them to double-truck cars. The company must have been pleased with the cars' performance and it decided to build new cars 101, 301-400, and Huffliners in its 65th Street (Manhattan) shops.

THE HUFFLINERS

Most of the Huffliners were built 75 years ago. Cars 551-625, the only center-exit cars ever operated by the company, were named "Huffliners" in honor of Slaughter W. Huff, who had been President of the company and who was in favor of trolley cars.

The engineers who were designing the Huffliners tried to produce a car that was lighter than the 300-series cars. In late 1936, the company built 601, which was made of high tensile steel. Meanwhile, the Aluminum Company of America's engineers helped Third Avenue design aluminum car 551, which weighed only 34,000 pounds. This car was 1,200 pounds lighter than the steel car. After comparing the car bodies on a cost-weight basis, Third Avenue's officials decided

to order 24 alloy steel cars, 602-625, which included about 1,000 pounds of aluminum parts. ALCOA's engineers submitted revised plans, which reduced weight and cost to the minimum consistent with weight and safety. Company officials approved the plans and ordered 49 aluminum cars, 552-600. These bodies were lighter than the alloy steel or the original aluminum car, but were stiffer than 551.

Third Avenue's officials were economical; its new cars contained many second-hand parts. Its engineers chose a lighter 25 HP motor, which could be bought on the used market. By rewinding the armature with two-turn instead of the original three-turn coils, reducing the turns in the field coils, and converting the motors to 300 volts, speed was increased from 25 to 40 miles per hour. The rewound motors developed 38 HP.

Instead of expensive automatic acceleration, the company specified a 22-point straight parallel controller, which gave smooth acceleration up to 4 miles per hour per second, almost as fast as a PCC.

CAR ASSIGNMENT

Most of the Huffliners were built and placed in service on the busy Broadway Line in 1938. The 300s that were transferred from Manhattan to the Bronx or Yonkers were sent to the shop, where trolley poles were installed for overhead trolley operation.

The following cars were transferred in 1938:

(Continued on page 4)

REMINDER: JAPAN TRIP—MAY, 2014

THE GENESIS OF “DASHING DAN” Part Two—The Long Island Rail Road Eyes Manhattan by George Chiasson (Continued from October, 2013 issue)

CAR CRAZY: THE VANDERBILT CUP RACES AND THE LONG ISLAND MOTOR PARKWAY (AMERICA'S FIRST EXPRESSWAY)

As we all know in contemporary history, the motor parkway system of Long Island represents its largest and most widely used transportation asset. This parkway system's early roots had an irrefutable and quite interesting interplay with the Long Island Rail Road in its day (particularly with the now-gone Central Railroad of Long Island) and through time has continued to be measured in part against the railroad with which it has been an ongoing competitor for some 85 years. Your author feels that a complete railroad history of the territory contained within this chapter would be remiss if it did not include an examination of this facet and its ultimate outcome, in both its own context and that of modern times.

Among many, one well-known quality about Long Islanders is this: they *love* their cars! Judging from the early start the area had as a favorite subject of the map publishing business (volumes from the long-defunct E. Belcher-Hyde Company that go back to the 1890s), since their earliest availability cars as such, from the horseless carriages of yore to the newest SRT Viper in 2013 have had a long, if not affectionate, place in the history of Nassau and Suffolk Counties (and in Queens, too, for that matter...). This is understandable given the area's tradition of wealthier, sometimes *much* wealthier, than average demographics. Then and now, rich, self-indulgent “playboys” (and some distinguished older men as well) have been captivated by the avant-garde grandiosity of fast and/or fancy automobiles and had the money, time, desire, and influence to use and promote them both in competition (ostensibly to advance automotive science) and for personal gratification. As time, finances, and land use patterns evolved on Long Island through the decades, the private automobile came to be a seminal form of practical, personal transportation, if not of self-expression, among the majority of its citizens. Much like a western desert, the area's open country roads, (formerly) sparse development, and flat terrain, particularly in Central Long Island, have been highly conducive to propagation (and perpetuation) of the freedom of movement that the motor vehicle has represented rather well. With a car of choice in hand that reflects one's lifestyle, personality, or economic status, the ability to “cruise” has continued to be a core tenet of Long Island culture as it developed through time, enduring to the present regardless of its intrinsic (and ever-

escalating) costs, inconveniences, or impacts.

As postulated above, one of Long Island's distinguished men of influence with a strong passion for what were then relatively-newfangled motor cars was William K. Vanderbilt II (1878-1944), the great-grandson of Cornelius Vanderbilt. His massive estate, coined “Deepdale,” was laid out just after the Central Railroad of Long Island was closed from Flushing to Creedmoor in 1879. After Nassau County was separated from Queens in 1899, its perimeter transcended both and was of sufficient size to form a municipality of its own. On its Nassau County side, the Deepdale estate was tucked between Great Neck and New Hyde Park, being centered about 1¼ miles northeast of the former Frankiston station of the Central Railroad of Long Island. In time part of its grounds became the basis for the present-day village of Lake Success, whose itinerant residents now tend to gravitate by car to Great Neck station on MTA-LIRR's Port Washington Branch, about 1¼ miles up Lakeville Road. Incongruously, the Vanderbilts' former mansion and the lake it overlooked both survive nicely in 2013, but are hemmed in by the Northern State Parkway and the Long Island Expressway. A century or so ago, Deepdale's massive and historic accumulation of acreage was a private domain that catered to the wealthy society man's every need, though “Willie K.,” as he was known, moved about frequently between several residences including quarters in Manhattan, a summer home in Newport, Rhode Island, and (especially during the depths of winter) another estate in Florida. There was also a smaller, attached plot of land adjoining the elder Vanderbilt's abode for his son (and presumably his family when he would wed), there to lead a life of semi-independence as he gradually moved up the pre-ordained family ladder of succession. Regrettably, these best laid plans never came to pass, for irony reigned when William K. Vanderbilt III was killed in a 1933 South Carolina auto accident at age 26 while driving home from the family retreat in Florida.

After being drawn to the allure of motor sports overseas as a teenager and gaining a reputation for untoward motoring activity as a young man while “summering” in Newport, W.K. Vanderbilt II sponsored a local competition for the “Vanderbilt International Cup” that was to be held on local roads (or in some cases at that time, dirt-caked trails) in the flat, open area of the Hempstead Plains. Though among the first of such contests of their kind to be held on U.S. soil, and vaulted to

(Continued on page 3)

The Genesis of “Dashing Dan”

(Continued from page 2)

an immediate level of prestige given its pre-eminent and well-known (if not flamboyant) patron, the expressed safety concerns of area residents made for an unenthusiastic public reception to the idea and some political effort was made to prevent it from happening. The race was held nevertheless on October 8, 1904 with both Europeans and Americans participating, and gained a high degree of sporting interest thanks to a long (and probably quite expensive) advance-publicity campaign. Vanderbilt made it clear that his aim in backing the race was to promote and hopefully advance both the sport of auto racing and the science of automotive development in the United States, but as they had already gained considerable experience in the field, the first three prizes (1904-6) were taken by British and French drivers.

A lively poster promoting the first race boldly proclaimed that the speeding cars would follow “*Nassau County Highways!!!*” for 250 to 300 miles, circling around Westbury at “Daylight” (actually 9 a.m.). From an origin in eastern “Queens” (then easterly Jamaica, now Queens Village), the advertised course used by these hurtling motor machines included Jericho Turnpike, Oyster Bay-Massapequa (now Hicksville) Road, and Plain Edge-Bethpage Road (now Hempstead Turnpike) within Westbury, Hicksville, and Central Park (Bethpage) before turning back through Hempstead itself. After roaring along Fulton Street, the racing cars finished their long trips via Hempstead Avenue (Turnpike) back into Queens, where they swung onto Creed Avenue (Springfield Boulevard) and ended up back at “Queens” (Village). These roads were then among the few well-defined thoroughfares of central Nassau County, though still unpaved and nothing like the seemingly endless, multiple-lane “strips” into which they’ve been transformed in more recent times.

The desire to avoid a repeat of predictable crowd control problems with the 1904 competition led to a far different route for the second Vanderbilt Cup Race, held on October 14, 1905. Being kept wholly within Nassau County, entrants were again instructed to follow Jericho Turnpike, but this time starting the event at Hyde Park (now Lakeville) Road instead of eastern Jamaica, and upon reaching Jericho proper, to go north on the Oyster Bay Road instead of south. At East Norwich (a much quieter hamlet than Hicksville), the cars were then to head west on North Hempstead Turnpike as far as “Bull’s Head Corner” (near Greenvale), turn left (south) onto Glen Cove Road, and follow that to I.U. Willetts Road. Heading west, the racers would cross the Long Island Rail Road’s Oyster Bay Branch at the future site of Albertson depot, wiggle across Mineola (Willis) Avenue, and wind all the way out I.U. Willetts to Lakeville Road in Lake Success. There they were to head south again, straddling the easterly edge of Deepdale as they

did, and rejoin Jericho Turnpike back at the launching point. This is the portion of the 1905 route that is hardest to retrace on a modern-day Nassau County map, as the Willetts Road alignment of old was long ago overridden by the current Northern State Parkway and disappeared around 1931.

During the third race, held on October 6, 1906, spectator Curt Gruner of Passaic, New Jersey wandered too close to the action at the Jericho Turnpike grade crossing of the Long Island Rail Road’s Oyster Bay Branch in Mineola and was fatally struck. This incident played on continued trepidation regarding crowd control and the public safety of the entire enterprise, which led to its abeyance for the year 1907. Vanderbilt and his associates had already worked a major change into the course for the 1906 contest as a preemptive attempt to minimize the mayhem and disruption of his racing day. This time, the speedsters were rerouted west from Glen Cove Road to Roslyn via Westbury, Back, and Roslyn Roads to Main Street, where they crossed under the Long Island Rail Road in Roslyn village instead of using the “dangerous, uneven” grade crossing in the concentrated municipality of Albertson as they had the previous year (and which would have also required an extensive police detail). They then sped up Main Street in Roslyn back to North Hempstead Turnpike and made a left turn (this road now extends westward as Northern Boulevard (NY 25A)), brushing against Manhasset before heading south on Lakeville Road to the northeast corner of Deepdale. To avoid a widening and general improvement of Jericho Turnpike from the Nassau County line to Mineola that was then underway (including the installation of a streetcar line) the 1906 racers forged east on I.U. Willetts Road (moving opposite to the 1905 course) and lastly southward on Mineola Avenue to the starting point at Jericho Turnpike. It was near this final left turn that the race’s lingering cloud of dust was blamed for drivers’ inability to pick up a drifting spectator such as Gruner, and though organizers had truly felt they did all that was required to attain a fair level of safety, their preparation unhappily proved deficient in avoiding such a long-dreaded incident. Upon due consideration, Vanderbilt decided to tackle several of these issues, and still keep his treasured racing competition alive, by privately bankrolling a company to design and build a completely new, grade-separated quasi-public roadway across the middle of Long Island, which in part would support his Vanderbilt Cup heats and in part promote motor car use in the years ahead through quick, easy access from New York City to the countryside of western Suffolk County, at least for those with the necessarily lofty means to take advantage of it.

After less than a year of design, property acquisition, and construction, what emerged in the late spring of 1908 was the first limited-access highway in the United States: the initial segment of the Long Island

(Continued on page 6)

Third Avenue's Car Building Program

(Continued from page 1)



Car 410 at W. 42nd Street Ferry.
Bernard Linder collection



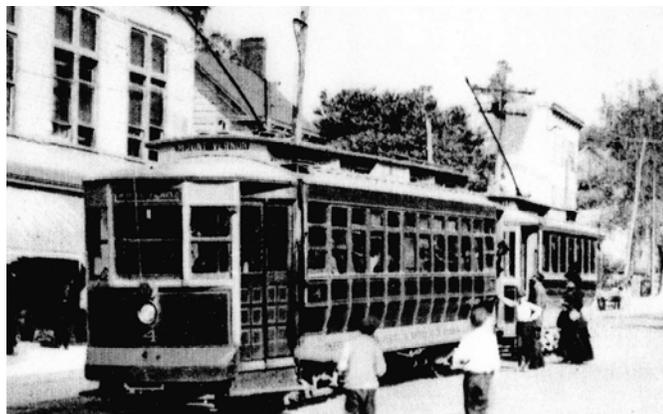
Car 175 at Westchester and Third Avenues, 1948.
Bernard Linder collection



Car 268 on the V/Williamsbridge Road Line at West Farms Square, 1948.
Bernard Linder collection



149th Street Crosstown Line at the Bergen Avenue Cutoff, August 13, 1947.
Bernard Linder collection



Car 4 on White Plains Road in Mount Vernon.
Bernard Linder collection



Car 38 on the P/Webster Avenue Line in New Rochelle.
Bernard Linder collection

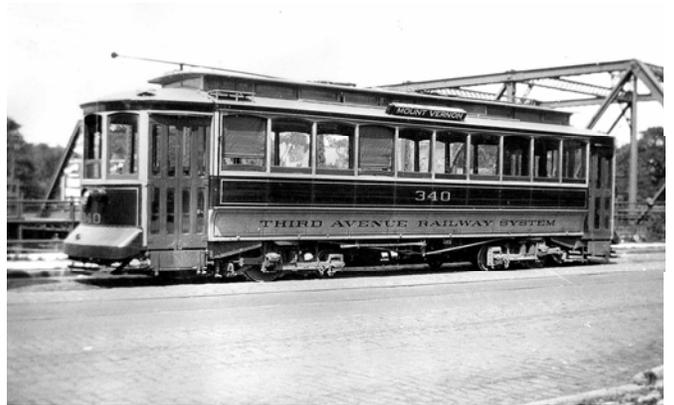
(Continued on page 5)

Third Avenue's Car Building Program

(Continued from page 4)



Third Avenue Railway car 336.
Bernard Linder collection



Third Avenue Railway car 340.
Bernard Linder collection



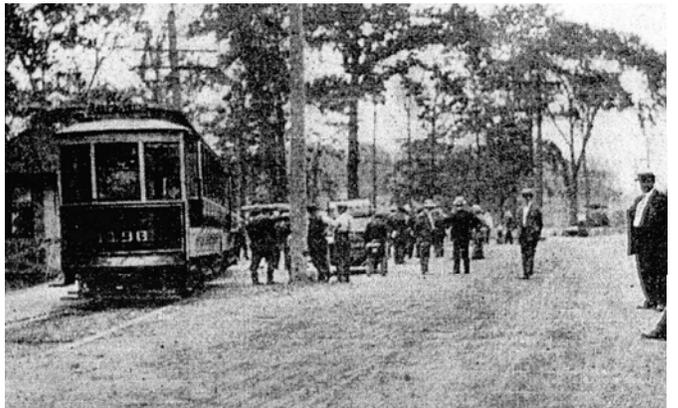
Car 612 on Tremont Avenue, east of West Farms Square.
Bernard Linder collection



Tremont Avenue, east of Third Avenue, circa 1933.
Bernard Linder collection



Fordham Road and Third Avenue, looking west, late 1930s.
Bernard Linder collection



Battery car on Pelham Park & City Island Railway.
Bernard Linder collection

(Continued on page 9)

The Genesis of “Dashing Dan”

(Continued from page 3)

(Vanderbilt) Motor Parkway. Then stretching for about 10 miles, the Parkway unassumingly originated at a turn off Rocky Hill Road (now Springfield Boulevard) in “Creedmoor,” just inside the Queens County boundary, and closely paralleled the present-day Grand Central Parkway, which in Nassau County changes to the Northern State Parkway. The new thoroughfare bisected Deepdale almost exactly between Little Neck and Lakeville Roads, passed very close to the Vanderbilt mansion, and then veered east from Lakeville Road to Nassau Heights (now a residential area centered on Herricks High School). It then circled southward next to St. George’s Lake (later filled in, its site is now framed by Searingtown and Old Searingtown Roads) and turned east again, crossing over the Long Island Rail Road’s Oyster Bay Branch next to Foxcroft Road at what is now the boundary of Albertson and East Williston. The road then turned southward and passed through the middle of the Wheatley Hills golf course, which was combined with local hotel development and constructed in 1907 in concert with the parkway. Again paralleled by the present-day Northern State Parkway, LIMP passed over Hillside Avenue (NYS 25B), Jericho Turnpike (NYS 25), and Westbury Avenue before swerving slightly to cross over the LIRR Main Line about halfway between the current Mineola and Carle Place stations. After fording Old Country Road on the eastern fringe of Garden City, the new roadway made a long, graceful 90° turn east as it crossed above Clinton Road. More or less, it then paralleled the former Central Railroad of Long Island “Extension” off the northerly flank of Stewart Avenue. This portion originally formed part of the south side of the Hempstead Plains Aerodrome in 1909-10, which was the original name for Roosevelt Field. In more contemporary terms, the Long Island Motor Parkway in this area cut across the south end of the present Roosevelt Field Shopping Center, and is actually used in part by its South “Ring Road.” In late 1956, a very short piece of Vanderbilt’s alignment was also adopted for the Meadowbrook State Parkway between Zeckendorf Boulevard and the Merchants Concourse. Like the former Central Railroad, that initial portion of LIMP is then still traceable across the Eisenhower golf complex before melting into Salisbury Park Drive in modern-day Levittown. Its final exit at that time was the “Massapequa Lodge,” a toll house off what is now Hicksville Road (NY 107) on the south side of Bethpage (formerly Central Park). Beyond that point the incomplete highway suddenly turned north (at a location later and famously coined “Dead man’s Curve”), again crossed over the Long Island Rail Road Main Line south of Central Park (Bethpage) station and petered out as it entered Bethpage State Park. Worthy of note, that sec-

ond LIMP overpass of the (single-track) LIRR Main Line was located very close to the present MTA LIRR bridge over the Seaford-Oyster Bay Expressway which opened in 1963.

Vanderbilt did not have the luxury of time to evaluate alignment alternatives from a public benefit perspective or perform environmental impact studies, but used his financial prowess to acquire or gain access to the properties he deemed necessary for the creation of a dedicated roadway in as efficient a manner as possible. In the end, the road’s overall alignment was dictated by geographic variations between its key destination points, and it literally wound its way across a significant portion of Long Island as a result. The road was originally 16 feet wide and later expanded to 22, being constructed with two lanes for general travel (one in each direction) that were bounded by wooden railings and had super-elevated curves so those early, minimally-powered motor cars could maintain their “high” speeds. There was no speed limit per se in the parkway’s early years, but given the technology then available, a typical vehicle of the time was able to reach and maintain about 40 mph with a minimum of consequence. Simple overpasses were built to get across each public roadway (including some that were barely chartable at that stage), being composed of bedecked, steel I-beams dropped between low concrete abutments. Access was controlled through dedicated ramps and toll houses, which all vehicles were required to pass before reaching the main roadway. A full-time attendant would open the swing-gate upon receipt of the appropriate toll (set at \$2 in 1908 *(that was the same as \$50.40 in 2011!...)*, it fell to \$1 by the onset of World War I). In fact, the access ramps were the only places where traffic would cross on the whole parkway, as each faced the same direction and left turns were required to reverse field.

Naturally, the initial segment was first used to host an informal auto competition from the “Garden City Lodge” near Clinton Road to the “Massapequa Lodge” on June 6 before the entire road was thrown open to the motor-ing public (such as they were). The fourth Vanderbilt Cup race was then finally held on October 24, 1908 and won for the first time by an American, one George Robertson of Garden City. It did indeed use the new Motor Parkway between Barnum (Merrick) Avenue and Massapequa (Hicksville) Road as a high-speed straightway with some built-in curves, but the overall circuit was markedly shortened from the earlier three matches as it traveled around a trapezoid formed by the above three thoroughfares plus Old Country Road. For each event between 1904 and 1906, the Long Island Rail Road was pleased to provide extra or “Special” service to various vantage points of the racing course, namely (New) Hyde Park, Mineola, East Williston, Roslyn, North Roslyn, Westbury, Hicksville. and Central Park on the Main Line and Oyster Bay Branches. For the 1908 race,

(Continued on page 7)

The Genesis of “Dashing Dan”

(Continued from page 6)

a main grandstand was erected in the strip between the New Bridge and Massapequa Road grade crossings of the Central Branch where that portion of the Motor Parkway ran parallel to the railroad. This location was coined “Division Avenue,” a somewhat arbitrary point just west of the former Island Trees depot at Milepost 25 (measured from Long Island City), where temporary, low-level cinder platforms were laid for the privileged, ticket-holding hordes. There LIRR could use the Island Trees siding to stage dedicated trains from Long Island City and Jamaica, which employed tank engines (as had once been used on “rapid transit” trains) to avoid the necessity of a reverse (tender-forward) haul or a wye maneuver.

The station and grandstand saw use for three Vanderbilt Cup races (1908, 1909 and 1910), including mid-summer qualifying heats, before competitive auto racing on Long Island was halted by legislative fiat, almost as horse racing at Belmont Park had been by the anti-wagering ordinance. Such political intervention was the by-product of the same apprehension about public safety which Vanderbilt had been battling since the start, as in 1906 being spurred by a fatal occurrence during the October 1, 1910 preliminary. In this second instance, however the victims were not “civilian” by-standers but rather two “mechanicians” who rode along in each car to insure their proper operation. One was killed in the race’s first laps when he was thrown out of his racer as it hopped over the New Bridge Road overpass, the other in a more spectacular manner when the Buick driven by Louis Chevrolet got snagged in a rut on Old Country Road (perhaps exacerbated by inlaid streetcar track), which disabled the car’s steering. It then careened off a parked trolley, spewed undercarriage parts as it crashed through a fence, and tumbled into the front yard of a residence, where it bowled over an occupied touring sedan and ejected both occupants before settling against the porch. Mechanic Charles Miller was pinned under the racing car’s wreckage and died on the spot, while Mr. Chevrolet was lucky enough to suffer only a broken shoulder. Thankfully, none of the four ladies occupying the destroyed touring sedan was seriously hurt, but there certainly was enough fear, excitement, and attendant media play to go around.

In subsequent years the Vanderbilt Cup began to travel across the United States and was awarded at a number of venues from Savannah, Georgia to Milwaukee, Wisconsin and finally Santa Monica, California through the year 1916. The cup and the racing it engendered were then suspended as the First World War began and not resumed for 20 more seasons. In 1936, William Vanderbilt II’s nephew, George Washington Vanderbilt III, resumed the sport of car racing on Long Island, but

this time it was completely confined to a large new track built on the original site of the Roosevelt airfield, which then became Roosevelt Raceway. Unfortunately, the new race attracted mostly foreign contestants, somewhat like its predecessor, while less-than-impressive construction worked against the peak performance that its fans had expected and enjoyed. Small improvements were made to the course after the first race, but the Roosevelt Raceway held its last motor sports event in 1937 and was then converted for horse racing meets beginning in April, 1940. As time advanced, these competitive equestrian events were served by Long Island Rail Road Specials that used the “Mitchel Field Secondary” (former Central Extension) until the adjacent Air Force Base, which controlled access to the station site, was closed in 1961.

Given the ability to develop dedicated track ways and grandstands, several car racing venues sprouted up around Long Island in the decades surrounding World War II, with competitive auto racing on municipal roads finally being banned by state statute after the 1953 season (at that time thanks to another incident in upstate Watkins Glen). The first was located in Freeport at its large depression-era Municipal Stadium, which was finished in 1931 and hosted its first, unsuccessful auto race in 1934. Midget car racing was then tried with better results through 1941, but when it was resumed after the war in 1946 drew less of a response and the Allstate Racing Stock Car Club was formed the following year to organize and promote the track’s activities. This series of races lasted through the 1959 season, after which several successor racing associations kept the track open until it was finally shut down in September of 1983 and the property subsequently redeveloped. Other Long Island race courses through the years were located at Islip from 1947 to 1984, it being particularly notable as birthplace of the “Demolition Derby” in 1958 and for hosting yearly NASCAR meets between 1964 and 1971; and at Riverhead, which saw the start of Stock Car racing in 1949 and remains open in 2013 as the last surviving motor sports arena on Long Island. Racing in the upscale east end community of Bridgehampton had a history similar to that of the Vanderbilt Cup, but was not as prestigious and began years later. Between 1915 and 1921 a competition was staged using the Montauk Highway and local streets before it was suspended for economic reasons, then not revived until 1949 using a slightly expanded course which lasted through the sport’s 1953 banishment. Local enthusiasts then formed a corporation to construct the required, permanent track facility, but it was not until 1957 that the Bridgehampton Raceway was actually opened, yearly hosting the Sports Car Club of America’s national championship heats. The next generation of the Vanderbilt Cup was awarded to its winners in 1965, 1967, and 1968, with no racing at all in 1969 and 1970. After one final SCCA

(Continued on page 8)

The Genesis of “Dashing Dan”

(Continued from page 7)

seasonal race in 1971, the track stood idle for 27 years before it was finally demolished in 1998.

As for the Long Island Motor Parkway, it was maintained and even expanded in the years after its time as the Vanderbilt Cup venue had ended. In 1911 the road was finally completed as far as Lake Ronkonkoma, which became an alternative end point after Vanderbilt was unable to secure the needed land to reach his desired destination of Riverhead, this being a sign of personal economic troubles as much as anything. The easterly extension continued where the original road had left off, slicing east-northeasterly across Bethpage State Park and Old Bethpage to enter Suffolk County. Roads were such that there was no longer an effort to eliminate grade crossings on this extension and the entire 2-lane thoroughfare was laid completely at grade, where it found little competition for space. From about Baylis and Pinelawn Roads in Lower Melville, the Parkway set a southeastward course straight into Wyandanch (actually Wheatley Heights), where it bent sharply northeastward again to reach Half Hollow Road. Wyandanch became a dividing point when speed limits were finally imposed on the parkway around 1923, being set at 40 to the east and 30 to the west, with typical traffic speeds by that time actually reaching up to 50 mph. From Half Hollow Road to its end by the shores of Lake Ronkonkoma, the balance of the “Vanderbilt Parkway” has been adopted by Suffolk County as its Route 67, was modernized through the decades, and remains a public way in 2013. It turns eastward at Deer Park Avenue in Dix Hills, eventually to tie in with a spur (now Harned Road) that still reaches Jericho Turnpike in Commack. After that the surviving highway weaves between the Northern State and Sagtikos Parkways, and then wobbles alongside the Long Island Expressway as far as Exit 57 near Islandia. The “Long Island Motor Parkway” then remains on its original course, albeit greatly widened, to the site of its former terminus at the Petit Trianon Inn next to Lake Ronkonkoma, a resort house that was destroyed by fire in 1958.

Expansion also came to the Queens end of the Long Island Motor Parkway after World War I (at which time Vanderbilt’s fortunes were again elevated). From its original end at Rocky Hill Road, the highway was continued on its original west-southwestward trajectory across Cunningham Park, where it turned sharply north-northwest and was built as a companion artery to Cross Island (later Francis Lewis) Boulevard. That final stretch of the parkway went as far as Peck Avenue, then curled briefly northwest before ending completely at Horace Harding Boulevard, which later became World’s Fair Boulevard (for 1939-40) and was massively rebuilt as the Long Island Expressway about 1960. Like the older

portions in Nassau County, this extension was again grade-separated, but its newer overpasses were slightly larger and higher, as well as constructed in a more substantial manner. After the parkway’s extension in 1926, the original Rocky Hill Road toll terminus was maintained as an exit called “Hillside Avenue Lodge,” while cars on the newer stretch passed through one of the first recognizable toll booth arrays in America, as there were no collection facilities west of that point. Ultimately, the entire road as completed through this final extension reached a total length of approximately 45 miles from Fresh Meadows to Lake Ronkonkoma, and was renowned as a swift, somewhat exclusive, and almost secretive alternative to an otherwise long journey between the “far” reaches of Long Island and New York City. By the early 1920s, annual passes in the form of metal license tags were available for a price of \$55 (*again, that would be \$716.69 in 2011...*). This played nicely into the hands of the illicit, so-called “Rum Running” trade spawned by Prohibition (otherwise known as the Volstead Act) in 1919, whose agents eagerly and effectively used it as a main commercial pipeline for more than a decade. Their exploits eventually resulted in public law enforcement on the otherwise privately-operated highway, as not only were speed limits finally incorporated, but patrols from the New York State Police were brought in during 1924 to replace the existing, private (and perhaps susceptible) security forces that had been deployed since the road opened.

The Long Island Motor Parkway led a mediocre economic existence well into the 1930s, just as the Greater New York area began to grow a publicly-funded motorway system of its own. This process was largely shepherded by Robert Moses, who was a politico in a very key position of power, at one time being simultaneously appointed as Mayor LaGuardia’s Parks Commissioner and the Commissioner of Parks for Nassau County, just as the Depression-era emphasis on public works came about. As a result of his political associations, Moses wielded great (and growing) influence across institutional and geographic borders through the formation of state-sanctioned public-benefit corporations, which in turn directed the construction of roadways. By the time the now-familiar Queens-Long Island expressway grid first began to take shape, Vanderbilt’s road was in default of taxes across some communities and being smothered by debt (situations exacerbated by the lingering Depression, falling usage, and plummeting toll revenues, as the cost of a passage sank to just 40¢ by 1937 (*that being \$6.18 in 2011 terms...*)). LIMP’s Board initially offered to sell the Queens-Nassau portion of its road to Moses and his affiliated companies as early as 1930, but the “Commissioner” demurred, claiming its alignment was no longer practical or particularly useful as a part of the modern highway system, and that the soaring use of emerging, toll-free highways (which he

(Continued on page 9)

The Genesis of “Dashing Dan”

(Continued from page 8)

was only starting to provide with public funds) would gradually starve the older road of its patrons in any case. Thus denied a long-term role in overall development of the metropolitan area’s public roadway system, the Long Island Motor Parkway—America’s First Expressway—withered on the vine and was finally closed forever in 1938. Certain portions of it lived on afterward, most notably the section in western Suffolk County as cited above, but also as a hiking, biking, and jogging trail in Queens, which was rehabilitated and improved as recently as 1999. The middle, most original portion

across Nassau County can now only be traced on topographic maps such as those available through Google, and at that in a fragmentary nature much like its adjacent relic, the former Central Railroad of Long Island. In recent times an awareness and appreciation of its trail-blazing existence seems to be growing, but just as its railroad contemporary was symbolic of the energetic drive to link the American city with its countryside in the 19th Century, knowledge of the Long Island Motor Parkway’s history now serves little purpose other than to illustrate the not-so-humble beginnings from which one of America’s most prized 20th century cultural phenomena, the freeways that so well express its citizens’ independence, came to be.

Third Avenue’s Car Building Program

(Continued from page 5)

OBSERVED DATA			
Car Numbers	From Line	To Line	Month
331-383	Third and Amsterdam Avenues Broadway-Amsterdam Avenue-125 th Street 125 th Street Crosstown	Yonkers-all lines	April-September
101-179	Broadway 10 th Avenue	Third & Amsterdam Avenues Broadway-Amsterdam Avenue-125 th Street 125 th Street Crosstown	Entire year
316-320	Broadway 10 th Avenue	Ogden Avenue	March
301-315	Yonkers Avenue	Yonkers-all lines A/New Rochelle-Subway	April
25-57	1/Broadway-Warburton Avenue 2/Broadway-Park Avenue 3/Broadway	Out of service (A)	August
700s	Yonkers and New Rochelle-local lines	31 st Street (Steinway) or out of service	July (A)
287, 291, 292, 300	Westchester County	St. Anns Avenue Morris Avenue Harlem Shuttle 138 th Street Crosstown	May
269-273, 275	Westchester County	Kingsbridge Car House	May
276, 278	Westchester County	Kingsbridge Car House	October

(A) When the 300s arrived in Yonkers, 25-57 were transferred from Broadway to lightly-traveled Yonkers lines, replacing the 700s, which were scrapped or transferred to Steinway’s 31st Street (Queens) Line. When all 300s were running, 25-57 were placed in storage.

The Huffliners, which were replaced by buses, were taken out of service when they were only ten years old.

Aluminum cars were probably scrapped and steel cars were sold to Brazil.

Commuter and Transit Notes

No. 300
by Randy Glucksman

Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Here is additional information about the \$1.83 million M-9 contract that was reported in last month's *Bulletin*. Using funding from MTA's 2010-4 Capital Program, the base order will deliver 92 cars to the Long Island Rail Road. If funds are provided in the 2015-9 Capital Program, additional cars would be ordered under options for the Long Island Rail Road (up to 304) and Metro-North (up to 280). These 676 cars would replace the roughly 290 M-3s that currently operate and provide for future service expansion. Since the M-9s will be assembled in Yonkers, up to 1,500 people will be employed in New York State. In recent years Kawasaki has produced 1,136 M-7s (836-LIRR and 336-MNR) and is in the process of delivering 405 M-8s for the New Haven Line, of which 276 are on the property. The M-9s will incorporate many features introduced in these two car models. Artist's renderings show the cars as LIRR 4402 and MNR 7900. Something seemed odd about the numbers and immediately I realized that the artist had switched the numbers for the cars since the last M-7 delivered to LIRR was 7836, and for MNR, 4335.



A press conference was held on September 30 to highlight the agency's 20-Year (2015-34), \$106 billion Needs Assessment. Included are projects for protecting the system and its assets from future weather events such as Superstorm Sandy. One omission is mention of the Third Track Project, which would add capacity between Hicksville and Floral Park. The tables below highlight some of what is contained in the 148-page report (TYNA-Consolidated.pdf) available on the Internet.

AGENCY	TOTAL (MILLIONS)
NYCT	\$ 68,237
LIRR	\$ 13,404
MNR	\$ 8,936
MTA Bus	\$ 2,507
MTA Bridges & Tunnels	\$ 12,033
MTA Police & Security	\$ 614
	\$ 105,731

Below are some of the proposed projects:

LIRR	MNR	NYCT / SIR
Expansion of Real-Time Information		
Implementation of new fare and toll payment options		
Improvement of access for elderly and physically challenged		
Purchase M-9s	Purchase M-9As	Purchase New Sub-way Cars for Subdivi-sions "A" and "B"
	Replace End-Door Coaches	
Optimize service links by adding transfer opportunities		
Upgrade Line Equipment (Tunnel Lighting, Ventilation Plants, Pump Rooms & Deep Wells), Power, Security, Signals, Stations, Tracks, Depots, Shops & Yards, and Structures		
Completion of Ronkonkoma Branch Double-Track Project	Campbell Hall to Sloatsburg Second Track	Bus/Paratransit Vehicle Replacement
Reopen Republic Hub Station in East Farmingdale	Southeast Inter-modal Center	CBTC Expansion
Introduce "Scoot" Shuttle service to non-electrified branches	Grand Central Terminal Improve-ments	Install Real-Time Information
Jamaica Improve-ments	Third track between North White Plains and Crestwood	Times Sq. Reconfigu-ration and Upgrade

Other LIRR projects would extend electrification on the Main Line to the Port Jefferson and Montauk Branches, adding 16 stations to the current 85 stations served by electric trains (there are 124 stations on LIRR), double track from Ronkonkoma to Yaphank, new storage yards in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, and plat-form extensions to accommodate trains longer than four cars at Forest Hills and Kew Gardens.

Subway car replacements:

CLASS	NUMBER	LENGTH	BUILT	REPLACE-MENT YEARS
R-46	752	75'	1975-8	2015-9
(System Growth)	168	75'	-	2015-9
R-62/62A	1,140	50'	1983-7	2020-4 2025-9
R-68/68A	625	75'	1986-9	2025-9

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) awarded its 2013 communications grand prize for printed materials, and first prize for electronic media to MTA Arts for Transit and Urban Design. The grand prize recognizes MTA's Graphic Art Cards and Poster Program and the first prize win goes to a mobile app, Meridian, that provides detailed information and location

(Continued on page 11)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 10)*

information about Arts for Transit's permanent works of art in the MTA system.

MTA-METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (EAST)

Track and drainage repairs on the second track between Woodlawn and Melrose were completed over the weekend of September 14-15 and service resumed on (inbound) Tracks 4 and 2. Some initial work was done on outbound Track 1, prior to switching to Track 3 before returning to Track 1. Two high-tech methods were employed to determine the extent of work required to repair this six-mile section of track, which over the years has sustained water damage.

Metro-North reported that the first method is Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR). "In the past, railroads have primarily relied on visual inspection and excavation to assess the condition of the track bed. GPR can accurately show potential problem areas in the structural layers below the track's surface before anyone starts digging. This information has been critical in developing the scope of our on-going track improvement programs, especially in identifying areas of poor drainage that need to be corrected." Second is a Track Loading Vehicle (TLV). "This technology leads the industry's efforts in assessing track conditions. It is designed to apply forces close to the strength limits of the rails, track ties, rail fasteners, and ballast. We are one of the first railroads in the US that is using this technology to test its entire right-of-way." As of September 18, GPR has inspected 85% of the railroad's 620 track miles, and the TLV has completed the entire New Haven Line." As this column was being completed (mid-October), Metro-North reported that the project was 70% completed.

While checking the August 19 temporary construction timetable, I discovered that for the first time, all Harlem Line stations are listed on one side – there is no separate section for the Wassaic service. This is because the bus shuttle from Melrose to Fordham occupies that space.

2013 will probably go down in history as being one of the worst in terms of service for Metro-North riders. Some of the tragedies that have befallen the railroad include the derailment and collision near Fairfield Metro (May 17), the CSX garbage train derailment at Spuyten Duyvil (July 18), and the latest, loss of a Con Ed 138,000-volt electrical feeder from a substation that supplies power to an 8-mile section of the New Haven Line from Mt. Vernon. When it failed at 5:22 AM September 25, service was suspended between Grand Central Terminal and Stamford for the entire inbound commute. Passengers were told to use alternate means of transportation, including the Harlem Line, where New Haven Line tickets were accepted. As I rode the Hudson Line that morning, I observed two trains of M-8s

heading north on this line. In the following days, similar sightings were reported. At 9:10 AM, hourly (described as "extremely limited") diesel (actually dual-mode) service was instituted between Grand Central Terminal and Stamford. Westbound service departed from Stamford hourly, starting at 9 AM. This service could only accommodate about 10% of the typical daily ridership. (While this was taking place, a man described as a resident of a homeless shelter pushed a young woman onto the tracks at White Plains in front of a northbound train at about 11 AM. She was hospitalized for treatment of serious leg trauma.) I was in Grand Central Terminal that afternoon and saw the virtually empty New Haven Line departure boards. Numerous alerts were sent, including one advising that pre- and post-Yankee game service would not operate on the New Haven Line (and for the following night, the final home game). Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy, speaking at a press conference, warned that the outage could last for weeks (till October 15). A service plan with some bus service was promised for the next day; however, the limited operation that was already in effect continued until the end of service.

Thursday, September 26: Riders were "strongly encouraged to stay home or seek alternate service" as even with the additional trains and bus shuttles, only about 33% of the regular ridership could be handled. Harlem Line cross-honoring continued. Until further notice, the New Canaan and Danbury Branches were operated with shuttle trains, while Waterbury was a shuttle bus. Again, as the MTA agencies have done too many times in recent history, a fleet of buses (60) with drivers, supervisors, and support personnel was marshaled to provide this service.

PDFs of the timetable for the hours of 5 AM through 3 PM and 3 PM to end of service, and a separate map, were posted on the MTA website. Governor Malloy held a press conference in Grand Central Terminal and blasted MTA for the catastrophic failure and called for refunds to commuters. He also suspended all routine highway work to aid those who opted to drive. The following services were operated:

- New Haven/Stamford, electric trains on 20-to-30-minute headways
- Stamford/Harlem-125th Street/Grand Central Terminal, diesel trains on 20-to-30-minute headways making all stops
- Old Greenwich to Rye, diesel trains on 25-minute headways, shuttle bus to White Plains
- Harrison to New Rochelle/Harlem-125th Street/Grand Central Terminal, diesel trains on 20-to-30-minute headways
- Pelham and Mt. Vernon East, shuttle bus to Mt. Vernon West (Harlem)

Friday, September 27: One timetable PDF was posted on the MTA website, which continued the same service

(Continued on page 12)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 11)

plan as the previous day

Saturday-Sunday, September 28-29: Westbound from New Haven, trains departed at 45 minutes after the hour making all stops to Stamford. At Stamford, riders could switch to a diesel express to Grand Central or to a diesel local to Grand Central. Express trains to Grand Central departed Stamford at 55 minutes after the hour. Local trains making all stops (between Old Greenwich and Fordham) to Grand Central departed Stamford on the hour. Eastbound local trains making all stops to Stamford departed Grand Central at 34 minutes after the hour, while express trains to Stamford departed Grand Central at 8 minutes after the hour. Expresses connected with a local to New Haven, departing Stamford on the hour

Monday, September 30: Working with Con Edison, arrangements were made to utilize what was termed residential power. Several temporary substations were constructed by bringing transformers to supply the correct voltage, which would enable an increase in service and operation of electric trains through the 8-mile section. Metro-North was now able to operate 50% of its daily service. These temporary substations had to be reengineered so that they were suitable for providing the higher voltage required to operate electric trains, as well as to be able to handle the spikes in power that occur when a train enters this section. These substations usually provide residential power which is sent to households in a steady stream. Con Edison was still working on a permanent fix that would be completed by October 7, shortening the original date by one week.

To supplement this service, 8,600 Park & Ride spaces were secured as follows:

LOCATION	WALK OR RIDE TO	NUMBER OF SPACES
8 E. 153 rd Street, Bronx	Yankees-E. 153 rd Street (Hudson) or 161 st Street 4 C D	1,500
Orchard Beach, Bronx	Free shuttle bus to Pelham Bay Park 6	5,000
Rye Playland	Bus to White Plains (Harlem)	1,500
Kensico Dam	Valhalla or bus to White Plains (Harlem)	600

In response to questions raised the previous week by Governor Malloy, Metro-North announced that it was reviewing the possibility of providing a credit toward future purchases. Any rider who had a monthly or weekly ticket during this incident was advised to hold onto his or her ticket. Also, in a change, New Haven Line tickets were being honored on all Metro-North lines. In fact, a special MTA Board meeting was called for the afternoon of October 1 to consider approving such a credit. According to a report in *The New York Times*, Con Edison admitted that it may have caused

the power failure by disconnecting a feeder cable that had previously been taken out of service for upgrades

Tuesday, October 1: At around 8 AM, an advisory was sent that normal service had resumed on the Waterbury Branch, which included the through trains. The MTA Board approved a credit toward future purchases for New Haven Line monthly or weekly tickets valid for travel between September 25, 2013 and the restoration of full service. An implementation plan as to how the credits would be received was being developed to be announced on the MTA website

Wednesday-Friday, October 2-4: With Con Edison supplying additional power via an additional transformer, five AM Peak trains were added to accommodate about 65% of daily ridership. To speed things up for New York customers at stations in the area of the power outage, local diesel trains originating in Harrison made fewer stops and customers at Pelham and Mount Vernon East boarded electric trains that originated in Stamford. Parking and bus shuttles remained in effect. A new PDF timetable was posted on the MTA website. On the Danbury Branch the peak hour through trains were restored.

Later that day, Connecticut Transportation Commissioner James Redeker told a gathering of Connecticut Mayors and First Selectmen at the Connecticut Convention Center that he was hoping for a full restoration of service for the Monday morning commute. According to a report in *The Hartford Courant*, Mr. Redeker also said that the railroad was able to accommodate about 65% of its riders; another 20% were using the Harlem Line. The remaining 15% drove, carpoled, or worked from home.

During the afternoon, Metro-North reported that full service would be restored Monday morning, assuming the new substation, which received Con Edison power that day, was found reliable during testing over the weekend.

MTA released its refund policy for holders of weekly or monthly New Haven Line tickets valid during the period of the outage. Those tickets would be prorated and riders could begin applying for the credit on October 9 and have until March 31, 2014 to submit their tickets. Mail&Ride customers will see this credit in December. There are no processing fees. Details can be found on the MTA website

Saturday-Sunday, October 5-6: The Meadowlands train did not operate for the Giants vs. Eagles game. There was hourly electric service, making all stops between New Haven and Stamford, and diesel express service between Stamford and Grand Central Terminal in both directions. Local trains operated with EMUs between Stamford and Grand Central Terminal. Bus shuttles did not operate. Metro-North conducted tests of the new substation and announced that the testing was successfully completed.

(Continued on page 13)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 12)*

My son Marc and I took photos on Saturday at South Norwalk, Stamford, and Cos Cob. With the additional electric power that was available, all *Acelas* and *Regionals* operated solely on electric power. One MNR local train operated using push/pull equipment instead of M-8s. No M-2/M-4/M-6 consists were to be seen

Monday, October 7: Normal service was resumed.

A 500-car garage will be built to serve the North White Plains station, which is used by more than 2,200 people each weekday. In the planning stages since 2003, the structure will also include spots for bicycles and scooters space for administrative operations and utilities, and limited retail space. The present 109-space garage will be demolished. Funding for this \$41.8 million project came entirely from a federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) grant.

By the time you read this, alcohol-free, soapy foam hand sanitizers will have replaced many of the soap dispensers in train restrooms. The project should be completed this fall.

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD (WEST)

Midday weekdays, between September 30 and October 11, buses replaced trains between Port Jervis and Harriman to enable track work and work in the Otisville Tunnel. Over the weekend of October 4-7, bus service operated between Port Jervis and Ramsey Route 17 so that maintenance projects could be performed at Tuxedo and Woodbury.

There was another midday busing project (using Leprechaun Bus) from October 14 thru November 22. Select off-peak trains between Port Jervis and Ramsey Route 17, and between Middletown and Ramsey Route 17, were replaced by buses to accommodate track work and the Otisville Tunnel Project.

A Pascack Valley/Port Jervis Line timetable was issued effective October 13. Please see details below.

The M-8 status was updated on September 19 to show 276 cars conditionally accepted with 20 cars undergoing Kawasaki inspection. As of mid-October, Bill Zucker had observed 9100-9307, 9312-31, 9334-5, 9342-63, and 9372-3 for 254 cars.

MTA LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

New timetables (timetable cards) were issued effective November 11. Details were reported in last month's *Bulletin*.

Special timetables or timetable cards were issued for:

- Port Washington: October 5, Sperry Rail Testing — Bus/van between Port Washington and Great Neck
- Ronkonkoma: October 5, switch replacement at Pine-Aire — 3 westbound trains suspended between Ronkonkoma and Farmingdale (card)
- Port Jefferson: October 6 and 20, rail welding and miscellaneous work — bus service from Port Jefferson to Huntington

- Port Jefferson: October 12-13, Switch 5E & 5W Replacement at Divide Tower — Hourly service vs. half-hourly service between Huntington and Hicksville
- Hempstead, October 13, Altered Sunday PM Service — One train re-timed (card)
- Oyster Bay, October 19 and 20, Oyster Festival — three extra eastbound and four westbound between Mineola and Oyster Bay
- Ronkonkoma, October 19-20, Switch 6E & 6W Replacement at Divide Tower — Some train re-timings
- Montauk, October 21-24, Sperry Rail Testing — bus service; transfer at Babylon, Patchogue, or Speonk, depending on the day

TrainTalk (September) reported that each year nearly 15,000 items are turned into the Lost and Found Office. Since 2011, the return recovery rate has increased from 51.5% to 60%.

The 2013 edition of LIRR's "Train to the Game" brochure to MetLife Stadium was available in late September.

On September 17 an agreement between LIRR and the Buildings and Construction Trades Council of Nassau and Suffolk Counties, a first for MTA and LIRR, was announced. This will reduce the railroad's labor cost on seven projects, the first being the \$137.7 million Main Line Double Track between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma. The other projects covered by the agreement are: the Mid-Suffolk Electric Yard (\$76.6 million); Hicksville Station improvements (\$55.2 million) and Hicksville North Siding (\$37.7 million); Ellison Avenue Bridge Replacement in Mineola (\$39.2 million); Great Neck Pocket Track Extension (\$25.8 million); Wantagh Station Platform Replacement (\$20.7 million); and the Colonial Road Highway Bridge Replacement, also in Great Neck (\$9.5 million). The total cost of union labor on those projects was originally estimated at \$60.1 million. LIRR (and taxpayers) expect to save an estimated \$6.5 million over the next five years.

In the September *Bulletin* I reported that the timetable rack next to the information window had been moved to the waiting room. That was the back (east) wall. Shortly after that move it was moved again to the north wall (men's room). Member Richie Schulman reported that It has been moved again as it is no longer in the waiting room. Nobody that he asked seemed to know where it is now. (*Editor's Note: The man who was staffing the desk at the entrance to this area told me that the timetable rack was moved from its first position early in the summer in order to place a large fan at that location. It was banished from the waiting area when passengers complained about the loss of seating. It is still unknown where the timetable rack was moved.*)

NJ TRANSIT

Between late September and February 2, 2014 (Super Bowl Sunday), NJ Transit will receive \$635,000 of a

(Continued on page 14)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 13)

\$1.06 million contract with Titan Advertising from Pepsi Cola to place ads on trains and buses and in stations.

New timetables were issued effective October 13 for all lines except the Atlantic City, which got its new timetable the following day to coincide with the opening of the Pennsauken Transit Center Station, and of course the *RiverLine's* timetable carries the same date. Getaway service operates on November 27 (Thanksgiving Eve) and December 24 (Christmas Eve) for the Morris & Essex, Northeast Corridor, North Jersey Coast, Pascack Valley, Port Jervis, and Raritan Valley Lines. Weekend/Holiday schedules will be in effect for November 28 (Thanksgiving Day), December 25 (Christmas Day), January 1, 2014 (New Year's Day), January 20 (Martin Luther King Day), and February 17 (Presidents Day). Pre- or Post-New Year's Eve service will operate on the Northeast Corridor, North Jersey, Pascack Valley, Port Jervis, and Raritan Valley. Enhanced Weekend/Holiday service will operate on the Montclair-Boonton, Raritan Valley Lines on January 20 and February 17, 2014. For the Far Hill Steeplechase, an annual event, a special schedule, where buses replaced certain trains, was on the Gladstone Branch on October 19. PDF schedules were posted on the Internet.

NJ Transit's post-Sandy rail fleet status is regularly updated. The numbers on the top line of the table below are carried over from last month's *Bulletin* and the bolded numbers are the latest.

TYPE	TOTAL FLEET	VEHICLES DAMAGED	RE-TURNED TO SERVICE	AWAITING REPAIR	AVAILABLE FOR SERVICE	CURRENT PERCENTAGE AVAILABLE
Rail Cars	1,152 1,164	273 273	186 200	87 73	1,068 1,091	92% 94%
Locomotives	207 210	70 72	53 55	17 17	190 193	92% 92%
Total Fleet	1,359 1,374	343 345	239 255	104 90	1,258 1,284	92% 93%

The June schedules scheduled 685 of the 700 trains that were operated pre-Sandy. With the October 13-14 schedules there are 697, which equates to 99%. Twelve trains have been restored to the schedules, six each on the Montclair-Boonton and Morris & Essex Lines. Still not back to full service are the Morris & Essex (1), North Jersey Coast Line (1), and Main/Bergen (3). The totals do not match because the Montclair-Boonton has two additional trains.

During September, member Bruce Russell visited Atlantic City and wrote: "Just for the heck of it, and because it was a warm, late summer day, I made a round trip Newark-Atlantic City. I went by NJ Transit bus

where I was one of SIX passengers, but returned on the Atlantic City rail line to Philly and then SEPTA-NJ Transit back to Newark. A.C.'s loss of business to Pennsy casinos is very obvious. The casino buses you once saw on the Garden State Parkway are now almost gone. A security guard at the Tropicana told me that there is no more business from Philadelphia and its suburbs and much less from New York City. I visited that new Revel casino (*Editor's Note: Bruce wrote that he is not a gambler but understands that many people derive pleasure from sitting in front of a slot machine*). What I noticed right away was LACK OF GAMBLERS! I returned on the 4:42 PM train to Philly. It had 4 cars with 3 open. Occupancy in each was about 65%. We passed the soon to open transfer station at Pennsauken."

The MyTix app for smart phones, which was launched on April 25 on the Pascack Valley Line (June *Bulletin*), was extended to the Main/Bergen/Port Jervis Lines effective September 18.

Effective 9 AM October 7 and continuing through December, the Hoboken Terminal Waiting Room was closed to permit restoration work.

Construction of a new Anderson Street station (Pascack Valley Line) began March 18 (May *Bulletin*) and was scheduled to be completed in September. As I passed the station on September 30, although work was underway, the project was not anywhere close to completion.

During the second week of October, I observed that significant work had been done on the platform extensions at Secaucus Junction Lower Level. Prefabricated sections of concrete platform have been installed east of both platforms. Additional work was still being done.

After NJ Transit replaced the Newark City Subway (NCS) PCCs on August 24, 2001, 11 were sold to SF Muni, where, after rebuilding, they are successfully operating on the F line. Eight cars (4, 7, 13, 15, 24-26, and 28) were retained for use on a proposed loop line in Bayonne, but the plans fell apart for this project and the cars were stored under wrap in HBLR's Communipaw Yard. Seven others went to various museums and four were scrapped. Member Khalis Ward sent a report about PCC 28, which has been undergoing restoration at the HBLR Shops since this past March. "Wiring and welding are steady. It is due for painting soon. Originally, car 24 was chosen but due to structural issues, and it looks like it hit something, that car was put back and can still be seen unwrapped in the south yard from passing Bayonne trains. At present, the car takes power but is still towed around the shop facility by track car equipment. In-house Kinkisharyo personnel told me car 28 will be used for historic and business use on the NCS system. The other cars in the south yard area were also inspected and parts from those will be used to refurbish car 28."

(Continued on page 15)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 14)***PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON CORPORATION**

Regular fares went up from \$2.25 to \$2.50 effective 3 AM October 3. This is the third consecutive year for a 25-cent increase. Other increases were: 10-trip fares from \$1.70 to \$1.90, 1-day Unlimited Pass from \$6.75 to \$7.50, 7-Day Pass from \$24 to \$26, and 30-Day Pass from \$73 to \$80. Senior fares remain unchanged at \$1 for those with Senior SmartLink cards. A card detailing the fare increases was produced. There is one more planned fare increase, on October 1, 2014 at 3 AM, single fares go to \$2.75; two-trip tickets will be \$5.50; 10-trip tickets will be \$21; 20-trip tickets will be \$42; 40-trip tickets will be \$84; a 30-day unlimited will be \$89; and a 7-day unlimited will be \$29.

Member Richie Schulman provided copies of a new Timetable, Map, and Guide, dated October 13. Its cover differs from previous versions as the PA-5 photo was replaced by a graphic of a train in a tunnel. There are "targeted" service reductions for weekday overnight and Sunday daytime schedules to accommodate Sandy and other capital project repairs.

AMTRAK

The Metro-North power outage also affected Amtrak, which ran its Regional trains from Boston with a diesel on the front and electric (pan down) to Queens, where the diesels were removed and the consist continued with the electric to New York Penn. Eastbound, the procedure was reversed. Amtrak informed its riders that refunds would be given.

One of my colleagues riding into Penn Station on September 27 told me that as the train passed Gate Interlocking, he saw an AEM-7 being removed from an eastbound train that was headed to Boston — its motor power now a diesel-electric. As reported above, trains operated on electric power on Saturday, October 5, and Amtrak resumed its regular schedule on October 6.

Due to overwhelming demand for its first *Autumn Express*, which was sold out (September *Bulletin*), a trip was added for November 3. *Cinders* reported that the train would have 15 cars and would likely be powered by Phase II Heritage 145 (P42) and 822 (P40).

Cinders also reported that in mid-September, a second ACS-64, 603, was delivered for testing. 600 and 601 are at the Technology Test Center in Pueblo, Colorado.

In the fiscal year that ended on October 1, Amtrak carried a record 31.6 million passengers, setting a record for the tenth time in 11 years.

The already successful *Downeaster* continues to grow in ridership. Much of that ridership comes from three New Hampshire stations (Dover, Durham, and Exeter), and in response, more round trips may soon be added. The New Hampshire stations generate about 40% of ridership.

As of October 17, 19 states had reached agreements with Amtrak to increase state control and funding of 28 current routes: California, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. States with state-supported Amtrak service have been renegotiating their contracts as required under a 2008 federal law that called for supporting Amtrak routes of less than 750 miles. Thanks to *Progressive Railroading* for this news.

OTHER TRANSIT SYSTEMS**BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

With voting for a new map concluded, MBTA reported that 17,000 votes were cast and Map 1 was the winner with more than 6,000 votes. According to MBTA, Mikheil Kvrivishvili, an interactive and graphic designer from Moscow, Russia, submitted the winning map. The public can expect to start seeing new maps in stations as replacements are needed and as new stations open. The new maps will first be placed at Orient Heights (Blue Line) when it reopens early next year, and the new Assembly Square (Orange Line) when it opens in late 2014, according to "T" officials.

Engineer training on the HSP-46 locomotive began at the MPI plant in Boise, Idaho during September. There is a rumor that 2001 was rolling east during the last week of September. It is assumed that is the one coming to MBTA for testing, though one is also going to Pueblo to the DOT testing facility — the thought is that 2000 will be that one.

Rotem update: Cars 812, 1812, and 1819 were in Ayer, Massachusetts on September 27, to be delivered by Pan Am Railway shortly. 820, 822, and 1822 were picked up in Philadelphia by CSX for the trek northeastward. Word is that a possible fix for the cab cars was being tested the weekend of September 28-29 that would allow them to be used again as control cars. No word if this also solves the cab signal issue that has them banned from the Northeast Corridor.

Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick announced that after several years of studies, the preferred routing for the South Coast Rail Project would be via Stoughton serving Raynham, Easton, and Taunton, with its primary line running to New Bedford and a secondary line to Fall River. In January of this year, the Governor unveiled a new state transportation plan that called for spending \$10 billion over 10 years, including \$1.8 billion to complete the South Coast Rail line by 2021. Thanks to member Todd Glickman for these reports.

LINDENWOLD, NEW JERSEY

On September 18, PATCO's escalator maintenance contract that was expected to go to Otis went instead to Fujitec America Incorporated of Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania (September *Bulletin*). The three-year contract, valued at \$1.39 million, became effective after

(Continued on page 16)

Commuter and Transit Notes

(Continued from page 15)

three weeks. In the interim, the firm received a \$50,000 contract. Fujitec was also the manufacturer of the escalators, making it easier to get the necessary replacement parts. Prior to these contract awards, SEPTA repair crews were used and PATCO was billed \$12,397 for work under a temporary contract. Separately, the Federal Transit Administration launched its own investigation into the failures following a complaint that PATCO is not providing mandated access to disabled customers. In August, escalators were working just 55.8% of the time, vs. the goal of 90%. Thanks to member Bill Vigrass for sending this report from *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Member Bob Wright wrote: "Silverliner Vs 717 and 730 (and 710 per *Cinders*) have been wrapped for the Philadelphia Eagles. The latter was on my homebound train tonight (September 19). You may have seen the SEPTA "doomsday" plan, to react to the non-passage of state transportation funds. Fairly drastic, but realistic in many ways given the state of bridges on Regional Rail and the coming end of serviceable life for the Silverliner IVs and Kawasaki cars. Not sure what's behind the proposed cutback of the Norristown High-Speed Line to Bryn Mawr — the cars will be OK and the Schuylkill River Bridge closure would still allow service to Bridgeport. Speaking of this, the work on the bridge is about half-complete, so pretty much on schedule."

SEPTA officials outlined their case for \$6.5 billion to address state-of-good-repair investments needed over the next ten years to state Transportation Secretary Barry Schoch. Here are some details of the "doomsday" plan:

- Elimination of service on 9 of 13 Regional Rail Lines: Cynwyd in 2014, Media/Elwyn in 2015, and Chestnut Hill West in 2018, followed by West Trenton, Airport, Warminster, Marcus Hook/Wilmington, Fox Chase, and Chestnut Hill East Lines in 2023
- Truncating service on the Lansdale/Doylestown Line (2018) and Paoli/Thorndale Line in 2023
- Suspending service on the Broad-Ridge Spur of the Broad Street Line and eliminating express service on Broad Street
- Converting all city and suburban trolley routes to bus and truncating service on the Norristown High-Speed Line to Bryn Mawr

Member Dave Safford sent news that SEPTA would be receiving \$10 million in federal funds to build a 6-mile bypass track on West Trenton Line between Woodbourne and West Trenton. This would permit CSX trains to operate independently of SEPTA trains.

Dave also provided the following news and commentary: "Back files of a newspaper are traditionally called the morgue, and today *The Inquirer* has charmed four

zombies, however briefly, into the light of day. These are four important transit plans announced in 2009 that are still awaiting the lightning bolt required to animate their bodies. Specifically:

- An 18-mile LRT line between Camden and Glassboro is still under environmental study. Completion of the study is a year away, but there's no hurry: Neither an operator nor a source of construction funds has been identified
- A proposal for a \$46 million express bus route along Highway 42 is also under an environmental study, completion of which is due spring 2014. But again the construction is unfunded
- A \$3 million plan for a combined transit depot at the Walter Rand Transportation Center in Camden has been returned to go due to the realization that the existing plan would not accommodate the Glassboro Line, assuming that this is built, and further that it is routed through the Transportation Center
- Four years and \$750,000 have produced no results from a study on ways to improve the existing Atlantic City Line. (The reporter notes wryly that the entire original Philadelphia and Atlantic City Railway was built in 90 days in 1877).

An NJ Transit spokesman was quoted as saying, presumably with a straight face, that these projects "can take a significant period of time."

Here is one more from Dave: "This one is for those citizens who fight rail service as lowering property values. SEPTA has now issued a commissioned study which shows that not only does the availability of rail service, especially in combination with adequate parking, dramatically increases property values. Moreover, the closer the property is to the station, the greater is the increase. A station with frequent service and adequate parking can be expected to increase the value of properties located within ½ mile by 10% over one located three miles away, and the one three miles away will still be worth 8% more than one with out service."

The Friends of Philadelphia Trolleys ran a charter trip on September 29 using PCC-II 2329 from Elmwood Depot to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the PCC cars in Philadelphia.

In early October, SEPTA reported that the Bridgeport Viaduct project (bridge to Norristown) was approximately 75% complete. Workers completed installation of new ties, rail, grating, and handrail on the entire open deck portion of the structure. Work remaining on the open deck spans includes; railing toe plate, the third rail system, and guard rail. The structural steel repairs in the station area are complete and the installation of the waterproofing and remaining track structure will begin October 7. A November 11 re-opening was planned.

From *Cinders*: SEPTA will donate Reading Company 9001, the first Silverliner, to the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania. Built by the Budd Company at its Red

(Continued on page 17)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 16)*

Lion Plant in Philadelphia, this was the first of 17 such cars for the Reading.

WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

Metro exercised an option with Kawasaki to purchase 220 additional 7000-series cars under a contract signed in 2010. Previous orders totaled 528 cars. The first group is expected to be in service in mid-2014, with the option cars in service in 2016. Deliveries were delayed by the tsunami that hit Japan in 2011. Thanks to member Pete Donner for sending this report from **The Washington Post**.

Although no transit services were curtailed due to the partial shutdown of the federal government, member Steve Erlitz reported: "Metro says there has been a 25% drop in ridership. I heard there are no 8-car trains now. Six cars will be the max until resolution."

During September VRE began including Amtrak delays in its email alerts.

On September 30, one day before the then-possible partial shutdown of the federal government, Virginia Railway Express (VRE) sent an advisory that full service would operate the next morning and "once morning service is done, we will look at how many riders came in and then make a determination if we need to move up the bigger train sets to accommodate a possible rush of early afternoon commuters." VRE did dispatch its larger train consists earlier in the afternoon. Additional alerts were sent throughout the week and continuing for 16 days, but the regular schedules remained in use.

VRE held a webinar on October 9 to hear from its riders on its plans for growing the system and responding to current and future travel needs in the northern Virginia and Washington, D.C. regions. The plan will evaluate potential service improvement and system expansion initiatives to ensure future VRE capacity best meet regional travel needs. While the plan will not guarantee specific levels of service or funding, it will inform VRE Operations Board decision-making and will reflect VRE's priorities and role in the region's transportation system. The plan can be found at <http://www.vre.org/about/strategic/SystemPlan/SystemPlanReadAhead.pdf>.

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Next spring, the 12-station, 2.7-mile Atlanta Streetcar is expected to open for service.

ORLANDO, FLORIDA

A crowd of over 500 was in Winter Park on September 21 to view the first SunRail bi-level car. The 32-mile Phase I is now scheduled to open next spring. Thanks to Pete Donner for this news. **Railway Age** reported that a SunRail train was displayed at the Church Street station in downtown Orlando on October 10. Member Bob Kingman observed cab car 2004 waiting to enter Kenwood Yard in Albany, New York on October 13.

CHESTERTON, INDIANA

On the days that there are Chicago Bears football games, NICTD will stop select trains at 18th Street, a station that is normally used only by Metra Electric trains. I asked member Jim Beeler to confirm this and he wrote: "Yes, as far as I know it is true; what I don't know is whether NICTD might stop if there is a big concert being held at Soldier Field. As 11th Street/Museum Campus is a regular stop for NICTD, they probably won't stop at 18th Street for a concert. While 11th Street is a little further walk from Soldier Field than 18th Street, it is not a big deal."

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

For two Sundays, September 22 and October 6, from 8:45 AM until 4:45 PM, part of the Rock Island Line (Gresham to LaSalle Street) was closed to enable the bridges at 60th and 66th Streets to be removed. Passengers destined to downtown Chicago were told to ride the Rock Island Line to Blue Island and change for special Metra Electric trains to Millennium Station. Passengers boarding at stations between Blue Island and Gresham had to ride to Blue Island and transfer. In case you were wondering what would replace these bridges, here is the answer. "The viaducts were filled in as part of the Englewood flyover bridge project; a new bridge that will carry the Metra Rock Island tracks over a set of tracks used by Amtrak and freight trains at 63rd and State. This will eliminate conflicts between trains. Closing the streets and filling the viaducts provided design flexibility and cost savings compared to replacing the viaduct structures on the new track alignments."

News reports (including the national news) reported that a two-car commuter (sic) train apparently rolled away approximately ½-mile from where it was being stored in Des Plaines Yard and struck a Blue Line train at about 20 mph at the Harlem station at approximately 8 AM on September 30. At least 33 passengers were taken to hospitals with minor injuries. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) was also investigating this incident. **The Chicago Tribune** reported on October 3 that NTSB plans to consider issuing emergency recommendations to CTA. All cars involved in the collision were in the 2600-series that were built by the Budd Company between 1981 and 1987.

KENOSHA, WISCONSIN

Railway Age reported that the city's transit commission approved plans to add a north-south route to the existing 1.7-mile line that uses former Toronto Transit Commission PCCs. Under the proposal, federal funds would cover 80% of the \$10.3 million total capital cost, with Kenosha paying the remaining \$2 million. The City Council last November approved funding in Kenosha's 2013 budget for the streetcar expansion, but on October 7 decided to defer approval for two weeks.

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

CAF USA was awarded a contract on October 4 to

(Continued on page 18)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 17)*

build five streetcars for the initial 2.2-mile streetcar line. This firm, which is a subsidiary of Spain's Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles S.A., will assemble the vehicles at its plant in Elmira, New York. Five cars for Cincinnati will also be constructed.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

Effective September 23, free Wi-Fi is available in cab cars of all Northstar trains. Signs were placed near the doors identifying these cars. Average weekday boardings were 3,250, year to date ridership is up more than 16% over 2012, and in August, average weekday boardings were 3,250. Year to date, ridership is up more than 16% over 2012.

FORT WORTH, TEXAS

Member Bruce Bente sent this follow-up. "The disposition of the Tandy PCCs is more complicated than indicated in the October *Bulletin*. More than two cars may still exist. Tandy 2 and 3: I photographed them on Brookville property in June, 2004. Being nine years ago, they may be gone by now. But about five years ago, there were a number of PCCs stored in a lot adjacent to I-80 near Brookville, and the assumption was that these were owned and stored there by Brookville. Again, I haven't seen an update since then. Tandy 4, 5, and 7: The website for "North Texas Historic Transportation", a historic group, says that NTHT owns these Tandy cars and stores them in Fort Worth. It also lists a number of other electric cars on their roster — it would be interesting to get an update on the status of all their cars."

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

A groundbreaking ceremony was held September 12 for the new Montano station, to be located between Los Ranchos and Downtown Albuquerque. A January opening is planned. Zia Road, between Santa Fe County 599 and South Capitol, is still not open, despite the fact that it has been listed as a "future station" since *RailRunner* opened in 2006. According to its website, "Zia Road will open after the City of Santa Fe addresses some nearby land use issues."

During September, parts of the western United States were inundated with heavy rains. *RailRunner* sent an advisory that train service had been canceled for Sunday, September 15, as crews were working to repair at least one bridge that washed out in Santo Domingo. Other bridges were also being inspected to ensure that Monday service would not be impacted. It was not, however; trains operated at restricted speeds over a 2-mile stretch of Santo Domingo Pueblo, which caused some minor delays.

PORTLAND, OREGON

TriMet reported WES commuter rail ridership set a record in the summer quarter (June through August) when compared to last year, by rising by 10.3% to an average of 1,930 daily riders.

PETALUMA, CALIFORNIA

The Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) Commissioners announced on September 30 that they would recommend that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission redirect \$11.4 million in Regional Measure 2 toll funds to the SMART Larkspur Extension. However, the line, for which construction began in May, 2012, is not scheduled to open until either late 2015 or early 2016. Phase I is a 38.5-mile line connecting downtown San Rafael and North Santa Rosa, with nine stations. Under Phase II, the line would be extended approximately five miles south to Larkspur Ferry and north to Cloverdale, approximately 31 miles north of Santa Rosa. Four stations would be added. The right-of-way parallels U.S. 101. Nine DMUs have been ordered from Sumitomo.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Muni Heritage Weekend will be celebrated November 2 and 3. Attendees will get a taste of the city's public transit past with rides on vintage motor buses and trolley buses from 10 AM to 5 PM. Also operating those days will be a special cable car and historic streetcars rarely seen in regular service. Details can be found at: <http://www.streetcar.org/#sthash.6nDlvmzY.dpuf>.

Thanks to Pete Donner for this news.

When the 60-day cooling-off period ended on October 11, BART employees once again threatened to go on strike (September *Bulletin*). The deadline was extended by 72 hours, and then extended again to Wednesday, October 16. However, on October 18, the employees went on strike. A tentative agreement was reached on October 21, and rail service returned the following morning.

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

The 3.2-mile link between BART's Coliseum station and Oakland International Airport, presently under construction, is reported to be on time, on budget, and scheduled to open next September. This driverless automated people mover will replace the AirBART bus.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

On September 11, LACMTA approved a \$1.272 billion contract to build the 8.5-mile Crenshaw/LAX Transit Corridor Project connecting the Expo and Metro Green Lines. The initial work is the relocation of utilities, with heavy construction to begin next spring. There are to be eight stations. This is one of 12 transit projects funded by Measure R, the half-cent sales tax approved by Los Angeles County voters in 2008. Completion is planned for 2019.

During the second week of September, Metrolink began testing its first positive train control (PTC)-equipped train. Under a law enacted by Congress in the aftermath of the train crash in Chatsworth on September 12, 2008, virtually all rail lines must be equipped with PTC by December 31, 2015, although there are some in Congress who are working to have the deadline extend-

(Continued on page 19)

Commuter and Transit Notes*(Continued from page 18)*

ed. Thanks to member Al Holtz for this report.

HONOLULU, HAWAII

Sliding door panels, also called platform screen gates, to prevent passengers from accessing the tracks, will be added to the line's 21 stations under a \$27.1 million allocation from the project's contingency fund. Thanks to member David Erlitz for this report from **The Honolulu Star-Advertiser**.

Copenhagen, Denmark

Member Bob Matten visited Copenhagen in June and wrote this report. "The main purpose was to ride the M1 and M2 Metro lines, and some of the S-TOG lines. When I was there with the ERA Scandinavian Convention, there was not enough time and the nearest two Metro stations were far from the hotel (which was near Central Station). I was very surprised that the two Metro lines did not go to Central Station. I took a 2-hour guided walking tour and saw the construction of 5 or 6 subway stations. Copenhagen Metro (København Metro) is building a 2-track ring line (M3) with 17 underground stations, going through Central Station. It is scheduled to open in 2018. There will also be a Line M4, which will begin at Central Station, goes partly on the ring, and has 2 branch line stations. This is scheduled to open in 2019.

"The existing lines run 3-car small driverless trains about every 5 minutes. Digital signs give the time of arrival of the next train to the nearest half-minute. Stations have stairways, escalators, and elevators. The ends of both lines are in the open. On the underground stations there are sliding glass doors that open only when a train is in the station. (Nobody can jump onto the tracks). The system looks just like the Turin, Italy Metro, which ERA visited last year. The S-TOG trains are like commuter trains. In the city the stops are close to each other. Outside the city, the stops are further apart. I only had time to ride one line, Line E.

"On the Sunday of my visit I rode several bus lines with headways of 5 minutes. In the Bronx, where I live, it is 24 minutes. I plan to return in 2018 or 2019 to ride the new lines."

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

Bob also visited Geneva, where he rode *The Choco-*

late Train, which is made up of old first class cars and departs from Montreux. En route, the train stops in Gruyere, where the admission to a cheese factory and chocolate factory in Broc is included. Bob also wanted to ride all of Geneva's light rail lines, which use new 7-section LRVs. Service is very frequent. In 2011, there were six lines with branches, which were reconfigured several times so that today there are four lines (12, 14, 15, and 18) and no branches. While riding Line 12, Bob noticed construction taking place near the Chen-Bourg, Eaux-vives, and Carouge stops. There was a large sign (in French) with a picture of a train and a map showing seven stations, the first being Central Station (Gare Cornavin). Bob asked someone connected with the project some questions and was told that a metro to France (which is very nearby) was being built.

TEL AVIV, ISRAEL

International Railway Gazette reported that on August 13, Yisrael Katz, Israel's Transport Minister, announced that the National Infrastructure Committee had approved the first phase of Israel Railways' electrification project. According to Katz, the first lines to be electrified will be the new direct line to Jerusalem and the Acre-Carmiel Line. This initial phase is said to cost the equivalent of US \$3.1 billion.

FROM THE HISTORY FILES

110 Years Ago: On November 24, 1903, Public Service Railway Company President Thomas N. McCarter proposed a streetcar subway for Newark. However, it took until November 18, 1929 until a groundbreaking ceremony took place. The Newark City Subway would open between Newark Penn Station and Heller Parkway on May 26, 1935. An extension to Franklin Avenue came on November 22, 1940. Initially there would be three lines using the subway, 7, which remains today (although without a number), 21/Orange (until March 30, 1952), 23/Central Avenue (until December 13, 1947), and 29/Bloomfield Avenue (until March 30, 1952). Today, the line is referred to as Newark Light Rail and uses a fleet of Kinkisharyo LRVs. It was extended to its present terminus, Grove Street, on June 22, 2002.

30 Years Ago: On November 13, 1983, the last of the original Broad Street Subway (Philadelphia) cars was retired.

News items and comments concerning this column may be emailed to ERAnewseditor@gmail.com.

Going in Circles, on Long Island*(Continued from page 20)*

Patchogue. The fare is \$2.00. Service is every hour Monday to Saturday (no Sunday service), and the running time is 45 minutes.

Trip #3: Ronkonkoma and Patchogue

Suffolk County Transit Bus Route S7A connects the Ronkonkoma station with the Patchogue station. The fare is \$2.00, running time 25 minutes. The bus runs

Monday through Saturday about every 70 minutes.

As you can see, you can ride the Far Rockaway and Long Beach Branches as a circle trip as well as the Port Jefferson Branch and the Montauk Branch and finally also the main line to Ronkonkoma and back from Patchogue. Of course these trips can be done in either direction. In future issues of the **Bulletin** I will describe other circle trips that can be done using Metro-North and NJ Transit.

Around New York's Transit System

NYC Transit Chooses New President

After making a nationwide search, MTA appointed Carmen Bianco as President of NYC Transit. New York City has the largest mass transit system in North America, serving more than 7.5 million passengers a day on subway trains, buses, paratransit, and Staten Island Railway. NYCT's new President is a NYC Transit veteran and career professional who will serve in North America's top subway and bus leadership post. Bianco is the seventh person to serve as President since the title was created in 1980. Since April, he has served as Acting President. Since 2010, he was Senior Vice President of the Department of Subways, where he was in charge of the entire subway system.

NYCT's 61-year-old President was in charge during Superstorm Sandy, which flooded tunnels, inundated stations, and washed out tracks in the most violent storm that ever hit the subway. He supervised the immediate efforts to pump out water, 24-hour emergency repairs, and the unusual construction work to restore service to damaged areas. He is also making plans to prevent future flooding. When he was the head of Subways, he helped develop the successful FASTRACK program.

MTA's Capital Budget

MTA officials were briefed on the proposed \$106 billion 20-year capital budget, stretching from 2015 to 2034.

About a quarter of NYC Transit's \$68.2 billion budget includes improvements to the aging signal and communication system. About one-fifth of the same budget includes the estimated cost of new subway cars and buses.

Planned subway improvements include a systemwide

network of countdown clocks and a successor to the *MetroCard* system, which cannot be maintained beyond 2019. NYC Transit has raised resiliency standards on cables and power relays since Superstorm Sandy.

The current signal system allows 29 trains per hour to run on the Lexington Avenue Line. But during the rush hour, only 26 trains run because crowding increases the dwell time at the stations. When Long Island Rail Road trains start running to Grand Central, additional heavy riding is anticipated. Train service cannot be increased, but congestion may be relieved by building additional stairways and installing additional turnstiles.

Pelham Line Station Rehabilitation

On October 5, the Castle Hill Avenue and Middletown Road stations were closed for rehabilitation in both directions for seven months until early May, 2014. The Buhre Avenue and Zerega Avenue stations will be closed from July, 2014 to February, 2015.

Improvements include replacement of floors, walls, ceilings, street, and platform stairs, reconstruction of platform edges including rubbing boards, and new ADA boarding edges. Work also includes new mezzanine lighting, a bird deterrent system, and replacement of canopies, windscreens, and railings. New platform lighting and public address systems will be installed at the Middletown Road and Buhre Avenue stations. Structural steel will be replaced at the Castle Hill Avenue station. The Pelham Bay Park station will remain open during the reconstruction of the bridge over the tracks, installation of a bird deterrent system, and replacement of the platform rubbing board and tactile warning strips. New platform canopies will be installed and control buildings and windscreens will be painted.

GOING IN CIRCLES, ON LONG ISLAND

By Larry Kiss

Two major trends seem to have developed over the last 20 years or so in the railfan world. The first, and unfortunately, not for the better, has been the disappearance of almost all chartered railfan train trips. The second, and helpful, trend has been the advent of the Internet. Once getting information and schedules was an arduous and time consuming task and now it can be done quickly with the use of a computer.

With these two trends impacting my train riding I have been able to create my own personal "circle" railfan trips. By using the web I have been able to put together trips where I can ride more than one line and sometimes use a connecting bus or train to create a circle trip. In this inaugural article of *Going in Circles*, I have

prepared three circle trips centered on the Long Island Rail Road.

Trip #1: Far Rockaway and Long Beach Branches

Take either **A** to Far Rockaway or the LIRR Far Rockaway Branch to Far Rockaway. One can take the Nassau Inter County Express (nicebus.com) bus route N33 to Long Beach, where the Long Beach Branch of LIRR can be accessed. The bus runs hourly, 7 days a week, the fare is \$2.25, and the running time is 25 minutes.

Trip #2: Long Island Rail Road Port Jefferson Branch and Patchogue

By taking Suffolk County Transit (sct-bus.org) bus route S61 you can connect between Port Jefferson and

(Continued on page 19)