

The Bulletin



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The Bulletin

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The New York Connecting Railroad
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CONTRACT 4 SUBWAY CONTROVERSY by Bernard Linder (Continued from February, 2016 issue)

We have been publishing excerpts from BMT's Chairman Gerhard Dahl's book, *Transit Truths*, in which he urged the City to complete the construction specified in Contract 4.

Following are excerpts from his July 12, 1924 letter to the Board of Transportation.

"It is useless, however, to buy additional new cars if there is no place to equip or maintain them. If there is inadequate maintenance or inadequate equipment, it is because of the default on the part of the City for eleven years in its obligation to supply us with shops and yards.

"Under our Contract with the City made in 1913, we included shops and yards as a part of the entire system to be operated on one fare, but the City was obligated to supply new shops and yards required as the system might develop after 1913. Since that time we have purchased 950 steel cars at a total cost of \$20 million. For the maintenance of these cars the City has not spent one dollar in supplying shops and yards.

"The Company is now completing the equipment of fifty new steel cars at an expense of \$1.2 million. These were purchased since the reorganization took place in June, 1923. The work on these new cars is proceeding under the grave handicap of shops, inadequate even for routine work. It is plain that there is no use in buying new cars if there is no place to which to keep them in efficient operating condition.

"So serious is the situation that the Company cannot consider the purchase of new cars for use on any part of the system, unless, by the time such cars are ready for delivery by the car builders the City shall have adequate

shops available in which to equip such cars, and, therefore to maintain equipment."

(Editor's Note: The following is an interesting excerpt from Mr. Dahl's August 26, 1924 article, which was published in the newspapers.)

"The B.M.T. today is operating 950 steel cars. To appreciate the significance of this statement it should be pointed out that in 1913 when the Dual Contracts were signed it was estimated that only 600 steel cars would be required after the construction work was fully completed. But to date the City has not completed this work. It has not finished the 14th Street-Eastern line. It has not even started the Nassau-Broad Streets extension. It has not built the shops and yards. Thus the Company today is operating 350 more steel cars than it was estimated would be necessary. Furthermore, these 950 steel cars now tax the capacity of the shops and yards. Only recently the Company spent \$150,000 on its shops because, in the public interest, it could not wait for the City to live up to its contract and build the shops and yards agreed upon in 1913."

To accommodate the expanding fleet, the Company enlarged and rearranged the shops and yards. Fresh Pond Shop was converted from an elevated to a trolley inspection shop. It was closed and razed after the Richmond Hill trolley was converted to bus on April 26, 1950. A new Fresh Pond Bus Depot was opened on July 27, 1960. The entrance to the East New York Elevated Shop was originally near the main line as shown on page 4, The entrance was relocated to the opposite end and the shop was extended closer to the main line at an unknown

(Continued on page 4)

NEXT TRIP: GRAND CENTRAL TOUR — SATURDAY, MARCH 19

FROM RECOGNITION TO DOMINANCE: THE NEW YORK CONNECTING RAILROAD (BRIDGING THE BAY AND CONNECTING THE PIECES)

by George Chiasson
(Continued from February, 2016 issue)

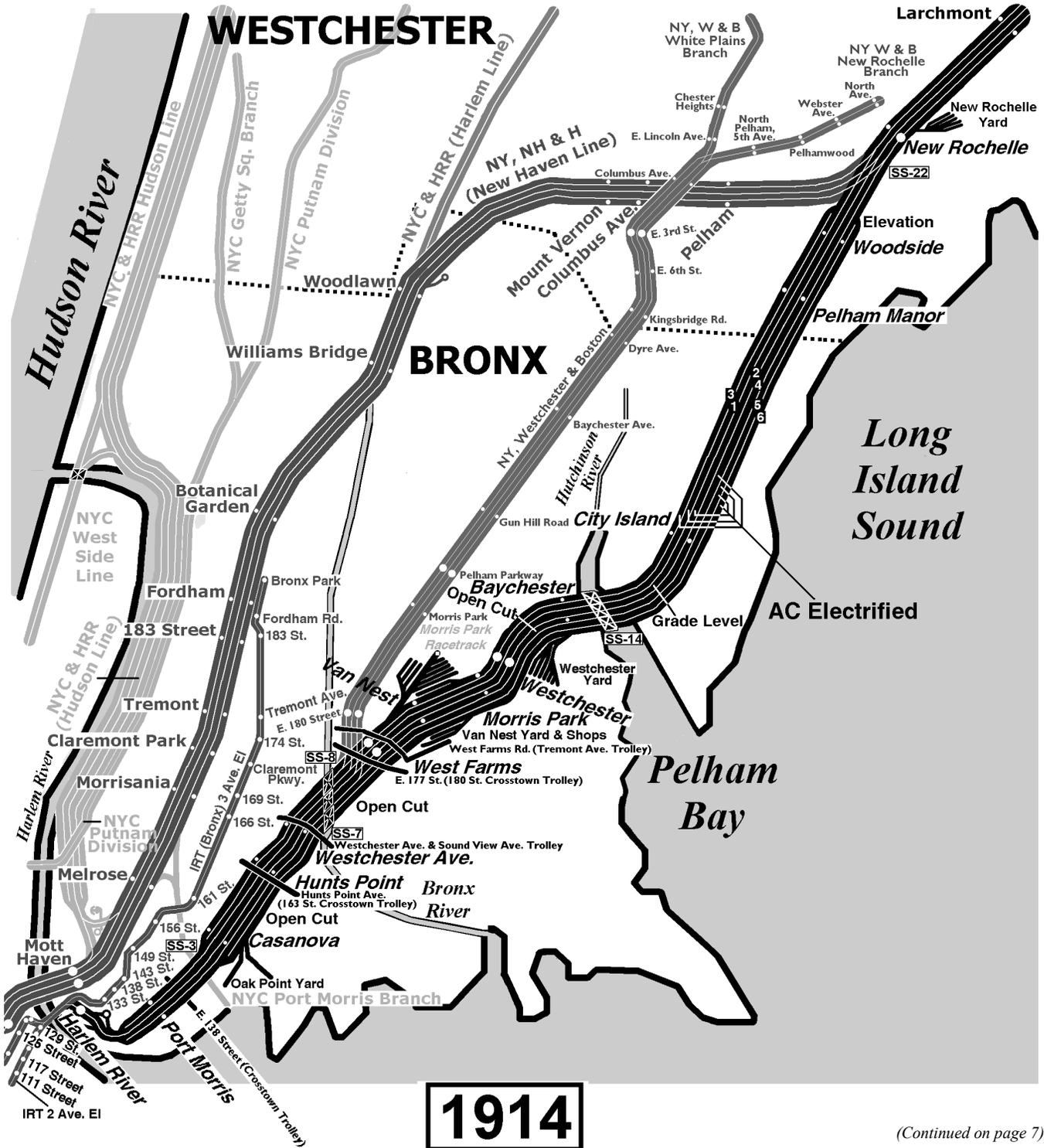
**Map 74: NY, NH & H RR Harlem River Branch
-and- Contiguous RR Lines in Westchester and the Bronx
Showing Right-of-way and At-Grade Railway Crossings**



(Continued on page 3)

From Recognition to Dominance
(Continued from page 2)

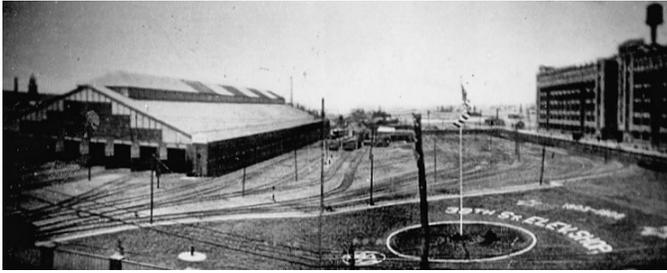
**Map 75: NY, NH & H RR Harlem River Branch
-and- Contiguous RR Lines in Westchester and the Bronx
Showing Improved Right-of-way**



(Continued on page 7)

Contract 4 Subway Construction Controversy

(Continued from page 1)



39th Street Elevated Yard and Shop, around 1910.
Bernard Linder collection



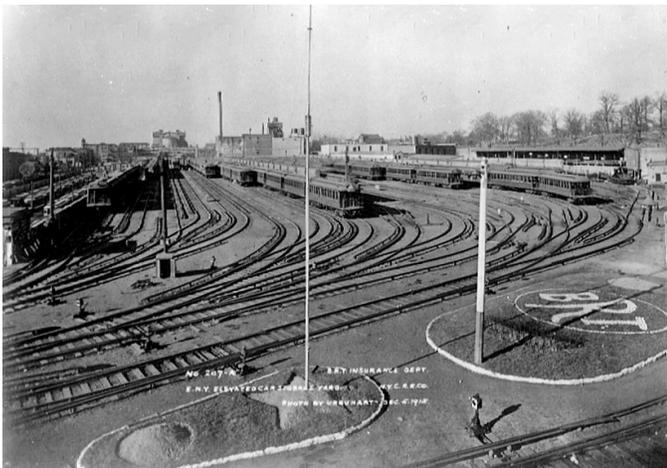
36th Street Shop.
Bernard Linder collection



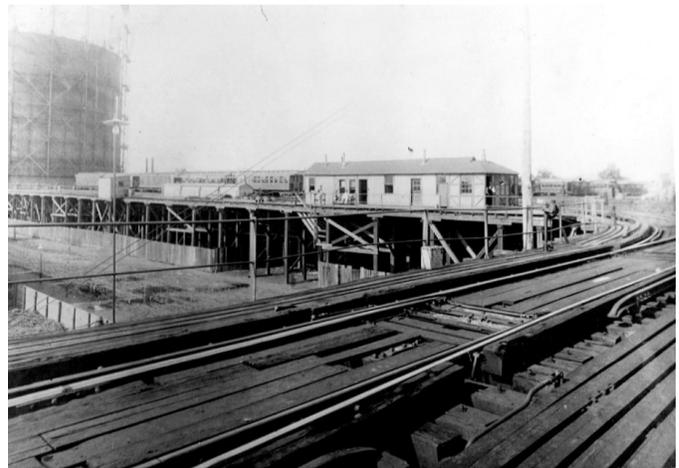
36th Street Yard, January 4, 1916.
Bernard Linder collection



East New York Shop before rebuilding.
Bernard Linder collection



East New York Yard, circa 1916.
Bernard Linder collection

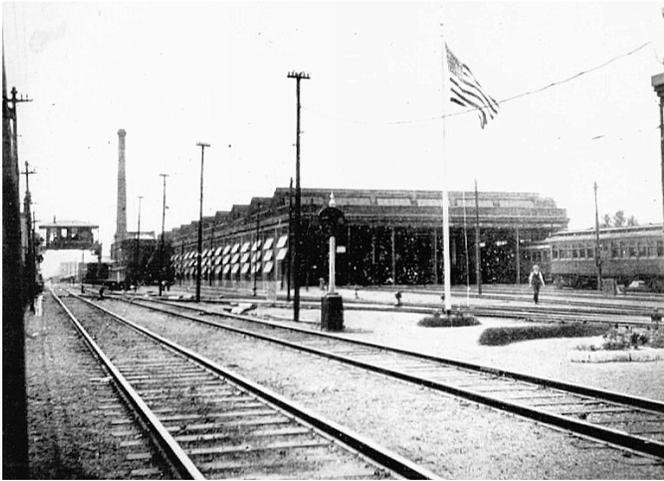


Alabama Yard, bounded by Pitkin Avenue, Williams Avenue, Alabama Avenue, and Belmont Avenue, circa 1910.
Bernard Linder collection

(Continued on page 5)

Contract 4 Subway Construction Controversy

(Continued from page 4)



Fresh Pond Elevated Inspection Shop, circa 1910.
Bernard Linder collection



Fresh Pond Depot, September 25, 1950.
Bernard Linder photograph



Two vintage views of Fresh Pond Yard.
Bernard Linder collection



Fresh Pond Yard, September 25, 1950.
Bernard Linder photograph



Fresh Pond Yard, looking west, November, 1968.
Larry Linder photograph

(Continued on page 6)

Contract 4 Subway Construction Controversy

(Continued from page 5)

date. Your Editor-in-Chief's supervisor told him about this alteration, but he was never able to find any published information.

The 36th Street Shop was no longer needed when the Fifth Avenue "L" ceased operating at Unification, June 1, 1940 The huge Coney Island Shop and Yard, which was opened in the 1920s, provided adequate space for storage and repairs.

At about the same time, the Company ordered the following D-Types:

CAR NUMBERS	DATE	BUILT BY
6000-3	1925	Pressed Steel
6004-70	1927	Pressed Steel
6071-6120	1928	Pressed Steel

On July 23, 1925, the first train operated on the Brighton Line. On September 22, 1928, D-Types appeared on the Sea Beach Line. Meanwhile, steel cars were transferred, replacing the wooden cars on Centre Street, as shown in the following table:

DATE	WOODEN CARS
1922	250 cars
1924	20 "L" trains
1925	10% on Myrtle-Chambers
August 22, 1927	None

With the opening of the Nassau Loop and the 14th Street Extension on May 30, 1931, Contract 4 construction was completed. The new Mayor was not hostile and the Company was able to give frequent and reliable service.

**AN ELECTRIC TRACTION TREASURE:
HENRY RAUDENBUSH MARKS 50 YEARS WITH LEADING FIRM
by Julien Wolfe and Jack May**

When we normally hear about national treasures, we think of authors or composers, or perhaps some famous ballet dancer. Few who ride public transit ever consider that behind the cars and trains they ride has been the hand of a national treasure, but one truly exists today at the firm of Louis T. Klauder and Associates — namely ERA member Henry (Hank) Raudenbush.

On February 1, 2016 George Dorshimer, President of LTK, announced that Henry had completed a half-century of service to that company, describing him as "a human encyclopedia of the rail passenger industry" and a "positive role model for another generation of future leaders."

Those with long memories can remember the good old days of New York Division ERA meetings held at the old New York Penn Station YMCA auditorium and how sometimes raging arguments erupted over some item of electric transit history or technology. Generally, after several of the more vocal members continued to scream at each other, someone would say, "...let's ask Henry," after which he would stand up and quietly say something like, "...in 1917 the Third Avenue 'L'..." and that would end the discussion. Prior to his service with

LTK, Henry worked for the New York City Transit Authority in its car department, but in 1966 left New York City and moved to the Philadelphia area, joining the firm of Louis T. Klauder and Associates, where he greatly contributed to the creation of the revolutionary M-1 EMU car design that quickly yanked the Long Island Rail Road out of the World War I era and into the modern era of electric railroading. For the next 50 years he continued to offer his know-how to scores of other electric traction projects — and still does so as his LTK career continues.

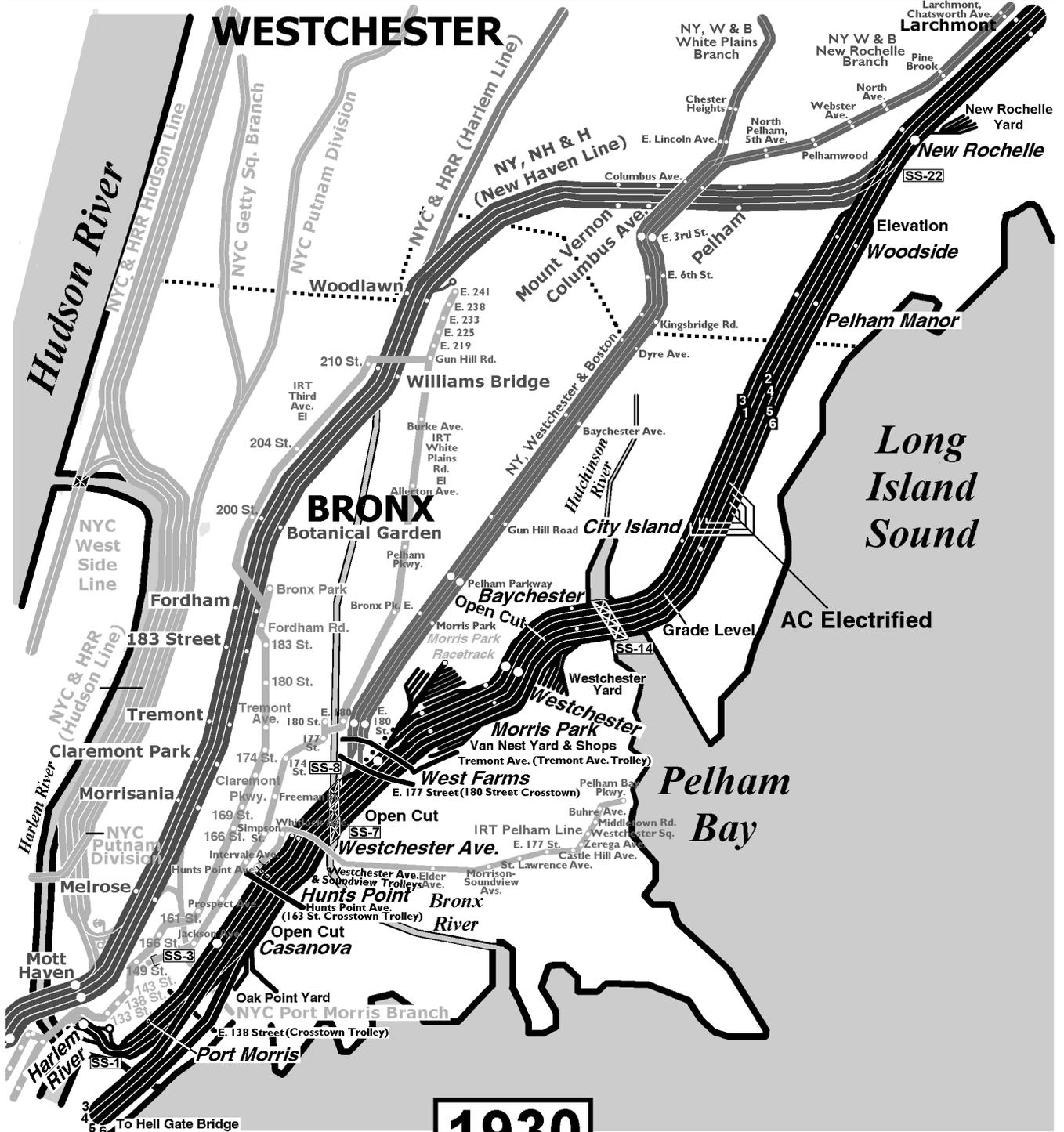
His technical expertise ranges from the esoteric to the sublime, from modern complex electrical engineering techniques to practical problem-solving. For example, when traveling with him aboard a sleeping car in 1963, he demonstrated how to stop the annoying squeaks and rattles in the roomette by forcing strips of cardboard into the gaps between wall panels. Never one to guard his expertise, he has always enjoyed educating all of us by sharing his vast knowledge of all things rail, and now, at the age of 80, continues to use his knowledge and experience to improve the lot of the transit rider.

Congratulations, Hank, and keep up the good work.



From Recognition to Dominance
(Continued from page 3)

**Map 76: NY, NH & H RR Harlem River Branch
-and- Contiguous RR Lines in Westchester and the Bronx
Showing Hell Gate Bridge Leads and Right-of-way**



1930

(Continued next issue)

Commuter and Transit Notes

No. 328

by Ronald Yee and Alexander Ivanoff

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

In reaction to the numerous incidents of spontaneous, uncontrolled combustion of their lithium-ion batteries (severe battery fires), MTA issued a total ban on “hoverboards”, futuristic devices that have become the latest fad among the younger crowd. The devices may not be used or even carried aboard any MTA trains, buses, or facilities over fears of exploding or burning batteries. Hoverboards have already been banned from Amtrak, Los Angeles Metrolink, and Chicago Metra as well as most U.S. airlines. NYPD has been instructed to strictly enforce the ban, which New York City has extended to all city streets, sidewalks, and parklands. Violators will face fines and confiscation of their hoverboards. (*New York Post*, January 27)

MTA announced that ridership at the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) and Metro-North Railroad (MNR) reached historic highs. Even more significant was the fact these ridership volumes were attained as gasoline prices fell to new lows during this time period. LIRR carried 87.6 million passengers in 2015, a new record level that was 2.1% higher than 2014, its highest ridership since 1949, re-securing its place as the largest regional passenger railroad in the United States, surpassing the 87.4 million rides set in 2008 before the economic downturn. MNR carried 86.1 million passengers, a 1.6% increase over 2014, double the number of annual passengers it carried during its founding year, 1983. Coupled with a re-focusing of the railroad on safety and service reliability, increases in ridership across all categories have been recorded. Non-commutation ridership increased 2.3% while traditional commutation ridership was up 1.0%. The west-of-Hudson lines saw a ridership increase of 4.9% to 1.8 million riders. MTA Chairman Thomas Prendergast attributed the increases to an improved and more reliable quality train service, new rail cars, better customer communication, and a new generation of people who value and seek out public transit as their first choice of travel mode. (MTA press release via Ernest Windschauer, February 2)

MTA METRO-NORTH RAILROAD

Because of the January 23 blizzard (see above and page 20), service was ordered suspended after 4 PM by New York State Governor Cuomo. The last train to depart Grand Central Terminal was at 4:20 PM. Reports from employees on the line indicated that the service suspension came just in the nick of time, with the last trains into and out of Grand Central Terminal encountering significant difficulties in pushing through the growing snowdrifts being rapidly built up by the heavy snowfall and high winds. Service on all three lines and branches was restored the following afternoon, with inbound trains departing their origin stations after 12 noon and outbound services restored at 3 PM operating on a Sunday schedule (with exception of southbound service at

the Melrose and Tremont stations on the Harlem Line, where third rail power problems on the southbound local track would not allow trains to stop at those stations). Tickets were cross-honored on NYC Transit Bx41 buses between Fordham, Tremont, and Melrose until 2:40 PM Tuesday, January 26, when full power and local train service was restored on that track. (Metro-North website, January 23-26)

Member Joe Calisi has observed, on a fairly regular basis, the operation of at least one consist of M-2 Cosmopolitan EMU cars on the New Haven Line since they were officially “retired” from daily service after the evening peak of July 2, 2015 had concluded. They have been seen during the AM as well as PM peak periods. Given that the 32 M-2s have been retained by the railroad for use as spare and back-up equipment, this is testament to the fact that the M-8s are still having some issues preventing them from reaching their expected reliability rates in terms of Mean Distance Between Failures. A shortage of M-8s still exists from the May, 2013 derailment and collision at Fairfield (up to 16 cars) as well as a grade crossing accident involving a snow plow truck being struck by a set of M-8s operating on the New Canaan Branch without passengers aboard, clearing the rails of snow after the January 23 blizzard. (Joseph Calisi, January 27)

Grand Central Terminal suffered a power outage shortly after 9 AM on Monday, February 15 when a pipe burst (probably from the record cold temperatures the preceding day when it dipped to -10F in New York City) on the lower level, flooding a transformer that supplied power to the lighting and auxiliary power systems of the terminal. While traction and signal power was not affected, all power to the lower level was cut off, plunging it into darkness. All retail outlets were also left in the dark. Train service was rerouted to the upper level and police and National Guard troops kept everyone out of the darkened lower level. The power outage affected all ticket vending machines, leaving the ticket office as the only location for ticket sales. This forced Metro-North to permit the sale of on-board fares without the usual on-board surcharge. Power was restored in time for the Tuesday morning rush hour. Fortunately, this occurred on President’s Day, when the railroad was operating a reduced schedule for the holiday and was carrying far fewer passengers than on a normal Monday. (*New York Daily News*, February 15)

MTA LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD

While service was restored to most of the system on Monday morning, January 25 with exception of the Atlantic Branch to Atlantic Terminal in Brooklyn following a blizzard (see page 20 for NYC Transit details), the Far Rockaway, Long Beach, Hempstead, West Hempstead, and Montauk Branches east of Speonk, which remained

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

suspended for Monday. However, the return of service on LIRR was not smooth, the morning commute plagued with massive delays and overcrowding as commuters flocked to the lines that were declared operational. LIRR President Patrick Nowakowski stated that LIRR's return to normal service was hampered by the decision to wait until 4 PM Saturday for Governor Cuomo's order to shut down the railroad. While outbound service out of Penn Station and Atlantic Terminal ceased by 4 PM, some inbound trains to Penn Station were scheduled to arrive near 5 PM and with the delays systemwide, some arrived after 5 PM. Unfortunately, that was after the peak of the blizzard had arrived several hours earlier. This was done as an attempt to get as many people who had come out that morning to return home and not become stranded in the city. Due to operational issues, contrary to Monday morning press reports, the Port Washington Branch did not return to service for the morning commute and was resumed at 2:46 PM. Passengers seeking to attend Monday night's Islanders game at Barclays Center were directed to ride to Penn Station and take the NYC Transit ② ③ trains to Atlantic Avenue. Full service was restored on all lines for the Tuesday morning rush hour but delays plagued the railroad for several days after the storm. (*New York Daily News*, January 25; ABC News, January 26)

The town of Hempstead will be adding 4,009 parking spaces at the Bellmore, Seaford, Wantagh, Merrick, and Baldwin stations beginning in April, 2016. These spaces are existing spaces that will become restricted to use only by Hempstead town residents. The town of Hempstead controls the parking lots and will sell parking permits for a mere \$10 to persons presenting proof of residency by showing their vehicle's registration to verify their home address. Violators will be subject to a \$135 fine for each offense. No word as to where the non-residents currently using these spaces will park their vehicles. (*Long Island Newsday*, February 4)

PORT AUTHORITY TRANS-HUDSON CORPORATION

The January 23 blizzard prompted PATH to shut down operations on the outdoor running portions of its system. Beginning at 11:52 AM on Saturday, January 23, service was suspended between Newark, Harrison, and Journal Square. All trains were turned at Grove Street in Jersey City. The underground portions of the PATH system remained operational throughout the duration of the blizzard. Service to Journal Square and onward to Harrison and Newark was restored at 2 PM Tuesday, January 26 after as many as 650 employees dug through snow drifts as high as 14 feet in the Jersey Meadows. (ABC News, *The Star Ledger*, January 26)

NJ TRANSIT

NJT suspended all commuter rail, light rail, and bus services at 2 AM Saturday morning, January 23 as the previously mentioned blizzard was forecast to hit the State of New Jersey at its maximum force shortly after that time. The shutdown was a preemptive move to

eliminate the possibility of stuck or stalled trains with passengers aboard during the storm and to facilitate the snow removal efforts once the storm had passed. Service resumed on the commuter rail lines as well as the Newark Light Rail and Hudson-Bergen Light Rail at or around 12 noon on Sunday, January 24 on Sunday schedules. The *RiverLine* was restored between Trenton and 36th Street in Camden. There was no service to the Walter Rand Transportation Center and points south until Tuesday, January 26. Regular weekday service was restored on Monday, January 25 with the exception of the *RiverLine*, which operated a limited service due to snow-clogged streets, and the Gladstone Branch of the Morris & Essex Lines, which remained suspended due to extreme snow conditions. However, while the services were restored rather quickly given the extreme snowfall, delays in service were abundant, fueling the ire of many commuters (NJ Transit, January 23-25)

NJT commuter rail services may be hit with a strike beginning Saturday, March 12. That is the date when the second Presidential Emergency Board expires. The unions representing the rank-and-file employees have taken a position where they are willing to fully accept the pay packages recommended by the two PEBs, 248 and 249, which call for an average annual pay increase of 2.6%, comparable to what was agreed upon by the unionized employees of LIRR and Metro-North. Health insurance and new higher 401K contributions are also on the table. The unionized workforce has been working without a contract for five years. It is expected that President Obama will order the striking employees back to work by Monday, March 14. However, railway labor laws limit that action to just 30 days. The last strike to hit NJT was in March, 1983 and lasted 34 days. While NJT Bus Operators have a contract, they may end up honoring the railway workers' picket lines, preventing NJT from utilizing its buses to blunt the effects of a rail strike. (*Star Ledger*, February 3)

AMTRAK

Amtrak operated a modified schedule on its Northeast Corridor between Washington, D.C. and Boston, Massachusetts during the blizzard on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday January 23-25. *Acela* services were suspended Saturday and Sunday but five *Northeast Regional Service* trains were operated to provide a basic service between Washington, D.C. and Boston, Massachusetts. Delays ranged from 6 minutes to 2 hours, timekeeping improving after the storm had passed through by Sunday morning in Boston. All services south of Washington, D.C. were suspended on Sunday, January 24. On that day, the *Auto Train*, *Silver Meteor*, and *Palmetto* were cancelled, the *Silver Star* operated only between Miami and Jacksonville, the *Crescent* operated only between New Orleans and Atlanta, the eastbound *Capitol Limited* operated only as far as Pittsburgh, the westbound *Capitol Limited* was cancelled, the *Cardinal* and *Hoosier State* operated only between Chicago and Indianapolis, the southbound *Carolinian* operated only between Charlotte and Raleigh, North

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

Carolina, the northbound *Carolinian* was cancelled, and *Piedmont Service Train #73* was cancelled. This level of long-distance service south and west of Washington, D.C. was maintained through January 26. Full service was restored on January 27. (Amtrak, January 24-26; WBAL 1090 News Radio, Al Holtz, January 27)

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) completed its environmental assessment and preliminary engineering, which will permit final design to commence, followed by the start of construction. The plans call for a fourth track to be added to 9 miles of the Northeast Corridor between Grove Interlocking near Odenton, northward to Winans Interlocking near Halethorpe, Maryland. The Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport rail station will be reconfigured to have two platforms serving all four tracks to provide maximum operational flexibility at the 13th busiest Amtrak station in the nation. (Federal Railroad Administration news release, February 4)

OTHER TRANSIT SYSTEMS**BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

The Government Center “T” station is scheduled to reopen on March 26 after being closed for two years to undergo a total rebuilding. This is the only station that offers a direct connection transfer between the Blue and Green Lines. Its closure has been a major inconvenience for “T” riders. The \$82 million project has added a new glass entrance at street level featuring 40-foot-tall glass walls, wheelchair accessibility, and improved station’s platforms with a new surfacing featuring colored terrazzo tiles. (*Boston Globe*, February 3, 2016)

MBTA suffered two major service disruptions on its rail systems within a 48-hour period. Just after 8:30 AM Tuesday, February 16, a 1-foot-by-12-foot section of paneling (Editor’s Note by Ron Yee: possibly a cover panel over one of the auxiliary systems mounted below the car body such as the “coffin box”) on the lower portion of an Orange Line subway car fell off as the train approached the State Street station. The panel struck a wall and then contacted the third rail, causing an electrical arc that created a smoke condition. As that train was already in the station, passengers were discharged there and evacuated from the station. Another Orange Line train following this train also struck the same debris and became disabled in the tunnel. Passengers aboard it self-evacuated as smoke filled the cars via the end doors as well as by kicking out the windows. Fortunately, no injuries were reported. Subsequent inspection of all Orange Line subway cars revealed a need to re-secure similar panels on 13 of the 120 cars checked. Early in the morning of Thursday, February 18, an Amtrak signal systems failure crippled all train operations into and out of Boston’s South Station, snarling the morning commute for thousands of passengers as well as hampering Northeast Corridor service. MBTA commuter rail service was cut back to the Back Bay station, where most trains were terminated and turned back to

their origins. MBTA offered free rides at Back Bay and South Station to accommodate their inconvenienced travelers. Only a few trains were able to operate into and out of South Station using Signal Department crews to manually hand-crank and line up the switches and spike them so they could set a limited number of routes. The signal system was finally repaired in time for the morning rush hour on Friday February 19. MBTA is investigating both incidents for causative factors and preventive steps to avoid future incidents. (*Boston Globe*, February 16 and WBUR, February 16 and 18)

BUFFALO, NEW YORK

The Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) is currently exploring options to extend its light rail line west of its current terminus at the Special Events station at First Niagara Center to the former Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad terminal building. Alternative A, called the South Park option, would bring the line along South Park Avenue to the north side of the DL&W terminal. Option B, the Buffalo River alternative, would allow the NFTA line to serve a new station platform on the ground floor of the terminal building, which is adjacent to the Buffalo River. Plan B would best serve the planned transit oriented development that this line extension would serve. (*Railway Track and Structures*, January 25)

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

SEPTA reported that it would activate Positive Train Control (PTC) systems on all of its regional rail commuter lines in February, 2016. A three-phase project, SEPTA was to cut-in the PTC on the single-track Warminster Line first, followed by its two-track lines and, finally, for lines with more than two tracks. Final testing of the PTC hardware and software aboard SEPTA trains and their interfacing with Amtrak’s PTC system used on the Northeast Corridor was on-going at press time. (*Progressive Railroading*, January 27)

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Baltimore’s MTA halted all light rail, rapid transit, and commuter rail services at midnight on Friday, January 22, 2016 in preparations for the aforementioned blizzard. Service was suspended all weekend, with partial MARC commuter rail service restored on Tuesday, January 26. (*Metro*, January 22; WBAL 1090 News Radio, January 27)

WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

WMATA rapid transit operations were suspended in the Washington, D.C. area after 11 PM Friday evening, January 22, due to the blizzard. Bus service was suspended at 5 PM that afternoon. All services were suspended system-wide on Saturday and Sunday and on Monday, January 25, WMATA restored limited underground service on the Red (Medical Center to Union Station), Orange (Ballston to Eastern Market), and Green (Fort Totten to Anacostia) Lines. Service remained suspended on the Blue, Silver, and Yellow Lines until Tuesday. Like NYC Transit, WMATA provided a “Snowzilla Service Map” on its website to indicate what lines and stations had service and which ones did not.

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

VRE and MARC commuter rail services were also suspended through Monday, January 25, resuming on Tuesday, January 26. (*Metro*, January 22)

After years of delay, the Washington, D.C. Streetcar opened to the public on Saturday, February 27 with an opening ceremony at 10 AM. Connecting H Street NE with Union Station (albeit a bit of a walk from Union Station itself), the streetcar will operate 6 AM-midnight Monday-Thursday, 6 AM to 2 AM Friday, 8 AM to 2 AM Saturday, and 8:00 AM to 10 PM on holidays. The streetcar line will be closed on Sundays. This marks the return of streetcars to Washington, D.C. after a 54-year absence. Almost typical of the manner in which this streetcar line was planned, designed, and constructed, no fares will be charged during the initial service period, ostensibly because a fare collection plan has yet to be finalized by the D.C. Department of Transportation. Once a fare structure is finalized and approved, fares will be charged at some point in the future. Meanwhile, plans are afoot to extend the streetcar line eastward to the Benning Road Metro station and westward to Georgetown. The alignment would include several stretches of dedicated right-of-way, avoiding the myriad of issues that had beset the starter portion of the line. (WTOP News, February 18, 2016)

FLORIDA

Siemens completed the first passenger carbody shell built for the Florida East Coast Industries "Brightline" high speed rail service, scheduled to commence in mid-2017 with service between Miami and West Palm Beach utilizing five four-car, 250-passenger consists. The cars are unique in that they are being touted as the only flat-metal-sided passenger car with curved side-walls to provide greater room at the hip level while still meeting standard railroad clearance profiles. The ongoing *Viewliner* order being completed for Amtrak by CAF uses a fluted skin under a Budd license. When the tracks and facilities are completed to Orlando International Airport, a total of ten seven-car consists will ply the rails between there and Miami. Siemens will also provide the motive power for these trains in the form of their new "Charger" class locomotive. 10 units have been ordered with options for an additional 11. This locomotive is currently on order by Amtrak for use on its corridor services in California, Washington, and several Midwestern states as a means to expand and upgrade their locomotive fleets. Florida East Coast Industries also reported that the foundation for the running repair facility at West Palm Beach was poured in January. (*Railway Age*, January 26)

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Metra rolled out the first example of a totally refurbished gallery coach (7437, built new 1996-8 by Amerail, formerly Morrison-Knudsen, with carbody shells manufactured in Japan), featuring new seating with higher seatbacks, lumbar supports, armrests, cup holders, and electrical outlets shin-high every other row

of seats. Metra plans to introduce approximately 30 such refurbished cars by the end of 2016. One feature that will only be a memory will be the flip-flop reversible seatbacks — the new seats are fixed, a few being permanently arranged to face each other. (Al Holtz, January 29)

The Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) is proposing to increase fares by 2.5% for each of the next two years on its South Shore Line. The additional \$1 million of fare revenue would be assigned to a capital fund, which would be used in conjunction with matching federal grants to finance a double tracking plan for the line between Gary and Michigan City, Indiana. This funding would enable the continuation of the "Sunrise Express" and its afternoon counterpart, a limited-stop super-express between Chicago and South Bend. Other capital projects include providing Wi-Fi on all passenger cars, bicycle racks aboard seven cars, and the launch of a weekend bicycle service. NICTD is set to vote on the matter on March 18 to be effective on July 1. Currently, NICTD is allocating all of its self-bonding authority to raise revenue to pay for the expenses associated with the installation and implementation of Positive Train Control, a federally mandated project that will cost NICTD \$80 million. The fare increase is the only means by which to raise revenue for additional improvements to the South Shore Line. (*Chesterton Tribune*, January 27)

Member Jack May reported that the last regularly scheduled passenger run of the Illinois Central "Highliner" electric multiple unit gallery cars occurred on February 12. It departed Randolph Street at 10:30 AM and arrived at University Park at 11:30 AM. The consist was then taken out of service and deadheaded to KYD Shops, where they were officially retired. The early 1970s-vintage "Highliners" will have been totally replaced by a new generation of "Highliners" built by Nippon-Sharyo. (Jack May, February 5)

EL PASO, TEXAS

As trolley service returns to the Downtown area, the city is also going to look into the possibility of extending streetcar service to Juárez — just like it did in the 1970s.

The City Council recently authorized City Manager Tommy Gonzalez to proceed with the initial research and to contact the appropriate agencies needed to begin a dialog for the next design phase for the streetcar project, which includes transnational/multimodal transportation solutions.

No funding was authorized as part of the motion, which passed 5-2 with some hesitation. The \$97 million El Paso Streetcar project being funded through the Texas Department of Transportation will restore trolley service to areas within and near Downtown El Paso. Construction on the tracks and street infrastructure began in January for the 4.8-mile route.

Six vintage PCC streetcars that were used in El Paso until 1974 are currently being restored in Pennsylvania while the tracks are being built. The first phase, which

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

includes the track construction and trolley restoration, is expected to be completed by mid-2018, officials have said.

The City Council in January approved an 8-year rollout for the next phase of the 2012 bond issue projects totaling \$416 million including \$204 million for the three Downtown signature projects (arena, children's museum and cultural center), \$155 million in parks and parks improvements, \$46 million for the zoo, \$10 million for libraries, and \$1 million for museum and cultural arts.

City officials said about \$28 million in projects were completed from the initial 3-year rollout approved in 2013, and another \$62 million in projects are in some phase of progress.

City Representatives Peter Szvarzbein and Cortney Niland said the city needs to take advantage of the relationships and support officials currently have for improving the international border region.

Niland said she wants Gonzalez and city staff to be creative in finding ways to possibly fund the second phase of the streetcar project.

"If you look back at how we were able to accomplish (funding) phase one," Niland said. "We were able to get \$97 million – not on the backs of El Paso taxpayers."

She also reiterated she is just asking that the city begin the dialog and that both sides of the border have to be willing to try to find solutions before anything can be done. If officials in Juárez are not interested the conversation ends there, she said. (*El Paso Times*, February 10)

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) diesel multiple unit (DMU) cars are now being tested at speeds up to 50 mph. 79 mph testing will occur later this year, along with simulated service runs. The Operations Control Center was completed in January. Safety campaigns are being instituted to familiarize the public along the line to the presence of the new rail line, with special focus on grade crossing safety and trespassing issues. Service is expected to commence around the Fall of 2016. SMART is expected to start service this Fall between downtown San Rafael and Sonoma County Airport in Santa Rosa with 14 Sumitomo/Nippon Sharyo DMUs arranged in A and B sets, the A cars being restroom equipped and the B cars having snack and refreshment service. The cars, which are similar to the DMUs used on Toronto's Union-Pearson Airport Express, will each have space for 12 bicycles and have on-board Wi-Fi and power outlets. The trains will be crewed by an Engineer and a Conductor who will handle fare enforcement, and the entire line will be equipped with Positive Train Control (PTC). Maximum speed on this line will be 79 mph. (*North Bay Business Journal*, January 28)

Service on the F surface streetcar line along Market Street was suspended to accommodate the festivities

during the weekend of Super Bowl 50, which was played in San Jose on February 7. Market Street was converted into a pedestrian-only mall and plastic piping was inserted into the grooves of the flanges a streetcar would operate over. While that reduced the possibility of anyone tripping over the flange-grooved tracks of the old streetcar line, it forced MUNI to limit streetcar operations to the portion of the F line between Embarcadero and Fisherman's Wharf and convert the Castro Street-to-Embarcadero section of the line to bus operations and operate them on Mission Street, one block to the south. BART and MUNI Metro services under Market Street continued to operate that weekend. (SFMTA website, January 21)

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Metrolink announced that the first F-125 "Spirit" locomotive has been released from the EMD shops in Muncie, Indiana. Powered by a Caterpillar C-175-20 diesel rated at 4,700 horsepower, these 125 mph units will be capable of propelling up to 10 cars. They will have regenerative braking directed to the head-end power systems with blended dynamic brakes and utilize a urea-based catalytic reduction system to meet the Tier IV emissions standards. The streamlined car body design with advanced crash management/energy absorbing technology is manufactured by Vossloh Rail Vehicles of Spain (a company that has since been acquired by Stadler Rail). While 29 units are on order from EMD, Metrolink's long-range fleet plans may add another 11 units for a total of 40 locomotives for \$280 million. (*Railway Gazette*, January 21)

Metrolink began full-scale service simulations on the extension of Route 91/Perris Valley between Downtown Riverside and Perris over BNSF tracks with test trains operating at full track speed (79 mph) on February 13. The weekend testing has also been stepped up to include all weekdays. Full-scale testing simulating regular service is expected to continue until service commences later in 2016. (Al Holtz, February 15)

Metrolink reported a major increase in delays to its trains, reducing its on-time performance from 93% in 2014 down to 85% in 2015, most notably after August. It was concurrent with the implementation of Positive Train Control (PTC), resulting in higher-than-anticipated delays stemming from the PTC systems stopping trains due to software issues causing system oversensitivity. PTC issues resulted in a total of 613 delays, with system resets taking up to 20 minutes. Metrolink is currently analyzing the reasons as to why the PTC systems are overly sensitive and taking measures to "tweak" the software. Other factors resulting in late trains were interference from freight train operations on the shared tracks, track work, mechanical issues with the system's aging fleet of locomotives, police activity, and trespassers on the tracks. The use of leased freight locomotives to replace cab cars for safety reasons was also a factor for the final ten days of 2015, when Metrolink began using them. The use of these locomotives has resulted in delays stemming from their slower speeds and larger

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Commuter and Transit Notes

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size and length causing train crews to have to reposition their trains when making station stops to match the coaches to the station platforms. *(Editor's Note by Ron Yee: It seems that Metrolink may not have provided wayside car markers to indicate to Engineers where to stop their trains so that their coaches are properly "spotted" on the platforms. Prior to the need to use these locomotives to replace the cab control cars, the Engineers would simply line up the lead car with the end of the platform. A simple car marker mounted on a post positioned the length of one locomotive off the end of the platform would solve this problem. As for the PTC issues, I suspect that all railroads will have teething problems with PTC that will require some degree of adjustment to the basic system as installed (tweaking) to get it to work properly. One major concern for this Editor is not toward impacts on passenger trains, but the effects of unexpected penalty brake applications on long, heavy freight trains on curving mountainous territory and whether they could actually result in derailments from excessive slack action on cars carrying varied loads throughout a long consist.)*

(Los Angeles Times, February 1)

MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA

On February 7, STM placed into service the first nine-car consist of the next-generation Metro cars built by Bombardier. After a ceremony held at the Henri-Bourassa station on the Orange Line, the MPM-10 "AZUR" Class train went into service, to the delight of unsuspecting passengers. Two years later, the C\$1.2 billion, 468-car order built by the Bombardier-Alstom consortium features advanced-technology propulsion systems as well as improved passenger amenities such as larger windows, wider doors, trip information screens, better lighting, improved ventilation systems, air suspension, wheelchair accessibility, and an open

gangway design with no doors between cars to increase passenger capacity. This train will undergo a 61-day revenue service test during weekday off-peak hours to prove out its components followed by an evaluative period where officials will gauge passenger response and customer satisfaction. A second trainset that was outfitted with full instrumentation during its testing phase was returned to the Bombardier plant at La Pocatiere, Quebec to be outfitted with seats and other passenger amenities before being returned to the Metro and placed into service. 12 trainsets are expected to be in service by the end of 2016, providing one-for-one replacement of the original 50-year-old MR-63 rolling stock built in 1966 for the 1967 Exposition. Additional trainsets will be placed into service upon the successful completion of this 61-day test without significant defects. The Orange Line will be the first line to be fully re-equipped with the new cars. (CBC News, February 8)

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

The Ontario government wants to see a proposal completed for a Toronto-to-Windsor high-speed rail project by October, according to a London-area Member of Parliament.

The governing Liberals were consulting with various stakeholders along the Toronto-to-Windsor corridor during February, as they map out what the proposed rail project could look like.

In October, 2015, the provincial government appointed David Collenette as its special adviser for high-speed rail.

Collenette, who was at the meeting in London, has been tasked with looking at economic development opportunities, as well as with looking at the experience of high-speed rail in other places around the world. The government says he will also give advice on possible

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The Metrolink EMD F-125 Spirit Locomotive.
Metrolink photograph via EMD website

Around New York's Transit System

(Continued from page 20)

Mayor Bill DeBlasio proposed a major transit project for Brooklyn and Queens in the form of a \$2.5 billion, nearly 16-mile-long streetcar line from Sunset Park in Brooklyn through Red Hook, Brooklyn Heights, the Brooklyn Navy Yard, Williamsburg, Greenpoint, Long Island City, the Queens Plaza area, Ravenswood, and northward to Astoria, ending near the Triborough (Robert F. Kennedy) Bridge. Called the Brooklyn Queens Connector or BQX, it would connect over 15 subway lines, 30 bus routes, 10 ferry landings, and 13 public housing projects with over 40,000 residents. Artist's conceptions show the proposed streetcar running on a parallel track under the Gowanus Expressway, past Atlantic Terminal, Jay Street MetroTech. The line could reduce a current transit trip of 51 minutes between Greenpoint and DUMBO in Brooklyn to just 27 minutes. Initially, the line could attract 24,000 riders and as transit oriented development is generated by this line, ridership could top 49,000 by 2035. Construction could begin as early as 2019. The line would be financed by property tax revenues based upon the expectations that as the values of residential and commercial properties increase because of the streetcar line making the areas served more valuable, tax revenues would increase and help pay for the line's construction. (Editor's Note by Ron Yee: Lacking in all of the artist's conceptions is any trace of catenary or other means of power transmission. There are just two running rails on the streets — it is as if the cars will be battery-powered.) (Editor's Note by Sasha Ivanoff: This would be a lifelong dream for streetcar/light rail proponents and a major shift in NYCDOT policy. Who would operate the line would be debate in itself, but it can be assumed MTA would. Long-time ERA members, including the late Jimmy Mattina, have said for years that the city should reexamine the feasibility of

streetcars and light rail in the Big Apple.)

Crane Collapses in Manhattan

A massive 580-foot-tall "crawler" crane collapsed onto Worth Street on Friday morning, February 5, 2016, prompting an emergency closure of the Franklin Street ① and Chambers Street ①②③ stations. Service was maintained on the routes, but trains did not stop at those two stations until after 3 PM. On the surface, one person was killed and three others injured by the falling crane, which may have been toppled by high wind gusts as it was being lowered into its "safe" position. An investigation was underway by New York City authorities as this *Bulletin* went to press.

Second Avenue Subway Update

With the ② train set to be rerouted to run on the new Second Avenue Subway at the end of this year, MTA will hold a public hearing this Spring about resurrecting the ④ train — a victim of the 2010 budget cuts that eviscerated subway and bus service. If approved, the change would occur this fall in preparation for the opening of the Second Avenue Subway.

If the plan is approved, when ② is rerouted to the new line in December, ④ will reappear to take its place in Queens. NYC Transit plans to run ④ on local tracks weekdays from Astoria into Manhattan, ending at the Whitehall Street station in Lower Manhattan. (Editor's Note by Sasha Ivanoff: this change would happen BEFORE the Second Avenue Subway opens, allowing for acclimation before the opening.)

The ⑤ train, meanwhile, would run express in Manhattan between Canal Street and 34th Street-Herald Square on weekdays during peak hours, midday, and evenings, according to MTA.

Bringing back ④ and making the other service changes for the Second Avenue Subway project would cost MTA about \$13.7 million a year, officials said.

Commuter and Transit Notes

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financing models for this project.

The government says the rail project will be part of the \$130 billion the province is spending on infrastructure over a 10-year period (CBC News, February 9)

HAMILTON, ONTARIO, CANADA

Daily, year-round GO train service between Hamilton and Niagara is one step closer to becoming a reality. Niagara politicians are stepping up their campaign and committing \$40 million needed for the rail service, which they say would cost a total of \$100-120 million. The region has pledged a third of that, but is still waiting on commitments from both the provincial and federal governments.

The proposal calls for year-round train service between Niagara and Hamilton that would tie into the existing Lakeshore West line to Toronto. There would be seven trains in and seven trains out. They would make stops in Grimsby, St. Catharines, and Niagara Falls.

Officials say they worked through 17 obstacles since

their last meeting with the province in March, 2015. One of them included the Welland Canal crossing. City officials managed to get commitment, in writing from the St. Lawrence Seaway management corporation for dedicated crossing times.

The other major hurdle, using the existing Canadian National Railway lines without coming into conflict with freight shipments. CN has agreed to the GO train proposal, but it would cost \$50 million to make the necessary track improvements, a cost officials have accounted for in their overall budget.

The new GO train line is projected to have an economic impact of about \$195 million and the Niagara GO team is hoping for a fully functional system as early as 2017. The proposed plan will be presented to the province in April and decision on whether the new train line is a go would come no later than June, when the province is set to announce its next phase of GO rail projects. (CHCH-TV, February 9)

EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA

The City of Edmonton, Canada, has awarded a public-

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TOUR OF TURKEY

by Jack May

(Continued from February, 2016 issue)
(Photographs by the author)

We rented an automobile for the next 5 days, as we would continue our tour through areas that did not have much in the way of intercity rail service. First on the schedule would be a round-trip to Gaziantep, some 140 miles east of Adana. Gaziantep is a city of 1.3 million residents with a brand new light rail line, called *Gaziray* (what else?). We would return to our hotel in Adana for one more evening before embarking on the next day for our mainly westward trek. We taxied over to the Avis rental location and found a very disorganized agency. But they did have our car, a new Hyundai, and knew we had prepaid (through Auto Europe in Maine), but they had no paperwork to give us. “No problem. Here is my card. Call me if you need anything.” We asked about how to pay highway tolls and were told, “No problem—we’re out of toll cards but you can buy one at any gas station — you can’t pay tolls with cash.”

So off we went and headed for the open highway. The Turkish word for motorway is *otoyol*. Their limited access highways, like our expressways and interstates, may be free or require toll payments. We followed signs marked “Gaziantep” from a nearby arterial road, the D-400, to the O-52, a toll road. The trip was fast and uneventful — except the gas stations on the highway did not sell toll cards. We had rented a car for a week on our 2001 trip, but at that time there were not any toll roads. Clare did all the driving then as I had gotten my pocket picked in Istanbul, losing my credit cards and driver’s license. As the first tollgate came into view we pulled up to a manned booth, where we were told to drive through, park on the shoulder, and walk over to another booth where cards were being sold. That was as easy as pie, and they even accepted my credit card to pay for the toll card (nominal) and the amount I wanted to load into it (like a prepaid debit card or gift card). I then walked back to the toll booth at which I originally stopped and the collector took my card and deducted the [presumably] right amount of money. Most of the traffic was speeding through lanes that had equipment to read transponders, much like our E-ZPass.

There were several exits for Gaziantep, but the Google map I had printed out indicated the specific one we wanted and we arrived at the Gar, in view of the light rail station, very quickly. It was now about 12:15, and we had covered the 140 miles in 2½ hours. I saw an open space along the curb, in front of a TCDD office building, where a lot of cars were parked. I did not see any No Parking signs, and I even asked a pedestrian if it was OK to park there. I mention this because when we returned to the car a little after 16:00 it had been “keyed,” with scratches all over the trunk and rear fend-

er. Needless to say we were not happy campers. I guess I should not have parked in Joe Boardman’s spot.

It was cloudy-bright (no shadows) in Gaziantep, but you take what you get — there is no other choice. Fortunately the LRVs are painted in a bright orange and white color scheme, so my photos came out reasonably well — and I was able to shoot in all directions. Clare and I bought smart card tickets from a booth and we first rode out to the outer end of the line. At that point Clare returned to downtown to visit museums and I began stopping for photos at several places along the route.

The line is a little over 17 miles long and has 13 stops. Unlike the other new tramway systems we visited, Gaziantep’s was budgeted in a frugal manner. As a result second-hand rolling stock was acquired — from Frankfurt, Germany. The 17 refurbished double-ended Dueweg-built Pt-class units have high floors, and so the line is very much a traditional streetcar operation, albeit exclusively on private rights-of-way. Much of it consists of grassy center reservation, although it is possible that due to its saturated color in certain places, some of the green may be AstroTurf or a variation.

Gaziantep suffered a great deal of trauma in preparing for the inauguration of its streetcar line. During the test period there was an accident resulting in the death of a pedestrian. As a result the opening was delayed for almost a year, and even when operations finally got started, service was severely limited to slow speeds and 15-minute headways. Thus we experienced extremely crowded cars. But much worse, I had to wait a long time between cars for photos. This probably explained the large number of safety posters displayed along the line.

The university is served by two stations, just short of the end of the line. The inner stop, Facultesi, is equipped with an overpass that allows for some good views. *Gaziray* traverses the heart of the city center, which is partially pedestrianized. Photographic opportunities abound in this area of office buildings, as few of the sweeping views are obstructed by traffic. And at this time of the year, the experience was enhanced by beds of flowers adding color to the scene.

As mentioned earlier we met around 16:00 and headed back to Adana in a slightly damaged automobile. We were back at the hotel before 19:00 and after the desk clerk directed me to a nearby parking garage, we rested for a short time and then went out for dinner. We were tired and so we dined across the street at the same Ke-bob restaurant we patronized the previous evening.

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Tour of Turkey

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We were quite satisfied with our hotel in Adana, as it was clean and modern, and provided us with excellent buffet breakfasts. But now it was time to get on the road. It would be a 250-mile drive to Konya, but we were going to take a slight detour to visit Catal Hoyuk, which would add some additional time to the trip. Catal Hoyuk (<http://www.catalhoyuk.com/>) is an archaeological site about 40 miles southeast of Konya containing the remains of one of the oldest human settlements ever discovered on this earth.

This time we turned westward onto the D-400 and at the outskirts of Adana found our way onto the O-51 and O-21, toll highways that would take us north into the Anatolian Plateau, through some of the same mountains we traversed by rail a few days earlier. The multi-lane limited access road is only partially completed, and will eventually run all the way to Turkey's capital, Ankara. But the toughest part of the route (from a topographical point of view) must have been opened recently, as the roadway was incredibly smooth and the rocky outcroppings in cuts looked newly scraped. In places the grade was very steep and the road ate into the mountains on elevated structures and tunnels. It seemed like a great engineering marvel.

In addition to their Turkish route numbers, the roads we traversed also carry the designation E90, or Europe 90, a route that stretches all the way from Gaziantep and even beyond, to Lisbon, Portugal. (The E90's route is conceptually similar to U.S. 2, which runs from Houlton, Maine to Rouses Point, New York, and then picks up again in St. Ignace, Michigan to continue to Everett, Washington. In the case of Route 2, Canada separates the two portions, while in Europe, the Mediterranean Sea divides the E90 between Spain and Sicily, with the Adriatic doing the same beyond Italy to Greece.) We eventually branched off onto the D-330 to Konya, but then turned onto some local roads to reach Catal Hoyuk. Fortunately, as we got close there were signs directing us to the site, as we were in an incredibly rural area with narrow roads, some only partially graded. We had to be especially watchful for escaped barnyard creatures, like cows, chickens, ducks and geese. Nevertheless, we arrived at our destination in good shape at about 14:00, some 5 hours after leaving our hotel.

The parking lot was virtually empty and we immediately realized we were not in the most touristy part of Turkey. In fact we had to use a telephone mounted on a pole to inform the staff that we were here to visit the archaeological site. A docent soon arrived and we were on our way across hill and dale for a private tour of the excavations. The site was discovered in the 1950s (within our lifetimes), but reflects man's activities during the Neolithic period, between 7400 and 6000 B.C. — in other words from 8,100 to 9,500 years ago. The mud-brick buildings that were dug out are very small, and, oddly enough, have no doors. Apparently people entered their homes from the roof, and climbed down lad-

ders to reach their kitchens and other rooms. The rooftop openings also provided ventilation, allowing smoke from open hearth ovens to escape. And with the houses close together, the roofs also served as paths allowing residents to circulate within the area, which was supposedly home to some 8,000 people. Thus one could say the streets were elevated! And what was underground below the houses? The burial plots of the dead, of course. It was incredible to see how much we progressed in almost 100 centuries while retaining some of the basic styles of living.

Because the entire area was covered to protect it from the elements, the only light we could use to view the interiors came in from the sides, and so it was quite dark. As a result I could not get any slides, but Clare took some digital photos. We were told that the rooms were decorated with wall paintings and murals, and we saw replicas of them once we were taken to the site's Visitor's Center. We also saw reproductions of other artifacts found when the mounds were dug out, including such objects of daily life like figurines (statues) and pottery. The actual objects, which seemed to be well-crafted, are now displayed in Ankara's archaeological museum.

We left Catal Hoyuk about 16:00 for the one-hour drive to Konya. I was quite concerned about being able to find our lodgings. The Ulsan is a truly budget hotel, more like a B&B, with very little in the way of amenities. But other accommodations conveniently located in the city center are quite expensive, and the reviews of the Ulsan on Trip Advisor were profusely positive. Thus we decided to save money and stay there, arranging our one-night visit through email correspondence, as the hotel is not listed on the usual search engine sites. (Reservations for all of the other hotels we patronized were accomplished electronically using search engines like Booking.com, Expedia, etc.) Anyway, the Ulsan is located on a narrow street in the old section of town, and it wasn't clear whether we could find it easily, even with the Google map I printed from our computer.

Konya revolves around Aladdin Hill, a man-made mini-mountain that formerly housed the city's Citadel and its first mosque, and now is a park that presents a challenge to those flabby tourists desiring to climb it. It is circumscribed by a wide roadway that sheds arterial roads and tiny byways in all directions. The inner end of Konya's only streetcar line traverses a single-track loop on private right-of-way along the inside of the counter-clockwise roadway, stopping at two stations.

It was easy to find Aladdin Hill but difficult to find the correct street to turn on, and we ended up rounding the rotary twice before venturing off into spaghetti-like narrow roads and alleys, which were thronged with shoppers. After making a few twists and turns we miraculously found the hotel, and the owner came out to help us unload our bags, as we could not park without tying up traffic. He spoke excellent English and directed me to a municipal parking garage a few blocks away, which I found easily. When I got back Clare was already en-

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Tour of Turkey

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sconced in our room, which had large, clean bathroom facilities across the hall and a salon-lounge housing a personal computer next door. And we were served tea as a welcoming gesture.

We had to walk a few blocks to find a restaurant, and ended up consuming very tasty low-priced local cuisine among a blue-collar clientele. Back at the hotel I spent some time catching up on emails and met quite a few English-speaking guests, most of whom were traveling with backpacks and using public transportation. Oddly, my last Commerce Bank ballpoint pen had just run out of ink, and I was not happy to have to convert to one from its successor, the TD Bank, which had changed the color of the ink from blue to black. Lo and behold there was a Commerce Bank ballpoint pen in the cylindrical container on the desk — and I quickly purloined it. Who would have thought I would find a pen from a local New Jersey financial institution in a B&B in Konya, Turkey!



The stub-end Gar terminal of Gaziantep's tramway has two side platforms, but one is short and does not extend the length of an LRV, although it may be sufficiently long to cover both doors.



The light rail line runs right through the center of town on Prof Muammer Aksoy Blv. The center reservation on most of the system is not grass, but rather a dark artificial turf.



An inbound tram passes a planter full of blooming flowers after veering right along Prof Muammer Aksoy Blv in the center of Gaziantep, near the intersection of Kibris Cd.



Gaziray's opening was delayed because of a pedestrian accident, so the company is very safety conscious, and has posted warning signs along its entire route.

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Tour of Turkey

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Two Gaziantep trams pass along Zubeyde Hanım Blv.



The University in Gaziantep is very large and hosts two stops along Üniversite Blv. The Tip Fakültesi station is endowed with an overpass, from which this photo of an outbound tram was taken.



Once off the main highway en route to Catal Hoyuk scenes of farms with domestic animals predominate.

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Commuter and Transit Notes

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private-partnership (PPP) contract to the TransEd Partners consortium to design, build, operate, maintain, and finance the first phase of the Valley Line, a 13-kilometer light rail line from Downtown to Mill Woods.

The contract consists of a five-year design-and-build phase, followed by operation and maintenance lasting 30 years. Construction will start later this year and commissioning is scheduled for late 2020.

TransEd Partners includes Bechtel, which is responsible for the design and construction of the project, helped secure the financing, and will assist with operations and maintenance. Bombardier will supply a fleet of 40.6-meter-long low-floor Flexity LRVs, signaling, communications, power supply, catenary, and related depot equipment, and its share of the deal is worth \$C391 million. EllisDon and Fengate Capital Management are

the other members of the consortium.

The C\$1.8 billion (US\$1.29 billion) project will receive a C\$800 million contribution from the City of Edmonton, while the federal government is contributing C\$400 million through PPP Canada and the New Building Canada Fund. The latter is being matched by the Province of Alberta, which is also providing an interest-free loan for a total contribution of C\$600 million.

The first phase of the Valley Line will have 12 stations, and will connect with the existing Capital and Metro lines at Churchill. The line will eventually be extended to Lewis Farms to create a 27-kilometer line with 28 stations, carrying around 100,000 passengers per day. (*International Railway Journal*, February 12)

BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND

The 21 CAF Urbos trams used on the Midland Metro light rail line are to be retrofitted with batteries to enable catenary-free operation, West Midlands transport agen-

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

cy Centro announced on February 12, and four more trams have been ordered which will be supplied with batteries already fitted.

This will allow catenary-free running on four planned extensions:

- Birmingham New Street station-Centenary Square extension scheduled to open in 2019, running through the architecturally sensitive Victoria Square with the 182-year-old Town Hall;
- Edgbaston extension from Centenary Square, through Brindleyplace and the underpass at Five Ways;
- Eastside extension between Moor Street Queensway and Digbeth High Street, where battery operation would avoid the need to lower the existing road under the West Coast Main Line and reduce the headroom required under the proposed HS2 station at Curzon Street; and
- Wolverhampton city center extension between the bus and railway station tram stops.

Centro estimates the saving from catenary-free operation on the four sections at £650,000, with longer-term savings from avoiding the need to prepare roads or buildings for overhead lines. The proposed Wednesday-Brierley Hill extension is also being evaluated to identify catenary-free sections.

West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority Chairman Councillor John McNicholas said catenary-free operation had been envisaged when the CAF trams were ordered in 2012, and the contract included provision for retrofitting. Urbos trams fitted with supercapacitors are used in Zaragoza and Sevilla; however, this technology was felt to be unsuitable for the steep hill on Birmingham's Pinfold Street, while battery technology was not sufficiently developed when the order was placed. (*Railway Gazette*, February 12)

BRETAGNE, FRANCE

On February 16 Bombardier announced that SNCF had placed a €34 million order for an additional four eight-car Regio 2N double-deck electric multiple-units. They are being financed by the Bretagne region and are scheduled to be delivered in 2019.

The order is an option on a 2010 framework agreement for the supply of up to 860 Bombardier Omneo units, of which 213 have now been ordered by 10 regions. Bretagne has ordered a total of 14 eight-car trainsets with 491 seats and seven six-car sets with 350 seats. (*Railway Gazette*, February 16)

MOSCOW, RUSSIA

A southern extension of Moscow Metro Line 1 on February 15 brought the number of stations on the network to 200. The 1.9-kilometer section from Rummyantsevo to Salaryevo follows on from the opening of the previous extension, a 2.5-kilometer section from Troparyevo to Rummyantsevo, on January 18.

Most of the latest section runs in bored tunnels, with around 500 meters built using the cut-and-cover meth-

od. A park-and-ride site with 1,000 spaces has opened at Salaryevo, and the line's third depot is under construction near the new terminus. (*Railway Gazette*, February 15)

VLADIKAVKAZ, RUSSIA

Uralvagonzavod subsidiary Uraltransmash has agreed a leasing deal with the Vladikavkaz city authorities for the supply of ten Type 71-407 trams.

Uraltransmash presented the updated design of its four-axle single-section tram last year. The 39% low-floor vehicles feature asynchronous traction motors.

Vladikavkaz has a 59 route-kilometer network, although only 55 route-kilometers are currently operational. Services are provided with a fleet of 26 trams, but the operator has a total of 59. (*Railway Gazette*, February 13)

SÉTIF, ALGERIA

Alstom announced the details of the 26 Citadis trams that it is to supply for Sétif on February 15. The order forms part of a framework contract signed in 2012 by Cital and Entreprise du Métro d'Alger for the supply of Citadis trams to operate on lines planned for several Algerian cities.

The Cital joint venture of Alstom (49%), Ferroviaria (41%), and EMA (10%) is to assemble the trams at its plant in Annaba using kits supplied by Alstom as part of its €85 million share of the contract. The low-floor trams will be 44 meters long with capacity for 302 passengers. The trams will have 12 doors, air-conditioning, and CCTV.

Construction of the Sétif tramway started in May, 2014. Work is being undertaken by a consortium of Yapı Merkezi and Alstom under a 38 billion dinar contract. In addition to rolling stock, Alstom is supplying signaling, telecoms, the control center, power supplies, and the ticketing system.

The 15.2-kilometer east-west line between Université El Bez and Centre de Maintenance with 27 stops is due to open in the first quarter of 2018. Trams would run at peak frequencies of 4 minutes, giving a line capacity of 5,000 passengers per hour per direction. Service speed is expected to average 20 kilometers per hour.

Work has not yet started on a second planned line. The unconnected north-south route would link Wilaya and Gare Multimodale. (*Railway Gazette*, February 15)

FUKUOKA, JAPAN

Kawasaki Heavy Industries is to supply 18 Series 9000 electric multiple units to Nishi-Nippon Railroad Company for use on the 78-kilometer Tenjin Omuta Line between Fukuoka and Omuta.

To be manufactured at KHI's Hyogo factory near Kobe, the EMUs are due to be delivered by March, 2017 and will replace the Series 5000 Series EMUs that date from 1975-91.

Toshiba is supplying propulsion equipment and electrical systems, including fully enclosed induction motors, VVVF inverters, auxiliary power supply, air-conditioning, and automatic train stop. (*Railway Gazette*, February 10)

Around New York's Transit System

Blizzard of 2016 Shuts Down New York City

Blizzards in New York City are rare, but this one, with gale force winds, hit the city on Saturday, January 23. A few snowflakes fell late Friday night, after which the storm intensified rapidly, depositing 26.8 inches of snow, the second-highest ever recorded. The snow finally ended late Saturday night or early Sunday morning.

NYC Transit and the railroads tried to keep the trains and buses running, but they were fighting a losing bat-

tle. On Saturday afternoon, MTA announced that trains would continue running underground in the subway, but elevated trains, railroads, and buses would cease operating by 4 PM Saturday. Crews were working overnight to remove snow and ice from signals, switches, and track rails. Snow-fighting equipment performed heavy-duty snow removal on the open cut, surface, and elevated portions of the transit system.

Trains making all stops continued running on the following routes:

ROUTE	FROM	TO	ROUTE	FROM	TO
① (A)	168 th Street	South Ferry	Ⓐ	207 th Street	Euclid Avenue
②	149 th Street-Third Avenue	Flatbush Avenue	Ⓑ	SUSPENDED	
③	148 th Street	135 th Street	Ⓒ	SUSPENDED	
④	149 th Street-Grand Concourse	Utica Avenue	Ⓓ	205 th Street	Broadway-Lafayette
⑤	SUSPENDED		Ⓔ	Jamaica Center	World Trade Center
⑥	Hunts Point Avenue	Brooklyn Bridge	Ⓕ	179 th Street	Jay Street
⑦	34 th Street-Hudson Yards	Hunters Point Avenue	Ⓖ	Court Square	Bergen Street
Ⓢ	Times Square	Grand Central	Ⓙ	Broad Street	Essex Street
NOTES: (A) Trains bypassed 125 th Street (B) Via tunnel (C) Except late nights (D) Late nights only			Ⓛ	8 th Avenue	Myrtle Avenue
			Ⓜ	SUSPENDED	
			Ⓝ (B)	Lexington Avenue-59 th Street	59 th Street (Brooklyn)
			Ⓞ	SUSPENDED	
			Ⓡ (C)	71 st Avenue	95 th Street
			Ⓡ (D)	59 th Street (Brooklyn)	95 th Street
			Ⓢ (Franklin)	SUSPENDED	
			Ⓢ (Rockaways)	SUSPENDED	
			Ⓩ	SUSPENDED	

We do not know when service was resumed on each route, but we know that NYC Transit and Metro-North service was nearly normal during the Monday morning rush hour. Staten Island Railway service was resumed on Tuesday, January 26. See page 8 for details of Long Island Rail Road service restoration.

Diesel Light Rail to be Proposed for LIRR Montauk Branch Within New York City

New York City Councilmember Elizabeth Crowley is planning to introduce an idea to City Hall to bring Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) light rail transit (LRT) service to the Long Island Rail Road's Montauk branch between Glendale and Long Island City. Aimed at two shopping malls in the Glendale area, The Shops at Atlas Park and the Metro Mall on Metropolitan Avenue just east of the former LIRR Fresh Pond station near the NYCT Ⓜ station at Fresh Pond Road, the proposed LRT line would link

them with the LIRR Hunterspoint Avenue and Long Island City stations where passengers could easily transfer to nearby subway lines ⑦③④⑤⑥ to Manhattan and Brooklyn. Civic activists in the area have long championed the concept of bringing rail transit back to the LIRR Montauk Branch since passenger service on the line ended in 1998, although the concept has met with some opposition from homeowners whose properties are immediately adjacent to the railroad right-of-way. Seen as a relatively inexpensive rail transit project because there would not be a need to electrify the line, the LRT line would bring much-needed rail transit service to the region.

Mayor DeBlasio Proposes Brooklyn-Queens Waterfront Light Rail Line

In his annual State of the City address, New York City

(Continued on page 14)