

POTOMAC RAIL NEWS

POTOMAC CHAPTER, NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 235, KENSINGTON, MARYLAND 20895-0235

JANUARY 2019



AMTRAK'S NEW CHARGER! Amtrak is acquiring new mainline passenger diesel locomotives from Siemens Mobility to replace its aging P40 and P42 locomotives. The initial 75 Charger locomotives will be used principally for Amtrak's Long Distance train service. Delivery will begin in summer 2021, with passenger service beginning in fall 2021. (Photo Courtesy of Siemens Mobility)

PROGRAM: Carl Franz will present "WESTERN MARYLAND AND BALTIMORE & OHIO DIESELS IN THE 1970s and READING 4-8-4s, mostly on the WM." Also included are Amtrak trains, the American Freedom Train and a number of nice surprises. This video presentation was made from Carl's 16mm Kodachrome films. Many of the Potomac Chapter's senior members will recall seeing the original film more than 40 years ago. See page 2.

MEETING: January 16, 2019. 8PM. Lobby Level Auditorium of the Montgomery County Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, MD.

NEXT MEETING DATE: February 19, 2019

DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY ISSUE: January 25, 2019. Send news items to Clay Moritz, Editor, Potomac Rail News, at c.moritz@comcast.net

INFO ON CHAPTER ACTIVITIES: <http://potomacnrhs.org/>

ADDRESS MEMBERSHIP INQUIRIES TO: Rick Davidson, Membership Agent, 2908 Breezy Terrace, Alexandria, VA 22303-2401 rdavidsonjr2908@verizon.net

THE CHAPTER FAMILY

If you know of a Chapter Member who is sick, has lost a loved one, or has a new birth in the family, please call the Chapter on (301) 251-9461.

THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM. Our look back into history begins with the final days of B&O's passenger service, including the last inbound run of the Capitol Limited at Harpers Ferry in April, 1971. In early 1972, we see United Aircraft's red-and-white streamlined "Turbo Train" at a number of locations, many in Montgomery County. The second section is a selection of scenes featuring B&O freight service from Rockville, MD, to Altamont, MD, which is at the top of "Seventeen-Mile Grade," east of Grafton, WV. The Western Maryland diesel section begins with the Baltimore Chapter's Maple Sugar Festival excursions in March of 1972 and 1973. The WM freight section features a variety of motive power in both the black and yellow and the red-white-and-black "circus colors." The majority of the scenes are spring and fall shots taken in the picturesque region between Hancock, MD, and Ohiopyle, PA. The last and largest section features Reading steam beginning with the test run of 2101 out of Riverside Yard, Baltimore, in its American Freedom Train (AFT) paint scheme. This is followed by runbys of the full AFT consist on the ex-PRR, C&O, and B&O. Following a few 2101 Chessie Steam Special runbys, we see 2102 powering two February, 1972, Baltimore Chapter winter charters on the WM from Baltimore to Hagerstown. We conclude with a few shots of the 2102 charter from Philadelphia to Washington, DC.

POTOMAC CHAPTER BANQUET GUEST SPEAKER. The Guest Speaker for our March 23rd Chapter Banquet is Jim Kleeman, who grew up in Chicago watching Milwaukee Road streamliners behind the backstop while playing sandlot baseball. He rode the North Shore downtown, and the Chicago Transit Authority to Wrigley Field. He and his father rode behind the CB&Q 4960 and 5632 on fan trips in the 1960s. Jim was a model railroader in high school and college. Then medical school and marriage put the hobby on hold. His interest in railroading was rekindled after moving east and riding the Chessie Steam Special in 1977. Following in his father's footsteps, Jim bought a Canon AE-1 and started shooting Kodachrome slides. In 2004, he made the leap to digital photography and has never turned back. He takes two or three week-long railfan trips each year and has visited all 50 states. See page 7 for the banquet reservation form.

RAIL NEWS

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN CANCELS OLD-WEST TRAIN FESTIVAL. An annual northern Utah event honoring American West railroad history was canceled due to the Federal government shutdown. The Winter Steam Festival at the Golden Spike National Monument in Promontory, Utah, northwest of Ogden, was scheduled for December 28 and 29. A U.S. government webpage for the event showed that it was cancelled due to the ongoing shutdown. The festival draws train enthusiasts and photographers to watch as steam billows in the wintery air as the old steam locomotives move along the tracks.

KSL-TV reported that Box Elder County Commission Chair Stan Summers said the County was willing to spend \$21,000 to salvage the festival, but that trying to coordinate with Federal employees and volunteers was too difficult due to the shutdown. Summers said he's disappointed in government officials and politicians who don't realize the impact shutdowns have on states and counties. (KSL-TV www.ksl.com)

SAD NEWS FOR BSME. The following announcement is posted on the Baltimore Society

of Model Engineers website: "We are cancelling all our open house shows. We have lost our lease and have been given our ninety day notice to vacate. We will be relocating and are currently looking at locations around the greater Baltimore area. Stay with us here for updates and/or follow us on facebook. - Thank-you for your support."

The Baltimore Society of Model Engineers' was formed in March 1932. BSME's large permanent display has 2,500 square feet of steam and diesel freight and passenger trains as well as trolleys and interurbans running from the overhead wire. The BSME is one of the oldest exclusively model railroad clubs in the United States. The BSME layouts and offices are located on the third floor of 225 West Saratoga Street, Baltimore, MD, which is a ½-block from the light-rail station, and one and a 1½ blocks from the Lexington Market subway station. (<http://www.modelengineers.com/>)

Some further background: The building is in the process of being sold (no contract yet), but the owners want the space clean for bringing thru potential buyers. The BSME has no power. They started having electrical problems around last November, found out they have a burnt wire in their panel box, and Baltimore Gas & Electric has cut-off power, so this whole move/cleanup will have to be done with a generator.

R.J. CORMAN RAILROAD ACQUIRES SIX RAIL COMPANIES. Nicholasville, KY-based, R.J. Corman is expected to take over operations in January of Nashville & Eastern Railroad Corp. (NERR), Nashville & Western Railroad Corp. (NWR), Transit Solutions Group (a commuter rail operation), and three related operating entities.

Nashville & Eastern is a 130-mile railroad, operating on leased track from the Nashville & Eastern Railroad Authority from Nashville, TN, to Monterey, TN. NWR is an 18-mile railroad, operating on leased track from the Cheatham County Rail Authority from Nashville to Ashland City, TN. Together, NERR and NWR transport 12,000 carloads annually, interchanging with CSX in Nashville. The companies haul diverse commodity mixes, including chemicals, aggregates, waste, paper, energy products, metals and building materials, and have developed industrial load facilities on both short lines.

R.J. Corman operates 11 short-line railroads in nine states, including Tennessee. The company has more than 1,300 employees in 22 states. (R.J. Corman Press Release)

CSX RETURNS TO THE TABLE FOR TUNNEL EXPANSION. The Howard Street Tunnel expansion appears to be back on, after CSX Transportation reversed a decision to pull out of the project and committed \$91 million towards it, Maryland officials said on December 13, 2018.

"We are pleased that CSX has reversed its position on the Howard Street Tunnel project and is once again supportive and willing to participate," Maryland Senator Ben Cardin said in a statement. The CSX commitment was secured during a December 13th meeting between CSX CEO Jim Foote and the Maryland congressional delegation.

The project, considered crucial to the future prospects of the Port of Baltimore, would expand the more than century-old tunnel under Howard Street through downtown Baltimore to accommodate double-stack trains. Officials say that the ability to double stack will generate 34,000 jobs and \$2.9 billion for the region. The Port has seen a surge of cargo shipped via container since the opening of the expanded Panama Canal in 2016.

The long-awaited project, however, appeared doomed last year, after CSX withdrew its support. The move caused State officials to cancel a request for \$155 million in Federal money for a project they hoped would be a boon for the

Port of Baltimore. There will be a greater need for public investment for the project moving forward. The \$91 million CSX has committed is less than what the railroad had offered earlier. The railroad and the State had agreed to split \$270 million of the project's costs when it was first announced.

The tunnel expansion project also calls for lowering the tracks under nine bridges in the City, including those along East 26th Street, where retaining walls holding streets above the tracks have collapsed twice in the past two years.

The tunnel, built in the early 1890s by the B&O Railroad, achieved international notoriety in 2001 when a 60-car train derailed and set off a chemical fire that paralyzed downtown Baltimore for almost a week. The fire damaged the City's underground infrastructure, halted freight traffic along the Eastern Seaboard and forced the cancellation of three Baltimore Orioles games.

The disaster generated interest in rerouting the CSX line or widening the existing tunnel, but the railroad and the State and Federal governments were deterred by the enormous cost of the project. Some of the proposed solutions, such as a new tunnel to the west of the existing one, could have run into the billions of dollars just like a similar proposal to replace Amtrak's Baltimore & Potomac Tunnel has. The price tag for that project is \$4.52 billion. The State and CSX announced plans in 2016 to keep the existing Howard Street Tunnel while lowering its floor and raising its ceiling to improve clearances and allow double-stacking. (Baltimore Sun)

BOB'S TAKE ON LAST MONTH'S PRN REPORTED LONG BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PLANS. As a diligent and dedicated Long Bridge researcher, I love reading how the aging bridge is over-capacity. Oh, Balderdash. True, it was totally rebuilt in 1904 replacing a much older and vastly weaker wooden truss structure just down river, but with the exception of the moveable portion, was entirely rebuilt in 1942-1943, with additional piers and girders replacing the old steel or iron truss beams. As for over-capacity, that is where the real balderdash of this tale is located. In the early 1900s, there were as many as 250 or more movements across the bridge every day, (yes 250 or more, that's NOT a misprint), and that was when there were not one but TWO draw spans also opened maybe 10 times per day for river traffic. Now, while that may have been for the older wooden single-track structure and trains were typically no more than 10-20 cars long and far lighter loading capacities, they did move and while they did occasionally have a nasty habit of running into each other (thankfully NOT on the bridge), the several hundred movements per day were real and there was always something waiting to cross. That condition persisted even past the bridge's opening in late August 1904.

Wanna know what the FIRST revenue movement across the bridge was? Sure you do, but you could never guess this one unless you knew, it was for a Southern Railway passenger movement from the old Pennsylvania Railroad station on the Mall at today's 6th Street and Constitution Avenue and went to drum beats herethe first revenue movement went up Southern's then Bluemont Branch, which in less than eight years would be on a long-term lease to the Elkins & McClain interests and become The Washington & Old Dominion RR. I think the date was August 28, 1904. Now you know, the rest of the story, good day, as Paul Harvey liked to say. - Bob Cohen

WHEN WILL THE TRAINS RUN AGAIN? The safety system installation that shut down the Atlantic City Rail Line last fall is complete, but transit officials still aren't saying when trains will begin running again. "We don't have a determined date in regards to the [Atlantic City Rail Line] restoration," said Nancy Snyder, a spokesperson for NJ Transit. "We are going to restore service on the ACRL as quickly as possible."

The line, which carried fewer than 2,000 riders a day, stopped service on September 5th so NJ Transit could install equipment for Positive Train Control on its 60 miles of track. Congress mandated that the system be active on America's railroads by the end of the year, a deadline most are expected to miss.

All required PTC equipment has been installed on the Atlantic City line, Snyder said. The line also needed 7½ miles of new track. That, too, is complete. The line still must be tested as required by the Federal Railroad Administration.

The news has revived questions about why service was suspended. Most of NJ Transit's lines have continued running through PTC installation. PTC installation, during which equipment must be pulled out of service, has required NJ Transit to make do with fewer cars throughout the State, creating scheduling chaos on its busiest routes. The Atlantic City line's riders represent less than 1% of the people NJ Transit serves, and the four locomotives and 16 passenger cars used to run the southern route, along with some staff, were transferred to busier lines in the past months to ease scheduling woes.

The need for equipment in North Jersey plays "a small part" in determining when the Atlantic City line would reopen, Snyder acknowledged. Local riders are frustrated that the service is on hold. While ridership on the line is small, losing service has been a hardship for those who depended on it to get to jobs in Atlantic City. For others, it provided access to services in Philadelphia.

The loss of the railroad also has been a blow to Atlantic City's economic revival, and a crimp in other communities' plans to promote the line as an underused resource for commuters. Cherry Hill has plans to improve access to its Atlantic City Rail Line station and pitch it as an easy way to get to 30th Street Station, which is surrounded by development and job growth. State legislators have been in communication with NJ Transit and that the agency is aware of the potential the line could have for the region.

"I'm very encouraged that they understand how important the railroad is to us here in South Jersey," said Assemblywoman Patricia Egan Jones (D., Camden).

NJ Transit said it could not calculate precisely how many of the Atlantic City line's locomotives and cars have PTC installed. When measuring the progress of PTC installation, it does not distinguish among lines, Snyder said. NJ Transit has 1,300 pieces of equipment, including 220 locomotives. Just 440 of those cars and locomotives are required to be equipped with PTC. (The Inquirer www.philly.com)

CSX HALTS RAZING OF HISTORIC ROUNDHOUSE. While initial plans were to clear the site of the CSX roundhouse in Port Huron Township, Michigan, the company has decided to change plans after hearing from concerned residents. David Cofield, CSX project monitor-inspector for asbestos abatement removal projects, said crews started at the site on December 10th. But then they soon heard from concerned railroad history buffs worried about losing the historic structure. He said the project has changed scope, from demolition to environmental cleanup and salvaging as much as possible. Cofield said there has been a steady stream of past and current railroad employees coming to the site, as well as members of the Port Huron and Detroit Railroad Historical Society. The structure is on 32nd Street north of Petit Street. All abatement and removal inside was expected to be completed in late December so CSX can turn it over to them.

The roundhouse was built in 1920 by the Handy Brothers of Bay City. A massive fire damaged the structure in April 1926. The roundhouse was rebuilt, expanding it from four stalls to six. (Port Huron Times Herald)

AMTRAK TO IMPROVE NATIONAL NETWORK WITH NEW LOCOMOTIVES. With demand for Amtrak service at record levels, Amtrak will acquire new mainline passenger diesel locomotives from Siemens Mobility to replace its aging locomotive fleet. These

initial 75 locomotives will be used principally for Amtrak's Long Distance train service, with options to purchase more, for use on some State-Supported routes and for future growth.

The new locomotives will offer the latest safety systems including Crash Energy Management and Positive Train Control. Capable of speeds up to 125 MPH, the locomotives will have 4,400 horsepower capable 16-cylinder Cummins QSK95 diesel engines with modern control systems and Alternating Current (AC) propulsion. The diesel engine will come equipped with the latest Tier 4 emissions technology, reducing nitrogen oxide by over 89% and particulate matter by 95%, and provide an average of 10% savings in diesel fuel consumption.

Delivery of the new locomotives will begin in summer 2021, with passenger service beginning in fall 2021. They will power trains used on the Auto Train, California Zephyr, Capitol Limited, Cardinal, City of New Orleans, Coast Starlight, Crescent, Empire Builder, Lake Shore Limited, Palmetto, Silver Meteor, Silver Star, Southwest Chief, Sunset Limited, and Texas Eagle. All locomotives are expected to be in service by 2024. Maintenance activities across the network will be supported by a supplemental multi-year Technical Support Spares Supply Agreement.

Amtrak is paying for the new locomotives through available funds and will comply with Buy American provisions. The locomotives will be built at Siemens Mobility's rail manufacturing plant in Sacramento, California, a facility that uses solar power and employs more than 1,300 people. Siemens Mobility has established a robust and diverse base of U.S. suppliers across the country to support the production of its current Charger diesel locomotives, including Cummins, which manufactures its engines in its Seymour, Indiana, facility.

Siemens Mobility's Charger locomotives are currently operating in several state-supported Amtrak routes in California, Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri, Michigan, and Washington.

The new locomotives will primarily replace the aging Amtrak P40 and P42 locomotives, some of which have been in service for more than 25 years. The new locomotives are part of Amtrak's long-term planned series of improvements for fleet, infrastructure, and stations. Other modern equipment includes new Acela trainsets arriving in 2021 and ongoing improvements continue at New York Penn Station and new construction at Moynihan Train Hall, in addition to expanded development of the major stations at Chicago, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and Philadelphia. (Amtrak Press Release)

EVENTS

OLD DOMINION DIVISION RRE MONTHLY MEETING. January 17, 2019. 8:00 PM. James Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Drive, Vienna, VA, in room 110. The closest entrance door to this room is Entrance No. 1. Pre-meeting dinner at 6:30 at the Amphora Restaurant, 377 West Maple Avenue Vienna. **TO REACH THE SCHOOL:** From Amphora Restaurant go south two blocks on West Maple Avenue to James Madison Drive and turn right. School is at the end of this street. **PROGRAM:** The Copper Canyon Railroad - A professionally produced film featuring Mexico's famed "Chepe" passenger train will be shown. This train travels over the Chihuahua-Pacifico Railway through the Sierra Madre Occidental mountain range, one of the most scenic rail lines in North America. On its trip between Chihuahua and Los Mochis the train passes through 86 tunnels and over 37 bridges. In this spectacular region, nine mayor canyons - most over a mile deep - carve through the Sierra Madre Occidental mountain range. The Chepe runs 418 miles traversing the Copper Canyon and ascends to 7,900 feet near the Continental Divide. The film includes many interior scenes of the train, providing the viewer with a feeling of what a ride aboard this spectacular train would be like.

**POTOMAC CHAPTER, NRHS
ANNUAL BANQUET
SATURDAY, March 23, 2019, 5:00-9:00 PM**

ALL POTOMAC CHAPTER MEMBERS, GUESTS, AND OTHER INTERESTED RAILFANS ARE INVITED. PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN ENJOYABLE EVENING!

Jim Kleeman will present "A Nevada Northern Railway Photographers' Weekend." When Kennicott Copper walked away from the railroad in 1983 it left behind the relics of a turn-of-the-century rail operation that started in 1905. The railroad is now on the National Register of Historic Places and looks much the same as it did 100 years ago. Steam powered trains run daily and their newest motive power is an Alco RS-3. We hope you'll enjoy the ride!

LOCATION: Hilton Washington DC North, 620 Perry Parkway, Gaithersburg, MD 20877 DIRECTIONS: FROM THE CAPITAL BELTWAY (I-495): TAKE I-270 North to Exit 11 MD-124 Montgomery Village Ave, Go right (East) on Montgomery Village Avenue, Stay in right lane and Turn Right at MD 355, (N. Frederick Avenue); Stay in right lane and Turn Right on Perry Parkway and proceed to 620 Perry Parkway, which is on the right past the shopping center. Hotel phone: (301) 977-8900

SOCIAL HOUR: 5:00 PM (CASH BAR); DINNER: 6:00 PM. PROGRAM: 7:30PM BUFFET STYLE; ENTRÉE CHOICE OF: CHICKEN, LONDON BROIL, AND SALMON PLUS CLASSIC CAESAR SALAD, MIXED GREEN SALAD, OVEN ROASTED POTATOES, SAUTÉED MIXED VEGETABLES, TEA AND COFFEE, AND ASSORTED DESSERTS.

COST: \$45.00 PER PERSON

DOOR PRIZE DONATIONS WILL BE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

RESERVATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY March 13, 2019 PLEASE USE OUR ON-LINE RESERVATIONS AT : <http://potomacnrhs.org/> (\$1.00 per Guest Service Charge Additional) OR COMPLETE THE RESERVATION FORM BELOW AND MAIL IT ALONG WITH YOUR CHECK TO: POTOMAC CHAPTER, NRHS - BANQUET, P.O. BOX 235, KENSINGTON, MD 20895-0235 FURTHER INFORMATION: (301) 649-2140 or email TheodoreXakillis@juno.com

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PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: "POTOMAC CHAPTER, NRHS"

Name & Address: _____

Phone number: _____ E-mail: _____

Guest Name	Cost
Total	

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

FIRST CLASS