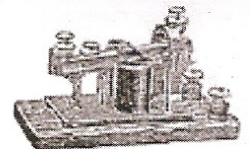


TARHEEL TELEGRAPHER



VOLUME 50 — ISSUE 8

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1 AUGUST 2012

YOUR TRAVELING EDITOR

This issue of the *Tarheel Telegrapher* may be considered somewhat unique from any other you have. Thanks to the miracles of technology now surrounding our lives, it is being prepared and sent to the printer from San Francisco.

Your Editor is on a twenty-six day trip around the nation, all via Amtrak. The journey began on 29 July 2012 when we boarded *The Crescent* in Greensboro, and is continuing with stopovers in New Or-

leans, San Antonio, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Milwaukee, Chicago, Indianapolis, and Washington (DC) before we return home to Raleigh on 14 August.

We already have many interesting tales to tell, including that of an Amtrak train legitimately arriving two hours early, and are sure to have more before we get back to North Carolina. We cannot tell them all here, but I am sure we could be prodded in person.

NCRM BOARD ELECTIONS

Our yearly election for members of the NCRM Board of Directors will come up soon at the Annual Meeting of the Corporation, currently scheduled for Saturday, 20 October 2012. As always, three (3) seats on the Board will be open. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, please contact the Chair of the Nominating Committee, Will Sadler, at:

NASARACER32@YAHOO.COM

Ballots for this election will be distributed with the October issue of the *Tarheel Telegrapher*. Eligible voters may mail them back to the Secretary of the Corporation or bring them in person to the meeting noted above. Ask any current Board member for details on what is required to serve.

CHARLOTTE TRANSIT HIKES FARES

Progressive Railroading

The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) has implemented a 25% fare increase for local routes and a 14.2% hike for all other fares. Local bus routes and train fares will increase from \$1.75 to \$2 per ride. "The fare increase was needed for CATS to maintain the core transit services currently provided to our customers," said CATS Chief Executive Officer Carolyn Flowers. "CATS' fares continue to compare favorably to other transit systems."

Also this week, the agency added an additional outbound trip on the LYNX Blue Line at 1:30am Fridays and Saturdays in response to rider requests for expanded weekend light-rail service. "The additional trip will allow the LYNX schedule to better align with the bus service providing another alternative for passengers heading to and from Uptown for events, dining and other activities," said Rocky Paiano, general manager of rail operations.

HALLOWEEN TRAINS ARE COMING!

The first 2012 NHVRy Halloween Train is only about ninety (90) days from now and the planning is already underway. The rides this year will bring back old favorite scenes and add two new ones: a *Haunted House* and a *Mummy March*. Also, a bottomless mine shaft will be added to the area leading up to the rides.

We are always looking for people to assist with set up and tear down, plus assorted witches, grave robbers, vampires, monsters, ghouls, goblins, etc. The goal, as always, is to give the public the best experience we can, keep them coming back for more, and bring new friends and neighbors with them. If you are willing to help in any manner, please contact:

**Shannon Curtin - Chief Ghoul
Cell - 919-671-1093**

Email - MouseWare7@AOL.com

USPS PONDERES BOOSTING

MAIL BY RAIL

Railway Age - by Douglas John Bowen

Hit-or-miss efforts (mostly miss) by the US Postal Service to move mail by railroad have characterized the mode's declining mail modal share for decades, but the USPS is once more eyeing freight railroads as a way to lower costs and improve efficiency. In a 26-page report dated July 16 prepared by the USPS Office of Inspector General, a recommendation is made to pursue intermodal mail movement to "save transportation costs, gain long-term strategic advantages, and still continue to meet existing service standards." The report acknowledges, "Competitors such as UPS and FedEx have become major users of freight rail over the last decade just as the Postal Service has moved away from it. In fact, UPS is now the single largest user of

FOUNDATION GRANT TO REHAB STEAM

LOCOMOTIVE IN ALASKA

Progressive Railroading

The Rasmuson Foundation will provide a \$350,000 matching grant to support the mission of Engine 557 Restoration Co., a newly formed nonprofit organization charged with rehabilitating a historic steam locomotive for eventual return to service at the Alaska Railroad Corp. (ARRC).

In January, Steam Engine No. 557 was returned to Alaska, where it last operated along ARRC track 50 years ago. Sold to a scrap dealer in Washington in the 1960s, the engine recently was purchased by Jim and Vic Jansen of transportation and logistics company Lynden Transport. In turn, they donated the locomotive to ARRC with the request that it be restored and used to provide passenger-rail service.

The locomotive's restoration is anticipated to cost \$600,000 to \$700,000, with major expenses including initial tooling, asbestos removal and abatement, galvanized steel cladding, new insulation, boiler and tubing replacement and repair, gear inspection and repair, painting and positive train control electronics.

Project supporters recently turned to the Alaska Community Foundation, which agreed to establish and administer a new fund to accept donations. The Rasmuson Foundation's grant program was the first substantial fundraising effort. "By providing a dollar-for-dollar match to fundraising efforts, this generous grant will accelerate the rehabilitation and give the project team the base they need to reach out to Alaskans and railroad fans everywhere to garner their support," ARRC President and Chief Executive Officer Chris Aadnesen.

intermodal rail service in the United States. J.B. Hunt, one of the Postal Service's largest highway trucking contractors, now earns about 60% of its revenues from intermodal rail operations."

USPS spent more than \$3.3 billion on highway-based contracts in 2011, but only \$40 million on rail-based alternatives, the report says. The potential use of Amtrak, which previously contracted with USPS for mail movement, specifically is not included in the main body of the report. In Appendix A, USPS recaps Amtrak's efforts during the 1990s to enhance mail transport by rail, which Amtrak largely abandoned by 2004.

TRAIN ORDER SIGNAL AT BONSAI

One of the latest additions to the *North Carolina Railway Museum* at Bonsai is the train order signal shown in the photo below. Installed just a couple of weeks ago, the signal would have been used by a Station Agent to inform approaching trains of pick-ups to be made at the station, or in some cases, if a stop was even necessary. The unit was placed next to our Baggage-RPO car to provide the most realistic looking position for it possible at Bonsai. Come down and see it for yourself.



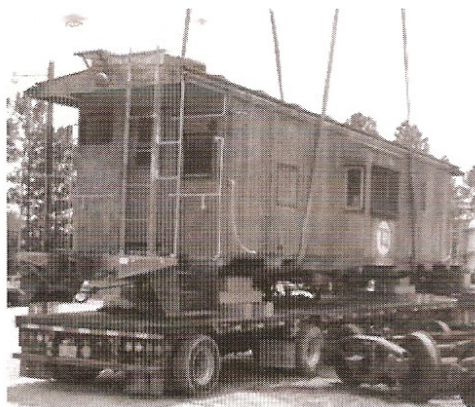
DURBIN ASKS STB TO ADDRESS AMTRAK PERFORMANCE DELAYS

Progressive Railroading

Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) has asked the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to increase efforts to improve Amtrak's on-time performance after a recent report showed the main cause of train delays stems from freight-rail operations. The US-DOT Office of the Inspector General released the report, finding several causes of delays related to freight-rail operations, including speed restrictions due to poor track conditions, construction, congesting and track sharing. Other factors include capacity utilization and activities at Amtrak crew change locations contributing "significantly" to delays throughout the system, but "considerably less" than the impact of freight-rail operations. Durbin asked STB members to use their authority under the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 to "investigate and enforce" the on-time performance standards where a railroad fails to meet the 80% threshold.

EX-N&W CABOOSE AT BONSAI

The other new addition to the collection of the *North Carolina Railway Museum* at Bonsai is an ex-N&W (Norfolk & Western Railroad) caboose generously donated to us by *Progress Energy*. The caboose, seen below being lifted off the flatbed truck delivering it to the museum, had spent many years at the Buckhorn generating facility not far from our location. Arriving at the plant at the end of a coal drag, the caboose was originally acquired by *Progress Energy* as a utility car for use around the plant.



Eventually, it was placed in a fixed position and used by the Systems Department for various tasks, winding up as a storage shed for computer parts and equipment. There it sat until a visitor to the NCRM, riding the NHVRy with his children one day a few years ago, suggested he might be able to arrange the donation.



As seen in the photo above, the interior of the caboose has been gutted of all railroad equipment with paneling and a drop-ceiling installed. This leaves the unit as a sort of "blank slate" for us, and discussions are rife with ideas of turning it into everything from a room for birthday and other parties to a fully air-conditioned luxury passenger car for extra fare on the train. No one yet knows which idea will be used, but for certain we will have a lot of work and fun refurbishing the caboose.

CSX COMPLETES TRACK MAINTENANCE JAMBOREE

Progressive Railroading

On July 4, CSX Transportation crews capped off this year's "Jamboree," a track maintenance blitz designed to compress about a year's worth of rail, tie, signal and bridge work into one week. During the Jamboree, more than 900 workers replaced or installed about 176,000 ties, 2,500 rail-cars of ballast and 233,000 feet of mainline rail. Crews also installed an additional 59,000 feet of relay rail in an Erwin, TN., yard, repaired or refurbished 10 bridges and 255 grade crossings, and completed nearly 650 track welds. In general, the \$34 million worth of work focused on maintenance and repair tasks in Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina and South Carolina. Trackwork was concentrated on key routes between Shelby, KY, and Abbeville, SC; and from Bostic, NC, and Elmwood Junction, SC, to Newberry, SC. The Jamboree was completed safely and on schedule despite record heat and rugged terrain.

"This critical work helps fulfill our commitment to investing in our customers and in the communities in which we operate," said Oscar Munoz, CSXT's executive vice president and chief operating officer.

In 1999, a CSXT machine operator coined the term "Jamboree" to describe the mass gathering of maintenance -of-way crews

NCDOT EQUIPMENT STATUS REPORT

NCDOT Rail Division

Locomotives:

Locomotive 1755 is still at Amtrak's Beech Grove, IN rebuild shop. In mid-May Amtrak discovered defects in the four new traction motors. Amtrak is waiting on replacement traction motors from its vendor. The new traction motors are due in mid-July. Once the new traction motors are installed Amtrak may begin its qualification tests prior to shipping the locomotive to Raleigh for NCDOT acceptance testing.

Locomotive 1797 was delivered to NCDOT in Raleigh on 6 April. Shortly after delivery during the NCDOT acceptance tests, the dynamic brake fan motor failed. Due to the defective dynamic brake system NCDOT had to suspend the acceptance testing. Amtrak wanted NCDOT to accept a reconditioned DB motor as a replacement but specifications call for a new DB motor. The new motor is not due to ship until mid-July. That means the 1797 will likely not be ready for completion of its acceptance tests until late July.

Railcars:

The first refurbished NCDOT railcar #400203 "Core Sound" (baggage/lounge) is ready to come home. It passed both the

(Continued on page 3)

THE CALL BOARD NHVRY CREW NEWS

TRAINING CLASSES

All members of the train operating crew will be required to attend one day of training. Next training will be listed in the Schedule below.

RULES QUALIFICATION TESTS

Rules tests must be renewed every two years in order to remain current. If you have not taken a rules test in the last two years, see the dispatcher on duty as soon as possible.

FRA PROPOSES RULEMAKING ON PASSENGER TRAIN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS STANDARDS

Progressive Railroading

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) recently issued a notice of proposed rulemaking that would clarify certain requirements of existing emergency preparedness standards for passenger trains and address issues that have arisen since the regulations were issued in May 1998. The rulemaking would ensure that railroad personnel who communicate and coordinate with first responders during emergency situations receive initial and periodic training and are subject to operational efficiency tests and inspections.

The revised regulation also would clarify that railroads must develop procedures in their emergency preparedness plans to address the safe evacuation of passengers with disabilities during an emergency situation; limit the need for the FRA to formally approve administrative changes to approved emergency preparedness plans; and specify new operational efficiency testing and inspection requirements for both operating and non-operating rail employees.

The proposed rulemaking is based on recommendations from the General Passenger Safety Task Force that's part of the FRA's Railroad Safety Advisory Committee. The FRA is accepting comments on the rulemaking from interested parties until Aug. 27.

FRA/OSHA AGREEMENT

FRA and OSHA have reached a memorandum of agreement to begin working together to address the seriousness and overwhelming number of whistleblower complaints that OSHA has received from railroad workers. According to OSHA, whistleblower complaints in the railroad industry have increased steadily.

AMTRAK UPDATES NORTHEAST CORRIDOR PLAN *PROGRESSIVE RAILROADING*

Amtrak released an updated report of its efforts to expand capacity on the Northeast Corridor (NEC) and upgrade the system to accommodate faster trains. *The Amtrak Vision for the Northeast Corridor: 2012 Update Report* outlines the current stage of conceptual development and planning for the future NEC rail network, on which Amtrak is proposing to operate 220 mph trains. The report details steps Amtrak and other NEC stakeholders have taken since two NEC planning reports were issued in 2010, and highlights key findings of a recently completed NEC business and financial plan. It also provides input for a new environmental analysis being led by the FRA.

"The NEC region is America's economic powerhouse and is facing a severe crisis with an aging and congested multi-modal transportation network that routinely operates at or near capacity in key segments," said Amtrak President and Chief Executive Officer Joe Boardman "With an expected 30% population increase by 2050, we must move beyond mere preservation and rehabilitation of the current system to a new vision of expanded transportation capacity and growth."



(Continued from page 2)

FRA and Amtrak inspections with flying colors. As in the past Amtrak will pick the car up from Delaware Car Company and move it from Wilmington to Washington on the nightly NEC shop train. Then it will be coupled to the rear of #79 the Carolinian for its trip to NC. Once the car gets to *Capital Yard*, NCDOT will perform final acceptance inspections and install the last of the interior safety signage and the *Operation Life-saver* decals on the outside of the car. Then it will make several test trips between Raleigh and Charlotte. NCDOT expects to place "*Core Sound*" into daily Piedmont service by 7 August.

Car #400007 is 80% complete. It is also being held hostage to the same long lead time single source made in USA items. The 400007 is currently scheduled for completion in late July.

Car # 400012 is 60% complete and should be finished in by mid-September.

Car # 400204 is 30% complete and should be finished in late October.

Car # 400006 is 10% complete and should be finished in mid-December.

Car # 400011 is 10% complete and should be finished in late January 2013.

Car # 400205 is 10% complete and should be finished in late February 2013.

Among the report's highlights:

- The FRA is expected to complete a Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan by 2015..
- After receiving feedback from states, commuter-rail agencies and other NEC stakeholders and users, Amtrak changed its 2010 NEC master plan. Changes include adding the Gateway program to increase track, bridge, station and tunnel capacity from Newark, NJ to New York City's Penn Station; revising the alignment of the proposed next-generation NEC high-speed rail route to travel through Providence, RI rather than Woonsocket; and changing various proposed stations.?
- The new business and financial plan indicates greater-than-anticipated ridership demand and associated revenue for future Amtrak service.
- The schedule and large capital expenditures in the peak period of planned construction should be modified to strengthen opportunities for public and private-sector funding.
- Amtrak should pursue a phased approach to NEC improvements that would improve reliability, increase capacity and reduce trip times as quickly as funding would allow. The approach will help the railroad strengthen its financial performance and provide additional capital funding to support the program's other elements.

WHERE ARE YOU?

PLEASE ENSURE WE HAVE YOUR CORRECT ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER, AND EMAIL ADDRESS, AT ALL TIMES. SEND A NOTE TO THE EMAIL ADDRESS ON THE FIRST PAGE OF THIS PUBLICATION.

NCRM 2012 SCHEDULE

5 August - NHVry Operating Day
16 August - NCRM Board Meeting
17 August - NHVry Group Day
2 September - NHVry Operating Day
20 September - NCRM Board Meeting
21 September - NHVry Group Day
7 October - NHVry Operating Day
18 October - NCRM Board Meeting
19 October - NHVry Group Day
20 October - NHVry Halloween Trains
27 October - NHVry Halloween Trains
15 November - NCRM Board Meeting
16 November - NHVry Group Day
1 December - NHVry Santa Trains
2 December - NHVry Santa Trains
8 December - NHVry Santa Trains
9 December - NHVry Santa Trains
20 December - NCRM Board Meeting
All events listed here are held at the NHVry in Bonsel, NC unless otherwise noted.

NORTH CAROLINA RAILWAY MUSEUM, INC.

NHV

NEW HOPE VALLEY RAILWAY

TARHEEL TELEGRAPHER

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