

THE **SHORTLINE**



CHAMPLAIN VALLEY CHAPTER • NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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JUNE 2012

**CVC MONTHLY MEETING
SWANTON STATION
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, 2012
MEETING STARTS AT 7:00 PM**

**CALENDAR OF
SHOWS & EVENTS**

JUNE 2012

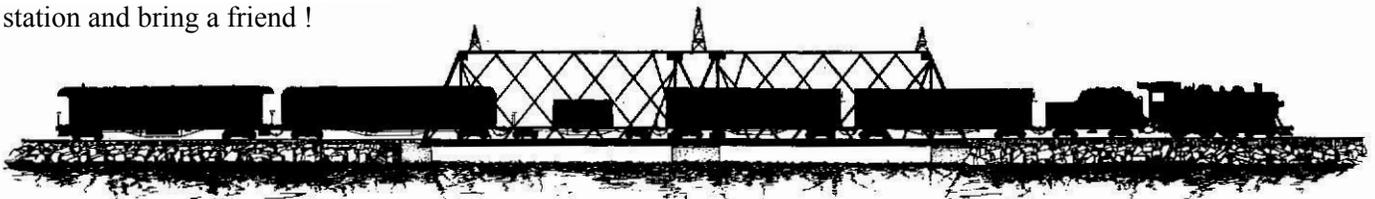
17-25 2012 NRHS CONVENTION

Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Program will feature five days of train trips on regional carriers including the Iowa Interstate, Iowa Northern, and former interurban Cedar Rapids & Iowa City. More program info and registration at <http://www.nrhs.com/news/2012-nrhs-convention-cedar-rapids-iowa>.

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Our chapter meeting for June will be held at the Swanton Railroad Station, home of the Swanton Historical Society, at 58 South River Street in Swanton, VT. NOTE the starting time of the meeting: 7:00 PM. (This is one-half hour earlier than our normal meeting time).

The program this month will be "St. Louis Union Station", presented by Tom Gallagher and Laz Scangas. St. Louis Union Station first opened in 1894, and was once the largest and busiest passenger rail terminal in the world, but ceased operation as an active train terminal in 1978. Union Station reopened in August of 1985 and this National Historic Landmark has been dramatically restored and redeveloped as a dynamic mixed-use project that includes great shopping, delicious dining and fabulous entertainment. This promises to be a fascinating evening, so meet us at the station and bring a friend !



CALENDAR OF SHOWS & EVENTS

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JULY

3 Burlington Fireworks. Tuesday. Ride the Vermont Railway from Charlotte into Burlington for Vermont's Biggest Fireworks show. Trains depart 5:30 - 6:45 and return at 10:30 pm after the fireworks display. Tickets: \$12/person. More info at <http://www.rails-vt.com/>

29 "North Country Explorer", on the Conway Scenic Railroad. Sunday. Special train will cover all operable portions of the ex-Maine Central "Mountain Division" from Redstone to Hazens. Sponsored by the Massachusetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts. Call 978-470-2066 or visit www.massbayrre.org

SEPTEMBER

6-9 "Empire Junction '12", The Northeast Region of the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) 2012 Convention, Syracuse, NY. Layout tours, operating sessions, clinics, prototype tours. More info at <http://www.empire-junction.org>

8 20th Annual Glory Days Festival Saturday, September 8, 2012 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. White River Junction Railroad station. (Rain or Shine)

22 2012 Rutland Train Show, Saturday. Franklin Conference Center, Strong's Avenue, Rutland VT. Sponsored by the Rutland Railway Association. For info call 802-855-1332 or by email at fiskinvt@sover.net

RAFFLE AT THE APRIL MEETING

Bring your raffle items to the June meeting. Save various items such as magazines, railroad forms, schedules, calendars, insulators, posters, etc. and bring them in for raffling purposes.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The BOARD OF DIRECTORS of the Champlain Valley Chapter will meet on Wednesday, June 13, 2012 at 5:00 PM (note earlier starting time) at MIMMO'S RESTAURANT in St. Albans. Mimmo's is located at 22 South Main Street, near the intersection of Main and Fairfield Street, right across from the south end of Taylor Park. The earlier starting time is to ensure we get to the chapter meeting at the Swanton Station by 7:00 PM. The BOD meeting is open to any CVC members. Any Board members unable to attend please let President Alan Ward know ahead of time.

MAY AUCTION

Our Annual Auction was held on Wednesday, May 9, 2012, at 1223 Ethan Allen Drive, Fort Ethan Allen Complex, Colchester VT. A plethora of railroad items (including the traditional rug) was available, and we raised \$850.50 in bids plus donations for our treasury. Thank you to our auctioneer Larry Wolff, who graciously agreed at the last minute to run the show. And quite a show it was, as Larry mixed in humor and anecdotes with his auctioneering talent. Thanks also to Laz Scangas for arranging for use of the room. Also a big "THANK YOU" to everyone who brought in items for the auction. And finally, thanks to everyone who bid and purchased items at the auction.

SEPTEMBER 2012 CHAPTER MEETING

At our May chapter meeting, we discussed having a picnic in September in lieu of the December banquet. Bill Sander agreed that the picnic could be held at his residence in Jeffersonville.

A tentative date of Saturday, September 15, 2012 was chosen, but subsequently it has been discovered that there is a conflict on that date. Alternatives will be considered, and the schedule will be announced at a later date.

It was also decided that the Chapter would provide the food, plates utensils, condiments, etc. and the members would be asked to bring their own non-alcoholic beverages. There would be no set charge for the food, and members would be asked to donate with whatever amount they felt comfortable with. So, please stay tuned for more information.

NATIONAL TRAIN DAY EXCURSION

As part of Amtrak's National Train Day Celebration, a special train was run from Essex Junction VT to Waterbury VT on May 12, 2012. Passengers boarded historic passenger cars provided by the Vermont Rail System and pulled by locomotives from the New England Central Railroad. The train departed Essex Junction at 10:00 am and arrived in Waterbury at approximately 10:35 AM. Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin was among the dignitaries who spoke at the Waterbury station. A slide show of the repairs to Vermont railroads following Tropical Storm Irene and railroad exhibits were available at the Waterbury Station. The engineer for this special train was our own Joseph Dufresne Jr.

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MAY 9, 2012

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Champlain Valley Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society was held at Trader Dukes Restaurant in South Burlington, VT at 5:30 PM on Wednesday, May 9, 2012. Members of the Board of Directors were notified of the meeting by electronic mail, and also by notice duly published in THE SHORTLINE. President Alan P. Ward presided at the meeting, and Tom Gallagher took the minutes of the meeting. A quorum was present.

Present were

Bill Sander	Steve Lowe	Laz Scangas
Rick Bonneau	John Gaworecki	Alan Ward
Gary Aubin	John Malcovsky	Tom Gallagher

Absent None

President Alan asked if there were any errors or omissions in the minutes of the April 11, 2012 meetings of the Board of Directors and Membership. Minutes of the meetings were passed unanimously.

John Gaworecki presented the Treasurers report and John Malcovsky presented the Membership report, which was included in the printed packet that was distributed to each member of the Board of Directors. Reports were accepted unanimously.

The Board decided to continue sending copies of The Shortline to Bob Moore in recognition of his many years of service to the Chapter.

36 members are receiving The Shortline electronically. Try to get more members to receive it via e-mail.

Rick Bonneau presented the future programs.

The spring Auto-Walking tour will be on Saturday, May 12, 2012. We will visit "Railroads on Parade" in Pottersville, NY, and the Center Rutland Depot and Museum. A sign up sheet and information sheets will be passed around at the membership meeting.

There was a continued discussion about having a picnic in September in lieu of the December banquet. Dates were discussed, and Bill Sander agreed that the picnic could be held at his residence in Jeffersonville. A tentative date of Saturday, September 15, 2012 was decided on at 1:00 PM. (*Since the Board of Directors meeting, it has been discovered that there is a conflict on that date, other dates will be discussed.*) It was also decided that the Chapter would provide the food, plates utensils, condiments, etc. and the members would be asked to bring their own non-alcoholic beverages. There would be no set charge for the food, and members would be asked to "feed the kitty" with whatever amount they felt comfortable with. Tom Gallagher will go to Costco to get an estimate on prices for food, etc., and a number of Board members volunteered to bring grills.

The Chapter website is in need of contributors. Contact Tom Gallagher

The May auction will be held at Fort Ethan Allen. There will be no charge for use of the room.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be on Wednesday, June 13, 2012 at 5:00 PM at Mimmo's Restaurant in St. Albans, VT.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:16 PM. May 9, 2012. Respectfully submitted, Tom Gallagher- Secretary

FUTURE CHAPTER MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

September 2012

Chapter Monthly Meeting. Date, Time, Location to be announced.

KNOW SOMEONE WHO LIKES TRAINS?

Let's continue finding new members for the Chapter. Contact a friend who might like the "lore and roar" of trains, real ones or models, and invite him/her to come with you to a Chapter meeting.

MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIBER ADDRESSES

Please let Membership Chairman John Malcovsky know of any address corrections or additions so our mailing list can be corrected. John's address is 13 Crombie Street, Burlington VT 05401-3612. Phone 802-862-7634, e-mail jmalcovsky@comcast.net. This will ensure that your **SHORTLINE** and NRHS publications will be sent to the correct address. Also members, let us know if you are not receiving your bi-monthly copy of the NRHS publication, **NATIONAL RAILWAY BULLETIN**. That publication will not be forwarded to a new address.

SHORTLINE "ON-LINE"

The **SHORTLINE** is available to Chapter members on the CVC website. Current and recent past issues are available. Access it by using the following link: <http://cvc-nrhs.org/pages/theshortline.html>. For future **SHORTLINES** you may voluntarily elect to receive only an electronic version of *The SHORTLINE* by contacting John Gaworecki at cvcnrhs@comcast.net. This will help reduce our chapter's expenses for printing and postage.

Contact **Tom Gallagher** (e-mail: prevost453@comcast.net) if you need a password or are having difficulty logging on to the site.

CHAPTER SPRING 2012 AUTO /WALKING TOUR

On Saturday, May 12, 2012, members of our chapter embarked on our Spring 2012 Auto / Walking tour. We visited the “Railroads on Parade” exhibit in Pottersville, NY in the morning, and the Center Rutland Depot and Museum in the afternoon.

“Railroads on Parade,” a production of Dunham Studios, is an astounding model railroad that incorporates an exhibit that was displayed at the Citicorp building in New York City for many years, along with several other model railroads created by Clarke and Barbara Dunham. We were greeted by Clarke and Barbara, who along with their staff were gracious hosts. We were treated to a “backlot” tour to view the “behind the scenes” construction, electrical, operation and maintenance areas. The exhibit incorporates trains from “O” gauge, “S” gauge, “HO” gauge and ‘N’ to create a “forced perspective” impression of greater distance. To get an idea of the exhibit, visit to the website: www.railroadsonparade.com/; however the photos cannot begin to do justice to the massive display and intricate details.

After lunch we traveled to the Center Rutland Depot and Museum. We were enthusiastically greeted by several members who provided a tour and shared their visions for the future of the museum. The museum contains artifacts, publications, a model railroad under construction, and an original Rutland Railroad caboose.

The Rutland group announced that they will be sponsoring a railroad show in Rutland on September 22, 2012. They have embarked on an extensive advertising campaign and expect to provide a substantial show. (A registration flyer will be added to the CVC chapter website.)

Thank you to Tom Gallagher for arranging this trip!

EAST ALBURGH SWING BRIDGE UPGRADED

The East Alburgh Swing Span is a 100-year-old movable swing span bridge which was upgraded and automated by Engineers Construction, Inc. of Williston, VT. The swing span is part of the East Alburgh Trestle, a 3,800-ft-long wood railroad trestle on Lake Champlain in northwestern, Vermont. The trestle is owned by the New England Central Railroad, a division of RailAmerica, and serves as a critical link between the Canadian National Railroad and the NECR. The swing span allows commercial, recreational, coast guard, and border patrol boats to pass through the trestle on their way to and from Missisquoi Bay.

Prior to automation, the bridge tender would be dispatched to manually open the swing span with a hand crank. The swing span automation involves the controls and mechanical equipment so that the railroad dispatcher can open and close the swing span remotely from St. Albans, Vermont. The approximately 3-minute opening process requires the automated release of the miter rails, retraction of the support

wedges, and rotation of the 102-ft-long steel thru-girder bridge. The closing process is just the opposite.

The automation is a complex system of navigation warning lights, horns, marine vessel messages, video cameras, timers, relay switches, limit switches, actuating motors, turning motors, braking mechanisms, alignment devices, verification sensors, submarine cables, backup power with automatic transfer switches, and other components. Boaters should be aware that the bridge will swing soon after the alarms sound and that all boats should stay clear.

During the navigation season (May 15 to October 15) the swing span will remain open for navigation (aligned with the navigation channel). The swing span will close (align with tracks) for train traffic and will return to the open position after a train passes. Outside of the navigation season, the swing span will remain aligned with the tracks and will be opened on an on-needed basis for boat traffic, as indicated on the electronic LED mes-

sage sign.

The swing span automation was part of a \$6M public/private partnership to upgrade the 100-year old trestle. The project funding included \$4,853,568 from the Federal Railroad Administration and \$1,139,178 from the New England Central Railroad. (*ECI website*)

RailComm Adds Remote Control

Fairport, N.Y.-based RailComm has provided remote control for a New England Central Railroad bridge.

RailComm’s Domain Operations Controller (DOC®) System is used to dispatch the railroad and has been modified to include control of the bridge, the company said.

Additionally, RailComm has constructed a secondary communications link that was outfitted with a cellular communication link to the office. This cellular link provides backup to the primary link. (*RailComm website*)

GREAT DAY ON THE “HOOSICK JUNCTION LIMITED

On Sunday, May 20, 2012 the Massachusetts Bay Railroad Enthusiasts sponsored the “Hoosick Junction Limited” train excursion over the Vermont Railway’s freight-only line from Rutland south to the connection with Pan Am Railways at Hoosick Junction, NY.

The weather was superb as the train departed from the Amtrak Station in downtown Rutland and headed southward over VRS’s B&R main line, along the banks of Otter Creek to Manchester and North Bennington. After a photo run-by stop at North Bennington, we then traversed the short line to Hoosick

Junction.

The train consisted of six passenger cars from the Green Mountain Railroad’s excursion fleet, with VTR locomotive GP38-2 #201 at one end and VTR GP40 #301 at the other. After a brief stop at Hoosick Junction, we made the return trip. Another photo runby was held at Wallingford.

The train traveled at close to 40 MPH on some sections, but at others we slowed down to perhaps 10 MPH.

Our chapter contingent was honored to have George Lerrigo in our car, who acted as a personal tour guide for us, pointing out landmarks and providing

trivia tidbits which added greatly to the experience.

The Mass Bay RR Enthusiasts provided an extensive trip guide, with detailed maps and descriptions of highlights along the way.

The train was “chased” by numerous photographers, so undoubtedly a lot of pictures will surface.

The train returned on time to Rutland, and was a well-organized and smooth operation. The Massachusetts Bay RR Enthusiasts are to be commended for a top-notch excursion.

(JMG)

Wi-Fi PROBLEMS ON AMTRAK’S NORTHEAST CORRIDOR

Amtrak’s free Wi-Fi service, which the railroad has heavily promoted on its Northeast Corridor between Washington, New York and Boston, is drawing the wrath of disgruntled users, the New York Times reports.

First introduced on Acela trains amid a marketing campaign two years ago, its press release promising “fast, reliable, and consistent connectivity,” Amtrak’s wireless service has instead turned into a source of mockery on blogs and a daily source of angry messages on Twitter and other social media, the Times reports.

In late October Amtrak extended wireless service to non-Acela trains as well, promising the long hours of productivity to non-Acela riders along the Northeast Corridor, but the instead the wireless service has become a symbol of the problematic state of rail travel in the Internet era.

Customers complain that it either doesn’t work at all or is unbearably slow. “It’s like dial-up pretending to

be Wi-Fi,” said Carrie Strine, an artist in New York, who frequently rides the train to Lancaster, Pa. “You almost expect to hear that sound that AOL used to make when you logged in.”

Amtrak officials have heard the complaints and say that they are updating equipment on most trains and that passengers should see improvement by the end of the year. But they also point out that some of the biggest problems with the service are beyond their control, like the placement of cellular towers and the fact that so many users are all vying for the same service.

“It’s not where we would like it to be in terms of performance,” Matt Hardison, Amtrak’s chief of sales distribution and consumer service, told the Times. Amtrak points out that providing the service on trains is a challenge. Amtrak’s Wi-Fi comes from cellular towers along the tracks that transmit signals to a router in the cafe cars. As the trains move, they travel in and out of different mobile

carriers’ cellular coverage areas. In some cases the handoff between cell towers and carriers is smooth, and users continue to get service, but often the signal drops. With so many travelers trying to connect, congestion is another problem.

Hardison said the railroad is updating software and equipment on its Acela trains, and the work should be completed by the end of the year. Improvements to other trains will be made when financing becomes available. The plan is to upgrade to the faster so-called 4G networks, which will increase bandwidth available through its Wi-Fi system by five times its current capacity.

Amtrak says even these steps will not completely solve the problem. Not all areas will have 4G, and there are gaps in the cellular network along the Northeast Corridor, particularly between Baltimore and Wilmington, Del. and in parts of Connecticut.

(Trains Newswire)

CUSTOMS RELIEF FOR *THE ADIRONDACK*?

Amtrak's *Adirondack* has been plagued for years by extensive border delays in both directions to its New York-Montreal journey due to both U.S. and Canadian customs clearance procedures. Now, spurred by U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer (D-NY), the railroad and both nations may be able to reduce delays.

Schumer on Thursday said in a statement that Quebec's Emissary Raymond Chretien told him during a meeting that the service is building a facility in Montreal's Gare Central, where U.S. Customs and Border Patrol and Canada's Border Services Agency could complete prescreenings. Arriving passengers would be processed by Canadian officials, while departing passengers would be screened by U.S. officials at the facility, he said.

Schumer and other New York congressional leaders have repeatedly asked the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to allow the U.S.-bound train screenings in Montreal. At present, trains stop at Rouses Point, N.Y., near the U.S.-Canadian border,

with Customs clearance delays reportedly lasting up to two hours. Under the plan, Amtrak would eliminate its stop at St. Lambert, Quebec, a suburb of Montreal roughly four miles from Gare Central, in order to augment security and expedite scheduling. Should Amtrak succeed in reinstating service between New York and Montreal via Vermont—as it once offered on its namesake Montrealer—the Gare Central facility also could be used for that train as well. (The vestigial Vermonter currently terminates its journey short of the U.S.-Canadian border, at St. Albans, Vt., roughly 70 miles from Montreal.)

Schumer said Canadian and U.S. authorities need to finalize legal agreements to allow U.S. border agents to work in the Canadian facility under the "Beyond the Borders" agreement before prescreening can begin. Such operations, however, have been in place for years at Toronto's Lester B. Pearson International Airport. In the West, U.S. and Canadian customs have cooperated successfully in expedited clear-

ance for Amtrak Cascades service linking Vancouver, British Columbia, with Seattle and with Portland, Ore. But Schumer, in his statement, said the Montreal prescreening would be "more comprehensive than the Vancouver prescreening, because the train will not have to stop at the border at all (unlike the current Vancouver prescreening in which a shorter inspection still takes place on the border)."

"Backwards border policies that have caused maddening delays for train passengers are soon going to be left behind," said Schumer. "The rail between Montreal and New York City should be a major artery for economic growth, but the delays have left this artery completely clogged."

Still unclear is whether any U.S.-Canada agreement would also pertain to Amtrak's Maple Leaf, running between New York and Toronto, which crosses the border at Niagara Falls, N.Y., and its namesake sister city in Ontario. (*Railway Age*)

ROHR RTL TURBOLINERS TO BE SCRAPPED

The State of New York announced on June 1, 2012 that it plans to finally "dispose" of its four remaining unrebuilt Rohr RTL Turboliners, which have been stored at an industrial park in Glenville, N.Y. since the program to rebuild them for Amtrak's Empire Service was scuttled in 2005. Also on the block are a warehouse full of replacement parts which include gas turbine engines, generators, seats, and wheels.

Built in 1976 by Rohr Industries, three trains were rebuilt by Super Steel. They briefly returned to service in 2003 but were retired by Amtrak due to inadequate air conditioning systems and other issues including high operating costs due to their fuel-guzzling gas turbine powerplants. The three refurbished sets are currently stored and offered for sale by Amtrak at Bear, Del. While scrapping is the likely outcome for

the trains, if not the spare parts, Manhattan mural artist Alex Gardega proposes to repurpose them into art galleries and trendy restaurants. The state says it will review any offers. (*Trains Newswire*)

A Bit of History

In 1998 New York and Amtrak began the "High Speed Rail Improvement Program," a \$185 million effort to improve service over the Empire Corridor. A key component of this program would be the reconstruction of all seven RTL Turboliner trainsets to the RTL-III specification. New York selected Super Steel Schenectady to perform the work, and two first two trainsets were to enter service in 1999. After numerous delays these trainsets entered service in April 2003. Of the five additional trainsets, originally scheduled to enter

service in 2002, only one was completed and it never entered revenue service.

All seven trainsets were renumbered in 2001 to prevent duplicate numbers with the new P-42s and were painted in new Acela-style livery. One of the rebuilt RTL-IIIs was tested on the night of February 15, 2003, reaching 125 mph (201 km/h).

In April 2005, New York State reached a settlement with Super Steel to completely close the rehabilitation project for \$5.5 million, to stop work on the project, cover any remaining costs, and move four unfinished trains into storage at the Glenville industrial park. This settlement, when added to the \$64.8 million previously spent, brought the total amount spent on the project—the results of which were three rehabilitated trainsets and four others in various states of repair—to \$70.3 million.

BOMBARDIER TO SUPPLY SUBWAY CARS TO NYC

Bombardier Transportation announced that it has signed a contract for 300 subway cars with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) to be delivered to New York City Transit (NYCT). The order is valued at approximately \$599 million US (\$623 million CDN, 482 million euro). The MTA Board of Directors approved the award of a contract to Bombardier on March 28, 2012.

The new cars (known as the R179 series) will be built at Bombardier's fully-integrated manufacturing plant in Plattsburgh, New York. The Plattsburgh facility is located in New York State's North Country region and is Bombardier's Centre of Excellence for rolling stock production in the United States. In operation since 1995, it has produced more than 3,000 passenger rail cars and locomotives now in service across the United States.

The R179 cars will incorporate state-of-the-art technology from Bombardier. The cars will be powered by highly reliable BOMBARDIER MI-

TRAC propulsion equipment with new, energy-efficient inverters. The cars' onboard systems will be integrated by Bombardier's industry-leading MI-TRAC train control and management system with internet protocol technology. The propulsion and control equipment will be supplied by Bombardier's Propulsion and Controls business unit in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Delivery of 10 pilot cars is scheduled to take place in the third quarter of 2014, followed by delivery of the remaining production series cars between mid-2015 and early 2017.

Raymond Bachant, President, Bombardier Transportation North America, said: "Bombardier's partnership with NYCT began in 1982 with an order for 825 subway cars. Since then, we have delivered close to 1,900 vehicles to our valued customer. We are proud that NYCT has shown its confidence in our products and technologies once again, and we look forward to providing high quality, reliable, safe rail cars for the millions of people who ride New York's

subway system every day."

Bombardier has redefined the future of mass transit travel. Around the world, more than seven billion people use Bombardier subway cars every year, from Boston, New York, Montreal, Toronto and Mexico City to London, Paris, Berlin, Delhi and Shanghai. Bombardier's current North American orders include 706 new subway cars for Chicago, 468 cars for Montreal, and 420 cars for Toronto.

NYCT – one of six operating agencies that make up the Metropolitan Transportation Authority of New York – is the largest public transportation agency in North America and one of the largest in the world. The subway has a daily ridership of more than five million people, and an annual ridership close to 1.6 billion people. Its fleet of 6,380 subway cars travels almost 345 million miles a year along 660 miles of track, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. (*Bombardier Transportation - posted 6/04*)

TAHAWUS LINE APPROVED TO RE-OPEN

The Surface Transportation Board (STB) on May 14 approved a request by Iowa Pacific Holdings to reopen a rail route deep in Adirondack State Park, N.Y., dismissing protests from an environmental group seeking to block reactivation.

Short line Saratoga & North Creek Railway is cleared to commence reopening the Tahawus rail line, running between North Creek and Newcomb, N.Y., for freight service.

The short line plans to haul tailings from past mining operations, as well as solicit freight service from other potential customers, including the operators of a garnet mine. Hauling the tailings by rail will be an alternative to the cur-

rent method of hauling by trucks, thus reducing air pollution. The company anticipates hauling 100 million tons of material and tailings from the Tahawus mine for this project.

The federal government built the 29.7-mile stretch of rail in 1940.

STB originally rejected Chicago-based Iowa Pacific Holdings' request last year, when the environmental group Protect the Adirondacks opposed it. But on Monday, announcing its decision in Docket No. FD 35559, STB noted "subsequent filings have provided enough information to resolve the concerns ... the railroad may now file a new notice of exemption for the operating authority it seeks."

Protect the Adirondacks, the key environmental group which filed a protest with STB last November, claimed the short line's right-of-way "exists as easements over a mix of public and private land," making ownership of the easements a debatable point. The line does, however, have the support of the New York Department of Environmental Conservation and the New York Department of Transportation.

According to Iowa Pacific Holdings, about 15 to 20 people would be employed during reconstruction of the track and the completed rail line would pump at least \$160,000 into the local economy each year. (*compiled from various public websites*)

BOMBARDIER INTRODUCES NEW MASS TRANSIT POWER SYSTEM WITHOUT WIRES

Bombardier Transportation presented its new wireless charging system for trams, buses, and cars. Called the PRIMOVE system, it has been installed in a pilot project on a tram in Augsburg, Germany. The system enables trams and similar systems, such as streetcars, to transfer power without the use of any overhead wires.

Based on the principle of inductive power transfer, Bombardier's system enables electric vehicles to be recharged either in motion (dynamic charging) or at rest (static charging). Eliminating overhead cables and other

wires previously needed to power electric vehicles could significantly cut costs for mass transit systems.

During the Augsburg demonstration, a Bombardier low-floor tram was fitted with two power receivers (pick-up coils) to capture the inductive power transferred from cables laid between the rails and beneath the ground. Inverters along the track are connected to a wayside 750 Vdc power supply network. Simulating regular operations in an urban environment, the pilot project proved the system's reliability, and was in full compliance

with all applicable codes and standards for electromagnetic compatibility.

Recently, the first automotive prototype was equipped with the technology to undergo a series of performance tests at Augsburg.

This month Bombardier, the city of Braunschweig, and local operator Braunschweiger Verkehrs-AG will launch another demonstration of the technology, equipping two buses with the new system. The German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building, and Urban Development are funding the demonstration. (*Trains Newswire*)

ESSEX JUNCTION DREAMS OF A NEW STATION

(Condensed from an article in the *Essex Reporter*, May 24, 2012)

Amtrak Vice President of Governmental Affairs Joe McHugh offered federal money, engineering help and grant-writing support to Essex Junction's train station during a meeting with the Village Board of Trustees on May 18.

Amtrak is undergoing an accessibility upgrade to the ramps and platforms of its stations nationwide to comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). Essex Junction citizens and trustees have used the mandated upgrades as an opportunity to re-imagine the entire station, which also serves as a bus stop and anchors the north end of Railroad Avenue.

The improvements are part of a larger citizen-led downtown revitalization effort that has resulted in a weekly outdoor farmers' market, video surveillance on Railroad Avenue to reduce crime and loitering, and a year-round event series.

The Board of Trustees enlisted University of Vermont engineering students to create a design that improves the station's aesthetics and functionality. The students presented the design to the trustees earlier in May, and on May 18 it was presented to McHugh, and other Amtrak and RailAmerica officials.

Village staff estimates the project at \$3.1 million. Amtrak is committed to build a new 4-foot-high loading platform and a ramp to make it accessible to people with disabilities. Amtrak will also fund a small expansion of the indoor ticketing area and new restrooms.

But Amtrak Engineer Joe Rago said the students designed improvements go beyond the scope of what Amtrak would typically support. "The funds that have been allocated have nothing to do with enhancements," Rago said. "It's strictly ADA."

McHugh said Amtrak's architect would look at the designs and determine what Amtrak will contribute.

Essex Junction Planning Commission chairwoman Liza Kilcoyne pointed out that the roof on the new design would tie together all the elements of the station, including the loading platform, waiting area, new public restrooms, bus stop, and ticketing area. A large clock is designed into the top of the roof. "The roof creates an aesthetic anchor to create some interest on that side of (Railroad Avenue)," said village engineer Rick Hamlin. "We go from a pill-box, flat-roof design building to a traditional form."

Hamlin noted that the design is preliminary. The trustees are circulating it to Amtrak, RailAmerica, New England Central Railroad, the Vermont Agency of Transportation, CCTA and village residents in hopes of building momentum for the project.

NEWS ITEMS

* **RailAmerica, Inc. in response to market rumors**, stated that its Board of Directors is considering strategic alternatives, which may include a sale of the Company. In connection with its evaluation, the Company is engaged in preliminary discussions with third parties regarding a potential sale of the Company. There can be no assurances that any agreement will be reached with respect to a transaction or that a transaction will be consummated. The Company has retained Deutsche Bank Securities Inc. as its financial advisor and to assist in its evaluation. The Company further stated that it does not intend to make any additional comments on this matter unless and until a definitive agreement has been reached. (*RailAmerica* - posted 5/23)

* **The East Broad Top Railroad will not run this year.** Negotiations between the East Broad Top Railroad Preservation Association and Mt. Kovalchick could not reach an operating agreement for this year. Although no trains will operation, the East Broad Top Railroad Preservation Association (EBRPA) will continue to offer tours of the shops and the round house for groups of 20 or more people. Interesting parties must phone (814-447-3011) and make arrangements. The EBPR is looking at all the possibilities to try and reopen the railroad in 2013. (EBPRA - posted 5/18)

* **Amtrak's Downeaster expansion** reached a milestone Monday May 14 with the official completion of new station platforms in Brunswick and Freeport, Me., which have not seen passenger rail service since 1959. (*Railway Age*)

* **The Surface Transportation Board gave R.J. Corman Railroad Co./Pennsylvania Lines Inc. (RJCP) authority** "to build and operate a new rail line using right-of-way previously rail-banked as well as new right-of-way, near Wallaceton, Pa. "This is the first instance in which the Board examined a new rail line construction proposal combined with restoration of rail service over a rail-banked right-of-way," said the board. "The entire rail line would provide rail service to a proposed new waste-to-ethanol facility, a quarry, an industrial park now under development near Gorton, Pa., and to other shippers

along the line." (*Railway Age*)

* **An intoxicated man has survived** being run over by a 26-car freight train, the Ottawa Sun has reported. The man, from the Crowsnest Pass-area of Alberta, had left his campsite near Elko, B.C., and somehow ended up on the nearby Canadian Pacific tracks, where he decided to take a nap. The engineer of a CP train saw the body on the tracks and put the train into emergency, stopping after 26 cars passed over the man. Railroad workers assumed he was dead, but when they reached him, one of the workers touched the man and he woke up. He got up, grabbed his beer, and just walked away. It took Royal Canadian Mounted Police dogs to track the man back to his campground, where officers arrested him. Charges are pending, and likely will be for public intoxication. (*Trains Newswire*)

* **Burma plans to restore a 150-mile section** of the railroad made famous by the film, "The Bridge on the River Kwai," Mizzima News reports. The 258-mile railroad from Rangoon, Burma, to Bangkok, Thailand, was built during World War II by prisoners of war. The most famous portion of the line is Bridge 277 across the Kwae Yai in Kachanaburi, Thailand, a popular tourist area. It was immortalised in David Lean's 1957 film "The Bridge on the River Kwai" which centers on the construction of the bridge. Although the film was shot in Sri Lanka, the real bridge still carries passenger trains on the Thailand portion of the line. Burma will now restore the remainder of the route, from the Three Pagodas Pass area to Thailand. (*Trains Newswire*)

* **A Chinese artist dedicated a hand-crafted sculpture** to Illinois State government in a bid to pay tribute to the Chinese railroad builders of the U.S. rail system. The sculpture, named as "Pioneer of Railroad Construction" by its creator Yuan Xikun, depicts three generations of Chinese railroad builders. This year marks the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Pacific Railway Act, authorizing the building of the first transcontinental railroad across the United States. Over 10,000 Chinese men contributed to the construction.

* **Two men arrested for stealing tie plates** from the Pennsylvania Northeastern

Railroad told police they didn't know they were breaking the law. Each man faces 115 counts of theft and receiving stolen property, after they admitted to police they took the tie plates from the tracks. A citizen observed the men loading the tie plates into a car, Police arrived after the men left the area. When police went to the neighborhood later in the day to investigate a domestic disturbance, one of the men told police they had been collecting scrap from the railroad and had sold it. They told police they didn't have permission from the railroad to collect the scrap, and did not believe it was illegal. They had received \$133.40 for the 920 pounds of tie plates. Pennsylvania Northeastern officials said the tie plates were worth \$1,725. (*Trains Newswire*)

* **The Zig Zag Railway**, a non-profit tourist railway in the mountains of New South Wales, will shut down on June 17. Explanations for the closure vary, but none of the line's steam locomotives is currently licensed to operate, and the line's website says there is a dearth of qualified volunteers to restore and operate steam locomotives. Other reports cite a lack of operating capital and administrative issues. The line, which features multiple switchbacks climbing a steep escarpment, was built in the 1860s, and for 50 years was the only rail route from Sydney into the interior of the country. In 1910, an alternate route featuring 10 tunnels bypassed the Zig Zag. The abandoned grade was re-laid to 42-inch gauge and completed in 1975. It operated 364 days a year, the only exception being Christmas Day. The line owns eight steam locomotives and four diesels, along with two diesel multiple-unit trains, one of which is currently providing service on the 4.2-mile line. (*Trains Newswire*)

* **Back-to-work legislation cleared** the Canadian Senate on May 23 to become law yesterday, ending a strike by 4,800 members of the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference against Canadian Pacific. Operations resumed at about 7 a.m. Eastern Time on CP in Canada, with freight service expected to return to full capacity with 48 hours, CP spokesman Ed Greenberg said. The strike began May 23. (*Trains Newswire*)

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