



# THE NEW YORK RAILROAD ENTHUSIASTS

## BULLETIN

VOLUME 38, NUMBER 9

OCTOBER 2016

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The next membership meeting will be on Friday, October 28 at 7:30 PM at the Williamson Library at Grand Central Terminal. Meet at Track 23's gate at **7:00** or **7:15** PM to be escorted to the library, which is in a secured area. Late arrivals should phone the library at (516) 660-1972. A \$5.00 admission fee is charged for non-members. Treasurer Steve Kalka presents photos from the following trips: 1) NYRRE 2008 Boston, 2) NYRRE 2007 Maine, 3) Overnight ride on Via's *Ocean* from Montreal to Halifax in October 2015, 4) NYRRE 2006 Berkshire and 5) NYRRE 2009 Adirondack Scenic Railroad including boat ride on the Fulton Chain of Lakes.

### PRESIDENT'S NOTES



Hello to all my fellow Railroad Enthusiasts. Our September meeting we started our 2<sup>nd</sup> half of our membership year and I was very pleased to see so many members including new visitors from our social media Meet Up" group. We were all treated to Super 8 film presentations by Messrs. Gary Grahl and Rick Carbone. All spent an enjoyable evening thanks to their efforts continuing a tradition of railfan Super 8 film presentations at the Williamson Library.

Referencing the Library, we have to follow a set of safety and security procedures. Due to MTA security, you must be at the Track 23 Gate at **7:00** or **7:15** PM for a group pickup. Metro North Railroad welcomes us considering we are in a restricted area of Grand Central Terminal. If you miss the 7:15 pickup, call 516-660-1972 and will try to accommodate you as long as the program isn't disrupted. The **ONLY opportunity** for members to leave before the conclusion is at the break.

I look forward on seeing all of you for our next meeting: Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. We can all share in the latest railfan information and enjoy the very best viewing presentations.

Michael Vitiello

#### Membership Meeting Schedule

All meetings begin at 7:30 at Williamson Library, Grand Central Terminal

<u>Date</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
November 25	Al Roberts
December 23	Mike Vitiello

## FROM MY VANTAGE POINT

### Defect Detectors

BY Michael Ditkoff  
Info@nyrre.org

In the “good old days,” the conductor and flagman rode a freight train’s caboose to monitor the train’s condition. They watched for shifting loads and hot boxes (axles and brakes on fire) from excessive wear. The fireman was too busy stoking the firebox to pay attention and the engineer was always watching forward. Eventually, cabooses were no longer part of trains, making it difficult or impossible to check for hot boxes and other dangerous conditions from the rear. Technology created devices to do the monitoring the crew in the caboose performed. These devices are called defect detectors.

There are several types of detectors:

High Car: This detector is set to the maximum height to allow safe passage through tunnels.

Hot Box: This detector checks the temperature of the axles for excessive heat indicating excessive wear, insufficient oil, brakes that haven’t fully released or some other problem. Two sets of infrared sensors are located on both sides of the track aimed for the bearings on the axles. They count every axle that passes and register the amount of heat from each axle. If there is more heat than the prescribed amount, an alarm is triggered.

Dragging Equipment: An illustration can be found at the NYRRE Photo Gallery <http://www.nyrre.org/Gallery>. Type Seabrook North in the search box. There are “smash” boards under the signals. Loose cables or hoses between cars strike the boards and trigger an alarm. An alarm would also sound in the engine if an electrical cable became detached.

Slide Fence: A fence is built at the bottom of a mountain as a shield to catch rocks that has fallen down. When the fence is struck, signals in the vicinity will drop to STOP even if the fence stopped the rocks from falling onto the track.

Flat Wheel: An alarm is triggered when a flat spot on a wheel is detected.

Early detectors didn’t have an audible method to convey information to the crew after the inspection and used a visual display such as a flashing light or numbers. I remember that on Southern Railway, a crew member on the rear (caboose or last car on a passenger train) had to watch the detector box after the train passed it. If there weren’t any defects, the flagman would call on the radio, “Southern Amtrak 819. The box is dark.” The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad had a display board at some locations. If there weren’t defects, three zeros would display and the flagman would call “Q307 0323 Triple Zeros at JD.” If there wasn’t a display board, an oscillating light attached to the next signal would illuminate. If there wasn’t a defect, the engineer would call on the radio train ID, signal name and indication, and “no whirlybird” meaning the oscillating light didn’t come on.

Next month, I’ll cover audible detectors.

## STACK TALK

By Neil Moran

Fall is officially here and that means steam excursions are on the move. I begin “across the pond.”

### UNITED KINGDOM – LONDON

Oliver Bulleid designed the Battle of Britain class locomotives in 1945. Number 34067 “Tangmere” was used across the entire Southern Railway from London to the Kent coast and as far west as Plymouth. The locomotive’s name came from the wartime RAF fighter’s station near Chichester. Tangmere was mainly used powering trains between London and Kent until the 1960’s. The 4-6-2 Pacific was then moved to Salisbury where her last few years were powering trains between Exeter and London. Many of that class were rebuilt in the 1950’s losing their distinctive air smoothed casing.

Tangmere remains in its original form, giving it a glimpse of how impressive these machines would have looked during the difficult years directly after the Second World War. During WW II, she narrowly escaped from the German Luftwaffe as they tried to machine-gun the engine. Luckily, it only received minor damage in each attack. She went to the Barry Island Scrap Yard to await the inevitable after retiring. Fortunately, that did not happen and the engine was overhauled at the Tuseley Shop. During the nineties and early two thousands after she was restored, she made her return to excursion service and has been powering trips up to the present. Jolly Good and Cheers!

### WASHINGTON STATE – SNOQUALMIE

Northern Pacific Railway steam locomotive #924, a class L5 0-6-0 switcher built in 1899, is undergoing restoration at the Conservation and Restoration Center. The museum’s full time and volunteer staffs are working side by side.

The Emery Rail Heritage Trust awarded its second grant to supporting rehabilitation. The machine grant will support fabrication of the fuel bunker, new bearing materials for the running gear and a new white oak pilot beam. This engine is an excellent example of a switching locomotive being put back together which was built in 1899. The Rogers Works became famous for their innovative work on steam locomotives in the early years of the nineteenth century.

### OREGON – PORTLAND

The Pacific Railroad Preservation Association’s volunteers are working hard to rebuild the 4-8-4 #700 at Oregon Rail Heritage Center. They are making good progress in preparing the engine for its FRA four year inspection. All the jacketing and lagging have been removed from the boiler. The steam dome and the hatch over the super heater head and throttle have also been removed so the areas for ultrasound measurement can begin. Other work to the engine includes cleaning of the smoke box and firebox and removing all super heaters along with some tubes and all firebricks. Everything removed from the boiler will be rebuilt. The group has launched the first of several fundraising campaigns for the inspection.

## NEVADA – ELY

Locomotive #81 is a 1917 Baldwin built 2-8-0 Consol purchased new by the Nevada Northern Railway to serve as mainline freight locomotive from East Ely to Cobra where the Nevada Northern interchanged with the Southern Pacific Railroad. Unfortunately, when diesels arrived, locomotives #81 and #93 were kept as backup power. Then in 1960, both were donated to the White Pine Public Museum for outdoor display. When you leave a display outside, you might as well place a sign of “Rust in Peace.” Riding to the rescue the Nevada Northern repurchased the locomotives and returned them to full service. Amen! The current plan is to do a “from the ground up” restoration on locomotive #81, followed by restoring #93.

## MINNESOTA – MINNEAPOLIS

Milwaukee Road 4-8-4 #261 returns to the rails, operated by Twin Cities and Western Railroad and its subsidiary Minnesota Prairie Line, sponsored by the Friends of the 261. The trips will originate out of Chanhassen and Minneapolis Junction. The first trip on October 7 is a dinner train that will go to Chanhassen and return. On October 8, the excursion will include a rare mileage trip out of Minneapolis Junction and head west towards Glencoe on the route of Milwaukee Road’s famed Olympian. This line has not seen regular scheduled passenger trains since 1960. On October 9, the excursion will include a rare mileage trip over the Minnesota Prairie, a former Minneapolis and St. Louis track that has not seen a regular scheduled train since 1969. This trip will run out of Minneapolis Junction to Gibbon or Winthrop depending upon time available. All excursions will have photo runbys so rail fans can capture the 261 in action.

## MICHIGAN – HOWELL

The Per Marquette Berkshire type 2-8-2 #1225 celebrated her 75<sup>th</sup> birthday this year at Howell, Michigan’s annual Melon Festival on August 20-21<sup>st</sup>. The Berkshire ran through the countryside with a lot of whistle blowing letting everyone know the #1225 was back in town. Vintage coaches with windows that opened allowed passenger to hear the #1225 working, a rare treat today. No sound can compare to the steam locomotive starting up. Baby its show time! I am happy to report that all the trips ran well.

## OHIO – AKRON

Another Berkshire is under steam. 2-8-4 Berkshire #765 ran over the Cuyahoga Valley Railway on September 17, 18, 24 and 25. Passengers enjoyed a three hour round trip through the Cuyahoga Valley National Park behind one of the largest steam locomotives in the United States. There were photo runbys.

## NORTH CAROLINA – BRYSON CITY

Engine 1702, a 2-8-0 Consol, will run on the Great Smoky Mountain Railroad from Bryson City, North Carolina. This special train will depart at 8 am Saturday November 5 for an all day excursion on the Tuckasegee River to Dillsboro, North Carolina. The train will stop for two photo runbys. Included in this event will be a special turntable presentation upon the return to Bryson City. Can it get any better?

## NEW JERSEY – FORT DIX

The American Locomotive Works in Schenectady, New York built locomotive #4023, a 0-6-0 switcher, in 1942 for the U.S. Army. She worked at the military base at Fort Dix, New Jersey. Later in its military career, #4023 was renumbered #616 and was transferred to the U.S. Army base in Fort Eustis, Virginia. By 1958, the Army was retiring some of their steam locomotives and #616 was part of the group selected. The Army sold #616 and two of her sisters to the Blue Ridge Railroad based in Piney River, Virginia. Later on, her number was changed to #9. The Switcher eventually ended up on the New Hope & Ivyland where it ran until 1965. In 1966, she was stored and replaced by #40 in 1968. The switcher went back to work and ran on the New Hope & Ivyland from 1976 to 1981 when her flue time ran out. Afterwards the locomotive was partially dismantled and stored in the deadline track until 2009. Later on, it was sold to the SMS Rail Line in Bridgeport, New Jersey. It has since been undergoing restoration to active service. It will then do what she does best, hauling passengers behind her. We look forward to the day she returns.

I extend my thanks to John Biehn (Dayton, Ohio Railroad Society), Peter Chatman (London, England), and Richard Taylor (New York Railroad Enthusiasts) for their reports. From your humblest servant in Steam, remember that Steam never dies!

UNTIL OUR TRACKS CROSS AGAIN



### From the Editor

This is my first issue as editor. Editor Emeritus Ben Schaeffer and former Production Manager Lorrie Roberts deserve our thanks for many years of publishing the *Bulletin*.

Sheldon Fosburg is the new production manager and continues his long association with the *Bulletin* as circulation manager. We developed an expedited processing schedule. Members should receive their issue no later than the middle of the month. Members with email capability can receive their issue within the first week of the month. Send your name and email address to [Info@NYRRE.Org](mailto:Info@NYRRE.Org).

Michael Ditkoff

## Final Comments from Track 34

by Roy L. Hudson

In case you forgot, on July 23, 1966 the New York Central's jet-powered Budd RDC, M497 reached 183.85 mph on jointed rail at Stryker, Ohio. This rail speed record still stands fifty years later for fastest (non - electric) run in North America. (Art Kinser)..... Last July, a shakeup in top brass at the Hyper - Loop Company took place. You say, " the Hyper - what?" This is the firm that wants to commercialize Elon (Telsa Auto) Musk's idea to transport people in pods inside a pressurized tube at 260 mph, between Los Angeles and San Francisco. (Wall Street Journal)..... Back in June 1924 the Pennsylvania RR announced that it had made plans for electrification between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh and New York and Washington but Philly and Pittsburgh would be completed first. Since time is on my side, I would like to suggest that they would probably finish the Corridor first. (Roy) .....Forty years ago in April 1976, Conrail began operating with the remains of run down railroads Penn Central, Erie Lackawanna, Jersey Central, Lehigh Valley, Reading, Lehigh & Hudson River, PRSL and a few lesser knowns. In April 1997, Norfolk Southern and CSX jointly purchased Conrail from the federal government. Norfolk acquired the lion's share of assets, 58%, and CSX took the remaining 42%. Because of overlapping interest, both evenly own Conrail Shared Assets, which operates in the New York metropolitan area. (Art Kinser)..... In April 1980, the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific, "The Rock" took the dubious crown as the third and largest railroad (7,000 miles) ever to be abandoned. The first was the 300 plus miles Colorado Midland in 1918 with only 60 miles remaining as the Midland Terminal RR. Next was the New York, Ontario and Western Railway (540 miles) in 1957 with no lines saved. The Rock Island's remains have spawned a number of successful regional railroads and short lines and major connecting roads picked up important pieces. The well-known Iowa Interstate operates almost 600 miles of "The Rock" (Roy)..... Snapshot - Staten Island Railway service started in 1860 and was operated by several railroads, including the Baltimore and Ohio. Today there are 19 stations between St. George and Tottenville on its 29 mile double track route which is operated with 63 MU cars and four diesels. Over 4 million passengers ride each year. (Progressive Railroading Magazine)..... Toy Train Dept. - Post WWII were the boom years for Lionel and American Flyer. First out of the gate was Lionel's 1946 version of Pennsy's steam turbine locomotive. The tinsplate look was gone and semi-scale O gauge was the norm. Smoke and whistle did the trick and while the PRR only built one locomotive, Lionel made thousands with many still in the secondary market at train shows. (Pierce Carlson)..... A record was set on Jan, 7, 1929 when the solid Pullman 20th Century ran from Chicago in seven, 15 car sections, taking 822 passengers into Grand Central Terminal. (A. C. Kalmbach)

All good things come to an end. Roy's column has left the station for the final time. The NYRRE extends its appreciation for half a decade as a regular columnist.



# The Penner Report

## Comptroller DiNapoli And MTA Oversight

By Larry Penner

New York State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli's recent MTA report concerning their failure to collect \$13 million in fines missed more significant financial issues.

How is the MTA managing its ongoing \$27 billion 2015 - 2019 Five Year Capital Plan? Are there any carryover projects and dollars from the previous 2010 - 2014 Five Year Capital Plan? Some financial problems with the MTA may be attributed to less funding provided by both Albany and City Hall, not Washington.

Federal support for transportation has remained consistent and growing over past decades. When a crisis occurred, be it 9-11 in 2001 or Hurricane Sandy in 2012, Washington was there for us. Additional billions in assistance above and beyond yearly formula allocations from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) were provided. In 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided billions more.

Most federal transportation grants require a 20 percent hard-cash local share. In most cases, FTA accepted toll credits instead of hard cash for the local share. This saved the MTA \$1 billion in the previous 2010-2014 Five Year Capital Plan. The same will be true with the 2015-2019 Five Year Capital Plan.

Washington has made available over \$1.3 billion in the 2016 formula allocations for the MTA which helps pay for 35 percent of its capital program. This includes \$35 million in buses and bus Facilities; \$668.3 million in state of good repair and \$573.2 million in urbanized area federal funding. There are other opportunities for up to several hundred million more in discretionary competitive grants and the remaining balance of \$432 million in available Disaster Relief Recovery Act of 2013 (Hurricane Sandy.)

Does the MTA submit grant applications to FTA on time? Are current federally funded programs being completed on schedule and within budget? Are all federally funded grant staff positions filled? Employees are needed to manage projects and programs to insure compliance with federal rules and regulations. Are construction projects being completed according to original specifications with few if any change orders? Is there any waste, fraud or abuse of taxpayer's dollars? Has New York State Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan or State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie ever asked their respective legislative committee chairpersons to conduct public hearings to investigate?

The MTA currently manages an active portfolio of federally funded capital improvement projects and programs in open grants worth over \$21 billion that utilize over \$10 billion in direct FTA financial assistance.

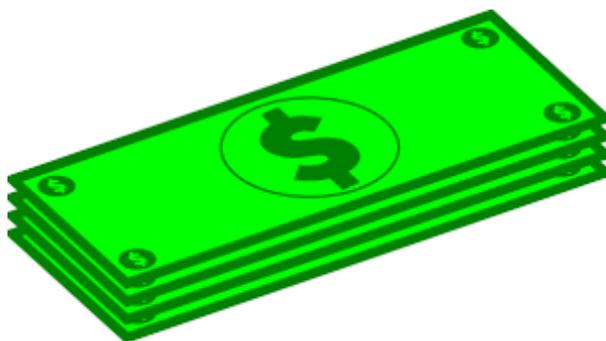
Both the MTA and FTA have independent engineering consultant firms to supplement in house staff for oversight. These companies provide both oversight and technical assistance for capital projects. Engineering firms which monitor the progress of major capital projects prepare monthly progress reports. Does DiNapoli receive and review these documents? They are made available to MTA Chairman Tom Prendergast, MTA HQ staff, MTA Board members (including four directly appointed by Cuomo), MTA Agency Presidents including Capital Construction Michael Horodniceanu, New York City Transit Veronique Hakim, Long Island Rail Road Patrick Nowakowski, Metro North Rail Road Joseph Giulietti, MTA Bus Darryl Irick, each MTA agency Chief Engineer, FTA HQ & Regional Office senior management teams and in house project oversight staff.

As part of master grant agreements, the MTA provides updated Quarterly Financial and Milestone Progress Reports to USDOT FTA on billions worth of active capital improvement projects and programs. Does DiNapoli receive and review these reports?

Does NY State Comptroller Tom Di Napoli coordinate his oversight efforts with NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer, NYC Office of Management and Budget, NYC Independent Budget Office, and the Offices of Inspector General at US DOT, New York State, New York City, and the MTA? All perform periodic audits of MTA projects and programs.

Governor Cuomo has yet to give any specifics of how he will come up with \$7.3 of the \$8.3 billion promised to meet the shortfall in the 2015 - 2019 MTA Five Year Capital Plan. The same is true for NYC Mayor de Blasio and his promised \$2.5 billion. Has DiNapoli held either accountable for meeting their commitments which are necessary to fully fund the \$27 Billion MTA 2015 - 2019 Capital Programs?

Larry Penner is a transportation historian and advocate who worked 31 years for the Federal Transit Administration Region 2 NY Office.



## MTA September 21 Press Release

### \$121 Million Initiative to Rebuild Hicksville Station Begins Construction; \$64.9 Million Contract Award to Improve Jamaica Station

Two of the Long Island Rail Road's central hubs are about to get makeovers. Work has begun on a \$121 million initiative to rebuild, reimagine and modernize the Hicksville station, the busiest station on Long Island. In addition, the LIRR has awarded a \$64.9 million contract to create a new platform and tracks at the Jamaica station, the LIRR's central hub and main transfer point.

#### Jamaica Station Enhancements

The new platform and tracks at Jamaica station will allow the LIRR to more easily re-route trains, take tracks out of service and support supplemental train service to and from Atlantic Terminal for customers attending games and events at the Barclays Center. The new platform will also feature glass-enclosed, heated waiting areas, as well as Wi-Fi and USB charging stations allowing customers to stay connected and charge their phones while they wait for the train. In addition, New York-based artist James Little will create brightly colored art glass installations on the station's westerly bridge, and also on the stairs leading from the new station platform to the AirTrain mezzanine.

The project is one element of the Jamaica Capacity Improvements Project which will modernize Jamaica Station infrastructure, which was built in 1913. The work will streamline track configurations, which have remained largely unchanged since the station was built, and speed service. The project began in 2010 and is being carried out in two phases with a projected investment of \$442 million by the end of 2019. Funding for Phase I of the project comes from a combination of the MTA's 2010-2014 capital plan and the 2015-2019 plan.

The new platform at Jamaica, slated to open in 2019, is one in a series of the LIRR system-wide capacity improvement projects, which also include an uninterrupted second track between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma, and a third track on the Main Line from Floral Park to Hicksville, as well as the East Side Access project to bring LIRR trains into Grand Central Terminal. Once East Side Access is complete, the new platform at Jamaica station will dramatically enhance service between Atlantic Terminal in Brooklyn and Jamaica Station, enabling shuttle trains to depart every 7½ minutes during rush hour and every 15 minutes during off-peak hours, which will provide a significantly higher level of service than that available under current timetables.

#### Hicksville Station Rehabilitation

Sixteen miles east of Jamaica, work has begun on another project – a \$121 million modernization of the Long Island Rail Road's aging Hicksville station, and the preparation of an adjacent site where the railroad will build a new connection to an existing siding west of the station.

The upgrades to the 55 year old station include Wi-Fi and USB charging stations throughout the station; an enhanced interior waiting room; new platforms with glass-enclosed, heated waiting rooms; improved lighting; a translucent canopy roof; improved stairways, escalators, plaza elevators, a video security system, audio and digital communications systems and better signage. The renovated station will also include new laminated art glass installations. The station work is expected to be completed by the spring of 2018, nine months sooner than originally planned.

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First Class Mail



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Visit our Meetup group at [www. Meetup.com](http://www.Meetup.com)

The New York Railroad Enthusiasts, Inc., is a not-for-profit, historical and educational corporation.

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Vice President: Sheldon Fosburg

Annual (calendar year) Dues is \$30.  
Membership application at  
<http://www.nyrre.org>

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