

# THE CROSS-TIE

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**Railroad Quick Hits**

- News updates and special reports are available online at Railfanning.org.
- **Coming Next Month:** In the February 2004 edition of *The Cross-Tie*, we will look at the railroad history in Clarksville, Tenn., the Gateway to the New South.
- Norfolk Southern Corporation said it is pleased with the Surface Transportation Board's timely resolution of the complaint in *Carolina Power & Light Company v. Norfolk Southern Railway Company* finding a significant portion of its rate increase on coal shipments to several of Carolina Power & Light's facilities to be reasonable. Norfolk Southern will comment at a later date on the potential effect on earnings.

## ORANGE ALERT POST ALERT, SECURITY BEEFED UP ON RAILS



Along the rails of America, railroads are beefing up security following the United States of America issuing an Orange Alert for terror. (Todd DeFeo/*The Cross-Tie*)

**The Cross-Tie**

WASHINGTON – Nationwide, railroads stepped up security following the announcement of an increase to the country's terror threat level.

"We are taking precautionary measures to assure our customers that we are doing everything that we can to make sure they can pass through our system without incident. Our customers are likely to see special response teams of officers carrying additional weaponry with a canine accompanying them," said Metro Transit Police Chief Polly Hanson. "We also are

asking our customers to be an extension of our eyes and ears, and let us know if they see anything unusual."

Since Dec. 21, when the threat alert level was increased to Orange Alert, Transit police officers have been wearing their bright fluorescent visibility vests so that customers who notice anything unusual can quickly spot and alert a police officer. More officers will be on patrol starting today.

"Rest assured, the presence of these special response teams and explosive detection canine teams does

*(Continued on page 2)*

## CROSS-TIE REACHES ONE YEAR

**The Cross-Tie**

With the January 2004 edition, *The Cross-Tie* marks an anniversary — one year.

In January 2003, *The Cross-Tie* published its first issue with a cover story about the Feb. 8, 1868, strike on the Memphis, Clarksville & Louisville Railroad. Nine issues were subsequently published, containing railroad-related news and features.

Inside this issue, a recap of the 10 issues of *The Cross-Tie* published in 2003 is presented.

Also, in December, Railfanning.org launched a new message board, allowing registered users to post their opinions on railroad-related topics.

The new message board, which launched Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2003, is available by logging onto <http://railfanning.org/message/>

Registration is free. However, vulgar language and off-topic posts are prohibited. The board is monitored to ensure that those rules aren't broken.

Also launching at Railfanning.org is a new, more in-depth guest book. That can be accessed by logging onto <http://railfanning.org/>

## SECURITY INCREASED

*(Continued from page 1)*

not indicate any specific, impending danger. These precautionary measures are intended to reassure our customers and add another level of security prevention," she said.

In Atlanta, MARTA Police Chief Gene Wilson put his officers on 10-hour a day shifts and cancelled all leaves until further notice.

"It's no secret that transit is always a major target of terrorist activity," said Nathaniel P. Ford, MARTA General Manager/CEO. "While we recognize the inconvenience this increased security might impose on our customers, their safety and security is our first priority."

Amtrak, the nation's passenger rail system, says its officers are spot-checking passenger's bags for anything suspicious.

The railroad is "increasing police patrols in its stations and other facilities," spokesman Cliff Black told *The Philadelphia Daily News*. Police will be "randomly riding and inspecting trains and K-9 units will be randomly sniffing checked baggage and, sometimes, just wandering through passenger waiting rooms."

Likewise, freight railroads are keeping a more vigilant eye on what moves along their tracks.

"We're real cautious about what comes down our line," Pete Lawrenson, chief of security for Montana Rail Link told *The (Helena, Mont.) Independent Record*. "We have contracted security working our yards and we're going to be much more aggressive with trespassers."

*"It's no secret that transit is always a major target of terrorist activity. While we recognize the inconvenience this increased security might impose on our customers, their safety and security is our first priority."*

—Nathaniel P. Ford,

General Manager/

CEO MARTA

## AMTRAK'S GOOD NOVEMBER



Amtrak's *Crescent* speeds through Norcross, Ga., on Oct. 12, 2003. Nationwide, November was the busiest month for Amtrak ever. (Todd DeFeo/The Cross-Tie)

### The Cross-Tie

WASHINGTON — Amtrak ended the busiest November in its 32-year history with a ridership total of 2,076,054, up 11.7 percent over last year's total of 1,858,345.

All 16 long-distance trains posted double-digit gains and, collectively, posted a 32 percent surge in ridership.

The most impressive gains were realized on the Capitol Limited (Chicago – Pittsburgh – Washington), up 54 percent; the Sunset Limited (Orlando – New Orleans – San Antonio – Los Angeles), up 50 percent; and the Cardinal (Chicago – Indianapolis – New York), up 51 percent due to a route extension from Washington to New York City.

Regional trains in the Northeast, which account more than 25 percent of Amtrak ridership, posted a 15 percent gain over last November.

During the seven-day Thanksgiving travel period (Tuesday, Nov. 25 – Monday, Dec. 1), approxi-

mately 595,000 passengers stepped aboard Amtrak trains, making it the busiest week in Amtrak history. Thanksgiving ridership was up nine percent over last year and up five percent over the previous Thanksgiving record set in 2000 when ridership was 566,759.

The increases were attributed to an improving travel market and to Amtrak's "back-to-basics" approach to running the railroad.

Among the recent initiatives under the back-to-basics approach are a new advertising campaign coupled with fare rollbacks, incentives for online booking, and a commitment to upgrading equipment and infrastructure to improve reliability.

As it has in past years, Amtrak took extraordinary steps to meet the increased travel demand around Thanksgiving: A total of 60,000 seats and 77 trains were added nationwide.

— For more, log onto <http://railfanning.org/news/>

## CPR: INTERMODAL INNOVATION UNDER WAY

### The Cross-Tie

CALGARY, Alberta – Canadian Pacific Railway in December became the first railway in Canada to operate intermodal freight trains with mid-train remote-control locomotives, the company said.

Mimicking the control inputs of engineers in leading locomotives, the remote-control units enable CPR to run intermodal trains approaching three kilometers in length through the winter when they were previously shortened because of air-pressure loss in colder temperatures. Since 1995 all new main-line locomotives ordered by CPR have been equipped to operate in leading or remote-control configuration.

Introduction of remote-control locomotives is a cornerstone of the railway's campaign to completely transform its intermodal service, which moves consumer goods in containers and truck trailers on rail cars. The railway is also reconstituting its intermodal fleet, putting in service 5,500 new cars that can carry double-stacked containers.

With the new cars, CPR will have a standardized fleet capable of handling any size of container in any load configuration, and will do away with older cars that are less flexible.

The net result will be an estimated 28-per-cent increase in containers per train and 16-per-cent decrease in intermodal train starts, creating railway network capacity for more traffic. CPR expects to reduce its overall intermodal rail car fleet by about 1,300 cars



Double stacked containers originating from the Port of Vancouver head through the Rogers Pass to the urban centers of the east. (Photo Courtesy Canadian Pacific Railway)

without losing capacity, while lowering train-crew costs. Service reliability is expected to improve, especially during the more challenging winter period.

“Over the past several years we have significantly increased the capacity in our intermodal facilities and expanded track sidings to accommodate longer trains,” said Rob Ritchie, President and Chief Executive Officer of CPR. “Now the next critical steps – phasing in remote-control locomotives and introducing a new rail car fleet – are under way as we take CPR's intermodal service to a new level.”

About 2,000 of the new intermodal cars will be in service by the end of this month.

CPR pioneered the use of remote-control locomotive technology in its western-Canada coal trains in the 1970s, making it possible to safely operate trains through the mountains at lengths previously thought impossible. The advent of high-capacity trains was a key development in helping Canada's coal industry overcome its competi-

tive disadvantage of being located a long way from ocean shipping ports.

CPR is now adapting the same concept to the intermodal market, the fastest-growing railway market and one that is highly service-sensitive.

The design of CPR's new, high-power alternating current locomotives allows them to be placed at the head-end and anywhere else in the train. During train operations, the controls of locomotives at each position are linked through data telemetry, giving the head-end crew full command at all times.

Placing a locomotive in a remote-control position distributes tractive effort and produces performance benefits not unlike those of all-wheel drive in a highway passenger vehicle. It also boosts air pressure to ensure sufficient braking power along the entire length of the train in freezing temperatures.

“CPR was the first North American railway to use containers in domestic intermodal service while everyone else was still using trailers,” Ritchie said.

*“Over the past several years we have significantly increased the capacity in our intermodal facilities and expanded track sidings to accommodate longer trains.”*

*— Rob Ritchie,  
President and Chief  
Executive Officer of  
CPR*



## COMMUNITIES CAN QUIET HORNS

### The Cross-Tie

WASHINGTON – The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) on Dec. 17 announced a rule allowing local communities to quiet train horns at some 150,000 railroad crossings nationwide if safety requirements are met.

“For several years, the Federal Railroad Administration has been working to address the impact of train horn noise on communities in a way that improves quality of life for nearby residents without sacrificing safety for motorists at railroad crossings,” said U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta.

“Train horns are important safety devices, but they also can be a nuisance for residents,” he added. “This rule means less noise for millions of Americans living near railroad crossings.”

The agency’s “Interim Final Rule” describes specific standards local decision-makers can use to silence locomotive horns, while improving safety at public highway-rail grade crossings, and allowing many communities with existing whistle bans to maintain those prohibitions.

“Research has shown that locomotive horns provide an important warning to motorists in advance of highway-rail grade crossings,” said Administrator Allan Rutter. “However, we have sought to respond to the many communities which have continued to press for relief from unwanted train horn noise. This rule will provide new flexibility in creating quiet zones, while maintaining safety at highway-rail grade

*“Train horns are important safety devices, but they also can be a nuisance for residents. This rule means less noise for millions of Americans living near railroad crossings.”*

*— U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta.*



A train passes through a grade crossing in Marietta, Ga., on Dec. 27, 2003. A new ruling by the Federal Railroad Administration will allow railroads to silence their horns in many communities. (Todd DeFeo/The Cross-Tie)

crossings.”

Under the rule, local governments will have the opportunity to establish quiet zones in certain areas where there is a low risk of collision, or to make specific upgrades meant to lessen the risk where the hazards are greater.

The upgrade options include the installation of crossing gates that block both lanes of traffic in both directions or some type of approved median divider to prevent drivers from crossing lanes to go around a lowered gate, the temporary closure of a crossing, or a one-way street with gates and lights. The rule also allows use of an automated horn system to be installed at the crossing as a substitute for the train horn.

“Our challenge has been to ensure the highest level of public safety possible, while recognizing communities’ legitimate interest in seeking relief from unwanted noise,” Administrator Rutter said.

For communities with whistle bans, the rule out-

lines specific steps local jurisdictions can take to maintain those restrictions, provided they notify FRA of their plan to create a “pre-rule quiet zone” and take the steps required to qualify them as such.

“By employing a risk-based approach, communities with ‘grand-fathered’ whistle bans can maintain the quality of life they’ve become accustomed to while ensuring public safety at highway rail-grade crossings,” Rutter said.

By law, the final rule will take effect December 18, 2004, one year following the date of its publication. However, communities with existing whistle bans will have at least five years to implement the requirements.

“The industry commends the FRA for developing a rule that recognizes public safety concerns and allows localities to develop alternatives to reduce train horn noise in residential neighborhoods,” said Association of American Railroads President and CEO Edward R. Hamberger.

## MTA, BUS AND RAIL OPERATORS REACH TENTATIVE CONTRACT AGREEMENT

### Railfanning.org

LOS ANGELES – A tentative agreement has been reached on a new three-year labor contract between the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the United Transportation Union, which represents 5,000 bus and rail operators, officials announced Dec. 18.

Terms of the settlement are being withheld pending a ratification meeting for the Union's members. Subject to Union ratification, the

MTA Board will consider approval of the contract at its January Board meeting.

"We are delighted that we have been able to reach an agreement which is equitable to both parties," MTA Board Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky, CEO Roger Snoble and UTU General Chairman James A. Williams said in a joint statement.

"This is a fair agreement for the employees, for the MTA and above all, for our 500,000 customers who depend on our public transit

system."

Negotiations reached their final stages in the last month.

MTA negotiators, Chairman Yaroslavsky and Board member Antonio Villaraigosa and UTU General Chairman James Williams presided over the successful discussions.

"This agreement ensures that bus and rail service will continue without interruption for the transit dependent people of our region," Villaraigosa said.

*"This is a fair agreement for the employees, for the MTA and above all, for our 500,000 customers who depend on our public transit system."*

— Joint Statement

## SEPTA COMMENTS ON PENN.'S 2004 BUDGET

### PRNewswire

PHILADELPHIA – The passage of the Fiscal 2004 Pennsylvania state budget restores a 6 percent cut in SEPTA subsidies (\$15 million), but does not alleviate the need for greater state support for public transit in the Commonwealth.

"Passage of the 2004 budget essentially returns SEPTA to where we were

last January," said SEPTA Board Chair Pasquale T. Deon, Sr. "But we are facing an immediate \$70-million dollar deficit going into the next budget year.

"With the prolonged budget struggle hopefully over, there is the expectation that state government will quickly address the fundamental issue of providing a long term and predictable

source of subsidies for SEPTA and transit agencies statewide. In recent years, SEPTA has reduced expenses and tightened service as much as possible. Without substantial state support in both the near and long term, our ability to provide present transit services will be jeopardized," Deon added.

## CATS AND NS REACH AGREEMENT ON TRACK

### The Cross-Tie

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) and Norfolk Southern Railway Company on Dec. 11 completed the transaction for CATS to purchase six miles of right of way along the South Corridor Light Rail Line.

The \$14.75 million purchase allows CATS to move forward in implementing its plans for light rail service

from I-485 near Pineville to 7th Street in Uptown Charlotte.

CATS has secured approximately 56 percent of the property needed to construct the light rail line. The purchase of the right of way from Scaleybark Road to I-485 is the largest and one of the most important acquisitions to date for the South Corridor Light Rail Project.

This segment, along with

previously acquired corridor segments, allows CATS to continue moving ahead with its final design plans.

"The acquisition of the Norfolk Southern right of way advances CATS' goal of bringing light rail service to the Charlotte region," said Ron Tober, CATS' Chief Executive Officer. "We are pleased with the agreement and believe this transaction will benefit both parties."

### The 2003 Cross-Tie Discography

#### December 2003

Andrews Raid: 'The Most Extraordinary and Astonishing Adventure of the War'

#### November 2003

Amtrak: Ridership Up, Strike Looms

#### October 2003

Walkout: Union Threatens Amtrak Strike

#### September 2003

Army's 101st Bringing Trains Back on Track in Rebuilt Iraq

#### July 2003

SAFETEA: Forward Thinking or Littered with Loopholes?

#### June 2003

Railroad History Runs Deep in Guthrie, Ky., Railroads Still Run

#### May 2003

U.S., Canadian Customs Agencies, Railroads Reach Agreement to Strengthen Security

#### April 2003

Canadian Railroads: Government Policies Holding Back Growth

#### March 2003

Amtrak Gets Most of Requested Funding

#### January 2003



#### March 2003



#### April 2003



#### May 2003



#### June 2003



#### July 2003



#### September 2003



#### October 2003



#### November 2003



#### December 2003



## NS ANNOUNCES '04 SPENDING

### The Cross-Tie

NORFOLK, Va. – Norfolk Southern Corporation plans to spend \$810 million in 2004 for capital improvements to its railroad operations and subsidiaries.

“Our capital spending budget reflects our commitment to providing the highest levels of service and safety for our customers and to utilizing our equipment and facilities efficiently,” said Norfolk Southern Chairman, President and CEO David R. Goode.

The anticipated spending includes \$517 million for roadway projects and \$258 million for equipment.

In roadway improvements, the largest expenditure will be \$384 million for rail, crosstie, ballast and bridge programs. In addition, \$29 million is provided for communications, signal and electrical projects, \$19 million for maintenance of way equipment and \$16 million for environmental projects and public improvements such as grade

crossing separations and crossing signal upgrades.

Equipment spending includes \$178 million to purchase 100 six-axle locomotives, upgrade existing locomotives, certify and rebuild 390 multi-level automobile racks and purchase 212 bi-level racks at the end of their lease. Equipment spending also includes \$42 million for projects related to computers and IT.

Business and industrial development initiatives total \$64 million.

## INTERMODAL TRAFFIC SETS RECORD, AGAIN

### The Cross-Tie

WASHINGTON – For the eighth time in the past ten years intermodal traffic on U.S. railroads has set an annual record, according to the Association of American Railroads.

Intermodal volume for 2003 reached 9,399,690 trailers or containers during the week ended Dec. 6, 2003, breaking the annual record of 9,349,630, which was set last year. With three weeks left in 2003, U.S. intermodal volume is expected to exceed 9.8 million units for the year.

For just the week ended Dec. 6, intermodal traffic totaled 202,690 trailers or containers, up 7.0 percent from the comparable week last year. Carload freight, which doesn't include the intermodal data, totaled 347,735 cars, up 5.0 percent from last year, with volume up 9.3 percent in the East and 1.8 percent in the West.

This is the highest carload freight volume for any week this year. Total volume for

the week was estimated at 31.5 billion ton-miles, up 7.1 percent from last year's 49th week.

Fifteen of nineteen commodities registered gains from last year, with coke up 45.2 percent; crushed stone, gravel and sand up 20.4 percent; waste and scrap materials up 18.5 percent; and grain up 18.4 percent. Loadings of metallic ores were off 19.9 percent from last year.

The AAR also reported the following cumulative totals for U.S. railroads during the first 49 weeks of 2003: 16,014,122 carloads, up 0.1 percent from last year; intermodal volume of 9,399,690 trailers and containers, up 6.7 percent; and total volume of an estimated 1.42 trillion ton-miles, up 1.4 percent from last year's first 49 weeks.

Railroads reporting to AAR account for 88 percent of U.S. carload freight and 95 percent of rail intermodal volume. When the U.S. operations of Canadian rail-

roads are included, the figures increase to 95 percent and 100 percent. Railroads provide more than 40 percent of the nation's intercity freight transportation, more than any other mode, and rail traffic figures are regarded as an important economic indicator.

Canadian railroads also reported an increase in carload freight but a small decline in intermodal during the week ended Dec. 6. Carload volume increased 71,356 cars, or 14.3 percent, from last year. Intermodal traffic of 42,337 trailers and containers was down 0.6 percent from last year.

Cumulative originations for the first 49 weeks of 2003 on the Canadian railroads totaled 2,879,836 carloads, up 0.2 percent from last year, and 1,925,909 trailers and containers, up 6.5 percent from last year.

Combined cumulative volume for the first 49 weeks of 2003 on 15 reporting U.S. and Canadian railroads totaled 19,102,709 carloads, up 0.2 percent from last year.

*“Our capital spending budget reflects our commitment to providing the highest levels of service and safety for our customers and to utilizing our equipment and facilities efficiently.”*

— *David R. Goode,*  
*Norfolk Southern*  
*Chairman, President*  
*and CEO*

## The Cross-Tie

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trepidations?

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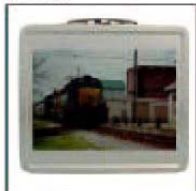
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**<http://railfanning.org/news>**

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to railroad news, general  
features and railfanning  
information.

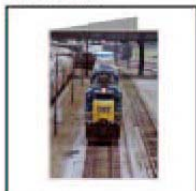
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[trains@railfanning.org](mailto:trains@railfanning.org).

## FOSTER-MILLER ANNOUNCES \$9M FEDERAL GRANT TO EXPAND SAFETY PROGRAM

### PRNewswire

WALTHAM, Mass. – Foster-Miller, Inc., announced Dec. 22 that it has received a two-year, \$9 million contract from the Federal Railroad Administration to expand its work in the areas of locomotive crashworthiness and fuel tank safety.

The contract comes as part of a continuing government effort to improve safety and minimize injuries in train accidents.

“This program will enable a major expansion of our work to provide for the safety of railroad personnel,” said Foster-Miller President William Ribich. “We see great potential to develop these systems and, ultimately, to produce and install them at our Fitchburg

facility.”

Foster-Miller has been actively engaged in creating computerized simulations of collisions involving rail equipment since 1995. These simulations are used to analyze different types of railroad accidents so that designers are able to minimize injury and improve crash worthiness through design modifications.

In 2000, Foster-Miller opened a 5,000-square-foot, full-scale Locomotive Test Facility in Fitchburg, MA, with a 1 million pound loading test fixture capable of handling 40,000-pound test locomotives. Following this modeling and testing, Foster-Miller conducts full-scale railroad crash tests at a government facility in Pueblo, CO.

Work that will be conducted under the new contract will move beyond analysis into designing and demonstrating new locomotive components such as better windshield structures, improved fuel tanks and more efficient ways of evacuating people from disabled trains.

The components will be fabricated in Fitchburg and then tested to quantify the subsequent safety improvements.

“In spite of the difficult economy, Foster-Miller continues to successfully expand its business into new cutting-edge industries, while creating new employment opportunities for Massachusetts residents,” said Congressman John Olver, D-Mass.