

THE CROSS-TIE

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Railroad Quick Hits

- News updates and special reports are available online at Railfanning.org.
- *The Cross-Tie* is launching a new e-mail based subscription. To receive future issues of *The Cross-Tie*, drop a line to subscriptions@thecrosstie.com.
- Canadian Pacific Railway on July 21 said it has filed a statement of claim against defendant Elk Valley Coal Partnership. CPR claims Elk Valley failed to pay the full amount of rail freight charges, which are applicable pursuant to a transportation contract between CPR and Elk Valley Coal Partnership. The dispute relates to the shipment of coal from the defendant's Elk Valley mines in south-eastern British Columbia to Vancouver area ports for overseas export.
- Check out our website at: <http://thecrosstie.com>

TO REPORT OR NOT TO REPORT?

NEW YORK TIMES: RAILROADS HAMPER FEDERAL INVESTIGATIONS



A motorist in Dickson, Tenn., almost crossed into the path of an oncoming CSX freight train. *The New York Times*, in its July 11 edition, reported that railroads have hampered federal investigations by failing to promptly report fatal crashes. (Todd DeFeo/*The Cross-Tie*)

By Todd DeFeo

Railroads, *The New York Times* reported July 11, have hampered federal investigations by failing to promptly report fatal crashes. The report immediately sparked criticism from Union Pacific and the Federal Railroad Administration.

"It's a systemic failure," James E. Hall, a former chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, told *The New York Times*. "It's been something that has just

not grabbed the attention, unfortunately, of the public."

The newspaper's investigation called Union Pacific a "stark example of how some railroads, even as they blame motorists, repeatedly sidestep their own responsibility in grade-crossing fatalities."

"Their actions range from destroying, mishandling or simply losing evidence to not reporting the crashes

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DOZENS KILLED IN WRECK

By Todd DeFeo

At least 36 people were killed when a Turkish train heading from Ankara to Istanbul derailed July 22, according to various published reports. Another 60 people were also injured in the wreck.

The high speed train derailed near Mekece, a small village in northwest Turkey, *The Associated Press* reported. Some critics attributed the crash to poor tracks, which could not handle new high speed cars.

"The train was a little fast going around the curves," *The Associated Press* quoted injured passenger Namik Kemal Ozden as saying. "There were vibrations. My cousin was sitting next to me, we hugged each other. The windows broke and we fell to one side. We could only understand what happened once we got out."

It is unclear how many people were killed in the crash. Initial reports placed the death toll at more than 120 people, but that tally was later reduced.

Turkey has been trying to update its national rail system. The tracks where the train derailed were not high speed ones and the train was likely not moving that fast.

UP, FRA OPPOSE NYT REPORT

(Continued from page 1)

properly in the first place,” the newspaper reported.

Union Pacific, however, refutes the report.

“Union Pacific’s policy is clear: We do not destroy information or evidence needed for legal proceedings,” the railroad said in a statement. “In the rare instances when an individual employee intentionally destroyed or altered evidence, the employee was fired. The company also has in place an Ethics Committee to review allegations of misbehavior.”

In a letter to employees after *The New York Times* published the results of its investigation, Dick Davidson, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Union Pacific Corporation, admitted the railroad might have been lax in some of its required reporting responsibilities.

“During the course of the reporter’s investigation, we learned that some of our reporting and compliance processes were not as thorough as we expect,” Davidson wrote. “When we learned of these breakdowns in our processes, we took immediate corrective actions. Union Pacific’s policy is to be 100 percent compliant with all of the many regulations that apply to railroads.”

He added: “... In October 2002, we instituted major changes to our processes to ensure that this wider range of materials is kept. Additionally, we will initiate a program to install video cameras on locomotives to ensure accurate recording of crossing incidents.”

In his letter, Davidson contends Union Pacific has a “comprehensive grade crossing safety program.” Included in the program is “system vegetation control, maintenance of grade crossing warnings, inspection and maintenance of track and crossing panels, maintenance of locomotive horns and lights, and training and certification of train crews who operate the trains.”

Like other major railroads, Union Pacific has posted toll free numbers at every grade crossing for motorists to call in case of an emergency, Davidson said.

As a result of these safety programs, grade crossing accidents on Union Pacific declined 84% between 1976 and 2003, the railroad said. At the same time, the railroad contends, the annual number of fatalities from rail-highway incidents on Union Pacific decreased 74% from 261 to 68.

In May, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) said there were a record low number of highway-rail grade crossing fatalities in 2003. The numbers were down 9% from 2002 and roughly 47% since 1994, the FRA said.

In a written response, the FRA said it has made “highway-rail grade crossing safety a top priority,” adding “it can be considered one of the great success stories in American transportation.”

“To read the recent story in *The New York Times*, one would think just the opposite of the FRA,” the statement continued. “It was disappointing to learn that after

an extensive investigation, the reporter came to the conclusion that the FRA is indifferent to highway-rail crossing accidents. Anyone interested in an unbiased review of the same FRA records and its professionals would have understood the tremendous efforts put into the successful prevention of vehicle-train collisions.”

However, the FRA admitted, *The New York Times* “highlighted some important issues.” But, the FRA criticized the paper, saying it “missed an opportunity to heighten public awareness of the dangers of ignoring highway-rail crossings, the major source of accidents and fatalities.”

“... *The New York Times* could have provided a great service to the entire nation if the same amount of time, resources and newspaper ink were used to examine the causes of highway-rail crossing collisions and how best to prevent them,” the FRA’s statement read.

“... The article could have explained how the public and local officials could join with us in saving the lives which have so tragically been lost. And it is disappointing that it chose to ignore the tremendous and successful efforts the Federal Railroad Administration has put into the prevention of vehicle-train collisions which has been one of the great success stories in the transportation arena.”

The Association of American Railroads said in a statement, grade crossings are safer because railroads have worked with governments and also because of Operation Lifesaver.

“During the course of the reporter’s investigation, we learned that some of our reporting and compliance processes were not as thorough as we expect,” Davidson wrote. “When we learned of these breakdowns in our processes, we took immediate corrective actions. Union Pacific’s policy is to be 100 percent compliant with all of the many regulations that apply to railroads.”

*— Dick Davidson,
Chairman and Chief
Executive Officer Union
Pacific Corporation*

WATERFRONT RED CAR LINE'S FIRST ANNIVERSARY FEATURES RED CAR

Business Wire

SAN PEDRO, Calif. – It is a reunion sure to be remembered.

The Port of Los Angeles' historic Pacific Electric (PE) Red Car 1058 reunited with her sister, PE Red Car 332, in commemoration of the first anniversary of the Waterfront Red Car Line.

As part of the July 17 and July 18 celebration, the Port offered free rides on all of its Red Cars, including visiting Car 332.

Both Red Cars hold momentous movie star status. After her retirement in 1940, Car 332 was owned by MGM Studios and featured in major motion pictures, such as 1952's "Singin' in the Rain."

Years after the Red Car system was discontinued in 1961, Car 1058 was featured in the movie "Bound for Glory" in 1976 and 1988's "Who Framed Roger Rabbit?"

An encounter of Hollywood proportions, Car 332 was to be transported to San Pedro from her current home at the Orange Empire Railway Museum in Perris, Calif., and remain at the Port for the entire weekend.

The Orange Empire Railway Museum will have a display at the maintenance facility at 22nd and Miner Streets – where riders will board Car 332 – with information about Pacific Electric's history and its own

famous collection of original Red Cars.

Although she is now painted white and green, Car 332's coloring once matched the well-recognized "Pacific Electric Red." The smaller, single-truck Birney-type car was used on PE's local streetcar lines in San Pedro in the 1920s-30s.

Car 332 is a nostalgic complement to the Waterfront Red Car Line, with "open air" style windows and "walkover" seats.

July 19, 2003, marked the inauguration of the Port's Waterfront Red Car Line – the first time in 42 years that Red Cars have operated in Los Angeles.

On July 1, 1854, the first trans-New Jersey train left Coopers Ferry Terminal in Camden and arrived on the then-bare Absecon Island in Atlantic City.

N.J. TRANSIT CELEBRATES TRAIN

On July 1, 1854, the first trans-New Jersey train left Coopers Ferry Terminal in Camden and arrived on the then-bare Absecon Island in Atlantic City.

As part of Atlantic City's 150th birthday celebration, the "ghost" of Dr. Jonathan

Pitney – regarded as the Father of Atlantic City – boarded a N.J. Transit train on July 1 to re-enact the first Camden-Atlantic Railroad train ride into the City by the Sea.

On July 1, 2004, N.J. Transit Train 4611 left 30th

Street Station in Philadelphia at 9:30 a.m. to begin the re-enactment with the "ghost" of Dr. Jonathan Pitney, played by Michael Doyle.

The first train carried 600 dignitaries, politicians and members of the press.

BART CARS FLAUNT SUMMER LOOK

Business Wire

OAKLAND, Calif. – For the first time in its 32 year history, BART covered up its famous silver coating and blue stripes on several BART cars and outfit them with a fresh summer look.

Starting June 16, BART gave the media a sneak peak at one of seven BART cars that will essentially become

moving messages after they're "wrapped" in a giant, sky blue sign that reads, "Spare the Air, Ride BART."

The BART car wrapping idea is part of a brand new air quality awareness program, which the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Bay Area Air Quality Manage-

ment District are launching in order to protect billions of transportation dollars earmarked for the Bay Area.

Both the Air District and MTC are hoping to use BART's environmentally friendly "wraputation" to promote cleaner air by asking people to ride BART during the summer smog season.

“You know you’re doing something right when your advertising — in and of itself — can generate revenue. We are thrilled that consumers like the Acela artwork as much as we do.”

— Barbara Richardson,
Amtrak vice president of
Marketing and Sales

WHO KNEW? AMTRAK STARTS SELLING AWARD-WINNING ADS

WASHINGTON — Amtrak’s new ads for *Acela Express* are paying off in ways the railroad never expected — they’re selling themselves, literally.

Customer response to the campaign has been so strong that Amtrak has taken the unusual step of selling posters of the award-winning advertising at its online store.

“You know you’re doing something right when your advertising — in and of itself — can generate revenue,” said Barbara Richardson, Amtrak vice president of Marketing and Sales. “We are

thrilled that consumers like the *Acela* artwork as much as we do.”

The new *Acela* campaign, launched in September 2003, reflects Amtrak’s back-to-basics approach to marketing its products. The ads feature bold, colorful illustrations by world-famous graphic artist Michael Schwab, best known for his work for clients including Apple and Coke.

Schwab’s art deco images evoke the love Americans have for train travel, while simultaneously positioning Amtrak as a modern trans-

portation provider serving the major cities of the Northeast.

Since the ads were released, customers from all over the country have contacted Amtrak to request copies.

There are four posters available for sale: a Boston version, a New York version, a Washington version and a fourth version featuring all three cities. The set of four posters is available for \$15.

Individual posters can be purchased for \$5.

TRAILS AND RAILS PROGRAM EXPANDS

WASHINGTON — The Trails and Rails on-board guide program has begun again this year on select Amtrak trains across the country.

Trails and Rails is a partnership between the National Park Service and Amtrak designed to encourage sightseers who are not National Park visitors to explore the natural and cultural aspects of several regions of the country.

“The world outside the window of train becomes even more interesting as The National Park Service Rangers and volunteers provide commentary and information about the sites, natural landmarks and their history,” said

Barbara Richardson, Vice President of Marketing and Sales. “As Amtrak travelers pass through some of America’s greatest sites, the Rangers and volunteers also conduct special activities on board and provide cultural and environmental information that further enriches and underscores the uniqueness of each Amtrak train route.”

Participating trains include Amtrak’s *Adirondack*, *California Zephyr*, *City of New Orleans*, *Coast Starlight*, *Crescent*, *Empire Builder*, *Heartland Flyer*, *Kansas City Mule/Ann Rutledge*, *Southwest Chief*, *Sunset Limited*, *Texas Ea-*

gle and the *Vermont*.

This year, the Texas Historical Commission and the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site joined the program.

The Texas Historical Commission will encourage travelers to visit historic and cultural attractions across Texas.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site focuses on destinations important to Civil War, civil rights and Native American heritage as well as “Southern Wonders” such as the 24-mile long railroad bridge spanning Lake Pontchartrain.



In next month’s issue of *The Cross-Tie*, we’ll take a look at how a former railcar facility in Duluth, Ga., has turned into a tourist attrac-

tion. And, we’ll retell the story of a railroad that no longer exists and has long since been lost to the concrete jungle.

IN SUSPICION OF THREAT, AMTRAK TRAIN STOPPED

By Todd DeFeo

Authorities, responding to a suspicious note, stopped an Amtrak train in Newark, N.J., and searched with bomb-sniffing dogs before letting it resume.

The train, bound for Newark, N.J., was stopped July 11, after a suspicious note was found aboard the train. *The Associated Press* quoted an anonymous source as saying the note contained "pro-Muslim, anti-Jewish rhetoric."

The train was stopped for about an hour and a half before it was allowed to resume, according to various published reports. Police searched the train with bomb-sniffing dogs and videoed passengers, *The Associated Press* reported.

Amtrak spokesman Dan

Stessel told *Reuters* there was "no threat to the train."

With political conventions fast approaching, police and railroads are stepping up patrols. N.J. Transit, among other agencies, has already announced its intention of upping the security ante.

With the help of state troopers, N.J. Transit police will be inspecting all New York-bound trains in rail yards. And, authorities will perform on board inspections before trains enter a tunnel leading to New York's Penn Station.

The Republican National Convention is scheduled for Aug. 29 at Madison Square Garden.

"These are prudent steps that will reduce the security risks associated

with serving customers on an open transit system," N.J. Transit Board Chairman and State Transportation Commissioner Jack Lettiere said in a statement.

N.J. Transit Executive Director George D. Warrington urged passengers to travel light and to keep their personal belongings nearby at all times.

Penn Station is the nation's busiest train station. More than 1,200 trains carrying N.J. Transit, Long Island Rail Road, Amtrak and NYC subway passengers pass through the station. N. J. Transit, for example, operates about 300 trains through the station complex, serving more than 50,000 passengers who make 100,000 trips into and out of New York daily.

"These are prudent steps that will reduce the security risks associated with serving customers on an open transit system."

— N.J. Transit Board
Chairman and State
Transportation
Commissioner Jack
Lettiere.

WITH SUMMER HEAT — AND COAL — ON THE RISE, RACELAND YARD FILLS CAR DEMAND

PRNewswire-FirstCall

RACELAND, Ky. — With coal demand sizzling like summer heat, the 250 employees of CSX Transportation's Raceland Car Shop weren't about to break a sweat over the challenge of finding a way to make more coal cars available to customers.

The Raceland team completed an accelerated 300-car order recently, and at mid-year are well on their way to rehabilitating the 2004 target of more than 3,000 coal cars. Raceland's output is a critical part of meeting surging coal

demand.

"We are striving to keep up with demand to maintain coal stockpile levels," said Chris Jenkins, vice president of coal and automotive. "We are doing everything possible to meet this significant demand, and our Raceland team is a critical part of that effort."

With work at Raceland already scheduled for an aggressive 2004 production target, Shop Manager Frank Spiers called together employee leaders in early March and asked them if they could do the extra work safely, on

time and within budget. He got an enthusiastic "yes" from workers who have long made Raceland Car Shop synonymous with labor-management innovation.

Work included patches applied to the sides of open-top hopper cars, or new sides along with other repairs to hopper chutes. The work on the additional 300 cars began March 8 and was completed on June 1. In addition, Raceland Car Shop employees are working on coil steel cars and open-top hopper cars for other commodities. Raceland pro-

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*Questions, comments,
concerns, fears, trepidations?*

We want your feedback. For more information, general feedback or to submit a press release, please e-mail us at:
news@thecrosstie.com

The deadline for submitting news is the 12th of each month. Items submitted after the 12th may have to wait before being published. All press releases are subject to editor's approval and may be edited for content and length.

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CSX'S RACELAND SHOPS KEEP PACE WITH INCREASING COAL DEMAND

(Continued from page 5)
duces 24 cars a day, and is certified for heavy repair by the Association of American Railroads.

"The employees at Raceland accomplish every challenge they're given," Spiers said. "This additional capacity that they have provided to the customers of CSXT on such an accelerated basis shows what they are made of. And we are just as proud that we have maintained our excellent safety record of no reportable injuries."

The need for additional work at Raceland was recognized during a meeting to address surging coal demand and the growing necessity for additional coal cars. The meeting included Jenkins; Jim Snyder, vice president-car management; and Don

Jones, assistant chief mechanical officer-fleet planning.

Dennis Shaughnessy, manager of production control, worked with Spiers to schedule the additional cars.

The cars are needed to haul the 170 million tons of coal that CSXT moves annually, or approximately 30,000 carloads weekly. On the domestic side, lowered utility stockpiles are driving increased demand, while overseas, China's growing economy and other favorable conditions have energized the export market, which has been diminishing over the years.

To meet both domestic and export demand, CSXT is acquiring new locomotives, training new train crews, leasing additional coal cars and rehabilitating others, such

as those at Raceland. Coal capacity per car ranges from 100 tons to 118 tons, and the cars are constructed of steel or aluminum.

The movement of coal makes up about a quarter of CSX's business. Raceland is CSX's largest car facility.

At the shops, employees repair various rail cars, including coal hoppers, gondolas and coil steel cars. At times, CSX, citing work demand, has reduced its work force at the shop.

— *Cross-Tie* editor Todd DeFeo contributed to this report.

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