

# THE CROSS-TIE

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

<i>Wreck Roundup</i>	3
<i>Trackside Profile</i>	3
<i>Silencing Horns</i>	4
<i>2004 a Safe Year</i>	5
<i>MARTA Wraps</i>	6
<i>News From the Rails</i>	7
<i>On the Flip Side</i>	8

**Railroad Quick Hits**

- News updates and special reports are available online at Railfanning.org.
- *The Cross-Tie* has launched an e-mail based subscription. To receive future issues of *The Cross-Tie*, drop a line to subscriptions@thecrosstie.com or log onto <http://www.thecrosstie.com/subscribe>. There is no cost to subscribe and e-mail addresses are not sold to third party vendors.
- In the July 2005 edition of *The Cross-Tie*, look for a photo spread from Folkston, Ga., home of the world famous Folkston Funnel. The south Georgia town is famous for its railfanning action, seeing over 80 trains per day, according to some accounts. We'll spend the day there and report about what we see and whether the town lives up to its hype.

Inside, Page 2: DOT to Triple Rail Inspection Capacity  
 Inside, Page 5: Railroads Set Safety Record in 2004

Volume 3, Number 6  
 June 2005



## DOT UNVEILS NATIONAL RAIL SAFETY ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS THE FUTURE SAFETY AND VITALITY OF AMERICA'S RAILWAYS

COLUMBIA, S.C. — A new plan to improve safety along the nation's railroads was unveiled May 16 by U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta during a visit to Columbia, S.C.

The plan will help prevent train accidents caused by human error, improve the safety of hazmat shipments, minimize the dangers of crew fatigue, deploy state-of-the-art technologies to detect track defects, and focus inspectors on safety trouble spots, officials say.

Mineta outlined the new National Rail Safety Action Plan, which represents the Depart-

ment of Transportation's aggressive new approach to improving safety throughout the railroad industry. The plan will target the most frequent, highest-risk causes of accidents, focus federal oversight and inspection resources, and accelerate research into new technologies that can vastly improve rail safety.

"The aggressive and comprehensive plan I am unveiling today will bolster safety along America's rails and help prevent the tragic and costly rail accidents that still plague the nation's railroad network. This

*(Continued on page 2)*

# DOT UNVEILS NATIONAL RAIL SAFETY ACTION PLAN

*(Continued from page 1)*

step-by-step action plan targets the fundamental factors that cause rail accidents,” Mineta said May 16.

One of the primary safety issues addressed in the plan is human error, the largest single factor accounting for 38 percent of all accidents over the last five years. Preliminary findings from the tragic accident in Graniteville this January point to human error as the cause – the failure of a train crew to properly line a switch back to the mainline track.

Under the plan, Secretary Mineta, with guidance from some of the nation’s top rail safety advisors, is seeking to develop a new federal rule to address human factor accidents. He said the Department is also accelerating research into the role fatigue plays in accidents to help railroads set better crew schedules.

The Secretary also announced the implementation of a new National Inspection Plan for deploying inspectors and resources to safety hot spots before accidents occur. And as part of that reinvigorated inspection effort, the Federal Railroad Administration is investing in special high-tech rail cars that automatically inspect tracks integrity as they roll along the rails.

The safe transport of hazardous materials by rail is also a major focus of the action plan. In response to FRA’s call to action, the railroad industry will now provide local emergency responders a ranked listing of the top 25 hazardous materials transported through their community. And by July, Mineta said, the FRA will launch a new pilot program providing emergency responders with real-time information via a secure website about the hazardous materials involved in train accidents.

Additionally, to help alleviate risk in so-called “dark territory” – or railroad lines without signal systems, the Department is investigating new devices to detect if switches are in the correct position, and low-cost circuits to detect broken rails. FRA is also beginning field-tests on new technology that automatically controls train movements and speed, including bringing a train to a stop.

“While the railroad industry’s overall safety record has improved over the last decade, very serious accidents continue to occur,” Mineta said. “Growth in both freight and vehicle traffic has created new opportunities and new challenges in the form of more trains on our tracks than ever before. But safety must remain the core principle that guides operations on our nation’s rail system.”

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

## SAFETY PLAN: DOT TO TRIPLE RAIL INSPECTION CAPACITY

BATON ROUGE, La. — The federal government will triple its capacity to inspect the nation’s rail lines with three new advanced track inspection vehicles being launched over the next 18 months, U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta said.

The announcement came during a visit to Baton Rouge and a demonstration of a new self-propelled inspection vehicle, the T-18, before it departs on its maiden voyage to identify track defects throughout Gulf Coast and Midwestern states.

Mineta noted that with the T-18 and two more inspection vehicles under construction, the Department of Transportation’s Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will soon be able to inspect 100,000 miles of track each year, tripling the agency’s current capacity.

“The T-18 gives us the ability to analyze the integrity of more track more quickly and to provide results that enable rail-

roads to make timely repairs when needed,” Secretary Mineta said. “More track inspections along the nation’s rail lines are good not just for the safety of railroad employees and communities, but good for our economy as well.”

The new inspection vehicles are a part of the National Rail Safety Action Plan, the Department of Transportation’s aggressive new approach to improving safety throughout the railroad industry. The plan targets the most frequent, highest-risk causes of accidents, focuses federal oversight and inspection resources, and accelerates research into new technologies – like the T-18 – that can vastly improve rail safety.

Highway grade crossing safety – the second leading cause of death associated with railroad operations – will improve as part of the new rail safety plan, Mineta said. The plan calls on all railroad companies to continue to preserve data

from their locomotive event recorders – black boxes for trains – and to report all accidents and preserve all evidence that can be used to help local law enforcement investigate crossing accidents.

Louisiana has had 15 grade crossing fatalities this year, three times as many than at this point last year. While the number of grade crossing fatalities has declined over the years, growing rail and vehicle traffic led to a nationwide increase in the number of crossing fatalities in 2004, Mineta said.

In addition to expanding rail inspection capacity and improving grade crossing safety, the new plan will focus on human error, the largest single factor accounting for 38 percent of all accidents over the last five years. Under the plan, Mineta, with guidance from some of the nation’s top rail safety advisors, will lead development of a new federal rule to address human factor accidents, and the De-

partment is also accelerating research into the role fatigue plays in accidents to help railroads set better crew schedules.

The plan also will focus on the safe transport of hazardous materials by rail. In response to a call to action from the FRA, the railroad industry will now provide local emergency responders a ranked listing of the top 25 hazardous materials transported through their community. And by July, Mineta said, the FRA will launch a new pilot program providing emergency responders with real-time information via a secure website about the hazardous materials involved in train accidents.

The Department also is investigating new devices to detect if switches are in the correct position, and low-cost circuits to detect broken rails. FRA is also beginning field-tests on new technology that automatically controls train movements and speed, including bringing a train to a stop.

## WRECK ROUNDUP

Here is a list of some of the railroad wrecks and derailments reported in the last month:

A vacuum train derailed May 31 at a Carroll Gardens in Brooklyn, *Newsday* reported. The MTA train pulled out of a station around 4 a.m. and it took crews almost 12 hours to clean up the derailment.

A Canadian National train derailed May 30 in Baton Rouge, La., and forced the evacuation of some downtown blocks, *The (Baton Rouge) Advocate* reported. Eight cars derailed, half of which were carrying the flammable gas propylene oxide, according to the newspaper.

On May 24, a Union Pacific train derailed in Los Angeles and a car leaked acetone, a television station reported. A pair of Metrolink trains were cancelled the next morning because of the derailment.

A 19-year-old man was electrocuted May 19 after he ran onto Metropolitan Atlanta Transit Authority tracks and came in contact with the third rail. The man was fleeing from police when he went onto the tracks at Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. Rail service was back to normal the next morning.

Eleven cars derailed in a Houston Union Pacific rail yard early in the morning on May 13. At first, authorities were concerned about potentially leaking petroleum gas from some of the cars, but those fears were unfounded.

A CSX train heading from Washington, Ind., to Louisville, Ky., derailed near Pekin, Ind., *WAVE* reported. Eleven of the train's cars derailed, including at least one carrying phosphorus pentasulfide, the television station reported. About 200 nearby residents were evacuated because of the derailment.

## Trackside Profile

### WINDER, GA.: CITY OF OPPORTUNITY



Todd DeFeo | The Cross-Tie

A CSX freight train performs switching operations in downtown Winder, Ga., on April 29, 2005. Railroads in the Northeast Georgia date to 1883.

WINDER, Ga. – In 1883, the Gainesville, Jefferson and Southern, later the Gainesville Midland Railroad, built tracks between Gainesville and Social Circle that passed through Winder, then known as Jug Tavern.

Four years later, the Georgia, Carolina and Northern Railroad started building a line between Baltimore and Atlanta, with the route passing through town. The line reached the Atlanta Area in 1892, though before the railroad's completion, it was leased to a company operating as Seaboard Air Line.

The first train reached town on April 24, 1892, and had 150 people on board. The train had two passenger coaches and a baggage car.

Originally, the railroad intended to build the tracks about four miles south of town. However, residents — including Dr. Wiley H. Bush — gave the railroad right-of-way at a discounted price to lure the company into building the tracks through Jug Tavern.

To show their appreciation to the railroad, the town changed its name to honor John H. Winder, a general manager with Seaboard Air Line. The General Assembly made the name change official 1893.

Winder was born in 1861 in Raleigh, N. C., to John and Octavia Winder. He started with the Seaboard Air Line as a clerk and rose to the position on general manager and died in Baltimore in 1952.

In 1910 or 1912, depending on the source, Seaboard Air Line built a depot on Porter Street in downtown Winder. On Dec. 9, 1975, the railroad gave the depot to the city of Winder, and Seaboard Air Line's predecessor, CSX, still operates about 30 trains through town.

In the late 1940s, the Gainesville Midland Railroad — known as the Jug Tavern Route — abandoned its tracks.

In 1959, Seaboard Air Line donated a steam engine to the city of Winder. The 2-10-0 locomotive — known as a decapod — is on display in downtown Winder, near the Barrow County, Ga., courthouse.

Winder at one time was home to a Thrall Car Manufacturing Co. plant. Around the turn of the century, the plant that made autorack cars closed.

— Todd DeFeo

Each month, *The Cross-Tie* will feature a trackside location. For more information about these locations, log onto Railfanning.org and click on Trackside.

# REGULATION ALLOWS COMMUNITIES TO SILENCE TRAIN HORNS

WASHINGTON — Thousands of communities nationwide will have the choice to consider silencing train horns at highway-rail grade crossings based on meeting safety needs, under a Final Rule made public April 22 by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

In addition, the rule provides a process for localities with existing whistle bans to retain their bans.

“At every step of the process we listened closely to the concerns of the public and local officials to craft a rule that balances safety and quality of life issues,” said FRA Acting Administrator Robert D. Jamison. “Communities will have significant flexibility to establish or maintain quiet zones for the benefit of their residents while keeping highway-rail grade crossings safe for motorists.”

The Final Train Horn Rule becomes effective on June 24, and is the result of a 1994 law mandating the use of a locomotive’s horn at all public highway-rail grade crossings with certain exceptions. This rule will pre-empt applicable state laws and related railroad operating rules requiring locomotive horns be sounded, and it also will supersede the previously issued Interim Final Rule.

The Final Rule provides for six types of quiet zones, ensures the involvement of state agencies and railroads in the quiet zone development process, gives communities credit for pre-existing safety warning devices at grade crossings and addresses other issues including pedestrian crossings within a quiet zone.

The establishment of a new quiet zone requires at minimum that each grade crossing be equipped with flashing lights and gates.

Additional safety measures may be required to compensate for the absence of the horn as a warning device. New quiet zones can be in effect 24-hours a day or just during the overnight period between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Communities with a whistle ban in effect on Oct. 9, 1996, the date Congress directed FRA to specifically address the issue of existing bans, and on Dec. 18, 2003, the date the Interim Final Rule was published, will be able to continue to keep the train horns silent for at least an additional five to eight years as they plan for and install any additional necessary safety measures.

Communities with a whistle ban created after Oct. 9, 1996, and in effect on Dec. 18, 2003, will have one year to install any additional necessary safety measures before the train horns will start sounding again.

The rule also establishes the first-ever maximum train horn volume level and will reduce the amount of time the horn is sounded, which will be beneficial to communities that decide not to pursue quiet zones.

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

## GRANT TO REDUCE HIGHWAY-RAIL CROSSING COLLISIONS

WASHINGTON — A \$1 million safety grant will be used for public education and outreach programs to reduce fatalities resulting from highway-rail grade crossing collisions, pedestrian accidents and railroad trespassing, which together account for 96 percent of all rail-related deaths, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) announced May 31.

The grant will fund various activities of Operation Lifesaver Inc., a not-for-profit organization that provides educational and awareness programs to inform motorists about how to safely approach highway-rail grade crossings, and to prevent individuals from trespassing on railroad property. Specifically,

the funds will be used for programs in more than 40 states, training for nearly 5,000 volunteer presenters and expand Operation Lifesaver’s ongoing national public service announcement campaign.

“In far too many cases trespass and grade crossings accidents are preventable tragedies,” said Acting FRA Administrator Robert D. Jamison. “To achieve additional safety improvements, it is critically important that motorists and other individuals be aware of what to do and not do when they are around grade crossings and other railroad property.”

The Operation Lifesaver grant also supports a major goal of the U.S. Department of

Transportation’s new National Rail Safety Action Plan to improve the awareness of the role motorists, railroads, states, and local communities each have in improving safety at grade crossings.

Since 1995, the number of highway-rail grade crossing collisions declined from 6.92 to 3.95 per million train miles operated; and the number of fatalities has decreased by 36 percent, to 368 in 2004. During the same time period, the trespass casualty rate declined from 1.43 to 1.14 per million train miles operated, although the number of trespass fatalities has remained fairly constant at about 500 annually.

This safety grant augments

recent FRA actions aimed at improving grade crossing safety, including issuing a safety advisory to the railroad industry stressing the industry’s role in preventing grade crossing accidents and its responsibilities after a collision occurs, publishing a final rule requiring the sounding of a locomotive’s horn at all public grade crossings unless the crossing is sufficiently protected by warning devices and other safety measures and publishing a final rule requiring reflective materials on locomotives and freight railcars to give motorists an additional visual warning of a train at a crossing in poor weather or lighting conditions.

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

## AAR: RAILROADS SET SAFETY RECORD IN 2004

WASHINGTON — Employees at the nation's railroads reported their lowest employee casualty rate in history during 2004, Edward R. Hamberger, president and CEO of the Association of American Railroads, said May 19 at a luncheon ceremony honoring railroads with the best employee safety records last year.

Twelve railroads received gold, silver or bronze E.H. Harriman Memorial Safety Awards in four separate categories at the awards luncheon.

Last year's employee casualty rate was nine percent lower than it was in 2003, when the previous record was set, Hamberger told the audience. "And for the first two months of this year, the employee casualty rate is down an additional 20 percent from the same period last year," he added.

Hamberger attributed the improvement to "a lot of dedication and hard work by the railroads and their employees. At its heart, safety is about those people who operate trains, maintain and repair tracks and signals, dispatch trains and maintain the industry's 21,000 locomotives and 1.3 million freight cars."

Norfolk Southern Corporation took top honors for the sixteenth consecutive year in Group A, comprised of line-haul railroads whose employees worked 15 million

employee-hours or more during the award year. In this category, the silver award went to the BNSF Railway while Union Pacific took the bronze.

In Group B, line-haul railroads with 4 to 15 million employee-hours, Metra, the Chicago commuter railroad, took the gold medal for the second consecutive year. The Soo Line Railroad, part of Canadian Pacific Railway, took the silver medal for the second straight year, while CN's Illinois Central subsidiary took the bronze medal.

In Group C, line-haul railroads with fewer than 4 million employee-hours, the Guilford Rail System took the gold medal. The silver medal went to the Wheeling and Lake Erie Railway while the Providence and Worcester earned the bronze.

For Group S&T, switching and terminal companies, the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis won the gold medal for the third consecutive year. Conrail was named winner of the silver medal, also for the third straight year, while the Alton and Southern Railway took the bronze medal.

Four railroads received special certificates of commendation for continuous improvement in safety performance. They were the BNSF Railway; Long Island Rail Road; Canadian Pacific Railway's Delaware & Hudson unit; and Conrail.

The annual rail employee safety awards

were founded in 1913 by the late Mary W. Harriman in memory of her husband, Edward H. Harriman, a pioneer in American railroading. For many years, the program was sponsored by two sons, E. Roland Harriman and the Honorable W. Averell Harriman, now both deceased. The awards are currently administered under the auspices of the E.H. Harriman Memorial Awards Institute, with support from the Mary W. Harriman Foundation.

At the time the Harriman Awards were founded, railroading was considered among the nation's most dangerous occupations. However, employee injury rates have declined sharply — with a 70 percent decline just since 1980 — and today railroad employees have injury rates comparable to those experienced by employees in retail stores and lower than those in other modes of transportation.

Winners are chosen by a committee of individuals in the transportation field. Awards are granted to railroads on the basis of the lowest casualty rates per 200,000 employee-hours worked, with a formula that takes into account the volume of work performed, as well as the number of fatalities, injuries and occupational illnesses, all documented and confirmed by the Federal Railroad Administration.

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

## ALASKA RAILROAD RECEIVES GRANT, RAIL LINE EXTENSION STUDIED

WASHINGTON — A \$24.8 million infrastructure grant for the Alaska Railroad will help upgrade mainline tracks, replace bridges, prevent rock slides and install track at the new Fairbanks Intermodal Facility, the Federal Railroad Administration announced May 27.

The Alaska Railroad is a state-owned corporation providing both passenger and freight rail services to communities from Fairbanks to Seward. Additionally, through innovative arrangements with cruise line companies, the railroad has developed a special service tai-

lored to meet the needs of the cruise industry. By attaching first-class travel cars owned by the cruise lines to its trains, the railroad brings cruise passengers to places in Alaska that ships cannot serve. This innovative service has helped make the railroad unique as the only profitable passenger railroad in the nation, receiving no state operating subsidy.

"There are lessons in the experience of Alaska Railroad that can apply elsewhere," said FRA Acting Administrator Robert D. Jamison. "Creating government partnerships to support passenger rail infrastruc-

ture improvements and letting rail operators focus on running the trains can lead to better service, increased demand and profitability."

The grant involves replacement of nearly 16,000 railroad ties and conversion of 30 miles of track, from jointed to continuously welded rail, for easier maintenance and a smoother ride. These funds also will be used to stabilize track subgrades, prevent rock slides onto tracks near Healy Canyon, and build additional track at the Fairbanks Intermodal Facility to handle more trains, more efficiently. Also, nine bridges will

either be replaced or rehabilitated.

In addition, FRA announced a second \$14 million grant to fund preliminary engineering and environmental studies for an 80-mile extension of the rail line. The extension proposes to connect Eielson Air Force Base near North Pole, to Fort Greely near Delta Junction, to support a variety of military needs. These funds also will be used to study a realignment and improvement of 20 miles of track from Fort Wainwright to Moose Creek, where it would connect with the new rail line.

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

## MARTA WRAPS TRAINS FOR NEW ADVERTISING PROGRAM

ATLANTA — The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) has launched its wrapped train advertising program, signing IKEA as its first client.

“This is another innovative opportunity to increase our non-traditional advertising revenue stream,” said MARTA General Manager Nathaniel P. Ford, Sr. “When Viacom offered a 50/50 revenue split with MARTA to sell advertising on the outside of our trains, our Board agreed it was a win-win situation that will benefit MARTA for years to come.”

Viacom Outdoor Group, MARTA’s advertising contractor for sales of internal/external buses, trains, as well as stations and bus shelters, approached the furniture retailer about this first-ever opportunity in March after they announced plans to open its first Atlanta store. MARTA expects to generate \$30,000 in revenue from the initial contract.

IKEA, the world’s leading home furnishings retailer, which will be opening its first Atlanta store on June 29th, will wrap four 75-foot rail cars for two months. The process of applying adhesive vinyl directly to the rail cars takes one day per car or eight to 10 hours on average.

The cars are scheduled to go into service on MARTA’s North/South rail line on May 12.

“IKEA recognizes and supports public transit wherever we operate stores, and the same is true here in Atlanta

where our store in Midtown will be accessible by MARTA. A rider myself, I value this innovative, non-traditional approach,” said IKEA Atlanta Store Manager Lynda Mee.

“Including MARTA’s wrapped trains as part of our broad marketing mix allows IKEA to reach Atlanta residents in a unique and unexpected way.”

Similar to MARTA’s bus wrap program, potential advertisers will be able to wrap both sides of a rail car, which includes everything but the front and the back of the car and the windows. One wrapped rail car can be compared in size to two wrapped 40-foot MARTA buses.

Billy Long, Viacom Sales Manager for the Display Division, said MARTA’s rail system will attract many advertisers through the wrapped train program.

“Our vantage point for selling MARTA train wraps is that the rail system is 75 to 80 percent above ground at all times on the North/South line,” he said. “That makes it easier for us to sell our product to potential advertisers.

“Not only are there more stops with key destination points, 75 percent of the people that work inside the perimeter live outside of it, which includes a vast number of people who ride MARTA,” Long added. “The number of tourists and travelers to Atlanta are another vantage point for businesses to take interest in the concept of wrapped trains.”

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

## BNSF RECEIVES FIRST CAMERA-EQUIPPED LOCOS

FORT WORTH, Texas — BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) has begun taking delivery of production locomotives equipped with forward-facing video cameras from GE Engine Services (GE).

The cameras, mounted on each locomotive, are being installed to help provide information on grade-crossing and train/pedestrian accidents.

The railway expects to equip a total of 350 locomotives, including about 180 new locomotives and 170 retrofits, by the end of 2005. BNSF plans to install the cameras on lead-qualified locomotives that will operate throughout the system.

The camera is intended to capture the view of the track ahead as seen by the locomotive engineer. The camera, mounted inside the windshield of the cab, will be pointed down the track ahead, but it will not provide a view of any activity inside the locomotive cab.

The camera will be mounted behind the locomotive’s windshield and will be fixed in position; it will not be able to move from side to side or up and down. The camera is located so as not to interfere with train crew members’ vision from the cab.

The camera installation will also include a microphone, placed outside the cab. Its purpose is to record exterior sounds, such as the locomotive whistle and bell; it is not intended to capture conversation inside the cab.

The camera will be synchronized with the locomotive event recorder. The camera will provide color video at 15 frames per second, compared with 30 frames per second for standard broadcast video.

Each camera will record at least 70 hours’ information, given normal locomotive operating conditions. Recorded audio and video can be downloaded by BNSF and used for such purposes as confirming the operation of grade crossing warning devices and motorist behavior.

BNSF installed cameras on six GE Dash 9 locomotives as part of an initial implementation in August 2004. The first six cameras helped BNSF determine specifications and requirements for locomotive-mounted video cameras.

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

## S.D. GOV., BNSF ANNOUNCE CORE RAILROAD LINE SETTLEMENT

PIERRE, S.D — Gov. Mike Rounds and officials from the BNSF Railway Company on April 29 announced a settlement agreement that paves the way for the sale of the state-owned Core railroad line to the Fort Worth, Texas, -based

Class I railroad. The acquisition price is \$41.64 million reduced by the value of the properties retained by the state. The sales agreement is subject to approval by the Surface Transportation Board. The 368-mile Core line

runs from Aberdeen to Mitchell, Mitchell to Canton, Canton to Sioux Falls and Mitchell to Sioux City.

The state of South Dakota purchased the Core line from the Milwaukee Road in 1980.

— *The Cross-Tie*



## NEWS FROM THE

## RAILS

QUICK HITS FROM AROUND  
THE RAILROAD INDUSTRY**Deaths result in CPR Police launching education blitz**

CALGARY, Alberta — In light of recent fatalities at railway crossings in the lower mainland, CPR Police will be targeting several area rail crossings as part of a public awareness education blitz.

“Though most people are aware of the dangers at railway crossings, anytime there are incidents like what happened recently, it is a concern,” said CPR Police Constable Dale Sanford, “The recent tragedies not only impacts families and friends, but also everybody at CPR, especially the train crews directly involved.”

On May 11, a man died while walking on the tracks in Maple Ridge. Two days later, a driver of a pick up truck was killed when his vehicle collided with a locomotive at the 287 Street crossing in the Mission-Maple Ridge area.

The incident occurred after the teen drove around the crossing gates and ignored bells, lights and train whistle that were all activated at the time.

“The messages are very straightforward, but will save a person’s life if they follow them,” Sanford said. “Always be cautious around railway crossings and yield to trains, don’t stop on crossings, always obey crossing signals and don’t walk on or near the tracks. Look, Listen and Live.

“The statistics are staggering, a person is 40 times more likely to die in a vehicle-train collision compared to a vehicle-vehicle collision while the

chances of survival for a pedestrian who contacts a train is remote,” Sanford added.

CPR Police officers began the awareness initiative on May 17 at crossings in the Maple Ridge area talking with motorists and pedestrians.

On May 18, CPR police officers offered crossing education/awareness at several crossings in Langley in the morning and then in the afternoon taking the safety message to crossings in the Abbotsford and Mission areas.

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

**MARTA Unveils First Pair of Rehabilitated Rail Cars**

ATLANTA — Officials of the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) and ALSTOM Transport Inc. unveiled the Authority’s first set of CQ311 rehabilitated rail cars May 11 during a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Avondale Rail Maintenance Facility in Decatur, Georgia.

The cars are part of a \$266 million capital project to rebuild 238 of MARTA’s oldest rail cars, extending their useful life by 15 years.

MARTA board members and staff, along with officials from ALSTOM Transport, the Hornell, New York, based company performing the rehabilitation work, gathered with local elected officials, business and community leaders to preview the overhauled cars that feature new rubberized flooring, door systems, climate control systems, light fixtures, propulsion systems, electrical systems,

communications equipment, and a redesigned operator’s cab.

ALSTOM Transport delivered prototype cars 275 and 276, the first married pair of refurbished CQ311 rail cars, to MARTA on March 30. Upon delivery, ALSTOM Transport has three months to perform qualification and acceptance testing before they are fully accepted into revenue service by MARTA. A total of 238 cars are scheduled to be rehabilitated between now and 2008.

“These refurbished cars will give an additional 15 years of life to our rolling stock, while increasing reliability and on-time performance — both of which will enhance the overall customer experience,” said MARTA General Manager/CEO Nathaniel P. Ford, Sr.

The program includes the overhaul of MARTA’s CQ310 and CQ311 rail cars. The CQ310 class rail cars were the first cars used to open MARTA’s rail system in 1979.

Delivered between 1979 and 1982, they were built by the French firm Franco-Belge. The CQ311 class rail cars were built to support the expansion of the MARTA rail system in the 1980s and 1990s including expansion to the Airport.

Delivered in 1987, these cars were built by the Japanese firm Hitachi.

MARTA’s Rail Car Rehabilitation program, led by Kenneth A. McDonald, Senior Director of Maintenance Operations, will allow the Authority to realize lower operating costs, standardize components between

fleets, design and implement life cycle based maintenance programs, and eliminate numerous obsolete parts. MARTA is saving \$448 million by refurbishing 238 rail cars instead of purchasing new cars at today’s average cost of \$3 million each.

“The improvements have cost-effectively addressed MARTA’s requirement for increased reliability, safety, security, and comfort,” said ALSTOM Transport Inc. Senior Vice-President NAFTA Region Francis Jelensperger.

“ALSTOM Transport is extremely proud of this project and our association with MARTA.”

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

**CTA Introduces Subway Customers to Moving Picture Ads**

CHICAGO — The Chicago Transit Authority has launched a new type of advertising technology in the southbound Blue Line Dearborn subway tunnel between the Clark/Lake and Washington stations.

Through the windows of the moving trains, customers will see a moving picture ad appear on the tunnel wall. This new advertising medium is expected to generate \$100,000 annually in revenue for CTA.

“This innovative technology allows CTA to use tunnel space, which in the past has not normally been considered an attractive ad space for companies, to generate additional advertising revenue to support CTA operations,” said CTA President Frank Kruesi.

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

## THE CROSS-TIE

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY  
RAILFANNING.ORG

Publisher & Editor:  
Todd DeFeo

*The Cross-Tie* is a monthly e-zine dedicated to railroad news, general features and railfanning information.

*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](mailto: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.

Check us out online at:  
<http://thecrosstie.com/>  
<http://railfanning.org/>

To receive *The Cross-Tie* via e-mail, that is, drop a line to [subscriptions@thecrosstie.com](mailto:subscriptions@thecrosstie.com) with "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line.

For information about the Railfanning.org News Wire, a carrier of *Cross-Tie* articles, please e-mail [wire@harpblaster.net](mailto:wire@harpblaster.net).

To advertise, e-mail [advertising@thecrosstie.com](mailto:advertising@thecrosstie.com).

All original content © 2005 Railfanning.org, a HarpBlaster.com site. Articles may not be reproduced without expressed written consent. For reprint information, please e-mail [reprints@thecrosstie.com](mailto:reprints@thecrosstie.com).

Your name could be here. And *The Cross-Tie* could be at your doorstep or in your mail box.

We're evaluating mailing options. Please send us feedback at [feedback@thecrosstie.com](mailto:feedback@thecrosstie.com).

---

## MARTA OPENS 33-ACRE RAIL FACILITY

ATLANTA — The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) celebrated the opening of its largest rail maintenance and storage facility during a dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony on May 23.

The Armour Yard Rail Service Facility will allow MARTA to maintain and store a recently expanded 338 rail car fleet, officials say.

"This new facility ... will prove to be a significant addition not only to MARTA, but to the region's transportation infrastructure," said MARTA General Manager/CEO Nathaniel P. Ford, Sr. Armour Yard's state-of-the-art workflow features will allow us to streamline rail operations, and therefore provide better service to all of our customers."

The Armour Yard facility, located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Piedmont

Road and Interstate 85, will maintain and store over 100 rail cars on 12,000 feet of track. The 33-acre state-of-the-art facility includes a 208,000 square-foot Maintenance and Overhaul Facility, Control Tower, Traction Power Substation, Gap Breaker Building, Train Wash, Cleaner Building, Blow Down Pit, Maintenance of Way Building, and Petroleum Oils and Lubricants Building.

The facility also includes a bypass track and lead tracks that connect to MARTA's north line, and trackway to serve the site's Maintenance and Overhaul Facility.

Using sustainable designs, MARTA constructed the facility to both preserve land and minimize environmental impact, including onsite treatment and recycling of the facility's waste water, storm water pollution controls, and waste wa-

ter contamination controls. The facility was also designed to accommodate possible future transportation projects in the region such as light rail and streetcar service.

Armour Yard will generate millions operating cost savings for MARTA, reducing "deadhead miles" for rail cars during routine maintenance and service interruptions and making train dispatching more efficient. In addition, MARTA will have the capability to perform heavy repair work in-house previously not possible.

The Armour Yard facility came in at \$135 million over budget, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reported May 22.

"There was no indication as to why it was needed," Rep. Harry Geisinger, R-Roswell, a member of the General Assembly's MARTA Oversight Committee told the newspaper.

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*