

THE WEEK'S TOP RAIL AND TRANSIT NEWS (in chronological order):

(SAT) Two CSX freight trains collided at slow speed near East Arcadia, NC. The accident derailed 1 locomotive and 11 cars, and resulted in a spill of several thousand gallons of denatured alcohol, which was contained. Minor injuries were reported to the crew members of the two trains. (ffd: <<http://www.wect.com/>>www.wect.com)

(TUE) The Rand Corporation released an extensive study of U.S. freight transportation. The study said, as have other transportation researchers, that the volume of freight transportation in the U.S. is expected to double over the next 30 years, and that greater use of freight rail could allow the domestic supply chain to minimize highway congestion and reduce fuel consumption. The study went on to say that there is a public role for easing expected rail capacity constraints, because private decisions about transportation and shipping have public consequences for safety and environment. The study is available at <<http://www.rand.org/>>www.rand.org. (ffd: RT&S)

(TUE) The New York City Transit Authority said that it may modify some cars of its Lexington Avenue subway line so that car seats may be flipped up and locked into place to make room for more standing riders. A NYCTA spokesman said that the special seats will make room for up to 18 percent more passengers per car. The Lexington Avenue Line is by far the most crowded of the city's subway lines, with a weekday passenger count that alone exceeds that of the entire subway systems of several other U.S. cities. The spokesman added that, to assure adequate seating for those who want or need to sit down, it would use no more than four cars with flip-up seats in any of the line's 10-car trains. (ffd: New York Times)

(WED) Amtrak suffered an on-duty employee fatality. Steven Rychwalski, Age 22, with three years' service, was struck and killed by an Acela Express train while working on Northeast Corridor Line tracks near New Carrollton, MD during early morning hours. Mr. Rychwalski worked for the railroad's Communications & Signals Department. (ffd: Baltimore Sun, wire services)

(WED) Maryland's MARC commuter rail system has agreed to purchase 13 cars from Virginia Railway Express, the commuter rail system serving Washington, DC and Northern Virginia. The cars are identical to MARC's Class MARC III Kawasaki bi-levels already in service; the cars being purchased are in fact an add-on to the MARC order. VRE has deemed the cars surplus, as they have acquired a fleet of new gallery-style cars for their service, and which also permits VRE to standardize its fleet. MARC said that it expects the new cars to be in service by November. (ffd: NARP)

(WED) The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation announced the launch of a new website promoting Amtrak's Keystone Line. The website, <<http://www.catchthekeystone.com/>>www.catchthekeystone.com, includes schedules, ticket information, station hours and train amenities for the 12-stop rail route, whose trains run between New York, NY and Harrisburg, PA by way of Philadelphia, PA. A PennDOT spokesman said that the Keystone Line's ridership this past July was up 26 percent over July of last year. (ffd: Philadelphia Business Journal)

(THU) The individual responsible for the derailment of a Metrolink commuter train in Los Angeles, CA in January, 2005 was sentenced to eleven consecutive life sentences, one for each of the passengers killed in the derailment. Juan Manuel Alvarez, Age 29, had parked his SUV across the tracks as the train approached and soaked it with gasoline. Prosecutors successfully argued that Mr. Alvarez was intent on causing severe damage to the train in an act to get the attention of his estranged wife. (ffd: wire services)

(THU) RailAmerica said that it was willing to sell all of its Central Oregon & Pacific's Coos Bay line in Oregon if a new operator can be found for the line. The company made its offer at a special hearing of the U.S. Surface Transportation Board that was convened in Eugene, OR to discuss the line's future. 94 miles of the line, between Cordes and Vaughn OR, have been out of service since September, 2007 due to deteriorated tunnel conditions. Also at the hearing, Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski urged the STB to reject RailAmerica's application to abandon the line and for RailAmerica to accept the Port of Coos Bay \$9.8 million offer to buy the line. (ffd: Progressive Railroading, Railway Age)

(THU) Acknowledging "a high level of token fraud," the Utah Transit Authority said that it would cease accepting tokens September 1 for payment of fares on its TRAX light rail and FrontRunner commuter rail lines. A UTA spokesman said that, effective that date, passengers beginning their trips on TRAX or FrontRunner should either purchase an appropriate ticket or pass from a ticket vending machine or present an old token to a UTA bus operator to exchange for a transfer ticket for trains. (ffd: Railway Age)

STATS – "BIG 7" TRAFFIC

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Canadian traffic includes that on the U.S. operations of Canadian National and Canadian Pacific.)

(THU) For the week ending August 16, 2008, U.S. rail volume grand totaled 35.2 billion ton-miles, up 0.6 percent from the comparable week last year. U.S. carload rail traffic totaled 335,245 units, down 0.8 percent altogether, down 3.7 percent in the East and up 1.3 percent in the West. Notable traffic increases included metals and metal products up 12.4 percent, grain up 9.5 percent, and coal up 5.1 percent; notable traffic decreases included motor vehicles and equipment down 30.6 percent, metallic ores down 23.2 percent, and wood and wood products down 17.5 percent. U.S. intermodal rail traffic totaled 237,034 units, down

0.5 percent. Also for the week, Canadian carload rail traffic was down 4.1 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 2.6 percent, Mexico's Kansas City Southern de Mexico's carload rail traffic was down 5.4 percent, and KCSM's intermodal rail traffic was down 0.6 percent.

For the period January 1 through August 16, 2008, U.S. rail volume grand totaled 1.11 trillion ton-miles, up 1.5 percent from the comparable period last year. U.S. carload rail traffic totaled 10,722,139 units, up 0.3 percent, and U.S. intermodal rail traffic totaled 7,357,794 units, down 2.9 percent. Also for this period, Canadian carload rail traffic was down 4.2 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 4.1 percent, KCSM's carload rail traffic was down 3.4 percent, and KCSM's intermodal rail traffic was up 8.5 percent. (ffd: AAR)

#### MORE STATS – "BIG 7" (EXCEPT CN) OPERATING PERFORMANCE:

Not reported this week.

#### EXPANSIONS, CONTRACTIONS AND ALIKE:

(TUE) BNSF re-opened a transloading facility at Eola, IL. The facility, which includes more than 12.5 acres of covered and open storage, will handle lumber, steel, and other building products, and also has ability to handle dimensional loads. (ffd: BNSF Corp.)

(TUE) Hatch Mott MacDonald announced their acquisition of Higgins Associates of Gilroy, CA. Higgins, which will continue to operate out of Gilroy but become a part of Hatch Mott's Transportation Planning Department. Higgins specializes in traffic demand forecasting, capacity and operational analyzes, speed study surveys, and accident and safety analyses. (ffd: Railway Age)

(WED) East Penn Railroad filed to abandon approximately 9 miles of line between Pottstown and Boyertown, PA. (ffd: STB)

(WED) Union Pacific granted Iowa Northern Railroad temporary trackage rights on approximately 5 miles of its Cedar Rapids Industrial Lead in and near Cedar Rapids, IA. The rights allow the Iowa Northern to interchange with the Cedar Rapids & Iowa City Railway via UP track until CIC's bridge across the Cedar River can be rebuilt. The bridge was washed away as a result of last June's Midwest flooding. (ffd: STB)

(WED) Union Pacific filed to abandon approximately 3 miles of its Memphis Subdivision in and near Memphis, TN. (ffd: STB)

(WED) The U.S. Army announced plans to construct a \$190 million rail line between Fort Bliss, TX and White Sands, NM. The line, which is targeted for construction by 2015, will also connect with military facilities in Orogrande and McGregor, NM, additional to White Sands. Officials of Fort Bliss said that the line's exact route is still in the planning stages. They added that moving tanks by rail would significantly cut down on wear and tear to tanks that must now cross the desert to get between Fort Bliss and the missile ranges. (ffd: Trains)

(FRI) URS announced their acquisition of LopezGarcia Group of Dallas, TX. LopezGarcia is a provider of engineering design, environmental planning, surveying and construction management services. (ffd: RT&S)

#### APPOINTMENTS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND MILESTONES:

(FRI) Kansas City Southern appointed Edward Scott its VP-Capital Investment Accounting. Mr. Scott has been with KCSR since 2006 and prior to that was involved with general and capital investment accounting for BNSF. (ffd: KCS Corp.)

(FRI) The League of Railway Industry Women, one of the professional organizations for railway business women, appointed Judy Petry its "Outstanding Woman Of The Year" for 2008. Ms. Petry, who is controller for Oklahoma's Farmrail, will receive the award at the railway's annual luncheon in Chicago, IL on September 23. (ffd: Progressive Railroading)

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Weekly Rail Review (WRR) is edited from public news sources and published weekly to those working in, or interested in, rail and transit. Send an e-mail to <mailto:weeklyrailreview@aol.com>weeklyrailreview@aol.com to receive it, with my compliments.

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