



Amherst Railway Society

P. O. Box 2351
Amherst, MA 01004-2351
www.AmherstRail.org

The next meeting of the Amherst Railway Society is Tuesday, Apr 20, 2010, 8:00 p.m. at the Amherst Regional Middle School Auditorium.

Amherst Railway Society Railroad Hobby Show – West Springfield, MA January 29-30, 2011:

April Topic: "Rail Trail Update" by Craig Della Penna

The railroads in southern New England were overbuilt by a factor of 3. And today, within a 100 mile radius of Amherst there are over 200 rail to trail projects underway. This is the

densest network in the U.S. and it largely connects to industrial village centers -right where people live work and play. Craig Della Penna has the country's largest collection of then and now photography--then as a RR and now as a rail trail--and he will use some of that to illustrate what happens to communities when the dead RR is converted to a walking/biking pathway. He will give updates on all the projects in the New Haven to Northampton [NH RR Canal Division] and Northampton to Boston [B&M RR's MassCentral Division] and beyond.

Craig Della Penna is the author of four books and numerous op-ed pieces/guest editorials on the value of rail trails and greenways in the context of residential real estate and smart growth development.

In their 10th anniversary issue, THE RIDE MAGAZINE named him as the most effective advocate for rail-to-trail issues on the eastern seaboard. A former lobbyist for Rails-to-Trails Conservancy—and one of the most in-demand

From the Treasurer

All donations to the Amherst Railway Society may be tax deductible. As Amherst Railway Society Inc. is a 501 C(3) tax exempt organization, your donations (of either cash and/or property) may be deducted on your Schedule A, Form 1040 of your Federal income tax. Consider the Amherst Railway Society in your estate planning. Your gifts can be restricted or non-restricted (you can pre-determine how you want your donation used). Upon request, and proper documentation of course, the Treasurer will issue you a letter to be used as justification for you tax deductions



public speakers on this subject in the U.S.,--he has given over 1,000 lectures on these subjects in 18 states and Canadian provinces.

Along with his wife Kathleen, he also operates Sugar Maple Trailside Inn, a bed & breakfast located in a nicely restored, 1865 farmhouse in Northampton's village of Florence. The house sits eight [8] feet away from southern New England's first municipally built/operated rail trail--- created the New Haven Railroad's Williamsburg Branch. The renovation of the house was featured on HGTV's Restore America and won a historic preservation award from the City of Northampton, while the B&B generally wins "**Best in the Valley**" in a poll of the readers of the Valley Advocate.

He is the Broker/Owner of Pedal to Properties, a full service real estate firm based in downtown Northampton. His unique real estate practice was recently featured in a BOSTON GLOBE editorial, an article in the WALL STREET JOURNAL and in United Airlines in- flight magazine—HEMISPHERES. He is also one of only a small handful of realtors in the northeast to receive Green designations from both NAR and the U.S. Green Building Council.



Message from the Amherst Belt Lines:

Our final show of the 2009-2010 season was the Nashua Valley Railroad Association (NVRRA) Show in Shirley, MA. The show was on April 11 at the Shirley Middle School from 10 AM to 4 PM. The Belt Lines put together a modest 24' x 36' layout in the limited time available for setup. Thanks to all who participated in the show and helped get the layout on its feet and operating.



There have been a number of new modules added to the layout this year. Some have been replacements for older modules, some have been past modules returning to the shows and some of the modules have been from new associates with the Belt Lines. It is great to see the growth in the layout and the variety of modules that come from the group! We are always looking for anyone interested in operating a large and variable modular layout, and new modules are always welcome, too! If you want to build a module, or just help out at a show, see Sudro, Clark or Alan and we will be happy to 'sign you up!'

Email address: amherstbeltlines@amherstrail.org

Show Schedule Update

The Belt Lines attends about six shows per year from September through April. Our schedule as we know it today is below. If you would like to mark your calendars for shows we will be attending, here are the dates for the rest of the spring season in 2010 and our start on 2011:

- o October, 2010: Pepperell Siding Model Railroad Club, Pepperell, MA. Show details are not yet available.
- o November 7, 2010: Bedford Boomer's Railroad Exhibition, Bedford, NH.
- o December 4 and 5, 2010: New England Model Train Expo, Marlborough, MA.
- o January 29-30, 2011: Amherst Railway Society, Inc. Railroad Hobby Show – West Springfield, MA.

We will publish additional details as invitations are sent to the Belt Lines.

From the Clerk

Thanks to everyone that presented at last month's meeting. The attendance was 82 people.

UPCOMING MEETINGS		
All meetings are in the MS Auditorium Interpreted for the Hearing Impaired		
May 18, 2010	Dan Bigda	"Freight Car Futures"
June 15, 2010 Annual Business Meeting and Silent Auction Quabbin's RR: The Rabbit" by J. R. Greene		

The current membership in the Amherst Railway Society is 402

Please check your mailing label. Your membership expires on June 30 of the year listed on the label. You will not be able to check out items from the library, or participate in other benefits of membership after that date. Now is the time to think about renewing. Free for Full Time students, 1 year for \$20, 3 years for \$50 and 5 years for \$80

Student memberships require the name of the school, and the class/year in addition to the student contact information

If you just renewed for one year and your mailing label says 2010, yes you are due to renew again.



Message from the Show Director:

I must apologize for missing you at the March meeting. It would have been the first meeting that we were all back together following the Show. I had a couple of fun stories that I will still share with you next time that you will enjoy. Our exhibitors can really come up with some great ones that you just cannot make up!

As many of you know from reading these monthly columns, we had a "Hits and Misses" meeting just after the show while things were still fresh in our minds. There will be many changes for the better for next year, including some minor logistical changes, a few more tents connecting the buildings, an all new, bigger and better reception center, more clinics and, as you know by now, some surprises that we have already decided upon. Our meetings include getting together with the folks at the Eastern States Exposition to call upon their expertise. They have given us some great feedback as well.

We are changing the structure of the Show with regard to the staff and volunteers. Some positions will be eliminated or combined with existing positions and others will be new positions that are necessary because of our growing Show and needs. Just one for example is the new Reception Center Manager, which is critical because of the new structure of the Reception Center (it is moving and will be much larger!) I will have more to say about that in person at our next general meeting. Other interesting endeavors include our added theme of having "Shows within Shows." Currently, we have the Euro-East folks (European Train Enthusiasts) as well as the 1/87th group exhibiting within our show. We estimate that those 2 groups added to our attendance another 1000 people...that's fantastic! We are in early talks with the National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) as they have approached us about trying to do more with us. That's exciting stuff! We'll have more to say about that after their spring board meeting.

My only other note in this short report is that of a reminder for our third Annual Silent Auction that we will have just before the final meeting of the season (at the June meeting). As in past years, the auction will begin as soon as we are set up (usually around 6pm) and we will run until 8pm on time to begin our final meeting of the year. Each year – as you know – we accumulate some great items, all of which are donated throughout the year. For this year's auction, we have new books, a great deal of scenery materials, including trees, ground cover and the like, clothing, hats, badges and plaques, some vintage Lionel, Magnuson models, new locomotives, structures and more. As always, we will have some bidding fun, allowing you to obtain these items at a VERY low price, and we get to add to the grant fund all at the same time.

See you next time!!!

John Sacerdote, Show Director

Upcoming dates that may be of interest

- Apr 16** **Flying Yankee Fundraising Celebration**, Executive Court, 13500 South Willow St., Manchester, NH. 6-11 PM. Cocktails, silent auction, dinner, entertainment. Tickets \$60.
Info: FlyingYankee Restoration Group, Box 145, North Woodstock, NH 03262; 603-881-3317; **e-mail:** flyingyankee@usa.net; www.flyingyankee.com
- May 1** **Opening Day At The Eastern Connecticut Railway Museum**
- May 9** **CT Trolley Museum (East Windsor) Mothers Day**, Mother's ride free with paid Child admission
- May 22** **Training Day At The Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum**,
New volunteers are always welcome! See <http://sftm.org/training.shtml> for more information.
- May 29** **Opening Day At The Shelburne Falls Trolley Museum**,
See <http://sftm.org/training.shtml> for more information.
- June 4 -5** **New England / Northeast Prototype Modelers Meet Collinsville CT**
- June 12-13** **Pioneer Valley Live Steamers Work Weekend Southwick MA**
- June 15** **All materials borrowed from the ARS library are due.**
ARS Annual Business Meeting And Silent Auction
- June 18-20** **Fathers Day weekend –**
Pioneer Valley Live Steamers annual open to the public weekend
- June 22-26** **NRHS Annual Convention – Scranton PA**
- July 11 -17** **NMRA National Convention – Milwaukee WI**
- Aug 6** **Flying Yankee Dinner Train – Lincoln NH** 6:00 PM - Catered by Hart's Turkey Farm aboard the Hobo Railroad Train with Mr Phil onboard for entertainment.
\$40 Adult, \$35 Child - A portion of the proceeds will benefit the restoration project.
Purchase tickets online at www.hoborr.com
- Sept 9 - 12** **Northeast Region NMRA Convention Burlington VT**
- Sept 21** **First Amherst Railway Society meeting in the Fall**



April 5, 2010

About *Fast Mail for Rail*

Fast Mail for RAIL is a regular compilation of the latest news and updates from the passenger rail industry that delivers timely information, resources, and announcements to *RAIL Magazine* subscribers, colleagues and friends. Please keep us posted on your latest news and developments by emailing your content to fastmailrail@ctaa.org.

Around the Depot

New products, documents and upcoming events from *RAIL Magazine* and CTAA's staff

- **REGISTER TODAY!** "Connecting Communities: A Passenger Rail Symposium," May 24-25, 2010, Long Beach, Calif. Spaces are running out quickly. Register today to ensure your spot.

RAIL Magazine is hosting "Connecting Communities" to discuss the future of passenger rail. Leaders from across the passenger rail industry will share their vision for how rail systems of all kinds can fuel economic growth, shape land use trends and connect our communities, regions and our nation. This gathering will focus on a number of important and dynamic topics in passenger rail, including:

- New Momentum for High-Speed and Intercity Rail
- The Emerging Mode of Regional Rail
- Building True Intermodal Connections
- Rail-Oriented Development
- New and Historic Passenger Stations
- Innovative Passenger Rail Products & Services
- ...and Much More

A full agenda, with sessions and speakers, along with registration is now available at www.railmagazine.org. Stay tuned to *Fast Mail for Rail* for the latest details in the next few weeks. Please email sampson@ctaa.org for additional information.

- **Register:** To register for "Connecting Communities: A Passenger Rail Symposium," visit the **EXPO 2010 Website and Registration Forms**.

- **VOTE TODAY!: The First Annual Best in RAIL Awards**

There is much in passenger rail that is exemplary. From captivating stations to distinctive vehicles, much can be celebrated as iconic, unique and worthy of honor. In that spirit, RAIL Magazine will be presenting the first BEST IN RAIL Awards in 2010. As this publication covers the entirety of passenger rail -- intercity, high-speed, heavy metro, commuter, regional, light rail, streetcar, trolley, monorail, airport trains, funiculars; anything that has rails and moves people. We invite you to nominate outstanding passenger rail achievements in the following categories:

- Most Distinctive Vehicle (post-1980)
- Best Modern Passenger Station (post-1980)
- Best Historic Passenger Station (pre-1950)
- Most Influential Rail Leader (living, non-fictional)
- Outstanding Commitment to North American Rail Manufacturing
- Top Passenger Rail Service (all modes)
- Most Innovative Design Element (i.e., bridge, map, icon, nuance)

While these categories may seem vague, that is exactly the point: entries are open to your interpretation and best judgment. To submit a nomination in any or all categories, simply send an email to raileditor@ctaa.org, or send your submission by standard mail to our editorial offices at 1341 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005. Submissions must be received by May 1, 2010.

- **CTAA Offers Financing for Railway Facilities:** A special loan fund to develop passenger rail sites, multi-modal facilities, park & ride lots and maintenance or garage facilities to improve community mobility and enhance economic development is available.
- **New RAIL Edition to Compliment Passenger Rail Symposium:** The 25th Edition of *RAIL Magazine* will also serve as the official program and background material for our Connecting Communities: A Passenger Rail Symposium. We'll take a big-picture look at the nation's current high-speed and intercity rail effort, noted railroad industrial designer Cesar Vergara will offer his perspectives on how good design yields successful service and other innovative concepts and ideas in passenger rail.

The Capitol Limited

News on federal passenger rail policy and developments from the Nation's Capitol

- **SAFETEA-LU Legislation Extended Through 2010:** Pres. Obama signed HR 2847, the "HIRE Act," into law. This legislation extends SAFETEA-LU highway and transit authorizations through Dec. 31, 2010, making sure that about \$20 billion is made available to cover existing appropriations (and anticipated appropriations for the first quarter of FY 2011). It also continues the increased federal share of Medicaid costs that were first established under the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*.
- **All ARRA-Supported Rail Transit Investments Awarded:** The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced a new round of *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* (ARRA) funding for 191 transit projects in 42 states and Puerto Rico. The grants enabled the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to meet its goal of awarding all ARRA transit formula dollars by March 5, according to the USDOT. Since the act was signed into law in February 2009, the FTA has awarded 881 grants totaling \$7.5 billion.

- **Ridership, Customer Satisfaction Grows on Long-Distance Trains** (PDF): The long-distance trains that serve as the backbone of America's national intercity passenger rail network are attracting more passengers as Amtrak continues to implement its comprehensive and multi-year Route Performance Improvement (RPI) program. Boardman noted total ridership on Amtrak's 15 long-distance trains reached nearly 4.2 million in fiscal year 2009, an increase of 13 percent from fiscal year 2006. During the same period, the on-time performance of long-distance trains improved from 30 percent to 75 percent contributing to higher customer satisfaction scores, increasing from 65 percent to 80 percent.
- **Public Officials, Passenger Rail Experts Discuss High-Speed Rail Efforts**: High-speed rail's success in Florida and the rest of the United States lies in effectively promoting and selling it as a safe, convenient, environmentally friendly mode of transportation. That was the message about 250 consultants and vendors attending the High Speed Rail 2010 conference in Orlando. But to do that, leaders have to communicate openly with the public and plan routes and station locations that will create jobs, revitalize communities and get people where they want to go efficiently.
- **New Website Shows Amtrak Connections to National Parks**: Amtrak introduced a new Website designed to show travelers how convenient it is to travel by train to visit the country's national parks. With the theme "Parks in Your Backyard," **Amtraktoparks.com** allows users to see the nearest Amtrak route to featured national park sites, each of which can be reached using public transportation from an Amtrak station. Amtraktoparks.com offers a trip wizard, which allows users to customize their search based on geographic location and personal interests -- Monuments/Memorials, Revolutionary History or Water Activities to name a few. Information on accommodations such as camping sites and hotels is also provided.
- **Web-based Screening Tool for Shared-Use Rail Corridors**: TRB's National Cooperative Freight Research Program (NCFRP) has issued a request for proposals to develop a web-based tool to help enable states and passenger rail operators to perform preliminary feasibility screening of proposed shared-use passenger and freight rail corridor projects. Proposals are due May 6, 2010.
- **Amtrak Initiates Free Wi-Fi Service on Acela**: Amtrak announced that it has launched free wireless Internet service on all 20 Acela Express trains that run along the Northeast Corridor between Boston and Washington, D.C., and in all four of its in-station ClubAcela lounges. The AmtrakConnect service initially is offered free to passengers traveling in business and first class seating. After the introductory period, the "policy will be reviewed based on customer demand and system performance," according to a statement.

The Community Flyer

Updates on passenger rail systems and projects from across the country

- Austin Opens Capital MetroRail:** MetroRail's first day of service on Monday, March 23 went off smoothly, with trains running on or near schedule all day. The vast majority of passengers arriving at 6:25 p.m. on the last southbound train at the Downtown Station stayed on the train for a return trip. Results of the first day of service leave unresolved whether in a few days or weeks, when joy riders stay home, MetroRail's ridership will reach the transit agency's modest projections. Capital Metro reported 2,942 boardings Monday.
- Los Angeles Gold Line Foothill Extension Approved:** Politicians from the San Gabriel Valley have for years made very clear where they want transit investment funds to be spent in their section of the Los Angeles region, on an extension of the light rail Gold Line from Pasadena to Azusa and eventually Ontario Airport. Yesterday, they got what they wanted: a commitment of \$690 million from the board of L.A. County's Metro transportation authority, with the goal of opening the first phase for service by 2014, three years earlier than originally planned.
- Caltrain Prepares for Electrification:** After 10 years of study, Caltrain officials will approve plans to electrify the railroad from San Francisco to San Jose, setting the stage for quicker, cheaper and greener trains within five years. The board of directors said it expects to certify both the state and federal environmental reports for the \$1.23 billion project, which will allow Caltrain to expand to 114 trains from 90 each weekday.
- Rail Runner Opens Kewa (N.M.) Station:** State, local and tribal officials opened the Kewa Rail Runner station with service beginning on March 22. The station is only the second to open on Pueblo land and is the 12th overall for the Rail Runner Express. The project was funded with money from the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*.
- Metrolink (Calif.) Welcomes New Crash Energy Management-Enabled Passenger Cars:** At the Port of Long Beach, Metrolink Board Chairman Keith Millhouse, Chief Executive Officer Eric Haley and a distinguished group of leaders greeted the arrival of the system's first two Crash Energy Management (CEM)-enabled cars. Delivered from their manufacturing site in South Korea, the cars are the first of 117 cars the agency will put into service later this year after a rigorous testing program. Metrolink will be the first commuter rail system in the nation to adopt these state-of-the-art cab and passenger cars, which feature a unique collision-absorption technology.
- SEPTA Receives First New Silverliner:** Three new, completely outfitted Silverliner V Regional Rail cars have arrived in Philadelphia -- finishing a journey that started on the other side of the world nearly two months ago. It's also a major step in SEPTA's plan to put 120 new, state-of-the-art cars on the railroad, replacing portions of the fleet that date back more than 40 years.
- Ridership for Seattle Link Light Rail Reaches 3.3 Million:** Ridership on Sound Transit's Central Link light rail continued rising this year after the Sea-Tac Airport station opened in December, according to the latest ridership report. Average weekday boardings in February were estimated at 16,741, up from 15,965 in January and 15,196 in the fourth quarter of 2009. The 14-mile line opened in July although it temporarily ended in Tukwila at an International Boulevard station before the final station opened at Sea-Tac, providing an uninterrupted link between downtown and the airport.

- **High Speed Rail Project Brings 1500 Jobs To Chicago:** Illinois Governor Pat Quinn, U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Jim Oberstar (D-Minn.) and Congressman Dan Lipinski (D-Ill.) are to highlight federal funding for the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program's Englewood Flyover in Chicago. The project received \$133 million under the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* (ARRA) High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program to build a rail flyover in Chicago's Englewood neighborhood that will significantly reduce rail congestion.
- **Angels Flight (Calif.) to Reopen:** The California Public Utilities Commission has approved the safety certificate for the historic Angels Flight rail line in downtown L.A., nine years after a fatal accident closed the funicular. In a letter to Angels Flight Railway Co., the PUC said that it had "no major safety concerns" regarding the rail line, which runs up and down Bunker Hill. The company has faced numerous delays in reopening Angels Flight.
- **Port Authority Awards Contract for World Trade Center Station:** On Feb. 25, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey's (PANYNJ) board awarded a \$542 million contract to a Skanska joint venture for a World Trade Center Transportation Hub project -- the largest contract let to date for the hub, which is expected serve more than 200,000 commuters daily after it opens in late 2011.
- **Illinois Creates High-Speed Rail Commission:** On Thursday, the Illinois Senate passed a bill creating the Illinois and Midwest High Speed Rail Commission (SB 2571). The 12-member commission would issue a road map by March 2011 on how best to structure a public-private partnership to design, build and operate a high-speed rail system at speeds of 150 miles per hour and greater. It also would issue recommendations on how to fund the network and integrate the new bullet trains with airports, Amtrak service and public transportation systems throughout the Midwest.
- **Kansas Established Passenger Rail Program:** The Kansas House has given initial approval to a measure laying the foundation for expanded passenger rail service through the state. The bill would establish a passenger rail program and fund within the Kansas Department of Transportation. It also authorizes the transportation secretary to enter agreements with Amtrak or other carriers to expand service through Kansas.
- **Iowa Invests \$1 million to Study Chicago-to-Omaha Service:** Gov. Chet Culver says the Iowa Transportation Commission has approved as much as \$1 million for the study of Chicago to Omaha passenger rail service through Iowa. The funds will be used to provide the required state match for the \$1 million grant from the Federal Railroad Administration under the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail program.
- **Minneapolis Moves Forward with Streetcar Plans:** The City Council is expected to approve the 30-year vision for local rail transit corridors first laid out in 2007 and passed by the Public Works and Transportation Committee last week. In addition, it will take the first step in readying one "starter" corridor for further planning later this year, with plans to eventually ask Washington to fund 50 percent of construction costs. The Minneapolis streetcar route network would extend the reach of the region's existing and planned rapid transit lines by connecting stations in the city's dense urban core.

- **Exeter (N.H.) Working to Expand Downeaster Station:** The Planning Board is behind a grant request to purchase the Exeter train station's former baggage building with an eye towards constructing a transportation center. The application for funding through the state Department of Transportation's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program is due April 1. Members of the Exeter Train Committee approached the Planning Board on Thursday, March 25, with their grant proposal. The board approved the request.
- **VIA Rail (Canada) Cuts Montreal-Quebec City Travel Times, Will Replace Windsor Station:** VIA Rail Canada announced that as of April 6, travel times on the Montreal -- Quebec City route will be significantly reduced with the introduction of new schedules. Trip times will be shortened by as much as 20 minutes, while arrival and departure times for certain trains will be changed to better suit customer needs.
- **Meanwhile, VIA's new Windsor station** will be fully accessible and will be built on a site near the existing building. Scheduled for completion in the fall of 2011, it will replace a structure originally built by Canadian National in the early 1960s and expanded by VIA in 1982. The majority of the \$6 million in funding for the new Windsor station and related improvements will come from Government of Canada's Economic Action Plan. VIA's Windsor Station Project is linked with other work currently or soon to be underway throughout the Quebec-Windsor Corridor, which generates almost 90 per cent of VIA's ridership and 75 per cent of its revenue.
- **Study: New Orleans-Baton Rouge Service Would Have Positive Effect:** A proposed passenger rail link between New Orleans and Baton Rouge that has been opposed by Gov. Bobby Jindal would provide positive economic and social benefits to justify the public subsidy needed for its operations, according to an independent evaluation commissioned by the Southern High-Speed Rail Commission and the Louisiana transportation department.
- **Cleveland to Study Commuter Rail Options:** A stress-free ride into Cleveland on a winter weekday morning and the ability to navigate the west side without a car are among dreams brought to you by regional rail enthusiasts in the public and private sectors. Attempting to make their dreams for Northeast Ohio a reality, the rail proponents are using funds procured by U.S. Rep. Betty Sutton's office as well as from agencies like Ohio Department of Transportation, the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency and the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority. The funds are being used to study the feasibility of an expansive network of commuter rail lines.
- **Study: High-Speed Rail Could Work in Colorado:** High-speed rail is feasible along Colorado's interstate 70 and 25 corridors and would generate billions in economic benefit for the state, a new study says. The study -- sponsored by the Colorado Department of Transportation and the Rocky Mountain Rail Authority (RMRA) -- says there are several options for high-speed rail between Fort Collins and Pueblo along I-25 and between Eagle County and Denver International Airport along I-70 that meet guidelines set by the Federal Railroad Administration.