



# NORTHSTAR NEWS

**Dues are due now. Help the chapter with your prompt payment.**

**Twin Cities Metro Transit Green Line Cars by Mike Hicks**



**New Siemens Green Line (Central Corridor) car was introduced in a ceremony in downtown Minneapolis, October 10th.** Photo from Trains Newswire by Steve Glischinski

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## Meeting Notice

The November meeting of the Northstar Chapter of the NRHS will be held on November 17th at 6:30 pm, at Roseville Lutheran Church at 1215 Roselawn Avenue, midway between Lexington and Hamline Avenues in Roseville. See map on following page.  
**Note the EARLIER START TIME at 6:30 pm.**

**Program:** Joe Stark -- Eastern Railroading in the Fifties. Slides include Jersey Central, Lehigh and New England, Lehigh Valley, Long Island, Central Vermont, New Haven, Lackawanna, Pennsy and Cincinnati and Dayton with B&O, New York Central, Louisville and Nashville.

There will be a pre-meeting get-together at the Keys Cafe and Bakery at the northeast corner of Lexington and Larpenteur starting about 5:00 pm. **PLEASE CALL Bob Clarkson at 651-636-2323 and leave a message with your name and the number of persons coming with you.**

## Northstar Chapter Officers

### Board of Directors

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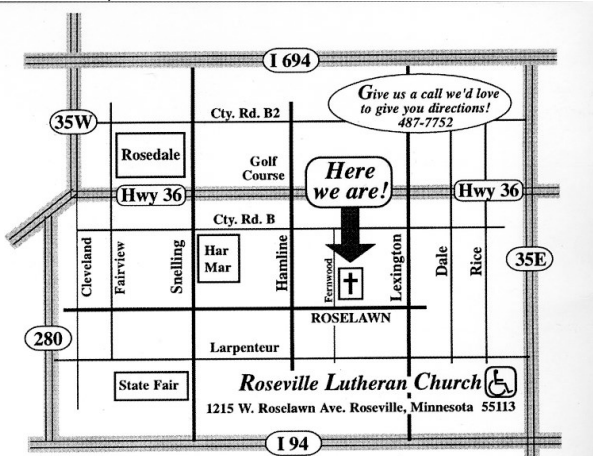
## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Dues are \$51 (\$36 for the National dues and \$15 for the local dues). Family memberships are \$5 per person additional. The student rate is \$22 (\$16 for the National, \$6 for the Northstar Chapter). If you want to join, an application is available at <http://www.northstar-nrhs.org/>. Print out this application and send it with a check made payable to "Northstar Chapter NRHS" to Northstar Chapter NRHS Membership Services, P.O. Box 120832, St. Paul, MN 55112.

*A subscription to this newsletter may be obtained for \$18 for either printed or electronic edition by sending a check to the post office box above specifying the form of the newsletter you desire. A subscription does NOT include voting privileges at chapter meetings nor any of the NRHS membership benefits and no membership application is needed.*

### Directions to the Meeting Site

From the east and west take MN 36 to Lexington Avenue. Drive south on Lexington Avenue to Roselawn Avenue and turn right. The large lighted parking lot is on your right as you travel west on Roselawn. Use the lower entrance to the church and turn left through the commons area. We'll be in room 40, the Diamond Room.



**Photo Credit Correction**  
October Cover Photo was by Roger Libre

### Editorial Disclaimer

It's been brought to the attention of your editor that the editorial from Railway Age, "RNC: A little hypocrisy goes too far" by Lawrence H. Kaufman may have been misconstrued as the opinion of the chapter. Mr. Kaufman is a well respected consultant to the railroad industry and has written columns for *Trains Magazine*.

The member who brought up the concern considers the reprinting of the editorial a risk to our tax exempt status. He considers just the reprinting of this op ed piece an implied recommendation as to how to vote in the upcoming election. I do not. It was reprinted only as an item of interest for our members. The chapter does not endorse any political party or candidate. I failed to include the usual disclaimer that editorials either written by the editor or selected from other sources is the responsibility of the editor and does not represent any official position of the chapter. This was a mistake on my part, and for that I apologize.

Russ Isbrandt  
Editor, Northstar News

**New light-rail vehicles bring a fresh look to Twin Cities transit**  
by Mike Hicks  
from Streets.MN Blog

A new Siemens S70 parked at Target Field alongside a Bombardier Flexity Swift in new "METRO" paint. Metro Transit officially unveiled their first new Siemens-built light-rail vehicle on Wednesday, October 10th, previewing what most of the Twin Cities light-rail fleet will look like just a few years from now. It also marked the first showing of vehicles with the new "METRO" branding which will be used on light rail and bus rapid transit lines going forward. Both the new Siemens LRV and one of the original Bombardier LRVs showed up in a brighter paint scheme of yellow, blue, and light gray, but still following the general pattern established by the older units when they began service on the Hiawatha Line in 2004. By now you may have heard the "Green Line" moniker that has been attached to the Central Corridor LRT project, and that the Hiawatha Line will soon be known as the "Blue Line". The Southwest LRT project is now being called the "Green Line extension", and the Cedar Avenue



and Interstate 35W BRT services are planned to be known as the Red and Orange lines respectively. Those routes are going to be unified under the “METRO” name. This seems like an attempt to keep everyone thoroughly confused, though it does have a purpose: at least one of the BRT lines will be operated by the Minnesota Valley Transit Authority. The METRO system will represent a unified brand across two different agencies and service regions. It’s an interesting political tool, but will any riders actually notice? We’ll have to wait and see.

The new branding has been rolling out slowly and has been most noticeable up until now along the Green Line where information kiosks at new stations have incorporated the METRO name. While the train that rolled in to Target Field this week was described as “the first Green Line car”, it will first see revenue service on the Blue Line. This first car actually arrived in the Twin Cities last month and has been undergoing some initial testing. Along with a second vehicle that arrived this week, the pair will be tested extensively, with overnight runs in the tunnels under MSP airport, before going into service around January. Later arrivals will probably only need about one month of testing each before being officially accepted into the fleet by Metro Transit.

Fifty-nine vehicles are currently on order for the Blue and Green lines, and there are options in the contract for 40 more. The Hiawatha Line had 24 Bombardier LRVs operating by the end of 2004, but the line’s ridership blew away expectations and Metro Transit ended up operating more trains and longer trains than anyone had anticipated. They were able to exercise options for 3 additional vehicles a couple of years later, but that was the maximum allowed in the contract. After those three were completed, Bombardier shut down the Flexity Swift manufacturing line for



**Hiawatha Line Bombardier car 104 in the new Metro paint scheme at the Target Field Terminal.** Photo by Mike Hicks

good, and Metro Transit has been making do with an undersized fleet for several years now. Twelve of the new trains will go toward beefing up the Blue Line fleet, while the remaining 47 in the order are intended for the Green Line to Saint Paul. Most or all of the last 40 options will probably be picked up once the Southwest extension gets approved for funding.

Metro Transit has been preparing for quite a while to receive the new trains. The Franklin Avenue shops have been undergoing an expansion for the past year to make room for the new vehicles, and some operations that don’t

require direct access to the train chassis have been moved into a new Light Rail Support Facility about half a mile south. Some vehicles officially intended for the Green Line may have a temporary home by Franklin Avenue until the new maintenance facility in Lowertown Saint Paul becomes complete enough to receive the new trains.

The new trains have some improved features as well as reduced weight compared to their older counterparts. The older Bombardiers weighed in at 53 tons each, while the newer Siemens model is only 50. That reduction by 6,000



**The interior of the new Siemens car.** Photo by Mike Hicks.

pounds should help with overall efficiency and reduce electricity consumption, though it falls short of what could be achieved. The Bombardier Flexity Swift model was primarily sold in Europe, and Metro Transit turned out to be the only American buyer. The LRVs on the other side of the Atlantic only weighed in at 41 tons. Federal regulations for crash requirements appear to be the culprit in porking out our original fleet as well as the newer vehicles, increasing energy consumption and adding extra wear and tear to the rails—and, of course, having the perverse effect of making it harder to absorb the energy of a crash in the first place.

The new Siemens S70 trains are a bit boxier than their elders in the fleet, which isn’t to everyone’s liking. However, they have been made a bit sleeker through the removal of rear-view mirrors, replaced by rear-facing video cameras with displays inside the cab. The interior features light gray surfaces rather than the Bombardiers’ yellow walls. The new trains have 68 seats rather than 66 in the Bombardiers. The seating arrangement has changed a bit, with seats up on the high-floor sections above the driving wheels facing toward the middle section of the vehicle, rather than the face-to-face seating found in the Type 1 cars. There is some face-to-face seating in the enlarged middle section of the Type 2 cars, though. The new trains also have a beefier heating system than the Bombardiers, and the unit on display this week was actively pumping out heat as the media and other onlookers gathered to check out the first article on a fairly cool and blustery day. Improved insulation should help keep the interior warmer and quieter than older trains as well.

But I shouldn’t forget to mention the Bombardier train painted in new colors which was also displayed on Wednesday. These trains will probably still be with us for another 20 years, and it was good to see them getting

spiffed up with a new paint job. While I think the old paint scheme had aged relatively well, some trains have begun to look quite dirty despite getting washed on a regular basis. The old paint has been physically aging, and deserves a refresh.

About Mike Hicks

Mike Hicks is a computer geek at heart, but has always had a side interest in transportation and urban planning. A longtime contributor to Wikipedia, he started a blog about trains and other transportation after realizing it had been two decades since he'd first heard about a potential high-speed rail line from Chicago to Minneapolis. Read more at <http://hizeph400.blogspot.com/>.

### High Iron Special to Omaha by John Goodman

On Thursday, 9/13/12, I was a one-way passenger on a High Iron Travel 5 car special passenger train from Amtrak Midway Station to Omaha, NE via the Union Pacific (former C&NW trackage).

We were due out of Amtrak in St. Paul at 5:15 am, but due to sticking brakes on the UP freight locomotive #4101, our actual departure was at 5:45 am. We backed the special train west from Amtrak to St. Anthony interlocking and then proceeded East/South through downtown St. Paul and past the St. Paul Union Station to Western Avenue yard on the UP, where a crew change took place. Amtrak provided their locomotive #161 for HEP, and Amtrak also provided an engineer and conductor as part of the charter train operated under Amtrak.

Union Pacific provided their "pilot" engineer and conductor to the train. UP crews were changed out at Western Avenue, St. James, MN, and Sioux City, IA. The Amtrak crew was changed out at Sioux City, IA. Unfortunately no photo stops were allowed enroute.

The train consisted of sleepers *Minnesota River*, *Cimmeron River*, sleeper-lounge *Swift Stream*, dome-lounge-diner *Sky View*, and private car *Caritas*.

We moved in the early morning through Bridge 15 (joint CNW-CMStP&P) to cross the Mississippi River and followed Minnesota Highway 13 down through Savage. We lost more time going through Valley Park yards, then proceeded through Shakopee. We moved through St. Peter and Mankato with speeds around 49 mph.

We lost more time enroute to Worthington, MN and on to Sioux City. The crossing of the Minnesota-Iowa border showed that the land became very flat with many corn fields along the tracks.

By Sioux City we were almost 3 hours behind the operating schedule.

We waited at California Junction for 2 UP eastbound trains to pass us, as we were in the siding on this stretch of single track.

We finally moved over to Missouri Valley Junction, and then south to Council Bluffs. From there we passed the massive UP passenger car yards/shop and on to Omaha. We tied up that night at the former UP depot.

Because of our arrival nearly 4 hours late, we missed the tour of the UP passenger car shops. The group did tour the shops the next morning however, but I had already left to come back to MSP.

The CB&Q depot sits across from the UP depot and looks pretty good for now. No further plans to re-do it into a useable building, but at least it has not met the wrecking ball as yet.

I spent the night on-board the train and flew back to MSP on Friday morning.



**The High Iron Special at the former Union Pacific station in Omaha.** Photo by John Goodman



**The High Iron Special at the Belt Yard in St. Paul.** Photo by Dick Tubbesing

### Hurricane Sandy's Northeast Passenger Rail Effects From Trains Newswire, Amtrak and New Jersey Transit Service Disruption Notices and Railway Age

Amtrak and all Northeast commuter services including Washington's Metro, Virginia Railway Express, Maryland's MARC, Philadelphia's SEPTA, New Jersey Transit including bus and rail, New York's MTA including bus, subway and commuter service, Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH) and the Long Island Railroad all shutdown completely during Sunday and Monday, October 28th and 29th. The following story is based on startup notices.





**Above: Penn Station throat showing inflatable dam. More pictures in electronic edition extra pages.** Photos from New Jersey Transit

#### Assessing the Damage

This from New Jersey Transit:

#### **Hurricane Sandy Storm Damage**

NJ TRANSIT continues to inspect facilities, infrastructure and equipment across all regions of New Jersey in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, as part of an intensive effort to restore the state's public transportation network to normal operations. Hurricane Sandy caused major damage throughout the state, leaving behind long-term mechanical and operational challenges that NJ TRANSIT is working tirelessly to overcome. This will take time, and the blow delivered by Hurricane Sandy will continue to impact customers for days to come.

NJ TRANSIT cancelled all service on Sunday in advance of the storm, which enabled the agency to ensure the safety of customers and employees and also allowed transit personnel to move locomotives, train cars, buses and other equipment to locations where they could be protected as much as possible from the elements. Since the storm subsided on Tuesday morning, crews have worked around the clock to inspect more than 500 miles of track, equipment yards, buses and trains sets, making repairs or clean-ups where necessary as the first step toward restoring the NJ TRANSIT network to normal operations. However, storm damage in many areas was severe, and residual impacts from Hurricane Sandy will cause many bus, rail, light rail and Access Link customers to continue to experience service suspensions, delays and cancellations on their lines.

#### **NJ TRANSIT Rail System Highlights**

NJ TRANSIT's Rail Operations Center--the central nervous system of the railroad--was engulfed in water, which damaged backup power supply systems, the emergency generator, and the computer system that controls the movement of trains and power supply. There are numerous downed trees across the rail system, which caused damage to overhead wires and signal wires. There were rail washouts across the system, including on the North Jersey Coast Line and Atlantic City Rail Line. Several rail stations were flooded, including Hoboken Terminal. Morgan Drawbridge on the North Jersey Coast Line in South Amboy sustained damage from boats and a trailer that collided into the bridge. Hudson-Bergen light rail and Newark light rail were also suspended indefinitely pending track and power distribution systems inspections. Newark Penn Station sustained flood damage and the right-of-way between there and Branch Brook Park station also sustained significant damage in the storm. The Hudson-Bergen light rail line was washed out at Port Imperial and West Side Avenue stations. NJ Transit does not have an estimate for the resumption of service on these lines. The River Line sustained no significant damage to equipment or track infrastructure, but, due to commercial power outages, would only

operate limited service. River Line service resumed at 3 pm on October 31, operating every 30 minutes between Walter Rand Transportation Center and Trenton Transit Center.

From Railway Age:

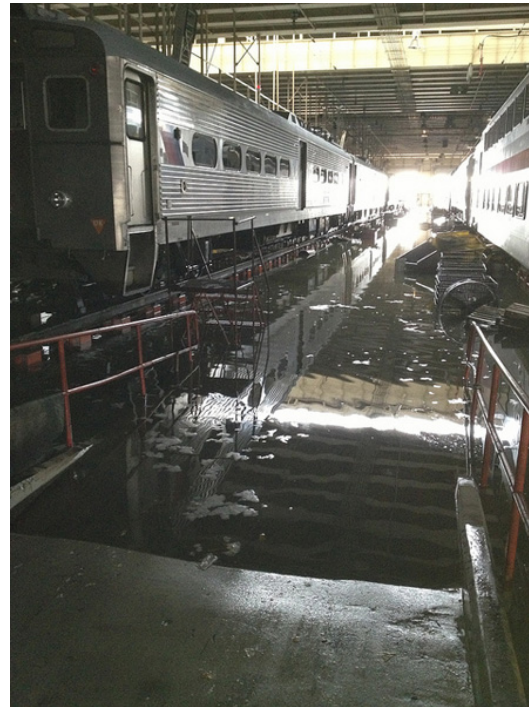
#### **For NJT, equipment damage looms large**

Written by Douglas John Bowen

New York-area residents attempted some resumption of "normal" travel-to-work routine Monday, with varying degrees of success. But New Jersey residents may be deprived of adequate rail transit alternatives for far longer than their counterparts in New York State and Connecticut may expect, in large part due to damaged rolling stock and locomotives. Bloomberg Radio reported NJT said 23% of its rail rolling stock, and 34% of its locomotives, had been damaged or rendered unusable by Hurricane Sandy. Quantitative repair estimates, as well as cost, were unavailable. But last Saturday NJ Transit Executive Director James Weinstein acknowledged that NJT won't be able to resume normal rail operations for at least four weeks, and possibly much longer. That contrasts sharply with service resumptions by other New York-

area regional railroads.

NJT has slowly been adding Bombardier BiLevel cars to its equipment fleet, with 329 on order. No immediate evaluation of damaged BiLevels was available. NJT also uses single-level coach cars and single-level electric multiple-unit (EMU) trains. On Monday, NJT relied heavily on its bus services, which in many



cases were overwhelmed by diverted public transit demand.



**Top: Meadows car shop. Above: Hoboken ferry terminal. More pictures in electronic edition extra pages.** Photos from New Jersey Transit

Amtrak resumed operations on the New Jersey portion of its Northeast Corridor last Friday, November 2, and Amtrak CEO Joseph Boardman said the railroad was seeking ways to boost capacity on the NEC between Trenton and New York to augment NJT service there, which also has resumed.

NJT resumed service Sunday on a small segment of the North Jersey Coast Line, badly affected by Hurricane Sandy. Trains also were resuming service on NJT's Hoboken Division, though Hoboken Terminal remained flooded by the storm; passengers on these trains could transfer at Secaucus Junction for NEC trains, already strained past passenger capacity. See New Jersey Transit map p.11 electronic edition.

From Trains Newswire:

#### **Amtrak struggles to restore service in Northeast**

By Bob Johnston

Published: October 31, 2012

WASHINGTON – Flooded tunnels under the Hudson and East Rivers at New York, washouts, and commercial power outages have shaped Amtrak's service restoration efforts in the Northeast following the devastation left by Hurricane Sandy earlier in the week. After canceling all service north of Raleigh, NC, on Tuesday, October 30th, Amtrak resumed truncated service Wednesday, October 31st where tracks could handle trains safely.

On the Northeast Corridor, all *Acela Express* service had been cancelled. Most *Northeast Regional* trains serving northern Virginia, Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia had resumed with several round-trips going as far north as Newark, NJ; some of the Newark turns used *Acela Express* equipment to take advantage of its bi-directional capability.

Meanwhile, crews were pumping salt water out of one of two Hudson River tunnels and beginning to repair electrical infrastructure. New York's Penn Station had been isolated because two of three East River tunnels linking the facility with the Hell Gate Bridge route to Boston and Sunnyside Yard in Queens also needed to be pumped out, and a washout on Metro-North Commuter Railroad trackage north of New York prohibited entry of *Empire Service* trains into the city. On the route to Boston, a washout near Stonington, CT, east of New London, was under repair and generators were deployed between New Haven and Old Saybrook, CT, to power signals until commercial power was restored. Metro-North was also reactivating its signal system from New York into New Haven.

Accordingly, Amtrak was turning trains where it had mechanical personnel: at Washington, Philadelphia, and Albany-Rensselaer, NY. The only trains operating into New England Wednesday were the Boston section of the *Lake Shore Limited* (the New York section was turned at Albany), and one *Downeaster* round-trip from Portland, ME, to Boston. An advisory warned passengers that the journeys may take over an extra hour and a half to complete because all highway crossings needed to be flagged owing to widespread commercial power outages in New Hampshire and Maine.

*Carolinian* round-trips to Charlotte, NC, turned at Philadelphia; the *Crescent* to and from New Orleans and the *Silver Meteor* to and from Miami turned at Washington. The *Silver Star* continued to run between Jacksonville and Miami via Tampa as it had throughout the Sandy emergency. With both sets of *Auto Train* equipment waiting out the storm at Sanford, FL, only northbound train 52 was operating Wednesday. Southbound service from Lorton, VA, would resume Thursday.

Trains still cancelled Wednesday included the New Haven-Springfield, MA, shuttles (no connecting Northeast Corridor trains), *Adirondack*, *Ethan Allen Express*, *Capitol Limited* (set to resume eastbound Thursday), *Cardinal* (east of Indianapolis), *Palmetto*, *Vermont*, *Pennsylvanian*, and *Maple Leaf* (south of Albany).

Late October 31st, Amtrak announced it would begin running six northbound and five southbound Boston-New Haven *North-east Regional* runs and four New Haven-Springfield shuttle round-trips Thursday. A full *Downeaster* schedule, including the inaugural run to Brunswick, ME, would resume, as would the *Pennsylvanian* to and from Pittsburgh. Other cancellations would remain in effect at least through Thursday, when Amtrak would make a decision on what additional service restoration is possible for Friday and the weekend.

#### **NJ Transit restores service on three rail lines**

Published: November 2, 2012

TRENTON, NJ – NJ Transit restarted limited rail service on three rail lines November 2nd, following Hurricane Sandy. Service began on the Northeast Corridor between Trenton and Newark Penn Station, the North Jersey Coast Line between Woodbridge and Newark Penn Station, and the Raritan Valley Line between Raritan and Newark Penn Station. Service to Penn Station New York would resume once Amtrak's restoration of the Hudson River Tunnels and signal systems is complete. NJ Transit service on the Morris & Essex, Montclair-Boonton, Main/Bergen and Atlantic City lines remained suspended, as was Hudson-Bergen Light Rail and Newark Light Rail service. From Amtrak's Web Site

#### **AMTRAK NORTHEAST CORRIDOR SERVICE RESTORATION PLAN FOR NOVEMBER 3 AND NOVEMBER 4**

*Acela Express* and *Northeast Regional* regular weekend service Boston-New York City-Washington, D.C.: most overnight service is restored

November 2, 2012 2:45 pm ET

Amtrak will provide *Acela Express* and *Northeast Regional* regular weekend service on the Northeast Corridor between Boston and Washington, D.C., via New York City, on Saturday, November 3 and Sunday, November 4. Amtrak services to and from New York City are subject to delay while repairs continue.

Other plans, full and modified service, for Saturday, November 3 and Sunday, November 4:

*Keystone Service* trains will operate normally between Harrisburg, PA, and New York

*Crescent* (Trains 19 & 20) will operate normally between New York and New Orleans

*Cardinal* (Train 50) will operate normally between Chicago and New York

*Vermont* (Trains 54 & 57) will operate normally between St. Albans, VT, and New York

*Maple Leaf* (Trains 63 & 64) will operate only between Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and Albany-Rensselaer, rather than originating and terminating in New York

*Silver Star* (Trains 91 & 92) will operate normally between Miami and New York

*Lake Shore Limited* (Trains 448 & 449) will operate normally Chicago-Boston, with no service to points south of Albany-Rensselaer, rather than (Trains 48 & 49) originating and terminating in New York

Repairs by other track owners also continue for the route between New York City and Albany-Rensselaer, with no estimate available for a restoration date for *Empire Service* trains between New York City and Buffalo/Niagara Falls, the *Adirondack* (Trains 68 & 69) to and from Montreal, Québec, Canada, and the *Ethan Allen Express* (Trains 290 & 291) to and from Rutland, VT.

From Trains Newswire:

#### **Limited Empire Corridor service returns**

By Bob Johnston Published: November 5, 2012

ALBANY, NY – Over the weekend, Amtrak restored service between New York Penn Station and Albany-Rensselaer. The *Empire Corridor* trains use trackage over Metro-North Railroad along the Hudson River. The route had been shut down since Hurricane Sandy's storm surge left it unfit for service last Monday. Metro-North, which operates commuter trains as far north as Poughkeepsie, NY, also resumed Hudson Line service on Saturday.



Amtrak ran test trains over the line Saturday morning. According to a directive issued to operating crews, some signals only governed movements over certain power-operated switches that were functioning, while switches at four control points were secured in the manual position and lined for straight away movements on main tracks unless directed otherwise by CSX dispatchers. Authorized speeds were limited to 59 mph for passenger trains north of Poughkeepsie.

Amtrak operated two revenue round-trips Saturday afternoon and evening, but they lost considerable time over the route. The first departure out of Penn Station on Saturday was No. 1049, a temporary designation, running on the westbound *Lake Shore Limited* schedule using *Empire Service* Amfleet I equipment. It left 2 minutes late at 3:47 pm but arrived at Albany-Rensselaer at 8:05 pm, one hour and 40 minutes late. The first southbound on Saturday, No. 244, and the *Maple Leaf* from Toronto both lost about an hour. A similar schedule was implemented for Sunday, including restoration of the northbound *Adirondack* to Montreal. On Monday, six *Empire Service* round-trips were cancelled but the northbound *Ethan Allen* to Rutland, VT, was operating.

Saturday's westbound *Lake Shore*, whose New York section equipment had arrived from Chicago as train No. 48 that afternoon, was held for connecting passengers and departed Albany-Rensselaer one hour and 45 minutes late. It arrived in Chicago only 10 minutes late, thanks to the once-per-year gift of Daylight Saving Time adjustment. The *Lake Shore* arrived at Buffalo, NY, at 1:51 am on Eastern Daylight Time, but left 9 minutes later at 1:00 am on Eastern Standard Time.

**Amtrak to open Penn Station tunnels Friday, November 9th**  
Published: November 8, 2012

WASHINGTON – Amtrak plans to reopen three tunnels that provide access to New York's Penn Station by late Friday, November 9th. With them open, Amtrak and commuter rail operators can expand service north, south, and west of New York City. Individual tunnels are expected to open at various times over the next three days.

The Hurricane Sandy storm surge flooded four of six 102-year-old tunnels under the Hudson and East rivers for the first time in their history. Salt water severely damaged signal and electrical systems in three of the four flooded tunnels and Amtrak employees have designed a bypass for the signal system to allow the tunnels to reopen, but more repairs are needed. "The return of all tunnel access to New York City will be a major milestone in the continued restoration of Amtrak and commuter rail service and for the larger recovery efforts of the Northeast region," says Amtrak President and CEO Joe Boardman.

Two of the tunnels (known as Line 1 and Line 2) that will reopen this week are under the East River and will support more Northeast Corridor service east of New York and Empire Service and other trains that operate to and from Albany, NY. When the two tunnels open, each will operate at 80 percent capacity, handling about 32 trains per hour as repairs continue. Two other East River tunnels did not flood and are operating at 100 percent capacity, or at a peak level of about 40 trains per hour.

The other tunnel to reopen, known as the North Tube, is under the Hudson River and will enable expanded Amtrak and NJ Transit commuter service south of New York. In combination with the South Tube, which reopened October 31, the two Hudson River tunnels will operate at about 63 percent capacity, or a peak of about 24 trains per. A normal peak is about 38 trains per hour.

The ability to further increase capacity through the Hudson River tunnels is currently limited by significant flooding damage at a key electrical substation near Kearney, NJ. On November 6, with the assistance of the Army Corps of Engineers, Amtrak brought the flooding under control and de-watered the facility. Crews are now cleaning the equipment, which will be tested to determine the extent of the damage. Amtrak is able to bypass this substation, but because the power used for this section of track now has to supply a longer distance, the number of trains allowed to take power in the longer supply section is to be restricted in order to protect the catenary wires from overheating or tripping the circuit breakers until the substation is back on line for full restoration of service.

The 1930s-era electrical system was built by the Pennsylvania Railroad and inherited by Amtrak when it took control of sections of the Northeast Corridor in 1976. It uses unusual 25Hz current; most modern electrical components are designed for 60Hz current, thus limiting the ability to easily substitute electrical components or bring in alternate power sources.

#### Meeting Minutes of the October 20, 2012 Membership Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 6:28 pm by past president Cy Svobodny with 19 members and guests present. It was noted that several of the other officers were not present. The question was asked if there were any changes or corrections to the secretary's minutes of the September 15, 2012 membership meeting, as published in the October 2012 issue of Northstar News. There were none, so a motion to approve them, as published, was made, seconded, and carried. The treasurer was not present to give a report. The national director and trip chairman were at the NRHS conference in Wilmington, DE. All members should have received their dues renewal notice sent out from the NRHS national office. The 2013 Minnesota Rail Calendars have

### NORTHSTAR CHAPTER'S ANNUAL BANQUET ---- DECEMBER 2, 2012

at

**Gulden's Restaurant and Bar**  
2999 Highway 61, Maplewood

Exit I-694 at Highway 61 and drive south, turning right on County Road D

Cocktails at 3 pm, meal service at 4 pm and program following the meal

Price: \$25.00 including tax and tip.

Includes buffet meal with choice of roasted turkey, Swedish meatballs, or Lasagna, beverage.

Please make your reservations early.

Program: John Gaertner's Power Point History of the Duluth South Shore and Atlantic

**Deadline: November 24th, 2012**

**Member.....\$25.00.....**

**Guests (number).....@ \$25.00.....**

**Phone number of member (in case we need to contact you)\_\_\_\_\_**

**Make Checks Payable to "Northstar Railway Historical Society"**

**Send to: John Goodman, 8409 13th Avenue S., Bloomington, MN 55425-1705**

arrived. Approximately 675 of them were printed. We sold several of them at the flea market earlier today. Postcards advertising the calendar will be going out soon.

The nominating committee came up with the following slate of nominees for the 2013 officers: President: Marty Swan, Vice-President: Dick Tubbesing, Secretary: Dave Norman, Treasurer: Dan Meyer, Trustee: Gary Rumler, National Director: Bill Dredge, Past President: Dawn Holmberg.

Programs - planned upcoming programs were listed, October - Greg Smith, November - Joe Stark, December - John Gaertner, January - member's night for calendar images, February - possibly Bill Dredge. Ross Hammond might do either March or April.

Cheer Committee - Frank Wilkie had surgery and is recovering satisfactorily. Jeff had surgery in August.

There was a call for any Old Business. It was suggested that we table discussion of a proposal to create a trip committee until next month.

The chapter's annual banquet will be Sunday, December 2 at Gulden's. The menu choices will be Swedish meatballs, lasagna and roast turkey (both white and dark meat.) Checks should be sent to John Goodman.

New Business: It was suggested that we change the date of the January meeting, as several members of the chapter will be attending the Rail Passenger Car Alliance meeting on the weekend of our normal meeting date. After a brief discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to move the date of the January meeting to the 4th Saturday of January.

There was a call for any announcements. Amtrak's *Empire Builder* has been running late lately. The BNSF has been raising track in areas in North Dakota that have been subject to problems with high water levels. It was mentioned that there has been a lot of track work lately by all railroads. Those present were asked to introduce themselves. There is a model railroad show this weekend at the Carpenter's Union Hall with 10 different layouts. There was a question about the St. Paul Union Depot - the Union Pacific still hasn't installed the track switches needed to reach the depot trackage. So it probably will not open for rail service until next spring. John Goodman has been trying to set up another tour of the Depot. This would have to be on a weekday. The overhaul of former Milwaukee Road steamer 261 is not done, but it is

being worked on. They hope for break-in runs in March or April and they hope to run a trip to Duluth in May. There was another question about a possible tour of the St. Paul Union Depot. Bob Clarkson talked about the East Metro Update study. He asked people to take pictures illustrating the congestion problems in bottle neck areas. Dave Norman said that he is working on a neighborhood history project about the Milwaukee neighborhood in south Minneapolis and would be grateful for information or suitable photos. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded, and carried at 6:56 pm. There was a break while waiting for the person who was to present the program to arrive. The program was presented by Greg Smith. He showed several hundred images of railroad scenes, mostly in the Twin Cities.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dave Norman Secretary Northstar Chapter NRHS

## Railfan Calendar

### Granite City Train Show and Sale

Saturday, November 10th, 10 am - 3 pm, National Guard Armory, 1710 Veteran's Drive, St. Cloud, MN. Admission: \$5, kids 12 and under free.

### Lakes and Pines Division of Train Collectors Association Open Train Meet and Show

Sunday, November 11th, 12:15 pm - 2:30 pm, John P. Murzyn Hall, 530 Mill St. NE, Columbia Heights, MN. Admission: \$2, kids 12 and under free.

### Upper Midwest Train Show and Sale

Saturday, November 17th, 9 am - 2 pm, Century College, 3300 Century Ave. N., White Bear Lake, MN. Admission: \$5, kids 12 and under free.

### Night Trains Premier

Saturday nights, November 24th - February 23rd, 6 pm - 9 pm, Twin City Model Railroad Museum, Bandana Square, St. Paul.

Northstar News

Northstar Chapter

National Railway Historical Society

1515 Creek Meadows Drive NW

Coon Rapids, MN, 55433-3768

Address Correction Requested



## From Trains Newswire

### Talgo files breach of contract suit against state of Wisconsin

By Matt Van Hattem Published: November 5, 2012

MILWAUKEE — On Friday, November 2, 2012, train manufacturer Talgo Inc., filed a lawsuit against the state of Wisconsin for defaulting on its contract to purchase two trainsets that Wisconsin had ordered in 2009.

The two trains were assembled at Talgo's plant in Milwaukee, WI, along with two trainsets ordered by the state of Oregon. Wisconsin's trains were going to be used on the Amtrak *Hiawatha Service* line between Milwaukee and Chicago, while Oregon's will be deployed on the Amtrak *Cascades* service between Vancouver, BC and Eugene, OR.

The trains are substantially completed, but Talgo says the state of Wisconsin has refused to pay it millions owed in manufacturing and testing costs. The state missed a payment of \$4.6 million, due in April 2012, and has refused to commit any money to pre-revenue testing of the trainsets, a critical step in the delivery process that Talgo says the state was obligated to pay under the purchase contract.

The lawsuit is the latest action that follows a series of steps that state has taken to back away from the trains. In March 2012, the state legislature cut off spending on the planning and construction of a maintenance base for the trains, then in April the state sent a notice canceling the 20-year maintenance contract with Talgo for the trains. Talgo and the state had gone through a mediation process to attempt to resolve the outstanding issues. In July, Talgo sent the state a "notice of default" for the \$4.6 million payment, requesting payment within 30 days.

The state failed to act, and on Thursday, November 1, Talgo terminated its purchase agreement with Wisconsin. The suit filed November 2 will enable the court to determine whether Wisconsin defaulted on the purchase contract and that Talgo acted lawfully in terminating the contract, and determine who will have title to the trains.

"Talgo is not in the business of politics. Talgo builds and maintain trains," said Antonio Perez, president of Talgo Inc. "Terminating a contract and filing a lawsuit like this is an extraordinary and unprecedented action for us, one which we have taken reluctantly but with resolve."

The state's investment in the trains totals more than \$50 million to date, paid for with bonds. If the state loses title to the trains, it will be unable to recoup any of that investment through a sale of the equipment.

### Northstar commuter line to open new station, offer free rides

Published November 5, 2012

MINNEAPOLIS — A new station will open on November 14 at Ramsey, MN, on the Northstar commuter rail line between Minneapolis and Big Lake, MN. To mark the occasion, Northstar will offer free rides between all stations on the 40-mile line on November 14 and 15.

Twelve Northstar trains will serve the station each weekday during rush hours. The station will also see six trips each on Saturdays and Sundays. Ramsey is the seventh station along the line, and the only new station added since Northstar began service on November 16, 2009.

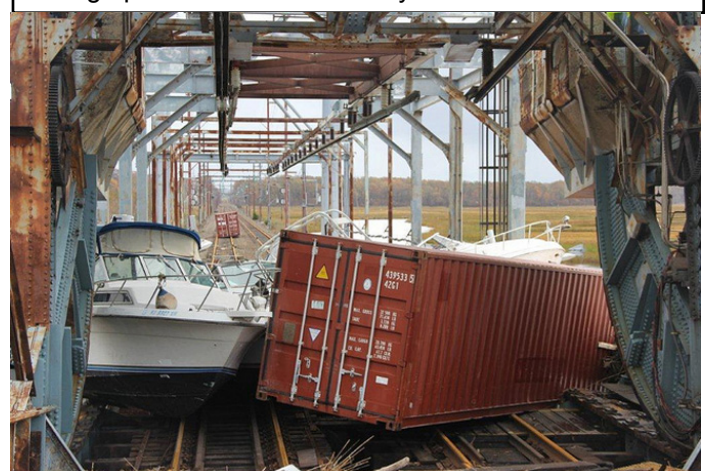
The City of Ramsey, the Anoka County Regional Rail Authority, the Counties Transit Improvement Board, State of Minnesota, and Twin Cities Metropolitan Council provided funding for the station. Metro Transit, a service of the Metropolitan Council, operates Northstar over BNSF Railway track using BNSF crews.



The High Iron Special at Chestnut St. in St. Paul. Photo by Dick Tubbesing



New York's Penn Station the night of October 29th. Damage photos from New Jersey Transit



Morgan Drawbridge on the New York and Long Branch (North Jersey Coast Line) section of New Jersey Transit.. Damage photos from New Jersey Transit





**Hoboken enginehouse.** Damage photos from New Jersey Transit



**North Jersey Coast Line section between South Amboy and Matawan on New Jersey Transit.** Damage photos from New Jersey Transit



**Morgan Drawbridge on the New York and Long Branch (North Jersey Coast Line) section of New Jersey Transit.** Damage photos from New Jersey Transit



**Washout at Perth Amboy.** Damage photos from New Jersey Transit



**Blocked line west of Perth Amboy.** Damage photos from New Jersey Transit



