

## WEEKLY RAIL REVIEW

For the week ending SAT, December 6, 2003

By Dave Mears

### THE WEEK'S TOP NEWS (in chronological order):

(SUN) A CSX freight train derailed 28 cars near Atmore, AL. 2 engines of the train also derailed, resulting in the train crew being taken to a local hospital for examination. The cause of the derailment was still under investigation at press time. (ffd: Mobil Register)

(MON) The U.S. Department of Transportation announced \$2.85 billion in funding for restoring or improving transit services in Lower Manhattan. The funding includes \$1.7 billion for a permanent PATH subway station at the World Trade Center site; \$750 million for the new Fulton Street Transit Center, which will link access to 12 different subway lines at or near the site; and \$400 million for a new South Ferry subway station, which will replace the single-track, 6-car capacity, loop-track station served by the system's No. 1 and 9 lines with a 3-track, 10-car, stub-end, 2-platform terminal. The new South Ferry subway station will locate immediately adjacent to the Staten Island Ferry Terminal now undergoing renovation. (ffd: USDOT)

(MON) Union Pacific and the Mexican railroad Ferrocarril Mexicano debuted a new expedited, all-rail intermodal service offering 7-day transit between Los Angeles, CA. and the primary Mexican industrial centers of Guadalajara and Mexico City. A spokesman for the 2 railroads said that the new service also offers customers expedited crossing of the U.S.-Mexican border by allowing the option of clearing customs within the interior of Mexico. (ffd: UP Corp.)

(WED) A survey by Economic Planning Associates, Inc. indicated that U.S. rail freight and passenger car orders will continue to rise through 2004 and into 2005. The survey indicated that new orders will be spurred by the low number of cars acquired in 2001 and 2002, and the need to replace aging equipment. The survey added that a shortage of domestic castings may constrain rail car production through mid-2004. (ffd: Progressive Railroading)

(WED) Amtrak announced that its ridership over the Thanksgiving Holiday period appeared to have numbered approximately 600,000 passengers, representing the highest holiday ridership in Amtrak's 32-year history. An Amtrak spokesman said that ticket sales for that period, November 25 through December 1, totaled \$30.9 million. The spokesman said that the figures were preliminary and that official numbers would be released shortly. (ffd: Amtrak)

(FRI) The membership of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers voted to merge with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. The merger, which was proposed by BofLE and Teamsters leaders earlier in the year, was approved by U.S. BofLE membership 81 percent to 19 percent and by Canadian BofLE membership 63 percent to 37 percent. The absorption of the 140-year old BofLE into the Teamsters will take effect January 1, 2004. (ffd: wire services)

(FRI) The U.S. Federal Railroad Administration and the International Union of Railways signed a memorandum of understanding to cooperate on railroad security issues. The agreement between the 2 agencies includes a framework for joint initiatives focusing on such subjects as information exchanges, technological research, crisis management and hazardous materials transportation. (ffd: AAR, Progressive Railroading)

(FRI) Amtrak announced several changes to its discount policies. The changes include expanding the military furlough discount such that it is now also good on weekend Metroliner and Acela Express trains. Other changes include reducing the senior citizen discount from 15 percent to 10 percent. The changes take effect January 6. (ffd: Amtrak)

(SAT) A 30-year conductor of Chicago, IL.'s METRA commuter trains commented on the recently published book of his experiences. The book, "That's What I Call Commuting," was written by METRA conductor Mike Holinka, with the assistance of longtime METRA rider Ed Gabrielse, and published by First Books. Mr. Holinka said that he decided to write the book after years of swapping stories with other train and engine personnel. "95 percent of the tales in the book happened to me and 100 percent are true," Mr. Holinka said. (ffd: Chicago Sun-Times)

### STATS:

(THU) For the week ending November 29, U.S. carload rail traffic was down 0.1 percent from the comparable week last year, up 6.2 percent in the East, but down 4.2 percent in the West. Also for week ending November 29, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was down 0.1 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was up 11.6 percent and Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 0.2 percent, all when ranked with the comparable week last year.

For the month of November, 2003, U.S. carload rail traffic was up 0.3 percent, compared with November, 2002. Notable traffic increases included coke up 28.3 percent, crushed stone and gravel up 12.8 percent and waste and scrap materials up 9.4 percent; notable traffic decreases include metallic ores down 21.4 percent and coal down 2.8 percent. Also for November, 2003, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 8.2 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was up 9.9 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 0.3 percent, Mexico's Transportacion Ferroviaria Mexicana's carload rail traffic was down 7.9 percent and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was down 8.2 percent, all when ranked with November, 2002.

For the period January 1 through November 30, U.S. carload rail traffic was down 0.1 percent, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 6.7 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was up 0.5 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 6.1 percent, TFM's carload

rail traffic was down 2.5 percent and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was up 12.4 percent, all when ranked with the same period last year. (ffd: AAR)

#### ACQUISITIONS, ABANDONMENTS AND ALIKE:

(MON) Burlington Northern Santa Fe filed to abandon approximately 60 miles of line between Pawnee, NE. and Endicott, NE. (ffd: STB)

(TUE) Union Pacific granted trackage rights to Burlington Northern Santa Fe between Gibes, ID. And Coeur D'Alene, ID. The purpose of the trackage rights grant is to allow BNSF to deliver and receive rail cars from the Stimson Lumber Co. at Coeur D'Alene, ID. as part of BNSF's agreement to provide haulage service for UP between Spokane, WA. and Coeur D'Alene, ID. (ffd: STB)

(WED) The U.S. Surface Transportation Board rejected the proposal by Conrail-Shared Assets to abandon approximately 1 mile of its Sayreville Running Track in North Brunswick, NJ. The STB rejected the proposal on procedural grounds and requested Conrail-Shared Assets to correctly re-file its request. (ffd: STB)

#### PERSONNEL CHANGES:

(MON) Metro North Railroad appointed Sherry Harrington Chief of Operations Services. A MNRR spokesman said the appointment makes Ms. Harrington the first woman to head a MNRR operating department. (ffd: Progressive Railroading)

(MON) Norfolk Southern announced the following appointments: James Hixon to SVP-Legal & Government Affairs; James Squires to VP-Law; Tony Ingram to SVP-Transportation Network & Mechanical; Mark Manion to SVP-Transportation Operations; Kathryn McQuade to SVP-Finance; Marta Stewart to VP-Controller; Charles "Wick" Moorman to SVP-Corporate Planning & Services; John Rathbone to SVP-Administration; Donald Seale to SVP-Marketing Services; Daniel Smith to SVP-Energy and Properties; and Robert Martinez to VP-Business Development. All of the above appointed individuals will be headquartered in Norfolk, VA. (ffd: NS Corp.)

(THU) The Twin Cities & Western Railroad appointed Mark Wegner SVP & General Manager. Mr. Wegner is a 10-year veteran of the 229-mile TC&W. (ffd: Progressive Railroading)

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(CORRECTION: Boy, did I goof this one! In WRR for the week ending November 29, I mentioned the appointment of former BN CEO Darius Gaskins as the new head of Delta Airlines. In fact, it is former BN CEO Gerald Grinstein coming aboard Delta. I've no excuse other than I once met Mr. Gaskins and also Bob Krebs (who came after Mr. Grinstein at BNSF), but never Mr. Grinstein; I guess this omission was weighing on my mind in a number of ways! In any case, thanks to WRR Readers Joe Folk, Scott Hulstrom, Bill Newman, Gary Olden, Henry Posner, Tuch Santucci and Doug Watts for their sharp eyes here.)

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Weekly Rail Review is edited from public news sources and published weekly, usually on Sunday or Monday, to the rail and transit industries and those interested in them. Send an e-mail to [weeklyrailreview@aol.com](mailto:weeklyrailreview@aol.com) to receive it, with my compliments.

HAVE A SAFE AND PROSPEROUS WEEK,  
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