The Trolleyville Times

September 2019

Welcome to Trolleyville - Keep in the know on modern rail transit activities!

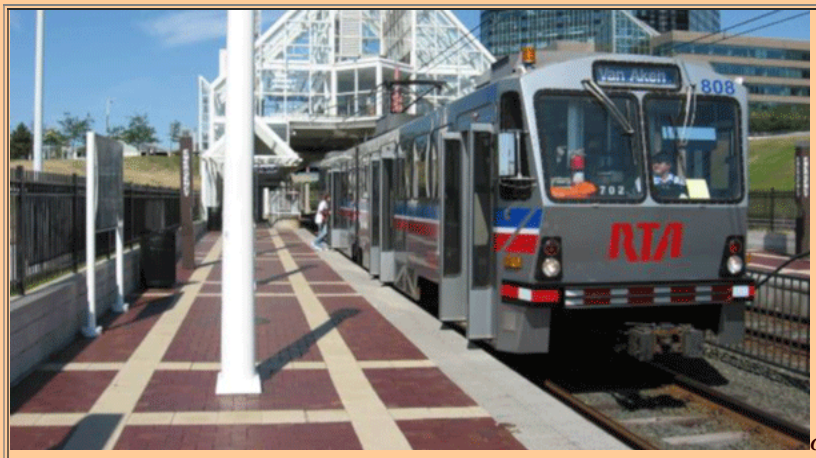
IN THIS ISSUE:

CURRENT EVENTS.....

Urban Commuter / Light Rail / Modern Streetcar News!

***

CLEVELAND, OH - In a move that will surely become the norm for transit agencies. the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) Interim Chief Executive Officer Flounsay Caver announced on August 13th the launch of free WI-FI at select Red Line Stations in East Cleveland, Ohio.

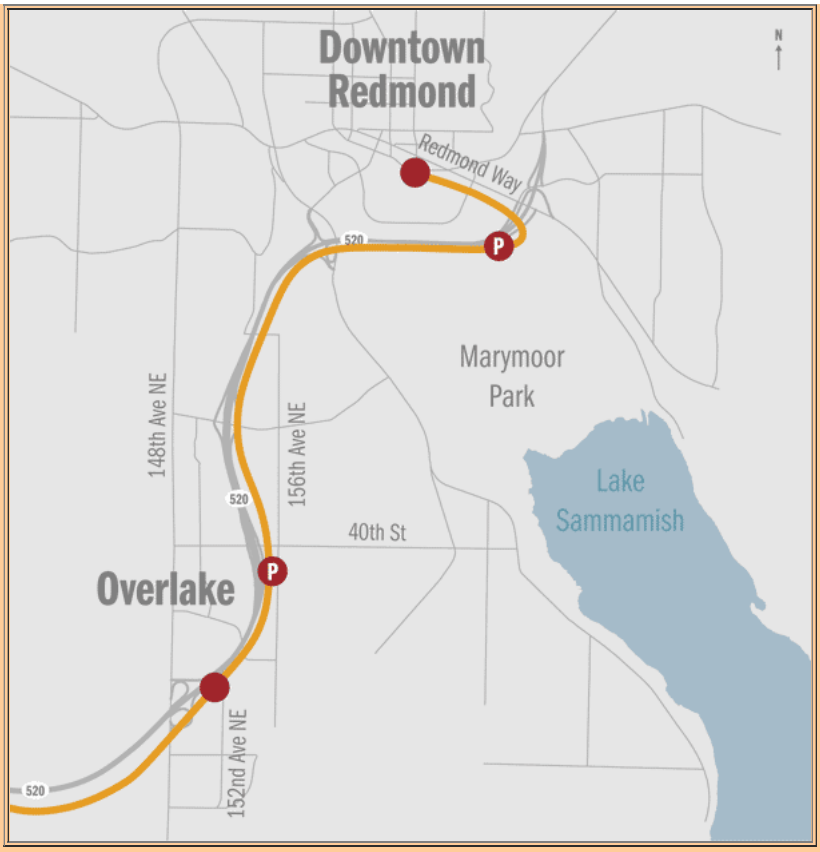


Car 848, one of 48 vehicles built in 1980 and 1981 by Breda Construzioni Ferroviarie. 34 of these vehicles are currently being renovated to last another 15 years.

For the record, Breda Construzioni Ferroviarie - BCF SpA was an Italian company, founded in 1971 with headquarters in Pistoia, Italy, that operated in the railway sector in particular in the construction of railway rolling stock for the transport of both passengers and freight. It closed in 2000 when merged into what now is AnsaldoBreda, whose vehicles are now operating in Boston, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

WI-FI service is currently available at Tower City Station platforms and the rail lobby at Cedar University Station in Cleveland, as well as the the interior lobby and rail platform at Louis Stokes/Windermere Station, GCRTA officials said in a press release. Crews also are installing WI-Fi on the Cedar University Station rail platforms, they said. GCRTA officials also announced a plan to begin enabling WI-Fi on all rail cars in its system starting in January 2020.

REDMOND, WA - In late July 2019 Sound Transit's board chose the Stacy and Witbeck/Kuney joint venture to complete final design and construction of the Downtown Redmond Link Extension project, which will extend light-rail 3.4 miles from the Redmond Technology Station to downtown Redmond, Washington.



The $729.3 million contract includes construction of guideway, two stations, a parking garage, the overhead catenary system, traction power substations, train control and communications, special track work, utilities, and street and trail improvements, Sound Transit officials said in a press release.

The board also authorized the joint venture to review alternative concepts received during the procurement process, and approved a $50 million allowance should it want to incorporate any of those elements into the contract.

Passenger-rail service on the extension is expected to begin in 2024.

SAN DIEGO, CA - The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) last week issued $335 million of its capital grant receipt revenue bonds to help finance the construction of the Mid-Coast Trolley, a trolley extension between the downtown area and University City in San Diego.

This transaction will accelerate SANDAG's receipt of a $1 billion grant from the Federal Transit Administration under the Capital Investment Grant program, SANDAG officials said in a press release.

"The bonds were issued at a low borrowing cost, which will allow us to maximize the use of federal dollars for the project," said SANDAG Chair and Poway Mayor Steve Vaus.

Two of the eleven full size S70s in San Diego. These were the first low-floor vehicles ordered by SDMTS in 2004 but their full length (93.6 ft) makes three-car trains block two intersections downtown so they are currently operated only on the Orange Line.

The $2.1 billion Mid-Coast Trolley is currently under construction. When service begins in 2021, the extended 11-mile route will include nine new stations.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - The Market Street Railway reported that for the first time in 77 years on August 6, 2019, the biggest (longest) cable car in San Francisco (or anywhere for that matter) climbed "halfway to the stars" and back down again under cable power, in regular service conditions.

"Big 19" on California crossing Grant Avenue. This car and 11 others just like it served Chinatown faithfully via the next two blocks to the north until 1942.

The 1883 vintage cable car known as “Big 19” for its size (**seven feet** longer than Powell Street Cable Car 19, and **four fee**t longer than the California Street cable cars, previously the longest in the fleet) has been on the streets twice before in recent weeks for testing, but both times at night, while the rest of the cable cars were sleeping in the barn.

On this day, it ran from the cable car barn at Washington and Mason Street just as a regular-service California Street cable car would, the cable pulling it up Jackson Street and along Hyde to reach the California line, then up to Van Ness, reversing ends all the way to Market Street, and back again to Hyde, pulling onto the non-revenue (no passengers) stretch of track on Hyde between California and Washington Streets.

There, a few feet from its long-time route along Clay Street, the crew tested the slot blade, the emergency brake that brings cable cars to a quick stop when other brakes have problems. It worked fine, but under cable car rules, a car has to be towed back to the barn whenever a slot blade is dropped, so that’s how it ended the August 6th test.

So, no problems encountered anywhere; it fit everywhere. Because of its length, it wasn’t certain it would clear the terminal switch at California and Market while a Cal Car was “in the hole” (The extra space to store a cable car at the end of the line), but it made it with ease.

Acting Senior Operations Manager for Cable Car, Wes Valaris, a former gripman, poses on the running board of "Big 19" at the California and Market terminal. Note F-line PCC 1051 in the background.

There's still some paperwork to be done, but at this writing, it looks like Big 19 will be cleared to make its passenger-carrying debut on Muni Heritage Weekend, September 7-8, an exciting event for sure. Thereafter, it's expected to join O'Farrell, Jones & Hyde Cable Car 42 for infrequent but incredible special event service.

Thanks to Peter Ehrlich for reporting this to Trolleyville!

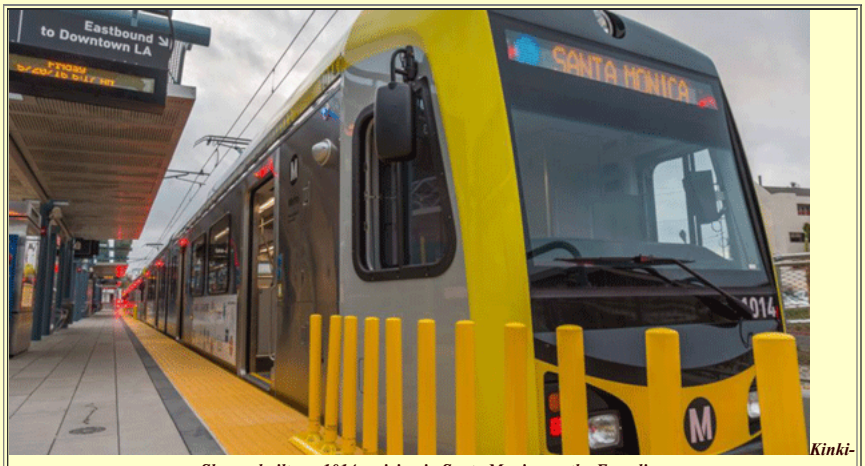
More Urban Rail Happenings!

***

LOS ANGELES, CA - On Saturday, August 24th, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LA Metro) reopened the Pico and 7th Street/Metro Center Expo Line stations, which have been closed since mid-June to accommodate Blue Line construction.

LA Metro's Blue Line has been undergoing a $350 million modernization that began in January 2019 to improve reliability, safety and the rider experience.

The Expo Line and Blue Line share tracks in downtown Los Angeles, which included the Pico Boulevard Station and part of the modernization work was to replace track at the junction of the two rail lines at Washington Boulevard and Flower Street, LA Metro officials said in a press release.



Kinki-Sharyo-built car 1014 arriving in Santa Monica on the Expo line

The Blue Line's northern section, which extends from Compton to 7th Street Station, continues to be out of service and is expected to reopen in the fall of 2019. The Blue Line project southern section upgrade was completed on June 1.

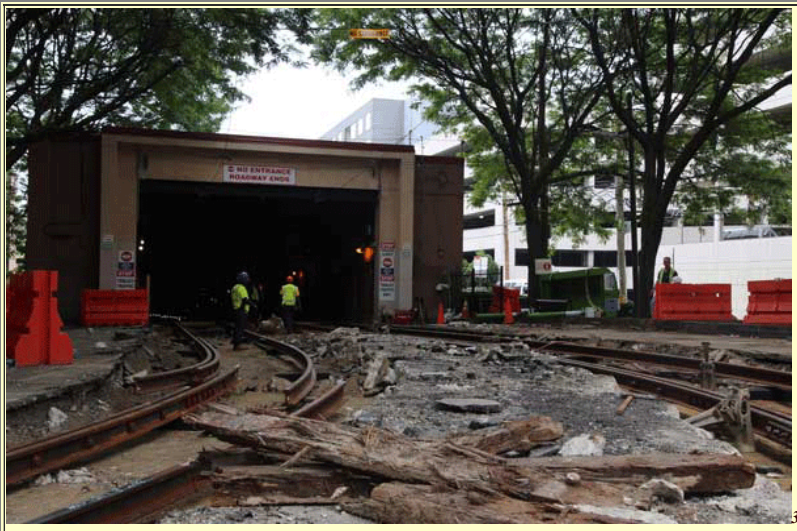
Also, on August 14th the Foothill Gold Line Construction Authority board awarded a contract to a Kiewit-Parsons joint venture to design and build a 9-mile segment of the Foothill Gold Line light-rail extension from Glendora to Pomona, California.

The Gold Line is the only light rail line in Los Angeles that has been extended from both ends. The original Northern end which was Pasadena is now Azusa and the original southern end which was Union station is now East Los Angeles.

The project is being funded by Los Angeles County's Measure M funds and with residual Measure R funds not used to complete the Pasadena to Azusa light-rail segment. In addition, funding will come from a grant through a state transit and intercity rail capital program. The contract also includes a two-year option to complete the full 12.3-mile project to Montclair and add stations in Claremont and Montclair. If the authority secures additional funding from San Bernardino County by September 2021, the contract would amount to nearly $1.2 billion.

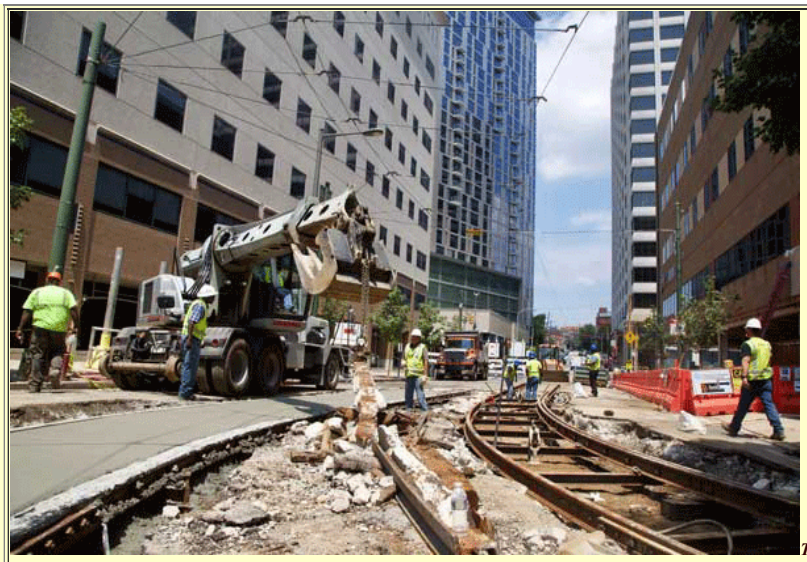
The project is scheduled to begin major construction in 2020 and take five years to complete to Pomona and eight years to complete to Montclair, if the contract option is activated. The $805.6 million contract includes relocation of existing freight track, track installation, 40 grade crossing improvements and construction of four light-rail stations in Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne and Pomona, authority officials said in a press release.

PHILADELPHIA, PA - Beginning August 9th, at 10:00 PM the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority (SEPTA) closed its subway-surface trolley tunnel from 13th Street to 40th Street for 10 days to perform repairs and preventive maintenance. SEPTAs crews were working around the clock tackling critical track and power maintenance and upgrades, station upgrades and painting, tile replacement, and maintenance work; and intensive tunnel, track area, and station cleaning as part of the 2019 Trolley Tunnel Blitz.



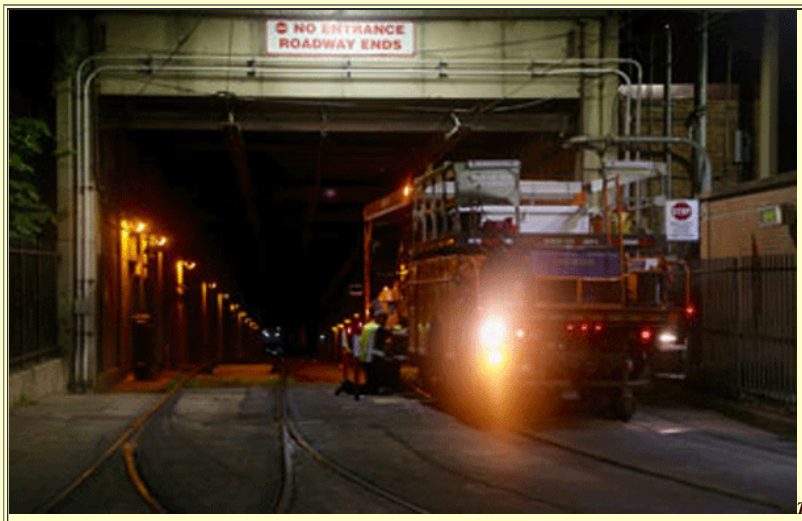
36th Street Portal, just south of Market street, used by Route 10, during the 2018 Trolley Tunnel Blitz.

The routes affected were: Route 10, Lancaster Avenue, Route 11, Woodland Avenue, Route 13, Chester Avenue, Route 34, Baltimore Avenue and Route 36, Elmwood Avenue. In the interim, subway surface trolleys took passengers to the 40th & Market Street Subway-Elevated (MFSE) station to continue their trip downtown. The route to 40th & Market, which is referred to by local crews as going "Over The Top" uses trackage, except for one block, left from from trolley routes 14, 38 and 40 abandoned in the mid 1950s.



Track replacement at the Route 10 portal during the 2018 Trolley Tunnel Blitz!

During the closure of the 5-mile tunnel, SEPTA crews will replace curved track and switches, clean track beds and drainage systems, install lighting, and replace and upgrade track circuit and signal wires, according to the project website.



The 40th Street Portal, located at the junction of Woodland and Baltimore Avenues during the 2018 Blitz. Routes 11, 13, 34 and 36 use this entrance to the 5-mile long subway-surface tunnel, which goes all the way to City Hall, Broad and Market Sts.

The tunnel closure. called the "Trolley Tunnel Blitz' occurs every year because it is the “most effective and efficient” way to perform large portions of repair work in a short period of time, SEPTA spokesperson Andrew Busch told The Philadelphia Inquirer.

The closure will affect about 62,400 riders who will be without service until August 19th at 5:00 AM, according to the newspaper.

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA - The Toronto Transportation Commission (TTC) hosted a "Farewell to the CLRVs" charter trip in the city on August 17, 2019. Peter Ehrlich, retired San Francisco F-Line operator and Urban Transit fan, was there for the occasion and posted several photos of the CLRV 4207 and ALRV 4146 that participated in the excursion. ALRV 4207 is one of 52 cars built in 1988 and one of only two left. The ALRV almost turned out to be the Canadian equivalent of the Boeing SLRV in the US.

The first six CLRV cars (4000–4005) were manufactured by SIG of Zurich, Switzerland, and used as prototypes for Urban Transportation Development Corporation (UTDC) (now Bombardier) to manufacture subsequent CLRVs at the Thunder Bay works of Hawker Siddeley Canada (today also part of Bombardier). The original order was for 200 CLRVs, of which ten were to be built by SIG and 190 by Hawker Siddeley. However, the order was reduced by four vehicles to 196 in order to provide parts to construct a prototype Articulated Light Rail Vehicle (number 4900). The four CLRVs removed were from the SIG portion of the order; thus, there were no CLRVs numbered 4006–4009. The 190 Hawker Siddeley CLRVs were numbered 4010–4199.[6][2] CLRV car 4000 had a pantograph when being tested by SIG on the Orbe-Chavornay railway and was converted to trolley pole before being delivered to Toronto.[2]

The ALRV cars were built by UTDC using bogies and articulations supplied by MAN SE of Germany. Assembly of the first 11 cars took place in Thunder Bay, while that of the remaining 41 cars took place in Kingston. They were numbered 4200–4251. ALRV 4231 was retired in mid-2014 and was used to supply parts until its scrapping in May 2015. It was the first ALRV to be retired and scrapped.

CLRV 4146 with ALRV 4207 at Woodbine Loop!

ALRV 4207 and CLRV 4146 at McCaul Loop!

CLRV 4146, ALRV 4207 and Bombardier 4443 at Lighthouse Loop!

A fun day, although long, was had by all!

MODELING HINTS.....

Rivers' Traction & Trolley!

***

Some of us old-timers in the model traction hobby remember names like Suydam, Model Tramway, and O'Toole Traction and Trolley. Well O'Toole Traction and Trolley became Rivers' Traction & Trolley.

When Tom O'Toole passed away in 2001, James Rivers, who had worked for Tom for about two years, bought the business in July 2001. Trolleyville has known Jim for over 18 years now and with the passing of Alpine Division Scale Models, we need to tell the customers where to get overhead wire hardware.

James Rivers at the East Penn Traction Club Meet in May 2009!

As a member of a module club that is converting to pantograph use, we became aware of RT&T overhead wire splices, especially the newer ones, RT&T-1, that were designed for both pantograph and pole operation.

Several items are available for those trolley aficionados still running models powered from live overhead wires:

	Designed for HO Scale	
B-610	Overhead Wire Hanger for Straight Track	$7.50 per dozen
B-615	Overhead Wire Hanger for Curved Track (Trolley poles only)	$7.50 per dozen
B-617	Overhead Wire Hanger for Pantographs (Curved or Straight track)	$7.50 per dozen
B-641	Overhead Wire Pan Frog	$1.50 each
B-642	Variable Overhead Crossover (40 to 90 degrees)	$1.50 each
B-643	Bracket Arm Casting for Bracket Line Poles	$7.50 per dozen
0-26-3	26 Gauge (.016") Phosphor Bronze Overhead Wire - 300 ft	$10.20 per roll
0-26-3NS	26 Gauge (.016") Nickel Silver Overhead Wire - 300 ft	$9.10 per roll
0-26-1	26 Gauge (.016") Phosphor Bronze Overhead Wire - 100 ft	$6.30 per roll
0-26-1NS	26 Gauge (.016") Nickel Silver Overhead Wire - 100 ft	$5.75 per roll
RT&T-1	Overhead Wire Splice (recently revised to improve pantograph capability	$1.50 each
	Designed for O Scale	
B-301	Trolley Pole Wheel Collector (non-rotating)	$1.60 each
B-302	Trolley Pole Shoe Collector	$1.60 each
0-24-3	24 Gauge (.020") Phosphor Bronze Overhead Wire - 300 ft	$10.60 per roll
0-24-1	24 Gauge (.020") Phosphor Bronze Overhead Wire - 100 ft	$6.60 per roll
	Contact:	
	James Rivers	
	540 County Line Road	
	Gates Mills, OH 4404	
	(440) 423-1760	
	jamesrivers@core.com	

Here's a oldie but goodie.....

This older Pennsylvania Scale Models Brill Suburban was slightly modified to represent an old Philadelphia Rapid Transit Standard Car in the 3100 series. It was assembled, painted and lettered in a Minuteman II Missile Site in the late 1960s and repowered with a Ken Kidder 27G power unit. It just may get DCC one of these days. The overhead wire was constructed with a lot of river's products.

Proper Etiquette at Model Train Shows!

***

We have been involved in attending and participating in model train shows now for over 25 years including the East Penn Traction Club Meets, Great American Train Shows, the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour Shows, The Great Train Expo and the current Great Train Shows. And during these years we have watched the expertise of the show managers increase over the years, especially in facilities where they have been more than once.

Problems getting vendors and layouts in and out of the various halls have perplexed show managers for years. The ever-increasing security and safety requirements have made entrance and and exits from the hall even more taxing but the show managers have very little control over the venues and their employees. Each of the halls have their great features and bad features but the various show managers who have presented shows at these halls know how to do things if only the show attendees would pay attention.

We attended a Great Train Show in Southern California last month at a facility well known to most area vendors and especially to the particular show manager. This manager has been presenting shows at this facility for over **25** years and is very familiar with the buildings and their limitations. This particular facility is also well known for absolute ineptness at performing tasks that one would think would be routine by now such as arranging exit for vendors after their show closes and also relating to them where they can park their trucks and trailers after unloading for the show

Because of all these factors, this particular train show manager, who has presented over **40** shows at this location developed some very clever ideas to minimize these entry/exit issues. He was able to implement them for both entrance and exit despite the "Clarabelle" management style prevalent at this facility.

At a recent show with a very peculiar door arrangement, the show manager specified that all vendors could set up beginning at **10 AM** BUT the club layouts should delay setting up at **12:00 noon**. This would allow the vendors (...whose booth and table fees basically pay for the show...) to get their large vans and trailers into the show and out of the hall before the layouts arrive. Then the club layouts, who are placed for their benefit in the vicinity of the large roll up doors could enter and set up without disturbances from vendors trying to exit the hall.

The show manager, despite having a show in the next building that ended one hour after his show, was able to arrange and implement a method for getting his vendors, their trucks and trailers back to and into the hall to move out in a very efficient fashion, or at least as efficient as it could be considering the geography of this location...provided that they followed his instructions and the time lines connected to his instructions.

This show manager had detailed instructions on how and when for both layouts and vendors to enter the hall and they were provided to **ALL** vendors and the club layouts **PRIOR** to their arrival to the show. Entry into the hall would have worked like a charm except for the one club layout that decided to back their large trailer into the hall partially through the large roll-up door one half hour before their alloted time and completely block the door with their large trailer and pick-up combination so no one could exit or enter using the only roll up door for at least 30 minutes. So there were at least one dozen vendors trapped inside the hall for that entire time. On top of that, these inconsiderate club members took their sweet time unloading the trailer. Of course there was 90 degree weather outside at that time.

Of course after this club displayed its high level of disrespect for the other clubs and vendors and were told about it, they went to the show manager later with their "apologies" for doing that but let's be honest here. They knew exactly what they were doing when they did it and did not care who they inconvenienced.

It would serve this club right if they never were allowed back to that particular show!

So here is the bottom line. To be a good vendor participant or layout exhibitor at train shows,

1. Read and comprehend the instructions given to you by show managers / presenters. Make sure that all of your members that will be participating in any way at the show read them also.

2. More important... follow those instructions EXACTLY. If you are given times or windows to enter and leave, follow them precisely.

3. For no reason should you ever completely block an exit door, and

4. If your trailer, van, car or truck is in the way of others, move quickly to unload and get out of the way of others. You are not the only vendor or club participating in the show. Be as quick going in as you will be going out.

Great News for Avid Modelers - NWSL is back!

***

The following item was announced on August 19, 2019 and should be great news for the a serious modeler:

Northwest Short Line is pleased to announce that the entire line has been acquired by an NWSL employee effective September 3, 2019. All existing back orders will be filled, and NWSL will be open to new orders as soon as the new websites are rolled out; the primary website nwsl.com will carry forward as the primary contact point.

The line is expected to carry forward largely unchanged although the company will no longer offer phone support. NWSL will be headquartered in Kila, Montana, located near Kalispell, and the new address will be P. O. Box 219, Kila, MT 59920. Email contact will be through the website.

Rich Allman's Kansas City Air-Electric PCC!

***

Kansas City Public Service air-electric PCC 715 has entered operation on Dr. Richard Allman's HO scale model railroad, called Main Line Transit. The prototype was built by St. Louis Car Company in 1941. It was part of a 24-car order, cars 701-724. The series entered service on the 50 TROOST line, a line with heavy patronage and some steep grades for the cars to show what they had and could do. These would be the only PCC's KCPS would acquire until the post-war years, when they purchased 160 distinctive all-electric cars without standee windows.

The Prototype:

The air cars were early victims of the abandonment of trolleys. Nonetheless, in their short time of operation, they sported 3 different paint schemes. I (typically!) chose the most complex, but one that along with the DC Transit, the Chicago Blue Goose, the earliest Dallas PCC scheme and the earliest Baltimore scheme was one of the most imaginative, distinctive and striking schemes created. The scheme I chose was the second one for this series, the scheme that was on the as-delivered post-war cars. Unlike the post-war all-electric cars, many of which found new life in Philadelphia, Toronto, Tampico, later in San Francisco via Toronto, and running gear for PCC cars in Brussels, all the air cars were scrapped with no further operation, utilization or preservation.

The KC air cars had many similarities to the 1941 Philadelphia cars, except that the KC cars had front dash lights in the belt rail and had four rear lights below the belt rail but lacked the typical Philadelphia roof whisker lights. Like the Philadelphia cars, the KC cars had a scalloped front window. There were many significant mechanical differences between the Philadelphia and KC cars, but they had no impact on the model. Typical of Kansas City PCC's, the lower windows on the rear doors were covered on the inside. The 701-724 series were withdrawn from operation in 1953 but returned briefly in 1955 after 40 of the post-war cars were sold to Philadelphia and operated until late 1955 when subsequent KC abandonments enabled KCPS to retire them from service. Attempts to sell them to Mexico City or Seoul, South Korea were unsuccessful, and the entire series was sold for scrap in late 1955.

The Model:

The shell was from Q Car Co., an epoxy shell. I acquired it from Wally Weart in Colorado, who was "thinning his herd" a bit. It was powered with a Bowser drive and had a Bowser floor. Wally had painted the car in Chicago livery. Neither Chicago Surface Lines nor Chicago Transit Authority ever had 46-foot air cars. All their cars were 50 footers and 9 feet in width and had rear doors. Wally did a magnificent paint and decal job on the car; I should have taken a photograph of it. It was a "might-have-been" model for Wally. The first step was an arduous task, removing the paint. I tried a bunch of products specifically recommended for paint removal, but it did not want to budge. Brake fluid was recommended but I could not find anything about whether it was safe on epoxy, so I shied away. In the end, I was able to get most of it off with 91% isopropyl alcohol and some gentle scrubbing. Anything that did not come off was unlikely to cause any trouble! I needed to add the outside taillights. Bob Dietrich assisted me in drilling holes for some brass tubing insertion which made acceptable replicas. The base colors were Aged White and Engine Black with aluminum for anti-climbers and the headlight wings. I used acrylic dirt color for the wheels, track brakes, and fender. Before reinserting the drive, I installed an A-Line flywheel onto the drive shaft of the motor. The decaling was complex and there was some breakage due to time-related brittleness of the decals. A light lacquer spray helped. Custom Traxx has a nice decal set, CN-750, suitable for either the air car or the all-electric. The Kansas City Public Service logos are a bit large, but this is understandable: smaller decals would have lost needed resolution. They include a range of destination signs. I needed to do a bit of post-completion tweaking to make the car successfully navigate my minimum 6-1/4-inch curves. There was method in my selection of car 715. In Fred Schneider's opus magnums on *PCC's Coast-to Coast*, a front-end shot shows that car 715 lacked the dash lights in the belt rail that were typical for Kansas City. Applying them would have been a huge hassle, to say nothing about trying to decal over them!

Credits:

Thanks, are extended to **Q Car Company** who made the shell for the car and to **Wally Weart** who sold it to me via Ebay. The Bowser drive, when it can be used is the HO trolley modeler's best friend. Thanks to George Huckaby of **Custom Traxx** for the decals. The books by **Henry Eisner** on Kansas City and the aforementioned PCC book by **Fred Schneider** and **Steve Carlson** were essential. Henry was a class guy and careful historian and modeler. Fred has been my friend for 57 years since our freshman year in college. As always, thanks are extended to my greatest of friends, my advisor and mentor, **Bob Dietrich** who was a source for so much brainstorming and troubleshooting.