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want you enjoy this rejuvenated hobby!

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### CURRENT EVENTS.....

## Urban Commuter / Light Rail / Modern Streetcar News!

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**KANSAS CITY, KS** - With Bowser Manufacturing renewing the project to make an HO scale model of the Kansas City all-electric PCC in HO scale, we thought that we would show you one ex-KC car that is still in Kansas City and still sitting on rails. Car 552 has been converted to a nice coffee shop on the current trolley line at 3rd and Delaware with the exterior very close to original.



The top two photos are of the car after complete refurbishment in 2017 (left) and as the coffee shop today (right). The bottom two photos are of the interior using some of the original PCC seats. Kansas City had 160 of these unusual cars without the trademark standee windows. By the time the original streetcar service ended in June 1957, 79 cars were sold to Belgium, 40 cars had been sold to Philadelphia, 30 cars had been sold to Toronto and 10 cars sold to Tampico, Mexico. The remaining car, 795, was placed in Swope Park, where it was eventually destroyed by that city's sludge contingent. Car 551 was one of the cars initially sold to Toronto in 1957.

**KANSAS CITY, KS** - A significant railroad non-traction story emerged on March 21st when Progressive railroading reported that Canadian Pacific Railway Ltd. and Kansas City Southern, headquartered in Kansas City had announced they had entered into a merger agreement, under which CP has agreed to acquire KCS stock in a cash transaction worth \$29 billion, which includes the assumption of about \$3.8 billion of outstanding KCS debt.



The transaction, which has the unanimous support from both Class Is' boards, values KCS at \$275 per share, representing a 23% premium, based on the companies' closing prices on March 19. Following the closing into a voting trust, common shareholders of KCS will receive 0.489 of a CP share and \$90 in cash for each KCS common share held, according to a press release.

After Surface Transportation Board (STB) approval, CP will acquire control of KCS and current CP President and Chief Executive Officer Keith Creel will serve as the CEO of the combined company, which will be called Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC). Calgary will be the global headquarters and Kansas City, Missouri, will be designated as the U.S. headquarters.

CP's proposed acquisition of KCS is the largest industry deal in decades, and would create a "compelling U.S.-Mexico-Canada rail network," according to a Baird Equity Research report. "The proposed combination would create the first U.S.-Mexico-Canada rail network connecting ports on the U.S. Gulf, Atlantic and Pacific coasts and offering single-line hauls across the continent." Baird analysts wrote.

KCS has long been viewed as a takeover target given its smaller-relative size and exemption from the STB's 2001 rules governing mergers and acquisitions involving Class Is, the Baird report notes. In September 2020, media reports indicated that KCS rejected a takeover bid from private equity buyers. "Given the limited franchise overlap (Kansas City, Missouri, is the single point of connection) and current interpretation of the STB's governing rules, we think deal approval is more likely than not," the Baird report states.



While remaining the smallest of six U.S. Class Is by revenue, the combined company will be a much larger and more competitive network, operating 20,000 miles of rail, employing close to 20,000 people and generating total revenue of \$8.7 billion based on 2020 actual revenue, according to CP and KCS officials.

**LOS ANGELES, CA** - The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (**LA Metro**) and other transportation agencies in the LA-Long Beach-Anaheim area will receive \$1.6 billion in relief funding under the American Rescue Plan signed by President Joe Biden earlier this month. LA Metro Chief Executive Officer Phil Washington and Los Angeles Department of Transportation General Manager Seleta Reynolds joined LA Mayor Eric Garcetti in a ceremony to highlight the funding.



*NipponSharyo 154, the first car of the 15-car 1995 order to open the Green Line, arrives in Santa Monica on the E-Expo Line shortly after its opening in 2016.*

They spoke of the critical role of the federal dollars will have in restoring transit service and ridership, while keeping the region on track to meet its timelines for major capital projects, according to a press release. “This funding is critically needed and will enable Metro to increase transit services and boost ridership,” said. Washington. “With ridership at nearly 50 percent of pre-pandemic levels, the American Rescue Plan Act puts us on a path to rebuild our ridership and continue providing a lifeline service to essential workers using Metro buses and trains.”

**PHILADELPHIA, PA** - A driver was in critical condition after the car allegedly ran a red light and broadsided a SEPTA single end 1981-built Kawasaki streetcar in West Philadelphia. It happened around 1 A.M. Wednesday February 10, 2021 at Belmont Avenue and Lancaster Avenue. The impact knocked the front truck of the streetcar off the tracks.





However, looking at the condition of the car (above-bottom) versus the condition of the 40 year old streetcar (above top) which was designed in-house by SEPTA employees on the late 1970s without the aid of so-called "consultants", it gives great testimony that they did one heck of a job building a solid car. The trolley operator sustained minor injuries.

**PUEBLO, CO** - Progressive Railroading reported on March 2nd that Caltrain's first electric trainset arrived at the Transportation Technology Center Inc. in Pueblo, Colorado, for testing. This facility will test the **electrical multiple units (EMUs)** at high speeds under numerous conditions, as required by the Federal Railroad Administration, Caltrain officials said in a press release.

Expected to take about eight months to complete, the testing will ensure that the new vehicles are ready for service. Tests include braking, propulsion, ride quality, noise and vibration, door operation, positive train control and electromagnetic interference.



Each trainset will consist of seven cars compared with the current five or six car trains used by Caltrain. EMUs are designed to accelerate and decelerate faster than diesel trains since eight motors are distributed throughout the train, while older cars must be pulled by a locomotive.

The electrically powered units generate less noise than their diesel counterparts. The EMUs also will include enhanced amenities.

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA** - The Market Street Railway reported on March 28 that Muni has set May 15 for the return of F-line service, if all goes according to plan.

Service will begin from Castro to Fisherman's Wharf, the entire F-line route, including the Fisherman's Wharf loop. Before the pandemic, F-line service was cut back to Pier 39 due to construction on Jefferson Street. That work on Jefferson Street ran well behind schedule, but we're told it should finally be finished within the next three weeks. Starting on May 1, again tentative, Muni plans to start running simulated service on the line (without passengers). So you should start seeing a lot more streetcars out and about, like this Pier 39 scene shot by Kirkland Division manager Paul Okunewitch, shared on their Facebook Group.



Muni is currently short operators, having suspended all hiring when the pandemic broke out. So initially service will run only eight hours a day, 11 am - 7 pm, seven days a week. The hours were chosen in consultation with merchant groups along the line and with Market Street Railway. The chosen hours represent busiest pre-pandemic hours for the F-line. Only PCCs will operate at first, and less frequently than before the pandemic.

The startup could be delayed if Muni is unable to get protective shields installed in enough PCC cars in time. The shops have installed prototypes on two cars -- 1060, and 1071, representing the two largest groups of PCCs, (ex-Philadelphia, 1050-1063, and ex-Newark/Minneapolis, 1070-1080) which differ slightly from each other. This is intended to be a permanent installation, to provide long-term physical security for the streetcar operators, matching what bus and light rail operators already have. There is some question on how quickly the shops can get the quantities of raw materials they need to do the rest of the cars in the fleet, but they're optimistic they can have enough for startup.

The Powell-Hyde cable line is slated to restart sometime this fall. The decision to start only one line, and to wait six more months to do so was driven, again, by operator shortages, and by an estimate by the cable machinery group that it will take that long to test the system properly. But a past superintendent of the cable machinery says there's no real reason the system can't be ready to go in three months; other highly knowledgeable observers say they should be able to start all three lines by that time. Union Square and Fisherman's Wharf merchants and visitor industry leadership is pushing on Muni to get the little cars back climbing halfway to the stars sooner than that.

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** - During the last week of February 2021, the [Federal Railroad Administration](#) (FRA) late last week issued an [emergency order](#) that requires the [wearing of face masks during all freight-and passenger-rail operations under the FRA's jurisdiction](#).

The order was issued to require compliance under President Biden's recent executive order and that of the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), which called for masks to be worn in airports and on planes and various modes of surface transportation, including trains, to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

The FRA's order mandates that railroads require their personnel to wear a face mask while engaged in railroad operations, including whenever in a transportation hub or facility under the rail carrier's control, regardless of duty status. Individuals who refuse to wear masks can be removed from service and subject to fines. Railroads that don't enforce the order also could face civil penalties.

**WILMINGTON, DE** - Progressive Railroading reported that AmeriStarRail LLC (ASR) has proposed to privatize Amtrak operations on the Northeast Corridor (NEC). Under its proposal, the private group says it will expand Amtrak's NEC capacity to meet travel demand over the next 20 to 40 years. The group would operate 160 mph trains and include "triple-class service" for coach, business and first class on each train.



*Last year, Amtrak's next-generation Acela prototype began testing at the Transportation Technology Center Inc. The new Acela trainsets are scheduled to begin operating on the Northeast Corridor this year.*

"For the first time, all passengers including senior citizens, students and families will have affordable, equal access to high-speed rail service in America which is funded by all taxpayers," the company's proposal states. Additionally, the group says it would extend NEC service to new routes, "eliminate inefficient terminal operations" in New York City and Washington, D.C., reduce train congestion and delays, and create additional track and yard capacity.

In a presentation in early March to the Delmarva Rail Passenger Association, AmeriStarRail officials said their group doesn't want to replace Amtrak, but enhance it, *WHYY.org* reported. The group would arrange private financing to fund its proposal. Its project would cost \$5 billion for the NEC expansion and to create a centralized maintenance center, which likely would be in Delaware, according to *WHYY.org*.

"We simply would be setting ourselves up as a company, much like in the airline industry, where you have various private companies operate routes for the major carriers, like American has American Eagle or United has United Express," said Scott Spencer, ASR co-founder and chief operating officer, according to the *WHYY.org*'s report. "The private entity has a different name, but they operate as an affiliated carrier under that marketing brand. So, we're simply using the airline model to improve Amtrak service."

AMR would have to get approval from the U.S. Department of Transportation to pursue its proposal. Amtrak could not be reached for comment prior to Progressive Railroading press time.

#### READER'S LAYOUTS (*Send us photos of your traction layout!!*):

### **Joseph Agosta's Traction Layout (Prescott, AZ!)**

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Joseph Agosta lives in Prescott, AZ and is married with two children and three grandchildren. In 2014 , he retired from his lumber business and with more time he has constructed a 12 x 7 layout in the garage. He also belongs to the Central Arizona Model Railroad Club which has around 130 members. As far as he knows, he is the only one who does live overhead wire.

Even though his parents gave him a Lionel set for Christmas around 1952, he did not have it long as they moved into a mobile home when his dad returned to school and there was no room for it. His dad was an industrial arts teacher and built model planes from an early age until his passing at age ninety so consequently he was directed to planes and not trains.

The incomplete layout has live catenary that he built from scratch using solid brass for the poles and arms and phosphorus bronze piano wire for the catenary. He is still on DC but hopes to be going partially to DCC in the near future. The fact that the catenary is almost invisible and works is an achievement.



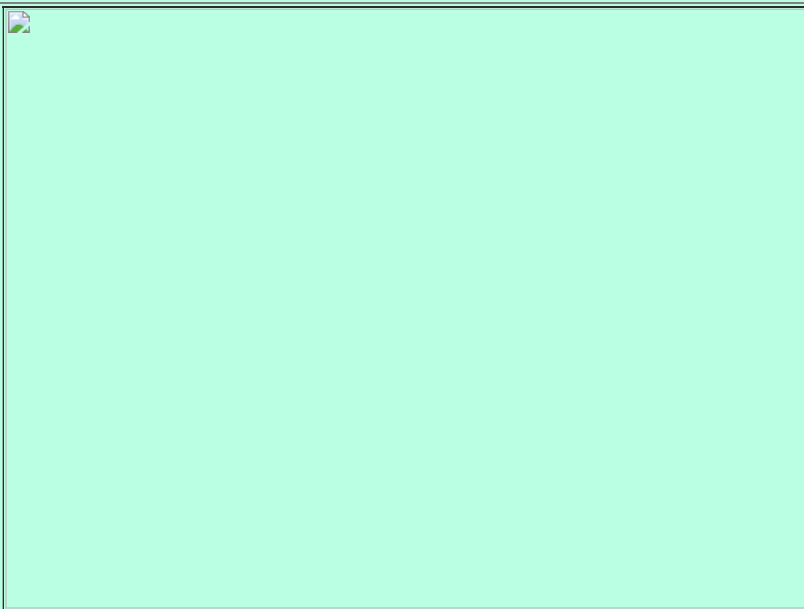
The first two photos (above) are of an old Bowser Jewett that's been on the shelf for fifteen years which he rewired for overhead. The third photo shows an HOn3 D&RG steam loco on a transfer trestle with standard gauge underneath. Most of the center of the layout is HOn3.



The fourth photo, below, shows an old Stewart kit he put together for the mine with overhead. The engine has a short in it so its a static display for now.



The final two photos show some of his electric 'motors'.







For DC the Bachmann E44s run the best. The Broadway Limited P5 is not wired for overhead wire since it is his understanding is that will void the warranty. The GG1 does run on overhead wire. These last two engines are equipped with sound and don't run that great on DC. The catenary poles used on the trolley line were given to Joseph by a club member. They look like they may be from old Japanese company, but he is not sure about that. At present, most of his focus has been directed toward the HOn3 section.

### **More of Rudi Volti's Traction Layout, (Claremont, CA!)**

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We saw a little of this layout in our preceding issue but we did not have the entire story. This layout is approximately 3.5' by 7' with a cutout on the operator's side. Rudi only started the layout between two and three years ago, the cars run on live overhead wire. The Pacific Electric 100 streetcar seen in both photos is a 3D printed model from West Coast Traction Supply powered with a Bowser 125130 traction mechanism with 26" wheels substituted for the stock 33" wheels. Notice how the overhead wire blends into the scene.

