

Amtrak NEWS

A NEWSLETTER FOR AMTRAK EMPLOYEES

Vol. 6, No. 1

January 1979

Amtrak's Crescent Begins February 1, Will Operate Daily To New Orleans

The *Southern Crescent* will begin daily service between New York City and New Orleans via Atlanta on Thursday, February 1, the day Amtrak takes over its operation from the Southern Railway.

The Southern currently operates the train on a daily basis only between Washington and Atlanta. It provides service three days a week between Atlanta, Birmingham and New Orleans.

Amtrak and Southern agreed on the date and general terms of the takeover subject to approval of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

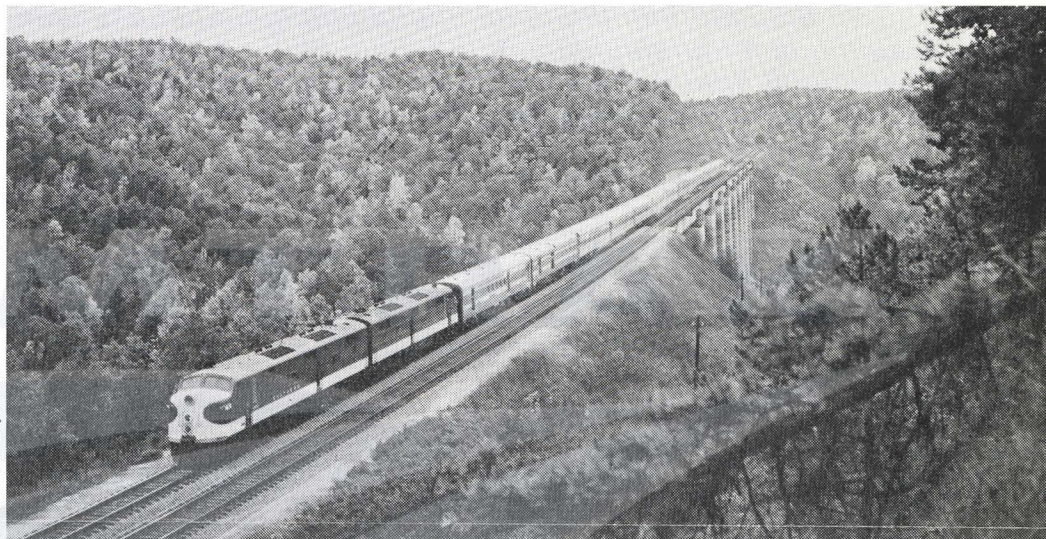
The *Southern Crescent* is the last overnight train still operated by a private railroad and is one of the very few trains which was not discontinued or taken over by Amtrak when it began operating the nation's intercity passenger rail system on May 1, 1971.

The Southern Railway's current schedule has Atlanta-bound trains leaving New Orleans on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and from Atlanta to New Orleans on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday.

The first *Crescents* operating under Amtrak will be those that depart on February 1 northbound from New Orleans at 6:45 a.m. and southbound from Washington at 7:20 p.m.

The *Crescent* leaving Washington on Wednesday night, January 31, will be operated by Southern through to New Orleans even though it will actually travel for most of its journey on February 1.

Amtrak President Alan Boyd said the decision to begin daily operations immediately was prompted by a determination to give the *Crescent* every



Southern Railway Photo

The Southern Crescent crosses Wells Viaduct in the picturesque Georgia hills just south of Toccoa.

possible advantage to attract new customers.

"Obviously a train that operates on a convenient daily schedule is a much more attractive travel option than one that operates only three days a week," he said. Boyd also noted that Amtrak managers, in planning for the train's takeover, always contemplated a daily service. Costs and rev-

enues were computed on that basis.

The *Crescent* runs over a 1,154-mile route which includes intermediate stops at such cities as Charlottesville, Virginia; Greensboro and Charlotte, North Carolina; Greenville, South Carolina; Atlanta; Birmingham; and Meridian, Mississippi.

Crescent service actually starts in
(Please turn to page 2)

Corridor Work Completion Postponed

In a press conference held in Washington on Monday, January 15, Transportation Secretary Brock Adams said the federal government had erred two years ago when it made the projections on costs and time needed to upgrade the Northeast Corridor to the Congressionally-mandated speeds and specifications.

Adams said the project would take two years longer and cost \$650 million more.

That would bring to a total of \$2.5 billion spent to improve the Corridor and set the completion date back to 1983.

Adams pointed out that most of the delay would be north of New York and that significant service improvements would be noticed first, perhaps even by the original target date of 1981, between Washington and New York.

(Please turn to page 11)

Employee Assistance Program Widened To Include Drugs, Family Problems

Amtrak has revised and upgraded its Employee Assistance Program to provide confidential professional counseling to employees and their families who are troubled by alcoholism, drug dependency or related personal or family problems.

The new program replaces the former Program for Alcoholic Recovery, or PAR, and, although continuing to stress alcohol-related troubles, has been expanded to include drug-oriented problems.

A letter explaining the new program, plus a booklet detailing it, was mailed to all employees in late December.

The program has the full support of labor organizations representing Amtrak employees.

Principal cause of employee problems involves excessive use of alcohol. The American Medical Association recognizes alcoholism as an illness that affects people from all walks of life.

One of the most common misconceptions is that the only person who is a true alcoholic is the "falling down drunk" on skid row.

Skid row inhabitants represent only about three per cent of America's 10 million alcoholics. The other 97 per cent are "ordinary" people holding good jobs, maintaining their families and living from day to day.

The number of Amtrak employees has increased greatly since 1975 when

the company activated its first alcohol abuse program. This fact alone was a good reason for broadening Amtrak's concept and awareness of its responsibility to employees in the health services it provides as a part of company benefits.

In this vein, Amtrak and Conrail participated in a Railroad Counselor Training Project in Philadelphia in late November. The session was funded by the Federal Railroad Administration and conducted by the University Research Corporation, who tailored the course specifically to the railroad industry.

Amtrak's five counselors and eight from Conrail attended the training course which was designed to provide them with an opportunity to improve their use of eight basic communication skills. This was done through videotape demonstrations, group discussions, exercises and individual role playing.

The training workshop was one ef-

fort of Amtrak's continuing commitment to improve the counselors' skills so they can better serve employees.

Amtrak's Employee Assistance Program is under the direction of JoAnn Anderson, manager, EAP, who has her office in Washington.

Assisting her are Ellen Cannon, Arlington, Virginia; Louis Butler, New York; James Hill, Miami-Jacksonville; James Herron, Beech Grove; and Morris Henderson, Oakland. Full addresses and telephone numbers were listed in the back of the booklet sent to employees.

Amtrak's Employee Assistance Program seeks to prevent the loss of valuable employees. Early detection of an alcohol or drug problem and its prompt treatment can prevent a large amount of human suffering. If an employee feels he has a problem and needs help, he is encouraged to contact a counselor immediately.

Help is available. One need only avail him or herself of it.

Booze Bull. . .oney!

Myth: Alcohol is a stimulant.

Fact: It's about as good a stimulant as ether. Alcohol acts as a depressant on the central nervous system.

Myth: Black coffee will sober up a drunk.

Fact: Yes, in about five hours. Cold showers don't work either. Only

time can get alcohol out of a person's system, as the liver metabolizes the alcohol. There's just no way to hurry the process.

Myth: Mixing your drinks causes hangovers.

Fact: The major cause of hangovers is drinking too much. Period!

Myth: Drinking is a sexual stimulant.

Fact: Contrary to popular belief, the more you drink the less your sexual capacity. Alcohol may stimulate interest in sex, but it interferes with performance.

Myth: It is rude to refuse a drink.

Fact: Nonsense. What is really rude is trying to push a drink on someone who doesn't want it, or shouldn't have it in the first place.

CRESCENT

(Continued from previous page)

New York with through coaches and a sleeping car to Atlanta daily and a through sleeping car to Los Angeles, via New Orleans, three days a week.

The Southern Railway announced its intention to discontinue service on the *Crescent* route on March 6, 1978. The Interstate Commerce Commission denied the original request and ordered the railroad to continue serv-

ice until at least August of this year pending a possible Amtrak takeover.

In the meantime, Southern and Amtrak management negotiated an agreement for the takeover. This proposal was approved by Amtrak's board of directors on December 13. Under the agreement, Southern will pay Amtrak \$6,674,812 which is the expected difference between costs incurred and revenue earned by the train during fiscal 1979.

East Lansing Station An Example Of State, Government, Amtrak Cooperation

Amtrak's East Lansing, Michigan, station is a unique example of state, local government and Amtrak cooperation for the ultimate benefit of rail passengers.

The station was established as part of the startup of the *Blue Water Limited*. At that time, ten units of local government—the cities of Lansing and East Lansing, Ingham county and the townships of Bath, Delhi, Delta, Lansing, Meridian, Windsor and Watertown—formed a non-profit corporation—the Capitol Area Rail Council—to establish and maintain the station and further promote ridership.

The council leases the building and property from Michigan State University and pays all operating costs except for the salaries of Amtrak's ticket agents.

Additionally, the council has advertised Amtrak service in local news media and has mailed train and tour information to local schools. Both actions have resulted in additional revenue for Amtrak.

The council has excellent liaison with the University which provides its services at cost. Included in this are personnel to maintain the building and parking lot, as well as for emergency snow removal when heavy snow accumulations overburden the regular contractor.

University police provide security for the premises and the grounds department has planted trees and shrubbery between the building and platform.

Located directly adjacent to the campus, the East Lansing station draws heavily on MSU's 44,000 students as a source of business.

The station waiting room, rest rooms and ticket office are well suited to accommodating patrons and a large well-lighted area provides free parking for either long or short term.

In late November, the Urban and

Public Transportation section of Michigan's Department of Transportation sent out a mailing to schools in the Lansing and Flint areas suggesting that Amtrak be used for school and other group trips between now and the end of the school term.

Special "Blue Water Track Team" posters and three-inch lapel pins were

designed as part of the promotion. Each group using Amtrak will receive a poster and each rider will receive his or her individual pin.

Heavy snows and bad weather have deterred travel so far this winter but officials expect ridership to climb as a result of the promotion once the weather breaks.



Passengers relax in East Lansing station's comfortable interior while waiting for their train.



East Lansing's station presents an attractive exterior with its chalet-style doorway.

Michigan DOT Photos

Atomic-Powered Supertrain Ready To Roll On NBC-TV

Supertrain, a mythical atomic-powered train that reaches speeds of over 200 miles an hour, is set to roll between New York and Los Angeles, courtesy of NBC-TV.

The production, described as a comedy-mystery, will debut as a two-hour pilot film, then be followed by ten one-hour weekly shows. If the show is a hit it will become a regular on the schedule.

Supertrain will air over NBC on Wednesday, February 7. The ten weekly shows are not presently scheduled for specific dates.

The ultra-modern train will be "super" in every way. Its passengers will enjoy many outlandish and luxurious features.

For example, the mock-ups of the cars—in which the scenes are shot—are 64 feet long, 26 feet wide and 22 feet high, the exact size of the fictitious Supertrain. According to the script, the train will operate over tracks that are over twice as wide as conventional railroad tracks.

The first car of the train contains the crew's quarters on the lower level and an extravagant VIP room on the upper. The other cars contain—in addition to regular day and night ac-

commodations—a medical center staffed by the train's doctor and nurse, a "Presidential" suite, a pharmacy and library, a boutique and men's store, a barber shop and beauty salon, a recreation room with shuffle board and ping-pong tables, a gymnasium complete with steam room, a glittering discotheque and a 14-by-22-foot swimming pool.

Supertrain may contain other special cars in future episodes.

"We can have anything we want," says Ned Parsons, the man who designed the train. "We can have a movie theatre, or a gambling casino, or anything else a script might call for."

Parsons, who has been in the movie business since 1953, was told in mid-1978 to start making plans for "the most modern, fantastic train in history."

He immediately began a crash program of researching trains and the railroad business.

"I visited libraries and museums for miles around, read about trains and studied designs," he said. He also tried to figure out how the show might be done using only miniature trains or by "dolling up" present-day

trains but rejected both ideas.

"Our train was going to be bigger, better, faster and more luxurious than anything that existed in today's world," he stressed.

"We had decided that we wanted a Supertrain, so we had to build one."

And build one they did. Starting in early September, two crews worked 12-hour shifts, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, straight through to completion.

Those sets are now housed on three huge sound stages at MGM Studios at Culver City, California.

Although Amtrak has nothing approaching Supertrain and obviously plans no such giant, the company did cooperate with the producers of the picture.

Prime liaison contacts were Jim Bryant, director, special events, Washington; Art Lloyd, director, public affairs, San Francisco; Lou Maxberry, assistant manager, Western division; Floyd Rogers, terminal manager, Los Angeles; and John Baesch, assistant director, train operations, Washington.

In mid October, a bi-level coach was leased to the film's producers who took out some of the windows and outfitted it with nine motion picture cameras mounted at various heights and angles. The car was coupled to the rear of the *Coast Starlight* and made a round trip from Los Angeles to Seattle to film the California, Oregon and Washington scenery.

North of Portland, a 70mm camera worth \$200,000 was mounted on the nose of the SDP40F locomotive for some spectacular running shots.

Amtrak received \$13,000 in revenue for the trip.

The films that resulted—some 73,000 feet of them—will be used to simulate motion in scenes shot on the studio sound stages. The illusion is accomplished through the art of the

Supertrain Could Attract Riders

If Supertrain does for the rail passenger business what another television series, *Love Boat*, has done for the ocean cruise industry, Amtrak could find itself getting many persons trying its service for the first time.

Obviously, passengers will not find—or even expect—discotheques, swimming pools or gymnasiums on Amtrak trains.

But they should find good service, pleasant surroundings and a positive attitude by employees that will induce them to return to

the train for future travel.

This is a golden opportunity for Amtrak employees to help sell Amtrak service. The vast majority of passengers are not unduly demanding and want only a comfortable ride and courteous service.

The least we can do is provide that and in the process show them that Amtrak takes second place to no one in caring for the people who choose Amtrak when other travel options are available to them.

process screen.

While the actors are delivering their lines and being filmed inside the mock-up cars, there is a huge blank motion picture screen mounted just outside the car's windows. The film is then projected on that screen.

From inside Supertrain, the illusion is of a train speeding through mountains, deserts, along the sea shore or wherever the director chooses.

Although most of the scenes in the picture will be of the full scale mock-ups, Parsons has built two miniature Supertrains that will be used for exterior shots. Those will be spliced into the final film to give the effect of the train moving through the countryside.

Stars in the pilot film included Steve Lawrence and Don Meredith. Others will make guest appearances

on the individual weekly segments.

Appearing on a regular basis will be Keenan Wynn, as the tycoon who heads the corporation that owns Supertrain; Robert Alda, as the train's doctor; Edward Andrews, as the chief conductor; Nita Talbot, as the train nurse; and Patrick Collins, as the passenger relations officer.

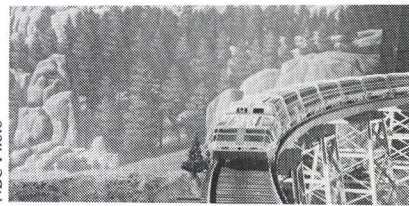
The film is being shot for NBC by Dan Curtis Productions



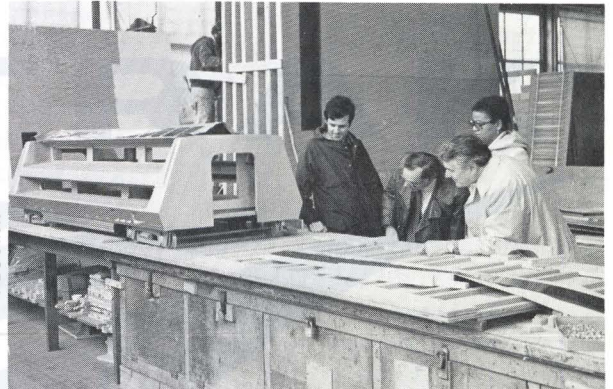
NBC Photo

NBC Photo

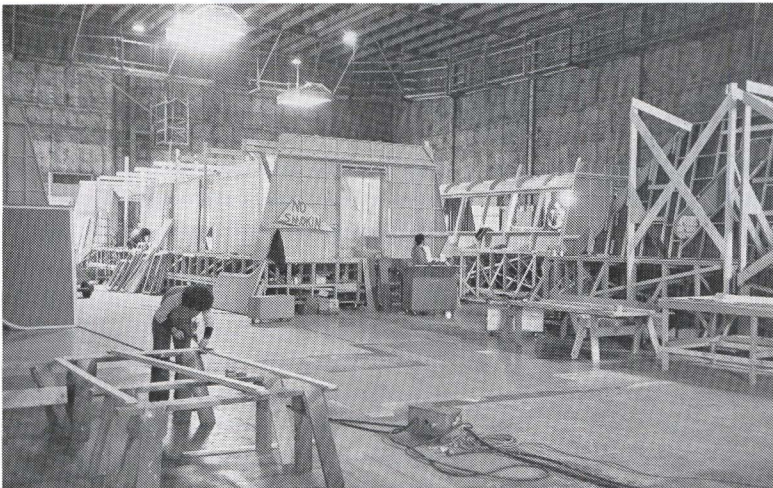
Extras and film technicians crowd Supertrain station set prior to actual filming.



Supertrain model makes its way over a mountain landscape.



Richard Henry, left, location manager, Dan Curtis Productions, explains how the model train will operate. Listening are Jim Bryant, Art Lloyd and marketing department's Joyce Greene.



Jim Bryant Photo

Crews work on early stages of mock-ups of Supertrain cars on MGM's soundstage.



Cameramen line up shots enroute between Los Angeles and Seattle.

Steve Lawrence chats with visitors during filming break at Los Angeles Union Station. At left is Supertrain on-board services person.



Caprice Taylor Photo



At Portland, the special 70mm camera is mounted on nose of 215.

Jim Bryant Photo

Railroad Retirement Taxes Climb, Monthly Employee Deduction Increased

Beginning January 1, there was an increase in railroad retirement tax rates as well as the maximum amount of earnings subject to railroad retirement taxes for both employees and employers.

For retirees, however, slightly liberalized limitations became effective which allows them to earn more money with no reduction in benefits.

On the other hand, new Medicare coinsurance amounts will mean higher costs to beneficiaries.

The regular railroad retirement tax rate for employees increased from 6.05 per cent to 6.13 per cent. The maximum amount of earnings subject to those taxes also increased, from \$1,475 per month to \$1,908.33 per month.

Because both the tax rate and the maximum amount subject to those taxes increased, all railroaders now pay higher taxes in 1979. Higher salaried railroaders have the greatest

increases.

For example, a railroader earning \$1,000 per month now pays \$61.30 per month in railroad retirement taxes in 1979, just 80¢ more than he paid in 1978.

Employees earning at least \$1,908.33—or \$22,899 per year, the maximum taxable in 1979—pay \$116.98 a month, some \$27.74 a month or \$332.88 a year more than they paid in 1978.

Amtrak matches the taxes that employees pay, as well as paying an additional 9.5 per cent tax on each employee's earnings up to \$1,575 per month for 1979. The maximum tier I and tier II amount of regular railroad taxes for railroad employers such as Amtrak is \$266.61 per month for 1979, or \$37.25 more than in 1978.

Employees pay only regular railroad retirement taxes but Amtrak pays railroad retirement supple-

mental annuity taxes and unemployment-sickness insurance taxes in addition to the regular retirement taxes.

For the first quarter of 1979, the supplemental annuity tax paid by Amtrak will be 12.5¢ per man-hour, an increase of half a cent. Throughout 1979, railroad employers will also pay a tax of seven per cent on the first \$400 an employee earns each month to finance the unemployment-sickness benefit program. This is a decrease from 1978's eight per cent rate because the unemployment-sickness tax rate varies according to the balance in the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Account at the end of the fiscal year.

Retirees who work after their retirement can earn more in 1979 without having their benefits reduced. The 1978 exempt earnings amount of \$4,000 has been raised to allow retirees between 65 and 72 to earn \$4,500 before their benefits are reduced. For retirees under 65, earnings in excess of \$3,480 in 1979 can cause a reduction in benefits.

No railroad retirement annuity is payable for any month in which a retiree works for a railroad, regardless of the amount of earnings. Nor are railroad retirement annuities payable to retired employees or their spouses for any month in which they return to work for their last pre-retirement non-railroad employer.

In 1979, a Medicare patient will have to pay for the first \$160 of his or her hospital bills, \$16 more than the 1978 charge.

In addition, a patient's daily bill for hospital care for the 61st through 90th day will be increased from \$36 to \$40 and the daily costs for post-hospital care in a skilled nursing facility for the 21st through 100th day will go up from \$18 to \$20.

More specific information on the 1979 changes is available from the Railroad Retirement Board, 844 Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

Army Major Trains With Amtrak

Gene Schneck, major in the Transportation Corps of the U.S. Army, is the latest participant at Amtrak in the military's "Training with Industry" program.

Schneck will spend one year with Amtrak studying and experiencing the rail passenger business. His tour began in early December with a four-week assignment in the planning department. He will work in every department in the course of the year.

Schneck went on active duty with the Army in 1968 after graduating from Penn State where he earned his second lieutenant's commission in the ROTC program. He graduated with a bachelors degree in business management and while in the Army concentrated on transportation.

His Army experience includes a one year tour of duty in Vietnam with a truck battalion and three years in

Germany with a nuclear weapons artillery unit and another truck battalion.

He has gone through the Transportation Officers Advanced Course at Fort Eustis, Virginia, and then spent three years at Travis Air Force Base, California, as the passenger liaison officer in the terminal.

While in California he earned a masters degree in business administration at Golden Gate College, San Francisco.

His last assignment before coming to Amtrak was as aide-de-camp to the commander of the Military Traffic Management Command in Washington.

This is Amtrak's third year of participation in the program. Previous officers included Major George Landis, in 1977, and Captain Frank Gregory, in 1978.

Safety Shoe Campaign Kicks Off, Mobile Stores To Tour System

“Foot Safety By The Truckload” is the theme for Amtrak’s new system-wide foot protection program.

All employees in maintenance of way, mechanical, shop or similar jobs will have the opportunity to purchase quality safety shoes directly from the manufacturer at a low cost and then pay for them through payroll deduction.

The program, in cooperation with the Hy-Test Safety Shoe division of the International Shoe Company, is aimed at convincing employees they should be sure their feet are protected from hazards on the job.

Hy-Test will visit Amtrak locations with a mobile shoe store—dubbed the shoemobile—housed in a truck.

Employees will be able to visit the “store,” pick out their choice of shoes and be properly fitted by store personnel. They will “buy” their

shoes by signing an authorization card for the payroll deduction. Cost of the shoes will be spread over two pay periods.

The program was kicked off in mid-January with the first visit of a shoemobile to the Wilmington, Delaware, shops.

Available to employees are over 50 styles of men’s and women’s safety shoes ranging from heavy work boots to dressy low-cut shoes.

Says Joe Bonelli, Amtrak’s director, rules and safety, “We’d like to see every employee who works in a hazardous work environment be outfitted with safety shoes while he or she is on the job.

“Modern safety shoes are just as comfortable as regular work shoes and, in addition, protect toes and insteps from injury in case some heavy

object falls on the foot.”

Safe work practices are the ultimate safety “device” but protective equipment, such as safety shoes, is practical insurance for those accidents that do happen occasionally.

The shoemobile’s arrival will be well publicized at Amtrak work locations. Posters will be displayed on bulletin boards pinpointing the exact time and location. Cards will be distributed with payroll checks the pay-day preceding the mobile store’s arrival.

Each employee will also receive an “admission” card to the shoemobile. The card will be used later in a free prize drawing for visitors to the shoemobile.

Between visits of the mobile store, employees can order additional or replacement shoes through the mail.

Corridor Personnel Master CPR, First Aid Skills

Some 101 men and women in the Northeast Corridor now wear special patches on their jackets and unique stickers on their hard hats.

This elite group is Amtrak’s newly-formed first aid and emergency service cadre, who have been trained and certified in Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation, or CPR, and standard first aid and personal safety methods.

The men and women, all volunteers for the training program, are employees in either the track, bridges, and building, electric traction or communications and signal departments where, because of the nature of the work, their skills are most important.

McKinley Scott, division engineer, Philadelphia, explained, “Out on the tracks, or anywhere in the field for that matter, if something should happen, a person could be many long minutes away from medical assistance. And the first few minutes can be crucial for the victim.”

Scott, who was responsible for initiating the program on the Philadelphia division, cites as an example a person suffering a heart attack.

“Those first six minutes can mean the difference between a good recovery or severe brain damage . . . or even death.”

Training and certification were carried out in accordance with American Red Cross standards by Amtrak’s training department and ran almost a full 40-hour week. The course was assembled by Thomas Bacchus, communications and signals construction engineer, and taught by himself and Rick Davidson, general foreman, track. Both are certified instructors in both skills.

The course, according to Bacchus, was designed to take into consideration the particular needs of a railroad, including the types of accidents or injuries most likely to occur and the remoteness of many work sites.

Certified employees are easily recognized by the special jacket patch and hard hat decal. Both of those were designed by Milton Palenqui and Al Cyrus, of the engineering department.

John Piet, division manager, Philadelphia, chaired the recognition luncheon held for the group on December 7 at the completion of their course. Awarding certificates was Joseph Hackenbracht, manager, operations and safety.

Speakers included Benjamin Overbey, engineer of track, NEC; A.C. Bowers, safety engineer, operations staff, NEC project, FRA; Matthew Werner, engineer inspection compliance, representing Dennis Sullivan, deputy chief engineer; Daniel Jerman, assistant chief engineer, NEC; and Michael Hagarty, district chairman, Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way employees.

Alexandria Station Employees

Clean-Up, Fix-Up, Paint-Up

When Everett Mello, ticket seller, Alexandria, Virginia, read the memo from his district supervisor, stations, suggesting that the depot's large baggage wagons, called floats, needed a paint job, he attacked the chore with vengeance.

Instead of just applying a superficial coat of paint, he decided to completely renovate the four-wheeled floats.

Helped by Ben Cross, fellow ticket seller, he completely disassembled the heavy float, reworked the moving metal parts and scraped away years of paint from the wood and rust from the metal.

Then, he put it all together again.

White primer was applied to the bare pine wood, then two coats of Amtrak blue paint. The wheels were painted a bright red.

What's the reaction to their work?

Says Mello, "We've gotten quite a lot of good comments from our passengers. They like the bright new look."

Baggageman Henry Williams refurbished the second float and is now working on the third. In the meantime, personnel from the extra board have been working on painting the outside benches. Several are already done, but a few are yet to be bedecked in the bright blue color.

The interior benches have also been covered with Amtrak blue paint by Bill Anderson, unassigned clerk, and other persons from the extra board.

The refurbishing is being done on time between ticket office duties and trainside work. About two hours a day were spent for two months to finish the first baggage float.

Mello has been with Amtrak since 1972. Prior to that he worked for seven years in Washington as a ticket seller in the Atlantic Coast Line, later Seaboard Coast Line, downtown ticket office.

Cross began with Amtrak as a red



Everett Mello, right, and Ben Cross show off the first float they renovated.

cap in Orlando in September 1974, later worked at various cities in the Southeast. After work as a ticket clerk in Wilson, North Carolina, for

about a year, he transferred to Alexandria in September 1977 where he now works as a relief ticket clerk/baggageman.

Furlough Train Successful Again

This past Christmas season marked the second consecutive year that Amtrak operated a special train to accommodate holiday-bound soldiers from Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

The special train left Columbia for New York on Wednesday, December 20, operating as the second section of the *Champion*.

The consist included seven Amcoaches, one Amcafe, one Amdinette and a baggage car. This year's train carried 855 soldiers compared to 650 last year.

The commanding general of the fort and his staff were at the station to see the troops depart. An Army band and a blue grass combo provided music for the occasion.

The *Fort Jackson Special* returned to Columbia as the second section of the *Silver Star* on January 3.

Earl Eargle, senior sales repre-

sentative, and Don Mouzon, station agent, Columbia, manned a special ticket office on the base for 20 days prior to the Christmas holidays, ticketing more than a thousand passengers on nine different trains.

In addition to 16 U.S.A. Rail Passes, they sold round-trip tickets to as far away as Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Most significant aspect of this year's operation was the fact that the train was used by approximately 20 per cent of the personnel taking Christmas leave from the post.

Joe Bellino, manager of government marketing, emphasized the need for rail travel availability for military personnel. He said, "These soldiers were spending their own money and had a choice of air, bus or rail. They picked rail because it met their needs and was cost favorable."

Keeping Track Of Amtrak

Niagara Rainbow Cut

Withdrawal of state subsidies has forced the discontinuance of the *Niagara Rainbow* between Niagara Falls and Detroit beginning February 1.

Operation of the *Rainbow* on that portion of its route between Buffalo—and more recently Niagara Falls—and Detroit since October 31, 1974, has been supported by the states of New York and Michigan with each paying 25 per cent of the train's operating costs. The states have informed Amtrak that their financial support will cease as of January 31. Accordingly, Amtrak ordered discontinuance notices be placed on the affected trains and stations along the route.

Beginning February 1, the *Niagara Rainbow* will operate on its current schedule between Grand Central Terminal, New York, and Niagara Falls only. The *Rainbow's* route was changed to include Niagara Falls this past October.

Safety In November

St. Louis led the divisions for the month of November in the President's Safety Contest with a .9 safety ratio. New Haven led the shops with a 4.8 ratio while ten mechanical facilities had no injuries at all and thus earned a zero ratio for the month.

The ten with no injuries for November were New Orleans, Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, St. Louis, Kansas City, Minneapolis, Detroit, Jacksonville, Buffalo and Philadelphia.

For the year to date, in the mechanical facilities category, Dallas-Fort Worth and Kansas City continue their injury-free record for a zero ratio for the first 11 months of 1978.

St. Louis leads the divisions with 2.5 and Beech Grove leads the shops with 11.9.

The safety ratio is a figure denoting the number of injuries per 200,000 man-hours. All injuries or job-related

illnesses that require more than mere first aid are counted.

Man Of The Year

Ken Karchinski, manager, reservations bureau, New York, was named 1978 Man-of-the-Year for the Pennsylvania Station branch of the YMCA of Greater New York.

One of the 23 branch winners, he was formally presented his award at a dinner in the Imperial ballroom of the Americana Hotel on Tuesday, November 21.

Speaker at the dinner, and recipient of the Y's 1978 Service to Youth award, was Gabriel Kaplan, star of television's "Welcome Back, Kotter."

In picking Karchinski, the Y noted, "He has been extremely helpful in addition to faithful board attendance and other activity participation."

Travel Managers Visit

Members of the Connecticut-Westchester Passenger Traffic Association and their spouses used Amtrak to visit Washington in mid-November. The 53-person group was accompanied by Tom Fortier, sales manager, and Tim Salvesen, sales representative, Hartford.

While in Washington, the group, representing over 30 major corporations in their area, first visited several hotels to view available accommodations, then spent time sightseeing.

Said Fortier, "The value of a weekend like this is in the exposure that Amtrak receives. Once a business



John Anderson Photo

Inspecting a Superliner in Chicago are, left to right, John Payne, manager of sales, Dallas; Ron Knutson, regional administrator; Bob Kimball, manager of sales, New Orleans; Martha Huppenbauer, supervisor, group desk, Chicago CRO; Mary Sunderland, sales representative, Chicago; Hal Williamson, senior sales representative, Chicago; Josie Guedea, secretary to district sales manager, Chicago; Sandy Pierceall, senior sales representative, Kansas City; and Virginia Lewis, sales representative, Chicago. Kneeling is Ralph Mangum, district sales manager, St. Louis. In doorway is Al Kaletta, regional sales manager, Chicago.

travel manager realizes how comfortable Amtrak trains are and the proximity of our stations to city business centers, they are willing to use rail transportation more often."

The group returned home late Sunday afternoon. Eugene Mahoney, president of the group, expressed the organization's thanks to Amtrak for setting up the weekend.

San Diego Riders

Ridership continues to grow on the *San Diegans* with some 58,924 passengers riding over the line in November.

This is an increase of 15,652, or 36.1 per cent, over the November 1977 count.

The early morning northbound train from San Diego was scheduled 30 minutes earlier in late October at the request of many regular riders.

The first full month of operation at the new time proved the request valid because the train now carries up to 100 more passengers each weekday on the new schedule.

New Resident Engineer

Ken Kulick has been promoted to resident engineer at Chicago, overseeing the upgrading of the Chicago car and locomotive yards, replacing Ted Jordan who has resigned to accept an outside position.

At the same time, Robert A. Nedzsky was promoted to regional engineer at Chicago.

Photo Winners

Grand prize winner in the marketing department's recent photo contest is Daniel Perry, ticket agent, Wallingford, Connecticut.

The two first prize winners are Hubert Hanrahan, baggage agent, Kansas City, and Andy Magistrale, sales representative, San Francisco.

Second prize winners are Louis Wasserman, sheet metal worker, Albany-Rensselaer, and Gary Zeitler, baggage agent, Kansas City.

All of the above winners submitted color slides.

Says Vince Begley, senior repre-

sentative, promotional copy, and the man who conducted the contest, "Because we received so very few black and white pictures and the ones that did show up were unusable, we decided to split up the awards and give two first prizes and two second prizes in the color category."

Another 23 slides were chosen as honorable mentions from the field of 400 entries. Winning slides are being used in the marketing department's new tour book which is scheduled to be released in February.

Express Service Lauded

Amtrak's express service received a large pat on the back from John Peurach, manager, Chicago parts depot, Chrysler Corporation, in a re-

cent letter to Jack Naughton, senior sales representative, Chicago.

Wrote Peurach, "We are pleased with Amtrak service in shipping orders to other Chrysler parts depots in Cleveland, St. Louis, Kansas City and Minneapolis."

The Chicago parts depot provides overnight service to dealerships in upper Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana with its own fleet of trucks but depends on common carrier trucks and air for other points.

Peurach continued, "Truck shipments, in many instances, took as long as two weeks. We had to find a faster and more reliable way to service customers at our other depots.

"We inaugurated the Minneapolis run, over Amtrak, in June 1978 out

Reno Fun Train Rolls Again

The popular "Reno Fun Train" will operate again during early 1979, the 15th year for this special train.

Originated in 1964 by the Reno Chamber of Commerce so Californians would have easy access to Reno during winter months, the train keeps growing in popularity.

Operated by American Rail Tours, the train uses Amtrak's reclining seat coaches, a dance car, lounge and food service cars. The dance car features a live band and is open in both directions during the entire trip. A limited food service is available along with a full line of hot and cold beverages.

The train leaves Oakland on Friday evenings at 6:30 p.m., with stops for passengers at Richmond, Martinez and Sacramento. It arrives in Reno after midnight.

Return is on Sunday morning, leaving Reno at 11 a.m. to allow a full afternoon's viewing of the marvelous mountain winter scenery over Donner summit and along the American River canyon.

Departures from Oakland/San Francisco are set for every Friday between January 26 and April 6, except for February 16 and March 16.

Cost of the weekend is \$89.95 per person, double occupancy, and includes rail ticket, hotel in Reno and a fun book that includes several meals, beverages and discounts on various attractions.

Reservations can be made through American Rail Tours, 655 Redwood Highway, Mill Valley, California 94941.

More Reno Fun

In another Reno-oriented promotion, San Francisco Bay area Amtrak passengers using the *Zephyr* to and from the Nevada gaming city can get a special bonus from the Sahara Reno hotel and casino.

The offer is worth \$12.50—\$10 cash, \$1 in food credit and a cocktail—and is available to Amtrak passengers over 21.

Those persons need only present their round-trip Amtrak ticket receipts—from the Bay area—at the Sahara's transportation center to receive their coupon book. The center is on the first floor of the Sahara's casino.

The hotel is only a block and a half from Amtrak's Reno station.

of Union Station, Chicago. After a trial period the coverage was expanded. We are now considering shipments to Boston and Memphis and are interested in expanding the practice, wherever possible, to customers on other routes serviced by Amtrak."

International Spikes

The top six Amtrak international travel agents were honored at a special awards dinner at the Fairmont hotel, New Orleans, on January 5.

Flying to the Louisiana city to accept their International Golden Spike awards were Geoffrey Marsh, Thomas Cook Ltd., London; Graham Caldwell, Hunts Carefree Holiday, Auckland, New Zealand; Joergen Tougaard, Reso Travel, Stockholm; Olav Foss, NSB Travel, Oslo; Robert Wattaux, Wingate Travel, Paris; and Rolf Schlierbach, D.E.R., Frankfurt.

Making the presentations were Al Michaud, vice president, marketing, and Mike Harding, manager, international sales.

During their visit to New Orleans, the travel agents were taken on a comprehensive tour of the city by the state tourism commission.

Amtrak Honored

Amtrak was honored by New York's American Society of Travel Agents, a group of some 1,900 agents.

At the group's annual awards dinner, Amtrak received a silver certificate for excellence in program planning.

Amtrak was singled out for the award from over 60 transportation companies. F. Paul Weiss, eastern regional sales manager, accepted the award for Amtrak.

Historic Place

Philadelphia's Thirtieth Street Station, used by Amtrak's intercity trains and Conrail and Septa commuter trains, has been entered into the National Register of Historic Places.

The Register, kept by the Department of the Interior, is the official list of the country's cultural resources worthy of preservation and includes properties deemed significant in architecture, American history, archaeology and culture embodying the heritage of the union.

CORRIDOR UPGRADE

(Continued from page 1)

Said Adams, "The Corridor project is a classic case of a good idea gone sour.

"Overoptimism, underestimation, inflation and the immense problems associated with creating and managing a project of the NECIP's magnitude created the conditions leading to the need for a redirection of the study."

Under the newly redirected program services would include:

- Twice hourly service, from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. on a 2-hour-40-minute schedule, between Washington and New York.

- Hourly service, from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., between New York and Boston on a 3-hour-40-minute schedule.

- Possible two-and-one-half hour express service between New York and Washington and 3-hour-20-minute express service between New York and Boston.

- Service every two hours from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., between Philadelphia and Springfield on a 4-hour-30-minute schedule.

The project also includes, as had been originally planned, the extension of electrification from New Haven to Boston and the acquisition of substantial amounts of new equipment.

November On-Board Winners Picked

November winners in the on-board services recognition awards contest in Category I, employees dealing directly with the public, include:

Washington: A three-way tie between Paulette Ballard, Calvin Pierce and Ulysses Washington.

New York: Joseph Lally.

Boston: Linda Duffaney.

Miami: Walter Barut.

Jacksonville: Three-way tie between Edward Johnson, Edmond Plummer and Sylvester Watts.

Seattle: Donald Bryan.

Los Angeles: Robert Benton.

Oakland: Neil Notestine.

Chicago: A 14-way tie.

Winners for November in Category II, employees not dealing directly

with the public are:

Washington: John McLurkin.

Miami: Three-way tie between George Burns, Ernestine Milton and Archie Mobley.

Jacksonville: Johnny Smith.

Oakland: Four-way tie between Hugh Smith Ernest Bigelow, James Doyle and Delmar Woods.

Chicago: Tie between Edward Franz and Earl Strandlund.

New Orleans: Louis Cotton.

Direct contact employees are judged on the basis of unsolicited letters of commendation received by Amtrak. Employees without direct contact—such as chefs, food specialists and pantrymen—are judged on ratings from stewards or other personnel in charge of dining cars.

AMTRAK NEWS

Published once a month for employees of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation and those of participating railroads engaged in rail passenger service.

STAFF

Editor

Ed Wojtas

Circulation

Marguerite Broyhill

Reporter

Debbie Marciniak



Amtrak News is a member of the Association of Railroad Editors.

Material in Amtrak News is not copyrighted. Readers may use what they wish with proper attribution to Amtrak News.

Christmas Post Script:

Songs, Music, Food and Mail

In Wilmington, Delaware, Amtrak and commuter passengers were treated to a week-long series of holiday concerts during the morning travel hours.

A choral group, Joy Morrell and the Conquerors, from the Fairwind Christian school, entertained on Thursday, while on the other four days, daily organ recitals of holiday music were presented by Nelson Rodney of Wilmington.

In Washington, holiday travelers heard the McKinley High School brass ensemble play yule music from the balcony overlooking the waiting room on the Wednesday preceding Christmas Day.

Amtrak's choral society sang carols in the lobby of the corporate headquarters building on Monday, December 18. Plans are to have the group participate in a concert at Union Station next year.

All of the entertainment was volunteered by participants at the request of Robert Freeman, accounting office, Wilmington shops, who coordinated the community efforts.

Freeman, who found that organizations were eager to cooperate, plans to expand his activity next year.

In that line, Amtrak's public affairs office encourages any employees who have contacts with school or church choruses or bands, or other musical groups, to invite them to entertain passengers at Amtrak locations next Christmas. Efforts should be coordinated through local supervisors.

Food Baskets

In Wilmington, too, donations from shop employees and proceeds from vending machine sales provided enough funds to supply 19 baskets of food which were then presented to less fortunate employees and retirees shortly before Christmas. Active in this area was Wilmington's craft committee.

Extra Mail Cars

Some 105 extra mail cars were added to Amtrak trains in the weeks immediately prior to Christmas to han-

dle the holiday business.

Cars were placed on the *Empire Builder* and *North Coast Hiawatha* to handle containerized mail between Seattle and St. Paul; on the *Broadway Limited* for containerized mail between Philadelphia and Chicago; on the *Lake Shore Limited* for containerized mail between Boston, Springfield and Chicago; and on the *Silver Meteor* for handling bagged mail between New York, Washington, Jacksonville and Miami.

Train Cakes

On the Southern division, special Christmas cakes—decorated with the legend "Seasons Greetings to All Aboard"—were placed on trains on December 24 and 25 to be shared by passengers and on-board employees who were traveling and had to be away from home on Christmas Eve and Day. Candy canes were also put aboard for kids.

Specific trains involved included the *Floridian*, *Silver Star*, *Silver Meteor*, *Champion*, *Palmetto* and *Cardinal*.



First Class Mail
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit 1911
Merrifield, VA

FIRST CLASS

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED