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**Subject:** You can ride a Dome Car LA to SLO on Oct 10th!

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**From:** Rail Passenger Association of California (noelnoelt@cox.net)

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**To:** ntbraymer@yahoo.com;

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**Date:** Monday, October 7, 2013 9:32 AM

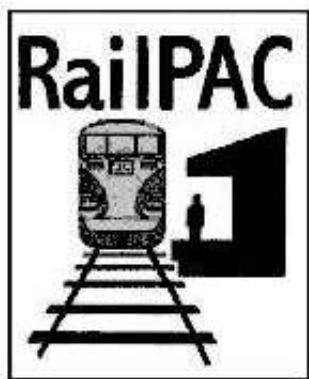
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## **RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for October 7, 2013**

**Edited by Noel T. Braymer**

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**Rail Passenger Association of California**  
**[www.railpac.org](http://www.railpac.org)**  
**Traffic? Gas Pains? We need more Trains!**



Dan Richards, Chair of the California High Speed Rail Authority addressing the RailPAC/NARP Joint Meeting in San Francisco on October 5, 2013. Mr. Richard gave the funniest and most charming talk of the day about the many problems he has faced at the High Speed Rail Authority. He admitted that in 2008 the Authority was like a stickball team that found itself playing in the baseball major leagues. He also pointed out that almost all High Speed Rail services generate an operating profit and he says California is a good market for High Speed Rail. Prop 1A passed by the voters in 2008 calls for High Speed Rail to make an operating profit but doesn't call for it to pay all capital costs. Mr Richard thinks with only 3 lawsuits pending for California High Speed Rail it is doing better than the Golden State Bridge which in the 1930's faced over 2,000 lawsuits. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

### [Notes on the October 5th's RailPAC/NARP Meeting San Francisco](#)

**By Noel T. Braymer**

The last but not least speaker was Bob Stewart, Chairman of the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP). Mr. Stewart went to great lengths to emphasize that NARP was interested in the future of Long Distance Trains and was a national organization, not just a Northeast Corridor organization. He talked about the problems of the Southwest Chief that the BNSF doesn't want rerouted through Amarillo or to pay to continue paying the maintenance between Albuquerque and Newton. He criticized Amtrak for their cost estimates for extending the Sunset from New Orleans to Florida which greatly discourage efforts to bring the Sunset back to Florida. Mr. Stewart introduced Larry Scott of NARP from San Diego. Mr. Scott gave his opinion that he thought Amtrak knows they are failing.

### [Amtrak still running despite government shutdown:](#)

Progressive Rail Roading- Oct 1, 2013

Amtrak will continue normal operation of its national intercity and high-speed passenger-rail network in the event of a short-term federal government shutdown, Amtrak officials announced late last night.

"Passengers planning to travel on Amtrak trains in the Northeast Corridor and across the country in the coming days and weeks can be assured that Amtrak will remain open for business," they said.

### [Amtrak Funds at Risk in Extended U.S. Government Shutdown](#)

Bloomberg-Oct 4, 2013

"At some point, I don't know whether it's weeks or months, they have a real problem," said Mortimer Downey, a former member of Amtrak's board and a former deputy U.S. transportation secretary. "If there's nobody at DOT, there's nobody to pay them reimbursements."

Ticket revenue for Amtrak may also decline, further crimping cash flow, with government workers not traveling, said Ross Capon, president of the National Association of Railroad Passengers, a Washington-based advocacy group.

### [One-third of DOT employees face furloughs - Amtrak still negotiating ...](#)

Politico-Sep 30, 2013

AMTRAK TALKS DOWN TO THE WIRE: Tuesday isn't just the deadline for funding the government. It's also the deadline for 19 states to come to agreements with Amtrak on how to fund short-distance routes. While Amtrak has long expected negotiations with Indiana to be a difficult, as of Thursday, they hadn't reached agreements with transit-friendly states like Massachusetts, Illinois and New York

### [With Deadline Approaching, 3 States Must Help Fund Amtrak or ...](#)

Governing (blog)- Oct. 4, 2013

Three states -- Illinois, Indiana and California -- are quickly approaching a federal deadline that will require them to help fund Amtrak operations or lose service in their states...

The affected routes carry more than half of Amtrak's ridership. In 2012, Amtrak and states reached an agreement on a funding formula to determine what states owed the rail provider for each route...

In California, Amtrak needs to sign deals with two agencies: the state transportation department, as well as the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority, a partnership of six local transit agencies. Amtrak has reached an agreement with the joint authority but is still working to reach one with the transportation department, Kulm says.

### [Michigan's Amtrak subsidy is about to triple](#)

Michigan Radio-Sep 29, 2013

Beginning Tuesday, the subsidy that Amtrak gets from the state of Michigan is about to triple, from \$8 million to nearly \$25 million a year.

**Welcome to the club, California this year will be paying Amtrak around \$200 million dollars for State Supported Rail service. NB**

### [Amtrak, DOT agreement avoids shutdown](#)

Albany Times Union-Oct 3, 2013

Amtrak and the New York State Department of Transportation have reached an agreement on a method for sharing costs on most trains in the ...

### [Will the Shutdown Affect Your Travel Plans?](#)

New York Times-Oct 1, 2013

The short answer is that you will still be able to get around, although some places you may wish to visit, like national parks and monuments, will be closed.

**A good deal of commercial travel by air and Acela is based on government travel and by private firms working under government contracts, particularly with the Defense Department. With major government spending cutbacked, we should see a drop in such travel. NB**

## [Government shutdown or not, more cuts are in store for transportation](#)

Transportation For America Sep 30, 2013

Transportation programs funded by the general fund are subject to the same cuts as most other federal discretionary programs under sequestration. This includes the New Starts and Small Starts programs, which fund construction of new transit service; the highly oversubscribed TIGER program of competitive grants, and Amtrak. As mentioned above, these programs were already cut by about 5 percent in FY13 compared to their FY2012 level, and will be cut by at least 7 percent and possibly more than 8 percent in a continuing resolution due to the sequestration requirements (the Office of Management and Budget will determine the exact percentage later this year). As a result, there will be less investment in new transit lines, in intercity passenger rail, and in innovative projects in cities, towns, and suburbs across the country.

## [Lockyer: California to Issue \\$12.5B of Debt Through 2014](#)

Bond Buyer-Sep 25, 2013

Those numbers pale in comparison to the amount of debt that would be required to build the infrastructure that California needs, including transit systems, water systems, and schools. Over the next 12 years, Lockyer estimates that those infrastructure needs would require an investment of about \$600 billion.

"I've been the most aggressive or largest issuer as a Treasurer, and just in my six and a half years, it's been about \$60 billion," Lockyer said. "So one twelfth of what the need is."

## [Watch Amtrak's Trains Move Along Their Routes in Real Time](#)

The Atlantic Cities-Oct 2, 2013

This week Amtrak released "Track a Train" — an interactive, Google-powered, real-time-ish status map of its 300-plus daily trips. America's passenger rail ...

## [Amtrak offers train-tracking with Google Maps -- a potential terrorism security risk?](#)

NEWS.GNOM.ES-Oct 1, 2013

While long-distance travel has evolved to the airplane, many people still "ride the rails" and use trains. People choose the old-fashioned train option for multiple reasons....

While this sounds like fun for train enthusiasts, I would caution that it could potentially enable terrorists to better plan attacks.

**Of all the amazingly stupid things posted of the internet this has to win the prize for most stupid! Maybe passenger trains would be "safer" if we ran them at random times so the "evil-doers" won't know when they are coming. The problem with that is the passengers waiting for the trains wouldn't know either! Railroads have run passenger trains on published schedules for over 150 years. Even without a real time Google Map an "evil-doer" would have a good idea when a train is coming. So how great a problem is "terrorism" on American Railroads? There has been one "recent" case back in 1995 near Palo Verde, Arizona where the Sunset Limited was intentionally derailed off of a bridge into a dry river bed. One person died with 78 injured, 12 seriously. A much greater problem on the railroads is human error. This includes truck drivers running into moving trains at crossings, tugboat captains running barges into a railroad bridge, operators running red signals while watching TV and smoking dope, or texting on their phone or forgetting to slow down for a curve while talking on the phone. NB**

## [Final phases of 110 mph upgrades start on Amtrak](#)

Herald & Review-Oct 1, 2013

CHICAGO (AP) — Workers are entering the final phases of upgrades that will someday allow Amtrak trains between Chicago and St. Louis to ...