
Subject: More Good News than usual to report for Trains this Week!

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

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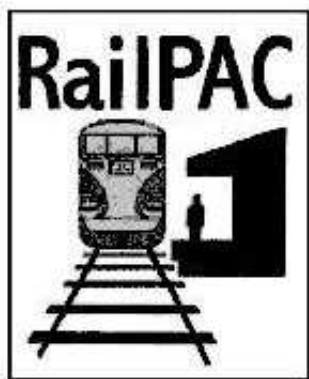
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RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for January 21, 2014

Edited by Noel T. Braymer

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Rail Passenger Association of California
www.railpac.org
Traffic? Gas Pains? We need more Trains!



Oceanside Transportation Center in 1990. Photo by Noel T. Braymer



The Oceanside Transportation Center today. In the background next to the Transportation Center on the

left is a new hotel that is almost finished. To the left of it further back is another hotel. Rail passenger service stimulates local economic growth. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

[Caltrain offering free ride for 150th anniversary](#)

San Francisco Chronicle-Jan 14, 2014

Thursday marks the 150th anniversary of the first train between San Francisco and San Jose, a service that helped develop the Peninsula.

It is the oldest continually operated commuter train service in the West, and to celebrate, Caltrain is offering a free round-trip, whistle-stop ride from San Francisco to Santa Clara on Saturday.

[Spending bill to likely give LA \\$130 million for key rail projects](#)

Los Angeles Times-Jan 14, 2014

WASHINGTON -- An eagerly awaited subway extension to the Westside and a downtown tunnel to link light-rail lines would be virtually certain to each receive \$65 million under a spending bill coming before Congress this week.

[FY14 appropriations good for TIGER, Amtrak](#)

RailwayAge Magazine-Jan 15, 2014

Congressional conference committee members cobbling together an actual fiscal year 2014 federal budget have reportedly agreed on budgetary numbers fairly favorable to Amtrak and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) programs.

[Railway Age's 2014 Passenger Railcar Outlook](#)

RailwayAge Magazine-Jan 16, 2014

The customer pool for North American passenger car suppliers keeps growing, as Railway Age reports in its January 2014 issue.

[California's Capitol Corridor marks December ridership gain](#)

Progressive Rail Roading-Jan 20, 2014

Capitol Corridor ridership rose 3 percent in December 2013 compared with December 2012, the first time in fiscal-year 2014 that the rail service posted a year-over-year monthly ridership gain.

['Huge' step for Millbrae BART developments](#)

San Mateo Daily Journal-Jan 14, 2014

The city of Millbrae will move forward with plans for the long-awaited construction of land around the BART/Caltrain station if the City Council approves an agreement with the potential to make way for two developers' projects.

[49ers new stadium adding 10000 parking spaces; Monday night ...](#)

San Jose Mercury News-Jan 14, 2014

Fans can also ride toward the \$1.3 billion stadium on Caltrain and BART and then hop on Valley Transportation Authority light-rail trains and ...

[New VTA chief's first challenge: 49ers football in Santa Clara](#)

San Jose Mercury News-Jan 13, 2014

A light-rail stop on Tasman Drive is just a few blocks away from the 50-yard line, and longer trains will be put in use. Buses will be rerouted to connect with Caltrain and BART to move fans to the game and back home. And the VTA will build a light-rail pocket track on Tasman to help with storing trains for football crowds.

[Big transit jobs done, but Bay Area building boom goes on](#)

San Francisco Chronicle-Jan 14, 2014

While those marquee projects are done, however, others are under construction and waiting their turn in the spotlight.

The taxpayer-funded building boom couldn't have come at a better time. As the technology bubble of the late 1990s burst, and the nation dropped into recession, the big infrastructure projects generated thousands of needed construction jobs in the Bay Area. Now, with the economy on the rebound and cranes dotting the San Francisco skyline, construction jobs are more plentiful.

[Light Rail Bill Moves Forward](#)

San Fernando Valley Business Journal-Jan 14, 2014

The bill sponsored by Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian, D-Van Nuys, would repeal legislation from 1991 that banned light rail in the Valley and limited transit projects to a subway or a dedicated bus way such as the Orange Line operated by the L.A. County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

If approved by the full Assembly and signed into law, the bill would allow Metro to consider light rail along a 3.5 mile section of the Orange Line between North Hollywood and Hazeltine Avenue in Van Nuys.

[Metro Board to consider beginning development of ballot measure for 2016](#)

The Source Jan 14, 2014

Extremely important: This IS NOT the Board deciding to go to the ballot with anything. Rather, this is Metro staff asking the Board to begin the process of developing a ballot measure which would be either an extension of Measure R or a new sales tax.

[FRA to launch rulemaking on locomotive cameras.](#)

Progressive Rail Roading-Jan 14, 2014

U.S. Sens. Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) yesterday announced the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will begin a rulemaking process to institute a rule requiring inward- and outward-facing cameras in all locomotives and operating cabs.



[The 2014 Annual Steel Wheels Conference](#)

Saturday, February 1, 2014
Los Angeles Metro Board Room
at Union Station, Los Angeles

Click on the blue letters to learn the latest and register today

[New Amtrak trains begin running from Eugene to Vancouver, BC](#)

OregonLive.com-Jan 13, 2014

Two new Amtrak trains the state of Oregon bought for more than \$38 million with federal stimulus money have begun running between Eugene and Vancouver, British Columbia.

[Amtrak adds its services to Super Bowl plans](#)

RailwayAge Magazine-Jan 16, 2014

Amtrak has announced it will utilize New Jersey Transit's Secaucus Junction Station, located on its Northeast Corridor, to help deliver customers to and from Super Bowl XLVIII, being held at MetLife Stadium in nearby East Rutherford, N.J., Sunday, Feb. 2, 2014.

[Amtrak returns to regular schedule after weather disruptions](#)

The State Journal-Register-Jan 13, 2014

Amtrak returned to a normal schedule on Illinois routes Monday after more than week of weather-related disruptions. Delays and cancellations ..

[Iceman freezes Amtrak and me in c-c-cold Chicago](#)

Kearney Hub-Jan 13, 2014

I had nowhere to go. Amtrak had canceled my Holdrege-bound California Zephyr and dumped us passengers out into the below-zero night.

[Letter: Outstanding work by Amtrak crew in bitter cold](#)

The State Journal-Register-Jan 15, 2014

The Amtrak crew was exceptional, considering the challenges. Their day had started at 4:30 a.m. when they left St. Louis and didn't end until we pulled into Chicago Union Station about 5:30 pm.

[Amtrak announces 20 percent fare discounts](#)

The State Journal-Register-Jan 14, 2014

Amtrak will discount fares 20 percent on travel in Illinois, Michigan and Missouri through March 31, the company announced Tuesday.

[Train derailment impacts Amtrak passengers' trip](#)

Minot Daily News-Jan 16, 2014

Willms and Stinson had been on the westbound Amtrak train but only got as far as Minot, where the train stopped late Thursday morning.

[Congress Cuts Funding to Amtrak](#)

In The Capital-Jan 17, 2014

The new federal budget, which is expected to be passed on Saturday, cuts nearly \$4.5 million from the Northeast Corridor Improvement program, which aims to improve existing train lines running north from Washington. It also cuts money from the Next-Generation High-Speed Rail program, a \$117 billion project that would reduce travel time from D.C. to New York to just 96 minutes and which, at the time of its inception in 2010, was to be completed by 2040.

[People Want More Rail Passenger Service](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

A quick check of news stories finds many about local efforts to expand rail passenger service across America. These efforts are not just in the major urban areas on the West or East Coasts either. These include local groups calling for returning service on the Sunset east of New Orleans back to Florida. There are efforts to create a section of the Crescent from Meridian, Mississippi through Shreveport, Louisiana out to Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas. There are proposals to extend the Heartland Flyer past Oklahoma City to Kansas City. There are also efforts to extend the Heartland Flyer to Tulsa, Oklahoma. There are efforts to save and improve service on the Southwest Chief between New Mexico and Kansas. There are also High Speed Rail proposals in places such as Texas, Colorado, throughout the Midwest and Oregon.

[What Do The Long Haul Trains Really Cost?](#)

By Andrew Selden, President, Minnesota Rail Passenger Association

The great Amtrak myth is that long distance trains cost a ton of money (one recent report we saw, which loaded them up with shares of every cost imaginable, including NEC costs and all the non-cash ones like depreciation of fully-depreciated Superliners, alleged a net loss last year of more than \$600 million).

Word has it:

There is talk that Amtrak is planning to soon eliminate the Pacific Parlour Cars on the Coast Starlight. The rational behind this is to save money by eliminating one attendant on board. That attendant sells alcohol. How Amtrak is able to lose money selling alcohol is a mystery to me. Also on the Coast Starlight the fares for the Sleeping Cars remain high. But at least on some dates this winter there have been vacant sleepers. It seems odd that Amtrak doesn't lower prices before departure time to insure more of the sleeper space is sold.

As if things couldn't get worse for the Empire Building: they are. Seems Amtrak is giving up keeping connections for the Builder in the face of current poor on-time performance. This includes eliminating connecting buses for the passengers on the Builder to make connections when the Builder is late. NB

[China: High-Speed Rail Network To Be Doubled](#)

Orange UK News-Jan 14, 2014

China has announced it will spend £60bn this year in an effort to almost double the size of its high-speed rail network. The investment forms ...

[China to build high-speed rail to Singapore, via Laos](#)

Shanghaiist-Jan 14, 2014

China is giving a steely infrastructural hug to its southeast Asian neighbors, with plans to roll out a massive high-speed rail system to crisscross ...

[More freight to run on High Speed 1](#)

Railway Gazette International-Jan 15, 2014

UK: DB Schenker Rail (UK) introduced additional freight services on High Speed 1 from January 13, carrying automotive components and refrigerated containers of perishable foodstuffs from Spain to London via the Channel Tunnel.

[Sweden To Get Next-Gen High-Speed Trains](#)

CleanTechnica-Jan 18, 2014

Sweden has just ordered electrical systems for 36 “next-generation” high-speed trains from ABB*. The cost of this deal was \$200 million, but SJ, Sweden’s state-owned rail operator, is actually investing \$510 million into the project in total. 26 SJ2000 trains will be used. The SJ2000 trains were designed in the

1980s, but these are getting a 21st century update.

[Proposed high-speed rail would link Texas and Mexico](#)

WFAA-Jan 15, 2014

SAN ANTONIO — A proposed high speed rail between San Antonio and Monterrey is in the works. One lawmaker says it would revolutionize ...

[California Assemblyman Submits Ballot To Stop Gov. Brown's High-Speed Rail](#)

KHTS Radio-Jan 13, 2014

California Assemblyman Jeff Gorell, R-Camarillo, has submitted a proposed ballot measure that aims to stop California's high-speed rail project ...

This is more political theater aimed to get publicity for this politician than an effort to stop High Speed Rail. The suggested deadline for submitting a ballot measure to the Secretary of State was September 27, 2013 for the November 4, 2014 General Election. This allows time for review by the Attorney General to insure the proposal is legal and constitutional. To qualify for the 2014 elections over a half million verified signatures must be turned in by April 18th. If this measure does get on the ballot it is no shoo in. The High Speed Rail Bonds are also helping fund many rail transit and commuter rail projects in the State. There are also many powerful groups that have an interest in building the High Speed Rail program. NB

[Vidak rails against bullet-train plan, met by bipartisan crowd](#)

Fresno Bee-Jan 17, 2014

In a news release prior to the announcement, Vidak indicated that his goal is to kill the bullet train. He tempered his in-person remarks, however, as he faced a crowd that included both high-speed rail critics from his home area in Kings County and a couple dozen representatives of labor unions who support the project.

[Despite legal setbacks, officials say California high-speed rail on track](#)

McClatchy Washington Bureau Jan 15, 2014

Supporters noted that the state's population, now at 38 million, is expected to increase to 50 million by 2030, and that the state's airports and highways couldn't keep up with the needs of residents now. Some implied that the project's criticism was less about substance and more about politics. Republicans widely oppose Obama's high-speed rail program, and the entire economic stimulus. "For those who oppose the project, give us your plan," Costa testified.

[California Congressional delegation is split on high speed rail project](#)

KPCC Jan 15, 2014

Delegations usually work together to secure federal funding. Texas brags about its ability to cross the aisle to grab federal dollars. The public disagreement surprised observers from other states. One member said, in two decades on the Hill, she'd never seen lawmakers turn down federal dollars.

Most of the opposition in Congress comes from politicians representing areas of California with some of the highest unemployment and poverty rates in the State. NB

[Brown's finance director sells budget to California ...](#)

Sacramento Bee (blog)-Jan 14, 2014

When Gov. Jerry Brown's director of finance, Michael Cohen, speaks about the 2014-15 budget proposal before the group today, he might find a more receptive crowd than in years past. With Brown emphasizing paying down debts over starting new public programs, and no new taxes on the docket, this year's agenda features fewer of the kinds of proposals that earn the Chamber of Commerce's dreaded "job killer" label.

[OP-ED: High-speed rail: Partnering with Caltrain](#)

San Mateo Daily Journal-Jan 16, 2014

High-speed rail is collaborating with Caltrain staff on the Caltrain Modernization Plan, which, among other benefits, will lay the foundation for high-speed rail service along the San Francisco-San Jose corridor.

The plan calls for investing \$600 million in high-speed rail funding to fully electrify the Peninsula Rail Corridor, enabling Caltrain by 2019 to replace diesel trains with a clean, electrified fleet that will eventually operate in a blended service with high-speed rail....

At the same time, Proposition 1A, the High-Speed Rail Act of 2008, is providing Caltrain with \$105 million for a "Positive Train Control" (PTC) electronic safety system that will monitor and, if necessary, control train movement in the event of human error. PTC will equip Caltrain with federally mandated safety technology essential for high-speed rail.

[Union Station eases policy on homeless seating in the waiting area](#)

Los Angeles Times Jan 16, 2014

Officials are easing up on a controversial policy to keep homeless people from congregating and sleeping in Los Angeles' historic Union Station, reopening 30% of the terminal seating to the general public, a transportation official said Thursday.

[Muni to pull streetcars, cable cars off line for 49ers game](#)

San Francisco Chronicle-Jan 17, 2014

That's because Muni wants to protect its historic cable cars and streetcars from overzealous fans, vandals and other troublemakers who might get a bit too rowdy after the Niners win - or lose - in Seattle. It also wants to protect revelers from hurting themselves.



Seen here at the LOSSAN Board meeting on January 15, 2014 in the City of Orange is RailPAC President Paul Dyson with Linda Culp of SANDAG (San Diego County's planning agency). Linda Culp was given a plaque by RailPAC for her work on behalf of Intercity Rail. Also at this board meeting, LOSSAN

presented to both Linda Culp and Danny Veeh of SANDAG with certificates of appreciation. This is for their work handling the administrative duties for the last 14 years of LOSSAN. Now under the reorganized LOSSAN, a full time staff is taking over administration working at the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA). OCTA photo.

We Get Emails

Re: Trains, 49'er's and Levi Stadium

Your information regarding rail travel to 49ers games is somewhat reassuring, however I wonder about a couple things.

-You state that Caltrain could have 10-car trains. I have never ever seen more or fewer than 5 cars on a Caltrain set. This despite the fact in off-hours, each car is almost empty while during rush hour, often each car is packed like sardines. Platforms look to me to be sufficiently long. It's good to hear that Caltrain has purchased some more cars from Metrolink, however it seems to me that they have some kind of policy or restriction regarding train length, and it is rarely ideal for the circumstances.

-There needs to be a plan to carry passengers from the southern half of the Santa Clara Valley. Currently, there is no Caltrain or Capitol Corridor operating south of downtown San Jose on weekends (not even from the Tamien station). Since there are hundreds of thousands of people living on that side of town, it would be logical for trains to run from the Blossom Hill station on up north to Great America. If Caltrain and Amtrak are too dysfunctional to do this, perhaps ACE can step in here.

Tommy Travers

I was talking about potential ridership with 10 car trains. I don't know how many cars Caltrain runs per train now. But I do know that Go Transit, the regional rail service for Toronto regularly runs 10 cars trains. They regularly unload full trains of 10 cars at Toronto Union Station in a manner of minutes. Go Transit carries about 187,000 riders daily on 7 lines. Over half of that ridership is on just the 2 lines along the shore of Lake Ontario. NB

Re: Trains, 49'er's and Levi Stadium

If people are worried about getting to Levi Stadium for Sunday 49er games, just wait for the traffic tie up when Cal plays Oregon there on Friday, October 24th with rush hour traffic!

Dick McKee

San Mateo

Re: Trains, 49'er's and Levi Stadium

Light rail with trains of 3 articulated cars have operated at 10-minute intervals both directions on weekdays in spite of the single track segment in Mountain View; that segment is too short (about 2 minutes) to impact such a headway schedule.

John Carpenter

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Rail Passenger Association of California.

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You can send your comments to me at nbraymer@railpac.org

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