

COAST Daylight



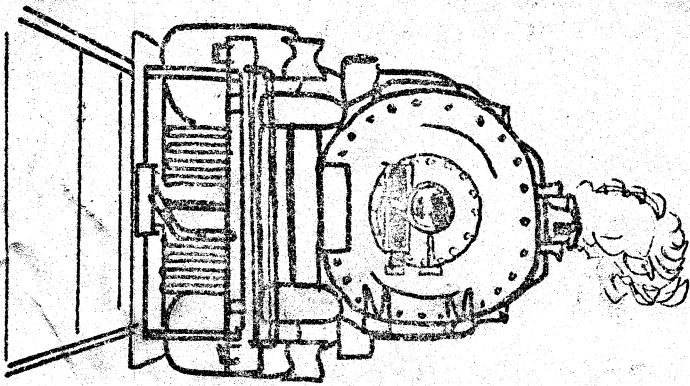
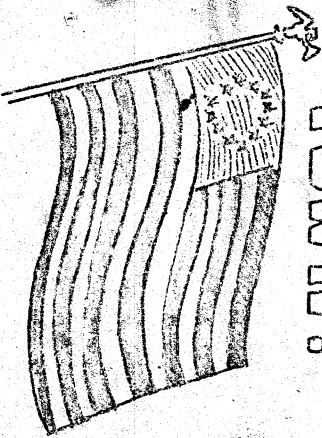
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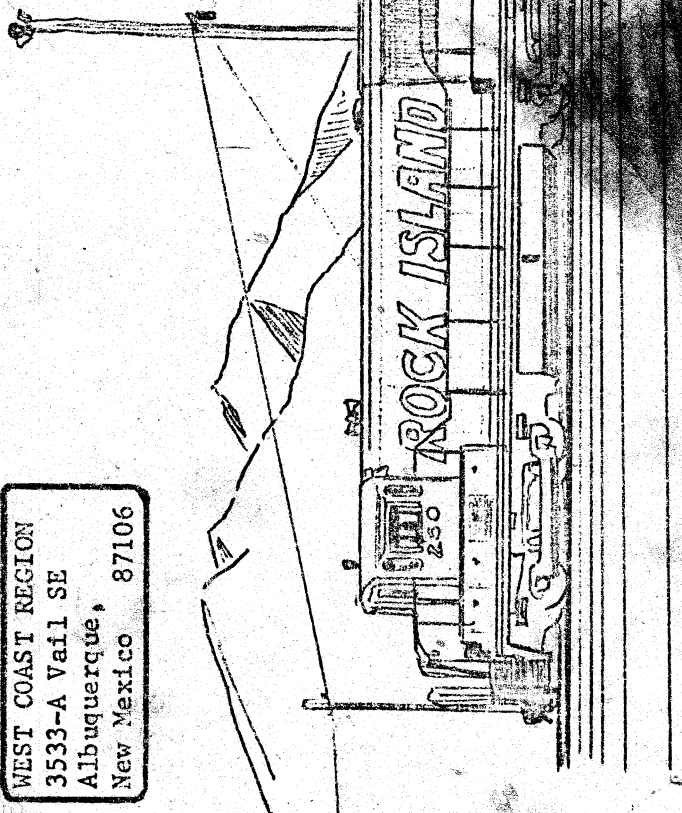
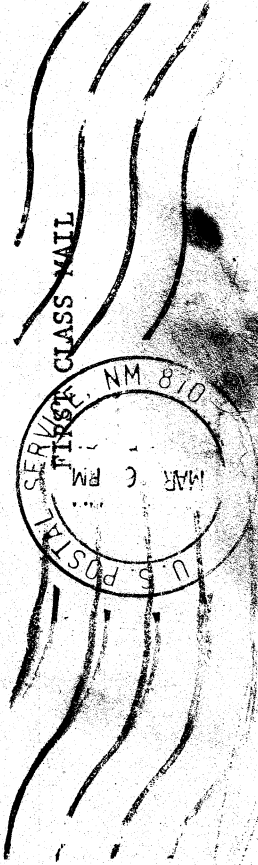
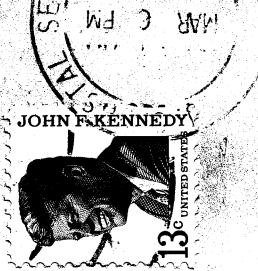
TOWN!

comes
to

★ Freedom
★ Train ★



WEST COAST REGION
3533-A Vail SE
Albuquerque,
New Mexico 87106





COAST DAYLIGHT

WEST COAST REGION

TAMR

ON THE COVER -

Rock Island U-Boat #250 at El Paso, Texas, a scene that's been pretty rare these past few months. The Rock and Southern Pacific lines meet at Tucumcari, New Mexico, and have had an agreement where through trains to El Paso would retain their Rock Island power over the old El Paso & Northwestern line. With the bankruptcy of the

Rock Island a few months back, traffic over the Tucumcari-El Paso line has been reduced. ALSO - The American Freedom Train made its appearance in the West over the past few months. Report on pg 3 by John McGreevy of Thousand Oaks, California, and yours truly.

SYSTEM NOTES - March/April 1976

Next month will be my last issue as Director of the West Coast Region, as well as editor of the Daylight, due to graduation in May (finally!) from the University of New Mexico, acceptance for Naval Flight Officer training afterwards, and the fact that I'm 21 and have become an associate member of TAMR! When I first attempted to get the West Coast Region going again last year, I had hoped that by this time we would have enough members to hold regular elections for positions in the region.

However, at this time we number eight active members, and with that small size I feel it would be a waste of time to attempt to hold elections. So, I am looking for volunteers for the positions of Director/Newsletter Editor, and Secretary/Treasurer until a time when the region does have enough people to support regular officers. Two people putting in a little time and effort should be able to keep expanding the region over the coming months, and help the region become one of the more active TAMR regions once again. All I can promise to anyone who does volunteer is the current WCR treasury, all previous issues and articles, and much support from the other regions and their officers. Amazing how sometimes the only people willing to help a region get back on its feet are the officers from the other regions!

Anyway, I have already been notified by one WCR member that he is interested in taking the Director's position; if I do not receive any other names by April 15, his name will be submitted to Mark Solomon, TAMR president for approval as the new regional director. His name and initial comments will be published in the May/June issue of the Daylight.

That still leaves the position of Secretary/Treasurer open to anyone who is interested. If you have a little time and wish to see the West Coast Region keep going, think about it. Most of you volunteered articles, photos and help when the questionnaires came back two months ago; here's your chance to do something about it.

NOTICE - This will be the last complementary issue of Coast Daylight for all non-members and potential members, due to the current state of the regional treasury. Dues information on page 4.

VARIOUS ETC. -

* Scott Drake of the Allegheny Region reports that the soon-to-disappear Penn Central is finally getting around to painting a Bicentennial unit. It will be black, and have a taped-on "Spirit of '76" poster next to the PC symbol! Have you designed a bicentennial unit or car for your model railroad? Take a picture of it or make a drawing and send it in!



The Freedom Train visits Santa Barbara...

By John McGreevy

I got up early on December 31, because the Freedom Train was coming nearest to my home. My brother and I spent four hours getting ready, watching and chasing the train. Due to the lack of a wye in Santa Barbara, it was forced to turn around and back up 30 miles! During the backing procedure the engine was in Montalmo yard for an hour and one half.

Over 3000 people came out to see the Freedom Train, and I managed to get plenty of slides. On January 2 we drove up to Santa Barbara (90 miles) and stood in line for an hour and one half; any later and we would have had to wait five hours! All in all, an enjoyable trip.

... and ALBUQUERQUE.

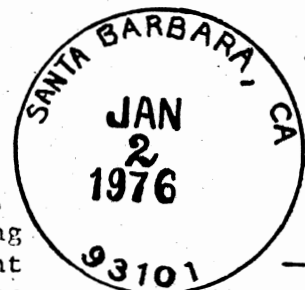
The American Freedom Train came to Albuquerque and the Land of Enchantment on Tuesday, February 3 for a three day stay on a siding at Kirtland AFB, located South of Town. My original plans had been to see the train on Thursday during the morning, realising that the evening would see a mob intent on visiting the train at the last second. Unfortunately, when I got withing sight of the train, I could see about 150 school buses from all over the state; unloading some 4000 students. Oh well, try again later...

Later that evening, with three friends in tow, I tried again, braving freezing temperatures, forty knot winds, and a genuine mob. By this time the Freedom Train had taken on something of a carnival atmosphere; there were the regular souvenir stands, refreshment stands, and people roaming around hawking the "Genuine Official American Freedom Train Souvenir Booklet", at something like \$2.00 a throw. I decided I wasn't particularly hungry or thirsty (not with Pepsi going at 50¢ a can!), got my ticket, and placed myself in line with my friends.

Approximately 90 minutes later, we were beginning to have second thoughts on the whole affair, probably due to the slow moving line and the increasing wind chill factor. Another ten minutes brought us to the doorway and moving sidewalk, and we were on our way on a thirty minute trip through American History. Anyone who had the fortune to actually make it into the train knows what it was like; an interesting look at various artifacts from this country's past 200 years, covering science, the move West during the 1800s, minority contributions, music and the arts, sports and other areas. Really an entertaining ride, it a little fast (necessary considering the volume the train sees each day.). Each car was a new experience, sort of your 11th grade American History class rolled into one presentation. Army personnel stood by in each car (what, no Marines?) to keep everyone moving and warning you to watch your step.

Outside, it was a quick dash back to the car, with short stops to view the old cars, replica of the Liberty Bell, and that huge engine pulling the whole thing. This was my first exposure to a large steam engine, and the drivers on the darn thing were somewhat imposing! If memory serves right, the engine is an ex-Southern Pacific engine.

We followed the trip with a return to a warm apartment and beer call, glad to have been able to see the Freedom Train, but a little disappointed in spite of it. I find it sad to have to pay \$2 to see my heritage, and the presence of all the concessions and their grossly inflated prices was discouraging. Oh well, it was the proverbial "chance of a lifetime" in spite of everything.



And in this corner. . . CONRAIL!

Well, I guess it had to happen sooner or later, but within the next few months the Penn Central, Erie Lackawanna, Lehigh Valley, Reading, Jersey Central and two other Eastern roads will disappear into Conrail, the federal government's corporation for rail freight in the Northeast. Through this program, the government hopes to rebuild the bankrupt Eastern roads, and restore rail service to its original position. To support Conrail, Congress has authorized \$6.4 billion in grants and loans; the managers and the USRA forecast that the new corporation will break even by 1979, and return almost \$400 million in profits by 1985. (Shades of Amtrak!).

When completed, the merger will link 17 states with over 17,000 miles of track, running from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River. Consolidated Rail Corporation, when it goes into operation on April 1, will constitute the largest corporate reorganization in United States history.

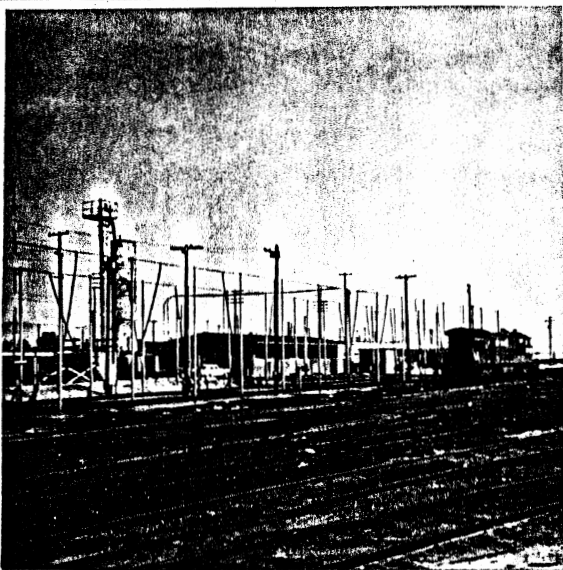
Enough about the legal implications, what about the equipment? Involved are the largest system in the country, the Penn Central, as well as one of the smallest, the Ann Arbor. According to Paul J. Manton, President of the Allegheny Region (and WCR member!), the numbering system will fit in with the current PC system, due to its size. With few exceptions, all engines involved will tie in with the PC numbering.

A good number of the Reading's units have been acquired by the Chessie, ranging from SW1s to new MP15s. Reading's C424s will be sold on the open market. When absorption is complete, Conrail will have Alcos, EMDs, GEs and even some Baldwins! How's that for variety?

Paul also mentions that both the PC and RDG posted discontinuance of service notices on a large number of branch lines in December, in compliance with existing requirements. The Penn Central listed 390 "light density" segments, totaling about 5000 miles, of which 94 (847 miles) are in Pennsylvania, 8 (71m) in New Jersey, and 43 miles in Delaware.

The Reading posted 27 branch lines totalling 264 miles in Pennsylvania. Where freight service will be discontinued over these lines, commuter service will be continued.

So there you have it, the second major federal involvement in rail service. It's interesting to note, that while Conrail and Amtrak are both backed by the government, it appears that the two will conflict over rail priorities in the Northeast Corridor! Ah, bureaucracy!



Southern Pacific yard, Tucson AZ.
M. Morgan

The West Coast Region yard is now open, but as you can see from the picture at left, there is still lots of room for your business and interests. If all the TAMR members who lived in the West joined the WCR, it would immediately become one of the larger TAMR regions.

The point is, to be a successful region, we need your support and a little of your time and interest. With a little help, a few more articles and photos, the Coast Daylight can expand and present a better product, both to OUR region and the Teen Association of Model Railroading.

Dues for the West Coast Region are now at the popular rate of \$1.50 per year, which brings you six issues of this newsletter and contact with people in your own area.

Show your support for model railroading, TAMR and the region. Join today!

COAST DAYLIGHT is published bimonthly by the West Coast Region of the Teen Association of Model Railroading. Ad rates are 10¢ per line. Ads and other items for inclusion in the Daylight should be sent to the editor: Mark Lee Morgan, 3533-A Vail SE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87106 (505)268-5056. Membership this month: 8