

transportation leaders who helped cut the ribbon for the ...

[Amtrak's debut at Union Depot: Better late than never](#)

Pioneer Press - May 9, 2014

Amtrak's Chicago-bound Empire Builder rolled into Ramsey County's renovated Union Depot on Thursday at 12:54 p.m., five hours and four minutes behind schedule. The passenger train's scheduled 7:52 a.m. arrival was thrown out of whack by freight ...

[Amtrak CEO visits Fargo Thursday](#)

WDAY-May 8, 2014

Visiting town Thursday, Amtrak CEO Joe Boardman and Mayor Walaker told media that they believe congress should fully fund operating costs and capital needs for long distance trains like the Empire Builder, which serves much of North Dakota and Minnesota.

Boardman is making the rounds in Minnesota and North Dakota with the reopening of St. Paul Union Depot (SPUD). NB

[Denver's historic Union Station reborn](#)

The Denver Post - May 5, 2014

Union Station, undoubtedly the most important building in Denver's history, opened in 1881 as the city's largest and most stylish structure. Starting with this week's grand reopening and its transition to a multimodal transportation hub, Union Station is returning to its former glory.

[Hazardous Cargo: Shipping Highly Flammable Bakken Crude Oil by Rail](#)

Truth-Out - May 8, 2014

The worries about basic railroad safety are compounded by concerns over the unique composition of Bakken shale oil. Independent tests obtained by Earth Island Journal suggest that the North Dakota light crude is especially flammable, perhaps because it is being produced at such a breakneck pace that drilling companies aren't following standard industry practices to separate out volatile gases. Each day millions of gallons of highly combustible oil are moving through major metropolitan areas – yet local residents and public officials are often unaware of the danger, and many first responders are unprepared for a disaster like the one that occurred in Quebec.

[The Government Takes a Weak Stab at Making Oil Trains Safer](#)

Businessweek- May 8, 2014

The reason this applies only to Bakken crude is twofold. First, that's most of what's being hauled. Second, the oil coming out of the Bakken is unlike any other kind that's out there. It's light, sweet, and superflammable, with high levels of propane and methane. That makes it almost impossible for local first responders to put out the fires that erupt when these trains derail. Sometimes, their only recourse is to evacuate the area and watch the tank cars burn.

[New map could refocus state's pollution battles](#)

Los Angeles Times-May 6, 2014

De León wrote a 2012 law that requires the state to spend 25% of the auction proceeds from California's greenhouse gas-cutting cap-and-trade program to benefit disadvantaged communities that face disproportionate effects from pollution and climate change....

Some of the worst-scoring neighborhoods sit next to busy ports, rail yards and freeways in places such as Boyle Heights, Long Beach, San Bernardino and San Jose, where residents are exposed to higher levels of air pollution from vehicle exhaust.

[Paso Robles police: man stabs another man with a fork on Amtrak](#)

KSBY San Luis Obispo News-May 6, 2014

Police say Tapp stabbed a 57-year-old from Santa Cruz in the face one time with a fork. That person sustained minor injuries.

[Great ticket to ride: Amtrak from San Luis Obispo to Santa Barbara](#)

The San Luis Obispo Tribune-May 4, 2014

The trip on Pacific Surfliner offers splendid coastal views and occasional whale sightings

[A Photo Tour of the southern Coast Line](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

The railroad that hugs the Coast along Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties is both picturesque and has a great deal of potential for ridership growth. What is holding it back is as usual, lack of funding and cooperation from the Union Pacific. It is only a matter of time though before we will see rail passenger service really take off on this line and see it fulfill its potential. Here is a collection of photos taken over the years of the Coast Line and to its potential and the progress that has been made.

[Caltrain celebrates Bike to Work Day with commuter race](#)

San Francisco Examiner-May 5, 2014

Reisman hasn't stopped pitting himself against various modes of transportation. In his current gig at Caltrain, he'll combine biking and riding the commuter train on Bike to Work Day in a race against Christine Dunn, the public information officer for Caltrain, who will drive to work.

[Roadshow: Caltrain slowdown causes missed connections](#)

San Jose Mercury News-May 8, 2014

Q Caltrain's northbound trains are slowing down as they go into San Francisco. Something about a bridge being undermined. This is making trains typically three to five minutes late arriving in San Francisco. Lots of MUNI connections are tight, so lots of folks are missing their most preferred buses, which sets their day back 10 to 20 minutes. How long will this slowdown go on?

[Caltrain names Deal to Transbay Joint Powers Authority, ...](#)

Progressive Rail Roding-May 9, 2014

Caltrain's board had appointed Jerry Deal to serve on the Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA), which oversees a new intermodal terminal known as the Transbay Transit Center, a rail extension for Caltrain and high-speed rail, as well as adjacent transit-oriented development in downtown San Francisco.

Deal replaces Arthur Lloyd, who announced his retirement from Caltrain's board in March, Caltrain officials said in a press release.

[County Supes to Take Up SCV Area Taxes](#)

SCVNEWS.com-May 5, 2014

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors will vote on several small community changes for the Santa Clarita Valley at their Tuesday meeting, dealing with issues of lighting and landscaping, water and railway....

The Acton Metrolink Station could receive a second platform, if the board passes a motion to execute a new memorandum of understanding with the Southern California Regional Rail Authority.

[HIGHGROVE: Community leader crusades for railway station](#)

Press-Enterprise-May 7, 2014

He thinks he can halt the project, even though a groundbreaking ceremony was held three months ago for the commuter rail's future Perris Valley Line and construction on its Hunter Park Station begins in a few

months. Dirt is being trucked in as crews prepare the site...

For more than a decade, the de facto mayor of Highgrove has been on a quest to get a Metrolink station built in Highgrove, population 4,000.

[All the Details on LAX's Potential People Mover System](#)

Curbed Los Angeles May 6, 2014

Yesterday, the Board of Airport Commissioners also met to discuss the biggie: a people mover that would connect to the Metro system. As mentioned yesterday, LAWA is looking at having a PM with two or four stops at LAX; the former would require passengers walk farther, but cost about a billion less and take few years less to build (between 5 and 7 years).

Let's see, 9 terminals with lots of walking between 2 stations and a transfer at different levels to Light Rail, yep that will work. Maybe they should use one lane and run dedicated Light Rail in the terminals. NB

[FTA to aid \(West\) Sacramento streetcar plan](#)

RailwayAge Magazine-May 7, 2014

"The FTA just green-lighted us to enter project development," West Sacramento Mayor Chris Cabaldon told local California media Tuesday, May 6, 2014, addressing them in Washington, D.C. "We are now officially a federal project."

[A Final Toast for Metro-North's Bar Car](#)

New York Times-May 10, 2014

Since before World War II, when rail was king and Prohibition was dead, the rolling saloon has been a national staple — its contents relied upon to make the strangers less strange, the commutes less interminable. But over the years, the bar cars began to disappear: Chicago, one of the last holdouts, abandoned its bar service in 2008.



A Friday afternoon and there is a line at the ticket machine 10 minutes before departure of Metrolink

Train 609 from Oceanside to Los Angeles. Even with 2 ticket machines (the second one is opposite the Amtrak Office) there were still people waiting to buy tickets for this train when it departed. These ticket machines are slow and many of the passengers were not regular commuting riders. NB

We Get Emails

Re: Animals on passenger trains

Returning from the 75th Anniversary celebration of Union Station on a southbound Surfliner, the conductor and a passenger with a dog became involved in a loud and animated confrontation over the presence of the dog and whether or not it was a service dog. The confrontation disturbed the tranquility of everyone in the car and eventually resulted in a draw. Two points here, This conversation should have taken place in an isolated part of the train so as not to disturb all of the passengers in the coach and secondly there seems to be no definitive determination of what constitutes a "service dog". Amtrak needs to develop a definitive policy and stick with it. Charging extra would no doubt eliminate some of the unauthorized bringing of pets on the train. Interestingly on the same train a elderly woman had a toy poodle and was not singled out for questioning. The owner of the other dog was a young black man who did in fact walk through the train with the dog trailing behind!

Fr. James Babcock

Sounds like Amtrak needs to educate its employees about service animals! As I discovered talking to a friendly owner of a service animal (other animals today besides dogs are service animals) that even questioning a person about their disability can lead to an expensive lawsuit. The reason for this is a disability is a private (and often embarrassing) matter. An animal might not look impressive, but many are able to sense a medical condition before they happen (like seizures) and warn its master to be ready before a problem happens. Some people no doubt will cheat to bring their pets along. But even one lawsuit from an Amtrak employee "harassing" a disabled person could prove expensive. Such lawsuits can involve the employee, Amtrak and almost anyone with "deep pockets" the lawyer can think of. NB

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