

### [Union Depot's first Amtrak trains might not come until end of year](#)

Pioneer Press-Jan 14, 2013

The depot's meticulously restored rail concourse reopened last month after sitting empty for decades. But passenger rail service will not roll into the transit hub for at least another nine months, Amtrak officials said.

### [Bustos meets with BHC board and AMTRAK Chair](#)

Aledo Times Record-Jan 14, 2013

In Lunch Meeting, Rep. Bustos Met With Tom Carper, Chairman Of The Amtrak Board Of Directors, About Need To Bring Amtrak Service To Region

Today, Congresswoman Cheri Bustos (IL-17) held meetings in the Quad-Cities to learn more from local leaders about their needs and priorities.

### [Larry the Answer Guy: Abilene not on Amtrak route](#)

ReporterNews.com-Jan 14, 2013

In February 2000, then-Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison announced that Amtrak would reroute its Sunset Limited train from New Orleans to Los Angeles along the Interstate 20 corridor, including stops in Abilene, Eastland and other Big Country towns. In 2001, there was talk of adding another train, the Caprock Chief, from Fort Worth to Denver with stops in Abilene, Sweetwater, Lubbock and Amarillo.

### [Metrolink elects Morris chairman to succeed Katz](#)

Progressive Rail Roding-Jan 14, 2013

The Southern California Regional Rail Authority's board, which governs Metrolink, has elected San Bernardino Mayor Pat Morris as chairman.

### [OCTA Re-Vote Clears Legal Snag On CEO Post](#)

Orange County Register Jan 14, 2013

The top job at the Orange County Transportation Authority, hung up for more than a month on a legal snag, was awarded Monday to an heir-apparent inside candidate. Again.

### [Najarian Effort To Retain Metro Board Seat About To Commence](#)

StreetsBlog LA Jan 14, 2013

.This is the latest episode in the soap opera like drama surrounding the attempt by proponents of the I-710 Big Dig project to keep vocal opponent Ara Najarian from continuing to serve on the Metro Board. The proponents make no bones it his use of his seat on the Board as a bully pulpit to preach his opposition that drove them to try and prevent Najarian's re-appointment.

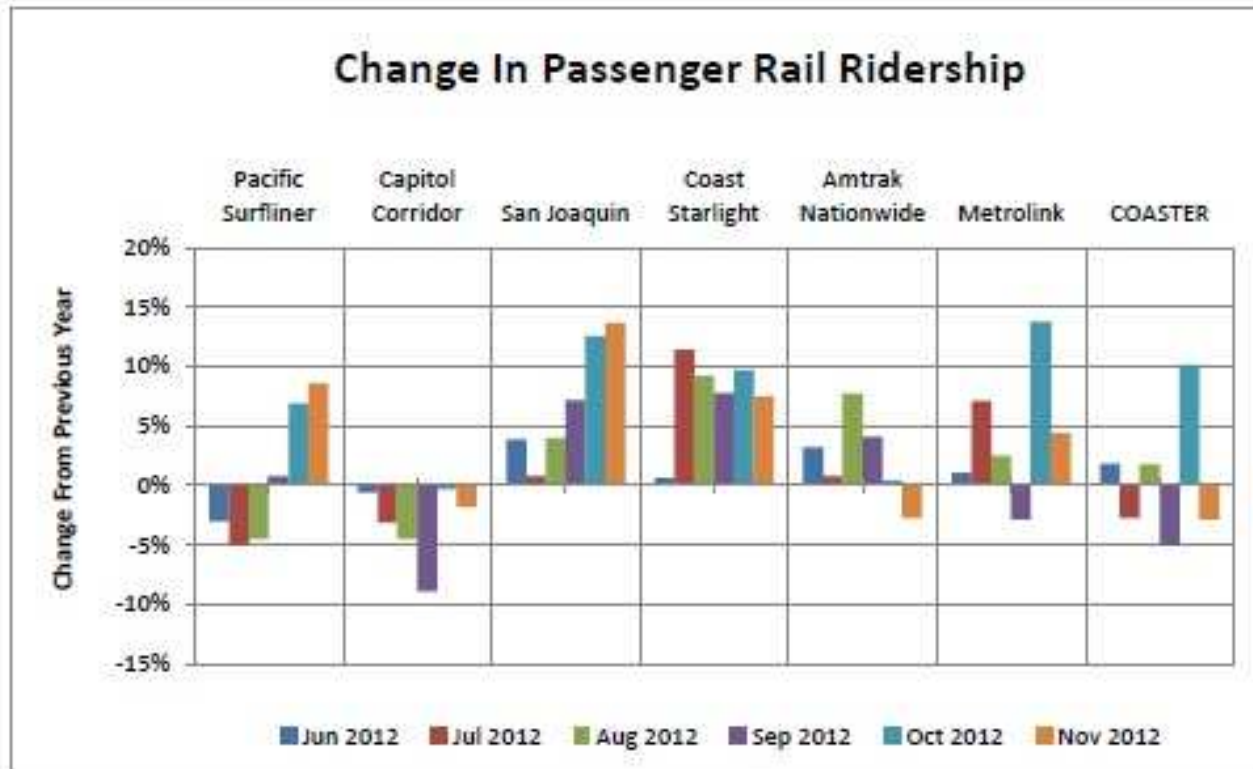
### [Planning under way for fairgrounds train platform](#)

Coast News-Jan 17, 2013

In addition to the platform, which would be used by Coaster and Amtrak trains, the project will include replacing the 96-year-old wooden trestle San Dieguito Railway River Bridge and adding slightly more than 1 mile of second mainline rail track south of Solana Beach, according to the SANDAG website

### **Corrections**

The January 14, 2013 issue of this eNewsletter had a headline that said **Caltrain has plans to raise fees next year**. The headline should have said **Caltrain has no plans to raise fees next year**.



Finally the Surfliners are seeing ridership growth. Ridership is down for the Capitol Corridor mostly in Sacramento since the new platforms replaced the old ones.

## We Get Email

### Re: Long wait for better rail service

Today as I read that the California Hi Speed segment between Los Angeles and San Francisco might become a reality in 2029.... DANG !!!! I am a 67 yr old young loving RR kid at heart Stargeezer and in those 16 years from now I will be 84 before I can enjoy boarding that bullet... Hope I make it that long ! From my world wide travels and aboard other rail roads... I am sore asamed of how backwards we are here in USA. Also if you ever get a chance. Be sure to ride the Fin del Mundo ( End of the World ) small gague railroad way down at end of South America in Usuhauia Argentina!

Thanks and again thanks for your great RR newsletters

Victor Sunstar

**I have been involved in Rail Passenger service advocacy for 34 years. In 1979 I thought we would be further along by 1989 than we are now. Still we are steadily making progress and things generally look bright in the future. Still I wish I can catch a train in Oceanside and get to Emeryville in under 9 hours with only one bus transfer by 2018. NB**

### Re: Amtrak's Creative Accounting

Last week a news story in this eNewsletter reported that Amtrak had claimed that it had achieved a reduced net loss on operations in FY 2012 (the year ending 9/30/12), in the amount of \$361 million. The claim is misleading. The claim reflects only Amtrak's highly manipulated internal categories and classifications, which basically show whatever management wants them to show.

The only reliable index of Amtrak's financial performance is found in their audited financial statements, where the numbers are corroborated each year by the company's independent outside auditors. **In Amtrak's audited financial statements for the last three fiscal years, we see that while revenues have increased in each year (2010: \$2.51 billion; 2011: \$2.71b; 2012: \$2.88b), expenses have grown even faster, so that Amtrak's actual audited net loss on operations has grown each year (as indeed it has for at least the last quarter century) (2010: \$1.21 billion; 2011: \$1.25b; 2012:**

**\$1.27b). *Emphasis Added***

A couple of points stand out: even in a post-recession “recovery” the rate of growth in Amtrak’s revenue is slowing over the last two years; and, the more people Amtrak carries, which reflects almost exclusively growth in both low-price and high-price but short corridors, as the long distance trains are statistically almost sold out and have little if any capacity for growth, the more it loses. **This was true in the years from 1999 through the early 2000s, the period that saw the introduction of Acela service in the NEC, and it is true today. The more short distance tickets sold, the higher the annual real losses. (The launch of Acela actually accelerated the growth in the real, audited, annual loss on operations.) That relationship has held firm for at least the last 30 years and shows no sign of changing.** Emphasis added

We can all argue policy and social benefit of various train services all we want, but the actual audited financial results, as distinguished from Amtrak propaganda, are irrefutable.

Andrew Selden

**In the 1980's under Amtrak President Claytor there was expansion of Long Distance service and Amtrak's cost recovery improved. When Mr. Claytor retired from Amtrak around 1993 he predicted Amtrak would break even before 2000. Instead by then Amtrak almost defaulted on all bills after the introduction of the ACELA. NB**

**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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