



Train Magazine is America's Answer To Planes

Train Magazine

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Amtrak Service To Maine Finally Begins

By **DAVID EMER**
Staff Writer



After 13 years of planning, the Downeaster has finally started making trips between Boston's North Station and Portland. As noted by the Associated Press, it took a longer time to restart service between these two cities than it did to plan out and build the transcontinental railroad back in the 19th century. However, this didn't dampen spirits on December 14, the ceremonial inaugural run of the train.

On the maiden run, around 450 politicians and planners of the project packed aboard Amtrak's newest train as it went through towns to hear the ringing of church bells and the cheers of crowds as the steam trains did when they first came to Maine over 150 years ago.

Ceremonial inaugural trains have been carried out for many years to boost awareness about the train and obtain free advertising from the press coverage. This ceremonial run meant a lot to the people who have worked these 13 long years to finally resume service.

"Sometimes, when we were in the dark days, it seems that was the thing that pulled us along - that inaugural ride," said Jeri Edgar, a member of TrainRiders/ Northeast, the citizens group that lobbied and petitioned for the train.

The next day, December 15, regular service between the two cities began. The sold out trip that left Portland at six in the morning carried weary-eyed diehard rail fans that wanted to be a part of history on a wet Portland morning. Two



The Downeaster at North Station

men who called themselves "The Downeaster Duo" carried around sacks of Maine potatoes and handed them out to passengers. Passenger Ruth Finch told the Associated Press that, "there's something romantic about a train" and this is what drove her to the train. The café car served local New England fare like clam chowder from Legal Seafood as the train rolled through the woods and beaches of Maine.

A fare on the Downeaster costs \$21 one-way and \$35 round trip for the 2 hour and 45 minute ride between the two hubs. The train rolls along at 60 MPH even though it was originally planned to go at 79 MPH like most trains outside the high-speed Boston-New York-Washington corridor run. The slower speed is blamed on the owner of the track, Guilford Transportation, the same company that bought out Boston and Maine Railroad and Pan Am Airlines. Guilford, which runs 12 freight trains a day on the same line contests that it is unsafe to run at that speed despite the millions of dollars spent on upgrades to the lines. Amtrak believes it is safe at 79 MPH. Both parties are awaiting a decision from the STB (Surface Transportation Board.) If the trains are allowed to run at 79 MPH the train will be able to make the trip in 2 hours and 30 minutes. Nate Moulton of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority said that this reduction in time will help the train.

Even at the slower speed, the train has seen early success. During the first weeks it has been nearly sold out on weekends and has seen better than expected ridership on weekdays. It is currently on pace to beat Amtrak's goals. However, the first few weeks especially around the holiday season are not a good judge of how the train will do and the ultimate success of the train remains in question. Rail advocates can only hope that if service remains reliable that the train will be more appealing than cars, which led to its original demise in 1965.

Railroading Briefs	2
Emer Notes	3
Train Watercolors	5
Crossword	7
Stock Track	8

Feature Articles:
Train Magazine takes a look at Amtrak's turbulent past few months on page 3.
Check The Stock Quotes-
Back Page

Train Magazine
Established in 1997
America's Answer To Planes

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www.trainmagazine.com

Railroading Briefs

This new article will cover a wide range of topics with sections written by different writers.

American Steam In Cuba

Who says the days of steam are over? Just go 100 miles south of Florida to the beautiful Caribbean island of Cuba and you will believe you have gone back in time. Today, while most of the world has switched over to using diesel or electric, Cuba still uses steam to haul sugar from about one third of its 150 mills. Many of these American steam classics will go out into the remote areas of Cuba to get the sugar cane and run over long distances.

When Fidel Castro turned Cuba into a Communist country in 1959 after it had been an American colony, John F. Kennedy announced an embargo on the country that still exists today. Since then, the United States has stopped supplying the country with anything, leaving the nation with '50s era cars and trains. Russia has supplied it with diesels for the main line and is continuing to supply it with diesels despite its economic problems. With Russian diesels continuing to arrive, the days of steam even in Cuba may be numbered.

Cuban engineers have had to live by the saying, 'make-and-make-mend.' They have time to do this to keep the classic Alco and Baldwin locomotives running because the trains are mostly used during the cane harvesting season running from February to April.

Because there is no supply of coal on the island the steam engines burn oil. The engines come from the middle period of steam production. The most powerful engine that is in Cuba is a 2-8-2 Mikado built by Baldwin with

one wheel in the front, 4 in the middle and another in the back on both sides. No engines predate 1878.

Cuba's vast array of gauges range from a tiny 2 ft. 3 in. between the rails to standard gauge (4 feet 8.5 inches.)

With yellow cabooses, old style signals and the some of the oldest engines in operation; Cuba is the king of steam.

Sources: Legends of Steam and Real Steel both by Colin Garratt

Contributed by David Emer

Japan: Where Trains Rule

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think Japanese? It's probably either the food, or there marvelous ways of miniaturizing things, right? Right up there is trains, which is one of Japan's most ideal ways of traveling. The most famous of the trains of Japan is their bullet train, the Shinkansen. This train was first created in 1964 and became the world's first bullet train. Reaching speeds of about 200 kilometers per hour was impressive for technology in the 1960's. These days the train can reach speeds above 300 kilometers an hour. Tokyo, the capital of Japan is the central position in the Shinkansen network and connects northern and western Japan together. Many Japanese people ride trains as a daily routine to get to work or even go to school. Yuri Hajikano of Japan says that trains are part of her daily life and she sometimes rides the Shinkansen to visit her Grandmother. "I ride the train to visit my Grandmother but it's expensive you know!" "I

usually just ride the regular train with my friends." Trains in Japan are not something that just comes and goes but a part of the Japanese culture.

Contributed by Oliver Hong

The Longest Train In The World

On June 21, 2001 Western Australia witnessed history. BHP Iron Ore Railroad set a new world record by running the longest and heaviest freight train. The train, pulled by all of its eight diesel locomotives dispersed throughout the train ran from Yandi mine to Port Hedland, a distance of 170 miles. The 682-car train was 4.5 miles long and weighed an incredible 109,705 tons. The Vice-President of the rail line Mark Darby said that this was, "an opportunity to push the technology to the limit." He continued, "You have to keep trying different things— if you don't, you don't know what you can do." The train did have a 5-hour delay because of coupler trouble. BHP had already held the record for the heaviest train, which it set in 1996 but the weight record was held by South Africa's Sishen-Saldanha iron ore line, which it set in 1991. That train was pulled by nine electric and seven diesel engines but only ran for 7,200 meters.

Sources: Railway Gazette Magazine and Trains Magazine

Contributed by David Emer

Train Magazine asks that readers contribute articles.

Please send them to Train Magazine Place. Address on back page.

A New Day For Train Magazine

By **DAVID EMER**

Director of Sales and Marketing

In the first issue of this year, Train Magazine is proud to introduce this new format. The format allows editors to have more freedom with the lengths of articles and to insert pictures into the middle of articles as was done for the first time on the cover page. The new blue and white title better distinguishes the magazine than the black and white one of the past so that the magazine will

catch the eyes of potential readers on newstands. The new format was made possible by a corporate investment into new software for the magazine. The delay in the publication of this issue was the result of learning the software.

Train Magazine also has just recently expanded from a 6-page magazine to an 8-page magazine giving you two more pages of information about the trains you love.

With the new format and added pages, now is a great time to get a

subscription. You can receive 8 issues in color for only \$14 or 16 issues in color for \$25. It now costs \$10 to receive 8 issues of Train Magazine in black and white. To receive any of these options write a check for the correct amount made payable to 'David Emer' and send it to Train Magazine Place, 20 Blackhorse Dr. Acton, MA 01720. With the new cost of the two extra pages, Train Magazine encourages long time black and white subscribers who receive Train Magazine for free to buy a subscription.

Emer Notes:

Amtrak Has Sent The Wrong Message To Congress

March 29, 2002 has come and gone. What is the significance of this date? I guess there is none. It was supposed to be the day that Amtrak President and CEO George Warrington would send formal discontinuance notices to Congress that 18 long-distance trains would be cut if Amtrak was not guaranteed funding of \$1.2 billion for the next fiscal year, an amount more than double the \$521 million that Bush has offered. Amtrak is required to give 6 months notice before cutting service. Amtrak wasn't guaranteed the funding and George Warrington, who resigned from his post but is still the acting president, didn't make a single threat on that date. As Amtrak's incredible \$5.8 billion backlog on train, station and track repairs increased, Amtrak's management remained silent. Then, 7 days later, Amtrak President George Warrington who is still working for a few more months said, "If funding falls below Amtrak's budget, it is likely that certain trains will be discontinued," a much less harsh statement than his February 2 announcement. The next day, he backed off from the threat citing he saw "signs" that Congress would increase funding. Amtrak Vice Chairman Michael Dukakis, the former governor of Massachusetts, agreed. He said, "My sense is that there's now a sense of urgency in Congress that wasn't there before."

Warrington's retraction was a mistake. While I would never have wanted Amtrak service to be cut, Warrington should have sent in the notices to Congress to cut the trains so that Congress would have been forced to act. His initial threat had effect because Sen. Charles Schumer D-N.Y., said, "These difficult measures should send a message to Congress that the time to get serious about passenger rail has arrived."

However, Amtrak lost credibility when it backed away from its threats because it made politicians realize that Warrington was bluffing and wasn't going to cut service.

"Signs" and "senses" that legislation will be passed are not the same as action and Amtrak has put its future and the future of passenger rail in America on the line by not making this distinction. Warrington should already know there is a difference. Last summer, he said that he had "secured" the votes needed to pass the High-Speed Rail Investment Act, which is an act designed to give \$12 billion towards the building of new high-speed rail corridors across the country. Since that time, the legislation has remained stalled.

If Amtrak is ever going to receive substantial funding, it needs leaders who will stick to their convictions and not send false messages to Congress. Hopefully, Warrington's successor, David Gunn, will realize this and unlike his predecessor will be able to secure the funding Amtrak needs and deserves.

Emer Notes, has appeared in nearly every issue of Train Magazine.

Turbulent Times For Amtrak

By **DAVID EMER**
Staff Writer

Over the past few months Amtrak has been in the news a lot. Most of the stories have been about Amtrak's dismal financial outlook but on the positive side, the national rail line has managed to create some good publicity.

1/17/02—America is beginning to catch up with Europe. Beginning in mid-March travelers will be able to book limited train travel with Continental Airlines flight plans out of Newark International Airport. Similar plans are commonplace in Europe. Continental will use code sharing to allow passengers to take Acela Regional (not the bullet train) and Keystone trains to Philadelphia Pennsylvania; Wilmington, Delaware; Stamford, Connecticut and New Haven, Connecticut. Passengers will be able to include the fare in their short distance air travel out Newark. The partnership, which will last for four years, is the first of its kind in America.

"Travelers will be able to use Amtrak's frequent Northeast Corridor rail service and Continental's coast-to-coast air service to easily reach the destination of their choice," said Amtrak president George Warrington.

Continental Airlines eliminated its short connector flights between Philly and Newark last fall, a major reason for the initiation of this plan. The plan will be open to anyone taking one of Continental's 300 daily departures out of Newark and Continental President Larry Kellner predicts that 500 travelers will take advantage of the new service.

Tickets can be purchased through Continental or a travel agent.

The agreement between the two transportation providers will also allow passengers to exchange points and miles on Amtrak Guest Rewards and Continental's OnePass program.

The partnership is not the first between the airline and the nation's sole national railroad. In bad weather conditions or other circumstances, Amtrak automatically transports stranded Continental passengers at Newark.

1/23/02— Only three days after cutting a deal with Continental Airlines, Amtrak announced that passengers will be able to access the Internet on three of its major routes. Amtrak, Yahoo and Compaq will pay for Compaq Pocket PCs with wireless modems to be on certain coaches and café cars for the next six months. Yahoo's purple and yellow advertising banner will distinguish these cars. Five to ten of these Web-connected Compaq handhelds will be on special cars on trains running between Boston and Washington, from Chicago to Milwaukee and from Sacramento to Oakland and San Jose.

2/2/02— Amtrak's president, George Warrington threatened to eliminate 18 long-distance trains if Congress doesn't increase funding to the struggling rail line. President Bush has promised \$521 million for the next fiscal year but Warrington contends that the struggling rail line needs \$1.2 billion, more than double the suggested amount. He said that if Amtrak gets the proposed amount, it would only operate in the profitable Northeast

Continued On Next Page

Continued From Last Page

Corridor. The drastic changes could come into effect by October if Amtrak submitted the names of the trains that it was going to cut by March 29. Amtrak must warn Congress six months in advance before cutting any service.

Warrington's announcement is a big change from his usual claims that Amtrak wants to expand and is not interested in cutting service. With his announcement of the cuts he said, "The system has reached a critical crossroads," and admitted that the rail line has a \$5.8 billion backlog in work needed on trains, tracks, rail yards and stations.

Showing the irony of these days for Amtrak, the National Association of Railroad Passengers, a group that lobbies congress for increased passenger service supported Warrington's threat to cut service. The president of the organization, Ross Capon, called his threats, "a wonderful way to rally support" for more federal funding. He also added that he hoped no service will be cut.

After Warrington's announcement, there were some words of support for Amtrak on Capitol Hill. Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del., said that there should be a dedicated source of money for Amtrak and Sen. Charles Schumer D-N.Y. said that it is time to get "serious about passenger rail."

Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska called Amtrak's act "irresponsible" because it is

really management problems, which are to blame.

The final effect of Warrington's words is yet to be seen. Update: See Emer Notes.

2/8/02— Amtrak's Reform Council submitted a 111-page report to Congress on how Amtrak should be restructured. Congress can accept all, part or none of the plan made by the watchdog group, which Congress created in 1997. The council was created to determine whether Amtrak was going to become operationally self-sufficient by 2003 as ordered by congress. On November 9, the council determined that Amtrak wouldn't come close to breaking even and following the steps laid out by Congress started work on a plan for the restructure of passenger rail in America. It has now completed this plan, which if implemented, would split Amtrak into three elements.

The first element would be a small government run organization to oversee decisions for operations, funding and planning. The next part would own and upgrade the profitable northeast corridor. Amtrak doesn't own most of the other tracks around the nation. The final part of the restructured rail service provider would operate the trains. At first, Amtrak would operate the trains for a two to five year period. Then, after this time, if the trains weren't being run efficiently some or all of the routes would be opened to private

competition. Amtrak would have a right to bid for the operation of these routes.

"The system we have today, the old Amtrak, has not worked and is not working," said Gilbert Carmichael, chairman of the reform council.

After the plan was introduced, Amtrak said the problem wasn't management but a lack of funding. "Until these issues are resolved, the nation's passenger rail system will continue to be torn by conflicting policy mandates and inadequate capital, whether operated by Amtrak or anyone else," the railroad said.

Views have been varied from Washington. Sen. John McCain R-Az. suggested a bill that was very much in line with the opinions of the council. Across the aisle, Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y. said that the council is ignoring the real problem of "chronic federal underinvestment." House Democrats gave a cool reception to the council's plan shortly after it was introduced.

One thing is certain; The Amtrak Reform Council has begun a debate on the role of passenger rail in America.

Sources:

Amtrak, Reuters, Associated Press, www.newsfactor.com

David Emer has been covering Amtrak for years.

Trains On Tofu

By **DAVID EMER**
Staff Writer

With the days of steam over, could the days of diesel also be coming to an end? If Mike Hart, CEO of Sierra Industrial Group, has his way, soybean oil will replace the heavy polluting diesel fuel of today. When combusted, the soybean oil, which is made from edible food smells like french fries cooking. Mike Hart owns the Sierra Railroad, a railroad that runs 3-hour dinner trains in Oakdale, CA. He plans to convert his four engines from diesel fuel to soybean oil along with a much more ambitious project, which he thought of during one of California's rolling black outs. He realized that a locomotive could help power a city.

His idea was to use 48 used locomotives with energy converters in passenger cars, which can be moved around California based on need to for extra power. Each passenger car can be coupled with four locomotives to create a block. Each 'block' can provide 8.4 megawatts, enough power for a typical town of 20,000 people.

What came next was a lot of paper work. Hart describes, "Getting through the state permitting process prior to signing a long-term contract took months and the policies were changing on a daily basis." Despite the complications, the state agreed to buy his locomotives and cars. The operation will start by June of this year.

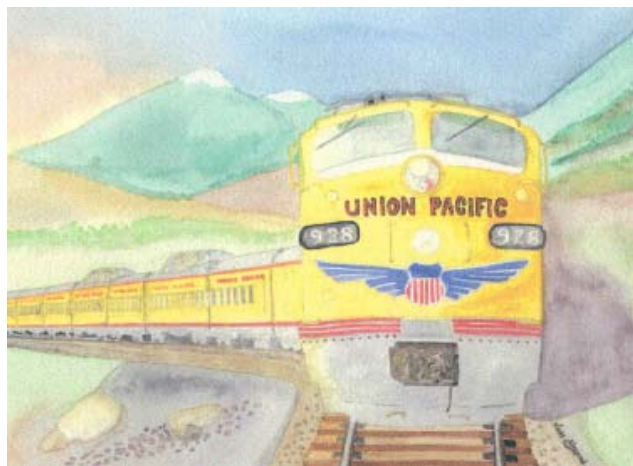
This isn't the first time soybean oil has been used as fuel. In farming and industrial operation a fuel using 20% soybean oil and 80% diesel fuel is in use. However, Mike Hart's locomotives will run off of 100% soybean oil.

When contacted by Train Magazine concerning the price of Biofuel, Hart described, "In general, Biofuel is much more expensive than Diesel." He continued that his company bought the fuel in a multi-million contract to reduce costs. With this revolutionary technology, it appears a new day in the history of trains is dawning.

Sources: Trains Magazine, Union Democrat and Sierra Industrial.

Train Watercolors

By REV. JONATHAN ALMOND
Correspondent



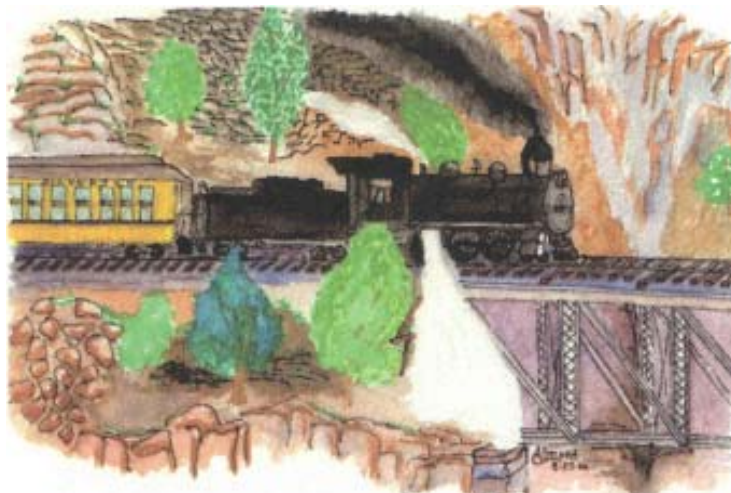
"UP through the Rockies"



"A Santa Fe Passenger"



"Hiawatha Running West"



"Crossing the Animas"

Jonathan Almond was kind enough to allow Train Magazine to publish his copyrighted water colors. These watercolors are sold as note cards. For ordering information log on to www.trainmagazine.com. This is Jonathan Almond's second contribution to Train Magazine.



Photo of the Month contributed by Wayne Hall. He captures a shot of a New England Central Railroad engine working in the rail yard at Palmer, Massachusetts. Palmer is the top train watching spot in Massachusetts. Many trains go by the spot a day, because the tracks are shared by New England Central, CSX and Amtrak. Amtrak runs the Lake Shore Limited and Vermonter through Palmer.

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Will Monorails Eventually Become A Symbol of The Future?

By **DAVID EMER**
Staff Writer

The Seattle Monorail was created along with Space Needle for the 1962 World's Fair to symbolize what future cities would look like. Since this time we have sent a man to the moon and broken the sound barrier but have failed to create working monorails throughout the country with the exception of Seattle. The Seattle monorail was the first monorail built in the country and discounting the one at Disney World, remains one of the only in use today. Despite its success, for some reason it has not encouraged the further development of this mode of transportation. The monorail covered its costs of construction through ticket sales in almost no time and remains the only self-sufficient public transportation system in the country. Annually 2.4 million people use it to ride between downtown Seattle and the Seattle Center, which is home to the Space Needle, Pacific Science Center, and the Experience Music Project. The .9-mile trip is covered by two 4-car trains, which run up to 50 MPH. The streamlined trains are really

subway cars on rubber tires. Each train has 16 heavy-duty rubber tires hidden by metal sides with another 24 wheels hugging the side. These trains are a vital link between the two metropolitan centers. The success of this monorail makes it baffling why monorails are not found all around the country.

The question remains whether this monorail will become a symbol of the future or will go down as what was perceived to be the future. It appears that it may actually live up to what it was meant to be. It may have taken 40 years but city planners are beginning to realize that monorails could be the economical answer to transportation gridlock. In Las Vegas, construction on a monorail to run along the famous Strip has begun. Taxpayers will never have to share a cent of the cost because a group of hotels and casinos took out a loan from the state, which will be paid off by ridership fares. Even if the fares aren't sufficient, the loans are insured so the state won't have to pay. In another sign of promise, there is speculation about a monorail being built between North Station and South Station in Boston. Currently,

Amtrak passengers traveling from Maine on the Downeaster (See cover story) who want to continue on to other Amtrak destinations cannot without great hassle continue on their journeys because the Downeaster terminates at North Station while all other Amtrak trains in Boston run out of South Station. To get between the two Boston stations, one would have to take two subways and walk a good distance. A monorail system would alleviate some of these troubles. Seattle, the home of the first monorail, is now considering extending its monorail at the cost of \$1 billion. Seattle is second in traffic congestion only to Los Angeles. The proposed 14-mile extension would run outside of Seattle's boundaries and would connect key neighborhoods with the goal to end traffic problems. A bill is currently being debated in the Washington State Senate regarding this issue. These new monorails will hopefully make Seattle not a city of the future but a city of the present.

Sources: The Seattle Times, KCTS, USA Today, and www.monorails.org- A very informative site, which I recommend.

Train Tragedy In Egypt

By **DAVID EMER**
Staff Writer

Three hundred and seventy- three people died in a train disaster without a single car even leaving the rails. An 11-car train set fire in Ayyat, a town 46 miles south of Cairo on February 20 in the early hours of the morning. Seven carriages were in flames and it took hours for fire fighters to douse them. The crowded train was carrying local people to the countryside to visit family for Eid al-Adha, the Feast of the Sacrifice. The holiday is one of the biggest in the Muslim year. The train fire is the worst disaster in the 150 years of Egyptian Rail and the worst train disaster in the world since 1989, when there was a gas explosion underneath two Soviet trains, killing 400.

The driver of the train didn't notice the fire spreading through the cars and didn't stop the train for 2.5 miles. During this time, many people burned alive while

others jumped off the moving train. A survivor Said Fuad Amin recalls, "I thought I was going to die anyway, so I jumped." Some were relatively lucky like he was while 40 passengers were found dead on the side of the tracks according to ambulance workers. Some passengers were trapped in the train behind bars on the window and couldn't make the jump to possible safety. The impossibility of jumping from some of the windows led to a mass exodus at the doors. In addition, the electricity had gone out when the fire started, further increasing the confusion. "We pushed each other and we were suffocating from the smoke. We threw each other out the windows," a survivor recounts from his hospital bed.

The train going from the capital, Cairo to Luxor, 300 miles south, was filled well beyond safety limits. Each car was holding 300 passengers, double the capacity according to police. This would suggest that there were more than 3,000

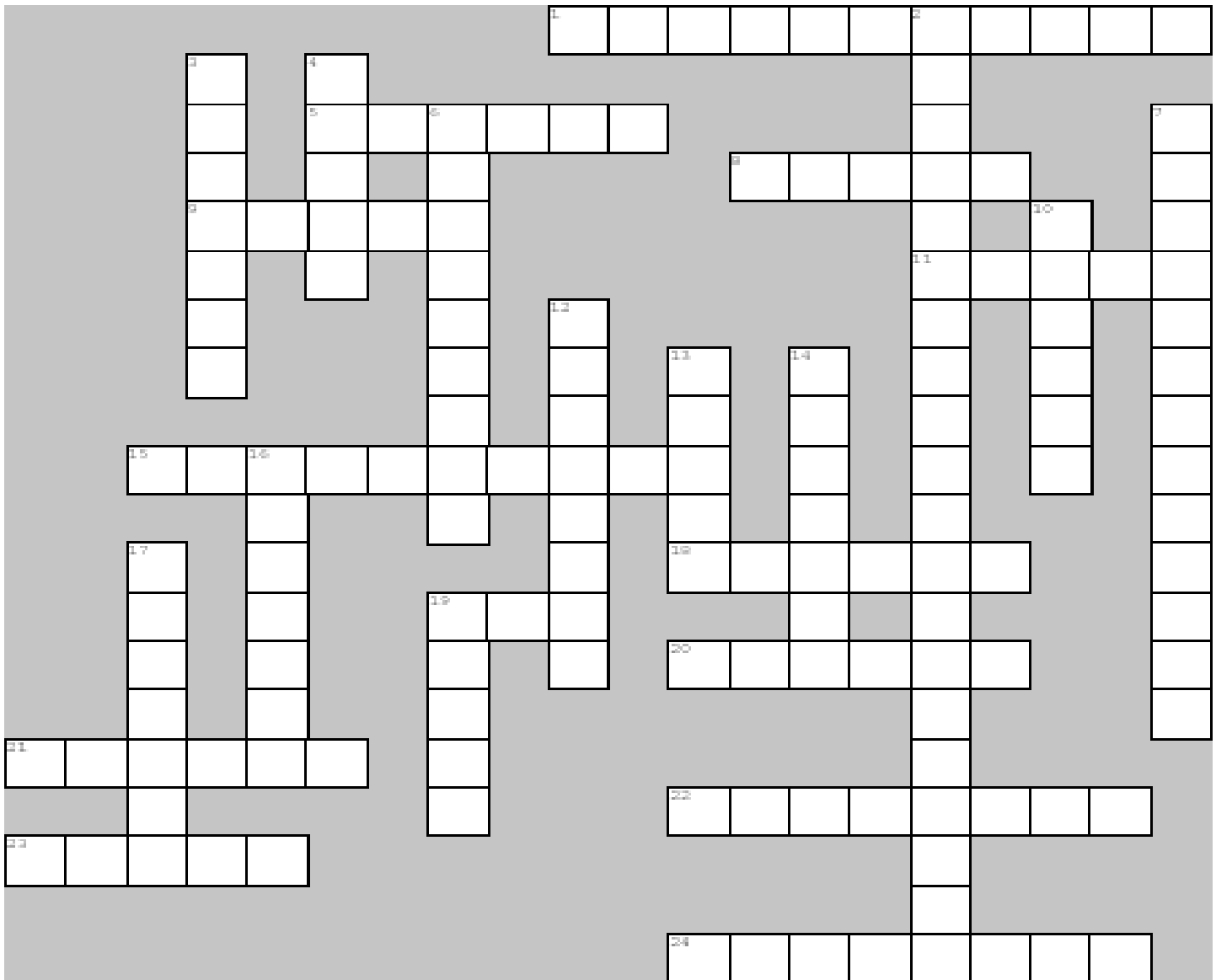
people on board. However, Ahmed al-Sherif, director of the state-owned Egyptian Railway says that there were 1,200 people on board but still admits it was filled over capacity. Aida Mehana, a 26-year-old housewife who survived the fire explains, "These are people's souls, or do they only care about theirs? The train is like a stable for animals, it is trash."

The cause of the accident is still under investigation. The leading cause is that a passenger using a gas stove started the blaze. The trains don't serve food so passengers commonly take stoves on board to cook their own food, despite regulations forbidding them for obvious reasons. Another possibility is that a gas cylinder from the train ignited the flames.

The state-owned Egyptian Railway Authority with old equipment and overcrowding is plagued by these accidents yearly. In 1998, 47 people died when a train derailed into a crowded town square.

Train Crossword

By **JONATHAN EISENBERG**
Staff Writer



Across Clues

1. the Shinkansen is a Japanese example of this kind of train
5. you need one of these to ride a train
8. trains' large competition for long distance travel
9. _____ Magazine
11. the nails used on train track
15. another word for the engine that pulls trains
18. the US government sponsored railroad
19. the wooden beams that cross the metal rails on train track
20. Many trains are powered by this type of oil
21. one of these highly advanced trains is being built in China
22. a train that runs on only one rail
23. In France, the subway is called this
24. you get this when train tracks meet the road

Down Clues

2. the longest railroad in the world, this runs from Moscow to Vladivostok (1 word)
3. a major freight company; the capital of New Mexico
4. back in the 1800's, trains were powered by this
6. the person who walks around and collects tickets
7. the topic of one of Agatha Christie's novels runs from Paris to Istanbul (1 word)
10. a piece of track next to the normal track that allows trains to pass one another
12. this person is in charge of keeping a train running
13. the new Amtrak train that runs from Boston to New York
14. you can hear this from trains
16. traditionally, you'd find this car at the end of a train
17. there are 2 types of trains: passenger and _____
19. trains run on this

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19-Apr-99	33.50	44.12	29.56	57.00	41.05
01-Jul-99	32.43	47.25	30.00	59.19	42.22
29-Aug-99	30.25	45.75	27.87	51.06	38.73
24-Nov-99	28.94	37.12	21.94	48.69	34.17
28-Dec-99	24.00	32.12	20.62	43.19	29.98
18-Feb-00	22.56	21.81	14.81	37.75	24.23
20-Apr-00	24.00	20.63	17.13	41.31	25.77
06-Jun-00	24.94	22.00	17.88	42.44	26.82
03-Jul-00	24.44	22.31	15.63	38.25	25.16
31-Aug-00	22.38	23.75	16.06	39.75	25.49
01-Dec-00	25.25	25.50	14.31	46.00	27.77
19-Jan-01	28.81	27.69	16.13	51.94	31.14
30-Mar-01	30.00	33.29	16.05	56.15	33.87
25-May-01	30.98	37.10	22.11	56.48	36.67
27-Jul-01	27.51	39.78	20.65	55.20	35.79
28-Sep-01	25.11	29.25	15.14	45.60	28.78
24-Nov-01	29.00	36.89	19.24	54.43	34.89
15-Apr-02	28.75	36.41	23.12	57.20	36.37

BNI= Burlington Northern and Santa Fe

NSC= Norfolk and Southern

UNP= Union Pacific

TMTA= Train Magazine Transportation Average-- An average of all four of them.

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