

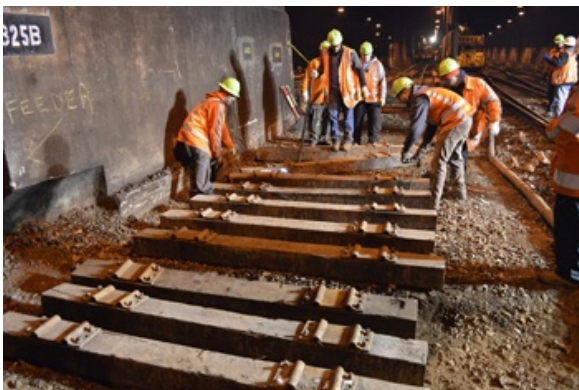
MILEPOSTS

A Newsletter for MTA Metro-North Railroad Customers

March 2015

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Behind the Scenes: Fixing a "Ladder" in Grand Central



From a distance the scene mirrors something out of a Hollywood science-fiction movie shoot: a powerful floodlight illuminating heavy machinery and a crew clad in reflective orange garb moving with flawless precision.

But there are no actors here: only employees who spend every weekend in Grand Central working to improve Metro-North's infrastructure as we continue to focus on improving safety and reliability.

It's late February, and down in the area of track known as Ladder K, the thickening fog of your breath means it's not getting any warmer.

"To be honest, I actually prefer winter work," Track Worker **James Morgan** says on a frigid Saturday morning, to the surprise of a bundled up coworker standing beside him. "I think it beats the blazing heat."

Morgan is one of the 25 individuals that make up a "super team" of Track, Communications & Signals, and Power Department employees who are currently performing vital repairs on Ladder K.

But Ladder K isn't a real "ladder": it is actually the first set of turnouts and switches that make up the interlocking (where trains switch from one track to another) a train reaches when heading south from the Park Avenue Tunnel. Ladder K was last rehabilitated in 1998. Since that time the rails and ties have experienced wear under rail traffic along its 600-foot length running from northwest to southeast. So since early January, this team has dedicated its scheduled winter work to getting this area back to its glory days.

[See more details.](#)

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Reminder: New Fares Effective March 22

New fares for travel between **Metro-North's New York State stations** go into effect on Sunday, March 22. (PLEASE NOTE: The March 22 fare increase does not affect ticket prices for travel between stations in Connecticut and New York, or between stations within Connecticut.)

The vast majority of fares will increase by 4.25% or less. For monthly and weekly commuters, all fares to/from Manhattan will increase by no more than 4.25%.

Metro-North offers you several ways to save on your commute, with a choice of ticket types and purchase options. How much you save depends on how often you ride. [See more details here](#), or pick up one of our new Ticket & Fare Brochures, available in Grand Central and at outlying stations.

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More Than 85 Million Served!



The final tallies are in, and we can report that our total ridership for 2014 was 85.2 million — the highest in the railroad's history.

East-of-Hudson ridership of 83 million surpassed the previous record of 81.8 million rides that was set in 2013.

Here is the breakdown by line:

- **The Hudson Line** was the fastest growing line with a 2.3% increase and carried 16,236,555 customers — its highest ridership ever.
- **The New Haven Line** was up 1.6% and also recorded its highest ridership ever in 2014 (carrying 39,611,113 customers). That's over 600,000 more rides than in 2013, the previous record year of approximately 39 million customers.
- **The Harlem Line** grew 0.7% in 2014, carrying 27,127,447 customers.

Commutation ridership grew 0.5% vs. 2013, while non-commutation ridership increased 2.7% vs. 2013.

Our three Metro-North operated connecting services (the Haverstraw-Ossining Ferry, Newburgh-Beacon Ferry, and Hudson Rail Link) decreased slightly during 2014. Combined ridership on the three services was approximately 535,000, down 1.2% from 2013. Ridership increased by 3.6% on the Hudson Rail Link but decreased by 11.5% on the Haverstraw-Ossining Ferry and by 7.4% on the Newburgh-Beacon Ferry.

Finally, our West-of-Hudson ridership reached 1.7 million, a 6.8% increase over 2013. And when you add them all up, it brings us to a total of 85.2 million.

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Plastic Now Accepted!

We are in the midst of expanding the use of our new Ticket Issuing Machines (TIMs) — which enable you to use credit cards to purchase tickets onboard the train — to all lines.

This is being done after a successful pilot launch on the Danbury and Wassaic branches.

The majority of conductors will have the new devices by mid-April. Listen for train announcements or ask your conductor if the option to pay by credit card is available.

Ticket purchases may be made using any major credit card (or you may use your debit card as a credit card). Conductors will also be able to print out customer receipts from their upgraded TIMs.



Please remember that purchasing your ticket on board the train is always the most expensive option.

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A-Rod Isn't The Only One Back!

Metro-North's Game Day service to Yankee Stadium is also returning in time for opening day against the Blue Jays on April 6.

Jays on April 6.

Let us take you out to the ball game without the major league expense of paying for parking and tolls. And don't forget the hassle of dealing with all the traffic to Yankee Stadium!



On game days, Hudson Line fans enjoy direct service from Grand Central Terminal, Harlem–125th Street Station and outlying Hudson Line stations.

For Harlem and New Haven Line fans, there is direct service from select stations for 7:05 PM weeknight games, as well as for weekend and holiday games.

At other times, Harlem and New Haven Line customers can transfer to Hudson Line trains or special game-day

shuttles at Grand Central Terminal or Harlem–125th Street Station for service to the Yankees – E. 153rd Street Station.

Did we mention that train service is provided before, during and after the game? Or that getting to and from the game is a one-ticket ride from all three lines? Or that you can buy your tickets at any ticket office, from one of our many ticket vending machines or from [WebTicket](#)? Well, we just did...

Also, monthly and weekly ticket holders who normally travel to or from Manhattan (on any of the three lines) can travel to or from Yankees – E. 153rd Street Station **at no extra charge!**

So travel like a pro this season (*and we don't mean in a limo!*) Take a Metro-North "Train to the Game."

Look for our special Yankees – E. 153rd Street Station Game-Day timetable, available soon in Grand Central Terminal and at outlying stations. [Or see more details.](#)

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Safety Rule of the Issue

Take time to become familiar with what to do in the event of an emergency on your train. Even if you think you are familiar with what to do, we urge you to take a moment to review the procedures [here](#).

In the meantime, here are a few quick tips:

Evacuation Instructions				
Listen for directions from authorized personnel.	Remain inside train if possible. If not...	Go to next car through end doors. If unable...	Open side door and go out. If unable...	Go out emergency windows.

- Be sure to familiarize yourself with safety signage (see illustration) in cars so you will know how to locate and operate emergency exits.
- Remember that your best protection is to **remain calm**, and think clearly.
- If you are directed to evacuate to the track level, **follow the train crew's directions**

carefully, watch your step and stay away from the third rail or any downed wires.

We bring you this information because your safety is always our first priority.

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Courtesy Corner



Duke Ellington once said there are really only two kinds of music: good and bad!

But who can really say what is good? (*Kanye will gladly tell you, but can you really wait until the next awards show to find out?*)

That is why you need to respect the musical preference of your fellow commuters. And the easiest way to do that is to keep the volume down when listening to your favorites on your portable MP3 player.

Skrillex fans really don't want to hear Taylor Swift "bleeding" from your headphones on the trip home, and vice versa. (*And besides, if the person next to you can clearly hear your music, you are probably damaging your ears...*)

Spring Flings

Can one truly appreciate the warmth of spring without experiencing the cold of winter? (We would most definitely say "yes," but John Steinbeck would probably disagree*.)

Spring is most definitely upon us, and the best way to appreciate it is by getting out and taking one of our discount "Getaway packages" to see and do something new.

Get your motor running with our **NY International Auto Show** package. It takes place at the Javits Center April 3 – 12. Preview futuristic concept cars, never-before-seen production models, and cars you can actually afford to drive today! [See more details.](#)

If you prefer "petals" to gas pedals, then check out **The Orchid Show: Chandeliers** at the New York Botanical Garden through April 19.

Behold the elegant orchid in all its myriad forms with an aerial display that would make Liberace (or any lighting fixture salesman) "green" with envy! You can also roam the 50 breathtaking gardens, indoor rain forests and deserts, 50 acres of native forest, and rolling green hills. [See more details.](#)



Of course, if you prefer to experience the season indoors, there is always the **New York Spring Spectacular**



Live from **Radio City Music Hall** (through May 3). We are told this show, which is "bursting with invigorating new Rockettes dance numbers, incredible 3D special effects, sophisticated large-scale puppetry and an exciting soundtrack of original songs and classics and pop hits," is as rejuvenating as spring itself. Seeing is believing... [Click here to find out how to save \\$10 on admission to the show.](#)



You can purchase our Getaway packages from Metro-North ticket offices or full-service ticket vending machines or through [WebTicket](#).

[See a complete listing of all our discount Getaways.](#)

(*In "Travels With Charley," Steinbeck originally wrote: "What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold of winter to give it sweetness." But we say, "Why wait until summer?")