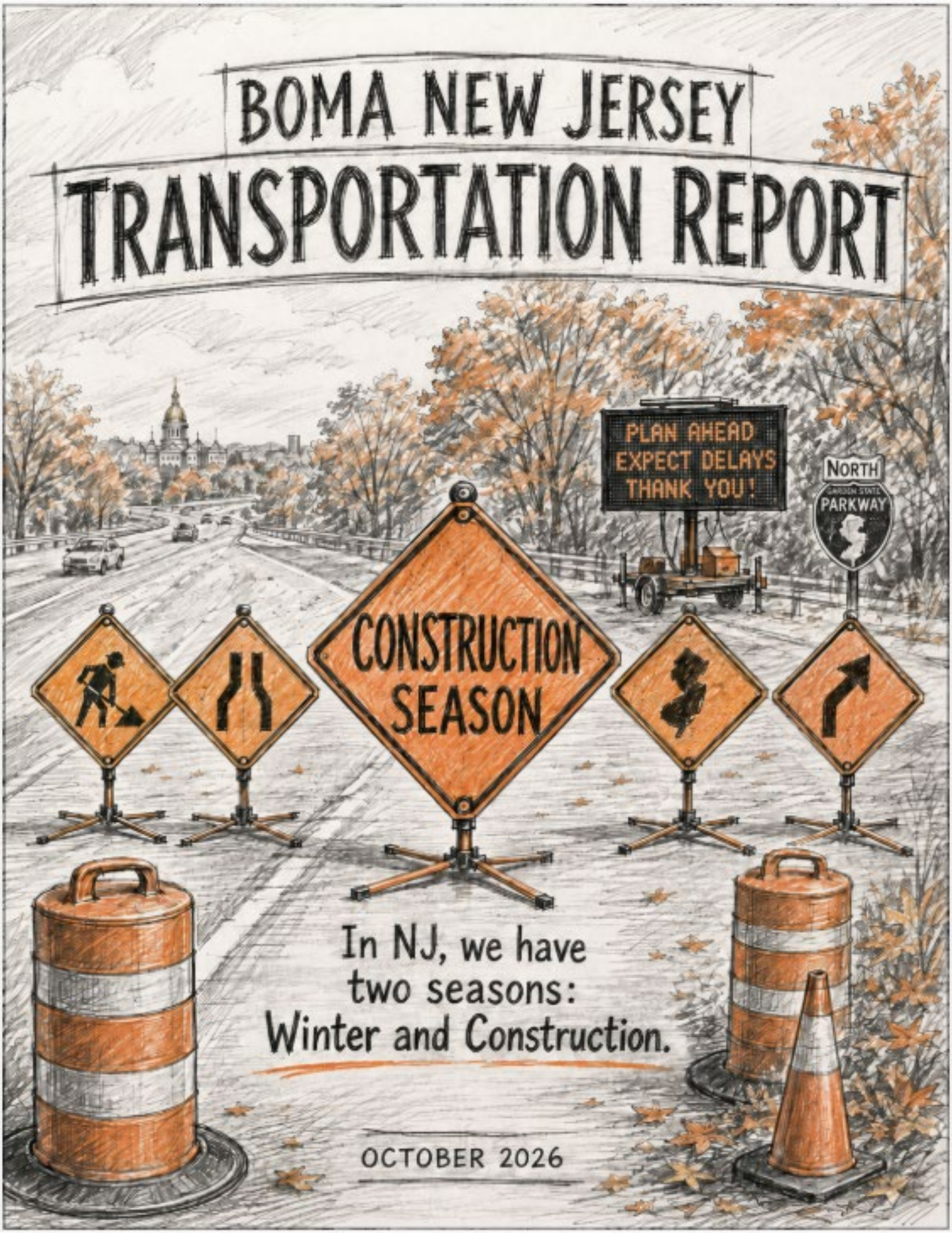
BOMA NEW JERSEY
TRANSPORTATION REPORT



GLENN WALDORF, BELL ENVIRONMENTAL
973-924-9004, GWALDORF@BELLENV.COM



BOMA - New Jersey
October 2026
Glenn Waldorf, Bell Environmental Services



🚧 NEW JERSEY HAS TWO SEASONS: WINTER AND CONSTRUCTION

And apparently both require "CAITION."



Really Seen in Parsippany!

Nothing says New Jersey construction season 🚧 quite like a caution sign ⚠️ that could have used a little more caution. When we picked construction as theme for the October Transportation Report, the old joke that New Jersey has two seasons, **winter and construction**, seemed like an easy way to avoid a Halloween 🎃 theme. Who knew we were so prescient?

This month gives us both sides of construction season. **First, there's the inconvenience we know is coming.** Beginning October 11, Amtrak and NJ Transit will undertake the final cutover from the old Portal Bridge to the new Portal North Bridge over the Hackensack River. For roughly five weeks, rail capacity between Newark and Secaucus will be reduced. Weekday Midtown Direct trains on the Morris-Essex Line, Gladstone Branch, and Montclair-Boonton Line will go to Hoboken, while Northeast Corridor and North Jersey Coast Line service into Penn Station will run on reduced or modified schedules. Regular schedules are expected back November 15, assuming all the testing goes according to plan.

Nobody is going to enjoy this. But this is what fixing things looks like.

The old Portal Bridge opened in 1910. For years, we've complained about a century-old movable bridge sitting in the middle of the busiest passenger rail corridor in the country. Now that we're finally replacing it, there's no magic switch that moves every train from the old bridge to the new one overnight.

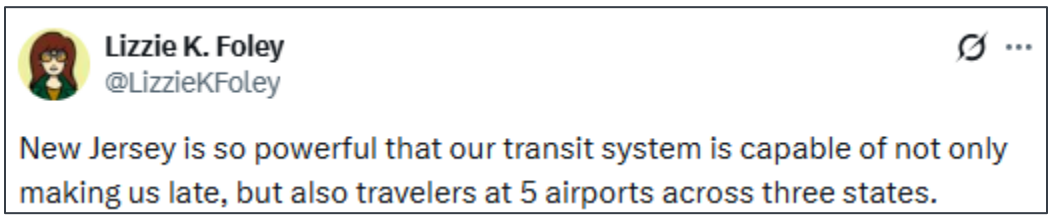
Old infrastructure has to be disconnected. New track alignments have to be connected. Signals, power and communications systems have to be integrated. Then everything has to be tested before normal service can resume.

For five weeks, the system will have less flexibility because people are working to give it more flexibility for the next several decades. That's **planned inconvenience**.

September gave us unplanned inconvenience when NJ Transit contractors working on the Delco Lead project between New Brunswick and North Brunswick accidentally cut a Verizon fiber-optic cable. Normally, that sounds like a bad day at a construction site. **This one helped shut down Newark Airport.**

The cable was part of the FAA's backup communications system serving air traffic in the Northeast. The FAA had already shifted operations to that backup while technicians investigated problems with the primary system. Then, at about 9:45 am on September 21, the construction crew cut the backup fiber. Suddenly there wasn't much of a backup left.

Newark effectively stopped commercial arrivals for hours. Hundreds of flights were canceled, others were delayed or diverted, and the disruption spread through JFK, LaGuardia, Philadelphia, Boston Logan, Teterboro and beyond. A construction project beside a rail line proved Central Jersey not only exists, it is also potent enough to disrupt airplanes across the Northeast.



Funny because it was true enough to hurt. ***And that is why you should use caition.***

🎀 THE FIRST CUT IS THE DEEPEST 🎵 – *EXCEPT NO ONE WAS SINGING*

🛩️ 7,000 flights delayed or canceled across the East Coast
🗽 1,400 flights impacted at the three major New York-area airports
🛬 600+ Newark cancellations, plus nearly 150 delays
⏱️ 400+ Philadelphia delays
❌ 200+ Philadelphia cancellations
🔁 ~100 flights diverted to other airports
🌎 6 airports hit: Newark, JFK, LaGuardia, Philadelphia, Boston Logan, & Teterboro
🌩️😡 1 very PO'd New Jersey weatherman
🔌 One cut backup fiber line.
🌊 One very big ripple effect.

There's an important wrinkle here. NJ Transit said preliminary information showed the contractor was working approximately **10 feet from the utility markings** when the cable was struck. New Jersey's Board of Public Utilities opened an investigation into the marking of the underground line and what went wrong.
That makes this more complicated than the usual "somebody forgot to call before they dug" story. Construction sites are messy places. Paint fades. Stakes move. Old records can be imperfect. Rail corridors are especially complicated environments, packed with tracks, electrical systems, signals, communications infrastructure and utilities.
A cable buried beside a railroad can look like somebody else's problem. Until somebody hits it. And then airplanes stop flying.
Longtime News 12 New Jersey meteorologist **James Gregorio** was among the travelers caught in the mess. He was returning from Paris when his Newark-bound flight was diverted to Albany. Think about that for a minute.
The next day, Gov. Mikie Sherrill was warning New Jersey residents about the approaching September nor'easter. That's normally Gregorio's territory. And Gregorio, who's normally more gregarious than aggrieved, had apparently reached his limit.



<u>He replied in a now deleted post →</u>

There may be no more New Jersey measure of transportation frustration than getting the weatherman mad enough to complain about something other than the weather. Construction season has officially gotten everyone's attention.
And there's another layer of irony here.
The **Delco Lead project itself is a resilience project**, designed to provide NJ Transit with emergency storage and inspection facilities so equipment can be protected during catastrophic weather events such as Superstorm Sandy.

Glenn Waldorf, Bell Environmental Services, 973-924-9004, gwaldorf@bellenv.com

In other words, work intended to make one transportation system more resilient temporarily exposed the vulnerability of another. That's construction season in one sentence.
That doesn't mean we shouldn't do the work. It means we have to do the work carefully.
Transportation isn't really a collection of separate systems. Roads connect to bridges. Bridges connect to railroads. Railroads depend on signals, power and communications. Airports depend on telecommunications. **Buildings depend on our network of networks.**

That gets to the bargain at the heart of construction season:
Construction done wrong can unexpectedly take transportation away. Construction done right sometimes has to take transportation away temporarily so it works better afterward.
We notice construction because it gets in our way. We notice maintenance because something is closed.
And we *really* notice when somebody hits the wrong wire.
After a long New Jersey construction season, winter can't come soon enough.

AND NOW .... YOUR NJ NEWS!

🚆 Portal North Bridge: The final cutover

Beginning October 11, NJ Transit will operate reduced service for about five weeks while Amtrak transfers the second and final track from the 116-year-old Portal Bridge to the new Portal North Bridge. Midtown Direct trains will be diverted to Hoboken on weekdays, with fewer trains running into Penn Station. **Why it matters:** A rough month for commuters, but the payoff is finally retiring one of the Northeast Corridor's most notorious bottlenecks. NJ Transit

---

🚇 Gateway: They're actually digging

On October 8, the first tunnel-boring machine for the Hudson Tunnel Project officially began mining from North Bergen into the Palisades. It marks the start of actual tunnel excavation on the New Jersey side of the Gateway project. **Why it matters:** After years of planning, lawsuits, funding battles and preparation, Gateway has reached a milestone everyone can understand: the tunnel is being dug. Source: Gateway Development Commission



✈️ One cut cable, hundreds of canceled flights

A construction crew working in New Jersey accidentally severed a backup fiber-optic cable serving an FAA air-traffic-control facility just as its primary communications system failed. Newark Liberty was hit especially hard, with hundreds of cancellations and widespread Northeast flight disruptions.
Why it matters: Modern transportation depends on infrastructure passengers never see. One damaged communications line helped disrupt one of the nation's busiest aviation regions, a reminder that construction mistakes can have consequences far beyond the work site. News 12 New Jersey

---

🚌 Hackensack bus terminal redevelopment gets derailed

Plans to replace Hackensack's aging bus terminal as part of a larger mixed-use development have stalled after millions were spent on planning. Rising construction costs and complications involving the property helped derail the transit portion of the project, while officials consider whether the housing component can still proceed. **Why it matters:** It is a very New Jersey combination of transit, real estate and construction economics, and an example of how escalating costs can threaten otherwise attractive transit-oriented development. NorthJersey.com

---

🚢 Belford ferry collision raises questions

The NY Waterway ferry *Molly Pitcher* struck part of the dock system while leaving Belford on October 6, shattering several lower-deck windows. No injuries were reported, but Monmouth County officials said they learned about the collision from passengers rather than the ferry operator and are seeking answers about how the incident was handled. **Why it matters:** Ferry service is an important alternative for Monmouth County commuters. Reliability, safety and communication matter if commuters are going to depend on it. News 12 New Jersey

---

🚢 South Amboy gets a permanent ferry terminal

South Amboy opened its new $31 million permanent ferry terminal on September 29, replacing the temporary floating facility used since Manhattan service began. Officials say ridership has grown to about 11,000 passengers per month. **Why it matters:** New Jersey continues building transportation alternatives that do not rely entirely on highways, PATH or the Hudson rail tunnels. News 12 New Jersey

---

🌳 NJ Transit's summer problem: Mother Nature

NJ Transit canceled 1,715 trains from June through August, slightly more than last summer. But weather-related and other "unpreventable" cancellations jumped from 288 to 657, while mechanical cancellations actually declined. One severe storm knocked down more than 50 trees along the Morris & Essex Line. **Why it matters:** Improving trains is only part of the reliability problem. Extreme heat, storms, trees and vulnerable infrastructure increasingly affect whether employees can get to work. New Jersey Monitor

---

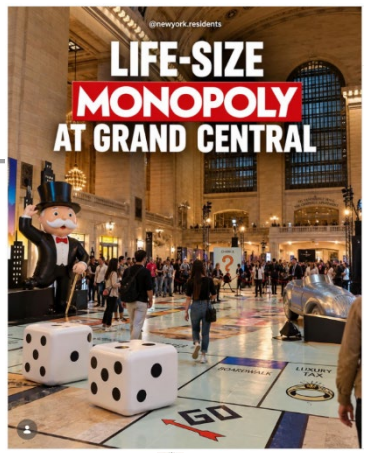
⛽ Fuel prices get a G7 intervention

The G7 agreed to release 100 million barrels of oil and refined fuels from emergency reserves after diesel and other transportation-fuel prices surged. A substantial portion of the diesel supply is being released quickly, with the balance spread over several months. **Why it matters:** Diesel affects trucking, deliveries, contractors, construction equipment and building-service fleets. Gasoline affects commuting, and jet fuel affects airline costs. Transportation inflation ultimately reaches commercial buildings in plenty of ways. AP News

---

🎲 Odds & Ends: Atlantic City takes over Grand Central

Visit Atlantic City transformed Grand Central Terminal into a life-sized Monopoly board from October 2–4, complete with giant dice and Mr. Monopoly. The promotion played off the famous connection between Monopoly's property names and Atlantic City streets. **Why it matters:** Transportation reporting cannot live on signal problems and construction delays alone. Sometimes New Jersey gets to invade Manhattan with a board game.



Glenn Waldorf, Bell Environmental Services, 973-924-9004, gwaldorf@bellenv.com

NJ GOT THUNDERSTRUCK

Nature's Dirty Deeds, Done Dirt Cheap.

In September, New Jersey seemed to be living through a rock-and-roll disaster movie.

Dinosaurs toppled in Atlantic City!

A shark went swimming through a flooded street on Long Beach Island!

Whole stretches of Jersey Shore beach disappeared under the nor'easter!

The Lobster House flooded in Cape May!

(Videos of the lobsters escaping were AI. Apparently, reality wasn't strange enough.)

Meanwhile, up at the Meadowlands:

Port-o-potties went sliding across the MetLife parking lot!

AC/DC got blown off its original date!

The Foo Fighters joined AC/DC on the rescheduled bill!

Marching bands got pushed out and were sent scrambling to compete in Randolph!

And in the middle of all this, Rutgers somehow won a football game?!?

Wait, in the aftermath, did the Giants take sole possession of first place with a 3-1 record?

All right, all right. We get the point.

Mother Nature shook New Jersey all weekend long.

The beaches will be replenished. The dunes will be rebuilt. The port-o-potties will even be carted off and cleaned.

And with the Foo Fighters suddenly part of the story:

♫ Times like these, you learn to fill again. ♫

♫ Times like these, you learn to dig again. ♫

Because in New Jersey, even the apocalypse eventually becomes a construction project.



WAIT! BEFORE YOU GO...

ONE LAST ATTEMPT TO MAKE YOU SMILE

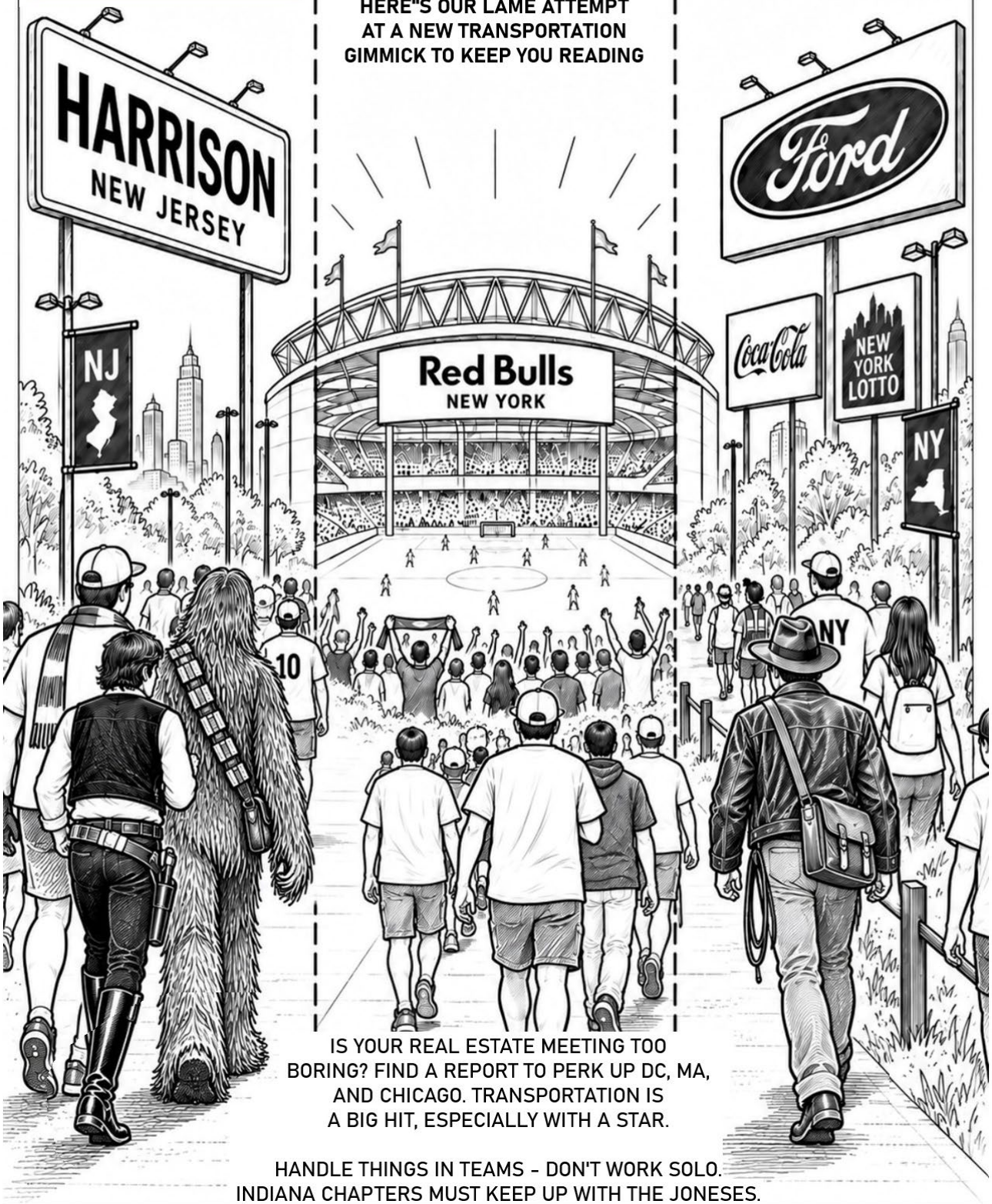
WITH A LITTLE FALL ENTERTAINMENT AND MAYBE EVEN A HALLOWEEN COSTUME IDEA

A FOLD PAGE OVER LEFT B FOLD BACK SO THAT "A" MEETS "B"

WHAT CAN MAKE A BORING MEETING INTO A BIG HIT?

FOLD IN THE PAGE TO FIND OUT.

HERE"S OUR LAME ATTEMPT AT A NEW TRANSPORTATION GIMMICK TO KEEP YOU READING



IS YOUR REAL ESTATE MEETING TOO BORING? FIND A REPORT TO PERK UP DC, MA, AND CHICAGO. TRANSPORTATION IS A BIG HIT, ESPECIALLY WITH A STAR.

HANDLE THINGS IN TEAMS - DON'T WORK SOLO. INDIANA CHAPTERS MUST KEEP UP WITH THE JONESES.

A short time ago on
the previous page....

FOLD IN GAG

October 2026

A FINAL ATTEMPT AT HUMOR

Did our fold-in actually work?

Too shy to try it?

No printer?

Didn't want to hurt the earth

for a cheap gag?

Scroll down and

May The Fold Be With You.


A B FOLD BACK SO THAT "A" MEETS "B"
WHAT CAN MAKE A BORING MEETING INTO A BIG HIT?
HARRISON
NEW JERSEY
Ford
NJ
Coca-Cola
NEW YORK LOTTO
NY
NY
10
BO MA,
HAN SOLO.
INDIANA JONESES.