MAKING THINGS HAPPEN IN NORTHEAST OHIO!

Instead of waiting for a miracle to happen (or, in this case, an Amtrak reroute), supporters from various on-line communities between Cleveland and Pittsburgh have formally decided to push harder for rail passenger service. This service would come in the form of an extended Amtrak PENNSYLVANIAN which currently operates between New York City and Pittsburgh on a daylight schedule. "Grassroots" support has come from the cities of Maple Heights, Bedford, Ravenna, Youngstown, Salem, and Sewickley (an affluent suburb of Pittsburgh). Much media coverage has occurred since last Summer, bringing in some active supports to our cause. Some have joined OARP. However, it must be noted that, without the hard work and dedication of officials in Ravenna and Youngstown, this project would simply not have occurred. The most prominent of these officials is Ravenna Councilman David Norris. Thanks to his work the groundswell of support from Ravenna’s business and political community has provided a solid base on which the other on-line communities can emulate — thanks to Dave! The City of Ravenna has set up a committee for the purpose of rallying support for an extended PENNSYLVANIAN and to gather data regarding the proposed extension. The "Pennsylvanian Committee" has been operating as an independent entity, comprised of participants from many on-line communities. However, the on-goings of the Committee have been assisted by OARP, the City of Ravenna, and the Ravenna Development Corporation.

At a Committee meeting on November 17th it was agreed that the group break into Sub-Committees, each one dealing with separate tasks. These sub-committees include: Bus Feeders; Project Costs; Political & Amtrak Relations; Contact On-Line Communities; and a Sub-Committee Board. Many OARP activists have been placed in leadership positions within this Committee. They include Howard Harding, Ken Prendergast, Bill Hutchison, Mark Carlson, John Ciccarelli, Jack Slanina, Daryl Gordon and Clinton Hobbs. If you live within the Cleveland-Pittsburgh Rail Corridor and would like to get involved with this Committee or work on one of the Sub-Committees, please contact Ken Prendergast in Kent.

According to OARP estimates, the costs for extending the PENNSYLVANIAN to Cleveland via Salem and Alliance (the most economical route) would be very reasonable. Once the Costs Sub-Committee’s work is finished, we will have a more detailed understanding of the financial side of this proposal. According to the recent letter from Amtrak’s President W. Graham Claytor, Jr., Amtrak will do a financial evaluation of extending the PENNSYLVANIAN to Cleveland. Amtrak’s evaluation may cover only the Salem-Alliance route. The Costs Sub-Committee will have to generate some cost data for the Youngstown route option. Additionally, Amtrak will be conducting a ridership study for the proposed PENNSYLVANIAN extension. (Continued...)
MAKING THINGS HAPPEN IN NORTHEAST OHIO (Continued) . . .

Amtrak says their ridership/revenue study should be completed by the middle of March. Meanwhile, grassroots support continues to build! When there is growing support, there are usually meetings! One notable one involved OARP's Doug Hudson, John Ciccarelli, Bill Hutchison, Ken Prendergast, Tom Anderson from the National Federation for the Blind, John Moliterno of the Youngstown Chamber of Commerce, Youngstown Councillor Al Chance, and Mayor Patrick Ungaro of Youngstown. Mayor Ungaro was informed that the city-owned B&ORR station could be turned into a rail passenger facility with an expenditure of about $100,000, which could be borne by the City. The Mayor said that a City expenditure of that magnitude would be "no problem -- we're already spending a lot of money on that station". The station itself is to become a restaurant as part of the Mahoning River Development Project. Mayor Ungaro indicated that, on his next trip to Washington, DC, he will try to arrange a meeting with Amtrak's Claytor. Unfortunately, we do not believe that Ohio's state government will take the initiative in this matter. Ohio has never seemed to be committed to improving Amtrak service. Until Ohio changes its tune, Amtrak will not waste valuable resources on a state that just doesn't care. We have to give them reasons to care. That's why we need coordinated "grassroots" support for an extension of Amtrak's PENNSYLVANIAN. If the decision-makers in Columbus (and in Harrisburg for that matter) see that there is extensive, broad-based desire for this passenger train service, they just might be willing to make the necessary funds available. Legislators from along the Cleveland-Pittsburgh route are becoming increasingly active in the on-gosings of the OARP-supported efforts. Once the tasks of the "Pennsylvanian Committee" are completed, we will be ready to take this proposal to the rest of the politicos in Columbus (and Harrisburg). An amendment may be drawn up to the 3-C Corridor bills to allow the state to contract with Amtrak for the extension of Amtrak's PENNSYLVANIAN.

On January 17th a meeting was held in Washington involving OARP's Ken Prendergast, Ross Capon of NARP, and Ira Silverman, John Prokopy and Nick Brockunier of Amtrak's Marketing Department. It was determined that the financial evaluation and ridership study that Amtrak is conducting is focused on the Salem-Alliance route option only, but that studies for the Youngstown route option might be done by Amtrak in the future, especially if enough on-line U.S. legislators inform the Amtrak Board that the service via Youngstown is preferred. Amtrak is studying the possibility of extending the PENNSYLVANIAN via Alliance without state support! They feel that if the projected ridership and revenues are substantial enough and the capital costs are low enough, Amtrak would extend the train on their own! Amtrak Marketing felt that the Cleveland-Pittsburgh language in the 3-C bills would only be necessary if their study indicates that the predicted ridership and revenue could not pay for the capital costs, or if the service operates via Youngstown. Amtrak is interested in station stops at Cleveland, suburban Cleveland, Ravenna, Alliance, Beaver Falls and, of course, Pittsburgh. Pennsylvania officials may be more sympathetic to the extension of the train if a new stop is located within their state. Amtrak Marketing is also interested in developing new Cleveland-to-Florida connections, with the possibility of establishing a dedicated bus between Harrisburg and Baltimore to accommodate the Florida passengers and maintain realistic connections with the Florida trains.

Lastly, a February 1st meeting at Youngstown's City Hall was hosted by Mayor Ungaro and included about 30 Youngstown area officials, plus 10 media representatives including two TV reporters. Mayor Ungaro reported he recently rode Amtrak's LAKE SHORE LIMITED from Cleveland to Chicago and back to attend a meeting. It was his first train ride since 1963 and he was very pleased with his train travel experience! So much so that he is working with area officials to assess where we are and what now needs to be done on a broad-based basis! Three cities are now willing to commit significant funding -- Lordstown, Youngstown and Ravenna. Lordstown wants a station stop developed in the Lordstown-Warren area. The City of Alliance will soon hold a meeting on the Cleveland-Pittsburgh passenger train proposal and we will report further developments in the next issue of the 6:53.

Again, we encourage all OARP members residing within this area to get involved actively if at all possible. Ken Prendergast is the one to make contact with. Consult the DIRECTORY in this issue of the 6:53.

We continue to WELCOME NEW MEMBERS who as members of The Sierra Club responded to OARP's ad in the November-December issue of The Ohio Sierra. People who care about the environment are also concerned with energy-efficient transportation and tend to favor modern passenger trains. We're going to run our ad once again in the March-April issue of The Ohio Sierra in hopes that more of our friends in The Sierra Club will also help us in the fight for modern passenger trains!
OARP’s "Midwinter" Meeting, NARP “Region Six” Annual Meeting to be held March 18
* Tour of Amtrak’s Beech Grove Maintenance Facility to be included!
* Featured speaker: NARP’s Assistant Director, Barry Williams!

Our friends at IndARP will host this year’s NARP Region Six (OH-IN-MI) Meeting, Saturday, March 18th, 1989, in Beech Grove (Indianapolis), Indiana. The meeting itself will be held at the Ramada Inn South in Beech Grove. The Ramada is located at 4514 South Emerson Avenue, at the South Emerson interchange of I-465 on the South-east side of Indianapolis. The Ramada is about one mile from Amtrak’s Beech Grove Maintenance Facility. Our attendance can make their own arrangements for overnight accommodations with the Ramada which offers attractive rates of $44.00 (single) and $46.00 (double). In order to receive these special low rates you must indicate that you will be attending the NARP Region Six Meeting. The deadline for making Ramada reservations is March 4th! Their phone number is (317) 787-3344. The cost of the NARP Region Six Meeting is $16.00 per person. This includes morning coffee and juice, a complete hot buffet lunch at noon and the meeting rooms for the day. Due to space limitations, the Amtrak Beech Grove Tour will be open only to those registered for the NARP Meeting!

IndARP will be pleased to provide transportation to/from Indianapolis Union Station and Indianapolis International Airport. Indicate specifics on your registration form. For further information contact: Phil McGeath [317] 898-1256

NARP meeting reservation deadline will be: March 11th, 1989!

OARP, MARP, and IndARP will hold state association meetings at the Ramada following the Beech Grove Tour. As always, OARP’s officers and regional coordinators will help organize carpools to Beech Grove on this day. We expect a very large attendance at this year’s regional meeting and, so that adequate arrangements can be made to accommodate everyone, we strongly urge you to strictly observe the registration deadlines!

Tentative Agenda:

8:15AM (EST)
Leave from the lobby of the Ramada to carpool to the Amtrak Facility front gate on Garstang Avenue (off Emerson Av.).

8:30-10:45AM
Guided Walking Tour of Amtrak Facility.

10:45-11:15AM
Coffee & Juice Break back at the Ramada.

11:15-12:00NM
OARP - MARP - Indarp State Association Meetings.

12:00-1:15PM
Hot Buffet Luncheon.

1:15-1:30PM
Break.

1:30-3:30PM
Feature Speaker, Barry Williams. Presentations by the NARP Board Members from Ohio, Indiana and Michigan.

3:30PM
Adjourn.

NARP Region Six Meeting Reservation Form
Reservation deadline is March 11th;
Please make your $16.00 check or money order payable to: IndARP mail to: IndARP, 2718 Todd Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46229.

Name:

Address:

City/State/ZIP:

Phone #:

Check which STATE meeting you’ll attend: [ ] OARP [ ] MARP [ ] IndARP
Sierra Club involvement in transportation issues is expanding in Ohio and across the country.

Jane Harf, State Government Liaison and Howard Harding, Vice President of OARP and also At-Large member of The Ohio Sierra Club's Chapter Executive Committee (RxCm) have been participating in meetings of a new, non-profit group which has been formed to promote passage of state legislation to provide for expanded rail passenger service within Ohio, beginning with the 3-C (Cleveland-Columbus-Cincinnati) Corridor. Howard Harding is one of three Trustees of the new, non-profit group while Jane Harf is helping former state legislator and Cleveland attorney Jim Betts to organize the group's meetings. Other participants include representatives of government and civic groups from communities along the route, and leaders of OARP. Ohio Senator H. Cooper Snyder (R-Hillsboro) has agreed to sponsor new legislation which the non-profit group develops. OARP has already offered draft legislation for consideration by the group. In northeastern Ohio, community groups have been organized to promote rail passenger service between Cleveland and Pittsburgh via Youngstown or Alliance. OARP and Sierra Club activists are participating in this effort also.

Nationally, Dr. John Holtzclaw, Chair of the Transportation Subcommittee of The Sierra Club's Urban Environment Committee (UEC), has just announced that his group has won approval of national Sierra Club leaders to seek funding for a multi-year campaign to reform Federal transportation funding. This "21st Century Public Transportation Campaign: UNTANGLE GRIDLOCK" is intended to organize Sierra Club members and coalitions across the country to support a national Sierra Club effort to get legislation passed which will finance construction of balanced, energy-efficient public transportation systems in all major urban areas, and to expand intercity public surface transportation. The Campaign proposes to fund this program by taxing motor vehicles for their full social, economic and environmental costs to society. Determination of these costs via a series of community studies is a high priority of the campaign. The proposed program would replace the expiring Highway Trust Fund.

For additional information about these transportation issues, contact Howard Harding, 489 Overwood Road, Akron 44313, [216] 867-5507.

OARP & SIERRA CLUB WORKING COOPERATIVELY ON TRANSPORTATION ISSUES FOR OHIOANS

AMTRAK FACING TOUGH BUDGET FIGHT... AGAIN! ——— by NARP Pres. John R. Martin


Soon after acknowledging our growing oil import problem -- a major argument for increased reliance on rail -- President Reagan released his FY '90 budget with: NO Amtrak funding, a huge cut in Federal transit funding ($1.6 billion in new budget authority vs. $3.3 billion for FY '89), a minor highway cut, big aviation and Coast Guard increases, and a transfer of $10 million in Amtrak FY '89 capital funding to local rail (freight) service assistance.

Marlin Fitzwater, spokesman for the new and old administrations, says the Bush budget will not differ on any "grand scale" from Reagan's. Where does this leave Amtrak and transit? Samuel K. Skinner, the next Secretary of Transportation, has superb credentials, but they may not help if "the ghost of David Stockman" still rules the Office of Management and Budget. Furthermore, it is unclear where the money will come from to offset restoration of Amtrak/transit funds. The "Gramm-Rudman" noose is tightening around the Federal budget and Bush's hands are already full with his own promises to increase spending (not for Amtrak/transit) and the growing S&L and nuclear weapons plants fiscal crises.

I am proud of NARP's role in getting Amtrak and transit into the environmentalists' "Blueprint" for the President-elect, including the eligibility of Amtrak for gasoline "fee" revenues. This is particularly timely since President-elect Bush has expressed great concern about environmental problems. Please remind your U.S. legislators that you favor increased Federal support for Amtrak and transit and oppose Reagan's Amtrak/transit proposals. If you can, please support NARP's presence in Washington as another tough budget fight begins. Contributions may be sent to NARP, 236 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Suite #603, Washington, DC 20002, [202] 546-1550.

OARP POLICY CHANGES... 1) TRAM (Travel Agency Member) DIRECTORY listings may now list a "WATS" number in lieu of local number. Listings will still be limited to ONE phone number. 2) News items or articles for the 6:53 MUST be submitted IN WRITTEN FORM. Follow up your "hot news" phone calls with written memo; or send photocopied newscaps from your local paper if you wish.
The situation at Central Union Terminal continues mostly on a downward spiral. The Conrail dispatcher's office has moved to Deerborn. The police department, a claims adjuster and an industrial representative are the only Conrail offices remaining in CUT. On the bright side...a snack bar employee told me that as long as Conrail freights continue to stop at CUT to change crews they will continue to operate the snack bar. With the police and the snack bar remaining in CUT, Amtrak will not be alone. How long this will continue, however, is anybody's guess.

There are off-and-on reports of Amtrak going to split shifts at Toledo so as to guarantee at least two personnel on duty at train times; and also as a "safety" factor if and when Amtrak becomes CUT's sole occupant. While two on duty at train times is good, revenue at Toledo might suffer since the ticket office would be closed during convenient afternoon and early evening hours. This is still another reason why Amtrak should be relocated to a new Toledo station as soon as possible.

Not much to report on the push for said new station. There are a few leads to follow up on, but the main problem appears to be Amtrak itself. They really don't seem to care that remaining in CUT will be very expensive for them. They say they would move into a new Toledo depot with pleasure, but that any such station would have to be 100% locally funded--that Amtrak cannot afford any money for new stations given their budget situation. But then we read in the latest NARP NEWS about the scheduled openings of new and refurbished stations in various cities -- big and small -- all over Amtrak's system. Funding sources, as reported by NARP, include various combinations of cities, states, and contracting railroads, plus, in every instance, Amtrak funding! It's hard to stay serious about supporting Amtrak here when I read things like that. The Toledo Blade has a new editor, Thomas Walton. Tom and I are long-time friends, going back to grade school days. Since Tom took over January first, the Blade has run several very pro-Amtrak editorials. They have supported 3-C Corridor conventional service and have been sharply critical of high-speed rail and continued funding thereof. The Blade has condemned Mr. Reagan's final no-money-for-Amtrak budget proposal, referring to Amtrak and mass-transit as vital to America's transportation needs. Good news from Conrail! They recently announced they will withdraw, at least for now, petitions to abandon the ex-PRR Carrothers Branch south of Tiffin. Conrail has indicated willingness to assist in attracting new industries along this line, which has been used in the past as an emergency detour route for Amtrak's LAKE SHORE, BROADWAY, and CAPITOL LIMITEDS. I'm told that some OARP members have been shocked by news of Conrail's closing of the busy Maumee River drawbridge at Toledo, fearing its effect on Amtrak and the heavy amount of rail freight traffic. Fear not, folks! The bridge IS indeed closed -- but to navigation! The trains keep rolling right along. This is routine for this time of year, with Conrail performing maintenance on the span that cannot be done during the busy Great Lakes shipping season.

CAN YOU HELP? We are looking for a member of OARP who would be willing to underwrite the cost of printing our 1989 OARP OHIO LEGISLATIVE DIRECTORIES. We've ordered 2,000 of these and the cost will be $285.00. In the past we've easily been able to put almost all 2,000 copies into good use with distribution to our members and, via our members and display opportunities, to others. If YOU can help OARP by underwriting the specific cost of printing these LEGISLATIVE DIRECTORIES, please contact your OARP Pres. Tom Pulisifer or Government Affairs Director Manfred Orlov as soon as possible. Thank you!
One of the new political developments within the last few months has been the formation of a new, volunteer political action committee for Ohio passenger train legislation. Cleveland attorney Jim Betts, himself a former State legislator, is chairing the group of city, chamber, consumer, and state-government representatives. Purpose of the Committee is to analyze and update legislation for conventional-speed rail, and to act with unity in support of that which is introduced. State Sen. H. Cooper Snyder (R-Hillsboro) has agreed to introduce another 3-C Corridor bill with the understanding that it will have greater business and chamber backing than the former one, with the help of this newly-incorporated "ALL ABOARD, OHIO!" Committee. But it will not be easy. Unlike decision-makers in other states, there is still the perception throughout Ohio that passenger rail service is not needed at all, and that those requesting the state to become involved with passenger trains are nothing but nostalgic train buffs and/or state contract seekers. The new Committee members, however, are all serious, dedicated individuals who believe in modern passenger rail systems. We are meeting every few weeks in Columbus to quickly introduce a new bill reflecting our corporate thoughts and experience. Succeeding issues of your 6:53 will feature excerpts and details of the new legislation including possible inclusion of the Cleveland-Pittsburgh extension being featured elsewhere in this issue. Lastly, our new 1989 OARP OHIO LEGISLATIVE DIRECTORIES are expected soon from the printer. We will mail one of these handy little reference guides to every OARP member residing in Ohio. Should you desire additional copies for local distribution, kindly request them.

CAN YOU HELP? OARP is looking for a member who would be willing to underwrite the $187.50 postage cost for us to mail our new 1989 OARP OHIO LEGISLATIVE DIRECTORY to our membership in Ohio. If YOU are willing, contact OARP Pres. Tom Pulsifer or OARP Govt. Affairs Dir. Manfred Orlow as soon as possible.
JOIN and help get Ohio moving on modern passenger trains! OARP is NOT another "railfan club". We are rail transportation advocates. OARP is the statewide voice of concerned citizens working together to help achieve better rail passenger services. We're over 700 strong and we are moving forward together for better rail transportation for Ohio. We invite you to get on board! A new membership in OARP is just $15 for your first year; $20 thereafter. CHECK HERE [ ] if you can be active in the ongoing work of your OARP!

Name: BILL McTAGGART
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Mail this entire page with your check/money order made payable to: OARP MEMBERSHIP SERVICES, P.O. BOX 653, XENIA, OH 45385

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UPCOMING OARP MEETINGS:
OARP/MARP/IndARP/NARP REGION 6
JOINT MEETING
on SATURDAY, MARCH 18th, 1989
at BLEECH GROVE (Indianapolis), IN
RAMADA INN, S. Emerson Ave. at I-465
hosted by IndARP and including a tour of AMTRAK's BLEECH GROVE MAINTENANCE FACILITY.
Guest Speaker: NARP's BARRY WILLIAMS

OARP 1989 ANNUAL MEETING
MAY 1989
Guest Speaker: OWEN HARDY, Editor & Publisher, The International Railway Traveler
in DAYTON date to be announced

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