

the 6:53

AUGUST 1989

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

ISSUE #34

CONFRONTING THE END OF A LINE

---- by OARP President Tom Pulsifer

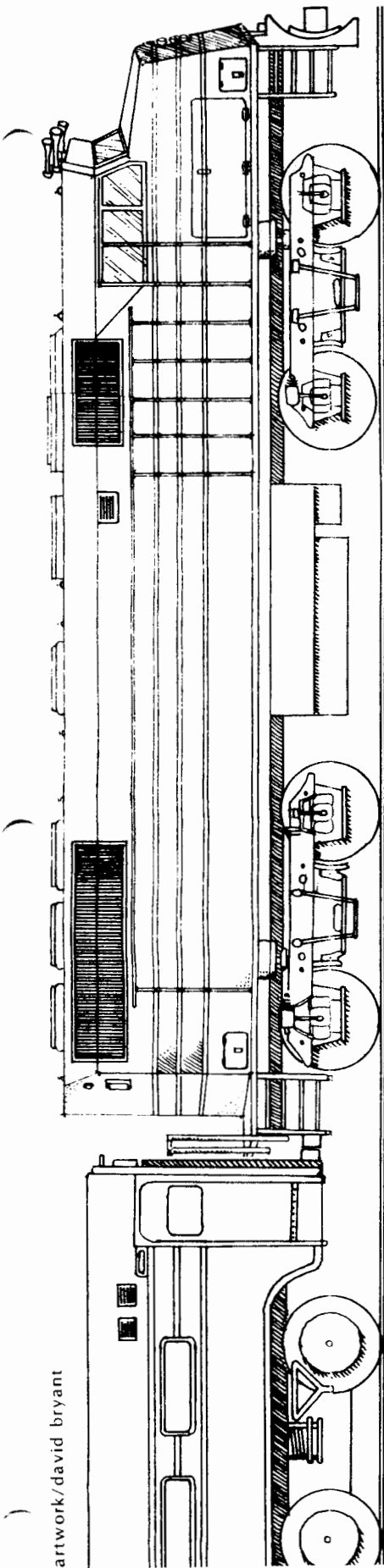
Fort Wayne 20,000, Lima 16,000, Canton 13,000, Crestline 8,000. These four stations handled some 57,000 Amtrak passengers last year. Now, through no fault of the train users, their trains may be taken away -- probably for good!

Amtrak and Conrail are presently locked in off-and-on negotiations upon which rests the future of the Fort Wayne Line, the direct former mainline of the Pennsylvania Railroad between Pittsburgh and Chicago and today's route of Amtrak's BROADWAY and CAPITOL LIMITED passenger trains.

At the core of the matter is a segment of 19.2 miles of line between Gary and Valparaiso. Conrail claims Amtrak should bear the full cost of all maintenance expense on this portion of line because Conrail says they no longer run freights over this segment. Conrail has been sending Amtrak a monthly bill of \$30,000 for track maintenance and has done this since March of 1988. Thus far, Amtrak has refused to pay these bills and claims Conrail HAS used the track for freight trains, and therefore why should Amtrak pay for all the maintenance costs. Although Conrail continues to bill Amtrak, the bill collectors have not yet been sent. Amtrak firmly maintains it will reroute its passenger trains onto other lines before it will pay Conrail one dime of disputed line maintenance costs. Amtrak and Conrail may get what they want -- but the Fort Wayne Line passengers may get left at the end of the line.

A CAPITOL LIMITED passenger riding up in the front seat of the dome car west of Crestline gets a nice view of Midwest America. The train passes through quaint little towns and folks wave back from farmhouse porches. Quick eyes will spot deer in the cornfields and clearings of western Ohio. Watch for Mr. Redenbacher's popcorn works east of Valparaiso and that great view, especially on a clear day, when the Chicago skyscrapers hove into sight as the train moves along a stretch of Lake Michigan shore just west of Gary.

This writer sits up there in the dome and gets perhaps a more realistic view of why the Fort Wayne Line is being pushed on towards its end of useful service. The former double-tracked line is now single-tracked. The block signals are farther apart and passing sidings are few. The only noticeable freight activity is observed near Lima, at Fort Wayne's old Piqua Road Yard, and near Columbia City. No freight trains are met or passed. Most of the sidings and spurs to local industries in those "quaint little towns" have been torn up and in many cases the industries



are also gone. Remaining clusters of rail shippers on the route are disturbingly close to other intersecting rail lines that could provide service just about as well. Remember ALL those freight trains that once bisected the likes of Bucyrus and Delphos and Plymouth, day and night, not too long ago? ALL through traffic has been diverted because the railroad says it's more cost effective to run ALL your trains on ONE mainline; in this case it's the former NYCRR route through Elkhart, Toledo and Cleveland. You just do NOT maintain a second, parallel, alternate route. Not today. So, between Gary and Crestline 256 miles of railroad line see only Amtrak's CAPITOL and BROADWAY each way daily, the CALUMET commuter run on weekdays west of Valparaiso, and occasional Conrail local freights and no freight west of Valparaiso.

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Amtrak could legally insist that its passenger trains remain on the Fort Wayne Line until 1996 when Amtrak's original contracts with the nation's freight railroads will expire. But Conrail only has to maintain the rails for Amtrak speeds until 1991. After that, Amtrak would have to pay to maintain the tracks on the Fort Wayne Line above what is adequate for Conrail's local freight trains.

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So, Amtrak is looking at alternatives. And OARP hears that Conrail may be helping force the alternatives. Is Conrail really making a deal; that they will pay for installing that crossover track connection at the east end of Cleveland's Lakefront Amtrak Station in return for getting Amtrak off the Fort Wayne Line? Remember; Conrail doesn't mind if you want to ride Amtrak. Just don't ride out of Canton, Crestline, Lima, Fort Wayne, Warsaw, Valparaiso or the CALUMET's commuter stops! Drive away the business. Tear up the tracks. Out of sight. Out of mind.

Perhaps one of the western railroads will "save" the Fort Wayne Line for direct access to the East Coast. Don't hold your breath.

The prevalent alternatives to passenger trains on the Fort Wayne Line include the innovative and the absurd. The CAPITOL will probably go from Pittsburgh to Cleveland then west to Chicago on the same route as Amtrak's LAKE SHORE LIMITED. The CALUMET will probably disappear unless the regional transportation agency (NICTD) assumes control and develops this commute route. The fate of the BROADWAY? Well, Amtrak indicates it prefers to run it from Pittsburgh west to Chicago on the CSX (ex-B&O) mainline via Youngstown and Akron with added unmanned station stops at Fostoria, Defiance, and Garrett or Auburn. No matter that this "new" route closely parallels the existing LAKE SHORE route for 300 or so miles and that these two lines are no more than 30 miles apart from each other. No matter that once you go west of Akron the on-line population (people = passengers) is weak. No matter that the hardy train-riding folks from Columbus and Dayton, who presently drive to Lima and Crestline to catch their trains, will think long and hard before extending the shuttle trek to Fostoria or Defiance for the same purpose.

Should we say, "Gee! Wisdom!" Or should we say, "Gee whiz! Dumb!"

To keep Fort Wayne on-line would involve a second railroad and dubious convoluted interchanges at Fostoria or Leipsic (via Deshler) and at Grand Crossing near Chicago. Meanwhile, Amtrak's Fort Wayne depot continues to disintegrate. Amtrak is not going to fix it if the trains go elsewhere. The station scouts have already scoured the CSX line to Chicago. This complex dilemma will not be solved by quick fix solutions. Will we, the passengers, again be left at the end of a rail line?

Our friends at IndARP will host a meeting at Fort Wayne on Saturday, October 14, with the stated focus to be on the future of rail passenger service in and through Fort Wayne. The Fort Wayne Line dilemma is Ohio's dilemma as well and I would encourage concerned OARP activists to register and attend this important symposium. Meeting details as this issue goes to press are tentative. I suggest that you contact Phil McGeath, President, IndARP, 2718 Todda Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46229. Call Phil at 317/898-1256, or John Clark at 317/842-7978 to register.

GREAT NEWS FOR THE QUEEN CITY — AMTRAK WILL RETURN TO CINCINNATI'S UNION TERMINAL

Late in July OARP understands that several Amtrak officials spent an entire day inspecting Cincinnati's historic Union Terminal and the great news was made official on August 8th that Amtrak is close to reaching a negotiated agreement with the City of Cincinnati and the Museum Center Foundation to return passenger train service to the 1932 Art Deco railroad station. Current plans are for passengers to reach the trains via the massive rotunda, with an alternate entranceway provided off Kenner Street. Costs to renovate the portions of CUT required for Amtrak's use are estimated at \$500,000. OARP understands that CSX Transportation will take care of all or a good part of this cost. CSX will benefit from the move as it will be able to handle the CARDINAL as well as possible future train services as through moves. Amtrak trains would no longer be required to make the time consuming (30 minutes) back-up move in and out of the present Amtrak depot on River Road. Part of the Union Terminal project is slated to be open to the public by the end of 1990. The complete Museum Center is set to open in 1991. The Amtrak station at CUT may open earlier; but probably not before mid-1990. The time saved by eliminating the CARDINAL's back-up moves at Cincinnati will be "shifted" to help cover a proposed rerouting of this train in Virginia which will also occur sometime in 1990.

OARP'S MIDSUMMER YOUNGSTOWN MEETING A SUCCESS

Great weather cooperated with a great turnout for our 1989 Mid-Summer OARP Meeting at the Ramada Inn in Youngstown on July 15th. We had 51 in attendance for the morning OARP business meeting and buffet, then 10 more came in for the afternoon session. The entire afternoon was organized and conducted by Ken Prendergast and focused on the push for Amtrak service in the Cleveland-Youngstown-Pittsburgh Corridor. Speakers included Jay Hrechun, business owner from Ambridge, PA; George R. White, Vice President-Research at The University of Pittsburgh; Edna Pincham, representing Mayor Patrick Ungaro of Youngstown; Ron Barnhart, Planning & Zoning Administrator for the Village of Lordstown; and Bob Abraham and Larry Joyce, both members of the Board of the Keystone Association of Railroad Passengers. The mood for the day was decidedly upbeat and positive. We were able to adjourn early which allowed John Ciccarelli to organize an impromptu carpool tour to the former B&ORR passenger depot which the City of Youngstown is helping restore for business use. Our morning OARP session was devoted mainly to information updates on various concerns. The appointment of Dan Innis as Columbus Regional Coordinator was approved by the members. Mark Adamcik reported on Cleveland RTA matters (He serves on RTA's citizen advisory board.) and Bill Hutchison reported on his recent meeting with officers and members of the Empire State Passengers Association in efforts to work cooperatively on train service improvements in the Buffalo-Cleveland Corridor. John Ciccarelli and Ken Prendergast, along with Doug Hudson, Daryl Gordon and Jack Slanina were thanked for all their fine efforts in various ways to arrange and organize our Midsummer Meeting.

OARP members are sending in their TRAIN & STATION REPORTS from Summer trips. A number of our travelers are finding much less than desirable conditions on Amtrak this Summer. Main complaints are... overcrowding, indifferent car attendants, inconsistent handling of situations when things go wrong, equipment breakdowns. However, not all the reports are negative. Some have had very good experiences. We do find people tend to report more frequently when they've got a gripe. We ask our members to fill out report forms on ALL their train trips. Use the order page in the back of this issue to request some forms for your use when you travel by train.

THE CLEVELAND - PITTSBURGH CORRIDOR
GOOD NEWS... ..AND BAD NEWS

---- by Ken Prendergast
OARP's CLE-PIT Special Project Director

What's the story on the Amtrak study for the extension of the PENNSYLVANIAN to Cleveland? Well, there is both good news and bad news. First, the good news. The study is done. Now, the bad news. Amtrak won't release this study to the public. However, OARP's Bill Hutchison, who has maintained a good working relationship with Cong. Dennis Eckart's office in Mentor, has informed me that Rep. Eckart will ask Amtrak to release this study.

OARP understands that Amtrak may be releasing a more generalized version of the study. Amtrak's reluctance to releasing the study is due in part to their negotiations with Conrail for the use of their tracks between Pittsburgh and Cleveland. Amtrak's negotiations with freight railroads are very sensitive. Any information contained in the study may harm Amtrak's negotiating position.

What does Amtrak need from Conrail? Two things. First -- permission to run the PENNSYLVANIAN extension from Pittsburgh to Cleveland and to reroute the CAPITOL LIMITED from Pittsburgh to Cleveland to Chicago via the LAKE SHORE LIMITED route through Toledo. In the last issue I reported that Conrail had a problem with operating both passenger trains on the Cleveland - Alliance segment. This is no longer an issue. Conrail seems willing to operate both trains.

The second issue that needs to be grappled with -- Amtrak needs a track connection east of the Cleveland Amtrak Depot to avoid having to make back-up moves on a busy railroad mainline. Neither Amtrak nor Conrail want to pay for the connection. Negotiations are now on hold between the two parties. (See also the Fort Wayne Line dilemma elsewhere in this issue.) Rerouting the CAPITOL via Cleveland would add approximately one hour to the Chicago - Washington schedule. Cutting the added time for a back-up move at Cleveland is a higher priority for the CAPITOL reroute than it is for the PENNSYLVANIAN extension. Estimated cost for this track connection is about \$½ million.

Despite the recent economic hardships faced by the on-line communities in the CLE-PIT Corridor, they are ready and willing to provide station facilities at their own expense. Amtrak Marketing has indicated that they would like to see intermediate stations at:

Southeast Suburban Cleveland (Maple Heights or Bedford)

Ravenna

Alliance

Beaver Falls

Most of these communities have been financially prepared by OARP's efforts to provide an Amtrak station when the time comes. Each city is to be commended for committing local resources to a project that they feel would be very positive for their communities.

Along those same lines, most on-line communities on both route options (via Alliance and via Youngstown) have been asked by OARP to contribute grant money to offset expenses being generated by our CLE-PIT Corridor Special Project. The very first grant was approved on June 19th; \$4,000.00 from The Village of Lordstown! Second, on July 5th, an initial grant of \$100.00 was contributed by A&M Transit Lines of Alliance, which says it would like to provide connecting bus/van services from the Amtrak stations to off-line destinations such as Canton, Akron, Youngstown, and Sea World/Geauga Lake. Most recently, on July 24th, Ravenna contributed \$500.00 to OARP! Thank you; Lordstown, A&M Transit, and Ravenna! Additional contribution requests are pending in the Youngstown City Council and at A&M Transit. Other potential funding sources will be asked to contribute money to the CLE-PIT Special Project Fund.

OARP CLE-PIT Project tasks have already begun. These include: a monthly newsletter being sent to various on-line organizations, corporations and individuals; education of the public via newspaper ads; a brochure; a video; and more coordination and contact with elected officials and other decision-makers.

Finally, I would like to personally thank all of you who attended and contributed to the joint OARP/Keystone ARP Summer Meeting in Youngstown on July 15th. The highlight of the meeting was George R. White's presentation on interfacing the PENNSYLVANIAN extension with the USAir "hub" at Pittsburgh's International Air-

port. Mr. White is Vice-President of Research at the University of Pittsburgh. What he presented was the establishment of a train station at Sewickley, PA, where interconnecting passengers would take a short bus ride to the Airport's main terminal. A myriad of USAir flights arrive and depart the Airport at about the same time the PENNSYLVANIAN passenger train would be rolling through Sewickley. As Mr. White puts it, "It's a beautiful, natural fit!" I think his proposal has merit and that Amtrak should look into it.

Our meeting in Youngstown helped us obtain something that has eluded us thus far -- support from the City of New Castle, PA. The lack of support from New Castle was a topic of discussion at our meeting. A reporter from the Youngstown Vindicator covered our meeting in the following day's paper. The headline read... "New Castle Is Crucial To The Extension Of Rail Line Through Area, Expert Says". That story encouraged New Castle to respond! Five days later, the Vindicator headline read... "New Castle 'Interested' In Rail Line". In the article, Mayor Richard A. Christofer of New Castle was quoted as saying "New Castle is extremely interested in Amtrak."

Thank you, Vindicator! As a follow-up, OARP representatives Ken Prendergast and John Ciccarelli, along with Jay Hrechun of Ambridge, PA, met with Mayor Christofer on August 8th. Since then, New Castle officials have taken charge in western Pennsylvania! What a fantastic turnaround! More updates in the next issue of the 6:53.

CHANGES... We welcome DAN INNIS as OARP's new Regional Coordinator for Columbus, succeeding Chuck Young. DAN has also been appointed as OARP's new Government Affairs Director, succeeding Manfred Orlow who will continue to serve as our 3-C Corridor Special Project Director and will also be coordinating development activities for OARP.

DAVE DAWSON has been appointed to succeed John Wilson as Regional Coordinator for the Hamilton-Middletown area and continues to serve also as our official Amtrak Liaison (rumor checker-outer). As OARP leadership changes in the months ahead, we're working also on other realignments to make our Regional Coordinator network work efficiently for all. We still have a vacancy for the Sandusky area and anticipate changes for the Springfield area. A Kentucky member has offered to serve as our Ohio Valley Regional Coordinator and to effect this we must amend our Constitution at the Fall Meeting. More on these matters in the next issue of the 6:53.

AND CORRECTIONS... In our last issue our OhioDOT Rail Division friends Lou Jannazo and Barbara Brown were credited with the drafting of Senate Joint Resolution #8. Credit for this should have gone to Greg Kostelac who is the Executive Director of the Ohio High Speed Rail Authority (OHSRA).

DEDICATED DIRECTORS Beginning in May, your OARP Board of Directors has been meeting monthly so that an orderly transition of OARP leadership may be effected when we hold our "Annual Meeting" (Elections) this November 4th in Columbus. In addition to Board Meetings preceding our Dayton Meeting on May 20th and Youngstown Meeting on July 15th, your Board members have taken the time to travel to and meet at Delaware on June 24th and August 19th. Another meeting is tentatively planned for sometime in October. Your elected Board members deserve a fine pat-on-the-back for their devotion to duty -- attendance at these special meetings has been excellent! The August meeting was assisted with the skills of professional facilitator Edy Seehafer of Bexley who came to assist us through the Ohio Sierra Club's Grassroots Effectiveness Program. A small donation was sent to the Ohio Sierra Club in return for the assistance provided to OARP by Edy Seehafer. Thanks also to Howard Harding for making the arrangements for the meeting facilitator.

COVER PHOTO: The eastbound CAPITOL LIMITED encounters some great scenery in daylight from east of Pittsburgh all the way to Washington, DC. And, there's a dome car for "up top" viewing of the passing scene. In this Amtrak photo we see the eastbound CAPITOL along the upper reaches of the Youghiogheny River near Confluence, PA. Unfortunately for sightseeing, the westbound CAPITOL traverses this area after dark. The tracks are those of the CSX (B&O) main.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION #8 -- A STATUS REPORT: SJR #8 has been introduced by Sen. H. Cooper Snyder and at this writing awaits a hearing, likely in Sen. Oelslager's Highways & Transportation Committee, prior to movement to the floor for a vote by the entire Ohio Senate. This resolution, important to us, provides for planning for conventional-speed intercity rail passenger trains for Ohio. A hearing may be scheduled on SJR #8 fairly soon. In addition to Sen. Snyder, there are 7 co-sponsors already signed-on: Sens. Robert J. Boggs, Robert L. Burch, Linda J. Furney, Charles E. Henry, Jan Michael Long, Robert D. Nettle, Paul E. Pfeifer. We have identified the following Ohio Senators as potentially crucial to the success of SJR #8: Sens. William F. Bowen, Charles L. Butts, Richard H. Finan, Lee I. Fisher, M. Ben Gaeth, Theodore M. Gray, Charles F. Horn, Betty D. Montgomery, Robert W. Ney, W. Scott Oelslager, Roy L. Ray, Gary C. Suhadolnik, Eugene J. Watts, Neal F. Zimmers, Jr. If one of these Senators represents YOU, please make contact (letter or phone) in support of conventional intercity passenger trains for Ohio and a favorable vote on SJR #8. The remaining members of the Ohio Senate should also be contacted for reassurance that there ARE constituents out there who want to go by intercity passenger trains in Ohio: Sens. Stanley J. Aronoff, Eugene Branstool, Robert R. Cupp, Grace L. Drake, David L. Hobson, Barry Levey, Harry Meshel, Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr., Dick Schafrath, Michael R. White, Alan J. Zaleski. Encourage YOUR Senator, if not signed-on SJR #8, to become a co-sponsor of this resolution. It would be best if over half of the Senate (17 or more Senators) could be listed as co-sponsors of this legislation.

B A G G A G E & E X P R E S S

FRA administrator Gilbert Carmichael told the National Conference of State Railway Officials, meeting August 16 at the Westin Hotel in Cincinnati, that "...gridlock on America's highways and at airports means the nation must turn to rail transit to move people...", and that "rail passenger service is on the threshold of a tremendous breakthrough". OARP's MIKE WEBER was able to attend a few of the NCSRO sessions. ¶¶¶¶ Thanks, Joyce Kimbler Cooper, for the nice feature write-up about OARP which appeared in The Columbus Daily Reporter, a business newspaper, on July 14th. ¶¶¶¶ OARP member DAVE SHREINER made the "Opinion" section of USA TODAY on July 7th with a comment on US DOT Secretary Skinner's "ignorance" of rail to help decrease highway and airport overcrowding. ¶¶¶¶ Amtrak and Harrah's Marina Hotel Casino have implemented an exclusive bonus program for passengers on Amtrak's ATLANTIC CITY EXPRESS trains. ¶¶¶¶ Wisconsin's new state budget contains \$1.1 million for a 28-month subsidy of two additional Amtrak trains between Chicago and Milwaukee, thus inaugurating the first state-supported 403(b) passenger service in Wisconsin's history. [If it can run in Wisconsin, why not in Ohio?] ¶¶¶¶ OARP's KEN PRENDERGAST has been published again! The August 12th Plain Dealer carried his latest op-ed, "City (Cleveland) Could Care More For Amtrak". ¶¶¶¶ We have learned of the death of longtime member MORTON GOETTING of Dayton and convey our sincere sympathy to his family. ¶¶¶¶ Thanks, Doug Trites of Unit Rail Anchor Company for providing OARP's officers, coordinators and board members with copies of the 1989 Railroader's Guide To Washington. ¶¶¶¶ OhioDOT's Rail Division has published its first OHIO RAIL MAP available to the public. The full-color map displays all rail lines in Ohio including all the shortlines and regional carriers and symbols denote approximate levels of tonnage handled on each line. You may request a copy of this new OHIO RAIL MAP by writing the OhioDOT, Division of Rail Transportation, P.O. Box 899, Columbus 43216-0899. ¶¶¶¶ Thanks to notification to OARP from Ohio DOT's Rail Division, we were able to participate in the USDOT Policy Development Outreach hearing in Cleveland on August 3rd. USDOT is facilitating public participation in the development of a National Transportation Policy, scheduled for completion in early 1990. OARP's HOWARD HARDING delivered brief testimony at the Cleveland hearing, then coordinated an official written statement from OARP which was submitted to the USDOT prior to the stated September 1st deadline. A series of 32 public hearings was scheduled in various cities nationwide. ¶¶¶¶ CAPITOL LIMITED schedule change for October 29th -- the eastbound train will run about 20 minutes earlier from Chicago -- the westbound train will run about 20 minutes later into Chicago. This is the only change affecting any of Amtrak's trains serving Ohio at this time. ¶¶¶¶ Despite mounting opposition from Canadians from all Provinces, and intense efforts by Transport 2000 Canada (NARP's Canadian counterpart), it appears that the anti-passenger train Canadian government will force VIA RAIL CANADA to begin to dismantle many long-haul routes from its transcontinental rail system beginning in January 1990 due to severe budgetary limitations. OARP ADVISES; ARRANGE TO RIDE THE LONG-DISTANCE CANADIAN TRAINS NOW! The VIA RAIL "system" of the future MAY include only the Ontario-Quebec Corridor services and isolated rural routes where transportation alternatives are unavailable. RIDE VIA RAIL WHILE YOU CAN!

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DIRECTORY of THE OHIO ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS, INC. (OARP)

Updated: August 30, 1989

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OHIO VALLEY	(vacancy)	

National Association of Railroad Passengers/NARP PASSENGER RAILNEWS HOTLINE (evening-weekend) 202/546-1551
236 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Suite #603, Washington, DC 20002 Ross Capon, Exec. Director 202/546-1550
OHIO NARP Region 6 Directors: Howard Harding (see above), Mike Weber (see above), and Bill Glasser, 3815 Ashwood Drive, N.W., Canton 44708 216/478-1003

OARP's DAYTON OFFICE (M. Orlow) is generally open weekdays 9am-5pm for your convenience 513/294-0718
This location is equipped with an answering machine should you wish to leave a message for OARP.

the 6:53

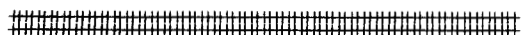


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"the 6:53" is the official bi-monthly publication of THE OHIO ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS, INC., a not for profit educational organization of some 700+ concerned citizens working on a volunteer basis to PROMOTE TRAVEL BY TRAIN and to HELP WORK FOR IMPROVED AND EXPANDED RAIL PASSENGER SERVICES IN AND THROUGH OHIO. The work of OARP is supported through membership dues and by extra donations of time, talents and dollars by our members and friends. JOIN OARP NOW and HELP OARP FIGHT FOR THE RAIL TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVE! Annual dues are \$15 (min.) for NEW members and \$20 (min.) for all renewals. Look for the handy membership application/materials order form printed in this issue. — ALL ABOARD!



UPCOMING OARP MEETINGS:

OARP FALL MEETING / ANNUAL MEETING
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4th, 1989
RADISSON HOTEL COLUMBUS NORTH
I-71 at Morse Road Exit — in COLUMBUS

Guest Speakers: BARB VOSMIK / Amtrak Sales
and JEROME PIER / ANF Industrie
The Turbotrain Manufacturer

Watch for complete details in the OCTOBER issue of the 6:53 - coming soon your way!

Deadline for OCTOBER issue: 09-15-89

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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