

the 6:53

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OHIO ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

Issue # 96

AMTRAK AT AGE TWENTY!

Observations on Amtrak at 20 by J. Howard Harding, OARP President

My adult rail travel involvement began via a 1964 European trip on trains between Heidelberg and Ludwigshafen, and Munich and Salzburg. Nine years later, on our second anniversary, my wife and I used a variety of trains between Vienna, Venice and Luxembourg via the Dolomite mountains, northern Italy, Switzerland and the Rhine valley. The next year we took Amtrak from Columbus to St. Louis, then to Chicago and back to Canton. The contrast with our European experience was dramatic!

Our first U.S. rail journey began via Greyhound bus to Columbus because Akron had no train service. That inauspicious beginning was followed by a midnight introduction to the crumbling ruin of Columbus Union Station. Our overnight "coach" turned out to be a refugee parlor car from New York City which doubled as a meat locker for the night and an oven the next day. Our pace across Indiana would have been faster on foot, and more comfortable in a steam room. St. Louis Union Station was in better condition than CUS, just as are the Parthenon of Athens is in better condition than the temples of Pompeii!

Our journey from St. Louis to Chicago, after an extra day's wait for its infrequent schedule, was via a sleek new French Turboliner, still equipped with European-style seats and glass compartment partitions. Although much faster than the "National Disgrace" we took into St. Louis, the Turboliner was unable to demonstrate its full speed potential, courtesy of the trackage which appeared in a race with parallel U.S. 66 to see which would crumble faster.

After a day in Chicago, we boarded the BROADWAY LIMITED with reserved seat tickets, only to find no such seat numbers existed in the assigned car. As the conductor from Penn-Central's old school remarked, it was a common, widespread frustration. Nobody knew then from one day to the next which or how many cars would actually be on any given train, so assigned seat numbers were irrelevant. But, there were usually far more seats than people, so the problem was minor.

Subsequent trips to Chicago, Boston, Washington, two transcontinental trips and two round trips to Florida, demonstrated Amtrak's uneven progress. On a Superliner-equipped SUNSET LIMITED across Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, we enjoyed selections from a large, multi-page menu, served with old-style grace and charm. Coming home on that same trip, we struggled

(continued on next page)

An Exclusive to "the 6:53"

AMTRAK PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE by Charles W. Hayward, Vice-President - Finance and Administration, National Railroad Passenger Corp. (Amtrak)

During its first ten years Amtrak suffered under the burden of old worn-out equipment, atrocious maintenance facilities and personnel who often considered passengers as a bother rather than their only reason for being. In 1981 revenues covered less than 50% of cash expenses.

Ten years later revenues covered over 80% of cash expenses. Was this the result of financial legerdemain, luck or serious hard work? To those in the know, it was clearly serious hard work coupled with the generosity of the Congress in providing over \$1 billion for capital improvement and, for good measure, a little bit of luck in the timing.

Amtrak's commitment to improving its revenue-to-cost ratio was made at the time a number of prior cost-saving and revenue-enhancing initiatives were coming to fruition. Delivery of our Amfleet and Superliner equipment was completed, the locomotive fleet was new, our HEP conversion program had rid the system expensive to maintain and poor performing steam equipment replacing it with renovated, passenger friendly, electric heated and air-conditioned cars. The NECIP program was essentially completed and had provided a comfortable, safe, high speed railroad. Amtrak's labor forces had made a generous 12% wage concession. Several major maintenance facilities had been upgraded. Subsequently, takeover of train and engine crews with an agreed provision for an 8 hour work day further added to cost savings. A vast expansion of our travel agent network enabled us to reach many more potential travellers than in prior times. On the expense side these initiatives helped to hold cost increases over the second decade to an average of 5% per year.

Concurrently, the end of the recession coupled with the aforesaid equipment improvements, sales improvements and all out employee efforts to achieve customer satisfaction produced a surge in ridership that resulted in revenues that averaged a yearly gain of over 12% over the same period. The 7% differential between cost and revenue growth produced the improvement in the revenue-to-cost ratio to 80%.

Throughout this ten year period of consolidation and progress, the Congress was a loyal and consistent supporter of intercity

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From the throes of a dying rail passenger industry to today's record ridership and sold-out trains, the last two decades have seen dramatic improvements in the quality, reliability and marketability of rail passenger service in this country I am satisfied that Amtrak is not only here to stay, but will in the future play a far larger and more important role in the passenger transportation business throughout this country. W. Graham Clayton, Jr., Amtrak President, before the National Press Club in Washington, May 1, 1991.

through the ZEPHYR's micro-wave plastic meals forced upon Amtrak by the Washington bean-counters, and Burlington-broken rails across Eastern Colorado.

A trip to Detroit for a NARP meeting, accompanied by a local reporter, came during one of the enumerable "Save Amtrak" battles. Contrary to Amtrak's critics, the train was so crowded on the journey home that our group of about 12 had to scatter throughout the train to find seats. The then newly rebuilt "Heritage Cars" on that train by now have had such heavy use they are nearly worn out. Amfleet II and Superliner cars, built in the late 1970's and 1980's have become prematurely gray with extremely heavy use by the crowds of people who increasingly enjoy seeing America at "See Level".

The battle for adequate U. S. rail passenger service is not over, but, after 20 years of struggle, the bean counters and anti-rail fanatics have lost. Amtrak's greatest challenge now is meeting the public demand for service. OARP's biggest challenge remains convincing the political leadership of Ohio of their responsibility to help meet that public demand.

(J. Howard Harding is OARP's President -- an articulate writer and a good spokesman he continues to plead the cause of passenger rail before government leaders across the state and in particular Columbus. Howard, who has served us as Veep and in other capacities, makes his home in Akron with his wife, Patty.)

AMTRAK AT AGE TWENTY!

Amtrak Twenty Year Reflections by A. E. Wolf

My first experience with Amtrak was in the form of a short trip on the NATIONAL LIMITED from Paoli to Lancaster (PA), Sept. 1971. The train was a hodge-podge of coaches (Union Pacific, Burlington Northern etc.), pulled by a GG1 electric locomotive. I don't believe there were any Penn-Central cars in the consist! The second trip was from Philadelphia to Miami in July 1973 on the newly refurbished SILVER STAR, the first train as I recall to be completely repainted/refurbished in Amtrak colors. I was impressed! Later in 1973 my wife and I rode the NATIONAL LIMITED from Paoli to Dayton for our house settlement.

On the positive side I feel that perhaps Amtrak's greatest achievement at the 20 year mark is the greatly improved condition of equipment which results in a much higher level of reliability. In addition, the fact that Amtrak is now considered a viable transportation mode along with highways and air is a significant accomplishment. (But much still remains to be done in this respect). The fact that the system survived eight years of barrage by the Reagan administration certainly says something about public support.

On the other hand, I feel the on-board services part of Amtrak has a long way to go. My recent personal experiences along with articles appearing in Rail Travel News point out the serious problems existing and the need for changes which must take place very soon. Another problem is the negative attitude of the freight railroads toward passenger service. Most of the freight railroads seem to consider rail passenger advocates as nothing more than "railfans" and do little to promote our cause.

passenger rail. In our view, the stellar efforts of rail passenger advocate organizations (such as OARP) was critical to this support.

Our commitment to reduce the need for operating subsidy continues. Clearly, the big cost savings were realized in the past ten years. Future cost efficiencies will be smaller, harder to come by and significantly dependent on large infusions of capital. During the current decade our hope is to again constrain cost growth while achieving revenue gains in double digits. The recent Superliner order is a key example. By replacing low density and high maintenance cost Heritage equipment, it will move more people at less cost. Our plan encompasses a number of initiatives, each of which we expect can make a small contribution to our goal of operational self sufficiency by the year 2000.

Our commitment is to do so while consistently improving the quality of our service to the American public. We deeply appreciate your past support and look forward to its continuing in the future.

(Amtrak is not only coaches, ticket agents, and routes -- it is also a business -- a big business! -- with a bottom line, which keeps improving. Special thanks to Amtrak's Chief Financial Officer, Charles Hayward (who is one of the five members of Amtrak's Management Committee), for his personal contribution to this edition of "the 6:53". Your editor first met him on the opposite side of the Dining Car table on the CARDINAL in January, 1989 and has maintained occasional communication with him ever since. Yes, in case you have ever wondered, Amtrak's top management DOES ride its own trains and converses with its passengers.)

My biggest disappointments (two biggest) were the loss of service to Dayton in 1979 and the loss of service on the Fort Wayne Line in 1990. They were extremely bitter pills to swallow.

I am optimistic about the future of passenger rail and of Amtrak because of the greatly increased level of public/congressional support and the passage of the Moynihan Bill which will obviously have a very positive effect on passenger rail. In states like Ohio however, with its entrenched highway bureaucracy, we will still have much to do to sell rail as an alternate mode.

(AI has been a member of NARP since 1967 and a member of OARP since 1974 (charter member), as well as belonging to the Keystone Association of Railroad Passengers (KARP), the Indiana Association of Railroad Passengers (IndARP), Transport 2000 Canada, and the Modern Transit Society (California), as well as the Sierra Club, Greenpeace, and the Ohio Environmental Council. He's employed by the US Air Force as a War/Contingency Planner at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, and along with my wife and two children (in their early twenties), are all seasoned Amtrak travelers.)

Dedication planned for remodeled Chicago Union Station

The remodeled Chicago Union Station with its new facilities and waiting rooms for Amtrak passengers and its special entrances and areas for Chicagoland commuters will be officially dedicated in the fall of 1991 -- the specialty retail stores on the first floor will not open until early 1992.

(Just a reminder: all SIGNED articles in "the 6:53" represent the opinion of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views or position of the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers or its officers.)

AMTRAK AT AGE TWENTY!

"Yes, Amtrak comes by -- but leaves us standing here in a cloud of d(ig)ust!"

by Tom Pulsifer
President Emeritus, OARP

Twenty years already? Isn't it ironic that Ohioans have lost more Amtrak services than they've gained or even kept intact in that time? After twenty years Ohio is still somewhere between "end points" with Amtrak passenger trains still being run at both whim and dictate of the freight railroads which supported the creation of Amtrak so they could get out of the passenger train business the day Amtrak was born! Makes a whole lot of sense, doesn't it?

Happy Twentieth, Amtrak! Let's celebrate. Let's ride Amtrak! Now, you tell that to the folks from Canton, Loveland, Dayton, Crestline, Athens, Lima, Chillicothe or Columbus. "All Aboard!" is "All Gone!" Ohio's remaining Amtrak trains are often sold out. And the latest twist is Amtrak might not let you ride the only train to Chicago tomorrow even if space is available because they'd rather allocate those seats to passengers who'll pay more to ride on to Reno! Land cruise! Outside the corridors, that's the new name of the train!

Just three cross-state routes now. Used to be five. Train times are still mostly when moonlight illuminates the unmanned stations, and not always every day. And the few ticket offices aren't open much (if at all) when the sun's shining. Be certain to tell those traveling families to tote their own grips because Amtrak will only check baggage at Cleveland, Toledo, or Cincinnati. Best word to describe the on-board service is **inconsistent**. Trains trips are either great -- or horrible.

Would Amtrak's first twenty years in Ohio have been different without OARP? Maybe. Maybe not. It appears that though Amtrak politely acknowledges input from passengers both collectively and individually, it pays most attention to the demands of politicians and freight railroads. Remember how the SHENANDOAH ran daily with few passengers for several years after the heavily patronized NATIONAL LIMITED was ended? And remember how Amtrak acquiesced quickly to get the CAPITOL LIMITED and BROADWAY LIMITED of the Fort Wayne line?

With Amtrak -- though I would like to think otherwise -- success must become failure, and failure must become success. Does Amtrak know what **initiative** is? Can Amtrak do **anything** without being told to from the outside?

Despite years of posturing and pontificating on several fronts, Ohio is no closer to 3-C Corridor service, or the PENNSYLVANIAN extension, or the Empire Corridor extension. Talk; plenty. Action; none. **I believe nothing will change until the entire rail passenger advocacy movement wakes up, stands up, visibly unites forces starting at the grassroots level, and aggressively instigates action!** We must learn; rhetoric in itself does not achieve.

The **very best** thing that OARP has done in eighteen of Amtrak's twenty years is to unite Ohio rail passenger advocacy activists together in a purposeful way! **I would personally hope that long before Amtrak's 40th we can aggressively and cooperatively forge ahead and help build a truly useful rail**

passenger system which actually helps meet the travel needs of and serves the PEOPLE of Ohio!

(Tom Pulsifer is anything but a stranger to OARP, having served as President for over 10 years and editor of this newsletter. He struggled through the humble beginnings of both Amtrak and OARP, he has seen trains disappear and be relocated. His words are presented as a challenge to all of us!)



AMTRAK AT AGE TWENTY!

Lost Opportunities and Positive Expectations by Rodge Sillars

Amtrak began with a massacre of rail service in Ohio. My wife and I got engaged in the Dining Car in Harper's Ferry on the old CAPITOL LIMITED, on one of its last Akron-to-Washington trips. Cleveland went from three trains on the Lakeshore Route to one and then none! Cincinnati lost service in many directions. In my mind I wasn't sure if Amtrak was an opportunity to save passenger service or a cover up to finish it off. The last trips of the first Lakeshore stopping at the old Erie station in the Flats on the now abandoned Big Four had me very worried that the goal was finishing it off. In the early years at OARP I kept urging that we not lose sight of the loss of service in other transportation modes. Ohio lost a lot of bus service and air service in these years as well. There are far too many places in our state with no public transit service at all.

The loss of Cleveland Union Terminal as Cleveland's train station and the potential rail hub finally died when no one stepped forward to save the Erie train in "The Great Penn-Central Fire Sale". It was sad to have lost the fight. If RTA had taken title to CUT and the Erie tracks, getting suburban rail back in Cleveland and Amtrak into Tower City Centre would be a lot simpler now.

While we are still seeing suburban rail service end (Valparaiso), the blooming of suburban rail in California and Florida as well as expansions in Boston and Washington coupled with Amtrak's very positive role in all of these developments has been a big surprise to me. It's great! Now if Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati can just get on this bandwagon.

The next ten years for Amtrak specifically and public transit in general keeps looking better and better. Amtrak finally seems to see that its future is in increasing service levels and adding service. In ten years I would be very surprised if we don't have at least three trains a day going east via both Buffalo and Pittsburgh and at least that many on the 3-C Corridor. I even expect to see some local movement on high speed rail. Congress is working on a vital new transportation bill that finally has some balance -- and -- you don't have to be a kook anymore to say we are too dependent on the automobile.

(Rodge Sillars, a long-time supporter of passenger rail, has been with OARP from the beginning. For many years he served as Vice-President of our organization -- he is employed by Cleveland's RTA and continues to track passenger rail events in northeast Ohio.)

BAGGAGE & EXPRESS @@@ (Because of the extra materials included in this Amtrak 20th Anniversary issue, we are omitting the B & E column this month -- we will make up for it next issue.)

AMTRAK AT AGE TWENTY!

What Others Are Saying

Amtrak began operations on May 1, 1971 -- May, 1991 was the 20th anniversary date of this national rail passenger carrier -- the National Railroad Passenger Act, which created Amtrak, was adopted on October 30, 1970. The 20th anniversary has been given wide coverage in various rail publications -- what follows in this AMTRAK AT AGE TWENTY! issue of "the 6:53" are comments on Amtrak's 20th as it effects Ohio -- comments both looking in and looking out!

The June, 1991 issue of *Trains Magazine* (P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187) highlights Amtrak's 20 year journey in a colorful issue under the theme, "The Amtrak Adventure".

Page 21 calls our attention to the fact that "soon after its beginning, Amtrak dipped to its nadir of 22,500 [miles] following the loss of the Buffalo (N.Y.)-Porter (Ind.) segment [including Toledo and Cleveland] with the January 1972 discontinuance of Chicago-New York trains 68-69." "Route miles made impressive gains during 1973-1975 with 10 additions [including] the reincarnated LAKE SHORE LIMITED."

The May, 1991 issue of *Passenger Train Journal* (Interurban Press, PO Box 6128, Glendale, CA 91225) addressed the Amtrak anniversary with a highly informative issue under the theme, "Looking Forward at Age 20."

On page 20 they remind us that the 1971 short-lived New York-Chicago train functioned with a New York and Ohio subsidy and died when the subsidy was withdrawn. Page 21 reminds us that three of the five cutbacks in 1979 included the NATIONAL LIMITED, the HILLTOPPER, and the FLORIDIAN (of which we now see shades of revival.)

Continuing, "Things were finally starting to look up for Amtrak. Then in January 1981 a new president, Ronald Reagan, entered the White House, selecting David Stockman as his chief budget chief. The battle to kill Amtrak was about to begin. Stockman targeted Amtrak as if it alone was there cause of America's budget deficit."

On page 45 Ross Capon, NARP Exec. Dir. states "gaps in the national network must be filled. All will require federal support; some will get partial state support other obvious gaps: Cleveland-Cincinnati."

On pages 48 James Larson, Amtrak VP, operations and planning, goes on the record and tells us what Amtrak is thinking by offering these words of interest to Ohioans: "there are three areas where we believe changes will occur. The first is the tri-weekly trains. We would predict that both the CARDINAL and the SUNSET LIMITED will become daily the third area is the need to split existing trains when they reach their capacities. A potential need exists to separate the LAKE SHORE LIMITED into a Boston train and a New York train."

Mr. Larson continues on page 49: "The second area of growth in the short-to-intermediate-length routes will be the establishment of new routes not presently operated. Probably the best example of the need for such service is the "3C" route in Ohio which would connect Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati. It is likely this route would start with two frequencies."

Modern Railroads observed the event by looking ahead with a May, 1991 article, "Amtrak Hits Big 20, Plans for Future" which calls our attention to "another potential growth area [which] is operation of contract commuter rail service for state and regional authorities." "Amtrak's new cars will have to meet requirements mandated by Congress in the Americans with Disabilities Act. That law, created last July, requires all new rail passenger cars be accessible to individuals with disabilities. The cars will also

include modern waste-retention toilet systems"

Thanks to Harold Wolff for sending us the words which Congressman Don J. Pease of Elyria inserted in the *Congressional Record* on behalf of Amtrak's 20th: "My wife and I have used Amtrak several times in recent years for our own personal vacations, and we have found it to be a very satisfactory and enjoyable experience. It seems to me that if we would only bring ourselves to have a transportation policy in this country, we would put increasing emphasis on mass transportation within cities and on Amtrak between cities."

Columbus OARP Activity Update

by Robert M. Boyce

Thursday, June 20, was a big day for OARP in Columbus. OARP Pres. Howard Harding and VP Bill Hutchison began the morning making the rounds of key state legislators. I joined them at 10 a.m. for an hour's meeting with John R. Platt, new ODOT Assistant Director for Transportation Modes and Jeff Honefanger, new Deputy Director for the Division of Rail. Both state officials appeared receptive to OARP concerns for an early start of conventional service on the 3-C Corridor and expressed a need for a balanced transportation system in Ohio with a fair share of funding for 3-C rail and municipal transit.

In the afternoon Harding appeared on Fred Anderle's WOSU call-in show, "Open Line", with Jim Betts (chairman of Ohio High Speed Rail Authority) and Jolene Molitoris, passenger rail consultant.

The July 6 meeting at the Red Door Tavern saw three new faces among the 11 members present, Harold Bauer, Tom Fletcher, and Stu Nicholson. Big news at the meeting was Lt. Gov. DeWine's announcement on July 4 in Coshocton that agreement had been reached on sale of Panhandle line by Conrail to the Central Ohio Railroad, thereby saving the last potential passenger line across central Ohio. The \$8 million agreement included \$1 million from OCR, \$800,000 from ODOT, and a major loan through the Ohio Dept. of Development. Operation could be transferred to OCR as early as Sept.

Fletcher and Larry Robertson are working out plans for OARP to have an information table at the Ohio State Fair which starts Aug. 1. Division "G" of the National Model Railroad Association is being approached for space in their area.

Nicholson volunteered to write to each of the Columbus mayoral candidates, asking their position on conventional passenger rail with a station in Columbus. He also would compile a list of Columbus broadcast representatives as potential additions to "the 6:53" mailing list.

Harold Zweifel reported on his attendance at the June 24 meeting of the Columbus Convention Center Facilities Board where he expressed OARP's concern for a rail station. Their next meeting will be July 23 at which we plan to be represented.

John Lightfoot reported on the June 18 Columbus Comprehensive Planning workshop, also attended by Tom Maher and myself. At the workshop we wrote out our reactions to the four proposed development plans that were presented.

We noted two members have moved out of the Columbus area, Dan Innis who has joined the Ohio University marketing faculty in Athens, and Richard Francaviglia who has taken a position with the University of Texas faculty (and has promised to keep us informed on the Texas High Speed Rail project).

Next OARP Columbus area meeting has been scheduled for 10 a.m. Sat., Aug. 17 at the Red Door Tavern.

AMTRAK BOARDING/ DE-BOARDING FIGURES FOR OHIO STATIONS

Cincinnati News

Return of Amtrak service to Cincinnati Union Station

Rail passenger service in the form of Amtrak's CARDINAL returned to Cincinnati Union Station on Monday, July 29, 1991. This event was publicly recognized by Amtrak on July 27. The museum now housed in CUS will officially be dedicated on Saturday, November 2, in a ceremony in which Amtrak will also participate. Mike Weber tells us that a number of OARP/ NARP members are planning to ride this first train into Cincinnati Union Station.

OARP members to meet in greater Cincinnati area

OARP members are increasing their efforts in Cincinnati and will be meeting on a regular basis. Mike Weber tells us that the next local (greater Cincinnati, southern Ohio) meeting will be at 7 p.m. on Thursday, August 15 at West Chester Travel, Tylersville Rd and the Conrail tracks in Tylersville. For more info contact Mike or David Dawson (see Directory, second last page.)

	Jan to Mar 91		Jan to Mar 90	Apr 90 to Mar 91	Apr 89 to Mar 90
Akron -	2,856		0	4,367	0
Alliance -	816		0	1,244	0
Bryan -	1,047	+ 5%	1,000	5,108	+ 7% 4,786
Canton -	0		3,681	9,890	15,124
Cincinnati -	4,198	+ 14%	3,694	18,959	+ 25% 15,219
Cleveland -	13,745	+ 18%	11,618	51,145	+ 14% 44,889
Crestline -	0		1,750	5,036	8,230
Elyria -	1,539	- 14%	1,748	5,631	- 8% 6,085
Fostoria -	1,550		0	2,536	0
Hamilton -	487	+ 17%	416	2,029	- 7% 2,175
Lima -	0		4,658	12,344	19,440
Sandusky -	519	- 6%	550	2,703	- 7% 2,880
Toledo -	24,497	+ 30%	18,862	84,571	+ 18% 71,897
Youngstown -	1,956		0	3,064	0
TOTALS:	53,210	+ 11%	47,977	208,627	+ 9% 190,725

Editor's Notes: 1) Figures courtesy of Amtrak Public Affairs Office, 2) Rerouting of CAPITOL LIMITED and BROADWAY LIMITED took place on November 11, 1990 -- please bear this in mind when interpreting these figures - this also accounts for the "0" in certain columns, 3) Obviously top honors go to Toledo which offers six trains per day. If you extrapolate the Toledo figure for the first quarter of 1991 into a full year, the projected annual figure = 97,988, 4) The Cincinnati numbers are also interesting, considering that the CARDINAL arrives and departs at very, very early morning hours, and that it operates only three times per week in each direction for a total of six trains per week. The increase in numbers can probably be attributed to the overall growth of CARDINAL usage systemwide and that some southwestern Ohio passengers formerly using Lima are now using Cincinnati.

PROGRESS REPORT !?!

by J. Howard Harding, OARP President

On June 20 OARP VP Bill Hutchison and I met in Columbus with Elizabeth Conley of Senator Cooper Snyder's staff and with Marty Coyne in Governor Voinovich's office to discuss Sen. Snyder's proposal to establish an Ohio Rail Development Fund via an amendment to the pending Ohio budget. OARP Columbus Coordinator Bob Boyce then joined us to meet with ODOT Assistant Director John Platt and Rail Director Jeff Honefanger. We discovered that ODOT and OARP share belief in the "building block" approach to rail passenger service development in Ohio. Director Platt also assured us that the Department was eager to use state Rail Development Fund money to match federal highway funds for rail transportation projects, as the recently passed federal transportation funding legislation (S.1204) proposes. This would allow the estimated \$3.5 million passenger portion of the RDF to "buy" as much as a \$17.5 million annual Ohio passenger rail program.

Governor Voinovich line-item vetoed creation of a legislative committee to develop a new comprehensive state transportation plan. Voinovich insisted that ODOT would develop its own plan, echoing what John Platt had told us earlier. This action was followed by a news report that Voinovich would soon announce details about a 10 to 20 year multi-billion dollar long-range highway construction program, to be known as "Corridors 2000." It will be fascinating to see how such a program, announced BEFORE completion of the promised plan, can be anything but mere "hair of the dog"!

On July 10 Cincinnati Coordinator Mike Weber met in Columbus with legislative aides for Senators Aronoff (Sen. President), Snyder and Oelslager (Sen. Transportation Committee Chair) to promote passage of Snyder's budget amending RDF proposal. Mike discovered that both Aronoff and

Oelslager's staffs were interested in the idea, but neither seemed to understand the connection between the RDF and federal transportation legislation! Worse, their knowledge of S.1204's provisions was almost non-existent!

On July 11, I met in Columbus with Marty Coyne of Governor Voinovich's staff, then joined OARP Board Member Ron Myers to meet with Guy Ford of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. Coyne and I discussed at length what OARP supports and why and agreed to maintain communications. It is clear that we each have much to learn about one another and about how best to work together.

Guy Ford was given information about rail passenger service and about OARP. He explained a bit about how the Chamber operates and agreed to bring the rail issue (& I-73) to the Chamber's Transportation Committee "soon."

Later that afternoon, the Senate debated and approved the 1000 page budget conference report, not including Sen. Snyder's RDF amendment. It was, apparently, politically impossible to dedicate funds to rail development when existing programs from education to general relief were "under-funded." Even the idea of delaying implementation until revenues exceeded estimates was not acceptable, nor was phasing it in over three years.

Our thanks to Senator Cooper Snyder, his staff, Jim Betts and to ODOT for their efforts on behalf of this proposal. Senator Snyder is reported ready to reintroduce the RDF as separate legislation, and Rep. Hagan and Sweeney have expressed interest in providing rail capital funds in the next state capital budget, to be voted on in 1992.

OARP's 18 years of experience makes clear that passage of any of this legislation will require the vigorous, united action which Tom Pulsifer calls for in his column elsewhere in this issue. **RAIL ACTIVISTS UNITE! WE HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT OUR AUTO DEPENDENCE!**

PLEASE PATRONIZE THESE AUTHORIZED TRAVEL AGENTS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE OHIO ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS:

Akron	Chima Travel Bureau	(216) 867-4770	Wanda Bittinger
Akron	Parkside Travel U S A	(216) 724-1800	Joel Brown
Alliance	Alliance AAA Travel	(216) 821-2323	(216) 456-6515
Canal Fulton	Massillon AAA Travel	(216) 854-6616	
Cincinnati	West Chester Travel, Inc.	(800) 634-8150	(513) 777-6770 David Dawson
Cleveland	Ohio Motorists Association/AAA Travel	(216) 361-6080	
Cleveland	Randall Park Mall Travel Agency	(800) 999-2434	(216) 475-8747 Robert Peck
Columbus	Accessible Travel Agency	(800) 837-2822	(614) 792-3555 Jude Cuddy
Columbus	The Ohio Automobile Club/AAA Travel	(614) 431-7823	
Dayton	The Miami Valley Auto Club/AAA Travel	(513) 224-2888	Virginia Adams
Elyria	Tours & Travel Service, Inc.	(800) 443-7789	(216) 323-5423 Michael E. McCleister
Mansfield	Mansfield Travel Center	(419) 756-8747	Jay Gilbert
Massillon	Massillon AAA Travel	(216) 833-1034	Cheryl Anderson
Perrysburg	Hayes Travel Agency	(419) 874-2271	Sharon Zuchewski
Piqua	The Miami County Auto Club/AAA Travel	(513) 773-3753	Frank Neff
Sandusky	Sandusky Travel Service, Inc.	(419) 626-4633	Roberta Skyler
Solon	Searles Travel Service	(800) 877-9724	(216) 248-7740 Amtrak Al Mladineo
Tipp City	The Miami County Auto Club/AAA Travel	(513) 667-5333	Richard Hardesty
Toledo	The Toledo Automobile Club/AAA Travel	(419) 241-0155	Nancy Connair
Troy	The Miami County Auto Club/AAA Travel	(513) 339-0112	

Authorized Amtrak travel agents who wish to join OARP, maintain current membership status, and be listed in this DIRECTORY, should send a \$40 check, made payable to OARP, to "the 6:53" Editor, 120 Luther Ave., Kent OH 44240. The TRAM annual listing fee of \$40 entitles you to list your CITY, the NAME OF YOUR AGENCY, one LONG DISTANCE PHONE NUMBER (which may be a "WATS" (800) toll-free number), one LOCAL PHONE NUMBER, and the name of one salesperson at the agency. RENEWALS will be billed by the Treasurer.

OARP meeting on Sat.,
Nov. 2 in Cincinnati

PLEASE NOTE: Plans have been made for our regular OARP meeting to be held at the Cincinnati Union Station on Saturday, November 2 -- mark that date on your calendar now! Amtrak may have an equipment display also -- although unconfirmed at this point. But the meeting is for sure -- get the word out -- plan to attend!

Cleveland-Pittsburgh Update by Ken Prendergast, Director, CLE-PITT Corridor Project

At the two most recent CLE-PITT community coalition meetings, it was agreed that we should attempt to gather as much information to make it easier for state and federal legislators to "sell" the PENNSYLVANIAN extension via Youngstown to their colleagues. One key piece of needed information was the level of projected ridership via Youngstown. Amtrak conducted a ridership study for the Alliance route in late-1990; it predicted that the extension via this sparsely-populated route would make an incremental profit. At the request of U.S. Congressman Dennis Eckart (D-Mentor), Amtrak President Graham Claytor has asked his Passenger Marketing Department to prepare an "updated evaluation of ridership on the Pittsburgh-New Castle-Youngstown-Cleveland route."

Amtrak is also attempting to get together with Conrail and CSX officials to gather capital cost figures for trackwork projects needed before the train can serve Youngstown. At this time it appears that any capital cost figures may not be available until August or perhaps September. Amtrak maintains that the PENNSYLVANIAN extension is a priority item, albeit one of about fifteen priority items. Meanwhile, state and federal legislators sit handcuffed, awaiting the final tally from Amtrak.

OARP and its friends who represent and lead the people of northeast Ohio should not be hesitant in wondering if the PENNSYLVANIAN extension is a priority at Amtrak. Amtrak says it is. Granted, there have been interruptions, such as the BROADWAY/CAPITOL LIMITED reroutes, which have temporarily put the extension on the back burner. There is a sense of impatience brewing among individual OARP members and community leaders; enthusiasm seems to have leveled off for the time being.

In all honesty I can condone this behavior. After all, this project began in 1988, three long years ago. On the other hand, I understand the heavy workload being juggled by the limited number of Amtrak staff people. In closing, all I can say is that it is easy for us in northeast Ohio/ western Pennsylvania to ask Amtrak to focus its attention on the PENNSYLVANIAN extension at the expense of putting aside its other priority projects. In my own parochial self-interest I find it difficult to resist in echoing that request, but I must resist. We will get the service much sooner that way.

Indiana efforts for Florida route accelerating

According to June 29 article in the Cleveland Plain Dealer William H. Miller, Vanderburgh County senior judge and chairman of Evansville task force to obtain Chicago-Florida Amtrak service in Ohio, is organizing a non-profit foundation (to be called Centrak) which would promote the new route proposal and sponsor a test run next year to include five Indiana stops plus stops in Kentucky and Tennessee. Seasoned observers tell us that the route through Ohio (Indianapolis and Cincinnati -- current CARDINAL trackage) is the better because it taps a much bigger market, but they add that the lobbying efforts emanating out of Evansville should not be ignored. Their efforts could slow down the process for a decision, and, because they are the loudest, they could win and force a decision which would be hard to undo in later years.

Moynihan Surface Transportation Bill

The U.S. Senate passed S. 1204 (formerly S. 965 -- the Moynihan bill) on June 14 by a 91-7 vote.

Flexibility: 20% of 17.5% of federal highway funds could be used for non-highway projects including capital costs for mass transit, passenger rail (including high speed rail), and operating costs for some passenger service, expenses for contracted passenger rail or magnetic levitation service, bicycle facilities and programs, and other features.

Level Playing Field: Federal share is mostly 80%, a welcome contrast to previously funding which allowed 80% mostly for highway projects.

Planning: Metropolitan planning organizations and states must agree on all projects before they can be undertaken.

Transit: Authorization was increased from \$3.8 to \$4.7 billion

annually, more than requested by Administration but still below needs.

Maglev: \$750 million was authorized for a "National Magnetic Levitation Design Program."

Truck Size Freeze: Truck weights and lengths are frozen.

National Highway System: President Bush and the Administration get their much-ballyhooed NHS but only a fraction of the funding.

Next hurdle is passage by the U.S. House of Representatives, where progress will be slow because it must pass through a number of overlapping committees and be subject to intense pressures from the highway lobbies. Final resolution would have to be worked out in conference.

What can you do? Write to your House Representative NOW urging support for a House highway/ transit authorization bill (similar to S. 1204) with as much flexibility



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NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____

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the 6:53



AMTRAK AT AGE TWENTY!

In this issue
33 Observing Amtrak's Twentieth Anniversary and Its Effect On The Buckeye State!

Articles by ...

- ... J. Howard Harding, OARP President, *Observations on "Amtrak at Twenty"*
- ... Charles W. Hayward, Amtrak Vice-President - Administration and Finance, *Amtrak - Past, Present and Future*
- ... Tom Pulsifer, OARP Pres. Emeritus, Yes, Amtrak comes by -- but leaves us standing here in a cloud of *d(is)just!*
- ... A. E. Wolf, OARP Charter Member, *Amtrak Twenty Year Reflections*
- ... Rodge Sillers, early OARP activist, *Lost Opportunities and Positive Expectations*
- ... What Others Are Saying About Amtrak's Twentieth
- ... plus a lot more, including Columbus update, CLE-PITT update, Ohio Boarding/De-Boarding Statistics, and still more

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"the 6:53" is the official bimonthly publication of the OHIO ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS, INC., a not-for-profit educational organization of about 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 FIGHT FOR THE RAIL PASSENGER ALTERNATIVE! Annual dues are \$ 15 (minimum) for NEW members and \$ 20 (minimum) for ALL RENEWALS. Look for the handy membership application form printed in this issue.

--ALLABOARD

DEADLINE: for the October issue -
September 15, 1991

In this issue

AMTRAK AT AGE TWENTY!

..... comments from OARP members, Amtrak, and other publications upon the 20th anniversary of Amtrak's founding and lots more

COVER PHOTO: Amtrak's inaugural BROADWAY LIMITED in Kent, Ohio, November 1990. Photo by Jennifer Bergen Albrecht.

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