



# the 6:53

August 1992

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

Issue #102

## NO MORE STUDIES! OHIO NEEDS TRAINS!!

### **\$50 Million for Trains or Paper - Which is of Greater Value to Ohio?**

by J. Howard Harding, *OARP President*

When Joe Vranich, author of the book *SUPERTRAINS* spoke at OARP's Annual Meeting in May, he presented a "Rail Supporters' Bill of Rights". Among those rights, according to Joe, is that we are entitled to no more studies of high speed rail's potential. We are buried in studies while Europe and Japan are building thousands of miles of new or upgraded routes. It is time to build modern train service in Ohio.

OARP agrees with Joe Vranich, but William Lathrop, Chairman of the Ohio Rail Organization (ORO), apparently disagrees. Mr. Lathrop has proposed that ORO spend another \$50 million -- \$5 million of its own money, \$5 million from the state and \$40 million from federal sources -- on detailed route mapping, environmental assessments, and preliminary design plans before committing to build the proposed high speed 3-C route! (ORO is the private consortium of consultants and bankers under contract to the Ohio High Speed Rail Authority [OHSRA].) This would be in addition to the \$1 million recently spent by ORO and the uncounted millions spent by OHSRA and predecessors since 1975 on other high speed rail studies!!

(Continued on Page 2)

### **Transit Survey Shows Strong Public Support**

by Cleve Ricksecker, President,  
*Capital City Transit Coalition*

Residents of Franklin County support construction of a light rail system for metropolitan Columbus by a margin of nearly three to one, according to a recent survey conducted by the Davon Group. The random telephone survey, commissioned by the Central Ohio Transit Authority, included responses by 405 people, 71% of whom never use public transportation.

When asked whether they would support a light rail system knowing such a system is expensive to build, 59% of the respondents said "yes", 22% said "no", and 19% expressed no opinion. The light rail question was part of a larger group of questions designed to measure public opinion about transportation issues.

The survey measured public attitudes about the current system of transportation in Central Ohio. In response to the question, "All things considered, do you think we have a problem with our entire system of transportation?", 52% of the respondents answered "yes", and 49% answered "no". Of the respondents who felt there is a problem, 58% indicated they felt there was a major problem.

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**OFFICIAL NOTICE:** The 1992 Fall Meeting and Inspection Field Trip will be held on **Saturday, October 3, 1992** in Fostoria, Ohio. See Page 5 for details.

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### Trains or Paper?

OARP believes that Governor Voinovich and the Ohio General Assembly should close down this reprehensible, unending Consultants' Full Employment Program now and invest in real transportation service for Ohioans. OARP supports prompt implementation of state supported conventional speed rail passenger services which could form a foundation for evolutionary development of high speed rail service in Ohio. Fifty million dollars will fully fund the capital investment needed for two initial routes through Ohio:

>the 3-C Corridor:

Cleveland-Galion/Mansfield-Columbus-Springfield-Dayton-Middletown-Cincinnati;

>the DET-PIT Corridor:

Detroit-Toledo-Sandusky-Cleveland-Akron-Youngstown-Pittsburgh.

Over 16 million people, thousands of businesses and dozens of colleges and universities could be served by rapid, frequent, contemporary service within 18 months of the decision to proceed. Still-relevant studies for both routes were conducted during 1990-92, indicating each route

would be viable. A summary of capital costs in Ohio for this introductory step appears in the accompanying table on page 3.

OARP believes that action is long overdue. Successful operation of modern, conventional speed services will silence the critics who insist that Ohioans will not use rail passenger service. Initiating operations with conventional speed trains will provide an affordable means of serving more Ohio cities than any single high speed route. Incremental improvements in frequency and speed can then be made as continued growth warrants. Growing popularity (and the resulting track congestion) could then provide the public with reason to support investment in true high speed service infrastructure. Ohioans are better served by access to transportation systems, not more study data. High speed rail development for Ohio can best begin with progressive and tangible steps today.  
**ENOUGH STUDIES!!! ENOUGH PAPER!!!  
BUILD REAL SERVICE -- NOW!**

*Note: The facts upon which this column is based were assembled by Ken Prendergrast. Howard Harding is solely responsible for the conclusions.*

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## Amtrak Rates 3-C Corridor Near Top For New Service!

An Amtrak evaluation of potential new passenger service routes (not presently served by Amtrak) rates the Cleveland-Columbus-Cincinnati (3-C) Corridor as among the most economically feasible of 13 such routes nationwide.

The study, which was released on July 6, 1992, was requested by Congress in the Amtrak Reauthorization and Improvement Act of 1990. The evaluation is based on the amount of federal subsidy required, as well as related performance measures such as Passenger-Miles per Train-Mile [PM/TM] and Short Term Avoidable Profit (Loss) per Passenger Mile.

According to the study, extension of a section of the Lake Shore Limited from Cleveland to Cincinnati would generate higher PM/TM than is now achieved on all but six of Amtrak's existing long distance trains. Only a proposed tri-weekly Chicago-Dallas service is projected at a higher PM/TM than the 3-C Corridor. The 3-C Corridor also has the highest Short Term Avoidable Profit per Passenger Mile of any of the routes studied. The Sunset Limited extension to Miami, scheduled to begin in April of 1993, is the only route with a lower projected incremental subsidy.

However, Amtrak's report concludes with a warning that "Amtrak cannot,... given its scarcity of capital for both rolling stock and track facilities improvements, and the operating subsidies initially required, presently consider implementing (this) route expansion on its own. This conclusion, coupled with the performance figures presented in favor of this route, provides support for passage of HB 4414, which would furnish Amtrak with the capital funds needed for service expansion. OARP believes that this report also provides reasons for the State of Ohio to cooperate with Amtrak in promptly implementing daytime service in the 3-C Corridor.

# WHAT COULD WE GET FOR \$50-MILLION?

## *An Alternative Analysis of the ORO Proposal*

### **The 3-C Corridor**

10 stations (new or upgraded)	\$ 3-million
4 train sets (1 loco & 3-4 cars per set)	\$27-million
Signaling adjustments	\$ 1-million
<b>TOTAL 3-C CORRIDOR INVESTMENT</b>	<b>\$31-MILLION</b>

### **Resulting Service:**

- 4 round trips between Cleveland & Columbus
  - 4 round trips between Cincinnati & Columbus
  - 3 round trips between Cleveland & Cincinnati
  - Through service to Buffalo, Upstate New York & the East Coast
  - Overnight service from Cincinnati, Dayton, & Columbus to New York City.
- Average speeds of 70 to 80 mph would be reliable on 3-C tracks.*

### **Detroit-Cleveland-Pittsburgh Corridor**

4 stations (new or upgraded)	\$0.5-million
1 train set (1 loco, 4 cars)	\$7.5-million
Track & Signaling adjustments	\$11-million
<b>TOTAL DET-PITT CORRIDOR INVESTMENT</b>	<b>\$19-MILLION</b>

### **Resulting Service:**

- 5 round trips between Toledo & Cleveland
  - 5 round trips between Youngstown & Cleveland
  - 4 round trips between Cleveland & Pittsburgh
  - 3 round trips between Cleveland and Detroit
  - 3 round trips between Detroit & Pittsburgh
- Average speeds of 70 to 80 mph would be reliable on DET-PITT tracks.*

**NOTE: Capital Cost Figures DO NOT INCLUDE Investments Outside Ohio.**

SOURCES OF DATA: Amtrak, Ohio Department of Transportation, Gohmann & Associates, JSL Enterprises, OARP

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### **Transit Survey**

The survey revealed startling results when respondents were asked about the future. In response to the question, "If things continue the way they are going, do you think we will have a problem with our entire system of transportation in our community ten years from now?", 81% said "yes", and only 19% said "no". Among those who felt there will be a problem ten years from now, 82% felt there will be a major problem with transportation if current policies are not changed.

Current transportation problems identified by respondents included "the flow of traffic" (70%),

"air quality due to pollution from cars" (66%), "the condition of streets and highways" (62%), and "the availability of public transportation" (42%).

Respondents were also asked to rate the importance of various solutions to transportation problems. They ranked public transportation at the top of the list and highway and automobile solutions at the bottom of the list.

Survey results in Central Ohio reflect results collected nationally by Transit Now, which indicate a majority of Americans favor investments in public transit over highway improvements.

## **Cleveland-Pittsburgh Update**

**by Kenneth Prendergast,  
CLE-PITT Project Director**

In the past 6-9 months, CLE-PITT Project activities seemed to have gone into a deep freeze. Under the weight of the recession, budget problems at the state level, and disagreements over the predicted capital costs of the Cleveland extension of the PENNSYLVANIAN, the effort had been stalled - but not derailed. By the time this issue goes to print, several meetings will be propelling the CLE-PITT Project back up to speed.

Productive discussions between OARP officials, local community leaders, and state legislators are resuming. The goal is to locate or create innovative funding mechanisms needed to bring the PENNSYLVANIAN to Cleveland via New Castle, Youngstown, and Ravenna. Such an investment equals the cost of a new highway interchange. Funds can and will be found.

Northeast Ohio communities predict that economic development opportunities can be bred from the PENNSYLVANIAN extension. Bedford, a Cleveland suburb, has demolished a large abandoned factory to create a new development site in which an intermodal station may be included. Ravenna has pledged its support in both deeds and dollars: the city treasury has \$15,000 in reserve as seed money for the creation of a station development zone. Youngstown's Spring Commons Park, which surrounds the B&O Station, is a development target for city planners proposing to mirror

Cleveland's thriving Flats District. An extension of the PENNSYLVANIAN would provide opportunity to access these worthy development objectives.

An informal, conservative analysis suggests that the predicted \$12 million investment from the State of Ohio in the PENNSYLVANIAN extension could in fact create many economic development opportunities. According to the analysis, conducted by the CLE-PITT Project, financial benefits to businesses in Northeast Ohio could reach \$3 million per annum. Businesses expected to reap the greatest benefits include: hotels, restaurants, food and beverage suppliers providing AmCafe provisions, railroad contractors, taxi companies, and travel agencies.

All is not quiet on the Eastern Front, either. In Pennsylvania, the General Assembly has passed HR 341, calling for a doubling of cross-state Amtrak service. The Transportation Systems Research Center at the University of Pittsburgh has been asked by the Commonwealth to prepare technical reports detailing the costs and benefits of such an expansion. Under Dr. George White, the reports are undeniably positive, and extol the merits of extending Amtrak services beyond Pittsburgh. Dr. White has chosen to keep OARP informed of their progress, recognizing the importance of maintaining a promising interstate relationship. It's a good feeling to have this train rolling again! I'll have another update next issue.

### **Thank You Ron Bergen!**

**Several years ago, when the Cleveland-Pittsburgh Project was just getting started, a communications snafu left a group of rail supporters on a street corner in Ravenna, locked out of their scheduled meeting room.**

**Ron Bergen, a recently active member from Kent, was among the locked out group.**

**He offered use of his church in Kent, and led the caravan across Portage County.**

**About a year later, when Tom Pulsifer announced his intention to step back and let others take on his many OARP leadership tasks, Ron Bergen once again stepped forward, to volunteer to edit the 6:53. Since then, through issue #101, Ron has done an outstanding job as editor. In addition, he has also helped OARP reach out to political leaders across the state via special mailings, interviews, and thoughtful suggestions to other OARP leaders.**

**Now, however, Ron's paying responsibilities have expanded to consume the time needed for his OARP activism. Thus, he has reluctantly decided he must step aside as editor. Thanks, Ron, for a job very well done.**

**Your excellent work is greatly appreciated.**

## **OARP Fall Meeting and Inspection Field Trip Fostoria Amtrak Station Tour Fostoria, Ohio**

**Saturday, October 3rd, 1992 - 10 a.m.**

**Meet at the Candyland Restaurant, 224 North Main Street in Fostoria.**

**Directions:** Fostoria has done an excellent job with Amtrak Pathfinder signs on all main routes in the city. The restaurant is on Main Street, 4 blocks north of the Amtrak Station.

**Schedule:**

- 10:00 a.m. - Gather for rolls, donuts, coffee cake, coffee, and juice.**
- 10:30 a.m. - Welcome and Introductions followed by a Business Meeting.**
- 12:30 p.m. - Lunch: 3-piece baked chicken dinner including mashed potatoes, dressing, mixed vegetables, bread & butter, and cake. Beverages will be available all day long.**
- 1:30 p.m. - Guest speaker Greg Peiffer of Radio Station WFOB, a main force behind the use of the ex-B&O Station for Amtrak.**
- 2:45 p.m. - Afternoon Business Session.**
- 3:15 p.m. - Tour of Amtrak Station (4 blocks south of the restaurant).**

**Cost:** \$12 per person if paid by registration deadline; \$14 per person after.

**Registration Deadline is September 22nd, 1992.**

**Mail check/money order (payable to OARP), and the names, addresses, and phone numbers of those attending to: W.Scott Lawson, 23624 W.Moline-Martin Road, Millbury, OH 43447.**

**Questions? Call Scott Lawson at (419)855-8510 or Larry George at (419)698-8510.**

## **Coalition Building**

**by Bill Hutchison, OARP Vice-President**

On June 13, 1992 I attended a meeting sponsored by several environmental organizations, including the Ohio Environmental Council, an umbrella organization with headquarters in Columbus.

The meeting dealt mainly with the theme Energy, The Environment, and The Economy, however, several other valuable workshops were held, one of which involved building coalitions.

I feel very strongly that coalition building is really the only way to go if we are to ever see rail passenger service in Ohio, since the legislature as a whole has been very apathetic on this issue and there are powerful interests which want to preserve the status quo. To that end, I have sent letters to coordinators in cities where there is an OEC contact person. People living in Akron, Athens, Canton, Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, Dayton, Lake County, Toledo, and Youngstown have probably been contacted by their coordinators by now and may already be planning coalition meetings in their cities.

In addition to coalition meetings with OEC, if members know of any other groups or individuals who may have similar interests to ours, please contact them. Local coordinators may want to oversee this effort so that we are organized in our approach and don't end up with more than one member contacting the same group. If local coordinators could keep me updated on their efforts, I will forward information on groups and events which may be useful in attempting to build these very important relationships. If you live in an area which doesn't yet have a local coordinator, please try and work with other local members. If you need any help, please contact me.

Finally, I can't overemphasize the point that we MUST build a coalition with these other groups, since collectively our voice will be much louder than otherwise would be possible. As Ben Franklin once said, "We must hang together, or most assuredly, we will hang separately!" I believe this also applies to us. If we are to ever take control of this nation's destiny, we must band together. Coalition building is a step towards taking that control for the people who want a meaningful change in the way transportation and other issues are dealt with.

## Columbus Area Update

by Robert M. Boyce

There's good news in Fostoria according to our group who visited there on July 22nd. Mary Eckert, who organized the visit, thanked the city council for all the city has done. Harold Zweifel presented framed "Certificates of Appreciation" to WFOB Radio, Greg Peiffer, Marilyn Thompson, and the Fostoria City Council. Greg is station manager at WFOB, and Marilyn is a local citizen who has been voluntarily opening the Amtrak station at train time. The citations were presented by the Columbus Chapter "on behalf of the entire membership of the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers... in appreciation of your efforts in restoring, upgrading, and maintaining the Fostoria Amtrak Depot and its surroundings". Thanks to Ken Wilt for producing the citations and to Mary Eckert for framing them and especially for organizing the project. The group, which also included Larry Grey, Bill Schuler, Violet Zweifel, and Tom Eckert, was treated to a meal by the Fostoria folks.

Columbus members met on July 11th and heard reports on Bill Hutchison's efforts on the OARP position paper and coalition building. There were also reports on Columbus/Newark commuter service prospects and petitioning. A fourth batch of petitions containing 743 signatures has been sent to key legislators and the transportation and development directors. Stu Nicholson proposed screening petitions for prospective new members and Jack Schoby and Karl Gefler volunteered to assist with the project.

**The next Columbus local meeting will be held  
Saturday, August 22nd, 10 a.m., at the  
Red Door Tavern, 1736 West 5th Avenue.**

## "FORM LETTER BLUES"

by Stu Nicholson

Like many of you (I hope), I sent letters to several Ohio members of Congress, including my own, Chalmers P. Wylie. In my letters I urged strong support of Congressman Al Swift's (D-Wash) "Penny-a-Gallon" gas tax bill to support **Amtrak**, otherwise known as **House Bill 4414**.

Let's hope we all don't get the same kind of bland, non-committal response as I received from Congressman Wylie in his "form letter" of June 26th. And I quote... "This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of June 12, regarding H.B.4414. As you know, this bill calls for a one-cent a gallon gas tax for Amtrak and passenger rail service. This bill is under consideration in the Energy & Commerce, and Ways & Means Committees. You will be interested to know as a former railroader myself, I am sympathetic to rail transportation. Thank you for sharing your views on this matter of mutual concern."

I suppose it's not the worst response you could get. But for a Congressman who is about to leave office, and has nothing to lose, you'd think Mr. Wylie would leap to his feet on the house floor and scream his support for HB 4414. Worse yet, his description of HB 4414 isn't even accurate: it's **NOT** a new tax, it's a transfer of one penny from the **existing gasoline tax!**

Don't let his response discourage you. Write those letters, and **demand** that your Congressperson co-sponsor, or at least give support for HB 4414! If they send you a form letter. send it back...with corrections! Don't let up...keep the pressure on!

### BAGGAGE & EXPRESS.....

@@@ We've caught the eye of Democratic Presidential Candidate Bill Clinton! Clinton spotted our sign **OHIO NEEDS AMTRAK TRAINS** as it was waved by Ken Wilt at a Columbus rally on July 20th. Clinton even commented on the sign in his speech, agreeing that more investment in rail infrastructure is sorely needed...

@@@ Belated thanks to Bob Boyce, George Vance, Juan Ogradnik, Harold Wolff, Steve Klipfel, Walter Kussmaul, Steve LaConte, Ken Prendergast, Scott Lawson, Jack Slanina, John H. Keller Sr., Howard Hollingsworth, Richard Cartwright, Howard Harding, Deborah Hare of Amtrak's Public Affairs Office, and others for providing material for Issue #101...

@@@ And for supplying material for this issue of *the 6:53*, thanks to Ron Bergen, Bob Boyce, Larry George, Howard Harding, Bill Hutchison, Stu Nicholson, Ken Prendergast, Cleve Ricksecker, and others...

@@@ Our sincere sympathy to Mark Schwinn upon the sudden death of his father, Darl Schwinn. Mark has served as our Kent-Ravenna Regional Coordinator and *6:53* circulation manager, in addition to being an active advocate. Mark recently graduated from Kent State and is working as an on-board attendant for Amtrak this summer. *The 6:53* was labeled and assembled for mailing in Mark's home, and his mother's gracious help was greatly appreciated...

@@@ Best wishes for a speedy recovery to George Vance, who was hospitalized recently for emergency surgery...



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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, 276 East Tulane Road, Columbus OH 43202. 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.

Updated: June 8, 1992

**Dayton Chapter Organizing!**

Dayton area members are organizing! They met on August 15 at the Faith Lutheran Church, 3315 Martel Drive. For information on future meetings call Linda Leas at 513-276-2545, or Al Wolf at 513-294-7110.

Dayton area members are planning a "Night at the Movies" to be held at the Neon Movies in Dayton in mid-October. The final date hasn't yet been established, but they are looking at Friday, October 16, or Saturday, October 17. A classic train film will be featured. Call Linda Leas, at 513-276-2545, or Al Wolf at 513-294-7110 for further information.

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Updated: July 8, 1992

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 294-0718

# the 6:53

## IN THIS ISSUE...

...You'll find an OARP membership application.

Recruit a new member for OARP!

We all know someone who believes Ohio needs passenger trains.

Show them how they can do something about it!!

We can double our statewide membership... and our clout as rail passenger advocates... if we each bring in ONE new member.

...also in this issue...

**NO MORE STUDIES! OHIO NEEDS TRAINS!  
SURVEY SHOWS STRONG SUPPORT!  
NEW OARP CHAPTER IN DAYTON!  
COALITION BUILDING!  
...and lots more news!!**

**August 1992**

**Issue #102**



Official Publication of the

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

### Editorial Policy of the 6:53

We welcome your contributions to the 6:53. We ask that articles be typed and kept to a maximum of 350 words. We reserve the right to edit all submitted materials to conform with format, content, and space requirements. Original articles should also include sources of quotes or excerpts from any works other than the author's own.

Photos are also welcome, but cannot be returned. So, please send reprints rather than originals. We assume no responsibility for materials lost or damaged in the mail.

News clippings from outside sources **must** include both the source and date of the article or clipping.

**Deadline for the October issue:  
September 15, 1992**

All signed articles in the 6:53 represent the opinion of the writer only, and do not necessarily reflect the views or position of OARP or its officers.

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