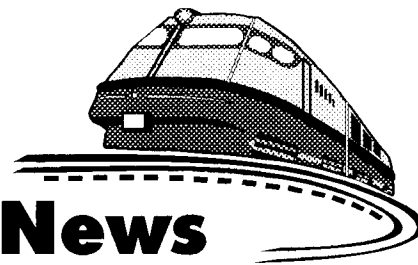




"the 6:53"



Ohio Rail Passenger News

April/May 1995

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

Issue #115

Amtrak Acts With An Axe - Ohioans To Be Affected

On April 6th, Amtrak's Board of Directors approved staff recommendations for the second and third round of service reductions to close a budget shortfall of at least \$200 million by year's end. Amtrak officials say the cuts and expected cost savings will allow the rail passenger corporation to achieve a balanced budget by year's end. Amtrak President Tom Downs said he hopes that the reductions will be the final ones enacted.

Ohio will be directly impacted by the cuts announced in April: the third and final cut to occur on September 10th will terminate the BROADWAY LIMITED west of Pittsburgh, ending service to Akron, Fostoria, and Youngstown. The CARDINAL also will have its route shortened, becoming a Cincinnati to Washington DC day train. It will no longer serve Chicago or New York City. Hamilton, Ohio will lose its service.

In the first round of cuts, the only Ohio service to be affected was the Chicago-Detroit-Toledo LAKE CITIES, which connected at Toledo with the LAKE SHORE LIMITED to Cleveland, Buffalo, New York City, and Boston. The LAKE CITIES was routed out of Toledo April 2nd to serve Pontiac, MI. An Amtrak Thruway bus connection between Toledo, Detroit, and other Michigan points now substitutes for the train.

Amtrak's rationale for terminating the BROADWAY LIMITED at Pittsburgh, and the CARDINAL at Cincinnati is to remove those trains' weakest segments. Also, both trains operate with the aging, maintenance-intensive Heritage Fleet rail cars which Amtrak wants to retire. The reason for rescheduling the CARDINAL as a daytime train is so it may serve the Greenbrier resort in Virginia, and the New River Gorge vacation mecca in West Virginia.

It is likely that the BROADWAY LIMITED will operate with Amfleet I or the newer Horizon coaches and cafe cars. The CARDINAL is expected to be outfitted with Superliner equipment. The BROADWAY would connect at Pittsburgh with a rescheduled CAPITOL LIMITED to Cleveland, Toledo, Detroit (via bus), and Chicago.

Governor Finally Makes ORDC Appointments

Ohio Governor George Voinovich has finally completed his appointments to the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC). On April 23rd, 1995 the *Columbus Dispatch* reported that Voinovich had confirmed the appointment of James E. Betts, a Republican from Cleveland, to the position of Chairman, with a term expiring October 20th, 2000. Larry R. Parsons, an Independent from Canton, and Tim Davis, a Democrat from Akron, were also given terms expiring October 20th, 2000. Donald Yerks, a Republican from Sylvania, and Larry Sowers, a Democrat from Columbus, were both assigned terms that expire October 20th, 1997. The ORDC was created last year to consolidate both passenger and freight state rail duties. To comply with the law which created the ORDC, which passed last summer, Governor Voinovich should have finished making these appointments over four months ago.

Amtrak Service Reductions Scheduled For June 11th:

- The ILLINI between Chicago and Carbondale: Service cut to Monday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday in both directions.
- CITY OF NEW ORLEANS between New Orleans and Chicago: Service eliminated on Tuesday and Wednesday; maintained on the other five days.
- HOOSIER STATE between Indianapolis and Chicago: will operate westbound on Friday, Sunday, and Monday mornings and eastbound on Thursday, Friday, and Sunday afternoons.
- LOOP and STATE HOUSE service connecting St. Louis, Springfield, and Chicago: Those two services are eliminated; but the TEXAS EAGLE and ANN RUTLEDGE continue.
- CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR between Salt Lake City and Oakland: Service eliminated on Monday, Wednesday and Friday; maintained on the other four days.
- ILLINOIS ZEPHYR between Chicago and Quincy: Service eliminated on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday; maintained on the other four days.

Amtrak Service Reductions scheduled for Sept. 10th:

- BROADWAY LIMITED, which now operates from New York to Pittsburgh and Chicago, will be reduced to a daily New York-Pittsburgh service. Passengers continuing to Chicago will be able to make a cross-platform connection with the CAPITOL LIMITED in Pittsburgh.
- CARDINAL between New York, Washington, Cincinnati and Chicago will be reduced to Washington-Cincinnati daytime service and will run eastbound on Thursday, Saturday and Monday and westbound on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.
- TEXAS EAGLE leg between Dallas and Houston will be replaced by a Thruway bus. The TEXAS EAGLE will continue between San Antonio, Dallas, St. Louis, and Chicago.

Cardinal Route Among Top 10

The Washington DC to Cincinnati segment of Amtrak's CARDINAL was recently selected as one of the 10 most scenic train routes in North America. James Russell, editor of *Rail Travel News* announced the selections in a recent edition of *EcoTraveler*. In addition to the CARDINAL route, which travels through the beautiful New River Gorge, other scenic routes include: the Alaska Railroad (any route); the Canadian Rockies (Vancouver, British Columbia to Edmonton, Alberta via Jasper); the Copper Canyon (Chihuahua to Los Mochis, Mexico); New York to Montreal; North Vancouver to Prince George, British Columbia; the Pacific Coast (Los Angeles to Seattle); San Francisco to Denver; Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan to Agawa Canyon, Ontario; and Seattle/Portland to Chicago.

COTA Robs Citizens of Choice in Light Rail Issue

By Kenneth L. Wilt

Rather than go on and on about how disappointed I am with the Central Ohio Transit Authority Board of Director's decision not to pursue even a single line of a light rail system until God knows when, I will tell the story with the leftovers from the Media Watch column. Although news articles about the Columbus light-rail issue have been both numerous and diverse, COTA seems content allowing only the *Columbus Dispatch* to influence its policies. They must assume that we have no knowledge of the situation beyond the oftentimes schizophrenic stories which appear. But if you collect information from enough sources, the truth and the possibilities are revealed...

I will say this, however: for COTA to blame the proposed Republican budget cuts and to therefore not even try makes no sense. If an attempt would have been made and it failed because of the Republican Congress, then we'd know who to blame. But now we have nobody to blame except the COTA Board and Management. Those of us who face the prospect of having to vote with our feet to obtain transportation options are going to be taking a good hard look at COTA's bus operations and asking questions about all the empty buses running around, the reluctance to switch to natural gas buses, and so on...

December 15th, 1994 *Columbus Guardian* presents an excellent 3 page long feature story on the need for the Columbus light-rail system. In addition, an editorial entitled, "Light Rail - Get on it" appeared. The amazingly positive story was leveraged through the hard work of Michael Wilkos of the Capital City Transit Coalition. Special thanks to reporter Patrick Bryant and Editor Andrea Simakis of the *Columbus Guardian* for trying to help educate the public and the powers-that-be. (Thanks to Bob Boyce)

December 27th, 1994 *Columbus Dispatch* editorial promoting expanded bus service rather than light-rail. (Thanks to Bill Hutchison)

January 3rd, 1995 *Chicago Sun-Times* says that the federal government has awarded Chicago \$64.1 million to help pay for design and construction costs of a downtown light-rail system. Construction of the 9.7 mile loop known as the Central Area Circulator is to begin this spring and be running by the year 2000. (Thanks to Steve LaConte)

January 10th, 1995 *Columbus Dispatch* reporter Mark D. Somerson writes a commendable piece regarding the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) and the question of a light rail system vs. expanding the current bus system. The story recalls how in 1984 the COTA Board was poised to take an aggressive approach to transit management, but then failed to do so and ultimately left the bus system in a shambles. Now the current light rail proposal is under attack because the federal government requires that projected ridership figures be based on current bus system figures- so that allegedly only 14,700 people would use the light rail line daily. The article then wisely points out the reality of the successful St. Louis light-rail system which opened last year with ridership projections of only 10,000 to 12,000 riders per day. Upwards of 37,000 people are riding each day, and almost 80% of them say they never rode on a bus. (Thanks to Dave Lebold)

January 22nd, 1995 *Columbus Dispatch* full page feature story on the front page of the Insight section reports on how bus ridership in mass transit systems across the US is either flat or dropping, while rail ridership has been boosting overall public transit ridership figures. In St. Louis the new light-rail system is given credit for boosting bus ridership. (Thanks to Bob Boyce)

March 22nd, 1995 *Columbus Dispatch* carried report entitled "Kasich's budget-cutting bill would slice COTA". The story states that U.S. Representative John Kasich (R-Westerville) heads the House Budget Committee which is looking to cut \$100 Billion on future budgets, in part by reducing federal mass transit operating subsidies by \$1.2 Billion over 5 years and eliminating capital grants for new, fixed guideway systems (including light rail) in order to save another \$1.1 Billion over 5 years. The article said that COTA gets about 8% of its budget from the feds (\$3.8 million of COTA's \$40 million budget this year). The first segment of the light rail system is estimated at \$276 million, and they were looking for 50% federal funding. A Kasich spokesman said that the committee voted to eliminate the new-start capital grants for rail projects, in part, because of a study that said cities that added rail in the 1980's have not seen substantial work-related ridership increases.

March 31st, 1995 *Columbus Dispatch* carries one of several stories that week regarding the COTA Board's decision to drop plans for the light rail system. The article acknowledges that cost, rather than need, has become the primary issue. While it had appeared that the COTA Board was prepared to move forward with light-rail, after a meeting with COTA General Manager Glenna Watson the board abandoned plans for rail. The only reason given was the dismal funding forecasts from Washington DC.

April 26th, 1995 *Columbus Dispatch* report says that public transit ridership is on the upswing nationwide, except for buses. The buses didn't decline much, but the message is clear- people prefer rail. It appears that this story was leveraged in part by the American Public Transit Association, who also provided some figures of general interest listed in the box below...

Riding The Rails

Public transit ridership is on the upswing nationwide, except for buses.

	1993	1994
TRANSIT TYPE	BOARDINGS	BOARDINGS
<i>Commuter Rail</i>	331 million	350 million
<i>Heavy Rail</i>	2.2 billion	2.3 billion
<i>Light Rail</i>	225 million	233 million
Bus & Trolley Bus	5.41 billion	5.4 billion

Are We Headed For Another Derailment?

"The biggest and most positive news for rail passenger advocates in Ohio is that it appears that we, at long last, have a very good chance at rail passenger service serving Ohio's 3-C Corridor, possibly by the fall of (hold your breath) 1985... The Biennial Budget for the State of Ohio is to include \$10.3 million for passenger rail! ...This amount would include funds for both operations and for acquisition of equipment..."

Sounds great, doesn't it? However, the above is an excerpt from the November 19th, 1984 issue of *the 6:53* -- just 10 years ago. This raises the question: Are we being led down the same primrose path this year?

-- Bob Boyce

OARP Responds To Changes In CARDINAL, Loss Of BROADWAY LIMITED

By Mark Carlson, OARP President

There are no reasons to be pleased about the service Ohio is set to lose. These losses contradict OARP's mission of promoting and improving rail passenger service in and through Ohio. In Hamilton, Fostoria, Akron, and Youngstown, city officials and residents are understandably angry. A means of accessing their cities will cease to exist September 10th.

Behind the scenes, OARP began fighting the cuts *before* the public announcement. While preserving the BROADWAY LIMITED west of Pittsburgh, or the CARDINAL west of Cincinnati, will be difficult, OARP will argue for their survival, while considering reasonable alternatives.

Before we can address the cuts, we must first understand Amtrak's objectives. Contrary to most published reports, the issues surrounding Amtrak's "service adjustments" exceed their need to eliminate or scale back their worst economically performing trains.

We are all aware that much of Amtrak's rolling stock is aged, broken, and should have been replaced decades ago. It has become expensive to maintain and operate the long distance coach, diner and sleeping car Heritage Fleet -- the post war hand-me-downs from Amtrak's predecessors. Besides Amtrak's perceived need to reduce train miles, they must also reduce their fleet. Any recommendations or proposals made to Amtrak must fit within the financial and equipment constraints which Amtrak faces.

Regarding the loss of the BROADWAY LIMITED to Ohio, OARP has recommended that alternatives be implemented to preserve service to Fostoria, Akron, and Youngstown. One possibility is to provide a station facility at either Hudson or Ravenna on the CAPITOL LIMITED route to serve the Akron metropolitan area. The city of Ravenna has in reserve \$15,000 to help fund construction of a station facility for a state-sponsored extension of the PENNSYLVANIAN to Cleveland. Ravenna is near to Akron (20 miles), Kent State University (5 miles), and Interstate 76. Hudson officials have recently expressed support for a station stop in their community, although no financial commitment has been made. Hudson is located 15 miles north of Akron.

Under Amtrak labor rules, the two Akron Amtrak station employees are eligible for "C-2" severance pay. They are aggressive at selling Amtrak in the region and their layoff would be Amtrak's loss. So why not move them to Ravenna or Hudson? Or even Youngstown? Local, state, federal, and Amtrak officials have shown an interest in restoring the Ravenna Connection in order to reroute the CAPITOL LIMITED through Youngstown. Youngstown Mayor Pat Ungaro, Congressman James Traficant, and State Rep. Bob Hagan have all pledged to seek the roughly \$4 million needed to restore the Ravenna Connection.

We are working with NARP to persuade Amtrak that, if the BROADWAY LIMITED isn't restored, they should not use a cross platform connection at Pittsburgh. In order to fulfill a major mail contract, Amtrak will switch mail cars into the CAPITOL LIMITED consist. Since the CAPITOL LIMITED has a Transition Car, two Amfleet IIs could also be switched from the BROADWAY LIMITED running to Chicago on the CAPITOL LIMITED.

Attempting to find replacement service at Fostoria will be difficult. Fostoria is one of those cities that draws passengers from great distances -- a quick look at the license plates in the parking lot is proof. To preserve service at Fostoria, a southward extension of the Michigan bound Thruway buses which meet the CAPITOL LIMITED and/or LAKE SHORE LIMITED at Toledo should be considered.

Regarding the CARDINAL, the opportunities to preserve service are more challenging. What is presently wrong with the CARDINAL? First, it operates thrice-weekly. Second, ridership has been weak west of Cincinnati because of an inconvenient, slow, late-hour schedule. And third, the CARDINAL uses the aging Heritage Fleet equipment. Efforts to preserve service should not duplicate what is already wrong with the CARDINAL.

There are several options to be sure. The new CARDINAL must be re-equipped with Superliner coaches, and it should operate on a true overnight schedule between Chicago and Cincinnati. As an extension of the proposed daylight Cincinnati - Washington train, the eastbound train could leave Chicago late enough to arrive at Cincinnati between 6am and 8am. Westbound, the train would depart Cincinnati before midnight, arriving into Chicago after 7am.

Another option would be to extend the Chicago-Indianapolis HOOSIER STATE to Cincinnati. The HOOSIER STATE will become a thrice-weekly train in June. Regardless of what is proposed west of Cincinnati, OARP considers it a shame for Amtrak to relinquish the Chicago-Indianapolis-Cincinnati travel market.

Yet another option is a combination of the previous two suggestions.

If the service adjustments, as announced April 6th, are not modified by September, the two Amtrak routes will stub-end at Cincinnati and Indianapolis, creating an intolerable 132-mile gap in the system. Additionally, Cincinnati would be isolated from Amtrak's entire midwest and western Intercity route structure. Again, another intolerable gap in the Amtrak national system.

If Amtrak cannot afford the train miles to Chicago, there are other options. Currently, there are no facilities available to service, store, or turn the train anywhere near Cincinnati Union Terminal (CUT).

As part of Access Ohio, consultants must identify terminal and turning facilities for passenger trains in the Cincinnati area. Amtrak, the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) and OARP will work with the consultants to locate such facilities for the CARDINAL, if it is determined that Cincinnati will indeed become the trains western terminus.

Nevertheless, the changes to the CARDINAL are far better than what OARP had expected. Rumors were flying all winter that the train would cease to exist. As odd as it may sound, OARP is pleased that enough will remain of the CARDINAL for OARP and ORDC to work with.

The possibilities to preserve service to those cities affected by cuts to the BROADWAY LIMITED or the CARDINAL are there. It will take some imagination and creative thinking. Some of our ideas may work, while others may not. We will be creative, but realistic; communicative, yet forceful. This is part of our mission.

ORDC Board Meeting Coming Up

Now that the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) Board appointments have been made, they are likely to hold a meeting pretty soon, perhaps even a public meeting.

You may have noticed that we sometimes have trouble getting the word out about some public meetings on time. This is because oftentimes exact details of the meetings are not available to us until a few days before the events. We're considering our options to address this situation, including the possibility of establishing a 1-800 hotline. For now, know that the ORDC will be meeting soon, and watch local media or contact your nearest OARP Board Member for details.

Dual Hub Rail Line On The Brink

By Mark Adamcik and Ken Prendergast

Dual Hub, the proposed Red Line rapid transit relocation via Euclid Avenue between downtown Cleveland and University Circle, is on the brink of either advancement or death at the hands of the Governing Board of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA), a metropolitan planning organization.

At issue is whether to proceed with preliminary engineering on the \$728 million project. Preliminary engineering is expected to cost about \$10 million, regardless of whether the line is built. This procedure is no different than in highway planning.

On March 14th, Ron Tober, general manager of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA), was to ask GCRTA's Board of Trustees to seek the engineering funds through NOACA. But, NOACA Board Chairman Tim Hagan (a Cuyahoga County commissioner) is anti-rail and is opposed to Dual Hub, and has stacked NOACA's Board against Dual Hub. Tober instead asked the GCRTA Board to delay in seeking the engineering funds, so that a campaign could be launched to offset Hagan's efforts.

Cleveland-area OARP members should express support for Dual Hub. Why?

Some might say that there isn't a rail project out there that OARP doesn't like. Not true. If someone had suggested building a rapid transit line through Cleveland along railroad rights-of-way bracketed by old factories and crumbling warehouses, OARP would oppose it. Yet, this ridership-hindering setting is where the Red Line is currently aligned. This segment suffers the lowest rail transit ridership per track-mile of any in the U.S.

Dual Hub would change that, and in big way. The Red Line would be relocated down Euclid Avenue--Cleveland's "Main Street". From Tower City, the Red Line would operate in a subway, running crosslots to the intersection of Euclid Avenue and East Ninth Street. It would continue under Euclid to East 22nd Street where it would rise to the surface. Eastward from this subway portal, the Red Line would run in a new median strip down Euclid to University Circle. Just east of the circle, at about East 120th Street, the line would rejoin its current alignment to Windemere.

To significantly lower construction costs, OARP suggested to GCRTA in April that they forget the subway and instead run Dual Hub down the middle of Huron Road from Tower City to Playhouse Square. From there, it would follow Euclid Avenue east to University Circle. OARP's suggestion represents a radical idea, so it is no surprise that it was met by a mixed response! We'll keep after it.

What ridership generators are within a five-minute walk of proposed Dual Hub stations?

There is the heart of Cleveland's financial district, where over 100,000 are employed. There is Playhouse Square, America's third largest performing arts center. There is Cleveland State

University, an urban "commuter" school with an enrollment of 25,000 students. At East 55th Street, a transfer station with the proposed Cleveland (Lakefront Station)-Akron (Quaker Square) commuter rail service, which could start in late-1996. There is the gentrifying area of Church Square.

Then there is University Circle, the largest concentration of cultural, medical, and educational institutions in the nation. It is also the second largest employment base in Cleveland, behind downtown. At the Circle, there is the world-renowned Cleveland Clinic complex, University Hospitals, Severance Hall, Case Western Reserve University, and dozens of museums visited by millions each year.

While Dual Hub would feature much of Cleveland's good side, the Red Line's current route endures its worst side. It parallels the Norfolk Southern Railroad mainline aside rusting factories, junkyards, and railroad yards. Perhaps the greatest potential for economic development on the current Red Line east of downtown is for EPA Superfund cleanup. The cost of rebuilding this area, at this time, is beyond the ability of most developers. Another problem of the Red Line is that it has only one downtown station--Tower City. Dual Hub would add three more stations in the central business district.

Cleveland-area OARP members should support Dual Hub because of rail's superiority over buses in encouraging suburbanites to use transit and patronize businesses and institutions in the central city. Developers, including members of the Urban Land Institute, are interested in Dual Hub because it would improve access to underutilized and vacant properties in the central city, which are gradually being restored to productive uses. Dual Hub would accelerate development, and circulate former motorists and bus riders arriving on new rail lines proposed into Parma, Berea, Cleveland Heights, Euclid, Lakewood, North Olmsted, and Highland

Hills. Downtown destinations and those along congested Euclid Avenue could be reached from throughout the city without having to change trains.

An element of the Dual Hub project would correct yet another major flaw in Cleveland's rapid transit network--the low-platform transit cars of the Blue and Green Lines cannot operate on the high-platform Red Line, and vice-versa. A cost component of Dual Hub would enable the purchase of a standard fleet of light-rail cars, capable of serving high and low platform stations. Those rail cars could serve any line, including future lines proposed by GCRTA.

Without Dual Hub, the feasibility of new commuter rail, light rail, and bus services envisioned by GCRTA would be greatly diminished. Dual Hub is more than the relocation of a misaligned, underutilized rapid transit line--it is the keystone to giving Greater Cleveland an exemplary transit system, one that can promote pedestrian-friendly development, less stressful rush hours (particularly in winter!), and a more livable urban environment.

If you want to let the NOACA Governing Board know your feelings on dual hub, you can write:

Timothy Hagan
President, NOACA Governing Board
668 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44114

New Ohio Rail Maps Available

OARP Member Clinton H. Hobbs of Kent, Ohio wrote in asking how one could get a copy of the new state rail map. I sent Mr. Hobbs a fresh map along with a note thanking him for his question. Anyone else interested in obtaining a map can write the Ohio Rail Development Commission at 50 West Broad Street, 15th Floor, Columbus, OH 43215 or call them at 614/644-0306.

- Ken Wilt

COTA Goes Online

The Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) has established the following Email addresses:

General Manager Glenna Watson = agenlmgr@cota.com
Customer Service = info@cota.com
Complaints or Compliments = comments@cota.com
Tour Information = schooltour@cota.com

Toledo Area Update

By Larry George, OARP Board Director

About 30 people came to Central Union Terminal on March 18th to participate in the national day of protest organized by OARP, NARP, and the Empire State Passenger Association (ESPA). Interested parties came not only from the Toledo area, but also from Cleveland, Columbus and Marblehead. The Columbus people displayed their large Amtrak banner. The protest was directed generally at Amtrak's cuts nationwide, but specifically at the discontinuation of the Toledo-Detroit segment of the LAKE CITIES, which took effect on April 2nd.

A somewhat larger crowd turned out for the second protest on April 1st to observe the final departure from Toledo of the LAKE CITIES. News media coverage of both protests was excellent by Toledo's Channel 11, with Channel 13 and the Toledo Blade covering the March 18th event only, albeit with good coverage.

It was hoped that the LAKE CITIES could have been extended to Columbus, but, as usual, Ohio dropped the ball, and now the train is gone. If Governor Voinovich gets off his duff and fills the positions on the Ohio Rail Development Commission (*Ed. note: finally done! See story on front page*), perhaps someday, in cooperation with Michigan, we can have service between Lansing, Detroit, Toledo, and Columbus. It would have had a better chance of happening a lot sooner if the LAKE CITIES could have kept running to Toledo.

Central Union Terminal Update

By Larry George, OARP Board Director

John Loftus, Chairman of the Central Union Terminal (CUT) project for the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority, says that the EPA planned to test the CUT property once more and if, as before, no contaminants are found, the Port Authority will take title to the property and solicit bids for the construction of the new Amtrak/Greyhound station and renovation of the rest of the building. If contaminants are found, the whole project could be scrapped. This is viewed as unlikely, since none were found in the first tests conducted several months ago.

The Port Authority has approached Amtrak on the possibility of relocating to a temporary facility (trailers) on the platform during the construction. This would allow all phases of the renovation to be done simultaneously, thus speeding completion. It also would protect Amtrak passengers and employees during the asbestos abatement phase of construction. The move could occur as early as May 10th.

**Columbus area local OARP meetings
are held on the second Saturday of
every month, from 10am to Noon, at
the Red Door Tavern,
1736 West 5th Avenue.**

Columbus Area Update

By Robert Boyce, OARP Columbus Area Regional Coordinator

The OARP chapter issue and the Amtrak crisis sparked discussions at the March 11th Red Door Meeting, and Larry Robertson presented his video exchange proposal.

Members welcomed two new faces among the 18 attending the meeting -- Richard Lodholz and Robert Yahn.

Bob Boyce read OARP General Counsel Ben Farah's opinion on OARP chapter formation, which had been presented at the last OARP Board meeting. The opinion cautioned against the hazards of formal chapter structure and cited examples in other organizations, including the past consideration of formal chapters by the National Association of Railroad Passengers. Consensus appeared to be that while our local membership accepted OARP's position on informal chapters, we reserve the right to express our views within the organization.

Some individual views:

- * OARP should be much more outspoken in criticizing government inaction on passenger rail.
- * Communication should be improved between the state organization and local groups.
- * A stronger, better defined strategy and action program should be developed by OARP.

In connection with the chapter issue, the group agreed to consider the transfer of local treasury funds from a checking account to a savings account, and for account purposes to consider the name "Central Ohio Rail Passenger Association". Harold Zweifel agreed to discuss the matter with OARP Treasurer Steve Klipfel. Harold reported \$241.58 in the local treasury.

Ten members tentatively agreed to attend the "Save Amtrak" rally meeting Amtrak's LAKE CITIES and LAKE SHORE LIMITED trains in Toledo on Saturday, March 18th. As it turned out, last minute confusion in planning caused by cancellation of the appearance of State Representative Sally Perz, only six from Columbus attended the rally: John Murley, Pat and Dan Patterson, Bob Rietz, Larry Robertson and Bob Boyce. At the rally, OARP Toledo Area Board member Larry George announced a repeat rally two weeks hence, on April 1st when Sally Perz could be present. That day would mark the final stop in Toledo of the LAKE CITIES train.

Larry Robertson passed out a list of his video tapes and invited members at the meeting to add their own titles to the list for the next meeting. He suggested some kind of "swapping" arrangement, where borrowers possibly keeping a tape from one meeting to the next for a small fee. Larry also suggested the production of tapes combing segments of TV rail news reports and members' rail video shots.

On February 22nd, Bill O'Brien, Harold Zweifel and Bob Boyce met with State Senator Cooper Snyder to urge his support for passenger rail in the legislature. That support was affirmed on March 21st, when Senator Snyder added his arguments for a rail alternative following OARP Government Affairs Director Bill Hutchison's testimony before the Senate Highway and Transportation Committee, of which Senator Snyder is a member.

Media Watch.....Clippings and news from OARP Members Across the State (and world).....Compiled by Ken Wilt

February 11, 1995 *Cincinnati Post* story on the possibility of an interstate compact being formed by Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana in order to pool Cincinnati area local governments' resources to pay for shared public amenities such as stadiums and light rail systems. The light rail system possibility was explained in a very nice graphic/map across much of the front page. (Thanks to W. Mike Weber)

March 13th, 1995 *Forbes* magazine had a very upbeat article about the recently opened Channel Tunnel, which links Britain and France by a 31-mile-long rail tunnel that runs under the English Channel. So far the Eurostar trains that run between London and Paris have been doing very well- running at about 75% occupancy and competing excellently against air service between the two cities. The trains make the London-Paris trip in about three hours, putting them 1/2 hour ahead of taking a plane when you include travel time to and from airports. The trains are also cheaper-so the airlines have been slashing fares in an effort to compete. To book a trip on a Channel Tunnel Eurostar train call 011-44-233-617575, or see your travel agent. (Thanks to H. Howard Hollingsworth)

March 13th, 1995 *Nation's Cities Weekly*, the official publication of the National League of Cities ran a front page article about the proposed Amtrak cutbacks and invited city officials from affected communities to attend a special meeting where the Amtrak situation and a vision for our national passenger rail system would be discussed. (Thanks to Linda Leas)

March 22nd, 1995 *Pataskala Standard* had a front page story and 2 pictures about OARP Board Member Bill Schuler's winter train trip through the Canadian Rockies. Bill and his wife had a fantastic two week trip in February, traveling from Windsor all the way to Vancouver, with plenty of stops in between. The article really captured the fun and romance of train travel, and the pictures were just some postcards picked up along the way. Bill leveraged this positive article about train travel by finding a reporter that was sympathetic to our cause (in this case Richard Patterson) and sharing lots of information with him. Bill feels that creating positive press about train travel is a good way for OARP to educate the public. I agree. Thanks for helping promote passenger rail, Bill!

March 31st, 1995 *Wall Street Journal* headline read "Budget Cutters May Miss The Train as Amtrak Appears to Be Jammed With Congressional Fans." The story cites many specific examples of legislators, many Republican, who although may have questioned Amtrak subsidies in the past, are now upset that Amtrak wants to cut routes through their districts. Amtrak converts mentioned were Representative Robert Walker (R-Pennsylvania) and Senator Trent Lott (R-Mississippi). Senator Lott, who is the Senate majority whip and the Chairman of the Senate Surface Transportation Subcommittee was quoted as saying, " I support having rail passenger service. I think most members of Congress do." Others were even more outspoken. Senator Alfonse D'Amato (R-New York) said, "Amtrak transports 22 million people per year in an environmentally sound and fuel-efficient manner." And Representative George Gekas (R-Pennsylvania) says that Amtrak "can, at an instant's notice, become a question of national security." (Thanks to Jim Dingus, Bill Schuler and Al Wolf)

April 1995 *Sierra Club Activist Resource* carried a provocative piece by Preston Schiller, who states that, "Improving intercity rail systems makes more sense than expanding airports, especially for trips of under 500 miles." Schiller points out an interesting statistic about the Seattle-Tacoma regional airport: "More than half of SeaTac's operations are given over to flights of less than 500 miles, which serve approximately one-tenth of the airport's travelers." Schiller contends that an accelerated intercity rail program could eliminate at least half of the commuter and short-distance flights... and save money. (Thanks to Robert and Sharon Carroll)

April 7th, 1995 *Columbus Dispatch* carried the report of Amtrak's laying off 5,600 people, cutting the Youngstown stop from the BROADWAY LIMITED come September, and eliminating the CARDINAL west of Cincinnati. Some hopeful news in that Representative James Traficant Jr. (D-Youngstown), has a plan for maintaining service to Youngstown by making it a stop for the CAPITOL LIMITED. "I would be willing to work with Amtrak to have a rail connection built at Ravenna to allow the CAPITOL LIMITED to be rerouted to Youngstown," Traficant said.

OARP's Annual Meeting to be held 10am - 4pm on May 20th in Columbus

You are invited to attend the May 20th Annual OARP Meeting in Columbus. Details and registration forms were sent out recently to dues paying OARP Members. If for some reason you did not receive that mailing, or you need another registration form, please contact Ken Wilt (info on back page, mailing panel). Pre-registration is \$15/person.

It should be an exciting meeting. There is the election of Board members and the speaker is Joseph Silien of ABB Traction, Inc. Joe will be giving us details about the IC3, a Danish built trainset that can be segmented to have different portions running on their own power. The IC3 could be an exciting piece of equipment for Ohio service. An IC3 trainset is scheduled to arrive in the US soon, for a demonstration project in Oregon. If we play our cards right, we may be able to get the train to visit here in Ohio as well. Come out to the meeting and learn more about the IC3! Registration is also available at the door for \$17/person.

For more information call Bob Boyce at 614/486-7038 or Ken Wilt at 614/451-5764.

Please take notice that at the general membership meeting on May 20th in Columbus, a vote will be taken to amend OARP's Articles of Incorporation, to change the principal office of the corporation from Xenia to Cleveland. In addition, changes to our by-laws may be proposed.

Corrected Directions to the Jai Lai Restaurant at 1421 Olentangy River Road:

Take I-70 or I-71 to St. Rt 315. If northbound on 315, take the Lane Avenue exit and turn RIGHT onto Lane. Then turn RIGHT onto Olentangy. The road will narrow and you will go straight through one stop light and turn left at the second light... Still Olentangy River Road. The Jai Lai will be on your right. If coming southbound on 315, take the Kinnear Rd/5th Ave/3rd Ave exit and turn left onto Olentangy River Road. The restaurant will be on the right.

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

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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 \$50 check, made payable to OARP, to Stephen Klipfel, Treasurer, 825 S. Tecumseh Rd, Springfield, OH 45506. The TRAM annual listing fee of \$40 entitles you to list your CITY, the NAME OF YOUR AGENCY, one LONG DISTANCE PHONE NUMBER, one LOCAL PHONE NUMBER, and the name of one salesperson at the agency. RENEWALS will be billed by the Treasurer.

Updated: June 1994

Help OARP Meet the Challenges of 1995!

An Introductory year long membership in OARP costs only \$15, and includes subscriptions to OARP's 2 newsletters.

Mail your order to OARP's Treasurer: Steve Klipfel, 825 S. Tecumseh Road, Springfield, Ohio 45506.

Name _____

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Contributions to OARP are tax-deductible.

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National Association of Railroad Passengers/ NARP PASSENGER RAILNEWS HOTLINE (24 HOURS) 900/988-RAIL
 NARP OFFICE PHONE (regular hours) 202/408-8362

900 Second Street, NE, Suite # 308, Washington DC 20002 Ross Capon, Executive Director
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 OHIO NARP At-Large Director: James A. Dingus, Jr. (address above)

OARP'S OFFICIAL BUSINESS PHONE - (equipped with answering machine)..... 614/451-5764

Updated: March 1995

Please clip out this updated directory...

Of Rail Interest...

May 27th & 28th Toronto, Ontario...

Central Electric Railfans' Association is holding its sixth annual **"Electric Railway Weekend"** which includes a visit to the **Halton County Radial Railway** near Guelph, Ontario. The museum is operated by the **Ontario Electric Railway Historical Association**, and features street railway equipment from Toronto and Montreal. Some interurban equipment is also on display at this **"operating museum"**. The weekend will also feature a meeting with a slide show entitled "Toronto in 1950" and a **street railway trip (using PCC equipment) on the streets of Toronto**. Tickets are \$50 for the weekend for adults, and \$25 for children. Tickets are also available for individual events. Tickets do not include food or lodging, but CERA has arranged a group rate at the Bond Place Hotel (1-800-268-9390).

Hotel Reservations must be made by May 11th. For more information and tickets please contact: **CERA, PO Box 503, Chicago, IL 60690.**

- submitted by Daryl Gordon

Unlimited Stopovers on All Aboard America Fares!

This year Amtrak is not only offering its special **All Aboard America Fares**, but is allowing an **unlimited** number of stopovers! This makes an already great value almost too much to pass up. For one low round-trip fare, you can stop in as many cities as you like within one, two, or all three Amtrak regions and take up to 30 days to travel. But hurry!

Reservations are required and must be made by May 15th.

Spring fares, which apply to travel between now and June 15th are **\$138 for one zone, \$188 for two zones, and \$228 for all three zones**. Summer fares, which apply to travel between June 16th and August 20th are **\$178 for one zone, \$248 for two zones, and \$298 for all three zones**. Travel is in Coach, with additional charges for First Class or other accommodations. Not valid for Metroliner Service, Auto Train or for VIA portions of joint Amtrak/VIA trains. Travel over the same segment of the Amtrak route system is restricted. Changes to route or stopovers after departure is prohibited. Tickets are non-refundable and must be purchased within 7 days after reservations are made. Further discounts for children and seniors are available. **Other restrictions apply. Contact an OARP approved travel agent (listing on page 7) or Amtrak at 1-800-USA-RAIL.**

Your Contributions Make The 6:53...

Your passenger rail related articles, clippings, letters, and photos are welcome! We may edit and we can't guarantee that we'll use everything you send. But we'll try...

Please note that all signed articles in *the 6:53* reflect the opinion of their authors, and not necessarily the views and positions of OARP and its officers.

Send your newsletter items to:

OARP News/the 6:53

c/o Ken Wilt, Editor

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