Amtrak saved from bankruptcy

Trains regain a future

In an 11th-hour move, the U.S. Congress has saved Amtrak from an almost-certain bankruptcy by passing the Amtrak reform and reauthorization bill. The measure passed both the Senate and House of Representatives without any objection. With the clock ticking down to a holiday recess, Republicans and Democrats negotiated an agreement that drew support from interest groups that were at odds only days earlier.

Amtrak’s access to $2.3 billion in capital investment funds, included in the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997, was tied to passage of the reform bill. The capital funds are needed to retire old debt and to upgrade aging facilities and rolling stock. Without these, Amtrak was facing the prospect having to go back to unsympathetic creditors in December, which probably would have forced Amtrak to file for bankruptcy.

It is quite likely that, if Amtrak had filed for bankruptcy, a large portion of the national system would have been liquidated to pay off creditors. Instead, Amtrak has sud-

MARP asks for GAO investigation

In a letter to U.S. Senator Spencer Abraham (R-Michigan), MARP has asked for a General Accounting Office (GAO) investigation and assessment of the effectiveness of Amtrak’s management. The request was prompted by the fall schedules for the Chicago-Detroit corridor, which went into effect Oct. 26.

The new schedules are the longest in Amtrak’s history, and, at six hours (Chicago-Detroit), are even longer than they were in the days of Penn Central. After over $100 million of track and signal work by the State of Michigan and Amtrak over
prospect having to go back to unsympathetic creditors in December, which probably would have forced Amtrak to file for bankruptcy.

It is quite likely that, if Amtrak had filed for bankruptcy, a large portion of the national system would have been liquidated to pay off creditors. Instead, Amtrak has suddenly been granted a much brighter future.

“With the President’s signature, Amtrak will join the rest of America, crossing the bridge to the 21st Century,” said Amtrak Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer Tom Downs.

President Bill Clinton was expected to sign the reform bill, as reported at newsletter press time. Congress and the Clinton Administration have told Amtrak that federal operating support will cease in 2002.

“Together, the labor agreement and the passage of reform legislation continues Amtrak on the right track to long-term viability,” said Rodney Slater, secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The bipartisan compromise meant the inclusion of some new provisions to the Amtrak reform bill:

- Labor protection (under section C-2) is removed from the statute upon enactment. Then, parties negotiate during

AMTRAK RETURNS TO COLUMBUS! It may have been for just one weekend (Sept. 20-21), but the Amtrak train chartered by the Mad River and NKP Railroad Society of Bellevue, OH showed off 3-C Corridor rail travel. Dubbed as “The Ohio State Limited”, the sold-out train carried passengers from Cleveland and Galion to Cincinnati, with some continuing on to Paris, KY. Behind the two P42 locomotives were nine Superliner coaches, and two private cars providing first class service. A week later, the same train ran between Akron and Pittsburgh (see page three for photo). In this scene, the train is pulling away from downtown Columbus, heading for Cincinnati.
Train of Thought
from OARP Executive Director
Kenneth Prendergast

It's time to begin looking for a better way to run a railroad. I know Congress has reformed Amtrak's labor practices and other operational matters. The question is, do Congress' reforms go far enough? I think not.

Few can say, with a straight face, that Amtrak has been a success. Despite recent statements by Supertrains author Joseph Vranich and a few others, it may be too drastic to burn Amtrak at the stake in the hopes something better might rise from its ashes. Instead, we might look at ways of advocating either an amending of Amtrak's authorizing legislation—the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970—or a restructuring of Amtrak's corporate structure.

Regarding an amendment to the legislation, I recall a recent, amazing turn of events. Last year, the Illinois Department of Transportation's operating agreement with Amtrak expired. Not only did Amtrak bid for a new contract, but so did freight railroads Burlington Northern/Santa Fe and Union Pacific, plus Metra, the Chicagoland commuter rail authority.

Amtrak won the bid because it could offer the lower cost structure, in part because the 1970 statutes gives it more regulatory freedoms, tax exemptions, and other benefits its competitors could not match.

Thus, to level the playing field, amend the Rail Passenger Service Act so it may apply to any rail operator which can be licensed to run passenger trains. Amtrak could become a contract manager, like it already is with a number of urban commuter railroads, and provide new intercity passenger train operators with its liability insurance benefits, national reservations system, stations, etc. for a fee.

Corporate restructuring could simply expand on something Amtrak has already started—the strategic business unit. Amtrak has three such units: west, northeast, and intercity. West is basically everything that operates along the Pacific Ocean's coast. Northeast is mostly the Washington D.C.-Boston Northeast Corridor, plus several routes that extend inland for several hundred miles. Intercity is everything else, as if they were leftovers.

Attention to customer service, marketing ingenuity, and generally decent operating conditions seem to prevail at Amtrak's west and northeast SBU’s. This compares to the apathetic morale, poor customer service, shortage of
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Clippings from newspapers and magazines must include the publication's name and date. Your articles and news briefs should be typed and double-spaced, though very short items may be legibly written. Preferably, send hard copy with IBM-compatible text files on 5¼'' or 3½'' disks. Submissions via e-mail to:

Internet:72764.2020@Compuserve.com.

We reserve the right to edit all non-published submissions. Original photos should be sharp, bright prints—avoid slides and negatives. Always include your name and phone number!

The Passenger Rail News
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North American rail pass created

MONTREAL — VIA Rail Canada announced that it will be launching in January 1998 a new North American rail pass in collaboration with Amtrak. The new product will link VIA’s national network with Amtrak’s system through connecting points at Montreal, Toronto, Niagara Falls, Sarnia, and Vancouver.

Both VIA and Amtrak will retain their existing rail passes exclusives to their own systems but, as Christena Ikon Sirsly, marketing vice-president for VIA says: “We believe the new pass will generate additional traffic, both in North America and especially in the offshore market.”

“This is a product of long-standing partnership with Amtrak and a response to customer demand. Clearly, for international travelers and for those in North America who have toured Europe on the Eurailpass we know that ease of exploration is top on consumers’ minds, not borders or barriers.”

The North America Rail Pass will open up some 900 destinations and 45,000 kilometres (28,000 miles) of rail travel over a 30-day period. The pass will cost $895 (Cdn.) in the peak season and $625 (Cdn.) in the off-peak and will be sold worldwide through both VIA and Amtrak offices as well as travel agencies. The pass provides economy class travel but holders will be able to upgrade to first class and sleeper accommodations as they can currently with the Canrailpass.

Most rules associated with the current Canrailpass will apply and these will be communicated when the new product is formally launched in January.

from a VIA Rail Canada press release

Report shows commuter rail benefits

A new report, “Commuter Rail: Serving America’s Emerging Suburban/Urban Economy,” finds that commuter rail service in the United States is a vital economic link that returns far more to the economy than it costs.

Chairman Bud Shuster of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and Ranking Committee Member James Oberstar joined officials of the American Public Transit Association (APTA), at a press conference called to release the report.

The economic benefits of commuter rail accrue to individuals — both riders and non-riders alike — as well as regions and the national economy. The report, prepared by the Carmen Group Inc. of Washington, DC, was released by APTA, the trade association representing the North American transit industry.

“This excellent report provides yet another clear example of the benefits of investment in our nation’s infrastructure,” said APTA Commuter Rail Committee Chairperson Don Nelson, president of Metro-North Railroad in New York. “More to the point, the study shows that for each federal dollar invested in commuter rail, more than five dollars in benefits accrue to the nation.”

“That is why APTA strongly supports the ‘BESTEA’ surface transportation legislation Chairman Shuster released yesterday. Balanced and flexible federal policies, such as those embodied in this legislation, are essential to ensure that all commuters have access to reliable, high-quality transit service.”

Amtrak returning to Fostoria while Intercity bus service resumes

from a VIA Rail Canada press release

Intercity bus service

from a VIA Rail Canada press release
Amtrak returning to Fostoria while Akron still dithers

By Robert Boyce
OARP Columbus Area Coordinator

Amtrak service is inching closer to Central Ohio. In Fostoria, work has begun on the renovation of a passenger waiting room, which is needed before Amtrak’s Three Rivers can stop there.

OARP member Harold Zweifel said that Daniel S. Hunter, Fostoria city engineer, told him that a contract had been let to a local company for about $8,000 to start work Oct. 20 with a completion in one month. Since the contract was below $10,000, it wasn’t necessary to advertise for bids through the state, which had appropriated $12,500 for the project.

Renovation includes a small waiting room and restroom in a utility building adjoining the former, original passenger station, which has been taken over for use by CSX—the station’s owner.

Once work is done, Amtrak must approve the renovation before scheduling a stop of the nightly Three Rivers train in Fostoria. Fostoria will then become central Ohio’s closest stop, some 30 miles closer than Cincinnati, which currently is closest.

The Akron station is still in limbo, however. According to Tom Wong of Akron’s City Planning Department, a bid to build a modular station recently came in at $97,000. But, the city’s budget ceiling for the project is an unreasonably low $50,000.

City officials apparently haven’t decided whether to accept or reject the bid. Hopefully, positive action will be swift, as rail passengers in the Akron area have been waiting for more than two years for the return of train service, despite that the Three Rivers trains pass through their town each night.

Ken Prendergast contributed to this story

Intercity bus service returns to da U.P., eh?

Michigan’s Upper Peninsula (the UP to Michigan) was left without any scheduled land transportation when White Pine Bus Company ceased operations in January after the death of its owner. In 1996, over 20,000 people rode UP buses according to MI-DOT.

MI-DOT has stepped forward and provided five 47-passenger buses on a $1 a year lease each, to Superior Delivery and Transportation Co., headquartered in Houghton. In turn, Superior operates two routes which intersect at the Delta County Area Transit Authority in Escanaba.

The first route runs from St. Ignace westward through Manistique, Escanaba, Iron Mountain, Iron River and Ironwood to Duluth, MN. The second route operates from Calumet in the Keweenaw Peninsula southward through Houghton, and L’Anse east to Marquette, then south again to Escanaba and Menominee, thence to Green Bay and Milwaukee.

The new service allows down-staters access to most major cities in the UP via Indian Trails connecting with Superior at St. Ignace. For schedules and fares, passengers can call Superior at (906) 487-6511.
Amtrak to passenger: Stay away!

As Amtrak’s fall schedules began circulating, howls of protest have been heard from virtually every passenger organization in the country. A few rail passenger advocates reportedly have even called for the dissolution of Amtrak.

The first of many things wrong is with the Detroit-Chicago schedule, now 6 hours. This is longer than it was under Penn Central, and the longest schedule for major trains on the route since the 1920’s (In 1938, New York Central did it in 4 1/2 hours). The first train (#350) leaves Chicago at 8:20 a.m. Supposedly this 1:20 later departure will boost Chicago boardings. Unfortunately, it also eliminates traffic to Greenfield Village, which has become the fastest-growing traffic generator on the route.

Under the old schedule, Amtrak was just beginning to attract business traffic to Kalamazoo. Here and there, people in business attire and carrying laptops were beginning to be seen among the students and tourists. Better yet, these were weekday travelers, filling seats which are normally empty.

Then, to compound the error, the train terminates at Detroit instead of continuing to Pontiac. This will hurt Oakland County ridership on the remaining Oakland County trains, as the availability of schedule choices makes the service less attractive.

The eastbound morning Wolverine, (#350), which terminates at Detroit, goes back out as the reasons #355 has weak ridership is that it left Detroit too early (5:13 p.m.), making it impossible for many workers to catch the train after a day in the office. The new schedule worsens this by leaving 45 minutes earlier.

At the other end of the route, train #354, the eastbound Twilight, was always successful because its 6:15 p.m. departure caught all of the connections from western trains, plus allowed people working in downtown Chicago to catch the train after work. Now that train leaves Chicago at 5:15 p.m., which means it will probably miss train #6, the California Zephyr. Worse, the new departure time does not allow people in the downtown Chicago area to take the train after getting off work.

Some other schedule changes are even worse. The eastbound Lake Shore Limited now leaves Chicago after 8:00 p.m., getting into New York City late in the afternoon, making the train less usable for everyone. For Michigan passengers, it means transferring from the once-popular Thruway bus to the train in Toledo at 2:00 a.m.

The rationale for this was to allow connections from the California Zephyr. Apparently no one thought to put a note in the timetable that connections from the California Zephyr at Chicago would not be guaranteed. The California Zephyr has been running late due to severe congestion problems on the Union Pacific, its host railroad (see related story, page eight).

MARP has complained to Amtrak President but no response has been received at press time.

Ex-Conrail line bought in Columbus

By Bill Hutchison
OARP Vice President

Pennsylvanian extension still on track

By Ken Prendergast
OARP Executive Director

As reported in the last issue of The Passenger Rail News, Amtrak is considering a westward extension of its New York City-Pittsburgh Pennsylvania to Cleveland, Toledo, South Bend, and Chicago.

However, OARP has learned both end points are slated to be changed. The eastern terminus may be moving west as well. Amtrak is considering making Philadelphia the train’s easternmost station.

This is due to the fact that the extension is being financed by additional mail and express business. Since the U.S. Postal Service generally prefers dispatching mail at dawn, the train would have to depart shortly after dawn from an endpoint city having a Bulk Mail Center. Yet, the train would also have to arrive its end-point city at a reasonable hour for its passengers.

New York City, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Chicago all have USPS Bulk Mail Centers. However, if the Pennsylvanian were to continue to leave New York City at 7:15 a.m., it would arrive Chicago well after 2 a.m. Because of the time zone difference, the schedule in the other direction would be worse. Departing Chicago at 6 a.m. would mean a New York City arrival of about 3:15 a.m.

Cutting the train back to Philadelphia would offer some improvement. Based on the schedules of other existing Amtrak trains, the eastbound Pennsylvania might depart Chicago at 6 a.m., with the 7:15 a.m. Pennsylvanian being dropped.
Ex-Conrail line bought in Columbus

By Bill Hutchison
OARP Vice President

“A local real estate investor who is buying a stretch of abandoned Conrail tracks that runs from the North side into Westerville said he’s talking to independent rail operators about reactivating the corridor for passenger or freight service. But the investor, Randolph Maynard, Sr., of Maynard Properties, declined to discuss specific plans for the 7 mile stretch.”...excerpted from the Columbus Dispatch, Oct. 23, 1997

OARP members should view this development as an encouraging one! There is much vacant or little-used land ripe for transit-friendly development immediately adjacent to the former Conrail (ex-PRR) line, especially at Innis Road, Ferris Road/Cleveland Avenue, and Morse Road.

The new Easton Mall is just a short distance to the east of the line, and any rail line would offer competitive service when compared to heavily congested Morse Road and Cleveland Avenue.

Maynard paid $1.5 million for the line, though the city apparently is upset that they did not get their hands on it for use as a transit route or bicycle path. However, the city has had ample opportunity to beat Maynard to buying the old right-of-way.

Representatives of the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA), the Columbus City Planning Department, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, and Conrail met a week after the deal was announced to discuss the matter. Nothing has been resolved, as yet.

Possibly, a short line operator like Ohio Central could run RegioSprinters or their equivalent which will save the cost of installing expensive catenary (cordless light rail?). On the freight side, there are a couple of potential customers: a large shoe factory at Innis Road, the Schottenstein complex, also at Innis Road, and a concrete manufacturing complex just south of I-270.

“What they want is to sell us the right of way; currently COTA (Central Ohio Transit Authority) could not do that,” said Glenna Watson, COTA general manager, in the Dispatch article. “We would love to have that (property), not necessarily for light rail, but in the future for bus-ways.”

Unfortunately, Glenna Watson shows her pro-bus, anti-rail bias as usual, but rejoice, since she will be out of office at year’s end. Maybe there is hope yet for Columbus, which recently was identified in a nationwide study as having the second-greatest increase in road congestion during the last six years. The traffic will only get worse and some are beginning to wake up and smell the coffee.

Robert Boyce contributed to this story

Planning Authority (COTA), the Columbus City

Transit Representatives of the Central

Ohio (OARP) Vice President, was quoted in the Dispatch article, "What they want is to sell us the

eastbound Pennsylvanian might depart Chicago at 6 a.m., with a 6:30 a.m. stop in suburban Hammond/Whiting, IN. This puts the train departing South Bend at about 7:30 a.m.; Toledo 11:30 a.m.; Cleveland 1:30 p.m.; Pittsburgh 4:55 p.m.; Altoona 7:30 p.m.; Harrisburg 10:20 p.m.; Paoli (in suburban Philly) at Harrisburg at 12:30 a.m.

Westbound, the Pennsylvanian might depart Philadelphia at 6:30 a.m.; Paoli 7 a.m.; Harrisburg 8:40 a.m.; Altoona 11:15 a.m.; Pittsburgh 2:45 p.m.; Cleveland 6 p.m.; Toledo 8:15 p.m.; South Bend 9:45 p.m.; Hammond/Whiting 10:45 p.m.; and Chicago at 11:45 p.m.

OARP has learned that Amtrak and the post office wanted to start the Pennsylvania extension before Christmas 1997, but Amtrak was short of train crews and could not hire new ones in time. The next opportunity for starting this service could be the spring timetable change, which takes place when daylight savings time comes next April.

Also, look for a number of enroute cities to contribute a sizeable amount of mail and express business. In Toledo, for example, Amtrak is already operating a switching locomotive to put together nearly 10 express car shipments a day, carrying everything from soup to whiskey from nearby plants.
Amtrak saved from Bankruptcy
— "AMTRAK", from page one

Cincy solutions: more rail, less cars

CINCINNATI — Facing stifling road congestion, area leaders are taking increasingly progressive attitudes toward transportation policy.

According to the Texas Transportation Institute, Cincinnati has the third-fastest traffic congestion growth of all American cities. According to regional planners, that congestion will intensify unless light-rail transit is built.

Officials say that, unless alternatives to the car are found, the Cincinnati region’s growth may be doomed by roads becoming entangled in their own traffic. Already, congestion cripples many urban and suburban Interstates.

In the last six years, congestion on Greater Cincinnati’s roads shot up 19 percent. Only Columbus (20 percent) and Salt Lake City (31 percent) saw faster increases. However, construction is about to begin on a 15-mile light-rail line in Salt Lake City. Columbus has no active rail transit plans.

Between those two extremes is Cincinnati, in terms of their advancement of light rail planning. The Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) is developing detailed plans for a light-rail line in the 33-mile, airport-downtown-Kings Island, Interstate 71 corridor.

Those who are backing the project say the Texas report, and OARP’s last newsletter (which highlighted light-rail’s importance) are major factors in a recent upsurge of support among Cincinnati leaders for light rail.

Along those same lines, OKI began a series of Rideshare television advertisements last summer which showed the shortcomings of the city’s overdependence on the automobile.

In one commercial, a man is seen in a traffic jam, looking in frustration at a broken clock. "What time is it?" he asks. "Time to ride the train," says the unseen announcer. "It could happen to anyone."

Rail and transit advocates might take an opposing view—that the ads were right on target. The FTC and FCC said the commercials were simply a public interest message, and took no action to halt them.
Congressional staffers said the move to give the board more powers was in response to Amtrak being “too flexible with labor in the last negotiations.” Without the changes in Amtrak’s board, those staffers feared that future negotiations with 11 other unions could cost $550 million by 2002.

The bill also reauthorizes Amtrak for $5 billion in federal operating and capital appropriations through the year 2002. The $2.3 billion contained in the Taxpayer Relief Act for capital investments is separate and is meant to supplement, not supplant, the federal appropriations. In the past, however, the Appropriations Committees have chosen not to give Amtrak the full amount authorized.

The compromise reform bill won widespread support from, and unheard of agreement among labor unions, trial lawyers, Amtrak management, rail passengers, conservatives, and liberals.

Now, Amtrak’s efforts will return to trying to operate more like a business, with an eye toward reaching self-sufficiency. Rail passengers see this as an opportunity to encourage improvements to Amtrak’s customer service, and to continue to advocate expanded train frequency and new routes.

Ohio opposes Conrail split

By Robert Boyce
OARP Columbus Area Coordinator

COLUMBUS — In a major development, Ohio has announced its opposition to the Norfolk Southern-CSX Transportation plan to purchase Conrail. Citing possible disruption in several Ohio communities and competitive problems for some Ohio industries, the state on Oct. 21 filed its objection to the proposed Conrail purchase and breakup with the federal Surface Transportation Board.

Thomas O’Leary, executive director of the Ohio Rail Development Commission, said plans to increase train traffic through Cleveland and in the vicinity of Willard could disrupt emergency services and community traffic flow.

Governor George Voinovich said the benefit which the railroads projected would result from their plan must not come at the expense of Ohio communities or adversely affect industries, rail labor, or other railroads like the Wheeling & Lake Erie.

Mr. O’Leary had earlier voiced his objections at an Oct. 15 Senate hearing in the Ohio State House, conducted by State Senators James Carnes (R-St. Clairsville) and Scott Oelslager (R-Canton). The hearing was coordinated by Bill O’Brien, chairman and state legislative representative of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. Mr. O’Brien also is an OARP member.

Besides Mr. O’Leary, witnesses opposing the Conrail sale included Larry Parsons of the Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway, representatives of Cleveland Mayor Mike White, and officials from Ohio coal and aggregate companies.

Your voices were heard

A lot of you have been busy in recent weeks, letting your U.S. representatives know how you feel about passenger trains. Word is, the bipartisan agreement to save Amtrak came in response to public pressure. Congressional staffers say that the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee was inundated with phone calls from all parts of the country, including Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana. Congratulations! You made a difference!

"Quote"

If I’m going to pay nine or ten dollars for a frozen Chicken Kiev that’s been warmed over in a microwave, it better be served on china!

"Unquote"

Woman in the diner on train #6, the California Zephyr, Oct. 29, 1997 commenting on Amtrak’s new policy of serving meals on plastic plates.
Rail expansion studies OK'd

By Ken Prendergast
OARP Executive Director

CLEVELAND — In the federal government’s recently passed transportation bill, Northeast Ohio Congressional leaders were able to include $5.5 million for studies that could lead to a major expansion of rail transit in the region.

The studies are a prerequisite before the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) can ask for federal construction dollars. While Cleveland is a city of diverse people and opinions, their Congressional representatives were able to agree on the importance of public transportation. Thus, they united in seeking funding for the rail expansion studies. Politically astute observers tell OARP that the importance of this issue cannot be overstated.

Funding amounts and rail projects, which could see construction within the next five years, are as follows:

- $2 million to complete studies of ridership and the environmental impacts of a proposed Canton-Akron-Cleveland commuter rail service.
- $1 million to study extending the new Waterfront Line south from the lakefront, around the east side of downtown, to Playhouse Square. This would be the first stage in building a light-rail loop around downtown Cleveland.
- $800,000 to study extending the Blue Line (Van Aken rapid) eastward from Warrensville Center Road in Shaker Heights to the Chagrin Highlands development and a new park-and-ride at Harvard Road and Interstate 271.

However, there are two very different alternatives for closing the loop. A higher-cost, higher-impact option is to continue the Waterfront Line west from Playhouse Square along Huron Road, directly into Tower City. A lower-cost, lower-impact option is to route the Waterfront Line south from Playhouse Square along East 14th Street to the combined Red/Blue/Green lines near the main post office. Ideally, however, both could be constructed.

Waterfront Line extension

After doubling its first-year ridership projections, the Waterfront Line is being eyed for expansion. However, from OARP’s perspective, the expansion being targeted may fall 4,000 feet short of being a usable service.

To be evaluated is a 1-mile extension of the light-rail Waterfront Line from North Coast Harbor, perhaps along East 17th Street, to Playhouse Square and Cleveland State University. An alternative routing along East 13th Street, closer to the East 9th Street financial district, may be considered.

Backing the project are a number of real estate developers who see a need for improved rail service in the downtown area. The Passenger Rail News, November 1997
the east side of downtown, to Playhouse Square. This would be the first stage in building a light-rail loop around downtown Cleveland.

- $800,000 to study extending the Blue Line (Van Aken rapid) eastward from Warrensville Center Road in Shaker Heights to the Chagrin Highlands development and a new park-and-ride at Harvard Road and Interstate 271.

- $700,000 to advance studies of extending the Red Line from Cleveland Hopkins International Airport to Berea.

CAC Corridor

Commuter rail service in the 60-mile Cleveland-Akron-Canton (CAC) corridor has been under discussion for several years. Over $10 million in federal transit funding has been secured for this project, expected to cost between $80 million and $100 million.

Traffic on I-77 and parallel Ohio Route 8 normally reaches parking-lot conditions during rush hours, particularly between Cleveland and Akron. The cost of widening these highways, some of which are 50 years old, would be extremely expensive. Neighborhoods and businesses have encroached to within a few feet of the highways, complicating their widening.

U.S. Rep. Ralph Regula, (R-Navarre), is one of the CAC Corridor's champions. Other backers of the project include Summit County, GCRTA, Akron Metro and a number of on-line communities.

Between two and four weekday round trips are being considered. If it is four round trips, one would likely be a reverse rush-hour run. Running times between the end-point cities would be about 1.5 to 2 hours.

CAC commuter trains would operate on a mix of developers led by Cleveland-based Forest City Enterprises. They are seeking to build a stunning city-within-a-city, called Davenport Bluffs, on the northeast side of downtown. The $400 million neighborhood would consist of new townhouses, mid-rise apartment buildings, sidewalk retail, and the Waterfront Line extension.

This would eclipse one of Forest City's largest projects to date — the $350 million redevelopment in 1990 of Cleveland Union Terminal into Tower City Center, which included a $40 million subway station.

Extending the Waterfront Line to Playhouse Square would bring it to within 4,000 feet of closing a loop around downtown. OARP has advocated the light rail loop for several years. Thoughtful people should be disappointed that the extension, if built as proposed, would keep the Waterfront Line unfinished and underutilized. Aside from tourists and downtown bar-hoppers, it is doubtful that few others will ride the extended line.

GCRTA has acknowledged in its long-range plans that it wants the downtown rail loop. However, downtown merchants don't want the rail line to terminate in the commons area. They cite real concerns that commuters from surrounding suburbs, particularly Strongsville, will congest Berea's streets in driving to the rail line.

Thus, GCRTA is considering whether to extend the rail transit a mile or two south of Berea to capture the significant number of commuters coming out of Strongsville. Another, less pragmatic option would be to extend the Red Line along Conrail's tracks, north of Berea Commons, west to the small town of Olmsted Falls.

GCRTA is estimating that the Red Line extension will cost about $80 million to build. However, OARP has been suggesting what we believe are less expensive ways to build the line. Either way, the extension could attract up to 1.5 million additional riders per year.
Commuter rail wins fans

By Ken Prendergast
OARP Executive Director

CLEVELAND — After the commuter train reached its destination, a lot more Cleveland-area government and business leaders were on board it. News about a three-day commuter rail demonstration generated a great deal of curiosity about the service being proposed by the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority.

When it was all over, GCRTA's reached its goal of stimulating support for commuter rail by offering a first-hand experience.

The transit agency borrowed two double-decker gallery cars from California’s Bay Area CalTrain service, and an F-40PH locomotive from Amtrak West. On Nov. 10, two round trips ran between West 110th Street in Cleveland to Westlake and Lorain. On Nov. 11, public tours of the train were offered at the Cleveland Amtrak station. Then, on Nov. 12, two more round trips were offered, this time between the Cleveland Amtrak station, Painesville and Madison.

If all goes well, Cleveland’s first commuter rail service could begin operating within three years. Five commuter train routes are being sought by GCRTA and others, including the two routes visited by the demonstration train. The others would more money into roads that bring more congestion and pollution when there are tracks already available,” said Jay Westbrook, Cleveland City Council president.

“Transit was an afterthought when it comes to development,” Brook Park Mayor Thomas Coyne said. “There is a growing awareness that we should use rail to get people to where the jobs are.”

“This is just wonderful,” said Lydia Champlin, mayor of Chagrin Falls. “It’s a good way to ex-sprawl.

On the west trips out to Lorain County, the trains operated through the most-densely populated neighborhoods between New York City and Chicago. Lakewood, for example, has more than 11,000 people per square mile. Apartment buildings, townhouses, and condominiums are tightly clustered along the rail line.
10, two round trips ran between West 110th Street in Cleveland to Westlake and Lorain. On Nov. 11, public tours of the train were offered at the Cleveland Amtrak station. Then, on Nov. 12, two more round trips were offered, this time between the Cleveland Amtrak station, Painesville and Madison.

If all goes well, Cleveland's first commuter rail service could begin operating within three years. Five commuter train routes are being sought by GCRTA and others, including the two routes visited by the demonstration train. The others would run from downtown Cleveland to Medina, Aurora, and Akron/Canton.

Limited trackwork and new stations would have to be built, including one in downtown Cleveland at the North Coast Harbor. Tower City Center (the former Cleveland Union Terminal) has been lost as a station for railroad commuter trains. A new skyscraper is being built on the trackbed of the terminal's western approach.

Some of the comments noted aboard the train show the support which the demonstration has generated.

"The movement of people into the city, and from the city out to outlying communities is vitally important. (But) it makes no sense to put sprawl.

On the west trips out to Lorain County, the trains operated through the most-densely populated neighborhoods between New York City and Chicago. Lakewood, for example, has more than 11,000 people per square mile. Apartment buildings, townhouses, and condominiums are tightly clustered along the rail line, which has little online industry. The train zipped at 60 mph along on excellent Norfolk Southern track.

Two days later, on the east side, a sudden lake-effect snowstorm dumped up to 10 inches of snow. But that didn't slow down the commuter train, which raced through whiteouts along the Conrail mainline at 79 mph. Guests aboard the train took some comfort while looking out the window at adjacent Interstate 90, which was jammed with cars, buses, and multiple accidents. The scene was a picture-perfect advertisement for commuter rail.

GCRTA officials, especially planner Rich Enty, are to be commended not only for bringing the commuter train demonstration to Cleveland, but for its smooth operation and excellent informational materials they developed and distributed.

The fact that the train's capacity was 280 people, and that some of the trains carried standees, suggests that there is a strong, diverse base of support willing to advocate commuter rail. Hopefully, GCRTA's follow-up will be just as effective as the introduction.
MARP by-law change proposed

At MARP's Sept. 20 annual meeting in Jackson, a motion was made and passed that elections be held every two years instead of every year, as at present.

According to MARP's By-Laws, the motion must pass again at the next statewide meeting (the Dec. 10 meeting in Grand Rapids) to become effective.

Amtrak ridership is up

Amtrak reports its fourth-quarter ridership jumped 5.5 percent from the same period last year and its fiscal-year ridership rose 2.6 percent. The premium Metroliner service set an annual record, transporting over 2.08 million passengers. Amtrak credits the increases to a strategic business plan that shifted resources to routes with the greatest growth potential.

Union Pacific nears meltdown in the west, southwest

In a traffic snarl that is making almost daily headlines in the Wall Street Journal, Union Pacific (UP) is proving that its merger with Southern Pacific (SP) was poorly planned. Immediately upon consummating the merger, UP bought out or laid off almost 1,000 Southern Pacific managers and workers. The result has been near-gridlock of the merged railroad, exacerbated by a severe shortage of locomotives and certain types of railcars.

MARP asks for GAO investigation

— "GAO", from page one —

MARP asks for GAO investigation, citing personal reasons. We will miss Meg’s pleasant demeanor and input at board meetings, plus her attention to detail in writing meeting minutes.

Although we are losing her as secretary, Mrs. Grey is remaining active in the association. She will continue to provide input on various projects and initiatives.

Grey resigns as secretary

Meg Grey of Pickerington has resigned as OARP secretary, citing personal reasons. We will miss Meg's pleasant demeanor and input at board meetings, plus her attention to detail in writing meeting minutes.

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In a traffic snarl that is making almost daily headlines in the Wall Street Journal, Union Pacific (UP) is proving that its merger with Southern Pacific (SP) was poorly planned. Immediately upon consummating the merger, UP bought out or laid off almost 1,000 Southern Pacific managers and workers. The result has been near-gridlock of the merged railroad, exacerbated by a severe shortage of locomotives and certain freight cars.

One UP employee explained that his current task was to search the railroad to locate some 300-plus missing center-sill lumber cars. He said that he found 35 of them sitting outside El Paso, TX, but he could not acquire any motive power so they could be forwarded to the mills in the Pacific northwest.

A National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) report has faulted the UP for a breakdown in safety procedures, and said that too many UP operating crews are suffering from exhaustion from excessive overtime. The railroad has said it will follow the NTSB recommendations.

One UP manager, speaking before the National Association Railroad Passengers Board of Directors meeting at Santa Fe, NM, said that the UP knew that the SP had a locomotive shortage, but that they did not realize the true extent of the corresponding operating crew shortage.

For passengers, the situation has resulted in very poor operation of the Sunset Limited and California Zephyr, causing them to run late virtually every day.

Reports circulating around the industry is that the UP is approaching Amtrak operating personnel in their search for qualified crews.

UP management has said that they hope to have the problem under control by mid-winter.

MARP asks for GAO investigation — “GAO”, from page one

Amtrak officials keep saying, in effect, “Gee, we’re really trying hard—just give us a little more time.” That line just doesn’t cut it anymore. We have not yet received justification from Amtrak regarding recent schedule changes.

In MARP's opinion, Amtrak’s management has dropped the ball, and it is time for them to justify their management decisions and the GAO has the power to make Amtrak respond.

Grey resigns as secretary

Meg Grey of Pickerington has resigned as OARP secretary, citing personal reasons. We will miss Meg’s pleasant demeanor and input at board meetings, plus her attention to detail in writing meeting minutes.

Although we are losing her as secretary, Mrs. Grey is remaining active in the association. This also means a search is underway for an interim secretary. Contact OARP President Mark Carlson at (440) 331-3161 if you are interested.

Desert Gust perhaps?

The Desert Wind between Los Angeles and Chicago has been discontinued by Amtrak’s Intercity division, but Amtrak West is preparing to resurrect the Los Angeles-Las Vegas portion of the train. Amtrak West CEO Gil Mallory is working to restore the service by June of 1998 using an American constructed version of the Spanish designed Talgo tilt-train equipment.

Using the Talgo and operating over the current Metrolink line between Los Angeles and San Bernardino, rather than the old route via Fullerton, would allow the schedule to be cut from 7-1/2 to 5-1/2 hours. Additional route improvements could permit a more desirable 5 hour schedule.

Depending on the final schedule, this could allow connections from the east via the Southwest Chief.

Amtrak currently serves the Las Vegas market with two Thruway Ambus routes from Los Angeles and Bakersfield, CA.
Possible Birmingham station site lost

In looking for a suitable site for a permanent Birmingham station, MARP members had identified two sites adjacent to Big Beaver Road (16 Mile Road).

One site was at the east edge of a golf course where the Canadian National tracks cross Big Beaver Road. The other site was on Adams Road, just south of Big Beaver, where a huge, roughly triangular plot of land was occupied by three houses. Unfortunately, the homeowners have sold to a developer and an entire subdivision of $300,000+ homes is going up on the site.

By the way, the confusion about the parking lot at the existing Birmingham station has been quietly resolved, and there is no change in parking at the station.

More Chicago - L.A. service

CHICAGO — Amtrak plans to begin operating a fourth train weekly between Chicago and Los Angeles via Texas and the Southwest, effective Feb. 6.

Amtrak currently provides service three-days-weekly between Chicago and San Antonio on the Amtrak Texas Eagle route and service three-days-weekly between San Antonio and Los Angeles on the Amtrak Sunset Limited route.

The fourth train weekly will operate as a through train providing direct service to points along the entire 2,726-mile route. On the current three-days-weekly service, passengers who wish to connect between the Texas Eagle and the Sunset Limited can transfer in San Antonio.

Amtrak is able to expand operation of the service because its express business is growing and prospects for its future customer growth warrant the expansion.

Both the Texas Eagle and the Sunset Limited feature bi-level Superliner sleeping cars, dining cars, sightseer lounges and coaches, which set the standard for comfort in long-distance train travel.

The fourth day of service will depart Chicago westbound on Fridays and will depart Los Angeles eastbound on Mondays. The Texas Eagle now departs Chicago westbound and San Antonio eastbound on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. The Sunset Limited now departs Los Angeles eastbound on Tuesdays, Fridays, and Sundays and departs San Antonio westbound on Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

“We’re very pleased to expand service between Chicago and Los Angeles on the routes of these two great trains, the Texas Eagle and the Sunset Limited,” said Lee Bullock, Interim President, Amtrak InterCity. “This is part of our on-going effort to increase train frequencies in order to be responsive to customers.”

Michigan trains hitting record ridership

The fall schedule changes seem almost designed to reverse the progress being made on Michigan routes. All three routes showed improvement over last year; Detroit-Chicago was up 11.1 percent, the International was up 11.0 percent, and the Pere Marquette was up 21.4 percent. Detroit-Chicago and the International recorded new all-time high ridership records under Amtrak operation.

MI-DOT has supplied us with ridership figures for Michigan routes which were up for the first three months of the year as the following:

- Detroit-Chicago was up 11.1 percent
- International was up 11.0 percent
- Pere Marquette was up 21.4 percent

Amtrak-UP dispute “express”

The federal Surface Transportation Board has accepted Amtrak’s request to terminate the daily Detroit-St. Louis-Chicago corridor, which was begun in September 1967, in favor of an express on the International.

CSX: Passengers fare better in Conrail deal

WASHINGTON — Paul H. Reistrup, former president of Amtrak, now CSX Transportation Inc. (CSXT) vice president for passenger integration, said “disciplined, scheduled railroading can smooth out the operating differences between freight and passenger service.

Mr. Reistrup, who served as president of Amtrak in the mid-1970s, spoke at a recent Railway Age conference in Washington, DC, detailing new opportunities for freight-rail partnerships made possible by the pending joint acquisition of Conrail with Norfolk Southern.

“CSXT also plans to invest almost $1.2 billion in track, signal and facility improvements over the next three years, including $500 million to upgrade the system to accommodate increased traffic from Conrail territory,” he said.

Mr. Reistrup also sounded a note of caution to operators of passenger and commuter lines. “Freight railroads recognize our obligation to be good corporate citizens,” he said. “We all try to work in the public interest. However, all of us have constituents, whether they are shareholders and freight customers, or riders.”
Michigan trains hitting record ridership

The fall schedule changes seem almost designed to reverse the progress being made on Michigan routes. All three routes showed improvement over last year; Detroit-Chicago was up 11.1 percent, the International was up 11.0 percent, and the Pere Marquette was up 21.4 percent. Detroit-Chicago and the International recorded new all-time high ridership records under Amtrak operation.

MI-DOT has supplied us with ridership figures for Michigan routes which are complete through Fiscal Year 1997, which ended Sept. 30, 1997:

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<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Detroit-Chicago Corridor Passengers</th>
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<th>Grand Rapids-Chicago Pere Marquette Passengers</th>
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Interim President, Amtrak Intercity. "This is part of our on-going effort to increase train frequencies in order to be responsive to customers."

Amtrak-UP dispute "express"

The federal Surface Transportation Board has accepted Amtrak's request that the board define "express" cargo to resolve a dispute between Amtrak and the Union Pacific (UP) Railroad.

The UP says express is limited to small packages. Amtrak claims that its financial survival depends on a broader definition, that includes time-sensitive carload business such as the Railway Express Agency once carried. Amtrak also says it does not pursue business that UP or other railroads now carry.

Expanded express business is important because revenues are expected to climb from about $60 million to $400 million—very welcome if federal operating grants keep declining.

Before Amtrak's creation, express revenues were very important to the overall economics of passenger service. On average, in 1959 "head-end" mail and express accounted for 46% of a passenger train's operating revenue. By the mid-1990's that figure had fallen to just 8%.

Mr. Reistrup also sounded a note of caution to operators of passenger and commuter lines. "Freight railroads recognize our obligation to be good corporate citizens," he said. "We all try to work in the public interest. However, all of us have constituents, whether they are shareholders and freight customers, or passengers—people whose needs are the reason we are in business."

He also stressed that "the host railroad and public authority responsible for passenger service must work together on a long-term plan that will accommodate the needs of both freight and commuter services."

Mr. Reistrup closed by issuing "report cards" on passenger and commuter service on CSXT lines, announcing that CSXT is providing VRE, Amtrak, MARC and South Florida's Tri-Rail passenger operations with close to 100 percent on-time performance.

Amtrak Intercity VP resigns

Robert VanderClute, Amtrak VP of Operations resigned on Nov. 14 after 26 years of service at Amtrak. Mr. VanderClute was widely respected, both within Amtrak and outside of the company, and especially among the many middle management veteran employees at the railroad. No reason was known for the resignation.
What to do about Amtrak!

For those who may not know, Amtrak is divided into three Strategic Business Units (SBU). The NorthEast Corridor (NEC) SBU covers most everything along the East Coast from Virginia north, and as far west as Niagara Falls and Pittsburgh.

Amtrak West initially operated in California, Oregon, and Washington, but it has grown to include British Columbia and, most recently, Nevada.

More or less, everything else falls to the jurisdiction of the Intercity SBU.

Last month Marilyn and I traveled to California. While there, I wanted to see what had changed in Amtrak West and if the glowing reports were still true! Sure enough, the Coast Starlight was up to its high standards of polite, friendly service, along with on-board entertainment. It was a joyous trip.

Some of you have heard me angrily say that Amtrak West “has it made.” How can it fail? It has all of the benefits and few detriments that weigh Amtrak Intercity down:

1) The Intercity SBU has trains running through 40 states and the District of Columbia. Amtrak West operates in a narrow slice of three states where there’s local rail support. California alone spends more money on rail projects than the whole federal government plus the other 49 states combined.

2) Intercity has over a dozen daily long distance trains, West has only one.

3) Less than half of the cities in the Intercity SBU have multiple daily trains. Over 70 are served only three days per week. Most of Amtrak West’s cities have multiple trains.

So where am I going with this?

According to recent customer service reports, most of the top Amtrak trains are operated by Amtrak West. Why? Look at the geography! As closer! West has to operate under the financial and equipment shortages just as Intercity must, but since West has the opportunity to be more focused, they do appear to have a decided advantage.

Amtrak, within the vastness between the NEC and West, needs to be more manageable. Amtrak Intercity needs to be split.

How it is split can be argued. Should some of the Intercity trains be operated by the other two SBUs? Should Amtrak Intercity be divided into additional SBUs or should Intercity have some clearly defined subdivisions?

I don’t like the notion of helping Intercity by harming the other SBUs. Why saddle Amtrak West or NEC with some trains from Intercity? This will only bring West or NEC down.

Instead, fix the Intercity SBU by subdividing and/or splitting it along most likely geographic lines.

For example...

One should be the Chicago-East Coast group of anything departing Chicago via Conrail. This would include: the Lake Shore Limited, Three Rivers, Capitol Limited, Cardinal, Michigan services, and an extended Pennsylvanian. This is a mix of corridor and long-distance trains, within a few states, and is more manageable.
Amtrak West apparently is of a manageable size. Mr. Mallory has the ability to be personally known, and personally involved in those few states he serves. By contrast, Intercity must cover the thousands of miles between Seattle and Miami or Los Angeles and Boston.

To attend a recent meeting, an Amtrak official drove from Indiana to Cleveland, then on to Chicago. The next day he was flying to Reno to resolve a problem there, the day after, he had to be somewhere else. The territory is just too big!

Beyond that, from the short 86-mile Chicago-Milwaukee Hiawatha corridor to the 3,146-mile joint Empire Builder/City of New Orleans run through, the vastness of Intercity’s operations is unwieldy. How can managers be focused when they are forced to keep seeing “the big picture?”

Out West, it’s easy to concentrate on developing a successful, long-distance train. How difficult is it to be route specific when there is only one long-distance train? This lack of distraction permits focus.

When the Coast Starlight arrives in L.A., everyone knows that it is still their trainset leaving for Seattle tomorrow. If something is broken, it will be fixed before the next run.

The story is different with the Intercity’s Lake Shore Limited. It doesn’t just run back and forth between New York and Chicago. Its equipment is shared with long distance trains up and down the east coast. When the Lake Shore Limited leaves New York for Chicago, the equipment came from the south, not Chicago. It’s treated just like another trainset going somewhere else. There is no sense of ownership.

Meanwhile there are scores upon scores of trains going from here to there. Who can really, personally care about the seat in car X that has a broken footrest or that closet panel that won’t stay shut for more than five minutes?

I am not trying to make Intercity out to be a band of uncaring, lazy slobs! But it is the nature of this huge SBU that prohibits most everyone from truly being able to concentrate on the details.

Amtrak West is not at the end of the rainbow, but from the passenger perspective, it is a whole lot more than moving trainsets along a railroad.

Is anyone at Amtrak up to the challenge?
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Authorized Amtrak travel agents who wish to join OARP, maintain current membership status, and be listed in the TRAM DIRECTORY should send a $50 check, made payable to OARP, to: Tom Allen, Treasurer; 752 Braumiller Road; Delaware OH 43015. The TRAM annual listing fee entitles you to list your CITY, the NAME OF YOUR AGENCY, one LOCAL PHONE NUMBER, one LONG DISTANCE PHONE NUMBER, and the name of one CONTACT at the agency. Renewals will be billed by the Treasurer. Updated: Sept. 1997

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DIRECTOR
Tom Wood
P. O. Box 785
Bloomington IN 47402
812 / 988-2419

NARP Region 6 Directors
Paul Arden
See list above
Alan Gebauer
See list above
Keith Dover
See list above
James Dingus, Jr.
See list above
J. Howard Harding
See list above

Updated: Sept. 1997
### December 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact person &amp; telephone number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>MARP Statewide Meeting</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
<td>Grand Rapids Amtrak Sta.</td>
<td>Market &amp; Wealthy</td>
<td>David Vanderbee 616 / 452-3495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Columbus Local Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Red Door Tavern</td>
<td>1736 West 5th Avenue</td>
<td>Bob Boyce 614 / 486-7038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Cleveland Local Meeting</td>
<td>6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Downtown Mo’s</td>
<td>Tower City - lower level</td>
<td>Ken Prendergast 216 / 529-7677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Toledo Local Meeting</td>
<td>7:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Amtrak Station</td>
<td>Central Union Plaza</td>
<td>Mark Buckley 419 / 476-4569</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### January 1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact person &amp; telephone number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ORDC — Committee Mtg.</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Riffe Center</td>
<td>77 South High Street</td>
<td>Lynda Nelson 614 / 644-7176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ORDC — Full Commission</td>
<td>*10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Riffe Center CAPA #3</td>
<td>77 South High Street</td>
<td>Lynda Nelson 614 / 644-7176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* approximate. Full Commission meeting to follow Committee Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Detroit Metro Area Mtg.</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Detroit Amtrak Sta.</td>
<td>Woodward &amp; Baltimore</td>
<td>John Delora 810 / 772-7842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Columbus Local Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Red Door Tavern</td>
<td>1736 West 5th Avenue</td>
<td>Bob Boyce 614 / 486-7038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Cleveland Local Meeting</td>
<td>6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Downtown Mo’s</td>
<td>Tower City - lower level</td>
<td>Ken Prendergast 216 / 529-7677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Toledo Local Meeting</td>
<td>7:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Amtrak Station</td>
<td>Central Union Plaza</td>
<td>Mark Buckley 419 / 476-4569</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### February 1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact person &amp; telephone number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>MARP Western Chapter Mtg</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>David Vanderbee 616 / 452-3495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Columbus Local Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Red Door Tavern</td>
<td>1736 West 5th Avenue</td>
<td>Bob Boyce 614 / 486-7038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Cleveland Local Meeting</td>
<td>6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Downtown Mo’s</td>
<td>Tower City - lower level</td>
<td>Ken Prendergast 216 / 529-7677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Toledo Local Meeting</td>
<td>7:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Amtrak Station</td>
<td>Central Union Plaza</td>
<td>Mark Buckley 419 / 476-4569</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NARP Regional Six Meeting**

*(Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio)*  
Saturday, March 7, 1998 – 8:30 a.m.  
St. Regis Hotel  
W. Grand Blvd. & Woodward  
Detroit, MI  
Contact: John DeLora 810 / 772-7842  
More details will be announced in a future issue of *The Passenger Rail News*.

All meetings are subject to change. We firmly suggest that you confirm dates, times, and locations for all meetings.
All meetings are subject to change. We firmly suggest that you confirm dates, times, and locations for all meetings. Anyone wishing to have their meeting or event listed in this directory, please send the information to:

Ken Prendergast, Editor
12029 Clifton Boulevard #505
Lakewood OH 44107-2161
216 / 529-7677

Internet:72764.2020@Compuserve.com.

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the even numbered months.

NO RESEMBLANCE TO ITS PREDECESSOR. The Windermere rapid transit station in East Cleveland was rededicated on Nov. 17 following the construction of a $12.7 million replacement facility. Windermere is the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority's second-busiest rail station, behind Tower City Center. The new station's bright passenger concourse (left) and platform area (right) have little in common with its predecessor's dingy, rusted appearance. Now, it has a European-style trainshed, concession stand, restrooms, on-site security, bus station, and a Head Start child care center. Windermere is the easternmost station on GCRTA's Red Line.