Amtrak is spared again, but how long this time?

While nearly $2 trillion from U.S. taxpayers has been lavished on highways and aviation since Amtrak was created 31 years ago, the nation's passenger railroad found itself in a familiar position this summer — fighting for survival.

Blessed with little more than a survival-level budget throughout its history from the U.S. Congress and seven presidential administrations, Amtrak has limped from one crisis to another. But never before had Amtrak come so close to a complete shutdown of its national rail system, as the corporation was starved for cash. About $200 billion was needed to keep the trains running after July 1.

The difference this time around is that Amtrak has at its controls a chief executive officer who says what he means, and does what he says. President and CEO David Gunn bluntly told Congress and the Bush Administration to give him a budget by Independence Day or he would shut down the Amtrak system. That would have stranded Amtrak's 65,000 daily passengers and the hundreds of thousands of daily commuters who depend on Amtrak-owned stations, tracks and operating agreements. Mr. Gunn was named Amtrak's CEO in April.

It's about time someone at Amtrak laid down the gauntlet.

And it worked. Suddenly, members of Congress and the Bush Administration realized how important Amtrak was and scrambled to come up with a last-minute funding package. But the package remains...
A national rail system is important to America, where long-distance routes link what would otherwise be a bunch of scattered short-distance rail corridors throughout the country. Amtrak’s Lake Shore Limited is one of those linkages, connecting the Northeast Corridor, Empire Corridor and Midwest Corridors. Here, the Lake Shore, train #49, arrives Albany from New York City. Mail and package express cars in the background will be added to train #49, as will the Boston section of the Lake Shore, train 449, which is already in the station behind the photographer.

OARP busy in rail fight

OARP volunteers and the association’s three part-time paid staffers have been very busy in these recent months, as it became apparent that Ohio’s trains and ongoing rail development plans were at risk from Amtrak’s worsening fiscal condition.

Based on feedback from Congress, media, businesses, transit agencies and other rail advocacy groups, OARP has proven to be a veritable powerhouse in getting out the rail advocates’ message. In fact, we have done more to educate and engage our Congressional leaders than some national rail advocacy groups, according to the staff of Ohio’s Congressional Delegation.

But OARP’s effective and continuing actions in this historic crisis have eaten away at the association’s financial resources. OARP has just enough funding to issue two more newsletters before the end of the year and that’s it.

OARP does not have enough funding to carry out any other activities without additional donations.

Therefore, we are asking our members to please make a generous donation today to OARP so that we can continue our fight for the survival of Ohio’s passenger trains and for the continuation of ongoing advocacy efforts for the expansion of rail passenger services in this state.

Your donations (check or money order) should be made payable to the “Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers” and mailed to Treasurer David Shreiner, 9705 Township Road 301, Millersburg, OH 44654. Donations to OARP may be tax-deductible under the IRS code, section 501(c)(3), since OARP is a publicly supported educational organization.

What has OARP been doing lately to advocate for the survival and expansion of passenger trains in Ohio? A great deal...

During the last few months, OARP’s Corridor Campaigns Director Ken Prendergast has written and distributed numerous press releases by fax and e-mail to more than 700 recipients in the media, Congress, Bush Administration, plus numerous business, labor and environmental organizations. Mr. Prendergast, who said he is very grateful to have recent new campaign memberships, has also written to potential grantors for additional funding support of the Corridor Campaigns and for OARP. Even if these small grants are approved, which isn’t guaranteed, OARP will need significant additional donations to keep up the fight.

OARP Administrative Director Stu Nicholson has developed a “tool kit” of informational resources for rail advocates in Ohio and across that nation to...
Prior to his passing in 1998, OARP’s Toledo Coordinator Larry George and I used to muse about Amtrak’s top brass. We often talked about how nice it would be if then-Amtrak President Tom Downs confronted Congress and the administration about the need for receiving more than just another “survival budget” for the railroad.

“If you don’t give me the budget I need to run a decent passenger rail system, then I’ll start shutting down the system and run only those trains I can afford to run,” Larry said, putting words into Mr. Down’s mouth. Of course, Mr. Downs never uttered those words. Nor did Amtrak’s next Chief Executive Officer, George Warrington, until he acknowledged the reality earlier this year. He had seemed more interested in placating Congress and two administrations than telling them the sordid truth.

Too bad Larry never got to witness Amtrak’s new boss, David Gunn, in action. Larry died one night from a heart attack while collecting petition signatures to be CARP’s vice-president.

Mr. Gunn is the top dog Amtrak has needed for a long time. He joined Amtrak with a reputation for turning around railroads and public transportation agencies. His record is stellar. He is perhaps best known for leading the massive but troubled New York City Metro Transit Authority out of the abyss. Its problems could be seen superficially by its graffiti-scarred subway trains or, more deeply, by reviewing its balance sheets, known for their fiscal quagmire.

Or, there was his stint at the Washington Metropolitan Transit Agency in our nation’s capital. The Metro soon became known as a highly efficient and attractive service. In Toronto, long a transit haven, there was trouble in paradise. A spate of subway accidents and a lack of attention to detail ended when Mr. Gunn took over, returning the Toronto Transit Commission to respectability. He also managed freight railroads several decades ago.

All of those transportation providers served many more customers and had much larger, more complicated budgets than Amtrak’s. Thus, it would seem reasonable that Mr. Gunn would be the man for the job in making Amtrak an effective transportation service. That was the rationale behind the April decision by Amtrak’s Board of Directors to pull him out of retirement in Nova Scotia and name him Amtrak’s chief.

While that still may prove to be true, I doubt that even Mr. Gunn expected to confront so awful a mess when he arrived to take over Amtrak. Observers got their first refreshing look at Mr. Gunn when he learned his predecessor had the use of two company cars and the protection of an Amtrak Police Department unit. He axed the company cars, reassigned the police unit to more important duties.
WANTED

Photos and Articles

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 3½" disks. Send e-mail submissions to:

kjprendergast@core.com

We reserve the right to edit all non-published submissions. Original photos should be sharp, bright prints—avoid negatives.

Always include your name and phone number!

Ohio Passenger Rail News
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The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers is incorporated in Ohio as a non-profit association and exempt from federal income tax under the IRS Code, Section 501(c)(3) as a publicly supported educational organization. Dues and donations to OARP may be tax-deductible in accordance with the IRS Code.

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An introductory one-year membership in the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers includes a subscription to the Ohio Passenger Rail News, plus action alerts, notice of rail-oriented events, and local meetings. (Contributions to OARP may be tax-deductible.)

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Three top speeds are being considered: 79 mph, 90 mph and 110 mph. The Youngstown alternative anticipates use of new, 125-mph trackage on abandoned rights of way formerly owned by Pittsburgh & Lake Erie, Lake Erie & Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania Railroad between New Castle and Warren, and use of the former Erie (Conrail Freedom Secondary) between Warren and Ravenna.

All other alignments under consideration use existing, upgraded freight mainlines with added dedicated passenger tracks for 90 and 110 mph speeds.

ORDC Executive Director Jim Seney said that the key issues are frequency and capacity. He added that profit is not an issue because it is not attainable. "We are building modern passenger rail service, not high-speed rail service," he said.

Mr. Seney added that elapsed travel time, not maximum speed, is the travelers' primary concern.

Representatives from New York, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Ohio agreed that a series of bi-state agreements or joint powers boards for each corridor is preferable to an Interstate Compact for the entire project. The latter requires all participating states to approve identical legislative language for each action.

Alex Metcalf of TEMS and his staff presented basic information about potential routes within each corridor: TEMS' preliminary time estimates for Cleveland-Pittsburgh via Alliance are 2:32 at 79 mph, 2:25 at 90 mph, and 2:22 at 110 mph. Via Youngstown, comparable times are 2:36, 2:33 and 2:31. Faster travel times are anticipated (but not calculated) if 125 mph track is built between Warren to New Castle. Ravenna-Cleveland top speeds are unlikely to exceed 79 mph, even with dedicated, passenger-only track.

If 3-C, Detroit-Cleveland-Pittsburgh and Cleveland-Toronto services were fully implemented (at eight daily round trips per route), Cleveland would see 58 to 60 trains per day in addition to existing Amtrak and proposed Chicago-Cleveland Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MRRI) trains, Mr. Metcalf said.

At least 22 trainsets would be required for full service implementation. Unit costs for trainsets could be reduced by as much as 30 percent if all Cleveland Hub and MRRI rolling stock is ordered as a package rather than as several small batches. Participating states prefer and are assuming an 80/20 federal/non-federal funding split, but may have to settle for 70/30 or 60/40 for all capital costs.

Minimum startup time for minor infrastructure upgrades for two daily round trips in any one corridor is two years, following completion of this analysis. Federally mandated environmental impact statement will take at least three additional years before any major capital improvements (like third tracks, new bridges, reconstruction of vacant right of way, etc.) may be made. A complete build-out of any one corridor may take ten years or more, Mr. Metcalf concluded.

The question of which corridor should come first has yet to be decided, but Mr. Seney reminded that ORDC legislation mandates that 3-C come first. Additional steering committee meetings will be held in the near future.
After three years of study, the Canton-Akron-Cleveland Major Investment Study (CAC MIS) is complete. This study looked at the transportation needs over the next 25 years along the Interstate 77, State Route 8 and Interstate 480 corridors between Canton and Cleveland. A technical oversight committee consisting of the metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and transit authorities in the three urbanized areas guided the study. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Districts 4 and 12, plus ODOT’s central office, also participated.

The final package of alternatives was presented to the public at a series of four meetings in January for their comment. The alternatives included highway improvements, express bus service and commuter rail recommendations totaling $820 million in capital investments. Opposition to widening of I-77 in Cleveland north of I-480 was expressed. Additionally, some residents of Silver Lake (north-side Akron suburb) expressed opposition to commuter rail.

Otherwise, strong support was expressed for commuter rail by the Greater Cleveland Growth Association, Greater Akron Chamber of Commerce, Canton Chamber of Commerce, City of Akron, City of Cuyahoga Falls, City of Hudson, City of Canton and Summit County.

One positive aspect of the commuter rail alternative outlined in the CAC MIS is that it uses the same trackage from Hudson and station facilities in Cleveland, as the proposed high-speed corridors being examined by the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) in the Cleveland Hub study.

In order for any federal funds to be spent on any project, it must be approved by the region’s MPOs. The governing board of each MPO consists of mayors, county commissioners and county engineers. When a package of alternatives (like the CAC MIS) is presented, the governing board of the MPO can approve the entire package, select only parts, or reject the entire recommendation.

The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA), the Cleveland area’s MPO, authorized commuter rail to move into the next phase of project development, but rejected any widening of I-77 in Cleveland. The Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS), the Akron area’s MPO, took the opposite stance. AMATS rejected the proposed commuter rail alternative but approved the package of highway alternatives. The Stark County Area Transportation Study (SCATS), the Canton area’s MPO, accepted the entire package of alternatives.

While Cleveland’s and Canton’s support of commuter rail was encouraging, the Akron area’s stance against commuter rail is problematic. AMATS’ stance causes difficulty in using federal planning funds for project development or the ability to obtain federal funds in the future.

At this point in time, the project sponsors, Akron METRO Regional Transit Authority and the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority are considering what next steps should be taken to move the project forward. Regardless of AMATS stance on commuter rail, Cleveland’s opposition to widening I-77 will force the region to develop alternative modes of transportation.

NOACA’s, and ultimately ODOT’s, rejection of I-77’s widening indicates the endless widening of Ohio’s interstates is ending. Northeast Ohio will need commuter rail in the future. OARP members and other friends of passenger rail should continue to press their local elected officials on the need for commuter rail and smart growth policies that promote dense, mixed-use developments near rail lines to stem the rising tide of highway congestion and urban sprawl.

ELYRIA — Efforts to redevelop a vacant, 77-year-old New York Central train depot in this city’s downtown as a transportation hub took a big step forward in June when the Lorain County Commissioners voted to seek detailed plans for the depot’s renovation.

Commissioners hired Second Generation Properties of Cleveland for $99,000 to develop plans that would make the depot an attractive center, linking users of Amtrak passenger trains, Greyhound intercity buses and Lorain County Transit (LCT) intracity buses. If realized, the plans would make downtown Elyria a more attractive place for people to live, work and visit.

The renovated depot would also include retail shops, a transportation museum and offices for LCT. By hiring Second Generation, the commissioners will learn exactly how much it will cost to redevelop the historic depot, expected to be between $3.5 million and $4.5 million. A hard figure is needed before seeking federal funds for the project. Lorain County bought the depot in 2000 to preserve it for a transportation center.

The various transportation providers currently are scattered at multiple, disconnected facilities. Amtrak trains stop at a station on the east side of downtown. Greyhound buses serve a station on the west side of downtown. And, LCT bus routes have no focal point in downtown Elyria.

Second Generation will take about three months to complete detailed plans and cost figures for redeveloping the depot. If federal funding is found in a timely manner, the depot could be renovated and reopened by 2005.
Amtrak bills face yellow signals in U.S. House

By Bill Hutchison  
OARP Past President

In a surprising move, the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure postponed the markup of both RIDE 21, a bonding bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Fort Yukon, Alaska) and the Amtrak Reauthorization Act. The Young bill would provide $65 billion in tax-free bonding authority to states for high-speed rail services. The Amtrak reauthorization would keep the current system running by providing $1.2 billion for Amtrak, plus $775 million in safety upgrades on May 22, but consideration of both items was postponed.

The committee was prepared to approve the $1.9 billion, one-year Amtrak reauthorization (H.R. 4545). However, Rep. Young, who chairs the House T&I committee, pulled the measure from the agenda when no agreement was reached on its companion, RIDE-21.

Union objections that were overlooked on purpose when the measure won subcommittee approval still had not been resolved as of a scheduled, late-May markup date.

Although leaders thought an agreement was close to being reached, the Association of American Railroads (AAR) registered objections. That means there is still no consensus on whether labor provisions that apply to Amtrak should be kept in force for workers on whatever entities become the operators of new high-speed lines. The AAR objected to language that committed not only railroads but future owners and independent contractors to Rail Labor Act and Railroad Retirement Act requirements.

Rep. Young, pronouncing the RIDE-21 “impossible to pass” at present, said that the Amtrak reauthorization would not move until the way has been cleared for the other measure. So it appears that Rep. Young is holding the Amtrak Reauthorization hostage until the labor problems that are holding up his bill are resolved. “A huge problem for any Amtrak reform,” in the words of one lobbyist.

The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers is trying to find out when they might be rescheduled.

The bills currently have 115 cosponsors, including Ohio representatives Sherrod Brown (D-Lorain), Marcy Kaptur (D-Toledo), Steven C. LaTourette (R-Painesville), and Bill Pascrell (D-N.J.), and better. A bill by Senator Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.), S.1991 now has 33 cosponsors, with Senator Thad Cochran (R-MS) coming on board. Unfortunately, neither one of Ohio’s two senators, Mike DeWine and George Voinovich, has signed on, although Sen. DeWine may soon. Also, at Amtrak’s request, Sen. Hollings had added an additional $12 million for security improvements and $43 million to rehabilitate dozens of wreck-damaged and un-repaired rail cars and locomotives now stored at Amtrak’s maintenance facility in Beech Grove, IN.

What is OARP doing about this mess? Well for one thing, we are now in an effort to get to start making noise on the issue.

However, our U.S. representatives and senators still need to hear from YOU! If you have not written to your representatives or either senator, do it now! Senator DeWine is a concern right now, since he has been a strong supporter in the past. Yet, at this time, he has not signed on to the Hollings bill.

If you are writing letters, please address them to the district offices of your senators and representatives, since the anthrax scare has all but halted mail to the U.S. Capitol mailroom. You should also consider using e-mail or telephone to communicate your message, which

Ken Prendergast photo

Long-distance passenger trains continue to prove popular at all hours of the day or night in Ohio and are the only Amtrak services to the Buckeye State. However, some members of Congress, the media and the Bush Administration falsely contend these are empty trains that exist solely for the political benefit of other Congressional representatives.
Amtrak is spared again, but how long this time?

“Amtrak saved” from page one — finances — something that Mr. Gunn’s predecessor George Warrington was unwilling to do.

That still leaves Amtrak $100 million short of being able to run its trains past mid-August to the close of the federal fiscal year at the end of September. As part of the deal between Amtrak and Secretary Mineta, Congress would have to decide on how best to close the $100 million gap, being a special appropriation, another loan or a loan guarantee. Initial discussions between Secretary Mineta, Amtrak officials and Congressional leaders (especially those on the House side) suggest this could become mired in politics.

Leaders of the Democrat-controlled Senate support both halves of the Amtrak rescue package, as well as a large federal spending bill. But leaders of the Republican-controlled House of Representatives oppose the large federal spending bill and have suggested that it be pared down or else the House won’t approve the Amtrak rescue package. While it’s nice to see that Amtrak apparently has become so important to become a political bargaining chip, this is an extremely risky move.

OARP members are strongly encouraged to contact their U.S. representatives and tell them that the $100 million Amtrak rescue package should be approved without becoming part of a political power play. Visit www.house.gov on the Internet to find your representative’s contact information, or simply call the Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask for the office of your U.S. Congressional representative (NOTE: do not send a letter as time is of the essence).

You don’t need to be a polished communicator. Briefly tell them you support the $100 million rescue package for Amtrak and say a personal reason why (ie: Sept. 11 aftermath shows U.S. needs balanced transportation, you prefer rail travel for a personal reason, or highways and airports are already too congested, etc.). Congressional staff simply want to know how you stand on a particular issue and keep a “scorecard” on their constituents’ beliefs toward that issue.

If Congressional staff don’t hear from the constituents regarding Amtrak, they will assume no one is watching them and that few citizens care if Amtrak dies. Make it an issue. Be blunt. Tell them you won’t vote for the Congressman if they don’t vote for the Amtrak rescue package.
Annual Meeting draws notables

Speakers say we’re on verge of rail renaissance

COLUMBUS — Amtrak Reform Council member James Coston, the keynote speaker at the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers’ Annual Meeting in Columbus, says the nation is at “end of the beginning” of a renaissance in rail passenger service. By noting such optimism, Mr. Coston, cited factors such as the Sept. 11 attacks, a rising number of states that are building fast rail services and growing dissatisfaction with air and highway travel as reasons for the rail rebirth.

“Americans may not grasp all the economics, but they do seem to understand that privately owned, for-profit passenger railroads are an artifact of a brief 19th-century honeymoon period when railroads had a monopoly on overland transportation and government had not yet decided to build competing transportation systems using low-cost capital raised from taxes,” he continued. “And I don’t mind saying that much of the credit for this evolution in American thinking goes to the kind of people in this room — to the rail-advocacy community all across this country.”

Many of Mr. Coston’s proposals for developing first-class rail passenger services for Ohio and the U.S. are similar to those embodied in OARP’s plan for the future of passenger rail. OARP’s plan is available in several formats on our Web site by visiting the section “The 21st Century Unlimited: Moving A Nation Forward.”

Mr. Coston and OARP are recommending public-private partnerships with railroads to upgrade their infrastructure to accommodate fast passenger trains. OARP specifically chose to include one of Mr. Coston’s recommendations, that a “kick-start” of federal capital funding be used to develop a network of speedy, comfortable and convenient passenger train services throughout the nation.

That includes serving populous markets in Ohio, a state which has the same population density as France, according to the 2001 World Almanac.

“Rail infrastructure will have to be jump-started with money from the (federal) General Fund before the system is big enough and busy enough to pay its own way out of a user fee. But you know something? In a sense, those user fees already have been collected, and a phantom Passenger Rail Trust Fund already exists,” Mr. Coston said.

passengers for 20 years ended up funding the nation’s airports and highways. While their competitors enjoyed cheap government infrastructure capital, the nation’s railroads financed all of their own infrastructure with private capital while using some of their own earnings to finance their competition.

“It is time to right this historic wrong. In the 20 years during which the ticket tax was in effect, the nation’s rail travelers paid $3.9 billion into the federal treasury, but the nation’s rail infrastructure never received any benefits in return. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, that $3.9 billion has a 2001 value of $30 billion, more than enough to launch a true renaissance in America’s railroad infrastructure and in rail travel itself,” Mr. Coston concluded.

In the short term, the very existence of passenger trains has been in question. But Mr. Phillips, whose newspaper and magazine coverage of the transportation-political scene in Washington D.C. has made him a Beltway insider, predicts that Congress will fund Amtrak’s short-term needs.

“After that, who knows?” Mr. Phillips said. “Don’t count on Congress. Get what you can out of your states.”

He pointed to California as a model of rail passenger development. The Golden State has consistently invested more money into passenger trains than the federal government. That was due to a “bottom-up” approach, where a groundswell of public support for rail caused state leaders to “lead the parade,” Mr. Phillips said.

Mr. Hacker spoke next, adding that the best way to do that in Ohio is to build coalitions. His Hotel & Lodging Association has interacted with this initiative...
opinion from the media means the first part of America's long struggle is over. The American people get it now about trains," Mr. Coston said in his speech, titled 'America's New Passenger Rail Program: Some Assembly Required.'

To read the complete text of Mr. Coston's speech, visit OARP's Web site, found at www.oarprail.org on the Internet.

"By 'get it,' I mean that they realize not only that passenger trains must be a major element in solving our nation's growing mobility crisis, but that passenger-train infrastructure must be funded-and funded adequately-by the federal government -- as the highways, the civil-aviation infrastructure, and the Inland Waterway were," Mr. Coston added.

"In 1942, during World War II, Congress passed a 15 percent emergency wartime railroad ticket tax. Its purpose was to discourage unnecessary civilian travel. ... The war ended in 1945, but the ticket tax stayed. In 1954 the tax was reduced to 10 percent. It finally was abolished in 1962. Unlike the federal taxes on motor fuel and airline tickets, the proceeds of the railroad ticket tax never were placed in a special trust fund for improving the infrastructure on which they were generated. Instead, they were deposited in the General Fund.

"That means that some of the taxes paid by railroad

Ohio opts to join Midwest passenger rail compact

COLUMBUS — With the stroke of his pen, Gov. Bob Taft took the final action needed for Ohio to join the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact in planning and pursuing high-speed rail projects. His July 2 signature made Senate Bill 212 law and will take effect 90 days thereafter.

The Ohio House of Representatives voted 85-6 on June 19 in favor of the bill, sponsored by State Sen. Jeffry Armbruster (R-13, North Ridgeville). Sen. Armbruster succeeded earlier this year in getting the bill passed (33-0) by the Ohio Senate. He joined with Rep. Rex Damshroder (R-89, Fremont) in marshaling the bill through the Ohio House.

This is the first major legislation which the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers has pushed through the Ohio General Assembly. It required a team effort. The process began last December when Corridor Campaigns Director Ken Prendergast got Sen. Armbruster to sponsor the bill. Mr. Prendergast and OARP's Government Affairs Liaison Chris Vineis rounded up an impressive list of organizational representatives to testify in support of SB 212 before the Ohio Senate's Highways & Transportation Committee, which Sen. Armbruster chairs.

OARP's Administrative Director Stu Nicholson wrote and delivered the association's testimony before the Senate committee, as well as before the Ohio House Committee on Transportation & Public Safety. All three OARP staff gathered supporters to testify before the House committee and kept the pressure on the General Assembly with the help of key legislators.

"Senator Armbruster, Representative Damshroder and their staifs worked hard to keep this bill a priority in a very busy legislative session," said Mr. Nicholson. "They deserve our thanks, as does Governor Taft for signing the bill into law."

The Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact will enable its member states to go to the federal government as a powerful group and seek funding for rail improvements. The compact also will be key in the planning process, as most high-speed corridors cross state lines and will require coordination. Ohio has joined five other Midwest states — Indiana, Minnesota, Missouri, South Dakota and Nebraska — in the consortium. Others are considering joining. The Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) will commit just under $20,000 per year in dues to the compact.

SB 212 was actively supported by diverse interests, including Buckeye Steel Castings Corp., Council of State Governments-Midwest, Environmental Law & Policy Center, Greater Cleveland Growth Association, Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce, Midwest High Speed Rail Coalition, ORDC, Ohio Sierra Club, Talgo, Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority and others.

"The argument against federal financing of rail travel begins with the axiomatic rule: Let the railroad pay for their own services. A pretty fair rule, but it's not a violation of it to reason the complexities. Do we have here an example of an 'opt out' like the rule that services should pay their own way? That may in fact the case, but in any event, conservatives need to climb onto a higher level from which to seek a broader perspective."

— William F. Buckley Jr., from his editorial in the June 14, 2002 National Review Online Edition: "Yes to the Railroads, a national endorsement of the railroads is defendable"
President’s Column

OARP’s new president sets agenda

By Ed D’Amato
OARP President

We all remember notable moments in our lives. For me, Memorial Day weekend 1995 was a turning point. That was when I became a rail advocate. For just over a year, I had been working for the state of Ohio in Bowling Green. My job at that time required I drive about 3,000 miles per month. In addition, I had been, for several months, driving to Kent State University every other weekend to finish up my master’s degree work.

That weekend, I wanted to visit family in Johnstown, Pa., but I was loathing the thought of having to get in my car and drive the 6+ hours it would take. All those months on the road just wore me out. When I had discovered that I could board a train in Fostoria and go directly to Johnstown, I seized the opportunity. I was so burned-out from driving, I didn’t even care that I would have to board the train around 3 a.m.

It was a relaxing, comfortable, dignified and sane way to travel. Upon my return, I decided to find out why we don’t have more and better train service as it had quickly become a quality of life issue for me. I started reading, joined the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers (and the National Association of Railroad Passengers), and slowly began getting involved. In 1999, I joined OARP’s board of directors as secretary.

OARP has made much progress in recent years. We have carefully cultivated a more professional image, increased our visibility to the media, begun building coalitions with like-minded organizations and hired a consultant to help us educate our elected officials in Columbus and Washington, D.C.

At the same time, public and political opinion has been shifting to a much stronger pro-rail stance. Rising image for rail, we don’t have more and better train service as it had burned-out from driving, it’s time to make our rail system can be modernized and expanded. This, in turn, is making advancement of a passenger rail program for Ohio difficult.

As OARP’s new president, I want to sustain the many positive efforts that began prior to my tenure, particularly coalition building. There are many voices of support around Ohio, including some local chambers of commerce, metropolitan planning commissions, local governments, the travel and tourism industry, rail suppliers and others. But, their voices are still largely isolated.

OARP needs to bring those voices together and turn them into a choir so our representatives in Columbus and Washington, D.C. can fully understand and appreciate the breadth and depth of support that exists for more and better passenger rail service.

We also face some key internal challenges, one of which is money. As our efforts have expanded, so has the expense of sustaining them and we are outgrowing our essentially all-volunteer structure. To be more effective, OARP needs to be able to hire a staff person who can handle things like mailings, meeting planning, fundraising and work that needs to be done during business hours when most of the board of directors are working at their day jobs.

We have been, and will continue to seek new sources of funding like foundation grants, and through our Corridors Campaigns, but the board of directors may also have to discuss additional options with our membership like a small dues increase.

Another challenge is our image. Though we have made great strides in establishing a professional image for OARP as a serious transportation advocacy organization, we are still perceived in some circles as a bunch of rail buffs who only want to preserve their hobby. As much as we all know that isn’t true, it is still a serious challenge that we must overcome.

I am confident that if OARP can sustain and build upon the efforts that are already underway. We will prevail, and we will have that strong third leg needed to balance our transportation needs.

OARP busy in rail fight

“OARP” from page one — employ when arguing their case for passenger rail. Keep an eye on OARP’s website (www.oarprail.org) for this “tool kit,” once it is complete. Mr. Nicholson also has been conducting interviews in the media and writing convincing pro-rail commentaries that have been published by local, state and national publications. He continues to coordinate the association’s activities despite its rapidly dwindling fiscal resources.

Among OARP’s most important activities have been conducted by OARP Government Affairs Liaison Chris Vines. She has been busy in her travels and making personal meetings with Ohio’s Congressional Delegation in Washington D.C. Furthermore, she has distributed helpful, rail-supportive information to Ohio’s U.S. senators and representatives by phone, fax and e-mail. Other OARP leaders have been equally as active, such as Past President Bill Hutchison’s recent interview on the Ohio News Network or Vice President Mark Carlson’s interview on Cleveland’s news superstation WTAM-AM.

Additionally, Mr. Carlson attended the May 8 Rail Day on Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. and met with congressmen and staff regarding the need for Amtrak funding. Mr. Nicholson participated in a recorded program (The Editors) June 27 in Toledo, sponsored by the Toledo Blade/WGTE (PBS Channel 30) which aired three times June 28-30. OARP President Ed D’Amato called into a National Public Radio show June 17 in which his pro-rail comments were broadcast nationwide.

OARP has proven to be one of, if not the nation’s most active and effective state associations in pushing our federal elected officials to make the right decisions when it comes to the survival and expansion of Ohio passenger rail services. As noted earlier, OARP has eclipsed the extent and efficacy of many national rail passenger associa-
Much work remains with our greatest challenges facing us now. Amtrak is near bankruptcy, and even though public support for rail is strong, Congress and the Bush Administration are so far unable to reach a consensus about how to reshape America's passenger train system. However, improvements are already underway. We will prevail, and we will have that strong third leg needed to balance our transportation system. And, in turn, having modern, efficient passenger trains will mean an improved quality of life for all Ohioans.

As noted earlier, OARP has eclipsed the extent and efficacy of many national rail passenger associations in communicating the need and desire for modern passenger trains. With the financial help of our members and others, we still can.

New OARP Board takes shape

Requires a complicated procedure

OARP has a new board, including a new president and vice president. But some of the changes required a complicated procedure that was approved by the membership at the Annual Meeting in Columbus.

Candidates (all uncontested) in this year's mail ballot were confirmed by the election committee. These included Ed D'Amato of Berea as president, Mark Carlson of Bay Village as vice president, Larry Robertson of Columbus as secretary, David Shreiner of Millersburg as treasurer and J. Howard Harding of Akron as at-large board member.

They replaced former President Bill Hutchinson of Westerville, Vice President Ken Prendergast of Lakewood and Secretary D'Amato, all of whom faced term limits. Only Mr. Shreiner was able to seek re-election, according to the bylaws. Mr. Hutchinson will remain on the board as past president until someone replaces Mr. D'Amato. Mr. Prendergast continues to serve the association as newsletter editor and as the director of the Corridor Campaigns.

Shortly before the May 11 Annual Meeting, a wrinkle was thrown into the mix. Northeast Ohio board member Jim Stone stated that his workload at his law firm prevented his involvement in the association for the foreseeable future. His term will expire next year. He offered to resign so we could get someone else to take his place. OARP sought an equally professional person to take his place.

An excellent candidate was found — Kirt Conrad, director of planning & development for the Akron Metro Regional Transit Authority. He is an OARP member who does passenger rail advocacy as part of his full-time job. But he has been an OARP member since December. OARP's bylaws require that regional directors (like the Northeast Ohio director) be an OARP member for at least one year prior to serving on the board. However, the at-large positions allow anyone to serve on the board, as long as they become an OARP member within 30 days. Mr. Harding was the candidate for the one available at-large seat in this year's election.

Thus, at the Annual Meeting, a previously proposed bylaw amendment, allowing the board to make appointments longer than six months was passed by the membership. This bylaw change was proposed months before Mr. Stone's work situation was known. OARP members authorized the board to take the following actions at a special board meeting immediately after the Annual Meeting:

◆ Mr. Stone's letter of resignation was accepted by the board;
◆ Mr. Harding's resignation as at-large board member was accepted by the board;
◆ The board appointed Mr. Harding to serve the unexpired term as Northeast Ohio Director, giving him no more or no less responsibilities than he would have had as at-large board member;
◆ The board appointed Mr. Conrad to the at-large board seat, vacated by Mr. Harding.

The week following the May 11 meeting, Northwest Ohio Director Kathy Wigon resigned, citing personal and work situations, saying she will continue to support OARP's efforts but cannot devote the time necessary to serve on the board. A replacement for her position is being sought, as is a candidate for the long-vacant Southwest Ohio director board seat. Interested candidates for these board seats should contact OARP President Ed D'Amato.

Thanks to all the board members who have served the association.
**Travel Agent Members**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Agency Name</th>
<th>Local Phone</th>
<th>Long Distance Phone</th>
<th>Contact Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akron/Stow</td>
<td>Parkside Travel USA</td>
<td>(330) 688-3334</td>
<td></td>
<td>Joel Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>Alliance AAA Travel</td>
<td>(330) 821-2323</td>
<td>(330) 456-6315</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal Fulton</td>
<td>Massillon AAA Travel</td>
<td>(330) 854-6616</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>Ohio Motorist Association/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(216) 606-6080</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>Ohio Automobile Club/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(614) 431-7823</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elyria</td>
<td>Tours &amp; Travel Service, Inc.</td>
<td>(440) 323-5423</td>
<td>(800) 443-7789</td>
<td>Mike McClister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansfield</td>
<td>Mansfield Travel Center</td>
<td>(419) 756-8747</td>
<td>(800) 759-7404</td>
<td>Cheryl Anderson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massillon</td>
<td>Massillon AAA Travel</td>
<td>(330) 833-1034</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piqua</td>
<td>Miami County Auto Club/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(937) 773-3753</td>
<td></td>
<td>Roberta Slyker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandusky</td>
<td>Sandusky Travel Service, Inc.</td>
<td>(419) 626-4633</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Amtrak Al&quot; Mladineo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solon</td>
<td>Astro Amtrak Tours</td>
<td>(440) 519-7331</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troy</td>
<td>Miami County Auto Club/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(937) 339-0112</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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: Dave Shreiner, Treasurer; 9705 Township Road 301; Millersburg OH 44654. 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: Oct. 2000

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**Directory of the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers**

- **Toll-free OARP telephone number:** 888 / 488-8439
- **Visit OARP on the web:** Visit OARP on the web! www.oarprail.org
- **OARP Regional Co-Ordinators**

**NORTHEAST REGION**
- Cleveland: James Stone, 216 / 438-5711
- Elyria: Phil Copeland, 440 / 365-7970
- Warren: G. Douglas Hudson, 330 / 544-3203

**NORTHWEST REGION**
- Toledo: Bill Gill, 419 / 536-1924
- Lima: Vacant

**SOUTHWEST REGION**
- Cincinnati: W. Mike Weber, 513 / 891-9251
- Dayton: Linda Leas, 937 / 253-9448
- Clermont: Ronald D. Garner, 513 / 444-3098
- Springfield: Vacant

**CENTRAL/ SOUTHEAST REGION**
- Columbus: Robert Boyce, 614 / 486-7038
- Delaware: Tom Allen, 740 / 369-5804
Join the 3-C, CTC Corridor Campaigns

Be a part of focused campaigns to bring advanced passenger trains to the Cleveland-Columbus-Dayton-Cincinnati (3-C) Corridor and/or the Cleveland-Toledo-Chicago (CTC) Corridor.

Members of these campaigns will receive the Ohio Passenger Rail News on a quarterly basis, plus a twice-monthly, interactive Ohio Passenger Rail News eEdition sent by e-mail, as well as a bi-monthly campaign newsletter, special concerns for action, use of campaign staff (to begin soon) and other benefits. An exclusive membership dues structure, identical to both campaigns, has been instituted.

CORRIDOR CAMPAIGN MEMBERSHIP FORM (please photocopy and mail)

Name............................................................... Circle the campaign or campaigns and check the membership level(s) you are joining:
Title............................................................... 3-C Corridor Campaign
Organization..................................................... 3-C Corridor Campaign
Address.......................................................... 3-C Corridor Campaign
City................................. State...... ZIP..........
Telephone (......)............................................. 3-C Corridor Campaign
E-mail............................................................ 3-C Corridor Campaign

Make checks payable to either the “3-C Corridor Campaign” or the “CTC Corridor Campaign” and mailed with this coupon to: David Shreiner, OARP Treasurer 9705 Township Road 301 Millersburg, OH 44654

- Associate ($50-99) - Campaign Partner ($5,000+)
- Benefactor ($100-249) - Campaign Partner ($5,000+)
- Advocate ($250-499) - Campaign Partner ($5,000+)
- Patron ($500-999) - Leader ($1,000-4,999)
- Leader ($1,000-4,999) - Leader ($1,000-4,999)

WEBMASTER Daniel Roberts 12 Westerville Sc, #275 Westerville OH 43081 614 / 889-8544 daniel_roberts@oarprail.org

3-C & CTC Corridor CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR Ken Prendergast See listing above Toll Free: 888 / 489-8439

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

NARP National Office
Executive Director Ross Capon 402 / 408-3962 202 / 408-8362
Assistant Director Scott Leonard fax-202 / 408-8267
900 Second Street, NE #308
Washington DC 20002-3557
E-mail: narp@narprail.org Web: www.narprail.org

NARP Region 6 Directors

Mark Carlson 3-C Corridor Campaign
419 Humiston Dr.
Bay Village OH 44149-3017
mccarlon@core.com

Phil Copeland 3-C Corridor Campaign
419 Humiston Dr.
Bay Village OH 44149-3017
mccarlon@core.com

John DeLora 3-C Corridor Campaign
419 Humiston Dr.
Bay Village OH 44149-3017
mccarlon@core.com

J. Howard Harding 3-C Corridor Campaign
489 Overwood Rd.
Akron OH 44313-5327
howardharding@msn.com

Nick Nee CTC Corridor Campaign
1185 Priority Place
Indianapolis IN 4627
nicknee@msn.com

W. Mike Weber CTC Corridor Campaign
513 / 891-9251
9800 Misty Morn Lane
Cincinnati OH 45242-5450

Director
Jeffrey G. Juaire
1200 Montgomery St.
Richmond VA 23219-302
E-mail: jeff@narprail.org Web: www.narprail.org

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489 Overwood Rd.
Akron OH 44313-5327
howardharding@msn.com

Nick Nee CTC Corridor Campaign
1185 Priority Place
Indianapolis IN 4627
nicknee@msn.com

W. Mike Weber CTC Corridor Campaign
513 / 891-9251
9800 Misty Morn Lane
Cincinnati OH 45242-5450

Director
Jeffrey G. Juaire
1200 Montgomery St.
Richmond VA 23219-302
E-mail: jeff@narprail.org Web: www.narprail.org
Mark your calendar for OARP's Summer Meeting
Saturday, August 17th, in Ohio's vacationland!

GREENTREE INN
1935 Cleveland Street
(U.S. Route 6)
Sandusky, Ohio

Agenda
9:30 Registration—coffee, juice, pastries
10:00 Good morning!
   President Ed D'Amato
10:05 Welcome to Sandusky:
   Erie County Visitors Bureau
10:25 Ohio and Washington updates
11:00 Where do we go from here?
   Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur
11:45 Break for lunch
12:45 Afternoon speaker:
   Sandusky Transit System
1:45 Adjourn

Meeting Registration Form
(Please Print)

Name(s)__________________________
Address_________________________
City________________State________ZIP_____
Telephone_______________________
Email____________________________

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Ohio Passenger Rail News, Summer 2002

Greentree Inn

Roller coasters, fishing, water parks, camping, off-track betting, concerts, wineries, museums, shopping, jet skis, safari, boating, history, parasailing, festivals...

No wonder the Sandusky/Lake Erie Islands Region is Ohio's most popular vacation destination! The region has much to offer its visitors. For more information, contact: www.buckeyenorth.com

Why not bring the family and spend the weekend?!?

Directions to the GREENTREE INN:
The Greentree Inn is at the northwest corner of Cleveland Road (US 6) and Cedar Point Causeway. The meeting room is off the rear parking lot.

From the West:
Toledo; Port Clinton
US 2 East to US 6 East (in downtown Sandusky US 6 becomes Cleveland Rd.)
Follow the "Cedar Point" trailblazer signs to the corner of Cleveland Road and Cedar Point Causeway.

From the South:
Cincinnati, Dayton, Lima, Findlay
Cleveland, (most suburban) Lorain, Elyria

From the East:
Port Clinton

Calendar of Events/Meetings

All meetings are subject to change. We firmly suggest that you confirm dates, times and locations for all meetings.

**July 2002**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact person &amp; phone number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Toledo Local Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Toledo Amtrak Station</td>
<td>Central Union Plaza, Toledo</td>
<td>Bill Gill 419/536-1924</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 614/486-7083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ORDC — Committee Mtg.</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Riffe Center; 77 S. High Street, 31st Floor; Columbus</td>
<td>ORDC 614/644-0308</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ORDC — Full Commission</td>
<td>* 10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Riffe Center; 77 S. High Street, 31st Floor; Columbus</td>
<td>* approximate. Full Commission meeting follow Committee Meetings</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>OARP Board Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Delaware Public Library</td>
<td>84 East Winter St., Delaware</td>
<td>Bill Hutchison 614/882-1716</td>
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**August 2002**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact person &amp; phone number</th>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>OARP Toledo Local Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Toledo Amtrak Station</td>
<td>Central Union Plaza, Toledo</td>
<td>Bill Gill 419/536-1924</td>
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<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 614/486-7083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>OARP Summer Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Greentree Inn</td>
<td>1935 Cleveland Rd., Sandusky</td>
<td>Mark Carlson 440/331-3161</td>
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**September 2002**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact person &amp; phone number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>ORDC — Committee Mtg.</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Riffe Center; 77 S. High Street, 31st Floor; Columbus</td>
<td>ORDC 614/644-0308</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Columbus Local Meeting</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Red Door Tavern</td>
<td>1736 West 5th Avenue</td>
<td>Bob Boyce 614/486-7083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Toledo Local Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Toledo Amtrak Station</td>
<td>Central Union Plaza, Toledo</td>
<td>Bill Gill 419/536-1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>OARP Board Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 p.m.</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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