Ohio, a strong travel market

Study showing solid rail ridership potential

Preliminary results from a study of two routes for proposed rail passenger services crossing at Cleveland reveal that four million riders would use the system each year, once the system is fully developed. The system would serve a ridership base of 27 million people, or 10 percent of America's population along just 870 route miles.

In finding "a significant market potential" for intercity passenger rail services, the Ohio-based study shows that rail travel can be made as fast or faster and less expensive than automobile travel and most short-distance airline trips (see the informational tables on page three for more detail).

Just as important, an improved passenger rail system would provide huge economic benefits to Ohio, as measured by thousands of new jobs, increased income of more than a quarter billion dollars and a $1 billion rise in Ohio property values. Those are just some of the preliminary findings of the Ohio & Lake Erie Regional Rail - Cleveland Hub Study, requested by the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC). Two consulting firms, TEMS Inc. and HNTB Inc., are conducting the study with input from the ORDC, departments of transportation in Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania and New York, Amtrak, transit agencies, metropolitan planning organizations and staff in various cities.

The study, to include as-yet incomplete capital cost data, should be finished by late-spring 2003, according to the ORDC.

Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers members who attended the association's Fall Meeting on Nov. 2, 2002 in Dayton were given a sneak peak at the draft study via an attractive PowerPoint presentation by ORDC planner Don Damron. Draft study results were received favorably by OARP. The association will take a formal position on the draft analysis once the entire study is done and after the OARP Board has had a chance to thoroughly review it.

For purposes of the study, the two routes were broken down into four segments:

- Cleveland - Columbus - Dayton - Cincinnati (3-C);
- Cleveland - Toledo - Detroit;
- Cleveland - Pittsburgh;
- Cleveland - Buffalo - Toronto.

Full implementation of the system, dubbed the Ohio & Lake Erie Regional Rail - Cleveland Hub Study, should be finished by late-spring 2003, according to the ORDC.
Big service changes hit Ohio

OARP fights loss of Amtrak’s *Pennsylvanian*

By Ken Prendergast
Director, Ohio Corridors Campaign

Amtrak’s daily *Pennsylvanian* service will no longer serve Ohio after Jan. 27, following Amtrak’s decision to eliminate its express freight business. Amtrak officials stated that the freight business was the sole reason for this train traveling west of Pittsburgh. After Jan. 27, the *Pennsylvanian* will revert to its pre-1998, Pittsburgh-New York City schedule, despite protests from the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers (OARP), communities and elected officials.

The *Pennsylvanian* had eastbound and westbound trains between Chicago and Philadelphia, serving the Ohio cities of Alliance, Cleveland, Elyria, Sandusky and Toledo each day.

OARP argues that this train should instead operate on a new schedule that favors passengers’ travel needs, rather than those of Amtrak’s freight customers. Further, OARP advocates that new rail contracts, untapped federal funds, local marketing partnerships and some inexpensive capital investments to speed up the service could result in a dynamic new *Pennsylvanian*.

The *Pennsylvanian* began in 1980 as a Pittsburgh-Philadelphia route, and was extended eastward to New York City in 1983. This service attracted more riders per year throughout much of the 1990s than all but one East Coast-Chicago route — the *Lake Shore Limited*. In the late 1980s, OARP began a focused effort to get the *Pennsylvanian* train extended westward to Cleveland. This effort was augmented in the 1990s to instead have the route extended to Toledo.

OARP’s efforts were rewarded in November 1998, when Amtrak extended the *Pennsylvanian* west of Pittsburgh to Chicago via Cleveland and Toledo. But, at the same time, Amtrak shortened the east end of the service.

— See “Pennsylvanian” on page three
Train of Thought
from Ohio Passenger Rail News Editor
Kenneth Prendergast

Whenever possible, I try to have high-priority articles that relate to each other appearing on the front page of this newsletter. This issue is one of those occasions. If readers are confused by the differing messages conveyed by those two articles, that's exactly what was intended.

One article says Ohio has the demographics (population, travel demand, etc.) to be a potent market for more and better intercity passenger rail services. The other article says Ohio and other places west of Pittsburgh lack what it takes to continue an existing passenger rail service — namely, the preservation of Amtrak's Pennsylvanian.

So, which message is correct?

Clearly, the first article is correct, and it's not just because it supports OARP's argument that Ohio needs more trains. The basis for that article is founded on input from a number of sources, primarily from the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC), its consultants and its study partners. One of those study partners is Amtrak.

Amtrak's actions were also the basis for the second article. The passenger rail corporation says ridership was lacking west of Pittsburgh on its Pennsylvanian route, hence Amtrak's decision to eliminate service on this route west of the Steel City starting Jan. 27. Actually, Amtrak doesn't call this change a cutback nor an elimination. In his stilted corporate verbiage, an Amtrak vice president considered this cutback to be "a reroute."

Amtrak clearly didn't measure the market and political opportunities in Ohio by keeping the same service levels it had before Jan. 27, else it would have worked with the ORDC, OARP and others to find ways to preserve and promote the Pennsylvanian to Ohio in some form.

This is very confusing. The ORDC study, which proposes expanded services on two basic routes via a Cleveland hub — Cincinnati to Toronto and Detroit to Pittsburgh. Much of the latter route was traveled by the Pennsylvanian prior to Jan. 27, without any advertising by Amtrak or without exploring marketing partnerships with the Ohio Department of Travel & Tourism and local tourism agencies. Nor was any attempt made by Amtrak to seek a new schedule that might favor existing travel patterns, or seek speed increases, mail contracts and stop gap federal funding with help from the local Congressional delegation.

Instead, Amtrak took the easy way out, and simply cut, or rerouted, the Pennsylvanian so it no longer serves Ohio.
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

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!

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Ohio, a strong travel market

"Cleveland Hub" from page one —

Phase One would consist of two to three daily round trips on each route, operating at 79 mph speeds. Joint development with commuter rail services is essential, ORDC officials point out, as federal dollars are available for commuter rail projects but not for intercity rail passenger improvements.

However, federal funding for intercity rail will be needed to develop Phase Two — providing six to eight daily trains in each direction, operating at speeds between 90-110 mph. ORDC officials noted that some short, rural sections of passenger-only track, such as redeveloping the abandoned Pittsburgh & Lake Erie right of way between Youngstown, OH and New Castle, PA, could permit 125 mph operations.

Passenger trains on other sections of railroad, such as on CSX-owned tracks between Cleveland and Greenwich in the 3-C Corridor, would likely be kept to 90 mph. That’s because new Roadway Worker Safety Rules adopted by railroads in 1996 require a 26-foot separation from the centerline of an existing freight track to the centerline of a passenger track where train speeds exceed 90 mph. That requirement may cause capital costs to rise from prior estimates, especially where long stretches of 90+ mph passenger-only track are proposed to be built next to existing freight railroads.

Indeed, the time savings by increasing speeds from 90 mph to 110 mph often prove to be minimal, yet construction costs typically rise significantly, based on experiences elsewhere in the nation.

Hub study.

The intent of the study wasn’t to reap high top speeds for passenger trains, Mr. Damron noted. Rather, it was to achieve high average speeds for rail travelers, which could often be accomplished by relieving rail traffic congestion at key bottlenecks, thereby providing significant benefits to freight railroad operations as well.

Recommended train equipment for Cleveland Hub services would have to be able to attain top speeds of 125 mph, achieve faster acceleration than conventional Amtrak equipment, incur lower fuel consumption and pollution emissions, plus reduced maintenance and operational costs. Trains should have wide seats, more headroom, at-seat computer power hookups and onboard food service, the study said. Several existing technologies meet those requirements, such as Talgo’s XXI train, ABB’s Flexliner and Bombardier’s Acela gas turbine train.

Those companies have domestic operations to manufacture or assemble these trains, and many components are likely to be built in Ohio, which is home to more than 100 rail industry suppliers (see “Amtrak relies on Ohio suppliers” on page five). This is a major reason why Ohio will benefit from passenger rail improvement programs throughout the country, not just those in Ohio. But having such a program in Ohio would likely provide even greater benefits to our state’s economy.

As noted before, the Cleveland Hub study is based on experiences elsewhere in the nation. Indeed, the system’s benefits will be sought early next year in a separate study. This analysis will look at various economic benefits derived from implementing the Cleveland Hub study, such as from added tourism, increased traveler productivity and more business for railroad industry suppliers. That economic impact study will likely be funded by a partnership of ORDC, various chambers of commerce and other independent, economic development organizations.

With a targeted completion date of late spring, the economic impact study’s release will likely coincide with that of the Cleveland Hub study’s. Together, these two analyses will provide citizens, elected officials, business leaders and others with critical information they will need to decide whether Ohio should nurture a system of fast, frequent and convenient passenger trains.

But, given the early results of the emerging Cleveland Hub study, Ohio clearly has the market base to make a modern rail passenger network succeed. OARP looks forward to seeing the final results of the Cleveland Hub study, and of the proposed economic impact analysis. We are confident that these two studies will prove to be powerful tools to illustrate to Ohio’s leaders why they should invest in passenger rail.

Cleveland Hub Summary

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Note: Based on TEMS/HNTB for Cleveland Hub study. Fuel costs are based on a 10% increase from Standard Mileage rate at the nearest dollar.
Big service changes hit Ohio

route to Philadelphia, dropping the largest city in the U.S. — New York. Amtrak also did little to advertise the new service to Ohioans, who had little knowledge that passenger trains still existed. Amtrak chose to subside this expanded service with its new emphasis on express freight. Unfortunately, that meant a schedule that favored freight over passengers.

All these factors were met with obvious results. Ridership on the Pennsylvania sank deeply and never recovered. A slightly more passenger-friendly train schedule, implemented last year, did little to increase ridership. And, while freight traffic on the Pennsylvania (and other passenger trains) was heavy, Amtrak's use of non-performing subcontractors and low-paying shippers caused Amtrak to lose money on what should have been a profitable enterprise.

Additionally, attaching so many freight cars to the Pennsylvania often created schedule delays. Furthermore, the heavy freight cars produced an uncomfortable "tugging" motion felt by passengers as the lengthy train frequently speeded up or slowed down.

OARP strongly believes that Pennsylvania service to Ohio can be successful, and serve as a foundation for statewide rail improvements planned by the state of Ohio as part of its Cleveland Hub study (see "Ohio, a strong rail travel market" on page one). These improvements can include:

✓ Reschedule the Pennsylvania to one which was proposed by Amtrak for the as-yet unrealized Skyline Connection, with through service to New York City. Another option is to have a New York City-based Pennsylvania operate as far west as Detroit, with faster travel times owing to the lack of express freight servicing at Harrisburg and taking advantage of potential 90 mph speeds between Cleveland and Pittsburgh.

✓ Form marketing partnerships with state/local travel/tourism agencies and bureaus, to make the service's existence known to potential travelers via direct mail marketing, media advertising, various Web sites and other informational resources.

✓ Secure United States Postal Service shipping contracts and revenues, since the route can tap USPS Bulk Mail Centers in Chicago, Detroit (via Toledo), Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and New York City. Mail contracts have long proven to be profitable for Amtrak.

✓ Work with state agencies and local metropolitan planning organizations to attract federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality grants to offset any expected operating losses. Federal CM/AQ grants have been acquired by local, state and federal officials in other parts of the country to fund intercity and commuter rail operations.

✓ Seek grade crossing improvements and negotiations with host railroad Norfolk Southern Corp. that could yield significantly faster speeds and time savings for Amtrak. For example, between Cleveland and Pittsburgh, NS has a signal system which can permit 90 mph train speeds, but existing grade crossing devices are "timed" for slower train speeds.

These opportunities would create a foundation for the kinds of services proposed by the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) in its Cleveland Hub study. But Amtrak officials failed to fully consider these opportunities. Instead, they simply cut the Pennsylvania's service to Ohio. Such an act of apparent desperation failed to acknowledge future repercussions, both market and political, particularly as they relate to ORDC's emerging efforts.

OARP believes a restructured Pennsylvania could have served as an important foundation for Ohio's planned service developments, rather than be a source of political ammunition for rail's skeptical opponents in this state. OARP believes it is never too late to rectify such a shortsighted decision and will work with various officials to address this challenge.

The Pennsylvania isn't the only Ohio Amtrak service to be affected by pending corporate plans. OARP understands all of Amtrak's Chicago - East Coast services could soon undergo a major restructuring. Amtrak is again considering rerouting its daily Three Rivers (Chicago - Pittsburgh - New York City) off its route through Youngstown, Akron and Fostoria via the Pennsylvania's route via Cleveland and Toledo. This was proposed by Amtrak in 2001, which OARP successfully fought, and we would do so again. OARP opposes any loss of rail service to Ohio cities.

Amtrak also is considering more schedule changes to its Lake Shore Limited (Chicago - Buffalo - New York/Boston) and Capitol Limited (Chicago - Pittsburgh - Washington D.C.). While details of these proposals aren't known, OARP understands these might result in more convenient service to Ohioans. Amtrak dramatically rescheduled the westbound Lake Shore Limited in 2002 to have a dawn arrival in Chicago, which resulted in dramatically lower ridership for this once popular train.

Lately, a refreshing change seems to be emerging among Amtrak officials — that more station staff, keeping stations open longer and offering more services will add more revenues than reductions in station staffing, hours and services can lower costs. OARP is glad this realization appears to be taking hold at Amtrak, and we understand one of the first beneficiaries of this new policy may be the Cincinnati station. Cincinnati's station has very limited business hours, despite that this Amtrak presence is inside the busy Museum Center at Cincinnati Union Terminal. Amtrak has yet to capitalize on this marketing opportunity at Cincinnati.

While Amtrak officials have made a number of decisions lately that have resulted in reduced train ridership on its once-popular East Coast - Chicago trains, it appears those officials are acknowledging that they need to rectify those mistakes. However, OARP encourages Amtrak officials to make an effort to tap potential local and state support for passenger rail improvements before taking any dramatic actions. OARP further encourages Amtrak, state officials, local interests and others to get together to review options before making short-term decisions that could have long-term consequences.
OARP helps start “Chicago Summit”

CHICAGO — In recent years, some rail officials said that if you put 40 leaders of pro-rail passenger organizations in the same room and asked them what should be the future of rail passenger service, you'd get 40 different responses.

But two notable gatherings held recently showed that rail passenger interests nationwide are much closer to a meeting of the minds than had previously been assumed. Such a unification is essential for rail passenger advocates to get what they want from the U.S. Congress — namely short-term solutions for stabilizing Amtrak and a long-term development policy and strategy for passenger rail nationwide.

A major step toward unification was accomplished at a Nov. 15, 2002 meeting in Chicago, with a second meeting held Jan. 10, 2003, also in the Windy City. More follow-up meetings will likely be held.

The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers, Midwest High Speed Rail Coalition and the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission came up with the idea of this national summit. To develop such a shared rail passenger policy and strategy would require the participation of as many rail passenger interests as possible.

“This is an auspicious, welcome and possibly historic occasion,” said Dennis Minichello, president of the Midwest High Speed Rail Coalition, as he kicked off the Chicago summit in November. “There’s before passing legislation,” said James RePass, chief executive officer of the National Corridors Initiative. “They would rather have those differences ironed out before you come to Congress to ask for something.”

The goal of the summit was to seek a free exchange of ideas and input from various interests to finally develop a unified and coordinated message to Congress, President Bush’s administration and others.

At the end of the first Chicago Summit, a concise, draft statement, called the “Chicago Agreement” was created and a basic marketing strategy was proposed. Rail interests who participated in the summit, and even those that didn’t, will be asked to endorse the policy and embrace the strategy. Of course, to make a policy acceptable to as many interests as possible, it needed to be “somewhat vague. But, at

But that wasn’t all. Others were Amtrak’s Cheryl Jackson and Ray Lang, United Transportation Union’s Joseph Szabo, States For Passenger Rail Coalition Treasurer Randy Wade (also a chief rail planner at the Wisconsin Department of Transportation), plus representatives of departments of transportation in Michigan, Illinois and Minnesota, as well as leaders of rail passenger advocacy organizations in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Texas and Virginia.

“I’m proud of OARP’s leadership role in beginning this national dialogue,” Mr. Prendergast said. “I think we’ve helped to start something that will prove to be very important and valuable in the near future.”
More than 40 people, representing some of the biggest names in the rail passenger community from as far away as Texas and New England, gathered at the summits. A list of participants appears at the end of this article.

Ohio was represented by Corridor Campaigns Director Ken Prendergast and OARP Treasurer David Shreiner, plus OARP members Rob Greenlese of the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority and Diane Reamer Evans of the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments.

"Not only should we organize and coordinate rail passenger interests nationwide," Mr. Prendergast said, "we absolutely must do this if we want to get where we want to go."

Joe Schweiterman, of DePaul University in Chicago, once worked for the airline industry. He noted that the aviation sector's lobbying mouthpieces are coordinated by just two industry associations and the various airlines. He said a similar unification is needed in the rail passenger sector.

"I'm impressed by the breadth of rail interests emerging," he said. "But there's a need to come together."

"Congress doesn't like to be an arbiter of differences representing different perspectives."

In order to ensure the safety, quality, reliability and efficiency of our country's vital transportation network and to preserve our national defense, America needs a balanced, integrated transportation system and the American people need diverse transportation choices. Passenger rail is a critical component of a modern, multi-modal transportation system, and needs to have financial support, unified policy development and oversight similar to that afforded to our air, highway and mass transit modes.

Therefore, we, the undersigned, do urge Congress and the President of the United States to fully institute the following passenger rail components, which are critical to the future of passenger rail in the United States, within the upcoming reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and/or Amtrak Reauthorization legislation:

1. Establish a dedicated, multi-year federal capital-funding program for intercity passenger rail, patterned after the existing federal highway, airport and mass transit programs.

2. Establish, as federal policy, a preserved and improved national passenger rail system — a nationwide, interconnected passenger rail system that stimulates higher levels of efficiency, innovation and responsiveness. Direct the Federal Railroad Administration, or another agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation, to — with state input — develop, fund and oversee this federal policy.

3. Provide full federal funding of Amtrak during the period that the new federal plans and policies are being developed. Then, fully fund implementation of the national passenger rail system — with its new efficiencies, innovation and responsiveness — in subsequent years.

(NO: As many organizations, corporations, and prominent individuals will be asked to sign on to this agreement.)
Rolling with the governor

Observations on a whistle-stop train journey

By Stu Nicholson
OARP Administrative Director

On Nov. 2, 2002, the early morning air down by the tracks was cold and the wind made it even colder as the crowd gathered to wait for the train in downtown Columbus. They gathered to either send off or travel with Governor Bob Taft, who was about to become the first Ohio governor to campaign by train since the early 1950s.

An Ohio Central Railroad special passenger train had already backed its way into town earlier that morning to stop west of downtown to board the governor and his staff for their grand entrance into downtown. And grand it was, with one of the OC’s steam locomotives, this one a former Canadian Pacific passenger engine, sending a tower of hot steam and smoke into the air, and turning heads with a whistle seldom heard these days.

With the Governor and Mrs. Taft waving to a crowd from the rear of the open-platform observation car, those riding to Newark, Coshocton and Sugar Creek boarded the train for what they apparently thought would be just a rolling campaign rally.

But I observed a revelation occur among the passengers in the four-car train as it glided along the former Pennsylvania Railroad Panhandle Line, now owned by the State of Ohio. The passenger list included the former and current Ohio Speakers of the House of Representatives, JoAnne Davidson and Robert Taft.

Keep in mind that they were riding a train made up of rail cars that dated to the 1950s, hauled by a steam locomotive built before all but a few passengers (myself included) were born.

It was time for me to politely intrude on these conversations and provide some answers. They were predictably surprised when those I told them the rest of the nation travels on trains that go to most major cities (except Columbus) and at speeds greater than 45 mph.

They looked surprised that Columbus, the center of most of their lives, once had up to 45 trains a day going virtually anywhere in the state and well beyond. Most were stunned at hearing Columbus is the second-largest city in the nation without regularly scheduled passenger trains (Phoenix is the largest).

I expected their eyes to roll back in a look of impending boredom. But the fact they were experiencing for the first time a few reporters stopped by to talk trains as they found out I was “spreading the gospel” on board.

But I wasn’t the only one talking trains as the Taft Express rolled on toward Coshocton and another track-side rally. Ohio Rail Development Commission Executive Director James Seney was also on board. He arranged this trip for the Taft campaign. But it was clear he at least wanted to expose those on board to the experience of traveling without being bored into inactivity.
Rep. Larry Householder, respectively. Also on board were Supreme Court Justice Evelyn Stratton, campaign and legislative staff, plus a troop of State House reporters from media outlets all over the state. There was lots of campaign talk, most sounding confident of an upcoming Taft victory.

The Ohio Central not only operates the Panhandle Line and many of its spurs, but also has done an excellent job of rehabilitating and maintaining an extraordinarily smooth track bed between Columbus and Coshocton. And it was that smooth ride at speeds that approached 45-plus mph that seemed extraordinarily smooth. One Taft campaign aide said he traveled Amtrak in the Northeast Corridor between New York and Washington. He said it was a positive experience. I responded by saying we could have much the same service between Ohio's "3 Cs" (Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati) and attract not only discretionary travelers, but people who travel for business.

This is travel, I explained, that could fuel Ohio's economy and help the state to do more business. It also raised more than a few eyebrows when I told my fellow passengers about the Ohio State University poll showing a super-majority of Ohioans wanting passenger trains.

Before the first campaign stop in Newark, a healthy stack of OARP Corridor Campaign brochures and newsletters had already been handed out. What struck me was most people actually sat down and read them, and a few had follow-up questions. Even a board to the experience of traveling without being strapped in at 35,000 feet or looking at the backside of semis on I-71.

The Ohio Central also went all-out to make the experience positive. Onboard answers could be had from OC employees, and a complete marketing brochure was strategically placed on every seat as people boarded in Columbus. All of this made a deep impression, judging by the comments I heard.

On a long, slow bus ride back to Columbus, Mr. Seney said he was pleased with the positive reaction he got from those on board. He said the governor and the General Assembly have to understand that passenger rail development, in an under-served Ohio, can be accomplished by going after existing dollars at the federal level.

No single train ride will change things right away in Ohio. But this train ride will likely be remembered when serious discussions gets underway about getting passenger trains rolling in the 3-C and other rail corridors in Ohio.

Amtrak relies on Ohio suppliers

By Ken Prendergast
Director, Ohio Corridor Campaigns

When Buckeye Steel Castings, an Ohio Corridor Campaigns member, slipped into bankruptcy in autumn 2002, it underscored how important its passenger rail business was to this Columbus, OH rail industry supplier.

A lack of federal funding for Amtrak finally caught up with Buckeye Steel, once managed by President Bush's grandfather, and recently employed 1,400 Ohioans. Moreover, Buckeye Steel is just one of many Ohio industries that view Amtrak as an important business client.

Ohio, given its traditional manufacturing base, is a major force in supplying the rail industry, including Amtrak, with raw materials, train components and track materials. The Corridor Campaigns has identified more than 100 Ohio companies which supply the railroad industry. So, how many of those companies supply Amtrak with materials, services and equipment?

Amtrak's Government Affairs Director Quentin Kelly faxed to me the most recent list of Amtrak's Ohio vendors, for fiscal year 2001. The fax was 56 pages long, listing some 90 suppliers! All told, Amtrak spent more than $6 million in Ohio in 2001, which is consistent with its spending in prior years.

Every part of the state has an Amtrak supplier. Ironically, Amtrak spent nearly one-third, or $1.8 million, of its 2001 Ohio supplier contracts on Columbus-area vendors. Even though Columbus is the nation's second-largest city (behind Phoenix) lacking Amtrak service, Ohio's state capital benefits greatly from Amtrak.

Imagine how much larger that investment would be if there was a federally funded, rail capital improvement program that supported the development of intercity passenger services nationwide. Even if our own state government doesn't proceed with an active rail development program right away, Ohio will still benefit as other regions move forward on their own.

But it might mean so much more to Ohio rail suppliers if their own state's government initiated better services. Clearly, federal leadership and funding is needed to make all pending, state-sponsored rail improvement programs a reality.

OARP's Corridor Campaigns is fighting for all Ohio suppliers, like Buckeye Steel Castings, by seeking federal capital funding for passenger rail. We need to do more to show to Ohio's Congressional Delegation the benefits of being proactive, not just the consequences of the status quo.

In 2003, and thanks to new, generous grants from the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission in Dayton and the Environmental Law & Policy Center in Chicago, the Corridor Campaigns will seek Ohio rail industry suppliers to join with us in seeking federal capital programs for passenger rail improvements. This effort will not end until we succeed in educating every member in Ohio's Congressional Delegation as to how important our rail industry is, and could be, in promoting economic development in our state.

And, thanks to Amtrak, we now have ample evidence to make that case.
President's Column
A difficult year passes, another coming

By Ed D'Amato
OARP President

I'm happy to say that OARP has made it through what has been a difficult year of extremes.

In May, Amtrak got the best president it has had in years, if ever, and then nearly shut down less than two months later. President Bush proposed a certain doom-Amtrak restructuring and burden-the-states federal funding scheme. At the same time, many in Congress began discussions about the need for a federal rail trust fund and the need to include passenger rail in the upcoming reauthorization of the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), an important surface transportation law that has never included intercity passenger rail.

November elections gave Republicans a majority in the U.S. Senate and expanded their majority in the U.S. House of Representatives, which in turn will give passenger rail foes in Congress more leverage than ever.

Meanwhile, 22 states (including Ohio) have organized into the States for Passenger Rail Coalition which is pushing hard for increased and equitable federal funding for passenger rail. These states are serious about their desire to improve, modernize, and expand passenger rail services throughout the country as a way to deal with the growing mobility and security problems America is facing.

Here at home, the Ohio legislature voted to join the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact and the Ohio Rail Development Commission is aggressively developing its Cleveland Hub proposal.

Although things will become more clear over the next year, it's anybody's guess now what the outcome will be.

The future of American transportation policy, as it pertains to passenger rail, is being developed, and OARP is making its voice heard in key areas:

♦ We have been part of a leading effort to organize diverse passenger rail interest groups into a new Ohio Rail Advocates Network.

We are meeting with public officials and community leaders, attending public meetings and hearings.

In order to maintain these efforts, we need (in addition to financial support) to ensure that OARP's board of directors remains active, dedicated and dynamic. With very few exceptions, the board of directors comes directly from OARP's rank and file membership.

We are now beginning another election cycle, and OARP has two long-standing vacancies on the board — the Southwest and Northwest Ohio Directors. It is important that the board have a geographic balance, not only so that the entire state is properly represented, but so there is a contact in every region of the state as our coalition-building efforts continue. A full board is also needed to ensure that fresh ideas continue to be generated and to help balance the workload. We have a dedicated core group of board members, but I'd hate to lose them because they get burned out.

Please consider seeking a board position. The only qualifications for the regionally specific director positions are:

♦ That you are an OARP member in good standing for at least one year and live in the area you seek to represent;
♦ You attend half of the Saturday-held board meetings each year (the board meets about 6 times per year);
♦ You have access to a computer so that you can participate in e-mail discussions in between meetings;
♦ You are able to represent the association in a positive and professional manner.

By working to strengthen OARP's board of directors, we can ensure that OARP's efforts to work with officials at higher levels, our efforts to work with officials at lower levels, our efforts to work with officials at the state level, our efforts to work with officials at the local level, and our efforts to work with officials at the federal level, are strengthened in numbers and in strength, whether it's in our membership ranks or on the

Cincy-area voters say no

While Hamilton County voters turned thumbs-down to a new transit levy that would have funded the expansion of bus services, transit centers and a new light-rail system for Greater Cincinnati, the problems that prompted the levy will not go away. In fact, Paul C. Jablonski, chief executive officer and general manager of Metro (Cincinnati's transit agency) emphasized in the wake of the levy defeat that Greater Cincinnati's problems will only get worse.

Transit improvements totaling $2.6 billion, outlined in a 30-year master plan called MetroMoves, were to be funded locally by a 25-cent sales tax and a levy in Hamilton County. Additional funds from the state and federal governments were to be leveraged by the sales tax revenues. But the county's voters shot down the levy by a 2-1 margin. Metro is a public service of the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority.

"The community has made its decision not to fund the MetroMoves plan in Hamilton County at this time, and we respect that decision," Mr. Jablonski said a day after the Nov. 5, 2002 levy defeat, in a letter to Metro employees and friends, including OARP, "The Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority board of trustees has made no decision yet concerning the next step for MetroMoves, but we all remain very committed to the plan and its value to the community."

Specifically, the MetroMoves plan proposed five light-rail lines, 30 bus transit hubs, 13 neighborhood shuttle buses and 11 new cross-town and cross-regional bus routes. A proposed streetcar network linking downtown Cincinnati and its cross-river neighbors, while incorporated in the MetroMoves plan, wouldn't have been funded by the erstwhile tax levy. Those proposed streetcar route active plans, and could conceivably attract federal support, would have addressed the region's transportation needs.
Calling all OARP candidates!

It's that time of the year again... Time for interested and qualified members of the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers to step forward and be a candidate for a seat on the OARP Board of Directors. To be considered a candidate on the mail ballot, you must submit your information (described below) to the Elections Committee by Feb. 20.

In 2003, all regional and one at-large board seats are up for a vote. All the following positions are two-year terms, with a two-term limit. Thus, for those seeking reelection, this is the last time they can run for the position until this next term is over:

NORTHEAST DIRECTOR - J. Howard Harding of Akron can seek reelection.
NORTHWEST DIRECTOR - vacant.
CENTRAL/SOUTHEAST DIRECTOR - Thomas E. Dailey of Columbus can seek reelection.
SOUTHWEST DIRECTOR - vacant.
AT-LARGE DIRECTOR - Michael L. Bradley of Columbus can seek reelection but will not.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE ABOVE POSITIONS:
You must be a resident of the region you wish to represent, except in the case of at-large board seats, where the candidate must be a resident of Ohio or an out-of-state county that borders an Ohio metropolitan area. Candidates for the at-large board seat must also become an OARP member in good standing within 30 days of joining the board of directors.

DUTIES OF REGIONAL AND AT-LARGE BOARD MEMBERS: Board members are charged with the management of the affairs of the association. Each member must attend at least 50 percent of the regular board meetings called each year during the term of his or her office. Typically, there are six regular board meetings each year, held on the third Saturday of the odd-numbered months, and often held in Central Ohio. Exceptions occur when a board meeting falls in the same month as one of the four regular OARP membership meetings, in which case the board meeting is held before or after the membership meeting. Special board meetings may be called by the president, as needed.

TO BE CONSIDERED A CANDIDATE, you must send a notice of candidacy, along with a statement not to exceed 75 words as to why the candidate desires to be elected, to the election committee prior to Feb. 20 of the year of election. In addition, prior to February 20, the candidate must submit to the election committee written endorsements of your candidacy, signed by five (5) other OARP members in good standing. These can be individual letters of support or signatures on a single, clearly worded petition.

The election committee, comprised of the Immediate Past President and two other non-elected members, will verify that the candidate meets the requirements of office. If qualified, the candidate's name will be added to the ballot. If found unqualified, the candidate will be notified. All appeals will be made to the OARP Board of Directors. Contact the elections committee chairperson (listed below) for further details.

Please mail your statement and endorsements to (do not fax or use e-mail):
OARP Election Committee
c/o Past President Bill Hutchison
474 Delaware Court
Westerville, OH 43081
614-882-1716

Transit improvements, coupled with urban redevelopment efforts, would have addressed the region's stifling traffic congestion, pollution problems, urban sprawl consequences and limited mobility options. Those factors, which harm economic development, are quickly worsening.

"Without MetroMoves, Greater Cincinnati will face a number of transportation problems that will reach crisis level in just a few short years," Mr. Jablonski added. "Traffic congestion will continue to increase, and with it air quality concerns. Many city residents who want to work won't be able to access jobs in suburban areas that are begging for workers. People who don't drive, including low-income residents, older adults, people with disabilities and students, will continue to have difficulty getting to where they need to go."

He said Cincinnati's existing, city-based and city-funded Metro transit system is inadequate to meet those challenges. A strong, efficient regional transit system is needed to help Hamilton County and the entire region grow and prosper over the next generation. OARP will continue to be involved in these issues, and assist Metro in developing new, transit-friendly solutions.

"Since the mid-1990's, transit ridership has increased more than 22 percent from 7.8 billion trips annually in 1995 to more than 9.5 billion trips in 2001 ... bringing ridership to its highest level in 40 years. Transit ridership has been growing at a rate of 3.5 percent annually over the last six years. If this rate of growth continues, ridership will double in the next twenty years."

— Joseph L. Perkins, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities; on behalf of The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials; Sept. 30 2002.
## Travel Agent Members

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Agency Name</th>
<th>Phone Numbers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Akron/Stow</td>
<td>Parkside Travel USA</td>
<td>(330) 688-3334</td>
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<td>Alliance</td>
<td>Alliance AAA Travel</td>
<td>(330) 821-2323</td>
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<td>(330) 456-6315</td>
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<td>Canal Fulton</td>
<td>Massillon AAA Travel</td>
<td>(330) 854-6616</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>Ohio Motorist Association/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(216) 606-6080</td>
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<tr>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>Ohio Automobile Club/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(614) 431-7823</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elyria</td>
<td>Tours &amp; Travel Service, Inc.</td>
<td>(440) 323-5423</td>
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<td>(800) 443-7789</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mansfield</td>
<td>Mansfield Travel Center</td>
<td>(419) 756-8747</td>
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<tr>
<td>Massillon</td>
<td>Massillon AAA Travel</td>
<td>(330) 833-1034</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piqua</td>
<td>Miami County Auto Club/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(937) 773-3753</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sandusky</td>
<td>Sandusky Travel Service, Inc.</td>
<td>(419) 626-4633</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solon</td>
<td>Astro Amtrak Tours</td>
<td>(440) 519-7331</td>
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<td>Troy</td>
<td>Miami County Auto Club/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(937) 339-0112</td>
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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:

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*

## Directory of the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Officers</th>
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<tr>
<td>PRESIDENT</td>
<td>Ed D'Amato</td>
<td><a href="mailto:edamato@earthlink.net">edamato@earthlink.net</a></td>
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<td>PAST-PRESIDENT</td>
<td>Bill Hutchison</td>
<td><a href="mailto:whh12@juno.com">whh12@juno.com</a></td>
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<td>474 Delaware Ct.</td>
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<td>VICE-PRESIDENT</td>
<td>Mark Carlson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mdcarlson@core.com">mdcarlson@core.com</a></td>
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<td>440 / 331-3611</td>
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<td>SECRETARY</td>
<td>Larry Robertson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:robertson9@osu.edu">robertson9@osu.edu</a></td>
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<td>2022 Langham Road</td>
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<td>TREASURER</td>
<td>David Shreiner</td>
<td><a href="mailto:doshreiner@valkyrie.net">doshreiner@valkyrie.net</a></td>
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<td>9705 Township Road 301</td>
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<td>Millersburg 44654</td>
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<td>NORTHEAST</td>
<td>L. Howard Harding</td>
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**Toll-free OARP telephone number:** 888 / 488-8439

Visit OARP on the web! [www.oarprail.org](http://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
- Toledo: Bill Gill 419 / 536-1924
- Lima: Vacant
- Mansfield/Galion: Vacant
- Sandusky: Steve La Conte 419 / 668-6225
- Cincinnati: W. Mike Weber 513 / 891-9251
- Dayton: Linda Leas 937 / 253-9448
- Clermont: Ronald D. Garner 513 / 444-3098
- Springfield: Vacant
- Columbus: Robert Boyce 614 / 486-7038
- Delaware: Tom Allen 740 / 330-5994

NORTHWEST REGION
- Elyria: Phil Copeland 440 / 365-7970
- Warren: G. Douglas Hudson 330 / 544-3203
- Lima: Vacant
- Mansfield/Galion: Vacant
- Sandusky: Steve La Conte 419 / 668-6225
- Cincinnati: W. Mike Weber 513 / 891-9251
- Dayton: Linda Leas 937 / 253-9448
- Clermont: Ronald D. Garner 513 / 444-3098
- Springfield: Vacant
- Columbus: Robert Boyce 614 / 486-7038
- Delaware: Tom Allen 740 / 330-5994

SOUTHWEST REGION
- Springfield: Vacant
- Columbus: Robert Boyce 614 / 486-7038
- Delaware: Tom Allen 740 / 330-5994

SOUTHEAST REGION
- Columbus: Robert Boyce 614 / 486-7038
- Delaware: Tom Allen 740 / 330-5994
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: .......................................  CTC Corridor Campaign
Address: ..............................................  3-C Corridor Campaign
City: ................................................. State: ............... ZIP: ......................
Telephone (............) ...................................  CTC Corridor Campaign
e-mail: ................................................  CTC 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  3-C Corridor Campaign
Millersburg, OH 44654  CTC Corridor Campaign

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A Double Play
Minor League Baseball and the Train

By Bob Carson
Editor, Minor Trips newsletter

"Take train trips to the baseball games, it's a lot of fun."

This simple little sentence from a reader was all it took to begin a fascinating, economical, adventure.

My beat is minor-league baseball. I travel the country each summer and write about my adventures at the ballparks. Talk about a great job. This past season, for the first time in 12 years of roaming the country during the minor-league baseball season, my wife, 13-year-old daughter and I left our car in the garage and traveled to minor-league and independent-league baseball games via passenger train. The season was a hit.

We were veterans of minor-league baseball travel, but we were rookies when it came to train travel. A little investigating was required before we hit the rails. A few minutes on the Amtrak Web site (www.amtrak.com) got us started. After our first tentative trip, we soon felt like train travel veterans.

We learned a lot about train travel in the U.S. this past summer. Unfortunately, one of the things we learned is that Amtrak is in trouble. The train system is limping along and needs help — money help, government help, reorganization help. If the passenger rail system does not get straightened out, train travel to minor-league baseball or anywhere else may be a mute point. Here's a little pitch: if you try the train and like it as much as we did, you may wish to join a state or national organization of folks who tirelessly work to promote train travel and legislation that is pro-passenger train. We did.

Here's some thoughts for baseball fans that wish to take the train or, for train travelers who wish to try a minor-league baseball game.

The 2002 edition of Minor Trips (at www.minortrips.com), listed 210 cities in North America that host a minor-league or independent-league baseball team. The guide also lists the home playing dates of each team. Of these 210 cities, 165 have an Amtrak station. Many of the 55 towns without a train station are within reach of a bus line or car rental. If you want to take the train to the ballpark, you will have a good chance of connecting.

During our trips, I found the conductors and train personnel were a great source of information. During each trip, I spent several enjoyable hours chatting in the snack car with a string of fascinating Amtrak employees. When they found out I was headed to a minor-league baseball game at one of their stops, they offered great suggestions on places to where we can eat, visit or stay.

One particular Amtrak conductor, a slender veteran with a bow tie and ready smile, was named John. He spent most of an afternoon offering astute observations on both minor-league baseball and railroad passenger travel. He knew a lot about both topics and was more than willing to share his knowledge and his ideas.

"Minor-league baseball had a dry spell," John said. "It fell out of favor, but made a nice comeback. I think passenger train travel can get through this rough patch."

He looked out the window as another small town whizzed past, smiled and continued.

"Baseball and the train will be around for a long, long, time. No matter how hard some dang fools try to mess them up, they are too good to lose."

John left the snack car through a clattering of sliding doors as the train hissed to a stop. I watched John conduct a little train business through the glass. He helped a young woman hoist her suitcase aboard. John returned and continued right where he left off.

Economics are at the root of the problem for the trains and baseball," John said. "Both passenger trains and baseball need some major economic restructuring. If this is not done, the small baseball teams and small railroad lines will be squeezed out."

For now, we will still have minor-league baseball played in big- and small-size cities. We still have a functioning train system waiting to be utilized. Combine the two. Baseball and the train make a great match.

Mr. Carson is based in the Cleveland suburb of Strongsville. For a free copy of his latest Minor Trips newsletter with a more detailed account of traveling by train to ballparks, send an e-mail to MINORTrips@aol.com and a complimentary newsletter and subscription information will be mailed to you.

Calendar of Events/Meetings
All meetings are subject to change. We firmly suggest that you confirm dates, times and locations for all meetings.
March 2003

Date Event Time Location Address
9 ORDC — Committee Mtg. 9:00 a.m. Riffe Center; 77 S. High Street, 31st Floor; Columbus
9 ORDC — Full Commission * 10:45 a.m. Riffe Center; 77 S. High Street, 31st Floor; Columbus
11 Columbus Local Meeting 9:30 a.m. Red Door Tavern 1736 West 5th Avenue
11 Toledo Local Meeting 10:00 a.m. Toledo Amtrak Station Central Union Plaza, Toledo

February 2003

Date Event Time Location Address
8 Columbus Local Meeting 9:30 a.m. Red Door Tavern 1736 West 5th Avenue
8 Toledo Local Meeting 10:00 a.m. Toledo Amtrak Station Central Union Plaza, Toledo

March 2003

Date Event Time Location Address
8 Columbus Local Meeting 9:30 a.m. Red Door Tavern 1736 West 5th Avenue
8 Toledo Local Meeting 10:00 a.m. Toledo Amtrak Station Central Union Plaza, Toledo
13 ORDC — Committee Mtg. 9:00 a.m. Riffe Center; 77 S. High Street, 31st Floor; Columbus
13 ORDC — Full Commission * 10:45 a.m. Riffe Center; 77 S. High Street, 31st Floor; Columbus

Date Event Time Location Address
22 OARP March Membership Mtg. 10:00 a.m. St. Regis Hotel, 3071 West Grand Blvd., Detroit MI

A joint OARP/NARP Region 6 Meeting in the Motor City
Hosted by the Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers — www.marp.org

March Meeting Registration Form

(Please clip or photocopy)

March Meeting Registration Form

Name(s)_
Address_
City_ State_ ZIP_
Telephone_ Email_

Please pre-register by March 18!
Registration fee is $30 which includes morning break, meeting, and buffet lunch of roast beef and broiled whitefish.$____ total enclosed. Make check or money order payable to: MARP
PO Box 594 St. Clair Shores MI 48080-0594

S A T U R D A Y, M A R C H 2 2 , 2 0 0 3
10:00 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.
ST. REGIS HOTEL DETROIT, MI

> Michigan’s high-speed rail project
> Federal funding update
> 3-C and CTC Corridor update
> Detroit-Toledo-Cleveland-Pittsburgh service plans
> Long-term funding proposals for passenger trains

Driving Direction From Toledo
I-75 north to Michigan exit #49, M-10 (Lodge Freeway) northbound.
Exit M-10 (Lodge Fwy) at Milwaukee Ave. and continue one block on the service drive to W. Grand Blvd.
Right on W. Grand Blvd. After passing Fisher and New Center One buildings on your left, the next major building is the St. Regis Hotel, also on your left.