State rail efforts rely on federal funds

OARP at forefront of US Capitol actions

Ohio transportation planners, like those in other states across the country, are looking to the federal government for modest, ongoing funding to give life to their plans for developing intercity rail passenger services. Such plans, while modest in their expense when compared to other modes of travel, would have a measurable impact on economic development and tourism in the affected states. Ohio is no different.

OARP expects that, with the issuance of the next newsletter, you’ll see the details from a planning process on which the Ohio Rail Development Commission and its consultants have been working these many months.

The Ohio & Lake Erie Regional Rail/Cleveland Hub Study will be the most comprehensive, far-sighted rail passenger planning effort to come out of our state in at least 25 years. Not only will it show how train service should be implemented, by why it should.

But, to make this effort a reality, federal funding will be essential. Ohio, and every other state, cannot go at it alone. Further, no organization promoting any transportation mode in any state would expect anything different.

To convey this message directly to Congress, representatives of the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers have joined with leaders from Ohio and other states in recent months in traveling to our nation’s capital. More of these trips are planned, as the debate in Washington D.C. is heating up as to what surface transportation modes and projects should be included in pending federal transportation programs that are now under discussion by Congress.

OARP is particularly proud at the partnerships we’ve developed and have joined with them in our trips to Washington. We’ve spread out and targeted multiple legislators, staffers and others with our message. And, in other situations, we’ve joined with pro-passenger rail partners to meet with individual legislators.

At no other time in OARP’s history have we worked so hard in our nation’s capital. But, as we all know, that doesn’t necessarily guarantee success. There are at least three pro-passenger rail pieces of legislation pending in Congress (see center-spread of this newsletter). If we don’t attain success with at least one of those bills, we’ll...
OARP fundraising hits new highs

By Ken Prendergast
Director, Ohio Corridors Campaign

While OARP is working harder at securing grants and other funding from sources outside of the association, none of us expected the gift OARP got in June from the Dayton Foundation. Dayton resident Frank Short made a generous $5,000 gift to the foundation’s Countryside Railroad Fund, with the stipulation that it be given in his name to OARP’s 3-C (Cleveland - Columbus - Cincinnati) Corridor Campaign.

After a brief discussion, OARP’s board of directors decided to use a portion of the unsolicited gift to expand marketing activities to increase membership in the 3-C Corridor Campaign. OARP Administrative Director Stu Nicholson will conduct those marketing activities.

Another $1,000 will be used to reprint corridor campaign brochures, the supplies for which were running very low. The remaining $2,000 is being held in reserve for an educational effort, to be launched once the Ohio Rail Development Commission’s Ohio & Lake Erie Regional Rail/Cleveland Hub Study is completed and released later this summer.

OARP supports the ORDC’s study efforts, which will include an economic impact analysis of rail passenger services proposed by the study. One of the key routes included in the study is the 3-C Corridor, with possible through services to Buffalo and Toronto. A second route being analyzed by the ORDC’s study is the Detroit - Toledo - Cleveland - Pittsburgh corridor.

Given these activities at the state level, the Dayton Foundation’s grant, at Mr. Short’s request, couldn’t have come at a better time for our educational efforts. But, OARP isn’t stopping there.

As reported in the last issue of the Ohio Rail Passenger News, OARP’s Corridor Campaigns won a $7,200 grant from the George Gund Foundation. This funding is being used to conduct an analysis of how to effectively link rail passenger services, proposed by the ORDC’s Cleveland Hub Study, with commercial airports throughout our state and those just outside of Ohio, such as in Covington, KY, Detroit and Pittsburgh.

Data collection for this airport-rail analysis is already underway, and OARP has received excellent input and support from airport officials, regional transportation planners and economic development organizations in multiple cities.

They recognize Ohio’s economy needs an interconnected transportation system that includes fast trains, linked to regional and hub airports, for our state to compete for jobs and business investment. Without superior access to/from Ohio cities, regardless of size, to national and global markets, our state will be left behind others which are already taking similar steps. OARP’s analysis, to be completed no later than March 2004, will be the first step to evaluate such transportation opportunities.

Additional fundraising activities are being pursued by OARP. We are requesting grant support for our coalition building efforts, to realize our vision for the Ohio Mobility Partners (OMP), as noted in the last issue of the Ohio Passenger Rail News. The OMP is a collection of diverse transportation interests from across Ohio, led by Mr. Nicholson.

OARP is involved in a number of strategic efforts we hope our members will support. Such efforts, we believe, will finally cause our elected leaders to include rail passenger service improvements in state and federal transportation policies. Without the support of our members and the rising number of grants we’re securing, those efforts would remain as mere dreams.
Ohio Passenger Rail News, Summer 2003

Train of Thought
from Ohio Passenger Rail News Editor
Kenneth Prendergast

As the president of the United States prepared to give his inauguration address, plain-clothed sharpshooters lay on rooftops near the U.S. Capitol building while rows of armed National Guardsmen stood below to protect the commander in chief of a powerful nation. It was the greatest show of security forces at a presidential inauguration in more than 50 years.

Meanwhile, conflicts throughout the world raged, which gave cause to the armed presence on what otherwise would be a festive occasion. Instead, it was a dark era of global turmoil. Someone in the crowd began singing “America,” spurring the rest of the collected masses to join in.

In the gathering of some 40,000 onlookers, there were Progressives seeking to change America’s transportation landscape. They were the so-called radicals of their day, who had grown tired of having a single mode of transportation monopolize a nation’s commerce, for better and often for worse. For the Progressives, like senators “Fighting Bob” LaFollette and Albert Cummins, who were in that mass of humanity, they would soon set forth changes in the transportation marketplace that would alter the face of America.

While this could easily be a word-picture of the upcoming 2005 presidential swearing-in, it was actually the setting from the 1917 presidential inauguration of Woodrow Wilson. But the comparisons to today are uncanny.

While the “War to end all wars” was being fought in Europe in 1917, our nation’s war on terrorism is being fought today on multiple fronts. And, the progressive senators of this era, who are seeking a balanced transportation system, count Republican Kay Bailey Hutchison and Democrat Frank Lautenberg among its leading spokespersons. Ironically, the travel mode they espouse today is the same one that senators LaFollette and Cummins sought to reign in. Now, highways are the monopoly and railroads are seen as the best hope for striking a new balance.

Behind their contemporaries — other senators, congressional representatives and still more national leaders — is a bubbling cauldron of people and organizations like the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers (OARP).

All causes aren’t just a matter of leadership and strategy, but of timing. OARP turns 30 years old this year. And, while we’ve had great leadership and good strategies over these last three decades, the timing for our message is getting better all the time.

I’ve been involved with OARP for 20 of those 30 years. They have often been tough, frustrating times. In the 1980s, for example, I watched OARP exert more
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Clippings from newspapers and magazines must include the publication's name and date. Your articles and news briefs should be typed and double-spaced, though very short items may be legibly written. Preferably, send hard copy with IBM-compatible text files on 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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Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers
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Millersburg OH 44654

results. This was due less from our efforts of Ohio's demographics but, more so, from the "quality" of our state's elected leaders.

Some things never change. Too many of our state's legislators are unable to come to grips with major issues which remain unresolved, such as school funding. I have no illusions that such issues are more important than developing rail passenger service. Yet, I'm convinced that once we have a fully developed rail passenger system in this state, we'll wonder how we coped with highway congestion, construction and bad weather without it.

That's why federal funding and leadership is essential. Even in states like Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin, that are ahead of Ohio in terms of their rail planning and development initiatives, those efforts have stalled in their tracks for lack of federal funding. Ohio, like its neighbors, is still waiting at the station.

Ohio can take a big step forward if there is a meaningful federal program for rail passenger development. Our state has already invested tens of millions of dollars in high-speed rail corridors by building road-rail underpasses or overpasses. More are coming. Those investments should count for something in terms of a state share of an as-yet-undetermined federal program. The Ohio Rail Development Commission and those of us who support their efforts are among those growing voices chirping louder among all the other baby birds in Washington's nest to seek our fair share.

There's a lot of us seeking access to the federal nest egg. OARP recently worked with others to formulate a policy document called the American Passenger Rail Agreement that since has been adopted by more than 80 companies, cities, organizations and others from across the country. The gist of that document is to get Congress to create an ongoing federal funding program for passenger rail.

In 2005, regardless of who takes the presidential oath, there will be a lot more voices in that inauguration crowd seeking passenger rail development than there were in 1917 who were part of the "good roads campaign" of that era.

Their contemporary counterparts aren't fading voices. Instead, we are growing louder all the time. We cannot be ignored for much longer. Soon, we won't just be voices in the crowd. We are becoming the crowd.
Greyhound may move to Toledo train station

By Bill Gill
Toledo Regional Coordinator

Occupancy of Toledo’s Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Plaza, which is owned by the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority and home to the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, Lucas County Educational Service Center and Amtrak (Central Union Terminal), could increase by two if proposed plans come together.

The port authority has been in active conversations with both Greyhound and Amtrak on possibly relocating Greyhound bus services to MLK Plaza. When remodeling of station occurred in 1995-96, plans included provisions for future accommodation of intercity buses. Moving Greyhound to MLK would require that the Port Authority buy out the lease at Greyhound’s existing Toledo facility. It may now be more financially feasible to buy out the lease so the move is again under consideration.

However, other challenges to be met include turn-around and loading areas for the buses. Possible solutions could involve razing the Express Building (currently leased by Amtrak) on the west side of the plaza, or using the short term parking lot on the east side.

Another problem is adequate space for a passenger waiting room. If Amtrak remains on the ground floor, significant remodeling will be necessary to allow both Amtrak and Greyhound to coexist there. The Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority is also considering increasing their transit bus presence at the station.

Meanwhile, the port authority has been considering moving into the now-unused space at the MLK, Jr., Plaza building. The location being considered for their offices is the portion of the station’s Grand Concourse, over the terminal’s tracks.

Upon hearing this proposal, members of the local OARP organization and the OARP Board quickly

More buses could soon call at this location at Toledo’s MLK Jr. Plaza station if Greyhound relocates their terminal here. The MLK Jr. Plaza station not only caters to Amtrak train passengers, but also offers connections to Amtrak Thruway buses to Michigan and to local transit buses, seen above. More buses would provide more transportation options for people traveling to, from and through Toledo.

Life’s a highway

Recently, OARP members were asked to contribute their I-71 horror stories to this newsletter. Two OARP members, Past President Bill Hutchison and Nick D’Amato (brother of your OARP president), provided two accounts that are frighteningly common. Mr. D’Amato even interviewed fellow motorists at rest areas along the way during his southbound trips in April and July, from Youngstown to Columbus. Meanwhile, Mr. Hutchison took note of his experiences during a June trip from Columbus to Ashtabula.

Mr. Hutchison... I left on a Saturday afternoon and immediately noticed the traffic seemed very heavy, nearly bumper to bumper on the three-lane segment north from Columbus. Still, I rolled along without incident, until I reached a point north of the Delaware exit and came to a halt due to an accident. There we sat — and sat and sat. About a half-hour later, ambulances arrived and workers cleared a path around the accident scene by using the berm.

From that point, I figured it’d take 2½ hours to get to Columbus...
Upon hearing this proposal, members of the local OARP organization and the OARP Board swiftly expressed concern. The board cited the need for balance between saving space for possible future expansion. Because Toledo will see a significantly increased number of passenger trains if the Cleveland Hub is fully implemented, it is important to avoid mistakes such as what happened at Cleveland’s Tower City. When a parking deck and other features were built, resulting in the elimination of a right-of-way for intercity passenger trains. If the Cleveland Hub and Midwest Regional Rail Initiative plans develop, Amtrak at Toledo would have to move back upstairs.

The Cleveland Hub could result in up to 8 to 10 round trips from Cleveland to Detroit. Add in the proposed Cleveland - Chicago route under the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative and a possible Columbus - Toledo - Detroit corridor — Toledo could be looking at 20-25 or more round trips per day among the three routes. This would require that the station be equipped to handle multiple trains simultaneously on multiple tracks. Currently, the station can only service one train at a time.

Rob Greenlese, Director of Surface Transportation & Logistics at the port authority, said he is actively working along with other groups to bring increased passenger rail traffic to Toledo. He said that it would be costly for Amtrak to move to the Grand Concourse level at this time, as considerable remodeling would need to be done to restore necessary elevators, counters, etc.

OARP believes any remodeling the port authority would do to the area to convert it into their offices would not be of such a permanent nature that it could not be redone when increased train traffic would cause the passenger rail operation to move upstairs.

Admittedly, the increase in trains will not materialize overnight. But, in four or five years, who can say? Local and national studies continue to reflect a strong sentiment in support of expanded passenger rail services, and a willingness to work toward this goal, including adequate funding. Toledo is going to have one heck of a multimodal transportation terminal when all this happens. Toledo will become even more of a world-class city.

Travel on Interstate 71 can often be difficult during Ohio’s two seasons — winter and construction. That’s because it is often the only real travel “option” for Ohioans traveling between the state’s largest cities and points in between. Improving travel choices, including adding rail passenger service, would make travel easier in Ohio and boost the state’s economy. Shown above, I-71 is starting to fill with traffic south of Medina on a recent Sunday afternoon.

All the way to Mansfield, my top speed did not exceed 55 mph, this where the speed limit is 65. Finally, north of there, traffic speeded up in three-lane segments, only to slow again through numerous construction zones. What was it that Ohio Department of Transportation planners said about maintaining speeds thru these zones while the road was being widened? Of course, truckers who routinely disregarded the limit roared past me on the narrow lanes through these areas. What a feeling.

One thing I noticed was that, even where there are three-lane segments, the traffic was very heavy. It was not possible to use cruise control even there. Finally, the weather was horrible — lots of rain and high winds that had its effect on drivers. What should have been a three-hour trip turned into a 4½-hour ordeal. But what can we expect when, like some old Stalinist country, there is really only one state-supported form of transportation?

How ironic!

When asked if he felt the traffic was getting worse, Earl Kropfier of Dublin, OH replied “Hell yes! I even left early today hoping to avoid most of it.” Sensing a trend in Mr. Mann’s and Mr. Kropfier’s comments, Mr. Kropfier was asked if traffic on I-71 was shortening his holiday weekend. “Yeah, it really is,” he said. “I could still be visiting with people and wouldn’t have to leave until after dinner, but who wants to risk it anymore?”

Shirley Harritos of Fairborn, OH was more to the point. “It’s a pain in the ass,” she said, at a rest stop during her trip from Mentor, OH. When asked if she would consider high-speed trains as an alternative, she replied “Sure, if they went to Dayton.” Ms. Harritos thought for a second and added, “I thought they had already decided to build a train, like over 10 years ago. What ever happened to it?”
Making connections in D.C.

By Stu Nicholson
OARP Administrative Director

Traveling almost anywhere by air these days is a living argument in favor of passenger rail. Between the understandable and necessary increase in security and the overall treatment of passengers (like cattle) by the airlines, I'd bet a poll would get very positive feedback from the "prospect" of better and expanded passenger rail in just about any short-haul corridor.

Now the good news.

I flew Continental to and from Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) Airport via Cleveland. The BWI Shuttle to the Amtrak/Maryland Rail Commuter (MARc) station was easy, convenient and free! A round-trip MARC ticket was $8.50 and the ride was great into Washington Union Station. My hotel was less than a block from Union Station and the Senate and House office buildings are also within easy walking distance.

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This is a shining example of what Amtrak funding can do.

The Cleveland Hub Plan. Final language is being ironed out, and it was generally felt the amendment will have a good chance at passing.

We also made a strong pitch, as we did with all we met, that Amtrak needs to be fully funded to preserve a national system and thus be a foundation for expanded and higher-speed service, whether by Amtrak or the various corridor groups and consortiums.

Mr. Seney was honest in saying he was disappointed that Amtrak is reluctant to "take the lead" in high-speed rail development outside of the Northeast Corridor. But, he also told everyone we spoke with that Amtrak President and Chief Executive Officer David Gunn is clearly the right man to clean up the railroad internally and that he is doing a very good job at that task.

We repeated it is essential for Congress to fund passenger rail not only fully, but also on a long-term basis so that real development and expansion can take place. We pushed the idea that the pending renewal of an existing federal surface transportation spending law needs to be more flexible with regard to rail. Actually, here is the agenda (outlined at the MIPRC meeting) that we put before every member of Congress:

- A dedicated, multi-year federal capital-funding program for intercity passenger rail: patterned after existing highway, airport and mass transit programs. States have already shown they are willing to help fund passenger rail, but a substantive federal commitment is needed. We support an 80/20 federal/state funding percentage.
- A preserved and improved national passenger rail system: a nationwide, interconnected passenger rail system that stimulates higher levels of efficiency, innovation and responsiveness. This should be reflected in a national federal policy that is developed with state and local input, and funded through the U.S. Darwin, out of will establish a 3,000-mile, Chicago-hubbed passenger rail system and would provide increased safety, speed and frequency in passenger rail service in the Midwest.

This was the message all MIPRC state members and "allies" presented to each of our state delegations in D.C., and if the response Mr. Seney and I got was any indication, it went over very well. In fact, since our trip, several major pieces of legislation have been introduced regarding both Amtrak and passenger/freight railroad infrastructure development.

In addition to meeting with Senator DeWine and Mr. Skocki, Mr. Seney and I also met with the transportation aides to U.S. Reps. Deborah Pryce, Sherrod Brown, Dennis Kucinich and David Hobson. I had to leave after lunch to get the MARC train back to BWI airport, so Mr. Seney met solo with aides to U.S. Reps. Marcy Kaptur and Steve LaTourette. He was also going to try and drop in on U.S. Reps. Ralph Regula and Robert Ney.

We got particularly positive responses from the aides to Reps. Pryce, Brown and Hobson, although Pryce and Hobson remain noncommittal toward Amtrak funding. Kucinich's aide was positive and supportive, though not sure what level of support to expect in the future.
While highway widening projects and airport expansions are filling out rights of way to the bulging point in Ohio, a new study in California shows fast passenger trains can provide an effective relief valve while accommodating more economic growth than other transportation modes.

The analysis — one of the largest and most comprehensive of its kind ever undertaken — was conducted by Cambridge Systematics, Inc. for the California High-Speed Rail Authority. The study compares the economic impacts of three potential transportation scenarios for managing the expected 54 percent growth in California’s population between 2002 and 2035. While Ohio’s population and economy aren’t growing as fast, they are growing, and so are the demands on its highway and airport systems.

“Californians will ultimately have to decide if and how they want to plan for the state’s inevitable population growth,” said Rod Diridon, chairman of the California High-Speed Rail Authority Board. “This study will provide a comprehensive look at their options — 1) do not build any additional transportation infrastructure than what’s already on the books; 2) expand existing highways and airports, or; 3) build a high-speed train system.”

The preliminary findings show that the high-speed train system creates more jobs, attracts more business and focuses growth creating less sprawl and uses less land than the other two alternatives. The high-speed train option provides the greatest opportunity for job growth by improving travel options and accessibility for Californians. According to the report, a high-speed train system will create 450,000 new jobs — more than twice the amount projected under the option of expanding freeways and airports.

The study is one element of the environmental review process being undertaken to assess the technical feasibility of building the 700-mile rail system. The draft environmental report is expected to be released in August. A $9.95 billion bond issue currently is scheduled for the November 2004 statewide ballot to finance, with matching funds, the first phase of construction of the high-speed train system.

This article was adapted from an official statement by the California High Speed Rail Authority, distributed courtesy of Business Wire.
Debunking Common Myths About Amtrak

Myth: Amtrak is unique in operating in the red, at taxpayers’ expense.

Fact: All transportation is subsidized by American taxpayers (see #2 regarding highways). Singling out Amtrak assumes taxpayers do not want to invest in passenger rail. Polls consistently show that Americans support federal funding for a national rail passenger system. A Washington Post poll taken July 26-30, 2002 (and reported August 5, 2002), found 71% support for continued or increased federal funding of Amtrak. Conservative Columnist George Will, in a June 4, 2003, column, said the poll indicated that “support for Amtrak is strong among all regions, ages, education levels and income groups.” A CNN/Gallup/USA Today poll conducted June 21-23, 2002—near the height of Amtrak’s funding crisis—found 70% support for continued federal funding for Amtrak. Votes in Congress have demonstrated time and again that taxpayers’ duly elected representatives agree.

Myth: Highways pay for themselves through user fees.

Fact: In 2001, 41% of the $133 billion spent on highways came from payments other than the gas tax, tolls, and vehicle taxes and fees, as follows: 15.3% general fund appropriations; 9.5% bond issue proceeds; 5.8% investment income and other receipts; 5.6% other taxes and fees; 4.8% property taxes. While most of this is at the state and local levels, federal policy encourages this by offering states generous funding matches for highway investments but no match for intercity rail investments. These statistics are in “Improving Efficiency and Equity in Transportation Finance,” by Martin Wachs [The Brookings Institution Series on Transportation Reform (April 2003)], which states: “Revenues from fuel taxes have for three decades been rising more slowly than program costs as legislators become ever more reluctant to raise them to meet inflation. As a result, the burden of raising the funds for transportation programs is gradually being shifted to local governments and voter-approved initiatives that are, in most instances, not based on user fees.”

Myth: Any dollar going to Amtrak is another dollar not going to roads.

Fact: Federal funds for roads come from the Highway Trust Fund, a dedicated long-term source of funding, whereas Amtrak receives federal dollars from the General Fund through the annual appropriations process. However, states and local governments should have the option to spend transportation dollars on the most efficient mode of transportation. Current policy discourages states and local governments from investing in intercity rail.

Myth: Shut down Amtrak and the private sector will operate passenger rail.

Fact: Rail passenger service was in private hands from its inception in the 1830s until 1970, when Congress and the Nixon Administration made a policy decision to create Amtrak because the private sector could not make a profit. The private sector operators that have expressed an interest in operating rail passenger service will do so for a fee with the clear expectation that the government will absorb the associated losses. Furthermore, most Amtrak route miles are on tracks whose owners, the private freight railroads, do not want to run their own passenger trains and have a top priority of opposing legislation to give Amtrak’s rights (for track access at reasonable cost) to any other entity. The practical result of shutting down Amtrak would be elimination of intercity passenger rail.

Myth: Flying is cheaper than taking a long-distance train.

Fact: Anyone with a computer can find a train fare that is less than an airfare, or the opposite. Long-distance trains don’t just go from one major market to another like flights, but serve many intermediate markets with poor air service (or no air service, or costly air service). Government offered massive subsidies to cars and highways. Most transit systems, in contrast, were privately owned and operated and, far from receiving subsidies, had to pay taxes…Post-World War II building codes, which forced a separation of housing, shopping, and work places also hit transit hard.” Of course, the private railroads—including their passenger facilities—also were privately controlled and publicly taxed.

Myth: Amtrak labor protection is outrageous.

Fact: Labor protection flowed from the railroad industry and the creation of Amtrak by Congress. Railroad workers historically have had strong labor protection. At the major freight railroads, protection can be triggered by many more events than at Amtrak. This was true even before Amtrak labor protection was scaled back as a result of the 1997 Amtrak reauthorization law.

Labor protection has no impact on day-to-day operating costs. It only comes into play when a route is discontinued or a mechanical facility is closed. In other words, none of the 1,000 employees Amtrak laid off in the past year got labor protection. Even when a facility is closed, Amtrak can avoid labor protection simply by letting employees follow their work, and—for employees who choose to do that—paying moving costs.

In the last reauthorization in 1997, rather than repealing labor protection provided by law outright, Congress sunsetted the provision, subject to negotiation of a substitute labor protection agreement by the unions and Amtrak under the provisions of the Railway Labor Act. The result of those negotiations was an arbitration award which reduced the benefits of labor protection for Amtrak employees.

Looking more broadly at Amtrak labor issues, many Amtrak pay rates are less than for comparable work at commuter railroads and some other companies. Commuter railroads and electric utilities benefit from “Amtrak as training ground,” using higher pay to attract Amtrak employees.
Myth: Amtrak carries only a half-percent of the US travel market, therefore it is insignificant.

Fact: Where there is a strong Amtrak presence, as in the Northeast Corridor and New York-Albany, Amtrak dominates the airlines and offers a significant alternative to automobile travel. (Amtrak handles about 50% of all New York–Washington airline + railroad traffic. This calculation includes Newark/JFK/LaGuardia and Reagan National/Dulles Airports; and these rail stations: Stamford/New Rochelle/New York/Newark/Newark Airport/Metropark; New Carrollton/Washington/Alexandria/Manassas/Woodbridge/Quantic/Fredericksburg.) As travel volumes grow in the future, and construction of new highways and airports becomes less practical, the need for such services also will grow around the nation. In rural areas, where Amtrak’s infrastructure costs are insignificant, Amtrak is often the only transportation alternative to automobiles.

Myth: Private Freight Railroad companies subsidize Amtrak.

Fact: The freight railroads urged the federal government to create Amtrak and agreed to provide access to their tracks at an incremental cost basis in 1971. The case can be made for the opposite — that Amtrak subsidizes the freight railroads. For much of Amtrak’s existence, the law prevented Amtrak from contracting out most work while the freight railroads reduced their employment rolls (in some cases by contracting out), thus reducing the amount of freight railroads pay into Railroad Retirement. Amtrak workers are “railroad employees.” Railroad Retirement obligations—unlike Railroad Unemployment Insurance payments—are calculated on an industry-wide basis, with all companies paying the same rates. Therefore, Amtrak is subsidizing the freight railroads’ contribution to Railroad Retirement; Amtrak’s “excess Railroad Retirement payments” (about $150 million a year) is what Amtrak contributes to Railroad Retirement for workers that Amtrak never employed. If Amtrak were to go away, Railroad Retirement payments by the freight railroads and their employees would be increased.

Also, capacity enhancements designed for passenger service (or no air service, or costly air service). Furthermore, the walk-up fare for an Amtrak trip is often much less than walk-up airfare. There are also people who cannot or do not want to fly.

Myth: One particular route (e.g., the Kentucky Cardinal between Chicago and Louisville) shows the entire national system is flawed.

Fact: The Kentucky Cardinal was instituted in 1999 to grow express package business. The profitable business never materialized and Amtrak discontinued the route on July 6, 2003. Despite limited ridership, no community wants its passenger train to disappear. Residents of Louisville recently filed a class action suit against Amtrak and the USDOT to bring back the route.

Myth: The overwhelming majority of Americans have chosen the automobile lifestyle.

Fact: To a large extent, this apparent “choice” reflects a necessary response to pro-highway federal policies, which for decades have encouraged state and local decisions that foster reliance on the automobile. States—naturally influenced in choosing transportation projects by the federal funding available for those projects—can obtain generous federal matches for investments in highways—often 80% and 90% of a project’s total cost—and aviation, but there is no federal match for states to develop intercity rail projects. The public’s interest in more travel choices is reflected both in the aforementioned polls and in ridership increases on Amtrak over five straight years (Fiscal 1997-2001) and on mass transit. At a June 27, 2003, conference on traffic congestion, American Public Transportation Association President William Millar stated: “Since 1995, transit ridership has grown by 21 percent, versus 16 percent for driving and 12 percent for domestic airlines. More people are taking public transportation now than in the last 40 years.” Also, on April 17, 2001, The Washington Post reported, “Mass-transit ridership grew faster than highway use for the third year in a row last year, according to new national figures.”

In their July 2001 report, “Twelve Anti-Transit Myths: A Conservative Critique,” Paul M. Weyrich and William S. Lind of the Free Congress Foundation write: “From the advent of the Model T until quite recently, transit was a declining industry. This is not surprising because gov-
President's Column

OARP Remains Diligent in Busy Year

By Ed D'Amato
OARP President

2003 is proving to be the most important year for passenger rail advocacy in decades. At the national level, the conversations we've wanted with our elected officials for years are occurring. Both houses of Congress are discussing future of Amtrak and exploring ways to better fund rail infrastructure.

At the state level, the Cleveland Hub Study is advancing, and the Ohio legislature is considering creating a legislative task force to study how Ohio can fund transportation in a more balanced way.

OARP has been and continues to be very active. We helped write the American Passenger Rail Agreement and the Ohio Mobility Agreement and continue to promote and distribute the agreements to gather support for them.

OARP representatives have met with various members of the Ohio Congressional delegation on several occasions so far this year:

- Board member At-Large Dominic Liberatore met with the delegation in March during a national public transit conference;
- OARP and National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) board members Mark Carlson and Howard Harding made their contacts during the NARP Director’s meeting in May;
- OARP Treasurer David Shreiner held his meetings on several occasions as his travels have brought him through Washington, D.C.;
- And, most recently, OARP Administrative Director Stu Nicholson in June held multiple meetings with our Congressional delegation during a conference organized by the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission.

Two of those trips, one by Mr. Liberatore and the other by Mr. Nicholson, were funded by a $1,000 grant from the American Public Transportation Association and distributed to OARP by the Ohio Public Transit Association. We thank those organizations for their generous support of OARP’s advocacy efforts!

So far this year, I have sent two letters on behalf of OARP to the Ohio Congressional delegation. One was regarding Amtrak funding and the other on the passenger rail plan proposed by the Bush Administration. I have also submitted written testimony to the House Subcommittee on Railroads which held a hearing June 26 to solicit input on ways to fund rail infrastructure.

We have several pending activities too, for which we will update you as they occur.

As you can see, we remain very busy working on your behalf. This isn’t always an easy task for a mostly volunteer organization. I don’t think our work has ever been more important than now. Rail issues are on the front burner in Washington D.C., and the proposals emerging range from good to bad.

It’s because of the priority that rail issues have taken and the need to ensure we have the resources to keep up with them, that the OARP Board of Directors voted to phase in a membership dues increase over two years. The first installment has already occurred, as I’m sure you noticed when you renewed your dues for 2003. The second installment will occur for 2004.

These are excellent times to be bringing in new members to OARP. We can show new members this is an active, vital organization that has a working agenda and is getting things done. We need you to be thinking of people you know in your community, or even businesses or community organizations that favor the development of passenger rail service in and through Ohio. This is the essence of building an organization at the “grass roots”. A large membership base helps us greatly when we go before our state and federal leaders. It will also help us continue the work we are doing now and be ready to take on new projects.

Now, more than ever, all of us need to step up to keep OARP growing and, yes, to help hasten the day when all of Ohio has access to first-class passenger rail service.

Election Results

by Bill Hutchison
Chairman, Elections Committee

On May 10, mail ballots were certified by the election committee and the following were elected to the OARP Board of Directors:

- Northwest Region - Beth McCray of Toledo elected to term ending 2005;
- Northeast Region - J. Howard Harding of Akron elected to term ending 2005;
- Central/Southeast Region - John Medert of Columbus elected to term ending 2005;
- At-Large - Richard Behrendt of Columbus elected to term ending 2005;
- At-Large Director Kevin McChord of Edgewood, KY resigned due to job commitments, thus his unexpired term became vacant. Dominic Liberatore of Shaker Heights was appointed to fill the rest of that term, ending in 2004;
- Southwest Region - vacant.

All ran unopposed. The chair of the Elections Committee wishes to thank all who assisted the election process. This gives OARP a strong board, filled with active, knowledgeable people who will really help move the agenda of OARP forward.

That said, there still is concern that there may be a shortage of qualified candidates in the future. Most candidates are running unopposed and the Southwest Ohio board position remains unfilled. This remains a concern to us, since OARP is only as good as those who run it.

We must make every effort to fill all the spots on the board, so the business of the organization can be done on a timely basis. Likewise, those who run for office, even though they are volunteers, are committing themselves to help run OARP. A couple of years ago, we had a board meeting in Toledo, only to find we could not pass any resolutions since we did not have a quorum, due to some no-shows and a couple of vacancies on the board. It is important that we all do our part and not repeat that experience.

That said, congratulations to all who have been elected!
A "rail good" week in Toledo

By Beth McCray
OARP Northwest Ohio Director

A week of transportation activities promoting alternative modes of travel was held in May, in which OARP served a major role. Called the TMACOG B-BOPP Week, this annual event was sponsored by the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council Of Governments (TMACOG) and like-minded organizations. Among this year's list: City of Bowling Green, City of Perrysburg, City of Maumee, Channel 11 TV, Greyhound, Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) and others.

So what is a B-BOPP? It's "Bike Bus Or Pool Pedestrian." Again this year, OARP — through its Toledo local group — was invited to "get on board." And, because of peculiar circumstances (cutbacks in local Amtrak personnel and services plus OARP's good working relationship with Amtrak in past years) we were named to be a liaison between the organizing committee and Amtrak's marketing people in New York. This also resulted in our making arrangements for Amtrak's participation in an Open House at the Amtrak train station and organizing a train trip.

OARP was invited to participate in a "Rail Day" open house May 15 at the Toledo Amtrak station facility. Amtrak agreed to extend the station's hours of operation and staff the ticket counter for the event. Most of the setup was accomplished the day before by OARP members Dick and Betty Kemp, Jim Parsons, Bill and Dorothy Leonhardt, Bill Gill, old friend Adam Garcia and I. Tables were set up for displays in the lobby by OARP and the Corridor Campaigns, the National Association of Railroad Passengers, Operation Lifesaver, the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, Amtrak and the Rail Users Network.

An adjoining room (currently used as a classroom where OARP's local group holds its meetings and is planned as a first-class lounge) was available for a model train exhibit and operation. Art works were displayed on portable partitions and some railroadiana items placed in a showcase. OARP member Anna Davis provided photos for an exhibit of Ohio train stations. Other local OARP members donated refreshments.

A drawing was planned to award complimentary Amtrak tickets to New York City and Chicago. Amtrak also donated a beautiful HO-gauge Acela model train set.

People began coming in as early as 8 a.m. Many stayed an hour or more, picking up literature, registering for the drawings and just talking with our members as well as Amtrak personnel, when a number of travel reservations were made. A contingent of an area bicycle club rode in en masse to join the festivities.

Aside from Toledo and its suburbs, we had folks from Akron, Lima, Piqua, Fostoria, Ada and Millbury in Ohio; Ida, Hillsdale, Blissfield and Monroe in Michigan; Chicago, and even one man from Kingston, Ontario! In fact, the man from Chicago won one of the trips. All concerned declared the day an unqualified success.

The following Saturday were train trips which OARP organized. We decided on two trips: a Chicago journey leaving Toledo on the Capitol at 7 a.m. returning at 11 p.m. allowing around six hours in the Windy City. Those not wanting to be away all day rode the train as far as Bryan, OH — about a 45-minute trip. They were met by a TARTA bus and, after breakfast at Lester's, a local diner, returned to Toledo. Those going on to Chicago enjoyed shopping, sightseeing, visiting Navy Pier, Sears Tower, etc.

With the assistance of Amtrak officials in New York (Paul Nestor and Maureen Albert) and Chicago (Brian Rosenwald), plus Toledoans Rob Greenlee and Dave Kuhn, we were able to quote a very reasonable price and provide seats for 78 persons. We also gathered a waiting list of around 40 others interested in going.

Diane Reamer-Evans, transportation project manager at TMACOG, was very generous in her appreciation of the work OARP did to make the rail portion of B-BOPP week a success.

Now arriving in Congress...

There's a lot on Congress' table right now when it comes to transportation. Foremost is the reauthorization of the multi-year, surface transportation law called the Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century. Debate is ongoing as to whether intercity rail passenger service should receive more funding from the renewal of this program.

Another program under discussion by Congress is an ongoing re-appropriation of Amtrak funding, at an annual amount of at least $2 billion per year over three years (as noted in House Resolution 2752 — please note this bill number when communicating with your representatives and senators). Such a program, including capital investment for rebuilding aging trains, tracks and stations, would allow Amtrak to be more effective in serving its customers' needs.

And, lastly, Congress is considering a new bill (HR 2751) called the Railroad Infrastructure Development and Expansion Act for the 21st Century, or RIDE-21. This bill, if enacted, would provide up to $60 billion for the development of new high-speed rail corridors and other rail investment.

The bill includes $12 billion each in tax-exempt and tax-credit bonds, expands the Railroad Rehabilitation Improvement Financing program from $2.5 billion to $35 billion, and re-authorizes and expands the Swift Act (recently passed) which will assist states in purchasing rolling stock for high-speed rail corridors. It should be noted that the provisions of RIDE-21 won't just benefit passenger rail projects, but freight projects as well.

For us in Ohio, passage of all three pieces, or perhaps two of the three pieces of federal legislation are important to nurture the progress of the Ohio & Lake Erie Regional Rail/Cleveland Hub Study, which is nearly complete at the hands of the Ohio Rail Development Commission. This thorough study, including an economic impact analysis, should be complete by issuance of the next edition of Ohio Passenger Rail News.
PLEASE PATRONIZE THESE AUTHORIZED TRAVEL AGENTS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE OHIO ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Agent</th>
<th>Phone Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akron/Stow</td>
<td>Parkside Travel U S A</td>
<td>(330) 688-3334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>Alliance AAA Travel</td>
<td>(330) 821-2323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal Fulton</td>
<td>Massillon AAA Travel</td>
<td>(330) 854-6616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>Ohio Motorist Association/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(216) 606-6080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>Ohio Automobile Club/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(614) 431-7823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elyria</td>
<td>Tours &amp; Travel Service, Inc.</td>
<td>(440) 322-3423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansfield</td>
<td>Mansfield Travel Center</td>
<td>(419) 756-8747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansfield</td>
<td>Massillon AAA Travel</td>
<td>(330) 833-1034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piqua</td>
<td>Miami County Auto Club/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(937) 773-3753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandusky</td>
<td>Sandusky Travel Service, Inc.</td>
<td>(419) 626-4633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troy</td>
<td>Miami County Auto Club/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(937) 339-0112</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mike McClister</td>
<td>(800) 443-7789</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jay Gilbert</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cheryl Anderson</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roberta Slyker</td>
<td>“Amtrak Al” Mladineo</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
Correction

The Spring 2003 issue of the Ohio Passenger Rail News contained an error in the article “New timetables for Ohio’s Amtrak trains.” In it, the article incorrectly stated that no changes were made to the thrice-weekly Cardinal (trains 50 and 51).

Instead, Amtrak’s Summer Timetable has train #51, the westbound Cardinal serving the Ohio cities of Cincinnati and Hamilton two hours and 10 minutes later than was published in the Winter Timetable. The new schedule makes that train less convenient for Ohio travelers, with departures of 2:48 a.m. and 3:40 a.m. for Cincinnati and Hamilton, respectively.

Also, the same article also failed to note that, following the loss of the Pennsylvanian across Northern Ohio, Greyhound is offering Amtrak passengers through-ticketing on two round-trip buses daily between Cleveland and Pittsburgh, to connect to Amtrak trains in Pittsburgh. Consult Amtrak for more details.
Coming this fall...

Help celebrate OARP’s 30th Anniversary.

This fall the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers will hold a special 30th Anniversary Membership Meeting. Plans are still sketchy; arrangements have not yet been finalized, but we can give you some of the details. We plan to meet on Saturday, October 25th in Galion.

Calendar of Events/Meetings

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

### August 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact person &amp; phone num</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Columbus Local Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Red Door Tavern</td>
<td>1736 West 5th Avenue</td>
<td>Bob Boyce 614 / 486-7038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>OARP Membership Mtg.</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Akron Metro offices</td>
<td>416 Kenmore Blvd</td>
<td>Howard Harding 330 / 867-5501</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Note:** There will be no Toledo Local Meeting in August this year. See you in September on a special date, Saturday, Sept. 20.

### September 2003

<table>
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<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>Central Union Plaza, Toledo</td>
<td>ORDC 614 / 644-0306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ORDC — Full Commission</td>
<td>* 10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Riffe Center; 77 S. High Street, 31st Floor; Columbus</td>
<td>Central Union Plaza, Toledo</td>
<td>ORDC 614 / 644-0306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* approximate.</td>
<td>Full Commission meeting follow Committee Meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Bob Boyce 614 / 486-7038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</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>
</tbody>
</table>

### October 2003

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<td>Central Union Plaza, Toledo</td>
<td>Bill Gill 419 / 536-1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>OARP 30th Anniversary Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Galion</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All aboard the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad... to Canton!

Saturday, August 16, 2003
10:00 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.
Refreshments/registration start at 9:30 a.m.

Akron Metro offices
416 Kenmore Blvd.

Transportation to and from the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad courtesy of Metro Regional Transit Authority

(Please clip or photocopy)
Summer Meeting/Family Outing Registration Form
(Please Print)

Name(s)
Address
City State ZIP
Telephone
Email

Please pre-register by August 8!
Registration fee: $22.
Includes continental breakfast, membership meeting,
round-trip CVSR tickets between Akron & Canton,
box lunch (please make meal selection below),
local transportation between meeting site and train.

For more information contact Howard Harding: (330) 867-5507

Meal selection(s): Make check or money order payable to:
___ Smoked Turkey sandwich OARP
___ Ham sandwich CVSR Trip
___ Vegetarian sandwich 489 Overwood Road
$___ total enclosed for ___ people.
A Akron OH 44313-5327

Driving Direction From Cleveland Area
I-77 south to exit #21B (Lakeshore/Bowery St)
Turn right on to Lakeshore Blvd
Metro RTA is straight ahead on Kenmore Blvd.
at the foot of Lakeshore Blvd.

Driving Direction From Toledo Area
Ohio Turnpike east to exit 173 (I-77)
I-77 south towards Akron
I-77 south to exit #21B (Lakeshore/Bowery St)
Turn right on to Lakeshore Blvd
Metro RTA is straight ahead on Kenmore Blvd.
at the foot of Lakeshore Blvd.

Driving Direction From Central and Southwestern Ohio
I-71 north to exit #209 (I-77 / US 224)
I-76 east to exit #21B (Lakeshore/Bowery St)
Turn right on to Lakeshore Blvd
Metro RTA is straight ahead on Kenmore Blvd.
at the foot of Lakeshore Blvd.

Driving Direction From Youngstown Area
I-76 west to exit #21C (OH Rte 59/Dart Ave)
Turn left on to Lakeshore Blvd
Metro RTA is straight ahead on Kenmore Blvd.
at the foot of Lakeshore Blvd.

Driving Direction From Canton & South
I-77 north to I-76 West (At this point both I-77 and I-76 are the same stretch of highway)
I-76 west to exit #21C (OH Rte 59/Dart Ave)
Turn left on to Lakeshore Blvd
Metro RTA is straight ahead on Kenmore Blvd.
at the foot of Lakeshore Blvd.