Ohio’s passenger rail future is so very close. How close? Try 80 miles from Cleveland and just 60 miles from Toledo.

In about 2½ hours, a quick boat ride north from downtown Cleveland across nearly 60 miles of Lake Erie to Port Stanley, Ont., and another 22 miles by car will get you to the fourth-busiest train station in all of Canada — London, Ont. At the southern end of London’s vibrant downtown and serving a city of 400,000 people is a brand-new, $7 million rail station. It is served by 14 passenger trains each weekday, operated by VIA Rail Canada, to places like Toronto, Sarnia and Windsor.

From Toledo, the future is even closer. The 60-mile trip up Interstate 75, through Detroit and under/over the St. Clair River to the VIA station in Windsor, should take just a bit more than an hour. Of course, perpetual construction on I-75 in Detroit can make a cross-lake boat trip from Cleveland preferable.

Ohioans will find in Windsor a rather unassuming western portal to the heart of VIA’s system — the busy travel corridors bounding Windsor, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Quebec City. The 85-year-old Windsor depot, with its station trackage in desperate need of some Weed-B-Gone, sits in a riverside industrial area north of downtown.

But, Windsor has four round-trip trains a day to/from Toronto, covering the 222-mile distance in as little as 3½ hours — an average speed of 60 mph. To put that in perspective, Amtrak’s Pennsylvanian took an hour longer to cover the 200 miles between Sandusky, OH and Pittsburgh. Of course, that was before Amtrak, in its “wisdom,” ceased operating that train west of the Steel City, ending Ohio’s only daytime intercity passenger rail service.

Go farther into the heart of VIA Rail’s corridors and Ohioans will find the lifeblood of Canada’s passenger rail system. Between Toronto and Brockville, Ont. (where VIA’s routes to Ottawa and
— See “O Canada” on page five.
OARP receives its largest-ever gift

As OARP celebrates its 30th anniversary, the association has another reason to cheer. The George Gund Foundation has generously awarded to OARP $25,000—the largest single grant in the association's history.

The grant will be used to help fund the startup of a coalition, called the Ohio Mobility Partners (OMP), comprised of diverse transportation interests. The OMP is seeking to promote greater balance in Ohio's transportation system by educating decision makers about the need for more public investments in non-highway modes of travel. See the Spring 2003 edition of the Ohio Passenger Rail News for more information about the OMP.

OARP Administrative Director Stu Nicholson, along with Kim Gibson of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and Todd Kleismit of Greater Ohio, led an effort last March to form a coalition of transportation, environmental and economic development organizations.

Uniting them was a policy statement called the Ohio Mobility Agreement, signed onto by several dozen organizations. The agreement asks the state to recommend new funding for improvements to railroads, transit, aviation, water transportation, bicycle and pedestrian services and facilities—not just highways. The organizations that signed onto the Ohio Mobility Agreement are called the Ohio Mobility Partners.

OMP Corridor Campaigns Director Ken Prendergast, who also serves as OARP's grants coordinator, wrote the grant request to the Cleveland-based Gund Foundation after he and Mr. Nicholson twice met with Gund staffer Jon Jensen. In the last two years, OARP has received $12,000 in grants from the Gund Foundation, for which the association is most grateful. Since 2000, OARP has raised more than $75,000 in grants, allowing the association to vastly increase its advocacy efforts.

"It should be noted that, without the continued generosity of OARP's dues-paying members, the association would not have the stability necessary to attract financial support from outside grantors," Mr. Prendergast emphasized.

More funding will be sought for the OMP and OARP's other programs and projects. OMP funding will be used to incorporate the OMP, develop informational materials, as well as to carry out advocacy and outreach on behalf of the new coalition.

"Working with others is what the Ohio Mobility Partners is all about," Mr. Nicholson said. "OARP cannot go it alone to change Ohio's highway-dominated transportation system to one that offers more mobility choices. We will continue to seek more funding and partners to make that happen. But, clearly, the Gund Foundation's grant is a superb jump-start to move this effort forward."

Coming in the next issue...

The future of passenger rail in Ohio and nationally may be determined by several major rail investment bills recently introduced into the U.S. Congress.

The next issue of the Ohio Passenger Rail News will detail those (and possibly other) bills and evaluate how each might help the Ohio Rail Development Commission realize its emerging plans for building modern passenger rail services.
Train of Thought
from Ohio Passenger Rail News Editor
Kenneth Prendergast

In the fading twilight of an August Friday, towns and trains outside of Toronto blurred past the windows of VIA Train No. 47 at a hypnotic rate. My Ottawa-to-Toronto train kept a 80- to 95-mph pace ever since it left Canada’s political capital for the nation’s financial capital.

Twenty-four daily VIA trains sped in each direction on the busiest segment — the 208 miles separating Brockville and Toronto (the same distance between Dayton and Cleveland), which my train covered in a brisk 2 hours and 40 minutes. On that two-tracked segment, the many passenger trains mixed well with numerous heavy freight trains.

I experienced the same thing on other trains I rode in the busy Windsor-Quebec City Corridor, including customer service that puts Amtrak’s to shame. Everywhere I rode — to Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, London, Windsor — the fast, frequent trains and large, amenity-laden stations teemed with travelers. Nowhere did I feel like taking the train was akin to cheering for the underdog. In populous southern Canada, rail travel is a serious player on a winning team.

Canada has what OARP and the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) are seeking — fast, multiple daily passenger trains on existing freight corridors to make the region more economically competitive. My rail travels throughout southern Canada in August was a fact-finding mission of sorts, to see what I and OARP might learn from our northern neighbors.

In the Windsor-Quebec City Corridor, 3 million people a year choose to ride VIA Rail Canada. Similar ridership is projected from a full build-out of ORDC’s plans. VIA’s ridership is rising, as services are expanded and improved by multi-year capital investments in trains, tracks and stations. Canada is winning with VIA, as its corridor services pump $800 million annually into the nation’s economy, generating 15,000 jobs.

Why do Canadians have better train services?

Quite simply, it’s because they lost fewer of them before and after VIA Rail Canada (a federal corporation like Amtrak) assumed passenger operations 25 years ago from private railroads. VIA had some decent services for it to take over, such as high-speed turbo trains in the Toronto-Montreal corridor called Rapidos. West of Toronto, VIA retained five daily round trips to/from Windsor and four daily to/from Sarnia (not to mention another three daily round trips between Toronto and London, Ont.).

Ironically, in the 1980s and 1990s, VIA was targeted by federal budget cutters, just...
WANTED

Photos and Articles

Clippings from newspapers and magazines must include the publication’s name and date. Your articles and news briefs should be typed and double-spaced, though very short items may be legibly written. Preferably, send hard copy with IBM-compatible text files on 3½” disks. Send e-mail submissions to:

kjprendergast@core.com

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

Ohio Passenger Rail News
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Lakewood OH 44107-2189

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

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

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as Amtrak was during the same period. Canada’s long-distance trains bore the brunt of the cuts, while some short-hop, local trains were either eliminated or turned over to commuter rail authorities. Since then, however, there has been greater interest by the federal government in expanding and speeding up rail passenger services.

Why?

It's all about culture. Canada tends to be a cross between the United States and Europe in many ways. Its citizens tend to be less individualistic than Americans. For example, Canadians are willing to accept governmental development boundaries around their cities to prevent urban sprawl and protect existing neighborhoods, even though very much in the United States, cities and suburban communities take advantage of new federal highway programs to create new suburban communities. Perhaps one reason for this is that many Canadians, the community tends to work together more than it does for Americans. Mass transportation in Canada is a beneficiary of that culture, making train, bus and transit use more socially acceptable in Canada than it is here.

Fortunately for rail advocates, culture isn’t bred — it’s learned. Americans didn’t use to be as individualistic as we are now. We use to live in cities and rode mass transit. That doesn’t mean we need to force people back into crowded tenements and trolleys any more than we should accept being forced to live out of our cars. What we need is balance between the two extremes, which is what Canada’s transportation system has, and what we lack — diverse choices.

When OARP members sift through these pages and take note of the rail passenger services that Canada has, keep in mind how close they are to us. Canada may be another country, but it’s hardly foreign. I was reminded of this when listening to Cleveland FM radio stations in my London, Ont. hotel, across the street from Canada’s fourth-busiest VIA rail station, served by 14 daily trains. That made it all the more possible for me to imagine I was in an Ohio city, served by a safe, fast, affordable, all-weather and environmentally benign mode of transportation.

After I left Canada and returned to this side of the lake, I realized that, without modern passenger rail service, Ohio and its competitive edge was more dull. Thankfully, we have something to look forward to — ORDC’s excellent passenger rail improvement plans, due to be released shortly. For the time being, if you want to see them in practice, they’re right across the lake.
OARP's 30th Anniversary

Former OARP presidents look back, ahead at Fall Meeting

All but one former association president was able to attend OARP’s 30th anniversary, to recall fond memories — and some not so fond — while offering a call to action for the future. The gathering was part of OARP’s Fall Meeting, held Oct. 25 in Galion, in which those in attendance also were given a detailed briefing on the progress of the Ohio & Lake Erie Regional Rail - Cleveland Hub Study by Ohio Rail Development Commission planner Don Damron.

Due to medical problems, David Marshall, OARP’s founder and first president (from 1973-76), was unable to attend. He is residing in an assisted living center in Hungerford, TX, southwest of Houston. OARP hopes Mr. Marshall makes a thorough recovery and expresses a debt of gratitude to our founder that can be repaid only by bringing the rail passenger service to Ohio which he sought for so long.

“He was the driving force to get things started, along with Willard Edson,” said Tom Pulsifer of Xenia, OARP president from 1976-89. “When I was elected to run the association, I wasn’t even at the meeting (in Toledo). When I arrived, they said ‘guess what, you’re the president.’”

Mr. Pulsifer told the 50-plus members at the Galion meeting to “involve people in learning and give them the tools to use to do things.”

“OARP has grown in professionalism and respect over the years,” added J. Howard Harding of Akron. He was association president from 1989-94. “I thank all of you, and carry on.”

“I would not be around (OARP) if it wasn’t for Tom Pulsifer,” said Mark Carlson of Bay Village, president from 1994-98. “I’ve invested 20 years in this and I’m not going to give it away. I love this association. It’s in

OKI: I-75 needs more lanes AND rail transit

CINCINNATI — A regional planning agency gave thumbs up to a $1.83 billion plan to widen congested Interstate 75 and build a light-rail line along the highway. While funding is available for addressing several choke points, such as at the intersections of I-75 and I-275, the agency's executive director said it is likely more rail line will be needed to function effectively.

At the Fall Meeting in Galion, several former OARP presidents shared their thoughts on the association's 30th anniversary. J. Howard Harding (left), now OARP's northeast region director, and current OARP President Ed D'Amato address the gathering.
Lima joins OARP's call for rail service

Upon completion of the Ohio & Lake Erie Regional Rail - Cleveland Hub Study in 2004, the Ohio Rail Development Commission is expected to expand its vision to include a proposed rail passenger route linking Pittsburgh, Columbus, Lima, Ft. Wayne and Chicago. This has drawn much interest from city officials in Columbus and, especially, in Lima. In fact, the City of Lima joined OARP earlier this year as a corporate member and sent a representative to the association's 2003 Fall Meeting in Galion. OARP and the National Association of Railroad Passengers Region VI will meet March 20 in Lima (see page eight for registration details).

Amtrak last served Lima in 1990, when its Broadway Limited (now The Three Rivers) and Capitol Limited were rerouted to tracks farther north. Lima's former Pennsylvania Railroad station (later served by Amtrak) was recently bought by the city, which is converting it into billing offices for the municipal utilities department.

Lima Mayor David Berger said the depot would be made available to travelers when the trains return. He is reaching out to other mayors along the proposed route between Pittsburgh and Chicago to pique their interest in high-speed rail.

"This is a completely different form of transportation than anything we have experienced before," Mr. Berger said in the Nov. 16, 2003 edition of The Lima News. "You're going to be able to arrive here, drop your car and head to Chicago or Pittsburgh or wherever you need to do business. This will reinvent the way we go about relating community to community."

While waiting is a scenario for discovering which choice points along the interstate, no money is yet available for the rest of the highway plan, nor for light rail.

The Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) said the combination of light rail and widening the highway to four lanes in each direction, with some sections getting a fifth lane, is the only way to keep I-75 traffic from grinding to a halt by 2030. Rejected was an option to widen the entire highway to six lanes in each direction, from near I-275 in Sharonville, south to the Ohio River.

Planners and consultants said that merely widening I-75 to four lanes each way without building light rail would make rush-hour traffic worse in 30 years than it is now. And, a highway with six lanes in each direction would produce serious traffic problems on secondary roads, hasten urban sprawl and cause the demolition of more than 100 homes and businesses.

"What the committee has been presented clearly indicates the futility of trying to double the width of I-75 from the current mostly six lanes (total) to 12," said Glen Brand, as quoted in The Cincinnati Post. Brand is an OKI oversight committee member and the Sierra Club's Midwest regional representative. "It represents the Los Angelesification of Cincinnati. The research presented by the consultants concluded the only sustainable long-range method is to provide public transit alternatives. Six lanes (in each direction) is lunacy."

I-75, the oldest interstate in Greater Cincinnati, is also the busiest trucking route in North America. Some local officials and citizens questioned whether trucks could be forced to use I-275 to bypass the most congested highway plan, nor for light rail.

We would be totally against that (truck ban)," said Martha Kelly, Cincinnati's principal city engineer, as quoted in The Cincinnati Enquirer. "What we are deciding should be two issues — do we want light rail, and the city of Cincinnati says yes. And the other is that do we want six lanes or something less, and six lanes would be ridiculous given its impact. Those are the two controversies here, and we need to keep that focus."

Another potential barrier to implementing the light rail portion of the I-75 plan emerged when two anti-rail activists were named this autumn by Hamilton County Commissioners to serve on the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Agency's board of trustees. Hamilton County Commissioner John Dowlin is a vocal opponent of rail transit.

One activist was Stephan Louis of the Southwestern Ohio Regional Drivers Alliance. He and the alliance led the only organized opposition to a sales tax levy for light rail. The levy was defeated by Hamilton County voters last year. The other was Daniel Peters of the ultra-conservative Buckeye Policy Institute which distributes misleading and inaccurate anti-rail material.

"Appointing these two people to a transit agency board is like putting the foxes in charge of the hen house," said Ken Prendergast, director of the Ohio Corridor Campaigns. "Nothing good can come from this move, which isn't just anti-transit, it's anti-downtown and anti-Cincinnati. Great cities do not exist without good public transit."

Transport bill to hike funding

Bipartisan legislation that would significantly increase highway and transit funding in all 50 states over the next six years and create 1.7 million new jobs was introduced in November in the U.S. House of Representatives. "The Transportation Equity Act" (House Resolution 3550) was introduced by 73 members of the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, including the bipartisan leadership of the Committee.

Backers of the legislation argue that it will create 1.7 million new jobs by 2009, although some critics have argued that many of those are merely existing highway jobs. HR 3550 would increase federal funding for highway projects to $298 billion and boost transit funding to $69.2 billion from 2004 to 2009. The previous six-year transportation funding bill (1998-2003) provided $174 billion for highway projects and $41 billion for transit projects.

The legislation also proposes to increase the minimum guaranteed percentage of return to each state from federal highway programs from 90.5 percent at present, to 95.0 percent by 2009. Ohio is a leading "donor" state, meaning that a state's citizens send more of their transportation tax dollars to the nation's capital than they get back in transportation funding.
A look at Ohio's rail future

Canada is on the fast track

By Ken Prendergast
Director, Corridor Campaigns

Big things are happening with passenger rail service in Canada, and a lot more could soon be arriving. VIA Rail Canada, already in the midst of a five-year, $402 million capital investment program approved by the federal government in 2000, got another $692.5 million in October to expand the program to nearly $1.1 billion. VIA is seeking an additional $2 billion in federal funds to fully develop high-speed rail services.

While $1.1 billion is respectable, that goes a long way in a nation of just 27 million people. That would be akin to Amtrak getting nearly $8 billion (on a per-capita basis and after converted to U.S. dollars) to augment its annual operating funds. That kind of money also goes a long way when Canada already has fast, frequent rail service in the 730-mile, Windsor-Quebec City Corridor, linking the Midwest to the Northeast.

Since 2000, VIA has been putting those capital dollars to good use to acquire 21 new high-speed locomotives, purchase 139 ultra-modern passenger cars (expanding its total fleet by one-third), rebuild existing rail cars, improve tracks and traffic control systems for higher train speeds, as well as upgrade station facilities. Ridership and revenues are up, and VIA's financial performance is improving.

VIA Rail Canada's train No. 72 covers the 108 miles from Windsor to London, with two enroute stops, in 100 minutes on jointed rail. That's 10 minutes faster than Amtrak's non-stop Lake Shore Limited on the 107 miles between Cleveland and Toledo. Train No. 72, seen here near Glencoe, ON, is just one of eight daily VIA runs between Windsor, London and Toronto.

under four hours. And, since long segments of that corridor are used by Toronto-Ottawa and Ottawa-Montreal modern train equipment, further improve stations, increase train frequencies and build more tracks to remove bottlenecks. Once the entire $3 billion is secured and these new VIA corridors begin to operate, train ridership and revenues will rise.

Ken Prendergast photo
Ridership and revenues are up, and VIA’s financial performance has greatly improved.

“There is a renaissance in passenger rail well under way right across this country,” said Transport Minister David Collenette.

Most of the improvements were made to the heart of VIA’s system — the Toronto-Montreal corridor, where the fastest trains now cover the 335-mile distance in just trains, reduced travel times extending as well.

Up next is a multi-year plan to further improve VIA’s services in the Windsor-Quebec City Corridor, with an eye toward top speeds of 200 km/h (124 mph). The $692.5 million already approved represents part of $3 billion necessary to make those plans a reality.

The available funding will be used to purchase more to build out the entire program, rail travel times between Montreal and Toronto will be reduced to just three hours, with similar reductions for other routes.

“There’s a lot of work being done,” Mr. Collenette said, as quoted in CNews. “I’m hopeful a decision could be made soon. I’m surprised by the amount of interest — there’s a lot of people quite keen about it.”

There are barriers to overcome, however. One of the most notable is bankrupt Air Canada. Aviation industry officials have complained that high-speed rail would hurt the airline on its busiest routes within the Windsor-Quebec City Corridor.

Another is a sluggish economy, which has all but evaporated the federal government’s budget surplus. Although, some of the startup money for faster trains may be available from $2 billion established in last February’s federal budget to fund sustainable transportation and renewable energy projects over five years to meet the Kyoto pollution emission accords.

And, one more potential glitch is the uncertainty from a changeover in the federal government’s leadership. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, a high-speed rail supporter, will retire in February.

The ace in the hole is VIA Rail Chairman Jean Pelletier, who has strong political links. He is a former chief of staff and longtime friend of the prime minister, and also was chief of staff in the Office of the Leader of the Opposition. Pelletier said he is very optimistic about gaining federal approval for the high-speed project, citing “overwhelming support” in the government.

Also pushing hard for high-speed rail is Montreal-based Bombardier Corp., a strong backer of the Liberal Party. Bombardier, the world’s largest supplier of railway equipment, would likely build the high-speed trains, providing a big boost to the financially struggling company and the nation’s economy. The rail project is expected to bring many new jobs to the populous, voter-rich swath between Windsor and Quebec City.

“The Government of Canada is committed to the revitalization of passenger rail in Canada,” said Mr. Collenette.

VIA Rail Canada
Services in the Windsor-Quebec City Corridor

Train frequencies/speeds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Round trips per day</th>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Fastest trip</th>
<th>Avg. fare*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Windsor-Toronto</td>
<td>Mon-Fri: 4-7, Sat: 4-6, Sun: 4-6</td>
<td>223 miles</td>
<td>3 hrs 40 mins</td>
<td>$55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto-Ottawa</td>
<td>Mon-Fri: 5-9, Sat: 3-8, Sun: 4-8</td>
<td>278 miles</td>
<td>3 hrs 51 mins</td>
<td>$68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto-Montreal</td>
<td>Mon-Fri: 7-12, Sat: 4-7, Sun: 6-10</td>
<td>335 miles</td>
<td>3 hrs 59 mins</td>
<td>$74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ottawa-Montreal</td>
<td>Mon-Fri: 5, Sat: 4, Sun: 4</td>
<td>116 miles</td>
<td>1 hr 35 mins</td>
<td>$31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal-Quebec</td>
<td>Mon-Fri: 4-5, Sat: 4, Sun: 4</td>
<td>169 miles</td>
<td>2 hrs 49 mins</td>
<td>$40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* one-way economy fare, in Canadian dollars ($1C is about 73 cents U.S.)

Train accommodations/amenities

Economy-class: lowest fares, snacks/beverages can be purchased from cart

VIA1 first-class: Panorama Lounge at key stations, priority boarding, free three-course meals/beverages, electric outlets and more room at each seat

Constellation class (Toronto-Montreal only): double and deluxe bedrooms, Panorama Lounge, early boarding, free continental breakfast and newspaper, showers in deluxe rooms

Station services**

- Staffed ticket counter
- Automated/express ticketing
- Baggage check-in
- Panorama Lounge (VIA1 patrons)
- Car rental
- Newsstand(s)
- Local public transit
- Restaurant(s)
- Public parking
- Lockers
- Taxi stand
- Restrooms

**available mostly in Windsor, London, Toronto, Kingston, Ottawa, Montreal and Quebec City, with other, smaller stations having lesser services.
Transport Minister David Collenette announced in October Renaissance II, a new funding package to revitalize intercity passenger rail services in Canada, worth $692.5 million over the next five years.

"The Government of Canada is acting to provide for faster, more frequent and more reliable passenger rail service across Canada," said Mr. Collenette. "Coupled with the $401.9 million announced in April 2000, more than $1 billion has been committed by this government towards the revitalization of passenger rail, the largest cash infusion for passenger rail in Canadian history."

Renaissance II builds on the previous investment and will allow VIA Rail to continue renewing its existing fleet and stations and improving strategic infrastructure to eliminate bottlenecks and enhance capacity for faster, more frequent and reliable service. These investments will benefit Canadians across the country. For example:

- The Light, Rapid and Comfortable (LRC) cars will be refurbished and passenger stations upgraded to continue to meet the needs of travelers in the Quebec City-Windsor corridor.
- The western transcontinental fleet will be refurbished in order to modernize the interiors and meet passenger demand for better sleeper car accommodations.
- The investment in additional Renaissance cars will increase the sleeper and lounge car capacity on the eastern transcontinental fleet operating between Montreal, Moncton and Halifax, and add some passenger cars in the Quebec City-Windsor corridor.
- The refitting of the remaining Renaissance cars will also benefit northern Ontario, as it will provide employment and economic benefit for workers in Thunder Bay.
Travelers in southeast Canada enjoy fast, frequent, modern trains on most routes.

The planned acquisition of new locomotives will allow VIA to continue its locomotive fleet renewal, increase train departures and contribute to improving the company's environmental performance through increased fuel efficiency and reduced greenhouse gases emissions per passenger.

Finally, the strategic infrastructure improvements, which will be spread throughout the Quebec City-Windsor corridor, will:

- increase track capacity and alleviate bottlenecks;
- improve on-time performance;
- reduce trip times by increasing speed;
- allow for additional frequencies; and
- further improve safety and reliability of service.

"This investment demonstrates the government's commitment to the continued revitalization of Canada's passenger rail services. Renaissance II will bring truly modern, affordable, safe and efficient travel options to Canadians," concluded Mr. Collenette. 

This statement is courtesy of VIA Rail Canada Inc.

O Canada!

"O Canada" from page one

Montreal split, there are 12 round trip trains on most days which speed over the 208 miles in less than three hours. That's a nifty average of 75 mph, made possible by train speeds routinely attaining 95 mph.

VIA's premier service are two trains, each departing Montreal and Toronto at 5 p.m. daily except Saturdays. This dynamic duo roars nonstop in less than four hours to the other city's outskirts (Dorval International Airport Station outside Montreal, or Oshawa near Toronto) at average speeds of more than 85 mph, before continuing downtown. That would be the same as a train taking less than four hours to go from downtown Chicago to either Cincinnati, Columbus or Cleveland.

Thanks to a multi-year, federal capital investment program approved in 2000 by the federal government, more trains operating at higher speeds with better onboard amenities and serving rebuilt stations are now arriving in southeast Canada.

Such quality rail passenger services are proposed for Ohio. The Ohio & Lake Erie Regional Rail/Cleveland Hub Study, being finalized by the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC), would create on our side of the border what southern Canada already has.

But Canada isn't stopping there. In late October, VIA received an additional $692.5 million in federal funding for capital improvements, including more trains and faster tracks with an eye towards increasing train speeds between Windsor and Quebec City to 200 km/h (124 mph).

So, if you want to see what the ORDC has in mind for Ohio and adjacent states, take a look at Canada's example on these centerspread pages and on page eight. Or, consider taking a trip about Canada, eh?
President’s Column
Tough questions to be answered in 2004

By Ed D’Amato
OARP President

In previous columns, I’ve said this is perhaps the most crucial time for OARP in our history. Congress is finally starting to debate the future of passenger rail in America. All of the crucial questions are under discussion:

- How do we define the policy framework for passenger rail?
- How do we fund it?
- What will Amtrak’s role be?

Even though the debate is on temporary hold while Congress finishes up its fiscal year 2004 budget (including Amtrak’s appropriation), it will begin again after the budget is finalized. OARP has already played an active role in this debate and will continue to do so as the debate picks up again.

Meanwhile, here in Ohio, the Ohio Rail Development Commission is about to release the Cleveland Hub Study and begin building public and political support for it. As the only statewide organization representing the interest of rail passengers in Ohio, OARP has a very important role to play in all of this. To truly succeed in our mission and fully participate in these federal and state processes, we must have a full and active board of directors.

It is the OARP Board of Directors that sets the tone for how we proceed as an organization as well as how we are ultimately perceived by others in the political process that determines the future of passenger rail. An active, diverse board gives us a variety of viewpoints that direct what our policies will be. I can’t tell you the number of times a differing viewpoint from one of our board members has given us a fresh view of an issue and how we proceed in dealing with it.

Elections for board positions will soon be upon us and the Southwest Ohio director position is still vacant after several years. It is vital that we have someone on the board to not only represent our Southwest Ohio members, but to make contacts with local government and business officials as we build support for the Cleveland Hub. This support will be absolutely critical, as each area of the state has its own local issues and concerns.

In addition there are a handful of officers and directors on the board who have been serving for many years. They are the ones who have diligently worked to move OARP to the professional and respected position we are now in. I don’t think I need to tell you that when you volunteer your time for an organization, after a while you reach a point where you begin to tire and need a break, or your priorities change and limit the time you have to give to the organization. In fact, this has happened to me. Recently, my priorities in my life outside of OARP got shuffled a bit, so I’ve decided not to run for a second term as president. I will remain on the board, however.

We are approaching a time of turnover on the board of directors, so we must begin to prepare our future leaders now.

We have been very lucky to have a generous membership that has supported us for 30 years, and we are making progress. For our goal to become reality, however, we need to recruit committed people for the board of directors. Therefore I am asking you all to consider running for a board position or to help us find suitable candidates.

A call for candidates!

It’s that time of the year again... Time for all 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 a candidate for a seat on the OARP Board of Directors or the President.

DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY: The Secretary keeps meeting minutes, is custodian of the association’s records, and provides notice of meetings.

Cardinal lands in The Big Apple

In October, Amtrak extended its Chicago - Cincinnati - Washington DC Cardinal service to New York City, providing direct service from southern Ohio to more East Coast cities. By routing the thrice-weekly train service beyond the nation’s capital, travel to cities like Baltimore, Wilmington DE, Philadelphia, Trenton NJ and Newark NJ was made easier by no longer requiring passengers to make a transfer to another train.

Amtrak was able to offer the through service after it began using single-level passenger cars on the Cardinal instead of double-decker Superliner equipment. Superliners couldn’t be used north of Washington DC due to clearance problems with overhead electric wires and several tunnels.

The Cardinal serves the Ohio cities of Hamilton and Cincinnati, but in the pre-dawn hours. Its eastbound and westbound trains stop at more convenient hours in towns across the Ohio River from Aberdeen OH (Maysville KY), Portsmouth OH (South Portsmouth-South Shore KY), Ironton OH (Ashland KY) and Chesapeake OH (Huntington WV).

Amtrak breaks ridership record

Despite chronic under-funding from the federal government, more than 24 million passengers traveled on Amtrak passenger trains in the past year, a 2.7 percent increase over fiscal year 2002. That’s the highest ridership tally in Amtrak’s 32-year history. The national passenger rail service’s fiscal year runs from October to September.

Amtrak attributed the positive results largely to a “back-to-basics” approach to winning over passengers, begun earlier this year. The approach includes a more straightforward fare structure, service enhancements and more marketing. The ridership record came despite a number of adverse conditions this year, including a lagging economy that hurt the travel market.
DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY: The Secretary keeps meeting minutes, is custodian of the association’s records, and provides notice of meetings.

DUTIES OF THE TREASURER: The Treasurer has custody of the association’s financial books, handle all financial transactions, be responsible for distributing dues renewal notices to all members, prepare regular financial reports for the Board of Directors, and prepare a budget prior to each fiscal year.

DUTIES OF 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 an OARP membership meeting, in which case the board meeting is held on the same day of the membership meeting. Special 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 Friday, Feb. 20, 2004. In addition, prior to Feb. 20, the candidate must submit to the election committee written endorsements (letters or a petition) signed by five (5) other OARP members in good standing.

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.

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

Did you know?

Buses connect to PA trains

Greyhound and Amtrak now offer through-ticketing on buses from Cleveland to trains at Pittsburgh destined for cities in central Pennsylvania and East Coast points. Travelers can book travel on connecting Greyhound buses by contacting Amtrak (www.amtrak.com or 800-USA-RAIL).

Buses arrive and depart Greyhound stations in both Cleveland and Pittsburgh — the latter is located across Liberty Avenue from the Amtrak station. Please note that Pittsburgh’s Greyhound station will be replaced in 2004 and be moved temporarily.

Residents of the southern suburbs of Cleveland may find Amtrak’s Three Rivers service (trains 40-41) from Quaker Square in Akron more convenient for their travels to/from Chicago, Pittsburgh and the East Coast.

Clarification

In the Summer 2003 issue of the Ohio Passenger Rail News, an article (Greyhound may move to Toledo train station, page three) noted the possibility of Greyhound moving to the Toledo train station, owned by the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority. While Greyhound has a lease with the owner of its existing Toledo bus station, no decisions by the Port Authority or any other party have been made to buy out Greyhound’s lease.
Travel Agent Members

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Agency Name</th>
<th>Phone Number 1</th>
<th>Phone Number 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akron/Stow</td>
<td>Parkside Travel U S A</td>
<td>(330) 688-3334</td>
<td>Joel Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance</td>
<td>Alliance AAA Travel</td>
<td>(330) 821-2323</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal Fulton</td>
<td>Massillon AAA Travel</td>
<td>(330) 854-6616</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>Ohio Motorist Association/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(216) 606-6080</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>Ohio Automobile Club/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(614) 431-7823</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elyria</td>
<td>Tour &amp; Travel Service, Inc.</td>
<td>(440) 323-5423</td>
<td>Mike McElster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansfield</td>
<td>Mansfield Travel Center</td>
<td>(419) 756-8747</td>
<td>Jay Gilbert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massillon</td>
<td>Massillon AAA Travel</td>
<td>(330) 833-1034</td>
<td>Cheryl Anderson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parma Heights</td>
<td>A to Z Amtrak Tours</td>
<td>(440) 888-6666</td>
<td>&quot;Amtrak Al&quot; Mladineo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piqua</td>
<td>Miami County Auto Club/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(937) 773-3753</td>
<td>Roberta Slyker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandusky</td>
<td>Sandusky Travel Service, Inc.</td>
<td>(419) 626-4633</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troy</td>
<td>Miami County Auto Club/AAA Travel</td>
<td>(937) 339-0112</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Authorized Amtrak travel agents who wish to join OARP, maintain current membership status, and be listed in the TRAM DIRECTORY should send a $50 check, made payable to OARP, to: Dave Shreiner, Treasurer; 9705 Township Road 301; Millersburg OH 44654. The TRAM annual listing fee entitles you to list your CITY, the NAME OF YOUR AGENCY, one LOCAL PHONE NUMBER, one LONG DISTANCE PHONE NUMBER, and the name of one CONTACT at the agency. Renewals will be billed by the Treasurer.

Updated: Dec. 2003

Directory of the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Toll-free OARP telephone number: 888 / 488-8439</th>
<th>Visit OARP on the web! <a href="http://www.oarprail.org">www.oarprail.org</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRESIDENT Ed D'Amato</td>
<td><a href="mailto:edamato@earthlink.net">edamato@earthlink.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PO Box 841 Berea 44017-0841</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAST-PRESIDENT Bill Hutchison</td>
<td><a href="mailto:whh12@juno.com">whh12@juno.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>474 Delaware Ct Westerville 43081</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VICE-PRESIDENT Mark Carlson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mdcarson@core.com">mdcarson@core.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>479 Humiston Drive Bay Village 44140-3017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECRETARY Larry Robertson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:robertson9@osu.edu">robertson9@osu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022 Langham Road Columbus 43221-1914</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TREASURER David Shreiner</td>
<td><a href="mailto:doshreiner@valkyrie.net">doshreiner@valkyrie.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9705 Township Road 301 Millersburg 44654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTHEAST REGION Cleveland</td>
<td>James Stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elyria Warren</td>
<td>Phil Copeland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toledo Lima Mansfield/Galion Vacant Sandusky</td>
<td>Bill Gill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lima Vacant</td>
<td>Steve La Conte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toledo Bill Gill</td>
<td>419 / 536-1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayton Linda Leas</td>
<td>937 / 253-9448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clermont Ronald D. Garner Vacant</td>
<td>513 / 444-3098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springfield Vacant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTHWEST REGION Cincinnati</td>
<td>513 / 891-9251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayton Linda Leas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clermont Ronald D. Garner Vacant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springfield Vacant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENTRAL/ SOUTHEAST REGION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus Robert Boyce</td>
<td>614 / 486-7038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware Tom Allen</td>
<td>740 / 369-5804</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OARP Regional Co-Ordinators

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

NORTHWEST REGION
- Toledo Bill Gill 419 / 536-1924
- Lima Vacant 419 / 668-6225
- Mansfield/Galion Vacant 937 / 253-9448
- Sandusky Steve La Conte 513 / 891-9251
- Vacant 513 / 444-3098

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

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

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

Members of these campaigns will receive the Ohio Passenger Rail News on a quarterly basis, plus a twice-monthly, interactive Ohio Passenger Rail News eEdition sent by e-mail, as well as special concerns for action, use of campaign staff (to be expanded soon) and other benefits.

An exclusive membership dues structure, identical to both campaigns, has been instituted (see at right).

CORRIDOR CAMPAIGN MEMBERSHIP FORM (please photocopy and mail)

Name: ...........................................
Title: ...........................................
Organization: ...................................
Address: ...........................................
City: ...........................................
State: ...........................................
ZIP: ...........................................
Telephone (...........)
e-mail: ...........................

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

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

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

Circle the campaign or campaigns and check the membership level(s) you are joining:
In 2001, VIA opened its new $7 million station in London, ON on the site of the old facility, used by nearly 400,000 travelers per year — eight times more than at Cleveland's Amtrak station. The new London station (serving a city the size of Akron) has a newsstand, first-class lounge, leasable office space and 14 trains a day, with more coming by 2005. See pages 4-5 for more about Canada's rail renaissance!

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

January 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact person &amp; phone number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ohio Rail Development Com.</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Riffe Center; 77 S. High Street, 31st Floor; Columbus</td>
<td></td>
<td>ORDC 614 / 644-0306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Columbus Local Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Red Door Tavern</td>
<td>1736 West 5th Avenue</td>
<td>Bob Boyce 614 / 486-7038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Toledo Local Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Toledo Amtrak Station</td>
<td>Central Union Plaza, Toledo</td>
<td>Bill Gill 419 / 536-1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Round-trip to Clifton Forge on the Cardinal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cincinnati Union Station</td>
<td>Contact Mike Weber regarding this Cincy RR Club event</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>OARP Board Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Galion Public Library</td>
<td>123 North Market Street, Galion</td>
<td>Ed D'Amato 330 / 256-7218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

February 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact person &amp; phone number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Columbus Local Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Red Door Tavern</td>
<td>1736 West 5th Avenue</td>
<td>Bob Boyce 614 / 486-7038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Toledo Local Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Toledo Amtrak Station</td>
<td>Central Union Plaza, Toledo</td>
<td>Bill Gill 419 / 536-1924</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

March 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact person &amp; phone number</th>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Ohio Rail Development Com.</td>
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<td>Riffe Center; 77 S. High Street, 31st Floor; Columbus</td>
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<td>ORDC 614 / 644-0306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Columbus Local Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Red Door Tavern</td>
<td>1736 West 5th Avenue</td>
<td>Bob Boyce 614 / 486-7038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Toledo Local Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Toledo Amtrak Station</td>
<td>Central Union Plaza, Toledo</td>
<td>Bill Gill 419 / 536-1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>OARP Membership Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Civic &amp; Convention Center</td>
<td>7 Town Square, Lima</td>
<td>Mark <a href="mailto:Carlson-mdcarlson@core.com">Carlson-mdcarlson@core.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers and the NARP Region VI Directors appreciate the enormous assistance provided by Mayor David Berger and his staff in the planning and hosting of our Spring Meeting.

Driving Instructions from I-75 southbound
I-75 south to exit #127 (SR 81)
Turn right on to SR 81 (Findley Rd) and follow for about 1½ miles where it curves to the south and becomes Jackson St.
Turn right at the 1st traffic light (E. North St) and go to the 2nd traffic light (N. Main St).
Go two blocks south to Market St. The Civic Center is on the far right corner. The parking garage is on the right on Market St.
A surface parking lot is one block south on Spring St. Turn right and immediately move to the left lane.

Driving Instructions from I-75 northbound
I-75 north to exit #125 (SR 117 and SR 309)
Turn left on to SRs 117/309 (Harding Hwy) and move to the right lane as Harding Hwy splits and becomes Bellefontaine Ave. After a mile it curves to the left and becomes Market St.
After crossing the railroad tracks you will come to the Town Square, the Civic Center is on the far right corner. The parking garage is to the right.
To use the surface parking lot turn left on Main St. and go south one block to Spring St. Turn right and immediately move to the left lane.