

# TRAINRIDER

THE NEWSLETTER OF **TRAINRIDERS/NORTHEAST**



## CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

submitted by Wayne E. Davis

### The Inaugural Committee Wants You!

As you must know by now, the May 1st date for an inaugural train was recently scrapped—messing up our idea of having our first train operate on AMTRAK's 30th Birthday. Since that bombshell was dropped, we're all weary of projecting startup dates. However, since our rather "unique" press conference we've read in newspapers that Guilford executives have now said that a June startup would be possible. Even if that date slides some more, we're still going to have to rush to find all the volunteers that will be needed. TrainRiders is the Co-chair of the Inaugural Steering Committee and is expected to provide appropriate volunteers for the many tasks that are an important part of the VIP inaugural run. We need volunteers to ride in each of six coaches to maintain the attendance roster and see that people board and exit at the appropriate time and location. We need volunteers for the two café cars to assist in crowd control. We'll need volunteers from Boston, Haverhill, Exeter, Durham, Dover, Wells, Saco, Old Orchard Beach and Portland to assist in the station events. Once we

*continued on the back page*

## ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

*TrainRiders/Northeast scheduled a press conference at Portland City Hall on Thursday, February 22, 2001, following the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority's announcement on the 20th that the startup of Amtrak service between Portland and Boston had been indefinitely postponed.*

**T**rainRiders' Chairman, Wayne Davis, outlined the disappointment of rail service advocates at the latest delay and questioned whether Guilford Rail Systems really intended to allow passenger trains to operate over its tracks in New Hampshire and Maine.

"TrainRiders has been extremely patient with this process, but that patience has ended," he said. "Guilford's pattern of conduct shows it will do all it can to deny passenger service to the public. TrainRiders now calls upon Governor King in Maine, Governor Shaheen in New Hampshire, the New England Congressional Delegation, the Rail Authority and Amtrak to take whatever legal and political actions are necessary to ensure that Guilford cannot continue to hold this region hostage. TrainRiders would encourage its members, and the public, to contact the Governors, their state legislators, congressional delegations and others to make their voices heard in favor of a quick completion of this project. And when the Surface Transportation Board receives the case, TrainRiders will encourage its members and

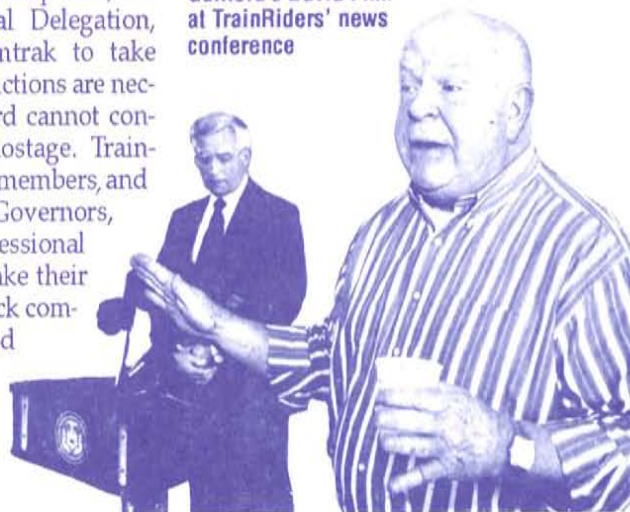
the public to contact the Board to ask that it issue whatever decision it determines appropriate on an expedited basis so we can avoid further delay." (editor's note: The Surface Transportation Board received the case March 12th.)

During a question and answer period, several people in attendance asked about the possible use of eminent domain to resolve the issues. Wayne replied that it has not been considered, and would be considered only as a last resort.

At that point, David Andrew Fink, Guilford Rail Systems President, accompanied by his son David Armstrong Fink and two other Guilford employees, strode to the microphone. Fink was loud

*See Press Conference on next page*

**Wayne Davis and Guilford's David Fink at TrainRiders' news conference**



*Bethen Maine Newspapers, Inc., photo by Doug Jones*



## THE TRAIN TO MAINE— IT IS DELAYED AGAIN

**O**n February 20, 2001, the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority announced that the startup of Amtrak service to Portland will not occur on May 1st, and that no future starting date has been projected.

Guilford Rail Systems (GRS), owner of the former Boston & Maine Line between Portland and Haverhill, Massachusetts, and the Rail Authority have failed to come to an agreement. At issue are passenger train operating speeds, which under the terms of a Surface Transportation Board ruling on October 22, 1999, depend on successful completion of a test of the stiffness of the rail. GRS is claiming that, unless the test is done on a daily basis, track conditions could be unsafe for operation at speeds in excess of 59 mph. A successful test would permit passenger train speeds at 79 mph where track conditions, such as curvature, etc., permitted those speeds.

The rebuilding of the approximately 78 miles of line between the Massachusetts/New Hampshire state line and Portland is now largely complete, with 115-pound (per yard) continuous welded rail (CWR) on both the main line and sidings which are to be used in conjunction with the passenger trains. Back in 1975, on the 39.10 miles of line between the Maine/New

Hampshire state line at South Berwick and Rigby Yard in South Portland, almost 99% had been 112-pound jointed rail, with just over one third mile each of 115-pound and 130-pound rail. An estimated 190,000 tons of crushed rock ballast will be required to complete the roadbed supporting the track. As of November 9, 2000, over 118,000 tons had been installed. It was anticipated that final surfacing and aligning of track, and other tasks such as signalling and installation of CWR on a few remaining segments, would be completed in time to commence scheduled operations on May 1, 2001.

GRS has indicated that it is unwilling to assume the costs of environmental cleanup resulting from construction of station platforms on its land. As a result, they have refused access to this land and no construction of platforms had started when the delay was announced by the Authority. Guilford has also insisted that all maintenance of platforms on their land be done by GRS personnel.

A third issue, a layover facility in Portland for Amtrak trains and locomotives, was also unresolved.

—State of Maine Rail Transportation Plan, Phase II, Inventory and Line Evaluation, Boston and Maine Railroad, December 1975; Portland Press Herald, February 21, 2001

## ... Press Conference

(continued from the first page)

and angry. "I own that property you want to take," he said.

Fink was adamant in his position that no test of rail rigidity would satisfy him that 115-pound rail is safe for operation at speeds above 59 mph. (editorial note: The Federal Railroad Administration, whose business it is to know such things, thinks otherwise.)

Fink's son announced that Amtrak trains could use Guilford Rail System's

layover facilities on a temporary basis, but without the ability to refuel locomotives until Amtrak has its own facility in Portland, a change from Guilford's position announced in January.

In addition, Guilford remains unwilling to assume any costs of environmental cleanup on their property resulting from station construction.

—Portland Press Herald, February 23, 2001; TrainRiders/Northeast Press Release, Feb 22, 2001

## AND WE CALL ON THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD—AGAIN.

**T**he Boston-Portland Amtrak speed issue was filed with the Surface Transportation Board in Washington March 12th. TrainRiders members are asked to telephone Linda Morgan, Chairperson of the Board, at (202)565-1500 to urge her to expedite our case. The Board deliberated on this very same issue twice before, so it's not as though it's anything new to them.

Generally speaking, elected officials have responded positively to our recent call-in campaign. Thank you all for doing your part.

Please note that when you call these numbers you'll be on the phone for only as long as it takes for your opinion to be counted as a vote for our side. You won't have to talk directly to a senator or a Governor or Linda Morgan. You may be on the phone for only a few seconds during each call.



No matter where you live, here are the numbers to call to express your concern over the delays in the start of Amtrak service between Boston and Portland. If you don't live in one of these states, you may also call your own members of Congress and ask them to offer their support to the members listed here.

### Maine:

Governor Angus King	(207)287-3531
Senator Olympia Snowe	(202)224-5344
Senator Susan Collins	(202)224-2523
Rep. Tom Allen	(202)225-6116
Rep. John Baldacci	(202)225-6306

### New Hampshire:

Governor Jean Shaheen	1-800-852-3456
Senator Robert Smith	(202)224-2841
Senator Judd Gregg	(202)224-3324
Rep. John Sununu	(202)225-5456
Rep. Charles Bass	(202)225-5206

### Massachusetts:

Senator Edward Kennedy	(202)224-4543
Senator John Kerry	(202)224-2742



## ACELA EXPRESS BEGINS

**O**n December 11, 2000, Amtrak began revenue service for the Acela Express. As with earlier special runs, the first revenue trip had a large number of VIPs aboard. *The Boston Globe* sent two reporters to New York City, one returning by Acela Express and one flying from LaGuardia Airport to Logan. Although the trip by air beat the train, which arrived in Boston 12 minutes late, by two minutes, it had cost \$160 for air fare on the Delta air shuttle plus two taxi rides, totalling \$45, for a grand total of \$205. The Acela fare was \$120. The train had been delayed for nine minutes in New Haven by a TV crew's late departure and another three minute delay was attributed to problems with a Metro-North commuter train between New York and New Haven.

While reports in the media were overwhelmingly positive concerning the new Acela Express, particularly on its quietness, large windows and on-board amenities, there remained some signs of caution. The editorial in the January 2001 *Railpace News-magazine*, read, in part:

"Now the Acela is up and running, the first true high-speed train designed as a high-speed train, not merely souped-up MUs (multiple unit electric cars) or conventional coaches that go fast. Its success will be fueled by two forces—tightening gridlock at Northeast airports and on its roadways. There simply isn't much more available capacity in these modes. Rail, however, is America's most underutilized asset, and the public is slowly coming to this realization. The second "force" that will drive the success of Acela is Amtrak itself, by properly marketing and operating the service to its intended client base. There is still plenty to do, both short and long

term, and the Federal government will be required to fund much of these projects. Bureaucrats who believe that they can put their check-books away now that Acela is running are in dreamland; much public investment will be necessary in the near future to assure the growth and success of high speed rail service. Projects like an additional tunnel under the Hudson River into Penn Station, right-of-way improvements in Connecticut, and elsewhere are needed to further reduce congestion and trip times. While Japan and Europe debuted their high speed franchises on all new, dedicated rights-of-way, Amtrak's first real entry is built upon a curvy, 19th Century right-of-way, with movable bridges, grade crossings, shared with commuter and freight trains.

Acela is up and running, and on its way to success. Plan to sample the speedster on your next trip along the Corridor."

The National Association of Railroad Passengers, in its January 2001 *News*, sounded the same theme regarding public investment in rail.

### "You Get What You Pay For"

That's what Governor Tommy Thompson (R-WI), chairman of Amtrak, told reporters on the Acela Express inaugural. It helps explain why just one U.S. route exceeds 110 mph and why Europe and Asia have better passenger rail.

U.S. taxpayers have paid for highway and aviation systems laden with problems largely because we have not (yet) paid for a modern rail system.

Amtrak's critics often cite the "huge" \$23 billion federal grants to Amtrak since 1971, then contrast air travel growth with Amtrak's. (Consider, for example, 1980 and 1999 pas-

senger-miles, in billions: Amtrak 4.5 and 5.3, domestic aviation 204.4 and 484.5.)

Rarely does anyone cite the multi-year highway spending totals (much less a 29-year total), yet federal highway funding will be \$31 billion in fiscal 2001 alone; in 1999, highway funding at all levels of government totaled about \$117 billion.

### Similar Freight Problems

Generous highway spending has also had a big impact on freight. Railroads have lost ground since deregulation supposedly liberated them in 1980. Rail revenues grew by \$8 billion (from \$28 billion to \$36 billion); truck revenues by \$295 billion (\$155 billion to \$450 billion). Also, railroads don't have enough track to grow their business significantly, or cash to build more track (let alone replace their aging bridges).

Here, the "get what you pay for" principle shows what happens when an infrastructure-owning industry tries to compete with an industry that uses publicly owned infrastructure on which political leaders love to spend money."

Amtrak added two more Acela Express runs March 5, 2001. One operates a daily round trip between Boston and New York City, the other operates on a non-stop weekday round trip between Washington, DC, and New York City, taking two hours 28 minutes each way.

—*Railfan & Railroad*, March 2001;  
*Railpace News-magazine*, January 2001;  
*NARP News*, January 2001;

*The Providence Journal*, February 24, 2001.

### Acela Running—Amtrak's Problems Not Over Yet

The Inspector General of the USDOT has called Amtrak's New York City tunnels dangerous due to inadequate means for escape, ventilation and water supply for fire fighting. Estimated cost to remedy these



*continued on page 4*



problems by 2010 is \$898 million. Frank Wolf (R-VA), who heads the subcommittee that appropriates Amtrak funding blames Amtrak for not correcting the problem. Wolf has proposed deep cuts in federal funding for Amtrak. Their requirement to be free of operating subsidies by 2003 has led Amtrak to spend to increase revenue or cut costs, not to maintain infrastructure. A single ventilation tower for one tunnel would cost \$109 million, but Amtrak's fire safety budget for next year is only \$31

million. Meanwhile, Wolf, who has two children living in New York City, said "This is an issue of saving lives."

"No major accident or fire has occurred in New York City tunnels, but 40-50,000 people die on U.S. roads every year. Some of these deaths could be avoided if Congress were willing to make the far safer rail option more generally available."

—The ESPA Express-News from the Empire State Passengers Association, January/February 2001

### High Speed = High Price

The dust had barely settled from the high speed Acela's first passage through Rhode Island when commuters were complaining about the high ticket prices. Instead of their 70 minute \$5.75 MBTA commuter run from Boston to Providence, the 33 minute Acela Express run cost \$28. Amtrak's slower, about 40 minute, Acela Regional and Northeast Direct trains charge \$18. between Boston and Providence. Working people feel the new train is not for them.

—The Providence Journal, January 12, 2001

Similar sentiments have been expressed in other parts of the Northeast Corridor. Matthew Mitchell, in a very detailed, largely favorable report on his ride on the Acela Express, stated the following:

### "Comfort Everywhere But the Wallor"

"Acela Express sets a new standard for passenger rail equipment in America, and is indeed a world class train. That's good, because Amtrak's

entire future has been bet on the success of it. The bad news is that that means fares will continue spiraling upward. My one-way trip to Baltimore, just 94 miles and exactly one hour, cost \$83. The regular Northeast Direct fare was less than half of that: \$39.

While the train is fabulous and the service so far has been good, the fares are too high for me to ride Acela Express to New York or Washington



even on business trips, unless I have to arrive in DC before 9:00. I suspect many others in the Delaware

Valley will feel the same way. Here in the middle of the NEC, where a lot of our trips are short, Philadelphians are hit hardest by Amtrak's need for bottomline profits from Acela Express."

—The Delaware Valley Rail Passenger, January 2001, page 11

### Amtrak Long-Range Business Plan: 20 Years, \$30 Billion

"Citing a 'rail investment gap,' Amtrak President George Warrington presented the nation's passenger railroad's proposal to increase federal support at two-and-one-half times the present rate. In advancing his plan, Warrington noted the United States currently spends less than one percent of its annual transportation budget on intercity rail, whereas Germany invests twenty-two percent of its annual budget on passenger rail. On a per capita basis, he noted, for passenger rail services we spend at the same level as Tunisia and Estonia, and far below that of Britain, France and Germany."

—All Aboard in the Carolinas, Carolinas Association for Passenger Trains, January-February 2001, addendum

see "AMTRAK" on page 7

## NEW HAMPSHIRE REPORT

Construction of station platforms awaits resolution of Guilford Rail System's concerns regarding environmental cleanup, clearance between platforms and trains, and maintenance of platforms.

The Legislature passed bill HB258, establishing a task force to study the Manchester & Lawrence and Northern lines. The aim is to re-establish commuter service between Lawrence and Manchester, serving Manchester Airport, on a line partially abandoned by Guilford. The Northern, between Concord and White River Jct., Vermont, was abandoned years ago and is now owned by New Hampshire. Freight service is being re-established to Westboro (West Lebanon). The line was once part of a route between Boston and Montreal. Also under consideration is bill HB352, limiting liability for operators of passenger rail service in the state.

Commuter service to Nashua, an extension of MBTA service to Lowell, is also under study. The plan, by Parsons Brinckerhoff, will take 14 months to complete.

The station at the University of New Hampshire in Durham will be returned to its 1915 appearance. Platform canopies are to be constructed. The dairy bar, there since passenger service ended, will still operate.

Bob Hall reports that on March 13, the vote in Exeter to appropriate an additional \$125,000 for the Exeter station was 1,099 in favor, 352 opposed.

—TrainRiders/Northeast Board Meeting, February 15, 2001;  
Atlantic Northeast Rails & Ports,  
13 February 2001

### TrainRiders Welcomes New Members

Suzanne Abbott, Palmetto, FL  
Herbert & Ann Bailey, N. Vassalboro, ME  
Peter & Lena Berube, Rochester, NH  
Robert F. Bishop, Yarmouth, ME  
Alan Cook, Northfield, VT  
Mary Fox, Brunswick, ME

Ron Lessard, Brunswick, ME  
Samuel Newbury, Farmington, CT  
Barry O'Brien, Brookline, MA  
Beth O'Malley, Portland, ME  
Garrison Valentine, Durham, NH  
Michael & Lee Wygant, Scarborough, ME



**TRAINRIDERS  
ANNUAL  
MEETING  
SET FOR  
APRIL 18TH!**

**T**rains won't be here by May 1st, but on April 18th we'll be celebrating anyway!

We'll be treated to displays and demonstrations normally reserved for VIP public officials. On April 18th, TrainRider members are the VIPs!

First, we'll eat! Doubletree chefs will serve up the kind of gourmet dinner that has kept us returning to the inn for our annual meetings year after year.

Then Surprise Advertising will explain marketing plans for the new passenger service and show commercials and other promotions planned to make the Amtrak service successful.

David Willauer, Transportation Director of Greater Portland Council of Governments, will make a Powerpoint presentation of Emergency Response Plans developed to cope with rail emergencies along the line. Operation

Lifesaver materials for children will also be on display.

Michael Murray, chairman of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority, will update us on construction progress on the line.

Captain Jeff Monroe, Portland's Transportation Director, will show architectural drawings of the Thompsons Point intermodal facility, now under construction. We'll see plans for other stations from Haverhill north.

We'll see the actual new station clock created by the Balzer Family of Freeport for the Bayside Station.

There'll be special guests and a drawing for Robert Willoughby Jones' latest book, *The Boston & Maine—Sea and Shore*.

TrainRiders' 13th annual meeting is **Wednesday, April 18th**, at Portland's Doubletree Inn. Notices will be in the mail shortly. Watch for yours. ■

## 50TH MAINE TRANSPORTATION CONFERENCE

**T**rainRiders/Northeast attended the 50th Maine Transportation Conference at the Augusta Civic Center on Thursday, December 7, 2000. Backed by our banner, sewn by Jeri Edgar, and posters from Amtrak, Wayne Davis, Guy Hunter and your Editor staffed our display booth. A lot of people inquired about the coming of Amtrak to Portland. We also attended a brief meeting of the Maine Passenger Rail Corridor Committee, a sub-committee of Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) 3, Bangor Region and RTAC 4, Kennebec River Valley, on the extension of passenger rail service beyond Augusta to Waterville and Bangor. The committee desired inclusion of a study of passenger rail service to Bangor within MDOT's current six-year Transportation Improvement Plan and the protection of



Fourtin Powell (left) and Guy Hunter man TrainRiders' busy double booth at the conference.

the rail line north of Augusta, where lowering of water levels following removal of Edwards Dam in Augusta has exposed the substructure of the track along the Kennebec River to deterioration. Wayne Davis noted that extending the service from Brunswick to Bangor need not take as long as it has taken to get it from Boston to Portland.

## RHODE ISLAND RAIL PROGRESS

**A**mtrak's Advanced Civil Speed Enforcement System was activated between Westerly and Cranston in late October 2000, permitting train operation in excess of 110 mph. High speed Acela Express trains can operate at 150 mph for eight miles between East Greenwich and Kingston, Rhode Island, and for ten miles between Hebronville and Mansfield, Massachusetts. The Acela Express can also operate at 150 mph for a short distance in New Jersey.

The Rhode Island DOT is working closely with the MBTA to provide shuttle service between the T.F. Green Airport Station in Warwick and Providence. The service would use the third (freight) track, which is to connect the Quonset-Davisville Port & Commerce Park in North Kingstown with the Providence & Worcester tracks in Pawtucket. A train every twenty minutes between the airport and Providence is under consideration. Amtrak has indicated that its high speed Acela Express will not serve Warwick, at least until it has proved that the number of passengers would be worth serving with its premier trains. The RIDOT also wants early morning and late evening MBTA service between Boston and Warwick for travelers from Greater Boston who are using T.F. Green's business flights.

Plans for the Warwick Station have reached the stage where construction contracts are expected to be completed by May 1st. The key to financing all of the improvements at once, including a people-mover between the airport and the rail station, has come from the car rental companies agreeing to a fee of \$3.25/day on auto rentals. This will allow \$100 million in State bonds to be repaid over a 30 year period. The park-

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## BOSTON-PORTLAND CONSTRUCTION REPORT

**A**s planned, construction on the track stopped December 8, 2000. Guilford Rail Systems track crews are expected to resume construction as soon as weather permits, presumably sometime this March. Additional funds are being sought to improve drainage near the Summer Street overpass in Kennebunk. Continuous welded rail has not yet been installed in this area due to a drainage problem.

The passing siding at Wells, passing beneath the Maine Turnpike, has been placed in service. Guilford removed the switches from the passing track at North Berwick, but has left rail and ties in place in case this siding is needed in the future.

Amtrak trains, for training on-board crews, are expected to start later this spring, though no date has been set.

—Mike Murray, Director, NNEPRA, personal communication, March 5, 2001

## VERMONT RAIL NEWS

**C**ommuter service between Charlotte and Burlington started December 4, 2000. The 13 mile route includes a stop at Shelburne; a proposed station in South Burlington has yet to be located. The initial schedule shows two trips northbound (into Burlington) in the morning and one northbound in the evening, with one southbound morning trip and two southbound evening trips. Operating speeds are 30 to 40 mph, for a travel time of 25 minutes. Additional trips will be added this spring. The Vermont Transportation Authority is studying an extension of commuter service north of Burlington to serve the large IBM plant at Essex Jct.

Vermont and Amtrak are considering re-routing the *Vermont* to terminate in Burlington instead of its present terminus in St. Albans. However, many contend that the answer to improving ridership is to have it again serve Montreal. Also under consideration is elimination of the baggage car, which is limited to lower speeds than are allowed

on the Northeast Corridor, and dropping some stops in Connecticut. Could some of the 100 high-speed boxcars Amtrak ordered for mail and express freight service from Trinity industries, to be assembled in the first quarter of 2001, be substituted for the slower baggage cars?

Amtrak's *Vermont Western Corridor Study—Phase II Engineering Report*, looking at the re-routing of trains to Rutland and ultimately to Burlington via southwestern Vermont, calculated construction costs of just under \$40 million. However, due to the topography of the area the line runs through, track improvements to allow speeds in excess of 60 mph were not cost effective. Running time of the *Ethan Allen* via the present route is two hours 17 minutes, compared with an estimated two hours 33 minutes for the revised route via North Bennington and Manchester.

—Atlantic Northeast Rails & Ports, 13 Feb 2001; *Railpace Newsmagazine*, Jan., Feb. 2001

## MBTA ACTIVITIES

**O**n November 17, 2000, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs approved the MBTA Draft Environmental Impact Study for the Fall River/New Bedford extension of MBTA service. Additional studies, mostly concerning Hockomock Swamp, a large wetland area in Raynham and Easton, are to be done in the early spring of 2001. State Senator Mark Montigny, D-New Bedford, applauded the acceptance of the report as another step toward the day when trains pull into New Bedford and Fall River. By December, bridge construction was already underway in Fall River and construction will begin in New Bedford in the spring of 2001. Opponents in Stoughton, Easton and Raynham have vowed to continue their opposition to the project. However, rising costs, now

estimated at \$610 million, may stop the project. The recently released MBTA five year capital plan included money for the Greenbush (Old Colony) and New Bedford/Fall River extensions, but omitted funding for an extension of commuter service to Buzzards Bay.

Ridership on MBTA's Old Colony extension, to Middleborough and Plymouth/Kingston, has doubled since its start in 1997. Rush hour trains are now so packed that conductors have been unable to collect all the fares. Five double-deck cars have been assigned to the service, and fifteen more are to be added in 2001. Twenty-four conductors are also to be hired by the end of 2001, to put an end to free rides!

The Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority has proposed new facilities to serve the MBTA. These

include a 400 car, three story parking garage at the Lawrence station, and a parking garage at Andover. More parking is also proposed at Ballardvale MBTA station, also in Andover.

On the Worcester line, the new MBTA station at Framingham is complete. It features a pedestrian bridge over the tracks and additional parking.

The Newburyport extension's passenger count has risen from about 160 per day in February 2000 to about 720 per day. Ipswich, the former end of the service from Boston, still gets about 480 passengers per day, a figure most likely determined by the size of the parking lots. The MBTA service has helped Newburyport's economy.

—The Providence Journal, November 18, December 18, 2000; *Railpace Newsmagazine*, January, February 2001; The 470, February 2001.



## MAINE TRANSPORTATION NEWS

## Rockland Branch Developments

**O**n February 28, 2001, the Maine DOT held a public meeting at Rockland City Hall to discuss the completed draft *Rockland Waterfront Assessment*. This plan concerns the proposed rail/water terminal for future Rockland Branch passenger service. The chosen site for the pier and rail/water transfer is Atlantic Point, in Rockland's "South End." The rail line leaves the Rockland Branch just east of the old engine house, near New County Road, and runs through closely built residential neighborhoods to the waterfront. Under consideration are three types of vessels: the "Cat", currently running between Bar Harbor and Yarmouth, Nova Scotia; a smaller passenger-only high speed catamaran; and conventional cruise ships, which would either land at the pier or send passengers ashore in tenders. The "Cat" would run between Rockland and Yarmouth, two to three days per week, beginning and ending at Bar Harbor. Because Rockland would become a Port of Entry, a customs and immigration facility would be part of the terminal. A feasibility study will start later this year.

Construction work to improve the Rockland Branch for passenger train operation resumes this spring, with

most of the track work to be completed this year. Bridge work is expected to be done in 2002.

In Bath, waterfront development along the Kennebec River is anticipated to include a 100 room hotel, re-establishment of the railroad station for railroad purposes once the dental clinic moves out, and construction of a terminal for high speed ferries. All of these are intended to offer travelers the option of seeing the Maine coast without their automobiles, using various modes of public transportation.

— *Maine Sunday Telegram*, February 25, 2001

## NORTH OF THE BORDER

**V**IA Rail Canada announced December 15 that it would buy former *Nightstar* equipment designed for overnight "Chunnel" service. The cars were built by Belgian-based Alstom. The price is C\$125 million. Plans are to use most of the cars in eastern Canada, including on the *Ocean* and *Chaleur*. Delivery is to be completed by mid 2001. Planned service increases, from the present to 2004, are Quebec-Montreal 52:64; Montreal-Ottawa 66:92; Montreal-Toronto 88:114; Ottawa-Toronto 64:100; and Toronto-Windsor 56:70. The first cars are to be placed in service this fall.

— *Railpace Newsmagazine*, February 2001

## ... AMTRAK (continued from page 4)

## Amtrak Moves Into Worcester Union Station



Amtrak's move into the nicely renovated 1911 Union Station is good news for its developers. The move was completed in February. The MBTA moved into the station on June 19, 2000. However, unless the Amtrak schedule increases from its present two trains daily in each direction, one between Boston and Washington, DC, and the Boston section of the *Lake Shore Limited*, between Boston and Chicago, the station will get more use from 14 daily MBTA commuter trains than from Amtrak.

— *Railpace Newsmagazine*, January 2001



## ... Rhode Island (continued from page 5)

ing garage will have 3,000 spaces for rental cars and 1,000 for rail patrons, and will be nine stories tall. Construction begins this fall and the station is planned to open in December 2002, followed by the people-mover in 2003. A February 19 editorial in *The Providence Journal*, stated: "In addition to the creativity shown by RIDOT, the Airport Corporation and Warwick officials, the nine auto-rental firms that do business in Rhode Island played a crucial role.

They are Hertz, Avis, Budget, National, Alamo, Thrifty, Enterprise, Dollar and Payless. They are, truly, the glue for this whole intermodal transit bonanza. Their leaders deserve applause."

Now that the time for acquiring land for the station and other commercial development planned for the Station District is near, about 600 homeowners whose homes near the airport would have been difficult to sell as residential properties due to increased activity at the airport in recent years, have banded together to try to sell their properties to the Rhode Island Airport Corporation.

Although one five acre property recently sold for \$5 million to a Chicago firm, the lawyer representing the homeowners cautioned them not to expect all the sales to be that high.

A resolution to study passenger rail service between Quonset-Davisville, the airport and Providence has been introduced in the Rhode Island House. Connections with small cruise ships, which might use the port, would be a market for such a rail service.

— *Railpace Newsmagazine*, January 2001;  
*The Providence Journal*, February 9, 18, 19, 2001; *Warwick Beacon*, February 15, 22, 2001



# Become a Part of Inaugural Day!

*continued from Chairman's  
Comments on page 1*

build a roster of names, there will be at least one face-to-face meeting for everyone, followed by written instructions and "job descriptions" for the one-day VIP inaugural train. Please look over the form on this page. Fill it in and mail to TrainRiders/ Northeast, Box 4869, Downtown Station, Portland, Maine 04112. If you prefer to call in the information instead, TrainRiders telephone number is (207) TRY-RAIL (879-7245).

## TRAINRIDERS NEEDS YOU!

☐ YES, I WANT TO VOLUNTEER ON INAUGURAL DAY (the actual day, probably in June, to be announced as soon as it is known.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (       ) \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would like to volunteer as a guide in this town(s):  
\_\_\_\_\_ e-mail (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would like to volunteer as a guide on the inaugural train.  
\_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would like to volunteer as a host on regularly scheduled trains.

YOU MAY ALSO CALL TRAINRIDERS' OFFICE TO VOLUNTEER.

**THE TRAINRIDER**  
Box 4869, Downtown Station  
Portland, Maine 04112  
(207) TRY-RAIL (879-7245)

Return Service  
Requested

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PORTLAND, ME  
PERMIT NO. 654