

TRAINRIDER

THE NEWSLETTER OF **TRAINRIDERS/NORTHEAST**



CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Submitted by Wayne Davis

At a time like this, I sorely miss our newsletter editor Fourtin (Buc) Powell. Buc has been ill and unable to participate in the current "good news" events, which is the reason that you'll read about the recent press conference here, rather than in an in-depth article by Buc.

Governor Angus King, the Maine DOT, Amtrak, the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority, Guilford Transportation and TrainRiders/Northeast held a joint press conference in the Governor's Cabinet Room in Augusta on Thursday, October 18th. Members of TrainRiders Board of Directors, representatives of the Maine Congressional Delegation and a crowd of well wishers were in attendance.

The Governor opened the conference with "This has been a day that has been some time in coming," followed by very kind words about TrainRiders/Northeast: "...we wouldn't be here today if it weren't for TrainRiders/Northeast. This

continued on page 6

PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE BETWEEN BOSTON AND PORTLAND OFFICIALLY BEGINS ON DECEMBER 15.

It will be preceded by an invitation-only gala inaugural run on Friday, December 14, that will carry Governors Jane Swift of Massachusetts, Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, and Angus King of Maine; former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis; former Senator George Mitchell, Senators Olympia Snowe, Susan Collins, Judd Gregg, Robert Smith, Edward Kennedy and John Kerry; Congressmen Tom Allen, John Baldacci, Charles Bass and John Sununu; TrainRiders/Northeast (TNE) board members and other persons who have made contributions to the long struggle to bring passenger rail to Maine.

All-day celebrations, a joint effort of TNE founder and chair Wayne Davis, Patricia Douglas of Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA), Tracey McGrail of the Exeter Chamber of Commerce, Susan Moreau of the Maine DOT, and Victor Salemme of Amtrak, will start off mid morning at Boston's North Station. After making 15-minute whistle-stops at Haverhill, Exeter, Durham, Dover, Wells and Saco, the *Downeaster* pulls into Portland's new Transportation Center in mid afternoon.

Following an early tradition that began with the first steam train to Portland in the 1850's, this December, church bells will peal in every stop along the way to announce

**V.I.P.
INAUGURAL
TRAIN
ARRIVES
DEC. 14th**

the arrival of the inaugural train. New Hampshire Hall's carillon in Durham will ring, and in Exeter, churches will ring bells, the firehouse whistle will blow, and 187 4th graders who have been focusing on a train curriculum that includes

poetry, prose, artwork and math, will greet the train along with many adults.

Many people in New Hampshire towns, which like Maine towns, have not heard or looked at a passenger train since 1965 have been going down to their rail stations daily for the unabated pleasure of watching the Amtrak training train pass through.

But every town along the route has planned a boffo, if brief, celebration. After those who must return to Boston detrain in Wells to board a chartered bus, others will proceed to Portland. After a platform welcome, everyone will be bussed to the Portland Expo for a celebration.

The following day will see the commencement of regularly scheduled *Downeaster* service in beautifully rebuilt Metroliner cars with deep-blue carpet and curtains and silver-gray walls.

Round-trip fare Boston/Portland is \$35, one-way \$21. Business class is slightly more. Discount 10-day and monthly commuter fares are available. All seats are reserved. For fares for shorter runs, please refer to our previous newsletter or call 1-800-USA-RAIL or see www.amtrak.com

TRAINS NEED HELP, TOO

A New York Times Editorial from September 25, 2001

Stranded travelers made a fortuitous discovery when the airlines shut down after the terrorist attacks: The country still has an intercity rail system. Amtrak scrambled to provide additional service to accommodate the surge in demand. In the Washington-New York corridor, Amtrak's stylish new high-speed Acela Express trains are especially busy because of the continued shutdown of Washington's Reagan National Airport.

Congress has acted admirably to help troubled airlines. But it should also make a commitment to improve passenger rail. Amtrak, which receives about 1 percent of all federal transportation spending, needs an immediate infusion of cash to beef up security throughout its system and to accelerate much-needed capital improvements along the Northeast corridor, where its fast trains are hampered by antique infrastructure.

Congress must also adopt a more sensible long-term strategy. For three decades it has grudgingly subsidized Amtrak, spending enough money to keep it alive but never enough to build an attractive service. Also, Amtrak is required to serve many communities where it does not make a profit, even

while facing a Congressional mandate that become self-sufficient by the end of 2002.

Despite these obstacles, Amtrak has been posting record ridership levels before the attacks, in part because travelers were frustrated by airport congestion. Congressional support for high-speed train service in designated corridors across the country had also been growing. Congress should now focus on investing in economically viable high-speed service in heavily traveled markets, and create a dedicated rail trust fund for Amtrak like the funds that pay for highway and aviation infrastructure projects.

The need for high-speed trains serving shorter routes extends beyond the Northeast to the Midwest, Texas and California. The Pacific Northwest from Portland to Vancouver is already benefiting from improved service. And Florida's voters last year gave a green light to developing new high-speed links between the state's largest cities.

Air travel is still projected to grow in the long run, intensifying gridlock. The current slowdown should not blind Congress to the need to upgrade the passenger rail system. ■

PASSENGER RAIL RIDERSHIP HAS SKYROCKETED

Well before the heavy Thanksgiving and end-of-year holiday travel period, Amtrak ridership is up to 70,000 per day from a pre-September 11 60,000 per day—itsself the biggest figure since the 1950s. That's a 17 per cent increase and does not include the many airline transfer tickets used during September when planes were grounded.

Rail ridership has continued to hold the above high level since the resumption of airline service.

—NARP Newsletter, September

NATIONAL GUARD TO HELP

On October 8, Governor George Pataki of New York state announced that hundreds of National Guard troops will be assigned to boost security at facilities across New York City, including Grand Central Terminal, Penn Station, bridges and tunnels.

"New Yorkers have been reassured by the presence of the National Guard at our airports, and I know these additional steps will further build public confidence in our great city," said Governor Pataki.

The National Guard will complement efforts of NYC Police and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

—Pataki news release to NARP

REGIONAL RAIL NEWS

DOWNEASTER CAFE CAR TO SERVE PRIVATELY CATERED FOOD — EVERY DAY ON EVERY RUN

In a move unique in the United States, the Maine DOT (with a little help from TNE) has hired a private caterer to stock the café car on the *Downeaster*. Among other fare to be served will be chowder made by award-winning Legal Seafoods of Boston, turkey wraps, pita veggie sandwiches, shrimp cocktail, fresh baked chocolate cookies, yogurt and, for traditionalists, hot dogs and hamburgers. Morning trains will offer fresh baked muffins and bagels from local providers.

The above food has been taste-tested by Wayne Davis and others, all of whom pronounce it delicious and unlike anything they have ever eaten on train or plane. ■



WANTED: HOSTS WITH THE MOST

At a 1989 board meeting of NARP, the late Henry Ferne brought up the idea of a host program for the trains that he and the emerging grassroots group hoped to see flying up and down the tracks within a few years.

Maine didn't get its train, but North Carolina, which like most states that already had passenger rail, took the idea and ran with it. Today, it has a wildly successful host program on board its *Carolinian* and *Piedmont* trains.

TrainRiders/Northeast did not forget the idea, and with North Carolina's experience as a guide and TNE member Ray Bergendoff of Bowdoinham to serve as dispatcher (coordinator of assignments)—and volunteers like you—the *Downeaster* will soon have on board goodwill ambassadors.

Their job is to assist passengers, promote trains, answer questions, hand out brochures, even babysit for a few minutes so that Mom may go for sandwiches. Hosts are responsible to the conductor.

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A REVIEW OF THE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND HIGHLIGHTS OF TRAINRIDERS/NORTHEAST

TRAINRIDERS/NORTHEAST began with 21 members in 1989, and following are the general goals they set:

TNE GOALS

- (1) RETURN OF PASSENGER RAIL BETWEEN BOSTON AND PORTLAND.
- (2) RETURN OF PASSENGER RAIL BETWEEN BOSTON AND ROCKLAND.
- (3) RETURN OF PASSENGER RAIL BETWEEN PORTLAND AND BANGOR VIA LEWISTON AND WATERVILLE.
- (4) RETURN OF PASSENGER RAIL BETWEEN PORTLAND AND BANGOR VIA BRUNSWICK, AUGUSTA AND WATERVILLE.
- (5) UPGRADING AND IMPROVEMENT OF RAIL SYSTEM IN GENERAL TO ACCOMMODATE MODERN AND EFFICIENT SERVICE FOR BOTH PASSENGERS AND FREIGHT THROUGHOUT NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND.

In addition to goals, the original small band of TNE founders set down as objectives the following:

TNE OBJECTIVES

- (1) ESTABLISH A CITIZENS' ORGANIZATION TO PROMOTE STATED GOALS.
- (2) EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ON THE NEED FOR PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE.
- (3) SUPPORT TRANSPORTATION PLANNING THAT INCLUDES PASSENGER RAIL AS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF MAINE'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.
- (4) ENCOURAGE MAINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE AND VERMONT TO UNDERTAKE, IN COORDINATION WITH MASSACHUSETTS, STUDIES OF THE BENEFITS, COSTS AND STRATEGIES REQUIRED TO RE-ESTABLISH PASSENGER RAIL.
- (5) ENCOURAGE AND FACILITATE COOPERATION AND COORDINATED ACTION AMONG ALL PARTIES WHO WILL NEED TO BE INVOLVED, INCLUDING FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES, RAILROAD COMPANIES, UNIONS, REGIONAL PLANNING GROUPS, RAIL USERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST 13 YEARS

- 1990-91:** Joint TNE-Railvision initiation of a legislative bill after collecting 90,000 voter signatures. The Passenger Rail Service Act becomes the first citizen-initiated bill to be adopted in the history of Maine.
- 1991:** Maine DOT and TNE seek federal funds.
- 1991:** Congress authorizes additional funds for Amtrak 403-B subsidized passenger rail service.
- 1991:** Amtrak commits to supply \$20 million worth of equipment for the service at no cost to the State of Maine.
- 1992:** TNE efforts prompt Federal Railroad Administration to award \$6000 grant to Maine DOT for design work for intermodal terminal in Portland.
- 1994:** Negotiations between Maine DOT and Railway Labor Executives' Association; draft agreement submitted to Maine's Attorney General and U.S. Department of Labor.
- 1996:** Negotiations begin between Amtrak, Guilford Transportation and the new Passenger Rail Authority.
- 1998:** Congress creates multi-billion dollar capital fund for Amtrak entitling Maine to an additional \$23 million to be used to provide 80 MPH service and to extend service to Freeport and Brunswick.
- 1998:** Differences of opinion among the parties over rail weight and train speed delay the project.
- 1999:** TrainRiders co-sponsors a multi-state summit meeting of state and federal officials as a follow-up to the rail conference of the previous November which resulted in regional approach to passenger rail service in Northern New England.
- 1999:** Surface Transportation Board (STB) issues ruling that Portland-Boston line is adequate for safe operation at 79 MPH speeds.
- 2000:** Over 200,000 tons of new ballast and thousands of new rail ties installed from MA/NH state line to South Portland, with welding completed to Old Orchard Beach and to be finished in spring of 2001. All 23 crossings rehabilitated.
- 2001:** Despite previous STB decision regarding a 79-mph safe train speed, Guilford says passenger trains are not to exceed 59 mph.
- 2001:** TNE meets with Maine's governor, DOT and Rail Authority to seek resolution to many obstacles.
- 2001:** Amtrak petitions STB to settle speed issue, requesting an expedited ruling.
- 2001:** TNE intervenes to assist Amtrak's STB proceeding. Also requested an expedited ruling.
- 2001:** Efforts continue with the governor, Congressional delegation, the National Association of Railroad Passengers, the Rail Authority, the MaineDOT, Amtrak, Boston-based Metropolitan Transit Authority and towns and cities along the rail line to assure that this project is completed in a timely fashion and that the service can be the best that it can be.
- 2001:** STB restates its previous decision that the line is adequate for safe operation at 79 mph speeds.
- 2001:** Inaugural run scheduled for December 14, 2001, with regular Boston-Portland Amtrak service commencing December 15, 2001.



Wayne E. Davis
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 Yarmouth, ME
 Retired C.E.O. BankEast



Charles Brown
Director-at-Large
 San Anselmo, CA
 Long-time Benefactor



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 Scarborough, ME
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Herbert Connell
 Cape Elizabeth, ME
 Retired paper industry
 research executive



Jeri Edgar
 Cape Elizabeth, ME
 Registered Nurse



James Friedlander
Midcoast Maine Director
 Brunswick, ME
 Retired Director of the
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 of Governments



Cynthia M. Garfield
Vice-Chairman
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TRAINRIDERS/NORTHEAST

IN MEMORIAM

Henry Ferne II
1909-1996

A founding member of TrainRiders/Northeast in 1988, Henry was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and died at his home, Daybreak II, in Edgecomb, Maine. He was a long-time benefactor of TrainRiders and his professional relationships with Amtrak proved invaluable during the creation of TrainRiders/Northeast. Henry graduated from the Episcopal Academy in Philadelphia, and Babson College in Boston. He was a Wall Street Investment Counselor, and during World War II was Red Cross Field Director at Fort Dix, NJ. Mr. Ferne enjoyed four terms in the Connecticut Legislature in the 1950s and established the CT State Police Memorial Scholarship Fund. His love of Maine developed at a very early age when his family would travel by train between Philadelphia and Rangely to spend summers together. In 1977 he moved to Wiscasset and restored a local mansion which he named "Daybreak Farm." He was a trustee of the Wiscasset Library, where he endowed the Hortense Ferne Memorial Art Library, and for many years was chairman of the Finance Committee for the Town of Wiscasset. He was Chairman of the Lincoln County Republican Committee and established the Maine State Police Memorial Scholarship Fund. He had a lifelong love and interest in railroading, and was director of the National Association of Railroad Passengers. He was a tireless worker in the effort to extend Amtrak passenger service to Portland from Boston and continued those efforts until the day he died.

IN MEMORIAM

Samuel E. Stokes, Jr.
1922-1992

A founding member of TrainRiders/Northeast in 1988, Sam Stokes of Alstead, New Hampshire, was a retired professor of French who worked endlessly to distribute to the media and to political leaders information about the benefits of passenger rail service and the costs of over-reliance on roads. He served as a member of our first Board of Directors in 1989 and was a generous supporter of TrainRiders. He remained a Director-At-Large as Lou Gehrig's Disease took its toll. Sam also served the National Association of Railroad Passengers as its first Vice President, and was a Director from its inception in the early 1970s until his death. For more than twenty years, his letters and published articles made politicians at the federal and state levels aware of his position on balanced transportation. Sam's letters to occupants of the White House and key members of Congress were legendary. He managed to raise public awareness of the importance of passenger rail service when many were saying that trains were "old fashioned." Amtrak gave Sam its first—and thus far only—Consumer Advocate Award in October 1990. It was presented to Sam by then Amtrak President W. Graham Claytor, Jr. In 1989, an editorial in the Keene, New Hampshire, *Sentinel* supported Sam's work, concluding with the prophetic statement: "Someday, and it may not be too far in the future, we expect a lot of people are going to wish they'd listened to Sam Stokes."

WANTED: HOSTS... (continued from page 2)

Each host will make one run in each direction on his assigned day; in the event he must cancel for a day, he is responsible for calling a replacement. (In North Carolina, there are more hosts than train runs, and since everybody likes the job, no difficulty exists.)

The host program is not limited to TNE members, just to people who know the value of rail travel and love to ride trains.

Hosts for the *Downeaster* will be trained. Prior to being certified and making their first run, they will make two qualifying runs with an established host. One host may wish to work once a week, another once a month.

TNE will hold an introductory meeting in the near future to explain the nuts and bolts of the program. For further information or to add your name to the list, contact the office at 207-TRY-RAIL (879-7245) or e-mail trainriders@cybertours.com. ■

Chairman's Report (continued from page 1)

is a great event in the history of Maine," he said as he continued with "It's a fun way to travel, it's a relaxing way to travel, and I think this is going to be an asset to Maine on all fronts."

The Governor spoke of the future and said officials will extend the service from Portland to Brunswick, hopefully by 2003, and with other extensions possible to Auburn and Rockland. There were many bursts of applause and whoops of joy from around the room as the Governor spoke. He introduced Commissioner John Melrose, who spoke glowingly about those involved in the project. He then introduced Jonathan Carter, the Chairman of NNEPRA, who praised Executive Director Michael Murray for his handling of the rail project. When the Commissioner introduced me, I recalled the efforts of those citizens who collected signatures at the Maine Mall back in 1990 and

1991 in anticipation of having The Passenger Rail Service Act made into law. It was perseverance that led to the Maine Legislature adopting the first citizen initiated referendum in Maine's history.

David Fink, Jr., Executive Vice President of Guilford Transportation, spoke, as did representatives of Maine's Congressional Delegation. The press conference lasted well over an hour and was given wide coverage by the media.

Now we must see that the Inaugural Run scheduled for December 14th is the best Amtrak inaugural ever! The Inaugural Train will carry dignitaries and a limited number of invited guests.

During the coming year, we're initiating the TrainRider Host Association (see our website) on the new Portland/Dover/Boston service and working with state and federal officials to extend the service to Freeport and Brunswick and Montreal. ■

MAINE REFERENDUM QUESTION 3 MUST BE PASSED ON NOVEMBER 6

Referendum Question 3 reads as follows:

Do you favor a \$61,000,000 bond issue for improvements to highways and bridges, airports, public transit and ferry facilities; development of rail, trail and marine infrastructure; and improvements to intermodal facilities statewide that makes the State eligible for up to \$120,800,000 in matching federal funds?

The \$61 million will match up to \$120.8 million in federal funds and over \$15 million in private and local funds, which would be distributed as follows:

\$37.4 Million for Highways— \$34.4 million to match up to \$69 million in federal funds for improvements to major and minor highways, \$3 million for snowmobiles, fishing access from state bridges.

\$10.10 Million in Freight-Related Improvements— funds to match \$1.8 million for rehab of track

Caribou-Loring to provide rail access.

\$5.8 Million for Rail Development — \$1 million for capital improvements to state-owned rail lines, including Lower Road Brunswick-Augusta; \$800,000 for Industrial Rail Access projects, matching \$800,000 for investment on St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad to reduce congestion and enhance rail connections Portland-Montreal via Lewiston-Auburn; \$4 million to preserve rail lines in northern and central Maine; \$1 million to modernize cargo-handling facilities in Searsport; \$1.5 million to continue 50/50 matching grant program for municipalities to upgrade or improve public harbor infrastructure along the Maine coast.

\$13.5 Million for Passenger-Related Improvements— \$3.25 million to match \$29.5 million (federal), \$3 million (local) for infrastructure improvements to publicly-owned airports; \$1.5 million for rehab of Arch Hangar facility (Loring); \$750,000

(federal match of \$1.7 million) for trails Brewer-Calais, Windham-Fryeburg, Kittery-South Portland; \$2.35 million, \$1 million to match \$4 million in federal funds, to replace 42-year-old transfer bridge to serve Maine State Ferry in Rockland; \$1.65 million for transit, with federal match of \$8 million and over \$5 million in local funds to support a replacement program for urban and rural transit providers; \$4 million for intermodal facility development, matching \$6.1 million in federal funds for intermodal facilities to provide connection between rail, transit, marine and park-and-ride; supports Explore Maine Strategic Passenger Transportation Plan.

What if the bond fails?

If Question 3 fails, dozens of road, aviation, rail, trail and marine projects throughout the state will have no means of funding.

—Keep Maine Moving Coalition
www.mbttaonline.org/bondissue

Downeaster Passenger Rail Service DAILY SCHEDULE Portland to Boston North Station

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Train Number	Southbound				Northbound			
	680	682	684	686	681	683	685	687
	AM	AM	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM	AM
Portland, ME	6:05	8:45	2:00	4:20	12:30	2:45	9:00	1:45
Old Orchard Beach	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Saco	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wells	6:41	9:21	2:35	4:56	11:42	1:54	8:09	12:58
Dover, NH	7:02	9:42	2:56	5:17	11:22	1:34	7:49	12:38
Durham (Fri., Sat., Sun.)	7:11	9:51	3:05	5:26	11:15	1:25	7:39	12:28
Exeter	7:30	10:10	3:24	5:45	11:03	1:15	7:30	12:19
Haverhill, MA	7:53	10:33	3:48	6:08	10:38	12:55	7:08	11:57
Boston, North Station	8:50	11:30	4:45	7:05	9:45	12:00	6:15	11:00
	AM	AM	PM	PM	AM	PM	PM	PM

DATELINE—AUGUSTA—OCTOBER 18, 2001:
AT THE GOVERNOR'S PRESS CONFERENCE, DECEMBER 15TH WAS
ANNOUNCED AS THE STARTING DATE OF REGULAR AMTRAK SERVICE
BETWEEN BOSTON AND PORTLAND

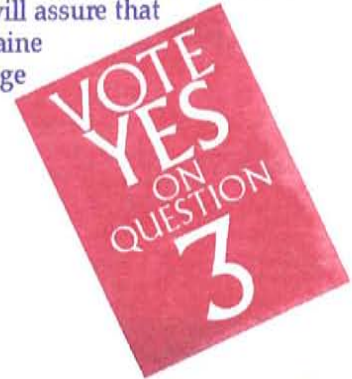


PHOTO BY CINDY GARFIELD

Governor Angus King listens intently to Wayne Davis, TNE's Chairman and Vice President of the National Association of Rail Passengers, as he thanks the many TrainRider volunteers who worked long and hard over the years to make this passenger rail service happen. Behind the Governor is NNEPRA chairman, Jonathan Carter. The Inaugural Run will take place December 14th.

Notice to our Maine Members
Vote on November 6th

It's clear by everything we read in the newspapers and watch on TV that people are feeling less secure about Maine's economy. Voting YES on the transportation bond, Question #3, is something all of us can do to help get our economy moving. Question #3 will bring over \$200 million in state, local and federal funds to every region of our state. The transportation bond will fund road, airport, waterway, rail and trail projects that will help move people and goods into and out of our state. Passing the transportation bond will assure that we can "Keep Maine Moving." (see page 7 for details)



THE TRAINRIDER

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