

# TRAINRIDER

THE NEWSLETTER OF **TRAINRIDERS/NORTHEAST**



## AMTRAK NAMES NEW PRESIDENT

### FROM FRIENDS OF AMTRAK:

Amtrak has announced that David L. Gunn has been named the new President and CEO, replacing George Warrington who indicated in March that he would be resigning. Gunn's appointment becomes effective May 15. He has been an executive of transit systems in New York City, Washington, DC, and Toronto as well as having played key roles at SEPTA in Philadelphia and MBTA in Boston.

Amtrak Board Chairman John Robert Smith said, "David has built a strong international reputation for investing in track and fleet, enhancing service, improving financial performance, and planning for the future. He has developed solid working relationships with labor, local communities, businesses and all levels of government. Like all of us, David shares a commitment to a strong national passenger rail network."

### FROM RAIL TRAVEL NEWS:

David Gunn, the new Amtrak President who will take office May 15, will ride to work on the Washington Metro rather than a

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## LOST: A GOOD FRIEND

For those of us who knew him, the news of Buc Powell's death brought a mixture of emotions: sorrow, of course, because we lost a valued friend and a fellow fighter for the return of passenger railroad service. But also a certain joy in the knowledge that he lived to see the train come in. On the day of the Downeaster's inaugural run, Buc was at the Portland station, all smiles, to greet those of us who made the trip; his health had prevented him from riding the train for which he had so long worked.

Fourtin 'Buc' Powell was the editor of this newsletter for its entire existence. His work for TrainRiders, however, extended far beyond its writing and blue penciling. Regardless of weather, he could be counted upon to make the round-trip to Portland from his home in Rockland to participate in the meetings of TrainRiders' Board of Directors where his knowledge of railroading, often of its more arcane aspects, his enthusiasm and his wisdom were immeasurably helpful to all of us.

He worked on conceiving, preparing maps, and writing railroad plans for both Maine and all of New England on behalf of TrainRiders; and, as a member of a sub-committee on Multi-Modal Transportation for MDOT's Regional Transportation Advisory Committee V, he co-authored a detailed passenger railroad plan for the Midcoast Region.

Before retiring, he had served as Executive Director of the Mid-Coast Regional Planning Commission in Rockland where he resided before moving to Rockport two years ago.

Buc had given so much of himself to the revival of passenger train issues that few of his colleagues on the TrainRiders Board were aware of his many other interests and passions.

He was a member of the Rockland Comprehensive Planning Commission and Treasurer of the Rockland Historical Society. He was deeply involved in the expansion-planning of Rockland's City Library. He helped to refurbish the Lincoln Street Art Center and to construct his community's playground.

Buc volunteered in many ways to establish a Children's Museum; he also worked for ten years at the Children's Tent at Rockland's Lobster Festival.

A graduate of Brown University, Buc had been a naval officer; and he continued to have an avid interest in sailing.

Above all, he had many friends, all of whom benefited from knowing him and experiencing his quiet, affable determination. Fourtin 'Buc' Powell was a gentleman and a gentle man.

Our most sincere condolences to Shirley, Buc's wife of 34 years. WE will miss him, too.



## ... NEW AMTRAK PRESIDENT

*continued from page 1*

fancy Crown Victoria car. Gunn told a group of Amtrak employees informally that he has given up a trio of these cars that Amtrak provides for him and is sending the Amtrak police officer assigned to drive



them back to regular patrol duty.

David Gunn is saying the right things to arouse the enthusiasm of Amtrak riders, watchers and rail advocates. Coming out of retirement, he is evidently taking the job as a challenge to turn Amtrak around and make it the national passenger railroad that it is supposed to be.

He told witnesses that he does not like being stuck in an office with bureaucrats. He would rather be on the road, testing out his railroad and seeing what is really happening. From this and other statements he has made, he is quickly winning the support of passenger train users.

### FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES:

Amtrak said it had selected David L. Gunn, who helped turn around New York City's subway system in the late 1980s, to be its new president and chief executive.

Mr. Gunn said his first task would be to prepare a shutdown plan in case the money ran out.

The national rail passenger system is "near death," he said in a telephone interview. "Physically and financially, it's in terrible trouble." But, he added, he is committed to a national rail system and believes he can secure the financing to make the railroad run well.

Some experts have suggested that Amtrak drop everything except service in the Northeast Corridor and short-haul service around Chicago and in California. But Mr. Gunn said he did not favor cutting long-distance trains. "Anybody who thinks you can solve that problem by truncating the system doesn't understand the numbers," he said.

Mr. Gunn said he saw himself as a turn-around artist, saying, "I never get hired unless there's a problem."

## AMTRAK IS DOING SOMETHING RIGHT WHEN YOU SEE THIS

*The following information, from the Delta website, was sent to us by TNE member Stephen Pesci. Notice the selective facts about the train.*

**Planes are Faster than Trains: Triple Miles and Double Guarantees.** Get triple miles every time you fly the Delta Shuttle through May 31. From check-in to gate in 20 minutes or less or you get 20,000 bonus miles. And, only Delta Shuttle guarantees you a seat!

**More reasons Planes are Better than Trains:** more check-in options like Kiosk or curbside . . . online or by calling . . . amenities in the air and on the ground; comfortable airport lounges, added leg room and the convenience of onboard dataports.

**Not a SkyMiles member? Enroll now!**

To qualify for Triple SkyMiles, you must purchase and fly a paid flight on qualifying Delta Shuttle routes between April 15 and May 31 . . . This offer valid Monday-

Friday only . . . Does not apply in an irregular operation situation due to weather, government mandated security actions, or other circumstances out of Delta's control. This offer doesn't include customers traveling on youth/children's Shuttle fares or customers traveling on Delta Flightpack Youth/Senior Booklets . . . also does not include customers traveling on SkyMiles award tickets. The award of 20,000 bonus miles is the exclusive remedy under the guaranty. *(We didn't understand the preceding sentence)* In no event shall Delta's liability exceed the award of miles. Miles received under this promotion are bonus miles and are not counted as base miles toward elite status . . . Guaranteed seat doesn't include delays caused by weather or air traffic.

*We were caught in one of those "irregular operation situations" a few weeks ago, on another airline, when the wind was blowing through Boston at speeds up to 55 mph. We guessed those winds wouldn't stop a train. ■*

## AMTRAK: MORE RIDERS, AND MORE LOSSES

Washington, DC, March 10, 2002— In the dramatic endings to silent movies, the heroine was tied to railroad tracks by the villain, with the audience wondering if the hero would arrive in time to save her. In real life these days, it is the oncoming train that is on the brink, waiting for a miraculous rescue.

Amtrak is facing a December deadline to make enough money to cover its operating expenses. It was making uncertain progress toward that goal before September 11, but the terrorist attack wrecked all previous plans. Now more people are riding the trains, especially the profitable ones in the Northeast Corridor, so revenues are up, but expenses are up even more, so losses are

reaching record levels.

The railroad argues it is doing well; ridership was up 4.5 percent in January from the same period a year earlier, to 1.76 million, and ticket revenues were up 12.4 percent, to \$96.7 million. A major factor in the increased revenues was the Northeast Corridor, where the new Acela Express carries a premium price. Meanwhile, airlines' ridership and revenues are down, part of a recession in travel resulting from the weak economy and the aftermath of September 11. In the Northeast Corridor, which accounts for two-thirds of Amtrak's ridership and revenues, business is up sharply, from 212,000 riders in

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## DETROIT'S AIRLINE TERMINAL GOES HIGH-TECH

Here we must address the new Northwest airport terminal that was reviewed in glowing terms and one photograph in the *New York Times* in March. The focal point of the photo was a train. This small news item represents one more example of just how intermodal the transportation business is becoming.

Actually, the train is a tram and there are two. They ride on a cushion of air about 15 feet above the concourse, which is one mile long. The *Times* refers to the \$1.2 billion cost, a 900-foot underground passageway between A, B, and C concourses, an enlarged parking garage, and covered sidewalks that not only move but are heated and measure four and a half feet wide. It reports that additional moving sidewalks and 97 gates are inside the terminal.

We happened to be in that terminal twice recently, once each going and coming from a western destination. We have more to say on the matter, and it's all good.

The terminal struck us as being akin to an appealing, thoroughly modern Main Street, although this thought didn't occur until we were whisking along in the tram looking down. We observed people walking, eating, strolling babies, talking on cell phones, talking to each other, passing time, and shopping. Given the leafy green trees that dot the way and our birds-eye view, it was as human-scale a scene as you can get in a large metropolitan airport. It was almost like being on a real train.

As for the trams, they are so sleek and quiet that we didn't know they were there until we heard a rush of air—the kind of sound you sense as much as hear. And there, up in that black and white, form-follows-function, window-walled terminal, was a bright red tram. In a twinkling it was gone, but we followed its path, and that of the other one, by looking at the concourse-level signs, which advise the

traveler YOU ARE HERE and show the location of each tram in a series of moving red lights.

Escalators hum up to the station platforms, where high-tech glass walls prevent anyone from falling into the track, which is neither deep nor a track but an indent into which the airy red trams fit like a hand in a glove. We were so excited when the tram pulled in, we failed to notice what happened to the glass walls. We assume they waltzed with the tram doors, moving quietly ensemble to allow mere humans to board.

The trams are operated from a central control room and include computerized announcements of stations along the mile-long route. Aside from the quiet, the speed, and the large windows, what we most appreciated was the knowing where we were going. "Main Street" with its sequentially numbered gates appeared out one side (good views of the Northwest aircraft and busy work crews outside the concourse's own enormous windows) and, out the other, Michigan countryside. We even peered straight ahead to see the headlight of the oncoming tram, which disappeared behind an outer wall to pass unseen.

Prior experiences with air terminal trains had us riding underground in cars whose windows faced dark tunnel walls. Not knowing where we were or how to get out if power failed and such action were necessary cause a bit of claustrophobia to assert its gloomy self.

But the Northwest tram had us begging for more. We wanted it to bust through the walls and continue into Detroit, out into the countryside, past Michigan lakes and small towns. We fantasized about the little trams zipping effortlessly about Portland, Maine, from airport to rail/bus terminal to docks on Casco Bay, out to beaches and lighthouses, and connections with ferries that would take us to beguiling islands.

—Paula Boyer Rougny

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## MICHAEL MURRAY TO RESIGN

The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority has announced that Executive Director Michael Murray will step down when his contract expires July 29.

He headed the project to establish Amtrak service between Boston and Portland for the state for more than twelve years. He became the first executive director of the rail authority when it was formed in 1995.

His goal was to get the trains moving, and the obstacles he faced were many and formidable. He persevered and succeeded.

"If the Maine DOT had assigned anyone else to the project, we'd still be waiting for the trains," said TrainRiders' chairman Wayne Davis. ■

## LONDON INSTITUTING "CONGESTION CHARGE"

In February of 2003 London drivers will face a daily charge of \$7 a day should they choose to drive into the city.

According to the *Washington Post*, the charge will be levied on cars and trucks entering the eight-square-mile central zone between 7 AM and 6:30 PM Monday through Friday. The system will be enforced by hundreds of closed-circuit cameras which will check license plate numbers against a database of commuters who have paid the fee.

Mayor Ken Livingstone announced the charges as the centerpiece of a plan to reduce traffic congestion in London's busy downtown area. According to Livingstone, the charges will go to fund and revitalize the city's extensive but rundown transit system.

Similar plans are in place in several cities around the world, including Singapore and Trondheim, Norway. Despite strong initial resistance to the plans, driver fees now have strong support in communities in which they have been introduced due in large part to the reduction of commuting time and congestion.

Stateside, a \$1 commuter parking tax proposal was shelved in Washington, DC, because local officials believed the tax would be unfair to commuters who do not have access to public transportation. Additionally, many elected officials were reluctant to support a new tax in an election year.

The DC plan would have brought an estimated \$1 billion for regional clean-air measures over the first three years. ■





Boston, May 1— The US Environmental Protection Agency has presented TrainRiders/Northeast with its Environmental Merit Award for outstanding efforts in preserving New England's environment. TrainRiders was nominated by EPA's Lucy Edmondson. Wayne Davis and six Board members attended the Awards Ceremony in Faneuil Hall. "With tremendous skill and perseverance, TrainRiders/Northeast brought together all the players needed for success. The return of train service has significant environmental benefits by providing commuters and vacationers with an alternative to driving. This reduces traffic congestion and air pollution...and also provides an incentive for communities along the rail line to pursue smart growth initiatives." — EPA

## PANEL TO TAKE HARD LOOK AT MAINE'S RAILROADS

Augusta, April 10, 2002— For the first time in decades, lawmakers plan to look at how railroads fit into Maine's transportation needs. It is a study state officials say is long overdue.

A bill passed by the Legislature and expected to be signed by the governor creates a task force of 12 members to examine the six private railroad companies that operate in Maine and the more than 1,000 miles of track in the state.

Transportation Commissioner John Melrose said, "The Legislature has not taken a look at the policy in this area in modern times," adding that the state needs to establish a comprehensive policy that addresses both passenger and freight services.

"Rail transportation is an integral part of the state's infrastructure," Representative Sharon Libby-Jones (D-Greenville) told members of the Transportation Committee. "We have spent a lot of time, as we should, on highways, but we have not really taken a close look at rail policy."

Libby-Jones, who sponsored the bill calling for the study, said the \$6,000 cost is warranted to look at the hundreds of miles of track that link most urban and many rural areas of the state.

"Rail has to be part of our general transportation plan," said Senator Mary Cathart (D-Orono), a co-sponsor of the study. "This is an area that we have not paid the attention to that we should."

Paul Tessier, a Democratic representative from Fairfield and co-chairman of the Maine Economic Growth Council, said railroads could

play a much more important role in the state's economy than they do currently.

"For rural areas, adequate transportation is key for economic development," he said. "I know of companies that would make more use of rail if some of the problems could be worked out." Those problems, he said, include delays in freight cars leaving the state because there is not enough volume to warrant trains leaving on a frequent and regular basis. Such irregularities and delays discourage shippers from using rails, he said.

The first railroad in the state was completed in 1836 and ran from Bangor to Old Town. The peak of rail in Maine was in 1924, when there were more than 2,300 miles of track in the state.

—Bangor Daily News  
Mal Leary, Capitol News Service

## LUXURY RAIL TOURS COMING TO MAINE

March 28, 2002— A luxury passenger train using refurbished Victorian-era railroad cars will make its inaugural trip to Maine's interior June 9. John "Randy" Parten of Houston, Texas, president of Acadia Railway Trains LP, said all is in place to begin rail tours to the northeast United States and eastern Canada.

"There is a huge interest this year in people taking a domestic vacation," Parten said during a telephone interview.

Parten said the train has been marketed heavily in New York, where upscale vacationers are looking for a different method of travel. His firm has published and mailed 25,000 colorful brochures about the trips throughout the country and has plans in place for television advertisements. He said the company's telephone call volume already has gone from 15 to 1,400 a week.

The inaugural trip will be on June 7 from New York to Montreal. The June 9 run will take passengers from Montreal to Greenville and on to Saint John. Most excursions planned to Canada and Maine are being packaged with tours involving motor coaches, cruise ships, Amtrak and VIA Railroad. Parten called the trains essentially cruise ships on rails, with five-course meals and a service staff of 22 people. The cost will start at about \$300 per day per person. It does not include airfare.

—Bangor Daily News, Diana Bowley

## ...Amtrak: More Riders, More Losses continued from page 2

September to 266,000 in December. The reason is new, faster and more comfortable equipment, and travelers' avoiding flying for safety reasons or because of security delays.

The improvement is clear in market share. From Washington to New York, Amtrak said it now carries 52 percent of the combined rail-air traffic, up from 42 percent a year-and-a-half ago. From New York to Boston it carries 31 percent, up from 18 percent in mid-1999.

And its long-distance sleeper cars are often sold out, as business travelers on routes like New York to Chicago or Washington to Atlanta snap them up.

But according to Amtrak, the net effect of terrorism has been negative, with costs for security more than eating up new revenue.

Amtrak is clearly near the end of its financial tether. Last year it mortgaged parts of Penn Station to raise \$300 million. But the railroad and its supporters are hopeful that the changed atmosphere since the terrorist attacks may be good for Amtrak. As George Warrington, Amtrak's (former) president pointed out in the January issue of *Arrive*, the slick magazine found on every seat of the new Acela Express, those attacks make a case for transportation diversity.

"The events of September 11th demonstrated the need for a more balanced national transportation system," he wrote. "We expect to play a critical role in the nation's transportation infrastructure for years to come."

—The New York Times, Matthew L. Wald



## OUR LATEST GREATEST PROFILE

VICTOR W. SALEMME, who lives on Sebago Lake, has been Amtrak's man in Portland since 1998. *He's our man, too. We couldn't have done it without him. Still can't.*

Though the Downeaster didn't make its first scheduled run until December 15, 2001, Salemme set up shop in 1998, protecting operating agreements, watching construction timing, hiring crews, and overseeing a myriad of other unknown and sometimes tricky situations. Prior to the Maine assignment, he supervised the building of the new high speed rail network between New Haven and Boston.

Four-and-a-half months and 115,000 passengers later Salemme had some stories to tell. First, he has hired a lot of Maine people; approximately 50 percent to 60 percent of the train's employees are Mainers.

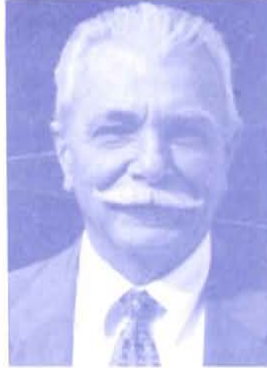
Because ridership exceeded the projected numbers from Week One and led to some standing room only adventures (takes one Boston rock concert or similar), he added two more top-quality coaches, items not easily come by.

The Downeaster now accommodates 276 seated passengers in four regular coaches and one cafe/business class coach. Early blips such as free spirits who failed to make reservations for crowded runs, clam chowder that ran out before everybody's appetite was appeased, and snowmobilers riding to the hounds down the middle of the track, have been dealt with.

To accommodate the FDA's regulation on food service, a cafe car is swapped once every 60 days. In railroad parlance that means it goes to Washington, DC, for inspection. Each train is washed and serviced weekly. Locomotives are sent to Boston or Albany every 92, 180 and 360 days for mechanical inspections, filter, oil airbrake and gauge work.

Salemme is a frequent rider. He likes to see who's on board, what they think, and how things look. He noted that the Downeaster has become personable. "The crews have developed a rapport with steady riders," he said, "and many passengers have attached themselves to a favorite

conductor. There are nicknames — one conductor is called The General — and certain dispatchers have pet names for the trains. Instead of referring to number 682, they'll say the lobster, or the steamer."



Victor Salemme

He added that people are happy when they're on a train, a fact that has become apparent with both commuters and families that ride the Downeaster—and yes, the Downeaster is attracting repeat family riders. Salemme himself often travels to Boston to see his mother, who has been ill. He will drive down on a weekday,

leave his car until the next time. "It's a pleasure to board the train in Boston at 6:15, enjoy dinner, look out the window," he said. "Getting out of Boston in a car is a nightmare on Friday evenings."

Salemme's wife collects him at the Portland station, so he's neither sans car in Maine nor paying a parking charge in Boston. *We like that idea, and we extend our best wishes to his mother.*

Asked about safety on board the Downeaster, Salemme said that train people have a finely developed sense about passengers. "Conductors can tell who may need help, and they know who may become rowdy," he said. "They know how to deflate an issue before it starts. Cafe car attenders also know when to refuse a drink to someone, and our detectives—they're on board, you just don't see them—work closely with the police in every town. We've never been without assistance when we've needed it."

He noted that many conductors have "broken the ice" with nervous travelers—people who may not speak English, or who are handicapped, or—if they're young—taking their first train ride.

On one late night Downeaster run a petite female conductor dealt firmly and quietly with two trouble-makers and, at the next stop, led them off the train into the arms of waiting police. "We encourage people to take the late train rather than drive," said Salemme, adding that no problem has ever gotten out of hand in his long career with the railroad.

*(We took that train once—the one that leaves Boston at 11 PM and arrives Portland at 1:45 AM—and all on board fell promptly to sleep.)*

Salemme stays on top of ridership figures, studying who travels when, who the new riders are. (As is obvious from the figures, new trainriders come into the circle every month.) He watches trends, knows how far people drive to catch the Downeaster—amazingly, some of them come down from Orono, Bangor, Old Town, even Fort Kent. He knows who rides the 680 and who rides the 682 and who is beginning to take the other two runs.

*When we said we travel business class on the Downeaster to atone for a lifetime of being strapped into coach,* Salemme said he always goes coach. He likes to be with the crowd. He wants to know what's going on. He talks to conductors.

He reminds us of Amtrak's new President and CEO, David Gunn. He too prefers being out on the railroad to being in an office. *And so do we.* ■

## DOWNEASTER SERVICE TO OLD ORCHARD BEACH PUSHED BACK TO LATE JUNE

April 30, 2002 — Passenger rail service to Old Orchard Beach will be delayed a month because of a now-resolved dispute between the track owners and the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority.

The summer-only Downeaster service to Old Orchard Beach was jeopardized in early April when Guilford Rail Systems refused to sign a lease for the platform. Guilford said it wanted to renegotiate the snow-removal agreements at the other six stations along the route from Boston to Portland.

A compromise was reached, but the town says the dispute pushed back platform work.

Though the lower platform with temporary handicapped access should be completed by late June, other projects—a canopy with skylights and fencing around the platform—will come later. It is hoped the work will be completed by July 4.

Chamber of Commerce executive director James Harmon said he's relieved that progress is being made to bring the Downeaster to town. —*The Associated Press*



## NEW HAMPSHIRE REPORT

The New Hampshire Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Committee has approved the request by the Town of Durham for a grant of \$800,000 to move into the second phase of station redevelopment. Because the plans must now go through several approvals, work on the project will not begin for two or three years.

The NHDOT will install heat coils in all the platforms at New Hampshire station stops. This will increase safety, convenience

and comfort for Downeaster passengers in the winter months.

The Dover station has a tentative tenant for the new intermodal facility at Chestnut Street at the downtown location. Hampton Shuttle has been selected by the station committee to occupy the newly constructed station. The service runs limos between seacoast communities and airports in Boston and Manchester.

—Bill Hunt  
TrainRiders NH Director

## FROM TRAINRIDERS' PHOTO ALBUM

*December 14, 2001: The Celebrating begins on the day of the inaugural run of the Downeaster.*

*Shown here in Portland are (left to right)*

*Senator Susan Collins, Maine State Representative and TrainRiders' Legislative Liaison Boyd Marley, Senator Olympia Snowe, Chairman of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority Jonathan Carter, Congressman Tom Allen and Congressman John Baldacci.*



*April 11, 2002—The celebrating continues with (left to right) Jonathan Carter, NNEPRA Chairman, Wayne Davis, James Weinstein, Senior Vice President of Amtrak's Northeast Corridor, and John Melrose, Maine Commissioner of Transportation, posing with the elusive 12-liter bottle of Korbal Brul Limited Millennium Edition Champagne (a gift from Sam's Club) during TrainRiders' Fourteenth Annual Meeting at Portland's Doubletree Inn. Mr. Weinstein, as keynote speaker, welcomed the Downeaster to the Amtrak family. Everyone attending the meeting toasted the startup of passenger rail service between Boston and Portland with a glass of the champagne.*

## HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP

UNLESS AMTRAK IS ADEQUATELY FUNDED, national passenger rail service as we know it will be eliminated.

Passenger rail supporters do not have the same financial muscle as powerful vested interests over Congress and the White House.

But we vote. Our numbers count.

Whenever we write, call or e-mail our elected representatives, we exert influence. Never forget that in America the people are the government.

TO HELP KEEP TRAINS RUNNING, CONTACT CONGRESS AGAIN AND AGAIN. THANK THEM FOR SUPPORTING RAIL IN THE PAST AND TELL THEM YOU:

- ☒ Oppose liquidation and privatization of Amtrak.
- ☒ Urge approval of the High Speed Rail Investment Act.
- ☒ Support a balanced national transportation program and adequate funding for first-class passenger rail service.
- ☒ Support the Hollings bill in the Senate — National Rail Act—S.1991.

### NAMES AND NUMBERS:

The White House: 202-456-1414

E-mail President Bush:

[president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:president@whitehouse.gov)

Fax: 202-456-2461

Congressional switchboard: 202-224-3121

(when you call, ask for the offices of your senators and your representatives.)

U.S. Senate e-mail:

[www.senate.gov/contacting/index.cmf](http://www.senate.gov/contacting/index.cmf)

U.S. House of Representatives e-mail:

[www.house.gov/writerep/](http://www.house.gov/writerep/)

*We thank Friends of Amtrak for the preceding reminder.*

## TrainRiders/Northeast Welcomes New Members

Suzanne Abbott, Palmetto, FL  
Hans Brandes, Falmouth, ME  
Valerie Cunningham, Portsmouth, NH  
Michael Duprey, Campton, NH  
East Rockingham Pomona, E. Kingston, NH  
Tom Ettinger, New York, NY  
Linda Freedman, Salt Lake City, UT  
William French, Yarmouth, ME  
Carleton Gunn, Sanford, ME  
Louis Hoffman, Minneapolis, MN  
Dallas Knight, Sanford, ME  
William Lord, Cape Elizabeth, ME  
Russell Marron, Peabody, MA  
Robert Meyer, New York, NY  
Ernest Phillips, Glenburn, ME  
Adele Robinson, Yarmouth, ME  
Ron & Sally Spicer, Walpole, MA  
M. Terrell, Jamaica Plain, MA  
Vahan Tufankjian, Portland, ME  
Robert Worcester, Portland, ME



## UPDATE:

## TRAINRIDERS/NORTHEAST HOST PROGRAM

Congratulations to all of you who have become members of the TrainRiders/Northeast Host Program. We've been functioning for about three months now, with volunteers who have attended both classroom and on-board training, and who have each committed themselves to act as hosts on at least one round-trip run every thirty days. Our thanks to you all.

We have now begun to receive comments from passengers and train crews about the program. While comments have overall been glowing endorsements of the program and of all of the hosts, a few tips are in order.

**F**irst, you should remember that the program consists of volunteer training hosts functioning under the direction of TrainRiders/Northeast. *The Downeaster* passenger rail service is sponsored by the State of Maine through the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority and is operated by Amtrak. The purpose of the program is to have volunteers serving as goodwill ambassadors on board the trains to promote patronage of *The Downeaster* while assisting passengers with information on board the train, along the route and at scheduled stops. Hosts are to distribute approved materials (and only approved materials), assist train crew when requested, and promote rail safety at all times.

**S**econd, remember our dress code. Men are to wear shirts and ties with either a jacket, cardigan, sweater or vest. Women may wear dresses, skirts or slacks and blouses. A jacket or smock may be worn as well if desired. All hosts

must wear shoes that have laces and a defined heel. Sneakers, slip-ons and flat rubber-soled footwear are not allowed for safety reasons. Neatness and cleanliness are important as well.

**T**hird, hosts must continuously move throughout the train while they are on duty. We've been informed that some hosts have



only walked through the train once. It is perfectly acceptable to take time for a coffee or soft drink or to have a meal on board—but certainly such breaks should be taken between stations to allow hosts to be in or near a vestibule to assist in seating boarding passengers at intermediate stations. Longer rest breaks should not be taken.

**F**ourth, hosts should also keep in mind that the business class section is not off-limits. To the contrary, passengers who have paid \$8.00 more for a seat should, if anything, expect extra attention from us as well as other on-board personnel.

**F**ifth, hosts should remember that they are not to occupy revenue seats when the train is crowded. This means that there may be time when there is no seat available for you.

**S**ixth, please remember that we are on-board to assist passengers. We are not on the train to change the way the service is run or the way the train crew perform their functions. While service as hosts on board the train, it is inappropriate to

discuss how the crew might improve their daily work routine, or ways in which the service might be changed (such as suggesting that it make additional stops, or discontinue present ones. All such comments can be included in trip reports or in discussions with TrainRiders.)

**S**eventh, properly filled out trip reports are imperative. The trip reports are reviewed by the host committee weekly and are the basis for the monthly meeting with Amtrak and Rail Authority representatives. We encourage explanatory comments in all sections, but comments are required if any category is rated a 1 or a 2.

**E**ighth, please call the TrainRiders office when most materials at the Portland Terminal are low. DO NOT call Amtrak or the Rail Authority or ask the ticket agent to "get" more materials. Having nearly 100 hosts contacting those parties to obtain supplies results in confusion and wasted time.

**F**inally, most of the preceding information and suggestions appear in the Host Manuals. Hosts should reread their Manual from time to time to assure compliance with the standards of the Host Program.

We appreciate your willingness to help make travel on *The Downeaster* a pleasant experience for everyone, while gathering important information about our passengers and their preferences. Please feel free to contact TrainRiders/Northeast with any questions. (Please note our new website and email address).

website: [www.trainridersne.org](http://www.trainridersne.org)  
email: [wedavis@trainridersne.org](mailto:wedavis@trainridersne.org)

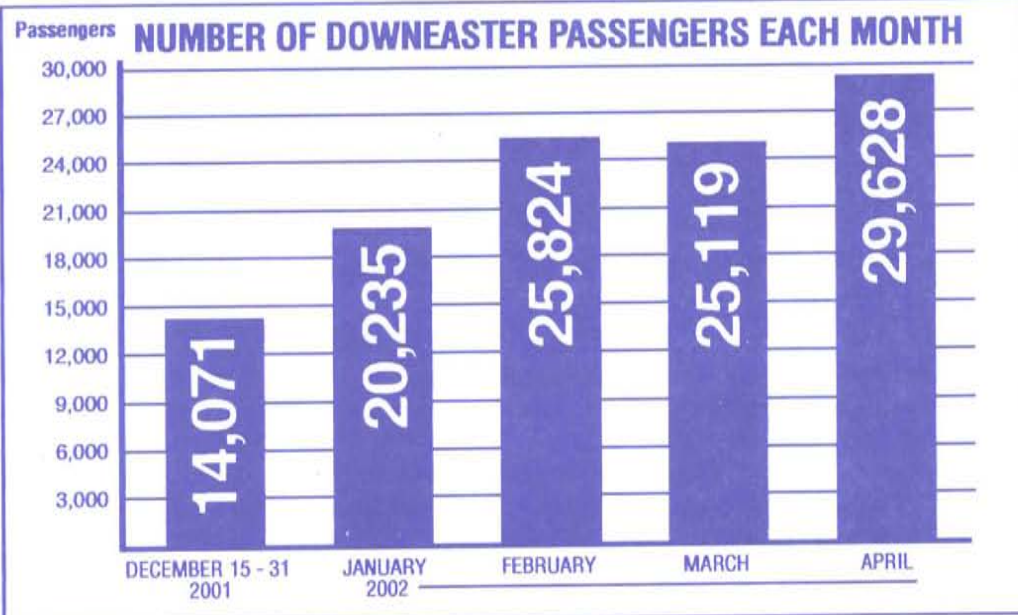
—WD



# DOWNEASTER RIDERSHIP AND REVENUE FIGURES OVER THE TOP!

The Downeaster continued to beat projections again in April, setting new records for ridership and ticket sales. According to the Associated Press, people who rode as a novelty when the service began are returning to ride again.

The rail authority projected annual ridership of 320,000 and annual revenues of \$3.3 million. After the first 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> months there had been 115,000 passengers bringing in a total revenue of \$1.7 million.



## **THE TRAINRIDER**

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