

# TRAIN RIDER

*The Newsletter of TrainRiders/Northeast*



## Don't Miss Our Annual Meeting April 23

*(Act Now! See enclosure for details)*

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

*Submitted by Wayne Davis*

*Thanks to those of you who took my last membership message seriously. The new members you referred to us and the gift memberships you provided to family and friends were most welcome.*

*Recently, the building in which our offices were located for over three years—rent and utility free—was sold. We were forced into a situation where we must pay rent for the first time in our five-year existence. One of our board members has agreed to pay one half of the annual rent, leaving it to the membership to come up with the other half and the monthly electric bill.*

*I sincerely hope we can pull together to raise the additional funds to meet these new financial obligations. We're at too crucial a stage in achieving Portland-Dover-Boston service, the North Station/South Station rail link and Northeast Corridor issues to have to worry about having to move into someone's basement to continue our work.*

*You've risen to the occasion in the past and I'm confident your enthusiasm for "making a difference in transportation" has not diminished! With your help, we'll see AMTRAK in Maine and New Hampshire and continue to press for a better transportation system throughout northern New England.*

**E**yebrows were raised in Washington, D.C. March 17th when the General Accounting Office (GAO) repeated what Amtrak and the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) have been saying for some time: Amtrak needs more money than it is getting.

The testimony of Kenneth Mead, GAO's Director of Transportation Issues, before the House Appropriations Subcommittee transformed a familiar message from the level of "just an agency and its advocates asking for more money like such people always do" to "an impartial investigator says it's really true."

Funding increases—certainly beyond what President Clinton proposes—will be tough to get, the more so because Amtrak's many statements about its improving revenues-to-costs ratio have lulled many into thinking that Amtrak's federal funding needs were declining.

They would be declining but for the paltry capital funding Amtrak got in most of the 1980s. In particular, for the six Fiscal Years 1985-1990, Amtrak capital plus Northeast Corridor Improvement Project funding averaged a total of \$97 million a year, 77% below the FY '94 level of \$420 million and 82% below the FY '81 level of \$357 million.

Thus, Amtrak remains saddled with obsolete maintenance facilities and rolling stock, including over 400 "Heritage" cars 30-47 years old. They have less capacity and customer appeal and are costly to maintain. This inflates costs and hurts revenues.

At the start of 1994, 28% of Amtrak's passenger cars were Heritage. That figure is dropping as new cars are delivered, but new cars on order will not allow the retirement of even half of the Heritage cars.

Some of the rhetoric at the March 17th hearing suggested that Amtrak should cut service to live better within likely funding levels. After past rounds of cuts, however, route closures and service reductions no longer will reduce federal grant requirements; the few "empty trains" disappeared long ago. Also, service cuts are unlikely to improve the match between Amtrak's resources and its needs. Rather, service cuts would undercut support for Amtrak, laying the groundwork for funding cuts.

We have here a question of priorities. From 1982 to 1994, the Amtrak share of federal spending on highways, aviation and intercity passenger trains dropped from 7.3% to 3.1%; annual federal highway

**ALWAYS  
THE  
BUDGET**

## ALWAYS THE BUDGET

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spending rose from \$8.5 billion to \$20.0 billion, aviation spending from \$2.9 billion to \$8.6 billion.

The message to Congress should be clear: the American people do not support the extent to which highway and aviation spending dominates federal transportation spending. The importance of the fledgling Los Angeles commuter rail system in the aftermath of the January earthquake is a metaphor for transportation priorities nationwide: Amtrak is worth nurturing.



Even with its elderly cars, Amtrak on average consumes only 54% as much energy per passenger mile as domestic airlines.

Even including the Sunset disaster, Amtrak travel over the past decade was *eight times* safer than automobile travel. (Excluding the Sunset, Amtrak was 19 times safer.)

Amtrak is the safest bad-weather form of transportation and is working to improve its bad-weather reliability.

Americans like trains. Amtrak travel in FY '93 was 48% above the FY '82 level (6.2 billion passenger miles vs. 4.2).

*Write to Congress at:  
(Member's Name),  
U.S. House of Representatives,  
Washington, D.C. 20515;  
U.S. Senate,  
Washington, D.C. 20510;  
And tell the  
President,  
White House,  
Washington, D.C. 20500  
and the  
Secretary of Transportation,  
Washington, D.C. 20590,  
that you appreciate the increases  
they have proposed for Amtrak and  
would like to see Amtrak get even  
more!*

— Ross Capon, Executive Director  
National Association of Railroad Passengers,  
Washington, D.C. 20002-3557

## TRAINRIDER ACTIVITIES

### New Hampshire Members Report

Seacoast towns and cities are awaiting the release of federal funding for the Boston-Portland passenger rail service before spending local money on station improvements. In Durham, UNH students have joined in fund-raising efforts to convert the former station to railroad use. Many residents await the return of passenger service.

Congressman Dick Swett of New Hampshire's 2nd District has planned another Amtrak trip to Washington from White River Jct., Vermont, to promote rail passenger service. The trip will run April 10-14 and features two nights in Washington. Call 1-800-458-5394 for information and reservations.

The January 12th approval of the Executive Council for acquisition of 186 miles of rail line will bring to 393 miles the total of rail lines owned by the state of New Hampshire. However, crucial portions of some will be retained by Guilford Transportation Industries (GTI). Fifty-nine miles of the old Northern Railroad, between Concord and Lebanon, across the Connecticut River from White River Jct., Vermont, will be purchased by the

State between Boscawen and Lebanon, with GTI retaining about 10 miles in Lebanon and just over a mile in Concord. Thus, despite the enthusiasm of State officials for future use as a Boston-Montreal passenger route or as a shorter route for Western coal to the Bow power plant, GTI controls both ends of the Northern. GTI will receive clear title to a portion of the Conway Branch, 9.7 miles from Rochester to Rollinsford, of which the northern part, at least as far as Ossipee, is State-owned and operated by the New Hampshire Northcoast, primarily to haul sand and gravel to the Boston market. However, the Rochester Running Track and the Lakeport Branch, from Rochester to Farmington, 6.2 miles, were reportedly "taken over" by New Hampshire Northcoast on October 10, 1993, following which rehabilitation of the deteriorated track was begun, continuing into early December. Rollinsford, on GTI's Boston-Portland main line, is expected to see Amtrak service late this year.

—The Union Leader, Railpace Newsmagazine,  
Bob Hall, Exeter, NH, Bill Hunt, Dover, NH

## ALONG THE TRACK

### Rhode Island to Improve Rail to Improve Air Quality

A transportation study prepared for the Rhode Island DOT recommends expanding the state's commuter rail network, in part to improve air quality. Expansion of current MBTA operated trains to serve stations south of Providence would result in a commuter rail network centered on Providence and, to a lesser extent, on Boston.

Commuter stations are proposed in Warwick, adjacent to the T.F. Green Airport; in East Greenwich, south of the former station, now a restaurant, which has insufficient room for commuter parking and in North Kingston, near the site of the former Wickford

Jct. station. The Kingston and Westerly stations, now used by Amtrak, would be improved. The Rhode Island DOT recently purchased the Woonsocket station on the Providence & Worcester. The historic building will be used temporarily for offices, with long range plans for conversion to an intermodal train/bus depot. Once the commuter rail network is operating, densities are expected to increase to the extent that light rail, centered on Providence, would be feasible by the year 2000.

—Providence Journal Bulletin,  
Railpace Newsmagazine

## Bethel Station Development Approved

On February 14, 1994, Bethel voters, by a 501—332 vote, approved a land swap crucial to the commercial development of the Cross Street area to include a station, hotel, museum and movie theater. *The Bethel Oxford County Citizen*, in its February 9th editorial entitled, "This is not a vote on change," noted the following:

*The question is not if more growth is coming, but what form the growth will take.*

*In the Cross Street proposal, Bethel has the opportunity to direct that growth, at least initially, into a form that complements the current village and is compatible with the values that make Bethel what it is.*

*Vote for the proposal, and we are likely to end up with a well-planned, pedestrian-friendly and economically vibrant extension of the present village. Vote against it, and we can count, soon-*

*er or later, on a hodgepodge of tacky franchises littering the approaches to town—and drawing off visitors' dollars well before they reach Main Street.*

*Vote for the proposal, and we get footpaths and a parkway along the river. Vote against it and we get a sprawl of asphalt lots choking off all access to the river, and making foot, bike and snowmobile traffic impossible.*

As a result of the vote, a 6.2 acre parcel of Town-owned land, the site of the highway garage and salt shed, will be swapped with the developers. The buildings will be replaced at no cost to the Town, for an estimated construction cost of \$350,000. At completion, estimated to take five years, the \$25 million project will pay about \$400,000 in taxes, about one-quarter of Bethel's tax base.

Prior to the vote, the Town Manager had prepared a Community

Development Block Grant for \$400,000 to match \$65,000 from the developers and \$500,000 already allocated by the Maine Department of Transportation to improve and relocate Cross Street and for a variety of infrastructure improvements related to the proposed development.

Bethel citizens have voted to locate the commercial activity resulting from the growth of the nearby Sunday River Ski Area and its need for rail transportation adjacent to their downtown. Much of the land was once the site of factories which shipped their wood products on the Grand Trunk Railway. Now, those same rails are used to bring skiers to nearby slopes, rails which still carry local wood to world markets.

—The Bethel Oxford County Citizen,  
Portland Press Herald

## Portland to Bethel Ski Train Off and Running

The Sunday River Silver Bullet Ski Express, hauled by two bright yellow St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad diesels, left East Deering (Portland) on Sunday, December 26, 1993, for its first revenue run to Bethel.

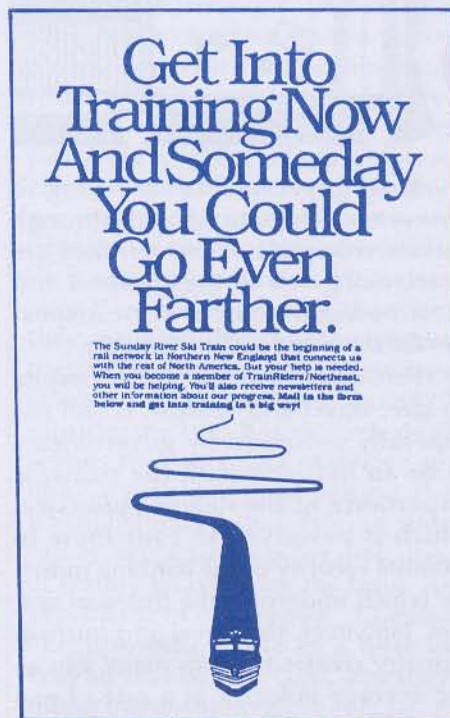
Signs at the Washington Street exit on I-295 direct the motorist to the station parking lot. Similar signs are on the Maine Turnpike (I-495) at Exit 12 in Auburn. The station facilities at Portland consist of a short, high-level platform for loading skis into the baggage car, which also houses the head end power supply, and a second short, high-level platform for passengers. Passengers can also board from the ground level, gravel platform. At Auburn, a single, short high-level platform with a ramp to the parking lot awaits passengers. At Bethel, a long, high-level platform with ramps to the bus loading area serves passengers while a short, high-level platform eases the task of getting the skis on and off the train.

The train departs Portland at 6:30 AM, Auburn at 7:45 AM, and arrives in Bethel at 8:45 AM. The shuttle buses arrive at Sunday River Ski

Resort at 9:15 AM and depart for the return trip at intervals from 3:30 to 4:30 PM. The returning train leaves Bethel at 5:00 PM, arrives at Auburn

at 6:00 PM and in Portland at 7:15 PM. Schedules from December through February were Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, with daily operation during holiday and school vacation periods, December 26—January 2 and February 21—27. The train will operate Saturdays and Sundays in March and April. For reservations and information, call (207)824-RAIL.

Sunday River Ski Resort President, Leslie B. Otten, whose plans for the resort extend far beyond the proposed \$25 million development at the station site in Bethel, recently acquired Attitash Ski Area in Bartlett, New Hampshire, a short distance west of North Conway. While his interest in rail transportation for Attitash currently extends only to a short length shuttle between North Conway and Attitash, he has previously arranged for bus tours from locations as far away from Sunday River as Washington, D.C. Once Amtrak is running to Portland, expected to be before the 1994-95 ski season, rail transportation from Boston and points south (continued on p. 6)



TrainRiders/Northeast poster on Sunday River Silver Bullet Ski Express

# Ride the Tourism Express

**"Millions of people travel because of work but let's not forget the millions who work because of travel."**

This headline appears in an American Express ad and clearly makes an impact statement.

Seldom does a day go by when we are not reminded by the media that jobs are a primary focus of our world and business leaders, not to mention how important jobs are to every one of us.

Travel and tourism is the world's largest industry and one of the few that governments can count on in the near and long term to generate large numbers of new jobs.

The 1993 World Travel and Tourism Council Reports reconfirm:

- ◆ *Travel and tourism is the world's largest industry and the world's largest employer;*
- ◆ *The direct and indirect impact of travel and tourism on the global economy produces a massive 10.1% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 1 in 9 jobs;*
- ◆ *The absolute contribution is forecast to more than double by the year 2005.*

To stimulate the global economy and to help create jobs, governments need to:

- ◆ *Recognize the paramount economic impact of travel and tourism;*
- ◆ *Reflect this reality in mainstream policy making—expanding the infrastructure, liberalizing markets, avoiding discriminatory taxes and encouraging growth in harmony with the environment;*
- ◆ *Make travel and tourism a strategic economic and development priority.*

## TRAVEL AND TOURISM JOBS

Travel and Tourism is the world's largest employer providing jobs for:

- ◆ *People involved in travel and tourism services to customers, businesses and governments such as airline pilots, hotel clerks, car rental agents, tour operators, retail merchants and train conductors;*
- ◆ *People involved in manufacturing and construction of travel and tourism buildings, like hotels; equipment such as aircraft, automobiles and trains; and supplies, food and beverage.*
- ◆ *People involved in providing travel and tourism, government services like tourism promotion offices, transportation agencies and park services.*



Most governments are trying to encourage economic growth through private enterprise. However, they are overlooking one of the cheapest and most powerful tools at their disposal—the travel and tourism industry.

Perceptions are important. Despite its size, travel and tourism is still not generally perceived by governments to be an industry with the strategic importance of the defense industry, which is perceived to contribute to national security or the banking industry which underpins the financial system. However, the travel and tourism industry creates twice as many jobs as the average industry at a rate of one new job every 2.5 seconds, high-quality jobs as well, that pay 4.6% more than the mean wage.



Travel and tourism has been called the invisible industry. It is easy to ignore something that you can't see. Without accurate statistics to guide them, policy makers have been somewhat blind to its benefits. Travel and tourism professionals need to work with public policy makers to provide the informational tools and building blocks needed to effectively incorporate the full power of travel and tourism into their near and long term economic planning.

Many of the things in our daily lives that are worthwhile or fun require travel. Transportation has been necessary to link cities since the dawn of civilization. Steamboats and railways ushered in the industrial revolution and built national economies. Rail service is playing a major role in the tourism industry today.

British, French and Belgian railways are aggressively promoting package tours and individual travel through the Channel Tunnel. The 31-mile long route under the English Channel between Folkstone, England, and Calais, France, will be a busy thoroughfare with luxury trains linking London, Paris and Brussels. The tunnel is set to open May 6, 1994. (It was announced on April 1 that actual passenger travel will not begin until sometime this fall.—Ed.) Some 12 million people per year are expected to make the under-sea journey, greatly refashioning long-established travel modes between the United Kingdom and the Continent. A fleet of 30 trains, each a quarter-mile

## QUAKE MOVES COMMUTERS OFF ROADWAYS AND ONTO RAILWAYS.

The January 17th earthquake in the San Fernando Valley, which severed numerous freeways in Los Angeles, gave a tremendous boost to MetroLink, the commuter rail network centered on downtown Los Angeles. The Santa Clarita line, the former weak link in the system with about 1020 riders weekly in early January, shot up to 21,900 on January 25, and slid back to a more manageable 8000 by mid February, a 684% increase! Systemwide, MetroLink's ridership grew by 88% by mid February. Equipment was temporarily transferred from other agencies and stations were hastily erected by Los Angeles road crews and the U.S. Navy Seabees. A track has been added to Union Station and a second track installed on one route. However, it will take more than an earthquake to change Angelinos' behavior. Unlike passengers who adopted MetroLink by choice and settled into commuting routines which included only infrequent social contacts with other passengers, most of whom were engaged in reading or getting some work done, the new riders were aggressive and pushy—not unlike their freeway behavior. However, once they adapt to using the train, they may find their lives much less hectic. The person with an average 60-minute commute by car (120 minutes or two hours each day) spends the equivalent of twelve 40-hour weeks per year behind the wheel. Much of that driving time can be replaced by other activities, or simply relaxing, on the train. As TrainRiders member Eugene Skoropowski wrote in a note to Wayne Davis, "By God, are they riding trains out here!"

—Los Angeles Times, Maine Sunday Telegram,  
NARP Newsletter,  
Eugene Skoropowski, Irvine CA.

## MBTA LINE EXTENSIONS

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, MBTA or "The T," formed in 1964 to encompass public transportation within the 78 municipality Boston metropolitan area, is currently involved in projects which will significantly expand their commuter rail network.

The Neponset River bridge is under construction. This bridge, burned in 1960, will permit restoration of routes once known as the New Haven Railroad's Old Colony lines. The MBTA Red Line, extended to Quincy in 1971 and South Braintree in 1980, parallels the former Old Colony line and will not be affected by this commuter rail project. Branches to Middleborough and Plymouth are expected to be completed late in 1998. A third branch to Greenbush has met stiff local opposition and is still involved in environmental studies.

To the north of Boston, a contract was signed on January 24, 1994, with J.F. White to clear the former Eastern Main Line between Ipswich and Newburyport. The line, unused by passenger trains north of Ipswich since 1976, contains light, jointed rail and creosote treated wood ties which will be replaced by continuous welded rail and concrete ties. The MBTA has purchased 20 acres for parking up to 850 automobiles in Newburyport south of downtown and close to I-95. A station is also planned in Rowley, near the site of the former station. The approximately ten miles of track, replacement of a major bridge carrying U.S. Route 1 over the track at Newbury, near the Newburyport line, two stations, parking facilities and a layover facility for the trains are anticipated to cost between \$22 and \$32 million. The layover facility will replace the one now at Ipswich, which will become a passing siding. A second siding, within the existing right of way (which was double tracked until 1958), has been proposed north of Rowley. The entire project is to be completed and trains running by early 1996.

The route through Newburyport was the first rail line to reach Portland from Boston in 1842. Passenger service to Portsmouth via Newburyport ended in 1965.

—MBTA Information Office, Boston & Maine  
Railroad Historical Society Newsletter, Boston's  
Commuter Rail—The First 150 Years, Environmental  
Notification Form (MBTA, Sept. 20, 1989)

long, accommodating 700 passengers, will be called Euro Star Service, jointly operated by the three national rail systems.

Last summer and fall, the German high-speed ICE Train toured the U.S., opening our eyes to the quality and efficiency of the new trains of the 90s.

This winter we welcomed a boost to Maine's own transportation system, the *Sunday River Silver Bullet Ski Express*. Now we enjoy a vintage train transporting skiers and sightseers alike from Portland to Bethel. By this time next year we will welcome another boost to Maine's transportation and tourism system—Amtrak.

If we are to continue with this success, we must:

- ◆ Recognize and appreciate the value of tourism to our economy;
- ◆ Provide our visitors with an infrastructure which makes their visit easy and enjoyable; and
- ◆ Plan now for the future economic success for tourism through long term infrastructure development.

Travel and tourism is going to continue to be the largest employer and industry in the world. It is up to us to decide now if we want to be a part of it—all aboard the tourism express.



**Barbara Whitten**

President, Convention and Visitors Bureau  
of Greater Portland  
and Chairwoman of the New England Society  
of Convention and Visitor Bureaus.

to both Attitash and Sunday River could be provided via Portland if the railroads involved chose to cooperate with Otten.

Most of the former Maine Central Railroad "Mountain Division" from Portland west to the New Hampshire state line is not operated by its current owner, Guilford Transportation Industries, Inc. (GTI). However, the right of way, not including the track materials, from Conway, NH, to Intervale, NH, is included in the 52.2 miles the State of New Hampshire agreed to purchase from GTI on January 12, 1994. That purchase, including the track materials from Intervale, west, extends up Crawford Notch and west to Whitefield, including the track at the base of Attitash. The "Mountain Division" joins the Boston-Portland main line near the site of the proposed Portland station. However, if the State of New Hampshire chooses to use the right of way between the Maine State line and Intervale for non-railroad purposes, future rail use of the line between Portland and points west of Fryeburg would be denied.

The Portland-Bethel ski train is the second now operating in the United States, though some Amtrak routes serve popular ski resorts in the West. However, Otten's advocacy of public transportation to serve resorts has many counterparts in Europe, where it forms part of much of that area's "eco-tourism". The Europeans, at least, recognize that destroying an area's resources and paving over its scenery do not attract tourists. Perhaps the trains can help reverse the decline in air quality so that drivers heading south on Route One in West Bath can again see the White Mountains when the wind is blowing northwest.

—Sunday River Ski Resort, *Maine Times*, *The 470*

## ALONG THE TRACK

### Maine Coast Railroad to Reach the Coast

The Maine Coast Railroad, backed by the Maine DOT, plans to have freight trains running to an unloading facility near a pier in Rockland Harbor this summer. About 7500 feet of track, owned by the State, will be rehabilitated by \$800,000 in Jobs Bond money approved by the voters in 1991. Removal of the old track, in preparation for the re-laying of new track, began February 28. Ironically, the bond money was to have been used for a commuter rail service centered on the bath area.

Dragon Products has purchased a barge with a hauling capacity of 4000 tons and has an agreement to purchase a former seafood cannery for the loading facility. Initially, the barge will operate about once a week, with future production increasing to allow the barge to operate twice a week. Dragon plans to operate trains three or four times a week to serve the barge which will haul cement to Boston and other East Coast locations where it is uneconomical to ship cement by rail or truck. Each barge trip will replace about 140 tractor-trailer highway trips. The rail cars, hauling bulk cement, will all be covered and will be unloaded by air pressure. The system in use worldwide for about 50 years, is designed to allow no dust to escape.

Some South End residents of Rockland have strongly opposed reopening of the rail line, which is located very close to many houses. Concerns were expressed over possible devaluation of nearby homes, despite the fact that the rail line, constructed and opened to traffic in 1873, has been there longer than most of the houses. An informational meeting in Rockport on February 28 was followed by a public hearing in Rockland on March 8.

Meanwhile, the Maine Coast Railroad has been improving its fleet of passenger cars in anticipation of the 1994 tourist season. They have also applied to construct a railroad station

in Wiscasset. Use of the facilities near the Yacht Club created too much competition for parking. Special trips begin on May 8 and continue through December 3, 1994. Their regular tourist service between Wiscasset and Newcastle starts May 28 and ends October 10. For further information, call 1-800-795-5404.

The cement traffic is vitally important to preserve the rail operation, which may one day include intercity and commuter passenger trains.

—*The Courier-Gazette*, *Maine Coast Railroad*,  
*Dragon Products Company*

### MOUNTAIN DIVISION ABANDONMENT— WHAT NEXT?

The Maine Central Railroad Company (MEC) filed notice of intent to abandon their Mountain Branch with the Maine DOT during the week ending June 19, 1993. However, as of February 28, 1994, the Maine DOT had received no further indication of MEC action on the abandonment. On January 12, 1994, the Executive Council of the State of New Hampshire approved spending \$4.72 million in federal money, to be matched by \$1.17 million state money, to buy 186 miles of railroad rights of way, including part of the Maine Central "Mountain Division" through Crawford Notch. Meanwhile, on October 20, 1993, trucks brought the 1935 Budd manufactured "Flying Yankee" streamlined passenger train from its long-term display site at Edaville, South Carver, Massachusetts, to Glen, New Hampshire. The train was purchased in 1991 by Bob Morrell. Morrell and George Howard are the principals of The Flying Yankee Restoration Group, Ltd., which was formed to restore the train to operating condition for tourist service through scenic Crawford Notch. —*The 470*, *The Manchester Union Leader*

## NEW MEMBERS

**NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1993:** Rosecrans Baldwin, Chicago, IL; Travis Bastien, Newmarket, NH; John Connet, Naperville, IL; Richard Duffy, Ridgefield, CT; Elizabeth Edgar, Highland Park, NJ; Michael & Carlyn Edgar, Falmouth, ME; Charles & Suzanne Higgins, Cape Elizabeth, ME; Thomas Hughes, Downers Grove, IL; Michael LeBlanc, Manchester, ME; Lorraine & Donald Leonard, Upper Marlboro, NJ; Robert & Sally Lingner, Worcester, MA; A.L. Loomis Bell, Birdsboro, PA; Mr. & Mrs. David MacMillan, Scarborough, ME; Edward Russell, Portland, ME; Helen Secord, Milford, MA;

Louise Townsend, Canaan, ME; Howard Vultee, Jr., Camden, ME.

**JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1994:** Peter Baecher, Brunswick, ME; Carolyn Beaulieu, Winthrop, ME; Brian & Amanda Callahan, Augusta, ME; David Harris, Philadelphia, PA; Joseph Landry, Lewiston, ME; Christopher Osgood, Lincolnville, ME; Gladys Richardson, Winthrop, ME; Horace Rodrigue, Augusta, ME; Eugene Skoropowski, Aliso Viejo, CA; Joan Sullivan, Kennebunkport, ME.

## ALONG THE TRACK

### NORTHEAST CORRIDOR ELECTRIFICATION COULD SAVE ENERGY

Federal environmental studies of the extension of Northeast Corridor electrification from New Haven to Boston have shown that, even with a projected increase to double or triple the number of trains now operating on the line between Boston and New York City, substantial savings in fuel would result. Much of this comes from a projected annual reduction in air travelers of 1.4 million and a reduction in automobile traffic on parallel I-95 by 324,000 vehicles. Despite an increase of 7 million gallons annually in fuel for electric utility power plants, a net savings of 10 million gallons is projected, 3 million gallons of which are in diesel fuel now used in trains between New Haven and Boston.

Another aspect of fuel saving made possible by electrification was mentioned in an article by Steve Barry in the February 1994 issue of *Railpace* *Newsmagazine*. The author rode the ICE Train between Philadelphia and New York City on the electrified portion of the Corridor. Unlike Amtrak's present electric powered equipment, the German ICE Train uses regenerative braking in most applications to control the speed of the train. This means that as the train slows, the momentum of the train turns the electric motors driving the wheels and returns current to the overhead wire, thereby saving energy and reducing brake shoe wear. The engineer explained that the ICE Train normally required its brake shoes to be replaced every eight months or so, compared to a few weeks for Amtrak's equipment used in Corridor service. In Germany, where all electrified trains are equipped for regenerative braking, approximately one train in three operates "free," on power generated by moving trains. In the United States, regenerative (dynamic) braking is used on some diesel electric locomotives, primarily on freight trains in mountainous areas, but the electric energy created is turned into heat and vented to the atmosphere.

—New Haven Railroad Historical and Technical  
Association NEWSLETTER,  
*Railpace* *Newsmagazine*

## TRAIN RIDES

Members are invited to submit articles on their train rides, here or abroad, to share their experiences with others. Remember, there are many who have never ridden a train, other than as a tourist attraction or dinner train, who have little idea what it is like to travel by train.

### 7588 MILES ON AMTRAK

Last September, long-time friend and fellow rail-advocate, Fred Richter, and I took off on a long Amtrak journey. Having ridden the entire Amtrak system—some of it many times—I was curious as to how the trip would go. I rated it 8 out of a possible 10, due mostly to trains running an hour or so late (it's best to keep the likelihood of late running in mind when planning a long Amtrak trip).

We had roomettes out of Boston for Chicago on the Lake Shore Limited—a pleasant and uneventful journey with fairly smooth running over most of Conrail's road. There was an overnight in Chicago. Try Berghoff's Restaurant if you like good German food. Also the new Metropolitan Lounge in Union Station is very nice and you can leave your bags there while you roam the city.

The next day we were westbound on the Superliner equipped Empire Builder heading for Whitefish, MT, on the west side of Glacier National Park. This is the old Great Northern, now Burlington Northern (BN), route through North Dakota and Montana to Spokane and Seattle. Second day out found us with bright, sunny weather and a pretty ride through North Dakota. The on-board service people were great and we enjoyed the meals in the big Superliner diner plus meeting interesting new people.

The sun was starting to set near Shelby, MT, so it was dark traveling through the very scenic Glacier National Park with Whitefish arrival about 11:30 PM. (Seeing the park by train is best when running eastbound since the run through the park is in daylight hours.)

We left Whitefish by car on September 25 and drove all through the park from West Glacier to St. Mary. The weather was beautiful and warm; we were lucky since the passes were snow-bound a week or so before. The high point of the trip was traveling over the "Highway to the Sun" with some of the best mountain scenery in North America, if not the world. On the 26th the weather was super again. We toured more of the park, went to a Blackfoot Indian museum and spent the night at the Izaak Walton Inn in Essex, an interesting, friendly place on the BN main line at the foot of Marias Pass where several helper engines wait to help trains over the summit of the Continental Divide.

The following day we turned in the car at Whitefish and caught the Empire Builder for Seattle. The train splits in the

middle of the night at Spokane with No. 27 going to Portland, OR, and No. 7 on to Seattle, WA. You need to be

sure you are on the right car!

More good weather greeted us in Seattle, a big, clean, friendly city with a long, busy waterfront much like the East Coast cities except for big mountains in the background. We took a long ferry ride, went to the zoo and before we knew it were on the southbound Coast Starlight headed for Oakland/San Francisco. Another wonderful ride through the Cascades of Oregon with a stop at Portland to see (with envy) their beautiful old Union Station with its tall clock tower and "Go By Train" sign.

The following morning we landed in Oakland at a drab, temporary station next to the nice old Southern Pacific station which unfortunately was badly damaged by an earthquake.

The Bay Area has a great transit system and we rode it all over the place. Plus, of course, the wonderful old cable cars and an extensive bus system, both of which you can ride on all day with a \$6.00 pass. We went to a Chinese laundry, watched a big, colorful parade in Oakland and ate a Fishermen's Wharf. We had one foggy afternoon, the only "bad" weather on the whole trip!

The morning of October 3rd we boarded No. 6, the California Zephyr, for the long journey east to Salt Lake City, Denver, Omaha and Chicago. This, I think, is one of the most scenic runs on the entire Amtrak system starting with the portion through Donner Pass in the Sierras and on to Sparks, NV, and Reno, reaching Salt Lake City about midnight. The sun rose again near Helper, UT, and the entire day was a succession of spectacular mountain and canyon views all across Utah and Colorado, through the Moffat Tunnel at dusk and down the Front Range into Denver in early evening. Omaha was achieved early on the final day and we began the long flatland run over the old Burlington road arriving in Chicago late afternoon.

The next day in Chicago we spent at the Brookfield Zoo (we must like zoos!) and climbed on the Lake Shore Limited that night for the last leg of the journey to Boston. Excellent Trip overall.

To show how much I like train travel, Bill Hunter talked me into taking another trip only a month later—but that's another story.

—Herb Connell, Cape Elizabeth, Maine

## NORTH OF THE BORDER

### Canadian Pacific Abandonment —Continuing Developments

On the same day Canada's National Transportation Agency approved the CP Rail System petition to abandon Canadian portions of its money losing line from Sherbrooke, Quebec, to the port of St. John, New Brunswick, Federal Transport Minister Jean Corbeil announced that VIA Rail will build a new station to serve St. John. The present station, built in 1979, cannot adequately handle its 21,000 passengers annually.

Meanwhile, European Transport Group, a transportation consortium, has stated it can double or triple container traffic through either St. John or Halifax to Rotterdam. Halifax and St. John are closer to Rotterdam than any U.S. port. The proposed \$500,000 cost of the study has been rejected by the Province of Nova Scotia but St. John's Economic Development Commission has been urged to consider the study.

At an Interstate Commerce Commission hearing in Bangor March 16, 1994, on the proposed CP Rail abandonment, a significant shift (up to 30,000 truck trips annually) from rail to highway was predicted if the abandonment occurs. Additional risks from highway spills of hazardous cargoes and the flooding which would result from the activity of beavers if the CP Rail line is abandoned were also entered into the record.

In Vermont, CP Rail advised the

Interstate Commerce Commission in January 1993 that its line from Newport, on the Quebec border, to Wells River, Vermont, was under consideration for abandonment. The connecting line from Brockport, Quebec, to Newport, VT, would also be abandoned or sold to a shortline operator.

The Central Vermont Railway, a subsidiary of Canadian National North America, is now for sale, with the sale not expected to be completed until late May. CV's unions have proposed an employee stock ownership plan. The Providence & Worcester and Massachusetts Central have also expressed interest in purchasing the line, now the route of the Montrealer between New London, Connecticut, and Montreal, Quebec.

Most of the above items are related to a consolidation of former Canadian Pacific and Canadian National Railway lines throughout Canada, with track abandonments and or spinoffs to short lines expected to be especially prevalent in eastern Canada by 1996. Let us hope that the "rationalization" of Canada's rail lines, with current, short-term freight revenues in mind, will not leave them with too little rail to serve future passenger transportation needs and deny us the opportunity of connecting our passenger rail network with theirs.

—RRE Journal, Railpace Newsmagazine,  
Bangor Daily News

## NARP CONNECTION

### NARP Region One Meeting

The National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) Region 1 Meeting was held in Boston on March 12, 1994. In balloting for Directors, Wayne Davis was top vote getter, followed by Susan Hamilton, Carl Fowler and four other directors, including Henry Ferne II. Amtrak's David Carroll, reporting on the Northeast Corridor Improvement Project, said NEC operations return 1.6 times their operating costs, with Metroliners returning 2.0 times their costs. Due to the enormous outlay for the NEC infrastructure, however, operations fail to cover expenses. **Completion of NEC electrification** between New Haven and Boston will permit 52 daily non-stop Boston-New York City trains. **Jack Martin, NARP President**, reported that **Amtrak had been starved for capital for too long** and was not in a position to earn new revenue without a significant infusion of new equipment. The **Clinton Administration**, however, is favorable toward Amtrak. **Wayne Davis** indicated that the **last hurdles for construction of the 78 miles of track between Haverhill, MA, and Portland** are anticipated to be completed shortly, and that **Senator Mitchell** is committed to seeing Amtrak service to Portland start before he steps down from the Senate.

#### THE TRAINRIDER

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