



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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RETURN REQUESTED

NEW ORLEANS!

World's Fair in 1984 Presents Opportunities!



—Photo by Barry Williams

READY FOR BIGGER CROWDS: Attractive New Orleans Union Passenger Terminal, built in 1954, serves Amtrak and Greyhound. It's next to the Super Dome, a block from the Hyatt Regency, and three blocks from the streetcar line.

HOUSE REPUBLICAN WHIP ENTHUSED

"This rail project carries the potential to be a real attraction for the Mississippi Gulf Coast, both during and after the World's Fair. I'm real excited about the prospects."

—Rep. Trent Lott (R-MS)

In 1984, for the first time since Amtrak's inception, a major rail terminal city will host a World's Fair. The only other rail-served World's Fair was Spokane 1974.

Amtrak's regular trains served Spokane in unattractive and were often late, a special Seattle-Spokane schedule offered. It was unsuccessful because it basically served one haul market, and with extraordinarily uncompetitive times (8½ hours to travel the equivalent of 278 highway miles before the 55 mph speed limit).

Amtrak can't avoid benefitting from the 1984 fair. New Orleans is the only city with direct Amtrak service from the nation's three major cities—New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles—and all these routes serve New Orleans at decent hours; these routes serve New Orleans with 19 states and the District of Columbia. Most of the remainder of Amtrak's nationwide network can be reached with a single change of trains and no overnight layover. From the Pacific Northwest, passengers chose from three routes for travel to New Orleans (Oakland-LA; Denver-Chicago; and Chicago-Chicago). Unlike the airlines, most Amtrak tickets require intermediate stopovers at little or no extra cost.

Passenger advocates are working to see that Amtrak's New Orleans fair not merely to fill up the two daily and one tri-weekly routes now serving the city but also as an opportunity to provide new services: to Mobile and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Baton Rouge, the capital of Louisiana, which never had Amtrak service. Mobile enjoyed passenger train service until the 1971 startup of Amtrak; Baton Rouge service was restored in 1968.

Leading the drive for service restoration are two energetic Amtrak affiliates: the two-year-old Louisiana Association of Railroad Passengers (LARP), and the seven-month-old Alabama Association of Railroad Passengers (AARP). Working primarily

The founder and current president of the Louisiana Association of Railroad Passengers is Zane G. Katsikis, 32, a New Orleans restaurateur.

The founder and current president of the Alabama Association is Bill McFarland, 33, a Tuscaloosa realtor.

Officials, these groups have used effective lobbying and relations skills to accomplish much in a short amount

New Orleans-Biloxi-Mobile

In 1980-81, LARP successfully lobbied the Louisiana and Mississippi state legislatures to authorize creation of a bi-state

rail passenger commission to study the feasibility of restarting train service between New Orleans and Biloxi, MS, 85 miles. Louisiana Gov. Dave Treen (R) and Mississippi Gov. William Winter (D) supported the rail commission concept, and every member of the states' congressional delegations co-sponsored legislation approving the commission (all interstate compacts require congressional approval). Congress approved the measure in June of this year and President Reagan signed it into law on June 30.

Meanwhile, recognizing that the run would be more successful if extended 60 miles to Mobile (SMSA population 443,000 vs. Biloxi-Gulfport SMSA 192,000), AARP organized itself and lobbied the legislature in Montgomery earlier this year to create an Alabama rail passenger commission that could work with the La.-Miss. commission to study reinstatement of New Orleans-Mobile service. State Rep. Taylor Harper (D-Grand Bay) introduced legislation. When it stalled in the House in the session's final weeks, State Sen. Sonny Callahan (D-Mobile) introduced an identical bill and championed it through to final passage. Gov. Fob James (D) signed the bill in late April.

Now, the governors of the three states must appoint members to the commissions, so that feasibility studies can begin.

The commissions will focus their attention on the 145-mile New Orleans-Mobile mainline of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad, which has undergone extensive rehabilitation during

(continued on page 2)

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

Effective Oct. 31, the tri-weekly "Sunset-Eagle" will have two changes in days of operation. Westbound, "Eagle" will depart Chicago Fri. (not Thurs.) and arrive San Antonio

Sat. (not Fri.); "Sunset" will depart New Orleans Sat. (not Fri.) and arrive LA Mon. (not Sun.). Eastbound, "Sunset" will depart LA Wed. (not Tues.) and arrive New Orleans Fri. (not Thurs.); "Eagle" will depart San Antonio Fri. (not Thurs.) and arrive Chicago Sat. (not Fri.).

The aim is maximum congruence with heavy weekend travel patterns. Weekend round-trips become possible between Illinois/St. Louis and Arkansas/Texas, including St. Louis-Little Rock round-trips even for those who can't change their 9-to-5 weekday working hours. (Missouri Pacific crew-turn cost problems forced retention of the Fri. morning LA arrival, preventing Amtrak from similarly tapping the Phoenix-LA weekend market.)

The Oct. 31 timetable should also show stops at Ephrata, WA, by the "Empire Builder's" Seattle section, and at Montgomery, WV, by the NY-Cincinnati-Chicago "Cardinal." Ephrata had been served by the "North Coast Hiawatha" until Oct. '79 and returns thanks largely to the hard work of a local NARP member, James O. Neal. Montgomery was served by C&O until Amtrak began operations May 1, 1971. NARP member David R. Gay of Beckley, WV, worked hard on this, an objective of the five-state rail passenger coalition trying to save and improve the "Cardinal."

The most important new station in years, expected to open no later than Oct. 31, is at Hammond, IN. With an SMSA population of 643,000, the Gary-Hammond-East Chicago area is easily the largest urban population Amtrak speeds by without serving (except for obscure Gary stations served by the "Broadway/Capitol" and "Cardinal"). Hammond will be served by the four daily Chicago-Michigan round-trips, "Lake Shore," "Broadway/Capitol," the Valparaiso commuter trains, and—after the requisite labor agreement is signed—the "Cardinal." For the first time ever, this region will have a single station serving Kalamazoo-Detroit, South Bend-Cleveland, Fort Wayne-Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati trains, thereby facilitating connecting traffic.

Amtrak, VIA Rail Canada, and Michigan have tentatively agreed to replace the "Blue Water" Oct. 31 with a Chicago-Kalamazoo-E. Lansing-Flint-Pt. Huron-London-Toronto train which would depart Chicago around 10:30 AM, and Toronto at 8:15 AM (1 PM Sundays), connecting with the northbound "City of New Orleans" and, except Sundays, with the westbound "San Francisco Zephyr/Pioneer/Desert Wind."

The Duluth-St. Paul "North Star," carrying record loads, may make its last trips Sept. 6 (Labor Day). The train may return on a May-to-October basis next year; the *Duluth News-Tribune* endorsed this in a June 25 editorial. Others have suggested "flipping" the schedule—to AM south and PM north—in the non-tourist season.

Amtrak service other than the Northeast Corridor/Empire Service/Adirondack/Maple Leaf/Lake Shore/Broadway Ltd./Chicago-Detroit lines could be affected by strikes as early as Sept. 9 (Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers) and again on Sept. 28 (United Transportation Union if President Reagan starts a 60-day cooling-off period July 30). Best guess is strikes would not last more than about a week. Congress likely would impose settlement conditions to avoid lengthy shutdowns.

DIVIDEND OF LABOR AGREEMENTS

The Memphis *Commercial Appeal* had not been particularly supportive of Amtrak until the new set of labor agreements finalized May 27 (June News). In a June 1 editorial, "Amtrak Cuts Costs," the *Appeal* concluded: "Well, Amtrak is on track. If the rest of its negotiations go as well, it should be highballing to success and that will benefit both taxpayers and travelers."

New Orleans (continued from page 1)

the past five years. Several months ago, a LARP "inspection team" composed of President Zane Katsikis, Secretary John Sita, and

the track to be in excellent condition, with station buildings in place in all major cities: Gulfport, Biloxi, Pascagoula, and Mobile. Indeed, a perfect intermodal opportunity exists in Biloxi, where Trailways occupies the L&N station!

JACKSONVILLE UNION STATION LIVES!

Jacksonville (FL) Union Station became a "bum's hotel" after the Jan. 1974 relocation of Amtrak service to an obscure, transit-less location 6 miles north of town. But NARP Director Lee E. McIlvaine thought the 1919 Union Station, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, worth saving. He shared NARP's vision of convenient downtown rail service and purchased the station "when nobody else wanted it."

Now the building is well on the way to becoming a convention center. Mayor Jake Godbold is working on implementation with a developer, Jacksonville Convention Center, and with the development arm of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce. On June 22, the City Council approved by a vote of 15-1 a resolution designating Union Station as the convention center site and directing Godbold to negotiate a contract with the developer.

When City Council finally approves that contract, assuring a bright future for the area, passenger train and downtown Jacksonville boosters, we hope, will turn to Amtrak and invite them back. The revival of Union Station, which is already front page news in the Jacksonville paper, would then be on the front-page of *NARP News!*

COMMUTER RAIL FOR CRESCENT CITY?

LARP Vice President Charles Apffel, an architect with a degree in urban design, is working closely with New Orleans City Councilman Wayne Babovich, to establish commuter rail service over the L&N between downtown and the developing, transit-starved eastern section of the city. Apffel and Babovich, along with other city and local business representatives, met recently with officials of the Budd Company. As a result, Budd may demonstrate its self-propelled SPV-2000 railcar on the route later this year, possibly in early October to coincide with NARP's fall board of directors meeting in New Orleans.

The campaign for eastern N. O. commuter rail was launched by developers and private interests. The fact that Babovich approached LARP on this matter speaks highly for the reputation this group has achieved in two short years.

Gulf coast officials are excited about the prospects of restored rail passenger service. The Mar. 20 *Biloxi Sun/Daily Herald* reported that Mississippi's director of tourism, George Williams, sold on the train route." Rep. Lindy Boggs (D-LA) "said she 'delighted that the states will study the feasibility of [the route].'"

NARP and its Louisiana and Alabama affiliates are hopeful the New Orleans-Mobile service will start in time for the fair and will soon lead to restoration of the entire 617-mile New Orleans-Mobile-Tallahassee-Jacksonville route once travelled by the "Gulf Wind." This would fill a critical gap in Amtrak's national system, permitting coast-to-coast service across the southern states, and access to Florida from a direction other than New Orleans.

New Orleans-Baton Rouge

As its first order of business after formation in early 1980, LARP began a campaign to restore rail passenger service between New Orleans and Baton Rouge with a stop at New Orleans' Morand Airport.

State Rep. Quentin Dastuque (D-Metairie) introduced a bill calling for a study of the feasibility of restoring such service between the state's two largest cities. The bill passed; Urban Systems Associates, Inc. (USAI) of New Orleans was hired to perform the analysis; and the final report was released in spring of 1981.

The study assumed six daily trains, using the most direct route the 79-mile Louisiana & Arkansas Railway. USAI estimated the service would cost the state no more than \$500,000 annually, using Amtrak's Sec. 403(b) joint funding formula; and probably less if federal costs were estimated.

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Pacific).
Following release of the report, Gov. Treen formally asked Amtrak to evaluate the New Orleans-Baton Rouge market and possible train routings. Amtrak surveyed three routes in April of this year: the L&A, the 89-mile Illinois Central Gulf river route, and the 99-mile ICG route via Hammond (of which the 53-mile Hammond-New Orleans segment is already used by Amtrak's "City of New Orleans").

L&A's parent, Kansas City Southern Railway, initially refused to permit the Amtrak inspection. At Amtrak's request, the Interstate Commerce Commission ordered the defiant railroad to cooperate.

In May, Amtrak issued its report, concluding that ICG's river route could handle two daily round-trips. The report estimated they would carry an average 32 passengers per train, which LARP considers a worst-case scenario. (Amtrak's projections can be more optimistic.) Amtrak's initial and final projections for Chicago-Indianapolis—where the train is also slower-than-ideal—were 68 and 71 passenger-miles-per-trainmile (PMTM), respectively, but the actual figure for the startup year, FY '81, was 95.7 PMTM. Amtrak projected 26 PMTM for Atlanta-Savannah, while Georgia DOT projected 131 passengers per trip—presumably at least 70 PMTM.)

Assuming the light ridership just noted, Amtrak projected a total operating subsidy of \$761,000 in the first year (45% of the total subsidy requirement of \$1.7 million as per 403(b), and a state capital expenditure of \$756,000 (50% of the total \$1.5 million capital need). Amtrak found the line in relatively good condition, recommending minimal capital improvements limited to increasing super-elevation on certain curves and modifying grade crossing signal circuitry. These improvements would permit a running time of approximately 2:20. LARP is urging the state to fund additional track improvements, and is urging local communities to lift train speed restrictions, to permit a faster schedule. The capital estimate assumes using part of the renovated IC station at Baton Rouge, which LARP notes is across the street from the Old State Capitol, the Centroplex convention center, and a parking garage. LARP also suggests a stop on the Louisiana State University campus in Baton Rouge, noting the tracks run within 300' of LSU Stadium and the trains could "provide an available and safe way to travel to athletic events." Amtrak recommended the N.O. airport stop due to accessibility problems caused by a nearby highway.

NEW ORLEANS TROLLEYS: CHEAPER THAN BUSES (AND THEY ATTRACT TOURISTS!)

The Federal Urban Mass Transit (sic) Administration awarded a \$506,000 transit assistance capital grant to the city to support preliminary engineering for improvements to the 35-car St. Charles streetcar line. The city will match the grant with \$125,000 in local money.

"Our streetcars are almost 60 years old, but if they are maintained properly they can have an indefinite life span," Mayor Dutch Morial said. 'This line's obvious advantages—the fact these cars don't pollute the air, hold a larger passenger capacity than a bus and have lower incremental operating costs—make their maintenance in our best interest.'

"According to project manager Ed Bayer of the Office of Mass Transit Administration, a streetcar's operating costs are \$14.61 vs. \$17.51 per hour for a public bus."

—New Orleans Times-Picayune, Jan. 30, 1982

Treen must decide by next year whether to apply to Amtrak for 403(b) service if the trains are to be in place for the 1984 opening of the World's Fair.

A Daily "Sunset"

The tri-weekly New Orleans-Los Angeles "Sunset" needs to be run daily. It is the only passenger train serving Houston, Phoenix, and El Paso. El Paso's twin city, Ciudad Juarez, long has had two daily mainline round-trips (recently expanded to include a tri-weekly branch local).

A daily "Sunset" would facilitate establishing badly needed

Oklahoma service and expanding Chicago-Texas from tri-weekly to daily. Currently, Chicago-Texas service operates tri-weekly via Arkansas with through cars to and from Los Angeles carried west of San Antonio on the "Sunset". Amtrak believes the through cars are essential for developing adequate ridership on the Chicago-Texas run. Thus, a daily "Sunset" could permit daily Chicago-Texas-(Phoenix-LA) service, operating on alternate days via Arkansas and Oklahoma.

NARP members along the affected routes should start (or continue) pressing your U.S. legislators for this service. Get local leaders to support the campaign. It is reasonable to ask: if the World's Fair in New Orleans doesn't lead to a daily "Sunset," will anything?

The "Houston Crescent": Except during the World's Fair, ridership on the entire Atlanta-New Orleans-Houston segment would be strengthened if the NY-New Orleans "Crescent" was extended to Houston, even if this forced cutting "Sunset" back to Houston. Extending the "Crescent" would:

- open up the "Crescent/Sunset" routes to connecting traffic, since a daylight layover between the two trains would replace the existing overnight layover, eliminating hotel expenses now required.
- provide direct service between Texas and "Crescent" points including NY, Phila., Washington, Baltimore, and Atlanta.
- provide "Crescent" with a stronger western terminal. Houston is the nation's 9th largest SMSA and one of the fastest growing, and the extended "Crescent" would serve it at "prime" hours for long-distance rail travel: morning arrival; evening departure.
- offer business travelers overnight N.O.-Houston service.



—Photo by John Wegner

Lee's Summit, MO, was so interested in gaining access to Amtrak that it spent \$26,000 of its own money to help fund an "automated" station and platform. Amtrak began serving the city of 30,000 last August, and the station opened three months later. The unstaffed station is governed by a timer which activates and deactivates lights, heating, cooling, and door locks in accordance with train schedules. City street crews built the platform, and the city contracted out the building construction. Total project cost: \$52,000 which was split equally between the city and Amtrak.

The Disappearing Trains of Pennsylvania and New Jersey

In just 16 months, a network of Philadelphia-based "mini-corridors" or "long commuter rail" services has been decimated and local passenger service on 220 route miles has been ended.

Stretching from Newark, NJ in the north to Pottsville and Reading, PA, in the west to Atlantic City and Cape May in the south, these trains had been operated by Reading Railway/Pennsylvania-Reading Seashore Lines/Penn Central/Jersey Central/Conrail and became part of the regional passenger operations supported by Southeastern Pennsylvania Transporta-

tion Authority (SEPTA) and the New Jersey Department of Transportation (now New Jersey Transit or NJT).

In the end, the services were killed by the unwillingness of local transportation authorities to address the problems of rising operating costs and shrinking subsidies. In the gloomy chronology below, where two or more communities are listed, the station shown first is furthest from Philadelphia.

1981

- **Mar. 1:** SEPTA eliminates Newark, DE-Wilmington (12 miles) service on Northeast Corridor for which Delaware had never paid.
- **May 31:** SEPTA ends through service Pottsville-Reading-Philadelphia (Reading Terminal) and Bethlehem-Reading Terminal. Shuttle service is provided requiring change of trains at and use of slower locals south of Norristown and Lansdale.
- **June 30:** SEPTA ends through service Newtown, PA-Reading Terminal. Buses replace trains on the outer 15 miles (above Fox Chase). Rail service ends on the 53-mile Pottsville-Reading-Pottstown segment as the Pottsville-Norristown shuttle becomes a Pottstown-Norristown shuttle. Bethlehem loses rail service as the route of the Bethlehem-Lansdale shuttle is cut by 17 miles to Quakertown-Lansdale.
- **July 1:** NJT cuts weekday Atlantic City-Lindenwold service from three to two round-trips.
- **July 26:** SEPTA eliminates the Pottstown-Norristown (24 miles) and Quakertown-Lansdale (16 miles) shuttles.
- **July 31:** SEPTA ends through service on the Newark, NJ-Bound Brook-Belle Mead-Hopewell-West Trenton-Jenkintown-Reading Terminal run. "Wall Street" and "Crusader" had provided two daily round-trips on weekdays.
- **Aug. 3:** NJT begins "emergency" substitute service (one weekday round-trip) Newark-West Trenton connecting with SEPTA locals.
- **Aug. 5:** FRA track inspection over Cape May line finds tracks unsafe. NJT begins "temporary" substitute bus service leaving the 31-mile Cape May-Tuckahoe segment without passenger trains. (The Ocean City and Cape May train ran as two rail diesel cars coupled between Tuckahoe and Lindenwold, outer terminal of the PATCO "Hi-Speed" rail transit line to Philadelphia. East/south of Tuckahoe, the cars ran singly on the two branches.)
- **Aug. 19:** NJT suspends Ocean City-Lindenwold service due to drawbridge malfunction; the 41-mile Ocean City-Tuckahoe-

NARP Board Elects John Kirkwood Vice-President



John H. Kirkwood of San Francisco, past president and current member of the Bay Area Rapid Transit board, and a long-time member of the NARP board, was elected NARP Vice-President at the board's Apr. 24 Washington meeting. He is the second vice-president in NARP's history, succeeding Samuel E. Stokes, Jr.

Kirkwood, a self-employed investor, is also on the boards of the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR), a planning and economic development organization for which he wrote a definitive study on San Francisco's transit system in 1973, and of Big Brothers of the Greater San Francisco Bay Area. He is a member of the California Railway Museum (Bay Area Electric Railway Association), the World Affairs Council, the Guardsmen (which sends underprivileged children to summer camp), and the California Historical Society.

He has long been active in Republican party affairs and is a four-term member of the San Francisco Republican County Central Committee, but he garnered over 70% of the vote when reelected in Nov., 1980, as the board member representing BART's heavily Democratic ninth district.

EDITORIAL PRAISE FOR A NARP DIRECTOR'S WORK

The Ashland (KY) Daily Independent, in an editorial "Governor could be man of the year for the Ashland area," also gave favorable mention to five other elected officials . . . and one private citizen: "Don Maxwell spent a lot of hours trying to get passenger train service restored to the area." Congratulations, Don!

As a result of his hard work last year, Don is now a director of the Chamber of Commerce of Boyd and Greenup Counties (KY) and chairman of its transportation committee.

Winslow segment loses passenger service.

- **Oct. 5:** SEPTA begins Newtown-Fox Chase (15 miles) diesel car shuttle service using workers from Phila.'s B&O subway and new work rules including train crews of two of three people.

1982

- **June 28:** SEPTA suspends West Chester-Elwyn (11 miles) service. Substitute bus service begins. When track work and training of crews is completed, service is to resume using B&O workers a la Newtown, and without through service to Philadelphia.
 - **June 30:** FRA finds 29 out of 46 miles unsafe on the Atlantic City-Lindenwold line. NJT suspends passenger train service and substitute bus service.
- In 1981, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania made a special appropriation of \$3.1 million to maintain service to Pottsville and Bethlehem, but the money was never spent because designated operator was unable to reach an operating agreement with Conrail.
- All rail passenger operations in southern New Jersey have been replaced by buses. NJT has made no moves to repair Atlantic City tracks or the Ocean City drawbridge and Conrail has bargoed all freight on both lines. Trains may never run again.
- Regarding the Atlantic City line, NJT is in the process of negotiating a private operator to run passenger trains, and Rep. James Florio (D-NJ) is pressing for a \$40 million commitment to the Atlantic City corridor as part of the Northeast Corridor Improvement Project.

While serving as President of the BART board for the first term, Kirkwood coordinated and directed careful planning and labor contract negotiations in 1979. As a result of the careful planning, BART's management maintained a consistent and unified negotiating posture and—after 19 weeks of highly publicized threats, work stoppages, vandalism to equipment, and a strike—gained a contract which for the first time met every parameter for wage and work rule restrictions.

During eight years on the BART board, Kirkwood served three times as Chairman of its powerful Engineering and Operations Committee. As Chairman, he insisted on establishing the first clear, quantifiable objectives and standards for operations and improving the troubled system.

Kirkwood served the NARP board most recently as chairman of its equipment committee.

At its Washington meeting, the NARP board also passed resolutions calling on Amtrak to:

- "continue to rehabilitate and convert to head-end power the maximum number of Heritage Fleet cars which is economically feasible";
- "increase its negotiations with bus companies to provide dedicated connecting bus service to Amtrak trains from the communities without passenger train service, or, in the event this fails, to run such service itself," and
- "retain and expand its program of incentive fares and subsidies with NARP and the affiliated state organizations to publicize these fares."

The board decided to join the National Clean Air Coalition (i.e., allow the Coalition to add NARP's name to its list of supporting organizations). This is a crucial year for clean air legislation and many groups in the Coalition have supported NARP in the past when crucial passenger train fights occurred.