

Amtrak NEWS

FOR AMTRAK EMPLOYEES

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Detroit Family Days Attract 30,000 Visitors

Nearly 30,000 persons jammed Amtrak's Detroit, Michigan, station on Saturday and Sunday, August 2-3, to participate in the second Family Days event of the year. By far it was the largest crowd to view one of Amtrak's equipment displays since they began last year in Washington.

One purpose of the show was to acquaint Amtrak employees and the general public with services provided the public and the equipment that is used.

The two-day event, cosponsored by the City of Detroit's recreation department, was coupled with an arts and crafts exhibit and the inauguration of Detroit-Toledo rail service.

Employees of the Detroit area were invited to a special preview showing of the equipment on Saturday beginning at 10 a.m., after which the doors were thrown open to the general public at noon. Sunday's public session ran from noon until 7 p.m.

One special feature of the show were one-hour, 36-mile, round-trip rides to Wayne Junction aboard a

Turboliner. Three daily trips were scheduled but demand was so great that an extra section was operated on both days. Still, many were unable to ride because of lack of time to schedule even more runs.

Employees were treated to a free Turboliner trip during their Saturday preview session.

Amtrak President Alan Boyd noted, "We've all seen Detroit's new cars, now it was time for Detroit to see our cars."

And see cars they did!

Amtrak's latest equipment was lined up on two parallel tracks and visitors were able to climb aboard, walk through and inspect them



The Lake Cities arrives on Sunday and cuts the ceremonial ribbon. Holding that ribbon are, at left, Congressman Carl Pursell and, at right, Detroit Deputy Mayor Richard Simmons.



The lines were long all day, on both days, but visitors reacted positively to Amtrak's new equipment.

thoroughly. Included were Superliner coaches and a diner; the latest head-end-powered cars turned out by Beech Grove including a sleeping car, diner and coach; an SPV-2000 self-propelled coach; P30CH and F40PH locomotives; Amfleet cars and the Turboliner.

Two counterpoints to the array of new cars were an older steam-heated coach that had seen better days and, to add a touch of nostalgia, a privately-owned and restored open-end observation car.

Also on display were a Conrail caboose and diesel locomotive and several buses from local transit authorities. Amtrak's safety van was also set on the station platform and

attracted many visitors.

While Amtrak's exhibits were located at trackside, the arts and crafts show, plus some food stands and merchandise vendors, were lined along both sides of the concourse that led from the front of the station to the main waiting room.

Hanging above the concourse exhibits was a collection of striking and colorful kites while dominating the cavernous main waiting room was a towering balloon sculpture.

Other balloons were all over the station, waiting room and train shed as kids attending the event were each handed a balloon and paper engineer's hats.

The waiting room was crowded

with people, display stands and a continuous exhibition, at one end of it, by youngsters from the city that presented programs of mime, roller skating, gymnastics, modern dance, singing and other skills.

Participating in the exhibits on the main floor of the waiting room were the Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers, the Michigan DOT, the Michigan Railroad Club, Operation Lifesaver and several individuals who displayed their collections of railroadians.

Members of the marketing department manned a booth too, distributing travel brochures and answering questions about Amtrak travel. A special reception, hosted by Paul Orr,



(Left) Crowds mill about on the train platform as they make their way between exhibits and the Turboliner where many received an hour's ride into the Michigan countryside. (Below) Train Attendant Ben Cornelius explains operation of a bedroom suite to some visitors.



(Above) Three of the many persons who "made it happen" discuss the successful event. Left to right are Bruce Heard, manager, special events, Washington; Bob Weir, Conrail passenger trainmaster; and Bill Duggan, Amtrak's regional director, passenger services, at Detroit. (Right) Some of the crowd watches an exhibition of dance in the waiting room.



district sales manager, Chicago, and Bob Hardin, district sales manager, Detroit, was held Friday night for the top local travel agents. The party was aboard the Superliner diner.

Assisting Amtrak people, who manned the cars acting as hosts for visitors and answering questions regarding the equipment, were a number of Michigan's passenger aides who normally ride Amtrak trains within the state and act as ambassadors of good will.

One facet of the arts and crafts show was the selection of three of the artists as candidates to paint a large mural which will be installed over the ramp that leads to trackside. The

three finalists will now each prepare a design for the mural. The winning design will net the artist \$1,500 plus supply costs.

One of Sunday's highlights was the arrival of the first *Lake Cities* train from Toledo.

The Turboliner arrived promptly at 12:20 p.m. and sliced through a red, white and blue ribbon stretched across the tracks.

The ceremony then continued with a greeting by Clark Tyler, group vice president, passenger services and communications. Others who spoke included Richard Simmons, deputy mayor, Detroit; Congressman Carl Pursell (R-Mich); William Faust, Michigan State Senator; Edward

Mahalak, Michigan State Representative; and Scott Hercik, manager of rail programs, Michigan Department of Transportation.

William Duggan, regional director, passengers services, reports that the show was a huge success. "We had a lot of people who came here and saw what we had to offer. I expect that a lot of them will be trying Amtrak for their next trip."

Duggan also noted that a good deal of the show's success was due to the help and cooperation of Conrail personnel who operate the station. "Two of those Conrail people whom I can't thank enough," he said, "are Bob Weir, local trainmaster, and Steve Swierczewski, our stationmaster."



(Above) The end of a long day is a little tiring for one young visitor. (Right) A Turboliner approaches the station at the end of its trip to Wayne Junction.



(Left) Mary Jean Gillis, ticket clerk, tells one disappointed patron that all of the train rides are sold out. (Below) Shirley Harbin, of Detroit's recreation department, checks some of Artist Burnis Calvin Day's works. Day was one of the three candidates for doing the station mural.



Keeping Track Of Amtrak

Toledo Connection

The Family Days exhibit was timed to coincide with the inaugural of the *Lake Cities*, the new Chicago-Detroit-Toledo train that now provides a direct across-the-platform connection to the *Lake Shore Limited* at Toledo allowing passengers from southern Michigan to travel to and from eastern cities.

The new train replaced the *Saint*

Clair and, at the same time, was changed from Amfleet equipment to a Turboliner.

The new service fulfills a commitment Amtrak President Alan Boyd made last year to reestablish rail service between Detroit and the eastern seaboard. The additional costs of extending the train from Detroit to Toledo are expected to be matched by an increase in revenue from the larger

market the train now serves.

The new train was named after the several major lakes along its route after a suggestion by Congressman John Dingell (R-Mich).

Corporate Changes

Two changes have been made in Amtrak's organization at corporate headquarters.

The planning department has been transferred to finance and administration to integrate more closely the company's financial and planning ef-

Pittsburgh Station: Small But Efficient

With the startup of *Pennsylvanian* service, between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, Amtrak's station in the Steel City has more activity than it has had since the demise of the *National Limited*.

Housed in a prefabricated metal building, the station's exterior is spartan but the interior is, nevertheless, bright and modern.

Amtrak's ticket office had been previously located in the adjacent old Pennsylvania station which, because of its huge size, became too costly to operate and maintain. The offices were moved to the present one-story building late last year.

The 32-by-84-foot structure had housed Conrail's local CTC operation but it became available when the CTC machines were moved to a suburban location.

Before Amtrak could take occupancy, extensive refurbishing had to be done. Old partitions were ripped out and new washrooms built. The ticket office and baggage area were located in the north end of the building and new lighting and a rear-ranged air conditioning system installed.

Three large benches were moved in from the old station, stripped and refinished. The end result: a modern facility for Amtrak's passengers.

The Pittsburgh ticket office is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Ten persons, including Charles Case, station supervisor, work at the facility.

(Right) Two of the several persons working in Pittsburgh's station are Phillip Paden, baggageman, and Ronald Richards, ticket clerk. (Below) Five other Steel City personnel are Earl Lewis, baggageman; Charles Case, station supervisor; Steve Planey, lead ticket clerk; Blake Young, ticket clerk; and Georgia Thomas, ticket clerk and baggageman.



Pittsburgh's station, although small, is modern, bright and fully efficient.

forts. Bill Daly, vice president, planning, will now report to Bob Eckenrode, group vice president.

The labor relations and personnel functions have been separated with George Daniels, vice president, labor relations, and Jim Handlon, assistant vice president, personnel, each reporting to Eckenrode.

Tomah, Portage Stops

Beginning October 26, Amtrak will upgrade the Tomah and Portage, Wisconsin, stops on the *North Star* and *Empire Builder* route from flag to positive stops.

Amtrak is trying to remove as many flag stops as possible because such stops hamper steady operations on any train's schedule and do not allow sufficient time to service passenger needs properly.

What A Tip!

One of Jesse Henderson's first days on the job as a ticket clerk trainee at Petersburg, Virginia, was certainly a memorable one for him.

Henderson was selling tickets at the station on Tuesday, July 22, when a man walked in and bought a one-way ticket to New Jersey.

As he was paying, he kept complaining about car troubles which made him decide to take the train.

Henderson offered to take a look at the car and see if he could get it operating again.

The passenger, who had been traveling from South Carolina, told Henderson that if he was so interested in the car he could have it. He then proceeded to sign over the papers on the 1969 Ford two-door hardtop.

After the shock wore off, Henderson checked with local police authorities to see if the car might have been stolen. They proclaimed it "clean" and Henderson now can boast of the day he was "tipped" a car for "services rendered."

Safety Standings

The Empire division went through June without any injuries thus earning a zero safety ratio for itself and

the lead in the division category for the month.

In the shops category, Beech Grove led the other three facilities with an 11.0 ratio, while in the mechanical facilities category nine locations went through the month with no injuries thus receiving the coveted zero ratio.

The nine locations were 8th Street in Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Kansas City, St. Louis, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, New Orleans, Niagara Falls and Jacksonville.

For the year to date, St. Louis leads the divisions with a 3.1 ratio, followed closely by the Empire with 3.8 and Philadelphia with 4.5. Wilmington leads the shops with a 9.1 figure, while five locations — Minneapolis, Kansas City, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston and Niagara Falls — continue their injury-free records.

The safety ratio is a figure that denotes the number of injuries per 200,000 man-hours. Any injury or job-related illness that requires more than first aid is counted in the statistics.

Trailways Interline Pact

Amtrak has signed an interline agreement with Trailways bus lines to expand its network of intermodal connections between the two systems.

Beginning July 15, Amtrak started honoring tickets issued by Trailways over Amtrak lines and Trailways began accepting Amtrak tickets over designated Trailways lines.

Passengers can now purchase through tickets in a single transaction at ticket outlets of either carrier. This service is available at over 100 selected Trailways ticket counters where excursion, family rate and regular tickets for all Amtrak trains can be purchased. Similarly, passengers can also purchase tickets for travel on Amtrak-Trailways combined routes at all Amtrak ticket outlets.

The agreement is part of Amtrak's continuing effort to ease ticketing transactions for the traveling public and to develop intermodal transfers wherever feasible.

For example, Amtrak stations at Los Angeles, Boston and New Or-

leans serve as major intermodal train-bus transfer points. Amtrak has a similar arrangement with Greyhound.

New Bus Connections

Intermodal routes to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and the lower Gulf Coast of Florida have been added to the Amtrak system as of August 3.

Passengers traveling to Myrtle Beach will have a convenient connecting bus service from the Amtrak station in Florence. Trailways bus service to Myrtle Beach will connect with Amtrak's southbound *Palmetto*. From Myrtle Beach, passengers will connect with the northbound *Silver Meteor*.

Passengers traveling to Florida's lower Gulf Coast will have two new connecting Trailways bus services from the Tampa station. Buses will connect with the inbound *Silver Star* in the morning and the *Silver Meteor* in the afternoon. Both operations will serve Bradenton, Sarasota, Venice, Punta Gorda, Fort Myers and Naples.

Northbound passengers will also have two departures to connect with the *Silver Meteor* in the morning and the *Silver Star* in the afternoon. Both buses will deliver their passengers to the Tampa station.

Sharpshooters Score

Members of Amtrak's Philadelphia police force competed in the Police Marksman Association's Northeastern championship pistol matches coming up with a first place in the sharpshooter class.

The four team members consisted of Sergeant Robert Deegan, coach; Patrolman Richard Beynon, team captain; and Sergeant Paul Smith and Patrolman Jack Ciupinski, team members. The group was awarded a team trophy as well as four individual trophies.

Cruises Rescheduled

Employees who might have tried to avail themselves of the New York-Montreal cruise discounts offered by

Bahama Cruise Line, mentioned in the May issue of *Amtrak News*, have discovered that the *ss Veracruz* has been out of commission all season because of a defective boiler.

Bahama Cruise Line now hopes to have repairs completed soon and has scheduled its first trip to leave New York on September 5. Three more trips, each sailing out of Montreal or New York on alternate Fridays, have also been scheduled for the month of September.

Employees are eligible for discounts on these sailings. Further information is available from Amtrak's

regional sales office in New York. Reservations will be on a space-available basis.

The cruise line hopes to be able to offer the discount plan to Amtrak employees again next year.

Detroit, Seattle Projects

Two expenditures for improved facilities at Detroit and Seattle have been approved.

Some \$68,000 has been earmarked for consolidating passenger services, sales and claims offices at Detroit's passenger station. The new offices will be located directly across from

the present ticket office.

Sales and claims offices are currently on the second floor, while the passenger services office, although on the main station floor, is inaccessible to the public.

This project will complement the many station improvements that have been occurring, in cooperation with the state of Michigan, in the Chicago-Detroit corridor.

Also approved was nearly \$90,000 to upgrade the passenger car watering facilities at Seattle to meet Amtrak's requirements for servicing equipment in the yard as well as making the facility come into line with Food and Drug Administration regulations.

Train servicing at Seattle is done by the Burlington Northern but the existing facilities have deteriorated and now do not meet FDA guidelines. While no formal citations have been issued, there have been complaints regarding present conditions.

Baltimore Station Repairs

Nixon Camper Associates, of Baltimore, a minority contractor, has been awarded a \$575,000 contract for re-roofing the Baltimore station.

The contract calls for removal of the existing clerestory decking and installation of new skylights to provide more light to the station's interior.

Three round Tiffany-type glass panes, each 25 feet in diameter, form part of the existing ceiling over the main concourse. Since the glass is irreplaceable, the biggest challenge for the contractor will be to protect the panels during the project.

The renovation is part of the Northeast Corridor Improvement Project funded by the Federal Railroad Administration and managed by Amtrak.

Roof work will start in early August and is expected to be completed in late 1981. The NECIP program will also include improvements to the concourse area, platform and building interior over the next few years.

New Tour Center Opens In New York

Amtrak has officially opened its new tour center at Pennsylvania Station in New York. The totally renovated office, which is located south of the bank of ticket windows in the main concourse, replaces the temporary tour information booth that had served the station for three years.

One of the major features of the new facility is its capability to plan fully an individual's or group's tour down to actual ticketing.

"In the past," said Bill Norman, Amtrak's vice president,

marketing, "the booth had planning capability only. The traveler then had to go to the ticket counter, often waiting in line, to finish his or her arrangements."

The new facility has its own central ticketing ability and will be operated by two tour representatives.

Said Norman, "We expect this center to generate a substantial increase in tour business. It also is the prototype for similar centers we hope to open at other stations where business potential exists."



Amtrak's new tour center at Pennsylvania Station, New York, replaces a three-year-old display that was without ticketing capability. Left to right are Oliver Gaffney, ticket seller; Peggy Maziariski, sales clerk; Bill Smith, director, Eastern sales region; and Richard Keating, chief, sales support. Working the front desk is Mary Murray, sales clerk.



Cars completely fill the Beech Grove shops as the head-end-power program continues in high gear.

Beech Grove HEP Conversion Program Results In Like-New Car For Passengers

Amtrak's fleet of aging steam-heated passenger cars has earned a new lease on life through the company's time-proven head-end-power program that is centered on Beech Grove.

The project has been so successful that 501 cars have either already been through the shops or are programmed for conversion. That number could even increase to 900 by 1986.

Why a head-end-power program?

Steam Inefficient

Although steam locomotives vanished from America's railroads decades ago, the cars used on trains across the country—the same cars that Amtrak inherited when it went into business in 1971—continued to be heated by steam produced in a boiler in the locomotive. For air conditioning and lighting, each car relied on its own generator and batteries. Some cars even used steam to power

their air conditioning system.

As the cars grew older, their internal systems of pipes and wires progressively deteriorated and become increasingly unreliable, although, in many cases, the car structure itself was sound. Cars froze up in the winter and air conditioning failed in the summer with agonizing regularity.

Railroaders knew that using electricity—generated in the locomotive and sent through the train via connecting cables—could do a more reliable job of heating and air conditioning the train but the total number of cars in the country's railroad car fleet precluded a massive conversion.

However, in recent years, as new equipment was purchased, such as commuter cars for specialized controlled service, it rolled off the assembly lines as all-electric. Amtrak's Amfleet equipment was designed to be all-electric, as were the Superliners. Turboliners and Metroliners,

too, use electricity for all of their functions.

Amtrak seemed headed toward a mixed fleet; the older, conventional cars that required steam for heating, and new cars that were all-electric.

First Car Converted

The trend toward an all-electric Amtrak car fleet started out rather unceremoniously.

A few years back, then President Paul Reistrup suggested that Amtrak's shop forces see if they could "electrify" an open-platform car for special occasion use with Amfleet equipment.

The end result worked so well—the car was used by President Ford in his 1976 campaign—that the next step was to electrify two sleeping cars for use on the Amfleeted *Night Owl*. This, too, proved successful and 30 more sleeping cars were sent to Beech Grove for conversion so they could be

used with Amfleet equipment on other overnight trains, including the *Montrealer*, *Cardinal*, *Pioneer*, *National Limited* and *Inter-American*.

With only one car builder operating in the United States, necessitating an inordinately long lead time for new equipment, Amtrak was faced with a further dilemma. The steam-powered cars were becoming more and more unreliable. Something had to be done to provide consistent good service to the passengers.

Complete Trains Next

A decision was made. The company would start converting entire train sets to head-end-power. The

first train picked for the changeover was the *Lake Shore Limited* and 59 select cars—coaches, diners, sleeping cars, lounges—were picked out of the car fleet and sent to Beech Grove.

The “new” *Lake Shore* began operating last October just in time for winter, which gets pretty severe over the train’s route. The cars worked so well that passenger complaints decreased dramatically while the train’s performance reliability shot up.

This past spring, the *Broadway Limited* received head-end-power cars and the results were the same.

The next train to be converted—this autumn—will be the *Crescent*. Following that, the New York-Flori-

da train, the *Silver Meteor*, will receive the refurbished and upgraded cars.

In a separate project, all 73 former Santa Fe hi-level cars are being converted to head-end-power for Amtrak by the Santa Fe at its Topeka, Kansas, shops.

Assembly Line Repairs

Just what happens when a car goes through Beech Grove’s HEP program? To qualify, a car must be in top condition structurally and have a stainless steel body. After being picked, the car is first fumigated, then completely stripped, internally and externally. Old steam lines are

(Below) R.A. Bennett, carman, washes off a car with the acid-foam wash.

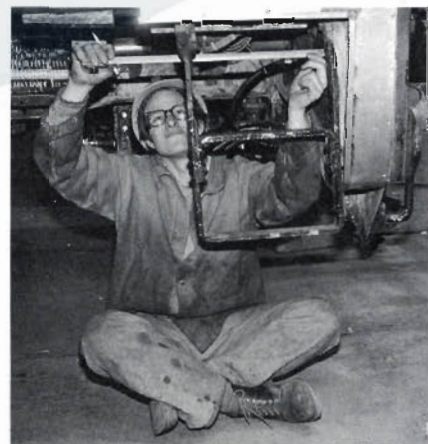
The underside of the car has been totally stripped, except for air tanks.

(Right) David Patton, carman-trimmer, installs newly-upholstered seats in a coach. Please note that the ex-Santa Fe decor has been retained.



(Below) Dave Kern, carman, connects heating elements along the floorboard.

(Right) Clarence E. Beller, carman, tightens handhold on a car destined for the *Broadway Limited*.



(Above) Chris Bowes, carman, does some measuring under a car.

cut away, old wiring pulled out, and all exterior fittings, except for the air tanks, cut away. What remains, basically, is an empty car shell which must be fitted with new components.

It is first cleaned externally with an acid/foam bath. New exterior equipment is then hung below the car, including transformers, the air conditioning unit, distribution boxes, emergency battery box, water tanks, a new plumbing system, a 480-volt electrical train line and assorted sundry brackets. The car then is transferred to the coach shop for further work.

There, all of the wiring is connected. Heating elements are installed

along the floor and switchboards set in place in the electric lockers at the end of the car. In diners, an all-electric kitchen replaces the aged wood-burning stoves. All of the equipment is thoroughly tested in the process.

Special features that individualize certain cars, such as Indian motifs on the walls or etched glass used for decoration, are retained to remind passengers of the cars' rich heritage.

While all this work is being done, the car's trucks are being rebuilt using new or thoroughly refurbished parts.

The car is painted inside and out, as needed, and external striping and logos attached. New windows—a combination of glass and lexan—are

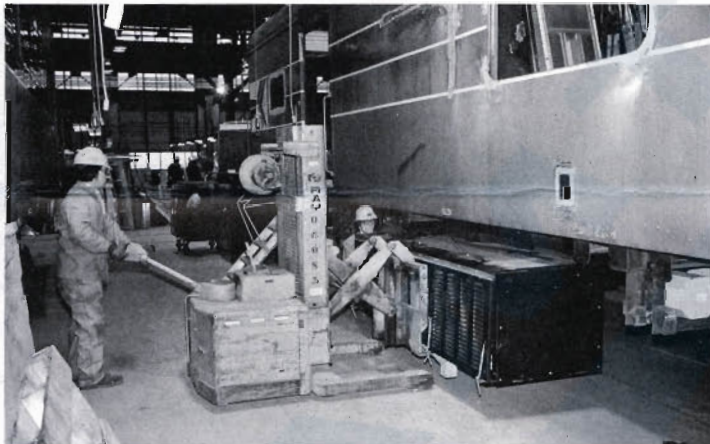
installed, as well as new carpeting and completely reupholstered seats. The reworked trucks are set back under the car and it moves on to a recently-built "hot" room where the air conditioning system's efficiency is thoroughly checked out.

The car must undergo 48 hours of quality control tests before it is shipped out for service.

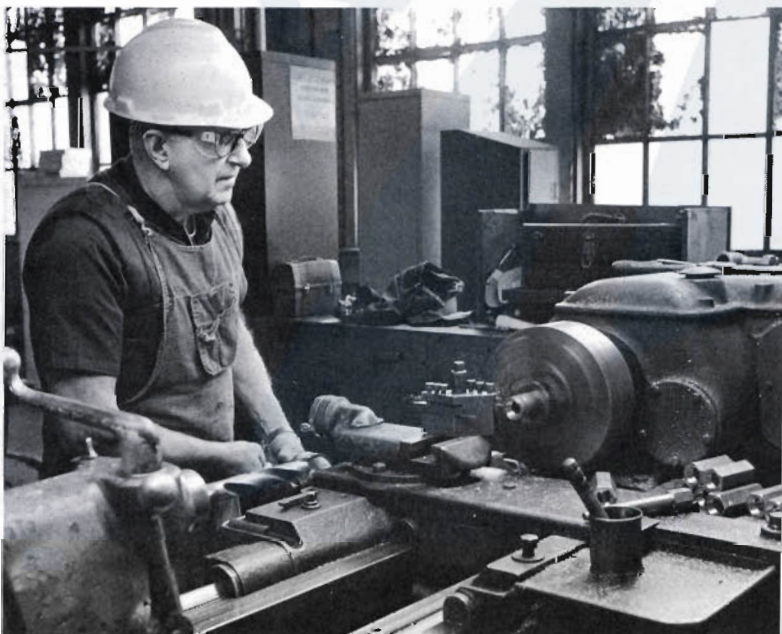
Virtually New Car

What rolls out of the car shop is a like-new car that costs between \$250,000 and \$400,000—depending on type of car—to convert, but still far less than it would cost to purchase a new one. Amtrak expects, with pro-

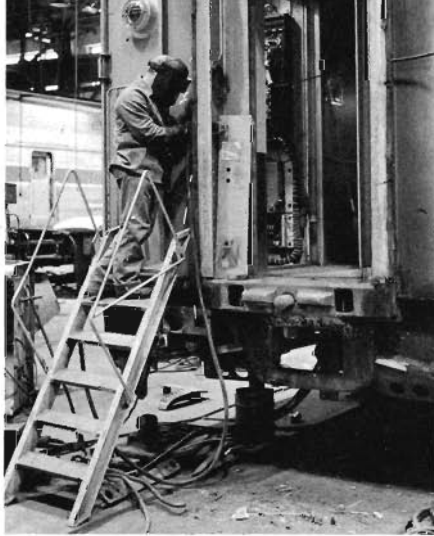
(Below) Mike Baker and Jeff Bocock, carmen-welders, roll an air conditioning unit into place under a diner. (Right) Gary Cook, electrician, assembles a harness of wires for use in the car rebuilding process.



(Above) Julius E. Trageser, machinist, and John P. Callahan, machinist apprentice, face off a disc for an Amfleet wheel set on the Farrell axle lathe.



(Left) Charles Mitchell, machinist, creates some brass nuts on a shop lathe. (Above) Tom Leathers, carman, and John Skaggs, carman-welder, assemble a foam-lined jacket for covering and insulating a car's water tank.



(Above) A welder works on the end bulkhead of a car. (Upper Right) J.S. Nowosielski, machinist, repacks bearings that will be used in reassembled trucks. (Right) Chester Hollis, carman, grinds down some rough spots on a truck frame.



Production Update

As of August 18, Beech Grove had completed 183 cars under the head-end-power program. This included the first 27 sleepers, 59 cars for the *Lake Shore Limited*, 64 for the *Broadway Limited*, 28 for the *Crescent* and five baggage cars for the *Silver Star*.

Route—erected the first brick structure on the site, a boiler shop, in 1908. By 1914, most of the other buildings were up and in operation.

The shop complex repaired and maintained all of the railroad's passenger and freight cars, as well as its steam locomotives.

The New York Central—the Big Four's parent company—formally acquired the shops in 1922 and expanded the facility with the addition of a freight car paint shop, in 1923, and a passenger car trim and paint shop, in 1930.

During the 1930s and '40s, Beech Grove was the NYC's principal base for its huge passenger car fleet. Employment peaked, during World War II, at 5,000.

Later, as passenger trains were being phased out of service, the complex was converted to a freight car shop.

After Amtrak came into being, it contracted with the Penn Central—successor to the NYC—to maintain its cars beginning in February 1972. The PC did so at Beech Grove.

Amtrak Buys Beech Grove

Three years later, in February 1975, a three-way agreement was forged between the PC, Amtrak and seven shop craft unions representing employees at Beech Grove. The end result was that Amtrak bought the property for \$3.8 million, plus an additional \$2.5 million for inventory.

The entire Beech Grove complex occupies about 120 acres, 64 of which, including nine buildings, now belong to Amtrak. The rest is still used by Conrail, which succeeded the Penn Central.

per maintenance, 10 years of service from each. One additional benefit: HEP cars are cheaper to repair and maintain than steam-heated ones.

Major Repair Facility

Beech Grove is Amtrak's prime passenger car heavy repair facility and the largest on the system. It currently is undergoing a \$29 million, five-year modernization program that is scheduled for completion by mid-1982.

Although the shop does other work, at present the facility is concentrating on the HEP program and to do this employs approximately 1,200 employees on two shifts.

A small locomotive repair section is currently overhauling P30CH locomotives and wreck repairs of other models and provides a two-year overhaul on baggage cars.

The shop also does wheel work for the entire system. About 200 wheel sets are turned out each month on the large wheel lathe. These are used on cars at Beech Grove or sent to other maintenance locations. As the shop modernization progresses, Beech Grove intends to increase its wheel

production to 6,000 per year.

Beech Grove, too, is home to Amtrak's Technical Training Center which operates an apprenticeship program as well as maintenance training for present employees.

The apprentice program came about when Amtrak realized that over the next ten years nearly half of Beech Grove's work force will be lost through attrition.

With skilled passenger railroad car workers a disappearing breed, Amtrak had no choice but to develop its own skilled craftsmen. The apprentice program, which has the approval of the United States Department of Labor, focuses on four crafts: machinists, carmen, electricians and sheet metal workers.

As part of the training department, Beech Grove operates an extensive audio-visual department and two training cars—dubbed the *Amtechs*—that travel over the system to give specialized instruction in the field.

Shops Began In 1908

Beech Grove's birth occurred when the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railway—the Big Four

Hot Line To President Boyd

Question: I'm a reservations clerk here in the Los Angeles CRO and I get numerous complaints from customers that they were unable to get through quickly because of busy signals. We're terribly understaffed here. Can't something be done about this? The more calls we lose, the more business we lose. And we need all the business we can get.

Answer: At the present time, the five CROs are staffed to maximum peak capacity, both in terms of people and the physical positions available for them. Telephone volume for June was the highest ever recorded, reaching two million calls, an increase of 42 per cent over 1979.

However, at the same time, busy signals were reduced from six million to 1.5 million.

Our standard of service is to have 85 per cent of the calls answered by the first available sales agent within 30 seconds. That isn't always being done today because of the physical limitations.

We are preparing for an enlarged CRO in Chicago, with greater call-handling capability, within the next year and a half. Also, more cost-effective automatic call distributors are planned for Jacksonville and Los Angeles.

Q: I thought the fee for buying tickets on the train was going to increase from 25¢ to 50¢. It seems I read about that last spring in *Amtrak News*. When is it going to actually go into effect?

A: The on-board ticket penalty will be raised to 50¢ per ticket effective October 26 when we issue some other changes in our tariffs.

This could not be accomplished prior to October 26 because certain cash fare stocks contained information concerning the 25¢ charge. New stock had to be obtained and this was a rather lengthy process. The new stock, by the way, contains no mention of a specific fee so if we change this charge in the future we won't

have to experience another delay like this one.

Q: I work in the Jacksonville reservations office and my suggestion is that we enhance the accommodation line of a Passenger Name Record to include departure times, arrival times and the day of the week of departure.

A: A number of requests to expand the accommodation line of an ARTS PNR to include departure day of the week and arrival times, in addition to the already displayed departure time, have been received. These enhancements will be incorporated into the design of a completely redeveloped ARTS system which should be introduced in the latter part of 1981.

Q: I'm a lead service attendant out of Los Angeles and I don't understand why passengers have to travel from Chicago to Los Angeles — some 2,500 miles across the country — with no air conditioning. Chicago or L.A. should do something about this but all they do is write it off.

A: It is company policy to make sure that all equipment is dispatched in good operating condition. However, the Chicago-Los Angeles equipment is prone to failure because it is the old conventional type.

With this year's unusually high temperatures in the mid and southwest, the air conditioning units have been pushed well beyond their normal capacity. Every effort is made to repair them enroute and at points of departure.

Q: I'm a foreman and store attendant here at Bristol shop and I've noticed that we dispose a lot of oils by having an outside firm come and buy this oil from us. Why can't certain things be done to this oil and then use it for heating the maintenance-of-way shop here during the winter? I'm sure we buy lots of oil for this purpose and we probably could save money by using the old discarded oil.

A: Your facility has a 2,000 gallon tank that gets all waste lubricating oil, anti-freeze and other waste which has to be picked up by a salvage operator. Environmental laws prohibit burning lube oil. The volume and quality of waste at your facility is such that we actually pay to have it hauled away.

Bristol shop is a rented building and uses a gas-fired hot air furnace as its major heating plant. There are four other kerosene heaters, small ones, but they use No. 1 diesel oil.

Q: I'm a block operator in the Philadelphia-Harrisburg territory and I'd like to see something done about our communication wire. For the dispatcher in Philly to hear me, I've got to holler, and to hear him . . . that's another trip.

It's hard to take down train orders and report your trains with conditions the way they are.

A: We are in the process of installing new communications between the train dispatcher's office in Philadelphia and all the block stations. Target date for finishing the job is November 1. Things should be much better after that.

Q: I'm a reservations agent at Bensalem and one of the questions we get here quite often is just how far from the Amtrak station is the local Hertz office. Their book doesn't provide the information. If the pickup station is at the local airport we can check that out, but if it's at a downtown location we have no way of confirming just how far away it is.

A: The Hertz data in ARTS is being updated. Hertz is going to supply mileage information to us that will be entered into the Hertz city profiles within two months.

Q: I've noticed several Amtrak employees with items such as hats, tie clips, coffee and beer mugs and, especially, T-shirts with the Amtrak logo or some sort of Amtrak advertising on them.

I'd like to buy some of these items and am especially interested in T-

shirts. I recently saw a yellow one that read "Amtrak is Getting into Training" and would like to have one. Is there a catalog available?

A: We have a small merchandising program that offers a beach towel, china coffee cup, thermal mug set and an Amtrak "flying saucer," a frisbee-like disc. These items are offered for sale and you can get a brochure for writing Sales Programs, 400 N. Capitol St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20001.

The program will be expanded this fall to include a wide variety of items, one being an Amtrak T-shirt. More information will be available later in *Amtrak News*.

Unfortunately the yellow T-shirt that reads "America's Getting into Training" is not available for sale. It was produced for a special promotion and that supply has been exhausted.

Q: I was wondering about we single employees with no dependents. Why can't we have our parents on our pass, maybe not for totally free trips but simply on a reduced basis.

Married people get to extend their privileges to their family and it would seem fitting that we single persons could do the same to our parents. The airlines do that sort of thing. Why not Amtrak?

A: Our pass policy says that only parents who are dependents of employees according to Internal Revenue Service regulations are considered eligible for rail travel privileges.

Whenever changes to our pass policy are proposed, we have to consider the impact the change would have on available space and the needs of the traveling public that we serve.

We can't relax the pass policy to qualify parents of single employees because this extra ridership would dilute revenues for the company since the parents would be occupying space that otherwise could be sold.

Q: I work in the Los Angeles ticket office and we supposedly are working under a philosophy that we have a nationwide functioning ARTS computer system. However, nothing is farther from the truth.

We have outages every day that last anywhere from ten minutes to five and six hours.

A: There is a corporate commitment, with a high priority, to replace the present outdated ARTS system with a new ticketing and reservations system that is reliable, efficient and more sophisticated. For example, the present system handles about 20

messages per second. The new one will handle well over 150 messages per second. There will be no regularly-scheduled downtime and outages should be infrequent and of short duration.

In addition, all existing CRTs and printers will be replaced with up-to-date equipment.

This effort is presently in progress and scheduled for implementation by October 1981.

The May issue of *Amtrak News* contained an article about our new data center in Philadelphia and noted that the development of a new ARTS system is going on.

Q: Would you please talk to the computer services department. They just put a newfangled item into the ARTS system which — when the computer is out of service — spits out a message that says, "ARTS Down, re-try shortly."

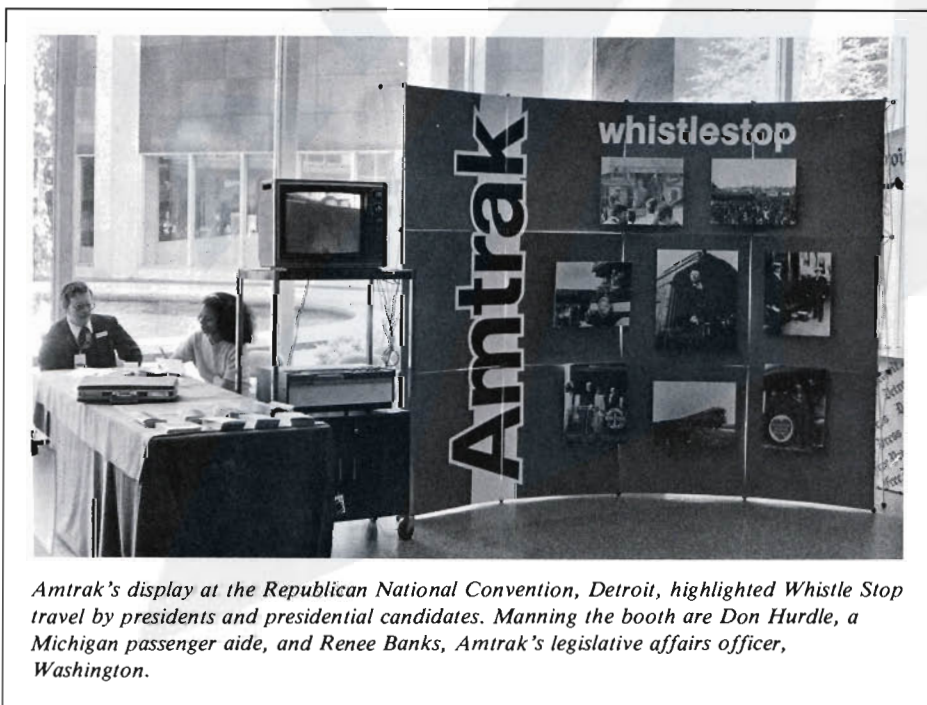
This is great to tell us, but the problem is that it wipes out the screen and you may not know if what you had sent previously ever got transacted. It would be nice if the screen didn't get obliterated when they send out that little message.

A: We're in process of testing an "Arts Down" message that would appear on the right side of the last line on the screen and not destroy the original message.

Q: I'm a sleeping car attendant on the *Coast Starlight* and am calling to tell you how Amtrak is losing a lot of money.

Many people are booking sleeping car space for day use, but end up using the beds. When they close the doors, you can't see what's going on and a lot of them put down the beds and sleep. They're using sheets, pillow cases, soap and towels and are not paying their share of the cost.

A: I'm sorry to say that you are correct in saying there is no real way to enforce the rule against use of beds in a room sold for day occupancy. However, we also feel that charging, say, \$39.50 or so for day use of a



Amtrak's display at the Republican National Convention, Detroit, highlighted Whistle Stop travel by presidents and presidential candidates. Manning the booth are Don Hurdle, a Michigan passenger aide, and Renee Banks, Amtrak's legislative affairs officer, Washington.

bedroom for a short distance would be exorbitant.

During our next fare increase meetings, we will consider adjusting the local seat charge for use of sleeping car space in daytime use on the *Starlight*.

Q: I'm calling again about the condition of the platform here in Ogden. Nothing is being done about it. For a junction city like this, where three trains interconnect — the *Desert Wind*, *San Francisco Zephyr* and *Pioneer* — it's a shameful situation.

A: In August 1979, we issued an authorization to the Union Pacific that covered the cost of installing crosswalks and repaving of the platforms at your station. This was required with the start of the new *Desert Wind* service. All work in the authorization has been completed except that the Union Pacific has been unable to find a contractor to do the paving work.

Our field engineering staff has been in contact with the UP, but to no avail. We will continue to push the UP to get the job done as quickly as possible.

Q: I'm a ticket seller and quite often the computer doesn't work. A lot of people find that their reservations have been cancelled if they try to pick up their tickets the day they're leaving. Also, many times their reservations are cancelled because of the hold limit.

The hold limit should still be effective for that day. It sure makes it tough on people with bedrooms as well as myself when reservations are cancelled and I'm trying to find out what kind of bedrooms they were supposed to have.

A: There are standard procedures published in the Reservations and Ticketing Manual for remote ARTS terminal offices to use when reporting ARTS and telephone equipment failures. You should place a call immediately to network operations.

To give passengers time to finalize

their plans, as well as ensuring that unwanted space becomes available for resale, Amtrak developed a Hold Limit policy which imposed a deadline by which a passenger must purchase tickets.

We are currently evaluating our Hold Limit policy.

Q: This is Salt Lake City and I have a suggestion regarding the job opportunity notices that come here over the computer. Could it be possible to speed them up so they don't tie up our computer?

A: Job opportunity notices are sent out over the ARTS network at a time of low activity, namely after 9 p.m., Eastern time.

However, this does sometimes interfere with other operations and your station, which has a busy spell between 9:45 and 11:45 p.m., Mountain time, falls into this category.

We are testing a new reservation system communications network and when that goes into effect the shutdown time of the computer will revert back to 1 a.m., Mountain time, which should alleviate your problem. Also, read the following question.

Q: I work at Flagstaff, Arizona, and about the middle of March we received a message that the computer would shut down about 10 p.m. our time each day for about 15 days or so. But, they're still on that schedule and it's causing us enormous problems.

A: Beginning May 30, an early shutdown of ARTS, namely 1 a.m., Eastern time, was established by agreement with the marketing, passenger services, operations and computer services departments to provide adequate test time for completing a new front-end communications system called TOPS.

That system is essentially the first step in the new reservations system that is intended to provide more efficient and effective support for all Amtrak departments.

At the time the schedule was established, the duration of the test period

was not known and should not have been published. When the testing is completed, we will revert back to the previous schedule, shutting down the computer at 3 a.m., which should alleviate your problem just as it will the previous questioner.

Q: I'm calling from St. Louis. The state of Missouri is thinking about putting another train on between here and Kansas City. I think it would be a good idea to extend it to Omaha, which is only 200 miles further.

Something like that should be pretty cheap to do, and the train could connect with the *Southwest Limited* at Kansas City and the *Zephyr* at Omaha. It could make a lot of money.

A: Your suggestion does indeed have some merit, but such a service would undoubtedly require some increase in our deficit.

At the present time, new services such as these are not possible. Before we seek new services to operate on our own, we must improve quality of present service in such a way that the company's revenue-to-cost ratio and ridership both improve substantially.

Once these goals are attained, Amtrak will have a much stronger case when we seek funding for new operations.

Q: I'm calling from a ticket office here in New England. Why can't we have a train that will get into New York from here at a reasonable hour in the morning so that businessmen can start their day at 9 a.m.? We're losing a lot of business because of the lack of such a train.

A: At present our earliest trains arriving at New York from the northeast are a 9:43 a.m. train from Springfield and a 10:05 a.m. train from Boston.

To achieve a pre-9 a.m. arrival would require a 4 a.m. departure from Boston, a 5:15 departure from Springfield, and a 5:52 a.m. departure from Hartford.

Past experience has shown that trains leaving major terminals so ear-

ly carry virtually no riders. When running times improve, as a result of the Northeast Corridor Improvement Project, we'll be able to offer earlier arrivals in New York for business travelers.

Q: I'm an employee at Penn Coach yard, Philadelphia, and my question is about the way the Amfleet toilets are serviced by the hopper trucks. The hose they use doesn't have a perfect seal and a lot of waste falls on the tracks where I work. This is messy, unsafe and unsanitary. What can we do about this?

President's Hot Line

U.S.A. 800-424-5191
D.C. only 383-2027

Personnel Hot Line

U.S.A. 800-424-5190
D.C. only 383-3636

Payroll Hot Line

U.S.A. 800-424-5067
D.C. only 383-3517

Payroll personnel will answer calls live during day shift hours, Monday through Friday. At all other times calls will be handled by an answering machine.

Jobs Hot Line

U.S.A. only 800-424-5196

All Hot Lines are in operation
24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Callers to the President's Hot Line can either identify themselves or remain anonymous. Personnel Hot Line callers, obviously, must identify themselves if they wish a reply to their questions.

Employees also have the option of writing instead of calling. Write the specific Hot Line you want. c/o Amtrak, 400 N. Capitol St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20001.

A: This issue has been discussed with the superintendent of maintenance at your facility. The problem apparently occurred in early May when the hoses on the hopper truck had deteriorated beyond repair and some seepage occurred while servicing was being done.

Since that time, new hoses have been installed and the problem corrected.

When spillage does occur, it is the responsibility of the person working the truck to clean it up immediately. If this isn't done, it should be reported to the supervisor so corrective action can be taken quickly.

Q: I'd like to make a suggestion about what might be a good paying run for Amtrak. I'd like to see a train run between Stockton and San Francisco, running south from San Francisco to Redwood City, then east to Newark, Niles, Pleasanton, and finally to Stockton over the Southern Pacific line. This would be a beneficial service to people here as there are many commuters going into San Francisco.

We could have one train leave Stockton at about 5 a.m., arriving in San Francisco at 7:30. Another could leave Stockton at 5:30 a.m. and arrive in San Francisco at 8.

The schedule could be improved if there was some track work done, because I don't think it's been used for passenger service in probably 40 years.

A: At present, we don't have either operating or capital funds required for implementation of any new services with the exception of those supported by states under the 403(b) program.

Also, if the service would be primarily commuter in nature — and your idea sounds like it might be — we are prohibited by law from operating it unless a 100 per cent funding of any deficit would be assured by local governments.

Q: Why, with the big increase in business, does Amtrak refuse to put

on more help at eastern and western ticket offices? Business is up but all we get is more supervisors rather than ticket clerks and baggagemen who could produce some revenue for the company.

Some ticket offices hours are so far out of line that people can't get to them. Why can't some of those that normally serve nighttime trains be kept open during daylight hours? The increase in revenue should more than offset the cost of the job.

A: Even with ridership up, we find our operating expenses are also up. So, Amtrak is still operating on a tight budget.

We've found out over the years that opening a normally night operation station during daytime does bring in an increase in business but that increase does not offset the total cost of the employee when you include fringe benefits such as health and dental insurance, railroad retirement and such, along with the salary.

Because of current budget restrictions, we have to use our allotted positions in places that serve the most passengers and have enough duties to fill an eight hour day.

Information and reservations are available to everyone through the use of our toll-free 800-series numbers which are accessible 24 hours a day.

Editor's Note: In one portion of a recent Hot Line question, a caller from one of the CROs complained that "no one is allowed to mention, much less use, the Hot Line here. They won't even post the Hot Line number at the CRO."

Assuming what that caller said is true, please note that anyone can and should use the Hot Line without checking with his or her supervisor. That is precisely the purpose of the Hot Line. You can call from home. And the Hot Line number has been published in each issue of *Amtrak News* which every employee should be getting at his or her home. Please note, there is no one looking over your shoulder in the sanctity of your own home.

New Material Management System Moving Towards Implementation

It takes a lot of material to keep Amtrak's trains operating.

For example, the company operates 87 stores and owns nearly \$125 million worth of parts which are needed to repair and maintain the fleet of 331 locomotives and 1900-plus passenger cars and to maintain the right of way.

Also, items worth over \$52 million have been positioned in the Northeast Corridor for future improvements to track, signals and catenary.

The cost of the inventory and the nationwide base of operations are two aspects of the challenge. A company-sponsored analysis in 1978 of its materials control, procurement and financial systems indicated that tracking and control of funds and materials was difficult at best.

This was primarily due to the differences in reporting between the three functions. Contributing factors also included lack of a comprehensive parts catalog, the need to manually verify receipts of orders and, too often, late payments to vendors.

Amtrak decided to get computer help because of the computer's ability for quick processing of large quantities of complex data.

Several railroads and service firms were visited to inspect their computerized materials management systems. Finally, last August, Amtrak decided to buy the Burlington Northern's system.

A project team, under George Gautney, program director, material management, is now working to adapt this system to Amtrak's needs. Several major tasks must be accomplished before Amtrak's Material Management System, or AMMS, becomes operational. These include:

- Changing some 11,000 parts numbers,
- Updating 180,000 stock locations,
- Finding best procurement and pay methods for over 45,000 vendors,

- Publishing a new procedures manual, and

- Training employees how to use the new system.

Gautney says that when AMMS becomes operational, "The company will have information available instantly to people who have a need to know by using computer terminals.

"In the past, material users lacked reliable inventory figures because information was slow in getting to the field."

With AMMS, computer files can be updated through on-line and batch processing and all levels of management can be sure they will be working

with current figures.

Gautney also points out that the AMMS team is interested in any suggestions or ideas that potential users would like to see incorporated into the new system. "We don't make any promises but all ideas will be considered," he said. Gautney asks that such ideas be conveyed to one's supervisor or called directly to the AMMS team at (8) 733-2459.

Amtrak wants the best equipment and the best services for its customers. AMMS's contribution will be in having the required materials at the right place in the right quantity at the right time.

Connection Made To Steam Railroad

The old and the new in railroading were linked together for the first time in 47 years on Sunday, August 3, at Old Saybrook, Connecticut, with the startup of connecting shuttle service between Amtrak and the steam-powered Valley Railroad tourist line at Essex.

The connecting shuttle service is the first rail service since 1933 between Old Saybrook and the village of Essex.

The Valley Railroad is a steam-powered tourist line that follows the Connecticut river and serves Essex, Deep River and Chester. An intermodal connection is made at Deep River to boats that operate on the river.

Fare for the ride on the steam train is \$3.50. An additional charge is made for the boat ride.

Two daily shuttle trains — a diesel locomotive and one coach — will connect with four Amtrak trains at Old Saybrook making it possible for vacationers from points in the Northeast to take a day-long trip into the past on the scenic Valley line. The entire trip can be made without using an automobile.

Two Amtrak trains arrive at Old Saybrook, one from Philadelphia and one from Boston, to make the connection with the Valley Railroad's shuttle at 12:15 p.m. The shuttle will return visitors to Old Saybrook for connections home at about 6 p.m.

The shuttle will operate daily through September 4, then daily except Monday and Friday through October 26.

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Boyd States Amtrak's Case Before Governors' Annual Meeting

Amtrak President Alan Boyd challenged the nation's governors, at their annual meeting in Denver on Sunday, August 3, to form a partnership that would revitalize the railroad industry, provide jobs, improve mass transit and reduce local economic burdens.

Addressing the annual meeting of the National Governors' Association, Boyd pointed out that Amtrak is a unique organization. The company, he noted, serves a public purpose and yet is free of many problems associated with governmental agencies. Boyd said, "The Amtrak experiment will have importance well beyond the question of how efficiently we transport people in passenger trains."

He told the governors that government's inclination, when dealing with industry problems, is all too frequently to treat symptoms and not the actual problem. The typical government response has been to continue paying huge sums in labor protection for compensating those put out of work while, at the same time, making loans to near-bankrupt railroads who cannot afford to repay.

"We should," he stressed, "be making near-commercial rate loans to

those who show some hope. We need to revitalize the railroad industry, not provide it with funeral insurance."

Boyd asked the governors to support Amtrak in developing a network of priority rail corridors, selected for both passenger and freight volume, that would be connected by a network of well-maintained long-distance mainline tracks. "This integrated system," he said, "should be targeted for the kind of capital improvements which are not within the financial reach of the private railroads alone."

"Work involved," he continued, "would provide productive, dependable jobs to thousands of people in the very parts of the country where such work is most needed."

Boyd also suggested that a healthy railroad industry could help revitalize lagging economic regions with jobs, reduce maintenance costs of interstate road systems, cut commuter mass transit costs and act as a partner with local governments and the private sector in developing significant downtown real estate.

Governors Respond To Speech

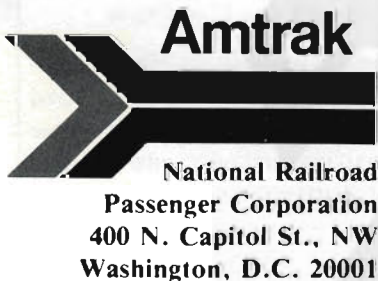
Before they adjourned, the National Governors' Association approved a resolution offered by Governor Jerry Brown, of California, supporting rail passenger service.

The resolution said, in part, "The revitalization of the passenger rail system is an important national goal.

"In response to the nation's growing energy problems, a pro-

cess should begin immediately to evaluate the benefits and costs of high-speed, high-frequency passenger rail service in heavily traveled transportation corridors.

"The most promising corridors should be developed and implemented without delay. They should be targeted for immediate infusion of capital funds to increase track capacity and permit high speeds."



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