



News from the

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NARP presented the George Falcon Golden Spike Award to Amtrak Chairman and Wisconsin Governor Tommy G. Thompson (center), shown here holding the award, with NARP President John R. Martin (right) and Executive Director Ross B. Capon (left). Thompson was honored for his "decision to champion intercity rail passenger improvements nationwide...the impressive amount of time he has devoted to his work as Chairman of Amtrak and...his willingness to carry with enthusiasm the message that Amtrak enjoys broad bipartisan support. We particularly appreciate his effective, persuasive and tireless efforts in carrying this message to the U.S. Congress."

## Golden Spike to Gov. Thompson

*Excerpts from comments by Chairman/Governor Tommy G. Thompson, on receiving the George Falcon Golden Spike Award, April 22:*

"It is a thrill, a privilege and an honor to receive the Golden Spike Award. It is also a tremendous honor for me to serve as chairman at this time...There are a lot of people that don't think we're going to do it [achieve operational self-sufficiency in four years]. For those doubting Thomases, I would like to say, get out of our way, because we're going to do it..."

"[Amtrak President George] Warrington truly is the best thing that's happened to Amtrak. He will go down in the annals of history as the person that turned Amtrak around and made it successful. We've got some of the best employees that Amtrak's ever had, and they're dedicated to revitalizing this railroad and making it successful..."

"California is going to have 19 million more people by the year 2020—you can't tell me that they can build enough highways or enough airports to handle that number. The only thing that's going to serve that population is rail passenger service, and we are going to develop the best passenger service out West, the same way we're going to do it in the Midwest...the Northeast...the South..."

## Voinovich-Chafee Bill Could Help States Fund Trains

Senators George V. Voinovich (R-OH) and John H. Chafee (R-RI) on May 27 introduced a bill that would let states spend their flexible "TEA-21" dollars on intercity passenger rail investments. Chafee chairs the Committee on Environment and Public Works; Voinovich chairs its Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure. TEA-21, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, is the big highway/transit law enacted last year (May, June '98 News).

Enactment of S. 1144 would move us towards the balanced, intermodal transportation system the public needs and wants.

The new flexibility in S.1144 ("Surface Transportation Act of 1999") applies to National Highway System, Surface Transportation Program and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program funds. Today, intercity passenger rail is the only major form of surface transportation on which states may not spend federal gasoline-tax revenues. Thus, state rail officials are handicapped when pushing state rail investments because—unlike road and aviation projects—rail projects generate little or no federal matching funds.

The "Amtrak flexibility" concept embodied in S.1144 was endorsed earlier this year in Congressional testimony by the National Governors Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Association of Counties, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the League of Cities.

Original co-sponsors of S.1144—which also has a section on the State Infrastructure Bank Program and a few other changes to transportation law—are Jim M. Jeffords (R-VT), Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY), John W. Warner (R-VA), Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), Harry Reid (D-NV), Frank R. Lautenberg (D-NJ) and Patrick J. Leahy (D-VT). ■

### AMTRAK FUNDING UPDATE

**Amtrak's fiscal 2000 funding request of \$571 million—and the right to spend it on maintenance work—was approved by appropriations subcommittees in the Senate (May 25) and House (May 27), and by the full Senate Appropriations Committee (May 27).**

"[At the November New Orleans high-speed rail ceremony attended by Senate Republican Leader Trent Lott (R-MS, Jan. News)], I said, 'Trent, we need some capital to build some high speed trains for America.' And Trent Lott said, 'I buy in.' So there you go. We're going to have bipartisan support..."

"There's a fondness for rail passenger service in America. Every time I talk about it, people smile. They like the railroads, and the fact they're going to come back. I tell people,

*(continued on page 4)*

## BURCH MEMORIAL SAFETY AWARD GOES TO AMTRAK CONDUCTOR GARRARD OF FLORIDA



Above, Bette Burch presents the Dr. Gary Burch Memorial Safety Award to Amtrak Conductor J. F. "Frank" Garrard of Mayo, FL, at NARP's annual Washington reception, at Union Station, April 22. Above right are, from left, Gail Garrard (wife of Frank) Wendy Garrard (daughter), Bette Burch, Frank Garrard and Amtrak Chairman/Wisconsin Governor Tommy G. Thompson (holding his Golden Spike Award, see p. 1).

The award—which includes \$1,000 from the Burch family—goes to the employee judged to have done the most to improve safety for railroad passengers. Garrard long has spoken to public groups about safety, all on his own initiative. His efforts started in the 1970's when he worked for Seaboard Coast Line, and continued after his 1986 transfer to Amtrak's payroll. He received extensive training under Amtrak that enhanced his knowledge of safety and his ability as a



presenter. In recent years, Garrard—who is based in Jacksonville—has trained all Amtrak train and engine crews in his area in using fire extinguishers. For emergency response personnel, he developed a training course specific to passenger-train accidents. Garrard prepares and copies his own materials; he even carries an actual passenger-car emergency window. In the past four years, he has made presentations in over 40 Florida and Georgia communities to over 3,600 emergency response personnel.

The Amtrak supervisors who nominated him said Garrard "is recognized by his supervisors and co-workers as a 'Superman' on the train particularly in providing outstanding service to our customers."

The Burch Award is presented in memory of Dr. Burch, who died in a 1991 passenger train derailment in South Carolina. The Burch family has sponsored the award since its establishment in 1994.

## Carmichael—"Interstate II," 20,000 Miles of High Speed Rail

*"Some people will argue that motor fuel taxes should only go to highway projects. But highway construction is not solving the gridlock problem. More important, the existing level of highway user fees doesn't even come close to covering the costs that highway transportation now inflicts upon our economy and society. More to the point, it is not building the system we need, one that captures the safety and capacity of the 21st-Century intermodal passenger and freight network.*

—Gilbert E. Carmichael, before the "Road Gang" (highway professionals group), May 20, Washington

Amtrak Reform Council Chairman Gilbert Carmichael, who was President Bush's Federal Railroad Administrator, thinks our intermodal freight system points towards "the most promising strategy for transportation improvements in the years ahead. I call it 'Interstate II,' a new vision of truly high-speed intercity travel, based upon steel, not pavement. The concept is not radical. It combines the proven efficiency of rail transportation with the strengths of the intermodal system."

Parts of "Interstate II," he says, already are under way, citing the Northeast, Empire and Pacific Northwest corridors. "During the first quarter of the 21st Century, I believe that we

can build about 20,000 miles of corridors capable of running trains at 90 to 150 miles per hour. That network will be augmented by as much as another 10,000 miles of high-quality conventional rail routings.

"Often, we will be able to use the same right of way that freight railroads now occupy—if we deal with a number of key issues—including grade separation and liability. An important element of Interstate II is the requirement to eliminate at-grade highway-rail crossings." Some will be closed, some separated, and the remainder "fitted with high-tech devices." After all, "we closed tens of thousands of road intersections when the Interstate highways were built."

His vision also includes "city center terminals in cities large and small...and fast, modern and highly efficient intermodal terminals," such as at airports where today "you are reminded that seamless service hasn't arrived. The seams are ripped apart just on the other side of the baggage claim."

*(continued on page 4)*

**FOR LATE NEWS on passenger trains, call NARP's 4-minute hotline, 1-900-988-RAIL (\$1.20 a minute, callers under 18 need parental permission). Updated Friday afternoons and as needed. A 15-second call is free (so you can learn whether the tape is new).**

## TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

**May 16 Amtrak Timetable**—Non-Northeast Custom Class is now "Business class" (but *San Diegans* have "Pacific class," Northwest Talgos have "Cascades Business class," *Carolinian* has "Carolina Business class"). Newspapers, beverages still provided.

In the Northeast, in preparation for the change to Acela service (Mar. News), Amtrak is moving towards a simpler, three-class structure:

- "First class" replaces Metroliner Club Class. However, NortheastDirect Club Class is dropped, meaning no such service for Virginia and New England. (Acela Express late this year will bring First class to Boston-New York and major intermediate points.)

- "Business class" replaces Metroliner Coach Class and Custom Class on NortheastDirect and Empire trains. Papers and beverages given on request for now, but that will end when Acela begins (except Custom Class amenities continue unchanged in Business class on *Twilight Shoreliner* and *Vermont*).

- "Coach class" is offered on Non-Metroliner trains. For now, coach seats on some NortheastDirect and Empire trains will continue to be reserved. After more equipment is available, all such trains (then to be known as Acela Regional) will have unreserved coaches.

Business class does not include Metropolitan Lounge access, so Amtrak is sending an access card to frequent NortheastDirect Club customers good through 1999. Amtrak will take care of others who "really" need access, and is developing a longer-term program that would give certain non-First class customers access.

Through September, Amtrak Shore Line trains (i.e., those running via Providence) will bypass Back Bay, using the Dorchester Branch. Peak MBTA commuter trains—except for last morning inbound Stoughton train—will stop at Back Bay as usual. Off-peak and weekend Attleboro trains, and weekend Franklin trains, will skip Back Bay; there will be South Station-Back Bay shuttle trains. Saturday Needham trains will terminate at Forest Hills, for Orange Line transfer.

All three Chicago-Detroit daily round trips now run

all the way to/from Pontiac, MI.

At the request of Missouri DOT, the eastbound *Ann Rutledge* leaves Kansas City earlier, at 7:30 am, further "degrading" the connection from the *Southwest Chief* (now arrives at 7:29 am). *State support is important, but this is a clear example of how increased reliance on state funding fragments the national system.*

*Cardinal's* Indianapolis dwell time is longer due to a possible new Chicago-Jeffersonville, IN (across river from Louisville, KY) train that would be extension of *Hoosier State* some days, *Cardinal* section others.

The May 16 timetable shows the *Southwest Chief* stopping at Williams Jct., AZ. But due to construction delays, the earliest that is likely to happen is July 2.

*Lake Shore Limited* and (westbound) *Southwest Chief* are about one half-hour slower, but westbound *California Zephyr* is 35 minutes faster.

**Connecting Services**—Triangle Transportation (701/775-4781) restored a Grand Forks-Winnipeg bus, though not an official Thruway service. The previous Thruway ended in February (Feb. News). Bus and rail stations at Grand Forks are 5 mi. apart; at Winnipeg 1.6 mi. apart.

Amtrak station in New London (CT) is close to pier for unreserved Orient Point (NY) ferry across Long Island Sound (runs every two hours). Passengers buy tickets at the pier; Amtrak no longer sells them.

Amtrak on June 1 began running a shuttle bus from its suburban Staples Mill station into downtown Richmond, VA (to Marriott and Omni hotels and Virginia Commonwealth University). The shuttle connects with four trains a day to/from the north.

**Salt Lake City**—Tracks leading to the Rio Grande station will be removed soon as part of an interstate highway reconstruction project and downtown track consolidation project (Mar. '97 News). When that happens, Amtrak's *California Zephyr* will begin serving a temporary station 1.5 blocks to the west, to be replaced before the 2002 Olympics by an intermodal terminal.

The Fort Worth-Oklahoma City train starts revenue service June 15. A northbound inaugural train will run June 14, with ceremonies at the stations.

## SAN ANTONIO GETS PERMANENT STATION



Amtrak began using a new, permanent station in San Antonio January 15, dedicated February 20 by Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX). Over 700 people were on hand, including NARP President John R. Martin. Above, the view from that day, looking north, shows in the background the old SP station, used by Amtrak until 1996 and now redeveloped by its owner, VIA Metropolitan Transit Authority. At left is a view looking south. The station, served by the *Sunset Limited* and *Texas Eagle*, cost \$1 million, paid for by Amtrak and VIA.

—both, Roger Minton

## Interstate II

(from page 2)

"For the equivalent of two cents on the motor fuel tax—one penny at the federal level and a second penny from the states—America could have within 20 years' time a network of high-speed rail corridors that approaches the scale of the Interstate highway system. That commitment of fuel tax dollars would offer a powerful incentive to additional private investment as well. States and cities should be partners in the process, bringing additional revenues to the table.

"This new ethical intermodal transportation system will conserve fuel, reduce pollution, and be less disruptive in using land...Private money can be applied to construction, operations, station development and equipment—especially modern passenger, mail and express train-sets."

To the question, "Why can't we have trains like those in Europe?" Carmichael responds, "We can! It's a question of priorities, strategy, partnerships, leadership and policy..."

"Building this very safe, 20,000-mile, grade-separated, high-speed intercity rail network is the key to the quality of transportation services during the next century. The money is there...the 'road gang's' next goal should be to build it."

Carmichael "came out of the highway lobby. As late as 1987, I was active in promoting a \$1.6 billion, 1077-mile four-lane highway development program for Mississippi. I have

## Gov. Thompson

(from page 1)

if [other countries] can have it, why not the United States?...

"I made a commitment that if I could do anything about it I was going to bring rail passenger service back to the Elroys [small Wisconsin railroad town where he grew up] of America. And, as chairman, I'm dedicated to do that. Not only high-speed trains, but we need long [-distance] passenger rail service from one end of this country to another. We need safe transportation, and we have to be able to go out and tell the American people that, 'America, we can have rail passenger service.' I'm dedicated to accomplish that, and I promise you, I am not going to let this railroad go down. With your help and God willing we're going to make Amtrak successful." ■

owned five auto dealerships and an air charter service. My first federal appointment came when President Nixon named me to the National Highway Safety Advisory Committee. In 1975, President Ford appointed me to the National Transportation Policy Study Commission, which Bud Shuster chaired. I led the subcommittee on advanced technology." ■

## WARRINGTON ADDRESSES NARP BOARD

Amtrak President/CEO George D. Warrington told the NARP Board April 23 that the "enthusiasm, energy and stature" of Amtrak's new Board helped convince him to seek the permanent job. He sees the Board as extremely helpful in getting Amtrak the support it needs to survive and prosper.

"I accepted this job because it is very important to me to demonstrate that there needs to be—and will be—a *national* system...and that if we're nimble, if we squeeze all the commercial revenue streams we can out of this operation, that we can run a very successful national intercity system." He said economics and politics both indicate that the system should have "more high-density corridors."

Warrington said he is determined to raise service standards "and deliver consistency across" Amtrak, by providing adequate training and "incentivizing the work force and management financially."

By year's end, he expects that his national market-based network analysis will "identify opportunities to improve the bottom lines of every long-distance train that we're running today" and help define "what I hope and expect will be today's national system, with significant enhancements either around frequency or reach. We will define a national system of long-distance trains and medium-distance corridors that connect very well and improve our bottom line. We will identify the capital cost of delivering that system in a quality way over the next decade. It's about vision, the long run and getting out of the short-term fixation with next year's appropriation."



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