

## More on NARP's Vision of a New Rail Law

This continues our recitation of policy recommendations the NARP Board would like to see in the next passenger rail reauthorization.

**5. Fund the implementation of the Performance Improvement Programs Amtrak has already prepared for its current national network (long-distance) routes.** Here are some of the key recommendations not implemented:

- New York-Philadelphia-Chicago through-cars on the *Capitol Limited/Pennsylvanian* to provide single-seat rides between Pennsylvania/New Jersey points and the Midwest
- Daily *Cardinal* and *Sunset Limited*
- Bike racks in Superliner coach/baggage cars on *Capitol Limited* – a logical place to begin bicycle haulage on a long route because of the bicycle trail that links Pittsburgh, Cumberland, the Harpers Ferry area and the Georgetown section of Washington
- Thruway bus links Grand Forks-Winnipeg, Newton-Wichita-Oklahoma City and Phoenix-Maricopa
- More revenue rooms in Superliner transition cars
- More capacity on New York-Atlanta portion of *Crescent* and seasonally on Bay Area-Reno portion of *California Zephyr*
- Palletized express service Chicago-

*Continued on page 4*

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- NARP's Heritage Circle 2
- Keeping Trains Running (Sect. 209 & government shutdown) 4
- Amtrak moves to matrix organization 4
- Performance improvement plans enacted 4
- Amtrak commits to end food & beverage service losses 5
- New Amtrak long-distance GM & route managers named 5
- High culture (re)discovers trains 6
- Apply for NARP leadership posts 6
- Travelers' Advisory 6

## NARP Keeps Up Pressure to Preserve, Improve Southwest Chief

**Stewart Addresses, Meets Local Leaders in Garden City, Dodge City, KS**

NARP Chairman Bob Stewart addressed a group of local elected officials and business leaders in Garden City on the importance of preserving Amtrak service. The Sept. 19 talk generated positive media coverage for NARP and the train service.

Stewart and his wife, Virginia, also spent a day in Dodge City, where they met with the mayor and city manager.

The Sept. 20 *Garden City Telegram* carried a detailed report that described NARP's mission and goals, extensively quoting from Stewart's talk. There also was coverage on local television.

The paper quoted Stewart: "The key date for the *Southwest Chief* is January 2016. That is the day that the contract between BNSF and Amtrak expires. BNSF is proposing that they'll need \$200 million over 10 years for upgrad-



Brad Nading / Garden City Telegram

**Garden City Telegram published this photo of NARP Chairman Stewart speaking there and prominently displayed the photo on its website.**

ing the line and maintenance over three states [Newton, KS, to Albuquerque, NM via La Junta, CO] each of which would have to put up \$4 million per year for 10 years."

*Continued on page 2*

## Capon Speaks to Well-Attended Chief Conference in Pueblo

Colorado Rail Passenger Association (ColoRail) President / NARP Council Representative Jim Souby organized a gathering of public officials and private citizens along the threatened portion of Amtrak's *Southwest Chief* route (see May 2012 *News*) in Pueblo Sept. 14.

The event rekindled positive momentum that the states of Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico and Amtrak and BNSF Railway will find a way to keep the railroad up to passenger train standards beyond January 2016.

Speakers included NARP President Ross Capon, Amtrak's Ray Lang, La Junta (CO) City Manager Rick Klein, Kansas State Rep. John Doll (R-Garden City), Pueblo City Commissioner Sal Pace, and New Mexico NARP leader Ford Robbins. The audience included a bipartisan assemblage of public offi-

*Continued on page 3*



Beverly Babb

**Amtrak's Ray Lang (left) and NARP Pres. Ross Capon (right) prepare to board the eastbound *Chief* at La Junta on Sept. 14. City Mgr. Rick Klein sees them off.**

# NARP's Heritage Circle

You remember that one train trip, where the tracks seem to go on forever as you were heading into the sunset?

Well that's what we tried to imagine when creating the new Heritage Circle Pin to denote the recognition of members who have named NARP as a beneficiary in their Will and Testament.

It conveys an "infinity" look, symbolizing that each Heritage Circle member's legacy will live on through NARP and its milestone accomplishments. These members always will be remembered for securing a voice for generations of rail passengers to come.



NARP now would like to honor its Heritage Circle members by offering this token of our appreciation for your generosity and consideration towards NARP and passenger rail service in America.

Please contact NARP and let Resource Development Director Logan McLeod know if you have named NARP in your Will, or plan on giving through an endowment program, and have not yet been recognized or thanked. We will get your Pin out to you immediately along with a special letter of thanks from Ross and our Chairman Bob Stewart. ■

## NARP News

©2013 National Association of Railroad Passengers. All rights reserved.

505 Capitol Court, NE, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20002-7706

(202) 408-8362; fax: (202) 408-8287

narp@narprail.org www.narprail.org

<b>Robert J. Stewart</b>	Chairman
<b>John Delora</b>	Vice Chair
<b>Albert L. Papp, Jr.</b>	Vice Chair
<b>Arthur Poole</b>	Vice Chair
<b>David Randall</b>	Vice Chair
<b>Stephen J. Salatti</b>	Secretary
<b>Kenneth T. Clifford</b>	Treasurer
<b>Ross B. Capon</b>	President & CEO
<b>Sean Jeans-Gail</b>	Vice President
<b>Malcolm M. Kenton</b>	Director of Outreach & Engagement
<b>James Abram Zumwalt</b>	Coordinator of Resource Development
<b>Logan McLeod</b>	Director of Resource Development
<b>Lawrence E. Scott</b>	Special Assistant to the Chairman

This has news through October 10.  
Vol. 47, No. 7 was mailed September 25.

## NARP Chairman Speaks in Garden City

from page 1

Present were State Rep. John Doll (R) and his wife, Garden City Commissioner Janet Doll. The *Telegram* quoted her saying that the revenue that Amtrak service generates for the city "far outweighs the cost of upgrading and maintaining the line. Amtrak contributes over \$30 million in 2012 in our economy just here in Kansas, so a \$4 million investment per year for 10 years is, I think, money well spent, be-

cause after that, it will last for a really long time. It's a good return on your investment."

The *Telegram* article had this from NARP's chairman: "We have a mobility crisis in this country. ... We see this problem around the country, where medium-sized cities have lost airline service, bus service and where Amtrak is their one connection, their one link to the rest of the country. We're going to have 100 million more people between now and 2050. How are we going to move them around? We have an aging population, too, that doesn't want to go through all the hassle of the airport, or the cost.

"We're all for good airlines and highways. ... But we think the rails need to get their fair share of the support. Your state (legislators) and your federal congressman should know how important this train is. Think about it, if

you guys happen to lose that American Airlines flight, this train is going to become even more important to the citizens of Garden City as a means of connecting with other cities. [American is Garden City's only airline, with two daily Dallas-Fort Worth round trips.]

"We work both sides of the aisle. ... We don't think this should be a party issue. This should be an American issue. Economic success is based on transportation. ... We're ranked 23rd in the world right now in terms of our transportation infrastructure. We ought to be ashamed of that. We ought to be number one in the world in transportation infrastructure.

"It's important to send the message to all of the states. I think we need to get the federal government involved in this in a bigger way."

A representative of Garden City's St. Catherine Hospital told Stewart the train is vital for sending patients to other hospitals. A local nun said her order uses the train to transport poor people with medical conditions. ■

## Cities Tout Their Amtrak Service



Courtesy of Amtrak

La Junta, CO, proudly includes "An Amtrak Served Community" on this welcome sign along US Highway 50. So far, 135 communities have posted such signs.

cials from all three states: 11 from Colorado, five from Kansas and four from New Mexico.

Souby said the general manager of the Philmont Scout Ranch near Raton supports saving the *Chief* and would have been present except that his board was meeting.

“I’ve seen lots of advocacy meetings around the country and today’s is one of the best ever,” Capon told the crowd of over 100.

**La Junta City Manager Rick Klein**, the energetic leader of this effort among public officials, told NARP he was impressed that Kansas and New Mexico leaders present at the first *Chief* meeting he organized “came back with more people. ... Saving Amtrak in Colorado is vital to our state and region.”

Capon noted that the *Chief* is Amtrak’s fastest Chicago-West Coast train, and the only one between the Midwest and the West Coast’s largest metropolis—Los Angeles, which also is the rail gateway to San Diego. “There is a chance that, if we can’t save the current route, we lose the train entirely, so cities

not on the threatened part of the route should be fighting just as hard.”

Noting that history can be instructive, Capon said Amtrak’s threat to discontinue the *Texas Eagle* in the mid-1990s led East Texas communities to convince then-Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX) to become a strong *Eagle* and Amtrak supporter. A grass roots support team was created and remains active today: Texas Eagle Marketing and Performance Organization <http://tem-po-rail.org/>

Texas gave Amtrak a two-year, \$5.6 million loan in 1997 (which Amtrak repaid early). This created enough political cover to save the train.

Capon suggested that a significant commitment from states might save the *Chief* even if it didn’t completely cover the implied states’ share of the “ask.”

**Pueblo City Commissioner Sal Pace**: “This is an issue I care deeply about. I dream of returning rail to this country and to Colorado and I believe we can save the *Southwest Chief*. We have too much emphasis on building roads. ... Ultimately, the *Chief* is a small cost—serving rural constituency, an untapped source of tourism, important for economic development.

“We need to get with the capital development to get \$2 to \$5 million a year for ten years and find a legislator who can be an advocate.

There are a lot of potential advocates.”

Pace cited a poll of southeastern Colorado voters that showed 83% favoring setting aside a third of one percent of state transportation spending to save the *Chief*, including **80% of self-identified Tea Party supporters.**

**TIGER Grant Delegation Letters**

Robbins said New Mexico’s entire Congressional delegation signed a June 26 letter to then-DOT Secretary Ray LaHood endorsing Garden City’s rejected application for a federal TIGER grant to rehabilitate the line between Newton and La Junta (see last issue).

Robbins said the signers included the conservative Rep. Steve Pearce (R-NM).

In Kansas, however, Rep. Tim Huelskamp (R) did not sign the state delegation’s letter. He opposes all subsidies.

Earlier this year, Huelskamp led a conservative attempt—backed by Pearce—to oust Rep. John Boehner (R-OH) as House Speaker.

Colorado Sens. Mark Udall and Michael Bennet (both D) and Rep. Cory Gardner (R) wrote Secretary LaHood in support of the grant.

**The Pueblo Chieftain report on the meeting** was reprinted in the national travel blog *Skift*. The *Chieftain’s* Sept. 18 editorial called the *Chief* “an important transportation and economic engine ... Pace estimates that \$2 million to \$5 million a year over the next 10 years may be needed to accomplish the track upgrade and provide regular maintenance. We think it’s an investment worth making....Rail supporters suggest area residents contact state [and federal] legislators, and local leaders to [highlight] the importance of the route.”

Pace urged people to meet personally with officials. ■

See June-July News, p. 3. Letters supporting Garden City’s TIGER Grant application to fix Chief track are at [www.colorail.org](http://www.colorail.org).



Both photos: Ross Capon

**Top:** The packed room at the Southeastern Colorado Heritage Center across the street from Pueblo’s former train station. Public officials and citizens discussed how to save Amtrak’s *Southwest Chief*. **Bottom (from left):** Kansas State Rep. John Doll, La Junta City Manager Rick Klein, active NARP member Ford Robbins of Santa Fe, NM, and Colfax County (NM) Commissioner Bill Sauble.



## Keeping Trains Running

Amtrak has reached agreement with agencies in 18 of the 19 states with service affected by the 2008 law's Section 209. That provision requires most states to pay more than they have in the past.

Negotiations with Indiana are continuing and Amtrak is hopeful. Indiana earlier had been in doubt, but pressure from citizens (thank you!) and from the mayors of Crawfordsville and Lafayette has been very helpful.

Required service cut notices Amtrak sent (which can be ignored) showed Oct. 16 as last day of operation—which, coincidentally, is the last day before the reported federal debt ceiling deadline.

**Oct. 1 federal shutdown:** Amtrak has worked since late spring to cut costs and conserve cash—including emphasis on collecting outstanding receivables—to boost the end-of-FY 2013 cash balance. Strong July and August passenger revenues helped. **Amtrak is running normally** and should do so for the foreseeable future. ■

### “PIP” IDEAS MADE REAL

The law required Amtrak to develop Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) for each long-distance route. Here are some PIP elements that have been implemented.

- Checked baggage handling on the *Zephyr* and *Chief* at Galesburg, IL
- Reduced layover time in San Antonio for *Sunset Limited* and *Texas Eagle* through cars; daytime service at Houston and Tucson
- Same-day connections in both directions at Los Angeles between *Coast Starlight* and *Sunset Limited*
- Checked baggage on *Cardinal*
- Priority vehicle offloading for *Auto Train* passengers who pay for it
- Additional coach on *Silver Meteor* during peak periods.
- *Palmetto* Thruway bus connections at Wilson NC for Kinston-Morehead City and for Goldsboro-Wilmington
- Regional items on *Cardinal's* dinner menu.
- Better signage to improve restroom cleanliness

## Amtrak Moves to Matrix Organization

DJ Stadtler, Amtrak VP—Operations, announced to employees on the first day of Fiscal 2014 that the new Operations organization structure “has been officially instituted” — it will be a “matrix organization.”

He identified three “driving factors”:

- To create business line accountability;
- To dissolve departmental silos; and
- To move decision-making and accountability closer to our customers.

All this sounds like Management 101 from years ago, but making good on it would be a major plus for Amtrak.

The new Amtrak will “Manage to Profit and Loss,” replacing a culture where, “when it came to financial management, Operations tended to focus mostly on expenses.”

One bad moment in Amtrak's history came years ago when it decided not to

add an extra, seasonal Chicago-St. Paul coach to the *Empire Builder* because Operations had not budgeted the cost. It seemed no one below the level of CEO was responsible for considering *both revenues and costs*.

Stadtler aims to change this.

As well, the matrix organization should expose employees “to new career opportunities because they have more interaction with various parts of the business.”

The ability of managers to work in different parts of companies at different times has been called a plus for companies and individuals. Stadtler himself has seen Amtrak from three vantage points: Federal Railroad Administration Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Amtrak CFO and—since late 2011—VP of Operations. ■

### Policy Recommendations, Part Two

from page 1

Los Angeles using available space in the *Southwest Chief* baggage car.

*The six Performance Improvement Plan reports covering all Amtrak's long-distance routes are at [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com) – News & Media – Reports & Documents.*

**6. Require Amtrak to plan expansions that would improve the public utility of all national network routes, which in reality are federally supported inter-state corridors. Provide the needed funds to develop those plans.** NARP long has held that Amtrak's existing network must be expanded to serve more of America. Logical priorities would include:

- Restoring the New Orleans-Florida link which was temporarily knocked out by Hurricane Katrina but permanently (so far) knocked out by Amtrak.
- Restore the other two routes that the 2008 law required Amtrak to study – Chicago-Pacific Northwest via southern North Dakota / southern Montana and via Boise and eastern Oregon
- Create a direct link between Florida, Atlanta and Chicago
- Re-establish service to the largest unserved metro areas – Las Vegas NV, Columbus OH, Nashville TN, Louisville KY (one or both of the latter two could

be on the Chicago-Florida route) – as well as to downtown Phoenix.

**7. Should the Appeals Court decision be upheld, give the Federal Railroad Administration sole authority to develop the performance metrics and standards specified in PRIIA section 207, deleting the words “...and Amtrak shall jointly...”**

As we reported in August *News*, p. 5, the Court of Appeals invalidated Section 207 of the 2008 passenger train reauthorization. Amtrak was found to have been improperly granted regulatory authority.

The apparent solution was to give Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) sole responsibility for what the law assigned jointly to Amtrak and FRA.

However, the Department of Justice (DOJ), in an eloquent petition for rehearing, argued that Section 207 is constitutional. If 207 ultimately is upheld, this recommendation becomes moot.

It is important that 207 be made operative again because it clearly defines on-time performance, whereas the reference to 80% on-time performance in Section 213, also cited in our August report, has been subject to some debate. ■

*NARP's Goals and Recommendations are at [www.bit.ly/reauth13](http://www.bit.ly/reauth13)*

## Amtrak: Zero Food Losses in Five Years

Amtrak has announced a plan to eliminate food and beverage losses over five years. The railroad says it has increased the cost recovery rate from 49% to 65% over the past seven years. Those percentages are conservative in that they do not reflect any ticket revenue that was earned due to the presence of food service.

However, Amtrak's October 3 release quoted President & CEO Joe Boardman saying that "if Amtrak were to eliminate food and beverage services as some observers recommend, the railroad would actually lose more money because of the loss in associated ridership and ticket revenue, and thereby increase its dependence on federal support."

Also from Amtrak's release: "In inflation adjusted dollars, the Amtrak food and beverage loss is down \$31 million, from \$105 million in FY 2006 to a projected \$74 million in FY 2013—or about a 30 percent move in the right direction."

NARP Board Member Jim Loomis's reaction to Amtrak's release probably reflected the views of many long-time train riders: "And, in five years, either the quality of food and the service ... will have markedly deteriorated or [Amtrak] will have failed to meet [its] stated goal."

While Amtrak has set a tough goal, achieving it would help the fight to preserve & expand the long-distance network. Criticism of food losses from some on Capitol Hill has been relentless.

Boardman said, "Our plan will expand initiatives that have worked, add new elements and evolve as updated information and opportunities lead us to better solutions." Indeed, Amtrak has improved menus in recent years, and restored real china on some trains."

Amtrak's release: "The centerpiece of the plan is an improved management structure that consolidates operations and accountability for food and beverage into a single department. This new organization also establishes a long-distance services general manager and route directors responsible for profit and loss of specific trains who will

identify opportunities for further cost savings and efficiencies [See articles at right and on page 4].

"Some of those opportunities include:

- aligning dining car staffing with seasonal changes in customer demand;
- establishing metrics to assess service attendants' onboard sales performance;
- reducing spoilage;
- closely tracking onboard stock levels;
- regularly refreshing menus; and
- exploring new pricing and revenue management options to align with customer needs and enhance cost recovery.

"Further, Amtrak is using technology onboard trains aimed at improving customer service, automating financial and other reporting, and eliminating the error prone and time consuming method of manual data entry. Just this week, for example, Amtrak began a pilot on the New York-Miami *Silver Meteor* to test a new touch-screen tablet-based solution that dining car service attendants use to take passenger orders and print customer receipts.

"In 2014 Amtrak will roll out its Point of Sale (POS) system [already on *Acela Express* and California corridors] across its national network. ... POS technology improves the customer experience by streamlining the check-out and receipt printing process in café and lounge cars, and allows onboard employees more time to focus on sales and customer service. It also provides real-time inventory status, better decision support and more flexibility to introduce targeted pricing and discounts, including value and combo meals.

"Also in 2014 Amtrak plans to test 'cashless' sales for food and beverage on certain routes. The elimination of cash reduces transaction time and significantly reduces accounting expenses and the risk of fraud or abuse. In addition, many venues that have pursued similar initiatives have seen increased sales. This model is very popular in the airline industry and has been seen as a favorable change by travelers."

As Vice-President--Operations DJ Stadler told Amtrak, one way an atten-

dant can increase "sales performance" is to traverse the coaches with some frequency promoting the dining car.

Amtrak says 99% of food losses are on dining cars "while Cafe car services ... essentially break even or make a positive contribution to the bottom line." ■

### New Long-Distance GM & Route Directors Named

Mark Murphy was named General Manager—Long Distance Services effective Oct. 3, Vice President for Operations DJ Stadler announced. Murphy is a 27-year Amtrak veteran who most recently was Deputy Chief Mechanical Officer—Terminal Operations in Wilmington, DE. He will relocate to Chicago for his new position.

He will oversee the functions of the Transportation, Mechanical, and Engineering departments within a common business line for the 15 long distance services. In addition, the new route directors who are responsible for profit and loss, business planning and decision-making for specific long-distance trains, report to him.

"Mark will leverage his experience and strong business principles to bring operational [and financial] excellence to our long-distance services," Stadler said in a memo to employees.

Three Deputy General Managers (DGMs) will report to Murphy. Under them are seven Route Directors, whose names were also revealed Oct. 3:

#### Central Region DGM Moe Savoy:

- Jim Brzezinski—*California Zephyr, Empire Builder*
- Cynthia Winslow—*Cardinal, Palmetto, Lake Shore Ltd., Capitol Ltd.*

#### Southwest Region DGM Mike Chandler:

- Michael Dwyer—*Coast Starlight, Southwest Chief*
- Eric Horsey—*Texas Eagle, Sunset Limited*

#### Southeast Region DGM Tom Kirk:

- Anella Popo—*Crescent, City of New Orleans*
- Karen Shannon—*Silver Meteor, Silver Star*
- Still to be hired—*Auto Train* ■

OUR MISSION: A MODERN, CUSTOMER-FOCUSED NATIONAL PASSENGER TRAIN NETWORK THAT PROVIDES A TRAVEL CHOICE AMERICANS WANT.

## High Culture (Re)Discovers the Passenger Train



Malcolm Kenton

To connect with the rail industry and advocacy community, Station to Station organizers reached out to NARP. NARP Outreach Dir. Malcolm Kenton and Resource Development Coord. Abe Zumwalt were selected to ride the Los Angeles-Oakland leg. Here, Zumwalt (center) converses with members of noted roots-reggae band The Congos in Skytop Lounge Cedar Rapids.

### Apply Before December 1 to Run for the NARP Council of Representatives

The next biennial election for members of NARP's Council of Representatives—an all-volunteer body with at least one Representative from each state (plus DC), elected by the NARP membership of that state—will take place in January 2014.

We look forward to new folks stepping up to be part of our leadership. Every current State Representative who wishes to run will be up for re-election; some slots are currently vacant.

The Council elects the Board of Directors, amends NARP's Bylaws, and

establishes general goals and directives for the Association. It meets twice yearly: in spring at or near Washington, DC and in fall at another location.

Serving on the Council is a wonderful chance to collaborate with others who have a common interest in improving passenger train service across the country. Representatives serve two-year terms and are responsible for travel costs and meeting fees.

For the current Council roster and list of vacancies, see [www.narprail.org/cncl](http://www.narprail.org/cncl).

Over the last month, a private train travelled from New York, NY to St. Paul, MN, to Winslow, AZ, and Oakland, CA and points between, showcasing exhibitions of mixed media art and music everywhere it went. "Station to Station," envisioned by artist Doug Aitken, redefined what a music tour can achieve.

From the NARP Blog: "Station to Station was a caravan of all artistic intent barreling across the country at high speed. ... Many of the artists came away with a realization of the unique experiential portent in train travel.

"[Most] passengers on the train who weren't bus-

### TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

You can redeem an Amtrak eVoucher over the phone with a reservations sales agent at 1-800-USA-RAIL. Before, these could only be redeemed with an agent at a staffed station. eVouchers are issued by email or in hard copy for the value of a canceled reservation, or in some cases when a reservation is changed in a way that results in a lower fare. Sometimes their value is wholly or partially refundable.

ily editing film or coordinating [the next station's event] were exploring and luxuriating in a strangely new experience. ... the trip exposed hundreds of culture makers to what train travel can be."

NARP member Adam Auxier, who runs Altiplano Railtours, served as the 'Train Producer' for Station to Station. Read more: [www.bit.ly/narpsts](http://www.bit.ly/narpsts). ■

Any legal U.S. resident who is at least 18 years old and has been a NARP member in good standing for at least one year is eligible to run.

If you would like to serve or want more information, visit [www.narprail.org/joincouncil](http://www.narprail.org/joincouncil). **Candidate Information Statements are due Thursday, Dec. 1, 2013.**

In states with contested races, every NARP member will receive a ballot in the mail in January. To be counted, a ballot must be in our office by Feb. 15, 2014. ■