



Ross B. Capon, President & CEO
Fall 2013 Council of Representatives Meeting
Jacksonville, FL



Thank you,
Council
Members!

VICTORY: NO TRAINS LOST TO PRIIA SECTION 209

- ▶ All 19 agencies in the 18 affected states have agreements with Amtrak.
 - ▶ This is a tribute to NARP's advocacy, to strong public support for trains, and to the ability of state and local officials to respond appropriately.
 - ▶ A big increase in the number of public officials who are learning about passenger trains – some of them likely will serve in Congress some day.
 - ▶ Amtrak must earn states' willingness to renew.

INDIANA & PENNSYLVANIA: MODELS FOR CITIZEN ACTION FOR TRAINS

- ▶ *Pennsylvanian* safe for another year, thanks to the work of thanks to citizen pressure from Western Pennsylvanians for Passenger Rail and NARP. (But SEPTA threatens major service cuts January 1 absent immediate, additional capital funding.)
- ▶ **Indiana** Gov. Pence's decision to support a 12-to-16-month extension of *Hoosier State* is a huge victory for which we can share credit—going back to our 2006 recognition of Crawfordsville H.S. students.



NARP Member Bill Malcolm appears on TV at a Save the Hoosier State rally



Image by Chris Little, posted on Wikimedia Commons

INDIANA STUDENTS GET ENGAGED

- ▶ In 1995, Crawfordsville High School students cleaned, refurbished and landscaped the Amtrak station area.
- ▶ Purdue University students rely upon daily Amtrak service to Lafayette. Purdue's student government passed a resolution calling on the state to fund the *Hoosier State*.



Crawfordsville HS students at NARP's 2006 Hill Reception, (May, 2006, NARP News)

Indiana Students Honored for Station Work and Passenger Train Advocacy

For cleaning, refurbishing and landscaping the Crawfordsville Amtrak station, and for promoting rail travel in their community with letters to the editor and public presentations, Dr. Helen Hudson's Crawfordsville High School English classes received NARP's second-ever Youth Rail Passenger Citizenship Award. The Award was presented during the students' four-day trip to Washington, DC; they made the trip on Amtrak.

On their trip, they contacted about 40 senators and representatives and their staffs and also met with DOT officials.

NARP donated \$500 to the students'

trip, and hosted the students at our Capitol Hill reception and two luncheons.

The project was supported by a federal TechKnowBuild grant, an Indiana Learn-and-Serve Grant and various other grants and donations. The federal grant provided each student a laptop and stipulated that students be involved in an authentic community problem. This is called problem-based learning, hence the project name "PBL: Amtrak."

Crawfordsville Superintendent of Schools Kathleen Steele did a presentation on the project in Chicago at a national convention of school superinten-

dents in early April.

When Rep. Corrine Brown (D-FL) accepted the Golden Spike Award at the NARP Reception (page 1), she summoned Sarah Howland, one of the students, to the podium. Brown was so moved by the project, which the students explained to her shortly before she received her award, that she wanted to publicly recognize and thank them.

On April 29, the students gave a creative PowerPoint presentation on the project to the NARP Board of Directors, noting that Amtrak ridership at Crawfordsville has increased markedly in recent years. A total of 11 students made the Washington trip along with Dr. Hudson and chaperone Elizabeth Justice. Students Elizabeth Helling and Ellen Miller addressed the Board, and then—joined by their nine colleagues—took questions.

NARP Board Member John Mills of Topeka, KS spoke for the Board when he told the students that their work and presentation were the most inspiring he had seen in almost 30 years of coming to NARP board meetings. NARP President George Chilson announced that the students have been made members of the association.

The project involved 34 students, both this year's seniors and juniors. Five freshmen also helped with landscaping.

Amtrak Acting President/CEO David Hughes helped NARP honor the students.

A grand opening for the cleaned station was held May 7. The Mayor of Crawfordsville helped the students cut the ribbon on the station to symbolically return the it to the community. ■



Students from Crawfordsville High School pose for a photo at the NARP Congressional Reception. They were presented with the NARP Youth Citizenship Award the next day for their efforts to refurbish the "Am Shack" in their town. Students are (l. to r., starting with first row) Alix Hudson, Anne Santa Maria, Liz Helling, Natalie Davis, Jess Meyer, Sarah Howland, Ellen Miller, Grey Castro, Courtney Cotton, Dr. Helen Hudson (teacher), Matt Kelsey, Brian Burns. In the far back are NARP President George Chilson and Executive Director Ross Capon. Class members who could not make the trip: Laura Sands, Kendra McPheeters, Adam Stout, and Stephanie Holmstrom.

TRAINS' GROWING IMPORTANCE

- ▶ 31.6 million Amtrak riders in FY 2013 = ninth ridership record in the last ten years, and 1% over 2012. Amtrak carried more than one rider for every second of the year (31.5 million seconds in a year).
- ▶ Ticket revenues up 4.2% to \$2.1 billion, another record
- ▶ Long-distance ridership “best in 20 years,” up 0.4% vs. 2012
- ▶ NEC second-best year in Amtrak history in spite of Sandy, Boston Marathon bombings, Metro-North T’sgiving closure
- ▶ Other short corridors up 2.2%;

BICYCLE TEST

- ▶ Capitol Ltd. roll-on bicycle test last Tuesday – First recent unboxed carriage of bicycles on Superliners
- ▶ <http://narprail.org/news/narp-blog/2407-capltd-biketetest>

POSITIVE TRAIN CONTROL

- ▶ Grady Cothen recommends 3-year deadline extension (to December 2018) conditioned on:
 - ▶ Preventing restricted-speed rear end collisions
 - ▶ Prohibiting judicial review of implementing regulations based on “cost-benefit theories and quibbles about risk estimates”
 - ▶ Require FRA to add lines with significant risk of PTC-preventable accidents, with 2020 deadline.

POSITIVE TRAIN CONTROL

- ▶ JR East plans to get business benefits such as increased capacity and reduced headways from its version of PTC. The railway anticipates eliminating wayside signaling which will reduce inspection and maintenance costs.
- ▶ Two PTC preventable tragedies: Commuter train crashed into Buenos Aires [Once] station yesterday morning (Saturday) -- nearly 100 injured at same place where similar accident killed 51 last year.

SELF-PROCLAIMED AMTRAK COMMUNITIES



CHALLENGE OF SEQUESTRATION

Am-trak	FY13	FY12	FY11	FY10
Ops.	443	466	561	563
C&D	904	952	923	1,007
Total	1,347	1,418	1,484	1,565

COULD IT GET WORSE?

- ▶ “So far, the defense industry is likely to be hit the hardest, since the automatic cuts, known as sequestration, set for January would slice an additional \$20 billion from the Pentagon’s budget.
- ▶ “Republicans on Capitol Hill are determined to mitigate those cuts by spreading them among various social programs, like education and Social Security ...”
–NYT, Oct. 20

COVERAGE OF OUR MEETING

- ▶ **Railroad passengers group push for Jacksonville-New Orleans line**

www.bizjournals.com/jacksonville/news/2013/10/18/railroad-passengers-jacksonville.html