



The Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers, Inc. (MARP) is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation established in 1973 to improve passenger train service, travel conditions for passengers, and to work for the preservation of historic rail stations.

Monthly meetings are held at locations around the state. Check the website for dates and venues. The public is invited to attend.

MARP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2014-2016

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The Michigan Passenger Editor and Webmaster, Larry Sobczak
ON TRACK Editor, Kay Chase

2016 MEETINGS

- 16 January** – REO Town Depot (former Grand Trunk Depot), Lansing
- February** – Cancelled
- 12 March** – Howell
- 16 April** – New Buffalo Library
- 21 May** – Jackson Carnegie Library
- 11 June** – Amtrak Station, Dearborn
- 9 July** – Executive Committee
- 17 August** – Marquette, in conjunction with 4th Annual MI Rail Conference
- 24 September** – Annual Meeting at Durand Union Station
- 8 October** – Dowagiac
- November** – TBA
- December** – Executive Committee

Visit www.marp.org
Email marprail@yahoo.com

Ride Amtrak’s Historic Great Dome Car This Holiday Weekend

Amtrak has just announced that its famous **Great Dome Car** will be plying the rails on the **Pere Marquette Route** between Chicago and Grand Rapids this Fourth of July weekend and on three more July weekends. It will operate eastbound from Chicago to Grand Rapids on Thursday nights with round-trips through the weekend, returning west to Chicago on Monday mornings, June 30-July 4, July 7-11, 14-18 and 21-24. There is no extra charge to ride in this car.

Known as the *Ocean View*, Amtrak car #10031 will give passengers 360-degree views of some of Michigan’s prettiest scenery. Combine this with the current promotion offering **free rides to kids on the Pere Marquette** when they persuade at least one adult to accompany them and you are on board for a great weekend on Michigan’s Sunset Coast.

A MARP member in Kalamazoo suggests beginning your trip in **Bangor** where you will enjoy breakfast at the **Railroad Cafe** in the station before boarding the train for **St. Joseph** where you can take a ride on the **Silver Beach Carousel**, splash in the **Whirlpool Fountain**, dip your toes in the lake, and snooze in the sun on the beach. Or visit downtown for gallery hopping and the **Curious Kids Museum**. End your day with some of Michigan’s best pizza at **Silver Beach Pizza** in the train station before climbing aboard for your return trip. Alternatively, head north to Holland to visit **Windmill Island Gardens** or continue on to **Grand Rapids**. Visit michigan.org for events and activities in cities, towns, and villages along any of Michigan’s three train routes. Book your tickets at Amtrak.com.

Trains Added for July 4th and Labor Day Travel

Amtrak has announced that it is suspending track work on the *Wolverine* route over the July Fourth weekend and the Labor Day weekend. On July 2, July 3, and July 4, there will be three complete round trips between Pontiac and Chicago. This schedule will be in effect also for September 3-5.

Three Pontiac-Chicago *Wolverine* round-trips are also maintained on the **modified summer schedule** every Sunday. Two round-trips are offered Monday-Saturday, through the completion of the projects and restoration of full service after September 23.

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KIDS RIDE FREE on MICHIGAN’S PERE MARQUETTE
STUDENTS AGE 13-25 SAVE 15%

There will be no general membership meeting in July

The Executive Committee will hold a day-long working session on July 9 at the Ypsilanti District Library, 5577 Whitaker Road. Questions? Send email to marprail@yahoo.com

Speaker Entertains with Stories of Train Travel by U.S. Presidents

MARP members gathered at the John D. Dingell Transit Center, aka the new Dearborn Amtrak station, were treated to some fascinating storytelling about the Secret Service and about train travel by U.S. Presidents.

Radford Jones was introduced by MARP member Dan Platz who has attended other presentations by Mr. Jones and described them as “awesome”. Mr. Jones spent 21 years with the U.S. Secret Service where he was responsible for the security of six U.S. Presidents.

After recounting some of the history of the Secret Service – notably that it was established in 1865 to ensure the integrity of U.S. currency at a time when banks were free to issue their own currency and 1/3 of U.S. currency was counterfeit – Mr. Jones related a number of interesting stories about travel by U.S. Presidents. He included some information about Air Force One, but concentrated on the use of trains. Trains carrying Presidents present a unique set of problems in that the route is fixed and well-known and is vulnerable at any point along the line. Train equipment must be inspected for explosives and the signal system checked. Evacuation points must be identified. Crowd control in open areas and at junctions is a challenge. An advance train precedes the Presidential train and a third train follows to provide additional security.

Mr. Jones related a number of stories from his own experience and from the “lore”. Andrew Jackson was the first to ride a train as President. In 1833 he rode on a B&O train from Ellicott's Mill MD to Baltimore, a distance of 12 miles. John Quincy Adams had also taken that train, but not while he was President. William H. Harrison was the first President to travel across the country by train, apparently to get away from political difficulties in the capital.

Abraham Lincoln, as a young lawyer, was involved in a seminal Supreme Court case in which the railroads' right to bridge navigable waters was established. The specially built Pullman Palace car that carried Lincoln's body back to Illinois after the assassination was destroyed by fire in 1911. A **replica** of the train was built in Elgin IL and **toured the Midwest** in 2015.

Another famous Pullman car, known as *The Sunbeam*, built in 1888 and later used by President McKinley and to carry reporters when Theodore Roosevelt traveled, was part of Lincoln's funeral train. It now resides in Manchester VT where Lincoln's son, Robert Todd Lincoln, made his home. Robert Todd Lincoln served as general counsel, president, and finally chairman of the board of the Pullman Palace Car Company. Interestingly, *The Sunbeam* was part of the FDR funeral train as well.

(PRESIDENTS continues in next column)



Royalty Rides B&O's Royal Blue Line

The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad's famed *Royal Blue Line* briefly recaptured the regal splendor of its early years on October 21, 1957, when Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip travelled from Washington to New York after meeting with President Eisenhower during a state visit. The Queen is said to be very fond of train travel.

The photo appeared in *Trains Magazine* **18** (4): 8 February 1958. It recently surfaced in a Twitter greeting on the occasion of the Queen's 90th birthday.

(PRESIDENTS continued from previous column)

Franklin Delano Roosevelt loved trains and rode over 554,000 miles by rail during his 12 years in office. The B&O Railroad's famous *Royal Blue Line* frequently carried the President to his family home in Hyde Park NY.

Harry Truman, who used the B&O Railroad's US Car No. 1 for his 1947 whistle stop campaign, ultimately logged 36,000 miles on the rails during his tenure. The B&O was also the railroad on which Queen Elizabeth II, who “loves trains”, traveled during her 1957 state visit. President Eisenhower made his final trip back to Kansas in a baggage car in accordance with his wishes to be transported in the same manner as the men who died fighting in World War II. The car is on display at the B&O Museum in Baltimore.

Mr. Jones was on the 1964 “Lady Bird Special”, a 4-day, 1,680-mile campaign trip by the First Lady through the Southern states at a tense time following passage of the Civil Rights Act. Mr. Jones also accompanied the Robert Kennedy funeral train and was responsible for the arrangements for the Carter inauguration. He distributed a list of books that we might enjoy.

Some material in the above account has been added by the editor who was curious to learn more about certain of the events recounted by Mr. Jones.



MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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