



ON TRACK

The E-Bulletin of the Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers

www.marp.org

marprail@yahoo.com

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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.

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

2015 MEETINGS

10 January –Grand Trunk Depot, Lansing
Speaker Bob Johnston, TRAINS Magazine

February – Cancelled

14 March – Kalamazoo, 1st Methodist Church

25 April – Ypsilanti Depot Freighthouse

16 May – Durand Union Station

20 June – Crossroads Village, Flint

25 July – Amtrak Exhibit Train at Grand Rapids Amtrak Station

August - TBA

5 September –Annual Meeting at Durand Union Station

October-December – TBA

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

Coast-to-Coast Passenger Rail Study Round 1 Public Meetings June 9-22

Public meetings begin this week along the rail corridor of the proposed passenger rail service linking Detroit, Lansing, Grand Rapids and Holland. The meetings are being conducted as part of the “Detroit – Holland Passenger Rail Ridership and Cost Estimate Study”, more often referred to as the Coast-to-Coast Passenger Rail Study.

MARP, as a member of the **Michigan By Rail** team, is hosting this series of 16 public engagement meetings that will extend into the fall. Other members of the team are **Michigan Environmental Council** and the **Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority**. The schedule of the first five meetings in the series can be found on the next page.

The meetings will provide an opportunity for the public to share ideas and input on the potential passenger train service. Participants will be asked for their ideas on the route, the frequency of service, what they consider to be a reasonable fare structure and amenities they would like to see on the trains.

The study, funded by a federal grant with a public match provided by 11 organizations and institutions located along the potential corridor, is being managed by Michigan Environmental Council through a partnership with the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority and the Michigan Department of Transportation. The consulting firm, **Transportation and Economic Management Systems** (TEMS), has been hired to complete the technical analysis. A final report is expected by December 2015.

Along with public feedback, the study will also analyze travel patterns, demographic trends, cost estimates and existing conditions of rail infrastructure to determine what, if any, next steps should be taken to examine the possibility for new passenger train service.

For questions or to request special accommodations, please contact Liz Treutel at (517) 487-9539 or liz@environmentalcouncil.org

Please print and share the **MEETING FLYER**



MARP MEMBER MEETING & ACTIVITIES
10 am – 4 pm, Saturday, June 20
**Crossroads Village at the
Flint Township Meeting Hall**
6140 Bray Rd, Flint MI 48505

Following the short business meeting, members will have the opportunity to tour the village and enjoy lunch before boarding the Huckleberry Railroad for a 40 minute steam-powered ride. See the next page for full details of the day. Please send an email to marprail@yahoo.com if you are planning to attend.

MARP June Meeting Includes a Variety of Activities at Flint's Crossroads Village

The next MARP membership meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 20, at **Crossroads Village** near Flint. Don Wescott, MARP's meetings coordinator, has been busy planning a variety of interesting activities following the 10:00 am business meeting. Members are urged to bring their families and friends and plan to spend the day.

We will gather promptly at 10:00 am at the Flint Township Meeting Hall in the Crossroads Village (directions below) for a brief business meeting. Following adjournment, we will shift our attention to the many interesting things to do and see at the **Crossroads Village**.

Folks may wish to have lunch at either the Café on Main Street or the Lakeside Grill located near the Carousel beside Mott Lake. There will be time for a stroll around the Village before the 2:00 pm "All Aboard" signal for a ride on the **Huckleberry Railroad**. Led by a Baldwin steam locomotive, the train makes an 8-mile loop through the 4500 acre Genesee Recreation Area.

Crossroads Village was developed as a Bicentennial project. Most of the buildings were rescued from demolition from areas mostly in Genesee County and were moved onto farm land adjacent to the old Pere Marquette line that ran up into the Thumb. The original tracks were converted from standard gauge to 3-foot narrow gauge to accommodate the vintage equipment that came mainly from Colorado. The engines are coal-fired steam engines and car maintenance and all restoration of the equipment is done on site.

An added bonus of our visit will be a tour - led by MARP member Dan Mitchell and his colleague Bill Simmons - of the Restoration and Engine House where the rail equipment is maintained.

For information about the Village and its attractions, visit the website geneseecountyparks.org/pages/crossroads. The website includes a link to **local accommodations** should you wish to make a weekend of it. Don has negotiated a \$5.00 entrance fee (a significant discount) for MARP members and their guests. This includes the train ride.

The address for Crossroads Village is **6140 Bray Rd, Flint MI 48505**. Park in the parking lot. Enter the Village grounds and turn left on Railroad Street. You will find The Flint Township Meeting Hall at the end of the street. The Flint Township Meeting Hall is #28 on the **Village Map**.

Don would appreciate knowing how many plan to attend in order to set up enough chairs in the meeting hall and to seat us together in the railcar. Please let us know the number in your party. Email to us at marprail@yahoo.com.



MARP VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED

As a member of the **Michigan By Rail** team, MARP has received a grant which carries with it a major responsibility for the planning and carrying out of the public engagement meetings that begin the week of June 8.

John Langdon is looking for volunteers to assist with the five meetings listed below. If you live in any of these five locations, please contact John at 616-218-9009 or email him at john.langdon@sbcglobal.net.

Volunteers are needed to:

1. Staff the registration table (1person)
2. Greet participants as they arrive (1 person)
3. Assist at the group tables (2 persons)

Rounds 2 and 3 are tentatively scheduled for July 13-24 (Dearborn, Plymouth, Ypsilanti, Howell, Brighton, Holland) and Sept. 28 - Oct. 9 (Ann Arbor, Detroit, E.Lansing, Holland, Grand Rapids). If you reside in any of these locations, please mark your calendar and let John know that you will be available to help out.

| | |
|--|--|
| Tuesday June 9 6:00-7:30 PM | LANSING Allen Neighborhood Center 1619 E Kalamazoo St Lansing MI 48912 |
| Thursday June 11 6:00-7:30 PM | CASCADE CHARTER TWP. Kent District Public Library Cascade Twp. Branch 2870 Jacksmith Ave. SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546 |
| Monday June 15 6:00-7:30 PM | GRAND RAPIDS The Rapid Central Station Conference Room 250 Grandville Ave SW Grand Rapids, MI 49503 |
| Thursday June 18 6:00-7:30 PM | DETROIT U-M Detroit Center 3663 Woodward Avenue Detroit, MI 48201 |
| Monday June 22 6:00-7:30 PM | ANN ARBOR The Ride Boardroom 2700 S. Industrial Hwy Ann Arbor, MI 48104 |

Pay Pal Now Available

To Join or to Renew your Membership

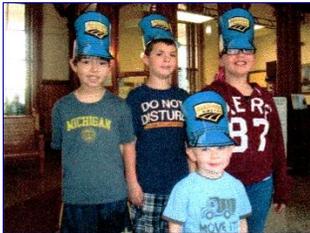
[CLICK HERE](#)

Amtrak Train Days in Michigan

John DeLora and Robert Tischbein reported to the Detroit station at 5:00 am on Saturday, May 23, where some sleepy people were happy to partake of the coffee and donuts provided. Thus awakened they enjoyed a panorama exhibit showing the M-1 rail project and perused Amtrak and MARP materials on display. About 40 passengers were welcomed during the morning.

At 11 am, Tischbein drove to Port Huron and joined the **Port Huron and Detroit Railroad Historical Society** to celebrate Train Day at their venue. Chief Sandy Duffy served barbecue and soft drinks to about 25 train supporters during the early afternoon.

Despite seeing only five passengers departing on Jackson's two daytime trains on May 9, some 250 people showed up at the historic station to learn about the attractiveness of train travel and the work of Operation Lifesaver. The kids got conductors' hats and practiced their "All Aboards". Coffee, punch and donut holes were enjoyed by all. John Guidinger reports that the Jackson group has planted flowers at the depot and cleaned up the lawn area and sidewalks.



Some 150 people turned out to marvel at the classy new John D. Dingell Intermodal Passenger Rail Station in Dearborn, where Robert Tobleck and John Cwiek stayed busy handing out materials and talking with people about planning and traveling by train. MARP appreciates the efforts of City of Dearborn staff members Jessica Carrares and Berry Murray in publicizing the event.

MARK YOU CALENDARS!

The celebration continues when the **Amtrak Exhibit Train** whistles into the **Vern J. Ehlers Amtrak Station** in Grand Rapids on July 25. Come aboard between 10 am and 4 pm for a free self-guided tour through Amtrak's past, present and future. For the youngest rail fans, stop off at Chuggington Kids Depot, featuring toy train and coloring tables. There's something that's bound to strike a chord for everyone! Click [HERE](#) for additional details.

MDOT Close To an Agreement On Commuter Rail Cars

June 2, 2015 -- The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Great Lakes Central Railroad (GLC) are negotiating contract terms and conditions for 23 rehabilitated commuter rail cars that are currently being stored in Owosso. GLC, which owns the cars, has offered to eliminate MDOT lease payments and assure the availability of the cars for up to five years for future commuter rail services in southeast Michigan.

In return, GLC would have the option to engage in other interim opportunities to generate revenue from the cars, such as subleasing them to other commuter rail agencies across the U.S. and Canada. Once commuter rail service begins in southeast Michigan, which is expected in 2019, the rail cars can return and MDOT would resume lease payments. MDOT expects to terminate lease payments to GLC after Sept. 30, 2015.



Photo by Clark Charnetski

"This agreement removes MDOT's lease expense and protects the state's investment in the commuter rail cars," State Transportation Director Kirk Steudle said. "It's a win for MDOT, GLC, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA), and future commuter rail service in Michigan."

Steudle had set June 1, 2015, as a target date to have a sublease substantially complete in order to eliminate MDOT's ongoing lease payments. If an agreement is failed to be reached, then MDOT has the option to terminate the lease 30 days after issuing a letter to GLC.

Initially, the cars were rehabilitated for two separate commuter rail demonstration projects from Dearborn to Detroit (West - East Line) and Howell to Ann Arbor (North - South Line), also known as the WALLY. Changes in lead federal agencies, technical requirements, and the state acquisition of the Kalamazoo-Dearborn-Detroit corridor caused delays in the projects. (MDOT News Release)

SAVE THE DATE



Aug. 19-20 • Grand Rapids, MI
GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY,
EBERHARD CENTER

AUGUST 19 1:00 - 4:30PM
FIELD TRIP

\$25 until June 15

AUGUST 20 8:00AM - 7:00PM
MAIN CONFERENCE

\$75 until June 15

[CLICK HERE for Information & Registration](#)

View from elsewhere . . .

“Both INDOT and Iowa Pacific Holdings remain confident that the new Hoosier State will be ready to begin operations on Wednesday, July 1, with southbound service on train #850 from Chicago to Indianapolis. By all accounts the quality of the passenger experience anticipated for the new consist will be a noticeable improvement over the standard Heritage-era fleet of passenger cars . . . The next nineteen months will be critical for the long-term viability of the Hoosier State.”

—see article in **June newsletter**, All Aboard Indiana
“Hoosier State: Now Comes the Hard Part.”

“The leadership, reliability and high-tech skills veterans bring to the job are a great resource to the operation of America’s railroad. I’m honored and proud to add more of our country’s service men and women to the Amtrak team . . . With more veterans joining our ranks, our passengers can count on Amtrak to serve them with pride and a sense of service that honors all who have come before us.”

—President and CEO and Vietnam veteran Joe Boardman, following a tour of the National World War II Museum in New Orleans.



Amtrak 642 Honors Veterans

In 2013, Amtrak launched a veterans hiring initiative with the goal that 25% of all new hires be veterans by 2015. To meet this goal, Amtrak plans to participate in nearly 100 military hiring events and is partnering with recruiting groups that focus on veteran hiring, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s Hiring our Heroes, the Wounded Warrior Project, RecruitMilitary, and Army PaYS. Since the program began, more than 19% of all new Amtrak hires have been veterans. Amtrak 642 is slated for revenue service on the NEC. Here is a **short clip** of Amtrak 642 as part of the consist of Train #30, the Capitol Limited. Visit jobs.amtrak.com.



OUR ADDRESS HAS CHANGED



MARP, INC
PO BOX 510842
LIVONIA, MI 48151-6842

Contact Your Lawmaker

Congressional Switchboard
202-224-3121

Sen. Debbie Stabenow

Sen. Gary Peters

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Find Your State Senator

Find Your State Representative