



# ON TRACK

The E-Bulletin of the Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers

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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. Everyone is welcome.

### MARP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2011-2012

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

### 2012 MEETINGS

**14 January** – Williamston Depot-Museum

**11 February** – Old Dog Tavern, Kalamazoo

**17 March** – New Pontiac Station

**21 April** – Chelsea Depot

**12 May** – National Train Day

**16 June** – Muskegon Union Station

**28 July** –RAPID Central Station, Grand Rapids

**August 25** – Executive Committee Retreat

**22 September** –Annual Meeting at Durand Union Station

**13 October** – Pere Marquette Station, St. Louis MI

**10 November** – Michigan Central Station, Essex, Ontario

Visit [www.marp.org](http://www.marp.org)  
Email [marprail@yahoo.com](mailto:marprail@yahoo.com)

## Another MARP First November Meeting in Essex, Ontario

by Rosemary Horvath

Essex, Ontario's historic Michigan Central Station will be the setting for MARP's first ever meeting beyond the border. Beginning at 10:00 am on Saturday, November 10, the meeting will feature guest speakers William Gay, historian/treasurer of Heritage Essex Inc., and Harry Gow, renowned Canadian public transportation activist.

Following an abbreviated business meeting, Mr. Gay will highlight southern Ontario's vibrant railroad, the Canada Southern Railway, built along the Talbot Trail in 1873. We will hear about the original crossing of the Detroit River via Grosse Isle, construction of the Detroit River tunnel, construction of the Essex Station in 1887, bankruptcy of Penn Central and finally of the railroad's demise.

Heritage Essex Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of local history, fully restored the building, which features a community meeting room and heritage museum. The Essex Railway Station was constructed of Michigan fieldstone and was key to establishing Essex as a shipping center.

Mr. Gow, founder and past president of Transport Action Canada, will discuss the history of Via Rail Canada, a government created and supported rail system that was patterned after the U.S. Amtrak system. In recent years, Via Rail has been subject to falling government financing and cuts in service.

(ESSEX continues on page 2)



Photo by John C. Dahl

### MARP MEMBER MEETING

**Saturday, November 10**

**10:00 am – 1:00 pm**

**Historic Essex Train Station**

Station St, Essex, Ontario N8M 2L8

Plan to attend MARP's first meeting held outside the United States. You will enjoy an interesting and informative program as we hear from railroad historian William Gay as well as one of Canada's premier rail advocates, Harry Gow, past president of Transport Canada.

Details on the website [www.marp.org](http://www.marp.org) If you have questions or if you would like to carpool to the meeting, send an email to [marprail@yahoo.com](mailto:marprail@yahoo.com) or leave a message at (269)388-3777.

(ESSEX continued from on page 1)

Gow has been instrumental in launching a series of town hall workshops across Canada. Known as the “National Dream Renewed”, the initiative aims to create “a blueprint for VIA’s revival and expansion based on the input of Canadians from Atlantic to Pacific to Hudson Bay.”

MARP member Doug Wilson, event organizer, noted that Essex County is in the southernmost part of Canada, wedged between two lakes: Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie. It was “a very busy part of the world” at a time where the system of highways, railways and marine transportation converged, he said.

Wilson added that rail has taken a beating in the last 20 years, leaving only a rich heritage to reflect upon. “Southern Ontario, the most populous part of Canada, wants and needs better surface transportation.”

MARP members will hear similar testaments from the speakers. Mr. Gay lamented in a local history publication that Canadian National “ripped up 85 miles of railway that could have been used to alleviate cross-border traffic,” because Essex Station connected directly to the rail tunnel under the Detroit River.

Following the meeting, all are urged to gather at Rizzo’s Crossing (23 Victoria Avenue Essex, ON N8M 1M4), a family-style restaurant noted for its home-cooking and use of locally-sourced ingredients.

The distance from the Detroit Windsor Tunnel to the city of Essex is about 20 miles, or 42 minutes. Click here for [Map and Driving Directions](#) . Be sure to carry your valid passport or your Michigan Enhanced Driver’s License.

The toll for both the Ambassador Bridge and the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel is \$4.75 US each direction (includes automobile, driver & passengers). Carpooling is suggested to share fuel and toll costs. If you would like to find someone to carpool with, send email to [marprail@yahoo.com](mailto:marprail@yahoo.com) or leave a phone message at 269-388-3777.

## Election 2012

### Tuesday, November 6

*Please exercise your right to vote  
in this very important election.*



### **MARP Members are Urged to Vote NO Proposal 5**

At its October 13 meeting at the depot in St. Louis, Michigan, the MARP membership voted to take a position in opposition to Proposal 5. This ballot initiative seeks to amend the Michigan Constitution to prohibit new or additional taxes by the State of Michigan unless approved by a 2/3 majority of members in each chamber of the legislature or by a statewide vote of the people. If it passes, just 13 state senators would gain the power to block tax votes supported by the other 135 members of the Legislature, in essence ensuring minority rule in the Legislature.

Even with the current rules, state funding for transit has not been increased in 25 years and passenger train advocates have had to fight to maintain funding for trains. This proposal would make it far harder to adequately fund transit, trains, and other important state services.

NOTE: [taking this position is fully legal](#) under MARP’s 501(c)(3) status. While we cannot and will not support or oppose any candidate for public office, nonprofits are permitted to advocate for and against ballot measures.

## Here are some sources of election information --

[Michigan Voter Information Center](#)

[2012 Statewide Ballot Proposals](#)

[Generate a Sample Ballot](#)

### AMTRAK Adding Michigan Trains for the Thanksgiving Holiday

Effective November 21 - 26, 2012

#### PLEASE SPREAD THE WORD !

Click Here for [Special Thanksgiving Holiday Timetable](#)

#### Wolverine Service

Amtrak Train 356

All Times Local		Days of Operation WeFrSaSu
9:00 a.m.	Dp	Chicago
11:39 a.m.	Dp	New Buffalo, Mich.
12:03 p.m.	Dp	Niles, Mich.
12:37 p.m.	Dp	Kalamazoo, Mich.
1:09 p.m.	Dp	Battle Creek, Mich.
2:00 p.m.	Dp	Jackson, Mich.
3:00 p.m.	Ar	Ann Arbor, Mich.

#### Wolverine Service

Amtrak Train 357

All Times Local		Days of Operation ThFrSaSuMo
6:15 a.m.	Dp	Kalamazoo, Mich.
6:40 a.m.	Dp	Dowagiac, Mich.
6:52 a.m.	Dp	Niles, Mich.
7:12 a.m.	Dp	New Buffalo, Mich.
6:22 a.m.	Dp	Michigan City, Ind.
7:45 a.m.	Ar	Chicago

#### Wolverine Service

Amtrak Train 358

All Times Local		Days of Operation WeThFrSaSu
10:00 p.m.	Dp	Chicago
11:01 p.m.	Dp	Michigan City, Ind.
12:12 a.m.	Dp	New Buffalo, Mich.
12:35 a.m.	Dp	Niles, Mich.
12:46 a.m.	Dp	Dowagiac, Mich.
1:30 a.m.	Ar	Kalamazoo, Mich.

#### Wolverine Service

Amtrak Train 359

All Times Local		Days of Operation WeFrSaSu
4:05 p.m.	Dp	Ann Arbor, Mich.
4:45 p.m.	Dp	Jackson, Mich.
5:44 p.m.	Dp	Battle Creek, Mich.
6:15 p.m.	Dp	Kalamazoo, Mich.
6:51 p.m.	Dp	Niles, Mich.
7:12 p.m.	Dp	New Buffalo, Mich.
7:45 p.m.	Ar	Chicago



Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers

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