



David Gunn Takes Over at Amtrak

David L. Gunn became President and CEO of Amtrak on May 15. He is well known as a respected transit executive. "The 64-year-old Mr. Gunn has led or participated in transit makeovers in Boston, Philadelphia, New York, Washington and Toronto. 'I tend not to get called unless there is a problem,' Mr. Gunn said in an interview. Transit executives are particularly impressed by Mr. Gunn's work in New York in the 1980's, when he took over the city's subway and bus system, which was then known for decay, breakdowns, filth and graffiti, and started its turnaround" (*Wall Street Journal*, Apr. 29).

Gunn's first decade of transportation work was for freight railroads. That knowledge should be especially valuable to him and Amtrak now.

He also knows the long-distance

passenger rail network. His father was a Boston stockbroker whose idea of a good vacation included taking the train to Los Angeles—and then taking a train home.

Gunn worked for Santa Fe 1964-67 and New York Central 1967-68. During 1969-74, he worked for Illinois Central which became Illinois Central Gulf (ICG). He was ICG's Director of Operations Research when Alan S. Boyd was President and CEO. Gunn rose to Assistant Vice President before going to Boston in 1974 to become MBTA's first Director of Commuter Rail.

The MBTA bureaucracy hated commuter rail. Gov. Francis W. Sargent (R.) decided to save it—which is why Gunn was brought in—but Gunn's knowledge and personal charm were crucial in turning around commuter rail's image. In

1975, Gunn became director of operations for the entire MBTA.

He next went to Philadelphia as SEPTA's General Manager/Chief Operations Officer (1979-84). He reduced SEPTA's annual operating costs from \$138 million to \$97 million, while rebuilding and replacing aging subway cars, trolley cars, buses, and trackless trolleys. He planned and negotiated the takeover from Conrail of Philadelphia's 400-mile, 800-train-a-day commuter rail system.

Gunn was president of the New York City Transit Authority, 1984-90. "Transit executives are particularly impressed by Mr. Gunn's work [here], when he took over the city's subway and bus system, which was then known for decay, breakdowns, filth and graffiti, and started its turnaround" (*Wall Street Journal*, Apr. 29).

He was General Manager of WMATA, the Washington Metro, 1991-94. He developed the accelerated construction plan and initiated building of three of four remaining segments of the planned 103-mile

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NARP Honors Quinn, Hollings

NARP recently presented George Falcon Golden Spike Awards to Jack Quinn (R.-N.Y.), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Railroads of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and to Ernest F. Hollings (D.-S.C.), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation. The Association gives this award periodically to recognize outstanding efforts in support of passenger rail.

Quinn accepted the award at NARP's annual Washington reception, April 25, this year held within sight of trains in the Starlight Room at Union Station.

The text on the award noted that Quinn "begins hearings by saying he is a strong Amtrak supporter. He has worked in support of an authorization with adequate funding to continue Amtrak's nationwide network, and played a key role in securing federal funds for a modern station for downtown Buffalo. His characteristic talent for getting people to work together to solve problems is invaluable."

In accepting the award, Quinn said that progress is made on passenger rail legislation only "because of advocates like you. A lot of people don't understand that. When we come up with ideas and suggestions, it's those of you...from all over the country...who make that connection for members of Congress and their districts back home. What you do day in and day out—advocacy for railroads—is really important. It backs up what we say. It makes what we say happen. Not only do I thank



Debbie Hersman of the Senate Commerce Committee accepting from NARP President Alan M. Yorker the Golden Spike Award for Sen. Ernest Hollings, April 25.

you for this award tonight, but I...thank you for your work throughout the year."

Rep. Howard Coble (R.-N.C.) was on hand to offer kind words about Quinn's tolerance—as chairman—of subcommittee

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NARP President Alan M. Yorker and Rep. Jack Quinn with Golden Spike Award, April 25.

House Rail Bills Pass Railroads Subcommittee

Full Committee Vote Delayed

Two key rail bills were delayed again when a failure to reach agreement removed them from the May 22 agenda of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Agreement has been reached on a one-year Amtrak reauthorization bill, H.R.4545

(Apr. News), but Chairman Don Young (R.-Alaska) will not move this bill until agreement also is reached on H.R.2950, the Rail Infrastructure Development and Expansion Act ("RIDE-21").

The Subcommittee on Railroads approved both bills May 8, albeit with some RIDE-21 labor-related matters remaining to be worked out. That approval in turn

followed important negotiations in which Subcommittee Chairman Jack Quinn (R.-N.Y.) played a critical role.

The Amtrak bill allows \$1.975 billion for Amtrak—the \$1.2 billion it said it needed to survive in fiscal 2003, plus \$375 million for security improvements and \$400 million for life safety work in the New York, Baltimore and Washington tunnels.

The bill requires Amtrak to submit quarterly and annual business plans to the Department of Transportation Inspector General and the House and Senate authorizing committees. Also, the General Accounting Office must audit Amtrak's accounting practices.

These provisions replaced a controversial provision in the original bill that would have given the Secretary of Transportation 30 days in which to veto or modify capital spending approved by the Amtrak Board (on which the Secretary sits).

In its present form, H.R.2950, the Rail Infrastructure Development and Expansion Act, combines elements of the older H.R.2950, and H.R.2329, the High Speed Rail Investment Act. There are \$12 billion each over ten years for high-speed rail tax-exempt bonds (scaled-back version of the original H.R.2950) and for high-speed rail bonds with federal tax credits (like H.R.2329).

The bill requires removal of all grade crossings in zones where the highest speeds would be achieved. Also, all projects must include some running at 125 mph or more. This reflects the beliefs of Chairman Young and Committee Ranking Democrat James Oberstar (Minn.) that such speeds are essential to attract travelers from autos and planes.

However, this also raises questions about usefulness of the law to the many states that are contemplating a 110 mph top speed and that face big hurdles just to reach 110.

The key sticking point needing resolution involves an agreement between the building trades and rail labor that the Railway Labor and Railroad Retirement Acts should apply to all workers on high speed projects.

The Association of American Railroads objects, but it also appears that what AAR really wants is lobbying help from rail labor on certain issues, including repeal of the 4.3 cent per gallon tax that railroads now pay for deficit reduction.



Henry Marcell, left, accepting the Dr. Gary Burch Memorial Safety Award from Bette Burch, Michael Burch and Kathryn Burch Pettyjohn.

Henry Marcell Wins Burch Award

Henry Marcell's winning this year's Dr. Gary Burch Memorial Safety Award was unique in two ways. He is an Amtrak employee nominated by a state DOT official—the first winner to have been nominated by someone other than his employer. Also, a year ago, Marcell nominated Damian Garden, last year's Burch Award winner (May '01 News).

Marcell, of Branford, Conn., was honored for his work as Amtrak's Director of Safety for Northeast Corridor Engineering (Maintenance of Way). He is now Employee Development Specialist-Engineering Services.

In nominating Marcell, Raymond Cox of the Connecticut Department of Transportation wrote, in part, "Over the past two years, Mr. Marcell has played a key role in implementing new safety initiatives and educating Amtrak forces as well as re-vamping/updating current safety policies and procedures..."

"Mr. Marcell was instrumental in developing and implementing the seven point Accident Investigation, which entails

working with different departments within Amtrak to identify root causes and recommendations to prevent reoccurrence of accident/injuries. As director of safety, he is equally respected by his peers, subordinates and managers due to his professionalism, genuine concern for others, dedication and care for the corporation and its employees."

Marcell accepted the award at NARP's annual Washington reception on April 25. These Amtrak officials also were on hand to recognize Marcell: Acting President Stan Bagley, Senior Vice President-System Safety and Security Ron Frazier, Vice President Chief Engineer Alison Conway-Smith, and Assistant Vice President-System Safety Cedestra Jordan.

Starting in 1994, the Burch family has presented the award (which includes \$1,000) annually to the individual judged by a broad-based selection committee to have done the most to enhance rail passenger safety. The award honors the memory of a victim of a 1991 passenger train derailment in South Carolina. n

rail system. Gunn also developed and implemented a multi-year \$1 billion capital rehabilitation program.

Gunn most recently served as Toronto Transit Commission's Chief General Manager, 1995-99. It is Canada's largest transit system—10,000 employees, 1.3 million daily passengers, 1,500 buses, 650 heavy-rail cars, 250 streetcars. He improved the system's cost recovery ratio from 66% to over 80%, and implemented a State of Good Repair Capital Program.



David L. Gunn

Gunn's general views on consultants seem consistent with those of the Amtrak Inspector General (Apr. News). Two days before Gunn started at Amtrak, Acting President Stan Bagley, speaking at a Washington meeting, said, "Mr. Gunn's directions have been pretty clear to me. Get the consultants out, take

the money, and fix at least one car. I'm hoping to fix five."

In 2000, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation reported that Gunn was "fed up with consultants who 'borrow my watch to tell me what time it is.' Managers within an organization should do the work, [not] the consultants...When he arrived at the TTC the first thing he did was rid the place of the consultants who were hired to find places to cut costs." (Gunn did tell NARP that he found value in some of Amtrak's consultants' recommendations.)

GUNN WRITES TO AMTRAK EMPLOYEES

The following is from Amtrak President and CEO David Gunn's May 21 message to Amtrak employees:

"I believe you have the right to expect straight talk from me. We no longer have the time or the luxury to engage in pleasant but non-specific dialogue.

"I am committed to a national railroad passenger system, which includes the corridor, commuter and intercity services. I will not participate in the dismemberment of our

company. I will fight to keep us whole. I am committed to restoring the existing system to a state of good repair as a first priority. I am committed to an efficient, high-quality service. I will create a lean, competent management, responsive to our funders, you and our passengers. I will ask that all of us review processes, work methods and procedures to increase efficiency.

"We will not be self-sufficient, but we must increase our cost recovery."

Gunn graduated from Harvard College in 1959 and received his MBA in 1964 from Harvard's Graduate School of Business. He served in the U.S. Naval Reserve from 1959 to 1962.

Most recently, Gunn—who has dual citizenship—lived on his farm in Nova Scotia. In Washington, where he does not have a car, he commutes on Metro or VRE.

WILLIAMSBURG, VA., STATION REDEDICATED MAY 23



—Dave Johnson

Prior to its recent refurbishment, the Williamsburg station had Amtrak and Greyhound crowded into one end, with the rest vacant. Now, the two are separated, with Greyhound at one end (far end in photo) with Colonial Rent-A-Car. Amtrak is in the near end (under portico), with a ticket counter and ticket machine. Restrooms and vending machines are between Amtrak and Greyhound.

Williamsburg is served twice daily by

Amtrak's Newport News-Boston Acela Regional trains. Local buses (as in photo) of the Williamsburg-James City County Transit system serve the station, as do the summer "Relax-And-Ride" tourist shuttles.

The Colonial Revival, ex-Chesapeake & Ohio station opened in 1935, after the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation completed most of the basic restoration work in town. The Foundation bought the station in 2000.

EXPANDING MAINE SERVICE

Old Orchard Beach, Me., will get service this year on Amtrak's Downeaster line, due to a compromise agreement between Guilford and the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority. Earlier reports had the service delayed to 2003 (Apr. News), but now it's planned for late June.

A platform is being built adjacent to the local chamber of commerce, about 100 yards from the beach.

The Downeaster has been very popular since its introduction (Dec. '01 News), even during winter, which had been expected to be somewhat slow. Instead, the trains typically run with six cars, rather than the three originally planned.

Also, in the first three months of operation, the Downeaster already had reached 40% of its projected first-year revenue.

Construction on a new trestle across Back Cove in Portland, beside I-295, should begin soon, and end in summer 2003. This will be used to extend Downeaster service north to Freeport and Brunswick. At Brunswick is a connection with a tourist railroad that hopes to start service in 2003 east to Rockland.

members, including Coble.

Quinn received another award on May 15 from Operation Lifesaver.

Hollings' award notes that he "has been a leading advocate for saving and upgrading our national intercity passenger rail network and for developing high speed rail corridors. September 11 further strengthened public interest in and use of passenger rail, but the obstacles to translating this into public policy are considerable. This makes Chairman Hollings' role as advocate extremely important, and makes us doubly appreciative of his efforts."

NARP President Alan M. Yorker and Executive Director Ross B. Capon presented the award to Hollings in his office May 7. Due to a scheduling conflict, his award was publicly accepted at the reception by Debbie Hersman—his Commerce staff person who put in countless hours working on Amtrak reauthorization.

Hersman conveyed Hollings' thanks and positive feelings following the Committee's 20-3 vote for S.1991 (Apr. News). She said Hollings "has felt for a long time that our nation has focussed a lot of energy on having world class highway and aviation systems, and now it's time for us to focus on having a world class passenger rail system. It's not just keeping Amtrak going the way it has existed for the last 30 years. It's making sure that we have strong passenger rail, developed high speed corridors, and that we work with railroads and commuter (agencies) and make sure that the railroad system works for everybody." n

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

Another sleeping car reduction—The Newport News-Boston *Twilight Shoreliner* lost its sleeping car May 20, as part of the continuing equipment shuffle in the wake of the Auto Train derailment of April 18.

Amtrak's equipment situation, with many wreck-damaged Superliners sitting idle for lack of repair funds, is very serious. NARP has asked Senate Appropriations Chairman Robert Byrd (D.-W.Va.) for more funding in 2002 for repairs. Such funding was part of an emergency supplemental passed by that Committee May 22.

The *Twilight Shoreliner* runs with coaches, lounge, and Business class. Except for six months in 1971, it's the first time since 1917 that Washington and Boston have not been connected by sleeping car.

Michigan—Due to several track work projects, minor schedule changes are in force, through September 30, for all Chicago-Detroit-Pontiac trains. Check with Amtrak before travel.

Ethan Allen—At Vermont's request, there is no more checked baggage or bicycle carriage on Amtrak's New York-Rutland service.

Sleeping car cancellations—Amtrak made its policy more restrictive, effective April 29. Rather than being able to cancel space 24 hours before departure in order to receive a refund, a passenger now must cancel at least seven days in advance.

Passengers who cancel within seven days now will get a voucher good for future travel. Sleeping car charges are forfeited by the passenger if the space is cancelled after departure, or not cancelled at all.

Standardized menus—As an efficiency measure, Amtrak, as of May 1, replaced its popular, regional, dining-car menus. There are still a few choices per meal, but they are the same on every train, except for a regional fish dish at dinner. Toast is no longer offered at breakfast (biscuit or croissant only), and there is no more fresh fruit.

Thruways—Since April 29, Concord Trailways offers bus connections from Amtrak at Boston South Station to New Hampshire. Manchester and Concord are served several times a day, with some service further north on three routes, terminating at Laconia, Berlin, and Littleton.

Excursion connection—Adirondack Scenic Railroad begins service directly to Utica Union Station June 7, same station as used by Amtrak. Actual connections are quite limited.

Transit—Metrolink began full Los Angeles-Fullerton-Riverside commuter rail service, the "91 Line" (after a parallel highway), May 6.

Also May 6, Dallas DART extended its Blue light rail line from White Rock northeast to LBJ/Skillman. Dallas' McKinney Avenue Trolley was extended one mile northeast to DART's underground Blue/Red Line station at Cityplace, May 6.



News from the
**National Association of
Railroad Passengers**

Vol. 36, No. 5

May 2002

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News from the National Association of Railroad Passengers (ISSN 0739-3490) is published monthly except November by NARP; 900 Second St., NE, Suite 308; Washington, DC 20002-3557; 202/408-8362, fax 202/408-8287, e-mail narp@narprail.org, web www.narprail.org. ©2001 National Association of Railroad Passengers. All rights reserved. Membership dues are \$28/year (\$15 under 21 or over 65) of which \$5 is for a subscription to NARP News. For the latest passenger rail news, visit our on-line Hotline, changed at least weekly.

Postmaster: Send address changes to National Association of Railroad Passengers; 900 Second St., NE, Suite 308; Washington, DC 20002-3557.

(This has news through June 3. Vol. 36, No. 4 was mailed May 3.)

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