



# ***IOWA RAILS***

*IOWA ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS*

==September 2008==

## **IARP to meet in Davenport**

### Topics:

Our next meeting is Saturday, September 20, 2008, at 1:00 pm at Thunder Bay Grille, 6511 North Brady Street, Davenport, Iowa 52806. (563) 386-1887

Prior to the meeting, attendees may enjoy an optional limited menu lunch.

The program includes:

Patrick Hendricks, President, IARP  
Passenger rail update

Dick Welch, member of the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) Advisory Board and former Region 10 NARP Director.

- ◇ Federal legislation supporting the national passenger train system
- ◇ Midwest Regional Rail Initiative
- ◇ Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission
- ◇ Cedar – Iowa River Rail Corridor Transit Project
- ◇ Proposed Passenger Train Service to Dubuque
- ◇ Proposed Passenger Train Service to the Quad Cities and Iowa City



### **Directions**

Thunder Bay Grille is located on U.S. 61 (Brady Street exit on I-80) and 65<sup>th</sup> Street. 65<sup>th</sup> Street is the first intersection after exiting I-80. If coming South or from I-80, be sure to be in the left lane.

*The public is invited and welcome and encouraged to attend the program and meeting.*

# *Iowa State Passenger Rail Advisory Committee Meeting*

August 14, 2008

**Vision**      A passenger rail network that connects Iowans to each other and the country and makes Iowa a more attractive place to live, work and visit.

## **The time is now**

- ◇ Excessive traffic fatalities
- ◇ Air pollution and greenhouse gases
- ◇ Congestion and delay costs at airports and interstate highways
- ◇ Skyrocketing fuel prices
- ◇ Growing challengers of air travel
- ◇ Energy conservation
- ◇ Lack of transportation choices

**Propel Iowa** for passenger rail opportunities in Iowa

## **Challenges**

- ◇ Lack of sustainable funding sources
- ◇ Difficulty in obtaining train arrival and departure slots at Union Station in Chicago
- ◇ Lack of equipment (locomotives and coach cars)
- ◇ Limited capacity on freight railroad tracks

The next Iowa Passenger Rail Advisory Committee meeting will be early November 2008.

## **DUBUQUE PASSENGER TRAIN INITIATIVE MOVING FORWARD**

Several activities by Dubuque's Envision 2010 Rail Passenger Initiative are keeping us busy in recent weeks. The monthly meetings of the group have attracted 12-20 people to develop strategy and activities that will keep the Initiative on track. An additional monthly meeting of interested people has been added that 10-12 interested citizens participate in as a leadership group. The regular monthly meeting is at 5:30 p.m. at the ECIA conference room at 7600 Commerce Road, Dubuque, with the leadership group meeting the third or fourth Friday mornings at a downtown location.

Along with contact of local and state legislators, members of the group met with Congressman Bruce Braley at a local "Congressman on Your Corner" meeting and others spoke with Senator Tom Harkin during a recent visit.

The Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) has taken an active role in the promotion of passenger rail service over the summer months. Realizing the importance of greater visibility for what appears to be a high level of interest among the citizenry for the return of passenger train service from the Tri-State area to Chicago, several activities have been directed to that purpose. With the assistance of the CVB, a new logo, media kit, website and PowerPoint® presentation to heighten awareness are nearing completion. CVB director Sue Czeshinski is representing the city as the program's spokesperson.

An agreement has been reached with the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque to generate financial support by a charitable gift for the public good with gift categories of business, community organizations, family, seniors and students. Supporters of the Initiative will be enrolled at local events, the first being a booth at a September 4th event welcoming students back to Dubuque. Three local universities all enroll students from the Chicago metro area who will find a passenger train a great travel advantage. The committee works closely with multiple organizations from communities along the proposed route as well as to extend west to Waterloo-Cedar Falls and points west.

*By David Solberg, Chair  
Envision 2010 Rail Passenger Initiative, Dubuque*

## US Senator Durbin (D-IL) proposes Train Cars Act

*“My bill proposes a package of financing options to bring our existing train cars into a state of good repair and lay the groundwork for the next generation of trains built in America,” Durbin said.*

The *Train CARS Act* provides funding to encourage manufacturers currently supplying passenger rail cars overseas to bring their modern design and manufacturing expertise to the U.S. and open manufacturing facilities here to meet growing demand. The bill also provides a tax incentive for private, domestic businesses to re-enter the passenger rail equipment business and rebuild facilities and train cars here in the U.S. Durbin’s legislation would take the following steps to address the most immediate obstacle to expanding Amtrak service – the lack of passenger rail train cars and equipment:

- **Grants and Tax-Credit Bonds for Domestically-Manufactured Train Cars:** Creates a new matching grant program at the Department of Transportation for Amtrak and states to rehabilitate existing equipment and purchase new, American-made equipment. Also authorizes Amtrak to issue up to \$2.8 billion in qualified bonds over four years to finance train car projects. To encourage bond purchases, owners would receive a credit against current year taxes.
- **Buy American Requirements and Labor Protections:** Ensure that any funding or tax credits provided in the bill are used for domestically produced train cars and that workers in the manufacturing and rehabilitation of train cars are paid a prevailing wage and protected under federal railroad labor laws.
- **Capacity Improvement Charge Matching Program:** Allow states to receive a dollar for dollar match on any equipment fee they impose for the purchase of new domestically produced train cars.
- **Next Generation Equipment Pool:** Mandate that Amtrak establishes a committee, along with Federal Railroad Administration and interested states, to design and develop specifications for a procurement standard for the next generation of passenger rail equipment. The Committee is instructed to examine the benefits of having a public or private corporation separate from Amtrak purchase new equipment and lease that equipment to the states and Amtrak for service.
- **Intercity Passenger Rail Rolling Stock Trust Fund:** Create a new trust fund to give Amtrak and the states a secure and reliable source of capital funding to replace the nation's train cars. The legislation would transfer one-quarter cent of the per-gallon motor fuels tax into the new Rolling Stock Trust Fund for three years generating approximately \$400 million/year.

Durbin's legislation would take the following steps to bring the passenger rail system—an industry that could once again offer high-paying jobs to thousands of workers and serve as the backbone of a national transportation system—into the 21st Century:

- **National Passenger Rail Electrification System Study:** Directs the GAO (General Accountability Office) to conduct a study of the costs, benefits and economic impacts of providing intercity passenger rail along a national electrification system. Electrifying the passenger rail system would provide a non-oil transportation alternative that could transport passengers along high-speed corridors without ever using a drop of oil.
- **Job Transition Services for Workers:** Requires the Department of Labor to identify existing programs and recommend changes to help transition workers leaving the aviation and automobile industries transition into rail care manufacturing, rehabilitation and maintenance.

Durbin's legislation is supported by the following national organizations: the National Association of Railroad Passengers, the Environmental Law and Policy Center, the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Council and the United Transportation Union.



## **Iowa Interstate to Operate Steam for Flood Relief**

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, August 14, 2008 On October 18-19, 2008 the Iowa Interstate Railroad (IAIS) will operate Railroad Development Corporation's (RDC's) 2 QJ-type steam locomotives on 2 days of special events for the benefit of The Salvation Army's efforts to assist communities through its territory impacted by June's flooding. A variety of rail-oriented events will be held, with the City of Rock Island acting as host and coordinator of the event.

On Saturday, October 18, a double-headed freight train will leave Iowa City for Rock Island, with the objective of setting "a new record for steam-hauled revenue tonnage in the 21<sup>st</sup> century." Upon arrival at Rock Island, the locomotives will then be split to operate passenger excursion shuttles east to Silvis, Illinois, and west to Walcott, Iowa. The day's events will culminate with a private evening dinner trip for special guests, with catering to be provided by RDC "celebrity chefs" from Pittsburgh, Cedar Rapids, Peru and Guatemala. Finally, on Sunday, October 19, a one-way limited excursion train will operate from Rock Island to Iowa City, accompanying the QJs back to their home in Newton, Iowa.

RDC and IAIS Chairman Henry Posner III commented, "By October, the economic impact of the flooding experienced in June will have been long forgotten. Iowans don't like to complain, and it is their nature to deal with problems in a spirit of self-reliance, but in this case we would like to remind the greater community that there have been thousands of lives disrupted, and that they should not be forgotten."

IAIS President & CEO Dennis Miller commented, "Although it has taken us some time to recover from our flood damage, we have not forgotten the many people who also suffered losses and were assisted by The Salvation Army. We hope these events will help to replenish their much needed funds in order to continue their valuable service to our communities. All proceeds from the events will be donated to The Salvation Army."

Additional details, as well as ticketing information, will be available at the end of August via the City of Rock Island's website, [www.rigov.org](http://www.rigov.org) . At that time a joint press release will be issued by the City of Rock Island, IAIS and RDC.

Founded in 1984, IAIS is a regional carrier operating over 550 miles between Omaha, Nebraska, and Chicago, Illinois, with connections to all Class 1 carriers. In May 2008, IAIS won the Gold Harriman award in recognition of its performance as the safest Class 2 (medium-size) railroad in the USA in 2007. IAIS is a subsidiary of RDC, a privately held Pittsburgh-based railway management and investment firm, focusing on "Emerging Corridors in Emerging Markets." For more information on IAIS and RDC, please visit: [www.IAISRR.com](http://www.IAISRR.com) and [www.RRDC.com](http://www.RRDC.com) .





QC Rail Supporters will be participating in the Monday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, Rock Island, Illinois Labor Day Parade. This year's parade theme is "All Aboard to the Future" recognizing the area's rich railroad heritage and support for restored passenger rail service to the Quad Cities.

Supporters will be walking the parade route passing out information and adding more names in support of passenger train service.



Fans attending the University of Iowa football games will be able to board the *Hawkeye Express* in Coralville to attend football games.

More and more passengers are discovering the benefits of riding the train to the game.

The train runs round-trip between Coralville and Kinnick Stadium for all Iowa home games. The train leaves every half hour. The first pre-game train begins 3 hours before game time. The first post-game trip starts at the beginning of the fourth quarter.

#### University of Iowa 2008 Home games

August 30 – Maine

September 13 – Iowa State

October 18 – Wisconsin

November 15 – Purdue

September 6 Florida International

September 27 Northwestern

November 8 Penn State

#### IARP GOALS

**Continued support of the *California Zephyr***

**Work with the *California Zephyr* support group**

**Continued support of the *Southwest Chief***

**Work to establish service between Dubuque and Chicago**

**Work to establish service between Iowa City, Quad Cities and Chicago.**

**Supporting all these routes give Iowans more transportation choices**

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