



# 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. Everyone is welcome.*

### MARP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

2012-2014

Robert Tischbein	Chair
Larry Krieg	Vice-Chair
Dave Randall	Treasurer
Hugh Gurney	Secretary
John Langdon	Governmental/Public Affairs Coordinator
Kathleen Newell	Membership Coordinator
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Jim Wallington	Meetings Coordinator
Don Monteith	Northern Region Chair
Jim Hinkins	Detroit/Metro Region Chair
Open	West Region Chair
Rosemary Horvath	East/Central Region Chair

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

### 2013 MEETINGS

- 12 January** – Williamston Depot-Museum
  - 9 February** – Capac Depot Museum
  - 9 March** – St. Johns Railroad Station
  - 20 April** – Niles Depot
  - 11 May** – National Train Day
  - 15 June** – Vicksburg Historic Village & Depot Museum
  - 20 July** – Flushing Historic Depot
  - 10 August** – S.S. City of Milwaukee Train Ferry
  - 14 September** – Annual Meeting at Durand Union Station
  - October 12** – Bangor Depot
  - November** – TBA
  - December** – Executive Committee
- Visit [www.marp.org](http://www.marp.org)  
Email [marprail@yahoo.com](mailto:marprail@yahoo.com)

## Passenger Trains and the March on Washington

By Clark Charnetski

The recent commemoration of the Fiftieth anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom focused on Dr. Martin Luther King's famous "I have a dream" speech. However, the driving force behind the march was A. Philip Randolph, founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. This was the third time in three decades that Mr. Randolph had called for marches on Washington.

Asa Philip Randolph, born April 15, 1889, in Crescent City, Florida, was the chief organizer and co-founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in 1925. He was not himself a porter, but being an outsider he was free from retaliation by the Pullman Company. He was elected the union's president.

Being a sleeping car porter became one of the highest paying jobs that a Black man could have in the United States. Years ago this author worked with a man whose father and grandfathers were physicians. This man's brothers and sisters became doctors and lawyers, but he wanted to make more money than they did, so he became a porter.

The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) was eventually absorbed into the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks (BRAC).

In 1941 Mr. Randolph's threat of a March on Washington pressured President Franklin D. Roosevelt to issue Executive Order 8802 which banned racial discrimination by defense contractors. This was at a time when the United States was conducting a massive military buildup on the eve of World War II.

His 1948 March on Washington proposal convinced President Harry S. Truman to issue Executive Order 9981 which ended segregation in the Armed Forces.

In 1963 Mr. Randolph suggested, and was one of the key organizers of, the August 28 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. This march attracted several hundred thousand participants.

*(PULLMAN continues on page 2)*



### MARP 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

Saturday, September 14

10:30 am – 2:30 pm

Durand Union Station

200 Railroad Street, Durand MI 48429

Keynote Speaker

**Kevin P. Keefe**

Editor / Publisher TRAINS MAGAZINE

Details at [marp.org](http://marp.org) . Or send email to [marprail@yahoo.com](mailto:marprail@yahoo.com) .

## On Board the S.S. City of Milwaukee

Meeting Notes by Hugh Gurney

Approximately 25 MARP members and friends journeyed north to Manistee on August 9-10 for the first ever monthly meeting in that community. At least six of us had the privilege of bunking aboard the **SS City of Milwaukee**, a Lake Michigan car ferry permanently berthed on Lake Manistee. Launched in 1930, the **SS City of Milwaukee** transported railroad freight cars across Lake Michigan until she was retired in 1981. As one of the best preserved of the Lake Michigan car ferries, the **SS City of Milwaukee** gained National Historic Landmark status in 1990.

On Friday night, many participants gathered for dinner at the Blue Fish Kitchen and Bar, which recently opened in one of the Victorian buildings in Manistee's historic downtown. Kudos to Steve Sobel for suggesting this wonderful restaurant.

Several of us joined the Board of Trustees of the **SS City of Milwaukee** for their meeting on Saturday morning aboard the **USCG Acacia**, a recently retired Coast Guard buoy tender docked adjacent to the car ferry. The meeting gave us a glimpse of what it takes to maintain two large, historic vessels and keep them open to the public.

At the MARP meeting, Vice Chair Larry Krieg shared notes from his interview with Emily Thompson, a 26 year old organizer for the Michigan Suburbs Alliance. The Alliance works to prepare young people to become responsible elected officials and public servants in the Detroit metropolitan area. Public transportation is a very important issue for younger people. MARP needs to capitalize on this interest.

A written report from East/Central Regional Chair Rosemary Horvath detailed her activities to promote train travel in that part of the state. There is interest reactivating the Blue Water Coalition to promote and market the **Blue Water**. There is concern that the **Blue Water** is running with fewer coaches than it did a year ago.

Horvath also reported that the design for the East Lansing Transportation Center is not yet cast in stone. Her understanding is that the new station will be twice the size of the present station and provide far more seating.

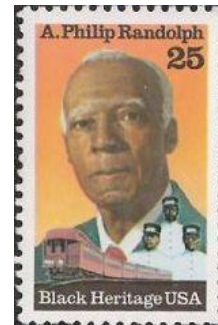
Detroit Metro Regional Chair Jim Hinkins reported that John Hertel, until now General Manager for SMART, has been appointed as CEO of the newly formed Southeast Michigan Regional Transportation Authority. Hugh Gurney noted the formative meeting of the Friends of WALLY, a support group for the Howell-Ann Arbor commuter train. The presence of several elected officials was an encouraging sign.

The City of New Buffalo has again applied for a TIGER grant to study a connection north of that city between CSX and Amtrak tracks, which would permit the **Pere Marquette** to serve New Buffalo and provide a connection with eastbound

*(ON BOARD continues in next column)*

*(PULLMAN continued from page 1)*

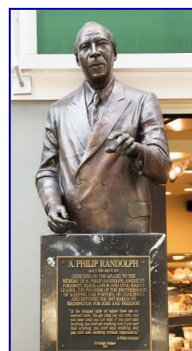
Mr. Randolph's life of service was recognized by the United States when he was awarded the Medal of Freedom by President Lyndon B. Johnson on September 14, 1964. In 1989 he was honored by being depicted on a First Class postage stamp.



Amtrak AutoTrain Superliner II Sleeper 32503 "A. Philip Randolph" is one of few Amtrak cars named after an individual.

The [A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum](#) at 10406 S Maryland Ave., Chicago IL 60628 is part of the [Historic Pullman District](#).

A. Philip Randolph passed away on May 16, 1979 at age 90.



In observance of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the March on Washington, Amtrak and the A. Philip Randolph Institute hosted a wreath-laying ceremony at this memorial to A. Philip Randolph which stands on the concourse at Washington Union Station.

*(ON BOARD continued from previous column)*

**Wolverine** and **Blue Water** trains. The grant would also provide funding for a long passing track between Dowagiac and Niles.

Work is now under way now on the Grand Rapids Rail Station, Dave VanderBee reported.

MARP's 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, September 14 at the Durand Union Station. Kevin Keefe, Editor of **Trains** magazine will be the keynote speaker.

The October 12 meeting is now scheduled for Bangor. For those traveling by train, transportation will be provided from the Kalamazoo station. A tour of Chicago Union Station is in the works for November 9 or 16. John Langdon is hoping to get a group rate for those travelling by Amtrak.

After the business meeting, many attended a shore side picnic hosted by the Board of Trustees of the **SS City of Milwaukee**, followed by a talk by a man who served aboard the **USCG Acacia** when she was active and a second talk about the car ferries that operated between Muskegon and Milwaukee.

## Michigan Rail Conference

*Report by Rich Vavra-Musser*

Michigan held its first statewide rail conference on August 27 in Lansing. This was a gathering of several hundred industry representatives, government agencies, consulting and advocacy groups and was an excellent demonstration that rail, both freight and passenger, is becoming more important to Michigan's economic future.

In the opening sessions we learned that transportation funding in Michigan is the next big legislative issue to be tackled. Governor Snyder and the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee chairs from the House and Senate have a good understanding of rail and its future value. Transportation policies at the Federal and State level have been heavily road-biased in the past and this will need to change going forward.

On the freight side of the ledger, Michigan is very dependent on short line railroads. We heard from some short line and Class 1 leaders who were very positive about rail in Michigan. New mines for nickel, gold and copper are in the process of getting approval to begin operations in the Upper Peninsula. Rail connections are being considered for each of these and would result in a significant increase in traffic for the UP. Additionally, agriculture is expanding and moving northward each year as climate change impacts our state. Climate change is also beginning to impact the ability to ship on rivers. This will lead to shipments shifting to rail. Short line connections and trans-loading to Class 1 railroads are key for Michigan.

Another trend is that many of the freight rail managers with years of experience are soon to retire. Our educational system, while improving, may not be able to keep up with the demand, posing a potential threat to the industry.

The US freight rail system is the best in the world and we must continue to work on balancing private business goals with public service when considering the integration of freight and passenger rail

For passenger rail, we learned about the initiative to begin streetcar service on Woodward Ave in Detroit. Construction on the [M-1 Rail line](#) will begin soon with operation likely starting in 2015 or 2016. Connectivity will be enhanced with a stop at the Amtrak station as well as to the tunnel bus taking passengers to Windsor, Canada. Event trains using the refurbished *MiTRAIN* equipment are expected to begin in 2014 on the Ann Arbor to Detroit commuter route. The purpose will be to gauge passenger interest that will help justify the eventual daily operation. Part of the reason waiting until 2014 is to avoid delays due to track work on the higher speed main line that would impact initial impressions of the service. Funding for on-going operations is still an unresolved issue.

The "South of the Loop" study continues as a focus of the [Chicago-Detroit/Pontiac Passenger Rail Corridor Program](#). Four [public meetings](#) are scheduled between September 17 and 24 to update the public and take comment. This is the next step in selecting the desired route for passenger trains between Porter and Chicago and will help to provide 110 mph service from Detroit to Chicago.

Lastly, there was a report on how Portland, Oregon has been transformed through investment in streetcars and light rail. Economic development has blossomed around these routes, demonstrating the value of transit and rail investment. Amtrak Board member, Tom Carper, highlighted similar community investments in places like Old Orchard Beach, Maine and Normal, Illinois that are happening as a result of the growth of passenger rail.

All in all, it was a great conference. I expect attendance to grow significantly over the next few years as the rail renaissance continues!

*Nine MARP members attended the conference: John Guidinger, Don Monteith, Rich Vavra-Musser, James Roach, Jerry Becker, John Langdon, Tim Fischer, Doug Wilson, and Larry Krieg*

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### ***Apropos rail development in Michigan, Don Van Uum, Hancock MI, has sent this information –***

*Gogebic Taconite has announced that they plan to ship iron ore concentrate by rail from their mine west of Ironwood, MI to ore docks at Escanaba, MI or Marquette, MI. This would require reopening the CN White Pine sub as well as the old Soo Line main, now owned by CN, from Prentice, WI to Pembine, WI. Another option, not being pursued at this time, would be to bring the old C&NW main from Ironwood to Iron Mountain out of the rails-to-trails program and lay new rail. Either plan would allow the Copperwood mine being developed north of Wakefield, MI to ship their copper to market.*

*A contractor has started to lay rail on another rail-to-trails property to connect an ore processing plant to the LS&I main operated by CN near Humbolt, MI, allowing the Eagle mine to ship copper and nickel to market. The DNR has found an alternate recreational trail route to replace this popular snowmobile and ATV trail in western Marquette County.*

### View from elsewhere . . .

*"We look forward to measuring the success of this roll-on bicycle service with an eye to expansion to additional routes across our national network."*

-- Derrick James, Amtrak Dir. Of Governmental Affairs-Central and an avid cyclist himself

*"Bicycle travel and tourism is important in the state of Michigan. Amtrak inclusion of bike service on Blue Water trains is beneficial for Michigan travelers."*

-- Tim Hoeffner, Director MDOT Office of Rail

*"As we pause to recognize the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington, an important moment in history, we also remember Mr. Randolph's fight for the rights of others that inspired him to be the voice of the Pullman Porters. Ultimately, his actions as a civil rights advocate helped to shape America's railroad system"*

-- Joe Boardman, Amtrak President and CEO

*"We are extremely proud of the legacy of A. Philip Randolph. His passion for justice and economic freedom for all inspired him to lead a movement and encourage change for all people, including those working on trains."*

-- Clayola Brown, president A. Philip Randolph Institute

### 40th Annual Historic Pullman House Tour October 12 & 13, 2013 Homes open 11:00am - 5:00pm



Co-sponsored by the  
Pullman Civic Organization  
and the  
Historic Pullman Foundation

The Pullman District of Chicago IL was the first model, planned industrial community in the US. It was built for George M. Pullman whose factories were located here, producing the famous Pullman Sleeping Car whose porters became an American icon. Porters and other over-the-rail personnel did not take part in the violent 1894 Pullman strike which caused President Grover Cleveland to call out troops to counter the ARU union's boycott of trains carrying Pullman cars. The first observance of Labor Day in 1894 was an effort to conciliate organized labor following the strike.

[www.pullman-museum.org](http://www.pullman-museum.org)

### Track Improvement Project Begins for Accelerated Michigan Amtrak Services

Some Wolverine train schedules will be affected September 9-12, 16-19 and 23-26 as a fall construction blitz gets underway. When all 2013 phases are complete in November, more than 30 miles of new track and 130,000 new ties will have been installed by crews working ten-hour days. [CLICK HERE](#) for service advisory.

### Bikes On-Board, Quiet Cars, and Wi-Fi Announced for Michigan Trains

MDOT and Amtrak have recently announced the start of three improvements that should bring smiles to the faces of Michigan passengers. On September 6, Amtrak debuted [ROLL-ON BIKE SERVICE](#) on the *Blue Water* route. Since August 19, weekday passengers on *Wolverine* trains have enjoyed a [QUIET CAR](#) located at the opposite end of the train from the cafe car. Expected in early 2014, [4G Wi-Fi SERVICE](#) will be provided at no cost to passengers on all Michigan trains.

### 2013 Michigan Rails Conference

Saturday, September 21, Library of Michigan

Keynote speakers include Michael H. Hodges, author of *Michigan's Historic Railroad Stations*, and railroad scholar (and MARP member) Graydon Meints, author of *Railroads for Michigan*. MDOT will talk about their ongoing work throughout the state and MARP Vice-Chair Larry Krieg will discuss current day passenger travel. Other highlights include the opportunity to learn about the railroad material in the *Martha W. Griffiths Rare Book Room*. Continental breakfast and box lunch are included in the \$15 registration fee. Program schedule and registration at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/HCXFFNQ](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HCXFFNQ)

### 12th Michigan Railroad History Conference

5 October, Hilton Hotel, Downtown Bay City MI

Kevin Keefe, editor of *Trains Magazine*, will give the keynote presentation "*Motor City Limited - Long before Amtrak, the Detroit-Chicago Route Defined Fast, Competitive Corridor Service*". Also of interest is a presentation by Mark Worrall on "*Logging and Mining Railroad Carferries in Michigan*". Optional field trips on Oct 4 and Oct 5. Visit [MichiganRailroadHistory.org](http://MichiganRailroadHistory.org) for Early-bird registration and information on discounts for hotel accommodations.

**CORRECTION:** In the August issue, page 3, "*Congress Goes Home Leaving Much Undone*" should have stated that the House is threatening to cut the Amtrak FY2014 budget by \$400 million.