

# The ESPA EXPRESS

NEWS FROM THE EMPIRE STATE PASSENGERS ASSOCIATION

<http://www.esparail.org>



## WORKING FOR A MORE BALANCED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Vol. 31, No. 3

May/June 2007

### New York State Ridership Falls West of Albany, Rises Elsewhere

Service disruptions due to severe weather, derailments, and poor on time performance have resulted in ridership reductions along the western Empire Corridor (down 20% from March '06; down 4% from Oct.-Feb. '06), and *Lake Shore Limited* route (down 13% from March '06; down 10% from Oct.-Feb. '06). The March 12 CSX freight derailment in the City of Oneida suspended through passenger service between Albany and Syracuse for about a week, and the February Valentine's Day storm suspended service for several days on the Empire West and Adirondack routes due to snow-related engine failures.

These losses go against the general nationwide trend for Amtrak that shows a 4% Oct.-Feb. '07 system ridership gain, and gains in all three types of services offered. North of Albany, ridership rose in March on the *Adirondack* to Montreal by 23% and on the *Ethan Allen* to Rutland by 13%. Also for that month, gains of 5% were reported on the Empire Corridor south of Albany to New York City. Fiscal Year 2007 Ridership figures appear on page 5.

*Andrew Cabal*

### Amtrak Expands Government and Community Relations staff in the Northeast

ESPA welcomes Ron Thaniel to New York City as an additional Director of Government Affairs. Ron joins Peter Cohen, also a Director in the Government Affairs office. With the addition of Ron to the Government Affairs staff Amtrak intends to expand its efforts to build relationships with State partners along the Northeast Corridor and other passenger rail routes in the Northeast and New England. The addition of a second staff person will allow Ron and Peter to attend more meetings and talk with more groups about the need to invest in Amtrak service in New York.

Ron comes to Amtrak from the U.S. Conference of Mayors where he had been the Assistant Executive Director since 2002. Prior to joining the Conference of Mayors Ron was a Public Safety and Transportation Policy Aide to Minneapolis Mayor Sharon Belton from 1998 to 2002.

If you know of a Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club or tourism group that needs to hear about the importance of passenger rail service in New York, give them a call. You can reach Ron at 212-630-6959 and Peter Cohen at 212-630-6373. *Steve Strauss*

### CSX Track Defects Target of FRA Investigations

The recent series of derailments on CSX lines in New York State (climaxed by the mid-March Oneida wreck and explosions) has sparked widespread public outcry from many groups, including ESPA. In addition, many in New York's Congressional delegation called for prompt action from the Federal Railroad Administration to investigate CSX's ongoing track safety standards.

Immediately after the Oneida derailment Joe Boardman, FRA Administrator (and former NYS DOT Commissioner) who is from Rome, NY, launched an exhaustive series of track inspections across the state utilizing several of FRA's own test cars. The results of these inspections found 78 defects across upstate and included one serious violation which may warrant a fine being imposed by the FRA on CSX.

At a press conference held in Rochester on April 18, Administrator Boardman stated that as a result of the inspections, CSX has committed to strengthen track standards, deploy additional safety technology and develop a stronger safety culture. He added that FRA will be vigilant in making sure CSX undertakes these preventative measures, especially improvements in the way they manage routine track inspections and in fostering safety awareness among employees. "CSX can't talk its way into a safer railroad," said Boardman. "This company has to be ready to take the steps needed to improve operations and better protect nearby communities."

ESPA remains deeply concerned that the ongoing derailments not only negatively impact passenger service delivery, but also cast rail travel as being potentially unsafe in the public's mind, which statistically is unfounded. ESPA applauds the FRA's efforts and the clear emphasis on safety that Administrator Boardman is forcing CSX to commit to.

*Bruce B. Becker*

### Amtrak Wait Lists Sleepers

Although it's not well known, Amtrak now maintains a wait list for those unable to get sleeper reservations. If you find no space available, call 1-800-USA-RAIL and ask to be put on the wait list for the train and date you want. Reservations are checked daily and when space becomes available those on the list are called on a first come first served basis. A message will be left if you are not home. However the price you pay may be higher than the initial quote. The wait list does not currently cover coach seats.

*Frank Barry*

## The View from the Cab...

As I have stated previously, I am hopeful that 2007 may well be the year that we will actually start to see some meaningful progress towards the accomplishment of our many goals.

I continue to hear only positive things about our new Transportation Commissioner Astrid Glynn and her pro-active involvement with many rail projects in her previous positions in Massachusetts. And as reported below, the announcement that Karen J. Rae has been named Deputy Transportation Commissioner for Policy and Strategy is also excellent news. Ms. Rae's rail background is outstanding.

Unfortunately however, the current reality is that the state lawsuit against Amtrak has yet to be resolved and until it is, little is likely to happen. The proposed Hudson Valley Express train has been removed from the spring schedules and the Senate High Speed Rail Task Force's future is unclear. ESPA continues to push for a quick resolution to the lawsuit and hopefully when this occurs, Commissioner Glynn and Deputy Commissioner Rae can start to move efforts forward.

As I announced in the last issue, we continue to move forward with the creation of a new Not-for-Profit 501(c)3 charitable organization, which will operate in conjunction with ESPA and when established by the end of 2007, will provide us with greatly enhanced opportunities to generate the funds necessary to significantly increase our education and outreach efforts aimed at increasing awareness of the benefits of passenger rail services and public transportation among the general population. I will keep you informed as to our progress on this effort and we will announce when the new organization is formally created.

As always, I welcome your comments, critiques and suggestions, on how ESPA can better attain our goals of improved passenger rail service in New York State. Don't hesitate to contact me at anytime.

*Bruce B. Becker, President*

## Dep. Transportation Commissioner Named

Acting NYS Commissioner of Transportation Astrid C. Glynn has appointed Karen J. Rae as Deputy Commissioner for Policy and Strategy for the Department. In this position Ms. Rae will provide leadership within the department with the many complex tasks necessary for the agency to implement the ambitious agenda Governor Spitzer and Commissioner Glynn have set.

Ms. Rae comes to this position with a wealth of experience in various transportation positions in several states. Most recently she held the position of Deputy Secretary for Local and Area Transportation for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, where she was actively involved in both passenger rail and public transportation areas. Previously she was Director of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, where she worked on numerous rail projects, including the agreement with CSX providing for state funded improvements to the busy Washington to Richmond CSX mainline in exchange for additional commuter services in Northern Virginia.

Ms. Rae has also enjoyed an 18-year long and successful career in New York State where she served at various times as the Director/General Manager of transit systems in both Glens Falls and Buffalo.

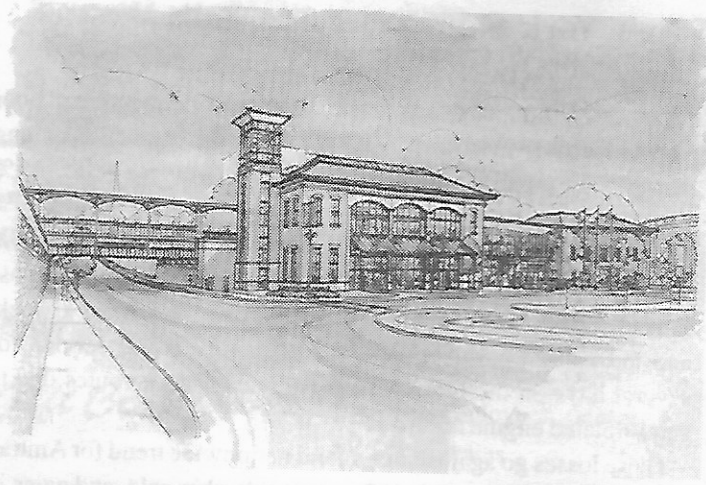
ESPA applauds Ms. Rae's appointment, particularly in light of her demonstrated commitment to and expertise in passenger rail development efforts.

*Bruce B. Becker*

## New Niagara Falls Station Efforts Intensify

The City of Niagara Falls, NY is re-energizing efforts to develop a new Amtrak station adjacent to the Whirlpool Bridge. The project, which includes the rehabilitation of the historic 1863 Customs House, would house an office of U.S. Homeland Security's border inspection agency, in addition to the Amtrak station and potential future commercial/retail space.

A new 14,800 square foot building would be Amtrak's station and a new dedicated passenger track would serve a single 500 foot long high level platform.



The city views the overall \$30-35 million redevelopment project as an important catalyst for the economic revitalization of the city's North Main Street Business district, which is adjacent. Currently, over 40% of the required funding is in place and efforts are ongoing to secure the remaining balance. If such funding is found in the immediate future, project completion could be as early as 2010.

What is yet to be determined is the potential cost and operational effect on Amtrak. With Amtrak being a tenant in the new building, lease expenses would result and Amtrak has stated that the current layover and maintenance facility at the Lockport Road station would have to continue in operation. In addition, trains originating or terminating at Niagara Falls would have to be moved to and from the new station to Lockport Road.

While ESPA firmly endorses the need for a new Niagara Falls station, we feel the proposed single boarding platform is a concern, as two trains would be unable to be accommodated in the station at the same time. Also, any future expansion of service could be hampered by this lack of platform capacity.

*Bruce B. Becker*

## Amtrak Names New Empire Superintendent

Tom Connelly has been named as the new Empire District Superintendent, replacing Jim Turngren who recently assumed a new position with Amtrak in Jacksonville, FL.

Tom is based at the Empire District offices in Rensselaer and is responsible for all aspects of the Empire Corridor, including train operations and passenger service. Tom most recently was assigned at Sunnyside Yard in New York and has been with Amtrak for over twenty-five years.

ESPA welcomes Tom to his new responsibilities and we look forward to working with him as we mutually strive to improve passenger service in New York State.

*Bruce Becker*

## LIRR Outlines \$46M Platform Gap Remediation Program

The gap between trains and high-level platforms became the focus of intense remediation efforts by the LIRR after the tragic 2006 death of a passenger who fell to track level through the gap.

The LIRR described changes to equipment in the next phase of the program to reduce risk to passengers from the gap. The railroad will install heated door sill plates extending 1" or 2" (depending on car type) to help bridge the gap. This effort will cost about \$2800 per car for the M-3/7s and about \$3400 per car for the bi-levels, with work split between Bombardier and LIRR shops. The cost includes changes needed to maintain function, for example, ladder steps for crew need to be relocated. Since the LIRR cars will then be slightly wider, some platforms at Penn Station will require "shaving", and will require Amtrak approval. Completion is scheduled for 2013. Cost of these modifications including those already accomplished totals \$46 million.

By 2007, the program had already included engineering solutions such as:

- Moving 71,000 ft of track closer to 24 platforms at 16 stations
- Realigning over 7,000 linear ft of platform slabs on 16 platforms at 11 stations
- Installing 5,300 ft of platform edgeboard on 9 platforms at 7 stations.

and operating solutions including:

- Zoning off cars by keeping car doors closed at certain locations to prevent passengers from encountering some wider gaps, requiring them to move to other cars to exit
- Relocation of train stop markers on platforms to reposition trains for minimum gaps
- Platform conductors equipped with hand-held radios to observe and assist passengers and communicate with train crews.

The most difficult station is Syosset, located on a curve, with both through express trains and freight traffic requiring clearance from platforms. Relocation of one platform to an adjoining tangent has been set back due to community objections. *John Raha*

## Report Shows Delays on Freight Railroad Lines Cost Amtrak and Taxpayers Millions

A new report requested by Sen. Frank R. Lautenberg (D-NJ) describes how delays to Amtrak trains that operate over freight railroad lines cost the company almost \$137 million in fiscal year 2006, an amount equal to 30 percent of its federal operating subsidy.

"This report puts in real dollars what these delays are costing Amtrak, taxpayers and rail travelers. Passengers shouldn't have to miss their meetings or family engagements because a freight train is blocking the tracks," Sen. Lautenberg said. "With high gas prices, widespread traffic congestion and flight delays the norm, we must ensure passenger rail is a reliable option for travelers."

The audit was conducted by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Inspector General (IG). Sen. Lautenberg requested the audit in February 2007 to study how much money could be saved from Amtrak's federal operating subsidy if Amtrak was not delayed when using railroad lines. A full copy of the IG's audit is located at: <http://www.oig.dot.gov/item.jsp?id=2273>.

More than 97 percent of Amtrak's 21,000 miles of routes run along tracks owned and maintained by private freight railroad companies. By law, these railroads are required to provide Amtrak with priority use of their track. However, this law is often not

followed and the U.S. Attorney General has never pursued a case. The IG found:

- Delays cost Amtrak \$137 million in overtime salary for its employees, additional fuel costs, and lost revenue from passengers frustrated with not arriving at their destination on time in fiscal year 2006. According to Amtrak, most of these delays stem from freight train interference or other freight-railroad caused delays; and
- Between fiscal years 2003 and 2007, Amtrak's on-time performance for long-distance trains outside of the Northeast Corridor (NEC) fell from an average of 51 percent to 42 percent. On-time performance for shorter corridor routes outside the NEC fell from an average of 76 percent to 66 percent. By comparison, the Acela's current on-time performance is currently 86.1 percent this year. The Acela runs on the NEC, which is owned and operated by Amtrak.

Ultimately, the IG also concluded that this poor on-time performance undermines intercity passenger rail as an option for travelers, weakens Amtrak's financial position by reducing its revenues and increasing its operating costs, and may undermine Amtrak's ability to retain and grow ridership.

In October 2007, the Senate passed Sen. Lautenberg's Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2007 (S. 294) which would change federal rail policies for the first time in over a decade and authorize \$11.6 billion in federal rail investment over 6 years. The bill now awaits action by the House of Representatives.

The bill includes a provision to allow the federal Surface Transportation Board to investigate Amtrak delays and issue fines to freight railroad companies if the on-time performance of an individual route falls below 80 percent in two consecutive quarters due to freight train interference. The provision is intended to improve Amtrak's on-time performance and reduce freight railroad-related delays.

## Empire Corridor Travel Tips, Discounts...

- \* In partnership with the 'I Love New York' tourism program, Amtrak is offering a 20% fare discount program for NYS rail travel now through September 2008. With a 20% discount off the regular adult fares, the program is only available by making reservations directly through Amtrak's 800 number, 1-800-USA-RAIL and specifically mentioning discount code V464 to the agent (it is NOT available via the Amtrak's web site!). Valid on all trains running in New York State and on the *Adirondack* to Montreal (but not on Northeast Corridor trains or on the *Maple Leaf* in Ontario), reservations must be made at least three days in advance of travel and early reservations will help insure the best availability of the discount. For more information and other discount restrictions, contact Amtrak directly.
- \* All Empire Corridor trains require reservations. While advance reservations are encouraged, last minute passengers will always be accommodated if space is available on a particular train. Booking as early as possible will provide the best possible fare. Amtrak accepts reservations up to 11 months in advance of your travel date! Travel during off-peak periods (mid-week, early morning or late evening) will generally be the least expensive.
- \* AAA and NARP members receive 10% off most regular fares, with a three day advance purchase requirement. Senior citizens, veterans and many students can receive a 15% discount off most fares.

## Maine Moving Forward With Rail Plan

The State of Maine is moving forward with plans to expand *Downeaster* service beyond Portland to Brunswick using a low cost Federal loan to pay for the deal. Brunswick is an extension of 27.6 miles using former Maine Central Railroad tracks to reach the coastal city. An intermediate station stop at Freeport is also part of the plan.

Amtrak currently runs five round-trip *Downeaster* trains daily from Portland to Boston, and ridership is up 23 percent over last year. The \$30 million Federal loan, which will be paid back over 25 years, will allow the train authority to run at least two of those round trips to Brunswick by upgrading existing tracks for higher speeds. The goal is to have the Brunswick service running by 2010.

The money to pay back the \$30 million loan will come from taking 50 percent of the tax currently collected on rental cars, for a \$3 million annual loss to the general fund. An estimated \$2.5 million a year will pay back the loan and the other \$500,000 will go toward other transit projects.

A newspaper story in the *Brunswick Times Record* on May 1, 2008 highlighted the impact of the proposed new service: "My hope is that it will be year-round service and, in addition to excursion service, that we'll be running some efficient transport back and forth between Brunswick and Rockland," said Patricia Quinn, director of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority. "Given a choice, people will choose to ride," Quinn said, particularly with gas prices being what they are today.

Maine had been using federal resources since the service to Portland began in 2001 to pay for the annual operating loss for *Downeaster* estimated at around \$8 million per year. Those resources have since dried up and are no longer part of the rail authority operating budget. Maine needed to take decisive action if they intended to preserve the rail service which is so widely viewed as a success by both riders and political leaders.

The legislative action by Maine's government to provide an annual operating grant to the rail authority and a new \$30 million loan gives the Pine Tree State an exciting future for its passenger rail program with a capital and operating plan now in place.

*Ben Gottfried*

## Amtrak Seeks ESPA's Input

Amtrak's Empire District Superintendent Tom Connolly wants to hear of your New York State Amtrak travel experiences. Whether everything was great or if there was room for improvement, Tom welcomes our input, as he strives to provide the best possible service on the Empire Corridor. Please send your written trip reports and comments, including specific dates, train numbers and employee names as appropriate to: Thomas Connolly, District Superintendent, Amtrak 525 East Street Rensselaer, NY 12144. Please also send a copy to Bruce Becker, so we can track trip experiences and follow up as necessary. Thanks for your help...

If you are a member of both ESPA and NARP you can save \$5 when renewing your ESPA membership. (Renew for \$19 instead of the regular \$24).

## The Case for Public Transportation

*This pro-electric rail section was deleted from the National Surface Transportation Report by the Bush administration:*

It is the view of the Commission that public transportation, especially in the form of electric railways, must and will play a significantly larger role in Americans' mobility. Federal transportation policy should not only accommodate but encourage this development.

Many of the factors leading to an increased role for public transportation are widely recognized. They include:

- Increasing traffic congestion, especially in urban areas. In addition to decreasing quality of life, traffic congestion imposes real economic costs. According to the Texas Transportation Institute's 2007 Urban Mobility Report, delays per peak period traveler increased from 14 hours per year in 1982 to 38 hours in 2005 for all urban areas in the United States. For the 14 largest urban areas, delay has risen from 21 hours per peak-period traveler in 1982 to 54 hours in 2005.

- The failure of many urban areas to meet Federally-mandated air quality standards. A shift of commuter travel from private automobiles to electric railways (which include some commuter rail, Heavy Rail (subways) Light Rail and streetcars) can play a significant role in reducing air pollution. Public Transportation's Contribution to U.S. Greenhouse Gas Reduction, published by SAIC [Science Applications International Corporation] in 2007, finds that a solo commuter switching his commute to existing public transportation can reduce his CO2 emissions by 20 pounds in a single day or more than 4,800 pounds in a year. Greater savings would result from new electric rail service powered by non-fossil fuel generated electricity.

- The difficulty of constructing new urban freeways in the face of land use, right-of-way cost and environmental obstacles. As has repeatedly been demonstrated, the phenomenon of "suppressed demand" quickly leads to renewed congestion on any new freeways that can be built. Generated Traffic and Induced Travel Implications for Transport Planning, published by the Victoria Transport Policy Institute in 2007, described research reports that found new highways would attract enough traffic to be filled to capacity or near capacity within a few years after they opened.

- The negative impact of automobiles and especially of limited-access highways on urban vitality, which contrasts strongly with the ability of electric railways generally and streetcar systems in particular to stimulate urban re-development.

- The rising price of gasoline, which leads commuters away from the private automobile and towards increased use of public transportation. To these well-known factors pointing toward greater reliance on mass transit, a highly important new consideration must be added: national security. Americans' dependence on automobiles fueled largely with imported oil is the Achilles' heel of our current foreign and national security policy. Rising oil prices threaten the prosperity of our economy, with dependence on oil imported from unstable regions adding the risks of actual fuel cutoffs, limited foreign policy options, and wars over oil sources and supplies. The Energy Information Administration reported that 71 million barrels of petroleum were imported from the Persian Gulf region in June of 2007, 18 percent of all petroleum imports. According to the same source, spot oil prices were \$81.51 per barrel on September 18, 2007, over \$50 dollars more than the \$27.26 per barrel spot oil price just four years earlier.

In the face of the Global War on Terrorism, providing Americans with mobility that is not dependent on foreign oil may be second in

## Mayor Bloomberg calls for Congestion Pricing, Increased use of commuter Rail

Mayor Bloomberg unveiled his plan for "A Greener, Greater New York" in an Earth Day address on Sunday, April 22, 2007 at the American Museum of Natural History in NYC. Although 127 specific strategies were identified in the plan for 2030, most attention focused on transportation strategy #10, a controversial measure calling for an \$8 Manhattan Cordon Toll. Another transportation strategy, #5, of great interest to Regional Rail advocates, urged better local use of commuter rail service in NYC.

Clearly, these strategies could be paired, because the commuter rail lines offer a short term opportunity to ease travel to Manhattan from unserved parts of Queens and the Bronx, location of strong opposition to the Mayor's congestion pricing plan. To see the entire plan go to [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov)

George .George Haikalis  
President, Institute for Rational Urban Mobility, Inc.  
One Washington Square Village, Suite 5D,  
New York, NY 10012  
geo@irum www.irum.org 212-475-3394

### Operation Lifesaver!

Always expect a train!  
Freight trains do not follow set schedules.

### ESPA/NARP Member

If you are a member of both ESPA and NARP you can save \$5 when renewing your ESPA membership. (Renew for \$19 instead of the regular \$24).

### FISCAL YEAR 2007 NEW YORK STATE AMTRAK RIDERSHIP

Train/ Corridor	R Route	Year-to-Date Ridership (Oct. to Feb.)	Percent Gain/ (Loss)	March 2007 Monthly Rider-ship	Percent Gain/ (Loss)
Acela	BOS-NYP-WAS	1,216,317	20.5		
Adirondack	NYP-ALB-MTR	34,518	9.8	7,405	22.8
Cardinal	NYP-CIN-CHI	33,509	(4.5)		
Carolinian	NYP-RGH-CLT	94,388	(4.4)		
Crescent	NYP-ATL-NOL	95,224	4.7		
Empire Service	NYP-POU-ALB	393,289	8.2	81,097	5.3
Empire (West)	ALB-BUF-NFL	110,501	(3.6)	18,593	(19.6)
Ethan Allen	NYP-ALB-RUD	17,553	4.5	3,713	13.3
Keystone	NYP-PHI-HAR	383,147	17.3		
Lake Shore Ltd.	NYP-BUF-CHI	113,237	(9.8)	22,173	(13.0)
Palmento	NYP-WAS-SAV	55,112	9.7		
Pennsylvanian	NYP-HAR-PGH	69,742	(4.0)		
Regionals	BOS/SPG-NYP-WAS	2,672,870	(2.5)		
Silver Meteor	NYP-CHS-MIA	108,137	4.8		
Silver Star	NYP-RGH-MIA	123,897	2.4		
Vermont	WAS-NYP-SAB	24,682	16.5		
Total NEC		3,938,197	3.8		
Total Short Dist.		4,583,981	5.7		
Total Long Dist.		1,412,232	1.2		
Total System		9,934,410	4.3		

Percent Gain/ (Loss) is versus the same period one year earlier

## Amtrak Launches .mobi Site to Provide Even Greater Online Access for Passengers

Continuing in its role as a leader in online access, Amtrak Friday announced the launch of Amtrak.mobi, a new domain for Amtrak.com users. The .mobi domain is designed to guide mobile users to made-for-mobile Internet content and services that can be accessed with the confidence of knowing a site will work on practically any mobile phone.

Because the Amtrak.mobi site is optimized for smaller screens, it provides easy access to the train reservation and information systems of Amtrak.com using most web-enabled mobile devices including cell phones and PDAs.

Amtrak.mobi is the first travel site in the United States to offer customers the ability to purchase a ticket using a mobile device. In addition, users may also access their booking profile and view up-to-date train status information. The site complements Amtrak Mobile, the mobile web-accessing system that Amtrak launched last summer. Like Amtrak Mobile, information viewed through Amtrak.mobi is available in both English and Spanish.

"With the growth of our online ticket sales — which now total 42% of all sales — providing our passengers with convenient access to Amtrak.com is a priority," said Kathleen Gordon, Senior Director E-Commerce. "Launching our Amtrak.mobi site ensures that we are able to reach the greatest number of passengers because our .mobi domain is accessible from practically any web-enabled phone and PDA." (Amtrak News Release)

### Amtrak Responds to ESPA Website Suggestion

The opportunity to speak with Amtrak's Vice President for Marketing and Product Management, Emmett Fremaux, Jr., at our Annual Meeting led to a follow-up letter and Amtrak's removing a confusing notation about seating options from its website recently. In March ESPA Coordinator Steve Strauss pointed out to Mr. Fremaux that trains in the Empire and Keystone Corridors with only one class of service were displayed on the schedule with a confusing and prominent "View Seat/Room Options" button. Amtrak reviewed the matter and has now removed the button from all Keystone trains along with those trains in the Empire Corridor with only a single class of service. The Pennsylvanian, Lake Shore, Maple Leaf and other Empire trains with either Business Class or Sleeper berths continue to show the Options button. When Business Class or Sleeping berths are sold out on a train an "Other Options Sold Out" notation appears. This change eliminates some confusion on the website and may help highlight Business Class seats, an under-marketed opportunity for Amtrak.

Steve Strauss

## Empire Corridor Travel Tips and Discounts

- All Empire Corridor trains require reservations. While advance reservations are encouraged, last minute passengers will always be accommodated if space is available on a particular train. Booking as early as possible will provide the best possible fare. Amtrak accepts reservations up to 11 months in advance of your travel date! Travel during off-peak periods (mid-week, early morning or late evening) will generally be the least expensive.
- AAA and NARP members receive 10% off most regular fares, with a three day advance purchase requirement. Senior citizens, veterans and many students can receive a 15% discount off most fares.
- Visit [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com) and select 'Hot Deals' for the latest discount program information.
- Join the Amtrak Guest Rewards program and earn points towards free travel and more.

### 2007-08 ESPA Meeting Dates

Saturday, June 16, 2007	Schenectady, NY - The Parker Inn
Saturday, August 4, 2007	Utica, NY - Trackside Tavern
Saturday, Sept. 29, 2007	Rensselaer, NY - Rudy's Italian Restaurant
Saturday, Nov. 17, 2007	Schenectady, NY - The Parker Inn
Saturday, January 26, 2008	Schenectady, NY - The Parker Inn
Saturday, March 15, 2008	Annual Membership Meeting – Schenectady Holiday Inn

ALL dates and locations are subject to change...Please refer to the ESPA Web Site, [www.esparail.org](http://www.esparail.org), for the most current information!

If you would like to become more active in ESPA, these meetings are the perfect opportunity to learn more about the Association and how **YOU** can make a difference! ALL ESPA members (and other interested persons) are welcome and encouraged to attend. Please contact President Bruce Becker, 716-741-6384 or [bbecker@esparail.org](mailto:bbecker@esparail.org), for more information or if you are planning to attend a meeting.

## Receive the ESPA Express earlier!

For members providing their e-mail address, the ESPA Newsletter will be-mailed at the same time it is forwarded to the printer enabling you to receive the newsletter about two weeks earlier than by mail. The postage savings can be used for passenger rail advocacy. E-mail address submitted will only be used by ESPA and not given to any other group. Please send your e-mail address to [www.rwlentz@aol.com](mailto:www.rwlentz@aol.com)

Thank You! Robert Lenz, Editor

### ESPA/NARP Member

If you are a member of both ESPA and NARP you can save \$5 when renewing your ESPA membership. (Renew for \$19 instead of the regular \$24).

## Give a Train Trip to Someone You Love

You may purchase gift certificates from Amtrak ticket office and Amtrak travel centers. Available in amounts from \$25 through \$1,000. Great gift to family, friends, co-workers, employees, or any one who loves trains.



### ESPA MEMBERSHIP - NEW OR RENEWAL

The Empire State Passengers Association is a volunteer network of people working to improve intercity rail, mass transit and bus service in New York State.

- Introductory membership (\$10.00 for one year)
- Renewal membership (\$24.00 per year)
- Renewal - Student or Senior Citizen (\$12.50 per year)
- Family membership (\$30.00)
- Sustaining membership (\$50.00)
- Patron membership (\$75.00)
- Corporate membership (\$100.00)
- Lifetime membership (\$300.00)

Please make checks/money orders payable to ESPA and mail to ESPA c/o Andrew Cabal, P.O. Box 434, Syracuse, NY 13209.

Send news items and "Letters to the Editor" to: Robert Lenz, Editor, 10531 Main Street, Clarence, NY 14031, Tel: 716-759-2315. e-mail: [RWLenz@aol.com](mailto:RWLenz@aol.com).  
Deadline for material for July/August issue is June 30, 2007. Material may be reproduced if credit is given ESPA and to the writer.

### THE ESPA EXPRESS

10531 Main Street  
Clarence, NY 14031-1684

Forward & Address Correction Requested

Please take a moment to check your mailing label.  
Your membership may be due for renewal.  
We appreciate your support.

FIRST CLASS  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT #2  
CLARENCE, NY