



HALLOWEEN HOTLINE

#1416

OCTOBER 31ST, 2025



Tell Us Your Story

NOTE: Our office has been getting a number of questions as of late about our printed "Passengers Voice" newsletter. We, unfortunately, stopped production in the Spring of 2020 and, as of this notice, do not have plans to start up again.

Association News

Holiday Travel Alert

Thanks to doubledigit growth in early bookings and record-setting passenger numbers so far this year, Amtrak is urging early booking for the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday. Seats are filling fast.

For more - [CLICK HERE](#)

Toledo, the 'Glass City,' Will Host RailNation 2026



by Jim Mathews / President & CEO

So, it's official and the voting is in: Toledo will be the site for our next RailNation fall conference. Toledo, also known as the "Glass City," picked up 32 votes from eligible Council members who helped to make a final selection in voting this week, followed by Raleigh at 19. Buffalo and Providence tied in the voting at 16.

We're all really excited to get to work alongside [All Aboard Ohio](#) putting together a great RailNation event at the Toledo rail station. It's a great space for a large gathering, and a great way to shine a spotlight on one of our most important advocacy targets – getting Ohio back on to the rail map in a meaningful way.

Recently, Ohio withdrew funds needed to rejoin the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission, eliminating Ohio's opportunity to have a seat at the table as the future of interstate passenger rail takes shape under

programs Rail Passengers helped to create in the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. That means virtually all of Ohio's major cities will potentially miss out on bringing Amtrak service and its significant economic benefits to their cities daily – right now, Ohio is only served three times a week in the middle of the night.

Moreover, I was shocked to see the proposed restructuring of the Ohio Rail Development Commission. By removing the commissioner representing passenger rail and replacing with an additional freight rail representative (someone who isn't even required to be from Ohio!) it takes another voice away from the Ohioans. Inexplicable, and even more head-scratching, when Ohio DOT's own surveys showed more than 75 percent of Ohio residents support expanding passenger rail.

Ohio has enormous passenger rail potential, and convening national rail leaders in Toledo under the RailNation banner might just be that one little extra push that's needed after the incredible grassroots work being done by a truly reinvigorated All Aboard Ohio.

We've heard it for years: three Cs plus D – Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Dayton. Rail Passengers' economic modeling suggests running three daily roundtrips on this very busy travel corridor would mean more than 300,000 new riders each year, and for some of the lowest infrastructure investment costs of any proposed new corridor anywhere in the U.S. Now, a lot of people will tell you that even if they like trains, starting new routes and running trains just costs too much, especially compared to driving. Unless they're driving on the toll roads, most people can't help but think of driving as the cost of gas and maybe their car payment.

But here's the real scoop.

In Ohio, combined state and Federal highway spending works out to \$715 per driver every year. Per driver. Yes, some of that comes from gas taxes that drivers pay. But even after you take that into account, each and every Ohio highway driver enjoys an annual subsidy of \$250 per year.

If we could get the Three Cs and D corridor going, our modeling suggests the annual subsidy per rail passenger could work out to about \$25. You might spend \$250 dollars just to launch it initially, but from there the ongoing costs would be pretty minimal. Meanwhile, each of those rail passengers should contribute about \$250 dollars each year to Ohio's economy. They'll eat in restaurants, they'll stay in hotels and Airbnb's, they'll buy things, and when they do that, not only do they help pay the staff, they spur business-to-business transactions. Restaurants buying wholesale food. Hotels replacing linens. Everyone paying sales taxes along the way. And of course, supporting hundreds of jobs, both directly and indirectly.

And that's not the only corridor worth a serious look. We think three trains a day between Cleveland and Detroit, via Toledo, would generate similar levels of economic return.

Remember, it's not about whether Amtrak (or some other state-supported operator) makes a profit, but instead it's about where the profit goes. Amtrak is a taxpayer-supported government entity. No law or regulation anywhere requires it to make a profit. And in the case of rail investment, the profit goes to the taxpaying communities served, generating many multiples of return by boosting the local economies and generating prosperity.

That's our message in Ohio, and now we have a little less than a year to make sure we put on a great conference to deliver that message to local elected and appointed officials, members of Congress, and the voting public.

Oh, and before we wrap this up, we've been asked a few times already why it's called the Glass City. [It's a cool little railroad-related story.](#) Positioned halfway between New York City and Chicago with great rail access, it turned out in the 1880s that Toledo was in exactly the right place for glass manufacturers to set up shop and distribute their goods widely across the country. New England Glass moved to Toledo in 1888, and today it's known as Libbey Glass.

Exact dates, hotels and lodging, ancillary tours, receptions, and events all need to head into the planning stage now. That work has already started with the Ohio team, and staff will turn its attention to the first round of planning sessions shortly after Thanksgiving. At a minimum, however, we intend, to have the dates and venue locked down by Memorial Day, and additional tours and events ready to announce by mid-July. We'll see you in the Glass City next Fall!

MTA Penn Access Project Delayed to 2030

[by Sean Jeans-Gail, VP of Gov't Affairs](#)

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) announced that delivery of the \$2.9 billion Penn Access project, which will connect Metro-North Railroad's New Haven line to Penn Station in Manhattan, will be delayed by three years, pushing full completion to 2030.

MTA is placing the blame for the delay squarely on Amtrak, which owns Hell Gate right-of-way, arguing the railroad has not provided adequate access for construction.

"I don't think this is in dispute: of the 48 outages committed to on paper in an agreement between Amtrak and the MTA, only seven were provided in the first two years," said Jamie Torres-Springer, the MTA's head of construction and development. "[Amtrak] can quibble and say actually it was seven and a half or eight, but, we did not get the outages in the first two years, and that set the project spiraling off in the wrong direction."

Amtrak Responds

In response to the MTA's accusations on Monday, Amtrak [issued a statement](#) emphasizing that it has invested \$140 million in the project. Amtrak did acknowledge that staffing shortages on its end led to delays in work. However, they also pointed to delays on MTA's end, such as with the Eastbound Reroute project.

"We need to objectively determine what the causes of the delays were at different points in time and then negotiate what the right agreement is," Amtrak President Roger Harris told reporters. "We are not unreasonable people."

Amtrak also outlined mitigation steps it is taking, in conjunction with MTA, including:

- Providing more 55-hr outages as well as three long-term track outages;
- Changing Amtrak rules for worker protection to allow more work to be done for the MTA and its contractor;
- Modifying and lengthening schedules of (and in some cases temporarily suspending) Amtrak trains to allow for work to take place; and
- Taking over a portion of the work that was originally to have been performed by the MTA's contractor.

Service Goals & Benefits

The Penn Access project will:

- Create a one-seat ride between Penn Station and the East Bronx, Westchester, and Connecticut;
 - Significant reduction in commutes between the Bronx to Manhattan, cutting travel time by up to 50 minutes;
 - Some Connecticut trips could be shortened by as much as 73 minutes;
- Build 19 miles of new and rehabilitated track along Amtrak's Hell Gate Line, which will improve reliability and on-time service for Amtrak passengers; and
- Add four new ADA-accessible stations at Hunts Point, Morris Park, Co-op City, and Parkchester/Van Nest.

Next Steps

In the response to the delays, MTA is proposing launching a limited version of the service in 2027 for East Bronx residents.

"We need to go through the process of figuring out how much of that is feasible to be able to say whether a '27 partial delivery is possible," stated Harris when asked by a reporter.

The MTA also hired a law firm to negotiate a revised agreement with Amtrak, and said they will be seeking additional funding for the project from Amtrak.

For more details of the work MTA is doing on Penn Access, read [StreetsblogNYC's Dave Colon's excellent coverage of this week's MTA Capital Committee meeting](#).

Council Elections





Every other year, we give interested Rail Passengers members the opportunity to take their support for more and better passenger trains to the next level by taking part in our national volunteer advisory body, the Council of Representatives. [We are now accepting candidates wishing to be elected to the Council as State Representatives](#) for the two-year term ending February 29, 2028.

The application submission deadline is 11:59 PM Eastern time on Monday, December 1, 2025.

[Click to see the number of available seats per state](#)

With the State Representative elections coming up, **it's more important than ever to be sure your membership shows that you are paid and in good standing**. The Candidate Certification Committee will use the final membership roster as of November 30, 2025, as the guide to eligibility. If you were due to renew in September and haven't yet gotten around to it, or your membership is due to expire in October or November, please be sure to get that renewal in place in time for you to be counted on November 30th. Postal Service delays could extend the time it takes for your renewal to reach our offices, so please act as soon as you can. We encourage you to [renew online](#) using a credit or debit card or bank account, but if you plan to mail a check, we recommend that you mail it to the office address (**1200 G St. NW, Ste 520, Washington, DC 20005**). Make sure that you indicate that this is a renewal of your dues and not a donation.

Any Rail Passengers Association member who meets the qualifications may apply for a State Representative seat on the Council of Representatives. Before applying, it is highly recommended that you review these position responsibilities and qualifications:

[Position Description for State Representatives](#)

[Council of Representative Handbook](#)

Please note that current State Representatives must also submit a Candidate Information Statement by the December 1 deadline in order to seek re-election.

If you are interested in applying for a State Representative seat, please complete and submit this form:

[CLICK HERE FOR THE CANDIDATE INFORMATION STATEMENT FORM](#)

The submission deadline for candidates to appear on the January 2026 election ballot is Monday, December 1, 2025, at 11:59 PM Eastern time.

Please contact Steve Musen at musensth@cox.net if you have questions or would like to know more about our Council of Representatives.

Thanks for all you do to bring about a more connected America!

Field Notes

Calling All Readers!

Do you have a favorite transit/train photo (or photos) you have taken from your travels around the country, or even around the world? Would you like to see them featured in our Hotline social media post each week (with credit, of course)?

Send them to Joe Aiello @ jaiello@narprrail.org with the subject "HOTLINE PHOTO"

Please email [Joe Aiello](#) if you have any local, state or regional stories/projects that you would like to write about and see highlighted in the Hotline.

Hotline Links

A curated selection of passenger rail and transportation stories from this week. Check out our social media feeds to read breaking news and join the

conversation!

[CSX train derails, sending 53 coal cars, 2 locomotives off tracks into wetlands in New Kent](#), 6 News Richmond

Amtrak services in parts of Virginia are suspended following a CSX freight train derailment in New Kent County. This impacts trains 65, 99, & 124 between Newport News & Richmond.

[Illinois lawmakers pass public transit funding bill to address RTA budget gap](#), ABC7 Chicago

The Illinois House has approved Senate Bill 2111, a comprehensive funding package aimed at addressing the \$230M+ budget gap facing the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), CTA, Metra, and Pace starting in 2026.

[Eye Opener: TxDOT unveils first ever Statewide Multimodal Transit Plan for urban, rural and intercity corridors](#), Texas Rail Advocates

TxDOT's 91-page draft Statewide Multimodal Transit Plan (SMTP) reimagines mobility across the Lone Star State - aiming to move Texans efficiently without adding lanes to highways (and more traffic)

[Metro-North Bronx expansion delayed by three years, 6sqft](#)

The MTA's \$2.9B Penn Access project - adding four new Bronx stations with direct service to Penn Station - has been pushed to 2030 due to track access tussle with Amtrak. A scaled-down plan could still launch partial service by 2027.

[Stadler to build more light rail trainsets for Utah's TRAX](#), Trains Pro

After placing an order a year ago for the country's first Stadler built light rail cars, the Utah Transit Authority is already calling on the company to double their efforts

[Grapevine TX benefits from new DART Silver Line rail service](#), Fort Worth Star-Telegram

It's "all aboard" for the Dallas Area Rapid Transit's new 26-mile commuter line - connecting Plano with the DFW Airport

[MBTA: \\$850MM to Enhance Safety, Reliability](#), Railway Age

The MBTA will receive \$850M via Commonwealth Transportation Fund bonds to bolster safety and reliability across their commuter rail network

[Northstar's final down](#), Anoka Hometown Source

It's the end of the line for Metro Transit's (Twin Cities) Northstar Commuter Rail

[CA: Santa Cruz County RTC unveils finalized passenger rail study](#), Mass Transit

Santa Cruz RTC released a final 284-page study on a zero-emission passenger rail and coastal trail from Pajaro to Santa Cruz, CA. The plan outlines nine stations, projected daily ridership upwards of 5,400, and a \$4.2B price tag.

[Miami-Dade's \\$2.2 billion North Corridor rail plan moves ahead as residents seek safer, faster transit options](#), Miami Times

The project, a roughly 10-mile, eight-station elevated Metrorail expansion along NW 27th Avenue, aims to connect the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Station in Glenview with Broward County, boosting access for communities in unincorporated MiamiDade, Opa-locka, and Miami Gardens.



**WE ARE WORKING ON A DISCORD SERVER.
STAY TUNED FOR MORE INFORMATION**

If you aren't following Rail Passengers on social media, you should be!
We are covering all the breaking news America's passengers need to stay informed on local, regional, and national issues.

Upcoming Events

[Improving Passenger Rail In The Empire Corridor](#) - Wednesday,
November 19

Save the Date(s)!



2026 DC WORKSHOPS + Days on the Hill

April 20th - April 24th, 2026
Rail Passengers Office
1200 G St NW, Suite 520

Registration and council business meeting information to follow.

Note: Attendees will be responsible for securing their own lodging needs.



Please contact Joe Aiello (jaiello@narprail.org) to have a local, state or regional meeting added to the Rail Passengers calendar (print and on-line) of upcoming events!

Staff Updates

Your staff is at the table, in the field, having the conversations that make a difference for passengers across the country. Learn what they're up to each week and how you can support your Association's key missions!

- **Jim Mathews, President & CEO**, did A LOT of press interviews this week – Progressive Railroading, Bloomberg, E&E News, and even some European press. He also took part in several meetings with allied organizations looking at the continuing crisis of railroad liability insurance and the proposed merger of Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern.
- **Sean Jeans-Gail, Vice President of Policy**, researched the effect the proposed merger between Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern will have on Amtrak passengers, and worked with allied organizations and offices on surface transportation reauthorization proposals.
- **Jonsie Stone, Chief of Staff**, crafted upcoming fundraising mailed and digital solicitations, processed membership dues and donations sent to the DC office, and tended to the administrative/operational needs of the Association.
- **Joe Aiello, Director of Community Engagement & Organizing**, worked on wrapping up the voting for the location for next fall's meeting and outreach for our council election. Joe also started to get the ball rolling on editing the videos from our San Antonio conference, while corresponding with members from around the country.
- **Kimberly Notarianni, Membership Management Consultant**, has been busy this week processing individual membership requests. With the launch of our lapsed membership campaign, there has been an increased volume of email inquiries. Kimberly is addressing each message personally and appreciates your patience as she works through them; thank you for your understanding regarding any slight delays in response. We've also identified a system issue affecting some members who renewed in December 2024 but were mistakenly flagged as having a 2023 lapsed membership. Please rest assured that we are aware of this situation and will be correcting each case individually to ensure membership records remain accurate.

End of Year Giving



LET'S FINISH THIS YEAR STRONGER, TOGETHER.

Making a donation today helps create a better tomorrow!

The Rail Passengers Association would be honored if you choose to include us in your End of Year giving plans. If a check is your preferred method of distributing financial support, we encourage you to [download the attached mail-in donation form](#) and mail it to the DC Office.

Mail to:

**Rail Passengers Association
1200 G Street, NW, Suite 520
Washington, DC 20005
ATTN: End of Year**

Your partnership allows us to work for you, your fellow passengers and communities across the country. Thank you for your support!

Keep Your Contact Info & Preferences Up to Date

We want to be sure you never miss important updates, membership news, or your transaction receipts! You can easily update your email address, phone number, mailing address, and communication preferences anytime through the CharityEngine Constituent Portal:

<https://membership.railpassengers.org/usercenter> (we recommend bookmarking this link for easy access)

Getting Started

1. Visit the Login page and enter the User Name and Password associated with your CharityEngine account.

Log in

☒ Remember me [Forgot password?](#)

LOG IN

2. Once you're logged in, you'll see your account dashboard. Click "Update Your Info."

HomeMy Info & PreferencesReports & Tax StatementsEventsSettings

avatar

CONTACT INFO

Name	Tom Train	☒ Receive Email?
Email		☒ Receive Phone Calls?
Phone		☒ Receive Mail?
Address	1200 G St NW Washington, DC 20005-3814 US	☒ Receive SMS?

[Update Your Info](#)

Welcome To Your Membership Dashboard

Renew Membership

Donate

Board • Council Directory

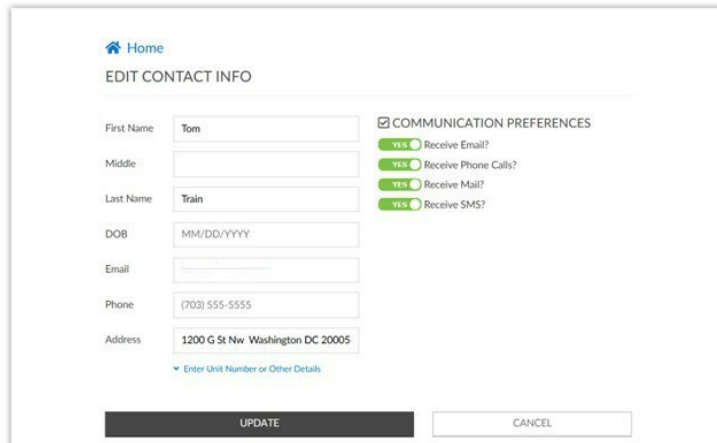
Making Updates

On the Edit Contact Info screen, you can:

Update your personal details like email, phone, and address.

Adjust your communication preferences—switch the green “Yes” button to red “No” (or vice versa)

Click **UPDATE** to save your changes.



A Quick Tip

Since transaction receipts are sent by email, having your current email address on file will ensure you receive everything without delay.

We Have Merch!



Rail Passengers Timetables

Thanks to a collaborative effort between Rail Passengers NYS Council Member Nathanael Nerode & juckins.net's Chris Juckins, we have been able

to completely update our timetables resource page.

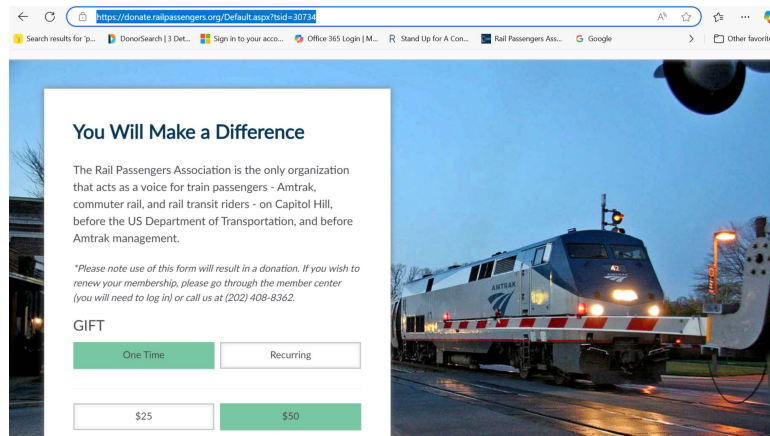
[CLICK HERE](#)

NOTE: Because we do update the links on our website - please bookmark **the main page** and not the individual schedules

Donate Online with Confidence

You can donate to the Rail Passengers Association online with confidence, knowing your credit card information is secure. Charity Engine uses industry-standard SSL technology to keep your information secure. Don't wait for a paper appeal to donate, support the Association today by donating here. When the web browser shows a lock next to the URL, it means that it's an HTTPS, and it's secure:

<https://donate.railpassengers.org/Default.aspx?tsid=30734>



Do more with your donations. If you have questions about employer match, gifting a membership, or other questions about how to make a bigger impact, let us know! Your staff is here to help with:

- Online Donations
- Donor Advised Funds
- Employer Match
- RPA Signature Visa Card
- Gift of Membership
- and More!

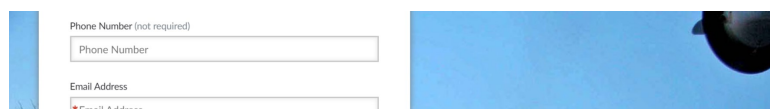
With multiple secure, protected methods of payment, you have more flexibility in the way dues are paid. Skip the hassle and [contact us](#) today for help setting up automatic or online payments.

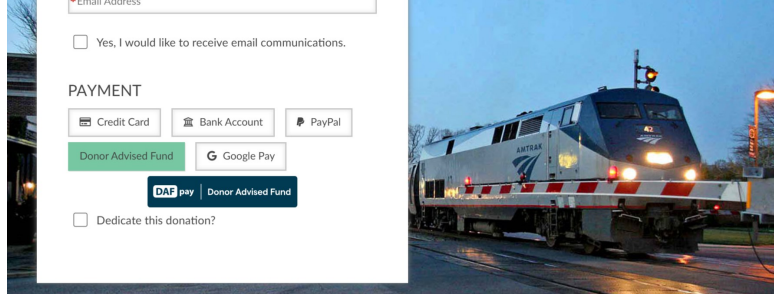
- Setup ACH or E-Check with your bank of choice
- Use a Debit or Credit Card to pay online, or
- Send a check to 1200 G Street NW Suite 520 Washington, DC 20005

Use Your Donor Advised Fund (DAF) to Donate, Renew or Join Online

You can now donate or join/renew your membership, online, through your donor advised fund using DAFpay. All Rail Passengers forms now include a "Donor Advised Fund" button under Payment.

Donation Form:



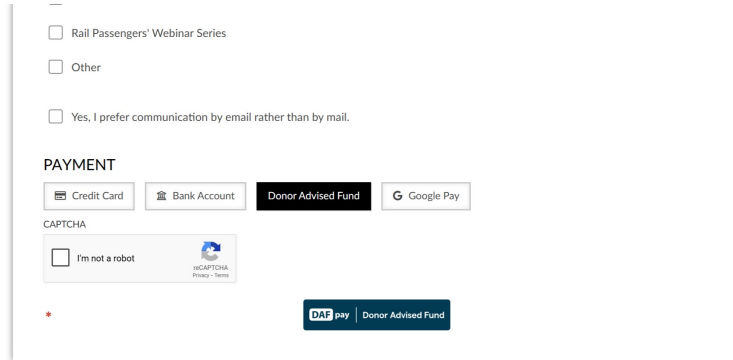


☐ Yes, I would like to receive email communications.

PAYMENT

☐ Dedicate this donation?

Membership Form:



☐ Rail Passengers' Webinar Series

☐ Other

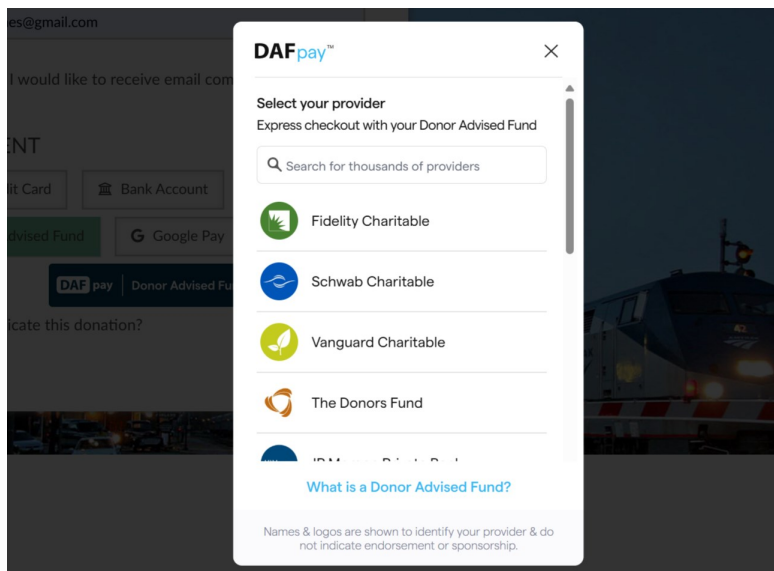
☐ Yes, I prefer communication by email rather than by mail.

PAYMENT

CAPTCHA

☐ I'm not a robot

After selecting Donor Advised Fund as your payment preference, you will be taken to a DAFpay screen to select your donor advised fund provider, ie., Fidelity Charitable, Vanguard Charitable, Daffy, etc.



DAFpay™

Select your provider
Express checkout with your Donor Advised Fund

Search for thousands of providers

- Fidelity Charitable
- Schwab Charitable
- Vanguard Charitable
- The Donors Fund

[What is a Donor Advised Fund?](#)

Names & logos are shown to identify your provider & do not indicate endorsement or sponsorship.

Select your provider, then follow their prompts. If you need to provide information on Rail Passengers Association, please use the below:

National Association of Railroad Passengers, Inc.
dba Rail Passengers Association
1200 G Street, NW
Suite 520
Washington, DC 20005
Contact: Jonsie Stone, jstone@narprail.org
Tax ID: 36-2615221

Member & Donor Notices

- **The Rail Passengers Association is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. Our federal tax identification number is 36-2615221**
- **To help facilitate dissemination of electronic thank you receipts, please make sure your contact information, specifically your email address, is up-to-date in your Neon profile.**
- **If you need assistance with your membership, please call the Office at 202-408-8362.**
- **While our staff continues to work remotely, we are unable to provide permanent membership cards.** You can print a temporary membership card by creating an account at www.railpassengers.org (select "My Account" on the homepage).

- **Complete all information!** -- Before sealing your envelope, PLEASE double-check the credit card information on the buck slip!

- Print credit card information clearly.
 - **Include an expiration date, month and year, as well as the CVV number.**
 - Without **COMPLETE** information, your membership renewal or donation can't be processed.
- **If you have your financial institution send a check on your behalf,** without a buckslip, PLEASE instruct them to add:
 - a notation in the memo field if the payment is for membership dues or a donation, AND,
 - your Rail Passengers Association member ID. If we have multiple members with the same name, i.e., John Smith, it can be hard to identify the correct member to attribute the payment, without the member ID.



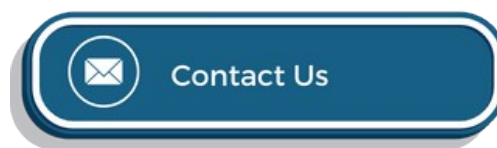
Rail Passengers Association members have access to a full service, nationwide federal credit union with extensive product and service offerings. Signature FCU is the exclusive provider of the [Rail Passengers Association-branded Visa credit card](#) with our logo, which supports our work by giving back to our organization, and gives you 1 point for every \$1 you spend to redeem for travel and merchandise. The card has no annual fee, no balance transfer fees, no foreign transaction fees, and has a very low interest rate.



Rail Passengers Association Earns Coveted 4-Star Rating from Charity Navigator

Rail Passengers Association's strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency have earned it a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator. Our Charity Navigator profile can be found by clicking [here](#).

If you have questions, feedback, or submissions for next week's hotline, send us your thoughts! Help us spread the word about your local, regional, and national passenger rail wins.



THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS:



RAIL PASSENGERS

EST. 1967

Rail Passengers Association
1200 G St. NW
Suite 520
Washington, DC 20005

P 202.408.8362
F 202.408.8287

