

# Green Pennant Special

RUN #38

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OMNIBUS SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC. SEPTEMBER 1985





Welcome to another issue of Green Pennant Special. It is through this publication that we try to keep you, the member, informed of happenings in the transit industry.

\*\*\* COVER PHOTO \*\*\*

RTA #8005 was photographed in Aurora passing the Paramount Theater on New York Avenue traveling toward downtown.

\*\*\* SEPTEMBER MEETING \*\*\*

The September meeting of the Omnibus Society of America was held on September 6th at the Bismarck Hotel in downtown Chicago. This was our annual "What I Did On My Summer Vacation" slide show.

Most of the members in attendance showed slides of their travels over the summer and it proved to be an extremely varied presentation of subjects and locations. This turned out to be the longest meeting of the year, it did not break up until almost 11:30pm.

\*\*\* OCTOBER MEETING \*\*\*

The October meeting of the Omnibus Society of America will begin at 7:30pm on October 11, 1985, at the Bismarck Hotel in downtown Chicago. THIS IS THE SECOND FRIDAY OF THE MONTH. REMEMBER THE DATE CHANGE.

The meeting will be held in the Green Room, and consist of 16mm movies and slides presented by Mr. Robert Halperin, Director of Marketing of Bombardier. The movies and slides will be of trolley buses taken between the 1930's and 1970's.

As stated before, this meeting will be on the SECOND FRIDAY of October. We hope to see big turnout for this meeting - it appears that it will be an extremely interesting meeting.

\*\*\* GRAND RAPIDS CHARTER \*\*\*

On Saturday September 14, 1985, six of our members ventured to Grand Rapids, Michigan, to ride and view the transit system in that city. A 35 foot Flxible was chartered for the excursion and traveled to the more scenic areas of the city for photographs.

A visit was also made to Shortway Northstar to view a number of their vehicles. A number of MC 9's were on hand to photograph, as well as a Nepoplan Skyliner.

A stop was made at the historical district in Rockford, Michigan, where an ex-C&EI commuter car was being used as a book resale store. A good time was had by all.

\*\*\* NEW OPERATOR FOR NAPERVILLE \*\*\*

Effective October 1, 1985, Continental Air Transport will begin operating the local transit service in Naperville. They will use seven school buses on this service and with the schedule calling for a total of 12 buses, will also use five MC-5B's.

It appears that the old operator, Commuter Bus Service, was underbid due to an extremely large increase in their insurance premiums.

\*\*\* ELECTIONS FOR 1986 \*\*\*

In 1986, two of the positions for Directors of the Omnibus Society become due, they being Bruce Moffat and Jim Penning. Both Bruce and Jim have decided not to run for reelection.

If any payed up member wishes to be placed on the ballot, please feel free to contact Bill Shapotkin or John Dowdall before the October Meeting. We wish to thank Bruce and Jim at this time for a job well done.

\*\*\* PAY PHONES FOR METRA TRAINS \*\*\*

By January 1, 1986; Railphone, Inc., will install phones on 15 coaches for a three month trial period. Users will be charged a flat rate of 95 cents per minute for any calls in the 312 or 815 area codes. Calls outside of those areas will cost \$1.45 per minute.

The phones will be at the foot of the stairs leading to the upper levels of the commuter coaches and use the same cellular technology as car phones. They will accept major credit cards but not coins, with METRA receiving about 10% of revenues.

The first phones will be installed on the Milwaukee Road and Rock Island commuter lines. The C&NW, BN and ICG have also expressed interest in the trial run.

\*\*\* O'HARE PEOPLE MOVER \*\*\*

We bring you the continuing saga of the O'Hare people mover controversy. As everyone should know, last spring the Washington administration chose Westinghouse, the second highest bidder, over the French firm Matra, the lowest bidder, to construct a people-mover at O'Hare to connect the domestic and new international terminal and the remote parking lots.

When Matra did not get the contract it filed suit, with the administration retracting its decision and ordering revised bids in August on a scaled down version of the people-mover.

These bids were opened in private, with Matra again being the low bidder at \$119 million, and immediately brought charges of impropriety in the City Council, a lawsuit by Westinghouse and a decided reluctance by the airlines to pay the proposed \$119 million cost for the system.

On September 13, 1985, Mayor Washington decided to award the contract to Matra, if a lower price can be negotiated. The administration is trying to lower the bid amount by about \$30 million and bring it in line with the amount that the O'Hare airline association is willing to pay.

The suit filed in Cook County Circuit Court by Westinghouse, charging that the secret bid opening was illegal and that Matra does not meet safety requirements still needs to be acted upon.

Stay tuned for later developments in this seemingly neverending saga.

\*\*\* ON THE CALENDAR \*\*\*

The following organizations will be holding Friday meetings during the month of October.

Railway & Locomotive Historical Society-  
1st Friday, Midland Hotel

Railway Club of Chicago-  
3rd Friday, Union Station, Room 107A

Central Electric Railfan's Association-  
4th Friday, Civic Opera Building