From the editor—

This issue of the Conrail Inside Track is the first to sport a new look, with the use of color on the cover and many of the inside pages. The addition of color to the Inside Track is one more step toward bringing you a better-looking, more interesting publication each quarter.

This issue’s lead story focuses on attempts to alter the Staggers Rail Act of 1980, which could affect the jobs of thousands of railroad employees in the U.S. at all levels. Since Staggers allows railroads to compete better against other forms of transportation, particularly trucks, changes could hobble the industry and bring on a new round of bankruptcies.

Also in this issue, we take a look at the Columbus Division, in the busy heartland of Conrail’s service region, and at how Conrail people go the extra mile to serve the railroad’s customers.

Finally, if you and your spouse both work, you’re sure to identify with our account of how some of Conrail’s two-paycheck families work out the details of raising kids and running a household. Raising a family isn’t easy when both parents work, but these Conrail families find their experiences rewarding.

Letters

The Hallmark article was nicely done! The employees at our local Hallmark shop enjoyed it, too. A small coincidence: the 2nd locomotive in the picture used on the cover and page 9, Conrail #6872, now resides permanently in Missouri, Hallmark’s home state. It is one of two Conrail engines preserved at the National Museum of Transport in St. Louis.

Nathan S. Clark, Jr.
Toledo, Ohio

After service with Amtrak and the Union Pacific, I started working for Conrail in July of 1979. It has been a genuine pleasure to watch Conrail turn into a “real railroad.” The growth and progress made at the Elkhart Yard alone is amazing. When I started working there it looked like a dump. Now it is a well-manicured yard, and a safer place to work. Steve Kariska and Jerry White, Supervisor and Assistant Supervisor of the Track Department, have done a great job in turning around the physical appearance of the yard. I am looking forward to the time when my seniority will allow me to hold full time work at Elkhart.

Bill Shoumake
Elkhart, Indiana

Retirement is one of the major decisions that a person must make in their lifetime. However, while this publication addresses many subjects and Conrail has many instructional classes, there are no classes or columns to help those who are preparing to retire. Inside Track could be a start.

John James Cunniff
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Enjoy “Inside Track”—a good variety of articles—as good a publication as I have seen while working for six railroads over 41 years, including being involved in publishing the newsletter for one railroad. While “TV” trains, “premium service” and “just-in-time” are interesting, much of this traffic is only marginal in revenue (net) contribution. How about an article covering a trip of a Dim-X, hazmat or a similar high revenue special train?

Ray Neal, Jr.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Your publication is a great morale builder and makes all of us proud to be employees of this railroad. We especially enjoy the articles on safety as this is a major concern to all of us in the Central Region. Please print more stories about the old railroads that formed Conrail and include more pictures if possible.

J. D. Case
Indianapolis, Indiana

I recently read the Winter 1986 Inside Track and would like to offer a different opinion than that of Mr. Bruce Healy of Buffalo, who stated that Inside Track is written in too simple terms. He offered the explanation of how a diesel locomotive runs to prove his point. There are many Conrail employees who work in offices and have never had the opportunity to experience working around railroad yards, shops, etc. To these people “simple” explanations can help them better understand how “their” railroad operates.

John F. Hollner, Ill
Selkirk, New York

Editor’s Note: In recent years, the profitability of Conrail’s piggyback traffic has substantially improved, as a consequence of cost reduction efforts and capital investments in physical facilities.
With the passage of the Staggers Rail Act of 1980, the nation’s railroads were finally given the opportunity to operate in response to customers’ needs rather than the requirements of full government regulation.

Since then, service has improved, new transportation services have been developed, and new business revenues have grown, allowing railroads to invest in upgraded track and new equipment. In an editorial this spring, The Cleveland Plain Dealer stated that Staggers helped make Conrail’s return to the private sector possible.

“Without the freedom to compete that Staggers provided, Conrail would still be the hopeless bundle of broken-down equipment and unsafe-at-any-speed trackage that it was 11 years ago when the federal government formed it from the shards of a half-dozen failed and failing railroads,” said the Plain Dealer.

“The success of rail deregulation is obvious in the financial stability, efficiency and improved safety record it has given the (railroad) industry, in the considerable savings it has meant for most rail shippers and in the modernization of trackage and equipment that it has enabled railroads to afford.”

Staggers will continue to be vital to railroads, and to railroad people. According to Charles N. Marshall, Conrail’s Senior Vice President-Marketing and Sales, the new business made possible by Staggers “will become the most important tool available in the future to create new jobs on railroads, and job security for railroad employees.”

But trouble is again lurking on the horizon. A group of shippers made up primarily of electric utilities and coal interests are pursuing legislation in Congress that would amount to deregulation of railroads. An attempt to attach such provisions to the Conrail Privatization Act of 1986 was narrowly turned back. But deregulation forces are at it again. If successful, the group’s campaign could threaten the financial security of the entire railroad industry.

“During the 1970s, more than 20 percent of the nation’s rail system was involved in bankruptcy proceedings,” said William K. Rich, Conrail’s Director-Deregulation. “If the rail industry is deregulated, the 1990s are likely to be a replay of the 1970s.”

According to Marshall, wholesale changes in the Staggers Act would be a disaster for railroad employees and “threaten substantial numbers of jobs, throughout the rail industry, that are supported by business made possible by Staggers.” For instance, the growth in double-stack intermodal trains has been fueled by competitive abilities created by Staggers.
When the Staggers Act was passed, it was intended to give railroads the market freedom they needed to compete—among themselves and against largely deregulated trucks and barges. Staggers allowed the railroads to adjust prices and service in response to the market, and work with shippers to get long-term commitments on traffic in return for reliable, responsible transportation service—often tailored to a specific shipper’s needs.

By most accounts, rail deregulation has been a huge success. Not one major railroad has filed for bankruptcy protection since Staggers’ passage, and substantial amounts of money have been spent to rehabilitate the nation’s track system, making it safer and more efficient. Since 1980, the year Staggers was passed, train accidents industrywide (per million train miles) have been reduced almost by 50 percent. Accidents related to bad track have declined 63 percent since 1979.

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**REGULATION: Back to square one?**

Railroads first became regulated 100 years ago, when the Interstate Commerce Act was signed into law on February 4, 1887. The Act gave the Interstate Commerce Commission the power to regulate the railroads, with an eye toward eliminating some of the most criticized practices of the time, such as rebates to favored shippers and other discriminatory practices.

The push for regulation started long before 1887, however, as farmers and others complained loudly of railroad price-gouging as the nation’s rail system pushed westward. Back then, shippers had few alternatives for moving their freight. The federal government, in response to the clamors for regulation, responded with the Interstate Commerce Act.

Over the years two other laws—the Hepburn Act of 1906 and the Transportation Act of 1920—strengthened the ICC’s control over railroads. Eventually, the ICC set rates for all train movements on all routes; railroads could neither price their services attractively nor recover the costs of moving their traffic. Unlike other industries, railroads could not enter into contracts with their customers to cover long-term rates and service levels.

Regulation didn’t matter very much in the early years, since railroads still enjoyed a virtual monopoly in the freight transportation marketplace. But by the 1950s, the growth of the federally-funded Interstate Highway System and the Inland Waterway System began to give railroads an uncomfortable dose of competition. If railroads had not been regulated, they could have responded to this competition with lower rates and more efficient service. Hamstrung by regulation, railroads were helpless. Since any rate change required an exhaustive review by the ICC, market conditions had often changed by the time the new rate was approved. Similar restraints blocked railroad cost-reduction efforts.

Railroads began losing customers and more business were slipping away because competitive rates could not be approved fast enough. In 1980, in response to an industrywide—and shipper supported—push for deregulation, Congress passed the Staggers Rail Act, which brought sweeping regulatory reforms to the railroads. The act mandated that competition be permitted to regulate most rail rates, just as it regulates the prices in most industries. Railroads can also enter into contracts with shippers, and move their freight over the most efficient routes. The ICC can only intercede if a railroad is found to be dominant in a market—that is, there is no effective competition for the business.

The results have been better service and lower prices for shippers, and more business for the railroads. In 1981, Conrail earned its first annual net income. In 1987—nearly 17 years after Penn Central entered bankruptcy—Conrail was returned to the private sector in the largest initial public stock offering in U.S. history.

Regulatory reform has brought financial stability to the railroads and better service to shippers and communities. But the proposal backed by Consumers United for Rail Equity (C.U.R.E.) threatens to push the industry back to square one.

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**Diagram:**

- Interstate Commerce Act signed into law, Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) established.
- Hepburn Act of 1906 passes.
- 1887
- 1906
- 1950s—federal funding of Interstate Highway and Inland Waterway systems strengthens them to compete for railroad traffic.
- 1950's
- 1970
- Penn Central Railroad enters bankruptcy, several others follow over next two years.
- 1976
- 1980
- 1987
- C.U.R.E. proposals threaten to deregulate industry, turn back modest progress made since 1980.
- Conrail created to restore stability to Northeast rail system.
- Staggers Rail Act becomes law, regulatory reform comes to railroads.
On the other hand, utilities' costs for personnel, interest, and other expenses have risen substantially since 1981.

Rates for most other commodities have also declined on an inflation-adjusted basis. In 1981, the average rail revenue per ton-mile for all commodities was 3.2 cents; in 1986 it was only 2.5 cents—a decline of 21 percent in just five years. Even without adjusting for inflation, average rail rates have still fallen 9 percent since 1981. How many other services or products have become less expensive over the last five years?

Rail freight rates have declined because Staggers allowed railroads to use their resources more efficiently. That efficiency has benefitted customers with improvement in on-time performance and shorter transit times, as railroads have focused on meeting truck competition.

Despite the evidence that Staggers works to the benefit of shippers and railroads, the C.U.R.E. special interests continue to press for changes.

Why? Says Marshall: "A minority of special interests are seeking to have the resources of this railroad and all others diverted to their benefit."

If they succeed in paying less than their fair share of the costs of moving coal, then other rail customers will end up paying more than the fair share of costs for moving their traffic. In the long run, the costs may not be covered at all, Rich said.

If C.U.R.E.'s changes were implemented, railroads' cash—the money available to fund purchases of new equipment and to rehabilitate existing track and equipment—would shrink, since the proposed changes are designed to require coal transportation service at prices that would not cover the cost of providing the service.

Rich said that even boxcar and intermodal movements, while not the focus of the current debate, would be at risk since the C.U.R.E. proposal reduces the Interstate Commerce Commission's power to exempt this traffic from regulation. Besides a reduced ability to offer truck-competitive rates for these services, railroads would have less money to invest in the better track and equipment necessary to serve this time-sensitive and cost-sensitive traffic if C.U.R.E. has its way.

According to Rich, C.U.R.E.'s proposals are unfair not only to railroads, but also to other shippers now doing business with railroads. At Conrail, for instance, truck-competitive rates and the flexibility to tailor service to customers' needs have lured business off the highway.

Conrail employees have helped Conrail keep this truck-competitive business by providing superior service.

What You Can Do

The outcome of debate on the Staggers Act will be crucial to the future of railroads and railroad employment. Employees everywhere should communicate their opinions to their own elected representatives in Congress. The lists on page 7 contain the names of senators and congressmen on Congressional committees who will play a key role in the debate. Let them know how you feel, as a citizen and a voter.

Some people just can't seem to let a good thing stand. Take the Staggers Rail Act of 1980—one of the most successful pieces of legislation in history. A group called Consumers United for Rail Equity (C.U.R.E.)—backed primarily by the coal and utilities industries—wants to take an ax to the Staggers Act.

They say they want to "perfect" the Act..."reform" it..."fine-tune" it. But if you read the legislation they have proposed, you will quickly see that, in critical areas, they want to re-impose the same stifling regulation—and more—that almost destroyed the railroads.

Never mind that most railroad customers—87 percent of those questioned in a recent survey—are happy with the Staggers Act and don't want it changed. Never mind the observable fact that the partial deregulation provided by the Act brought the railroads back from the brink of disaster, resulting in efficiencies and improved service for all who use rail.

Never mind, even, that the freedom to set rates and make contracts with less regulatory interference did not result in massive rate increases. Many rates—coal and grain rates in particular—have gone down in recent years.

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The interests represented by C.U.R.E. think they can use federal and state governments to lower their rates still further. But there is no free lunch. If C.U.R.E. succeeds, most other shippers will pay more—through higher rates and poorer service from a weakened industry.

Don't let C.U.R.E. chop up a law that has been good for you. Stand up for your interests. Write and tell Congress that the Staggers Act works. It doesn't need pruning—or fine-tuning.

For more information, write Let It Stand, Association of American Railroads, 50 F St., NW, Washington, DC 20001, Dept. 000, or call (202) 639-2550.
COLUMBUS

From bustling cities to rolling farmland, this division has it all

By Gedehill Cameron

It is fitting that Conrail’s Columbus Division is centered around a city named for history’s most famous explorer. Getting to know this division, the most sprawling on Conrail’s system, is an adventure which explorers would relish.

Its 1,300 miles of main line and secondary track form a giant “S,” scoring the heart of Columbus, Ohio, the headquarters city, reaching 130 miles northwest towards Toledo; northeast 142 miles towards Cleveland; southeast 110 miles through Cincinnati, and 250 miles south-east through Charleston and beyond in bituminous-rich West Virginia.

Spread out as the Columbus Division is, it is not surprising that diversity is its most distinguishing characteristic, and the word that almost everyone uses to describe it. Columbus is diverse in its traffic base, its geography and its climate.

Along the division’s far-flung tracks are Conrail customers moving coal, autos and automotive parts, grain, chemicals, foodstuffs, fertilizer, paper and paper products, plastics, and steel.

“The diversity we have is an advantage,” said then Division Superintendent R. Paul Carey.

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EDITOR’S NOTE: When this story was researched, R. Paul Carey was superintendent of the Columbus Division, and a key source who has been quoted extensively in the story. In late March, 1987, Carey was named division superintendent of the Mohawk-Hudson Division, and Michael A. Luce, formerly division superintendent at Jackson, Michigan, assumed Carey’s post at Columbus. Although Carey is no longer at the Columbus Division, his observations about the division are relevant for the story as it was prepared, and he is a central figure in the article.
“It means we are somewhat protected from the economic ups and downs of one or two industries.” In 1986, the Columbus Division and its roughly 1,300 employees generated more than 173,000 carloads of freight and more than $162 million in revenue.

Columbus is also a major center for Conrail’s premium intermodal service. A new, expanded and modernized intermodal terminal was relocated from the 20th Street Yard to the division’s key facility, Buckeye Yard. Here trains can be made up in 35 to 40 minutes, twice as fast as they were at the old yard, said Joe Okuly, trainmaster at Buckeye. Since the new terminal opened in June of 1986, the number of loaded trailers handled each month has increased by nearly 40 percent.

The division’s geography is as diverse as its traffic base. While the city sits surrounded by miles of fertile, flat farmland, the division becomes increasingly hilly in southeastern Ohio and its tracks run up into the tightly crumpled hills and hollows of Appalachian West Virginia.

“That gives us a rather unusual climatic situation in this division, especially in winter months,” explains Bob Garman, assistant division engineer. “You can have four or five different conditions at the same time. It might be sunny or rainy in parts of West Virginia, with moderately light snow in Columbus and as much as five or six inches near Toledo, Cleveland and Dayton, along the snow belt.”

But if traffic, terrain and climate offer diversity, the work force at Columbus appears to be remarkably homogenous, a stable, steady and safety-conscious group. The Columbus Division had the lowest rate of lost time injuries in 1986, and was the best and most improved division in safety for 1984. Early this year, Conductor Darrel Cheesebrew, a Columbus Division employee, was Conrail’s nominee for the Harold F. Hammond Award, a new industry-wide award for a single railroad employee who has demonstrated personal commitment to safety. Cheesebrew finished second in the competition for the 1987 Hammond Award.

“People here are level headed and accepting, the kind who go on doing the best job they can whatever the circumstances,” says Bob Bradford, terminal trainmaster at Sharonville Yard near Cincinnati and an 18-year railroad veteran.

Observes Bill Goshorn, a train dispatcher at Columbus, and a history buff: “People in Columbus are a little more laid back, more conservative and independent than elsewhere. You must
Shortly after Scottslawn, the tracks pass a connection to the handsome low buildings of the large new Honda automotive assembly plant—the only Honda plant in the U.S. Years in the planning, it opened in 1982, and is now one of the four largest plants in the country. During 1986, the plant was shipping out an average of 50 to 60 tri-level freight cars a day (each carrying 15 Accords or Civics)—some 4,500 to 5,400 Hondas flooding out of Marysville to all parts of America during a six-day week.

This year, Honda is moving towards its projected full capacity production of 360,000 vehicles a year. Honda is currently the second largest customer on the Columbus Division, with General Motors first.

At Ridgeway, Carey draws attention to the excellent condition of the road bed and tracks, noting that Columbus now has 100 percent welded rail on all its main lines.

A fast freight was due to arrive at Ridgeway, on its way to Pittsburgh from Indianapolis.

"You will see this train go right through here at normal speed without a pitch or a roll," he says, "It will be rock-steady!"

When the train glides into view, exactly on time, it is indeed a pretty sight, as it streams majestically, smoothly, across the bucolic landscape. Carey watches it with the glowing appreciation of a sportsman, or a horse lover at a perfect race, or a sailor at a splendid regatta.

After the freight passes, Carey stops in at the Ridgeway Interlocking Tower, which looms in the isolation of the prairie. He checks in with the sole occupant, block operator Jim "Jimbo" Lipp, an affable, young-looking 25-year railroad veteran who has never lost a day on the job. Lipp seems easy and comfortable in his workplace at this lonely spot on the map, noted for its extremes of wind and weather which funnel down from the western end of Lake Erie. Lipp smiles amiably as he points to two notations he has made on one wall: December 23, 1983. Temperatures reach 22 below zero January 10, 1985. Temperature reached a record 26 below. On the other hand, Lipp casually notes, summer can bring the other extreme—temperatures up to 100.

After a brief chat with Lipp, Carey continues his inspection trip. He now takes the hi-rail on the Indianapolis main line. At the division's western terminus near Bellefontaine, highest point in Ohio (1,549 feet above sea level), the ruling grade for this line, he leaves the track to return to Columbus.

The next morning, Carey finishes a full morning's work, including the daily staff meeting, and is on the road again before lunch. At Springfield, he stops to look at an important work site where Brad Darling, supervisor of track, and a crew of eight are working on Conrail tracks which go right through the center of the city. The crew is preparing a new bed for tracks. Work began at 9:30, as soon as the last train passed. The men are pushing hard to have the area open to traffic by late the next day. It is now raining, a mean, bone-chilling drizzle. Assistant Division Engineer Bob Garman is on hand too, and he grins broadly, as he hunches his broad shoulders against the rain: "I can't think of anything I'd rather be doing." (The job will be finished in fact, by noon the next day.)

Satisfied with what he has seen, Carey pushes on to Cincinnati, passing numerous other towns and plants of important Conrail customers—the General Motors assembly plant for S-10 pickup trucks at Moraine, the Appleton and Miami paper companies at West Carrollton, Armco Steel at Middletown, and another GM plant (Firebirds and Camaros) at Norwood, a Cincinnati suburb. Other industries clustered near that city are Consolidated Grain and Barge, Quaker Oats, Pillsbury, Seagram's and Schenley. In the city center is the modern twin-towered headquarters of Procter and Gamble, the city's second largest employer and a major division customer at its factory in Ivorydale.

Local officials describe Cincinnati as "an affable, no-nonsense, non-uptight city" which, "like Columbus, generally considers itself conservative." It is a city of old and quiet wealth, much of it dating back to the days when Cincinnati earned the title of "Queen City" of the Ohio River, as the bustling hub of its river traffic. It is Bill Goshorn, train dispatcher and history buff, who provides the interesting fact that during the Great Depression in the 30's, Cincinnati was said to have more money in savings banks than any other city in the country. The city is still bustling and thriving.

It is close to 6 p.m. when Carey reaches Cincinnati, but he will have one more meeting—with Conrail sales personnel at this busy industrial center—before calling it a day.

Carey is on the road again the next morning before 6:30 en route to Sharonville, Conrail's Cincinnati headquarters, and then to Columbus, where he will attend a meeting of the communications and signals quality circle, which calls itself "The Terminators."

The Terminators are led by Tom Veith, signal maintainer, and include signalmen Robert McGrath, Kevin Fisher and Jeff Ennis; maintainers Bruce Carter, Bill McKahan, Charles W. Tatum, Eugene Hadden and Vernon Jordan; and Paul Bourcier, assistant shop foreman.

Like the 25 other quality circles around the system, this one is made up of ground level, hands-on workers who give an hour a week on company time to develop proposals calculated to increase productivity. The Terminators are making a presentation to R. D. Mays, engineer, C and S training and shop, as well as Ray Neal, Jr., director of the four-year-old Labor/Management Project; Goshorn, the "facilitator" for this QC and Carey. With remarkable clarity, the group presents its plan for fabricating three necessary C & S components themselves instead of purchasing them from an outside company—for a savings of more than $9,000 annually.
Carey sits quietly but absorbed during the meeting, which takes most of the morning. He leaves before lunch and heads back to Stella Court to attend to matters at Columbus headquarters.

It is only early afternoon when Carey is off again, this time traversing another leg of the division, to Charleston, West Virginia. Traveling by road, he crosses the Ohio River at Point Pleasant. It is here, he notes, that West Virginia coal passes on barges on its way north to Pittsburgh and elsewhere. Conrail handled this coal from the mine to Port Amherst, where it was transferred onto the barges.

From the Ohio, Carey follows the Kanawha River (pronounced locally “Kah-NAW”) south through the “chemical valley” where West Virginia Conrail customers include Monsanto, Union Carbide, Du Pont and others. He spends the night in Charleston and the next morning, long before the mists have risen from the hollows, he is at Dickinson Yard, 15 miles south of the city.

It is chilly and damp, but beautiful, at the yard, tucked among the hills. This is a world away from the downtown wealth and luxury of Cincinnati the day before. Unemployment is high and times are hard in West Virginia. Inside the office and crew lounge, Carey gathers three or four men and tells them he’d appreciate their thoughts about any specific problems at Dickinson and what needs to be done. Gradually more men appear as Carey speaks, easily and informally, inviting their ideas.

The men ask questions, tentatively at first, then more eagerly. They appear to be infused with new confidence as Carey talks.

By now the group includes Danny Wilkinson, locomotive engineer (a 24-year veteran); his “baby brother,” A. O. Wilkinson, l. and R. foreman (41 years); Carl Hill, laborer (33 years); Robert Winfree, conductor (27 years); Roger Hindle, conductor (38 years); and the “youngster” in the group, Roger McAfee, track foreman (12 years).

When Carey goes to another office to speak with Dickinson Trainmaster Thomas White, a calm and friendly man with a soft West Virginian accent, the men speak even more personally about themselves, the hard times in the area now and about the superintendent.

Danny Wilkinson, a big, white-haired man with a young, unlined and cheerful face, says, “The thing is, we have a continuity here and on the job. It may seem like a slow-going pace to some people, but we get the job done and we take care of each other.”

McAfee says he knows of families “with maybe six kids and maybe only one person in that family working, maybe one kid flipping burgers in a restaurant. A family can’t hardly live on that. But they do somehow. And it is because we help each other.”

continued on page 16
McAfee, with the least seniority, says he works on the railroad six months and is furloughed for half a year. "But I wouldn't give this job up for anything," he says. "Myself," he adds with a gentle smile, "I'm waitin' on the coal boom."

The group seems sincerely impressed, energized by Carey's talk.

"Well, he doesn't blow smoke," notes Hindle approvingly. "If a man is trying to help you—well, then, you are going to try and help that person. When he tells me that this is what he himself believes—and that those who work with him believe it, well, then, I have to believe it too."

Says Carey, as he drives away: "When I come down here and I see one of those guys working, I try—and maybe I don't always succeed—but I try to think: what would I want to know if I were that man? So then it is really easy to speak honestly and simply."

Carey cranks down the railway wheels of the hi-rail again and goes on the tracks at Port Amherst, not far from Dickinson (189 miles from Columbus, says the track-side milepost). Dickinson Yard handles two through trains a day, plus several local freights. Northbound DIIN (Dickinson/Indianapolis) carries coal to Port Amherst, where it is transferred to barges to travel up the Kanawha to the Ohio, then to steel mills, power companies and other industries along the Ohio and Monongahela Rivers. DIIN moves coal and chemicals north to Columbus and beyond, six days a week.

Beginning early in 1985, innovative marketing and aggressive sales efforts in Columbus created new business for the train's southwest trip, and a new market for Ohio grain producers. Train COIN, which had been hauling empty coal hoppers back south, offered producers an opportunity to reach new markets economically by moving carloads of grain along with the empty coal cars.

Small grain producers—"mom-and-pop silos," Carey smiles—jumped on Conrail proposals. "Imagine," he says, "for the first time we are moving Ohio grain through West Virginia to markets in the south." In May, 1985, the first grain shipments came through Dickinson en route to North Carolina, to be used as poultry feed. With over a dozen small grain producers involved, some 4,000 carloads of grain were moved in just over a year, Carey notes with satisfaction.

Now Carey is driving the hi-rail through the lovely hills and woods of Appalachia, some areas accessible only by railroad or helicopter. As he inspects track and surroundings, he also passes small towns with names like Institute, Nitro, Black Betsy, Red House, Grimm's Landing, and "Eleanor," in honor of Franklin Roosevelt's first lady.

On this route, through West Virginia and southeastern Ohio, Carey also drives over bridges—many, many bridges. The railroad crosses one meandering creek (called "the snake") 13 times. According to Bruce Anderson, supervisor of Bridges and Buildings, the 250-mile route from Columbus to the end of the West Virginia secondary track includes some 300 bridges. On one stretch of a few miles in southeast Ohio, there are four or five bridges per mile. Some of the bridges are still wooden; many are scheduled to be replaced as part of a continuing program.

Back in Ohio again, at 12:45 Carey stops to pick up Track Foreman Gary Moses at Armitage.

A bearded, 16-year railroad veteran, Moses supervises about 165 miles of track from Hobson, West Virginia, to Columbus—only a mile and a half of it without curves, a fact which necessitates high maintenance, he says. He is a quiet-spoken man, disciplined and confidence-inspiring, an ex-Marine. His usual response to Carey's occasional note—a need to replace a confusing cross buck sign at a remote crossing, the removal of a single new "monument" which has suddenly appeared beside the track (an old stove or refrigerator, contributed by some "good" citizen) is a simple, "Yessir. That will be done tomorrow."

It is a little after 3 p.m. when Carey lets Moses off at Main Street, New Lexington, and gets back on the highway himself, heading home to Columbus. He relaxes a little now, exhilarated by the activities of the past few days.

"The truth is," he smiles, "I feel very lucky. I look forward to getting up in the morning. There is so much that is interesting in this division—and we work hard to deliver quality service consistently and proudly."