

Train may resume service

By RACHEL STIFFLER
Staff Writer

The Amtrak Carolinian, a passenger train taken out of service in September, could soon be back on track if the General Assembly finds it can erase the debts amassed by the train, a N.C. Department of Transportation official said last week.

Charles Glover, intercity program manager for the DOT, said he hoped the Charlotte-to-Raleigh passenger train would be in service again within a few weeks.

Several issues must be settled before the Carolinian runs again, Glover said. For example, whether or not money designated for the next two years of service could be used to pay off this year's accumulation of debts is one problem facing the DOT.

The Carolinian, a joint financial effort between the DOT and Amtrak, had its inaugural run on Oct. 28, 1984 and was discontinued in September because it was losing money. The General Assembly had provided funding to operate the train for its first year.

"We didn't achieve as high a revenue as we thought we would," Glover said. "We thought the trip length per average rider would be more than it was. We thought each person

would ride about 400 miles, but they only rode about 250 to 260 miles. Of course the shorter the length (of the trip), the cheaper the ticket."

Glover said if and when the train resumed service, it would probably operate during the warmer months when ridership is higher — usually between Easter and the North Carolina State Fair.

Glover said the average trip length was shorter than expected, while the number of riders was larger than expected.

The DOT had estimated less than 100,000 people would ride the train during the 12-month period. The actual ridership was 115,000 in 10 months.

"It was a learning experience," Glover said. "It (the high ridership) demonstrated that there is definitely a need for a train from Charlotte to Raleigh." The Carolinian provided daily service between Raleigh and Charlotte, with through service to Richmond, Va., Washington, D.C. and New York City.

"One thing we learned . . . is that we need to do a better job of advertising that the train goes further than just from Charlotte to Raleigh," Glover said. "If we can get people to take trips of longer length, then we'll get more revenue."

There will be a meeting for all University-desk writers at 5 p.m. Tuesday at the U-Lush's desk in the Daily Tar Heel office.

U-desk meeting

Group 84 program

Group 84, the local chapter of Amnesty International, will meet tonight at 8 at the Newman Center. The group will discuss International Human Rights Week, which begins Tuesday and runs through Dec. 9.

For more information on the group, call Tom Rudin at 966-3256 (daytime) or 929-6055.

Egypt approves plane rescue

From wire reports

CAIRO, Egypt — The Egyptian parliament passed a resolution Saturday approving the governmental decision to storm a hijacked EgyptAir jetliner in Malta — the bloodiest hijacking rescue attempt in history.

Parliament passed the resolution Saturday during a special session after the bodies of some of the victims were returned to Egypt from Malta. The government vowed not to retaliate against Libya.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and other officials had earlier accused the Libyans of being behind the Nov. 23 hijacking and mentioned possible retaliation. Libya denied the allegation and placed its armed forces on alert after the hijacking.

Hijack victim buried

OCEANSIDE, Calif. — Relatives and friends of Scarlett Rogenkamp were told Saturday not to be bitter toward the terrorists who killed her on the island of Malta during the hijacking of the EgyptAir jetliner.

Rogenkamp, 38, was the only American who died in the incident,

news in brief

which left 59 dead after a bloody commando raid.

About 100 mourners filled a small Catholic church in Oceanside, a small community bordering the Camp Pendleton Marine Corps base just north of San Diego.

"We will have no fists of rebellion or bitterness toward anyone," the Rev. John Lucev said during the funeral service. "God loves all of us with no exceptions."

Election contributions reported

WASHINGTON — Special interests poured a record \$113 million into the 1983-84 election cycle, most of it going to incumbent members of Congress, the Federal Elections Commission reported Saturday.

Senate and House members seeking re-election received \$80.6 million, or 70 percent of all the contributions from special interest political action committees. In contrast, challengers received only 16 percent, and candidates in open seat elections received 11 percent.

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A limited number of student tickets as well as tickets to the public are still available for the Stanford-UNC Basketball Game in Carmichael Auditorium Friday Evening, December 20th. Student tickets are free with I.D. and athletic pass. Tickets to the public are on sale at \$11.00. Tickets are available at the ticket office in Carmichael between 8:30 am-4:30 pm daily.

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