

ALL ABOARD

INDIANA

The Official Newsletter of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

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Why Ride the (*Hoosier State*) Train?

By Donald Yehle

Ed Ellis, president of Iowa-Pacific Holdings, would answer the question, "Because our company plans to operate the 196-mile *Hoosier State* railroad between Chicago and Indianapolis in the very near future."

Negotiations, now in progress, call for **Amtrak to provide the engineers, conductors, and track access.** Additionally, the National Passenger Railroad Corporation (Amtrak) would sell and collect ticket revenue. Locomotives and train cars, including an en-



hanced business-class coach, would be furnished by Iowa Pacific, which has operations in eight states—California, Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, and Texas.

The **Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) would make ticket pricing decisions**, with input from Iowa-Pacific. Many service improvements are being planned for the *Hoosier State*.

- **In on-time performance**, through daily focus on host railroads, follow-up on managing freight train interference, and ensuring the train is ready for an on-time departure.
- **In speed and frequency improvements**, through capital expenditures for track and signal improvements and new routing into Chicago. "We are willing to add frequencies, assist in financing improvements, and take financial risks," Ellis says.
- **In growing ridership** by adding connecting shuttle (*continued*)

As We Go To Press:

Major positive news about the future of the *Hoosier State* was reported May 1 by the *Journal & Courier* of Lafayette. The newspaper's Christine Vizza interviewed 11 different people about a two-year funding extension and a July 1 startup of the Iowa Pacific *Hoosier State*. For details, go to our homepage at indianahighspeedrail.org and click the link to read the story or search the web for the JConline story "Hoosier State Train Forging Ahead."

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bus service to Bloomington and to Merrillville/Gary.

- **In marketing**, by offering a train-specific website, group sales development, focusing on student travel, and development of weekend packages.
- **In "on board" services**, with Wi Fi and food and beverages for coach passengers .
- **In an enhanced business class service**, including a hot breakfast, Wi-Fi, and a "dome car"—for an extra fare.
- **In maintaining** a fleet of "spares" (locomotives and passenger cars).
- **In maintenance and service** for all of its equipment.

Iowa Pacific Moves Nearly 400,000 People Annually

Organized in 2001 and entering passenger rail five years later, the company provides passenger train service to nearly 400,000 people annually. It owns 700 miles of track and has access to 1,200 additional miles of steel. Fun is part of its culture, as demonstrated by the thousands of Americans who ride *The Polar Express*, the *Train to Christmas Town*, the *Reno Fun Train*, and *Pullman Rail Journeys* – all rail adventures operated by Iowa Pacific. The company's vision for the *Hoosier State* includes bringing back the fun for the 12 million people along the 196-mile corridor between Chicago and Indianapolis.

The "Iowa Pacific Story" is based on the premise that people will pay more for better service. The company doesn't ask anyone to travel more than two hours without at least a cup of coffee being made available. It understands if you can distract people with things like Wi Fi, food, and beverages, customers are more willing to ignore the current slower speeds of the *Hoosier State*, Ellis says. **(See adjacent story, "Value = Price + Service + Equipment.")**

Future *Hoosier State* riders can expect to become engaged by "customer evangelists" and company-paid ambassadors. "Unhappy customers tell seven people; happy customers tell two people," he continues.

Iowa Pacific "ambassadors" listen to those who have positive experiences and seek to convince others to use their service. Growth in revenues and riders is tied to these "ambassadors" who also will develop relationships with attractions and lodging companies. Focused future promotions may include contests such as "Why I like riding the train in 25 words or less." One winner of an essay contest received a personal visit with Michael



"Things Not To Do While Driving" slides highlighted the convenience of rail travel from multiple perspectives.

Murphy, a party with the celebrity cowboy singer at their home, newspaper coverage of the event, and YouTube fame after the event was video-taped and posted, Ellis says.

At a Greater Lafayette Commerce Eggs-'N-Issue event in mid-April, the rail executive offered several pointed reasons to give up the automobile in favor of rail transportation. Presented with the use of humorous slides, those "things not to do while driving" included:

- Texting, which can safely be done on a train
- Reading the newspaper, which can safely be done on a train
- Conducting a business meeting, which can safely be done on a train
- Using your computer, which can safely be done on a train
- Playing games with your kids – rather than yelling at them, which can safely be done on a train

(continued)

("Why Ride the Train?" continued from page 2)
 "Reasons not to be on the road" were described (i.e. Updated snow cast for today and tomorrow; car flipped over in the ditch; stalled traffic, and "grandma" at the wheel. Rail passengers are free from worry of distracted drivers, food in one hand and a drink in another, and impaired driving.

Will you join us on a future Iowa Pacific *Hoosier State* rail trip? asks Ellis.

Iowa-Pacific Plans Value Ride for *Hoosier State* Passengers

By Donald Yehle

There's a basic transportation equation that drives Iowa Pacific's thinking as they prepare to launch a new brand of passenger rail service in Indiana. It is:

VALUE = PRICE + SERVICE + EQUIPMENT

Value -- "Rail must deliver high value to justify a premium price," explains Ed Ellis, president, Iowa Pacific.

Service -- "Service value has to take a different form to attract repeat ridership," he continues.

Equipment -- "Many discretionary travelers will only travel if they don't suffer," Ellis says.

Hoosier State passengers have suffered. Consider:

- Indiana's north-south railroad isn't high speed – average train speed is 39 MPH.
- The train arrives in Indianapolis at midnight; it departs for Chicago at 6 a.m.
- I-65 has a higher top speed limit, 70 MPH, compared to 60 MPH on the *Hoosier State*.

Iowa Pacific Holdings hopes to generate more customer satisfaction utilizing better equipment and service.



- Coordinated with *The Cardinal*, there's one daily train each way -- northbound, mornings; southbound, evenings.
- Ridership is less than 40,000 annually.
- On-time performance is lacking, although a recent Supreme Court decision favoring passenger rail over freight will help improve things.
- The train has no Wi-Fi and no food or beverage service.

Gradually lessening the suffering might well be Iowa Pacific's battle cry. Make the route fun. Make it a more pleasurable trip. "Raise the perception value, and you raise the average ticket price and raise repeat ridership," he says. This is music to the ears of INDOT and community leaders in Indianapolis, Beach Grove, Crawfordsville, Lafayette, West Lafayette, Tippecanoe County, and Rensselaer, all of whom have joined forces to finance the *Hoosier State* since October 2013.

The *Hoosier State* is one of only 23 state-supported train routes in the United States. Ellis and his Chicago-based team know Indiana is a "car culture" state and that the state has been reluctant to fund passenger rail until now -- the current state legislature has approved \$3 million for the *Hoosier State* for the next two years.

DEPARTURE FREQUENCY IS KEY SERVICE INDICATOR

Until rail infrastructure issues can be funded (\$500 million would solve track issues), don't look for multiple rail departures in the near future. "It takes 14 daily rail departures at a minimum for "clock service" to allow more than token business travelers," Ellis continues.

Amtrak's Northeast Corridor, from Boston to Washington, D.C., has sufficient intercity rail departures to attract this business. Southwest Airlines does so, too, as it flies 25 daily departures between Dallas and Houston. London to Exeter, England, passenger rail features 36 departures on two lines, he says.

"A nicer train can drive up the value of the trip for discretionary travelers when three things are offered – better views, more comfortable seat pitch, and different classes of service," the rail executive adds.

"Business travelers are willing to suffer through travel to get to their destinations at a certain time; price shoppers are willing to suffer through travel to save a few dollars, and as said before, discretionary travelers will only travel if they don't suffer," Ellis says. *(continued)*

Hoosier State Train

Service Development Timeline

Iowa Pacific Vision

				\$millions
	Trip Time	OTP	RT/week	capex
Startup	5 hours	60%	4	\$0
3 months	5 hours	75%	4	\$0
1/1/2017	4 hours	90%	14	\$40
1/1/2018	3 hours	90%	28	\$100
1/1/2020	3 hours	95%	168	\$500

Note: This timeline has multiple assumptions regarding financial support and IP participation that must be validated and approved.

In the above chart, OTP refers to On-Time Performance, RT/week is Routes per Week, and Capex is Capital Expenditure.

("Iowa-Pacific Plans Value Ride" continued from page 3)

SERVICE DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE IN PLACE

A "Service Development Timeline" is included as part of Iowa Pacific's proposal to INDOT. Trip times will be at five hours from startup to three months of operation, dropping to four hours by January 2017. A year later travel time on the corridor will be three hours and by January 2020, remain at three hours with a 95 percent on-time percentage, the rail executive continues.

Iowa Pacific joins other stakeholders in understanding current top speeds of 60 miles per hour and average of

speeds of 39 miles per hour are unacceptable. "Given the state of the rail line's physical plant, 65 miles per hour is a good initial goal, but we'd like to see the *Hoosier State* get to 80 miles per hour as soon as possible," says Steve Coxhead, president, Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance.

Speed improvement to an average of 79 miles per hour would allow for a three-hour running time. Improved access into Chicago and additional sidings or double track are needed to make this goal. Substantial investment—in which Iowa Pacific will participate—is part of the plan, Ellis says.

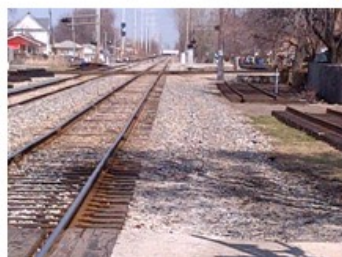
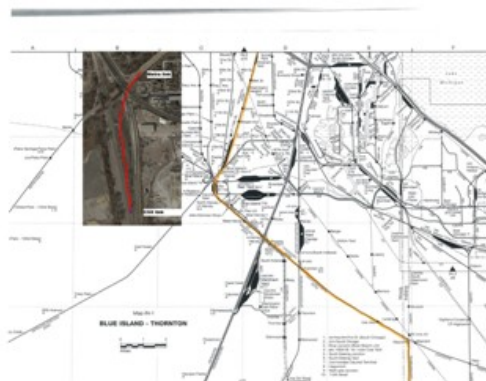
The on-time service performance metric starts at 60 percent and is expected to improve to 75 percent three months after launch. Three performance factors matter with regard to on-time arrivals. They are:

- Daily focus on host railroads
- Follow up on managing freight train interference
- Ensure train is ready for on-time departure

ARE 12 DAILY DEPARTURES AN ACHIEVEABLE GOAL?

It's true the Iowa Pacific president has set 12 daily runs as his company's goal. It's also true many dominos would have to fall in place to get there, but it's not impossible, says Greater Lafayette Commerce's Arvid Olson. *(continued)*

Developing the Indianapolis-Chicago route



Improve running time

- Three-hour running time with up to 12 daily departures can be achieved
- Speed improvement to 79 mph is required
- Additional sidings or double track will be needed

Improve access to Chicago

- New connection at Blue Island or Ashburn
- Ashburn = Amtrak+Metra+CSX
- Blue Island = Metra+CSX

Iowa Pacific will participate

- Long-term improvements of \$100 to \$500 million, or \$30 million annual financing cost
- IP will participate in financing

("Iowa Pacific Plans Value Ride" continued from page 4)

As head of the Chamber's Transportation Committee, Olson outlines the following steps to greater daily frequencies, including:

- Successful transition from Amtrak *Hoosier State* to Iowa Pacific Holdings' *Hoosier State*.
- Effective promotion and strong word of mouth on features and benefits of the train.
- Good on-time performance.
- Ridership growth—probably the most critical item on this list.
- Continuance of support and lobbying for track improvement on the Monon subdivision.
- Better access into Union Station—Chicago from Dyer.
- Overall per-rider reduction in subsidy for the *Hoosier State*.
- Successful introduction of morning south and evening north trains.
- Possible extension to Cincinnati and Louisville, with higher speeds and average speed of 65 miles per hour.
- More ridership demand, especially in Indianapolis and Chicago.

So how will Iowa Pacific succeed?

PRICE -- Many customers will pay a higher price for higher value. Rail can't compete with bargain bus and air carriers. A higher price tells customers the service is better, though. Some people won't like riding coach.

SERVICE – On-board service can make the trip much more enjoyable. Rail isn't competing on frequency of departure. Improved coach service and newly-added business class service raises average fares, creates customer satisfaction, and accelerates "the buzz," Ellis says.

EQUIPMENT – First-class equipment, coupled with on board service including Wi-Fi, can make the trip more enjoyable. Typical short-haul rail rolling stock is neutral compared to bus/air, the latter of which benefits from hidden costs paid for by governments.

Indy Ticket Office Open Days, Nights

Amtrak passengers wanting to purchase tickets at the Indianapolis Union Station may do so during the hours of 11 p.m. to 6:30 a.m., seven days a week.

Additionally, the tickets window is open during these daytime hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday—7 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Thursday—6:30 a.m. to 12 noon

Friday—8 to 11:30 a.m.

Saturday—6:30 to 8 a.m.

Sunday—Closed

Ticket office hours are subject to change.

Predictable, Dedicated Funding

By Donald Yehle

Burn this phrase into your mind – **Predictable Dedicated Funding.**

During the National Association of Railroad Passengers' (NARP) spring meeting in Washington, D.C., last month, this phrase was often repeated. Council members of the 28,000-person passenger rail advocacy group asked their House representatives, their U.S. Senators, and their respective staffs to provide Amtrak with **predictable dedicated funding.**

Unfortunately, Amtrak has been saddled with just the opposite—year after year of "continuing resolutions" funding. In fact, the National Passenger Rail Corporation (Amtrak) has been left guessing how much money it will have to spend in 25 of the last 28 years. *(continued)*



Numerous laws affecting passenger rail are making their way through the House and Senate. (Capitol pre-scaffolding; photo by Martin Falbisoner; accessed via Wikipedia.)

("Predictable, Dedicated Funding" continued from page 5)
During a "Day on the Hill" event, NARP members delivered state-specific and corporate messages to the individuals who write laws, shape budgets, and advise those who vote on rail legislation.

Of the 10 pieces of rail legislation before the 114th Congress, many address railroad financing and three railroad safety. Here are two House safety measures that NARP supports:

House Resolution (H.R. 705) – Rail Crossing Safety Improvement Act – Support: Provides needed money to address the increasing number of grade crossing incidents that endanger passengers and motorists.

House Resolution (H.R. 946) – Commuter Rail Passenger Safety Act – Support: Provides much needed public investment for the implementation of the life-saving positive train control (PTC) technology.

Senate bill (S. 650) – Railroad Safety and Positive Train Control Extension Act -- Oppose: Provides a needed extension to allow for implementation of the life-saving PTC technology, but goes too far in providing a five-year blanket extension. NARP is proposing granting the Transportation Secretary authority to grant 18-month extensions on a case-by-case basis.

Four Senate bills are being supported by this passenger rail advocacy group. They are:

S.762 – Innovation in Surface Transportation Act of 2015 – Support: An outstanding bill that allows states to direct limited resources to transportation projects that best achieve critical economic and mobility improvement goals. Moves away from asphalt-dominated programs to a smarter multimodal form of transportation planning.

S.268 – Rebuild America Act of 2015 – Support: A much needed vision for funding the creation of a world class U.S. rail network.

S.515 – Sequestration Relief Act of 2015 – Support: Eases budget restrictions that have throttled infrastructure investment, slowing economic growth and prolonging the negative effects of the recession.

S.769 – Track, Railroad, and Infrastructure Network Act – Support: A bill that finally expands policies that have been used to successfully speed delivery of road and bridge projects to include rail and transit.

Three bills, two before the U.S. House of Representatives, and one before the U.S. Senate, are being monitored by NARP, which will celebrate its 50th birthday as an organization in 2017. They are:

H.R. 749 – Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act – Monitoring: A bipartisan endorsement of the need to preserve the national rail network. Unfortunately, this bill fails to address a growing investment backlog and only maintains the status quo.

H.R. 1308 – The National Multimodal and Sustainable Freight Infrastructure Act – Monitoring: A bill to amend Title 49, United States Code, to establish a Multimodal Freight Funding Program and a National Freight Infrastructure Competitive Grant Program to improve the efficiency and reliability of freight movement in the United States, and for other purposes.

S.769 – Rail Shipper Fairness Act of 2015 – Monitoring: To improve the efficiency and reliability of rail transportation by reforming the Surface Transportation Board, and for other purposes.

Individuals seeking more information on these 10 pieces of federal legislative are encouraged to contact the National Association of Railroad Passengers @ 505 Capitol Court, NE, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20002-7706. Phone: 202-408-8362; Fax: 202-408-8287; Email: narp@NARPrail.org

NARP Fall Council Meeting

Friday, October 16, 2015 - Sunday, October 18, 2015

*Crowne Plaza at Union Station
123 West Louisiana St; Indianapolis, IN 46255*



The Crowne Plaza Hotel will host NARP this fall.

Rail Advocates: There's Work To Do!

In the 1960s, the United States had an extensive network of passenger rail trains. All the major cities in the Midwest and South were linked by regular train service. You could get service on smaller routes, like the one from Boise, Idaho, to Portland, Oregon, three times a day.

Then a lot of lines got shut down in the late 1960s and 1970s, as this animation shows.

Go here to see the map:

<http://www.vox.com/2015/3/11/8192499/amtrak-passenger-train-decline>

Information furnished by Northwestern University. Views expressed around the attached map don't necessarily represent the opinions of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance.

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A Call for Participation!

By Steve Coxhead

At the April 25th IPRA board meeting at the historic Baker Street Station, in Fort Wayne, a decision was made to create a membership committee under the chairmanship of long time Board member, Ted Wetekamp. The scope of the committee would be to further develop our member base, develop donor resources to support the work of the organization, and coordinate the production and distribution of publicity and membership materials.

One of the first tasks to be undertaken by the new committee will be the production and distribution of a redesigned and updated membership brochure.

A visit to the IPRA website at "indianahighspeedrail.org" is all that is necessary to join the organization or make a donation. Payment can be made online, via either credit or debit card. This capability will be leveraged to encourage friends of modern 21st century passenger rail service to provide an enhanced level of financial support.

All IPRA members and friends are invited to pitch in and participate in the work of this committee. If you are interested in lending a hand, please contact Ted Wetekamp at ted.wetekamp@yahoo.com or send a message to info@indianahighspeedrail.org, with "Membership Committee" in the subject line.

Ted Wetekamp: Get Engaged in Passenger Rail

All Aboard Indiana wants members to know its Board of Directors. In April, Fred Lanahan from Fort Wayne was introduced. This month, please say hello to Westfield's Ted Wetekamp, who is wanting to see our organization grow in members, prestige, and muscle.



"I believe passenger rail is Indiana's best transportation option for economic, energy, and environmental reasons. I want to see reliable, frequent, and quick rail that can get Hoosiers to any Midwestern destination," he says.

Visits to the East Coast gave this Hewlett-Packard IT manager the vision of how rail can boost a region's economic vitality. "From observing passenger rail in Northern France, I also saw the connectivity it provides to technological and manufacturing centers," he continues.

Recent developments with the *Hoosier State* are encouraging as nothing will happen with passenger rail until the general public says it wants trains. "We need to put a hat on a hat to make rail a vibrant transportation alternative in Indiana," Wetekamp says.

By "hat on a hat," Wetekamp means Indiana (*continued*)

(*"Ted Wetekamp"* continued from page 7) Passenger Rail Alliance members and especially board members will need to take responsibility to keep select policy makers engaged in passenger rail.

To learn more about Ted and his views on passenger rail, contact him by phone at 317-652-2677 (cell) or by email at ted.wetekamp@yahoo.com. He can also be found on linked in at www.linkedin.com/pub/ted-wetekamp/.

Riding the Rails to Philmont— A 75-Year-Old Tradition

By Donald Yehle

Southwest Chief – The fight to preserve the *Southwest Chief's* route through Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico has received good news in that the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) will continue to make stops in these five New Mexico towns and cities—Albuquerque, Gallup, Lamy, Las Vegas, and Raton.

This is important to Boy Scouts and Explorer Scouts who for 75 years have depended on passenger rail to get them to Raton and nearby Cimarron, home to the Philmont Boy Scout Reservation. "It is part of the experience," says Philmont's Marketing Director, Brian Hayek, who estimates 4,000 Scouts take the train to camp each summer.



Amtrak's Joe Boardman (center, in white) visits with Boy Scouts at the Philmont Boy Scout Reservation.

Last July, Joe Boardman, Amtrak's president and CEO, took the *Southwest Chief* through New Mexico in an effort to gain support for the current route, including visiting for several hours at Philmont.

"We are making progress, with repairs being made to a track segment where major downgrades were most likely. We do not face an imminent deadline date and are continuing to work with leaders in all three states on ways forward," Amtrak spokesman Marc Magliari told *All Aboard Indiana*.

A January 1, 2016, deadline to finance some \$8 million in track repairs has been lifted by his company. There had been threats "to move the passenger train to a more southern route unless the rails were replaced on the current track," according to an editorial in *The Pueblo (CO) Chieftain*.

Funding solutions already in place include BNSF Railway taking on costs of maintaining the line and a \$22 million Tiger grant secured by Kansas and Colorado communities to upgrade rails between La Junta, Colorado and Newton, Kansas.

Your editor joins passenger rail advocates from Colorado, Kansas, and New Mexico who are hoping all the money can be raised in those states and from participating railroads to keep the *Southwest Chief* on its current route. In 1964—at the age of 14—the same tracks took me west from Michigan to Philmont's 127,000 acres of rugged New Mexico wilderness for a backpacking adventure.

The high adventure camp welcomed its one million Scout last summer. An estimated 22,000 more boys are expected this summer for horseback cavalcades and backpacking.

Old National Bank Project Will Enhance Lafayette's Big 4 Depot

Texas Eagle travelers have marveled for some time about economic development activities in and around the Bloomington-Normal, Illinois station. In Lafayette, IN, Amtrak passengers riding either the *Cardinal* or the *Hoosier State* will likewise be able to admire a project on their route. (*continued*)

(*"Old National Bank Project"* continued from page 8)

An artist's rendering of the Old National Bank project



Construction begins in September on a \$24 million, mixed-use project that features 96 luxury apartments, a regional headquarters and branch for Old National Bank, and additional retail space. The new building replaces an existing structure that opened in 1961.

Says Randy Williams, Old National Bank market president in Lafayette, "Being the newest person to Old National Bank, having been with Lafayette Savings Bank, this is just phenomenal.

"To me, this cements the fact that they really want to be here."

"It's a fact of life that 21st Century Passenger Rail is a big positive for communities along the rail corridors," adds Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance President Steve Coxhead. "Lafayette's downtown already is special. This development will make the area even more inviting to businesses and individuals who want to live, work, and play in their downtown."

To be called 101 Main, the project will take 18 months to complete. Apartments will be on the upper floors of an L-shaped building, complete with underground parking. Apartment balconies will overlook Main Street and Riehle Plaza, which sits next to the Big 4 Depot.

Vacation by Rail in Canada this Summer

By Bill Malcolm

Looking for a different vacation this year? Want somewhere affordable? Look no further than a trip on VIA Rail in Canada. VIA is Canada's equivalent to Amtrak.

Better yet, Canada is on sale. Your dollar is now worth \$1.20 in Canada. That's right. A U.S. dollar buys \$1.20 in Canada since the value of their "loonie" has fallen.

VIA vacation ideas include the following:

Take the Barons Bus from Indy or Ft. Wayne to Detroit, then take VIA from nearby Windsor, Ontario to Toronto.

Fly to Seattle, take Amtrak to Vancouver, then take VIA to Edmonton through the Canadian Rockies

Fly to Montreal, then take VIA to Quebec City or Ottawa. Don't forget to brush up on your French.

Fly to Toronto, then take VIA to Montreal

Fly to Edmonton, then take VIA to Jasper, Vancouver, or Pt. Hardy



Canada's VIA Rail offers some beautiful route options.

Fly to Montreal and take the Ocean train to Halifax

For schedules and vacation ideas, visit www.viarail.com

Use your AAA card for a further discount.

Lafayette City Bus Providing Depot Access

Since Monday, April 27, CityBus has been providing an access bus to transport passengers from the AMTRAK depot in Lafayette across the Wabash River to the west end of the John Myers Bridge.

Each morning, seven days a week, a volunteer meets to direct or escort Lafayette train passengers eastward across the bridge to the AMTRAK platform. The shuttle bus leaves from the depot—on the east side of the Wabash -- at 7:00, 7:15, and 7:30 a.m.

The shuttle bus waits at the west side of the Myers Bridge to take any passengers who have de-boarded the northbound train back to the Lafayette side if their cars are parked on that side of the river.

The CityBus shuttle also operates each evening, but there are no volunteers to assist passengers when either *The Cardinal* or the *Hoosier State* arrive at 10 p.m. from Chicago. "Friendly CityBus drivers greet passengers," says Amtrak volunteer Joe Krause.

There are many workmen on the AMTRAK platform, the Myers Bridge, and on the pedestrian (Riehle) bridge, Krause reports. Construction work is supposed to be completed by June 11, 2015.

Chicago Union Station Revitalization Plans Described at MHSRA Conference

Special thanks to Midwest High Speed Rail Association

The City of Chicago is working to revitalize one of Chicagoland's most important—but outdated—transportation assets, and Jeff Sriver of the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) talked about it in late March at the Midwest High Speed Rail Association's (MHSRA) spring conference. Chicago Union Station is used by millions of people each year, yet the station's layout doesn't meet today's needs or allow for expected growth, Sriver says.

The Union Station Master Plan strives to create capacity for growing demand by building an inviting space,

facilitating transfers between different transportation modes, and making the station a catalyst for economic development, he explains.

In the short term, the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) plans to improve access to ground transport and construct the Central Loop BRT. Then in the next few years, they are looking to unclog the congested waiting area, widen passenger platforms, reconstruct platforms for through tracks, and possibly build new basement waiting rooms, Sriver continues.

In the long term, CDOT looks to coordinate real estate development near the station and possibly build subways for Metra, Amtrak, and CTA trains adjacent to the station, he says.

South Korea HSR System

By Julius Parod, MHSRA

At the same conference, MHSRA's Julius Parod gives an overview of the high speed rail system in South Korea and described its similarities to the Midwest United States. "South Korea has built high speed rail in a phased blended approach—using upgraded conventional tracks to extend the reach of a dedicated high speed trunk line, he says.

"Over time, South Korea has added more high speed sections, shortening travel times across the country. The system also includes a direct connection to Seoul's main airport and has driven development near new stations. This is a similar approach to what the Midwest would likely do," Parod continues.

The presentation also drew parallels between some of the challenges Korea experienced with what the Midwest might face. Korea had to deal with lawsuits (like California has), construction setbacks, and poor transit connections at intermediate stations. In spite of these challenges, South Korea's system is a huge success with tremendous ridership—like a Midwestern network will be one day, Parod explains.

Gravity "Ridership" Model

By Jordan Horowitz, DePaul

A model for predicting train ridership and how it could be applied to proposed projects in the Midwest (*cont.*)

("Gravity Ridership Model" continued from page 10) and Texas was described at MHSRA by DePaul University graduate student Jordan Horwitz. **According to the model (which didn't include city pairs less than 90 miles apart), Chicago-Indianapolis-Cincinnati would see the highest use of any Midwestern corridor, says Horwitz.** His model for ridership accounts for the rate at which travel demand diminishes as distances rise.

Horwitz also gives an update on the proposed private high speed line between Houston and Dallas, which is receiving significant support from Japan. When applied to this corridor, the gravity model says Dallas-Houston would see less ridership than Detroit-Chicago, Chicago-Indianapolis-Cincinnati, and Los Angeles-San Francisco.

Cross Rail Chicago

By Rick Harnish

Materials MHSRA uses to promote Cross Rail Chicago with elected officials and other potential allies were shared by Rick Harnish, who says the project has made great strides in the past year. His presentation normally is given "in print" at meetings.

Cross Rail connects O'Hare International Airport, Union Station, McCormick Place, and the South Side of the Windy City. Communities with high unemployment would be connected to jobs by Cross Rail, Harnish emphasizes.

Track improvements, new rolling stock, revamped scheduling, and new or revitalized stations at O'Hare and Union Station are among the details Harnish explains. The potential for Cross Rail to be the hub for high speed train across the Midwest and its project costs are explained by the MHSRA executive director.

Bipartisan Congressional Support

By Ray Lang-Amtrak

Amtrak's Ray Lang touted the railroad's recent successes and comments on some recent pieces of transportation news. Amtrak's network reach, and how it serves communities large and small across America, were highlighted. Significant ridership increases in recent years have led to smaller operating deficits, Lang says.

Passage of "Amtrak Authorization" by the House was described. **While acknowledging the legislation didn't go far enough, Lang recognizes the significance of a bipartisan effort standing up for a true national system. The unanimous Supreme Court decision that found Amtrak to be a government entity is praised.**

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For More Information:

All Aboard Indiana is a monthly publication of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (formerly Indiana High Speed Rail Association).

To learn more or to join IPRA go to www.indianahighspeedrail.org or contact us at Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance, 3951 North Meridian Street, Suite 100, Indianapolis, IN 46208

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