

# ALL ABOARD **INDIANA**

The Official Newsletter of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

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## Waiting for the Last Domino

By Arvid Olson, Greater Lafayette Commerce



Supporters of passenger rail were disappointed to learn of yet another delay in the roll-out of the new *Hoosier State* passenger train. With the recent successful completion of a veritable regulatory alphabet soup of equipment and road inspections, many people believed that Indiana rail passengers would begin to enjoy an enhanced rail experience between Indianapolis and Chicago beginning July 1. Sadly, it was not yet to be.

To understand the delay may require the dear reader to remember how a series of dominos fall. Each domino needs to be in place and to fall at its appointed time. To fall out of sequence or to not fall means that the measured sequence of painted blocks does not complete its objective.

We are at one of those delicate places in the 'domino' sequence known as contract negotiations. You might be surprised to learn that while the Indiana Department of Transportation and Iowa Pacific Holdings are in agreement regarding the new Hoosier State, Amtrak has not entered into an agreement with INDOT regarding the operation of the new train. Amtrak's policy has been to not enter into a contract discussion with a state considering an alternative method of train operation (apart from a traditional Amtrak provided service) until it has been proven that the state hired (3<sup>rd</sup> party) or state owned train is road worthy (hence the complicated barrage of inspections). At that point, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation will enter into negotiations regarding providing engineers, conductors and access to the national ticketing system.

*Indiana passengers eagerly await a new and improved Iowa-Pacific Hoosier State train.*



INDOT is facing two key challenges toward the completion of a successful long-term contract negotiation. The first is that there is little precedent within the construct of PRIIA or based on other state agreements for an INDOT/Amtrak agreement involving a third party provider (IPH). The second challenge, to be fair, is that Amtrak has objected to the decision to retain a third party provider throughout the past eighteen months. There is little incentive for Amtrak to willingly encourage the erosion of what (*continued*)

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(*"Waiting for the Last Domino"* continued from page 1) is in fact a virtual intercity and long distance passenger rail monopoly in the United States.

That said; INDOT and Amtrak are continuing to negotiate, albeit with some reluctance. One good sign is the end of June agreement for Amtrak to continue to operate the existing **Hoosier State** consist until negotiations are complete.

So, take heart, rail passengers: The last few dominos may indeed fall this month. Stay tuned!

## Take Iowa-Pacific/Pullman to New Mexico in October

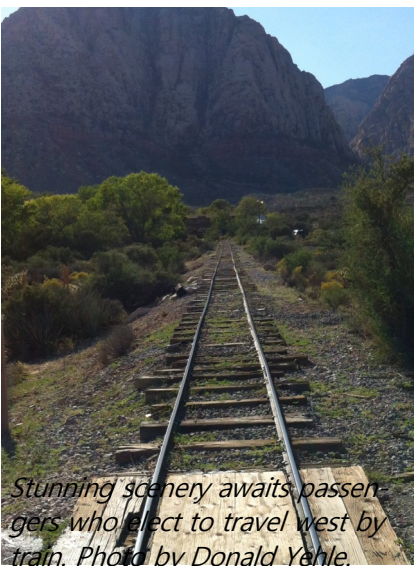
By Donald Yehle.

The same company—Iowa Pacific Holdings—that may soon take over the 196-mile Hoosier State train service between Chicago and Indianapolis is offering a five-day rail adventure from the Windy City to either Albuquerque or Santa Fe, New Mexico, this October.

"Imagine all that awaits you in the *Land of Enchantment* while you enjoy Pullman's signature service," says an advertisement from Pullman Rail Journeys, an operating unit of Iowa-Pacific Holdings. Trip dates are October 1-5. Guests may take in the Albuquerque International Balloon Festival or Santa Fe's celebrated culture and food.

The Chicago-based company has secured a contract from the Indiana Department of Transportation to manage the *Hoosier State* with direct responsibility for providing engines and rolling stock; on-board food and beverage service, and sales and marketing activities.

To make a reservation for this vacation package, please call 888-978-5563.



Stunning scenery awaits passengers who elect to travel west by train. Photo by Donald Yehle.

## Lafayette Amtrak Station Closed for Major Renovation

By Joe Krause.

On Monday, June 22, workers and equipment arrived at the Lafayette Amtrak station to begin making major renovations around and within the station. This includes the AMTRAK waiting room.

The planned renovation also incorporates replacing the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment (HVAC). Replacement of ceiling tiles, electrical, rest-room plumbing, and the addition of new floor tiles are part of the renovation.

Additionally, on the building's exterior, gutters are being repaired or replaced. Red pavers, which make up the station's second deck, have all been removed and are stored on pallets in the parking lot. It's estimated all work will take five months to complete.

What does this mean for AMTRAK passengers boarding the *Hoosier State* and the *Cardinal*?

The QUIK-TRAK ticket machine has been moved into the City Bus Transfer Center on 3rd St. As of this writing, the machine was not yet operational, so passengers and conductors are being informed that the ticket machine is temporarily unavailable.

City Bus continues to provide shuttle service from 2nd street next to the Amtrak Depot because most persons arrive there to unload luggage and secure parking passes for use at the County Garage located at 2nd and Columbia. Ordinarily, a shuttle bus makes its runs between 7:00 and 7:25 every morning.

The shuttle bus takes passengers across the Wabash River to Tapawingo Drive, where an AMTRAK volunteer meets them and directs them to the railroad platform.

The shuttle also operates in the evening beginning around 9:15 p.m. and then waits until after the southbound train drops off passengers around 10 p.m. However, there are no volunteers working during the evening.

(continued)

(*"Lafayette Station Closed"* continued from page 2)



As for the pedestrian bridge over the three railroad tracks, that work has been sporadic. First slated to be finished on June 11, then June 30, rumors now say project completion will be in the middle of August.

The elevators have been replaced—not repaired. However, the only persons

who can use them are contractors due to the condition of the pedestrian bridge.

## Take Amtrak's *Cardinal* to Purdue's Labor Day Opener

By Donald Yehle

**West Lafayette, IN** – Purdue football fans may want to consider taking Amtrak to Huntington, West Virginia, to catch the Boilermakers' 2015 season opener against Marshall University.

"It's a 357-mile, nine-hour train trip from Lafayette," said Steve Coxhead, president of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance and a Purdue graduate.

Amtrak's Eastbound *Cardinal* leaves Lafayette at 9:57 p.m. on Saturday night, September 5. The long-distance train arrives in Huntington, West Virginia, the next day at 7:09 a.m., allowing plenty of time for a tailgate party followed by the 3 p.m. kickoff against Marshall's Thundering Herd, he added.

Boilermaker faithful can catch the Westbound *Cardinal* seven hours after kickoff (9:56 p.m.), returning to West Lafayette at 7:36 a.m. Monday, September 7. Round-trip coach seating for two people is \$192.40. There are a limited number of round-trip roomettes for two available for \$556.40 (includes rail fare.)

This football rail trip has possibilities for Purdue fans

living near Amtrak's Chicago Union Station and the following *Cardinal* stops -- Dyer, Rensselaer, Greater Lafayette, Crawfordsville, Indianapolis, Connersville, and Cincinnati, Coxhead continued.

"And yes, Purdue's Labor Day weekend opener is on Sunday—not Saturday. And yes, the game is in Huntington—the first time a Big 10 team has played there. And yes, it's against a Thundering Herd team that finished with a 13-1 record in 2014, winning the inaugural Boca Raton Bowl last December," he concludes.

Marshall's football stadium and the Huntington railroad station are approximately two miles apart.

Rail ticket prices can vary. Roomettes are limited. For more information, call Amtrak at 1-800-872-7245.

## Greater Membership Involvement Sought

Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA) monthly board meetings are scheduled for the balance of 2015, on Thursdays or Saturdays, and will be rotated among three cities—Fort Wayne, Lafayette, and Indianapolis.

Seeking to nudge greater activity and involvement, consideration is being given to opening all meetings to the general membership, President Steve Coxhead said in an email to the board.

"I do not expect everyone to be able to attend each meeting, but hope that everyone will be able to attend some meetings, and thus maximize their opportunity to contribute," he added.

"I would like to time the meetings so that all who so desire would be able to meet for a late lunch afterwards," Coxhead added.

Invites with time, place, and agenda items will continue to be sent to each board member. With board approval at the July meeting, the general membership will be informed of upcoming meeting details through *All Aboard Indiana* and on IPRA's website—[www.indianahighspeedrail.org](http://www.indianahighspeedrail.org).

Meeting dates and locations are:

**Thursday, July 16 – Lafayette**

**Saturday, August 15—Indianapolis**

(continued)



*("Greater Membership Involvement Sought" continued from page 3)*

**Thursday, September 17 – Fort Wayne**

Saturday, October 10 – Lafayette

**Thursday, November 19 – Indianapolis**

Saturday, December 19 – Fort Wayne

## Indy Hosting NARP's Fall Conference

An advocacy conference for the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) will be hosted in the Circle City this October. While conference details are still being set, Indiana passenger train advocates are urged to circle October 16-18 on your calendars. Site of NARP's fall conference will be the Crowne Plaza Hotel adjacent to Indy's Union Station.



## Do Traffic Jams Work for You?

By Dennis Hodges and Donald Yehle

***"To waste, to destroy our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed."* -- President Theodore Roosevelt**

Instead of going "green," too many people want to pave over everything in sight. Construction of more highways and more byways is a major issue. More highways = more automobiles = more pollutants = economic and environmental havoc.

Students from Ball State University are warning against building more highways. In their 30-minute documentary, ***Indiana Cross Rails: A Transit Choice***, they advocate giving Americans a choice to walk, bike, bus, or ride the rails—rather than just sit in idling cars.

**CHICAGOLAND COMMUTERS STUCK  
IN TRAFFIC FOR 52 HOURS ANNUALLY**

The prestigious ***Atlantic Magazine*** reported in February 2013 that American commuters spend on average 38 hours per year stuck in traffic. In the Chicago area, that figure soars to 52 hours annually. As a result, American commuters purchase an extra 2.9 billion gallons of fuel. Translated, that's 56 billion pounds of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere from idling cars. The average annual pocketbook hit -- \$818 per commuter.

In 2009, the Midwest Regional Rail System—a consortium of nine (now eight) Midwestern States—argued that auto congestion and airline delays resulted in an \$81 billion loss to the American economy and nearly \$6 billion to the Chicago/Northwest Indiana economy. **Is there an alternative solution? Passenger rail.**

Diesel fuel, combined with electric power, power trains. These fuels are cleaner and more efficient than gasoline. Totally electrified passenger rail is cleaner still and even more efficient.

### MAN'S GREED CAN PUSH PLANNERS TO FAVOR ROADS

If passenger trains are so great, why aren't they the top choice of planners? "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed," said Mahatma Gandhi.

Glen Boise, a passenger train advocate from Kokomo, speaks to the cost of building highways. "Building a single lane of highway can easily cost several million dollars per mile," he says.

"Interchanges cost even more," Boise continues.

**A case in point is the new interchange under construction at I-65 and Worthsville Rd. in Johnson County. It will cost \$18 million, according to the Indiana Department of Transportation's Environmental Assessment for the project.**

While highway construction means good work for many, so does new railroad construction. National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) delegates lobbied Congress in April to consider the benefits of passenger trains. "Investment in trains will promote greater mobility and economic development, generate more jobs, encourage energy efficiency, and enhance Americans' standard of living," was NARP's message. *(continued)*

*("Do Traffic Jams Work for You?" continued from page 4)* "A strong passenger train program—adding train manufacturing, construction, operation, and maintenance—will provide good-paying jobs that can't be exported.

"These jobs will help rebuild, modernize, and strengthen America's industrial base," the passenger train advocates say in a white paper, *"The Benefits of Passenger Trains: Growing America's Economy."*

### **\$1 BILLION INTO RAIL CREATES 20,000 JOBS**

"According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, 20,000 new jobs are created for every \$1 billion invested in rail. By using that metric, implementing a high-speed and intercity rail network could create as many as 1.6 million construction and manufacturing jobs," NARP says.

In testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives, Amtrak President Joe Boardman says long-range investment in new locomotives, cars, and facilities is essential. "Today [Amtrak's] fleet is the oldest we've ever had."

"The U.S. Department of Transportation has a commitment from 30 foreign and domestic rail manufacturers to locate or expand operations in the United States if

selected to do high-speed-rail work—meaning good-paying jobs for American workers," NARP continues.

Two Midwestern-based environmental organizations released a 41-page study in January of this year entitled

*"Reasons Not to Drive"*  
courtesy of Iowa-Pacific Holdings.



"Passenger Rail and Transit Rail Manufacturing in the United States."

Blue Green Alliance was one of the groups. They unite 15 of the country's largest unions and environmental organizations and speak on behalf of 16 million members and supporters who want a "cleaner, fairer and more competitive American economy."

The Environmental Law and Policy Center is the other group. "We develop and lead successful strategic advocacy campaigns to improve environmental quality and protect our natural resources," says the Chicago-based group.

The scope of the 41-page document covers street car/light rail, subways, commuter rail, Amtrak/intercity rail, and high-speed rail.

### **79 RAIL-RELATED COMPANIES IN 32 INDIANA COMMUNITIES**

The report's staggering results are encouraging for all of America, including the Midwest and Indiana.

"750 companies in at least 39 states manufacture components for passenger rail and transit."

"212 companies in 32 states manufacture passenger rail cars and locomotives or major components and systems for these vehicles.

"Focusing on just two rail manufacturing regions—the Midwest and the Mid-Atlantic—we find more than 540 additional companies manufacturing sub-components, materials, track and infrastructure, as well as providing repair and re-manufacturing to the industry in these states.

**Seventy-nine of those companies are in 32 Indiana cities and towns. Thirty-five of those companies are located in Indianapolis.**

As the Midwest Regional Rail System has said since its inception in 1996, rail brings many benefits, including economic development, economic investment, and employment opportunities. An educational publication about the eight-state consortium cries out these benefits.

It's All About People Who Travel between City Pairs (i.e. Chicago to Indianapolis, Detroit to Chicago, Indianapolis to Cincinnati, Crawfordsville to Chicago).

It's About Comfort and Convenience for leisure and business travelers.

It's About Travel Safety.

It's About Quality of Life.

It's About Air Emissions and Auto Traffic *(continued)*

*("Do Traffic Jams Work for You?" continued from page 5)*  
Are you ready to get off the highways and back on board light rail, subways, commuter rail, or Amtrak?

For more information or to download copies of the ***Passenger Rail & Transit Rail Manufacturing in the U.S.*** report, please visit [www.BlueGreenAlliance.org](http://www.BlueGreenAlliance.org) and/or [www.ELPC.org](http://www.ELPC.org). For a copy of the ***"Benefits of Passenger Trains: Growing America's Economy,"*** contact [narp@NARPrail.org](mailto:narp@NARPrail.org)

## Riding (Light Rail) in Twin Cities, Muncie?

By Donald Yehle

**Minneapolis/St. Paul and Muncie, IN** -- "From Target Field to Union Depot, [the new Metro Green] line packs 23 stops into 11 miles," writes *Midwest Living* magazine in its May-June 2015 issue.

The six-page story details how the \$900 million, 1-year-old light rail project has for residents "inspired some \$2.5 billion worth of housing, retail and office developments, as well as renovations to destinations like the 1920s Union Depot in downtown Saint Paul.

"For visitors, the line provides easy access to the classic Twin Cities attractions, like Minneapolis' Nicollet Mall, plus an invitation to explore off-the-radar neighborhoods," *Midwest Living* reports.

The Twin Cities' other light rail line—the Blue Line -- connects with the Green Line, providing passengers access to the Mall of America or the airport. The new service is described as bright and clean, with trains arriving every 10 minutes. It takes just 45 minutes to travel the entire line, for as little as \$1.75 one way or \$6 for a 24-hour pass, the magazine says.

**Note to Indiana citizens, our governor, our legislature, and business community: Muncie residents want light rail to connect their community and the Circle City.**

Such a project wouldn't be as dramatic as Minneapolis-St. Paul's new Metro Green Line, but it's just as important to some of Indiana's citizenry like Ball State's John Rouse.

The political science professor proposes to survey the 65-mile, CSX double track between Indianapolis and Muncie to see "if it's suitable for passenger commuter rail investments."

"A tour train involving light rail proponents, elected officials, and CSX executives would be a good place to start," Rouse says. (For more on this light rail proposal, see "Are You Ready for a Commuter Line Between Muncie and Indy? In the June issue of *All Aboard Indiana*. To talk one-on-one with Professor Rouse, call 765-282-9292 or email him at [jrouse@bsu.edu](mailto:jrouse@bsu.edu))

## Light Rail Moving Motor City Forward

By Donald Yehle

**DETROIT** -- "We went to Portland, Minneapolis, Denver, and San Diego and ... we were told light rail was the single dominating economic event that took their cities to the top," Dan Gilbert reportedly told the *Detroit News* in a story June 22 of how "M-1 Rail helps gets developments rolling along Woodward (Avenue)."

Dan Gilbert, founder of Quicken Loans, is a well-known, key figure in downtown Detroit's revitalization. M-1 Rail is a public



transit system that will travel 3.1 miles along Detroit's Woodward Ave. The light rail "streetcars" will debut as early as fall 2016, the *Detroit News* reported.

Rail supporters believe "M-1 will drive \$3 billion in developments and 10,000 housing units, filling the yawning gaps of dead buildings and empty lots along Detroit's most storied street," wrote *News'* reporter Louis Aguilar.

Planned residential development includes office space, retail, and 250 apartments on the downtown site of the famed J. L. Hudson Co. One of M-1 Rail's *(continued)*



*("Light Rail Moving Motor City Forward" continued from page 6)* 12 stops will be near Comerica Park -- a 300-unit apartment complex is planned to replace a parking lot next to the major league baseball field, the newspaper continued.

M-1 rail is a factor in New Center development in Detroit. "With the recent activity Downtown and in Midtown, along with the imminent arrival of the M-1 rail, New Center Development is the next step in Detroit's comeback," said Dietrich Knoer, Chief Investment Officer of Redico, in a *Detroit Free Press* report. "We are pleased to have put together a local group of development partners with strong capital support," Knoer said, in announcing winning the bid to purchase the Fisher and Kahn Buildings.

## New Mexico Man Takes 50 Round Trips on Southwest Chief

By Donald Yehle

While *All Aboard Indiana's* purpose is to educate our readers on rail developments in the State of Indiana, occasionally we run across a human interest story too good to pass up. Last month, while returning to the Midwest from Raton, New Mexico, we stumbled across such a story.

Ernest Haecker, a widower, audiologist, and Raton resident 60 percent of the year, maintains residences in New Mexico and New York City. He's made 50 round trips on the **Southwest Chief**, mostly since 9/11. Every six weeks, Haecker travels the **Southwest Chief** between Chicago and Raton. The **Lake Shore Limited** is his connecting train between the Windy City and the Big Apple.

Albert Kaufman, a West Lafayette college student, was in Raton waiting for the eastbound **Southwest Chief**. On a week-long, car-train vacation, Kaufman had experienced an exhibition of Amtrak history in La Plata, Missouri; a day on a wheat/corn/cattle range with relatives in Dodge City, Kansas; a trip down memory lane at Philmont Scout Ranch; and a diversion to Colorado Springs to see the U.S. Air Force Academy and the U.S. Olympic Training Center, plus a light-rail trip to Denver's renovated, historic union station.

Javier Rodriguez, an Amtrak employee and El Paso resident, helps staff Raton in the summers while boys and girls arrive for two-week treks at the 137,493 acre Phil-

mont Scout Reservation in nearly Cimarron. Rodriguez was keeping both passengers informed of the train status, as it had experienced a delay in Albuquerque due to a signal malfunction.

"I never tire of the **Southwest Chief**. Every season is different. Corn is always at different heights. The Mississippi River is always at a different height --four or five years ago, it was almost at track level," Haecker said.

"An occasional bald eagle--visible from the train--is stunning," he continued.

After pulling out of Raton -- leaving behind a very affable Rodriguez--and while crossing through the Raton Pass to Trinidad, Colorado, Haecker provided fellow diners with stories about the Wooten Ranch and a long-shuttered watering hole for Santa Fe Trail traders, visible through the dining car windows.

What Haecker most enjoys about long-distance train travel is the people. "There's always a different collection of people. Some lives are always exciting like mine. Some lives I'd rather not have," Haecker said, with a smile.

Kaufman's **Chief** adventure was to end the following day in La Plata--where his vacation began five days earlier. La Plata boasts 1,366 residents. By train, it's four hours and 51 minutes from Chicago Union Station. It's the first stop in Missouri for Westbound **Chief** passengers. The Amtrak parking lot -- both at his arrival and his departure -- was full, with more than 20 automobiles.

The Galesburg, Illinois train station would have been a more logical departure point for Kaufman. La Plata was chosen because it's the site of an American Passenger Rail Heritage Foundation (APRHF) exhibition of Amtrak history. Housed in two aging Amtrak Mail Handling Cars, the train cars sit on the grounds of a railroad-themed hotel with 30 rooms and a vineyard now being established by the owners of the hotel.

*(cont'd)*



*Ernest Haecker poses during his most recent Southwest Chief journey.*

"New Mexico Man Takes 50 Round Trips on Southwest Chief" continued from page 7) Access to the museum is gained by securing a key from The Depot Inn and Suites hotel, which is themed after a 1800s railroad depot along the Wabash Line. Chris Guenzler would like the hotel. A plaque recognizing him is hung in one of the mail cars along other Amtrak train memorabilia, including 23 menus, coffee cups, a conductor's hat, and promotional flyers.



At mile marker 312.7 near La Plata, Guenzler completed his one millionth Amtrak mile on April 7, 2008.

"(Guenzler) is the only regular Amtrak passenger documented to have traveled more than 1,000,000 miles since its creation in 1971—having covered every mile of every route

in the system," the plaque dated 4-7-08 reads.

Promotional flyers tout Amtrak as the "latest in time sharing." Another flyer reads, "Ski Amtrak—See America." "Experience the Coast Starlight," says another. A "Big Sky Picnic Dinner" of broasted chicken and Montana blackberry cobbler for \$7.75 is one other advertisement.

A proclamation from the City of Miami—also inside one of the mail cars—declared June 6, 1978, as Amtrak week. The nation's cities owe their existence to access to transportation networks. Amtrak is salvaging that great American tradition, the citation said.

Think back to Haecker, Kaufman, and the *Southwest Chief*.

It's a financial challenge to pay for badly-needed track improvements. A county board of commissioners in Colorado—one of eight states through which this long-distance train passes—reportedly voted unanimously in June to contribute \$12,500 in matching funds to a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant application by the states of Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico.

The three states are seeking a federal grant that would provide \$15.2 million for track improvements. Funds from the Pueblo County (Colorado) Commissioners are just a small fraction of the millions required to obtain the TIGER grant, the *Pueblo Chieftain* newspaper reported.

Earlier in June, New Mexico's Governor Susana Martinez announced a pledge of \$1 million "to improve a section of track south of Santa Fe." That section lies between Lamy and La Bajada, the *Santa Fe New Mexican* said.

The *Southwest Chief* and the *Missouri River Runner* face another challenge due to Amtrak's inability to fund the installation of "Positive Train Control (PTC) on sections of the track through Kansas City and St. Louis," says the Midwest High Speed Rail Association (MHSRA).

"The problem is the Kansas City Terminal and the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis, defined as Class III railroads, are exempt from the 2008 PTC mandate—despite seeing significant traffic and being owned by two Class I Railroads.

"The railroads said they won't pay for PTC—and Amtrak can't afford it," MHSRA says in its June 15<sup>th</sup> weekly newsletter.

## Passenger Rail Advocates Must Address "Slights"

By Donald Yehle

A Nielsen Company survey crossed your editor's desk this month. "Your opinion counts," the survey said, pointing specifically to shopping, entertainment, sports, media, and lifestyle.

Part H explored transportation concerns. Question H1 caught my eye: "Check types of transportation you used in the **past 7 days.**"

The seven boxes one could check were drive (not carpool); carpool; bicycle; bus; taxi; other, and none. Light rail, subway, and train were missing. Since the survey was geared to Lafayette, IN, area residents, it's understandable that subway and light rail weren't listed. But why not TRAIN? (Or for that matter, plane?)

Similarly, FC Organizational Products, LLC publishes a list of toll-free numbers and websites in (*continued*)



(*"Rail Advocates Must Address 'Slights'" continued from page 8*) its "key information" section of Franklin Covey paper planners. Users can reference nine automobile rental websites and corresponding toll-free numbers. Users can reference similar information for 23 hotels and motels. Contact information is also listed for eight domestic airlines, nine international airlines, and three air freight companies.

Is it time to remind publishers that passenger rail is back? Amtrak.com (1-800-USA-RAIL) needs to be included along with the other organizations serving America's traveling public.

## City of New Orleans Rail Passengers Turn to Champaign-Urbana Station

By Donald Yehle

Hoosiers seeking a convenient and comfortable train station to catch Amtrak's **City of New Orleans** southbound train may want to consider Champaign-Urbana, especially if you don't mind a 10:34 p.m. departure.

Seven days a week, the **City of New Orleans** leaves Chicago Union Station at 8:05 p.m. for its 129-mile run to Champaign-Urbana and its upscale Illinois Terminal. The 10:34 p.m. departure to New Orleans from this Big 10 university town allows Hoosiers to work a full day, drive to Champaign-Urbana, locate convenient, no-cost parking, and take advantage of a truly modern train station, says Steve Coxhead, president of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance.

The **City of New Orleans** arrives in the Crescent City at 3:32 p.m. the following afternoon, Amtrak time tables show.

The northbound long-distance train departs New Orleans at 1:45 p.m. every day, travels 805 miles to Champaign-

Urbana, arriving there at 6:10 a.m. the following morning, before terminating in Chicago at 9 a.m. daily.

Long-distance train enthusiasts riding the **City of New Orleans** will travel through five states—Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana. There are 22 total stops, including Memphis, Tennessee, and Jackson, Mississippi. The entire trip to New Orleans takes 19 hours and 25 minutes from Chicago or just under 16 hours if leaving from Champaign-Urbana. Two other Amtrak trains—the **Saluki** and the **Illini**—travel the same corridor. Each has one daily train each way, with Chicago as the northern terminus and Carbondale, Illinois, the southern terminus. University of Illinois students and others in Champaign-Urbana benefit from these multiple rail options as Purdue University students could once plans take hold to stabilize and grow the **Hoosier State**, Coxhead said.

Rail passengers benefit from Burlington Trailways' thruway bus service connecting Indianapolis Union Station, Bloomington-Normal, and Champaign-Urbana, he continued.

Bloomington-Normal's equally upscale train station is yet another rail option for Hoosiers wanting to ride the **Texas Eagle** or the **Lincoln Service** to St. Louis, rather than beginning these trips at Union Station, Chicago, Coxhead said.

The Effingham, IL, station is a third option for catching the **City of New Orleans**, says Bill Malcolm, a frequent public transportation user and IPRA board member.

"Our goal in Indiana is to get more passenger trains running in the state and keep them going, IPRA president said. Six Amtrak trains operate in Indiana—the **Blue Water**, the **Cardinal**, the **Capitol Limited**, the **Hoosier State**, the **Pere Marquette**, and the **Wolverine**.

## "Locked Gate" Key Safety Feature at Illinois Station

At Champaign-Urbana, passengers are not permitted on the train platform until after trains have stopped. The "locked gate" is only then opened for boarding passengers to leave the station to climb aboard the trains.

Champaign-Urbana's 16-year-old station is multi-modal, providing platforms for five long-distance bus companies, the communities' urban mass (*continued*)



*("Locked Gate" Key Safety Feature at Illinois Station" continued from page 9)* transit district, and Amtrak. Amtrak Express also offers regular service here, meaning customers can ship packages up to 50 pounds each or a total of 500 pounds per shipment.

The waiting room in Champaign-Urbana seats more than 100 people. Several potted plants add to the attractiveness of the facility, which also pipes in soothing music, plays the "Weather Channel" on a flat-screened television set, and displays more than two dozen photographs showing passenger rail's present and past.

A Subway Restaurant is open seven-days-a-week on the first of four floors at the Illinois Terminal Building. Eight vending machines are available. Amtrak passengers may park their cars for up to 14 days at no charge. Rather than issue parking passes, security cameras capture people at their cars and while boarding trains.

A large American flag is hung from an upper floor of the facility that frequently is showcased as an example of how one city has brought together two public transit systems under one roof.

For more about these stations:

<http://www.greatamericanstations.com/Stations/CHM>

<http://www.greatamericanstations.com/Stations/EFG>

<http://www.greatamericanstations.com/Stations/BNL>

## Safe Train Travel at 110 MPH from Porter to Kalamazoo

By Donald Yehle

Outside of the Northeast Corridor (NEC), the **Wolverine** has the most 110 mile per hour (mph) track in Amtrak's passenger rail system—and that number is growing.

A speed control system on the 100 miles of track between Porter, IN, and Kalamazoo, MI, allows those speeds to be realized. Now, the same system is being installed on another 135 miles of track, this time from Kalamazoo to Dearborn, newspaper reports out of Michigan say.

The idea is to **safely** shorten the train travel time between Chicago, through Northwest Indiana, to Detroit by an hour—to approximately four hours, says Amtrak spokesperson Marc Magliari.

"We want our [train] service to be competitive with

auto travel," he says.

Speed control systems are known by a variety of names and are sometimes incorrectly used interchangeably. Names include advanced civil speed enforcement system, automatic train control, incremental train control, and positive train control.

No matter the name, improved rail safety is the goal, says Jim Loomis, vice chair of the board of directors of the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) and author of *All Aboard – The Complete North American Train Travel Guide*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition 2015.

Think collision prevention. Think derailment prevention. Think trains running closer together and at higher speeds, he says.

The **Wolverine's** safety system is known as Incremental Train Control.

Positive train control (PTC) systems like incremental train control are "highly sophisticated system(s) using global positioning technology that is designed to control train movement.

"PTC requires special equipment in every locomotive cab, as well as in multiple locations along every route," Loomis continues.

Not only will the Michigan system shut down trains if engineers don't obey signals, but it "prompts railroad crossing arms to descend 25 seconds before the faster trains" arrive at grade crossings with roads and streets," says Steven Ditmeyer, an adjunct railway management professor at Michigan State University, in an interview with the *Detroit News*.

"But they can't prevent crashes in which motorists disobey signals and bypass crossing arms," Ditmeyer adds.

Speed control systems can't be implemented overnight. Three organizations—Amtrak, the Federal Railroad Administration, and the Michigan Department of Transportation—began collaboration on the Porter to Kalamazoo section of the **Wolverine** in the 1990s. The project has been operational since 1999—with 110 mph speeds first being reached in February 2013, reports say.

The speed control system accounts for only a portion of the Federal grant of \$387 million and *(continued)*

*("Safe Train Travel" continued from page 10)* State of Michigan funds of \$37.5 million being used to buy and improve the tracks between Kalamazoo and Dearborn. Purchase and track upgrades account for much of the spending, *All Aboard Indiana* has learned.

Not enough Federal dollars have been appropriated to transit, Amtrak, and the freight rail industry to meet the Congressionally-mandated goal of having automatic train control in place across America on higher speed tracks by the end of 2015, sources say.

#### **AUTOMATIC TRAIN CONTROL ALLOWS FOR RESUMPTION OF NEC SERVICE**

Following the Philadelphia train tragedy in May, additional automatic train control was activated to allow normal Northeast Corridor Service to resume. "Repairs were made with utmost care and emphasis on safety, including complete compliance with Federal Railroad Administration directives," said Joseph H. Boardman, President and Chief Executive Officer, Amtrak.

Activation requires frequency approval from the Federal Communications System (FCC). Prior to the May accident, automatic train control was installed, but not yet activated.

"Amtrak remains on schedule to meet a federal mandate by the end of 2015 to install PTC on tracks for which it is responsible," says Joseph H. Boardman, company president and chief executive officer.

Writing to Amtrak employees in *Amtrak Ink* Boardman said, "PTC is a system that analyzes track conditions and equipment speed for optimal safety. The Advanced Civil Speed Enforcement System (ACSES), a form of PTC, is already operating on 206 of the 401 miles of track that Amtrak is responsible for on the NEC spine between Washington and Boston.

"Amtrak is also upgrading locomotives used outside the corridor to ensure they are compatible with the host railroads' PTC systems. No other large, Class 1 railroad has progressed as far as Amtrak in installing PTC technology," the Amtrak executive said.

"In response to the [May] incident, I've instructed that inward-facing video cameras be installed on all ACS-64 locomotives in service on the NEC by the end of this year.

"We are also developing a plan for installing inward-

facing cameras in the rest of our locomotive fleet, including *Acela Express* power cars and diesel units.

"The cameras add an additional layer of safety to the outward facing cameras already in place on locomotives, as well as to advanced systems that monitor locomotive and engineer actions," Boardman wrote.

#### **TRAIN SPEEDS VARY WIDELY ACROSS AMTRAK'S SYSTEM**

Northeast Corridor trains between Boston and Washington, D.C., routinely travel between 105 and 125 mph, with the high-speed Acelas reaching 150 mph along a few stretches. In parts of Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and upstate New York (plus Indiana) Amtrak trains travel at speeds up to 110 mph, Loomis says.

Speed limits for Amtrak trains in most parts of America is limited to 79 mph. Its 79 mph, not 80 mph, due to Federal regulations requiring any train operating at 80 mph or faster to have a device in the locomotive cab that picks up and visually displays trackside signals for the engineer, he says.

Train speeds depend on weather and various other factors. Those factors include track conditions, the train's weight—number of cars, the type and number of locomotives pulling the train—and whether that automatic signaling device has been installed in the engine cab, Loomis concludes.

#### **AUTOMATIC TRAIN CONTROL HISTORY DATES TO 1976**

"Since Amtrak gained ownership of the NEC in 1976, all Amtrak trains on the corridor have included a system called Automatic Train Control (ATC). ATC ensures that trains comply with the wayside signal system, by providing a notification to the engineer through signals in the locomotive, when the train approaches a more restrictive signal," Amtrak employees are told in their employee publication.

"If the engineer does not respond, the system will automatically apply the train's brakes and protect the train against a collision. All trains operating along the NEC are equipped with ATC including those using the segment of line owned, maintained and dispatched by Metro-North Railroad between New Rochelle, N.Y., and New Haven, Conn. *(continued)*



*("Safe Train Travel" continued from page 11)* "In the 1990s, Amtrak worked with industry partners to develop the nation's first PTC system, known as the Advanced Civil Speed Enforcement System (ACSES). Amtrak developed ACSES as an integral component of plans for Acela Express service.

"ACSES went into operation in 2000, and is currently installed and operating on 206 of the 401 route miles of track that Amtrak is responsible for on the Northeast Corridor spine.

"ACSES has several components that build on the protection provided by ATC.

"It provides protection against derailment from excessive speed, and includes programmable track transponders that store and transmit information on track condition and speed, wayside interface units, a temporary speed restriction server system and an onboard installation on the locomotive.

"These systems are linked by radio, and the transponders are programmed with data about track configuration and permanent speed restrictions.

"The ACSES wayside components have been installed on the remainder of the NEC south of Newark, NJ, but the system is not yet operational -- testing, FCC approval, and radio equipment installation needs to be completed.

"Metro-North intends to install ACSES on its 56-mile line, but the installation is still several years away," Amtrak employees learned in their May-June 2015 issue of *Amtrak Ink*.

Amtrak expenditures on PTC since 2008 are \$110.7 million, the rail company concluded.

For more information on incremental train control, go to: <http://www.gettransportation.com/its/signaling-train-control/automatic-train-protection-control-systems/itcs-incremental-train-control>

## 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](http://www.indianahighspeedrail.org) or contact us at Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance, 3951 North Meridian Street, Suite 100, Indianapolis, IN 46208

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IPRA President: Steve Coxhead  
Newsletter Editor: Donald Yehle  
[djyehle@gmail.com](mailto:djyehle@gmail.com) or 765-418-4097  
Newsletter Publisher: Shereen Vinke

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## Contributors:

**Amtrak** – Marc Magliari  
**Ball State University** – John Rouse  
**Depot Inn & Suites**, La Plata, MO – Front desk staff  
**Iowa-Pacific Holdings** – Pullman Rail Journeys  
**Greater Lafayette Commerce** – Arvid Olson  
**Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance** – Steve Coxhead, Dennis Hodges, Joe Krause, Bill Malcolm, Tim Maloney, and Doug Yerkson  
**Michigan Passenger Rail Association** – Kay Chase, John Langdon  
**National Association of Railroad Passengers** – Jim Loomis  
**Railroad Passengers** – Ernest Haecker, Albert Kaufman