

ALL ABOARD

INDIANA

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Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

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Your Opinion Is Needed: A Purdue Survey for the *Hoosier State* Train

By V. Dimitra Pyrialakou, Ph. D. Candidate, Purdue University

I would like to invite you to participate in a survey exploring the current passenger rail services in Indiana, and specifically the *Hoosier State* train.

This survey is part of my Ph.D. research, which focuses on an assessment of public transportation systems in U.S. rural and small urban communities, conducted under the supervision of Dr. Konstantina Gkritza, Associate Professor of Civil Engineering at Purdue University. This survey is approved by the Purdue University Institutional Review Board (IRB Research Project Number: 1503015896). The results of the survey will be analyzed to provide insights that have the potential to benefit both the communities and the transportation operators. (continued on page 2, with address for survey)

The New *Hoosier State*: When? ...Soon!

By Arvid Olson

Another month has passed and some readers might wonder when the promise of an improved *Hoosier State* consist, provided by Iowa Pacific Holdings, will manifest itself. As has been previously reported, Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and Amtrak are actively negotiating an operating agreement that will provide for Amtrak engineers, conductors, and use of the national ticketing system. It would be fair to say that while some differences remain, the negotiations are proceeding.

Sometimes, the assumption of progress requires patience, and just possibly faith (if that's your proclivity). Much work, planning and cooperation between the parties is ongoing and should result in achieving the bottom line: a train Indiana can be proud of.



Higher-High-Conventional Speeds Define 21st Century Passenger Rail

By Donald Yehle

Steve Coxhead (SC), a Northwest Indiana resident, has been leading the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA) throughout the struggle to save and ultimately improve ridership on the *Hoosier State* line. *All Aboard Indiana* (AAI) caught up with Steve to find out how he feels about the direction of passenger rail in Indiana and some of the rail projects his organization is advocating.

AAI -- "21st Century Passenger Rail" is a term you frequently use to describe IPRA's vision for passenger rail in Indiana. What do you mean by 21st Century Passenger Rail? (cont'd)

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For More Information

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At the beginning of the 2013 fiscal year and until recently, the Hoosier State train has been facing the possibility of service discontinuance. I have been closely following the Hoosier State train developments, and a main goal of my research became to capture both the thoughts of Indiana's residents who will be most affected by the potential changes in service, and the willingness of the many stakeholders involved to support the line.

We are currently conducting a survey targeting residents living in Indiana counties where an Amtrak station is located (i.e., Marion, Lake, Jasper, Tippecanoe, and Montgomery Counties) who will be most affected by the potential changes in service, to explore the residents' attitudes and behaviors toward passenger rail services in Indiana.

However, as expected, most of the randomly selected residents are not familiar with the services of the Hoosier State train. **For this reason, we would like to ask your opinions and thoughts on the matter! Your experience with passenger rail in Indiana can provide us with valuable insights, which we can in turn share with the community, as well as transportation authorities and planning agencies!**

Your feedback is vital to the completion of this study and your responses will be highly appreciated!

In addition, we are planning on conducting an onboard survey sometime during the next two months, with Amtrak's permission, in order to get feedback from Hoosier State train's passengers.

This survey is endorsed by the Indiana Department of Transportation.

To participate, please access the survey online at the following web address:
https://purdue.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_7PRyokDOgm2OcdL

The survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Your responses will be strictly confidential, anonymous, and will not be linked to any of your personal information.

If you experience any problems with completing the survey using the Chrome web browser, please note that respondents have found Firefox, Internet Explorer, and Safari to be consistently reliable.

Thank you for your consideration!

("21st Century Passenger Rail" continued from page 1)

SC – 21st Century Passenger Rail refers to the use of "state of the art" passenger rail systems in the national transportation network, including Indiana. This can mean true high speed rail (220 mph); higher speed rail (110 mph), or conventional rail (80 mph).

AAI -- Would you be specific about the existing national transportation network in Indiana?

SC – Business and leisure travelers ride a number of Amtrak trains in and through our state, including the *Blue Water*, the *Cardinal*, the *Capitol Limited*, the *Hoosier State*, the *Lake Shore Limited*, the *Pere Marquette*, and the *Wolverine*. The Northern Indiana Commuter Transit District operates the South Shore line between South Bend, IN, and Chicago, as well. Through *Greyhound Lines*, Amtrak provides "thruway bus connections" to and from Nashville, Tennessee; Louisville, Kentucky; Cincinnati, Ohio; Indianapolis, and Chicago.

AAI -- How does "state of the art" technology factor into the definition of 21st Century Passenger Rail?

SC – The overall system in place in Western Europe is a great example of 21st Century Passenger Rail. It incorporates service speed, propulsion, computer-based command, and passenger amenities. What we have in this country, today, is a skeletal system, not even as good as the mid-20th Century system that could be found around, say 1948-1952.

AAI – IPRA members and for that matter, most Hoosiers, know our state and our country are "light years" behind our European and Asian friends when it comes to passenger rail. What can be done to change that reality?

SC – 21st Century Passenger Rail needs to be our target to optimize choice, comfort, and convenience for the traveling public. We're working on creating the awareness of what's needed. The decision by the Indiana legislature to allocate millions of dollars for the next two years for the *Hoosier State* is a significant step in moving awareness to something tangible. True high speed rail would be the ultimate, as it has the additional property of changing how we think of time and space (e.g. Indianapolis becomes a suburb of Chicago).

AAI -- Speaking of passenger rail along the Chicago-Indianapolis corridor, are you personally restless about where the various parties stand with the *Hoosier State*?

SC – Rumors are flying about when the various contracts will be signed to create the private/public partnership for the new *Hoosier State*. Many individuals have worked hard and continue to labor to realize an (continued)

("21st Century Passenger Rail" continued from page 2)
improved train between our state capital and the Windy City. I'm confident that passengers will end up – sooner, rather than later -- with a *Hoosier State* that offers Wi-Fi, food and beverage services, and the same safe access now provided by Amtrak. Iowa-Pacific has hired a sales and marketing manager who understands the need to reach out to millennials in an effort to drastically boost ridership on the line in the next 18 to 24 months.

AAI -- Where does Indiana stand with other passenger rail initiatives, particularly the proposed Chicago to Columbus, Ohio, passenger rail line being developed by the Northeast Indiana Passenger Rail Association (NIPRA)?

SC – Revival of passenger rail service on this corridor that would serve Warsaw and Fort Wayne hit a snag in June when funding wasn't secured for its Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement. Despite this setback, I continue to be excited about the possibilities for that service. I'm equally proud that our organization is working with NIPRA on rail development across the state and am confident that they'll execute the proper strategy at the right time to gain the needed funding. (See related story, "Proposed Northern Indiana-Ohio Train Waiting on the Hoosier State.")

AAI -- You met in June with folks from the Cincinnati area with the desired end condition to bring daily, modern, 21st Century Passenger Rail to the Chicago-Indianapolis-Cincinnati corridor. Would you share with our readers how that effort is progressing?

SC -- The most recent news is provided in a link to an *UrbanCincy* article noted in the "Riding the Rails" column in this month's *All Aboard Indiana*. Additionally, you'd want to know the June meeting was a preliminary discussion about conducting an economic and feasibility study for expansion of rail service on this corridor. Discussion participants included a councilwoman and staff members from the City of Cincinnati; a Hamilton County, Ohio, commissioner; the CEO and executive director of the Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana Regional County of Governments, and transportation consultant Rich Davis, who wrote a lengthy AAI article in June on "Faith, Grace (College) and Rail." Also present was Derek Bauman of All Aboard Ohio, who told AAI readers in March about "steam gathering for an Oxford, Ohio, stop on the *Cardinal*."

AAI – Thinking economic vitality, IPRA's board of directors last month voted to begin discussions with Anderson and Muncie residents to advance the case for light rail to and

from Indianapolis. Would you tell us a little more about that light rail project?

SC – A meeting is being arranged between several IPRA board members and East Central Indiana light rail proponents to define broad outlines of the project, identify prospective stakeholders, and to determine appropriate political support. IPRA will encourage the need to organize a local committee, the need to "time" the project so as to secure funding to study the project, and how to tie current project enthusiasm with a 2008 "Final Report of the Central Indiana Commuter Rail Feasibility Study."

AAI – The National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) is holding its annual fall conference in Indianapolis the 16th-17th-18th of October. What's the difference between NARP and IPRA?

SC – NARP is America's largest advocacy group in support of passenger rail. Like us, they desire a 21st Century Passenger Rail system. While NARP functions at the national level, we concern ourselves with promoting and advocating passenger rail in Indiana. Unlike us, NARP has a small, paid staff.

NARP hosts two national meetings a year – its council of representatives meeting each April, and a fall session to encourage passenger railroad advocacy. At the April meeting, NARP members spend a "day on the hill," visiting with U.S. Senators, U.S. Congressmen, and their staffs. NARP's national headquarters is in Washington, D.C.; IPRA's unstaffed headquarters is in Indianapolis.

AAI – How can I and should I attend the organization's Indianapolis meeting?

SC – As announced elsewhere in this newsletter, a "Beech Grove tour (Oct. 16) will be open to NARP members only ... Saturday's 'A Connected America' Advocacy Day program (Oct. 17) is open to all interested persons." Check www.narprail.org and the September and October issues of *All Aboard Indiana* for more information. While IPRA has no formal involvement in this year's program, we can learn from the panel of speakers, which will include Ed Ellis, president, Iowa-Pacific Holdings. By participating, IPRA members will rub elbows with top passenger railroad (continued)



IPRA President Steve Coxhead

("21st Century Passenger Rail" continued from page 3)
advocates, some of whom spend time talking with national political leaders about the need for 21st Century Passenger Rail. So yes, plan to come to the Crowne Plaza Hotel adjacent to Indianapolis Union Station on October 17.

Editor's Note: Both Phillip Streby and Steve Coxhead are elected members to NARP's council of representatives. Your editor attended the April NARP meeting in Washington, D.C., and had the opportunity to speak personally with U.S. Senator Joe Donnelly, who is very supportive of the *Hoosier State* passenger rail line.

So, What's the Big Deal with Passenger Rail in Western Indiana?

By Arvid Olson

An article on the Trains Magazine web site (<http://trn.trains.com/>) noted that along a recently opened 20 mile-long section of light rail between Phoenix and Tempe into Mesa, Arizona there has been 8.2 billion dollars in new private and public capital investment. Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton stated; "Light rail has been transformative for our downtown and our economy. With it we've linked jobs, education, arts and culture in a way that would not have been possible otherwise."

Why in a time of tight funds for transportation infrastructure did a southwest metro double down on rail while other states and municipalities have vocally rejected 'those trains?' The answer in part may lie in how planners and elected officials view the next generation of citizens.

Across the United States, rail projects that get a reasonable level of support have one thing in common;



An Amtrak train zips out of Lafayette, Indiana

they base their projects' ROI in part on metrics that demonstrate future growth by the next population boom; millennials. It is estimated that this age group, born between 1982 and 2004 now number 80 million strong. The cohort elders are now thirty-two with the last millennials celebrating their 11th birthdays. And, just as baby boomers were very different from the 'greatest' generation, so are the desires and likes of millennials.

In general, millennials marry late, are heavily indebted (college), underemployed, renters over home buyers, and prefer an urban lifestyle. They purchase cars later than any previous modern generation, use public transportation, ride sharing, bikes and mopeds. If they had their way, they might not even learn how to drive (first time licensing has dropped precipitously). Their most important possession is a smart phone and they often decide where to go or 'hang out' based on WiFi availability.

So, where is a bright, newly minted college graduate going to live? They will choose affordable communities that cater to their urban lifestyle, are technologically savvy, and most importantly have regular PASSIVE transportation; locally and intercity. A young entrepreneur can live in a downtown loft, work in a nearby co-op business incubator, ride public transit for life's necessities and, when necessary, hop a train to the big city to meet with clients or investors.

If this mix of urban amenities, technology and passive transportation are not readily convenient, they will move to a place where the desired support network meets their needs. Communities as diverse as Urbana, Illinois and Phoenix have already reaped the reward of successful urban developments. Young people are filling apartments in proximity to Urbana's stylish new transportation center. Their 125-mile commutes to downtown Chicago are quicker, less expensive and more productive than those commuters from Chicago's near suburbs. Who wouldn't want to sit comfortably, read or work on a connected device while avoiding snarled traffic or high parking downtown fees?

Western Indiana is situated between two large metropolitan areas and a smorgasbord of colleges, large and small. Costs of living are far less than those in larger cities. These Hoosier communities are working hard to plan and provide a viable environment that is attractive to millennials, including a robust tech infrastructure.

That is why effective passenger rail transportation is critical to retaining the best and the brightest young minds. These blossoming taxpayers want passive transportation that is efficient, affordable, connected and enjoyable. Visionary leadership in Western Indiana sees the potential of improved passenger rail service and is eagerly counting the days until it is a reality.

The Case for Passenger Rail

By Tom Hayhurst

It's Time for Intercity Passenger Rail Service to return to Fort Wayne. Here's why:

Rail travel is convenient—and enjoyable. Picture relaxing on the train as you travel to Chicago or Columbus, Ohio, or possibly Indianapolis. You can be in downtown Chicago in 2 hours and you can sympathetically watch everyone in traffic jams as your train races by. As you travel, working on the internet, listening to music, or reading a book is a breeze. No problem.

Rail is a safe mode of travel. The safety record of train travel is unparalleled throughout the world. This pattern has been true for decades.

Rail travel is environmentally friendly. Train travel uses a fraction of the fuel per passenger mile used in automobile or air travel. This helps clear the air we breathe and protect the environment. Remember—we only have one planet! It's a job creator—Thousands of new jobs will be created as passenger rail service expands in the USA. Rail production companies such as SDI in Whitley County will add more jobs. Other rail workers, workers in businesses that sprout up at rail junctions, and workers who manufacture modern train engines and rail cars will also benefit.

Young people, the future of our nation, appreciate traveling by rail. This has been shown in multiple studies. Young millennials often see communities with passenger rail service as forward thinking—the type of community in which they would like to live, study, work, and raise their families.

Our community security is enhanced by access to passenger rail service. On September 11, 2001, all airborne aircraft were immediately grounded. Passenger rail service continued where it was already in place. In future crises of this type—which WILL occur—having multiple modes of transportation will make us more mobile and safer. Travel options are increasing steadily at multimodal passenger rail depots and stations in many cities. Buses, bicycles, car rentals such as Zipcar, light intra-city rail systems, etc., are increasingly common. An even better option once you arrive at the rail station is to WALK—think of all the benefits!

The Midwest is an economical and logical location to expand passenger rail service. The population in our

multistate region is concentrated in a manner similar to that of Europe where efficient rail travel is much appreciated and utilized. And...there are no mountains in the Midwest—it's a logical location for rail travel.

Passenger rail transportation will eventually be financially self-sustaining according to extensive studies throughout our region. The USA already provides massive subsidies for highway and air transportation throughout the nation. For a small fraction of what is being spent on highway and air travel we can return efficient, safe passenger rail service to our community and our nation. If Europe, Argentina, China, and Japan can make this work, so can WE!

What can you do? First, talk with your friends and family about the important role of passenger rail service. Tell your elected officials you want them to bring passenger trains back to Fort Wayne. Ask political candidates if they support passenger rail expansion and vote for them if they do. Join organizations such as the Northeast Indiana Passenger Rail Association and the statewide Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance. Passenger rail service is so logical that it will eventually return to our area—why wait?? Let's make it happen now.

Editor's Note: Tom Hayhurst wrote the above op-ed piece, which was published in the *Journal Gazette*, Fort Wayne. Mr. Hayhurst is a co-founder of the Northeast Indiana Passenger Rail Association and is a board member of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance. He has served as a Fort Wayne city council member (1996-2008) and is a public health physician.

Economics Key to More Rail; Light Rail Project Identified

By Steve Coxhead

The surest argument to be used with persons, groups, or other entities which make decisions regarding improved passenger rail is ECONOMICS, says Arvid Olson, the newest board member of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA).

Olson, transportation chair of Greater Lafayette Commerce, updated 15 board attendees on the struggle to keep the *Hoosier State* running. Operations of the new *Hoosier State* must be such that the operating subsidy will eventually be reduced – and well within the two years of funding just provided by the Indiana State Legislature.

While the current state budget doesn't have any (*continued*)

("Economics Key to More Rail" continued from page 5)
available funding for another major Indiana rail project, unanimous board approval came July 16th for IPRA to begin preliminary talks with Delaware and Madison County residents eager to develop a light rail project connecting their East Central Indiana counties with Indianapolis. IPRA wants to explore how it could help get the project moving and toward that end, is asking for a meeting to define broad objectives, to determine prospective stakeholders, and to determine from where political support must come.

Put College-Aged on Trains Is Key to Marketing Strategy

The newly-named sales and marketing manager for the **Hoosier State** train was introduced at the board meeting hosted by Greater Lafayette Commerce. Heather Hice, a Lebanon resident and University of Tennessee business management graduate, talked in general terms of how Iowa-Pacific will be at multiple college "frosh" orientations this fall (Purdue, St. Joseph's College, and Wabash College). Social media will be used, and Convention and Visitor Bureaus will be sought out, to spread the word about the new **Hoosier State** with its larger seats, WIFI capability, and gourmet kitchen. The former travel agency owner later exchanged marketing ideas over lunch with a handful of board members.

Hearing from passenger rail advocates in the Columbus, Indiana, area, U.S. Senator Joe Donnelly was represented at the meeting by Justin Mount. Coincidentally, a decision was made to share IPRA's membership list with All Aboard Ohio, which is pushing to bring daily train service to Cincinnati.

To bring forth greater activity and involvement from members, IPRA's board approved a request from its president to open up all meetings to the general membership. The next board meeting will be 10:30 a.m., Saturday, August 15, at the law offices of Faegre Baker Daniels, 300 N. Meridian St., Suite 2700, Indianapolis. Go to www.indianahighspeedrail.org for more details.

Fair Train Announces Schedule

By Michelle Yerkeson

The Fair Train is back. Ride the train to the fair from Fishers.



Dates: Aug 7-23

Times: First train leaves Fishers Municipal Complex at 8:45 am. No one will be admitted into the fair after the 9:15 pm train. Visit the Indiana Transportation Museum website at www.itm.org, and under the "Train Rides" menu, select "Fairtrain" for a complete schedule.

Price. Discount days: Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays- Adults \$12 and Children \$8. Tuesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays- Adults \$13 and Children \$9. Cash and Credit Cards accepted; sorry NO AMEX.

Fishers' departure location. Located close to 3 Municipal Drive, Fishers IN 46038 (South of the Hamilton Southeastern Public Library and north of the new construction). Because of the ongoing construction, we are located in a tent again this year.

Driving there. Use the 116th Street exit off of I-69 north bound to 116th St. Turn west on 116th St, and drive 1/2 mi to Municipal Dr. or turn west from SR 37 south bound to 126th Street. Turn south on Lantern Rd in the round-about. Turn right on Municipal Dr. Look for the dark green signs on 116th Street and 126th Street. Volunteers from Kiwanis will help direct guests to the best parking.

Departure location at the Indiana State Fair. Located across Fall Creek Parkway from Gate 6.

All tickets are round-trip (no one-ways, unless you can buddy up with another one-way on the same trip).

Train runs rain or shine

Please arrive at least 15-30 minutes prior to your train.

NEW THIS YEAR: Ride the reverse trip from the fairgrounds to Fishers and return. Tickets are available in the Coliseum Box Office inside the fairgrounds. Stay on the train for a 90 minute round trip or get off in Fishers and explore the shops and eateries within walking distance of the train station. Prices are the same as above.

Proposed Northern Indiana-Ohio Train Waiting on Hoosier State

By Fred Lanahan

There is not a lot of change to report on the Northern Indiana-Ohio passenger rail line effort. NIPRA and partners are awaiting the conclusion of negotiations between INDOT and Amtrak and Iowa-Pacific for operation and funding for the **Hoosier State** passenger line.

Once that happens, we plan to meet with INDOT executives to work on building a partnership for a Tier I study on this line and move toward eventual implementation.

There is also a parallel effort ongoing between Indiana and Ohio planners at the city and MPO levels to create a governance structure for this two-state effort.

However, we have built a rather substantial match fund that will stand us in good stead once we can move forward on the necessary studies.

Lafayette's Riehle Plaza Bridge Could Reopen Aug 10

By Joe Krause

There has been significant visible progress on three projects at or near the Lafayette Amtrak Station. Workers have completed placing pre-stressed concrete slabs onto the floor of the Riehle Plaza Bridge over the three railroad tracks. The next step is to cover the slabs with concrete, a project scheduled to be completed by the end of July.

Painting of the iron bridge will begin once there are 48 consecutive hours of no rain. Limited use of the bridge will be allowed beginning August 10, the same day CityBus plans to cease operating its shuttle service to the West Lafayette side of the John T. Myers Pedestrian Bridge.

A separate project on the John T. Myers Pedestrian Bridge over the Wabash River seems to be coming close to completion.

- Concrete has been poured and is being cured in the center of the bridge.
- Various exposed joints are now being filled in with pavers.
- The elevators nearest the tracks have been replaced and are operational, but open only to the workmen at this time.

- The tall, three-flight steel steps on the west platform have been removed. It is unknown when or if they will be replaced.

The work in the Lafayette Amtrak Station Waiting Lobby was on hold for two weeks, but laborers came in Monday, July 27, to remove floor tile and the adhesive used to hold the tiles in place. Remodeling began on June 22, but seemed to be delayed for a time.

More and more Amtrak passengers are simply being brought to the west end of the Myers Bridge -- by the Margerum Fountain -- to begin their walk across the Wabash River to the Amtrak Platform. A very few do make use of the Amtrak ticketing machine in the CityBus Transfer Center on 3rd St. (That office is open 7 am to 7 pm Monday through Friday and 10 am to 6 pm on Saturdays. It is closed on Sundays.)

Amtrak Passenger Assistance volunteers have been advising local residents to use the ticket machine on a day previous to travel or, rather, simply get their E-tickets printed at home or at a public library. Out-of-town passengers are a bit out of luck because the "window" is so small for them to (a) find the CityBus Transfer Center; (b) use the ticket machine; (c) get to the CityBus Shuttle, and/or (d) be transported by private vehicle to the west end of the Myers Bridge.

Completion dates?

Pedestrian bridge over tracks was supposed to be June 16, then June 30 -- and now, August 10.

John T. Myers Bridge -- possibly "middle of August" or "just before Purdue starts Fall Semester."

Remodeling of train depot—unknown.

Scaffolding back up at Union Station in Indy

By Bill Malcolm

Scaffolding is up in front of the Amtrak / Bus station (aka Union Station) in Indianapolis.

This time the scaffolding is in front of the station.

Per Peggy Frazier of the City of Indianapolis (which owns the beleaguered facility), the scaffolding is related to "work that is identified on the summary sheet that we passed out late last fall. We will have ongoing work at Union Station for some time," she noted.

Frazier noted this is part of the \$4 million dollar project to repair the structure and noted that they will be working on the roof of the station before too long.

Take the Train to Milwaukee

By Bill Malcolm

Going to Milwaukee?

Amtrak runs 7 trains a day between Chicago and Milwaukee (the **Hiawatha Service** plus the **Empire Builder**). The train takes 90 minutes and makes just 3 stops including the Milwaukee Airport Rail Station. The fare is just \$24 and the train goes 79 mph on Metra tracks then Canadian Pacific tracks. Delays are rare. There is a quiet car in the rear where cell phone use is prohibited.

Milwaukee's renovated Intermodal Bus-Rail station is a traveler's delight. Opened in 2007, the station "is the result of a \$17 million transformation of the former downtown rail station, built in 1965, into a modern facility that serves as the gateway to the city," according to www.greatamericanstations.com-MKE. The building features a three-story glass-enclosed atrium that welcomed 596,415 travelers in 2014.

The spacious facility also serves as a regional bus hub where you can catch buses to Minneapolis, La Crosse, Green Bay, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and other destinations. Bus lines operating out of the Intermodal Facility are Coach USA, Greyhound Lines, Indian Trails, Lamers Bus Lines, and Mega Bus. The Milwaukee County Transit Bus has a stop there, while Badger Bus serving Madison is a few blocks away.

There is even a free shuttle to the new Potawatomi Hotel & Casino from the Intermodal station.

The bus-rail station is right downtown, steps away from the Milwaukee Public Market, a popular food and shopping destination. While in Milwaukee, tourists frequent Lake Michigan, plus the Milwaukee Art Museum, the Milwaukee County Zoo, the Harley-Davidson Museum, or Miller Park to see a Milwaukee Brewers game.

During August, two big events are on tap – the Wisconsin State Fair (August 6-16) and the Milwaukee Irish Festival (August 13-16).

Traveling from Indiana? Take the Amtrak Thruway Bus to Chicago, the **Hoosier State/Cardinal** train (or even Mega Bus), or the South Shore Commuter Service.



Milwaukee Intermodal Station

39 Years of Loyal Service To Circle City Passengers

By Donald Yehle

In one word, "cheerfully" is how Amtrak's lead customer service representative, Jan Botkins, greets Circle City rail passengers at Indianapolis. To treat people this way one morning, one week, one month, or even one year is special. Try maintaining this disposition for 39 years.

Everyone who sees Jan for reservation or ticketing assistance would agree her attitude is top notch. "It's amazing how cheerful she is when I call her for **Hoosier State** and **Cardinal** departure times, passenger numbers, and names of crew members," says Joe Krause, Lafayette Amtrak passenger assistant volunteer.

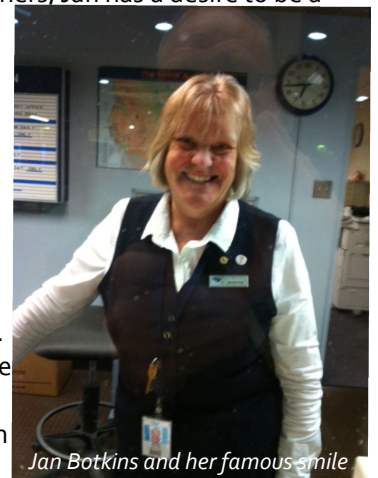
A customer talked of how helpful Jan was with the last minute booking of a roomette for the 18-hour journey from Indianapolis to Washington, D.C. "My job is to make everyone's rail adventure a little more comfortable and special," Botkins says.

Jan tells stories of other regular and deceased customers who have impacted her life. There's a local realtor who traveled annually to Seattle. A lady would go to Chicago and bring back a special chocolate cookie. One other customer frequented Las Vegas, always returning with silver dollars.

Jan joined Amtrak on November 10, 1975, which was a little more than four years after the corporation was founded. "I really wish I'd kept a log and picture journal of present and past engineers and conductors," the 39-year veteran employee continued.

Other than serving rail customers, Jan has a desire to be a gourmet chef. She and her husband, Gary, a retired Amtrak Beech Grove employee, like traveling by train, too.

Next time you're in Indianapolis, stop by the Amtrak ticket window between the hours of 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. When you purchase your ticket, you'll get something else, too – a warm and friendly smile.



Jan Botkins and her famous smile

Registration Begins August 10 for Fall NARP Advocacy Conference

Indianapolis -- On-Line registration begins August 10th for the National Association of Railroad Passenger's (NARP) Fall 2015 Council and Membership Meeting being here in Indianapolis.

Dates:

Friday, October 16 - Sunday, October 18

Host Hotel and Meeting Site:

Crowne Plaza at Union Station,
123 West Louisiana St., Indianapolis



Agenda:

Friday, October 16 – Tour of Amtrak's Beech Grove Maintenance Facility

Tour Start Time, Cost and Other Details To Be Announced

Chartered buses will operate between the Crowne Plaza and the Beech Grove Shops.

Lunch is Included in the Tour.

Saturday, October 17 – 'A Connected America' Advocacy Day (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

Speakers, Presentations and Panel Sessions of interest to all passenger rail advocates

Registration will include breakfast, lunch and AM/PM beverage breaks.

Invited speakers include Iowa Pacific's Ed Ellis.

Sunday, October 18 – NARP Council Day (8 a.m. to 2 p.m.)

NARP Business Sessions and a Prominent Lunch Speaker

Registration will include breakfast, lunch and AM beverage break.

The Beech Grove tour will be open to NARP members only. Space is Limited! To join NARP, America's largest advocacy group for trains & transit, go to www.narprail.org. NARP memberships start at only \$35.00 per year (with discounts for Seniors and Students available) which includes a 10% Amtrak discount and Amtrak Guest Reward program points.

Saturday's 'A Connected America' Advocacy Day program is open to all interested persons (NARP membership is encouraged). Complete registration information for all conference events will be available by August 10th at www.narprail.org.

Amtrak Vacations Seeking Passengers for Summer Getaways

By Donald Yehle

The Indiana Passenger Rail Association wants Hoosiers to ride our country's trains. Amtrak Vacations, an operating arm of the National Passenger Rail Corporation (Amtrak), supports that objective by offering five different types of rail vacations, including:

Independent Rail Journey
Escorted Rail Journey
Rail and Sail Vacation
Family Adventure
Rail Getaway

Amtrak Vacations can also customize any rail vacation to anywhere Amtrak travels, the company said.

During a July webinar, "last minute" summer vacations were highlighted. In order of popularity for late summer weeks, Amtrak Vacations' top 10 rail vacations are:

- Grand Canyon, Arizona
- Glacier National Park, Montana
- Niagara Falls, Canada
- New York City, New York
- San Francisco, California
- Washington, District of Columbia
- Chicago, Illinois
- Seattle with Alaska Cruise
- Boston, Massachusetts
- San Diego, California

(continued)

("Amtrak Summer Getaways" continued from page 9)

Why travel with Amtrak Vacations to U.S. National Parks, to Western USA, Southern and Midwestern USA, and Eastern USA? Jim Marini, director of sales, offered listeners these reasons:

- Bucket-list experience – Experience travel by train in larger-than-life windows.
- Less hassle – No lengthy two-hour check-ins, plus electronic ticketing.
- Room to roam – Stretch your legs, roam the train, chat with fellow passengers.
- Flexibility – Amtrak has 300 daily trains traveling in 46 of the 48 contiguous lower states. Only South Dakota and Wyoming lack a passenger rail presence, Marini said.
- **City-to-City Service – Is there a better location to enter New York City than through Penn Station?** ("Penn Station in New York City is the busiest railway station in all of North America, with a half a million people passing through every day," says Jim Loomis, author of *All Aboard, The Complete North American Train Travel Guide*.)
- Satisfy Your Hunger – Amtrak offers food service in café/lounge cars and dining cars.
- **Baggage – Two carry-on bags are allowed per passenger at no extra charge.**
- Travel "Green" -- Trains are energy efficient, produce fewer greenhouse gases, and take people off the highways, thereby reducing traffic congestion.

As summer winds down, Hoosiers and Americans nationwide have time to book passage on an independent rail journey, which typically are multi-city journeys and last 7, 8, 10, or 12 days. Sample destinations are Glacier National Park; the Grand Canyon, or three Western cities (Denver, Salt Lake City, and San Francisco) and West Yellowstone.

Other sample rail adventures are to Pacific Northwest cities of Portland and Seattle, after starting in San Francisco; "America's Heartland" (Chicago, St. Louis, and Dallas/San Antonio); "Jazz, Blues, and Rock 'N' Roll" (Chicago, Memphis, and New Orleans), or "Cowboys and Cajuns" (Dallas, San Antonio and New Orleans).

Escorted rail journeys, complete with tour managers and knowledgeable local guides, take rail passengers to these and other destinations – "Glacier National Park"; "National Parks of the Southwest" (Grand Canyon, Bryce, and Zion); "Northern National Parks" (Glacier, Yellowstone).

Rail ultimate getaways are single city trips of two-to-four-day duration to cities including Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, New York, and Washington, D.C. A five-

day, "Rails to the Grand Canyon" to/from Los Angeles has departures into December.

Do you want a cruise? Consider Alaska Cruises with Seattle Getaway or Glacier Bay Cruise with Seattle Getaway. Family adventure trips are scheduled to Glacier National Park, Grand Canyon, and Washington, D.C.

"While a minimum of eight rail adventures begin in Chicago, as many as half of our clients will fly to begin their train treks," the sales director said.

With Amtrak Vacations, rail, hotels, some meals, and sightseeing are conveniently booked as one package. Amtrak Thruway Service by motor coach allows guests to venture to places not otherwise available by rail. VIA Rail Canada partners with Amtrak, as well.

Flexibility is a huge advantage when booking an Amtrak Vacation. There's flexibility to add extra days; to travel coach or sleeping car; to choose a modest or a deluxe hotel, and the freedom to come and go. With the travel protection option, individuals and families can cancel trips for any reason up until 12 noon on the last business day prior to the first services offered, he continued.

City trips often include convenient city passes for local attractions; hop-on, hop-off tours, and one dinner at a popular restaurant. In describing a non-city excursion, "There's not a better way to get into Glacier National Park than on the train that drops you 200 steps from the lodge (Glacier Park Lodge)," Marini concluded.

To experience America's Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, South, Midwest, West, or Canada:
Visit www.AmtrakVacations.com
Call (800) 268-7252
Call your travel agent.

Riding the Rails to Cincinnati?

By Donald Yehle

EXTENDING HOOSIER STATE SERVICE TO CINCINNATI – President Steve Coxhead encourages Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance members to go to the article at the link below. "The article contains general information about Amtrak-related legislation, as well as specific mention of developments relevant to the question of extending **Hoosier State** service to Cincinnati," he said. *(continued)*

("Riding the Rails" continued from page 10)

To read the article, visit the UrbanCincy website or browse their July archives directly at: www.urbancincy.com/2015/07 and scroll down to "Stars Aligning for Cincinnati to Chicago High-Speed Rail."

SERVING PASSENGERS WITH DISABILITIES – During the last five fiscal years (FY 2010 – FY 2014), Amtrak saw its ridership of disabled passengers increase by 50 percent.

With that fact in mind – and as America celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) last month -- the company announced major steps to better serve the train travel experience for passengers with disabilities.

Mobility enhancements are:

- Installation of passenger information displays (PIDs) in audible and visual formats.
- Installing or rebuilding station entrances, restrooms, and ticket counters.
- Ensure accessible pathways between the parking lot, station building and platform.

Since ADA was signed into law on July 26, 1990, Amtrak has "worked on platforms, ramps, sidewalks, entranceways, restrooms and seating," the National Association of Railroad Passengers reported in its July 22 issue of **Hotline Midweek Brief**.

Input was gathered from station owners, stakeholders from the disability community, and state and federal officials in planning for these improvements, the rail advocacy group said.

"Passengers with disabilities represent a large and growing share of Amtrak ridership and we are proud of our role as an important means of transportation," said Amtrak President and CEO Joe Boardman. "We are confident we can build on the progress made to date and advance a robust program of station accessibility improvements in the years to come."

Passengers with disabilities and their companions receive a discount when riding Amtrak – "the only mode of intercity transportation" that provides such an incentive, Amtrak said.

CHICAGO UNION STATION PLAYS HOST TO "TERMINAL TOWN" EXHIBIT – "Raising public appreciation of Chicago's extraordinary role as a great intercity transportation center" is what's prompted an ongoing exhibit in the Great Hall at

Chicago Union Station. "Some of the strategies being used to deal with the dramatic growth in the rail-freight business" will be featured in a new exhibit panel to be unveiled this month.

Joe Krause, volunteer station agent in Lafayette, recommends passenger rail advocates take in the exhibit, do the "Terminal Test" based on answers found on exhibit panels, and purchase the book, "Terminal Town."

All rail and bus stations in Chicago and surrounding areas are mentioned in the book, which also features information on Mega Bus, the China Bus, and five major Chicagoland Air Fields -- O'Hare Field, shuttered Meigs Field, and three international airports at Chicago Midway, Gary/Chicago, and South Bend. "Terminal Town" readers will find outstanding maps, too, Krause said.

Visit the sponsoring organization's website, www.terminaltown.org, for upcoming events, a list of its generous sponsors (including BNSF and CN), classic movie clips, and more.

CHICAGO RAIL STORIES FEATURED AT HISTORY MUSEUM –

Our present and future are often predicated by the past. "From the Union Stock Yard to Union Station, explore Chicago's rich railroad history at the Chicago History Museum.

"Climb aboard the first L car, conduct the Pioneer, and discover the life of a World War II-era rail worker in *Railroaders: Jack Delano's Homefront Photography*," touts advertising material from the museum, which is easily accessible via three rail companies – Amtrak, Metra, and the South Shore Line.

The museum is at Clark St. at North Ave.; call 312-642-4600 or visit www.ChicagoHistory.org.

AMTRAK STATION IN ANN ARBOR EXPANDS ACCESSIBLE



Ann Arbor, MI platform

BOARDING -- The Ann Arbor, MI, Amtrak station – served by the **Wolverine** -- will "offer a prototype retractable setback-shuttle platform that will provide safer and faster boarding on and off trains for all passengers including those who use a wheeled mobility device, seniors, and those who need assistance with luggage and strollers," Amtrak announced on July 23. (con'd)

("Riding the Rails-Ann Arbor" continued from page 11)

"The platform mechanically extends toward the train, bridging the gap created when a level-boarding platform is needed," the company said.

"Amtrak and RLE International of Madison Heights, Mich., developed this setback-shuttle platform from concept, through the design process, to a prototype for installation at the Ann Arbor station. This prototype will remain in use for a two-year test on performance and then Amtrak plans to deploy at other stations," they said.

In an earlier announcement, the Prince, West Virginia, station – served by the **Cardinal** – also is slated for an accessibility project in 2015. Eleven stations on the **Empire Builder** also are in line for accessibility projects this year.

Both the **Cardinal** and the **Wolverine** travel through Indiana.



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

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Member Discounts

Crowne Plaza Union Station Indianapolis: Ask for discount 100329414 and receive 12% off the best flexible rate.

AAA and NARP members save 10% off Amtrak tickets at www.amtrak.com if booked three or more days in advance.