

NARP's Fall Meeting Calls for "A Connected America"

By Donald Yehle

All passenger train advocates are welcome to the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) fall meeting next month in Indianapolis; NARP members may also tour Amtrak's Beech Grove Maintenance Facility and see a Talgo Trainset on Friday, October 16.

Friday's tour starts from the Crowne Plaza at 9 a.m. After the included lunch, participants will be returned to the Crowne Plaza by 2 p.m. "A Connected America Advocacy and Learning Day" is set for Saturday, October 17, at the Crowne Plaza hotel. Saturday's event is from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Breakfast, breaks, and lunch are included in Saturday's registration cost. A \$25 discount (except students) is available before October 1. Non-NARP members can join during registration.

Meeting Registration Packages are:

- **\$200**, Full Meeting, Friday-Sunday, for paid NARP members only, including Friday's tour of Amtrak's Beech Grove, Indiana, maintenance facility.
- **\$130**, Friday-Saturday only, for paid NARP members only, including Friday's tour of Beech Grove and Saturday's "A Connected America" day.
- **\$175**, Saturday-Sunday only - open to all interested persons, NARP membership is not required.
- **\$95**, Saturday only - "Connected America Advocacy and Learning Day" - open to all interested persons, NARP membership is not required.
- **\$85**, Sunday only - NARP Business Session and Keynote Lunch Speaker; open to all interested persons, NARP membership is not required.
- **\$35**, Special Saturday Only Student Discount Rate - School ID will be required to be presented at event.



To register, go to NARP's website – www.narprail.org Scroll down to latest events, on left hand side -- Fall 2015 Council Meeting, Indianapolis, IN.

Complete agenda information, including confirmed speakers and presenters, will be updated on the NARP website regularly starting in mid-September.

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("NARP's Fall Meeting" continued from page 1) If you have any questions, please contact NARP's Director of Special Events Bruce Becker at bbecker@narprail.org or 202-408-8287. Becker is a former NARP Board member and a special events professional.

"We especially want millennials to join us for Saturday, as they represent the largest group of future potential railroad and transit passengers," says Becker. "Their enthusiasm, drive, and vision will help make 'A Connected America' possible in the years to come. We encourage millennials to take advantage of our special \$35 student rate for the day."

First Week of the New Hoosier State Highlighted in this 22-Minute Video

Iowa Pacific Holdings' (IPH) **Hoosier State** started operating on Sunday, August 2, delayed until then as a 1,200-foot section of track was laid to connect CSX tracks to IPH's maintenance facility in Beech Grove. Click on the VIDEO below to learn more about the train and its first week of operation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3TszX-xazwk&feature=share>

Iowa Pacific's First Revenue Run August 2 Makes State Rail History

By David Drasin

Summer 2015 may in retrospect be an important period in Indiana Rail Passenger history. The first revenue run of the **Hoosier State** --under management by Iowa Pacific Holdings (IPH) -- was on Sunday, August 2, 2015, from Indianapolis to Chicago.

From October 1, 1980, through August 1, the **Hoosier State** had been operated by The National Passenger Rail Corporation (Amtrak), which continues to provide the train consist with its engineer, conductors, and the national passenger reservation system. The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) of 2008 led to the change in operators.



Amtrak conductor Philip Streby (center) tends to a line of passengers in Dyer on August 2. Photo courtesy Chuck Pullen, NWIgazette.com.

As most rail advocates know, PRIIA requires train routes under 750 miles -- excluding the Amtrak-owned and operated Northeast Corridor -- to be financially supported by individual states, not with federal dollars. Congressional legislation shifted financial responsibility for the **Hoosier State** to the State of Indiana in October 2013.

It took 22 months of discussions and negotiations before contracts with Amtrak, host railroads, IPH, and the State of Indiana were signed leading to the August 2 debut. Between October 2013 and last month, a state award to Corridor Capital never led to any service. Serious consideration was given to eliminating the service altogether. Thanks to financial support from communities along the rail corridor, Amtrak continued operating the four-day-a-week train.

For a brief period, when Amtrak was competing with Iowa Pacific for the State of Indiana's operating contract, **Hoosier State** rail passengers were provided with free Wi-Fi, complimentary coffee, and premium "business class" seating.

Prior to August 2, IPH engines and rolling stock were thoroughly inspected by numerous organizations -- the Federal Railroad Administration, the Food and Drug Administration, Amtrak, the State of Indiana, and several railroads whose tracks the train would use. Big and small items were checked, including water quality from coach drinking fountains. To Amtrak conductors and engineers, the change in operators made little difference. Its employees are working the same occupations at the same pay scale.

Amtrak management is adjusting to the challenge of seeing one of its intercity trains slip away to a new private contractor. Some view IPH and the State of Indiana as two new bureaucracies responsible for passenger rail along the 196-mile, Chicago- to-Indianapolis rail corridor. (*continued*)



The *Hoosier State* arrives in Dyer on August 2. Photo courtesy Chuck Pullen, NWIgazette.com.

("Iowa Pacific" cont. from page 2)

To this long-time West Lafayette resident, rail user, and interim reporter, the clearest advantage to the present operating arrangement is that in practice both Iowa Pacific

and the *Hoosier State* have one supervisor -- the State of Indiana. Rail corridor communities of Crawfordsville, Indianapolis, Lafayette, Rensselaer, and West Lafayette and Indiana legislators -- who have financially supported continuance of the train -- will be easier to please than 535 members of the United States Congress.

Providing food service on trains is an example. Congress had made it clear that it expects Amtrak to minimize, if not eliminate, food service operating losses. An important aspect of Iowa Pacific's vision for the state-supported corridor is to provide a level of food service -- plus snacks -- that will attract a passenger segment not usually seen on Amtrak, except perhaps on busy Northeast Corridor, Acela trains.

The Indiana State Legislature is looking for a dramatic increase in ridership, as do rail corridor communities, who continue to help finance the *Hoosier State*. Without ridership gains over the next 18 to 24 months, future state and local financial support for the train is in jeopardy.

Ed Ellis, Iowa Pacific's president and public voice, knows of the ridership gain challenge. A Chicagoan with a deep knowledge of the Midwest's train infrastructure, Ellis has a public style which seems to be very persuasive to the general public and decision-makers. The bridge challenge in Lafayette that has brought havoc on I65 travel between Chicago and Indianapolis could not have come at a better time for Ellis and Indiana's train.

Two trains -- Amtrak's *Cardinal* and the *Hoosier State* -- combine to offer passenger train revenue service along the 196-mile route both directions, seven-days-a-week. The *Cardinal* arrives in Chicago after 31 stops, including six in Indiana, on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday. It departs Chicago nightly Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, with New York City its ultimate destination.

The *Hoosier State* is a revenue producer from Indianapolis to Chicago four mornings -- Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and

Friday. The train leaves Chicago for Indianapolis the following four nights -- Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Departure time for both trains is 6 a.m. from Indianapolis; 5:45 p.m. from Chicago.

The arrangement is complicated on Mondays and Tuesdays, as the IPH train deadheads behind the *Cardinal* on Monday morning and Tuesday night. Deadheading in the railroad business means being attached to another train to position it for use at a later time. This arrangement entails having the *Cardinal* spend extra time to allow the IPH consist to be attached/unattached. Additionally, the weight of the Iowa Pacific behind the *Cardinal* makes for a time-keeping challenge.

Installation of a 1,200-foot track section connecting CSX tracks with Iowa Pacific's Beech Grove maintenance facility in Beech Grove delayed the IPH startup to August 2.

In an Associated Press interview, Ellis amplified themes delivered last spring at a Greater Lafayette Commerce breakfast. They are:

- The Chicago-Indianapolis rail corridor presents great long-term passenger rail possibilities.
- Iowa Pacific Holding wants to deliver reliable time-keeping.
- We're seeking to provide a level of service that will encourage many customers to pay a premium fare for an excellent meal -- breakfast northbound, dinner southbound.
- A pleasant, comfortable if not speedy ride is important, as well.

The train consist is two coaches, a "full dome" car, and two engines. In addition to the standard Amtrak crew, the Iowa Pacific consist travels with its own customer service employees on board. WiFi and some food service were available in the first few days. For an indefinite initial period, holders of non-first class tickets will be permitted to ride in the full-width dome car. Iowa Pacific will also offer heavily discounted fares for a very limited basis.

Although IHP is new to the Hoosier State, the company operates both freight and passenger service in several states. Pullman Rail Journeys, a glamorous rail service, travels Chicago to New Orleans and in the Rockies. For more information, go to www.iowapacific.com and travelpullman.com

Light Rail Exploratory Meeting Set for September 10

An exploratory meeting to jump start a rail commuter line from Muncie to Indianapolis is set for Thursday, September 10, at the Hoosier Environmental Council offices in Indianapolis. Invitees include officials from the following groups -- metropolitan planning organizations, community leaders, elected officials, and key transportation stakeholders.

Says Steve Coxhead, president, Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance: "The goal is to identify possible centers of political support and the need to set up some sort of commuter rail district, similar to Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District in Northwest Indiana."

Organizations are being sought to champion this project, he added.

The Hoosier Environmental Council is located at 3951 N. Meridian. The meeting will begin at 12 noon, concluding at 1:30 p.m.

For more information, contact Coxhead, scoxhead@comcast.net, or (219) 741-8053.

Michigan Train Advocates Ride the Rails to Durand

By Donald Yehle

WARMUP FOR OCTOBER 16-18 -- Jim Mathews, president and chief executive officer of the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) visits Michigan on September 19 to deliver the keynote address at the 42nd annual meeting of the Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers (MARP). One month later, the enthusiastic new NARP leader travels to Indianapolis for his organization's annual fall council and membership meeting at the Crowne Plaza Conference Center at Union Station, October 16-18.

Tim Hoeffner, director of the State of Michigan's Office of Rail, will also speak that Saturday, updating Michiganders on progress to improve passenger rail service, particularly operating times, on the corridor connecting Chicago and Detroit through Northern Indiana. MARP's 42nd annual meeting takes place at historic Durand Union Station, near Flint, MI, which is an Amtrak stop for the *Blue Water* that runs from Chicago to Port Huron, MI.

DETROIT – CHICAGO RAIL CORRIDOR INSPECTION TOUR – The Railway Study Association of the United King-

dom will conduct an inspection tour of the Chicago-Detroit rail corridor on Friday, September 18. An Iowa Pacific dome car will be made available to the group as it travels as part of Amtrak's *Wolverine* consist – eastbound in the morning and westbound that same night.

A General Electric executive will talk with the group about the Incremental Train Control System used on these tracks (see "Safe Train Travel at 110 MPH from Porter to Kalamazoo," page 10, July issue, *All Aboard Indiana*.) Norfolk Southern representatives will address the \$71.4 million Indiana Gateway project, which consists of subprojects to add universal crossovers, mainline tracks, and a new passing siding on the Amtrak Michigan line just north of Porter, IN.

Ed Ellis, president of Iowa Pacific Holdings, is to present a talk on short line railroads, which are Class III railroads with annual revenues under \$20 million, serving small towns and industries or hauling rail cars for one or more larger railroads. Detroit's M-1 Rail and "Wally" – a Washtenaw County to Livingston County Light Rail Line in SE Michigan – will be described to the group, who are officers of British railways, transport public agencies, and rail transit systems.

The Railway Study Association is associated with the London School of Economics and will be inspecting the rail line as guests of the Michigan Department of Transportation.

REGULAR CINCINNATI-CHICAGO RAIL SERVICE GETS BOOST – Chris Wetterich, a staff reporter and columnist for the *Cincinnati Business Courier*, reported in mid-August the "Federal Railroad Administration" (FRA) is expected to soon announce that it will lead the study and planning of new, regional-wide interstate passenger rail networks that could include better service between Cincinnati and Chicago.

"The FRA has notified stakeholders and Congress informally that it has chosen the Midwest and Southeast to spend \$2.8 million to study and plan rail networks in those two regions," Wetterich reported.

Specifics about the allocation of these FRA dollars will be an important topic at the upcoming Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission meeting.

ST. PAUL HOSTING MIDWEST INTERSTATE PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION --

The status of passenger rail improvements in the Midwest, future Midwest rail plans, and legislative activities affecting those plans are among the topics before the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commissioners (*continued*)

(*"Michigan Train Advocates Ride the Rails"* continued from page 4) meeting on September 23-24 in St. Paul, Minnesota. Participants will learn, among other things, how passenger rail station development brings economic benefits to the surrounding community. Fred Lanahan, an Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA) board member from Fort Wayne, and Randy Truitt, a West Lafayette state representative who has been instrumental in efforts to develop the Hoosier State passenger rail line, are among the commissioners who will be participants in the upcoming meeting.

Urgent Help Needed with Passenger Rail Survey:

Purdue Survey Could Help with Effort to Build Ridership on *Hoosier State* Train

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

****Survey link near end of article****

I would like to thank readers of the August *All Aboard* newsletter who took the time to respond to my passenger rail survey, which will be completed and analyzed this fall.

Fifty people have taken the survey. For us to have a good sample, 100 more responses are needed. Would you please take 10 to 20 minutes to answer rail-related questions in the following areas:

- Your experience with passenger rail in the United States and with the Hoosier State train
- Ease of using the Hoosier State train
- Usefulness of the Hoosier State train
- Hoosier State train usage and personal network
- External factors affecting your use of the Hoosier State
- Using the Hoosier State train in the future
- Transportation mode choices
- Demographic questions

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.

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 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 very 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 as early as next month.

This survey is endorsed by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and the results of this study will be shared with both INDOT, Amtrak, and Iowa Pacific Holdings. In addition, some key first findings might be presented to two focus groups that will be conducted under the same study consisting of elected officials, planning and operating agencies, economic development groups, public transportation agencies, passenger rail advocacy groups, and other key stakeholders in Indiana.

If you would like your opinion to be recorded, please access the survey online at the following web address:

https://purdue.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_7PRyokDOgm2OcdL

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!

10 Senseless Deaths, 11 Injuries on Hoosier State Rail Corridor in 2014

Indiana Rail Safety Week has come and gone; the need to respect the dangers of disregarding railroad crossing laws and to avoid trespassing on railroad property has n't, say officials, who teamed August 23-29 to build public awareness about this issue.

"Train versus car collisions are completely preventable," says Jessica Feder, executive director of Indiana Operation Lifesaver. "Indiana law enforcement agencies and railroad special agents were out monitoring railroad crossings and checking for trespassers during Indiana Rail Safety Week.

"We want the public to know how dangerous it is to try to beat a train and that trespassing on railroad tracks and property is dangerous and illegal."

In 2014, there were 122 railroad crossing collisions statewide. This resulted in 50 people injured and 10 fatalities in the State of Indiana. All 10 of the trespasser deaths and 11 of the injuries were on The Hoosier State corridor, Feder explains. (Editor's Note: Accidents were the result of both freight and passenger rail incidents with automobiles and trucks.)

Nationwide, 269 highway-rail grade crossing fatalities occurred in 2014, with 73 percent of those happening in 15 states, according to the Federal Railroad Administration.

Deaths in those 15 states in 2014 were: California (33); Illinois (21); Texas (20); Alabama (15); Louisiana (13); Michigan and Oklahoma (12 each); Florida, Indiana, Minnesota, and Wisconsin (10 each); Georgia and Tennessee (8 each), and Arkansas and Iowa (7 each).

"We are constantly striving to improve our statistics with both crossing collisions and trespasser incidents," said Feder.

"One accident, one fatality, and one injury is one too many," the executive director emphasized.

Indiana Operation Lifesaver last week scheduled numerous enforcement blitzes throughout Indiana involving law enforcement agencies. There were public safety announcements, safety information distributed at college campuses, posters on South Shore commuter trains and at stations, and media coverage of events.

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) had rail safety messages on the dynamic message boards along

major roads. Indiana Operation Lifesaver continually takes a proactive lead in the elimination of trespassing and pedestrian fatalities at railroad crossings.

Indiana Operation Lifesaver is a non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating collisions, deaths and injuries at highway-rail grade intersections and on railroad rights-of-way through public education, engineering and enforcement. To learn more about Indiana Operation Lifesaver, please visit them online at www.oli.org or call (812) 528-4327.

Teaming in the week-long, statewide, education campaign were the Indiana State Police, INDOT, local law enforcement, railroad companies, and the Indiana Operation Lifesaver. Governor Michael Pence formally declared August 23-29 Indiana Rail Safety Week.

From Air Brake to Yard, Train Guide Tells It All

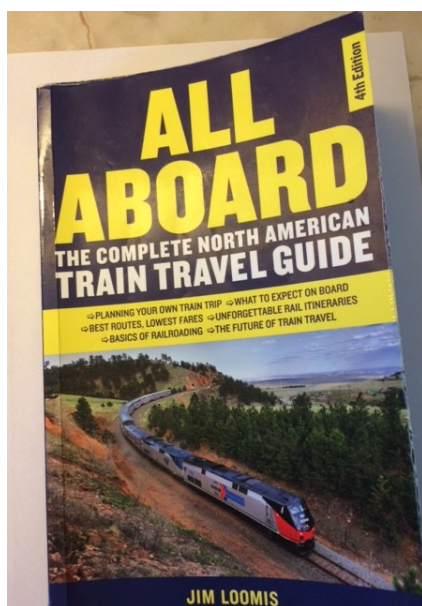
By Jim Loomis and Donald Yehle

Basic railroad operations are described with many terms – air brake, cab, electric locomotive, Gandy Dancer, journal bearing, main line, pantograph, rail, tank car, vestibule, and yard -- to name a few. In *All Aboard – The Complete North American Train Travel Guide*, author Jim Loomis lists 128 railroad terms.

With the author's permission, *All Aboard Indiana* will publish these terms and definitions in our continuing effort to educate America's public about 21st Century Railroading. Enjoy!

Air brake - The standard braking system used on both passenger and freight cars. Compressed air is used to hold the brake shoe away from the cars' wheels. When air pressure

is reduced, the brakes are applied. This concept has an important impact on safety: should anything go wrong with the system, the brakes are automatically applied. Every car on the train, including the locomotive, has its own brakes. The braking system for the whole train is (continued)



(*"From Air Brake to Rail Yard" continued from page 6*) controlled by the engineer in the locomotive. Sometimes when a train is backing into a station, for example, the brakes can be applied by the conductor operating a special valve in the vestibule of the last car.

Ballast – Coarse gravel or crushed rock used to form the roadbed on which tracks are laid.

Cab – A compartment in the locomotive where the crew sits and operates the train.

Derailment – When the wheels of a car or locomotive come off the rail. While derailments are usually accidental, they are sometimes deliberately caused for safety reasons. Watch for a small, usually yellow sign in a rail yard that reads DERAILED. Near it you will see a device attached to the rail that will derail – in other words, stop – an unattended car that may be rolling toward a main track where a collision could occur.

Electric locomotive – Any locomotive that is powered by electricity and gets that power directly from an outside source — that is, from an overhead wire (the **catenary**) or from an electrified third rail.

Fireman – Except for special excursion trains powered by restored steam locomotives, firemen are – alas – part of an earlier time. In the days of steam, firemen were primarily responsible for keeping the firebox adequately fed with wood or coal. The second person in the locomotive cab is sometimes still referred to as the fireman, but on Amtrak trains, both are **engineers**. The freight railroads are now using either **assistant engineers** or **co-engineers**.

Gandy Dancer – Old-time railroad slang for anyone working on the tracks. The term comes from the brand name stamped on the specialized hand tools – picks, shovels, and sledge hammers—made by the Gandy Manufacturing Company more than 100 years ago.

Handcar – A small four-wheeled vehicle usually powered by a gasoline engine that carries workers and inspectors along the tracks. Today these people more commonly ride in ordinary cars and trucks fitted with flanged steel wheels that keep them on the rails while being propelled by normal rubber-tired wheels.

Journal bearing – If there is one critical part common to all railcars, the journal bearing is it. There are two of these box-shaped bearings on each axle, and essentially they bear the weight of the car and help to distribute its weight over the axle. When a journal bearing fails, it overheats and is referred to as a **hot box**. If undetected, it can cause a serious breakdown.

Lading – An industry term for whatever a freight car is carrying.

Main Line – A long stretch of track that receives regular, heavy use.

Observation car – A passenger car specially designed to be the last car in a passenger train, often featuring extra-large windows or a rounded end, or even an open-air platform at the end of a car. VIA Rail has several of these beauties, called **Park cars** because each is named for one of Canada's national parks. They elegantly bring up the rear on several of VIA's long-distance trains.

Pantograph – This is the device that extends upward from the roof of an all-electric locomotive and presses against the overhead wire (the **catenary**), collecting the electricity that powers the train.

Quiet car – A single car on many of Amtrak's short-haul trains in which cell phones and loud conversations are not permitted.

Rail – Made of rolled steel, the traditional rails are 39 feet long (to fit on 40-foot flatcars) but are being replaced today by great quarter-mile-long rails laid by machinery. The cross section of a rail can best be described as looking like an upside-down capital T. All rails look pretty much the same, but larger and heavier rails are used where high-speed or very heavy trains operate. Smaller, lightweight rails are used in rail yards and on sidings where traffic is less frequent and slower.

Sander – A device operated from the locomotive cab that applies sand to the rail just in front of the driving wheels to prevent them from slipping. It is used going up steep grades or where ice or snow has covered tracks.

Tank car – A railroad car used for transporting liquids.

Unit train – A freight train that carries only one commodity – coal or grain, for example.

Vestibule – The drafty, noisy enclosed area you pass through when moving from one passenger car to another.

Weigh bridge – This is the railroad equivalent of weigh stations along an interstate highway where officials check for overweight trucks.

Yard – A rail center where, within a specific area, train consists are made up, railcars are moved about, and general railroad activity is carried out. (*continued*)

All 128 terms are found in "Appendix A: Railroad Terms and Slang" of Loomis' book. To purchase a copy of the book, go to Amazon.com or your favorite bookstore.

Traveling on Iowa Pacific's *Hoosier State*

By Doug Yerkeson

Wanting to experience the new Iowa Pacific *Hoosier State* passenger train, my son Nathan and I decided to take a day trip to attend a Chicago Cubs game on Sunday August 9, 2015. Our adventure began around 5:30 am at Indianapolis Union Station (IUS). A good crowd was already waiting to board the train. I understand that the new *Hoosier State* has already sold out for several trips since its inaugural run on August 2nd.

Our train arrived around 30 minutes late from the maintenance facility in Beech Grove. Some basic work on the passenger waiting room at IUS would make the wait much more comfortable (e.g., functioning air conditioning, more seating and updated restrooms). Just to keep things interesting, the fire alarm within the IUS waiting room sounded for several minutes, although no one paid much attention to it.

Our experience greatly improved once we boarded the train 851 to Chicago. The train included two coaches and a full length dome car. We settled into our comfortable seats, with plenty of leg room, in the first coach behind the dome car. Shortly after departing Indianapolis, our coach



Diners enjoy breakfast and conversation aboard the *Hoosier State*.

attendant offered us complimentary coffee served in our seats. Nathan enjoyed the complimentary Wi-Fi service.

About 30 minutes outside of Indianapolis, we headed to the dome car for breakfast. Breakfast was served in

the lower level lounge, while the upper level dome was open seating. I understand that the upper level dome will eventually be reserved for first class passengers.

For breakfast, we shared a table with Howard Clark (VP and Chief of Staff of Iowa Pacific) and his son. I understand that representatives of Iowa Pacific management have been travelling onboard initial runs of the new *Hoosier State* to observe operations and survey passengers.

Breakfast selections included: Bagel, Oatmeal, Breakfast Burrito, Cinnamon Roll and Two Eggs cooked to order. I ordered the

Breakfast Burrito, while Nathan had the Cinnamon Roll. Our meals were prepared fresh by the onboard chef. Both of our selections were delicious, economic and served on real china. While new and still learning the ropes, the service attendants were professional, pleasant and eager to please.

After breakfast, we adjourned to the upper level dome to enjoy the scenic views of Indiana farmland. Another service attendant was available to serve beverages to passengers seated in the upper level dome. The Amtrak operating crew worked well with the Iowa Pacific onboard service crew. Although we departed Indianapolis 43 minutes late, our train made up time and we arrived in Chicago Union Station (CUS) only 12 minutes late.

From CUS, Nathan and I walked along Jackson Boulevard to the Red Line CTA station on State Street. We rode the Red Line CTA train to the friendly confines of Wrigley Field to watch the Cubs defeat the San Francisco Giants, 2 to 0. Following the game, we returned to CUS to wait for train 850 and our return trip to Indianapolis. While at CUS, we took a quick look at the new Legacy Club. It is a beautiful venue and I strongly encourage that you check it out the next time you are in Chicago (for additional details see the article on the Legacy Club in this issue of *All Aboard Indiana*).

Hoosier State train 850 departed Chicago on time at 5:45 pm (CT). Shortly after our departure, we were unexpectedly delayed almost 40 minutes on Norfolk Southern tracks. Once cleared to proceed, our train made good progress, making up time the remainder of the trip.

Once outside of Chicago, we walked to the dome car for dinner in the lower level lounge. Dinner selections included Personal Cheese or Pepperoni Pizza, Turkey Club Sandwich, Farm Fresh Salad, Chicken Caprese Panini and Blue Plate Special. Nathan enjoyed the Cheese Pizza, while I had the Blue Plate Special which was a delicious Chicken Breast with Italian Spices and Mushroom Gravy, Rice and California Vegetable Medley.

We spent a good part of the return trip riding in the upper level dome, returning to our coach seats late in evening for the improved Wi-Fi signal. Again, the Amtrak operating crew did an outstanding job operating our train, while the Iowa Pacific service crew was attentive to our needs. We arrived in Indianapolis only 2 minutes late, a fitting end to a great day.

I strongly encourage you to experience the new and improved *Hoosier State*. Daily service to and from Chicago via the *Cardinal* and the *Hoosier State* allows for scheduling flexibility, including day trips and weekend excursions. Amtrak, Iowa Pacific and IN-DOT have created a unique experience here in Indiana.

Bicentennial Train Moves to State Fair for Five Years

By Bill Malcolm



The Indiana Historical Society's Bicentennial Train has moved to the State Fair Grounds, which will be its home through 2019. A historical exhibit of *The Next Indiana* is contained in three, 65-foot

renovated Amtrak freight cars. Nearly 20,000 State Fair visitors toured the train last month. A combined 82,000 Hoosiers have viewed the exhibit in 2013-2014 as the Indiana Bicentennial Train and from 2004 to 2008 as the Indiana History Train.

A truck moved the three train cars in successive nights to the Fair Grounds, placing and welding each car to rails. In addition to public viewings last month, other viewing opportunities are being explored.

For more information, go to www.indianahistory.org. In Site Search, enter "Bicentennial Train."

Indiana celebrates its 200th birthday next year.

Busloads of Purdue University students – a crowd estimated at over 5,000 people -- attended a Greater Lafayette Commerce "bash" in downtown Lafayette on Thursday, August 20, welcoming the students to the twin cities of Lafayette and West Lafayette. Iowa State Holdings' Sales and Marketing Manager Heather Hice manned a booth to promote her companies' new *Hoosier State* train. Two promotional flyers were made available. (Photos courtesy Greater Lafayette Commerce.)



Amtrak's *Crescent* and *Cardinal* Provide "Carless" Atlanta Trip

By Donald Yehle

Atlanta – Always wanting to visit America's 39th largest city, this reporter was given a very special present last month – an afternoon in Atlanta, Amtrak rides on both the *Crescent* and the *Cardinal*, a half-day in beautiful Charlottesville, Virginia, and opportunities to talk with people from the Southern, Eastern, and Midwest United States, plus the District of Columbia.

The three-day adventure was filled with numerous highlights, including incredible scenery, visits to two Atlanta museums, and memorable conversations. There was a lobster on board one of the trains – an environmental biology student from Maine returning to college in West Virginia was carrying a big red lobster pillow in her backpack. A group of passengers bonded and derived the idea that Amtrak should create a promotional calendar, featuring them. Two passengers resolved who should run for president on both the Democratic and Republican tickets in 2016.

A millennial next to me was returning to Lynchburg, South Carolina, following her sister's college graduation. An Amtrak thruway bus brought the individual from Mobile to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and the *Crescent*. She carried a sketch pad with thousands of animated cartoons. Her day job involves pre-fabricating roof trusses and walls. She met her husband – a professional horse trainer who also trims hoofs -- at a Great American Frontier Show.

Both of us listened to some surprising words from an Amtrak passenger rail assistant. Take care of the condition of the bathrooms on board the train -- some of you are traveling to New York City (859 miles from Atlanta). Monitor your children while traveling Amtrak. Frequent the café and dining cars. Sit back, relax, and enjoy the journey, she added. The two bathrooms in our coach were "uncommonly" marked – "women" on one side, "men" on the other side.

Atlanta's Peachtree Train Station is some distance from Olympic Park, site of the 1996 Summer Olympics. Five exciting Atlanta venues are conveniently located next to the park, which was bustling with activity. Venues included the Center for Civil and Human Rights, the Georgia Aquarium, the College Football Hall of Fame (relocated from South Bend), the CNN Tower, and the World of Coca-Cola. (continued)

(*"Amtrak's Crescent and Cardinal"* continued from page 9)

Long lines at Coca-Cola World prompted a visit to the Civil Rights Museum, which didn't disappoint. Guests can go back into a difficult time in America's history by sitting at a 1960-era Woolworth Lunch Counter. Museum-provided headphones are placed over your ears and you can hear what many people experienced at Southern lunch counters many years ago.

The **Crescent**, originating in New Orleans, has 32 stops in 12 states – Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York (plus Washington, D.C.). The Peachtree Station was full when the train arrived on time in Atlanta at 7:35 p.m., allowing for an 8:05 p.m. departure. Clemson, Greenville, Charlotte, High Point, and Greensboro were among our station stops -- mostly in the middle of the night. Occasional passenger noise, the desire to see cities I've never visited (i.e. Charlotte), and the excitement of the trip kept me awake most of the night. At 7:09 a.m., we arrived in Charlottesville, Virginia, my destination, and a special place.

Charlottesville is home to the University of Virginia. America's third, fourth, and fifth presidents – James Monroe, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison – had plantation homes in the Charlottesville area, all of which you can tour. The city boasts an eight-block pedestrian mall with 120 shops, including a boutique-style "cat-lovers" store filled with dozens of purr-fect gifts. Amtrak's Charlottesville station is within walking distance of the university, points of interest, hotels, shopping, and features a quality restaurant directly behind it – just one of 30 downtown eateries.



Charlottesville is a lovely stop for tourists.

Having not slept well, I checked into a downtown Charlottesville hotel at a reduced rate for a few hours rest and to clean up. With the **Cardinal** due in at 1:58 p.m. that Sunday afternoon, there was still time to take the free shuttle to Charlottesville's tourism office, locate a few places to shop, grab a piece of pizza, and indulge in some ice cream.

A conversation with a Philadelphian that night reminded me why I like to ride the rails. "Max" was headed to Chicago and then St. Louis, for the 51st annual Studebaker Driver's Club meeting. He was excited about the possibility of playing his trumpet – a lifetime passion for this career music teacher. It was with Max that presidential politics were debated – and resolved, at least to my satisfaction.

Meal time on train diners are often a treat, as one never knows with whom you'll sit and visit. Sherry and Andy Davies of Noblesville were two such people the final morning of the trip. "Growing up in Westville, New Jersey, I frequently visited the [local] train station for trips to Newark," Andy said.

On this particular weekend, the Davies had already traveled the M.B.T.A. (Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority) -- remember "Charlie who couldn't get off the MTA?" The Amtrak Downeaster took them from Haverhill, Massachusetts, to Boston-North Station. After a transfer to Boston South Station, the couple continued their trip to Washington, D.C., before boarding the **Cardinal** for the 726-mile, 20-stop trip back to Indianapolis.

Three passengers expressed why they prefer trains to planes and automobiles. "I like to de-compress. I enjoy the experience of meeting people (on trains)," said one man. Train travel is "in the budget, a nice mode of transportation," said another, while a single lady chose the train to visit relatives in Cincinnati.

Virginia is exceptionally beautiful. The **Cardinal** takes one through the Shenandoah Valley, across the New River Gorge, through the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains, and into Ohio and Indiana. You also stop at The Greenbrier Resort, in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. Unfortunately, our train was a week too early to catch the defending Super Bowl Champions New England Patriots and the New Orleans Saints holding a joint practice there last month.

Railroad crews came to our rescue outside of Charleston, West Virginia, Daniel Boone's home town and the historic capital. A tree fell across the tracks on that Sunday night, delaying our entry into Charleston and lengthening the trip by about an hour. In this instance, West Virginia's state motto – *Montani semper liberi* – didn't hold true. "Mountaineers are always free" the motto says, but the **Cardinal** and its passengers weren't for that agonizing hour. (*continued*)



(“Amtrak’s Crescent and Cardinal” continued from page 10)

Huntington, West Virginia, was the next stop home. Football fans from Purdue University and Marshall University will flood the downtown stadium there on Sunday, September 6, for a rare Sunday college football game, which will be na-

tionally televised. Amtrak’s *Cardinal* is prepared to take fans from Chicago and across Indiana to the game, leaving on Saturday night, September 5. The train’s schedule has the *Cardinal* pulling into Huntington Sunday morning at 7:09 a.m. Fans can tailgate, catch the afternoon football contest, and return to Indiana later that Sunday night.

The Purdue Alumni Association found the football trip by train interesting. The information is being kept available should anyone ask, but Purdue can’t “push it (the train trip idea) out from here because it would be advertisement for Amtrak and since we sell advertising opportunities we would have some customers wondering how they could get the same deal,” said Chad Johnson, Purdue’s vice president of Engagement and Alumni Outreach.

While my trip was Atlanta to Indiana changing trains in Charlottesville, you can do the trip in reverse. Take the *Cardinal* from any of Indiana’s six station stops on a Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday night. Arrive in Charlottesville the next afternoon at 3:10 p.m. Sightsee, shop, and dine in Charlottesville until the *Crescent* arrives a little more than five hours later. The next morning, at 8:13 a.m., you’ll find yourself in Atlanta in time to be first in line at the World of Coca Cola.

Rail Travel an Option During I-65 Closure

By Bill Malcolm

The recent closure of I-65 until September due to a bridge problem near Lafayette underscores the vital role passenger rail can play in providing travelers from Indianapolis an alternative to car or bus travel to Chicago.

With air fares to Chicago now running as high as \$300 one way to Chicago’s O’Hare airport, travelers often forget they have a rail option when going to the Windy City rather than fighting the traffic (and now closures) on I-65 (not to mention the high cost of parking in Chicago).

Service on the rail route has recently been improved.

The 4 day a week Hoosier State train to Chicago is now operated by a new company, Iowa Pacific, which has upgraded the service to include a dome car, meal service, WiFi, and more. The 3 day a week Amtrak Cardinal service also offers meal service plus a sleeper car option as well.

All trains leave Chicago’s Union Station daily at 5:45 p.m. and Indy at 6 a.m.

Trains leave from Indy’s bus rail station at 300 South Illinois.

Tickets can be purchased at www.amtrak.com. Fares from \$24.

While the departure time is a tad early and the trip run time is a tad too long, the one hour delays caused by the detour of the I-65 bridge closure makes rail a competitive option. Plus rail travel is more conducive to getting work done or reading since the seating is more spacious.



Editor’s Note: The above opinion-editorial appeared in two newspapers last month – the *Journal and Courier* of Lafayette and *The Times of Northwest Indiana*. The Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA) submitted it to these newspapers in an effort to build ridership on Indiana’s new *Hoosier State* and the *Cardinal*. Please feel free to submit this letter to other media contacts (radio, television, or print), including with it the name and contact information for IPRA as well as your own personal contact information. Thank you.

Any member with an idea to push our rail advocacy program should contact President Steve Coxhead at scoxhead@comcast.net

Bullets from the Board

By Steve Coxhead, President, IPRA

- The August Board meeting was held at the offices of Faegre, Baker, Daniels, LLC, in downtown Indianapolis, on Saturday, 8/15/15. Several Board members met for lunch, afterwards.
- It was decided to continue our membership in the Indiana Chamber of Commerce. The sense of the Board was that nudging the Chamber to a position supportive of our efforts would be a multi-year effort.
- In an effort to network with other like-minded organizations, which could be supportive of our work, it was decided to join the Rail Users Network (RUN), a national advocacy organization, as an organizational member. It was thought that membership in RUN would complement our loose connection with the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP).
- Our Membership Chair, Ted Wetekamp, will be relocating to Texas in a job-related move. We will, therefore, need to recruit a new Chair for the Membership Committee. Any interested parties should contact any Board member.
- It was noted that the most important thing IPRA can do to maintain momentum on the "Hoosier State" project is to help to build ridership, thus reducing the amount of State support per passenger. Iowa Pacific is vigorously promoting ridership through its "Hoosier State" marketing representative.
- The annual Fall meeting of the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) will be held in Indianapolis 10/16/15 thru 10/18/15. All IPRA members and friends are encouraged to attend. Information can be found at www.narprail.org.
- The September Board meeting will be on Thursday, September 17, at the Baker Street Station, in Fort Wayne.
- The October Board meeting will be on Thursday, October 8, in Lafayette.
- IPRA members and friends are encouraged to attend Board meetings. For information, watch the website, the newsletter, or send inquiries to info@indianahighspeedrail.org.
- We continue to support the Northeast Indiana Passenger Rail Association (NIPRA) in their quest to obtain funding for a Tier 1, Environmental Impact Study (EIS), for their pro-

posed Chicago-Fort Wayne-Columbus service.

- A meeting to explore the possibility of Muncie-Anderson-Indianapolis commuter rail service will be held on 9/10/15.

Remember to send questions, comments and ideas to info@indianahighspeedrail.org!

State Business Publication Carries Passenger Rail Plea

Dennis Hodges, IPRA's vice president of business relations, wrote an opinion piece in support of passenger rail that was published last month in *Inside Indiana Business*. See below.

<http://www.insideindianabusiness.com/story/29879364/passenger-rail-can-add-to-indianas-economic-and-employment-growth>

Priority Boarding Offered by Union Station's New Legacy Club

By Joe Krause and Bill Malcolm

The new Legacy Club has opened at Chicago's Union Station, just south of the Great Hall. Formerly used as a part time art gallery in the station (and briefly as a first class waiting area over Christmas last year), the historic facility is well-furnished and a pleasant treat for weary travelers.

For \$20, any transit or train passenger can use the lounge. At no additional charge – other than the \$20 fee – one has WiFi access, very comfortable chairs, relatively quiet television monitors, and helpful assistance for passengers.

Additionally, there's complimentary hot and cold beverages, nutritious snacks, and up-to-date magazines in a luxurious Art Deco-themed historic setting. Indeed, part of the area was once an art deco-era barber shop, which you can see today and which was widely used by many passengers in the days of greater train travel. *(continued)*



Amtrak passenger James Burns relaxes in the Legacy Club.

(*"Priority Boarding"* continued from page 12) Best of all, patrons are offered priority boarding on all Amtrak trains. Satellite TV is available, as are charging stations

for your electronic devices. Persons waiting in the Legacy Club are given passes to move freely in and out of the lounge to get meals from various food vendors in the Food Court, upstairs in Union Station.

You can help fund the new Legacy Club in the Great Hall.

Speaking of which, new restrooms are also open on weekdays. Relief has come for the current, crowded situation vis-à-vis a shortage of rest rooms in Chicago Union Station.

The Legacy Club is operated by Chicago Union Station itself (not Amtrak) so all travelers may use the Club. It's great if you have a significant layover in Chicago. This includes Metra users as well as those waiting for a Greyhound connecting bus.

Current Status of Riehle Depot and Amtrak Platform in Lafayette

By Joe Krause

As of August 10, Amtrak passengers have been able to use the repaired Riehle Plaza bridge over the three railroad tracks and the new elevators installed in the towers which flank the tracks.

The City Bus shuttle worked successfully for over six weeks, taking morning and evening passengers to the west end of the John T. Myers Bridge and waiting for passengers alighting (getting off) the **Cardinal** or the **Hoosier State**. City Bus (Greater Lafayette Transportation Corporation) management, dispatchers, and drivers cooperated in providing safe, efficient and courteous shuttling of passengers over the Wabash River so they could re-cross the

river and get to the AMTRAK platform ... and returning passengers who got off the train to the Lafayette side. As of August 28, work on the John T. Myers Bridge over the Wabash River is slated to be finished. That will permit persons to walk across the river from West Lafayette directly to a ramp down to the platform or Wabash Heritage Trail. Or they can take the West tower elevator from the 2nd to 1st floor (platform level).

Work continues intermittently in and around the Riehle Depot itself. There have been "guesstimates" that the Depot will not be open until the end of the year. As reported earlier, major renovation is taking place in and around the Depot itself.

The AMTRAK QUIK-TRAK ticket machine, currently located in the lobby of City Bus Transfer Center on 3rd street has not been in service for several weeks. Volunteers have simply been informing the conductors that the machine is not available. AMTRAK officials have been contacted several times, but the machine remains "Out of Service."

For More Information

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

To learn more about IPRA, visit www.indianahighspeedrail.org or contact us at

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Note: This group is not affiliated with Amtrak, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation.

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.

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Priority Boarding Available at Chicago Union Station in the Legacy Club

Open Daily from 9:00 a.m – 9:00 p.m.

Priority boarding is now available at Chicago Union Station for an introductory price of \$10, offering access to Amtrak trains ahead of general boarding.

The priority boarding fee includes access to the Legacy Club located in the southwest corner of the Great Hall where coach passengers, commuters and others can enjoy a quiet, comfortable atmosphere to wait for trains or unwind after traveling. The Legacy Club features include:

- Priority boarding for all Amtrak trains
- Complimentary Wi-Fi and charging stations
- Comfortable, quiet lounge seating
- Train status displays
- Complimentary refreshments
- Satellite TV



The Legacy Club is open daily from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. Daily access passes are available at an introductory price of \$10 through July 31, 2015, and \$20 starting August 1.

For more information, speak with a uniformed Amtrak employee at Chicago Union Station or stop by the Amtrak kiosk in the Great Hall.

Sleeping car passengers, Business class and Amtrak Guest Rewards Plus and Select Executive members will continue to have complimentary access to the Metropolitan Lounge in the Concourse level of the station.

Thank you for traveling with Amtrak. Reservations and information are available at Amtrak.com, our free mobile apps and at 1-800-USA-RAIL (1-800-872-7245).

