

What It Takes To Run a Passenger Train

By Arvid Olson, Greater Lafayette Commerce



The 'buzz' over the introduction of the new *Hoosier State* train has rightly centered on the many amenities of the train's consist. Comments on social media about the wonderful food, the dome car, and friendliness of the Amtrak and Iowa Pacific crews are very encouraging. With the October introduction of a 4th passenger car (the completely rebuilt *Durant*) the train will be able to carry up to 184 passengers in comfort between Indianapolis and Chicago.

This might be a good time to pause for a moment in appreciation of the hard work that went into the introduction of this innovative rail service.

Understanding what goes into a multi-part agreement that permits a third party carrier to use Amtrak employees to operate a regularly scheduled passenger train over track owned by six or so parties in two states is a very complex undertaking.

Shortly after the agreements were signed by all parties in late July, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) posted the documents on the state's website to allow interested individuals to better understand the detail and complexity of this unique arrangement.

There are three documents of note on the website (<http://www.in.gov/indot/3200.htm>):

- First is the landmark agreement that created a public funding structure to support the *Hoosier State*. This was crafted to address Congress' decision to end federal support for the *Hoosier State* and other Amtrak routes of less than 750 miles effective October 2013. At that time, the state of Indiana partnered with on-line local governments to fund *Hoosier State* operating and capital costs not covered with ticket revenue. Initially INDOT anticipates paying a total of \$254,527 per month and the communities of Crawfordsville, Lafayette, Rensselaer, Tippecanoe County and West Lafayette would pay a combined \$21,194 per month. The communities that are contributing funding have a vested interest in improving performance and ensuring accountability for the tax dollars being invested.
- Second is the 65-page agreement between the state of Indiana (via INDOT) and Iowa Pacific Holdings. Iowa Pacific was selected as the state's contractor to provide the train equipment, train maintenance, marketing, and food and beverage service. Iowa Pacific is one of the world's premier private providers of passenger and excursion trains with services in Colorado, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon, Texas, and other (*continued*)

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("What It Takes To Run a Passenger Train" continued from page 1) states. Indiana's contract continues through June 30, 2017, and INDOT may prolong the service with Iowa Pacific for up to four additional years.

- Lastly is the document that outlines the responsibilities of Amtrak in the continued operation of the *Hoosier State*. Formally, Amtrak serves as the operator for the *Hoosier State*, working with host railroads, providing train and engine crews, and managing ticketing and reservations. The train continues to be operated by experienced and well-trained Amtrak crews responsible for safe operations. Amtrak eTickets, paper tickets and reservations continue to be issued.

Time will tell regarding the workability of this unique set of agreements. The stakeholder communities are closely watching to determine the long-term viability of their support of passenger rail in Western Indiana. INDOT is ensuring the daily management of the rail service through their multi-modal department. And Amtrak and Iowa Pacific are dedicated to ensuring the safe movement of passengers between Indianapolis and Chicago. Anecdotal comments to date indicate that Indiana's little train is winning new converts daily to the passenger rail community.

If you haven't scheduled your trip on the new *Hoosier State* yet, times-a-wastin'. You can reserve your seats at www.amtrak.com or at <https://www.hoosierstatetrain.com/>.

See you in the diner!

History, Next Steps Detailed by Ft. Wayne Rail Advocates

By Dorothy Hagan, Planner, City of Fort Wayne

Indiana has been active in passenger rail development since signing as one of the original members of the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI) in 1995. Citizens of Fort Wayne became involved in the initiative to bring passenger rail back to their city in early 2000, when Dekalb County, Waterloo and Auburn representatives serving on the Northeastern Indiana Regional Coordinating Council (NIRRC), the local Metropolitan Planning Organizations¹ (MPO), expressed that their communities did not like the rail stop in Waterloo and requested the route return to Fort Wayne.

After hearing this, local NIRRC representatives, including Geoff Paddock – a current Fort Wayne City Councilman -- decided to step up efforts for bringing passenger rail back

to Fort Wayne. (Paddock was originally Governor Evan Bayh's appointee to the NIRRC Board, and he was reappointed by the late Governor Frank O'Bannon.)

Paddock and other NIRRC representatives approached both Governor O'Bannon and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) for assistance with this initiative. In 2002, INDOT, the Ohio Rail Development Commission and Amtrak, jointly sponsored the routing study, which was named the Northern Indiana/Northwestern Ohio Routing Study. The result was Fort Wayne being selected as an intermediary stop on a proposed high-speed rail line between Chicago and Cleveland. This more Southern Route Eastward was chosen as part of the final Midwest Regional Rail System plan adopted in 2004.

Unfortunately for Fort Wayne, political push back arose from South Bend statehouse representatives, who also wanted this high speed passenger rail stop. These political pressures resulted in no line being officially promoted by the State of Indiana, and with the economy failing in 2007, discussions of any passenger rail expansions weakened, as government at all levels struggled to just meet basic needs.



The Chicago-Fort Wayne-Columbus Corridor is a unique rail initiative because it has developed from the bottom up rather than the more traditional top down approach. Cities and local communities along the route have led the effort in promoting and fundraising for the business analysis and EIS studies. Rail

development has traditionally been spearheaded at the state level; with the federal government approached later for assistance. Traditionally, local governments may have money in station development but have rarely been involved at the onset of the effort.

This bottom up approach has both benefits (continued)

("History, Next Steps..." continued from page 2) and risks. The main benefit is the broad base of support for the corridor developed even before seeking state or federal money. With already hundreds of supportive fans, including many businesses and educational institutions, higher level government officials take notice and are compelled to give their support.

The risk of this approach could happen during the federal government required EIS process as the current method analyzes the environmental impact of new routes between two designated endpoints. This method could impact all of the projected "passenger rail stop" communities along the Chicago-Fort Wayne-Columbus Corridor, who have already funded or committed to funding this particular route. The traditional analysis may need to be altered to allow for the stops within these communities.

Meetings throughout the corridor have been instrumental in keeping the process moving and holding all the partners accountable. These meetings also ensure that the partners maintain a consistent and productive message about the project and that the leaders of the impacted communities are up-to-date on all accomplishments.

These meetings have been a platform for discussing topics including the establishment of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed by all cities with stops on the proposed corridor, fundraising strategies, and tactics for creating a larger network of supporters. To date, close to \$500,000 has been collected from partner agencies for this effort.

Future work needed includes decisions on a management entity for the corridor itself, discussions on project oversight of the Tier 1 EIS, financing decisions, and even the naming of the Corridor. Recent discussions with corridor partners have produced a recommendation that federal and state government representatives from along the corridor also be invited to participate in future meetings.

The next step is to meet with our Indiana partners and discuss strategies for moving forward – such as using the monies collected for needed track upgrades. After the partners grant approval, NIPRA and the City of Fort Wayne would request meetings with the FRA and determine what they would require if we approached the rail owners about upgrading their tracks with the money collected from our partners communities.

Soon after the FRA discussion occurs, NIPRA and the City will seek meetings with INDOT, Amtrak and Iowa Pacific to discuss developing an arrangement similar to the Hoosier State Corridor operations.

October Board Meeting Switched to October 8

An "open" board meeting of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance is set for Thursday, October 8, at the Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Originally, the meeting was scheduled for Saturday, October 10, but was switched due to a Purdue University home football contest and to come prior to the National Association of Railroad Passengers' fall conference in Indianapolis, October 16-18.

Board members and other passenger rail advocates are invited and encouraged to attend in person; however, if you are unable to do so, the "Dial In Number" is 712-832-8330. The Access Code is 3843776.

The Greater Lafayette Commerce is located at 337 Columbia St., on the Courthouse Square in downtown Lafayette.

Three Hoosiers in St. Paul for Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission Meeting

By Fred Lanahan

Last month, I attended the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission (MIPRC) annual meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota. State Representative Randy Truitt of Lafayette and Ms. Katie England of the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) also attended from Indiana. MIPRIC commissioners, partners and allies from nine Midwest states attended the conference at the beautifully restored St. Paul Union Depot in downtown St. Paul, Minnesota.

I took Amtrak from Waterloo, Indiana, to Chicago and there joined a contingent of others taking the Amtrak **Empire Builder** passenger train to St. Paul. On the train we had presentations by Ray Lang of Amtrak on passenger rail services and Dan Krom of Minnesota Department of Transportation on their efforts to add a second Empire Builder train from St. Paul to Chicago, Illinois.

At the conference, we had presentations and updates from each state delegation represented. We were urged to contact our members of Congress to support a long term federal transportation bill that must include solid funding for Amtrak and passenger rail. We were also asked to contact our members of Congress *(continued)*

("Lanahan in St. Paul for MIPRC Meeting" continued from page 3) and Senators to ask for a delay in the institution of the federal Positive Train Control (PTC) mandate as most major freight railroads will not meet it and Amtrak cannot run on those freight owned lines that have not implemented PTC after the end of this calendar year.

The Federal Rail Administration (FRA) sent representatives to the conference and they spoke on their plans to provide leadership on new Midwest Passenger Rail planning with MIPRC and the state DOT's in the Midwest. However, details are not fully clear yet. The FRA staff gave a presentation on their "Connect process" for evaluating the viability of passenger rail plans and proposals.

We were also treated to a ride on the new light rail system connecting downtown St. Paul with Minneapolis and the suburbs. It is a wonderful system with strong ridership providing, in our case, a direct connection between center cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis. All of us were very impressed with this system that uses light rail as the spine and buses as feeders to those light rail lines.

Tracks and People Wait Patiently for Commuter Line

By Rick Yencer, activist and author of *Muncie IN 150*

INDIANAPOLIS, IN - The tracks are there and so are the people to offer passenger rail service between Indianapolis and Muncie.

So are preliminary studies and the ready means to make a Cardinal Red Line happen on CSX rail lines near the Interstate 69 corridor.

As Addison Pollock, who coordinates the Indiana Citizens Alliance for Transit, says, "Ultimately, it comes down to the fiscal governing body in each county to call the question for the proposal to be put on the ballot."

That proposal would be a referendum to raise income taxes to fund the passenger rail service estimated to cost \$155 million in 2013, based on commuter rail feasibility studies done recently.

Pollock and other stakeholders in passenger rail met in September at the offices of the Hoosier Environmental Council to discuss the status of service. Among them were Jerrold Bridges, who directs the Madison County Council of Governments, and Steve Coxhead, president of Indiana

Passenger Rail Alliance.

Pollock said no timetable had been set for referendums in Marion and Hamilton counties. And there's been little discussion in Madison and Delaware counties about a transit referendum, although mayors in Muncie and Anderson support passenger rail service.

Indy Go bus system has looked at various tax proposals to increase ridership and streamline bus service. And Hamilton County partners continue to study different transit networks to service their communities.

Pollock and other stakeholders said a Green Line service was being considered to connect Indianapolis with Noblesville and Greenwood.

Coxhead talked about the European model of passenger rail that was clean, efficient and comfortable which should be among talking points to convince taxpayers to fund the service.

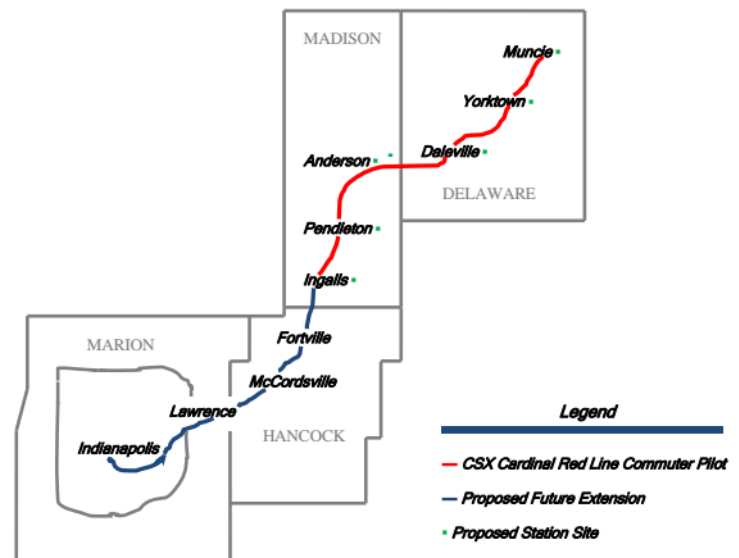
Northwest Indiana has passenger rail from Chicago to Hammond and east to South Bend. And Amtrak still serves Indianapolis, Lafayette, Fort Wayne (via Waterloo) and Hammond. *(continued)*

PROPOSED CSX CARDINAL ROUTE MAP

CSX CARDINAL RED LINE

Proposed Station Sites

- 1 Ingalls
- 2 Pendleton
- 3 Anderson
- 4 Chesterfield
- 5 Daleville
- 6 Yorktown
- 7 Muncie



("Tracks and People Wait" continued from page 4) Bridges said approval of passenger rail funding would take a change of culture, and stakeholders realized supporters had to include government leaders who would ultimately support the referendum.

"What we all want is a better movement of people," said Bridges.

Motorists know how traffic can be on Interstate 69 with the road being repaved between Indianapolis and Muncie this summer. And congestion on the 69 corridor between Indy and Noblesville continues despite building traffic lanes.

John Rouse, a Ball State University professor, said the key-word for passenger rail service was "sustainable" with a rail bed already in place and passengers needing transportation.

Another talking point discussed by stakeholders was getting millennials to support and use passenger rail as an alternative to automobiles. The Indiana Chamber of Commerce also supports the initiative and stakeholders plan to reach out to business and government leaders again in 2016.

*Rick Yencer is an activist and author of the new book **Muncie IN 150**, which offers a view for those here and there to a community in the Midwest that always puts quality of life and place before crime and poverty. The book is available now from Xlibris at www.xlibris.com.*

Bullets from the Board

By Steve Coxhead, IPRA President

The September Board meeting was held on Thursday, 9/17/15, at the historic Baker Street Station, in downtown Fort Wayne. Highlights of the meeting included the following:

- Long time Board members Steve Cecil and Mark Dobson have stepped down, Steve due to a desire to focus closer to home, and Mark due to a conflict with his new job at the Elkhart County Economic Development agency. We wish them both well and are grateful for their long time service to IPRA.
- The **Hoosier State** is off to a good start (August performance was reviewed), with the train often selling out. Remember that the most important thing we can do right now to support the train is to build ridership.
- Board member Doug Yerkson was interviewed recently by Fox News, in Indianapolis, concerning the link between **Hoosier State** funding and Governor Pence's tax amnesty program.
- The idea of operating the **Hoosier State** out of LaSalle Street Station in Chicago was discussed. Board member Bob Garity volunteered to chair a committee to develop information on the concept.
- The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has funding for passenger rail planning in the Midwest. Both the NIPRA plan for Chicago-Fort Wayne-Columbus service, and planning for enhanced Chicago-Cincinnati service could be included in the FRA planning effort. The Midwest Interstate Rail Planning Commission (MIRPC) will be involved with the FRA.
- Station construction continues in Lafayette, much to the inconvenience of riders.
- East Central Indiana interest in commuter rail in the Muncie-Anderson-Indianapolis corridor continues and was discussed.
- Board member and Membership Committee Chair Ted Wetekamp will be relocating to Texas in connection with his job. We therefore need a replacement for Membership Chair from among our in-state members. Those who are interested should contact any Board member or send an e-mail to info@indianahighspeedrail.org.
- Rick Harnish of the Midwest High Speed Rail Association (MWHsRA) gave the Board an overview of developments in Illinois and how the on-going budget problems in our neighboring state could affect their plans for passenger rail development.
- In news from the wider world, it was noted that construction on the "Express West" route linking Los Angeles and Las Vegas will begin in 2016.

Join NARP's Fight To Eliminate Dining Car Cost-Cutting Moves

Courtesy of National Association of Railroad Passengers

When NARP Chairman Robert Stewart wrote about his experience riding on the Silver Star following Amtrak's decision to eliminate the Dining Car on the train as a cost-cutting measure, you let us know that you agreed this move is bad for passengers. Much like the Silver Star passengers that our chairman spoke to, NARP members wrote in to say how disappointed they were.

The fact of the matter is: when dining amenities on a long haul train are gutted, normally high revenue sleeping cars generate less income, dragging both the fiscal and customer service performance of the entire train into a downward *(continued)*



NARP's Jim Mathews displays an insulated bag.

("Join NARP's Fight" continued from page 5) spiral. This becomes a problem not just for every person who rides the train, but also for the communities the trains serve.

NARP is asking members to help spread the mes-

sage: America's passengers deserve better, through our "Donate For Dining Cars" campaign. When you purchase an insulated Dining Car food bag, it will not only support NARP's work to build a passenger-focused passenger rail network, but helps us get the message to Congress that micromanagement of the nation's passenger railway, such as eliminating Dining Cars on long-haul rail service, is not the way to go.

Thanks to your donations, NARP has been successful with its efforts on Capitol Hill and around the country. You can pay \$50 for one bag or \$75 for two bags -- one to you and one to a member of your congressional delegation. Your purchase does two things -- send a message to Congress on keeping Dining Cars in place and continue to fund NARP advocacy efforts. We appreciate your support.

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

By Donald Yehle

Council members of the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) will be making their way to Indianapolis this month for the association's annual fall council and membership meeting. **The cry will be for 'A Connected America' – but what does that mean?**

Write this down, memorize it, and tell public officials, especially those in Washington, D.C., the following:

Incorporate intercity passenger rail into the nation's transportation system.

Put modern passenger rail service within 25 miles of 80 percent of Americans in 25 years.

Speakers on Saturday, October 17, will address the

above two points.

You will learn that assured, multi-year federal funding will allow state and local governments, railroads, and Amtrak to make critical investments to do the following:

- **Acquire new, state-of-the-art locomotives and cars**
- **Eliminate critical bottlenecks such as exists along the Detroit-Chicago railroad corridor**
- **Increase the capacity and capability of the nation's railroad infrastructure.**

None of this is particularly new or earth-shattering. Since the 1950s, America has been pouring Federal, state, and local dollars into the nationwide U.S. Interstate Highway System and into the nation's airports. America's railroads have been largely ignored. What funding they receive is inappropriately dubbed a "subsidy."

NARP invites you and other passenger rail advocates to Indianapolis on October 16-17-18. If you're not a NARP member please consider joining.

All advocates are welcome (members & non-members) to attend on Saturday, October 17 for the "A Connected America Advocacy and Learning Day," scheduled from 8:00am to 5:00pm at the Crowne Plaza at Union Station Hotel in downtown Indianapolis. Speakers, presentations, and panel discussions are planned. Breakfast, lunch and breaks are included.

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. (Five spaces remain; see related story.)
- \$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
- \$95**, Saturday only – "Connected America Advocacy and Learning Day" - open to all interested persons
- \$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.

(continued)

("NARP's Fall Meeting" continued from page 6)

Complete agenda information—including confirmed speakers and presenters—and a link to registration can be found on the [NARP 2015 Fall Meeting web page](#).

If you have any questions, please contact NARP's Director of Special Events Bruce Becker at bbecker@narprail.org or 716-880-7271. Becker is a former NARP Board member and a special events professional.

Beech Grove Tour Offers Rare Behind-the-Scenes Opportunity

Courtesy of National Association of Railroad Passengers

[The members-only NARP tour of Amtrak's Beech Grove Maintenance Facility on Friday, October 16] is rare opportunity to see the inner workings of Amtrak's principal diesel locomotive & car fleet repair and heavy overhaul shop. In addition, we will have the opportunity to tour one of the stored Talgo Trainsets (originally intended for Hiawatha Service) which is currently at Beech Grove.

The agenda for the tour is:

- Tour Check-In Table - 8:00am - 8:45am - Crowne Plaza Main Lobby - You will receive your meeting nametag at Check-In
- Bus Boarding - 8:45am - Crown Plaza Front Entrance on Louisiana Street
- Buses Depart Crowne Plaza - 9:00am SHARP
- Beech Grove Tour, Including Lunch
- Bus Re-Boarding - ~1:45pm
- Buses Depart Beech Grove - 2:00pm
- Buses Return To Crowne Plaza - ~2:30pm

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- **Advance registration is REQUIRED!** As of today, there are ONLY 5 available seats remaining for the

tour! If you know of other NARP members who may want to participate, they should register ASAP!

- All tour participants must take the bus from the hotel. **Individuals cannot drive to Beech Grove on their own.**
- **Tour Dress Requirements:** All tour participants must wear appropriate closed-toe, sturdy footwear! For your safety, high heels, sandals, flip-flops, etc. are NOT permitted. Many areas of the facility are unheated. The tour will be both outside and inside of the buildings. Please be prepared to dress according to the weather conditions that day, including for rain if necessary.
- **Hard hats and safety glasses** will be provided by Amtrak to all tour participants. These safety items must be worn at all times while on the tour. A safety briefing will be held by the Amtrak staff prior to commencing the tour. We will be in active, working, sections of the facility. Please pay attention to your surroundings, particularly where you are stepping!
- **Tour will require walking approximately 1.5 miles** on uneven, rough surfaces; both indoors and outside. The ability to board train cars without assistance will be required for some aspects of the tour. The tour is not ADA accessible!
- **A box lunch is included.** The lunch sandwich selections will be either turkey or a vegetarian option. Water stations will be available during the tour.
- **Photos will be permitted**, but please be safe at all times when taking pictures.

If you have any immediate questions or concerns please contact me at [716-880-7291](tel:716-880-7291) or bbecker@narprail.org

See you in Indianapolis....

Ridership from Lafayette Averaging 18 Every Day

By Joe Krause

Average ridership on the *Hoosier State* (number of passengers getting on in Lafayette) is about 18 a day. Indianapolis is putting on nearly 40 a day. I do not know about Crawfordsville or Rensselaer. The Sunday of Labor Day weekend (September 6) had a nearly full *Hoosier State*, the only one seen so far.

As for the station (lobby and ticket machine) there is little good news. *(continued)*



("Ridership from Lafayette" continued)

1.) The ticket machine, inconveniently placed a block away at the City Bus Transfer Center, is finally operating again (after weeks of being "down"). The ticket machine is accessible only briefly before the morning train since the City Bus Transfer Center opens at 7:00 a.m. with a 7:36 scheduled arrival of the *Cardinal* or *Hoosier State*. The Transfer Center is open after 10 a.m. on Saturdays (our busiest travel day) and not open at all on Sundays.

We volunteers (Julius Walker and I) have simply been telling the conductors that the ticket machine is not practically available. The only passengers who can be helped by it are those who come on a previous weekday or appropriate time on a Saturday and get the tickets for FUTURE travel. The Saturday hours for the City Bus Transfer Center are from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Weekdays the hours are 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

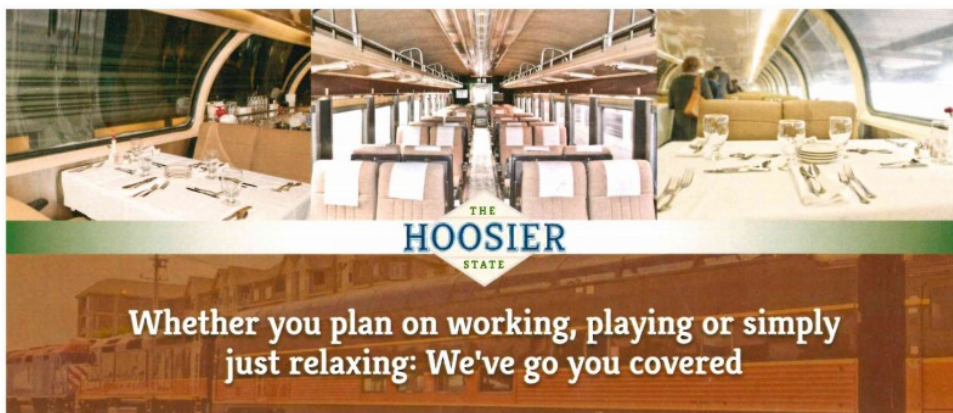
2.) Repair and renovation of the station seems sporadic, with days of activity followed by more days of nothing seeming to happen. Estimates are that the waiting room, lobby, ticket machine will not be available until "the first of the year." Happy New Year!! Recently, brick pavers next to the elevators have been removed. Now passengers walk onto two large plywood panels to get to the 2nd floor entrance, to the east side elevator.

3.) As for the Myers Bridge over the Wabash River (scheduled to be opened August 28, then mid-September, now latest—October 20), there have been railings put up and then removed.

Civility in Transportation

By Dennis Hodges, IPRA Vice-President of Business Relations

Highways and cars are all good things to a point. But with added construction and reconstruction of highway infrastructures, the attitude of drivers is not always a positive one. Congestion, missed or late appointments, accidents, construction zones, and not being adequately prepared for what was planned at the driver's destination can convolute and diminish both his or her attitudes and cause a serious malfunction in their emotional profile.



The Rail Advantage

- Free Wifi
- Power Outlets at each seat
- Comfortable reclining seats
- Pass through charming communities and beautiful Indiana country

Stay tuned and spread the word



/HoosierTrain



@HoosierTrain



/premiertrails



/PremierRails/
hoosier-train/

People may love their cars, but do they actually like driving them? Any mishap on the highway can toss out all disciplines in anger management and prepare the person for the worst possible outcome at the end of the journey. Nothing seems to go right after that.

By and large, commuters on the South Shore railroad are happier and more productive. They are more relaxed, perhaps having taken the commute to better prepare for an assignment or work product. The same is true of intercity travel.

Modern, efficient and comfortable 21st century passenger trains can add measurably to a person's positive attitudes and make him or her a happier and more productive person. They will also add to the state and local economies.

Many of our lives are stressful from the time we get up to the time we go to bed. *Stress in travel can exacerbate all that is going on in a person's life and create serious problems on the road. In fact, a certain amount of stress or personal distraction on the highway can lead to an accident.*

Reliable passenger rail travel is an option to all who drive or even fly. This is among the reasons why Indiana needs to consider adding passenger rail to its transportation mix and policy. *Cars and highways will always be with us, as will airports and airlines. That is not going to change, but efficient and timely passenger rail should also be a part of our transportation profile.* Doing so will add measurably to reducing our civility issues and add to our personal and corporate self-esteem and attitude towards others. *(continued)*

("Civility in Transportation" continued from page 8)

Businesses are clamoring for efficiencies all the time, but often ignore the corporate travel issues. Would it not be nice to take a train to Indianapolis or Fort Wayne or Detroit in the morning, arrive refreshed and energetic, meet with your business partners during the day and return home later in the day?

At the IRS recommended fifty-one cents per mile for car travel, plus other car related expenses, travel anywhere can be very expensive for a company. The same is true for airlines. There are additional costs when flying, and they are significant. With timely and efficient passenger rail, those costs would diminish measurably and the time on the train for the traveler would be so much more efficient and productive.

Let us then have a serious discussion about passenger rail. The Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance is here to help in that regard. For additional information, please contact me at dennis@indianahighspeedrail.org or 219-979-8289.

W. Dennis Hodges is the founder of the Indiana High Speed Rail Association, now the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance, and its vice president of business relations. He lives in Gary. The above story was written for The Times newspaper in NWI, which has initiated a Civility in Society campaign.

Proposed Amtrak Funding Cuts in Illinois Being Fought

By Dylan Hayward, Midwest High Speed Rail Association

The Midwest High Speed Rail Association (MHSRA) has been active in energizing the public and informing politicians of the risks associated with proposed cuts to Amtrak funding in Illinois.

As part of a bigger fight over the FY2016 budget, Governor Rauner proposed cutting Amtrak funding by 40%. It appears that Governor Rauner misunderstood the requirement of PRIIA that shifted funding responsibility from the federal government to the states. PRIIA had increased the state share from \$26 million a year to \$42 million a year. The governor proposed returning the budget to \$26 million.

MHSRA educated local leaders about the impact this cut would have on their communities. It would result in more than a 50% reduction in service levels because Amtrak's capital costs would have to be spread over fewer trains.

On July 28th, a coalition of mayors, legislators, universities,

chambers of commerce and other key members of downstate communities held a press conference; with the important message that proposed cuts would devastate Amtrak communities statewide and that trains are a vital component of the life and economic development of Illinois. A letter from this coalition was also sent to the Governor's office to ask that Amtrak service not be cut in their communities.

FY2016 began on July 1st. Three months later the overall impasse continues and the state does not have an operating budget.

The efforts of the local leaders have drawn increased attention for the need for continued Amtrak funding and renewed public support for the service. No final decisions have been made but we are confident this issue will be resolved without the loss of service.

Riding the Rails

By Donald Yehle

TOLEDO, OHIO – Retirement at Age 65 isn't an option for the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Plaza in South Toledo. A telegraph operator was among those on hand last month for the 65th anniversary of Central Union Terminal there, which opened in September, 1950, and continues to serve Amtrak's *Capitol Limited* and the *Lake Shore Limited*. Both of those trains travel through Indiana.

CHICAGO – A Toronto, Canada, transportation leader visits Chicago November 13 as a guest of the Midwest High Speed Rail Association. Kathy Haley, president of the Union Pearson Express (UP Express), will talk about her company's service which is an excellent model for Chicago's O'Hare "planned" express train. The Toronto train connects Pearson International Airport with Toronto Union Station, offering riders level boarding and large luggage racks. One million passengers are projected to ride the train, which is diverting 1.2 million car trips in its first year.

NEW BUFFALO, MICHIGAN – If you're looking for a rail-related adventure over Columbus Day weekend, consider traveling to New Buffalo for a doorstep to doorstep guided historical walking tour, Friday and Saturday, October 9th and 10th! New Buffalo Railroad Museum tour conductors will guide groups along a leisurely stroll of New Buffalo, showcasing historical points of interest and bringing the past to life by relating the tales of ancestors who contributed to the City. *(continued)*

("Riding the Rails: New Buffalo, MI" continued from page 9)

Learn where the first doctor's house still stands, which building housed the Michigan Bell phone operators and how large fires changed the landscape of the Downtown corridor. The narrative excursion encompasses historical sites designated by New Buffalo's Historical Plaques, installed during the Sesquicentennial in 1986, and uncovers other interesting places with a story to tell. Participants can follow along with their own Doorstep To Doorstep tour map recapping all of the remarkable anecdotes illustrated with before and after, historic to current, photos.

The one hour circular tour will begin and return at the Museum site located at 530 S. Whittaker, New Buffalo. The group outings will depart on Friday and Saturday at 10 am, 12 pm, 2 pm and 4 pm. The walked distance will be approximately 1.5 miles. Group size will be limited to enhance the intimacy of the experience. Walk-in participants will be added on a first-in-line, first-served basis after accommodating reserved groups. A suggested donation of \$10 is appreciated. Reservations can be made at the New Buffalo Railroad Museum ([\(269\) 469-8010](tel:2694698010) or info@new-buffalo-railroad-museum.org).

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NEW BUFFALO RAILROAD MUSEUM—Volunteer

Special Note

The October issue is dedicated to George Thomas, a lifelong resident of Northwest Indiana who passed away last month following a brief illness. Mr. Thomas, a chemist, devoted the better part of his career with Sherwin-Williams developing coatings for railroad cars. He was your editor's father-in-law.



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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