

Looking Ahead: A Vision for 2016 and Beyond

By Steve Coxhead, President, Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

IPRA has done good work in 2015. We have made important contributions to the effort to maintain and improve the *Hoosier State*. Who would have thought, two years ago, that the state budget would contain support for the investment necessary to maintain service in the corridor? In so doing, we have helped to raise awareness in the state that there is a passenger train issue! Again, quite a change from a couple of years back. This opens the possibility for even more significant developments, going forward.

However, the work is not yet done. In looking into 2016, and ensuing years, there are many additional things which should, and I believe can, be done.

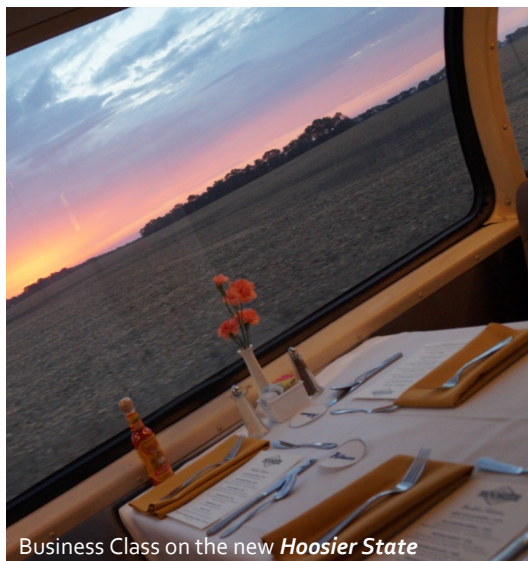
First of all, there's a lot more to be done with the *Hoosier State*. At the very minimum, the number of daily trains needs to be doubled. One train, in each direction, each day, is just not acceptable. *The difficulties imposed by that skeletal schedule are the biggest enemy of increased ridership.* At a minimum, there must be two trains, in each direction, each day. Only when one can leave from any point in the corridor, and return the same day, will ridership truly reach the point of economic self-sufficiency. And it has to keep to schedule. Yes, there are difficulties, but they can, and must, be overcome. We must find ways to reach out to all parties (Amtrak, Iowa Pacific, INDOT, and CSX) to make this happen.

Second, we must exert every effort in support of our friends in Fort Wayne who are fighting to bring Chicago-Fort Wayne-Columbus (Ohio) service to the northern tier of the state. There is an environmental impact study (EIS) that needs funding. We can, and should, lend whatever support we are able to this effort.

Third, to complete the picture of a viable intercity rail network, daily service will have to be extended to Cincinnati, and a daily connection to the *Hoosier State* and *Cardinal* must be forged to Louisville. That would give us a state network centered on Indianapolis.

Fourth, there must be room for commuter rail.

Up in Northwest Indiana, progress is finally being made on extending the South Shore commuter line south into Lake County. Frankly, this is critical to the survival of Lake County. Without it, the population (*continued*)



Business Class on the new *Hoosier State*

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("Looking Ahead" continued from page 1) base simply drains away into the other Chicago collar counties. We must support this effort in every way we can.

There is nascent interest in commuter rail in central Indiana. Anderson-Muncie-Indianapolis-Bloomington is one corridor that has been studied. As the size of the Indianapolis metropolitan area grows, this sort of transportation infrastructure will be vital to keep the area attractive as a place to live and do business.

If this is our vision, then we will have something of real value to take to the people of Indiana. More than just preserving a single train here and there, we can press for a viable, 21st Century, Hoosier rail network, that will be well worth the initial investment, and be one of the critical economic assets Indiana requires to be competitive in the modern world. Otherwise, the state risks becoming, in some respects, a back water.

Now, will all this happen in 2016? Assuredly not. However, neither economic nor social progress is made in the absence of a vision. I suggest that this should be the vision of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance, serving as our roadmap into the future.

Happy Holidays!

Construction Projects at Lafayette Train Station Affect Train Ridership

Efforts to increase *Hoosier State* ridership to and from Lafayette has been hampered by ongoing construction projects to the Lafayette Depot, the Riehle Plaza bridge, and the John T Myers bridge, says Joe Krause, Amtrak volunteer rail assistant in the Twin Cities of West Lafayette and Lafayette.

"When people must stand outside in lieu of a heated depot and have any confusion as to how to access the train loading platform, they're going to use other forms of transportation," he says.

Heating and air conditioning employees are arriving periodically, giving hope that the Depot will be available for passenger use next year. Sets of new doors and windows are installed leading to the waiting room, providing vestibules to deter cold air from entering the lobby from either the parking lot or the loggia – path from lobby to the east side elevators.

It's hard to see any progress on the waiting room itself, which still needs grillwork for a false ceiling, floor tiles, and restored

rest rooms, Krause continues.

Deteriorated concrete has been replaced and railings installed and painted on the west side of Lafayette's Riehle Plaza Bridge. Heavy gauge steel screen and newly installed painted hand rails span both sides of the bridge, which crosses over three rail tracks, he explains.

Train passengers can't access the Amtrak passenger loading area from West Lafayette. While strengthened railings are installed and painted on the ramp leading to the Wabash River/John T. Myers bridge, that ramp is closed.

Construction workers are using the depot parking lot to work at the nearby Centier/Chase Bank Plaza. Projects include infrastructure work, pavers, flag poles, and new shrubs. Work is expected to begin soon on a \$24 million, mixed-use project featuring 99 luxury apartments, a regional headquarters and branch for Old National Bank next to the depot.

"I have every reason to believe the passenger rail experience for *Hoosier State* and *Cardinal* Users will be enhanced by all of this construction. In cold weather, it's challenging to maintain the faith," Krause concludes.

Ride the Indiana Transportation Museum's Polar Bear Express

**A Regional Holiday Tradition
Celebrating 20 years of bringing holiday joy
to people of all ages
Departing Fishers, Indiana for the North Pole**

All Aboard!

Snowflake, the beloved polar bear, greets passengers at Fishers Station before the train arrives. Snowflake is available for pictures at the station. The Museum Store will also be open for gifts and stocking stuffers. *(continued)*



Photo courtesy Indiana Transportation Museum

("Polar Bear Express" continued from page 2)

Photo courtesy Indiana Transportation Museum



Experience a historic, streamlined passenger train straight out of the history books as it thunders into the station at Fishers for a

grand entrance. As soon as the train stops, the Conductor calls "All Aboard!" for your boarding of the Polar Bear Express. The train is decorated for the holiday season, and Santa as well as his helpers are filled with excitement.

Upon departure, your party will travel through Noblesville to the "North Pole," the home of Santa Claus. The North Pole features a train station and holiday decorations as Santa and his helpers eagerly prepare for the holidays. The North Pole will be seen from the warm comfort of the passenger cars. The train ride lasts approximately one hour and fifteen minutes. Santa and Mrs. Claus will be on board the train, and will lead an interactive experience.

Passengers will receive hot chocolate, a cookie, and a candy cane; children will receive a small gift from Santa. A holiday themed story will also be read as part of the magical experience.

For more information, including schedule and ticket information, please visit the Indiana Transportation Museum website at: <http://itm.org>.

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Amtrak President Talks Railroad Security, Safety

Joseph Boardman talked about railroad security and safety in the wake of the Paris terrorist attacks and the Amtrak train derailment in May 2015. He also spoke about Amtrak's ridership, budget, and the future of rail travel. [Click here to view his interview on C-SPAN.](#)

Riding the Rails

By Donald Yehle

RAIL USERS NETWORK – Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA) President Steve Coxhead is to be featured in the fall issue of Rail Users Network's (RUN) newsletter. In an article requested by RUN, Coxhead talks of IPRA's vision for 21st Century Rail in Indiana, how "state of the art" technology factors into the vision, and the awareness being created to provide rail passengers with optimal choice, comfort, and convenience.

Additionally, IPRA initiatives with the *Hoosier State*, the proposed Chicago to Columbus, Ohio, passenger line, and the push to provide seven-day service between Chicago and Cincinnati are described. "As with all rail initiatives, these efforts take time and never move as fast as rail advocates would like," Coxhead said, when commenting specifically about the Ohio-launched campaign to expand *Hoosier State* service.

Those of us in Indiana were thrilled to have the national rail advocacy spotlight pointed at Indiana in October, when the National Association of Railroad Passengers had its fall advocacy meeting in Indianapolis. It was timely having the meeting here, just two months after the launching of the public-private partnership involving Amtrak, Iowa Pacific, and the Indiana Department of Transportation, the IPRA board president said.

IPRA became a member of RUN this fall, for the purpose of gaining information and contacts to move Indiana forward toward the dream of 21st Century Passenger Railroad. To learn more about RUN, insert Rail Users Network into your browser.

39 STATES BOAST LOCAL CITIZEN RAIL GROUPS -- Hoosiers you're not alone in advocating for 21st Century Passenger Rail. In fact, there are two Indiana organizations promoting rail in our state. The Northeast Indiana Passenger Rail Association has its own website, as does IPRA. Additionally, 38 other states have local citizen rail groups, according to the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP).

California leads the way with 20 separate rail advocacy groups. Other states with multiple groups are New York and Pennsylvania, six; Texas, five; Illinois, four, and with three each, Connecticut, Florida, Massachusetts, Oklahoma, and Virginia. The states of Colorado, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Iowa, Kansas, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin join Indiana with two each.

On its website (go to National Association of Railroad Passengers, click on "About," go to Nationwide Partners), NARP shows regional rail supportive groups in the (*continued*)

("Riding the Rails" continued from page 3) southeast and northwest; six route support groups, including the "Friends of the Cardinal," 20 advocates of Transportation, High Speed Rail and Balanced Transportation – National and Canada; six similar groups outside North America; eight industry rail groups, and 17 rail labor organizations.

The Midwest High Speed Rail Association (MWHSR) is yet another organization of importance to Hoosiers. "IPRA members are encouraged to spend time on the Northeast Indiana Passenger Rail Association website, NARP's website, MWHSR's website, and our own," says Coxhead, who believes solutions to some of our rail advocacy challenges can come by learning from others.

"DONATE FOR DINING CARS" CAMPAIGN PERFECT CHRISTMAS GIFT – If you're looking for a Christmas gift for the NARP member who has everything, consider donating either \$50 or \$75 to a campaign to remind Congress "that micromanaging the nation's passenger railway, through things like eliminating Dining Cars on long-haul rail service, is not the way to go," says the nation's rail advocacy group on its website and in the October issue of NARP News.

Says NARP:

"Your purchase does two things: send that message to Congress on keeping Dining Cars in place and continue to fund NARP advocacy efforts. Buy your bags at <http://bit.ly/1OqwkH7>

Congressional representatives and your loved ones will receive insulated "Dining Car" bags.

Would a Train Travel Guide Be a Perfect Christmas Gift?

By Donald Yehle

Most peoples' budgets don't allow for a Hawaiian vacation, but should you be looking for an appropriate Christmas gift for a passenger train lover consider Jim Loomis' *All Aboard – The Complete North American Train Travel Guide*.

Says the Honolulu Advertiser: "A down-to-tacks how-to book that describes in detail just about everything you need to know to take a train trip in the United States and Canada."

The book covers topics such as:

- Planning your own train trip
- What to expect on board
- Best routes, lowest fares
- Unforgettable rail itineraries
- Basics of railroading
- The future of train travel

Appendix A carries a lengthy list of railroad terms and slang, some of which were published in *All Aboard Indiana* this past September. As promised, here are 17 additional terms (upon request, your knowledge will be tested on a quiz in 2016.)

AIR SIGNAL – A separate air line runs the entire length of a passenger train.

When activated by a valve in each car, it beeps in the locomotive cab. The conductor can use this means to signal the engineer but seldom does, since normal communication is carried out by handheld radios.

BLUE FLAG – When this signal (a flag or a solid blue signboard during the day and a light after dark) is displayed in front of or behind railcars, it means that people are working on or under that equipment. As a safety measure, a blue flag can only be removed by the person who put it there.

CABOOSE – This distinctive-looking car was located at the end of freight trains. Most of us thought crew members used the caboose for rest or sleep, but its primary function was as a post from which the train was observed and potential problems spotted – an overheated journal bearing, or **hot box**, for example. Caboosees have been replaced by trackside automatic detectors that are located every few miles and alert crews to such problems.

DIAPHRAGM – This ribbed fabric shield stretched between passenger cars, protecting you from the weather as you pass from one car to another.

ENGINE – Technically, this refers to the machinery that produces energy. But in the context of this book, *engine* is frequently used as a synonym for *locomotive*.

FIRST CLASS – This term isn't used much in North America anymore, but it has always meant sleeping-car accommodations. Both Amtrak (on its Acela trains) and VIA Rail offer variations of upgraded coach class that are referred to as first class.

GAUGE (OR GAGE) – In the railroad context, this refers to the distance between the rails, which has been standardized throughout North America at 56 1/2 inches. Any gauge less than that standard is referred to as **narrow gauge**, although 36 inches is the most common. Narrow-gauge track (*continued*)

Jim Loomis, travel guide author



(“*Would a Train Travel Guide...*” continued from page 4) is usually found where the terrain requires curves in the track that are too sharp for the longer, standard-gauge railroad cars.

HEAD-END POWER (HEP) – This refers to electricity being provided to the entire train by a special generator located either in the locomotive or in an additional unit immediately behind it.

LOAD LIMIT – The maximum weight a given car is permitted to carry. It’s computed by subtracting the weight of the empty car from its maximum allowable gross weight. The load limit is stenciled on the side of every car.

MAIN TRACK – The track that carries most of the scheduled train traffic. It is commonly referred to as “the main.”

PARLOR CAR – Back in the golden age of train travel, these were the first-class coach cars used for short-haul daytime travel, with large, overstuffed swivel chairs and other features not found in ordinary coaches. There was an additional fare for all that comfort and luxury, of course.

Amtrak has added a Pacific Parlour Car to the *Coast Starlight’s* consist, in which folks traveling in sleeping cars can relax, chat with fellow passengers, and enjoy meals or beverages. Wine tastings are held each afternoon in this car as the train travels through wine-producing areas along its route. There’s even a small theater on the lower level where movies are shown on a flat-screen TV.

RAPID TRANSIT – Any rail system operating on an exclusive right-of-way and used for moving people in and out of urban areas.

SIDING – A track located parallel or adjacent to a single main track onto which one train is diverted to allow another train to pass.

TERMINAL (ALSO TERMINUS) – More than just a station, this is by definition an important rail facility where both passengers and freight are handled, where passenger trains originate, and where many other railroad activities are carried out.

VIEWLINER – Amtrak sleeping cars used on most of the overnight trains in the eastern part of the country. Viewliners are easily spotted because they have a second tier of windows designed to provide more light in the bedrooms and nighttime viewing for passengers in upper berths.

WHEELBASE – The distance between the first and last axles on a railcar or locomotive.

YARD ENGINE -- A locomotive that is assigned to a yard and functions only within the yard area. The term is almost always synonymous with **switching locomotives**.

This Chicago Review Press book is now in its fourth edition – copyrighted in 1995, 1998, 2011, and 2015. The writer, Jim Loomis, lives in Ha’iku, Maui. To purchase a copy, go to www.chicagoreviewpress.com, www.ipgbook.com, or to your nearest bookstore.

Yellow Locomotives To Pull Silver Trains Accented in Spectrum of Five Colors

“New Fla. Passenger train service to quickly link Miami and Orlando” – *U.S.A. Today* and *Lafayette Journal and Courier*, November 9, 2015.

“All Aboard rolls out snazzy name, colors” – *Orlando Sentinel*, Tuesday, November 10, 2015

Imagine being a passenger rail advocate and waking up to those headlines on successive days? It happened last month. This nationwide story comes with the following facts:

City Pairs – Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, and Orlando.

Route length – 235 miles

Startup date – Mid-2017

Service Name – Brightline

Owner: All Aboard Florida

Total Trains Sets – 10

Manufacturer -- Siemens, Sacramento, California.

Project cost – North of \$3 billion

Benefits – Eased congestion, less pressure at crowded airports, affordable, convenient, and safe.

Locomotive color – Yellow

Coach Colors – Red, orange, green, blue, and pink accenting silver coaches.

Trip Time – Three hours, comparable to driving to airports, going through security, and fly time.

Website – gobrightline.com

The Big Picture: It’s About People

By J. Charles Riecks, Vice Chair--Government Relations, National Assn. Of Railroad Passengers

For me the cornerstone of The Big Picture for passenger rail, starts, continues, and ultimately ends with a concern for people. Is that not what passenger rail advocacy is about? Others may care about trains that haul oil, coal, containers, etc. But we must focus our concern on those trains that carry people, from one destination to another and back again.

Interestingly enough the Government Officials you will relate to in your advocacy have the same primary concern, people (which for an elected official is translated as voters). So especially from their point of view, The Big Picture also starts with people. (*cont.*)

("The Big Picture" continued from page 5) Thus, they may not listen too attentively when you discuss about the need for all these flashy speedy trains with all their state-of-the-art "bells and whistles." But if you begin to discuss the numbers of people who would like to use these trains, how the speed will attract thousands of new riders etc. . . Then they start to listen.

They may not see the need for the capital expenditures necessary to purchase safe, comfortable equipment, until they read about a wreck caused by out-of-date equipment. They may not give long term equipment authorization bills a second thought until they receive a constituent letter complaining about unheated, unlit passenger cars. Whenever the issue involves people, especially their constituents, you have aroused their interest.

It is easy to get cynical about the fact that it takes an extraordinary circumstance to get the interest of government officials aroused, but then, as I cautioned before, our concern for decent passenger rail service is just one of many "causes" all competing for a limited amount of resources. Ours is just one of many groups active on today's political scene who promote ourselves as being for "people." Therefore, in our advocacy messages we must put people first if we hope to be effective.

Chicago to Columbus Rail Line May Be Completed in Sections

The Northeast Indiana Passenger Rail Association (NIPRA) is continuing to progress toward its Tier 1 Environmental Impact Study (EIS) for the Chicago to Fort Wayne to Columbus, Ohio, passenger rail

line, says the organization's president, Fred Lanahan.


A meeting has been held of the Indiana partners to discuss and gain unity for support of our Tier 1 EIS effort. A second conference call is scheduled with our friends in the Federal Railroad Administration on our proposed study and restoration of passenger rail service to Gary, Valparaiso, Plymouth, Warsaw and Fort Wayne in Indiana and on to Columbus, Ohio, he said.

"This may well end up being a project done in sections with the Indiana piece being the first to be completed," Lanahan continued.


NIPRA is also in the process of adding several new board members to replace long term people that have or soon will step down after many years of good service to our passenger rail supporters, **All Aboard Indiana** has learned.

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Toronto “UP Express” Train Role Model for Connecting O’Hare, Union Station

By Donald Yehle

Editor’s Note: The story below recently appeared in a weekly publication of the Midwest High Speed Rail Association publication.

Former Illinois Governor Pat Quinn was among 100 people who learned last month how Toronto, Canada, tackled the challenge of connecting Canada’s busiest train station and with its busiest airport. It took four and one-half years, but the Union Pearson (UP) Express train launched in June is transforming Toronto, championing Ontario, and putting the city on the world stage to help hotels, convention business, entertainment, and tourism, said Kathy Haley, president, UP Express, to Cross Rail Chicago supporters.

O’Hare Express trains could eventually accomplish what UP Express/ Metrolinx trains are doing in Toronto -- moving guests with minimal stops between downtown and the airport, at a faster speed than commuter trains, in spacious, comfortable seating, and with extras including level boarding, wi-fi, and ample luggage storage.

The Toronto monorail had been talked about for decades, as far back as 1958. “In our planning, we understood customers would want a predictable and reliable service that will get them to the airport on time, rather than to be stuck in traffic for 60-90 minutes,” Haley said.

This seamless, serene, and elevated urban transportation rail service considered unique passenger needs as it runs every 15 minutes, takes 25 minutes to travel the 15 and ½ miles between the train station and the airport, and operates for 19 and ½ hours per day.

Sixty-five million annual passengers is the anticipated initial useage for the “idea whose time has come.” By the next decade, annual ridership should grow to 130 million people or more.

The service is economical, with a \$27.50 one-way charge, compared to Toronto cab and limo charges of \$50 to \$60. Environmentalists are pleased that 1.2 million cars are being moved off the road to rails in the government-operated service’s first year, lunch guests learned.

Positioning Toronto as a desirable destination for people to live, work, visit, and play, UP Express meets the “global best practices” test. Project planners and engineers studied six international air-rail links -- London Heathrow; Changi Airport Singapore; Narita Airport, Tokyo; Copenhagen Airports, the Vancouver, Canada, Authority, and Schiphol Amsterdam.

Metrolinx is more than a train system. It’s a bundled experience for travelers to Toronto, which is climate controlled, allowing individuals to go station-to-station without ever being outside. A sense of calm and place is achieved through architecture, materials, color, texture, typography. Retail and other non-fare revenue sources are incorporated into the design, Haley continued.

As Cross Rail Chicago’s vision for transportation in our region is advanced, Haley would encourage every effort be made to understand consumer behavior. Look at all “touch” points, including Information & Planning, Getting to the Station, Ticketing, Airline Services, At the Station, Boarding, On the Train, Deboarding, and Getting to the Terminal, Haley said.

A Fine Ride: Why the *Hoosier State* Line Should Endure

Below is a letter to the editor of the *Journal & Courier*, Lafayette, IN, as published November 25, 2015; reprinted in *All Aboard Indiana* with permission of Don and Sandy Kewman, Nevada City, California, in cooperation with the *Journal & Courier*.

“We recently had the pleasure of taking the Hoosier State train to and from Chicago and Lafayette. We learned that the continuation of this important transportation link was endangered. However, the hard work and support of local Lafayette civic leaders along with those of other cities along the route and the state of Indiana has extended this service for at least the next two years.

“Amtrak engineers and conductors operate the vintage Iowa Pacific Hoosier State train that has been refurbished and offers a wonderful dining experience in either coach or business class, along with a full bar. The Iowa Pacific crew includes a Purdue graduate chef and other excellent staff who made our trips the best we have experienced of our many rail trips across the country.

“We travel annually from our home near Colfax, California, to Chicago via Amtrak’s California Zephyr, and the *Hoosier State* rail service allows us to complete our journey in an affordable, stress-free, ecological sustainable manner to downtown Lafayette. It is clearly an important link for students and many others who want to visit Lafayette and enjoy the things that your great community has to offer. (continued)

(“A Fine Ride” continued from page 7)

“Ticketing of the Hoosier State continues to be through Amtrak and is a seamless process when linking to trains in the Amtrak system.

“We hope that local and state leaders as well as local riders will support continuation and expansion of this service beyond the next two years.”

-- Don and Sandy Kewman, Nevada City, California.

Surprise Holiday Meals Start December 11 for *Hoosier State* Rail Passengers

Iowa Pacific chefs on the *Hoosier State* are planning holiday-themed meals FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER starting Friday, December 11. Chefs aren't telling what these "blue plate specials" will be, preferring to surprise their customers who since August 2 have been enjoying delicious breakfasts and dinners.

The *Hoosier State* serves dinner nightly from Chicago on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Breakfast is available to northbound *Hoosier State* passengers on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Passengers on Amtrak's *Cardinal* also can find breakfast and dinner on the days the *Hoosier State* doesn't operate. The *Cardinal* leaves Indianapolis mornings on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday. The *Cardinal* leaves Chicago evenings on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Correction

We at the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance thank Marc Magliari for information he provides as Amtrak spokesman. We inadvertently listed him as a contributor in the November issue, and want to clarify his role.

Contributors

Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance – Steve Coxhead, Joe Krause, Donald Yehle, Doug Yerkeson

Indiana Transportation Museum

National Association of Railroad Passengers— J. Charles Riecks, Vice Chair--Government Relations

Northeast Indiana Passenger Rail Association—Fred Lanahan, president

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

Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance
3951 North Meridian Street, Suite 100
Indianapolis, IN 46208

IPRA President: Steven Coxhead
Newsletter Editor: Donald Yehle

djyehle@gmail.com or 765-418-4097

Newsletter Publisher: Shereen Vinke

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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.