

ALL ABOARD

INDIANA

The Official Newsletter of the

Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

Volume 4, Number 2 February 2017

“We will build new roads, and highways, and bridges, and airports, and tunnels, and railways all across our wonderful nation.” – President Donald J. Trump, Friday, January 20, 2017

On Inauguration Day 2017, America’s newly-installed president included building **railways** in his inaugural speech.

That is a huge step for our cause!

Rail advocates, pat yourselves on the back for this accomplishment; DO NOT REST, THOUGH.

We must hope “railways” are not an afterthought; after all, new roads, and highways, and bridges, and airports, and tunnels are all mentioned first.

We must hope the new administration is serious about “infrastructure improvements.”

We must take to heart one political pundits’ advice that the administration will make infrastructure gains by prioritizing projects on a nationwide basis – i.e. begin with bridges, he said. (i.e. Remember the I-65 bridge near Lafayette that was deemed unsafe.)

We must take the time to understand NARP’s goal of a “Connected America.”

Rail advocates, pat yourselves on the back for pushing IPRA’s goal of 21st Century Passenger Rail in Indiana; DO NOT REST, THOUGH.

Who saw our outgoing vice president, Joe Biden, board a train on Friday after the inauguration?

Can we inspire Biden and our former governor and new vice president, Mike Pence, to sit down and talk about making America’s passenger rail system great again?

We must find the time to convince Americans of the need for equity in spending on airports, bridges, highways, roads, railways, and tunnels.

Railway advocates, at a minimum, let’s start by getting our citizens and politicians to think of infrastructure needs in alphabetical order – airports, bridges, highways, railways, roads, and tunnels.

Donald Yehle
Editor, *All Aboard Indiana*



Outgoing Vice President Joe Biden leaves D.C. via train on Inauguration Day.

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NARP Policy VP Sheds More Light on Increased Investment in Rail

"During the presidential transition, Congressional Republicans indicated an infrastructure bill would not be on the agenda for the first 100 days of the Trump Administration. The opening days of the Trump presidency, however, have featured a number of positive signs for increased investment in passenger rail," writes Sean Jeans-Gail, the National Association of Railroad Passenger's vice president for policy.

Inaugural Address – "President Trump reiterated campaign promises to rebuild America's infrastructure, explicitly mentioning railways in a callback to earlier statements about high-speed rail. 'We will build new roads, and highways, and bridges, and airports, and tunnels, and railways across our wonderful nation. We will get our people off of welfare and back to work – rebuilding our country with American hands and American labor. We will follow two simple rules: Buy American and hire American,'" Jeans-Gail says.

Priority Projects Identified – In a letter to NARP members on January 25, "the Trump Administration has reached out to transportation groups to identify a list of projects critical to the national economy and security. NARP was asked to provide input, and we advocated for national and regional rail projects, while providing information about how new passenger rail equipment would grow the U.S. manufacturing sector," he explains.

McClatchy (Newspapers) Washington Bureau and the *Kansas City Star* have obtained a document they reported was compiled by the Trump Administration. "While it is unclear if it is a draft or final, it is heartening that several of the projects NARP identified were on the list. They include the Gateway Project, the Chicago Union Station redevelopment, and Texas Central Railway, along with many others," Jeans-Gail continues.

See IPRA's list of key Indiana rail projects (next story).

Democrats look for Common Ground – "While disagreement remains high on a number of issues, Democrats are looking for common ground with President Trump on his infrastructure ambitions. Democratic leadership, led by Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), unveiled a \$1 trillion infrastructure plan. While the details haven't been released, the plan targets transportation, water infrastructure, energy transmission, and much more.

"It includes \$180 billion for 'rail and bus systems,' and a \$200 billion 'vital infrastructure fund' for critical projects like Amtrak's Gateway Project connecting New York and New Jersey.

"Republican leaders have responded to the proposal negatively, saying the numbers are too big. Democrats, however, argue they can work with the Trump Administration to provide a pay-for, and that it will go beyond tax credits for private sector projects," Jeans-Gail adds.

Some Ominous Signs for Rail— "Not all news has been positive, however. A story last week in The Hill reports that Trump's Transition team prepared a budget that would slash federal funding. Based on a Heritage Foundation budget blueprint, the plan would slash \$10.5 trillion over 10 years. That blueprint calls for the elimination of funding to Amtrak, along with debilitating cuts to transit funding," Jeans-Gail writes.

Passengers Must Speak Out!— "There are promising indicators, but unless WE act they won't become reality. NARP is asking our members (and IPRA is asking the same) to make sure that elected officials hear from train passengers on the very first week of the 115th Congress," says Jeans-Gail. Right click on links below to open hyperlinks and to find your U.S. Congressman and U.S. Senators or to write the White House.

<http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/>

<https://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/>

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/>

NARP Asked to Push State Rail Projects

By Donald Yehle

Three Hoosier state rail and transit projects have been submitted to the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) for possible funding by the federal government, says IPRA President Steve Coxhead. (See 'Priority Projects Identified' in above story.)

Projects are:

Complete funding for the Northern Indiana and Ohio Passenger Rail Project environmental impact study (EIS) of the Chicago-Fort Wayne-Columbus, Ohio, train. --

Local matching funds have been raised. An application was made last year for federal funding of the EIS, but that was turned down. The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is on board with this project, and had sponsored last year's application. Ms. Katie England is the contact at INDOT. Local advocacy group is Northeastern Indiana Passenger Rail Association (NIPRA). Contact is Fred Lanahan. This project has widespread public support in northern Indiana and Ohio.

Physical plant upgrades to the Hoosier State corridor to allow sustained speeds of 80 mph, and (continued)

("NARP Asked to Push State Rail Projects" continued from page 2) **additional frequencies.** -- This is necessary to improve service in the corridor to the point where it becomes self-sustaining. There is widespread, local support for this improvement. INDOT has had conversations with CSX Railroad (owns most of the right of way) about costs associated with the upgrades. Problem is funding. No prospect of upgrade funding in 2017-2019 state budget, currently being put together by the Indiana General Assembly. State would be happy to accept federal funding. Again, INDOT contact is Ms. England.

Extension of the Hoosier State corridor to Cincinnati. -- This would have significant support in Cincinnati and SE Indiana. Would be complementary to the seven-day *Cardinal* initiative. Interest from the Ohio/Kentucky/Indiana Regional Association of Governments, Hamilton County (Ohio), Dearborn County (Indiana), and City of Cincinnati. Major advocacy organization has been All Aboard Ohio. Contact would be Derek Bauman. Funding is a question, as well as Indiana's commitment of the *Hoosier State* corridor.

In his letter to NARP, Coxhead said, "Commuter rail funding is also a developing issue (in Indiana), so any applicable federal programs would be helpful. In NW Indiana, the South Shore expansion is proceeding. I believe funding has been arranged for it. There is a strong, potential interest in Muncie-Indianapolis-Bloomington and Lafayette-Indianapolis commuter systems, but little or no groundwork has been laid to date."

Project characteristics NARP submitted to the Trump Transition Team fell in two areas – Tier 1, projects that are "shovel ready," with defined entities ready and able to accept capital infusions; environmental review work competed; strong political support; and cost estimates for the various alternatives and Tier 2, projects with some clear scoping and environmental work done, strong public and political support, well defined investment needs. The daily *Cardinal* project is such a project; at press time, it's not known if any of the above Indiana projects were submitted.

Regional Rail Advocates Pushing 7-Day Cardinal

By Donald Yehle

Friends of the *Cardinal*, All Aboard Ohio, and NARP are among those groups that have placed a high priority on advocating a seven-day *Cardinal*. As an Indiana-focused organization, IPRA puts its highest priority on in-state rail developments, which is why the long-distance service wasn't submitted by IPRA with the three rail projects listed above. "The *Cardinal* and other long distance trains that also serve Indiana are second priority," said Steve Coxhead, IPRA president.

"NARP is better placed than IPRA to fight the battle for the long distance service," he continued. A "Daily Cardinal Action Plan" is featured at the top of NARP's website (<https://www.narprail.org/>) That action plan alternates with "Summer by Rail" under *Happening Now* in the upper hand corner of its website.

Indiana was represented at the *Cardinal* Conference last September when "100 civic and business leaders from along the Chicago-East Coast route (united) to work together on increasing service from thrice-weekly to daily trains. The event was hosted by the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber of Commerce. All Aboard Ohio raised nearly \$6,000 to cover the cost of the event," according to the Fall-Winter 2016-17 issue of *Ohio Passenger Rail News*. If you want to know more about rail advocacy activities in Ohio, right click and go to Open Hyperlink on the following link <http://allaboardohio.org/join-us/>

Friends of the *Cardinal* also posts information on the *Cardinal* train. Right click and go to Open Hyperlink of its website -- <https://sites.google.com/site/wvcardinaltrainfans/>

IPRA's Duane Chattin, Phil Streby at "Day on the Hill" Event

By Donald Yehle

Two Hoosiers (Duane Chattin and Phillip Streby) will be among passenger rail advocates nationwide visiting with their respective congressional delegations on Tuesday, April 25, as part of the National Association of Railroad Passengers' (NARP) annual spring advocacy and summit meeting. All NARP members are welcome to join NARP state representatives at the Silver Spring, Maryland, event. Chattin hails from Vincennes, while Streby makes Peru his hometown. Streby, IPRA's treasurer, and IPRA President Steve Coxhead are Indiana's state representative to the NARP Council. When visiting with U.S. Senators and House of Representative members and staffs, NARP members urge equitable federal funding on all types of transportation, especially rail.

MEETING DATES: Sunday, April 23, thru Wednesday, April 26

HOST HOTEL: Sheraton Silver Spring – 8777 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring, Maryland (3 blocks from the Silver Spring Red Line Metro Station)

TENTATIVE AGENDA:

SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 2017

- 5:00pm - 6:30pm - Board of Directors Meeting - Open To All Attendees
- 6:30pm - 7:30pm - Welcome Reception - Included For All Attendees

(continued)

("Day on the Hill Event" continued from page 3)

MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2017

- 6:30am - 5:00pm - Meeting Registration
- 7:15am - 8:15am - Buffet Breakfast
- 8:30am - General Meeting Convenes
- Morning Speakers & Presentations
- 12:00n - Lunch With Keynote Speaker
- 1:30pm - Meeting Reconvenes
- Afternoon Speakers & 'Day on The Hill' Preparations
- 4:15pm - General Meeting Concludes
- 4:30pm - 5:30pm - Division & Committee Meetings
- Evening Free

TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2017

- 7:30am - 8:30am - Continental Breakfast At Sheraton
- Morning & Afternoon - NARP 'Day on The Hill' - Congressional Office Visits
- 5:30pm - 7:30pm - NARP 2017 Congressional Reception - Location TBA

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2017

- 7:15am - 8:15am - Buffet Breakfast
 - 8:30am - NARP Business Meeting Convenes
 - 11:30am - Business Meeting Concludes
 - 12:00n - 2:00pm - Lunch With Keynote Speaker
- All Events Conclude By 2:00pm

More information, including on group-rate room reservations, is available at NARP'S website -- <https://www.narprail.org/events/>

Have questions or need more information? - Contact Bruce Becker at bbecker@narprail.org

Taking the Train for a Family Weekend in the Windy City

By Doug Yerkeson



A trip to Chicago promises plenty of options for family entertainment.

The combined schedules of the **Cardinal** and the **Hoosier State** trains provide daily service between Indianapolis, Crawfordsville, Lafayette, Rensselaer, Dyer and Chicago. As such, our family enjoyed a round-trip train trip to Chicago over the Martin Luther King Day weekend. Our journey

began with a drive to Crawfordsville and a short side trip to Allen's Country Kitchen (downtown Crawfordsville), where we picked up homemade muffins. Amtrak's **Cardinal** arrived at the Crawfordsville station on time, where we settled into our large business class seats and enjoyed complimentary coffee, bottled water and soft drinks. After a relaxing trip through northwestern Indiana, we arrived 20 minutes early at Chicago Union Station. Following a short visit to the new and improved Metropolitan Lounge (which is available to passengers travelling same day in sleeping or business class), we took the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) bus route 6 (Jackson Park Express) to the Museum of Science and Industry. The excellent public transit system in Chicago makes it easy to visit without the need for an automobile.

While at the Museum of Science and Industry, we watched the National Parks Omnimax movie and visited many of the fantastic exhibits, including the U-505 Submarine, Science Storms, the Ships Gallery and the Transportation Gallery. A favorite exhibit is the Great Train Story, a model train layout representing 2,200 miles of scenery and stories from Chicago to Seattle along 1,400 feet of track. (Note that an annual membership at the Indiana State Museum is accepted for general admission to the Museum of Science and Industry.) After a quick bus ride back to Union Station, we grabbed our bags from storage at the Metropolitan Lounge and checked into the London House Chicago hotel. We enjoyed dinner at the nearby Italian Village Restaurant, which boasts that it is the oldest Italian restaurant in the city.

After a quick breakfast at our hotel, and some window shopping along Michigan (*continued*)

Jazz Blues and Rock 'n' Roll

9- Days: Chicago, Memphis, New Orleans

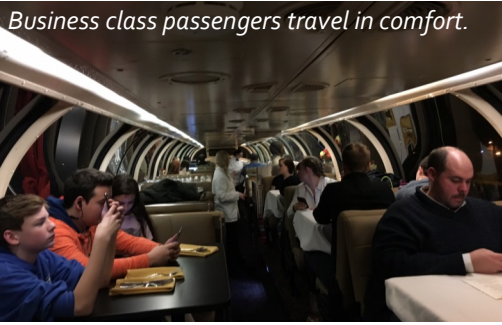
BOOK BY February 28th

SAVE
\$200
per couple

Click [HERE](#) For More Details

("Taking the Train for a Family Weekend..." continued from page 4) Avenue, we met up with a friend who traveled across Ohio for the opportunity to

Business class passengers travel in comfort.



ride the **Hoosier State** train. After lunch at Corner Bakery Café and ice cream at Ghirardelli's chocolate store, we visited the Art Institute of Chicago and the Chicago Bean. After a day of shopping and sightseeing, we returned to relax in the Metropolitan Lounge at Union Station and enjoy a variety of soft drinks and snacks prior to boarding the **Hoosier State** train.

We boarded our business class seats in the dome car for departure of our train around 5:55 pm (10 minutes late). Meals and beverages are included with business class on the **Hoosier State** train. The blue plate special was a delicious beef wellington with brussels sprouts and a baked potato. Other dinner selections included a Caesar salad with grill chicken, a cheeseburger, and a grilled cheese sandwich with bacon. Our train arrived in Crawfordsville on time, concluding our great family weekend in Chicago.

Chicago's Union Station Seeing More Improvements

By Bill Malcolm*

Chicago's Union Station will be adding more passenger station improvements.

Just opened is the Union Station Transit Center kitty corner from Union Station which allows easy access to the many CTA bus lines serving the station including the 151 line which runs

north to the Lincoln Park neighborhoods.

Also open now are new restrooms just off the Great Hall.

Underway now are repairs to the historic Union Station glass ceiling.

Coming soon are new retail and remodeled rest rooms in the former Union Station ticketing area. (Ticketing has moved to the Great Hall as has the new Metropolitan Lounge.)

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel stopped by the Station recently to announce the improvement plan, according to Amtrak staff I talked to. Amtrak is still looking for a restaurant tenant for the space across from the new ticketing area in the Great Hall.

The Burlington Room has also re-opened. It was the former historic women's lounge. It hosted the Polar Bear Express Santa Train in December. Everything has been restored to its original condition including the four murals and seven historic bronze light fixtures.

Also open is the Legacy Club which for \$20 gets you priority boarding, snacks, magazines, happy hour (12:30 to 2 and again from 4:30 to 6). It can be found in the southwest corner of the Great Hall at Union Station. Also included is free WiFi, charging stations, rest rooms, gaming consoles, CNN, Starbucks coffee and Tazo Tea, and more.

It, too, is in a historic part of the station which has been carefully restored. Treat yourself on your next trip from Chicago. It is worth every penny -- especially the pre-boarding where you can pick any seat you wish. The Legacy Club is open to both Metra, Amtrak, and **Hoosier State** travelers and is separate from Amtrak's own first class lounge, The Metropolitan Club.

Delays Plague Amtrak Trains

By Bill Malcolm*

Delays on Monday, January 16, were a sorry site (see picture of arrivals board) with the **Empire Builder** showing a 4-hour delay and also a big delay for the **Texas Eagle** and other trains.

As followers of Hoosiers for Passenger Rail are aware, both the **Cardinal** and **Hoosier State** have also had a rough go. Recently, the editor of the **Lafayette (IN) Journal & Courier** had an unfortunate experience on the **Hoosier State**. The train had a "mechanical" so a bus was substituted 2 hours later. Then the bus broke down. The editor arrived home at 4 a.m. And let readers know about his experience. He later wrote a follow up article reversing some of his negative comments -- (continued)



The Legacy Club allows train passengers a pleasant space in which to pass time at Chicago's Union Station.

Pedestrian Ramp Now Open at Lafayette Train Station

By Joe Krause

On January 19, Lafayette's Pedestrian Ramp – under construction for the last two years – opened. The pedestrian ramp leads from the John T. Myers bridge (Wabash River) to the Riehle Plaza Bridge, over the railroad tracks, and to the Big Four Depot.

On the east side of the Riehle Bridge, concrete steps leading down from the bridge have been blasted apart and are being removed. Pedestrians once used these steps to walk down to 2nd Street.

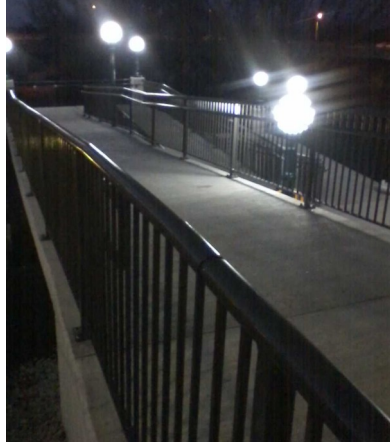
Steps have been removed as part of the Promenade Project, which will connect Columbia Bridge to the south with the Riehle Bridge. The promenade will be to the west of the Old National Bank structure and parallel to the Wabash.

Construction crews are building a temporary, 23-step wooden staircase structure to replace the concrete steps. This temporary structure will give railroad passengers (and others) access to the Riehle Bridge, to the West side elevators, and down to the train platform. It will be removed once the promenade is finished.

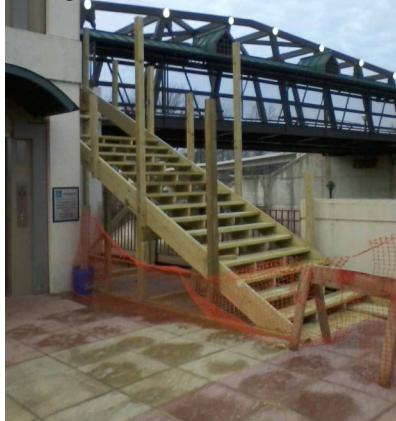
The wooden stair case – near the old iron stair case -- has been treated with some type of non-slip preservative; there is no protective roof over the temporary wooden stairs.

In another Lafayette development project near the Big 4 Depot, progress continues on the City of Lafayette Gateway project. A metalwork 'statue' of modern design has been erected on a huge concrete block near the Red 7 Restaurant (2nd and Main). A similar 'statue' is planned for the nearly Chase-Centier Plaza.

The newly-constructed pedestrian ramp is now open.



Temporary wooden steps allow passengers access to the train platform during the construction.



The Old National Bank project is progressing. Iron work is four stories high. Workers are constructing the third of four towers, for staircases and elevators.

Amtrak's Reorganization Geared for Customer Focus

By Donald Yehle

Three months on the job, Amtrak President and CEO Wick Moorman announced early in January a new organization structure. It's designed to allow for greater product and customer focus, along with strengthened accountability and decision-making.

"While changes to an organization are never a 'silver bullet,' the right structure is a necessary first step to driving the five key objectives that we believe are critical to our long-term success," Moorman said.

Those five key objectives are:



Amtrak's Wick Moorman is passionate about customer service.

- Build a world-class safety culture with a relentless focus on training, risk-reduction, positive reinforcement, and personal accountability.
- Develop and consistently provide competitive products and services.
- Create the teams and processes necessary to serve and grow Amtrak's customers across all business segments.
- Gain support for and deliver on investments that sustain, improve, and grow Amtrak's business.

- Harness innovation, technology, and partnerships to enhance and accelerate Amtrak's business.

Under the new organization structure, there will be six senior executives, all reporting to Moorman. Amtrak expects streamlined decision-making, increased alignment between departments, and more clearly established areas of accountability.

Groups and their respective executive vice presidents are:

Operations - Scot Naparstek, Chief Operating Officer (COO)

Marketing and Business Development - Jason (continued)

(“Amtrak’s Reorganization” continued from page 7)

Molfetas, Executive Vice President

Finance - Jerry Sokol, Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Law - Eldie Acheson, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary (GC)

Administration – D. J. Stadtler, executive vice president.

Planning, Technology, and Public Affairs – Stephen Gardner, Executive Vice President

Meet the Board: George Vande Werken

By Bob Garity

George moved to Northwest Indiana in 1975 to begin a career in community banking. Since 2007, he has served as Regional President for Providence Bank, a \$500 million community bank with 11 offices in the greater southern Chicago/Metro NWI area. In 2015, George and his wife relocated to the Austin, Texas, area from which he continues to work remotely for the bank.

About 10 years ago, he joined the Board of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance and served as its Treasurer until 2015. The community banker has maintained a strong layman’s interest in public transportation issues for several years and became more fully engaged in learning about public transportation issues while serving on the Transportation Committee for Congressman Pete Visclosky’s Good Government Initiative in the fall of 2006/spring of 2007.

That study focused primarily on public bus service and “demand response providers” in Lake County. The IPRA website had not been updated in several years, and so in 2011 George and his daughter, Shereen, took on the project of updating the content and improving the usefulness of the site. Current Board members have since become more engaged in monitoring and improving the site and have also continued to collaborate with Shereen to publish a monthly newsletter (*All Aboard Indiana*) providing stories and pictures on matters affecting passenger rail in Indiana and in the United States.

In 2016, George – along with Raj Selladurai of Indiana University Northwest and Peggy Daniels Lee of the Kelly School at Indiana University -- co-edited a book focused on high speed rail trends and challenges in the United



George Vande Werken pauses to smile during a non-profit function.

States. The book, entitled *Emerging Challenges and Opportunities of High Speed Rail Development on Business and Society*, was published by IGI Global in June 2016 as a resource for academicians, students, policy makers, and advocates interested in learning more about high speed rail in the United States. The IPRA board member also contributed to three of the chapters.

Additionally, Mr. Vande Werken has been an active volunteer for non-profit religious and civic organizations and currently serves on two other not for profit boards. He and his wife have four married adult children and 12 grandchildren.

For NE Indiana Rail Fans

By Donald Yehle

Geoff Paddock, an Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance board member from Fort Wayne, authored a January 1, 2017, article for the *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*. “Leaving the Station – at last” was how the newspaper told its readers that an “environmental assessment marks the start of exciting times for rail fans in northeast Indiana.”

This good news follows years of working, planning, fundraising, and coordination, wrote Paddock, who is the Fifth District city councilman in Fort Wayne and also a board member of the Northeast Indiana Passenger Rail Association (NIPRA).

Well documented in the January issue of *All Aboard Indiana*, NIPRA wants passenger rail advocates to know the following about the “hoped for” train service:

Evaluation is to be made of a possible passenger rail route from Chicago through Fort Wayne to Columbus, Ohio.

The environmental assessment is consistent with requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act.

A 2013 feasibility study and business plan suggests that the evaluation will be positive.

Preliminary engineering and eventual construction would follow the evaluation.

The 12-month study commences in the fall of 2017 and will cost \$350,000.

As reported in the *Journal Gazette*, Fort Wayne has been without train service since 1990 “when Amtrak consolidated trains and the tracks they shared with freight rail lines across the United States.”

Fred Lanahan, NIPRA’s chairman and also an Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance board member, has spearheaded (continued)

("For NE Indiana Rail Fans" continued from page 8) efforts to raise the necessary funds to pay for the feasibility study. Many cities in Ohio and Indiana were contacted for dollars as was the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and the Federal Railroad Administration. In the end, the City of Fort Wayne appropriated \$200,000 toward the assessment. Allen County (of which Fort Wayne is a part) provided \$50,000. Private sources in Fort Wayne, northeast Indiana, and northwest Ohio contributed funds, as well. Dollars from the Federal Government and Amtrak weren't made available due to budget cutbacks, it was reported.

The **Hoosier State** has been cited as an example of what NI-PRA hopes Northeast Indiana rail passengers can enjoy as early as 2020. Much has been written about this service and can be found at either of the following web sites: <https://www.hoosierstatetrain.com> or <https://www.premierrails.com/rprofile/hoosier-state-train>.

Paddock and Lanahan understand INDOT would like to "replicate" the Chicago to Indianapolis service. That said, here's some additional "steel and spike" information:

The "hoped for" passenger train would share tracks with freight trains.

Maximum speeds would slowly increase as "improvements along the tracks are made – benefiting both freight and passenger trains."

Passenger train stops, frequency of trains, and scheduling of trains would be determined during and assessment/subsequent engineering studies.

Young travelers, disabled individuals, and those who find air travel too costly would particularly benefit from the new service.

The orthopedic and medical complex between Warsaw and Fort Wayne want the service.

Overall, the train service would appeal to two million passengers annually – when speeds reach 110 miles per hour. This is from the TEMS Feasibility Study done in 2012 and released in 2013 based on multiple trains per day.

.A rebirth of downtown Fort Wayne and neighborhoods around the city's Barker Street station are likely once the rail service comes to town.

Riding the Rails

By Donald Yehle

The Winter Park Express, a joint operation between Amtrak, Union Pacific Railroad, and the Winter Park Resort, is providing passenger rail service once again from Denver's Union Station straight to the winter resort. If you're in the Denver area or coming from out of town and want to hit the slopes through March 26, take the The Winter Park Express to skip traffic and enjoy the ride.

IPRA board member Joe Krause and his wife, Barbara, completed a nine-day rail adventure earlier in January, traveling on four Amtrak trains and an Amtrak Thruway Bus. Tampa, Florida, was the destination. Warm weather was hoped for, as the Krause Brothers Reunion was held in the city which also just finished hosting the College Football Championship game.

Barb and Joe began their trek on **The Cardinal** (Train #50), taking it from Lafayette to Charlottesville, VA. An Amtrak Thruway bus then took the couple to Richmond, VA, for an overnight stay. Rainy weather cancelled a planned, next day walk to the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens. The southbound **Silver Star** (Train #91) arrived soon enough, though, at the Staples Mill Road Amtrak station. The **Silver Star** was packed as Joe and Barb were assigned seats 57 and 58. Bulkhead seats (without windows) were near a sliding door leading into the next coach. Sleeping in the coach section was made a little more difficult as lights were left on as the train was racing toward Tampa.

The "last mile" between the station and the Reunion was managed as Krause's son, Bill, had an automobile. The "hoped for" warm weather materialized for their two days in Tampa. Gloomy weather followed the travelers who again boarded the **Silver Star** (Train #92) for a longer trip to the nation's capital. Tornadoes that racked Alabama didn't affect the train, allowing Joe and Barb to have a "fairly restful night's sleep." Arrival in Washington was "pretty much on time." Washington's Union Station continues to impress as did the 104-year-old Hotel Harrington, where the couple spent a night. A "nice" doorman provided the Krause's with a peek at nearby Trump International Hotel while also loaning them an umbrella for a walk to Ford's Theater, the scene of Lincoln's Assassination. If ever you visit Washington, a trip to Ford's Theater is recommended. You can see the actual box where Mr. Lincoln was shot.

Since all good things must come to end, so did the Krause's nine-day trip. The borrowed umbrella was returned. The **Capitol Limited** (Train #29), a superliner, provided an early arrival the next day into "very cold" Chicago. Putting their luggage in the newly-renovated Legacy Club, Barb and Joe walked to the Berghoff Restaurant for lunch before returning to Union Station for an on-time departure of the **Hoosier State**. Passenger count was light. CSX Transportation caused two delays due to freight train problems. Arrival in Lafayette was an hour late, as the couple made it home by 11 p.m.

The Chicago – Fort Wayne – Lima – Columbus environmental study for this new passenger rail line is considered one of the five most important 2016 highlights of a "very productive year" at the Midwest High Speed Rail Association (MWHSR). "Funding by local communities that see the benefits of passenger rail" was singled out as a key aspect of this project. (continued)

("Riding the Rails" continued from page 9)

Other 2016 stories of significance were Midwest station improvements, including Chicago Union Station (with more ahead); new Siemen's locomotives having passed key tests are destined for delivery to the Midwest in 2017; expanded service of the *Hiawatha* between Chicago and Milwaukee, and as detailed in the December issue of *All Aboard Indiana*, local support for the Cross Rail Chicago project which "would serve high-frequency local commuter trains, express trains, and all Midwest intercity routes," writes MWHRS's Dylan Hayward.

To learn more about the Midwest High Speed Rail Association, go to www.midwesthsr.org/

To learn about other locations of new/renovated Midwest stations, go <http://midwesthsr.org/part-3-modernizing-our-train-stations>

In the above post, MWHRS mentions improvements to the Dwight and East Lansing, Michigan, train stations. As covered in *All Aboard Indiana*, Milwaukee Intermodal Station was another station with major renovations.

City officials in Oxford, OH, could spend up to \$350,000 in support of a new Amtrak station. The support comes after Oxford City Council members heard a presentation earlier in December that outlined the plans which were prepared by the seven-member Joint Miami-Oxford Amtrak Committee. All City Council members expressed support for having an Amtrak stop in the city and said they were willing to spend money on the project. The proposal would add a stop on Amtrak's *Cardinal* Line which runs from New York to Chicago. The eastbound train comes through Oxford in the early morning hours, three mornings a week. There is also a possibility of expansion of service as part of the *Hoosier State* Line that connects Indianapolis and Chicago. Currently, local people seeking to ride the *Cardinal* Line can board it in Cincinnati, OH (about 40 miles from Oxford) or in Connersville, IN (about 25 miles from Oxford). (Reprinted with permission of the National Association of Railroad Passengers.)

Wind Powering Trains in Netherlands -- All electric passenger trains in the Netherlands are powered entirely by the wind. Dutch railway company NS ushered in this new era of green transportation one year ahead of schedule. Renewable energy advocates hope the early success will inspire transportation planners to incorporate wind-powered trains in other high speed rail projects around the globe, including in the United States. NS, one of the Netherlands' largest railway companies, carries 600,000 passengers daily.

Writes All Aboard Indiana Reader Brad Anderson -- "I was down in Orlando last week (January 2-6) and saw a new train station being constructed south of the airport that will connect to a new terminal. Didn't know if you have been following this project called Brightline. Runs from Orlando to Coco

Beach then down to Miami." Brad, yes, *All Aboard Indiana* is covering *Brightline*. Readers can learn more at <http://allaboardflorida.com/stations/orlando>

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

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