

# ALL ABOARD

# INDIANA

The Official Newsletter of the

**Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance**

**Special Edition** March 2017

## Indiana Products Offered on New *Hoosier State*

By Donald Yehle

A Noblesville man is serving Indiana popcorn and two Munster-brewed beers are available for sale to passengers on the 'new' *Hoosier State*.

Joe Hughes, lead service attendant for Amtrak, got the call to serve passengers March 1 when Amtrak launched its *Hoosier State* café car. Bags of sweet and salty 'Kettlecorn,' produced in Popcorn, Indiana, are the first Indiana product to be sold.

Three Floyds Brewing of Munster has two beers on board the train that connects Indianapolis with Chicago. Alpha King and Yum Yum Ale are among the beers being sold to passengers as they ride the 196 miles between these two major Midwestern cities.

Amtrak officials hope there will be more state products available. For now, though, Hughes is taking orders for an angus burger and a Hebrew National hot dog. Jimmy Dean's sausage, egg, and cheese sandwich is a popular breakfast product available on the train.

While on this special assignment, Hughes is enjoying a commute of negligible miles. Normally, the 18-year Amtrak veteran works the *Missouri River Runner*, which connects St. Louis and Kansas City.

Two, Horizon-series coach cars, each seating 68 passengers, help make up the train. For March only, Amtrak is also showcasing the one and only dome car it owns – the (continued)



Noblesville's Joe Hughes (left) serves a Hoosier State customer.



Alpha King, Yum Yum (center, first row)



Kettlecorn, produced in Popcorn, Indiana

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*("Indiana Products Offered..." continued from page 1)* Great Dome "Ocean View" – as part of the *Hoosier State* consist.

It took a collaborative effort to ready the new train for its inaugural runs – and some good fortune, too. Bad weather, including tornadoes, touched down in the Midwest Tuesday night (February 28) and could have had an adverse effect on launch day, but didn't as both the northbound and southbound trains arrived on time or ahead of schedule.

Coaches and the café car were spotless. There was a sense of pride on the faces of Amtrak management that rode the train. Ideas to improve the route were shared – how do we reduce the run time, for example. An Amtrak public relations official sat briefly with a Lafayette passenger to inform her of details from the 2016 *Cardinal* conference in Cincinnati.

A commemorative *Hoosier State* water bottle was presented to all passengers along with an Indiana map and other rail literature. A flyer announcing three March-only promotions was distributed, as well.

Promotions are:

- A "buy-one, get-one" fare, so two adult passengers can ride for the price of one.
- The "Ocean View" dome car is part of the *Hoosier State* train consist during March only.
- Complimentary access to Union Station's Legacy Club – a \$20 value – is available

Amtrak Vice President Joe McHugh's letter recognized Indiana partners – communities on the route and the State of Indiana – for developing this service and promoting this extremely vital corridor.

**TWO ADULTS RIDE FOR THE PRICE OF ONE --** The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and Amtrak are offering Hoosiers (and other rail users) a "BUY-ONE, GET-ONE" fare for the entire month of March. The offer is available on your *Hoosier State* train, which operates four-days-a-week between Indianapolis and Chicago.

See the Deals tab on Amtrak.com for applicable requirements for fare code V216. Or, dial 1-800-USA-RAIL. When Julie answers, ask to speak with an agent.

## The "Ocean View" Travels Indiana's Western Corridor This Month Only

Hoosiers have a rare opportunity in March to see the Indiana countryside aboard Amtrak's only dome car. The car is affectionately known as "Ocean View." As the unidentified passengers pictured above learned, the rail car features an upper level with windows on all sides.



*Indy-bound passengers aboard Amtrak's Ocean View.*

"There is no extra cost as seats in the car are unreserved and available on a first-come, first-serve basis," said spokesmen for INDOT, Amtrak, and the community partners of Crawfordsville, Lafayette, Rensselaer, Tippecanoe County, and West Lafayette.

Rail buffs who like to photograph America's trains will notice the "Ocean View" wears stripes comprised of equal width red, white, and blue. The repainting was done in honor of the National Passenger Rail Corporation's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

History buffs would want to know the car was built in 1955 by the Budd Company for the Great Northern Railroad. "Passengers (who purchase either business class or coach tickets) are encouraged to rotate in and out of the Great Dome to allow all to enjoy this unique experience," said two media relations spokesmen, INDOT's Will Wingfield and Amtrak's Marc Magliari.

Rail Executive Will Gawin of LM&M Railroad (below) was also an "Ocean View" rider both southbound and northbound on March 1. His company operates a scenic, public dinner train every Saturday throughout the year in southwestern Ohio.



*Will Gawin, operator of a scenic railroad in southwestern Ohio.*



## Free Access to Union Station's Legacy Club in March

*Hoosier State* passengers can enjoy free access in March to the Legacy Club at Union Station -- a \$20 value. As detailed in the February issue of *All Aboard Indiana*, the Legacy Club offers priority boarding, snacks, magazines, happy hour (12:30 to 2 and again from 4:30 to 6). Also included is free Wi Fi, charging stations, rest rooms, gaming consoles, CNN, Starbucks coffee and Tazo Tea, says IPRA Board Member Bill Malcolm.



The Legacy Club – not to be confused with the Metropolitan Lounge – can be found in the southwest corner of the Great Hall. It's a quiet place, perfect to relax while waiting for your next departure, adds Malcolm, who is a frequent Amtrak and transit user.

The Legacy Club is open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven-days-a-week. Metra and other Amtrak passengers will be found enjoying the space, which is a few steps away from the National Passenger Rail Corporation's ticketing kiosk and the Metropolitan Lounge – 13,500 square feet, double its previous size, and available to Amtrak's sleeping car passengers and business class customers, including those riding the *Hoosier State*.

## Why a Special Edition of *All Aboard Indiana*

By Steve Coxhead



It's unheard of for rail passengers to be offered three perks, and especially all at once. Two tickets for the price of one. A ride in a full length great dome car. Free access to the Legacy Club.

INDOT and Amtrak are investing significant resources to welcome Hoosiers to this new edition of their state train. Iowa Pacific, working with INDOT and Amtrak, did a marvelous job of bringing modern amenities to the train – something that has been well-documented. Rail passengers have been pleased at the commitment of Iowa Pacific to the corridor and should be equally pleased to see Amtrak expanding its commitment to the corridor. This expanded commitment includes a café car (complete menu later in this issue).

Investment in the *Hoosier State* was included in the draft state budget. The budget bill has passed the House and is now in the Senate. The new budget should be finalized and ready for the Governor's signature by the end of April.

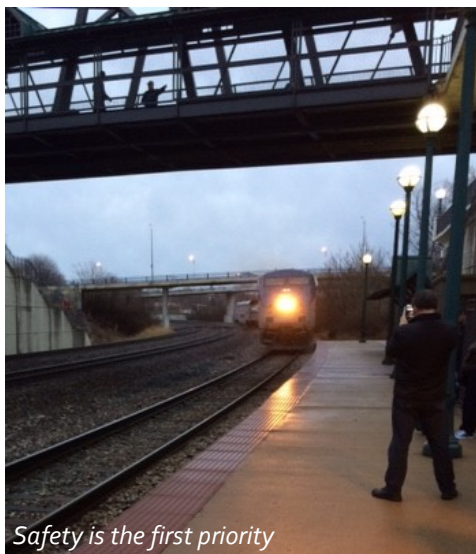
We are encouraging Hoosiers to take advantage of these promotions. This is the best way to demonstrate the value this train adds to the communities it serves. Of course, Hoosiers are always encouraged to reach out to their state legislators, personally, to express their views on matters of concern.

Down the road (or rails) many things are possible. The physical infrastructure could be improved to significantly improve travel times and capacity. Doubling the frequency (two trains in each direction, each day) could make travel planning considerably easier, and encourage Chicago area visitors to journey to Lafayette, Indianapolis, and other points on the line. Much will depend on the availability of funding, including possible, future, federal funding for infrastructure improvement.

To contact state lawmakers, go to <https://iga.in.gov/legislative/find-legislators/>

## Some Things You'll Want To Know About Your Train

By Joe Krause



The *Cardinal* and the *Hoosier State* offer passenger rail service between Indianapolis and Chicago seven-days-a-week. Those of us who support the trains are most interested in safety first, as is Amtrak.

(continued)

Safety is the first priority

("Some Things You'll Want To Know..." continued from page 3)  
**Stay clear of the tracks when the train approaches any station, as passengers are doing in the photo on the previous page, taken at Lafayette on March 1.**

Passenger rail volunteers, like myself, along with train engineers and conductors want to make train travel enjoyable, as it was March 1 for Lafayette passengers Abhilash Vuppala and Pamela Jones, pictured at right waiting for Train 851.



Passengers are important.

That day, the *Hoosier State* left Lafayette on time shortly after 7:30 a.m. and arrived in Chicago five minutes early – at 10 a.m. The early arrival allowed Mr. Vuppala to make his CTA connection to O'Hare International for a long flight to the West Coast and a job interview in San Jose, California. (We're keeping our fingers crossed for the native of India, who had just earned a master's degree in Industrial Engineering at Purdue.)

Pamela Jones, who currently calls Lafayette home, was traveling to Chicago for a funeral that afternoon. A frequent train traveler, Jones is in Lafayette to help care for four grandchildren. With family also in Cincinnati, she welcomes hearing the news of ongoing discussions by rail advocates in West Virginia, Ohio, and Indiana plus Amtrak professionals about making the *Cardinal* into a seven-day train.

Safe, frequent, reliable, convenient, and if possible, pleasant travel, is what we work toward. Julius Walker, another Lafayette-based passenger assistant volunteer, encourages passengers to arrive at any Amtrak station 30 minutes before scheduled departure. We also encourage passengers to join effective, rail advocacy groups like the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance.

## Indiana Among 18 States Providing Short-Distance, Intercity Rail

By Donald Yehle

Effective in 2008, Federal law requires any train route 750 miles or less to be funded by the state in which it operates. The *Hoosier State*, a route of 196 miles, falls into that cate-

gory. "To promote reliability, the locomotives and railcars used for this train are part of pool used for other Amtrak services in the Midwest," Amtrak executives told passengers in a "welcome aboard" announcement on March 1.

**Food and beverage service – including alcohol -- continues from earlier services but under a different format. Amtrak is "now responsible for all elements of the Hoosier State trains," riders are learning.**

CAFÉ MENU	
– BREAKFAST SPECIALTIES –	
Bagel with Cream Cheese	2.75
Blueberry Muffin	3.00
Cinnamon Roll	3.00
Donut Holes	3.00
Jimmy Dean Breakfast Sandwich	4.50
– HEALTHY OPTIONS –	
Fruit & Granola Yogurt Parfait	3.75
Mixed Fresh Fruit Cup	4.25
Salsa Hummus with Pretzel Crisps	4.50
Cheese & Cracker Tray	5.50
– SNACKS –	
Lay's, Better Made or Vito's Chips	2.25
Roll Gold Pretzels	2.25
Planters Peanuts	2.25
Doritos Queso Butter Cake	2.50
Planters Smoked Almonds	2.75
Cup of Noodles	2.75
Bitterman's Cookies or Mars Candies	2.75
Pretzelhaus Salted Pretzel with Nacho Cheese	3.00
– COMBOS & SANDWICHES –	
<small>Combos include a standard beverage and a bag of Better Made or Vito's Chips. Upgrade to a premium beverage for \$1.00.</small>	
COMBO #1	10.50
CHOICE OF:	
• Chicken Pesto Wrap	
• Smoked Turkey and Muenster on Marble Rye	
Entree Alone	7.50
COMBO #2	8.50
CHOICE OF:	
• Hebrew National Hot Dog	
• Boneless Buffalo Chicken Tenders	
Entree Alone	5.50
COMBO #3	9.50
CHOICE OF:	
• DiGiorno Pizza (Cheese or Peppersoni)	
• Angus Cheeseburger	
• Ham and Cheddar on Pretzel Bun	
• Vegan Burger	
Entree Alone	6.50
COMBO #4	7.50
• White Castle Cheeseburgers	
Entree Alone	4.50

Breakfast, anyone?



Sandwiches and Combos (above)

On board, "for purchase" food options are divided into four categories – breakfast specialties, healthy options, snacks, and combos & sandwiches. You're encouraged to peruse the café menu (above) and photos at left for your favorite sandwich or snack.

Passengers with disabilities will find the two, Horizon-series coaches accommodating. "Railcars also have power outlets, reading lights and tray tables at each seat, with free cellular-based, trademarked Amtrak Connect Wi-Fi," INDOT (continued)



*("Indiana Strong Among 18 States..." continued from page 4)*  
and Amtrak announced days before the launch.

In its news release, the Wi Fi – so important to a new generation of railroad passengers – combines mobile data from multiple carriers along the track. Baggage – up to four per customer -- can be stowed above each seat, while racks are available at the end of each car for larger items, it was announced.

***Have a dog or cat weighting 20 pounds or less? For \$25 each way, your pet can travel to your destination in a soft-sided carrier, Hoosier State riders are learning.***

One-way, adult ticket prices are as follows:

Indy-Chicago, \$25 to \$48

Crawfordsville-Chicago, \$25-\$47

Lafayette-Chicago, \$23-\$45

Rensselaer-Chicago, \$17-\$30

Dyer-Chicago, \$12-\$22

**REMEMBER: PURCHASE ONE ADULT TICKET, GET A SECOND HOOSIER STATE TICKET FOR FREE DURING THE ENTIRE MONTH OF MARCH!**

Children, 2-12 years old, are half price. Seniors and students qualify for 15 percent off. By booking tickets 14 days out, saver fares are up to 20 percent off.

**One-way business class tickets are available, as well, for the combined cost of a coach ticket plus:**

**\$21, Indy/Crawfordsville to Chicago**

**\$20, Lafayette to Chicago**

**\$14, Rensselaer/Dyer to Chicago**

Business class seats are located in the café car. Here are your perks:

Six single seats on one side of the aisle

Or, six, side-by-side seats.

Extra leg room

Leather seating surfaces, foot-rests and leg-rests

Complimentary coffee and tea; food and alcoholic beverages available for purchase

Complimentary newspaper, plus digital *Washington Post* for everyone

Use of Chicago's Metropolitan Lounge

25 percent bonus for Amtrak Guest Rewards members.



## Not Convinced, Yet?

Metropolitan Lounge customers – business class and sleeping car folks – enjoy a mid-day, complimentary, wine and cheese party. Three cheeses – Swiss, Cheddar, and Pepper Jack – are served. Eight veggies are offered, as well. They are: Broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, green peppers, red peppers, and tomatoes.

Your **Hoosier State** train travels northbound on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings.

Your **Hoosier State** train travels southbound on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings.

**Book a ticket and see what your state tax dollars are providing!**

Book a ticket and see what the communities of Crawfordsville, Lafayette, Rensselaer, Tippecanoe County, and West Lafayette are also helping to finance!

## Contributors

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## For More Information

This is a special edition of *All Aboard Indiana*, 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](http://www.indianahighspeedrail.org)

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## Discounts

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

AAA and NARP members save 10% off Amtrak tickets at [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com) if booked three or more days in advance.