

Lafayette Volunteers Help Passengers After CSX Derailment

By Donald Yehle

An overnight CSX train derailment in Rensselaer last month caused disruption for Amtrak passengers. *Hoosier State* passengers were affected.

According to news reports, 16 freight train cars left the tracks on Thursday, December 21. As a precaution, residents in some Rensselaer homes were evacuated for several hours that night. No injuries were reported

High fructose corn syrup and petroleum distillates were products being transported.

Passengers on both the Northbound *Hoosier State* (Train #851) and Southbound *Hoosier State* (Train #850) experienced disruption the following day (Friday, December 22).

Lafayette Station Volunteers Joe Krause and Julius Walker became informed of the situation when making their normal 6:01 a.m. phone call to Indianapolis that Friday morning. Amtrak's Indianapolis-based station attendant informed Krause and Walker the northbound *Hoosier State* would only travel from Indianapolis to Lafayette where the train would be terminated.

All incoming 65 passengers de-boarded and joined 37 Lafayette passengers on two Amtrak-arranged motor coaches to complete the trek to Chicago Union Station. Both buses went directly to Chicago, as there were no passengers getting on or off in either Rensselaer or Dyer.

"There were some anxious moments among a very few passengers about ever getting to Chicago. When the motor coaches arrived around 8:15 a.m. (45 minutes later than desired), passengers' concerns quieted," Krause said.

Two Amtrak employees, a third volunteer (Daniel Flavin), Walker, and Krause were available to answer questions and assist passengers that morning.

Both Krause and Walker were uncharacteristically on hand in Lafayette Friday night to greet passengers on incoming motor coaches from Chicago who normally would have been riding the southbound *Hoosier State*.

Those whose destination wasn't Lafayette transferred to the Amtrak consist at (continued)



INDOT photos show both the derailed CSX train and the cleanup efforts.

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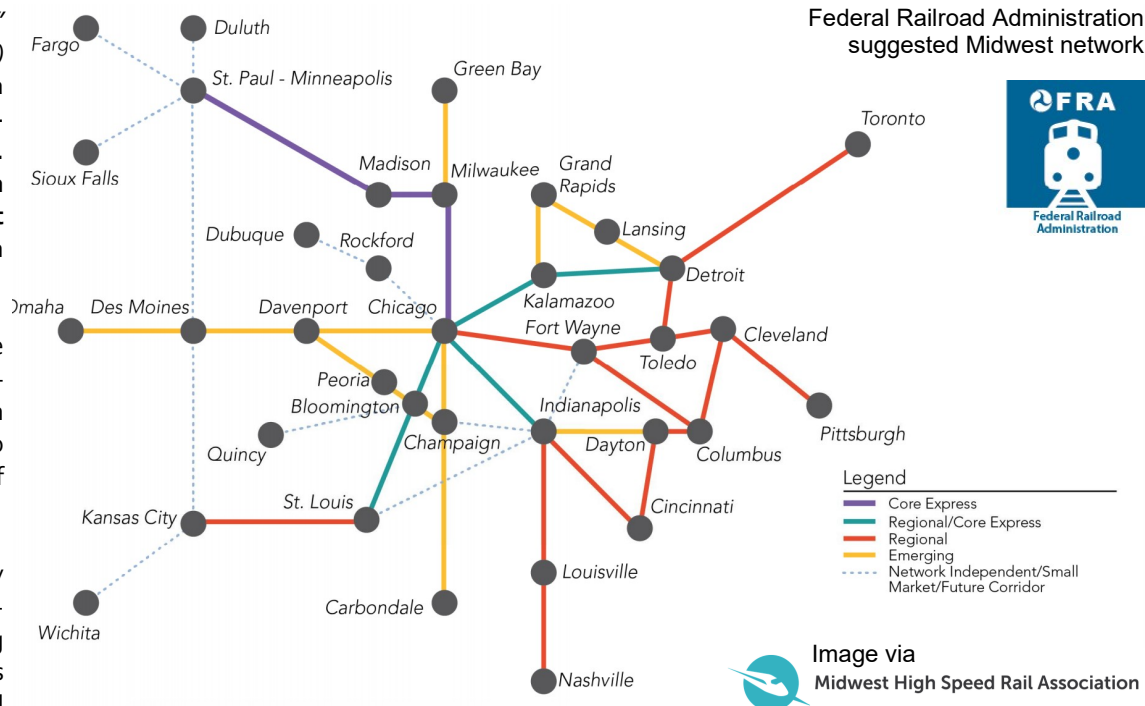
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("Lafayette Volunteers..." continued from page 1) around 10:15 p.m. for a return trip to Indianapolis via Crawfordsville. (The consist was held in Brookston throughout the day in anticipation of the return trip.)

Krause was pleased the traveling public was patient. "Passengers were in a good mood with no significant outbursts of impatience," he said.

The long day finally ended, with another volunteer shift upcoming seven hours later. As always, Walker and Krause called Indianapolis that Saturday morning to learn the number of northbound passengers expected, including in business class, plus the name of the engineer, conductor, and assistant conductor.

Thankfully, the Saturday morning train continued through Lafayette to the Windy City.



Ohio Increases Transit Budget, AAO Reports

By Donald Yehle

From time to time, it's worthwhile to see what goals neighboring passenger rail associations are pursuing.

According to Executive Director Ken Prendergast, "All Aboard Ohio has a new organizational strategy, including a more multi-modal agenda for the near future."

While we wait to learn more about that agenda, Hoosiers similarly join our friends from Ohio in waiting for the Federal Rail Association (FRA) to release in March a "draft report of the Midwest Regional Rail Plan to identify and prioritize promising passenger rail routes for development."

Based on four FRA stakeholder workshops held last year, the following proposed passenger rail routes show promise for the people of Ohio. They are:

Pittsburgh-Cleveland-Toledo-Detroit-Chicago
Cincinnati-Indianapolis-Chicago
Columbus-Ft. Wayne-Chicago
Cleveland-Columbus-Dayton-Cincinnati

"While funding battles remain, the state (of Ohio) last year boosted transit funding for the first time in 17 years.

"All Aboard Ohio raised \$20,000 and hired a government affairs consultant to give you a louder voice," Prendergast says. (continued)

In the News

By Bill Malcolm

Longtime ally and legislative leader State Senator Brandt Hershman is leaving for a DC law firm. Very sad for us. He was a savior.

Amtrak (Pacific) NW disaster is problematical. Happily, at 39 mph the Hoosier State won't be going fast any time soon.

Illinois still working on its 110-mph plan -- awaiting Positive Train Control (PTC) per the *Chicago Trib* story yesterday (in late December). Much of the upgraded track has been in place since 2012.

Don't miss my pics of Denver's Union station on our FB page, Hoosiers for Passenger Rail. I was just out there. It is a gem.

Happy New Year to all!

("Ohio Increases Transit Budget..." continued from page 2) Additionally, a gubernatorial election looms in Ohio and with it, "an opportunity to elect a governor who supports passenger rail and public transit investment.

"We are making trains and transit part of the gubernatorial debate," he continues.

An alternatives analysis/service development plan has begun for the Columbus-Fort Wayne-Chicago corridor. "It's the first step in the project development process for major transportation investments.

"Look for public input meetings coming up in 2018," Prendergast writes.

One major event in May is on All Aboard Ohio's calendar. It's the annual Train Day in Toledo, May 12. "Thousands of people show up each year to celebrate railroads," he says.

Our friends in Ohio also publish an e-edition newsletter. "We encourage people to share the newsletter to inform more Ohioans about rail/transit developments and All Aboard Ohio," Prendergast concludes.

Look, Listen & Live: Operation Lifesaver

Courtesy, Operation Lifesaver—Indiana

Freight trains do not travel on a predictable schedule; schedules for passenger trains change. Always expect a train at every highway-rail intersection.

Train tracks are private property, no matter which railroad owns them. Trains have the right of way 100 percent of the time – over ambulances, fire engines, cars, the police, and pedestrians.



Photo via Operation Lifesaver Indiana website



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If there are rails on the railroad ties, assume that the track is in use, even if there are weeds or the tracks look "rusty."

A typical locomotive is approximately 400,000 pounds or 200 tons. When 100 railcars are added to the locomotive, the train can weight approximately 6,000 tons. The weight ratio of an automobile to a train is proportional to a soda can and an automobile.

A train may extend three feet or more outside the steel rail; this makes the safety zone for pedestrians well beyond the rails themselves.

Trains cannot stop quickly. It is a simple law of physics: the huge weight and size of the train and the speed of the train dictate how quickly it can stop under ideal conditions. A 100-ton freight train traveling at 55 miles per hour will need more than a mile to stop – that's approximately 18 football fields – once the train is set into emergency braking.

There are 173,000 miles of railroad tracks in the United States. (Source: Association of American Railroads.)

Trains can move in either direction at any time. Trains are sometimes pushed by locomotives instead of being pulled. This is especially true in commuter and light rail passenger service.

Modern trains are quieter than ever, with no telltale "clackety-clack." Also, an approaching train will always be closer and moving faster than you think.

Cross tracks ONLY at designated pedestrian or roadway crossings. Observe and obey all warning signs and signals.

Never walk down a train track; it's illegal and it's dangerous. By the time a locomotive engineer can see a trespasser or a vehicle on the tracks, it is too late.

The train cannot stop quickly enough to avoid a collision.

Remember: Rail and recreation do not mix!

Breaking News: **STB Issues Second Decision on Railbanking Nickel Plate**

By Logan Day

January 5, 2018

The Surface Transportation Board (STB) issued its second decision concerning the proceeding initiated by Fishers, Noblesville, and Hamilton County to railbank the Nickel Plate Line.



[To Read the Decision, Click Here](#)

Your Efforts Are Paying Off!

The STB is accepting all 112 filings submitted so far -- against the wishes of Fishers, Noblesville, and Hamilton County - into the record of the proceeding.

Hamilton County and the two Hamilton County cities (Fishers, Noblesville) may submit one final reply. The case is then closed for a final decision to be rendered.

Of those filings:

- **94 OPPOSED** railbanking, including the **Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance**
- 8 were from Fishers, Noblesville, and Hamilton County
- **4 SUPPORTED** railbanking
- 6 were **NEUTRAL** or supplemental motions to a filing.

"Because of the significant public interest in this proceeding and in the interest of a complete record that embodies the full spectrum of interests involved, the service requirements of 49 C.F.R. § 1104.12(a) will be waived for all pleadings and letters received by the Board as of the date of issuance of this decision, and **all of those pleadings and letters will therefore be accepted into the record.**"

While they did deny STNKP's motion to suspend and investigate the proceeding as well as an additional request for an extension of time, **their decision specifically highlights the importance they've placed on "[the] public's interest...and... a complete record that embodies the full spectrum of interests involved."**

This is a HUGE milestone and we have YOU to thank!

THANK YOU to our supporters who have been so active in this issue!

Keep it up and PLEASE continue to INVITE others to "LIKE" and follow our page.

Thanks, again. I hope you had a very Merry Christmas and happy new year!

Office Seeker Supports Saving the Nickel Plate

By Donald Yehle

The Nickel Plate Railroad has the potential to improve our economy by offering railroad excursions to Colts' games and the Indy 500, says Garen Bragg, a May 2018 Republican primary candidate for State House District 29 (Carmel, Fishers, Noblesville, and Westfield).

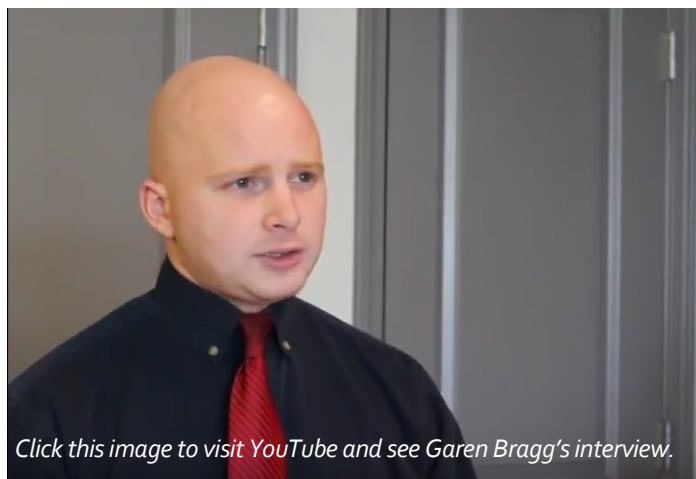
It holds great cultural and historic significance to Hoosiers who deserve to be heard.

"The idea (to support the Nickel Plate) came from conversations from the people in our area," he says.

Bragg has made this an agenda and platform item. Logan Day of the Save the Nickel Plate organization interviewed him in early January.

The Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA) supports preserving the train corridor – rather than converting it to a trail – as it also offers a commuter rail corridor, says Steve Coxhead, IPRA president.

(For a detailed background on this local and state rail issue, read the September issue of *All Aboard Indiana*, available in "Resources" at www.indianahighspeedrail.org)



Click this image to visit YouTube and see Garen Bragg's interview.

Peru Mayor Hosting IPRA on Thursday, February 1

By Donald Yehle

Gabriel Greer, mayor of Peru since January 2016 and an ardent supporter of passenger rail, welcomes the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA) board and its membership to his office on Thursday, February 1, at 11 a.m. EST.

Peru is in North Central Indiana at the intersection of U.S. Highways 31 and 24.

Former Amtrak conductor Phil Streby will give a 15-minute presentation on how passenger rail can be an economic springboard for communities. Streby, IPRA'S treasurer and a Peru resident, also will welcome questions.

The Peru meeting will be the first of six scheduled 2018 IPRA board meetings.

Persons needing more information about the meeting may contact Streby at (765) 473-6561. Individuals needing specific directions to the city hall building (35 S. Broadway) may call (765) 472-2400.



Mayor Gabriel Greer of Peru
(Image via Peru website)

CP's Holiday Train Travels Northern Indiana

By W. Dennis Hodges

"It was a beautiful sight and we had a great turnout for the occasion," says Tena Woenker, Town Manager, Waterloo, Indiana. Around the midnight hour of November 30 / December 1, a crowd of nearly 450 people from around the Waterloo area lined up along the tracks to watch the amazing and colorful "Holiday Train" of the Canadian Pacific Railroad (CP) slowly pass by.

"Because the CP does not own tracks in Indiana, the Holiday Train could not stop in this state," says Christine Brown, manager of the company's Community Connect.

However, Woenker says, "The trains slowed down on its way through Waterloo, and passengers on the train, which included some well know entertainers, were able to yell out a hearty Merry Christmas to the crowd."

Tena added, "In the tradition of the Holiday Train, the



town collected a pick-up bed of canned goods for our local soup kitchen."

Friends of the Depot, a Waterloo volunteer group, helped to coordinate the late night and festive event. Both the Town officials and volunteer group are looking to do this as an annual event, and to improve on what was successfully accomplished this year (2017).

Except for Indiana, two Holiday Trains "stopped in about 170 communities during a three-week run in Canada and the United State," Brown says.

She added, "Hopefully, these communities will inspire others to donate to their own Food Pantry." Collecting food for local charities is the purpose of the railroad event.

Organized in 1999, "the Holiday Train program is all about local food banks and food shelves and the critical role they play in our communities," says Keith Creel, CP's President and Chief Executive Officer.

"People come for the beautifully-lit train and stay for the incredible show – all in the name of community."

He adds, "The holiday season is the best time of the year, and we look forward to bringing together thousands of Canadians and Americans this season for this incredibly important cause and a great time."

Photos courtesy of Facebook.



NARP Is Now RPA Rail Passengers Association Unveils Simple, Modern Look

By Donald Yehle

With nearly 400 Hoosiers holding membership in the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP), it's worth emphasizing the rebranding of our nation passenger rail advocacy group. At Rail Nation Chicago last November, President Jim Mathews announced the need to "Celebrate 50 Years of Passenger Rail Advocacy with a New View – The Passenger's View."



NARP President Jim Mathews

The National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) is now the Rail Passengers Association.

A news release was issued to explain the re-branding. NARP is important for rail passengers in America, said Jim Mathews, NARP president and CEO for nearly three years.

"If you look closely at our (new) logo, you'll see it is reminiscent of a train window. That puts you in the passenger seat. Our branding is cleaner, easier to say, and focused on the passenger, not the train. After all, we represent people, not train companies or transit agencies," he said. Members are invited to send personal photos to be used in



the organization's advocacy efforts. Get acquainted with NARP's new look, by visiting the redesigned website and by linking up with fellow railroad advocates on social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn).

Great thought and consideration went into the change. Extensive research was conducted. Outside experts were consulted. Current long-time members provided feedback and potential members were surveyed to make sure the "new look is simple, yet modern," Mathews said.

In further explaining the change, the rail passengers association leader studied the past 50 years and looked forward to the next 50 years, while emphasizing "the National Association of Railroad Passengers is not going away."

"We are still NARP. We will always BE NARP. We are NOT changing our name. We are changing our brand. Just as

Amtrak is the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, the Rail Passengers Association is the National Association of Railroad Passengers," Mathews said.

Politicians in Washington have threatened the very existence of trains over the last 50 years. "Our voices have been raised when services needed improvement, when expansion efforts were needed," he continued.

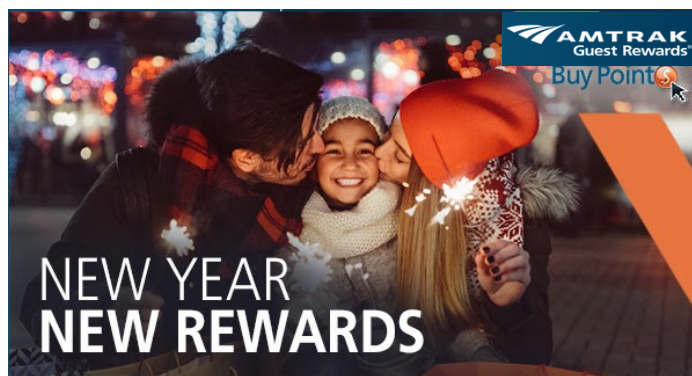
NARP has a proud history. NARP members have built a strong organization that has been a "crucial part of the fight (for trains)," Mathews said.

Be optimistic in working to expand and strengthen the national rail network going forward over the next 50 years.

"Today, more than ever, trains are an important part of the interconnected transportation system. We know that rail drives development locally and propels regional economies forward.

"As America considers how and where to invest our transportation and infrastructure dollars, rail needs to be at the center of the conversation," the CEO offered.

In conversations with local, state, regional, and national political leaders, Rail Passenger Association members are asked to remember the following: *(continued)*



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("NARP Is Now RPA" continued from page 6)

Old, antiquated ideas about rail are still a threat.
Political leaders (including some in the White House) still want to cut funding for Amtrak.
Rural rail passengers, where travel options are limited, could be hurt the most.
Poor on-time performance plagues America's trains.
Old and outdated passenger rail equipment and systems are in desperate need of repair and maintenance.
NARP can win the fight to improve rail connectivity.
Rail riders expect and deserve better service.
Let's raise our "pro rail" voices louder – locally, in our states, regionally, and nationally.
Let's make sure the needs and concerns of rail passengers are heard.
NARP's new brand reflects the same mission.

Two RPA Members Among Fatalities in Cascades Derailment

Courtesy, Rail Passengers Association

Washington, D.C. – "The passenger rail community is shocked at the loss of two Rail Passengers Association members Jim Hamre (also a board member) and Zach Willhoite, who reports have confirmed are among the three fatalities in the Amtrak Cascades derailment that occurred last month near Tacoma, Washington.

"Both men were devoted to their family and friends, as well as passionate advocates for passenger rail and advancing the advocacy work of RPA. While NARP waits on the National Transportation Safety Board's investigation into the cause of the accident, the entire Rail Passengers Association (and the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance) mourn their loss.

"Our deepest sympathies go out to each of their families," RPA said in its statement.

NTSB Issues Preliminary Report on Amtrak Cascades Derailment

Courtesy, Rail Passengers Association

Last month's Amtrak Cascades' derailment could have been prevented using Positive Train Control (PTC), a technology that can remotely monitor, slow and stop trains that are speeding, according to a preliminary report issued by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

The report said, "In this accident, PTC would have notified the engineer of train 501 about the speed reduction for the curve; if the engineer did not take appropriate action to



NTSB Photo of Cascades derailment

control the train's speed, PTC would have applied the train brakes to maintain compliance with the speed restriction and to stop the train."

The NTSB previously said that the passenger train was moving at 78 mph in a 30-mph zone around a curve. The excessive speed saw Amtrak train 501 jump the tracks and derail, resulting in the deaths of three passengers, including RPA members Jim Hamre and Zack Willhoite.

"The NTSB report only strengthens the need to implement PTC on all passenger rail services," said Rail Passengers Association President and CEO Jim Mathews.

"Congress created an unfunded mandate on PTC, to be carried out independently by transit agencies of varying resources and capabilities, some of which cannot afford to meet the 2018 deadline set by Congress.

"This is not acceptable and the traveling public, who are our friends and family, deserves more," he concluded.

The NTSB also revealed in its report that the Amtrak derailment cost \$40.4 million in damages.

Transportation Secretary Reminds Rail Executives of December 31 PTC Deadline

Courtesy, Rail Passengers Association

U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary Elaine Chao sent a letter to executives of Class I, intercity railroads, and state and local transit agencies as a [reminder and encouraging them to utilize PTC](#) before the December 31, 2018 deadline mandated by Congress.

Secretary Chao said in the letter, dated December 27, that the federal agency is concerned with safety as a top priority and it's expected that each agency "is taking all possible measures to ensure that it will meet the requirements specified by Congress" regarding implementation of PTC.

Secretary Chao also said in the letter that the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will work with the railroads "to help create an increased level of urgency to underscore the imperative of meeting existing timeline expectations for (continued)

("Transportation Secretary..." continued from page 7) rolling out this critical rail safety technology."

The letters come after U.S. senators from Washington and Oregon, among other states, urged Secretary Chao to hold railroads "accountable" if they fail to implement PTC by the deadline. The request from the senators also came after the Amtrak Cascades derailment in Washington.

Contributors

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National Association of Railroad Passengers – Staff

Operation Lifesaver/Indiana – Jessica Allen Feder

Save the Nickel Plate – Logan Day

Discounts

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

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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
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