

# *THE INDIANA PASSENGER LETTER*

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INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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## *LAFAYETTE MEETING A SUCCESS*

by Phil McGeath

INDARP'S January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting at Lafayette was well attended despite bitterly cold weather. INDARP has held meetings before at the former Big Four depot, but this was our first meeting at the depot's new location. The depot and the depot plaza are a very impressive sight.

John Moisan-Thomas, who is the assistant project manager for the Lafayette Railroad Relation Program, gave an update on the project as well as a tour of the depot. Work is proceeding on the relocation of the two Norfolk Southern lines that pass through Lafayette. The completed CSX relocation eliminated 18 grade crossings, while the NS relocation will eliminate 24. Construction has begun on the Wabash Avenue and 9<sup>th</sup> Street bridges. This summer will mark the beginning of construction of the bridge over US 52, with the work on the State Road 25 bridge to begin in 1997. The former Monon shops, north of town, are being razed in order to provide the new route for NS. At the present time, the new NS right of way is in place north to 9<sup>th</sup> Street.

In addition to being served by the tri-weekly Cardinal, the depot also houses Greyhound intercity bus service that provides three daily trips to Indianapolis and Chicago. City buses also serve the depot facility. INDARP members had an opportunity to see Amtrak's video ticketing kiosk that links Amtrak passengers to agents in Indianapolis. Space in the depot is available for lease by tenants and some businesses have already occupied the site. The city also plans to make space available for use as a community meeting room. The new depot plaza certainly enhances the appearance of downtown Lafayette, we urge you to see it at your convenience!

The INDARP business meeting served as an opportunity to discuss how best INDARP can work to achieve its goals. It was the feeling of many that the key to improved passenger train service in Indiana lies in establishing ties with members of the state legislature. If INDDOT acts at all, it is in a reactive manner, not a proactive one. Therefore it was felt that contacts with state legislators sympathetic to passenger rail offers the greatest chance for positive results. Members were also encouraged to send news items to INDARP for use in the newsletter.

Editors note: I'd like to thank Joe Krause for making the arrangements for our meeting in Lafayette, and Phil McGeath for filling in for me in my absence. Their assistance is greatly appreciated!

## *NORFOLK SOUTHERN LINE FUTURE MORE SECURE*

by Paul Arden

The towns of Fishers and Noblesville have formed a partnership to secure the future of the former Norfolk and Western line from 13<sup>th</sup> Street in Indianapolis to Noblesville. The "Hoosier Heritage Port Authority" has purchased the line and will lease it to an operator to preserve freight service. As far as restoration of passenger or commuter service, an independent study done apparently shows that commuter service would not attract enough passengers to be profitable. But it appears that "limited" services such as the annual Fair Train to the State Fair and special shuttle runs could be profitable. The port authorities current goals are to find an operator to run the line, set guidelines for firms wanting easements for fiber optics, electric lines and other uses of the right of way and to make a connection between where the line ends at 13<sup>th</sup> Street to Union Station. It is estimated that the connection from 13<sup>th</sup> Street to Union Station could cost about \$5 million.

## NEWS FROM NICTD/SOUTH SHORE

by Phil McGeath

As a result of continuing loss of federal funding, NICTD was forced to increase fares on the South Shore in mid-February. The increase ranges from 6-8%, and is only the second fare hike in the past ten years. Previous increases occurred in 1986 and 1992. The increase will be offset, to a degree, by NICTD's decision to no longer charge for parking in the East Chicago and Hammond parking lots.

Service increases are planned to take place in May. A current rush-hour train operating between Hegewisch and Chicago will now originate in Michigan City and make limited stops. It is anticipated that this will produce a reduction in 10-12 minutes from the current running time. Also planned for May is the extension to South Bend of two weekday midday trains that currently terminate at Michigan City. INDARP applauds this move, as it gives NICTD an opportunity to build a market providing intermodal service to airline passengers using the Michiana Regional Transportation Center in South Bend. New schedules will be available around May 1 to reflect the schedule enhancements. Speaking of South Bend, NICTD plans to complete its project of welding rail between Michigan City and South Bend this year.

## GREYHOUND MOVING INTO UNION STATION

by Phil McGeath

Greyhound Lines, Inc. plans to share space in Indianapolis Union Station with Amtrak by the summer of 1996. Greyhound has proposed a five year lease worth over \$155,000 to the city of Indianapolis. In addition, Greyhound has proposed to spend \$200,000 in renovations to accommodate the forty buses that would serve the facility each day. Illini Swallow and American Trailways would also relocate to Union Station.

The move by Greyhound has been the subject of rumor and discussion for a number of years. Federal funding that was used for the transportation center at Union Station, was contingent on the facility serving as a combination bus terminal and rail station. Several bus companies have served the station over the years.

## MICHIGAN TO HOST NARP REGION 6 MEETING

The Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers will host this year's meeting of Region 6 of the National Association of Railroad Passengers. Region 6 consists of NARP members from the states of Indiana, Ohio and Michigan. The meeting is open to the general public.

The meeting will be held on Saturday, March 23 at the St. Regis Hotel in Detroit. The St. Regis is located at 3071 Grand Boulevard, approximately two blocks from the Detroit Amtrak station. The morning session will begin at 8:30. In addition to reports from the three states in Region 6, a presentation will be made by Tim Hoeffner who is the Manager of Passenger and Freight Rail Programs for the Michigan Department of Transportation.

Following lunch, those registered for the meeting will have an opportunity to make an Amtrak round trip between Detroit and Pontiac at no charge. This extension to the Chicago-Detroit corridor is relatively new and should be of great interest for those attending the meeting. The group should arrive back at the St. Regis at approximately 5:00pm.

Registration cost for the meeting, which includes lunch and the train ride, is \$20.00. Those interested in attending should send a check payable to MARP at the following address:

MARP  
P. O. Box 532  
Marquette, MI 49855-0532

The St. Regis Hotel is offering very attractive rates for those attending the meeting. Rates for Friday and/or Saturday are \$69.00 per room. Reservations may be made by calling 1-800-848-4810. Please mention that you will be attending the NARP Region 6 meeting.

Paul Arden of Gary and Phil McGeath of Indianapolis represent Indiana and Region 6 on the NARP Board of Directors.

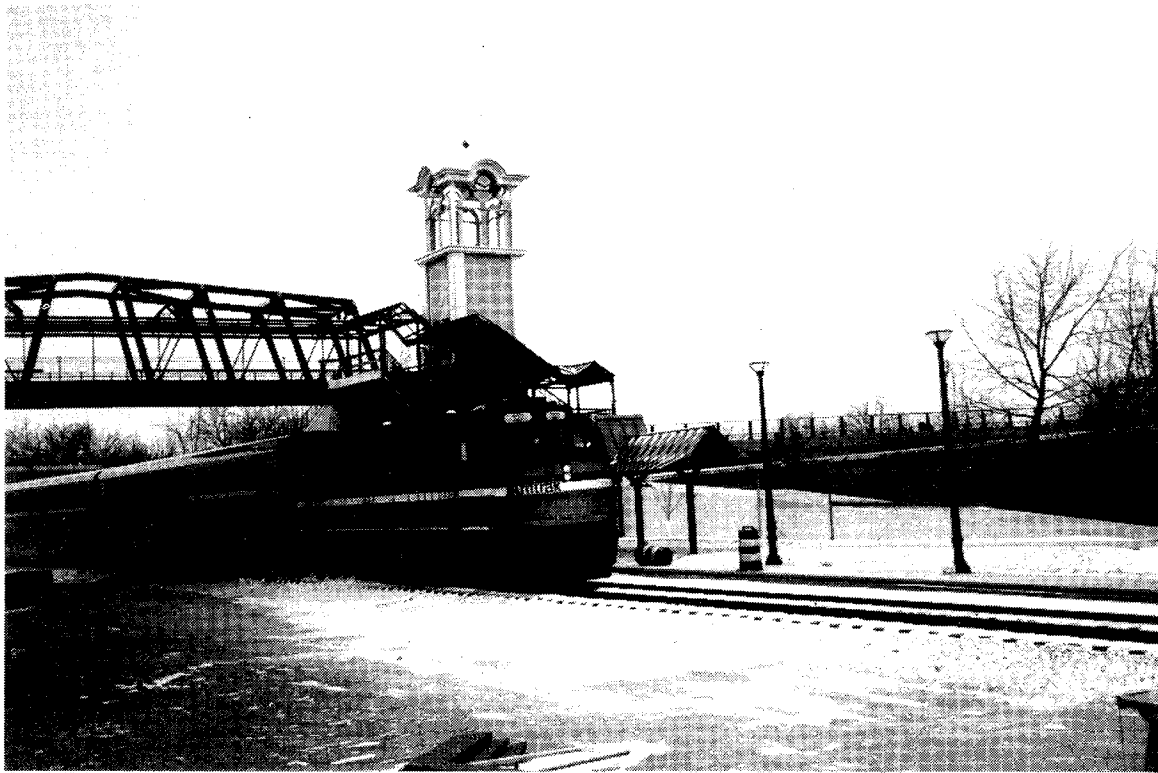
PHOTOS OF JANUARY 27<sup>TH</sup> MEETING IN LAFAYETTE. ALL PHOTOS PHIL MCGEATH.



AMTRAK'S NEW VIDEO TICKETING MACHINE AT LAFAYETTE DEPOT.



FORMER BIG FOUR DEPOT AND DEPOT PLAZA IN LAFAYETTE.



**AMTRAK'S CARDINAL ARRIVING AT FORMER BIG FOUR DEPOT IN LAFAYETTE.**

**ET CETERAS.....**

- Amtrak Beech Grove is converting 20 heritage coaches into new mail/baggage cars for use on various Amtrak routes. The new mail cars, numbered in the 1700 series feature new "Superliner II" type striping, and have one mail door on each side that rolls up, instead of to the side. The conversions will cost \$3 million. The funding for the conversions comes from Amtrak's FY-96 capital budget approved by Amtrak's Board of Directors at their recent Beech Grove meeting. The program means the recall of 16 furloughed Beech Grove employees.
- In other Amtrak equipment news, we understand that Amtrak has made some revisions in its plans for ordering new high speed equipment for service between Washington and Boston. It now appears that 18 electric train sets will be ordered instead of 24. Amtrak intends to go along with plans to order two fossil fuel train sets. A builder has not be selected yet, but Amtrak is seeking a builder who will also help finance part of the project. There are also indications that Amtrak intends to order 24 new electric locomotives to haul conventional equipment when the New Haven-Boston electrification project is completed.
- Amtrak President Tom Downs has appointed Mark Cane as Chief Executive Officer of Amtrak Intercity SBU, based in Chicago. Mr. Cane comes from the Burlington Northern Railroad, where he began is career as a Operations Management trainee and rose to the positions of Vice President, Equipment Management, Vice President, Service Design and finally Vice President, Intermodal. Mr. Cane work for Amtrak during collage as an on-board service attendant. He earned a B. A. from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN, and a M. B. A. from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, MN. He replaces interim CEO Robert VanderClutte, who has returned to his previous position of Vice President, Operations for Amtrak in Philadelphia.
- There will be no spring INDARP meeting this year. We expect that our next meeting will be held during July or August. I'd like to thank every who sent in newspaper clippings and other materials for inclusion in the newsletter. Please continue to keep the information flowing!
- Thanks to everyone who has renewed their membership in INDARP! Also, many thanks to those members who enclosed extra contributions! Please check your mailing label, if 01-96 appears, your membership renewal is due. Please continue to support INDARP!

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**IF 01-96 APPEARS ON YOUR MAILING LABEL,  
YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS DUE. PLEASE RENEW!  
PLEASE NOTE AND USE INDARP'S NEW ADDRESS.**

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/NEW MEMBERSHIP FORM

MY DUES ARE ENCLOSED AS FOLLOWS (PLEASE CHECK THOSE WHICH APPLY):

REGULAR RENEWAL \$10.00

SPOUSE \$5.00

NEW MEMBER \$7.50

EXTRA DONATION

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO *INDARP* AND MAIL TO:

INDARP  
P. O. BOX M661  
GARY, IN 46401

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIPCODE \_\_\_\_\_

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