

THE INDIANA PASSENGER LETTER

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

VOLUME 13 NUMBER 3 MAY 1994

MAJOR RESTRUCTURING OF HOOSIER STATE SCHEDULE

Amtrak's new national timetable that became effective May 1, contains major changes in the schedule of the Hoosier State. In order to better understand the changes, we have reproduced that portion of the timetable dealing with service between Indianapolis and Chicago.

Chicago...Lafayette...Indianapolis

Hoosier State	Hoosier State	Cardinal	◀ Train Name ▶				Hoosier State	Cardinal	Hoosier State	
316	318	50	◀ Train Number ▶				315	51	317	
MoTuThSa	SuWeFr	TuThSa	◀ Days of Operation ▶				SuTuWeFr	MoThSa	MoThSa	
			◀ Train Service ▶							
READ DOWN			▼	Mile		Symbol	▲	READ UP		
Amtrak Thruway Bus Connection—Madison, WI/Chicago, IL—Schedule Below										
2 30P	5 50P	7 40P	Dp	(Conrail) Chicago, IL—Union Sta. * (CT)	0		Ar	11 15A	11 25A 2 25P	
3 34P	6 54P	8 31P		(CSX) Dyer, IN (CT)	28	●		9 51A	9 56A 1 01P	
4 14P	7 34P			Rensselaer, IN (CT)	73	●		9 11A	12 21P	
5 09P	8 29P	10 08P		Lafayette, IN (EST)	121	●		8 20A	8 24A	11 30A
5 39P	8 59P	10 39P		Crawfordsville, IN (EST)	148	●		7 48A	7 51A	10 58A
7 00P	10 20P	11 54P	Ar	(Conrail) Indianapolis, IN (Nashville) (EST)	195		Dp	6 45A	6 45A	9 55A

At first glance it appears that the new schedule has both advantages and disadvantages. A big plus is that there will be an early morning departure from Indianapolis to Chicago seven days a week. A problem is that travel three days per week (Cardinal days) will require a reservation, while the other four (Hoosier State days) will not. You will also note on travel between Indianapolis and Chicago that departure times from Crawfordsville, Lafayette and Dyer vary depending upon the day of the week. The 2:30pm departure from Chicago four days per week is good from the standpoint that it permits earlier arrival times at the passenger's destination. The problem is that it becomes impossible to connect to this train from any long-distance trains from the west, unless one waits for the Cardinal. Of course, on Mondays that option is not available.

So the question is, why did Amtrak change the schedule? The changes between Indianapolis and Chicago make good sense. The service was suffering from the fact that it was only possible to arrive in Chicago three days per week before noon. The later arrival of the Hoosier State allowed little time for same-day activities in Chicago, and often caused problems in making connections to other trains. It would have, no doubt, been better had the Hoosier State continued to depart Chicago at 5:50pm daily. However, this could not be done since there is no crew base for train and engine personnel in Indianapolis. Hoosier State crews are based out of Chicago, the crew bringing the train down one evening takes it back to Chicago the next morning. Federal law mandates a certain amount of rest. A 6:45am departure from Indianapolis would not be possible if the train arrived at 10:20pm the previous evening. Amtrak considered establishing a crew base in Indianapolis, however, that idea was not implemented at this time. We hope that Amtrak will take another look at that possibility in the fall.

NICTD PROPOSES FLAG STOP CONSOLIDATION PLAN

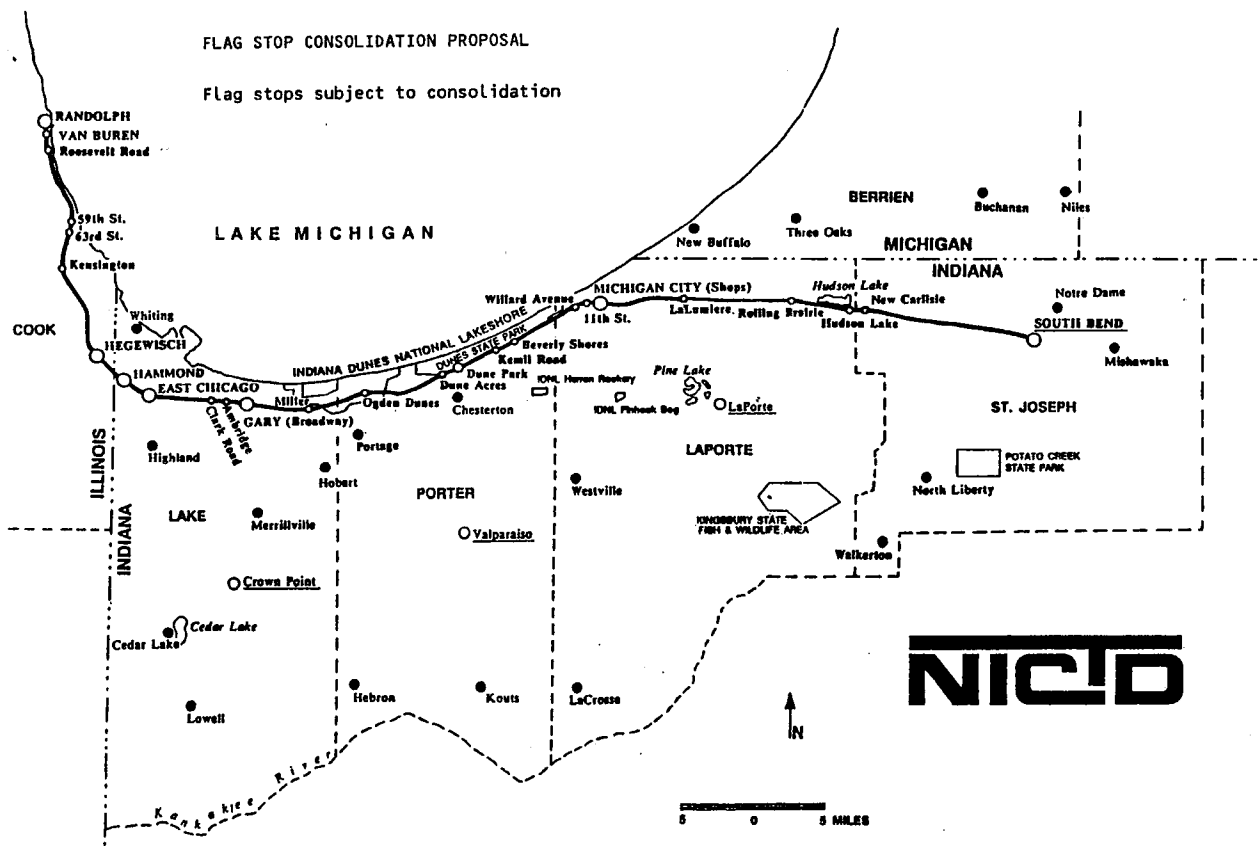
The Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD), owner and operator of the South Shore commuter service held three public hearings in April on its flag stop consolidation proposal. The plan would reduce the number of minor flag stops from 12 to 5. Flag stops to be closed under the proposal include: New Carlisle; Rolling Prairie; LaLumiere near Rolling Prairie; Willard Avenue in Michigan City; Kernil Road near Beverly Shores; Dune Acres near Chesterton and Ambridge in Gary. NICTD must also seek permission from the Interstate Commerce Commission to close the stops.

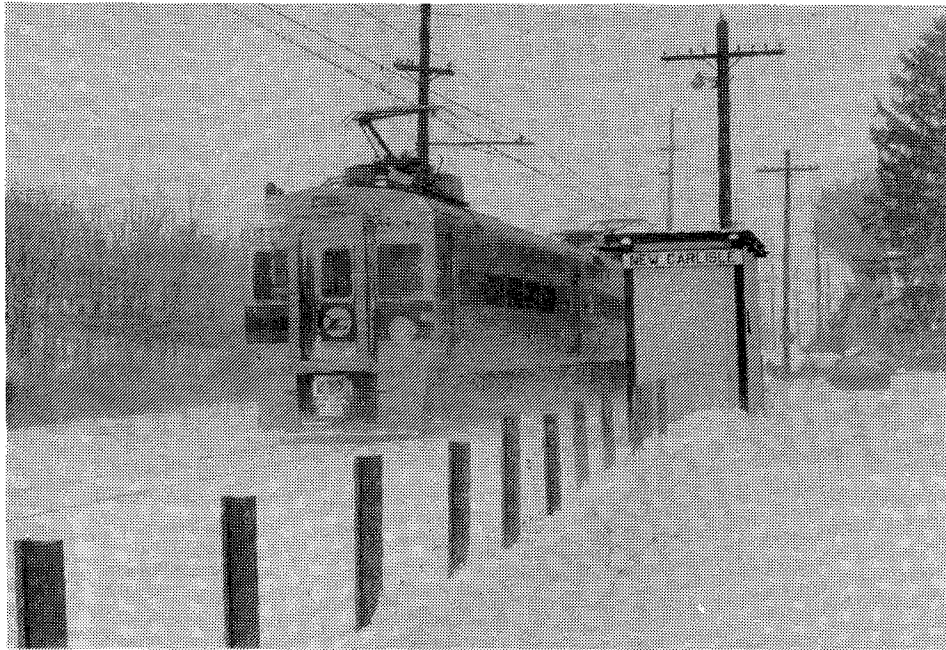
The 7 flag stops under consideration for closing account for less than 0.4% of total weekday westbound passenger boardings. The lightly used stops are either within reasonable proximity to major station stops, or serve areas with extremely low population densities. Closure of the Dune Acres stop would not occur until additional parking is made available at the Dune Park station which is 1.4 miles to the east. The proposed date for the closing the other six stops is June 1, although we understand that this may be pushed back to a later date.

NICTD is proposing the closures in order to improve service reliability by reducing the number of train stops. This is a key element to maintaining and expanding its passenger base, especially in the rush hour. Mechanical wear and power costs associated with deceleration and acceleration will be reduced. Finally, NICTD's property maintenance costs as well as security and liability exposure should be reduced.

INDARP's position on the proposed closings is that they make good sense from both an operating and marketing standpoint. We feel that service reliability will be improved while passenger inconvenience will be kept at minimum levels.

The following map shows the affected stations. A photo of the New Carlisle stop was taken on a snowy day in early 1994 by John Clark and appears on the next page.





In other South Shore related news, work has started on clearing ground for the new station in Hammond. The facility is scheduled to open in the summer of 1995, at a cost of \$3.7 million. The new station will provide 400 parking spaces, as compared with 200 at the present location. Work on terminal expansion at the Michiana Regional Transportation Center in South Bend is progressing at a fast pace. The South Shore should be able to occupy the new waiting room and ticket office by this fall.

RECAP OF INDARP'S LAFAYETTE MEETING

On Saturday, April 16, INDARP held a successful meeting in Lafayette. The thirty members in attendance heard a very informative presentation by Ramona Lawson, the Depot Coordinator of the Lafayette Railroad Relocation Project. She described the design of the new depot location and the tie in with Amtrak boarding facilities. She indicated that present plans call for Amtrak to end its 10mph journey down the middle of 5th Street by mid-July of this year and start service on a relocated corridor through town. The former Big Four depot will be moved two blocks north, possibly by the fall of 1994, but the new depot plaza project will not be completed until the fall of 1995. In the interim, Amtrak will use a temporary boarding platform located a short distance from the present depot location. When Amtrak moves into the Big Four depot, the facility will not be staffed by ticket agents, although the City of Lafayette is exploring the possibility of having a travel agent located in the depot to write tickets. The building will house a ticket office for Greater Lafayette Public Transit, and a bus transfer island will be located outside the depot. Public telephones, rest rooms and electronic train boards for train announcements will be in place for the comfort and convenience of Amtrak passengers.

Following the presentation at the depot, INDARP members inspected three sites of the railroad relocation project. A photo of a portion of the group was taken by Phil McGeath and appears on the back cover of this newsletter. The location is on the future site of CSX tracks on the new corridor.

A short business meeting followed a delicious lunch at the Lafayette Brewing Company. Lafayette Mayor James F. Riehle was presented a plaque thanking him for his continuing efforts to keep Amtrak service in downtown Lafayette and for his heroic efforts in keeping the community focused on the need to complete the Lafayette Railroad Relocation Project. The previous day, Mayor Riehle was in Washington, D.C. to testify before the House Surface Transportation Subcommittee. Riehle was presenting the case for funding for the final phase of the project that would relocate the Norfolk Southern tracks in Lafayette. To date, approximately \$100 million in federal, state and local funds have been spent or committed to the project. It is estimated that an additional \$50 million will be required to complete the project that will eliminate 42 grade crossings in Lafayette, and consolidate 4.2 miles of NS double track, 1.26 miles of NS single track and 2.6 miles of CSX track in a new rail corridor.

AMTRAK FIRST QUARTER BOARDING NUMBERS

We have received first quarter boarding figures (Oct 1-Dec 31) from Amtrak for Indiana stations. The results indicate an alarming decrease of approximately 15%.

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>1st QUARTER FY '93</u>	<u>1st QUARTER FY '94</u>
Indianapolis	22,829	18,106
Hammond-Whiting	8,387	6,959
South Bend	5,468	4,747
Lafayette	4,552	3,756
Fort Wayne (bus)	2,107	1,706
Elkhart	3,727	3,609
Crawfordsville	1,807	1,744
Nappanee	1,156	1,242
Dyer	1,272	925
Waterloo	3,640	4,038
Michigan City	751	489
Garrett	3,350	2,859
Rensselaer	633	475
Connersville	170	114
Total	59,849	50,769

The reasons for the decrease are difficult to pinpoint. However, bad weather during November and December was definitely a factor. Continued operating problems that led to the addition of twenty minutes to the schedules of the Cardinal and Hoosier State did nothing to help ridership either.

AMTRAK FY '94 RIDERSHIP STATS

We have received ridership statistics for Amtrak that cover the first four months of FY '94. As you might guess, the same factors that depressed boardings in Indiana stations had a negative impact on ridership figures by route.

***IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUE FOR RENEWAL? PLEASE CHECK MAILING LABEL
07-94 INDICATES MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL IS DUE***

<u>TRAIN</u>	<u>FY '94 (OCT-JAN)</u>	<u>% CHANGE</u>
Broadway Limited	65,801	+0.1
Capitol Limited	54,435	-4.2
Cardinal	32,743	-21.4
Hoosier State	24,238	-22.0
Lake Shore Limited	98,491	-19.4
System Total	6,956,413	-4.1

GRADE CROSSING SAFETY IN INDIANA COMES UNDER SCRUTINY

During 1993, Indiana had the dubious distinction of ranking second in the nation in grade crossing accidents and fourth in fatalities resulting from such accidents. A total of 285 crossing accidents claimed 36 victims. Indiana's U.S. Senators Richard Lugar and Dan Coats have requested a study by the federal General Accounting Office to see how these numbers can be reduced, and if Indiana is receiving an adequate share of railroad crossing improvement money. The study will focus on five Indiana counties that account for about 60% of the accidents and 50% of the fatalities. These counties are Lake, Porter, LaPorte, St. Joseph and Elkhart. The five counties are characterized by dense population, a high level of freight and passenger train movements and numerous grade crossings.

The Indiana Department of Transportation has changed the way it allocates the \$5 million a year it receives in federal money for grade crossing improvements. INDOT formerly spread the funds geographically around the state, and automatically allocated half of the funds to state highway crossings. The new policy will concentrate on improving the most dangerous crossings, regardless of location or designation.

Ultimately, the best grade crossing safety device is common sense on the part of Hoosier motorists. Too many accidents are caused by drivers thinking they can beat trains through a crossing.

THOMAS DOWNS ADDRESSES NARP BOARD MEETING

Directors of the National Association of Railroad Passengers had the opportunity to hear a presentation by Thomas Downs, Amtrak's new President, at the spring meeting recently held in Rockville, Maryland. This was Downs' first appearance before NARP's Directors. Your newsletter editor was in attendance, and came away with the impression that the right person has been chosen to steer Amtrak through the challenging days that lie ahead. We will attempt to summarize the major points covered by Downs in his presentation.

---Clinton's FY '95 budget proposal for Amtrak represents a positive departure from past White House budgets, but it is not enough. Amtrak needs additional funds to operate the present system effectively and to purchase new equipment.

---Amtrak needs a dedicated capital fund. Downs proposes using the \$9 million Amtrak will pay the government in diesel fuel tax for this purpose. This money could be used in conjunction with funds borrowed from the private sector to purchase badly needed equipment. He is reasonably optimistic that this could happen this year.

---During FY '94 Amtrak equipment will depreciate to the tune of \$250 million. Re-capitalization (purchase of new equipment) will total only \$96 million. This trend cannot continue. Amtrak is paying the price for its under-capitalization of the 1980s.

TIME TO RENEW? PLEASE CHECK MAILING LABEL

---Dedication to improving on-time performance. Amtrak will attempt to put pressure on the 13 freight railroads over which it operates by releasing quarterly on-time figures on each railroad to the media.

---Amtrak is a series of different markets and should be managed as such (Northeast Corridor, Auto Train, Intercity business, Mail and express, California service). Functional business units must be established, smaller units are more accountable units. Re-focus management, can't be all things to all people, decentralize.

---Amtrak can't continue to promise what it can't deliver. Focus on the customer, the customer, the customer.

---Two future possibilities for high-speed service are Chicago-Detroit and Los Angeles-San Diego corridors. Chicago to Detroit is promising because Amtrak presently owns a significant portion of the route and could own more by the end of the decade. Hence, potential conflicts with freight railroads over high-speed service could be avoided. Los Angeles-San Diego is promising because the route is owned by public agencies, again avoiding conflicts with freight lines. Clean air law implications and tremendous growth in that part of California also a plus.

---Wants to improve consumer communication with Amtrak through use of focus groups and test surveys. Find out what the customer wants by making it easier to communicate those wants to Amtrak.

---1996 will be an important year for Amtrak, operating agreements with the 13 freight railroads come up for re-negotiation. Major issues will be demands by freight lines for greater liability and user fees.

W. Graham Claytor, Jr. was the right man to steer Amtrak through the troubled period of the 1980s. Thomas Downs appears to possess the enthusiasm, dedication and plan of action to do the same in the 1990s.

NO SMOKING PLEASE!

On May 1, 82% of Amtrak trips became smoke-free, as smoking was prohibited on all short and medium distance trains. In addition, smoking is prohibited on the following overnight trains: Broadway Limited; Coast Starlight; Night Owl; California Zephyr; Desert Wind; Pioneer and Montrealer. Smoking on the Capitol Limited is prohibited in sleeping cars and permitted in designated areas of the lounge car only. On trains that prohibit smoking, passengers may smoke on station platforms during longer stops. These vary by trains, but generally are indicated by separate arrival and departure times in timetables. Passengers are encouraged to remain next to the train and be prepared to reboard immediately when notified that the train is about to depart. Failure to do so could mean walking many miles for a Camel.

Amtrak started restricting smoking on its trains in 1988, and has found four times more unhappy nonsmokers than unhappy smokers in surveys about its policies.

LAKE SHORE'S CHICAGO CONNECTION RESTORED

Effective with the May 1 timetable, the schedule of the westbound Lake Shore Limited has been changed so that passengers may once again make same-day connections in Chicago to the California Zephyr, Desert Wind, Pioneer and Empire Builder. These important connections were broken in the fall of 1993. The chain of events that led to the restoration is one that is both complex and interesting, in that it affects not only the Lake Shore, but also the Broadway Limited and the Cardinal. The reason the connection was severed last year was because Amtrak needed more time to turn the Lake Shore's equipment in New York City. The train's departure from New York was pushed back to 8:55pm, making connections in Chicago no longer

possible. The City of New Orleans was re-equipped with Superliners in March. This freed up almost enough Heritage Fleet to be used for an additional train set for the Lake Shore, which would once again permit an earlier westbound departure from New York. The only problem was that the City of New Orleans did not have dining cars in its consist, as it utilized dinette cars with tray meal service. This problem was solved by taking one of the dining cars from the Broadway Limited equipment pool. The remaining two diners from the Broadway's pool were assigned to the Cardinal as that train operated during more potential meal hours. The Cardinal had been using a dinette car in its consists. The Broadway will have dinette cars and tray meal service until Heritage Fleet diners become available from the re-equipping of the Capitol Limited with Superliners. Had enough of this confusion??? One final point, dome coaches freed up from the City of New Orleans are now in the Lake Shore's consist between Chicago and Albany.

For the record, the Lake Shore now leaves New York one hour and forty-five minutes earlier. It departs Chicago five minutes later. There are no changes in the schedules of the Broadway Limited, Capitol Limited or Cardinal.

INDOT ATTENDS HIGH-SPEED RAIL MEETING

Presentations by Debbie Simmons and Matt Brooks of INDOT highlighted the March 8 meeting of the Indiana High Speed Rail Association meeting held in Gary. That's the good news, the bad news is that neighboring states started working on plans for high speed rail corridors more than two years ago. Simmons indicated that the state has just gotten involved in high speed rail issues and has yet to determine its position and policy on the issue. However, it is encouraging that INDOT is getting involved to the degree that it sent representatives to the meeting, hopefully this will represent a first step in a change of policy.

DID HE SAY WHAT I THOUGHT HE SAID?

The featured speaker at the meeting of NARP Region VI held in Toledo on March 19 was Dan Collins who is on Amtrak's Board of Directors. Mr. Collins was discussing not only the changes in Amtrak's top management, but also changes on Amtrak's Board. He mentioned that the seat presently held by Governor Thompson of Wisconsin was up for re appointment in a couple of months. Mr. Collins expressed the opinion that it was likely that the seat would be filled by the appointment of Indiana Governor Evan Bayh.

INDARP has received no further confirmation on Mr. Collins' comments. Governor Bayh has shown very little interest in Amtrak during his tenure as Governor of a state that possesses Amtrak's largest maintenance facility. However, there is the hope that his possible appointment to the Amtrak Board would serve to redirect his interest.

DELIVERY OF VIEWLINER SLEEPERS TO BEGIN IN 1995

The first cars of a 50-car order of Viewliner sleeping cars are scheduled to arrive from Morrison-Knudsen in April, 1995. The cars will feature all new color schemes, 13 two-person compartments, 2 deluxe bedrooms with showers, one handicap room with shower, a public shower for compartment passengers, an attendant's room, a food service unit for dispensing on board amenities and an entertainment system in each room featuring 3 audio and 2 movie channels.

The cars from this order (and hopefully, subsequent orders) will be used to replace Amtrak's aging 10-6 sleepers and slumbercoaches. These Heritage Fleet cars are between 40-50 years old and are becoming an operational and maintenance nightmare for Amtrak. Nostalgia aside, they are a serious financial drain on the company, both from a cost and revenue standpoint.

NEWS ON NORFOLK SOUTHERN-CONRAIL NEGOTIATIONS

Norfolk Southern has tentatively agreed to purchase 61 miles of track between Valparaiso and Warsaw from Conrail for \$4.46 million. As part of the deal, Conrail will grant Norfolk Southern rights to operate over 39 miles of track between Warsaw and Fort Wayne. Earlier, NS had purchased 18 miles of the route between Gary and Valparaiso for \$1.4 million.

The two purchases will give Norfolk Southern a badly needed alternate route between Fort Wayne and Chicago for its Triple Crown service. Its existing mainline between those two cities averages between 30-40 trains a day. The Conrail line has a top speed of 40mph, although Norfolk Southern indicated that in 5-10 years it could be upgraded to 60mph. As many Hoosiers know, the line was formerly the route used by the Broadway Limited and Capitol Limited between Chicago and Fort Wayne.

SHORT LINES

---Congratulations to Paul Arden and Phil McGeath on their re-election to NARP's Board of Directors from Region 6. They would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who supported their candidacy.

---Amtrak's Board has approved funds to improve the yard tracks at it's Beech Grove maintenance facility. The tracks had fallen into disrepair and had been the site of several derailments over the past year.

---The Indiana Transportation Museum is in the process of a \$230,000 maintenance project on the former Nickle Plate line between the Indiana State Fairgrounds and Atlanta, Indiana. A total of 3000 ties are being replaced between the Fairgrounds and Fishers, along with 3600 additional ties between Fishers and Atlanta. Completion of the project will permit maximum speeds of 30mph on the line. The ITM plans to run steam excursions on the line with the 587 on May 14-15 and over the Memorial Day weekend.

---No word as to when Amtrak's Operating-Engineering Task Force will evaluate the feasibility of building a track connection at St. John. We understand that plans for the evaluation are still on but that no definite date has been set. On-time performance of the Hoosier State since the train began running over the new route between Dyer and Chicago has been dismal (Nov. 28.3%, Dec. 32.3%, Jan. 25.4%, Feb. 37.5%) even with the addition of twenty minutes to the schedule.

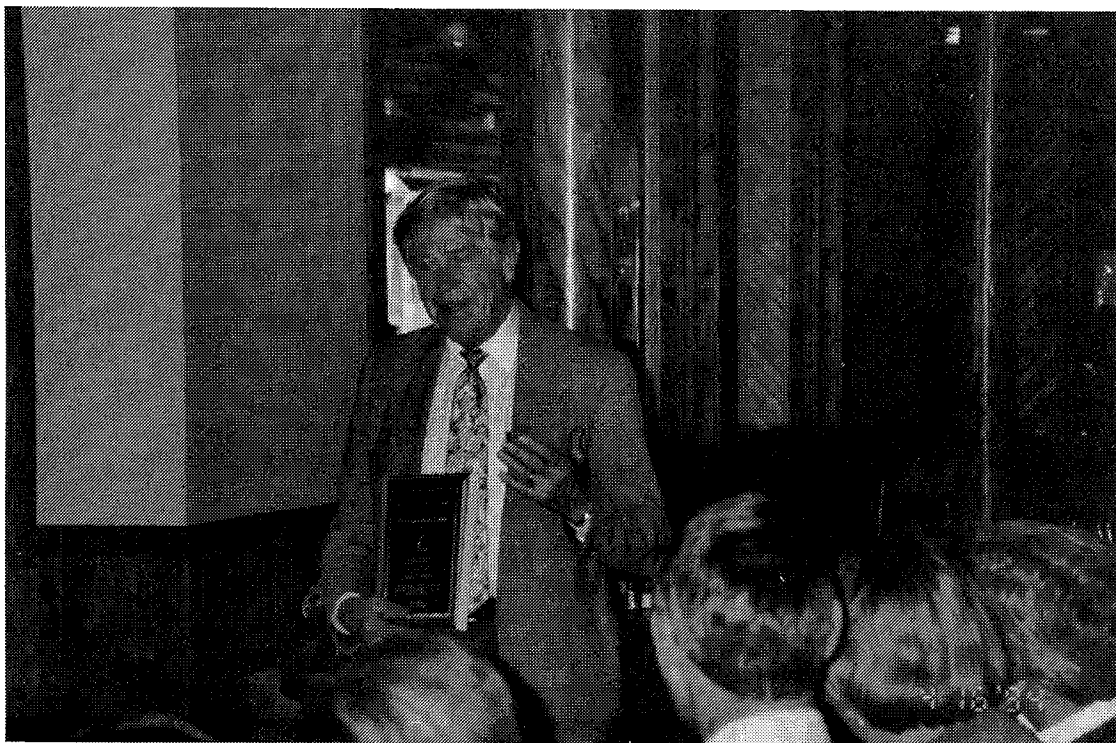
---Information concerning the next INDARP meeting will be contained in the July newsletter.

---The mailing date for the May newsletter was delayed approximately one week in order to be able to include news from the NARP Board meeting. We will return to our usual mailing schedule in July.

---The Indiana Passenger Letter is published six times each year (January-March-May-July-September-November) by the Indiana Association of Railroad Passengers, 5346 Chipwood Lane, Indianapolis, IN 46226. Newsletter editor is Phil McGeath. We are always happy to receive photographs and copies of news articles from our members for use in the newsletter. Such items should be sent to INDARP no later than the 20th of June, in order to be included in the July newsletter.

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP?
PLEASE CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL**

Lafayette Mayor James F. Riehle addressing INDARP members at April 16 meeting. Photo by John Clark.



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NAME _____

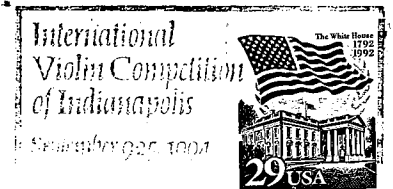
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INDARP members inspecting right-of-way on future CSX route through Lafayette. Photo taken by Phil McGeath at INDARP meeting on April 16, 1994.



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