

THE INDIANA PASSENGER LETTER

The Official Publication of the
INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

VOL. 10 NUMBER 6 NOVEMBER 1992

"Working to Improve, Promote, and Expand Passenger Train Service in Indiana"

AMTRAK'S NEW FISCAL YEAR BRINGS LAYOFFS AT BEECH GROVE

Amtrak has announced indefinite layoffs for 250 employees at its Beech Grove maintenance facility. The layoff decision coincided with the beginning of the new fiscal year for Amtrak. The furloughs will affect almost 25% of Amtrak's work force at Beech Grove.

Earlier this year, Amtrak had announced the tentative layoff of 1,011 Beech Grove employees for a 3-4 month period to begin July 1. This was averted by reprogramming \$18 million from Amtrak's capital budget to its operating budget.

The layoffs are evidence of the economy's effect on Amtrak's ridership and revenues. There are also two variables that will adversely impact Amtrak's FY '93 budget. Labor costs will increase as a result of settlements resulting from last summer's unrest involving the strike/lockout. In addition, Amtrak will be required to spend \$4.6 million to comply with FDA mandates. Given these factors, and the fact that Amtrak's operations budget will again be \$331 million, cost savings had to be achieved.

In addition to the obvious hardship on the affected employees and their families, Amtrak passengers will also suffer. It will not be possible for Amtrak to achieve its overhaul goals on equipment, thus compromising the availability and condition of equipment.

It appears that the only hope for the recall of the furloughed employees will be a sharp upturn in ridership and revenues as a result of economic growth.

BUSES RETURN TO INDIANAPOLIS UNION STATION

On October 1, Indianapolis Union Station again became an intermodal transportation facility as American Buslines transferred its operations from the Greyhound station. This marks the second time that an intercity bus company has shared the facility with Amtrak. Trailways briefly based its Indianapolis operations at Union Station before the carrier was acquired by Greyhound.

The company has three routes operating out of Indianapolis. There are four daily roundtrips between Indianapolis and Fort Wayne, with intermediate stops in cities such as Anderson, Muncie, and Marion.

A second route features three daily roundtrips between Indianapolis and Evansville, with intermediate stops including Bloomington and Vincennes. The final route involves three daily roundtrips between Indianapolis and Elkhart, with intermediate stops including Kokomo, Logansport, and South Bend.

At the present time, American and Amtrak schedules are not conducive to connections. It would be in both carriers interests to attempt to coordinate schedules to permit connections in the future.

INDARP understands that negotiations are still taking place between Greyhound, Amtrak, and the city of Indianapolis on the transfer of Greyhound service to Union Station. Greyhound has held discussions with Amtrak that would permit a sub-lease of Amtrak's crew room at Union Station. The area could then be converted to a snack bar for passengers.

In addition to potential revenue enhancements brought about as a result of sharing Union Station with bus lines, there are other economic benefits for Amtrak as its pro-rated share of expenses for the facility will be reduced. Amtrak currently pays \$1 annually in rent, and a percentage of utility and maintenance costs.

We imagine that Indianapolis Amtrak passengers are noticing a major problem caused by the return of bus service, a decrease in parking. The area directly south of the station is no longer available for use by Amtrak passengers for parking, as it is exclusively reserved for buses. This was, of course, the original purpose for the area. However, following Trailway's pullout, it had been a source of parking that was convenient, safe, and free. The only remaining free on-site parking are the twenty spaces to the south of the bus area facing the post office on South Street. The closest underground parking lot is approximately one block to the north on Illinois Street. In addition to the decrease in on-site parking, it will be less convenient to drop off and meet passengers.

INDARP plans on monitoring the parking situation at Union Station and would appreciate comments and reactions from members regarding adjustments they have made in response to the changes. We also plan to keep abreast of any changes in the overall atmosphere at the station that might occur as a result of its revived role as an intermodal transportation facility.

EXCITING TIMES FOR THE SOUTH SHORE

Dedication ceremonies for the new South Shore facility at the Michiana Regional Airport will begin at 11:00 am on Friday, November 20. Regular revenue service from the new location will begin the following day. A new timetable will take effect January 1, and will increase weekday service between Porter County and South Bend in accordance with clusters of airline arrivals and departures. Weekend service to and from South Bend is expected to remain the same. The move to the new location is expected to add five minutes in running time to current schedules. Michiana Regional will become the first airport in America to be a true multi-modal transportation center.

We are pleased to share two photographs of the project. The first photo shows the new track leading in to the east end of the airport terminal. The second photo shows the new South Shore platform under construction and the airport unloading area. Both photos were taken by Jim Davies in late September.



The South Shore has taken delivery of the first of 17 new cars that are scheduled to be in service by January. Four motorized cars have been delivered and are undergoing testing before final acceptance takes place. Their entry into service could coincide with the dedication ceremonies at the Michiana Regional Airport on November 20. The cars feature a 3-2 seating arrangement and will greatly help in reducing crowding on rush-hour trains. Three more motorized cars and four trailer cars are expected to arrive on the property later in November. A photo of one of the new cars, the number 45, taken by Joe Crnkovich at the Bendix Siding in South Bend on October 7.



DINNER IN THE DINER?--NOT ON THE CARDINAL

Dining car service on the Cardinal has fallen victim to the FDA crackdown on Amtrak. In order to meet FDA requirements for cleanliness and food preservation, Amtrak has reduced the cycle for preventive maintenance from 120 days to 60 days for food service cars. This has, in effect, reduced the number of full-service dining cars that Amtrak is able to have in service at one time. In order to cope with the shortage, the Cardinal has been assigned an Horizon dinette instead on a diner. The change took place in early September and is expected to last for an indefinite period.

Tray meals of the type served club car passengers in the Northeast Corridor will be served in the dinette car. Seating capacity will be reduced from the usual 48 seats to 32.

The Cardinal was targeted for the service reduction since it is a tri-weekly operation. Sleeping car passengers on the Cardinal, looking at the bright side, will not have to endure having meals served on roomette toilets as was done briefly on the Montrealer. Your newsletter editor recently had the opportunity to test the new arrangement and found the food quality and service acceptable, but not up to regular dining car standards.

MIKE LENNOX OF ITM SPEAKS AT INDARP MEETING

Mike Lennox, executive director of the Indiana Transportation Museum, spoke at the October 3 meeting of INDARP held in Indianapolis.

Mike traced the growth of the ITM from its origins in 1960, to its present operation of the 39-mile former Nickle Plate line between Indianapolis and Tipton. In 32 years the ITM has grown in size from a couple of pieces of equipment and a few members, to an

organization with over 100 pieces of equipment worth \$1.3 million and nearly 1000 members. The ITM presently has a paid staff of ten persons. The 1992 Indiana State Fairtrain made a total of eight daily roundtrips during the 12 day fair, and carried approximately 17,000 passengers. A tie replacement program, earlier this year, replaced 200 railroad ties per mile between Fishers and Noblesville. In all, over 1700 ties were replaced in just three days. The project brought the line between the State Fairgrounds and Noblesville up to FRA Class 2 standards of 30 mph.

The ITM is hopeful that the purchase of the ex-Nickle Plate line can be accomplished in the near future. The ITM is currently operating the line under terms of a two year lease. Future plans, subject to available funding, include the creation of a satellite museum site south of the State Fairgrounds and the extension of the line to Indianapolis Union Station.

INDARP is supportive of the activities of the ITM's efforts to maintain and develop the ex-Nickle Plate line. The route holds great potential as a commuter line between Noblesville and Indianapolis. As a tangible demonstration of our support, INDARP presented the ITM a check for \$100 at the meeting.

TRAINS RUNNING OVER PORTION OF NEW TRACK IN LAFAYETTE RAILROAD RELOCATION PROJECT

The Cardinal, on the morning of September 24, became the first Amtrak train to run over a portion of new trackage associated with the rail relocation project in Lafayette.

The train was the first regularly scheduled train to officially use the new CSX railroad bridge, and the relocated trackage leading to and from the bridge. The bridge is part of the 9th Street underpass portion of the project. The former CSX tracks in the area of 9th Street and Canal Road will be removed in order to proceed with the excavation for the underpass.

INDARP has learned that the timetable for the full relocation of CSX tracks has been accelerated from 36 months to 27 months. This could move Amtrak service from the street running on 5th Street to the new rail corridor by late 1994.

INTERSTATE RAIL PASSENGER COMPACT GAINS CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL

INDARP has received information from Congressman Frank McCloskey that his bill creating an Interstate Rail Passenger Compact has passed both the House and Senate without opposition. It is expected that President Bush will sign the bill into law. Upon Presidential approval, the states of Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida will be able to begin work on the economic impact studies, financial projections, and estimated levels of funding needed from each state to pay for required startup capital costs of Chicago to Florida service.

We applaud Congressman McCloskey for his hard work in the effort to restore Amtrak service between Chicago and Florida. We wish that he

would go one step further and become a co-sponsor of H.R. 4414. This bill would divert one cent from the federal tax on gasoline into an intercity rail passenger trust fund. This plan would provide the more realistic vehicle for resumption of the service to Florida. At the present time, the bill has 32 co-sponsors. However, the only House member from Indiana who has become a co-sponsor is Congressman Andrew Jacobs, Jr. It would seem logical that Congressman McCloskey should add his name to the list. INDARP members living in his district should contact the Congressman and ask him to become a co-sponsor of H.R. 4414.

NEW TIMETABLE BRINGS FEW CHANGES FOR INDIANA SERVICE

Amtrak's new timetable, effective from October 25 through April 3, contains few changes for service in the state. The most obvious change is that service to Hoosier cities in the eastern time zone is one hour later than before. The eastbound Lake Shore Limited will now depart Chicago 5 minutes earlier than before, while its westbound counterpart will serve Indiana stations 35 minutes later.

There are two increases in train frequencies, both in California. The timetable now lists one additional roundtrip between Los Angeles and San Diego, bringing the total to nine. In addition, there is a fourth daily San Joaquin roundtrip between Oakland and Bakersfield.

HELP IS ON THE WAY FOR AMTRAK'S BELEAGUERED LOCOMOTIVE FLEET

In a move that largely went unnoticed this past summer, Amtrak's Board of Directors approved capital funding, in the amount of \$60 million, to purchase 20 new diesel locomotives from General Electric. Amtrak also has an option to buy up to 30 more of the 4000 horsepower units. This action represents an add-on to a previous order from GE. Amtrak is awaiting the delivery of 22, 4000 horsepower units, and 10, 3200 horsepower dual-power units with 3rd rail capability from GE. Twenty 3200 hp units, the P-32s have been in service for approximately one year.

The move is welcome news as the aging fleet of F-40s continue to labor from overuse. In mid-October, for example, 47 of the 212 F-40s owned by Amtrak were not available for service on a given day. This represents 22% of the fleet. Amtrak's locomotive fleet presently includes 257 diesel units (212 F-40s, 20 P-32s, 8 owned GP-40s, 15 leased GP-40s, and 2 F-69s with a.c. traction motors). Amtrak owns 6 of the 1750 hp, dual-power FL-9s that operate between Albany and New York City. The locomotive roster also includes 65 electric locomotives that operate between Washington and New Haven (52 AEM-7s and 13 E-60s).

A LOOK AT HOOSIER STATE ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

INDARP recently monitored on-time performance of the Hoosier State over a four-day period from October 11 through October 14. We also understand that a disabled CSX freight north of Dyer led to long delays for both trains 317 and 318 on October 15. Generally, we found that train 318 to Indianapolis had a better performance. The

train arrived in Indianapolis on-time two of the four days, and was five minutes late on a third. On October 12 the train arrived 40 minutes late, due in part to a delayed departure from Chicago to accommodate connecting passengers from late western trains. The train to Chicago showed a degree of improvement from the past, and was one minute early on the 11th. Its tardiness on the remaining three days was 3, 9, and 17 minutes. Slow orders on Conrail's SC&S branch are still costing the trains 6-8 minutes every day.

SHORT LINES

- Amtrak funding for FY '93 is in place with the higher Senate figures being signed into law by President Bush. Amtrak will receive \$331 million for operations (same as FY '92, refer back to Beech Grove layoff article) \$165 million for capital (look for a Viewliner sleeping car order before the end of the year) \$146 m. for mandatory payments to railroad retirement and unemployment and \$204 m. for the Northeast Corridor (will permit continuation of New Haven-Boston electrification).
- The Amtrak shelter at Rensselaer has been spruced up. The shelter has been painted, repairs have been made to the roof and lights, windows have been replaced, and a new telephone and security lights have been installed. A good deal of the work and materials was made available on a volunteer basis.
- Information concerning the next membership meeting of INDARP will be in the January edition of the IPL.

The Indiana Passenger Letter is published six times each year. (Jan-Mar-May-July-Sept-Nov) by the Indiana Association of Railroad Passengers, 5346 Chipwood Lane, Indianapolis, Indiana 46226. Newsletter editor is Phil McGeath.

Annual dues are \$7.50 for new members, \$10 for current members, \$5 for spouses. Check or money should be made payable to INDARP and mailed to the above address.

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Amtrak's Hoosier State approaching the east end of Indianapolis Union Station, October 23, 1992. Photo by Phil McGeath.



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