

***Hoosier State* Passenger Rail Service: Encouraging Developments**

....in the Indiana General Assembly

- All those interested in seeing a modern passenger rail system in our state are smiling a bit more, after learning that the Indiana House of Representatives has included an annual appropriation, which can be used for the *Hoosier State*, in House Bill 1001, the budget bill. Many people, including Governor Mike Pence and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, can be thanked for this encouraging development.
- House Bill 1001 now moves to the Indiana Senate where it will be considered by the Senate Appropriations Committee. "If this committee holds to form, it will invite budget presentations from various state agencies, including the Indiana Department of Transportation, before it adopts its own version of the budget," says Tim Maloney, a board member of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance.

....at the Indiana Department of Transportation

- INDOT and Amtrak (the National Passenger Rail Corporation) have been actively negotiating a new long term contract that would allow the *Hoosier State* to continue running four days a week between Indianapolis and Chicago.
- As reported in February, a new player is being considered to provide rolling stock and sales and marketing expertise as part of the new contract between Amtrak and INDOT. Iowa Pacific Holdings of Chicago, Illinois, surfaced last month as part of the package INDOT proposes to use to keep the 196-mile *Hoosier State* operational.

Hoosier State Short Term Contract Extension May Be Needed

"Gaining consensus that the *Hoosier State* is an asset worth protecting is huge for the State of Indiana, its citizens, its businesses, and the environment," notes IPRA President Steve Coxhead. Roadblocks still remain, including the likelihood of having to negotiate another short term contract extension.

The current 90-day agreement between INDOT and Amtrak expires April 1st, about a week before the Senate Appropriations Committee's deadline for completing its deliberations on the budget bill. Once out of committee, the full Senate must take action. Reconciliation of differences between the Senate and the House versions must then be resolved before final votes in each chamber. Consequently, another short-term *Hoosier State* contract extension will likely be needed.

Those concerned about continuing *Hoosier State* passenger rail service can provide input to state senators by using the contact information on the next page.

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For More Information...

Indiana State Senate Contact Information

To Identify and Contact Your Senator....

Enter "Indiana General Assembly" on your computer's task bar and hit enter (or just type in <https://iga.in.gov>). Under "Indiana General Assembly, 2015 Session" look for "Find Your Legislator" and click on it. The name, picture, and contact info will come up for both your state senator and state representative.

To Contact Any Senator....

- **Write:** 200 W. Washington St., Indianapolis, IN 46204-2785
- **E-mail:** Use "s" and the district number @iga.in.gov (for example, Senator Ron Alting of District 22, Tippecanoe County, is emailed like this: s22@iga.in.gov)
- **Call:** 800-382-9467 or 317-232-9400 and ask for a particular state senator's office and then leave your message.

Members of Senate Appropriations Committee:

Majority Members:

- Sen. Luke Kenley, Chairman, Dist. 20 (portions of Hamilton County)
- Sen. Ryan Mishler, Ranking Member & Majority Whip, Dist. 9 (portions of Elkhart, Kosciusko, Marshall, and St. Joseph counties)
- Sen. Phil Boots, Dist. 23 (Fountain, Montgomery, Parke, Vermillion, Warren, and portions of Boone County)
- Sen. Ed Charbonneau, Dist. 5 (Pulaski and portions of Jasper, LaPorte, Porter, and Starke counties)
- Sen. Douglas Eckerty, Dist. 26 (portions of Delaware, Henry, and Madison counties)
- Sen. Brandt Hershman, Dist. 7 (White County and portions of Boone, Carroll, Clinton, Jasper, and Tippecanoe counties.)
- Sen. Patricia Miller, Ass't. Pres. Pro Tempore, Dist. 32 (portion of Marion County)
- Sen. Brent Waltz, Dist. 36 (portions of Johnson and Marion counties)
- Sen. Carlin Yoder, Dist. 12 (portions of Elkhart and Kosciusko counties)
- #### Minority Members
- Sen. Karen Tallian, Ranking Minority Member, Dist. 4 (portions of Porter and LaPorte counties)
- Sen. Earline Rogers, Co-Minority Whip, Dist. 3 (portions of Lake County)
- Sen. Mark Stoops, Dist. 40 (most of Monroe County)
- Sen. Greg Taylor, Dist. 33 (portions of Marion County)

Transit Day at the Statehouse: Tuesday, March 10, 2015

By Doug Yerkeson

Transit Day is sponsored by the Indiana Citizens' Alliance for Transit and provides an opportunity for public transit supporters from around the State of Indiana to meet at the statehouse and show their support for transit funding. Join us in telling state elected officials why it's important to invest in public transit! Learn more and register at: <http://www.indianacat.org/transit-day/>



Event Schedule:

9:30 AM	Assemble at the Statehouse
10:30 AM	Program and media event
11:00 AM	Begin meetings with legislators

Chamber Asked To Consider 21st Century Passenger Rail

The Indiana Chamber of Commerce has been asked to envision a modern 21st Century passenger rail service in our state. "Embrace a vision for transportation similar to that held by President Eisenhower for the interstate highway system," writes Steve Coxhead, president of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance.

Taking the Chamber to task last month for its opposition to using state general fund revenues to stabilize the *Hoosier State* passenger rail service, IPRA's leader reminds the Chamber that Indiana is not well served by continuing to rely almost entirely on a transportation infrastructure dating from the last century.

"IPRA, and others, favor the allocation of state funds at this time to stabilize the existing passenger service, as a foundation on which to build a truly valuable state transportation asset.

"Once the situation is stabilized, the State of Indiana would be in a position to work with Amtrak (*continued*)

“Chamber Asked” continued from page 2) and private sector operators to build the required service,” he says.

The required service would operate at higher speeds—80 to 110 miles per hour. Reliable, on-time performance would be the norm. Modern amenities (i.e. Wi-Fi) would be standard. There would be three trains each direction each day, Coxhead explains.

What’s not on the table is a nostalgic effort to relive the past glory days of passenger railroading. What’s on the table is an integrated transportation network to improve quality of life and build a positive business climate. Coxhead envisions the *Hoosier State* corridor continuing to Cincinnati to give Indiana better access to the commercial possibilities in southwestern Ohio.

He knows the up-and-coming millennial generation desires mobility options as provided by passenger rail. “They (the millennials) are the entrepreneurs and work force of the coming decades, and will choose locations which provide those options. If Indiana cannot attract the millennials, the state risks becoming a backwater in a competitive world,” he concludes.

Serious Issues Face Lafayette Passengers

By Joe Krause

AMTRAK passengers in Lafayette now face serious issues getting to and from the passenger loading platform, which is separated from the Big Four Depot by three heavily used railroad tracks. Formerly, passengers took the Depot side (East) elevator to the Riehle Plaza Bridge and descended on the elevator on the Platform side (West) to the AMTRAK platform. As of Monday February 23rd both elevators have been dismantled and will be replaced with more suitable equipment. Currently the completion date has been set for April 1, 2015.

Current procedure: Passengers stay in Waiting Lobby until Joe Krause or Julius Walker, AMTRAK station passenger assistance volunteers, hear a radio message between the Lafayette Yardmaster and the engineer of



either Train #51 *The Cardinal* or #317 *The Hoosier State* (CSX does not recognize the number 851). Usually this is around 7:20 a.m. At that point Krause and/or Walker direct the passengers to the indoor stairs leading to the Big Four Depot where it is still warm, but there are no seats. Listening further to the one-way radio exchanges, both men encourage passengers to leave the Depot and ascend the east side metal stairs to the Riehle Plaza Bridge and then descend the two flights of metal stairs to the platform. All the time, both Krause and Walker are warning passengers to be aware of ice, snow, or wet spots both on the stairs and on the platform. "Safety, first, last and always! Help each other!" is what Joe and Julius remind the groups of travelers.

This procedure will be severely tested should the elevator replacement project fail to meet deadline; after April 1, 2015, work will begin on the Riehle Plaza Bridge, denying use to ANYONE crossing those three tracks. Instead, the City of Lafayette Engineering Department, having few alternatives, has designed a .6 mile detour from the Depot to the west side of the tracks. *(Those persons who are good at second-guessing need to come down to the Depot and see for themselves before criticizing this decision. See map at end of article and directions below.)*

1. Easiest of all would just be for passengers to be on the west side of the Wabash River to park in the Wabash Landing Garage at the cost of \$11 for 10 to 24 hours or further away at the free outdoor lot at Tapawingo Park (off of Brown St.). They *(continued)*

(*"Lafayette Passengers"* continued from page 3) could then walk across the Myers Bridge spanning the Wabash River and go to a ramp on the north side of the bridge which leads to (a) the Wabash Heritage Trail and (b) the AMTRAK platform. (This is an entire ramp route, but it is long.)

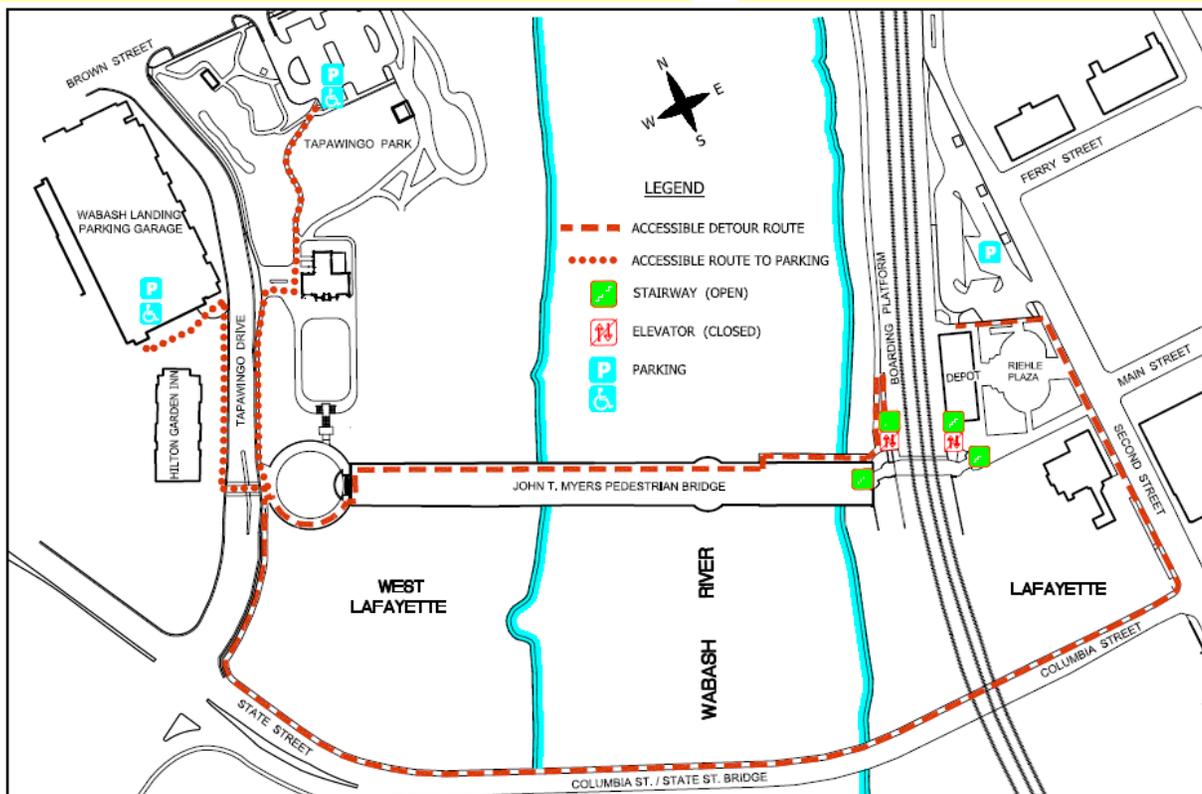
2. For those who choose to come to the Depot (itself being listed for major internal repairs in the Waiting Lobby at an undetermined date), it gets more complicated. However, because the AMTRAK Quiktrak Ticket Machine is in the Depot and many passengers still need to print their tickets or purchase them using credit or debit cards, there will be many passengers still coming to the Depot.

All these passengers are at this point .6 miles away from the AMTRAK platform.

Joe Krause, Lafayette Big Four AMTRAK passenger assistant, has had one phone conversation with Jennie Leshney, Lafayette City Engineer. She has indicated that she is still in negotiation with the Greater Lafayette Public Transportation Corporation (CityBus) to secure the use of an Access bus (capable of loading handicapped passengers) and other passengers with plenty of luggage. This bus might be parked on Second Street or even in the Lafayette Depot Parking

lot. Krause and Walker would direct passengers to load their luggage onto the Access bus once they heard the Lafayette yardmaster grant permission for the Train to enter the Lafayette Yard Limits. The bus driver would be told to depart the Depot, head south on Second Street, turn right onto Columbia going west over the Wabash River, and then turning right onto Tapawingo Drive. (If possible, the Access Bus might be permitted to ride onto the Myers Bridge—which is, after all, old Main St., a vehicular roadway turned into a pedestrian way since Railroad Relocation.) The Access bus could discharge passengers at the entrance to the ramp which leads from the north side of the Myers Bridge down to the Wabash Heritage Trail and the AMTRAK platform. More able passengers could leave the Access bus and walk to the metal stairs on the west side of the platform and descend one flight to the AMTRAK platform.

At this time, no one has committed to volunteer with passenger assistance for the evening trains, so passengers would be forced to navigate this confusing route on their own. Conceivably an Access bus could be sitting on the Myers Bridge awaiting de-boarding passengers and the bus could take them to parking lots on either side of the Wabash River, but nothing has been decided about that matter.



Contact information: Parking permits for the Depot lot, County Garage or Tapawingo Lot: call 765-746-2525 or go to Lafayette City Clerk's Office (not West Lafayette.)

Other information: call Joe Krause 765-743-8853 (home) or 765-309-0321 or e-mail jkrause5182@gmail.com

All Aboard Ohio Gathers Steam for Oxford Stop on Cardinal

Special thanks to Derek Bauman, All Aboard Ohio

Oxford, Ohio, home of Miami University, hasn't had an inter-city rail stop in decades. That could change if officials from the City of Oxford are successful in garnering a U.S Department of Transportation grant this spring and if they can persuade Amtrak to conduct a feasibility study for such a stop.

The *Cardinal* passenger train rolls through the college town without stopping three times a week on its way to and from Cincinnati, 33 miles away. Miami University has more than 15,000 students, many hailing from Chicago and other places in the Midwest.

Support from other universities—specifically the University of Cincinnati and Xavier University—is also being sought in an effort to boost ridership on the *Cardinal* and pave the way for daily Chicago-Cincinnati passenger service, says Derek Bauman, Southwest Region Director for All Aboard Ohio.

"Tying together the various Ohio and Indiana universities along the route would be a huge benefit and I believe a key selling point that we should be highlighting in our advocacy for 21st Century passenger rail service," he notes.

Officials from Amtrak, Miami University and Oxford met in December in Oxford to discuss a possible new train stop. The *Cardinal* goes as far east as New York City and uses Chicago's Union Station as its other terminus.

"Third House" Legislative Meetings Continue into April

Special thanks to Glen Boise, Kokomo

Individuals may still participate this year in "Third House" Saturday morning sessions with state legislators. Sessions allow citizens to provide input on pending legislation and allows state legislators "to educate those who attend," says State Representative Randy Truitt, District 26, West Lafayette.

Upcoming Third House meetings are March 14, March

28, and April 28. Contact your local Chamber of Commerce for more details.

Condolences to Landske Family

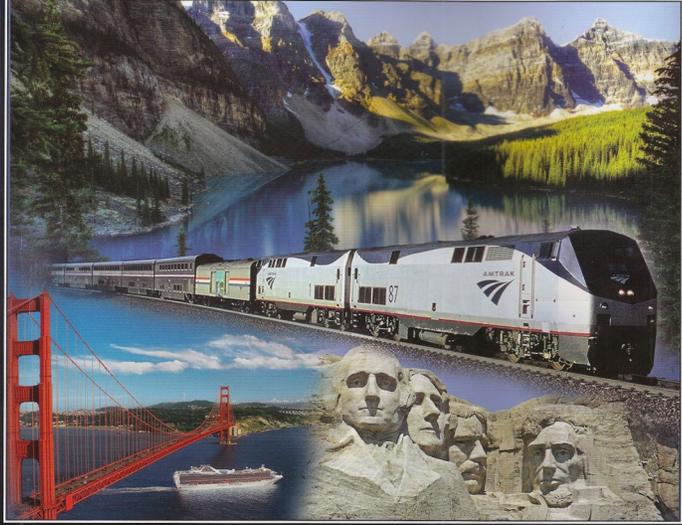
By Dennis Hodges

State Senator Sue Landske (R-Cedar Lake), a supporter of many Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance issues, passed away on Friday, February 27. Her memorial service was March 2. Her absence from the senate and society is already being missed.

Escorted Rail Tour Meeting Coincides with Presidential Visit

Special thanks to America By Rail, East Lansing, Michigan

Nearly 175 Hoosiers gathered at the Crowne Plaza Hotel adjacent to Indianapolis International Airport last month for a presentation on escorted rail tours by America by Rail. Some attendees witnessed a special event even before learning of the 54 rail (*continued*)



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("Escorted Rail Tour Meeting" continued from page 5)
tours offered between April and October of this year.

Arriving at the airport while attendees were arriving at the Crown Plaza was the President of the United States. President Obama's motorcade likely traveled close to the hotel on the way to a downtown Indianapolis speaking engagement, delaying the arrival of some meeting attendees.

The obvious common denominator between America by Rail tours and the presidential visit to the Circle City is the meticulous planning. "We do it all, you go on the ride," is how the Michigan-based tour company explains their business. Arguably the number one escorted train tour company in our country, they arrange transportation, lodging at upscale hotels, some meals, and many day excursions.

Thirty U.S. destinations, nine Canadian venues, and one overseas trip are planned for this year. Seven brand new tours are scheduled for tour groups that average 30-40 people. Each is led by a professional tour guide, who promises to provide relaxation, peace, "not confining travel," cozy atmospheres, plenty of conversation, and vacations "being about the journey."

Trips feature interconnecting transportation—trains, motor coaches, riverboats, and sometimes air. This year's new escorted rail tours are:

- A 17-day **Great American Circle Tour** to four cities -- New Orleans, Seattle, Vancouver, and Montreal -- plus 8,300 miles of train travel on four trains -- **Sunset Limited, Coast Starlight, VIA's Canadian, and Adirondack.**
- A 12-day **Western Sampler** on two trains -- Sunset Limited and California Zephyr—with motor coach visits to Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, Pikes Peak, and Garden of the Gods.
- A 7-day **Take Me Out to the Ballpark** tour to five professional baseball games featuring 10 teams; five stadiums (U.S. Cellular Field, Chicago; Busch Stadium, St. Louis; Kauffman Stadium, Kansas City, Miller Park, Milwaukee, and historic Wrigley Field, Chicago), while riding on four Amtrak trains (**Lincoln Service, Missouri Runner, Southwest Chief, and Hiawatha Service**).
- A 5-day **Glenwood Springs Express**, 2,446-mile rail tour to/from Chicago on the **California Zephyr** ending in Glenwood Springs and its world famous

Hot Springs Pool. The Glenwood Caverns Adventure Park & Historic Fairy Caves is another destination.

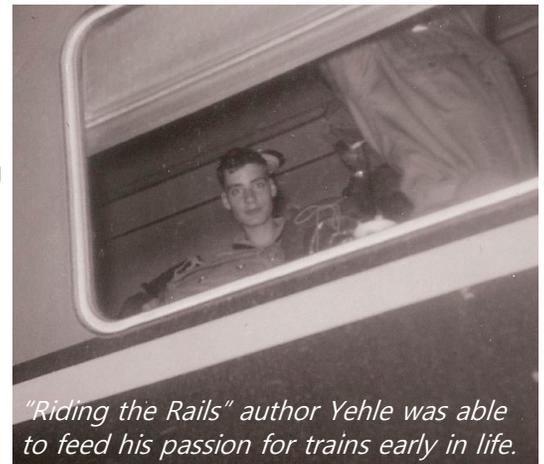
- A 7-day, 1,049-mile rail adventure aboard Amtrak's **Texas Eagle** with visits to Branson, Eureka Springs, and Hot Springs National Park. Featured, prepaid entertainment includes the Oak Ridge Boys, Mickey Gilley, the Shoji Tabuchi Show, dinner and show on the Showboat Branson Belle, and an excursion on the Branson Scenic Railroad through the Ozarks.
 - A 12-day **Legacy of the Automobile Tour** on board four trains (**Lake Shore Limited, Downeaster, and City of New Orleans**). The tour package includes visits to seven automobile museums: Owls Head Transportation Museum, Owls Head, Maine; The Antique Automobile Club of America, Hershey, PA; Crawford Auto Museum, Cleveland; Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, MI; Indianapolis Motor Speedway Hall of Fame and Museum; Indianapolis; National Corvette Museum, Bowling Green, KY; and Lane Motor Museum, Nashville, TN.
 - A 10-day **Vienna "City of Dreams"** European adventure taking in Vienna, Austria, Salzburg, and Slovakia. Vacationers will do a train excursion from Vienna to Salzburg and a cruise on the Danube River. The trip includes round-trip air between New York's JFK Airport and Vienna.
- For more information, go www.americabyrail.com

Riding the Rails

By Don Yehle

OXNARD, CALIFORNIA—The February 25 commuter train crash here -- caused by a truck stuck on the tracks—would have resulted in many more injuries had it not been for the installation of the latest safety features on Metrolink rail cars, officials say.

Collapsing barriers at the front of the train cars, seating that prevents passengers from being thrown around, and
(continued)



"Riding the Rails" author Yehle was able to feed his passion for trains early in life.

("Riding the Rails" continued from page 6)

breakaway tables limited injuries in the crash of the Ventura County Line Train 101 that occurred 60 miles northwest of Los Angeles.

FEWER TRAINS IN ILLINOIS?—A \$16 million proposed cut to a \$42 million subsidy could result in some reduction of passenger trains operating between Chicago-St. Louis and Chicago-Carbondale. Work planned for a Chicago-Quad Cities Amtrak line could also be affected.

Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner's spending plan would roll back expenditures to 2013 levels, it was reported in a roundup of rail stories published by the Chicago-based Environmental Law and Policy Center.

PULLMAN NATIONAL MONUMENT CREATED—Portions of the model industrial town founded by George Pullman in 1880 is America's newest and Chicago's first National Monument. Pullman's rich social history and architectural beauty led to the designation of the neighborhood as a unit of the National Park System, says the National Trust for Historic Preservation. This National Monument is 13 miles south of downtown Chicago.



David Varner, Amtrak engineer, stops at the new Dearborn station during his runs between Pontiac and Battle Creek, Michigan.

JOHN DINGELL TRANSIT CENTER—The new Dearborn, Michigan, train station has been named after one of Amtrak's strongest Congressional supporters. Amtrak, the City of Dearborn, and the Michigan Department of Transportation call this station the "John Dingell Transit Center." Mr. Dingell is the longest-serving Congressman in U.S. History—almost 60 years.

NARP SPRING COUNCIL MEETING—Phillip Streby, a National Association of Passenger Rail (NARP) council representative for Indiana, will be in Washington D.C., in April, for the organization's annual spring council meeting and "Day on the Hill." As he's done in past

years, Streby will tell Indiana's Congressional representatives and senators that the *Hoosier State* and the nation need a 21st Century Passenger Rail System. Details aren't available yet, but NARP plans to host its annual fall meeting in Indianapolis this year. "We're hoping to showcase the Circle City and use the opportunity to gain momentum for further development of passenger rail in our state," says IPRA President and NARP Council Representative Steve Coxhead.

Like Us on Facebook!

By Dennis Hodges

After several months of being dormant, our Facebook page is growing in the number of "likes."

If you have not yet "liked" this page, please do so! (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Indiana-Passenger-Rail-Alliance>) And by all means, make contributions to the site.

A study by students at Indiana University Northwest, reports that Social Media is a major part of corporate communications and should be utilized aggressively. So make your opinions known on our FB page and share your passenger rail stories.

For More Information:

All Aboard Indiana is a monthly publication of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (formerly Indiana High Speed Rail Association).

To learn more or to join IPRA go to www.indianahighspeedrail.org or contact us at Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance, 3951 North Meridian Street, Suite 100, Indianapolis, IN 46208

To follow rail news on Facebook go to Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance, Hoosiers for Passenger Rail, and/or Hoosiers for the Hoosier State.

IPRA President: Steve Coxhead

Newsletter Editor: Donald Yehle

djyehle@gmail.com or 765-418-4097

Newsletter Publisher: Shereen Vinke

Contributors:

America By Rail, Derek Bauman (All Aboard Ohio), Glen Boise (Kokomo), Dennis Hodges, Joe Krause, Phillip Streby.

Note: This group is not affiliated with Amtrak, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation.