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Michigan Association of
Railroad Passengers
www.marp.org

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Some thoughts regarding Amtrak On-Board Service Staff



Dining car service in the 1960s on Union Pacific's "City of Kansas City." Railroad managers knew that good food and good dining car service would attract passengers and represent the railroad well to the public. Employees who did not offer good service were quickly removed from passenger trains. (Carl Fowler photo)

By John Guidinger

During the last several years, the service attitudes of the men and women making up the onboard staff on Amtrak coaches, sleepers, diners, and café cars seem to have improved. Today there seems to be many newly hired people on the trains who have a genuine interest in their jobs and in working with passengers in all sorts of situations, some of which are quite challenging to the employee. Today's onboard staff seems to be more interested in being patient with passengers, answering their questions with respect, and in offering courteous attention to their needs. These people represent Amtrak well and they signify the potential for expanded modern rail passenger service.

As a member of the former Amtrak Customer Advisory Committee during the 2002 to 2007 period, I saw a lot of bad employee attitudes on the trains that offended the passengers. Many passengers in those days told me that they would never set foot on an Amtrak train again.

So, I am particularly discouraged to have to say that I have recently encountered a few rude and sour staff members on some of Amtrak's long distance trains. This is so discouraging! I sincerely hope that we are not returning to that degraded level of service. I think Amtrak management is strongly committed to having only the best on-board staff that provide good service on their trains. But there is still a disconnect between Amtrak managers and the onboard Amtrak staff. It is in the space of this disconnect where things can go wrong.

We very seldom see rudeness

and sour attitudes in the workers who meet the public in other travel related industries. The well-trained flight attendants on the airlines, the service staff on cruise ships, the clerks and food workers in the hotel/resort industry, and the staff on foreign or excursion passenger trains all seem to perform exceptionally well. The chance of encountering rude and sour onboard staff seems to be a problem that is unique to Amtrak trains.

I have some suggestions:

Recruit On Board Staff with Great Care.

I think good recruiting and long term mentoring probably offers the best chance of eventually solving Amtrak's onboard service problems.

Requirements for prospective onboard staff employees must be set out and persons not meeting these requirements should not be hired. The prospective employees must be interviewed by a person knowledgeable of social skills, good basic human interaction traits, and the ability to make other people feel comfortable. This will require the interviewer to make judgements concerning personal traits that are not easily quantifiable. Therefore, the interviewer should be selected with care, and their reports should be kept confidential.

Prospective employees should display virtuous basic traits of courtesy, good grooming, vigor, healthfulness, language skills, and a sense that they care about their fellow humans. They should have no serious criminal record and be open to travel. They should have high

school diplomas or, better yet, at least two years of college experience. Persons who appear to be curt, inflexible, unmotivated, poorly groomed, strong willed, etc. should not be hired for onboard service positions on Amtrak trains.

Amtrak should communicate with the airlines, Via Rail Canada, and European passenger rail systems to learn about their procedures for recruiting onboard service employees. The airlines are known for having very strong recruiting requirements for their flight attendants.

Get Into Team Building.

As a rail passenger since the 1940s, I have always sensed that railroad management is uncaring and overly strict with employees. Punishment or termination seems to be the only source of corrective action. Other options such as counseling, one on one mentoring, and displaying expressions of understanding for employee issues do not seem to be part of any corrective actions. Surely Amtrak has spent large sums of money and time recruiting and training each employee and the loss of the employee through termination is a failure that should be avoided except for only the most unresponsive individuals.

Amtrak should foster a team spirit among the train crews. Train crews should be periodically brought into a classroom or another off-train environment for time with their managers to receive service refresher training and allow for crew debriefing. The crews must be allowed to report on their experiences.

See *Amtrak On-Board Service* page 3

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The Michigan Passenger welcomes your comments and submissions on passenger rail issues. Comments, articles, and other materials sent for publication should be sent by email to jhguidinger1@yahoo.com. Clippings from newspapers, magazines, and electronic sources must include the publication's name and date. Photos sent by email must be in .jpg format. We reserve the right to edit all submissions.

Contributors to this issue: Hugh Gurney

Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers, Inc.

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Letters & Emails

Email, May 15, 2023

I want to reach out and compliment you and the publication team on the latest issue of *The Michigan Passenger* (as well as previous ones). I look forward to receiving the publication each quarter and have found the recent two issues quite interesting and exciting.

It's refreshing to see groups working to make our passenger rail system in this state better and at the same time, as reported in the recent issue, getting a good reception from our lawmakers.

I've been a MARP member for several years now, but since retiring last fall I finally have some time to fully digest the issues and sort through the options presented. I commend the team for the options presented to the State and continue to digest them along with the benefits and associated costs.

I see the dilemma MARP currently finds itself with respect to cost estimating for the

various options presented (Note: for the proposed Kalamazoo-Detroit/Pontiac trains). At this very conceptual phase, with no design done, my suggestion would be to encourage MDOT, in partnership with MARP, to secure an engineering consultant who could provide a high-level estimate to present to the state (and define the assumptions that provide the basis of that estimate).

Statistics from industry reveal that the less engineering done, the less accurate the initial estimate(s) will be - which is why large government projects routinely run well over budget...at this point you don't know what you don't know.

As an engineer myself, I have some experience in this area and being retired, have time on my hands. If I can assist in any way, please reach out and let me know. This is an exciting time for passenger rail in Michigan!

Tom Fletcher

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Amtrak Train Schedules										NOTE: To allow for summer track work, Trains 350 and 353 will run only on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday between July 31 and October 5, 2023 (except for Labor Day, Monday, Sept 4).						
Wolverine Service	Wolverine Service	Blue Water	Wolverine Service		Train Name					Wolverine Service	Blue Water	Wolverine Service	Wolverine Service			
350	352	364	354		Train Number					351	365	353	355			
See Note	Daily	Daily	Daily	Mile	Days of Operation					Daily	Daily	See Note	Daily			
6:45a	2:15p	4:00p	5:50p	0	Dp	CHICAGO, IL, Un Sta (CT)					Ar	10:32a	11:45p	2:02p	10:40p	
7:11a	↓	↓	↓	16		Hammond-Whiting, IN (CT)					↑	↑	↑	1:15p	9:54p	
9:04a	4:31p	6:10p	8:04p	62		New Buffalo, MI (ET)								11:24a	1:21p	10:02p
9:29a	4:52p	6:32p	8:24p	89		Niles, MI								11:04a	1:01p	9:42p
9:40a	↓	6:43p	↓	102		Dowagiac, MI								10:52a	↑	9:29p
10:14a	5:26p	7:11p	8:58p	138		Kalamazoo, MI					9:16a	10:26a	12:28p	9:00p		
10:56a	6:03p	7:33p	9:35p	160		Battle Creek, MI					8:48a	10:00a	12:01p	8:33p		
		9:00p		208		East Lansing, MI						↑	8:54a	↑	↑	
		9:37p		238		Durand, MI							8:08a			
		10:08p		256		Flint, MI							7:35a			
		10:34p		274	↓	Lapeer, MI							7:08a			
		11:31p	↓	319	Ar	PORT HURON, MI					Dp		6:20a			
↓	↓		10:03p	184		Albion, MI					↑	8:15a				
11:51a	6:55p		10:28p	208		Jackson, MI						7:51a		10:58a	7:37p	
12:28p	7:35p		11:08p	243		Ann Arbor, MI						7:14a		10:23a	7:00p	
12:57p	8:11p		11:37p	271		Dearborn, MI						6:44a		9:53a	6:29p	
1:25p	8:44p		12:10a	281		DETROIT, MI						6:26a		9:35a	6:11p	
1:49p	9:05p		12:34a	292		Royal Oak, MI						6:03a		9:12a	5:48p	
1:57p	9:12p		12:42a	296	↓	Troy, MI						5:56a		9:04a	5:41p	
2:11p	9:29p		1:01a	304	Ar	PONTIAC, MI (ET)					Dp	5:43a		8:50a	5:28p	

Amtrak Train Schedule									
Effective November 21, 2022									
Chicago-Grand Rapids									
Pere Marquette	Train Name								Pere Marquette
370	Train Number								371
Daily	Mile	Days of Operation						Daily	
6:30p	0	Dp	CHICAGO, IL, Un Sta (CT)					Ar	9:08a
9:14p	89		St. Joe-Benton Harbor, MI (ET)					↑	8:10a
9:50p	116		Bangor, MI						7:32a
10:33p	151	↓	Holland, MI						6:49a
11:34p	176	Ar	GRAND RAPIDS, MI (ET)					Dp	6:00a

NOTE: These schedules are provided for planning purposes only and may not show recent time changes. Consult with Amtrak at AMTRAK.COM or 1-800-USA-RAIL when making reservations.
 Printed by the Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers, Inc. - August, 2023

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Station	Staff	MARP Volunteer
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Bangor	None	J. P. Descamp
Battle Creek	Amtrak	Shuler Harmon
Dearborn	Amtrak	Mary Jo Durivage
Detroit	Amtrak	Dwight Phillips
Dowagiac	None	Dowagiac Chbr of Commerce
Durand	Museum	Mary Stone
East Lansing	Caretkr	Steve Vagnozzi
Flint	Bus	Barb Westcott
Grand Rapids	Caretkr	Mit Renroc
Holland	None	Nathan Nietering
Jackson	Caretkr	John Guidinger
Kalamazoo	Caretkr	Warren Fritz
Lapeer	None	Jim Slater
New Buffalo	None	Rich Knoll
Niles	Caretkr	Jack Kessler
Pontiac	Bus	Robert Tischbein
Port Huron	None	T. J. Gaffney
Royal Oak	None	David Roberts
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Toledo, OH	Amtrak	James Parson
Traverse City	None	Carolyn Ulstad
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<input type="checkbox"/> Seniors (65+)	\$20
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Amount Enclosed	\$ _____

South Shore Rail Projects on schedule



The New Miller Road Station in Gary is under construction as part of the double tracking improvements to the South Shore Railroad. (NICTD Photo)

By Hugh Gurney

Both major South Shore construction projects underway at present were on schedule, according to Andrew Steele writing in the March 28 issue of *Northwest Indiana Times*.

The double tracking of 26 miles of the original main line between Gary and Michigan City, including relocation of tracks through Michigan City, will be complete in November, 2023. "Most of the work taking place for the rest of the year will be from the Dune Park Station west to just to the east of Gary Metro," NICTD CEO Michael Noland stated. "We'll

be double-tracking and putting in new bridges and high speed crossovers, finishing up the station in Miller Beach. There's a tremendous amount of work still to be undertaken, but Double Track is going very nicely." Testing will then take about six months, with full operation of the expanded, speeded up service into Chicago beginning in May, 2024.

As to the West Lake project, (the new six-mile rail extension from Hammond south to Dyer) Noland admitted that NICTD faces "headwinds." The new NICTD rail line must cross

CSX tracks twice, requiring an underpass near the planned Munster-Dyer station and an overpass just north of 45th Street at the Maynard Junction in Munster. "All of that needs to be done and coordinated and approved by CSX, so there's a lot of engineering design and reviews and approvals that have to be obtained," Noland explained.

Environmental issues at the site of a trucking company and a junkyard on the new right of way require an additional \$5 million. Despite obstacles, Noland stated NICTD is holding design-build contractor F.H.

Paschen Ragnar Benson to the agreed upon completion in late 2024. Positive Train Control installation and testing is expected to take several months thereafter. Noland expects the new service between Dyer and Chicago's Millennium Station to begin in May, 2025.

NICTD also agreed to hire Lakeshore Engineering of Chicago to represent South Shore on a third major project, the construction of an additional mainline track serving downtown Chicago stations on the Metra Electric District line and platform work at the Van Buren

and Millennium stations. South Shore uses the Metra Electric District line to access these Chicago stations. The 26 additional trains per day to be added as a result of its expanded double track main line and the new West Branch line will require these upgrades. Currently, the four track electric line narrows to three tracks approaching the Van Buren and Millennium stations. The additional track and platform work in downtown Chicago is estimated to cost approximately \$150 million

See *On schedule* page 8

Amtrak On-Board Service . . . Continued from page 1

Management should listen to their crews and adjust procedures as possible to accommodate their ideas and concerns. If it is not possible to react to these concerns, management should carefully explain why changes cannot be made.

The train crew member should be made to feel as a part of a very important team. They must have an open two-way communication system with their union representatives and with Amtrak managers. They should not be afraid to send and receive electronic and in-person communications from time to time about issues of importance. Employees who seem to have an interest in proposing creative ideas or suggesting improvements should receive extra attention and be encouraged to express their ideas. All of this is going to require attention to detail by Amtrak managers and the devotion of much time and energy.

Learn from the Train Chief Problems.

I would not bring back the Train Chief program. My experience was that many Train Chiefs were ineffective. Many did not represent management well or they were senior workers about to retire and had little motivation and apparently no training to improve onboard service quality. I think many were too chummy with the onboard employees and were unwilling to challenge the poor performers. There were also apparent conflicts in the line of

responsibility with the conductors. My impression was that the Chiefs had relatively little to do and they became weary on long distance trips. I saw Train Chiefs just sit in their sleeping car rooms the whole trip and do nothing to monitor onboard services.

Institute a Roving Service Inspector Program.

There should be Amtrak employees who ride the trains as onboard service inspectors. The inspectors should have a gentle engaging demeanor backed by a disciplined, no-nonsense attitude about improving onboard service delivery. They should appear unannounced to ride trains for random portions of trips at random times to observe employee actions. They should have full authority to make reports, and to take whatever action Amtrak deems necessary in whatever time sequence desired by Amtrak. They should be backed fully by Amtrak management. I would think about three to five highly qualified inspectors roving nationwide would do wonders for improving onboard service quality.

I suspect that the airlines and other intercity passenger rail systems, have some type of service inspectors on their aircraft and trains. Perhaps Amtrak can learn from these or other travel organizations what they need to know about onboard service inspectors.

Restore the Volunteer Amtrak

Customer Advisory Committee (ACAC).

I strongly support bringing back the ACAC program. The ACAC provides real-time reporting on what is happening on the trains and whether management identified service standards are being delivered. I would also support the RPA managing the program as was done in the past by NARP.

About 20 volunteer committee members should be carefully selected. They should be seasoned, professional people, who have both business and leisure travel experience. They should understand common courtesy. They should have experience in observing workers doing their jobs. They should be from geographically dispersed locations in the US with knowledge of local customs. Some might be regular riders on corridors and others occasional riders on long distance trains with both coach and sleeping car experience. There should be representatives on the committee from the handicapped community, as well as elderly persons, minorities, and young college age people (hopefully with some seasoning).

The ACAC committee members should be trained on the basic duties of onboard crews, including the conductors. They should have basic knowledge of uniform (clothing) requirements, how food service is to be delivered in café cars and diners, healthy food choices, sanitation procedures, trash removal, and baggage policies. They should know how the crews

should interact with the public, how to deal with common issues that can arise during a train trip, and how to deal with difficult passengers.

I think committee members should be passive observers. They should probably remain incognito and behave as a normal passenger. But they must be able to report carefully and accurately incidents that they personally observe (good and bad) with specific details as to the name of the employee (if readily obtainable), the time and date of the event, the train number, the car number, the car line number, and a description of the event. Their reports must be sent quickly by email so as to be immediate and timely.

They must be able to devote time to traveling (on their own) and have time to meet face to face with Amtrak management once or twice a year to discuss their observations and suggest improvements. They should be allowed to reward exemplary performance. And of course, they must feel that Amtrak is acting on their observations.

In summary, Amtrak must offer good service on the trains that respect the needs of the passengers so that they will want to return to Amtrak and support expansion of modern passenger trains.

Indian Trails Mich

Indian Trails Continues to Offer Amtrak Thruway Services

Indian Trails intercity bus schedules are shown on pages 4 and 5. Through ticketing to destinations on four of these routes may still be purchased through the Amtrak reservation system. These are routes 1485, 1488, 1490, and 1494 with connecting buses to Amtrak at Kalamazoo.

Indian Trails was affected by the 2021 sale of Greyhound Lines to the German Company FlixBus. A positive effect is the ability of Indian Trails to add services as Greyhound pulls back. Indian Trails added three daily round trips between Detroit and Chicago as shown in route schedule 1482.

Indian Trails also continues to provide daily bus and package express service to many small communities in northern Michigan without any other public transportation services. The company is a family-owned business headquartered in Owosso, Michigan. They have been in business since 1910.

A negative effect, hopefully to be resolved soon, is the current inability of Indian Trails to serve Battle Creek and use Greyhound stations. Not having all buses arrive and depart from common stations ("Union Stations") makes traveling difficult for passengers. In Chicago Indian Trails buses now stop at Desplaines Avenue and at 95th Street & Dan Ryan. The latter is at a CTA station on the Red Line to downtown Chicago.

Recently, Indian Trails expanded service west of Chicago to Naperville to connect with Burlington Trailways for routes to many Midwestern points. At Detroit, Indian Trails has established connections with Adirondack Trailways for service to Toronto and they are negotiating with Jefferson Lines for connecting service to the northwest.

Michigan Flyer, a subsidiary of Indian Trails, provides nine daily round trip frequencies East Lansing-Brighton-Ann Arbor-Detroit Metro Airport. (See the schedule above at right.) While the focus of this service is getting travelers to and from the airport, students and staff at both the University of Michigan and Michigan State University use this service to go between the college facilities in East Lansing and Ann Arbor.

Michigan Flier East Lansing-Brighton-Ann Arbor-Detroit Metro Airport

Eastbound to Airport

Schedule Number	8002	8006	8008	8010	8012	8014	8016	8018	8020	
Frequency	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	
East Lansing, MI (Marriott, 333 Albert Ave.)	Lv	3:30a	6:30a	7:45a	9:15a	10:45a	12:15p	2:00p	3:15p	4:30p
Brighton, MI, (Meijers, 8650 W. Grand River)		4:18a	7:20a	8:55a	10:15a	11:35a	1:05p	2:50p	4:05p	5:20p
Ann Arbor, MI (Blake Transit Center)		4:45a	7:55a	9:10a	10:40a	12:10a	1:40p	3:25p	4:40p	6:00p
Detroit Metro Airport (McNamara Term, Note 1)	↓	5:20a	8:30a	9:45a	11:15a	12:50p	2:20p	4:05p	5:25p	6:35p
Detroit Metro Airport (Evans Terminal, Note 2)	Ar	5:30a	8:40a	9:55a	11:25a	1:00p	2:30p	4:15p	5:35p	6:45p

Westbound from Airport

Schedule Number	8003	8007	8009	8011	8013	8015	8017	8019	8021	
Frequency	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	
Detroit Metro Airport (Evans Terminal, Note 2)	Lv	7:15a	10:45a	12:15p	2:00p	3:15p	4:30p	5:45p	7:00p	8:15p
Detroit Metro Airport (McNamara Term, Note 1)		7:30a	11:00a	12:30p	2:15p	3:30p	4:45p	6:00p	7:15p	8:30p
Ann Arbor, MI (Blake Transit Center)		8:10a	11:35a	1:05p	2:50p	4:10p	5:25p	6:35p	7:50p	9:05p
Brighton, MI, (Meijers, 8650 W. Grand River)	↓	8:40a	12:05p	1:35p	3:20p	4:45p	6:00p	7:05p	8:20p	9:35p
East Lansing, MI (Marriott, 333 Albert Ave)	Ar	9:35a	1:00p	2:30p	4:15p	5:40p	6:55p	8:00p	9:15p	10:30p

Note 1 - Departure Level Ticketing and Check In (at Air France location).

Note 2 - Stall Number 1 at Ground Transportation Center

Kalamazoo-Grand Rapids-Lansing-Flint-Southfield-Detroit Indian Trails Bus Schedule

24	22	20	70	Schedule Number				21	71	23	25
Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	1483				Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily
9:25p	1:30p	10:45a	8:30a	Lv	Kalamazoo, MI (Metro Transit) (ET)	Ar	3:35p	3:50p	8:40p	1:55a	
10:25p	↓	11:45a	↓		Grand Rapids, MI (Amtrak)	↑	↑	↑	5:50p	↑	
10:30p	2:50p	12:01p	11:30a		Grand Rapids, MI (Rapid Intermodal)		12:35p	2:45p	5:45p	12:55a	
11:50p	4:00p	1:15p	----		Lansing, MI (CATA Intermodal)		11:15a	----	4:10p	11:50p	
12:01a	4:15p	1:30p	----		East Lansing, MI (Bus/Amtrak)		11:00a	----	3:50p	11:35p	
↓	4:20p	1:35p	----		East Lansing, MI (Michigan Flier)		10:50a	----	3:40p	↑	
12:55a	5:20p	2:40p	----		Flint, MI (Bus/Amtrak)		9:55a	----	2:45p	10:40p	
----	6:20p	3:40p	----		Pontiac, MI (Bus/Amtrak)		8:55a	----	1:40p	9:45p	
----	6:45p	4:05p	----	↓	Southfield, MI (Intercity Bus Terminal)		8:30a	----	1:15p	9:25p	
----	7:10p	4:30p	----	Ar	DETROIT, MI (Intercity Bus Terminal) (ET)	Lv	8:00a	----	12:45p	9:00p	

Kalamazoo connections to and from Chicago/Naperville and intermediate points. Grand Rapids connections to and from St. Ignace, Traverse City, and intermediate points. Lansing connections to and from St. Ignace, Mt. Pleasant and intermediate points. Flint connections to and from St. Ignace, Bay City, and intermediate points.



Hancock-Marquette-Escanaba-Green Bay-Milwaukee Indian Trails Bus Schedule

53/59	Schedule Number				58/52
Daily	1490				Daily
10:25p	Lv	Hancock, MI (Shottle BOP) (ET)	Ar	7:35a	
10:35p		Houghton, MI (Mich. Tech. Mem. Union Bldg.)	↑	7:25a	
11:05p		Baraga, MI (Pines Convention Center)		6:55a	
11:15p		L'anse, MI (Sunshine Flower Shop)		6:35a	
12:10a		Champion, MI (Koski Corners BP Station)		5:50a	
12:25a		Ishpeming, MI (Jim's Jubilee Foods/C. of Com)		5:35a	
12:50a		Marquette, MI (Marquette Transit)		5:20a	
1:20a		Gwinn, MI (M-35 & CR-553 at Gas Station)		4:45a	
2:10a	↓	Gladstone (US-41 Shell Gas)		3:55a	
2:20a	Ar	Escanaba, MI (Delta Area Transit)	Lv	3:45a	
3:35a	Lv	Escanaba, MI (Delta Area Transit) (ET)	Ar	2:00a	
3:10a		Cedar River, MI (BP M-35) (CT)	↑	12:25a	
3:40a		Menominee, MI (US-41 & 26th Ave.)		11:55p	
3:55a		Marinette, WI (Walmart)		11:40p	
4:05a		Peshtigo, WI (Corral Family Restaurant)		11:20p	
4:25a		Oconto, WI (Shell Gas Station)		11:00p	
5:15a		Green Bay, WI (Metro Transit)		10:25p	
6:00a		Manitowoc, WI (Shell Station, 1701 S. 41st St.)		9:25p	
6:35a	↓	Sheboygan, WI (STTC, 830 Pennsylvania)		8:45p	
7:35a	Ar	Milwaukee, WI (Bus/Amtrak Sta.) (CT)	Lv	7:45p	

Escanaba connections to and from St. Ignace, Ironwood, and intermediate points.

St. Ignace-Gaylord-Clare-Lansing-Jackson-Ann Arbor-Detroit Indian Trails Bus Schedule

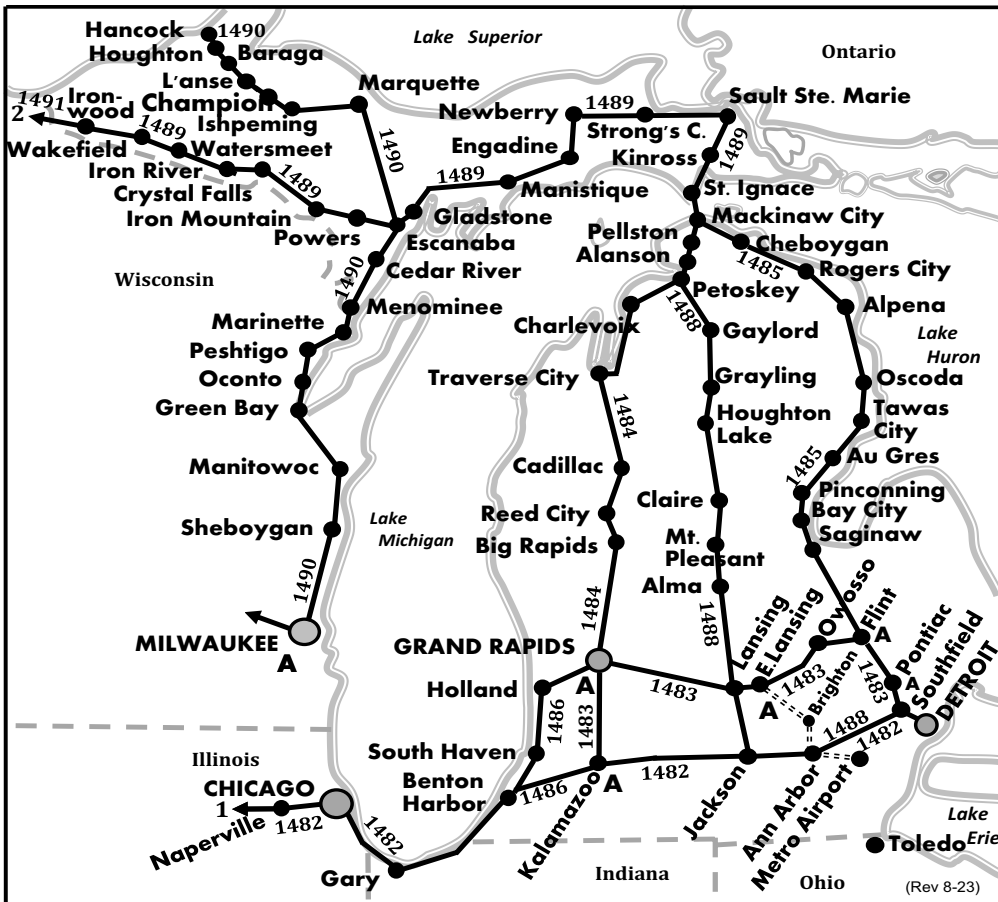
55/45	Schedule Number				44/54
Daily	1488				Daily
7:15a	Lv	St. Ignace, MI (Transportation Center) (ET)	Ar	10:20p	
7:30a		Mackinaw City, MI (Village City Hall)	↑	10:05p	
8:05a		Pellston, MI (General Store/Amoco)		9:30p	
8:20a		Alanson, MI (Alanson EZ-Mart)		9:15p	
8:45a		Petoskey, MI (1850 Anderson Rd.)		8:50p	
9:30a		Gaylord, MI (I-75 Exit 282 Marathon)		8:10p	
10:00a		Grayling, MI (Admiral Gas Station)		7:35p	
10:30a	↓	Houghton Lake, MI (B&B Gas Station at M55)		7:05p	
11:00a	Ar	Clare (Cid's Marathon)	Lv	6:35p	
		Meal		25	
11:20a	Lv	Clare (Cid's Marathon)	Ar	6:10p	
11:45a		Mt. Pleasant, MI (Central Mich. Event Center)	↑	5:45p	
12:10p		Alma, MI (Alma College Book Store)		5:20p	
12:20p		Alma Station, MI (Dart Transportation)		5:10p	
1:20p		Lansing, MI (CATA Intermodal Downtown)		4:20p	
1:40p		East Lansing, MI (Bus/Amtrak)		3:40p	
1:45p		East Lansing, MI (Michigan Flier)		3:25p	
2:35p		Jackson, MI (Jackson Transportation)		2:40p	
3:35p		Ann Arbor, MI (Blake Transit Center)		1:35p	
4:20p	↓	Southfield, MI (Intercity Bus Terminal)		12:55p	
4:45p	Ar	Detroit, MI (Intercity Bus Terminal) (ET)	Lv	12:25p	

St. Ignace connections to and from Duluth, Milwaukee, Hancock, Sault Ste. Marie, Escanaba, and intermediate points.

Michigan Bus Routes

Naperville-Chicago-Kalamazoo-Ann Arbor-Detroit Indian Trails Bus Schedule									
14	12	10	Schedule Number				11	13	15
Daily	Daily	Daily	1482				Daily	Daily	Daily
8:45p	3:55p	5:00a	Lv	Naperville, IL (105 E. 4th Ave)	(CT)	Ar	1:25p	10:45p	5:50a
↓	4:40p	5:45a		CHICAGO, IL (Desplains St.)		↑	12:40p	10:00p	4:50a
9:45p	5:15p	6:20a		CHICAGO, IL (95th & Dan Ryan, CTA Red Line)			12:05p	9:25p	4:15a
10:30p	↓	7:05a		Gary, IN (Bus Terminal)	(CT)		11:20a	8:40p	3:30a
12:50a	8:00p	9:30a		Benton Harbor, MI (Intercity Bus Term)	(CT)		11:00a	8:20p	3:10a
2:00a	9:05p	10:35a		Kalamazoo, MI (Metro Transit)			9:55a	7:15p	2:10a
30	20	20		Rest Stop (Marshall, Loves Truck Stop)			20	20	30
3:40a	10:35p	12:10p		Jackson, MI (Jackson Transit Center)			8:20a	5:40p	12:30a
4:40a	11:35p	1:10p		Ann Arbor, MI (Blake Transit Center)			7:15a	4:40p	11:30p
5:05a	↓	↓		Ypsilanti, MI (North Adams Bus Shelter)			6:45a	↑	↑
↓	12:15a	1:55p	↓	Southfield, MI (Intercity Bus Terminal)			↑	4:00p	10:50p
5:50a	12:40a	2:20p	Ar	DETROIT, MI (Intercity Bus Terminal)	(CT)	Lv	6:05a	3:30p	10:25p

Connections at Naperville to Burlington Trailways to points to west and north.



INDIAN TRAILS INTERCITY BUS ROUTES, 2023

14-- Route Number ===== Michigan Flier A-Amtrak Station Served
 1-Connections to Burlington Trailways 2-Indian Trails to Duluth, MN (Route 1491)
 (Note: This map is an approximation from the Indian Trails website and may contain errors and omissions. Contact Indian Trails at indiantrails.com for final travel information.)
 Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers, Inc., 2023

St. Ignace-Traverse City-Cadillac-Grand Rapids Indian Trails Bus Schedule				
81	Schedule Number			80
Daily	1484			Daily
7:00a	Lv	St. Ignace, MI (Transportation Center)	(ET)	Ar 8:08p
7:15a		Mackinaw City, MI (City Hall)		↑ 7:50p
7:50a		Pellston, MI (General Store/Amoco)		7:15p
8:05a		Alanson, MI (Alanson EZ-Mart)		7:00p
8:35a		Petoskey, MI (1850 Anderson Rd.)		6:35p
9:05a		Charlevoix, MI (Beaver Island Boat Co.)		6:05p
10:25a		Traverse City, MI (BATA)		4:55p
10:55a		Kingsley, MI (Kingsley Laundromat)		4:15p
11:20a		Manton, MI (Shell Gas Station)		3:50p
11:45a	↓	Cadillac, MI (Cadillac/Wexford Transit)		3:35p
12:20p	Ar	Reed City, MI (McDonald's)		Lv 2:55p
25		Meal stop		25
12:45p	Lv	Reed City, MI (McDonald's)		Ar 2:30p
1:10p		Big Rapids, MI (Label Shopper)		↑ 2:05p
1:20p		Stanwood, MI (Bauman's Party Store)		1:55p
1:25p		Morley, MI (Sunoco Gas Station)		1:50p
1:45p		Howard City, MI (Bus Shelter across from Library on Williams St.)		1:35p
2:05p		Cedar Spring, MI (BP Station, 17 Mile Rd)		1:15p
2:15p	↓	Rockford, MI (Citgo Station, 10 Mile Rd)		1:05p
2:35p	Ar	Grand Rapids, MI (The Rapid Intermodal)	(ET)	Lv 12:45p

St. Ignace connections to and from Duluth, Milwaukee, Hancock, Sault Ste. Marie, Escanaba, and intermediate points.
 Grand Rapids connections to and from Detroit, Kalamazoo, Chicago, Naperville, and intermediate points.

St. Ignace-Bay City-Flint-Owosso Indian Trails Bus Schedules				
85/43	Schedule Number			42/84
Daily	1485			Daily
7:00a	Lv	St. Ignace, MI (Transportation Center)		Ar 10:35p
7:15a		Mackinaw City, MI (City Hall)		↑ 10:20p
7:40a		Cheboygan, MI (N. Huron & W. State)		9:55p
8:30a		Rogers City, MI (Sunoco Gas Station)		9:05p
9:15a		Alpena, MI (Walmart)		8:20p
9:35a		Ossineke, MI (BP/Subway US 23)		8:00p
10:00a	↓	Harrisville, MI (Main & State Streets)		7:35p
10:25a	Ar	Oscoda (Burger King)		Lv 7:10p
20		Meal		20
10:45a	Lv	Oscoda (Burger King)		Ar 6:50p
11:15a		Tawas City, MI (The Bay Inn)		↑ 6:25p
11:40a		Au Gres, MI (US 23 & Court St.)		5:55p
11:59a		Standish, MI (Municipal Lot, Pine & Forest)		5:35p
12:10p		Pinconning, MI (The Cheese House)		5:25p
12:45p		Bay City, MI (Central Bus Terminal)		4:55p
1:15p		Saginaw, MI (Saginaw Bus Center)		4:30p
2:30p	↓	Flint, MI (Bus/Amtrak Station)		3:55p
3:05p	Ar	Owosso, MI (Indian Trails Corp. Office)		Lv 2:45p

St. Ignace connections to and from Duluth, Milwaukee, Hancock, Sault Ste. Marie, Escanaba, and intermediate points.
 Owosso connections to and from: Detroit, Lansing, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Chicago/Naperville, and intermediate points.

Grand Rapids-Holland-Benton Harbor-Kalamazoo Indian Trails Bus Schedule								
75	73	71	Schedule Number				70	74
Daily	Daily	Daily	1486				Daily	Daily
5:45p	2:45p	12:35p	Lv	Grand Rapids, MI (Rapid Intermodal)	(ET)	Ar	11:30a	2:35p
5:50p	2:50p	↓		Grand Rapids, MI (Amtrak)		↑		↑
6:30p		1:15p		Holland, MI (Macatawa)			10:50a	
7:10p		1:55p		South Haven, MI (Potatoes Plus)			10:05a	
7:40p	↓	2:35p	↓	Benton Harbor, MI (Intercity Bus Terminal)			9:35a	
8:40p	3:50p	3:35p	Ar	Kalamazoo, MI (Metro Transit/Amtrak)	(ET)	Lv	8:30a	1:30p

St. Ignace-Sault SM-Escanaba-Ironwood Indian Trails Bus Schedule				
51/61	Schedule Number			60/50
Daily	1489			Daily
10:50p	Lv	St. Ignace, MI (Transportation Center)	(ET)	Ar 6:50a
11:25p		Kinross, MI (BP I-75, Exit 378)		↑ 6:15a
11:50p		Sault Ste. Marie, MI (EUPTA)		5:55a
12:30a		Strong's Corner (General Store)		5:10a
12:55a		Newberry, MI (Pickleman's)		4:45a
1:15a		Engadine, MI (Mobil Gas)		4:25a
2:05a		Manistique, MI (Lake Shore Shell)		3:40a
↓	↓	Gladstone, MI (Shell Station)		2:40a
3:05a	Ar	Escanaba, MI (Delta Area Transit)		Lv 2:30a
3:45a	Lv	Escanaba, MI (Delta Area Transit)	(ET)	Ar 2:20a
3:15a		Powers, MI (Jct of US-41 & US-2 Park & Ride)	(CT)	↑ 12:50a
3:55a		Iron Mountain, MI (Muni Lot, 401 Iron Mt. St.)		12:10a
4:25a		Crystal Falls, MI (US-2 & M-69 by Post Office)		11:40p
4:45a		Iron River, MI (Iron Inn Motel on US-2)		11:20p
5:15a		Watersmeet, MI (Jct US-2 & US-45)		10:50p
6:20a	↓	Wakefield, MI (US-2 & Holiday Gas Station)		10:05p
6:35a	Ar	Ironwood, MI (Gogebic Transit)	(CT)	Lv 9:30p

St. Ignace connections to and from Grand Rapids, Bay City, East Lansing, and intermediate points. Escanaba connections to and from Milwaukee, Hancock, and intermediate points. Connections at Ironwood to west.

Ironwood-Hurley-Ashland-Duluth Indian Trails Bus Schedule				
57	Schedule Number			56
Daily	1491			Daily
6:35a	Lv	Ironwood, MI (Gogebic Transit)	CT	Ar 9:30p
6:40a		Hurley, WI (Citigo Quick Mart)		↑ 9:25p
7:25a		Ashland, WI (Main St. in front of courthouse)		8:40p
7:55a		Iron River, WI (O'Brien's C Store)		8:10p
8:05a		Brule, WI (Cenex Gas Station)		8:00p
8:40a	↓	Superior, WI (Perkins Restaurant)		7:25p
8:55a	Ar	Duluth, MN (Duluth Transit Center)	CT	Lv 7:10p

Ironwood connections to and from Escanaba, St. Ignace, Milwaukee, Hancock, and intermediate points.

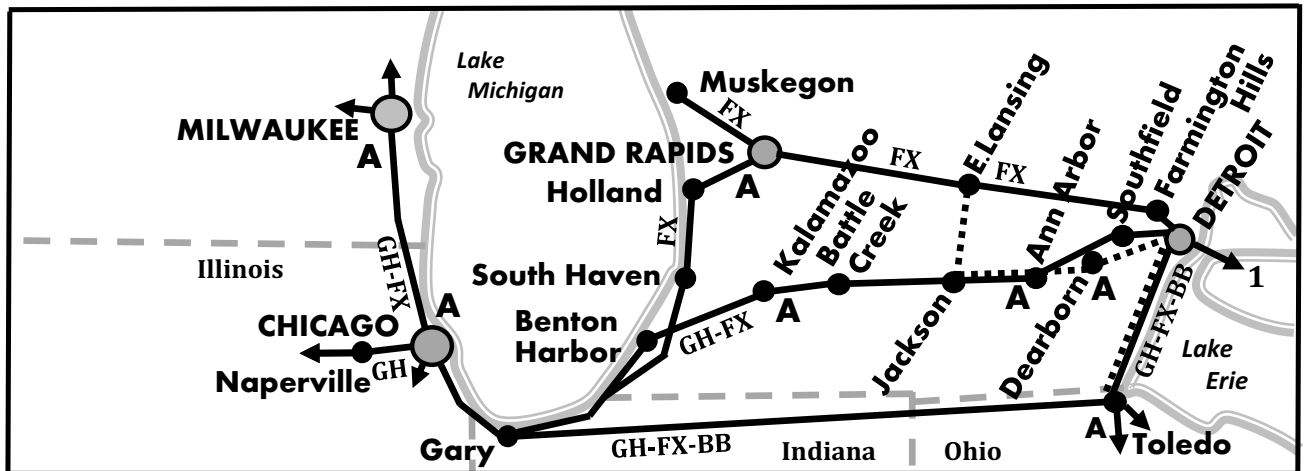
Greyhound's acquisition by FlixBus brings changes to Greyhound

The purchase of Greyhound Lines by the German company FlixBus in 2021 has resulted in significant changes to intercity bus operations throughout the country, including Michigan. FlixBus operates intercity bus routes in 36 different countries, including Canada and Mexico.

Two of the Michigan schedules shown here are combined for Greyhound (which continues to operate under the traditional name), FlixBus, and for Barons Bus. Basically, Greyhound continues to operate a reduced number of routes with multiple stops, while FlixBus and Barons Bus operate a small number of express bus routes in Michigan. Beyond the Michigan area, Greyhound and FlixBus are nationwide carriers, while Barons Bus serves many points in Ohio and several other states.

Not shown here is the schedule of numerous FlixBus, Greyhound, and Barons buses operating each day between Detroit and Toledo as part of longer routes to the south, east, and west.

As of August 1, 2023, Miller Transportation took over Amtrak's Thruway bus previously operated by Trinity Transportation to provide connections for Michigan passengers at Toledo to and from Amtrak's *Capitol Limited* and the *Lake Shore Limited*.



GREYHOUND-FLIXBUS-BARON BUS-AMTRAK INTERCITY BUS ROUTES

A-Amtrak Station Served
 1-FlixBus to Toronto
 ***** Amtrak Thruway Bus to/from Toledo
 GH-Greyhound FX-FlixBus BB-Barons Bus
 Source: Bus company websites, July 2023.

Note: This map is an approximation and may contain errors and omissions. Contact your bus company for final travel information.

Michigan Association of Railroad Passengers, Inc., 2023

Chicago-Kalamazoo-Ann Arbor-Detroit Greyhound/FlixBus/Baron's Bus Schedules

Eastbound

Carrier:	GH	FX	GH	BB	GH/FX	GH	FX	GH	GH	GH	BB
Frequency:	Daily	We	Daily	Daily	Ex Tu/We	Daily	Ex Tu/We	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily
Connections from Gary, IN	---	---	3:55a	---	---	---	1:20p	---	---	9:30p	---
Connections from Michigan City, IN	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	12:15p	---	---	---
Connections from Chicago Train Station	---	---	---	---	---	9:35a	---	---	---	10:05p	---
Chicago, IL (Chicago Bus Station)	Lv (CT)	2:00a	6:35a	7:00a	7:55a	9:30a	10:15a	3:00p	4:15p	10:50p	---
Chicago, IL (95th St. & Dan Ryan)										10:45p	---
Gary, IN (Bus Terminal)	(CT)			8:35a		11:00a					---
Benton Harbor, MI (Intercity Bus Term)	(ET)			9:45a					7:00p	1:35a	---
Kalamazoo, MI (Metro Transit)		Via	Via	11:10a	Via	Via			8:20p	Via	2:55a
Battle Creek, MI (Bus Station)		Toledo	Toledo	11:40a	Toledo	East	Toledo		[[6:45p]]	Louisville	[[2:10a]]
Jackson, MI (Jackson Transit Center)				12:45p		Lansing					---
Ann Arbor, MI (Curbside, Amtrak Station)				1:45p				8:15p	10:10p	4:45p	11:35p
Southfield, MI (Intercity Bus Terminal)				2:25p					10:50p		
Farmington Hills (Orchard Lake Rd - Note 1)	Ar			6:20p							
Detroit, MI (Detroit Bus Station)	Ar (ET)	10:00a	---	2:50p	3:55p	6:30p	6:45p	9:10p	11:15p	4:00p	6:00a

Westbound

Carrier:	GH	FX	BB-GH	FX-GH	GH	BB-GH	BB-GH	GH
Frequency:	Daily	Ex Tu/We	Daily	Ex Wed	Daily	Daily	Tu/We	Daily
Connections from Farmington Hills, MI	---	---	---	1:40p	---	---	---	---
Detroit, MI (Detroit Bus Station)	Lv (ET)	9:00a	9:45a	12:50p	2:15p	4:05p	5:05p	5:05p
Southfield, MI (Intercity Bus Terminal)		9:25a				4:30p		11:25p
Ann Arbor, MI (Curbside, Amtrak Station)		10:05a	10:45a			5:10p		12:05a
Jackson, MI (Jackson Transit Center)		11:15a						1:15a
Battle Creek, MI (Bus Station)		12:10p		Via	Via	6:45p	Via	Via
Kalamazoo, MI (Metro Transit)		1:10p		Toledo	Toledo	7:25p	Toledo	Indianapolis
Benton Harbor, MI (Intercity Bus Term)	(ET)	2:15p				8:30p		4:15a
Gary, IN (Bus Terminal)	(CT)			7:05p				3:55a
Chicago, IL (95th St. & Dan Ryan)								4:35a
Chicago, IL (Train Station)								4:50a
Chicago, IL (Chicago Bus Station)	Ar (CT)	3:05p	1:55p	7:50p	9:10p	9:20p	12:10a	5:05a

Source: Greyhound/FlixBus/Baron Bus website, visited July 21-22, 2023.
 Schedule for week of Monday, July 31, to Sunday, August 6, 2023. Schedule limited to no more than one transfer.
 GH - Greyhound Bus; FX - FlixBus; BB - Barons Bus.
 [[]] - Apparently, leave Battle Creek for Kalamazoo to transfer to Detroit bus.
 Note 1 - Curbside at 27890 Orchard Lake Road, but not in any business or gas station.

Toledo-Detroit-East Lansing Amtrak Bus Schedule

29/49	8150	Connecting Train Number	30/48
Daily	Mile	Thru-Way Bus Number	Daily
6:30a	0	Toledo, OH-Amtrak (ET)	10:35p
7:35a	61	Detroit, MI-Amtrak	9:30p
7:50a	70	Dearborn, MI-Amtrak	9:10p
8:40a	106	Ann Arbor, MI-Amtrak	8:25p
9:25a	143	Jackson, MI-Amtrak	7:40p
10:05a	182	East Lansing, MI-Amtrak (ET)	7:00p

Service provided by Miller Transportation.



Chicago-Grand Rapids-East Lansing-Detroit FlixBus Schedule

FlixBus	FlixBus	FlixBus	Carrier	FlixBus	FlixBus	FlixBus
Ex Wed	Ex Tue/Wed	Daily	Frequency	Daily	Ex Tue/Wed	Ex Wed
-----	-----	9:30a	Chicago, IL (Chicago Bus Station)	Ar	8:25p	-----
-----	-----	11:45p	South Haven, MI (1200 Phoenix St Rd-Note 1)	↑	6:10p	-----
-----	-----	1:15p	Holland, MI (762 Cabill Dr-See Note 2)	↑	6:40p	-----
-----	-----	1:45p	Grand Rapids, MI (Pearl St - See Note 3)	Lv	6:10p	-----
-----	-----	3:20p	Grand Rapids, MI (Pearl St - See Note 3)	Ar	6:05p	1:10p
-----	-----	4:50p	East Lansing, MI (Chester Rd - See Note 4)	Lv	4:30p	11:40a
12:30p	4:55p	-----	East Lansing, MI (Chester Rd - See Note 4)	Ar	-----	11:35a
1:40p	6:05p	-----	Farmington Hills, MI (Orchard Lake Rd - See Note 5)	↑	-----	10:25a
2:05p	6:30p	-----	Detroit, MI (Detroit Bus Station)	Lv	-----	10:00a

Source: Greyhound and FlixBus website, visited July 21-22, 2023.
 Schedule for week of Mon, July 31, to Sun, Aug. 6, 2023.
Note 1: Curbside at 1200 Phoenix St at Phoenix St. exit off 1-196 behind the BP Gas Station.
Note 2: Curbside at 762 Cabill Dr. at the Lincoln Road exit off I-196 behind the McDonald's.
Note 3: Curbside at 410 Pearl St NW next to the Burger King parking lot along Mt. Vernon St.
Note 4: Curbside at 941 Chester Road north of E. Grand River Ave, but not in the Burger King lot.
Note 5: Curbside at 27890 Orchard Lake Rd., but not in any business or gas station.

Megabus, another nationwide carrier, has not re-entered the Michigan market, although they have interline agreements with Indian Trails for the Toronto-Detroit-Chicago route and with Adirondack Trailways for Toronto-Chicago.

Miller Transportation, which up until recently provided service from Detroit west to Kalamazoo and then south into Indiana and Ohio has departed from the Michigan market to concentrate on their bus system south of Michigan.

Note: The map and schedules were constructed by MARP from information in greyhound.com to obtain an overall view of Greyhound, FlixBus, and Barons operations in Michigan. There may be errors and omissions. Check with your bus carrier before travel for final information.

MARP Presses to Restart the South of the Lake Study

MARP joined the Lakeshore Rail Alliance (LSA) on July 11 in pressing for the restart of the South of the Lake Study. MARP member Steve Vagnozzi represented MARP at a meeting arranged by Ed D'Amato of the LSA with the staff of US Representative Marcy Kaptur (D-Toledo). The purpose of the meeting was to educate Rep. Kaptur's staff on the importance of restarting and completing this critical study. The study, which was discontinued in 2017, sought to identify the most favorable rail route between Porter, Indiana, and Chicago for improvements that would minimize freight train interference. Until a route is identified, these improvements cannot be planned or implemented.

MARP members and all Michigan passengers have suffered for years because of schedule unreliability of the ten Michigan Amtrak trains. This is due in large part to freight train interference on the approximately 45 miles of congested Norfolk Southern track (NS) between Porter and Chicago. We also commonly ride the four other Amtrak trains between Chicago and the East Coast and find that their schedules also unreliable due in part to freight train interference between Chicago and Porter.

The meeting discussed using the newly created Great Lakes Authority as an organization to apply for and receive federal funds for building the improvements on the selected route and to manage what would be a very complex project. Although it may not be up and running for another three years, the Great Lakes Authority will be a federal entity dedicated exclusively to advancing solutions to the challenges faced by the eight states of Great Lakes region – Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Among its priorities, the new Authority should have the goal of improving public infrastructure such as the rail improvements needed between Porter and Chicago. The Authority was created by legislation primarily authored by Rep Kaptur.

The Lakeshore Rail Alliance is a multi-state coalition of rail organizations that advocate for better mobility along the Lake Shore Corridor. Members include the High Speed Rail Alliance, All Aboard Ohio, All Aboard Erie, the Empire State Passenger Association, MARP, and others.

Some of the points brought up by MARP included:

- MARP strongly supports any effort to get the South of the Lake Routing Study restarted and concluded in a timely fashion.
- MARP was heavily involved between 2013 and 2017 in the unfinished study to identify the best route.
- MARP understands that this study must be done at the federal level due to the peripheral nature of the route to the transportation needs of Illinois and Indiana and the out of state situation that limits Michigan involvement.
- The restarted study must be performed by a study team with the expertise and knowledge of developing a long term solution to freight train interference to passenger trains on the present NS line.
- The study must not ignore or minimize the needs of NS and other freight rail carriers in this congested region and must recognize that this is a freight route of national importance.
- The study must identify a Preferred Route for passenger trains between Porter, Indiana, and Chicago Union Station.
- The Preferred Route must offer a long term solution with enough capacity for existing Amtrak trains and with the capacity for future expansion in terms of both intercity and new commuter/regional trains.
- The study should avoid restudy of previous information, but concentrate on updating and building on what was developed before, to complete the study in a timely matter. We need to build on the existing study. We have already

See *Study* on page 8

SHORT LINES

It was another great year for Amtrak's Winter Park Express between Denver and Winter Park according to the Colorado Rail Passenger Association's newsletter. From early January to late March 2023 the ski train left Denver's Union Station at 7 AM on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday and arrived in Winter Park 2 hours later. The return trip left Winter Park at 4:30 pm and arrived in Denver at 6:45 pm. Estimates are that more than 17,000 tickets were sold, which included 23 groups (a record) and one special charter of the entire train on an extra Thursday run. The five-car Superliner train carried a Sightseer lounge car which proved to be a solid revenue source. The closest ski lift is only 100 feet from the Winter Park Station..... **Amtrak cancelled the Adirondack until further notice, after Canadian National imposed a 10 MPH speed restriction** due to heat-related rail warping issues. *Mass Transit Online* reported on June 28th that the train of June 26th was the final to run north of Albany until further notice. It was just three months ago that the Adirondack was reinstated between New York City and Montreal after being suspended for three years due to the COVID pandemic, a period well past the time when cross-border traffic by other modes resumed without restriction. The Adirondack will continue to run from New York to Albany, but stations to the north will not see any train service until the Adirondack returns to Montreal. Local North Country leaders are working to get the line reopened..... **Berkeley, California, was awarded \$5.1 million from regional transit officials to study rebuilding its pier for passenger ferry service** across San Francisco Bay to San Francisco, according to a June 1 report from *Mass Transit Online*. The historic Berkeley pier has been abandoned for years and deteriorating from weathering by the salt water. The grant will help the city plan for reopening and expanding the structure that was originally built in the 1920s. Present plans show that the ferry terminal would use the first 580 feet of the repaired pier, and the pier would be extended another 500 feet into the bay for other use. In total, the newly reconstructed pier would offer 32,560-square-feet of space open to the public for general recreation..... **Another landslide in the San Clemente area has again stopped rail service between Los Angeles and San Diego.** *Rail Group News*, an online rail newsletter, reports that fallen rocks and debris were found on or near the tracks on June 5th. Metrolink and Amtrak service along the route has been suspended until the debris can be cleared away and the tracks declared safe for passenger trains. The same area had been closed for several months to slope slippage and had been re-opened for service only in May. The previous problem had been alleviated after Orange County Transit hired contractors to place a rock revetment on the beach and install steel anchors in the hillside to stabilize the slope at a cost of \$13.7 million. Meanwhile, a more permanent solution has gained backing which would relocate about 11 miles of the railroad inland, possibly to a route along Interstate Highway 5. A Del Mar segment of the track could move off the cliff on the shore to an inland tunnel with US Rep. Mike Levin's support and \$300 million has been allocated for planning the tunnel. The total cost of the tunnel would be over \$4 billion..... **USDOT awarded \$2.2 billion in Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grants for infrastructure projects.** *Progressive Railroading* reported that on June 29th that USDOT Secretary Pete Buttigieg announced the award would help fund 162 infrastructure projects across the nation. Ten of the projects address rail grade crossings. A grant of \$11.5 million was awarded to the Hoosier Southern Railroad to upgrade 14 miles of 75-pound rail to 115-pound rail. A few other rail-related projects include passenger station improvements, closing especially dangerous grade crossings, and bridging over railroads..... **Amtrak Plans to upgrade the Meridian, Mississippi, Union Station** at a cost of \$13 million. *Railway Age* reported on April 27th, that the two platforms at the city-owned station would be renovated and new canopies constructed. Additional work would include new signage and electrical connections. The new platforms would be ADA compliant for disabled travelers and provide station facilities at Meridian for the often mentioned future connecting train to Dallas..... **Amtrak's Office of Inspector General released a report warning of fraud risks that Amtrak could face** as it receives significant federal investments for capital and operating projects. The Amtrak OIG pointed out in a news release that "If history is any indicator, funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, like other large spending bills, will be targeted by criminals through a variety of unlawful fraudulent schemes." The report identified four high-risk fraud areas the company faces: contracts and procurements, health care, employee

wrongdoing, and cybercrime. The OIG examined 99 fraud-related investigations and 22 audits conducted since 2017, as well as industry research on fraud schemes and the best practices to prevent and detect fraud. The Amtrak OIG committed in the report to carefully continuing its oversight role and actively investigating and prosecuting fraud cases. Reports of fraud, waste, or abuse can be made 24 hours a day via the Amtrak OIG Hotline at 1-800-468-5469 or online at <https://direc.to/hPAU>..... **Amtrak Trains between Chicago and St. Louis have been given permission from the FRA to run at 110 miles per hour,** according to various sources, including a report on May 17th in the very interesting website by Ellis Simon, *Ellis on the Rails*. After working out operating details, Amtrak initiated 110 mph service on June 26, according to *Mass Transit Online*. *Ellis on the Rails* reports that the new speed limit will apply to the Joliet and Alton segment. Rebuilding the 284-mile route, which is mostly in Union Pacific ownership, to 110 mph speeds took over 14 years due to fluctuations in funding availability. According to the Illinois DOT the project entailed installing 660 miles of new track, 881,000 new concrete ties, 2.1 million tons of stone ballast, renewing 221 crossing surfaces and approaches, and closing 39 other crossings. It also involved installation of new signaling and Positive Train Control by Union Pacific, and building or rebuilding eight passenger stations. This is the first higher speed passenger operation to share the tracks with extensive numbers of heavy freight trains. Successful integration of the two services could pave the way for passenger trains to exceed 79 mph on more rebuilt freight lines, according to the High-Speed Rail Alliance..... **On the Northeast Corridor, Railway Age reports that Connecticut is beginning the replacement of the Norwalk River Bridge,** a four-track swing bridge built in 1896 at Norwalk. One of the oldest movable bridges on the corridor, the bridge is deteriorating and has failed to close properly on several occasions, disrupting travel on Metro-North's New Haven Line and Amtrak services between New York and Boston. The new bridge will have two independent, lift spans designed for extreme weather events. A speed restriction over the bridge will be eliminated, allowing trains to travel 15 mph faster..... **SEPTA reported increased ridership on its regional rail lines since a bridge on Interstate 95 in northeast Philadelphia collapsed** June 11 after a fire from a wrecked tanker truck weakened the steel beams of the bridge. *Progressive Railroading* reported on June 16th that SEPTA added cars to the Trenton, West Trenton, and Fox Chase trains, and increased frequencies on the Market-Frankford Line to every six minutes during peak hours. These lines handled 14% more riders on June 12 and 13 compared to ridership the week before, according to WHY Radio. On June 14, ridership jumped a further 20% on the Warminster Line. The closed portion of I-95 is one of the most heavily traveled highways in the country, used by about 160,000 vehicles every day. Repairs to the highway could take months, forcing commuters to find other options to avoid traffic, the *New York Times* reported..... **Amtrak has begun construction on the first project associated with replacement of the B&P Tunnel at Baltimore** according to *Mass Transit Rail Update* on May 4. The first project includes installing new concrete ties, new rail, and completing track drainage improvements on track outside the tunnel and will enable high speed operations on all four tracks on this segment. The \$6 billion project consists of several sub-projects involving new bridges, track, an ADA-accessible West Baltimore MARC station, and building the new Frederick Douglass Tunnel. The 150-year old B&P Tunnel is Amtrak's oldest tunnel on the Northeast Corridor. The new tunnel will have two new high-capacity tubes for electrified passenger trains. The project will eventually utilize federal funding provided by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and other funding..... **New York City Subway preservationist Don Harold died on June 14,** according to a *New York Times* obituary published on June 28th. Harold was a former employee of the NY Transit Authority and his persistent (some say sneaky) tactics resulted in the establishment of the New York Transit Museum (at Grand Central Terminal) and the preservation of several subway cars and other artifacts. Known as a "tiny guerilla army," his volunteers succeeded over the years in saving a collection of old cars that total about a hundred today. Many of these cars have been rebuilt and are operated on occasion for hugely popular subway excursions that run through some of the 700 miles of subway track. Don was born in Brooklyn in 1931 and loved New York City passionately. He was 91 years old.

Bridge Replacement Work Continues in Jackson



Jackson Street Bridge structure ready to be lifted into place.



Attractive cast concrete blocks have been used for landscaping details at the bridges, both of which are located in downtown Jackson.



Looking east at the new sheet pile retaining wall along the north side of the railroad west of Jackson Street.



Jackson Street Bridge in June with the new abutments.



Looking east at the west end of the Jackson Street Bridge. The south track (on the right in the photo) has been raised 3 to 4 feet to allow the bridge to be raised by this amount to increase the clearance over Jackson Street to about 14 feet.

The contractor for the Michigan Department of Transportation continues work on replacing the century-old Jackson and Mechanic Street railroad bridges in downtown Jackson. Once the abutment work is completed, MDOT plans to replace the two double-track bridges simultaneously during one 5-day week period beginning on August 9th. The plan is to

close the MDOT-owned railroad used by Amtrak for 120 hours.

At Mechanic Street the contractor sand blasted the existing steel on the east pier, which will remain in place encased in concrete. Other abutments and footings have been completed and the wingwalls have been poured with concrete. At Jackson Street both bridge abutments, the four concrete

retaining walls, and the steel sheet pile retaining walls were completed in 2022. The bridge superstructure is currently being built nearby. The railroad will be raised about 4 feet to provide more clearance under the bridge for vehicles on Jackson Street.

The work also includes replacement of the double-track grade crossing of Blackstone Street, 850 feet west of the Jackson Street

Bridge. The new crossing will be about a foot higher in elevation to assist in providing the additional clearance for the Jackson Street Bridge.

Work will continue throughout 2023. Both existing bridges will be removed and

replaced using a special self-propelled modular transporter. The project will be closed out with the replacement of curb and gutter, roadway paving, and landscaping.

On Schedule from page 3

with NICTD bearing 85% of the cost.

In a March 12, 2023 Guest Commentary, Tony V. Martin of the *Northwest Indiana Times* queried Noland about some of the favorable impacts of NICTD's expansion. One example Noland cited is the \$80 million mixed use project in downtown Michigan City which will include the new NICTD station, a 500 car parking structure, 10,000 square feet of office space and 200 luxury apartments scheduled to get underway during the summer of 2023.

The station project is expected to generate additional Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in the Michigan City area. For example, a \$250 million hotel/condominium project is scheduled to break ground about ½ mile from the new station later in 2023.

In a related project, NICTD plans to relocate its South Bend terminal from the east side of the airport to the west side, reducing travel time to and from Chicago by 15 minutes. Limited stop NICTD trains will reduce the commute time to and from the Windy City to around 90 minutes, strengthening business ties between South Bend and Chicago. Hourly shuttles operated by NICTD between Michigan City and the South Bend International Airport will benefit the entire region.

Noland also cited the \$30 million restoration

of the historic Bank Calumet building, located several blocks from a potential future station on the West Lake Corridor. A now vacant high rise will be converted into over 100 luxury apartments as part of Hammond's multi-million-dollar investment in their downtown, a plan guided by nationally known TOD expert Jeff Speck. Hammond's mayor credits the West Lake Corridor as the reason for the city's decision to move forward.

In all, some \$2.5 billion in private sector development is anticipated from the expansion of the South Shore. The double track project will permit the South Shore main line to add 14 additional trains each weekday operating on faster schedules with increased on-time performance. When it comes on line, the new West Lake Corridor will add 12 new one seat ride trains between Munster/Dyer and downtown Chicago every weekday plus frequent shuttle trains between Munster/Dyer connecting at Hammond with South Shore trains on the South Bend-Michigan City-Chicago line. The greater opportunity for Northwest Indiana residents to access jobs in Chicago and nearby areas with salaries ranging up to 40% more than local employment will ultimately benefit all who live in South Shore territory.

Study continued from page 7

wasted many years during which costs have gone up and the impact on passenger (and freight) movement has continued.

- The study must be concluded while the current political conditions are favorable for development. We must minimize the possibility of a new administration in Washington not favorable to passenger rail coming into power and terminating another incomplete study (as happened in 2017).

- The Preferred Route and any reasonable alternative routes must be compared based on operational efficiency (for passenger and freight), cost, environmental impacts, permitting difficulty, new right-of-way needs, and other factors deemed pertinent.

- The study must include a relook at the South Shore/CN/METRA/St. Charles Air Line route, considering the recent improvements to the South Shore Railroad between Gary and Michigan City.

- The study must examine options at the east end of the Preferred Route, such as con-

necting in Porter, Michigan City, or elsewhere.

- The study must identify general sources of funding and general management options for developing the project.

- The study should provide conceptual cost estimates suitable for comparing the Preferred Route and alternative routes. Likewise, it must lay out a general development schedule suitable to compare the Preferred Route and alternative routes.

- The study must provide the route selection and siting information needed to support future final design, detailed cost estimating, permitting efforts, right-of-way acquisition, construction, etc.

- Out of the box thinking should be considered. One idea may be to purchase some portion of the NS right-of-way for passenger use and lease back what Norfolk Southern and other freight carriers need for existing and future freight operations (such as is being done in Virginia).