



Hoosier State Train Spotlighthed on TV

(March 14, 2016) With offerings of warm cinnamon rolls, freshly cooked pizza and other delectable delights in a dome lounge, the *Hoosier State* train is getting noticed.

Boomer TV, a weekly show geared toward the baby boom generation, recently featured the amenities of the train. Boomer TV airs Sunday mornings on Indianapolis-based WISH-TV. To watch a video of the segment, click [here](#).

The *Hoosier State* train combines with Amtrak's long-distance Cardinal service, which includes sleeping-car service, to provide daily round trips between Indianapolis and Chicago. Intermediate stops take place in Crawfordsville, Lafayette, Rensselaer and Dyer.

One of the train's highlights is the upper level of a unique dome lounge, which features curved glass windows that extend overhead. Business-class service includes table seating in the dome, complete with a hot meal served on white tablecloth and beverages, including wine and beer. The [Boomer TV segment](#) contains an onboard interview in the dome with Indiana Office of Tourism Development Director Mark Newman and includes mention of INDOT.

Besides free basic Wi-Fi service and power outlets in coach and business class, the train also features these freshly cooked selections served with dishware and silverware:

- Breakfast on Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays for northbound passengers. Selections include cinnamon roll with warm icing; steel-cut oatmeal with brown sugar, walnuts and fruit; sausage or bacon breakfast burrito; bagel with cream cheese or butter; two eggs with hash browns, toast, fresh fruit, and sausage or bacon.
- Dinner on Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for southbound passengers. Offerings include personal cheese or pepperoni pizza; fresh salad with fruits and vegetables; turkey club sandwich or chicken caprese panini with chips; blue-plate special with vegetables, potatoes and rolls.

INDOT Rail Office Developmental Specialist Bridgett Hail (front row, from left), Passenger Rail Contract Manager Venetta Keefe and INDOT Commissioner Brandye Hendrickson received an exclusive train tour courtesy of (back row, from left) Iowa Pacific Holdings (IPH) Operations Manager Neil Bagaous and IPH General Manager Jody Moore.



These hot meals are available to coach and business-class passengers, but only the latter have access to the private dome lounge and meals included in the ticket price.

Additionally, travelers may opt for a selection of candy bars, miniature apple pie with caramel and whipped cream, imported and domestic beers

or spirits, and mixed drinks or wine. Also, those looking for a quick snack may pick up potato chips, granola bars or yogurt. Coffee, tea, soda and juice are also offered.

Last fall's addition of the dome lounge and business-class car more than doubled the maximum seating of the train from 88 to 184.

INDOT became involved in the *Hoosier State* train after Congress voted to end federal support for Amtrak routes of less than 750 miles effective October 2013. The state of Indiana partnered with on-line local governments to fund *Hoosier State* operating costs.

Iowa Pacific Holdings was selected as the state's contractor to provide the train equipment, train maintenance, marketing, and food and beverage service.

Amtrak serves as the operator for the *Hoosier State*, working with host railroads, providing train and engine crews, and managing ticketing and reservations.

INDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration reached an understanding of the clear lines of accountability for safety and accessibility, allowing Indiana to seek private-sector competition for passenger rail. Indiana's contracts require its vendors to comply with all Amtrak and FRA safety requirements.

In addition, INDOT has designated a staff member – Passenger Rail Contract Manager Venetta Keefe – to be responsible for overseeing contract compliance.

“Boomer TV is the first television spot on the *Hoosier State*, and we're pleased about the publicity,” said Keefe. “Our on-time performance was 94 percent for February, up from a low of 57.7 percent in December 2014.”

Keefe noted that the *Hoosier State* train is the first public-private partnership of its kind in the history of the American passenger rail industry, after Congress mandated that states sponsor Amtrak routes of less than 750 miles.

“The communities of Crawfordsville, Lafayette, Rensselaer, Tippecanoe County and West Lafayette are contributing funding and have a vested interest in improving performance and ensuring accountability,” said Keefe.

To book a reservation on the *Hoosier State* train, click [here](#).