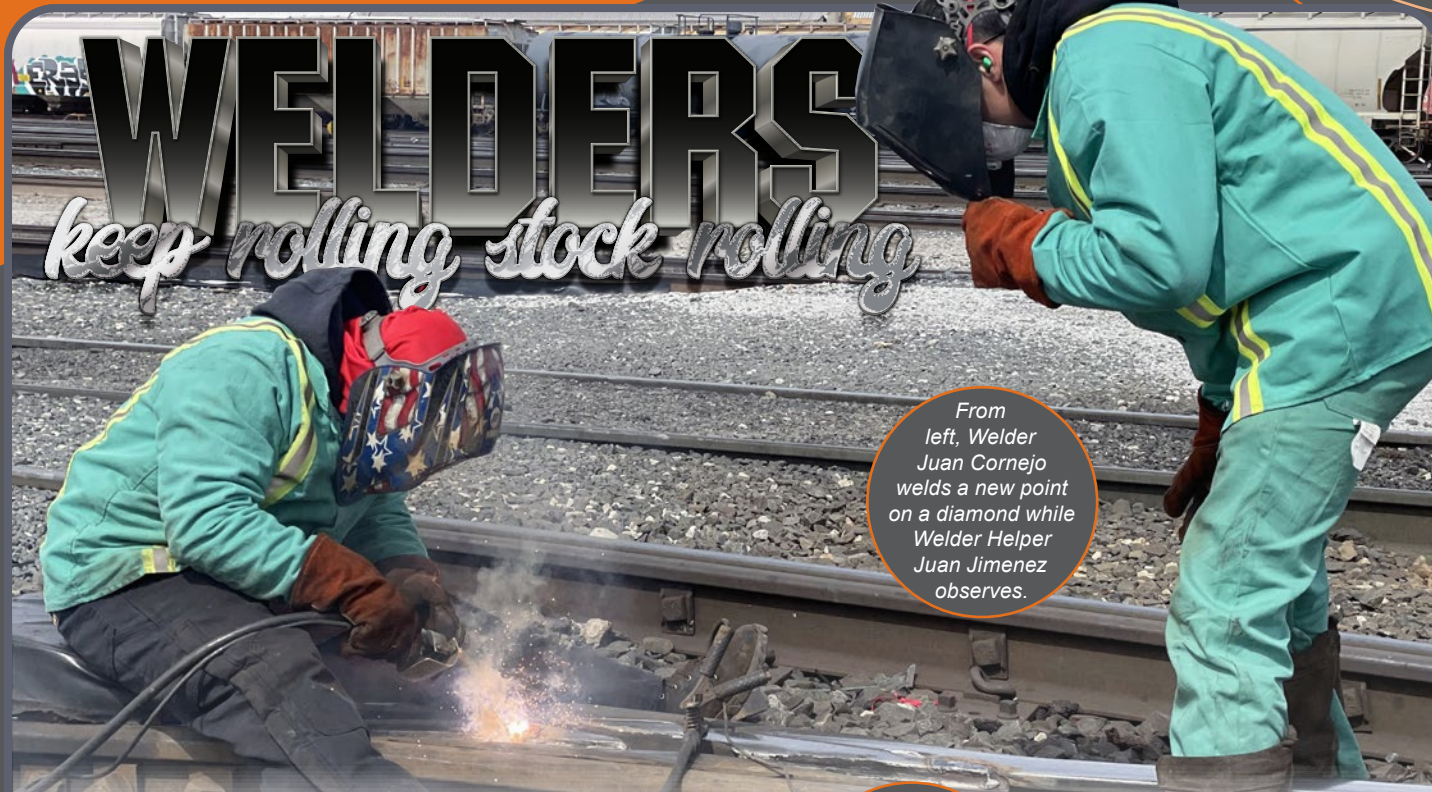




SAFESTART

AWARENESS NEWSLETTER

SECOND QUARTER 2025



WELDERS

keep rolling stock rolling

From left, Welder Juan Cornejo welds a new point on a diamond while Welder Helper Juan Jimenez observes.

Since Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) Welders Steve Baldwin and Juan Cornejo and Welder Helper Juan Jimenez are well-versed in the industry's lingo, arc welding the nose on a frog in Blue Island Yard seemed like a normal task in April.

As it resembles an amphibian's legs, a railroad frog is part of the infrastructure that keeps a rail car's wheels rolling from one track to another. When the front of that structure, known as a point or crossing nose, wears down over time, it can be rebuilt to extend its longevity.

Along with holding a thorough job briefing, Baldwin, Cornejo and Jimenez assign a watchman and stay in constant communication with one another as well as the Train Dispatcher.

"We go through the process step by step and decide where to clear if a train does come," said Cornejo, who notes a track may be temporarily taken out of service if the point requires an extensive amount of grinding and welding.

Talking about their emphasis on track maintenance for the sake of safety and operational fluidity, Cornejo said, "We take care of it right away."

He says he appreciates his IHB co-workers as the team remains focused on safety regardless of the task.

From left are Welders Juan Cornejo, Steve Baldwin and Welder Helper Juan Jimenez.



Franklin leads Gibson Yard as Superintendent

Gibson Yard Superintendent Matthew Franklin stepped into the role on April 12, bringing with him a decade of railroad experience, a passion for team building and pride in Indiana Harbor Belt's (IHB) contributions to Midwest rail traffic.

Since 2015, Franklin has been a Switchman, Conductor, Yardmaster, Trainmaster and Assistant Superintendent. He expresses gratitude to various mentors throughout his career.

"A lot of good people have helped me along the way," he said.

Franklin is responsible for setting goals, coordinating with other departments and ensuring the yard has the resources needed to operate safely and efficiently.

"I see this as a chance to be a leader," he said. "I get to influence and build the team, and that's the part I enjoy most."

Speaking about the positive impact of detailed job briefings on daily operations, Franklin says, "It starts in the shanty. We make sure safety always is at the forefront."

Franklin now supervises a growing team that includes Assistant Superintendent Justin Kakos and Trainmaster Josh Sinde, who are executing new responsibilities at Gibson.

"Justin came from Blue Island Yard and picked up the operation side quickly," Franklin said. "Josh was a Yardmaster

here, so he knew the operational side; now, he's learning the administrative piece."

Noting the importance of planning, Franklin says, "Everything we do involves time — crew hours, train schedules. It all has to work together."

Franklin grew up in Chicago until age 10 and now lives in Dyer, Indiana, with his wife, Rachel. When he's not at work, he enjoys playing guitar, gaming with friends, gardening, and helping care for their cats, dogs, fish, snake and spiders.

Prior to heeding his brother-in-law Tim Holben's recommendations about IHB, as Holben was a Yardmaster at the time, Franklin worked for a construction company and a print shop in Merrillville, Indiana.

"Tim told me IHB was a good place to work — and he was right," Franklin said. "The team is tight-knit. I know most people by name, and we have a lot of good employees."

He's especially proud of the role Gibson Yard plays in the region's auto traffic.

"We're a spotlight in the Midwest in that category," Franklin said. "I take a lot of pride in what we do here. I'm continuing to develop my own skills, but I'm also preparing our team as they're the future leaders of IHB."

Family Days scheduled

Get your Peanuts and Cracker Jack ready as the baseball-themed Family Days are coming!

Last year, Family Day was celebrated as a one-day picnic.

"This year, we thought we would try a new way to accommodate our employees with different schedules," Manager of Human Resources and Labor Relations Ashley Bruinius said.

Employees will have two options — attend a Gary SouthShore RailCats or Windy City ThunderBolts baseball game.

The RailCats game is July 25 versus the Sioux City Explorers at 6:45 p.m. It will be a Star Wars-themed night at the stadium that evening along with fireworks night, so fans will be able to enjoy the fireworks that evening.

The ThunderBolts game is Aug. 10, when they play the Evansville Otters at 1 p.m. It will be family day at the stadium that day and fans will be allowed to run

the bases and get player autographs after the game.

Special sections have been reserved for both games, and there will be a food buffet with soft drinks provided during the first few innings of each game. There are children's playgrounds at both ballparks.

The registration portal will be open during the month of May for employees to RSVP to one of the events. The link is on all employee tablets, and for those without tablets, it is being sent via email.

"We look forward to seeing everyone there and are hopeful these events will be a great time for employees and their families,"

YOUR CHOICE

Gary SouthShore RailCats game

July 25 at 6:45 p.m.

Star Wars Theme
& Fireworks



Windy City ThunderBolts game

Aug. 10 at 1 p.m.

Family Day, Run the Bases
& Player Autographs

Registration portal open throughout May to RSVP for one event.

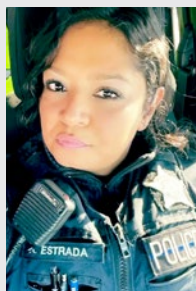
Reserved Sections | Food Buffet | Soft Drinks | Playgrounds

Director of Human Resources Melanie Lindner said.

AED, CPR and first aid classes available

Thanks to expanded access, every Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) employee can now participate in Automated External Defibrillator (AED), CPR and first aid certification classes. Special Agent Raquel Estrada leads the sessions, following American Heart Association (AHA) and American Red Cross standards.

"Whether it's your first time taking the class or you're doing a renewal, having this training and being ready to go in a high-stress situation can make all the difference," Estrada said.



Special Agent
Raquel Estrada

The two-hour class includes hands-on instruction in adult, child and infant CPR, basic first aid, and use of an AED. IHB currently has 23 AEDs across the property, including some carried in company vehicles.

Certification is valid for two years.

"In the adrenaline of the moment, you want your training to take over," Estrada said. "That's why recertifying every two years is important."

Classes are offered twice a year and rotate locations. The most recent sessions were March 19 and 21 at the

Gibson Yard main office, with 17 employees participating. Upcoming sessions are planned for October in Blue Island and Gibson yards.

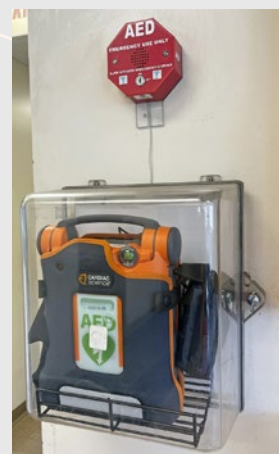
IHB covers the costs. Upon completion, employees receive their AHA certification by email.

Estrada will send out details for the October sessions later this year. Interested employees should watch their

inboxes for her announcement and sign-up information.



Several Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) employees participate in a March AED, CPR and First Aid certification class. IHB currently has 23 AED units.



These IHB team members completed their AED, CPR and First Aid certification in March:

Car Department Supervisor Greg Elbaor	Track Laborer Keith McGuffey
Senior Manager of Customer Service and Demurrage Dawn Geeve	Director of Business Development and Joint Facilities Patrick McShane
Manager of Signal and Systems Will Geeve	Track Foreman Michael Ramirez
System Superintendent Kiley Hinds	Manager of Interline Switching and Revenue Accounting Joe Ruff
Trainmaster Donna Krumwiede	Environmental Manager Dan Shirley
Trainmaster Tony Kuypers	Trainmaster Joshua Sinde
Track Supervisor Joshua Lemmon	General Superintendent of Field Operations Darrell Snyder
Director of Human Resources Melanie Lindner	Track Laborer Joshua Walker
Car Department Manager Eddie Lopez	General Manager John Wright

"In the adrenaline of the moment, you want your training to take over. That's why recertifying every two years is important."

— Special Agent Raquel Estrada

Bryan draws on firsthand knowledge in new safety role



Director of Safety Zach Bryan brings nearly two decades of railroad experience to the role he began on March 15. Bryan replaced Eric Ritter, who now oversees Indiana Harbor Belt's infrastructure as Chief Engineer.

Bryan reports to General Manager John Wright and leads a team that includes Assistant Director of Safety Don Bolster, Manager of HazMat Bryan Fuller and Industrial Superintendent East Chas Hyde, and Road Foremen Dan Bink and Chris Saenz.

"I liked the job Eric was doing," Bryan said. "We have a shared vision for safety and how to connect that message to employees. I want to continue what he started and lead in a way that reflects my background in Transportation. We can be a safe and efficient railroad at the same time — and that starts with doing the right thing when no one's looking."

Bryan joined IHB in October 2006 as a Conductor and has since worked as a Locomotive Engineer, Road Foreman of Engines, Assistant Terminal Superintendent and Terminal Superintendent.

Bryan is responsible for safety across all departments, including regulatory reporting to the FRA, and tracking cost codes tied to incidents and injuries. He also oversees safety rules, certification programs and testing requirements.

"Information comes in from many places — Accounting, Crew Management, etc. — and we put it all together," Bryan said, noting he's learning from Ritter and Director of Risk Management Joshua Sanchez.

Bryan hopes to expand engagement efforts, including employee cookouts and the Safety Performance Award.

"We want to award employees who go years without an incident," he said. "I also want to create a joint safety committee that includes having craftspeople involved in delivering safety messages, performing observations and having conversations with crews."

Bryan's approach is grounded in communication and consistency, noting, "I like to coach. I'm approachable, and I believe if we do the little things right, the big things will take care of themselves. If you stick to the core rules, you can have a long, successful career here."

Originally from Colorado, Bryan now lives in Valparaiso, Indiana, and credits his IHB career to his aunt, Barb Bryan, a former Engineering Department Clerk who retired in 2012. Bryan also has family members who've worked for the Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway.

"I'm proud of my family and my current and former co-workers," Bryan said. "It means a lot to be part of a team that handles such heavy volumes."

Outside of work, Bryan and his wife, Brandy, enjoy traveling as it's "a way to experience different cultures and unwind." Their recent trips include Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Gatlinburg, Tennessee. They plan to visit Colorado this summer.

Bryan also likes to get up at 4 a.m. most days to work out with his sons, Tristan, 18, a weightlifter; and Blake, 17, a wrestler. He's followed his early morning routine since seventh grade.



"To be part of the team that handles the heavy volumes we do, it means a lot."

— Director of Safety Zach Bryan



Boilermakers Mike Whitman and Ryan Webb work on IHB 1511 to replace a fan drive assembly.

COLLABORATION AIDS TROUBLESHOOTING

Teamwork is the name of the game for Machinists Paul LaBerge and Russel Miley and Boilermakers Ryan Webb and Mike Whitman when they troubleshoot locomotive issues. For example, they recently discovered that a fan drive was installed incorrectly by a vendor on IHB 1511.

LaBerge said the mistake could cause a vibration that wears out the compressor or other problems.

On April 2, the team removed the radiator shutters and replaced the fan drive. This work requires dexterity and attention to detail. LaBerge, an 11-year railroader, said the project allowed him to share some of his experience with



The new fan drive assembly is installed in IHB 1511.

Machinist Paul LaBerge has been with IHB for 11 years.

Miley, a three-year Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) team member whose background

includes auto manufacturing and operating a steel slitter.

Safety message from Zach Bryan

As I take on a new role, I strive to encourage everyone to continue their great work.

Do the right thing and take your time. The right thing includes performing industry inspections at more than 130 locations. We will be doing repairs and trimming overgrowth. We also will be doing our own yard sweeps, including picking up garbage and scrap metal.

We might call it spring cleaning, which is a reminder to be conscious of changes in the weather.

By working as a team and taking accountability for safety on an individual basis as well, we can ensure everyone goes home to their loved ones. Thanks for all you do!

— Director of Safety Zach Bryan

Scholarship update

The deadline to submit an application for the new Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB) Scholarship Program ended on March 18.

Recipients will be selected by Scholarship America in early to mid-May. All applicants will be notified by Scholarship America via email or regular mail if they were selected or not. They may contact Scholarship America at 800-537-4180, with any questions.



EAP Counseling

Step-by-Step Access Guide

Getting help is easy!



1

All EAP counseling services start with a phone call or a **digital intake**. Calls are answered by experienced Masters and Ph.D. level counselors, who provide immediate support.

Digital Intake Form
or call **1.800.252.4555**

2

Often, you can get the support you need to resolve your issues just by calling and talking with one of our counselors through the EAP's 24/7 telephonic support.

3

Members seeking ongoing counseling services may choose: text, voice, or video messaging, chat, telehealth, or face-to-face counseling. These options are available with local in-person counselors, and through our partnerships with **BetterHelp**, and **Talkspace**.

Please note: These options require prior EAP authorization. Without EAP authorization you will be responsible for costs.

4

In addition to follow-up counseling, the **Talkspace Go App** offers self-guided digital tools to improve mental health, including new self-guided interactive courses, and counselor led classes monthly.

Organization Code:
ESIEAP



Get Help For:

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Your EAP can help - call any time: 1.800.252.4555 | www.TotalCareEAP.com

Sinde stands ready to help

Approaching his sixth year with Indiana Harbor Belt (IHB), Josh Sinde became a Gibson Yard Trainmaster in March. Sinde says his new role offers a deeper connection to the day-to-day operations.

“It’s all about communication,” he said. “If a crew needs me, I go to them. I ask my Yardmasters how I can make their day easier and support our crews however I can — giving rides, answers questions and helping with whatever they need.”

Sinde’s leadership style emphasizes presence and trust.

“I like to put my boots on and walk the yard. I watch how the crews break down and build trains. If I see a potential risk, I’ll say something because I care,” he said. “Safety always is the most important part of what we do.”

Sinde supervises between 30 and 40 Conductors, Locomotive Engineers and Yardmasters.

As a U.S. Army veteran, Sinde served from 2010 to 2016 as an infantryman, completing two combat tours in Afghanistan. He also was stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado, and Schofield Barracks in Hawaii.

“In the military, you learn situational awareness and discipline — slow is smooth, and smooth is fast,” he said. “There’s no need to rush. I carry that mindset with me here.”

Sinde says the biggest challenge he faces as a Trainmaster is timing.

“Railroading can have a domino effect,” he said. “That’s why I use the PACE methodology and create a primary, alternate, contingency and emergency plan. You always need a backup. When a train safely heads out to its destination, you know you helped make that happen.”

Sinde, who started as an IHB Conductor in 2019 and later became a Yardmaster, credits former Locomotive Engineers John Cizincky and John Trembczynski for his IHB career and appreciates the opportunities it’s given him.

“You could say I’m the poster child for what’s possible here,” he said. “You can start with no experience, and if you work hard, you’ll move up. You get to see different sides of railroading and understand the why behind what we do.”

Sinde also is grateful for various mentors such as Director of Safety Zach Bryan, Gibson Yard Superintendent Matthew Frankin and former Yardmaster Ryan Gamblin.

“They made themselves approachable and pointed me in the right direction,” Sinde said. “I wouldn’t be here without them.”

Looking ahead, Sinde says he’s focused on leading and supporting his team.

“I want to be the kind of manager people call even when I’m off,” he said. “That comes with trust. I’m here to earn it and to be ready for wherever opportunity presents itself.”

Born in Fort Benning, Georgia, and raised in northwest Indiana, Sinde now lives in Hebron with his wife, Kailey, and their children: Ronan, 7; Cohen, 6; Miles, 4; and Sutton, 2. The family also has three dogs: Libee, Luna, and Laika.

Outside of work, Sinde enjoys coaching his children’s baseball teams, duck hunting and golfing.



Trainmaster Josh Sinde with his sons, Cohen, Miles and Ronan

“If I see a potential risk, I’ll say something because I care.”

— Trainmaster
Josh Sinde

Congratulations to new Chief Engineer Eric Ritter!

Welcome new hires!

Trainmen

James Coleman
Austin Colon
Carson Crowe
Tyson Knight
Casey Lassiter
Thomas Lemmon
Riley Osborne
Jordan Ramsey
Fernando Robles Jr.

Track Laborers

Miguel Delgado
Christopher Lopez
Austin Pecor
Jayden Robinson
Jesus Romero

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If you see something, say something

The IHB Police greatly appreciate all of your continued vigilance in prompt reporting of suspicious observations.



FLASHBACK!

This image is of the Blue Island Ready Track in winter 2001. The 9206 unit was built in August 1966 by General Motors' Electro-Motive Division at its La Grange, Illinois, facility. It later was rebuilt in Mexico and renumbered 1509.



IHB 9206 is positioned at the Blue Island Ready Track during winter 2001. It was built in 1966 by General Motors' Electro-Motive Division at its La Grange, Ill., facility.



IHB 1509, formerly IHB 9206, was rebuilt in Mexico and renumbered.

Fresh look for IHB 1509 and 1510



IHB 1509 shines after being rebuilt and having a new paint job done.



IHB 1510

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