

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 2007**

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***INAUGURAL SPECIAL PASSENGER TRAIN***

Passenger train provides free rides between Des Moines and Iowa City and return on January 11, 2007 for Culver-Judge Inaugural Events

(Iowa City) – Iowa Interstate Railroad, Ltd., Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, and the Iowa Association of Railroad Passengers are cooperating to operate a free passenger train service on Thursday, January 11, 2007, between Des Moines and Iowa City. Called, the *Inaugural Special*, the passenger train will arrive in Iowa City in time for riders to participate in the Old Capitol Kick-Off Reception and Tour, hosted by Governor-elect Chet Culver and Lieutenant Governor-elect Patty Judge, as well as the One Iowa Gala at Hancher Auditorium featuring noted entertainer Al Green.

The *Inaugural Special* will originate in Des Moines at 12:30 p.m., from the former Rock Island Depot, 100 4th Street in downtown Des Moines. On its way to Iowa City, the train will stop in Newton (1:30 PM)(at the former Rock Island depot), Grinnell (2:15 PM)(Depot Restaurant) and Marengo (3:15 PM)(former Rock Island depot) to pick up passengers. The train will leave Iowa City and return to Des Moines about thirty minutes after the event at Hancher Auditorium ends.

The passenger rail cars have been donated by Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and Iowa Interstate Railroad, Ltd. Locomotive power and crews are being donated by the Iowa Interstate Railroad, Ltd.

“The Iowa Interstate Railroad, Ltd. is the successful result of over 20 years of private-public cooperation,” said Dennis Miller, CEO of the railroad. “Iowa Interstate Railroad, Ltd. owes its existence to the state of Iowa and the Iowa Railway Finance Authority which provided the financing to help create the railroad. We appreciate the support of Iowa’s citizens. Putting together the *Inaugural Special* and offering free train travel to those attending the Culver-Judge Inaugural events in Iowa City is an expression of our appreciation to Iowans for their support of our operations over the years.”

“There is growing excitement throughout Iowa about the Inaugural events to be held in Iowa City on Thursday evening. We want to provide a unique and energy-efficient transportation option to those who plan to travel to Iowa City for the historic occasion,” said Eliot Keller, excursion chair of the Iowa Association of Railroad Passengers. “Our group is pleased to assist Iowa Interstate Railroad, Ltd. and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe in this effort. Our members will be on board the passenger cars to help those who ride the train, answer their questions, and to assure that the trip is safe.”

The ride is free, but seating is limited. To board the *Inauguration Special*, tickets will be required. Persons who wish to ride can get information about the *Inaugural Special* and reserve their free tickets by calling: 319-466-4245. The event's e-mail address is: [InauguralSpecial@aol.com](mailto:InauguralSpecial@aol.com).

Information about the Iowa City Inaugural events can be obtained at 515-287-8667. The Culver-Judge Inauguration website is [www.culverinaugural.com](http://www.culverinaugural.com). The e-mail address is [info@culverinaugural.com](mailto:info@culverinaugural.com).

Information about Iowa Interstate Railroad, Ltd. is at [www.iaisrr.com](http://www.iaisrr.com).

The Iowa Association of Railroad Passengers is a non-profit group dedicated to improving rail service in the state of Iowa, both passenger and freight. The IARP web site is at [www.simpson.edu/~iarp](http://www.simpson.edu/~iarp).