



## Amtrak *Heartland Flyer* Celebrates its 12th Anniversary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Communities along the Oklahoma City-Fort Worth route of the state-supported Amtrak *Heartland Flyer* will celebrate the 12th anniversary of daily passenger rail service on Saturday, June 18, and Amtrak is offering a special anniversary fare promotion.

"This service has exceeded its ridership expectations from the day it started and even in the current economic climate is on a record-setting pace," said Mike Chandler, who is responsible for the *Heartland Flyer* service as Amtrak General Superintendent, Southwest Division.

Since this Amtrak fiscal year began October 1, 2010, and through May 2011, ridership on the *Heartland Flyer* has grown by nearly 10 percent compared with the same period a year ago. Total ridership since the *Heartland Flyer* inauguration on June 14, 1999, now totals 790,713.

This Saturday on the Paul Adams Memorial Platform at the Santa Fe Depot in Oklahoma City, volunteers will provide complimentary coffee, bottled water, donuts and souvenir badges to passengers departing at 8:25 a.m. On the *Heartland Flyer's* return trip that evening from Fort Worth, a series of drawings will be held for souvenir items provided by the online communities.

Using a special anniversary fare good from now through June 30, rail travelers can now purchase an adult train ticket for as little as \$20.80 each way to ride the full *Heartland Flyer* route, which is 20% off the regular ticket price. Kids' fares and ticket prices between other cities on the route are even lower. Tickets must be purchased by June 27 to qualify for the discounted price. Reservations for the discounted fare can be booked only by calling the Amtrak customer contact center at 800-USA-RAIL and asking for code V547. Seating is limited and restrictions apply, so booking reservations early is strongly recommended.

### ***Heartland Flyer* History**

The Amtrak *Heartland Flyer* was inaugurated with federal funds received by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (Okla. DOT) that were designed to initiate service in areas without Amtrak trains. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) joined the partnership with Oklahoma and Amtrak in 2006.

Last year, with a whimsical cartoon pointing out the biodiesel fuel blend being used included a beef by-product, TIME Magazine declared the *Heartland Flyer* was "Amtrak's Beef Powered Train" as it joined the ranks of Apple Inc.'s iPad and others on the list of The 50 Best Inventions of 2010. Those biodiesel test operations have concluded and the locomotive's engine is now being examined so any impact of the fuel on valves and gaskets can be measured.

Amtrak operates the *Heartland Flyer* under state-funded contracts with the ODOT and TxDOT to provide daily service, with regularly scheduled stops in Oklahoma City, Norman, Purcell, Pauls Valley and Ardmore, Oklahoma and in Gainesville and Fort Worth, Texas. For details about the stops along the route or to find out more about the *Heartland Flyer*, go to [www.heartlandflyer.com](http://www.heartlandflyer.com).

### **About Amtrak**

Celebrating 40 years of dedicated service as America's Railroad, Amtrak is the nation's intercity passenger rail provider and its only high-speed rail operator. A record 28.7 million passengers traveled on Amtrak in FY 2010 on more than 300 daily trains - at speeds up to 150 mph (241 kph) - that connect 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian Provinces.

INFORMATION RELEASE

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Amtrak operates trains in partnership with 15 states and four commuter rail agencies. Amtrak also is a strong financial performer achieving an 85 percent cost-recovery ratio in FY 2010. Enjoy the journey at [Amtrak.com](http://Amtrak.com) or call 800-USA-RAIL for schedules, fares and more information. Join us on [facebook.com/Amtrak](https://facebook.com/Amtrak) and follow us at [twitter.com/Amtrak](https://twitter.com/Amtrak).

#### **About the Oklahoma Department of Transportation**

Since 1911, Oklahoma Department of Transportation employees have worked to provide a safe, economical and effective transportation network for the people, commerce and communities of Oklahoma. Beginning with four employees to a workforce of 2,400 we have always had one thing in mind: Oklahoma. Together we've built and continue to maintain enough miles of highway to drive from Oklahoma City to Los Angeles 22 times. Join in celebrating a century of transportation accomplishments from Rt. 66 to the Heartland Flyer, from navigable waterways to the interstate system and so much more. For more information on the agency and its 100th anniversary, visit [www.okladot.state.ok.us/odot100](http://www.okladot.state.ok.us/odot100).

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