

INDIANA – Chad Lemond

Hello, my name is Chad Lemond, and I come from the great State of Indiana. The name itself comes from the early years of the United States when an agreement was signed between the State of Virginia and the six Native American tribes of the Iroquois Confederation who granted a large portion of their land in payment for goods. Originally, this territory was called the “Northwest Territory”.

Then, in 1800, this land was divided again. The eastern part become known as the Ohio Territory and the western piece, since this was land that came from “Indians”, was called the Indiana Territory. The actual State of Indiana, which is about a quarter of the original territory size, entered the union as the 19th State on 11 December 1816.

The nickname of the State is, “The Hoosier State” and people who come from there are affectionately referred to as “Hoosiers”.

Where the title originated is a subject of much debate. The most common explanation for the unique name comes from the time when Indiana was a rugged frontier of the early United States, and when a visitor hailed a pioneer cabin in the wilderness or knocked upon its door, the settler would respond in the local dialect, "Who's yere?" And from this frequent response Indiana became the "Who's yere" or Hoosier state.

A more gruesome account, which originated from Indiana’s most famous poet, James Whitcomb Riley, who told that the first inhabitants of the State were enthusiastic and vicious fighters who gouged, scratched and bit off noses and ears. This was so common an occurrence that a settler coming into a tavern the morning after a fight and seeing an ear on the floor would touch it casually with his toe and ask, "Whose ear?"

However, the version which I believe is probably the most accurate relates to an early business man who was named John Hoosier. He predominately hired his laborers from the Indiana side of these rivers, and they became to be known as “Hoosier’s Men”.

Geographically, the state is dominated by flat, fertile lands that were created by the glaciers of the Ice Age. Which leads to Indiana’s leading commercial product of agricultural goods, mostly soybeans and corn.

In comparison with the other States in the Union, Indiana is relatively small in size.

However, Indiana doesn't have a problem throwing its weight around for influence in the United States due to its numerous home-grown celebrities and unique institutions such as:

The Indianapolis 500, which is billed as *The Greatest Spectacle in Racing*, is considered one of the three most significant motorsports events in the world; Also the small Southern Indiana town of Santa Claus receives more than a half million letters and requests at Christmas time.

The 10th largest pharmaceutical company in the world, and first mass producer of penicillin, Eli Lilly and Company, was started in the State Capital of Indianapolis by a native Hoosier.

While the State does not have any American Presidents born here, the state has had a few Presidents who have called Indiana home from time to time, most notably Abraham Lincoln who passed his boyhood here before moving to Illinois.

Other famous Hoosiers are: Hollywood actor and legend, James Dean, Nighttime TV funnyman, David Letterman, Rocker, John Mellencamp, Basketball great, Larry Bird, author, Kurt Vonnegut and Folk hero, Jonny Appleseed.

I hope you have enjoyed hearing about Indiana as much as I have enjoyed telling you about it, and I hope if you're ever travelling through the United States, you'll take the opportunity to stop by.