

Washington Rail News

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February/March 2000

Publication of the Washington Association of Rail Passengers
A Not-for-profit Consumer Organization
"...getting the Pacific Northwest on the right track."

Rail advocates gather for big Portland weekend

In Portland, the extended weekend of Feb. 4-7 was filled with meetings for rail advocates from the Northwest and beyond. On the evening of the 4th and the morning of the 5th there was the first ever West Coast "summit" of rail advocates. On the afternoon of the 5th our annual WashARP, AORTA and NARP Region 8 joint membership meeting took place. The Amtrak Customer Advisory Committee (ACAC), of which WashARP's Noel Hancock is a member, met Saturday evening through Monday afternoon.

The summit was organized by George Gaekle, NARP Region 12 director from CA, with assistance from other rail advocates. Over 30 people were in attendance. Since this was the first meeting of the group much of the time was devoted to discussion and

information sharing. We discussed the need for continued autonomy of Amtrak West in operating its trains (while staying within the framework of a national Amtrak system). Other points of discussion included the critical need for mail and express on the long distance trains to help them become more operationally self-sufficient; *Coast Starlight* on-board service issues; the Amtrak toll-free number, including the suggestion for Spanish-speaking reservation agents; restoration of the *Pioneer*; the Amtrak Reform Council; and 2001 Amtrak funding proposals (see p. 4).

About 100 people attending the membership meeting heard Anne Hoey, Amtrak Vice President Service Operations, talk about the positive directions Amtrak is heading. Amtrak is on target for operational self-sufficiency

by 2003. The five major components of the business plan are coming together:

- Corridor development: The Administration has \$468 mill. for this but getting it through Congress will be a challenge.
- Public-private partnerships: mail and express, freight rail (See **Portland**, page 5)

FRA indecision threatens Amtrak Cascades Service

By Jim Hamre

The Talgo trainsets purchased three years ago by Amtrak and WSDOT met or exceeded all Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) safety requirements that existed when they were ordered. During construction, FRA increased some safety requirements and added new ones. Provisions in the new rules allow existing equipment to be "grandfathered." Amtrak has petitioned FRA to grandfather the Talgo trainsets, but FRA has continually delayed a decision. If no decision is made by FRA by May 8 the Talgo trainsets will no longer be able to legally operate in the U. S.

The main issue in all of this is buff strength, a measure of the compressive forces placed on each end of a rail car. The higher the minimum requirement, the less likely a car will crush longitudinally in an accident. Before the new rules were issued, FRA had no buff strength requirement. However, the American Assoc. of Railroads had an 800,000 pound buff strength requirement for rail cars interchanged between railroads and North American freight and passenger cars have traditionally been built to this standard. FRA has now adopted this 800,000 pound standard.

The existing Talgo trainsets have a buff strength of at least 440,000 pounds. Amtrak, Talgo and an independent engineering firm, LTK, have provided FRA with extensive documentation (Amtrak's petition is 314 pages) showing the Talgo trainsets are as safe as any equipment now operating in North America.

So why the FRA dithering? Bombardier of Montreal, Quebec has continually filed briefs (it appears its lawyers are paid by the word) asking for more and more information on the design and testing of the Talgo equipment, in-



Top Left: Anne Hoey, Amtrak Vice President Service Operations. Top Right: Ross Capon, NARP Executive Director. Bottom: Rail advocates Washington, Oregon, California and Montana gathered at Portland Union Station for our first west coast passenger rail summit.

Photos by Jim Hamre

*From the
Executive
Director's Desk
by
Lloyd H. Flem*

**Cautious
optimism in
Olympia;
Busy days in
Portland;
Clear skies in
the Big Sky?**

In mid-February, a continuation of state funding for Washington's exemplary rail passenger program is still uncertain, but we are cautiously optimistic. I have met with nearly two dozen state legislators, with nearly all expressing support for continuation of some state participation in the form of both capital and operating assistance for our trains. WashARP members and other rail advocates cannot rest though. We must continue to politely remind even legislative friends of the rail program to make monies available to allow our Amtrak service to survive and to again grow. (Always remember that well over half the costs of operating the trains come from tickets and on-board purchases we passengers make. While our train service is "subsidized," so are virtually all other forms of transportation, if one properly defines a subsidy as any cost of operation not borne directly by the user.)

While most in Olympia agree the state's rail program, in both the passenger and freight aspects, is a total success, the once-comfortable pot of money that funded rail and much of our transit and ferry systems went away with the passage of I-695. So survival of Washington's lauded rail partnerships depends on tapping the state's general fund, something never before required. (This has always been the case in Oregon; one reason why their financial participation has been far more modest than ours to date). So you need to urge legislative support, whether your senator and representatives are on the transportation committees or not.

A couple of months ago the idea of Pacific Northwest Amtrak trains carrying a portion of our region's large, important tree fruit crops rested primarily with dedicated members of AORTA, WashARP's Oregon counterparts, and in prior research done by WSDOT's Ray Allred (also a good WashARPer). Since then, WashARP, WSDOT's Rail Office, with full blessing of WSDOT Secretary Sid Morrison, members of the Washington State Transportation Commission and virtually all legislators

from the central Washington fruit region, have moved very quickly toward a plan to carry "Apples on Amtrak." (Thanks for the good slogan, Rep. Linda Evans Parlette!)

In late January, Mr. Morrison met with Amtrak Mail and Express executives, transportation commissioners and others. WashARP and AORTA hosted the Amtrak folks and representatives of most grower, shipper and processor interests from the major Washington and northern Oregon fruit producing areas in Yakima and Hood River the days following the Morrison meeting. Much credit to AORTA's CB Hall, who has doggedly pursued fruit express as an economically-sound means of supporting a return of Amtrak's late and lamented *Pioneer* train, for efforts at arranging the very successful Yakima meeting. Growers and shippers there were virtually ready to load up Amtrak reefer cars on the spot had they existed.

The Rail Office, with Ray Allred and Steve Anderson doing excellent research and legwork, has pushed ahead with "Apples" which would simultaneously help our fine Washington fruit growers, who are unable to find sufficient truckers in today's economy (the Class 1 railroads have virtually given up shipping most agricultural perishables), help preserve long-distance passenger train service in eastern Washington (the fruit would go east from Wenatchee on the *Empire Builder* as a starter), and would help achieve the many safety, environmental and economic advantages of moving product long distances by rail rather than by highway.

WashARP applauds central and eastern Washington legislators who have patiently supported the state rail program even though most of the investment has gone to the *Cascades Corridor*.

We are pleased to be able to serve as a catalyst for a rail idea, that if successful, will bring tangible benefits to the Dryside. Properly, the work of WashARP and state monies for the rail program should help all regions of our state.



February 4 through 7 were spent at a series of rail meetings and conferences in Portland. WashARP representatives of course traveled by train, and used MAX, buses, and walked to access needed places in the Rose City.

One can successfully conduct adult business without driving, when responsible transportation policy decisions have been made and one utilizes the affirmative results of these decisions. Thank you Washington state, for the Amtrak *Cascades*, and thank you Portland, for enlightened transportation and land use policies.

Elsewhere in this issue the NARP Region 8 meeting, held 5 February is summarized. I attended the Oregon Rail Passenger Coalition meeting on 4 February. This group, formerly a Portland to Eugene interest, is now statewide in scope. One result of the \$10 million the 1999 Oregon legislature granted is an expansion of the Amtrak Thruway Bus program, which will connect most of the Beaver State with corridor trains and Portland. Albany Mayor Chuck McLaran, chair of Amtrak's national Mayors Advisory Council, said intercity passenger rail should be seen as an integral part of our national transportation system and not just an alternative.

At the "Summit" of West Coast rail advocates WashARP voiced strong support for maintaining autonomy for Amtrak-West as opposed to a reversion to centralized DC control of all Amtrak decisions. We also stumped for a continuation of innovation and entrepreneurship as a means to ensure Amtrak survival after 2003. In that regard, we, joined by AORTA, stressed that mail and express were essential for maintaining long-distance train service.

WashARP's Noel Hancock is our effective voice on the nationwide Amtrak Customer Advisory Committee. ACAC's 7 February morning meeting featured a panel of representatives from BNSF, UP, FRA, Amtrak-DC, and WSDOT's Ken Uznanski. BNSF's cooperative partnership mentality was again demonstrated by the always positive and constructive DJ Mitchell, who sees Amtrak as a respected customer, and public investment in rail infrastructure by the Feds and the states as of benefit to all parties and society at large. Ken summarized Washington's successful partnerships, a lesson for all concerned.

I spoke one-on-one with both DJ and with the FRA's Dick Clairmont, who agreed that a larger role for the public sector in rail infrastructure investment was both desirable and probable. Until (See **Lloyd**, page 5)

Trackside Talk

With Erik Griswold

Sixty Million Dollars. Have you Sixty Million Dollars to spare? If so, you may wish to contact Sound Transit as that is what they are missing in order to start commuter rail service. You see, that is exactly the amount the State of Washington was to chip in as its part of agreement with the Port of Seattle, the Port of Tacoma, BNSF, UP and Sound Transit. But due to I-695, the money that had been set aside for this track improvement project is gone. What did the money buy? More capacity for the existing railway between Everett and Tacoma, enough to allow extra daytime Sounder commuter rail and Amtrak Cascades operations without affecting the current daytime freight capacity of the two freight rail companies. It would have also eliminated the current operational conflicts that occur between the BNSF and UP from Seattle to Tacoma (e.g. Argo and Black River junctions). Without WSDOT's share of the money the entire agreement may fall apart or, at lease, take months to renegotiate. (Ed.: late word indicates the Puget Sound Regional Council may use \$110 mill. in federal money from other delayed projects to fund critical road and rail projects that lost funding due to I-695, including the \$60 mill. needed for track and signal improvements.)

What about nighttime operations? That was the beauty of this deal; it, of course, gave added capacity to the line at night too, and thus meant that more freight trains could get their goods in and out of the ports that are (combined) our region's largest employers. More freight capacity often means less trucks on our highways and thus less damage to our roads. This would have been a help to the private automobile owner who contributed to that Sixty Million Dollars through the MVET. (I wonder how much Interstate 5 has cost to



Sound Transit's newly-delivered Sounder equipment, with its "splashy" waves graphics, pulls into the Tacoma Amtrak station on Dec. 2 for the "Ride of the Century" VIP run. *Photo by Jim Hamre*

operate, clean, patrol and maintain in current dollars over the 35-plus years since it was officially opened.) One can understand also why this is apparently the first agreement signed between the BNSF and the UP since 1913. When the fact that over 50% of the sales tax generated in King County goes to Olympia on a one-way journey is added to the argument, perhaps you might see fit to con-

tact your state senator and representatives to help WSDOT get the Sixty Million Dollars it needs? Sounder needs this funding now to get the track improvements in place for the September service start-up. Unless, of course you are of means and you are feeling very generous!

David Beal from Sound Transit spoke at our January meeting. Mr. Beal is program manager for project development and is the project manager for the King Street Station project. The Environmental Impact Statements for Seattle to Everett and Tacoma to Lakewood seem to be proceeding along with few speed bumps. He told us that four of the eleven F59 locomotives ordered had been received, though I think the total is now up to six, based on a recent trip through the yard on a

Cascades train. Fifty-eight Bombardier bi-level coaches have been ordered; eighteen are equipped with a cab for push-pull operation. So far, four cab cars have arrived. Thus Sounder can use the slogan "We don't have a single dummy (coach) in our yard."

We as a group continued to suggest Sound Transit operate special trains to help show off the equipment they have and prevent the popular belief from growing that "those trains are just sitting gathering rust." Trainspotters will notice that one of the F59s (probably number 902) will be in service in Vancouver, BC pulling West Coast Express commuter trains very soon. This is a temporary lease and is based on the fact that WCE needs a backup locomotive, which they are presently leasing from VIA Rail. Number 902 will return to Seattle when it's needed.

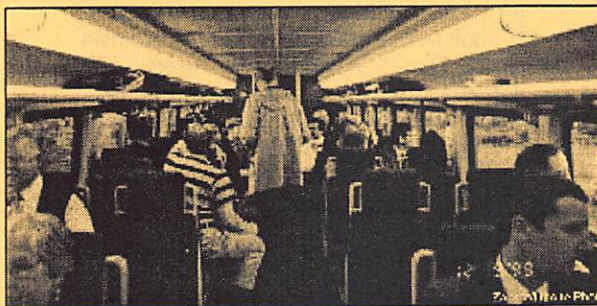
I should point out this is one of the



Grad student Erik Griswold finishes an important term paper on his laptop (running off of train power) while commuting to the UW. This is productive time instead of having his two hands clenched to a steering wheel and traveling at 20 mph on I-5. The coaches each have several work tables and each seat has the important latte holder. While we were only fantasizing on the Dec. 2 trip, similar scenarios will be played out by the thousands every day when Sounder starts in Sept. *Photo by Warren Yee*

beauties of railway transportation systems. First, the level of foreign content can be monitored to maintain balanced trade. (Try telling the automobile consumer that he or she must buy a vehicle made in the USA.) And if it is ever decided that rail needs to be replaced or removed, the vehicles can be sold or leased away, and the rail, ties and ballast can be easily recycled. Try doing that with Interstate 5, Interstate 90 or State Route 520 and the rapidly-depreciating vehicles that operate on them!

See you at Andy's Diner on March 16th!



"Commuters" enjoy the Dec. 2 trip between Tacoma and Seattle, including a strong WashARP contingent. *Photo by Zack Willhoite*

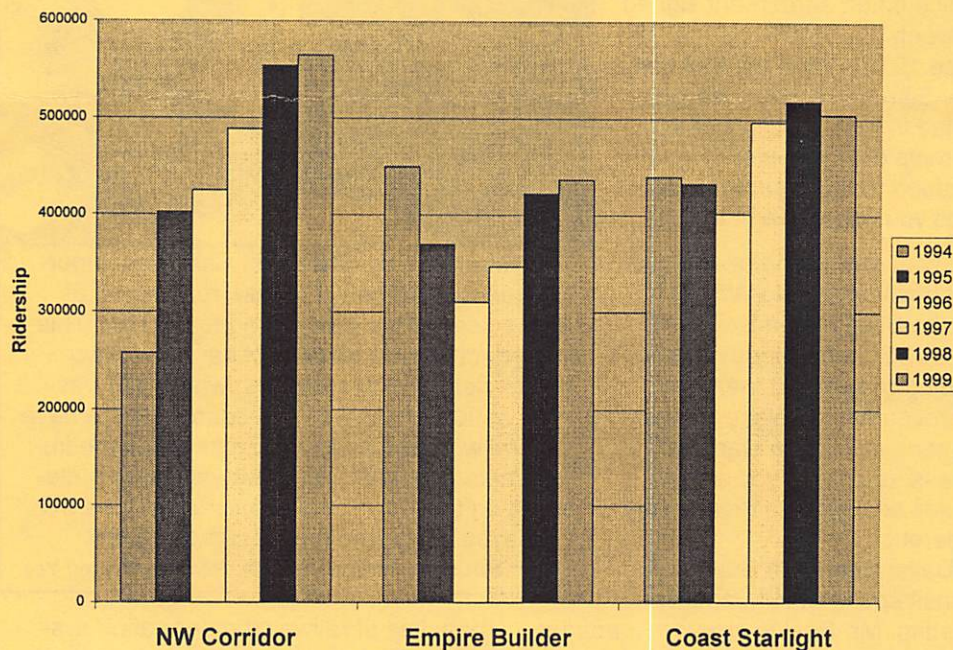
Amtrak Ridership Data Four Year Washington State Station Totals (calendar year)

Station	1996	1997	1998	1999	'99-'98 % Change
Bellingham	8,225	8,689	9,967	22,345	+124.2
Bingen-White Salmon	492	827	1,198	1,155	-3.6
Centralia	16,575	18,127	20,337	19,286	-5.2
Edmonds	14,016	14,382	17,119	20,138	+17.6
Ephrata	1,235	1,378	2,158	2,552	+18.3
Everett	16,223	18,945	24,487	27,653	+12.9
Kelso-Longview	20,788	22,423	24,877	22,468	-9.7
Mt. Vernon	5,832	5,150	7,194	9,589	+33.3
Olympia-Lacey	27,265	32,362	38,531	39,241	+1.8
Pasco	7,861	10,392	13,402	14,122	+5.4
Seattle	405,866	467,471	533,598	575,924	+7.9
Spokane	22,611	34,916	42,599	39,624	-7.0
Tacoma	80,563	91,607	106,721	111,699	+4.7
Vancouver	45,071	49,750	57,054	59,359	+4.0
Wenatchee	5,687	6,498	18,609	15,228	-18.2
Wishram	361	516	660	717	+8.6
TOTALS	678,671	783,433	918,511	981,100	+6.8

Information provided by WSDOT Rail Office

Totals for 1998 and 1999 include Thruway bus ridership numbers
Wenatchee ridership for 1998 and 1999 includes excursions to Leavenworth.

Trains Serving Washington State



Northwest Corridor ridership in Nov. 99 was down 4.4% over Nov. 98 and Dec. 99 ridership was down 6.7%. Part of this decline is a result of less Horizon equipment being available for the extra trains at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Perhaps the better winter weather also had an effect on ridership. For the year, ridership was up 2.0%, setting a new Amtrak ridership record. Weekend and summer time ridership is often at or near capacity. Much of the time

Monday-Thursday ridership is lighter. However, according to WSDOT ridership surveys, to tap the business market that will help fill these seats, more frequencies and faster schedules are needed. Ridership at Bellingham and Mt. Vernon was buoyed by the introduction of the new morning-south, evening-north train. And the train only operated for the last four month of 1999! This is the service people in Northwest Washington have been demanding and

they are starting to use it.

For FY 99, the *Empire Builder's* ridership was up 3.5% but *Coast Starlight* ridership was down 2.7%. Airfare competition continues to hurt middle distance segments of the long distance trains, such as Seattle-Spokane, St. Paul-Chicago and Bay Area-Los Angeles.

In conjunction with Genie Express, there is now a four-times-a-week Thruway bus from Seattle to Pasco. The bus operates Sunday, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, making stops in Yakima, Sunnyside, West Richland and Richland. It departs King St. station at 6 p.m. and departs the Pasco Intermodal station at 6:30 a.m.

Clinton budget promising for Amtrak; hurdles ahead

The FY 2001 budget submitted by the Administration on Feb. 7 contained the Congressionally-authorized \$989 mill. for Amtrak. Included is \$521 mill. that keeps Amtrak on target for operational self-sufficiency by 2003. The remaining \$468 mill. is for the new "Expanded Intercity Rail Passenger Service Fund" that would be available to Amtrak and the states for capital projects. The money would be a small part of the projected \$3 bill. in gas tax revenues the federal government will collect that is in excess of the estimates used in TEA-21. The revenues must be spend only for highway programs that already got a huge spending boost under TEA-21. Using 15% of the money for intercity rail will require an amendment to TEA-21.

Many states (including Washington) have been looking for the federal government to become a partner in funding intercity rail projects like it is in all other modes of transportation and this proposal would finally allow it. The highway lobby and its congressional allies are already lining up in opposition to the Administration's proposal.

According to NARP, a new state DOT coalition is forming to push for this component in the federal government's transportation plan. At a Feb. 1 Capitol Hill breakfast, David King, deputy director of North Carolina DOT said, "What really is missing [in expansion of our nation's rail corridors] is adult federal money." Added Wisconsin DOT's Terry Mulcahy, "I think there's something else we need here too—adult leadership. The states have already made a difference, but...we are at a critical point." He then quoted House Transportation and Infrastructure chairman Bud Shuster (R-PA): "When the state's belly up, the feds should show up." However, Shuster has been a long time opponent of allowing intercity rail to share TEA-21 funds, even though every other form of ground transportation is eligible.

Portland, from page 1

roads, real estate and the states. Amtrak needs to be more creative.

- The long awaited Market Based Network Analysis is due out within a month. Although Hoey didn't go into specifics, the report shows 11 new or expanded routes (*Pioneer? Restored southern Montana service?*), 40 new cities and towns served, 1 bill. more passenger miles per year and 200 new jobs. As Amtrak found out four years ago with the Mercer Management recommendations, eliminating routes or frequencies always has a negative effect on the overall system.
- Amtrak's service standards initiative will reach its pinnacle on July 4th when Amtrak will offer an unconditional service guarantee to all passengers on all trains. No other transportation company in the U. S. offers this. The service guarantee was pioneered on the *Coast Starlight*. The goal is 99.9% satisfied customers. On the *Starlight*, Amtrak issues only one credit for every 107,000 passengers, well in excess of 99.9% satisfied customers. To ensure the success of the service standards guarantee, Amtrak is instituting its Right and Ready program. The 21 elements critical to customer service and safety must be met before a train is allowed to depart its terminal.
- The fifth element is brand revitalization. The Amtrak name will continue to be the overall brand while the various corridors will be uniquely branded. The long distance trains will also have a name to tie them all together, possibly Vista Service.

Amtrak is upgrading its reservation system to allow for seat assignments, wait list for sleeping car space, concierge services and automated on-board fare collection.

The company plans to repair and return to service or sell all wreck damaged equipment by the end of 2001.

At the public forum part of the ACAC meeting on Sunday afternoon, Amtrak West CEO Gil Mallory pointed out that

compared to five years ago Amtrak West is operating 56% more trains, carrying 27% more riders and has seen revenue grow 49%. In May, a new Portland-Eugene train will start operation. Amtrak is ready to extend the Seattle-Bellingham train to Vancouver, BC shortly after the province agrees to provide funding for track improvements. The funding has been tied up in provincial politics.

During the public forum a number of citizens expressed their concerns and desires for improving Amtrak service.

All in all, it was a busy and exhilarating weekend for the rail advocates who took part in some or all of the activities.

FRA, from page 1

cluding data Talgo considers proprietary. Talgo has released much of the requested information, yet Bombardier continues to push its delaying tactics.

To even a casual observer it is plainly obvious that altruistic motives are not in play here. Bombardier, the largest rail car manufacturer in North America, is simply attempting to drive a competitor out of the market. Perhaps Bombardier is trying gain information so it can fix problems with its high-speed Acela trainsets being built for Amtrak's Northeast Corridor, which are

already months behind schedule with no startup date yet determined.

Without our corridor trains most people would divert to I-5 between Seattle and Portland. Statistics show the chance of being killed in an automobile accident are about 15 times higher than the chance of being killed in a train accident. Also, as WashARPer Erik Griswold pointed out, the federal government has no qualms about standees on transit buses that are zipping down I-5 at 60 mph or more.

The latest and fifth extension of the comment period ends Feb. 22, just before most members receive this newsletter. However, it may not be too late to contact your federal representative and senators on this. You can also view the information on file by going USDOT's document management web site <<http://dms.dot.gov/search/>> and typing 6404 in the document number box. Once the petition is brought up there is a button at the bottom for submitting comments. Amtrak, Talgo and WSDOT have been working tirelessly to get this issue settled. Perhaps a little Congressional pressure is needed.

Lloyd, from page 2

recently, government supplied investment for all modes except rail. Responsible thinking for the 21st century includes comprehensive transportation policies which allow and support all modes, allowing each to move goods and people where most efficient and beneficial, with cooperative participation of private and public sectors. Lets work for that.

Important Addresses and Phone Numbers	
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U. S. Senate	Washington, DC 20510
Capitol Switchboard (for all members) ..	202 224-3121
State Legislature	State Capitol, Olympia, WA 98504
Hotline for leaving messages	800 562-6000
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Tony Trifiletti, Shoreline..President.....	206 440-9451
e-mail: tonytrif@msn.com	
James Neal, Ephrata..VP-East.....	509 754-3114
Dennis Fait, Seattle..VP-West.....	206 706-1770
Erik Griswold, Seattle..Commuter Rail	206 441-4915
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All are evening numbers, except Lloyd's, which is available 24-hours a day (answering machine).	



WashARP is pleased to have a relatively large membership from Montana. We fully support our Big Sky members in their quest to preserve the *Empire Builder* and someday return service to the more populated southern route. We learn our Shelby, MT contingent is very close to a firm agreement to move express on the *Builder*, helping to financially preserve that train, so vital to small towns and cities in Montana and North Dakota. Good work, friends!



Jack Newman is retiring after heading Destination Centralia for many years. One of their most successful projects is bring people on the train to shop the antique stores and the outlet mall in Centralia. Over the years, thousands have ridden Amtrak to Centralia for shopping. WashARP wishes the Newmans the best.

FELLOW RAIL ADVOCATES: INFORM YOUR LEGISLATORS THAT PRESERVING OUR TRAINS IS ESSENTIAL!!

WashARP News

March 11: WashARP meeting at noon at **University Plaza Hotel**, 400 NE 45th St, Seattle (just west of I-5 Exit 169 and on Metro routes 44 and 307).

March 16: Commuter Rail Section meeting at **6:30 p.m.** at **Andy's Diner**, 2963 4th Ave S, Seattle (just north of Spokane St).

April 8: WashARP meeting at noon at **University Plaza Hotel**, 400 NE 45th St, Seattle (just west of I-5 Exit 169 and on Metro routes 44 and 307).

At the January WashARP meeting we set locations for the rest of our 2000 meetings:

- May 13: Spokane (location to be determined)
- June 10: Seattle
- July 8: Seattle
- August 12: potluck picnic in Puyallup
- September 9: Seattle
- October 14: Vancouver, BC (location to be determined)
- November 11: Seattle
- December 2: Seattle

Seattle meetings are scheduled for the University Plaza Hotel.

WashARP members contributing to this newsletter include: Hans Mueller, Jeff Schultz, Zack Willhoite, Warren Yee, Erik Griswold, and Susan Sauer.

WashARP board election time: any one interested in serving on the board for 2000-01 must submit his or her name in writing to Secretary Mike Skehan via e-mail (see p. 5) or letter sent to our PO box by Mar. 8.

Washington Association of
Rail Passengers
P. O. Box 70381
Seattle, WA 98107

Return Service Requested

1999 WashARP financial report

<u>Income</u>	
Renewals	\$11,645.00
New members	3,033.00
Donations	12,723.12
Memorials and grants	1,300.00
Luncheon receipts	855.50
Miscellaneous	979.33
Interest	683.72
Total	\$31,219.67

<u>Expenses</u>	
Executive Director	\$14,377.50
Newsletter postage	647.68
Newsletter printing	2,533.73
Miscellaneous postage	2,026.87
Miscellaneous printing	1,251.38
Meeting expenses	119.46
Luncheon expenses	911.67
Membership promotion	2,025.00
Sales expenses	14.00
Supplies	2,484.23
Miscellaneous expenses	1,444.93
Total	\$27,836.45

WashARP membership stayed about even 1999, reversing a several-year downward trend. Your WashARP leaders are implementing plans to grow the membership. You too can help our organization by recruiting new members or giving gift memberships.

We thank all who have responded to our November fundraising appeal. It has been the most successful fundraiser in WashARP history. It's not too late to send in an extra contribution.

Spread The Word!

by Susan K. Sauer

I work in the office of Steck Medical Clinic in Chehalis. Most of my co-work-

ers are young and middle-aged women, probably typical of today's working women in many communities. In conversations I always tell of the advantages of riding Amtrak trains. Recently, I said I was taking the train to a meeting in Portland. One co-worker looked at me in disbelief. "Why don't you drive?" After I explained how much fun it is to be able to meet friendly people, enjoy the scenery, walk around and arrive relaxed, she still didn't fully comprehend.

Although trains run all the time just a short distance from the clinic, few of the women seemed aware. "You mean you can actually ride a train to Portland or Seattle?" I was asked. Most of my colleagues didn't have a clue! After I explained they could travel from nearby Centralia several times daily to Portland, Seattle, and many other places, many became really interested in doing so. Hopefully, I have "sold" some new customers on Amtrak!

When I was on the Portland trip February 5th, I chatted, as I always do, with Amtrak crew. I always tell people about WashARP whenever the subject of transportation comes up. I was shocked to learn the Bistro Car man had never heard of WashARP! I told him how WashARP was trying to save our trains! I think all Amtrak employees ought to at least get WashARP brochures and be informed how WashARP is working to save their jobs!

What I've recently learned is we need to continue educating the average person that our good passenger trains exist and what a great form of transportation they are. We also need to inform Amtrak workers about WashARP. I plan to do both whenever I can.

(Susan has been a WashARP member for three years and lives in Chehalis.)

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- Basic Membership\$20.00 per year
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- Patron.....\$50.00 per year
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(always welcome and appreciated)

Note: if you move, let us know in advance and save WashARP 75¢ for address correction service.

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Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____