

# Washington Rail News

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Publication of the Washington Association of Rail Passengers  
A Not-for-profit Consumer Organization

"...getting the Pacific Northwest on the right track."

## State rail program survives I-695 budget cuts

After the 60-day regular session and two special sessions, the Legislature passed a revamped WSDOT budget for the rest of the 99-01 biennium on April 12. The budget, reduced by 24%, was signed by Governor Gary Locke on May 2.

WSDOT's rail program saw its budget reduced from \$126.1 mill. to \$69.8 mill. However, \$60 mill. in reprogrammed federal funds controlled by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) has helped fund key projects that otherwise would have been cut.

Continued funding for the second Seattle-Bellingham train, which was in doubt at the end of the regular session, is in the final revised budget. The three Seattle to Portland/Eugene round-trips and the Seattle-Vancouver, BC trains

all received full operational funding.

The state's \$5 mill. contribution toward restoration of King St. Station also remains. However, there are still several obstacles to getting the project underway. The most important one is that, in the rush to adjourn, the Legislature failed to pass a bill giving DOT authority to turn over the station to a private non-profit corporation. This company would then assume the financial risk of rehabilitation and be responsible for operating it for 30 years. Revenue for maintenance and upkeep would be earned from renting office space on the second and third floors. Also, the entire funding package is still not in place. There is a proposal in the U. S. House to provide additional money. Amtrak is currently continuing platform rehabilitation work that Sound Transit earlier started.

Funding for the new Amtrak/Sounder maintenance base just south of Safeco Field remained in the budget. However, DOT's share of Everett-Seattle-Tacoma-Lakewood track and signal improvements was removed as PSRC will fund these projects.

Use of operating funds for extending the south-in-the-morning-north-in-the-evening Seattle-Bellingham train to Vancouver is conditioned on first obtaining money for infrastructure improvements in British Columbia from Canada, BC or private sources.

The Legislature also provided \$500,000 in seed money to leverage a \$10 mill. federal loan for purchase refrigerated express rail cars. The cars, named for retiring Sen. George Sellar (R-East Wenatchee), will be used to (See **Budget**, page 5)

## FRA extends deadline as it grinds through "process"

On May 3, just five days before its arbitrary deadline for grandfathering continued use of Amtrak's *Cascades* Talgo equipment, FRA extended the deadline until Aug. 31, 2000. (See previous two *Washington Rail News* issues for more details.) Our view from Washington State is that it appears FRA is moving slowly because of Talgo competitor Bombardier's continued quest for detailed information on the design of the Talgo trainsets. This in spite of the demand from both Washington senators and seven of our representatives for a quick and appropriate resolution of the issue.

## Amtrak budget, rail capital and flexibility continue wending their way through Congress

HR 4475, the FY 2001 transportation bill was approved by the U. S. House of Representatives on May 19. Amtrak's funding is \$521.5 mill. Unfortunately, language that would have made up for not including the \$468 mill. Passenger Rail fund proposed by the Administration and would have brought the funding level to the previously authorized \$989 mill. was stripped from the bill. Rep. Bud Shuster (R-PA), a very good friend of highway and aviation interests, had the provision removed on a point of order. The \$468 mill. would have come from the billions of dollars in gas tax revenues being collected that are beyond the amounts authorized in TEA-21.

The Senate Transportation Appropriations subcommittee is expected to act on its transportation bill about June 6. The chance of a passenger rail funding level above the House amount is slim.

The huge gap between the authorized Amtrak funding level and what is (See **Congress**, page 3)



Amtrak did an excellent job of accommodating passengers during implosion of the Kingdome on Mar. 26. The three morning departures from King St. Station originated in Edmonds or Tacoma. The *Empire Builder* ended its run in Edmonds. Amtrak provided charter buses from the Seattle Greyhound station. In Tacoma, above, *Coast Starlight* passengers unloading from buses were directed to the left of the smallish station's entrance for baggage checking and to the right side to receive boarding passes. The train was spotted well in advance of the passengers' arrivals so once check-in was completed people proceeded around the station and on to the train. Amtrak's Doug Schwab ably supervised the well-run operation. All additional Amtrak costs were covered by Paul Allen's company that is building the new stadium

Photo by Jim Hamre

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

## **Victory for Now; Some Good News; Debate with Timbo?**

The many legislative supporters of our state's rail program and other options to simply maintaining our existing road system are unanimous in saying the real battle will come next year, when the full impact of I-695 comes into play, without the one-time financial rescue managed in this recent legislative session.

Thanks to strong support from WashARP and other advocates of balanced transportation, a supportive Transportation Commission and WSDOT leadership, a bipartisan majority of legislators who understand the value of rail and other non-highway modes, an effective and dedicated group in the Rail Office, and best of all, fine products in the form of our Amtrak Cascades and Grain Trains, our nationally-praised state rail partnerships will live another year. Beyond 2001? Sources of funding, not just for rail, but for other programs, including needed highway work, must be found in addition to the current motor fuel taxes. Even if one takes the position that roads should receive nearly all state transportation dollars (a mono-modal stance I do not take, if any of you were in doubt!), more funding is going to be required.

So let us celebrate our legislative victory for the one year, then get to work on helping educate and elect state legislators who have the understanding and courage to work for and support long-term increased transportation funding. WashARPer's want that funding to be in part for rail, for transit, for ferries, for other non-highway modes as well as for the safety, maintenance, and improvements acknowledged as necessary to our road and highway system.

WashARP is pleased to have been instrumental in bringing key central and eastern Washington legislators more fully into the pro-rail fold this past session. Many of our Dryside lawmakers have been good on rail issues. But they have been justified in asking, "When will it be our turn?". With the passage of "Apples on Amtrak," the George Sellar express rail cars, and funding for the east-west rail study, for which WashARP VP-East Jim Neal worked

so hard, the people and legislators of the 4th and 5th Congressional Districts will be getting a piece of this next year's rail funding pie. I am grateful WashARP was able to serve a principal advocate role in these matters.

At our very successful recent WashARP meeting in Spokane, two of these supportive Dryside legislators, Rep. Gary Chandler (R-Moses Lake) and Rep. Alex Wood (D-Spokane) spoke to WashARP about the growing role rail needs to play across the state in the future. The two men issued independent but bipartisan agreement that next year would be even tougher for funding. We must work for more transportation dollars.

Unable to attend the meeting, Rep. Linda Evans Parlette's (R-Wenatchee) very complimentary letter to WashARP was read to those present. We also honored retiring state Senator George Sellar, who remains in Wenatchee.



Some good news on other fronts. Governor Tommy Thompson (R-WI) is Chairman of the Amtrak Board! Those attending the Amtrak Partnership Dinner April 26 in Tacoma heard happy news concerning our very successful and nationally-respected passenger rail partnership here in the Northwest Corridor. Affirmations from Amtrak President George Warrington, Amtrak-West CEO Gil Mallery, Ex-BC Premier Mike Harcourt (love your words, Mike, but where are those Canadian investment \$\$?), Rep. Ruth Fisher, and WSDOT Secretary Sid Morrison were great, but nothing could approach the roof-raising, stand-and-stomp, adrenaline-pumping pep-rally address Tommy Thompson delivers to delighted rail advocates. The message of the classic Notre Dame coach to his team prior to the annual contest with such despicable as USC or Miami would be as evening vespers by comparison. Does Tommy engage in a bit of hyperbole? Of course, and we loved every second of it! Jaded observers have said the Wisconsin governor is a cheerleader for Amtrak. Yeah, and just what is wrong with that! I feel his genuine excitement over our only current intercity passenger provider cannot help but get to the rest of the Amtrak Board, to Amtrak management and labor, to members of Congress, and any segment of the public fortunate enough to catch one of Tommy's presentations.

Oh, let us not forget. Another rail

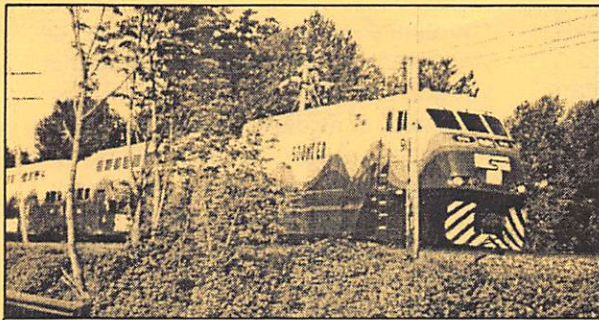
advocate governor is that of Wisconsin's northwest neighbor, Jesse Ventura. Story goes that the new Minnesota governor toured their DOT building and saw only road infrastructure pictures. Jesse is said to have growled loudly that he wanted pictures of trains also. He liked and believed in rail transportation. Recalling Jesse's competence at his pre-gubernatorial profession, Minnesota DOT staff had train shots on display the next day!

Other good news: WashARP-hosted display of J. Craig Thorpe's superb rail art was a hit at downtown Olympia's Spring Arts Walk. The WashARP booth at the annual Cowlitz County Earth Day was another great success, with literally hundreds visiting us. We pushed safety for the many children present, particularly in the wake of recent tragedies where kids and adults were illegally and fatally walking on mainline tracks. (The deaths are obviously not "good news".) As rail advocates, we have an obligation to help educate the public about both the positives and the potential dangers, when folks break the laws, of trains.

I will soon be meeting, on a field trip to Centennial Station, with people of Centralia and Ron Schauer of Longview, who will be (CTL) and hope to (KEL) establish host/hostess programs at the two southwest Washington Amtrak stations. Kelso is totally unstaffed. Centralia has a fine Amtrak agent, Ken Moore. But Ken's hours have been cut to where he is not present when three of the eight daily trains serving Centralia are scheduled to arrive! Destination Centralia, with full cooperation of the City of Centralia, will operate the hosting program in cooperation with, and definitely not instead of, regular Amtrak agents. In Kelso, we hope to help promote community interest in starting a program with the nationally-respected Centennial Station program as the model. Centennial's Rich DeGarmo and key representatives will serve as tutors to the Lewis and Cowlitz County folk.

I also have been approached by citizens of Wenatchee who wish to start a volunteer station hosting program. In addition Ellensburg wants our help in preservation and development of their classic depot. Ellensburgers are also among those in Central Washington who want some or some more rail passenger service.

(See **Lloyd**, page 5)



Sound Transit has begun offering Sunday Sounder trips from the Tacoma Amtrak station to Mariners home games. The first one on April 29 drew about 400 passengers. On May 7, pictured above after the game, however, the train sold out with 1040 passengers! ST has scheduled additional Sunday trips on June 25, July 9 and July 23. And you certainly don't have to attend the Mariners game to ride. Tickets go on sale at several Tacoma locations the Monday before each trip. A limited number of tickets are available the morning of the trip. For more information check [www.sounder.org](http://www.sounder.org) or call 800.201.4900 or 206.397.5410 (TDD/TTY).

*Photo by Jim Hamre*

## Congress, page 1

proposed makes it even more important that S. 1144, the Senate bill giving states the flexibility to spend certain federal transportation dollars on intercity passenger rail service be approved. The bill is ready to come to the Senate floor with strong support but is stalled by two anti-rail amendments that are expected to be offered.

S. 1900 and its House counterpart, H.R. 3700, are the high speed rail capital investment bills. S. 1900 currently has 44 cosponsors, including Patty Murray (D) and Oregon's Gordon Smith (R) and Ron Wyden (D). H.R. 3700 has 81 cosponsors, including Norm Dicks (D-Bremerton) and Jim McDermott (D-Seattle). Three Oregon representatives are also cosponsors. \$10 billion in federal dollars would be available for high speed rail investment with the states required to provide a 20% match. No more than 30% of the money could be spent in the Northeast Corridor and 10% would be set aside for capital investment outside designated high speed corridors.

Without flexibility and the high speed rail capital account it will be extremely difficult for Amtrak to become operationally self-sufficient by 2003.

For more information on all these bills see the NARP web site at [www.narprail.org/bills.htm#1](http://www.narprail.org/bills.htm#1).

Remember, never hesitate to ex-

press your views to your federal representative and senators. See page 5 for telephone numbers and addresses. E-mail addresses for Congress are linked from the NARP web page.

## NARP board meeting highlights

The NARP board met for its usual Spring meeting in Washington, DC on April 27-29. Region 8 was represented by regional directors Hans Mueller, Stephanie Weber and Jim Hamre; Erik Griswold (filling in for director Stuart Adams); and at-large director Art Poole.

At the NARP reception in the Columbus Club at Washington Union Station, our Golden Spike award was presented to Sen. George Voinovich (R-OH) and to Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ).

Voinovich was honored because, quoting from the plaque he received, he "has worked

hard to secure for states the right to invest their federal transportation funds on intercity passenger rail projects. We appreciate his persistence in getting S.1144 adopted in committee and in working for passage of the bill."

Lautenberg, who is retiring from the Senate at the end of the year, was honored because of his "long, distinguished career of successfully and significantly increasing federal funding for passenger rail." His plaque continues, "He has also been a consistent leader in seeing that both New Jersey and the entire nation received a much stronger passenger rail system than would have been possible without his efforts." This was the senator's second NARP Golden Spike.

The Dr. Gary Burch Memorial Safety Award went to Allan Thomas, a chef on Amtrak's *City of New Orleans*. Thomas is actively involved in many safety groups for Amtrak in New Orleans. The award is presented annually by the family of Dr. Burch, who was killed in an Amtrak derailment in South Carolina in 1991.

The highlight of the meeting was a Metroliner trip to Philadelphia on Friday evening to see one of the new Acela high-speed tilt-technology trainsets still in testing. The consortium constructing the troubled Acela trainsets is led by Bombardier. (Yes, that's the same Bombardier who's trying to have our operational Talgo trainsets (that use their tilt technology every day) taken out of service.) Some directors have concerns about the design and durability of the trainsets, but most feel that once Amtrak gets them in service (hopefully this summer) the demand for high



Local and Sound Transit officials turn dirt for the new Sounder station in Puyallup on May 10. Construction here and in Sumner is scheduled to start soon. Station construction in Auburn is moving along. Demolition work in preparation of station construction in Kent is underway but ST and the city are still discussing all the permits needed. Platform work at King St. Station for Sounder service has been completed. Although ST has not made a formal announcement, service in Tacoma will have to start out of the Amtrak station as no work as yet begun on the Freight-house Square station. Work has not yet started on the Tukwila station either.

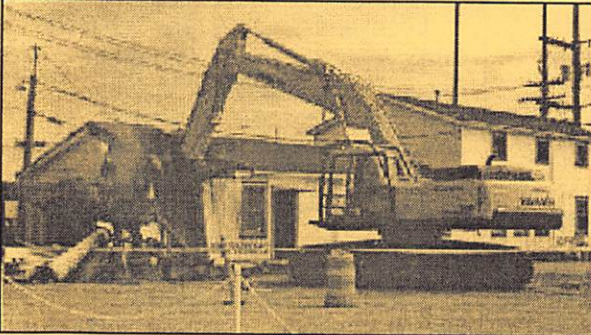
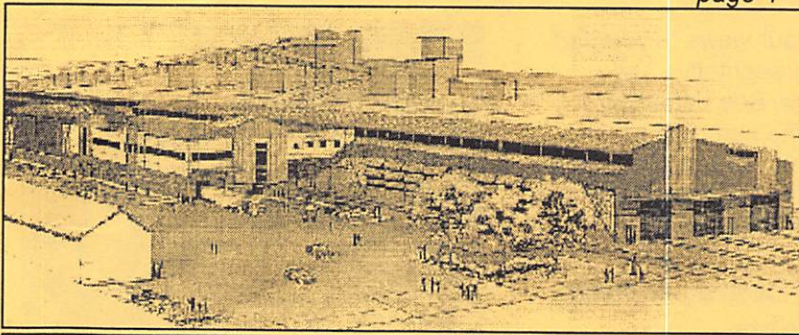
We hope that Puyallup, Sumner and Kent stations are at least operational by the start of limited Sounder service, currently scheduled for Sept. 18. ST had planned to initially run three morning northbound trips and three evening southbound trips. However, BNSF is unable to offer time slots acceptable to ST so service will start with two trips each way. More service will be added as track and signal improvements are made.

*Photo by Zack Willhoite*

speed rail will really take off in North America.

Speakers at the meeting included Amtrak President George Warrington (just back from the Seattle board meeting); Steve Scott, VP, Amtrak Marketing; Wash-ARP friend Joe McHugh, Director, Amtrak Government Affairs; Fred Weiderhold, Amtrak Inspector General; Ed Walker, President, Amtrak Intercity; Cory Brandt, senior engineer for Talgo; and NARP director Gene Skoropowski, Managing Director of the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority, for whom Amtrak operates the Sacramento-Bay Area *Capitols*.

Warrington again reiterated the "myth" that he's not committed to a national passenger rail system is not true. (More meeting highlights next time.)



Rendering of new Seattle Amtrak/Sounder maintenance base courtesy STV, Inc.

"Groundbreaking" photo by Jim Hamre

### New Seattle Maintenance Base

On April 26, Amtrak, Washington state and Sound Transit officials broke ground for the new Seattle Amtrak/Sounder maintenance base on the site of the existing base. The ceremony was attended by Amtrak President George Warrington, Amtrak-West President Gil Mallery, member of the Amtrak board, USDOT Deputy Secretary Mort Downey, Rep. Jim McDermott, WSDOT commissioner Ed Barnes, Sound Transit board member Dave Erling, Seattle councilman Richard McIver, former Eugene, OR Mayor Ruth Bascom and many others, including contingents from AORTA and WashARP. Amtrak board chairman and Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson missed the ceremony due to a late flight! Secretary of State Ralph Munro played master of ceremonies.

Amtrak is providing \$21 mill. and state and local funding is \$22 mill. Sound Transit has signed a 10-year \$50 mill. contract with Amtrak for maintenance of its Sounder equipment. The 75,000 square foot service and inspection facility will feature full-length service pits beneath the tracks. An adjacent 66,000 square foot building will house a three-track locomotive and coach facility, mechanical operations and upgraded employee offices and locker rooms.

The project also includes relocation of the BNSF mainline to the east side of the maintenance base so that every movement between the base and King St. Station will no longer require crossing the double track mainline! The

project will take about three years to complete.

As can be seen in the adjacent picture, the "ground-breaking" was really a "building destruction" as a backhoe tore into one of the nearly one hundred year old buildings on signal from the digni-

ties' wooden train whistles.

### Amtrak ticketing machines coming to Northwest

Quik Trak ticket vending machines are coming to six Pacific Northwest Corridor stations. According to Kurt Laird, Amtrak's Northwest manager, machines will be installed in Portland, Kelso, Olympia, Tacoma, Seattle (2 machines) and Bellingham. In unstaffed Kelso and Olympia, the machines will provide passengers the ability to purchase tickets at the station. In the other cities they will supplement the agents, allowing them to provide better customer service to those with more complex needs. The machines are expected to be operational by the end of June. They will accept credit and debit cards but not cash as this lessens security concerns. Reservations can be made via phone or the Internet and then the tickets can be issued from the machine. The Northwest has the highest percentage of Amtrak customers in the country using the Internet to purchase tickets.

### Amtrak West Roundup

**Ron Scolaro** has been named Amtrak's Asst. Vice President-Pacific Coast High-Speed Rail Corridors. Ron is well known to us in the Northwest as he was Amtrak's first high-level executive assigned to the west coast and spent his first day on the job being chauffeured by WashARP to visits to key legislators, DOT officials and former Seattle Mayor Norm Rice. He will

coordinate Amtrak's high-speed rail development partnerships with California, Oregon and Washington. ... **Brian Rosenwald**, considered the father of the relaunched *Coast Starlight*, has been

appointed to a new position at Amtrak Intercity. He will be responsible for operation of the *Empire Builder*, *California Zephyr* and *Southwest Chief*. Amtrak Intercity has also named eastern and western regional vice president. Don Saunders is now vice president for the Western Region. He will be Rosenwald's boss and have responsibility for all western long distance trains, the Midwest Corridor service and terminal operations at Chicago Union Station. Saunders' previous position was chief operation officer for Amtrak West. ... **A Restored Salem, OR** Amtrak station has reopened to passenger use after extensive renovation. ODOT and Amtrak rededicated the station on May 19. ... **Additional Eugene-Portland**

**train service** has been postponed by ODOT until Oct. 2000. UP is requiring additional track improvements in southeast Portland before the additional service can start. The trains will either be extensions of or connections to the mid-day *Cascades* departures from Seattle and Portland. ... **Ellensburg's train station** is the object of an effort to save and restore the station. Save our Station is working to have the city acquire the building from private owners and will work to have it restored for transportation and other uses. WashARP will soon be in contact with the Save our Station group to offer our assistance in their restoration effort. We hope it will again host passenger trains one day soon! ... **USDOT is providing \$750,000** for grade crossing improvements in Bellingham, Marysville and Puyallup. Jeff Schultz, of WSDOT's rail office, said \$200,000 will go to better protect waterfront park users in Bellingham, \$300,000 for grade crossing consolidation in Marysville and \$75,000 for traffic signal improvements at 15<sup>th</sup> St. SE and Pioneer Way. The intersection is adjacent to the 15<sup>th</sup> St. grade crossing. ... **The City of Boise** has received a donation of 14.7 miles of track from UP. The segment is part of the loop through Boise (the mainline bypasses the city) and is critical to restored passenger service directly serving Boise. Another 3.5 miles must be purchased by the city. UP has leased the rest of the loop to a shortline.

**Budget**, from page 1  
 haul Washington state produce to market. A shortage of trucks means apple growers cannot move their products to market in a timely manner. The cars will also be used to haul other produce to maximize revenue, which will be used to repay the federal loan and support the long distance trains. Produce will move east from Wenatchee on the *Empire Builder*. The Assoc. of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates and WashARP continue to push the hauling of refrigerated express from Yakima and Hood River as one way to support a restored *Pioneer*.

However, elimination of other infrastructure projects between Tacoma and Vancouver, WA threatens planned expansion of *Cascades* service at a time of strong growth. March 2000 *Cascade* ridership was 41,489, up 23.7% over March 1999 and total Northwest Corridor ridership (including Seattle-Eugene riders on the *Coast Starlight*) was 50,721, up 17.5%. In April, *Cascades* ridership totaled 45,734, up 27.2% over 1999 and total corridor ridership was 55,232, up 22.8%.

The mid-day departures from Seattle and Portland continue to be the most popular runs. The Seattle-Bellingham train continues to see ridership growth since it debuted in Sept. 1999. Some reasons for the strong growth include resizing the consists to provide more seats on the more popular runs, a continued marketing program and special discounts available through Amtrak's Internet Rail SALE.

Several studies have also been authorized by the Legislature: the east-west study of passenger service between Seattle and central and eastern Washington; a study of the potential for commuter rail service between Bellingham and Everett; and a study of railroad rights-of-way in the Spokane valley as they relate to possible future rail transit use.

**Lloyd**, from page 2



Which brings us to our final topic: People in our state support our state's rail program.

The major complaint: There are not enough trains!. From Spokane to Ellensburg to Bellingham to Kelso people say, not that our state's modest investment in passenger rail is "a waste of money" as claimed by only one or two in the Legislature, but that we need more rail service! That is a major point I will try to make in the now-scheduled debate/discussion with Tim Eyman sometime in the next several weeks.

WashARP's Mike Skehan had approached Eyman, primary author of I-695, to engage in a radio debate with Aaron Ostrom, long-time advocate for alternative transportation, and with me. The venue will be the Dave Ross show on KIRO 710 AM Seattle. Date to be decided. Dave Ross is a political centrist and has a large, middle brow audience. The debate/discussion will concern Tim Eyman's latest of his many initiatives, I-745. Its theme is "Improving traffic by making road construction and road maintenance the top priority of the state transportation system." Included are requiring 90% of all transportation funds be spent on roads, requiring performance audits of transportation agencies, updating transportation plans, and exempting road construction from sales and use tax.

This effort is certainly not as catchy as 695, which drastically cut the very unpopular motor vehicle excise tax. It would be possible to get buried in arcane squabbling over whether much of what is proposed in 745 is already in existence. (Who would argue that roads are not already the state's top transportation priority? Or how far back in terms of supplier linkages to road builders would taxes be exempt? Or does 745 take existing Sound Transit money and allocate it for 90% roads? And if so, can a statewide vote dictate localities use monies for a purpose different from that upon which they voted to tax themselves? (If, say, Spokane were to vote to tax themselves for library improvements, could a state initiative say "No Spokane, you must spend your tax dollars on swimming pools!"))

Instead of arguing over what the wording of 745 may mean, I hope we can compare Tim's essentially cars-only vision with ours, where rail and other alternatives continue to be growing travel options for our state's people and visitors. Though I've yet to talk with Aaron, it is certain he too will have a vision where environmental and social costs and benefits are considered. Dave Ross' show is of the call-in variety, so some listeners will have a chance to question us. Eyman's acceptance of this radio debate occurred only after being questioned by WashARP Chairman Chuck Mott at a National Federation of Independent Business meeting. He had come to solicit NFIB support for another of his initiatives and was surprised when Chuck cornered him with the transportation debate challenge.

WashARP e-mail address ..... washarp@scn.org  
 All are evening numbers, except Lloyd's, which is available 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m daily.

Make no mistake. Eyman is good at what he does. I do not take his one-liner skills lightly. But I believe we can make a good case for a multimodal transportation future that is not only what our state needs, but what the majority of our people want. Tune in.

**Important Addresses and Phone Numbers**

U. S. House of Representatives .. Washington, DC 20515  
 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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All are evening numbers, except Lloyd's, which is available 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m daily.

**Important Web Addresses**

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 Amtrak: [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com)  
 Amtrak *Cascades*: [www.amtrakcascades.com](http://www.amtrakcascades.com)  
 Sound Transit: [www.soundtransit.org](http://www.soundtransit.org)

# WashARP News

**June 10:** WashARP meeting at noon at **University Plaza Hotel**, 400 NE 45<sup>th</sup> St, Seattle (just west of I-5 Exit 169 and on Metro route 44 and Sound Transit route 512).

**June 15:** Commuter Rail Section meeting at 6:30 p.m. at **Andy's Diner**, 2963 4<sup>th</sup> Ave S, Seattle (just north of Spokane St). This meeting was rescheduled from May 18.

**July 8:** WashARP meeting at noon at **University Plaza Hotel**, 400 NE 45<sup>th</sup> St, Seattle (just west of I-5 Exit 169 and on Metro route 44 and Sound Transit route 512).

**July 20:** Commuter Rail Section meeting at 6:30 p.m. at **Andy's Diner**, 2963 4<sup>th</sup> Ave S, Seattle (just north of Spokane St).

**August 12:** WashARP meeting at noon at **Jim Hamre's home**, 13307 104<sup>th</sup> Ave. Ct. E., on Puyallup's South Hill. Bring a potluck item. Hamburgers and beverages will be provided. Call for more information. Phone number on p. 5.

Contributors to this newsletter include Zack Willhoite, Warren Yee, Steve Anderson, Ray Allred, Darleen Flem, Stan Suchan, Jeff Schultz and Jerry Smith.

Darleen Flem now serves as WashARP's "Sunshine Lady." When a WashARP member or loved one is severely ill or has passed away, she will send a card from WashARP to the person or their family. Please call Darleen at 360-943-8333 or 360-740-7488 (leave a message) or e-mail washarp@olywa.net.

Washington Association of  
Rail Passengers  
P. O. Box 70381  
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Return Service Requested

## WashARP meets in Spokane

Just over 40 people were in attendance at our May 12 meeting in Spokane. Guests included Rep. Alex Wood (D-Spokane), Rep. Gary Chandler (R-Moses Lake) and Jerry Smith, representing Watkins-Shepard Trucking of Shelby, MT.

Chandler has a vision: this state will have high speed rail! We need to continue educating the citizens and look to the future. He also said more convenient service in eastern Washington is needed and the east-west study is vital. Purchase of the Talgo trainsets was a far sighted move by the state. He said the purchase of a second set of grain cars by the state for use in the Moses Lake area was financed by revenues from the first set operating in southeast Washington. Hauling express on passenger trains, as planned with the *Empire Builder* at Wenatchee must be balanced against the needs of the passengers.

Rep. Wood spoke of the difficulty in working together in the House with the 49-49 tie. However, the transportation committee always works well together. The temporary legislative fix for I-695 is like putting "a patch on a blown out tire." It will take a lot more work to provide a more permanent solution to building and maintaining a multimodal transportation system in our state. He helped fight for continued funding of the second Bellingham-Seattle train and noted the new north-south freeway corridor in Spokane will accommodate light rail in the future.



Rep. Gary Chandler (right) receives WashARP's Tom Martin Memorial Award from Chuck Mott at the Spokane meeting for his continuing vision for high speed rail and balanced transportation in our state. The award is a hand-crafted "steam whistle" made by Frank Hutchins using bellows and pipe organ harmonics. Tony Trifiletti looks on.  
*Photo by Jim Hamre*

Jerry Smith talked of the strong support for Amtrak in Shelby and across Montana's High Line. He was drafted to help with the Save Amtrak campaign when the *Builder* was cut to quadweekly and that led to his involvement in Amtrak Express in Shelby. The Port of Sweet Grass, north of Shelby, is the busiest border crossing between Lake Superior and the Northwest with 130,000 trucks a year crossing there, most bound to and from Calgary, Alberta. They estimate they can provide 12-14 rail cars of express a week to Amtrak with \$1.2 mill. in revenue going directly to the *Builder's* bottom line. However, it has been an uphill battle with Amtrak. But they are renovating tracks for an express area and hope, with enough political leverage on Amtrak, to get trial shipments started this Oct.

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J/J **MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION  
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- \_\_\_\_\_ Basic Membership .....\$20.00 per year
- \_\_\_\_\_ Student/Fixed Income .....\$15.00 per year
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family Membership .....\$30.00 per year
- \_\_\_\_\_ Patron .....\$50.00 per year
- \_\_\_\_\_ Extra Contribution .....\$\_\_\_\_\_

(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 \_\_\_\_\_