



# Washington Rail News

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A Not-for-profit Consumer Organization

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

## King Street Station: legislative action moves restoration forward

Senate Bill 5224, allowing the state Dept. of Transportation to partner with a private non-profit corporation to restore Seattle's King Street Station to its original glory, passed both houses of

the legislature in March and April. The Senate vote was 49-2 and the House vote was 79-10.

Governor Locke signed the bill

on April 18, setting the project in motion. The partnership between WSDOT and Railroad Station Properties leverages the \$21 mill. in federal, state and Amtrak funds on hand to build the \$43 mill. project.

The three story 60,000 square-foot station was constructed by the Great Northern Railway, opening in 1906. The station was designed by the architecture firm of Reed and Stern, best known for its design of Grand Central Station in Manhattan. King Street Station replaced a station that resembled a giant woodshed. Seattle resident Welford Beaton commented, "It was perhaps the worst excuse for a depot operated by any railway in the world in a city as large as Seattle—it had become a sore spot with the citizens, who had to apologize for it every time anyone landed at it." Were he still alive a hundred years later, Mr. Beaton would be saying the same thing about the appearance of King Street Station in the 21<sup>st</sup> century!

The station was built in the railroad Italianate style. An important building in early Seattle, the building featured a

12-story clock tower modeled after the campanile at the Piazza San Marco in Venice. The exterior of the main floor was constructed of granite-clad masonry; the second and third floors were clad in face brick and decorative terra cotta. Glass canopies lined all side of the building. The lower floor interior was decorated with white, ornate molded plaster on the high ceilings and the walls. Elegant brass chandeliers descended from the ceil-

The Amtrak *Cascades* began stopping at the temporary Sounder Tukwila Station on June 1. The station is at 7601 S. 158th Street, just east of West Valley Highway and south of I-405. Ticketing will not be available at this station, but plenty of free parking is available. This stop provides a good alternate to King St. Station for south and east King County residents.

ing. Huge oak benches and leather chairs provided luxurious accommodations for the passengers passing through the station. Tall windows allowed the station to be bathed in natural light.

So how did we get to today's deplorable King Street Station? The long decline in train ridership after World War II meant the railroads began deferring maintenance of all passenger facilities. By the start of Amtrak in 1971 fewer than 400 passengers a day passed through the station. With the renaissance of Amtrak service in the Northwest Corridor and the beginning of Sound Transit's Sounder service over 3800 passengers a day now use the station. WSDOT projects 6 mill. passengers a year will use the station when full Amtrak *Cascades* and ST Sounder service is implemented.

Also, the Great Northern "modernized" the station for the 1962 Seattle Worlds Fair, contributing to today's unappealing ambiance. A false ceiling was installed in the main waiting room. Many of the ornate decorations, windows and doors were covered or removed. Original furnishings were removed and office space was constructed in parts of the main floor.

However, many original interior finishes and features are still intact, albeit in various states of disrepair. Structurally, the building remains sound, surviving the earthquakes of 1949, 1965 and this February with little damage.

The goals of the project include: (See **King Street**, page 5)



Top, King St. Station with the Seattle skyline; bottom, the campanile at Piazza San Marcos in Venice, Italy from which the King St. Station tower was modeled. The campanile was built in 1173, King St. Station in 1906. Photos: top, Jim Hamre; bottom, courtesy WSDOT



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

**Travelin' for  
the Cause;  
A Few Good  
Men**

Your Execu-  
tive Director has  
had occasion to

recently venture afar, by commercial  
airline, Amtrak, commuter train, transit  
bus, Aeroporter, Sea-Tac subway, cab,  
and even by private car. Also lots of  
walking. (In DeeCee, healthy hikes are  
essential simply within the massive  
congressional office buildings.)

In late April, in concert with atten-  
dance at the NARP meeting, I met with  
my congressman, Brian Baird and with  
Cong. Rick Larsen. Both BB and RL  
are on the vital House transportation  
and infrastructure committee. In addi-  
tion, I met with lead staffers of Sens.  
Murray and Cantwell, and Reps. Dunn,  
Dicks, and Portland's Earl Blumenauer,  
who is a Congressional champion of  
multi-modal transportation, and repre-  
sents a key portion of our Northwest  
corridor.

I also paid courtesy calls on the of-  
fices of five non-WA senators who are  
very supportive of Amtrak and bal-  
anced transportation. I praised their  
good work from "the people of the state  
of Washington." The senators' staffers  
seemed very pleased. Praise for an  
elected official is rare enough; from one  
a continent away, exceptional.

My essential message to all was the  
importance of passage of the High  
Speed Rail Investment Act. To the  
Northwest delegation, I underlined the  
importance of these investment monies  
to the future growth of our already suc-  
cessful and nationally lauded Corridor.



On May 8, Talgo hosted members  
of the Legislature, state transportation  
officials, others involved with the Am-  
trak *Cascades* success story, and from  
WashARP, Chuck Mott, Tony Trifiletti,  
Jim Hamre and myself. We met at  
Olympia's Centennial Station, enjoyed  
a flawless trip to King Street Station  
afternoon *Cascades*, toured and  
heard about the now-funded station  
project (Thank you, Legislature!),  
walked over to Talgo's new HQ on  
South Fifth, and enjoyed fine Spanish-  
style food and beverages.

Co-hosting the event along with  
Talgo's Jean-Pierre Ruiz, was Ralph  
Munro, Amtrak, Sid Morrison, Talgo  
Vice-Chairman Lucas De Oriol, and

me, representing WashARP members  
and Northwest rail passengers. Senate  
Transportation Chair Mary Margaret  
Haugen (D-Camano Island) and House  
Transportation Co-chair Maryann  
Mitchell (R-Federal Way) delivered  
strong endorsements of our trains and  
supported continued funding for in-  
creased service. Mitchell graciously  
credited fellow House Co-chair Ruth  
Fisher (D-Tacoma), who indeed has  
been the top legislative rail advocate for  
a decade, but was unable to attend, as  
well as former Rep. Karen Schmidt, for  
their strong support for the fine trains  
we enjoy in our corridor.

A major purpose of the trip was to  
demonstrate to legislators just what  
they have invested in. Of the seventeen  
present, several had never ridden our  
trains. Fair to say the impression was  
unanimous among the nine R's and  
eight D's that Amtrak *Cascades* funding  
is and should be an essential part of  
our state's transportation mix. We  
WashARPer's spent our time chatting  
with the senators and representatives.  
A very productive day.



While in DeeCee, I enjoyed an eve-  
ning with former Cong. Al Swift, who  
was to host a session on passenger rail  
advocacy for the High Speed Ground  
Transportation conference held May  
16-18 in Milwaukee. Al invited me to  
give my perspectives on advocacy from  
the independent passenger association  
viewpoint as part of his May 17 ses-  
sion. I gladly did so, being the only such  
advocate to address the large and aus-  
picious group of mostly business and  
industry people who rightly support a  
much stronger role for passenger rail in  
our country's future.

Following a most complimentary in-  
troduction by Al Swift, I emphasized  
partnerships; cooperation rather than  
intra-industry battling; that even Amtrak  
President Warrington says we must  
work for the "High Speed Rail Bill" not  
the "Amtrak Bill"; and that states and  
regions, not just the Feds, must be re-  
cipients of our advocacy. I cited our  
state's successful record of incremen-  
talism and partnerships. I urged coop-  
eration with NARP and state/regional  
ARPs. I advised would-be advocates to  
find and support a few champions  
among elected officials, to work with al-  
lies, but not become subsumed by  
those groups whose larger agenda may  
not correspond with those who support  
a greater role for high speed rail trans-

portation. I told the mostly-private-  
sector audience that the products they  
hope to sell are the safest, most envi-  
ronmentally sound means of moving  
people and they can be the Good Guys  
in helping address America's transpor-  
tation needs.

I concluded, "Cooperate, think of  
both short- and long-term benefits to  
your firms and associations, praise de-  
cision makers for what they have done  
or what they should do, and gently push  
forward to the next level. A rail advo-  
cate must be in it for the long journey.  
As one who has been on this train for  
nearly two decades, welcome aboard!"

The balance of Swift's session very  
successfully elicited rail advocacy ideas  
from all assembled. These ideas are  
being edited into what will be essen-  
tially a handbook for advocates.

I was pleased to be part of a de  
facto Washington state delegation that  
included Swift, former WSDOT Secre-  
tary Sid Morrison, WSDOT Rail man-  
ager Ken Uznanski, and Talgo's JP  
Ruiz, all of whom had prominent roles  
at the Milwaukee HSGTA conference.  
Attendees from around the country cite  
our state's leadership. Members of the  
Wisconsin ARP, a fine organization in  
another state which leads in commit-  
ment to passenger rail, saw me off on  
my *Hiawatha* train to Chicago with sin-  
cere praise for what we in Washington  
have accomplished. Let's now work for  
our state to continue warranting such  
accolades.



This column has in the past praised  
the role of women legislators as being  
particularly dedicated and effective at  
bringing about the Washington pas-  
senger rail success story. While there  
have been and are some excellent  
male legislative rail advocates, guys,  
we still must doff our hats to the ladies  
in this regard. But now let us praise a  
Few Good Men (with acknowledgments  
to the USMC).

In my last column I thanked just-re-  
tired WSDOT Secretary Sid Morrison.  
My sentiments were multiplied by  
scores at a retirement dinner for Sid in  
April. Most everyone vital in Washing-  
ton politics and transportation was  
there to applaud the former congress-  
man. I sat with BNSF friends, including  
Pat Keim, who was one of many who  
spoke well of Sid. New WSDOT Sec-  
retary Doug MacDonald was present,  
praising his predecessor and stating a  
(See **Lloyd**, page 5)



## Trackside Talk

With Erik Griswold

Three years ago, Mike Skehan asked if I would like to take over the duties of chairing the Commuter Rail section of WashARP. Due to reorganization of both organization and focus, I am today the vice president of the Commute Rail Transit Advocacy Committee, but this will likely be my last or second-to-last column. My wife has accepted a position at UCLA and we will be moving to "The Southland" come September.

When I began as a member of WashARP in March of 1992, there was just one dedicated passenger train a day from Seattle to Portland, supplemented by the *Pioneer* and the *Coast Starlight*, two long-distance trains that were not completely reliable for the northbound Portland-Seattle traveler. Today, in addition to the one dedicated Seattle-Portland train, we have two dedicated Seattle-Eugene trains, plus the *Starlight*, though we did lose the *Pioneer*.

Where we had no trains to the north of Seattle (except for the *Builder's* service to Edmonds and Everett) we now have one Seattle-Vancouver, BC train and one Seattle-Bellingham train (with a dedicated bus connection Vancouver).

On our Seattle-Tacoma tracks, we have added to the above with two peak-direction trips each way by Sounder, Sound Transit's commuter rail service.

Not bad for ten years, I say. Though of course we could have had so much more were it not for Mr. "Me-Myself-and-Eyman." But then again, this funding crisis has spurred a very necessary debate about funding and how we pay for things. We now know that the concrete highway system is not "free," and does not even "pay for itself" through the dedicated gas-taxes, property-tax exemptions, non-gas-tax funded emergency and volunteer-right-of-way-cleaning services it receives.

We saw that the license plate fee was not based on weight or efficiency of a vehicle and thus damage to roadway or environment. That fee was paid whether the vehicle was operated 24/7/365 or if the car sat in the garage except on sunny Sundays. It was like an all-you-can-eat buffet where it was impossible to get full or gain weight.

And a lot more people today understand that the gas tax has not kept up with inflation and is based on how many gallons of gasoline are sold, not a percentage of the price of that gallon. Thus as the price-per-gallon goes up, revenue does not go up; in fact it can go down if people drive less. As vehicles have become more efficient, on average, since the 1960's, despite the popularity of SUVs, they drive more miles per gallon.

What wears down a road? The passage of time to a degree, but what really wears down the asphalt is the number of axles

times the tires-per-axles that pass over the road. Well, the more axle-miles one travels per gallon, the more wear the road incurs. So for your two-bits of gas tax, you get to run four tires over 30 miles of road where you might have, for the same price (adjusted for inflation, it was more expensive back then) run four tires for 20 miles in the 1960s. It should pay for itself, but without keeping up for inflation and improvement in vehicular efficiencies, it doesn't.

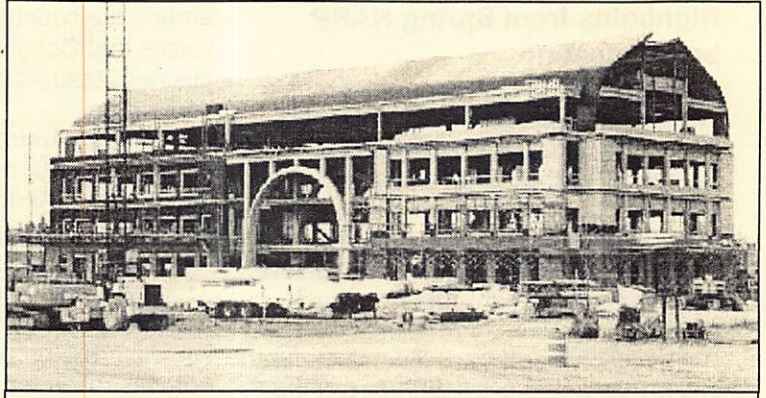
(And now a brief pause in the writing of this column while I run up to the university to run some errands...OK, I am back. Took the bus. As it was the afternoon, it took me approximately 5 minutes to get from Westlake Station to Campus Parkway, but on the return, for which I stood the entire journey due to all seats being full, we took 20 minutes to go from Campus Parkway to Westlake Station. And why? Because that inbound bus uses the University Draw-bridge which has to open for even just one single-occupant sailboat! And of course, after we passed the bridge, say it with me: "Buses get stuck in traffic!")

A follow-up to my reference to the Boeing move discussed in my last column. Remember that Airborne Express is headquartered in Seattle. Their "hub" is near Columbus, Ohio. Where is the true economic impact of Airborne? I'd argue Ohio. Let's work to keep Boeing's economic impact here in the Puget Sound. (OK, and in the Long Beach area too, if I am to be kind to my new neighbors.)

Sounder track work will be under way at the beginning of July. According to BNSF sources, a crew of 27 is slated to start work on signal improvements and on connecting Freighthouse Square to the Seattle-Tacoma BNSF mainline. Bravo to all parties for finally coming to an agreement. We've been waiting!

I hope that when I return from my "exile" to the City of Angels I **do not** return to a state where the only full-time and frequent rail transit systems operate in Spokane, Vancouver (WA) and Tacoma! But as things stand that just might be the case!

Finally, an open letter to Emory Bundy: Recently Bundy stated that it would be possible to operate 300 buses per hour through the downtown Seattle transit tunnel. This, Bundy stated, would be greater than the capacity that light rail is slated to have in terms of seated passengers. (Anyone who has ridden a rail transit system in



On May 9, construction is progressing on the four-story 65,000-square foot Everett intermodal station which will host transit and intercity buses, Sounder and Amtrak, as well as the city's career development center and college classes sponsored by the state's five universities.  
Photo by Jim Hamre

any city understands the difference between standing on a rail vehicle and standing on a bus, which is in part why buses have always had many as many seats as possible.) But at 60 minutes in an hour this means 5 buses per minute, giving only 12 seconds per station if the buses are not platooned and one minute per station if they are. (Platooning would mean operating the buses like a train, but, without a physical coupling, increases the chances of collisions between buses in the tunnel.)

A casual observation of buses that were unloading and loading full loads, without either having to deploy a lift for a disabled passenger or the driver being asked a question by a patron, leads me to conclude that the shortest "dwell time" is already 45 seconds. It would not take much to drop the throughput of platooned buses in the tunnel below the one minute per station rate that Bundy is proposing. Just a one lost tourist and we lose any cost-savings.

Besides, we'll soon need new Dual-Mode buses. Let's say that with this 300 buses per hour rate we will need 1000 buses so that a bus has two hours to get to from either downtown Seattle transit tunnel portal (Convention Place or International District) to the end of its route and then back to the tunnel. Many routes take longer than this to make a round-trip. Plus we'll need some spare coaches for breakdowns and scheduled maintenance, as well as driver shift changeover. What might it cost to buy such a fleet? While our original fleet of Bredas cost "only" \$450,000 each, the latest bidding for Boston's dual-mode buses like Metro operates in the tunnel came in at \$1.7 million per coach. That's a fleet of new buses that would cost us \$1.7 billion with a service life of about 15 years! And what happens to those buses when they leave the portals of the transit tunnel (at a rate of 5 per minute)? You got it! They get stuck in traffic!!

Come see my last meeting! July 19<sup>th</sup> at Andy's Diner! We'll figure out what to do to get the Seattle to Everett Sounder open A.S.A.P.



## Highlights from Spring NARP board meeting

The NARP board of directors met in Washington DC April 26-28. Directors from the Northwest attending were Stephanie Weber, Stuart Adams, Hans Mueller, Art Poole and Jim Hamre. WashARP Executive Director Lloyd Flem also attended the meeting. Below is a summary of highlights from the meeting.

Senator Max Cleland (D-GA), a disabled Vietnam veteran, addressed the board on April 26. He stated that the railroads have meant much to development of the United States. Now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, high speed rail needs to be a viable, convenient and superior alternative to our other modes of transportation. Sen. Cleland emphasized that he strongly supports the High Speed Rail Investment Act as it's time to move high speed rail outside the Northeast Corridor. He said there is a market for high speed rail; build and they will come.

Amtrak's Paul Vilter, who participated in the four-month process to analyze and redesign Amtrak's mail and express initiative, provided an update on the project. Instead of looking to haul any express that is offered, Amtrak must target the markets where it has the greatest competitive advantage: long-haul, high-speed, time-definite service and specialized handling (sorting and consolidation of loads). Amtrak will focus on three core market segments: print media, perishables and premium truckload. Amtrak will also restrict the number of intermediate switching and loading points. At one point, Amtrak was looking to originate about 600 cars and roadrailer trailers a week. Concentrating on these core express businesses will mean that about 250 cars a week will be hauled, but total profit will be about the same.

George Warrington, Amtrak president, spoke to the board on April 27. He is focused on service quality. Amtrak must manage its business smartly. He refuses to hold up a couple of trains as political hostages to get more money from Congress.

Acela Express is doing great. Ridership and revenues are strong and growing as Amtrak adds more frequencies. All 20 trainsets should be delivered by November.

Several times a month Warrington said he visits governors and mayors

around the country. The most effective voices that Congress can hear are from business leaders and chambers of commerce.

Although Amtrak has only 1.2% of all intercity trips, it has 4% of all air/rail trips, making Amtrak the ninth largest carrier. Amtrak is gaining on Continental.

In response to a question, Warrington stated that if Amtrak receives the full \$521 mill. proposed by the Bush Administration for fiscal year 2002, \$200 mill. will be dedicated to renovation of the remainder of the Superliner I fleet (delivery of which started in 1979) and the Viewliner sleepers.

Norman Mineta, the USDOT secretary addressed the board at its Friday luncheon. Mineta, a Democrat, served as Secretary of Commerce in the Clinton Administration and is a former congressman and mayor of San Jose. He thanked NARP for its years of advocacy on behalf of passenger rail service and balanced transportation. The secretary said he looks forward to working with NARP in the coming years.

Intercity rail and transit are no longer just an option, but a necessity for commuters nationwide. There were 9.4 billion rail and transit trips in 2000, the highest level in more than 40 years. Rail had the biggest growth rate. Transit ridership in general is growing faster than air or auto travel. With respect to rail and transit, Mineta said that he hopes to change the mindset of many who work in the transportation arena.

Rail is capturing the attention of more and more people as a way to relieve congestion on the nation's highways. Mineta noted that in a recent survey sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, 62% of the people surveyed said they would be interested in riding high-speed trains and 69% said they would favor high-speed train service in their area.

High speed rail will help relieve congestion in many busy corridors, Mineta declared. President Bush understands that rail is an important part of our transportation system. The administration is reviewing the HSRIA before taking an official position.

Mineta stated that safety will remain important at USDOT. Other issues he will work on are better intermodal connections, continued implementation of TEA21, improving coordination between modes and transportation providers, and developing

intelligent transportation systems.

On Saturday, we heard from Vukan Vuchic, professor of transportation at the University of Pennsylvania. He outlined how the U. S. lags behind all its peers in the development of passenger rail service. Our country has taken too narrow a view on transportation, we have no rational transportation policy, we have not defined our transportation goals and have distorted user financing between modes.

He pointed out anti-rail bias in the United States with the following examples:

- with highways, we say it's an investment; with Amtrak, we say it's a subsidy
- with highways, we only talk about the annual investment; with Amtrak, we talk about the total investment over the last 30 years
- with highways, we talk about systems financing; with Amtrak we say cross subsidies are bad
- with highways, we say users already pay the full cost (which they don't); with Amtrak we complain that users should pay the full cost
- with highways, we provide free parking; with Amtrak we say minimize subsidies by raising fares

Vuchic argued against the idea of operational self-sufficiency, saying it's self-defeating. The critics say increase fares to increase revenue. This leads to decreased ridership and increased congestion. Then the critics claim Amtrak is "elitist."

He said the magnetic levitation proponents are taking the politicians "for a ride." He pointed out that a federal DOT report stated the Northeast Corridor would be the best location to construct a maglev system, but did not mention that it was **not** the **best** alternative for the NEC.

Vuchic concluded by telling us we must insist that the principals of TEA21 are implemented and intercity rail, including high speed rail, must be included.

The annual NARP awards reception saw the presentation of the Golden Spike award in memory of NARP's late and long-time president, John R. "Jack" Martin. His wife, Faye Martin, and several other family members accepted the award. The first annual John R. Martin Passenger Rail Advocacy Award was presented to Leif Erik Lange, of Elk Grove, CA. for his long-time and instrumental role improving passenger rail service in California. The Dr. Gary Burch Memorial Safety Award was presented to Damian Garden, of Yalesville, CT, an Amtrak maintenance-of-way supervisor, for his contributions to many of the infrastructure improvements that help to safely support Amtrak's high speed rail service in New England.

(The complete text of Secretary Mineta's remarks to the NARP board is available at [www.dot.gov/affairs/042701sp.htm](http://www.dot.gov/affairs/042701sp.htm). His remarks to the May 9 meeting of National Corridors Initiative are available at [www.nationalcorridors.org/](http://www.nationalcorridors.org/). Click on the May 14 newsletter link.)



**King Street**, from page 1

- Preserve and protect the historic structure over the long term.
- Ensure continued use as a transportation hub for Amtrak, WSDOT, Metro and Sound Transit.
- Ensure the upper floors become a home to public commercial tenants that will enable the owner to pay for ongoing operation and maintenance costs and build future capital reserves.
- Provide travelers with a safe, convenient and enjoyable travel experience.

To move the restoration forward with only about half the needed funding in place, WSDOT and Railroad Station Properties with use IRS 63-20 financing. This part of the tax code allows a private, non-profit organization to issue tax-exempt bonds at the same low interest rate as public debt. RSP is owned by the National Development Council of New York City, a nonprofit corporation that works with governments and nonprofits nationwide on housing and economic development projects.

Through competitive bidding, WSDOT selected RSP to manage the redevelopment and operate the station for up to 30 years. WSDOT will lease the building from RSP, providing Amtrak and Sound Transit the needed facilities for their operations. The upper floors will be subleased to government agencies. Lease payments will be used to pay off RSP's debt. By the end of the lease WSDOT or another designated agency will assume ownership of the building.

Maria Barrientos of Barrientos LLC, a consultant involved in redevelopment of historic buildings and coordinating the project for WSDOT, suggested the financing plan, which was used by King County to develop the King Street Center next door to the station.

Other partners in the project include Nitze-Stagen & Co. Inc. of Seattle, who will be the developer, and Baugh Construction, who will be the general contractor. Both recently finished the restoration of Union Station, just across 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. from King Street Station, for Sound Transit's headquarters.

Now that the Legislature has authorized WSDOT and RSP to enter into the redevelopment partnership, the project will be getting off the ground within a few months. The first step is for RSP to negotiate the sale of the station and surrounding property with BNSF. A temporary modular station will be constructed for Am-

trak's use during the restoration. The temporary building will be placed between the station and the Weller St. pedestrian overpass. Amtrak will move into the temporary station by the end of next April.

The renovation project is expected to take about 14 months. King Street Station should reopen with all its original glory restored and modern functionality incorporated by the middle of 2003. Welford Beaton, who must have been impressed with the opening of King Street Station 1906, would certainly be equally impressed with the restored 2003 version of the station 97 years later. WashARP and other rail advocates in the Northwest will certainly be excited and pleased to see this long awaited and important project brought to a successful completion.

*(Information is from WSDOT and John Schwarz of Barrientos. For more detailed information, see [www.wsdot.wa.gov/pubtran/-passrail/kss/](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/pubtran/-passrail/kss/).)*

**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  
 Amtrak reservations/information..... 800 872-7245

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All are evening numbers, except Lloyd's, which is available 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m daily.

WashARP e-mail address ..... [washarp@scn.org](mailto:washarp@scn.org)

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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)

**Lloyd**, from page 2

proposed course those at my table found positive. The evening's MC was, who else?, Ralph Munro.

Easily the most popular and widely-respected Washington statewide elected official in the past twenty years, Ralph chose to retire after two decades of making the Secretary of State's office one of the nation's best. The distinguished Scotsman, a renaissance man, has rail advocate as a chapter of his thick portfolio. As part of enlarging his office's role to encompass a state version of the U.S. Secretary of State, Ralph worked very effectively with representatives of Spain at the highest levels. (Recall the Spanish crown prince's visit.) Talgo's fine partnership with our state and their strong and successful entry into the North American rail equipment market is significantly a result of the diplomatic ex-

cellence Ralph practiced in dealing with multiple interests from two friendly but somewhat varied cultures and governments.

Al Swift is another one of the Good Men. As the congressman from northwest Washington's 2nd district, Al came to understand the need for passenger rail to re-emerge as an important means of moving people, particularly in corridors such as ours. A political lesson learned from Al is that all elected representatives are laymen, except in one or two fields. (His is broadcasting.) To make decisions that affect the well-being of their constituents, they must rely of good staffs and on valid information and ideas provided by those qualified in all other fields. One hopes this truism is realized by all elected representatives and by those advocating ideas or positions to these officials.

Al also practiced a traditional constructive bipartisanship, working with those on "the other side" when in our state's and the country's best interests. Al's legacy for passenger rail? Among other things, yhe Swift Rail bill, important to the continuation of passenger trains in our country. It was not named for the hoped-for train speeds! Today Al Swift's savvy and skills are still helping The Cause, as his firm represents Talgo in DeeCee.

Former Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson recently resigned from the Amtrak Board as he devotes his professional skills to the job of President Bush's Secretary of Health and Human Services. Don't believe we have lost one of the world's most (See Lloyd, page 6)



# WashARP News

**July 14:** WashARP meeting at **12:45 p.m.** at **University Plaza Hotel**, 400 NE 45<sup>th</sup> St, Seattle (just west of I-5 Exit 169; on Metro route 44 and Sound Transit route 512).

**July 19:** 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 11:** 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 or e-mail for more information. See p. 5.

Your editor was remiss in the last **Rail News** for not thanking the people and groups that provided displays for our joint membership meeting on March 30. WSDOT displayed information on the Kelso-Martin Bluff third main track project; Sound Transit displayed information on their transit services in Pierce County, including Tacoma Link light rail; Sounder commuter rail; ST Express bus service; and the Tacoma Dome Station/Freighthouse Square intermodal project. Issaquah Trolley showed off their plans for trolley service between the city's old train station and Gilman Village. The trolley, leased from the city of Yakima, will be operating this summer on weekends, holidays and during special events. J. Craig Thorpe showed off his broad range of railroad art. We also thank the WashARPer's who worked hard to make the meeting a success, particularly Dale Menchhofer and Bob Lawrence.

WashARP welcomes the following new members in March and April: John and

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

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Sherry Douceur, Bellevue; Joseph and Colleen Jannuzzi, Portland, OR; Philip Heid, Aurora, OR; John McKinney, Seattle; and George Heppes, Longview.

WashARP will have a booth at Seattle's Wallingford Street Fair on July 8. The focus of this year's fair is transportation alternatives. WashARP needs volunteers to staff the booth. To help, contact Bob Lawrence. His phone number and e-mail address are on p. 5.

Rocky Shay has been elected by the WashARP board to the position of secretary, replacing Noel Hancock, who resigned the position. Noel remains a board member.

Erik Griswold will be leaving our state for a couple of years later this summer as his wife Olga pursues a masters degree in linguistics at UCLA. WashARP will need a new volunteer to head up our Commuter Rail section. Please consider helping in this important position. Contact Erik (info on p. 5) if you are interested in volunteering.

WashARP members contributing to this newsletter include: Jeff Schultz, Tony Trifletti, Zack Willhoite, Erik Griswold, Lloyd Flem, Bob Lawrence, Warren Yee and Stan Suchan and Mark Garcia.

**Lloyd**, from page 5 enthusiastic rail advocates, however! Tommy's pro-Amtrak, pro-rail voice will continue to be heard in the highest places, we can be sure.

Notice something? All the above retired from their elected positions. None were defeated. They are from both major political parties. Yet they work cooperatively for the good of rail and for the many other causes they foster. To young people reading this, don't be too put off by the excessive partisanship and petty scandals that have become the public image of elected officials in recent years. Public service can be an honorable calling. Look up to the above Few Good Men.



The Legislature is now back in Olympia for a second special session. As transportation funding has yet to be decided, it is perfect timing to get that letter to your state senator and representative. And at the federal level, Senator Jim Jeffords' move from R to I, giving the D's a Senate majority, means our senators will now have a bit more influence. Please contact Senators Murray and Cantwell, thanking them for their support for HSRIA and urging them to push for its passage.

## Amtrak West Roundup

**Northwest Corridor ridership** continued growing in March and April though more slowly than last year. March *Cascades* ridership was 43,734, up 5.4% over March 2000; total corridor ridership was 51,473, up 1.5%. April *Cascades* ridership was 47,789, up 4.5%; total corridor ridership was 55,831, up 1.1%.... **A passenger information system** is being funded by Oregon DOT for stations along the Northwest Corridor. It first will be installed in Oregon stations and then move north to Washington. Real time information on train status will be available to passengers. Eventually the information will be available via the Internet.... **Passenger rail service** to Astoria, OR is being proposed by ODOT and Amtrak West for the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition. The service would operate from Portland in the summer from 2003 to 2005. A bus connection between Kelso, WA and Rainier, OR would serve *Cascades* passengers traveling from the north. A full length dome car may operate on the train.... **Olympia-Lacey's Centennial station** will soon have additional parking. A new parking lot to the north of the station will open this summer and help with the chronic parking shortages on most weekends.

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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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