

Washington Rail News

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December 2004/January 2005

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

Two new rail promotion initiatives underway at WashARP; We need your assistance

By Loren Herrigstad

Two resolutions passed by the WashARP Board in the last two months are bringing new energies to WashARP's mission and work. The first resolution, the Campaign for New Century Northwest Rail, was conceived in response to growing interest in rail service across Washington State, as evidenced by increasingly full Amtrak Cascades trains, as well as growing inquiries from Eastern Washington, and even activities in Leavenworth and Kittitas County about developing improved or new passenger rail access to the region. The second resolution, a more nationally-focused initiative by WashARP member C. B. Hall, seeks to build on ideas from noted rail activist and former Federal Railroad Administrator Gil Carmichael and others towards generating renewed support and sustainability for passenger and freight rail nationwide, and perhaps eventually a new national rail development initiative, dubbed Interstate II. Both these projects will work closely with WashARP's existing leadership and be subject to

ongoing Board review and approval.

While the two projects have somewhat different areas of emphasis—the Campaign for New Century Northwest Rail focusing on taking passenger rail within Washington State to the next level, and C. B. Hall's project seeking to build support within our state for taking passenger rail nationally to the next level—both projects seek to put WashARP's longstanding stated mission of "more and better trains" into action and into reality. The simple fact is that passenger rail, and freight rail as well, now need to grow, both within our state and across America, and even throughout North America for that matter. Within Washington state, our Cascades and Sounder trains are running near and sometimes over capacity, while adjacent freeways and roads are being overloaded with demand for regional travel as well. And across the nation, the status quo of popular Amtrak trains with unstable and insufficient funding, and sometimes inadequate infrastructure, is simply something we can no longer accept and must start to push towards real change in new ways.

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We at WashARP have been looking at these intertwined problems for a while now, in some cases for years. The challenges may seem so big and complicated that you might well ask, as a friend of mine has put it, "So what can you do about it all?" That is precisely what these two new efforts are designed to address. Experience from such disparate places as California and Britain has and is showing that campaigns and organized efforts of ordinary (See **Initiatives**, page 4)



WashARPer Zack Willhoite awaits the arrival of a trolley on the George Benson Waterfront Streetcar as evening closes in on Nov. 24. Mr. Benson, 85, a civic leader and balanced transportation advocate in Seattle for decades, passed away Oct. 25. See page 2 for Lloyd Flem's tribute to his long-time friend.

Photo by Jim Hamre

Update: King St. Station renovation progress

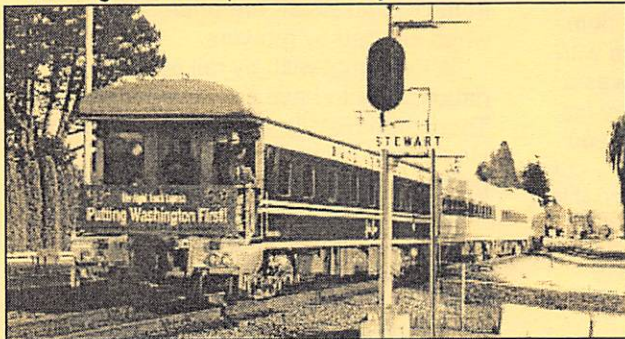
Ron Sheck, WSDOT's project manager for King St. Station, provided WashARP an update on the renovation at the Dec. 4 meeting. Sheck has been involved with this project for three years now and it's been a very slow and laborious process to reach an agreement with BNSF on a myriad of legal issues. He said, "We are now better positioned than we have ever been to make this project a reality."

The phase one project currently underway has \$17 mill. in funding. To date the following have been completed: waiting room expansion, restroom replacement, new Amtrak crew room and new parcel storage area.

The next construction project is now underway. It includes complete restoration of the Compass Room, the main entrance to the station from King St. Parts of the Compass Room are already blocked off, but public access from King St. is being maintained. Some of the items included in this project:

- Restoring and replicating the ornate plaster work
- replacing the historic round windows

(See **King St. Station**, page 5)



Sen. Patty Murray (D-Shoreline) and Democratic gubernatorial candidate Christine Gregoire, joined by other candidates, toured the state by train in the three days before the Nov. 2 election. The train operated from Spokane to Vancouver and north to Bellingham, stopping at towns and cities, big and small along the way. Here, the train, using chartered Amtrak equipment and private car Yerba Buena, passes control point Stewart just west of Puyallup. Photo by Jim Hamre



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

Memories of Mr. George Benson; Election 2004 and Rail; Ombudsman Work

I first met George Benson, one of Seattle's most cherished citizens, as a fellow member of the University of Washington Alumni Band in about 1980. During those years when George served on the Seattle City Council, Alumni Band members did not need to participate in his reelection campaign, but only in the inevitable reelection celebration. As Mr. Benson played the baritone horn and I the trombone, we had occasion to be together as we played for the gathering crowds of Husky fans for three hours before, then during and after home football games and for other events where band music was sought.

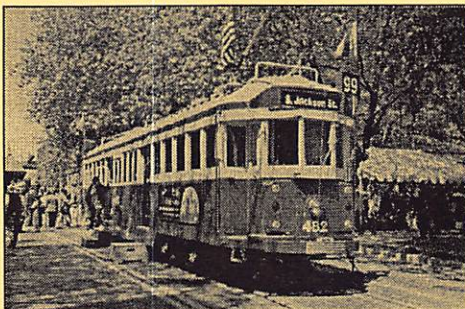
It was George's quiet but determined persistence that brought to Seattle's waterfront the streetcar service that now properly bears his name. The usual gaggle of nay-sayers, including Seattle daily newspapers, opposed the idea. They were wrong and George was right. The Waterfront Streetcar is not only a prime tourist attraction, bringing "outside money" to Seattle businesses, but has proven to be a significant form of public transportation. Let's work to see that this fine rail service continues—without interruption—to grace the shore of Elliot Bay into the future.

It was during those early years of the streetcar that I introduced Mr. Benson to WashARP, assuming he might be supportive of all forms of passenger rail. He showed immediate interest, joined us, and became a loyal and active WashARP member to the end of his wonderfully productive life. Long-time WashARP treasurer and current board member Hans Mueller visited George just four days before his 25 October passing. Hans said even then Mr. Benson asked about WashARP and the Ballard Terminal Railroad. George regularly attended our meetings for years, missing some only when he needed to care for Evelyn, his beloved wife of 59 years, who passed away about two years ago.

George Benson's political clout and support for passenger rail was demonstrated when Rail News editor Jim Hamre and I hosted leading Amtrak

execs from DeeCee and LA (before the State of Washington's now-renowned rail program had really been developed and funded) on a visit to Olympia and Seattle. We got audiences with then-key legislators, DOT personnel and others in Olympia. In Seattle, George arranged, on short notice, for a most cordial and productive meeting with mayor Norm Rice. Rice told Jim and I that when George asked for a meeting, Hizzonor would and did make time.

A couple years after George's 1993 retirement from the Seattle City Council, he and I were seated separately at a meeting of, as I recall, transportation, business and political leaders from around western Washington. During self-introductions George, certainly well-known by nearly all present, introduced himself as "with the Washington Asso-



Waterfront streetcar number 482 is on display for the 20th anniversary celebration marking the start of service on a beautiful June 1st in 2002. It was during this event that the system was named the George Benson Waterfront Streetcar. *Photo by Zack Willhoite*

ciation of Rail Passengers." I could not have been more proud.

In early November, I spoke with George E. Benson of Snohomish, one the senior Bensons' three children. I said his father's wholly constructive work in Seattle and beyond, accomplished with uncommon grace and kindness, was a continuing inspiration to us all. May his example continue to guide. Thank you dear friend George.

[For more on George Benson's remarkable life: archives.seattletimes.nwsource.com/cgi-bin/texis.cgi/web/vortex/display?slug=webbenson26&date=20041026 and www.legacy.com/nwclassifieds/LegacySubPage2.asp?Page=LifeStory&PersonId=2762259]



Rail advocates must concede that policies relevant to our favored mode of transportation were not high on the list of concerns of most candidates for federal and state offices. But the results of 2 November are important to rail, so let us review.

In my view, transportation is not of particularly high priority to the Bush Ad-

ministration. It is reasonable to say passenger rail as a federal issue will continue to be of minor interest to President Bush and his closest advisors. Troubling to rail advocates is the huge and growing federal deficit which will make it more difficult to convince Congress or the Administration to maintain or increase funding for domestic programs that are not considered high priority by many of them. Congress also lost, through retirement not election defeat, two of the strongest voices for rail passenger funding: Rep. Jack Quinn (R-NY) and Sen. Fritz Hollings (D-SC). There are champions for Amtrak from both parties who will be returning to Congress, but maintaining, not to mention growing, our American passenger rail system will prove challenging.

On the bright side, the reelection of our Sen. Patty Murray (D-Shoreline) bodes well for our state. Though Murray is in the minority, she has managed to do well in terms of bringing federal transportation dollars, including for transit and rail, to our Washington. Our House delegation has not really changed in terms of probable support for rail. The six incumbent Democrats, all from Western Washington, will be returning to DeeCee. All have voted "correctly" on rail funding. The two newly elected House Republicans replace Republicans whose support was mixed. Returning Central Washington Republican Doc Hastings has not supported Amtrak, but recently led Washington's entire House delegation in getting a million federal bucks to help fund a Washington State Produce Rail Car program, increasingly essential to Central Washington's agricultural industry, as long-haul trucking gets increasingly difficult and costly, and rail cars from UP and BNSF are often scarce when needed by growers.

A long-shot wish by rail advocates nationally is to have Ex-Governor Tommy Thompson (R-WI), currently Secretary of Health and Human Services, be appointed to head USDOT, a position he had wanted from the beginning. Thompson, as Wisconsin's governor, was an avid supporter of passenger rail, and his pep-rally enthusiasm continued as he served as chair of the Amtrak Board. Support for TT as USDOT boss has come from such disparate quarters as the very conservative Paul Weyrich and the very liberal *Capital Times* of Madison. Rail advocates should urge other pro-rail editors to support Thompson's appointment as should rail advocates who supported President Bush's reelection. (See **Flem**, page 4)



The View Down the Tracks

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with Jim Cusick

Texas T

No, not "Bubblin' crude," "Black Gold" or the other thing that had Jed Clampett moving to Beverly Hills—"Texas Tea." In this case, I'm referring to the new HOV/Transit Direct Access ramps from I-5 to the Lynnwood Transit Center. While, as supporters of transit we can celebrate the new improvements for transit riders to the Lynnwood Park & Ride, I still think that the long term solution is rail. The ramp's benefit for transit riders is how much time it saves, and the benefit for those still in SOVs is it will alleviate the weave that buses and carpools have to do to exit in Lynnwood. If you're driving by, and are in a carpool, check it out. If you're not, take note of the congestion (i.e. 'weave friction') relief. Either way, I have two words of advice – Speed Limit.

Okay, if this is too successful, and it ends up that Lynnwood doesn't want rail, I'm game for having Bothell be the new focus for rail access. Great idea.

Monorail's Mandate

Well, with a resounding vote of NO (63%) on Seattle's I-83, the Monorail Recall Initiative, the Seattle Monorail Project received an impressive vote of confidence in this election. Whatever your opinion of monorail as a solution, the die has been cast. The challenges the monorail faces are not minor. Witness the issues with the Las Vegas Monorail losing parts to the street below and being indefinitely shut down, and the pitfalls of the Design-Build-Operate-Maintain (DBOM) process. However, there are some positive things working in the monorail's favor. One is the experience level of the people at SMP, much of which is many years with standard rail systems. The other advantage is that this is the first time Hitachi would be building a monorail in the U.S. This is where their desire to gain a foothold here could work to Seattle's advantage, given that Bombardier's troubles (Las Vegas) are putting a damper on that company's monorail portfolio. While Sound Transit thought it had a hard time dealing with all their issues, SMP will have to run the same gauntlet, if not more so, since all of it's work will be very visible. These are two places SMP will have their hands full.

We look forward to the monorail succeeding and furthering transit options in

the region, so my two words of cautionary advice can be taken from Column A or Column B: A) King Street or B) Seattle Center.

Election Entertainment

This year has provided us with a few interesting surprises. In fact, while I'm writing this, we don't know who will be governor, although at last count it was Dino Rossi by 42. It's quite possible that by the time you're reading this, we still won't know who our governor is, given the manual recount that will happen, along with the inevitable lawsuits.

What will the latest elections mean for mobility in the Puget Sound region? Maybe not so surprisingly, even though we seem to be stuck in molasses in our attempt to solve our mobility problems, other cities around the country have passed initiatives to start construction on new rail lines. In the case of Denver, after experiencing the benefits of their light rail system, the citizens have voted to tax themselves for an ambitious expansion of the system including over 100 miles of additional light rail and new commuter rail.

How the governor's race comes out could have some effect on rail on the Eastside. Both the Eastside of Lake Washington and the east side of the Cascade Mountains. The reason is Republicans, or actually more like the unfortunate stance some Washington state Republicans have taken as the Anti-Rail party. This is in stark contrast to the much enlightened Republicans who are members of WashARP. While it's a persistent perception that there is a cultural divide between the transit-only tree huggers of Seattle and the car-only gas guzzlers of the Eastside, everyone who reads this column knows it is FALSE. It seems the political environment would have people believe that the divide exists. Until now.

While the voters of his district seem to like most everything about him, it appears that state Sen. Jim Horn's (R-Mercer Island) Achilles Heel was his uncompromising stand on a rail solution. In his bid for re-election, Jim Horn lost for one simple reason. He was seen as an impediment to moving forward on a truly balanced transportation solution.

Hey, don't look at me. I tried to help. Maybe he doesn't read this newsletter.

There are even more signs that rail is the preferred long range solution on the Eastside, judging by the response to Sound Transit's Phase 2 plans by Bothell City Council member Tim Tobin. His comments, after looking over the plans, were that it appears that a high-capacity

solution (rail) to serve the Bothell UW/Cascadia campus, is lacking. Along with other long-time supporters, such as Redmond Mayor Rosemarie Ives, Bothell can join the cities of Issaquah and Kirkland as avid supporters of rail as a solution. With more and more elected officials coming on board the train, there will be enough political will to make a difference and we will be able to spend the excess Eastside sub-area Sound Transit funds wisely. We will reach Critical Mass.

Solving Something

Now before anyone thinks that only Democrats are the "rail enlightened" group, we should keep in mind that most everyone in the political arena still thinks that only super dense cities like New York, Los Angeles or San Francisco should build rail systems. They operate under the false assumption that large transportation projects should SOLVE problems. This is because the "common sense" solution of adding more lanes as a short term solution ignores all the shortcomings of this solution for the long term.

For those who regularly read this column, you already know that adding lanes is an inadequate long term solution, but what's really missing from the mental map we construct is that large scale transportation projects don't solve anything, but instead create the landscape we live in. As an exercise, think about this. While we insist that rail is the solution to travel between the higher density cities such as Seattle and Tacoma, why did we build a system to go from Tukwila to Lynnwood, when we already had a system that did just that. What system did we build? I-405. The beginning and end points were not high-density cities. It was built BEFORE the development caught up with it, and created the congestion problem we are supposedly trying to solve. Not only that, it was not cheap, and at the time it was built it was essentially overbuilt. The development follows the transportation system, not the other way around. Plus, the chosen mode will define what type of development will occur.

There are a number of Democrats who also think that density must exist first, and this contributes to our inability to get a clear picture of where the transportation systems figure in on the livability of the Puget Sound region. Think Future.

Governor Who?

If Dino Rossi is indeed our next governor, it would be advisable for him to do (See Cusick, page 5)

Flem, from page 2

At this writing, Dino Rossi leads Christine Gregoire by 42 votes to be Washington's next governor. While many state government policies are likely to change under an assumed Gov. Rossi (while understanding, with Democrats controlling both houses of the Legislature, the magnitude of change will not be as much as some people wish...or fear), the semi-independence of transportation policy and funding from other portions of state government does not suggest dramatic switches of direction. Rossi had spoken out against Sound Transit's light rail in years past. Sen. Rossi admitted to WashARP at our February 2004 meeting in Lacey he was not particularly familiar with Washington's successful rail programs, but his campaign staff pledged to me in October that if Rossi won, he would join WashARP on an Amtrak *Cascades* trip and would learn of the state's role in intercity passenger rail.

With Democrats regaining control of the state Senate, there will be changes in committee chairmanships. It appears likely the very pro-rail Mary Margaret Haugen (D-Camano Is.) will chair the Senate Transportation Committee, with Dan Swecker (R-Rochester), another pragmatic supporter of multi-modal transportation, as ranking Republican. It is hoped others supportive of rail investments who served in 2003-4 will again be part of Senate Transportation.

Democrats increased their majority in the House. I do not anticipate major change in transportation philosophy, although a more pro-rail Senate Transportation chair can prove helpful in the House as well. Chairman Ed Murray (D-Seattle) has always been an advocate for transit and rail, as well as ferries and highways. Doug Ericksen's (R-Bellingham) solid reelection victory should assure his again being ranking Republican. Doug has supported rail, as well as highways and ferries.

The Transportation Commission, an appointed body which helps direct transportation planning and policy, though not legislation and funding which are the Legislature's prerogatives, has several rail-friendly members. So the future looks relatively bright for at least open ears to the preservation and expansion of the role of rail in Washington state's transportation future. Were the feds willing to make the kinds of investments in rail they have traditionally made in all other transportation modes, our Washington's ongoing rail investments and fine rail policy execution would put us in good stead to get a solid sum of DeeCee capital to further expand the train mode here.

Good news nationwide is the continued electoral victories for urban passenger rail. Most of November second's score of local elections to fund forms of trolleys, light rail transit, and commuter rail won. And no longer can critics of urban rail claim only a

handful of "not really American" eastern cities support rail. Striking victories were seen in Phoenix, Austin and, especially, Denver. Salt Lake City's successful LRT is now supported by many who fervently opposed the original line as a "waste of money." Yes, as Paul Weyrich points out, a majority of the urban rail victories were in Red States. A few rail critics still say "Let's have fast buses instead of expensive rail." These critics would likely ride neither bus nor rail! While transit buses offer needed transportation, they simply lack the ability to attract patronage the way urban rail, with near identical schedules and fares, does. Example: in San Francisco 20,000 people a day are taking the F Line trolley which replaced a bus that was hauling 1200 a day. Bottom line: Americans want and will fund and ride passenger trains. Now we must lead the charge with elected and community decision makers to make this happen.



Following my last column's request for readers to pass to me both compliments and criticisms of rail service, I have received several requests and suggestions. All your concerns have been or will be addressed to our rail service providers, however I cannot promise a satisfactory "cure." Two requests involve food service on the Amtrak *Cascades* south of Seattle. I quite agree with the WashARP member, and several SW Washington legislators, who want the choice of real sit-down meals south of Seattle, as riders on the train to Vancouver, BC now have. Announced reason for this disparity in service is economics. Passengers to Vancouver tend in general to be more on holiday to that fine Canadian metropolis, and often will include the purchase of a full meal on board. Riders south of Seattle tend to be on business or on other non-discretionary trips, and are less likely to order a meal. North of Seattle full meal preparation is cost-effective; south it is said not to be.

What really needs to be changed is the current too-early closing of the Bistro car, for example on Seattle-bound trains at or before Tacoma, and the current inefficiency and limitations in how customers may make payments for their Bistro purchases. This is not only a further service disparity to south-of-Seattle riders, but loses money to support the trains in at least two ways: Bistro purchases are lost from Tacoma north, and the long lines resulting from the crew's lack of modern point-of-sale technology when the Bistro is open, sends many would-be customers disgruntled back to their seats with dollars still in pockets. So not only has the current situation been unattractive to *Cascades'* customers, but monies on the high-profit Bistro snacks and beverages which would help pay for the trains' operation and crew need now be made up for by subsidies from Washington state taxpayers. At long last I understand new procedures and technology will come

into play by the end of June 2005 that will both better serve south end riders and bring more "user fee" bucks into the coffers of the *Cascades*.

I also understand the annoyance at having to line up for seat assignments in Seattle and Portland. This however appears needed largely as a result of the trains' successes! With the frequent sell-outs on the *Cascades* and the reality that riders board and detrain at six stations beside Seattle and Portland, it is probably necessary to have some control over seat locations for the near future. With more train service in the future, lining up to get a seat that might not be one's choice could possibly be ended. But there are also *Cascades* riders, such as couples and small groups, for whom seat assignments enable them to sit together. The commuter train take-any-seat boarding often leaves these folks separated, less acceptable on an extended trip as opposed to the routine ride to work. What is not at all needed now is the silly queuing again (by no means a behavior encouraged by Amtrak) after getting the seat assignment! One has a guaranteed seat. The rank order in which one walks out the Portland or Seattle station doors for the short jaunt to the train is utterly irrelevant!

The above are but a sample of train rider concerns. Keep me informed of both your praise and push for more and better service. And yes, as always, assist me in educating and communicating with elected officials and others who can help bring about more and better trains. The 2005 sessions of our Legislature and Congress convene in just a few weeks. Let your electeds know you support rail investments.

Initiatives, from page 1

citizens can make better passenger rail happen. Rail advocates just like you and I helped bring about what is the amazing network that is now Amtrak California into being. Folks just like us have created community rail partnerships that are starting to revitalize, and possibly revolutionize, rural and regional passenger rail in Britain. And let's not forget our own role in bringing about the nationally-admired *Cascades* service that we ourselves enjoy today.

So, what can you do about it all? In short, get involved! If you want to see a return of trains like the *Pioneer*, a fresh look taken at sustainable sources of business and revenues for Amtrak or passenger rail nationally, or work towards a vision of a new national rail network, support C. B. in his work. If you want to see more trains running East-West, as well as North-South, across our state and stopping in more places—to the point where you just "get on and go" by rail wherever and whenever you want in our Northwest region—join with me in working on the Campaign for New Century Northwest Rail. If it all looks so good to you that you just can't choose between them, I'm sure that there will be much common ground and joint efforts you can be (See **Initiatives**, page 5)

King St. Station from page 1

- installing replica lighting fixtures, except that the one remaining original chandelier has been located and will be hung from the Compass Room ceiling

Other items in this contract include:

- replacing the marble on the columns in the newly opened waiting room area
- removal and replacement of the exterior canopies on the south and west sides of the station
- new exterior lighting
- replacing the metal framed doors and windows with wood framed doors and windows (with brass fixtures)
- opening up the windows above the east and south doors to the tracks

All the work in this contract should be completed by June 2005.

The next construction contract will be awarded in the next several months. Work in this contract includes:

- relocation of the ticket office to the north side of the waiting room (in what was once the dining room)
- removal of the ugly drop ceiling and partial restoration of the original plaster ceiling (this elicited a big cheer from those at the meeting)
- cleaning and repointing of all the exterior brick work
- relocation of the BNSF microwave facilities from the clock tower to another building
- returning the clock to working order
- replacement of the electrical, heating and air conditioning systems

This work is scheduled to be finishing in mid-2006, in time for the 100th anniversary of King St. Station.

Sheck stated that research and planning continue on phase 2 of the project. The major issue in the future, when up to 80 Sound Transit and Amtrak trains a day could be using King St. Station, is track capacity. A previous expensive plan to add more capacity would have run tracks through the first floor of the station and moved the waiting room to the second

floor. No one liked this proposal so WSDOT sent HDR Engineering, the design consultant, back to the drawing board to see if there were other solutions that would provide the needed additional track capacity.

Two events have come together that would provide more track capacity without having to significantly and forever alter the integrity of the station.

The first was a decision to drop plans to build a bridge over the BNSF mainline on Royal Brougham Way at the south end of the station tracks. This means the remaining piece of the former 4th Ave on ramp to I-90 can be removed, allowing the mainline to be shifted to the east. This will allow the station platforms to be extended to the south an additional 150 feet.

The second was a major concession by BNSF that would allow Sound Transit to construct additional Sounder platforms on the double-track mainline adjacent to the station tracks. When it was pointed out that all Sounder stations from Tukwila to Puyallup have mainline platforms the railroad agreed that it didn't make sense to not allow them in Seattle. These platforms will be used by commuter trains traveling all the way from Lakewood to Everett.

Other matters that are currently being investigated or soon will be include:

- the issue of the Seattle monorail passing within 20 feet of the west side of King St. Station, obstructing parking and pedestrian access
- Metro Transit's proposal to install a bus loop under the monorail guideway between King St. and Qwest Field
- the need for the city's intercity bus terminal to be in this area to complete the multimodal hub being built
- development of a security plan, including a surveillance system, security guards and a station code of conduct, that, when posted, will allow police to enforce it.

Sheck told us that another major development is the signing of a joint venture agreement between BNSF and developer Nitze-Stagen (www.nitze-stagen.com) to look at redevelopment of all BNSF property

in the King St. Station area, including air space above the tracks.

This important restoration project has had more twists and turns and dead ends than any other project most people can think of. With Ron Sheck optimistic about progress on the King St. Station project, we can all feel confident that it's really going to happen. Put the grand 100th anniversary celebration on your 2006 calendar!

Cusick, from page 3

what he can to give the Puget Sound region the tools it needs to create a truly balanced, multi-modal transportation system. A place he can have a more direct impact, though, is with things farther east, specifically the East Side of the Cascades. The Kittitas County Rail District's Ellensburg-Seattle passenger train would be the perfect vehicle for Mr. Rossi to exhibit his ability to bring people together to arrive at the best solution. Why there? Because of what improving that rail line would do for the Port of Seattle, the wheat growers of the Inland Empire, and the profitability of being the commerce corridor of choice between the Far East and the eastern U.S.

Two words of advice – Stampede Pass.

If those two words help, and Mr. Rossi is instrumental in solving the mobility problems of our region, he won't have to do anything else, and he will enjoy the benefits of two other words – Second Term.

From those of us that attended the Olympia meeting where then-candidate Dino Rossi spoke to WashARP, we can have confidence that our voice will be heard. After all, Mr. Rossi told us that he had "Dubya" on a leash. I know that dog will listen.

My final two words? Happy Holidays!!

Initiatives, from page 4

involved with to help both of these projects move forward.

This is exciting stuff, working on the future of rail. History is made simply by people who decided to say or do something. So why not join in and help make a little rail history yourself? And if nothing else, stay tuned—there's much more to come on both these fronts!

(Loren Herrigstad can be reached at lbhrgstd@isomedia.com, (360) 352-2601 or via our PO Box. C. B. Hall can be reached via the PO Box.)

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

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- U. S. House of Representatives: Washington, DC 20515
- U. S. Senate: Washington, DC 20510
- Capitol Switchboard (all members): 202 224-3121
- State Legislature: State Capitol, Olympia 98504
- Hotline for leaving messages: 800 562-6000
- Amtrak Reservations/Information: 800 872-7245
- WashARP: www.washarp.org
- NARP: www.narprail.org
- NARP Hotline: www.narprail.org/hot.htm
- Amtrak: www.amtrak.com
- Amtrak Cascades: www.amtrakcascades.com
- Sound Transit: www.soundtransit.org

WashARP News

January 8: WashARP meeting at **12:45 p.m.** at **Andy's Diner**, 2963 4th Ave. S., **Seattle** (just north of Spokane St. and on Metro routes 23 and 174).

January 20: Commuter Rail Group meeting at **6:30 p.m.** at **Andy's Diner**, 2963 4th Ave. S., **Seattle** (transit information above).

February 12: WashARP meeting **11:30** at the **Panorama City** retirement community in **Lacey**. Cost: \$15 (cash or check) for the luncheon; includes room rental and other meeting costs. We will invite key political leaders. Driving: from I-5, north or south, take exit 108 (Sleater-Kinney Rd. south). Travel about 1 mile to Panorama City entrance, about 500 feet past 14th Ave. on the left. Follow Information Center signs to the Restaurant building. Proceed through the main entrance to the Garden Room on the second floor. Train: from and to the north, use trains 11 and 506. The program will fit between train arrival and departure. Pickup at Olympia-Lacey station will be provided. RSVP requested; call or email Lloyd Flem (see page 5 for contact info).

March 19: Joint NARP Region 8/WashARP/AORTA/MTWYarp meeting in Portland. Details and registration in the next newsletter.
(No WashARP meeting in March.)

WashARP members contributing to this newsletter include Ray Allred, Zack Willhoite, Warren Yee, Tony Trifiletti, Jim Cusick, Loren Herrigstad, Lloyd Flem, Rocky Shay, Ron Sheck, C. B. Hall, Rocky Shay and Dan McFarling.

NEEDED: Volunteers to staff WashARP information tables at the Pacific Science Center Model Railroad Show January 15-17 and other upcoming events. To sign up, contact Loren Herrigstad; email lbhrgstd@isomedia.com or call (360) 352-2601. Thanks!

Washington Association of
Rail Passengers
P. O. Box 70381
Seattle WA 98127

Return Service Requested

At the Nov. 13 meeting, the following people were elected to the 2005-2006 WashARP board of directors:

- Stuart Adams, Bellevue
- John Carlin, Edmonds
- Jim Cusick, Bothell
- Jim Hamre, Puyallup
- Loren Herrigstad, Olympia
- Bob Hettrick, Everett
- Chuck Mott, Mukilteo
- Hans Mueller, Seattle
- Louis Musso, Ellensburg
- Jim Neal, Ephrata
- Paul Scott, Davenport
- Rocky Shay, Federal Way
- J. Craig Thorpe, Bellevue
- Tony Trifiletti, Shoreline
- Warren Yee, Seattle

Officers will be elected at the January 8 meeting.

Additional planned meeting dates and location for 2005 are:

- April 9 in Seattle
- May 14 in Seattle
- June 11 in Leavenworth
- July 9 in Seattle
- August 13 in Puyallup
- September 10 in Seattle
- October 8 in Bellingham
- November 12 in Seattle
- December 3 in Mukilteo

Additional meeting details will be in future newsletters.

You may notice there is no list of new members in this issue. That's because WashARP added no new members in October and November! This organization belongs to all of us so we must all work to build membership. One way to do that is to give a holiday gift membership to family and friends. Simply send us a note with the person's name and address, and a check for the membership fee. We'll send a membership card and newsletter, along with an acknowledgement of your gift. Also, if you haven't yet responded to our recent fund raising letter, please consider sending a special contribution to WashARP.



TaeRak Son, who is from South Korea and served as a Rail and Transit Policy Consultant at WSDOT for 18 months, spoke at the Nov. 13 WashARP meeting. He told us about the advances in rail transportation in South Korea during the last 30 years. The first leg of the Seoul subway opened in 1974. Today the system has 530 kilometers and 13 lines serving six million riders a day. South Korea's first high speed rail line, from Seoul to Pusan, opened April 1, 2004. Based on French TGV technology, the Korea Train eXpress (KTX), cruises at up to 300 km/hr. The running time on the 660 kilometer Seoul-Pusan route has been reduced by half, to 2 hours 40 minutes. The railroad is operating 104 KTX trips each weekday and 122 trips on weekends! Forty-six percent of the line is in tunnels and 17 percent on bridges. Ridership is already at 60,000 a day.

Have ideas for small improvements with a great passenger benefit? Share them with WashARP

As an adjunct to Lloyd Flem's ombudsman work and WashARP's plan to build stronger coalitions and advocate a long range rail improvement proposal, we are seeking member input on ideas for lower cost enhancements in service and infrastructure that would provide a big bang for the investment. A couple of examples: Improve the inadequate, non-ADA compliant doors at the Tacoma station and provide state funds for expanded station agent hours in Centralia so all 8 trains are covered each day, not just 5. Send ideas to Lloyd Flem and we will take the best of them to the Legislature and WSDOT for consideration.

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D/J **MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**
RENEWAL FORM
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Basic Membership\$25.00 per year
Student/Fixed Income\$17.00 per year
Family Membership\$35.00 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.

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone _____