



Washington Rail News

February/March 2007

www.AllAboardWashington.org

Publication of All Aboard Washington
A Not-for-profit Consumer Organization
"Moving forward...On Rail."

The Battle for King County's Eastside Rail Line

All Aboard Washington has never been in a tougher fight than its campaign to save the Eastside rail line, the 47-mile BNSF alternate main line between Renton and Snohomish (the Woodinville Subdivision). On Friday,



Al Runte is interviewed by KOMO TV at the All Aboard Washington protest on Jan. 19. Photo by Jim Hamre

January 19, the Corridor Advisory Committee of the Puget Sound Regional Council met at the Redmond

Regional Library for its final vote, while members of All Aboard Washington stood outside the library to protest. Other friends of the railroad joined us, making for a very respectable showing of between 15 and 20 folks.

No surprise: The advisory committee sided with King County Executive Ron Sims, voting to rip up the tracks and build a trail, "The Granddaddy of All Trails," as Sims prefers to call it. All Aboard Washington was ready with a poster by J. Craig Thorpe comparing Sims's vision and our own. Throughout

By Alfred Runte

the morning, members of the press appeared and interviewed our gathering, including KOMO-4 News, *The Seattle Times*, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, and KIRO radio. Saturday night, we were further invited by KIRO talk radio to participate on the David Goldstein Show.

If the facts mattered (which they don't), we would be chalking this up as a victory. The county, BNSF, and the Corridor Advisory Committee are relying on heaps of misinformation to confuse the public. The tracks are so old they are only good for scrap (tell that to the *Spirit of Washington* dinner train); it would cost hundreds of millions to upgrade the tracks (nonsense); it would cost billions to effectively restore the line (utter nonsense). Meanwhile, the county is admitting that the trail will cost \$800,000 a mile (asphalt these days is not cheap), for that is exactly what they intend for their "environmentally friendly" trail – more asphalt.

Stay tuned to the *Washington Rail News* for regular updates. The line (and dinner train) closes on July 31 if we don't prevail. We intend to. Meanwhile, make sure you contact all your elected representatives both state and (See **Eastside Line**, page 5)

Amtrak reauthorization reintroduced (again!)

Amtrak has been without authorizing legislation for many years. Last year's six-year reauthorization passed the Senate on a 93-6 vote but House leadership would not allow the bill to come up for a vote in that chamber.

Sens. Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) and Trent Lott (R-MS) are trying again, and expect an authorization to pass Congress this year. On Jan. 16, the two senators introduced S. 294, The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act, at a press conference with Amtrak Pres. Alex Kummant at Washington Union Station. "It's not going to be that difficult this year," Lautenberg said of passage.

The bill would authorize \$3.2 bill. a year for intercity rail service for the next six years while requiring efficiency improvements to continue. For the first time, there would be federal money available to partner with state governments to improve passenger rail service.

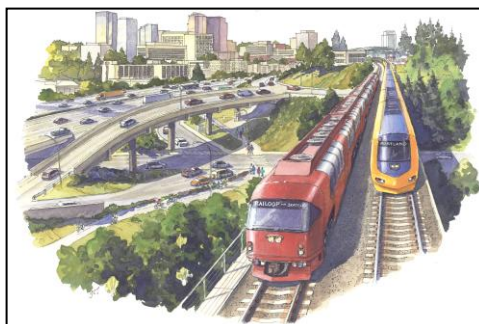
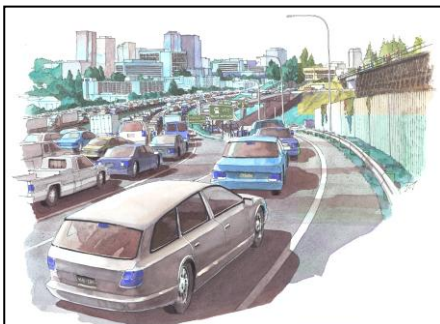
Lautenberg and Lott said that having a viable passenger rail option is vital to the nation's economy and environment. "We cannot depend entirely on airplanes and roads," Lautenberg said.

In addition to carrots, the bill offers several sticks, such as expecting Amtrak to reduce operating costs by 40 percent over six years. "This is about reform and accountability," Lott said. "It's not just a big chunk of money."

The bill would authorize \$1.7 bill. in debt repayment, \$7.8 bill. in new bonding authority and \$340 mill. a year for matching grants. The senators said the grants would encourage overall investment in the system as well as states' sharing in the cost of providing services.

Kummant said the bill fits his vision of the rail network of the future, which would be a series of state rail networks threaded into national corridors.

Sens. Patty Murray (D-Bothell) and Maria Cantwell (D-Edmonds) are not yet cosponsors of S. 294. For more details on its provisions go to: www.narprail.org/cms/index.php/resources/more/s_294/



Two visions of the future of downtown Bellevue: on the left is King County's, with a bike trail on the Wilburton Trestle (top right) and a jammed up I-405; on the right is All Aboard Washington's, with the Eastside line preserved and enhanced to provide regional and intercity passenger rail service as an alternate to driving I-405. Art by J.



*From the desk of
the Government
Affairs Director
by
Lloyd H. Flem*

Energy, Climate, Transportation – Be Like Mike!; US Senate Bill 294 – A Decent Little Start

Now virtually "everyone," including President Bush, agrees that that the US pattern of energy use has major faults and that human-induced climate change is a serious issue. The few remaining holdouts to those realities are like the tobacco execs who deny the health dangers of cigarettes.

Obviously, there is and will be considerable debate about how to approach energy and climate change problems. Again, there is strong agreement that our ever-growing reliance of imported petroleum is not in our national interest. One point of agreement, from Bush advisors to the Sierra Club, is to get better motor fuel mileage from our near-infinitely large fleet of private motor vehicles. (Debate is on how much mileage improvement and how it should be achieved.) What is generally absent from the conversation is a need for the American populace to achieve access to places without always driving those private motor vehicles. Too often, we hear "cleaner cars" is the panacea, even from the Green community.

Brutal opinion: While the probably-unattainable goal of zero-emission vehicles would bring about less air pollution and greenhouse gases, the other forms of environmental and societal damage resulting from "driving everywhere," such as the paving over of city and countryside alike, increased traffic congestion, the destruction of traditional communities, continued highway carnage, the physical and social isolation of non-drivers, etc. could even get worse. Cleaner-running vehicles with better mileage are laudable goals, but far from the only ones we should seek in terms of our transportation policies and behaviors.

Another answer? Be Like Mike! Not **THAT** Mike, the legendary Chicago Bull who appeared to fly using muscle power, but Mike from south Seattle. Mike experienced a car breakdown, and instead of panicking (Oh my, I can't live without my very own wheels!) and getting a loner or rental (as 90+% of the working population would do) Mike went to the Metro website and mapped out trips to work – and other

trips – and found he could use transit for most of his transportation needs, leaving his now-repaired car at home. Mike says travel time is about the same and he can "...read the paper, nap and am getting more exercise walking to the bus stops. My stress level has never been lower." Mike also will use Sounder when the "reverse commute" – Seattle to Tacoma – begins. "I will never drive to Portland or Vancouver BC again. I've taken the Amtrak Cascades train to both cities at least a half dozen times this year," he said. Mike also awaits completion of Seattle Link and the South Lake Union streetcar, further enabling urban rail transportation.

Mike is making it work within our existing system, which is still primitive in its intercity phase compared with peer nations in Europe and East Asia. Now, leaving the car at home (or even not

Cleaner-running vehicles with better mileage are laudable goals, but far from the only ones we should seek in terms of our transportation policies and behaviors.

owning one, like some Pearl Neighborhood Portland friends, who rent a car on those occasions when they want to travel to beach or mountains) will suffice only a portion of the time or, in the absence of public transportation, any of the time. Example: I could get to the Lewis County Historical Museum in downtown Chehalis (the site of our June AAWA meeting) from Olympia by foot, bus and train, but it would take 2½ hours, 21 minutes of which are on the Amtrak Cascades. I do drive. But like Mike, I would never drive to Portland or downtown Seattle, though carpooling is grudgingly acceptable. Like Mike, I can work, relax, and enjoy our glorious Northwest landscape on the Cascades, avoiding the linear root canal job which is I-5 much of the time!

A generation ago, most school kids walked, biked or bused to school. Now new schools are designed with massive car wait areas so lots of parents can drop off and pick up their offspring daily. So OK, if the children were in real physical danger using traditional travel to school...but kids in safe affluent neighborhoods are more likely to be chauffeured to and from than are youngsters who may have problems in the public...the former group only until their 16th birthday, when of course they are given their very own motor vehicle! Mom and Dad, Be Like Mike; set a responsible example for Johnnie and Sally. (Although today their names are more likely to be Joshua and Caitlin, it seems!)



US Senators Lautenberg (D-NJ) and Lott (R-MS) have reintroduced a rail funding bill, now numbered S. 294, essentially the same as that which passed the Senate 93-6 last session. House leadership did not allow it to be voted on, but with the new Congress, it seems likely to fully pass in 2007.

Passing an authorizing bill like this is easier than getting monies appropriated, particularly when transportation generally and rail funding specifically is not a top tier priority with most in Congress. The main job of rail advocates will be to help educate our US Senators and Representatives on the importance of rail investments.

Criticisms of S. 294, which are relatively few from those aware of rail issues, have come from two distinct directions. One school opposes the bill essentially because Amtrak will remain the designated operator of intercity passenger trains in the USA. This school also favors major organizational changes, including separation of Northeast Corridor infrastructure from

running trains and believes the monetary loss of the National Network (long-distance) trains are excessive for value received.

From the other corner comes opposition to S. 294 based on the belief that the bill is a clandestine effort to destroy Amtrak! Obviously both views cannot be correct.

In my view, the bill offers not just more handouts to a fatally-flawed Amtrak or its near-certain demise, but a decent mix of needed reforms, including opening the door to the possibility of the freight railroads again operating passenger trains, as well as some Federal bucks. Amtrak President Alex Kummant, in joining Lautenberg and Lott at the send out of S. 294, believes the major future of intercity passenger lies with trains serving corridor markets, of which our Vancouver, BC to Eugene Northwest Corridor is an archetype. Kummant also supports survival of the National Network trains, however.

Yes Amtrak has been an imperfect entity, with a history of errors of both commission and omission. I have no ideological opposition to other train operators entering the market if such could happen. But the reality is the freight railroads, upon which nearly all Amtrak trains outside the NEC operate, have agreed only to allow Amtrak (or possibly themselves) to carry regular intercity passenger service on their tracks. For (See **Flem**, page 5)



The View Down the Tracks

with Jim Cusick

Rails AND Trails

It's a beautiful sunny day, following a few weeks of extremely challenging driving. Even though it's not snowing there are still problems with icy roads. As I compose this issue's article, sitting in my Imperium Condescender in Bellevue, I have a nice view of the Wilburton trestle.

Now, granted, I had almost no problems commuting (other than a slower than usual one), so all the anxiety shown on the local news didn't apply to me. However, for Eastside commuters, one option that most definitely would have provided relief is being taken away if the Puget Sound Regional Council's BNSF Woodinville Subdivision Corridor Advisory Committee recommendations are adopted by the King County Council.

Now that I live next to available rail service, I could just say: "who gives a rat's fanny?" Out of the goodness of my heart, though, I will still stay involved with this issue, since I feel it's important to



The Eastside line runs just east of I-405 at the north end of the Wilburton Trestle. The northbound lanes pass over the line, but the immediate issue is with the southbound lanes. They pass under the line in the Wilburton Tunnel (upper right of photo). The Dept. of Transportation wants to save \$25 mill. on the multi-billion dollar I-405 expansion project by not replacing the tunnel.

save the involved decision-makers from becoming a horse's fanny.

Plainly put, if you tear up any of the tracks on the Woodinville Sub, you will succeed in truly making the Puget Sound Region the laughingstock of transportation planning.

Regular readers of this column know that the preliminary numbers investigated during the I-405 Corridor Program showed, in direct contrast to King Cush-

man's statements in the Seattle Times, that commuter rail on the Woodinville Sub is a viable alternative. If not for the political roadblock placed by the City of Renton and the Kennydale Neighborhood Association during the I-405 proceedings, we could have had hard figures on the cost/benefit ratio.

This is important because when you compare costs, the rail option truly is the most economical. From information I have gathered from various professionals and the PSRC BNSF CAC's documentation, I am going to go out on a limb and "pad the estimate" for rehabilitating the Eastside line to function as a single track, start-up commuter service. I can say it's safe to assume about \$100 mill. Remember, it will cost the same for the right-of-way whether it is turned into a bike trail or

...when you compare costs, the rail option truly is the most economical.

not, and since only the cost of rail seems to be the issue, we'll concentrate on that.

Let's put that figure into context. One hundred million dollars divided by 47 miles, equals a little over \$2 mill. per mile. That is one-half of the cost of adding one arterial lane, according to the amounts we looked at in the I-405 Program. The capacity of the rail line, even as a single-track system, would then be one fourth the cost of adding the required two lanes on a theoretical highway (such as SR 9) through the same corridor.

The viability of this line is not in question, and this is not just the opinion of some wishful thinking "railfans" as King County Executive's assistant Mr. Kaushik dismissed All Aboard Washington members as on David Goldstein's show on KIRO 710. There are numerous professionals that are in agreement with our position. Maybe the decision-makers in the region not only need to listen to their constituents, but to more of the people in the trenches.

Enough said for the Woodinville Sub, since there will be even more public discourse on this in the coming months.

Driving in the Snow

For all of you who struggled in the snow, your favorite prognosticator in his superior four-wheel drive vehicle and superior winter driving skills, will now share his driving tips with you.

Snow and ice are slippery!

Next revelation: four-wheel drive (4WD) gives you more control than two-wheel drive (2WD) when accelerating and braking in slippery conditions. Yes, I know this runs against the grain of the popular media advice, but listen up.

One of the well know axioms of the off-road crowd is that the advantage of

4WD is that it lets the guy in the 4x4 get his truck stuck farther out in the woods than the guy with 2WD.

Advantage #1 for 4WD – you can get going easier than 2WD.

Advantage #2 for 4WD – you can decelerate with greater control than most 2WD vehicles. How is that?

Auto Mechanics 101 lesson, folks. Vehicles with automatic transmissions (as most are nowadays), can stop at a light without disconnecting the (running) engine from the (stopped) driving wheels without the use of clutch (you remember how that works, don't you?). This is accomplished by the wonderful device known as a torque converter (essentially, a sophisticated fluid coupling). While this allows you to have the vehicle stopped with the engine still able to run, it means that there will always be a little bit of push against the driving wheels.

This really comes into play when there is no traction due to slippery conditions. With the engine pushing against the rear wheels on a rear-wheel drive (RWD) vehicle and no outside force on the front wheels, in slippery conditions the front wheels will lock up before the rear wheels. The Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) was invented to keep this from happening. Front Wheel Drive (FWD) at least puts the steering and the driving wheels on the same end of the car, so this is not as big an issue. However, accelerating can be a problem because of another fancy device called the differential.

Winter Driving Tip #1: If you have a RWD vehicle, all is not lost. To get equal braking control, gently shift the transmission to neutral when you plan to come to a stop. It really makes it easier.

Winter Driving Tip #2: Drive like you have no brakes. Driving with this in mind means you will do one important thing, that we all wish our decision makers would do, and that is to plan ahead, way ahead. If the road looks icy, and conditions appear to favor that, then don't drive beyond your capabilities. This applies to whatever vehicle you drive, 4WD, 2WD, FWD, RWD, whatever! By the way, driving this way is also a great method for increasing you gas mileage.

Joni Earl puts pressure on other ST staff

It's important for a CEO of an organization to set an example for her people, and all rumors aside that Joni Earl is a (See **Cusick**, page 5)

UK Rail Lessons for the Northwest (Part 1)

by Loren Herrigstad

I must tell you at the start that part of me now wishes I hadn't gone to Great Britain last April – because I came back no longer able to think that the progress we have been making here in rail has been adequate. There, in a nation roughly the size of Washington State, I witnessed and traveled a system of trains and transit that we in this region could justifiably have, but don't. What is truly amazing however, is how rail in Britain has thrived despite being caught between micro-managing government bureaucracy, conglomerates that naturally can't afford to lose money, and a now nonprofit rail infrastructure "trust" that is neither public nor private and hasn't been able to significantly expand the network for years!

In Britain, I found trains that run as frequently, and in as many directions, as transit buses do here; rail stations that were busier than airports; and a society far more energy and resource efficient than ours, worrying far more about global warming than we do, yet concerned they weren't doing nearly enough to combat it. Yes there were flaws – train seats smaller than ours that didn't recline, overcrowded trains at rush hours and weekends, and some drawbacks with fares and ticket restrictions that international rail pass users like myself didn't have to worry about. But for the most part, British trains soon became a dream ride that I didn't want to wake up from, or leave.

Rails of a common ancestry, with some resemblance

Railways in the UK and USA both were grown by energetic entrepreneurs and eventually consolidated into a few large rail conglomerates. Differences started to develop after World War II though, when a war-ravaged British rail industry could no longer operate on its own. So while the UK Government nationalized British Rail in 1947, America let passenger rail continue in private hands until 1971 when Amtrak was created, and even then, Amtrak had to mostly operate as a guest or tenant of freight railroads, while British Rail passenger trains ruled the tracks they ran on.

Actually, Amtrak's Northeast Corridor looks and acts a lot like British railways do and perhaps demonstrates a possible need for public ownership of or significant partnership in rail infrastructures if World Class Passenger Rail is to flourish. After all, would passenger air travel be flourishing if air cargo companies owned the airports?

Myths vs realities of successful rail

UK railways blew away a lot of myths and preconceptions for me. In a poster produced in the 1940s, the UK's Southern Railway perhaps best distilled the essentials of successful passenger rail service by promoting just three things:

COMFORT ■ SPEED ■ FREQUENCY

Everything about traveling British trains (except perhaps the seats themselves) was more comfortable and convenient than most of what I've experienced on American rail travel. Most stations had platform canopies that kept passengers dry, not to mention offering handy cafes and convenience stores right next to the platforms. I could also access a train car through any door without waiting for staff to open it, which makes for faster train boarding and much shorter stops.

Speed was a real surprise in the UK – trains were often not all that fast, other than on the 100 mph plus express main lines.



Virgin Voyager DMU train at Bourne-mouth, England. Photo by Loren Herrigstad

Most commuter and rural trains cruised comfortably along at speeds of between just 40 and 70 mph. I discovered that speed, and thus track investment, doesn't always need to be all that great to be satisfying and get people riding trains.

Frequency was to me the biggest plus in using trains in the UK. I rarely had to wait more than an hour anywhere in Britain to catch a train to most anywhere else I wanted to go in the nation! At great termini like London Paddington or Waterloo, I sometimes had trouble deciding which train I wanted to take – there were so many destination choices, all leaving over the next half hour or so. It was like being at an airport with an unlimited pass allowing me to catch any flight to any destination I wanted. With the best, most attractive train schedules, you don't have to think or remember when a train goes. Trains on many UK lines traveled every hour, sometimes every half-hour or even 15 minutes apart. Just show up and go! I came away thinking that frequency may just be the most important element in creating World Class Rail.

The UK's Rail-Industrial Complex

The contemporary UK rail scene has been dominated by four main players since privatization in 1996. The UK Government provides regulation, public funding, and oversight, mainly through its Office of Rail Regulation (ORR). The Train Operating Companies (TOCs) run passenger trains under franchise agreements with the Government, but typically do not own the equipment they use. Rolling Stock Leasing Companies (ROSCOs) fulfill the role of owning and leasing trains that the TOCs couldn't justify owning, given the short life (7-10 years) of many franchises. Finally, there's Network Rail, a nonprofit entity, in-

dependent of government and industry, which owns the tracks and also principal stations that are shared by more than one TOC.

There has been, and continues to be, a lot of controversy about the now 10-year old privatization of British Rail. On the plus side, UK nationwide rail ridership is up 40% in the 10 years of privatization, which is the best growth rate in Europe, even better than Germany and France. UK rail travel volumes are now basically the highest they've been since World War II. And after being declining then flat for decades, UK Government Rail Investment rose 280% in the first six years of privatization to US\$9 billion a year in 2003-04. Additionally, through private investment (backed by government-set and subsidized train leasing rates), the average train fleet age is now down to just 13 years old.

The down side though is that UK Government subsidies, called Operating Grants, are also up 243% in 6 years to US\$6 billion a year – they used to be \$1.8 billion under British Rail. This is so simply because, unlike a public sector British Rail or Amtrak, private companies can't lose money and remain in the rail business. Their investors have to see an adequate, even attractive, profit. As the UK Strategic Rail Authority noted in justifying its operating grants, "Grant levels were set to allow the newly-formed rail companies commercial rates of return."

For the passenger, rail fares have risen moderately, while air fares have gone down. While ticketing was once a relative breeze and one of the best aspects of train riding under British Rail, tickets now, especially discount rail tickets, can be riddled with as many limitations, restrictions, and "gotchas" as airline tickets – which somewhat defeats rail's "show up and go" attractiveness on more expensive express and long distance routes.

Opponents of rail privatization argue that British Rail in the 1990s was already on course to achieve the positive performance of rail cited above anyway – noting that two BR business sectors, InterCity and RailFreight, were profitable before privatization, with Network SouthEast near break-even, and only the rural Provincial and ScotRail sectors showing significant losses.

However, British Rail, as a government agency, never could lobby very well for significant investments or subsidies to grow services. As a result, BR accrued a lot of deferred infrastructure maintenance and aging rolling stock due to government underfunding. When the Conservative John Major government privatized the BR system, private sector participants demanded that the government adequately fund infrastructure (See **UK**, page 5)

Eastside Line, from page 1
 local, beginning with Governor Christine Gregoire. Numbers count and legislative contacts matter – Big Time. Please be sure to do your part. [Messages for all legislators and the governor can be left via the Legislative Hotline: 800 562-6000.]

Al Runte is a founding member of the Washington Assoc. of Rail Passengers (now All Aboard Washington), former environmental history professor at the University of Washington, national park ranger, author of several books about railroads and their ties to the environment and the national parks, and a candidate for mayor of Seattle in 2005. Al is All Aboard Washington's point man in our effort to preserve the Eastside corridor as a rail line.



One argument against using the Eastside Line for commuter rail is that it doesn't serve population centers. Above, the tracks cross NE 8th St. just a quarter mile from the edge of downtown Bellevue, one of the top employment centers in the state. Photo

Cusick, from page 3
 workaholic, Joni made it to work during the snow and ice that crippled everyone else. How did she do it? Does Joni have a set...
 ...of really good studded snow tires on her Imperium Condescender?
 Does she have nerve...
 ...s of steel?
 No! What Joni did was use the steel already available. Wheels of steel. Steel wheels on steel rail.

Joni took Sounder. Will wonders never cease? Why that's almost as if David Gunn took the NYC Subway when he headed up the NYC MTA. Come to think of it, David Gunn did take the NYC Subway when he headed up the NYC MTA!

Joni takes Sounder because it's on-time performance is almost 100%. During the two snow incidents this winter, except for 2 trains delayed by just a few minutes, all the other trains operated on-time.

ON-TIME! This when everyone else was immobilized.

Winter Driving Tip #3: **Take the Train!**
 Sounder is proving that what rail has to offer is its consistency. In the words of Susan Powter, it's time to "Stop the Insanity!" It's time to plan ahead. It's time to avoid that impending wreck on the roads. It's time for decision-makers to listen to their constituents.

It's time now for a working rail system to be expanded even further, and this includes the Woodinville Sub.

Flem, from page 2
 now it's Amtrak or nothing, and Amtrak, even if a tough grader would grant it only a "C," gives Americans a taste of the safe, environmentally and socially-sound rail transportation that virtually all other advanced capitalist democracies enjoy and our citizens deserve. And many of Amtrak's struggles are a result of decades of insufficient and uncertain funding. What S. 294 attempts is to take the first little steps in having the Federal Government start to show the rail mode the respect and support shown to road, air and inland waterway transportation modes for at least the past 80 years. Gil Carmichael, the chairman of the Amtrak Reform Council of a few years back, wanted major changes and reforms in the provision of intercity passenger train service. Amtrak's critics repeat Amtrak's faults and the ARC's recommended changes, only some of which have or are likely to be realized in the near future. But Mr. Carmichael also proffered the need for a vast increase in Federal investment in rail in our country. Amtrak bashers tend to forget about "the other half" – the investment half. Carmichael believes that as we built the pavement Interstate a half century ago we now, for the long-term benefit of our country, need Interstate Two, the Steel Interstate. I see S. 294 as a nod in that direction and shall urge our Congressional delegation to support this bill and the funding

needed to make it succeed.

UK, from page 4
 structure and support train fleet renewals, otherwise companies simply would not run the network as the government hoped. So the TOCs, ROSCOs and the banks that financed them effectively came to constitute a Rail Industrial Complex, much like our American Military Industrial Complex that President Eisenhower warned us about in his farewell address. And just like our Military Industrial Complex, the British Rail Industrial Complex was able to lobby the UK Government to spend far higher amounts on rail than British Rail ever had been able to previously – to the point where the British Government now spends some **five times** more annually on rail investments and operating subsidies than it did on BR!

Privatization was once heralded to bring private entrepreneurial initiative to passenger rail. That has largely been squeezed out by the ORR setting tight train operating franchise specifications that lay out how many train services are to be run. TOCs can run more trains than called for in their franchise contracts, but they face sometimes severe track and station capacity limits and have to secure contract variances from the ORR, which could result in a renegotiation of their whole franchise agreement and financing!

Even simple trains do a lot

While tourist steam and other trains are a minor side attraction in most Northwest communities, in the UK they are key backbones of local tourism economies. Although a neglected part of the national network, the 8.5-mile Island Line on the Isle of Wight off England's southern coast (their equivalent of our Bainbridge Island), using run-down vintage 1938 stock from London's Underground subways, handles over 900,000 passenger journeys a year. That's 105,000 more annually than Tacoma's 1.6-mile Link light rail and way more than the now ex-Seattle Waterfront Streetcar's approxi- (See **UK**, 6)

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- Amtrak Reservations/Information: 800 872-7245
- All Aboard Washington:
AllAboardWashington.org
- NARP: www.narprail.org
- NARP Hotline: www.narprail.org/cms/index.php/hotline/
- Amtrak: www.amtrak.com
- Amtrak Cascades: www.amtrakcascades.com

All Aboard News

March 17: Joint meeting with NARP Region 8, AORTA and MTarp in Tacoma. Registration flyer enclosed in newsletter, or contact Lloyd Flem or Jim Hamre (contact info on page 5).

April 14: Board of directors meeting.

May 12: meeting in Seattle; details in the April newsletter.

All Aboard Washington welcomed the following new members in December and January: Renee Such, Redmond; Thomas Donegan, Issaquah; Wen-tau Yih, Redmond; Walter Appel, Lynnwood; Thomas Winter, Renton; William Moore, Redmond; Lawrence Reymann, Renton; Richard & Ann Parsell, Mercer Island; Ronald Rosie, Mercer Island; Susan Godfrey, Woodinville; Terrance Christ, Bothell; Richard Theiss, Sammamish; Marie Lewis, Olympia; Dean Morgan, Lacey; Chuck Ayers, Seattle; James Ashlock, Snohomish; Ralph Federpiel, Kirkland; Peter & Nancy Pitarys, Bellevue; James Roodhouse, Bellevue; Susan Wallingford, Everett; Dr. Lee Bennett, Jr., Snohomish; Linda Waugh, Snohomish; Gregory Wang, Renton; Kathleen & Martin Keeney, Bellevue; Linda Christensen, Kirkland; J. O'Farrell, Bellevue; Kimberly Bowen, Seattle.

All Aboard Washington members contributing to this newsletter include: Al Runte, Loren Herrigstad, John Carlin, Warren Yee, Craig Thorpe, Tony Trifiletti, Steve Spear, Lloyd Flem and Jim Cusick.



The first Central Link light rail car was rolled out in a Dec. 18, 2006 ceremony.

*Photo by
Warren Yee*

All Aboard Washington

(formerly Washington Association of Rail Passengers)

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Return Service Requested

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mately 200,000 annual ridership! And while we're thankful in Washington State to have 7 active tourist rail operations, similar-sized Britain has 108 operating heritage railways that handle 12 mill. passenger journeys and 1.7 bill. passenger miles annually! Important attractors and movers of both tourists and locals, heritage railways are even starting to offer commuter runs, often using antique Diesel Multiple Units (DMUs).

A real British railway breakthrough though can be found in Community Rail Partnerships, which have revolutionized small secondary and rural lines across the UK. CRPs take a variety of forms, from grass roots organizations to formal partnerships, or development companies or authorities. CRPs work with train operators, local and national governments, business and tourism interests to support trains, initially through marketing promotions and later through investments in stations, trains or track. There are over 60 CRPs across UK and these are coordinated by ACORP, the Association of Community Rail Partnerships. ACORP profiles itself as mainly a group of "doers" – operating much like The Nature Conservancy does in fostering tangible projects to protect the environment. ACORP focuses on arranging and supporting partnerships, leaving most advocacy of rail policy to organizations like Transport 2000 UK and the Railway Development Society. And while ACORP does have memberships, most of their funding is through grants from foundations and governments.

To show what a Community Rail Partnership can accomplish, ACORP points to a well-documented example in Germany, the Kaarst-Mettmann Regiobahn near Dusseldorf. In 1999 the line had "just" five round trips a day – which coincidentally is what our Northwest Corridor has when you include the *Coast Starlight*. Local rail mana-

gers called this service level "discouraging towards passengers" and these ten trains were carrying a total of only 500 passengers a day on average. A Community Rail Partnership between local governments and commercial train operators was formed, which improved the line and purchased new Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) trains. By 2002 trains were running every 20 min (over 40 per day) on the line, an 800% increase in train service, which attracted over 15,000 passengers a day. As a result, ridership increased over 2,900% in just 3 years!

(In part 2 (next newsletter), we'll explore how what has happened in the UK can be applied to passenger rail service in the Northwest.)

2006 WashARP financial report

Income

Renewals	\$13,761.84
New members	802.00
Appeal and donations	14,816.96
Memorials and grants	1,055.00
Meeting registrations/fees	1,325.00
Miscellaneous	865.48
Merchandise/Auction	1,709.11
Interest/dividends	284.54
Total	\$34,619.93

Expenses

Executive director	\$24,827.70
Eastside Line Special Project	8,974.92
Newsletter	2,894.86
Miscellaneous postage	2,693.44
Website redevelopment	1,502.44
Membership promotion	4,828.76
Meeting expenses	2,289.27
Supplies	500.12
Miscellaneous expenses	1,060.31
Total	49,571.82

All Aboard Washington thanks all who responded to our funding raising letter, no matter the size of the donation. As you can see, our work to save the Eastside line is taking a lot of resources. While much of the funding for this effort comes from our Tom Martin fund for special projects, any additional contributions for this project are welcomed and appreciated.

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