



WASHINGTON RAIL NEWS

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www.AllAboardWashington.org

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

Amtrak ridership bucks national trends with strong growth in 2008; Northwest train capacity strained even as new stops and improved stations encourage continuing ridership increases

Nationwide, Amtrak ridership soared 11.1% in fiscal year 2008 (ending Sept. 30) over 2007, setting a new all time record. This increase comes at the same time auto and air travel have plunged. And even the substantial drop in gas prices since last July has had little impact on the public's reductions in driving, though the

was 760,323, up 12.8% over 2007; revenue was \$20,999,003, up 15.8%. Total Northwest Corridor ridership (including *Coast Starlight* passengers riding solely in the corridor) was 847,563, up 15.4% over 2007.

- *Empire Builder*: FY 2008 ridership was 554,266, up 9.8% over 2007; revenue was \$59,461,168, up 11.8%.
- *Coast Starlight*: FY 2008 ridership was 353,657, up 2.9% over 2007; revenue was \$28,117,404, down 3.6%.

The *Cascades* again set a new ridership record last year. Double digit growth continues though capacity constraints during holidays and in the summer prevent many passengers from being able to travel when they want to. Amtrak desperately needs additional equipment throughout the country, including here in the Northwest.



The newly remodeled and expanded waiting room at the Vancouver, WA Amtrak station opened January 13. By opening up former unused office space, the waiting room has doubled in size, providing a much more pleasant facility for Vancouver's growing ridership.

Photo by Jim Hamre

economic crisis is the main factor now keeping motorists off the road.

Amtrak ridership for 2008 was 28,716,407. Passenger revenue was more than \$1.73 bill., up 14.2% over 2007.

Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) on the nation's roads and highways dropped 5.3% in Nov. 2008 over Nov. 2007. For the first 11 months of 2008 VMT was down 3.7% over 2007.

Airline passenger boardings dropped 7.0% in Nov. 2008 versus Nov. 2007, continuing a year long trend.

For Amtrak routes serving our state, here are the impressive numbers:

- *Cascades*: FY 2008 ridership

There is hope that Congress will finally appropriate the funds for new equipment contained in last year's \$13 bill. Amtrak reauthorization. Amtrak and the Oregon and Washington state DOTs know that additional Talgo trainsets are needed if the *Cascades* are going to continue to grow and offer people more options to driving I-5.

The *Empire Builder* continues to be Amtrak's premier national network train. It has by far the highest ridership of all the long distance routes. Amtrak has done an excellent job of maintaining the high level of service

established with the relaunch of the *Builder* in August 2005 and the public continues to show its support by riding this train.

It's rather amazing that *Coast Starlight* ridership increased in 2008, considering the route was partially or completely annulled between Jan. 20 and May 6 because of the massive landslide that wiped out the Union Pacific mainline in the Oregon Cascades. The *Starlight* received upgraded amenities and services this past summer and on-time performance has improved markedly from 2007. This improvement led Amtrak to announce that effective Feb. 23 northbound passengers on train 14 will again connect to the eastbound *Empire Builder* at Portland. This will eliminate the day long bus ride from Klamath Falls to Pasco that passengers have endured for several years.

Stations

Vancouver, Washington's 100-year-old Amtrak station reopened on Jan. 13, 2008 following a six-month \$650,000 renovation of the station's interior. The station is owned by the city. The focus was on maintaining the building's historic character while moving the ticket counter adjacent to the baggage room for more efficient operation, doubling the size of the cramped waiting room and upgrading (See **Ridership**, page 4)



J. Craig Thorpe's painting shows the proposed design for Leavenworth's Icicle Station. Phase one of the station project is planned to start construction in March and start serving *Empire Builder* passengers in September.



*From the desk of
the Executive
Director
by
Lloyd H. Flem*

**Transportation Lobby Day;
Rail Funding; North to Vancouver?**

Tuesday February 24 is Transportation Lobby Day at the state capitol in Olympia. This is when advocates of "alternative" transportation (everything except more single occupant vehicle capacity) meet with their legislators. All Aboard Washington is part of a coalition urging increased investment in safer, environmentally sound and more fuel efficient movement of goods and people. While AAWA surely cooperates with the other groups participating in Transportation Lobby Day we tend to go our own way. Most of the other participants' interest is on intra-metropolitan issues (especially in the Seattle area); we are most interested in intercity passenger trains.

PLEASE inform me **ASAP** if you plan to participate so I can make appointments for you with your legislators. In addition, I will prepare talking points relevant to current realities concerning state passenger rail policies and investments. You should of course emphasize your own viewpoints and experiences when meeting with your state senators and representatives. My contact information is on page 5.



The WSDOT Rail Office has prepared a midrange plan for our Amtrak *Cascades* service covering FY 2010 to FY 2017 (go to www.wsdot.wa.gov/freight/ publications for links to the plan and appendices). I served as the AAWA representative on the Stakeholders Committee and provided significant input prior to the publishing of the final report.

The plan proposes four options for the level of state investment in our successful, nationally praised, but-now-often-sold-out corridor trains. The first option simply maintains existing service; no added capital investment or trains. The second includes modest capital funding. The third option would allow substantial infrastructure investment and two more Seattle-Portland roundtrips. The fourth option assumes "no financial constraints" and would allow a rapid increase in the number of Seattle-Portland and Seattle-Vancouver, BC roundtrips.

The governor's proposed budget appears to fund only option one, except that three major ongoing infrastructure projects (Vancouver, WA rail yard, Pt. Defiance bypass and Kelso-Martins Bluff) would receive continued funding. With WSDOT now an executive agency, the governor's proposed budget is effectively that of the DOT. In the past, DOT could and did send its own budget proposal, independent of the governor, to the state Legislature.

The Legislature, not the governor, does have the final decision on state budgets (short of a veto). I have thus spent much time meeting with the leadership and many members of Senate and House Transportation Committees.

Option four would be ideal and would be similar to investment strategies in most other industrialized countries and many rapidly developing counties (such

The ostensible primary purpose of the stimulus legislation is to provide and preserve good jobs and to get the economy moving. The country would be well served by investment of federal dollars in rail infrastructure and new and rebuilt passenger train equipment.

as India and China) outside North America. However, Washington does have "financial constraints" and option three is the reasonable choice to pursue.

Responses from the legislators with whom I've met since mid January have been positive. All have agreed on the need for and desirability of more Northwest Corridor passenger trains.

Now, let's look at potential federal funding for passenger rail. At this writing, the news is dominated by the multi hundred billion dollar "economic stimulus/recovery" package. Assuming the stimulus bill passes, it will likely contain far less investment for rail than rail advocates believe is justified based on the safety, fuel efficiency and environmental advantages offers by passenger and freight trains.

The \$4.9 bill. for intercity passenger rail proposed by the U.S. House (only about one-half of one percent of their proposed stimulus package) was then slashed to \$1.1 bill. - \$800 mill. for Amtrak and \$300 mill. for states like ours which have successful and well planned rail programs.

The Senate proposal would add another \$2 bill. for high speed rail projects to the House's \$1.1 bill. Our Northwest Corridor, designated as a high

speed rail corridor, would again be in line for a significant piece of this additional \$2 bill. in funding.

The ostensible primary purpose of the stimulus legislation is to provide and preserve good jobs and to get the economy moving. The country would be well served by investment of federal dollars in rail infrastructure and new and rebuilt passenger train equipment.

Most economists, business and labor leaders, and many governors and mayors, as well as pragmatic members of Congress from both parties agree the best buy for taxpayer stimulus dollars comes from infrastructure investments, of which rail infrastructure and equipment needs should be a part. It is not too late to emphasize this to your representative and senators since the final version of the bill continues to be debated.

We must understand that these state-intended stimulus dollars would **NOT** require a state match. However, the Amtrak reauthorization bill, which also includes funds for states with good rail programs, has a section that requires a 20% state match. The leadership and key members of the state House and Senate Transportation Committees with whom I've met have all agreed our passenger rail program is important and do support funding for the state portion of the match so that we can receive the federal dollars. While nothing is certain until the dollars are delivered, we can be pleased about their commitment to date.



Many AAWA members and others from both side of the British Columbia/Washington border continue to wonder when the second Amtrak *Cascades* round-trip that now turns in Bellingham will continue to its logical terminus in Vancouver. Counterproductive bureaucratic hang-ups are by no means limited to the United States. The Canadian Border Security Agency (CBSA) unilaterally decided to charge \$1500 per trip for the second train from Seattle to Vancouver as it defined this train as a "new service." It appears that the CBSA has been charged with "cost recovery" from people required to use its services. Neither Washington State or Amtrak is willing to pay the \$1500 per day, a position with which I totally agree. The province of British Columbia, the Vancouver business community and other transportation providers (such as airlines, bus companies and cruise ships) agree the fee (See **Flem**, page 5)



The View Down the Tracks

=====
with Jim Cusick

We're Growing Up!

Well, at least "Railwise," that is. It seems our rail passengers are starting to complain. Now I know we have a reputation of whining here in the Northwest (just check any local Internet forum if you don't think so), so why does that make me happy?

What's really great is that rail passengers are whining when the service is disrupted. They aren't just shrugging their shoulders and saying "Oh well, we're lucky to have a train." They are starting to take the regular service for granted. They aren't giving up on rail since it's no longer a novelty; it's starting to weave itself into the fabric of their travels, especially the Puget Sound commute.

The only people who seem to be perennial complainers are those who can't find enough parking at the stations! Even though both Amtrak and Sounder find themselves in situations where they run out of capacity, which is a good thing, they also need to look forward and build for the future. In other words, think like a "growth company."

Hopefully with the incoming Obama administration, rail agencies will get the funding they need to really perform like growth companies.

What does that mean? What makes a growth company different? Simply that each dollar spent has value as a long-term investment as opposed to the short-term payback. Companies that are in a contraction spiral create a self-fulfilling prophecy. As they cut back inventory or services, or whatever they are selling, they create an atmosphere of less. The atmosphere of lowered expectations.

For instance, if a retailer starts cutting back on inventory to save money for the short term, they can actually start to run out of items which not only translates directly into lost sales, but also to the perception by the customer that "they never have what I need." They go shop somewhere else.

The same can be said of services, in our case, rail service. When the public just dismisses the interruption in service, it means they don't really think much of it.

So, in a strange way, customers who thought it was totally unacceptable that Amtrak had to suspend service during the recent weather calamities, and Sounder customers who complained about cutbacks or delays in service despite the blizzard conditions and floods, really are a sign that things are looking up for rail in the Northwest.

People are starting to get it.

Well, except for a few NIMBYs.

NIMBY Neutralizer

Using the term NIMBY to describe those who don't want what we want has negative connotations. Now that seems obvious because the word is an acronym for **Not In My Back Yard**. That statement is in itself strongly worded. What they left out is the "Please."

The Eastside rail line appears to be getting closer to becoming a reality. Now that Parsons Brinkerhoff has completed the study with Sound Transit the results are quite encouraging.

What's interesting about this study is that while Sound Transit and Parsons Brinkerhoff generally "gold plate" their systems in the design stage (building for the long term), it still concludes that commuter rail service on this line is quite feasible. Of course, we at All Aboard already knew that.

Actually, I think the ridership numbers are a bit low, since Transit Oriented Development

What's really great is that rail passengers are whining when the service is disrupted.

wasn't taken into account and that would show much higher numbers as the years go by.

However, as many other commuter rail systems that have started up around the country have found out, it is not always necessary to build the full blown system right away. It is quite reasonable to begin service with the moderate upgrades needed to remove the areas with speed restrictions and build modest platforms and waiting shelters. This has already been done by Sound Transit as exemplified by the temporary Tukwila station. This station is still functioning well and cost about as much as a typical suburban home, approximately \$350,000, when it was built.

Here's the snag, though. I've talked about this many times, but it bears repeating. There will be hearings for the neighborhoods to discuss how this commuter line should be built. There will be many people testifying how it will negatively impact them. In some cases, there might be negative impacts, but these are not insurmountable. There are many opportunities to improve the functionality and livability of their neighborhoods.

What we as rail proponents need to do is help provide solutions to the issues which will be brought up.

I realize that some issues they raise will be very parochial and uninformed, such as "my children have always played on those tracks and if you send these giant trains hurtling through our neighborhood at 79 miles an hour, someone will get hurt."

These can be met with succinct responses that don't compromise, but make the point, such as "These trains will not be

traveling that fast, and besides, would you let your children play on the freeway? How is the railroad right-of-way any different?"

It is a commercial thoroughfare.

Apply the same logic to the rail line as you would the "car/truck" line or even the "airplane" line. The logic of such comparisons will prevail.

Let it Snow! Let it!

Get out of my way! I've fired up my gas guzzling Imperium Condescendor! I can go anywhere in this snow. Punch that All Wheel Drive option, and nothing can stop me!

Egad, what a Christmas holiday! However, I LOVE the idea that the Puget Sound doesn't use salt. Makes my Imperium Condescendor last longer, thank you very much.

However, many of us who think rail is the superior product felt let down. We know that rail performs well in the cold and snow, since most of the Midwest and Northeast is regularly blanketed with the stuff. So why was the Amtrak *Cascades* service canceled? Why did Sounder suffer? Why stop running the *Empire Builder*?

One of the primary reasons to suspend service is SAFETY. We can accept that. Certain portions of the *Empire Builder's* route put the train in danger from avalanches. As we are all too aware of here in the Pacific Northwest, avalanches have had a devastating effect on rail travel. The Wellington Rail Disaster had the highest loss of life for one train accident. To halt service until the danger passed is commendable.

But what about the service that was suspended that wasn't to protect the safety of rail passengers?

Make no mistake, this was one nasty snowstorm. Switches normally controlled by remote dispatchers failed because of the weather and required train crews to manually clear them of ice and snow. They then had to ensure the switch was correctly lined, creating many delays. Another problem was bridges with movable spans, which were also plagued by the same issues.

Even the Sounder Seahawks specials were delayed at King St. Station, while BNSF's maintenance-of-way personnel made heroic efforts to clear the manual and the remote switches at both ends of the station. Just as one was cleared out, the other switch was already iced over.

Station platforms were caked with ice and snow, navigating them was treacherous for passengers and personnel alike. Snow in the shoes, snow on the luggage, snow on the head, snow...everywhere. Wet snow, dry snow, slushy snow...What fun!

Why put up with it?

Because passengers get to travel in comfort and arrive relaxed as they didn't (See **Cusick**, page 5)

Ridership, from page 1
the restrooms. The contractor, Skyward Construction, Inc., maintained the historic finishes by matching the existing wall plaster, refinishing the original maple wood flooring and custom manufacturing new solid Douglas fir doors. Carpenters also replicated original interior wainscoting, bead board and trim patterns. The city purchased the station from BNSF for \$1. (Information reported by the Vancouver Columbian.)

In **Leavenworth**, the city is moving toward a March 2009 ground-breaking for its Icicle Station project. The new stop for the *Empire Builder* is expected to open in September 2009. The city and local merchants plan to team up to provide shuttle service from station, which is about a half mile from downtown, into the city.

Though Amtrak has not yet set the schedule, the approximate times the *Builder* will call at Leavenworth will be 8:12 p.m. eastbound and 6:13 a.m. westbound. While the Puget Sound area is a natural market for the new stop, the city plans to market the faux-Bavarian tourist destination all along the *Builder's* route. In addition to visiting Leavenworth, tourists can venture into the Cascades for camping, hiking and rock-climbing. The Stevens Pass ski resort is interested in offering ski packages to train passengers.

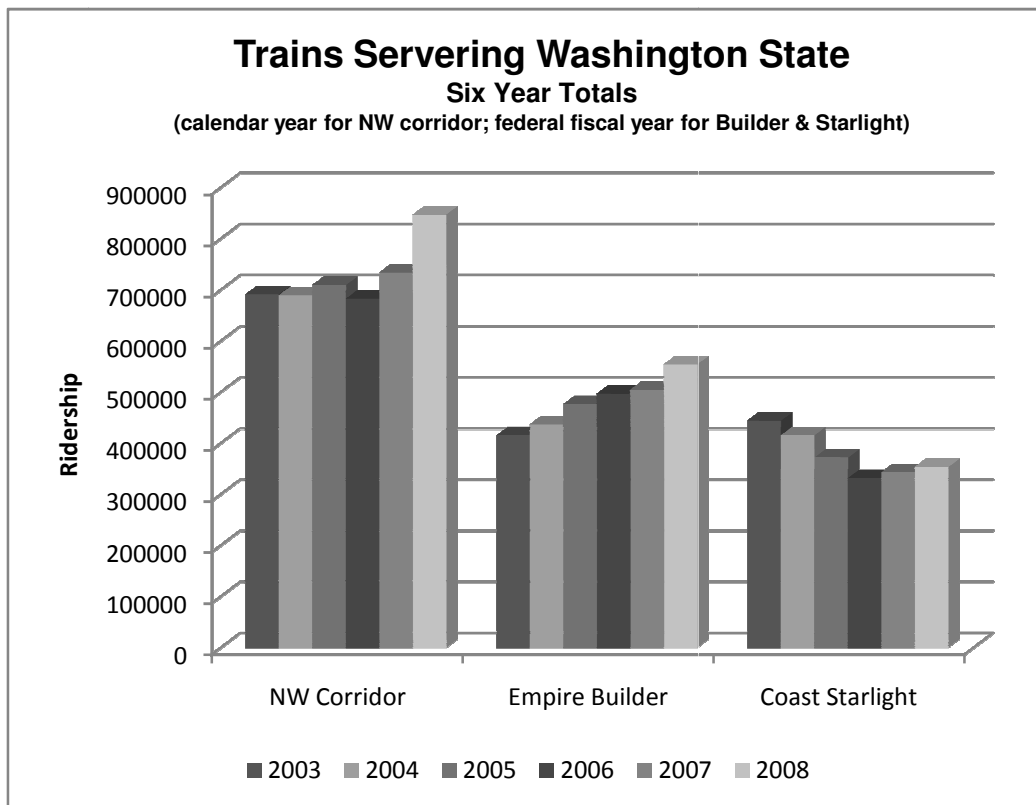
According to Mayor (and All Aboard Washington board member) Rob Eaton, the city is conducting its final push to raise the last \$100,000 for the station project. You can help by donating to the campaign with a tax deductible contribution. Visit www.iciclestation.com/ for more on the project. A donation flyer can be downloaded at www.iciclestation.com/pdf/capcam.pdf.

The **Stanwood** station project is also ready to move into construction in March. According to Kirk Fredrickson, the WSDOT project manager, bid opening for the project is Feb. 13 and if the bids are favorable construction will move forward with an expected station opening date in September. What will be built is considered an interim facility because the city of Stanwood is developing a master plan for its new municipal campus and the ultimate station will be a part of the campus. The stop will consist of a passenger platform with shelters. Amtrak will manage construction of the station facilities for WSDOT. Visit www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/rail/stanwoodstation/.

Sound Transit is now moving forward with the permanent **Tukwila** station that serves both Sounder and the Amtrak *Cascades*. The permanent station, located directly south of the existing temporary station, has been waiting for the cities of Ren-

Amtrak Station Data							
Six-Year Washington State On & Off Totals (calendar year)							
Station	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	'08-'07 % Change
Bellingham	48,594	55,033	56,087	52,356	51,315	70,990	+38.3
Bingen-White Salmon	1,190	1,460	1,938	1,924	2,307	2,959	+28.3
Centralia	19,644	19,771	19,089	18,816	21,060	23,663	+12.4
Edmonds	25,869	25,415	28,404	27,320	27,543	31,204	+13.3
Ephrata	2,462	2,773	2,985	3,469	3,923	4,365	+11.3
Everett	37,895	37,339	39,532	40,047	41,567	48,420	+16.5
Kelso-Longview	21,289	20,573	20,956	21,411	23,519	28,330	+20.5
Mt. Vernon	15,964	17,186	21,172	20,206	19,328	24,280	+25.6
Olympia-Lacey	43,180	41,613	42,404	44,205	49,659	58,133	+17.1
Pasco	16,355	18,710	22,056	27,147	28,072	29,202	+4.0
Seattle	627,534	628,836	650,061	609,104	634,193	668,037	+5.3
Spokane	39,284	40,106	42,491	46,096	48,484	59,001	+21.7
Tacoma	106,840	106,180	102,255	102,703	110,869	124,351	+12.7
Tukwila	9,017	11,470	14,214	16,082	18,887	22,292	+18.0
Vancouver	68,123	71,487	72,266	74,907	84,766	97,554	+15.1
Wenatchee	14,543	15,094	18,157	19,992	19,085	20,945	+9.7
Wishram	938	1,154	2,446	1,403	1,683	1,814	+7.8
TOTALS	1,098,703	1,114,200	1,156,513	1,089,235	1,186,260	1,315,540	+10.9

Station totals include Thruway bus ridership numbers.



ton and Tukwila to proceed with the eastern extension of Strander Blvd. across both the BNSF and Union Pacific tracks. Part of the plan includes relocation of the UP tracks easterly so they are adjacent to the BNSF tracks, though the timing of the relocation is still up in the air. Sound Transit plans to start construction on the permanent station in 2010 with or without the rail relocation.

An improved facility with better shelters and an Amtrak ticket vending machine will encourage more people to ride the *Cascades* from Tukwila. Another needed element for the station that All Aboard Washington has pushed for many years is a Thruway bus connection from all trains to Sea-Tac airport. See www.soundtransit.org/x1821.xml for more details.

Cusick, from page 3
have to drive in it.

They were disappointed in the cancellations. They were disappointed in the delays, although navigating that mess in the car seemed like an option because the free-ways were empty. They were all on the train! Sounder saw numbers that day that they usually see on regular weekday commute service. They were overwhelmed, but they kept fighting.

However, why do railroad employees put up with it, since last time I checked they don't get snow pay just for working a regular shift in it. Why should they be disappointed that trains were canceled?

Pride.

People who work in those conditions know that while it's lousy when they're doing it, there is a sense of pride delivering when no one else can.

Airports were shut down, roads were impassable, but the trains could keep running. At least that's what we thought.

There will be many arguments about what should have been done. We know trains can operate very well in the snow and cold, snowier and colder than what was experienced here, because they do it all the time in the Midwest!

Why not here?

This is one of those paradigm shifts that's beginning to appear. To keep the scheduled trains running, do you invest in things like switch heaters even in climates that don't get as cold and inclement as the upper Midwest.

No doubt Amtrak's shortage of equipment played a part, since delays at one end of a train's route forced delays at the other, because there is no spare equipment to send out to keep the schedule.

And then...the flooding!

What next?

A plague of locusts?

Although the flooding of Jan 7-8 closed down all service from Portland to Seattle and from Seattle to Spokane, it appeared rail was failing us again, except that (with the absence of mudslides) Sounder was able to perform its regular duties.

When it was all said and done, being wet, cold, covered in snow and tired is a good feeling, if you are delivering when no one else can.

During the events around the holidays, it seemed that the weather hit Amtrak hard, and since it's been on a starvation diet for so long, it got sick fast.

Why shouldn't Amtrak get more money for equipment and anything it needs to perform? After all, Amtrak is entitled to it.

Entitlement?

That's been the latest pejorative buzzword lately.

Ah, the Entitlement Generation (which ever one that is) is described as the one that feels everything should be handed to them, as if life were an entitlement.

How dare anyone feel they are entitled to anything!

The government isn't here to hand out money, is it? After all, private industry has built this country, with private dollars. No government handouts here...Yesiree!

Well, ignore the fact that \$350 bill. of our tax dollars were just **GIVEN** to the banking industry no questions asked! With \$350 bill. more on the plate. As if they are Entitled to it!

How **DARE** Amtrak ask for money. Can't they run their operation like a successful business, like the Banking System? Like the Auto Industry?

Whoaaah, okay, bad examples.

The Oil and Auto industries are in line for their portion of the Stimulus Package and it appears that they are getting everything they are asking for. As if they were Entitled to it. However, there are representatives balking at giving Amtrak and the various transit agencies their money, however small compared to what is going to be spent on roads. After all, it's important that we have enough roads to keep cars on the road and gas prices high.

What Amtrak and our transit agencies and, yes, even the freight railroads need to do is behave like the other members of private industry when it comes to government money.

Act like you are Entitled to it!

Flem, from page 2
should not exist.

From the business perspective, dollars spent each day in Vancouver by train travelers from the south would exceed by 12 to 15 times the \$1500 the CBSA would earn by charging for the second train. With the upcoming 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics, actions which imperil a good means of access to that magnificent Canadian city are surely ill advised. I, along with other Canadian and U.S. rail and business advocates (independent of, but cooperating with, government agencies) are working to block implementation of this fee.

Let's hope wisdom will prevail and the second train to and from Vancouver will be realized by the summer of 2009!

Transport 2000 Canada awards its Lemon Prize to CBSA for Cascades Vancouver extension delay

Transport 2000 Canada Pres. David Jeanes Feb. 2 announced the award of the association's Lemon Prize to former Solicitor-General Stockwell Day and to Susanne Hurtubise, Deputy Minister responsible for the Canadian Border Services Agency, for preventing the startup of a second Seattle-Vancouver train.

Jeanes noted: "The Province invested a few million dollars to put in a passing track to increase capacity on the line but the State of Washington – who funds the passenger service – has been told by the CBSA that it must pay \$1,500 per train each day because it is seen as a "new facility." Our attempts to get information on this holdup through Access to Information have met the usual year-long delay."

Commented John Bakker, President of Transport 2000 BC: "This \$1,500 charge is nonsense as the secure customs and immigration facility has been at the Vancouver station for years and is used by a train each way each day. This stubborn obstruction is already harming tourism in the Lower Mainland and will be a distinct handicap for the Olympics."

The Lemon Prize is awarded by Transport 2000 to "winners" who go out of their way to make life miserable for transportation users and have acted counter to the development of sustainable transportation.

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All are evening numbers, except Lloyd's, which is available 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily.

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State Legislature: State Capitol, Olympia 98504
Hotline for leaving messages: 800 562-6000
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
Sound Transit: www.soundtransit.org

All Aboard News

February 24 (Tuesday): Transportation Lobby Day, **Olympia.** The event kicks off at 10:00 a.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church, 2020 Franklin St SE. Then we will proceed to the capitol to meet with our legislators. Rides from the Olympia/Lacey Amtrak station will be provided. Contact Lloyd Flem to set up appointments with your legislators and to arrange for a ride from the train station. See p. 5 and see his column for contact information and more details.

March 28: Northwest rail advocates membership meeting at the **Izaak Walton Inn, Essex, MT.** Registration flyer has been sent to all members. Registration postmark deadline is March 9. Travel via the *Empire Builder*. For more information, contact Jim Hamre (see p. 5).

May 9: Amtrak's second annual National Train Day. All Aboard Washington will be participating in events in our state. More details will be available in the next newsletter.

All Aboard Washington welcomed the following new members in December and January: Veronica Marohn, Tumwater; Sylvia Swazey, Olympia; Lynn & Glen Scroggins, Olympia; Jeff Conner, Lake-wood; Tom Hamre, Puyallup; Barry Green, Glendive, MT; and Patrick Bowen, Bridgeport, CT.

At the Nov. 8 membership meeting the following people were elected to the All Aboard Washington Board of Directors:

- George Barner, Olympia
- Harvey Bowen, Seattle
- Jim Cusick, Edmonds
- Rob Eaton, Leavenworth
- Jim Hamre, Puyallup
- Loren Herrigstad, Centralia
- Carl Jackson, Auburn
- Bob Lawrence, Mill Creek
- Bill Myers, Anacortes
- Tedine Roos, Longview
- Rocky Shay, Federal Way
- Ron Sheck, Seattle
- Zack Willhoite, Puyallup
- Warren Yee, Seattle

At the January 10 board of directors meeting the board elected the following All Aboard Washington officers:

- Loren Herrigstad, President
- Jim Hamre, Vice President
- Rock Shay, Secretary
- Harvey Bowen, Treasurer

After many years of service to All Aboard Washington, our long time Chairman Chuck Mott and President Tony Trifiletti have decided to step back from the spotlight. We all thank Chuck and Tony for their leadership over the years as All Aboard Washington grew in stature and advanced the cause of rail in our state.

All Aboard Washington members contributing to this newsletter include Zack Willhoite, Warren Yee, Lloyd Flem, Jim Cusick, Rob Eaton, Carl Fowler and Kirk Fredrickson.

Rail, the "Critical Link"

Amtrak has created a publication called Critical Link. It provides excellent information on the importance of rail passenger service as an integral component of our country's transportation network. Topics covered in Critical Link include:

- Highway and airport congestion mitigation
- Economic development at both the national and regional level
- Travel choices
- Energy efficiency and environmental benefits
- Safety

Some interesting facts from Critical Link:

- Though Horizon Air has nearly 30 roundtrip flights a day between Seattle and Portland, and other airlines have additional flights each day, Amtrak, with four *Cascades* roundtrips, has 66% of the air/rail market share.
- Amtrak serves more than 170 communities with limited or no commercial air service and more than 50 without intercity bus service.
- A Harris poll found nearly 80% of Americans ranked more long distance and commuter rail service as their top transportation priorities.
- Amtrak's energy efficiency, measured per passenger mile, is better than both commercial airlines and the automobile.
- Railroads rank best in four of five types of air pollutant emissions.

The entire report is available on Amtrak's web site. To find it go to www.amtrak.com and click the News and Media link at the bottom of the page; click the Government Affairs link on the left; click the Amtrak Information link; and click the Critical Link – 2007 link.

All Aboard Washington
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