

BLET's Mike Elliott speaks at All Aboard Washington meeting

Mike Elliott of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen was the speaker at our June 14 meeting. He currently serves as spokesperson and lobbyist for the Washington State Legislative Board (WSLB) of the BLET. It is the oldest labor union in North America, celebrating its 150th anniversary last year.



There are nine BLET local divisions in Washington State representing about 750 employees on BNSF, Union Pacific, Amtrak and Tacoma Rail.

About 75 people (mostly engineers) work for Amtrak operating the Cascades, Empire Builder and Coast Starlight in our state. The rail labor payroll in Washington averages \$71,000 per employee each year for a total of \$4 billion.

Elliott praised WSDOT and Rail Office Director Ron Pate as supportive of labor. He emphasized his close working relationship with Herb Krohn of the United Transportation Union and his desire to work cooperatively with All Aboard Washington, acknowledging that AAWA and rail labor share many goals and positions on rail issues. Elliott shares AAWA's positive opinion of the increasingly influential Legislative Rail Caucus. He also supports preservation of the Eastside Rail Corridor



Mike Elliott speaking at the June 14 All Aboard Washington meeting.

Photo by Warren Yee

from Renton to Snohomish for rail use.

Elliott reviewed highway inroads on passenger rail during the 20th century and passenger rail's survival into the Amtrak era. With building interest in rail nationwide and in the Northwest as a viable alternative to air, bus or car travel, commuter and passenger rail operations are enjoying a renaissance.

With continued improvement in infrastructure, technology and cost control, passenger rail service in Washington State will thrive in the coming decades. He sees areas where passenger trains could safely exceed 79 mph. The success of Amtrak is good for the traveling public, for BLET members and for our region.

The BLET favors moving crude petroleum by rail – it is now one of BNSF's most important commodities. Yet public safety and BLET member safety are of top importance. Lack of a pipeline network from the Bakken Shale Oil Formation to domestic refineries has made rail the only viable transportation mode. Elliott noted a 433% increase in crude oil shipments by rail since 2005, 166% of it between the first quarter of 2012 and the first quarter of 2013.

Elliott then showed a map of Bakken-like oil fields along rail lines throughout the U.S. He spoke of placarding inaccuracies on trucks and trains regarding the specific hazards of shipments. He said rail labor is working with the state and is trying to get Washington ports to support having the oil industry remove explosive gases from Bakken crude before shipment, rendering it virtually inert.

He said rail labor wants slower, shorter and lighter oil trains with more than one buffer car between the locomotives and tank cars. Two person crews are a must. Very long (average (See Elliott, page 4)

Ken Uznanski: A Tribute

By Lloyd Flem



Three good railroad men who did fine and dedicated work at the WSDOT Rail branch are tragically no longer with us: Ray Allred, Steve Anderson, and now Ken Uznanski, who was born in 1962 and passed away on

July 7. All died way too young. All had more years to contribute to the well-being and success of the rail mode in our country. I had the privilege of working with all three in Olympia for many years; Ken from the time he was fresh from being the State Rail Planner in North Dakota until he went to Amtrak in 2009.

While several people deserve credit for Washington State's successful rail passenger program, none more so than Ken Uznanski, fine husband, father, and guiding light of the WSDOT Rail Office (now Rail Division) for many years. As one who worked closely with Ken, I knew his managing Washington rail program was not just a job; it was a calling. He knew all aspects of what the work entailed, worked with uncommon diligence to lead a loyal crew to where Washington was judged throughout our country as having among the very best state-level rail programs. This nationwide respect was just emphasized as William Vantuono, Editor-in-Chief of the respected Railway Age professional journal, lauded Ken's work in an [on-line tribute](#).

During Ken's years as rail manager, I had access to him at all times. I helped carry his message to elected officials at all levels, and civic and community leaders. Ken understood that an independent rail advocate could approach influentials in ways others with specific corporate or institutional interests could not as easily do.

At Ken's funeral Mass and reception at Olympia's St Michael Catholic Church on July 14, evidence of Ken's reach was obvious. Scores of church members were present, as were dozens of youngsters (See Uznanski, page 2)



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

Whither Amtrak Cascades in BC?; Benson Streetcars

As is always the case, conferences for which Bruce Agnew is significantly responsible for organizing feature important topics, have key speakers, and are well attended. The "Beyond the Borders" tour event, July 18-20, was representative of Bruce's good production. While rail freight issues, cross border security, and international market access near and across the Washington-British Columbia border were the primary topics covered,

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the absence of even a mention of intercity passenger train service by the British Columbia side during the portions of the event I attended, remains a matter of concern.

Attendees on the special tour car northbound from Seattle on Amtrak Cascades 510 Friday morning included a number of Washington State legislators plus two from Oregon, all of whom were very supportive of our states' rail programs. On-board presentations included those from WSDOT Rail's Ron Pate, Talgo's Antonio Perez, and a BNSF representative. Ron's was an upbeat look at the present and near future of our Amtrak Cascades rail program, Antonio told of Talgo's distinctive technology, and the BNSF person offered a summary of the BNSF presentation Johan Hellman made at a recent AAWA meeting.

I did not attend the afternoon tours, but enjoyed the evening reception co-hosted by the US and Canadian Consulates in Vancouver. I had long and cordial discussions with several of our Washington legislators, all of whom are active members of the Legislative Rail Caucus.

Saturday morning's session, at downtown Vancouver's Sutton Place Hotel, included presentations by representatives of Port Metro Vancouver, CN Rail, CP Rail, and the BC Ministry of Transportation. The port presentation included lots of good factual information concerning western Canada's premier port. CP and CN sounded a lot like UP would at such a meeting. I would not expect the above three to mention passenger rail; their jobs are moving freight.

Of concern was the presentation by Bob Steele of the BC Ministry of Transportation. Concerning land border crossings, only highway crossings were illustrated and discussed. This utter disregard of intercity passenger rail connections was accented when examining the Tourism Vancouver Official Map. Detailed listings and mappings of all of Metro Vancouver's fine Skytrain, West Coast Express (commuter train), SeaBus, and BC Ferries, but no reference to Amtrak or Canada's VIA Rail!

Rails literally tied together our vast, magnificent northern neighbor to a degree even greater than in the US, but intercity passenger train service appears to be now ignored in Canada. Certainly Washington and now Oregon are investing in the Cascades service, as well as the ARRA federal funds invested in our state. But where are Canadian federal dollars for intercity passenger trains? And whither British Columbia in that regard? Both Washington and British Columbia benefit from the passenger trains that connect our state and the province. Acknowledgement of that benefit and financial participation from north of the 49th parallel is long past due.



On July 21 the Seattle City Council took a major first step in putting the vintage Melbourne streetcars back into use in the heart of the Emerald City. The council voted 8-1 to proceed with the Center City Connector (CCC), which mandates a streetcar line. The cars, named after the late and beloved Seattle Councilman George Benson, who had the cars brought from Melbourne, Australia and personally participated in their restoration, served admirably as a heavily-used mode of transportation and tourist attraction as the Waterfront Streetcar.

I favor use of the Benson cars, which have the potential of saving \$8 million and would represent over 20% of the local match needed to receive a Federal grant. And, on the proposed First Avenue route, they would provide transportation equal to that of modern, more costly cars.

Yes, I favor the cars in part because

of the man for whom they are named. During his latter years, George was an active member of our rail advocacy organization. And George and I sat together for many years at Husky home games in the UW Alumni Band. All who knew Mr Benson agree a finer gentleman could not be found in Seattle. The vintage streetcars are his legacy ... and they are a practical and delightful form of transportation.

Thanks to you who urged the Seattle City Council to choose streetcars on the CCC. Now, continued communication with the Council advocating the Benson cars on the CCC is in order.

Uznanski, from page 1

whom Ken led and coached in boys and girls sports activities. The rail community was also well represented, with past and present WSDOT colleagues and other rail entities, including Amtrak and Talgo, honoring the memory of their friend. Notable was former WSDOT Rail's Jeff Schultz, who traveled from Connecticut to celebrate Ken. Several AAWA and AORTA officers and Board members were also present.

In addition to family, church, youth sports and profession, Ken had another passion, his Alma Mater, the University of Notre Dame. While an excellent academic institution, Notre Dame also plays football.

A little lighthearted story in that regard: Ken and I had a friendly wager when my UW Huskies were to play the Fighting Irish about a dozen or so years ago. Ken would buy me dinner if the Huskies won; for an Irish victory I would have to don Notre



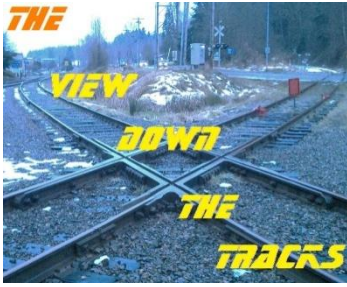
Dame garb and play the famous Notre Dame Victory March on the trombone. (I was then an active member of the UW Alumni Band and knew

the ND tune well.) With divine intervention (I told Ken), the Irish won. The bet was paid off in full view of many throughout the halls of the WSDOT Headquarters building, and it was videotaped. Ken's huge grin with the Notre Dame victory was extended courtesy of this old Husky's trombone tribute – wearing Irish gear – to his beloved team.

Severe health issues kept Ken from active professional rail efforts in the past year or so, but his successes on behalf of intercity passenger rail service in our Northwest Corridor is the ongoing legacy of his work.

May God bless Ken Uznanski and his lovely family. The rail community gives thanks for his life, his work, his friendship.

(AAWA's webpage has a July 7 "TrainOrders" tribute to Ken by rail consultant Tom White. There his many tangible rail achievements are summarized. Those desiring a mailed copy of the tribute may contact me; info on page 5.



WITH
JIM
CUSICK

Amtrak, a Foreign Country?

Do you ever wonder what happens to [foreign aid](#)?

It's a common complaint made over the years about the US government giving another country money when we could use it here at home.

One of those 'dirty little secrets' about foreign aid is that it comes with strings.

One of them – Buy American.

Some also argue that our military involvement in other countries doesn't benefit people here.

Not true!

Much of the military spending is for weapons systems that employ people in the US.

Also, did you know that the Pentagon is always trying to cut spending?

They regularly attempt to close unused or non-essential military bases.

What stops them?

Congress.

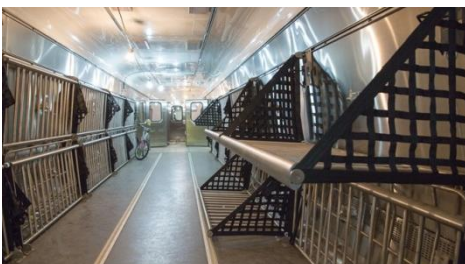
Why?

With bases in every state, they benefit from what is essentially welfare – military style.

Every state wants a strong defense because it means money spent at home, therefore garnering support from both sides of the political aisle.

So, given that we need to have an excuse to spend money, and Congress doesn't seem to think spending it on US transportation infrastructure is important, we should declare passenger rail service a foreign country.

Then we could build the system we need using good old American know how.



Amtrak's new baggage cars will be on many national network trains. They feature racks for luggage and unboxed bicycles and will be climate controlled. *Photo courtesy of Amtrak*

For instance, Amtrak is going to be [putting new railcars into service](#).

They're manufactured by a Spanish company. However, the work is being done in the US.

One problem, it seems there are no American passenger railcar manufacturers.

There are [American Railcar Manufacturers](#), but they are currently only involved in freight equipment.

Hmmm, that CEO's name looks familiar. Icahn... Icahn...

Amtrak – America's Railroad.

But Not In My Backyard!

I wish I was kidding about this next one.

It seems that there are a number of Edmonds residents who have decided that [trains should not be seen or heard on the Edmonds waterfront](#).

Their solution? Put the trains in a 25-foot deep trench.



Graphic from www.edmondstraintrench.net

As an Edmonds resident, I would certainly vote no when this appears on the ballot.

And no Edmonds tax money should be spent on this without public approval.

From the commentary on the My Edmonds News website:

*"Ferry Traffic Interruption
Edmonds hosts the only remaining location where ferry loading and unloading operations are at grade over BNSF rail lines. This results in significant and increasing delays to all modes of travel."*

However, the commentary seems to ignore rail traffic as an integral part of transportation.

While noting the high decibel levels of the train horns as mandated by the FRA, the emphasis appears to be concerned with how it affects the quality of life for a select few trackside residents.

Are these the kinds of people who would move under the flight path of an airport runway, and then go up to the ticket counter at that airport to complain about the noise?

Answer – Yes.

For the legitimate concerns noted, using hyperbole does not help their

argument.

One example they use is that there are 45 trains a day which cause the crossing gates to be down for a total of 4½ hours.

That equates to 6 minutes per train.

I submitted this in the comments section for the MyEdmondsNews commentary on the train trench:

"The crossing gates at Main and Dayton streets close, on average, the following times:

Sounder and Amtrak - 90 seconds

Regular manifest freights - 2 minutes, 30 seconds.

Longer intermodal freights and unit grain trains, both which are as long as the coal trains - 3 to 3½ minutes.

Oil trains, which tend to be shorter - about 3 minutes.

Coal trains, which are travelling at a reduced speed, roughly 4 minutes.

Oil trains take as long, since they also travel through the area at reduced speeds."

Why make it sound worse, if it will only hurt your credibility?

Also, the [Edmonds Train Trench](#) website engages in even more fuzzy history, when they talk about the Edmonds Crossing project as if it was the only way for the Washington State Ferries traffic to avoid crossing the tracks.

If you actually read the EIS for that project, you would see that while accomplishing that part, they would get the ferry traffic off Edmonds Way and Sunset Avenue. The loading area, whose entrance is from Pine Street, would have contained all the traffic that now stretches up to the Westgate shopping area on those busy summer days.

The Edmonds Crossing project was not a 'make things nice for us well heeled waterfront property owners with million dollar views' endeavor only.

The project's price tag would have meant it solved a lot of issues, but the wisdom of the voters prevailed with the effects of I-695's message, and subsequent enactment of eliminating the statewide car-tab fee, so we have what you see now. Its would have upgraded the options for WSF to allow multiple docks for greater safety in inclement weather.

However, I'm just going to come right out and say it – the trench is a silly idea.

I will delve into the specifics in the future, but for now, I will introduce my own silly idea.

Combination Sound/Sea walls. No trench needed, since with Climate Change ocean levels will be rising, and (See **Cusick**, page 5)

Station developments around the Northwest

Tacoma

With the Pt. Defiance Bypass Project – which relocates Amtrak service through Tacoma from the Pt. Defiance line to the line used by Sounder to Lakewood – advancing, the Amtrak station for the city needs to be relocated to Freighthouse Square, where Sounder now stops. WSDOT has been working diligently with Tacoma Dome District stakeholders, Sound Transit, Amtrak, the City of Tacoma and All Aboard Washington (the advocates for the passengers).

Many locations in Freighthouse Square were analyzed and reduced to three options: the east end, the west end and a central location just west of the Sounder station area. Some in the neighborhood favor the east end but this location has many negatives. The major issues with the east end: a quick analysis by WSDOT indicates construction costs would be higher; annual operating costs are about double the other locations (which are estimated at \$800,000 to \$1 million); and the east end is the least desirable location for passenger convenience and comfort and for Amtrak operations.

WSDOT has selected the central location as the preferred alternate. This option will be forwarded to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) as a compromise that meets the expectations and requirements for an Amtrak station. WSDOT will continue to work with stakeholders during the design phase for the central location. A public meeting will be scheduled to share design concepts and to gather ideas on several design elements. Once approved by the FRA, construction will start in late 2015 or early 2016.

All Aboard Washington will continue to represent the needs and concerns of the rail passengers, which, after all, are the whole reason the trains and stations exist.

Sandpoint, ID



The forlorn Sandpoint Station in 2010 during construction of the Sand Creek Byway.

Photo by Jim Hamre

As reported by the Bonner County (ID) Daily Bee, an agreement has been reached between Amtrak and BNSF on restoration and reopening of the Sandpoint train station. It was closed several years ago because of deteriorating building conditions.

Passenger have had to wait outside since then.

Amtrak has almost \$1 million for the improvements provided by the Idaho Dept. of Transportation during Sand Creek Byway negotiations to move or restore the station. The Sand Creek Byway is a freeway IDOT squeezed between the station and the adjacent creek.

BNSF, which owns the building, wants a design that will not preclude future installation of a second mainline past the station. The agreement calls for the building's east side doors to be blocked off. An entrance on the building's south side will be installed. The platform on the building's east side will be removed and the area secured.

Improvements to the building's exterior include replacement of the roof. All the sheathing and underlayment will be replaced, as will defective rafters, trusses, fascia boards, gutters and downspouts. The brick exterior will be repaired and repointed.

Inside, the plaster on the ceiling and walls, terrazzo flooring in the waiting room and women's restroom – soon to be the new unisex restroom – will be repaired and restored. Energy-efficient lighting will be installed. A modern HVAC system will replace the oil furnace. The plumbing and electrical systems will be replaced.

Amtrak will install a new, ADA-compliant platform to the south of the station using its dollars and not the restoration fund.

Construction is supposed to start soon. After work is completed, the Sandpoint Station will still be unstaffed, but the reopened waiting room will provide a place to wait – especially welcomed by passengers in the winter.

Tukwila



Cascades 500 departs the under-construction Tukwila Station on July 12, 2014.

Photo by Jim Hamre

The permanent Tukwila Sounder/Amtrak Cascades station has been under construction for the last year and is planned to be completed by the end of 2014. The new facility is being built around the temporary station, which has made for challenges for the contractor, the passengers, BNSF, Amtrak and Sound Transit.

The new 390 stall parking lot and the transit center on the west side of the BNSF mainline have been mostly completed, as

well as much of the west platform. The cities of Renton and Tukwila have opened the first phase of the Strander Blvd extension under BNSF which connects the station to Renton's street system. Funding is still needed to push Strander Blvd west under the Union Pacific tracks to West Valley Hwy.

Dedicated Amtrak parking spaces are located at the south end of the parking lot. This will make for a fairly long walk to get to the east platform since the existing pedestrian underpass at the north end of the station will remain as the only access from one side of the tracks to the other.

All Aboard Washington has expressed our concern about Amtrak passengers being on the wrong platform when a train arrives unless a system is put into place to communicate to the passengers which track the train will arrive on. People with luggage having to make their way to the other platform will cause train delays and harried passengers.

Cheney

The Spokesman Review reports that a group of Cheney residents is working to save the city's historic Northern Pacific Railway station from demolition. BNSF has offered to donate the station to the community if the group can come up with a plan to move it off the railroad right-of-way.

Save Our Station is looking at several properties in Cheney and is seeking donations to pay for moving and rehabilitating the 1929 depot. The Spanish mission-style station replaced an 1881 wooden depot that served the early years of rail service.

Cheney Mayor Tom Trulove said the city doesn't have money, but is supporting the efforts by Save Our Station.

The group estimates the cost of moving and fixing the station at \$415,000. A significant portion of that cost could be covered by an offer from an Alaska doctor, whose father grew up in Cheney, to donate money for land acquisition.

Gus Melonas, BNSF spokesman, said the railroad has not been using the building, which sits next to the railroad's busy main line between Spokane and Portland. The railroad has put demolition on hold to allow Save Our Station time to come up with a plan.

The group is researching possible uses for the building, including retail outlets, tourism, a museum, mixed uses or a transportation facility.

One of All Aboard Washington's major goals is to return daytime passenger rail service between Seattle and Spokane. Cheney, home of Eastern Washington University, would be a logical stop on this route. While we support saving the station, moving it far from the BNSF mainline would preclude using it for its original purpose.

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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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 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
 All Aboard Washington: AllAboardWashington.org
 NARP: www.narprail.org
 NARP Hotline: www.narprail.org/news/hotline
 Amtrak: www.amtrak.com
 Amtrak Cascades: www.amtrakcascades.com
 Sound Transit: www.soundtransit.org

Elliott, from page 1

120 cars) heavy (15,000 tons) trains increase maintenance. "Sloshing" of the oil can create asymmetrical forces, adding to track wear and tear. Distributed Power issues (for example, signal loss) can also create train handling problems. Lac Megantic, Casselton and other derailments point to a need for stronger regulatory oversight. Train line-up issues play a role in exacerbating crew fatigue that leads to safety concerns. Finally, improved tank car design (CPC-1232 is the newest standard) will help improve safety.

He noted that the National Transportation Safety Board is calling for more route planning for oil trains and more security. He said the state has hired more inspectors to supervise oil train loading. But there is probably no way to keep oil trains away from all population centers.

Other issues of concern to WSLB are adequate rail capacity and maintaining a balance of cargo commodities. Washington State is the most trade dependent state in the country and discretionary cargo helps to drive and sustain job and business opportunities. With energy trains poised to consume a significant share of rail capacity for the foreseeable future, the need for a regulatory solution to ensure balance seems imminent.

Elliott thanked the group for inviting him. AAWA members were pleased by his presentation and the discussion it fostered; his affirmative, cooperative views concerning all in the rail industry; his positive outlook on both freight and passenger rail's future; and his willingness to work with independent rail advocates such as our organization.

Cusick, from page 3

since the whole waterfront area in Edmonds is built on a marsh, we'll be ready for the next century!
 I'll Have To Drive Your Bus
 What is the cost of Bus Rapid Transit

(BRT)?

It's not ZERO dollars to make a bus lane, or any lane for that matter on an existing roadway .

WSDOT's estimate to get a low cost way to add a northbound lane to I-5 by re-striping the Seneca lane off ramp so that it is no longer an exit-only lane is still a \$23 million project.

So why don't BRT proponents ever argue that their preferred option is better **based on cost**?

As you know, on the eastside, it was already shown that the Freeway BRT was actually more expensive than commuter rail on the Eastside Rail Corridor.

Why should I do BRT proponents legwork for them?

For the same reason I want the mainstream media and our elected officials to lay out the actual costs of road capacity projects.

I took the Sound Transit analysis for the SR 522 corridor and isolated the BRT cost, since it is a straightforward bus lane addition without a lot of topographical challenges.

The scope of the project is from NE 145th (SR 523), all the way to the UW/Cascadia Bothell campus.

Their cost estimate is between \$91 million and \$125 million. This is for a 6.5 mile length. However, some of this area has already been upgraded with bus lanes.

For the sake of argument, even though it should be more, we could take a happy medium of \$15 million per mile to install a BRT setup on an arterial roadway.

SR 522 is at grade. LRT is always presented as exclusive right-of-way, elevated.

If you want the BRT equivalent, then you're spending up to \$40 million per lane, per mile, according to WSDOT.

Using this in the discussion of ST3 extending light rail to West Seattle, where

the bridge complicates matters, then what do you do?

Using the monorail map, I calculated the same as a BRT system, using \$15 million for the at-grade section from the Delridge area to downtown, and decided that only one lane needed to be added to the West Seattle bridge, and we could restripe for the other bus lane. That's roughly \$75 million/mile for the 2 mile length for a total of \$150 million.

Add in the balance of 4 miles at \$15 million = \$60 million.

So a back of the napkin estimate of \$200 million would do it.

How would that compare to light rail in the same corridor, for the same length?

Good question, since Sound Transit's LRT analysis included the full length from Seattle, via West Seattle, White Center, Burien then turning east thru Tukwila and on to Renton.

Their estimate for that whole project is \$4 billion to \$ 6 billion for light rail.

For that same alignment in BRT, \$2 billion to \$4 billion.

One thing to note from the analysis, is that BRT capacity is half that of LRT.

Why build LRT then?

It's called 'Investment.'

The same reason the morning Amtrak Cascades train from Eugene (Train 500) should continue past Seattle on up to Vancouver, BC, and conversely the morning train from Vancouver, BC (train 513) should continue on to Eugene.

Bolt Bus has impacted Cascades ridership in the north. Why? It's a through bus. One bus nonstop from Vancouver, BC all the way to Seattle.

For the time frame it needs to operate in, the Cascades Thruway Bus must stop and turn around in Bellingham.

The ridership potential for a mid-day train is probably even higher than the second roundtrip over the border was.

Passenger Rail service is successful, if you invest in it.

All Aboard Washington
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Seattle, WA 98127

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All Aboard News

September 13: All Aboard Washington meeting from **noon-3 p.m.** at **Russillo's Pizza and Gelato**, 32 N Front St, **Yakima**. Russillo's is located in the former Northern Pacific Railway station. Local legislators are invited guests and speakers. We will use our annual east of the Cascades meeting to continue promoted east-west daytime passenger train service. We are working on chartering the Yakima Trolley following the meeting. We'll collect the fare for the trolley on site.

October 11: All Aboard Washington meeting from **10:15 a.m.-12:45 p.m.** at **Kelso Train Station meeting room** (lower level). Use trains 501 from the north and 500 from the south to Kelso, and trains 506 to return north and 513 to return south. Bring your lunch or eat on the train. Alternately, take a later train home and enjoy lunch at one of the several restaurants within 4 blocks of the station. We invite our Oregon rail advocate counterparts to the meeting as the topics will cover rail issues of mutual importance.

All Aboard Washington recently welcomed the following new members: **Harry and Cynthia Fay**, Bellevue.

All Aboard Washington members contributing to this newsletter include Barry Green, Zack Willhoite, Bob Lawrence, Warren Yee, Rocky Shay, Mark Meyer, Lloyd Flem, and Jim Cusick.

Our silent auction will return to the November meeting this year, which will again be in Centralia on the 8th. We are looking for quality items or services to put in the silent auction. Please contact Lloyd Flem or Jim Hamre (contact information, p. 5) if you have an item or service to donate. Please help us out. This year we will be able to accept credit cards for payment of the auction purchases.

The National Park Service and Amtrak team up to provide volunteer on-board guides on various segments of many Amtrak trains. The program is called Trails & Rails. According to the NPS, the volunteers interpret local natural resource, heritage-based history

and issues along a route for the passengers. Local opportunities from Seattle include the *Empire Builder* to Shelby and the *Coast Starlight* to Portland. Volun-

teers interested in these two segments can contact the Klondike Gold Rush National Historic Park in Seattle at www.nps.com/klse or call Spirit Trickey at 206 220-4240. A number of AAWA members have participated in this program as volunteers and have thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

