

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

Strong support for National Network long distance trains at Whitefish passenger rail conference

Amtrak's National Network Trains – Tying Our Country's Passenger Rail System Together

The above statement was the theme for our passenger rail advocates conference on a snowy March 17th St. Patrick's Day at The Lodge at Whitefish Lake in Whitefish, MT. Over 70 people were in attendance; the majority of attendees arrived via the *Empire Builder*.

Our first speaker was Doug McBroom, Chief of Multimodal Planning, Montana DOT. He discussed the 2010 update to the state rail plan, and the three studies done in recent years that analyzed the return of passenger rail service to the southern route through Montana (Billings-Helena-Missoula).

McBroom also discussed the importance of the *Empire Builder* to Montana and its citizens. He outlined the reduced costs of transportation, highway maintenance, accidents and pollution, as well as spending in Montana by tourists and Amtrak. The carrier employs 142 Montana residents. Over 40% of Montana *Builder* passengers board or detrain in Whitefish, many to take advantage of nearby attractions such as Glacier National Park and Whitefish Mountain Ski Resort.

"The economic benefits of Amtrak for a state like Montana are just huge," said McBroom.

View McBroom's presentation at www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/railplan/ by clicking on the Presentations link.

Next up was Joe McHugh, Amtrak Vice President of Government Affairs and Corporate Communications.



Joe McHugh

McHugh first noted that Amtrak had once again set a record for ridership in 2011, with nearly 30.2 million passengers carried. This is Amtrak's eighth record ridership in the last nine years. Amtrak's revenue to cost ratio last year was 85% and is still improving. This is higher than any other passenger rail system in the world. Revenue is up 42% since 2003. Debt has been reduced from a high of \$4 bill. to \$1.7 bill.

While most Amtrak passengers live in more densely populated areas, trains like the *Empire Builder* that serve rural America are a crucial part of our national rail system. Amtrak is committed to staying on its route through Devils Lake and Grand Forks, ND. It has partnered with BNSF and the state to fund the raising of the tracks and bridges along the ever-rising Devil Lake.

The first phase of the new Seattle maintenance base has finally opened. This \$41 mill. project replaced very outdated facilities.

Amtrak has started introducing electronic ticketing. The conductors will use an I-phone with a scanner device to read boarding passes. (See **Conference**, page 4)

Russians discover Маркетинг

By Robert Rynerson

In 2010, circumstances and curiosity led Colorado Rail Passenger Assoc. newsletter editor Robert Rynerson to make two lengthy rail journeys. On a family-and-friends trip to the Pacific Northwest, he rode 4,645 rail miles. On a visit to the Siberian cultural and educational center of Tomsk, he rode 4,475 miles. This material is drawn from his May 2011 presentation to the ColoRail General Meeting in Denver.

I didn't set out to draw comparisons between Amtrak and the Russian Railways passenger service. That idea was raised by a February 2011 blast by U.S. Rep. John Mica (R-Florida), who compared Amtrak to the Soviet Railways. In fact, there are some interesting comparisons that can be made that get away from the difficult European vs. North American comparisons.

To start with, both countries operate on a distance scale that is otherwise rare outside of North America. And both countries have the heritage of... *The Milwaukee Road*. The Soviet Union's railways were originally electrified following the model of the revolutionary Northwest U.S. railway's 3000V DC pattern, with simple feeder lines on wooden poles.

The Russian intercity transportation market is in some ways – air travel excluded – the equivalent of the US 1930s outside of a few major corridors. Paved highways reach between most major cities now, but driving is a long, tedious chore.

The newly entrepreneurial Russian Railways has responded with a series of improvements. Private operators are also being franchised. The Russian word in the headline is "Marketing." One result is the all-sleeper train that I rode, the *Tomich*, scheduled at attractive times for mid-route cities.

On both Amtrak and Russian Railways, I was able to buy my tickets in advance via the Internet. I might have (See **Russians**, page 5)



Conference attendees enjoy their buffet luncheon and the music provided by the Whitefish High School Jazz Band. Photo by Jim Hamre



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

“That will never change.” Oh yes it will!; Recognitions

The past 60 years have seen significant social changes within our country. Women and racial minorities have far more economic and political opportunities than in the early 50s, the elderly and physically handicapped now have public access to a degree greater than even in much of western Europe, and air and water are generally less polluted than in mid-20th Century. Other changes may be seen as less desirable, but this column, designed to be generally upbeat, won't list them here.

But three other changes this observer sees as good have occurred in recent decades despite influential voices having once dogmatically declared, “That will never change.” The first is public smoking. A half century ago we were assaulted by cigarette smoke virtually everywhere, from faculty lunchrooms, to legislative hearing rooms, to most public transportation modes, to restaurants, to even physicians offices and hospitals! Hollywood glamorized smoking, the tobacco industry told us it was an “adult social custom” that exemplified freedom, and smoking everywhere “would never change.” But great positive change has occurred. At the University of Washington, as an example, smoking in the classrooms was allowed in 1960. By the 1990s open-air Husky Stadium was totally smoke-free.

As an early exponent of the “regional food supply” movement (I was founding president of the Washington State Farmers Market Association in 1977), I and allies were met with skepticism, even ridicule, by those who insisted, “Nobody except a few hippies cares where or how food is raised as long as it's plentiful and relatively cheap. That will never change.” Now Washington state has well over a hundred farmers markets, people contract directly with local farmers to raise fresh produce, the better restaurants increasingly emphasize local sources, and even once-scoffing supermarkets have large sections of regional/organic foods. Farmland is saved, farming is preserved, and most importantly, family farmers are

able to practice their noble profession. Real change has happened.

To the third affirmative change: the dominance of road and air passenger transportation, significantly a result of government policies and subsidies at local, state and federal levels, and the decrease in passenger rail at all levels continued after WWII, probably reaching the bottom in the 1970s. (King Street Station is said to have had the fewest trains in 1983 as a result of Amtrak slashing many trains to less-than-daily service.) Advocates of modally-balanced transportation – we were and still are patronizingly known as “rail buffs” – were generally dismissed, because “Americans love their cars and that will never change.” I argue that Americans don't “love” their private motor vehicles any more than other peoples; we are simply more habituated to them than western Europeans and east Asians.

Like smoke-free public places and the availability of fresh, locally-grown food, the renaissance of passenger rail is occurring, in contradiction to those who smugly proclaimed, “That will never change.”

But as the many economic, safety, environmental, and social reasons for passenger rail, from streetcar to Superliner, are again being realized in the US, the still-small, but growing transportation market share for passenger trains has outpaced the available supply of passenger seats on many of our intercity trains. In mid-week and mid-March, traditionally low points of intercity train ridership, our Amtrak Cascades, as well as the *Coast Starlight* and *Empire Builder* are essentially sell outs. Costly gasoline – by American standards – and the no-fun reality of driving I-5 compared with our trains, is pushing demand for the rail mode.

The downward spiral of passenger rail patronage in the US in the generation following WWII has surely reversed. Like smoke-free public places and the availability of fresh, locally-grown food, the renaissance of passenger rail is occurring, in contradiction to those who smugly proclaimed, “That will never change.” Let's all help speed up the change.



The tedious but interesting job of my going through boxes of written material on passenger rail advocacy from the over quarter century I have been actively involved yields some valuable material, some stuff I had written but also from others. Here I'd like to single out some work by three

people who contributed good ideas or strong public positions supporting the missions of WashARP/AAWA.

Mr. Jim Neal, formerly of Ephrata, now a King County resident, almost alone organized business and community leaders from Central and Eastern Washington to lobby their state legislators to fund a study of returning daytime passenger train service from the Puget Sound area to and through the Dryside of our state. While this study did not directly result in the addition of more passenger rail service east of the Cascades, it and subsequent efforts by Mr. Neal have helped to maintain interest, on both sides of the Cascades, in bringing more rail service to Central and Eastern Washington. AAWA's June 9 meeting, to be held in Ellensburg, will directly address that topic.

Dr. Hal Cooper, PhD, has written some excellent, forward-looking papers dealing with the development of passenger rail in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. Dr.

Cooper published a well-researched paper on the many advantages of investing in more passenger rail between Seattle and Portland rather than adding Sea-Tac runways mainly to serve inefficient short-hop flights substantially between Sea-Tac and Portland. This paper's reasonable position brought, what were in my judgment, almost panicky responses by those pushing a third, even fourth Sea-Tac runway. Hal's work on this and other issues has helped open eyes to possibilities for rail services even other rail advocates might not consider.

Mr. Chuck Mott, a former president and chairman of WashARP/AAWA proved very valuable as a key member of Gov. Gary Locke's Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation. In my view, the Commission was heavily loaded with highways-only people. But Mr. Mott's extensive knowledge of road as well as passenger and freight rail transportation, his well-defined positions on modal balance, and his civil but assertive advocacy for those positions emboldened not only a few allies on the BRCT, but actually made a couple of converts. The conclusions drawn by the BRCT, which had significant influence on transportation policy direction of the Locke Administration and the Legislature at that time, would certainly not have included a growing role for rail without Chuck's dedicated efforts.

Finally, recognition to those who organized and managed the recent NARP meeting in Whitefish, MT. From the quality and messages of the guest speakers, to the smooth flow of the meeting itself, to the excellence of accommodations at The Lodge at Whitefish Lake, the March 17 meeting, where rail advocates from WA, OR, ID and MT met, was an unqualified success.



WITH JIM CUSICK

How to be constructive

As you've already read, the Trail and Rail supporters showed up at the Kirkland City Council chambers to share our positive suggestions on how to correctly proceed with development of the BNSF Eastside rail corridor. (tinyurl.com/EastsideRail)

There was one "trail" person who spoke favorably of having a trail in the corridor. Theirs was a positive comment on the future trail, with no mention of rail, either in a positive or negative sense. I had feared that some of the comments were going to be anti-rail, since I had been perusing the Eastside Trail Advocates website – www.eastsidetrailadvocates.org – and was somewhat disappointed in the two video links.

Be that as it may, we are advocates for both uses.

AAWA Pres. Loren Herrigstad did an excellent job of presenting how trail construction can be enhanced by utilizing the rail line, and showing the passenger rail service possible now on the corridor as an intermediate step to Sound Transit's fully built out plans.

I was there to set the record straight.

I have found out in the past that people will relate the process and conclusion incorrectly, and I have even called radio talk shows to correct the misinformation.

By this, I mean to ensure everyone knows what happened with planning on this rail line.

To do that one needs to see it laid out in chronological order.

BNSF had used the Woodinville Subdivision to deliver to local businesses, and to deliver windmill parts to eastern Washington, as this line could handle the clearances needed for them.

They also used it when they delivered 737 fuselages to the Renton Boeing plant by coming down from Snohomish all the way through Maltby, Woodinville, Kirkland, Bellevue, and yes, over the Wilburton trestle.

The southern end, which branched off the mainline at Black River Junction in Tukwila, did not have the necessary clearances. In particular, it was the truss bridge just east of where the rail line left Houser Street.

Once BNSF re-engineered the line between Black River Junction and the Boeing plant in 2008, raising the roadbed, creating greater road crossing clearances, and re-

moving that bridge, they were able to deliver the fuselages via the mainline along the Sound through Seattle and come into the plant from the south.

What was part of my testimony at this meeting was the following:

During the I-405 Corridor Program analysis in 1999-2001, the alternatives studied included various combinations of light rail, bus rapid transit (BRT) and additional general purpose lanes.

At that time BNSF was not planning to sell this right-of-way, but the staff was requested to expand on the April 1992 Regional Transit Project Eastside Commuter Rail Feasibility Study.

They were able to show an increase in ridership over that original study. However, during the process any municipality had veto power over any proposal they didn't agree with. The City of Renton and the Kenndale Neighborhood Association sent letters to the I-405 Corridor Program requesting that this option not be studied.

What went forward was the \$4.5 billion light rail option, along with the \$960 million BRT option.

Sound Transit and the Puget Sound Regional Council finished their study of the BNSF rail corridor in 2008, well after completion of the EIS for the I-405 Corridor Program, with a price tag at the high end of \$1.3 billion. This actually compares favorably with the BRT option in ridership and, most importantly, its ability to intercept commuters from distances outside the immediate I-405 corridor. Traffic is already entering I-405 via SR 522, SR 9 and SR 527.

The problem is, the BRT option and the Woodinville Subdivision Commuter Rail option were never studied side by side.

The removal of the rails in order to daylight the Wilburton Tunnel to expand I-405 only saved WSDOT \$30 million. This is a minor amount compared to the overall project cost of \$4.5 billion for 4 additional general purpose lanes. WSDOT should be responsible for replacing that rail overpass.

If Kirkland's plans are only to put a gravel path over the rails, leaving them intact, then they have the flexibility of just having to dig them out when the rails are activated again for freight or other uses.

Which we hope happens sooner than later.

Constructing Link

I know politics probably have a lot to do with Sound Transit's decision to run North Link down the I-5 corridor.

Imagine what the region would look like if each of the neighborhoods and municipalities actually worked in a cooperative manner?

We'd not only have transportation that would be the envy of the west, we could do it so that it would be the most desirable place to live.

Given that Sound Transit is moving for-

ward with this pig of a route, I'll be there to help them get the lipstick on as best as we can.

So here we go...

Most important, don't bother with a NE 145th St. station, there is no logical development potential. Heck, there isn't much development potential around the freeway anyway, so at station areas, they should diverge from the I-5 corridor as much as economically feasible to increase the walkshed.

I've seen suggestions for NE 130th St., which seems almost too close to the Northgate station.

However, building stations that close is not without precedence.

Take a look at the station on Metro-North Commuter Rail's Harlem division stations of Tuckahoe and Crestwood (Eastchester). They are just about a mile apart, with almost the same type of residential, business and population density.

Talk is also of having a NE 155th St. station, but if I were the Sound Transit Czar, I'd defer anything in the NE 145th/NE 155th area.

As far as a NE 185th St. station goes, if Shoreline wants access to the station, then they can build a Bothell Canyon Park style overpass, or something grander.

More importantly, to save money, don't have the line cross the freeway there just to get closer to Shoreline. Keep it on the east side until the approach to the Mountlake Terrace Park & Ride, crossing over into the median.

After that, crossing over the southbound lanes to enter the Lynnwood area would work nicely, and then the only issue becomes, where does Lynnwood want to site its station?

I would think at least one end of the station should be accessible from the Lynnwood Transit Center. They could probably have the station straddle 44th Ave, and create a Transit Oriented Development environment in the area on the other side from the Transit Center.

This would be a very long walk to the Lynnwood Convention Center, but not impossible.

Real Men Pump Concrete

While I'm solving problems everywhere else, I might as well try my hand at civil engineering!

Just give me enough concrete and I'll have things running smoothly in no time.

Okay, so maybe I should leave the detailed engineering to the professionals and just work on the political side.

The next problem is one close to me. Literally.

It involves the mudslides that disrupt Amtrak and Sounder service between Seattle and Everett.

One of the complaints about spending money on this necessary repair is that people either say "They should sue the uphill landowner for all the damages, and →

make them stabilize the hill!" or "Why should we give our hardearned taxpayer-dollars to benefit BNSF, a private company?"

Well, we aren't ... suing landowners or benefitting BNSF.

When a mudslide occurs, BNSF can have it cleaned up in hours, and they resume freight operations. It doesn't really affect them much.

The issue is putting passengers in possible danger by having them on the train going past the slide area too soon after a mudslide occurs (BNSF's 48-hour rule).

There are certain ideas that have been pursued to deal with the liability issues, but I'm talking about concrete plans.

And I mean **real concrete**, too.

And do I have the plans...

Observe Exhibits A and B ... or B and A, as it were.

Four of the items are common to the **Before** and **After** diagrams.

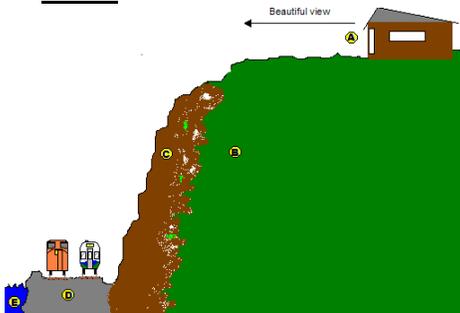
A – The Expensive home on the bluff, with the Million Dollar view

B – Stable hillside said expensive home (A) is built on

D – The railroad tracks

E – Puget Sound

Before



The current problem is Item C – the unstable hillside. Note the lawyers imbedded in the glacial till.

If a government entity fixes this, who benefits?

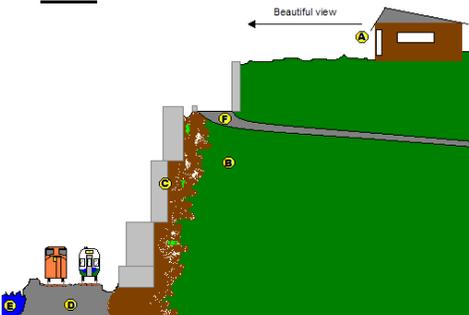
It appears the owner of Item A, the home with the Million Dollar view.

Should we make them invest the millions of dollars to stop the mudslides?

Keep suing them until they've paid millions of dollars?

Maybe the trade off would be, in addition to reliability given to the over 2000 daily riders of Sounder and Amtrak, we could give an added benefit to the public.

After



Note the addition of Item F.
Item C is the now a stable hillside.
Looks like a lot of concrete, doesn't it?
Who would put that much concrete in to hold back a hillside?

Turns out, our own Washington State Dept. of Transportation.



At the intersection of SR 522 and

96th Ave NE, at the western end of Bothell, in order to straighten out the dangerous "Wayne Curve," WSDOT reworked the intersection and cut into the hillside.

The hillside was stabilized and in a nod to nature, the concrete was textured like stone.

If you want something that



shows the power of man versus nature, use the same method DOT did for the Campus Way entrance to the Bothell UW/Cascadia College campus from SR 522.

Now back to Item F.

If we preserve the hillside with public money, then the public should enjoy it as much as the owner of the property with the view.

All affected lands could be given over to the state or county, and hillside stabilization would become their responsibility.

The benefit to the taxpaying public would be access, via a roadway or maybe a pathway of some sort.

We could even make it a bike trail!

Connect all the said problem areas, and we'd have a real Mutha of all bike trails!!

However, if we made it a roadway, we could use gas tax monies...

Food for thought.

By lowering the pathway/roadway, we could keep from offending the sensibilities of the homeowners, so their view is not spoiled by having common folk in the way.

As for the safety of the rail line below, safe from the public on the path that is, we can build in the "primate proof" moat between the path and the wall.

Things work pretty slick when all parties involved cooperate.

If you've had opportunity recently to take the Edmonds-Kingston Ferry, you'll notice how smooth the Main Street railroad crossing is. This entailed new track, new subgrade for the track, new crossing panels for the auto traffic, and lots of cooperative effort between the three entities.

After preparatory work adjacent to the tracks was completed, BNSF, the State Ferry system and the City of Edmonds

worked out the logistics and the crossing itself was replaced.

In one night.

Conference, from page 1

Rollout has started and Amtrak plans to have e-ticketing fully implemented by the end of summer.

McHugh wrapped up his presentation by saying, "Never let any Amtrak CEO or Vice President get out of the room alive if he advocates cutting the long distance train network."

Joe Szabo, our keynote speaker, is the Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration.



Joe Szabo

The FRA has a never-ending commitment to preserve and grow intercity passenger rail in our country. He was pleased to visit Washington, Oregon and Montana. He had reviewed projects in the Northwest Corridor

between Seattle and Portland. This was the first time he had ridden the *Cascades* and the *Empire Builder*. Szabo stated, "Lines like the *Empire Builder* are cultural gems, but for rural communities trains like this are people's connection to other communities and the rest of the world."

Szabo noted that it's not just Amtrak experiencing record growth. Last year local transit and commuter rail had their second highest ridership since the 1950s. With 100 million more people in the next 25 years, and increased airport delays and highway congestion, Americans deserves travel choices. President Obama's goal to connect 80% of America with a high performance interconnected passenger rail system is achievable. Lay a high and higher speed network built in the eight mega-regions over the top of the national network and you actually reach 85% of the people.

The US started construction of the transcontinental railroad during the bloodiest war in our history. We built the Interstate highway system during boom and bust over 10 presidencies and 28 Congresses. Projects like these are the reason our economy works today.

"No economy can grow faster than its transportation network can carry it," stated Szabo. We must continue to build a transportation infrastructure for tomorrow that creates well paying jobs, just as espoused by President Reagan in the 80s.

Szabo said that you don't always need a 220 mph rail system to provide a vastly improved service. He cited the *Cascades* as example of where a higher performance system, such as WSDOT and ODOT and their partners are working to build will meet the needs of people for years to come. Amtrak, with five Seattle-Portland round-trips a day, already has 25% of the air-rail market even though there are about 30 →

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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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 Amtrak Cascades: www.amtrakcascades.com
 Sound Transit: www.soundtransit.org

flights a day each way.

Responding to a question on how to get through to Congress, Szabo replied that citizens, mayors, governors and other local officials are far ahead of Congress on the passenger rail issue. We must keep strengthening the local ability to build these projects, while continuing to push and advocate. Congress will eventually follow the rest of us.

After lunch, we had an update from Antonio Perez on the construction of the new trainsets for Oregon and Wisconsin. Then representatives of Montana's Sens. Jon Tester and Max Baucus and Rep. Denny Rehberg reiterated their bosses' support for Amtrak and the *Empire Builder*.

NARP Chairman Bob Stewart provided an overview of NARP's goals and the organization. Current goals are:

- Improve and expand national conventional intercity passenger train service
- Support startup of one high speed rail line
- Increase connectivity among all forms of transportation to create an integrated and seamless system

NARP opposes any reduction in services on the national system. The organization supports performance improvement programs for each train, increase frequencies and capacity, more equipment for the national network and restoration of New Orleans-Florida service.

We then had a panel discussion on what passenger rail organizations and our members can do to promote, support and improve the national network trains. Moderator was Art Poole, NARP Vice Chairman; panelists were Bob Stewart; Donald Leap, NARP Council Member from Oregon; Barry Green, NARP Council Member from Montana; and AAWA Executive Director Lloyd Flem.

A big thank you to our corporate meeting sponsors:

- Talgo, Inc.
- The Historic Belton Chalet, West Glacier, MT

(See **Sponsors**, page 6)

Russians, from page 1

saved money on the Russian ticket by purchasing it there, but like Amtrak in the summer here, trains often are sold out. In the table below, I smoothed out details of my Amtrak trip to make it more comparable by using sleeper fares and eliminating my side trips.

To pick up my ticket in the U.S. I needed to show my driver's license. In Russia, I needed to show my tourist visa. One difference is that in Russia I also had to show my visa whenever I showed my ticket.

In both countries, it was miserably hot, with the risk of disruption by forest fires. Both trips took me through major cities and vast open spaces. In both countries, there were delays for summer track work, and in both countries padded schedules aided in recovering lost time. The difference was that the Russians got the time back and customers did not spend their trip on their cell phones giving status reports to friends or relatives.

However, cell phone and other battery charging was a big preoccupation. Rebuilt Amtrak cars had more outlets than the 2009 Russian sleeper that was typical equipment on my train. Original "tear down that Wall, Mr. Gorbachev" Reagan-era Amtrak cars on several trains that I rode in 2010 were short on outlets.

The train that I rode was a peak season train that supplements Siberian Division Trains 1 & 2, the trains we call the *Trans-Siberian*. It can make better use of equipment than Amtrak does, because it runs so closely to schedule. The Tomsk-Moscow-Tomsk run takes five sets of equipment for a daily operation, while the *California*



The *Tomich* prepares to depart Tomsk for Rynerson's return trip to Moscow.

Photo by Bob Rynerson

Zephyr takes six.

One lesson learned in Amtrak *Pioneer* days was that the Seattle on-board service crews were better than the Chicago crews. The *Tomich* crews come from Tomsk and turn in Moscow. A job on this train is a good job in pleasant Tomsk; it would be a so-so job in costly Moscow. Russian on-board crews were helpful and kept the trains cleaner.

Most importantly, they feel that they have a future. Rail lines are being upgraded and rolling stock capable of 100 mph speeds is the new standard for long distance trains. Service to suburbs is being regionalized.

North Americans are still the champion heavy freight haulers, but Russian Railways is making strides in that field. Freight by-passes are in the design and construction process for several major passenger corridors, which will smooth out both services. And, kilometer by kilometer, lines extend ever further toward Siberian resources, eventually to cross the Bering Strait.

(Bob Rynerson is the Senior Service Planner/Scheduler for Denver's Regional Transit District. Bob has previously worked at Oregon DOT, where he was recognized for his work in helping start Amtrak's *Pioneer* route and was involved in Portland's first light rail study. He also worked at Edmonton (Alberta) Transit where he was involved in the startup of the first North American light rail transit line of the modern era. Bob is a founding member of the Oregon Assoc. of Railway Passengers, predecessor organization to AORTA.)

A tale of two railways

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amtrak - Denver - Sacramento - Sacramento - Seattle - Seattle - Bellingham - Bellingham - Portland - Portland - Oakland - Oakland - Emeryville - Emeryville - Denver - With a day in S.F. • 4645 rail miles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russian Railways - Flew Berlin to Moscow. - Train Moscow to Tomsk - Train Tomsk to Moscow - One night in Moscow - Flew Moscow to Berlin. • 4475 rail miles |
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All Aboard News

April 14: All Aboard Washington business meeting from **noon-4 p.m.** at **Basil's Kitchen**, Embassy Suites Hotel, 15920 W. Valley Hwy, **Tukwila**, adjacent to the Amtrak Station. Our guest speaker will be **Rep. Judy Clibborn** (D-Mercer Island), chairwoman of the state House Transportation Committee. Rep. Clibborn is a strong supporter of modally-balanced transportation, including both intercity rail and Sound Transit. Her presentation will deal with, among other items, transportation issues addressed by the 2012 Legislature. AAWA is very pleased Rep. Clibborn will remain for much of the meeting so that attendees will have an opportunity to informally discuss transportation issues with her. Please **RSVP to Harvey Bowen**, if you can (contact info p. 5). Put "April 14 RSVP" in Subject or Body of your email.

May 12: National Train Day. Events in Washington State (that we are aware of at press time) will be held at **Centennial Station** in Lacey/Olympia, **Centralia Station** and **Kelso Station**. We are looking for volunteers to participate in NTD events. Contact Lloyd Flem. See the AAWA website, Facebook page or Twit-

ter feed, or visit www.nationaltrainday.com for up-to-date information.

June 9: All Aboard Washington membership meeting in **Ellensburg** at approximately **noon**. Location information will be available on the AAWA website, Facebook page or Twitter feed, or in the next newsletter. Our guest speaker will be **Rep. Mike Armstrong** (R-Wenatchee), ranking minority member of the state House Transportation Committee. One topic of discussion will be the need for daytime passenger rail service to central and Eastern Washington from Seattle.

All Aboard Washington welcomed the following new members in February and March: Clark Frazier, Redmond; Abe Zumwalt, Tacoma; Carson Tavener, Arlington; Steven Brown, Washougal; and Bill Becht, Blaine.

All Aboard Washington members contributing to this newsletter include Barry Green, Jeff Miller, Zack Willhoite, Jim Cusick, Warren Yee and Lloyd Flem.

Here is a website lets you search Amtrak itineraries over a range of dates and will show you what the coach, business, first class and sleeping car fares are for each train and date. If your travel plans are flexible you may be able to save yourself some

money: biketrain.netfirms.com/am snag/amSnag.php

Sponsors, from p. 5

- The Izaak Walton Inn, Essex, MT
- High Plains Motors, Wolf Point, MT
- Austin Funeral Home, Whitefish, MT

Also a thank you to the individuals who made extra contributions and to Barry Green and his planning committee for putting together a great meeting with excellent speakers and presentations.



Photo by Jim Hamre

Here is the new ticketing area at King St. Station. Amtrak opens this area in May as restoration of the waiting room begins. More details in the next newsletter.