



WASHINGTON RAIL NEWS

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2010

www.AllAboardWashington.org

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

Canadian Border Services Agency seems intent on driving away tourists & their dollars

In a move that surprised everyone, the Canadian Border Services Agency, on September 17, announced the trial period was over and that it would impose a \$1500 per day fee to service Amtrak Cascades train 516 upon its 10:50 p.m. arrival in Vancouver, BC. The service began operating in August 2009 without the fee and CBSA said they would consider waiving the fee for this "new facility" if ridership was strong enough. Ridership has exceeded projections and continues to grow each month. Over 70 passengers arrive in Vancouver on train 516 every evening.

CBSA operates 24 hours a day 7 day a week at Vancouver International Airport and at three of the four road crossings of the 49th parallel in Western Washington but it apparently thinks providing equal service to rail passengers needs to be paid for by someone else. Immigration control and customs are the responsibility of a national government and should be funded by said government. Since CBSA feels differently, the **ALL** people entering Canadian by land, sea or air should be required to pay an entry fee.

"British Columbia and Washington are so disappointed by this news," said Washington Transportation Secretary Paula Hammond. "The economic benefits for Vancouver and Washington are clear as travelers shop, eat and stay in local hotels. The second train has brought an estimated \$11.8 million in economic benefits to British Columbia during the year it has been allowed to operate. Does it really make sense for \$550,000 in annual border inspection fees to be the reason the service ends?"

"We proved that the ridership demand was there, during the Olympics and after," Hammond said. "We have no money to cover this added cost and we will not ask Washington travelers to

pay more for their tickets, when customers traveling into Washington don't have to pay a U.S. customs fee."

"I am extremely disappointed that Canada has taken this counterproductive and harmful action against Washington state passengers," said U.S. Sen. Patty Murray (D). "This new fee will hurt our state and it will reduce cross-border economic activity that helps both countries. I urge Canada to reconsider this decision."

U.S. Rep. Rick Larsen (D-Lake Stevens) said the second Amtrak Cascades train offers a clear economic benefit on both sides of the border. "I urge the Canadian government to work with Washington so this service can continue to help enhance cross-border travel for people traveling and commuting in this region."

"I am very disappointed to hear about this lack of commitment from the Canadian federal government," said State Sen. Mary Margaret Haugen (D-Camano Island), chair of the Senate Transportation Committee. "Washington has made investing in passenger rail service a top priority, but we need support from our neighbors to continue this valuable transportation option that connects our two countries. We will be reaching out to our congressional delegation urging their support in resolving this issue between the U.S. and Canadian governments."

"The second train service to Vancouver is an important transportation resource and I am saddened that the Canadian government has decided to impose this added fee," said State Rep. Judy Clibborn (D-Mercer Island), chair of the House Transportation Committee. "Washington has sponsored Amtrak Cascades for over 15 years and it's time our neighbors helped support this service that brings in tourism and (See **CBSA**, page 5)

Why Blaine, Why Now?

By Michael Skehan, Director

In 1909, with much pomp and ceremony, the city of Blaine welcomed the Great Northern Railroad's passenger trains to the newly built Blaine Station. In addition to station agents, it housed US Customs, welcoming new faces to the United States.

An era gone by, or just one prematurely abandoned? I won't preach to the choir here, except to say, it may have just been a pause in the evolution of good transport practices. We all know how efficient and environmentally friendly rail transit can be when compared to a single person barreling down I-5 in their SUV.

Can the Blaine Station make a comeback? If Bill Becht, owner of Horseshoe Coins, and his newly formed Citizens for Blaine Station Preservation group have



Today's sad looking Blaine rail station.

Photo by Mike Skehan

their way, it will be saved from near certain death by demolition or worse, a continuing slow decay over the years from neglect. Bill's vision is to save the historic landmark, restore its turn of the century charm through renovation, and repurpose it as a multi-modal transportation center and commercial leased space serving Blaine, population 5,000.

White Rock, Surrey and Langley on the Canadian side, with a combined population of nearly half a million, sit literally just across the border. Both sides see the benefits of an additional stop along the rail corridor, on either side, if thorny customs issues can be addressed. This is one of many issues the group will be focused on.

Our good friends at WSDOT, Whatcom Council of Governments and the Cascadia Center have secured funding to (See **Blaine**, page 5)



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

Second Train to BC?; Two Cheers for AAR

This writer has been sometimes accused as being "too soft" when addressing those people and ideas that are harmful to the cause of more and better passenger trains in the Pacific Northwest and throughout North America. While Praise and Push has been far more successful overall than Criticize and Confront in advancing our cause, elements of this column may be a bit more prickly than usual. So be it.

As reactions and, hopefully, positive actions on the penny-wise, pound-foolish decision of the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) to impose the \$1500 per train fee on the northbound "Second Train" to Vancouver, BC are developing rapidly, these comments

(written 9/25/10) may soon be old news. But the principles should retain validity.

Washington state taxpayers have paid the overwhelming majority of the capital costs in bringing two daily Amtrak Cascades frequencies to Vancouver. By comparison, little investment has come from north of the 49th. In addition, Cascades rail passengers to Vancouver, demographically mostly upper-middle-income Puget Sound residents, spend hundreds of Yankee dollars per person per day in what is certainly one of the most magnificent cities in North America. Washingtonians pay for and get a fine travel experience. The greater Vancouver business community, and in taxes and fees, regional, provincial and the Canadian federal governments, get well-compensated for the goods and services they provide.

To their credit, BC elected officials, the Vancouver business community, and BC media have strongly opposed the CBSA's decision. Hopefully, our Canadian neighbors, with our encouragement and assistance, can persuade Ottawa to reconsider this unfortunate decision. Also to their credit, ranking Washington state legislators, US Senator Patty Murray, US Rep. Rick Larsen and the WSDOT leadership are also working the issue. And we of the rail advocate community are helping where we can.

My bottom line is neither the State of

Washington, nor Amtrak, nor northbound rail passengers should pay the \$1500 per trip fee! Ideally, the CBSA will reconsider and permanently waive the fee's imposition. But if this Canadian federal bureaucracy refuses to do so, then the provincial or Vancouver regional governments, or, as a last resort, the Vancouver business community needs to pay Ottawa for the CBSA services. Nearly \$12 million has gone directly into the Vancouver economy in the year the Second Train has operated, again because of investments and payments Washingtonians have made. I would actively oppose our paying any more.

Equally galling is the apparent double standard in Canada. Road and air transportation, like most of the time in the

My bottom line is neither the State of Washington, nor Amtrak, nor northbound rail passengers should pay the \$1500 per trip fee! Ideally, the CBSA will reconsider and permanently waive the fee's imposition.

USA, are considered essential public services. Passenger train are uniquely supposed to "make a profit," or in this CBSA case, achieve full "cost recovery" with no apparent consideration of the direct economic, social, and environmental benefits train services and train passengers bring.

Canada has traditionally been voted the "world's nicest country" in international polls. I do not disagree. The land to our north is a great place full of genuinely nice people. I hope for their sake and ours, a decision is reached which allows we of their big neighbor to the south to continue enjoying the southwest corner of this great place by arriving on two or more train frequencies per day.



The Association of American Railroads (AAR), though it now has Amtrak and a short-line conglomerate as members, is overwhelmingly the public policy and political vehicle representing the interests of the seven Class One North American freight railroads. Like all major interest groups, the AAR takes positions they consider to be in their economic interests. Nothing wrong or surprising in that. But from even a usually friendly and allied observer like this writer, sometimes the pairing of AAR positions is...well, almost amusing. For example, the AAR is properly now touting the environmental advantages of rail. But, in the same breath, the AAR says, but don't dare re-

strict or discourage the use of coal, which of course is a major source of freight rail income! Some militant environmentalist want to phase out coal entirely. I do NOT agree, but coal must continue cleaning up what has been historically a dirty act, as it also continues to be an important rail-shipped commodity.

The AAR opposes federal government reregulation, saying the deregulation put in place by the 1980 Staggers Act has allowed American railroads to achieve a state of strength and profitability that is of great value to our country's well-being. I quite agree. But reregulation that has any chance of Congressional passage would not cause the sky to fall. And, there is still some occasional corporate arrogance and public bullying by the Class Ones of the kind that helped bring on the excessive railroad regulation early in the 20th century. Nonetheless, I believe it is in our country's interest and in the interest of passenger train advocates to ally with the AAR and oppose reregulation most of the time.

I also agree the unfunded mandate by the federal government to have the railroads install and pay for positive train control (PTC) systems wherever passengers or hazmat materials are hauled is unfair. The social advantages said to follow from PTC mean entities other than the freight railroads ought to pay at least a part of the costs of PTC.

I also feel the draft conditions proposed upon the Class Ones by the Federal Railroad Administration for using Federal ARRA monies (which include most of the \$590 million ARRA grants in our state) are too severe. While there have been capricious delays of Amtrak and commuter trains by some freight railroads in the past, and some "stick" as well as "carrot" is needed to help ensure that the freight railroads fulfill their on-time contacts with Amtrak and with states such as ours, significant modification of some of the FRA draft conditions are definitely needed. I understand BNSF's Matt Rose and USDOT Secretary Ray LaHood are directly involved in the modification process. The Class Ones have a legitimate case here.

I get daily news from AAR. Even two months ago, more articles stressing cooperation with passenger rail interests, exemplified by the "One Rail" organization, were common. But since the London-based ECONOMIST article in late July, which lacked identified author or (See **Flem**, page 4)



The View Down the Tracks

=====

with Jim Cusick

Spend no dime before its time

Does it ever end? Especially with the economy the way it is, the same refrain is played "Rail is too expensive and it doesn't have the payback."

Invariably, the person making that statement backs it up by showing us the first year ridership numbers for whatever rail system being discussed and relates that to the full cost of the system.

They ignore, of course, the low "ridership" of any rural highway.

Unfortunately, there are many transit supporters who are intimidated by these seemingly endless figures thrown at them and they capitulate on the argument from the cost/benefit standpoint.

This is played out again when rail detractors tout Bus Rapid Transit as the solution, and quote capacity figures showing that BRT will ultimately carry more than Light Rail in this region.

So, what I've done is step back to take on the argument that "No Dime Should be Spent Before Its Time" from exactly that point of view.

What if we only built infrastructure when we decided it was necessary based on two criteria, the ridership and what the users of that facility actually pay for the use of that infrastructure.

So I picked up my handy-dandy 2009 WSDOT Annual Traffic Report and looked at a typical rural, and somewhat local highway, In this case, US 2, the Stevens Pass Highway.

I began with the section "Annual Average Daily Traffic Volumes" and looked for a representative section, such as between Index and the Forest Service road just past Baring (FS6028). Over the years, the volumes average between five and six thousand vehicles a day.

For arguments sake we'll say it's 6000.

So how much do the drivers contribute? Well, since it is not a tolled facility, one would attribute the portion of the gas tax that gets burned on that stretch of road to that stretch of road.

How much do we say the road costs? If we calculate the cost at Interstate levels, it would be approximately \$16 million per mile. Instead I will use the average arterial costs we used in the I-405

analysis of \$4 million per mile per lane, or \$8 million per mile for that stretch of road.

If drivers are contributing to the highways, via the gas tax, at 2 cents per mile, then what do they contribute over the lifetime of a mile of that road?

Calculate: $0.02/\text{mile} \times 6000 \text{ vehicles per day} \times 365 \text{ days a year} \times 30 \text{ years}$ and that equals \$1,314,000, which is 15% of the \$8 million cost of the roadway.

Hmmm, argument over.

Maybe we shouldn't even bother paving a road into the rural areas since they have such low ridership and it appears the locals certainly can't pay for them, at least via the gas tax.

So do the users ever pay the full cost?

My next example was actually from the first project that involved me in my lo-

Calculate: 0.02/mile x 6000 vehicles per day x 365 days a year x 30 years and that equals \$1,314,000, which is 15% of the \$8 million cost of the roadway.

Hmmm, argument over.

cal government.

(The documentation for this is available in the same place anyone can find information about their own local projects, the Public Library.)

The road in question is 228th St SW between SR 527 at Canyon Park and Locust Way.

The Canyon Park area of Bothell is fairly busy, but if you're familiar with Locust Way, it begins at SR 522 in Kenmore as 61st Ave NE at the Jack in the Box and ends at the Taco Time as Larch Way on 164th St SW in the Martha Lake area. The Heartburn Highway.

A 2 lane winding country road to be exact.

In this case, the plans for 228th St SW were for 5 lanes (4 general purpose, 1 middle turn lane).

The road at 2 lanes was congested at what they were showing as 17,000 vehicles per day.

228th St SW goes over what old timers call Nike Hill. At the top is what used to be a Nike Missile Silo. It now is offices for FEMA and some other government entities. Also, the Kenmore Gun Range is on the west side of Nike Hill.

To the locals, it didn't seem to make sense to dump a 5 lane road onto the 2 lane Locust Way. Essentially, what happened was the locals objected, and it was scaled down to 3 lanes, 2 GP lanes on the uphill portions of each side of the "summit," and the appropriate turn lanes and traffic control at the intersections. In

effect, they added 1 lane to the road.

The cost? \$10 million.

For a moment, ignore what the numbers are really telling you. This is helpful when you try to defend roads-only solutions.

For 1 lane of arterial grade road, at a cost of \$4 million a mile, that lane would have to carry 17,000 vehicles per day, from the get-go, for 30 years, for you to consider it actually "paid for" by the users via the gas tax. (If you are analyzing the numbers, this is really a fanciful pro-road argument.)

As we get closer to the urban areas, if we use the cost of a lane of Interstate grade roadway, on average, as \$20 million per mile, then the users are paying approximately 30% of the cost. That's because an Interstate grade lane can

have greater throughput than an arterial.

Maybe if it could be built at-grade, not elevated, not buying any right-of-way, and got the cost of the freeway down to about the \$8 million a mile it is in rural areas, and it stayed as congested as we

see it on southbound I-5 between Northgate and Downtown, just maybe we could get closer to that payback that the arterial could theoretically have.

No Driver Left behind

So, let's fill up that road with cars. Then we can move on to transporting people by bus, if we want to get more throughput.

We could make sure that only arterials are built, to a higher standard than neighborhood roads, when the smaller roads got full, and then, only if the new lane performs at the levels above.

This train of thought is analogous to the idea that you should use buses until they are as full as can be, before you move to a rail system.

Where would we get those bus lanes?

We could follow the lead of FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff, in a speech "Next Stop: A National Summit on the Future of Transit" at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston in May 2010.

He makes this specific remark "Supporters of public transit must be willing to share some simple truths that folks don't want to hear. One is this -- Paint is cheap, rails systems are extremely expensive."

Really? Just get out that paint can and take away a few GP lanes? Hmmm, great idea.

I'd be tempted to jump on board with that idea, if he's "got the equipment" to (See **Cusick**, page 4)

Flem, from page 2

attribution, put forth the following: "America's system of rail freight is the world's best. High-speed passenger trains could ruin it," increasing numbers of articles which are only variations on that theme are published by the AAR and are also now found in the general press.

While some Class One execs may really feel that way, I believe this latest "The sky will fall!" rhetoric is at least in part a bargaining chip. Even BNSF, seen as traditionally the most cooperative Class One toward intercity passenger trains, will always start with an extreme position, hoping the other side won't be good at negotiating a balanced result. Higher (if not high) speed passenger trains on freight lines can work to both freight and passenger train benefit, if reasonable care is shown.

Union Pacific, traditionally more the Bad Cop in the Northwest to BNSF's relatively Good Cop, has execs joining the choir that higher speed passenger trains would so damage their freight business that much of it would revert to big long-haul trucks, a situation UP knows would be unpopular with most of the general public.

Now a little couple little secrets about UP: Their Northwest rep is now also a Good Cop. (Oops, hope he doesn't get in trouble for my writing this.) He properly supports UP corporate interests, but with a cordial smile. But even more compelling proof is that Thomas Mulligan, UP's recently retired Director-Passenger Operations, will receive the *Railway Age* 2010 W. Graham Claytor, Jr. Award for Distinguished Service to Passenger Transportation for his exemplary work in putting together the very successful Capitol Corridor passenger train service (Sacramento-Oakland-San Jose), in cooperation with Eugene Skoropowski. Those two gentlemen are proof that passenger trains and freight railroads can coexist with everyone winning.

And of course BNSF and WSDOT are a national model of the development of a passenger train corridor on a Class One main line. Early in September WSDOT Secretary Paula Hammond and BNSF CEO Matt Rose signed a Memorandum of Agreement to allow the construction of rail improvements using the ARRA grants our state will acquire. Many details need to be worked out, but the history of WSDOT and BNSF cooperating for mutual benefit calls into question the "sky will fall" rants one now hears from some in the AAR and also some anti-passenger rail ideologues in reference to the ARRA dollars for improved passenger train service in our country.

The point is, in northern California with UP and in our Northwest Corridor with BNSF, mutually beneficial results have come from smart negotiations between public passenger rail interests and private freight rail companies. Everyone wins and

the sky hasn't and won't fall.

In addition, the notion that public investments on freight rail infrastructure do not benefit freight operations is, shall we say, debatable. Improvements in signaling, grade separations, added sidings, etc., while designed to increase track capacity for passenger trains, do not suddenly disappear after passenger trains have passed! Freight operations have every right to insist that their primary mission, to move freight, is not compromised by passenger trains, of whatever speed. The Capitol and Northwest Corridors are proof that that need not happen and that the freights' primary mission is in fact enhanced by the investments these passenger trains have brought.

Finally, there is general agreement that passenger train speeds that exceed freight train speeds more by more than 30 mph can cause problems if there are lots of frequencies. Top speeds of 90 to 110 mph, are practical limits when sharing tracks with freight trains. Higher speeds of 110 to 125 mph, real high speeds (125-200 mph) or Popular Science-cover fantasy speeds (220 mph and up) will obviously require separate, very costly new rights-of-way. But a top speed of 90 in our corridor, along with speeding up existing slow spots, will result in greatly decreased travel time. That is what will bring crowds of new train passengers, not a couple minutes of "WHEE! We're going really fast!", as additional frequencies and more passenger capacity become available.

Cusick, from page 3

pull that off!

All political questions aside, let's say you did want to build an all Bus Rapid Transit system.

The closest thing to this in the US is the Lincoln Tunnel bus lanes in New York City.

In fact, according to the Port Authority, the Port Authority Bus Terminal, in conjunction with those lanes, moves more people into NYC than all the other New Jersey Commuter Rail lines.

62,000 to be exact.

That equates to 1700 buses, with an average of 36 passengers per bus. If you evenly spread the buses out over the commute period, that's 1 bus every 12 seconds.

The way you can pull it off is to have a facility in Manhattan such as the Port Authority Bus Terminal. This is a 2 square block facility, with over 160 bus platforms. The only way to get that throughput in the tunnel, is to have parallel boarding areas at the end of the tunnel. Don't forget, there are no stops in the Lincoln Tunnel.

A linear system, like the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel, wouldn't come close to handling that level of traffic.

Besides, how would you cost it? If you want it to perform better than a BST (**B**uses **S**tuck in **T**raffic) system, then you would

have to build the HOV infrastructure to support it.

In the I-405 Corridor Program analysis, this came to \$1.5 billion to add in all the HOV to HOV access points. This did not include the cost of adding HOV lanes the full length of I-405, since they had already, shall we say, applied the paint. But if one were to have added those lanes, then a reasonable assumption would be that it cost the same as 2 GP lanes, or \$2.25 billion. If you add the two amounts together, you get pretty close to the figures we were using for Light Rail in that corridor, of \$4.5 billion.

Bus lanes don't just magically appear. Unless, I suppose, you're Peter Rogoff.

Think about it for a moment, if you spend the money to create a grade separated infrastructure for buses, what's the difference between that and building rail infrastructure?

You might be saving on the overhead power portion of the system, but the rail system leaves a smaller footprint. Just look at the bus only lanes from I-90 to the DSTT, and then look at any elevated portion of Central Link.

When you make your comparisons, you can't just take the theoretical limit of one mode, BRT, and compare it to a 20 year projection from Sound Transit. Remember, the numbers ST is using are the "Northwest polite" crush loads, which has Link carry only about 140 persons per car.

If we're using the crush load of 78 for an articulated bus, then it could be argued that Link could hold 200 persons per car.

So let's ask what Metro's plan is for running buses on I-90, and what the minimum headway will be, and whether the I-90 floating bridge will support an articulated bus every 5 seconds?

Which brings up another point, and that is...what are you describing?

If you use the example of the constraints of Link headways in the Rainier Valley as it affects the arterial traffic, which says that 6 minutes headways are about the limit, then how would the same wagon train of buses affect MLKing Way, at roughly 30 second intervals?

Also, each bus requires a driver, so in that same 6 minute interval, which required one operator, and probably one fare checker or security person for a Link train, you would require 11 or 12 bus drivers.

I like the way you look

So, how should we decide what system is best, given that in the game of capacity, a rail system can certainly move more at its theoretical limit than can the equivalent bus system, which can move more than a freeway lane of SOVs, which can move more than an arterial lane of SOVs?

Simple. Ask the people.

Give them the choice of whether they want to spend the money to perpetually widen their arterials until they reach the capacity needed to have a freeway run through their town, or create a busway through their town, or have a light rail system come through town.

I know what most towns would prefer.

All Aboard Washington Officers

Loren Herrigstad, Centralia..President 360 736-5783.. lbhrgstd@isomedia.com
 Jim Hamre, Puyallup..Vice President 253 848-2473.. jimhamre@mindspring.com
 Rocky Shay, Federal Way..Secretary 253 925-2085.. HarmonShay@aol.com
 Bill Myers, Anacortes..Treasurer..... 360 588-8772.. anacortesbill@verizon.net
 Lloyd Flem, Olympia..
 Executive Director 360 943-8333.. washarp@q.com
 Office FAX..... 360 943-0136
 Address..... 3704 22nd Ave SE, Olympia 98501

Jim Hamre, Puyallup..Newsletter Editor 253 848-2473.. jimhamre@mindspring.com
 Warren Yee, Seattle..E-newsletter 206 723-0259.. washarp@earthlink.net
 Zack Willhoite, Puyallup..Membership Director zackw@allaboardwashington.org
 Harvey Bowen, Seattle..Fundraising Chair. 206 322-2729.. harveyb@allaboardwashington.org

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

Important Addresses and Phone Numbers

U. S. House of Representatives:
 Washington, DC 20515
 U. S. Senate: Washington, DC 20510
 Capitol Switchboard (all members): 202 224-3121
 State Legislature: State Capitol, Olympia 98504
 Hotline for leaving messages: 800 562-6000
 Amtrak Reservations/Information: 800 872-7245
 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

In Memoriam

Stuart Adams and Robert Downing

Stuart Adams, long time AAWA and NARP member and supporter (and retired director for both organizations) passed



Stuart Adams, Zack Willhoite and Steve Spear inspect the new Leavenworth station just weeks before its Sept. 25, 2010 opening.
 Photo by Jim Hamre

away on August 8, 2010. Stuart would have been 95 year old on August 18. He was a member of the "greatest generation," serving in the Navy during World War II. He chose funeral directing as his life's work, but advocacy for expanded and improved passenger rail

service was one of Stuart's many community activities. Stuart served for many years as an Amtrak on-board interpretative guide on the *Coast Starlight* and *Empire Builder*. His love of trains came from his father, who worked for the Great Northern Railroad in Eastern Washington. Stuart was a great friend and mentor to all of us at All Aboard Washington and we will miss him.

Robert Downing, a railroad legend of the 20th century and a member of All Aboard Washington, passed away on August 3, 2010 in Spokane. He was 96. The civil engineer started his career with the Pennsylvania Railroad. After being laid off there, he went to work for the Great Northern Railroad in Montana. He advanced through the ranks and, as an executive vice president, was instrumental in putting together the 1970 merger of GN; Northern Pacific; Chicago, Burlington & Quincy; and Spokane, Portland & Seattle into the Burlington Northern Railroad. As BN's chief operating office in the early 70s, he convinced the board of directors build a rail line into Wyoming's Powder River coal basin. The line, now three and four tracks wide, moves nearly half a billion tons of coal a year to markets throughout the world.

CBSA, from page 1

business to their province."

British Columbia government and tourism officials were no less harsh in their criticism of CBSA. AAWA member C.B. Hall interviewed Vancouver officials for an article in Crosscut.com:

Tourism Vancouver spokesman Stephen Pearce said his organization was convening a meeting to weigh a response to the CBSA decision. "We want to look at trains as a more environmentally effective means of traveling to Vancouver," Pearce said. "What can be done to support CBSA, if it's a resource issue?" He said Tourism Vancouver was "very disappointed in the decision."

John Tylee, Vancouver Economic Development Council, chimed in, saying, "It's a successful train. The idea of the second train is all part of a strategy we're working on with WSDOT in trying to build some high-speed rail for the future. This is a matter of great concern. We're all kind of scrambling here."

British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell and other provincial officials are also working with the federal government to reverse CBSA's decision.

In an email to WSDOT Secretary Hammond, AAWA Executive Director Lloyd Flem said, "Be assured we will work closely with you, Amtrak, Talgo, and others to try to change the CBSA's decision. We have already contacted passenger train advocates in BC who have begun working with, among others, the Vancouver business community, which has been a prime beneficiary of the trains we Washingtonians have paid for as taxpayers and passengers."

There are 120 road crossing between Canada and the U.S.; 8 alone in eastern Washington. Since many of these serve under 50 cars a day, perhaps CBSA needs to start looking there to save money in its budget. There are only 3 passenger rail crossings between the two countries.

Keep up-to-date on this issue by checking allaboardwashington.org and our Facebook and Twitter feeds (linked from our web page).

Blaine, from page 1

study freight and passenger rail opportunities in the North Sound corridor. A commuter rail study done in 2005, using self propelled DMU vehicles between Bellingham and Everett showed promising results in ridership and costs. This new effort, with results to be finished within about a year, will further define the

role of rail for the betterment of both freight and passenger service between Vancouver and Seattle.

In the meantime, it's imperative to do the grunt work needed to evaluate the Blaine Station to accommodate these emerging opportunities. Both Bill and myself, at a recent meeting with the Blaine City Manager and Director of Development, emphasized that "we don't need another Wenatchee station experience"...Here today, gone tomorrow. (Ed.: BN tore down the Wenatchee station just months before asking Amtrak to move the *Empire Builder* from the Stampede Pass route to the Stevens Pass route.)

Some of this work has been accomplished:

- A local working group has been formed.
- Our civil engineer confirms the building is sound, but needs lots of upgrades and TLC.
- The city completed a renovation study and cost estimate last year.

More tasks are on the agenda, among them:

- Cultivate public/private partnerships and community support.
- Work with local US/Canadian transit providers.
- Firm up a plan and identify funding sources.

Both Lloyd Flem and Loren Herrigstad have been guiding this effort since last year. Now it's time for more of us north-enders to get involved. Maybe Blaine will never return to its glory days as the "Gateway to the Pacific Northwest," with its deep water port, shingle mills and canneries, and having the only hotel with both hot and cold running water north of San Francisco, but who knows, maybe the rail renaissance we all embrace is beginning to take root.

Annual Meeting, from page 6

ber and is one of the few commercial establishments in the state that explicitly advises guests to "Take the Train." (866-736-5164 or www.mcmenamins.com)

Invited guest speakers are representatives of BNSF and UP. For the foreseeable future, passenger trains will continue traveling on these freight railroad properties and we need to continue our close working relationships. By the meeting, we'll know the makeup of the next state Legislature and US Congress and present broad strategies for working with these bodies.

RSVPs are not essential, but desirable, so we have an idea of the number attending. Hope to see you on November 13!

All Aboard Washington
P. O. Box 70381
Seattle, WA 98127

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U. S. POSTAGE PAID
PUYALLUP WA 98371
PERMIT NO. 468

Return Service Requested

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New Renewal

Address Change

\$ 200 Leadership Membership

\$ 100 Contributing Membership

\$ 75 Sustaining Membership

\$ 50 Family Membership

\$ 25 Individual Membership

\$ 18 Student/Fixed Income Membership

Extra Contribution of \$_____

Please send me my newsletter through e-mail only.

Note: if you move, let us know in advance and save us the fee for address correction service.

Name_____

Address_____

City/State/Zip_____

Phone_____

Email_____

All Aboard News

November 13: All Aboard Washington Annual Meeting at the **Centralia Amtrak Station**. Lunch at **noon**; meeting 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. For complete details, see article, this page.

December 4, All Aboard Washington gathering at **11:30 a.m. at Centennial Station**, 6600 Yelm Hwy, **Lacey**. Meeting is timed between arrival of trains 11 and 500 and departure of trains 507 and 516. Cost is \$10 per person cash or check for pizza, subs and beverages. We will have a small silent auction and railroadiana merchandise will be for sale. If you have items to donate to the silent auction, contact Jim Hamre or Lloyd Flem (contact info on p. 5).

All Aboard Washington welcomed the following new member in August: Dayna Tolman, Edmonds. September information was not available at press time.

All Aboard Washington members contributing to this newsletter include: Mike Skehan, C.B. Hall, Warren Yee, Loren Herzigstad, Zack Willhoite, Lloyd Flem and Jim Cusick.

NOTICE OF ELECTION OF DIRECTORS OF ALL ABOARD WASHINGTON

ALL ABOARD WASHINGTON will elect six new members to its board. Each member of All Aboard Washington who is of sound mind and legal age is entitled to run for the office of Director and file a Declaration of Candidacy by November 6, 2010. The Declaration of Candidacy shall be in writing and shall include the full name and mailing address of the candidate and must be delivered by mail, email or otherwise to Rocky Shay, Secretary, 820 SW 356th St., Federal Way, WA 98023. (For Shay's telephone and email information, see page 5.) If no more than six candidates have duly filed for Director by 8 PM, November 6, 2010, all candidates who have filed Declarations of Candidacy will be deemed elected and the election will be canceled.

If an election is required, such election shall occur at the General Membership Meeting commencing at noon at the Centralia Amtrak Station, 210 Railroad Ave., on November 13, 2010. Each active member of All Aboard Washington (everyone whose dues are current) is entitled to be present and vote for candidates for Director. The new Board members shall take office on January 1, 2011.

AAWA's Annual Meeting: Celebrate Old Centralia!

Mark your calendars and order your train tickets for Saturday, November 13. With the gracious cooperation of the City of Centralia, which now owns the classic 1912 Northern Pacific station, our meeting is scheduled for that venerable facility. Lunch will be available from the 1908 McMena-min's Olympic Club Restaurant and Pub, just across Railroad Avenue from the station. (Specifics of whether catered at the station or meals individually ordered at the Club are pending. Suggest cash for your meal.)

From the north, train 501 will allow you several hours to enjoy downtown Centralia's many antique and specialty stores. Train 11 would be most timely for the noon luncheon. Train 513 will permit a single ride from north of Seattle, but will arrive just as the meeting starts. Return north would be on train 516, or later trains if desired.

From the south, it is simple: train 500, giving people time to enjoy downtown Centralia. Return on train 507 or 509.

However, consider making it a mini-vacation, staying overnight at Olympic Club Historic Hotel, with individual rooms named for colorful characters from Centralia's past. The Olympic Club is again an AAWA mem- (See **Annual Meeting**, page 5)