

AORTA Bulletin

A publication of the
Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates

Issue 151

September 2011

Since 1976

Register Today for **AORTA** Fall Membership Meeting Celebrating 35 years of rail and transit advocacy

Issues intensify as meeting approaches: Nov. 12

Portland- Speaker possibilities abound: The future as seen by incoming Oregon and Washington rail administrators. Amtrak promoting its 40th anniversary. Experts offering answers to HSR and CRC dilemmas. The latest on Oregon's new Talgo trainsets, expected in 2012. And **AORTA** celebrating 35 years of advocacy!

Your **AORTA** board is working to secure presenters who will blow the room away.

And we do have a room. It's a great one: the Fireside—cozy and comfortable—at the historic Multnomah Hotel (Embassy Suites) in downtown Portland. So, ink it on

your calendar: 11:30 am- 4 pm, Saturday, November 12. And send in your registration today to reserve your spot. Form and return envelope are included with this Bulletin.

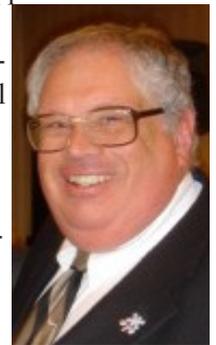
The Multnomah Hotel is working with **AORTA** to keep costs down. Accordingly, we are able to offer a modest but fine meal (see below) at \$37 along with an afternoon of excellent rail conversation and good company.

This just in: President Donald Leap has confirmed he will replicate his dramatic HSR presentation to Washington legislators in July, which earned him an audience with the new rail division chief in that state.

AORTA President Donald Leap Grabs WA Legislators' Attention

Seattle- **AORTA** President Donald Leap's Power Point clearly made a powerful impression on Washington lawmakers in Seattle, July 27, when he and a host of regional and international rail experts addressed a special legislative committee.

Lieutenant Governor Brad Owen was outspokenly appreciative in his thank-you letter to Leap. His presentation hit on essential but oft-forgotten realities about the opportunities and limitations of high-speed rail in the Cascades Corridor between Eugene and Vancouver, B.C. Floyd Smith, **AORTA** governmental affairs director, introduced the production, which was researched by Leap and Mike Morrison, board member.



-Floyd Smith

See copy of Lt Gov Owen letter on page 3.

Willamette Valley Lunch Buffet

Portland French Potato Rosemary Bread with Local Butter

Peach, Local Goat Cheese, Spicy Pecan and Organic Spinach Salad Frisée
Dressed in Red Wine Vinaigrette, Local Gouda Cheese, Fresh Blueberries and Hazelnuts
Whole and Sliced Fruit Platter (local and organic when available)

Spinach and Artichoke Ravioli, Asparagus, Oregon Bay Shrimp, Pesto Cream Sauce
Pendleton Flat Iron Steak with Garlic Mashed Potatoes and NW Wild Mushroom Jus
Herbed Roasted Chicken Served with Orzo Garden Pasta
~ Carrot Cake Strawberry Short Cake

Rainforest Alliance Certified Regular and Decaffeinated Coffee, Assorted Teas,
Honey, Chocolate Shavings, Cinnamon Sticks and Whipped Cream

Sorry! This **AORTA Bulletin** is very late! Problems with a new computer (defective solid-state hard drive) caused long delay. It will take time to master the now running pc and the incredible Adobe CS 5.5 Design Premium software, but I am hoping future Bulletins will be more frequent, entertaining and informative.

Join **AORTA** on Facebook

One of the ways you can keep in touch with **AORTA** events and activities is by participating in Facebook and "liking" the **AORTA** Facebook page.

The **AORTA Bulletin** is published
4-6 times/year by the

**Association of
Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates**

A nonprofit citizen advocate group working to educate the public about the need for safe, fiscally responsible, environmentally sound transportation. Incorporated as the **Oregon Association of Railway Passengers.**

Portland Union Station
800 NW 6th Avenue, Suite 253
PO Box 2772, Portland, OR 97208-2772
503.241.7185

President Donald Leap 503.789.2290
Vice President Dan McFarling 503.642.4077
Secretary Jon Nuxoll 541.684.8883
Treasurer Kenneth Peters 503.646.5034
Past President Jim Long 503.313.7382
Bulletin Editor Dan McFarling 503.642.4077

Also serving on the Board of Directors

Jim Howell, Claudia Howells, Dave Jannuzzi,
Robert Krebs, Mike Morrison, Ray Polani and
Floyd Smith.

PNW NARP Leaders

Art Poole, Vice-Chair Coos Bay, OR
Jim Hamre, NW Division Leader Puyallup, WA
Stephanie Weber, Rep Coordinator Kirkland, WA

NARP State Representatives

Robert Flint Alaska (Anchorage)
Vacant Idaho
Barry Green Montana (Glendive)
Donald Leap Oregon (Portland)
Mike Morrison Oregon (Portland)
Jim Hamre Washington (Puyallup)
Robert Lawrence Washington (Mill Creek)
Stephanie Weber Washington (Kirkland)

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Introductory, living lightly	\$ 18
Regular	25
Family	30
Steward	100
Sponsor	250
Corporate/Government	500

E-Mail: OregonRail@aol.com
Web Site: www.AORTArail.org

Salem City Club Hears Rail Call

Salem- Panelists—the Oregon governor’s new transportation adviser, Eugene’s rail promoting mayor, and a Salem passenger train campaigner—have given Salem City Club members a stark lesson on the intricacies of passenger rail politics.

The three generally agreed during the May 6 luncheon meeting on the need for improved passenger train service through the Willamette Valley, but they differed on how to get it done and how fast.

Outspoken rail enthusiast Britta Franz of Salem, a retired owner of women’s apparel shops, brought her private-sector drive for immediacy to the discussion. She called on the governor to empower his transportation adviser to deal directly with host railroads, Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe, to enhance passenger rail service in Oregon.

Franz, well known for her Rail Now! organization, acknowledged she has grown impatient with the slow pace of government in addressing rail issues. She told her hometown audience, it is now time to move beyond the bureaucracy and go to the host railroads with cash in hand to negotiate a deal to improve passenger train frequency and on-time reliability along Oregon’s section of the Cascades Corridor, which runs from Eugene through Oregon and Washington to Vancouver, British Columbia.

That did not get a direct response from Lynn Peterson, who recently gave up her position as Clackamas

County Commission chair to become the governor’s chief transportation strategist and adviser. Peterson holds advanced degrees in civil and environmental engineering. She told the audience, Gov. John Kitzhaber is pushing for “new ways” to enhance transportation and ease highway congestion.

Peterson also professed her deep support for improvements to freight AND passenger rail. She stated that Oregon needs to coordinate with Washington and British Columbia to upgrade the Cascades Corridor for people riding trains.

This, she said, is in the works, in part, through the recently convened Rail Funding Task Force chaired by Port of Portland Executive Director Bill Wyatt. Peterson also alluded to the long-term planning importance of a new committee announced the day following the Salem City Club meeting—in Eugene by Mayor Kitty Piercy, an ardent promoter of better passenger trains.

The Oregon Rapid Passenger Rail Corridor Committee, which Piercy will co-chair, has been given the task by Gov. Kitzhaber of writing a plan for the state’s segment of the corridor which starts in her city.

Mayor Piercy, commenting to her Salem audience, heaped credit on the governor for his “recognition” of the need for improved passenger service. “The time to act is now,” she said. “I am committed to more, better, faster rail.”
-Floyd Smith

Register today for **2011 AORTA Fall Membership Meeting and Luncheon!**

11:30 am - 4 PM, **Saturday, November 12**

Multnomah Hotel (Embassy Suites), 319 SW Pine Street, Portland, Oregon 97204

\$37/ person

Rockin' the Rails

Saturday, September 10th

Olympia-Lacey 'Centennial' Amtrak Station
6600 Yelm Highway SE • Lacey
Open 12 Noon – 4 PM



The Mud Bay Blues Band
with legendary Olympia Rocker
George Barner

Music ♦ Fun ♦ Lunch available ♦ Door prizes

Olympia- **AORTA**ns and friends are invited to a fun-filled All-Aboard Washington (AAWA) event at the Olympia-Lacey Centennial Station from noon until 4 PM on September 10. Music will be provided by the

Mud Bay Blues Band. All-Aboard Washington (AAWA) board member George Barner is a member of the band. According to AAWA Executive Director, Lloyd Flem, "George is an Old Rocker-- Rock-n-Roll-- not the

chair!"

"It's a long story," says Flem, "but George and I, as then-members of UW Alumni Band, are why "Louie Louie" - originally made famous by a Portland's Kingsmen, is now played at every athletic event in western WA."

"The Olympia-based Mud Bay Blues Band are really good with 50s and 60s R&B R&R."

There will be several train-oriented announcements and tables with rail literature. Attendees will "be encouraged to dance on the plaza" says Flem.

Food will be available for a donation. Support for more trains in the corridor, and contributions to **AAWA** and **AORTA** will be encouraged.

Train 500 will get to OLW early, but you'd be welcome to help us set up; 506 would still allow you a couple of hours of Rockin' the Rails. If you really want to drive to OLW, we won't oppose it. Hope to see lots of you on September 10!

Amtrak 40th Anniversary Train at Portland Union Station, Oct 29-30

Portland- Mark a free and fun-filled event on your calendar. To commemorate Amtrak's 40th Anniversary, a special train with displays of photos, uniforms, china, and memorabilia from America's Railroad while also offering a glimpse into the future. A display on the role of the National Association of Railroad Passengers is included.



Brad Owen
Lieutenant Governor



August 1, 2011

Donald Leap, President
Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates
PO Box 2772
Portland, OR 97208-2772

Dear Mr. Leap,

Thank you for the very informative presentation you provided at our Legislative Committee on Economic Development and International Relations meeting on "High-Speed Rail and its Future in Washington State and the Pacific Northwest." The information you and Mr. Smith shared with the legislative members and the public about the region's passenger rail infrastructure and some of the current opportunities was compelling. I particularly appreciated your discussion of the economic impacts of developing high-speed rail in Washington and other possible rail system governance models. This meeting and your presentation specifically put into sharp perspective the importance of investing in high-speed rail to our region's economy. I am grateful for your efforts in developing our passenger rail system and encourage AORTA to continue to keep up your good work.

Without question, the information you presented and the many suggestions you made contributed greatly to the success of our legislative meeting.

Many thanks again.

Sincerely,

Brad Owen
Lieutenant Governor

President of the Senate
Chairman, Rules Committee

250 Insurance Building
PO Box 40400
Olympia, WA 98504-0400

Phone: (360) 786-7700
FAX: (360) 786-7749
e-mail: owen_br@leg.wa.gov



Retiring Rail Administrator Looks Back, Looks Ahead

Salem- Oregon Rail Division Administrator Kelly Taylor announced her retirement effective June 30. She has held the position seven years and has spent her entire 33-year career with the Oregon Department of Transportation, having started there at age 19.



AORTA Bulletin asked Taylor to pen her thoughts on rail under her leadership:

“We’ve made great strides in the last seven years to improve the passenger and freight rail systems in Oregon, including a dedicated funding source for existing passenger rail service,

purchasing Oregon’s first two trains, completing the comprehensive 2010 Rail Study and investing over \$172 million of state and federal funds in rail infrastructure projects.”

Taylor said the coming two years hold an “exciting” future as Oregon plans for the coming 25-plus years:

“The Rail Funding Task Force will make its recommendation for a dedicated, sustainable funding proposal for freight and passenger rail investments to the Oregon Transportation Commission by the end of this year. This summer, we begin work on the federally required Corridor Investment Plan (which includes a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement) to establish the goals, objectives and capital projects needed to improve passenger service on the Oregon segment of the Pacific

Northwest Rail Corridor between Eugene and Portland.”

In addition, Taylor pointed out that the State Rail Plan, providing a long-range statewide strategic blueprint for the freight and passenger rail systems, will be updated to attract federal money:

“Both the Corridor Investment Plan and State Rail Plan will make Oregon eligible for future rounds of the federal High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail program funds, specifically capital construction funds, in order to fulfill Oregon’s vision for more reliable, more frequent and faster rail service.”

Design of the State Rail Plan will call on elements from the State Rail Study, published in 2010.

AORTA extends best wishes to Kelly Taylor in her retirement.

Oregon Pacific Railroad Tour

Pictures from August 13 AAWA tour of Oregon Pacific Railroad. **AORTA** assisted with the event. Keep watch on the **AORTA** website or join **AORTA**'s facebook page to keep track of upcoming events.

