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Amtrak *Empire Builder* Service to Leavenworth, WA to Begin September 25, 2009

Community Celebrates the Restoration of Rail Passenger Service with Opening of Icicle Station

LEAVENWORTH – The City of Leavenworth and Amtrak announced today that the eagerly awaited restoration of rail passenger service to the popular Bavarian village, a destination community in the Cascade Mountains, will begin on Friday, September 25, 2009. The first train returning to Leavenworth, one of Washington’s most visited attractions will be Amtrak’s Empire Builder departing Seattle that evening bound for Chicago.

“We have been working for some time with our partners at Amtrak and BNSF Railway to make Icicle Station and the return of rail passenger service to our community a reality,” said Rob Eaton, Leavenworth’s Mayor. “Our community has a long history with railroads and train service and we are truly thrilled to welcome Amtrak to Leavenworth and have the ability to offer passenger service to both our residents and visitors.”

The City partnered with the Port of Chelan, Chelan County Commissioners, Washington State Senator Linda Evans Parlette, and US Senator Patty Murray as they worked with Amtrak and BNSF representatives on the project. Additionally, the local community, Projekt Bayern (a local service group), and the Chamber of Commerce were instrumental in supporting Icicle Station.

“This is an exciting day for Leavenworth and a big step forward in showcasing one of Washington State’s best destinations,” said Senator Murray. “Bringing Amtrak to Leavenworth is going to help create local jobs, build their tourism economy, and make travel more convenient for local residents. I’m proud to have worked to provide federal funding that has helped Leavenworth build Icicle Station and open their community to new visitors and economic opportunity.”

“This is a tremendous milestone for our community,” said Senator Linda Evans Parlette, R-Wenatchee. “Not only will rail service be a convenience for the citizens who live in and around Leavenworth, it will also be a very big boost to the local economy through increased visitors to the area. Just two years ago we were working to secure state transportation funding for this project. Now here we are today, at the finish line. I couldn’t be happier for our friends and neighbors who have worked so hard to make this project a reality.”

Empire Builder service to Leavenworth will begin on Friday, September 25 with the westbound train departing Seattle King Street Station at 4:45 p.m. and arriving in Leavenworth at approximately 8:00 p.m. On Saturday, September 26, both east and westbound trains will begin daily stops. Passengers will be able to make reservations and purchase tickets to and from Leavenworth (LWA) beginning today September 16.

Please join us as the new service to Leavenworth will be celebrated with entertainment at King Street Station on Friday, September 25 beginning at 3 p.m. and at Icicle Station, beginning at 7p.m. in Leavenworth, as the community awaits the arrival of the first Amtrak train.

About Leavenworth

Leavenworth, Washington State’s Bavarian Village, is located in the eastern foothills of the Cascade Mountains. A four season destination, we welcome over 2 million visitors each year with our world famous festivals, wonderful hospitality, and outdoor recreational opportunities.

About Amtrak

Amtrak has posted six consecutive years of growth in ridership and revenue, carrying more than 28.7 million passengers in the last fiscal year. Amtrak provides intercity passenger rail service to more than 500 destinations in 46 states on a 21,000-mile route system. For schedules, fares and information, passengers may call 800-USA-RAIL or visit Amtrak.com.