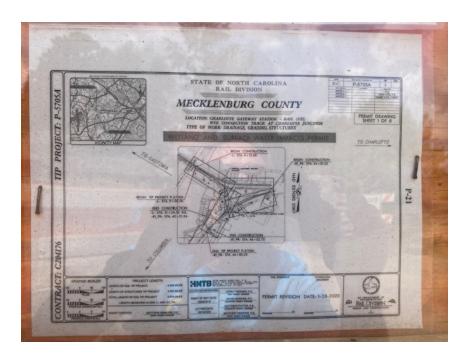


From the Cab -- October 2024

Martin Wheeler - President, David Robinson - NC Vice President, and Don Yehle, Editor

Connection track to aid freight and passenger movements in Charlotte well underway -- The \$13.5 million Charlotte Junction Wye project at the junction of the Norfolk Southern Atlanta and Columbia mainlines will be a major improvement for freight movements to and from the intermodal terminal at Charlotte Douglas International Airport. An added benefit would be use of the wye to turn Amtrak trains when the new Gateway Multimodal Station and NC DOT Rail Maintenance Facility is opened within the next 3-4 years.







Top photo is looking west from Primrose Ave. across the existing leg of the wye. Photo immediately above this caption is looking from Seymour Drive on the south side of the project along the NS mainline.

The new leg on the west side of the right of way is closest to the airport. The east leg has existed since the late 1950's when a major project (the new "R" line) to move long freight trains off the old "R" line which went straight through the middle of Uptown Charlotte was completed. The Lynx light rail transit line now occupies that former corridor.

A later project elevating the Norfolk Southern mainline line on the west side of Uptown was completed in 1963 forcing the city's passenger train station to be relocated to North Tryon Street alongside the freight yard.

Immediately below this page is the official agreement from the Department of the Army Corp of Engineers authorizing this project, which is to be completed by December 31, 2026. Periodic visits to the construction site by the Corps of Engineers will be required to assure compliance with permit plans and conditions.

North Carolina's Department of Transportation is the other party involved in this connection project to improve freight and rail passenger transportation.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY VIII. MINISTEN DESTRUCT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS SP CARS, INDITION AVENUE WIII. ARRIVOTOR, ROOFIN CARDS, MAX TRANS. CARS.

April 14, 2021

Regulatory Division

Action ID: SAW-2016-02211

NCDOT-Rail Division, Planning & Development Branch Attn: Mr. James Bridges 1 South Wilmington Street Raileigh, NC 27601

Dear Mr. Bridges:

Enclosed is a Department of the Army permit for the Wye Connector Track project (STIP P5705A) which involves construction of a new connector track, known as the Wye Connector Track, at Charlotte Junction. The work would construct a new connector track between the existing Mainline and R-line. Specifically, the project involves the permanent impact to 0.01 acres of wetlands and 427 linear feet of stream channel. The project is located near the convergence of two existing rail lines located approximately 0.25 miles south of the intersection of Morris Field Drive and Andrew Jackson Hwy (NC 29) in Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

Any deviation in the authorized work will likely require modification of this permit.

If a change in the authorized work is necessary, you should promptly submit revised plans to the Corps showing the proposed changes. You may not undertake the proposed changes until the Corps notifies you that your permit has been modified.

Carefully read your permit. The general and special conditions are important. Your failure to comply with these conditions could result in a violation of Federal law. Certain significant conditions require that:

- a. You must complete construction before December 31, 2026
- You must notify this office in advance as to when you intend to commence and complete work.
- c. You must allow representatives from this office to make periodic visits to your worksite as deemed necessary to assure compliance with permit plans and conditions.
- d. In order to compensate for impacts associated with this permit, mitigation shall provided in accordance with the provisions outlined in the U.S. Army Corps of

Transit Summit Held in Charlotte -- Matthews Mayor John Higdon held a 'transit summit' to discuss possible changes to Mecklenburg County's mass transit plan. The plan is part of recent package of transit related issues approved by all government entities in the county except Matthews.

Mayor Higdon's major thrust was that a revisit to the proposed funding levels for rail transit, bus transit and roads should be undertaken. The current plan in proposed legislative language splits funding for rail and roads at 40 percent each with bus getting 20 percent. Those percentages leave no funding for the Silver Line light rail project, a segment of which would run between Charlotte and Matthews. Higdon proposed several different funding plans and will run those scenarios. Higdon saying, "This needs to equitable, with no winners and losers."

Matthews Town Manager Becky Hawke indicated nothing is carved in stone yet. There is time for locals to consider possible changes to the proposed legislation to be sent to the General Assembly concerning the proposed transportation tax, and creation of an authority to oversee transit funding, planning and operations. It's unlikely the legislature would consider a tax referendum issue until the long session of the General Assembly which begins in January. Even after submission the legislature may alter the plan. A November 2025 referendum would still be possible with that time frame. Hawke saying, "There may be only one shot; we should wait if necessary to get what we actually want."

The October 19th meeting was attended by 21 government representatives from Mecklenburg and Union Counties. Matthews, Stallings, Indian Trail, and Charlotte all had at least one person attending. 9 persons from various interested groups also attended including CAPT President Martin Wheeler.

Coverage by WFAE News

https://www.wfae.org/politics/2024-10-21/matthews-holds-transit-summit-but-most-key-leaders-skip-it



CAPT President Martin Wheeler (unidentified) joined government representatives from Mecklenburg and Union Counties and other citizens on October 19 to review and discuss possible changes to Mecklenburg County's Transit Policy. Mathews' Mayor John Higdon called the meeting, saying the transit plan that will be submitted to the State General Assembly "needs to be equitable, with no winners and losers." See story above the photo.

CATS PROJECT MANAGER TO ADDRESS CAPT BOARD ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, IN CHARLOTTE -- The annual Carolinas Association for

Passenger Trains membership meeting is set for Thursday, November 21, at Big Ben Pub, 1535 Elizabeth Ave. "We will have the Charlotte Area Transit System's project head speak to us about its Red Line and Gateway Station, with a tour earlier of the new platforms for the future Charlotte Gateway Station," says CAPT President Martin Wheeler.

The three-hour meeting begins at 1 p.m.

At the annual meeting, five board CAPT members will be up for re-election for two-year terms from 11/24 to 11/26, as will five officers for 2025. CAPT by-laws require advanced notification to the secretary if your intention is to run again. Since CAPT is without a secretary, board members and officers seeking to continue in leadership positions must either notify President Wheeler of your intentions or appear in person at the Charlotte meeting.

Board Member Dr. David Robinson of North Carolina plans to come off the board to focus on CAPT's website (see next story). *From the Cab* Editor Don Yehle will continue editing CAPT's monthly publication but is stepping down from his board position, as well.

Three members hoping to continue on the board are Tommy Thomas, Robert Bischoff and Ed Locklin. Officers desiring to continue leading CAPT for the next 12 months are President Martin Wheeler; Jim Frierson, vice president - South Carolina, and Treasurer Ralph Messera.

Two CAPT members from North Carolina and one from South Carolina are needed to represent their respective states for two-year terms, replacing Dr. Robinson, Tom Darling and Yehle. Vacant offices for 2025 are VP-North Carolina and the board secretary position. Individual interested in serving on the board or interested in holding an office are urged to contact President Wheeler at mwheeler3@att.net

CAPT RE-BRANDING, WEBSITE AND LOGO DESIGN - UPDATE

At its July 2024 meeting in Spartanburg, SC, the Board of Directors approved a contract with Wonder Design, Inc. to design a new website, and to develop a new logo for **ALL ABOARD CAROLINAS** which will be the DBA (doing business as) name for the **Carolinas Association for Passenger Trains, Inc.** For all legal and financial matters, the private non-profit name will remain in force.

While the website design is still a work in progress requiring involvement by several board members to provide images and prepare text, the Board of Directors has approved the logo shown below after choosing from many designs offered by the contractor:



No date has yet been set for the changeover from the current to the new website, but the board of directors is hoping that it will happen before the end of 2024, ready for 2025. If anyone has any pictures that you have taken of current Amtrak trains and stations in either state, and you think they may be of use somewhere on the website, please forward them to David Robinson at dr.david.robinson@gmail.com.

A DAY TRIP TO WINSTON-SALEM BY TRAIN AND BUS

Would you like to leave in the morning, spend the day in Winston-Salem, and visit Old Salem, or the Reynolda House, or Wake Forest University campus, or just enjoy downtown, and return home late afternoon or in the evening? It can be done, but you need more information than Amtrak's reservation page provides you.

Amtrak.com suggests several train-bus (with a combined train/bus fare) connections to downtown Winston-Salem with daily Carolinian and Piedmont trains, but only via High Point's Amtrak station. However, don't waste your time trying to book the bus connection on amtrak.com, since the suggestions are more focused on getting people in Winston-Salem connected with Amtrak trains for outbound (in-state and out-of-state) train trips, as opposed to making it easy for people living elsewhere in North Carolina to visit Winston-Salem for a day trip or longer. And the information gives the impression that the identified connector buses take you directly to WNS, which they don't. Since the bus is also a regular

High Point Express Bus, it will always go to PART's transfer point, from where you will change to a Winston-Salem Express Bus.

[As this article continues, for simplicity the train/bus stations will be referenced by their Amtrak station codes: Winston-Salem – WNS, Charlotte – CLT, Kannapolis – KAN, Salisbury – SAL, High Point – HPT, Greensboro – GRO, Burlington – BNC, Durham – DNC, Cary – CYN, and Raleigh – RGH.]

Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART)

In fact, there are many more options available to make a same-day out-and-back trip to Winston-Salem than Amtrak.com and ncbytrain.org would have you believe. And you can thank the express bus services of PART linking the GRO and HPT Amtrak stations with the Coble Transportation Center (midway between GRO and WSN), and the downtown Transportation Center in Winston-Salem (WSN.)

Monday through Saturday, PART operates three Express Routes that converge on its Coble Transportation Center (CTC), midway between Greensboro and Winston-Salem:

Route 1: Winston-Salem Express to/from the CTC (X1);

Route 2: Greensboro Express to/from the CTC (X2); and

Route 3: High Point Express to/from the CTC (X3)

These three express bus routes operate Monday-Friday between 5:45 am and 9:45 pm, and on Saturday from 6:45 am to 9:45 pm. Frequencies on Monday-Friday are every half-hour (except hourly between 9:15 am and 3:15 pm), and hourly all day Saturday. All transfers at the CTC are timed such that no bus departs until the other two have arrived, thus all riders can make their transfers. However, the service is not available on Sundays or on certain holidays (check www.partnc.com for details.)

PART's Bus Fares

The one-way PART bus fare is \$2.50 (but half-fare for Seniors [60+], Disabled, Veterans, Students, and Medicare Cardholders), with no charge for making a transfer from one express bus to another at the Coble Transportation Center.

The Greensboro (GRO) Connection

Since every Carolinian and Piedmont train serves the GRO Amtrak station, the Route 2 Greensboro Express adds many more options for going to and returning from Winston-Salem. From CLT, KAN, and SAL, you can choose either High Point (HPT) or Greensboro (GRO) as your connecting train station, but from RGH, CYN, DNC, and BNC, you should always use Greensboro (GRO.)

Trip Details

The following two tables show all the train-bus connections to Winston-Salem for a full, same-day, out-and-back excursion.

Table 1: Getting To Winston-Salem (WNS)

Origin	Train	Departs	Arr (G)RO	Bus	Bus	Transfer	Arrive
Station	#		or (H)PT	route	depart Train	at CTC	WNS
Burlington*	73	11:08 am	11:35 am (G)	X2	station 12:15 pm	X1	1:15 pm
Cary	71	6:42 am	8:01 am(G)	X2	8:15 am	X1	9:15 am
Charlotte	80	6:45 am	8:02 am (H)	Х3	8:15 am	X1	9:15 am
Durham	71	7:02 am	8:01 am (G)	X2	8:15 am	X1	9:15 am
Kannapolis	80	7:10 am	8:02 am (H)	Х3	8:15 am	X1	9:15 am
Raleigh	71	6:30 am	8:01 am (G)	X2	8:15 am	X1	9:15 am
Salisbury	80	7:28 am	8:02 am (H)	Х3	8:15 am	X1	9:15 am

^{*} Train 71 does not stop at Burlington

Should your train's arrival at Greensboro or High Point be delayed, you need only wait half an hour until the next bus arrives.

Table 2: Returning From Winston-Salem

Destination	X1 Bus	Transfer	Bus	Arr	Train	Train dep	Train arr
Station	Dep	at CTC	route	(G)RO or		(G)RO or	
5 1'	7.45	0.45	1/0	(H)PT	70	(H)PT	0.07
Burlington*	7:45 pm	8:15 pm	X2	8:45 pm	78	9:15 pm G	9:37 pm
				(G)			
Cary	5:15 pm	5:45 pm	X2	6:15 pm	76	6:55 pm or	8:15 pm
	or	or		or	or 78	9:15 pm (G)	or
	7:45 pm	8:15 pm		8:45 pm			10:38
				(G)			pm
Charlotte	3:45 pm	4:15 pm	Х3	4:45 pm	77	4:51 pm or	6:21 pm
	or	or		or	or 79	7:16 pm (H)	or
	5:15 pm	5:45 pm		6:15 pm			8:56 pm
Durham	5:15 pm	5:45 pm	X2	6:15 pm	76	6:55 pm or	7:53 pm
	or	or		or	or 78	9:15 pm (G)	or
	7:45 pm	8:15 pm		8:45 pm			10:17
				(G)			pm
Kannapolis**	5:15 pm	5:45 pm	Х3	6:15 pm	79	7:16 pm (H)	8:56 pm
		-		(H)			
Raleigh	5:15 pm	5:45 pm	X2	6:15 pm	76	6:55 pm or	8:29 pm
	or	or		or	or 78	9:15 pm (G)	or
	7:45 pm	8:15 pm		8:45 pm			10:52
		-		(G)			pm
Salisbury	3:45 pm	4:15 pm	Х3	4:45 pm	77	4:51 pm or	5:41 pm
	or	or		or	or 79	7:16 pm (H)	or
	5:15 pm	5:45 pm		6:15 pm			8:06 pm

^{*} Train 76 does not stop at Burlington;

As has been demonstrated, the skipping of certain stations by Piedmonts 71, 76, and 77 does restrict the return train options for Burlington, High Point, Salisbury, and Kannapolis passengers, but even so, a day trip of useful duration in Winston-Salem is possible.

Same-Day Out-and-Back Trip Details

The amount of time that travelers from each of the above cities can spend in Winston-Salem is shown below in Table 3:

^{**} Train 77 does not stop at Kannapolis

Table 3: Day Trip Durations in Winston-Salem

Origin City	Arrive WNS	Depart WNS	Visit Duration (hours)
Burlington	1:15 pm	7:45 pm	6.5
Cary	9:15 am	5:15 pm or 7:45 pm	8 or 10.5
Charlotte	9:15 am	3:45 pm or 5:15 pm	6.5 or 8
Durham	9:15 am	5:15 pm or 7:45 pm	8 or 10.5
Kannapolis	9:15 am	7:45 pm	10.5
Raleigh	9:15 am	5:15 pm or 7:45 pm	8 or 10.5
Salisbury	9:15 am	3:45 pm or 5:15 pm	6.5 or 8

Conclusion

As this article shows, it is quite easy to make a worthwhile same-day out-and-back trip to Winston-Salem by train and bus from seven North Carolina cities along the Piedmont Service route. Unfortunately, the average traveler would never be aware of this by only checking train and connecting bus times on Amtrak's reservation page. CAPT will be discussing this information gap with Amtrak, NC By Train, and PART in the near future.

D. C. Robinson September 4, 2024

CAROLINAS FALL FESTIVALS....BY TRAIN!

(+ CAROLINA PANTHERS' HOME GAMES)
===== OCTOBER 2024 =====

https://youtu.be/yQiATLhlubw?si=NKxo-qUvTA0laSq8

Click above link from Oct 18, 2024 NORTH CAROLINA STATE FAIR
Video shows the Silver Star 92 passing by the State Fair Station (NSF) only
minutes before the arrival of Carolinian 80 from Charlotte, Kannapolis, Salisbury,
High Point, Greensboro, Burlington, and Durham. State Highway Patrol make
sure every alighting passenger is able to safely cross Hillsborough Street.

==== NOVEMBER 2024 =====

2 (Saturday)

20TH ANNUAL NORTH CAROLINA WHIRLIGIG FESTIVAL, WILSON NC https://whirligigfestivalnc.org

The northbound Carolinian 80 from Charlotte (and stations in between) arrives Wilson (Amtrak Code = WLN) at 11:18am, and the southbound Carolinian 79 to Charlotte (and stations in between) departs Wilson at 4:05pm, giving you almost five hours of enjoyment.

2 (Saturday)

2024 SC PECAN MUSIC AND FOOD FESTIVAL, FLORENCE SC

https://www.scpecanfestival.com

Held in Downtown Florence, one mile from the Amtrak station. The northbound Palmetto 90 from Savannah, Yemassee, Charleston, and Kingstree arrives Florence (Amtrak Code = FLO) at 10:49am, and the southbound Palmetto 89 departs at 5:57pm, giving you over seven hours to enjoy the festival and see other Florence sights.

3 (Sunday)

CAROLINA PANTHERS vs NEW ORLEANS SAINTS, CHARLOTTE NC

Bank of America Stadium

9-10 (Saturday & Sunday)

NC COMICON, DURHAM NC

https://nccomicon.com/

Times are 10am-7pm on Saturday, 10am-5pm on Sunday. Held at Durham Convention Center, 301 W. Morgan Street, only a 7-minute walk along W. Main and E. Chapel Hill streets from the train station. All Piedmont and Carolinian trains between Charlotte and Raleigh serve Durham (Amtrak Code = DNC.) Carolinian 80 arrives DNC at 9:27am; Piedmont 73 from Raleigh and Cary at 10:32am. The return train in Charlotte direction is Carolinian 79 at 6:04pm, and trains in Raleigh direction are Piedmont 74 at 5:01pm and Piedmont 76 at 7:53pm.

24 (Sunday)
CAROLINA PANTHERS vs KANSAS CITY CHIEFS, CHARLOTTE NC
Bank of America Stadium

south Carolina has aggressively worked to expand and improve passenger rail opportunities in the Tarheel State. In this mid-October article in Columbia's *Post and Courier* newspaper, Josh Archote explains what's happened over the last 25 years to delay expansion of passenger rail between the Palmetto State's major cities. Click on the link below to learn more:

https://www.postandcourier.com/columbia/news/passenger-rail-sc-carolina-highways/article_8950efc4-7b4b-11ef-afed-038b4f9116f6.html

CAROLINAS' AMTRAK ROUTES -- THE PALMETTO 89/90 (New York-Savannah) --

This is the second of six articles that will feature the six Amtrak routes that originate in or pass through North and South Carolina. Unlike three other Carolinas trains – the *Crescent* (featured in August's *From the Cab*), the *Silver Star*, and the *Silver Meteor* – the *Palmetto* has no overnight portions, starting from Savannah northbound in the morning, and from New York southbound in the afternoon.

As shown in the timetables below, the *Palmetto* stops at four stations in NC (Rocky Mount, Wilson, Selma-Smithfield, and Fayetteville) and five stations in SC (Dillon, Florence, Kingstree, Charleston, and Yemassee.)

SOUTHBOUND PALMET	TO #89	NORTHBOUND PALMETTO #90		
Station (READ DOWN)	Scheduled	Station (READ DOWN)	Scheduled	
New York, NY (NYP)	Dp 602A	Savannah, GA (SAV)	Dp 735A	
Newark, NJ (NWK)	Dp 619A	Yemassee, SC (YEM)	Dp 823A	
Metropark, NJ (MET)	Dp 633A	Charleston, SC (CHS)	Dp 915A	
Trenton, NJ (TRE)	Dp 656A	Kingstree, SC (KTR)	Dp 1010A	
Philadelphia, PA (PHL)	Dp 732A	Florence, SC (FLO)	Dp 1054A	
Wilmington, DE (WIL)	Dp 754A	Dillon, SC (DIL)	Dp 1129A	
Baltimore, MD (BAL)	Dp 843A	Fayetteville, NC (FAY)	Dp 1222P	
BWI Airport, MD (BWI)	Dp 856A	Selma Smithfield, NC (SSM)	Dp 111P	
New Carrollton, MD (NCR)	= -	Wilson, NC (WLN)	Dp 143P	
Washington, DC (WAS)	Dp 959A	Rocky Mount, NC (RMT)	Dp 213P	
Alexandria, VA (ALX)	Dp 1018A	Petersburg, VA (PTB)	Dp 344P	
Richmond, VA (RVR)	Dp 1219P	Richmond, VA (RVR)	Dp 441P	
Petersburg, VA (PTB)	Dp 1254P	Alexandria, VA (ALX)	Dp 634P	
Rocky Mount, NC (RMT)	Dp 232P	Washington, DC (WAS)	Dp 757P	
Wilson, NC (WLN)	Dp 252P	New Carrollton, MD (NCR)	Dp 808P	
Selma Smithfield, NC (SSM)	Dp 322P	BWI Airport, MD (BWI)	Dp 824P	
Fayetteville, NC (FAY)	Dp 416P	Baltimore, MD (BAL)	Dp 842P	
Dillon, SC (DIL)	Dp 509P	Wilmington, DE (WIL)	Dp 929P	
Florence, SC (FLO)	Dp 557P	Philadelphia, PA (PHL)	Dp 955P	
Kingstree, SC (KTR)	Dp 633P	Trenton, NJ (TRE)	Dp 1026P	
Charleston, SC (CHS)	Dp 737P	Metropark, NJ (MET)	Dp 1048P	
Yemassee, SC (YEM)	Dp 826P	Newark, NJ (NWK)	Dp 1103P	
Savannah, GA (SAV)	Ar 925P	New York, NY (NYP)	Ar 1123P	

During 2022, the ranking of NC and SC stations by passenger activity is shown below, with 2021 and 2022 numbers for comparison (although those two years were COVID-affected.)

Activity by station					
	2020	2021	2022		
North Charleston Fayetteville Savannah , GA	20,012 18,711 11,533	16,532 17,462 10,514	32,208 28,711 23,161		
Wilson * Florence	17,735 14,278	13,838 11,898	21,479 20,139		
Rocky Mount	7,803	5,618	8,245		
Kingstree	3,526	3,124	4,560		
Dillon	3,435	3,080	4,130		
Yemassee	2,732	2,356	4,051		
SelmaSmithfield	3,199	2,196	3,980		

^{*}Amtrak Thruway Connection Station

For 2022, the Top Ten Station City Pairs by Ridership for the entire route were as shown below.

Top city pairs by ridership, 2022

1. New York, NY - Washington, DC	225 mi
2. New York, NY - Philadelphia, PA	91 mi
3. Philadelphia, PA - Washington, DC	134 mi
4. Richmond, VA - Washington, DC	109 mi
5. Baltimore, MD - Washington, DC	40 mi
6. North Charleston, SC - Savannah, GA	101 mi
7. Alexandria, VA - Richmond, VA	101 mi
8. Baltimore, MD - New York, NY	185 mi
9. Fayetteville, NC - Washington, DC	325 mi
10. Fayetteville, NC - New York, NY	550 mi

One convenient feature of the *Palmetto*, in either direction, is the ability to make shorter trips between select station cities in NC and SC. Southbound from NC, all five SC stations (and Savannah, GA) make for very convenient trips, as are northbound trips from South Carolina stations to all four stations in NC, as well as to Virginia cities (including Petersburg, Richmond, and Alexandria), Washington DC, and all listed stations through Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey on the way to New York. -- *David C. Robinson, August 30, 2024*

DRINKS AT THE MORGANTON DEPOT, NORTH CAROLINA NEXT TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 5:30 P.M.

Waiting for the Train is thrilled to announce our 2nd annual Drinks at the Depot event, coming down the tracks on **Tuesday**, **October 29th at 5:30 pm**. We're pulling into the **Historic Morganton Train Depot** for a night that promises to be as refreshing as it is inspiring.

It's **our biggest fundraising event of the year**, and we're inviting you to join us in laying the tracks for western North Carolina's transportation future. As we lift our glasses, we'll also be lifting our voices **in support of bringing passenger rail service back to our region.**

We've got a stellar **lineup of speakers** ready to share the latest updates on our passenger rail efforts. You'll hear firsthand how recent events, including the impact of Hurricane Helene, are shaping our path forward.

In addition to words from our Co-Founders, Barbara Lynam and Mimi Phifer, **several local elected officials**, including county commissioners, municipal council members, and state representatives will be on board, as well, **offering their views on the restoration of our rail service.**

Looking forward to seeing you there!

Yours till we ride the train together, Barbara and Mimi

Waiting For The Train: Citizens Working to Bring Passenger Train Service Back to Burke County

"Everything depends on local interest and local advocacy"

Website: waitingforthetrain.org

Facebook: <u>facebook.com/morgantonpassengertrain</u> **Instagram**: <u>instagram.com/morgantonpassengertrain</u>