

FRRS Vice-President
(Acting President)
Report - August 2016

There has been a lot of activity around the Museum in the last month, as well as with my personal issues. We started with the annual colonoscopy on July 19th, which, of course, included the day of prep and guzzling down that gallon of swill. Initial reports show my Crohn's to be nearly in remission, with minor issues of diverticulitis and two, not one, strictures (restrictions) to deal with in the future, and some other minor issues. Since then, I have not been doing all that well, with the return of cramps, pain, and that Greek bastard, diarrhea, being more common than I'd like. Flushing my guts out for the procedure is the reason for the return of the issues; hopefully, they will subside.

The first big item for the Museum was the UPHS visit on Thursday, July 28th. As reported earlier, I came up with a plan to run photo trains for this group, and, with the capable help of Fritz Elems, Bil (1L) Jackson, Ethan Doty, Dave Dodds, and Greg Elems, we put two trains together in the days before the visit, usually waiting till after dark to work, due to the brutal (for Portola) heat during the day. Once the 28th arrived, we were ready, and the plan was executed to perfection by Greg Elems and Ethan Doty on the passenger train, led by WP 805-A, Charlie Spikes and Steven Parry on the freight train, led by WP 2001, and Fritz Elems, Burr Wilson, and Jerry Norris on the caboose train, led by WP 1503. Bil Jackson assisted with the electric cart for a couple of visitors that needed a ride, as well as answering questions and helping out everywhere. I stationed myself at the photo runby location (the sewer crossing) with the group, and moved the trains as Yardmaster by radio. TRAINS magazine editor Jim Wrinn posted the photo runbys on TRAINS' website, and they received, so far, several thousand views. Bil's wife, Barbara, and my wife, Mary, set up and served the Subway lunches I got for the group, and Elise and Jean were in the WP Store. I had previously arranged with UPHS President Hilding Larson to charge \$12 per person for the UPHS visit; with 81 people on the tour, this came to \$972, however, Hilding wrote me a check for \$1200. Along with the Store sales and donations, the day's take was \$3190. Not bad for a three-hour visit. Most of these people also went on the tour to Rio Vista the next day, and Wayne Monger told me that the group was still worn out from the Portola trip, and that WPRM was all they were talking about.

Based on the communication I had with most of the Directors, I bought 3500 gallons of diesel fuel recently, which was put into our tank car, and then shortly afterward was transferred to our thirsty RAL fleet, as well as the 1503. All these engines are now full, and we should be good until next season. I don't have the exact price we paid for the fuel, but it will be around \$2.25 per gallon. I also ordered two barrels of lube oil for makeup to our fleet, since we are now out until the oil is delivered. I also ordered more Kroil, since we are almost out.

With the agreement with Bill Parker for use of his DRGW 01414 caboose in the caboose train, I told him we would replace the broken cupola window, as well as replace the embossed seat backs in the cupola (embossed with the Rio Grande logo). I am pleased to report that this work is completed. I took the broken window out, had it repaired in Quincy, and reinstalled it. Barbara Jackson started her project to repair/ replace our bad caboose cushions by replacing the embossed seat backs with new ones she made, which were installed by 1L and Fritz (who also removed the old ones). Per Bill's request, his embossed cushions are now stored in a secure location. The DRGW caboose has generated several favorable comments since it has joined the caboose train, and I like the added capacity it provides.

Our bookkeeper, Susan Scarlett, recently noticed that our AT&T phone bills had gone up dramatically. I dug through my stack of paperwork and found a letter I overlooked that said our preferred rate contract was expiring, which happened in June because of my mistake. I got on the horn with AT&T and got a new contract rate established, which is actually lower than what we had been paying. We should start seeing the new rates in September, and will be fully in effect by October. I apologize to the Board for this error on my part.

I have been attending the Railroad Days committee meetings since June, except for a couple I missed due to being in Elko. We are, as expected, a big part of the event, and the book signing we have set up with author Janet Dawson on Saturday, August 27th, is highly anticipated. I am still working to get UP off top dead center and get us something for display for Railroad Days. Retired UP CMO Bill Wimmer, touring with the UPHS group (also an FRRS member), lamented some of the current slate of people involved with running the UP, and wished us luck in future dealings with the railroad, in the conversation I had with him.

The work on "Christine" continues, with the goal of having her ready for Railroad Days. Most of the painting is completed, and I have received the new windows for the caboose, and am currently prepping the frames. Ken Chapin has done the lion's share of the painting, and has contributed toward the project with purchases out of his pocket. Matt Parker has spent several hours painting and working inside the caboose, coming over on his days off between trips. So far, I have spent just over \$1000 of my own money for windows, paint, and other supplies on this project, but the end is in sight.

Bob Sims transferred 100 shares of Wal-Mart stock to our broker, with instructions to sell for cash. The sale took place at the 52-week high for the stock, netting proceeds of \$7468.12, of which all but \$2000 is for the 165 (the rest went toward the fuel we bought). With these funds, we have bought several tools and supplies deemed necessary for sandblasting and painting the tender tanks and tender frame, prior to reuniting the tanks and the frame. Plans are being finalized for the work sessions needed to complete this work, with Chris Allan and Bob Sims coordinating.

We recently did some sound recordings for another model railroad sound provider, brought to us by Life Member Larry Hanlon. With the very capable help of

Fritz Elems and Ethan Doty, and assistance from Life Members John Ryczkowski and Dave McClain, many of our engines were run through their paces for the recording over a two-day period, including 2001, 805-A, 1503, 1100, and 917-D. The sound guy (I can't recall his name) signed up as an Active member, stayed overnight in the sleeper, and then made a sizable donation (\$500) to the Museum for our efforts. Larry and Ski each also gave me checks for \$500 for the 1503 fund, in memory of Rod (Dave made a sizable donation toward the 1503 fund last year).

After Railroad Days and the conclusion of our regular operating season on Labor Day weekend, we will start the transition into some new events for us, Pumpkin Trains and the Chili Cook-off, coming in October. David Epling tells me he has secured a supply of 200 pumpkins for the Pumpkin Trains, and I have a plan for the train we will be running, but more work and help is needed to finalize our plans. Eugene is the point man for the Chili Cook-off, so I won't say much about that here. Then, of course, we will be preparing for our 25th annual Santa Trains, with several new ideas being put forth.

Steve Habeck (PT)