

FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY

DATE: March 2018
ITEM: President's Report
FROM: Steve Habeck

While very little has been going on around the Museum lately, we have all managed to stay busy. The big storm last week dumped close to 2 feet of snow in Portola, in three waves over 3 days. Ethan has the Museum plowed out and accessible, with the usual sloppy conditions due to the weather warming up.

One project that got done was the battery work on SP TR6A 1100. Previously, CMO 1L Jackson disconnected and removed all the intermediate battery cables and hardware from the batteries, in anticipation of removing them and replacing them with the new batteries we purchased. However, I overlooked the fact that the battery boxes on the 1100 had been modified with structural braces to only accept smaller (8" wide) batteries; the new ones are larger (11" wide), and will not fit without significant work to the boxes. So, I decided to clean and inspect the existing battery terminals and cables, and reinstall everything. In this process, I found evidence (melted lead and copper, air gaps, and other damage) that we had at least three high-resistance connections in the battery box that were sufficient to drop the voltage to the starter windings enough so that it wouldn't start. With Ethan's help, I cleaned all the battery terminals, cables (three had to be replaced due to damage), and battery nuts (many of which also had to be replaced), and reinstalled all the hardware, paying particular attention to ensure solid connections at the three trouble spots. After completion of this work, all 8 batteries were found to be holding at 9 volts or more, despite having been in the shop, in the cold, and not charged since Santa Trains. We closed the battery switch, and had 73 volts available; turning on the headlights, running lights, radio, and fuel pump only dropped the voltage to about 68 volts. I feel that these batteries are still in good condition, and now, with good connections, the 1100 should start easily. The new batteries may need to be installed in the 2873, which needed a lot of TLC to get it started for the rotary run for channel 10 on February 16th.

On February 16th, Jon Bartels of channel 10 in Sacramento came to Plumas County to do a couple of stories, one of which was running the rotary at the WPRM. Although the day started out cold, we had no snow to plow. The previous day (Thursday), Ethan, 1L, and I got the 2873 and the rotary snail started, and tested everything out prior to Bartels' visit. This got the engines warmed up thoroughly, so we didn't have to drain them overnight, despite the cold temps. The next morning, both engines started up without assistance, surprising everyone. The plan was for Bartels to show up around 9:30 and spend a couple of hours with us; he was there just before 9:30, but wound up staying nearly 4 hours. He shot a lot of footage, and did a lot of interviews, for what will probably be a 2-minute segment when it airs. Ethan Doty, Greg Elems, Bil Jackson, Charlie Spikes, Duane VanderVeen, and myself were the crew for the shoot, and Bartels was very impressed, as was Patty Clawson from Big Fish (our promoter), who was also there. Photos from the event, as well as the actual footage that airs, will be posted on the website as soon as it's available.

As I mentioned, we have stayed busy despite little activity at the Museum. Ethan and KC are completing the year-end inventory in the WP Store, and when completed, they plan to update the store computer, and transfer the data to our newer Vend system, which will support an

online WP Store. We're getting there! Eugene and I have been spending hours daily on FRRS business, which doesn't show up in the physical plant, but is absolutely necessary to keep the FRRS in business. I am still immersed in the process of finalizing our new track lease arrangement with UP, and have updated the Operating Department with information they need to update our bulletins. A laminated drawing from UP is posted in the Ops Office, showing the lease boundaries, and a copy of the lease will be available for review. (This is just the track lease/interchange agreement, and is separate from our property lease, which is also under review by UP.) I have also just received our new liability insurance policy (45 pages). Although I haven't yet reviewed it in detail, it appears to be in order, with the new limits as required by UP, and with UP listed as an additional insured. The policy is in effect from 2/1/2018 until 2/1/2019.

Additionally, I'm still trying to get moved into our new house, and trying to get a trip or two in with UP to maintain some income. We've had to spend some time moving snow around our house, too. Lastly, I want to thank Director Roger Stabler for allowing us to hold the February Board meeting in his private car, "*Two Rivers*", in Woodland last month. It was a refreshing getaway for some of us, and we got some socializing in, too.