

President's Report

April 2019

Once again, we have survived the winter here in Portola. February was brutal this year, with many storms and lots of snow. However, we used this to our advantage by setting up and running a rotary snowplow train in March as a fundraiser, which was more successful than I had ever imagined. The photos and videos speak for themselves, and are a tribute to the crew of volunteers at the Museum that put in the necessary work in advance to make it happen. Included in this elite bunch are Bil Jackson, Charlie Spikes, Duane VanderVeen, Ethan Doty, David (Fritz) Elems, Greg Elems, and a little help from yours truly. The marketing for the fundraising aspect of this event was handled by Eugene Vicknair and Patty Clawson from Big Fish. Discussions are being held as to preparing to do this again next year.

The saga of the passenger cars on the West Pass may finally be coming to a conclusion. Ryan (don't have his last name handy), who is the maintenance man for the UP's *Sunset* and *Stanford* in Oakland, was sent up to Portola to inspect the cars for movement. A minor defect was noted on each car, and I agreed to get them corrected. Fritz Elems has already repaired the problem on Doyle McCormack's sleeper (loose steps in the trap on the north side), and has a plan to fix the problem on the VIA lounge car, which involves better securement of the water fill door latch on the south side of the car. Once these are corrected, I will get with Ryan and Jon Clark so they can work on getting the cars moved.

Another back-burner item has resurfaced. One of the museums in Arizona that wants one of the beet gons has contacted us for information, and plans to get their car moved out soon. The other Arizona museum that also wants a beet gon says they're currently unable to move their car, so it's still on hold.

I have ordered the signs for the troop sleeper acknowledging the donation of the new mattresses by Boy Scout Troop 341 in Carson City, NV, and I should have them next week, and I will install them in the car. We still need to clean up the car, and distribute the new mattresses.

The Museum is currently in Maintenance mode; we are set up to support maintenance on the locomotive fleet to the maximum extent possible. This will continue well into May, until it's time to get the caboose train ready. I have authorized the maintenance crew to buy the parts

and supplies they need to get the maintenance done, and the work is ongoing, as schedules of the volunteers allow. We are still not sure if the batteries in SP 1100 will be able to start the engine, let alone be reliable for the RAL program; testing and servicing continues. We are discussing plans to swap batteries around to try and get reliable starting for the RAL fleet, but we are running out of options, other than buying new batteries. I will still need to buy fuel for the locomotives soon, and we need to fill our gas and diesel cans, but prices are quite high right now. We'll have to get some cans filled, anyway.

I am also working with Eugene and KC to buy stuff for the convention and the WP Store; these plans are coming together, and we should be ready for sales at the convention. Hopefully we will be able to buy enough stuff to stock the WP Store, as well as support the convention. We are focusing on Jeff Asay's books, as well as Janet Dawson's CZ mystery books, since both authors will be at the convention and will be available to sign their books. These books also sell well in the WP Store, so we look forward to stocking up.

While my recovery from my intestinal bleeding episode continues to go well, I somehow managed to get an infection in my right elbow that required a visit to the emergency room to get treatment. Between the pain, extensive bandages, and drainage arrangement, I was out of commission for a couple of days, and had to miss a trip at work. I'll get an update after the doctor's visit next week. This is not something I can take lightly, since the biologic I take for my Crohn's Disease weakens the immune system, and infections can have drastic effects.

Steven J. Habeck

President, FRRS