

President's Report

—Rod McClure, FRRS President

First, some department changes:

Trainsheet Editor: Matt Elems is now the Editor for The Trainsheet. He is more than qualified to do this as long as we help him with articles. This has been a problem for the last few years, lack of input. I am guilty of that along with many of you, so let's change this. I will be first to start by writing my President's message for the next edition along with the future ones. I am no longer asking, but demanding that all of you on the Board and Department heads write something for publication at least every other edition. If I can do it, so can you.

Fund Raising Department Head: Eugene Vicknair has been requesting this for sometime and now that he has shed a bunch of his other duties, he will be in charge of Fund Raising, including year-end fund raiser, grant writing and the like. The Grant writing projects will be approved by the Board as before.

Historical Department Convention Manager: Eugene Vicknair will be handling the yearly process of finding a Convention Chairman, and all other details. This will include being responsible for any monies spent and an accounting to the Board of any Convention expenses and profits.

Santa Train Coordinator: Steve Habeck will now assume all duties and responsibilities for our yearly Santa Trains. This includes getting enough volunteers for all positions, advertising, and fund raising for this event.

Insurance Manager: Rick Gruninger will be our Insurance Manager. This will include making sure our existing policies are sufficient for our needs. He will explain any details of our coverage on an as needed basis and will inform the Board of any possible liabilities that may come up.

Other Items of Note:

Now, I have missed the last couple of meetings due to work and vacation. We have addressed a few things during the year that were needed. The biggest one has been the repairs to our White Fork Lift. I have put out instructions on its operation as a big chunk of the money we spent having it repaired is due to abuse and improper operation. If you have questions on operating it or need to be qualified to operate it, let me know. The days of anyone jumping on it only to abuse it are over. This also goes for other museum equipment like the electric cart, extending boom forklift, back hoe, etc.

Another is the need to replace the heater in the Shower Car with a more efficient one, as the old one wastes a lot of propane for little heat. I also have inquired into the cost of adding a heating element to the Sleeping Car. We now have more volunteers here working during the winter and the safety hazard of using the portable heaters is of real concern.

In talking with the De-accession Committee, they will be presenting a list of equipment for scrapping later this year. I am sure that there will be some resistance to this but it is for the benefit of our museum. As with the prior scrapping, we will hear from members and rail-fans that we are evil for doing this. We continue to refine the collection to focus on Western Pacific equipment, and while we are sensitive to these concerns, if naysayers don't come forward with a suitable home or the money to do something with it, then there ends the debate. As you may or may not know, with the changes in the UP policy of moving locomotives without alignment control couplers, we have to either have something moved on a flat car or trucked. This limits finding new homes for some of our de-assessed locomotives. Let's remember our Mission Statement and why we do what we do here. I have noticed that some are forgetting it or interpreting it their own way.

As I am talking about surplus equipment, the SP4404 has left Portola and arrived at its new home in Washington State where Western

Rail is going to give it a new lease on life. The MILW 5057 is ready to leave Portola and head to its new home with the Cascade Rail Foundation in Cle Elum, Washington after some last minute work to the brakes. The VIA Lounge car will be headed back to Canada early next year. We have a possible new home for the Baldwin AS616 #4, which will leave the #3 which we would like to get back into operation.

The WP 501 has had its engine problems repaired and though we are still working on many little issues, the 501 should be alive next year and you will see it on the caboose train! Thanks to Dave McClain, Dwight Whetstone, David Elems, and Charlie Spikes for all their work on this project.

Dave McClain and Dwight Whetstone also replaced a bad cylinder liner in the WP 707. David Elems (Fritz) spent most of the winter rebuilding the reverser drum, replacing water hoses, and machining new fittings in WP 917, making it reliable for all this years RAL's. His dad, Greg, has been slowly working on the body rot on nose of the 917. It looks ugly right now, but is necessary to begin the process of restoring the body and paint on this engine.

The Gift Shop is doing better this year than the last three years. Besides a increase in visitors and them spending more money, Gail has changed what the store sells in a lot of areas that seem to be popular with the general public who visit us. Interestingly, in reading other organizations newsletters (Western Rail Museum-Rio Vista, CSRM, to name a few) they are also seeing and increase in visitors and spending this year. I will leave a detailed report on the Gift Shop to Gail.

I will be sitting down with Mike Mucklin very soon and working together to get the Archives and Historical Department back up to speed and things getting done. I would like to have an outline and plan put together to tell you about in the next Trainsheet. Regardless of a few naysayers and untrue rumors, I, and the Board, care very much about the Archives and Historical Department and want to have it move forward in the best way possible for the organization as a whole. More on this soon.

Until next time,
WP Lives
Rod McClure



WRIX 4404 (Formerly SP 4404), still in SP's "Bloody Nose" paint, receives facial reconstruction surgery. The locomotive is seen here getting new alignment-control couplers for the move to Western Rail's shops.

—Bob Sims Photo