

FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY AGENDA REPORT

DATE: December 31, 2005
FROM: Director Vicknair
ITEM: Old Business 2
SUBJECT: **FRRS Membership Drive**

The Society current has 992 total members breaking down as follows:

	US	Foreign	
Active	478	8	
Associate	67		
Comp	42		
Family	88		
Family Life	63		
Historical	2	3	(retired category)
Life	223	6	
Sustaining	12		
total	975	17	

This number has been declining slowly for several years (although there have been several new members joining in the past 2 months, mostly via the PayPal website). To maintain a support base for the Society and the museum, we need to find ways to increase our membership.

Looking at other museums, there are many ideas that have been tried to varying levels of success. I propose that we implement the following actions:

- Gift Membership Drive – give a membership to a friend for ½ price (Active or higher level only)
- Discount Memberships – if a non-member purchases a combo rental, they can get an Active or higher level membership for ½ price
- Advertising Drive – use magazines and newspapers
- Active Solicitation – at events like Santa Train or Railroad Days have special flyers given with ticket sales discussing membership and its benefits
- Hold Member Only Events – a Members Day, special Members Only excursions, etc.

I would like to set a goal of 100 new or upgraded memberships by January 2007. Costs would involve mainly lost revenue from discounted memberships (unknown as based on number sold),

printing for special flyers (under \$400 for 1000 half sheet prints) and any costs involved in holding a special member day event (unknown, but likely under \$1000).

Based on last year's budget report and the current membership numbers, each member costs the Society an average of \$20.50 to service, based on Headlight, Train Sheet, Election and related membership maintenance costs. (Some levels are different. Associate, for example, costs less due to not receiving the Headlight.) Based on this, I recommend that we limit the membership discounts to Active and higher levels.

As directed by President McClure at the December meeting, I am exploring realigning our Life Membership levels again and simplifying them, along with other Membership levels. Jay Sarno and others have recommended ending the "age based" Life Membership scheme and going to a higher flat rate. Based on Mr. Sarno's calculations of needed income from the Life Member dues, he estimates that a Life Member rate of \$2500 should be instituted.

There have also been recommendations to drop the Sustaining as a level or else give it more differentiation from the other membership levels. This should be discussed at a later meeting.

I am seeking Board Approval for a Membership Drive using the strategies outlined above and with a budget authorization of \$1500 on a funds available basis from line item 67184 – Membership Expense (other).

ACTION: Discussion, Possible Action

Reference – Current Membership Structure

- Associate membership does not have a vote, receive The Train Sheet but not The Headlight and are for one person only. \$20.00 annually (35.00 foreign).
- Active memberships receive both The Train Sheet and The Headlight, have voting rights and are for one person only. \$40.00 annually (55.00 foreign).
- Family memberships receive both The Train Sheet and The Headlight, have one vote and include all members of ones immediate family. \$60.00 annually (75.00 foreign).
- Sustaining memberships receive both The Train Sheet and The Headlight, are for a maximum of two persons with one vote each. \$100.00 annually (115.00 foreign).
- Life memberships receive both The Train Sheet and The Headlight, have voting rights and are for one person only for life.
 - Birth-17 years of age \$1200.00 or (5 payments of 280.00)
 - Age 18-39 \$900.00 or (5 payments of 220.00)
 - Age 40-61 \$600.00 or (5 payments of 160.00)
 - Age 62 and above \$300.00 or (5 payments of 100.00)
- Family Life memberships receive both The Train Sheet and The Headlight, are for a maximum of two people and have two votes (one per member) for life.
 - Birth-17 years of age \$1800.00 or (5 payments of 420.00)
 - Age 18-39 \$1350.00 or (5 payments of 330.00)
 - Age 40-61 \$900.00 or (5 payments of 240.00)
 - Age 62 and above \$450.00 or (5 payments of 150.00)