

From the President

By Jim Murphy

Well, it's the end of another tourist season in Portola. It's that time of year when all the locals come back out and take an occasional drive to Graeagle without feeling like they're in the LA area.

At the Portola Railroad Museum it's time to start closing everything up for the winter and start planning for the New Year. Steve Habeck reported another successful Truckee Railroad Days event. This year's event was special with the return of the orange and silver to the Feather River Canyon route. A special thank you is in order to Steve Habeck and Rod McClure who worked endless hours at organizing the trip and working out all the logistics with the UP.

If a wildland fire and UP derailment weren't enough... they were in Oroville when the September 11th attacks occurred.

Thank you to Steve Habeck, Rod McClure, Greg Elems, Jerry Williams, Vic Neves, Frank Brehm, Eugene Vicknair, John Walker, Hank Stiles, Janis Stiles, Dave Bergman, Alan Hirasawa, and Doug Morgan who all worked in Truckee to make the event successful. Ken Iverson, Norm Holmes and Kenny Roller remained in Portola and had their hands full keeping the Museum open to the public.

Vic Neves staged an excellent Railfan Day program. While the event was held only four days after the September 11 attacks, there weren't many people traveling. Those who were present were elated with the program and I was impressed with Vic's ability to move a lot of equipment around and present some great photo opportunities.

On October 20th Tom Graham coordinated a "Prepare the Museum for Winter" workday. They got a lot accomplished and it was refreshing to see everyone working together and helping each other. Probably the most hilarious sight for everyone was seeing Sam Herschbien (our webmaster) covered in grease from head-to-toe. I'm positive Sam found some muscles that he didn't know he had the next morning. I bet it was a slow drive back to Washington for Sam.

Thank you to Tom Graham for coordinating the workday, Judy Mcgrath, Melissa Mcgrath, Art Young, Jeff Palmer, Stewart Dorsey, John Rese, Dave Kantoff, Sam Herschbien, Loran Ross, Alan Hirasawa, Rod McClure, Norman Holmes, Barbara Holmes, Andy Anderson,, Gayle Anderson, Jack Ziegler, Debbie Murphy, Jim Tigan, Leslie Tigan, and Ken Roller.

At the end of the day we all took pleasure in feasting on Jim Tigan's barbecuing and we allowed him to entertain us with his humor at no extra charge. We enjoyed steak dinner and chicken with potato and macaroni salads, garlic bread and plenty of soft drinks.

What's up between now and next spring? The Board of Directors are currently working on budgets and projects for the next fiscal year. We got a lot accomplished in the form of restorations this past year. I hope we can keep it up. I'd like to see at least one restoration each year with some additional

focus on improving facilities. In addition we need to re-construct the Magnolia Tower on the Museum facility and start work on the Old Western Pacific Hospital restoration.

Most of the winter will be spent on getting our filing systems in order and Kerry Cochran is working on many policies and procedures and preparing new manuals that will help guide us all with our responsibilities within the FRRS framework. We're looking into re-keying the entire facility, improving the telephone system and computer networking the entire facility.

It's time to start thinking about next year's Board of Director elections. Hank Stiles, Frank Brehm and Andy Anderson's terms all expire. Tom Graham is once again chairing the election committee and has submitted his election calendar and instructions on the process. They should be part of this newsletter, if not we'll post them on the wplives.org web site.

In conclusion, my term as the President of the FRRS Board of Directors is half over. To say that it hasn't been controversial or without incident is an understatement. I hope that our membership can understand that the majority of the Board of Directors have sought to achieve accountability, fairness and fiscal management in FRRS business transactions this past six months. When the membership has detected turmoil, controversy or disagreement among the Directors it was usually the result of differences in opinion on process formalities vs. the "way we always used to do it." Change is always hard for any organization, but it is even harder when you have an organization of volunteers who all chip in and perform "hands on" labor to make the organizational mission a reality.

I ask each of you that have become alarmed or concerned about the rumblings abounding in the FRRS to evaluate the changes that have been implemented and to inquire why they were implemented before you rush to judgment on any individuals. Especially judgment that is based on third hand information or the perception of an old friend who is reacting to change, but who may not fully understand the reasons why it was necessary to start operating like a professional business.

I am confident that if the membership takes the time to visit the Museum, or use some of the other member services, you will begin to notice some of the organizational changes and some of the business management changes that have been put in place by your Board of Directors. If you don't agree with certain issues, let me know. I'm available at Portola City Hall during business hours (530-832-4216) or at home (530-832-5202.)

As spring approaches you will be hearing about several special work weekends. I encourage anyone interested in helping out to plan on participating. We're trying very hard to make them some work, a lot of fun, some railroading stories with slide presentations and a lot of camaraderie.

I wish our entire membership an enjoyable, relaxing and rewarding holiday season. Merry Christmas and Happy New year!