

President's Report for October 2018

With the needs of the operating season behind us, we have been able to rearrange the Museum yard to facilitate the Pumpkin Trains setup, as well as mechanical department work. Refer to David Elems' report for the plans for the mechanical work. We also hosted the Steam Crew for their fall work week last week; Roger will have an update on what they accomplished. Seth Adams was here this week, and was successful in starting WP 501; however, many issues remain to be resolved before it's return to service. We also placed Doyle McCormack's sleeper on the Rip track, where it was jacked up, and the west truck removed. The wheels from that truck then made a fast turnaround to Amtrak's Oakland shop to be turned on their wheel lathe, and returned to Portola to be reinstalled, and the truck replaced under the car. Unfortunately, the wheels on the east truck also need to be turned prior to the car being moved, so another session of jacking up the car, removing the truck and wheelsets, getting them turned, and replacing them under the car is planned for November. We gained a lot of experience with this type of work; David Elems, myself, and Ethan Doty all learned new things, with lots of help from Roger Stabler, Steve Lee, and Wayne Yetter and his crew. Also, thanks to Ben Pechner for arranging to get a truck and trailer to transport the wheelsets to Oakland and back (overnight). While this work has taken some of us away from other Museum work, Doyle and his 4449 crew have acknowledged our help and cooperation in getting his car moved, and will be remembered for it.

KC and Ali are charging ahead with their plans for the Pumpkin Trains; their enthusiasm and creativity is refreshing to watch and see in action. Unfortunately, group after group of service organizations, schools, and others have backed out or are otherwise unable to help out with our event. This may result in very thin staffing for us, and the need to be in several places at once; just so everyone is aware of the potential situation. It's disappointing, given the amount of work being put into the event. This year, we have opted to remove the diner from the Pumpkin Train due to issues we observed last year; it's in the shop as a lounge for the event. The train will use 6 cabooses and the baggage car, pulled by our 2001. We have planned ahead, with the cabooses in the same order as needed for the Santa Trains; running the power cords through the train will not have to be changed for the Santa Trains, saving us setup time between events.

I have been in contact with Bill Hartman, a Scoutmaster from Troop 341 in Reno. He is working with Reno Mattress to get custom mattresses made for the troop sleeper, using the measurements we provided to him. His plan is to have the Museum pay for the mattresses, and then he will make a donation to us for the cost; he has asked that we put a sign or plaque in the troop sleeper acknowledging Troop 341 for their donation. I told him we will gladly comply with this request.

The Fall fundraiser has pretty much run its course; we are still getting an occasional envelope in the mail. I am not aware of how many people donated via PayPal or other sources, but I have 47 responses by mail as of 10/12, for a total of \$7045. we also had the usual people that used the fundraiser envelope for their dues renewal, with no additional donation.

Work on the 849 is complete; Western Rail paid us to have David Elems and Ethan Doty finish the work on the engine (with a lot of help by various volunteers). It is now WRIX 849, and will leave as soon as it's billed out.

Due to a lack of communication, and an improper response by me, we had some ruffled feathers regarding the plans by several people to get the Train Sheet on track. I believe we have settled the issues I had. One of my concerns was that we would not have sufficient funds for the schedule they presented, given that we have ordered injectors and lube oil for the 707 project (and the RAL fleet), and

that we need to order diesel fuel. However, Bob Sims has donated 78 shares of Wal-Mart stock that we recently sold; this will net us just over \$7000, which was originally intended for fuel, lube oil, and paint for 1503. I have discussed this with Bob, and he has agreed to let us use some of these funds for Train Sheet publication, to keep the plan for accelerated Train Sheet production viable. Further discussion will occur in the Board meeting, and onward.

My reaction to the Train Sheet plan because of budget issues requires me to bring up another cold, hard fact. We are soon entering our off-season, with little income coming in, but expenses continuing (our electric bill and propane bills actually go up in the winter). It typically costs the FRRS about \$30K in expenses to get from October till April. After the Pumpkin Trains and Santa Trains, the drain on our finances begins in earnest. I welcome discussion and ideas as to how we can lessen the impact of this situation, which occurs every winter. I have some suggestions, but they may prove to be unpopular.

I have been contacted by a guy in the Sacramento area (Hubert Hanrahan) that apparently has a garage full of various passenger car parts and pieces he is interested in donating, since he is moving to Southern CA and can't take this stuff with him. I asked for some kind of inventory as to what he has, but have not yet received it. He did tell me he has fixtures, seats, doors, and other miscellaneous stuff; some for Budd cars. Eugene will get his contact information for possible follow-up. If we are interested, it will probably involve renting a truck to get this stuff.

Lastly, my health issues are slowly progressing for the better. I have started my new medication therapy, after being in the hospital 3 times this summer with intestinal blockages. I appreciate everyone's patience with my episodes of flare-ups, sickness, and inability to keep up the pace. It frustrates me more than you may realize.

Steve Habeck
President, FRRS