

President's Report

August 2019

First, I apologize to all the FRRS Directors, Officers, and Department Heads for entirely missing the meeting in July; I was having major issues with my Crohn's Disease and its complications. Since then, with careful manipulation of my diet and avoiding overexertion, I have been able to return to the Museum, although on a limited basis, compared to what I expect of myself. I have also been taken off work due to my issues, so I have no income at a very bad time for me financially, adding to my stress levels. As most of you know and have experienced, I have been very difficult to work with, especially leading up to the WP Celebration event. Again, I must apologize to everyone who had the misfortune of dealing with me in these last two weeks; my frustration over my lack of production, as well as my personal perception of the condition of the Museum, resulted in unacceptable behavior on my part. For my entire working career, I have been in jobs/industries where perfection is demanded and expected, and recognition of work done well is scarce, or nonexistent. Living in this environment for nearly 50 years has left me finding it very difficult to expect anything less than the best performance from everyone, and I find it very difficult to express my thanks and gratitude to the volunteers, since in my working career, my best was always expected, without recognition, and I just got used to that's the way it was. I know I have to work hard at improving this, and I have a long way to go.

Now, on to Museum issues. We have finally gotten into the heat of the summer, with highs in the 80's-90's, and some days with high humidity to boot. As you might expect, this has frayed some already-stretched nerves and tolerance amongst the volunteers (see preceding paragraph). Fortunately, Bob Sims was at the ready with the swamp coolers he bought, and they have been getting a workout. They are staged in the WP Store, Ops Office, and other locations as necessary (Sweetwood, MoP baggage/archive car, east end of shop). The heat has also brought out the bane of the Museum, the wasps; there are a lot of them, and they are active, requiring almost daily eradication measures.

With the new batteries in the electric cart, Vince Bonfiglio found all sorts of problems with it. The batteries were installed incorrectly (backwards, which is how the old ones came out), all the lights were blown out, and none of the accessories worked. After several days of work, the cart is now essentially fully operational, and we have an electrical diagram of the cart's systems as they now are, and a folder for the paperwork. Thanks, Vince, for tackling this problem. Additionally, this cart is not an all-terrain vehicle; it is NOT to be used for greasing the balloon, or other off-road adventures.

I was beginning to get worried about running out of fuel in the RAL fleet, so we finally got around to filling SP 1100, and putting 870 gallons in the SP 2873 (although the fuel log said we only had 514 gallons in the tank car). The tank car is still not empty, and the 2873 is not full, but we can operate for the remainder of the season now. However, we will need to order fuel the next time anything needs fuel. I encourage the train crews and RAL engineers to shut the locomotive down during lunch breaks and longer intervals between RAL's. We may issue an Operating Bulletin soon to address this.

The next piece of equipment that will probably need a new battery is the 3-wheel electric forklift. Despite massaging the battery on its charger and ensuring the cells have water, the battery is showing definite signs of end-of-life failure. This battery is at least 23 years old, so failure is not unexpected. It is a 36-volt, 18-cell unitized battery; initial searches for pricing show \$4K- \$6K for a new one. I do not recommend getting a reconditioned battery; they are nearly as expensive as a new one, and subject to failure at any time. With available funds allotted to the 1503's radiators, I'm not sure when we can replace this battery, but this forklift is essential to heavy work in the shop, due to its tight turning radius and maneuverability. I must also put in a reminder that locomotive batteries are high on my wish list, and could go to the mandatory needs list at any time. We have no spares, so the next battery failure takes another locomotive out of service.

Updates on WP 1503 will, I'm sure, be covered elsewhere; however, I did buy some outdoor orange reflective tape for edging the engine steps and pilot plates. This tape will be going on soon. One interesting development we discovered during the painting of the 1503: we ran out of primer, and had to search for paint stores in Reno that could help us out. Roger found a place called Industrial Finishes, which was able to help with the primer and paint (yes, we ran out of paint, too). While Roger was talking to them on the phone, I was looking at their website, and noticed that they had acquired Barrett Paint in Reno eight years ago. We used to have an account with Barrett (we got all our paint for the 2001, 707, baggage car, 428, 25283, and others) from Barrett, before they went out of business (or so we thought). Turns out our account from Barrett was transferred over to Industrial Finishes, and was still active, making it much easier to get the paint and supplies we needed.

Reports on the WP Celebration are probably submitted elsewhere; the total 2-day gross in the WP Store was \$4591, and I took the large deposits from the weekend to the bank on Tuesday, and got them safely deposited. The event was a great success, in my opinion, and I thank everyone who participated in the success of this event by whatever means they utilized (planning, participation, donations, or a combination thereof). Some lessons for future events like this were learned and will be discussed and implemented. Planning has already gotten underway for the Pumpkin Trains in October.

The Museum hosted one of a series of meet-and-greets in Plumas and Lassen Counties on Friday, August 9th, held by California First District Congressman Doug LaMalfa and his staff. Although lightly attended, the Museum and our volunteers had everything ready, including the PA system, plenty of seating, and tables for the refreshments (and our brochures). With some encouragement from Patty Clawson of Big Fish, the Congressman signed up as an Active member of the FRRS, and is looking forward to receiving the *Headlight*.

Steve Habeck (PT)