To: FRRS Board of Directors
From: Paul Finnegan, Webmaster
Re: Museum Web Page
Date: June 3, 2020

COVID-19 Update

The website has been kept up to date with all the new museum information regarding the COVID-19 health emergency. The home page, the Latest Museum News column, the calendars, etc. have been updated as I received material.

Another Hostmonster Issue

On Wednesday May 13th, I received an email from Hostmonster, our website service provider that there would be a scheduled maintenance downtime on Friday May 15th starting at 8 p.m. PDT. I posted the information to the Latest Museum News column on May 13th. On Saturday morning, I had received the agenda and reports for the May FRRS Board Meeting. About 5:30 a.m., I processed them as usual on my home UNIX system and tried to upload them to Hostmonster. The file transfer failed. I tried to login at Hostmonster, it also failed. The website was up, but I could not update it. I contacted Hostmonster technical support and after an hour of work convinced the front line support person there was a Hostmonster problem from the maintenance done Friday night. An escalation ticket, #22594257, was opened. I continued to contact Hostmonster on Sunday and Monday to track the progress. I had to wait until the issue was resolved on Tuesday morning before I could update the website.

Train Sheet References

In January 2016, I created the Train Sheet Master Index. This is a webpage that lists the titles, authors and subjects for past issues of the *Train Sheet* that are more than a year old. Each entry has a link to a PDF file of the issue of the *Train Sheet* with the related article. Each link included the page number of the article. On desktops, the link would cause the web browser to download the PDF file and jump to the page of the article. Later, I added the links for specific pieces of equipment to the various collection pages.

There were two known weaknesses with this implementation. On a desktop, neither was a serious issue if the user had a good internet connection. The same was not true for a mobile device user.

The first problem was regardless of the size of the article, the entire PDF was downloaded. The second problem was, on at least some mobile devices, the jump-to-page feature did not work and the user was left looking at the cover page of the *Train Sheet* issue and had to scroll down to find the correct page.

This month I created small PDF files that start on each page of the old *Train Sheet*s. Each file would be either a single page or a couple pages if the articles continued on another page. Then I went back and changed the tool that creates the Train Sheet Master Index and collection pages to now reference the smaller PDF files. Now all users will link to the correct starting page of the articles and the file download is significantly smaller. I created 2,998 "page" files from the 180 issues in the archive. In the future as new issues are posted to the online archive, each issue's pages will be extracted in addition to the "whole" file (which is used elsewhere in the website.)

This will significantly improve the performance of the links to *Train Sheet* articles.

Webcam Issue

Last month I reported about the new webcam system I put online. It has been working properly. We have received complaints from one (non-member) user about the reliability of the webcam service. To accurately monitor the service, I have added more detailed logging of the system performance and will report on it next month.

Website Audit

In January 2017, I started creation of a tool suite that performs an extensive audit of our website. Over the years I have added additional features to it to help identify issue with our website. With the shelter in place order, I have had additional time to further refine and enhance the set of tools. Over the past year some issue arose that required that the audit tool be significantly enhanced to properly function; this task is now completed.

During the last two weeks of May, I ran the tool several times (each run takes about three hours on my home UNIX system) and worked through all the errors, warnings and notes it reported. The audit currently searches for 59 different types of errors (e.g. spelling errors, broken links, mobile redirection issues), 13 possible warnings (e.g. pages that are not linked to the public, i.e. orphan pages) and 8 notes (e.g. link with http:// rather than https://).

I also have configured the audit tool to automatically run once a week and send me a report so I can fix anything that it detects almost real time.

From the public user standpoint, the website is now clean (again).

General Items

5/13/20 – Posted Hostmonster scheduled downtime in Latest Museum News column for 5/15/20.

5/14/20 – Posted May Board Meeting Preliminary Agenda

5/19/20 – Updated the website with all the pending materials when the login issue at Hostmonster was resolved.

5/19/20 – Updated 2020 Crew Roster with Ethan Doty and Craig Simmons after they completed the online rules exam.

5/19/20 – Added five photos from Greg Elems to the Around the Museum 2020 gallery.

5/20/20 – Posted May FRRS Board Meeting financial reports.

5/24/20 – Corrected call-in information in Latest Museum News column. (Brought to my attention by Ed Wagner)

5/25/20 – Implemented enhancement to Sleeper Reservation System requested by Kerry Cochran to make it easier to book many reservations for a single person.

5/26/20 – Posted a new photo from Greg Elems to Around the Museum 2020 Gallery webpage.

5/27/20 – Three new photos sent to me by Roger Stabler (photos by Roger, Greg Elems and Mike Waters) were added to Around the Museum 2020 Gallery webpage.

5/30/20 – Started work on adding *Headlight* #51 to Headlight Master Index and Headlight List of Articles webpages. The *Headlight* Master Index now has 2,582 entries.

6/1/20 – Removed broken link: http://www.railroadkeys.com/ (Railroadiana Wanted! Railroad locks, keys, wax sealers & lanterns) from Links & Credits web page.

6/2/20 – Added two photo from Greg Elems to the Around the Museum 2020 Gallery webpage.