

FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY

DATE: January 2026
ITEM: Director's Report
FROM: Eugene Vicknair

WINTER FUNDRAISER

All the fundraiser letters have been printed and addressed. I am currently stamping and mailing them. All should be out in the next couple of days. As last time, I printed all at my own expense. Only cost to the Society was postage, which was around \$520.

OBSERVATIONS FROM OTHER MUSEUMS

I recently had a chance to visit two museums that I have not seen in about 20 or more years and look at their operations.

Southern California Railway Museum

A large operation and the day I was there (January 3) they were running a trolley and have 4 diesels fired up and moving around due to work going on. At least 18 volunteers by my count.

Noticed several items that I thought were interesting and that we should look at:

- They had letter size photo copies of an artifact scavenger hunt and a locomotive / equipment bingo for kids to use while visiting. Volunteers commented these were popular with families.
- Lots of equipment was getting at least paint touch-ups and basic paint jobs.
- Each train ride started with ops volunteer letting everyone know they could become a member and volunteer at the museum.
- There was a rack in the museum store with discounts at several location restaurants. I learned these were provided in exchange for a donation from each restaurant. One volunteer coordinates all that.
- They have a couple volunteers whose sole jobs are to coordinate and build up volunteer staff.
- Their version of our picnic area was clean and well used.
- They are getting a LOT of things donated, including paint and equipment for locomotives, transport on BNSF, materials for repairs, labor and funds. The paint scheme on their bicentennial SD45-2 was completely donated, along with the locomotive itself and its transport.

Mojave Desert Heritage and Cultural Association

This is an 80 acre local cultural and historical museum at Goffs, CA. For those of you who do not know where Goffs is, it is a former station on the Santa Fe in the Mojave Desert about 30 miles west of Needles and 10 miles off Interstate 40 on old highway 66. In other words, in the middle of nowhere.

They have several buildings, including a full size replica of the Santa Fe Goffs Depot which they built, a few railroad cars and lots of mining and local artifacts. They were building a replica homesteader's cabin when I was there and looking at starting the reroof on one of their buildings with a grant they had just received.

While there was certainly things that could be improved, I was impressed with how good the place looked and how interesting it was for being so remote. (Population of Goffs in 23)

I talked with the main caretakers and learned several things:

- They have a close relationship with E Clampus Vitus and several chapters send members over 1-2 times a year for several days to clean the grounds and repair things.
- They are part of the Harvest Hosts network of RV location (Roger Stabler got me looking into this) and they trade work for stay time with Harvest Hosts.
- They have someone who aggressively recruits volunteers and coordinates their stays.

Some other items:

- They had a nice guidebook for free / voluntary donation with histories of exhibits.
- They also function as an RV park and appear to derive some of their income that way.
- Docent immediately greeted me and showed me around, even though the main building was technically closed that day. They opened up for a small donation.