

Bill Kløver, speaking on behalf of BAERA, said, "We're really pleased to have joined with FRRS in this historic trade agreement that allows both ourselves and our colleagues in Portola to better fulfill our respective mission statements. The agreement also reflects our mutual commitment to ARM's "Recommended Practices for Railway Museums."

Rod McClure, speaking on behalf of FRRS, said, "This historic trade agreement allows both of our organizations to refine our core collections respective to each organizations goals. This follows our memberships directives to hone our collection and refocus on preserving the Western Pacific's empire."

Driver's Ed for Trains?

By Kerry Cochran

This was the Headline from the Portola Reporter (Newspaper) on Wednesday, December 6, 1989.

The below article described the Rent-A-Locomotive Program at the Portola Railroad Museum. In past years the RAL program has had sufficient engineers to make this dream come true for many of our museum visitors. However today, we are struggling with low turn out rate for qualified engineers to support the RAL program.

Yes it does take some investment in your time to become a qualified RAL engineer, but think of the rewards it brings, not only to the FRRS, but to self improvement and learning. This investment you make in learning to be an engineer benefits the museum greatly.

With more qualified engineers to handle the RAL program, the less each person has to commit to coming to the museum to handle each RAL.

The RAL program needs more engineers to help us out. We need the membership's help, Please think about becoming a member of the Operating Department and training for a RAL position. You do not need to come to the museum to work RAL every day or week, just now and then. If we had everyone who was qualified work just one day a week or even one day, every other week we should be able to keep the RAL program up and running, and funds coming into the museum for all of our projects.

Should you have an interest in the RAL program, Please contact Kerry Cochran, Superintendent of Operations, (home) (650) 952-7127, email KC6KNT@Compuserve.com or call the museum at (530) 832-4131 and let John Walker know, and he will pass the information on to me.

Driver's Ed for Trains

by Sandra Gubel
Portola Editor

Have you always dreamed of being a railroad engineer? At the Portola Railroad Museum, your chance at the throttle lever can actually come true.

They call it "Rent-a-Locomotive." For \$60 an adult or an entire family can receive an hour's worth of instruction and actual practice in the art of locomotive engineering.

Qualified operating personnel from the Feather River

Rail Society supervise your inaugural runs around the museum's scenic 2mile balloon track.

"To my knowledge, this is the only place you'll ever do this. This is the only museum around that can have something like this," said Rail Society Director Bruce Cooper. Cooper came sun with the idea which has provee itself not only a moneymaker for museum restoration efforts, but a service to the rail fan.

The unique promotional activity is starting as "a phenomenal success," said Cooper. In Rent-A-Locomotive's first five weeks, about 25 hour long sessions revere offered. People flocked to Portola from the Bay Area and even Southern California to take advantage of the gimmick.

Bay Area residents caught wind of the idea on the recently broadcasted 15 minute segment of "Bay Area Backroads," filmed at the museum this fall.

Novice engineers come from all walks of life and they're of all ages, said Cooper. "We've had kids as young as 6 years old driving on their mothers' laps," he said. As many as four people fire allowed in the cab at a time.

Engineers for the hour are not responsible for switching tracks or any other complicated procedures. A supervisor is on hand, as is the instructor, who can perform emergency measures, if needed, to stop the train.

The one hour run does not qualify people as operating, personnel of the Feather River Rail Society, who, after extensive training, have been credentialed to drive the excursion passenger trains at the museum during the summer.

Engineers of the day usually end up venturing about four times around the balloon track during the hour's time, said Rail Society President Norman Holmes. Each receives a certificate of completion at the end of the run.

Hours for the unique opportunity are scheduled in advance, according to visitor and operating personnel availability. Weather permitting and as long as snow doesn't cover the tracks. "we can do it just about any time," said Holmes.

All proceeds go toward continued volunteer efforts of the rail society to restore used and donated railroad equipment.

For more information or reservations for Rent-A-Locomotive, call the Portola Railroad Museum at 832-4131.

(Editors Note: The program has since been renamed Run-A-Locomotive.)

Comments from the Election

Below are some of the comments received with the second return of election ballots and answers to some of them.

How about providing an easy way (i.e., email) for hapless members to communicate to the board? (These will be listed along with the directors names on Page 2)

How about providing a "Letter to the editor" section in the newsletter? You guys are to insulated from the membership. (Look for this to begin in the next few issues)

More history (people) and less big toys for little boys and stick to the WP.

Am I missing something? 3 appear to be qualified candidates for 3 positions. Who ever demanded this re-run (of the election) for nothing should be asked nicely to pay for the paper, printing and postage. Terrible waste of money and resources. Think trains, not nit pick.