

View From the Crummy

By Gail McClure

Passion

Definition: Boundless enthusiasm or the object of such enthusiasm. A powerful emotion, such as love, joy, hatred, or anger, or the object of such love or desire.

As a member of the Feather River Rail Society, you have made a commitment to preserve the history of the Western Pacific and its people, a story rich in railroad innovation and a sense of family now missing from traditional railroading. With this commitment comes responsibility.

Your responsibility is to participate in telling the story. You can do this by sharing your love of the WP with friends and family, encouraging their participation as well. If your employer sponsors employee supported organizations, educate them to why the Western Pacific was a driving force in developing new technologies critical to getting products to markets which impact us all, every day, and live beyond her fallen flag. Cushion underframe cars, sectioned box cars, luxury transcontinental "cruise trains" (i.e. the California Zephyr which was the first passenger train scheduled to take full advantage of the scenery across which she traveled; the beauty of the Rockies and the Feather River Canyon). Tell them how the WP Lives in Portola, CA and why their support of the FRRS is important.

Here's a story: Rick Edwards, FRRS member, has a colleague in Oakland, CA who owns a machine shop. Rick was sharing our need to have resurfacing work done on one of the exhaust manifolds for our Fairbanks Morse 1857 locomotive. His passion for the collection lead to further discussions and the owner of the shop was generous enough to donate his time in providing a top notch service which allowed for the speedy repair and placement back into service of this unique locomotive. The quote we had obtained from another source was nearly \$2,500. The money saved by this donation can now be used to pay for other supplies and much needed services; there are many expenses involved with running our museum from the mundane (electricity, gas, water and garbage) to the unique (custom blended Centauri paints for our equipment). Our liability insurance alone runs nearly \$27,000 per year.

Here's another one: Matt Schumann, President of the Shasta Cascade Rail Foundation gave Eugene Vicknair, member of the FRRS Board, the name of a gentleman who sells locomotive parts. We were in desperate need of batteries for our locomotives with the newest set being more than 12 years old. After sharing his passion with the gentleman in question, he offered to sell us six sets of locomotive batteries at \$1,000 each (to put it into perspective, a good set of used batteries normally runs \$2,000 and a new set of batteries between \$4,000-6,000). The oldest set was about three years old and the newest six months. Rod McClure, President and Steve Habeck, Board member, Yardmaster, and battery guru extraordinaire, shared their passion when they traveled all the way to Fresno to test the batteries prior to completing the transaction, this being a large amount of money for a small organization to risk without checking. The batteries tested out very well and the seller threw in an extra set of batter-

ies at no extra charge. Another member, Scott Franklin, who owns a trucking company, hauled them to Portola at cost. All told, passion resulted in the Society obtaining \$14,000 in batteries for a total cost of around \$6,500.

This are just two of many stories how members' driving passion has come to benefit our organization. There are many, many others including the dream of the FRRS founders whose passion resulted in the fruition of a dream...one that many said could never be done.

How and with whom will you share your passion for the WP today?

We want your feedback. Please contact me at 2centsworth@charter.net. I'll see that your commentary is forwarded to the appropriate member of the Board of Directors or Department Head for response. Without your feedback, we have to assume that you, the membership, like the direction we are taking the organization.

We Are In Need Of...

By John Walker

The Portola Railroad Museum is constantly looking to upgrade and acquire new equipment to improve and enhance the hard work of our volunteers and staff. There are many occasions when the right tool or piece of equipment would greatly speed our efforts to get projects done or, make that project simpler and easier to complete.

To that end, future issues of The Trainsheet will contain a running list of equipment that we would like to acquire. It is our hope that someone in our membership may be able to donate these items or, convince their employer to donate such items. Or perhaps, you'll be traveling down the road someday and see a "for sale" sign on some equipment that we could use here at the museum.

These items don't have to be new. As long as they function correctly or, can be repaired at a nominal cost, we might be able to use it. It doesn't have to look pretty either. The big cost is the equipment itself. Parts, repairs and a touchup of the paint are nothing compared to the cost of the equipment.

Take a look over the list and give Museum Manager John Walker a call at the museum if you think you can help. This is another great way to help the organization even if you can't physically come up to the museum. And remember, donations to the FRRS are tax deductible. So if you, your company, your fraternal organization, church or your employer is looking to upgrade your tools, vehicles, displays or office furniture, please keep us in mind.

We need a new pickup truck for everyday use around the museum. A good work truck for hauling lumber, parts, equipment and going to the dump would be great. A Four-wheel drive would be awesome for use around the museum in the wintertime. If we get the truck, maybe another member could donate a new paint job or mechanical repairs.

We really need a hydraulic man lift of some kind. A "Cherry Picker", "bucket truck" or scissor lift of some kind would make it easier to do restorations, painting, changing light bulbs, repairing broken glass, electrical wiring, trimming trees, the list is

endless! And it would be safer than setting up scaffolding or climbing tall ladders.

A small "Bobcat" type front-end loader. These tractors are great for landscape projects, cement work and clearing snow. Their diminutive size allows them to squeeze into tight areas that our Backhoe will not fit into. An auger attachment on the back would help us dig holes for fencing, signs and other projects.

A John Deere "Gator" or similar all-terrain, work vehicle. These vehicles are great to have when you need to haul a 55-gallon drum of oil or some big wrenches, track tools or parts out to the end of track to do some maintenance on an engine or some track work. Ideally, a 6x6 with a flat deck on the back would be great!

Snow blowers. As I write this, there is four to five feet of snow on the ground at Portola. We could really use one or two of these.

Our carpentry shop is always looking for good quality power tools. Circular saws, Sawsalls, routers, table saws, cordless drills, nail guns, planers, vacuum systems, cutters, joiners, you name it, we want it and could use it.

A new copy machine. Ours is wearing out and the copies are getting worse and worse. A color copier, or perhaps an all-in-one printer, copier, scanner, fax machine would be great.

A sand blaster. Small or large, we can use it.

If anyone is in the aggregate business, we could use a few truckloads of sand, 4-6 inch river rock and drain rock for various landscaping and facilities projects.

A bead blasting system for cleaning small metal parts. This would help the restoration and mechanical department.

The gift shop and the display room need glass display cases. Upright or counter styles are both good. We're also looking for some "Slat-wall" style display panels.

A large conference table capable of hosting 10-12 people for Board of Director meetings or conferences. We can refinish the table (or perhaps another member can help in this area). We already have some nice chairs; it would be nice to put them around a nice conference table.

Reception area furniture. We would like to change the entranceway into the museum. We need a nice reception desk and counters, which we can use for brochures and informational signs. If someone out there is redoing the reception area of his or her offices, please consider donating the old furniture to the museum.

Waste oil heaters. Many automotive shops and airport hangers use these types of heaters to heat large buildings. We've got a large building and we've got waste oil and it would be great to burn it up and help heat the building.

Thanks; we will have more items listed in the next issue.

Caboosing Around the Museum

By John Walker

09.04/5 Labor Day Weekend! Still cleaning up from Railroad Days this week. Our "TGMTT" special train departed for Truckee on Sunday with Rod McClure at the controls and Steve Habeck watching the markers at the rear of the train. Lots of last minute details to tend to in order to get the train out on time. Ed Powell, Alan Hirasawa, Gunther, and others changed

seven brake shoes on the UP6936. Rick Edwards and Hank Stiles were busy in the shop area while Kerry Cochran, Don Nelson, Lew Barnard, Jack Palmer, Bill Parker and Charlie Spikes ran passenger trains around the museum. John Walker and Linda Knudson packed items from the gift shop to take to Truckee later in the week. Norman Holmes worked on sprucing up the Quincy #4. The weekend was fairly calm for a three-day weekend but the weather was nice. Andy Anderson ran RAL's. Lew Barnard shot an RAL promotional video, which will play on a lap top computer at train shows which we attend in the future.

09.28 Jeff Sanders of Hesperia, California, Charlie Spikes and John Walker spent a full day cleaning out the WP baggage car located next to the loading dock. This car has been used for storage by four different departments over the years and needed a serious cleaning, inventory and reorganizing. After pulling out nearly the entire contents of the car onto the dock, the car was swept out and metal shelves installed. We then called in Norman Holmes and Doug Morgan to help us identify what some of these items were. This was a big help since some of this stuff was acquired a long time ago and we had no idea what some of it was. But Norm was able to identify some old artifacts while Doug identified old locomotive parts and tools. While we didn't throw much away, tools and restoration parts were moved to where they belong, cables and wires were moved to the material storage area, some things were moved to the archives storage area and the stuff that went back into the car is much better organized.

09.29 Jeff Sanders and John Walker constructed more metal shelving to use in other car cleaning projects. Kerry Cochran was working in the area and stopped by the museum. Kerry sorted through some old radio parts that were found in the baggage car and spent time in the office catching up on paperwork and record keeping.

10.02/03 Ed Powell checked caboose heaters and sorted through various electrical cables, hoses and tools found in the baggage car. Rick Edwards did various mechanical work and record keeping. Bill Parker sanded on the Pullman Troop Sleeper and helped John Walker and Rick Edwards assemble more metal shelving. Steve Habeck serviced batteries. Board of Directors meeting with Treasurer Dan Brady attending. Dan also worked with John Walker on gift shop ideas and financial reports. Rod McClure, Frank Brehm and Gail McClure serviced the derrick in preparation for upcoming use. Rod McClure and Rick Edwards also serviced several locomotives.

10.06 Steve Habeck and John Walker switched the east end of the museum for three hours in preparation for Santa Trains.

10.07 Steve, John and Rod McClure switched the west end of the museum for another four hours, digging out ballast cars and boxcars used for storage.

10.09 Alan Hirasawa, Gunther, Seth Adams, Brittany K, and Heather replaced fire rings on 4 cylinders of the UP 849, reinstalled heads and cleaned up the block. Don Bordan ran RAL's and worked on the Lounge car. Jay Sarno, Ken Iverson, Gail McClure and Eugene Vicknair did electrical work on the volunteer lounge car. Phil Schmeir over hauled the dump truck. Matt Parker helped John Walker with various projects. Frank Brehm and Gail McClure worked on the Hospital Building. Dwight Wolfinger worked on various projects. A severe thunderstorm complicated outside work.