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# FEVR FLASH

## NEBRASKA RAILROAD MUSEUM

1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025      DEC, 2003

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### NOTE:

The return address on this newsletter still indicates "Eastern Nebraska Chapter". It was determined at the mailing of the last issue that the Postal Service required IRS documentation of continuing non-profit status under the name of "Nebraska Railroad Museum". This, among other changes while assuming the new name, is in progress.

### POINTS OF CONTACT:

**Nebraska Railroad Museum and Fremont and Elkhorn Valley Railroad (FEVR)** 1835 N. Somers, Fremont, NE 68025 ([www.fremontrailroad.com](http://www.fremontrailroad.com))

**Fremont Dinner Train** - 650 N. H St., Fremont, NE 68025

**For excursion only-** 402-727-0615

**For Dinner Train only-** 402-727-8321

(The Fremont Dinner Train is a separate business for which the FEVR provides motive power and trackage).

### SANTA CLAUS RUNS:

The Fremont Dinner Train and the FEVR combined their facilities on **November 30** and **December 7** for the traditional Christmas holiday travel with **Santa**. There was a good turnout for both days.

### RESERVATIONS:

Reservations are now being taken for **excursion charters** for business, school, and social groups for **Spring, Summer, and Fall, 2004**. Early reservations will insure an optimal choice of times and dates. Regular excursion service will begin in **late April**. In the interim, charters in heated caboose or coach may be available depending upon weather and operating conditions. Contact the FEVR office at 402-727-0615 for more information.

### OFFICE MANAGER:

Callers to the office may have wondered why they did not hear the voice of **Gene Zimmerman**, our office manager. Gene is temporally absent under "bad order" status while recovering from long needed and much

postponed **hip surgery** several weeks ago. He is recovering nicely and will be back on the job after a period of therapy and recuperation. All members wish him a "get well".

### MALL SALES:

Under the very capable organization of member **Virginia Rassmussen** and with the assistance of many member volunteers, holiday sales of Day Out With Thomas <sup>TM</sup> merchandise were conducted in the **Fremont Mall**.

### DAY OUT WITH THOMAS:

We regret to inform that the friendly little engine will **not** repeat the visits of the last two years in **2004**. The sponsoring organization apparently has decided to limit appearances in a regional area in order to insure that the local cooperating railroad will have high attendance figures. In the local area the **Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad** (Boone, Iowa) will host Thomas in 2004 and Thomas will return to our railroad in **2005**. It is understood that Thomas will return to a television series in 2005.

### VOLUNTEERS:

**Volunteers** are needed in all areas of the FEVR operations. These areas include office work, gift shop sales, car maintenance, grounds and track maintenance., and mechanical repair in addition to the classic brakeman, conductor, and engineer tasks. .

### BOARD ELECTION:

The ballots for election of officers for the **Board of Directors** were counted at the regular Board meeting on December 3. Re-elected were **Shirley Angermund, Allan Schlapfer, and Jeff Blackmore**. Both local and national memberships are needed needed to serve on the Board and to cast ballots.

### DONATIONS:

Appreciation is expressed for recent donations. **Walmart Stores** donated **\$500** as a match for the value of volunteer time spent by employees this year during the Day Out With Thomas<sup>TM</sup>

event.

**Boschult Engineering** has donated a quantity of **rail** along with tie plates and other associated hardware. This light rail will be suitable for the construction of sidings and storage track.

The Museum very much appreciates these contributions. If any reader knows of other possible sources, we would appreciate being informed.

### MOWING MACHINE:

One major problem in the maintenance of track is the control of **vegetation**, both alongside and between the rails. Root penetration degrades the rock ballast necessary for a stable roadbed. Dry vegetation increases the risk of **fire** while green vegetation on rails can seriously impede **traction** and **braking** performance.

**Chemical** application by sprayer is customarily used as a method of control, but is expensive and may not be effective unless applied at the optimal time of growth. Applicator licensing is required and there are environmental concerns.

The FEVR is no exception to vegetation problems. However, members **Charles Egbers** and **Jerry Morris** combined their ingenuity and mechanical talents to provide an **effective, low-budget** solution. By equipping a used farm corn stalk shredder with rail wheels and adding a gasoline engine power unit from a hay baler, they have produced a "**mowing machine**" to be towed behind a large motorcar. (see photo).

Right-of-way between Hooper and Nickerson has already been cleared with the machine. The unit clears approximately a ten foot wide swath, providing a clearing not only between the rails but also a large area on each side.

### RAIL SCHOOL:

**Rail School** will resume in the next issue. In the meantime, best wishes to all our readers for a **Happy New Year!**



**RAILSCENE:** Mowing Machine! Members Charles Egbers (left) and Jerry Morris adjusting the power unit on their invention in the Hooper yard before clearing vegetation on the right of way. (News about this machine inside)

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