

THE FEVR FLASH

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEBRASKA RAILROAD MUSEUM

1835 N. SOMERS, FREMONT, NE 68025 DECEMBER, 2008

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~~For Dinner Train only: 402-727-8321~~

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

BACK ISSUES:

All back issues of the FLASH may be viewed at www.fremontrailroad.com.

In addition, numerous links to other websites of commercial railroads, tourist railroads, the Fremont community, and more information on the FEVR history and equipment may be found there.

MAILING LIST:

If anyone wishes to be added to the list they should send an email request to NPTCHM@Hotmail.Com. The address will be used for no other purpose than the Flash.

BOARDS OF DIRECTORS :

The Boards of Directors for FEVR and the NRM met December 3, 2008, at the Wilderness Lodge in Fremont. Those in attendance for their respective board positions were **Al Schlapfer, Charles L. Sedlacek, George Blessing, Erik Mutthersbough, Ron Spahni (FEVR only), Maynard Porter, and Shirley Angermund**. President **Angermund** conducted the meeting.

Minutes from the previous **FEVR** and **NRM** meetings and the current treasurer's reports were presented, reviewed, and approved.

Porter reported that the necessary reporting to the FRA was up to date. He will bring information on that to the membership meeting on December 10 when a FRA representative will present a program on track inspection.

There were updates on several items: (1) the oil test report on locomotive 1219 has not yet arrived; (2) Lawrence Addleman was identified as being responsible for 1219 maintenance; (3) the wood clipper obtained under a Nebraska DEQ will have more use in the coming year; (4) salvage operations on unneeded assets such as rail have been suspended because of the steep decline in prices of scrap iron. To obtain the maximum returns on rail scrap, a way must be found to economically cut it into 3 foot lengths; (5) the sale of the box car in Hooper was cancelled because the offer from the prospective buyer

was too low; and (6) there has been track work done by **Schlapfer** and his crew to repair problems needing immediate attention that were identified during the recent FRA visit.

Angermund reported on her meeting with members of several local organizations regarding the business plan previously submitted to them. The success of the Thomas event has increased interest in the long term success of our organization. There was a recommendation from that meeting that there be new people added to the FEVR BOD and that there be a new effort toward combining the operation base of both the FEVR and the FDT at the depot site. The BOD indicated acceptance of both ideas, subject to the proper agreements of the parties involved.

In the NRM meeting, the principal business was the counting of the election ballots for the three open BOD positions. **Porter** was re-elected and new member **Dennis Wallen** together filled two positions. **Mel Cunningham** and **David Mutthersbough** were tied for the third position. (Cunningham later declined the appointment so Mutthersbough became the second new BOD member.) All are welcomed to the BOD and their advice and help will be needed in many ways in the future.

The sale of the inoperative International dump track to a member for \$50 was approved. The member would like to restore it to use.

The BOD President was asked to contact our real estate agent regarding the sale of some remaining land in West Point.

The BOD will elect officers at the January, 2009, meeting.

FRA PRESENTATION:

The December 10 membership meeting site was originally scheduled at the Wilderness Lodge but was relocated to the conference room at the depot because of the expected attendance. **Jason Shelton** and **Cody Leu** had recently renovated this room and made it into a very suitable space.

Tom Brown of the FRA, whose office is in Council Bluffs, gave a well illustrated and very informative presentation covering track maintenance issues. Those present gained an insight into track problems and their remediation.

Over 20 members were in attendance, many of whom were the young people on whom the future of the railroad depends.

The BOD again wishes to thank the FRA personnel for the help and advice they have shared.

PASSENGER RIDES:

Christmas season runs with Santa Claus in cooperation with the FDT were held **November 30** and **December 6 and 7**. Over 400 passengers were accommodated. Over 11,500 passengers were guests of the FEVR in 2008. This total includes the Day Out With Thomas™ event but does not include those carried under contract with the Fremont Dinner Train.

POSITIVE TRAIN CONTROL:

Although implementation on the FEVR is highly unlikely, Positive Train Control (PTC) continues to make news in the transportation sector. This is a means to automatically stop a train in an emergency situation if the engineer does not do so. Besides the ban on the use of distracting electronic devices, such as cell phones by train crew members, the emphasis on this is a result of the September 12 head-on collision between a Metrolink commuter train and a UP freight in Chatsworth, CA.

The system already is in use on some commuter systems and originally was not much more than a device by trackside which would trip the train's air brakes if the engineers did not make the needed application.

Implementation of a sophisticated system on a large scale on numerous railroads is both complex and very expensive. The initial applications appear to be directed where most needed - where commuter and freight traffic shares the same track - as was the case in California

CAR STORAGE:

The downturn in the economy has resulted in a reduced demand for intermodal freight. Some sea ports are quite inactive, with small demand for empty containers for return to overseas suppliers and with ships still to be unloaded. The need for storage for these with the railcars that haul them is growing and might be an opportunity for extra income for short lines which could provide the space.

DAY OUT WITH THOMAS™:

Readers are reminded that this event is scheduled for the last two weekends in July, 2009. More details will be available later.

EXCURSION SEASON:

Excursions will resume in May, 2009. Any changes in fares and schedules will be announced when available.

CHARTERS:

Depending upon weather and operating conditions, charter trips continue to be available. Reservations are being taken for 2009.