

RailCamp 2019 Report for Board of Directors Meeting, November 9, 2019

We had two successful camps again this year. There were 36 attendees from 14 states. Seventeen received full or partial scholarships. We had no girls in camp this year.

We received financial support from the Arkansas-Boston Mountain, Blue Water Michigan, Cape Cod, George L. Carter, Jersey Central, Lackawanna and Wyoming Valley and Potomac Chapters, Amherst Railway Society, Pennsylvania Railroad Technical and Historical Society, Railway Passenger Car Alliance and the Somerset County 4-H Trainmasters. This is in addition to donations received with dues and at other times during the year. As in the past there were no paid staff or counselors. Volunteers, both within camp and assisting our partners, make this program available at a reasonable cost.

Our first minor derailment this year was finding out that Thomas the Tank would be at Strasburg when we were scheduled to be there. Director Tony White contacted the other partners and the University, to make sure we had a place to stay, and worked around a new schedule. Applications were already arriving, so applicants had to be notified and all were available. This put camp during the week of July 4th. The University dining room could not feed us that day. Again, Tony worked his magic and found very good substitutes.

At the last minute Mt. Rainier Railroad and Logging Museum had a personnel change and didn't know we were coming. Our two-day visit was cut to one. This left a big hole in the middle of the week. Northwest Director John Cox got on the phone right away and arranged for a day in Portland. The Oregon Rail Heritage Center was happy to have us and they rolled out the red carpet. We were met at the Amtrak station with tickets on the light rail to the museum. Lunch and as much as could be crammed into a brief visit delighted the campers. They ate dinner on the Coast Starlight on the return to Tacoma and the day was a total success.

Our past partners, Amtrak on both coasts, the PRR Museum at Strasburg, the Strasburg Rail Road, Tacoma Rail, Sound Transit, Northwest Railway Museum, Mt. Rainier, and our new substitute Oregon Rail Heritage Center all provided a variety of experiences for these young people. Their commitment to our program is outstanding. Everywhere we go the people we deal with are friendly, patient, knowledgeable and anxious to make our day with them memorable.

Groundwork is in place for 2020 with all of our partners. We are welcome to return everywhere. A final schedule will be available by the end of the year with the application going online January 1, 2020. Do not delay in getting candidates excited about applying. Sponsored applications are due March 1st, with final deadline April 1st.

Financially, we are in good shape. At this point there is no need to increase tuition. It will be \$1,390 for either camp again in 2020.