

# LINEUP



Motorcar Operators West Official Magazine

**Western Railroad Museum**  
**Eastern Idaho Railroad Excursion**

Volume 25, No 1

Winter and Spring 2017

# Motorcar Operators West

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## Cover Photo Credits

Front cover: Rick Smith - Speeders lined up after lunch before departing for Cannon at the Western Railroad Museum run.

Back cover: Jen Limon - Passing windmills and shooting range near Bird's Landing.

2018 MOW Membership Renewals and new membership applications are now being accepted.

All current memberships expire on December 31. Please download the printable form on the MOW website ([www.mowonline.org](http://www.mowonline.org)) and fill-out all requested information. Mail the form along with a \$24.00 check to:

Motorcar Operators West, c/o Harry Fischer, Membership Coordinator, 28819 Shadow Valley Lane, Santa Clarita, CA 91390

The Line Up is the official publication of The Motorcar Operators West, Inc. which is a non-profit corporation dedicated to the safe and legal operation of railroad motorcars as excursion vehicles. Motorcar Operators West excursion schedules, documents, items for sale, and past Line Up issues are available at [www.mowonline.org](http://www.mowonline.org). Membership is \$24 per year and includes a Line Up subscription. The Line Up is copyrighted and permission to reproduce any portion of the newsletter must be obtained. All rights reserved. Submitting Photos and Captions: Members and guests are encouraged to contribute to the Line Up Photo Journal magazine by sending their excursion photos, accompanied by who, what, when, and where captions to: **MOWLineUp@gmail.com**. When submitting, please change photo file name to the caption text, or place caption text in the email body and photos as .jpg attachments. Front and back cover photos should be submitted in a portrait orientation at a high resolution.

## President's Message: Jim Culbertson

It's hard to believe, but the year 2017 is rapidly drawing to a close. Halloween is here and Easter is just around the corner. Yes you are correct, I did miss Thanksgiving and Christmas because I blinked. As I look back over the motorcar year of 2017 I have to admit that while we sponsored



some fine runs, in summary it was a bit of a disappointing year. We had many unfortunate circumstances beyond our control that kept us off rails that we will still be able to run in the future. Coastal runs in Santa Cruz have been curtailed by significant storm damage that will take time to correct and is compounded by the contractual arrangement with the operator, Iowa Pacific. The Napa Wine Train run was side lined by the success of the excursion railroad itself with the addition of new trains in the schedule. A Fillmore & Western run never got off the ground with road crossing construction and other conflicts. Even the Placerville & Sacramento Valley RR has now experi-

enced a closure as new grade crossings are constructed for the housing expansion that will forever change what I have often referred to as the "Little House on the Prairie" run. It's safe to say that the stars did not align in 2017 and our team of astrologers is working on correcting our galaxy!

Moving forward and looking ahead, the future of the hobby will continue to require hard work and safe operation to keep the excursions coming. Our pool of Excursion Coordinators has diminished over the years with the need for new candidates to step up. We all need to be Ambassadors of the hobby, working on any railroad connections that may come along while we promote the safe operation of the hobby. When we have the opportunity to interface with the public, the smiles, waves, and camera's are present in large numbers. People in general realize that we for the most part are having the rides of our life as we pass by. When you consider that the hobby consists of roughly 1,200 active members Nation wide, it truly is a very special opportunity. Motorcar Operators West has a great history of leadership in the hobby and your Board of Directors is committed to maintaining that legacy. The membership support and suggestions is key to keeping the rails under our wheels. It still gets back to the old ask not what MOW can do for us, but ask what we can do for MOW and the hobby.

On the good side of the ledger our efforts and support at the Western Railway Museum has continued to grow our relationship. For those operators who participated in our spring run which included crossing over the suspended rails wash out, I'm happy to report that a new pipe line has been put in place and the gap is fixed. Five MOW members assisted the Museum's track crew with this effort and some have continued to come out bi-weekly for their track work party efforts. This has included work on the additional small wash outs on the line to Canon. The museum for the most part has no current interest in this section of the line so the willingness to make these repairs is big. We have also begun an effort track west of Molena to weed spray and clean up an additional mile and a half of track for motorcars

In closing, I would like to send a special thanks to Dan Berg for his many years of putting the "LINE UP" together and helping to create a great format for the publication. I would also like to thank Andy Limon for stepping up and volunteering to take over the newsletter duties. Herding cats always comes to mind when you look at what it takes to put this publication together. Let's all consider what we can do to contribute to this important newsletter. Information on past and present runs is key to helping attract new members as they contemplate joining.

Here's to shiny wheels and safe miles of rail.

# Western Railway Museum, Rio Vista Junction, CA

April 23, 2017

## Dave Balestreri, Excursion Coordinator

Photos Courtesy of Sue Fischer, John Gugler, Jen Limon, Rick Smith, Vic Theis

**M**otorcar Operators West conducted an excursion at the Western Railroad Museum on Sunday, April 23, 2017. This was the day after PRO's run at nearby Niles Canyon on Saturday, April 22, 2017. We were expecting a spectacular wild flower presentation on our trip through the Jepson Prairie Wildflower Preserve and we were not disappointed. The weather was beautiful, the company was great.

The day began with a 7:30am set-on and then a 9:00am Safety meeting, followed by a 9:15am departure. The morning run headed west, through open fields and herds of cows, through the many windmills before ending at Molena for the first turnaround of the day. After a short rest stop in Molena, the group headed back for the museum depot.

Once everyone was back to the set on point, we walked to the WRM museum depot for an 11:00 AM departure on a vintage trolley for a 15 mile round trip, along the route we had just covered. The trip included Museum volunteers who shared the history of the trolley we were riding on, and pointed out sights and wildflowers as we relaxed and enjoyed the ride. After the trolley ride, we had time to take a quick tour of some of the museum's collection of trolleys, and do a little shopping at the museum store, before heading back to our cars for a short lunch break.



After lunch, we had another safety meeting before the afternoon run to Cannon. We were informed that a short section of the track had gotten washed out, but after inspection by the museum and MOW representatives, it was determined that it was safe to cross. For additional safety, it was determined that cars should cross one at a time, and very slowly. After crossing the washed out section of track, the rest of the run was very pleasant, passing through beautiful open fields with free running horses. The run ended at Cannon, 12 miles away, where we turned around. During the rest stop we were greeted by a southbound UP freight, the engineer acknowledging us with a horn blast as we watched the train pass through. The return home included the slow washout crossing, before returning to the set off point, which was the newly constructed wooden crossing built by MOW volunteers.

The Western Railroad Museum is located on highway 12 between the cities of Rio Vista and Fairfield and is accessible from all major state freeways. The address is:  
Western Railroad Museum  
5848 State Highway 12,



Excursion Coordinator  
Dave Balestreri conducts  
the morning safety briefing.

Set on, ready to head to Molena on the morning run, along the electrified tracks.





Leaving the WRM yard for Molena on the morning run.

Enroute to Molena. Note the trolley wires overhead, we would be using those wires.



Windmills and wildflowers.



Excursion attendees board the museum trolley for a relaxing 15 mile ride during the lunch break.





After lunch, the run to Cannon began.



Slow down thar! A very slow and careful crossing allowed everyone to make it safely across the washed out section of track. The track was repaired soon after with the help of MOW volunteers.



Beautiful rolling green hills on the afternoon run to Cannon.





Turnaround at Cannon.



Waving at the passing BNSF freight at Cannon after turnaround.



Niner relaxing in Rick Smith's car at the Western Railway Museum



# Eastern Idaho Railroad Excursion, Idaho Falls/Ashton/ Newdale/Menan, ID

May 27-29, 2017

**Joe Schnyder , Excursion Coordinator**

Photos Courtesy of Carol Balestreri

It all started by raining early morning on Friday May 26th while we were setting on. The set on was originally scheduled to start at 3 pm when the Yellowstone switcher got back into the yard. Unfortunately, the locomotive quit running about 20 miles north of Idaho Falls, so at the track supervisor's direction, we started setting on right away.



EC Joe Schnyder leads safety meeting.



Leaving yard in Idaho Falls for Newdale, ID.



Approaching Iona for a rest stop enroute to Newdale.

The railroad could not get the loco running so the run for Saturday was changed to the East Belt subdivision originally scheduled for Sunday while the railroad ran a locomotive from Twin Falls out to Rexberg to pick up the dead loco and finish switching the industries. Fortunately they got it all done and were back in the yard in Idaho Falls Saturday before we got back from a beautiful run to Newdale. The run was highlighted by perfect weather and cloudy skies keeping the sun exposure to a minimum.



Passing a wooden silo in Parkison.



Turnaround in Newdale, ID.



Lunch stop at Ashton, ID, enjoying lunch at the park.

Sunday we ran the Yellowstone sub to Ashton originally scheduled for Saturday. We ended at the crossing at the end of town next to the park where we had lunch. After lunch, we got turned and headed back to Idaho Falls. It was a nice calm run with perfect weather.



On Monday we ran the West industrial sub to within 1 mile of the end of track, then turned and came back for a noon set off which got everyone loaded and on the road.



Railroad escort setting a shunt in Rexburg.





Nancy Parsons points out a birds "nest" with eggs in gravel.



Propping open the spring frog: Dave Balestreri & railroad escort with guest on-looker.

Bill Phoenix leading a patriotic sing along with his trombone on Monday, the 4th of July.



## MOW Outreach

- Fillmore and Western Railfest April 29, 2017
- Orange Empire Railway Museum Antique Truck Show May 7, 2017
- Road Kings of Burbank Car Show June 11, 2017

MOW members attended multiple events recently to bring attention to our hobby and inform the public about what we do and invite them to join us.



On April 29, member Robin Douglas took his speeder to the Fillmore and Western Railfest, spending the day sharing our hobby with enthusiastic rail fans. Here a couple of potential MOW members try out the seats in Robin's MT-14 UP *City of Santa Clarita*.

On May 7, member Andy Limon took his MT-14 to the American Truck Historical Society's 32nd annual Antique Truck Show, held at the Orange Empire Railway Museum in Perris, CA. It started out as a rainy day which kept attendance by both show trucks and spectators low, but the truck enthusiasts were curious about the railcar and had a lot of questions.



Robin also displayed his speeder at the Road Kings of Burbank Car Show at Johnny Carson Park on June 11, sharing space with custom cars, fire trucks, classics and hot rods. Although Jay Leno did not stop by, many visitors inquired about joining us on the rails and took MOW information sheets and membership applications.



For membership information, please visit our website at [www.mowonline.org](http://www.mowonline.org)