

THE MANIFEST October 2014



Well the running season at the Railroad Park is over for 2014. As always, I thoroughly enjoyed working at the snack stand with Larry, Nancy and quite often Allen. We made several changes and improvements, including but not limited to the Medco 4 being able to be displayed outside each run day and the motorcar improvements and track extension. I am reprinting the update info on the Medco 4, as it is imperative we get some donations on or before December 15, 2014. Please step up to the plate and help bring the Medco 4 project to completion.

THE MEDCO 4 UPDATE

As I noted in the last newsletter, the work on the Medco 4 is moving along, and Jerry has made great progress, however there is still much to be done. For example, the steam engine (the cylinders that drive the locomotive) needs to be partially disassembled, evaluated, and repairs made as needed; refurbishing of the line shafts and drivelines needs to be completed; parts of the air pump need to be refurbished or remanufactured by a machine shop; and the entire air brake control system needs to be installed. This is only a partial list. It is estimated that at least \$30,000 still needs to be raised to complete the Medco No. 4 restoration.

Your continued support is needed to keep this project moving ahead.

***** Chief Mechanical Officer and Medco No. 4 Project Leader, Jerry Hellinga is offering two challenges for this fund raising effort: *****

- 1. \$1,000 is offered if at least 50% of the membership donates \$25 or more.**
- 2. An additional \$1,000 s offered if total donations for the current year from all sources exceed \$10,000.**

THE DEADLINE FOR BOTH IS December 15, 2014.

To donate the Medco No. 4 restoration, write a check to the Southern Oregon Railway Historical Society (SORHS) with Medco 4 on the memo line on the check and mail it to:

**SORHS
P.O. Box 622
Medford, OR 97501**

OR

Donate on line at **www.soc-nrhs.org**. Click on the "donate" button at the bottom of the home page to make a donation through **EBay** and **PayPal**.

2014 TRAIN SHOW November 29-30

The train show is quickly approaching. There are still spots open where we need volunteers. As of Bruce's November 5 email, the following slots were available.

Friday November 28 – 9 am – 10 am,
Security – 1 person
Literature Table Set up – 1 person
Distribute & pick up road signs – 1 person

Saturday November 29 – 9:30 am – 11:30 am

*Tickets 5 - 1 person
11:30 am – 1:30 pm
Tickets 2 - 1 person
1:30 – 3:30 pm
Tickets 3 - 1 person*

3:30 – 5:30 pm

*Raffle 2 - 1 person
Tickets 4 - 1 person
Security 3 - 1 person*

Sunday November 30 – 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Parking 1 - 1 person

12:00 - 2:00 pm

*Tickets 2 - 1 person
Parking 2 - 1 person*

2:00 – 4:00 pm

*Tickets 3 - 1 person
Public Ho Operator - 1 person*

4:00 – 6:00 pm

Outside Clean-up - 1 person

If you can help, let Bruce, Jerry or me know.

Thank You

**Story of the Month
Copper Hauling Railroad From Medford
by
Tony Johnson**

For about two years now I have been actively searching for new information on several short line railroads in the Rogue and Illinois valleys. They are the California & Oregon Coast RR, the Pacific & Eastern Ry, the Owen-Oregon Lumber Co, the Gold Hill Lumber & Railroad Co., and a few others.

In early September I was sent the following article from my friend Glen Corbett. It is an article in the November 1, 1927 edition of *The Timberman* magazine, and it tells of a proposed 45-mile long copper railroad that would run out from Medford. This is the first I, and others, have heard of such a proposal. I guess that since the railroad line was never built, it isn't surprising it is unknown to us. The following is the actual article as it was printed.

SOUTHERN OREGON RAILROAD DEVELOPMENT
(Special to *The Timberman*)

MEDFORD, Ore., Nov. 7 – Negotiations are now pending between the American Smelting & Refining Co., [aka ASARCO – Tony]the Southern Pacific Company and Medford, Ore., citizens interested in the construction of a railway out from Medford to the Blue Ledge copper mine, a distance of 45 miles. W.H. Gore, president of the Medford National Bank, heads the Medford people in the project.

The Medford-Jacksonville railroad owned by the city of Medford, would be one of the links in this proposed road. A.B. Evensellor, of Tacoma, manager of the Tacoma smelter, and Pacific Coast representatives of the Guggenheims, has conferred with the Medford people on the matter.

The Guggenheims, who own the Blue Ledge copper mine, will operate on a 1500-ton output per day if they can get the ore to market. The Southern Pacific is willing to operate the road if it is constructed. What the Medford people are trying to do is finance the construction with the Jacksonville road, which extends four miles into the timber beyond Jacksonville, as nucleus.

The proposed railway road would have a water grade to the Blue Ledge mine, and holders of timber in the Applegate country are interested and have promised financial support. According to reports of timber cruisers, there is an easy grade pass through the Siskiyou Mountains beyond the Blue Ledge mine to the Klamath, tapping a large tract of sugar pine.

The Blue Ledge is a very rich copper mine and a heavy producer during the war period, shipping to the Tacoma smelter, but has been idle since the close of the war. There are other rich copper mines partly developed in the same district.

I did some additional research after reading the article and I can only wonder what such a railroad line would have looked like. The article stated, "*The proposed railway road would have a water grade to the Blue Ledge mine...*" The Blue Ledge mine is several miles south of Applegate Dam and about 33 miles south of Jacksonville in Northern California. To my mind I don't consider this a "water grade" route.

The mine, which was most active during World War I, has been dormant for decades. Prospectors discovered the copper deposit in 1898 and built several small communities in the area during the mine's heyday. The Blue Ledge name came from the blue sheen of weathered chalcopyrite, also called copper pyrite, found throughout the outcropping.

In mid-September 2011, the mine was added to the Environmental Protection Agency's Superfund National Priorities List yesterday, making it eligible for federal clean-up funds.

According to the Mail Tribune, "The Blue Ledge Mine is the county's first Superfund site, which designates it as one of the most complex, uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites in the country, according to an EPA press release. Toxic pollutants discharged by the mine sully streams in the Rogue River and Siskiyou National Forest.

That all said, it would have been interesting if the railroad was built after all.

MOVING DAY FOR THE RAIL Pic by Rick Aubin

Some of you may have noticed that the rail that was stacked up behind the snack stand is gone. Rick Aubin shared some pictures of the move.







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UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

If you know of any other events that should be added to our newsletter, please email, (c-manley@charter.net), or call, (541-890-7639), with the details.

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