



Southern Oregon chapter National Railway Historical Society  
P.O. Box 622 Medford, Oregon 97501  
Newsletter for May 2011



### **SPECIAL MEDCO #4 ADDITION**

**Greetings from the Plush NRHS Editorial Offices-** Bringing the chapter news to your home and hearth .... ..Ric Walch Editor, Home 772-6255 or cell 840-4380  
engmgr@medfab.com.

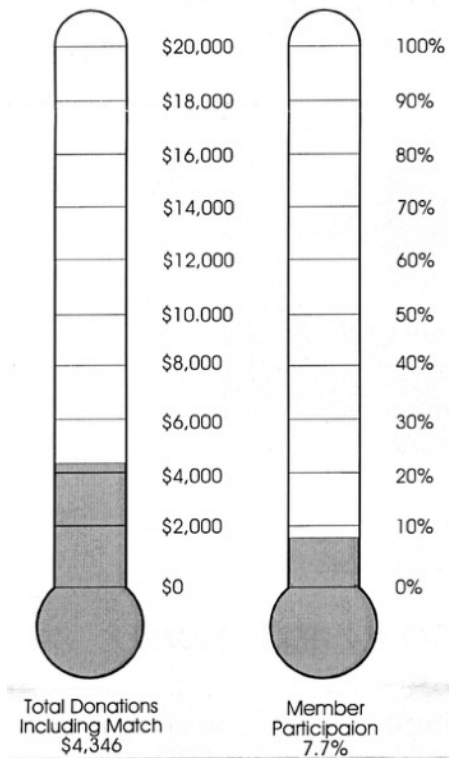
**May. Activities-** *The following is our May. activities schedule, this schedule will appear monthly to help remind everyone of our monthly meetings and any special planned activities.*

**10 May. 7:00 P.M. @ Model Railroad Clubhouse-** NRHS membership meeting. This month we have a special guest presentation by Allen Dobney. The presentation will be on *The Southern Pacific in Southern Calif....Thx Allen*

**24 May. 7:00 P.M. @ Model Railroad Clubhouse-** NRHS board meeting, *forging the future with steel from the past....*



## **Medco No. 4 Fund Drive Update**



It has been about a month since a letter was sent to all members requesting donations so we could take advantage of an offer of matching funds.

Our short-term goal was to raise enough money to have the boiler rebuild completed. We needed raise \$20,000 including the match to meet that goal.

We are now at about 20% of our goal with about 8% of our members responding. Donations have varied from \$10 to \$1,000. This is a good start but we still have a long way to go.

We realize not everyone has the resources to make a large donation but small donations do still add up. Keep in mind that all donations made before July 1<sup>st</sup> will be matched 100%. Also consider that a high member participation percentage may help influence those that can make large donations.

**Remember, donations must be postmarked on or before July 1, 2011 to qualify for the matching funds.**

**We Can Do It-You Can Help-** Like many of you I joined the Southern Oregon Chapter NRHS for one reason and that reason was to complete Medco #4. The Rogue Valley was settled and the communities established driven by three factors they were Gold, Agriculture and Timber. Gone are the days when timber was king but I can still remember the bustling mill communities, logging trucks jamming the roadways (nothing like the sound of a frantic Jake brake on a steep hill) and the sight of the Medco logging trains crossing at the Big Y interchange. Whenever we would come to the crossing and hear them approaching my dad would slow down just so we could be

stopped to sit and watch the trains pass by. The whistles, bells and squealing brakes were music to a pre teen boy and better than 10 cent comics. When big timber and logging left the area it was like a deathly silence. For many years I lived next to the Kogap Lumber Company Mill and was lulled to sleep in the summertime with my window open listening to the mill operate on the night shift. I began having trouble sleeping and could not determine why until all of a sudden it hit me Kogap had closed down never to run again and the missing harmony of mill sounds caused my insomnia. They built a golf course on the old mill site but the click of a solid hit golf ball just doesn't compare to the music of industry. We are very fortunate to be able to help return an important artifact from this era back to operational condition for our children and future generations to enjoy.

We are in the final push to put #4 back on tracks and now is the time for everyone to kick in and help make it happen. This has been a tough project with more than a few bruised knuckles (and a few bruised feelings) along the way but what do you say we come together for one last push to do justice to this project and pay respect to the hardy souls that drove #4 into the woods and back and honor their commitment to a idea that helped build this country.

It is important for the Southern Oregon Chapter to demonstrate support for this project and we want to encourage everyone to send in what you can regardless of what you can afford. We will raise the funds to finish this project however we want do it with 100% participation from our chapter members. The level of participation speaks volumes on the commitment of our group to a worthy cause. So let's set the what if's and I don't think so's aside and knock this one out of the park....**Editor**

**I would guess somewhere near Rancheria with just a light coat of red cinder dust...**



Water Water Everywhere But Not a Drop to Drink- Now that we are getting closer to completion of the Medco #4 project many of you have asked “what next?” At least initially the plan is to operate #4 at the railroad park if for no other reason than to do some test runs, tighten the odd bolt or two that may shake loose, take some pictures, shake hands and then move #4 to a permanent operational site. Since it became apparent that we would not be able to operate on the old Medco grade we have researched numerous other options with mixed results, we are currently in the process of revisiting some of those options with a new found determination to put #4 back on track. Anyone that would like to assist in this effort please contact me...**Editor**



**#4 Moving Some Loaded Flats**



**To the members and Friends of the Southern Oregon Chapter, National Railway Historical Society,**

As most of you know, the Southern Oregon Chapter has been engaged in a long term project to restore to operating condition the Medford Corporation (Medco) No. 4 Willamette geared steam locomotive. The Medco No. 4 is one of six surviving Willamette locomotives and the only one of these Oregon built locomotives still left in Oregon . Since it was started, \$74,000 and 5,200 volunteer hours have been invested in this project.

The restoration of the Medco No. 4 is now approaching a critical point. There is only a limited amount of work that can be completed before the boiler is rebuilt and placed on the frame. Once this work is completed this year, progress on the Medco No. 4 will end until we can raise the money we need to have the boiler work completed. We need to raise at least \$20,000 in addition to the funds currently on hand before we can send the boiler out for rebuilding. We will also need an additional \$30,000 or more to finish the full restoration of the locomotive once the boiler is completed.

Right now the biggest obstacle to the completion of the Medco No. 4 locomotive is the lack of funding. Unless we can raise at least the \$20,000 needed to complete the boiler, all work on the Medco No. 4 will come to an end this year. To help with our fund raising efforts, one of our members has offered to match any and all private donations made before July 1, 2011] . Every dollar donated during this time will result two dollars to the project. This is a very generous offer but it only takes us half way. The rest is up to us . Won't you help??

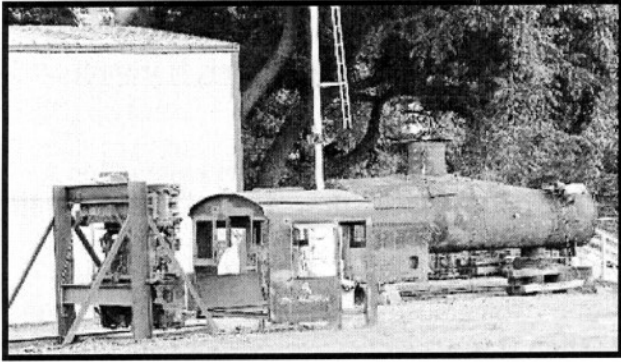
To make a tax-deductible donation to this project, make out your check to "SOC NRHS" and write Medco 4 on the memo line of the check and send it to the above address. If you have any questions, call Project Lead Jerry Hellinga at 541-944-2230.

Sincerely,

Eugene D. Pettit, **President**

Richard E. Walch, **Vice President**

## Historic Train Carries Emotional Pull



By **BILL MILLER**

Arlen Lynn has been looking for one special logging locomotive for more than 60 years. "A while back, someone told me it was at Fort Bragg," said Lynn, "but when I got there, it wasn't."

In his travels, Lynn found a few similar engines, but he wanted the one he remembered riding almost every day in Butte Falls, when he was only 5, 6 and 7

years old. That was the Medford Corporation's tough little Willamette locomotive, the one that pulled logs out of the Upper Rogue to the company's Medford mill for more than 35 years. Rail fans and local loggers affectionately called it the "Medco 4-Spot," for the large number 4 at the front of the locomotive. "Dad ran the 4-Spot," said Lynn. "He was the engineer in the '30s and '40s and my grandfather worked track maintenance. He ran the speeder up and down the tracks." Lynn said his father continued to look for the locomotive for years after he left the Rogue Valley in 1947, and when Lynn got older, he joined in the search. "Of course we didn't have the Internet or computers or anything like that at the time," he said, "and when we visited in Oregon over the years and asked, nobody knew anything." Before Dad passed away in 1999, that's all he could talk about — the 4-Spot and — that was his love. "Lynn remembers the days his grandfather would tell him to get into the speeder, a small motorized maintenance vehicle, and they would ride to one of the many landings where his father was driving the train. "They would be loading the logs onto the train with the old steam donkeys," Lynn said, "Seeing the donkeys and hearing the whistles at the landing was exciting." He still remembers the "whistle punks." "When they got the chokers all set on the logs, to pull them up to the landing, the whistle punk would push a button on the donkey. A whistle would shriek out and they'd tighten the cables and pull the logs up." You know, when you're a kid, noises are noises, and I'd sit there on a log and just watch them for hours." When the train was loaded, he'd ride back with his father to Butte Falls "where they watered up before heading to Medford." Lynn's father let him blow the whistle and ring the bell. He taught Lynn how to read one of the gauges that told the boy when to open and close a valve. "I remember when I turned it on, the steam would be blowing about my feet," he said. "That was my job. Turn that valve on and off, and I thought I was driving the train. Dad got a big kick out of that." As they approached Butte Falls, near the fish hatchery, a trestle 30-40 feet high crossed over the road and it was the only part of the trip that frightened Lynn. "Riding over that trestle, with the old timbers creaking under you and no railings, was a scary experience for a kid," he said.

Lynn was a firefighter for about seven years. He then drove trucks throughout the Northwest before retiring to Exeter, Calif., a half-hour from Sequoia National Park. The family took vacations in Oregon and Lynn kept looking for the 4-Spot. He never knew the locomotive had retired to a Medford park. "It was given to the city," said Jerry Hellinga, former president of the Southern Oregon Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. "It ran from Butte Falls to Medford and then they towed it out to Jackson Park." Hellinga said the city built monkey bars and benches on the locomotive and over the years, bits and pieces of the locomotive disappeared, including the bell. "The cab was gutted," he said. "All the airbrake gauges and controls were missing. We actually had to go find and salvage replacements for a lot of different parts." When the city sold the locomotive to the railroad historical society for a dollar in 1998, the group began a restoration project that still continues. "We do as much of the work as we can ourselves in order to save money," said Hellinga, "but sometimes we just don't have the right tools or ability and that gets expensive." He said this summer the society got an estimate of \$70,000 just to do necessary work on the engine's boiler. Hellinga said there is no way to know when the 4-Spot will be back together, because so much of the work will rely on donations and grants to complete.

Lynn's search for the 4-Spot ended when his son helped him get a computer. "Thanks to the Internet," he said, "I finally found it. I found out about the restoration project and about Railroad Park and then I saw the story last month in your newspaper about them finding a Medco train bell." Although not from the 4-Spot, the bell, which was missing for 50 years before being anonymously returned, was from a sister Medco locomotive, the 2-Spot. "I rang the bell on the 4-Spot, so I was pretty excited about that. It's really cool." Lynn said he'll be visiting Railroad Park as soon as he can to get reacquainted. "These guys are trying to get it back together so they can fire it up again," he said. "I was there when it was already fired up and going along with a full load of logs behind it. Not many people are left who can say that.

**"I've been dreaming about this all my life."**

### ***The Last Page- Railroad Humor.....***

Two drunks were walking down a New York City street when one fell down the subway steps. When he got back up top he told his drinking partner, "...boy you got to see that guy's train set in the basement!"

I once heard a story about a railroad crew that befriended a monkey named Bobo. Where the monkey came from is not known.

The railroaders would play with Bobo and feed him and really treat him nice. In fact, they taught the monkey to give hand signals and pull pins; soon he was able to read a switch list. Eventually they even taught him to run the engine. Soon Bobo got to be so good at it that the guys would let the monkey do their work while they went fishing.

One day the Trainmaster caught the guys fishing while Bobo was doing the work. All of the railroaders got fired on the spot. A couple of months later the railroaders got a letter from the company. It was a great flowery piece and reinstated all of the railroaders to their former positions with all back pay.

**It was signed by Trainmaster Bobo.**

—Can't afford to paint your rolling stock? Just park it on a remote siding for a couple of weeks.—



And they never yield to right of way

