

THE MAIL CAR

December 2020



Bishop Museum
& Historical Society
dba
Laws Railroad Museum
& Historical Site
PO Box 363
200 Silver Canyon Road
Bishop CA 93515
(760) 873-5950
www.LawsMuseum.org
LawsRailroadMusuem@gmail.com



Congratulations to Jim & Joan P. long time patron members and winners of the handcrafted quilt! Thank you to everyone who participated, Kathryn Daniels, Laurie Morrow, and Paul Thompson who helped to bring the museum \$2,640.00. Thank you, danke, gracias, merci, much obliged.

THE MUSEUM IS CLOSED AS WE OBSERVE THE REGIONAL STAY AT HOME ORDER. WE ARE OFFERING PRIVATE SHOPPING BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. WE HAVE AN ADORABLE GIFT SHOP AND MEMBERS RECEIVE 10% OFF! EMAIL US TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT. NOT LOCAL? EMAIL US YOUR ORDER AND WE WILL SHIP IT TO YOU.

What a year 2020 has been. We have all been through a lot, some more than others. It has been a struggle and we will not be sad to see it go. Hello 2021. Things are looking brighter and we are excited for the new year, we have some big plans. We are working in ways that we never thought we would have to, keeping an upbeat attitude with Covid19 stress is a challenge but one we have met head-on.

We hope each and every one of you knows how much you mean to us. Without you, this year would have been very bleak. We have been closed for 73% of the year. For those of you who enjoy statistics, this year the museum has been open 27% (glass half full perspective), visitors down 76%, interesting because the gift shop sales were only down 48%. Yay!

We modified events, the Curley Fletcher Rendezvous was virtual and our Annual Membership Meeting was replaced by a very formal Non-Event event. We did not hold either Choo Choo Swap Meet for safety sake. We are expecting the next Choo Choo Swap Meet to be bigger than ever since everyone has had ample time to clean out closets, sheds, and garages.

We have been working on fix-it projects and are happy with our accomplishments. We are trying new things and celebrating each new day and hope you are too. We look forward to seeing you once it is safe to do so. Be safe and thank you for your support.



On the Horizon We asked for help and you came through in a big way, a really big way. Our friends at Death Valley Conservancy generously matched donations and covered the graphic artist cost to refurbish our Big Sign on Highway 395! Your donations and support from Death Valley Conservancy have enabled us to refurbish our Big Sign. Panels are being fabricated and will be installed as soon as possible. Here is a sneak preview.



It's Raffle Time! Déjà vu?



We are so lucky to have the best members and donors supporting us. Laurie Morrow of Written in Thread Quilting has gifted two adorable identical handcrafted flannel quilts 45"x 39". Enter for your chance to win these matching flannel train theme quilts for yourself or the railfan in your life. **Tickets are only \$5 each or 5 for \$20.** Drawing will be held March 14, 2021. Purchase your tickets today. Please make checks payable to Laws Railroad Museum

PO Box 363, Bishop CA 93515 or log on to www.LawsMuseum.org, click Join Our Family, then One Time Donation, please note for Quilt Raffle. Questions? Give us a call (760) 873-5950 or email us at LawsRailroadMuseum@gmail.com **Good Luck!**



Hoyle's History



Let me start by saying, I truly love volunteering at Laws Railroad Museum. And as my wife Paula says, it's not about me, so, from my observations, let me tell you about some of our great volunteers, as we are a team.

The Reception Center/Gift Shop's busiest day of the week is always Saturday. Robert DeLaRiva has been the Saturday volunteer for quite awhile and when we are open, I usually run into him at Vons market prior to him going out to Laws. He truly is the best man for the job as he enjoys Laws and what he does and time goes really fast on Saturdays, then throw in the Brill car rides, weddings, and other special events and if the weather is decent, it keeps you on the move.

Jay Smart volunteers on Wednesday and Saturday with his pals Ron Morefield and Jerry Gabriel at the gold mine display. Jay is the best, as is Ron and they both go out of their way to show our visitors the most rewarding experience and when they exit the museum parking lot, a lot of Jay and Ron's stories go with them.

Kathryn, Beverly and Maddy come out to volunteer when they can as they all enjoy the gift shop and to meet and greet our patrons. They are all a pleasure to be around and will go that extra mile.

Then there is the Brill car crew which includes Paul Thompson and previous Board of Directors President, Jim Morrow. We do not run the car enough, but when we do, they are all professional and each enjoy doing what they do and it does not go unnoticed, especially with the little ones.

Tony and his son, Nick, are fairly new to our volunteer group, but have been visitors for years. I actually helped recruit them both as I've known Tony Latino since he attended Bishop Union High School when I was a custodian there. Tony and Nick, if you do not know them, maintain the model trains located in the Depot building.

My favorite though, of all time, is Alice Wolfson. I knew Alice when I was delivering her mail as she was a sweetheart. When I came out to Laws, Alice was our Sunday volunteer who sat in the Agent's House and would spin tales of yesterday to anyone who came in to see the exhibit.

Visitors who met Alice, adored her and the stories of the Agent's House she would tell. She was dedicated and committed to every Sunday, rain or shine. And if she was going to be late or miss a Sunday she would always call and notify me. Now since she no longer comes out, I do miss her so, and I always had a feeling she was a New Englander, so one cold windy snowy Sunday morning I asked her and she told me she was.

There are many other volunteers at Laws, but for me, the ones that I have highlighted are the ones mostly in my orbit and are all important team members at the Laws Museum. GO SOX!!

If you would like to be on our email list, simply send us an email at LawsRailroadMuseum@gmail.com and say, "I'd like to be added to your email list". We won't spam you, we promise. Thank you for your continued support.

NEWS FROM THE ENGINE HOUSE

The Engine House (train operations and maintenance volunteers) has had a pretty quiet year with this pandemic and its restrictions essentially making train rides impractical. We have been doing some maintenance of the operating equipment, some training, and some review of our operating practices, especially after a visit from an inspector from the California Public Utilities Commission, which oversees our railroad operations. The inspection found no violations of operating or safety regulations, but we got to thinking about improvements we could make to improve the safety of operations. The casual rider will not notice any difference, but the Operators will.

Speaking of Operators, we can do refresher training of our experienced operators (Engineers and Conductors and Docents), on a limited basis (no big crowds) and training of any others desiring to become a part of the operating crew, assuming next operating season will be better. If any of you are interested, just call or e-mail the Museum and we will contact you and set up some times that are convenient. The environmental study for potential track expansion has been completed and the report writing and review with LADWP is in the works. Hopefully LADWP will approve our proposal and we will be able to expand our rides somewhat. If all goes well we may be laying track this next year. This will take lots of money, of course, so we always appreciate any donations to our separate account dedicated to track expansion and railroad operations. Wear your mask, wash your hands, avoid crowds, and look for many train rides next year!

