



Company News for MRL Employees

Dispatch Staff: Lynda Frost • Jack Gabrian • Pete Lawrenson • Michelle Watt • Kayleen Woodruff • Erin Best

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Tunnels & Bridges on MRL



As one traverses across our railroad, many bridges and tunnels are encountered that support the track structure over streams and through the mountains. These structures are huge assets to MRL, and maintaining them each year is a big part of the operating and capital budgets.

There are eleven tunnels on MRL, ranging from 305 to 3,896 feet long. All of the tunnels combined comprise a total length of 12,217 feet. The longest tunnel – Mullan Tunnel over the Continental Divide – was shortened to a new length of 3,616 feet. Along with the shortening of the tunnel, it was rehabbed to increase the integrity of the tunnel, attain better clearances, and provide additional air for our new locomotives. The air volume in the tunnel was increased by 36%. This project cost \$20.6 million, which did not include the money spent on the emergency work. In addition, Tunnel 9 near Quinns also required some emergency repairs this year with costs at nearly \$900,000.

The number of bridges on MRL totals 306 with 157 of them on the Main Line. The total footage of the bridges is 36,979 feet or a little over seven miles. The longest bridge is near Clark Fork with a length of 1,174 feet. We have replaced or repaired many bridges over the last 23 years which included some innovative work with some; such as Bridge 165 over Fish Creek, Bridge 208 near Quinns and, now, Bridge 209 also near Quinns. The rehab design by Muth Consulting in Missoula is unique to the railroad industry; the arch design had never previously been used on any railroad bridges in the country. Bridge 209 cost \$5.1 million and has taken a little over two years. MRL's capital budget for bridges for the past few years has been between \$3-4 million.

It is important to keep the bridges and tunnels in top condition for the safe operation of trains, and that requires a large portion of our annual capital budget. Many of the bridges were constructed in the early 1900's and designed to accommodate the large steam engines of that era – which has helped them last as long as they have. MRL is committed to keeping these bridges and tunnels in top condition. As Chief Engineer of MRL, I am proud to say that our employees have done an outstanding job over the past 23 years keeping our tunnels and bridges safe and in excellent shape.

Thanks to all –

Richard Keller
Chief Engineer

Employee Tools

Extracast

Log in today to see what the fuss is about.

Safety Comes in Many Packages

Pete Lawrenson, Chief Security & Safety

Safety comes through so many different actions, reactions, expressions, and efforts – which leaves an abundance of material to address. This article is not about safety in the workplace, it is about generosity from one person to another that benefits the health and safety of a family.

Tim Olds, with MRL since start up, is a "jimbo" operator for the Engineering Department. Tim usually flies below the radar but is a well-respected, hard working employee; always willing to share a safety concern. Tim is married to Toni, and they have two nearly full-grown children.

Earlier this fall, Toni donated one of her kidneys to a neighbor woman she barely knows. Toni's kidneys were a good match, so she just did it. Two trips to Salt Lake City, major surgery and

Devoted to You

www.montanarail.com now offers more information and tools for you in an easy-to-navigate format. The Employee Tools page is only available to MRL employees and includes company news, events and references that will help keep you connected. Click into the MRL Extranet to access pages devoted to each department; providing quick access to maps, benefits, employee recognition, job announcements, contact information, and much more! Check out such things as temp lists, bulletins, and rosters from your home computer, laptop or mobile device and stay connected. Watch for new features and resources to be added in the coming months.

EXTRANET

a difficult recovery – all done for no other reason than because you care for people. Imagine what Toni's gift did for this woman and her family for their health and safety – priceless. Out of the kindness of her spirit, Toni Olds gave the greatest gift possible to a young woman, while asking nothing in return.

Giving is a large part of MRL's safety culture too. We give of ourselves to work safely and to keep our co-workers safe – for no other reason than because it is simply what we do. During the season of Thanksgiving through Christmas, it is wonderful to reflect back and see a great year in safety, while looking forward knowing we will do even better in 2011.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

PAY IT FORWARD 2011



The very popular *Pay It Forward* will be launched again in February 2011! The program is offered by the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation to provide Washington Companies' employees an opportunity to make a \$250 financial contribution to their charity of choice. Once again, there will be 250 employees whose names are drawn to participate in this program; a portion of those names drawn will be MRL employees.

Those interested in participating must submit their name and employee number to mjohnson@washcorp.com or by calling 523-1500 by February 19th. To date as a result of the first three offerings, there have been 750 gift cards offered to Washington employees; an amount totaling \$179,500. What a remarkable thing to share with the communities in which we work and live!

Keeping Track

On the Move

Scott Baier, Bill Edwards, Andy Payne • Were Machinists, Now Switchman – Laurel
Jim Bieber • Was Projects Engineer, Now Director Engineering – Missoula (eff. 1/1/11)
Cindy Brashear • Was Clerk, Now Receptionist – Missoula
Tyler Braswell • Was Electrician, Now Signal Laborer – Livingston
Chris Cline • Was Accounting Staff Assistant, Now Manager Car Repair Billing – Missoula
Cory Cromwell • Was Track Laborer, Now Assistant Roadmaster – Superior
Jennifer Fauque • Was A/P Technician, Now Accounting Staff Assistant – Missoula
Randy Gustin • Was Director Engineering, Now Chief Engineer – Missoula (eff. 1/1/11)
Matt Hansen • Was Track Laborer, Now Dispatcher Trainee – Missoula
Craig Hardy • Was Assistant B&B Supervisor, Now B&B Supervisor – Missoula
Max Hausauer, Wes Hocevar, Cody Opp • Were Track Laborers, Now Switchman – Laurel
Dustin Hayes • Was Assistant Roadmaster, Now Roadmaster – Missoula
Justin Laughery • Was Carman, Now Switchman – Laurel
Kevin Leonard • Was Hostler, Now Switchman – Laurel
Cindy Moore • Was Procurement Manager, Now Material Manager – Livingston/Helena
Mike Rahl • Was B&B Supervisor, Now Director Structures – Missoula
Ginger Reimann • Was Clerk, Now Transportation Supervisor – Missoula
Mary Schwenk • Was Clerk, Now ATM Temporary – Missoula
Dawn Taylor • Was Manager Car Repair Billing, Now Procurement Manager – Missoula
Bruce Young • Was Material Manager, Now Senior Procurement Manager – Missoula

Look Who's New

A/P Technician
Bretteny Bailey

Retirements

Terry Bankston, Operating Laurel
Walter Bradford, Dispatch Missoula
Dave Cook, Engineering Missoula
Danny Fox, Mechanical Laurel
Mick Fauske, Operating Missoula
Allan Grainger, Operating Laurel
Jerry Hayes, Mechanical Livingston
James Meredith, Mechanical Laurel
Ted Proctor, Mechanical Laurel
Perry Smith, Operating Missoula

Geometry Cars

Kayleen Woodruff, Administrative Assistant - MOW

In less time than it takes to blink; track can be measured to determine if rail gauge, wear, cross-level, alignment, and the curvature fall within MRL and FRA standards. Geometry cars are designed to do all this while simulating the track under normal freight loads traveling at normal track speed. A geometry car uses a specialized laser measurement system to give an exact measurement of the rail profile, rail wear, cross-level, degree of curvature, super elevation of the curve, and gauge of the track. This type of technology has developed within the last 30 years and continues to improve to help track maintenance personnel maintain the track. Montana Rail Link contracts with the BNSF to run a geometry car across its system in the spring and fall of each year. Any exceptions (area of track not within MRL and FRA standards) discovered are marked with the exact GPS locations and type of defects found, so crews can accurately find and correct them. In addition to the BNSF inspections, the FRA periodically brings their geometry car across our system to perform inspections. The FRA chose to visit Montana Rail Link in 2010 using Geometry Car DOTX-216. This car is a converted Amtrak Metroliner coach, equipped with a track geometry measurement system, a rail profile system, and a multi-car ride quality measuring system capable of making track measurements at speeds up to 165 mph. In traveling 560 miles across our main line track, the FRA geometry car found only three track exceptions. This incredible feat happened only because of the hard work and expertise of the individuals assigned to maintain the track.

Coming Together Across the MRL Line

MRL employees in all areas make a difference each Christmas season providing for those across Montana who are struggling. These efforts include a toy drive in Helena and food drives in Laurel, Livingston and Missoula during MRL Christmas parties. Food was also raised in Missoula during the Can the Cats program in the days leading up to the Griz/Cat football game. Thanks to everyone across our line for all that you contributed to help the less fortunate during difficult economic times.



MRL Santa Express

On December 4th, the Santa Train rolled into the Missoula Southgate Mall area to welcome local kids and their families. The public toured the MRL passenger cars, and children sat with Santa and Mrs. Claus to receive several gifts including hats, gloves or scarves to provide warmth throughout the winter. Over 850 were in attendance. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped to make this event possible!

Left: Santa and Mrs. Clause a.k.a. Gerald and Debbie Marshall. Gerald is a Missoula locomotive engineer, and Debbie works in the GOB as a Claims Specialist.

Training On Tour

Jack Gabrian, Manager Field Operations

The TRANSCAER training tour completed its travels across MRL property in early October. The tour made stops at Laurel, Livingston, Helena, and Missoula and consisted of the specialized TRANSCAER car, the MRL training car, two training tank cars, and various MRL locomotives. Instructors for the complete tour included Jack Gabrian and a BNSF contractor assisted by Jeff Lair,

Paul Elsenpeter and Kent Kulesa. This outreach program was attended by over 130 personnel from city, county and state agencies along with several other private industries. The program included both classroom and hands-on training during the session which lasted 3-5 hours. All sessions were a great building tool between Montana Rail Link, BNSF and local response agencies.

Meet E1

Michelle Watt, Manager Accounting

Montana Rail Link is currently in the process of upgrading from the JD Edwards 7.3 computer software to JD Edwards Enterprise One (E1). This new system is web-based technology with several new and improved capabilities for business users. Some benefits that will result from this E1 upgrade include: increased revenues in Real Estate by better tracking of parcels, better control on costs, optimized productivity, and increased customer service just to name a few. Upgrading business software is a complex process, and a team has been assembled for the integration. The E1 project team consists of individuals assigned to the project from MRL and Washington Business Services, as well as involving AMX Consulting to help with the implementation. This implementation is a six phase project before completion. The team is currently finishing up the third phase and will begin testing data in the new system in phase four. The migration over to E1 is going to be a challenging task and will take approximately eight months to complete, with our "go-live" date currently set for April 18, 2011. The amount of time and effort that the MRL project team will be putting forth during the next several months will be something of value to MRL in the years to come. The efforts by all that will be involved are much appreciated.

Employee Family Scholarship Provides Up to \$8,000!

In partnership with the Dennis & Phyllis Washington Foundation, Montana Rail Link offers the Employee Family Scholarship. The scholarship program was established to help the families of our employees broaden their access to higher education and offers up to \$8,000 maximum lifetime benefit toward education costs.

The program provides \$1,000 per semester to a child (no age limit) or spouse of an employee who has worked with the company for one year or more.

Funds may be used for post-secondary education at any accredited institution, provided the program is full-time and continues a minimum of one year. *Students must submit their application no later than 30 days after the school term has begun.*

The application can be located on the MRL Extranet website or at dpwfoundation.org. If you have any questions concerning the Employee Family Scholarship Program, please contact Ellen Harne at Washington Corporations (523-1371).

