

FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY

DATE: May 2016
ITEM: Event Report
FROM: Eugene Vicknair
SUBJECT: **2016 Convention**

Over 190 visitors attended the joint NMRA – PCR / FRRS – WP 2016 Convention in Modesto. Many expressed that they enjoyed the varied format and presentations and felt it was a very smoothly run convention.

Presentations included the debut of an updated film on the First 50 Years of the Western Pacific from Cantenary Video, a look at the history of and techniques for modeling several WP related pieces, including the shorty steel gondolas by Bill Gilbert and Tidewater Southern steeplecab electric 100 by Chris Allan. Jim Providenza shared information and techniques on modeling WP F-units, while Mark Williams gave presentations on the California and Pioneer Zephyrs. WP branchlines were also featured, with Ken Middlebrook discussing the San Jose Branch and Wayne Monger giving a look at the relatively unknown Terminous Branch. Special thanks to Stan Jennings who came out from Salt Lake City to share his knowledge of the Salt Lake, Garfield and Western Railway. Eugene Vicknair did a show on 6 ex-Rio Grande steam locomotives that came into the WP family, while CSRM's Kyle Wyatt presented research on WP's second generation of heavyweight passenger cars. Newly scanned films from the Virgil Staff collection were shown and Evan Werkema closed out the presentations on Saturday with a great show on WP's steam powered railfan excursions. Other presentations focused on details of modeling and model railroad operations. Attendees also got to enjoy the NMRA model contests.

Three tours were also part of the event. On Thursday a bus took 40 attendees to the Port of Stockton for a close up look at the Central California Traction Company's operations at the port as well as the recently opened welded rail plant. Friday afternoon was a special excursion and photo run-bys on the Sierra Northern's Sierra Railroad division out of Oakdale. And on Saturday morning a group got to tour the shops of the Modesto and Empire Traction Company, which included a roll-out of newly restored General Electric 70 tonner 600. Thanks to Scott Inman for coordinating the tours and special thanks to the CCT, Sierra and M&ET for their assistance and cooperation.

The Saturday banquet featured a talk by retired Sacramento Northern trainman Norm Lucas, sharing his experiences with the SN in the 1970s and some of the interesting people he worked with on trains like the Chico Local and the SN Detour. Norm's presentation was very well received and generated more than a few laughs at some of the colorful stories. Thank you again for sharing it all with us, Mr. Lucas!

The banquet also featured an announcement that the Union Pacific Foundation had awarded the FRRS a \$3,000 grant to being work on an Archives Research Facility. More details on that will be coming soon.

The archives raffle had over 30 sets of prizes ranging from models and model railroad supplies to archive prints. Special thanks to our raffle gift donors for their generous assistance:

Cantenary Video

Richard Brennan

Brad Lomazzi - Railroad Americana

Walt Schedler - Walt's Trains & Electronics

Bowser Model Trains

Peter Arnold

Kadee Quality Products

Woodland Scenics

Marc Desobeau

Kalmbach Publishing

FRRS Museum Store

FRRS Archives

Pacific Coast Region – NMRA

Broadway Limited

Huge thanks to Scott McAllister, 2016 Co-Chair and lead on the PCR-NMRA side, as well as the convention committee and our convention volunteers:

Al Rowe

Bob Schott

Dan Evans

Jim Dieckman

Scott Inman

Giuseppe Aymar

Richard Klammer

Nancy Stokely

Ray deBlieck

Steve Wesolowski

Tom Campbell

Greg Elems

Jim Collins

Rod Smith

David Elems

Mary Moore-Campagna

Bob Cable

I would like to propose that the 2017 Convention be held in one of the following locations:

- Marysville
- Reno
- Lodi