

from the
**Membership Officer's
Desk**

Joe Way

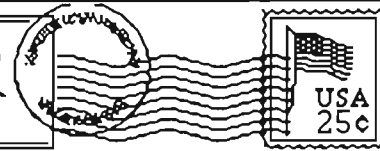
Membership in the Feather River Rail Society has increased quite a bit since the 30-odd charter members gathered in the spring of 1983 with the purpose of preserving western railroad history. We now have 531 Associate members, 193 active members, 82 Family members, and 31 Life members for a paid total of 837. Two people hold honorary memberships in return for the many contributions they have made to the society and the museum. The members are spread over 39 of the 50 states and five foreign countries. The vast majority reside in California as is to be expected considering the location of the headquarters. Nevada is the next most populous state for us, with the other northwestern states of Oregon, Utah and Washington providing homes for many more.

Railfans come in all ages. Our youngest member is 3 years old, and our oldest is 95. Most are married men, but many are single and quite a few are women. We make our livings in a great number of ways, but the single largest group by far is active and retired railroaders.

I keep all this information in a computer database. The program I use is cleverly written to allow my computer to work with more information than it can fit in its small memory (64k, or about 64,000 characters). That's good, since the main data file alone is currently 240k. It makes for a relatively slow operation, however, and I have an ultimate limitation in the size of my disk drive, which has room for about 300k of information. This means that the day is coming when my computer won't be able to handle the Rail Society's membership list.

I wonder, accordingly, if there might be someone among the members, possibly an executive or owner of a business, who might have

**Letters to
the Editor**



An open letter to the FRRS museum staff and members:

I recently had the chance to visit the museum after being away for a number of months. While there, I checked on the condition of the Santa Fe cabooses, and I am sorry to say I was very disappointed. It seems some individuals have no idea what trash cans and brooms are used for. Both cabooses were littered with trash and cigarette butts, and the bunks in 99197 had been used and not made back into seats. We had to clean up these cabooses after they had been out on the railroad and were targets for hoboes, I never thought we would find the same kind of mistreatment while at the museum.

As you may be aware, the Santa Fe cabooses are on loan to the museum on a no cost, friendly arrangement which benefits both our organizations. These cabooses, as are the other cabooses at the museum, are available for members' use while in Portola on a first come, first served basis.

One of the joys of belonging to the FRRS is the chance to get our hands on some real railroad equipment. Where else can you crawl in and around F-7s, RS-1s, box cars, cabooses, etc., unless employed by the railroads (and then the glamour goes out and it becomes just another job)?

This is, however, a privilege and not our right. And, as with all privileges, it is something which we have to earn and maintain or we lose it. It is up to each of us, when at the museum, to remember the equipment is there for all of us to enjoy. Don't let acts of vandalism (and I believe leaving your mess behind for someone else to clean up is just as much an act of vandalism as painting graffiti) force us out of the museum to close and lock doors on the equipment.

One of the greatest traditions of the Boy Scouts when on outings is to "leave the area in better shape than it was when you arrived". Let's all keep that in mind when we visit the museum.

Thank you,
Errol Spangler
Vintage Railway Equipment
"The Santa Fe Boys"

upgraded his or her computer system and therefore has surplus equipment which might be suitable to our needs. Tremendous amounts of inexpensive software is available for IBM-XT compatible computers, so that's what we would prefer, but I'd be happy to talk to anyone about anything they might have available. I would be glad to pay a reasonable price (which couldn't really be too high, considering the current compatible price wars) or perhaps someone might like to make a tax-deductible donation of equipment to the society. Either way, any response to our problem will be appreciated. You can contact me directly on this matter at:

3494 Chandler Road, Quincy, CA

95971-9628. My phone number is (916)283-4034. Thank you.

This issue of *The Train Sheet*
is dedicated to

George L. Waters Jr.

1912-1989

A man of faith and wisdom,
to whom I am greatly indebted for both.

Dave Waters