

# The Train Sheet



Preserving "The Feather River Route"

...news from The Feather River Rail Society and The Portola Railroad Museum

Issue No. 77

January/February 1996

## WP GP9's Are In Portola



*The Geeps are home! Our WP GP9's finally made it back home to Portola. Engines 300 & 306 (WP 725 and 731) are shown spotted next to the oil house at the Museum. Photo by Norm Holmes.*

### Inside this Issue:

- The arrival of 2 WP GP9's.
- Notice of Operating Dept. crew training.
- Notice of upcoming Board of Directors Election.



## Feather River Rail Society

\*\*\*\*\*  
Portola Railroad  
Museum

Preserving

*"The Feather River Route"*

P.O. Box 608  
Portola, California 96122  
(916) 832-4131

The museum is open daily year round from  
10:00 AM to 5:00 PM except Christmas Day.  
Entrance to the museum is free, however, we  
have a suggested donation of \$2.00.

*The Feather River Rail Society, a tax exempt public benefit California corporation, is the historical society for the Western Pacific Railroad and operator of the Portola Railroad Museum in Portola, California. The FRRS is not associated with the Union Pacific Railroad.*

FRRS Tax ID number is 68-0002774  
Member of Tourist Railway Association Inc.

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Vic Neves-----	(510) 352-4373

### Headlight Publisher

John J. Ryczkowski  
13305 Mahogany Dr.  
Reno, Nevada 89511  
(702) 853-5303

### Train Sheet

Ed Warren  
110 Date Palm Drive  
Sparks, Nevada 89436  
(702) 425-3610

### Membership

Associate-----	\$15
Active-----	\$30
Family-----	\$35
Sustaining-----	\$75
Life-----	\$300
Family Life-----	\$450

These are the dues for one year. Life and Family Life memberships are a one-time payment. Associate members do NOT have a vote and do NOT receive the Headlight, all other members do. Associate, Active and Life memberships are for ONE person only. Family memberships may include all members of one's immediate family, but there is only one vote. Sustaining and Family Life memberships are for a maximum of two people and two votes.

# From the Desk of the President



We're now most of the way through the "off-season," and most of us around the Museum are still waiting for it to start. Except for the cold, the snow, and the calendar, the slow season is not really here. I'm still adjusting to the year-round tasks of helping administrate our business and operations, and this year seems to have been much busier than last, and much more interesting. The FRRS Board of Directors is dealing with the challenge of decreasing Museum revenues by expanding our advertising, particularly for the Locomotive Rental program, Rallfan's Day, and Railroad Days, and by investigating other avenues open to us. Watch the Train Sheet for further developments.

Our WP GP9's are safely on the property (see articles elsewhere), and CMO Hank Stiles has already had them both running. WP 731 (UP/LAIS/Helm 306) has a control power problem that is being looked into, but WP 725 (UP/LAIS/Helm 300) runs and loads just fine. We expect to re-number them and put WP 5-chime horns on them, but WP paint will have to wait a bit. Both of them have a lot of WP orange (particularly end stripes) showing through the UP yellow, anyway.

Please take the time to review the article on the upcoming elections in this issue. With 5 Directors' seats up for election this year, the challenge is there for any member, active or above, to get involved in shaping the future of the FRRS and the Portola Railroad Museum. It is not a requirement that you live near Portola to be a Director, but serving as a Director does include participation in monthly Board meetings, usually in Portola.

We can also use your help in promoting your Museum. Tell your friends, families, and co-workers about the Portola Railroad Museum, encourage them to consider a visit, and don't forget the Locomotive Rental program!

Headlight #11 should now be in your hands. My thanks go to you all for your continued support, and patience. You won't be disappointed.

Steve Habeck

## Back Issues of the Headlight

- Issue 1 (Out of print) California Zephyr Anniversary Issue.
- Issue 2 Joint issue with the Freight Car Journal; WP freight car roster; color. 28 pages, \$5.00.
- Issue 3 (Out of print) F3s in freight service; AAR box cars; WP tank cars; index to historical articles in back issues of the Train Sheet.
- Issue 4 (Out of print) A tale of 2 engines; PC-WP box cars; GP40s....a guide to types; circus specials. 36 pages.
- Issue 5 The Reno branch; M-K remanufactured GP35s and GP40s; the Charles O. Sweetwood car; mill gons. 48 pages, \$4.00.
- Issue 6 M-K remanufactured GP40s, part 2; Budd RDCs; cupola cabooses; 1970 freight car roster. 52 pages, \$4.00.
- Issue 7 Western Pacific FT 50th anniversary issue; color cover. 48 pages, \$5.00.
- Issue 8 Working the Sperry Rail Detector Car on WP; GP 35's; modeling WP ex-MILW boxcars. 36 pages, \$4.00.
- Issue 9 WP History; Merger 10th Anniversary; Complete Western Pacific steam and diesel locomotive roster; color on cover and interior. 96 pages, \$12.95.
- Issue 10 War time, Beer cars, Shafter, GP-35's. 36 pp. \$6.00.
- Issue 11 Train dispatching on the WP, Fifty foot single sheathed automobile box cars, WP employee magazines. \$6.00.

Headlight issue #11 is the most current issue.

Back issues of the Train Sheet are available  
for \$1.00 each postpaid.

Send all orders to: FRRS Gift Shop at P.O. Box 608, Portola, CA 96122.

## Budgeting Our Resources (What Resources?)

By David Dewey

Last month I mentioned budgeting our resources so the society (FRRS) can better manage the museum to tell the Story of Railroading to the public. Now before we can talk about budgeting these resources, we must understand what they are and what we are budgeting for.

First, note that I stated that, "the society can better manage the museum...." This statement alludes to a primary thought; The FRRS exists as a separate entity from the museum. The museum functions as only one of the activities that the FRRS does to preserve the Western Pacific Railroad's place in history and make people aware of its, and all railroading's, importance to their lives. We (the FRRS) also do other things, such as publish *The Headlight* to also meet this goal. While the museum does occupy most of the FRRS' time and resources, it is not our only activity. We must stay aware of these other activities that benefit those who cannot visit the museum (Our publishing activities carry our message worldwide!).

Second, our resources are not limited to financial resources (OK, that's a fancy way of saying "MONEY"), nor our volunteers (Although the volunteers are our backbone, and carry more than their share of support--if you missed it, that was a big THANK YOU from me). Because we are organized as an educational, non-profit organization and operate a facility we call a MUSEUM, we benefit from a gigantic resource known as "The Public Trust."

Oh brother, there he goes again--using politicians' talk--wait a minute, hang in here, I didn't invent the word, I'm just using it, let's see what it means for us.

Society has long held the idea of a Museum as a part of "the Arts;" that part of our culture that is to be held in high regard (even if it is boring), and to be supported, without financial benefits (i.e., you're not gonna get a red cent back), almost like one's church. This ideal of supporting those things that only benefit our sense of well being runs deep, even through large profit oriented business organizations. This ideal is what allowed our museum to be born. Many of the core pieces of our collection were given to us, and our

present site leased to us, because of this public trust.

It is this same trust that inspires people and corporations to continue to give to the FRRS. However, as with all things in nature, this isn't a one-way street, and there are potholes in the street, many we don't see until we hit them. The trust requires nurturing, especially in these changing times.

Most importantly, we need to manage our organization so that the public senses a value received. This could be as simple as having a good experience visiting the museum. It could be an enjoyable train ride at the museum or elsewhere. Maybe it's a book we published, or someone who gives a presentation to a grade-school class.

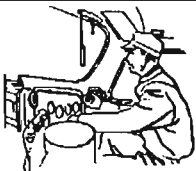
At the same time, we also need to politely let the public know what we need in support of our goals. We do this by requesting membership, selling excursion tickets, magazines, and asking for participation in special projects (money, labor, or expertise donations). This must be done diplomatically and must give something back to the givers. This can be as simple as the satisfaction that they have helped save a piece of history. However, in order to be able to provide that satisfaction, we (FRRS) must manage our activities (preservation, display, education, and financial ability to care for the item FOREVER) so the givers will trust us to keep the piece saved.

The public trust is a complicated relationship that takes a lot of attention, but it is what allows a small group like us to have a big impact on the world around us. We presently have a world-class collection of "stuff" in our museum attracting visitors that has a major financial impact on the Portola area. We have publications that spread the message that "WP Lives" worldwide. While this has taken the dedicated work of a few, without whom this would not be here today, it would NEVER exist without the resource known as The Public Trust.

If you want to reach me via email, I'm at:  
djdevey@ecst.csuchico.edu

### FRRS Member Benefit

All FRRS members in good standing receive a 10% discount on all items purchased in person or by mail from the FRRS Gift Shop. You must ask for this discount when making the purchase.



### YOU! Can Operate a Diesel Locomotive

for one hour with your own private instructor included.

**Fulfill your wildest dream!**

A handsome certificate suitable for framing is awarded after each rental. Rentals by appointment. Our popular "Combo" rental package includes Western Pacific "Covered Wagon" 921-D EMD F7. Call for details. Help support the Society. Phone number for appointments: (916) 832-4532.

### Attention FRRS Life Members

A new class of membership now exists called Family Life. This allows a maximum of two people and two votes.

Everyone who was a Life Member prior to October 1, 1995 may upgrade to Family Life AT NO CHARGE and AT ANY TIME simply by writing a letter requesting the upgrade, and listing the second person, and by sending the letter to: FRRS Membership Chairman, P. O. Box 608, Portola, CA 96122.

This effectively means that no spouse of a life member requires their own separate membership any more.

*The Incredible Journey is Over At Last...*

# WP GP9's 725 & 731 Are Home

By Steve Habeck

On February 8th, our WP GP-9's finally made it back home to Portola. The units were delayed in Council Bluffs and Omaha pending inspection and some minor air brake repairs, but when they started moving west they arrived in record time.

This "Incredible Journey" for Helm Financial engines 300 & 306 that began three months ago (11/9/95 - 2/9/96) finally ended when MTO Ray Breedlove of the UP in Portola had the crew of the OGST set WP GP9's 725 & 731 (and Norm's EMD/Baldwin FRW 531) inside the Museum fence, at Malfunction Junction. The Geeps are home!

There's no doubt as to these units' heritage. There are WP green and orange showing through all over the units, particularly the short hood end of the 731 (the "WP" letters and the stripes are easy to see). The 731 has the knockdown numbers in the number boards; the 725 has one-piece boards, but most everything we should need to put knock-downs back in looks like it's still there, or can be easily modified. All cab glass is intact, no cracks (and, of course, is all FRA part 223 glazing). Both units have speedometers on both control stands. We will need about four class light lenses between the two. Despite the heavy rain during the last 2 weeks, both cabs were dry.

Other notes: The wheels on the 725 are all thin, particularly #3 axle. 731's wheels are much better, but definitely not new. 725 also shows evidence of having been sideswiped on the fireman's side some time in the past. The units were shipped coupled nose to nose and MU'ed, and that's how they were delivered, including an MU jumper cable. WP's order for their 8 GP9's was EMD order #5407, and these units bear frame numbers 5407-1 and 5407-7.

On Saturday afternoon, February 10, 1996, both units were spotted on the oil pan on track 3, with battery chargers hooked up and humming. We plan to get started on getting rid of the numbers 300 and 306, too, to make room for the numbers 725 and 731.

Cosmetically, these units are not much to look at, but with one look into the engine compartments, it's clear that we have well-maintained units on our hands. They should be excellent runners (both still have some fuel in them, too). We have now paid the transportation bill to the UP, which was \$10,150 (we waited until they were delivered, although they've been in Portola for almost two weeks already). By the way, MTO Breedlove left a message on the Museum's answering machine apologizing for the delay in setting the units over. Nice touch.

## GP9 Fund

The GP9 fund now stands at \$7,067.75. This is only 10% of what we need to replace funds used from our savings account. Several other railroad preservation groups that we are familiar with will not use general funds or savings to purchase equipment for their collections, but rely solely on members contributions. We were in a position where we had to use our savings to purchase the WP GP9's on very short notice or lose them to the scrappers. Several of our members have made substantial donations to this fund and we have a challenge from Life Member Peter Watkins for all Life Members to contribute \$500 to the GP9 fund. If each of the 162 Life Members contributed \$500 to this fund we would have more than enough to cover the costs of the units and to cover costs to restore them to WP paint.

The following have donated to the GP9 fund in January and February:

Roger Arnold  
Don Breitbarth  
Randall Cape  
Mark Cooper\*  
George Crandall  
Russ Czuleger\*  
Dan Davella  
Ed & Lynn DeLozier\*  
Robert Dobbins\*  
Jerry Foote  
Barry Garrett  
Norm Gidney\*  
Dennis Gilkey  
Peter Goodier\*  
Robert Gordon  
Paul Guercio\*  
Peter Haas\*  
William Hartley  
Scott Holyoake  
IBM Matching Fund  
Richard Kirker

Doug Laurice\*  
Tom Lerza  
Clyde Lippincott  
John Nardi  
Pacific Gas & Electric\*  
Jack Palmer  
Peter Parrish  
Ray Sarno\*  
Richard Severance\*  
Wayne Sheldon  
Enrico Stein\*  
George Wahl\*  
Mike Wallington\*  
Peter Watkins\*  
Phillip Wyche  
Mel Zernow  
Gregory Zucco

\* indicates a donation of \$100 or more.

## Material Donations

The following items were recently donated: A military camouflage cover for use as a summer deck cover from Robert Shepard; eight HO gauge CZ passenger cars from Jack Hathaway. Leonard Ferreira donated a wheel alignment gauge, a car mover and an air gauge test device. Also an anonymous person left 277 track spikes painted and lettered from almost as many US railroads. It will be a challenge to figure how to display them.

Thank you everyone.

## Help Wanted

We are still in need of sightings of WP cabooses. Please send the number and location of any that you know of that are preserved. Also we have had no response asking for photos of WP semi-trailers. This is an often overlooked facet of WP's freight operations.

## The Western Pacific Headlight

At long last we have issued Western Pacific Headlight No. 11. It was mailed to all Active, Family, Sustaining and Life members, and to those classes of members who have dropped their membership during the past two years. We mailed 1,183 copies on February 20, 1996 with a total weight of 346 pounds. If you did not receive your copy within a reasonable time, please contact us. We expect the WP Headlight to be published on a regular basis. Thank you for your patience.

## Trains Unlimited Tours

Don't forget the Trains Unlimited raffle drawing which will be held on June 1, 1996. If you haven't sent back your tickets and donation, there is still time. If you want to trim the odds, we have additional tickets for sale at \$7 each, or 5 for \$30.

# New FRRS Members

Please welcome the following new FRRS members:

Cluin H. Cameron  
Bill Chapman  
Tom Hamm  
Everett F. Jacobs  
Eric and Maila Johnson  
M. & K. Johnson  
Stephen Moore  
Mark Nichols  
Ken Nissen  
Richard Otoski  
Byron Redburn  
Rob Roberts  
Gerald Roundy  
Richard Sullivan  
Thomas Swift  
Richard L. Woods

# New FRRS Life Members

The following people are the newest  
FRRS Life Members:

Tom Piantanida  
Richard Rowe  
Mel and Lea Zernow  
Jim Somerville

The following people have upgraded their Life  
memberships to Family Life:

Dave and Serena Dodds  
Tom Graham and Judy A. McGrath  
Larry and Lynn Hanlon  
Jim and Maylou Smith  
Hank Stiles and Janis Peterson

Thank you people.

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# CASH Donations CASH

The following generous people have made cash donations to the FRRS:

Cluin Cameron  
Don Davella  
David Edwards  
Martin Gibson  
Larry Harrison  
Eugene Hines  
Josh Kennedy  
Michel J. Knight  
Kimberly Lagraf  
George Nolan

Peter Parish  
Richard Rowe  
Donald Schmitt  
Francis Sellman  
Richard Simonsen  
United Way of San Joaquin County  
Bill Wells  
Eric Wright  
Mel and Lea Zernow  
Gregory Zucco



## Would You Like to Work for the Railroad?

The museum operates trains every weekend between Memorial Day and Labor Day. If you have always wanted to have a taste of "working on the railroad," such as connecting air hoses, giving hand signals to the engineer, and pulling pins on couplers, then this is your opportunity.

Members who would like to participate in the museum's train operating crews are required first to take a rules examination and then to be instructed in safe operating procedures.

The rules examination is an open book test on the FRRS General Code of Operating Rules with no time limit. If you do not have a copy of the rules book, one will be provided for you. You must have a rules book in your possession to take the examination. A passing grade is 75% or above.

### Please bring your own pencils!

Upon your successful completion of the rules exam, you will be instructed in hand signals, getting on and off of moving equipment, coupling of air brake hoses and other safe and correct operating procedures.

Members who wish to participate in train operations or any other work at the museum are required to sign a Release of Liability. This can be done at the time of taking the Rules Examination.

For safety reasons, we also require you to have heavy work boots that lace up over your ankles to prevent ankle injuries; and we require work gloves.

### The crew training for 1996 will be held:

Saturday, April 27, 1996

Sunday, May 5, 1996

The sessions will run from 10:00 AM to 3:30 PM on each day. You may attend the session on EITHER of these days.

Members who are unable to attend the classes on either of these two days may make arrangements to take the examination and receive instruction at any other time by calling the museum at (916) 832-4131 or stopping by the museum.

If you wish to attend the Saturday session, consider staying over and working at the museum on Sunday.

If you wish to attend the Sunday session, consider arriving a day early and working at the museum on Saturday.

**Note: ANY previously-qualified member who wishes to participate in any operations THIS YEAR, must take and pass the rules examination BEFORE they will be allowed to operate. No Exceptions!**

## FRRS Board of Directors Election

By Steve Habeck

This year, the terms of Directors Gordon Wollesen, Peter Langdon, Vic Neves, Hank Stiles, and Steve Habeck are due to expire. Now is the time to consider serving your Society as a Director. Any FRRS member in good standing, except Associate, may serve as Director. Attending monthly Directors meetings in Portola, which can be quite long, is a requirement, and a good working knowledge of Museum activities is recommended. If you are interested, send in your name and a brief (100 words or less) candidacy statement to the Society office by May 1, 1996. The address is listed in the masthead of every issue of the Train Sheet.

Ballots and the candidacy statements will be mailed to the membership in May, probably with Train Sheet #78. The election will be held, and ballots counted, at the FRRS Annual Membership Meeting and Dinner on Saturday, June 22, 1996, at 7:30 PM, at the Museum. Get involved with your Society, and help it grow!

### Pacific Limited Update

By Steve Habeck

The Pacific Limited schedule for 1996 appeared in the last issue of the Train Sheet, and PLG Crew Chief Bob Harper reports that he has received some inquiries from interested FRRS members about being car hosts. He has requested that we put out an urgent call for volunteers with formal medical training (doctors, nurses, EMT's) for any and all segments of both 1996 trips. If you, or someone you know, has the medical expertise and would like to be volunteers on these trains, please contact Crew Chief Bob Harper as soon as possible. Thank you. Bob Harper, 2 Pleasant Avenue, Corte Madera, CA 94925, (415) 924-0170

### The Ties That Bind

We were notified that a large number of good used railroad ties were available through government surplus from the Sierra Army Depot at Herlong, CA. (60 miles from Portola.) Bruce Cooper made arrangements through the State Surplus reutilization program for us to purchase 500 ties. Norm Holmes lined up a flat bed truck and trailer outfit from Reno to haul the ties. Norm and Ken Iverson went to Herlong where the Army's forklift loaded the ties. At Portola, Norm, Ken Iverson and Ken Roller helped unload the ties and stacked them on one of our flat cars. Tobie Smith operated the crane for the unloading process. This will give us a good supply of replacement ties and for a possible future track extension.

### It's Tax Time Again

Pending any changes Congress might make, donations of cash or property to charitable organizations are deductible from your Federal and State Income Tax, if you itemize deductions. This includes your membership dues. For a one time gift of \$250 or more we will issue a formal acknowledgment for tax purposes. Property donations, such as a railroad car or locomotive, valued at \$5,000 or more, require an official appraisal to claim the deduction. The gift you make now will help you on your 1996 tax form.

### Your Will

This is probably as good a time as any to remind you about your will. If you have railroad related items in your collection that you would like to donate to our museum upon your demise, they should be listed in your will. Sometimes relatives do not appreciate the value of one's collection and these items are destroyed. We also accept cash or securities. These would be added to our growing endowment fund. Another option would be to create a trust to pay income to your spouse or other relative for life and designate the remaining principal to us. If you have any questions about any of the above, we will be happy to help find the answers.

# Interesting Photos



*Left: Union Pacific steam locomotive 3985, a 4-6-6-4 Challenger, is shown on the point of a Pacific Limited Excursion train at La Grande, Oregon on October 4, 1995 on a service stop. The FRRS is a member of the Pacific Limited Group.  
Photo by Dave Dodds.*

*Right: A third locomotive also arrived at the museum on the same day as the 2 WP GP9's. This is a former Baldwin VO-1000 re-engined by the U.S. Navy with an EMD 12 cylinder 567 BC engine and EMD generator. This locomotive was purchased from Concord Naval Weapons Station by Executive Director Norman Holmes for resale purposes. It will not become part of the FRRS collection. Photo by Norm Holmes.*



*Left: Our flat car FR&W 15545 now has 500 ties on it for use on possible future track extensions at the Museum. These were acquired from government surplus at the Sierra Army Depot at Herlong, CA. Photo by Norm Holmes.*



*Union Pacific steam locomotive 3985, a 4-6-6-4 Challenger, with vintage E Units trailing, is shown pulling a Pacific Limited Excursion Train, with FRRS Member Dave Dodds in the cab, near Glen Ferry, Idaho, on October 6, 1995. The FRRS is a member of the Pacific Limited Group. Photo by Serena Dodds.*

**FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY  
PORTOLA RAILROAD MUSEUM  
P.O. BOX 608  
PORTOLA, CALIFORNIA 96122**

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