



"HAPPY RETIREMENT NORMAN" reads the banner on UP 3369, Norm & Barb (4th & 3rd from right) with all the well wishers that were on hand for his last run.....

**NORM HOLMES RETIRES**

With the arrival of the NPOAZ (mail, pigs, autos) in Portola Sept. 28, 1987, Union Pacific Engineer and Feather River Rail Society President Norman Holmes brought his railroad employment to a close. Having reached age 60, and with the incentive of an early retirement separation allowance, Norm figured forty-two years with the railroad was enough.

Norm loved trains and particularly the Western Pacific from as early as he could remember. At age 17 he went to work as a steam watchman in San Jose. As soon as he turned 18 (August 15, 1945) he started on his student fireman trips "covering the road" from Oakland to Portola. His first pay

trip as a fireman was on a steam switcher in Stockton, doubling through from an afternoon shift to a midnight job--16 hours. A brief stint in the Army in 1946 cut into his career and when he returned to civilian life he was cut off from his firing job. In 1950 and '51 Norm worked in Portola and Stockton, but it wasn't until 1953 that year 'round employment was available. Norm worked switchers and locals in the Bay Area, made 90 round trips as a fireman on the Zephyr and was promoted to engineer in 1959.

In 1970 Norm decided to return to Portola with his family. They bought 15 acres of pine forest

land, built a home in 1971, and have been there ever since. Norm's last assignment was in the freight pool between Portola and Winnemucca--211 miles. Will he miss the railroad? Sure, but he won't miss the midnight calls and the allnight slow trains. Norm shouldn't have any trouble keeping busy--"honey do's" and the Portola Railroad Museum should take care of his free time.

Norm and his wife Barbara plan to celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary next year with a month long trip to New Zealand and Australia.

**NOTICE:** When sending in a check that includes amounts for both a gift shop order and a membership renewal, please make two checks--we have to keep these accounts separate. A donation and dues can be in the same check, though.

**FLIMSIES!**

**THE NEWSLETTER of WESTERN RAILROADING.....**  
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- ELECTRICAL-LOCOMOTIVE.....
- GENERAL.....
- LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEER (OPERATING)....
- MACHINIST .....
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- TRACK FOREMAN'S TRAINING PROGRAM.....
- TRACK SAFETY STANDARDS (COMPREHENSIVE).....
- WALL CHARTS.....

If you're interested and would like to become involved please write to John Ryczkowski and he'll give you more information..... S.A.S.E.