

many. His paintings are all over town, and he has one hanging in an elevator lobby in UP headquarters in Omaha. He was also a Vietnam veteran, and suffered ailments related to his tour over there. I intend to attend his memorial service on behalf of the FRRS; we owe it to him, regardless of how things went in the later years.

I have concluded our dealings with FEMA regarding the flood damage issues we endured during last year's atmospheric river flooding events. After many months of paperwork, meetings, E-mails, and many hours spent on them, we were determined to NOT be a critical industry under the guidelines established, and our application was denied. We could start over by applying to the Small Business Administration for possible assistance, but FEMA felt that this was a long shot. I filled out and sent the cancellation form, and opted not to go to the SBA. (By the way, the City of Portola's claims to FEMA were also denied; they had far more damage documented than we did). I want to thank the FEMA rep in Redding that we were dealing with; he was very helpful, honest, patient, and gave good advice.

With a significant Director election looming in 2018, with several seats to be filled, I encourage everyone with an interest in the FRRS/WPRM to consider giving of your time and effort to serve as a Director. The Board of Directors meets monthly, and charts the direction of the FRRS and the WPRM, our biggest asset and prime income generator. The issues and challenges facing the FRRS/WPRM require input from dedicated and interested individuals. If you are one of these people, your input is solicited as a Director.

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### **General Superintendent's Report – Dec 2017**

*–Kerry Cochran, Director*

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and will have a safe and Happy New Year.

As we enter into 2018, I would like to thank all the members and volunteers of the Feather River Rail Society and the Western Pacific Railroad Museum. As I look ahead into the New Year, I would like all of us to keep in mind that

we need volunteers throughout the year to keep the museum in operation to meet the expectations of our members, visitors and guests.

I appreciate all the members' and volunteers' support throughout 2017. Without all the help from you, I am sure we would not have had such a successful year.

Whether you help in caboose train operations, the Mechanical Department, the Museum Store or any other part of the society, THANK YOU.

Please keep an eye on the museum's website as we continue to update and add materials to it. News items are published as they take place, events and event help is requested with notices to the web pages and you can sign up to volunteer on the web pages also.

Look for more exciting events to take place in 2018, and as I do in most of my communication, I add the following statement:

“As always, there as so many volunteers that help around the museum all the time and I would be remiss if I did not say thank you to all of you. I may have missed some specifically by name, however all of your help is greatly appreciated”.

At any time should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, I may not have an answer right away, however I will get one for you.

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### **General Superintendent's Report – Jan 2018**

*–Kerry Cochran, Gen. Superintendent*

For this month I am combining the General Superintendents report and the Historical/ Archive department report into this one report.

To start off, I hope that everyone is getting ready to attend the 2018 Convention in Salt Lake City. Eugene has been hard at work trying to get everything lined up for this event. Information and Registration is now available on the FRRS website. Paul our webmaster has posted the

information to the site and you can go there and view and make your reservations. [http://wplives.org/news\\_items/2018\\_convention.html](http://wplives.org/news_items/2018_convention.html)

In other news, it is my understanding the Headlight # 50 has been sent to the printer and should be out in a few weeks. I would like to make a request to all members, please take the time to submit articles for the Headlight, we are very, very short on written materials for the Headlight and need more Photos, Articles and Authors to help us get this publication back on-track. Should there be any questions on the Headlight and submission of articles, please contact me.

I have been busy in the off season in creating position description for all the volunteer positions within the museum. Some may ask "Why", the simple answer is, and when a volunteer wants to volunteer for a position at

the museum or on the staff, the position description will give them a list of tasks and a general amount of time it takes to perform the work within the position.

These position description will go along with the new volunteer manual that should be ready for the 2018 season starting the week of crew training. This along with an emphasis on Safety will be an on-going theme for this year. While we have always covered Safety in crew training, we will improve on Safety training with the general volunteer pool of members this year. Also to go along with Safety, I am currently working on getting a Safety Committee up and running to address several areas that have been brought to the museum's attention over the last couple of years. Should you have any interest in the safety committee, please contact me.

A new Sleeper Reservation process and procedure is now on the society's website,



The Santa Train backs into the loading platform on 9 December 2017 after another successful run.

—Greg Elems Photo.

[http://wplives.org/museum\\_forms\\_and\\_documents.html](http://wplives.org/museum_forms_and_documents.html). Click on the Sleeper Reservation process and procedure toward the bottom of the page.

For those of you that may be interested, we have a “Working Group Meeting” that involves four of the museums staff members, that covers things like the operating rules, entrance to service book, and general museum issues that normally cannot be covered during the operating season. The members of this group: Kenneth Finnegan, Paul Finnegan, Loren Ross and Kerry Cochran have been meeting over the past few months to put the finishing touches on the revised Entrance to Service book for the operating department (one of the original members Rick Gruninger, has since retired).

Started two years ago this group has advanced several topics to the attention of the Operating

Department, the Board of Directors and several members that cover various items that have been a concern over the years. The idea is that this core group of individuals can get these topics brought to the right people in the museum organization and get them resolved for the Best Practices and use within the museum. If there are any questions about this group and its work, please contact me.

For those of you that are available, there is a “Get Ready for Opening Work Party” on March 24th and 25th. Please let Eugene Vicknair know if you plan to attend so that he may count you in for the Volunteer Breakfast at 9 AM on the 24th.

Those members in the Operating Department, Don't forget about Crew Training on May the 5th starting at 10 AM. With Operating Season starting on May the 26<sup>th</sup>.



Crew members in discussion before the start of the Santa Trains on 9 December 2017. Left to right: Steve Habeck, Ed Powell, David Elems, Eugene Vicknair, Fred Elenbaas.

—Greg Elems Photo.

“As always, there are so many volunteers that help around the museum all the time and I would be remiss if I did not say thank you to all of you. I may have missed some specifically by name, however all of your help is greatly appreciated.”

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## Superintendent of Operations Report

–Loren Ross, Superintendent of Operations

With the unfortunate departure of Rick Gruninger, I have been solicited to take the reigns as the Superintendent of Operations, a position I temporarily held a few years ago. I have accepted this offer with excitement and I am looking forward to continuing Rick's work on several projects. Kerry has asked me to join the Working Group as well, and I'm already reviewing their past records in anticipation of the group's next meeting. I am going to miss working alongside Rick, and I wish him success in his future.

This operating season has seen its share of difficulties, the most notable being the poor track conditions on the balloon from Malfunction Junction to Milward Switch. Over the summer, I worked on the track repair crew under the supervision of our Roadmaster, Greg Elems. Many of us weekly braved the extreme heat to manually replace over 60 rail ties in order to make the track safe to run. The balloon was repaired just in time for Railroad Days, which was another success! If you haven't seen the photos of the track repairs on the web site, I recommend you check them out!

Although the repairs were done well, there is still much to be done. An emergency track repair had to be completed in order to run the Pumpkin Trains in October, and more work was done to insure that Santa Trains would also come off without a hitch. However, an examination of the track shows that there are another 25-35 ties in need of replacement. There are wide spots that

need to be properly gauged, and some ties need to be plugged and re-spiked. The Roadmaster will be announcing track repair dates, and I encourage as many of you as possible to consider coming to the museum to help with this project. The more hands available, the easier it will be on all of us!

Our other area for improvement is train staffing on the weekends. For a variety of reasons, we have been losing members from the Operations Department, and not replacing them with “new blood”. This has resulted in staff scheduling problems, and I would like to find some new folks to join us so that we can continue to operate the museum to the best of our ability. I will be working with the Yardmaster to create more weekend yard switching days so that we can keep our level of proficiency as high as possible, and to provide the volunteers with more training time. This will only work if we have people available. So, if you know anyone who might be interested in joining the Operations Department, please start talking to them now so that we might have them come to next year's training classes.

After some discussions with our RAL staff, I have appointed Ethan Doty as the RAL scheduler. Ethan, and KC in the gift shop, have been working hard to fix some of the scheduling problems that seem to pop up from time to time, and have done an excellent job! Ethan and KC are working on several new ideas to help streamline the RAL adventure for our clients, and our staff, and I'm looking forward to their success! Our RAL engineers have done a fantastic job this summer as well, a fact often echoed by our customers.

Finally, I want to thank all the volunteers and staff who worked so hard this summer to keep our trains running and our customers happy. I've been volunteering at this museum since 2001, and I've never been prouder of the people I work with. WP IS the Willing People!