



Preserving "THE FEATHER RIVER ROUTE"

Issue - 178

September/October 2018

- Pumpkin Patch Express 2018 -

Ali Doty

Along with co-coordinator Kristina "KC" Dunn, with help from Eugene Vicknair, Secretary and Board member, and Patty Clawson of Big Fish Creations, we prepared for and ran the Pumpkin Patch Express on the weekends of October 20th and 21st, and October 27th and 28th. My husband, Ethan Doty, and Steve Habeck, FRRS President, put the wires up for powering the lights for the night runs. Ethan also built two seven-foot tall cemetery gate columns to begin our collection of spooky graveyard pumpkin patch decorations with the goal of having a unified theme and longer lasting decorations. Bil Jackson also created a baker's dozen of small wooden tombstones on which I painted some funny names.

In discussions with Steve and Ethan, it was determined that since the Silver Plate needed to be removed from the train consist this year, we would use most of the Santa Train consist in reverse order with the baggage car bringing up the rear. So with WP 2001 as power, the train consist was cabooses SP 4706, UP 25732, RI 17174, MP 13878, SN 1642, UP 25283 and FRRX 5653 (the baggage car). One major advantage in using this consist was having the power cords already run on 6 of 7 Santa Train cabooses, it would speed up the process of converting to Santa Trains since just the decorations were all that needed to be changed. I decorated the train as well as the Silver Plate, which was left in the Diesel Shop as a place for people to sit, eat and relax.



Although we had a bit of a delayed start on October 20th, with the help of Patty, Ethan, Debbie Reynolds, and Shaun Rowden, the pumpkin patch was decorated like a spooky graveyard and the pumpkins were set out for purchase in time for the first run of the day that was further delayed by a kid pulling the emergency valve in the MP caboose.

Last year on the night runs, Steve had success in spooking the riders of the train by having it slow to a stop just past Milward Switch and pulling the cords to all the lights on the train. It worked well and the screams could be heard all the way back at the Pumpkin Patch. This year, everyone just pulled out their cellphones and used them as flashlights, so no screams were heard even with Steve banging on the cabooses and trying to scare people.

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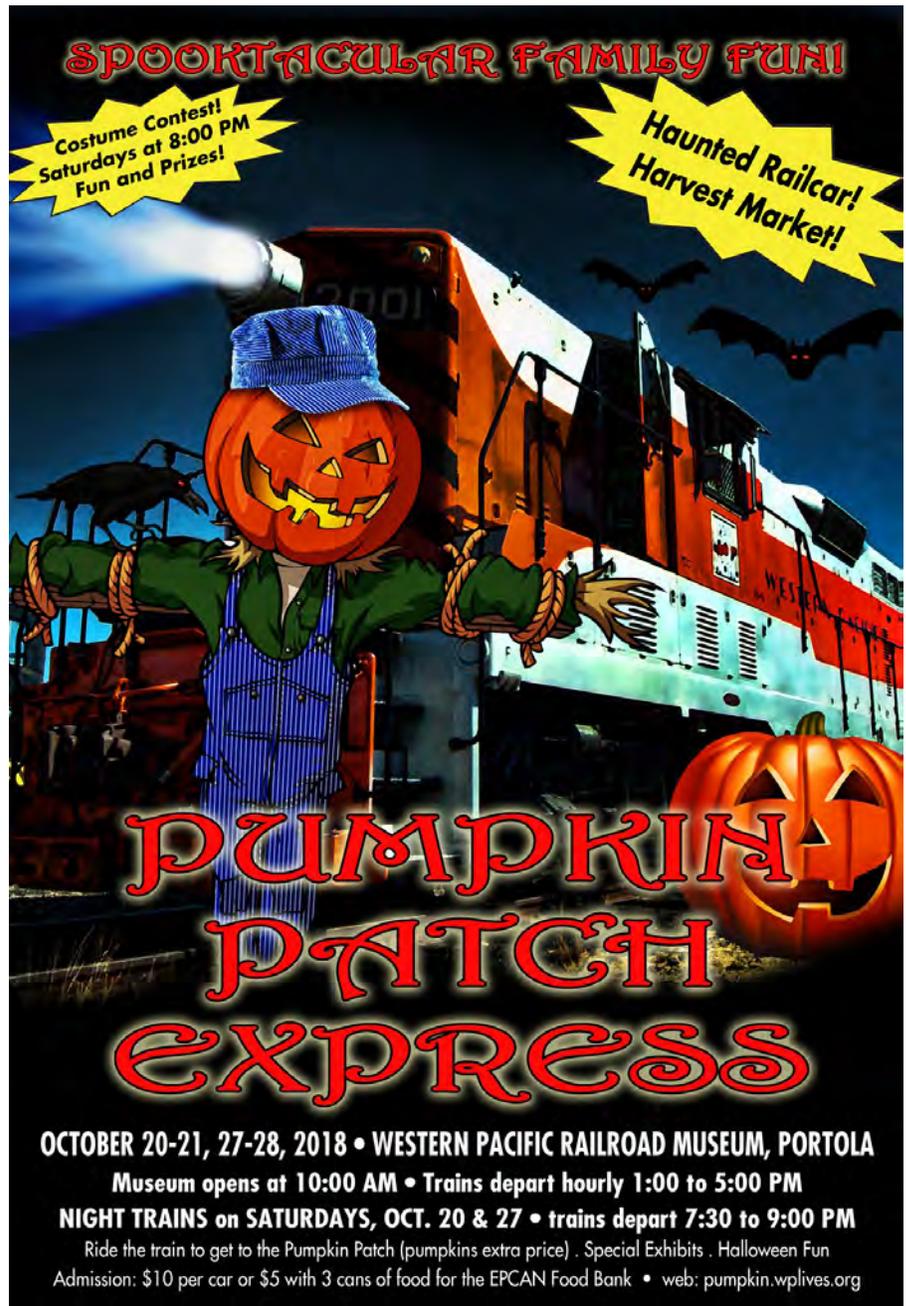
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On the second Sunday we did a sale on the pumpkins to help move as many as possible so we wouldn't be left with a bunch of extras to dispose of at the end of the event. We almost cleared out box number seven of ten. We allowed the volunteers to take pumpkins home. Duane took two boxes of pie pumpkins to C. Roy Carmichael Elementary School in town for their art class. David and Bart Hansen took the last box to sell themselves. Which I had no problem with since they delivered the pumpkins and are donating a portion of the cost of them to the museum.

This year introduced a new piece of the event, our Vendor Market. Eugene and Patty handled the coordination with vendors. We had many vendors sell items during the event including, Rocks Wood 'n Things, Yellow Dog Leather Company, Treat Yourself Snacks, Bob Danner, High Sierra Crystals, Paula Tiner, and Dennis who owns the Street Cart Cafe.

I want to thank the following volunteers who were present and helped with the event: Loren Ross, Bart Hansen, David Hansen, David Elems, Greg Elems, Steve Habeck, Bil Jackson, Duane Vander Veen, Charlie Spikes, Janet Steeper, Ethan Doty, Kevin Ross, Fred Elenbaas, Ann Morningstar, Debbie Reynolds, Shaun Rowden and Eugene Vicknair. I apologize if I missed anyone, it's been a hectic couple of weeks for Ethan and me.



Pumpkin Patch Express Passenger Report

Saturday Oct. 20th: Day Train
4 runs, passenger count total: 202

Saturday Oct. 20th: Evening Train
3 runs, passenger count total: 63

Sunday Oct. 21st:
7 runs, passenger count total: 115

Saturday Oct. 27th: Day Train
7 runs, passenger count total: 196

Saturday Oct. 27th: Evening Train
3 runs, passenger count total: 150

Sunday Oct. 28th:
7 runs, passenger count total: 135