

# The Train Sheet



Preserving "The Feather River Route"

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

Issue No. 50

July/August 1991



**New Arrival!** The "Santa Fe Boys," (Vintage Railway Equipment) purchased this old wooden caboose from Oregon Northwestern Railroad in Burns, Oregon at the same time we purchased our two Baldwin AS-616s. On July 8, 1991, this beautiful old crummy was loaded on a trailer and trucked to Portola. Cazazza Trucking Co. of Reno laid rails on their low bed trailer and were very cooperative in helping with the move. At Portola, the trailer was spotted at the east end of the yard lead, the rails connected to the trailer, and with the assistance of our GE 80 ton loco, the caboose was pulled from the trailer and onto the museum rails.

ONW 300 was built as N&W 518121 in September 1915 and sold to ONW about 1945. It is in good condition and will remain as an exhibit of a "working" caboose. It will not be used in our passenger service. A long-term lease agreement between Vintage Railway and FRRS covers this caboose as well as the two Santa Fe cabooses already at the museum. Photo by Wayne Monger.

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# Feather River Rail Society

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Portola Railroad  
Museum

Preserving

*"The Feather River Route"*

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

Hours: Memorial Day to Labor Day -- open seven days a week 10:00AM to 5:00PM. Fall, winter and spring hours: Open weekends 10:00AM to 4:00PM.

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

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

### Board of Directors

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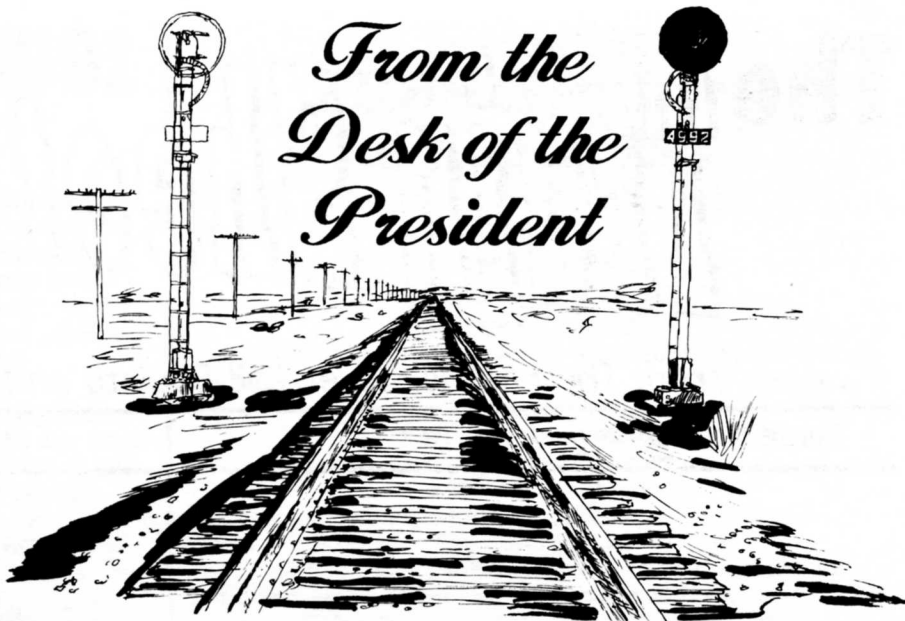
Mardi Vincent (916) 836-2167

### Membership

Associate----- \$15.00  
Active----- \$30.00  
Family----- \$35.00  
Sustaining----- \$75.00  
Life----- \$300.00

Dues are paid for 12 months from time of receipt. All memberships have one vote except for Associate. Associate members also do NOT receive the The Headlight.

# From the Desk of the President



### FAITH.

Our members have faith in what we are doing here and expect us to stay in the museum business. This is evidenced by the number of Life members (four recently) who sent us \$300. If you can afford it, the life membership is a good deal for the member and for us.

It eliminates your annual dues and gives us some working capitol if needed.

We treat this account as untouchable, although we have made loans against it. The interest earned pays for the cost of servicing the member.

Something to think about.

--Norman W. Holmes



### YOU! Can Operate a Diesel Locomotive

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Western Pacific 921-D EMD F7 available as a provisional rental. Call for details. A handsome certificate suitable for framing is awarded after each rental. Rentals are done by appointment. Help support the Society. Phone number for appointments: (916) 832-4532.

### Back issues of the Headlight

Issue 1 California Zephyr Anniversary Issue  
Issue 2 Joint issue with the Freight Car Journal; WP freight car roster; color  
Issue 3 F3s in freight service; AAR box cars; WP tank cars; index to historical articles in back issues of the Train Sheet  
Issue 4 A tale of 2 engines; PC-WP box cars; GP40s....a guide to types; circus specials  
Issue 5 The Reno branch; M-K remanufactured GP35s and GP40s; the Charles O. Sweetwood car; mill gons

Back issues of the Headlight are available for \$4 each postpaid. Back issues of the Train Sheet are available for \$1.50 each postpaid. Send your order to the FRRS Gift Shop at P.O. Box 608, Portola, CA 96122.

### Current Membership

as of August 21, 1991

Associate	176	Sustaining	3
Active	550	for a total of:	966
Family	179	of these, 30 are charter	
Life	58	members.	

# 8th Annual National Track Motorcar Championships

## By Wayne Monger

The sound of Fairmont motorcars putt-putting around the trackage of the Portola Railroad Museum filled the air for the eighth year in a row on the first Saturday of August 1991. Participants and spectators nearly filled the parking lot to witness the 8th Annual National Track Motorcar Championships (NTMC) that started just after 1 PM on August 3, 1991. This year, 20 motorcars of various types, plus a six-person "rail-bike" were involved in the NTMC.

Being similar in format to the U.S. National Handcar Races held every September in Old Sacramento, the NTMC uses a 976-foot (300-meter) length of museum track to allow one car at a time to run for the best time of three tries. This year at Portola, the NTMC was broken down into five different categories for the participating motorcars to run in. These "classes" consisted of the following:

- Class A Cars with 1-piston motors (mostly Fairmont M-series and S-series cars)
- Class B Cars with 2-piston, 2-cycle motors (cars with Fairmont "AA" motors)
- Class C Cars with 2-piston, 4-cycle motors (cars with Onan engines)
- Class D Cars with 1-piston or 2-piston motors with rubber tires.
- Class E Cars with larger than 2-piston motors being operated for exhibition only or alternate-powered cars.

As in the past, the "Class A" was the most crowded and saw the most cars that have participated in past NTMCs. There were eight cars in this class this year, and a ninth that had been signed up but did not show. Bob Mahan of Ventura, Calif. returned to 1st place this year with his S-2 with a time of 33.06 seconds. Bob had been 1st in 1987, 2nd in 1989 and 3rd last year. 2nd place went to Ron Allen of Carson City, Nev. on his Fairmont S-2 with a time of 33.93 seconds. Ron had taken 1st place in 1989 and another 2nd place last year. 3rd place was taken by NTMC chairman Wayne Monger with his Fairmont M-19 with a time of 40.31 seconds, the first time he has placed higher than 4th in all eight years the NTMC has been run. Other participants in the Class A were 4th place winner John Bailie of Citrus Heights, Calif. on an M-19, 5th place winner Errol Spangler of Sunnyvale, Calif. on his S-2, 6th place winner Steve Bush of Auburn, Calif. on his M-19E, 7th place winner Paul Jarmusz of Rohnert Park, Calif. with his beautifully restored M-9 and last place went to first year participant Milon Thorley of El Dorado, Calif. on his M-19.

The "Class B" this year consisted of only one participant, mainly due to FRRS member Hank Stiles' Fairmont ST-2-AA having failed the day before the motorcar races. First place this year in this class went to William Kaminsky of Grand Terrace, Calif. and his M-19-AA with a best time of 31.27 seconds. This repeats his 1st place of 1990. Bill was also very instrumental in the success of this year's NTMC, as he is the organizer of the new Western Railway Motorcar Owners and Operators (WryMoo) that many of the motorcar owners now belong to, plus Bill provided the excellent electronic timer that was used for the first time this year at Portola. Thanks, Bill!

The "Class C" continues to be the most closely matched of any class, shown this year by the fact that all six cars involved had best times that fell within a span of three and a few hundredths seconds between 1st and last place. 1st place went to Glen Hansen of Chico, Calif. operating FRRS member Terry Decottignies' Fairmont MT-19 with a winning time of 30.33 seconds. In an unusual twist, 2nd place went to Terry Decottignies of Chico, Calif. operating Vic Neves' MT-19 car, coming across with a time of 31.93 seconds. Vic this year was busy video taping the entire event and helping Gary Cousin announce the NTMC event. 3rd place went to first year participant Gil Dominguez of Fair Oaks, Calif. and his MT-19 with a time of 32.57 seconds. Other participants in Class C were 4th place winner Bob Beattie (Team Mallory) of Carson City, Nevada with his MT-19, 5th place winner Scott and Bill Vogel of Hayward, Calif. with

their MT-19 and 6th place winner Tom Gerald of Weaverville, Calif. and his MT-14. FRRS members Dave and Julie Anderson did not operate their MT-14 this year as they were helping in the operation of the NTMC.

There were the same three participants in the "Class D" category again in 1991. 1st place in this category again this year went to Gary Mitchell of Cathedral City, Calif. and his futuristic "Space Railer" prototype motorcar. Powered by a one-cylinder motorcycle motor and riding on rubber tires, this car had the best time of 22.19 seconds. 2nd place went to last year's 3rd place winner Gary Boots of Paradise, Calif. with his Fairmont MT-19A with rubber tires getting a time of 27.90 seconds. 3rd place went to Tom Mercer of Sacramento, Calif. with a time of 28.70 seconds on his MT-19A.

In 1991, the decision was made to limit the use of any large motorcars with larger than 2-cylinder motors to an exhibition class ("Class E"), both for the safety of the spectators and the operators. Some of these cars in the past have exceeded 45 mph in this short stretch of museum trackage while most other motorcars have a difficult time reaching 35 mph during the NTMC. Once again this year, "Team Mallory Electric" from Carson City, Nevada came to operate and show off their restoration work on the FRRS "Gang Car" M-44 (equipped with a "souped-up" Ford V-8) and the A-3 car equipped with a 4-cylinder Waukesha. Thanks go to Bob Beattie and the other people of "Team Mallory Electric" for the sometimes awesome display of overpowered motorcars on rails!

A special entry arrived just before the start of the NTMC this year. Mark Norstad of Greenbrae, Calif. entered his "Paragon machine" (6-person powered rail cycle) into the exhibition class. The times of this rail cycle were well matched with that of many of the other motorcars, with their best time coming in at 34.72 seconds. This was also a crowd pleaser.

Each year, the NTMC could not be put on without the efforts of some of our fellow FRRS members. Some of the people we need to thank for their efforts this year are Bob Lindley, Ed Warren, Julie Anderson, Gary Cousin, Pat Cousin, Renee McComb, Gordon Wollesen, Dave Anderson, Vic Neves, Andy Thomas, Norm Holmes and of course, Hap Manitt. A few of the FRRS members that have participated or helped out in the last NTMCs were not in Portola this time, as long time member Dave McClain had chosen this day to get married in Colfax. Congratulations, Dave!

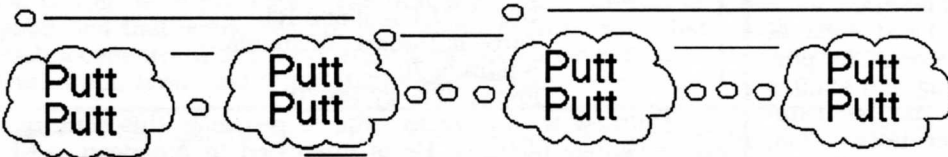
Following the end of the races and the awards ceremony at 4:30 PM, many of the motorcar owners gave free rides to museum visitors until it got dark. The picnic Bar-B-Q dinner for the motorcar people was a great success again at the museum's fine picnic area near Milward switch. With everyone rapidly fading, some of the people headed for the Flannery Room for a few hours of videos and slides dealing with past motorcar meets and runs.

On Sunday August 15, 1991, 12 of the motorcars from the previous day headed for Chester, Calif. and the Almanor Railroad. For the third year in a row, the FRRS (in conjunction with WryMoo this year) had gotten permission for a motorcar run on the 13-mile long Almanor Railroad from owner Collins Pine Company. In all, almost 50 people got to experience the curvy and scenic Almanor Railroad from Chester to Clear Creek Jct. and return. It was noted on traveling over the Almanor Railroad that many of the rail joints show evidence of the heavy electric bonds required when this was the electrified mainline of the Red River Lumber Company in the early 1920's plus some of the side tracks on the railroad are still laid with 60-lb rail dating from the 1880's (some are stamped "C.P.R.1").

We hope that everyone will return next year to the NTMC on the first Saturday of August.

If you have a motorcar and are not yet a member of WryMoo, contact:

William Kaminsky  
11818 Burns Ave.  
Grand Terrace, CA 92324



## Diesel Doings

Our GP-7, No. 707, developed a loud vibration under the short hood. Investigation revealed a bad traction motor blower bearing that needed replacement. Out of our spare parts supply came a good used motor; however, the air outlet was on the opposite side from the bad one. Finding the replacement motor was the easy part, removing the old one and installing the new one was the hard part. There is a two foot high crawl space under the floor on the short hood which is accessed through an opening from the walkway near the battery box. Steve Habeck, Peter Langdon, Kevin Moran, Jim Price, and Paul Lucia managed to remove the old motor, exchange parts with the new one (Hank Stiles helped there) and installed the new one in the Geep. It runs fine now. Thank goodness it wasn't the No. 2 motor as it is under the cab with tanks, pipes, etc. all around it!

WP 501, 608, 707 and 921D have all received new fiberglass air intake filters. Our CMO, Mardi Vincent, decided the filters that the units came with were way overdue for replacement and made the change with the assistance of Brian Challender and Peter Langdon.

WP 501 developed a water leak in the cylinder area; inspection failed to determine the exact location, but after running the engine for a little while the leak disappeared. These early EMD engines have seals that dry out and this is probably what happened. The railroads used to let these engines idle whenever not in use, even for days, to prevent the seals from leaking. When fuel was 9 cents per gallon, the cost was a small consideration. We used 501 in passenger service on August 4, 1991, but it died on the balloon track and had to be rescued by engine 512. The problem this time was plugged fuel filters. These were replaced by Norm Holmes and the problem solved. A fuel additive has been put in the fuel tank to help clean up the water and dirty fuel problem. We are still running some of the old fuel that came with the engine.

Our Baldwin DS-4-4-660 No. 51 came to life with the exchange of some batteries that would hold a charge. Hank Stiles repaired the leaking brake cylinder and the unit was used on our passenger operation on August 11, 1991. Because it still operates on only two traction motors, it will see only limited service.

## First Sub Club Meeting

On July 13, 1991, the FRRS "First Sub Club" gathered at the former SP depot in Niles (Fremont), California for a meeting and Bar-B-Q. The "First Sub Club" is designed to help keep the FRRS membership living in the San Francisco Bay Area informed on the Portola Railroad Museum and is a get-together where members can meet other members living in the area. A large amount of "First Sub Club" effort has been put forth by Richard and Deborah Canino of Belmont, CA and Niles Depot volunteer Darrell Dennis.

Eventually 20 FRRS members joined together for dinner under the trees and next to WP caboose 467 which is being restored by the volunteers at Niles Depot. Later everyone headed inside the depot to the evening's meeting. By the end of the evening, 27 FRRS members had arrived, including Errol Spangler and Bob Lindley who were on their way home from bringing Oregon & Northwestern RR caboose #300 from Hines, OR to Portola. Errol removed the video tape from his camera, and played it on the VCR to show everyone how the caboose was loaded and unloaded from the lowbed truck. The evening finished up with slides from Wayne Monger, Matt Vurek, Rich Canino and others.

Next meeting of the First Sub Club will be at 7 PM on Friday, Sept. 6, 1991 once again at Niles Depot. The purpose of this meeting will be the final planning and staffing for Railfan Day the following weekend, plus the usual updating of projects at the museum. For more information, contact Rich Canino at 415-591-4997 or write to him at 1749 Valley View Ave., Belmont, CA. 94002.

## Donations

Paul Comer donated a nice vice on a stand for our machine shop. Bill Fierro, a retired WP clerk from San Jose, gave us a large WP enameled herald brought to the museum by Hal Shields. We received two locomotive headlights from WP 304 and 311 discovered under a porch behind a house in Albany, and we received several Baldwin service books from John Kirkland. Lee Johnson donated 3 boxes of GE and ALCO manuals, plus all blueprints of the WP U30B locomotives, and 2 5-drawer file cabinets from the GE West Coast offices in Walnut Creek, CA.

We appreciate receiving almost any item relating to WP and our collection of railroad equipment.

The following have made cash donations to our general account:

George Bates  
Kirk Baer  
Don Chamberlin  
George Comer  
Ken Coulter  
Jim Folsom  
Warren Gilleran  
Phil Guidera  
Sam Jenkinson  
Werner Lang  
John McCormick  
Spencer Pattison  
Marvin Pitts  
Allan Ratliff  
Mike Romiez  
Edward Ryan

Our Baldwin moving fund received donations from:

Erik Frodsham  
Ken Iverson  
Peter Parrish

We have spent \$2,000 so far in getting the units to Boise (only #3 has made it so far) and there will be considerable additional expense once we decide the best method to bring them the rest of the way to Portola. All donations will be appreciated.

## Life Members

We welcome Jack Cummings, Henry deCoursey, Larry Feay and Edward Ryan to the ranks of FRRS Like Membership. These four people have the faith in us that Norm Holmes spoke about in his President's Message.

## Qualifiers

The FRRS Operating Department announces that Mardi Vincent, Charlie Tronoff and Andy Thomas have each qualified as a brakeperson. Congratulations go to these three people who have mastered the training administered by the Operating Department.

## Another Pen Pal Wanted

Matthew Stewart  
Unit 2-31 Cwolimon Rd.  
Tarooni, Hobart, Tasmanian  
Australia 7053  
Phone: 002-27-89-79

Matthew would like to write to people in this country and exchange pictures. He is interested in American railroads, and he will be visiting here in October.



## ...from the Board of Directors.

By Kent Stephens  
Secretary of the Board

The Board meeting of May 15, 1991 was called to order at 9 AM in the Operating Department room.

Regarding publicity, Hank Stiles and other board members commented about the great publicity that the FRRS had received thanks to Railfair '91. The board agreed to the running of our radio commercial for a one month trial on KROW radio in Reno. The board also agreed to running a blurb in the Sacramento Bee Wednesday Museum listing (which is free), and to continue listing museum events in the AAA Motorland events column (which is also free).

Regarding grants, Kent Stephens reported that an application letter is ready to be sent to a foundation for a partial reimbursement of the construction cost of the new entrance road.

Regarding restoration work, the board discussed the problem of having members make alterations to museum equipment without advance discussion with museum officers or board members. The board agreed by motion that any changes to facilities or equipment must be approved before being done. Gordon Wollesen is Facilities Manager, and Mardi Vincent is Chief Mechanical Officer.

The board discussed a steam locomotive acquisition plan. This is a revised plan that also calls for FRRS to have logging railroad steam power. This plan was discussed, but not voted upon pending some more revisions.

Norm Holmes brought up for discussion the need to attend the TRAIN (Tourist Railway Association, Inc., of which we are a member) '91 Fall Meeting in Duluth, MN as it is the meeting prior to the Spring '92 meeting that we are co-sponsoring. He said we also need to think about what we will be doing for the meeting, and he recommended that we contact UP regarding a shuttle train from Reno-to-Portola and back for one day for TRAIN members to come to Portola. The board agreed.

Upon Gary Cousin's recommendation, the board appointed Eric Rich of Fernley, Nevada to be our Chief Radio Technician.

The Board meeting of June 9, 1991 was called to order at 9 AM in the Operating Department room.

Hank Stiles played a tape of our radio commercial that had been on KROW radio, and announced he had negotiated a new agreement with them.

Regarding restoration, Bill Evans reported on work that had been completed, and he also expressed concern about the low participation of the membership on restoration work. He suggested ideas including having free steak BBQ on certain weekends. There was a comment made that other organizations have the same problem.

Two proposals from Mardi Vincent, the Chief Mechanical Officer, were presented. The first was that a bulletin be published that would require each engineer to be sure that each locomotive that they operate is inspected for engine oil level, water level, and that EMD locomotives are flashcocked

before initial startup each day. Also any defects or mechanical problems should be reported to the CMO or any board member. Discussion then ensued including discussion of whether there is a need to flashcock EMD locomotives daily when EMD mechanical procedure is to do it only after a unit has been shut down for more than 48 hours. The board passed a motion that they publish a bulletin to the effect that there is an initial inspection and report filled out on same on a daily basis. The second proposal was to have a form that people sign saying they have read, understood and agreed to abide by the FRRS Mechanical Department's safety rulebook.

A letter was read from the Union Pacific informing us that the UP will donate baggage car UP 904221 to the FRRS for the purpose of housing the Sacramento Dispatcher's equipment.

The board extensively discussed the 10th anniversary of the FRRS. Norm said we had a choice of range of dates of 1993-1995 depending on which beginning point we select. Historical dates: Feb. 7, 1983, FRRS formed. Aug. 26, 1983, 921D donated. Sep. 13, 1983, FRRS incorporated. Dec. 1983, UP agrees to lease. May 1984, UP signs lease. May 26, 1984, first work. May 1984 on, equipment starts arriving. Aug. 26, 1984, UP 6946 donated. Aug. 27, 1984, first motor-car race. May 26, 1985, grand opening. Norm suggested doing our 10th anniversary during 1994. This year is also a WP anniversary. Bill Evans suggested that the theme for the event should be a covered wagon tribute.

The board passed a motion that all M of W vehicles and machines will be painted WP MW yellow except WP crane #90 (orange), and WP #37 (black).

The board passed a motion that we acquire DODX flat car 39480. The car is a 54 foot, 200,000 pound capacity, 6-axle, roller bearing flat car (designed for carrying Army tanks). We will obtain this at a very minimal cost, and the car would be used for moving heavy pieces of equipment to the museum.

An offer of restoration of the wood PFE refrigerator car was discussed. The car is owned by John Ryczkowski and he is willing to donate it to the museum.

Bill Evans suggested that the museum obtain a hot water heater so people can take hot showers after working. The board members also noted the need for hot water in the snack bar and the wash rooms. Hank Stiles has a surplus sink he will donate.

Kent Stephens brought up plans to work on the fence that lines the south side of the lead track. He also suggested that we need a railing around the loading dock.

Mardi Vincent has suggested that we need an Ambu-Bag for possible medical emergencies, and also an oxygen tank. John Ryczkowski can take care of obtaining these emergency medical supplies.

On Another Note — FRRS Vice President Bruce Cooper has logged over 2,000 rail miles without ever leaving Portola and without ever setting foot in a passenger car. As the director of our locomotive rental program, Bruce has put on enough miles going around our balloon track with locomotive "renters" to add up to over 2,000 miles.

