



THE TRAIN SHEET

News from the Feather River Rail Society



Preserving "THE FEATHER RIVER ROUTE"

Issue - 203

October/November/December 2024

President's Pin

Greg Elems

Welcome to the New Year at the WPRM.

2024 was an interesting year with the visit from Union Pacific's famed "Big Boy". After the Big Boy visit things mellowed out for a short while. The City of Portola and the Lost Sierra Chamber of Commerce started planning another Portola Railroad Day and asked us to work with them. Since our operating season had finished, it was decided to do a special Saturday operation of the caboose train. The last Saturday of September had great weather and we closed the season out on a high note. With no time to waste, we started working on the *Pumpkin Express* weekends. With night trains planned, Steve and Ethan decorated a couple of cabooses with lights on the outside and Eugene and Patty Clawson with help decorated the interiors. With Sasquatch visiting and decorations in the diesel shop from an anonymous member the Halloween vibe was great. With the completion of the *Pumpkin Express*, we turned our attention to the *Santa Trains*. The Santa Train event was a lot of work but a success that ended 2024 on a positive note. One of the benefits I am proud of was how we were able to donate a good amount of food to EPCAN (Eastern Plumas Community Assistance Network. EPCAN is the local food bank in Portola which serves the needs of families in Eastern Plumas County). I would guess we were able to give about 1,000 pounds of food from October and December to EPCAN.

Now we will have a couple of months of quiet but in March we'll start working on our preparations to open to the public. I'm looking forward to see all of our volunteers again in 2025.



The Western Pacific Headlight

Dale Sanders

Editor, Western Pacific Headlight
email: headlight@WPLives.org

On October 22, 2024, White River Productions was awarded the contract to produce the *Western Pacific "Headlight"* magazine on behalf of the Feather River Rail Society. Effective immediately, I'll be taking on the task of editing and producing the publication.

If you have previously submitted an unpublished article, please contact me! I'd like to make sure I have it on hand and, if so, make sure the version I have is the most current.

If you'd consider producing an article for the magazine, or even if you have a rough idea for an article, please contact me! If you know someone else who is willing and able to generate an article, please contact me so I can twist their arm!

If you have any photography you'd like to make available for use in the magazine, please contact me!

Thanks for your consideration. I look forward to working with you all to make the "Headlight" a standout publication.

-THE TRAIN SHEET-

Issue 203 - October/November/December 2024
Published January 6, 2025
News from the Feather River Rail Society and the
Western Pacific Railroad Museum at Portola

Editor - Paul Finnegan
Email: trainsheet@wplives.org

Contribution Deadlines: Last Day of March, June,
September and December.

Contents Copyright © 2025
Feather River Rail Society
All Rights Reserved

FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY
WESTERN PACIFIC RAILROAD
MUSEUM at PORTOLA

PO BOX 608, Portola, CA 96122-0608

Museum Phone: (530) 832-4131
RAL Reservations: (530) 832-4532

2025 Hours starting May 1, 2025:
Thursdays & Fridays Noon - 4 PM
Saturdays & Sundays 10 AM - 5 PM
Pumpkin Express Days in October
Santa Trains in December

If you wish to visit during the closure period, it is
advisable to call in advance
and find out if the museum will be open.

Entrance to the museum for members is free. Non-
members are required to pay an admission fee.

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 Western
Pacific Railroad Museum in Portola, California.

**The FRRS is not associated with the Union Pacific
Railroad.**

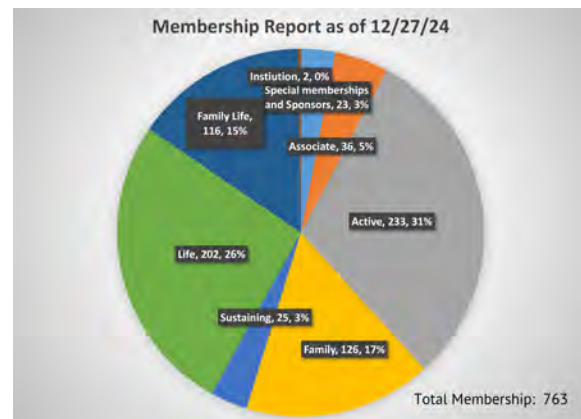
FRRS Tax ID number is 68-0002774
Member of the Heritage Rail Alliance

**- BOARD OF DIRECTORS and OFFICERS -**

Greg Elems - President, Director	president@wplives.org
Steve Habeck - VP, Director	vpresident@wplives.org
Eugene Vicknair - Secretary, Director	secretary@wplives.org
Position Vacant - Treasurer	
Charlie Spikes - Director	cspikes@wplives.org
Kerry Cochran - Director	kcochran@wplives.org
Michael Coen - Director	mcoen@wplives.org
Matt Elems - Director	melems@wplives.org
Bob Sims - Director	bsims@wplives.org
Janet Steeper - Director	jsteeper@wplives.org

Table of Contents – Issue 203

President's Pin	1
The Western Pacific Headlight	1
Sponsor	2
Membership Report	2
Meet Our Newest FRRS Director: Mike Coen	3
2025 Operating Department Crew Training	3
Online Museum Store Closed for the winter	3
2025 FRRS Board of Directors Election	4
Portola RR Day 2024	5
2024 Pumpkin Patch Express	6
FRRS/WPRM Museum Operations 2024	7
2024 FRRS/WPRM Accomplishments	8
SP 2873 Restoration Project Update	9
Santa Trains 2025	10

**Museum Sponsor****H & R Block - David Hansen**

2850 Main St Ste 7, Susanville, CA 96130
Tel: 530-257-9339



Editor's note: After Roger Stabler's resignation as director, the FRRS Board of Directors appointed Michael Coen to fill the vacant position at the October 2024 FRRS Board meeting.

Meet Our Newest FRRS Director: Mike Coen

Mike Coen is a lifelong follower of the Western Pacific. He discovered the WP in 1977 in Stockton California on a railfan trip. He and his cousin walked into the WP Stockton shops area and were greeted with "just be careful". Several more trips to Stockton as a teenager yielded photos of this cool little railroad he had never known about. Subsequent trips to the Feather River Canyon after the merger, and several books on the WP, cemented his lifelong admiration of the scrappy railroad of "willing people".



Mike is a native of Berkeley, California. He grew up next to the Santa Fe Berkeley line that ran from Richmond to Oakland. He is an avid model railroader, having built several layouts based on the WP.

Mike served as treasurer for the Feather River Rail Society from 2009 until 2012.

He has a background in engineering and finance. He finished his career as an elementary school teacher. Mike is now retired and lives in Reno with his wife Deidre.

Online Museum Store Closed for the winter

Please note that the WPRM Museum Store is re-vamping its point of sale system during the first part of 2025. As a result, the WP Online Store will only be available for memberships and membership renewals, donations and Run-A-Lo-comotive gift certificates and deposits.

The full online store will return once the point of sale revamp is complete, some time early Spring 2025.

2025 Operating Department Crew Training

Kerry Cochran
General Superintendent

Crew training will be held on May 3rd, 2025, starting at 10 a.m. at the museum. Please register for crew training and complete the online rules exam before attending the crew training day on the society's website.

I want to invite all FRRS members (active and above levels) to become a member of the Operating Department and give us a hand operating the caboose trains at the museum for the general public. We also need crew year-round to move equipment at the museum for display and maintenance. Additionally we need crews for our Railroad Day, Pumpkin Express and Santa Trains events.



I would also like to have all of the current Operating Department crew members check their calendars and see if they can volunteer at least one or two days a month during the 2025 operating season. "Many hands make light work" certainly applies to running our museum. By working together we can provide a safe, enjoyable experience for our guests and other members.

All of our time is valuable and I certainly appreciate all your help. However, we need to staff the caboose trains for our visiting public and we need to make sure that we can operate with a full crew each summer weekend.

There may be questions along the way so please send email to me at operating_dept@wplives.org and tell me what weekends you may be able to commit to volunteer. If you have any other comments, please tell me so I may be able to address them.

2025 FRRS Board of Directors Election

Matthew S. Shuman



2024 has been a good year for the FRRS and we are moving forward with the 2025 Election Year and the 2025 Election Committee is ready to serve the membership again.

The three upcoming seats, presently being held by **Bob Sims, Janet Steeper, Michael Coen (who replaced Roger Stabler)** are available for the June 2025 FRRS election year. Nominations will be open from January 1, 2025 through January 31, 2025. Nominations can be submitted by voting members of the FRRS (IN WRITING) to the Nomination and Election Committee or personally delivered to the Election Committee. Email is an accepted form of written communication for the FRRS. Nominations received earlier than January 1, 2025 will not be accepted and will be rejected. Nominations received later than January 31, 2025 will not be accepted and will be rejected.

Any person eighteen (18) years of age or older who has been a FRRS member of a voting membership unit in good standing for a minimum of one (1) year at the date of the election or appointment shall be eligible for election or appointment as a director.

Please be sure to read the Election Policy https://www.wplives.org/museum_policies/Nomination-Election.pdf for additional dates and details if you might be interested in running for the FRRS Board in the 2025. If you have any questions about the election process, please feel free to address the Elections Committee at election@wplives.org.

If you have an email address the FRRS and WPRM would like to have it for multiple reasons including news announcements, elections, *Train Sheet* delivery by email and more. You may update your contact information using the Change of Address entry on the Membership web page on WPLives.org. These are used exclusively for the FRRS and WPRM and will not be sold or given out.

I would like to thank our webmaster Paul Finnegan and the rest of the Election Committee for their continued assistance in the election process.

"Your 2025 Election Committee thanks you and is Proud to Serve the FRRS & WPRM."

Sincerely,

Matthew S. Shuman - FL 1948
FRRS 2025 Nomination & Election Committee - Chair
election@wplives.org

FRRS 2025 Nomination & Election Committee
1040 Redbud Drive
Redding, CA 96001-0162

FRRS 2025 Election Committee Members:
Matthew Shuman - FL 1948 - Chair
Ann Morningstar - L 1967 - Co-Chair
Debbie Shuman - FL 1948 - Clerk/Catering Facilitator to the Election Committee

Portola RR Day 2024*Eugene Vicknair*

Portola held their 36th annual Railroad Days on September 28, 2024. The Lost Sierra Chamber of Commerce and the Feather River Rail Society worked together to create a day of railroad history and family events.

Booths, food and activities were held in the Portola City Park along with live performances by Truckee's Pickle Barrel band and the Nevada Gunfighters. At the WPRM, our volunteers operated caboose trains and gave walking tours to the guests.

The FRRS had a booth at the City Park promoting the museum. It was staffed by volunteers Michael Coen, Tom Hervey and Gus Paoli. There was also a table at the museum to raise awareness about our preservation efforts and promoting FRRS memberships and volunteering to the visitors.

The event has been rebuilding since ending just before the COVID pandemic. The goal is to build bit by bit each year into a larger and larger event. Attendance was noted to be higher than last year which points to a positive 2025. This year many newcomers to Railroad Days were impressed with the event. The *Sierra Sun* quoted Cheryl Povey, who attended with her grandson Avery: "It's my first time here, and I love it! It's so beautifully set up, and very kid-friendly."



There was a really good crowd on RR Day 2024!



RR Day Special Evening Photo Event - With the newest next to the oldest diesel next to the last class of steam switcher and the Johnny come lately WP 608 thru a trade with the ST&E. About a 55 year time span representing WP's work horses of the yards. - Greg Elems 9/28/24

Thanks to all the FRRS volunteers who made the event happen. Patty and Michael Clawson of Big Fish Creations worked with Eugene Vicknair on social media and promotion. The Museum Store staff handled the crowds and provided information to those with questions. Operations crew included Nick Manos, Charlie Spikes, Fred Elenbaas, Craig Simmons, Des Powers, Emanuel Petrisor, Ron Berriesford, Steve Habeck, Greg Elems and Janet Steeper. David Elems, Ethan Doty and others also helped with prep before the event.



Look for Railroad Days 2025 to be announced sometime early next year. It will likely be held in September once again.

2024 Pumpkin Patch Express

Eugene Vicknair

The 2024 Pumpkin Patch Express trains were held on October 19-20 and 26-27, Saturdays and Sundays. The museum was open at 10 AM all four days with caboose trains operating from 1 PM to 5 PM. Trains ran from the Diesel Shop to the Pumpkin Patch and return. Saturday nights we operated the "Super Spooky Night Trains" between 7 PM and 9 PM.

Turnout for the event was good, with the second weekend being the most heavily attended. The "We Cook For You" food truck was at the museum for the October 19-20 Pumpkin Patch trains and was much appreciated by the visitors.

The highlight for many of the attendees was the appearance of Sasquatch, once again portrayed by Bob Danner. The friendly railfan Bigfoot handed out candy and posed for photos with the kids.

The Diesel Shop and caboose train decorations were placed by several volunteers, including Patty Clawson, Bob Danner, Ann Cary, Jackie Habeck, Steve Habeck, Breckyn Shirley, Adam Mahoney, Ethan Doty and David Elems. Charlie Spikes handled getting the pumpkins purchased while David Hansen took care of the pumpkin transport and getting hay bales to the museum. Marketing and promotion were handled by Patty and Michael Clawson of Big Fish Creations along with Eugene Vicknair, who also designed the promotional posters. Other volunteers who helped with setup and general prep included



- Big Fish Creations

Greg and David Elems, Duane Vander Veen, Brian Waller and Nick Manos. The pumpkin patch was staffed by Breckyn Shirley with help from David Elems and some others. The gate was crewed by Ann Cary with help from Ron Berriesford, Greg Elems and Steve Habeck.

Special thanks to Ron Berriesford and his wife, who once again donated amazing cookies. Train operations were handled by Charlie Spikes, Fred Elenbass, Duane Vander Veen, Loren Ross, Burr Wilson, Greg Elems, Steve Habeck, Eric Manos, Nick Manos, Emanuel Petrisor and Brian Waller. Eugene Vicknair was able to pitch in the second weekend.



At the Pumpkin Patch

- Greg Elems 10/20/24



- Big Fish Creations

FRRS/WPRM Museum Operations 2024

Kerry Cochran
General Superintendent

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the members of the Operating Department and the rest of the FRRS/WPRM volunteers for your help with the 2024 Operating Season.

The operating season completed with our *Santa Trains*, December 20th and 21st. What a great way to enjoy the museum in the wintertime and end the year.

One of the highlights of this year was the visit of the UP 4014 "Big Boy" steam locomotive. This was a large undertaking for the FRRS and the WPRM. With the help of all the volunteers, members and friends we had a great event and everyone enjoyed this showing of the UP 4014 and the museum's WP 165.

I appreciate all the support from all the volunteers, members and the Operating Department this last year and hope that all volunteers and members will consider returning and volunteering for this next year's season.

Without the help of all the museum volunteers, we would not be able to keep the museum open and the caboose trains running each weekend. This also includes our special events, *Pumpkin Express* and *Santa Trains*.



Open Cab Days - Docent meeting prior to open cab days.

- Kerry Cochran 6/8/2024



Student Brakeman Drew Adkins and Instructor Lew Barnard ready for caboose train movement.

- Kerry Cochran 6/8/2024

And what about the RAL Engineers? Without them we would not have a successful rental program to keep us working at the museum all year. The support of the RAL program helps us continue our operation each year and keep the museum open for all.

With the recent retirement of some of our RAL engineers, we need to have more volunteers help us in the RAL program.

Please think about becoming an RAL Engineer. If you have an interest, please contact Greg Elems or myself.

Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

There are many other volunteers who help the Operating Department during the year and without their help we just would not be able to handle all that need to be done. THANKS to everyone.

I would ask you to check the FRRS WEB site, www.wplives.org and use the link to the crew pages. Check to see what weekends we are short on members and try to sign up for that weekend.

Should you have any questions about the Operating Department please contact me, my email is operating_dept@wplives.org.

2024 FRRS/WPRM Accomplishments

The museum's operations were greatly increased in 2024. Many items were accomplished by volunteers and the museum staff including:

- 2024 WP Historic Calendars were published and sold out.
- 2024 WP Historical Convention held in Oroville.
- WP165 was used for the Big Boy Event.
- Work done on the Steam Department's fuel tank car.
- Held the 2024 BOD election which resulted in a white ballot.
- The Museum Store had a major restock of new merchandise.
- Work continued on the WP 705 prep work. Old lettering removed, sanding and spot priming started (on-going project).
- Quincy RR 1100: Mechanical work to keep it working during 2024.
- Archive Car: Completed work on moving more of our collection into the archive car, including some newly found slide collections. We received several high-profile members photo/slide collections this year. See website for the new Historical/Archive Collection pages.
- Added new collections and materials to the Archives.
- Crew training held in person and online.
- Answered questions for information on the WP through the website. (These are questions that are sent to the Archive Department.)
- Continued SN 1642 Caboose exterior restoration work (on-going project) continued; sanding, filling of holes and primer paint applied.
- Tree, brush and weed abatement around the balloon track and the museum to reduce the fire danger.
- General clean-up around the Engine House.
- Held Pumpkins Express trains.
- Held Santa Trains.
- Mechanical work performed on WP 1503, QRR 1100, and SP 2873.
- Started planning on joint FRRS/Rio Grande Modeling and Historical Society 2025 convention in Sacramento.
- Made improvements to the Museum Tour system and QR code signs are placed on over 100 artifacts at the museum.
- Four new videos were posted on the Museum's YouTube channel.
- WP Cloud Server upgraded and usage expanded.
- Significant improvements made to the society's mobile web pages.
- Twenty news items added to News Archive web page.
- New Mailtrain subscription added to the list created for FRRS Board Meeting material.
- SP 2873 Mechanical work and ongoing restoration/painting.
- Installed new ADA compliant water fountains and bottle fill utilizing grant from the Union Pacific Foundation.
- Successfully held a joint event with the Union Pacific to exhibit the UP 4014 Big Boy steam engine.
- Participated with city of Portola and Lost Sierra Chamber of Commerce on 2024 Portola Railroad Day.
- Expanded ADA parking spaces in main lot utilizing grant from the Union Pacific Foundation.
- Four issues of the member newsletter, *The Train Sheet*, were published.
- THE WESTERN PACIFIC *Headlight* issue number 57 was published.

Not to forget our team:

All the volunteers who supported the museum in 2024.

Webmaster for keeping our website up to date.

SP 2873 Restoration Project Update*Greg Elems*

SP 2873 is awaiting warmer weather to finish the paint process. Primer has been applied to the roof, nose roof and sides to protect it for winter. Cancer on the nose and cab has been addressed also. It was decided to go further on the rust removal and primer after more cancer was found on the side of the nose above the battery boxes. Next spring the yellow on the cab, nose and frame will get applied with the red following. At that time the numbers on the cab will get a fresh coat of red. Then masking in preparation for the black on the steps and fuel tank will be applied. Last bit of work will be the silver on the trucks. As usual, a finish date will depend on weather and temperature.



Masking for the red is almost finished on the long hood.

- Greg Elems 9/22/24



Cancer on the nose has been addressed.

- Greg Elems 9/11/24



Not done yet, but looking good!

- Greg Elems 10/27/24



Painting SP 2873 - David Elems and Nick Manos painting on 9/29/24.

Santa Trains 2025

Greg Elems

Santa Trains ran again this year. One of the questions we were asked was, "is this going to be the last one?" It was a successful event and I'm recommending that we do it again next year. Our budget is tight but the event was well attended. One of our big issues is the continuing rise in our utility bills. Through out the year, we are continually asked about the *Santa Trains* and people look forward to them. We are proud of our food donations to EPCAN and I would like to see that continue. Suffice to say, I feel the Santa Train tradition is worth the effort and should be around a while longer.

Ann Cary attended to the front gate this year, thank you Ann. Breckyn Shirley, Jackie Habeck kept the store running smoothly while Ali Doty and Mary Habeck gave out the hot cider, hot cocoa, coffee and cookies.

Several members donated cookies and we had home made cookies provided by Mary Habeck, Mary Ann Vicknair and Charlie Spikes. Ron Berriesford and his wife generously donated cookies and canned goods.

Santasquatch made an appearance again this year and was popular. One of our members dec-



orated the diesel shop with a "Nightmare Before Christmas" theme. A 13 foot tall Santa was a popular back drop for pictures. UP 6946 was also lit up this year which added to the festivities. So with our traditional decorations, some new themes were introduced much to everyone's enjoyment.

The *Santa Trains* were crewed by Charlie Spikes, Ed Powell, Nicholas Manos, Eric Manos, Duane Vander Veen, Matt Elems, Brian Waller, Bill Parker, Janet Steeper Loren Ross and Ron Berriesford. Steve Habeck and Ethan Doty decorated WP 1503 this year to power our 6 caboose train. Steve and Ethan also did a great job decorating the cabooses. Some visitors had seen the caboose train running from highway 70 and made their way to the museum. Visitor numbers were up over last year's numbers and caboose trains ran about 3 times an hour.



Our car count for the five nights was over 350 cars with the breakdown below. As usual, a few might have been missed, but Ann is certain this is an accurate count.

Dec 7th, 86 cars
 Dec 13th, 30 cars
 Dec 14th, 39 cars
 Dec 20th, 69 cars (if I remember correctly)
 Dec 21st, 129 cars

EPCAN once again benefited quite nicely from the generosity from the visitors who came to see Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus. Matthew Cruz and Elizabeth Cruz did a fantastic job filling the roll of Santa and Mrs. Claus.

Santa and Mrs. Claus gave out plush stuffed animals this year along with the candy canes. The stuffed animal toys were provided by Brian Martinez- president of White Sulphur Springs Ranch and were quite popular.

This year the Feather River College in Quincy bought 25 tickets to give their students with



families. Monica Potter, EOPS/NextUP Counselor/ CARE Coordinator, was instrumental in putting this together and it appears we had about half of the tickets redeemed. Hopefully we can try again next year and maybe expand on this type of program.

Thank you, all of you who volunteered for the train crew and those who donated time and materials in the decorations and treats. Also a big thanks goes out to Mr. and Mrs. Claus and Santasquatch.



The Train Sheet

Feather River Rail Society
P.O. Box 608
Portola, CA 96122-0608

Change Service Requested

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
San Jose, CA
PERMIT # 10

Catch the Early Train!

*Get your Train Sheet by email and you will
get it before the post office even receives it
and it is in COLOR!
(and you save the FRRS money too!)*

*Send an email requesting email delivery to
membership@wplives.org
with your name and email address.*

