



THE TRAIN SHEET

News from the Feather River Rail Society



Preserving "THE FEATHER RIVER ROUTE"

Issue - 205

May/June/July/August 2025

2025 Western Pacific-Rio Grande Convention

Eugene Vicknair

The Feather River Rail Society and the Rio Grande Modeling and Historical Society will be hosting a joint 2025 Western Pacific - Denver and Rio Grande Western Historical Convention on September 11-14, 2025 in Old Sacramento, California. Presentations and exhibits will be presented at the California State Railroad Museum. The closing banquet will be at the Delta King Hotel. (Please note, rooms at the Delta King are now sold out.)

Two different convention HO scale model cars are also available: a DRGW steel boxcar and a WP wood boxcar. They have arrived from Accurail and look great!

Some of the presentations scheduled are:

- DRGW owned WP passenger cars by Kyle Wyatt
- WP - SN - TS - CCT images by Dave Stanley
- California Zephyr operations and equipment in the Pullman Era by Riggie Twigg
- Ex-DRGW steam locomotives on the WP system by Eugene Vicknair
- Special presentations by CSRM staff

There will also be an exhibit and vendor room. Bring your DRGW and WP related models and photos to share with everyone. For more information and to follow updates on presentations, clinics, special tours and other details, please see the convention web page on the WPLives.org website.

See you all in Sacramento!

End of Year Events

Eugene Vicknair

Our annual end of year events are coming up soon! The *Pumpkin Patch Express* will be taking place on Saturday and Sunday, October 18-19 and 25-26. Saturday nights will feature the Super Spooky Night Trains.

The *Santa Trains* will be on Saturday, December 6 and Friday and Saturday, December 12-13 and 19-20.



Admission for members is free (bring your membership card). For non-members, the fare is \$15 per car, or \$10 with the donation of 3 non-perishable canned food items for the EPCAN food bank.

If you would like to volunteer for the events, please contact us at info@wplives.org. We are always in need of folks to help decorate, tear down, help run the events and just work as guides for the visitors. Also, we are looking for homemade cookies for the *Santa Trains*. Each year we give our free homemade cookies and hot drinks to our guests. As such, we go through a LOT of cookies!

Check out the event web pages at WPLives.org for more information.

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Issue 205 - May/June/July/August 2025

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News from the Feather River Rail Society and the
Western Pacific Railroad Museum at Portola

Editor - Paul Finnegan

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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

Hours until October 5, 2025

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
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FRRS Tax ID number is 68-0002774

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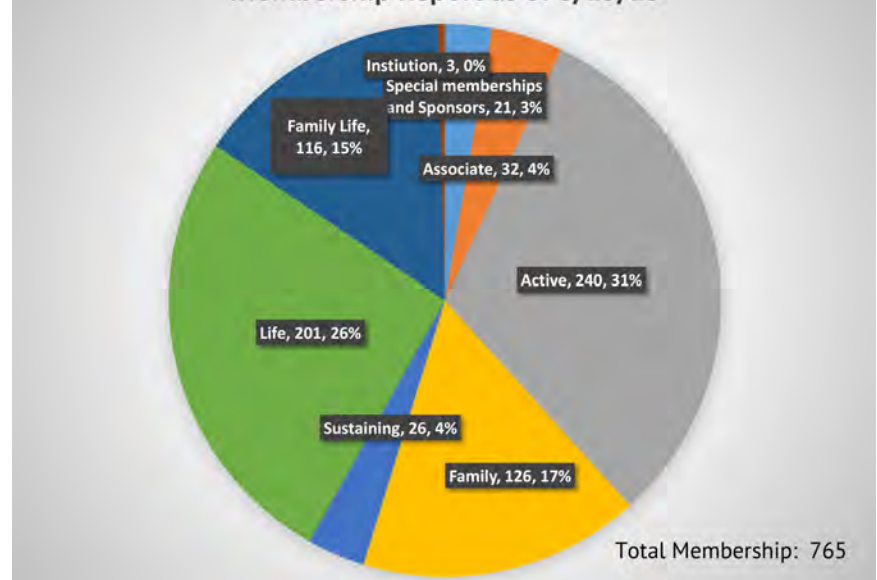
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Membership Report as of 8/25/25

WCRG Motorcars at the Museum*Eugene Vicknair*

For July 5 and 6, we were joined at the museum by Matt Parker, Gail McClure and Steve Hart, representing the West Coast Railroaders Group. They brought three motorcars to operate over the holiday weekend. Operations began in the morning with the motorcars giving rides to the visitors. The caboose train took over from 11 AM to about 2:30 PM, then the motorcars closed out the day. Very often the motorcars ran full and many guests came just to ride them. It was a great weekend for everyone.

On Saturday night, Eugene Vicknair cooked dinner for the volunteers and motorcar operators. Huge thank you to Matt Parker, Gail McClure and Steve Hart. We are already looking for more opportunities for the WCRG folks to operate at the museum.



July 5, 2025 – Matt Parker starts another run, giving visitors a ride in his open air motorcar. Gail McClure follows in the yellow enclosed motorcar and Steve Hart brings up the markers in his Rio Grande car.

- Photo by Eugene Vicknair

Museum Store Update*Eugene Vicknair*

Over the winter, we did some revisions to the product mix for our Museum Store. This also included purging old product files from both the point of sale system and the online store. Some

new products are being brought in, including new hat colors, some new pins from Sundance Marketing and changes to the books we stock.

The store staff also did some reorganizing and rearranging to improve the look and layout. We're working on getting the Keddie Wye HO scale diorama fixed up and on display. If you would like to help with that, please contact Kerry Cochran and Eugene Vicknair at info@WPLives.org.

Coming soon will be the 2026 Western Pacific Photo Calendar and some new kids toys. All proceeds from the physical and online stores support the work of the Western Pacific Railroad Museum.

Kaiser-Frazer Automobile Owners Club Visits Portola*Eugene Vicknair*

On Saturday, May 31, 2025, the WPRM hosted the Kaiser-Frazer Owners Club, a group devoted to preserving K-F produced vehicles. The group was holding one of their meets in the area and came over to the museum for a tour and caboose rides. As part of their visit, the group had several K-F vehicles on display for the public at the museum from 10 AM to 12 noon.

The Kaiser-Frazer Corporation was an American automobile manufacturer founded jointly by industrialist Henry J. Kaiser and automobile executive Joseph W. Frazer in 1945. Kaiser-Frazer was known for several innovative concepts, including early front-wheel drive concepts and the Kaiser-Darrin sports car with a fiberglass body. They also explored advanced technologies like unit construction and innovative suspension designs. In 1953, Kaiser bought the ailing Willys-Overland company, mainly for its Jeep brand, and merged the Kaiser and Willys operations under the Kaiser-Willys Corporation, ending the Kaiser-Frazer name. The company built its last passenger vehicles in 1955 and built only utility / off-road vehicles, particularly the famous "Jeep".

Thank you to Steve Elkins for setting up this memorable visit! And thank you to the FRRS volunteers who helped get everything set up and ready.

Historical/Archive Department News

*Kerry Cochran
Archive Manager*

While we have been closed for the winter, we reopened the archives department on Memorial Day weekend. (By appointment)

Several other donations have been coming in and during the summer, we will be inventorying them and getting them ready for either a display or having them available for research.

Ethan Doty has become a full-time member of the archives and has been working on several projects over the last ten months. He has taken the opportunity to start to clean up several of the archive storage cars and get things arranged so that we can better inventory the collection and be able to have more room to search for items that need to be sorted.

Long time charter member Chris Skow has joined the Archive Department. He and Ethan went to work on the archive display room at the museum.

They moved several of the display cabinets and put a fresh coat of paint on the floor. Boy do es that look good now.

While work on repainting the floor they rearranged the room and added two new display cases that Chris donated to the museum. The reworked all the displays in the room and now the room has some new an updated materials for our visitors to see.



As we move forward there are three new display cases, that Chris donated in the main shop next to the museum store, where the photo display wall is. In the near future, these display cases will have new materials added to them to display more of our collections.

During a recent trip to the museum, Paul Finnegan and I sorted through several boxes of donations in the office car and moved them to some of the other archive cars for storage and inventorying.

The office car holds some of our collections in storage; this car has become a great asset for the Archive Department giving us space to work while working on all the archive materials. This car has become the defacto office for the archive.



Along with all the other archive storage cars and the main archives, we are making great progress on being able to meet the goal of the society in supplying information on the Western Pacific Railroad.

This also gave me an opportunity to pick up several pieces of mail that had been left in the office car so that I could answer and respond to people who had written to the society.

I would like to remind all our members and staff at the museum to please make sure that I am aware of the mail that is sent to the Archive Department. This will help me in responding in a timely manner to our members and public.

I would like to thank our President, Greg Elems, for keeping me informed on a weekly basis of various items that have to do with the archives.

There is still a lot of work that needs to be done in the archives and several of the archive staff have been busy behind the scenes working on cataloging, scanning and preserving our collection, this work continues behind the scenes and is a great help to the society.

Thank you to all the members of the FRRS/WPRM who contribute to the society and the archives.

Should there be any questions about the archives, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Photo of display room by Chris Skow, photo of wooden storage cabinet by Paul Finnegan.

Operating Department Summer 2025

*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 volunteers for your help with the 2025 Operating Season so far this year.

As always, we need help around the museum in getting everything ready for any of our events, so if you have time give a call to the museum and check in.

While we have been short on crews, several of our members have stepped up and helped out. This takes the pressure off some of the members

who show up all the time to make sure we can operate. I appreciate all the support from all the members of the museum and the Operating Department. Without the help of all the Museum volunteers, we would not be able to keep the caboose train running each weekend.

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.

Should you be interested in helping out in the Operating Department, please contact us.

All the Operating Department Crew members work very hard through the year in volunteering their time to the museum. The time they spend working on the crew in their student positions or qualified positions helps us run the trains during the weekends.

Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

Recent Promotions

Eric Manos - Qualified Brakeman
Nick Manos - Qualified Passenger Engineer
Tom Mueller - Qualified Brakeman
Duane Vander Veen - Qualified Brakeman
Brian Waller - Qualified RAL Engineer

New Student Positions

Eric Manos - Conductor Fireman, Hostler
Tom Mueller - Conductor
Emanuel Petrisor - Brakeman
Duane Vander Veen - Conductor

There are many other volunteers who help the Operating Department out 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 at you check the FRRS website, www.wplives.org and use the link to crew pages. Check to see what weekend that 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.

Archives Department Museum Display Room*Kerry Cochran*

Back in June of this year, I was contacted by Charter Member, Chris Skow about the museum display room. Chris had discussed with me in previous Board of Directors meeting on helping out with the archives and the display room. With that said, Chris volunteered to give the display room a face lift. He enlisted member Ethan Doty to give him a hand. To that effort, he and Ethan went to work. Moving items that were store in the room to archives storage locations. They went about moving the current display cases and started working on moving the display cases that Chris donated to the museum.

Next order of business, Chris and Ethan gave the floor of the room a fresh coat of gray floor paint. Once the paint had dried, they went to work on

moving all the display cases, desks and current display around the room. Chris had an extensive collection of WP materials and he started to repopulate the display cases with some of those materials.

They went about getting everything back in place and today the room looks 1,000% better than it has in a number of years.

Thank you to Chris and Ethan for all the hard work getting this work completed and making the display room look good for all of our guest and members.

To see photos of the display, please look at the gallery of photos, Photos of Museum Display Room, on the Historical/Archive Department home page on WPLives.org.



- Photo by Ethan Doty

WPRM Exhibits in Sacramento and Fremont*Eugene Vicknair*

On May 17 – 18, 2025, the Sacramento Model Railroad Historical Society invited the FRRS to have an exhibit at their public open house. Several artifacts from the museum and member's own collections were brought down as well as scale models of WP equipment owned by several members. These were joined by photos and documents from the archives, all of which shared the WP story with the many visitors who came by to see the SMRHS layouts.

A similar event took place at Ardenwood Farm in Fremont the following Memorial Day weekend, May 24-26, when the same exhibits, plus some merchandise from the museum store, was exhibited as part of Ardenwood Rail Fair. The Society for the Preservation of Carter Brothers Railroad Resources ran excursions during the event and, on Saturday evening, gave our volunteers a tour of their facility.

Huge thank you to Greg Elems, Eric McKay, Michael Coen and Eugene Vicknair for handling the exhibits and providing materials for both events. And thank you to SMRHS and SPCBRR for inviting us to participate. We are hoping to make these an annual event for the FRRS.



A pair of HO scale WP GP40-2s model the final "New Image" scheme while traveling the Feather River Canyon section of the SMRHS' layout.

- Photo by Eugene Vicknair



The WPRM exhibit at the Sacramento Model Railroad Society's open house.

- Photo by Eugene Vicknair



Recreating a scene from 1934, the "Burlington Zephyr", aka "Pioneer Zephyr", runs across Keddie Wye on the SMRHS' HO scale layout.

- Photo by Eugene Vicknair

Railroad Day 2025

Railroad Days will be held on September 27th, 2025. Celebrate the rich railroad history of the area with live music, drinks, a farmer's market, and a 5K Run/Walk.



The museum will be open 10 am - 5 pm with train rides 11 am - 2 pm! Learn more about the event at portolarailroaddays.com.

Our Collections

Kerry Cochran
FRRS/WPRM Archive Manager

This is an updated article that I wrote back in 2019. I have come to appreciate several individuals over my association with the FRRS/WPRM and the number of people that I have known over the years.

The sheer knowledge and experience these people have, have amazed me over the years. The unfortunate thing that has reminded me, is that all of this knowledge and experience is slowly disappearing as more and more of our older member and associates have passed away. The article I wrote described Our Collections and Collectors We Know.

I wanted to expand on this a little bit about not only Railroad collection, but the Modeling hobby of railroads. This article continues: The expertise and enjoyment we gain from a lifetime of collecting, organizing, building, modeling and writing will die with us if we are unwilling to share.

Over the past few years, (actually over 30 years) I have been exposed to several people that had very large collections of photographs, slides, modeling and models in their collections. Unfortunately, deteriorating health conditions have temporarily prevented these people from working on their projects from time to time. However, their collecting continued and in some cases they were able to continue to work on their hobby. In other cases the person was unable to care any longer for their collection, and the sad fact was that they had to dispose of their collection in order to move, or return to their home or passed away.

One thing that I have noticed during these events is the enormous amount of the collection and in some cases new products and materials, many still in the original boxes and stored without any amount of work done on them. Another thing that I have noticed, was most were stored without any type of inventory so neither the person knew what they had or a way to account for the collection. Digging through a massive amount of a collection requires an enormous amount of patience and skill, let alone the time, to be able to arrange the collection for passing on to a family member, a sale or a donation to an organization.

All too often we see and know someone like what I am describing. If so, what can you, and possibly we, as a community of interest do now to avoid a similar situation?

First, do not assume that a family member (even immediate family) knows what the person has, how much it is worth or where it should go. Even if they do know, they may not care and may not go to the trouble of sorting through a lifetime of collecting, preferring instead to sell it as a lot or toss it in a dumpster.

Second, document what you have and store it in a manner that facilitates packing for movement and possible sale.

Third, keep an inventory of all of your collections, assign a value to individual items. While we all think our collections are priceless, everything has a price provided there is an interested buyer. Books and brass models will sell, however do not expect to recover the cost unless the item is exceedingly rare.

An inventory is a great way to help you know what you have and in the event you are not able to pass along your collection, it gives others a means to help dispose of the collection.

One final note I would like to mention, is the expertise and enjoyment we gain from a lifetime of collecting, building, modeling, reading and writing will die with each of us if we do not share it with others. Please think about helping your society, by writing articles, giving presentations, taking to other members and making documents about your experiences. Please consider the fate of your collection while you can. I assure you that those who can help, will and your lifetime of hard work will be available for the next generation to enjoy.

Several of our members (past and present) have made donation to our museum. These donations, (while not all have been inventoried yet) hold a vast amount of information and history of not only the Western Pacific Railroad, but several other historical items of railroad history.

(Author's note: This should not be taken as any legal advice and you should consult your attorney and tax professional for any legal matters.)

Should you have any questions on this subject, please contact Kerry Cochran, FRRS/WPRM Archives (Historical_Archive_dept@wplives.org).

Museum Sponsors

The Western Pacific played a major role in developing the economy of Plumas County and the surrounding region. The Western Pacific Railroad Museum is proud to be a part of that heritage and to hold a position in supporting the ongoing economic health of our community. We welcome the support of that community in return. We ask our members and visitors to support our business sponsors, companies who have generously contributed to the museum and its mission to preserve the Western Pacific family.

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Mechanical Update - Summer 2025

Nicholas Manos, CMO
cmo@wplives.org

This is a report of Mechanical Department progress and equipment status as of August 1, 2025.

Mechanical session one began April 4th and ran for 12 days. Attendance included Eric Manos (6.5 days), David Elems (3 days) and myself (12 days). Ethan Doty and Steve Habeck helped by performing battery cleaning, service and charging prior to the session as well as providing consultation, as needed.

Mechanical session two began May 19th and ran for 10 days. Attendance included Eric (4 days), Duane Vander Veen (3 days) and myself (10 days). Ethan helped with providing documents and a yard move and Don Nelson contributed with a brake shoe change.

Now that we are in operations season, work will slow as all mechanical personnel are also operations personnel. However, we are being reasonably successful at staying on top of most mechanical issues.

QRR1100 - in service for switching, caboose train and RAL. This locomotive is running well with no major issues or concerns. We have completed a full annual with the following repairs:

- Fixed the over pressure condition in the fuel system
- Addressed several electrical issues including shorted wiring
- Replaced a cracked and worn brake shoe
- Properly secured #7 cylinder head (missing nut and damaged threads)
- Replaced primary fuel filter elements

Deferred maintenance and repair list:

- Fuel sight glass gasket replacement (parts received)
- Gauge light repair
- Front headlight repair (only has one brightness setting)
- Headlight selector switch needs cleaning
- 'Stop' button near isolation switch needs cleaning or replacement
- Need to fabricate cages for car body filters
- Oil change

The locomotive desperately needs new oil, as the existing fluid is best described as 'black water'. This will need to be done soon, but we must get the existing waste oil barrels emptied before storing any more waste.

WP1503 - in service for switching, caboose train and RAL. This locomotive is running well with no major issues or concerns. A locomotive annual was started during our first work session. We also performed an oil change with new multi-weight oil. With all critical work complete, 1503 was placed into service for all uses on April 14th.

We completed the annual during our second session with the following work:

- Added crater compound to the axles
- Oiled the truck pivots
- Replaced the air compressor air and lube oil filters
- Replaced engine air filters
- Cleaned carbon traps

Deferred maintenance and repair list:

- The fireman side cab heater is malfunctioning
- The left front ditch light bulb is oscillating, perhaps burning out
- The fan shaft forward bearing is making noise and may need replacement (investigating)

- David reported the engine protection device needs to be replaced (improper unit that has occasional malfunction)

SP2873 - Out of service awaiting paint. This locomotive ran well with no major issues or concerns prior to its removal from service for painting. The Mechanical Department is not presently involved with this painting project but we are keeping updated on the status of the paint work so we can coordinate mechanical work required to return the locomotive to service.

LiftAll Forklift - In service. The Liftall took a great deal of abuse before and during the Big Boy event. Both the accelerator and the clutch pedals/linkage were broken during this time, in addition to other physical damage from improper use. The accelerator had been wired together and the clutch master cylinder and pedal were removed and rebuilt. The lift has been out of service since last year. It was re-stored to service on July 21st.

Work completed:

- Clutch master cylinder re-installed and system bled
- Engine oil and filter replaced
- New air filter installed
- New operator seat installed with seat belts
- Radiator, hoses and engine block flushed of rust and debris
- New thermostat installed
- Engine coolant replaced
- Clutch, brake and hydraulic fluids topped off
- Damaged parking brake repaired
- New ignition components installed
- Transmission fluid replaced
- Battery hold down installed
- Coolant overflow bottle installed
- New radiator cap installed

Deferred maintenance and repair list:

- Broken accelerator pedal (parts received)
- Steering cylinder leakage increasing
- Multiple leafs of rear spring packs broken

Yale Forklift - In service Work completed:

- Engine oil and filter replaced
- Hydraulic, transmission, air and fuel filters replaced
- Battery replaced
- Engine coolant replaced
- New radiator cap installed
- Hydraulic and brake fluid topped off
- Ignition coil replaced

Deferred maintenance and repair list:

- The engine temperature gauge and sensor need replacement (parts received)
- The mast lift cylinder discharges fluid at full extension
- The steering is stiff unless moving. The stiff steering is probably related to a weak main pump or steering boost pump. It works well enough once moving and the cost to rebuild the pump(s) is high. We'll leave it as is and monitor.

Cat Electric Forklift - In service. During session one, the brake master cylinder and supply hose were replaced. Brake fluid was flushed and filled, restoring the brakes on this unit. Steve serviced the batteries and gave them a full charge. This equipment was placed in service.

During session two, we noticed the lift continues to leak fluid under the front right wheel. This is confirmed to not be brake fluid. Instead, it is gear oil from the right transaxle. We are continuing to evaluate this, but given we have no manuals for this lift and can't find any for sale or reference, we may have to make a service call. This lift is a vital tool in the shop are and we cannot afford to make any mistakes attempting to repair it.

Use of this lift should be minimized until the leak is repaired.

Telehandler - Out of service. The Telehandler was found to have large hydraulic leaks that covered the shop floor over the winter. Also, during the test drive it was noted there are no functional engine temperature or fuel pressure gauges. Problems were also found in the cooling system that prevent the engine from reaching correct operating temperature. This lift will remain out of service until these issues can be properly corrected.

Work completed:

- Engine oil and filter replaced
- Engine fuel and air filter replaced
- Engine coolant replaced
- Hydraulic return line hose replaced (this was the largest leak)
- Hydraulic fluid filled

Deferred maintenance and repair list:

- Thermostat needs replacement (parts received)
- The radiator neck is cracked
- The radiator overflow tube is crushed
- Radiator needs a coolant overflow bottle (parts received)
- The temperature gauge needs replacement and sender installation (parts received)
- The oil pressure gauge needs replacement and sender installation (parts received)
- The battery needs a hold down installed (parts received)

Backhoe - In service. The backhoe also left quite a mess of hydraulic fluid on the shop floor due to several leaks. The worst of them was the left loader lift cylinder having a loose gland nut. After tightening, this seemed to eliminate the largest of the leaks, but several other exist and are developing. We will need to start a program of hose replacement and cylinder rebuild.

The backhoe had an engine oil and coolant replacement. Engine air, fuel and oil filters were replaced. The hydraulic filter was replaced and the hydraulic fluid was topped up.

The backhoe had hard starting problems and was making excessive smoke upon acceleration. This was reported to be failing injectors, so I bought new injectors. I have not replaced them yet since it turned out they were not the source of the issues. The primary fuel filter was filled with algae and dirt to the point it poured out what looked like mud and the air filter was clogged solid with dirt. After filter changes, the backhoe now starts right up and has no excessive smoke once warmed up.

Diesel engine fuel filters cannot be ignored - they must be changed yearly. Same with air filters when working in dusty environments, which this equipment seems to be.

Inspection of hoses for leaks revealed two issues that need immediate attention. First, the hoses that run the backhoe bucket are badly worn and one has a large leak. Second, one of the hoses for the transmission cooler was replaced with an aftermarket hose that lacks the 90 degree fitting of the original. To make it work, it is bent against the frame, which is wearing a hole through the hose and has managed to remove over 1/8" of material so far. When this rubs through, we will immediately lose all transmission fluid which will stop the backhoe at the spot of loss and probably damage the transmission if the operator doesn't immediately stop the engine (which they likely won't)

During the second session, Duane replaced the tractor's seat. We now have a stable place to sit with a functioning seat belt.

Brian Waller used the backhoe after our first session and reports that it is running well.

Light Plant, Kubota - In service. The light plant had a busted coolant bottle and was missing a starting key. The coolant bottle was replaced and the engine oil was changed. The engine oil, air and fuel filters were replaced. The battery terminals were cleaned and greased and the new starter key was tested. The documentation tube was loose but is now mounted properly and we printed a new operating manual to put in the tube. The starter key is now mounted to a wire inside the unit. With these changes, no keys will be needed by an operator except the key for the exterior panel locks.

Light Plant, Mitsubishi - In service. The engine oil was changed. The engine oil, air and fuel filters were replaced. The battery terminals were cleaned and greased and the new starter key was tested. The starter key is now mounted to a wire inside the unit. With these changes, no keys will be needed by an operator except the key for the exterior panel locks.

Shop - During the first mechanical session, I cleaned the west end of the building. The center walkway was cleared, a mechanic's bench area established and the track and outdoor tools were sorted and moved to the south wall. With the help of Ethan and Greg Elems, the shop was switched out to present a locomotive display for our guests. Barricades were set up to provide a full walkway from one end of the shop to the other. The west half of track one is reserved for shop work. 2873 is currently set on this track for painting and display, one of five locomotives we now have on display. Other locomotives displayed in the shop include WP165, WP805, WP707 and WP2001. Most can be easily opened for cab tours when docents are available.

I have begun sorting and cleaning the four boxcars that house most of the mechanical supplies. This work will be ongoing.

The west bay has been cleaned and organized to better fit battery chargers, supply storage and provide better parking for the golf cart.

I am now cleaning the mechanic's bay to eventually make it a workshop and locomotive supply storage area. Shelves have been installed and the tool boxes have been moved in. Please respect this area by not removing any tools or supplies, as they are all designated for specific mechanical work. Please do not create a situation where a scheduled work session is scuttled due to missing supplies or tools - this will only result in fewer repairs being completed and fewer locomotives being operational. Unless your name is listed as a mechanic in the org chart, please stay out of this area.

Our next mechanical work session will be October 4th and 5th. We will be winterizing locomotives and generally preparing for the off-season during this short session.

Next year's main work session will take place April 6th to April 23rd. With current staffing, we can only commit to servicing and maintaining the support vehicles and two locomotives. If you want to see a third locomotive running next year, please consider volunteering for the Mechanical Department. You don't need any mechanical experience to make a difference. Most of the time consuming work is general labor and cleaning. The work isn't glamorous, but we have yet to see a locomotive run because a large group of people wished it into operation. We will provide all training, materials and PPE. Even a few days of help can be of great advantage. If you wish to commit to one or more days of assistance, please contact me and we'll gladly sign you up. If you are thinking about it but aren't yet ready to commit, there will be additional opportunities to sign up in the coming months.

If you have any questions about this report or the Mechanical Department in general, please feel free to email me.

Time to visit WP 707

Nicholas Manos, CMO

The Mechanical Department is evaluating 707 for a return to service. We started by gathering information on the present status of the engine. It is said that 707 was removed from service due to extensive fuel contamination in the lube oil. This was determined to be caused by 9 injectors leaking at their main seal. Additionally, it is reported that 707 cannot hold a regulated pressure setting in the air system.

The high level work list for 707:

- Repair leaky injectors
- Change lube oil
- Operate locomotive and perform annual inspection to generate full deficiency list
- Perform repairs and annual maintenance on locomotive
- Possible feed valve malfunction

The original plan for the injectors was to exchange them for rebuilt units. To prepare for this, we pulled the injectors to gather part numbers. We found the numbers on the injectors do not cross to any known injector listed in EMD part manuals. The number is an EMD format and the injector body has all the signs of being an 567 injector, but the number does not reference. This was quite a puzzle for us and our parts supplier. Eventually, we consulted with Interstate Diesel who provided us with a cross reference to modern unit exchange numbers.

Armed with proper part numbers, we inquired about exchange. This presented another roadblock as our old injectors lack calibration slides. These injectors are no longer accepted for core credit by our parts supplier. I checked with a few other rebuilders and found the same policy - no core credit for injector bodies without calibration slides. This means we would need to purchase rebuilt injectors outright, which at recently raised prices are roughly \$700 each, or \$11,200 per 16 cylinder engine. Even if we found a rebuilder that would give us credit for the cores or sell for less, it is likely the total cost of rebuilt injectors will be far in excess of all available funds.

But fear not! We know how to read and we have tools, so we explored repairing the injectors ourselves. By chance, we recently found a brand new pack of 50 injector seals in one of the boxcars, along with a plentiful supply of injector filters and copper gaskets. It appears someone before us had the same idea...

Not wanting to make any mistakes with 707's injectors, we removed an injector from 708. The part number was checked to confirm it was a rebuilt unit exchange for a 567. We disassembled the injector to

study the components and determine what would need to be replaced to provide a proper overhaul. Of course, we promptly dropped everything on the bench before we could note component orientation.

After some study of the components and comparison to the exploded diagrams, we understood the operation of the injector and were able to thoroughly clean and inspect for damage and wear before re-assembling it properly. We made a list of likely replacement parts and looked up numbers in the EMD part catalogs to facilitate a quote request. We can now report that a basic overhaul will cost us about \$30 in parts, per injector. This price drops to \$9 per injector when we factor in the parts we already have.

We can also report we learned the proper orientation to disassemble and reassemble an injector without dropping all the parts on the bench.

Someone may point out this will not provide results as good as a professionally rebuilt injector. I will not argue this point directly because I generally agree, but they do not have to be as good. The injectors need to be safe, which in this case means not leak. They must also perform reasonably well. Given the improvement we saw from just a quick external cleaning of the injector tips on 1100, I am reasonably confident we can dramatically improve any injectors with this proposed overhaul procedure. In any case, we simply don't have the resources to purchase the rebuilt units. The only choice currently available to us is between overhauling the injectors ourselves to see if that works or just leaving 707 out of service. We are going to give this a try.

Once all the injectors are tested leak free, the next order of business will be changing the lube oil. We have three barrels, or 165 gallons on hand. We will need one more barrel of oil, at an approximate cost of \$1,250. This amount is within the current lube oil budget so a purchase is possible this year.

2025 Crew Training

Paul Finnegan, FRRS Crew Caller

The Operating Department held it's annual Crew Training for 2025 on Saturday, May 3, 2025. Twenty-four members attended the training. Last year we had twenty-one members at the 2024 Crew Training.

We welcomed three new members this year: Mike Coen, Dave Hosmer and Tom Mueller to our crew.

Two additional members completed the TBA training, bringing our Operating Department roster to twenty-six for 2025.

You can see the current roster at the bottom of our Crew Training Material web page on the Operating Department home page.



2025 Crew training in the Silver Plate

- Photo by Paul Finnegan

Steam Department Changes

Nicholas Manos, CMO

The Steam Department performed nothing short of a miracle returning Western Pacific 165 (WP 165) to service. They gave it their all in time, sweat, blood, tears along with much of their own money and materials. In the end, they made the whistle echo in the canyon once again. I know I speak for many when I say we owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude. But I also say we owe them much more. We owe them the work that comes ahead to not let the product of their efforts fall into disrepair. Like all inheritance, this gift carries with it the responsibility of maintenance and improvement. We must try to leave that which we were given in better shape when we pass it to the next generation. The Steam Department did that for us, and now it is our turn to carry on.

With all of this in mind, draft planning is underway to attempt a return to service for WP 165 in 2027. For those of you wondering 'Why not 2026?', please read on. There is much work to do.

Conflicting Priorities - When I became Chief Maintenance Officer (CMO), my first order of business was to reflect on how and why I ended up as the CMO. It wasn't difficult to see that excessive strain on resources contributed to the departure of the previous CMO, as well as the leader of the Steam Department. Both losses were felt acutely, and I knew my contributions weren't going to be of any lasting benefit to the museum if I couldn't figure out how to avoid this same fate. To be transparent, I must admit to giving serious thought of my own departure after the strain of work preparing for the last year's 'Big Boy' event and I only had a fraction of the work that others shouldered. I understand and respect the need to step away.

A big part of the resource strain was the WP 165 program itself, both in resource requirements and in how the program was prioritized. While I could discuss various issues in detail, I prefer to focus on what I consider the root cause. *The return of WP 165 to service was treated as a stand-alone project that was to be pursued as the highest priority of the museum, often to the exclusion of all else.* This appears to have set in motion a number of issues that ultimately led us to what we have today - a museum with a steam locomotive we can't run, many operable diesel locomotives out of service, a skeleton crew in the Mechanical Department and several burnt out volunteers.

From my perspective, the singular focus on 'get it running' was paired with little visible action aimed at 'keeping it running.' Consequently, we are left without the ability to field a full crew, much less the resources to maintain the engine. I don't say any of this as an accusation or complaint. I document these difficult things only to describe what happened, so as to explain the motivation for the changes being made in the program. This time, we are not going to 'make it run' unless we have a functional and documented plan to keep it running, as well as the ability to pay for it.

To this end, an acknowledgement that steam engines are extremely resource intensive will guide all plans and decisions made regarding WP 165. We cannot afford to pursue steam operations at all costs. We must remain prepared to pull the plug and be content with our beautiful display engine if we are confronted with brutal and unwelcome reality. As knowledgeable students of the WP, we know they were an early adopter of diesel power, and we know why. It would be foolish, indeed, to not pay heed to those lessons learned so long ago.

While we will pursue the return of steam, it will be in the context of rebuilding a mechanical program that works for all the museum's needs while creating an environment that both attracts new volunteers and welcomes back those members who had to step away for much needed and deserved rest.

With all that said, please have no doubt that we can hear that whistle again.

Here is how we are going to get there...

A New Organization - In recognition of the need to coordinate mechanical resources, the Board of Directors recently moved the Steam Department under the CMO. Following this, an internal reorganization has built upon this effort with the following actions:

- Eliminate the term 'Steam Department'. WP 165 will now be managed as an additional engine in the Mechanical Department, not as a separate effort of the society.
- Eliminate 'Steam Crew' positions in the Mechanical Department. All Mechanical Department volunteers will be trained for and expected to work on both steam and diesel locomotives to maximize our efficiency.
- Transfer 'Steam Crew' positions to the Operation Department as new ratings for fireman, hostler and engineer.
- Define the 'Steam Lead' position as a project manager and leader for all steam engine related work. This individual will provide technical leadership in all matters related to the repair, restoration, maintenance, training and operation of WP 165. While the steam lead will remain a hands-on position, the expectation is the actual work on the steam engine will be performed by the entirety of the Mechanical Department. The steam lead will report directly to the CMO, who will provide overall program planning and management of the resources committed to WP 165 with a specific objective to assure its needs do not unduly impact the repair and maintenance of the overall fleet.
- Eliminate any single designated 'Steam Advisor' position. Instead, we will look to cultivate relationships with as many experts as we can, both within the society and the steam community at large. We must avoid over reliance on any one individual. It isn't fair to that person and will only lead to burning out another important resource.

Certification - We will begin by exploring the current status of Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) certification for WP 165. We'll determine what may need correction and how best to do that work in a compliant manner. We will consult with the FRA, past steam leaders and other industry experts.

Concurrent with this will be an exploration of putting the engine on an alternate legal inspection process. While there are many good reasons to maintain FRA certification, the financial and labor realities for the museum may make this impossible. In this case, we need to see if there is an alternative that would allow us to continue safely operating the engine with less expense. A cost/benefit analysis for all options will be prepared and used to guide our decisions.

Repair - We no longer have ready access to in-house knowledge or sufficient labor resources to effect the repairs the WP 165 needs. While we will rebuild both capabilities over time, many of our members want to see the engine back in service as quickly as possible. The only realistic path to restoring operation quickly is to hire out much of the work. We will enumerate any deficiencies with the engine and identify industry respected vendors to obtain quotations for work.

Maintenance - We will develop, in consultation with experts, written maintenance procedures and supply specifications for the inspection, repair and operation of WP 165. Labor requirements will be estimated for each procedure to inform the total labor needs. Parts and service providers will be identified and recorded.

Training - A training and qualification program must be created in the Operating Department for steam rated fireman, hostlers and engineers. Plans are being made to obtain the 'bootstrap' training for our in-house trainers.

Operations - Operations rules will be developed and documented with specific attention to the unique requirements of steam operations. These will include consideration of crew qualification, minimum number and rating of crew for specific operations, crew working conditions, clothing requirements, etc.

Preliminary plans call for the locomotive to operate no more than three times a year. Although this plan mentions 2027 as the first year goal, this schedule and limitation is to be applied to any year WP 165 is operational.

The first operation will be made for annual maintenance testing and crew training. This may take place on a normal operations weekend, but it will not be scheduled or publicized. It will happen when the locomotive is ready, completely at the discretion of the Mechanical Department.

The second operation is being proposed for the Independence Day weekend. The locomotive would operate for 3 days, providing Run-A-Locomotive (RAL) each day in addition to caboose train rides. Crew training would continue during caboose and RAL operations, with some limitations.

The third and final proposed operation would be Railroad Day. The locomotive would operate for 3 days, providing RALs each day in addition to caboose train rides on Railroad Day. Crew training will continue during caboose and RAL operations, with some limitations.

No steam RALs would be available outside the two proposed steam operating sessions.

Resource Needs: Funding - We should be able to fund WP 165 operations, at least for the first several years, with RAL revenues. However, the revenue from those operations will need to be dedicated to the needs of WP 165.

With regard to initial funding of the return to service, the steam program has some dedicated funds in account, but these are inadequate to address the known repair needs. We have some grant opportunities coming up that we are preparing for to help close the gap, and we have also identified another avenue of fundraising.

The museum has been cleaning the property by junking or removing those items that have no use, historical significance and/or ties to the Western Pacific. Some of these items have a reasonable amount of value to outside parties, so we could sell them to raise funds for WP 165 while contributing to the cleanup project. The first item we will be selling is the museum's 1995 Dodge Ram 2500 club cab pickup. This pickup was last used by the museum manager before it developed problems with its fuel pump that resulted in it being parked for several years. This pickup has the very desirable Cummins 12 valve 5.9 liter turbocharged diesel engine (the main component of its value). It has a 2 wheel drive automatic transmission and 395k miles on the odometer. The pickup does not currently run, so it will need to be towed or trailered away.

We would like to give the membership the first opportunity to make an offer. If you would like to purchase this pickup to restore or just reuse the drivetrain, please contact cmo@wplives.org for more details or to make an offer. We'll wait 30 days from publication to see if we can agree on a satisfactory internal offer, then we will list the truck externally.

Yes, it seems I also sell used cars now. It beats begging for donations, but if you'd like to send those in, I won't complain.

Resource Needs: Labor - I am often asked "when will the steam engine run again?" Every time, I am tempted to say "about 300 hours after you start working on it" (probably because that was said to me at one time.) Some may label this as snark, but it is absolutely a factual statement. All of the engines, including WP 165, will run when YOU help make them run. How soon (or if) they return to service and how long they remain in service is largely dependent upon your contribution.

I couldn't help but notice we had many enthusiastic members show up from far and wide to see the steam engine run last year. In the months and weeks prior to operation, when all the messy work on WP 165 was in progress, the museum was a comparative ghost town. I realize it is always enjoyable to see a steam engine run, but we must accept that a lot of not so enjoyable work goes into making that happen. If all we have are well-wishers and spectators, there will soon be nothing left running.

We welcome both volunteers who are mechanics and volunteers who have no previous mechanical experience. The majority of the time needed in the Mechanical Department is consumed by work that is best described as 'labor'. It requires no special skills other than the ability to show up when scheduled and follow direction.

Without additional volunteer labor, this article is just words on paper expressing a dream that will never be.

2025 Election Report

*Matthew S. Shuman
2025 Election Chair*

The 2025 Election Year progressed well. At the close of nominations, we had only three nominees, those being the three incumbent directors. With no requests for write-in candidates, a "White Ballot" was declared by the Election Committee. The confirmed nominees were incumbent Board Members Bob Sims, Janet Steeper and Michael Coen.

With the "White Ballot" declared, the voting membership was notified by Internet and Social media. The incumbents were resworn in at the July 12, 2025 Board Meeting, for another three-year term.

The Election Committee would like to thank Paul Finnegan for his continued dedication to the FRRS organization and the commitment he has made to the FRRS around communications to our membership. We also want to acknowledge the FRRS Boards of present and past for their continued dedication to the FRRS and WPRM and the membership.

FRRS 2025 Election Committee Members:

Matthew S. Shuman - FL 1948 - Chairperson

Ann Morningstar - L 1967 - Co-Chair

Debbie Shuman - FL 1948 - Clerk/Catering Facilitator to the Election Committee

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*Members' Day 2025 - Greg Elems delivering his after dinner talk.
- Photo by Tom Hervey 6/7/25*