

Feather River Rail Society

Western Pacific Railroad Museum



WP

CONVENTION GUIDELINES

Contents

INTRODUCTION:	4
PART I Planning the Convention:	5
<i>Number of Days for the Convention:</i>	5
<i>SCHEDULING – Date Selection:</i>	6
<i>Committee Members and Responsibilities:</i>	6
<i>Convention Chairperson</i>	6
<i>Convention Co-Chairperson</i>	7
<i>Volunteer Staff Members and Convention Volunteers</i>	7
<i>Registration Desk</i>	7
<i>Advertising:</i>	7
<i>Chamber of Commerce, Convention Bureaus:</i>	8
PART II – Finances:	9
<i>Accounting:</i>	9
<i>Income:</i>	9
<i>Payments/Expenses:</i>	9
<i>Registration:</i>	9
REGISTRATION DESK:	9
REGISTRATION DESK BULLETIN BOARD	11
CONVENTION BADGES:	11
REFUNDS:	12
REGISTRATION FORM:	12
NOTE:	12
<i>Facilities Requirements:</i>	13
<i>Choosing a Location:</i>	14
<i>Choosing a Hotel/Motel or Meeting Hall:</i>	14
<i>Theme:</i>	18
<i>Ticket Prices:</i>	18
<i>Meeting Rooms:</i>	19
<i>Vendor Spaces:</i>	19
<i>Private sales</i>	20
<i>Archive Display Spaces:</i>	20
<i>Museum Store Space:</i>	20
PART III - PROGRAMS:	21
<i>Presentations:</i>	21
<i>Presenters:</i>	22

<i>Presenter Needs:</i>	22
<i>Presenter Equipment Needs:</i>	22
<i>Timetable and/or Convention Program:</i>	23
PART IV – Set-Up Materials and Supplies:	23
<i>TRANSPORTATION:</i>	23
PART V – Raffles:	23
<i>Type of prizes:</i>	24
<i>Raffle Tickets Prices:</i>	24
PART VI – Models and Modeling – Display and Contests:	24
<i>Location and hours of the contests.</i>	26
<i>Registration, voting and awards</i>	26
PART VII – Banquet:	27
<i>Type of Meals:</i>	27
<i>Number of Meals:</i>	27
<i>Cost of Banquet:</i>	28
<i>Banquet Program:</i>	28
<i>Head Table:</i>	28
<i>Guest Speaker:</i>	29
PART VIII – Tours and Off-Site Events:	29
<i>Field Trips, Tours</i>	29
PART IX – Security:	30
PART X – Board of Directors Meeting:	31
PART XI – Closing out the Convention:	31
PART XII – Attachments:	32

INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this guide is to set forth the procedures needed to set up and put on the Feather River Rail Society/Western Pacific Railroad Museum WP annual convention.

It is the desire and intent of the Western Pacific Historical/Archive Department to hold a convention each year for its members, members of the Society/Museum and other interested parties. The location of the convention is preferably to be nearby the former Western Pacific right of way. The convention should include programs that would cover the history of the Western Pacific Railroad, its subsidiaries, branches and railroads that had connections with the W.P. Other operations within the area that would be of interest to our members may be included. Industries that the railroad served during its existence may be included. This may include modeling contests, modeling displays and raffles of WP and Railroad items along with a vendor sales area.

Putting on a convention is work and you will need help. You need to do certain things in a timely manner, keep records, and follow-up.

The convention is not intended to be a moneymaking activity of the society, however all profits are used for the Arthur Walter Keddie Railroad Library. Care must be taken to prevent any losses; all profit is an added benefit to the preservation activities of the FRRS and is encouraged. With that said, we try to keep the participants cost reasonable; this will encourage more participation which in turn will benefit everyone.

The following guidelines are just that, guidelines! Their purpose is to guide each year's chairman through the process of setting up the convention and running it. Each convention will and should be different; this is why we move from site to site. We want the convention to be fresh each year. We also want the convention to be consistent in certain aspects.

PART I Planning the Convention:

Number of Days for the Convention:

In general the convention is scheduled for three days, normally on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Conventions have been held on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays with Sunday a Travel day. There is no specific set dates and they have varied over the course of the various years.

The location of the convention each year should alternate (if possible) from the Northern, Western, Southern and the Eastern areas of the former Western Pacific and all points between.

Accommodations may dictate the actual location. This is the first and maybe the most difficult part of the process. Finding a facility that fits our needs and budget may not be easy.

Preferably the convention should be held at a hotel or motel complex that can provide a minimum of two meeting rooms. One room needs to be large enough to hold 100 seated people. This room needs to be able to be darkened for presentations. The second room needs to be large enough to accommodate tables for the vendors, model contest, model displays, Museum Store sales, along with the Historical/Archive displays from the museum.

Common spaces have been used in the past, however they do provide a security risk for vendors, museum store and materials left out as a display and/or covered overnight.

These rooms should be able to be secured. It would also be nice to have a lounge area where videos could be run; especially if the sleeping rooms are off site.

We need a room where the banquet can be held. This can be the same room in which the presentations are held. You must remember to schedule your presentations so that the room is available to set up for the banquet.

SCHEDULING – Date Selection:

Possible conflicts are PCR/NMRA convention, first of May, UP or SP Historical conventions, Winter Rail and the Loggers convention in Sonora (there are several other conventions also).

The FRRS has held conventions in the past as a co-sponsored FRRS/PCR/NMRA events with both organizations supporting each other. The RCR normally is the lead organization as they have a larger body of membership and have a few more resources than the FRRS convention committee.

Committee Members and Responsibilities:

- Convention Chairperson
- Convention Co-Chairperson
- Staff/Convention Help
- Registration Desk

Convention Chairperson

The Convention Chairperson is the spokesperson for the convention.

The Chairperson has overall responsibility for negotiations with the Convention facility (e.g. hotel, convention center, fairgrounds) and other major high cost activities.

The Chairperson oversees the activities of all committees.

The Chairperson has a key role in planning of the convention details.

The Chairperson reviews and approves the financial arrangements made for the convention.

The Chairperson has the authority to change the responsibilities of the staff and volunteers if deemed necessary.

The chairperson appoints, removes, and/or replaces staff and volunteers as necessary.

The Chairperson presides over the meetings of the convention committee meetings.

Convention Co-Chairperson

The primary responsibility of the Co-Chairperson is to be prepared to step in and assume the duties of the Chairperson in the event that the Chairperson is unable to fulfill his/her duties.

The Co-Chairperson assists the Chairperson in the above duties.

The Co-Chairperson oversees assignment and delegation of tasks to event positions.

The Co-Chairperson works closely with the Chairperson in all matters.

Volunteer Staff Members and Convention Volunteers

Volunteer staff members and convention volunteers assist and help in the overall work that needs to be done to set-up, maintains and operate the convention at the direction of the chairperson or co-chairperson.

Registration Desk

Registration desk members take in the registration of attendees, give out registration packages, collect fees due, gives out information.

There may be a lead registration desk member who gives direction to other registration members.

Advertising:

Draw up an information sheet that you can send out with the 4 Ws: What, Where, When, and Whom to contact.

Get information to *Train Sheet* and *Headlight* (*Headlight* if possible), post at museum and to our sponsors. Get to *Headlight* dealers for posting in their shops.

The convention staff will maintain a mailing list of all past attendees, you should send flyers to all of them. This eats up about 4 registrations but is our most effective way to get attendees. You can send registration (flyer) to all that have attended in the last 2 years and post cards to the rest of the list to cut costs!

Contact Model Railroader, Model Craftsmen, Trains, Railway & Locomotive Society, UP & SP Historical societies, P.C.R. Bulletin, Rio Vista, Niles and Sacramento Museums and anyone else you can think of.

Ads are free so send them out. If you have someone do this, give dates it must be done by. As President Reagan said "Trust but verify"

No matter how hard you try, you will be told you have not advertised enough, if you have done the above, don't worry about it. Send magazine material in about 90 days before they say is the dead line. If someone complains ask them, where they would advertise, if it is reasonable send out a flyer and add it to our list.

60 to 90 days before the convention send out above mentioned registration forms to all past attendees, have all the information posted to the FRRS website. (The webmaster will help you.) Do not offer discount, it does not work. Charge more at door. If there are deadlines (rooms, meals etc.) make sure you tell them. If you need attendees to stay at the facility to help pay for the rooms, just say so. Don't assume everyone will stay at hotel.

Chamber of Commerce, Convention Bureaus:

In some of the areas where we have had conventions in the past, the local chamber of commerce and/or convention bureau has given us material to post or hand out at the conventions.

In some cases they have provided bags for the convention attendee to collect the various handouts and advertisements at the convention.

PART II – Finances:

Accounting:

The Convention Chairperson should work with the FRRS Treasurer to coordinate this. You will be required to provide an accounting of convention income and expenses. This is a good time to start documenting your expenses.

Income:

Deposit all monies into the FRRS Checking account. This can be done by contacting the FRRS accountant and/or the FRRS President (or other designated person).

Payments/Expenses:

All expenses paid out are from the FRRS Checking account and/or the FRRS credit card account.

All expenses should be accounted for and a detailed list of the charges and payments made on accounts in the financial report.

Registration:

REGISTRATION DESK:

Keep the desk open at all times necessary for the convenience of attendees. If you have scheduled a morning tour you are strongly encouraged to have your registration desk open the day prior to the first day for those members arriving early so they may pick up their convention registration package and tour tickets.

The registration desk also needs to be open on the first day of the convention at least one hour prior to the departure of your first tour.

Recommended times for the registration desk to be open are:

- Day 1 Thursday 8:30 am - 3 pm
- Day 2 Friday 8:30 am – 3 pm
- Day 3 Saturday 8:30 am- 2 pm
- Day 4 Sunday closed

Do not assume that including all pertinent information on the registration form is sufficient. Once the application has been completed and returned, the attendee has no information to refer to, so important registration details should be covered also in the announcement brochure text. This often is handled by making the registration form a tear-off part of the brochure, with tear off portion having on the back side no information needed later.

The registration form should encourage attendees to purchase tickets in advance for the banquet, tours, and other special events or material such as souvenir/convention cars.

When the registration desk is open, a FRRS member must always be present, and/or nearby the desk to help answer questions. Never leave inexperienced, or young family members, at the registration desk

Attempt to use a past volunteer to start off the first day of the registration. This will help get new volunteers up to speed with what needs to be done.

Those who have pre-registered should be given preferential and expeditious treatment. DO NOT ask these members to wait in line with those registering at the door. Make sure that your registration packets are in order, easy to find and are ready for prompt issuance.

Open all registration packets and have the member confirm that everything that he/she registered for is included. With the member observing, double check to assure the correct number of tour/event tickets are in the packet. Have the member sign a receipt that everything was received.

A computer is needed at the registration desk to make on site changes to existing reservations. (We have been relying on a member to bring a computer with the registration information on it to help in this process.)

You need to set up a way to keep track of all inquiries, registration forms sent out, registrations received and what they signed up for.

A computer almost becomes a must. Set up a simple database or spreadsheet and use it. Just be sure to bring your data sheet with you to the convention in case of a problem. If there is a problem with a registration try to work it out, do not be hardnosed.

Have all registrations sent to the person and/or the FRRS as noted in the registration information. Have all payments made out to the FRRS.

The practice in the past has been not to charge spouses to attend the convention, except for the banquet and any tour that would cost money. However we do need to get the spouses name so that we can make out a name tag for them.

We do not charge presenters for registration, we just need to make sure we get name tags printed for them. .

If possible, get a non-railroad person or two and make sure you rotate 2 people to handle registration Friday and Saturday. No one wants to come to the convention and just sit at the table all day.

Be aware of the tours and/or other programs so that, if necessary, a person at the registration desk can attend.

Set up your registration table, it should be positioned so everyone must pass it going in. These folks will need some change and a way to keep it. They will also need a copy of your database or spreadsheet. Have a receipt book for cash transactions. Keep a record of name, address, telephone, e- mail of at the door registrations in order to add them to convention database for the next year.

If something goes wrong just deal with it fairly. Get all the information needed and talk to the convention chairperson about it before making any adjustments.

Have copies of the TIMETABLE/PROGRAM (as previously printed in the convention flyer) reprinted and available at the desk. Make enough copies for your expected attendance. This gives you the chance to make any last minute changes/corrections. Consider inserting a copy of the timetable/program into the registration packets.

REGISTRATION DESK BULLETIN BOARD

Have an information bulletin board in the registration area to post schedule changes, messages, ticket exchanges, etc.

CONVENTION BADGES:

3" x 4" size is best. Use a badge holder and lanyard.

Stick-on badges are cheap, look cheap, and don't do the job. Include convention name, registration number, and registrant's name. Different color badges can be used for members, spouses/companions, vendors and presenters, if desired.

REFUNDS:

Refunds to members for their inability to attend the convention (or go on a specific tour) should be handled on a case-by-case basis. Include a statement on refunds in your published materials. However, remember to treat members fairly and maintain some flexibility if they provide a reasonable explanation in requesting a refund.

There will be NO refunds of the registration fee. This is an expense to the convention and the FRRS and is used to cover administrative expenses.

There should be no refund on tour tickets, unless the tour is sold out and you have a waiting list of members to purchase the ticket. If the tour is not sold out, have the member place the tour ticket information on the ticket exchange bulletin board. This exchange is strictly between members, the convention staff and/or the FRRS is not involved outside of providing the bulletin board.

Any refunds should be made after the convention because of the stress on registration and the treasurer. If deemed necessary to act more expeditiously, consult with the Convention Chairperson.

REGISTRATION FORM:

The registration form, like the convention brochure, can best be prepared using examples from past conventions. The convention brochure should be reviewed by several past convention staff prior to printing.

A notation that all FRRS members, and non-members, must pay full registration to be admitted to the convention.

Hotel and convention registration is available online. Make sure it works. Double check that you do not have conflicts with arrival and departure dates and times for the facility you intend to use.

NOTE:

Hotel registration is strictly between the attendee and the hotel. The FRRS and Convention staff have nothing to do with room reservations.

Facilities Requirements:

It should be noted that all the facility costs are a factor in determining the ticket cost to each member for attending the convention. The Banquet is an additional cost to every member.

Ample space shall be provided in the main presentation room for approximately 100 to 120 people with theater/class room style seating.

Adequate ceiling height shall be provided to allow an unobstructed view of the projection screen and in the case we need to provide our own projection screen, ceiling height to support the 11 foot screen.

There should be no columns in the room to hamper room arrangements and viewing of the presentation screen.

The room layout should allow for no more than 10 to 12 people maximum in a row, with 5 to 6 seats on each side of a center aisle.

Wall or ceiling mounted projection screen should be used if available. (The museum does have its own large screen, so this is not critical and should be considered if the convention site charges to use a screen.)

Vendor and Display room should provide ample space to place eight 32" X 72" tables along each side of the room with the center of the room being capable of six to eight table with a center aisle for persons to sit in between the table on each side.

Common space or registration space should be able to handle one to two 32" X 72" tables and upright display banners without impeding the foot traffic flow.

Restroom facilities should be close by for use by convention attendees.

A hotel restaurant should be within the facility, or restaurants close to the hotel (walking distant/across the street) for attendees to gain access to.

Place informational and directional signs in all areas where appropriate, both inside and outside the hotel/motel/exhibit hall.

Choosing a Location:

The location of the convention each year should alternate (if possible) from the Northern, Western, Southern and the Eastern areas of the former Western Pacific and all points between.

Find a location near one of WP's old properties, such as Stockton, Reno, Oakland, Chico, Sacramento, etc. if possible.

Sometimes it may be difficult to find a location close to an actual WP location and you may need to be a few miles away based upon costs of a hotel/motel meeting hall.

Choosing a Hotel/Motel or Meeting Hall:

We have many members that will need motel rooms, so in selecting a facility without rooms make sure there are nearby hotels/motels available. You should contact nearby hotels/motels and try for a block of rooms at a set rate; or at least list motels, amenities and the room prices so members can make a decision and one phone call.

Ask what the convention room(s) charges are if you only sell a percentage of what you agreed to block out for the convention.

Do not get into handling rooms for attendees - let the facility handle this!

They would love to put everything on your credit card, don't let them do it!

Other possible sites could be wedding reception halls, church halls, public meeting rooms (water districts, club houses, fraternal halls i.e. the Moose and such). Again, the hotel is probably the best site but may not always be available.

You need to tie up the site as far in advance as possible; a year in advance is not uncommon, so you need to get in line. We prefer the month of April, but we can move a month each way if needed.

In some cases it may be necessary to change the month of the convention as there are conditions that become out of the control of the FRRS and/or the Convention staff.

You need to question what other events are being held at the facility

that same weekend and determine if they pose a problem. You should also try not to step on other events in the railroad world that may be held that weekend.

Now that we have found our facility and have worked out the price, they will want a deposit.

Sew it up somehow, someone could walk in the next day and take your place, especially if they are a larger group. Get a contract made out to W.P. Convention (**in FRRS name**).

Get there early! Make sure all rooms are set as you requested them, if not if you can rearrange with available help just do it. You will just upset yourself trying to find someone to change it.

1). Confirmation Letter

Soon after you have made your facility selection (and probably prior even to award of the bid by the FRRS Board) you should have a confirmation letter from the hotel. Desirably, this letter will be included in the bid as evidence that the facility is committed. The confirmation letter should be written in plain English and outline in abbreviated content, the tentative agreement. It should contain:

- The names of the parties (i.e. Convention group)
- Dates of the convention
- Space, services, and equipment to be supplied by hotel
- Any special arrangements (such as room guarantees)
- Charges for space, services, and equipment
- Signature block for both parties

The confirmation letter, if signed by both parties, is a legal document, but obviously is controlling only to the level of detail in the letter. Today, it is likely to be followed by a formal contract. For your protection, if signed before the bid has been awarded, it should contain a contingency clause saying that it is not binding in the event the convention bid is not approved by the FRRS Board.

2). Contracts

If you are presented with a contract, remember that (a) it is subject to negotiation, and (b) it is not binding until both parties sign. A contract should be read and reread carefully to see if all points are as previously agreed to in negotiations and that the wording is clear to you. If not, you should request further negotiations and clarifications. Although you may be presented with a form contract (i.e. a standard document that the hotel corporation routinely uses), it may not be to your advantage to accept their standard wording. Normally, if your requests for changes are reasonable, some clauses can be negotiated and reworded to your satisfaction. If a standard contract is offered to you, review the contract example and discuss with the hotel those sections that pertain to

your convention and those that do not (these should be removed), policies that are unacceptable, and items that are not clear.

If the contract does not contain negotiated items you consider important, or has unacceptable clauses, add provisions as you want them and don't hesitate to strike out the unacceptable material.

Send back the contract with the changes unsigned. Some hotels may include a sentence stipulating that if the contract is not signed and returned by a specific date, the space will not be held. Do not be overly concerned; a telephone call explaining your reservations about the contract should be sufficient to confirm your desire for the space reservation, particularly if a confirmation letter has been signed already.

If an exhibition (manufacturers, sellers, and modular displays) is held in conjunction with the convention, the hotel's exhibit space rental charges should be determined at the same time that bedroom and meeting room rental rates are discussed. A total package should be negotiated rather than approaching the separate needs in a fragmented process.

3). Contract Outline

The topics ordinarily covered are:

- Guest room block reserved for convention
- Guest room rates
- Complimentary rooms
- Reservation procedures
- Food and beverage arrangements
- Meeting space
- Cancellation policy
- Hold harmless clause (liability insurance)

These topics and others are discussed below.

4). Guest Room Block Commitment

This section identifies the block (number) of bedrooms held for the convention on each night, from early arrival through late departure. There often appears a paragraph indicating that the hotel has the right to reduce the number of rooms based on data received from another hotel used in previous years. If the wording of this provision is restrictive and one-sided, insert language assuring that before making any such reduction, the hotel will discuss with the Convention Committee the reduction. On the other side, the Convention Committee may also wish to reserve the right to reduce the block if, for example, in the time between contract signature and the convention dates, the hotel embarks on a renovation program that results in a reduction of floor space or a dramatic increase in room rates.

A desirable clause is: "If the hotel cannot honor a guaranteed reservation for an attendee arriving on the date specified, the hotel will secure and assume the financial responsibility for ground transportation and comparable or better accommodations at the nearest hotel possible." Also consider this: "The hotel will not overbook guest rooms beyond the no-show percentage reported by the FRRS convention hotel(s) utilized in preceding years and confirmed by FRRS."

5). Guest Room Rates

As noted, few hotels will guarantee guest room rates more than one year prior to the convention. To cover this situation, the contract should include:

Current convention rates for the month in which the convention is scheduled

Estimated rates for the year in question, or the anticipated annual increase

A percentage off the rate guarantee (if this has been negotiated)

The date by which rates will be confirmed Assurance that the convention rate will apply to early arrivals and late departures

Current taxes

Theme:

Once the site is determined, your next job is to develop a theme for the convention. This is fairly easy as it can be site related such as (Marysville, "The Sacramento Northern revisited") or (Reno "The Reno Branch Welcomes You"). This will be used on all advertisement and such. Also try to tie as many presentations and programs into this theme as possible.

Ticket Prices:

Ticket prices will vary each year based upon the site selected. Please take into consideration of the location, type of facility and associated costs for the member to attend the convention.

The Banquet is a separate fee (see banquet section).

For example, the 2016 convention was held in Modesto with the PCR at the Double Tree Hotel. The rooms costs \$ 109.00 a night

For example, the 2017 convention was held in Reno at Harrah's in downtown Reno. The rooms cost \$ 247.00 for three nights, with the convention fee of \$ 46.00 for members and \$ 57.00 for non-members

For 2018, the convention was held in Salt Lake City at the Double Tree just west of the SLC Airport. The rooms cost \$ 79.00 and the convention fee was \$ 45.00 for members and \$ 55 for non-members.

Include a Day Ticket price (\$20.00 a day) for a single day, don't forget to have prices set-up for walk-in without the banquet.

(The banquet may be available for walk-in, if someone had reserved in advance and then cancelled, check to see before committing to a spot at the banquet)

Remember to keep costs down, however keep the costs in mind to cover the meeting place should it be necessary if we do not make the required room bookings.

Meeting Rooms:

These rooms can be provided at no cost by the facility or can be very expensive. Be careful, some facilities will provide rooms free of charge or at a reduced rate based upon your group renting a minimum number of sleeping rooms or if you purchasing x amount of banquet meals. This is all negotiable.

We need a large screen. If the facility does not have one the FRRS has one that they can provide, There is no need to rent one unless absolute necessary.

There needs to be electrical outlets in the presentation room and some type of table to set up the LCD/slide projectors. (In most cases the FRRS brings extension cords and power strips for the projectors.)

The museum has its own PA system and we do not need to rent the facilities system unless absolute necessary.

The museum has its own LCD projector and we do not need to rent one unless there is a very good reason.

Watch your costs on hotel provided equipment; an extension cord can get expensive! Can we bring our own equipment? Large convention centers do not let you provide certain equipment, so ask.

Vendor Spaces:

A commercial seller should be charged a table fee.

We need to establish a set of rules here.

One thing of caution, if we do allow sales, any merchandise that the society or the FRRS Museum store is selling, it should not be allowed on the commercial sales table.

All vendors are responsible for the California State Sales Tax.

The FRRS and the convention staff take no responsibility for collection of taxes. The FRRS Museum store will handle sales tax on items sold in the museum store.

Private sales

Private sales are not handled by the convention. Should a member have items they wish to sell, let them do it privately during non-convention hours.

A bulletin board can be set-up for these types of messages.

Archive Display Spaces:

There should be sufficient space to set-up several display racks to place pictures and photos on. Two to four 32" X 72" tables for archive materials.

The museum has several chrome display grids that can be set-up for this use. Remember to get some set-up to bring materials from the museum to the convention site.

Getting members and people to show parts of their collections may be a bit difficult as bringing collections by air or train can be a large task. In the event that this is done, we must make it clear to the person(s) that the convention cannot provide security for their items and they are responsible for them.

It should be noted that if a member or private individual shows their collection(s), the FRRS will not be held responsible for that collection and/or display

Maybe this would be better as a sort of hands on (off) presentation where a person would lay it out on the table and explain where it came from, what it is, it's value and scarcity etc.

Museum Store Space:

There should be sufficient space to set-up two to four 32" X 72" tables for FRRS Museum store materials.

The FRRS Museum store should staff the museum store and make arrangements for staff or volunteers to cover the store while the convention is in progress.

Museum store sales are an important part of the convention and it is a way to sell WP and museum branded items and helps our income base.

PART III - PROGRAMS:

The convention should contain the following but not be limited to:

Presentations:

Historical presentation on the WP and days gone by with its history of a place, station, train or train operation are just some of the items needed.

These presentations can be of the following:

- Slide and film presentations. These presentations should be W.P. related as much as possible, but not exclude other railroads that would be of interest to our members. It will be difficult to always find only W. P. material, so we need to fill in with additional presentations.
- Old advertisements, sales materials, training and WP employee experience working on the railroad are just a few.
- Modeling the WP or some of its other associated lines and railroad operation.
- This along with structures, Maintenance of Way equipment.
- Old WP films and some home movies work very well also.
- (If any commercially produced video are used, we will need to get permission in writing from the copyright owner to show them at the convention)

Recommended is a pattern of one hour presentations with a half-hour break between for set up and clean up. A pattern of either 5 presentations during daylight hours can be generated:

5 presentations at 9-10, 10:30-11:30, 1-2, 2:30-3:30, 4-5

The 5 presentation pattern works well.

More and more conventions are scheduling one or two evening presentations as well: they are proving very popular. This will increase the number of presentations needed to fill the time pattern.

Presenters:

Guest speakers should include past employees, authors, and others that have knowledge of the Western Pacific and its affiliates.

Presentations on modeling W.P related equipment and structures.

Tours to points of railroad interest in the area of the convention are encouraged, as many members are from out of the area and are not familiar with these areas. Care must be taken that there are activities at the convention site during these trips for those that chose not to go on a particular tour.

A video presentation during off-site events will work well. You should be prepared to show this presentation again during the convention if needed.

You will need enough programs to fill all the time slots you have in the convention schedule, plus some back-up programs in case someone gets sick or does not show up.

Follow up on all presenters the week before to reconfirm. You need to keep on top of the presenters. Tell them to contact you immediately if anything changes.

Send written confirmation that they are on the schedule and for what time. Don't just talk to them at Railroad Days and expect them to show up, confirm in writing with each presenter.

You should introduce each presenter, also try to attend which programs interest you.

Just inform the registration desk where you are at all times. Check in with the registration desk regularly so they don't feel abandoned, once you see things are going smoothly, leave them alone except to give them breaks and support.

Check and adjust your schedule if needed. Don't worry about it, just let the registration desk know of all changes.

Presenter Needs:

Inquire if the presenter has any special needs. (Chair, stool, other type of table, etc.)

Presenter Equipment Needs:

Find out what equipment each participant/presenter will need and make a note

of it. Make sure you have the needed equipment ready at the convention. (The exception is any specific equipment that is normally not available to use for a presentation).

Timetable and/or Convention Program:

Once you have the convention schedule set-up, you have to get it created and checked so it can be sent for printing. This needs to be as far in advance as possible so it can be checked and it has time to be printed. Take your time to review the schedule before you send it to the printer. It is easy to make mistakes.

A printer may need 30 days prior to the expected delivery date of the convention timetable or program in order to get it printed and mailed back to the committee.

PART IV – Set-Up Materials and Supplies:

Check lists and other forms for the convention are attached to the end of this guideline.

Check list of items that need to be brought to the convention, Office Supplies, name tags, Lanyards, etc.:

Don't forget a computer and printer along with any supplies needed for them.

TRANSPORTATION:

Moving supplies and materials around or to/from the convention site may require the rental of a van or trailer to transport materials. Check to see if the museum trailer is available for this to avoid a rental fee. Please check if any member can assist with this need. Plan ahead, and keep rental to a minimum. (NOTE -This is a convention expense.)

PART V – Raffles:

Raffle prizes should be a money-making item, or at least, self-supporting. Quality of raffle prizes and how hard the chances are pushed determines an amount that can be put in the income column.

Raffle prizes are drawn at the Banquet. You do not need to be present to win. People that purchase raffle tickets should be told to place their name

and telephone number on the ticket stub they place in the drawing container.

Remember that the winner(s) are entitled to the raffle prize even if they are not present.

Winners do not pick the prize, the raffle people do.

Sell raffle tickets all the time. Make announcements about them being sold and where they can be purchased. (Registration Desk, FRRS Museum store)

Raffle prizes are on display during the convention. This helps generate ticket sales. This can be at the registration desk, the museum store, near the archive display, you just need to have them where they can be watched.

Type of prizes:

Typically any type of railroad memorabilia, model kits, model (RTR = Ready to Run), model parts, books and other railroad artifacts can be used. In some cases many members have donated prizes to the raffle.

A sample letter of a request to vendors is supplied, use FRRS letterhead, be sure you are real clear where to send donations to so they get delivered to the intended person handling the raffle. Raffle prizes donations may get sent to the museum in Portola, make sure the museum staff know what to do with them when they arrive.

Raffle Tickets Prices:

Raffle Tickets sell 12 for \$10, 6 for \$5 and \$1 for one. (Prices of the raffle tickets may need to increase based upon the conditions at the time of the convention)

PART VI – Models and Modeling – Display and Contests:

Usually close at noon on Saturday to allow time for judging in afternoon so awards can be announced at banquet.

Models

This is a tough one to estimate. However, start from a base need of table top area for 40 models, each of about 2 square feet. The typical facility table is the 18" by 6' mentioned elsewhere. Add aisle space for judges and viewers to move around the models on display. You are looking for about a 80 square foot room at minimum.

Photos

In past years, the photo contest has been combined with the model contest. However, in recognition of the interest of the public in photo displays, the photo contest should be in a hall where it can be enjoyed by many. It still may be located with the models providing there is enough space for both to share. The judging is held throughout the convention up until the closing on Saturday noon.

Models can be in any scale.

The following categories may be opened for entries:

- Locomotives (including, but not limited to steam, diesel or electric)
- Cars (including, but not limited to passenger, freight, caboose, maintenance of way)
- Structures (must be a model of a railroad owned or related building)
- Fantasy/Might Have Been
- Photograph (black & white or color print)

In all of the above categories, entries shall be limited to models of WP, SN or TS prototypes, their subsidiaries, or connecting short-line connections. Display of supporting documentation in the form of photographs, diagrams, etc., is encouraged.

In the photo contest, entries are confined to the subjects listed in the paragraph above, with the exception of the addition of subjects photographed on the same areas after the merger. Prints shall be framed or mounted and be no smaller than 5"x 7" and no larger than 16"x 20".

Models or pictures that do not meet the above criteria may be placed on display, but they are not entered into the contest.

Location and hours of the contests.

The contest should be in a location that can be secured with limited or no access by non-WP convention staff or site staff during the time the site is not in operation during the convention. The contest may be opened at any time at the discretion of the individual in charge of administering the contest. Traditionally, this has been shortly after the opening of the convention. Tables (usually provided by the site) should be placed in a position to minimize the possibility of their being jostled or struck, causing damage to the models. Tablecloths are optional, but encouraged if available (do not require it as there may be a charge from the facility for them).

From two to four tables are usually enough to meet demand, however flexibility should be kept in mind if participation exceeds estimates. Need to make sure that the registration package indicated is any member is bringing models or photos for the contests so that the convention staff can make suitable arrangements to have sufficient space on hand for the contests.

Registration, voting and awards

A registration form should be used for registering those members who are participating in the contest. An identifying number should be used, placed alongside each entry to identify the model for voting purposes. The contest is a popular vote contest based on ballots cast by convention attendees.

Ballots should be included with the registration package. One central collection site (usually at the contest registration area or the registration desk) for the ballots should be provided.

Voting should be concluded by mid-afternoon of the Saturday of the convention prior to the banquet. Awards will consist of certificates, which may cover registration only for each winner for the next year's convention.

Only three certificates will be given, regardless of the number of categories. These will be non-refundable and non-transferable.

The certificates will be provided by the convention coordinator, so as to be consistent.

Once a model or picture has won it cannot be entered again. It can be displayed without reentering into the contest.

PART VII – Banquet:

It is best to have it at, and provided by, the facility. Next would be to have it catered; this was done at Quincy and was quite successful.

Make sure all costs are included. Tax and tip were in addition to the quoted price at Stockton, this was 18%!

You need to check carefully; ask questions, even at the risk of appearing foolish, after all you don't do this for a living.

You will need to collect for the Banquet with registration. Find out when the cutoff date for the food service/caterer is, put this on all information and registration sheets. What about cancellations up to what time?

It may be cheaper to pay for a few meals rather than the rooms, if you come up short.

Check with the food service/catering people with the current count and reaffirm when you can give a final count if that option is available to you.

Type of Meals:

Keep in mind the menu is for all the attendees. Get a good selection and see if there are items for people on special diets.

Think about a buffet, this works most of the time and is less expensive.

Number of Meals:

Set up the number of meals based on the number of attendees and make sure to count meals that you will provide to the guest speaker and other special guests.

Also find out how many extra meals that are figured in. Keep these for real emergencies; we as all organizations have individuals that never play by the rules and then expect you to solve their problem.

Remember you may be paying for the rooms with meals so don't allow cancellations too easily.

Cost of Banquet:

Set the cost of the banquet so you have room to cover all expenses for it.

2016 banquet costs \$ 45.00

2017 banquet costs \$ 52.00 members and \$ 56.00 non-member

2018 banquet costs \$ 48.00 members and \$ 54.00 non-member

Based upon the recent changes in 2020, the banquet costs will be going up, make sure you adjust for all costs.

Banquet Program:

Set-up a Banquet program, that includes a general greeting of the attendees, the activities of the convention, any special notifications, the raffle drawing and the President of the FRRS if he/she is present.

Then introduce the guest speaker and allow enough time for them to answer questions after their speech.

A cash bar should be provided by the food service/cater.

Social time (hour) should start by 5 pm to allow you to get people ready to be seated in the banquet room by 6 pm.

Dinner should start by 6:30 pm. Banquet speaker should start by 8 pm. (this may be delayed due to several reasons and you should plan an adjusting the schedule)

Take early seating for special needs members and get assistance if necessary.

Head Table:

Seating at the head table should be provided for the following along with their spouses, FRRS President, FRRS Vice-President, and Convention Chairperson and Guest Speaker.

A second head table may be needed for the FRRS General Superintendent and all FRRS Directors and Officers present at the convention.

Guest Speaker:

You should set up your Banquet program and speaker as far in advance as possible. (Give the speaker advance notice so they may prepare for the event.) Does it tie to your theme? Doesn't have to? (No).

Make sure that the convention pays for the guest speaker and their spouse's dinners.

PART VIII – Tours and Off-Site Events:

Field Trips, Tours

Such events can be made optional and the reasonable costs charged (the major one probably will be transportation such as charter buses plus any charge from the Convention as on a tour trip run by a railroad).

Recapture virtually all these costs (or even make a small profit that will contribute something to the convention overhead) through the sale of tickets to the event.

One thought to keep in mind is that capacity should be determined and used to limit sales. For example, don't rent a whole 50 passenger bus for one ticket holder: limit sales to increments of one whole bus at a minimum. (i.e. if it takes 200 sales to pay the railroad for the train, if you don't sell the minimum of 200 tickets, the event is canceled by a certain date, same for the bus.).

You should plan for tours that feature your local railroad attractions. Where would you or your committee take out of town guests? The name and destination has been checked making for an orderly boarding of the bus.

Sunday and Monday tours are becoming popular and the same tour can be offered later in the week for those who do not come early to the convention.

A dinner trip is very popular

Trips on local rail excursions are very popular.

Don't forget local railroad layout tours, they are very popular

Consider the distances involved in traveling to a layout that is out of the immediate area to see if it can be combined with other tour attractions in the vicinity.

Your tour tickets should be printed and numbered. Numbered tickets give you CONTROL. It will enable you to check in every member as they

board the bus for the tour.

Tours must be budgeted to show a profit. (Do not take a loss)

Keep a close watch on the bus tours for adequate advance reservations to support the costs of the bus and act to cancel out tours that are not going to be successful.

All buses **MUST HAVE** bathrooms and air conditioning.

All tour trips should include bottled water and food considerations.

Large numbers of volunteers may be needed, especially if the movement of people by a large number of buses is involved.

With buses, several controls by the convention staff are involved. First, the loading and unloading of transportation must be controlled. The crowd must be directed to loading spots. A head count and check (or collection) of tickets must be made. People going on the trip must be allocated to buses so as to make the optimum use of the buses. Hand-outs or other information material can be provided at the bus door.

Every bus should have a representative of the convention on board to assist the bus driver in getting safely to the destination. Many of you will have had the experience at other events and conventions of buses getting lost and failing to arrive on time at the right point, or failing to show up at the appointed time for a pick up. This can be avoided by placing a guide on each bus who has been over the route and knows the schedule for that particular bus.

An orientation trip by the event staff member for his/her staff is essential. In addition, either the facility (e.g. railroad or manufacturer) or the tour committee should provide "explainers or guides" at the destination. If the tour committee provides the

PART IX – Security:

At least one person of the convention staff, designated by the individual in charge of the convention, should be present at all times while the display rooms are open to the attendees .The convention rooms should be secured at all other times.

Talk to hotel/event staff see if they have security on-site or identify someone that checks on the facility during off-hours.

Let them know your open hours and that all rooms need to be secured during those times.

Make sure you have a contact at the site to get in touch with should anything come up.

PART X – Board of Directors Meeting:

Should there be a FRRS Board of Directors meeting scheduled during the convention, make sure to make arrangements for a room or schedule the meeting prior to the opening of the day's events.

PART XI – Closing out the Convention:

Send thank you notes to all presenters, speakers and committee help. A thank you at the convention should be followed with a letter.

Pay all outstanding bills, contact each committee member that could have expenses.

Make a statement of all expenses and all income for the convention.

Next write up a report on the convention and of the things you would change were you to do another convention.

What was successful and what was not as successful for future insertion in this manual.

Submit the final accounting and report to the convention coordinator who will review it and forward it to the society.

Submit a list of attendees and their addresses to the convention coordinator for updating our database.

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of the members of the Western Pacific Historical/Archive Department and the Feather River Rail Society.

PART XII – Attachments:

1. List of items needed for convention
 2. Volunteer List
 3. Materials and Supplies list
 4. Phone/Contact list
 5. Keep notes of items that need to be added to convention
 6. Keep notes of items and issues that need to be addressed.
- Materials and Supplies list

Revision History

Rev Number	Changes	By	Date
1	Original Document	Kerry Cochran General Superintendent	5/9/2018
2	Revisions, entire document	Kerry Cochran	11/22/2020
3	Revisions with input	Kerry Cochran Paul Finnegan	11/22/2020