

A Word From The Executive Director

There has been some discussion over the years whether there should be a separate organization to be known as the Western Pacific Railroad Historical Society. Most, if not all, railroad historical societies do NOT have a museum to support. Some have a few pieces of equipment under their care, but the main focus seems to be to collect printed material and photographs and to publish periodicals relating to their chosen railroad.

I believe the Feather River Rail Society is unique among railroad historical societies inasmuch as we publish the Western Pacific Headlight (now that it is back in production) and we have preserved a very impressive number of locomotives and cars from the Western Pacific. And we have a place to operate them. In addition, the large amount of printed material and other artifacts we have collected on the railroad are stored in one location. Granted we still have a long way to go to make this material accessible to researchers and the public, but at least it is not stored in various members' garages, basements, etc.

To address the concerns of some members and non-members who have no interest in the museum as such, we have proposed that there be established an additional membership category - that is "Historical Member." The dues would be \$22 and would be for four issues of the Western Pacific Headlight magazine. There would be no other member benefits except to receive the Headlight.

I would urge you to make an affirmative vote on this by-law change. I do NOT believe that fragmenting our Society into two separate organizations would be in the best interest of "Preserving the Memory of the Feather River Route."

Sincerely, Norman W. Holmes

Attention FRRS Life Members

A new class of membership now exists called Family Life. This allows a maximum of two people and two votes.

Everyone who was a Life Member prior to October 1, 1995 may upgrade to Family Life AT NO CHARGE and AT ANY TIME simply by writing a letter requesting the upgrade, and listing the second person, and by sending the letter to: FRRS Membership Chairman, P. O. Box 608, Portola, CA 96122.

This effectively means that no spouse of a life member requires their own separate membership any more.



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Phone number for appointments: (916) 832-4532.

Preservation Column...

Back to Budgeting our Resources

By David Dewey

Another important resource is our people, from the board of Directors down to the member whom we only know by their name on a mailing label. Each one is valuable to the society and each has a unique vision of us. It is this combination of visions that gives our society its dynamic, active persona that allows us to do so many things (like keep a fleet of locomotives running, staff excursion trains, etc.).

People are one of, if not the most, difficult resource to deal with. We are not going to discuss managing people-- people hate to be managed - budgeting the human resource is about respecting, rewarding, and guiding passions of the people who share our goals. Some might call this the "Three R's" of volunteerism - Respect, Reward, Restrain. Most of us hate that last word, because it involves rules and procedures.

Rules and procedures are a pain in the neck, but in the climate we work in they are necessary if only to keep people from getting hurt -- safety rules and training plans. There are also procedures that direct how our energies will be used, like project planning, or locomotive start-up routines. This last example also shows respect for the artifact.

By forming these guidelines, we also show respect for each other's visions and the value of their time. This can also prevent the modern malady known as "micro-management" where many others jump onto the decision process eating up everyone's time, and not changing anything anyway. By creating procedures and respecting decisions formed by following them, individuals are "empowered" (don't you love the modern buzz words -- this really means the person made a decision, it wasn't second-guessed and he/she feels that their thinking is valued and they are trusted to "do the right thing").

So far it sounds like I'm talking about stuff that involves working on things (artifacts for you intellectual types -- who me??), but it's actually valid for any part of the society. Board members who do their homework before the meeting show respect for the group by saving time and keeping the meetings under five hours. Having someone in the museum while it's open respects the visitor and protects our stuff (artifacts again!). Working rules for the operation of trains protects everyone, members, visitors, the staff.

By having these guidelines (notice I dropped 'Rules,' they're still there, but 'guidelines' sounds better) set down and available to everyone we show that we care for "our people" and we expect them to show the same care for each other. It is a two way street, but I think that the society gets the best end of the deal.

Before I close this month, I want to note that Spring has sprung, and so have gas prices! Typically when this happens, casual weekend driving drops off, so we'll need everyone's help keeping the museum's activities going. Invite a friend, car-pool with another member, tell a stranger about the Rent a Locomotive program. And most of all, thanks for your support.

FRRS Member Benefit

All FRRS members in good standing receive a 10% discount on all items purchased in person or by mail from the FRRS Gift Shop. You must ask for this discount when making the purchase.