

A New WPRRHS Administrator

By Thom Anderson

I would like to thank outgoing Administrator John Walker and FRRS Board of Directors President Andy Anderson for their confidence in naming me to succeed John as WPRRHS Administrator. I look forward to working with them as well as the staff and membership of the WPRRHS and FRRS. It is my intent to build upon the foundation built by John and develop the WPRRHS into something we can be even more proud of. We have come a long way in four years, but there is still much to be done.

For those who do not already know me, let me share a little of my background. I am 45 years old and grew up in Daly City, California, where I have been employed as a police officer for the past 22 years. I have been interested in trains for as long as I can remember. I credit Jack Palmer for my first exposure to the Western Pacific. Jack's wife is the daughter of my next door neighbor when I was young. Jack knew I liked trains, and he would occasionally show me his model trains, and bring me to his house to run his layout. The only railroads I had any serious exposure to at age 8 or 9 was Espee and Santa Fe – I hadn't heard of the WP. Well, I was pretty impressed with those silver and orange diesels. I was so impressed, one day sometime thereafter I found a can of silver spray paint in the garage and was discovered by my mother spraying all of my HO diesels with silver paint in the garage! Needless to say, she was not happy, but I've been painting WP diesels ever since.

Pete Solyom gets much of the credit for my participation in the FRRS and WPRRHS. I met Pete while we both were standing in line for the bus to take us on a tour of the North Platte yard at the UPHS convention in 1987. We both discovered the other was more a WP fan than UP. I later participated in many of the "FRRS Southern Region" meets Pete hosted in the Los Angeles area. It was through Pete I met Mike Mucklin, John Walker and other individuals who helped form the WPRRHS.

I want to say "thank you" to both of these gentlemen for their influence on me. And, in case you were wondering, as far as I know I am not related to our board President.

My main concern is the production of the Headlight magazine. With the exception of the Portola Railroad Museum, I consider the magazine to be the most visible product of the FRRS/WPRRHS to the general public. The Headlight is also the most tangible benefit of membership for those who cannot make regular visits to participate at the Museum.

One of the problems in most historical societies is a volunteer staff and the production staff not centrally located. I have spoken with Editor Pires, Production Manager Mucklin and others on the staff during the con-

vention in Quincy about this. I am confident that communications between staff members regarding production and magazine content will be improved and the Headlight will soon be seen on a more regular basis.

I'm sure there will be some positive changes in the time ahead. One of them has already occurred with the appointment of Steve Hayes as Convention Site committee chairman. Steve and his wife Norma were the hosts of the 1998 convention in Stockton. Steve brings his insights and expertise from that experience to the position. His job is not to host conventions (unless he wants to!) but instead, to locate and assist others who volunteer as convention hosts. Steve is also working on a manual to guide convention hosts in what is needed and when to do it. I am pleased that Steve (and undoubtedly Norma) are on the team!

The 2001 and 2002 convention cities have been selected. They are Modesto and Marysville/Yuba City, respectively. Steve is looking for a host for the Modesto convention. If you are interested in hosting, assisting, or presenting a clinic at the convention, or know someone you think would, Steve would like to hear from you! Tom Lawler has committed to host the Marysville/Yuba City convention.

Steve can be reached at P.O. Box 1083, Soulsbyville CA 95372, or by phone at 209-536-1847. He's not on-line yet, but we're working on it.

John Walker will be focusing his attention on the archives. John and his merry band of volunteers will be transferring the archives into the newly built storage car and cataloguing it for future reference. Undoubtedly they will find lots of material that will see its way into future issues of the Headlight. Once the archives are catalogued, the membership will know what is available for research. Maybe you will find something interesting in the archives to write an article about for the Headlight.

We are always looking for new material for publication from authors besides those on the staff. Currently awaiting publication are articles on modeling U23-B and SW1500 diesels by members from Tennessee and Texas. Obviously, you don't have to live in WP country! Also on hand is an article on the "final four" F-units by Founding Editor John Ryczkowski, and an article on Binney Junction by Administrator Emeritus John Walker. These articles will be appearing in future issues after the upcoming CZ 50th anniversary issues.

If you have any ideas or suggestions on what can be done to improve *our* WPRRHS, please let me know. I won't guarantee your suggestion will be adopted, but I will listen and give serious consideration to any ideas or concerns from the membership. I can be reached at 689 – 21st Avenue, San Francisco CA 94121, or by phone at 415-386-7130 during evenings and weekends prior to 9:30 PM. My e-mail is tjanderson@dalycity.org. If you get the answering machine with the steam engine, you've got the right number!