

enough to the museum to be able to come up and help very often, there are things that can be done from afar, like fund raising and working on publications, etcetera, something for everyone. If each of our 1000 members set aside just one hour each month to help the museum it would be the same as having six full time employees! You see it adds up fast.

In closing, a big thank you to Rick Edwards. The old brown pickup we use around the museum would not pass smog. After Rick rebuilt the carburetor and did some additional tuneup work it passed just fine. He did this without cost to the museum, giving about \$200.00 out of his own pocket.

Please become more active in the museum, you can make a difference.

Thank you and see you in Portola.

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## Volunteers

- Eugene John Vicknair

It seems that everywhere I go lately, I meet folks who are excited and impressed by what the FRRS is accomplishing. And let me say, it feels great to hear that so many people are not only paying attention, but approve of our progress! Still, most of these conversations seem to end with some variation on: "I wish I lived closer to the museum so I could do something."

You don't need to live close to help to museum. True, we have some volunteers who travel some long distances to pitch in. They come from San Diego, Salt Lake City, Washington state, even from Missouri. I live in the south Bay Area in California, a four hour trip if there's no traffic.

But there are things you can do right from home. We need help with advertising, volunteer coordination, off-site event assistance, even restoration work that can be done away from the museum. One member has often brought locomotive parts home to refurbish!

We just need to know who has the ability and willingness to take on these projects. If you would like to help, please contact one of the Directors or Managers listed in the masthead.

We Want YOU!

## FRRS On-Line

- David Epling, FRRS Webmaster

WIRED!

As you all know, we've added a larger Internet presence for the WPRM. This project began with the addition of a Discussion board and the next step saw the addition of a webcam. The most recent step was completed Jan 7th, 2006 with the running of network cable to the Operations/Mechanical office computer. FRRS members can now access the internet from the comfort of the crew lounge/board room. If you bring your own laptop computer, you can access the internet via Ethernet connection or wireless connection. If you choose to use the wireless connection, then you will need the numeric key code to access the router as we have made the wireless a closed system. Upon request to the webmaster, the key will be given to you and you may use it whenever you are at the museum.

This project is not complete however. We still have 2 more cameras that will be installed in the spring. Their locations are still being determined, but, unlike the current camera, they will be aimed at the museum grounds. The final phase of the project will be completed when the Silver Debris Crew Lounge project is finished. We will wire the Silver Debris for Internet access as well.

Hopefully this will become another amenity that will be readily available to the FRRS Membership and museum staff. Remember: your FRRS Membership allows you to come and be a physical part of the museum. Come on up and take advantage of the Edenwold Sleeper. 2006 is going to be a great year. There are a ton of projects big and small that need attention and together we can make our museum better than it already is.

Finally, thanks to member Seth Neumann for his generosity. Upon hearing that the webcam computer was having problems due to brownouts, he donated a used, high capacity Uninterruptable Power Supply to the museum, along with an inkjet printer and other items that will be quite useful around the Gift Shop.

**FRRS Website: [www.WPLives.org](http://www.WPLives.org)**

## 2005 In Review

- John Walker, Museum Manager

2005 is over. I'm tempted to say Good Riddance! After all of the momentum that we had built up at the end of 2004, the New Year greeted us with six feet of snow. Despite this, we got the museum open on time. The snow finally melted away in mid March and we thought we could finally get back to work. But then it started raining. We had rain, snow, sleet, hail and freezing conditions for five out of seven days for two and a half months. This weather precluded any kind of out door work and left everyone very frustrated. It got so bad that we began looking through the archives to see if we could find the plans for the Las Plumas we were so wet. Although our RAL and passenger ops began on schedule, the lousy weather adversely affected our visitor traffic and the slow start eventually led us into a cash crunch that would continue to haunt us throughout the year.

Business picked up in June and July despite a six-week heat wave that left temperatures inside the engine house well over 100 degrees. August started out promising, and just as it looked like we might start catching up and turn the year around, the record high gas prices quickly slowed attendance to the museum yet again. Still, we hosted a decent Railroad Days and a visit from the Union Pacific 3985. Eventually August proved to fall short of the previous year and by 3 PM on Labor Day the operating crews had nullified the last runs of the day and there was nothing to stop the occasional tumbleweed from blowing through the parking lot.

September was a very poor month. But just as it looked like the year was going to be a total wash, the gas prices began falling, the fall foliage came out and the weather turned unseasonably warm and dry. RAL's and visitors remained steady and we were able to recover some of the income we lost in the spring and summer. Oddly enough, the last three months of the year turned out to be better than last year and, along with a great July, were the only bright spots in an otherwise rotten year financially. Although disappointing, I can honestly report that this was not due to any error on our part. We did everything right but the weather and fuel prices are simply out of our control. In hindsight, there were probably some things we could have done better but we've yet to find a

crystal ball lying around the museum that can accurately predict the future.

Quite honestly, I couldn't wait to put 2005 behind us and start over. But, now that I've had some time to reflect back on the year, I have to admit that despite all of the adversities, we still continued to make good progress in many areas and we had several accomplishments that we should be very proud of.

Although we're still crunching the numbers, it looks like our gift shop and operations are down 10-12% from 2004. While disappointing, that's not too bad considering our remote location. Reports from the Tourism industry indicate that we did better than a lot of other people. Our financial donations improved and our material donations were very good as we received the gift of several items, which we can really use at the museum. Our community relations are improving rapidly and we are working together on several cooperative ventures, which will benefit Portola, Plumas County and our museum. Our relationships with other museums continues to get better and better with lots of potential benefits to all of us. Our facility operates more smoothly and productivity around the museum is at an all time high.

And we made some significant improvements this year. The gift shop received a healthy overhaul with some new paint and expanded display areas. The entire shop area was cleaned and reorganized. The battery house and oil shed received some new paint. The old gift shop (now known as "The Board Room") was cleaned and spruced up with new paint, shelves and furniture. The efforts by many to clean up the museum grounds resulted in more junk being picked up, more trees trimmed and nearly 8 acres of sagebrush and weeds being cleared from the property and old Hospital. Electrical improvements included new lights in the display room, additional outlets in the gift shop, safety and security lighting in the shop, and repairs to several broken light fixtures and outlets. We now have the start of a computer network and DSL inside the museum and a working web cam and security cameras! We have a fantastic new web site that just seems to get better and better all the time. And we painted three pieces of equipment this year!