

## 2008 NATIONAL TRAIN SHOW

- Chris Allan, Steam CMO

The weekend of July 18th- 20th saw our WPRM Booth set up at the National Model Railroad Association's National Train Show in Anaheim, California. This was an opportunity for the Southern California members to help promote the Museum and the RAL Program.

The Rent-a-LoCo program was presented as a "brand" and the primary focus of the booth. Around 500 names and addresses were collected for future promotional programs by way of a RAL session giveaway, one each day. The show was attended by approximately 25,000 members of the public. WPRM was the only historical group at the show, and we did generate a lot of interest which will hopefully lead to some increased visitation. The Train Show administration was quite generous as this booth cost the museum only \$200, quite a bargain for the amount of exposure we received. Our thanks to the NMRA for the opportunity!

Mike Mucklin deserves special thanks for show coordination, creating the signage and getting it printed, as well as lining up other members to help staff the booth, among many other tasks. SoCal members in attendance during the weekend were Mike, James Mason, Don DeLay and myself. Museum manager David Epling and Bob Simms traveled south with the Z-scale layout to display, and brought some gift shop stock to sell in the booth, despite some minor mechanical problems. (This was the Z-Scale layout's first trip off-site. Thanks to Bod and David for getting it there and back in one piece.) Most of the signage from this show then traveled up to the Hot August Nights booth, so we did get our money's worth on the printing. Thanks also go to Eugene Vicknair for his creative input and suggestions on the signage.

Thanks again to everyone who helped make this happen. Admittedly this show took place in a "remote" location, but there is no doubt we will receive some positive results. For those of us stranded down here in the south it's one way we can help out.

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*The FRRS is participating in more and more off-site shows and we need your help! If you would like to volunteer to help out with a future RR show, or you know of a show coming to your area that might be a good showcase for the Society and the museum, please let us know by calling the museum at 530-832-4131 or e-mail us at [Info@WPLives.org](mailto:Info@WPLives.org).*

## DEPARTURES

Long-time Life Member and volunteer Eric Stephens lost his multi-year battle with brain cancer on July 17, 2008. In addition to his work for the FRRS, he was also an electrician, guitarist and Eagle Scout, and was well-known for his humor and colorful personality.

Eric first became involved with the FRRS in the late 1980's, coming to Portola to help with Feather River Short Line 2-6-2 8, when it still called Portola home, and working on various facilities projects. Through his experience at the museum, he became a devoted fan of the Western Pacific and the *California Zephyr* in particular. He became a Life Member in 1992.

A move to Denver, Colorado kept him away for several years, but when he returned to California in 2000, he also returned to active duty at the museum. He led a major upgrading of the electrical system in the diesel shop, with assistance from his father Steve Stephens and long-time friend Eugene Vicknair. He also completed repairs and improvements to the electrical systems of the Office Car, the FRRX Baggage Car, the Shower Car and the Edenwold sleeper. He was instrumental in much of the planning for the Zephyr Project and worked on the documentation and disassembly of the Silver Hostel for restoration.



- Eugene John Vicknair photo

His final project for the FRRS was working with Eugene on the design of the Silver Debris crew lounge, as well as completing much of the wiring for the car. This