

RAILFAN PHOTOGRAPHER DAY

- David Epling

Railroad Photographer Day began as usual with a week's worth of yard switching to prepare for it. Under the guidance of Vice-President and Yardmaster Steve Habeck, an ops crew consisting of Craig Simmons, Charlie Spikes, David Epling, Tom Andrews, Rick Gruninger, Russ Johnson, Bobby Johnson, George Sousa, Seth Adams, and Bil Jackson. On Friday the 25th, Ethan Doty and Tim Carter arrived. (There are others whose names slip my mind that were also there.)

The crew began to put the trains together beginning Monday September 21. One of the significant accomplishments was on 24th when we had three separate switch crews operating simultaneously. To my knowledge, this is the first time that has happened and is another excellent indicator of the WPRM's training program and capabilities of our operating department.

On Saturday September 26th, crew call saw two full crews assigned to work the day's trains. Crew A was Charlie Spikes, Ed Powell, Tim Carter, and Ethan Doty. Crew B was David Epling, Rick Gruninger, Russ Johnson, Craig Simmons & George Sousa. As we did the previous RP day, Wayne Monger came in dressed the part of a WP Dispatcher and issued track warrants for the day's operations.

Crew A boarded the first scheduled train of the day, WP FP7 805-A, "WP" F9B 925-C, WP F7A 917-D and our passenger cars, Crew B went to their train, SP TR6A 1100 and the Caboose train that is normally used during our Operating Season. As we waited for Dispatcher Monger to issue track warrants to the WP 805-A, the booming sound of a dynamited train echoed across the yard, the passenger train decided to get cranky for the A crew. After almost 30 minutes of trying to recover the air, Dispatcher Monger pulled the warrant and issued our warrant for movement. We then got underway and the day began.

The result was we wound up being down about 45 minutes on the daily schedule, the next train out was the 805-A who had finally got train to keep it's air. The 805-A was running but the

925-C was the power and controlled by Charlie in the 805-A. The B crew in the WP GP7 707, WP GP20 2001 and a modern boxcar train followed out the 805-A. Next was the A crew in WP NW2u 608 and a local freight. The B crew followed that after a small power swap by Ops Supervisor Bill Parker in the USArmy H-12-44 1857. He along with yardmaster Habeck, took the 925-C and married it to the SN GP7 712.



The crew provides protection for the back-up move from the platform of WP caboose 428.

- David Epling photo

When that was done, the B crew boarded SN 712 and another local freight. As the engineer of the B crew, this was a new experience for me. I was running the 925-C from the cab of the dead SN 712. Normally you can feel your engine and react to it, but when running from a dead locomotive there is a delay in movement, needless to say, and not being used to that, it led to a rocky ride. It didn't help that our caboose for the train was WP 484, the Yardmaster's rolling office. Steve likes to set a fan up and challenge the WPRM Engineers to move the 484 without knocking over the fan. Let's just say that fan went for a ride and we'll leave it at that.

The rest of the day went as planned, only trains moved in an opposite direction to take advantage of the afternoon sun. I should also note our Switch tenders did a great job, Bobby Johnson at Milward and Bil Jackson at Malfunction Jct. They were both excellent at making sure everything was lined for their proper movement.

As with past Railfan Photographer Days, dinner was included. This year, the event was also in conjunction with the FRRS' Member Appreciation Day. After dinner, Vic Neves set up

his multimedia operation and we were treated to slide shows, notably was the FRRS move of the GGRM a couple of years ago and narrated by Steve Habeck. Vic also held his nighttime photography session.

I would be remiss to not include the takedown on Sunday and Monday: a crew of Charlie Spikes, Russ Johnson, Bobby Johnson and Bil Jackson spent 2 full 12 hour days under the guidance of Steve Habeck putting everything away. Also, the crews were treated to a great, home-cooked breakfast prepared in the kitchen of the "Silver Plate" on Saturday morning. As mentioned in the last issue, the breakfast was prepared and served by Vicki and Deborah Epling, Cheri Johnson and Mary Ann Vicknair, with Zephyr Project Manager Eugene Vicknair leading the crew in cooking up waffles, bacon, beignets (a French-Cajun pastry) and various other goodies.

Despite the mechanical issues, the WPRM Ops Dept did a first class performance. Make sure you mark your calendars for next year for September 25, 2010 when we do Railfan Photographer Day once more.



Vic Neves and Craig Simmons enjoy Saturday night's spaghetti dinner in the Diesel Shop.

- David Epling photo

WP 165 - FALL WORK REPORT

- Chris Allan, Steam CMO

Wednesday, October 21 - I again successfully escape my fetters and hastily drive back north, over the Grapevine. Happily, another uneventful trip would clear my head. Since the truck bed was to be relatively empty, I took a load of lockers for the shower car, provided by our good friend and member John Hachey of Ontario, California. A stop for lunch in Sacramento was in order with Paul Zaborsky, old pal and currently a director at Bay Area Electric Railway Association. Paul looks and feels much better now after his recent transplant surgery. For the first time in his life he is no longer diabetic, and we wish him the best with the replacement parts. Another leg of the drive over Donner Pass, with the fall colors in their full glory, and a mid afternoon arrival back in Portola, again. Peace and quiet at last. I enjoyed at least ten hours of sleep in the Pullman, after vacuuming up the cat hair. Cat hair and I don't get along. A generous application of Febreze® didn't hurt either.

Thursday, October 22 - Nathan "Maverick" Osborn and James "insert nickname here" Cowdery

arrived Thursday and immediately started taking readings on the wrapper side sheets. As of this writing they have completed the first one thousand or so readings, with quite a few left to go. Suffice to say they have the process down. Mike Mucklin checked in and began photographing the goings on. (Many of Mike's photos from the week can be viewed here: http://www.wprrhs.org/extras/wp_165_oct09/) He also made a nifty plywood template to match the curve of the roof sheet, the top of the wrapper sheet, at the location of a needed patch under the rear sand dome, to be utilized when the new piece of steel is rolled.

Mike got dirty later in the week, and took a bit of a "love kiss" while needlescoping on the frame; just a bit of a scrape really. Matt Parker joined the party later in the day. He was able to tape up Maverick's full scale tube sheet replacement drawing in place to verify that the new boilerplate misses all the parts we want it to, and that the tube locations are correct. A few minor modifications were noted, but all in all, nice work by Mav. Matt was given a quick lesson by me on cutting torch operation (sorry, Rod!) after which he began removing the cotter pins on the