

Media Day 2023

- Eugene Vicknair

On Thursday, May 18, the museum hosted a gathering of media professionals and local political figures to showcase recent progress and announce some future developments. The invited guests gathered in the “Silver Plate” dining car for refreshments, followed by a multi-media presentation by Eugene Vicknair covering a brief history of the Western Pacific and the FRRS, plus our recent achievements and coming plans.

The major announcement was the \$1 million grant the WPRM will be receiving for phase 1 construction of the Whitman Building, but other highlights included discussion of the \$310,000 donation received from the estate of Katherine Hale and how those funds are being used, details on proposed museum expansion including buildings and a longer excursion run, and the announcement that the WPRM is in negotiation with both Union Pacific and the Portola 192 development partners to secure and expand full ownership of the museum property. The Portola 192 main partners, Orin Bennett and John Hodgson were also in attendance and we publicly announced the partnership between WPRM and 192 to work together on improvements to the local utility infrastructure for the benefit of the museum and the future residential development.

Reaction to the presentation was very positive and we have used the enthusiasm to plan several meetings between WPRM representatives and elected officials at the city, county and state level. In addition, many of the media outlets have been or are planning stories to promote the museum and our efforts. Already radio KOH in Reno has made several news announcements concerning the museum that have been widely heard.

A video of the presentation is available on the WPLives.org website, on the WPRM Photo & Video web page.



Director Vicknair discusses the FRRS' future plans with the assembled media and political representatives.

Photo by Big Fish Creations

Following the presentation, the guests received a guided tour of the museum with up close looks at several items, including WP 0-6-0 165 hosted by Steve Lee, WP business car “Charles O. Sweetwood” and recently steam cleaned (thank you Roger Stabler!) UP business car 105. They were then given a chance to ride a caboose pulled by WP SW1500 1503, as well as get a cab ride, and in a motorcar operated by Matt Parker. The event wrapped up about 5:00 p.m.

Thank you to those who attended this event and are helping to promote and advance the WPRM programs. And special thanks to those who made the event possible and helped with its preparation and execution:

Ann Cary
 Michael Clawson
 Patty Clawson
 David Elems
 Greg Elems
 Steve Habeck
 Steve Lee
 Matt Parker
 Roger Stabler
 Mary Ann Vicknair