

asked Charlie about this and he indicated it didn't work well, if at all. A quick test confirmed this, as almost no sound could be heard. The muffler was also noted to be heavily rusted and due for replacement soon. A new exhaust cutout valve was acquired, along with a new pipe and muffler. The exhaust cutout needed additional welding to seal some gaps, which Brian Waller quickly took care of, showing off his TIG welding skills on stainless steel (no easy task). The exhaust was replaced and the whistle installed on the new valve. It makes quite a bit of racket now, but we have yet to demo it for anyone so hopefully it will be found to be adequately obnoxious.

Additional work is planned for the 2024 season:

- Fabricate and install new floorboards
- Adjust pedal linkage and floor boards to allow for entering high gear
- Adjust transmission brake band to improve braking action
- Investigate the magneto to see if we can restore operation without an engine overhaul
- Repair windshield support and glass



Keep an eye out for future updates!
- Photo by Nick Manos



Author's sons enjoying 25283 in August of 2004
- Photo by Nicholas Manos

UP 25283 Caboose

- Nicholas Manos

Those of you who visited the museum this season may have noticed that a particular yellow caboose was missing from the weekend train. It was here, to be sure, but it was off to the side, out of the way. A number of issues had kept it from service. Recently, it was moved into the shop for repairs to return it to the *Pumpkin Express Trains*.

Car foreman Phillip Schmierer and CMO David Elems were the first to go to work, resolving issues with the brake system. After this, I was asked if I would like to tackle some woodworking projects. Given my sons' love of this caboose, I eagerly agreed.

I was assigned three issues to resolve. The floor under the conductor's desk was rotted out and could best be described as a collection of dry rot held together by really old linoleum and top notch glue. The conductor's desk seemed to have suffered repeated abuse as a chair and was separating from the wall it was (sort of) mounted to. Oh, and the ceiling panels were falling down... minor issues like that.

I started with the ceiling. After removing the trim, I was able to have a look at the problem. UP felt it was entirely adequate to hang plywood, upside down, with common box nails. It is

surprising it lasted this long. Setting some screws secured all the panels. Some additional damage repair and new paint to two panels put the ceiling in good order. New trim boards have been milled and painted and will be installed in the coming weeks.



Switching focus to the floor, the first task was to remove the sheet metal baseboards. Although UP used smooth nails on the ceiling, they used twisted shank nails to secure the baseboards very well. I guess baseboard movement is a real hazard when you are trying to dodge falling ceiling panels! The damaged floor was cut back to good wood, which in this case resulted in a 6 foot by 3 foot area being removed. The original construction used plywood on fir supports that were bolted to the steel car bottom. The supports were entirely destroyed by dry rot and the steel floor was severely rusted, but thankfully it was not rusted through. A good scraping of the larger rust followed by wire wheel work cleaned up the floor for a thick coat of rust stop paint. New supports were milled using reclaimed fir beams. These were secured to the floor using new hardware in the existing bolt holes. New 1-1/8" plywood was then applied to complete the floor.

The conductor's desk was another case of common nails being used where screws were a better fit. New screws and a bit of adjustment pulled the desk tight against the wall.

Steve Habeck is now working on resolving some electrical issues, including re-routing conduit

that had been used as a grab iron in the past. My sons may or may not have been involved, but I didn't mention this to Steve.

Caboose 25283 is well on its way to a return to operation in October!

Visit from New Congressman

- Eugene Vicknair

As of January 1, 2023, Plumas and Sierra Counties were moved into a reconfigured District 3 for the California Congressional Districts. For several years, the FRRS has enjoyed an excellent relationship with the congressional office for District 1 and Congressman Doug LaMalfa, which culminated in his office assisting the society in obtaining a \$1 million grant to begin construction on our long proposed Whitman Event Building. Even though we are no longer in the district, Congressman LaMalfa has continued to assist where he can and has expressed his ongoing support for the society and our mission.

Our congressional representative now is Kevin Kiley, newly elected to head District 3. Early in the year we got in contact with his office and extended an invitation to visit the museum when he was available. His office also began assisting the society, including nominating us and providing a support letter urging that the WPRM be awarded the National Medal for Museum and Library Services, discussed in the accompanying article on grants and awards in this issue.

On Tuesday, September 5, Congressman Kiley and aide Pamela Grant were able to make their first visit to the museum for about an hour in the afternoon. Director Eugene Vicknair gave them a tour of the museum which included viewing the WP 106 "Charles O. Sweetwood", Union Pacific 105 business car, WP 0-6-0 165 and WP "Silver Plate" diner. Ms. Grant was especially thrilled with the "Silver Plate" as she had ridden the "California Zephyr" with her family growing up and had many fond memories. Congressman Kiley was quite impressed with the scope of our collection and the "Charles O. Sweetwood" and the WP 165 in particular.



FRRS President Greg Elems shares some pointers about operating WP SW1500 1503 with Congressman Kevin Kiley

- Photo by Eugene Vicknair

Following the tour, FRRS President Greg Elems gave them a RAL trip in WP SW1500 1503. The congressman commented that he had never done something quite like that before and had been eager to run the engine. While their schedule required them to move on to another appointment, he was able to complete two trips around the balloon track. He also presented the society with a Certificate of Congressional Recognition which is now hanging in the Museum Store.

He has promised to return for a longer visit in the future and discussed several of our improvement plans for the museum during his visit, stat-



Congressman Kiley presents FRRS President Greg Elems with a Certificate of Congressional Recognition for the FRRS

- Photo by Eugene Vicknair

ing that the WPRM is important to the region and he intends to support our growth.

Thank you to Congressman Kiley and Ms. Grant for taking the time to visit us in person and we look forward to future visits. Also, thank you to Director Charlie Spikes who helped prep the WP 1503 for the RAL and Director Kerry Cochran and Vice-President Steve Habeck who did some cleaning around the museum for the visit.

Museum Sponsors

The Western Pacific played a major role in developing the economy of Plumas County and the surrounding region. The Western Pacific Railroad Museum is proud to be a part of that heritage and to hold a position in supporting the ongoing economic health of our community. We welcome the support of that community in return. We ask our members and visitors to support our business sponsors, companies who have generously contributed to the museum and its mission to preserve the Western Pacific family.



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