

### Pumpkin Express 2023

*-Eugene John Vicknair*

The 2023 Pumpkin Patch Express trains operated on Saturday and Sunday, October 21-22 and 28-29. We saw some very good attendance, particularly on the 2nd weekend, were over 300 cars were admitted over the two days despite threatened and actual rain that forced the Pumpkin Patch indoors.

Southern Pacific GP9 2873, fresh from several years of heavy mechanical work, was operated in multiple with Western Pacific SW1500 1503 hauling the caboose train. The train along with the Diesel Shop were decorated for Halloween, including lights on some cars for the Saturday "Super Spooky Night Trains".

A highlight of the event was Sasquatch, portrayed by Bob Danner, brother of Patty Clawson of Big Fish Creations. The kids got a kick out of meeting the big hairy guy as he handed out candy in the Pumpkin Patch and on the train.

We are already planning for next year's event and are looking for volunteers to help us make it even bigger. Next year, we would like to bring back the Haunted Railcar and expand the night train operations. Come join us in the fun!

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped out. In particular, thank you to Patty Clawson, Steve Habeck, Ron Berriesford and Breckyn Shirley who



*No ghost or witch sightings were reported, but there were multiple Sasquatch sightings reported around the museum.*

*- Photo by Michael Clawson 10/21/23*



*The first Super Spooky Night Train prepares to depart on Saturday. - Eugene Vicknair 10/21/23*



*- Photo by Michael Clawson 10/21/23*



*- Photo by Michael Clawson 10/21/23*

helped with decorations. Brin Shirley and Olivia Simone worked the pumpkin patch and Ron Berriesford who worked the front gate during the event. Charlie Spikes arranged for the purchase of the pumpkins while David Hansen provided transport and also acquired hay bales for the Pumpkin Patch. Matt Shuman and Ann Morningstar helped out the final weekend, supporting wherever they were needed. Patty and Michael Clawson of Big Fish Creations handled promotion work including radio ads, event photography and videos, and helping distribute flyers and posters. Paul Finnegan made sure it all got on the website and into the Train Sheet.



- Photo by Michael Clawson

Special shout out to Ron Berriesford and his wife who baked and donated dozens of amazing cookies which we sold in the Museum Store and in the Pumpkin Patch to help raise funds.

Our train crew volunteers for the event were Charlie Spikes, Nicholas Manos Fred Elenbaas, Duane Vander Veen, Brian Waller, Des Powers, David Elems, Greg Elems, Loren Ross, Steve Habeck and Matt Shuman. Eugene Vicknair worked to keep everything moving and get it all set up. Special thanks to Duane Vander Veen who handled a lot of the pack up post event. If I missed anyone, please let me know!



Yngshi Feng returned as our face painting artist and was popular again this year.

- Photo by Michael Clawson



Due to the wet weather on Sunday, the Pumpkin Patch moved into the Diesel Shop.

- Photo by Greg Elems 10/22/23

## SANTA TRAINS 2023

WPRM hosted Santa Trains again in 2023. It was held on Saturday December 2<sup>nd</sup>, Friday December 8<sup>th</sup> & Saturday December 9<sup>th</sup> and Friday December 15<sup>th</sup> & Saturday December 16<sup>th</sup>. Look for more about it in the next issue of the *Train Sheet*.

