



THE TRAIN SHEET

News from the Feather River Rail Society



Preserving "THE FEATHER RIVER ROUTE"

Issue - 186

July/August/September 2020

Help us repaint WP 705 back to "Perlman Green"! Then...



Western Pacific GP7 705 - August 14, 1977 - Oakland, California - Thomas G. Acheson photo, Frank Brehm collection

Now...



Soon?

While we at the FRRS have had great success at preserving our collection of railroad equipment, we still need your help in raising funds to maintain our equipment.

While we are actively working on plans for the maintenance, repairs and restoration of some of our equipment, we need your help to make our efforts go even further!

You can donate online at donate.wplives.org or mail a check to "WP 705 Restoration" P.O. Box 608, Portola, CA 96122-8636 made out to the Feather River Rail Society.

-THE TRAIN SHEET-

Issue 186 - July/August/September 2020
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 News from the Feather River Rail Society and the
 Western Pacific Railroad Museum at Portola
 Editor - Paul Finnegan
 Email: trainsheet@wplives.org
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 September and December.
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FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY

WESTERN PACIFIC RAILROAD

MUSEUM at PORTOLA

PO BOX 608, Portola, CA 96122-0608
 Museum Phone: (530) 832-4131
 Fax: (530) 832-1854

**Due to the COVID-19 Health
 Emergency, the Museum is Closed
 Until Further Notice**

The museum is normally open:

April: Thursday - Sunday

May - September: Daily

October: Thursday - Sunday

Hours: 10 - 5, weather permitting.

If you wish to visit during the closure period, it is
 advisable to call in advance
 and find out if the museum will be open.

Entrance to the museum for members is free. Non-
 members are required to pay an admission fee, details
 are inside this issue on the inside of the back cover.

The Feather River Rail Society, a tax-exempt public
 benefit California corporation, is the historical society for
 the Western Pacific Railroad and operator of the Western
 Pacific Railroad Museum in Portola, California.

**The FRRS is not associated with the Union Pacific
 Railroad.**

FRRS Tax ID number is 68-0002774
 Member of the Heritage Rail Alliance



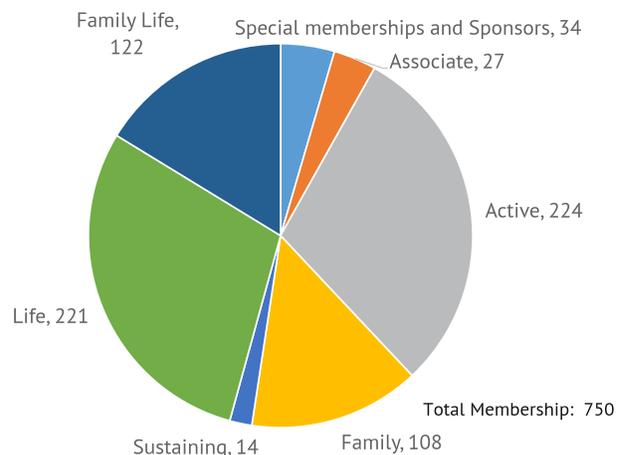
- BOARD OF DIRECTORS and OFFICERS -

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Membership Report as of 7/2/20



- WEB PAGES of INTEREST -

FRRS Official Site	www.WPLives.org
CZ Virtual Museum	calzephyr.railfan.net
California Zephyr	californiazephyr.org
Western Pacific Pages	www.WPLives.com
WP Virtual Museum	wpmuseum.railfan.net
Tidewater Southern Pages	www.TidewaterSouthern.com
Central California Traction	www.trainweb.org/tractionco

**Historical/Archive
Department**

- Kerry Cochran
General Superintendent
Archive Manager



During the shelter-in-place order, we still have been receiving donations to the archives.

Thank you to our donors:

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Don Jones | John and Diane Starr |
| Mark Bluth | Hubert Hanrahan |
| Elisa Swanson | Joseph Strapac |
| Renee Frantini | Robert Matthew |
| Steve Martindell | |

All of these donations will be added to our collection and are currently in safe keeping until we can open again and take inventory of the items.

We have received some additional other small donations to the archives during the last few months. They will be added to our collection and are currently in safe keeping until we can open again.

Should there be any questions on donations or the archives during this time, please contact the Archive Department or any of the contacts on our web site and someone will get back to you.

Several questions have come in during the last few months and we have answered most of those questions. There may be some questions that may take some time to research and try to answer, which right now with the museum closed, may take longer than some might expect. There are other questions that have come in that we have, so far, been unable to answer, as we have materials that have not been inventoried and some of that material is still in storage.

We continue to work on the inventory as time allows. Right now with the COVID-19 virus and shelter-in-place orders, several of the staff members of the archives department have not been to the museum in the last six months. By

the looks of current events, we may not be able to resume work on the archive until well after the start of 2021.

We are however, still processing archive requests through the museum closure (those that can be done remotely) and are creating a list of things that need to be done once the museum opens again.

We still need to obtain a good software package to help with the inventory process (see needs for the Archives)

If you have not visited the Historical/Archive Department web page recently, please consider looking at them to see “What’s New” in the Western Pacific Documents page. (https://wplives.org/wphistory_wp_documents.html)

We continue to add more materials to the Historical/Archive web pages. Please take time to view the Historical/Archive web pages and see what’s new.

Needs for the Archives:

We are always looking for help in getting items properly stored and we need the support of the membership with helping supply storage materials for the archives. Items listed below are needed to help keep our collection stored properly and should you wish to help us out, we certainly would like your donation and help.

- Computer Program to track all the Historical/Archive items. PastPerfect is the computer program that I have been looking at, however I have not received a cost for that program as of yet.
- Original copy of Windows 10 to be used in the Archive Department.
- Archive Storage boxes for 35mm slides
- Archive Storage boxes for 8 1/2 X 11 materials

Thank you to the members, several FRRS/WPRM members have been helping behind the scenes to assist with the Historical/Archive Department. Without them during the shelter in place orders

(continued next page...)

(... continued from previous page)

and the museum closure, we would not be able to continue to keep up with requests, donations and work at the museum even though most of that work is very limited.

Keeping in mind that social distancing and appropriate PPE is required and the restrictions on people in groups, we are still able to keep up with most requests to the archive department.

Thanks go out to:

- Greg Elems
- Steve Habeck
- Eugene Vicknair
- Tim Steeper
- Janet Steeper
- Tom Steeper
- Erick McKay
- David Elems
- Ethan Doty
- Ed Powell
- Dave Wallace
- Charlie Spikes
- Duane van der Veen
- Loren Ross
- Mary Ann Vicknair
- Jim Gray
- Paul Finnegan

I am sure that that there may be others that I have missed, Thank you to all who have helped with the Archive Project. I could not have done it without your help.

Some other behind the scenes work is done most every week with things like mail, donations in the mail and making sure I get informed about materials arriving at the museum.

Thanks to:

- Greg Elems
- Steve Habeck
- Eugene Vicknair
- Paul Finnegan

All play a great part in keeping the information flowing each week.



Milward Switch

- photo by Greg Elems

**Things Around the Museum:
The MILWARD Switch**

- Unknown

In September of 1986, a young, volunteer head-end brakeman, named Steve Milward, was riding on the front of Portola's GP-20, WP 2001. With plenty of time to spare, Milward stepped from the engine and walked to the upcoming switch to perform his duties. At the switch, he stepped into a wasp nest and was immediately attacked.

With wasps buzzing (and stinging) all around, he threw the switch as required. Unfortunately, his hand was caught between the switch stand handle and base crushing one his fingers. As the engine passed safely by, Milward waved to the engineer and shouted "Piss on this. I'm outta here."

The name of the switch was changed soon thereafter in Steve's honor.

Departure - Jim Ley

Long time FRRS Life Member Jim Ley passed away Monday, September 28th, 2020 in Washington state. We will try and share more information in the next issue of *The Train Sheet*.

Photo by Ed Warren from 1994



What the heck was POLING?

- Staff

Did you ever wonder what the small round dimples are that are found on many pieces of our equipment at the museum? They are what were known as pole pockets. A push pole was used to move equipment on adjacent tracks during switching. Pole pockets are found on a wide variety of equipment at the museum on both cars and locomotives from before the 1960's. Our Western Pacific 501, 1939 EMC SW-1, locomotive still carries a pole under the fireman's walkway.



"Poling" was used by most railroads. It was a practice of using a hickory or oak pole with a band of steel around each end to prevent splintering. The pole was used to push a car (or a couple of cars) on an adjacent track when performing small switching jobs. It was very dangerous. A crew member had to hold up the pole up between the locomotive and the car it was going to push to drop it into the pocket. Some of the old stories indicated some of the poles split and hit crewmembers while performing this procedure.

The practice was mostly stopped sometime in the

1950's. It has been reported it lasted into the 1960's on some railroads. It is not known when the WP stopped, nor does it appear it was ever prohibited by the ICC. From photos, WP and UP GP20s had poling pockets, SP and Santa Fe, as well as the EMD demonstrators, do not seem to have them. Our photos of GP30s and GP35s do not show poling pockets. Same with U30Bs and SD24s, so it looks like those 1960s models were the switchover point for having pockets.



Top right: WP 501, 1939 EMC SW-1

Top left: WP 6550, 1945 long gondola

Above: WPMW 90, 1952 Brownhoist Crane

Bottom left: WP 707, 1952 EMD GP7

- photos by Greg Elems

Membership Spotlight - Philip J. (Phil) Schmierer

I have always been infatuated by trains, ever since I was a toddler. I was born in Los Angeles in September of 1956 and raised in Redondo Beach, CA. The first train that I can remember seeing was Southern Pacific Black Widow F-units. We used to go out to Banning, California, and watch trains on Saturday morning, spend the night and come home Sunday, stopping in Yucaipa to visit Aunt Emma. The spotting of the Black Widows was on one of those trips.



I graduated High School in 1974 and after I turned 18, I actively started trying to obtain employment down in the LA area with SP/UP/AT&SF. No one was hiring as there was that recession starting in 1974. So, I attended El Camino Junior College there by Redondo and worked in two gas stations, worked in a liquor store and I was also a “Burger Boy” at Carl’s Junior Unit #71.

In early 1977, I went up north to get out of LA and I ended up taking 10 student trips on the McCloud River Railroad Company. I had been riding the McCloud since 1969 as my parents and I discovered that railroad on one of our Pacific Northwest summer vacations.

Sid Muma, the president of the McCloud RRR, knew that I was riding and I asked if I could get a job there. He said he’d give me 10 “Official Student Trips”, but he would not hire me because he said that the McCRRR would probably fold up when I was in my late forties/early fifties. But he could give me a letter of recommendation if I was successful in showing ability to grasp railroad safety and the operating rules. I did, he gave me the letter. It was early June 1977, I was staying with my brother Bill in Hat Creek, California. Just for fun, I was looking in the phone book and saw the WP office number for Keddie. I called and I believe it was Phil Olds who answered the phone. I told him I had completed 10 student trips at McCloud and I was wondering if they were accepting applications. Phil said that as a matter of fact they were ! I asked him how late they were open and he said he’d be there until 4 p.m. So, I jumped in the old 1970 Mustang and flew over to Keddie. I got there in time and filled out my application. I got picked up by WP and did the Brakeman School at Stockton, CA. I did two weeks switchman student trips in Oroville, then three road trips out of Stockton Yard .

I passed all the tests and made my first paid trip as a switchman in South Sacramento Yard on July 28th, 1977 at 23:59 on the So Sac “Hill Job”. Forty one years , three months and three days later, I retired here in Dunsmuir CA.

I got turned on to the Portola Railroad Museum in 1984, I believe it was. Jim Ley was already there and he was the person who turned me on to the place. I knew Jim from being a Docent at the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento. Kirk Baer and I did docent training together at CSRM and met Jim there.

I really thought that WPRM was the coolest place I’d ever been, RR wise, and was hooked! It was in its infancy back then. The WP 921 and the WP 608 were there, as were the Silver Debris and a sister bunk car which I believe now is the “Silver Shower” car. I might have those reversed as that’s been 36 years ago....

I currently work in our Mechanical Department as Lead Carman. I also will jump into other projects as needed as I like the variety of various chores that are needed to be done around the property.

I’m not afraid of getting dirty! Now that I’m retired, I hope to come over more often as it’s a pretty painless 4.5 hour drive down 89 to 44 down to Quincy and on over to Portola from Dunsmuir. Besides I get to foam on the Highline both ways on that journey! I’m looking forward to many more productive years as a volunteer at WPRM. It’s always a blast to come over and contribute plus see old friends.

Latest on the WP165*- Roger Stabler*

Since our last *Train Sheet* article, we have had another work session. I arrived on Sunday, July 24th, and proceeded to get settled in.



On Monday, I spent most of the day locating parts in the various storage locations and setting up for the week. Mike Waters arrived Monday afternoon and immediately went to work on the dome studs, extending the thread as necessary. We managed to get the dome on and all bolts torqued. I started working on piping for the steam lines and ordering valves for the fireman's manifold that we do not have. I also got out the water glasses and valves and started work on locating the second water glass. On Tuesday, Bob Sims arrived while Mike and I continued to work on piping. Wednesday I procured the gasket material for the front end. Mike and I, assisted by David Elems, installed the gasket and tightened down the front end. The decision was made to buy all new hardware for the front end so work stopped until Friday when the material arrived.



Fireman's Manifold, body manufactured by Channing Walker. Mike and Roger installed it on the engine with the blower valve and associated piping to the smokebox.

- photo by Bob Sims

On Thursday Mike and I, with the assistance of Charlie Spikes, remove all of the cylinder cocks and lapped the valves. We then went to work on the linkage so that the valves are operational. The rest of the day was spent doing work on piping of cab water glasses and finishing the piping on the air pump and manifold. Bob Sims got the timber set up and drilled the tender sill. Mike and I helped Bob get the timber secured. Friday the hardware for the front end arrived and Mike ran a die nut on all the studs and tightened down the front end. Mike also installed the queen post and the front-end handrail is now on the engine. Dave Elems arrived and test fit the stay bolts that he is making for us. They need a little more machine work to be ready to install. I spent most of Friday plumbing the water glasses and machining fittings for the glasses.

On Saturday, both glasses were installed and the pipe to the "dyno" (dynamo generator) was installed. We spent part of Saturday cleaning up the shop and departed early Sunday Morning. The steam crew enjoyed a nice dinner and visit with Kirk Baer at his home Saturday evening.

I hope to have one more work session the last week of September. Hopefully, with the exception of seal welding, all of the rear sheet boiler work will be completed.



Mike Waters chases nuts on the smoke box cover.

- photo by Bob Sims

WP 705's Journey Home

- Paul Finnegan

EMD GP7 number 705 was completed on October 10, 1952 and delivered to WP on October 29, carrying serial number 17029 and frame number 5197-5. The 705 stayed on the roster until after the merger with UP. She was sold by UP to Mountain Diesel Transportation on July 15, 1987.

Mountain Diesel, in turn, sold her to the Great Western in August 1987. There, she was repainted and lettered Arizona Central 705 in May 1989. She was later acquired by OmniTrax. In 2003, she was declared excess and was scheduled to be scrapped if a purchaser could not be found.

When news of 705's imminent demise and her appointment with the cutting torch reached Portola, thirteen FRRS members came to her rescue and raised the \$5000 scrap value and a required \$400 inspection fee in about a week's time.

WP 705 was discussed at the FRRS Board meeting on June 7, 2003. The July 12, 2003 board minutes indicate a check was sent to OmniTrax for the purchase of WP 705. UP approved moving her on August 2, 2003. On November 1, 2003, WP 705 was safely inside the UP Steam Shop under the watchful eye of FRRS member and friend Steve Lee, manager of the Union Pacific Railroad's steam program in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

It took what seemed like forever to finally bring 705 home, but she arrived on the property at Portola on March 23, 2005. She has waited patiently for her restoration work to begin, and now her time has arrived.

Our thanks go out to the original donors who stepped forward in time of need: Lew Barnard, Dave Bergman, Kerry Cochran, Kenneth & Paul Finnegan, Norm Holmes, Wayne Monger, Don Nelson, Jack Palmer, Jay Sarno, Hank Stiles, Eugene Vicknair and Ed Wagner.

Support the FRRS when you shop at Amazon!

Join AmazonSmile and bring a smile to all of our faces! Last quarter the FRRS received a new donation of \$110.93 from the program. Since the FRRS joined, we have received \$1,086.19.



What is AmazonSmile?

AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support the FRRS every time you shop, at no cost to you. AmazonSmile is available at smile.amazon.com on your web browser and can be activated in the Amazon Shopping app for iOS and Android phones. When you shop at AmazonSmile, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added benefit that AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. You can choose from over one million organizations to support. We hope you will choose the Feather River Rail Society.

How do I shop at AmazonSmile?

To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com on your web browser or activate AmazonSmile on your Amazon Shopping app on your iOS or Android phone (found under settings on your app).

Departure - Barbara Holmes

Barbara Holmes, Norman Holmes's wife, passed on September 29th, 2020 in Carson City, NV. We will try and share more information in the next issue of *The Train Sheet*.

~ Notice ~

Due to the COVID-19 Health Emergency, Pumpkin Trains and Santa Trains have been cancelled for 2020.

SN Lives!

We have a really nice new first person story on the SN webpage on the society's website.

SACRAMENTO NORTHERN'S SOUTH-END FINALE: A BOY'S RETROSPECTIVE OF AN INCREDIBLE SUMMER by Darrol J. Stanley. It is in the "Personal Stories" section.



At 12 gallons a minute, it takes a while to fill the 1100 gallon tank on the 1503. Here we see Steve Habeck waiting, not wanting to leave the fueling unattended, sitting on the front step. 9/19/20

- photo by Greg Elems

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. Helping to preserve the Western Pacific is good for tourism, good for our regional culture and good for business.

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.

If you are a business owner, see how you can support the WP Museum, your community and improve your advertising and networking outreach through our sponsorship program. See www.wplives.org/sponsors_how_to_become.html to learn how.



H & R Block - David Hansen
2850 Main St Ste 7, Susanville, CA 96130
Tel: 530-257-9339



Ithicos Solutions
Self Service Active Directory Web Tools
Ithicos Solutions LLC
1315 Wentwood Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80919
808-735-4226 - ithicos.com

New Website Service Provider

*- Paul Finnegan
FRRS Webmaster*

For a long time (since mid 2008), the FRRS has used Hostmonster as the website service provider. I became the FRRS webmaster in fall of 2015. Over the past five years, the paradigm of the society's website has changed from a static, desktop centric website to a custom, mobile friendly, interactive, highly-automated website with significant data-management capabilities.

Although the services promised by Hostmonster are capable of supporting this expanded paradigm, the actual service provided has proven to fall short. In the past 11 months, we have had four serious (multi-day) and two minor service interruptions due to Hostmonster's negligence and/or lack of expertise. In addition to the actual service interruptions, some of Hostmonster's environment required me to implement strange coding/design/deployment methods to function on their systems.

For several years, Kenneth Finnegan has encouraged me to abandon Hostmonster and move the web service to a dedicated server. Kenneth's suggestion was not to go to a new hosting provider, but rather rent a virtual server at a data center and administer the system ourselves. I was reluctant to pursue this kind of solution because I thought the support services provided by a hosting company would outweigh the advantages of going stand-alone. I did not want to just change the host service vendor either, since the reviews I kept reading said they are all bad once you stop using the very simple, basic, click and drag created websites. Thus, the devil we knew might be better than the unknown devil of a different provider.

Hostmonster's service over the past year has convinced me I was wrong and we began to explore replacing Hostmonster.

The Signal Department made a presentation to the FRRS Board of Directors to move the web hosting from Hostmonster to a dedicated Linux

virtual machine hosted in Kenneth's personal hosting company, PhirePhly Design. We have super-user (root) access to the virtual machine and now administer the entire system ourselves. This eliminates the dependence on the provider's sys-admin group for fixing problems or making system level changes for the website. It also insulates us from unexpected system updates, inconvenient scheduled downtimes and other system events that we had no control or influence over while using Hostmonster. The FRRS Board approved the proposal.

On Saturday, September 26th Kenneth and I completed the move from Hostmonster to our new server on Kenneth's PhirePhly Design network located at Hurricane Electric's FMT2 data center in Fremont, California. The website, the wplives.org email system, and our sub-domains are now fully under our control.

PhirePhly Design is hosting the virtual machine gratis, thus saving the society the cost of web hosting every month. We plan to move the DNS hosting from Hostmonster and NameSecure to Google Domains and Cloudflare in the near future, providing additional cost savings due to their lower cost. The end user of the website should not notice anything different, except improved performance and reliability.

FRRS/WPRM Updated Equipment Roster September 2020

*- Steve Habeck
FRRS Yardmaster*

Following the completion of the WPRM Yard switching/rearrangement during the summer of 2020, I created track lists of all tracks and all equipment (on flanged wheels, and on the rail) at the WPRM.

The total number of pieces of equipment on this list is 157, and they have all been verified to be on the property by physical inspection. My list is available on the Collection page on wplives.org (Museum -> Museum Rolling Stock pull-down menu). Please contact me for any comments, questions, or clarifications, including the master track lists.

- FRRS Membership -**Yearly Dues**

Associate \$25.00
 Active \$50.00
 Family \$80.00
 Sustaining \$150.00

Single Life Membership - \$1800.00

Family Life Membership - \$3000.00

Institutional - \$60.00 (annual membership for 501(c)3 groups)

Renew or change your information on
 the FRRS website! Go to:
<https://membership.WPlives.org>

These are the dues for the duration of one year, with Life and Family Life being a one-time payment.
 Five year payment plans are available for life memberships.

Associate memberships do not have a vote, receive *The Train Sheet* but not the *Headlight* and are for one person only.

Active memberships receive both *The Train Sheet* and the *Headlight*, have voting rights and are for one person only.

Family memberships receive both *The Train Sheet* and the *Headlight*, have two votes and include two adults and all minor children residing at the same address.

Sustaining memberships receive both *The Train Sheet* and *Headlight*, have voting rights and are for one person only.

Life memberships receive both *The Train Sheet* and *Headlight*, have voting rights and are for one person only for life.

Family Life memberships receive both *The Train Sheet* and the *Headlight*, include two adults and all minor children residing at the same address, and have two votes (one per member) for life.

Send all applications, renewals and address changes, including email changes, to:
 Feather River Rail Society - Membership Dept. - P.O. Box 608 - Portola, CA 96122-0608
 Address / email changes may also be sent to membership@wplives.org

Mission Statement

"The Feather River Rail Society is dedicated to the preservation, interpretation and education of the public, as to the history and people of the Western Pacific Railroad."

Mission Goals

To preserve and interpret the history of the WP, the "*Willing People*" as a vital link in the development of the rail industry on the West Coast, including the steam and diesel evolution, WP's influence in the passenger tourism industry, the impact of freight competition between neighboring railroads, and WP's influence in the lumber, mining and agriculture industry from Plumas County throughout California, Nevada and Utah.

WPRM Admission and Train Ride Fares for non-members (effective April 2, 2020)**Admission**

- Adult (ages 19 - 64): \$10.00
- Youth (ages 5 - 18): \$5.00
- Child (age 4 and under): free
- Senior (65 and up) and Active Military: \$8.00
- Family (defined as 2 adults plus any related children 18 and under): \$25.00

Admission and train ride tickets are good all day.

Admission and train rides for FRRS members are free.
 Cab rides are extra fare with member discount.

Train Rides (all day)

- Adults 19 -64: \$4.00
- Youth 5 - 18: \$2.00
- Child 4 and under: free
- Senior (65 and up) and Active Military: \$4.00
- Family (defined as 2 adults plus any related children 18 and under): \$10.00

Cab Rides

- Adults 19 -64: \$20.00
 - Youth 5 - 18: \$10.00
 - Senior (65 and up) and Active Military: \$20.00
- Cab rides are for one (1) ride only.

***The Train Sheet* needs your photos and articles!**

If you are working on projects for the Society, volunteering on restorations, performing archives work, helping out at off-site events, etc., or if you get some nice photos of FRRS or museum happenings that you want to share, please contact us to have them printed in *The Train Sheet*.

Photos should be at least 5" high by 7" wide and 300 dots per inch.

Articles should focus on FRRS related events, people or your own personal experiences with the Society.

To contribute, contact the editor - Paul Finnegan, by email at trainsheet@wplives.org.

The Train Sheet

Feather River Rail Society
P.O. Box 608
Portola, CA 96122-0608

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Change Service Requested



WP 165 needed to be moved to continue light bulb replacement in the shop. 2001 was used to pull it out and doing so allowed all six of the silver and orange diesels to be coupled up.

8/19/20 - Photo by Greg Elems