



The Willow Creek Gazette

Special points of interest:

- Work Days:
 Yep, HELP!
- Call for reporters
- Railroad Fun
- For Sale

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Since 1975

Summer 2005

NASCAR Up-Date, Steam-Up Reminder

Saturday July 2, Tony Stewart started from the pole and led all but nine laps in Saturday night's Pepsi 400 NASCAR NEXTEL Cup Series race at Daytona International Speedway. Tony was the engineer of a 180 mph, 40 car freight train.

Now the 2005 Steam-Up reminder. Steam-Up is WCRR big money making event. Be ready to work; at the station, running trains, and help keep the railroad running smoothly.

The dates for Steam-Up are July 30 and 31; and August 6 and 7.

As we have done in the past years, we will be building a long train, Saturday evening on July 30. Last year a 94 car train was assembled. With your help and cars, maybe we can build a 100 car train.

On July 30, a dinner will be offered prior to the long train, at 6:00. Email willowcreeerr@att.net to RSVP

for the dinner. More information will be sent out soon.

Please wear your Willow Creek tee shirts and name tags.

If you have FRS 2-way radios, please bring them charged up. These radios help with communication.



Work Day Accomplishments

As the pictures above show, there were several projects. Something for everyone to help with.

Flower bed weeding, planting, and mulching. Clean up of lumber piles, culling out firewood. Painting the grain elevator. Not pictured was the lawn

mowing crew, track crew, and several other teams getting the job done.

The vegetable garden has been planted.

The entire park is looking great, the hard work really shows.



Club Work Days, HELP!

We only have two weekends to
prepare for Steam-Up.

Your help is needed.

“Let's Get R Done”

Car Barn Up-Date

Work on the Car Barn has moved outside. The interior work has been completed; sheetrocking, painting, and installation of the track panels.

The next task is to build the track leads to the Car Barn. This means we need to build and install track panels, install some old switches from our old track, Garry will be constructing two 3-way switches, and track ballasting.

The first two tracks are now connected.



For Sale

Please submit items for sale to Frank Lertora. The sale is between the seller and buyer. This listing is a service to the membership.

Honda 5.5hp Engine, electric start and charging system, runs great with only 10 hrs run time on it, \$300, James Folk, folksales@comcast.net or call (360)458-9419.

1 1/2" scale "Thatcher Perkins", (photo to right) a B&O 1863 4-6-0, coal fired copper boiler, locomotive, tender and riding car \$9,500. Kenneth Roeh
216 N. 28th. Ave.
Yakima, WA 98902
(509)248-4449,
kenroeh@earthlink.net



Call for Reporters, Photographers

In order to make this a true "club" newsletter, I am asking for your help. Send me articles, pictures with captions, short updates describing things that you think would be of interest to the members.

Send information about your home railroads, projects you are working on, even trips you have been on or planning.

You can mail submissions to :
Frank Lertora
35162 Kee Ln.
Astoria, OR 97103

Or email to:
webmaster@willowcreekrr.org

Or:
elk_hunt_1@hotmail.com



A Ride on the Sierra Railroad *By Frank Lertora*

The last week of June; Ashley, Rachel, Sarah, and I made a trip to visit my parents in California.

One day we drove about one hour east of Mom and Dad's home to Jamestown. This is where Railtown 1897 State Park is located. Railtown 1897 was established in the early 1970's by Sierra Railroad to share the steam history of the company. In the 1980's the state purchased the round-house facilities and steam equipment.

Sierra Railroad still runs freight out of Oakdale, California.

Unfortunately the steam was not running the day we visited due to an upcoming federal inspection. But we went for a ride. The ride lasted about an hour.

Rachel and Sarah were the fifth generation of Lertora's to ride the Sierra.

We all had a great time in the foothills of California. And the trip brought back some great memories.



Willow Creek railroad fun for train lovers of all ages

By Angela Obery, *Statesman Journal*, July 5, 2005 Reprinted with permission of the *Statesman Journal*.

In 2002, my first child was born. I clearly remember his first cries. I remember the perfect wrinkle of every toe. I remember simply being overjoyed. The first hour of his life, my husband and I marveled at the blessing.

Now in 2005, my husband and I sit together as our son runs circles around us. We spend about an hour trying to decide on a fitting location for a third birthday party.

"Our back yard?" my husband offers.

"Think bigger." I request.

"Disneyland?" he suggests with a smile.

"Too big," I judge.

"The park?" he tries once more.

"Not bad," I declare. "Now, if only we could find a park with a train."

Weeks later, I sit on a blanket under a beautiful willow tree. Bright yellow marigolds dot the edges of the grass. The breeze gently blows the tree branches from side to side and in the distance I hear a train whistle and a high pitched voice yelling, "Hi, Angela! Hi, Angela!"

Cradling my infant son, I rise to my feet and look down the nearby track as a miniature train rounds the bend. The engineer, complete in overalls and cap, is followed by my husband and 3-year-old son. Sitting behind them are several family friends, among them is one of my son's favorite playmates. She is waving and calling out to me.

I take this as a sign, a good sign. We definitely made the right choice for the location of our celebration.

I first discovered the Willow Creek Railroad at Antique Powerland online:

"Home of large scale model railroading since 1975," the Web site proclaimed. Looking closely at posted photographs, I could see adults and children smiling as they rode atop small boxcars.

I e-mailed the event coordinator and was put in touch with Garry, one of the original founders of this railroad and an engineer with a heart of gold. Speaking with him, I confirmed the location and hours of the train rides.

"The cost per person?" I inquired.

"No charge," he said. "Donations help the club with costs and improvements."

As the train chugs by me, all those aboard wave. The mainline track is more than a mile long and winds through the grass and trees, returning to the boarding area after an eight-minute ride.

Today, it is a WWCR Club member named Jack who graciously runs his train for us. He is patient as we line the kids up to take a picture before boarding. All total, the club has more than 30 engines and 100 box cars.

Jack's engine is painted a brilliant yellow and features a working headlight and five horns. The engine is about

6 feet long and is hooked to five boxcars followed by a detailed caboose. Each boxcar has two adjustable bench seats.

My husband takes the back seat and positions our son right in front of him. Their box car is marked 'Great Northern.' I also spy a 'Northern Pacific.'

The entire Willow Creek Railroad is one-eighth scale; meaning that every actual foot has been reduced to an inch and a half model. A small water tower, a brick train station, signals and railroad crossings stand among the track and

landscaping. All the smells, sights and sounds of early steam and diesel railroading are here, only smaller than the originals.

As we leave, I thank Garry and Jack for treating our family and friends to such a fun afternoon.

"We're here every Sunday if you want to come back and ride again," Garry tells me.

I also find out that the club will host large parties.

For only \$75, a group of 50 can enjoy the space for up to three hours. Unlimited train rides and picnic tables are provided. A gas grill and volleyball net can be requested as well. It's a great deal for a church group, family reunion, large birthday party or company picnic.

The Willow Creek Railroad Club has transformed a simple farm field into a tree-lined park area with a working railroad that provides fun for all ages.

What started as a modeling hobby has grown into a family attraction for the Mid-Willamette Valley.

I hope more families will stop by next Sunday and take a ride.

If they do, I hope they leave a generous tip in the red 'donation' caboose at the track entrance to thank these train enthusiasts for sharing their time and talents.

Angela Obery lives in Salem with her husband and two young sons. Kid Trips appears Tuesdays in this section. Write to Kid Trips, *Statesman Journal*, P.O. Box 13009, Salem, OR 97309-3009. Letters can be faxed to (503) 399-6706 or e-mailed to sjkidtrips@yahoo.com

An Answer to a Common Question By Scott Johnson

Over the years I have been approached several times with a wide variety of questions. One of the top ten questions usually goes something like this...../We come to the park on the weekends and were wanting to know if there was some little item that we could bring to contribute to the park? These people might be the ones that can't contribute as much time working as some, or en-

joy the cookouts, and want to help out with what they can. We have started to compile a simple list of items that by themselves are not much, but when combined are a HUGE help with the operation, and success of the park. Not to mention make things much better. Most of the items listed below are used on a regular basis, and can be monitored during the year to determine how much

we need. The list will be updated, and posted in the kitchen. Please feel free to add suggestions for the list.

Paper Towels, Paper Plates, Utensils, Cleaners (i.e. Windex/409), Soda Pop (for workers, the machine, or the fridge), Air freshners, Shop Rags, Work Gloves, Flowers, Gas, Propane, WD-40, Firewood, I am sure you get the idea).

THE NEWSLETTER
OF WILLOW CREEK
RAILROAD

"The Back Shop"

Here is what members have been working on:



Tank car under construction, by Lertora Car Works. Should finish by Steam-Up.



Now complete, car barn for the Soggy Sod Railroad, built by Frank Lertora. Has 4 tracks, to store 12, six foot cars.



The engine and engineer car called the Blew Bird was built by Llew and Lew Bird, father & son.

Well he did it, Fred Werbin completed his 4-4-0, "American."



We'er on the web
willowcreekrr.org

President Johnson's Rant

Okay... I guess we've kept you waiting and wondering long enough? Everybody's thinking what's with the NASCAR info? Well it goes like this, every issue we have e-mails coming back to us with favorable results. However last issue our first criticism, "Great newsletter but no NASCAR report"! So in an effort to keep everybody happy, here you go!

In proof reading the newsletter, I see the included picture of the Operation Lifesaver trailer, but no explanation of why? Our first bit of running every year is for a school field trip. Through our association with the 700 group (PRPA) and the Operation Lifesaver people, we were able to make this display happen for this field trip. This trailer will also be on display during the Steam-Up.

As to the article in the Statesman Journal, The Lady wrote it

the way she saw it. Sure it had errors. We all know that the cars are Gondolas, Jack's engine is mostly gray and blue (but you've got to admit the yellow stands out). The thing is, this is just plain what we are about ! As a result the web hits are up by 300%. My phone whistles all the time, and several parties have been booked. Okay, take your best shot, I know "Heart of Gold" I do have my moments! Also just to set the record straight, I didn't know she wrote for the paper until after the party.

Frank always tells me to keep it short, so here is the important stuff, the first day of Steam-Up is July 30. We need everybody who attends to help make this a safe and successful time. To pull this off we need everybody to help out. One of our biggest problems is getting relief for the people working the station. If

you are sitting under the trees and see Mike S., bright red and sweating after standing in the station 5 hrs, why not go and give him a break? This is our biggest source of income and dictates what gets done in the future. We all need to do our part.

I will be working the loading and un-loading area as needed. Scott and Frank will try to keep other operations going. Hopefully we will (all members) be in touch with the FRS radios? This is really important, since we don't usually run conductors.

Well I suppose if I go any longer I will get edited, so if you can make it out to help before the Steam-Up please do, there's still plenty to do. At the Steam-Up remember "Think Safety."

