



The Willow Creek Gazette

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Since 1975

Winter 2006

WCRR Annual General Meeting *By Garry Johnson*

As most of you know, a very special time was in the works for the meeting this year. Our friends, the PRPA had agreed to let us have our meeting in their "work in progress" crew car.

Everything had been worked out for the SP&S 700 to hook up and give us a private trip down to Oaks Parks and back. I even sacrificed my health in 30-degree weather Thursday night for a test run, to make sure you would all enjoy it. That's the kind of guy I am, always thinking of you...

For the record it was a great trip standing on the back platform of the caboose as we backed down to Oaks Park. But

sitting next to the stove in the caboose on the way back was even better.

Ok as most of you know about 1/2 hour before our meeting was called to order, the 700 and the 4449 went on the ground about a 1 1/2 miles South of us. I think I heard a comment from the back suggesting I go help, as I have plenty of experience re-railing the Young Lady. I am just thankful that it didn't happen for our proposed trip! I probably would have been stripped of my "Golden Heart" and given the "Grinch" that stole Christmas award.

My hat is off to Trevor Heath who did a nice article on his web site "Live Steaming", about

our meeting. To read it as written you would have actually thought everything went off without a hitch.

Creative writing at it's best... I just noticed he has taken it off the site, so you will just have to take my word for it.

The meeting was very well attended; business was taken care of without any delays. Two positions were open and two candidates threw their hat in the ring. Scott Johnson and Mark Adelblue will serve for the next term.

The PRPA, BNSF, Garry & Bev, and Jack Chapman sponsored several door prizes this year and even without the train ride people left with a smile.



Heaven's Roundhouse: Bill Kendle & Grant Ellingson

Bill Kendle suffered a massive stroke, three days after the annual meeting, and passed away on Friday December 16th.

Bill was with the club at Molalla until a couple of years ago. He, his wife and granddaughter joined our club this past spring. They could be found working around the track most week-ends. Bill was a retired electrician and was helping us relocate power to needed areas.

Bill had some rolling stock and a couple of engines. He was in

the process of giving them the TLC they deserved.

Bill was a great asset to WCRR and he will be missed.

Retired member, **Grant Ellingson** passed away in August from Cancer.

Grant was an active WCRR member until he and his wife Doris, moved to Yuma, AZ.

He would be best known as

the designer and builder of the 40' turn table and the circle of steaming bays at Train Mt. He also built the scissor lifts used at Crisp Yard.

One of his most unique projects was an early diesel locomotive which ran by hydraulics, but unlike all the rest he powered his with a vertical steam engine. It was given the name "Odd Ball", the loco lives on, but is now powered by a gas engine.



AMPA / Operation Lifesaver / Ag Show By Garry Johnson

Jan. 30-31 Feb. 1-2

For the past few years Powerland has been given a large space to display "what we (they) are about" at the Ag Show in Portland. I go on record saying, "I wish it would go away". It is something that is almost impossible to pull off as a club. Most people in our club are not set up to put their equipment on display. This requires transportation to and from with engines, rolling stock, stands, signage, all in the middle of winter and to top it off, it happens during the work week. So no help from anybody that has a job!

I was already to forget it this year, but then I learned Red Nelson had volunteered to coordinate it this year. Red has been a good friend and member of WCRR so it was impossible to say NO! My task turned out to be, how to do something without much participation? Something big, something flashy! Then it came to me, how about the Operation Lifesaver trailer. What a

deal WCRR gets credit and Operation Lifesaver people do the work, hum? Great idea. Well the plan came together, I picked up the trailer, I washed it, I delivered it, and I manned it for three days. Does this mean I work for Operation Lifesaver? Oh ok, thank you, Terry Kimzey for making it sort of happen and also picking up the trailer when we were done.

Fred and Thelma Werbin brought the recently finished American Locomotive, which he runs with DC volts instead of steam. We set up a Willow Creek display next to the trailer so I could keep an eye on it. Some photo boards and albums and the engine running on a set of bearings that I built made it look almost like we knew what we were doing? The Werbin's were there daily greeting people and selling our club.

I hope Red gives this up next year? It will be a lot easier to tell someone else NO!



**"Thank you
Garry for the
time and effort
at the Ag Show"**



Vitz Crossing *By Scott Johnson*

As most of you know by now the full-size set of crossing lights and bell on the west end became operational at the end of this past running season. What most of you don't know is the story behind those lights.....

In 1996 member Marty Vitz donated the lights, which were partially restored at the time. *Marty also was the member that initiated the picnic table "sponsor" program by buying and building the first table that same year. (These are the stained red ones with the nameplates attached)*

When Marty donated the lights, WCRR was in the planning stages for the new railroad, so they were stored away until a good location could be found. Like most things at WCRR they got moved around (several times) from one storage building to another. Once a good location was determined it was still almost a two-year project to get

them operational. Several people have been involved in seeing the project through, from sandblasting and painting the hardware to donating and painting a pole for them to be attached to. And finally the task of installing/mounting and wiring the unit to be fully operational on the new railroad. (Final hookup took place the same time as the west end track signal project this past September).

Therefore this crossing, which gives access to the inner area of the west end will now be known as "**VITZ CROSSING**". There will be some signs made and installed this spring to clearly mark the crossing.

Unfortunately Marty has moved away and is unable to see the finished product in person, but is still a member of WCRR and will

see this article and pictures when he gets his newsletter. Marty has also been known to make an appearance at Train Mt. in the past, so maybe we will see him there this June for the Triennial Meet.

Thanks Marty for the wonderful donation they add so much to the railroad, we finally.....Got r Done!



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.

SW body, SW7 or similar. It's 6' long and about 16" x 16" wide and tall. Very heavy sheet metal, with rubber around the windows. Paid \$1200 for it, would like to get \$1000 or best offer. No rust or damage, currently in primer. Contact **Chip Colby** by email at 555colby@comcast.net or at work (541) 754-1374.



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

Roy & Jenny Bennett's Ankeny Railroad Salem, Oregon *By Roy Bennett*

Layout for the railroad started in September of 2001, the site slopes away from the house and was initially conceived as a figure of 8, crossing a seasonal stream in two places, with a wooden trestle, circling an existing maple tree on the lower loop.

The track layout is based on a radius of 48 feet and was centralized in the stream valley to minimize the depth of cut and fill. With the cut into the hill on both sides we now had 3 to 5 foot high banks to retain. On our upper patio retaining walls we used concrete blocks, 16" wide, by 6" high and found them very versatile. We decided to continue this theme and use the blocks as a retaining wall on the outside and to retain the track ballast on the inside curves.

Our property is located in an estate called 'Spring Lake estates', this name describes the area well and below the future rail location we have installed a 4" drain line. We used a Ditch Witch trencher, from this we learned to wait for the dry summer months, after the machine dug itself into a spring, in seconds and had to be lifted out with the tractor.

The steam, passing through the center, is completely dry from July to October and protected by a small pond on the upper side. This simplified the installation of two 12" diameter culverts at the left of the picture and an 18" diameter from the center, downwards for 120 feet. These have been well tested this winter. The culvert at the lower end is now some 15 feet below the track bed, from the cut and fill material excavated.

Jenny had been noting with interest the general arm waving, grade pegs appearing and the sheep pasture fence changing position, but not much concern, until the excavator and bulldozer arrived!

All the walls and grades have been pegged out with a sighting level and a 9 foot pole, when it came to the trestle location, it was outside the range of the pole, a hot evening, and next years project, looks OK, we will work it out latter.

The following Spring the trestle location was preliminary pegged out and measured. It would be 210 feet long on almost a continuous sweeping curve and be 19 feet high, to the track bed. It would look great, but was overridden by a one to one owners vote and Jenny 'sacrificed her sheep' to allow the use of the sheep pasture.

The lower sheep pasture was fortunately cleared of most the trees, several years ago and leveled. From the entry point down to the bottom fence line drops some 40 feet in elevation, over a distance of 275 feet. Following many evenings with the sighting level and calculator, the current 'loop to loop' track plan was conceived.

From the now existing upper loop it would turn into the old sheep pasture area, through a cut, then a 200 degree curve, then straight to below the top loop, all at a 3% grade, then another 180 degree curve to cross the stream, into the final loop, which is just below the first 200 degree curve. Not a problem, just need a bigger excavator.

During my mark out, I added grade pegs every 10 feet around the proposed cut and fill locations. These were numbered and a chart provided for Tony and the excavator. All measurements were from the top of the peg with the depth required. It's amazing how close we came, on the first cut to depths like 42.15".

This section was the deepest at just over 11 feet. The basic process was for Tony to dig and I would move the loose material to the fill location. This only used a part of the excavated material and the trips to new fill locations became longer and longer. To say my 1967 Massey earned it's keep is a minor statement and except for one flat front tire, never failed.



The lower loop required the least soil movement and once the excavator had completed a rough cut the bulldozer cleaned up the grade nicely. This is the upper side of the bottom loop, and the ground falls off very quickly to the left, out of picture, a short, low, level trestle is planned to span this gap. This was in October 2003.

It's time to get a train running on the site!! We plan to lay the first loop of track this year and add the car barn for storage. We collected our first batch of aluminum rail from Train Mountain in the fall and the winter projects are to work on the jigs and fixtures required, before we can build the track sections.



Mother Nature Strikes WCRR Again! *By Scott Johnson*

When I first arrived today for the monthly APMA meeting, I saw what at first was to be expected...lots of water and fir tree branches everywhere. Once parking on the road in front of Papa Joes I started to make a b-line for pops trailer.

The ditch was completely full of water as to be expected....however on the way I got a big surprise out of my right eye. We have lost 2, maybe 3 willows from the west end! Doooh! It must have blown really hard and with the ground being so wet it's a very bad combination.

Some trees on the west fence line, behind the Chevy Luv also took a beating (don't worry I think the truck is ok). The tree behind the port-a-potty is also leaning causing the port-a-potty to have a bad lean and leaving the door open. I placed a 2x in front to hold the door shut.

On the plus side, Coyote Ridge is going to get more sun, we have a lot more fire wood, and the falling trees just missed taking out the fence. Whew! We have a full day of work cleaning up though.



Train Mountain Triennial 2006 *By Scott Johnson*

Just a reminder to everyone June is the Triennial meet at Train Mt. It is a great event to take in. A lot of WCRR members were in attendance in 2003, and from what we can tell this time there should be even more. If you have not sent in your registration form and you are planning on attending the price is going up every month. Remember to write on your form that you are a WCRR member. (This might get you close to another member on track storage assignments). Also remember to

bring all your WCRR apparel to wear at the event. The T-shirts received lots of comments last time. We will keep you posted on any planned club activities during the meet. If you need any other information go to the Train Mt. web site, www.trainmountain.org. If you are registered and/or planning on going please e-mail willowcreekrr@att.net with a confirmation and the dates you will be there.

Willow Creek Produce *By Scott Johnson*

Its time to start thinking about the WCRR Vegetable Garden for the upcoming summer.

This will be the third year for the garden, which continues to improve every year. Most everyone got a taste of the produce last year at one of the many BBQ's. There are lots of ways to continue making it even better; it just takes more help and ideas. If you think that you might want to be more involved with the garden please let us know.



"The Back Shop"

Here is what members have been working on:

Rumors, rumors:

It has been heard that, Bob Wolf has been working on a log car or two.

Rumor has it that, Dick Hofsheier has been working on or should I say "in" a tunnel on the Coyote Ridge Logging Rail-

road. He has also been working on a few cars.

Garry Johnson has been attempting to work on Fred Werbin's 2-4-2.

Jef Wood is working is working on an engine.

Frank Lertora has started two hopper cars and one flat car.

Hopefully there will be some pictures of all this work for the next issue. Everyone else needs to get busy.

President Johnson's Rant

As the guy that has the last word, (I just figured out, that must be why I'm on the last page?) I look over what Frank has assembled. Doing so, I thought we've done it again, one more successful edition. I have run out of fingers and toes to count the positive comments about the Gazette. Most recently as last week someone came up to me at the Ag Show and told me how much they like it.

They stated that it was good looking and informative, much more than other club scribes they were receiving. We will try to keep it up, so keep us informed as to what you are doing?

Okay, now for some of the nagging stuff. Please don't shoot

the messenger when someone asks you to run a little slower or don't follow another train through a block signal. Just like the real railroads, highways and city streets have speed limits and traffic lights. We do too!! Most of our running consists of hauling public passengers. All it takes is one incident where someone is injured (or not) and everything we have spent 30 years creating will be gone!

This has happened to two clubs recently, one is gone completely and the other now has such strict compliance rules that most members will not haul anybody other than family. In both cases these were on land owned by the City and dealt with a lot of bureaucratic red tape.

Although we are not in a city park, we are on leased ground and share with 14 other partner organizations the responsibility to act in a safe manner.

Our club is and always is about sharing, teaching and learning. Not just a display put up once a year with a rope around it so you could watch a couple guys running an engine around. It is a hands on operation and most of you can be proud and say "I helped make this what it is". As they say "We've come a long way baby", let's not do something we may regret!

**PLEASE.....
"THINK SAFETY"**

We're on the web
willowcreekrr.org

Thank You *By Garry Johnson*

Thank you, those that have started sending your early payment of dues. Although they don't expire until the Steam-up, it makes things much easier to handle by getting it done prior to that time. Last year, most

people did this early and gave me much more time to deal with the operations of the railroad during Steam-up.

As most of you know, Roy and Cecilia Anderson have been

very good supporters of WCRR over the years. Last year a \$1000 donation was made for "Something Special". It was decided that this would be a people-hauling locomotive owned by the club. This year, to sweeten the pot, Roy and Cecilia donated another \$1500, towards this goal. On behalf of the WCRR members, "thank you Roy and Cecilia."

