



The Willow Creek Gazette

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Willow Creek Railroad

Winter 2009

Steam-Up 2008 *By Frank Lertora*

Well, once again WCRR survived the 2008 Steam-Up. This was the first event for the new station cover. As you will see in the photos the station cover provided shade to the station crew.

As in years past there were a lot of trains running. We had a

mix of steam, diesel, and electric. There was the catered dinner, which as usual, was excellent. After dinner, Professor Ralph led a discussion about his experiences working on the 1 to 1 scale railroads. He also presented a lecture on Steam Engine 101, how they work, and what are those parts.

Once Professor Ralph finished class, it was back on the rails.

Thank you to everyone for the help, it is because of you we continue to have successful Steam-Ups.



NOTICE

Annual General Meeting:
September 5, 2009
1:00 PM
Willow Creek Railroad
Brooks, Oregon

Heaven's Roundhouse: Fred Werbin

It is with great sadness to report that one of our own has passed. Carl "Fred" Werbin, made his way to Heaven's Roundhouse on September 21, 2008, at the age of 80.

Fred joined WCRR in the mid 1990's after visiting for Steam-up. Right from the start, one could tell that he was a go-getter. Soon after joining, Fred bought the "Red 13" from Garry and not long after that he ordered up himself a new Santa Fe Diesel – complete with a powered slug from Rail Systems.

From there his railroad hobby just blossomed – there was hardly a year that went by that he wouldn't have a new freight car – or two or three... And if that wasn't enough, he built not one but two railroads around his house in the Clackamas area (the first one was used by Frank Lertora to build the Soggy Sod in Astoria when Fred wanted to replace the barstock rail with Aluminum profiled rail), complete with a turntable, car storage barn with a scissor lift very similar to the one used at the park.

He also always offered his equipment for use for the long train and for Steam-Up in general. Back in the day, we did not have as many cars as we have now to give rides. Fred would offer to bring *all* of his cars so that we could have riding cars to keep the lines small. And to top it off, it would take him more than one trip to bring them all down – that was a lot of work at the end of July in the heat! He had more cars than anyone and for along time he was the long train! The first year of the "official" long train in 2005 netted 102 cars in part thanks to Fred. Due to constraints we



were not able to have it in 2006 but we had Fred's cars anyhow. In 2007, we had 137 cars – over 25 of those cars were Fred's!

Fred was a member that was one of those *Above and Beyond* members. He purchased a steam locomotive kit that was donated to the club and turned it into an Electric "Steamer". He was also probably the first member anywhere – possibly in the US – to apply radio remote controls to his Santa Fe diesel so that he could watch it go around on his private track – sounds like fun.

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Fred Werbin

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On top of that, he would help out whenever he could.

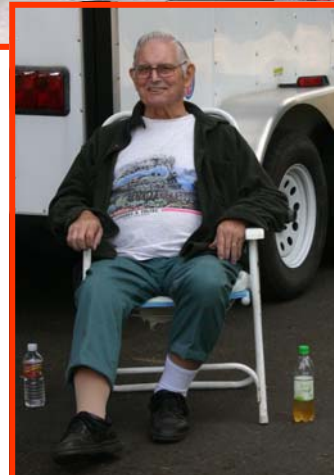
Fred was instrumental in ground preparation of the current layout at the park. The Dynamic Duo of "Red and Fred" hauled what seemed like thousands of truckloads of sod off of the grounds. Fred was an excavator genius. He did things with his machine that you would not think was possible. If it was not for Fred and his expertise with the excavator, we might be still digging!

When the roadbed was going down, we had the use of a couple of other member's smaller pieces of equipment to spread the sub-ballast. It was suggested that we find a compactor to move over the roadbed to help stabilize it. Fred said that he *just might* have something that would work for us. A couple of days later, Fred brought in a roller compactor for our use.

Fred was a fighter until the end. After he was diagnosed, not long after his 80th birthday, he was determined to win this battle. He went through three doctors and two different treatments. Unfortunately, it was a battle that he could not win.

Survivors include his wife, Thelma; daughter, Sherry Cummings; sons, Dave, J. Fred, Tim and Tommy; 15 grandchildren; and great-grandchildren.

Fred, we will miss you.



The Junior Program *By Ernie Hellman and Mike Baker*



The Willow Creek Railroad Junior Program Celebrates its 1st Birthday this last September.

It has been a very active year for the Junior's Program. We have endeavored to mix field trips and projects to keep the kids interested and engaged and have them vested in the spirit and participation of being a part of a living museum.

We have taken three field trips so far this season. Starting with a trip to the PNW railroad shops, where the kids learned how a real railroad maintains and safely operates maintenance equipment, railroad locomotives and rolling stock.

Our next trip was to the Oregon Zoo Railway where we were allowed to have complete access of the shops and a lengthy ride on the complete Zoo railway. Several of the kids actually rode in the cab of the American steam locomotive. We finished the day taking in the sights of the Zoo and seeing the baby elephant.

In January we had a tour of Union Station and the Amtrak facilities in Port-

land. We also had a complete tour of the Cascades commuter train and one of the superliner sleeper cars of the Empire Builder. We finished the tour with pizza upstairs in the station paid for by the Juniors pop can collection from Steamup 2008.

In the coming year we hope to have the kids tackle an APMA project to help the kids understand the unique partnership that makes up Powerland, and how important it is that we all work together on other projects as well as our own railroad.

Also in early spring 2009 we would like to have the Juniors pick from three logo designs drawn by Amber Day. In making a choice early, we would like to have T-shirts with their own logo done by early summer. This will allow them to have their own look for the coming season of events, including the Train Mountain Triennial.

Some other upcoming projects might include designing and building some more "scale" buildings for use around the park, completing some larger "peddle cars" which can even be used by adults. (WCRR exercise program)

We also have more trips planned for 2009 to transportation and related railroad venues, if you or any of the kids have any ideas or suggestions on trips to take, don't hesitate to tell us. It is very important that all of the Junior members try to participate in our second Saturday meetings every month. We would like to encourage all of our senior members with children to attend also and remember that the future of Willow Creek Railroad and Powerland will be passed to our children. By keeping them interested and involved, we will help create the same passion for the park that all of us share. It will also keep the park a living museum for years to come.

The last thing I would like to share with the membership is that in the last year while talking and traveling to other clubs, they have all expressed great interest in what we do with our Junior program. All of these clubs have come to the realization that we are all getting a little older each year and that it is getting hard to compete with computer games and sports programs. History is soon forgotten if we do not pass along this legacy to the younger generation.



Winter Clean-Up *By Scott Johnson*

As previously reported the park has suffered some damage from all the winter weather. Most notably the trees. A few unofficial workdays have taken place to start the cleanup, but there will need to be several more soon before the trees start putting on this years foliage. Stay tuned for e-mail notice regarding workdays.

For Sale

The club has 2 partially built wooden cabooses for sale. Before we advertise on the web-site we want to offer them to club members first.

These are not a package and can be bought separate.

Each one includes:

- frame
- stairs
- body
- window frames
- coupola (with extra coupola, which is a little different style)

THEY DO NOT INCLUDE TRUCKS OR COUPLERS!

Price \$500.00 ea.

First come, first serve.

If you are interested please e-mail willow-



creekrr@att.net

Station Platform

Well, we are very close to calling this project "Done."

There are just a few detail pieces too go. Like knee braces, lighting, ridge detail, and a clock.

Days of the old tarp canopies are behind us. WCRR is still collecting donations to help pay for this project. If you would like to donate contact any of the Board Members.



Drawing for the Amtrak San Francisco Trip By Garry Johnson

As most of you are aware, we sold 100 rusty spikes for \$20 each to help defer some of the cost needed to complete our new station platform cover. Everyone that purchased a spike was given a free ticket, which could be turned into a possible trip to San Francisco via Amtrak.

After the annual meeting and the last spikes were bought, I made an appointment with Scott Hurd, Head Trainmaster for Amtrak, @ Portland Union Station. Mike Baker, Scott Johnson and Myself met with Scott and had him

draw the winning ticket with Amtrak #14 as a backdrop.

Since it was only a few days until our field trip to the Washington Park & Zoo Railway, we decided to make the presentation there. This proved to work just fine since the winner was in attendance. During a short stop at the Washington Park Station we took the opportunity to gather everyone around the locomotive for the presentation.

And the winner is: Bill Esther of Salem.



In my humble opinion, this was the highlight of activities of the 2008 season for club field trips and I wish to thank my friends

Jeff and Ken for a great day. This entire trip was well documented both with still and video photography and is available for viewing at the club.

Track One *By President Mark Adelblue*

First of all, I would like to wish everyone a wonderful New Year. With the fairly recent winter storm, I know that we will all have our hands full when spring finally arrives at the park! We know what the snow and ice have done to the trees...

The reason that I am writing this is that the board has elected me as your President. That's right, you are not seeing things. Garry has decided that after 35+ years working in this position that his time would be better used on other endeavors – don't read that as he is quitting Willow Creek – just passing the baton to some "younger blood" as he has stated. Garry has seen a lot of change at Willow Creek over his 35 year tenure... from a 600' loop in the middle of a field to 1 mile of top quality railroad, yes a lot has changed. If you would like to see some of the changes yourself, all you have to do is look at the trees at the Park. Garry and other members of the club planted all of the trees that you spend time under in the summer heat – when the fir trees were planted, they were only about knee high – amazing that they now tower over where the *old* loading area used to be (right where the carbarn is now located). And speaking of the carbarn, that is just a relative recent addition to Willow Creek.

Garry, I would like to personally "Thank You" for all that you have done for the Park over the years, for without your vision we could not be where we are currently today, a premier 7.5" gauge railroad park that even includes one of the first and most successful Junior Programs in the area (just so that we know that the railroading legacy that he helped start will live on into the future). Thanks again for your dedication, I definitely have some shoes to fill.

Speaking of shoes to fill, Scott Johnson also needs a "Thank You" for stepping up to the plate to fill Garry's shoes over the last year and a half due to illness in the Johnson family. It will probably take both Scott and I to completely fill Garry's shoes.

Now a bit about me, just in case you

don't know who I am. I am the tall one with prematurely salt and pepper hair walking around down there – just kidding – a bit. Anyhow, I became interested in the live steam hobby when I was just six or seven. I remember seeing an article in **Sunset** magazine about the *Pacific Northwest Live Steamers* in Molalla. Now I know I belong to Willow Creek, but at that time, WAPI (APMA) was in its infancy and *Shady Dell* had been in operation for over 15 years (I hate to say it but it was in 1973 or '74). Anyhow, I don't want to date myself too much.

I begged my parents to take me one summer Sunday; they loaded my little brother and I into the car for a little trip. I did not know that it would be to Shady Dell. I remember very distinctly, getting out of the car and running to the chain link fence after I heard a steam whistle blowing for a crossing. Just as my fingers clamped themselves to the fence, a steam engine chugged by pulling a train full of passengers. I lost all of my young thought process and probably would have just stayed there all day, watching through the fence, except my parents said we were going in to ride. The rest of the day was a blur. All I can really remember is that I wanted one of those little steam engines to have for my very own. I also remember my dad saying that one day "when my ship comes in" we will get one of those. I thought that the ship must have sank at sea as it seemed that it would never happen – but at that age I had no idea what that really meant. It was almost 25 years later that I met Grant Ellingson through a buddy that I went to high school with.

I called Grant one day, to see if I could come visit him. He said "sure" so I took a drive to, of all places, Molalla, to see his Allen Mogul (he was a member of Willow Creek at the time). At that time, I had no idea that within two years, I would be purchasing that very engine. Grant said that I could contact Garry Johnson, as he was "in charge" of a club in Brooks called Willow Creek. I had visited the Park a few times in the past during Steam-up but never had the chance to talk to a member, until Grant. I called and made arrangements to visit with my newly acquired engine and was

quickly accepted as one of their own. Also while a fairly new member of WCRR, I was sort of "drafted" to work on several projects including helping on obtaining the non-profit status that we now enjoy. I was also involved in working on the new track layout that Louie Lettier designed (what we now run on which is a slightly different version than Louie's) as well as working as Track Superintendent and also worked with Scott for several years as a co-editor of the Willow Creek Gazette. And now look where that has gotten me – President!

Just to let you know, you will probably not see any changes – it will be business as usual at the Park. Things are set up just as they were before the transition and any changes will take time as we work towards the future and will better the club as a whole. The board members are currently working on some internal paperwork, which will allow us to work into the future without needing to make any changes to the way we do business. Just a reminder, your board members include: Scott Johnson, Frank Lertora, Mike Baker, Terry Kimsey and myself.

Speaking of the future, there are project plans in the works to upgrade the roundhouse and roundhouse area – which will be another major project – much like the station cover was for this last summer. An ongoing project, which will be continued in 2009, is the signaling for the safety and smooth flow of trains over our 1st Class railroad.

You should be aware that we were voted as one of the six best-rated railroads in the nation. The Discover Live Steam website states: "Overall, the railroads listed as the most favored for visiting were, in alphabetical order, [Bitter Creek & Western Railroad](#), [Eagle Point Railroad](#), [Maricopa Live Steamers](#), Michigan Central Railroad, [Train Mountain Museum](#), [White Creek Railroad](#) and [Willow Creek Railroad](#)." To read the entire article, visit: <http://www.discoverlivesteam.com/magazine/116/index.html>

Let's keep this momentum going. We have made great strides over the last 8-10 years at the Park.

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Track One

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This includes, but is not limited to, an entirely new layout, new car barn, brand new station platform cover (of which many visitors were awestruck by, including many members of WAPI), signaling, loading area with 17' scissor lift, as well as ongoing work in the gardens, drainage portals, memorial garden area complete with brick memorial wall and numerous other projects that keep us busy. We are also building relationships with other railroad based entities including Operation Life Saver (of which we have a couple of *certified* presenters in our membership) as well as Amtrak.

I touched on the Junior Program above just a bit. Look at all of the things they have done in the past year. Visiting not one but two operational railroads (the Washington Park Zoo train and the WP)! Who can say that they have been able to do that? A trip to the Evergreen Air Museum as well as the Great Wolf Lodge just for fun! Now this is something to be proud of. Did you know that there are other clubs, not only at APMA, but other railroad clubs that want to copy what we have started?

Kudos to the Juniors and the Junior Leaders for making this a really top-notch program.

We have others that are working in the background to make sure that the Juniors will be able to keep going forward as time goes on and they take over for the current leadership (heck, we can't all do this forever...). People are working on sponsorships for the Park, trying to have ties with others in the community that are willing to help our cause – keeping railroading alive, but only on a smaller scale. Where can you go and see a real steam engine working? Sure it may be only 1/8th the size of the full counterparts, but we can keep the history alive – that is one of the reasons we are here and why we need you to be involved.

Unfortunately, it seems that most of this work falls on the shoulders of a few hardy souls that seem to be there almost every waking moment that the weather cooperates. I know that we all have priorities and other things going on – it's called life and sometimes it sucks – you have to take what is dealt to you. But you need to make it your mission – each and every one of you – to take time to

come to the Park on a couple of the work-days. Now that doesn't mean that you have to show for every single one of them, but if more people were to show for these work-days to help, it would allow for more play time – and no project is insignificant. Try to make it your goal to maybe come to a couple extra this year, if you have made it to them in the past – if you haven't made it in the past, make this year the one to start. This is not to say that this is an open free-for-all for each member to come down and do what they want. The board works very hard to plan projects for all levels of talents of the members. You may not think that some project is very important, but everything we do is very important. Many of us have to do things that we really would rather not do (go to work every day, shovel snow, paint the house) but there is a reason it needs to be done and you know it. We need you to get involved and take personal pride and ownership in what you do – don't let the few do it for you so that you can reap the reward of just being able to come and play – behind that playing is a lot of hard work and we need your help to do that. This means everyone!

So let's keep the forward momentum going and make 2009 even more gratifying than 2008.



"The Back Shop"

Here are more Steam-Up photos:



NEXT ISSUE

- Low Voltage & Signal Update
- Memorial Garden
- On Going Projects

NOTICE

Annual General Meeting:
September 5, 2009
1:00 PM
Willow Creek Railroad
Brooks, Oregon

NEW IN 2008! -- Hobo Lake

In the spring of 2008 Joe and Amber Day offered to upgrade the pond located at the east end of Coyote Ridge. With the assistance of the original builder (Dick Hofsheier) the project was under way and finished in time for the June memorial event that was held at the park. This new addition was a complete donation! Joe decided to name the pond "Hobo Lake". Thank you Joe, Amber and Dick!!! What a great feature for the park.

