

## WHY I JOINED THE FRRS

- Dustin Carter

Why would anybody so young be interested in the Western Pacific Railroad? I would be the one to ask, considering I am only 14 years old. My name is Dustin Kyle Carter and I was asked to write this for the museum. I'm going to talk mostly about why I am a part of the museum and the opportunities it has given me. And also why somebody as young as I am should join the museum, why I joined, and some of the projects and experiences I'm involved with.

Well there are many reasons for somebody "so young" to join Western Pacific Railroad Museum. For one, it's an adventure anytime you are at the museum. You get to do things that most kids at your school perhaps had not done, including the experience of working on rail cars and locomotives that are not in regular service anymore and that are among the most fascinating machines around. Being a member also is a learning experience: you learn about the history and mechanics of the various cars and locomotives, as well as details of rail operations such as blue flag protection. And it supports many future plans you have. Just imagine putting the amount of volunteer hours on a college application and how great it would look. There are so many reasons to be a part of the museum and the opportunities it gives are remarkable.

I'm a part of the museum because I strive for an adventure and the learning experience that adventure provide me. I have learned where the *California Zephyr* operated and how class and style was a big thing when it came to passenger trains. I learned these things by getting to work around the some of the Zephyr cars myself and exploring them from the inside,

hands on. And you, the reader, could also learn a lot "no matter the age." You learn, not only about the trains, but also history of the places and people involved with the WP and its neighboring railroads.

It's a fun adventure to be in and around the cars and engines. We aren't one of those museums where there are "Do Not Touch" signs everywhere. You can actually climb through the cars and discover unknown treasure hidden within the equipment. There is no better way to learn than to get your hands dirty!

You could also use your time wisely and invest it in your future. All your volunteer hours could be put on a application for college or a job. Imagine putting qualified passenger engineer on your résumé. I want to be a Disney Imagineer and the number one thing they look for when they hire someone are leadership skills. You can learn tons of them everyday at the museum. Many top colleges are now requiring a certain amount of hours as a volunteer for applicants. And guess what you're doing when you help out at the museum? Certainly better than cleaning some highway to get into a good college. Through the museum, I am learning not only history, but also preparing myself for the needs of tomorrow.

And these are the least of my reasons for joining. I not only joined for the learning experiences and the benefits, but also because it's fun. I joined because everybody at the museum becomes family. There are some great people in the FRRS. You can learn a lot from the many of the volunteers and members. And you too can become a part of family, when you join with us here at the Western Pacific Railroad.

Hope to see you around!

*Dustin has developed a special interest in Union Pacific 105, our business observation car, and hopes to make it a special personal project.*

*Mike Mucklin photo*

