

E-TRACKS

A periodic publication for members and friends of
The Florida Railroad Museum

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Hi, members, volunteers, staff, and friends. E-Tracks is here again at last! It was in early 2022 that the most recent E-tracks was published. Here's a huge shout out and thank you to Cookie Jordan for faithfully publishing E-Tracks for many years. Cookie, you did a great job and left very big shoes to fill. I will do my best!

Like all businesses, profit and non-profit alike, your museum went through some difficult times during Covid. There were weeks we didn't run. Masks on. Masks off. Strained our finances! But we are alive and well, thanks in no small way to our dedicated staff, faithful veteran volunteers, and a big class of newcomers! More about them inside.

I am so glad that in my first issue as Editor I can report four promotions. It is heart-warming to see the new guys and gals stepping up to advance their skills and contribute their time and energies to the museum. Thank you all!

My endeavor is to publish E-Tracks no less often than quarterly. I have some ideas for keeping it interesting and timely, but your suggestions are always welcome too. Please feel free to email me at cbonnett@frfm.org.

-30-

Cal

Railroad Trivia Question

In which year was the first steam train introduced in the world?

A. 1785, B. 1804, or C. 1832

See answer on page 3

Joshua Chapman Promoted to Conductor!

May 28th, 2023 was a proud day at the Florida Railroad Museum as we learned of Joshua Chapman's promotion to Conductor. It has been our great pleasure to watch this young man pursue his never-ending thirst for railroad knowledge. Joshua, we're proud of you! We love you, Man! Joshua's Mom and Dad wrote the following:

Joshua David Chapman, How His Dream Came To Life

Joshua's passion for trains began at the tender age of three. Most people would think that Thomas would be the beginning of his enthusiasm for trains. Thomas came later on. It began when our son, Junior, gave him a video game called Train Town and a model of a locomotive that he had for years. It was then that his curiosity for how trains worked grew. This led him to explore the Internet.

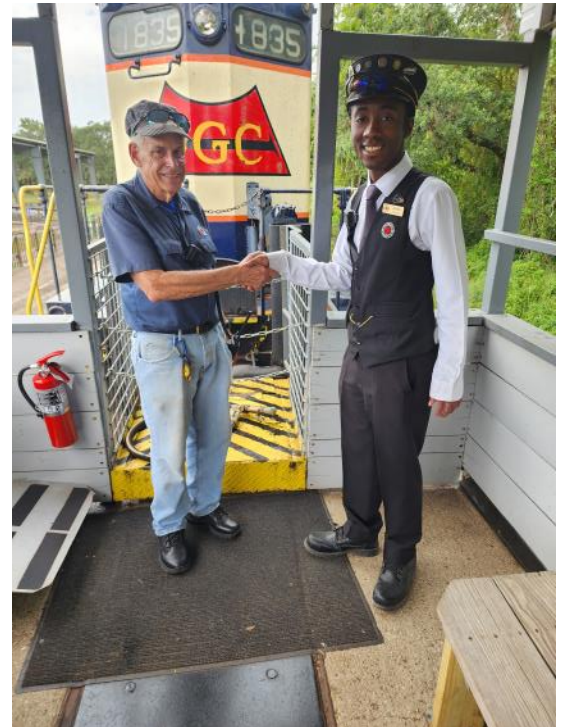
At three years old, there weren't many words he comprehended, but that didn't stop him from wanting to learn more about the world of locomotives. Instead of reading books about fictional characters, he wanted me to read stories about locomotives on the Internet to him until he was able to read them for himself. I was still there for the tough words.

Soon, he was on the Internet daily researching every kind of locomotive: steam, diesel and electric...national and international. He's still conducting his research on trains to this day. He also researched railroad museums for us to visit to see some of those locomotives he had studied for years up close and personal. We have been to several and are still traveling to different museums across the United States.

In the beginning, we thought his passion for trains might be somewhat overly obsessive. But in the fifth grade, he came to us excited about having created a Power Point presentation about locomotives. At first we thought, "More trains!" Of course, we didn't let him know that we thought he might be too obsessed with trains. But then, when the presentation began, from start to finish, we were totally flabbergasted...completely astounded with his extended knowledge of locomotives. We were sold. We decided to support him in his endeavor. He announced that he wanted to drive trains for a living. We thought that was very ambitious for a boy with Asperger's Syndrome and we wondered how on earth could we possibly help him realize that desire.

One day, we made a visit to the Florida Railroad Museum. It was a fun trip, riding from Parrish up to Willow and back to Parrish again. While riding we talked with the Car Host and the Conductor. They told us about membership and how they also have a training program where they train volunteers in all the operations of railroading starting from Car Host all the way up to Engineer. We thought that sounded amazing. The only problem was we lived a good two hours away from the museum. Getting Joshua back and forth for that kind of training would be a challenge. But we kept that thought in the back of our minds.

A few weeks later I was sitting in Joshua's room with him and he was showing me some train videos that he had recently downloaded and he said, "You know what Dad?" I said, "What's that?" He continued, "I want to do something with my life." That's when I knew he was ready. So I signed him up for membership and spoke with Kay about Joshua's ambition and she said we needed to talk with Josh Long. Josh was the Trainmaster at the museum. Josh met us on the train and immediately took Joshua under his wing. Shortly, Joshua began training every weekend. Each weekend, we would drop Joshua off in Willow to stay in the bunk car to enable him to work both Saturday and Sunday excursions. Other plans were made to get him there, and every weekend he trained until on May 28, 2023, Joshua was promoted to Conductor. He is still looking forward to becoming a locomotive engineer and, as hard as he works at his trainings, no doubt he will reach that goal.



Peter Mason, Chairman of the Operations Committee, congratulates Joshua on his promotion.



Peter Mason, Chairman of the Operations Committee, congratulates Karol on his promotion.

Meet Engineer Karol Chordas!

On July 19th, 2023, Karol Chordas qualified as our newest FRRM Engineer!

Karol spent his formative years watching trains in and around Youngstown, Ohio. In 1976, he joined the US Navy and spent the next 13 years as a photographer. In May of 1980, Karol and Theresa were married in Lexington Park, MD.

While serving in Maryland, he flew in some high-performance Navy aircraft, and later, while stationed at NAS Jacksonville, Karol earned the Naval Aircrewman insignia. Pursuing advancement via higher education, Karol entered a commissioning program. He earned a bachelor's degree at the University of New Mexico in May of 1989 and was commissioned as a Naval Supply Officer. After Supply Corps School, he attended Submarine Officer school in Groton, CT. Upon completion, he was assigned to the USS Stonewall Jackson, SSBN634G. After another tour where he commissioned the USS MAINE, SSBN 741, a transfer to Hawaii and a Submarine Squadron brought him back to close association with railroading.

Karol retired from the Navy in August of 2000 after serving 24 years, and soon thereafter, became associated with the Hawaiian Railway Society. Karol's wife Theresa was hired as the Administrator of the railway. He soon thereafter became a member of the Board of Directors. Every Sunday, from 2003 thru 2008, Karol could be found at the Railway working as crew on the Sunday excursions from Ewa to Kahe Point. After qualifying to operate the locomotives, he would run the two Sunday excursions. It was tough leaving Hawaii, but after 13 years on the Island of Oahu, Karol and family moved back to the mainland and ended up in the Tampa area at the end of 2008.

Karol first volunteered at FRRM during North Pole Express in 2008. He and wife Theresa worked a couple of nights in the multiple unit cars. He came by occasionally over the next ten years, primarily helping with large events. He started crewing the train more regularly after recovering from shoulder surgery in early 2020 and recently has, in his words, "tinkered in the Model Railroad Division." Karol completed Trainman qualification in April of 2022 and Conductor qualification in June of 2022. He was elected to the Board of Directors in September 2022 and joined the Operations Committee in March of 2023. And now, after nearly 15 years, Karol is qualified to operate locomotives again!

Answer to Trivia Question: B. 1804

Richard Trevithick (13 April 1771 – 22 April 1833) was a British inventor and mining engineer. The son of a mining captain, and born in the mining heartland of Cornwall, Trevithick was immersed in mining and engineering from an early age. He was an early pioneer of steam-powered road and rail transport, and his most significant contributions were the development of the first high-pressure steam engine and the first working railway steam locomotive. The world's first locomotive-hauled railway journey took place on **21 February 1804**, when Trevithick's unnamed steam locomotive hauled a train along the tramway of the Penydarren Ironworks, in Merthyr Tydfil, Wales. (Wikipedia)

New Conductor, New Trainman!

Congratulations to Evan Gough and Andrew Graham!

On June 25th, Evan Gough qualified as a Trainman, and in just seven weeks on August 13th he qualified as a Conductor!

Evan became interested in trains at a very young age. He was only two months old! He rode multiple trains throughout his childhood and stood at many a side of tracks just to watch whatever freight train planned on coming by.

Evan found the museum in 2016 or 2017. He rode the train with his parents and after that he was sold. He started volunteering during our 2023 Easter train and has enjoyed every minute. He intends to stay for the very long term and appreciates every opportunity the museum has given him. You're welcome, Evan!

On July 23rd, Andrew Graham qualified as a Trainman.

Andrew has lived in Brooksville since December, but he grew up in Glide, Oregon by way of Grayling, Michigan. His love of trains started before he can remember. Railroading was his and his grandfather's favorite subject. Grampy and Andrew enjoyed many train related activities.

This year for his birthday Andrew was gifted a cab ride with Peter Mason. This is where he found out he could make his dreams a reality. He started training (pun intended) in May and on a recent weekend performed his first full shift as Trainman. Andrew says it has been an amazing experience so far, especially with the things he has learned and people he has met.



Peter Mason, Chairman of the Operations Committee, congratulates Evan on his promotions.



John Halash, Member of the Operations Committee, congratulates Andrew on his promotion.

From the Desk of President Pat Masterson



When I joined FRRM in 2004, there was one single employee, Glenn Miley, doing everything. I tried to help him wherever I could. That included repairing cars and locomotives, and doing track work.

At that time, there was no development in the Willow yard. There were no buildings or sidings. As the years went by, Glenn, Paul Chapman, Woody Massara, and others built up the yard tracks, and cleared the brush on the west side of the tracks. This is now our event field. In 2012 Paul built the first part of the Willow Station, and we had hired a full time utility worker.

By 2021, we had most of the new Parrish buildings erected. Now, when I look back at what we all have accomplished since I first arrived, I am truly impressed. We have come a long way, yet we have much to do.

It would not have been possible without the dedication of our employees, and the countless hours of our fabulous volunteers. Post COVID, this is a most optimistic period for the museum. We are making great progress on many fronts, and it is all due to your help, and the sacrifices you make to keep us moving forward.

We have a lot of forward momentum now. We have a great staff, and a constantly improving volunteer base. I can't wait to see what the Museum will look like two or three years from now!

Thank you all for making the Florida Railroad Museum such a great success.

Pat Masterson

Did You Know?

The Florida Railroad Museum has its own professional photographer!

Our photographer, Eric Michael Hilton, grew up in New York where he trained to become an architect. During Vietnam he joined the Navy and fell in love with photography, which then became his passion.

After the service he enrolled at New York Institute to study film production and commercial and architectural photography. As a commercial photographer in Manhattan, he photographed products for museums and advertising, brochures and architecture for magazines.

Still searching for the perfect job, he became an industrial photographer with the Sperry Gyroscope/Unisys Corporation for almost 20 years.

Lockheed Martin later contracted him to photograph nuclear submarines, radar sites, and other military and manufacturing locations for public relations, marketing brochures, and tech manuals.

Throughout his professional career, Eric has strived for excellence and perfection in his work and has won many awards.

Now living in Parrish, Eric combines two of his passions; photography and architecture, which has helped many real estate agents reduce their listing times and sell, market, and rent their properties. Feel free to visit his website at www.yourhomeshots.com.

The Florida Railroad Museum appreciates Eric's willingness to share his professional expertise with us. Thank you, Eric!



Cooling Off at the 2023 FRRM Summer Splash in July

It was a great way to beat the heat!



Coming Events in 2023!

The Florida Railroad Museum has scheduled a busy special event season and it begins in September with the train robbery by the notorious Hole in the Head Gang. Visit www.frrm.org for ticketing information and get your tickets before they sell out!



Hole in the Head Gang Train Robbery

September 9th and 10th at 11:00AM and 2:00PM

Rumor says a valuable shipment will be on board your train. Passengers are assured the situation will be fully secure in the hands of the United States Marshal Service. Surely the Hole-in-the-Head Gang will not attempt to stop a train under Marshal protection... Will they? Join us for a fun train ride that will let you experience an Old West-style train robbery!

Other upcoming events:

October 14, 15 - Civil War Reenactment

October 21, 22, 28, 29 - Pumpkin Patch Express

November 4, 5 - Von Kessinger's Express

November and December - North Pole Express

Check our website, www.frrm.org, for information and ticketing!

Have a few hours each month to spare? Why not consider volunteering at the Florida Railroad Museum? We're easy to get along with about scheduling. We'll schedule around your availability! And you will be thoroughly trained for any position to which you aspire. You'll begin as a Car Host Trainee and our Car Host Trainer, Debbie Chapman, will see that you know what you need to know. Interested? Come out one Saturday or Sunday and talk to Debbie. You'll soon be family!

Prefer hands-on hard work? The maintenance crew would welcome your assistance at our Willow Yard on Tuesdays at 9:00 AM. Learn the mechanical side of railroading! Report to General Manger Robert Lewis. Call the station for directions.



The *Pumpkin Patch Express* will be departing the our Parrish station at 11:00AM and 3:00PM on October 21, 22, 28, and 29 for a trip to the museum's very own pumpkin patch!

Lots of activities are included with your ticket! Hay rides, arts and crafts, Lincoln log building, and games will be available. Children are invited to pick a pumpkin from the patch to take home.

Food and beverages are available for purchase onboard the train and while at the Pumpkin Patch.

For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit www.frrm.org and click Pumpkin Patch Express under the Rides & Events tab.



And our premiere event of the season!



Join us this holiday season for a 35 minute ride from Parrish, Florida to the North Pole. Upon arrival, everyone will detrain at our special North Pole station where Santa awaits to visit with every child. During your stay a variety of entertainment, activities, camp fires and all the hot chocolate and cookies you care to eat are included with every train ticket.

Additional food and beverage will be available for purchase at the North Pole.

We travel to the North Pole twice nightly on 16 nights in November and December. A variety of seating options are available including First Class cars, Excursion Class cars, Open-air Coach cars, and Private Caboosees. Tickets on sale August 17th, and they go fast! Don't procrastinate and be disappointed. Visit www.frrm.org and click North Pole Express under the Rides & Events tab. See you at the North Pole!



*Remembering our 2022
North Pole Express*





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Edward Ringwald

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Debbie Chapman

Car Host Trainer

Operating Hours

Train Schedule

Saturday and Sunday Only

(excluding some special events)

<u>Station</u>	<u>Departure</u>	<u>Arrival</u>
Parrish	11:00 AM	12:30 PM
Parrish	2:00 PM	3:30 PM

Ticket Prices

(excluding special events)

Adults 12+ \$18.00

Children 3-11 \$14.00

Under 3 Free

Office Hours

Wednesday through Sunday

10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

(extended for special events)

Contact Information

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kpowers@frmm.org

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