

I grew up in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I rode the Super Chief and El Capitan to Chicago twice a year to visit my grandparents. It was when I was three years old, watching the mar's lights on the covered wagons snake through Apache Canyon in the snow that I developed my love for trains. My relatives were deeply immersed in the history of the Santa Fe, New Mexico. My godfather (great uncle) was agent in Albuquerque for 50 years and my great grandmother was a Fred Harvey girl in Rincon, New Mexico.

We briefly moved to Chicago while my father went to law school. I would sneak out of the apartment and walk a block and a half to the Indiana Harbor Belt to watch the trains. It was then I knew in my heart that I wanted made to become a locomotive engineer.

At the age of 15, I moved to Chicago to live with my grandmother. During two summers, I worked as a tour escort for American Rail Tours (a division of Amtrak). That experience was a profound part of the foundation of my railroad career and the start of my passion for railroading. Out of that experience came my love affair with Southern Pacific.

I attended the University of Tennessee in Knoxville to major in Transportation. During that time, all I could think of was working in the railroad industry. In 1976, I hired out at the Chicago and North Western as a brakeman after begging the women in the personnel department to hire me. After that, I become a conductor, fireman, and locomotive engineer. I was the second female locomotive engineer in the United States.

While on vacation to the Bay Area in 1979, I stopped in at One Market Plaza (the Mecca of the Southern Pacific) and applied for employment as a promoted locomotive engineer. I was hired in Oakland. And the rest is history.

In 1987, I began working for Amtrak with headquarters in Oakland as the first woman road foreman of engines in the country.

Subsequently, I relinquished my seniority at Amtrak and moved to Olathe, Kansas to work for Burlington Northern as assistant manager of locomotive engineer training. A family crisis sent me back to the San Francisco Bay Area which led me to work in intermodal and automotive operations at Consolidated Freightways, American President Lines, and Pacer Stacktrain.

My future husband to be was living in Michigan and I moved to that state until we could return to the Bay Area. I worked as a consultant starting up operations of a Class III switching railroad in New York, an intermodal project for Norfolk Southern, and a shortline railroad company operating in Texas.

After we returned to the Bay Area, I was hired as a locomotive engineer for Sierra Northern until I was approached by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to become part of team developing the Confidential Close Call Reporting System. The program was funded by the FRA and administered by NASA to study human factors incidents and accidents to improve railroad safety. I became project manager and was based at Moffett Field, California until I retired in January of 2020.

I continue to work as a consultant teaching train handling, operations, and rules for various shortline railroad companies. My husband Chip and I reside in Lafayette, California as well as Santa Fe. We are a blended family with five children and two grandsons. Our interests include railroad photography, tennis, hiking, biking, activities with our dogs, and international travel. We raise, show, and do field work with our four wire haired Dachshunds who are gracious enough to let us live with them.