

# Controversial cabooses on the way out

By LANE WALLACE  
STAFF WRITER

LA SELVA BEACH — Two cabooses are on their way out of La Selva Beach after nearly five years of controversy.

On Sunday, crews began removing one of the cabooses from the property of Julie and Dr. John King near the beach. By yesterday, the caboose was hauled nearly to the top of the road leaving the King property, where it was temporarily stuck.

Controversy began almost immediately after the Kings placed the cabooses on their vacant land, adjacent to the beach.

A number of La Selva residents complained to the county, saying the Kings had violated county regulations. The most vocal opponent has been Jim Fairbanks, whose home overlooks the cabooses.

Mrs. King said she had been told in 1988, by Dan Forbus, then a county supervisor, that she didn't need a permit to have the cabooses, which sit on a short stretch of rail line the Kings put in.

County officials said a permit was needed, however. Forbus was out of office and dying of cancer by the high point of the controversy.

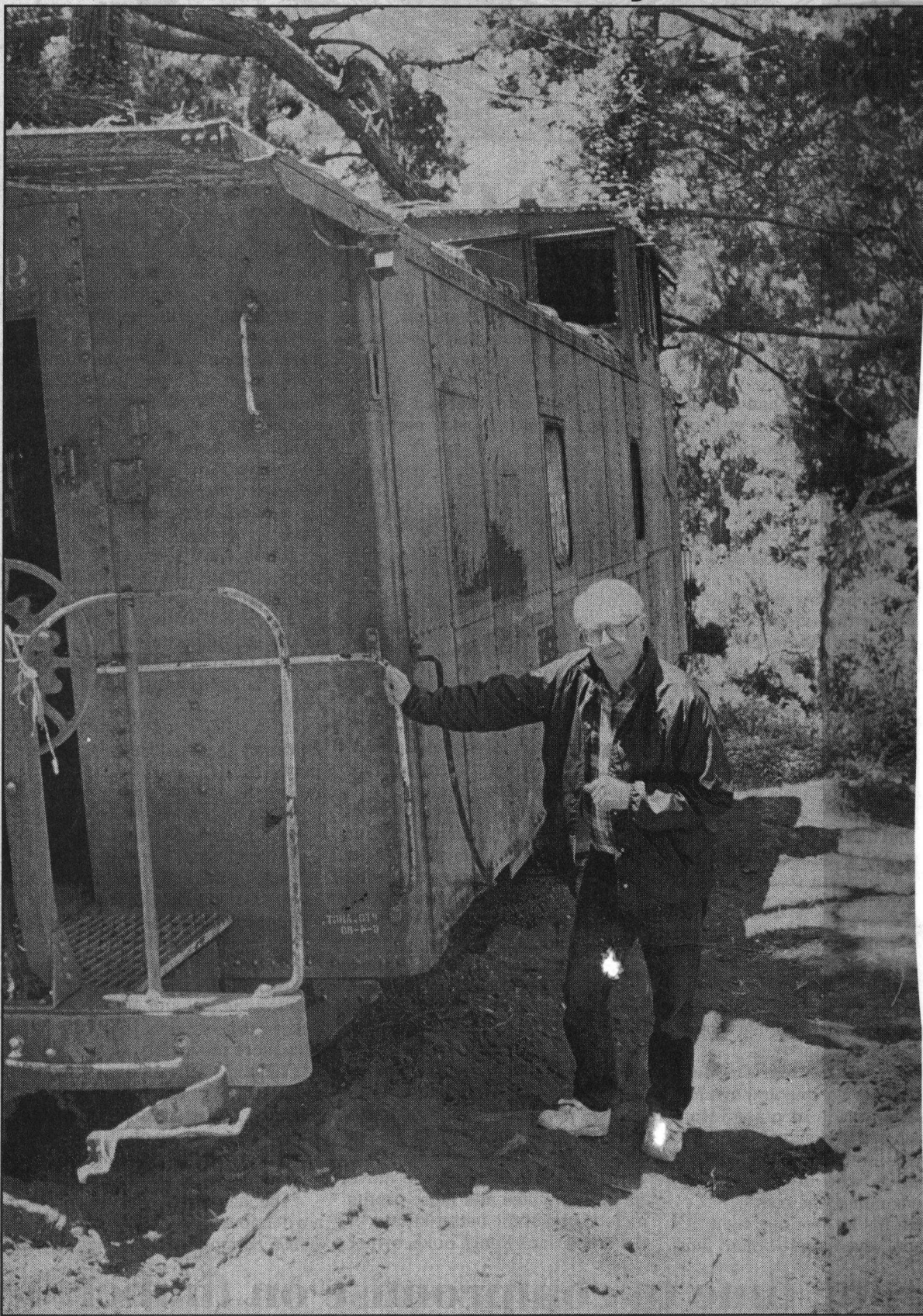
Opponents of the cabooses gathered a number of signatures on petitions, and the Kings had petitions of support.

After several hearings by the county Planning Commission, the county sued the Kings to have the cabooses removed. The county won, and the Kings appealed. After an appellate court ruled against the Kings in 1993, the case came back to Santa Cruz and Superior Court Judge Tom Black set a June 1, 1994 deadline for the cabooses to be removed.

The deadline passed, and the cabooses stayed. Several efforts were made to find somebody to take the cabooses, but Fairbanks said there is "no excuse" for the delay.

Fairbanks said yesterday he was "happy as hell" that the cabooses are on their way out.

When the cabooses were put in, Mrs. King said she was putting them in because of their historical significance —



Lane Wallace

Jim Fairbanks is glad that the 'La Selva Beach Railroad' is leaving town

cabooses are no longer essential for freight trains.

Soon after the cabooses went in, they were vandalized. Windows

were broken, and people ransacked the inside of the cars.

A hearing on the county's suit is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. tomorrow

in Santa Cruz Superior Court. A judge could impose sanctions on the Kings, or extend the deadline for removal.