



A publication for the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum members

March 2024

VOLUNTEERISM & DONATIONS ON THE RISE



President
Stephen Hager
inside the Shop
Building at
Campo.

*Photo by Jim
Lundquist
2/17/24*



**Pacific Southwest Railway Museum
Association, Inc.**
WWW.PSRM.ORG

Museum and Train Operations

Campo Depot
Highway 94 at Forrest Gate Rd, Campo
619-478-9937

La Mesa Depot Museum & Office

4695 Nebo Drive, La Mesa, CA 91941

PSRMA Board of Directors

Meetings are held on the 3rd Friday of the month except Dec at 6:30PM. A link to join the Zoom meeting will be provided on our website at members.psrn.org.

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Museum Services Dept: Travus Clark
Operations Dept: John Cenknerr

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Asst Volunteer Coordinator: Colin Atwood

Volunteers & Donations are the Lifeblood of our Museum

It has been GREAT to see so many new volunteers working around our museum in Campo. On February 17th, the shop was full of volunteers working on many projects under the leadership of President Stephen Hager. In the library, we had new volunteers working with Bruce Semelsberger. There were volunteers working as crew or training as future new crew members while three full trains were operated on the SD&A Railway. There are new volunteers doing a great variety of work in the facilities department under the direction of Frank Denison and Jim Lundquist.

Also, during the week, we had volunteers putting together picnic tables, trimming trees and cleaning up our museum site. While all this work is going on, the museum also has those jobs which remain unseen. The giftshop is restocked, memberships are renewed, financial paperwork continues, the La Mesa depot is staffed three days a week, and on and on. In addition to this great news, donations keep coming in. We raised \$10,000 to offset some of the costs for the recently completed track work. We also had a member make a \$3,200 donation which allowed the purchase of three new picnic tables.

This issue of the *Hot Scoop* will highlight just a few of these new volunteers and share the good news. Please reach out to our new volunteers and make them feel welcomed and thanked. In order to continue to grow our Museum, we can always use additional volunteers. Without volunteers, we don't exist. To join with us, email volunteer@psrm.org

February 2024 Hot Scoop Feedback

The February 2024 issue of the *Hot Scoop* highlighted the track work which was completed on the SD&A Railway. The project cost \$285,000 to complete. A long time volunteer wondered if, in fact, that was the largest financial effort for our museum. There was discussion regarding the financial resources invested in bringing our steam locomotive SP #2353 back into operations during the 1995 - 1999 years. As far as this editor knows, actual financial records for that specific project for those years are not available. Without this information, it is impossible to compare. However, I am confident in stating that the track project was the largest financial commitment for one project in one year that our Museum has undertaken.

That being said, I'm certain as we move forward with the development of the Master Plan, future projects will most certainly require larger financial commitments.

Jim Lundquist, Editor



The *Hot Scoop*® is a publication of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association, Inc.

The opinions expressed in the *Hot Scoop* are those of the individual writer and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association, Inc., (PSRMA) its officers or staff.

PSRMA Mission Statement:

PSRMA is dedicated to preserving the physical legacy and the experience of rail transportation. Programs address the historical, social, economic and technical impact of railroading with particular emphases on railroads of San Diego County and the systems with which they connected in the United States and Mexico.

PSRMA is a non-profit educational organization operating under section 501(c)3 of the tax codes. Donations may be tax deductible.

PSRMA is a member of the Heritage Rail Alliance.

Submission guidelines: All articles should be single spaced and submitted in Microsoft Word format. Photographs are also welcomed. Please include photographer and date of photo. Send all submissions to Editor@psrm.org

The *Hot Scoop* is available in color via email. To receive the electronic version in PDF format, send an email to editor@psrm.org and include your name, membership number and email. Note that if you opt for the e-mail version, you will no longer receive the printed copy.

Comments are always welcome.

Send your feedback to:

editor@psrm.org

Calendar:

Special Events:

March 16, 17, 23, 24, 30 and 31 - Bunny Trains in Campo

March 30 at noon - Behind the Scenes Tour in Campo

April 5 at 7 p.m. - Members meeting in La Mesa Police Dept Community Room

April 6 - Coaster SDNX 2103 lead locomotive at Campo

April 13 & 20 - Brakeman class at Campo

April 18 at 6 p.m. - Annual Museum Dinner at Bali Hai Restaurant

May 4th and 5th - Campo Days at Campo

Regular Schedule:

At our Campo Facility

Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Museum open to public.

NOTE: The excursion trains operated under the name "SD&A Golden State" will run on Saturday only through March 10th.

Saturdays and Sundays - volunteer work days.

Wednesdays and Saturdays - Library open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call Bruce Semelsberger at 619-264-7282 for an appointment

At our La Mesa Depot

Tuesday & Thursday Noon - 3 p.m. Saturday: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. - Depot open

Volunteers are at both locations during the week as well. For more information about volunteer opportunities, please email: volunteer@psrm.org

April 5th, 7 p.m. - Members meeting set in La Mesa. Come hear about the acquisition and transportation of our latest locomotive at Campo. It is a fascinating, multi-year story told by none other than the guy who made it all happen - President Stephen Hager.



North County Transit District's five F40 locomotives were familiar workhorses on the Coaster commuter trains for over 25 years. When NCTD announced that it would be retiring these locomotives, PSRMA leadership knew it had to act to save them. PSRMA faced and overcame daunting logistical and regulatory hurdles, culminating in the arrival of SDNX 2103 at Campo in August of 2022. Come hear Museum President and Coaster Locomotive Acquisition Project Manager Stephen Hager give a lecture on Friday April 5th about how SDNX 2103 became PSRMA's newest locomotive.

As a added bonus, in conjunction with the lecture, on Saturday April 6th, PSRMA will operate SDNX 2103 on the day's Golden State Excursion trains.

The fun will take place in La Mesa, CA on April 5, 2024 at 7:00 pm.

The lecture will be held at the La Mesa Police Department's Community Room at 8085 University Avenue, La Mesa, CA 91942 (a few short blocks from PSRMA's own La Mesa Depot). Light refreshments will be served. In addition to the in-person presentation, we are pleased to offer a Zoom live-stream of the meeting as well for those members and friends who are unable to attend in-person.

Due to space constraints, in-person attendance is limited to the first 40 individuals to RSVP. You can RSVP for either in-person or virtual. Those attending virtually will receive a Zoom link the day before.

The book on the acquisition is on our Gift Shop shelves. It is also available on Amazon at: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0CMPKS9L3?ref=cm_sw_r_cp_ud_dp_954VSPHYJ3FK6CQM61NN

We look forward to seeing you there!



SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL RAILROAD MUSEUM!

Museum History - Looking Back by Decades



March

1984:

The Santa Fe Railway donated their overhead crane which was located at the foot of Pacific Highway, along with the three-way switch. Volunteers disassembled both and trucked them to Campo, where they were both reassembled and reused for many decades.

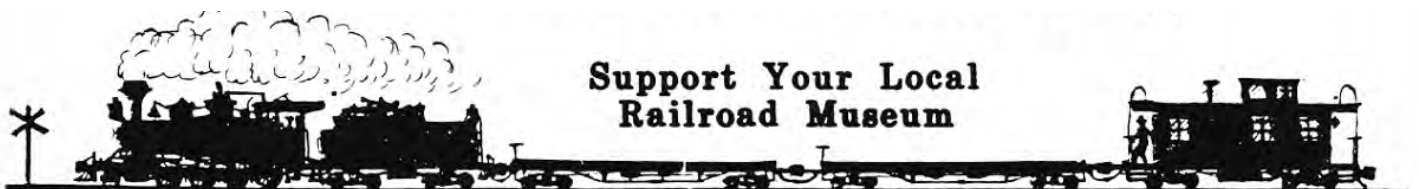
SANTA FE DONATES CRANE, SWITCHES, RAIL, TIES AND TRACK MATERIALS !!

March 2004: Restoration of the Campo Depot begins.

Membership News by Carl Brooker

PSRMA is happy to announce that Elizabeth Cole of San Diego, California has joined the museum as a sustaining member. Additionally, the following people have joined as either individual, student, senior, or family members and we are happy for their support – Jeff Archer; Shellie Archer; Jeremy Dear; Jenny Hughes; Jim Jeffrey; David Lewis; Nathan Lincey; Tyler Marty; and Jeffrey Rule. Welcome all!

welcome
TO THE
TEAM



The Pacific Southwest Railway Museum

cordially invites you to

*The Annual
Members Dinner*

*An evening filled with food, friends, and reflections
on the accomplishments of the past year, with a
special acknowledgment planned for our
volunteers.*



Thursday, April 18th

6:00 p.m.

Bali Hai Restaurant

2230 Shelter Island Dr, San Diego, CA 92106

Tickets are \$25 per person. RSVP here:
<https://forms.gle/FbTfbNZa2BTpggWDA>



Above left - Frank Denison and Morgan Snyder work with Freedom Ranch volunteers to assemble our new picnic tables.

Above right - Morgan Snyder with the new tables.



Father & Son Tim Mendeola and Darrien Mendeola work together in the Shop.



Scott Weber (pictured) and Jake Cotton worked on the backhoe inside the shop, with Frank Denison looking on.

Photos by Jim Lundquist 2/17/23



Michael Wendorf (left) and Alex Skytich (right) inspect the steam cleaner with the intent of making repairs.



Frank Najera continues to install a new roof on the 1932 Santa Maria railbus. <https://www.psrn.org/trains/passenger/smv-9/>

Both photos by Jim Lundquist 2/17/24

New picnic tables at Campo. Our thanks to longtime life member Mike Retz for his \$3,200 donation to allow us to purchase three new beautiful picnic tables now installed at the Campo Depot.



March 30th - Behind the Scenes Tour and New Member Orientation

Would you like to learn the history of our railway museum? How it came to Campo? Would you like to visit equipment and places the public doesn't normally see? Would you like to meet the project managers at Campo? Are you interested in looking inside equipment not normally open to the public? Join Jim Lundquist at Campo to learn firsthand answers to

these and other questions at our museum. Jim was the President back in 1980 when our museum purchased the Campo site and started to develop our museum. The tour will start at noon at the Campo Depot, allowing members to take the first Bunny Train at 10:30 and a few minutes to eat lunch.

Space is limited to the first seven members who respond via email to Jim@psrm.org

Fundraising Report

Donna Spevack, Administrator of Fund Development

George Porter, Don Cyphers, Stephen Grant, William DaLuna, Jeffrey Rule, Ann S. Squire, J. Voss, Brian Clarke and Jack O'Lexey.



Your support is assisting with railway track work, the Mine Train ride and exhibit, signage (Campo Museum), Educational Programming and much more at the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum.

On a Celebration Note: The Party Caboose will be completed in the coming months (thanks to Rob Stebbins donation) and we are looking forward to hosting you for your special day!

We have applied for a San Diego County Grant for \$50,000 to assist with the restoration of the Campo Depot Building, which will cost around \$60,711 to complete the full restoration. We are hoping to have it completed and painted the same colors as the La Mesa Depot by summer of 2025.

If you would like to contribute to any of these specific projects just let us know and we will be glad to assist.

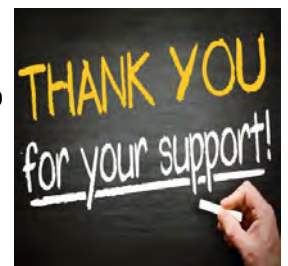
To make a donation go online at [Donate – Pacific Southwest Railway Museum \(psrm.org\)](https://www.ppsrm.org/donate) and click on our donation site or mail in a check addressed to: **PSRM, 4695 Nebo Dr., La Mesa, CA 91941-5259.**

Please specify if you would like to contribute to a special project, in memory of a loved one (table with a plaque) or just a general donation.

Thank you for the donor support for February: You make a difference!

Thanks to the following donors: Glen L. Rogers, Gerald Blake, Nicole McDowell, Richard D. Piselli, Anonymous, Kenneth T. Faller, Manley A. Golson, Steve Colombel, Francis C. Witkowski, Miles Linscott,

If you would like to explore additional ways in which you can help PSRM, please feel free to contact me at fundraising@psrm.org for more details. Thank you!



Library Update by Bruce Semelsberger

The Cavalry has arrived! All is Saved!

That's what it feels like at any rate. Thanks to the arrival of new volunteers at our library, we have already begun to make inroads on the huge inventory of backlogged donations. All of our new volunteers are relatively recent additions to the membership. In order of appearance we have Francis Pruitt, Maria Elena Ibarra and Josefina Cardenas to thank.

Francis (or Frank, he will accept either) joined with the museum at the end of 2023 and was instrumental in the success of NPL after taking on the job of making the hot cocoa for all of the visitors. He evinced a desire to work with the library at that time and has followed up on that in 2024. His skills as an IT security professional are a great help to us as we continue putting together a comprehensive update to our software.

New member Maria Elena was willing to dive right into the organization of our book collection, which had been left largely undone after the untimely death of Bob Underhill a few years ago. This will make the addition on the shelves of prior and upcoming book donations very much easier. Maria Elena can generally be found working with Richard and Bruce on Wednesdays.

Josefina, also a brand-new volunteer with PSRM, is a local resident and able to work with us on most Wednesdays and Saturdays. She has now mastered the rudiments of accessioning materials in our museum software beginning with the book donation backlog. As a result, we have already cleared three donations that have been taking up space for so long that there were cobwebs attached (perhaps a slight exaggeration). The addition of these new stalwarts has given

en Bruce time to process the first of several donations of photos that have taken up desk space for several months.

If you meet any of these new volunteers at Campo, please introduce yourselves and give them a warm welcome to our organization!

In other news, our old radio receiver, the hub of the A/V reproduction center, has finally outlived its usefulness and is being replaced. The old Sherwood was donated by Randy Houk back in the 1990s and served us well, but it is time for new blood in that department as well, so Bruce is donating a brand-new Sony unit after a bit of a search to find something with the necessary analog audio and video inputs. We occasionally like a bit of news and music while we work. The location of Campo, far away from English speaking radio sources, requires an external FM antenna above the roof, which we have, but the connection provided on the new Sony receiver is a tiny 2mm micro plug (we don't know what the Sony engineers were thinking) that required us to fashion an adapter from a mating jack and a 300/75 ohm matching transformer. Problem solved.

Wrapping up this report, I would like to thank all of the many volunteers who have arrived at Campo the last two weekends to clean up the car shop (What a difference!) and tackle a range of overdue projects there. I suspect from what I hear that at least some of this is due to the efforts of our fellow Museum Services Department staffer Jason Drenkow. Jason has done a fantastic job with our social media sites and given us a nationwide, maybe worldwide, following.

You, too, can join the action. There are plenty of jobs available at the library and all of the other departments to keep you enjoyably entertained on those long boring weekends.

Operations Volunteers

by Rich Paulus, Chief Operations Officer

Train Service - those who are qualified train crew members, speeder operators/crew, and trainees who have helped us run 15 Golden State trains, and the number of days they have volunteered through February 24: Colin Atwood 4, Alyssa Andersen 1, Paul Bandemer 1, Carl Brooker 1, Ken Brown 1, Kyle Cascadden 1, John Cenknier 1, David Choy 1, Travus Clark 1, Hector Gonzalez 1, Stephen Hager 2, Randy Houk 1,

Charles Karayan 1, Tyler Marty 1, Mike McIntyre 2, Rich Paulus 1, Duke Schweikert 3, Rob Stebbins 3, Tom Ulrich 1.

MOW - maintenance of way volunteers who have assisted Roadmaster Glen Rogers and Track Foreman James Caestecker in maintaining tracks and right-of-way this period: Paul Bandemer 1, John Cenknier 1, Hector Gonzalez 1, Isaiah Hutchinson 1, Jim Lundquist 2, Tyler Marty 1, Glen Rogers 2, Alex Verdugo 1.

There were a total of 38 volunteer-days this period.

From the Back Platform

by Stephen Hager, President

February at the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association can be a slow time of year. This year, in spite of some very wet storms over the past month, visitor counts at the museum have been up. This was, no doubt, helped by our organization's participation in the San Diego Museum Council's Museum Month, where all visitors with a Museum Month pass received 50% off train rides tickets and museum admission. On the note of storms, I'm happy to report that the recently completed drainage work along the railroad has been holding up very well to repeated torrential rains. The track rehabilitation project was money well spent!

SP 3709 has been operating weekly on our Golden State train excursions since mid-January. It has proven to be a reliable locomotive and is slated to continue pulling trains for the next few months. Work has been continuing on the locomotive on Sundays as we tackle various non-critical components that need to be repaired or replaced. The next major work to take place on the locomotive will be the reinstallation of the dynamic brake system. This system was disabled and partially removed by the US Military at some point following the locomotive's sale by the Southern Pacific Railroad. Specifically, the dynamic brake fan was removed, the switchgear in the electrical cabinet was removed, the high voltage cables between the electrical cabinet and resistor grids were cut, and the controller in the control stand was replaced with one that lacks a selector lever. These are going to be expensive components to replace, but fortunately, they are still readily available and we have the original electrical schematics. If you are interested in donating towards

the SP 3709 restricted fund, please visit our website at <https://www.psrsm.org/donate/>, use the "Choose Fund" drop down box to select the SP 3709 restricted fund, and select the amount you would like to donate. You can also mail a check to our La Mesa Depot at: 4695 Nebo Drive, La Mesa, CA 91941

March will be a busy month at the museum as we enter into Bunny Train season. This year, we are doubling our Bunny Train offerings compared to previous years! Bunny Trains will operate on March 16th, 17th, 23rd, 24th, 30th, and 31st. Like on all special event trains, passengers will have a choice to ride in coach or first class aboard our 1926 lounge car, ATSF 1509. Don't miss out on a chance to bring the family out to Campo for a train ride, egg hunt, and visit with the Easter Bunny! Visit <https://www.psrsm.org/bunny-train/> to book your tickets today.

On Friday, April 5th, I will be giving a member's lecture on the project to acquire and move Coaster 2103 to Campo. I'll describe the complicated acquisition process, the physical move of the locomotive, and some lessons learned for future museum locomotive and rolling stock acquisitions. Those attending the lecture will also be among the first to view some never seen before pictures and videos of the move. The following day on April 6th, we will operate Coaster 2103 on our Golden State trains at Campo. During the members lecture, we will raffle off cab rides aboard 2103. We will also be offering discounted first-class tickets aboard ATSF 1509 to members. This is a great opportunity to take advantage of your museum membership!

As always, if you would like to get in touch with me, please send a note to president@psrm.org. Until next time, keep it on the high iron!



Hot Scoop



March 2024

CAMPO DAYS

— ★ ★ ★ —

MAY 4-5, 2024

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST
RAILWAY MUSEUM

750 Depot St., Campo, CA 91096

TRAIN RIDES • VENDORS
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& MORE!



www.PSRM.org

Meet your Volunteer – Randy Houk

Randy Houk grew up in Lemon Grove, one block from the SD&AE tracks, watching the Espee (Southern Pacific Railroad) SW8 switchers (locomotives) pulling their trains to El Cajon and then back to San Diego. He never got tired of watching them as he stood near the rails or from his classroom windows at Golden Avenue Elementary. All trains ran during the day back in the 1950's and 60's, well before the line was double-tracked for the trolley.

Jumping ahead to 1989, Randy, his wife Connie and son Dave visited the Model RR Museum in Balboa Park. There they picked up a brochure for PSRM. The following weekend they trekked out to Campo to ride the Miller Creek excursion. They boarded on Track #1 in the yard; this was before the historic depot became our departure point. Engineer Dave Slater noticed his interest in MRS-1 #1809 and invited Randy to ride in the cab. He was hooked, and became a member that day.

Randy attended an orientation run by Dick Pennick at the PSRM library in La Mesa. Dick asked each attendee what their goal might be in the Museum and he immediately said "locomotive engineer". Thus began his journey with PSRM. However, rather than volunteering at Campo right away, Randy started out at the La Mesa library working with Roy Pickering, Bruce Semelsberger and Bob Underwood. Son Dave also helped sort books and magazines. Dave and Randy helped move the library twice, including to where we thought we had a permanent location at the Santa Fe Depot. Of course, now Bruce Semelsberger runs the fabulous library in Campo.



After about one year, Randy started volunteering at Campo as a Trainman with Dave usually tagging along with him. In addition to riding the train as a docent, he gave as many as three walking tours a day from the depot to the yard, describing our cars and locomotives. He recalls one day leading about 250 visitors on those three tours. At that time the museum ran two trips to Miller Creek at 11 and 2:30. Dave worked on the train for Stationmaster George Boggs, selling snacks in the Guard Car at age nine. What a great experience for him, dealing with money and people!



At this time Randy assisted Dave Slater in the effort to get MRS-1 #1820 running again. He still love the sounds, power and responsiveness of the two stroke EMD 567 Diesel engine.

In 1992, he started brakeman training, and became qualified in 1993. Running those trains to Miller Creek was very interesting for everybody, especially for the brakemen. This included the engine running around the train at both ends of the trip, increasing our proficiency at all aspects of railroad safety on the 1.4% gradient.

In 1994, Lew Wolfgang taught Randy HTML (computer) coding, and he started helping him with the web pages. Randy took lots of photos of our equipment and created roster pages for them using research provided by Bill Schneider. He also created photo galleries for our volunteers, and a "Filmography" page describing all the Hollywood work we've done.

Randy started engineer training in 1996 under the

Randy Houk - continued

tutelage of Denby Jones, Randy Gibson, Lew Wolfgang, Don Getz and Michael Reneau. All training at that time was in our two EMDs #1809 and #1820, along with AL-Co #2104. He learned the #6 brake stand before learning the #26-L with self-maintaining as found on #7285, #3873 and #3709. Randy became certified for engine service in 1997.

Randy became a conductor in 1998, and immediately Lew put him to work running our “Ticket to Tecate” trains. Randy has run more than 100 Tecate trains as Conductor, Brakeman and Engineer. Son Dave became a qualified brakeman and motorcar operator at age 18 in 2000, and it was a joy to crew our trains with him. Dave is now a USCG Gunners Mate and father of three.



Randy serves as locomotive instructor, and was Designated Supervisors of Locomotive Engineers (DSLE) for about ten years. Recently Randy has learned how to run the 70-tonner SP #5119, and how to “MU” (connect together to run as one unit) SP #3873 with Coaster #2103 and with SP #3709. He thanks our Mechanical Department for bringing these additional locomotives online. He is very happy that we’re once again running school trains to teach kids about rail-roading.

He is very appreciative of the work the PSRM board has accomplished to rehabilitate SD&A Railway track- age between Campo and Canyon – it’s the best he’s ever seen it! He looks forward to extending our rides back to Division and again east to Miller Creek. Almost everyone he talks to about our trains remarks about how much they enjoyed our Tecate runs, and when will we start doing them again? He says “Soon, I hope”!



PSRM was very active in 1999, with trains to Hipass and Jacumba. Randy was engineer on these trains. Going over Hwy 94 at the Upper Campo Creek Viaduct is breathtaking. Heading down the 2.2% grade east of Hipass using the #6 stand on #1820 is very interesting, but much simpler with the dynamic brakes on SP #3873. Jacumba is a wonderful destination for crew and passengers.



Boardroom Brief by Jenn Brooker, Secretary

Didn't make the last board meeting on February 16, 2024? Here are the highlights of what you missed!

Director of Museum Services, Travus Clark, provided an in-depth report on PSRM's current collection plan. The plan categorizes PSRM equipment into separate categories, which certain requirements for restoration and maintenance, and rules for acquisition and disposal unique to each category. The plan has not been updated in over 10 years. Clark proposed that a committee should be created to reassess the collection policy. The Board will approve the make-up and scope of the committee at the next meeting.

President Stephen Hager reported that the \$285,000 track project has been completed by RailWorks!

The Board selected Bali Hai Restaurant as this year's location for the PSRMA Annual Dinner. See the ad in this edition of the Hot Scoop for more information, or email jbrooker@psrm.org.

After the inaction of the previous Master Plan Committee, the Board approved the creation of a

committee with new members to determine a concept for the museum's future site plan, including the number, type, dimensions, and purposes for proposed future buildings.

The Board approved filing an application for the San Diego County Neighborhood Reinvestment Program Grant. The grant, if awarded, would provide \$50,000 towards the replacement of the wooden siding at Campo Depot with Hardie Board fiber cement board, which has fire protection and weather-resistant qualities.

Travus Clark submitted a proposal to beautify the museum's grounds and help combat erosion by planting succulents and native plants along embankments around the property. The Board authorized the expenditure of up to \$2,000 to purchase irrigation equipment, pending MTS approval for the plantings (as the embankments are on portions of the property owned by MTS).

The Board of Directors typically meets every third Friday of the month at 6:30pm. Members are invited to join in person at the La Mesa Police Department Community Room, or via Zoom at the link provided to members via email. Complete Board Minutes are available in the library or at <https://members.psr.org/>.

Down at the La Mesa Depot

by Timothy Miller

The wet weather has reduced the number visitors over the past few weeks, but those that have ventured out have enjoyed their visits. Many were first time visitors.

I want to thank those members that have helped me keep the depot open and functioning properly:

- * Bruce Semelsberger for repairing the lock on the south-end of the depot door and replacing the cloth covered wires on the telephone at the operator's desk.

It was not an easy task to work on ancient technology. Bruce spent a lot of time on the internet trying to find the proper items.

- * Frank Denison was a great help getting the Bunny Train banner up and replacing the waiting room Wooden Railway with the other layout so the younger return visitors get variety in our hands-on area.

- * Paul Falk for manning the depot on Saturdays.

- * Donna Spevack for adding a seasonal touch.

Brakeman Training Classes

By Stephen Hager, Brakeman Class Instructor

The next hands-on class for the entry level train crew position, Brakeman, will be held this April. The class is open to anyone, age 16 and above, who is interested in becoming a member of our volunteer train crew (don't let the brakeman title scare away any ladies.) Class size is limited to eight people. There will be two sessions of

the class; attendance at both sessions is necessary to complete the class. The two sessions will be held on April 13th and 20th (Saturdays), all day, at Campo. There are only two prerequisites for the class; those interested in taking the class must hold a current museum membership and must have completed two brakeman "observation runs". Visit the brakeman class webpage to view more details and information on signing up: <https://www.psr.org/brakeman-class/>



David Sanchez celebrating his 1st birthday in 1955 at the Jacumba section camp. One of 14 children born there. (car # 239 in the background)



The Jacumba cars are a continuing source of surprise and amazement. They have been a valuable education into the craft of wood car restoration. This will prove useful in future wood car restorations like the “Carriso Gorge” # 050.

The #239 was built (1875) during the transition to the automated wire nails that we know today, from the costlier and labor intensive “cut” nail (square nails) of the past. I have been finding lots of examples of both. Also some mahogany trim, and Birdseye maple veneers have been discovered.

The latest big surprise was finding remnants of a Southern Pacific timetable of the Bay Area that has been hiding behind one of the clerestory panels. That would date this artifact to before 1916 when the SD&A purchased the cars. Being the first person to see this piece of paper in over 100 years, was quite a thrill.

All of these discoveries pale in comparison to the latest developments as a result of Jason Drenkow, our Social media director, and Jenn Brooker efforts.

Jason’s recent updates of the car’s restoration progress on the PSRM Facebook page caught the eye of Tricia Meza who is the daughter of Alice Sanchez who lived in car #239 in the 1950’s. Tricia, along with her sister Becky Callen (Meza), rounded up the remaining Sanchez bothers who were actually born in car #239 in the 1950’s (three of 11 children that were known to have been born there). On January the 27th, members of the Sanchez and Meza families visited the museum to relive some childhood memories. Alice Meza (Sanchez) was unable to attend, but her husband, Richard Meza was able to make it.

After a tour of the cars and some of the exhibits, the group headed to the Library where Bruce Semelberger and Richard Finch were on hand to digitize

Jacumba Cars - continued

many of the family photos that they brought with them. There was also talk of recording some oral histories of what life was like working and growing up on the SD&A.



Members of the Sanchez and Meza families inside car #239 retelling stories of life growing up in Jacumba. Left to right: Becky Callen, Stephen Sanchez, Project manager Richard Finch, Keith Callen, Ruben Sanchez, Tricia Meza, David Sanchez (*Jenn Brooker photo*)

Developing this new connection to the Jacumba cars and their roots on the SD&A is what preserving history is all about.

We often forget it is the men and women that are at the heart of making a railroad run.

Much like the many tireless museum volunteers that are at the foundation to our day to day operations.



Alice Sanchez and Sara Garcia with # 240 in the background



Alice Sanchez graduates from Mt Empire High School in 1958. Cars #240 and # 239 in the background.



Ruben, Stephen, David, and Alice Sanchez in the 1950's



Stephen, David, Ruben, and Alice Meza's (Sanchez) husband Richard Meza today



Cajon Pass

The Santa Fe's original route (California Southern Railway) into California travels from Barstow down Cajon Pass, through San Bernardo, Perris, Oceanside, San Diego and National City. Finished November 9, 1885, Cajon Pass remains a very important transportation route. It now includes three tracks of the former AT&SF Railway, plus another set of tracks for the former Southern Pacific Railroad and hosts Union Pacific Railroad traffic as well. All four lines host many trains per day as they struggle up the pass to reach to the top. Originally, Route 66 and now Interstate 15 also uses the pass on its way from San Diego to Las Vegas, Salt Lake City and north to Canada. More info: sdrm.info/history/cs/calsouth.html





These two images capture San Diego county railroading at its finest. (Above) In 1933, AT&SF steam locomotive #3523 is pulling a four car passenger train away from its station stop at Del Mar, about to run along the cliffs above the Pacific Ocean on the way to San Diego. (Below) 82 years later, SDNX 2103 is pulling five cars and a locomotive along the same cliffs as it heads towards Del Mar with a Coaster train bound for Oceanside. SDNX 2103 is now preserved at Campo, with that story set to be told at the members meeting in La Mesa on April 5th.





In a scene duplicated across rural America in the 1860's - 1940's, farmers are transferring bales of hay between a box car and a horse drawn wagon. Campo and other stations throughout San Diego, no doubt, included many of these types of activities.