

# HOT SCOOP



A publication for the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum members

June 2024

# CAMPO DAYS

— ★ ★ ★ —





**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](http://members.psrn.org).

**Museum Officers**

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Vice President: Colin Atwood  
Treasurer: Hector Gonzalez  
Secretary: Jenn Brooker  
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Facilities Dept: Frank Denison  
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Gift Shop Mgr: Thomas Deen  
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Volunteer Coordinator: Jenn Brooker  
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## Campo Days Were A Huge Success

Campo Days were held May 4th and 5th as a special celebration by all the museums and non-profits in Campo with a fun-filled day of activities. This issue of the *Hot Scoop* will bring us all the details of our railway museum's events, through written texts and photographs. Our volunteers really pulled together to make this weekend a special time for our visitors. This is an annual event. Plan on attending next year's Campo Days.

### Calendar:

Due to required track maintenance, the Golden State will not operate standard train excursions during the month of June. We apologize for any inconvenience. The scheduled June school train, the National Model T Club excursion, and the sensory-friendly excursion are still a go!

Members are invited to attend the June 20th Ford Model T rally.

### Special Events:

June 9 - "Sensory Friendly Train Ride" for adults with autism/developmental disabilities.

June 18 - School train at Campo

June 20 - National Ford Model T rally and train ride at Campo

August 9 - Membership Meeting. "Railroading in San Diego County: 1945-Present". 6:30 p.m. in La Mesa Police Dept Community Room.

November 14 - Membership Meeting. "Spreckels Empire". 6:30 p.m. in La Mesa Police Dept Community Room.

### Regular Schedule:

#### ***At our Campo Facility***

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

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

#### ***La Mesa Depot Open:***

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

Volunteers are at both locations during the week as well. For more information, please email: [volunteer@psrm.org](mailto:volunteer@psrm.org)

Corrections - May 2024 *Hot Scoop*: Page 8, arm rests were reupholstered on SP #3873, not #7873. Page 12, San Diego & Cuyamaca Railway - photo was of opening day excursion to Lakeside in April 1889 and there are actually three trains, all with borrowed equipment. Page 16, photo location is Lakeside.

# Annual Campo Days Celebration a Huge Success!

by Jennifer Brooker, Special Events Coordinator

*Campo Days is an annual celebration of the history and heritage of East County, held the first weekend in May, by each of the four museums in Campo: Gaskill Brothers' Stone Store, Camp Lockett Event and Equestrian Center (CLEEF), The Motor Transport Museum, and the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum.*

PSRM celebrated Campo Days 2024 with a focus on railroading across Southern California. Dozens of volunteers came together to make the event a huge success. Many pieces of equipment that are not normally on public display or for public access were brought out for guests to enjoy. Our steam locomotive, SP 2353, was brought outside for the first time since 2019, along with a freight consist. Jim Baker and Timothy Miller regaled visitors with the locomotive's extensive history while guests took pictures and enjoyed a tour of the cab. James Caestecker provided tours of the *Robert Peary*, PSRM's VIP car, highlighting the car's presidential history. Stephen Hager entertained families with a demonstration of the SD&A Firetruck.



Eight rail clubs from across Southern California, including the All Gauge Toy Train Association and the San Diego Model Railroad Museum, set up booths in the Exhibit Hall to provide visitors with even more railroad knowledge and demonstrations. San Ysidro

Health, Imperial Valley Desert Museum, Laguna Mountain Volunteer Association, and the PSRM Library also set up informational booths to educate the community and answer questions.

Despite the questionable weather, nearly 600 guests enjoyed scenic rail excursions, equipment demonstrations, giveaways, live entertainment, a variety of local food vendors, tours of rarely seen equipment, and more. A huge thank you to the many volunteers that helped plan and execute this event. It was amazing to see so many familiar and new faces coming together for this excellent event. We cannot wait until 2025 as this event continues to grow year after year!

*Interested in volunteering for Campo Days 2025 or another special event? Email [volunteer@psrm.org](mailto:volunteer@psrm.org) for more information!*



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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:editor@psrm.org)



A group photo was taken at the end of Campo Days. Included were all the volunteers that could get away late on the Saturday afternoon. *Photo by Jason Drenkow 5/4/24*



## From the Back Platform By Stephen Hager, President

At the beginning of May, the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association and several other member organizations of the Camp Lockett Interest Group (CLIG) hosted the third annual Campo Days event. This year, the event fell on Cinco de Mayo weekend and we saw no shortage of visitors from the local area and the wider San Diego region. With each successive year that we host Campo Days, more activities and vendors are added to the mix. Thanks to the efforts of a handful of dedicated volunteers, I would argue that this year's event was the best yet. Much of the credit goes to Jenn Brooker and Jason Drenkow, who spent multiple months planning and coordinating with other organizations and vendors to make the event a success.

Since many of our other special events are geared towards families with small children and function primarily as fundraisers, we decided to make Campo Days into more of a railfan-oriented event. To this end, we put together a plan to showcase as much of our equipment as possible and to bring in other railroad organizations from the area. Organizations who participated included the San Diego Model Railroad Museum, La Mesa Model Railroad Club, the All Gauge Toy Train Association, and many others. In the exhibit hall, we had the ATSF 1413 caboose, SD&A 050 Carriso Gorge business car, ATSF 74 RPO car, and RS&S 3 "Jim Crow" car open and available for walkthroughs as usual. We also recently moved our chair car, UP 576, into the Exhibit Hall where it will remain on display when not needed for North Pole Limited or other special event service.



On Track 1 between the Exhibit Hall and Section House we staged SP 2353, our "ten-wheeler" steam locomotive, along with a short freight car string consisting of a box car, tank car, and caboose. This short freight train was a huge hit and steam foreman Jim Baker was there to give tours and answer visitors' questions, assisted by Timothy Miller, Tim Wamsley, and Rich Paulus. On the passing track in front of the Campo Depot, we staged ATSF 2098, our alco RS-2, along with the freight string that it normally accompanies on the house track. We also positioned SDNX 2103 on the passing track for easy viewing. On the house track just east of the depot, we staged the Robert Peary business car. James Caestecker provided tours of the car and informed guests of our special summer offer to charter the car for an entire day for only \$500. For more information on this limited-time offer, email [reservations@psrm.org](mailto:reservations@psrm.org).

On the house track east of the Robert Peary, I led hourly demonstrations of the water pumping capabilities on the 1931 SD&AE Fire Truck, currently on extended loan to us from the California State Railroad Museum. In addition to the group of outside railroad organizations who participated, we hosted several of the usual vendors including food vendors, artists, a band, and other local organizations. Other than some cooler temperatures and light rain on the Sunday morning of the event, the weather was picture-perfect and made for some great photography. Well over 500 people rode our trains over the weekend and countless others took advantage of the free admission just to stroll through the museum. To borrow a commonly used refrain, "a good time was had by all!"



As we head into the month of June, we again find ourselves needing to do some critical track work on the section of railroad that we normally operate over. This time, the track work is needed at Milepost 64.6, approximately one mile west of Campo. This is an area which unfortunately received very little rehabilitation work earlier this year as we focused the efforts of our large contracted track project on other sections of the railroad that had more acute needs for repairs. The unfortunate thing is that this section of bad track has cut down our mainline to only about two miles.

Considering the scope of the repairs needed, we have made the decision to annul all weekend train operations in the month of June, except for the previously planned sensory-friendly train rides on Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>. We also still plan to operate a School Train on June 18<sup>th</sup> and a special event train for the Model T Ford Club of America on June 20<sup>th</sup>. The weekend public operations annulments will allow us to maximize our volunteer resources to get the track put back into service as soon as possible. The more volunteers we get to help, the sooner we will have the railroad reopened. An email to all active volunteers will be going out soon soliciting help for this

undertaking. If you are not already on the volunteer email list and you would like to assist with these efforts, please send an email to [volunteer@psrm.org](mailto:volunteer@psrm.org) and indicate that you are interested in helping with the track repairs.

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

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If your favorite non-profit group, church or school is having a raffle, we would be pleased to share two tickets to our museum and demonstration train ride. Simply send an email to [Jim@psrm.org](mailto:Jim@psrm.org) with the details and we will get those out to your group.



## Campo Days Reflections

by Jason Drenkow  
Jenn Brooker & Jason Drenkow began their planning of Campo Days back in December of 2023.

With the help of fellow members and volunteers Jason began compiling a list of regional railroad themed groups and museums and eventually expanded into a few other area museums and volunteer organizations.

The intent for Campo Days was to truly celebrate being a railroad museum while showcasing to the public all of the amazing groups and places where, not only can they enjoy trains & railroading but can also become involved. Hopefully we created new railfans during this event and have provided a place

for rail enthusiasts, history lovers and volunteers to gather, talk and celebrate our common passions. A special thank you goes to John Tarantino who provided many ideas and contact information. Invitations to Campo Days were sent as early as February

2024. Guest Exhibits included:

Chula Vista Live Steamers, San Diego Model Railroad Museum, La Mesa Model Railroad Club, Imperial Valley Desert Museum, Pioneers Museum



of Imperial Valley, All Gauge Toy Train Association and Laguna Mountain Volunteer Association.



Exhibitors handed out stickers, brochures and had activities for kids. The public was delighted to discover and learn of these organizations. All Gauge Toy Trains Association stole the show with their children's raffle. They raffled and gave away several sets of toy trains. We are certain we are helping to create a future generation of train enthusiasts! Thank you to our guest exhibitors! We are hoping to grow and expand our exhibits for 2025.



## Operations Volunteers for April 24 to May 25, 2024

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 17 Golden State trains, 1 School Train, and the number of days they have volunteered through May 25: Colin Atwood 3, Paul Bandemer 1, Carl Brooker 1, Hector Gonzalez 1, Ryan Hodge 3, Randy Houk 3, Charles Karayan 2, Amira Kaddoura 1, Jim Lundquist 1, Mike McIntyre 2, Marco Muniz 1, Rich Paulus 1, Glen Rogers 1, Duke Schweikert 1, Rob Stebbins 3, Tom Ulrich 1, Will Vanni 1, Tim Wamsley 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. This particular effort was to re-rail a SD&A coach and begin track repairs: Colin Atwood 1, Alyssa Andersen 1, James Caestecker 1, David Choy 1, Stephen Hager 1, Ryan Hodge 1, Rich Paulus 1, Glen Rogers 1, Tim Wamsley 1

Yard switching - these are the volunteers who have worked in PSRM yards this period doing switching for Campo Days: Jim Baker 1, James Caestecker 2, Stephen Hager 2, Rich Paulus 1, Duke Schweikert 1, Glen Rogers 1, Tim Wamsley 1

There were a total of 46 volunteer-days this period.

## Down At The La Mesa Depot

by Timothy Miller

Spring has brought out an increase in visitors. Several have commented that they had never seen the Depot open before and were first time visitors even though they live nearby. A La Mesa City worker recently applied weed abatement products around our display track.

PSRM has recently been approached by the group Casa De Mosaic to provide a "Sensory Friendly Train Ride" for adults



with autism/developmental disabilities. Working with Jen a date has been set for June 9<sup>th</sup> for the first implementation. To encourage others with similar issues to attend, a banner was procured, with the idea that it would help get the word out. It was first hung below the "Vintage Train rides at Campo this Weekend" banner on the PFE reefer but proved to be challenging to read. It was relocated to the fence next the La Mesa Boulevard sidewalk for better viewing. If you know of anyone that would appreciate a sensory friendly Train Ride, please let them know. It is possible that this might be needed as a bi-annual or quarterly event.



## **Fundraising for May** by Donna Spevack, Administrator of Fund Development

May has been a beautiful month! The weather has been great for a visit to the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum for your next family outing or a special celebration (*i.e., birthday, anniversary or maybe even a wedding*). Let us know and we can help make your special day memorable.

Also, it is a great time to volunteer at PSRM as the weather is still cool – go online at [Volunteer – Pacific Southwest Railway Museum \(psrm.org\)](https://www.psrsm.org) to sign up!

### **A big “Thank You” to our donors for their generous donations this month:**

Chuck Henry; Manly Golson; John Cenkner; Jack M. O'Lexey; Jim James; Michael Retz; George Porter; Kristen Gonzales

### **You too can make a difference in 2024 by renewing your commitment to PSRM**

What a great time to volunteer or renew your membership at PSRM for the upcoming year. Remember your membership renewal or donations enable us to broaden and deepen our commitment to save our valuable heritage for future generations.

Let's explore the many ways in which you can support the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum. Whatever your budget may allow, we have a plan for you. Check them out below:

### **Here are ways you can make a contribution:** (Including low-cost options)

- Make a donation online at [Donate – Pacific Southwest Railway Museum \(psrm.org\)](https://www.psrsm.org).
- Send a check to: PSRM, 4695 Nebo Dr., La Mesa, CA 91941-5259.
- Buy a bench in memory or honor of a loved one (includes a plaque).
- Or if you are interested in exploring alternative charitable options with us (planned giving), please feel free to call (619) 606-6231.
- Employee charity match programs through your work place – Check with Human Resources to see if they participate. **Volunteer hours can also count towards matching gifts.** [List of Companies with Matching Gift Programs \(easterseals.com\)](https://www.easterseals.com).
- Not able to make a monetary donation? Volunteering to help at an event or at the museum is a great way to contribute.

Visit us on <https://www.facebook.com/SanDiegoTrain> for opportunities. (*Like us on Face book*)

Please feel free to contact me at [fundraising@psrm.org](mailto:fundraising@psrm.org) for more details. Thank you!



## LIBRARY UPDATE by Bruce Semelsberger

You've probably heard the expression "Too Much of a Good Thing". Well, in some ways that is what the library collections are currently experiencing, particularly in the area of artifacts. Actually, PSRM as a whole is also sharing the experience in that much of the rolling stock, equipment and parts accumulated in the early days of the museum's growth is now more than current staff and dollar assets can continue to even preserve, much less restore.

The library's collections are a microcosm of the overall problem. For decades we have accepted whatever books, materials and artifacts that were donated in order to form a good representation of the railroad experience. Looking over the sheer bulk of the accumulated items, it is apparent that with the current availability of volunteer staff to process it all it will take the next year or two even if we don't receive another item! Furthermore, this does not include time needed to maintain the items we already have, do research, update and upgrade software and perform reviews to assure accuracy.

It is obvious that several things must happen if we are to avoid drowning in our own success. We need, first of all, to find ways to reduce current inventories. In the matter of books, we need to find a vendor or vendors who can resell duplicate inventory. Current practice is to keep the two best copies of all books and one extra copy each of subsequent editions where changes have been made. People like to read! Some donors have given us more than a hundred books at one time and railroad books form a limited genre, so many of them turn out to duplicate what we already have. We currently have several hundred excess

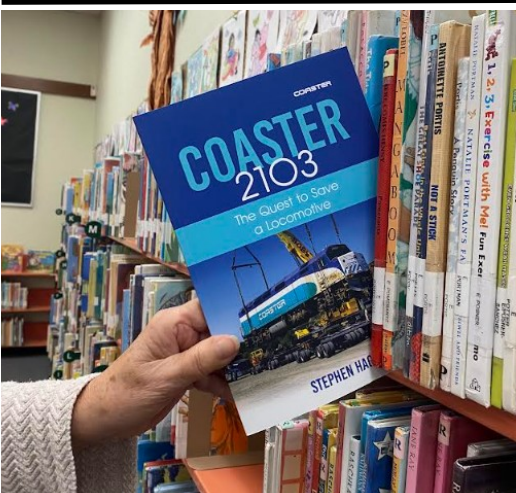
books to dispose of.

Artifacts should be limited to a reasonable number of items representative of each category with an emphasis on local railroads. It is amazing how many oil cans, lanterns and date nails, for example, that people have squirreled away. A number of them are not identified with a particular railroad or were even used by a railroad at all!

We are asking for your help in identifying what is not germane to our collections and finding a source for the best proper disposal of same. Some things may be sold in our gift shop or to a vendor. In the case of books, we need to identify a vendor or vendors that can handle bulk inventory at some profit to the museum.

If you contemplate donating items to PSRM, we ask that you take a close look at everything and try to winnow common items that have no association with local history. This includes what many people call "coffee table" books which are usually oversized and have lots of color photographs and very little information. We *love* old photos and negatives! We have the equipment to digitize any type or size of print and negative (another fun volunteer job) but, *Please*, write any information you have that helps to identify the subject.

Lastly, we need to reiterate the need for volunteers to help us even if it is only once a month at Campo. We currently have only four staffers of which only two are regularly there at least weekly! Drop in any Saturday and see what we do and maybe you will find a project that interests you. To suggest a vendor for the surplus items, call or message me at 619-264-7282. Thanks for supporting PSRM!



On May 24, 2024, Jennifer Brooker presented a lecture entitled "Saving Coaster Locomotive 2103" to patrons of the San Carlos Branch of the San Diego Public Library. The talk focused on President Stephen Hager's tireless efforts and perseverance in securing Coaster 2103 and its epic journey to Campo. Jennifer presented a signed copy of Hager's book, *Coaster 2103: The Quest to Save a Locomotive*, to the library, which is now available for patrons to check out and read.

## Membership News

by Carl Brooker, Membership Coordinator

Train enthusiasts and history buffs alike, lend a hand (remotely!) to the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum! We're seeking a dedicated volunteer to take on the rewarding role of Membership Coordinator. This fully remote position is perfect for railway history buffs who want to support the museum from the comfort of their own home. As Membership Coordinator, you'll play a vital role in processing new memberships and renewals, ensuring our valued members receive their welcome packets promptly. It's a fantastic opportunity to make a real difference for the museum, all without needing to travel to Campo. If you're passionate about trains and have a knack for organization, we encourage you to inquire! Please email at [membership@psrm.org](mailto:membership@psrm.org) with any questions or to express interest!

PSRMA is happy to report that in the last month we had nineteen folks join our rolls as new members either as supporting, family, individual or senior. Please welcome Rebecca Aguilar, Sandra Boetler, T.J. Bonner, Michael Carroll, Nicholas Errico, Linda Eskin, Paula Feriante, Seth Fulton, Mark Gomes, Esteban Gonzalez, Alyssa Grace, Justin Hardin, Bob Heygood, Bruce Hoang, Lee Huntington, Peter Matusov, Aaron Roske, and Nancy Watts.



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## Members meeting on November 14th

Save the date for the final PSRM lecture of 2024. Dr. Sandra E. Bonura will present on her book [Empire Builder: John D. Spreckels and the Making of San Diego](#) - winner of the 2021 San Diego Book Award.

**As a special offer for PSRM members, Sandra has graciously offered PSRM members copies of her books for 40% off for a limited time! Use code [6AS24](#) for the discount at checkout.**

Empire Builder Order Page: <https://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/nebraska/9781496222916/>

The Sugar King Order Page: <https://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/nebraska/9781496235114/>

Dr. Sandra E. Bonura is a historian and award winning author of multiple nonfiction books. Her popular book, [Empire Builder: John D. Spreckels and the Making of San Diego](#) chronicles the life of a forgotten pioneer who almost single-handedly built San Diego after creating empires in sugar, shipping, transportation, and building development up and down the coast of California and across the Pacific. After “discovering” the bankrupt village of San Diego, in 1887, Spreckels left everything behind to follow his heart. His moves were so decisive and sweeping that within a few years, he controlled most of Coronado and San Diego’s industry. He was at the forefront of innovation and at the top of the 20th century, one in

15 San Diegans worked for a Spreckels-owned company. He was harshly criticized for perceptions of ruthless business tactics and monopolization. To the strenuous charge that our troubles were derived from the city being a “one-man town,” he responded, “If being a one-man town is bad for the town, take it from me, it’s hell for the ‘one man’!”

*“Here is the definitive book on John D. Spreckels, a titan who came to San Diego and ended up seeming to own or control everything in town. To read Sandra Bonura’s biography of John D. Spreckels is to understand how many of the very foundations of America’s finest city came to be.”—Ken Kramer, creator and host of Ken Kramer’s About San Diego on KPBS-TV*

The fun will take place in La Mesa, CA on November 14, 2024 at 6:30 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.

**Space is limited, please RSVP [here](#).**

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89734602264?pwd=i33RUfh6RJ7EPSuz2SF4yDdM2sgOMu.1>



Steam locomotives SP 2353 (<https://www.psrn.org/trains/steam/southern-pacific-2353/>) and SD&A 104 (<https://www.psrn.org/trains/steam/sda-104/>) are two of our most treasured artifacts at our Campo museum site. Both worked on the SD&AE thru Campo, one pulling passenger trains, the other freight trains. *Photo by Jason Drenkow*