

Hot



Scoop

HotScoop Shovel Logo by Larry Rose

A publication dedicated to San Diego Railroad Museum volunteers

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MUSEUM NEWS

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***** Trainman Classes ***** *Bob Schussler*

The trainman school began as scheduled on October 1 at Cuyamaca College. Although we didn't get the required number of students, the school permitted us to hold the classes. Several museum people helped out by registering, thus swelling the ranks to twelve. Special thanks to Darren Apedaile, Jim Baker, Kassandra Goulding, and Dianne Roberson.

The students appear to be enthusiastic about railroading in general and our museum in particular, but our ability to retain them depends on their perception of the museum and all of us. If we make them feel wanted, and show that we are willing to help get them started, we increase the chances of their staying. While being a trainman requires a certain amount of dedication and sacrifice, it is also a rewarding job, and can even be fun. I hope they see that side of the job when they visit Campo on Saturday, October 13. We'll also have another optional session on Saturday, October 27. Stop by and say "Hello."

***** To All My Campo Friends ***** *Ross M. Bryan*

Today, September 16, 2001, is a very significant day in my life, as it is my 37th year in railroading, having started my first day of work at 6:50 A.M. Sept. 16, 1964.

Equally important was that at 6:50 A.M. the same day my oldest step daughter was born, and on this date I was launched into both a railroad career and a few years later assumed responsibilities of being a step father to 2 girls and a boy.

Both of the above careers have taken me places and given me a very satisfying life.

Due to financial problems I had to stay home last winter and work part-time rather than come to Campo as I had the previous 4 winters. However, my part-time job has given me some very good travel benefits, and enough money to get by.

But the winter of 2000-2001 was quite cold, and the time I was at home between trips I was quite unhappy with the weather.

I was quite unhappy about not being in Campo due to some of the work that was needed to be done. And I very much missed not seeing my friends at the SD&A and the friends who live at Campo. On the other side of the coin, the guys at the Midland RR and my 7 grandkids were quite pleased to have me at home!

On May 5th while working at the Midland I suffered a badly broken leg which laid me up completely for 2 months. I have made a good recovery since then, and have resumed my part-time job delivering trucks in mid-August.

Hopefully I can come west this winter, and am working towards this goal. I have also submitted to the SDRM newsletter a story of one of my delivery trips where I rode on AMTRAK's Acela train, so I can share it for your enjoyment.

In closing, I hope that if any of you are sitting in the "Old Oak" restaurant drinking coffee, you'll be able to look through the window at Hiway 94 and see my bus rolling west into Campo. God willing and luck holding, I'll be there the early part of December!!!

***** Riding Amtrak's New "Acela" train ***** Ross M. Bryan

Since retiring from Santa Fe a few years ago, I have realized a long time dream of spending the winters in a warmer and dryer climate than Kansas. This goal had been realized by living the winter in Campo, California, working with the operation of the San Diego RR museum. I had spent four winters there, and wanted to spend the winter of 2000-2001 also.

Due to financial restraints, I was unable to do so, and was forced to take a part time job delivering large trucks for a local dealer. The advantages of having both a locomotive engineers license and a federal truck drivers license enabled me to get the job of delivering new and used crane trucks all over the country became very apparent, as I ended up with the perfect job for someone who loves travel, and is a railfan.

While some deliveries are two-way, where I deliver a new truck and bring the trade in unit home, many trips are one way, and you get back any way you can. Naturally, my choice has been Amtrak! Shortly before Christmas I delivered a new Sterling 9500 truck to Hagerstown, Maryland, which is close to Washington, D.C.

After arrival there, I took a bus to Washington, D.C., went to Union Station, and went to Baltimore, Maryland and visited the B&O RR Museum (yes I recommend it highly), knocked around Baltimore that evening, then returned to the train station for the next leg of my journey.

I had decided to return home via Washington, New York City, and Chicago to get back to Kansas City. Looking at the north east corridor timetable, I decided to ride Amtrak's new high speed *Acela* trainset from Baltimore to New York City, the *Adirondack* from NYC to Schenectady (the home of ALCO), lay over a few hours and visit a friend, then take the *Lakeshore Limited* to Chicago, and then the *Southwest Chief* to K.C.

The timetable informed me that the next *Acela* northbound would depart Baltimore early the next morning, with a quick connection to the *Adirondack*. The price for this ticket was \$136, a full \$100 over the price of an ordinary train on the same trip. I thought the price to be too steep for my tastes, but decided to make that my Christmas present to myself.

The whole architecture of railroading is quite different on the north east corridor lines. There are many examples of locomotives, cars and lineside equipment that you don't see in Kansas City or San Diego.

My personal observation was that the *Acela* equipment was an entirely different "breed of cat" than any other type of equipment used anywhere in this continent. For all practical purposes the *Acela* is so much different than anything else, it is like taking your first train ride all over again. The main difference in the train is that the cars are of a "tilt body" technology that allows 160 mph speeds on the present N.E. corridor track alignment between NYC and Boston. Between NYC and Washington maximum speed is 130 mph, due to more curvature in this division.

Upon boarding the train, I first noticed the vestibules were much larger than conventional equipment, and were much warmer and less noisy than any thing I had ever seen before. Going into the passenger areas I noticed the door openers were radar controlled, like the newer store doors we are seeing now. All aisles were straight through the middle of the car, and create an area which is very easy to take a motorized wheel chair anywhere in the train.

All interior appointments in the train are very light colored, with very little being dark colored, giving the entire interior a very well lit and bright appearance. All the seats were quite comfortable, and appeared to be a type of seating I had never seen before. Much of the interior wall and ceiling panels appeared to be easily removable by shop forces for cleaning or remodeling.

While departing the station I noticed the car was much quieter than conventional equipment, and seemed to ride smoothly at lower speeds while negotiating switches and crossovers. After leaving Baltimore's northern yard limit, the acceleration of the trainset became very apparent, and soon we were doing a track speed of 130 mph, but the speed did not seem to be any more than 85 mph with conventional equipment.

One of the technologies used with the Acela trainset to provide for the high speed is the tilt body suspension system where the suspension control system senses a curve, then uses the ride system to tilt the body at enough angle to compensate for speed and track curvature. The result of this is that the passenger has very little feeling of the track curvature. To someone such as myself, the feeling of the tilt system at work was quite odd, unlike anything I had felt either while riding a train or operating a locomotive.

The operation of the brake system is quite intriguing, as the train can come to a smooth stop from full speed in a very small time. This is due to the fact the braking is a combination of air and dynamic braking controlled by a computer. Another feature of the locomotive braking system is the use of a caliper type brake foundation. The caliper and brake shoes engage a bolt-on wear ring on the outer diameter of the plate of wheel, just inside the rim.

I made the trip to the lounge and bar car, to get an early morning snack, and saw ten Amtrak officials riding along, monitoring all aspects of scheduling and overall train performance. They were looking at time intervals as small as five seconds for early arrivals or departure delays! While I was at the food counter, I noticed across the aisle what appeared to be a small broom closet. When the door opened, I saw someone sitting at a small desk with a large computer screen. This monitor could show information on all aspects of the trainset operation. One screen would show speed, another locomotive mechanical and electrical performance, and another screen could show the status of all the doors in the trainset.

In what seemed no time at all I saw we were in New Jersey, just a few minutes from arrival at New York. I then headed back to my seat, and saw the New York skyline, but then discovered that much of the route runs in deep cuts or tunnels and not much can be seen of NYC. Our arrival at NYC was on time but as I had only fifteen minutes to make my connection with the *Adirondack* to Schenectady, and did not have an opportunity to see any of the station. It was also rush hour on a weekday and there were a lot of people in the area, and I would guess that ninety five percent of these people are daily commuters.

Leaving the station, northbound we again ran through deep cuts and tunnels for six or seven miles, then started running on the east shore of the Hudson River valley. Again a skyline view of NYC was not to be seen. However, as we went further up the valley, there is much to see, with all the railroad facilities in view, much marine action on the river, the Hudson Palisades rock wall area, and even a view of Sing Sing Prison walls.

The varieties of rail equipment to be seen is astounding with the mix of long haul trains and an endless variety of commuter rail equipment, and as usual I had no camera.

After several stops we arrived at Albany, which is a service stop and there is time to get out on the platform and look around. Albany is the end point for many commuter trains between there and NYC, and there were the dual power EMD FL9 locomotives mingling with the new Amtrak Genesis locomotives equipped for third rail operation.

After arrival at Schenectady I was picked up by Rob Wulscheger who then gave me the railfan's tour of Schenectady. I then saw the remnants of the ALCO plant, then went to the west end of town and saw the Schenectady Super Steel locomotive fabrication plant. This plant is fabricating the new EMD streamliner passenger engines.

Later that evening I had to return to the station to catch the westbound *Lake Shore Limited* to Chicago. Soon after leaving a bad storm blew in from the north, and the trip to Chicago had ice and snow all the way. We were three hours late arriving at Chicago Union Station.

Our departure from Chicago on the *Southwest Chief* was delayed due to a wait for another weather delayed train to make connections with the Chief. I was not bothered by the delay account the weather had all the highways and streets clogged badly and the Chicago airports were barely functional. West of Galesburg, Ill. the weather cleared up but was very cold the rest of the way to Kansas City. I went to the diner for last call, had an excellent dinner and some of the best coffee I had ever had, and had a nice trip the rest of the way to KC.

In closing I must say that I do not care for the eastern seaboard of our country, and would very much rather travel to the western areas when traveling, but I must say the Railfan interest in the east must be seen by all.

***** Volunteer Cap Program ***** Jack O'Lexey

Requirements to receive a hat:

1. Volunteer at the Museum 2 two times each month for 4 consecutive months.
2. We have a few people who volunteer 8 times in one month during the week. Get your hat in a month if you are one of them, if you sign in.
3. Any combination in four months.
4. MUST SIGN IN EACH TIME YOU COME TO THE MUSEUM.

The book is in the Car barn on the desk in the Lounge. (If you forget, you don't get credit. You must designate a project, not just "2353". Example: (painting, stay bolts, Firebox of 2353). Track work, track 15 pounding spikes etc.

5. For those who must work weekends but can get off once a month you work 10 consecutive months you can get a hat too.
6. If you have another combination for earning a hat put it in writing and submit it to Jim or me. We will get together and discuss it.
7. If you get paid for doing a position you are not volunteering your time and it will not be counted.
8. Any volunteering anyplace in the museum will be counted if a record is made at that location.
9. Bill Valverde was asked about this program and felt each person should earn a hat, not just get one.
10. **Note:** Jim Polloreno and I have purchased 24 hats for a start and will buy more when needed. If you would like to help purchase the second order of hats after the first 24 are gone please let Jim or me know.
11. Program starts September 1, 2001. Remember you must sign in at the car barn. We must have a record of when you worked, you forget that date it will not be counted.
12. Sign in only at the car barn, either on the table or operations sign in if you are on the operations crew.

I am happy to announce that **Dwight Koller** has become the first to get a hat. I presented it to him for working 8 times at Campo in September. I presented it to him after he finished talking to a tour and presented it to him in front of the walking tour group, everyone applauded. Congratulations to Dwight.

***** Web page update ***** Randy Houk

New this month is photos of newly qualified brakeman Tommy Batts, speeder operator Jim Baker, ticket agent Kassandra Goulding and concessionaire Annette Vaughan. See them at <http://www.sdrm.org/gallery/people/>.

Don't forget that our web page has a link for Volunteer Services. You can see old issues of the Hot Scoop and a link to the Code of Federal Regulations. The username is "**volunteer**" and the password is "**2353**".

If you're receiving this via U.S. Mail but have gotten **E-mail**, please send an email to hotscoop@sdrm.org so we can make you a 'member'. We save postage that way!

***** Year 2001 Dates of Note *****

	October	November	December
Staff meeting (1900 at Solar)	2	6	4
Campo to Tecate	13,20,27	10,17,24	8,15,29
Steam Train	-	-	-
School Train	16	20	18
Brunch Train	14	11	9
Dinner Train	6	3	1
Wine Train	-	20	10
Board meeting (1830 at Solar)	23	27	
Museum Services meeting (1900 at Solar)	31	28	
Deadline for Hot Scoop articles	28	28	28

***** Article Submissions *****

Please submit articles in pure text (.txt) or MS Word (.doc) format.
E-mail to hotscoop@sdrm.org is preferred. Send address changes to the editor.

*****PHONE NUMBERS and e-mail*****

Web page: <http://www.sdrm.org>

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