



A publication for the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum members

October 2024



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Trackwork



is
Finalized





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

619-465-PSRM (7776)

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.

Museum Directors

President: Stephen Hager

Vice President: Colin Atwood

Treasurer: Hector Gonzalez

Secretary: Jenn Brooker

Equipment Dept: Robert Smith

Facilities Dept: Frank Denison

Museum Services Dept: Travus Clark

Operations Dept: John Cenker

Museum Staff

Archivist: Bruce Semelsberger

Asst Dir. Of Facilities: Jim Lundquist

Asst Volunteer Coordinator: Colin Atwood

Fundraising: Donna Spevack

Gift Shop Manager: Alex Fiori

Hot Scoop Editor: Jim Lundquist

Membership: Carl Brooker

Social Media Mgr: Jason Drenkow

Station Master (La Mesa): Timothy Miller

Steam Foreman: Jim Baker

Volunteer Coordinator: Jenn Brooker



Special Events:

October 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, 26 & 27 - Pumpkin Express in Campo

October 5, 12, 19 & 26 - Sip & Scare Sunset Special (21+) departs at 6:30PM

November 14 - Membership Meeting. "Spreckels Empire". 6:30 p.m. in La Mesa Police Dept Community Room. The speaker for the lecture will be Dr. Sandra E. Bonura, she will be presenting her book Empire Builder: John D. Spreckels and the Making of San Diego.

Regular Schedule:

At our Campo Facility

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

October 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, 26 & 27- Pumpkin Express train rides at 10:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

October 5, 12, 19, 26 - Sip & Scare Sunset Special at 6:30 p.m. (21+)

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



October is a very busy month at Campo.

Two great events this month. Our annual Pumpkin Express is back again - great fun for the whole family as usual. New this year is the Saturday evening Sip & Scare for adults. We hope you can join with us - either as a volunteer of a willing customer. See you at Campo!

SIP & SCARE SUNSET SPECIAL

THE PACIFIC SOUTHWEST RAILWAY MUSEUM

A 21+ SPOOKTACULAR
ADVENTURE WITH
COSTUMES, COCKTAILS,
AND CHAOS!

6:30PM
SATURDAYS IN OCTOBER



WWW.PSRM.ORG/SIPNSCARE



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

From the Back Platform

By Stephen Hager, President

It is officially fall and the fourth quarter special events season at the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association has begun. September 29th will be a workday at Campo where volunteers will converge on our train cars, Exhibit Hall, and Campo Depot to decorate them for the **Pumpkin Express** and **Sip & Scare Sunset Special**. The **Pumpkin Express** is our classic family-friendly Halloween special where families take a train ride and tour through our haunted trains, and kids can pick out and decorate their own pumpkins. The **Sip & Scare Sunset Special** is our first foray into an adult-only special event in over a decade. This 21 and over event will run on Saturday evenings in October and will feature one complimentary cocktail or mocktail for all passengers with additional alcoholic beverages available for purchase. There are still lots of volunteer positions for Pumpkin Express and the Sip & Scare Sunset Special that need to be filled. Please send an email to volunteer@psrm.org if you are willing and able to help.

The operations department has been busy in September with the Brakeman Class and the final scheduled round of rules and review classes for the year. I'm happy to report that one of our newest operations volunteers, Dave Little, has completed the brakeman class and will soon be starting on-the-job training as a brakeman trainee. We also have a couple newly qualified train crew volunteers to recognize. Congratulations to Duke Schweikert for becoming qualified as PSRMA's newest conductor and to Ryan Hodge for becoming qualified as our newest brakeman! Both are rising stars within our organization and will provide much-needed relief to our small but hard-working group of operations volunteers. Please congratulate and thank Duke and Ryan when you see them next!

The equipment department has also been hard at work in September as volunteers perform the annual maintenance and inspections on our operating fleet of locomotives and passenger cars. With some minor exceptions, work has been proceeding smoothly and on schedule. October will be a particularly busy month for the equipment department as we begin lifting our heavyweight passenger cars off their trucks

to lubricate the center plates. We will be using our 35-ton Whiting Electric screw jacks for this work. We used the jacks for the first time last year on our light-weight coaches and baggage car and found the process to be relatively easy and intuitive. We will also be doing the usual lubricating, electrical work, and air tests on the cars in preparation for the North Pole Limited special event. As usual, an email will be going out to the volunteer list at the beginning of the month to solicit volunteers for these workdays. I would like to thank Bryon Anderson and Tim Wamsley for agreeing to take on the mechanical foreman positions in September while I've been busy with teaching operations classes and traveling.

Speaking of traveling, as I am writing this, I'm on my way to the HeritageRail Alliance Conference in Northwest Arkansas. HRA is an organization for promoting



the interests of and sharing information among railway preservation groups and tourist railroads. The annual fall conference is an opportunity to meet and network with leaders at other railway museums. There are a series of presentations where topics such as museum best practices and new developments in the railway museum industry will be presented. There are also multiple field trips to nearby railway museums, tourist railroads, and short line railroads. This will be my first time attending the conference and I'm looking forward to speaking with other railway museum leaders to see how they are operating their respective organizations. I'm hoping that I can come home with some useful takeaways for things that we can implement at PSRMA for the betterment of our organization.

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!

FREE BOOKS OFFERED TO MEMBERS - WHAT A GREAT CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Do you have a friend or family member, or yourself, who is interested in trains and history? We have just the gift for you, just in time for Christmas - your selection of duplicate books in our library! All that is needed is to arrange to meet our Librarian, Bruce Semelsberger, at Campo and select the books you are interested in. Bruce is normally in the Library on Wednesdays and Saturdays. These books are duplicate to our collection and we are happy to find good homes for them. Call Bruce at 619-264-7282 to arrange your visit.

Happy reading and Merry Christmas to you and your friends!



Facilities Report by Jim Lundquist, Assistant Director of Facilities

With myself back from my summer job running tourist trains, and with assistance from Morgan Snyder, we started back on the regular duties of tree trimming and weeding. These duties are an annual effort and they simply have to be done each year. In addition, Morgan and I have spent many days travelling down the tracks in a motorcar removing the larger weeds trackside that keep growing. I am thankful for his ongoing assistance. More projects will be underway in the Fall. We can always use extra hands if you would like to join us.

Large Donation of Railway Books to our Library

by Jim Lundquist

I received a phone call from my long time friend and former boss at the Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB, now known as MTS), Greg Thompson. Greg informed me that he was relocating to a new home and asked for assistance in finding new locations for his extensive collection of railroad books. I was working this summer near Yosemite and offered to drive to Sacramento to gather the books. My wife was also near Sacramento visiting her sister and they both offered to assist in the effort. Thank goodness for that.

It turns out that Greg had 395 books dealing with railroads! The ladies worked together to box the books

up and load them into the sister-in-law's truck for transport. There were 14 medium sized boxes, which took up the entire back of the pickup truck and the back seat!

The following week, both came down to Yosemite where we transferred the boxes into my truck for transport home. I spoke to Bruce Semelsberger who asked that I drop them off in Campo to allow our library first selection of any books we could use. Bruce added 233 books to our collection!

I then reached out to other railway museum libraries, and found a home for the other 162 titles!

THANK YOU DR. Thompson for your kind donation. Everyone is richer for your donation.

Museum has a YouTube channel

by Carl Brooker

We've been busily curating a collection of engaging videos that offer a deeper dive into our exhibits, collections, and history. From captivating documentaries to insightful lectures and fascinating vintage footage of the railroad, there's something for everyone. Explore our channel and discover the rich history and stories that our museum has to offer.

<https://www.youtube.com/@psrmrailway>

Some of my personal favorite videos are this month's amazing lecture on "Railroading in San Diego County 1945 to Present". Also we recently uploaded a professionally produced video on the "San Diego Trolley - The History of How it All Began". Of course, a perennial favorite is railfan Ken Kramer's "2011 About San Diego" which highlights the museum's acquisition of SP 5119.

We invite you to subscribe to our channel and hit the notification bell to stay updated on new uploads.

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 12 Golden State trains and the number of days they have volunteered through September 22: Colin Atwood 3, Paul Bandemer 1, Carl Brooker 1, Ken Brown 1, James Caestecker 1, John Cenknier 1, Cameron Garvin 1, Ryan Hodge 4, Randy Houk 1, Isaiah Hutchinson 1, Jim Lundquist 1, Matthew Milhoan 1, Duke Schweikert 2, Gabe Zorbas 1.

Brakeman Class – instructor, engineer, and other volunteers who have conducted the Field Training Class for those volunteers beginning brakeman training this period: Stephen Hager 2, Randy Houk 1, and Rich Paulus 1.

MOS – maintenance of signal volunteers who conducted electrical and mechanical maintenance and testing of highway crossing signal systems this month: Chad Baker 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: Chad Baker 1, Jim Lundquist 4, Morgan Snyder 4 and Tim Wamsley 1.

It's Pumpkin Season!

Volunteers Needed for the Pumpkin Express and NEW Sip & Scare Sunset Special

By Jennifer Brooker, Special Events Coordinator

Starbucks just released the Pumpkin Spice Latte, so that means fall is almost here. And fall in Campo means Pumpkin Express time and our brand-new offering, the **Sip & Scare Sunset Special!**

The Sip & Scare is a new adults-only event occurring Saturday evenings in October with cocktails, music, costumed characters, and a guided tour of our haunted train cars (complete with scare actors!). Learn more about the Sip & Scare at www.psrn.org/signscare. To make this new event a success, PSRM needs **YOU!** No experience necessary and no age limitations for most positions.

Please review the available positions below and email volunteer@psrn.org to sign up for one or more positions. Thank you for all that you do to make our museum, and our special holiday events, the absolute best they can be!

Available Volunteer Positions

For Pumpkin Express (Saturdays and Sundays in October with departures at 10:30am, 1pm, and 2:30pm):

1. Decorators (8-10 people needed): Unleash your creativity and transform our iconic vintage train cars and depot area into a frighteningly delightful wonderland! Put your decorating skills to the test and help us create a spooky atmosphere with creepy crawlies, cobwebs, and other frightful delights. **Decorating begins Sunday, September 29th, with 1-2 days needed during the week.**

2. Clean-up Crew (2-4 people needed): Be our unsung heroes! After the Pumpkin Express excitement is

over, help us keep the museum sparkling clean. This role involves tidying up the craft area, storing tables and chairs, removing and storing décor, and cleaning up any remaining pumpkins. **Clean up begins after 5pm on Sunday, October 27th and must be complete by Friday, November 1.**

3. Craft Area Volunteer (2-4 people needed): Get ready to unleash your inner artist! Lead our young guests in creating hauntingly fun Halloween crafts, such as pumpkin decorating. This is a perfect opportunity to interact with families and share your love of creativity. **Needed Saturdays and Sundays from 10:30am to 5pm.**

4. Pumpkin Delivery (1-2 people plus forklift operator): Looking for a physically active volunteer role? Become part of our pumpkin delivery crew! Need a licensed forklift driver as well! **Needed Fridays in October.**

5. Pumpkin Patch Volunteer (2-4 people): Not all scarecrows are spooky! Ensure our pumpkin patch is fully stocked and ready for our eager young trick-or-treaters. Help families navigate the patch, pick the perfect pumpkin, answer questions, and ensure a spooktacular time for all. **Needed Saturdays and Sundays, 10am-5pm.**

6. Gift Shop Assistant (1-2 people needed): Welcome visitors to our charming gift shop! Answer questions, recommend souvenirs, and make their shopping experience delightful. Strong communication skills, a friendly demeanor, and retail experience are beneficial but not required. **Needed Saturdays and Sundays 9am-5pm.**

7. First-Class Snack Bar Attendant (1 person each day): Fuel the fun as a snack bar hero aboard our First-Class car! Ride the rails as you greet guests with a smile, prepare soft drinks efficiently, hand out snacks and candy, and ensure excellent service and a clean workspace. **Needed Saturdays and Sundays, 8:30am-4:30pm.**

Volunteers Needed for NEW Sip & Scare Sunset Special

For Sip & Scare (Saturday, October 5, 12, 19 & 26 with departure at 6:30pm):

1. First-Class Snack Bar Attendant (1 person needed): Fuel the fun as a snack bar hero aboard our First-Class car! Ride the rails as you greet guests with a smile, prepare soft drinks efficiently, hand out snacks and candy, and ensure excellent service and a clean workspace. **Needed Saturdays only, 5:30pm-8pm.**

2. Licensed Bar Attendant (1-2 people needed): As the resident mixologist, whip up craft cocktails, beer and wine to thirsty guests. Bar server license is required, but easily obtained. Ask for more info! Cocktails will be pre-mixed prior to loading onto train based on a provided recipe. **Needed Saturdays only, 5pm-8pm.**

3. Costumed Bar Servers (2-4 people needed): Haunt the halls of the train in costume and take orders and serve drinks to thirsty guests. Bar server license is required, but easily obtained. Ask for more info! **Needed Saturdays only, 6pm-8pm.**

4. Haunted Car Actors (4-6 people): Calling all thespians and drama enthusiasts! Join our Spooky Squad and bring our Halloween characters to life. Dress up in costume and interact with guests, creating a hauntingly fun atmosphere. **Needed Saturdays only, 7pm-9pm.**

5. Haunted Tour Guide (1-2 people): Calling all thespians and drama enthusiasts! Join our Spooky Squad and lead guests through our haunted train cars while telling spooky tales. Dress up in costume and interact with guests, creating a hauntingly fun atmosphere. **Needed Saturdays only, 7pm-9pm.**

North Pole Limited Tickets are on-sale

Our most popular event each year are the North Pole Limited's. The evening trains feature caroling, cookies and hot chocolate and, of course, a visit with Santa Claus all while travelling by train to the North Pole!

Don't be left out, as many trains are sold out each year. Tickets are available for sale at:

<https://www.psrn.org/npl/>

Bring the whole family, including grandparents and grandchildren.



Don't be left out. Order your tickets NOW!

Fundraising for September

Donna Spevack-Administrator of Fund Development

I bet you are all glad to see cooler weather after the hot, hot summer months. Fall is the best time of year with the start of the Pumpkin Express, apple cider and donuts and then the anticipation of the return of the North Pole Limited. Great time of year!

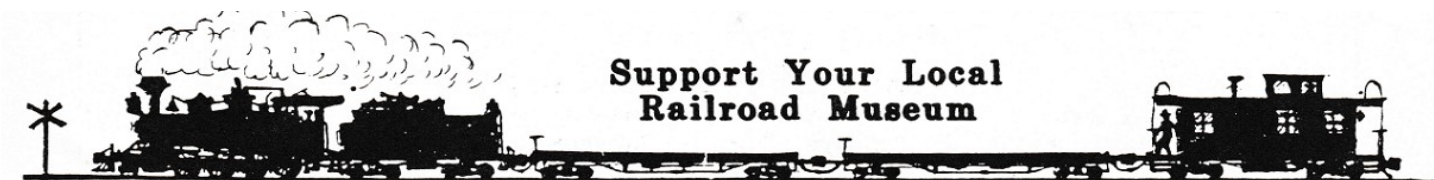
I would like to Thank all of our wonderful donors for August/September:

Mary Wade; Ivan Maric; Sam Wagstaff; Emily Bingham; Linda Jimenez; Lori Copeland; Teri Garcia; Mireya Garcia; Joseph Jolly; Judy Ford; Connie Danielson; Brittany Hendrix; Frank Weller; Rebecca Ferguson; Jim DeMassimo; Manley A. Golson; Tim Young; Erika Bird; Trystan Lee; Evan Sickels; Kerstie Payne; Narilee Walker; Daryl Leininger; Renee Dallezotte; Janice Sanders Weeks; Olivia Cash; Phillip Ona; Dennie R. Crile; Jacklyn Willford; Lourdes Gibson; Helen Lopez; Ashley Smith; James Nys; Douglas Dunker.

A special note:

Be on the lookout in the coming months for PSRM's "Giving Tuesday" Campaign and also Microsoft Rewards points can now be automatically donated to charity as part of a new initiative called [Give with Bing](#). The points that Microsoft Rewards users earn by searching the internet via Bing will be changed into money when it's donated to one of more than a million non-profit organizations. [You can now automatically donate your Microsoft Rewards points to charity](#) (Paste this link into your browser and designate the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum, and again it is free and Microsoft will match donations through December). **So, keep browsing!**

Looking forward to seeing you in Campo for our holiday train excursions!



Welcome new members by Carl Brooker, Membership

We are happy to announce that the following persons have joined the museum in the last month as either new individual, student, senior, or family members and we are grateful for their support – Tyler Becker; Emily Bingham; Erika Bird; Pamela Bundy; Graham Chuck; Lori Copeland; Renee Dallezotte; Jim DeMassimo; Martin Dukes; Rebecca Ferguson; Judy Ford; Mireya Garcia; Teri Garcia; Marianne Gerdes; Brittany Hendrix; Linda Jimenez; Trystan Lee; Cathleen Martin; Mary Mills; Kerstie Payne; Mary Wade; Narilee Walker; Frank Weller; Chris Wray; and Tom Young. Welcome aboard all!

LIBRARY REPORT by Bruce Semelsberger

Thanks to a donation arranged by Jim Lundquist we are now the proud owner of well over 100 new books including some rarities and some very useful references, and thanks to the work of our newest volunteer Staci Burns we are well on the way to having them all entered into the system. Staci was looking for something useful to do after graduating from college and we are grateful that she chose us! Thank You Jim and Staci!

Volunteer Maureen Witkowski was able to continue her work on our postcard collection once we received a recent order of archival boxes (one of many items your donations support). This unheralded collection is surprisingly diverse and informative as postcards have been around for at least a couple of centuries. In addition to the commercial variety we are all familiar with, cards were created by many entities and individuals including railfans. Cards often showed scenes personally photographed and shared with other fans. Railroad companies also produced their own for publicity purposes. Postcards are valuable because they add context to the towns and locations along the transportation networks and also because of the personal messages many contain. Our own collection has grown to many hundreds of cards from all over the world and no work had been done to integrate new donations for the last several years, so Thank You Maureen!

Before there were cellular phones and PCs there were fixed telephones and before that the telegraph system delivered the news, work instructions and personal messages. In the United States it was often the railroads that initially installed the wires and other infrastructure across the country and led to the creation of Western Union and similar commercial companies. The telegraph and congruent telephone networks were essential to the operations of the railroad companies and constantly evolved to the point where trained and skilled operators routinely handled message traffic at 80 words per minute or more. Equipment became more complex as well with patch bays and multi-station selectors coming into use by the early 1900s. We are now close to completing the accession of a donation from Ray Proefrock of the collection of his late father Jack Proefrock, one of those highly skilled operators and an amateur radio enthusiast (K6QEQ).

This amazing assortment of devices runs from the old straight keys and sounders to semi-automatic keys ("bugs") and station selectors, a portable set, test devices

and signaling apparatus. These kinds of donations can be challenging as we attempt to identify the origin and function of many of the items. This would be almost impossible without the internet; as it is, it has sometimes taken an hour or more of research for some items and a few have defied positive identification so far. If any of our readers has a background in this area and would enjoy helping, please email us at library@psrm.org.

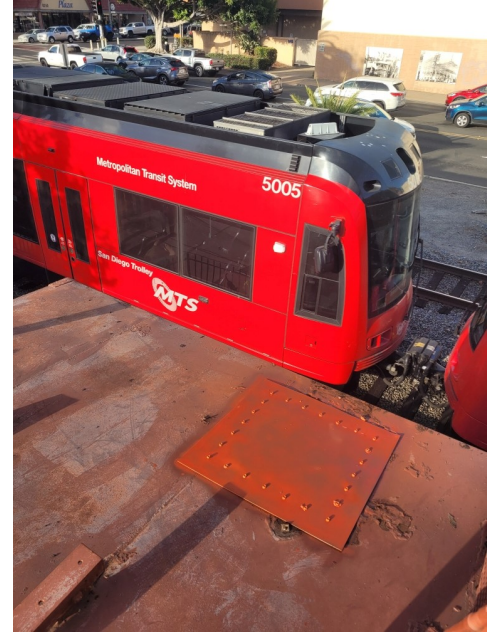
Because of the several large donations we have received in the last year, I want to clarify our policy regarding future donations. We simply do not have the space or resources to accept all items offered to us, so please check with us first before dropping off any items and be aware that items received and not needed for the collection may be sold or traded to benefit the museum. When you donate items, a deed of gift form will be generated as soon as the items have been accessioned and it will list the entire donation as a summary. If you require a detailed list one can be provided, but it will only show items that have been assigned an accession number as a permanent part of the collection.

Last, but certainly not least, we have finally brought out a donation of large artifacts from our senior collector of "stuff", Dick Pennick. With the aid of Dick and his son Warren, Richard Finch and Jim Lundquist with his 18 foot trailer, we were able to load and transport many very large items such as a water tank spout, a complete wooden coach entry way, telegraph pole crossarm, full size wood signs and signposts, a trolley car seat and much more. Most of these articles and many others already on hand that don't require climate control will be stored after accessioning in one of the new shipping containers we are ordering once they have been received and installed near the library. This will free up much needed space in the existing library. Thank You Dick!



Down at the La Mesa Depot by Timothy Miller, Station Master

While we continue to welcome guests every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, repairs were also required at our exhibit. The SP caboose had its stack removed by someone unknown. I was assisted by Jim Lundquist and we were able to patch the roof to make it watertight again. In addition, the wooden sign facing La Mesa Blvd broke in half but we were able to repair it as well.



When I look at articles in the magazines and on the web highlighting Depot Museums, I can't help but feel how fortunate PSRM is with the La Mesa Depot. We have actual railroad equipment on display. We are on an active rail line with passenger service available across the street. But to me our greatest asset is our neighbors. They keep watch over our display. They call the police when things need an immediate response. They contact us personally or by any method they are familiar with. Case in point the Facebook page La Mesa Happenings on September 12 had the photo attached of our broken sign. Thanks to Jim and Dawn Lundquist it was repaired the same day!

October is a month with the potential for high visitor numbers. October 4th through 6th is La Mesa's Octoberfest. Then Halloween is coming at the end of the month with mobs of Trick-or-Treaters. No help will be turned away on these dates!



Tim on the roof of the caboose.

Photo by Jim Lundquist



This photograph was taken by an unknown photographer at Bena, California on Southern Pacific's Tehachapi Pass route on an unknown date. It is just too great of a photograph to not pass along to our members.

Pumpkin Express and Sip & Scare trains run this month in Campo. See you there!