



A publication for the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum members

June 2025

BACKCOUNTRY WINE TRAIN A WONDERFUL SUCCESS



Life Member Jim Price and Senior Member Joan Sieber enjoyed their
adventure on the first Backcountry Wine Train on April 27th.



**Pacific Southwest Railway Museum
Association, Inc. WWW.PSRM.ORG
619-465-PSRM (7776)**

Campo Railroad Museum
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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Vice President: Jenn Brooker
Treasurer: Carl Brooker
Secretary: Duke Schweikert
Equipment Dept: vacant
Facilities Dept: Frank E. Denison IV
Museum Services Dept: Jim Lundquist
Operations Dept: Colin Atwood

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Membership: Lena Ibarra
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Station Master (La Mesa): Timothy Miller
Volunteer Coordinator: Jenn Brooker
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Special Events:

June 14 & 15 - Campo Days. Special events at all museums in Campo.

October 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 19, 25 & 26 - Pumpkin Trains

October 4, 11, 18 & 25 - Sip & Scare Sunset Train & Haunted Train

October 24- Membership Meeting at 7:00 p.m. at La Mesa Police Dept
Community Room. The speaker for the evening will be Russ Low.

November 1—Backcountry Wine Train. Advanced reservations required.

Regular Schedule:

At Campo Railroad Museum:

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

Saturday - Golden State train rides at 10:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

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

Backcountry Wine Train a Total Success

A well known local TV star and PSRM Life Member rode the first Backcountry Wine Train. The editor asked him to share his thoughts.

“First of all, and most important, it was wonderful! The vintage equipment, the champagne flutes and music that greeted us as we were being seated, the elegantly dressed staff, the way the tables were dressed, all made us feel that this was a remarkable occasion.

I had wondered how the elegance of a wine-tasting event would blend with the older rolling stock click clacking through the desert. It absolutely worked. The P.A. announcements were happy and informative, and yet brief enough that everyone could converse and enjoy the scenery.

Having a Rest Room on board the train was important and appreciated. The pace of the train, the dwell time, it was all just perfect.

I think the way the wines were presented in two groups of three with glasses already poured in a numbered carrier was splendid. I appreciated that juices (for non-alcohol drinkers) were respectfully presented and given just as much attention as wines. It's important because some member of every group is going to be driving home. Nice!

We arrived about an hour early and took the time to see the station and museum and everybody enjoyed that.

Couple of additional thoughts:

Our group wanted to tip the waiter(s). We learned that all tips would be turned over to the museum. That makes perfect sense when you consider that it's an all volunteer crew. Again, very classy. We did discover a tip jar in the parlor section of Santa Fe 1509 and fed it.

My group consisted of business and professional folks, a restaurant group owner, two physicians, and teachers. We all felt that this is something the Museum might do more often, and frankly charge more for the experience. We all believe that coach seating could be set at a higher rate (especially if it's billed as a Museum fundraiser) and first class seats would be snapped up at \$200.00 a person.

I know it's not that simple. I'm guessing this was a major effort to put on and volunteers are not always available. Also, clearly we benefited from the most agreeable cool weather and striking scenery with seasonal grasses in full green splendor. Summer will be hotter, and the cars aren't air conditioned. But in Spring and Fall....with local wineries continuing to be on board...wow!

That's the consensus of our group. We had a blast!”

Ken Kramer



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



Join us for Campo Days, June 14th and 15th, 2025!

Campo Days: A Weekend of East County Thrills!

Step back in time and explore the wild west legends, rich history, and hidden gems of San Diego's East County during Campo Days! This FREE* two-day event unlocks the doors to four incredible museums, each offering a unique adventure:

Chug Aboard History: Ride the rails at the Campo Railroad Museum. Explore classic train exhibits, climb aboard for a vintage train excursion through our beautiful back country, and discover the fascinating story of our region's railroads.

Secrets of the Stone Store: Unearth the past at the Gaskill Brothers Stone Store. This historic hub, once a bustling center of commerce, travel, and ranching, unveils the region's captivating Indigenous, ranching, and military history.

Motor Mania: Gear up for a journey through transportation history at the Motor

Transport Museum. Housed in a former Feldspar Mill, this museum showcases a treasure trove of vintage vehicles, reflecting the area's rich mining heritage.

Where Buffalo Soldiers Roamed: Saddle up and explore Camp Lockett Equestrian and Event Facility. Located on the grounds of a historic military outpost, this museum honors the legacy of the famed Buffalo Soldiers, the last mounted cavalry units trained in Southern California.

Unforgettable Experiences Await!

Campo Days is your chance to:

Ride a historic train and feel the magic of the rails.

Uncover hidden stories of cowboys, ranchers, and Native American tribes.

Explore a bygone era with vintage vehicles and mining exhibits.

Learn about the legendary Buffalo Soldiers who once patrolled these lands.

Don't miss this exciting weekend adventure! Pack your curiosity and head to Campo Days for a journey through time you won't forget.

*Museums are offering free museum admission and music entertainment during Campo Days. Other activities and experiences may incur a charge. Please visit each museum's webpage for more information.

Annual Dinner and Fiesta a los Voluntarios a Huge Success! by Jenn Brooker

The lively atmosphere of the Barra Barra Saloon in Old Town San Diego set the stage on May 15th as approximately 55 enthusiastic members and volunteers, a mix of familiar faces and new friends, gathered to celebrate the remarkable achievements of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association during the past year.

The signature Golden Spike cocktails were a hit, flowing alongside engaging conversations and a delicious spread of traditional Mexican cuisine. A nostalgic slideshow took guests on a trip down memory lane, highlighting the key accomplishments of 2024.

President Stephen Hager delivered an inspiring State of the Museum address, sharing current happenings and generating excitement for the future. On the horizon are the highly anticipated completion of the Mine Train and Birthday Caboose projects, the return of popular Sip & Scare and Wine Train excursions, and significant progress in developing PSRMA's expansive property through essential grading and drainage work, paving the way for future buildings.

Adding to the evening's excitement, lucky attendees won free tickets to the San Diego Museum of Art and the San Diego Model Railroad Museum, thanks to generous donations. A small raffle further contributed to the cause, raising \$265 to support the restoration of Mojave Northern #3.

A highlight of the evening was the recognition of PSRMA's dedicated volunteers. Vice President and Volunteer Coordinator, Jenn Brooker, presented well-deserved Volunteer Certificates of Appreciation and Hours Awards to an impressive 30 individuals who each contributed over 100 hours in 2024. Leading the charge was Jim Lundquist, whose staggering 1,354 hours of service – equivalent to nearly 170 days! – underscored his extraordinary commitment.



Annual Dinner - Continued

The evening also celebrated the exceptional contributions of individual volunteers through the Department Awards. These awards recognize the volunteer from each department who demonstrated the most exemplary service through their unwavering commitment and the high quality of their work. The awards were presented by each Director for their respective departments:



Vice President Jenn Brooker proudly presented The Administration Award to Morgan Snyder for his outstanding dedication to special events and community outreach.



President and Acting Director of Equipment Stephen Hager recognized David Choy with the Equipment Award for his infectious enthusiasm in learning, teaching, and mentoring within the department.



Director of Facilities Frank Denison honored Kerry Hebert with the Facilities Award, acknowledging Kerry's dedicated efforts in property improvements, including his expert handling of the forklift and backhoe.



Director of Museum Services presented the Museum Services Award to Carl Brooker for his diligent and effective work as membership coordinator.



Director of Operations Colin Atwood presented the Operations Award to Ryan Hodge for his skilled work as a brakeman and his consistently flexible and positive attitude.



Congratulations and a huge thank you to ALL of our members and volunteers! Want to earn an hours badge or Department award of your own? Email volunteer@psrm.org to learn more about how you can get involved.

Annual Dinner—2024 Hours Award Recipients

100+ Hours	250+ Hours	1,000+ Hours	1,250+ Hours
Randy Houk Bob Nickles BG Miller Timothy Miller James Caestecker Michael McIntyre Paul Falk Bryon Anderson Chad Baker Chris Baker Carl Brooker Duke Schweikert Ryan Hodge David Little Tom Ulrich	Jim Baker Mark Landguth Dave Tomeraasen Rich Paulus Colin Atwood Kerry Hebert David Choy Jennifer Brooker Frank E. Denison IV	Stephen Hager Bruce Semelsburger	Jim Lundquist

Campo Railroad Museum Featured on Radio by Jim Lundquist, Director of Museum Services

K-LOVE reached out to us for an interview to tell their listeners about our museum. Jim Lundquist was invited to speak with Jeanice Lee, Regional Public Affairs Manager for the radio station. The goal of the interview is to help spread the word about the many offerings we have in both Campo and La Mesa. The interview is about 25 minutes and was broadcasted over the air in San Diego County.

A link to the interview on line may be found at:

<https://www.klove.com/news/closer-look/hot-topx/local-closer-look-campo-railroad-museum-campo-ca-10200>

Operations Volunteers for April 21 to May 25, 2025

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, 2 wine Trains, and the number of days they have volunteered through May 25: Colin Atwood 6, Alyssa Andersen 1, Hal Brandt 3, Carl Brooker 1, Ken Brown 3, David Choy 2, Greg Flores 2, Stephen Hager 3, Randy Houk 2, Dave Little 2, Mike McIntyre 2, Bob Nickles 2, Rich Paulus 1, Duke Schweikert 1

MOW - maintenance of way volunteers who have assisted Roadmaster Glen Rogers and Track Foreman James Caestecker in maintaining tracks and right-of-way, equipment, and tools by running 2 Work Trains to install private crossing signage and serving as Weed Spraying Pilot this period: Carl Brooker 1, Ken Brown 1, Stephen Hager 2, Ryan Hodge 1, Dave Little 1, Bob Nickles 1 and Tim Wamsley 1.

MOS – maintenance of signal volunteers who conducted monthly and quarterly electrical and mechanical maintenance and testing of highway crossing signal systems this month: Chad Baker 2.



From the Back Platform

By Stephen Hager, President

This year has been flying by and it is hard to believe that it's almost June! Volunteers at the Pacific Southwest

Railway Museum Association have been hard at work making progress on several MOW, Equipment, and Facilities projects. On the last Sunday in April, we ran our first revenue Backcountry Wine Trains. The trains were a smashing success and our Special Events folks are already being bombarded with requests to book the next ones! Rest assured – we plan to run more wine trains this year and will get an earlier start in the winter running them next year.

Our two major grant-funded projects are moving right along. The Campo Depot exterior siding replacement project, funded partially by the \$50,000 County of San Diego Neighborhood Reinvestment Program Grant, is about 50% complete as of my writing this article. The existing trim demolition and installation of new waterproofing is complete, the eaves are being boxed, and we just took delivery of the new Hardie Board siding. We still hope to have the project complete before Campo Days weekend on June 14th and 15th.

The Stormwater Improvements Project, funded by the \$475,000 ARPA Grant, is also making good progress. Our engineering consultants have nearly completed preliminary the grading design for the future buildings and drainage improvements, and will soon be meeting with the County of San Diego to kick off the permitting process. In support of this work, we had preliminary title reports completed for the land parcels that we own and lease in Campo. This had to be done to locate all the easements on the parcels and ensure that none of the proposed improvements fall within an easement that would preclude their construction. You can only imagine how many hundreds of pages of historic records were included in the reports. Our consultants also completed flood plain mapping to ensure that the future buildings will not fall within the Campo Creek floodway. As of right now, we are still on track for design and permitting to conclude late this year.

In early May, volunteers in the equipment depart-

ment changed out the wheelsets on the first of our three operating coaches, SD&A 254. This wheelset change proved to be a bit more challenging and time consuming than the baggage car wheelset change that we did in January. 254 took two weekends to complete and we learned several lessons during the process which will help us complete the next wheelset change more quickly. It is quite an involved process; first the center pin cover plates inside the car must be removed, followed by the locking center pins. For some reason, the center pins on 254 are more temperamental than the other coaches. After removing the center pins, we disconnected the brake rods that connect the trucks to the car body. We then removed the retaining bars from the bottoms of the pedestal jaws, and removed the brake rigging components that surround the bottom of each wheel. This last step was not needed on the baggage car because it has a single brake shoe on each wheel, whereas the coaches have double clasp brake shoes.

After removing all the above components, we lifted the car body using our four 35-ton Whiting electric screw jacks. We then rolled each truck out, one at a time, and lifted the truck off the wheelsets using our Santa Fe 25-ton gantry crane. Once the truck is up in the air, the old wheelsets can be rolled out, and the new wheelsets can be rolled in. Our 6,000-lb SkyTrak forklift easily handles the wheelsets as they are lifted on and off the rails. Upon removing the bearing adapter boxes from the old wheelsets and attempting to install them on the new wheelsets, we ran into a problem; the bearing caps on the new wheelsets were too big for the adapter boxes to fit over. The solution? We swapped out the smaller bearing caps from the old wheelsets onto the new wheelsets.



From the Back Platform—continued

With this completed, the truck can be lowered back onto the new wheelsets. This took us a few tries for each truck because the trucks were not perfectly balanced under the lifting slings and the pedestal jaws would settle unevenly on the bearing adapter boxes, causing them to snag. We believe we've come up with a better lifting technique that should make this less of a problem for the rest of the coaches. We also took the opportunity to re-lubricate the center plates on each truck before lowering the car body back onto the trucks. After the car body was lowered, we proceeded to reconnect and reinstall all the parts that we had disconnected and removed. This of course is a bit of any oversimplification of the process. Many nuts and bolts had to be rethreaded, broken cotter pins had to be punched out of holes that they had rusted in to, a come-along had to be used to pull some of the brake components together to re-pin them, and the center pins had to be persuaded back into place with the assistance of a sledge hammer!



Later in May, volunteers worked over the course of a weekend to install sign posts and private crossing signs at all the dirt crossings between the Campo Valley and Canyon. This was a small but necessary safety measure to ensure that the users of these crossings know that they are approaching an active railroad track. There is an important operating rule that all railroad employees know, and which I wish all members of the public appreciated as well; always expect a train on any track, at any time, and in either direction! On the last Saturday of May, we have a major track work project planned. We will be changing out ties in a curve about 2.5 miles west of

Campo in the hopes of lifting a speed restriction that is currently in place. As of writing this, there are 10 people signed up to help, and a couple more tentatively planning to help. If you'd like to assist with this project or future workdays like it, please send us an email at volunteer@psrm.org, and let us know that you'd like to try your hand at track work!

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!



DON'T MISS OUT - ORDERS FOR MEMBERS START JUNE FIRST

Backcountry Wine Train



The **ONLY** wine train excursion
in Southern California!
Snack on some charcuterie bites
while sipping a selection of 6
San Diego County wines and
taking in the stunning views
during this 90-minute, 21+ event.

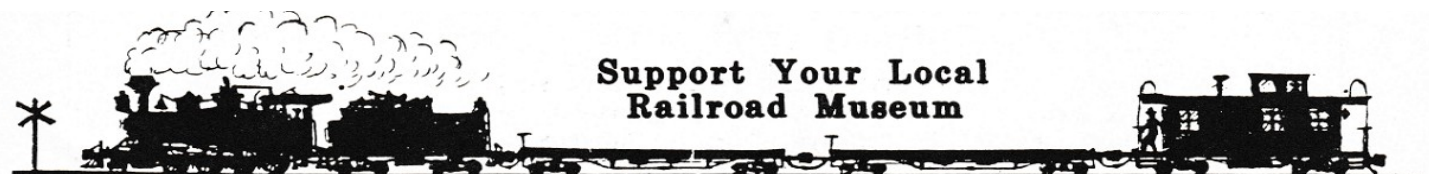
Next Departure:

November 1, 2025 at noon and 3 pm

Members only pre-sale June 1 through June 15

Password: VinoVino!!

www.psrn.org/winetrain



Fundraising for May - Donna Spevack, Administrator of Fund Development (fundraising@psrm.org)

May is shaping up to be a beautiful weather month! Be sure to visit the Campo Railroad Museum and check out the Campo Depot building restoration being done by Eric Stutzman of Stutzman Siding!

Thank you members of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum for fueling our efforts to save and protect our railroading history. Your memberships and donations make all of our restorations and upgrades possible in addition to the grants that the museum has received through the County of San Diego.

Thank you to our April/May donors for their generosity: YTD - \$5,849.39

\$200 - \$5,000 - Specified Fund - Jack O'Lexey - Mine Train Project

\$1-\$199 - General Fund - Carrie Crowell; Sarah Reinwald; Ciria Romero; Martin Caestecker; Jeffrey Haslam; Thomas Witkowski; Conner Shipley; Anna Buster; Alexander Antov; Susan Gallier; Todd Rossiter; Lars Petre; Mike Lucek; Connie Hillyer; Robert Sorbello; Jennifer Magnone; Charles B. Phelgar;

If you would like to make a donation, go online at: <https://www.psrn.org/donate/>. You can make a one time donation or you have the option of making an **automatic monthly gift** in support of PSRM. If you'd like you can also mail your charitable gift to: **PSRM - La Mesa Depot**, 4695 Nebo Drive, La Mesa, CA 91941-5259.

Two easy additional ways to donate are:

Free: Microsoft Rewards Points can now be automatically donated to your favorite charity (PSRM) 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 automatically donate your Microsoft Rewards points to charity, just designate the **Pacific Southwest Railway Museum** when registering, it's free, so keep browsing! (just paste either link below into your browser to get started). I do it and it is easy to sign up and have our favorite railway museum benefit!

- <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/rewards/about-signed-in>
- <https://ukstories.microsoft.com/features/now-you--can-automatically-donate-your-microsoft-rewards-points-to-charity/>

Matching Gift: Many companies double (or even triple) your contribution. Find out if you work for or are retired from, a company that matches donations by visiting.

- <https://www.matchinggifts.com/unh/>

Special thanks to our great volunteers and members who support PSRM year-round.

Thank you!

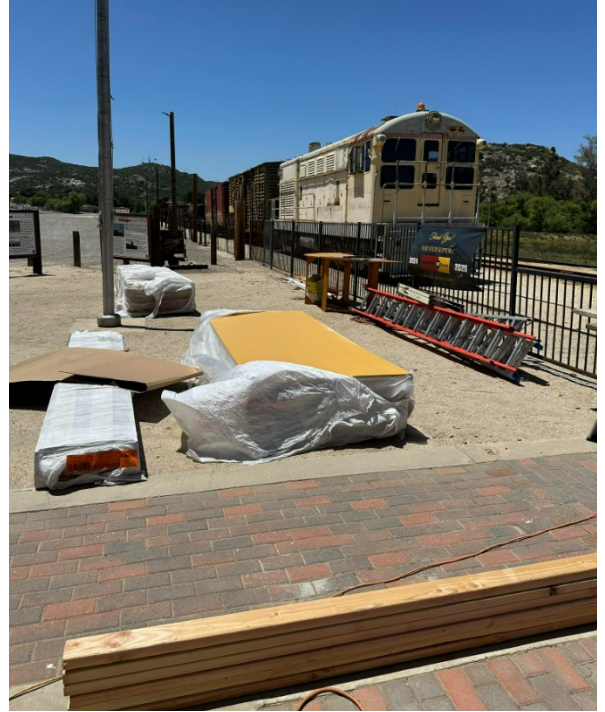


Campo Depot Renewal Project Moving Forward

by Jim Lundquist, Assistant Director of Facilities

The job of reskinning the historic Campo Depot continues. Contractors have been working during the week when we are closed to the public to remove bats, seal the exterior and boxing in the eaves. The new Hardie board that has arrived in Campo is pre-colored with the correct color and is ready for installation.

The new exterior skin will be fire resistant with the goal of never having to be repainted again in the next two decades, rather than every three to five years!



Membership News

By Lena Ibarra, Membership Coordinator

Dear members – before I welcome our new members I have a request. Please invite your family and friends to join our museum before rates go up July 1st. And more importantly, once they join, plan to volunteer together. Our department heads have done a great job of breaking down the work to align with your availability and interest. Together, we can significantly impact the success and growth of our museum.

This month I'd like to welcome three Life and Senior Life members: Morgan Snyder, Rudy Lopez and David Waite. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

Welcome to our new Family members: Anna Buster, Sandra Drake, Rocio Junyent, David Le, John Lewis, Casey Phin, Sarah Reinwald, Ciria Romero, and Phillip Sweeney.

Joining with Individual and Senior memberships are Cheryle Redelings, David Redelings, Richard Stanford, Chris Witkowski, Thomas Witkowski.

Thank you all for choosing PSRMA!

Down at the La Mesa Depot

by Timothy Miller, Station Agent

The big news at the La Mesa Depot is that the San Diego Fine Woodworkers Association has agreed to take on the restoration of the Mojave Northern #3 Cab!

Planning for the re-creation of the cab is already underway. The Woodworkers Association have only agreed to assist with the cab restoration, so we really need the participation of all you talented members who can assist with the "heavy metal" aspects of the cosmetic restoration, as well.

The recently-delivered HO scale model railroad layout needed some modifications to allow its location in the La Mesa Depot baggage room. First, fourteen inches had to be removed from the layout to allow better visitor flow for viewing--not only of the layout, but also of the wall displays. This has already been accomplished. My thanks to members Justin Hyland and Paul Falk for their help during the week of May 18th to complete that work.

Next steps for the layout project include upgrading to newer control systems. We expect to be utilizing a system that is currently popular in the model railroad community known as Digital Command Control (or "DCC"). We are also considering a system that uses

the Bluetooth capability of a cellphone. The advantage of that Bluetooth system is that all the controls for the train are on the operator's cellphone. The app is a free download for your cellphones.

We are also considering installing a clear plastic border around the layout, to deter little fingers from



touching things that should be left alone. Our wooden railway layout is still available for those little fingers!

Thanks to Bruce Semelsberger for repairing the flush valve seal on the toilet. This should save quite a few gallons of water.

Drop by and check out all that is happening at the La Mesa Depot!

Mannequins Placed Behind Ticket Counters

We have two ticket counters at the Campo Railroad Museum. One is in the Waiting Room at the Campo Depot. It was custom built to represent a standard ticket counter to be found in a rural depot. The other is inside the Exhibit Hall and is from the Los Angeles Union Passenger Station, a large urban station. The mannequins are dressed as railroad employees using donated uniforms. They add a bit of authenticity to the exhibits.



Membership Rates Increase

Starting July 1

It has been many years since we last increased our membership rates. Starting July 1st, the new rates will be:

\$30 - Student, Senior and Veteran
\$40 - Individual
\$70 - Family
\$90 - Contributing
\$120 - Supporting
\$180 - Sustaining
\$350 - Senior Life

\$900 - Life Member
\$1,200 - Gold Spike Life
\$5,000 – Benefactor

Current members are encouraged to renew your membership at the existing rates prior to July 1st to take advantage for the lower rates.

We greatly appreciate every member's support for our museum and trust you will continue that support. Please consider upgrading your membership when it becomes your renewal date.

Thank you.

Equipment Department Volunteers Change Out Wheelsets on SD&A #254



May 3rd found our hard working volunteers changing out wheelsets on car SD&A #254. The old wheels had become worn. We purchased new wheelsets to replace these. Using the jacking pad, screw jacks, overhead crane and forklift, President and Acting Equipment Director Stephen Hager, Cass Witkowski, David Choy, Tim Wamsley and Jaden Soroka carried out this important task. As with most jobs at the Campo Railroad Museum, it was not an easy job as the team worked late into the evening.

Thank you guys. Without your hard, manual work, we would soon be out of business as the wheels wear out.



Photos by Jim Lundquist 5/3/25



Underground Plumbing Repairs

The old water pipe gate valves at the Campo Railroad Museum were installed over 40 years ago. Over time, they become unusable with hard water deposits keeping them from closing. Over the week of May 5th, volunteers Dawn Lundquist and Jim Lundquist, assisted by Kerry Hebert and Steve Pohjola, dug up the old pipes and replaced the valves.

Photo by
Jim



to by



Lundquist 5/6/25

Community Outreach Continues—Getting the Word Out by Jim Lundquist



Every opportunity we get, our volunteers are going out into the community and letting people know about our Museum. Even though we are in our 40th year of being open to the public, a vast number of people still have not heard of us.

In the photo to the left are Jenn Brooker and Dave Little promoting the new Backcountry Wine Train on May 4, 2025 at the Vintage Alpine Wine Fest.

If you are aware of similar opportunities for us, please let us know. If your non-profit group could use some free tickets to raffle off, etcetera, please contact me at Jim@psrm.org and I'll mail postcards to them which include two free admissions and two train tickets for our regular *Golden State* train.

Let's keep building our Museum together.

HO Train Layout Donated to the La Mesa Depot

An HO train layout was donated to us from Stan Gaska and is displayed at the La Mesa Depot. His son, Dan Gaska, shared the story of the layout with us.



Photo by Mark Landguth 5/8/25

Sore Thumb Railroad by Stan Gaska

My dad has loved working and playing with models railroads for many years. It all started in the basement when we lived in Chicago and built our first layout and grew from there. We were part of the Boy Scouts and worked on one of the model railroads for the Chicago Museum.

We moved out to California in 1979 and we were only able to bring pieces and accessories of the model railroad we had in Chicago. Once settled into the Allied Gardens area of San Diego when began to recreate what we had in Chicago. But through the years and moving several times it became in disarray. My dad retired after 40 years as a specialized engineer tool and die maker along with fabrication.

My dad wanted to create a model railroad again since he now had the time and wanted to get back into what he enjoyed most. I built the layout with legs, we put it together and started working on it. It took dad almost a year to get the layout just right and once he had the rails and cars running; then he fine-tuned it with the mountains, towns, lakes, beaches, houses, yard and turntable. He loved working on and painstakingly had sore thumbs from hitting his thumb with the hammer when using small nails. Hence the name Sore Thumb Railroad. There was even an English Tavern named the same thing and it stuck.

After a year of finishing the layout, he enjoyed playing with it every day and it brought him joy. He even incorporated my love for fishing and desert with a lake scene with a boat and a jeep that I used to drive the desert. He created so many different scenes using a lot of sawdust (which I supplied) and Rit dye. Bushes and shrubs were made from paint bristles, streets from sand giving it the look and feel of gravel. The lake was made from plaster of Paris and added paint, fish and covered with plexiglass. A lot of the accessories were used from my childhood and collections over the years. Some of it was over engineered as that is how my dad is, always over engineering something in one form or another.

We just wanted to share our love of trains and hope to inspire the next generation of train lovers and modelers to carry on a great tradition for years to come. We thank you and your team for being able to use the Sore Thumb Railroad for others to enjoy.



Mark Landguth and Dan Gaska are assembling the layout inside the La Mesa Depot.

Photo by Steve Pohjola 5/8/24

Thank you to the Gaskas for their wonderful donation and volunteers Mark Landguth, Steve Pohjola, Bruce Semelberger and Mike Retz for unloading and assembling.

Learning New Skills is Fun at the Campo Railroad Museum



These photos show Mike Rela working on repairs to the caboose on the Mine Train. Mike is learning wood working skills from Richard Finch while repairing the door which had separated in the weather. Thanks to both Mike and Richard for teaming together.

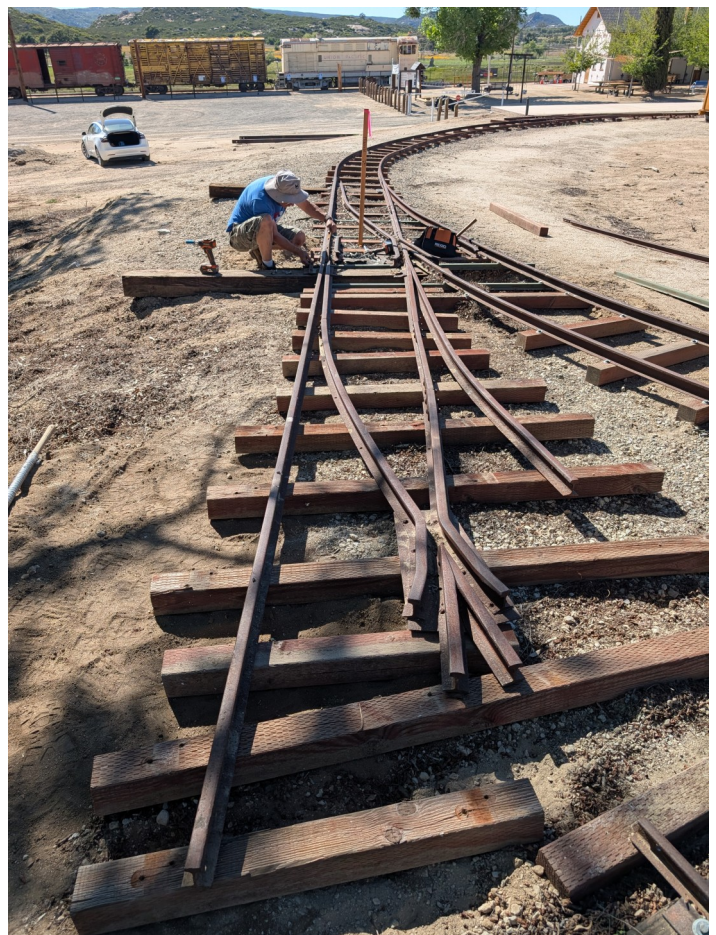
Photos by Richard Finch



Work Restarts on the “Early California History - Mining, Farming and Trains” Exhibit

This two foot gauge exhibit now has a new alignment. As part of the new alignment, a switch needed to be relocated to just outside the Big Hole Mine to serve the future mainline. In this photo, Steve Pohjola is working on reinstalling the switch. Project Manager Jim Lundquist is looking forward to continuing the effort of laying tracks in the late summer and Fall.

Photo by Jim Lundquist 5/9/25



LIBRARY UPDATE

by Bruce Semelsberger, Archivist

Don't think we haven't been busy in your library, but most of what we do appears less than spectacular and most of the material we work with is 8X11' or smaller, so no cool photos of jacked-up cars and red cabooses to grace these pages. Nonetheless, here is some of what we are working on.

Maureen has completed her second major project of finding, sorting and alphabetizing our very large collection of railroad passes and has now moved on to the ephemera files. We receive many paper items relating to railroads all over the world and we attempt to save all the most interesting ones. Sorting and filing these are usually not a high priority task, so they tend to pile up until there is a large overflowing boxful. Maureen was willing to take on this latest batch, for which she deserves kudos from the rest of us!

Mike has devoted many hours now to compiling a complete collection of Reports and Hot Scoops and scanning them into searchable PDF files that will be available online for all of our members. Our CZUR book scanner has proved to be invaluable in this effort as it quickly scans and flattens the images saving a huge amount of time compared to flatbed scanning. Once this is complete, most of the information pertaining to past museum projects, personnel and rolling stock will be just a click away!

Richard continues working on the overall digitization effort, solving problems with the aging software and creating paths to storing the new files generated, es-

pecially the very large ones from the map project. We have now re-humidified and flattened the initial batch of SD&A maps for scanning as soon as the data storage is defined and available.

Bruce continues to work his way through the backlog of donated books, papers and artifacts, a necessarily slow process due to the large amount of data to be entered after initial sorting and research. Working from home, he is also compiling a rolling stock roster for the SD&A from its inception up to 1932 and simultaneously uploading a detailed description of each box of files.

Maria Elena is going through the technical books on the shelves, alphabetizing and identifying duplicates. All of these efforts have resulted in finding a huge amount of surplus documents, especially old Reports, newsletters and books that took up valuable shelf space. Papers are being recycled and books are available to volunteers and visitors for FREE on the shelves in the Campo depot. We are gratified to see how quickly the books are disappearing so we will never again have to deal with finding a home for hundreds of duplicate books.

We also have handled research requests at the same time on subjects such as equipment drawings and construction work on the SD&A and conducted tours for some special visitors, some of them relatives or descendants of either former PSRM members or SD&A employees.

We will be staffing a booth at the Campo Depot and offering tours during Campo Days on June 14th and 15th, so stop by and say Hi!

Board Actions from May 16, 2025

Approved credit cards for Board members.

Approved a 10% increase to \$825 for our donation to groups assisting with the North Pole Limited trains as Elves.

Approved \$552.77 for emergency repairs to the forklift.

Approved \$8,286.77 for rental equipment. Funds from ARPA grant.

Supported moving forward to gather information to add HVAC to our excursion train fleet. Authorized up to \$3,000 if necessary to bring in experts in the field.

Increased discretionary spending for Board members for museum projects to \$1,000.

Approved an agreement with Rapido Trains Inc for man-

ufacturing HO scale model locomotives of Coaster 2103. Authorized \$1,500 to acquire a 20 foot long container to house the electric people mover.

Approved a 20% increase in membership dues effective July 1, 2025.

Authorized Jim Lundquist to sell the Liftking forklift for the Museum.

Authorized a Daily License for beer and wine sales during Campo Days.

Authorized up to \$350 to migrate the existing web pages and \$51 per month for maintenance.

Authorized \$1,200 in additional expenses for the inaugural Backcountry Wine Train.

Approved advertising the NPL in Playbill.

CAMPO DAYS

— ★ ★ ★ —
JUNE 14TH AND 15TH, 2025

**CAMPO
RAILROAD MUSEUM**

750 Depot St., Campo, CA 91096

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www.PSRM.org/campo-days