



A publication for the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum members

Campo Railroad Museum **July 2025** *La Mesa Depot Museum*

Campo Days Celebration on Father's Day Weekend



Members of the San Diego Young Marine Color Guard present the American flag



Volunteer Chris Baker represented the Institution of Railway Signal Engineers and provided a demonstration of "Signal Science" to visitors.



Volunteer Mark Landguth leads an educational tour of the *Robert Peary* for visitors.

Our Special Events team, lead by Vice President Jenn Brooker and with great assistance by Morgan Snyder, partnered with the three other museums in Campo to showcase the history of San Diego County along with music, food and drink to the community. Even with the hot weather, many people enjoyed their day at Campo.

Photos by Jenn Brooker



**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.

Museum Directors

President: Stephen Hager
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

Museum Staff

Archivist: Bruce Semelsberger
Asst Dir. Of Facilities: Jim Lundquist
Fundraising: Donna Spevack
Gift Shop Manager: Sarah Fullum
Asst Gift Shop Manager: Roark Stump
Hot Scoop Editor: Jim Lundquist
Membership: Lena Ibarra
Social Media Manager: Jason Drenkow
Station Master (La Mesa): Timothy Miller
Volunteer Coordinator: Jenn Brooker
Acting Equipment Dir: Stephen Hager



MEMBERS UPCOMING EVENTS

Special Events:

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

October 4, 11, 18 & 25 - Sip & Scare Sunset Special Trains + 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



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

Why not book the *Robert Peary* for your small
group for a truly luxury experience, complete
with champagne and a private server!

www.psrma.org/winetrain



Father's Day weekend
finds Director of Operations Colin Atwood at
Campo on GP-9 SP #3709
during the Campo Days
weekend celebration.

The volunteers are looking
forward to a fresh paint
job on the old girl, but, in
the meantime, she has
work to do at Campo.

Photo by Jenn Brooker



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

Another Campo Days is in the Books

by Jenn Brooker, Vice President and Special Event Coordinator

Campo Days 2025 has come and gone, leaving us all a little sunburned, but with great memories and a renewed appreciation for our beloved Campo Railroad Museum. Despite a few curveballs, both literal and metaphorical, thrown our way, the event on June 14th and 15th was still a success.

Now, let's address the elephant in the train car, shall we? Many of us, me included, were quite disappointed by the shift from the traditional Campo Days weekend in early May to this year's mid-June dates. * The hot desert sun certainly made its presence known, with outside temperatures in the upper 90s and temps aboard the train soaring past 100! I'm certain our train crew saw mirages of ice-cold lemonade dancing on the tracks.

Day 1 kicked off with some rocking jams from local Campo band, Track 29, but also with a damaged railroad switch! The latter regrettably delayed our first scheduled train and necessitated the temporary suspension of first-class service for the day. The expert crew, however, got everything back on track and provided complimentary snack and beverage service to everyone in Coach to keep spirits high. While guests eagerly awaited the train's arrival, they were serenaded by one of several live musicians performing in front of the historic Depot or cooled off under the misters with a cold beer at the brand new Athey Mine Beer Garden, hosted by VFW Post #2080.

Despite the heat and the slow start to the weekend, the spirit of Campo Days truly shone through. Numerous community organizations, San Diego County museums, model railroad clubs, and local vendors provided a host of engaging educational demonstrations, hands-on activities, and shopping opportunities for our dedicated members and the general public. Our museum volunteers provided guided tours of the *Robert Peary* presidential car, the Railway Post Office car, the Southwest Railway Library, and the cab of our steam locomotive, SP #2353. Campo Railroad Museum welcomed over 350 guests enjoying our scenic train excursions and countless others exploring the museum grounds and exhibits across the 2-day event.

Overall, Campo Days 2025 was a testament to the resilience, dedication, and sheer passion of our volunteers and railroad museum community. We proved that even with some unexpected heat and a few technical challenges, the spirit of railroading runs strong in Campo. Thank you to every volunteer, attendee, member, and collaborating organization for making this year's event another memorable chapter in our museum's rich history. Now, who's ready for Campo Days 2026!?

***Editor's Note:** Campo Days is a collaborative event between the Campo Railroad Museum, the Gaskill Brothers Stone Store Museum, the Motor Transport Museum, and the Camp Lockett Equestrian and Event Facility. This year, the Campo Railroad Museum was inadvertently left out of the planning and selection of the June date. Fear not, as next year, the Campo Railroad Museum will once again celebrate Campo Days during the (much cooler) first weekend in May!

Membership News

By Lena Ibarra, Membership Coordinator

Our very own Jennifer Brooker, VP of the PSRMA was gifted a Life membership by her husband Carl on her birthday. Thank you both for your hard work and commitment to the museum.

We are deeply grateful for all our members!

Please join me in welcoming Dan Gaska with a Supporting membership, and to the many new Family memberships this month! Bianca Duong, Zoey Green,

Jamie Hartshorn, Adrian Perez, Matthew Redelings, Lawrence & Evelyn Repass, Scott Rifkin, Nhut Tran, Sirena Valdez, and Christopher Woods.

Joining us with Individual and Senior memberships are Jared Green, Thomas Lord, Robert Repass, Linda Mose, Steven Moyers, Linda Norton, and John Paul Warne.

Welcome and thank you! I hope your summer is off to a great start.



CAMPO DAYS PHOTOS

All photos by Jenn Brooker.



From the Back Platform

By Stephen Hager, President

It's hard to believe that we're already halfway through 2025! For many Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association volunteers, the month of June was largely consumed by the annual Campo Days event, which took place on the 14th and 15th. Since 2022, PSRMA has been co-hosting this event with the Motor Transport Museum, Mountain Empire Historical Society, and Camp Lockett Event and Equestrian Facility. Each year, we've attempted to expand our offerings at the event by displaying more equipment, offering more activities, and hosting more outside organizations, vendors, and bands. The event normally takes place during the first weekend of May, but factors outside of PSRMA's control pushed the event to mid-June this year. The unseasonably high temperatures that weekend unfortunately reduced our visitor counts, but we still put on an event that we're very proud of. I'd like to extend a huge thank you to Vice President Jennifer Brooker and volunteer Morgan Snyder for their tireless efforts to make the event a success this year.

In addition to appealing to the wider community, we've endeavored to make Campo Days a railfan-oriented event where we show off our rolling stock and partner with other rail-oriented organizations. This year we had Pullman Robert Peary, our Railway Post Office Car (ATSF 74), and the SD&AE Fire Truck (on loan from the California State Railroad Museum) on display next to the Campo Depot. We also had SP 2353 and SP 3873 with a short freight train on display next to the Exhibit Hall. The Golden State excursion trains were led by Coaster 2103, paired with SP 3709. In the Exhibit

Hall and around the Campo Depot, numerous other museums and organizations set up booths, including the Institute of Railway Signal Engineers, San Diego Model Railroad Museum, J.A. Cooley Museum, and Imperial Valley Desert Museum, to name just a few.

There's quite a bit of setup and breakdown required in the weeks before and after Campo Days, including re-shuffling numerous cars and locomotives in our rail yard. We're definitely on the lookout for more volunteers to help put this event on in future years. If you'd like to help, please send an email to volunteer@psrm.org! We're also interested in hearing feedback from our members who attended the event. Were there certain things about the event that you enjoyed and that you'd like to see more of in future years? Things you wish we did that weren't included? Send me your thoughts at president@psrm.org so we can continue to improve the event going forward!

As June comes to a close, the Campo Depot siding project is nearing completion. Progress has been slower than we hoped for, but the project is nearly complete. I look forward to sharing photos of the completed work in next month's edition of the Hot Scoop.

The next three months will allow our Special Events volunteers a well-deserved break as we focus on regular weekend train operations, track maintenance, and equipment work. There will be track work days in August and September and numerous equipment work days throughout the quarter. Keep an eye on our volunteer calendar at <https://www.psrn.org/volunteer/> to see upcoming opportunities to volunteer at your museum!

Membership Meeting Featured MTDB General Manager

Our thanks to Tom Larwin who spoke to our membership about the startup and the early days of the San Diego Trolley. For those who missed the May 9th lecture, it has been uploaded to YouTube.

Link is: <https://youtu.be/X18jSf17Mpk?si=Lip4cY4f10cuklOa>



Fundraising by Donna Spevack, Administrator of Fund Development

Preservation energizes neighborhoods, provides culture and education, and restores and rebuilds our connections to our histories and to each other.

Thank you to our members and railfans who have donated for the month of June: YTD- \$28,378.12

\$1,000-\$20,000 Bruce L. Deck; Jack O'Lexey

\$1-\$999 Zoey Green; John Paul Warne; Tom N. Thompson; Linda Eskin; Linda Norton; Chad Baker; Christopher Baker; Nelson Ha; Elizabeth Dunn; Bianca Duong; Jon Frost; Karen Lewis; Heather Wright; Matthew Redelings; Steven Moyers; John Diehl; Gary Ashcraft; Shawn Moore; Stephen Banks

Note: If you have not received a donation letter for your taxes and would like one, please let me know.

Fundraising:

The **Campo Depot** is in the completion stage this week for a total restoration cost of \$93,839. The project was partially funded through the \$50,000 San Diego County Neighborhood Reinvestment Grant with the remaining balance of \$43,839.75 to be funded through donations and additional sources.

"Your gift of \$25, \$50, or any amount you can give will help PSRM fund restorations like the Campo Depot and future preservations. Please visit <https://www.psrn.org/donate/> to make your donation today."
Thank you for your generosity!

Two free/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/>

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

I have heard it said that “a picture is worth a thousand words,” so here are four thousand!

Kidding aside, I would like to share with our readers some people who are making a big difference at the La Mesa Depot.



Here is a photo of Bruce Semelsberger helping take down the Campo Days banner from the Pacific Fruit Express Refrigerator Car. Bruce has been there helping me keep the banners current for the past several years.



Allow me to introduce a new PSRM member, Stephen Banks. Stephen, assisted by Justin Hyland, has been busy re-wiring the recently received “Sore Thumb Railway.” Those members who have a few HO scale trains, and no layout to run them on, are welcome to bring them over to the Depot.

The article continues on the next page.

Additional information regarding the La Mesa Depot may be found at:

<https://www.psrn.org/visitor-information/la-mesa-depot/>

Additional information on the Davenport steam locomotive on display at the La Mesa Depot may be found at:

<https://www.psrn.org/trains/steam/Mojave/>

Down at the La Mesa Depot—continued



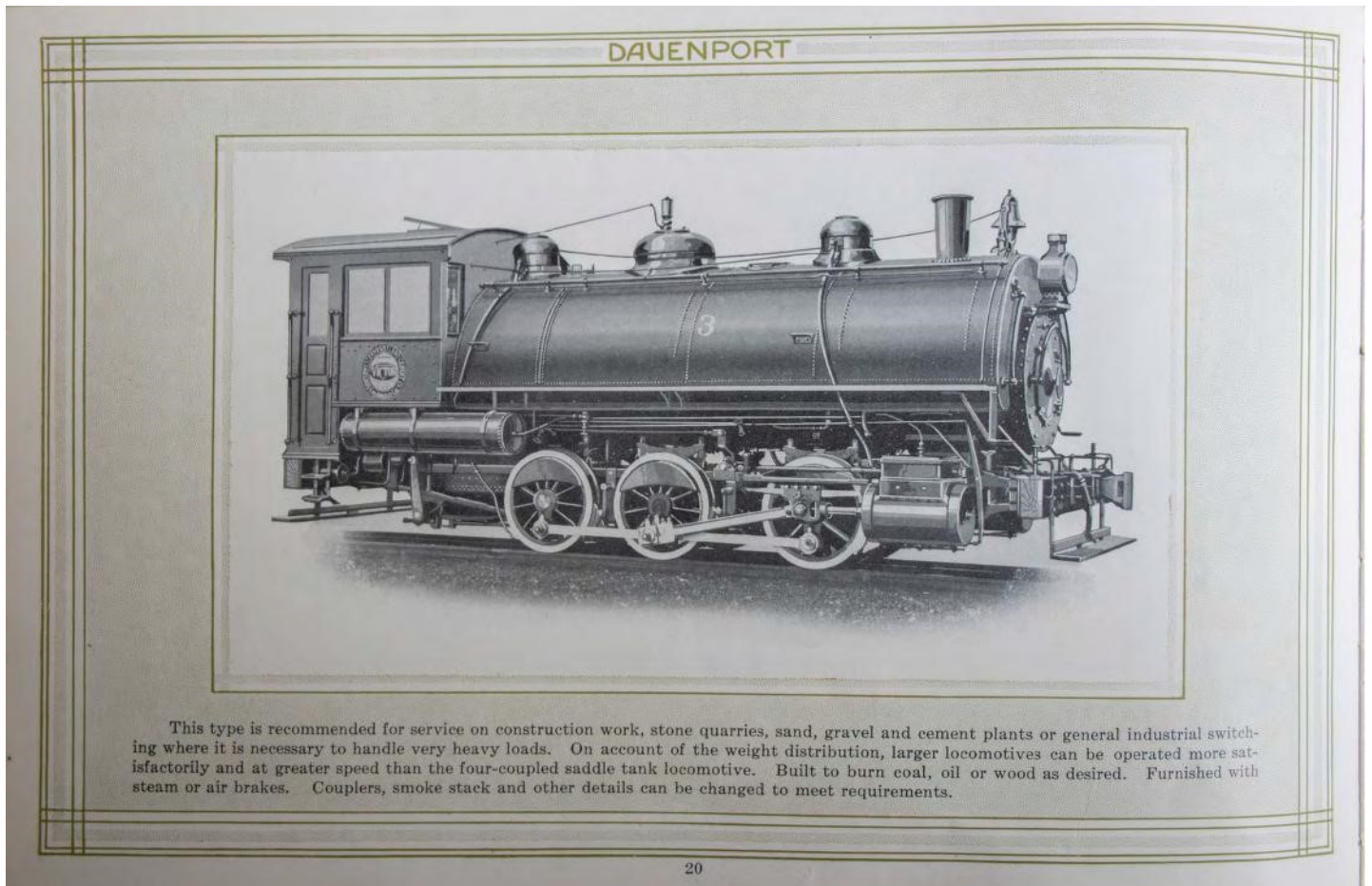
Left:

This smiling trio are members of the San Diego Fine Woodworkers Association. They are measuring the cab of Mojave Northern #3, so it can be historically accurate when they replicate it. From left to right are Rick VanHatten, Matthew Smith and Deborah Chandran.

Below:

I was able to find a picture online of a 0-6-0 tank engine in a Davenport Locomotive Works catalogue that is similar to our #3 engine. This will give our Woodworkers Association partners-in-renovation an idea of what the #3 looked like, when new.

It is a short drive or trolley ride to La Mesa. How about dropping by for a visit?



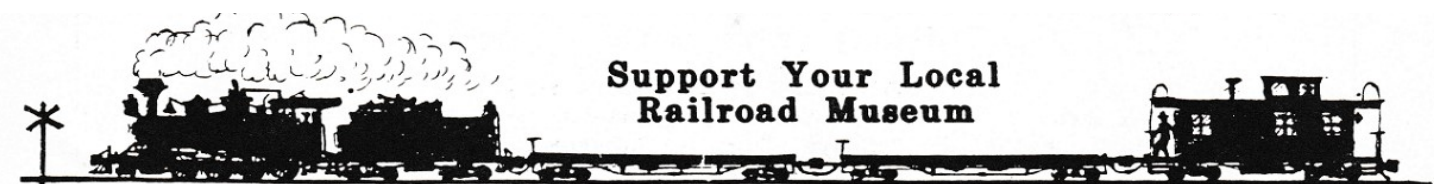
LIBRARY UPDATE by Bruce Semelsberger

What sort of memories occasionally drift into your thoughts of the years when you were of a certain age and still learning about the glorious world beyond your own house, street or city? So much was yet to be learned and you could hardly wait for the next wonder to come along. For we “baby boomers” growing up in the 1950s, there was television for one. On Saturday morning before the old folks were up and after the test pattern vanished from the little black-and-white screen there were the cartoons, westerns, and serials. Even the advertisements heralded stuff just for you like a secret decoder ring or membership in a club just for kids.

Even breakfast had its own allure as the back of each sugary cereal box offered, for a week’s allowance and a box top or two, a submarine that went up and down in water, a pack of cat’s-eye marbles or even a deed to a square foot of the Yukon where Sergeant Preston lived! For those children with a burgeoning yen to ride the rails, Post Cereal’s Super Sugar Crisp offered a railroad comic book and a pack of seven colorful tin plate logos of major railroad lines for a quarter and one box top- and there were four different sets of logos, 28 in all! If you managed to collect all 28, your favorite railroad was sure to be included! What a great reason to make sure mom kept buying that cereal as each set required another quarter and box top.

The offer ran from fall of 1954 through 1955, and a lot of kids must have participated because those colorful logos began turning up in our collections years ago, but we didn’t know the whole story until a recent donation arrived including the comic book and all 28 logos with a brief note about the origin. A little research soon uncovered the rest of the story.

There are many stories still waiting to be uncovered in our collections and you can participate by giving us a little of your time each month as a library volunteer.



Operations Volunteers by Rich Paulus, Chief Operations Officer

Train Service - those who are qualified train crew members, speeder operators/crew, and trainees who have helped us run 15 Golden State trains and the number of days they have volunteered through June 22: Colin Atwood 4, Alyssa Andersen 1, Jim Baker 2, Hal Brandt 1, Carl Brooker 2, David Choy 1, Stephen Hager 2, Ryan Hodge 1, Randy Houk 2, Dave Little 2, Mike McIntyre 2.

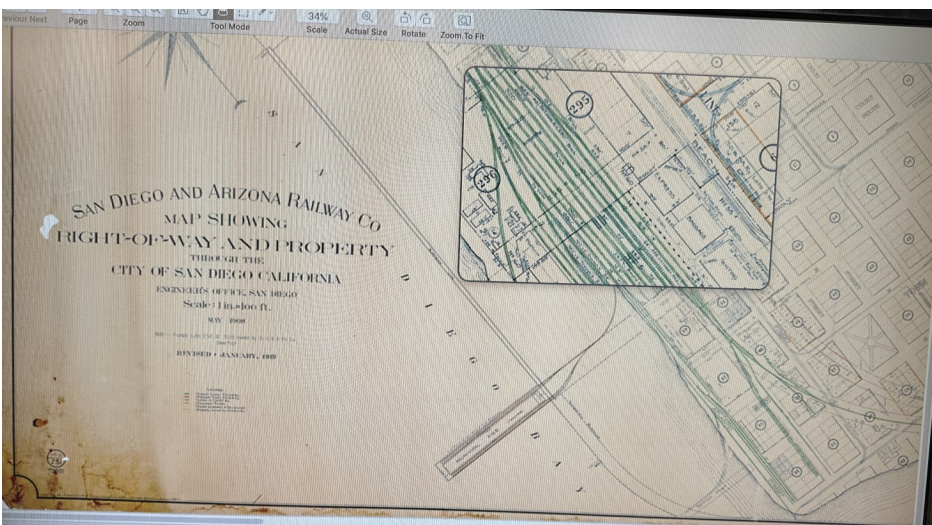
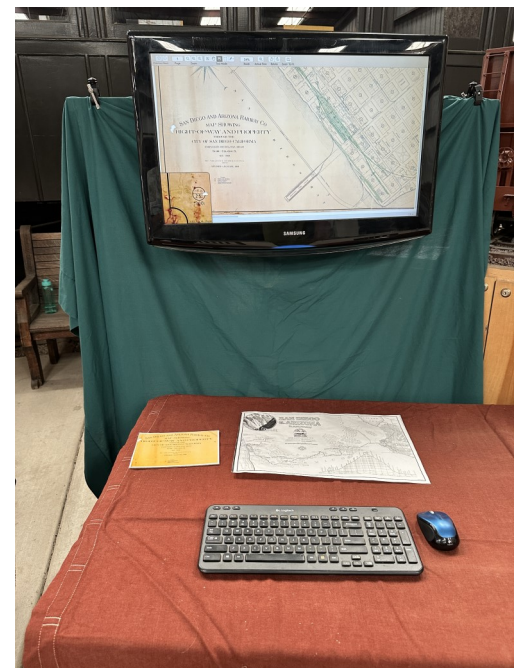
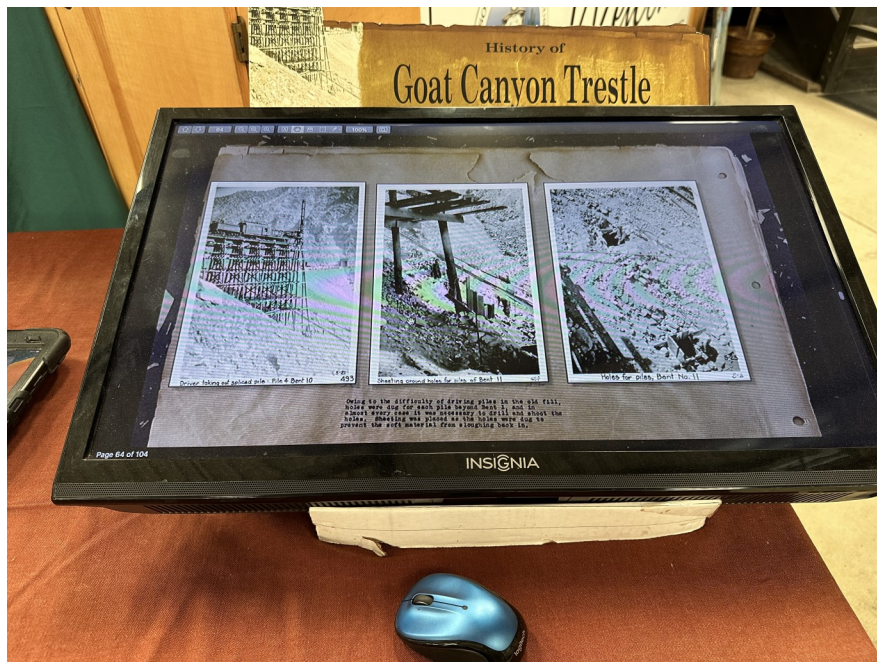
MOW - maintenance of way volunteers who have assisted Roadmaster Glen Rogers and Track Foreman James Caestecker in maintaining tracks and right-of-way, equipment this period: Jim Baker 1, Hal Brandt 1, James Caestecker 2, David Choy 1, Stephen Hager 1, Ryan Hodge 1, Duke Schweikert 1, Mariluz Sulek 1, Will Vanni 1, Tim Wamsley 1, Cass Witkowski 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 1.

Yard switching - these are the volunteers who have worked in PSRM yards this period doing switching to pull out and put back engines and railcars for the Campo Days event: Colin Atwood 1, Jim Baker 2, Ken Brown 2, James Caestecker 1, Greg Flores 1, Stephen Hager 1, Dave Little 3, Bob Nickles 2.

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

The PSRM library staff, Bruce Semelsberger, Richard Finch, and Mike Rella, with the help of Trish Cates were on hand at this year's Campo Days showing off the latest projects in the library's digitization program. First up was the 4 X16 foot map of San Diego in 1919 that was scanned in house with our new Widtek 48 wide format scanner. This map is called the "Rosetta Stone" as it shows all of the railroad trackage in the city at the time. Now this important document can be studied with a click of a mouse.



Next is digital recreation of a crumbling 1932 newsprint scrapbook documenting the construction of the Goat Canyon Trestle. Now one can easily scroll through 104 pages of 5X7 photographs from the collapse of tunnel 15 in March of 1932 to the first train to cross the completed structure in February of 1933.

Gain the Skills Needed to Join Our Fundraising Team as a Grant Writer!

San Diego County District 4 is hosting a **FREE** Grant Writing Workshop to provide organizations like ours with the tools and guidance needed to successfully apply for funding through the District Four Community Enhancement and Neighborhood Reinvestment Grant Program. This workshop will walk you through the grant application process, offer valuable tips and insights to strengthen grant proposals, and ensure you're ready to help the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association compete for resources to support our many underfunded projects! Grants are a vital way for PSRMA to receive much-needed funding to continue our mission of education and preservation of railroad history.

The next workshop is Thursday, July 10, 2025, from 6:30pm-8pm at Cuyamaca College.

Please email volunteer@psrm.org if you're interested in joining the Fundraising Team and attending the workshop as a representative of PSRMA!

SAN DIEGO COUNTY | DISTRICT 4

GRANTS WORKSHOP

CUYAMACA COLLEGE, STUDENT CENTER, ROOM 209

900 RANCHO SAN DIEGO PKWY EL CAJON, CA 92019



JULY 10, 2025 | **6:30PM - 8:00PM**

Wanted: WorkCampers!

Are you an adventuresome individual or couple looking to combine your love of RV camping with giving back to your community? Well, you're in luck! The Campo Railroad Museum has a highly coveted WorkCamping position open **NOW** with more positions to come this fall. Campo Railroad Museum provides you a **FREE** RV space overlooking the Campo Valley with **FREE** included electricity, water, and sewer. In exchange, WorkCampers bring your own RV and work 20 hours per week per person, including during the hours of 8am and 5pm on Saturdays and Sundays when the museum grounds are open to the public. Jobs vary but may include gift shop attendant, facilities and grounds maintenance, janitorial tasks, special events assistance, and more.

These 3- to 6-month long positions are perfect for remote workers looking to get out of the city, road trippers traveling across the US, retirees seeking a new skill, or anyone open to new and unique opportunity.

If you're interested in applying to PSRMA's WorkCamper Program, please send an email to workcamper@psrm.org.

New Photo Cutout Board in Place at the Campo Railroad Museum

Many years ago, Jack O'Lexey installed a hobo photo cutout board at Campo. The years finally took their toll on it and Michele Little painted a new one for us.



Mike Rella and Richard Finch installing the hobo camp photo cutout board just in time for Campo Days.



The new photo cutout board was immediately used during Campo Days.

Father & Son on the Signal Gang: A Special Campo Days Weekend

By Chad Baker, Member – Pacific Southwest Railway Museum & IRSE North American Section Chair

Father's Day weekend is always a meaningful time, but this year's Campo Days celebration at the Campo Railroad Museum was something truly special for me. As both a dad and a seasoned Signal and Train Control Professional, I had the joy of spending the weekend alongside my son, Christopher, sharing our passion for signaling from a technical perspective and tying it together with railroad signaling history with Museum visitors.



Christopher and I are both proud members of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association and the Institution of Railway Signal Engineers (IRSE) North American Section, and this year we had the privilege of serving together as docents for the Museum's Signal Science Interpretive Display. The display showcases the fascinating history and technology behind train control and signaling systems used across the Western United States—a topic that's close to both our hearts.

But we didn't stop there. Representing the IRSE, we also helped run an interactive STEM exhibit featuring a working track circuit and block signal demonstration. It was a hands-on way for visitors of all ages to understand how signals display aspects to trains and ensure their safe movement across the railway. Watching guests intrigued as they made the signal change colors by operating the circuit was a blast. It reminded me of how I first became hooked on railway signal-

ing—by seeing safety communicated through lamps and aspects, as well as electromechanical devices.

What made it especially rewarding was doing it all with my son. Sharing our knowledge, our time, and our passion for signaling as a team was something I'll always treasure. It's not every day you get to work side by side with your child, doing something you both care about, and watch as others get inspired by it too.

Father & Son on the Signal Gang: A Special Campo Days Weekend -continued

We're grateful to the Museum and to the IRSE for giving us the opportunity to contribute to Campo Days in such a meaningful way. Whether it was chatting with guests and fellow members about signal blocks or explaining the role of relays in track detection, every conversation was a chance to keep the story of railroading alive—and pass it on.



As Chair of the IRSE North American Section, I would like to express our gratitude to the museum for allowing us to exhibit at Campo Days.

Here's to many more weekends of trains, teamwork, and shared tradition—on the rails and beyond.

Editor's note: Making memories with your children at the Campo Railroad Museum or the La Mesa Depot Museum is another benefit of volunteering. I am aware of many special times for our volunteers and their families, including mine. My thanks to Chad for sharing his story about this year's Father's Day.



Three dead locomotives sit on unused San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway tracks in the desert just off Interstate 8 in Imperial County. One wonders what's to become of them and the railway in the future?