

HOT ***SCOOP***

A publication for the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum members

Campo Railroad Museum

October 2025

La Mesa Depot Museum

Dr. Deadtrack visits the Campo Railroad Museum this Halloween





**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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Station Master (La Mesa): Timothy Miller
Volunteer Coordinator: Jenn Brooker
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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
with Dr. Deadtrack!**

**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 with
Pumpkin Express trains 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. Saturday
hours may vary depending on the volunteer needs with the Pumpkin
Express train requirements. 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

Who is Dr. Deadtrack and why is he in Campo????

Dr. Deadtrack is actually museum volunteer Michael Rella who has the starring role in the Saturday evening haunted trains at the Campo Railroad Museum in October. The museum volunteers are expanding the haunted trains this year, and, obviously having a great time doing it based upon the article submitted by Special Events Coordinator and Vice-President Jenn Brooker. The haunted train team has been working many months to put together the fun exhibit. It's great when a team gets going together and making progress all while having fun doing it.

The Saturday evening Sip and Scare trains are new this year featuring adult drinks followed by the haunted house adjacent to the Exhibit Hall on track 1. The goal is to continue to build on the exhibit as the years pass. A huge THANK YOU to the team for your dead-e-cat-ed service to our museum.



All aboard for a night of cocktails and chaos as we hunt for the Lost Train of Dr. Deadtrack...if you survive!

Every Saturday night in October at 6pm



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

Interview with the Vampire BooCrew by Jenn Brooker

Building a haunted house is no easy feat, and when you're doing it in an old, rundown train car, it takes a special kind of dedication, or maybe just a delightful dose of delusion. Get to know the BooCrew, the mad geniuses behind this peculiar project, *The Lost Train of Dr. Deadtrack!*

Answers have been edited for clarity and humor.

Meet Richard Finch



Richard is a SoCal native, born and raised in Alpine. He got his start volunteering at the museum in the library, where he has been instrumental in helping to modernize our collections by digitally scanning thousands of records. In his 50s, Richard went back to college and received an associate's degree in graphic design and another degree in fine art. He combines this education with an extensive background in electronics, construction, and theatrical stage crafts to bring a creative flair and technical expertise to the BooCrew. Richard is also a retired dirigible pirate.

What is your role on the BooCrew: I'm the Lead Cat Wrangler (looking at you, Morgan and Jenn).

Why did you join the BooCrew? My main goal on the BooCrew is to take my 10 years of experience in community theater doing stage design, lighting, and special effects to help create a space for our tortured dreams to be displayed for the public's amusement.

Favorite Halloween costume: The best Halloween costume I have ever done was the invisible man.

Favorite scary movie: My favorite horror movie is *The Shining*. I'm also a big Alfred Hitchcock fan.



What are you most excited about for this year's haunted house? I'm most excited about rehabbing the AT&SF #1304 (Chief Manakaja) and SD&A #351 (Air Force car) into new display spaces at the museum. Having a permanent dedicated space for a haunted house allows us the ability to build an attraction that doesn't have to be dismantled every year and very well may give the rest of the local haunted houses a run for their money!

BooCrew continued

Meet Michael Rella



Michael was born at a very young age and was raised in San Diego. He's retired after more than 25 years of experience in retail. It is this exact experience that makes him not want to manage the Gift Shop. When not sorting through and cataloging the hundreds of book donations in the library, Michael enjoys pina colodas and getting caught in the rain. He is not into yoga.

What is your role on BooCrew: Chief lacky.

Why did you join the BooCrew? I joined the crew as it looked like fun, and I like Halloween. Also, Richard asked me nicely.

Favorite Halloween costume: Dr. Deadtrack, obviously.

What are you most excited about this year's haunted house?
I'm excited to become Dr. Deadtrack. It will be fun!

Meet Morgan Snyder

A true man about town, Morgan was born at Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla and grew up in Vista, Escondido, and El Centro. He now spends his time hanging with his two dogs, Penny and Banshee, right here in Campo. Morgan attended Southwest Academy for the Visual and Performing Arts at Southwest High School, where he majored in dramatic arts. He also earned an impressive three associates degrees from Imperial Valley College, attended Simi Valley Adult School for Pharmacy Tech training and studied at CSU, Northridge for a BS in Biochemistry with a minor in Biology.

What is your role on the BooCrew: I do it all!

Why did you join the BooCrew? I love this stuff.

Favorite Halloween memory: I loved trick or treating with friends. I always dressed up as Dracula as a kid (*Editor's Note: His mother confirmed it was Eddi Munster – we're awaiting photographic evidence*). As an adult, my favorite memory is the Sip 'N Scare, of course!

Favorite classic Halloween character: Freddy Kreuger because that dude still gives me nightmares.

What you're most excited about this year's haunted house: Getting to scare the crap out of people.



BooCrew continued

Meet Jennifer Brooker



Originally from Northeast Pennsylvania, Jennifer landed in San Diego just 5 years ago after touring the world with the Army and a long stint in Washington, D.C. She's a tax lawyer and pooch mom to Phoebe by day, and PSRMA's event planner extraordinaire every other waking moment.

What is your role on the BooCrew: Creator of Dr. Dead-track, costume designer, decorator, prop fabricator, and the main cat that Richard has to herd.

Why did you join the BooCrew? Halloween is my favorite holiday! I love spooky decorations, especially the Victorian gothic aesthetic, which fits right in with the era of trains in Campo. As the Special Events Coordinator, I wanted to expand our Halloween offerings and make the Sip 'N Scare bigger and better.



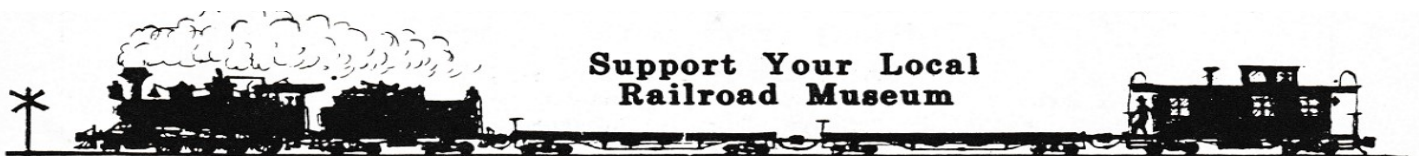
loween memory: Coming up with the most unhinged requests for Halloween costumes that my mom would handmade (like a fried egg, tornado, alien in a spaceship....).

Favorite scary movie: Surprisingly not a horror movie fan, so I'll go with *Young Frankenstein*.

What you're most excited about this year's haunted house: Being the most unique haunted house in San Diego County, if not the whole country! Where else you can experience a haunted train on an actual haunted train!? I mean, that car is clearly haunted for real, right?

Favorite Hal-

Come join the BooCrew for the grand opening of the Lost Train of Dr. Deadtrack, Saturday nights in October, as part of the Sip 'N Scare experience!



Museum Membership Meeting - October 24th in La Mesa

As part of our education and outreach program, we are pleased to welcome Russ Low and his multimedia presentation on the history of the building of American railroads. Russ has a new presentation and an illustrated book. "The Iron Road and the Steam-Breathing Dragon" describes the journey of two brothers who left Southern China in 1864 to help build the western half of the Transcontinental Railroad. The story follows the brothers from the time they board the Pacific Mail Steamer, through the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and then on to Promontory Utah. The 34-minute multimedia presentation tell the story with videos, illustrations, and music.

Meet Russ at the La Mesa Police Department's Community Room located at 8085 University Avenue in La Mesa. The meeting starts at 7:00 P.M.

"A Tale of Courage and Triumph in the American West"

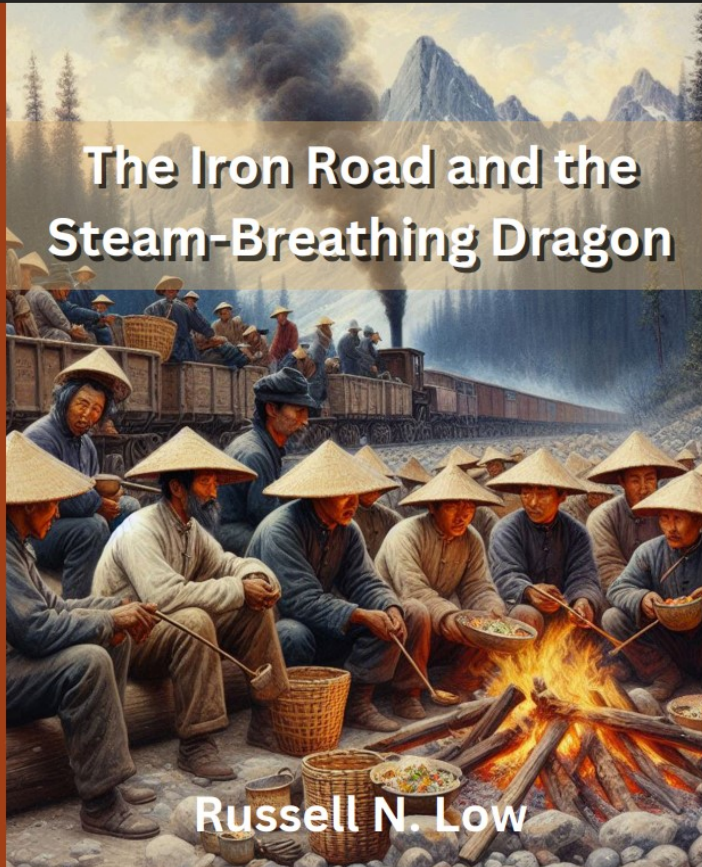
In a captivating narrative that challenges the conventional, 150 years ago, the destiny of the United States rested in the hands of an unlikely group—foreign teenage boys hailing from Canton. Amidst the turmoil of the Civil War, while the country was torn apart and its sons perished, a small cadre of Chinese youths from Guangdong was entrusted with an extraordinary task: uniting the nation by constructing the western segment of the Iron Road across the formidable Sierra Nevada mountains. Armed with picks, hammers, shovels, blasting powder, and an unyielding spirit, these young individuals, characterized by their slight build, distinctive appearance, and traditional pigtailed, labored to build the railroad through some of North America's most unforgiving landscapes.

"The Steam-Breathing Dragon," a gripping saga of Chinese teenagers who defied the odds, building the Iron Road during the Civil War. Russ Low's vivid storytelling weaves courage, resilience, and triumph into this remarkable chapter of history."

"The Iron Road & the Steam-Breathing Dragon" intimately recounts the journey from the perspective of two brothers from Guangdong seeking adventure and fortune, delving into their encounters with mortality, the forging of friendships, and the legacy of an Iron Road that brought true unity to the nation for the first time.

Russ Low's intimate storytelling, complemented by engaging dialogue and vivid illustrations, breathes life into one of the most extraordinary chapters in American history. This epic tale explores the indomitable will and determination of young foreigners pitted against the formidable forces of nature and the pervasive control of overseers. "The Steam-Breathing Dragon" stands as a poignant saga of courage, resilience, tragedy, and triumph, forever altering the destinies of these men and shaping the course of the nation.


Gum Saan Journeys Publications



The Iron Road and the Steam-Breathing Dragon

Russell N. Low

If you are unable to attend in person, attend via zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86739882422?pwd=Kw6hI8hwuK0pwBT4rxCRaH0agQMeTV.1>

Meeting ID: 867 3988 2422

Passcode: 660504

If you have ideas for topics or suggested speakers for next year's membership meetings, please contact Museum Services Director Jim Lundquist via email: Jim@psrm.org

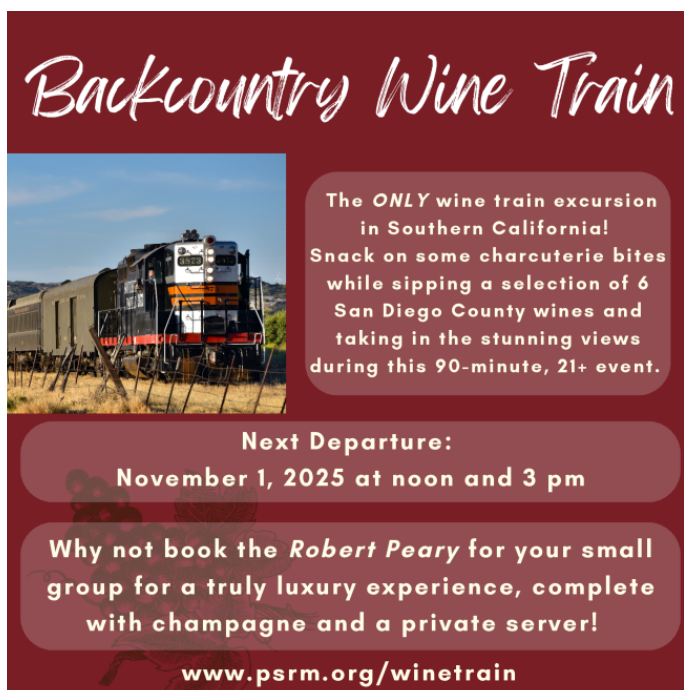


Special Events Coming Up Next at the Campo Railroad Museum

As we approach the Fall season, things get really busy at our railroad museum. We have four special events on tap this quarter: Pumpkin Express, Sip & Scare, Wine Train and North Pole Limited

Each event is very important to the financial well-being of our museum. Each of these events require many volunteers to present to the public. Please reach out to us and offer your volunteer services if you are able to.

THANK YOU.



The Elves are Now Recruiting!

By Jenn Brooker, Special Events Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator

While Santa's elves toil away at the North Pole in their workshop, the Campo Railroad Museum needs our very own elves to bring the North Pole to Campo! Don't be on the naughty list: Experience the magic of the North Pole Limited and help make this an event to remember! The following volunteers are vital to our operations:

1. Decorating Crew: Unleash your creativity and transform our iconic vintage train cars and depot area into a winter wonderland! No artistic experience necessary, just a love for all things fun and festive!

2. Clean-up Crew: Be our unsung heroes! After the North Pole Limited excitement is over, help us keep the museum sparkling clean. This role involves removing and properly storing décor from the depot and train cars.

3. Gift Shop Cashier and Assistant: 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.

4. First-Class Snack Bar Attendant: Fuel the fun as a snack bar hero aboard our First-Class car! Ride the rails as you greet guests with a smile, serve soft drinks, hand out snacks and candy, and ensure excellent service and a clean workspace.

5. Hot Chocolate Chef: Whip up warm, chocolatey magic in large batches to be served aboard the train. Transport the large containers via golf cart from the kitchen facility to the train cars. Requires a driver's license and may require heavy lifting.

6. Parking Lot Attendant: Rudolph may have a shiny red nose to lead the way, but our guests will rely on you and your bright parking wand to find the perfect parking spot. Dress warmly, as this role is all outdoors.

7. Crew Caterer: There's nothing like coming back to a homecooked meal after a long day of work. Whip up large batch meals for our volunteer crews to enjoy at the end of a long night of NPL.

8. Santa Shuttle Driver: Take the big man and his wife back and forth between the North Pole and the Campo Depot between train excursions. This role requires a driver's license and a privately-owned vehicle large enough to accommodate two adult passengers. The route is approximately 9 miles each direction.

9. North Pole Attendants: Keep the North Pole looking shiny and bright! Ensure the facilities are clean, the décor is staged both inside and outside, the generator is powered on and full of gasoline, the fireplace is chugging along, and all the lights are twinkling throughout the night. Dress warm as this role is entirely outdoors.

10. Ticketing Agents: Distribute ticket reservations to guests, answer ticketing questions, and assist guests with walk-up ticket purchases. Customer service skills and a big smile are a must!

11. Hobo: Done your finest tattered hat and worn-out clothes while you engage with children and families while sharing stories of your travels and adventures around the fire pit.

Please note: The event runs Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from November 28th through December 21st from 5pm until 9pm, on Fridays and Saturdays, and from 2pm until 7pm on Sundays, with many volunteers needed earlier. Flexible schedules are available for many positions. Specific requirements and responsibilities may vary slightly depending on the role.

Interested? Email volunteer@psrm.org for more information or [SIGN UP HERE!](#)



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



The Pacific Southwest Railway Museum is unique in preserving cultural aspects of our community. This was driven home to me when on August 28, 2025, Bruce Semelsberger, Justin Hyland, Mark Landguth and I hosted a visit to the La Mesa Depot by the Alzheimer's Association San Diego organization. Sally Lantz Cobian, coordinator of the organization's social activities, reached out to Jennifer Brooker in late May about the possibility of a group visit. Sally and Jennifer settled on a date, and fortunately, we were able to have several members

available to give more personal attention to our guests.

The visit was well attended, and the Depot was packed! Not only were we members explaining how the Depot was part of the community it served, but our visitors were reminiscing about their experiences at depots from long ago. Many stories were



shared. It seemed that so much information was being shared that no one was bored or in a hurry to leave. The visit appeared to have left a lasting impression on everyone, and confirmed that a one hundred- and thirty-one-year-old building can still connect people!



Fundraising for September

Donna Spevack, Administrator of Fund Development, (619) 606-6231; fundraising@psrm.org

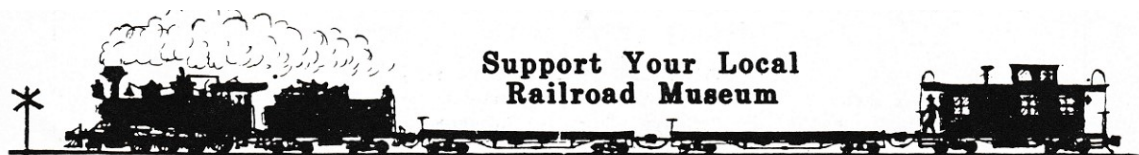
I know it doesn't feel like it but fall is here! Lots of activities and events happening in the next few months at PSRM. **Pumpkin Express** will be arriving soon and be sure to watch out for our upcoming fall/winter events-**NPL and Wine Train** - <http://www.psrn.org>. If you are interested in volunteering at these events just go to our website to sign up: [Volunteer – Pacific Southwest Railway Museum](#). We welcome all volunteers and can always use the help!

These events are brought to you by our volunteers and funding through memberships and donations: If you would like to contribute, please go to [Donate – Pacific Southwest Railway Museum](#). Every donation counts no matter what the monetary amount or how many volunteer hours you contribute. We welcome either, as both contribute to the growth of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum and benefit all PSRM visitors.

Thank you to our donors for their generosity for the months of August/September: YTD - **\$52,282.27**

\$1,000 - \$25,000

Theodora Davis



\$1-\$999

Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Couch, Jr.; Michael McIntyre; Maile Hartelt; Andrew and Cherry S., Diefenbach; E. Schworm; Miaden Pavlovic; Katherine Blaisdell; Matthew Blaisdel; Katherine Stowe Thurston; Mariusz Sulek; Alyssa Anderson; Russ Bergeron; Ashley Smith; Joy Fetherlin; Chris Wray; Antonina Giarrantano; Mary Wade; Mallory Jenkins; Christof Erickson; Cass Witkowski

If I forgot anyone or if you would like a letter for your taxes, please let me know.

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-profits 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). [About Microsoft Rewards](#) or [You can now automatically donate your Microsoft Rewards points to charity](#).

There is also a **Matching Gift** option whereby 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. [Home - Matching Gifts](#) or ask your Human Resources Department if your place of employment participates.

Membership News By Lena Ibarra, Membership Coordinator

Fall is here and with it so many new members to welcome aboard!

Joining with Contributing memberships are Jennifer Lazaro and Emily Schworm.

Nicole M Barnhill, Joy Fetherlin, Kyle Jacobi, Hao Lu, Mary Peterson, and

Douglas Shaver joined with Family memberships.

With Individual memberships are Olga Alvarado, Matthew Blaisdell, Maile Hartelt, Mallory Jenkins, and Mladen Pavlovic.

With new Senior memberships are Russ Bergeron, Antonina Giarratano, and Patric Vargas.

We love seeing Student memberships and this month we welcome Jalen Cron.

There are many events coming up this fall, please consider volunteering. We can't do this without you.



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 21: Colin Atwood 2, Alyssa Andersen 1, David Choy 1, Greg Flores 2, Ryan Hodge 1, Randy Houk 3, Dave Little 3, Matthew Milhoan 1, Rich Paulus 1, Duke Schweikert 1, Jaden Soroka 1.

Culminating in September, Ryan Hodge and Duke Schweikert qualified as conductors on the SD&A.

MOW - maintenance of way volunteers who assisted Track Foreman James Caestecker in maintaining tracks and right-of-way and equipment this period: James Caestecker 1, Stephen Hager 1, Jim Lundquist 2, Mario Sulek 1, Tim Wamsley 1, Cass Witkowski 1.

Brakeman class - these are the volunteers who have worked the Fall Brakeman Class at Campo and the number of days they volunteered this period: Colin Atwood 1 and Stephen Hager 1.

There were a total of 26 volunteer-days in Operations this period.

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 highly coveted WorkCamping positions open NOW.

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.**

Facilities Work at the Campo Railroad Museum



Jim Lundquist installs skirting on the office trailer



Air conditioning contractor services the units on the office trailer.



Steve Pohjola caulks windows on the Office trailer.

All photos by Frank Denison IV



Jim Lundquist trims trees at the Campo Depot

Facilities Work at the Campo Railroad Museum



Jim Lundquist installs a new replacement EXIT sign in the Shop Building.

Photos by Frank Denison IV 9/5/25



LIBRARY UPDATE by Bruce Semelsberger

Happy Autumn to everyone! I'll keep the report brief this month, particularly as most of the staff is heavily involved in Halloween "Boo Crew" activities and putting in some long hours getting the new cars ready. Much of my own time has been spent filing the paperwork from the long-delayed "thank you" and deed of gift letters, library maintenance and cataloguing. Although the accessioning of donations is caught up, cataloguing the extensive collections still lags far behind, particularly the thousands of photographs that need to be sorted and scanned. This is a long term job for someone who loves to look at old photos and we will be happy to train you on our very nice equipment until you get to know more about it than we do. The SD&A correspondence records are another crying need for a caretaker; probably every question we have ever been asked about our railroad could be answered if only someone took the time to enter all of that data. I'm sure that anyone would find it as fascinating as I did when I had time to work on them instead of running a library.

The Fall/Winter season is the time when historical societies and other groups traditionally like to have programs for their members and we have already been approached by two of them for a guest lecture spot, so I will be at the Santee Historical Society in November and the Coronado Historical Society next April. I

feel certain that they would welcome new potential members at these events, so if any are interested, please check their websites for details.

Maureen has completed still another sorting job for us and the filing of exchanged newsletters and ephemera is now up-to-date. With all of that experience, she has now taken on the most daunting sorting job we have: newspaper clippings! It probably didn't sound so horrible when I approached her, but then she discovered that there are nine full boxes of them! We set up a table and sorting space in fully one half of our main work area and phase one is underway. This is going to be a long job for one person and I'm sure that she would welcome someone to work on the project when she's not there. This initial phase is just sorting the clippings into boxes for the main categories and illuminating as many duplicates as possible. We also need to trim off excess and make sure all of the clippings are marked as to source and date. In phase two we will sort through the boxes of each category to further eliminate duplication and in phase 3 we create a data base by scanning each clipping onto acid free paper, so you can easily see that this will take some considerable time and effort to complete. All things begin somewhere, and this is that time and place.

When the holiday season is over, we'll get back to the software issues with new resolve and hope some grant money becomes available.

From the Back Platform

By Stephen Hager, President

We've made it to October and that means we're officially into our busy fourth quarter special events season. Rather than focusing on the details of our upcoming events, I'd like to share what I've been up to in September. At the beginning of the month, I attended the HeritageRail Alliance Fall Conference in Durango, Colorado on behalf of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association. HRA puts on this annual meeting every Fall to bring together leaders and representatives from railroad museums and tourist railroads across the country (and even some from Canada). This was my second year attending.

Many of you probably know Durango as the home of the world-famous Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad. Owned and operated by American Heritage Railways, the D&SNGRR comprises the 45-mile Silverton Branch of the San Juan Extension of the Denver and Rio Grande (Western) Railroad and many of the D&RGW's original narrow gauge passenger cars and steam locomotives.



D&SNGRR Convention Special backs up onto the wye at Cascade, which is half way between the namesake cities.

It also has one of the most complete and capable steam locomotive shops in the entire country. D&SNGRR/AHR were the gracious hosts of the conference and they provided two round-trip private charter

trains throughout the conference; one all the way from Durango to Silverton and one to the halfway point at Cascade Canyon. It was the perfect setting to network with leaders of other railroad museums and I made several valuable connections while I was there.

Of course, a big part of the conference is the seminars. I sat in on several seminars covering a wide variety of topics including Non-Profit Business Strategies, Strategic Planning, Managing a Federal Grant for Bridge/Track Projects, and Next Generation Strategies. I got many useful takeaways from each seminar which I'll be sharing with the PSRMA board of directors in the coming weeks. The topic of next generation strategies is a particularly hot one across the rail preservation industry. Organizations around the country are struggling to attract and retain younger volunteers and are looking for new, innovative ways to tackle this challenge. The group at the seminar generally agreed that social media is an effective way to bring in younger prospective volunteers, but that organizations also need to create a welcoming environment and continuing opportunities for meaningful engagement to retain these volunteers. The group also agreed that it's incredibly important to hold all volunteers accountable to the same standards of conduct and to grant merit-based opportunities for advancement.

For our part, I feel that PSRMA has been relatively successful in bringing in a younger volunteer demographic in the past couple years, though we unquestionably have room to grow. As a younger volunteer myself who got involved in this organization as a teenager, I remember how exciting it was to be given the opportunity to work hands-on on real trains. The thing that kept me coming back was the willingness of everybody to take me under their wing and let me grow at my own pace. This is an ideal that I and other members of PSRMA leadership strive to uphold – if you come with an appetite to learn and a willingness get your hands dirty, we'll make sure you get as many opportunities as possible to do meaningful work and make a difference in rail preservation. I'm curious to hear both from our current volunteers and our non-volunteer members; what makes you keep coming back to

to volunteer, what would make you consider volunteering (or volunteering more), and what dissuades you from volunteering? Send me your thoughts by emailing president@psrm.org and I'll take them under consideration.



D&SNGRR shops are located in Durango, Colorado. They maintain all their steam and diesel locomotives plus the passenger fleet. Shop forces also complete work for other railroads under a contract.

Aside from the HRA Conference, I've been working with our civil engineering consultant, Civil Landworks, on the design of storm-water and grading improvements at the Campo Railroad Museum. As I've covered in previous editions of the Hot Scoop, this design work is being funded by the \$475,000 American Rescue Plan Act grant that we received through the County of San Diego. The project objective is to complete the grading and drainage design for the future roundhouse and exhibit halls and get as much of the construction done as possible with the funding available. Preliminary engineering is underway and we have a meeting

scheduled with the County in October to get land development permits started for the construction.

PSRMA needs to have all grant funds spent by the end of June next year, so we'll be working feverishly to get the design work finished and the project bid out and constructed in the next nine months. As we start to hone in on anticipated construction costs, we'll adjust the scope of the construction work to stay within the available grant funds. Of course, if we receive additional funds, either through another grant or through donations, we could continue construction work uninterrupted. Please reach out to me or our Administrator of Fund Development, Donna Spevack, at fundraising@psrm.org if you'd like to learn more about opportunities to financially support this ambitious project to expand our Campo Railroad Museum facility.

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!



The highlight of the ride between Durango & Silverton is the Animas River Gorge. Back in 1881, the D&RG Railroad carved out a ledge 400 feet above the Rio de Animas Perdido (River of Lost Souls) in order to serve the mining community of Silverton. The entire 45 mile narrow gauge railway extension from Durango was completed in ten months.

Engineering Highlight SD&A Railway

What is a frog?

By Chadwick Baker, MIRSE

Railway Signal and Train Control – Design Manager

Editor Note: Museum volunteer Chad Baker maintains our crossing signals at Campo. He will be presenting information regarding technical aspects of our railroad in the next few issues of the Hot Scoop

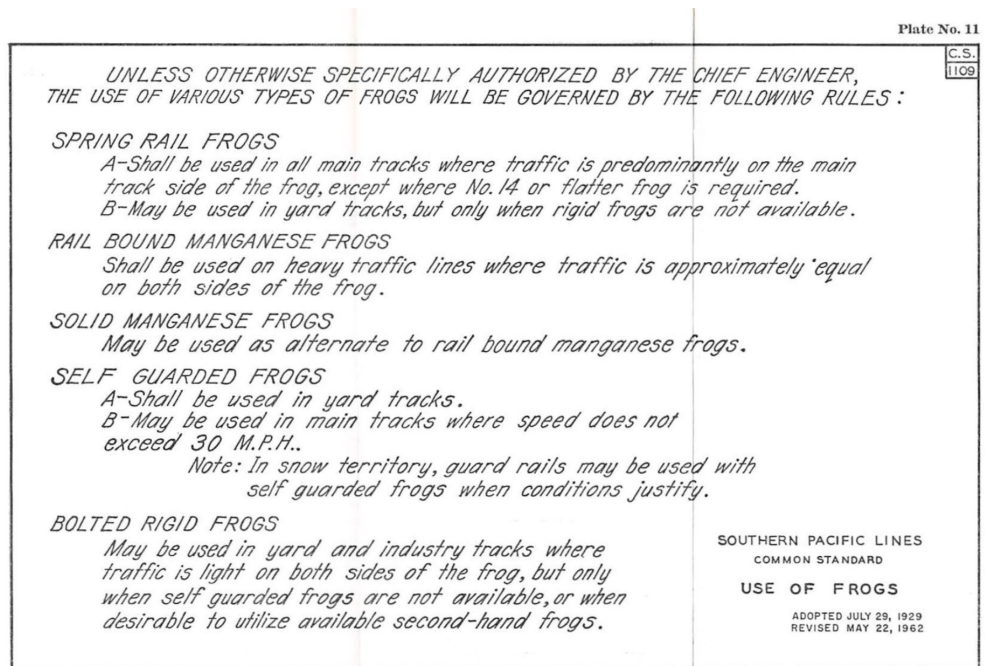
From the earliest part of your rail journey, be it as a kid with a model train, exploring railroads, or here at the museum, you've heard or know the term frog. No, not your high school science dissection frog, no, this is a heavy convergence of steel rails and iron braces casted or bolted together. Why the name frog? Some say the rails resemble the body of a frog, while others say frog in railroad terminology is believed to have originated from the shape of a horse's hoof, specifically the V-shaped part on the underside called the frog. Early railway track engineers reportedly observed a resemblance between the converging rails of the railway turnout and the shape of a horse's hoof.

The American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-of-Way Association (AREMA) defines a frog as: A track structure used at the intersection of two running rails to provide support for wheels and passageways for their flanges, thus permitting wheels on either rail to cross the other. The simple turnout frog enables the wheels running on one track to cross the rail of a diverging track, provides continuous channels for the wheel flanges, and supports the wheels over the intersection of the flange-ways. Turnout frogs are divided into two principal classes: rigid frogs, which are without movable parts, and movable wing frogs of the spring-rail pattern, in which one wing moves outward to establish a flangeway for the wheels.

On the San Diego and Arizona Railway, we have both the rigid and spring-rail frog installed on the main line. At Campo on the main track, both the Campo Siding and Campo House tracks have spring-rail frogs, while Rose Junction has a rigid frog.

The Southern Pacific Railroad had specific situations for each type of frog and where they could be installed. SP Common Standard Drawing C.S 1109 dated July 1929 and updated May 1962 states:

Spring Rail Frogs: Shall be used in all main tracks where traffic is predominantly on the main track side of the frog, except where No. 14 or flatter frog is required. May be used in yard tracks, but only when rigid frogs are not available.



149

Bolted Rigid Frogs:

May be used in yard and industry tracks where traffic is light on both sides of the frog, but only when self-guarded frogs are not available, or when it is desirable to utilize available second-hand frogs.

The spring rail frogs at Campo conform to the SP CS 1109 standard. The Rose Junction turnout was installed by the museum and is equipped with a rigid frog.

Continues next page

Frogs - continued

Spring-Rail Frog - A frog having a movable wing rail which is normally held against the point rail by springs, thus making an unbroken running surface for wheels using one track, whereas the flanges of wheels on the other track force the movable wing rail away from the point rail to provide a passageway.

This frog has a movable wing rail. The wing rail is held closed by a spring assembly. It also has an anchor block, thimble, and a bent joint bar at the toe end to allow the wing rail to pivot. The guardrail pulls the wheels over, forcing the wing to open on the diverging side. The wing rail springs closed again after the wheels are through. Spring frogs are supplied as either right or left-handed. To determine the hand of a spring frog, stand at the rigid wing end, facing the frog. The side the movable wing is on indicates left or right. The spring frog is used for trackage with predominant main line traffic, especially high-speed movements, because there is less pounding and a smoother ride. The disadvantage is that it requires more maintenance than conventional frogs. Recent advancements in spring frog design have eliminated some of the rigorous maintenance needed to keep a spring frog functional.



Spring Frog on the main line at the Campo Depot

Bolted Rigid Frog - A frog built essentially of rolled rails, with fillers between the rails, and held together with bolts. Bolted rigid frogs are made of machined rail bolted together. They are cheap to make and are used primarily in yards and secondary lines. They are designated as right or left hand. The straight route side of the bolted rigid frog point is continuous, whereas the diverging side of the frog point is milled to intersect the straight side frog point rail, hence the need to differentiate the hand of the frog.



Photo:

Rigid frog in the Campo Railroad Museum yard

Central to the frog are guard rails that are installed on both the straight and diverging tracks. The guard rails pull the wheel away from the point of the frog and ensure the wheel will not pick up the frog, causing battering or cracking on the point of the frog.

Maintenance of Frogs – Frogs require routine maintenance, which varies based on the type of frog. The spring frogs require lubrication for the moving parts of the spring wing rail and slide plates. Applicable to both the spring and rigid frogs is the tightening of bolts, tamping of ties under the frog, and alignment of the

Frogs - continued

rails. The point of the frog and wing rails will occasionally require grinding and welding if damaged or cracked. Cracking is typically caused by the track not being in gage.

An interesting note at Campo is the lack of self-guarded frogs. The SP was a leading user of self-guarded frogs. Self-guarded frogs are cast iron and one piece with no removable or replaceable parts. I was sure we would have one in service, but I have yet to find one on the SD&A Rwy.

Applicable FRA Regulation related to Frogs
49 CFR § 213.137 – Frogs

Except as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, the flangeway depth measured from a plane across the wheel-bearing area of a frog on Class 1 track shall not be less than 1 3/8 inches, or less than 1 1/2 inches on Classes 2 through 5 track.

If a frog point is chipped, broken, or worn more than

five-eighths inch down and 6 inches back, operating speed over the frog shall not be more than 10 m.p.h.

If the tread portion of a frog casting is worn down more than three-eighths inch below the original contour, operating speed over that frog shall not be more than 10 m.p.h.

Where frogs are designed as flange-bearing, flangeway depth may be less than that shown for Class 1 if operated at Class 1 speeds.

The flange depth requirements in paragraph (a) do not apply to a frog designed as a flange-bearing frog (FBF) used in a crossing diamond in Classes 2 through 5 track, provided that the crossing angle is greater than 20 degrees unless movable guard rails are used. Interested in Maintenance of Way, Signals, or Railroad Engineering? We need you and your talents to maintain our railroad. The mind and physical labor of MOW work are great for the body and will bring you satisfaction with tangible results. Please consider volunteering in our Engineering, MOW, and Signal areas. The future of our railway depends on all of us participating.

Capital Projects Committee Forming

The Board of Directors has asked for assistance in prioritizing future capital projects and developing cost estimates. This will be used for future fund raising and grant applications. Jim Lundquist has taken the lead in this effort and is seeking volunteers who might be interested in serving the museum in this endeavor. Already underway are efforts to develop costs for

necessary track improvements as well as air conditioning three cars used on our excursion trains. Also, the steam team spent a decade identifying work required to restore the Coos Bay #11 steam locomotive. Developing a list of projects and recommending priorities for these projects will be the first order of business for the committee. If you would like to be involved, please contact Jim either by phone (619-417-7059) or via email at Jim@psrm.org.

Museum Supports Other Non-profits

Our Museum partners with other non-profit groups to support their activities by making tickets available. If you are aware of other non-profit organizations which could benefit from offering two tickets for admission and train excursion rides at our Campo Railroad Museum, those can be provided at no charge to them. Over the years, we have found that spreading the word about our museum to others is a good way to gain recognition of our efforts.

simply send an email to our Director of Museum Services Jim Lundquist at Jim@psrm.org. Provide basic information regarding the non-profit and an address where we can send the tickets to. We'll take care of the rest.

Please recognize that these tickets are good only for our regular events and the Golden State trains. These are not good for any special event activities, such as Easter trains, Bunny trains, North Pole Limited trains, Sip-n-scare, wine trains or the like.

If you are involved or become aware of an opportunity to assist other non-profit groups with these tickets,

Help us spread the word about our great, all-volunteer museum to others.



Santa Fe's *El Capitan* passenger train arrived Pasadena, California in the early evenings. The bilevel coaches were used as a pattern for future Amtrak coach designs. Here, the Chaircar Attendant and the Conductor are welcoming passengers onboard.