Hot Scoop

Hot Scoop Shovel Logo by Larry Rose

A publication dedicated to Pacific Southwest Railway Museum members

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North Pole Express Trains A Huge Success!

Enjoying a cookie from the Golden Acorn

Conductor Jim Baker punches tickets

Chef Dave DiGiorgio made the hot cocoa

Santa (Mark Ovadia) with happy children

Photos by Cyndi Hawkes

*** Operations Volunteers *** *Randy Houk*

We have a group of extremely dedicated, hard working people who continue to make the trip to Campo each Saturday, Sunday and School Train Tuesday to keep our demonstration trains running. We ran 8 trains in December, carrying more than 1600 passengers.

Jim Baker	Robin Becker	Darrel Bivans	Ken Brown	Steve Clark	Dave DiGiorgio
Duane Dubke	Don Getz	Tom Gray	David Green	Randy Houk	Larry Hieshetter
Seth Miller	Jim Lundquist	Bob Nickles	Linda Ovadia	Mark Ovadia	Larry Rose
Rich Paulus	Dick Pennick	Don Pope	Red Schmitz	Bob Schussler	Sandy Schussler
Frank Stites	Rob Stebbins	Robin Wonders	Tommy Batts	Dave Tomeraasen	

Congratulations to newly qualified conductor **Darrel Bivans**.

*** Donations ***

Wayne & Lauralee Bennett	$15	General Fund	Glenda Cox	$10	Pumpkins
Harry & Jo Ann Roesener	$10	General Fund	Philip Woods	$20	General Fund
Tommy Batts	$200	General Fund	Herb Kehr	$200	Report
Mr & Mrs David Miller	$10	General Fund	Herb Kehr	$100	RPO Fund
Raymond & Deborah Park	$60	General Fund	Anonymous	$50	General Fund
Gerald D. Heveron	$15	General Fund	Mark Jennings	$250	Restoration
Robert & Virginia Mautino	$10	General Fund	Roy Pickering	$5000	Library building
Robert & Mary Solsbak	$10	General Fund	William Wright	$15	General Fund

*** Pearl Harbor Day Troop Train *** *Mike Retz*

On Saturday, December 9, PSRMA members Jim & Gretchen Friedlan and Mike & Rachael Retz were aboard the 5th annual “Pearl Harbor Day Troop Train” when it departed San Diego’s historic Santa Fe Station behind Amtrak train No. 571. It was Bill and Debbie Hatrick’s way of honoring the USA, its flag and our Pearl Harbor veterans. The “Troop Train” consisted of the Hatrick’s beautifully preserved 1949 SP club lounge “Overland Trail” and an equally immaculate 1950 SP sleeper/lounge.

The cars were all decked out for an “old fashioned Christmas on wheels” with food served constantly all the way to Los Angeles’ Union Station and return. There was no need to run over to Philippe’s in LA for a bite to eat! The guests of honor on the trip were the veterans. A microphone was passed around and some of the vets told of their experiences at Pearl Harbor and the war. A DJ had plenty of WWII music on hand and it was piped into both cars.

About a dozen young men and women were dressed in military uniforms from the 40s, but the “show-stopper” was a woman wearing a 40s dress, stockings with seams down the back and her hair looking exactly like it did back 60 years ago! I hate to admit that I remember those years! We also had Lou Costello on board. Or a guy who looked like, dressed like, talked like and acted like Lou Costello. He kept us all laughing and also had wonderful stories to tell. We all had some wonderful memories to take home when the “troop train” pulled into San Diego that night.

*** Food Drive a Big Success *** *Ted Kornweibel*

Thanks to your great generosity, we provided bountiful food "baskets" to three needy Campo families. Several of you brought large quantities of food to Campo. Three $50 cash contributions, a wonderful $100 gift, plus a twenty, enabled me to fill up several grocery carts. I delivered everything to the Lake Morena Community Church, and the local organizers of the food drive distributed it to the families, in the name of PSRM.

Each family received a turkey and a ham, dressing mix, cranberry sauce, canned yams, pickles and olives, 10# of potatoes, and bottles of sparkling cider for a big Christmas meal. In addition, each family received boxes of macaroni and cheese, large cans of juice, crackers, 2# of cheese, butter, nuts, cornbread and brownie mixes, brown and white sugar, pancake mix and syrup, hot chocolate mixes, peanut butter, catsup, cooking oil, several boxes of cereal, 5# of pasta; bottles of pasta sauce; cans of vegetables, fruits, refried beans, chili, beef stew, and various canned meats. And as a special gift, each family received passes to ride the Golden State.

Isn't it a joy to be able to bless those less fortunate than us!

*** North Pole Express *** *Dave Tomeraasen*

Hobo Red Schmitz

This is where the rails lead!

Dave DiGiorgio, Alex Fiori and Diana Hyatt

Diana Hyatt and helpers read to the children

Cary Hyatt mans the bar in AT&SF #1509

Santa surrounded by the Fiori family

A super time was had by all on the North Pole Express on Sat., Dec. 16th. A hobo was the only problem encountered that evening. He kept trying to board the train without a ticket. Several passengers reported that he was aboard and dodging the conductor. Smiles were plentiful among the 300 plus passengers on their way to the North Pole. Success was achieved as the train arrived at the North Pole and Santa boarded the train bound for Campo. Hot chocolate and cookies were distributed to all by Santa's assistant elves. Christmas carols were heard throughout the train coaches.

*** President's Report *** *Jim Lundquist*

As I set here in the dining room at Campo on a dark, Campo Saturday night, I can marvel at what we have just accomplished. It's our second weekend of night *North Pole Express* trains. Both trains went out full of visitors, and came safely back to Campo with happy families, many of which enjoyed their first train ride. We served hot cocoa, huge cookies, read a book onboard, visited with Santa and sang Christmas carols onboard the train. Now, as I reflect on the weekend, I can see that the clean-up and preparation for the following weekend's trains is already well in hand. On our site, I can count 16 volunteers who are staying over the night, having already worked all day putting in windows in the #350, preparing the train and food, constructing steps at the Campo Depot or a variety of other jobs onsite. These volunteers, along with two others who live in Campo offsite, will get up in the morning to continue the clean-up effort and making the train ready for more visitors next weekend. I am amazed at the commitment by so many people to assist the Museum in presenting railroad history in such a fun way. For me, watching the children come off the train with their families, with nothing but a smile and a bell – that makes all my volunteer time worthwhile. For all involved, THANK YOU for all you do.

A very special thank you must go out to **Ron, Diana** and the whole **Hyatt family** for their efforts to pull these trains together for us. Yes, there were many others who helped out, and I'm sure the article dealing with these trains will list those involved. However, for duty above and beyond the call, the Hyatt's deserve our special thanks. They took time off from work and spent countless hours making the train ready for our visitors. Please take a moment to tell them thanks from you when you next see them.

Also, please remember **Dave DiGiorgio** for his efforts to issue tickets for five Tecate trains and eight *North Pole Express* trains during a short few weeks period. *John Little* and *Red Schmitz* started out early every morning after the train runs by cleaning the cars and the bathrooms at the depot. **Brian Elmore** and family once again took care of the North Pole Village for us at the North Pole (Miller Creek) this year. It's great to just turn over that entire portion of this event to him and let him run. In addition to a Santa's sleigh and house this year, they graded a site and also built a Christmas tree from lights, star, added lights on the ground and a Santa's workshop. In addition, they supplied elves to dance with Santa. In actuality, the village needed to be set up twice as the winds blew it over after the second weekend. Terrific job, Brian and family. I can't wait to see next year's effort!

Our corporate sponsors this year were **Golden Acorn** and the team of **Qualcomm/Pitney Bowes**. Golden Acorn supplied awesome chocolate chip cookies for each and every visitor for us – over 2,300 cookies! These huge 6 inch cookies were very well received. As more and more people kept showing up for the trains, Golden Acorn was also able to make additional cookies for us. Qualcomm and Pitney Bowes teamed up to print 1,500 song books for everyone on the train. This was a nice touch to have a souvenir song book onboard.

On Sunday, December 10th, the **San Diego Union-Tribune** ran a front page color photo and story on our all volunteer *North Pole Express* trains. This is terrific publicity for our Museum and will help us in everything we do in the future.

The most asked question as our visitors walked off the train was "When will tickets for next year's train go on sale?" Now, that's a great question to hear. You should make plans right now to become involved in next year's trains. These trains really picked up my spirit to see so many people enjoying the fruits of our labor. Please pencil in some time to help out at Campo next November and December as we will need more volunteers to help spread the load out for all involved.

It will be nice to see **Ken Helm** again soon. He comes out from Kentucky during the Christmas season to spend some time with us, teaming up with **Larry Rose** and me to get a few projects completed. I enjoy spending time with friends over the Holidays at Campo.

Speaking of the Holidays, I hope you enjoyed your time with friends and family. Allow me to invite you to join our family this year at Campo. We love saving and sharing history for our community, and spending time with friends. I hope to see you at Campo soon and at the Annual Dinner as well.

*** PSRM Volunteer Dave Houk Joins the USCG *** *Randy Houk*

Long time museum volunteer Dave Houk has joined the United States Coast Guard. Dave graduated from boot camp in Cape May, New Jersey on December 1st after 8 weeks of training. Connie and I were fortunate to be able to see Dave graduate with 50 other Seamen and Seamen Apprentices. Dave signed up for a 6-year hitch, so he goes to sea as a Seaman. Dave was lucky to receive his first choice for a duty station: Honolulu, Hawaii! He is assigned to the high endurance cutter USCGC Rush, WHEC 723. He is currently at sea, and reports via email that he has taken the helm, and stood lookout duty high above the bridge. The Rush sails most of the Pacific Ocean, making port calls to Alaska, Korea, Japan, Australia and South America. Great adventures lie ahead for him!

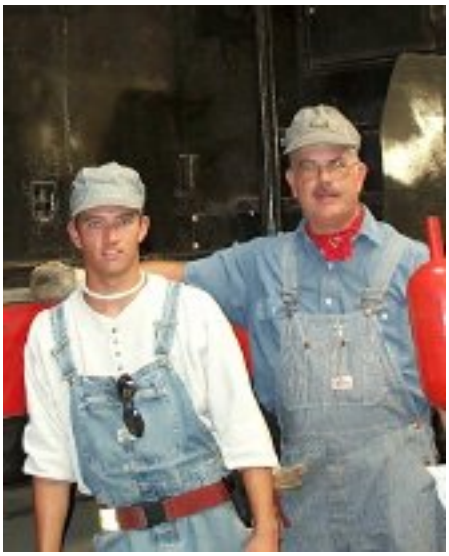
Dave has been a PSRM volunteer since he was 9 years old, beginning by helping me as a trainman back in 1991. He sold snacks on the train, manned the bar in AT&SF #1509 and also worked as staff on our dinner trains. He really began to shine though when he became a qualified brakeman at age 18, one of our youngest ever. With the guidance of Mike Edwards and other veteran museum volunteers, Dave quickly proved his skill as a brakeman and motorcar operator. Dave operated the motorcar on our first trip to Tecate in June of 2004, our first trip back to Mexico after several years. When I was engineer and Dave my “brakie” it was a joy to work with him; he was so extremely competent, efficient and safe. What more could a proud father ask for? He was also, in my opinion, one of our very finest instructors. When he had a brakeman or motorcar trainee, he would sit down for as long as necessary at the end of the day to talk with the trainee about what went well and what aspects of his performance needed improvement. I think that these skills will serve Dave well in the Coast Guard.

Connie and I are extremely proud of Dave, and are sure that he will serve his country well.

Good job, Dave!

You can reach Dave at dhouk@rush.uscg.mil.
USCGC Rush website is: http://www.uscg.mil/pacarea/rush/

Dave at 13 in AT&SF #1509


First day brakeman at 18, with Dad

USCG Seaman Dave Houk

*** The Work Goes On *** *Dave Tomeraasen*

Left photo: Here is our busy 15 year old PSRM member **Alex Fiori** "in the pit" working on the 92 day service on the Southern Pacific GP9. This was his second time working on the service and was doing an excellent job as he had remembered the service procedure from the previous time. He is working under the direction and supervision of **Ron Hyatt** and **Mike Chisholm**. Alex was quoted "I can't wait to do the service on the Goat."

Right photo: On Saturday, December 16, **Mike Chisholm** and **Dave DiGiorgio** worked on a new rain gauge for the amateur (ham) radio station KA6DAC-11 which links via packet radio to the PSRM.org web site.

*** We Get Letters ***

Subject: The North Pole Express

Wow! What an amazing experience. Talk about top drawer. You people did a fantastic job and bring this story to life. First off you need to raise the price. We will be doing it every year. It is going to catch on big time. Just a suggestion but $35-40 per adult is totally reasonable I feel with the amount of work and the time put in. I bake (from scratch) those were darn good cookies. They weren't hard or tasteless. That was the best hot coco ever (I thought Giradelli was good) Kid tickets should be $20 - $25.00 It was so beautiful in the train. The elves, the decorations, all of it. My son is 12 and Autistic. He loved it. He was smiling the whole time and brought his book on the ride. He has been up there many times but never at night so he really liked this. Thanks for making a favorite story book come to life. Now Santa is bring him the movie since he rode the train. What a wonderful service you provided. Even if I was childless I would have wanted to ride on it. Great fun. Thanks so much.

Amy and Family, from San Diego.

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Hello Chef Dave!

I am so glad we got to meet you on the North Pole Express! It was a fun-filled ride, despite how we were dealing with our colds. Very much improved over last year. Here's a few shots for your viewing pleasure.

BTW, the next day, Saturday, I went up to Mt. Laguna and stayed at the lodge for a couple nights and got to enjoy the snow, first hand! I bet you have some experience in the mountains too! I'd love to share notes someday.

Have a wonderful holiday, and we'll stay in touch. Thank you again for the fantastic train ride!

Cyndi Hawkes

*** La Mesa Depot Museum report *** *Dick Pennick, coordinator*

La Mesa's annual "Christmas in the Village" promotion began at 6 p.m. Friday, December 8th and ran through Sunday, December 10th, with lots of craft booths, food and holiday music. The Merchants' Association, which stages this annual affair, opted out of its normal 2-weekend schedule this year, partly due to the competition of Balboa Park's "December Nights" celebration December 2nd & 3rd.

PSRMA volunteer docents were on-hand each of the three days at our ***La Mesa Depot Museum***, handing out complimentary hot apple cider, bakery cookies and hot chocolate as our small token of appreciation to the La Mesa community for its support of our museum activities there. Six dozen assorted bakery cookies were again donated by **Henry's Marketplace** and **Albertson's Food Center** in La Mesa. The apple cider was graciously provided by docent **Bruce Semelsberger** and the museum provided the gourmet hot chocolate mix (the same delicious mix used on this year's" North Pole" trains). La Mesa's **Coast Restaurant Supply** provided the free loan of a restaurant-style hot beverage dispenser for the cocoa.

Late in the week, we weren't sure the weather was going to be chilly enough to justify putting a coal fire in the depot's pot-bellied stove. But by the time Friday rolled around, and the sun had set behind the western horizon, the justification was clear. After a few false starts attempting to get a fire going, we soon had that authentic old-time coal smell and radiant heat permeating the waiting room. For these evening openings, additional spot-lights are added to the mix for safety and convenience: two are provided over the steps to the caboose, another illuminates the steam locomotive cab, and a third light beams on the descriptive sign at the locomotive.

My appreciation for another "job well done" is expressed to docents **Sid Saltzstein --** who served a double-shift on Saturday (his regular 1 – 4 p.m. stint plus the 6 – 9 p.m. evening duty); **Ed Smith**, who helped all three days; **Bruce Semelsberger**, who decorated the depot interior, got the exterior Christmas lights working, provided the cider <u>and</u> staffed the Friday shift; **Ray Lethbridge**; **Mike Retz**; **Duane Dubke**; and **Dick Pennick**, who contributed his standard duties of general cleanup, staffing, coordination, and other duties as required.

*** Board Approves Fall-Restraint System for Enginehouse ***

At its August 19th meeting, the PSRMA Board approved a request by Vice-President of Museum Services **Ted Kornweibel** to purchase and install a state-of-the-art fall-protection system in our Campo enginehouse/car shop.

The Board agreed with Ted's argument that – as long as our volunteers continue to risk life and limb working on the tops of cars and locomotives under restoration or repair inside the building – a better system of fall-restraint was needed.

The system includes two heavy-duty, 160'-long aluminum I-beams hung from the roof trusses above tracks 12 and 13, four safety harnesses, four self-retracting load-cushioned life-lines, etc. Total estimated cost is about $5,500, plus delivery from San Diego. Installation is expected to be performed by the Museum, with completion hopefully by the end of January, 2007. The new system will initially allow two people to hook up to each I-beam trolley, but more can be accommodated with additional fall-restraints. The individual harnesses and lifelines can also be used remote from the enginehouse, as long as there is a suitable structure to fasten the line to.

Once installed, the next task will be for all departments to ensure that their personnel actually use the system for the purpose intended. This writer recalls a near-miss accident involved with filling the sand dome on the Museum's steam locomotive #2353 on a damp, dark night in 1998, which required standing on top of the boiler jacket with a 40-lb. bucket of sand. The jacket had a light coating of "dew" from atmospheric condensation. As I lifted the heavy bucket, my feet lost their traction on the slippery surface and I fell backwards, my fall broken mercifully by the smokestack. Although the experience gave me a sore back and a wounded ego, it was preferable to tumbling head-first 13 feet to the ground, bouncing off various metal items on the way. I have my own personal fall-protection apparatus, but wasn't wearing it that night.

This system is a giant leap forward in the Museum's effort to provide a safe working environment for our volunteers. (D. Pennick)

*** PSRMA Trainman Duo Celebrate Half-century ***

PSRMA Trainmen/Docents **Sandy** & **Bob Schussler** recently celebrated 50 years of wedded bliss -- not with a cross-country rail tour, as you might expect, but with a two-week ocean cruise to the Mediterranean. **Bob** is currently the Museum's Trainman instructor and **Sandy** serves the Museum's Board of Directors as Secretary.

The Museum appreciates their volunteer involvement and commitment and wishes them well for their next half-century! (D. Pennick)

*** In Memoriam ***

The Museum and its ***Southwest Railway Library*** mourn the recent passing of San Diego resident **Catherine M. Rogers**, widow of retired SD & AE conductor and PSRMA member **James F. "Jimmie" Rogers**. Catherine, a native of Herington, Kansas, passed away on Monday, December 11th. She was 89.

In recent years, Catherine had rounded up most of her husband's railroad memorabilia and graciously donated it to the museum and our research library. Jimmie had been a "griever" for the local Trainman's Union and had a number of books and other interesting items related to that activity. Other items included SD & AE employees timetables, switch locks and keys, caboose keys, news clippings, etc. (D. Pennick)

*** Narrow-Gauge Steam in the High Country (Part 6) *** *Dick Pennick*

In last month's installment, this writer spent his final "free" day enjoying the dramatic spectacle that is the departure of the regular steam passenger train from Chama, New Mexico on the narrow-gauge Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, and hitching a short free ride on the "Galloping Goose".

On Monday morning, June 12th, I was up before the alarm clock, pulled on my overalls, grabbed a quick bite, and was at the Chama Depot across the street by 8 a.m. The mandatory "Volunteer Orientation" wasn't scheduled until 9, so I had time to amble over to the commissary car to enjoy a complimentary Danish, a hot cup of coffee, and some fresh fruit.

By 9 a.m., all the volunteers were gathered along the House Track in front of the depot, many holding cups of coffee and munching Danish. No trains were scheduled for a Chama departure this morning, so we had the yard to ourselves. Tim Tennant – President and CEO of the non-profit ***Friends***, and an ex-rail – introduced the ***Friends*** staff. Tennant was also filling in temporarily as General Manager of the "for-profit" railroad, so he was a pretty busy guy.

Among the various announcements, introductions and safety pronouncements was an offer by the local Chama Station Inn to provide a free BBQ for all volunteers on Thursday. At the conclusion of the Orientation, we were all lined up alongside the former Rio Grande Southern Railroad "Galloping Goose" for the traditional group photo, copies of which would be available for purchase later in the week.

With the orientation completed, it was time to meet the rest of my work crew and go to work. Counting myself and the project leader, there were six of us, from all corners of the country. Our leader, Terry Rider, and his wife Sherri were in from Wichita, Kansas; Jeff Smith, who manufactures parts for live-steam locomotives, drove down from Meade, Colo.; G.O. Gish, and his son Bryant, hailed from the farm country around Pleasant Hill, Missouri; Bob Meckley was an industrial engineer from Glen, New Hampshire; I represented the California contingent, and "Andy", a hired professional welder, was the eighth member of the team.

Andy is a colorful personality. Besides his welding business, he and his wife have a small country-western band that plays gigs in Chama and around the region. There weren't too many things he hadn't tried at least once in his life, including coal miner, oil-field roustabout, and literally "wine, women & song". He also does sandblasting, and both the C & TS Railroad and the Friends have hired him frequently over the years for a wide variety of specialized tasks. His distinctly Appalachian drawl belies his skill with a welding rod and torch and his ability to find solutions to problems. His presence on the team was a definite plus.

Next time: laying out a work plan for the next five days and "getting down and dirty".

*** A Personal Tribute to our Volunteers *** *Dick Pennick*

I'm going to try not to be too "gushy" with this personal commendation of our hard-working volunteers who made our recent series of 7-car ***North Pole Express*** Santa trains such an overwhelming success, but it will be difficult.

Long before the first of these trains were run on November 24/25, the Museum's Board of Directors, staff and other volunteers were methodically putting the pieces in place to make the trains happen. A new online reservation system (Kintera) was adopted to hopefully streamline this crucial part of the activity. Advertising was developed and flyers printed. Appropriate decorations for the railcars and locomotive were obtained and installed. Brand new butane space heaters had to be acquired to ward off the chilly evening temperatures in the Baggage car and the "open" excursion car #350.

Twice the number of Santa trains were operated this season than last, due to the overwhelming public demand. And, if we had the cars available, we probably could have sold twice that number of seats! A computer glitch caused some of the trains to be accidentally oversold, and it was necessary to sell the seats in car #350. This required a last-minute effort to cover the window openings with sheets of plexiglas and installation of the new heaters. The effort paid off, and we heard few, if any, complaints from the passengers. To compound the problem, a very positive, illustrated story about our holiday trains appeared recently in the San Diego Union-Tribune, long after the last seat had been sold. But somehow we managed.

A sufficient number of "warm bodies" had to be provided for train crew, story readers, Santa's elves, two Santas, carolers, and others. We again found the students at Mt. Empire High School willing participants, and the Museum agreed to share some of the proceeds with them. One of the most important tasks was to assure that each of the railcars, and the Diesel locomotive that would pull the special trains, was in good mechanical condition and able to perform their assigned tasks. Our volunteer mechanical department worked many long hours to be able to make those assurances. Last-minute emergencies – a faulty electrical wire here; a bad-order hand-rail there; a car-mounted generator that inexplicably quit halfway back to Campo; an off-limits toilet in the Pullman with a malodorous surprise left by an unknown, unthinking contributor without any means to flush it down; a crumbling concrete floor in a coach doorway – were all addressed with quiet skill and patience.

Electricity had to be provided for the car lights, which by itself took months of intensive volunteer labor. This work included a complete overhaul of the Waukesha "Engineator" under the Pullman car ***Robert Peary***, which also provided power to the "ditch" lights on the west end of the car. These lights permitted us to safely shove the train backwards down the hill from Miller Creek station ("North Pole") without turning the train around, trimming about 15 minutes from the running time and deleting the necessity to run around the train at Campo. Before the recent overhaul, the Waukesha generator had not been used in years.

Food was a big item, both for the train passengers and the volunteers. Hundreds of large chocolate chip cookies were donated by Golden Acorn Casino – one of the event's three corporate sponsors – but volunteers had to bag each cookie in its own individual bag. Gallons and gallons of hot gourmet cocoa were prepared in 5-gallon insulated dispensers for each car. Off the train, hungry volunteers had to be fed, and they were presented with delicious, hot meals before and after train time. Grilled steaks were a special treat on one memorable evening.

Our three corporate sponsors this year -- Qualcomm Corp., Pitney-Bowes Management Services, and the Golden Acorn Casino Travel Center – were a big help in keeping the ticket costs within reasonable limits, and we are extremely grateful for their combined support. We look forward to their continued support in the months and years to come. Please let us know of other potential corporate sponsorships – maybe a company you presently work for – and we will suggest ways that they can help.

All in all, the eight ***North Pole Express*** trains were a big success. There was an overwhelmingly positive response from the passengers and their children, and we are sure that they will be back again next year. Some will become members and volunteers of the Museum. But, to continue to provide the quality and content of this year's trips, we will need to encourage more of our members to roll up their sleeves and pitch in. This year, probably 90% of the work to provide these special trains fell on less than a half-dozen volunteers. Next year, that needs to change.

My hat is off to those of us who gave of their precious time during this hectic Holiday season to provide such a wonderful gift to the children and their families. I have intentionally not listed the names of those members who worked so hard, partly because I know I would unintentionally forget someone. But you know who you are, and we thank you, from the bottom of our heart. Not bad for a 100% volunteer organization!

*** Some Dates of Note in 2007 ***

Some of the key anniversaries coming up this year:

May 13th – 40th anniversary of the donation of our ex-Feather River Railway Shay #3 by the Georgia-Pacific Corp. on Friday, May 13, 1967. It arrived in San Diego from Oroville, Calif. on its own wheels, June 10th, with a load of spare parts. This was the first locomotive to be delivered to San Diego for the new museum, and the first to operate here. Sadly, it was sold in 1998 to the State of West Virginia for operation on the Cass Scenic Railroad and conversion from oil to coal fuel.

November 24th – 40th anniversary of the very first operation of a museum locomotive in San Diego. After some minor reassembly and a successful hydrostatic test on the boiler, Lima Shay geared steam locomotive #3 was fired up and operated over the Thanksgiving weekend, November 24 -–26, 1967, on the 100'-long Standard Iron Works spur at the south end of Santa Fe's freight yard near the foot of Crosby Street in San Diego. Pioneer PSRMA members **Dick Pennick**, the late **Terry Durkin**, and several other members were the first of the group to fire and run the old logging engine back and forth on the short track. A photo story followed in the San Diego Union.

November – 40th anniversary of the donation of our ex-Coos Bay Lumber Co. 2-8-2T #11 (currently being restored to operation at Campo) by the Georgia-Pacific Corp. in 1967. The engine finally arrived in San Diego on a depressed-center flatcar August 3, 1968, and was stored initially at Entlow Spur – 300' of leased track at the foot of Crosby St. near Pacific Hwy., the museum's second home after the Standard Iron spur was torn up. (D. Pennick)

*** Question: Where's the famous "Bridge"? ***

Probably two of the most-often-asked questions by our visitors (after "Where are the restrooms?") are: "Do we run trains over that high bridge?" or, "Where is the big Carriso Gorge bridge?".

As all of our regular crews know by now, the answer to the first question is "No, the Museum doesn't run passenger trains over the Goat Canyon trestle in Carriso Gorge, but freight trains regularly run over the bridge to and from an interchange with the Union Pacific Railroad at Plaster City". The Museum currently is not permitted to run its passenger trains into Carriso Gorge, and has no plans to do so in the future.

The answer to the second question may not be as readily understood. First of all, "The Bridge" is a 633-foot long curved, all-wood trestle at Mile Post (MP) 102.29, located between tunnels 15 and 16 about a mile east of the former "Carriso Gorge" siding and about in the middle of the 11-mile long gorge. The highest point on the bridge is about 185 feet above the flow-line of Goat Canyon. "Railroad Museum" station, just east of Campo Depot, is located at MP 66, which makes "The Bridge" 36 miles further east.

The Goat Canyon trestle is not a part of the railroad's original construction through the Gorge in 1918/1919. A massive landslide in March, 1932 collapsed the original Tunnel 15 (remnants of which are still visible) and the railroad opted to build a new track around the old tunnel, moving the track further away from the steep mountainside and creating a new Tunnel 15. Since the original track had rested on a narrow shelf blasted out of the hillside just north of the old tunnel – around the upper end of Goat Canyon – the new track was about 300 feet west, which now required a bridge to get it across Goat Canyon.

The bridge – built on a 15 degree curve – was finally completed and opened to traffic again in July, 1932. A short section of the old main line along the hill to the abandoned east portal of old Tunnel 15 was retained as a spur track to park a water tank car for tunnel fires. During WW II, an old wooden ex-SD & A coach was also parked here to provide quarters for a bridge "watchman" to protect against sabotage.

We hear comments from visitors about the Goat Canyon bridge (technically "Bridge No. 102.29") suggesting it is "the highest (or longest, or oldest, or whatever) bridge in the country or the world". As far as this writer knows, there are no absolute figures to substantiate any of these claims. But it is likely that the bridge is one of the largest remaining all-wood, curved railroad trestles on a regularly-operated public Class 1 common-carrier railroad in the U.S. (other higher and longer wood trestles have been built for logging and other private industrial railroads -- primarily in the Pacific Northwest -- some of which may still be in use). At any rate, we're continually amazed how many of our visitors are aware of the bridge – at least at some level – and we're just happy it still exists as a National Civil Engineering Landmark on our "home" railroad! (D. Pennick)

*** I've Been Working On The Railroad (Part 1 of 2) *** *Roy Barnes*

Have you ever heard the moan of a steam locomotive whistle on a cold winter night, as you snuggled down in a feather bed, so nice and warm? I remember very well that sound, heard many times during my early years.

My father, Leo Barnes, went to work on the Rock Island Railroad when I was five years old. This was in Mercer, Missouri. Later, we moved from the farm to Jamesport, Missouri, living there about one year and moving on to Lawson, Missouri. My Dad was a gandy dancer, or section hand, on the maintenance gang. Lawson was a small town with a population of approximately five hundred souls. It was a real railroad town, if you count the number of railroads passing through. There were the Rock Island, Santa Fe, and the Milwaukee Road. Our house was located near the Milwaukee's depot, so we heard and saw many trains pass by.

In 1941, my father decided to go to California in search of a better job. By then, he was a relief foreman on the Rock Island. So off to San Diego, California, he went. He was hired by the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway (SD&AE) as a Section Foreman. His first assignment was at a place called Dos Cabezas (Spanish for "two heads"), one hundred eleven miles east of San Diego by rail. This is located on the eastern flank of the Laguna and Jacumba Mountain ranges, in high desert country. There was not much there, a water tank, apartments for the section gang, and a two-bedroom house for the foreman. Dad sent us photos of the place and the nearby Carrizo Gorge. It was hard for me to realize then just how rugged the mountains were to be in reality.

In July 1942, my mother, two brothers and I boarded the train in Lawson, Missouri, to head for Jacumba, California. By that time, Dad had bid in that section (No. 8) and was stationed there. When we boarded in Lawson, we were seated in a nice, air-condioned coach. We remained in that coach until we reached Yuma, Arizona. There we had to transfer to the San Diego & Arizona Eastern. This occurred at about midnight on July 4. The temperature was hot. The coach we entered did not have air conditioning. There were two small fans on the ceiling, rotating very slowly, and the lights were very dim. The straight-back, purple-plush seats must have been about 1890 vintage. Finally, the train was made up and pulled out of Yuma.

Shortly west of Yuma, the railroad crossed the international border into México and continued on to Mexicali, where it crossed back into the U.S. at Calexico. It proceeded north to El Centro, in the heart of the Imperial Valley, where the SD&AE leaves the Southern Pacific's InterCalifornia Railway mainline right-of-way and makes its own way west into the mountains toward rendezvous with the Pacific Ocean at San Diego.

We are very uncomfortable. It is hot as the old sun beats down as we cross the desert. We cross over several trestles and dry sand washes. I wonder why they have the trestles in the desert, no rain. Every window on the coach is open but it doesn't help cool things much. A 2-8-0 helper locomotive is coupled onto the front at Coyote Wells for the steep 2.2% grade ahead.

Just before we arrive at tunnel 21, the beginning of Carrizo Gorge, the brakeman comes through the train advising us to close all the windows because we will be passing through several tunnels. It was so hot that most people ignored his warning. But, as soon as our coach entered the tunnel and the smoke and hot exhaust gas came inside, everyone was frantically trying to close the windows. The flanges of the wheels were squealing on the rails on those sharp curves and passing through more tunnels. It was all very exciting to me. But I noticed that some people who were sitting on the deep gorge side of the coach got up and moved to the other side. We were traveling approximately 10 to 15 MPH all through the gorge. After passing through tunnel 5 we could open the windows again. It was several degrees cooler now because of the altitude which was about 2750 feet. Arriving at Jacumba, we detrained. I wasn't very impressed at what I saw. Nothing but sand and rocks. The sun glare was almost more than one could stand. Dad was waiting there to meet us. Our home was two wood-sided passenger coaches on solid foundations, close to the track.

Being this was during WWII, manpower was scarce. When I went for my Army physical exam, I was classified 4F, so I did not pass. I then applied for a job as an engine watchman for the SD&A at Jacumba. I had to go into San Diego and work in the roundhouse as a mechanic for a while. I was 18 years old at this time. Bill Hudson, the telephone lineman for the SD&A, let me stay in his hotel room located at 10 and Market Street during my time in San Diego. He was always away out on the road. I enjoyed being around the steam locomotives, learning how to maintain them which would be my job when I returned to Jacumba.

After two weeks of working in the roundhouse, Mr. Tom O'Connell, the Master Mechanic, came to where I was working and wanted me to start a fire in locomotive #1. So I went through the procedure and had the fire going as it should. He didn't have much to say, just observed. One thing he did tell me was never have a big, hot fire at first, but increase it gradually to bring up the steam pressure slowly. If a maximum fire has been started when the engine has been cold, there is a danger of cracking the flues because of expanding too rapidly. He informed me that I would be going to Jacumba and my work shift would be 6 PM to 6 AM, seven days a week. So, the next day I boarded train #362 going east to Jacumba. A man about 60 years old was in the day shift. He showed me where all the equipment and supplies were. He was very helpful to me.

Sometimes there would be five engines to service. Jacumba was the place where the helpers were stationed. The telegraph operator at the depot would inform me when the engines would be going out for helper service and the time of departure. So I would have everything ready. Steam pressure at 210 psi (pounds per square inch) and air compressor operating. The engineer would do an inspection, oil all around and head out.

The procedure to keep steam pressure built up was as follows. When the pressure in the boiler was down to 100 psi, it was time to start a fire and increase the pressure back up to 210 psi. To start a fire, open the fire box door and toss a kerosene-soaked piece of waste rag into the firebox. Check the oil temperature in the tender. If the temperature was cold, turn on the heater blow-back steam. When the temperature was correct, toss a burning piece of paper into the firebox. This would ignite the waste rag. Then open the atomizer valve a small amount and the oil feed valve. This would cause a fine mist of oil in the firebox which would ignite. Then the blower valve was opened. The blower creates an artificial exhaust through the smokestack. Then the oil feed valve, atomizer valve and blower valve were adjusted until the fire is of proper heat and size.

I remember one cold winter night I had steamed up all three engines and shut down the fire in each one. I went to sleep in the cab of one of the engines. It was nice and warm in there. Normally the steam pressure in an engine would hold for about four hours. But I slept beyond that. I woke up and hurriedly built a fire in two of the engines. But when I checked on the third one, the steam pressure was down to 80 psi. I immediately tossed a bunch of kerosene waste into the firebox and opened the oil feed valve. But the oil was too cold and it would not atomize. It just ran down the front of the firebox like molasses. So I had to use some steam to heat the oil in the tender. Needless to say, I was getting nervous. When the steam pressure had dropped to about 40 psi, I tried to start the fire again. I poured a gallon of kerosene into the firebox with more waste, and then tossed in some burning paper. Well, the cold oil that had run into the firebox ignited and it ran out the draft door below the firebox onto the ties beneath the engine and caught on fire. I tried the oil feed valve and the atomizer valve and got ignition in the firebox. Then I rapidly got out of the cab and extinguished the fire beneath the engine. You can be sure that I never overslept again after that experience!

I remember one engineer in particular by the name of Bill Blakeman. One night when all the engines were going out, he asked if I would like to ride along to Coyote Wells and back. So I did. It was a beautiful summer night, full moon. The ride up through Carrizo Gorge was beautiful.

Then one evening when I came on duty there was a telegram from the dispatcher, "Engine watchman J. LeRoy Barnes deadhead on train #362 to Calexico and be fireman on train #451 to San Diego." So when #362 arrived I got aboard for the trip to Calexico. Upon arrival there I walked over to the roundhouse and located engine #2844. I climbed up into the cab and met George Turskey, the engineer. He asked me, "Who are you?" I explained that I was to be the fireman on this trip to San Diego. He said, "OK, let's get out on the main line and couple onto the train. I had to ask him for a switch key. He was a little upset about that. Anyway, we got out on the main and coupled to our train. Then we waited for the conductor to deliver the train orders. Turskey asked me how long I had been a fireman. I told him, "This is my first trip." I explained that I was the engine watchman at Jacumba. I was a little nervous because I had never fired an engine on the move. So, we headed north to El Centro. I kept the steam pressure up and the water level in the boiler where it should be. At El Centro, Turskey said, "You're doing great!" This gave me a little confidence. At Coyote Wells, another 2-8-0 Consolidation was coupled on the front as a helper for the long 2.2% grade ahead. In conversation Turskey asked me if I would like to go on the road as a fireman. I told him "yes." He told me he would put in a word for me with the "old man", Mr. Tom O'Connell, the Master Mechanic in San Diego. When our train arrived at Jacumba, I was relieved by another fireman who had come out from San Diego by automobile.

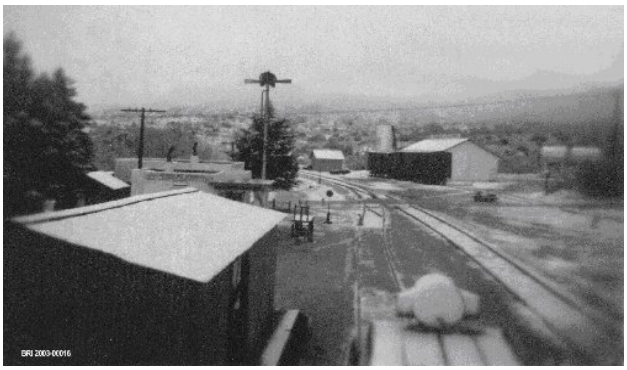
In a few days I received a notice to come to San Diego to take the examination on the book of rules for position of locomotive fireman. I passed the exam okay and was sent back to Jacumba for the helper engine job. Most of the helper service was from Coyote Wells to Hipass, then return to Jacumba. Sometimes we were called to go west to Redondo, Mexico to help passenger train #362 or an extra. Usually the helper engines were 2-8-0 Consolidations. Engines in passenger service were Ten Wheelers (4-6-0's).

There was one engineer that we called Brother Austin. He was also a preacher. I always enjoyed being called to fire for him. Many times after his inspection and oiling around the engine, he would ask me if I would like to be engineer today. Of course, my answer was "yes!" So he would be the fireman and I would run the engine. This was an engine dead-heading without cars. I remember being called to fire for him one night to go to Coyote Wells and help train #451 to Hipass. Well, I hadn't got my rest as I should have from the previous run. Not because of not having time, but because of other things. We coupled onto #451 at Coyote Wells and started up the mountain about 9 PM. The top speed was about 25 MPH. That engine swaying from side to side just rocked me to sleep. Soon Austin came over to me with a cup of cold water. But I didn't stay awake very long. I guess he kept an eye on the water level and steam pressure. When I really did wake up, we were stopped at the water tower in Jacumba! Austin was up on the tender, filling it with water. Needless to say, I was very embarrassed. But other engineers were not so tolerant as Austin. I've had them become angry if I dozed a little and tell me to lay off for a few days and get some rest.

During my time as a fireman I was involved in two derailments. The first one occurred on the west leg of the wye at Hipass. An engineer, I'll call Bill, and I were called at 1130 AM to go to Redondo, Mexico to help #362 to Jacumba. Evidently, Bill had some marital problem. His wife was there at the engine as he was oiling around. She was swearing and calling him some bad names. I just climbed up in the cab and stayed there. When we were ready to depart, I aligned the derail and switch for the main line and realigned them after the engine was on the main. We were running backward to Hipass where we would turn the engine on the wye. As we left, his wife was still shouting and waving her fist at Bill. He was very embarrassed. At Hipass we had turned the engine and headed down the west leg of the wye to the main line. There was a derail that had to be removed before the main switch. I was riding on the step on the left side of the cab so I could get off and take care of the derail. All of a sudden I realized we were traveling too fast and I shouted "derail" and I jumped off. Bill applied the emergency brake, but too late. The engine clattered over the derail, pony trucks and drivers on the ground!

I knew an extra train was not far behind us. So I grabbed the red flag and torpedoes and ran back to stop it. I wasn't sure that our derailed engine was clear of the main line. After stopping the extra, they proceeded to our derailed engine slowly, and it was in the clear. The crew on the extra offered to help us rerail our engine. But Bill told them we would get it back on the rails okay. I was surprised at his decision because I had seen an engine derailed at Jacumba one time and it took three days to rerail it! So I told Bill this and he said he had rerailed Mallets back on the Great Northern. So, the extra crew asked once more, and then waved and left heading west. Bill and I got the rerailing frogs out of the tool box and placed them behind the drivers and placed tie plates behind the other wheels. Bill got in the cab, put the engine in reverse and opened the throttle wide open. There was just a small "chuff" and no movement. Then Bill asked me to go to the section foreman's house and ask for some help. So he and some of his men came. All they did was place some more tie plates behind the drivers. We could not get the engine back on the rails. So then Bill called the dispatcher and told him our predicament. The dispatcher sent an order to Campo, 22 miles west, for the extra train that had passed us to set out their train and back the engine and caboose to Hipass. When they arrived at Hipass, their engine went around the wye and coupled onto the tender of our engine. Bill got in the engine again and, at a given signal, both engines opened their throttles wide open and our engine came back up on the rails. For this derailment error of not having the extra to help when I stopped them, there was an investigation. Bill received 60 demerits and I received 10 because I was not on the pilot to give a stop signal before we came to the derail.

Jacumba, looking eastbound towards the Gorge. The water tank is long gone.



Jacumba, looking westbound towards Campo

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

Don't forget that our web page has a link for our volunteers: www.psrm.org/members/. You can see old issues of the *Hot Scoop*, the *Report* and crew callboards. The username is "**volunteer**" and the password is "**2353**". There you can see our updated archive of *Hot Scoops*. We have a new page of Campo depot photos at: http://www.sdrm.org/gallery/campo/.

*** Dates of Note ***

	Jan	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**
School Train	16	20	20	17
Tecate Train	20	17	10	21
Garcia Special			24	
Board meetings	**26**	**15**	**15**	**19**
Museum Services meeting	16	20	20	17
Deadline for Hot Scoop articles	**28**	**28**	**28**	**28**

Your Board meets the 3rd Thursday each month, 7 PM at Trinity Church, 3902 Kenwood Drive, Spring Valley.
Museum Services meets the 3rd Tuesday, 7 PM at Ted Kornweibel's house, 6334 Lake Decatur Ave., San Diego.

*** Article Submissions ***

Please submit articles in pure text (.txt) or MS Word (.doc) format. E-mail to hotscoop@sdrm.org is preferred.
The deadline for article submissions is the 28th.

*** Phone numbers and e-mail *** **Web: www.psrm.org** or **www.sdrm.org**

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