



A publication for the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum members

Campo Railroad Museum

October 2026

La Mesa Depot Museum

PHASE 1 COMPLETED FOR BRICK PLATFORM AT THE CAMPO DEPOT





**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 [https://psrm.org/
members-only-board-information/](https://psrm.org/members-only-board-information/).

Museum Directors
President: Stephen Hager
Vice President: Cass Witkowski
Treasurer: Carl Brooker
Secretary: Duke Schweikert
Equipment Dept: vacant
Facilities Dept: Frank E. Denison IV
Museum Services Dept: Jim Lundquist
Operations Dept: Colin Atwood

Museum Staff
Archivist: Bruce Semelsberger
Asst. Dir. Of Facilities: Jim Lundquist
Fundraising: Donna Spevack
Hot Scoop Editor: Jim Lundquist
Membership: Lena Ibarra
Social Media Manager: Jason Drenkow
Station Master (La Mesa): Timothy Miller
Volunteer Coordinator: David Choy
Acting Equipment Dir: Stephen Hager



Special Events:

October 4 - Backcountry Wine Train - **SOLD OUT!**

October 10, 17, 24 & 31 - Sip & Scare

October 24, 25 & 31 - Pumpkin Express

November 27, 28, 29; December 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19 & 20 - North Pole Limited

Regular Schedule:

At Campo Railroad Museum:

Saturdays & Sundays— Special event trains and scheduled work days will require checking the web pages at www.psrn.org for schedule. On some days, we are closed to the public to allow for work to be completed.

Saturdays and Sundays - volunteer work days.

Wednesdays and Saturdays - Library open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Call Bruce Semelsberger at 619-264-7282 for an appointment.

La Mesa Depot Open:

Tuesday & Thursday Noon - 3 p.m.

Volunteers are at both locations during the week as well.
For more information, please email: volunteer@psrm.org

From the Back Platform

By Stephen Hager, President

From time to time, I think it's important to take stock of our organization's history and current assets, especially for the sake of our newer members who might be curious to learn more about the museum. Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association was founded by a group of railfans in 1961 as the San Diego County Railroad Museum. Their goal was to form an operating railroad museum somewhere in the county. In 1963, the group formally changed the organization's name to what it is today and in 1964, Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association was incorporated as a non-profit California educational corporation. The young organization acquired its first piece of rolling stock, Santa Maria Valley Railroad railbus No. 9, in 1965.

As PSRMA began amassing a collection of railroad equipment, it first began storing that equipment at the Orange Empire Trolley Museum in Perris, CA in 1966. Following this, PSRMA briefly stored part of the collection in Downtown San Diego through an emergency arrangement with the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railway. This temporary arrangement was then followed by a longer agreement that saw the growing collection moved onto a private spur track on what was then Naval Air Station-Miramar in 1970. During the 1970s, PSRMA was able to display Coos Bay Lumber Co. steam locomotive No. 11 and business car *Robert Peary* in Downtown San Diego during the two-year celebration of the city's birthday from 1976 to 1978.

In 1979, PSRMA learned from the navy that the spur track in Miramar was due to be removed and that it would have to relocate. This touched off the ambitious search for a permanent home for the museum, which resulted in PSRMA purchasing its first parcels of property in Campo in 1980. This land would be developed over the next few years to become what is now the Campo Railroad Museum. PSRMA's collection was temporarily moved from Miramar to La Mesa in 1981, before ultimately being moved to Campo between 1983 and 1985 in a series of "Great Freight" trains. A critical achievement during this period was the signing of an agreement with the Metropolitan Transit Development Board (now the Metropolitan Transit System) to operate trains over 14 miles of the San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway.

PSRMA began operating regularly scheduled weekend passenger excursion trains from the Campo Railroad Museum in 1986; we just celebrated our 40th Anniversary of train operations in January this year! You can read a much more detailed writeup of our organization's history during this time period and our achievements since then on our website at: <https://psrm.org/about-us/psrm/>.

Today, PSRMA owns 99.65 acres of land in Campo, including 36.3 acres that form the Campo Railroad Museum grounds. PSRMA also leases a portion of the MTS/SD&AE Railway right of way in Campo, including the Campo Depot and Campo Section House. In Downtown La Mesa, PSRMA owns the La Mesa Depot and leases the land under it from the City of La Mesa.



The *Hot Scoop*® is a publication of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association, Inc.

The opinions expressed in the *Hot Scoop* are those of the individual writer and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association, Inc., (PSRMA) its officers or staff.

PSRMA Mission Statement:

PSRMA is dedicated to preserving the physical legacy and the experience of rail transportation. Programs address the historical, social, economic and technical impact of railroading with particular emphases on railroads of San Diego County and the systems with which they connected in the United States and Mexico.

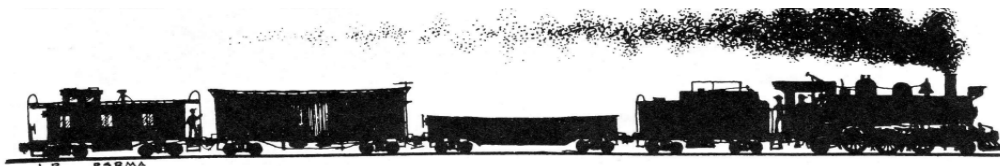
PSRMA is a non-profit educational organization operating under section 501(c)3 of the tax codes. Donations may be tax deductible.

PSRMA is a member of the Heritage Rail Alliance.

Submission guidelines: All articles should be single spaced and submitted in Microsoft Word format. Photographs are also welcomed. Please include photographer and date of photo. Send all submissions to Editor@psrm.org

The *Hot Scoop* is available in color via email. To receive the electronic version in PDF format, send an email to editor@psrm.org and include your name, membership number and email. Note that if you opt for the e-mail version, you will no longer receive the printed copy.

Comments are always welcome. Send your feedback to: editor@psrm.org



From the Back Platform (continued)

The original limits of the operating agreement with MTS remain the same; PSRMA has rights to operate trains over the San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railway from milepost 59.94 at the International Border to milepost 74.0, just east of Miller Creek. As of 2026, our regular train operations are limited to the section between milepost 61.6, a location we named "Canyon", and milepost 66.76 in the Campo Valley. Expanding our ride beyond these five miles will require extensive capital investments on the order of 100s of thousands of dollars.

PSRMA's total rail equipment collection has grown to over 90 pieces. Of these, four locomotives, seven passenger cars, two freight cars, and several motorcars are in regular service for passenger excursion trains and maintenance of way trains. Several more pieces of equipment are restored and on static display at the Campo Railroad Museum and the La Mesa Depot Museum. The remainder of the collection in Campo is

awaiting restoration as time, volunteer resources, and funding permits.

Today, PSRMA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization operated entirely by volunteers, including the board of directors and management. Our organization relies on income from train operations and memberships to cover the majority of our annual expenses, while donations and grants help us pursue major capital projects like equipment restoration, expanding the museum facilities, and large track maintenance projects.

I regularly field questions from our volunteers and museum visitors about what it would take to complete _____ (fill in the blank) project or why something at the museum is the way it is. The answers to these questions are often complicated, but very interesting and worth sharing. If you have a question about our organization, drop me a line at president@psrm.org. Who knows; I might just write about it in a future edition of the Hot Scoop!

Until next time, keep it on the high iron!



JOIN US FOR
**THE NORTH
POLE LIMITED**
Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays
November 27 through December 20.

Experience the Magic

Only at the
Campo Railroad Museum



Visit us at PSRM.org/NPL

SPECIAL EVENTS SEASON APPROACHES



As Fall approaches, our museum starts our busy season again. As always, now is when new and seasoned volunteers step up to make these special event trains a great time for our visitors. If you can assist, we need you. This is when we shine! These photos by Annie Field were taken on 9/26/26 and show the volunteers working on the haunted train.

The effort is lead by Richard Finch, assisted by Mike Rella and Morgan Snyder assisted by new workcampers Ethen Dickerson, Cortney Martin and Karla Loaiza.

Our Sip-N-Scare starts October 10th.



HOLLOWEEN SPECIAL EVENTS AT THE CAMPO RAILROAD MUSEUM

HE'S BAAAAACK!
BIGGER, BADDER, AND SCARIER THAN EVER



TRY AND SURVIVE DR. DEADTRACK
AT THE SIP 'N SCARE
SATURDAYS IN OCTOBER

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!
[PSRM.ORG/SIPNSCARE](https://psrm.org/sipnscare)



CAMPO RAILROAD MUSEUM PRESENTS

THE PUMPKIN EXPRESS

FALL FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

October 24, 25, and 31, 2026
10:30am, 1pm, and 2:30pm



SCAN HERE FOR TICKETS!



DR. DEADTRACK ★ WANTS YOU ★



JOIN OUR MAD TEAM

Now Recruiting Scare Actors and Bartenders

Email jbrooker@psrm.org to apply!

- Cursed Conductor
- Skeleton Warrior
- Autopsy Nurse
- Living Dead Soldier
- Lost MadMan/MadWoman
- Caged Specimen
- Escaped Lab Specimen
- Deadtrack Labs Lab Assistant



Brick Platform at Campo Depot.

Continuing the story from the August 2026 *Hot Scoop* (page 8), the brick platform job (phase 1) has been completed by the volunteers. These are the members who helped out: Frank Denison, Jim Lundquist, Dawn Lundquist, Steve Pohjola and new work-campers Ethen Dickerson & Cortney Martin. Thank you all. With the additional bricks, sidewalks will be extended between the tracks as time and energy allow.



(Above) Frank and Dawn lay bricks.



(left) Steve runs the vibrator packing down the DG.



(Above) Jim and Steve level the DG.



(Left) The volunteers are out of daylight. Back tomorrow.

SD&A Coach Seats Reupholstered

Employees are recovering the coach seats in SD&A coaches #252, #253 & #254. This contract work is happening in the Shop Building Lunch Room during the week. The new seats look terrific.



Photo by Cass Witkowski 9/14/26

Gate Relocated on Baggage Car

Our thanks to Aaron Kearney of Mobile Equipment Repairs for donating his time, truck and tools to relocate the pedestrian barricade from inside the baggage car to outside . This will allow easier access to the car when we load for various events.



Down at the La Mesa Depot

by Timothy Miller, Station Agent

It is Autumn! Has not felt like it, as Jeff Devenberg and I have been working on the Mojave Northern #3 this past week. It has felt more like mid-summer.

In keeping with the change of seasons, we swapped out our wooden railway play tables for our future train crews and restoration specialists in the La Mesa Depot waiting room. The change was enthusiastically put into operation by our younger visitors!

The Halloween banner has been hung on the PFE reefer to alert the travelling public of our upcoming events.

The next ninety days do seem to be our busiest time of the year.

On October 3rd and 4th the Great Train Show will be held at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. Once again Bill Grove is giving PSRM a FREE table at the show. I will be there both days handing out brochures and telling the Railfan Community of all the great things happening in our organization.

The La Mesa Village will hold their Halloween event on La Mesa Boulevard on the 30th. We will be handing out brochures and candy at the Depot.

Please consider volunteering at the Depot, it is our only location where you can travel to it by RAIL!

Membership News by Lena Ibarra

We're delighted to welcome our new members of the PSRMA. With family memberships are Mark Gonzales and Anthony Jauregui. With individual or senior mem-

berships are Kyle Jensen, Elizabeth Leytem, Karla Loaiza, Colin Mills, Richard Belesky, Janice Young and Perla Nunez.

We're glad to have you with us and welcome aboard!

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 22 Golden State trains and the number of days they have volunteered through September 20: Colin Atwood 3, Alyssa Andersen 1, Carl Brooker 1, Ken Brown 2, James Caestecker 1, David Choy 1, Jaxon Dixon 1, Greg Flores 1, Leo Giron 2, Adrian Gonzalez 1, Ryan Hodge 3, Randy Houk 2, Justin Hyland 2, Dave Little 3, Jim Lundquist 1, Bob Nickles 1.

Congratulations to Leo Giron who qualified as brakeman this month.

MOS – maintenance of signal volunteers who conducted the annual, quarterly, and monthly maintenance

and tests of highway crossing signal systems this month: Chad Baker 1 and Travus Clark 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: Ken Brown 1 and Stephen Hager 1.

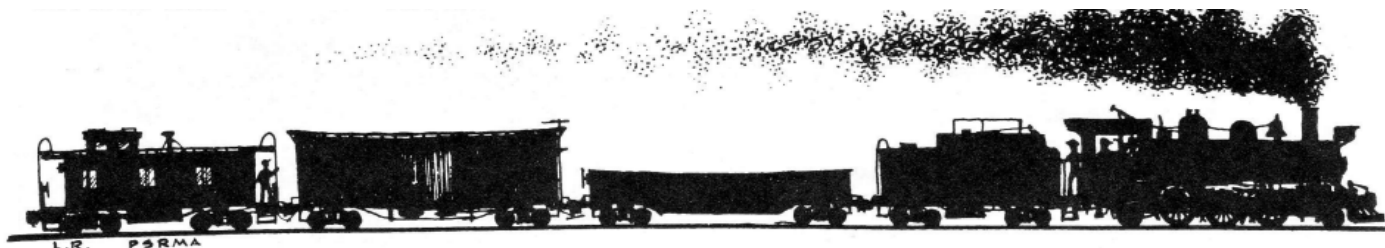
MOW - maintenance of way volunteers who have assisted Track Foreman James Caestecker in maintaining tracks and right-of-way this period: Jim Lundquist 3, Kerry Hebert 1 and Colin Atwood 1.

Yard switching - these are the volunteers who have worked in Campo and PSRM yards this period doing switching: Colin Atwood 2, David Choy 1, Greg Flores 1, and Bob Nickles 1.

There was a total of 40 volunteer-days this period.

Volunteers Ride Special BNSF Executive Train by Stephen Hager

One of the perks of being a Pacific Southwest Railway Museum Association volunteer: As an associate member of the California Short Line Railroad Association, PSRMA was able to invite its active volunteers to participate in CSLRA's Annual Fall Train Trip. This year's trip was hosted by BNSF Railway aboard their Officer's Special Train with its beautifully maintained business cars. On September second, the round trip ran from Downtown San Diego to Irvine and back. Ten volunteers attended and were able to enjoy a wonderful day of riding the rails, networking with short line railroad executives and industry professionals, and enjoying snacks and a delicious lunch prepared by BNSF's own staff of executive chefs.



Chula Vista Citrus Train at Third Avenue near K Street in 1959.



All of Southern California started as a farming community. After all, there was a reason Lemon Grove and Orange County took their names!

There were fruit packing plants located throughout San Diego County, all served by rail line. These required ice blocks in the early days, which were also located throughout the county.

Looks a bit different today!