



Goleta

# DEPOT DISPATCH

Newsletter of the South Coast Railroad Museum  
Volume 15, Number 2 — Summer 1995

## Goleta National Bank Sponsors "Free Rides for Dads"

All dads visiting the railroad museum on Father's Day, Sunday, June 18, will be treated to a free ride on the miniature train, courtesy of **Goleta National Bank**. Event hours will be 1 to 4 p.m.

The complimentary tickets may be picked up in advance at the bank's offices at 5827 Hollister Ave., or at the museum. They will also be available during the event at Goleta Depot's Waiting Room ticket window. Tickets will also be available at regular prices for other family members and the general public.

## "Another Steaming Summer" Is Here

An exciting summer season of live-steam miniature railroading at the museum begins Saturday, June 24, with the start of the eighth annual *Another Steaming Summer*, sponsored by **Toyota of Santa Barbara**. The first day's festivities will be highlighted by **Gene Allen's** 4-4-0 American, a *Steaming Summer* regular, built by Allen Models, Inc. of Goleta.

The event continues July 22 and Aug. 26. Hours for all three Saturdays will be 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The event will also feature handcar rides at 25¢ each (riders must be at least 48 inches tall) and continuous free showings of *Thomas The Tank Engine* videos in the museum's Gandy Dancer Theater.

Members of the **Goleta Lions Club** will again be here to prepare and sell tri-tip sandwiches and hot dogs, with all proceeds going to the railroad museum.

There is no charge for admission to *Another Steaming Summer*. Single-ride tickets on the Goleta Short Line are \$1 and 3-ride tickets \$2.50. Coupons good for 1/2 off on all train-ride tickets, are available at Toyota of Santa Barbara, 5611 Hollister Ave.

## Steam Loco Class Offered

This summer, the museum is again offering a short course on *The Operation and Maintenance of a Steam Locomotive*. **Eugene Allen** will serve as instructor of the two-session class, which will utilize his 4-4-0 American for demonstration purposes.

The class is open to museum staff and volunteers. Those interested should contact Director Gary Coombs at the museum (964-3540) before June 15.

## HELP WANTED

The museum has an urgent need for volunteers in all staffing areas. Volunteer docents are essential to many of the activities and services that museum visitors enjoy. Volunteers operate the miniature-train and handcar rides, staff the Track-side Shop, and share the historical landmark and model railroad exhibit with the public. If you would like to learn more about the docent program, please call Assistant Director Phyllis Olsen at 964-3540, any weekday afternoon.

## Depot Day Will Be Sept. 24

The 13th annual *Depot Day*, the railroad museum's major annual celebration, is slated for Sunday, Sept. 24. Hours will be 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Mark the date on your calendar and watch for complete *Depot Day* details in the next *Depot Dispatch*. If you have auction items to donate, please call the museum (964-3540).

## Train Schedule Undergoes Changes Expanded Sunday and Summer Hours

Beginning May 1, several changes were made to the Goleta Short Line schedule. Trains will now operate on a set time schedule, with departures every 15 minutes. On Saturdays and Sundays, the first train will be at 1:15 p.m. and the last train at 3:45. On Wednesdays and Fridays, the first train will be at 2 p.m. and the final train of the day will depart at 3:30. During busy times or when necessary for other reasons, extra trains may be dispatched — at the discretion of the conductor.

During July and August only, the weekday schedule will be expanded, with trains running on Thursdays as well as Wednesdays and Fridays. Weekday hours also will be increased to match the weekend timetable, with departures every 15 minutes from 1:15 until 3:45.

## Coast Starlight Program Tested

On Monday, May 22, a successful trial run of the *Coast Starlight* interpretive guide program was completed by Museum Director Gary Coombs and Asst. (continued on page 2)

*South Coast Railroad Museum  
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(continued from page 1)

Director Phyllis Olsen. A receptive lounge-car audience listened to Gary's narrative over the public-address system, while Phyllis greeted passengers, distributed brochures, and answered questions in the upper level of the attractive new Superliner II car.

The one-way rehearsal covered the Oxnard-to-Guadalupe area. To meet the *Coast Starlight* in Oxnard, the pair rode the *San Diegan* from Santa Barbara in the morning. Then, in the afternoon after completing the program, they were passed to Train 11, the southbound *Coast Starlight* at the meeting spot in Guadalupe, to effect their return to Santa Barbara.

The lounge car was filled throughout much of the program and the passengers proved both eager and appreciative. Both Phyllis and Gary were elated about how well the program had been received. "It's wonderful to be able to share our area's rich history, points of interest, and things to do," Gary said. Phyllis called the experience "extremely rewarding."

We anticipate that, following additional tests in June, the program will commence with presentations given at least once a week during July and August. Members who are interested in becoming a *Coast Starlight* interpretive guide are urged to contact the museum office (964-3540).

**Santa Barbara County Parks** has been added to the list of program sponsors, which also includes the **Santa Barbara Conference & Visitors Bureau**, **Greater Goleta Valley Chamber of Commerce**, and **California State Parks**.

## Runte Shares "Trains of Discovery"

Those attending the May 17 program at Goleta Library were treated to an informative and thought-provoking presentation by author and historian **Alfred Runte**, based on his book, *Trains of Discovery: Western Railroads and the National Parks*.

Dr. Runte's hour-long program explored the century-old relationship between the Western railroads

and our national parks. He examined the significant role that the railroads played in the creation of the national parks in the late 1800s, and in their subsequent growth and development.

The presentation was profusely illustrated, with handsome depictions of both historic railroad art and rare print advertising, which colorfully promoted both the national parks and rail travel. He also discussed — often passionately — contemporary issues and events, including the recent restoration of the Grand Canyon Railway and present-day Amtrak cutbacks in the West.

A Visiting Professor of History at UCSB, Alfred Runte is a noted environmental historian, public lecturer, and specialist on the national parks. Following the program, he was available to meet with attendees and to autograph copies of *Trains of Discovery*.

The museum's Trackside Shop, open Wed.-Sun. 1-4, has copies of Dr. Runte's beautifully-illustrated *Trains of Discovery* in stock, both in softcover (\$19.95) and hardcover (\$35). Members' 10% discount may be applied to the purchase.

## Attention, Jr. Engineers

The third annual *Junior Engineers Club Party* will be held Friday, July 14, from 2 p.m. until 3:30. There will be free rides on the Goleta Short Line, special showings of *Thomas The Tank Engine* videos, prizes and surprises, and delicious refreshments, including a Junior Engineers cake!

Don't miss this special annual summer get-together just for you! Please RSVP, 964-3540.

## Moms Enjoy Free Rides

The *Free Rides for Moms* event on Mother's Day, May 14, was a rousing success. In fact, despite some so-so weather conditions, museum attendance on Mother's Day was the best ever for a May date in museum history. Ridership on the *Goleta Short Line* for the day reached 158 — another May record!

Special thanks are due to **Goleta National Bank** for sponsoring this year's event, which featured attractive ticket-invitations that were distributed in advance at the bank and museum.

## Safari Fundraiser Helps Museum

May 20 marked the 1995 edition of the *Asphalt Regatta*, in which last year's *Too-Fari Safari* theme was reprised. As this issue of the *Depot Dispatch* goes to press, it appears that this will be the most successful spring fundraiser in the 14-year history of the event. To date, pledges have passed the \$9,500 mark — about \$400 ahead of last year's record-setting pace when

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\$10,000 was eventually raised.

This year's event featured three teams, the *Short Line Shortcutters*, the *Leaping Leopards*, and *The Lost Team*, headed by Trustees **Ben Beede**, **Jack Cogan**, and **Bill Parker**, respectively. The teams competed to raise the most money for the museum and to earn the highest point total in a "safari" walk around scenic Lake Los Carneros.

After registration, each team was outfitted with pith helmets, a map, an "Emergency Survival Kit," and a *Safari Journal*, whose pages were completed as the teams mastered a series of six adventures during their park expedition. Midway along, teams came to the "Trading Post," where refreshments were served.

Each safari began and ended with a ride on the "Jungle Train" which carried team members from the "Last Chance Outpost" embarkation point to a festively-decorated "Bwana Junction," their final destination, where participants enjoyed a potluck luncheon.

Beede's *Shortcutters* and Cogan's *Leopards* are currently in a dead heat for the fundraising championship. Winning teams and top individual fundraisers will be announced and prizes awarded at the museum's June 21 meeting at Goleta Library. All members are encouraged to join the 7:30 p.m. get-together and help to honor all Safari participants for their valuable service to the museum.

## Museum Receives Collections Gifts

**F.B. Esty** of Camarillo has given our library a collection of 20 books covering a variety of railroad subjects. **Norman Pomeroy** of Pomona gave a collection of 36 printed items, mostly employee timetables of the S.P., San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railway, Northwestern Pacific, Union Pacific, and Santa Fe.

Trustee **Robert Sponsel** recently restored one of the cars from the museum's toy-train collection — an O-gauge Lionel caboose, *No. 817*, which was manufactured in 1933 or 1934. The handsomely reconditioned car appeared in our year-end *Toy Trains and Teddy Bears* holiday display.

## Bunny Express Was Baskets Of Fun

The third annual *Easter Bunny Express* was held on one of the windiest days the museum has seen in a long time. Nevertheless, there was a good-sized crowd, approaching the 1,000 mark. Ticket sales reached 512, rivalling last year's total. Special thanks to the **Hobby Depot** in Santa Barbara, **Kinko's Graphics** in Goleta, and **Robitaille's Fine Candies** in Carpinteria for serving as advance-ticket locations. Kinko's also contributed some of the printing services for the day.

Attendees were treated to some wonderful live music, provided by the **Bluescasters**, a local group with a terrific sound that generously donated their performance to the museum.

Prizes for the Jack-Rabbit Junction drawing were contributed by **Paul and Carolyn Nielson** and by **Sol Morrison**. Gratitude is also expressed to the **Goleta Lions Club**, whose members prepared and sold hot sandwiches, with all proceeds to the museum.

Volunteers who helped make the day successful

included "**Bunny**" **Bob Burtness** and "**Helper**" **Lynn Burtness**, **Ken Becker**, **Dave and Susan Cavalli**, **Jack Cogan**, **Mary Cole**, **Ron Ferguson**, **Ed and Kathy Leska**, **John Locke**, **Bruce Morden**, **Bill Parker**, **Gene Rantanen**, **Joe Salas** and his **Goleta Lions crew**, **Judy Savage**, **Dan Saragosa**, **Jim and Susan Smith**, **Bob Sponsel**, **Lani**, **Susan and Hannah Strobel**, **Lynne Tracy**, **Hilda Volkman**, **Evelyn Woods** and **Carolyn Young**.

## Volunteers Upgrading Model Exhibit

**Gene Rantanen** has installed an electronic detector in the Model-Railroad Exhibit room, which puts the trains in motion when a visitor enters the exhibition area. This is a first step toward making the museum's most popular exhibit open during all museum hours. Efforts are now underway to increase layout security so that the room may be shared with visitors without the need for docent supervision.

It is estimated that, when the current work is completed, at least 3,000 more visitors will be able to enjoy the exhibit annually.

## Display Sign Now Greets Visitors

There has long been a need for a welcome sign that will provide arriving visitors with information about the museum. That need has now been met with a new display-case sign that greets visitors as they start down the sidewalk from the parking lot.

The sign measures 3x3 feet and is mounted on wood posts. It displays, under Plexiglas, both permanent and changing information, including museum hours, today's activities and schedule, visitor advisories, and coming events. The commercially-manufactured sign was installed by **Eugene Allen**.

## Short Line Receives Switch Stand

**John Darby** has donated a switch stand for use on the Goleta Short Line. The gift of equipment will allow for improved and more efficient train operations.

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
(IF THIS IS A GIFT, PLEASE USE RECIPIENT'S NAME HERE, GIVER'S NAME BELOW)

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Please enter/renew my membership (mark desired category):

Active - \$15 ( special rate for Docent Assn. members only - \$7)

Sustaining - \$25  Trustee's Club - \$250

Contributing \$50  President's Circle - \$500

Life Member - \$200

Jr. Engineer's Club - \$15 ( add'l. member at same address - \$5)

GIFT. Giver name for gift card: \_\_\_\_\_

RETURN COMPLETED FORM WITH CHECK, PAYABLE TO:  
SOUTH COAST RR MUSEUM, P.O. BOX 2125, GOLETA, CA 93118

South Coast Railroad Museum is an educational program and business name of the Institute for American Research, a local nonprofit organization. Contributions are deductible from state and federal income taxes.

## Member Discounts Clarified

There has been some confusion regarding member discounts on Goleta Short Line ticket purchases. The 25¢ discount applies to *every* ticket purchased by the member, regardless of whether the ticket is used by the member or by an accompanying friend or family member. The discount may be used for multi-ride tickets, for birthday and special occasion "Party-Pack" purchases, and during special events.

A valid membership card must be shown to receive the ticket discount, as well as for discounts in the museum's Trakside Shop. If you've lost your card, a replacement may be obtained by contacting the museum office (964-3540).

## Museum Reps Observe CSRM Program

To assist in the design of the *Coast Starlight* interpretive program, representatives from our museum made an April 23-27 trip to Sacramento and Reno to observe the parallel program conducted by the Calif. State Railroad Museum docents on the *Calif. Zephyr*. Museum Director Gary Coombs was accompanied on the trip by Docent **Bruce Morden, Andrea Morden, Trustee Robert Sponsel, and Patricia Chidlaw.**

A great deal was learned from observing this fine and long-established program. Interpretive-program chairman **Robert Dawson** and guides **Bill and Jacquie Carr** were especially helpful and gracious during the visit. Sadly, although the CSRM program will continue, it is being adversely impacted by Amtrak's rollback of *Zephyr* operations to a four-days-a-week schedule starting June 13.

The museum team spent an extra night in Reno to make a side trip to Carson City to visit the Nevada State Museum and Nevada Railroad Museum. The group was escorted on a day-long, personal "insiders" tour by **Robert Nysten**, Curator of History at the Nevada museums, and a friend and colleague of Gary's. The Nevada museums generously rented a van to transport the group roundtrip from Reno and throughout the day in Carson City, which included

visits to the rail museum's restoration shops, Carson City's historic district, collections areas, and galleries where major exhibition renovations were in progress.

The trip was sponsored in part by **Amtrak**, which provided all rail transportation and onboard meals.

## Mid-State Bank Helps Library Program

Our museum is participating once again in the Summer Reading Program of the **Santa Barbara Public Libraries**, thanks to a generous sponsorship gift from **Mid-State Bank**. Last year, 1,869 children enrolled in the reading program and 947 youngsters read 15 or more books, thus qualifying for a pair of free rides on the Goleta Short Line.

## "Railroad Words" Join *On\_Track!* Toolkit

In the last *Depot Dispatch*, readers were introduced to *On\_Track!*, an educational program for local youth now being developed by museum staff and educators from the **Goleta Union School District**.

One of several new activities and resources added to *On\_Track!* this year was a list of 73 railroad words, which teachers can use for classroom spelling or other applications. Several variants of the list have been prepared, including an English/Spanish version and another with the words indexed by grade level. All of these various forms of the list are being made available to teachers through the school district's Instructional Materials Center.

In future issues, we will report on other new elements of the *On\_Track!* program.

## Guide Program Will Be June Topic

Museum Director Gary Coombs and Asst. Director Phyllis Olsen will discuss the status and plans for the museum's *Coast Starlight* interpretive guide program at a June 21 meeting at Goleta Library, scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Those who may be interested in participating as guides, in particular, are encouraged to attend. See the Page 1 story, "*Coast Starlight* Program Tested," above, as well as articles in previous issues, for more information on this new museum activity.

## Greetings To New Museum Members

We are happy to welcome **John L. Friend** as a new Life member, **Nils Froula** as a Sustaining member, and the **Timothy Wickham** family as an Active member.

New Jr. Engineers include **Kyle Grote, Joshua Habisch, Michael Morden, Emily Mosbrucker, Zackary Peck, Sean Patrick Urbany, Nathan Matthew Winn, and Zachary Taylor Winn.**

## Museum Enjoys Huge April

The monstrous rains of January and March led to a poor first quarter for the museum. Thus, we were thankful when the museum enjoyed the biggest and busiest April in museum history. In fact, the 1,291 train riders in April made it the eighth-best month in museum history — the first month that we've ever had more than 1,200 riders during the first half of a year.

### DONOR CONTRIBUTION FORM

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Enclosed please find my check, made payable to  
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