



Goleta **DEPOT** **DISPATCH**

Newsletter of the South Coast Railroad Museum

Volume 19, Number 1 — Spring 1999

Easter Bunny Visits April 3

The *Easter Bunny Express*, always a spring favorite with families throughout the area, makes its 7th annual run on Saturday, April 3, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Those holding the event's colorful egg-shaped tickets will be able to participate in all of the day's activities, including visits to *Wabbit-Twacks Station* (to board the fancifully-decorated Goleta Short Line miniature train for a one-third-mile ride around the grounds); *Harvey's House* (where a cookie and beverage await); *Easter-Bunnyville* (to meet the **Easter Bunny** and select an egg surprise); *Jack-Rabbit Junction* (to enter a drawing for some marvelous gifts); and *What's Up Dock* (to collect another event souvenir).

Tickets are \$3 for children and \$2.50 for adults (adult tickets do not include the *What's Up Dock* and *Easter-Bunnyville* activities). They will be available at the museum during the event until 3:30 p.m. Or, they may be purchased in advance during regular visitor hours (Wed.-Sun., 1-4 p.m.).

Members of the **Goleta Lions Club** will be helping out again this year. The Lions will be selling hot sandwiches and other refreshments, with all proceeds from their booth benefitting the museum. Please plan to join us for lunch and support the Lions good deed.

Hop aboard the *Easter Bunny Express* on April 3. It promises to be another hare-raising eggs-perience and lots of fun for the whole family! In case of rain

on the 3rd, the event will be held Saturday, April 10.

Museum's "March Madness" Means Free Train Rides

We're having a real "free-for-all" at the museum in March. Throughout the month, all miniature-train rides will be free! To add to this "*March Madness*," the ride schedule also will be expanded during the month: The train will run Wednesday through Sunday (adding Thursdays to the regular lineup) from 1:15 to 3:45 p.m. (increasing weekday hours to match those on weekends).

This month-long activity is part of the museum's continuing commitment to make its programs and activities available to the widest possible audience.

Please plan to attend. And, be sure to tell friends and others about *March Madness* at the railroad museum.

Year-End Gifts Acknowledged

Year-end contributions from members and friends passed the \$3,000 mark. This is a good first step toward the \$25,000 fundraising goal for the year that was set last fall by the Board of Trustees and announced in the last issue of the *Depot Dispatch*.

The names of all year-end contributors have been added to a listing of museum donors, which is prominently displayed at the new entrance during museum hours. This list, which was first

placed on public view in late January, will be updated periodically with the names of new contributors and displayed throughout the year.

Those who made financial contributions to the museum at year's end, independently or as part of their membership renewals, included: **Richard M. Abbott; Christine Allen; Junior Engineers Keith and Fiona Avery; Shirley Baird; Betty Bazzi; Gary and Lori Blum; Elsie Boeseke; Dirk Kolff Breyman; Ronald E. Bruns; Larry and Theresa Caccese; John M. Carroll, Jr.; L.M. Cavaletto Ranch;**

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Many Candy Cane Train participants, including Sierra and Nicholas Hofstatter, shown here, added their own festive touch to the event (See story on page 2)



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Also: Don and Jo Hollister; Institute of Museum and Library Services; Morse and Opal Jeffers; Josiah F. Jenkins; Mr and Mrs Josiah C. Jenkins; Ruth M. Johnson; Ellen G. Keeter; Ralph and Scott Kornahrens; Clifford and Stella Kramer; G. Ronald Larrieu; Mr. and Mrs. Daniel V. Lopez; The Lyon Family; Bill McKeag; Bob and Helen McPherrin; Mid-State Bank; Robert W. Miesbauer; and Ed and Kathy Miller.

And: Warren P. Miller; Josephine A. Millett; Isabel Friend Newman; Phyllis J. Olsen; Paradise Machining Corporation; Godwin J. Pelissero and Deborah S. Pelissero; Doris Phinney;

and Lee and Suzanne Polansky.

And: George R. Potter; Bill and Arlene Radasky; Santa Barbara Bank & Trust; Santa Barbara Foundation; Ed and Judy Savage; Mr and Mrs Tallant Smith; Thomas and Beulah Strout; Steve Sullivan; Rich and Linda Thom; Hilda B. Volkman; Dana Walker; Jacob Winnikoff Family; Wood-Claeyssens Foundation, and Jon Wordsworth.

Gifts also were received in memory of Ruth Hammond and Stella Haverland Rouse.

On behalf of everyone who benefits from the museum and its programs, special thanks to all year-end givers.

“Candy Cane Train” Turns In Shining Performance

The 1998 run of the *Candy Cane Train* was one of the most successful in the event's six-year history. Favorable weather played a big role, with only two of 22 event days canceled due to rain over the Nov. 27 thru Dec. 27 period.

Much of the credit also goes to the *Santa Barbara News-Press*, which published a *Candy Cane Train* display advertisement more than a dozen times without charge to the museum.

Event ridership reached 1,332. Daily averages exceeded 90 riders on weekends and almost 50 riders per weekday.

Melissa Erickson of Montecito was the lucky winner in the *Candy Cane Train* drawing.

New Collections Software Is Making A Big Difference

Staff members have been busily updating the computerized record-keeping system that is used to record and manage the museum's collections of artifacts, historical photographs, documents, and memorabilia.

Central to the updating process is the new collections-management software, “Past Perfect,” which our museum was able to purchase with a grant from the Wood-Claeyssens Foundation. All of the museum's collections records have now been transferred into Past Perfect.

The new system will make it easier for the museum to keep track of its collections, which have grown to include thousands of items. The new software is an important, behind-the-scenes tool that will help us to do the best possible job of caring for the rare and precious collection items with which the museum has been entrusted.

Endorsed by the American Association for State and Local History, Past Perfect was selected by Museum Director Gary Coombs after a years-long evaluation of a number of commercially-available collections-management computer software programs.

Welcome New Members

New museum members are August and Debbie Berger, Sterling Ellsworth CPA, Walter Naumann, and Mary Lee Sanders.

New Junior Engineers Club members are Cory J. Nelson, Joey Ochoa, Trevor Redfern, Amanda Redfern, and William Shifflette.

Welcome to the museum family!

Silicon Beach Communications Lends Museum A Big Hand

The railroad museum has benefitted enormously from the generosity of Silicon Beach Communications. The local internet-service provider has donated internet access and space for the museum's web site since 1996.

More recently, the company's president, Frank Dziuba, has been helping connect the museum's two computers by means of a local-area network, with donations of both expertise and hardware.

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Volunteers Needed

The museum continues to experience a shortage of volunteers, especially depot agents and miniature-train crew members. Additional clerks for the Trackside Shop are also needed.

Please think seriously about joining this wonderful corps of dedicated members. If you have at least one afternoon (only about three hours) available per month to give to your museum and would like to share our historical landmark and activities with museum guests, please call Asst. Director Phyllis Olsen at 964-3540. She'll be happy to tell you more about the rewards and benefits of the museum's volunteer program.

Holiday Display Features Member Keepsakes

Special thanks are due to all of the museum members who loaned items for the recently concluded "Toy Trains and Teddy Bears" holiday-season display.

For years, **Eugene Allen** has contributed two antique live-steam locomotives to liven up the exhibit — his O-gauge LMS-265 and a large-scale "Birmingham Dribbler." This year, Gene added a new, third toy engine — another O-gauge operating steamer, but one that he had personally built.

Another popular keepsake returning to the display was "Merry-Lee," a giant stuffed bear shared by **Scotty Becker**, son of museum docent **Ken Becker**.

Volunteer **Karl Harris** took part for the first time, with his HO-scale replica of the Union Pacific Railroad's famous 4-8-8-4 "Big Boy" locomotive.

A reproduction of a 1930s Lionel standard-gauge freight train, contributed by docent **Bob Burtness**, anchored the entire lower level of the display case.

Many Junior Engineer Club members and their families also participated this year. Ten-year-old **Max Weidmann** shared his "Thomas The Tank Engine" train collection, started when he was only two, along with a bear hand-puppet that he received from his grandparents.

Also on display was **Michael Morden's** six-year-old "reindeer bear."



Toy Trains and Teddy Bears enlivened Goleta Depot's Waiting Room over the holiday season

Dressed up for the holidays as Santa and his reindeer were "Muffy" and "Lulu," loaned by **Kira Purinton**.

James Nivin brought us his wooden train set, each car handmade by his uncle. James and his sister, **Heather**, also shared "Thunder" and "Snowflake," keepsakes handmade by their mother, museum member **Susan Nivin**.

The display also featured a Christmas bear that **Eva Weidmann** received last year as a holiday gift from an aunt.

Nolan Fewell assembled a colorful nine-piece toy train especially for the exhibition.

Each year, all members are invited to participate in the upcoming holiday-season display. If you would like to be a part of the the 1999 presentation of *Toy Trains and Teddy Bears*, please contact the museum office (964-3540).

Vandenberg AFB Trip Set for March 9; Members Welcome

Museum members are invited to join the *Coast Starlight* guides on a field trip to Vandenberg Air Force Base on Tuesday, March 9.

Vandenberg is an important part of the interpretive program that the museum and its *Coast Starlight* guides offer to the train's passengers, and the goal of the day-long field trip is to better acquaint the guides with many of the base's interesting features.

Space is limited, so members interested in joining the group should call the museum now. There will be no fee for the field trip.

17th Spring Fundraiser Set For Saturday, May 22

The museum's spring fundraiser celebrates its 17th anniversary on Saturday, May 22. It will be the third year in which the event will utilize a "Great Goleta Rail Race" theme.

Reminiscent of the tale of John Henry, the *Great Goleta Rail Race* offers its own version of the epic struggle between human and machine, as the people-powered museum handcar is pitted against the Goleta Short Line miniature-train in a competition to determine which can complete the greatest number of passenger-miles over a three-hour period.

From 1 until 4 p.m. on race day, both the handcar and train will operate continuously, giving free rides to all visitors. Race officials will keep careful record of the total passengers carried and the distance completed by each conveyance.

The Great Race winner will be determined based on these totals, adjusted using a handicap based on the previous years' results (In both of those years, the miniature train compiled precisely 2.82 times as many passenger-miles as the handcar.). Each team also will be trying to break the all-time records of 77.5 passenger-miles for the train and 27.45 passenger-miles for the handcar.

Museum members, as well as the general public, are invited to attend, to observe the action and cheer on the participants, as well as to actively join in as rider-participants, themselves. At the event, you, your family members, and friends may throw your support behind either the handcar or train, simply by riding that vehicle once or as often as you like; or, you may use the opportunity to enjoy the free rides on both the train and handcar. All riders will receive a certificate acknowledging their *Great Race* participation.

The museum's normal, slow oper-

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ating speeds will be maintained throughout the event. Train riders must be at least 34 inches tall; the handcar ride has a 48-inch height requirement.

In addition to the day's fun, the *Great Goleta Rail Race* also has a serious side. The spring fundraiser is one of the railroad museum's most important annual income sources, generating more than 10% of all monies needed for operations. Funds are raised by many of the event participants, including members of the Board of Trustees, who obtain financial pledges from sponsors, including area businesses, organizations, members, families, and individuals.

Last year's goal of \$10,000 was exceeded by more than \$600.

Money raised from the event will be used not only to underwrite general museum operations, but also to sponsor more than 20 free-ride days in 1999, including the entire month of March, *Great Race* day, itself, and two additional free days later in the year.

This year, the museum is again asking all members to support the event financially. Please complete and return the accompanying donation form along with your tax-deductible check. All contributors, as well as those who secure pledges for the event, will be acknowledged on the Campaign '99 List (See Page 1 story, "Year-End Gifts Acknowledged").

Please come out on May 22 and join the fun! Mark the *Great Goleta Rail Race* date on your calendar now.

Attention, Junior Engineers

The current issue of the Junior Engineers Fun Page can be found on the museum's internet web site. The site address is "www.silcom.com/~scrm". When you reach the museum home page, select the "About The Museum" button, then, click on the "Junior Engineers Page" button.

Juniors Engineers who do not have access to a computer and the internet may view the Fun Page at the museum anytime during the month of March. When you arrive at the museum, please notify the shop clerk of your desire to

see the Fun Page on the computer.

As a privilege of membership, all Junior Engineers receive the Fun Page, which is normally printed on paper, along with their quarterly *Depot Dispatch* newsletter mailing. All members are invited to enjoy this special electronic issue of the Junior Engineers page.



California State Railroad Museum & Foundation

Railfar '99 Trip Planned

Our museum is organizing a June 21-24 trip to Sacramento for Railfar '99 at the California State Railroad Museum.

Celebrated only twice previously — at the state museum's founding in 1981 and a decade later in 1991 — Railfar has established itself as one of the world's premier railroad events. Planners expect that Railfar '99, which has the theme "California Calls You," will eclipse its predecessors both in size and audience participation. As always, the event will be highlighted by lots of historic locomotives and cars, special train operations, performances and exhibits.

Our museum group, which is limited to a maximum of 20, will depart Santa Barbara on Monday, June 21 aboard Amtrak's *Coast Starlight*. We'll enjoy our museum's own "California's Wonderful Corner" interpretive program along the way, then spend the night at Oakland's Jack London Square (to avoid the northbound *Starlight's* late-night Sacramento arrival). Tuesday we'll complete our journey on the early morning *Capitol* train.

There'll be two full days in Sacramento, where we'll stay downtown at the Best Western Sutter House. Our Thursday return will be via the *Coast Starlight*.

Cost of the trip is \$295 per person, based on double occupancy, which includes three nights lodging, continental breakfasts, train fares, and admission to Rail Fair. To make reservations, or for

further information, please call the museum at 964-3540.

Goleta National Bank Sponsors Free Rides for Moms and Dads

On Mother's Day, Sunday, May 9, all moms visiting the museum will be treated to a free ride on the Goleta Short Line, compliments of **Goleta National Bank**. Trains will run continuously beginning at 1:15, with the last train pulling out of the station at 3:45.

The complimentary tickets may be picked up in advance at Goleta National Bank's office at 5827 Hollister Ave. beginning April 5, or in Goleta Depot's Waiting Room, during event hours only. Tickets, at \$1 each, will also be available during the event for other family members and the general public.

Goleta National Bank is also sponsoring "Free Rides for Dads" at the museum on Father's Day, Sunday, June 20. The same train schedule applies.

The bank helped to originate the Father's Day event in 1994, and has sponsored both events ever since.

"Super Saturday III" Brings Big January Crowd

The 3rd Annual *Super Saturday!*, also known as "Super Saturday III," was held Jan. 23. A good-sized crowd was on hand to take the museum up on its offer of free rides on the Goleta Short Line for one and all.

Although the 230 riders was not a *Super Saturday!* record, it was a good showing given the day's blustery weather.

Deepest gratitude is expressed to our five *Super Saturday!* sponsors:

Friedlander & Associates Insurance Services; Michael J. Gartzke, CPA; Mid-State Bank; Silicon Beach Communications; and Timbers Restaurant & Catering.

The event would not have been possible without their support.

Also contributing to the success of the day were volunteers **Meredith Bradt and Susan Cavalli.**