



# Goleta DEPOT DISPATCH

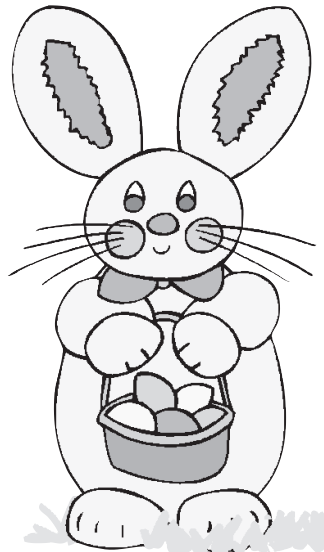


## Newsletter of the South Coast Railroad Museum Volume 24, Number 1 — Spring 2004

### *“Easter Bunny Express” Pulls In April 10*

The much anticipated *Easter Bunny Express* will be pulling into Goleta Depot on Saturday, April 10. You and your family and friends can hop aboard the museum’s most popular spring-time event, which celebrates its 12th anniversary this year, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The cost is \$3 per person, adult or child. Those holding the special egg-shaped ticket will be able to take part in a number of fun activities, including visits to *Wabbit-Twacks Station* (to ride the decorated train); *Harvey’s House* (for a cookie & lemonade donated by **Country Catering Co.**); *Easter-Bunnyville* (to meet the **Easter Bunny** and receive an egg surprise); *Jack-Rabbit Junction* (to enter a prize drawing); and *What’s Up Dock*



(to collect another fun event souvenir). Tickets will be sold in advance at the museum. They will also be available during the event until 3:30 p.m.

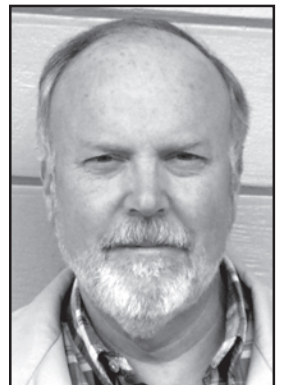
*Visiting the Easter Bunny is an event favorite*



The decorating for the event is already underway, as the California poppies begin to bloom and the trees and scrubs around the grounds take on their bright springtime mantels. To this colorful mix, we will add some fanciful signs (“Support Rabbit Transit” and “Wabbit Twacks Crossing,”  
(cont’d on page 4, see “Bunny”)

### **China’s Steam Railways Are Thom Lecture Topic**

Join international rail traveler **Rich Thom** on March 31 for a journey to China’s remote Inner Mongolia, to ride and marvel at the trains of the Ji-Tong Line, the world’s last mainline railroad to use only steam-powered locomotives. Known as the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region Provincial Railway, this 595-mile-long route offers the longest, regularly-scheduled steam passenger service on the planet.

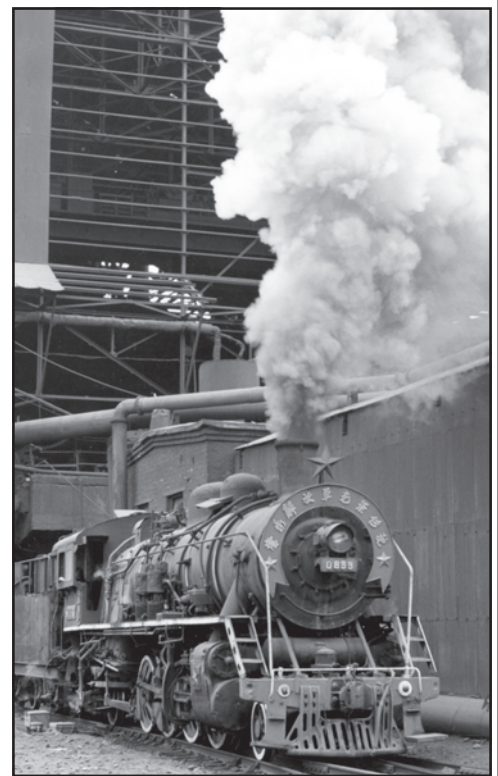


*Rich Thom*

Take a steam-train ride through sparsely populated Inner Mongolia, rolling across grasslands, desert scrub, wind-blown sand dunes, and the spectacular Jingpeng Pass, where five horse-shoe curves, seven tunnels, and six spindly viaducts were needed to conquer a range of barren and wind-

(cont’d on page 4, see “Thom’s China”)

*This steel-mill locomotive is of the standard Chinese industrial type, a class SY with a 2-8-2 wheel arrangement.*



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## Toy Trains & Teddy Bears Display Was A Holiday-Season Treat

Special thanks are extended to all who shared keepsakes during the annual *Toy Trains & Teddy Bears!* exhibition. They included Junior Engineers **Ian Jimenez, Chris Kayda** and **Kelly Reynolds**, and volunteers, members and friends **Eugene Allen, Edee Brown, Ted Cheesman, Jean-Guy Dubé, Ed Leska** and **Mike Leska**.

## Welcome New Members

George and Vivian Obern are new Life members.

New members of the Junior Engineers Club are **Max Cunningham, Jackson Cunningham, Michael Hartley, Jonathan Hartley, Sean Hopkins, Grant Hopkins, David McInnes, Carwyn Melson, Emily Peterson, Ryan Wiener, Samantha Wiener, Michael Wiener** and **Dylan Worth**.

Special greetings to all of the museum's new members.

## Director Shares Depot History, Museum Programs & Plans

Museum Director Gary Coombs made a Feb. 19 presentation before the **Woman's Service Club of Goleta**. Programs topics included Goleta Depot's history and architecture, and how the building served both the railroad and the community. The talk also covered museum programs, events and plans for the future. Dr. Coombs also spoke to the **Goleta Rotary Club** on Nov. 25.

Coombs will be making a presentation to the **Goleta Lions Club** on March 16 and to the **Rotary Club of Goleta Noontime** on March 30.

## Depot Service Takes Many Forms

Historically, Goleta Depot served both the railroad and the community in many different ways — as a passenger station, handling freight and Railway Express business, delivering train orders, and providing the town with its Western Union telegraph office.

Continuing that long tradition of service, the depot and museum grounds recently served as the site for a Calif. Dept. of Justice course on "Dignitary Security." About 25 law enforcement officers from throughout the state took part in the Nov. 20-21 training course, in which a visit to a popular public attraction by a political dignitary was simulated. Students in the course took part in a variety of dignitary-protection drills. Goleta Depot and grounds have served in this capacity a number of times over the past 10-15 years.

## Spring Fundraiser Is Coming

The museum's 23rd annual Spring Fundraiser will be held Saturday, May 15. The event will include free miniature train and handcar rides for all museum visitors.

We are now recruiting volunteers to help with the fundraising. Each year, this event covers about 15% of the museum's annual operating costs. Please support the spring fundraiser with your tax-deductible donation ... and enjoy the free rides on May 15!

## Please Support Museum Sponsors

Included with this member mailing is a "Community Commitment Donation Card" from **Fairview Car Wash**. This locally-owned Goleta business has been one of the museum's most loyal and generous supporters, including their renewed sponsorship of free miniature-train rides every Wednesday and free handcar rides on the third Saturday of every month.

We encourage you to use this donation card, which will bring additional dollars to the museum, as well as show the good people at Fairview Car Wash how much we all appreciate their continued support and good will.

## Thanks for Your Support of *Super Saturday VIII*

The 8th Annual *Super Saturday!*, held Jan. 31, would not have been possible without the generous support of the 2004 event sponsors. They included **American Pension Co; Cold Spring Tavern; Michael Gartzke, C.P.A.; "Dr J" Neel, Optometrist; Ken Pontifex Family; Bruce and Andrea Morden Family; Ramada Limited; Santa Barbara Hobbies; State Farm Insurance (Ed Attlesey & Tammy Dobrotin, Agents); Peter Tiersma; and Western Welding**.

This Issue Sponsored By

**Wilson  
Printing**

**Goleta Depot Dispatch:** Newsletter of the South Coast Railroad Museum.

Published quarterly by the Institute for American Research, 300 North Los Carneros Rd., Goleta, CA 93117-1502.

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## Morden Will Lead Museum Board

**Bruce Morden** has been elected president of the board of trustees. Bruce has served on the board since 2001. He is also one of the museum's most active volunteers, putting in regular turns as a *Coast Starlight* guide, depot agent, and member of the handcar and miniature-train crews. It is a rare museum event that Bruce is not on hand – to help with the preparations and clean up, as well as volunteering during the festivities, themselves.

A Native Californian, Bruce was raised in West Los Angeles. He attended UC San Diego, where he received a bachelor's degree in biology. He worked for 31 years with the State of Calif. Dept. of Health Services as a food and drug investigator, before retiring in 2003.

Bruce lives in Carpinteria with his wife, Andrea, and their two children, daughter Miranda, a sophomore at UCSB and son Michael, also in his second year, at Carpinteria High School.

Bruce Morden grew up in a home in which one room was devoted to trains. His own interest in railroading began with his first Lionel train set, in the 1950s. He is a member of the South Coast Society of Model Engineers, the National Model Railroad Association, and the Southern Pacific Historical and Technical Society. He has published articles on railroad subjects in *Layout Design Journal*.

When Bruce isn't playing with trains, he and Andrea enjoy a variety of outdoor activities, including backpacking, mountain climbing, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, and bicycling. They also like to visit museums and historic places.

Morden takes the reins from David Chapman, who served as presi-



*Bruce Morden was taller than his son in 1999, when this museum photo was taken.*

dent in 2002-03. Other officers elected for 2004 include **Richard B. Shelton**, vice-president and president-elect, and **Noel Langle**, secretary and treasurer.

## Volunteer News

On Feb. 16, **Thea Cremers** and **Pat Weeks** successfully completed their onboard auditions to become guides aboard the *Coast Starlight*. The only step that Pat and Thea have yet to complete is the national Trails & Rails orientation and safety training, which will be conducted later this spring by National Park Service and Amtrak personnel. Congratulations to Pat and Thea on their training progress!



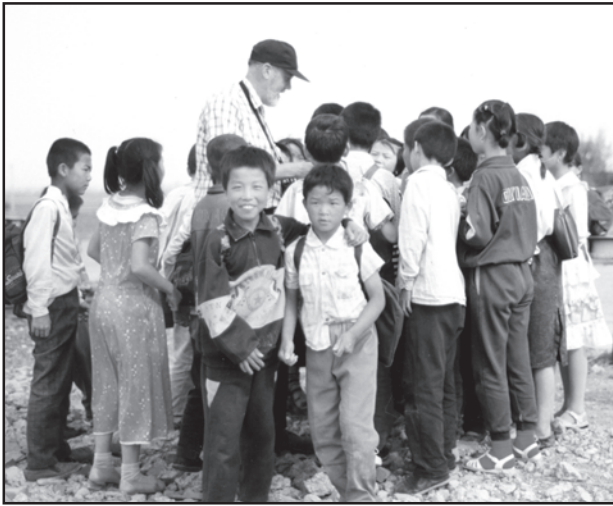
*Thea Cremers talks about area history and local sights over the train's public-address system*



*Pat Weeks shares information with a Coast Starlight passenger.*

**“Thom’s China”** (cont’d. from page 1)  
swept mountains.

Travel “hard class” with the natives and visit delightful villages, farms



*In remote areas, Americans, who are seldom seen, except on TV, are sure to attract a curious crowd.*

and pasture land in an isolated, rural part of northern China rarely explored by Westerners. Then, witness double-headed steam freight trains climbing Jingpeng Pass, this time from the comfort of a hotel window.

Unless you visit the Ji-Tong Line personally, this program may be your last chance to see these steam “dragons” in action, since the locomotives are

*There’s no shortage of manual labor for track work.*



rapidly being eliminated, victims of China’s aggressive modernization. The Chinese government wants to abolish all steam locomotives at least two years before the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Rich Thom has lectured and made multimedia presentations about many of the exotic railways and places he has explored around the world. His articles have appeared in “Trains” and “Aboard” magazines, and in “International Railway Traveler,” where he is contributing editor. Thom’s study of China’s railways has taken him there ten times, logging about 20,000 miles of rail travel from the

Russian border in the north to the South China Sea. A long-time resi-



*Two young women ride in hard-seat coach.*

dent of Santa Barbara, Thom is a former trustee of the South Coast Railroad Museum. He now lives in the Seattle area with his wife, Linda. He retired from Goleta’s Raytheon Vision Systems in 1999.

Rich Thom’s program will be at 7 p.m. at Goleta Public Library, 500 North Fairview Ave., Goleta. Admission is free and the public is cordially invited to attend.

**“Bunny”** (cont’d. from page 1)

for example), to help make the grounds a special part of this annual event.

For those wishing to enjoy lunch or an afternoon snack, our volunteers will be serving hot sandwiches, snacks and refreshments throughout the event.

Don’t be left at the station! The 2004 *Easter Bunny Express* is sure to be another “hare-raising egg-sperience” for the whole family (rain date: April 17).

The museum will be closed on Easter Sunday, April 11.

## Construction Will Begin Soon; Skilled Volunteers Needed

The museum is gearing up to take the next major step toward the realization of the new Visitor Center and store. Construction of the building framing and roof will begin in late April or early May, according to **David Chapman**, chairman of the museum’s Planning Committee.

Volunteers are now being recruited for this phase of the Visitor Center project, which is expected to take one or two weekends to complete. Persons

with work experience in the following areas are needed: construction framing, roofing, finish construction and electrician. All volunteers will need to provide their own tools.

If you would like to play a role in this important addition to the museum, please contact Museum Director Gary Coombs (by phone: 964-3540 or e-mail: [gcoombs@goletadepot.org](mailto:gcoombs@goletadepot.org)). Please include a phone number and brief description of your work experience.