



Goleta

# DEPOT DISPATCH

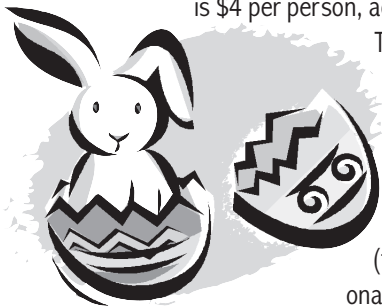


## Newsletter of the South Coast Railroad Museum

Volume 26, Number 1 — Spring 2006

### “Easter Bunny Express” Is April 15

Get those income-tax returns finished early this year so you'll have plenty of time for some good ol' family fun on Saturday, April 15, when the annual Easter Bunny Express rolls into town. The hours for the popular springtime event at the railroad museum will be 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The cost is \$4 per person, adult or child.



Those holding the special oversized egg-shaped tickets will be able to take part in a number of fun event activities, including visits to *Wabbit-Twacks Station* (to ride the decorated train); *Harvey's House* (for a yummy cookie and some lemonade); *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 event souvenir).

Tickets are available in advance at the museum. They will also be sold during the event until 3:30 p.m.

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



*Bev Gruen was an Easter Bunny during last year's "EBX."*

The 2006 *Easter Bunny Express* promises to be another “hare-raising egg-sperience” for the whole family. Don't miss it! (rain date: April 22). The museum will be closed on Easter Sunday, April 16.

### Railroad Museum Representatives Share “Information Station” At State Meetings

The California Association of Museums held its annual meetings on Feb. 21-24 in Monterey. One of the session topics was the South Coast Railroad Museum's “Information Station,” which will soon be housed in the new Visitor Center where everyone will have access to its many fun and informative resources.

Sharing the Information Station concept and features with museum representatives from across the state were Museum Director Gary Coombs, Trustee Noel Langle and Ed Leska.

### Rotary Day Coming June 17

The 6th Annual “Rotary Day,” an afternoon of free train and handcar rides at the museum, will be held Saturday, June 17. The event is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Goleta Noontime.

### Volunteer News

We are pleased to welcome the museum's new class of guides-in-training for the Coast Starlight Program. Ray Allen, Merle Betz, B. Marc Bradley, Dondra, Margot Durham, Mary Kahn, Thomas Smith, Bernard Verbit and Annette Winter all successfully completed the emergency and safety course and the other classroom training during a day-long session on Jan. 28.

Congratulations to Don Chalfant, Kathy Chalfant, Pat Martzen, Bev Torres and Esther Velarde, who have fulfilled all of the requirements to become Coast Starlight guides.

### Grants Are Making Visitor Center Completion Possible

The museum has been awarded grants totaling \$12,000 from two local charitable foundations, the Hutton Foundation and Wood-Claeyssens Foundation.

The Hutton grant is for \$7,000; the Wood-Claeyssens award is \$5,000. Both will be used to complete the Visitor Center project. The Wood-Claeyssens grant is the third that organization has given for the Visitor Center, bringing its total commitment to \$19,000.

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## Super Saturday Tenth Annual Was One Of Best

The Goleta Short Line trains were full all afternoon on Feb. 4, during the museum's 10th Annual *Super Saturday!* The free-ride event was made possible by the generous support of these event sponsors:

Allen Models; Bartlett Tree Experts; Dick and Wendy Shelton; Circle of Friends Children's Center; Cold Spring Tavern; Friedlander & Associates Insurance Services; Motel 6, Goleta; Michael J. Gartzke, CPA; Dal Pozzo Tire Corp., Goleta; Goleta Valley Voice; Grace Baptist Church; Robert B. Locke, Esq.; Montessori Center School; Bruce and Andrea Morden; Mike and Gail Pearl, Sotheby's International Realty; Ken Pontifex Family; R P Printing & Graphics; Peter Tiersma; and State Farm Insurance, Ed Attlesley & Tammy Dobrotin, Agents. Thank you one and all for making this year's event a great success!

**Depot Day**  
**SEPT. 24**

## "Great Race" Fundraiser Slated For May 20

The museum's 25th annual Spring Fundraiser will be held Saturday, May 20. The event will include unlimited free miniature train and handcar rides for all museum visitors. Lambda Theta Nu sorority will also be helping to host this year.

The 2006 event will reprise the "Great Goleta Rail Race" theme that has been used since 1997. Reminiscent of the story of track-builder John Henry, the "steel drivin' man" who raced a steam-powered drill, the museum's "Great Race" offers its version of the epic struggle between man and machine, as the people-powered museum handcar and the Goleta Short Line miniature train compete to see which can complete the greatest number of passenger-miles over a three-hour stretch.

For museum visitors, the event means they can enjoy unlimited free rides from 1 to 4 p.m., during which both the handcar and train will operate continuously. Careful record will be kept of the total passengers carried and the distance completed by each vehicle, with the winner determined using a handicap for the handcar. This handicap has been based on the actual vehicle performances over the history of the event, except for the very first year, when it was determined by calculations performed by math teams from local high schools.

Members are urged to take part this year by helping with the fundraising leading up to the May 20 event, either by obtaining pledges or making a pledge of one's own. Each year, the Spring Fundraiser generates about 15% of the museum's annual operating costs. Please support this important museum event by making a tax-deductible donation using the pledge form that accompanies this newsletter. For more information about the event and how you can help, please contact Gary or

### Welcome New Members

Spencer F. Greenwald of Fredericksburg, Virginia is a new Contributing member. New Active members are Ray Allen; Merle E. Betz, Jr.; B. Marc Bradley; Dondra; Margot C. Durham; Mary Kahn; Thomas Smith; Bernard S. Verbit; and Annette S. Winter.

New Junior Engineers Club members are Aiden Berkley, Luke Berkley, Hunter Brownell, Wyatt Zachary Damon, Quinn Fergusson, Alexandria Gully, Zaiden Hagler, Ian Olitzky, Benjamin Partee, Craig H. Pattee, Isabella C. Pinter, Duncan Saal and Siubhan Saal.

Phyllis at the museum (805-964-3540).

All "Great Race" train riders must meet the museum's 34-inch minimum-height requirement. On the handcar, 48 inches is the minimum height.

*Noel Langle gives handcar rides to young visitors.*



### Museum Receives Software Gifts

Three software manufacturers, Berkley Integrated Audio Software (BIAS), Lucid Flash and Diskeeper Corporation, have made valuable product donations to the museum. Diskeeper has contributed four copies of its Diskeeper 10 Pro defragmentation software, to help protect all of the museum's computers. BIAS has donated a copy of SoundSoap 2, which is used to remove hiss, hum and other defects from digital sound recordings. Lucid Flash has contributed its Chameleon Sound Player, which has become an important component of the museum's "Information Station" resource.

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**Steve Sullivan - Hilda Volkman - Steve Arbuckle - George Thorpe**

## In Fond Remembrance

This past holiday season the museum lost two of its oldest and dearest friends with the passing of **Hilda Volkman** and **Steve Sullivan**.

**Hilda Volkman** is best remembered by most museum members as the artist who painstakingly prepared the panels that form the lively scenic Santa Barbara/Goleta backdrop that is the model railroad exhibit's most prominent feature. That was in 1987, the same year that Hilda began work on a series of coloring pages on depot scenes and rail topics for free distribution to the museum's young visitors. Hilda was one of our very first weekday "agents," the volunteers who share the Freight Office with visitors. Over the years, Hilda also helped with museum events and fundraisers far too numerous to mention. She also fashioned the little 4-4-0 American steam locomotive that became the museum's logo.



Hilda became an important early supporter of the Goleta Depot Project when, as a Goleta Valley Historical Society board member, she prepared the sketch that graced the historical society's 1982 calendar. Entitled "Our New Neighbor," the drawing was a tender depiction of the recently-moved depot as viewed from a window at Stow House.

In many of these activities, Hilda was accompanied and supported by her husband, **Al Volkman**. Other family members were also called upon to assist: In 1989, grandson **Ryan Maloney** adopted the wig-wag installation on the museum grounds as his Eagle Scout project.



Hilda Volkman won the Golden Deed Award in 1989 as Goleta's Woman Of The Year, reflecting all of her contributions both to the railroad museum and other local organizations.

Hilda passed away on Dec. 26. Gifts to the museum in her memory have been received from Reid and Robin Cederlof, Virginia Sloan, Bruce Morden, Miriam and Adam Dydak, the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic

*Hilda Volkman, 1987*



*Hilda and Al were voted "Sweetheart Couple" on 1990 Valentine's trip.*

Preservation and Doug and Joyce Ward.

**Steve Sullivan**, as the Goleta Bureau Chief for the Santa Barbara News-Press, was an indispensable ally in the early 1980s campaign to save Goleta Depot. Steve wrote about the depot project, telling thousands of readers how valuable the historical landmark was to its community.

Steve often worked behind the scenes, making enormous, but oftentimes unheralded contributions. He edited all of the local-history publications produced by the Institute for American Research during the 1980s, including *Goleta Depot: The History Of A Rural Railroad Station* by Gary Coombs. He also wrote a benchmark essay, "Goleta



*Steve Sullivan*

Depot: A Tribute," which chronicles the history and pageant of Goleta Depot from its construction in 1901 through its rebirth as the centerpiece of a fledgling railroad museum. Throughout the depot project, Steve was a relentless devil's advocate, constantly challenging the ideas and assumptions that members of the Depot Committee frequently brought his way.

Sullivan helped to organize some of the most important events in the history of Goleta Depot, including the Oct. 1982 landmark dedication ceremony, Goleta Valley Night dinners that honored Goleta Depot and the Depot Project, and the Nov. 1983 Native Sons dedication that yielded the bronze plaque where countless museum visitors have read the words that Steve, himself, wrote: "On

this site stands Goleta Depot, a tribute to many ..."

Steve Sullivan died on Nov. 26. Memorial donations honoring Steve have been given by Barbara Cornish and Rose Ann Hill.

Another longtime member and friend, **Steve Arbuckle**, died on Jan. 11. A Southern Pacific Railroad train dispatcher, Arbuckle joined the museum in the fall of 1982, just weeks before Goleta Depot was reopened and dedicated as a Santa Barbara County Landmark. Steve loaned the museum an authentic Western Union Telegraph sign, which was used to produce the replica sign that hangs today in



*Sullivan shows off debris found when Goleta Depot was moved off of its original foundation, Nov. 18, 1981.*

front of the Freight Office. He also donated to the museum a number of dispatcher's log books and train sheets from the early '70s, which the museum recently transferred to the Southern Pacific Historical & Technical Society's library. Gifts in memory of Steve Arbuckle have been received from Edward and Judith Arbuckle, Ethel Carstens, Barbara and Robert Eggemeyer, and Morton and Joan Metersky.

**George Thorpe**, who joined the museum in 1999, was a faithful supporter of museum appeals and causes, from the annual spring fundraiser to the Visitor Center project. George was a daily fixture at the Santa Barbara Amtrak Station where many of our *Coast Starlight* volunteers came to know this gentle man quite well. George Thorpe died Nov. 8. A gift in George's memory has been given by Pat and Perry Lorentzen.

## Exploring The World's Great Narrow-Gauge Railways

Join international railway traveler Rich Thom on Wed., April 12 as he presents the first half of his epic *'Round The World By Narrow Gauge*, a lecture and multimedia program sponsored by the South Coast Railroad Museum. The presentation is free and open to the public. It will be held at Goleta Library starting at 7 p.m.

Rich Thom's topic, narrow-gauge railways, refers to those world railroads where the distance between the two parallel rails (the track gauge) is less than the 56.5 inches found on the more common "standard-gauge" railroads. By comparison, narrow-gauge railways tend to be shorter in length, traversing scenic, often difficult mountainous terrain, typically with trains that are pulled by steam-powered locomotives. Narrow-gauge railways are especially common in many third-world countries.

Thom's April 12 presentation will focus on narrow-gauge railways in South Africa, North America and India. His opening, South African segment will focus on the 24-inch-gauge Port Elizabeth-Avontour Railway, but will also cover other narrow-gauge lines in that country.

To represent North America, Thom has chosen the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad of New Mexico and Colorado. Even those who have ridden this popular seasonal tourist destination will find unfamiliar the snow-mantled scenes that will illustrate the narrative.



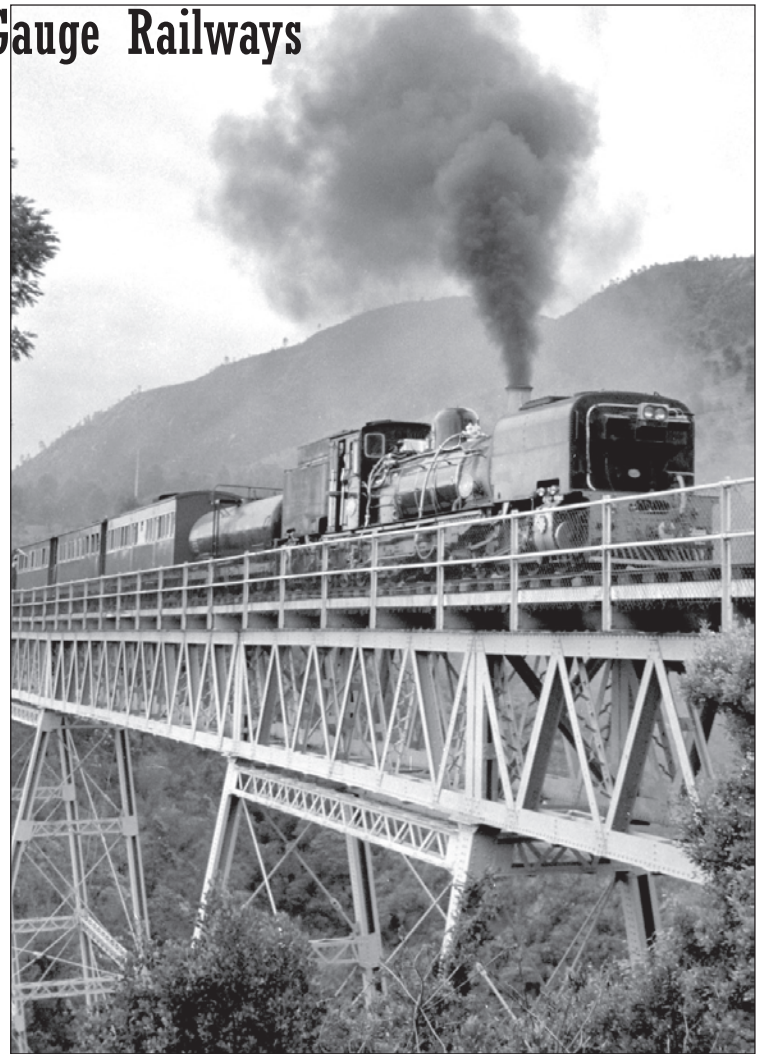
*Rail Adventurer Rich Thom*

Thom will close with a look at the various narrow-gauge railways of India, with an emphasis on the spectacular Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, considered by many to be one of the world's greatest engineering feats.

Rich Thom has ridden and photographed the railways of 30 countries during 45 international trips made over the past four decades. He has chronicled his journeys in a number of railway publications, including regular contributions to the International Railway Traveler magazine.

Before turning to digital still and video photography starting in the late 1990s, Thom had amassed an estimated 29,300 slides and negatives from his international railway travels.

A former trustee and president of the South Coast Railroad Museum,



*A train on the 2-foot gauge Port Elizabeth-Avontour branch in South Africa crosses the famous Van Staden's Gorge, claimed to be the highest bridge in the world ever built for this railway gauge (December, 2000).*

Rich Thom is retired and lives in the state of Washington State with his wife, Linda. The couple make frequent trips to Santa Barbara, where Rich can often be found once again volunteering his time at the museum.

Part II of his narrow-gauge saga, scheduled to be offered later in 2006, will feature the Jiayang Coal Railway of Sichuan Province, China; the Indian Kalka-Shimla Railway; and railways in Ferrocarriles Guatemala.

## Joanell Scala Joins Board; Joan Hanna Elected President



Joanell Scala has been elected to the organization's Board of Trustees for a two-year term.

Scala was in business locally for 27 years as the owner of Lorene Scala, a woman's boutique and dress shop. She was also formerly part owner of Admiral's Travel and currently works part-time for Your Travel Center.

She served for two years as an

*Joanell Scala*

elected member of the Republican Party Central Committee and also served as its secretary. For 10 years, she was an active member of Soroptimist International of Santa Barbara.

The Board of Trustees has also elected **Joan Hanna** as its president for 2006. Other officers are **Richard Shelton**, vice president and president-elect, and **Bruce Morden**, secretary and treasurer.



*Joan Hanna*