



Goleta

DEPOT DISPATCH



Newsletter of the South Coast Railroad Museum

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Easter Bunny Express Coming March 30



Get your family ready for another memorable event at the railroad museum. The 21st annual *Easter Bunny Express* will be here on Saturday, March 30. Hours are 11 a.m. to 4 pm.

We promise there will be plenty of fun activities for all in your group. When you arrive, check your colorful, oversized, egg-shaped souvenir tickets. Each event activity is listed on the ticket as a “station.” Be sure to visit all of these station stops, including:

**Wabbit-Twacks Station* – where you will take a six-minute ride on one of the

- festively-decorated trains –
- **Easter-Bunnyville* – to meet the Easter Bunny, where children will receive an egg-filled surprise and parents will have some great photo ops –
- **Jack-Rabbit Junction* – to enter a drawing for some great prizes, including dozens of cuddly stuffed animals and new plants for your garden – and
- **What’s Up Dock* – to collect another *Easter Bunny Express* souvenir.

For rides, there will be two trains to select from this year, the *EBX Thunderbunny* and the *Lop-Ear Local*, each running on its own one-third-mile-long route. Ticketholders will be able to choose which train to ride. Or, ride both trains for only \$2 more.

There will be drawings held every hour – at 12 noon, 1:00, 2:00, 3:00, and 3:45 p.m.

For those who would like to have lunch or an afternoon snack, museum volunteers will be serving Depot Dogs, smoked-sausage sandwiches, snacks, and refreshments throughout the day.

The ticket cost is \$4 per person, adult

or child. For those who will not be riding the miniature trains, the cost is just \$3. Tickets are available in advance at the museum, or make your purchase through the Online Store and receive a



discount on every ticket! Tickets will also be sold at the event until 3:30 p.m.

The 2013 *Easter Bunny Express* promises to be another “hare-raising egg-sperience” for the whole family. Hop aboard! (rain

date: Sat., April 6).

The museum will be closed on Easter Sunday, March 31.

Young visitor collects an egg surprise from Bunny Kari Adams.



Buy your tickets through the online store & save!

Scan the code at the right into your smart phone or type the following address into your browser: <http://ow.ly/iKXT2>



“Central Coast Flyer” Vintage Railcar Travel Program Keeps Going And Growing

The museum’s vintage-rail program has really been growing. Over the first half of 2013 alone, the museum has 11 “Central Coast Flyer” trips completed or scheduled. Some include two railcars.

Many of the trips sell out very quickly. Of those slated for the March thru June period, six are already sold out and a seventh has only two seats still available.

The three historic cars that we’ve been using this year include the Southern Pacific club-lounge *Overland Trail*, *Silver Splendor*, and *Acoma*. The first two of these, *Overland Trail* and the Vista Dome car, *Silver Splendor*, will be familiar to anyone who has read the *Depot Dispatch* newsletter over the past few years, since both have played prominent roles in the museum’s vintage-rail program.

Acoma is the newest addition to the Central Coast Flyer fleet. The car has quite a pedigree. *Acoma* is the club-lounge car from the original 1937 streamlined version of the Santa Fe *Super Chief*, “The Train Of The Stars,” which ran between Los Angeles and Chicago. With much of its warm Southwestern interior motif intact, *Acoma* is the only car from this first stainless-steel *Super Chief* train-set that remains in active service today. Only two of *Acoma*’s sister cars survive: the dining car, *Cochiti*, showcased at the Calif. State Railroad Museum, and the observation car, *Navajo*, proudly displayed at the Colorado Railroad Museum.

Each of these cars is used in one of

Chocolate expert Maya Schoop-Rutten, shown here with cacao pods during a recent trip to Peru, will be our presenter for the “Chocolate Lovers Limited” trip.



the following upcoming rail trips, for which seats are still available:

■ Sunday, April 14 marks the “Spring Colors Special” aboard *Overland Trail*. \$76 per person.

■ Saturday, May 4 is the “Chocolate Lovers Limited” aboard *Acoma*. This trip features a delicious, fun, and informative afternoon chocolate-tasting led by Swiss-born chocolatier, **Maya Schoop-Rutten**. Limited to 25 passengers. \$99 per person.

■ Saturday, June 15 aboard *Silver Splendor*. All passengers will be able to ride in the car’s scenic dome during one-half of the trip. Those reserving early will have their choice of morning or afternoon dome seatings. \$79 per person.

Complimentary soft drinks, coffee, and light snacks are included in all trips. Museum guide-hosts will also be aboard to answer your questions, share tidbits

of history, and identify points-of-interest along the beautiful coastal route from Santa Barbara to San Luis Obispo.

The prices shown above include a \$3 per ticket discount, available only through the online store. If you prefer not to purchase your tickets online, please call Terry, our reservation specialist, at 805/680-0397 (9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. only, please)

Acoma is the latest Central Coast Flyer addition.



What’s Happening At The Museum?

Now, you have a number of ways of getting up-to-date answers to that question – just by visiting the museum’s website: goletadepot.org

In the right-hand column of the homepage and most other pages, you’ll see a section entitled “Museum News & Notes.” There you will find a scrolling message bar with information about current events and activities at the museum. Each message-bar item contains a link that will take you to a source with more details.

Directly below “Museum News & Notes” is another section entitled “Events.” There you will find a listing of the next four museum events, also with links to pages with more information about each listed event. There is also a link to “All Events,” which will give you a chronological listing of all coming events at the museum.

At the bottom of the right column is a section labeled “From The Museum Blog.” It contains a list of all of the posts to the museum blog. The most recent posts are listed first. Clicking on any of the entries will take you to the blog, itself (blog.goletadepot.org), where

you can enjoy the complete posting, usually including some great full-color images and other graphics.

We have been using the blog a lot lately, as a way of communicating current information about museum happenings to members and our other fans and followers. Recent posts have focused on:

- Goleta Short Line locomotive No. 1316, including a historical photograph of its Southern Pacific namesake.
- The Feb 16 *Sweetheart Special* rail trip, including a stunning video clip of the train crossing Alegria bridge west of Gaviota.
- Volunteers **Raphaella Baholzer-Donati, John Green, Nancy Johnke, Ed Leska, Tony Ramirez, Dick Roberts, Nancy Revlin, Rick Reeves, Bern Verbit & Doug Winter**; Museum Assistant **Borgia**

(continued on page 3)

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“What’s Happening” (cont’d from page 2)

Wasem; and UCSB Intern **Shuyan Dong.**

- A new Pride Of Madera bush on the grounds that is ready to burst into bloom.
- Upgrades to the train-ride turntable.

To view the latest blog post, you don’t even have to leave the website: That entire most-recent posting can always be found occupying a large area at the bottom of the website homepage.

These various sources can be especially valuable for learning about opportunities at the museum that become available between the quarterly issues of the *Depot Dispatch* newsletter. For example, one of the blog posts alerted its readers of the chance to ride the historic Santa Fe *Super Chief* lounge car, *Acoma*, on its inaugural Coast Route run. We were not able to put this special Jan. 19 trip together in time for it to be announced in the Winter 2012-13 newsletter issue.

Museum Volunteers Will Help With “National Train Day” On May 11

Four volunteers from our museum will be staffing a booth during the 6th annual *National Train Day* event at Los Angeles Union Station on Sat., May 11.

The booth will offer information about both the South Coast Railroad Museum and the National Park Service’s Trails & Rails Program. Staffers on the day will include museum Trails & Rails guides **Nancy Johnke, Donnis Galvan, Esther Velarde, and Al Schildhorn.**

National Train Day celebrates America’s love of trains. The event, which runs from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m., will feature a long list of family-friendly activities and attractions including rolling-stock tours, “Kids Depot” fun area, musical entertainment, model train displays, special exhibits, drawings for trips and other prizes, and lots of souvenir giveaways.

Los Angeles Union Station is at 800 N. Alameda Street. Besides Los Angeles, four other cities will feature major *National Train Day* festivities – New York, Washington, D.C., Chicago, and Philadelphia.

2013’s “Rotary Day” Will Coincide With Father’s Day

The 12th annual *Rotary Day* will be held on Father’s Day, Sunday, June 16. The event features free miniature-train and handcar rides. The event is sponsored by the **Rotary Club Of Goleta Noon-time.** Members of the club will be at the museum during the event, to greet visitors and lend a hand with the rides.

Please join us for free rides on *Rotary*

Day. When you do, be sure to say thank you to the Rotarians who are present for their club’s continuing support of the museum and this popular yearly event.

On *Rotary Day*, visitors may ride as often as they like, without charge. The museum’s usual minimum-height requirements will apply: 34 inches for the train and 48 inches for the handcar.

VOLUNTEER NEWS

New Guides-In-Training Join “Trails & Rails”

The training of new volunteers for the Trails & Rails program began with an orientation meeting on the evening of Feb. 13, followed by a day-long classroom session on Saturday, Feb. 23. Attending the Saturday training were four new guide prospects, plus 15 of our continuing guides, who are required to go back through this training every two years. We are pleased to welcome the four new additions to the program: **Paul Kremser, Kenneth Pierskalla, Daniel Smith, and Donald Voegele.**

Traveling all the way from his home in Austin, Texas, the National Coordinator for Trails & Rails, **James Miculka**, attended the all-day training and provided the morning instruction on onboard emergency & safety guidelines. Also in attendance was **Hale Sargent**, the Interpretive Specialist with the National Park Service’s **Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail**, which part-

ners with the railroad museum and **Amtrak** in the Trails & Rails Program. Sargent schooled attendees on the Anza Expedition of 1775-76 and also on the role of interpretation in presenting educational programs aboard Amtrak trains. **Museum Director Gary Coombs** introduced the new program applicants to the Trails & Rails Standard Operating Procedures.

Additional training will include individual study and exercises, followed by training trips aboard Amtrak’s *Coast Starlight* trains under the direct supervision of senior museum guides.

The Trails & Rails program is offered four days a week to *Coast Starlight* passengers between Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo. It includes live presentations about area history, local sights, natural history, and things-to-do along the train route. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, the program is expanded to include one guide trip each week to San Jose.

National Coordinator Jim Miculka talks to program volunteers about emergencies and safety aboard trains.



In Memoriam: James Higman

The South Coast Railroad Museum lost a longtime friend on Dec. 19, 2012 with the passing of **James Higman**.

Jim was perhaps best known around the museum for the table-top display of miniature stationary steam engines and steam-driven tools and devices that he helped organize for museum events, including a long string of *Depot Days*, starting in 1983, and later for *Steaming Summer* and *Railroad Days*.

He contributed to the museum in many other ways, including as a financial donor to many *Spring Fundraisers* and year-end appeals. Jim loaned the museum his brass steam-locomotive bell for sharing during the *Goleta Valley Days* parade and several *Depot Day* events. Jim also donated the original knuckle couplers and ball-bearing trucks that were installed on the first four Goleta Short Line passenger cars.

Jim was one of the men responsible for building the museum handcar, completed in 1989. He turned and cut the massive 72-tooth bull gear, which came from a 220 lb. slab of solid steel. Jim



Jim Higman, left, and Gene Allen show off the live-steam display during the first Depot Day celebration, Oct. 9, 1983.

also collaborated with **Gene Allen** in creating the companion 10-tooth pinion gear.

Jim became a museum member in 1982. He and wife, **Sue Higman**, became Life members in 1990, the same year that Jim became a member of the Board of Trustees.

Jim loved to share the steam-powered tools and devices at museum events.



Please Support Spring Fundraiser

The 32nd annual *Spring Fundraiser* will be held at the museum on Sat., May 18. Better known nowadays to many as the *Great Goleta Rail Race*, and to longtime members and friends as the “Asphalt Regatta,” the event includes unlimited free train and handcar rides for all visitors who meet the minimum-height safety requirements (34” for the train; 48” for the handcar).

The *Spring Fundraiser* is a critical source of operating income. It produces about 10-15% of the money needed to sustain the museum for a 12-month span. Everyone who

contributes to the event not only sponsors the free rides on May 18, but also helps to keep the museum healthy and strong.

Please help with the fundraising leading up to the May 18 event, either by obtaining pledges or by making a pledge of your own. Please support this important museum fundraiser with your tax-deductible donation by using the card mailed with this newsletter. For a pledge form or more information, contact the museum at 805/964-3540 or send us an email at: museum@goletadepot.org

Welcome New Members

Bruce and Susan Wennerstrom have joined the museum as new Sustaining members. New active members include **Mr. and Mrs. Frederick S. Allen, Hollanda Harwin, Paul Kremser, Herman Pfauter, Kenneth Pierskalla, Elaine Sichel, and Donald Voegelé.**

Parker Gin is our newest Junior Engineer Club member.

Greetings to you, one and all!