Creating Our Community Education Room — Phase 1

This December, volunteers under the direction of board member Noel Langle began the first steps in creating a new, large meeting and community educational space at the station. They took hammers, and crowbars to the interior dividing walls, and false ceiling and trusses in a major effort at rehabilitating the station’s Freight Room. The goal: create a large exhibit and meeting room that will be ideal for community and school groups to come and learn about Goleta’s history and the importance of railroads in rural America. With dust still swirling around, Noel declared, “It is thrilling to see the space opened up again!”

This effort will depend upon the brains and brawn of our volunteers and donations from the community. December’s demolition crew included new board president Steve Wagner, who declared, “Tearing things down can be very therapeutic!” The final meeting space will be larger than 600 sq feet. The incredible volunteers helping out included: Lenny Brown, Alex Tzoumas, Shane Tzoumas, Cole Tzoumas, Bob Thomas David Willett, Matthew Thorp, and Jim Rice.

Phase 2 Starts!

In January, the museum board met with architect Susanne Tejada for an exciting discussion about the design of our Community Education space. Here’s a photo of Susanne and board members brainstorming new ideas.

Doggie Days at the Depot

What could be cuter than seeing your favorite pup dressed up and posing on a miniature train at the Goleta Depot? Doggie Days was celebrated in the month of December and was the brainchild of board secretary Jane Honikman. Visiting pooches were provided with props and costumes to stage a photo, and they took home a special railroad kerchief to as a memento. We’re not sure who enjoyed it more – the dogs or the dog owners! Jane was assisted by dog-loving volunteers Martha Lannan, Dena Stein, Linda Honikman, Anne Mitzenmacher, Tanda Jacobs. Look for more Doggie Days coming up.
Have You Met Alexis?

Alexis Aguiniga is the face of the South Coast Railroad Museum, and she is usually found in our visitor center (VC). Behind the counter, she calmly and professionally sells tickets by the armload for our miniature train, handles all business transactions, answers a multitude of queries about the museum, and more.

Certainly, Alexis’s love of children makes her prefect for the center. But more, Alexis is bound by ties of family lore to railroads. Her family, reaching back five generations, has railroads in their blood and has even spilt precious blood for the trains. On her mother’s side, the family laid tracks in the Southwest, reaching north from Durango, Mexico into the US. As they stretched the iron rails across untamed nature, her forebears lived out of traveling boxcars.

On her father’s side, grandparent and uncles served as mechanical, electrical, and railroad engineers. According to family history, Alexis’s great, great grandfather died in a head-on train-to-train collision. His tragic end came only after tossing both of his sons from the speeding train to save their lives!

Alexis is also a student at SB City College and specializes in music. She says she’s looking forward to the new semester when she takes on the challenge of playing Chopin’s difficult concertos on the piano. Give Alexis a greeting when you stop by the VC!

Ho-Ho-Ho!

Not the threat of raging fire nor ashes and smoke could deter Santa from making his annual visit to the depot and bringing good cheer for our Candy Cane Train. Reprising the role of the man in red, 2017 board president Bruce Morden delighted little ones and big ones as he heard their wishes for Christmas. Bruce made the perfect Santa with puffy white beard, which he joked he usually keeps a darker shade of gray with Grecian Formula. While the Thomas Fire unfortunately canceled the Candy Cane Train for a few dates, the Depot reopened just before Christmas. On Saturday, Dec. 23, the miniature train took 119 passengers on a trip through ornament laden-trees, before kids gladly accepted candy canes from engineer Ryan Bates and conductor Willy Madrigal.

Our End of the Year Appeal

The South Coast Railroad Museum is a nonprofit, free, public museum. We are dedicated to providing educational activities about historic Goleta to all residents and visitors. We depend upon the support of our friends in the community to continue our ambitious plans, including:

- Build our new Community Education Room
- Display to the public even more of our collection of fascinating historic treasures
- Launch new, exciting education programs

Our End of the Year Appeal drew in over $5000, while the City of Goleta recognized the Museum’s valuable educational work in the community and granted us $3,500 for the first phase in building our Community Education Room. A big and hearty thanks to all donors large and small! The museum simply could not survive without your generosity.

Want to show your support?

We gratefully accept donations sent to the South Coast Railroad Museum at 300 N. Los Carneros Road, Goleta CA 93117. Or go to GoletaDepot.org and click “Support” and then “Make a Donation.” Yes, we are a tax deductible nonprofit.
Our New Administrator!

Rich Kaplan has joined the SCRM as our new administrator. Rich will help ensure that the museum’s day-to-day operations run as smoothly as a Union Pacific Big Blow engine powering down the California coast, and he will boost communications with our membership and the community. A long-time local, Rich comes with significant experience in marketing, journalism and education. He’s a history buff and has written a book on American newspaper history. Feel free to stop by and chat with Rich about our historic depot, old-time Goleta, or anything else that strikes your fancy.

Wanted: Gandy Dancer Crew

Come lay track, straighten rail, pound spikes (well, not really) and keep our miniature train line rolling. The museum is forming a “Gandy Dancer Crew” to help maintain the Goleta Short Line, which takes thousands of visitors around the Goleta Depot. Gandy Dancers were the early railroad workers in the United States, more formally referred to as “section hands.” They laid and maintained railroad tracks in the years before the work was done by machines. Training will be given, so no prior experience is needed – just a willingness to help. Anticipate regular work sessions. Call the museum at (805) 964-3540 and leave a message that you want to be a Gandy Dancer.

Want Your News Fast?

Get the Goleta Depot Dispatch delivered fast and in blazing bright colors right to your email. Tell us by going to our website and sending a message: https://goletadepot.wordpress.com/contact/ You’ll be first on your block to get the very latest railroad news.

Upcoming Events at the Goleta Depot

Mark your calendars for all these fun activities.

- **March 24 — Acoma Vintage Train Car**

- **March 31 — Goleta Bunny Express & Doggie Day**
  Our annual Bunny Express! Miniature train ride, carnival booth, bunnies from B.U.N.S. and fun for the whole family! 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Tickets just $4 per person

- **June 2 — Overland Trail Vintage Train Car**

- **August 11-12 — Depot Days**
  A fun-filled celebration of our historic train station

- **Oct. 27-28 — Haunted Depot – too scary to miss**

- **Nov. 23-Dec. 23 — Candy Cane Train**

Thank You Elks!

Just to start the year right, the Santa Barbara Elks Lodge No. 613 with assistance from Goleta City Councilman Roger Aceves presented the Goleta Depot with a $1000 grant. The Elks donated the money to help us build our Community Education Room. The Elks’ lodge is located just a stone’s throw from the depot’s old home near the railroad tracks, so Elks Lodge 613 must be missing their old neighbor. Thank you kindly!