

WHEEL CLICKS

Pacific Railroad Society Inc.

NOVEMBER 2011

MILEPOSTS

BY MARTI ANN DRAPER

Hello again! I realize that since last spring, I have been taking a breather, paying attention to the needs of my family and gathering my wits to launch into future PRS efforts. And I have not written any of these columns. This is partially because I could not find the words for what I really wanted to tell you.

Then one day last week, one of our youngest members approached me as I was at work about to highball my train out of a suburban station. He called out, "What has to happen to get PRS doing things again?" Without hesitation, I shouted back, "VOLUNTEER!" as the train pulled out of the station.

Many of you have asked us, "When is the next excursion? Why don't you give a tour? What is PRS going to do next?" I struggle to answer them, because I want both members and non-members to believe in PRS as a competent, and as one of my more vocal critics likes to call it, "a well-run organization."

On the other hand, by simply telling you of our plans, I perpetuate the impression that PRS functions automatically through the offices of our workers, without the need of input from our members. As long as we do not pay our management or the great majority of those who put on our programs, PRS activities are limited by the amount of involvement put in by volunteers who conceive, plan and execute those activities.

It was interesting to me that one of your younger members so succinctly brought up the question. Our membership is aging, and we always seek to have "new blood" to bring ideas and enthusiasm to PRS. It is younger railfans, however rare they may seem, that we need to reach out to.

You are familiar with the activities of other non-profit organizations, which utilize paid administrators and staff to regularly conduct their businesses. The National Geographic Society, the Page Museum, AARP and the Auto Club all regularly conduct activities, and you belong to organizations like these with the exception that your dues will bring you service. In some of these groups, your participation is limited to sending in your dues and you may get a slick, well-produced "product" in the form of a magazine or a radio broadcast or a discount from your admission price when your family attends a professionally built and beautiful museum with interactive exhibits.

By contrast, PRS consists of people who enjoy railroading and who want to perpetuate the history and study of railroads. Up to this point, all of our activities have been initiated by and carried out by volunteers. Maybe this is an obsolete organizational model, but it is an honest and sincere one. PRS is less of a business that gives you a service in exchange for your dollars than it is a cooperative endeavor between friends with a common purpose.

I realize that many of you are sitting back and awaiting the

next "thing" to amuse and educate you. I, your officers, the members of the board of directors, and the heads of committees are laboring to keep the organization alive and functioning so that activities such as our library and museum in San Dimas; the publication of articles and books; the regular meetings; the preservation of streamlines passenger cars; our holiday party in Fullerton; and excursions great and small can be accomplished. But we do not just work for your amusement. If you have a project or a dream in mind, maybe this fellowship of railfans with a 75-year history of success is the instrument which will make it happen. Step forward and advocate your ideas, and show us what you can do!



On Father's Day 2011 the photographer's daughter and son-in-law treated him with a ride on the Niles Canyon Railway. While the train was stopped at its Niles station, Capitol Corridor Train 733 sped by. Passing so quickly there was hardly time to capture images of the corridor train. Photo by Charles Varne



WHEEL CLICKS

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EDITOR **DICK FINLEY**
TECHNICAL EDITOR **CHARLES VARNES**
MAILER **JOHN STALLKAMP**

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SUSTAINING MEMBER **\$50.00 per year**
CORPORATE MEMBER **\$100.00 per year**
LIFE MEMBER **\$500.00**

PACIFIC RAILROAD MUSEUM is operated by Pacific Railroad Society at 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas, CA 91773. Telephone: (909) 394-0616. Museum e-mail: PRSTrainman@aol.com Open Saturdays: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Mondays: 12-5 p.m.; Wednesdays: 1-5 p.m.

MUSEUM CURATOR **DAVID HOUSH**

EXCURSION DIRECTOR **MARTI ANN DRAPER**

WEBMASTER **RUSSELL HOMAN**

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PRS NEWS	ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES
Nov. 2, 9,	Pacific Railroad Museum Wednesday work party
16, 23, 30	1:00 to 5:00 p.m., 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas.
Nov. 4	Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Valencia Room, Joslyn Center, 210 N. Chapel Ave., Alhambra.
Nov. 5, 12, 19, 26	PRM Saturday work party, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas.
Nov. 5, 12, 19, 26	Rolling Stock repair day, 8:30 a.m. to ?, aunders Yard, Noakes St. & Herbert Ave., Commerce.
Nov. 7, 14, 21, 28	PRM Monday work party, 12:00 to 5:00 p.m., 210 W. Bonita Ave., San Dimas.
Nov. 11 Fri.	Membership Meeting, 7:30 p.m., MTA Bldg. in Board Room on Third Floor.

NOVEMBER PROGRAM

November 11: **A tribute to the late Chard Walker!** On this evening we'll see some of Chard's legendary color images, as well as some black & white images from his collection. We'll

also see a 1996 Pilgrimage to Chard's house in Hesperia by a group of PRS folks, including both the late Dave Cameron, and the late Barbara Sibert. Be there, and bring digital briefs!

MEMBERSHIP REPORT by **VIRGINIA GRUPP**

Late renewals were assigned Seniority Numbers 429-431. New members voted into PRS at the Board Meeting on August 5 were Craig Curry, #427; and Jonathan Riley, #428. New members voted into PRS at the Board Meeting on October 7 were George Luchs, #432; Rod Haney, #433; and James Marshall, #434.

MEETING MOVES BY **MARTI ANN DRAPER**

PRS has chosen to move back to the Joslyn Center in Alhambra for our regular meetings, starting on January 13, 2012.

Our regular meetings have been held at the Joslyn Adult Recreation Center for many years, since Chris and Cecelia Ditlefsen first made arrangements for us to meet there. It was at the Joslyn Center that Fred and Many Ane Knox and Theresa Rosewall set up donuts, coffee and soda, and where PRS held potluck holiday parties starting when Will Walters was president.

Last fall, Alhambra received a grant for the refurbishment of the Joslyn Center. The City of Alhambra graciously substituted the use of the Almansor Park Gymnasium for our first couple of meetings during the construction process.

Since then, we have been the guests of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in their Board Room. This venue has afforded us a very upscale and centrally-located meeting room. The room is within walking distance of Amtrak, Metrolink and Metro trains. However, parking there is not free and there is a relatively long walk from either the train platforms or the parking garage to the meeting room. The consumption of food or beverages is prohibited and we are limited to the use of the built-in projection equipment.

The work on the Joslyn Center is now completed and our Board of Directors was faced with the decision of whether to move back to Alhambra or to continue to meet at the MTA building. Before the decision was made, we asked for an informal vote of the members present to the meeting in September. There were only 18 votes cast, 14 for returning to the Joslyn Center and 4 for staying at MTA.

We also sent out a straw poll with last month's *Wheel Clicks*. People mailed, w-mailed, or called in their responses. The count at the time of the meeting was 13 in favor of Joslyn Center and 7 in favor of the MTA Board Room. Some of the respondents could get to either place, while others could only get to one or the other. This was generally based on where the respondents lived and whether or not they were dependent upon public transit.

It's worth noting that attendance at the regular meetings has been decreasing for some time. However, moving to the MTA Building did not stem this trend. We will meet at the Joslyn Center for the next several months and then perhaps consider whether we should go back to the MTA Board Room for our regular meetings or for special programs.

Thanks to Ken Ruben for serving as Assistant Secretary in

Charge of Meeting Venues during this uncertain period. Comments are still important and you are invited to forward yours to Ken.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE BYLAWS OF PACIFIC RAILROAD SOCIETY, INC.

It is hereby proposed that Article 6, section 6.2, of the Bylaws of Pacific Railroad Society, Inc., be amended as follows:

A new section 4.14.d will be added to Article 4 of the Bylaws, as follows:

4.14.d REMOVAL OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

It is expected that officers and directors will fulfill their duties and responsibilities faithfully. Failure to do so will be grounds for removal from office.

In the event that an officer or director is alleged to be unwilling or unable to fulfill their duties, any board member may contact the President at least twenty days before the next Board meeting, and will propose an officer or director for removal. The President will notify the affected person of the possibility of removal and the reasons therefore in writing at least ten days prior to the meeting of the Board of Directors. The matter will be placed on the agenda for that meeting and that agenda shall be distributed to each member of the Board at least seven days before the meeting.

At that meeting, a motion to remove the subject officer or director may be made, discussed and acted upon in the usual manner. A vote of two thirds of the Board members present is necessary to carry the motion and, if passed, the subject officer or director shall then be removed from office immediately.

If the subject officer is the President, the Vice President shall fulfill the duties prescribed for the President in the preceding two paragraphs.

This paragraph in no way amends the procedure for removing an officer or director who has failed to attend meetings of the Board of Directors, as set forth in Paragraph 4.14.c.

REASONS FOR THE PROPOSED CHANGE

Although the Bylaws now provide for removal for three unexplained absences, or if a director is declared incompetent by a court, it has come to the attention of the board of directors that there is currently no means for the board to remove a director or officer who fails or refuses to do his or her job. This new section will provide a method to do so. A director or officer so removed would be replaced in the same manner as if any other vacancy had occurred.

ENACTMENT

This proposed change will be inserted into the November issue of *Wheel Clicks* and voted upon by all members present at the regular January meeting of Pacific Railroad Society, Inc., on January 13, 2012.

PACIFIC HARBOR LINE GETS CLEANER

Pacific Harbor Line Inc. is one of the shortest railroads in the nation, operating only 18 route miles entirely inside the neighboring ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Already lauded as one of the least polluting U.S. railroads, Pacific Harbor Line in September unveiled its latest effort at cleanliness: a glossy, black, 2,000 horsepower locomotive that appeared to have undergone few changes except for a new bulge on its roof. The railroad is in the process of upgrading 16 of its 23 locomotives with advanced engines and special exhaust systems that will sharply reduce some key components of air pollution.

Pacific Harbor Line said the upgrades would result in an 85 percent in particulate matter – dust, smoke and other particles that contribute to serious health problems, such as respiratory disease and heart attacks – and a 38 percent reduction in smog forming nitrogen oxide compared with the rail line's fleet six years ago.

"We have taken the greenest fleet in America and improved it," said Pacific Harbor Managing Director Andrew C. Fox. The effort will elevate the trains one notch in the Environmental Protection Agency's four-tier system of emissions standards for diesel engines. The only cleaner engines would be labeled "Tier 4," and few of those are in operation.

Pacific Harbor Line's job is to break down trains as they arrive and send their cargo containers to the nine terminals at the ports, where containers are transferred to ships. The railway also assembles trains that haul freight to much of the nation, connecting to Union Pacific and BNSF transcontinental rail lines.

Over the course of a typical year, Pacific Harbor Line will handle 1 million rail carloads. Its role in California is unique. In the mid-1990s, there were still three separate railroads trying to get cargo in and out of the ports in a timely fashion, a situation that led to frequent disputes over timing and rights of way. In the late '90s, the ports and the railroads decided a neutral third body would work inside the ports.

They chose Anacostia & Pacific Co., one of many private companies that run the regional and short line railroads that connect communities and main rail lines. Pacific Harbor Line began running in 1998. The company was approached by the ports, Fox said, and asked whether it could do even more to reduce emissions. The company worked with the South Coast Air Quality Management District and received one of the agency's Carl Moyer grants to pay for the bulk of the retrofit costs.

Pacific Harbor Line chose the engine offered by Progress Rail Services, a division of Caterpillar. The engine would be paired with that new bulge on the roof of the locomotive, a state-of-the-art filter manufactured by a Swiss company called Hug Engineering.

“We’re partners with the ports, so we said we would be happy to see what more we could do,” Fox said. “The grant gave us \$11 million, which will pay for 85 percent of the costs. We could not have done this without the partnership with the AQMD.” Gary Eelman, vice president of locomotive sales and leasing for Progressive Rail Services, said that the locomotives were a first for the U.S., although such new engines have been paired with the sophisticated filters in Europe.

Pacific Harbor Line expects to receive all of the upgraded locomotives by the end of the year, well ahead of an anticipated boost in business once the Port of Los Angeles’ \$274-million renovation of the TraPac cargo terminal is complete in about three years. The renovation will add a 10th on-dock rail facility at the ports, and Pacific Harbor Line will handle that cargo too. [Info. from *Los Angeles Times*]

CALTRAIN NEWS

by MIKE GONDRON

Caltrain conducted two emergency preparedness drills on the tracks near the Hillsdale station in September and October. The first drill, held on September 22, was actually a practice for the real drill that took place on October 5. There was no disruption of service, and nearby residents were notified in advance, so as not to be alarmed by the presence of emergency vehicles and personnel.

Because of the ongoing construction of the San Bruno Grade Separation Project on October 8, trains began stopping at a temporary San Bruno station, located just south of the existing station. The temporary station will include parking and a pedestrian crossing to move between the two platforms.

The \$147 million project will elevate the Caltrain tracks above San Bruno, San Mateo, and Angus Avenues. Eventually, a new elevated San Bruno station will be constructed between San Bruno and San Mateo Avenues. It is expected to open in the fall of 2012 and will replace the existing San Bruno station.

On October 6, crews began to assemble a new bridge over Jerrold Avenue in San Francisco and dismantle the old one. The bridge replacement project requires the closing of Jerrold Avenue to through traffic until November 5. As this is written, the actual bridge replacement is scheduled to take place on the morning of October 15 with minimal disruptions to train service.

Other projects ongoing along the Caltrain Corridor include Santa Clara and San Jose Diridon station improvements, and the San Mateo Bridges Rehabilitation Project. The project involves the seismic retrofitting of four rail bridges in San Mateo over Poplar, Santa Inez, Monte Diablo, and Tilton Avenues.

AAR OCTOBER STORED FREIGHT CARS REPORT

by CHARLES VARNES

The Association of American Railroads reported that as of October 1, 2011, 260,317 freight cars were in storage, 11,087 fewer cars than on September 1 and equal to 17.1 percent of the North American fleet.

For the first nine months of 2011 the number of freight cars stored (and the percentage of the fleet) was: January, 316,271 (20.8); February, 318,773 (20.9); March, 306,316 (20.2); April, 283,649 (18.7); May, 276,228 (18.2); June, 279,083 (18.4); July, 276,236 (18.2); August, 276,943 (18.2); September, 271,404

(17.8).

- In July 2009, 1,603 million cars were in the fleet. From July 2009 through September 2011, 47,767 new cars were installed, while 117,127 cars were scrapped or otherwise removed, yielding a net reduction of 69,360 cars in the North American fleet.
- 527,060 cars were in storage on July 1, 2009 (including cars that haven’t moved since before 2005). By October 1, 2011, that was down to 273,130, for a reduction of 253,930. Subtracting the 117,127 cars scrapped or otherwise removed yields 136,803 cars returned to service.

A freight car is “in storage” if it has had a loaded revenue move since 2005, but not in the past 60 days. Rail cars are stored when they are not needed due to lack of demand; they come out of storage when demand improves. Figures are for the entire North American rail freight car fleet and include rail cars owned by railroads, leasing companies, shippers, and others. The total freight car fleet changes from month to month as new cars are added and old cars are scrapped.

[Info. from AAR Rail Time Indicators]

PASSENGER TRAIN UPDATES by CHARLES VARNES AMTRAK

Fiscal Year 2011 Ridership and Revenue

Amtrak carried nearly 30.2 million passengers in Fiscal Year 2011 ending September 30, marking the highest ridership total since the National Railroad Passenger Corporation started operations in 1971 and the eighth ridership record during the last nine years. Ridership versus the prior year is up by more than five percent – and ticket revenue is up by more than eight percent -- despite significant weather related disruptions in the Northeast, Central and Western U.S. Ticket revenue for the Fiscal Year was \$1.9 billion. Fiscal Year 2010 ticket revenue was \$1.7 billion.

In its Fiscal Year 2011 ridership report Amtrak highlighted the following information.

- 26 of 44 Amtrak services set all-time records in FY 2011.
- Seven Amtrak routes carried more than one million passengers in FY 2011, up from five in FY 2010.
- FY 2011 was the best year ever for Northeast Regional service between Boston and Washington and the second-best year for Acela Express.
- All three main Amtrak business lines saw ridership growth in FY 2011; Northeast Corridor and state-supported/short distance routes set new records and long-distance trains had best ridership in 16 years.
- Since FY 2000, Amtrak ridership is up nearly 44 percent.

Amtrak Fortieth Anniversary Exhibit Train

To celebrate its Fortieth Anniversary Amtrak has been operating a special train throughout its system. The train will visit California on the following schedule: Nov. 5 – 6, California State Railroad Museum, Sacramento; Nov. 12–13, Oakland Amtrak Station, Jack London Square, Oakland; Nov. 19 – 20, Bakersfield Amtrak Station, Bakersfield; Dec. 3 – 4, San Diego Amtrak Station, San Diego; Dec. 10– 11 Los Angeles Union Station, Los Angeles.

Amtrak furnished the following description of consist of the

Fortieth Anniversary train.

P40 822

P40 822, was built for Amtrak in 1993 by General Electric in Erie, Pa. This 4,000 horse power locomotive will provide the pulling power for the *Exhibit Train*. It was originally based in New Orleans and operated on various long distance routes. The 822 was later reassigned to Albany, N.Y. and operated in the northeast until stored as surplus in 2003. It was selected as one of the 15 P40 locomotives to be upgraded and returned to service as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

40th Anniversary Store 85999

40th Anniversary Store 85999, was built for Amtrak by the Budd Company in 1976 as Amclub 20130, which featured a "split club" configuration of 18 club seats at one end, 23 coach seats on the other. In 2000, the car was converted to *Capstone Café* car 85004 for use on the newly branded *Acela Regional* service. It was stored on July 31, 2005 due to an abundance of food service cars of this type in the fleet. It was selected to serve as a combination 40th Anniversary gift shop and display car for the *Exhibit Train*, with work being performed at the Bear, Del. and Beech Grove, Ind. maintenance facilities.

Display Car 10095

Display Car 10095, was built in 1953 by the Budd Company, started life as Baggage car 3512 for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe (ATSF) Railroad. After transfer to Amtrak in 1971, it was renumbered as 1029, upgraded in 1978 from steam heat to Head End Power (HEP) and renumbered 1219. In 2000, this car was one of three baggage cars rebuilt with bicycle racks for use on the *Twilight Shoreliner*, and was renumbered 1856. In 2005, the car was stored at our Beech Grove, Ind., maintenance facility due to mechanical problems. Selected for use on the *40th Anniversary Exhibit Train*, it was the first of the three Display Cars completed by our Beech Grove, Ind., maintenance facility.

Display Car 10094

Display Car 10094, was built in 1957 by the Budd Company as Baggage car 3547 for the ATSF, this car became part of the Amtrak fleet in 1971 and was renumbered 1061. In 1978 it was upgraded from steam heat to HEP and renumbered 1228. Needing heavy repair, the car was stored in 2009 at Beech Grove until selected as one of the three *40th Anniversary Exhibit Train* Display Cars.

Display Car 10093

Display Car 10093, was built in 1953 by the Budd Company as Baggage car 3535 for the ATSF and transferred to Amtrak fleet in 1971, when it was renumbered 1049. In 1978 it was upgraded from steam heat to HEP and renumbered 1222. Needing repair and no longer fit for service, the car was stored in 2007 at Beech Grove until selected as one of the three *40th Anniversary Exhibit Train* Display Cars.

Sleeper 10020

Sleeper 10020, was built in 1950 by the Budd Company for the Union Pacific as Sleeper 1404 and named, *Pacific Bend*. It contained 10 roomettes and 6 double-bedrooms, and joined the Amtrak fleet in 1971 as Sleeper 2603. The car was upgraded from steam heat to HEP in 1977 and renumbered 2903. In 1997, the car was converted for service as a crew dormitory for use on eastern long distance trains, and renumbered 2504. Stored in

2006, the car remained inactive until 2007, when it was modified for use by the Amtrak Police Department as a Special Communications Car. It was renumbered 10020 and renamed *Pacific Command* at that time. The original name, *Pacific Bend*, has since been reapplied and the car will serve as a Sleeper for Amtrak staff during the *40th Anniversary Exhibit Train's* tour.

NPCU 406

NPCU 406, was built for Amtrak in July 1988 by EMD as a 3,000 horse power F40PH locomotive number 406, was rebuilt as Non Powered Control Unit 406 in 2011 at the Beech Grove, Ind., maintenance facility. As a locomotive, the 406 operated all over the country on various routes before being stored in 2001. It was slated to become an NPCU to augment the push-pull fleet, and chosen to be part of the *Exhibit Train* because it can control a locomotive without the expense of additional fuel, allowing a train to operate in either direction without turning around. It will also provide HEP to power the lights and HVAC systems onboard the train

Historical Route On-Time Performance

The September 2011 historical on-time performance percentages for selected routes were:

Route	September 2011	August 2011	Last 12 months
Sunset Limited	57.7%	57.7%	74.0%
Texas Eagle	58.3%	8.1%	47.2%
Heartland Flyer	33.3%	35.5%	67.3%
Southwest Chief	76.7%	32.3%	68.6%
California Zephyr	30.4%	0.0%	34.4%
Empire Builder	57.5%	16.5%	41.1%
Coast Starlight	91.7%	87.1%	77.7%
City of New Orleans	81.7%	87.1%	78.7%
Pacific Surfliner	72.8%	70.9%	77.1%
San Joaquin	90.3%	85.2%	88.3%
Capitol Corridor	93.7%	93.8%	94.3%
Amtrak Cascades	77.5%	70.5%	68.6%
Illinois Service	73.8%	57.9%	68.0%
Michigan Services	26.8%	16.8%	25.8%
Hiawatha	93.2%	87.6%	89.6%
Missouri River Runner	90.0%	76.6%	84.2%
Acela Express	87.3%	82.1%	84.1%
Northeast Regional	83.6%	81.0%	80.3%

[Info. from Ken Ruben, Ed Von Nordeck]

UNION PACIFIC 844 TO VISIT CALIFORNIA

Union Pacific steam locomotive 844 will be on display in Bloomington, Calif. from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Nov. 19. The display location is 10359 Alder Ave. Alder Ave is midway between Cedar Ave. and Citrus Ave., south of the I-10 Freeway running north off Slover Ave.

Union Pacific Railroad steam locomotive, 844, will travel through the Southwestern United States to kick off state centennial celebrations in New Mexico and Arizona, respectively. 844 is the last steam locomotive built for Union Pacific and will travel more than 2,900 miles from its base in Cheyenne, Wyoming, on a 32-day, nine-state tour.

The *New Mexico/Arizona Centennial Tour* began October 29 when No. 844 departed Cheyenne, Wyo. The train's consist, which includes passenger cars from Union Pacific's renowned

Heritage Fleet, will stop in each of the following cities before arriving back in Cheyenne Nov. 29.

- Denver, Greeley, Colorado Springs and Pueblo, Colo.;
- Stratford, Dalhart and El Paso, Texas ;
- Tucumcari, Santa Rosa, Vaughn, Carrizozo, Alamogordo, Santa Teresa, Deming and Lordsburg, New Mexico;
- Wilcox, Benson, Vail, Tucson, Coolidge, Gilbert, Tempe, Phoenix, Picacho, Casa Grande, Gila Bend, Wellton and Yuma, Ariz.;
- Niland, Thousand Palms, Colton, and Yermo, Calif.;
- Kelso, Las Vegas, Moapa, Caliente and Modena, Nev.;
- Milford, Delta, Lynndyl, Faust, Salt Lake City and Ogden, Utah;
- Evanston, Rock Springs, Wamsutter, Rawlins, Medicine Bow and Laramie, Wyo.

One of the rail cars that travels with 844 has a Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) transmitter. The GPS system is integrated with a map on UP's website. Enter the word "Steam" in the search box on the homepage for a shortcut to the map.

Website visitors will be able to access route maps with varying amounts of detail. The GPS system will update the map every five minutes showing 844's location. GPS updates are also available at http://twitter.com/UP_Steam.

[Info. from Union Pacific via Ed Von Nordeck]

BIG GREEK HYDRO PROJECT

Big Creek is a city 60 miles northeast of Fresno in the Central Sierras. It is an isolated area and what is happening there directly affects millions of lives in Central and Southern California every day.

Big Creek is the home of Edison International's Hydro Electric Project of the same name. By harnessing rain and snow runoff and directing it through a system of six lakes, nine powerhouses and 23 generating units, plus miles of tunnels and pipes, the project generates 1,000 megawatts of electric power and then delivers the water to the floor of the San Joaquin Valley to be used again for irrigation. It is an amazing engineering feat.

John Eastwood, a Fresno engineer, roamed through the area on horseback in 1886 searching for the best combination of water flow and topography for power generation. When he came upon the area now known as Big Creek, he knew he had found it.

Big Creek has strong ties to the San Gabriel Valley. In order to get the project constructed, Eastwood sought an investor who needed electricity and had money. He found Henry Huntington of railroad fame and fortune. Huntington needed electricity to power the Pacific Electric railroads he was building to new Southern California communities.

A deal was struck, and the project began. The first order of business was figuring out how to get the workers and equipment up the steep, forest-covered mountains. Mr Huntington knew what to do – build a railroad. The San Joaquin and Eastern, a 56-mile railroad, was constructed in 157 days. There were 1,100 curves and 46 trestles.

Work on the powerhouses, dams, lakes, tunnels and transmission lines began. The local area received power from the project in August 1913. Three months later, power was delivered to Southern California. In 1917, Huntington merged his

power company with Edison

Big Creek is beautiful. Everywhere you look, there are reminders that nature hasn't been tamed – steep snow roofs, sheer granite cliffs, towering Ponderosas, snowplow scrapes on the road, and the strong smell of pine. From the Saw Mill Restaurant in Dinkey Creek, supposedly named for a German shepherd who saved his master's life either from drowning or a bear, depending on who is telling the story.

The San Gabriel Valley still has close ties to Big Creek with Edison International and Southern California Edison headquartered in Rosemead, along with other Edison facilities in Irwindale, Alhambra and Pomona, Edison provides 18,000 jobs and is growing as it strives to offer more green energy options.

[Info. from *Pasadena Star-News* by Cynthia Kurtz, president and CEO of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership]

URBAN RAIL TRANSIT

by **DICK FINLEY**

EXPO LINE KICKS OFF FINAL LEG

Construction of the first phase of the Expo Line, an 8.6-mile stretch from the downtown 7th Street/Metro Center station to Culver City has been underway since 2006 and is slowly nearing completion. The \$1.5-billion second phase will continue 6.6 miles west to Colorado Avenue and 4th Street, about a half-mile from the ocean.

Transportation officials hope to open the full line sometime in 2015, and say they will be able to shuttle commuters the entire 15.2 miles in a reliable 46 minutes. A shortened segment of the first phase is planned to open near the end of the year., with the entire first phase to Culver City scheduled for completion in early 2012.

The Expo Line will be the first to penetrate the Westside since streetcars crisscrossed the region. "It's the best day we've had in transportation in 50 years for the Westside," said L.A. City Councilman Bill Rosendahl, one of several speakers at the ceremony.

"It means jobs, real jobs, right here," said county Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. Santa Monica Mayor Richard Bloom surveyed the skyline surrounding the vacant lot where the ceremony was held and rattled off proposed housing, business and recreation projects the line could help advance.

"It is transformative," Bloom said. "The light rail coming in, and the number of passengers it's going to carry and the change it's going to make."

[Info. from *Los Angeles Times*]

TRAIN DRIVERS BARRED FROM CELL PHONES

State regulators have banned California train drivers from using cell-phones in the wake of a deadly Los Angeles crash blamed on texting. The California Public Utilities Commission on October 6 unanimously voted to ban use of cell-phones, pagers, satellite phones and other personal electronic devices by rail transit personnel. It makes permanent an emergency ban already in place.

Cameras will be placed in train operator cabs to enforce the ban. Federal regulators already have such a ban for national rails. The California ban extends that to regional lines such as LA Metro.

[Info. from *Pasadena Star-News*]

GOLD LINE FOOTHILL EXTENSION

Workers on September 14 installed a 150-foot-high steel

cage that will make up a portion of a rapid transit bridge spanning the eastbound 210 Freeway between Baldwin and Santa Anita avenues. When complete, the 584-foot-long, \$18.6 million Metro Gold Line bridge will be buttressed by columns designed to resemble Native American baskets.

"It's quite unique, not something you see frequently of this scale," said Gary Baker, director of construction for Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority. "It represents the true ground breaking of the bridge structure."

Eastbound lanes of the freeway were closed overnight at Baldwin Avenue from midnight September 14 to 5 a.m. that day to allow the reinforcing cage to be delivered. Eastbound on-ramps at Rosemead Boulevard, Michillinda and Baldwin avenues were also closed from 9 p.m. September 13 to 6 a.m. the next day. Three more overnight eastbound lane closures, including midnight Monday to 5 a.m. Tuesday will take place in coming weeks.

The bridge work is expected to be completed by the summer of 2012, while the entire 11.5-mile extension is due to be finished in 2015. The extension will continue the Gold Line east into Arcadia, Monrovia, Duarte, Irwindale and Azusa.

Although the bridge work by contractor Skanska USA Civil is progressing, the schedule of the rest of the 11.5-mile eastward expansion is up in the air.

Due to state actions and subsequent legal challenges, the Gold Line Construction Authority has yet to acquire land for a proposed Gold Line maintenance and operations yard in Monrovia. The yard is needed for the project to move forward. The Monrovia City Council and Redevelopment Agency is unable to consider a land deal for the proposed yard until the California Supreme Court rules on a challenge to a state budget bill provision that attempted to eliminate redevelopment agencies. That is expected to happen in mid-January.

Under its funding agreement with Metro, the Gold Line Construction Authority must acquire 50 percent of the proposed site for the maintenance yard before it receives additional funding for the light rail extension project, GLCA spokeswoman Lisa Levy Buch said. The schedule of the Pasadena-to-Azusa light rail extension could be affected as a result, possibly causing a loss of millions of dollars, she said.

"It's potentially a devastating problem," Buch said. "We're dealing with it as a critical issue that needs to be resolved ... We are looking at other options so we can keep the project on schedule."

There is a chance that the State Supreme Court might allow cities like Monrovia to continue their redevelopment agencies, said Monrovia City Manager Scott Ochoa. But if the Supreme Court ultimately rules in favor of eliminating redevelopment agencies, "it means that the project would be in a complete shroud of uncertainty," Ochoa said. "It could set back the Gold Line (extension) significantly."

[Info. from *Pasadena Star-News*]

METRO BOARD NEGOTIATES LABOR PLANS

The Los Angeles Metro board of directors agreed on September 22 to negotiate a labor agreement covering a series of upcoming transportation infrastructure projects. If ultimately approved, the pact would be first applied to construction of the Crenshaw/LAX light rail project, according to Los Angeles

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's office.

More than \$70 million worth of transportation projects are expected to be completed throughout the region over the next 30 years, according to the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor.

Plans call for setting aside at least 30 percent of the jobs for local residents, but negotiations are continuing between the Metropolitan Transportation Association and the Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trade Council. Another 10 percent of the jobs would go to so-called at-risk workers, including those who are homeless or have criminal records.

"Approval ... by the Metro board means employment for thousands of skilled residents who hunt each day to work at a time when Los Angeles County is facing an unemployment epidemic," said county Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, who sits on the MTA board.

Proponents say the agreements allow projects to be built on time with no work disruptions or strikes by employees. Opponents say the pacts drive up construction costs while preventing small construction firms from being able to place competing bids.

[Info. from *The Daily Breeze* via John Whitmeyer]

HIGH-SPEED RAIL'S DESIGN REVISED

The proposed California bullet train will undergo major design changes, involving more than half of the route that traverses the Central Valley, the authority building the system said October 5. The plan for building a 114-mile segment of the system between Fresno and Bakersfield was released in August. However, it encountered heavy criticism from citizens groups, local cities, major land owners and financial experts. The California High-Speed Rail Authority, responding to public feedback, said it would issue a new plan for that section next spring.

The segment is projected to cost \$6.1 billion to \$7.2 billion, up to double the original estimates. The escalation accompanied decisions to have long elevated bridges over cities and route options disrupting more businesses than first planned and traversing rich agricultural fields. The plan would have required 23 miles of elevated track structures and crossed 124 public roads, requiring big construction projects at each point.

Also, the authority was criticized by citizens groups, local governments and powerful farmers for allowing only 45 days of public comment on a document that runs 17,000 pages. The authority said the revisions will not affect the start of construction next year, and it is not backing off from plans for the Central Valley segment that runs from Fresno to Merced. That portion of up to 95 miles is expected to cost \$4.4 billion to \$6.9 billion.

Some of the most severe criticism has surrounded Hanford. The authority proposed laying track east of the historic railroad town and putting a station in the middle of a farm field. Now the authority will consider a route west of Hanford.

The Central Valley segment was supposed to be the easiest and lowest-cost part of the system. Critics say the urban segments through Los Angeles County and the Bay Area will be even more problematic.

[Info. from *Los Angeles Times*]

CHINA HIGH-SPEED RAIL

by ASIA TIMES

The deadly rail accident in China last month has “deeply hurt national pride,” said Francesco Sisci. The Chinese considered their superfast train technology to be a rival to Japanese and French high-speed rail, and they planned lucrative exports to Russia and India. Now all that is on hold is the wake of the crash, which sent several cars plummeting off a bridge, and killed 40 people.

According to the official story, the crash occurred when a lightning strike caused a signaling malfunction. But railway officials, accustomed to complete impunity and a culture of secrecy, hampered the investigation by burying the wreckage almost immediately. That smacked of a cover-up and sparked a rumor that the crash was an inside job planned to avenge the arrest earlier this year of the “powerful and corrupt” railway minister, who is said to have “pocketed millions in bribes related to the high-speed projects.”

Now the wreckage is being examined, and thanks to a national outcry, the government has promised a full investigation. That could well lead to an overhaul of the rail industry – the last bastion of the old Communist system. Other industries were reformed in the 1990s, but the railway system is still “a state within a state, with its own police, courts, and system of taxation,” accountable to no outside authority.

If China can open up its railway industry, it will be good for transportation – and good for democracy.

[Info. from John Whitmeyer]

200 MILES OF NEW MEXICO UNWANTED TRACK

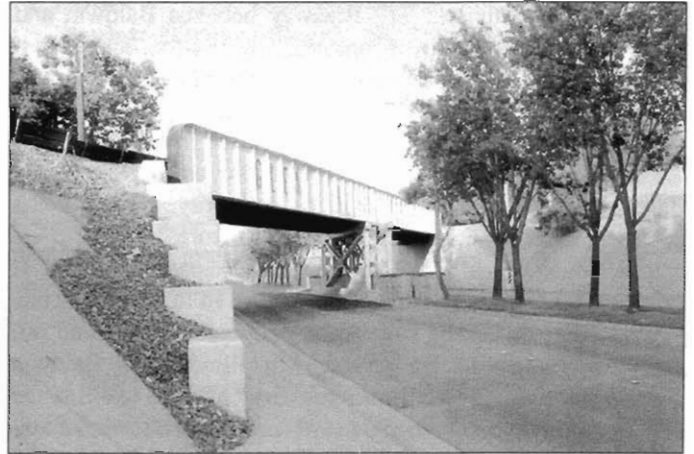
The state of New Mexico has a multimillion dollar bill for 200 miles of railroad track it has no plans to use. Records show that the state Transportation Commission voted in August 2010 to set aside \$2 million in next year’s budget for capital improvements along the stretch of train track from Lamy to the Colorado border. That’s in addition to the \$5 million the state promised to pay BNSF Railway Co. to purchase that same stretch of track.

The \$2 million would pay for major capital and replacement projects on the route, such as bridges and signal system components. Some of the signaling equipment is nearly 100 years old. Just this past summer, heavy rainfall forced Amtrak to stop running its passenger trains on the route while repairs were made.

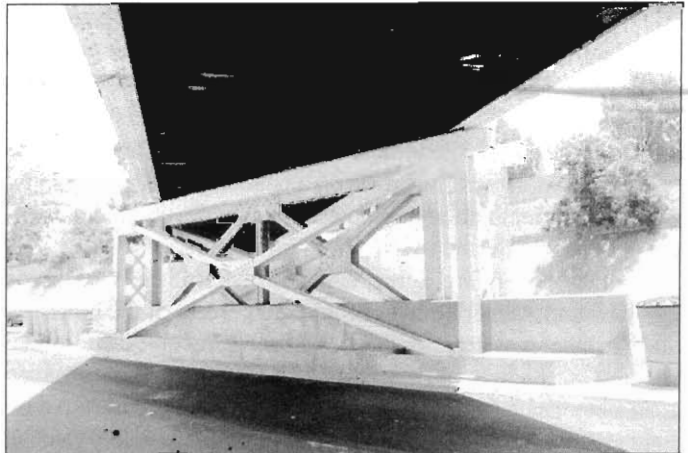
Back in 2005, DOT officials defended buying the extra track as vital to the goal of creating the Rail Runner Express. BNSF wouldn’t sell the 99 miles of track needed for the Belen-to-Santa Fe commuter service without the state also buying the additional 200 miles between Lamy and the Colorado border.

But even before the Rail Runner project was launched, news reports show, BNSF was considering abandoning its freight service on that northern New Mexico route. And that’s what eventually happened, about two years after BNSF agreed to sell the line to the state. Now, Amtrak is essentially the sole user of the 200-mile segment for its twice-daily *Southwest Chief* run.

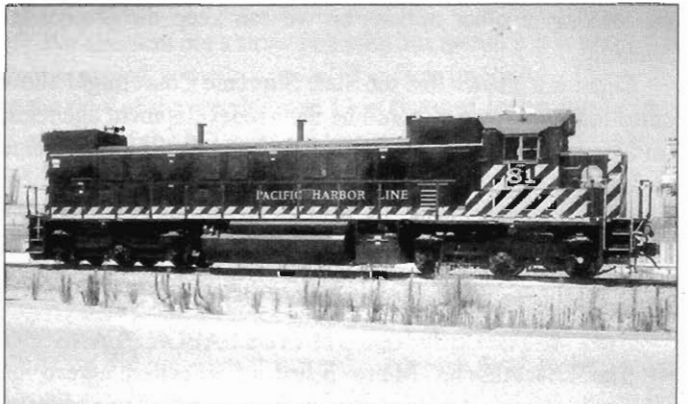
[Info. from *Albuquerque Journal* via John Whitmeyer]



When the Santa Fe Second District (now the Metrolink Pasadena Subdivision) track and Highway 66 grade separation in Glendora, Calif. was built in 1929, two plate girder bridges were supported by a concrete pier in the center of the road. In late 2010 and continuing into early 2011 the bridge received a seismic reinforcement when the concrete pier was replaced with a concrete and steel structure. The bridge after the project’s completion is seen looking east. Photo by Charles Varnes



A closeup view of the steel and concrete central pier replacement. Photo by Charles Varnes



Pacific Harbor Line 81 at Port of Los Angeles in San Pedro on July 5, 2011. Photo by John Whitmeyer