

The Travel Town TENDER

A Publication of the Travel Town Museum Foundation

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Greetings from Travel Town!

There is so much going on at the Museum right now that I hardly know where to start. Foundation members had a great time at our *Polar Express Pajama Party* during the Holidays - and our annual *Depot Day* extravaganza in October will be here again before we know it. This past weekend, in celebration of *National Train Day* (May 9th), we were pleased to honor 14 of our hardworking Travel Town Volunteers with special *Presidential Service Awards* from our new President, Barack Obama! The Foundation also presented a Railroading Merit Badge seminar for 23 energetic Boy Scouts on May 3rd. And I'd like to formally congratulate two other Boy Scouts, Adam Goldman of Burbank Troop 209 and Zach Totten of Oxnard Troop 234, on attaining the rank of Eagle Scout. Both Adam and Zach successfully completed their "Eagle Leadership Projects" at Travel Town recently, garnering my praises and thanks for jobs well done!

On the restoration front, I'm pleased to report that cosmetic rehabilitation work on the Museum's historic Southern Pacific wood-sided Box Car is nearing completion - with special thanks going to students from the LAUSD *Zoo Magnet High School* as well as to two of our key volunteers, brothers Mike and Gary Teti. Gary and Mike have devoted a lot of hours on this specific project recently in order to bring it to completion. Meanwhile, in the Union Pacific Dining Car 369, we're pleased to have the volunteer support of professional electrician, Michael Harwick, who is donating his time to do some much-needed wiring work inside the historic car. Thanks Michael! I am also very happy to report that the "frame" of the Southern

Pacific steam locomotive No. 219 was given a complete sandblasting courtesy of the *National Sandblasting Company* and is now back at the Travel Town worksite. Thus begins the exciting task of reassembling the historic locomotive, with rehabilitated parts and a new boiler! Watch for the progress during your next visit to the Museum.



Louis Falsetti
1903-2009

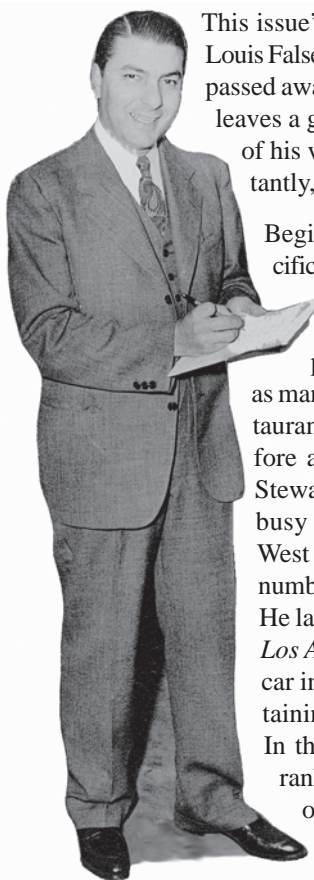
Finally, it is on a sad note that I reflect on the recent passing of a dear and longtime Travel Town friend, Mr. Louis Falsetti. "Louie" passed away in January after a very long and happy life of 97 years!

[Please see page 2 for "On the Platform . . . Louis Falsetti" to read about this man's fascinating career.] Louie and I became great friends over the years and I so enjoyed talking and visiting with him. Whenever

Nancy and I were in the Bay Area, we always found a warm welcome and great hospitality at the Falsetti home. All of us at the ASRA and TTMF offer our most sincere best wishes to his lovely wife Doris and his son, Alan and their families. We know Louie's legacy will live on at Travel Town for many years through his great and generous contributions to our historic preservation efforts! Thanks Louie, we miss you!

Greg Gneier, President
July 2009

On the Platform . . . Louis Falsetti



This issue's *On the Platform* is a tribute to Mr. Louis Falsetti, a longtime Travel Town friend who passed away this January at the age of 97. Louis leaves a great legacy to Travel Town, not only of his work and knowledge, but more importantly, his long term friendship.

Beginning his career with the Union Pacific Railroad at the age of 17 in 1928, Louie worked an amazing 43 years with the railroad's Dining Car & Hotel Department. In the late 1920s, he served as manager of the railroad-owned lodge restaurant at Bryce Canyon National Park before attaining the position of Dining Car Steward. He then logged in thousands of busy miles, crisscrossing the American West in heavyweight "36-seaters" like the number 369 now preserved at Travel Town. He later worked on the *Streamliner*, *City of Los Angeles* with our own "Little Nugget" car in tow and recalled a number of entertaining anecdotes aboard the fabled car. In the Post-War years, Louie rose to the rank of "Inspector" and ultimately to that of "Superintendent" of the Dining Car and Hotel Department in Denver.

During those heydays of passenger train travel, Louie encountered and served a great many celebrities and other notables. Among his favorite stories was one of a trip on the *City of Los Angeles* in the 1950s, during which Frank Sinatra and the 'Rat Pack' took over an entire sleeping car and club car for their train-board antics. Louie was also the DC&H's man-in-charge of the promotional photo shoot with then actor, Ronald Reagan, in the Union Pacific's famous Dome Dining Car.

In 1971, when Union Pacific turned its passenger business over to the newly-formed *National Railroad Passenger Corporation* (Amtrak), Louie retired from the railroad and settled down with his wife Doris in the seaside community of Santa Cruz, California. We met up with Louie some years later, as we began researching the history of "The Little Nugget" for its restoration in 1988. Louie was an incredible repository of historic information and was always eager and happy to share his memories with us. But he didn't stop there – Louie was also very active in helping us track down other former railroad employees and in locating dining car artifacts like china, silverware, photographs and menus. The depth of our restoration and interpretation efforts on Travel Town's passenger cars has been so greatly increased by Louie's help, advice and encouragement.



☞ One of Louie's duties as Superintendent during the 1960s was the supervision of the advertising photo shoot with then "movie actor" Ronald Reagan aboard one of the Union Pacific's fabulous Dome Dining Cars. Of this experience, Louie writes: "I supervised the food and table setting, the Mountain scene was a prop, the picture was taken in the East Los Angeles U.P. Yards. Pres. Reagan and the Steward were real, others were models. Professional photographers took the picture and it was shown in many magazines ... This was before Ronald Reagan was President." One interesting anecdote that Louie told of this scene was that the photographer sprayed little drops of milk on the silverware to give it an extra sparkle! (Union Pacific Railroad photograph from the ASRA collection.)

Polar Express Pajama Party Again a Big Hit!

The Foundation successfully held its Polar Express Pajama Party again last December, which was a big hit for all our members. The train ride to Santa was also going on that evening! The Foundation wants to thank David Thach and Sony Computer Entertainment America in Santa Monica for its contribution of four big screen TVs for our event, which made the viewing more enjoyable for all.

Our 2009 Pajama Party will be on FRIDAY, December 4th, so be sure to mark your calendars now! Would your business like to sponsor our Pajama Party? Let us know! This is a great way for your business or family to give back to the community – a wonderful holiday gift that all of our members can enjoy. Contact Nancy Gneier at the office for sponsorship information. Thanks!



Program Manager Julie Foster reads the book to interested listeners.

National Train Day Volunteer Recognition Luncheon

In May of 2009, President Obama signed a letter of recognition for those who qualify for the 2009 Presidential Service Award and is now fulfilling award requests for 2009 service hours. There are several people in our volunteer ranks who received this award at our National Train Day Volunteer Recognition Luncheon.

Each recipient will receive a personalized certificate of achievement, a congratulatory letter from the President of the United States, a congratulatory letter from the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, and an official President's Award pin.

The individual award system is divided into three categories: children (under 15), young adults (15 to 25) and adults (26 and over). Each category is further divided into gold, silver and bronze levels.

For his incredible work as a docent and as one of the leaders on the Boxcar Restoration project, with almost one hundred hours and thirty hours of service over this past year, Gary Teti has qualified for the Bronze level award.

Another Bronze Award honoree is Pete Hayward, having served nearly 200 hours, almost exclusively on the SP 219, and always with a great attitude.



At the Silver Award level, we had seven honorees. For adults to qualify at the silver level, they must have earned between 250 and 499 volunteer hours. Those honorees are Kirk Reinholtz, with almost 300 hours; Michael Teti, with 321; with almost 350 hours, Brad Slosar; Greg Gneier, Craig Smith, and Edward Temm, each with over 320 hours; and Greg Ramsey with almost 500 in recorded volunteer hours.

To earn a gold award at the young adult level requires at least 250 hours. That's a lot of week-ends. With almost 300 recorded volunteer hours, our first gold level award went to Derek Reinholtz.

Our last award went to someone in the young adult category who had over 500 hours, the required amount needed to earn the Gold Award at the adult level. This volunteer has more than *twice* the minimum hours to qualify for the gold in the his age group. Congratulations to John Stumreiter for contributing almost 600 recorded volunteer hours to the Travel Town Museum Foundation, the City of Los Angeles and the community at large.

Individuals who have completed 4,000 or more volunteer service hours over the course of their lifetimes are eligible to receive the President's Call to Service Award. Several of our volunteers are well on their way!

All Aboard!

A warm welcome to the newest members and renewing supporters of the Travel Town Museum Foundation.

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Call 323-668-0104!***

We've Been Working on the Railroad!

The "Boxcar Boys"

Now affectionately known as "The Boxcar Boys," volunteer brothers Mike and Gary Teti and devoted most of their Saturdays this year to finishing up the woodwork rehabilitation on the Museum's Southern Pacific wood-sided Box Car. Over the past few months, the boys have completely replaced the car's roof "running boards," end beams, and a number of other key pieces of the wooden structure that had been lost to 80-plus years of weathering. The car's hand-brake mechanism was also completely refurbished and reinstalled. While the Brothers Teti have had assistance from other volunteers, including Brad Slosar, Michael Ruble and Chris Geozian (pictured), Gary and Mike have really performed the yeoman's duty on this car. Thanks guys - it is looking great!



Gary Teti installs new placard boards on the East end of the Box Car.



Brothers Mike and Gary Teti fit-up access planks around the newly-refurbished hand brake wheel. Talk about "team work"!



Chris Geozian and others joined in the boxcar fun!



Commercial electrician, Michael Hardwick, is volunteering his time and expertise to install a new circuit breaker panel and various convenience outlets in the 1921 Union Pacific Dining Car. These new electrical features are being discretely placed so as to not detract from the car's historic appearance - ridding the car of some not-so-discretely placed equipment that was installed when the Diner was brought to Travel Town in the 1950s. Thanks for your help, Michael!



⌚ Hard at work on that big Winton engine in the Santa Fe M.177, Project Leader Bryan Reese is assisted by student volunteer Michael Lima.



Zoo Magnet Students Help Out Again!



⌚ Elizabeth Burgos helps re-stock gift shop shelves.

☞ Andrew Raymond and Elizabeth Burgos "re-laying track" in front of the gift shop. (Not pictured is Anna Helm.)

This year we once again had the talents of three Zoo Magnet High School Seniors helping out at the Museum! Anna Helm, Elizabeth Burgos, and Andrew Raymond were kept busy with a variety of duties. In addition to putting some extra paint on the boxcar, they helped us lead tours to school groups visiting the museum. They also re-painted the tracks in front of the gift shop that define the play area for our public Thomas the Tank Engine Playdays (on the first Sunday of every month) and they also helped us re-stock and clean the gift shop.



☞ Volunteers John Stumreiter and Vanya Holt spent three Saturday's doing remedial window jamb clean-up and surface preparations in support of the Museum's window sash replacement project on the Pennsylvania Railroad Dining Car. And there's our faithful program manager, Julie Foster - assuring the guys will be well-fed come lunchtime! The Pennsy Diner, which is regularly used as a rental venue for children's birthday parties, is currently undergoing a cosmetic renovation.

Ghosts from the Past

New additions to the ASRA archives



A recent addition to the ASRA archives is this snapshot of Travel Town's oldest steam locomotive, *Stockton Terminal & Eastern No. 1*, taken about 1936. This classic 4-4-0 has a long and rich history. She was built in 1864 by E.S. Norris of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and came to California by sailing ship (around Cape Horn!) to work on a subsidiary of the Central Pacific Railroad. She was "retired" and sold to the fledgling S.T.&E. in 1914 where she ran in regular service for four decades - right up until her donation to Travel Town in 1953. The locomotive was already 70-year-old when this photo was taken, and she still had 17 years of service left in her operating career. Today, she is 145 years old and, although now cold and quite, she is a favorite of many of Travel Town's young visitors. The photo is credited to *Josiah F. Hobart*.

A surprising eBay find is this 1965 photo of the "**Re-dedication of Travel Town**". On-hand for the ribbon cutting ceremony aboard the Museum's historic Handcar are "Conductor" Ward Kimball (famous Animator from *The Walt Disney Studios*), Recreation & Parks Superintendent, Bill Frederickson (sporting his signature bow tie), and "Engineer" Rufe Davis (aka Floyd Smoot, the fireman and conductor on the C.F. & W. Railroad's *Hooterville Cannonball* on the popular T.V. show *Petticoat Junction*). We're not sure who the gentleman in the fedora is, nor the lady in white — but if you recognize them, please let us know! Both Kimball and Ferderickson were instrumental in the original creation of Travel Town in 1952. A decade later, construction of the Ventura Freeway displaced Travel Town from its original location. The historic railroad equipment and other artifacts were relocated several hundred feet south to the site occupied by the Museum today. It must have been raining that day, when an unknown press photographer snapped this happy scene.



Here's a wonderful photo of Union Pacific No. 4439 from the camera of our good friend, *Alan Weeks*. The oil burning locomotive is seen pulling a "railfan special" south on Glendale Avenue near Forest Lawn Cemetery (Glendale) in June 1956. This was the 'last hurrah' for the 0-6-0; she was placed on display at Travel Town just a few months later - ending her 38-years on the Union Pacific with the distinction of being the last steam locomotive to operate in regular-service in the City of Los Angeles. Photograph by Alan Weeks.

And for our Diesel fans... here are two great vintage shots of California Western Railroad "Baldwin" locomotive No. 56 from the collection of Travel Town volunteer, *John Stumreiter*. The first is an image of the locomotive taken in Peoria, Illinois in May 1955 by photographer Monty L. Powell. The loco is fresh from the factory, sporting its original livery as number 33 of the McCloud River Railroad. She was later sold to another Northern California shortline, the California Western Railroad, where she worked with the famous "Skunk" trains between Ft. Bragg and Willits. Later painted as C.W.R. 56, she posed near the water tank at Ft. Bragg in a 1976 photo by John Black. The 120-ton locomotive came to Travel Town in 1992 and is maintained in operating condition by our Museum Volunteers! Both photos from the John Stumreiter Collection.



Rehab of Southern Pacific 219

Recent work in our efforts to return Southern Pacific No. 219 to steam have centered around the locomotive's most basic part: "the frame." Throughout the summer and fall of 2008, Travel Town volunteers worked to remove rigging, equipment and other parts from the locomotive's underframe. By the first of the year, the frame was torn down to its bare minimum and ready to have 100-plus years of gook, rust and grime cleaned off. The frame was lifted onto a flatbed truck and hauled off-site to the National Sandblasting Company in east Los Angeles, which donated a full commercial cleaning treatment. After a coat of metal-protecting primer, the frame is now ready for the REASSEMBLY of the locomotive to begin!



☞ The freshly-sandblasted frame rests on a dolly at the National Sandblasting Company in Los Angeles. We appreciate their valuable contribution!

☞ After the sandblasted frame was returned to the Museum for inspection, determination was made that the rear coupler beam would require some special repair work. Here we see our prime welding team of Kirk and Derek Reinholtz, hard at work on the repairs.

☞ "No job is finished until the paperwork is done" You've heard that mantra a thousand times - but it's true... especially on a complex project like a locomotive rebuilding! After a long day of parts cleaning and rehabilitating, Pete always takes the few extra minutes needed to make sure that each part is properly tagged and put away. It may be months from now before these parts will be put back on the locomotive - and the tags really help us remember what is what and where it goes! Thanks, Pete!



☞ Volunteers Greg Ramsey and Pete Hayward begin disassembly of one of 219's brake cylinders.



Horse Car Nearing the End of the Line

One of the saddest images we have at Travel Town is the old wooden Los Angeles Railway "Horsecar." This relic of the Southland's Victorian streetcar era is a real "poster child" for our conservation and preservation efforts. Unfortunately, this is what happens to something made almost entirely of wood that has been outside in the rain and sunshine for over 125 years! While many of the more fragile artifacts at Travel Town are now under protective covering, this poor little horse car is already decayed beyond the point of no return. However, that certainly does NOT spell doom or complete loss of this important relic. Efforts are now ongoing to document the artifact and conserve or salvage the surviving components. Longtime Travel Town Volunteer Greg Gneier (by profession a set designer in the entertainment industry) is carefully measuring the car and creating a C.A.D. (computer assisted



drawing) documentation that can be used for future replication.

One proposed idea for the remnants of this car is its reconstruction as a trailing car for the small Southern Pacific steam locomotive no. 219, which is currently being restored to operating condition at the Museum. Both the 219 and the L.A. Railway Horsecar are from about the same 1880s vintage. In 1939, the locomotive was paired with a similar

horsecar during the Grand Opening Gala of Los Angeles Union Station. We hope to eventually recreate this historic scene with help of our volunteer restoration team and our community support network. If you would like to make a donation to help preserve these pieces and bring these goals to reality - please don't hesitate to contact us!



Father & Son Fun in the Sun

Without hesitation, almost any Travel Town Volunteer will tell you that their least favorite museum activity is “ballast tamping” on a newly laid or repaired railroad track. Tamping is the process of shaking or vibrating the rocks under and around the ties, causing them to settle and lock together. Most often in the “real” world, this process is done by a large machine that rides on the track, but Travel Town doesn’t have one of those big machines, so we usually do our tamping the old fashioned way - hand work that requires use of a very HEAVY tool similar to a jack hammer. Tamping is just plain hard, grueling work - and there is not much in the way of visible results to reward the worker when he’s finished. Nonetheless, tamping is an extremely important job that has to be done - otherwise the track will sink into the ground when the train goes over it (not a desirable result).

To make the tamping a little less unpleasant, we try to “spread the wealth” by taking turns at the task. Earlier this year, we had to tamp a section of Track 4 following a Boy Scout tie-replacement project. Several of our leading volunteers invited their sons to join in the fun for a little “father son tamping.” In the end, however, a pair of hardworking student volunteers, Ivan and Miguel, did the bulk of the work and finished the job beautifully. Thanks, boys!



♣ Greg Ramsey Sr. & son Greg Jr.

♣ Kirk Reinholtz & son Derek



♣ Greg Gneier & son Tim

♣ Student volunteers Ivan Vega & Miguel Ibarra.



Boy Scout Merit Badge Seminar

On Sunday, May 3rd, the Travel Town Museum Foundation was proud to present a Railroading Merit Badge Seminar for Boy Scouts from three Southland troops. Twenty-three scouts, from troops in Burbank, Ventura, and Oxnard, participated in the all-day event and earned the BSA *Railroading Merit Badge*.

The seminar included educational presentations on railroad operations, signaling, car identification, employment opportunities and trip planning. We were fortunate to have several railroad professionals with us as guest presenters, including Union Pacific locomotive engineers John Strube and Calvin Fujiwari; Amtrak airbrake instructor Bryan Reese; and U.S. Navy track inspector Greg Ramsey. Travel Town volunteers Greg Gneier and Frank Deckon gave presentations as well. Perhaps the most important part of the seminar was the segment about railroad safety, presented by Operation Lifesaver volunteer Jes Godinez.

The highpoint of the day for many of the scouts was the hands-on segment, during which each boy had the opportunity to demonstrate proper brakeman hand signals while working directly with the crew of one of the Museum’s operating Diesel locomotives! In the midst of all that learning, the participants also enjoyed a fantastic lunch cooked up by Travel Town volunteer Yvonne Ramsey. At the end of the day, each Scout took a test exploring the various topics covered in the presentations. What a great day at the Park!



Scout Chris Kilie signals the engineer to “SLOW DOWN.”



Boy Scout Michael Chavez demonstrates the brakeman’s signal for “STOP.”



Here is Boy Scout Austin Hahn giving the “COME AHEAD” signal.



Operation Lifesaver volunteer Jes Godinez gave all-important presentations on railroad crossing safety!



Greg Ramsey, Travel Town Volunteer and U.S. Navy Track Inspector, instructed the scouts on a variety of Brakeman hand signals.



Railroad professionals John Strube, Bryan Reese, and Greg Ramsey discussed finer points of employment opportunities within the railroad industry.

ALL ABOARD FOR DEPOT DAY!! SPONSORS NEEDED!

We need \$5,505 for Depot Day! Our Annual Depot Day is a transportation safety fair for the general public with special events for our members. It is a day our Foundation has an "open house" of all the historic railroad cars and engines that we have been restoring over the past year, complete with docents in costume, decorated sleeping cars, and a dining car with china and silver displays. It is also a day that we say "thank you" to our members who have monetarily supported us through the year with a simple lunch and Thomas the Tank Engine Playday for the kids.

Last year we had some wonderful musical performances from local singing groups "The Conductors," "The Hollow Trees" and "Jim Starr, the Singing Cop." We even had the Hoover High School Jazz Band come out and do a session! We also court local transportation entities like Caltrans, Metro Lines, Amtrak, etc., to have booths, and we always have presentations by Operation Lifesaver to promote grade-crossing safety and Women in Railroading, who display books, posters, and other educational materials related to the contributions of women in American railroading and history. These vendors usually have hats, coloring books, and other giveaways for our visitors.

Please help us continue this great tradition at Travel Town. We need sponsors to help cover the rental costs, entertainment and catering associated with this event. Send a check of any amount to the Travel Town Museum Foundation, and put "Depot Day Sponsor" on the memo line. Thanks for helping! Businesses can advertise with us for a donation of over \$1000. Please contact Nancy at 323-668-0104 or nancy.fundraising@traveltown.org and we'll work something out. See everyone in October!

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