

The Travel Town TENDER



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President's Message

Greetings Travel Town Friends!

Spring has sprung in Griffith Park! The wildflowers are in bloom, birds are singing, and Travel Town Foundation Members and Volunteers are going gangbusters to improve the Museum! Visually topping the list of accomplishments is the shiny new paint job on the historic Santa Fe Railway Motorcar "M.177" – thanks to the hard and dedicated work by Project Leader, Bryan Reese, this vintage piece of American railroad history is looking better now than it has in 40 years! And even more exciting is the work going on INSIDE the M.177, where mechanical restoration of the car's engine and generator systems are nearing completion. Last operated in the mid-1950s, we're really looking forward to having the historic car move on its own power again soon!



Already this year we've welcomed several community group efforts, working alongside our regular Travel Town Volunteers to maintain and enhance the facility. We're so grateful to welcome help from the great folks at the "Happy Village" of the *Korean-American Development Center* and friends from the *Wilshire Lions Club* and "Leos". These groups lend us their hands to accomplish a multitude of tasks around the Museum, from gardening and grounds maintenance to rehabilitation work on the big trains! In March, these groups teamed up to refurbish and repaint the historic Waiting Gazebo and garden near the site of the new Gift Shop – and it looks great!

And what about that NEW GIFT SHOP...? I know you're wondering (since visitors ask us about it every day!) In February, the City of Los Angeles Recreation & Parks Commission reaffirmed its decision to accept the Foundation's donation of the new building and approve our continued support efforts at Travel Town. The agreement is now awaiting final ratification by the Mayor and affiliated City officials. We're grateful for the continued efforts of the Recreation & Parks Staff, and Councilmember David Ryu and his deputies, in helping to complete this final approval process. I again want to thank the *Griffith Trust*, *The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation*, *The Ahmanson Foundation*, *NBC Universal*, *The Community Foundation of the Verdugos*, and our wonderful *TTMF Patron Members and Volunteers* for their generous (and very patient) support of Travel Town! We're all committed to working together to make the Travel Town Museum a better place for all Angelenos! THANK YOU ALL – we can't do it with YOU!

I look forward to seeing you at the Park and am hoping to be able to invite you to the Grand Opening of the new *Gift Shop* and *Travel Town Volunteer Center* very soon!

GREG GNEIER
President

Donations Power the M.177 Restoration Project



The TTMF would sincerely like to thank the U.S. Battery Manufacturing Company of Corona, California for supplying us with 8 Deep Cycle Marine Batteries for use on the M.177 Restoration project! To finish the car's 64-volt electrical control system, our restoration team was in need of a set of batteries, and the U.S. Battery Manufacturing Company's contribution literally “fills the gap” in the car's power system and will provide a critical link towards bringing this historic railcar back to life for the education and enjoyment of visitors at the Museum.



Project Leader Bryan Reese and volunteer Will Cosso showing off the new batteries.

“Little Nugget” Restoration Update: Send in the Clowns!



Restoration work on Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Landmark No. 474 - “The Little Nugget” – is moving ahead at full steam! One of the key aspects of the overall project is the reassembling of the *Compendium of Comedy* – a grand collection of historic entertainment photographs and selected artworks, compiled by American Artist Walt Kuhn as part of his interior decoration of the car in 1937. Many of you know the story... the collection got ‘scattered to the winds’ in the 1970s and Travel Town Volunteers have been toiling for years to put it back together. GREAT NEWS – we’re almost there! Last week, Restoration Project Leader, Greg Gneier, met together with

Reproductions Artist, Aprile Boettcher, and Photo Restorationist, Bill Cosso, to discuss the re-creation of the many missing Walt Kuhn paintings. Pictured below is one of the Aprile’s recreated clown paintings as well as one of the few existing originals. The ‘little lady in the oval frame’ was a personal favorite of Kuhn himself, and was discovered very recently at an art auction; purchased and donated to the project by a good friend of Travel Town! The papers spread out on the worktables include scanned photos and other items that have been scaled and printed to their correct sizes. We now await Aprile’s magic touch to re-create the many clowns and entertainers that have been absent from the car’s walls for some 40 years.



Fagan Family Donation helps our Gift Shop Train stay “on Track”



One of the exciting features planned for our new Travel Town Gift Shop is an O-gauge model train that will make a big loop at one end of the sales room. The wonderful thing about O-gauge is that it is big enough to show the detail of the cars and locomotives, yet is small enough for a layout to fit inside the room. Our volunteers have laid scale track along the walls and built lovely trestle bridges so the train can run quite happily around the room. We know kids and parents alike will be excited to watch the train make its regular runs!

As the Foundation awaits final approval from the City for our opening of the new Gift Shop, our gang has been testing the train track and smoothing out the operation. We've had one borrowed engine puttering around room

while we assembled merchandise shelving, painted, cleaned, and prepared the store interior for a long-awaited Grand Opening. Suddenly...we got an incredible donation! Ian and Helen Fagan had been collecting O-gauge trains for many years, but decided it was time to give them up. The Fagan Family very graciously donated a huge assembly of model train cars and locomotives – many in special or limited edition sets! When our new shop opens, you will be able to see some of the many wonderful model cars and locomotives donated from the collection. Mr. & Mrs. Fagan's donation has already had a great educational value for the Museum, as many of the cars were used as 'visual aids' during our recent Boy Scout *Railroading Merit Badge* workshop! Volunteer used the cars to illustrate the many different types and purposes of railroad cars to the Scouts. Many thanks to the Fagan Family for this wonderful contribution to Travel Town's future! If you'd like to join with the Fagans in supporting the Travel Town Museum Foundation, please [Click here](#) for more information about making a donation.

Torassa Family donates Memorabilia

This just in: Caboose Pot Belly Stove and Freight Platform Scale make their way to Travel Town!

The Foundation would like to thank the Robert W. Torassa family for donating a cast iron “Smoke Consumer” caboose stove as well as a Fairbanks portable Platform Scale – both wonderful historic relics of early 20th Century railroading. The heavy stove, manufactured by the Estate Stove Company, came from a Santa Fe Railway caboose and is typical of those used over 60 railroads. The Fairbanks scale was once used by the Pacific Fruit Express Company. While the family was slightly concerned with how to move and transport the 250+ pound stove, TTMF volunteers brought a pallet jack and some ingenuity to the Torassa's home in San Marino and were able to move stove with ease. It needs some fixing and clean up, but we hope to have it on display somewhere in the Museum soon!



Happy Village makes Travel Town Happy, too!



“Before” and “after” photographs of the Gazebo – and some of the great crew from Happy Village!

On the first Saturday of every month, Travel Town gets an extra burst of activity! Volunteers from the “Happy Village” of the *Korean-American Development Center* along with friends from the *Wilshire Lions Club* and their youthful counterparts, the “Leos” - come out and help us spruce up the Museum! In March, this fantastic group cleaned trains, repainted the waiting Gazebo, weeded along the tracks (a BIG job, given all the recent rains), cleaned up the center walkway of the locomotive Pavilion, (another BIG job, because a messy pair of crows have been living inside the Pavilion, leaving large twigs and droppings all over the walkways). The Happy Village even helped install our new Dining Car China Garden exhibit sign! Their combined efforts in one day resulted in over 75 hours of volunteering, and the place really looked great when they left! This group is a true example of community giving and support; every one of their members is excited to be here and does a great job, no matter how simple or complicated the task. Sometimes cleaning trains can be very tiring, but when you do it with several friends alongside, the work seems like play. This group has a great time at Travel Town and looks forward to every month’s new challenges. What’s next? Cleaning up the garden next to the train ride and the future Volunteer Center!



New educational sign installed in the garden.

-WANTED: PROJECT LEADERS-

Volunteer leaders are needed to guide and manage groups like the *Happy Village* and our High School student service-learning program teens for work at Travel Town. Come the day before to plan, organize, anticipate and prepare; then on the day of the project, supervise, encourage and praise! It’s great fun leading a team - and very rewarding to see projects FINISHED at the end of the day! E-mail Kendall@traveltown.org for more information on this volunteer opportunity!

Railroading Merit Badge Campout a great success!



LALS volunteer Jeremy Steinert teaches scouts about signals as the sun sets.

On April 1st and 2nd our Foundation hosted its annual *Railroading Merit Badge* campout at Travel Town! This year we maxed out at 40 Boy Scouts and their 10 adult leaders as. Scouts from three local troops were represented, Troop 210 of Burbank, Troop 319 of La Canada-Flintridge, and Troop 161 of Rosemead.

We've been told (and agree) that our Merit Badge workshop is one of the best available in railroading for Scouts. The Scouts get to camp out overnight at the Museum, take instructional classes where they interview Amtrak Employees and learn how to read a timetable inside historic railroad dining cars. There is a lot

of hands-on learning -- on Sunday morning each boy gets to be a brakeman and give lantern signals to an actual Diesel-electric Switch Engine. They get to ride in a locomotive and learn whistle signal responses using the horn. There's even a ride on a vintage "handcar" that is totally Scout-powered! And of course, in the evening they get to go 'next-door' and have the great experience of riding aboard a train at the *Los Angeles Live Steamers*, where they can see track-side signals in action! For the first time, this year's Scouts got to learn about different types of railroad cars using the O-gage model railroad in our almost-ready-to-open new gift shop, along with scale-model unit trains, mixed freight trains and passenger trains at the *East Valley Lines* N-gage Exhibit. Finally, the boys get an *Operation Lifesaver* presentation about track and train safety. Each Scout is then tested and individually reviewed to make sure he has an understanding of all the railroading terms and features that are covered over the weekend. And the Railroading Merit Badge is earned!

Here are some other fun facts: 50 quarts of Greg G's famous "Travel Town Chili" along with 3 trays of home-made cornbread were consumed on Saturday night! 150 sausages were eaten the next morning for breakfast with an assortment of fruit cups, chocolate chip muffins and cereal! And of course, no scout event would be complete without tasty hamburgers, baked beans and potato chips for lunch!

All of our merit badge instructors were volunteering their time, with 10 individuals teaching the boys in rotation according to their various areas of expertise. That doesn't include the Live Steamers fabulous train crews, our assistant chefs, and parents who provided supervision and took photos.

We can use YOUR help as well – how about making a donation to the Travel Town Museum Foundation programs. Besides our Scouting merit badge events, we gladly accept donations to help support Eagle Projects and other enhancement work done at Travel Town, restoration work on the BIG trains, and funding for our Educational Outreach Programs. Please visit our website at www.traveltown.org or [click here](#) for more information about the work we do.

The Travel Town Museum Foundation sincerely appreciates the support, cooperation and partnership we get from the Live Steamers and Operation Lifesaver in making this event such a success every year. Thank you!

New and Renewing Members

Restoration Partner

Eric Andersen

"LITTLE NUGGET" Club Memberships

Marianne Leo-Burton

Fred Glienna

Don & Peggy Gustavson

Streamliner Memberships

Robert Anderson Arbuckle

Andrea Austin

Daniel Cole

Hugh Edwards

Mindy Farnsworth

Jessica and Bruce Jones

Jack and Sherrie Jessup

Dan Katzir

Jessica Timberlake

Track Gang Memberships

Janelle Bieler

Damion Bryant

Jo-Anne Camangian

Stevan Dumas

Jennifer Fitzpatrick

Kiersten Franz

Kevin Galicia

Shane Gilreath

Miguel Gonzalez

Constance Hayes

Cathryn Humphris

Kevin Kelly

Robert Kurues

Anny Ly

Andrea Mankin

Nash Marquez

Jocelyn Merken

Eleonor Ochoco

Barbara Pantleo

Cheryl Park

Michelle Pervaiz

Brianna Rasich

Lorena Rodriguez

Punuachat Sawatdikij

Elizabeth Sentianin

Lalhy Serrano

Larry Thomas

Gina Williams

Karla Williams

Irene Wong

Junior Engineer memberships

C.J. Caton

Dean Dinsky

Everett Green

Regina Cane Larsen

Benjamin Lehrer

Jackson Sushinski

Joseph Tourouk

Chris Zine

Adult Engineers

Brad DeGruccio

Marie DeGruccio

Mark Dodge

Nicole Elliott

Jonathan Hathaway

Allison Margolin

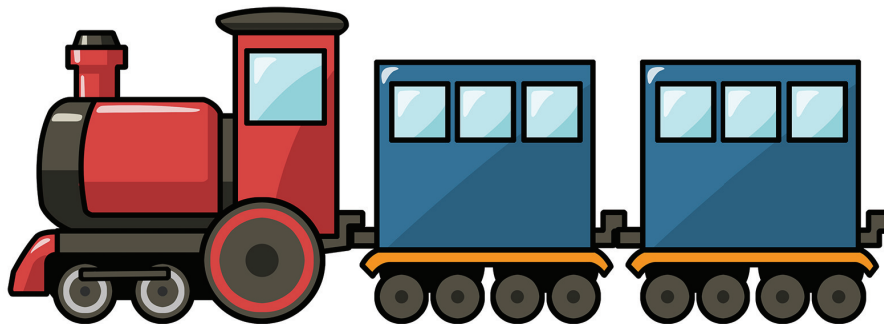
Norman Moline

Willard Sundquist

Dorothy Shepherd

Jeff Wells

Do you need to renew your membership? You can do it online! [Click here for more information!](#)



On the Platform...Kendall Williams!

Kendall Williams is our new Program Manager at the Museum. Kendall heard about us from a Burbank Mom's Group, and she was ready to get back to work, and this seemed like a great fit! Kendall has volunteered and worked with other service groups in the non-profit sector, including "Big Sunday", "Tree people" and the PTA. Here is her story:



Kendall (center) and her Tribe of 5!

"My interest in trains started as a kid, the highlight of Christmas was my Dad breaking out the Lionel Train from his childhood. The train is one of my dad's prized possessions. All the tunnels and little buildings were so fun to set up! My dad has passed on this love of trains to my children buying them their own Lionel Train that we run every Christmas.

When I read Travel Town was hiring, I knew it would be an exciting opportunity to work and help give back to a place my own children have enjoyed. Volunteering is something that has always been an important part of my life. When I was a kid we volunteered through my church, when I reached High School I was a member of Tri-Hi-Y, a High School "Sorority" that's base was serving the community. I worked on mission trips, Habitat for Humanity and the Meals on Wheels program. When I became a parent and working a full-time job was not in the cards, I found volunteering to be a good outlet for me. As my children got older I started working in their classrooms once a week, this led me to PTA. I spent three years on the PTA board as Vice-President and then President. When our family moved from Orange County to Burbank, volunteering led me to meeting new people in our community. Volunteering with "Big Sunday" on a regular basis led me to being a lead on volunteer project and getting paid. This was when I realized I could "have my cake and eat it, too". I previously worked in Sales, but never felt like I made a difference, non-profits allowed me to have a career and feel good about the work I do.

The "Tribe of 5" as I refer to our family is led by my husband Josh. He is a self-employed finish carpenter, and we have together run our family Carpentry business Williams Moulding for the last 18 years. My oldest child Daniel 17, is the real car and Train lover his third word was "cars" followed by "Trains". Avery is my middle child he is 16 and the artist in our family, he loves to draw and plans to be an animator. Our Daughter Thalia, 13 also has the volunteer heart and is currently a Junior Board Member for "Big Sunday". As a family we love to hike and go camping, living in California we never run out of opportunities to explore somewhere new.

My family has really bonded through volunteering. At least once a month we all volunteer somewhere-- no phones, no other distractions. As a parent of teens who enjoy their electronics, volunteering gets them out of their own space. Volunteering has helped my children be more aware of their surroundings and other people in their community. For myself volunteering has given me a connection to the city I love and the ability to see the good in this world."

Buy Groceries and Restore Trains.... at the SAME TIME!!!!

If you shop at Ralphs in the local Los Angeles Area, we are hoping that you will take two minutes to really make a difference for the trains at Travel Town. If you shop at Ralphs, you probably use their "Club card" in order to take advantage of their savings. Good for you! Please link your club card with our foundation! This really helps our fund raising!

Its simple!! – go to www.ralphs.com and click on "community contributions" link. You are a "participant" so click on the "sign up". Fill out the forms, the Travel Town NPO is 81111. When you make your purchases your receipt will say "thank you for supporting the Travel Town Museum".

If you shop at **Vons/Pavillions** – you can help us out, too! Go to www.escrip.com. Follow the simple directions there – the Travel Town Museum Foundation's Group Number is 1094834.

If you are at the museum, feel free to stop by the Foundation office next to the old gift shop and we will be glad to do the registering for you on-line!

Also, do you like to shop online? Please visit our website home page and click on the Amazon.smile link on the bottom left of the page. All these little things really add up to a lot of extra donations!!

Upcoming Events

May 13 – (Saturday) – PASSENGER CAR TOURS

10:30 AM to 3:00 PM in the Locomotive Pavilion. Join us for Docent lead tours through selected historic railroad passenger cars. No reservation necessary.

May 20 – (Saturday) – JUNIOR ENGINEER PLAYDAY (Members Only)

10:30 AM to 1:30 PM Next to the gift shop. Join us for a fun Members only PlayDay. Become a Member today online at [Travel Town Members](#) or on-site at the PlayDay!

May 27 – (Saturday) – Presidential Service Awards Presentations

Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon where we appreciate our volunteers and the great work they do at our Museum. Call the Program Office for sponsorship details and reservations.

June 10 – (Saturday) - VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

2:00 PM in front of the gift shop. Join our volunteer team! Sign up online at [Travel Town Volunteers](#) or onsite at the Orientation.

June 10 – (Saturday) – PASSENGER CAR TOURS

10:30 AM to 3:00 PM in the Locomotive Pavilion. Join us for Docent lead tours through selected historic railroad passenger cars. No reservation necessary.

June 17 – (Saturday) – JUNIOR ENGINEER PLAYDAY

Join us at Historic Union Station in Downtown LA for a special Event!!! More news to come in the next Tender and subsequent E-Mails!!