



THE SIDE TRACK

NEWS

from the Toy Train Operating Society
Sacramento Valley Division

SUMMER

2023

Mrs. Rabbit: *What did your father tell you this morning?* Thumper: *If you can't say somethin' nice ... don't say nothin' at all.* - "Bambi" (1942)

Jerry Azzaro, editor

President's Message

by Ed Strisar, SVD President

Fellow SV TTOS members:

For two years, SVD TTOS has been discussing a trip to the Sacramento Valley Live Steamers Railroad Museum in Rancho Cordova. Well, on June 25 we **FINALLY** went there.

SVD TTOS reserved a steam engine and we were offered numerous trips behind a live steamer. In addition, SV Steamers personnel generously provided a tour of their Museum and we participated in a pot luck in the shaded park area. The main course of sliced sausage in BBQ sauce accompanied by white rice and baked beans was provided

by the club. Salads, side dishes and various deserts were provided by club members. A very enjoyable time was had by all present. Photos of the event were taken by **Lisa Stanton** and appear in this issue.

Kathleen Silvera and **Phil Fravesi** cooked a wonderful breakfast at our monthly January 2023 meeting. Since that time, Chef Phil has delighted us with a very tasty breakfast at each of our monthly meetings. All SVD members are invited to attend our monthly meetings at the cordial Saint Mark's Grace Café.

For the second half of this year, SVD TTOS plans to visit other railroad themed locations.

- Ed

"CALIFORNIA SPECIAL"

TRAIN, TOY & MODEL KIT SHOW

PLUS ... OPERATING TRAIN LAYOUTS

*** Open to the Public ***

International Agri-Center, Tulare, CA

4500 S. Laspina ... next to Route 99; Paige Ave. exit

½ way between Sacramento and L.A. → Car Pool with Friends

2023 Show Dates: Nov 18 – 19 (10 – 4)

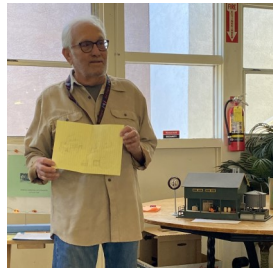
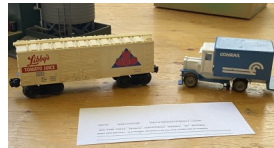
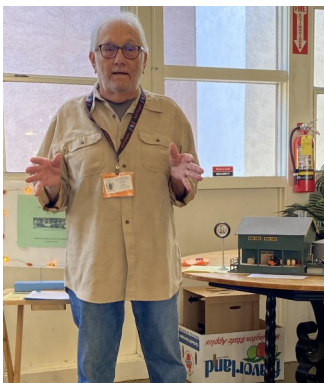
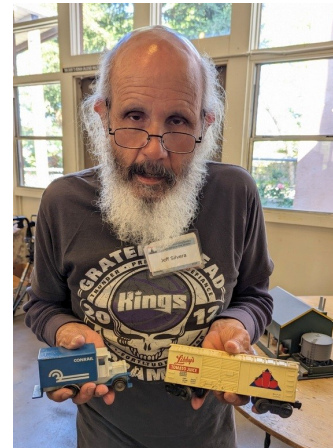
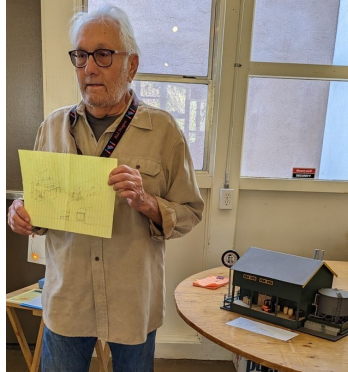
\$10/person; \$15/family (cash only at door) - (good both days)

– **FREE PARKING!**

Up to 400 sales tables + parts + clinic in 60,000 sq ft building
{Vendors – Send SASE to TTOS, PO Box 6710, Fullerton, CA 92834}

April 15 meeting

Text by Bob Phillips—photos by Bob Phillips and Lisa Stanton

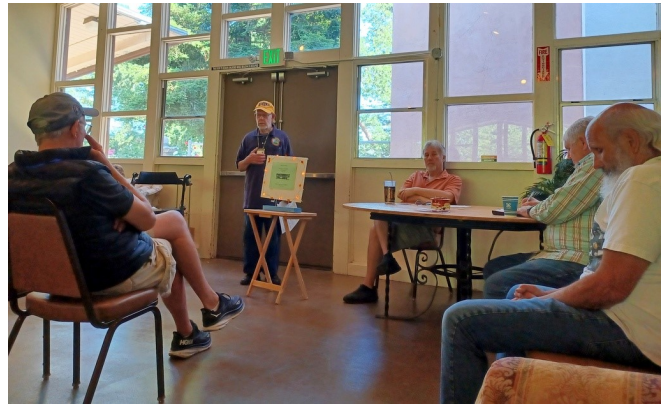


Jeff Silvera presented a nice Lionel Libby bank car and a David O King custom made O gauge rail truck.

Carl Curtis, the master of repurposed materials, brought his beautiful scratch built freight station which he describes as “junk put together”.

May 20 Meeting

Text by Bob Phillips—photos by Barbara Rohrs and Bob Phillips

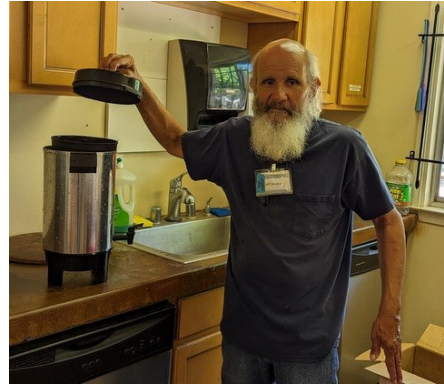


Jeff Silvera presented a trolley that was scratch built O scale by David O King. The trolley was decorated with the name **Caroline** and produced between 1975 and 1985.



June 17 meeting

Text by Bob Phillips - photos by Bob Phillips and Lisa Stanton

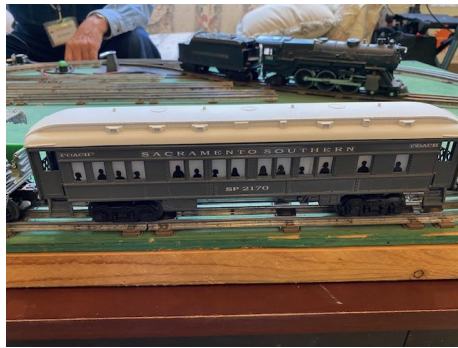


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Bryan Stanton: trucks that are made by Tonka and Buddy L. Pretty similar except for shape of the grilles.

Bill Bender: 3 scratch built cars. First is a tourist gondola. Second is coach car they was originally a Polar Express car. Third is another coach car.



Riding the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad

- Phil Fravesi

After canceling our trip earlier on the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad due to COVID, Emma and I finally completed our journey. The C&TSRR is a 3-foot narrow-gauge heritage railroad that operates on 64 miles of track between Antonito, Colorado, and Chama, New Mexico. We flew into Denver and drove 280 miles to Antonito (population 600), the eastern terminus for the RR. We visited the depot on Monday when they were closed, just to check it out. An employee from the shop saw us and said we could go back and look around, alone. (That wouldn't happen in California!)

The next morning we arrived at 8 am for a 10 am departure. I was surprised to see that we were the first ones there - I guess there were no true "foamers" riding. I watched as they moved the locomotive for coal and water, and hooked up to the consist. I talked to someone with a camera and tripod thinking he was going to ride. He was doing an "on the spot" weather report for a local station in Colorado Springs and asked to interview me on air. I even had my TTOS polo shirt on! I told him my main interest was toy trains, but I also liked 1:1 scale.

We had reserved seats in the parlor car, the last car on the train. It was opulent, with large cushioned chairs, one per window. FYI, the left (south) side going west is absolutely the only way to go. We had a rear platform and the car was "private" so no



other passengers got past the car attendant. Over its 64 miles, the route crosses the Colorado/New Mexico state lines eleven times.

The railroad runs two trains each operating day, starting from each terminus. There are many switchbacks to gain elevation. The route passes over several trestles and through two tunnels, one supported by timbers and one in solid rock. It took 6-½ hours including one hour for lunch to complete the journey, then a 1 hour 10 minute return bus ride from Chama back to Antonito.

I was told that it was completely different than the [Durango and Silverton](#), and it is.

The elevation change means spectacular views from the mountain ridges down into valleys hundreds of feet below. I saw several elk, but wildlife was scarce that day.

We had fire suppression following us at a distance, which consisted of a speeder equipped with water tanks in case we started any fires. What a job!

Both trains meet at Osier CO and stop for one hour for a buffet lunch. Passengers who have made arrangements can switch trains here and ride back to their point of origin. When we were all fed, it was on toward Cumbres, the summit for the line (10,015 feet). Then a 4% downhill grade into Chama. The photos tell the rest of the story.

This was a "trip of a lifetime" and I recommend it for any lover of trains and history.



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Photo Gallery: SVD visits the Sacramento Valley Live Steamers

On July 30th several TTOS-SVD members had a picnic, rode the live steam model trains and toured the facility. **Lisa Stanton** provided an album's worth of photos.



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Right in our own backyard

-Jerry Azzaro

One bright and sunny June Saturday in San Francisco, Anna and I decided to do something we've wanted to do for a long time: ride the PCC streetcars on the Market Street "F-Market & Wharves" line.

We began our adventure by going to the [Forest Hill Station](#) (built 1918) in our neighborhood, taking the elevator down into the [Twin Peaks Tunnel](#) (also 1918), and boarding an inbound Muni Metro train to Castro Street Station. After arriving at Castro, we boarded the PCC streetcar that was waiting at the F-line terminus at the top of the escalator.

The F-line runs on the surface of Market Street, while the Muni Metro trains operate below grade. From Civic Center to Embarcadero station, The BART line is another level below that.

One hundred years ago, there were four streetcar tracks on Market Street - two inbound and two outbound. "The Roar of the Four" as it was called. The two rivals, United Railroads and SF Municipal Railway, each had their own tracks. Eventually Muni bought the other company and Market Street was reduced to just two tracks.

When the Muni Market Street tracks went underground in the early 1980s, someone had the good sense to retain some trackage on the surface, which now makes up most of the F-line route. The F-Line runs from the head of Market Street at Castro to the foot of Market Street at the Ferry Building, then along the

Embarcadero past Pier 39, terminating at Fisherman's Wharf. At Powell and Market it serves the famous Powell Street cable car turnaround. Our ride showed us that the F-Line is used heavily by tourists (standing room only!) traveling between the downtown hotel district, the Powell cable car, the Ferry Building Plaza, Pier 39 and Fisher-

man's Wharf. Many locals also use it, including west of Powell Street, a non-tourist area. It's a lot easier than going below ground to catch a Metro train, and the F-Line has stops at every major intersection.

SF Muni own scores of PCC cars with twenty-one of them professionally restored and operational, painted in the schemes of various cities that operated PCCs. At any time during operating hours there are between six and twelve cars running at 5 to 15 minute intervals. The non-profit volunteer organization [Market Street Railway](#)

encourages and supports the restoration and operation of the vintage trolley cars and cable cars. They operate a museum/gift shop near the Ferry Building, which is - alas - more gift shop than museum.

We used our Senior [Clipper Cards](#), so an afternoon of trolley rides cost us about the price of a gallon of gas.

If you are interested in riding Market Street

PCC cars or the Cable Cars, a page of rider information is available [here](#).

There's a neat online Trolley Tracker that shows which cars are running and where they are on the line, [click here](#) during operating hours.

"The Roar of the Four"
Four tracks down Market Street



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A typical F-Line passenger about to board

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Photos along the F-Line ———

Although they look “modern”, [PCC cars](#) were designed in the 1930s



Looking down “the slot”, as old-timers referred to Market Street.



The Ferry Building clock tower is undergoing restoration and is shrouded in scaffolding and netting.



Car #1050 (St. Louis) ready to depart from Fisherman's Wharf terminus.



Inside a restored PCC car, before all the tourists boarded. Handicap accommodations are provided.



Arriving at Fisherman's Wharf.



[SS Jeremiah O'Brien](#) at Pier 35, one of only two remaining functioning Liberty Ships built during World War II.



At the business end of the car: The fare box accepts bills only, and no change is given. The black box on the pole at right is the scanner for Clipper Cards, phone apps, etc.

Down the track

Upcoming events of interest to SVD members (SVD events are in **BOLD**)
(Click the [underlined](#) links for more information)

July 12-16: [National Summer/Fall Steamup](#), Lodi

July 15: SVD Meeting, St. Mark's Church, Sacramento*

July 22-23: [Great Train Days](#), Santa Rosa

August 19: SVD Meeting, St. Mark's Church, Sacramento*

September 16: SVD Meeting, St. Mark's Church, Sacramento*

August 1-6: TTOS National Convention, Columbus OH

September 30: SVD River City Meet, Elk's Lodge, Carmichael

October 1: [Just Trains Open House](#), Concord

October 14-15: [Carquinez MRS](#) and [CTTOM](#) Open House, Crockett

October 19-21: [TCA Eastern Division York Meet](#), York PA

November 18-19: "California Special" meet, Tulare

December 2-3: [San Joaquin Valley Toy Train Operators Show](#), Turlock

***Meetings begin at 9:30 AM**

BRING YOUR SVD and TTOS NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Contact us:

Club business: Ed Strisar, President - (916) 395-3169 stein.ed.0530@gmail.com

Membership questions: Barbara Rohrs - (916) 730-1415 tjbrr@hotmail.com

Website: www.ttos-sv.org

TTOS-SVD Mission Statement:

Our mission is to bring together persons interested in the hobby of collecting and operating toy trains. The focus of activities shall be on promoting the best interests of the hobby through fellowship, a sense of good will, camaraderie within the membership, and exposing the general public to the hobby, encouraging greater interest in it and increasing membership.