



## Remembering When Citrus Was King! Co-Dependency Of Railroad & Citrus Industries Recognized

by Rick Swanson, President



**On 10-28 our Visitor Center was struck by a pick-up truck in an attempt by one man to run over another man. Besides \$900+ in damages to our roll-up door, untold damage was caused to Jerry Mathews' pre-1960 Lionel train layout — a main attraction of the Center. Repairs to both are pending.**

The growth and history of the Santa Clara River Valley rests primarily on two industries – oil and citrus. And the railroad made them both possible! The history of oil can be traced back to the founding of the Union Oil Company in Santa Paula and the oil drilling sites of Texaco that dot the valley to this day. This rich history is told in part at the Santa Paula Oil Museum. But what about the citrus industry? Who is there to tell that local story?

How about us? The Santa Clara River Valley Railroad Historical Society? After all, thanks to Sunkist and the Fruit Growers Supply, we own a 1957 Pacific Fruit Express reefer, one of many that traversed the valley rails hauling fresh oranges and lemons to eastern markets. Several of our members, and even a past society president, are citrus ranchers in the valley with rich family histories to draw upon. Our Railroad Visitor Center is located just a few blocks from historic citrus packing houses and the outlying areas between Piru and Ventura are filled with citrus groves and fruit stands. Heck, Fillmore even has an annual Orange Festival. It's a natural idea!



Our current Railroad Visitor Center is the temporary home of what will be the Exhibit Center or phase 3 of our Railroad Interpretive Center (RIC) project (the turntable being phase 1 and the roundhouse phase 2). The exterior of the Exhibit Center can be designed to look like an old packing house. Inside we will have a section of track from the roundhouse that can be used to display the PFE car and perhaps an overhead ice loading platform and loading dock similar to that currently on display in the State Railroad Museum in Sacramento. Related farming and railroad tools can be displayed as well as packing boxes and labels. We can tell the



story of how fruit got to market (by railroad of course). The Citrus theme can be to the Exhibit Center what railroading is to the turntable and roundhouse – one big real life co-dependent operation.

So as members, if you think this has potential, let us know. In the meantime, feel free to start searching for those old packing box labels from the Santa Clara Valley when you go antiquing. Look for old photos of trains and citrus operations too (Oxnard had a PFE icing facility until the late 1970's). Collect stories and document historically related events. Search the attic and the barn for related display materials. Let's begin to transform the current Visitor Center and get a head start on our future! And don't forget, donations of items or dollars are gladly accepted and are tax deductible!

### FRA Requires Training For Switchmen

Following a series of railroad industry accidents involving improperly aligned switches in non-signaled territory, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has issued an Emergency Order Authority mandating training for affected employees. The FRA said order E024 is necessary to ensure that railroad employees who dispatch or operate hand-operated main track switches in non-signaled territory return the switches to normal position after use. Under the Emergency Order:

- No employee is permitted to operate or verify the position of a hand-operated main track switch in non-signaled territory unless qualified on EO24 and the railroad's operating rules.
- A written receipt or acknowledgment that each employee has received training must be obtained.
- Employees operating hand-operated main track switches in non-signaled territory must complete a switch position awareness form, conduct job briefings and communicate with the engineer by radio.
- Affected employees must receive a copy of EO24. Though they do not need to carry it, employees will be asked by FRA inspectors if they have received it, and have been trained and understand it.

The training must be implemented no later than Nov. 22, 2005. Violations can result in civil penalties of up to \$27,000 for individual employees, managers and company for any violations.

# DISPATCH BOARD

## NOVEMBER 2005

Join us for an informal breakfast Saturday mornings at 8:00 am  
*The Fillmore Café* Santa Clara & Central — Fillmore

- 2nd** 7:00 p.m. - **SCRVRHS Board of Directors Meeting**  
Railroad Visitor Center 455 Main Street, Fillmore  
Members are welcome to attend
- 5th** **F&W WEEKEND EXCURSION TRAINS**  
Car Attendants and Docents needed 11:00 am — 4:00 pm  
call Don at 805 484-8624 or email at dhatch@scrvrhs.com
- 9th** **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
7:00 pm Railroad Visitor Center—Fillmore  
Refreshments & *action* train digital videos in surround sound!
- 12th** **F&W WEEKEND EXCURSION TRAINS**  
Car Attendants and Docents needed 11:00 am — 4:00 pm  
call Don at 805 484-8624 or email at dhatch@scrvrhs.com
- 19th** **SOCIETY PLAY DAY**  
Come to the Visitor Center and check out what's new!  
Polk around and help us get ready for the December 'rush'
- 19th & 20th** **F&W WEEKEND EXCURSION TRAINS**  
Car Attendants and Docents needed 11:00 am — 4:00 pm  
call Don at 805 484-8624 or email at dhatch@scrvrhs.com
- 24th** **Happy Thanksgiving**
- 26th & 27th** **F&W *CHRISTMAS TREE* TRAINS**  
Car Attendants and Docents needed 9:30 am — 4:30 pm  
call Don at 805 484-8624 or email at dhatch@scrvrhs.com

### AROUND THE ROUNDHOUSE . . .

**SAVE THE DATE** — December 10th at 4:00 pm for our annual SCRVRHS Holiday Party. Bring a dish to the Visitor Center and the Society will take care of the rest! Enjoy a late afternoon holiday celebration with your friends and fellow railroaders.

**THE TURNTABLE** — plans are progressing. The blueprints have been revised to eliminate the cosmetic brick lining of the inside of the pit. This was done as a cost reduction measure. Revised blueprints are being submitted for final bid preparations. We still face the problem of rising construction material costs. Concrete alone has doubled in price in recent months and we need a lot of it to install the turntable. Our hope is that our grant funds will cover our costs but that won't be determined until construction bids are received.

**GOT DRAWERS?** — Our Society is in need of a four drawer filing cabinet to hold all of our important papers. If you have one and need help to bring it to the Visitor Center or you know where one can be obtained for a donation, email Gary Phillips, SCRVRHS Secretary at gphillips@scrvrhs.com. Thanks in advance!

**The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.**

— Eleanor Roosevelt, First Lady and humanitarian

*Editor/Publisher—Rick Swanson*



### TRAIN ORDERS

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