



# SPCRR's Hotbox

Monthly

activities and work events

The Railroad Museum  
at  
Ardenwood

**November 2014 Edition.** *Hotbox* is a monthly bulletin of The Railroad Museum at Ardenwood, designed to update members and the general public about **activities, work events, and volunteer opportunities** at the museum. Questions or comments can be directed to Bruce MacGregor, editor, at [bruce.macgregor@comcast.net](mailto:bruce.macgregor@comcast.net)

The Museum's mission is the preservation, restoration and interpretation of regional narrow gauge railroad history, including Carter Brothers, a pioneer railroad car builder of California. The Museum is operated by SPCRR, a non-profit, 501 (c)(3) corporation of the State of California. The Railroad Museum at Ardenwood is located at Ardenwood Historic Farm, in Fremont, California.

**DOUBLE OUR READERSHIP: PLEASE, FORWARD THIS HOTBOX TO A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER.**

## General Manager's Report

I am so happy to report that this year has been a very wonderful year for SPCRR, between Rail Fair and Haunted Train- both of which have brought in good revenue for us to work on our projects. Thanks to all of you great volunteers who helped make it happen!! The whole year went well with a lot of track work and projects in the Car Barn getting finished.

We all miss Box Car Bob Hertz and all the things he did for the Railroad, especially at Rail Fair and Haunted Train. Our sympathy to all of his family and friends. (please see page 8)

In November we have work days coming up. Our regularly scheduled train runs thru November 23, followed by three special operating days on December 5, 6 and 7- and then we are through for the season. December 13, 2014 will be our Christmas Dinner and General meeting and another year coming to an end, but a good one.

Barbara Culp, General Manager



## President's Report

October was a fairly busy month, with Halloween set up and operations fitted around the park's Harvest Festival. With Harvest Festival on the 11'th, we got in on the 4'th and set up the village flats, with several of us back early on the 17'th to finish setup. My thanks to all of the volunteers who make this operation possible, and especially to those turn out to help put it together and take it down. Halloween operations over the two weekends were a definite success, despite a few miscommunications and the usual glitches, but I will leave the formal report to Andy. The weather was very accommodating, with only a little light mist one night and little wind, a point I particularly notice out at the grove's end graveyard.

Harvest Festival train operations were a long day of shuttling heavily loaded 3-car trains out and back. There was some apprehension of park guests on the track, as has happened previously when the corn field was adjacent to our track. Ken countered by putting up a yellow caution tape on stakes, all the way from our boxcars around the curve to the grove's first tree. This was quite effective, since I doubt more than a dozen people crossed the tape and our tracks, down about ten-fold from the last time the corn was close.

### November activities:

Nov 8 - Car restoration - Randy has collected a set of brake levers and rods that should fit the Westside flat that currently lacks them. With Randy out of town, I will be leading their installation.

Nov 15 - Track construction - We have ties down for the outside barn track 4, and I would like to get this completed before we get any heavy rain and things turn muddy.

Nov 22 - I will be unavailable, but we may have some activity at the car barn.  
Anybody want to set something up?

Nov 29 - Probably paddock maintenance. Possibly more track work



## Car Restoration Workdays

**What:** Return Sorensen flat cars 205 and 308 to operation. Goals include truck inspection, oiling and light repair. This is car anatomy at its most basic, and a great way to learn how 19th century wooden railroad cars are put together.

If additional crew and time are available, work may continue on caboose 5591 as well, under the leadership of Ken Underhill.

**When:** Saturday, November 8, 9:30- 5 pm

**Where:** Car Barn

**Who:** John Stutz, [president@spcrr.org](mailto:president@spcrr.org)

## Track Workdays

**What:** extending track # 4 at the Car Barn

**When:** Saturday, November 15

**Where:** Car Barn

**Who:** John Stutz, Track Manager email: [president@spcrr.org](mailto:president@spcrr.org)

**Equipment:** sturdy shoes, work gloves, sun protection & lots of water!

October track work has been largely preempted by Halloween set up, operation, and take down, running from October 4 through November 1. With Ardenwood's Harvest Festival on October 11 & 12, we needed to get our major Halloween props up on the 4th: the town flats erected and tables and benches distributed. The two weekends following Harvest Festival are Halloween operations, and November 1 is cleanup. On November 15, we'll be back to work on the two Car Barn sidings.



## Where to meet for SPCRR projects

Each month, work activities are announced by **date, time, contact person, and location**. Typically, the location can be at the Ardenwood Station (main parking lot), at the Stable, at the Car Barn, or somewhere along the line.

If a location is “up front”, somewhere in the western half of the park, usually parking in the main parking lot is best. Just let the ranger at the gate know that you are a volunteer with the SPCRR - or just say “the railroad”. It’s good to have your membership card with you, just in case, for free access to the park. Walk to the work location. **A map of the park was included in your Welcome Packet.**

Please note that vehicles are generally not permitted within the active area of the park especially when the park is open. Many projects are centered at the Car Barn in the back (eastern end) of the park. It is possible to park up front, by Ardenwood Station, and walk back (it’s about 3/4 of a mile distant). Alternately, on these days, usually the north-east service gate at the end of Siward Drive will be unlocked. It is possible to bring in vehicles along the Siward Gate fire-road and park along the east wall of the Car Barn. There is a round yellow RxR sign on this gate and when opened the chain lock will be flipped over (unlocked) or clipped shut. You may open the gate (opens outward) drive in and close the gate behind you. We hope to see you out for a project soon!



NWP caboose 5591 at Pt. Reyes Station, 1930's.

Jack Muzio Collection

## Curator's Workbench

On our October work day we cleared the decks of the two Sorensen flat cars 205 and 308, and did a preliminary survey. We found old car siding which Henry Sorensen had removed from the smoker, new 4” T&G fir flooring (which will be used for caboose 5591) and misc. blocking piled on the decks. We sorted and stacked the material, leaving the decks cleared. The cars still need a good cleaning, likely including pressure washing and vacuuming to get rid all the dirt and saw dust. There is some insect damage to the decks. One strategy it to vacuum the decks compeltely. Then if new wood dust appears we will know that the little guys are still active, and take action.

We also did a preliminary car survey. Flat car 205 is complete and will be available for service after we check the journal boxes, likely repacking them in the process. The car is in pretty good shape, but its deck is a mess with many deck boards spliced. We believe the deck is original, as installed by West Side Lumber Company, functional but a mess.

Flat car 308 has more issues. It is missing brake rods and levers. Luckily, we had a full set of spare parts in our parts pile, these are parts salvaged from the West Side Tuolumne shops in 1985. Those loose parts now sitting on the car deck. They will be installed by John and crew on our November work day (November 8).

Even with brakes installed, 308 will not be available for use (yet). The survey found that the end beams (aka end sills) are failing and the truss rod washers have pulled into the beams. One truss rod is hanging loose. We will plan a couple of future work days to replace the end beams, and replace about 6 deck boards, This will make 308 a solid and stable car. Eventually we will likely install side rails and benches, making it our 4th passenger flat car giving us two, 2 car trains for Rail Fair operations.

One note, both these cars came with knuckle couplers. These were installed by Henry Sorensen, and were not used on these cars while they were on the WSLC... We have 5 West Side “Monarch” link and pin drawbars as used on these cars on hand to convert them back to L&P... the knuckle couplers will be used on 1725 and Parjaro Valley 215... 1725's Sams will then be used when we restore SPC 444... The big coupler swap will result in historically correct draw bars and couplers (see note below) on our equipment.

We also started to clean the smoker... there is a lot of old car there, but it will be a serious, complicated restoration... We plan to vacuum and clean the car inside early in the year.

### Saturday, November 8th work day plan:

We will be working on two projects. John Stutz will be leading the crew working on the newly arrived Sorensen West Side Lumber Co flatcars, 205 and 308. Car 205 is complete, but needs its trucks serviced before being released for service. Car 308 is missing its brake rigging. We have located a set of brake rods and levers, which will be installed on 308. The crew will have to jack up car 308 to remove trucks to install the truck rods, giving us a chance to better inspect the trucks.

Ken Underhill will oversee work on caboose 5591. We will continue to nail down the T&G finished flooring, and will have sanders and sand paper on hand to prepare the interior for paint.

# Haunted Train Final Report!!!!

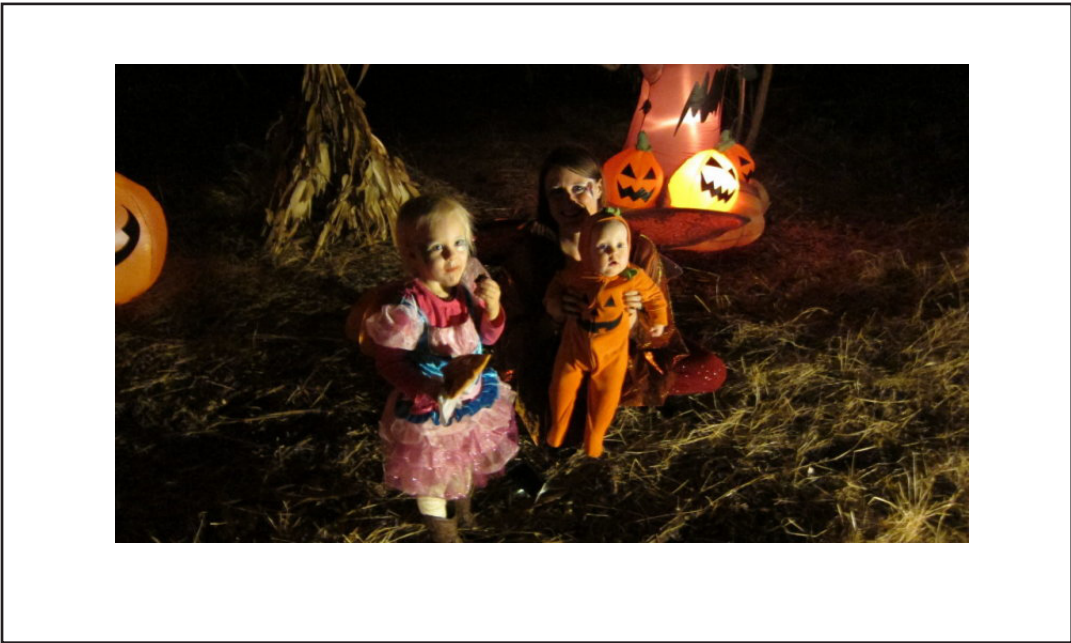
The 2014 haunted train was a major success, we hauled about 3400 passengers on 34 trains on 6 nights and raised around \$16,000 (all the expenses numbers aren't in yet).

This is a huge annual event with many families coming year-after-year to visit the Haunted forest of Ardenwood and visit with the lone gravedigger, the Ghost Bride, the Witch, the pirates, and the loony Chance Family. We sold out most nights.

Pulling it off requires an army of volunteers - this year over 40 - and too many to thank here individually. Nevertheless, special thanks are needed for some nonmembers: Bill Ekstrom (narrator), Janet Ekstrom (Ghost Bride), Beth Cary (Witch), and Scott Ekstrom and friends(Dread Pyrates), and some members: Linda Weathers and Barbara Frank (ticket sales and the use of their credit card reader), Robin Frank (for sound), Ruth Tyson (for her cool Jack-o-Lanterns). Thank you all.

Pictures from the event are still trickling in but some are available on the SPCRR's photogallery at <http://www.pbase.com/spcrr/hauntedtrain2014>.

--A.J.L. Cary, Haunted Train 2014



## Goliath heads for Oregon

*As many of our readers know, Goliath the draft horse was retired from railroad service this past summer, and now has become a resident of Philomath, Oregon. Emily Nikzat reports on his new home.*

Goliath is very happy up here as a riding horse. He fits in very well at his new home, even though he is much bigger than his new friends. His daily schedule is breakfast at 7:30 am, which is pre-weighed to be the perfect amount of food for his body weight. He gets to munch on it for a while, then goes out at 8:30 with his buddies where he spends a few hours roaming in one of the pastures. Each pasture is a few acres (ranging from 6-22) where the 3 of them can go explore, graze, and run around in the woods and fields. He then comes in and gets a little extra food for lunch, then is fed "late lunch" at 4pm, then dinner at 7:30. The meals are spread out during the day for maximum health to mimic grazing as close as possible in a stall setting.

Horses in the wild graze about 19 hours a day, so Goliath almost always has food in his stall. He has turned into a completely different horse with the change of setting and work load. Now that he is working regularly and has the opportunity to be more social, he has turned into a well behaved, calm horse. Everyone at the barn who handles him has lots of horse experience, so he has learned that many of his old bad habits and manners do not fly. He was always a horse who knows when people don't know what they are doing, and will take advantage of that. But now that he knows he cannot get away with bad behavior, he is very well mannered with everyone. All in all, he seems very happy up here. I go see him every day to take care of him and clean his stall. I also work at that barn 3 days a week to help work off some of his board. If you are ever in the area, you are welcome to come see him. It is a small barn in Philomath, just a few minutes from Corvallis.

-Emily Nikzat



# A Tribute to “Boxcar Bob” Hertz

Robert “Bob” Hertz  
Feb. 10, 1936- Sept. 13, 2014  
Newark, CA

Robert “Bob” Eugene Hertz a longtime resident of Newark, CA passed away on September 13, 2014 after a short illness. Beloved husband of 48 years to Betsy Hertz (deceased), he is survived by his brother and sister Norman and Maryann, his children Cindy, Debi, Michael, and Patricia, his grandchildren Jackie, Rachel, Jason, James, Sarah, Nicholas, and Kamea and his great-grandchildren JC, Ryder, and Victoria. Bob was born in Buffalo, NY on 2/10/1936 and graduated from The Park School of Buffalo and attended the University of Buffalo. He served four years in the US Air Force at Travis AFB.

Bob was an accomplished truck driver owner/operator as well as a truck driving instructor. He worked for Fremont Unified School District as a school bus driver and in the bus yard for 14 years. In his spare time, he enjoyed driving the Dreyer’s Rocky Road Bus that provides transportation for local schools and non-profits all around the Bay Area.

Bob was an avid fan of theater and volunteered his time to design and build sets for Fremont Community Theater, the Temple Pageant and other many local productions.

Bob’s biggest passion was for trains - big trains and model trains. For the past 10 years, Bob was a volunteer at Ardenwood Regional Park as a member of SPCRR working at the Railroad Museum and the train at the park. With his natural passion for storytelling, Bob loved getting into character for Rail Days and The Haunted train rides. Bob was also a member of the Toy Train Operating Society- Golden State Division and enjoyed setting up his creative and intricate model trains for display in local malls.

Bob was fortunate to be naturally gifted with the beard and build of Santa Claus and for years was called upon by family and friends take on that role. In 2008, he took on the job professionally and in 2010 he got his big break and was Santa Claus at the Macy’s in Union Square in San Francisco.

A private, family memorial was held in San Francisco on October 19th and a Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered on October 22 at 8:30 am at St. James the Apostle Catholic Church at 34700 Fremont Blvd, Fremont.

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