I hope you all had a wonderful Holiday Season and are off to a prosperous new year! 2011 was a great year at Travel Town, filled with many exciting events and museum improvements - many of which are outlined in this issue of the Tender. The Museum benefited from several wonderful Scout projects this past year, including a beautiful restoration of the Pacific Electric “Rio Vista” waiting station building - accomplished, I am proud to say, by my own daughter, Katy Gneier, as her Girl Scout Gold Award Project!

Meanwhile, at the opposite end of Travel Town ... funding support from our Foundation enabled the Museum volunteers to complete restoration and installation of two century-old Union Switch & Signal “Style B” semaphore signals, originally donated to Travel Town many years ago by the Southern Pacific Lines. The semaphores are a great sight to behold, harkening back to the days when steam locomotives charged up and down the tracks of the west coast. The Museum volunteer team has also been making great strides on the restoration of the Santa Fe M.177 Motorcar as well as Southern Pacific steam locomotive No. 219 and the big American Crane. We hope to see lots more progress on all of these projects in the coming months!

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Thanks again to all of you for your continued support. Hope to see you at Travel Town soon!

Greg Gneier, President
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**New Student Docents Georgina Molina and Samantha Benedicto (above) and Jaquie Esquivel (below) help out at Depot Day!**

Travel Town Museum Foundation memberships are available in a range of levels, all of which include special benefits including gift shop discounts and invitations to members-only events! In addition, each issue of Travel Town Museum Foundation memberships are available in a range of levels, all of which include special benefits including gift shop discounts and invitations to members-only events! In addition, each issue of Travel Town’s newsletter also highlights the work our docents are doing in our Oral History Center and on the Park. We appreciate all of our new and renewing supporters of the Travel Town Museum Foundation!
Depot Day this year was a fun event featuring the theme “Railroads in the roaring 20s”. Our exhibitors helped educate the public about rail and transportation safety with booths from Operation Lifesaver, LA Metro, the Fillmore Western Railroad, Los Angeles Fire Department Engine Co. 76, L.A. Trade Technical College, The Griffith Park Rangers, Boy Scout Troop 210, and Fairplex Garden Railway. Exhibitors that added to the historical educational purpose included Jackie Hadenot, woodcarver, Louis Arce and Adam’s Forge Blacksmithing, Darrell Rooney Productions, and the Model A Ford Club of America. Special thanks for donations go out to Pizza Hut, Costco, Trader Joe’s, Starbucks, Schylling/Toys, and WowToyz. Performances that highlighted the day were made by Storyteller John, The Hollow Trees and the Crescend Valley Jazz Band!

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Eagle candidate Denny Kim also helped the museum out by re-building and painting two cart tracks that are regularly used to move ties, rail and other material along the railroad to support various projects. Denny had to have the carts stripped and sanded down, replace the wood surface on the cart, and have everything put back together with new bolts and fasteners. And they were given a sharp new coat of yellow paint and new lettering! These carts have been used recently to help move ballast along the right of way track as well as the ties for Thomas Cisneros’ tie project below. Denny is from Troop 621 based in Los Angeles.

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Docent volunteers Wil Casso and John Evans wait to give tours through the dining car while Michael Ruble passes by.

Sister Museum Fillmore and Western came out and added to our event.

More beautiful Model A’s basking in the sun at the museum.

Author Darrell Rooney discusses his book about Jean Harlow.

Traveltown favorite Jackie Hadenot displays his train woodcarvings.

Volunteers from the LA Art Deco Society also spiced up the event in their period costumes. Also featured here are some of those beautiful Model As!
We’ve Been Working ...

M-177 Work Right on Track!

Progress on restoration of the Santa Fe Railway M.177 Motorcar continued to move forward in 2011 under leadership of Travel Town Volunteer, Bryan Reese. The main powerplant, the Winton Model 177 418 gasoline engine and its 600 volt DC generator, are essentially finished and only require tinkering and fine tuning to make them run smoothly. The previous year had seen the solving of a bedeviling problem with the main bearings of the Winton, and this was ultimately traced to cooling water contamination in the lube oil. The fix was not simple, and involved disassembling nearly all of the top half of the engine. Since then, the engine has only been run sporadically due to the difficulty in obtaining gasoline to run for any longer than a few minutes. However, a recent wonderful donation of gasoline from Valero Oil will now permit prolonged run-tests! This is just what’s needed to complete the final testing and adjustment of the engine.

The final piece of the puzzle to seeing M-177 move under her own power is the electrical system. This part of the project is being spearheaded by volunteer Kirk Reinholz and is essentially finished and only require tinkering and fine tuning to make them run smoothly. In the middle-to-late ‘40s, the Santa Fe “modernized” the interior of the 1920s-era car, removing the original 3-and-2 seating and replacing it with contemporary reclining 2-and-2 coach seats. Original mahogany wood paneling was painted over and brown linoleum was laid on the floor as part of the modernization. Today, the original paint colors from that period have been matched and re-applied, and replacement linoleum purchased several years ago was located in Travel Town storage and is being readied for installation. Once the flooring is replaced, the re-upholstered seat can be installed and that room will be complete!

Meanwhile - on the exterior of the car - some prep work was done on the body of the car, including replacement of a few small rusted areas of the skin with new metal. Perhaps this year will see the painting of the exterior - along with the car taking its first self-powered movement in over 50 years!

Semaphore Signal Restoration

Museum Volunteer and Foundation Board Member Brad Slosar rehabilitated the original operating machinery for both of the “Style B” Semaphore Signals. Dating from the early 20th century, these two signals came to Travel Town from the Southern Pacific’s Siskiyou Line in central Oregon near the town of Cottage Grove. They were retired and removed from railroad service in the 1980s and have been stored at Travel Town for two decades awaiting restoration.

In recent weeks, the non-smoking compartment has been repainted in the paint scheme it had when it came to Travel Town in 1957. In the middle-to-late ‘40s, the Santa Fe “modernized” the interior of the 1920s-era car, removing the original 3-and-2 seating and replacing it with contemporary reclining 2-and-2 coach seats. Original mahogany wood paneling was painted over and brown linoleum was laid on the floor as part of the modernization. Today, the original paint colors from that period have been matched and re-applied, and replacement linoleum purchased several years ago was located in Travel Town storage and is being readied for installation. Once the flooring is replaced, the re-upholstered seat can be installed and that room will be complete!

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On the Railroad!

Corporate Sponsorships: Big Business Making a Big Difference at Travel Town!

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp. Sponsors Student Service Learning Program

With an extra dose of Holiday spirit, we’re pleased and proud to report the receipt of a generous grant from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation to help sponsor our High School Student Service Learning and Educational Outreach programs at Travel Town! Through these programs, the Foundation helps provide the Museum with volunteer Docents, restoration workers and other support personnel. High school aged students are recruited and trained to help in a variety of volunteer capacities and positions. Students can be seen at Travel Town almost every Saturday - building new railroad tracks, helping with site maintenance, working on artifacts restoration or giving guided tours through the historic railroad passenger cars! Each student is registered through the City’s volunteer registration program and can earn community service hours to help fulfill their school, church and/or scouting service requirements. The funds from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe grant are being used to underwrite training resources, exhibit materials, Docent uniforms and other program expenses - all of which help keep the wheels turning! Thank you BNSF!

And here’s a little bit of educational outreach right now: Headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas, the BNSF Railway is one of America’s largest Class One railroads, with 32,000 miles of tracks connecting points throughout the western two-thirds of the United States - from Seattle to New Orleans, Chicago to Los Angeles, and Canada to the southern tip of Texas. The present railway is the product of nearly 400 different railroad lines that merged together over the course of 160 years! Among BNSF’s notable predecessors are the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy (Burlington Route), the St. Louis & San Francisco (Frisco Lines), the Great Northern, and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe.

Valero Energy Fuels M.177 Engine Testing

We’re proud to welcome Valero Energy Corporation as a valuable partner in the Museum’s M.177 Restoration Project! Valero’s contribution of 280 gallons of gasoline will be used to power up the historic motorcar’s recently rebuilt Winton gasoline engine during run-in trials and testing. This is the project’s next big step towards a return to the car’s self-powered operation! Many thanks to Steve Faischeny and Gwendolyn Goodman at Valero for making this wonderful gift possible!

Tons of Thanks to Vulcan Materials Company

In fact, 100 tons worth of thanks to the Vulcan Materials company for their generous support of Travel Town’s ongoing track construction program. Vulcan supplied 100 tons of ballast for the new tracks along the hillside at the Museum. We also want to thank Ray Morales and his crew from Rec & Parks who brought an extra skip loader out to Travel Town and help spread the new rock on the day of the big delivery!

Kaiser Permanente Helps Travel Town Get Made in the Shade!

Kaiser Permanente helped our park THRIVE! by donating plants and the manpower to spruce up the gazebo under the trees at Travel Town. It looks great!

If your company would like to build team spirit and give back to the community by working at Travel Town, please contact our General Manager Donna Choi.
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The final piece of the puzzle to seeing M-177 move under her own power is the internal wiring to connect the generator to the traction motors through the controller. Part of the project is being spearheaded by volunteer Kirk Reinholz and is nearly complete! Meanwhile, Don Wooten spent a lot of time making non-working dummy run-tests! This is just what’s needed to complete the final testing and adjustment of the engine.

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Thanks again to all of you for your continued support. Hope to see you at Travel Town soon!

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On the Platform…

Gregory Ramsey II

Many of our long-time volunteers certainly know Gregory Ramsey II, a young man who has literally grown up around Travel Town. We are proud to report his recent graduation from his Recruit training as a United States Marine on January 20, 2012. Private First Class Ramsey was accepted into the U.S. Marines as a musician and will attend the Armed Forces School of Music in Little Creek, Virginia, after 29 days of Marine Combat Training at Camp Pendleton. Look for him in the Rose Parade in a few short years!

Proud Parents Greg and Yvonne Ramsey have been key members of our volunteer program for over 20 years. We are so proud of you Gregory! HOOO Rah!