

Snowshed

November, 2022

Volume 15 Number 3



News & Events:

The Santa Claus Train in Truckee River Regional Park—Saturday, Dec. 3rd (weather permitting)

Truckee Railroad Museum (caboose) is open Sat & Sun, 10-4.

Museum of Truckee History is open Fri, Sat, and Sun, 10-4.

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Presidents Letter

By Jerry Blackwill

Well, we've had a good year. The Truckee River Railroad has been very successful and lots of fun for kids and adults alike. Snow has begun to fall, but we may be able to get a Santa Claus train run on December 3rd. It's tentative because it's too early to know what the weather will be like that Saturday. Once we know for sure, we'll post the information on our website, tdrrs.org, and Facebook page "Truckee Donner Railroad Society".

Speaking of our website, Jay Jacobs has done a great job redesigning it. If you haven't seen the new design, it's worth your time to take a look. And, Dan Cobb has run successful trestle tours and his plans for next season will be posted on the website.

Our Caboose Museum will be opened throughout the winter. However, we need more volunteers to staff it on the weekends. As a docent, you'll enjoy meeting with visitors and describing Truckee's railroad history to them. If you could do just one three-hour shift per month, that would help us greatly. Please contact museum manager Ed Larson at museum_manager@tdrrs.org to volunteer.

Lastly, please send your membership renewal in as soon as possible. Take advantage of the offer of free rides on the Virginia and Truckee railroad out of Virginia City.

Jerry

Truckee River Railroad

by Bob Bell

2022 was a very successful year for our ride-on train in the regional park, affectionately known as the Truckee River Railroad. The trains ran on 10 Saturdays this season, giving a total of 3,814 rides to children of all ages. Twenty volunteers put in a total of 420 hours to make it happen, and many of them were out there nearly every run day, setting up equipment, running the trains, greeting guests, punching tickets, blowing whistles, and keeping everyone safe. We also conducted two formal safety presentations and did "Operation Lifesaver" training on four Saturdays.

Thanks to all the volunteers and riders, and we look forward to doing it all again in 2023.

Model Railroad

by **Dan Cobb**

The Tahoe Donner Railroad Society is considering building a historical model railroad. The model would complement the Society's museums, rolling stock, Trestle Tours, and the Truckee River Railroad riding train as another way to acquaint locals and visitors with Truckee's rich railroading history. It would be open for public viewing on summer weekends and special events.

Our model railroad would depict Truckee in the early 1900s, a time when railroads were the mainstay of local and long-distance transportation, a major component of the local economy, and an important catalyst for the nascent tourist industry. In addition to the Southern Pacific mainline, our model railroad would include the Lake Tahoe Railway & Transportation Company's train to Tahoe City, the Hobart Southern standard gauge line to Hobart Mills, and the narrow gauge Sierra Nevada Wood & Lumber logging lines snaking through the forests north of Truckee. Truckee itself would be modeled as accurately as possible, and would include the SP Depot, Commercial Row, the granite roundhouse, and the balloon track. The railroad would probably be done in HO scale (1:87), but N scale (1:160) would be considered if space is a limiting factor.

Several alternatives have been considered for housing the model railroad. One option is a dedicated building in the Truckee River Regional Park. This would require a major fund-raising effort, but is probably the best way to ensure the long-term viability of the railroad. Another possibility would be donated space, preferably with a long-term commitment, but even short-term would be considered to get things rolling. The third option is to develop the railroad as a modular layout that could be "popped up" in various locations for operation and public viewing. Some combination of the three approaches over time is also possible.

Railroad Society members and other railroad modelers are invited to help with the planning, construction and operation. If you're interested in participating, please email us at model_railroad@tdrrs.org.

New Car Barn at the Regional Park

by **Tom Smith**

A new 42-foot-long car barn has appeared at the Truckee River Railroad in the Truckee River Regional Park. The project, which has been in the works for over a year, was done using a modular approach with 8-foot sections. The car barn will enable us to store a complete "consist" (riding cars and caboose) for the 2.5" scale train that is pulled by the steam engine. The new car barn will make it easier to assemble the steam train for our public runs during the summer months, and also expands our overall equipment storage capacity.



Many thanks to Truckee Lumber Co. and Mountain Hardware for their contribution of materials to make this project possible. Also, special thanks to Tom Nixon, Greg Zirbel, Bob Bell, Jerry Blackwill, Ed Larson, Ben Bloomfield, and Tom Smith, who volunteered their time working on the project.

New and Improved Website: tdrrs.org

by Jay Jacobs

The Truckee Donner Railroad Society has updated its online presence. We have a new website, and a new, shorter web address, tdrrs.org.

The new website articulates the mission of the Society and how that translates into the Society's outreach to the community. The areas of focus for the website are the Truckee Railroad Museum and its affiliation with Museum of Truckee History, the Truckee River Railroad (our 7.5 inch gauge railroad in the Truckee Regional Park), our display of historic railroad equipment in the Truckee Railyard, our "Trestle Tours" (guided exploration of historic railroad sites around Truckee), and our efforts to preserve the legacy of Truckee's railroads.

The website hosts a nearly complete archive of the Society's newsletter, *Snowshed*. These newsletters contain a wealth of historical information regarding Truckee's railroading history.

The website uses "responsive" web technologies, meaning that the format of each page adapts to device on which it is viewed. This provides an appropriate experience whether the site is viewed on a desktop or laptop computer, a tablet, or a cell phone.

You can view the new website at <https://tdrrs.org>.



Renew or Become a Member of TDRRS

The Truckee Donner Railroad Society runs the Truckee River Railroad, maintains the equipment displays in the Railyard pocket park, conducts Trestle Tours and history presentations, operates the caboose museum, and helps operate the Museum of Truckee History. Membership in the Society is a great way to learn about Truckee's railroading past, keep up on Society events, and do your part to keep Truckee's railroad history alive. Members receive the *Snowshed* newsletter by email, get advance notice of Society events, and are invited to our annual picnic and meeting in August. We also have a limited number of free tickets on the Virginia & Truckee Railroad for new or renewing members.

Visit <https://tdrrs.org/membership> and renew or join today for as little as \$25.

Newsletter Editor Needed

Our current *Snowshed* editor, Dan Cobb, has produced this newsletter for four years and is transitioning to a new role as the society's Historian and chief Trestle Tour guide. As a result, we're looking for a new editor. The *Snowshed* is published quarterly, and is currently just four pages. It's currently done using Microsoft Publisher, but it could easily be transitioned to Word or another word processing program, and we're open to considering redesign or expansion ideas. Contact Dan at tours@tdrrs.org if you're interested.

Truckee Donner Railroad Society

Board of Directors:

Jerry Blackwill — President

Bob Bell — Executive Vice President and Treasurer

Ed Larson — Vice President, Museum Operations

Dan Cobb — Vice President, Strategic Planning and Historian

Ed Czerwinski — Secretary

Nelson Van Gundy — Historian Emeritus

Chip Huck — Rolling Stock Restoration & Preservation

Judy DePuy — Publicity

Tom Smith — Truckee River Railroad

Jay Jacobs — Webmaster

Our History: Railroads of the Truckee area played a significant role in founding and developing the town of Truckee. From the blasting of black powder in the granite over Donner Lake, to the hissing of the first steam engines coming into town, to the whistles of lumberjacks in the mountains, to the crack of ice being loaded in the reefers, to the tourists flocking to enjoy the beauty of the area, Truckee's story is very much the story of its railroads.

Our Mission: Our mission is to preserve, interpret, and educate the public about railroading life and history in the Truckee region including its contribution to Truckee and the nation. We will accomplish this through the acquisition, preservation, and restoration of relevant equipment and artifacts and the display of exhibits in our Truckee museums.

Volunteer!

You can help TDRS and serve the community by volunteering for one of our projects or ongoing operations:

- ♦ Snowplow & Crane Restoration
- ♦ Truckee River Railroad Operations
- ♦ Museum Docent

Contact our volunteer manager volunteer_manager@truckeedonerrailroadsociety.com.

Donate!

You can also help by donating at our website, truckeedonerrailroadsociety.com, at the bottom of the home page.

The Truckee Donner Railroad Society is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization.

Truckee Donner Railroad Society
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