



# The Interchange

News for the Customers of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Company  
The Transportation Gateway for the Central Coast

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## HAPPY NEW YEAR!



We hope that all of you had an enjoyable and safe holiday season and wish everyone a Happy and Prosperous New Year! We look forward to a better year economically as we continue to provide an efficient and cost effective transportation system to our customers, helping everyone weather these economic times.

In November Business Development Directors Jamie Foster and Matthew Regusci and I attended the California Short Line Railroad Conference in San Pedro. The mantra was that traffic levels are down and short line railroads are getting virtually none of the Federal stimulus money. It looks like we are on our own to continue to rehabilitate our line and equipment. We will continue to be very creative in using our resources rehabilitating our track and equipment.

We are starting a new marketing campaign, "Clean and Green, Ship by Rail!". The objective of this marketing campaign is to educate the public that rail transportation is the most efficient and environmentally friendly mode of freight transportation. We encourage all of our customers to take advantage of a positive marketing image that your product is shipped by rail.

Speaking of environmentally friendly issues, the City of Santa Maria has put in place an ambitious plan to build an extensive network of bike paths and bike lanes. Some of the long term plans calls for bike paths on our right of ways and adjacent to our right of ways. This concerns us as safety and liability issues are our concerns for public access along our railroad right of ways.

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## Service Report

### UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COAST LINE



Despite challenging weather issues across the country, Union Pacific Railroad's traffic continues to move with no significant delays. In fact all of the Class 1 railroads continue to move freight in a timely manner so far. Rail transportation has proven its reliability in stormy weather throughout the nation.

Greg Wallen is now the permanent Manager of Road Operations in San Luis Obispo. Greg is very knowledgeable manager who is well received by his employees. Greg has assisted the Santa Maria Valley Railroad on numerous issues and concerns. We welcome Greg to the Central Coast!

### SMVRR REHABILITATION PROJECTS



Signal rehabilitation continued in the Fall. SMVRR Maintenance of Way forces replaced rail and ties on Pacer Curve just west of Black Road. The crews also have been rehabilitating equipment in the shops and recently rebuilt a portable water pump.

**Clean and Green  
Ship by Rail!**

Bike paths and railroad tracks is just not a good mix. Some city officials are not aware that we are an operating freight railroad with train service as much as 6 days a week. We are also concerned with bike paths adjacent to our right of way as this cuts out any future possibilities of sidings and spurs to future freight customers. Some of the future plans will directly affect our freight customers' properties. We will need to be vigilant in the development of the bicycle master plan.

We are certainly not opposed to the bicycle community's efforts for an increased bicycle infrastructure, but it needs to be planned with safety and function in mind. In fact we now sponsor a recently formed cycling team, Santa Maria Valley Railroad Cycling Team, with already over 20 members.

Rob Himoto, President

## LOOKING FOR EQUIPMENT

The Santa Maria Valley Railroad is looking for a portable welder, preferably a Miller Bobcat or Miller Trailblazer welder or an equivalent unit. GM James Andrews is putting together a car repair department and is also looking for grinders and other hand tools.

The Maintenance of Way Department is looking for a brush hog and small disc for their Ford tractor. They plan to do a maintenance of way blitz this Spring to clean up the right of way and attack the vegetation.

Anyone who has surplus equipment give James a call at (805) 922-7941 or email [jandrews@smvrr.com](mailto:jandrews@smvrr.com).

## FRIENDS EVENT SCHEDULE

The Friends of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad has put out their schedule. Friends programs on the second Thursdays start at 6:00. Dinner for \$6.00 is served at 5:30. For more information go to [www.friends-smvrr.org](http://www.friends-smvrr.org).

**Jan. 14 Friends Monthly Program – All about Air Brakes**  
Location: SMVRR Office at Betteravia Industrial Park. James Andrews will talk about air brakes and how they work.

**Feb. 11 Friends Monthly Program – White Hills Branch**  
Location: SMVRR Office at Betteravia Industrial Park. Bruce Morden will be doing a presentation on the Lompoc White Hills Branch.

**Mar. 11 Friends Monthly Program – SP Surf Station** Location: SMVRR Office at Betteravia Industrial Park. John Rososki will be talking about the history of the SP Surf Station.

**April 8 Friends Monthly Program – Safety on the Railroad**  
Location: SMVRR Office at Betteravia Industrial Park. Mary Harlow and James Andrews will talk about Safety on the railroad and basic First Aid. A mandatory program for Friends volunteers

**April 10-11 Motorcars Operators West Spring Speeder Run**  
Location: Betteravia Industrial Park on Saturday and Bitter Creek Western Railroad on Sunday.

## WARREN BUFFETT'S PURCHASE



Just about everyone has heard about Warren Buffett's purchase of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad. We feel this is a positive development for the railroad industry. Mr. Buffett is a long term investor who only invests in strong companies. This may attract other long term investors such as Mr. Buffett and has put the railroad industry in the forefront of the investing public.

By nature railroads are a long term capital intensive infrastructure investment. Investors such as Mr. Buffett and Bill Gates are good for the railroad industry.

## SHIPPING BY RAIL

### EFFICIENT

It takes just one gallon of diesel fuel to move one ton of freight over 400 miles by rail.

### COST EFFECTIVE

Rail Transportation enables businesses in the Santa Maria Valley and Central Coast to cut costs and remain competitive in this global marketplace.

### ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

The Santa Maria Valley Railroad hauled an equivalent of almost 2700 trucks the past year.

## Santa Maria Valley Railroad Company

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