

# Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

P.O. Box 1776

Colfax, CA 95713

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## *PSRHS Activities & Events...*

### Editor's Comments

June should prove to be a very interesting month for the PSRHS members. Instead of our regular meeting we will have the first field trip of 2007.

**Saturday June 23<sup>rd</sup>.** - Field trip to the area around Donner Summit.

**BONUS TRIP - Saturday June 30<sup>th</sup>.** - Visit to Dave McClain's home to view the semaphore signal that we have obtained, and see the operation of the one on his property.

Please forward any comments, suggestions or ideas for trips or other activities to me for consideration and information.

Editor: Lyle Brown, (530) 885-6997  
<2lebrown@infostations.com>

## *In this Issue...*

### *Monthly Meeting...*

There will be no regular Society meeting in June. A field trip will be held on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Information herein or call (530) 346-9607 for more info.

### **Membership Information**

Individual Members = \$20.00  
Family Membership = \$25.00

- Monthly Newsletter
  - Member Activities, Presentations and Field Trips
  - Display & Restoration Projects
- PSRHS, P.O. Box 1776  
Colfax, CA 95713

# Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

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## Monthly Newsletter ---June 2007

### *June Field Trip Programs:*

In place of the monthly meeting the following is scheduled for the enjoyment and enlightenment of the members.

### Railroad and Transportation History at Donner Summit

The railroad and early highway history at the Donner Summit area will be featured on the spring fieldtrip of the Placer Sierra Railroad Heritage Society on **Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>**. Some of the sites to be visited include Tunnel No. 6, the China Wall, the Lincoln Hwy and Emigrant Wagon Road, the Summit Locomotive Turntable, as well as others.

The fieldtrip attendees should meet in the Donner Ski-Ranch parking lot at 10AM and bring lunch, water and sunscreen. Carpools will depart from Colfax at 9AM. The trip should finish at approximately 2pm. Call Jim Wood at (530) 346-9607 for more information.

**Semaphore Meeting** - We've arranged with Dave McClain to hold a scoping meeting for those of you interested in seeing the semaphore signal that you all contributed to as well as establishing a working group to begin its restoration and installation. We will meet at Dave's house at 1:00 PM on **Sunday, June 17**. Dave will demonstrate the operation of a semaphore signal with the one that he has operating in his yard. Dave lives at 22850 Placer Hills Rd near Colfax. Exit I-80 at Placer Hills Road/Canyon Way exit. Cross over the freeway and turn left onto Placer Hills Road. Wind up the hill and through the subway under the railroad crossing. Turn left at the T- intersection there. Go about 200 feet and turn sharp left

onto Espee Lane (Dave's driveway). Drive slowly up the driveway past the other houses up to Dave's log home at the top of the hill on the left. If you get lost, 346-6946.

Those of you living in Auburn may wish to carpool: Vi White, Ken Yeo, Shirley, and Lyle Brown. Call me if you have questions 346-9607. Hope to see you there.

Jim Wood, President

### *May Meeting Minutes:*

### *Announcements and Updates:*

Our first Field Trip for the year is scheduled for **Saturday June 23**. The destination will be the Summit area (Norden, Turntable site, etc.). This will be a revisit for some members; the itinerary is the same as the very first Field Trip 5 years ago. Carpooling and meeting places to be arranged.

### **UP light crane parked at Colfax:**

Union Pacific is ready to donate the crane to PSRHS, pending attainment of property with spur line track for the Society to use. The crane is self propelled and therefore can also be used as a switch engine. Negotiations are in the works for the property.

Tony Hesch showed us the Track Chart book the club recently purchased. It shows maps, yards, grades, and other track information from Roseville to Salt Lake City.

A Board Meeting followed the regular meeting.

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## Monthly Newsletter ---June 2007

### *Program –*

#### **“ROTARY UP THE HILL”**

Many thanks to Brendan Compton for sharing the video footage he and Jay filmed of UP’s training session on the rotary snow plow. The UP decided to take 2 of the rotaries up to the snow in early March in order to train new staff on how to run them since the last few men that know how to operate the plows will be retiring soon. The last time the rotaries went up to the snow was in 1998.

The two plows were built around 1925 and 1935. They are pushed by 2 AC diesels, with a connector to supply the electric power to the plow units. A steam boiler on board is used to circulate hot steam to the working parts in order to keep them from freezing up during use. When plowing, they travel between 4 – 12 mph, depending on the weight and consistency of the snow. The rotary wheels themselves are 11 feet in diameter and revolve at about 90 rpm’s when throwing an arc of snow 150 – 250 feet away from the track.

The onboard crew consists of an operator, engineer and conductor, with 2 maintenance men assigned to keep the plows in working order. Now that more crews have been trained on the rotaries, we hope we will all be able to see again the same beautiful sight that member Vi White described. She lived for many years near Donner Lake and remembers seeing the plows in full action, throwing a beautiful arc of snow as they came around the bend towards Donner Summit.

Shirley Belleville, Secretary

