

# Placer-Sierra Railroad Heritage Society

P.O. Box 1776

Colfax, CA 95713

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MAY 2010



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To:

## *PSRHS Activities & Events...*

### Editor's Comments

Interesting field trips are being planned:

Possible tour of the Roseville rail yard may be possible in June.

A trip to the Virginia & Truckee railroad in July is scheduled.

In the Fall another look at the Towle Brothers railroad is proposed.

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

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## *In this Issue...*

### *Monthly Meeting...*

The next PSRHS meeting will be held at 7:00PM Thursday, May 27th. in the Multi-purpose Senior Citizen Center on D Ave. at the Dewitt Complex in Auburn. 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

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## Monthly Newsletter

### Announcements/Updates:

Membership renewal dues for 2010 are now being accepted. \$20 individual member; \$25 family membership

**Colfax caboose**-Final work was completed on updating the electrical system. The panel is now rewired and up to code. Work sessions at the caboose are on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month, around 9:30 am. Contact Jim Wood for details 530-320-1276

**Donner Crossings:** Roger Staab distributed the latest edition of "Donner Crossings", a publication by PSRHS. The subject is "Colfax and Its Railroads – A Look Back In Time." It contains many pictures and interesting historical facts about the railroad and the town of Colfax.

### May Program:

"Sierra Shortlines" Video. Member Ken Yeo will be offering insights about this new video that we will be showing.

### Thank you to members:

Tony Hesch for donating historical photos and videos to the club.

Jim Wood for donating issues of various train magazines to members.

### Field Trip Plans for 2010

**May/June:** possible tour by UP staff of the Roseville Rail yards. Details will be reported at a future date.

**July 11 or 18:** We are planning a trip in July to Virginia City, Nevada for a private tour of the Virginia & Truckee Railroad. Included will be a ride on the V&TRR. The finalized date and plans will be reported.

**Fall:** Exploration of the history of the Towle Brothers Railroad. The Towle Brothers built their first sawmill near Blue Canyon in 1859 to serve the mining trade. By the late 1860s, their major customer was

the Central Pacific railroad, beginning a relationship that continued for many years. In the 1880s, the Towle Bros. began building narrow (three foot) gauge rail lines to haul logs from the forest to mills, and evidence of roadbeds from this era can still be found in many locations.

### April Program:

Roger Staab narrated a pictorial history of the town of Colfax as it related to the presence of the Railroad. We saw the evolution of the town from the time it was known as Illinoistown, renamed after Schuyler Colfax, and up to the present. The photos showed the evolution of the depots, the placement of various buildings, and the changes to the mainline and NCNG. Thank you Roger for a detailed look at the history of the railroad town of Colfax.  
(Shirley Belleville, Secretary)

### May Program:

A presentation by Ken Yeo who will show us a new commercially produced video film featuring historical footage of 5 shortline railroads in California. There is a segment on the Nevada County Narrow Gauge in which Ken provides the audio narrative for the film. Other segments feature historic railroads such as Yosemite Valley, Yosemite Logging Incline, Hetch Hetchy, and Amador Central. This is a rare opportunity to see actions film of these famous railroads in operation.

### V&T RR Field Trip in July

Our first fieldtrip of the year will be a unique trip to see the newly reconstructed Virginia and Truckee Railroad from Virginia City to the vicinity of Carson City. Much of the track was laid over the historic grades

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## Monthly Newsletter

but deviations were incorporated in some locations. This will be a special trip presented for our PSRHS group by Gary Luce of Geocon Company who is the chief engineering company responsible for the V&T reconstruction project. Gary is both a mining engineer as well as a geotechnical engineer. His perspective of coping with the rebuilding effort through historic mining territory will make this trip a once in a lifetime opportunity to see the engineering feats accomplished to rebuild this historic railroad line.

Our trip will take place on **Sunday, July 11**. Trip attendees will meet and depart from Virginia City at 10:30 am in 4x4 vehicles or high clearance vehicles for a guided tour along the reconstructed railroad grade by way of the historic wagon road that parallels the old railroad grade. We will stop at various spots to inspect the engineering of the railroad line. Along the way we'll have a run by of the V&T train. At the Carson City end of the line, we'll board the train and have another personally narrated trip back to Virginia City.

Cost for the trip will be \$60 and will include a special guidebook prepared for us and the V&T train ride ticket. This will be a long day but worth it. Water and soft drinks will be provided. Bring your own lunch and snacks.

Because the V&T operators need some amount of guaranteed attendance, we'll need to have your reservation and payment by mid-June. Guests can be accommodated. Car-pooling will be encouraged. More details in the June newsletter.

### In Reemergence

Violet (Vi) White passed away on April 17, 2010. She had been a member of the PSRHS for a number of years. Vi had a very interesting life which included building with her husband the first ski lodge at Donner Summit, near Sugar Bowl. An avid skier she was a member of the Oakland Ski Club and participated in various ski races.

Her memories of the development of the skiing industry on the summit and its relationship to the railroad were a truly amazing story.

(A memorial will be held in Truckee on May 29<sup>th</sup>. Call Charlie at (530) 587-4811, for information.)

