

Railroad Weekend called a rootin' tootin' success



Railroad event rolls in Arroyo

Children and adults alike were drawn to the IOOF Hall in the Village of Arroyo Grande last weekend for the South County Historical Society's "Railroad Weekend," which featured model trains, lectures and a movie. The event drew more than 800 people.

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The first-ever Railroad Weekend event held at the South County Historical Society IOOF Hall in the Village of Arroyo Grande last weekend was a huge success, according to organizers.

The family-oriented event was the largest ever held at the newly renovated IOOF Hall, 128 Bridge St., and drew more than 800 people over the course of the weekend, said Vivian Krug, Historical Society member.

The hall was packed both days with people — young and old alike — who enjoyed viewing the running model trains that were on display and listening to stories from local historians such as Loren Nicholson about the history of trains in the county, Krug said.

During one of Nicholson's stories, an audience member asked a question, was handed the microphone and then began telling a story about his experience with trains as a youth.

"All of a sudden the (microphone) was being passed around to the audience as they

told of their train stories," Krug said. "It was great."

Greg Burnstein, owner of Doc Burnstein's Ice Cream Lab in the Village, handed out free wooden train whistles to the first 300 kids who walked through the hall's doors.

Krug said train whistles could be heard inside and outside during the two-day event, which made both days even more fun for participants and organizers.

The San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association showcased several model displays during the event, including running trains throughout the existing Avila Beach exhibit at the hall.

Burnstein displayed some of his Village Railroad rolling stock that runs throughout the year in the ice cream parlor, according to Krug.

Kids also got to watch the movie *Polar Express*, and Nicholson sold and signed copies of his latest book, "Rails Across the Ranchos."

— April Charlton



Contributed/Vivian Krug

Railroad fans of all ages gathered last weekend to check out trains at the first-ever Railroad Weekend event at the South County Historical Society in the Village of Arroyo Grande. More than 800 people attended during the weekend.