

Friends of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad
P.O. Box 1031
Santa Maria, CA 93456

4th Annual Friends of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Dinner Gala

Saturday May 19, 2018 at the Santa Maria Fairpark

Join us for our 4th Annual Friends of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad Dinner Gala on Saturday May 19, 2018 in the Fountain Pavillion at the Santa Maria Fairpark starting at 5:30 pm!

This year the Santa Maria Valley Railroad will be presenting the Railroad Public Safety Award to the Union Pacific Railroad's local Maintenance of Way Crew based in Guadalupe. UPRR's MOW crew led by Manager of Track Maintenance Javier Sanchez kept the Union Pacific Railroad's Coast Line open during the Thomas Fire, the largest fire in the history of California, last December. The crew fought the fire on the railroad right of way in the Ventura area and quickly restored the line within a day. In January the line was covered by the mudslide in Montecito, and the crew was called again to uncover and repaired the line and restored service within days. Their efforts were nothing short of heroic to remove mud, boulders, and debris particularly at the Olive Mill Road area.

As a result, there were only slight delays in railroad traffic. The customers on the Santa Maria Valley Railroad were able to continue to ship and receive by rail and did not have to divert freight traffic by truck. Amtrak was able to operate over the line and was greeted with full trains as Highway 101 remained closed.

The efforts of UPRR's local Maintenance of Way crew lessened vehicular traffic along the 101 corridor as alternative vehicle traffic routes were congested. With Highway 101 closed, what would have been a 20-minute drive became an almost 4-hour drive between Santa Barbara and Ventura. Passenger rail became a valuable transportation alternative. Also, with minimal interruption in freight traffic, there was no increase in truck traffic during this time.

The Friends of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad will be presenting their Annual G. Allan Hancock History Preservation Award. The Friends is raising funds for a new exhibit at the Santa Maria Valley History Museum focusing on the railroad's importance in growing the Santa Maria Valley economically over the past 100 plus years.

Seats are still available for the dinner gala and silent auction fundraiser featuring a dinner buffet of Tri Tip, Chicken and Ribs catered by Cool Hand Luke's. Tickets are \$75.00 per person or a table of 8 for \$600.00. Tickets can be purchased on line at www.friends-smvrr.org.

Friends of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad are a 501(c) (3) nonprofit corporation dedicated to the preservation of the history of the Santa Maria Valley Railroad and to educate the public about the current railroad industry. For more information go to our website at www.friends-smvrr.org.