

Union Pacific steam program's Ed Dickens is keynote speaker for R&LHS 2025 annual meeting

Southern California Chapter is host of event

ONTARIO, Calif — “Southern California Rails” is the theme for the 2025 Railway & Locomotive Historical Society’s annual meeting to be held here on June 11-14. The host is R&LHS’s Southern California Chapter.

Ontario lies inland from Los Angeles and stands on the western edge of the booming Inland Empire area that continues through San Bernardino and Riverside counties. Many transportation options are available, including Metrolink commuter trains and Amtrak’s *Southwest Chief* at San Bernardino and Riverside. Amtrak’s *Coast Starlight* and *Pacific Surfliners* serve Los Angeles, the tri-weekly *Sunset Limited/Texas Eagle* stops at Ontario, and commuter trains serve Rancho Cucamonga, nearest Metrolink stop to

the convention hotel.

Event headquarters is the DoubleTree by Hilton Ontario Airport, 222 N. Vineyard Ave., conveniently located near the Ontario airport via free hotel shuttle. Activities planned are:

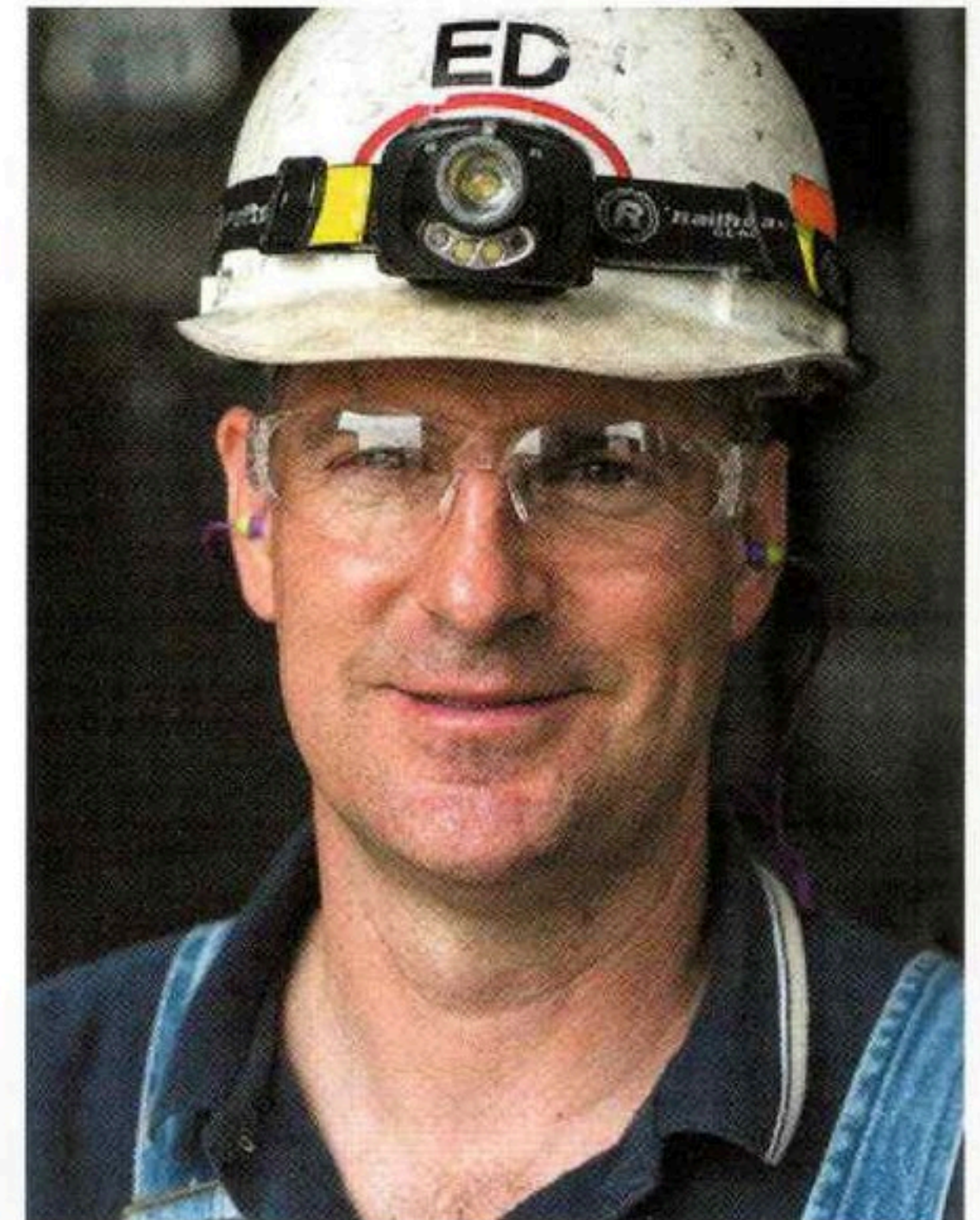
Wednesday, June 11

- Afternoon registration and national R&LHS board meeting.
- An evening meet-and-greet reception with no-host bar.

Thursday, June 12

- Breakfast on your own. A tour on air-conditioned motor coaches toward the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles is planned, focusing on the interface between the ports and the railroads in moving intermodal freight inland. A box lunch will be provided. Dinner is on your own.

- Author and photographer Joe Strapac will present an evening program titled “Rail Expansion in Southern California, 1869-1911.”



Ed Dickens

Friday, June 13

- After breakfast on your own, board air-conditioned motor coaches to ride to Southern California Rail-

On Our Cover

Two of the electric stars of the Illinois Railway Museum’s collection – both operable – pose for night photos at the museum’s grounds in Union, Ill. At left is a Chicago, North Shore & Milwaukee four-car *Electroliner* articulated inter-urban trainset (St. Louis Car Co., 1941), with Chicago South Shore & South Bend double-cab 2-D+D-2 electric motor No. 803 (General Electric Co., 1949). Part 1 of our coverage of IRM begins on Page 8.

—Photo by Dave Zeman

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DOUBLETREE BY HILTON ONTARIO AIRPORT will be the headquarters for activities during the 2025 R&LHS annual meeting, scheduled for June 11-14.

way Museum in Perris. Founded in 1956 and located in Perris since 1958, it originally was known as Orange Empire Trolley Museum. SCRM later expanded its emphasis to include steam and diesel railroading.

A full day is planned at the museum. Equipment is expected to be operating, with train rides planned. In addition to an extensive fleet for the museum's operating trackage, it also owns the rolling stock from Walt Disney animator Ward Kimball's Grizzly Flats Railroad.

The opportunity to operate a diesel locomotive will be available at extra charge, payable directly to SCRM. A box lunch will be provided.

- Following return to the Double-Tree, the evening will begin with a no-host bar. Dinner will include the R&LHS annual members' meeting. The speaker will be Union Pacific Railroad Manager, Heritage Operations Ed Dickens. He oversees the operation of UP 4-8-8-4 Big Boy locomotive No. 4014 (American Locomotive Co., or Alco, 1941) and 4-8-4 engine No. 844 (Alco, 1944). The Chapter returned No. 4014 to UP in 2014 for an overhaul, completed in 2019. It participated in events marking the 150th anniversary of the Golden Spike Ceremony in 2019. Since then, it has toured much of the UP system, from Chicago to Texas and California.

Chapter Chairman Rob Shatsnider notes that "We are supportive of rail preservation and what better way to preserve a locomotive than to have a Class 1 railroad restore it to service?"

Saturday, June 14

- The morning begins with an included breakfast buffet, at which author John Bush is scheduled to speak on UP's 88-member fleet of Alco-built 4-12-2 three-cylinder locomotives. Built between 1926 and 1930, the group was unique to UP. With co-author and UP expert William Kratville, Bush literally wrote the book (two volumes) on the 9000 class.

- Attendees will board air-conditioned motor coaches to travel to the Chapter's RailGiants Train Museum in Pomona. Bush will give a walk-around tour of the only surviving 4-12-2 engine, UP No. 9000.



A STAR attraction will be UP's Centennial DDA40X double-diesel unit No. 6915.

Photo by Shelley Hunter Shatsnider

That engine, together with Southern Pacific three-cylinder 4-10-2 engine No. 5021 (Alco, 1926) and UP 6,600-horsepower DDA40X "Centennial" double-diesel No. 6915 (Electro-Motive Division of General Motors Corp., 1969), give meaning to the "Giants" part of the RailGiants name.

Another diesel in the collection, UP SD40-2C unit No. 3105, will be running. The collection includes four more steam locomotives: Santa Fe Hudson-type 4-6-4 engine No. 3450 (Baldwin Locomotive Works, 1927); narrow-gauge Consolidation-type

2-8-0 engine No. 3 (BLW, 1903), used by several Western mining operations; Fruit Growers Supply Climax type engine No. 3 (Climax Manufacturing Co., 1909); and Outer Harbor Terminal Railway 0-6-0 switcher No. 2 (Schenectady Locomotive Works, 1887).

Also, the museum includes three cabooses and several freight and passenger cars, including a Santa Fe horse express car.

Buses will depart before lunch, returning attendees back to the Double-Tree or, for those having afternoon flights, to Ontario International Airport.



UNION PACIFIC STEAM AND DIESEL share the spotlight at RailGiants Train Museum, with operational Electro-Motive Division SD40-2 unit No. 3105 at left and 4-12-2 engine No. 9000, first of its class (Alco, 1926) and largest of the few surviving North American three-cylinder steam locomotives.

Photo by Shelley Hunter Shatsnider

Southern California Rails 2025 Registration Form

Ontario, Calif. • June 11-14, 2025

Your Name: _____
(As you want it to appear on your meeting name badge)

Companion Name: _____
(required to pay separate registration fee if attending official events)

Street address or P.O. Box: _____

Address line 2 _____

City _____ **State** _____ **ZIP** _____

Email _____

Cellphone _____

Cost: \$450 members (spouse or significant other may also register at this rate)
\$490 non-members (includes 1-year R&LHS membership)

Note: Final schedule for meals and speakers is pending arrangements.

Please register _____ attendees for the program @ \$ _____ each.

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Send checks payable to R&LHS Southern California Chapter to:
Steve McFerson, Treasurer, 12700 Newport Ave. #17, Tustin, CA 92780

Form and payment must be RECEIVED no later than May 15, 2025

If you prefer to register and pay electronically, you can do so at <http://www.railgiants.org/2025ontario.htm>

Questions? Leave a voicemail message at 909-833-0464 and the Chapter will respond, or email at RailGiants@gmail.com

Hotel and travel information

Registrants must book their rooms through the hotel website or phone number. The meeting hotel is the DoubleTree by Hilton Ontario Airport, 222 North Vineyard Ave., Ontario, Calif., 91764. Room rate for R&LHS attendees is \$189/night + tax if booked by May 12, 2025, or until room block is filled. Overnight parking if needed is about \$18 per day.

Book on-line at

<https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/onto-dt-919-780a9492-fd7e-4a1f-8b88-8cd85fa51d7d/>. If that doesn't work or you prefer to talk with a human, phone 800-222-8733 and use Group Code 919 to make your room reservation. The DoubleTree has a 72-hour reservation cancellation policy. **Important:**

1. Not all equipment is ADA accessible.
2. No refund on R&LHS registrations after May 15.
3. Attendees with dietary needs must contact the Southern California Chapter in writing at least two weeks prior to the event.

Ontario International Airport is the closest airport. The DoubleTree provides a free shuttle from the airport to the hotel. Other major airports are at greater distance. Amtrak serves San Bernardino, Riverside, and Los Angeles. Metrolink commuter trains connect these three stations with locations near Ontario. Uber and Lyft are also popular. An updated rail guide will be available as the meeting approaches.