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Burlington Northern Bringing RR Locomotive Simulator to Metro

(March 29, 2005) Itchin' to drive a choo-choo train? You may get your chance, Thursday, when the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad brings its diesel locomotive simulator to Metro Headquarters.

The Los Angeles Railroad Heritage Foundation is sponsoring the simulator display as one of a series of historical events focused on BNSF and its Atchison Topeka & Santa Fe predecessor.

The simulator gives wannabe engineers a true-to-life sensation of operating a real BNSF engine. Used by the railroad to train its own engineers, the simulator can recreate the feel of pulling a slack train, merchandise cars, piggyback or coal cars.

Technicians will begin setting up the locomotive simulator in the Headquarters lobby on Wednesday afternoon. It will be open to visitors and employees on Thursday from 9:30 a.m. until 4 p.m.

BNSF's vice president of training, John Quilty, and Jeffrey Abbott, general director of the National Academy of Railroad Sciences, will be on hand to help demonstrate the simulator, according to Joe Lesser of the Railroad Heritage Foundation.

Also on Thursday, the Foundation has scheduled a dinner at Philippe's French Dip Restaurant to mark the opening of "Red, Silver, Blue & Yellow," a wide-ranging display of Santa Fe locomotive images and models from the early 1930s through the present.

Other Foundation tours and dinner events are scheduled April 9, 26 and 30. For information about these events, employees can e-mail at jlatsf@earthlink.net or call 626-458-4449.