



THE CLUB CAR



Bulletin 642

Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc.

www.ncry.org

February 2017

End of the Drought? Be careful for what you wish



Photo by Steve Barkkarie

Steve Barkkarie and Doug Vanderlee spent four hours clearing track and opened up culverts.

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We are the Niles Canyon Railway. The very name "Canyon" tells us that such a railroad is precariously positioned between a hillside on one side of the right-of-way, and a creek or river on the other side. This tidy little arrangement works out pretty well most of the time. The canyon topography yields beautiful and dramatic views . . . in clear weather. During earthquakes and heavy rains, gravity draws rocks, trees, mud, and water from above on the hillside down onto the tracks below.

It is for this reason that the mighty Southern Pacific, with all of its strength and resources, pulled up their rails in

1985 and left the canyon. One last mudslide was one too many for the SP to bear.

On Wednesday, 11 January 2017, after a couple of days of heavy rains, Maintenance of Way volunteers Steve Lowe, Pat Stratton, and John Zielinski reported for Wednesday Warrior duty in the Brightside Yard. They found Doug Vanderlee and Steve Barkkarie preparing equipment to deal with a very significant mudslide at the drainage drop inlet at the East end of Sandbag Curve. The offending drain plugs up almost every time there is significant

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OUR MISSION: To be an operating railroad museum for standard gauge railroading, past, present and future, with emphasis on the Western United States and special emphasis on Northern California.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

February 4	1st Saturday	East Track Building, 8 a.m. (Brightside Yard)
February 11	2nd Saturday	Board of Directors Meeting, 3 p.m. (Sunol Depot)
February 25	4th Saturday	Brush & Tree Trimming 8 a.m. (Brightside)
March 4	1st Saturday	East Track Building, 8 a.m. (Brightside Yard)
March 11	2nd Saturday	Board of Directors Meeting, 3 p.m. (Sunol Depot)
March 17	3rd Friday	General Mtg 7:30 p.m. (Niles Essanay Film Museum)

Most General Meetings take place at the Sunol Glen School in Sunol, meetings are held in January, March, May, June, July, and October, but can be subject to cancellation.

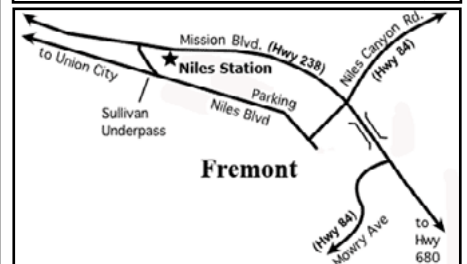
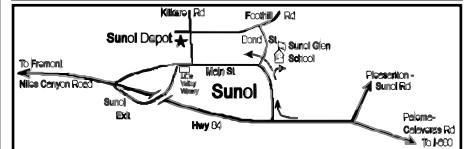
Every Wednesday and Saturday is a WORK DAY at the Brightside Yard

===== BOARD OF DIRECTORS =====

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The Club Car

The deadline for submitting articles and photos for next month's issue of The Club Car is the **20th of this month**. Submitting articles is easy by e-mail in MS Word™ text format.

Send e-mail to:
clubcar@ncry.org

Digital photos may also be submitted on digital media or by e-mail. Electronic images should be saved as PC format .jpg files with minimal compression (i.e., average to excellent quality). A text file with the photo number, description of photo and identifying the people in them is required.

To send documents, articles or photos, by snail mail, contact the editor at (510) 431-3401 for mailing instructions.

The editor reserves the right to hold or edit material as necessary.

The Club Car is an official publication of the Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc., P.O. Box 515, Sunol, CA 94586-0515.

The Club Car is distributed monthly to members, sponsors and friends of the Pacific Locomotive Association.

The Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc. is an IRS Code 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. The PLA's Federal Tax ID is 94-6130878, the State of California Tax ID is 0501445.

General Meetings are held on the 3rd Friday of January, March, May, June, July, and October, beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Sunol Glen School, two blocks east of the Depot on Main Street in Sunol, CA. Members, Sponsors & Guests are welcome.

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The Pacific Locomotive Association is a member of the Association of Tourist Railroads and Railway Museums. (ATRRM)

President's Report

This is going to be a big year for the Pacific Locomotive Association and a big year for the Niles Canyon Railway.

First some news. We have learned that the Golden Gate Railway Museum has signed an agreement with the Northwestern Pacific Railway Corporation to lease space in the North Bay as a new home for their Museum Operations. We want to congratulate them on this achievement, and we know how much work and effort was required to reach this milestone for them. We wish them all the best in their new location.

I also want to ask you to support their efforts to move to their new home in whatever way you can personally. This should be simple, as many PLA members are also GGRM members. They will have great need for manpower to assist them, and if you can help them out, I am sure you will. Relocating railroad equipment is a tremendous undertaking. It took us many years of prep work to get our equipment in shape to move to Brightside. It took GGRM a lot of time and money to get their equipment ready to move to Brightside when they needed to move out of Hunter's Point. I know many PLA experts worked alongside the GGRM team to assist them in those efforts. Luckily, it has only been 10 years since they came to Brightside. For railroad equipment, that is like a few months in human years. So while they do need to go through all the equipment again to get it ready to move, major repairs should not be required.

I for one am looking forward to visiting them in their new facility once they are up and running.

This year will also then become a great chance for us to take advantage of the opportunities that will be open to us once GGRM has departed Brightside. There are a number of plans that were put on hold so we could accommodate receiving the GGRM equipment. Those plans should be revisited and if still viable put into action. First and foremost is the Locomotive Shop. Alan

Siegwarth is spearheading that project, and he is already working with Alameda County to get plans developed and approved.

Hopefully the Pole Barn project can also be reinvestigated. I think great strides have been made in fabric buildings over the last decade, and constructing a structure that will cover a significant portion of our storage tracks will be feasible. If planned correctly, this can be built erected in stages, and grow as our needs and budget allow.

This will also be a perfect time for the various departments to take inventory of what they have and to seriously consider classifying these materials for future projects, maintenance of existing facilities, and surplus. We have plenty of space to bring in additional containers if deemed necessary, and maybe some better usage of our storage baggage/boxcars. After seeing how a well-organized baggage car makes TOL decorating almost a joy, it is easy to see how organizing some of our other materials will help in this inventory efforts.

As always, these projects will just be more 'wouldn't it be great if we had...' without somebody stepping up to take charge of seeing they get planned properly, budgeted properly, and executed. And speaking from experience, I can assure you that a well-planned project will have little difficulty in getting Board approval for funding.

My personal project for the coming year will be getting water service installed on our Niles property. While we want to be able to develop detailed plans for development there, the lack of water service will prevent anything permanent from happening there.

2017 is also the year for our quinquennial (every 5 years – I looked it up) Town Hall meeting with the citizens of Sunol. The last Town Hall was poorly attended, and we actually want more Sunolians to attend this time, and to actively express their desires for our continuing involvement in OUR com-

munity.

To this end, I am going to make another unusual request for a Railroad organization. I am looking for someone who is well versed in archival storage of items for review. I believe the common parlance for what I need is a 'Scrapbooker', one knowledgeable in the art of 'scrapbooking'. Many non-profits keep a publicly available record book of comments received by the organization. These typically are arranged chronologically, and include both positive and negative communications. This scrapbook should include original documents when available. I would also like this scrapbook to be kept in a digital format as well. If you know of someone who might be able to help me out with this task, please have them contact me. See below.

As always, if you would like to discuss any topic in further detail, please contact me by phone at 925.447.7358 or by email at president@ncry.org

Respectfully submitted
Henry Baum

TRAIN AND ENGINMEN RECERTIFICATION CLASS

MARCH 11, 12 & 18

Report to the White House

9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Bring with you

Rule Book

Time Table

Tests will be given

Reserve your spot at
traincrews@comcast.net

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Along the Right of Way

FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

The 2016 Train of Lights is now in the history books. It also was one of our best received trains that have been run over the years. The reason is the volunteers and their friendly attitude. That is one comment we hear all the time and in that brings this train alive. From the first day that we start decorating this big TOL train to the last run of the train. The effort that is put forth in making this train a success just overwhelms you when you think about it. We all have to pat ourselves on the back and say, "You know, we did one heck of a swell job this year in making this train work". If you stop to think about it, there are not many groups like ours that could make this big train work. For one, it takes a track structure to support something that big. That is why we spend so much in maintaining it. It also takes a dedicated volunteer group to support it. We have come through year after year in making this train work. Now that this year is finished and the train is being undecorated and put away until next year. Plans are already in the works on what we want to do with the 2017 TOL which will get underway in nine months. A big thank you goes out to all who participated in the TOL this year.

Everyone said we needed rain. Your wishes have come true. We have been hit with some severe storms and yes, one of them provided our first slide of the year because of a plugged culvert at MP 34.76 which covered our tracks and closed Hwy 84. This is the same place that this has taken place before. Steve Barkkarie and Doug Vanderlee spent four hours in getting the railroad open again. Steve also reinforced our ditching to the West to make any future problems to channel to the West to the next downhill culvert. That is one thing that this railroad has lots of culverts. Over all, the railroad has survived nicely. Keep your fingers crossed. We still have a lot of bad weather still



Photo by Dexter Day

Howard Wise and crew Tom Hambleton master diesel mechanic and his son Dave attempting to start 9010 engine.

coming this year in our direction. The side dump which we use for clearing mud was brought into Brightside so it would not get cut off from us using it if needed. Back fill at Joy Land Park was also done by Steve to save the right of way. It was very close to shut down. He back filled and now there is a six foot (toe) path and the hill is stable. This

railroad wants to destroy itself as you all sleep. Grade All is hired to take on all these heavy dirt jobs. That is Steve. He has the machines and expertise to get the job done in minimum time. That is the key. We also found that our 1875 stone culvert at 37.2 wanted to destroy itself. Heck, it should have been in a rock retirement home years ago. Steve

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Along the Right of Way

FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER



Photo by Dexter Day

Realignment of the East Brightside switch.

and Doug got it open and running. M of W only until we get it repaired and inspected. First thing first! No water.

A major mile stone was reached this past month in the restoration and rebuild of the KM 9010. After many hours of preparation in getting the engine on the KM ready for use, the big day came to see if the engine would start and run. Howard had a device that preheated

the water for the block. Gerry Feeney and crew using the 1195 brought the 9010 out of the car shop into the open. The battery was used off the 1195 to provide power for turning the starter. To assist Howard Wise was master diesel mechanic Tom Hambleton and his son Dave Hambleton. After all the cables were attached, the big moment came. Dave pushed the start button and the

starting motor turned the shaft attached to the engine. The engine turned over and little smoke came out of stack, but engine did not start. Several attempts were made but with same results. Back to the drawing boards. It looked like it needed more direct power to turn the engine over faster. It will be back shortly for another go at it. One thing that came out of this test was that all the parts moved without binding and the engine turned over nicely. Next time, it will roar.

The switch that was on the passing siding and not in use was removed this past month. Steve Barkkarie using the backhoe removed the rails after H & H construction pulled the rail. The ties were removed and new ties were placed to straight rail the track. Now that the switch is gone, most people don't even remember it being there. Talking about switches, the 136 lb. East Brightside switch was realigned by H & H. Maybe I should say it had to be rebuilt to be realigned. It now fits better than it did. They took the kink out of it. However, more work in that area on the mainline track is needed and the crossing at MP 34 needs major help. It will be rebuilt shortly. I will be buying more Oak ties to have on hand for projects that our Wednesday crew can do. I got word the price is going up.

Now that the TOL is over with and we will have some time to get some projects finished. One major project is the WP 315 coach which was rushed into service for its seats. Well! It made it. Only because of duct tape holding the poor fabric to gether. The car is out of service and the seat cushions are being shopped out for being redone. This time early in the year. Also, the seats are being mounted through the floor and not into the floor. Other upgrades will take place on this car this year. Another project to finish is the 1830 Bones open car. It still needs to be painted. The Combine is back in

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Along the Right of Way

FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

the shop to get its seats put back in and roof piping I understand. One project we need to get on and soon is sending some wheels out for turning and new wheels pressed on where needed. Roller bearing wheels are needed badly. The Commissary car will need some work done on its wheels or replaced, which ever is decided, it needs to be done. So, a lot will take place before the next TOL. Rumors still are out there that the WP 713 GP 7 will be painted. It will likely take place sometime this year.

For all of our trainmen and engine crews who handled the TOL, thank you from all of Operations and Crew Caller Pat Warren. It was tight some nights. But our crews covered what was needed to be done. Model railroaders and rail fans would love to run a GP7 engine pulling a 15 car train with the Dynamics on running on a one percent grade downhill in full control of the train. We have engine crews and Pat has to use every method available to try to drag one Fireman out for a TOL evening. Over all, we did great on crews. No complaints. Since we had such a good time running the TOL. It is now time to think about your recertification classes. Check the Ad for all the information. A new date was issued, March 12th which is a Sunday. This was set up for those that could not make Saturday.

For our new members that would like to become train crew members, there is a February class set. See AD. Sign up for it.

That's it for this month. I would like to thank the interior decorating team that did a great job in short periods. The take down is done when you read this. Great effort.

So until next month, take care and hope to see you along the right of way.

Dexter D. Day



Photo by Dexter Day

The Brightside siding switch was there, but gone now.

WANT TO VOLUNTEER? START HERE!

YOUR VOLUNTEER HELP IS ALWAYS NEEDED AND APPRECIATED

BRUSH CUTTING - Clearing the RoW of bushes and trees - Steve Jones - fcocompost@aol.com
CAR DEPARTMENT - Maintenance and repair - Tom Crawford - tom@thecrawfordfamily.net
COMMISSARY - Food Service on the trains - Bob Bradley - ncry.commissary@yahoo.com
GIFT SHOP - Work in the Sunol Gift Shop - Gail Hedberg - giftshop@ncry.org
MOW CREW - (WEDNESDAY) - Work on track repair, etc. - Joe Peterson - wedmow@ncry.org
MOW CREW - (SATURDAY) - Work on track repair, etc. - Michael Strider - michael.strider@hdrinc.com
SIGNALS - Install / Maintain signal systems - Curt Hoppins - curt@ncrysignal.com
STATION - (NILES) - Work parking, ticket sales, set-up, etc. - John Fenstermacher - johnnsheerif@aol.com
STATION - (SUNOL) - Work parking, ticket sales, set-up, etc. - Donna Alexander - station-agent@ncry.org

Membership Report

You know there are all kinds of rewarding activities going on around your railroad that you can get involved in whenever you are ready for something new in your life. However, there is one special opportunity that is not that easy to get. Only once or twice a year is the training available that is required for members of the actual operating crews of our trains. This month is one of those times. If you have ever waved at the

crew on a passing train and dreamed of being in their boots, operating a real train yourself, and maybe being waved at by envious people on the ground, then just be grateful that you know about the Niles Canyon Railway. Look on this page for the announcement of the Brakemen Training Class, and then sign up to attend. That will be the beginning of a whole new experience for you, gaining skills and knowledge that are just not available almost anywhere else.

Of course, you have to be a PLA member to work on a train crew. The new members this month are Gary Kapic, Jesus Diaz, Harry Wong, Teresa McKinsey, Justin Legg, the family of Lisa and Dirk Lorenz, and the family of Lauren and Clark Fuller. If you are not yet a member, you can join online at www.ncry.org or ask for an application at either ticket office during our normal Sunday operations.

Our next general members' meeting is in March, and just happens to fall this year on St. Patrick's Day. This will be one of those rare occasions when we get to hold our meeting at the Niles Essanay Silent Film Museum. I can't say yet what film we will get to see, but I'm sure you will enjoy it. And there is quite a display of historic motion picture equipment there, too.

In the meantime, Happy Valentine's Day! Be grateful for whatever special people are in your life, as we are for the volunteers and other members that make the Pacific Locomotive Association possible. Be careful and keep those people safe. We need them!

Peter Midnight

Treasurer's Report

Paul Veltman, Treasurer

December 2016

In December, we received \$13,042 in donations.

\$270 was received for Ballast, \$6,488 for the Emery Rail Heritage matching grant, \$2,064 for the General Fund, \$3,120 for the SP 9010 and \$1,100 for the new locomotive shop.

Donors were: Anonymous, Joel Allan, Rich Anderson, John April, Gregg Bailey, Henry Baum, John Burnside, Sharin Cancilla, Rodney Ciganovich, Dennis Clemens, Paul Ellis, David Ernest, Jeff Evans, Excel Graphics, Gene Fiscalini, Tim Flippo, Don Gholson, Charles Givins, William Goldman, Jon Graff, Robert Guy, Infaith in memory of Phil Woods, Charles Jellison, Karl Koehler, Lawrence Livermore National Labs, Phil McCall, Mike McQuaid, John Munro, Tom Myers, Charles Navara, Vic Neves, Carol Neveu, Leon Oakley, Steve Peterson, Nancy Peterson, Robert Porterfield, Quickcyclists, Bryce Reynolds, Gregg Schluntz, Kathryn Schroeder, Doug Semon, Bruce Sorel, Jim Stewart, Mike Strider, David Tadlock, Ron and Sue Thomas, Michael Thomas, Paul Veltman, John Walsh, Samuel Weeks, Kurt Wegelius, Barry Wilson, Eugene Wollak, Eric Wright and Christopher Zanoni. We thank all of you for your generosity in helping the Niles Canyon Railway and its many projects.

TAX DEDUCTIBLE: The Pacific Locomotive Association is qualified under Internal Revenue Service code section 501 (c)(3) as a tax exempt organization. Thus, donations to the PLA are tax deductible as CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS to the extent allowed by law. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 515, Sunol, CA 94586-0515. The PLA's Federal ID is: 94-6130878, CA ID is: 0501445.

BRAKEMEN TRAINING CLASS

February 25 & 26 2017
Brightside

Report to yard office at 0900 AM
For orientation of equipment
Class room studies
will start at 1015 AM.

Class will go until 5:00 PM.
Those that apply should be able
to climb up onto equipment and
bend down to
connect air hoses.

Those that are interested,
contact

Crew dispatch at:

traincrews@comcast.net

Give your name, phone number,
and email.

E-COUPLING INFORMATION

Website: <http://www.ncry.org>

E-Mail: pla@ncry.info

Twitter: @toots4ncry

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/NilesCanyonRailway>

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/NilesCanyonRailRoad>



End of drought brings mudslides, rocks and work

Continued from Page 1

and sustained rain.

The drop inlet and culvert is at the base of a micro-canyon carved in the hillside by water flowing down through soft alluvial clay soil and small rounded rocks. Clay is great for bricks and tiles; bad for hillsides. When the storm water flow is too great, and/or it is too full of solids, it plugs the drainage inlet and culvert, halting water flow through the culvert pipes to the creek. When this happens, water, mud and rocks flow out over the NCRY tracks, over the embankment and down onto Niles Canyon Road, Highway 84, below. This is what happened on January 11th, resulting in closure of the highway all day, and pressing Caltrans crews into action to clear the muck from the highway. Literally tons of material flowed out onto the railway, probably enough to fill 2 or 3, or maybe 4 dump-trucks full.

Ironically, the highway closure served to slow (but not deter) our volunteers access to Brightside Yard. Steve Barkkarie put the Cat backhoe onto the rails and proceeded to remove the bulk of the slide material. Doug Vanderlee, Steve Lowe, Pat Stratton and John Zielinski used shovels to do the detail cleaning between the rails and on top of the ties.

There were a number of rocks which fell onto the right-of-way which were removed by hand. Several were found that required the Diesel powered Tie Handler to remove.

So, the good news is, the long miserable drought in Northern California is all but over. The bad news is there is a high likelihood of more of these slides if the rains continue. The other good news is no one will have to feel guilty about taking a nice long hot shower after a day of shoveling mud.

Story from second hand information, after visiting the site out of curiosity, didn't wear the right clothes and didn't lift a finger to help.

Steve Jones



Photo by Linda Stanley

Doug Vanderlee, Pat Stratton, Steve Lowe and John Zielinski shovel ties clean as Stephen Barkkarie excavates mud & rock away from drain inlet.



Photo by Linda Stanley

Stephen Barkkarie excavates inundated drainage inlet using the Cat backhoe.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

2017 Schedule - Niles Canyon Railway TRAIN RIDES

Feb. 5 & 19 (Diesel)
 Feb. 12 Romance on the Rails* 12:00p.m., 3:00 p.m.
 Feb. 16 Niles Education/Weekday train 10:00 a.m.*
 Mar. 5 (Diesel), **19 (Steam)**
 Mar. 16 Niles Education/Weekday train 10:00 a.m.*
 Mar. 18 Beer on the Rails* 1:00-3:00 p.m.
 Mar. 30 Sunol Education/Weekday train 10:00a.m.*
April 2 & 9 (Steam), 16 & 23(Diesel), **30 (Steam)**
 April 6 Niles Education/Weekday train 10:00 a.m.*
 April 29 Ride the Rails For Relay*
 April 27 Sunol Education/Weekday train 10:00 a.m.*
May 7 (Steam), 14, 21, 28 (Diesel)
 May 14 Mother's Day Tea*
 May 4 Niles Education/Weekday train 10:00 a.m.*
 May 18 Sunol Education/Weekday train 10:00 a.m.*
 May 28 Memorial Day Honoring Veterans*
June 4 & 11(Steam), 18 & 25 (Diesel)
 June 17 Beer on the Rails* 1:00-3:00 p.m.
 June 30 Niles Education/Weekday train 10:00 a.m.*
July 2 (Steam), 9, 16, 23, 30 (Diesel)
 July 7 Niles Education/Weekday train 10:00 a.m.*
 July 15 Wine Tasting Special* 1:00-3:00 p.m.
 July 21 Sunol Education/Weekday train 10:00 a.m.*
 July 29 Wine and Beer Tasting Train* 1:00-3:00 p.m.

August 3 Niles Education/Weekday train 10:00 a.m.*
 August 6, 13, 20, 27 (Diesel)
 Aug 5 & 19 Wine Tasting Specials* 1:00-3:00 p.m.
 Aug 19 Hot August Night on the Rails* 7:30-8:45 p.m.
 Sept. 3 & 17 (Diesel)
 Sept. 9 & 30 Wine Tasting Specials* 1:00-3:00 p.m.
 Sept. 9 Harvest Moon Ride* 7:30-8:45 p.m.
 Sept. check web site for TOL TICKETS SALES*
 Oct. 1 & 15 (Diesel)
 Oct. 8 Beer on the Rails* 1:00-3:00 p.m.
 Nov. Train of Lights* Nov. 24, 25, 26, 29
 Dec. Train of Lights* 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17,
 18, 20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 30

Equipment subject to change



*Visit ncry.org for special event information and ticketing details

Follow us on Facebook

Niles Canyon Railway Windbreaker (Water Repellent)

Special Order

PLA embroidery logo options: *Farwell Bridge* or *NCRy*.
 Jackets available in Black, Forest Green, Navy, Red, Royal Blue
 Sizes: Adult Small-XLG **\$44.95**
 2X (46.95) 3X (48.95) 4X (50.95) 5X (52.95) 6X (54.95)
 Add embroidered Name in Script: \$7.50
 Member discount 20%



- 100% polyester shell
- 100% polyester jersey lining with mesh insets breathability
- Snap front closure
- Interior pocket
- Front slash pockets
- Raglan sleeves
- Articulated elbows for greater mobility
- Half elastic, half self-fabric cuffs for comfort
- Port Pocket™ at left chest for easy embroidery access
- Draw cord hem with toggles

Niles Canyon Railway

PRESENTS

Beer on the Rails

A Niles Canyon Railway Fundraiser



\$45.00
person

beer
and
lunch



2 hour
train
ride

March 18, June 17, October 8, 2017

Departs Niles/Fremont Station at 1:00, returns at 3:00
 37029 Mission Boulevard, Fremont

Tickets only available online at ncry.org

Must be 21+ when boarding; ID required at ticket window when tickets picked up
 No outside food or beverages allowed, no children, no pets.

Non-alcoholic beverages available

Proceeds support Niles Canyon Railway fundraising activities.

Thank You!
 Operated by volunteers of the
 Pacific Locomotive Association
 501(c)(3) not for profit



Info: 510.996.8420

ncry.org



Wednesday Maintenance of Way

With lots of rain coming down, a good load at the infirmary and a few hearty souls who actually worked on the ROW, this will be a short report!

The big news is the expected rock slides in the canyon and the big mud flow just west of Farmers Crossing. These, along with culvert cleaning and flange lubricator maintenance has kept the able bodied WEDMOW team busy this past month!

We have Leprechauns working along our ROW! Steve Jones found a fairly large tree had come down at the Shoofly storage track and was arranging to have the cars moved so the offending cellulose could be removed. Next thing Steve hears is, "What tree?" Seems some out-of-work Leprechauns had come in and removed said cellulose! Too bad they didn't leave a pot of gold behind as a tip ;-)

Hopefully the sun will return and we can get WEDMOW back on an even keel to attack the project list! If you need to lose some holiday residue, stop on by and put your gym dollars to work for you and the railroad!

**Yours in water and mud,
Joe Peterson**



Photo by Gregg McNaughton

Dwarfed by the cut stone culvert from the 1860s, Ron Thomas cleans out the inlet so the culvert can do its job.

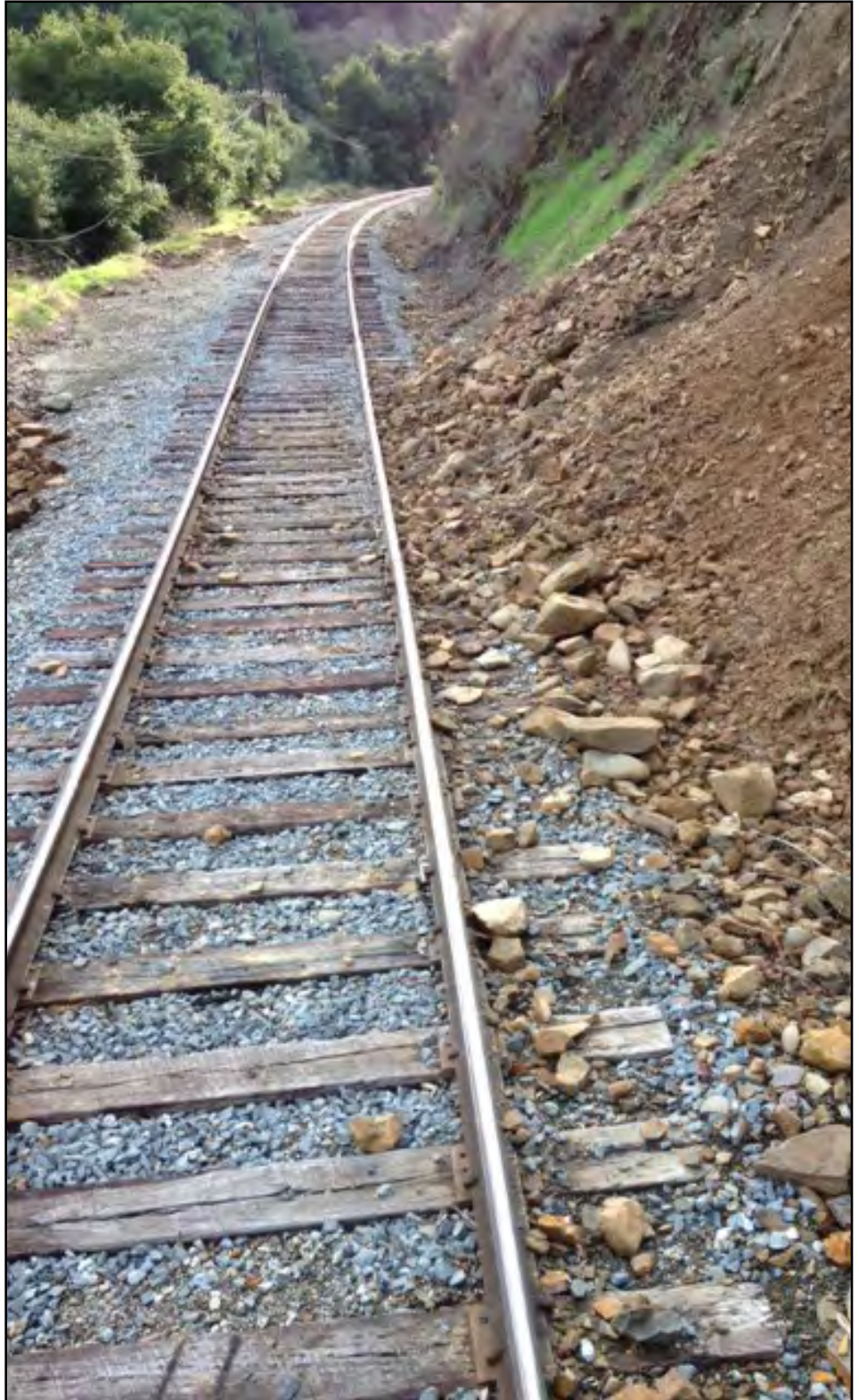


Photo by Pat Stratton

Some of the rock slides that occurred in the canyon during the Big Rains in January.

Wednesday Maintenance of Way



Photo by Pat Stratton

Steve Barkkarie, Doug Vanderlee and John Zielinski attack the mud slide just west of Farmers.



Photo by Gregg McNaughton

Ron Thomas, Greg LaFramboise and Bob Pratt give much needed attention to one of the flange lubricators.



Photo by Gregg McNaughton

Cleaning out transient garbage so it will not clog the culvert and create a new lake has just been added to the MOW skillset ;-)

Saturday Maintenance of Way

It's a new year and that means it's time to return to building track east of Verona. With the panels that have already been placed east of the Verona crossing the track extends east about a quarter mile from the UP overcrossing. Last month's Club Car had photos of the new switch that was installed recently. To continue building east, the MOW team needs to place more panels of track. A number of panels of 136-lb rail are ready to go, but, some panels came from grade crossings in a previous life. This means the panels were torch cut out of the existing crossings and other areas leaving a very rough end to the rails. We needed panels that have flat, smooth, square rail ends that can be bolted together. We needed to cut off the ends of each rail in the panels, and then drill new holes for the bolts that will join the panels together.

The team of Mike Strider, Wes Swift, Frank Fontes and Steve Jones met at Brightside at 08:00 Saturday to assemble the MOW work train and gather tools and supplies. In the canyon, sunrise happens later than in the outside world. When I arrived, the mist was still in the yard, you couldn't see much in any direction and it was very cold. There was ice on the MOW flat cars. One of the tasks was to clear the ice off the windows of the MOW equipment to permit safe operation. As we got ready, I could see the disk of the sun coming up over the hills through the clouds of mist. It was like being inside an airbrushed painting, clouds of mist appeared and then were gone. As the sun got higher in the sky, the mist burned off and the ice turned to sludge. Everything was slippery. Then the mist turned to a very light rain for a few minutes. The weather at sunrise is very dynamic. As we were switching the MOW railcars a Great Blue Heron perched near the pond next to Blake's Palace. You never know what you will see out along the line.

It takes a lot of effort and teamwork to get the MOW equipment loaded and out onto the mainline to head east. Then we ride to Verona and the end of track. It can take up to 3 hours from the initial meeting at Brightside to being ready to work at the east end of the line. The sun was well overhead now and the sky was clear. When we started at Brightside it was near freezing, but now it was very warm. Linda Stanley and Mike Pechner joined us to shovel ballast just west of the new switch. As the crew setup to use the cutoff wheel to cut the ends of the rails, I was assigned to file down the sharp edges of the rails that had been cut during the previous work session. It reminded me of junior high metal shop class many decades ago. It takes a lot of effort to remove any amount of metal from the end of 136-lb rail.

Cutting rail is a significant operation. Rail ends are cut using an abrasive disc blade driven by a large chainsaw engine. The cutoff wheel wears down very quickly, we can get about 3 cuts from each cutoff wheel. We used a lot of them this day. The saw is held in place on the rail by a pantograph which allows the saw to move up, down and back and forth, but keeps it



Photo by Brian Hitchcock

End of line, east of Verona.



Photo by Brian Hitchcock

Mike Strider cutting rail, Wes Swift, Steve Jones assisting.



Photo by Brian Hitchcock

My job, filing the freshly cut end of rail.

Saturday Maintenance of Way



Photo by Brian Hitchcock

Steve Jones drilling the end of rail.



Photo by Brian Hitchcock

Great Blue Heron near Blake's Palace.



Photo by Brian Hitchcock

Ice on the MOW flat cars.

square to the rail, and just like on TV, there are a lot of sparks. We watched carefully to make sure nothing got too hot.

Drilling the holes in the end of a rail is also impressive. Doug Vanderlee helped us get started with this process. The web of the rail is very thick so the drill is actually hydraulic. The drill bit is a hole cutter (technically called an annular cutter) that ejects a very clean disk of metal when it breaks through the opposite side of the rail. Like the cutoff wheel, the hole saw wears down quickly. Towards the end of the afternoon, after starting to drill another hole, the drill jerked a little bit. That means the hole cutter was dull and had broken. We had to replace the cutter and drill new holes.

We discussed some of the history of this project during lunch. When NCRY first arrived in the canyon, there weren't any rails at all. Southern Pacific had removed them all, but left the ties in place from Niles to Verona. From Verona east, the ties had been removed as well. This means we are building railway from scratch as we work our way east. It is impressive to see what it takes to get even one panel of track in place. Each panel is about 40 feet long. When we get all the 136-lb rail panels we have in place, we will have advanced another 500 feet or so. At that point we will start using the 132-lb rail panels we have.

After lunch, the sun was already casting long shadows on the track panel I was working on. It was getting cold again. In the canyon, sunrise comes later and sundown comes early. The shadows foretold of the cold that was coming after sunset. For almost all of the 136-lb rail panels we have, the rails now had fresh ends cut smooth and square. We also got almost all of the required holes drilled as well. This means we have panels ready to put in place to extend the line next time.

It was time to go home. The sunlight would soon be gone. We loaded up, flagged the crossing at Verona and headed West. We closed the gate behind us after entering Brightside, fueled the "Big Bird" MOW crew car, parked the MOW equipment and stored the gear. It was time to go home.

Next time will be very interesting as we need to lift each panel and place it at the end of track. We also have to stagger the rail joints. The rails in the panels we have line up with each other, just as they were when the panel was cut out of the grade crossings they came from. To stagger the joints, we have to loosen the spikes along one rail and pull that rail out of line to form the stagger. This process will be something to see.

It is very rewarding to see this all come together. I encourage you to join us, the first Saturday of each month, unless the rains come again. I also want to make clear that I don't have any experience with building full scale track, but I was able to help, and so can you. It does help to have more people, to flag the crossing, throw the turnouts, help replace the cutoff wheel and many other tasks that must be done to keep extending the track to the east.

Brian Hitchcock

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

Niles Canyon Railway's Education Trains of 2017

Open to schools, recreation groups, senior centers, families, and anyone who wants to ride during the week.

Everyone age 3 and older rides for \$6.00

Tickets and more information is at ncry.org

Trains boarding in the
Niles District of **FREMONT**,
37029 Mission Blvd.:

February 16, 2017, Thursday, 10:00 a.m.
March 16, 2017, Thursday, 10:00 a.m.
April 6, 2017, Thursday, 10:00 a.m.
May 4, 2017, Thursday, 10 a.m.
June 30, 2017, Friday 10:00 a.m.
July 7, 2017, Friday, 10: a.m.
August 3, 2017, Thursday, 10:00 a.m.



Trains boarding in **SUNOL**,
6 Kilkare Road, Sunol:

March 30, 2017, Thursday, 10:00 a.m.
April 27, 2017, Thursday, 10:00 a.m.
May 18, 2017, Thursday, 10:00 a.m.
July 21, 2017, Friday, 10:00 a.m.



Questions?? Please contact Donna Alexander:
510-996-8420 or email station-agent@ncry.org



The Niles Canyon Railway is operated by the volunteer members of the Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc, a tax-exempt, non-profit IRS 501 (c)(3) charitable organization founded in 1961. We are a living museum preserving an era of California's History on the Original Transcontinental Railroad, and our goal is to preserve this operating heritage railway for future generations to experience and enjoy. Every dollar earned goes towards this effort.



NILES CANYON RAILWAY

The following is a list of the people who helped run your railroad in **December**. Names in Bold are new members, first timers, or the first time in a long time. If you are new to volunteering on the railroad, please print your name clearly on the sign in sheet so it can be read. You can also send hours by e-mail to Paul Veltman at: stumpie1@sbcglobal.net.

Note that if I can't read your writing, you may not get credit for the hours you worked.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Donna Alexander
Henry Baum
Dexter Day
Jim Evans
Don Gholson
Peter Midnight
Joe Scardino
Paul Veltman

MEETINGS

Donna Alexander
Mike Pechner

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

CAR DEPARTMENT

Warren Benner
Carlo Borlandelli
Lou Bradas
Dexter Day
Don Gholson
Jim Green
Jeff Haslam
Dennis Mann
Joe Scardino
John Senf

GGRM PROJECTS

Bob Bailey

COMMISSARY

DOCENTS

SPECIAL EVENTS

TRAIN OF LIGHTS

Donna Alexander
Rich Alexander
Paul Anderson
Rich Anderson
Mary Asturias

TRAIN OF LIGHTS

James Baber
Bob Bailey
Ed Best
Linda Best
Lou Bradas
Thomas Bradas
Hal Briar
Pat Buder
Dave Burla
John Burnside
Steve Coon
Tom Crawford
Scott Crislip
Ray Crist
Dexter Day
Gerry Dewees
Nancy Dewees
Fred Elenbaas
Gerry Feeney
Tim Flippo
Mike Ford
Glenn Fountain
Norm Fraga
Don Gholson
Rob Giles
Armano Giovacchini
Pete Goodier
Chuck Gullo
Warren Haack
Nancy Harden
Bonnie Harrington
Jack Harrington
Zonker Harris
Gail Hedberg
Kent Hedberg
Jerry Higgins
Brian Hitchcock
Curt Hoppins
Steve Jones
Fred Krock
Greg LaFramboise
Dave Lion
Paula Lion
Derick Lyon-McKeil

TRAIN OF LIGHTS

Ken Lippman
Dennis Mann
Al McCracken
Jim McDaniel
Bob McGearry
Peter Midnight
Mark Miller
Tom Miller
Dan Mills
Thomas Milvie
Bob Moore
Sharron Morrison
Denis Murchison
Charlene Murrell
Vicki Newcommer
Lorentz Nilsen
Mike Pechner
Tony Peters
Joe Peterson
Bob Pratt
Joe Romani
Mike Roque
Dan Sarka
Joe Scardino
Brian Schott
Linda Schultz

TRAIN OF LIGHTS

Roger Schultz
Wayne Shull
Charles Smith
John Senf
Leslie Smith
Linda Stanley
Jack Starr
Jim Stewart
Phil Stone
Pat Stratton
Wayne Stoddard
Ray Strong
Don Stuff
John Sutkus
Jacqui Szymanski
Ron Thomas
Sue Thomas
Ted Unruh
Steve Van Meter
Paul Veltman
Jackie Vlasik
Pat Warren
Jon Williamson
Pete Willis
John Zielinski
Travis Zupo

DEPOT CREW/OPERATIONS

Pat Warren

GIFT SHOP

Gail Hedberg
Jim Jernigan

TRAINING

TRAIN CREW

SWITCHING CREW

Rich Anderson
Gerry Feeney
Kent Hedberg
Eric Wright

BRIDGES AND BUILDINGS

Al McCracken
John Senf
Doug Vanderlee

ELECTRICAL & SIGNALS

Curt Hoppins
Steve Jones
Joe Romani
Linda Stanley
Jim Stewart

MECHANICAL DEPT.

Rich Anderson
Henry Chandler
Steve Coon
Doug Debs
Gerry Feeney
Jim Green
Chris Hauf
Kent Hedberg
Steve Jones
Chuck Kent
Dennis Mann
Bill Ross
Jeff Schwab
Alan Siegwarth

MECHANICAL DEPT.

Linda Stanley
Bill Stimmerman
Howard Wise
Bob Zenk
John Zielinski

MOW / TRACK

Bob Ackerman
Tom Anderson
Steve Barkkarie
Hal Briar
Chris Campi
Dexter Day
Dave Fontes
Frank Fontes
Steve Jones
Greg LaFramboise
Steve Lowe
Gregg McNaughton
Charles Navarra
John Pelmulder
Joe Peterson
Bob Pratt
Jim Stewart
Pat Stratton
Mike Strider
Wes Swift
Ron Thomas
Doug Vanderlee
John Zielinski

OTHER

Don Buchholz
Zonker Harris
Barry Lependorf
Ray Strong
Paul Veltman

Niles Canyon Railway wants you!

It's not often we have a variety of Positions available at the same time on the Niles Canyon Railway from M of W, Commissary, engine wiper or qualify for train or engine crew. A Broad spectrum of jobs and the interest and talents of our many members are looking for a match. If you are interested, Contact:

Kent Hedberg
(Volunteer Coordinator)
hedbergs@sbcglobal.net
510-793-7153

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Photo by Dan Sarka

Engineer's view during the Train of Lights heading to Sunol.