# THE CLUB CAR



**Bulletin 655** Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc.

www.ncry.org

March 2018



Photo courtesy of George Childs

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Paul Veltman

# Save the Date! FOUNDERS' TRAIN on the CALIFORNIA WESTERN M-200

WHEN: SUNDAY May 20, 2018.

WHERE: SUNOL DEPOT

We are preparing for the recreation of the inaugural passenger service in Sunol when the California Western M-200 Skunk Motorcar completed the run on the one and one half miles of track. We want to give special thanks to the dedicated volunteers that worked for over a year on the first part of the track reconstruction

between Sunol and Brightside to make May 21, 1988 historic for the Pacific Locomotive Association (PLA).

Did you know that 20 years ago the Sunol Depot was restored and placed at the current station site? Volunteers Rich Alexander, Bob Bradley and Pete Willis are currently making minor repairs to the building in preparation for new exterior painting. The Sunol Depot will be showcased this summer during the full 2018 celebration.

We need your assistance to gather and preserve photographs digitally from both of these historic events. Please contact Gail Hedberg (email) marketing2@ncry.org if you can help or for details. We are creating a special guest list to recognize those that made that day possible and to ride the Founders' Motorcar Train on Sunday May 20, 2018. Look at the photos and tell me who was there!

Join us in celebrating thirty years of restoring vintage diesel and steam train travel in scenic Niles Canyon. This historic route linked America's east and west coasts by rail for the first time as

part of the original transcontinental

route.

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**

March 3, 2018 Sat MOW Building East

March 4, 2018 Regular Operations

March 7, 2018 Wed MOW 7:30 am - 4:00 pm

March 9, 2018 Niles School Train 10:00 am

March 14, 2018 Wed MOW 7:30 am - 4:00 pm

Saturday, March 17, 2018 Beer on the Rails 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Sunday, March 18, 2018 Tea on the Rails

March 21, 2018 Wed MOW 7:30 am - 4:00 pm

March 25, 2018 PLA General Meeting 2:30 pm onboard train

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

= = = = = B(	DARD OF DIRECTORS =	: = = =	= = =
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	20,		
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Station Agent - Sunol	Donna Alexander	(510) 996-8420	station-agent@ncry.org
Steam Department	Alan Siegwarth	(408) 515-4602	sieggy667@hotmail.com

#### The Club Car

The deadline for subnitting articles and photo for next month's issue of The Club Car is the 20th of the current calendar month. Simply submit articles by e-mail in MS Word<sup>™</sup> text format. Send email to: clubcar@ncry.org Digital photos may also be submitted on digital media or by email. Electronic images should be saved as PC format . Jpg files with minimal compression. A text file with the photo number, description of the photo, and identifying the ople in them is required To send documents, articles or photos by U.S. ostage, contact the edito at (510) 260-7967 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 501©(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, and Guests are welcome. Items in this publication are Copyright 2018, Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc. and may be reproduced only by permission with credit to the source. Views expressed herein are those of the author nless specifically noted by the editor as official policy. The Pacific Locomotive Association is a member of the Association of Tourist Railroads and Railway Museums. (ATRRM)

# **President's Peport**

I'm really starting to get wound up about next year's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad. The idea that people could travel 3000 miles in 10 days was downright magical, especially when you realize that the alternative took months.

When the Golden Spike was driven at Promontory Point on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1869 the country was connected from coast to coast, and nothing since that event has had a similar impact on the nation. And for the next 50 years, there was little improvement in the trip other than the railroad's impetus to shave minutes off the time for the trip.

But the railroad trip ended in Sacramento, and passengers and freight had to transfer to a riverboat to get to San Francisco. This was not good business for the railroad, so they were already hard at work building an extension to get the tracks to the Bay area.

The Central Pacific extended their tracks to Stockton and then commenced construction to build a railroad over the Livermore (now Altamont) Pass and into Oakland (or San Francisco via the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad (completed in 1864)). They were aided by picking up the rights to failed railroad ROWs that were never completed. One such stretch of railroad was the original (but already failed) Western Pacific Railroad that was attempting to build a route from San Jose to Sacramento through what was then known as Alameda Canyon.

In September of 1869 the last link of the Transcontinental Railroad was completed. No one is sure precisely where the 'golden spike' connection was made, but I believe it was near Milepost 33 in Niles Canyon. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

What is indisputable is the impact this link had on the communities that found themselves prospering because of this new connection. Tracy, Livermore, Pleasanton, our beloved Sunol, and Niles all got a boost in popularity because they were on the Transcontinental Railroad. Sunol and Niles Canyon became popular Holiday and weekend spots, with special local trains run to accommodate the citizens of San Francisco and Oakland. Hotels and campgrounds sprang up, and everyone new where Niles Canyon was.

But the California Pacific Railroad knew that a route along the bay towards Martinez would significantly shorten the trip from Sacramento to Oakland, and they began construction along the southern shore of the bay. A <u>train</u> ferry operated between Benicia and Porta Costa from 1879 until 1930 when a rail bridge opened, shortening the trip even more.

So as early as 1879 the route through Niles Canyon became a secondary route. It still saw plenty

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of traffic, but more of a local nature and less Transcontinental. The railroads maintained the line but spent little to upgrade it or improve it. Improvements were made as necessary to support the Coast Subdivision and the Dumbarton Bridge Extension. The Holiday destinations continued well into the 1920s, but the advent of the automobile spelled the beginning of the end for the excursion trains into the East Bay region.

Southern Pacific ceased its operations through the canyon in 1984, and deeded the land to Alameda County. The Niles Canyon Railway ran its first passenger train from Sunol on May 21, 1988. Passenger trains once again connected Sunol and Niles starting on April 9, 2006.

The Niles Canyon Railway is on the National Register of Historic Places as the Niles Canyon Transcontinental Railroad Historic District on October 13, 2010. As far as I know, it is the only significant stretch of the original Transcontinental ROW still in use today for passenger service.

That is all in all a really big deal. Celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary is also a really big deal.

I am forming a committee to put together a months long agenda of activities for next year, spanning the time between the original Golden Spike in May to the True Golden Spike in September. I am looking at staging one big weekend each month celebrating different important aspects of this historic endeavor. Please contact me if you want to be involved in the planning stages.

Without the dedicated volunteers who do so much for the organization, we would be not be as successful as we have become. We will be organizing another Volunteer Appreciation event for this Spring, so watch for further details.

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







#### ALONG THE RIGHT OF WAY

#### FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

BY: Dexter D. Day, General Manager

This month has seen a lot of activity take place within Brightside. Both the exterior and interior decorating crew finished taken down the TOL for this year. Just think, in six months, we can look forward to decorating the 2018 TOL. The interior group will be doing some new decoration designs in some cars. It will be a new look. Some cars have not been changed in years. We have six months to think about it. We bought a lot of new lighting types at the end of this season. We will need to buy a lot of new garland in long length. We will try them out on this year TOL.

Last month it was reported that we were able to fix Mongo the yard tug for our M of W crews. That fix that was thought would do the trick failed to hold up under the next three outings. Steve Barkarie felt that it would be best to just get the engine rebuilt. The engine will be going to a machine shop in Sacramento for the rebuild. By May, we hope to have it back on line. When we get finished with Mongo, the Burro Crane will be the next piece of M of W equipment that will see an engine rebuild. The Burro Crane still runs, but it is tired and worn out. It is time for a rebuild. Our Ballast regulator also needs some mechanical TLC. The hydraulic system and hoses need work. So far, it's engine seems to be ok. With this old stuff, it runs today and on start up the next time out, it could fail.

The painting of the M200 is well underway by our contractor Craig. The primer is on the car and the final prep is be done. Next it will be painted in it's school bus yellow with black stripes. The skunk that was on the side of the car will remain as is. The M200 is historic along with that skunk. It came with the car when we got it.

The new holding tank for the Articulated coach is now installed under the car. Jim Green, Gerald Dewitt and Rich Alexander got the tank mounted. Now they have to plumb it to the toilet and attach the drain valve. When completed, it will be just as it was when it was in operation on the Southern Pacific Daylight. The inside walls where the sinks were mounted are being redone. Carlo was asked if he could help in the finish work in the rest room. He will apply is talent and get it back looking like it was when it was in operation. The floor is being put back with the same pattern that is in the isles. All the fixtures are being recoated to bring them back to new appearance. We have the sinks and furniture. We need to get another mirror or mirrors made. The other room which was the women rest room is be rebuilt into a crew lounge. That toilet is not going to be put in. Tom Crawford and his Wednesday group will be doing that room. Another chapter for this only running Articulated Coach. Now that air condition and heaters work in this car. It was reported that It is nice working in comfort when working on the rest room.

The old spare part Burro Crane is now one heavy duty dolly. It looks like a M of W flat on Steroids. Actually, this will be where the trailer hitch will be attached for the rail heavy haul trailer which we bought. That trailer is getting roller bearing wheels and axle. Doug Vanderlee and Steve Barkarie will be working on this project. This dolly with the trailer hitch attached with trailer attached will be able to be towed by an engine and carry a grade all. Perfect set up for ditching.

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#### **Niles Canyon Railway Operations**





Conductor Mark Miller with Brakeman's Warren Haack, Jorg Linke, Dee Murphy, and Bob Pratt passing through the canyon aboard Sunol-bound first excursion of the 2018 season. Photo by Dan Sarka



Dee Murphy of the Wednesday MOW crew is in the middle of repairing a leaky valve on the Blue Rooms handwashing tank. Photo by Dan Sarka



It's a beautiful time of year while the trees in the canyon are in bloom and the surrounding hills are carpeted in green. Almond trees especially put on a beautiful show of blossoms along the Right of Way. Another sight is the Cattails hugging the hillside between Brightside and Farmer's Crossing. Even the bare branches of the old growth Sycamores along Alameda Creek capture the sunlight in interesting patterns while awaiting spring and the large Avocado tree in the Niles parking lot will be busy producing the next crop for sharp-eyed volunteers.

Rich Anderson and Gerald DeWitt are managing the tractive power on SP #1423 for this Regular Operations day, 2/18/18.

# Want to volunteer with the Niles Canyon Railway? 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 MAINTENANCE - 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 - johnnsherif@aol.co

STATION - (SUNOL) - Work parking, ticket sales, set-up, etc. - Donna Alexander - station-agent@ncry.org

This year recertification classes can be reserved by calling Pat Warren traincrews@comcast.net, <u>1 650 369-0414</u>. The three dates were listed. 3/11, 3/25, 4/8 which are Sunday classes. I have now listed a new date which is a Saturday class 3/31. Bring rule book and Time table.

That is going to do it for this month. Hope you have a good month, follow the rules, be careful and be safe. Hope to see you along the right of way.

**Dexter Day** 



Gerald DeWitt (pictured) and Jim Green installed a new holding tank for the bathroom on the articulated coach. Photo by Jim Green



M200 being prepped for painting by contractor Craig. Photo by Dexter Day



# **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

# Wednesday Maintenance of Way Update

First, I would like to thank Pat Hafey, Pat Stratton, Greg LaFramboise, Gregg McNaughton, Dee Murphy, Sierra Murphy, Steve Jones, Steve Barkkarie Bob Pratt, Ron Thomas, John Zeilinski and Doug Vanderlee for aother productive month along the ROW!

Once again the right-of-way is clear of dead ties and debris from recent tie replacement exercises. Cracked joint bars have been replaced and work continues on the wooden spacers to be installed in Sunol.

Major termites destroyed the eastbound whistle post at the Spot!

A tour of Brightside was conducted for a new member who is interested in MOW and Signals.

Crow's nest removed from Farwell Bridge and graffiti on East Farwell Whistle Board was painted over.

On the arboreal front, an Oak tree inside Brightside driveway gate removed; too close to the road and a second Oak tree inside gate trimmed back. Of course the Oak tree slash chipped.

Turret base from "parts queen" Burro Crane continues to defy attempts to remove. More bolts removed today.

Regular maintenance was performed on the Bandit Chipper and the Bucket truck.

As you sit and read about all this work being done, you might be wondering what skills are needed to work on the Maintenance of Way crews! Look at the accompanying photos and you'll see everything from basic to advanced. The main thing is to come out and put the skills you have to work for your railroad. As you need them, new skills can be taught and practiced. Know how to drive a stick shift car? You are on the way to operating Big Bird and Smoke Chaser.

If equipment with exotic names like Tamper, Tie Handler, Tie Extractor, Burro Crane, Derrick, Mongo, Bandit, Tug and even Scarifier pique your interest, come out and learn more so you to can become one of "the few, the proud, the dirty"!

Hope to see you along the right-of-way real soon! Your railroad and our customers will appreciate that you did.

Joe Peterson



# MOW Crews at work



Is Steve Jones: A) Being eaten alive by the bucket truck B) Taking an afternoon siesta C) Doing basic truck maintenance on the bucket truck Photo by Joe Peterson



On a recent cold and foggy morning, the Tie Handler was caught gathering ties near the Farwell Bridge. Photo by Greg LaFramboise



If you can use a broom, you can come out to Brightside and help with the many jobs to be done! Photo by Joe Peterson



Bob Pratt and Pat Hafey were creating a lot of dust (above) until they cut a slot in a water bottle and created a sawdust collector and diverter (below) Photos by Joe Peterson



# Romance on the Rails February 11, 2018











Romance on the Rails 2018

The 2018 Romance on the Rails event featured a variety of select Livermore Valley wines paired with cheese and hors d'oeuvres. While our gracious volunteers served our guests in the elegantly restored SP 10040 Parlor Car, wine educator Steve Ferree spoke about the history of the wines, the early pioneers of the region, and of the transcontinental railroad. Volunteers for the event were: Jackie Del'Duco, Ruth Ebert, Charlotte Ferree, Bob Pratt, Cena Rugeri, and Sue Thomas.



Photos by Dan Sarka

#### **January Volunteers**

by Paul Veltman

The following is a list of the people who helped run your railroad in January. 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 <a href="mailto:stumpie1@sbcglobal.net">stumpie1@sbcglobal.net</a>. <a href="mailto:Note that if I can't read your writing">Note that if I can't read your writing</a>, you may not get credit for the hours you worked.

<u>Administrative</u>	<u>Membership Meeting</u>	Linda Stanley		
Henry Baum	Donna Alexander	Jim Stewart		
Dexter Day	Rich Alexander			
Peter Midnight	Henry Baum	<u>Car Department</u>		
Joe Scardino	Ed Best	Gerald DeWitt		
Paul Veltman	Bob Bradley	Jim Green		
	Pat Buder	Steve Jones		
<u>Meetings</u>	Dave Burla	Dan Loyola		
Donna Alexander	George Childs	Dennis Mann		
Rich Alexander	Dexter Day	Dee Murphy		
Henry Baum	Jim Evans	Bob Pratt		
Ed Best	Tim Flippo	Linda Stanley		
Bob Bradley	Glenn Fountain			
Jim Evans	Zona Fowler	<u>Commissary</u>		
Gail Hedberg	Don Gholson	Doug Debs		
Kent Hedberg	Zonker Harris	Train of Lights		
Dennis Mann	Brian Hitchcock	Train of Lights  Donna Alexander  Bob Bailey  Steve Barkkarie  John Burnside  Tom Crawford  Dexter Day		
Peter Midnight	Curt Hoppins			
Charles Smith	Steve Jones			
Leslie Smith	Peter Midnight			
Linda Stanley	Mark Miller			
Jim Stewart	Dan Mills			
Doug Vanderlee	Joe Peterson			
Paul Veltman	Nancy Peterson	Norm Fraga		
Pat Warren	Bob Pratt	Don Gholson Pete Goodier		

List continues on

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# Brush cutting crews at work



Sierra Murphy, Brooke Murphy, Dee Murphy, Kassandra Strangio, Steve Jones and Rhonda, who came all the way from Lake Don Pedro to help with clearing the ROW.



Rhonda on Mongo, heading off to chip branches. Photo by Dee Murphy



Kassandra Strangio just enjoying the work! Photo by Dee Murphy



## Niles Canyon Railway 30 year Anniversary

A few photos looking back at the beginning of NCRY





Photo by Dexter Day







Photo from PLA Archives

# Treasurer's Report

Paul Veltman, Treasurer

#### **Donors were:**

In January, \$9,582.50 in donations were received.

\$3,482.50 was received for the General Fund, \$100 for the new locomotive shop and \$6,000 for painting the M-200.

Donors were:

Henry Baum

**Charles Jellison** 

Gigamon

**Andrew Goodson** 

Google

Jorh Linke

Mark Lunge

Raphael Moll

Southwest Railcar Ltd.

Jean-Pol Zundel

We thank all of you for your generosity in helping the Niles Canyon Railway and its many projects.

#### NCRY begins 2018 Operations



Above: SP #1423 enroute to Sunol from Niles during the first operation day of 2018

Below: The 2018 NCRy train season kicks off with SP #1423 departing Sunol on 2/4/18 with Engineer Ed Best and Fireman James Stewart providing the traction and Conductor Mark Miller with crew managing the train. Photos by Dan Sarka





Bob Zenk

Steve Hu

John Zielinski

**Other** Zonker Harris

Brian Hitchcock

Paul Veltman

Jim Green Linda Stanley Steve Jones

Joe Scardino Ken Lippman Bill Stimmerman

**Howard Wise** Jim McDaniel Jim Stewart

**Bob Moore** Eric Wright

**Sharron Morrison Electrical & Signals** 

**Ed Best Denis Murchison** 

Bent Christensen

**Brooke Murphy** 

Jim Decker Dee Murphy MOW / Track

**Curt Hoppins Bob Bailey** Sierra Murphy Joe Romani Frank Fontes **Bev Patterson** Jim Stewart Pat Hafey **Tony Peters** 

Paul Veltman Joe Scardino

Steve Jones Joe Shaw

Greg LaFramboise **Mechanical Dept Terry Stokes** 

**Gregg McNaughton** Rich Anderson Phil Stone

Dan Mills **Tom Anderson** Don Stuff

**Brooke Murphy** Henry Chandler **Ron Thomas** Dee Murphy **Doug Debs Sue Thomas** 

**Gerald DeWitt** Sierra Murphy Steve Van Meter

Charles Navarra **Gerry Feeney** 

Mike Pechner **Chris Hart Depot Crew/Operations** 

Pat Warren John Pelmulder Jeff Haslam

Joe Peterson Chris Hauf Gift Shop **Bob Pratt** Steve Jones

Gail Hedberg **Chuck Kent** Jim Stewart

**Kassandra Strangio** Justin Legg

**Switching Crew** Pat Stratton Dennis Mann Mike Strider **Brooke Murphy Gerry Feeney** Dee Murphy **Ron Thomas Ron Thomas** 

Doug Vanderlee Sierra Murphy Eric Wright

John Zielinski Jeff Schwab

Alan Siegwarth

**Bridges and Buildings** 

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