



# THE CLUB CAR



Bulletin 723

Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc.

November 2023

## Clover Valley #4 pulling steam operations



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

Chuck Kent (firing in the cab), Dylan Olson and Gerald DeWitt finishing the morning's activities in preparation for the first Charlie Chaplin Days operation. Note the McCloud Fire Car behind the locomotive carrying water for the day's operations. The day was cloudy and rainy – unusual weather for September.

### IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 November Activities
- 4 President's Report
- 6 Along the Right of Way
- 10 Tales of the Past
- 13 Membership Report

The past couple months since our last Club Car article have been filled with steam, specifically the Clover Valley #4 pulling steam operations for the public in September and October. The Steam Department operated the #4 out of Niles on both Saturday, September 30th and Sunday, October 1st for "Charlie Chaplin Days" which Niles holds every year to celebrate the silent film era. Our riders enjoyed riding steam out of Niles with the trains full and lots of questions

of the crew when the locomotive was being watered off of the McCloud Fire Car that we brought to Niles to supply water during the operations. In addition, there were a crowd people who were enjoying the festivities in Niles who stopped to watch the train from across the UP tracks either on the Niles Depot viewing platform or in Depot Park as the #4 ran around the train and left town. Nothing like a steam locomotive

**Stacktalk continued on Page 8**

**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

# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## MEETINGS

### Member's General Meeting

**NEXT MEETING  
NOVEMBER 10**

Board of Directors Meeting  
following the Member's Meeting

In Whitehouse @ Brightside  
In-person & Teleconference

## CLUB CAR SUBMISSIONS

The deadline for submitting articles  
and photos for next month's issue  
of The Club Car is the  
**20th OF THIS MONTH**

Submit articles in **WORD** text format.  
Submit photos in jpg format

A **WORD** file with the photo number,  
description of photo and  
identifying the people in them  
**IS REQUIRED.**

## JOIN THE PLA

**Yearly Membership Dues:**  
**Primary \$48.**

**Second adult \$24, Child (under) 18, \$12**

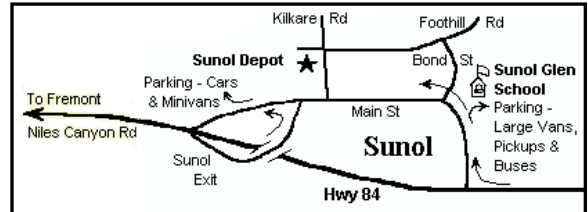
Payments can be made on-line through  
**ncry.org**

or by check mailed to:  
Membership Secretary  
Pacific Locomotive Association  
P.O. Box 515, Sunol, Ca 94586-0515

## BOARDING LOCATIONS

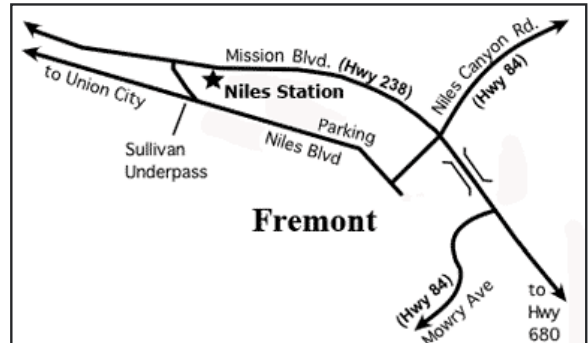
### SUNOL DEPOT

6 Kilcare Road  
Sunol, CA 94586



### NILES STATION

37029 Mission Blvd.  
Fremont, CA 94536



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

President	Henry Baum	(925) 447-7358
Vice President	Jim Evans	(650) 697-9033
Recording Secretary	Matt Petach	(925) 860-4296
Membership Secretary	Rich Alexander	(510) 508-0503
Treasurer	Pat Stratton	(650) 888-8619
Director-At-Large	Justin Legg	(510) 717-4944
Director-At-Large	Warren Haack	(650) 726-7952
Director-At-Large	Patrice McDonald	(408) 772-9278
General Manager	Stephen Barkkarie	(510) 368-1733

### ===== DEPARTMENT HEADS =====

Brush Cutting - Mark Whitman	New Member Orientation - Glenn Fountain
Car Department - Dennis Mann	Operations Manager - Dexter Day
Charter Agent / Docents - Jim Evans	Public Relations - Henry Baum
Chief Engineer - Mike Strider	Road Foreman of Engines - Kent Hedberg
Club Car Editor - Barry Lependorf	Security Department - Jim Evans
Commissary - Doug Debs	Signal Department - Curt Hoppins
Crew Caller - Jackie Vlasak	Station Agent - Sunol - Donna Alexander
Gift Shop - Patrice McDonald	Steam Department Head - Alan Siegwarth
Hazmat Manager - Doug Debs	Steam Hosteler Training - Jeff Schwab
Marketing Manager - Chris Hauf	Technology - Matt Petach
Member Communication - Linda Stanley	Train Master - Mark Miller
Museum Curator - Dennis Mann	Volunteer Coordinator - Ed Best
	Yardmaster - Stephen Barkkarie

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 2nd Friday of each month except December at 5:30 p.m. in the Whitehouse at Brightside Yard.

Members, Sponsors & Guests are welcome.

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The Pacific Locomotive Association is a member of the HeritageRail Alliance (HRA).



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## ===== November Activities =====

November 4	Saturday	First Saturday MoW, 8:00 am - Brightside - Stephen Barkkarie
November 5	Sunday	Public Speeder Rides/Speeder Charter, Niles, 8:00 am - Bob Pratt
November 13	Monday	TOL Test Train, Niles, 6:00 pm
November 17	Friday	TOL 4:30 pm, Niles, - TOL 7:30 pm, Sunol
November 18	Saturday	TOL 4:30 pm, Niles, - TOL 7:30 pm, Sunol
November 19	Sunday	TOL 4:30 pm, Niles, - TOL 7:30 pm, Sunol
November 25	Saturday	TOL 4:30 pm, Niles, - TOL 7:30 pm, Sunol
November 26	Sunday	TOL 4:30 pm, Niles, - TOL 7:30 pm, Sunol
November 29	Wednesday	TOL 4:30 pm, Niles, - TOL 7:30 pm, Sunol

## Volunteer Report

**Ed Best - Volunteer Coordinator**

Note: Volunteer hours must be sent to [volunteer-hours@ncry.org](mailto:volunteer-hours@ncry.org) in order to be recorded. The people listed below reported over 1,975 volunteer hours for the month of September.

### Administration

Henry Baum  
Matt Petach  
Rich Alexander  
Pat Stratton  
Steve Barkkarie  
Justin Legg  
Warren Haack  
Bob Pratt  
Chris Hauf  
Dexter Day  
Don Gholson  
Donna Alexander  
Ed Best  
Gerald DeWitt  
Jackie Vlasak  
Joe Scardino  
Kent Hedberg  
Mark Miller  
Mary Asturias

### Archives

### & Library

Brian Hitchcock

### Car Department

Bev Patterson  
Bob Pratt

### Car Department

Chris Hauf  
Cynder Niemela  
Dave Hipple  
Dee Murphy  
Dexter Day  
Greg Gleason  
James McDaniel  
Jim McDaniel  
Joan Weber  
John Link  
Linda Randolph  
Lou Bradas  
Marshall Williams  
Matt Petach  
Megan Harcourt  
Pat Stratton  
Phil Stone  
Robert Moore  
Ron Thomas  
Steve Van Meter  
Sue Thomas

### Car Department

Tim Boot  
Tim Flippo  
Tom Crawford

### Commissary

Benita Harper  
Bonnie Harrington  
Dan Mills  
Doug Debs  
Jack Harrington  
Sally Mills  
Sue Thomas

### Docent

Jim Evans  
Jim Stewart

### Electrical & Signals

Bent Christensen  
Curt Hoppins  
Joseph Romani

### Facilities

Bob Bailey  
Doug Debs  
John Zielinski  
Linda Stanley  
Steve Jones  
Wesley Van Osdol

### Gift Shop

Charlene Murrell  
Patrice McDonald

### Mechanical

Charles Franz  
Chris Hauf  
Gerald DeWitt  
Gerry Feeney  
Henry Chandler  
Howard Wise  
Karl Swartz  
Kent Hedberg  
Linda Stanley  
Richard Gove  
Steve Jones  
Tim Flippo  
William Stimmerman

### MOW & Track

Adam Weidenbach  
Bob Bailey  
Bob Pratt  
Mark Whitman  
Mike Pechner  
Pat Stratton  
Ron Thomas  
Wesley Van Osdol

### Other

Barry Lependorf  
Bob Bailey  
Bob Pratt  
Charlene Murrell  
Dee Murphy  
Ed Best  
Patrice Warren  
Tim Flippo  
Zonker Harris

### Train Crew

Alan Siegwarth  
Albert Ou  
Bob Pratt  
Brad Jones  
Charles Franz  
Chuck Kent  
David Bowman  
Don Shaffer  
Dylan Olson  
Ed Best  
Gabriel Gleeson  
Garon Michaelis  
Gerald DeWitt  
Henry Chandler  
Jackie Vlasak  
Jason Pate

### Train Crew

Jeff Schwab  
John Zielinski  
Jon Williamson  
Justin Legg  
Liam O'Leary  
Logan Rubasky  
Mark Miller  
Mason Denton  
Micheal Stockwell  
Nick Alexander  
Patrice McDonald  
Raymond Swift  
Ron Thomas  
Sanjay Bhandari  
Sarah Fritz  
Steve Knoeck  
Ted Unruh  
Tim Flippo  
Warren Haack



## President's Report

Henry Baum - President

First, I want to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, and I hope you have as many things to be thankful for as I do, especially here at the Pacific Locomotive Association. I am thankful that TOL decorating is almost completed, but there will always be things to check and functionality to be confirmed for the thousands (millions?) of lights we have on the train. I am also thankful that our new PA system will be installed and working for the test train, which will run on November 13th this year. We are thankful for the excitement the test train always generates amongst our fellow non-profits that we invite, as well as the politicians and other community leaders. I will be using the test train as a platform to share our Niles Museum Concept with the passengers that night. I want them to be aware and build a desire for hearing more about it. Fremont Rotary is next on my list to make a presentation, and hopefully more to follow after the holidays. I am thankful that all the feedback has been positive, and that positive feedback builds community support for this major undertaking.

I am truly thankful for all of the volunteers who have come out to get everything ready for TOL. Whether it is decorating the cars, repairing things that are broken, maintaining the Right of Way, cleaning, painting, testing or just checking things, it is all important, and it all needs to be done. All of this checking and testing will go a long way to making sure that this year's TOL goes off without a hitch. Knock on Wood. No matter how much we test or check, things are bound to 'go awry' (or as my wife's English friend says, 'come adrift'). I am truly thankful for those volunteers who step up and dive in to solve problems when they occur and keep the trains rolling.

Last year we identified some problems with the train. The diner had sprung a number of small leaks when it rained. They were patched, and after TOL investigation showed one leak was more severe than we thought and was

doing significant damage to the car. The cause was identified (a leaky hatch for the defunct ice chutes was the culprit), and a permanent repair for the leak was designed and fabricated. We also had a refrigeration failure in the diner, and that was also resolved quickly by the lounge car hosts to keep the trains rolling, and all the refrigeration and Air Conditioning systems brought up to snuff for this year's TOL. None of that means we won't find new problems with a 96-year-old car or any of the modern upgrades made to the car. Sometimes, new stuff breaks more often than the old stuff. They just don't make it like they used to, right?

We also identified a sneaky little gremlin that was causing problems with our train line, the electrical system that powers all the Holiday lights and other electrical accessories on the train, like the air conditioning in the double-articulated chair car. While everything was being operated safely, apparently we had a load that was unbalanced, primarily due to that air conditioning in the double articulated. The giant cables and connectors we run between the cars to get the electricity from the generator to the other cars were having some issues handling the loads. This made the connectors almost impossible to unplug. What a nuisance. No simple fix, short of pounding out the pins and revamping the connectors, both the pins and the sockets. A big job. And these are not \$2 connectors you buy at Home Depot. Parts are still available, and the connectors were completely rehabbed. We will use the generators on the double articulated to ensure the loads are properly shared.

The K.C. Bones open car is ready to go back in the train with a new paint job and new metal roofs replacing the plastic tarp roofs. Hope it doesn't hail though, could get noisy. The All Day Lunch has had its interior revamped thanks to the Wednesday Warrior crew. Locomotive problems have also been identified and addressed.

All we can do is hope we don't have

any surprises once TOL begins, but we have the people who know what to do when trouble arises. We just hope they are volunteering that night. YOU may be one of those people. Have you signed up for one of the many positions still open this year? Just having you on board means someone else is free to solve problems.

Do not wait until the last minute to sign up. We know it seems like it is still early but the train will be running in just a few weeks from when I am writing this. Go to the members web page and sign up for as many nights as you can, and as many jobs as you feel like trying out. Caboose and car hosts are the easiest jobs we have going, and there are a lot of nights still needing volunteers. I will be signing up for a number of nights. Will you?

We will still always need your help. No matter what it is, we need volunteers to make it happen. Make 2023 the year you come out and volunteer.

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](mailto:president@ncry.org). I REALLY want to hear your thoughts on what we should be doing to move the organization forward.

Respectfully submitted

**Henry Baum**

## Matching Gift Program

If your employer has a matching gift program for donations to charitable organizations, you may be able to double the impact of any contribution you make to PLA. Because conditions and criteria for gift matching vary by employer, check with your HR department for details. If details of the PLA as recipient are needed, contact:

**Treasurer Pat Stratton at**  
[treasurer@ncry.org](mailto:treasurer@ncry.org)



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Brightside Yard

Mike Pechner



Mike Pechner photograph

Repairing the roof on the Diner.



Mike Pechner photograph

Working on the #4's lubrication.



Mike Pechner photograph

The upper block has been removed allowing access to the lower block near the saddle.



Mike Pechner photograph

This side of the Ranch car is awaiting sheet metal work.



Mike Pechner photograph

Close-up.



Mike Pechner photograph

Here you see one of the wooden blocks that sits atop the steel saddle.

## Brush Cutting

Mark Whitman

Tuesday, September 19, Brad Jones, and I took the bucket truck and started trimming trees east of the Brightside gate to generate brush for the chipping crew on Wednesday.

On Wednesday, September 20, the crew headed to the same area to chip and continue trimming and removing small trees all the way to the beginning of the tangent track.

The Crew was Brad Jones, Ron Thomas, Adam Weidenbach, Steve Knoech, and two new young helpers Mason Denton, Garon Michaelis, and Mark Whitman.

On Friday, September 29, I decided to take care of some small projects that I wanted to complete. Adam Weidenbach and I went out to pick up some logs left by a previous brush cutting that were too big to fit in the chipper and dispose of them.

We also trimmed four or five trees by the big retaining wall just west of Dresser Bridge. While we were at Dresser Bridge, we went under it to see what it would take to remove a large log that is wedged against the center pier. We determined that this was a project for another day. We also discovered a skateboard that was reincarnated into a bosons chair hanging from the center pier. On the way back to Brightside we picked up an old engine block and components that had been laying in the brush by the brick plant. We also picked up an old signal pole that was laying alongside the right of way and hauled these back to Brightside.

Mark Whitman



## E-COUPLING INFORMATION

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

Email: To Join Members Email List, send an Email to: [info@ncry.org](mailto:info@ncry.org)

Twitter: [@toots4ncry](https://twitter.com/toots4ncry)

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

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





# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager

The Jack-O Lantern is still on the front porch at home, but at Brightside yard, the Christmas Train of Lights has been assembled for final connections and testing. I haven't had the season's first slice of pumpkin pie and we have sold out every seat for twenty-five nights in record time. It may sound like we are ahead of schedule, but it has come right down to the wire wrapping up repairs and improvements to the passenger fleet. Regular operations wrapped up for the year with a steam train on the final day and now we all can focus on preparations for the TOL.

Supplies for all the scrumptious treats must be ordered and all the gift shop goods have been laid by. Sign up for crew positions are online (lots of positions available), commissary dept will hold training for all its helpers old and new. The stations are being made ready for the hordes of passengers and their vehicles. Maintenance of way takes this time to double check the track, make sure switches are secure, ensure no trees will scrape the train and that our culverts and ditches are ready for the coming rains. Our professional locomotive mechanic Matt Munson will come out to inspect our fleet for readiness and the local Sheriff Sargent Marc Petrini has agreed to tour the right of way for unwanted encampments. The local CalFire crews have been invited to ride our test train and observe our readiness for emergency coordination. Everything we can think of gets planned for so we can limit the surprises, but you never know what might come up.

As far as car repairs are concerned, the NCR 1830 "K.C. Bones" looks beautiful in its new paint and new metal roof over the open sections. The SP 10040 hatch cover for the AC is completed and with some last-minute upholstery repairs it is ready for use. The last holdout for the Xmas train, the WP315 coach, has had its eight new windows fitted and it is the last one to get decorated. Although it is



Stephen Barkkarie photograph

KC Bones in new paint with metal roof.

not in the Train of Lights, the GN1242 "Hidden Lake" repairs to the South side are moving along quickly as Howard has removed the rotted drip line the whole length of the car and the lower sill edge rot has been completely removed. Before you know it, that car will be whole on the outside. We are having a new PA system installed on the whole train and the contractor has been working long hours to install cable and new speakers throughout the cars. (More info on the progress will be coming later this month.)

Elsewhere on the railroad, ballast on the Eastern end of the line has been spread using a locomotive and ballast hopper to get ready for the

final profile and alignment to be done later this month. Railworks (formerly H&H Engineering) will be being in their mainline Tamper and regulator to do a professional job on the track from Verona station to the Happy Valley Bridge. They may also do some lining and tamping on the section from Verona X-ing down to Arroyo de Laguna Bridge if time allows. We will also have a team coming in to inspect the extent of scouring that occurred on the Easternmost pier of the Arroyo Bridge during last year's torrential rains. We need to document its condition in case we have another hard rainy season. We may need to get the county and FEMA involved in this repair.



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Along the Right of Way

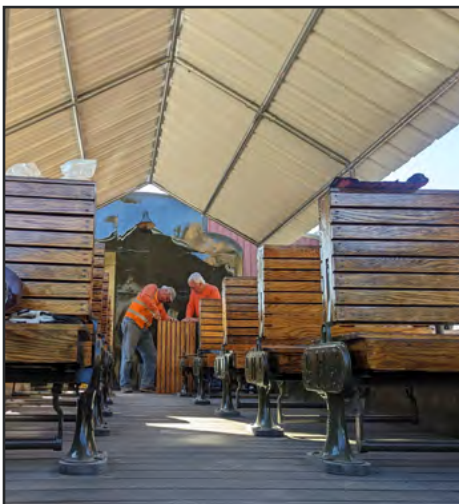
**Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager**

PLA will be helping our neighbors the Farwell's by giving them asphalt grindings from our Niles station. We have an abundance of this material from previous donations, and we need to move a great deal of it to begin our turntable/roundhouse project, so we are happy to help out our friend and benefactor.

While I'm on the subject of helping out your neighbor, I need to express the importance of signing up to volunteer during this most important season. This is when we generate most of our capital to do the great work we do. There are lots of ways to help. Some take only a few hours like parking cars, feeding crews, stocking the train and some take more time like chaperoning a caboose, serving in commissary or hosting a first-class car. All are important to the success of this most important mission. Please make a commitment to be a part of this year's Train of Lights and become a part of the legend. We will show you how.

See you on the rails,

**Stephen Barkkarie,**  
General Manager



*Stephen Barkkarie photograph*  
**Steve Meyer and Pat Stratton mounting seats in NCRY 1830.**



*Stephen Barkkarie photograph*  
**Sanjay Bhandari instructs student Brakie Patrice McDonald.**



## Stack Talk

Alan Siegwarth - Steam Department

### Continued from Page 1

whistle to attract the attention of those nearby! The #4 was also operated on three other Sunday operations rounding out our steam operations for 2023. Next spring's steam operations should be interesting as we will likely have a big party as the Clover Valley #4 turns 100 years old in March 2024 and that sounds like a reason to celebrate!

When the Steam Department was not supporting operations, the Southern Pacific #1744 project kept us busy. In early September, we set up and installed the last set of tires on the #2 driving axle. The #2 driver was left for last as it has the Stephenson Valve Gear Eccentrics attached to the axle where we usually rest the driver set during tire installation. Henry Chandler, Chuck Kent and Gerald DeWitt fit some wood blocks to rest on the drop pit jack so the axle could be rotated 90 degrees and be supported clear of the eccentrics. The final two tires went on smoothly ending the tire installation portion of the #1744 rebuild project.

As mentioned last month, John Abetecola with TSG Multimedia was onsite during the tire installation to video another episode of their ongoing Youtube video series on the Southern Pacific #1744 restoration – the “Niles Canyon Railway SP 1744 Update Ring of Fire Putting On Tires” video is out on the TSG Multimedia Youtube channel. Check it out on TSG Multimedia's Youtube channel, it is the latest of five educational videos on the SP#1744 restoration project – enjoy! Meanwhile, Stockton Locomotive Works has been progressing on the driving boxes as well. The box repairs have required many hours of welding and adding new metal plates in where SP did braze repairs at the end of steam. The boxes started out looking really rough but are now looking good with the work and will give us years of service when completed!

**Alan Siegwarth**



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

**Chuck Kent operating the crane, Gerald DeWitt (behind the tire), Jeff Schwab up top, Charles Franz and Henry Chandler guide a tire in place for heating.**



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

**More heating of the tire.**



*Charles Franz photograph*

**Tire work completed!**



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Stack Talk

Alan Siegwarth - Steam Department



Alan Siegwarth photograph

Engineer Tim Flippo brings the #4 in for a coupling in Sunol while a railfan takes pictures.



Alan Siegwarth photograph

With all the paint stripped off the drivers, a lot of historical evidence can be found on repair work and how SP mixed and matched parts from locomotives during repairs over the years. The current #1 driver for the 1744 is marked for use as a #3 driver on sister Mogul #1746. Additional markings denote that the driver had a new axle applied at the West Oakland shops on March 12, 1919.



Stockton Locomotive Works photograph

New liner welded in one of the SP#1744 driving boxes.



Stockton Locomotive Works photograph

Newly faced box with the babbitt thrust bearing removed. A new babbitt bearing will be poured on the front face of the box shown.



Alan Siegwarth photograph

John Blaine took a break from welding on the SP #1744 frame to make a replacement roof cover for the air conditioning system. The large cover added to the car in later years, measures about 4'x5' and covers the opening to maintain the air conditioning blowers. Thanks to John for taking on this project as the old hatch had holes all the way through it!



## Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

### This Month's tale: THE LONE ORPHAN "COMBINE SP 3176"

This tale starts with the construction of two new cars built by the Pullman Company in December, 1916 as Pullman lot 4396, Plan 2925 which only had two cars designated class 60-CB-1 sixty foot Combination Baggage-Coach. These were cars Arizona Eastern 453-454.

The AE combines had one less window in the coach section than other combines of class and seated 34. The two cars were numbered into the Pacific Lines series in 1926 as AE 3176-3177 and changed in December 31, 1924 when AE was absorbed by the Southern Pacific and the two cars were redesignated to SP 3176-3177. In 1946, the cars were shopped so the upper arched window sashes were able to be plated over and painted into the famous Daylight paint scheme.

The SP 3176 which is the sole survivor of its class was used on SP trains 53 – 54 between Oakland and Sacramento in 1946-late 1950's. The car was set up to handle luggage and express shipments. The brake end of the car was set up to handle fresh fish. The elevated wooden slat flooring concealed a galvanized sheet metal drain pan that sloped towards the center of the car with several drain holes



*NCRY Archive photograph*

"Southern Pacific Lines". Combine 3176 is the soul survivor of its class. Picture taken before lettering was applied at Brightside.

along the center line. The arrangement was for shipments of fresh fish, packed in ice in wooden crates. The fish racks allowed the melting water to drain out of the car while the remaining area of the baggage room floor stayed dry. The car handled company mail and had a cast iron stove and it also had steam heated coils with protective wire mesh screen.

Along with all the other comforts,

the car had its own toilet hopper and wash stand. It also served as an office for train Conductors and Brakemen in the territory that it ran in. Also, the car did not have air conditioning. This car eventually was removed from regular service and it was kept in reserve and it was spotted on a track near the SP West Oakland Shops. California-Nevada Historical Society entered into a purchase agreement with the SP for



*S.P. photograph*

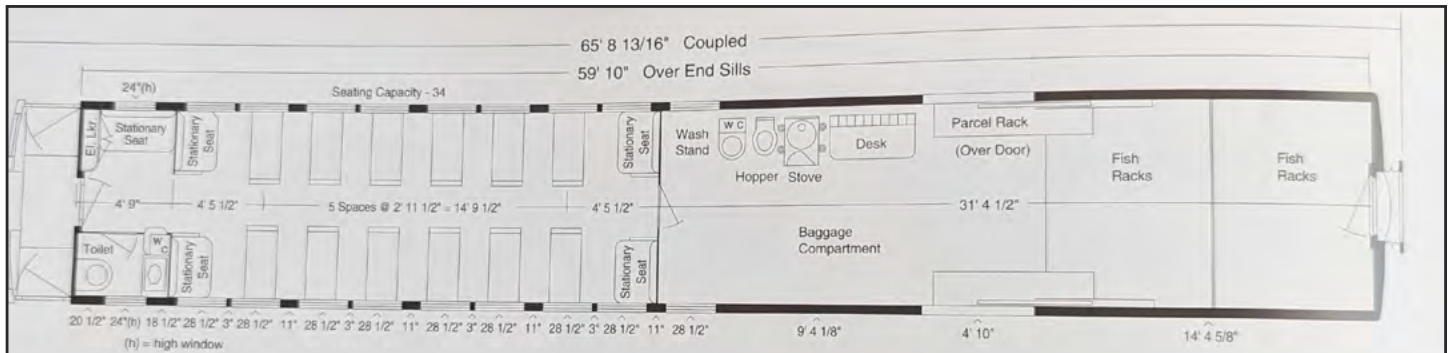
Combine as built for Arizona Eastern as Class 60-XB-1 in 1916. The car as it sits today is as it sat when new.



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Tales of the Past

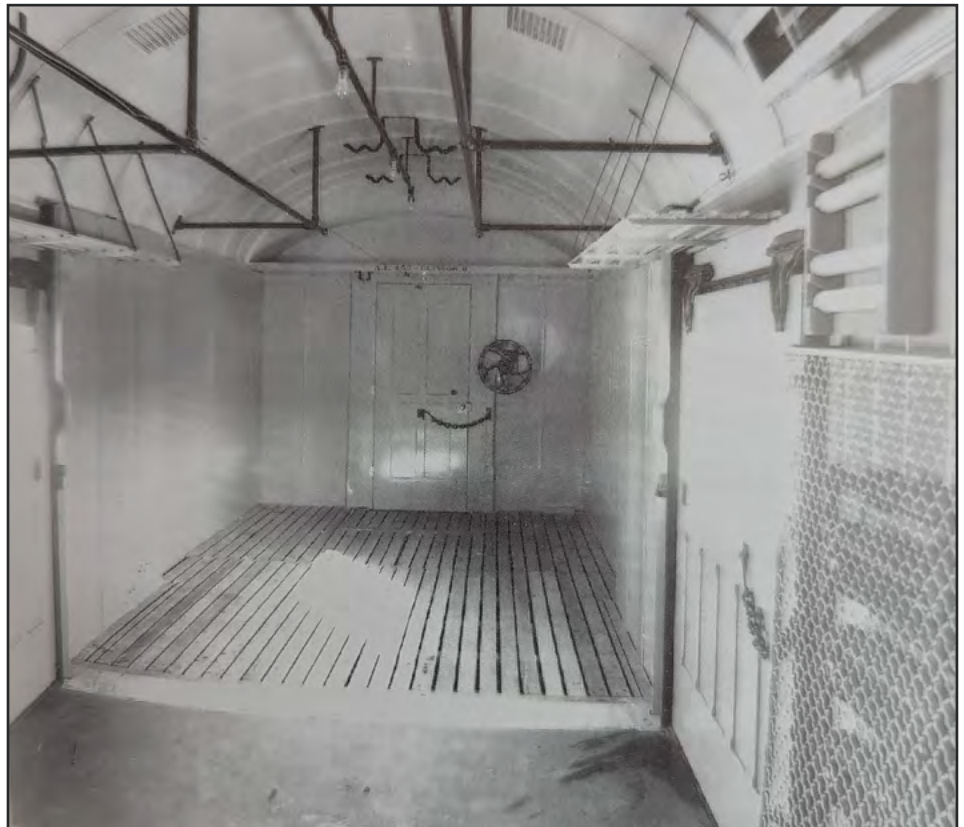
**Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager**



*SP Coaches and Chair Cars photograph*

**Combine AE 453 as built in 1916. The interior has not changed that much since built. The car is intact.**

\$1,000.00. All seemed well and good until a member discovered that the car had been moved to the on-premises scrapyard. The Cal-Nevada President contacted the SP on this matter. The SP said it was too late to save the SP 3176, it seems that a scrapyard had paid the SP for the Combine SP 3176. The SP was generous and offered the society other cars in its place, but Cal-Nevada held fast on the pre-existing agreement and on the basis that the Southern Pacific Railroad had cashed their check for \$1,000.00. SP had to acknowledge that Cal-Nevada was legal owner of the car and the car narrowly escaped the scrappers' torch. Now that the car was in Cal-Nevada group's control, the car was used on various sponsored excursion trains in California. One of the excursions that was well-documented was on the SP to Northern California for a trip over the McCloud River Railroad from Mt. Shasta City which ran in June 1962. This excursion included the McCloud's steamer No. 25 and Yreka Western Steamer No. 19. After the excursions were over with, you had a car that needed a new place to stay. Cal-Nevada arranged a lease with the Sierra Railroad for use in regular tourist and movie service including being part of Railtown 1897 State Park at Jamestown, Ca. While at Jamestown, the car received its Dark Olive Green



*SP Coaches and Chair Cars photograph*

**Looking toward the brake end of the car is the fish rack flooring. This floor had drain holes for washing out the car. Next section was for luggage and freight section with heating pipes.**

paint and re-lettered as Sierra Railroad No. 3176 and later named "Calaveras" No. 11. At the conclusion of the Sierra Railroad service in 1979, the car came back under the care of the PLA.

The car left the Sierra on September 7, 1982 to return to Castro Point. From Castro Point, the car was part of the Hospital train that moved the  
*Continued on next page*

# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager



*SP Coaches and Chair Cars photograph*

Picture shows mail portion for sorting company mail. The car stove was just beyond desk. Also this section had the toilet and wash basin. It also carried two shot gun positions.



*SP Coaches and Chair Cars photograph*

The passenger section of the Combine. The intact toilet is behind bulk head at the end of car. This section has not changed since this photo was taken.



*Bob Zenk photograph*

Southern Pacific Lines 3176 as it sat in West Oakland in 1968 as PLA members Bob Zenk, Bruce Heard and Eldon Lucy inspected the car for PLA.

### ***Continued from previous page***

equipment from Castro Point to the Oakland OTR in 1986. While at the Oakland Terminal Railway, the car was repainted and extensive repair work was done to the car. With its original number AE 453, the car was trucked to the Niles Canyon Railway. On February 1, 2014, Cal-Nevada membership generously donated the

AE 453 to the PLA for permanent care, use and display. The car remained as AE 453 until it was repainted into its fresh new Olive Green paint and was put back to Southern Pacific Lines with the No. 3176. The seat upholstery was done at Niles Canyon Railway into its present color. The rest of the car is as built with the exception of the baggage area which has boxes built for counter

space for TOL. The car is almost 95 percent intact. The only item for the car that is seen missing are the two shot guns for the gun rack that were carried back in time.

With that said, another tale comes to a close.

**Dexter Day**  
Operations Manager



## Membership Report

**Rich Alexander - Membership**

It is with great sadness that I have to report the longtime member Raymond Strong has passed away on 10-8-2023.

### New members:

Bud Beal, Paul Heintz, Michael Kellner, George Reilly, Doruk Tayli, Ekin Tayli, Melahat Tayuli, Steven Turner, and Crystal Wade.

We currently have 904 active members.

Volunteer TOL requests are continuing to come in. At this time we have 282 on the Saturday 7:30 pm train and 316 on the Sunday 4:30 pm train. There is still space available so get your requests in.

This year I am using FareHarbor to track the ticket requests. If you have an email address, you should have received a confirmation notice from FareHarbor. Some of our members have no email address in the database so you won't be able to get a FareHarbor confirmation. Your name will still be on the manifest. You should have received your boarding passes in the mail unless other arrangements have been made. By using FareHarbor I can send out email notices to those on the manifest if changes need to be made or updates. This has been a busy month.

Train of Lights tickets went on sale October 7 at 10:00 am. Within the first 20 minutes all the first class and cabooses were sold out. Within the first hour and a half all the 4:30pm general seating were sold out. At 2:39 pm everything was sold out.

For those volunteers who are not members but give their time to volunteer on the Niles Canyon Railway we will start tracking their time for TOL Volunteer train tickets. If you know of someone who is in this category, I will need their information in order to track their hours and send out notifications when the time comes for TOL Volunteer ticket. This should include their full name, address, phone number and

email address. Please send me the information at [membership@ncry.org](mailto:membership@ncry.org). I have had several volunteers ask this year as to why they did not get tickets. If I don't have any way of contacting them it is hard to get the information out to them, so please pass the information along to those volunteers who are not members of PLA. Also, they still have to fill out a release form in order to work on

property. Those forms are available in Blake's Palace. Remember that those under 18 years of age need a parent or guardian with them when volunteering. Once filled out please place them in the Membership Secretary mail there.

**Rich Alexander**  
Membership Secretary

## Station Agent

**Donna Alexander**

By the time you get this Club Car, we will be 1-2 weeks away from the beginning of our Train of Lights season. And it's a worry that we won't be able to provide the very best for the public like in past years if we don't get more volunteers to sign up for snack bar, caboose hosts, dome and parlor car hosts, parking lot helpers, and a few other spots. As of this writing we need 43 4:30 caboose hosts and 40 7:30 caboose hosts. We need 2 dome captains, six 4:30 crew, and eight 7:30 crew, which is not bad, but the parlor car still needs 10 captains, 43 4:30 crew and 39 7:30 crew. We've never needed this many volunteers for the parlor car in the past, and it's a little scary. We need 104 parking lot helpers for our Niles/Fremont Station because it's really hard for our passengers to park themselves at that lot. It's long and narrow, and it's best if the cars back into the spots so they can easily drive out and not have to worry about backing out and hitting someone walking. And for our snack bars on the train we need two more cocoa captains, eleven more commissary captains, and 38 crew. Round up your friends and relatives and ask them to help because they get to ride the train for free and interact with the passengers which is fun, and if they work both trains they get dinner, and can then wander the train when empty

on the ride from Fremont to Sunol from 6:00 to 7:00 pm. Such a deal!!

If you have questions on anything, please email me. And on Saturday, November 11th at 10:00 am at Brightside there will be a training class on volunteering for the snack bars, dome and parlor car hosts, and caboose hosts if we have any come that day.

### Here again is how to sign up:

Go to [ncry.org](http://ncry.org).

Click on **Members' Website** under **About**. You do not need to log in.

Click on **Volunteer Opportunities** under **Volunteer**. You'll see the volunteer spots.

When you see somewhere you want to sign up, click on **Volunteer Yourself** by the **green hand** on the right side of the opportunity.

Choose which date you want to volunteer, and check the box on that date, and put in your name, email address, and phone number.

Scroll to the bottom and click **Next**.

Check the dates you signed up for, and click **Finish**. If you don't click Finish, your sign up won't be saved.

Need help? Contact me and tell me which date/dates you want to volunteer and I'll help sign you up.

**donna alexander**  
[station-agent@ncry.org](mailto:station-agent@ncry.org)

# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Treasurer's Report

Pat Stratton - Treasurer

Our balance sheet shows a very good cash balance and virtually no liabilities, so we are in good shape going into this year's TOL. On October 7 we began selling TOL tickets and were sold out in about 4 hours. We don't actually collect those dollars until we have completed that day's trips so our paydays don't start until late November, but with decent weather and the help of all you volunteers we will have additional cash reserves by the end of the year.

Revenue in September was normal, except for a welcome bump from the second Beer Train of this season. It was very successful, entertaining many riders with not only beer tastings but also live music; and profitable too, earning almost \$9,700. Other revenue came from contributions of \$6,800, including another \$400 contributed in memory of John Fenstermacher, long time member and Niles Station agent who passed away recently.

On the expense side, we have some projects underway that are using our cash. We have taken this opportunity to upgrade the PA System in all our TOL cars. This involves a custom set of sound equipment, assembled to meet our requirements and installed into our unique equipment, so it is a costly upgrade. So far all is reportedly going well. Roof repairs have been done to the Steam Shop, that job is complete. We have ordered the equipment for an upgrade and expansion to the car shop compressed air system; that could be done in November. And the new roofing, paint, lettering and other upgrades for the Bones should be nearly complete by now. New to the lineup is an underwater inspection at Arroyo Bridge to determine if any remediation is needed to prevent scouring during the coming rainy season.

Along the right-of-way, we recently had 61 truckloads of donated ballast delivered. This should allow us enough

ballast to build up and surface the East end extension as well as build up our planned Niles yard improvements. Next week should see contractor Railworks equipment on the East end to surface, line and dress the newly completed ROW there between Verona and Happy Valley Road. They will also spend up to an additional 3 days tamping and spot lining other areas of the ROW west from there and into the Canyon. This attention to track structure is what makes our track the best of any museum railroad in the West.

This past September 5th our bank of many years, Bank of the West, merged into BMO Bank. As far as our bank accounts and CD are concerned, the transition went well. The credit card side has been rockier, but problems

are being solved. Some paperwork requirements of BMO are not the same as those of Bank of the West and we are in the process of covering that shortfall. BMO also has a very different transaction fee structure - not as friendly to non-profits as we are used to. It will take some time to determine if BMO is a good fit for us. More on that next year.

The financial audit has begun. It will continue into December.

That is what is going on now. If you have questions or comments send them via email to [treasurer@ncry.org](mailto:treasurer@ncry.org).

**Pat Stratton**

Treasurer

[treasurer@ncry.org](mailto:treasurer@ncry.org)

650-888-8619

### **SAVE THE DATE!** **TOL Commissary Training** **Saturday Nov 11**

**Last year, we had a Train of Lights training session for Commissary volunteers. It was well received by new volunteers, and by our seasoned volunteers – there's always something new to learn! Everyone is welcome.**

#### **NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY!**

**The training session will be Saturday, November 11th at Brightside. Training starts 10:00 am, lasts 2-3 hours.**

**Team leaders will lead small groups to each car (snackbar car, All Day Lunch car, dome car, & parlor car) for everyone to learn.**

**Lunch and homemade gingerbread will be provided for everyone. After lunch, we will finish stocking the cars, and to learn what goes where.**

**Questions? Contact Doug Debs, cell 650-704-1487**



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Mudball Express: Wildflower Seeding of Niles Canyon Alex Clayson's Eagle Project

Becoming an Eagle Scout is no small feat. After many years of climbing the ranks, a community service project must be completed by those desiring to become eagles. After completing the Railroading Merit Badge at Niles Canyon Railway, Alex Clayson (Troop 199, Warm Springs, Fremont) decided to do his project along the right of way. Alex has spread native seeds, "in order to increase the robustness of our ecosystem"-Alex. Clayson started his research last spring, when he boarded a train with 2 local biologists to survey the canyon. He did this to insure that the seeds being spread would be Bay Area native wildflower seeds. Alex then acquired 7lbs of native seeds! Next, along with volunteers, they mixed a pinch of seeds with Sunol clay and compost to form small seedballs. There were many seed balling sessions with nearly 6000 seedballs being produced. On October 8, the train left Sunol loaded with all 300 lbs of seedballs. Troop 199 tossed out many seedballs along 84 in Sunol. When we got near Vallejo Mills, other volunteers of all ages tossed seedballs into the flatter areas which got good sunlight. We did a runaround in Niles and returned to Sunol. By the time we were back, all the balls had been spread containing 13 different species of native flowers like Lupines and Clarkias.

In this project, about 413 service hours were worked. Now, Clayson will complete his paperwork and do a Board of Review to obtain his Eagle, which only 6.5% of scouts have ever done (Long Beach BSA). The Pacific Locomotive Association/NCRY would like to thank Alex, Troop 199, and all volunteers involved for their efforts in this amazing ecological restoration project. Also, thanks to Bob Pratt for coordinating the event for NCRY.

**Jason Pate**



*Lori Clayson photograph*

**Troop 199 and other volunteers tossing seedballs near Vallejo Mills.**



*Jason Pate photograph*

**Alex Clayson on the Mudball Express  
highballing back to Sunol.**



*Jason Pate photograph*

**A box of seedballs is about 20 pounds.**





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*Chris Hauf photograph*

"For the first time in nearly a decade, the K.C. Bones has its number and its identity back. After completing the body paint, Chris Hauf added back the car's name and number to further complete the repaint of the car so it would be ready for Train of Lights."