



# THE CLUB CAR



Bulletin 726

Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc.

February 2024

## Knight Foundry - Museum Helping Museum



*Chris Hauf photograph*

Pouring the brake shoe molds. Two people handle the ladle while a third holds back the slag from coming out of the ladle onto the mold.

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Operating historical railroad equipment comes with many complications; one being the availability or lack thereof of spare and consumable parts like cast iron brake shoes for steam engines. Having members that volunteer at both museums, step in a wonderful collaboration between our Niles Canyon Railway and the Knight Foundry in Sutter Creek, CA. A preserved late 1800s foundry and machine shop, it is the last of its kind

to be fully water powered. The foundry remains active in casting and offered to help cast new brake shoes for our steam locomotive. This process took place this past Saturday with members of our NCRy on site to watch and document the process from start to finish. Here one of the brake shoe molds is being poured with the hot liquid iron by members of the Knight Foundry. A great collaboration, and a

**Knight Foundry 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

**FEBRUARY 9**  
**5:30 PM**

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**

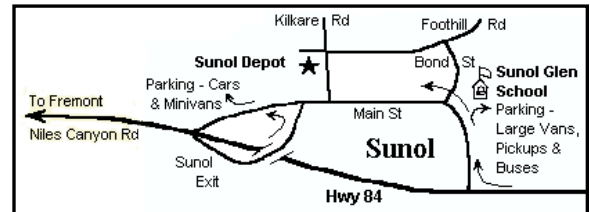
Payments can be made on-line through  
**ncry.org**

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

## BOARDING LOCATIONS

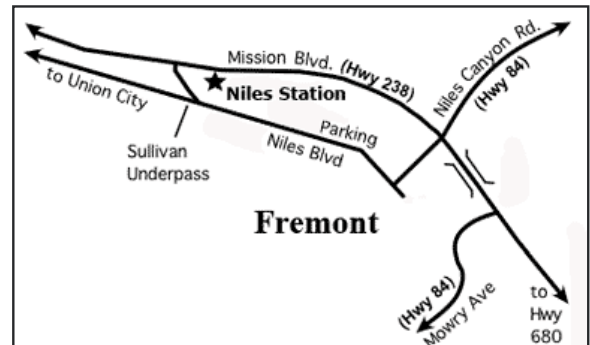
### SUNOL DEPOT

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

## FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES

February 3	Saturday	MOW Building East	Brightside	8:00 am	Mike Strider
February 9	Friday	General Meeting	Brightside	5:30 pm	Henry Baum
February 10	Saturday	D Regular Operation.	Sunol	10:30 am & 1:00 pm	
February 11	Sunday	S Regular Operation.	Sunol	10:30 am & 1:00 pm	
February 17	Saturday	D Regular Operation.	Sunol	10:30 am & 1:00 pm	
February 18	Sunday	S Regular Operation.	Sunol	10:30 am & 1:00 pm	
February 24	Saturday	Brush Cutting	Brightside	7:30 am	Mark Whitman

## Volunteer Report

Charlene Murrell

HAPPY NEW YEAR! The people listed below reported 7,111 volunteer hours for the month of December. Please note: Volunteer hours should be emailed to Charlene Murrell - email address: volunteer-hours@ncry.org. Train crew hours will continue to be collected directly from the log sheets. (Please PRINT CLEARLY)

### Administration

Bob Bradley  
Bob Pratt  
Chris Hauf  
Dexter Day  
Don Gholson  
Donna Alexander  
Ed Best  
Henry Baum  
Jackie Vlasak  
Joe Scardino  
Kent Hedberg  
Mary Asturias  
Pat Stratton  
Rich Alexander  
Stephen Barkkarie

### Archives & Library

Brian Hitchcock

### Car Department

Bruce Burke  
Dennis Mann  
Dylan Olson  
Gerald DeWitt  
Gerry Feeney  
Howard Wise  
Karl Swartz  
Lou Bradas  
Peter Bradas  
Sarah Fritz  
Steve Brown

### Docent

Jim Evans  
Ray Crist  
Ryan Dong

### Electrical & Signals

Bruce Burke  
Steve Knoeck

### Facilities

Brad Jones  
Wesley Van Osdol

### Gift shop

Charlene Murrell  
Cynder Niemela  
Doug Vanderlee  
Patrice McDonald  
Sarah Fritz  
Stephen Barkkarie  
Sue Thomas

### Mechanical

Charles Franz  
Henry Chandler  
Jeff Haslam  
Linda Stanley  
Steve Jones  
William Stimmerman

### MOW & Track

Bob Bailey  
Chris Campi  
Bob Pratt  
Chris Campi  
Dee Murphy  
Mark Witman  
Matt Petach  
Mike Strider  
Pat Stratton  
Ray Crist  
Rick Corey

### Other

Barry Lependorf  
Charlene Murrell  
Curt Hoppins  
Ed Best  
Patrice Warren

### Other

Zonker Harris

### Train of Lights

Alex Clayson  
Alyssa Cantz  
Amanda Best  
Barbara Troster  
Benita Cown-Harper  
Bob Bailey  
Bob Gilbert  
Bob Pratt  
Bonnie Harrington  
Brenda Du Charme  
Bruce Burke  
Bruce Compton  
Cari Lependorf  
Carol Boseley  
Cathy Harrington  
Cheryl Dougherty  
Christophe Kiwoba  
Connie DeGrange  
Crisand Giles  
Crystal Campisi  
Dalip Bahati  
Dan Mills  
Dan Thomas  
David Hipple  
Debra Kane  
Derek Johnson  
Don Sullivan  
Donna Schroder  
Doug Debs  
Dexter Day  
Ed Best  
Elizabeth Casy  
Florian Fournier  
Frank Stein  
Frankie Ross  
Gail Farwell

### Train of Lights

Garrett Farwell  
Greg Ellis  
Greg Gleeson  
Hal Briar  
Henry Baum  
Jack Harrington  
Jacques Verdier  
Jan VanDe Werfhorst  
Janna Hathaway  
Jeanne Digel  
Jeff Mockus  
Jessie Troester  
Jim Ellis  
Joan Butler  
Joe Romani  
John Link  
Joshua Derham  
Julie Christensen  
Karen Correia  
Kathy Ellis  
Katie Rothe  
Kylie Montgomery  
Laren McCarthy  
Laura Bajuk  
Lauren Fuller  
Linda Best  
Lori Clayson  
Linda Stanley  
Lydia McCloskey  
Madaline Briar  
Mary Perez  
Mathew Clayson  
Mathew Mockus  
Melinda Ross  
Mika Stratton  
Mike Pechner  
Pat Bruder  
Pat Fry  
Pat Oakman

### Train of Lights

Patrice McDonald  
Patrick Allaire  
Paul Davison  
Phil Montgomery  
Ray Crist  
Rhonda Dijean  
Rich Alexander  
Richard Smith  
Rick Gross  
Rob Giles  
Ron Hook  
Ron Thomas  
Sally Mills  
Stephen Ferrari  
Steve Harrington  
Steve Miller  
Susan Hayes  
Teresa Schmidt  
Theresa Pena  
Tim Rumbolz  
Tom Crawford  
Vicki Witt  
Vivian Nguyen  
Walter Spector  
Wayne Stoddard  
Wendy Cooper  
Wesley Van Osdol

### Train Crew

Adam Weidenbach  
Alan Siegwath  
Albert Ou  
Bob Pratt  
Brad Jones  
Charles Navarro  
Curt Hoppins  
Dave Burla  
David Bowman

### Train Crew

Dennis Mann  
Derek Johnson  
Don Shaffer  
Doug Vanderlee  
Dylan Olson  
Ed Best  
Eric Wright  
Garon Michaelis  
George Mednick  
Gerald DeWitt  
Jackie Vlasak  
Jason Pate  
Jim Stewart  
John Sutkas  
Jon Williamson  
Jorg Linke  
Justin Legg  
Liam O'Leary  
Logan Rubasky  
Mark Miller  
Mason Denton  
Matt Petach  
Michael Stockwell  
Nick Alexander  
Nick Zamora  
Pat Stratton  
Peter Savoy  
Ray Crist  
Ron Thomas  
Salli Lundgren  
Sanjay Bhandari  
Sarah Fritz  
Scott Crislip  
Stephen Barkkarie  
Steve Knoeck  
Ted Unruh  
Tim Flippo  
Warren Haack

## President's Report

Henry Baum - President

Change is hard. Some people understand that change is inevitable, but that does not mean they desire to embrace change. Change can be good, and change can be bad. And what is a good change for some may also be a bad change for others. Sometimes that is all just a matter of perception. That is precisely what makes change so hard. I have also found that while change is considered good or even necessary, the implementation of that change is what people tend to worry about. Not the change itself, but how the change manifests itself. I have seen it become a stumbling block many times over my years whether as a leader or just a bystander watching others deal with change.

As a child of the turbulent 60s, I was content many times to just be a bystander while others dealt with implementing change. I didn't see a need to put myself in the middle. If I did get caught up in something, I just chalked it up to being in the wrong place at the wrong time. That made whatever happened to me my fault. I was no stranger to getting into trouble, but it was my trouble to bring on myself. I really didn't fully grasp the meaning at the time, but I was truly enamored by the quote from Eldridge Cleaver: **"There is no more neutrality in the world. You either have to be part of the solution, or you're going to be part of the problem."**

I even misinterpreted it to myself conversely, that if you aren't part of the problem, you don't need to solve it. It eventually came into focus as to what the quote actually meant several years later, when I found my favorite quote in the whole world, from the 16th century English poet John Donne. Again, I truly didn't grasp the full meaning at the time, and it took many years of growing and achieving and screwing up to fully understand the quote, typically paraphrased as:

**No man is an island, Entire of itself. Each is a piece of the continent, A part of the main.**

**If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less.**

**As well as if a promontory were. As well as if a manor of thine own. Or of thine friends were.**

**Each man's death diminishes me, For I am involved in mankind.**

**Therefore, send not to know For whom the bell tolls, It tolls for thee.**

I was probably 18 when I first learned the quote. I was probably 50 when I began to understand what it meant. I mean at least what it meant to me.

When I was a Boy Scout and an altar boy, I believed I understood what it meant to be involved in your community, and to be a contributing member of society. At least I understood how others expected me to present myself. I assure you, I did not actually buy into the expectations of others, but I did know how to play them to my advantage. When I finally got some control of my life, the quotes became clear, and I learned what it means to actually volunteer to do something. The lesson comes from figuring out what

you want to get from volunteering, and make sure you achieve that goal.

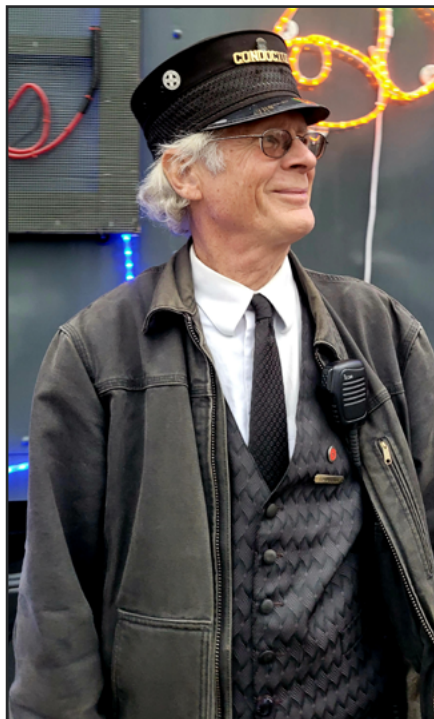
When you volunteer for the PLA it is about achieving your personal goals. You don't do it for the recognition or the accolades, as you will find that those don't translate into satisfaction. But by achieving your personal goals you will find that you can also help achieve the organization's goals. Paraphrasing, no volunteer is an island, we work for the common good of the organization.

Since I am on a roll paraphrasing, one last quote for the month:

**Ask not what the PLA can do for you, but what you can do for the PLA.**

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. I REALLY want to hear your thoughts on what we should be doing to move the organization forward.

Respectfully submitted  
**Henry Baum**



**Warren Haack has been a volunteer since volunteering as Student Brakeman in 2009.**

**He is now a Brakeman and Conductor on the train.**

**He is also on the Board as a Director.**

**You don't have to know everything and you don't have to volunteer for more than one position.**

**You can volunteer for whatever position suits you best and what you like to do.**

**Volunteering on Niles Canyon Railway is exciting and gives you a sense of accomplishment.**

**Come join us!**



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Membership Report

### Rich Alexander - Membership

New Members: Carol Boselly, Karen Correia, David Bobrinen, Katrina Gardner, Mary Hyde, Leslie Lara-Enriquez, Edward Marsh, Ryan Schofield, Colin Snow, Harry Wong. Donald Kirker and Steve Knoeck have requested voting status. They were approved at the last board meeting. At the next membership meeting they will come up for a vote.

The TOL is now over but not without some tolls. I have been out of commission with a sinus infection for most of January and am now just recovering. That being said, it is now time to play catch up with membership duties and other activities that I participate in.

As a reminder, if you need to contact me about membership, please do so by emailing me at [membership@ncry.org](mailto:membership@ncry.org) or on my cell phone 510-508-0503. If you contact Donna at the station agent email, she has to forward your emails to me and I don't get to them as quickly as needed.

You can renew your membership online on our web site by logging in to your profile. Membership is \$48.00 for the first adult, \$24.00 for the second adult, and \$12.00 for children.

Also, start thinking about who you would like to nominate for Volunteer of the Year. This is announced at the 4th of July picnic, and we would like to have several worthy volunteers get nominated.

Again, I would like to thank all of you who participated in making the 2023 Season of TOL a successful one. Without everyone pulling together we could not have made this as successful as it was. I know that we had a few problems during the TOL but we all worked together to overcome them.

**Rich Alexander**

Membership Secretary

## CLIP & SAVE

### 2024 Schedule

February 10, 11, 17, 18 regular weekend rides

March 9, 10, 16, 17 regular weekend rides

March 14 Sunol school train 10:00 am

March 22 Niles school train 10:00 am

April 5 Sunol school train 10:00 am

April 6 Public Speeder rides, Niles

April 7 Wine Train 1:00-3:00 pm, Sunol

April 13, 14, 20, 21 regular weekend rides

April 19 Niles school train 10:00 am

April 28 Sunol Ride the Rails Relay for Life 10:30, 12:30, 2:30

May 5 Beer on the Rails 1:00-3:00, Sunol

May 10 Niles school train

May 11, 12, 18, 19 regular weekend rides

May 17 Sunol school train

June 2 Beer on the Rails 1:00-3:00, Sunol

June 8, 9, 15, 16 regular weekend rides

June 22 Sunol summer full moon evening train ride 7:00 pm Sunol

July 4 members 4th of July picnic and train ride

July 12 Niles Summer train ride

July 13, 14, 20, 21 regular weekend rides

July 26 Sunol Summer train ride

August 3 Hot August Night on the Rails 7:00 pm, Sunol

August 4 Beer on the Rails 1:00-3:00, Sunol

August 10, 11, 17, 18 regular weekend rides

September 14, 15, 21, 22 regular weekend rides

October 12, 13, 19, 20 regular weekend rides

November & December

Train of Lights

# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager

As I sit down to pen this month's report the rain is coming down, and it reminds me of the brutal January we had last year. We were inundated with slides, flooding and overflowing culverts. Those many days of rain caused many months of work clearing sloppy silt from the track and digging out blocked pipes. We had to deal with downed trees, leaking roofs and full ditches. All this trouble caused a delay in the start to the regular operating season and left us with the challenges enough to last the whole year. Right up to the week before the biggest storm of the new year, we were out opening troublesome ditches and removing alluvium from the track. I have been working every Voodoo charm, penitent prayer and pagan offering I could think of to allay a repeat performance by mother nature (truth be told, I may have included a request that the Niners go to the Superbowl) and so far, the moisture has come in manageable amounts. If the trend continues, I look forward to seeing our regular consist running the canyon, sans holiday décor, later this month. Second and Third weekends as last year. Watch the website because rumor is it could be a steamy February.

To get things ready for regular service, decorations have come down and been stored, and the car connections removed for the consist to be switched out. Last year we found that most of the trainline power connections on the West end of the train had welded the plugs into their sockets due to high amperage load. Our plan to use two generators for the season to limit the load on the trainline worked out well because all the connectors came out normally. (a good thing too because those plug/receptacle sets are 1500 bucks)

For the big job of disassembling the TOL we made an advanced training day by having a half dozen of our new student brakemen join the fun. Each



Warren Haack photograph

The Train of Lights rounding a curve.

student got paired with a seasoned brakeman and teams were assigned tasks at key points in the yard. One team ran the switches in the West end of the yard, one team tended the locomotive and another team coupled and disconnected cars on the siding and mainline. One more team fielded moves into and out of the yard leads. This prevented a lot of walking or riding on the side of cars. There was a two-page list of car moves to make, (very well thought out by Tim Flippo our Asst. RFE) and each team had a copy. We reviewed the plan at the morning safety meeting, and everybody got a chance to visualize the job ahead of time. Doing yard switching requires more thought on the part of crews and is a great exercise in thinking sequentially. The two-phase plan involved a locomotive at each end of the yard and a switch-order for each

end of the yard. One locomotive was set on the siding as an anchor while the other locomotive pulled the string of cars off the mainline or yard lead. First on the West end, and then on the East end of the yard. Each move required brakes to be set or released, couplings made and stretched, skates to be set, brake hoses connected, angle cocks closed/ opened, and switches lined. The idea was for the students to do the work with veteran overseeing. Because the moves are repeated many times, crew members get more valuable hands-on practice in one day of yard switching than you would in many days of passenger service. We had a safe and productive day.

Along with regular operations, February also begins the restorations efforts and normal maintenance of way activities. Crews have already



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Along the Right of Way

**Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager**

been out to replace a missing endplate from the last Signals inspection and while they were at it, low ties in the area were raised and fouled ballast replaced, missing signs replaced, and repairs to track equipment made. Tree crews have been out to deal with a large Oak that fell on the track at MP34.25 and a large part still needs to be pulled off the hill and chipped. Car window repairs on the WP315 that were halted for the holidays will begin again, and protective covers on the non-operative steam locomotives will be replaced. The Wednesday Warriors will take on deteriorated windows in the AE3176 "Combine" and maybe begin restoration of the Ladies lounge on the

Articulated Coach. The starter motor for the SP9010 should come back and, weather permitting, the rear hood and nose remounted.

The East build is coming back online. The next section between Happy Valley and Sunol-Pleasanton bridges has been staked for excavation of the subgrade and drainage ditches. Next step for the previous section is to regulate mounded ballast, fill in a couple areas that need more rock and call in the big guns to finish line/tamp. If all goes well, come Spring, we should be back to laying track.

With a new year it's time to renew memberships and time for annual crew recertifications. This year we hope to

hold these classes earlier rather than later. Plans for RWP and Recert are proposed for March. Be sure to look for dates to be advertised next month. A new Brakeman training class will follow in April or May. If you want to work on the track, you need to take the Roadway Worker Protection review. If you are on the train crew, sign up for a recertification test.

Everything is lined up for another momentous year at the Niles Canyon. If you want to be a part of it, you won't have to wait in line, we'll put you right to work. Come on out and see what goes on.

**Stephen Barkkarie.**  
General Manager

## Hazmat & Commissary Report

**Doug Debs**

### Commissary

Sue and Dan Thomas organized and led the effort to remove TOL-specific perishable items, dry goods, and serving equipment from the parlor car, dome car, All Day Lunch car, and snackbar car. This eliminated leftover cookies etc. that attract mice, and keeps everything clean and readily findable for next year.

### Hazmat

We are looking forward to installation of an underground electrical connection to Hazmat Sheds #1 & #2. Better lighting inside will be a big help!

Open-top (removeable lid) 55-gallon steel drums are used for Solid Oily Waste

(oily/greasy rags, pads, TrackMat, etc) collection & disposal. Before COVID, we bought reconditioned drums from local suppliers, cost \$50-\$60. These vendors no longer have reconditioned drums, and new ones cost >2X more. Fortunately Steve Coon located a source of clean used open-top drums at \$25 each, but due to distance it's best to buy them 8-12 at a time. The extra empty drums are stored in the loft above the Hazmat Sheds #1 & #2. Access using the stairway behind shed #2.

### Electric Utility Carts ("golf carts")

These have become indispensable to working efficiently. No more trudging

400' each way to get a tool – just jump in the cart and you're back pronto! During TOL, one utility cart with a small trailer was moved to Niles, where it proved super helpful to move all the traffic directional cones, signs, etc. before and after each Niles TOL. We equipped this cart with clamp-on headlights (rechargeable-battery worklights, actually). At Brightside, 1-2 utility carts were used to re-stock all 4 food/drink service cars every operating day. One of our ~30-year-old utility carts was out of service waiting for a new motor (a long-leadtime part).

**Doug Debs**  
Commissary Mgr, Hazmat Mgr.



### 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>



## Knight Foundry - Museum Helping Museum

Continued from Page 1

place to put on your places to visit in CA. They offer tours twice a month of this historical gem, and more info can be found on their website. Thanks to the members of the Knight Foundry for their collaboration!

**Chris Hauf**



*Chris Hauf photograph*

The coke in the blast furnace is getting to the point where the iron could soon be put into the furnace.



*Chris Hauf photograph*

The steam locomotive brake shoe pattern that the Knight Foundry made for our shoes. These are using the sand cast process to form the cavity for the material.



*Chris Hauf photograph*

The Knight Foundry buildings. The first building is the foundry and the buildings connected to it are the historic machine shop.



*Chris Hauf photograph*

Breaking the plug... The exit path for the molten iron is formed in clay and is also plugged with clay to stop the flow. Here the clay plug is broken to allow for the molten metal to flow. A new plug will be placed when enough material has left the furnace.



## Knight Foundry - Museum Helping Museum



*Chris Hauf photograph*

The blast furnace charging deck where coke and iron materials are loaded through the door in the furnace chimney near the floor. On this day, the iron was coming from recycled brake rotors.



*Chris Hauf photograph*

The view from the blast furnace charging deck of the Knight Foundry as their team of volunteers was getting ready to do a cast iron pour that included brake shoes for our Niles Canyon Railway and other shoes for Railtown among other items for their museum.



*Chris Hauf photograph*

Pouring the brake shoe molds. Two people handle the ladle while a third holds back the slag from coming out of the ladle on to the mold.



*Chris Hauf photograph*

Pouring the brake shoe molds.



*Chris Hauf photograph*

After the pour, the foundry is full of wood smoke from burnt forms and supports.



*Chris Hauf photograph*

With "suitcase weights" placed on the end collars around them to hold the two-part molds together, the brake shoes molds wait for the pour.



*Chris Hauf photograph*

More molds are poured.



*Chris Hauf photograph*

Pouring down the line of molds.



## Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

This Month's tale:

### SECOND TO THE LAST SERIES OF AN ERA "THE ICE BUNKER REEFER"

This tale begins with the beginning of The Pacific Fruit Express Co. which was a joint venture of the Southern Pacific and Union Pacific railroads in the early 1900s by Edward Harriman, who controlled both railroads. This joint venture lasted until March 1978 at which time it was dissolved. The assets were divided between the two railroads. The Southern Pacific railroad retained the Pacific Fruit Express name, while the Union Pacific named its half Union Pacific Fruit Express which went to SP's PFE in March 1978.

This class R-40-27 steel "reefer" was built in PFE Colton Shops in 1957. PFE 10591 is an RS-type car (refrigerator cars using ice or ice and salt to cool down the cargo space). The ice is loaded through rooftop hatches into which ice blocks were dropped at icing stations enroute ("stage icing"). This was accomplished by icing stations in a larger freight facility like Roseville, Ca. There were smaller icing facilities in other locations to ice cars as needed. Bayshore PFE/SP was one of those facilities that maintained an eleven car icing station for that purpose. The icing of reefers lasted until the late 1960's. This form of icing was in PFE's 10001-11700 series. The car is 40'0" long, 9'6" wide and 12'10" high and it has a wooden interior. It has a combination door, 6' plug, 2" hinged. The car weight is about 59,500 pounds, with an 80,000 pound capacity. PFE 10591 is one of the second to the last class of ice refrigerator cars built by PFE in the Colton Shops in 1957.

The car remained in service until 1978 at which time PFE donated the car to the California State Railroad Museum.



This is PFE reefer 10591. It looked pretty good in this photo. Too bad it doesn't still look that good. It has been tagged a few times.



PFE reefer 10591 at a bumper in Service.

The car was then donated to the Pacific Locomotive Association by the California State Railroad Museum and moved to the Niles Canyon Railway in 2008. Although not in the lime light, it

remains fully operational on the NCRY.

In December, we had a TV crew come out to the railroad to have a closer look at PFE 10591 reefer since it was a fully intact ice reefer and they



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Tales of the Past

### Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

wanted a closer look at the interior of the body of the car and the ice storage bunker in the car. They were doing a who is it investigation for a TV show and the story they were doing is that of a nameless body that was found in the ice bunker of a reefer and the mystery of finding the dead body and who was it was never solved. This is what the TV program is based on. Hope they let us know when it airs.

Well, that wraps this article up. Hope we can get this reefer back to a cleaner state to show it off in the yard. It is second to the last class of ice reefers built. Although I didn't have to knock the dust off this article too much, it does bring attention to a very important piece in our collection.

With that said, another tale ends.

### Dexter Day Operations Manager



*Stock photo*

Another view of them loading ice into an ice reefer.



*Stock photo*

Top loading an ice reefer like PFE 10591.



*Dexter Day photograph*

The way PFE 10591 looks today. It needs tender loving care. It is not just another reefer.



## Brightside's Unsung Heroes



*Doug Debs photograph*

John Zielinski regularly checks and maintains tire pressure on the forklift, backhoes, dump truck, Pettibone crane, electric utility carts, etc. He also checks (and replaces, if needed) GFI electrical outlets, is in charge of installing the new Car Shop air compressor, and does many other "behind the scenes" tasks to make us more productive.



*Doug Debs photograph*

Linda Stanley and Steve Jones servicing the Case forklift.

## Gift Shop News

Patrice McDonald

### We have a winner!



*Patrice McDonald photograph*

Congratulations, Elizabeth Chavez of Fremont, who is the lucky winner of the NCRY Train of Lights quilt for 2023.

We appreciate everyone that purchased tickets in support of the raffle. Your donation will help our fundraising efforts. Thank you to the Piecemakers Quilt Guild of Southern Alameda County for their continued partnership and hard work in providing another wonderful raffle quilt.



## Treasurer's Report

Pat Stratton - Treasurer

Our Balance Sheet looks very good. Our 2023 Train of Lights fundraiser was successful. We have cash in our checking account, and CD's holding additional cash at the ready. We have one outstanding receivable of \$3,752 due from Pleasanton Garbage - we asked them to reimburse our direct cost to replace the Brightside main gate that their driver accidentally destroyed, and their insurance company has said a check was in the mail. As debt we have one unpaid amount of \$2,000 awaiting final completion of the PA System replacement agreement; that has been settled. At this date the PLA's current Net Income is \$859k.

Looking at income, the month of December was all about the 2023 TOL. Gross revenue from ticket sales was a little over \$1 million. Gift shop sales were \$47k; and commissary sales were \$41k. Another significant source of income was anonymous donations from all TOL cash boxes - commissary, gift shop, cabooses, ticket offices, and online ticket transactions - these added up to \$14,378.

Compare some of those numbers with last year's (2022) TOL. Ticket gross revenue was a little less than \$1 million. Gift shop sales were \$36k; and commissary sales were \$40k. This year's ticket sales were up about 10%; gift shop sales were up 30%; commissary sales were up just a bit.

This may be a good time to compare some numbers to our Budget since we are 50% through our fiscal year. In a symmetrical world both our revenues and our costs from this report might be expected to be about 50% of our budgeted amount since we are halfway through our budget period. Revenue from dues is at 49% of budget, and that makes sense halfway through the year, right? And revenue from regular monthly runs is at 50% of budget - exactly what we projected. (Some luck involved there!) There are exceptions,

of course. Consider revenue from TOL - it is already at 100% after only 6 weeks. But we know it is revenue from a completed seasonal program, so it makes sense that its percentage of budget at this point is higher than 50%.

Still, these Budget metrics can be useful. Gift shop sales are at 104%, meaning our sales have exceeded those budgeted at this 50% point in the fiscal year; and similarly with commissary sales at 86%. With summer/school trains we have completed only 20% of what we hoped for at budget time; and for charters only 36%. We may want to do more to promote these programs, perhaps not to increase revenues from these activities but more to increase what we as a non-profit give back to our community.

For the Expense side of our Income, we hope to see our percentages be lower than 50%. We have spent only 25% of our Mechanical Dept. budget on maintenance, repair, and restoration of our equipment. This work is primarily done by volunteers, so the costs are mostly for parts, supplies, contractors and materials. We will need to find more volunteers or contract out more work for this percentage to increase. Many factors can come into play. Some of the contracted boiler work for the 1744 steam locomotive restoration has experienced short-term delays; and assistance from the state museum in

Sacramento for the repatriation of a steam crane to Niles Canyon has been put into question.

On the other hand, our expenses for toilets and trash services (exclusive of extra services for TOL) so far are 81% of our budget. Oops, that is higher not lower. Either our budget was too low, or we spent more than we had planned. In fact, all our utilities are up some this year. Were there any price increases? Yes. And someone blew up two of our rental toilets in Sunol, which we then had to replace at a cost of \$2,000. These budget percentages can flag areas where our costs may not be on the path we are expecting and may call for research into cause and possible intervention.

Under Admin expenses, our Bank & Merchant Fees (again, exclusive of extra services for TOL) are already 110% of our budget 50% of the way through the year, so we will need to look into this category for anomalies, and maybe ways to save.

As regular readers know, my term as Treasurer for the PLA and the NCRy is up this next June 30 and I will not be running for another two-year term. If you enjoy being a PLA member and volunteer in the thick of things, you will find this job a great outlet for your basic record-keeping and finance capabilities. Your talents can help develop our future growth into a fully realized museum. If you would like to talk about this opportunity, give me a call or email.

Thanks to all of you for volunteering and supporting our efforts to provide another grand Holiday experience for Bay Area revelers with our TOL.

If you have any questions or comments, let me know.

**Pat Stratton**

Treasurer

treasurer@ncry.org

650-888-8619

**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

## Castro Point Railroad



Photographs all taken by the late C. G. Heimerdinger during our time at Castro Point near Point Molate along San Pablo Bay in Richmond, California.



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY



*Season's Greetings  
from the Sunol  
Depot Gardens and  
the residents of Sunol*

*Donna Alexander photographs*

This year the residents and the businesses of Sunol decorated trees and put them around the Sunol Depot Gardens, across the street from our Sunol Depot. This was the first year this was done, and hopefully it is the first of many decorated trees years. If you didn't get a chance to visit the trees this year, I hope they will be back for our Train of Lights in 2024 so everyone has a chance to see them. It really brought some Christmas cheer to the park.



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NCRy Pickering 04, lettering on South side.

*Chris Hauf photograph*