



# THE CLUB CAR



Bulletin 732

Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc.

August 2024

## Southern Pacific Railroad #2479



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

Completed patch and stay work. A beautiful repair – one less item to fix on the boiler.

### IN THIS ISSUE

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The steam department report this month is on our newest arrival and biggest steam locomotive, the Southern Pacific Railroad #2479. With everything else going on in the Canyon, we were lucky to have Chris Brophy and Scott Kennedy from Durango and Silverton out to work on installing stays on the wrapper sheet patch that was cut, rolled, fitted and tacked in place by Steam Services of America. A local boiler company that was hired by PLA

to do the code welding to install the patch in the wrapper sheet and then we assessed how to complete the final steps of the repair. After requesting quotes from several contractors, we decided to hire Durango and Silverton to come out and install the crown and flexible stays to complete the patch repair.

The D&S crew did a great job on the work with the help of steam

**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

### General Members Meeting

**AUGUST 9**  
**5:30 PM**

In-person & Teleconference  
at the

**Veterans Memorial Hall**  
37154 2nd St, Fremont, CA  
(corner of 2nd St. and E St. in Niles)

=====

Board of Directors Meeting  
will follow the Members Meeting

## 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 Microsoft **WORD**.  
Submit photos in jpg format.

The photo should have a description  
and / or identifying the people in it.

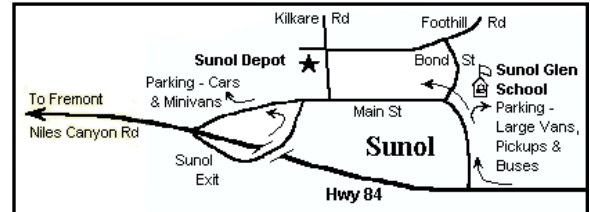
Send email to:  
**clubcar@ncry.org**

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

## BOARDING LOCATIONS

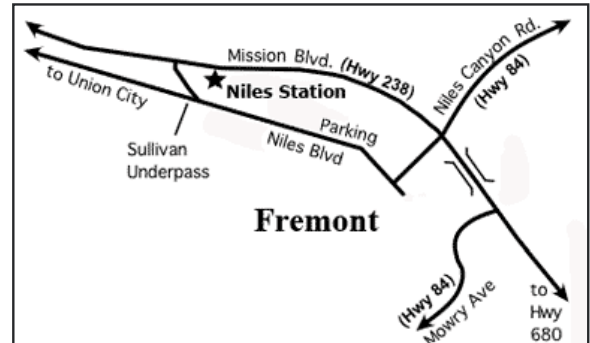
### SUNOL DEPOT

6 Kilcare Road  
Sunol, CA 94586



### NILES STATION

37029 Mission Blvd.  
Fremont, CA 94536  
(Niles)



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

President	Tim Flippo	(650) 575-3341
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
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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.

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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. at the Veterans Memorial Hall in Niles at 37154 2nd St (corner of 2nd St and E St). Members, Sponsors & Guests are welcome.

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



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## AUGUST SCHEDULE

<b>August 1</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Summer Train</b>	<b>Niles</b>	<b>10:30 am</b>	<b>- The Alexanders</b>
August 3	Saturday	Track Building East	Brightside	8:00 am	- Mike Strider
<b>August 3</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Hot August Night on the Rails Sunol</b>		<b>7:00 pm</b>	<b>- The Alexanders</b>
<b>August 4</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Beer on the Rails Train</b>	<b>Sunol</b>	<b>1:00 pm</b>	<b>- Doug Debs</b>
August 7	Wednesday	Maintenance of Way	Brightside	7:30 am	- Ron Thomas
August 9	Friday	General Meeting	Veterans Hall	5:30 pm	- Tim Flippo
<b>August 10</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Regular Train Operation</b>	<b>Sunol</b>	<b>10:30 am &amp; 1:00 pm</b>	
<b>August 11</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Regular Train Operation</b>	<b>Sunol</b>	<b>10:30 am &amp; 1:00 pm</b>	
August 14	Wednesday	Maintenance of Way	Brightside	7:30 am	- Ron Thomas
<b>August 17</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Regular Train Operation</b>	<b>Sunol</b>	<b>10:30 am &amp; 1:00 pm</b>	
<b>August 18</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Regular Train Operation</b>	<b>Sunol</b>	<b>10:30 am &amp; 1:00 pm</b>	
August 21	Wednesday	Maintenance of Way	Brightside	7:30 am	- Ron Thomas
August 24	Saturday	Brush Cutting	Brightside	7:30 am	- Mark Whitman
August 24	Saturday	Brakeman Training Class	Brightside	9:00 am	- Dexter Day
August 25	Sunday	Brakeman Training Class	Brightside	9:00 am	- Dexter Day
August 28	Wednesday	Maintenance of Way	Brightside	7:30 am	- Ron Thomas

## Volunteer Report

**Charlene Murrell - Volunteer Hours Coordinator**

The people listed below reported 2,646 volunteer hours for the month of June. Volunteer hours should be reported to Charlene Murrell - volunteer-hours@ncry.org. Train Crew hours will continue to be collected directly from the log sheets. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY ON THE LOG SHEETS.

### **Administration**

Bob Bradley  
Charlene Murrell  
Chris Hauf  
Dexter Day  
Ed Best  
Henry Baum  
Jackie Vlasak  
Joe Scardino  
Kent Hedberg  
Matt Petach  
Mark Miller  
Rich Alexander  
Robert Giles  
Sarah Fritz  
Stephen Barkkarie  
Tim Flippo

### **Archives & Library**

Brian Hitchcock

### **Car Department**

Bob Moore  
Dennis Mann  
Joan Weber  
Linda Randolph  
Marshall Williams  
Phil Stone  
Steve Van Meter  
Tom Crawford

### **Commissary**

Bonnie Harrington  
Colin Snow  
Jack Harrington  
Robert Giles  
Sally Mills  
Sue Thomas

### **Docent**

Joseph Chavez

### **Electrical & Signals**

Curt Hoppins  
James Stewart  
Joseph Romani  
Stephen Knoeck

### **Facilities**

Doug Vanderlee

### **Gift Shop**

Charlene Murrell  
Patrice McDonald

### **Mechanical**

Brad Jones  
Charles Franz  
Gerald DeWitt  
Henry Chandler  
Howard Wise  
Jeff Haslam  
Justin Legg

### **Mechanical**

Karl Swartz  
Sarah Fritz  
Steve Brown  
Whitney Haist

### **MOW & Track**

Adam Weidenbach  
Bob Bailey  
Brad Jones  
Chris Camp  
Dee Murphy  
Greg Gleeson  
John Zielinski  
Mark Whitman  
Matt Petach  
Mike Strider  
Ron Thomas  
Sarah Fritz  
Stephen Knoeck  
Stephen Slabach  
Steve Buscovich

### **MOW & Track**

Steve Meyer  
Tim Bennett  
Tim Flippo  
Trevor White  
Wesley Van Osdol

### **Other**

Barry Lependorf  
Bob Bailey  
Curt Hoppins  
Dee Murphy  
Dennis Mann  
Patrice Warren  
Sarah Fritz  
Stephen Knoeck  
Tim Bennett  
Tom Eikerenkotter  
Wesley Van Osdol  
Zonker Harris

### **Train Crew**

Bob Pratt  
Brad Jones  
Chuck Kent  
Dave Burla  
Dylan Olson  
Ed Best  
Gabriel Gleeson  
Jackie Vlasak  
James Stewart  
Jason Pate  
John Sutkus  
Jorg Linke  
Logan Rubasky  
Mason Denton  
Nick Alexander  
Ron Thomas  
Sanjay Bhandari  
Stephen Knoeck  
Ted Unruh  
Tim Flippo  
Warren Haack

# NILES CANYON RAILWAY



*Chris Hauf photograph*

A great group of guests poses for their photo after the wine train run.

NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## STUDENT BRAKEMAN TRAINING CLASS

**AUGUST 24 & 25, 2024**

HELD AT BRIGHTSIDE IN THE WHITEHOUSE

**9:00 AM TO 5:00 PM**

**SATURDAY - WILL BE CLASS ROOM STUDIES AND TEST  
SUNDAY - WILL BE HANDS ON TRAINING**

**THOSE WANTING TO BE A BRAKEMAN MUST BE  
ABLE TO PERFORM THE DUTIES OF A BRAKEMAN**

**LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED SATURDAY**

**MUST BE A PLA MEMBER**

**SIGN UP THROUGH CREW CALLER  
510-582-2648**

## President's Report

**Tim Flippo - President**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Henry Baum again for all of his work as President. I would like to congratulate Mark Whitman, our latest recipient of the Whistle Award. Also, I would like to congratulate Bob Pratt who was the recipient of the Volunteer of the Year Award. I thank them both for all their contributions over the last year and they are very deserving of their respective awards. I also need to thank Doug Debs and his crew for the great picnic they put on for the fourth of July. If you did not make it out our train crew gave us a very nice ride out past Mile post 39. It really showed off the great work our track crew has done. After going east, we then went west all the way to Niles stopping just short of the Niles platform. The calendar says it is August by the time you read this, that means we will be down to one month until we start decorating for the TOL. Seems like it was just yesterday when we took down the decorations. The new air compressor is now mounted on the MOW car, it has storage underneath, and first reports are it is a great addition to our MOW tools. We have plenty of jobs to do, so the more volunteers we have the easier it is for everyone. So please come out and help.

**Tim Flippo**

President

### Pacific Locomotive Association

**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

# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Brush Cutting

Mark Whitman

Due to the rapid tree growth between Sunol and Niles the long tangent section just west of Sunol was getting too close to the trains again; this section was heavily trimmed three years ago. On Tuesday, June 18 Brad Jones and I took the bucket truck to do aerial trimming in this section prior to the Wednesday Warrior crew. Joining us later that day were Matt Petach and Dee Murphy.

On Wednesday, June 19 we chipped the brush generated Tuesday and continued trimming with the bucket truck in that same area. The crew today was Ron Thomas, Wes Van Osdol, Steven Boscovich, Greg Gleeson, Sarah Fritz,

Brad Jones, Steve Knoech, Nicholas Alexander, and Mark Whitman.

On Friday, June 21 Brad Jones and I took the bucket truck to this same section and continued aerial trimming.

On Saturday, June 22 returned to the same section chipped the brush from Friday and continued with aerial trimming and finished the tangent section. Due to excessive heat, we called it a day at lunch time. The crew today, Ron Thomas, Brad Jones, Sarah Fritz, Garrett Farwell, and Mark Whitman.

Mark Whitman

## Membership

Rich Alexander

### New Members:

Rose Marie Everett; Shreyash Kame; Suhasini Kame; David Tomaschik; Alastair Young.

At the last membership meeting the following were voted in as voting members: Sarah Fritz; Brad Jones; Mason Denton.

A bit of sad news, we lost a couple of long-time members Paul Veltman and Dick Charpier. Paul was a very active member for many years around the railroad. Paul set up the radio frequencies for our operations. He also set up and controlled the PLA email list which many of you are on. Some of you may remember Paul as the person who kept everyone on track using the list and if they wandered off railroad topic Paul would restrict or reel them back in. Paul will be sorely missed.

Dick was a fixture around the yard for many years stepping in where needed either on MOW or car repairs. The last few years he slowed down because of health reasons.

If you are having trouble renewing, please call me or email me at 510-508-0503 or [membership@ncry.org](mailto:membership@ncry.org). If you use the station-agent account it goes to Donna and then she has to forward it to me.

As a reminder dues are \$48 for the primary member; \$24 for secondary adult; \$12 for children under 18 years of age. If you have trouble renewing your membership online you can send a check payable to PLA at PO Box 515 Sunol, CA 94586-0515. Paying online is the easiest way. Sending a check will take a little longer to process.

Rich Alexander

Membership Secretary

## Train of Lights 2024

It's August, and the Train of Lights is coming soon! Tickets go on sale on Saturday, October 5, at 10:00am at [ncry.org](http://ncry.org). And soon our volunteer opportunities will be online for everyone to sign up and help with this fun event. We need snack bar helpers, parking lot helpers, and car hosts. Sign up, come out, and have fun with us!

**4:30 trains depart from Niles/Fremont Station and gets back around 6:00pm.**

**7:30 trains depart from Sunol Depot and gets back around 9:00pm.**

November 16: Commissary Training Day

November 18: Test Train 6:00pm, Niles/Fremont Station

November 22: 4:30 public, 7:30 public

November 23: 4:30 public, 7:30 volunteer train

November 24: 4:30 volunteer train, 7:30 public

November 25, 30: 4:30 public, 7:30 public

December 1, 4, 6, 7, 8: 4:30 public, 7:30 public

December 10: 4:30 public, 7:30 church charter

December 11, 13, 14, 15: 4:30 public, 7:30 public

December 16: 4:30 public, 7:30 Emma Smith school charter

December 18: 4:30 public, 7:30 public

December 19: 4:30 public, 7:30 Girl Scout charter

December 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, 30: 4:30 public, 7:30 public

donna alexander

## 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**

There is a saying about the spring rains in March coming in like a lion but let me tell you this July came in like a fire breathing dragon. With record temperatures for our annual BBQ picnic, our commissary crew did a good job of providing plenty of cold drinks, shade covering and a cool misting station. The soaring temperatures didn't wilt the spirit of folks enjoying good food and good company, and the air-conditioned articulated coach was the "belle of the ball" during the train ride out to Happy Valley.

Extreme temperatures can be hard on a railroad also causing heat kinks, breaking bolts and generally testing the integrity of the track. During a routine annual bridge inspection broken joint bars were discovered on the Dresser Bridge by the inspector from ARE engineering (our consulting firm that provides the required self-inspections for us) obviously caused by the wide swings in temperature. Those bars and another on Farwell Bridge were changed by MOW immediately as we happened to be working that day. (The inspector was impressed by our quick response.) Heat also takes its toll on the trees. The live oaks around our area tend to swell and split apart on hot days. We recently discovered a newly fallen tree at the Big Curve while on the way to clear a tree that had fallen against stored equipment at the Spot siding and because of upcoming operations we were forced to put in a long day to clear that obstruction. Thanks to them for the extra effort.

The reason for clearing the Spot was to pull out an old Half-flat that is up for deaccession and is soon to be picked up. We also wanted to stage our ballast cars to begin distribution of the ballast donated from the SCVT light-rail project in San Jose. To that end, our new president, our Road Foreman of Engines and our General Manager supervised a crew of newer brakemen



*Stephen Barkkarie photograph*

**Steve Meyer, Chris Hamilton and Jordan Hamilton after a hard days work.**

to conduct a weekday switch out. This is a great way to experience railroading beyond the usual operations switching in the yard. It is a more real-world situation that tests the knowledge learned in passenger service because they encounter cars in differing states of repair and condition. They must deal with sticky couplers, loose parts, debris on or under the cars, rusted brakes and all manner of other issues in addition to following a switch plan to construct the desired order of cars. The process is not as simple as it sounds. (Dedicated volunteer Sarah Fritz was challenged by the president to develop the switch order and I must say I could not have done a better job myself. Well done, Sarah.) I think everyone came away a better railroader.

Another milestone this month will be the arrival of the 150-ton steam powered Central Pacific wrecker crane from the state museum. Finally, after twenty years, this important piece of railroad history will take its place among



*Stephen Barkkarie photograph*

**Looking past the Happy Valley Bridge.**



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Along the Right of Way

**Stephen Barkkarie - General Manager**

our other unique pieces of equipment. After many months of preparations led by Doug Vanderlee and Steve Slabach, the moving plan came into focus and the crane itself was made ready for disassembly, transport and reassembly on the NCRY. This required many trips and many man-hours. This is the only piece of original Central Pacific equipment in our collection and our historians have a picture of a crane of this class clearing a train wreck in the canyon in the very early days. It could well be this crane. So once again we fulfill our mission to preserve important railroad equipment for the future.

Another improvement to the line was accomplished thanks to MOW volunteers showing up in sufficient numbers to field two separate teams. While one crew went West to clear fallen trees, another crew headed East to change out the headblock at the East Sunol run-around. (The headblock is the great big tie that supports the switch stand and points for the turnout.) This is no easy job and one we usually hire out to professionals. But on this occasion, we had the people to pull it off. Aided by the backhoe, Steve Meyer,



*Stephen Barkkarie photograph*

### **New position for the Sunol Passing switch.**

myself and father son team Chris and Jordan Hamilton tackled the task. It was decided that the stand would be moved to the railroad South side of the track for better visibility, which meant we had to construct a retaining wall for a footpath around the switch stand as well. Although it took most of the day everyone got in on the action and not only did we replace the headblock, but were able to go further east and replace a bad tie under the heel blocks at the East Sunol Crossover. That tie had been letting the points rise when cars passed despite repeated tappings, and it had to go. A hard day to be sure but very productive.

I would like to say how I appreciate the Hamilton's' dedication. Despite having found train crew was not a perfect fit for them, they found a new home with the Maintenance of Way team and continue to enjoy the NCRY as a father/son activity. It is that kind of loyalty that makes the volunteers at NCRY so valuable. It just goes to show that we have many different ways to contribute and I would encourage others to follow their passion and try something different.

**Stephen Barkkarie.**  
General Manager



*Stephen Barkkarie photograph*  
**Center pin nut from Central Pacific crane.**



## Stacktalk

Alan Siegwarth - Steam Department Head

### Continued from Page 1

department volunteers including Chuck Kent, Art Randall, John Blaine, Sarah Fritz, Dylan Olson, Gabe Gleason, Gerald DeWitt, Henry Chandler, Ken Middlebrook, Chris Hauf, Jeff Schwab, Charles Franz and Alan Siegwarth. I am hoping I did not forget someone on my list as the teamwork between Scott,

Chris and our volunteers succeeded in accomplishing a lot more than the original planned work. Some of the additional work included making new washout plugs, fixing valves, lapping and reinstalling the turret, installing the dome lid with new plugs. All this work was accomplished to perform a hydrotest on the boiler for the first time since it left regular service. The

test was done to confirm the work on the new patch as well as look at areas that were repaired while the locomotive was being restored at the Fairgrounds. While there is plenty of more work on the boiler to perform, it was exciting to see the #2479 under pressure for the first time in close to 70 years!

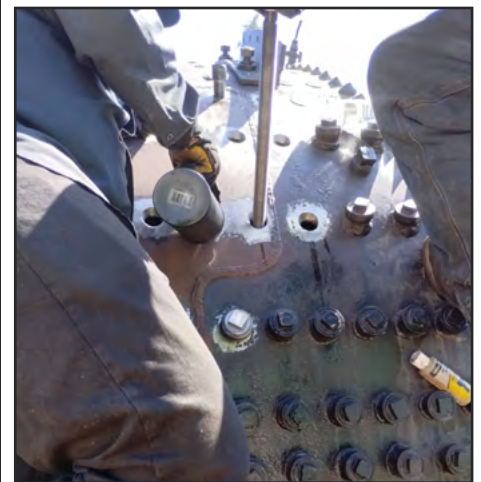
Alan Siegwarth



Chuck Kent Photograph  
Chris Brophy machining a staybolt to fit.



Alan Siegwarth photograph  
Patch progress picture with one sleeve welded on and the flexible staybolt installed in the center of the picture.



Chuck Kent Photograph  
Tapping the firebox sheet for staybolt installation.



Chuck Kent Photograph  
Art Randall using the lathe upstairs that he repaired to operate again to turn a staybolt.



Alan Siegwarth photograph  
SP#2479 Project Manager Ken Middlebrook (left) discusses ongoing work with Jeff Schwab (right). Good to have Ken at Brightside and in overalls ready to work no less!



Alan Siegwarth photograph  
Big locomotive, small people Scott Kennedy (on top of boiler), Ken Middlebrook on running board and Gerald DeWitt on the ground.



**Alan Siegwarth - Steam Department Head**



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*  
**Chris Brophy lapping valves on the turret in preparation for a hydrotest.**



*Chuck Kent photograph*  
**Scott threading a flexible stay in place.**



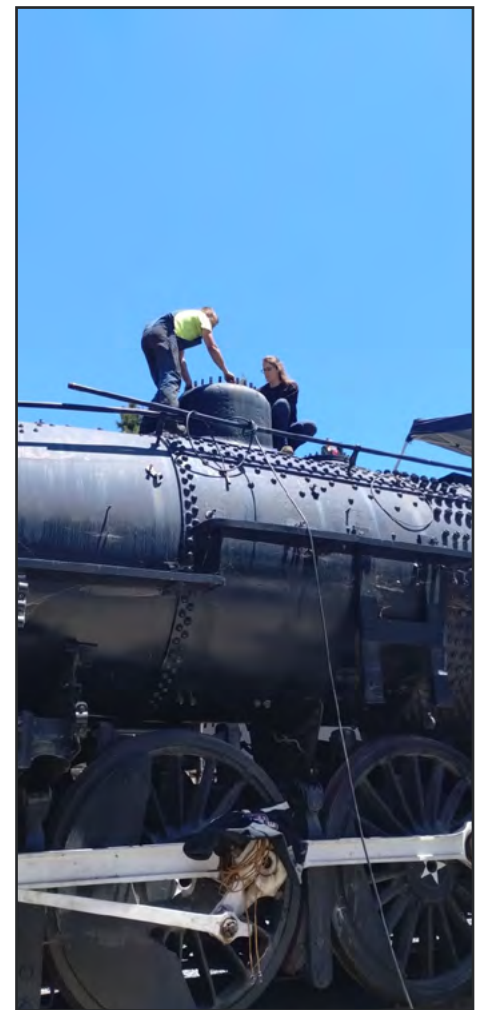
*Chuck Kent photograph*  
**Lower row of sleeves and flexible stays installed.**



*Chuck Kent photograph*  
**Scott Kennedy at work welding sleeves in place.**



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*  
**Scott Kennedy and John Blaine mounting the turret back on top of the #2479.**



*Chuck Kent photograph*  
**Scott Kennedy schooling Sarah Fritz the inside of the boiler.**



## Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager

### This Month's tale:

## FGEX 59412 "STAY WITH US, CALVARY IS ON ITS WAY"?

This Month we will really dive back into the crystal ball and try to come up with something on the old wooden reefer that sits in storage at the Brightside Yard on the Niles Canyon Railway. You really cannot tell too much about this car as it sits since it was painted all white to preserve it and try to slow down the deterioration of the wood that the car is made of. The car was made by the American Car and Foundry somewhere in the late 1940's as the crow flies. With the number the car has, it could have been later. The car numbers for that series 59000-59999 date from 1948-1953. Stats on the car are lacking but stats by type are as follows, length of car is 41'8", width is 9'1" and height is 12'1". Being a reefer, the car does have good insulation. The interior is 33'2 3/4 "long, 8'3" wide and 7'5" high. The weight of the car 60,400 lbs. (30.2 tons) with a load capacity of 81,000 lbs. (40.5 tons) in its 2010 cubic feet of cargo space. To keep the cargo cooled in transit, the car had roof hatches into which blocks of ice were dropped into the car at icing stations on the car's route. With the car's adjustable ice grates, the car's ice capacity was 9,600 lbs. (chunk), 10,200 lbs. (coarse), and 10,600 lbs. (crushed). In the later years, electric cooling fans were added.

The FGEX cars would receive upgrades over time. Some of the upgrades received were the Hutchins steel roof that when applied to the cars resulted in the top of the ends being squared off. These same roofs were applied to many other reefers in the consortium fleet. They also upgraded the cars with AB brakes, so by the late 1940's, all except their oldest cars had been changed out. FGEX never rebuilt



*Dexter Day photograph*

**FGEX 59412 is a car that was in the last Series built. For what it has been through, it still is standing.**

its cars with steel ends. That is to say if the cars retained their wood sides, they also retained wood ends. The FGEX was owned by over twenty railroads in the south and east. Because of the different sizes of each owner's fleet, some would dominate and some would be scarcer. With about 2,000 cars at any given time, BREX was the smallest.

In the middle was WFEX with about 7,000 cars. FGEX over its history varied the most but was always the largest with well over 18,000 cars at one time. In fact, Western Fruit Express and Burlington Refrigerator Express were formed in 1923 and 1926 respectively so they each would have access to a larger number of refrigerator cars. Likewise, Fruit Growers Express wanted to work with these companies because it meant more cars would be available to them when crops were



*Dexter Day photograph*

**The other side of FGEX 59412 which shows a little more weather damage.**



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Tales of the Past

**Dexter D. Day - Operations Manager**

being harvested in the territory it served. In turn, all three benefited from access to larger markets and having their cars used on a more year around basis. In other words, the cars owned by each of the three companies operated as one fleet. If the reefers delivered to fulfill a particular request bore only one set of reporting marks, it would have been a random and accidental event. These wood sheathed fleet of refrigerator cars would roam all parts of the country within the life span of the cars. Further, as compared to the other four large produce reefer fleets, the FGEX/WFEX/BREX consortium was still primarily a wood fleet as it approached 1953.

So, the next time you drive down the driveway and see this wood white reefer that doesn't look like much now, stop, and take a close look at it. The car is 76 plus years old and is still sitting on its wheels and it still can pass an air test. You might say it is a young wood reefer. There were only 587 wood reefers built after it was built.

With that said, another Tale comes to an end.

**Dexter Day**  
Operations Manager



*Internet photograph*

FGEX 57708 has been saved and restored. Hope that ours can look as good someday.



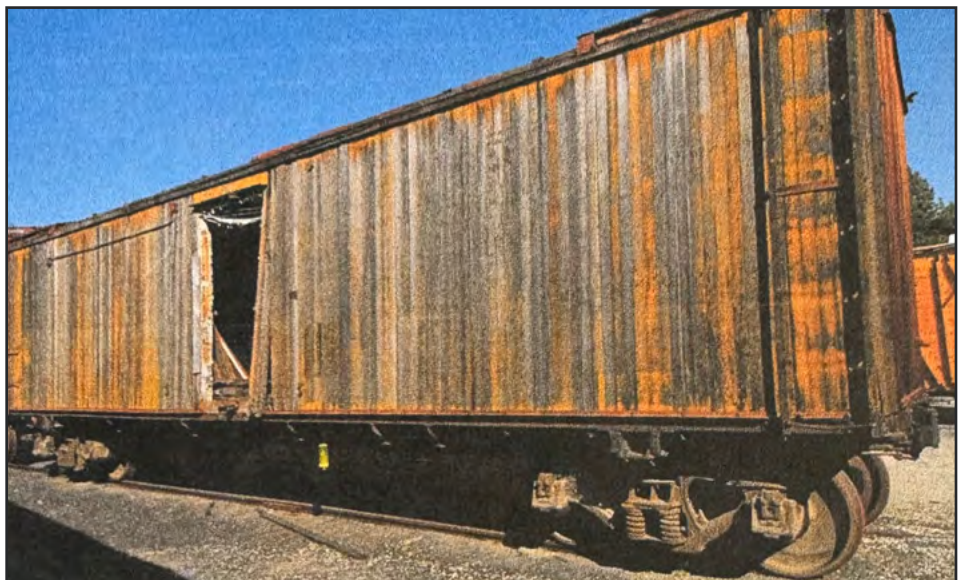
*Pacific S.W. Railway Museum photograph*

FGEX 56415 is another reefer that is being saved for future generations to enjoy.



*Midwest Railway Preservation Society photograph*

FGEX 55985 is a reefer being restored and saved from deterioration and destruction.



Look at this car, PFE 52138, this car is being restored at WPRM.



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Annual 4th of July Train Ride and Picnic

Our annual special 4th of July train ride and picnic was another great success! We took our members and guests to the far eastern extension of the railroad where no passenger train has ever ventured, then back west to Niles before we got back to Sunol where we had a great meal with a variety of tasty items set up, coordinated by Doug Debs and his group of dedicated volunteers.



*Jim Evans photograph*

Special train nearing the east end of our railroad with Mike Strider, Coordinator of the NCRy eastward track expansion project giving a thumbs up expression of satisfaction.



*Jim Evans photograph*

Our new president Tim Flippo in blue, with Henry Chandler of our Steam Department, and Curt Hoppins of our Signal Department.



*Jim Evans photograph*

Happy special train riders staying cool under the cover of open car roof touring the east end of our railroad.



*Jim Evans photograph*

Fourth of July special with guests enjoying the comfort of air conditioning in our 1941 built former SP articulated coach.



*Jim Evans photograph*

Commissary volunteer Sue Thomas conversing with happy guests at our 4th of July picnic.



*Jim Evans photograph*

Part of our happy train crew, Conductor Warren Haack and Brakeman Dylan Olson.



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Annual 4th of July Train Ride and Picnic



*Jim Evans photograph*

President Henry Baum presenting BOD choice of Volunteer of the Year award to Mark Whitman.



*Jim Evans photograph*

President Henry Baum presenting Members' Volunteer of the Year to Bob Pratt.



*Mike Pechner photograph*

Happy Valley Bridge with end of track in distance.



At end of track, head-end crews change end for the trip back as Conductor Warren waits for the mandatory brake test before going downgrade on the Mountain Div.



*Jim Evans photograph*

Doug Debs, Food Master, and Commissary Coordinator talking to coordinator of our popular wine tasting trains at our 4th of July Picnic.



*Mike Pechner photograph*

A real surprise. The incredible Steve Coon back from the dead walking with the Conductor Warren Haack.

## Marketing Department

Chris Hauf - Marketing Manager

I am often asked, "How can we help to publicize and grow our Niles Canyon Railway?" Well, there are many ways a member can help. So let us look at a few.

**Rack cards.** We have a large quantity of professionally printed, 4 inch by 9 inch full color rack cards for the NCRy that carry all of our pertinent information. They are designed not to be time sensitive, so they do not expire. These can be picked up at the Sunol Depot during operating days, most Saturdays while I am volunteering as I typically have them in my truck or I am happy to send you some in the mail. These can be placed any place someone has a brochure rack or location to share our information. Recently I have put some at the Western Railway Museum and History San Jose. The one place they should not be put unless specific permission is given is in hotel chain brochure racks as typically those are stocked by a paid service where each museum or attraction has paid to have their brochures in that rack. Ours will just be discarded so it is always best to ask. We have plenty so please get some and put them out wherever your summer travels may take you. They are also great to hand to friends and acquaintances curious about riding our railroad.

**Posters.** We have nice full bleed letter size color posters again with all the museum's critical information that can be put up anywhere with permission. We already have many up in businesses throughout Niles for example. We have had some challenges in public libraries due to some current verbiage on them that say we charge a fare, but we have a new version in the works to remove that. In any case, we have them available. I can leave some for you at the Sunol depot, Blake's Palace or

again, I am happy to mail some to you.

**Social media.** Our Niles Canyon Railway is most active on both Facebook and Instagram where we draw our largest audiences. We have over 135,000 followers on Facebook alone! First, please Like our page ([www.facebook.com/NilesCanyonRailway](http://www.facebook.com/NilesCanyonRailway)) and then when you see a post that you feel may interest your friends on Facebook, please give it a share to your Timeline or your Story. No need to share every post as your friends may disown you, but the more sharing we get among our membership, the greater the audience we reach. You can also share links to specific pages for say events or blog posts from our website ([www.ncry.org](http://www.ncry.org)) to your Facebook timeline when appropriate. For Instagram ([www.instagram.com/nilescanyonrailway/](http://www.instagram.com/nilescanyonrailway/)), the best way to share our posts is via your Story where they will stay for a day and then disappear.

**Send me photos!** Like Barry, our Club Car Editor, I am effectively the editor of our website and social media pages. Also like Barry, I constantly need new content to feed the typical daily posts we make to social media to keep our readers interested in the many things that we do. As an avid photographer, I generate a lot of the content we share as it insures I have some amount of content to share without resorting to begging. Still, I cannot be everywhere any time our volunteers are doing something interesting as I still have one of those pesky full time jobs, and we know our volunteers do interesting things almost every day of the week! I am happy to share meaningful photos or videos taken by our volunteers that are appropriate and interesting for public consumption. Like every good editor, I will state that not everything I

get will be published. Still I would love the chance to see what you have, and cell phone cameras take great pictures and videos today. Many things I post are taken on my iPhone as it is typically the camera I always have with me.

Another outlet is our website blog. Maybe you have something that would make for an interesting blog post. The blog is great to document say a day long work session with multiple images, to share a unique piece of railroad, PLA or NCRy history, or maybe to make an ask for something. We recently put up a post asking for anyone with Great Northern recipes or recipe books that may have been used on our Ranch Car.

For simple photos, please email me the photo, I am ok if you just drop some caption information in the email. I will share my contact info below. For videos, I can setup a shared directory on DropBox or OneDrive where you can place your video for me to pick up if it is too large to email. For a blog post, I need the visual content and the text in whatever form you can get it to me, e.g. email or a Word doc. Please visit our blog for inspiration. ([www.ncry.org/blog/category/blog/](http://www.ncry.org/blog/category/blog/))

The best way to get to me is via my marketing email, [marketing@ncry.org](mailto:marketing@ncry.org). I can also get images via text, so please drop me an email, and I will share my cell phone with you. It is also in the member directory. Please let me know how I can help you help us market our railroad. We have had a very solid season so far this year, but we still have some empty seats, and you could help us fill them. Or you could help us find our next new volunteer!

Thanks!  
**Chris Hauf**  
Marketing Manager



# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Treasurer's Report

Pat Stratton - Treasurer

We have just completed our June 30, 2024 fiscal year. The Balance Sheet is a financial snapshot in time - in this case, the PLA's assets and liabilities on June 30. Our operating cash is a solid 19% of our total assets. Our only liability is the deposit collected on a pending charter run scheduled for September 8. Preliminary (unaudited) net income for our FYE 2024 is just about 48% of our revenue. Very good. However, we are here to fulfill elements of our nonprofit Mission: to protect and restore historic equipment; repair and maintain our operating equipment and buildings;

fulfill our ROW and Niles development plans; and continue our outreach to the Bay Area community through educational operations. To do that the PLA needs active volunteers with every sort of skill set and capability. Put your talent with our need and resources (knowledge, tools and equipment, and finances) and we should get so much more of our Mission realized. I encourage all of you to get in touch with a Board member or our Volunteer Coordinator as a first step to adding the fun and satisfaction of operating and maintaining the Bay Area's #1 railroad

to your daily lives.

The Income Statement: Our operations have been very successful this year - Thanks to everyone for managing our efforts so that they are not only safe and enjoyable for our customers, but they are also financially positive. For both our gift shop and commissary departments revenue was markedly up, and they were profitable. The same is true of both our beer and wine trains - the Commissary department seems to have developed a winning program. Special Ops were well thought out and successful -like Bronco Billy Days with steam locomotives. Interest income on operating cash was up more than 3x.

On the negative side, during the FY just ended we received 4% less dues than the prior year; and 20% less from charters. These numbers warn that we need to try harder to sustain our membership base; and review our marketing approach to charters.

Regarding the budget, we ended the year having spent significantly less than we budgeted. To the extent that is due to our control of spending it is good news. On the flip side, some projects we hoped to get done didn't happen at all. The Board will vote on the new year budget at the August Board meeting.

In other business, it is time to engage an audit firm to perform an audit of our books and records for the fiscal year just ended. I have suggested we engage Regalia and Associates CPA's, of Danville, which has done the audit for us in recent years.

The PLA has received a \$250 donation "In Memory of Dick Charpentier". Thank you very much for this recognition of Dick's long volunteer service with our railroad.

If you have questions or comments, let me know at email: [treasurer@ncry.org](mailto:treasurer@ncry.org).

**Pat Stratton**

Treasurer

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

650-888-8619



**BEER ON THE RAILS**

**May 5, August 4 & September 1, 2024**

**NILES CANYON RAILWAY**

Departs Sunol Station at 1:00PM & returns at 3:00PM  
6 Kilkare Road, Sunol, CA

**\$69 per person**

**\$37 Designated Driver**  
Lunch & Ride only

**Beer from three local breweries**

**Non-alcoholic beverages available on board**

**Two hour train ride**

**Live music on board!**

**Lunch included**  
No outside food or beverages allowed

**21+ with ID**  
to pick up tickets & to board  
No children / Pets

**Tickets only available online at [ncry.org](http://ncry.org)**

**Info: [ncry.org](http://ncry.org) 510.996.8420**



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Special 4th of July train arrives at Sunol.

*Mike Pechner photograph*