



# THE CLUB CAR



Bulletin 753

Pacific Locomotive Association, Inc.

May 2026

## End of an Era – Skookum leaves Niles Canyon Stacktalk - SPECIAL EDITION



*Chris Baldo photograph*

End of an Era – Skookum being loaded, getting ready to leave Brightside on a Renn Transportation heavy haul trailer for the Sacramento Railroad Museum on April 14, 2026.

### INSIDE THIS MONTH

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Following the title of a famous movie on the last days of Rayonier steam logging operations, another "End of an Era" event occurred on April 14, 2026. Exactly 7 years to the day that Skookum was loaded onto a truck in Oregon for the trip to Niles Canyon, Skookum was loaded on a truck to depart Niles Canyon. The last seven years of partnership with Skookum's owner Mr. Baldo and the Roots of Motive Power continues their long-standing

relationship with the Pacific Locomotive Association (PLA) Steam Department. While Skookum was in Niles Canyon, PLA operated, continued restoration and upgrading of the locomotive with the assistance of Mr. Baldo and Roots volunteers, who also had an opportunity to operate Skookum periodically in the Canyon. However, the time has come for Skookum to continue her road tour of the West Coast with a move to her

**Stacktalk continued on Page 10**

**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

### BOARD MEETING

**FRIDAY, MAY 1**  
7:00 PM

### GENERAL MEETING

**FRIDAY, MAY 8**  
7:00PM

### BOARD MEETING

**FRIDAY, JUNE 5**  
7:00 PM

### GENERAL MEETING

**FRIDAY, JUNE 12**  
7:00 PM

All Meetings are:  
In-person & Teleconference  
Held at:  
**Veterans Memorial Hall**  
37154 2nd St, Fremont, CA

## CLUB CAR SUBMISSIONS

The deadline for submitting articles and photos for next month's issue of The Club Car is the

### 20th OF EACH MONTH

Submit articles in **WORD** format.

Submit photos in **jpg** format.

Each photo should have a description identifying the people in it, and the photographers credit.

Submit to:

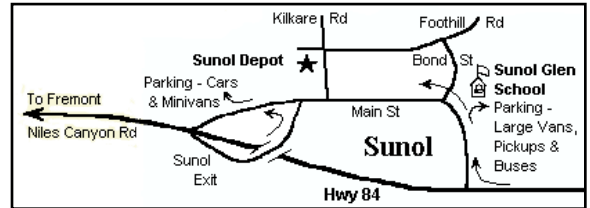
**clubcar@ncry.org**

(If I don't respond with a Thank you or Got it, then I didn't receive it.)

## BOARDING LOCATIONS

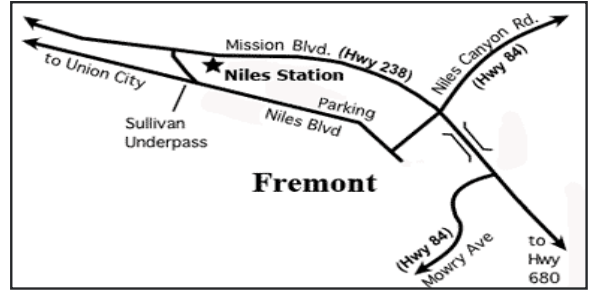
### SUNOL DEPOT

6 Kilkare 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.....	Sarah Fritz.....	(510) 754-0355
Treasurer.....	Steve Miller.....	(323) 957-5646
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Director-At-Large.....	Mark Miller.....	(510) 502-8521
Director-At-Large.....	Patrice McDonald.....	(408) 772-9278
General Manager.....	Stephen Barkkarie.....	(510) 368-1733

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

Brush Cutting.....	Mark Whitman	Museum Curator.....	Dennis Mann
Car Department.....	Dennis Mann	Operations Manager.....	Dexter Day
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Chief Engineer.....	Mike Strider	Road Foreman of Engines...	Kent Hedberg
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Crew Caller.....	Jackie Vlasak	Station Agent - Sunol.....	Donna Alexander
East Build.....	Stephen Knoeck	Steam Department Head.....	Alan Siegwarth
Gift Shop.....	Patrice McDonald	Steam Hosteler Training.....	Jeff Schwab
Hazmat Manager.....	Doug Debs	Technology.....	Matt Petach
Maintenance of Way.....	Ron Thomas	Train Master.....	Mark Miller
Marketing Manager.....	Chris Hauf	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 7:00 p.m. in the Veterans Memorial Hall in Niles at 37154 2nd Street, (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

## MAY EVENTS

DATE	DAY	EVENT	LOCATION	TIME	CONTACT
May 1	Friday	Board Meeting	Veterans Hall	7:00 pm	- Tim Flippo
May 2	Saturday	Building East	Brightside	8:00 am	- Steve Knoeck
May 7	Thursday	Education Train	Niles	10:00 am	- The Alexanders
May 8	Friday	Education Train	Sunol	10:00 am	- The Alexanders
May 8	Friday	General Meeting	Veterans Hall	7:00 pm	- Tim Flippo
<b>May 9</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Public Train</b>	<b>Sunol</b>	<b>10:30 am &amp; 1:00 pm</b>	
<b>May 10</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Public Train - STEAM!</b>	<b>Sunol</b>	<b>10:30 am &amp; 1:00 pm</b>	
May 14	Thursday	Education Train	Niles	10:00 am	- The Alexanders
May 15	Friday	Education Train	Niles	10:00 am	- The Alexanders
<b>May 16</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Public Train</b>	<b>Niles</b>	<b>10:30 am &amp; 1:00 pm</b>	
<b>May 17</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Public Train - STEAM!</b>	<b>Niles</b>	<b>10:30 am &amp; 1:00 pm</b>	
May 23	Saturday	Brush Cutting	Brightside	7:30 am	- Mark Whitman

## Volunteer Report

**Charlene Murrell - Volunteer Hours Coordinator**

The people listed below reported 2,525.5 volunteer hours for the month of March. Volunteer hours should be reported every month to Charlene Murrell at [volunteer-hours@ncry.org](mailto:volunteer-hours@ncry.org). Train Crew hours will continue to be collected from Train Crew log sheets in Blake's Palace. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY on the LOG SHEETS!!! If I can't read your name, you will not get credit.

### ADMINISTRATION

Bob Bradley  
Bob Pratt  
Charlene Murrell  
Chris Hauf  
Curt Hoppins  
Dexter Day  
Donna Alexander  
Ed Best  
Henry Baum  
Jackie Vlasak  
James Stewart  
Kent Hedberg  
Mark Miller  
Matt Petach  
Mike Strider  
Rich Alexander  
Stephen Barkkarie  
Steve Miller  
Tim Flippo  
Tom Eikerenkotter

### ARCHIVES & LIBRARY

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Bonnie Harrington  
Dan Miles  
Jack Harrington  
Jacques Verdier  
Ron Hook

### COMMISSARY

Sally Mills  
Sue Thomas

### DOCENT

James Stewart  
Jim Evans  
John Siebert  
Ron Hook  
Tom Stone

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Curt Hoppins  
Jacques Verdier  
James Stewart

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Bob Bailey  
Doug Vanderlee  
Jack Harrington  
John Zielinski  
Mark Whitman  
Stephen Meyer

### GIFT SHOP

Charlene Murrell  
Patrice McDonald

### MECHANICAL

Charles Franz

### MECHANICAL

Henry Chandler  
Howard Wise  
Jeff Haslam  
Jeff Schwab  
Karl Swartz  
Matthew James  
Warren Anderson  
William Stimmerman

### MOW & TRACK

Brad Jones  
Charles Navarra  
Chris Hamilton  
Dee Murphy  
James Moon  
John Zielinski  
Jordan Hamilton  
Mark Whitman  
Matt Petach  
Mike Strider  
Rick Cory  
Stephen Knoeck

### OTHER

Barry Lependorf  
Dan Miles  
Dee Murphy  
John Link  
Kent Hedberg  
Matt Petach

### OTHER

Patrice Warren  
Rick Cory  
Stephen Knoeck

### TRAIN CREW

Adam Weidenbach  
Alan Siegarth  
Alexander Haken  
Armin Haken  
Charles Franz  
Chris Chisom  
Chuck Kent  
Curt Hoppins  
Dylan Olson  
Gabriel Gadzikowski  
Gabriel Gleeson  
Garon Michaelis  
James Moon  
James Stewart  
Jason Pate  
Jeff Schwab  
Jesse Olague  
Jorg Linke  
Justin Legg  
Kent Hedberg  
Liam O'Leary  
Logan Mitchum-Rubasky  
Mark Miller  
Mason Denton  
Michael Stockwell

### TRAIN CREW

Peter Savoy  
Sanjay Bhandari  
Steve Knoeck

### TRAIN CREW

Tim Flippo  
Warren Haack

## RIDE THE TRAIN

### Mother's Day Sunday May 10th

Mothers and grandmothers are offered a complimentary small glass of champagne, or Martinelli's sparkling cider.

## EMERGENCY NUMBER FOR NILES CANYON RAILWAY

**510-793-3434**

is Alameda County's emergency dispatch, they know about the Niles Canyon Railway and coordinate with Fremont, Cal Fire, Fremont Police, local CHP, and ACSO.

# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Treasurer's Report

Steve Miller

Currently as of this writing, our cash balance is 35% greater than it was this time last year. Thank you everyone for another successful TOL fundraiser!

From the P&L: Revenue from regular diesel passenger runs are down 8% over last year, but from steam runs it is up 56%. The presence of a steam locomotive surely does sell the most tickets to our trains. Can we run more steam trains each season? Our passengers would love it. Or instead, let's extend the Sunol siding to the west so we can add a couple more cars to our steam trains.

Gift shop sales are up 22% over last year, and commissary sales are up over 10%. Donations overall are flat; exceptions are the KM9010 at over \$20k, SP2101 painting at over \$9k, and the Brightside Fuel Depot got \$5k.

On the expense side, we bought new batteries for SP2472. Monthly Brightside trash and recycling have gone up 75% due to a rate increase. We had over 200 ties replaced during one week by professionals. We have a new (used) tie crane and articulated loader that is undergoing minor conditioning, plus Mongo's diesel motor has been rebuilt. Our Motorcar Garage team is bringing maintenance up to snuff on our speeders.

Our fiscal Budget ends on June 30, and Annual Budgets for the 2026-27 fiscal year will be due soon. Department Heads – Please get those numbers together. We will be calling on you soon to submit your proposals for approval. More to come soon on this one.

The latest QR Code initiative is going well. Chris Hauf is working on

placement in the cars over the next couple of weeks, and I am working with a company that produces napkins that will have our QR Code and Logo on them, so we can hand them out on the commissary car. The napkin company is donating the first batch of 500-1000.

Lastly, please get your reimbursement requests to me in a timely manner. Please ensure that you submit all receipts in detail. When you make purchases, ensure that the vendor has your full name and not just your first name. When submitting the

reimbursement form with your receipts, kindly ensure that I know what project initiative you are purchasing for. This way I can properly allocate these to the correct Departments for budgeting purposes. This will make things much easier for me, and so I can ensure that you are being reimbursed in a timely manner. Please feel free to call me or send me an email at any time. I'm fairly responsive for the most part.

Steve Miller

treasurer@ncry.org

### Attention student brakeman class attendees!

After Sunday, May 3rd, hands-on portion of class, the gift shop will be open and ready for business. It's the perfect time to grab any gear you might need before your first shift on the rails.

And it's not just for students-ALL members are welcome to swing by! Whether you're on a mission to pick up needed items or just stopping in to say hello, we'd love to see you.

Patrice McDonald

### NEW BRAKEMAN TRAINING CLASS

HELD AT BRIGHTSIDE IN THE WHITE HOUSE

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

SATURDAY: MAY 2nd & SUNDAY: MAY 3rd

CLASS ROOM STUDIES WITH LECTURE / WRITTEN TEST WILL BE GIVEN  
LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED AT NOON / HANDS ON TRAINING WILL BE GIVEN  
MUST BE ABLE TO PERFORM THE REQUIRED DUTIES OF A BRAKEMAN

\*\*\*\*\*

LUNCH PROVIDED

\*\*\*\*\*

SIGN UP FOR CLASS at: [traincrews@gmail.com](mailto:traincrews@gmail.com)



### 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>



## President's Report

Tim Flippo

### From the President,

I would like to thank the JPB/ Caltrain for their recent donation of all their Christmas decorations. It will be a nice supplement to our own decorations. Our elves have been hard at work sorting, testing and storing them for their summer sleep. In August all the decorations will be waking up and heading out to decorate the 2026 Train of Lights.

We were recently contacted by an individual who has the original builder's plates for our steam crane. A few of us will be taking a road trip up north in June to pick them up.

Hopefully by now you have turned in your vote to Sarah for Volunteer of the Year!

For those of you that would like to



Zona Fowler

see the right-of-way east of Sunol, we will be running the M200 that direction in June.

On a sad note, long time member Zona Fowler passed away on April

5th. She did many things for the PLA including keeping track of the engine crews for years when we used to hand write it in a binder. She worked her way up through the ranks from Brakeman to Engineer. She was a very good Engineer.

During one of her trips heading west to Niles she was surprised by a large mud flow at the culvert near Farmer's crossing. Needless to say, that ended the run and the train had to return to Sunol. Our crews cleared the mud so later the train could go back to Brightside and tie down. Zona, you were a great asset to the organization and a great friend!

Tim Flippo  
President

## Membership

Sarah Fritz

### New Members:

Dawson Bone, Amber Bryce, Joe Bryce, Diny Chen, Felix Chen, Jack Chen, Reef Chen, Shu Kai Chen, Robert B Clark, Liam Hart, Jeffrey

Kinast, Byron J May, James S Rush, Fernando Silva, Yanni Wang, Lili Xia, Ming Sen Xia, Yanyu Xia, Gabriel S Yamagushi-Layman, and Aleksei Zhukov. Welcome to the Niles Canyon Railway!

I have some sad news to share. Last month we lost one of our long-time members, Zona Fowler. A lovely service was held on April 13th.

The end of the fiscal year is coming up fast! We have so many hard-working volunteers out there so please think about someone who deserves to be recognized as our Volunteer of the Year. All you have to do is drop me an email at: [membership@ncry.org](mailto:membership@ncry.org)

I also want to remind everyone again that this means there are now only two months left to earn hours towards the 2026 Train of Lights Volunteer Train tickets. If you aren't sure how many hours you have, you can send me an email and I will let you know how many

hours you've earned this fiscal year (July 1st, 2025-June 30th, 2026).

One last general reminder, if you want to ride the regular weekend trains as a member you must contact the Station Agent at [station-agent@ncry.org](mailto:station-agent@ncry.org). Please include the exact date and time that you wish to ride. This way you can be placed on the manifest.

Sarah Fritz  
Membership Secretary

### RIDE THE TRAIN SPECIALS

#### Mother's Day Sunday May 10th

Mothers and grandmothers are offered a complimentary small glass of champagne, or Martinelli's sparkling cider.

#### Father's Day Sunday June 21

Fathers and grandfathers are offered a complimentary small glass of beer, or root beer.

### EMERGENCY NUMBER FOR NILES CANYON RAILWAY

510-793-3434

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## Along the Right of Way

Stephen Barkkarie

We have had our April showers, so bring on the May flowers, and bring a picnic out to the canyon. Trains are running, including steam on Sundays, and the hillsides are in full bloom. It's a great time of year with moderate temps and everyone energized. Projects around Brightside are humming and we're making good progress purging gremlins from the MOW fleet. With all our annual reviews behind us, we are focused on the coming year and looking forward to another busy year on the NCRy.

Our community events are robust already, like the 15th annual "Ride the Rails for Relay" fundraiser for the American Cancer Society that took place on the last Sunday of April and our very popular "Education Trains" for local schools has been running nearly every operating weekend. In addition, another Boy Scouts of America railroading merit badge class has just taken place and it has doubled in size from previous years. (Leaders of that group tell us more troops are interested in participating.) A local group of artists from Sunol rode the train and toured Brightside yard for inspiration, because they plan to create railroad themed banners for the light posts Main St. Sunol. Passenger operations will run out of our Niles Station May 16th & 17th in support of the Niles Main St. Association's "Charlie Chaplin days". It is important for us to be a part of the communities on our line. We are talking "behind the scenes" about different ideas for future events, thinking outside of the boxcar, if you will.

MoW crew has worked hard to put "Mongo", our main motive powerhouse for track maintenance, back into service after the engine rebuild. Two months without it gives me a new appreciation for that machine. (As they say, you never know what you got 'til it's gone.) The absence forced us to push our smaller machines a little too



Stephen Barkkarie photograph

### Trusty Mongo back in business.

hard, which has led to other repairs being necessary. Fortunately, our track car team stepped up to help and did a great job getting our crew car "big bird" running like a top. I handled a couple minor fixes to our two tie cranes and the Case backhoe putting us almost back to full strength.

Niles station has seen some attention also. We have finally finished screening out all the asphalt grindings piled in the wye ready for trucking out to Brightside and Farwell ranch. This is to make way for the rest of the Lenzen roundhouse materials coming from Santa Clara. (That will happen over the next couple months.) The ballast screen can now begin sorting out the mountain of rock we bought from the VTA. The screen



Stephen Barkkarie photograph

Railroad safety requires high visibility.

## Along the Right of Way

**Stephen Barkkarie**

does a great job of sizing ballast for track and walking ballast and removing any fine material. We took the opportunity to give some of the MoW members a little experience running the backhoe loader. (We plan to keep the training

going and fortunately there is plenty of rock to go around.) Plans are to get back to building storage tracks on the North side of mainline using the turnout at the East end of the platform. (We'll do this in our spare time.)

After a seven-year visit, the locomotive #7, the "Skookum", has moved on to CSRM Sacramento. The same folks from Renn trucking who dropped her off showed up on a Tuesday morning mid-April with two lowboy tractor trailers. With some help from our steam dept and forklift, the engine was loaded on one truck and the tender on another. Our Road Foreman of Engines, Kent Hedberg, handled switcher SP 1195 expertly, and with conductor Mason Denton guiding from the ground, and Al Depaulo of CSRM running the ramp crew, both pieces were headed down the road in a little over five hours. That is a far shout faster than when we broke the mainline near MP35 to unload it and had to construct a snap track up to the trailer. We wish Chris Baldo and the Skookum good fortune and a fond farewell.

This summer is lining up to be a busy one at Niles Canyon. We should see some good things getting done in the car department. Out East the track will continue to grow, Steam will run through May (and continue work on the #1744), we could see the M-601 powered again, and all the while people will ride the most beautiful ten miles of track there is (in my humble opinion). Don't you want to be a part of all that? You are welcome to, just log on, sign up and get onboard.

**Stephen Barkkarie**  
General Manager



*Stephen Barkkarie photograph*

Steve K. screens grindings at Niles.



*Stephen Barkkarie photograph*

Steve K. loads ballast while Rick Cory screens rocks.

# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Welcome & Retirement Congratulations new ACS Sgt. For Niles Canyon Area

As PLA's Emergency Coordinator I make sure we have good coordination with our area emergency responders. Cal Fire, CHP, and Sheriff's Department, The Alameda County Sheriff's Department is our policing agency in the eastern portion of Alameda County including Niles Canyon.

term settlement along Alameda Creek between Farwell and Dresser bridges a few years ago. Happy retirement Sgt. Petrini!

Sergeant Franco is no stranger to Niles Canyon as he grew up in Sunol and attended Sunol Glen School. Welcome Sgt. Franco.

**Jim Evans**  
Security Department



Richard Franco on the right is our new area sergeant who replaces Sgt. Marc Petrini on the left. Both officers have 27 years of service with ACSD.

Marc will be missed as he took the lead in coordination with PLA GM Steve Barkkarie and others, to very effectively evict near 100 homeless people who had established a long

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## NILES CANYON RAILWAY Members 4th of July TRAIN RIDE & PICNIC

Join us in beautiful Niles Canyon on

**Saturday, July 4, 2026**

to celebrate the 4th of July with a round trip train ride from the Sunol Depot and then a BBQ in the Sunol Depot Gardens.

Bring your family, partner, friends or potential new members to experience vintage railroading at its best!



**Ride the Train, then enjoy the Feast**

The Train departs at 10:30 am, we eat at 12:30 pm  
(Please bring your own folding chairs & table if possible)

**THE FEAST!** Enjoy grilled tri-tip, chicken, mild Sicilian sausage, hot dogs, artisan cheese, Brentwood corn on the cob, watermelon, Italian bean salad, potato salad, bread & butter, fruit, wine, beer, sodas, water, iced tea and more!



**Tickets: Order by June 26:**

Members = \$15, Guests = \$20, Kids 5 -12 = \$10.

Order after June 26: add \$5 per ticket.  
(Tickets will be held at the Sunol Depot ticket window).

**Members:** Go to [ncry.org](http://ncry.org) > About > Members' Website > Login with username & password > Members Only > Calendar > July > "4th of July Members Picnic" > Register Now.

**OR:** mail your check payable to:  
NCRy July 4th, PO Box 515, Sunol, CA 94586-0515.

**Ticket Info:** Donna Alexander  
510.996.8420 | [station-agent@ncry.org](mailto:station-agent@ncry.org)



## The Restoring of SP #2101

At 102, I guess you do not mind being naked for a while if it means ultimately looking as good as you were when you built by Pullman in 1924. This is currently the status of two ends and one side of Southern Pacific Railroad Pullman commute coach #2101 as they sit in bare steel as final preparations and body work are made prior to a finish coat of SP Dark Olive Green and all new lettering. This was a restoration that started last year with a small team with the goal of preparing one side of the car while the car was STILL in regular service; something a few said was not possible as the work had to be done on the two off weeks each month when our train was not running. Well, mission accomplished and by Train of Lights, the 2101's south side was in full SP Dark Olive showing what was possible.

Fast forward to this January with TOL over the train being split back up to where we now find the #2101 pulled from regular service and parked west of the car shop to allow the restoration to run to completion. SP #1949 at the spry age of 115 became a member of our weekend consist; filling in a few months while the #2101 is completed.

Since late January, that same team that worked on the car last year augmented by a few others has needle scaled all of the paint off of the north side and two vestibules, has performed multiple steel patches along with some good old fashioned body filler work, sanded most of the bare steel to give a smooth surface to accept the new primer and begun the process of also finishing many of the details like the wood vestibule doors and replacing the diaphragms. A few individuals should be mentioned. Tim Flippo has spent MANY hours at the end of our needle-scaler getting paint off. Steve Barkkarie has been working tirelessly on steel repairs while your author, Chris Hauf, has been working on needle-scaling, sanding, body work, preparing the full lettering package, and lining up all the



*Chris Hauf photograph*

**Southern Pacific Railroad #2101 sits at the west end of our Car Shop in Brightside yard with its two vestibules in bare steel as final repairs are done prior to repainting.**



*Chris Hauf photograph*

**Just a quick preview of coming attractions as the south side is already in SP Dark Olive from the restoration work done last year. This side will receive a little extra paint work and all new lettering this year, but this is what the car will look like when completed.**

materials and supplies for the repaint which I will start soon.

Thanks to several generous donors including several NCRy members, over \$9,000 was raised for the restoration which means all the restoration costs will be covered by donations. THANK YOU for your generosity! Thanks to all the volunteers who have also made this restoration possible. When the #2101 is complete and rejoins our standard weekend consist, our entire train will

have been repainted within the past five years which makes our train really stand out to our visiting public!

The goal is to have the car complete and back in service by mid-summer. We may also be calling for help in masking and other preparation tasks if you are able to help when needed so please stay tuned for more updates.

**Chris Hauf**  
*Marketing Manager*

Continued from Page 1

3rd railroad since restoration, the California State Railroad Museum, where she will get the opportunity to operate on their demonstration railroad along the Sacramento River.

**SPECIAL EDITION:** The beginnings of Skookum's visit to Niles Canyon dates back to the 2014 Steamfest where we mused with Mr. Baldo about bringing Skookum to Niles Canyon for a visit as we had his Port of Olympia #2 locomotive for two of the Steamfests. When the PLA started planning for the 150th Anniversary of the Transcontinental Railroad, plans were made to move the Skookum to help celebrate this special Anniversary for our Country and the rail line through Niles Canyon. In March of 2018, representatives of the steam department along with Roots volunteers made a road trip to the Oregon Coast Scenic to get some advance training on the locomotive's operation which was an adventure to say the least and a great time visiting with other steam folks from the Pacific Northwest.

After Skookum arrived in April 2019, early operations were difficult with a litany of issues and breakdowns that had the steam crew working long hours to keep Skookum on the road. As we worked through issues, Mr. Baldo, Roots personnel and Steven Butler visited the shop to help make the locomotive's operation more reliable. While at times the early operations were exhausting and frustrating, we took solace in the fact that our efforts were continuing the restoration of this famous locomotive. Finding and fixing issues on any recently restored steam locomotive is common and in truth the rail preservation community is lucky the Skookum is in one piece and operating considering the locomotive at the end of logging service derailed, rolled on her side off of a bridge, was left on her side in the woods, then pulled out of



Alan Siegwarth photograph

May 10, 2019 – the 150th Anniversary of the Transcontinental Doubleheader Celebration train is being setup in the yard. Jeff Schwab and Derek Schipper on the #4, Alan Siegwarth and Gerald DeWitt crew on the Skookum pose before the start of the day's festivities.



Alan Siegwarth photograph

The Clover Valley #4 and Skookum #7 await service for the Transcontinental Celebration on May 10, 2019.



Alan Siegwarth photograph

Celebration of 150th Transcontinental Anniversary Train loaded and waiting to leave Niles for the day's excursion to Verona and beyond, May 10, 2019.



Alan Siegwarth photograph

Doubleheaded celebration train leaving the yard with Yosemite Valley #330 carrying the markers, May 10, 2019.



Alan Siegwarth photograph

Doubleheaded Mallets with a Transcontinental Special, leaves Niles Station as a southbound Capitol Corridor train passes by, May 11, 2019.

**Alan Siegwarth**



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

**Happy passengers view the rare site of two Baldwin Mallets together at the Verona Siding, September 7, 2019.**



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

**Chris Baldo and Eli Mosher working a radius rod while timing the Skookum on June 3, 2019.**



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

**Engineers for the Niles Canyon Golden Spike Celebration – Charles Franz and Jeff Schwab. September 6, 2019.**



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

**Another repair on September 6, 2019 – Derek Schipper and Charles Franz are working on the air compressor governor.**



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

**Charles Franz being interviewed about the Skookum and the September 6th, 2019 events by TSG Media's John Abatecola.**

the woods in many pieces by railfans. These pieces were moved multiple times, some lost and against all odds were reassembled and operated by the determination of the Oregon Coast Scenic staff and her owner, Mr. Baldo.

The Skookum started operating doubleheaded with Clover Valley #4 on special excursion trains running from Niles to the east end of the railroad past Verona to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Transcontinental on May 10th and the 150th Anniversary of the completion of the line through Niles Canyon on September 6, 2019 – the actual completion date of the Transcontinental to the Pacific Ocean. These trains were popular and the special event recreating the driving the Niles Canyon Golden Spike on September 6th drew many local politicians along with other dignitaries. The Skookum required frequent work and repairs during the early years of operation and Mr. Baldo with other Roots folks visited on many occasions to lend a hand with some of the work including boiler work, valve timing issues, work on the power reverse, finishing the jacketing which was not completed in Oregon and other repairs. The PLA with their help fixed many issues not finished or found during the limited operations in Oregon. The Steam Department crew fixed many other issues such as the air pump, running gear, lubricator, front end changes, a valve seizure problem among other regular running repairs.

One of the highlights of the Skookum's stay on the NCRy has to be the Lerro Photography Charter where photographers from around the world visited us to photograph a log train pulled by the Skookum and Freight train pulled by the Clover Valley #4. This charter required a huge amount of organization and preparation but was a fantastic event that received rave reviews from the photographers (along

# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

**Stacktalk- SPECIAL EDITION**

**Alan Siegwarth**

with a nice extra donation that went towards the 1744 restoration). Thanks to Pete Lerro for organizing the event which gained extra publicity from a surprise visit by Jim (editor of TRAINS Magazine) and Cate Wrinn. March 9th was a fortuitous day with the parts of newly acquired Southern Pacific Mogul #1744 and tender arriving from Colorado. The Skookum operations continued in Niles Canyon until March 15th, 2020 – the day before the COVID “Shelter in Place” health order began which had all of us social distancing at home and shut down the railroad. March 15th would be her last operation for six months. When COVID restrictions began to loosen, Niles Canyon started to plan operating special excursions which the Board of Directors requested the Steam Department operate steam for these pre-ticketed special operations beginning in September. Our department held a Zoom meeting to discuss operating steam with COVID protocols and we agreed to proceed as we all were excited to get back to railroading again. The operations would be different than the push/pull two locomotive operations before COVID as they would be operated with a five-car train and one locomotive running around the train in Niles and Sunol – we chose the Skookum to power these special operations. The Skookum performed well with ongoing TLC keeping the steam crew busy on non-operating days.

Another highlight of Skookum’s time in Niles Canyon was the Photographers specials operated to raise funds for the Southern Pacific #1744 steam locomotive restoration. The Skookum pulled freight trains on the west end of the railroad for one special and with the locomotive facing west we did another set of photographer’s specials in all new locations along the east end of the railroad. As part of the trip we stopped



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

**Skookum pulling a log train westbound into Niles on the Lerro Productions Photo Charter, February 8, 2020.**



*Pete Lerro photograph*

**Lerro Productions photo charter Volunter Crew pictured with the Skookum and the #4 in Sunol, February 8, 2020.**



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

**Recreation of the driving the golden spike in Niles Canyon, September 6, 2019.**



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

**Two Baldwin Mallets nose to nose in Niles – note the Niles sign on the hillside, September 6, 2019.**



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

**September 6, 2019, Niles Canyon Steam Crew celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the completion of the railroad through Niles Canyon.**

# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

**SPECIAL EDITION - Stacktalk**

**Alan Siegwarth**



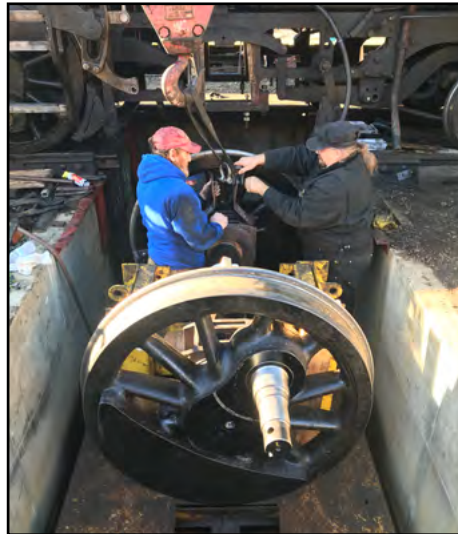
*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

A nice picture of the whole freight train west of Arroyo De Laguna Bridge during the May 1, 2021 photographers special.



*Chris Hauf photograph*

Trains are back rolling with post-COVID special operations as the Skookum approaching Farwell Bridge in this great picture dated September 22, 2020.



*Alan Siegwarth photograph*

Skookum repairs had complete use of the facilities at Brightside including the drop pit in this December 2021 photograph where Troy James and Steve Butler are working on reinstalling the rear driver after some crown brass work.

in the yard and gave a short talk about the SP#1744 project. The Skookum continued to be in our operating locomotive rotation until 2024 when work on the Skookum, Robert Dollar #3, Clover Valley #4, and both our newly acquired locomotives, SP#1744 and SP#2479 taxed our limited volunteer manpower. The Skookum always required an extra level of operating day care and backshop maintenance time behind the scenes so the decision was made by our crew that we couldn't keep operating the Skookum – we needed that time for our other projects. Meanwhile, Mr. Baldo had been working with the State Railroad Museum for several years as the next stop on Skookum's western museum tour which finally culminated in Skookum leaving this month.

The Niles Canyon Railway truly appreciates the time Skookum operated in the Canyon as a key cog in our steam operations along with special events such as our 150-year Anniversary celebration of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad, completion of the railroad through the Canyon and many photographers specials. The privilege to operate and carry on the restoration with Mr. Baldo and other Roots volunteers was an honor and the Steam Department truly are proud to be part of the Skookum's restoration story. She leaves Niles Canyon in better operating shape than when she arrived which will serve her well in the future on CSRM's Sacramento Southern Railroad.

Thank you Mr. Baldo for your friendship, partnership and trust in us with Skookum – it was an exciting Era on the Niles Canyon Railway! We look forward to future endeavors with you and Roots of Motive Power in the future.

**Alan Siegwarth**  
*Steam Department Head*

## Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day

### This Month's tale: **FORGOTTEN BUT STILL STANDING**

This month's tale is focused on two of our freight cars that nobody pays too much attention to. "In railroad terms, they occupy rail space". They were acquired in 1999 from Jim Dobbas Inc. who is a private owner located in Roseville, Ca. One of the box cars SP MOW 1342 was built by the Pullman Company in 1926 as class B-50-15.

The other box car SP MOW 2622 was built by the Southern Pacific Railroad shops in Sacramento, Ca. in 1927 as class B-50-16. Both cars are 40' wood sided, outside steel braced, single door box cars which have 100,000 pounds capacity and weigh 44,300 pounds. The design of the cars was a derivative of the American Railway Association's ARA 4D design for a single sheathed box car. All B-50-15 box cars were built with Murphy corrugated ends that consisted of 7 corrugations in the top panel and 9 in the bottom.

The B-50-16 cars were built with dreadnaught ends. Three main corrugations in the top panel and 5 in the bottom. Both groups of cars used a variety of different roofs, with Murphy radial roof and the Viking roof being the most common. In fact, nearly all B-50-16 received Viking roofs.

Most of these cars were delivered with T-section trucks, though many were later upgraded with "Bettendorf" style trucks. They used Bettendorf T-section cast steel trucks. Some had Columbia T-section cast steel trucks or ASF T-section cast steel trucks. They were changed to AAR U-section trucks in the late 40's and early 50's. Starting in the 1930's, the Southern Pacific started a program of re-siding cars in both classes replacing the wooden sides with steel sides inside of the steel side bracing. This program continued on and off for many years. Not all cars



This car is a B-50-16 with its slated wood sides and steel braced supports and Dreadnaught ends. Not perfect, but still hanging in there.



This is the car at the Spot with wood removed. This B-50-16 is ready for a rebuild.

### Dexter D. Day

of those classes were rebuilt.

The steel sided cars in particular remained in service for many years with 227 B-50-15 and 25 B-50-16 cars still in revenue service as late as 1970. Because of their antiquated looking construction, they really stood out in a

train by that date.

Our two cars were retired early and were assigned to Southern Pacific MOW service. At this time, one of these cars No. 2622 sits on a storage track in Brightside awaiting some attention. The other car, No. 1342, now sits at

the Spot. The car was put there after restoration that was being done on the car suddenly came to a halt. In this car's case, the old wooden sides and floor were removed and that was it. As the other car sits now, preparation of

**Continued on Next Page**



*Ted Culotta photograph*

Here is a B-50-16 when it was in service before any upgrades or it was rebuilt or retired.



Here is a B-50-15 in its retired state as SP MW 2417. Still in fairly good shape.

## Tales of the Past

Dexter D. Day

*Continued from previous page*  
the steel on the car should be done.

After that, get some new wood and fasteners and with some new paint, you now will have a restored wooden outside steel brace car for the photo

freight. This car, which is now at the Spot, has more of the original hardware than its stable mate which is sitting as a storage car at Brightside.

Both of these rare cars need lots of attention to preserve them, there aren't

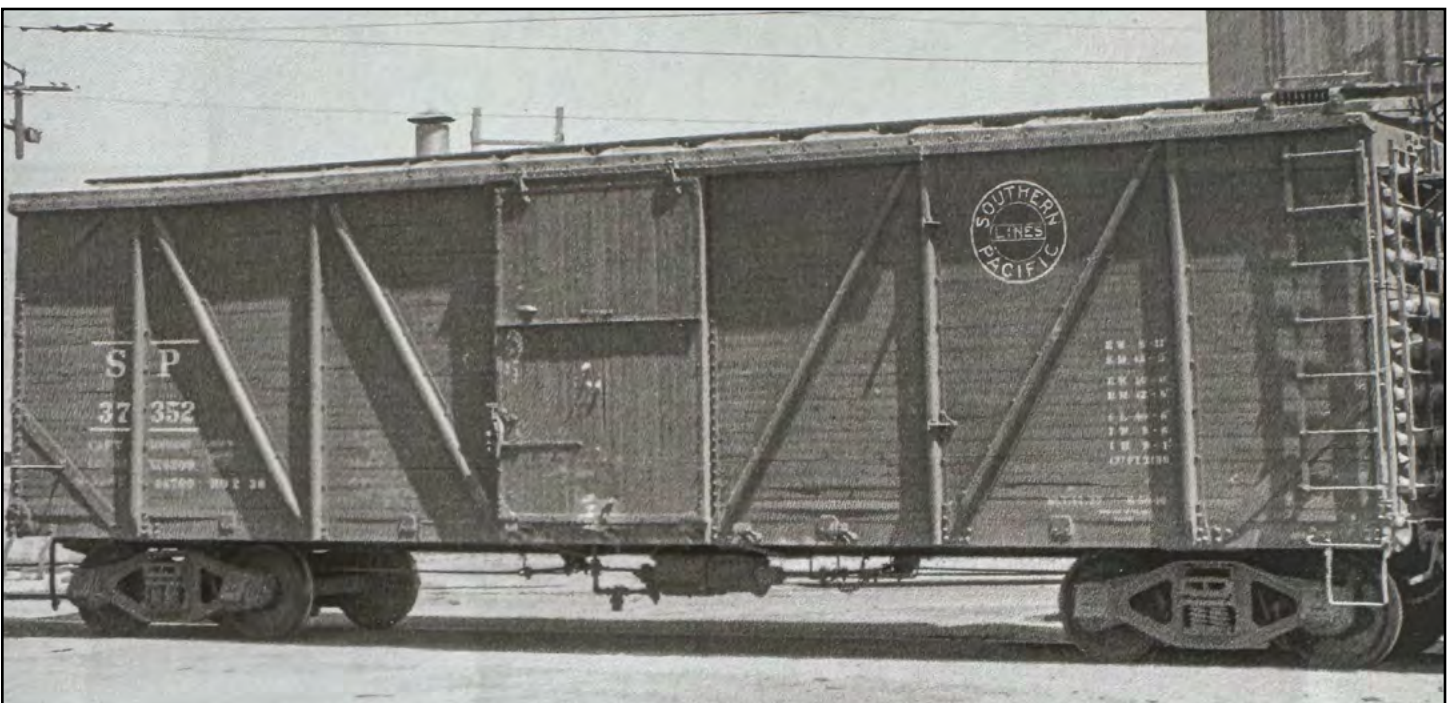
many of these cars left.

With that said, another tale comes to an end.

**Dexter Day**  
*Operations Manager*



This is a B-50-15 in its new steel sides with the outside brace supports.



This is another B-50-16 in its original state as built. Car has dreadnaught ends.

## This Month in NCRY History

LS

On May 4th, 1986, (40 years ago this May 2026) the newly named Niles Canyon Scenic Railway's first work-day in its prospective, new home took place following then-General Manager Peter Schulze's announcement of the activity in the PLA's newsletter, 'The Club Car'. This work would include cleaning dirt and ballast off of ties, plugging old spike holes, loading, hauling and spiking, as Peter declared "down our rail on our ties (one side only) for one mile."

This is the first article in what is hoped to be a series chronicling the herculean work accomplished by volunteers- both new and veteran alike- leading up to the PLA's lease signing with Alameda County on December 1st, 1987, this date the true 40th anniversary of the PLA in Niles Canyon.

Thanks to the (mostly) "Pioneers" who have contributed photographs, helped with their editing and attempt to identify the participants in contributed photos detailing the early days of NCRY history, including: Mark & Nancy Whitman, Jeff Otto, Jim Evans, Dexter Day, Mike McQuaid, Steve Rusconi, Alan and Peggy Frank, Dan Sarka, Doug Vanderlee, Tim Flippo, Mike Strider and Jeff Schwab and Steve Jones.

The following was contributed by Mike McQuaid, PLA's President during the railroad's challenging transition. "By early 1986 the slow process of moving out of Castro Point to our new home in Niles Canyon was well underway. Photo's from February 1986 show many familiar faces doing track removal work from the San Rafael Bridge end of the Castro Point Railway toward Molate Beach. All that 75-pound rail would be useful in keeping the ties that were left behind by Southern Pacific, to stay in the roadbed in Niles Canyon. By this time, we had something called a "Beneficial Occupancy" agreement with Alameda County which allowed us access, to store supplies and material at the former Kaiser Kylite Plant (now Brightside) until the formal agreement was signed."

Next month will feature the beginning of preliminary track construction toward Sunol.

LS



*Mike McQuaid photograph*  
Tim Flippo (standing), along with unidentified Castro Point Railway (CPRy) volunteer, using track jacks to remove rail from CPRy's location by the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge for use in Niles Canyon to protect ties left behind by Southern Pacific prior to CPRy's move there in 1986.



*Jeff Otto photograph*  
Steptoe Valley #3 looks to its new future at Kaiser's Killite Plant Tipple (to eventually become Brightside's Engine Shop) in Niles Canyon.



*Peter Schulze photograph*  
Castro Point Railway volunteer Dexter Day at the cut East of the Kaiser Killite Plant (Brightside) during Pacific Locomotive Association's mid-1980's inspection of Niles Canyon ROW following abandonment by Southern Pacific a couple of years earlier.

## Brush Cutting

**Mark Whitman**

On Wednesday March 25, we started to work in an area adjacent to Vallejo Park working our way east. Unfortunately, after a couple of hours we lost one of the pins that hold one end of the hydrolytic cylinders of the grapple. We were able to use a bolt and wired it in place for a temporary fix so that we could finish chipping the brush that was already cut and on the ground. We then decided to go back to Brightside to do a permanent repair. Steve Knoech and I found some material to fabricate a new pin. Steve later took it to his home to weld it up. It was already lunchtime, so the rest of the crew switched our project to changing out the knives of the chipper. The crew today consisted of Steve Knoech, James Moon, Brad Jones, and Mark Whitman.

On Saturday, March 28, we installed the new pin that Steve Knoech fabricated. We then decided to go back to the east end and continued trimming trees just east of Thompson's Crossing. Today the crew consisted of Steve Knoech, Ron Thomas, John Zielinski, and Mark Whitman.

On Saturday, April 4, we decided to continue to trim and remove trees east of the east track build. This is an area where little if any tree trimming had been done for years. In several instances trees had grown up close to the actual edges where the new ties will be placed. I borrowed two people from the east build crew and got additional assistance with the backhoe from that same crew.

The crew today consisted of John Zielinski, Adam Weidenbach, Steve Barkkarie, and Mark Whitman.

**Mark Whitman**  
Brush Cutting head

## Successful Public Speeder event

Over 125 riders enjoyed our first Public Speeder Rides of 2026 on the weekend of Saturday, March 28 and Sunday, March 29. NCRy partnered with WCRG, (West Coast Railroaders Group), who arranged for the speeders and trained operators. The weather was perfect and the wildflowers are getting better each day. In addition to the speeders, we offered rides on both our hand car and velocipede, which were well received. The recently rebuilt Crew Car, (non-motorized trailer), was used for the first time and was well

received. PLA members Brad Jones brought out his "Flaherty Flyer" and Tuka Gafari brought his hand car. Helping to make this a successful event were Dan Mills, Donna Alexander, Sanjay Bhandari, Bob Bailey, Mason Denton, Garon Michaelis, Brad Jones, Warren Anderson, Tuka Gafari, Mona Gafari and Bob Pratt. We are looking for ways to increase the frequency of these popular events.

**Bob Pratt**

**BEER ON THE RAILS**  
June 7, August 2 & September 6, 2026  
**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

# NILES CANYON RAILWAY

## Bringing Back the YV 107: A New Chapter for the Yosemite Valley Legacy

The Pacific Locomotive Association has always been a guardian of West Coast rail history, and today, we are about to embark on one of our most evocative restoration journeys yet: the return of Yosemite Valley Railroad (YV) Car 107 to active service.

Built by Pullman in 1911, YV 107 began its life as a mail and baggage workhorse for the Texas and New Orleans Railway. However, its most storied era began when it was acquired by the Yosemite Valley Railroad. For years, the YV 107 was a vital link in the logistics of the valley, hauling mail and supplies alongside its sister car, YV 330. After the YV ceased operations, YV 107 passed through the hands of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad before eventually finding its way to the PLA. For decades, it has served us first as a gift shop and later as a stationary storage unit with its paint fading and exterior rusting. The time has come to honor its legacy and put it back on the high iron.

Our goal is simple but ambitious: transition the YV 107 from a static, deteriorating display to an operational excursion asset. This isn't just a cosmetic "paint and patch" job: The upcoming year focuses on stabilization and safety. We are prioritizing roof restoration to stop the cycle of water damage, followed by an exterior repaint in its historically accurate livery. Mechanically, we will be overhauling the trucks—utilizing existing PLA stock and donated parts—to ensure the car meets modern safety standards for passenger excursions. Inside, we plan to restore the baggage and postal areas including a period-correct pot-belly stove and water systems to create an immersive 1920s environment for our visitors.

My name is Uwe Reimer, and I am serving as Project Lead for the YV 107 restoration. My son and I joined the PLA in October 2025 and quickly found our place in the preservation work here. Over the past months I have



been actively working alongside Wes Swift on the YV 330 project, learning the craft and history firsthand. That experience made the case for the YV 107 restoration impossible to ignore: these two cars were frequently in service together, and together they belong back in service.

To succeed, we need the "PLA family" — and that means all of you. Volunteer work parties are planned to begin in late May, and we need every level of help: complete beginners who can hold a sanding block or push a broom, experienced craftspeople who can tackle metalwork and carpentry, and seasoned senior advisors whose knowledge of vintage equipment is simply irreplaceable. If you have ever wanted to get your hands on a piece of living rail history, this is your moment.

Beyond labor, donations to the 107 Fund will directly translate into the high-quality materials required to weather-proof this asset for the next fifty years. To sign up for a work party or learn more, reach out to Uwe Reimer at [uwe.reimer@hotmail.com](mailto:uwe.reimer@hotmail.com) — no experience necessary, just enthusiasm.

By restoring the YV 107, we aren't just fixing a car. The Yosemite Valley Railroad was a proud short-line railroad that handled passenger service to the famed Nation Park, and the 107 and 330 are the only surviving operable rolling stock from that line anywhere in the world. When we complete this restoration, the PLA will be home to a complete and authentic YV consist. Let's get to work!

**Uwe Reimer**

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*Chris Baldo photograph.*

**End of an Era – Skookum loaded and tied down ready to leave Brightside on a Renn Transportation heavy haul trailer for the Sacramento Railroad Museum on April 14, 2026.**