

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for May 22, 2016. Lots and lots of activity going on this week as the MOW Team works to build a better railroad. Now, let's keep the activity going by getting this update started ASAP!

It was all "hands on deck" Tuesday as Pat Scholzen, Cliff Hayes, Frederick Carr, Anthony Filamor, Harry Voss, Joe Margucci, Frank Werry, Gene Peck, and Heather Kearns set out to repair the broken pivot-arm on the wing of the ballast regulator. You will recall that, last Saturday, the one-half inch steel on the pivot-arm failed where the lift-cylinder connected to it. So Cliff, our master welder, conferred with Gene, Pat, and Fred on a plan and it was decided that the wing needed to be removed from the pivot-arm in order to affect repairs. The pivot arm was chained-up to hold it in position. Hydraulic lines were disconnected from the wing components and capped-off. Harry fired-up the portable air-compressor which powered the half-inch pneumatic impact-wrench which was used to remove the bolts connecting the wing to the pivot-arm. Anthony on the forklift came in and, under Gene, Pat, and Joe's direction, slowly began to lift it off the wing off of pivot-arm. With Gene leading Anthony, they found a spot to set the rather hefty apparatus. Immediately, Joe and Fred began removing the pivot-arm, itself. First they removed the hydraulic lines and the brackets holding them in place. Then, they used the impact wrench on the bolts. Mind you, none of these bolts have been turned since the machine was built in the mid-1980s. Fred descended under the machine with the impact-wrench in hand while Joe held the nut-end with a ratchet. Some bolts came out, others did not. For those that didn't, Cliff heated them with his trusty torch in order to get them un-stuck. Fred and Joe kept at it and eventually, the bolts began to turn. Meanwhile, Heather was moving track-materials that had piled up inside the Boiler Shop out to our materials yard to the west of the building. All in all, we made further progress than expected on the regulator. Gene estimates it will be fixed and back together in a week.

Thursday, Mike Harris, Gene, Anthony, Heather, Harry, Frank, and Fred picked right up from where the Team had left off on Tuesday. The goal for the evening was to remove the pivot arm from the machine. Fred spent much of the evening under the machine using whacker-tools to pound-out the stubborn bolts. Mike fired up Cliff's welding gear to heat and cut bolts that would not turn. It was a total Team effort with Frank, Harry, Anthony, and Gene all involved at various stages. With the persistent perseverance for which the MOW Team is known, they managed remove the remaining bolts. Anthony climbed on the forklift and lifted the now free pivot arm over to Cliff's welding station. Mike H., who is a professional engineer by trade, analyzed the tensile and torsional stresses exerted on the arm to determine how such a hefty steel structure could rip, tear, and snap the way it did. He determined that there is a structural design flaw in the unit. Before the machine goes back out on the line, we will inspect the pivot-arm on the other side make necessary modifications to prevent another such incident. Meanwhile, over in the Boiler Shop, Heather installed a new hour-meter on the back-hoe. For some upcoming projects, the Team will need to use the blue tractor which has been stored over in the Boiler Shop for a couple of years. Frank, Harry, and Mike headed over to retrieve it for servicing. Harry chained it to the forklift and Mike H. hauled it out onto the transfer table. By evening's end, it was situated in the Erecting Shop ready to be brought back to life. It had been a very successful and busy evening, indeed.

A double ration of doughnuts greeted the MOW Team on Saturday. Thanks to Tom Freeburger and Chris Carlson, two pink boxes brought smiles to the faces of Pam Tatro, Steve Nemeth, Heather, Joe Margucci, Michael Florentine, Clem Meier, Josh Bailey, Jose Gomez, Chris Machado, and Anthony. All sugared-up, the Team headed out on the line for a grand day of bolt-tightening and switch-servicing. Clem, Anthony, Joe, and Pam got the bolt-machines all strapped down to the trailer. Jose backed-in the truck as Heather, Steve, Tom, and Josh got it hitched-up. Mike F. climbed on the Green Machine and we all headed off to Broadway where the bolt-machines and Team would deploy. Joe, Clem, and Pam worked northbound with the orange bolt-machine while Jose, Steve, Chris M., and Anthony took the yellow machine south. Pursuant to 49 CFR Part 214.328, Tom and Josh worked as "lookouts." Heather, and her natural Weedie instincts, influenced Chris C. to help pick weeds along the right of way. The bolt-tightening process went quite smoothly and completed sooner than expected. Now every bolt between the Circle of Lights and Front Street has been inspected and tightened. With that, the Team headed to a special lunch.

Our very good friends at the Signal Department held their annual barbecue in Miller Park and invited the MOW Team to join them. The train, pulled by Granite Rock 10, passed by on several occasions giving a whistle salute to the joint convention. Signal Maintainer Paul Helman suggested that a two-paragraph description of picnic events would be appropriate in this update. Alas, allotted space allows for just one. Sorry Paul. Nonetheless, the MOW Team sincerely appreciated the invitation to join the festivities. An excellent time was had by all. Many thanks to Chef Al Utzig, chief party planner Bill Meyer, Signals Manager Dale Parker, and all the fantastic folks of Team Signals!

After lunch, the Team headed to Baths to being the annual switch-servicing ritual. With Anthony and Joe being our newest Team members, they had the joy of wielding the grease-bucket brush for the first time. All four of the Baths switches were inspected, cleaned, adjusted, and lubricated. After waving to the 3 o'clock train as it passed northbound, the Team headed back to the Shops and called it a day.

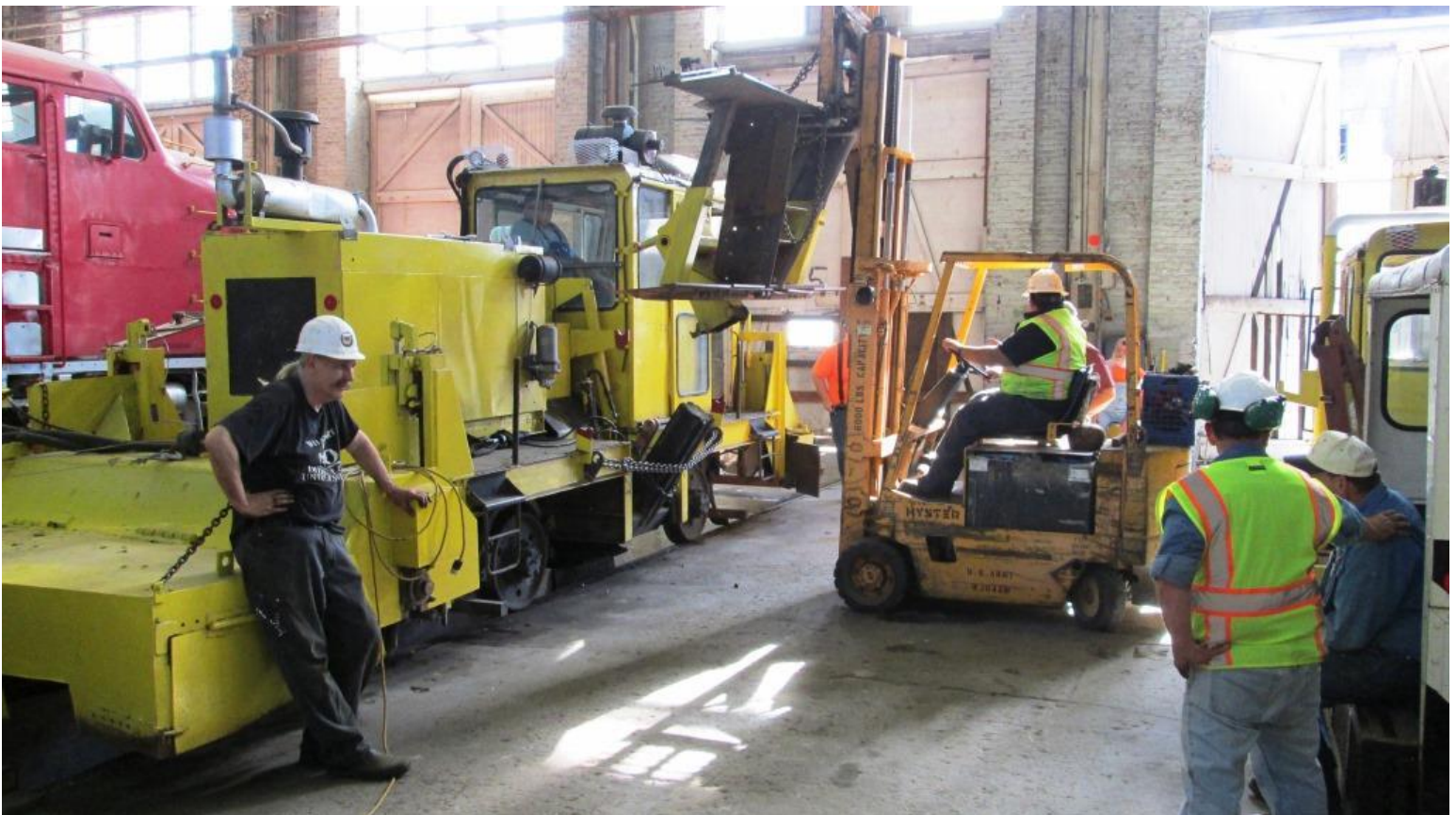
This coming week, it's the normal routine for the Tuesday and Thursday Shops crews. The doors will be open at or before 5 o'clock. Saturday will not be routine. **There will be no MOW on Saturday.** It is cancelled due to a lack of management (with keys and codes) over the Memorial Weekend. So, enjoy your three-days off. MOW will resume in earnest on Saturday, June 4th. In the meantime, many thanks to one and all for your incredible dedication and support for the Team in building a better railroad. After all, no tracks, no train.

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



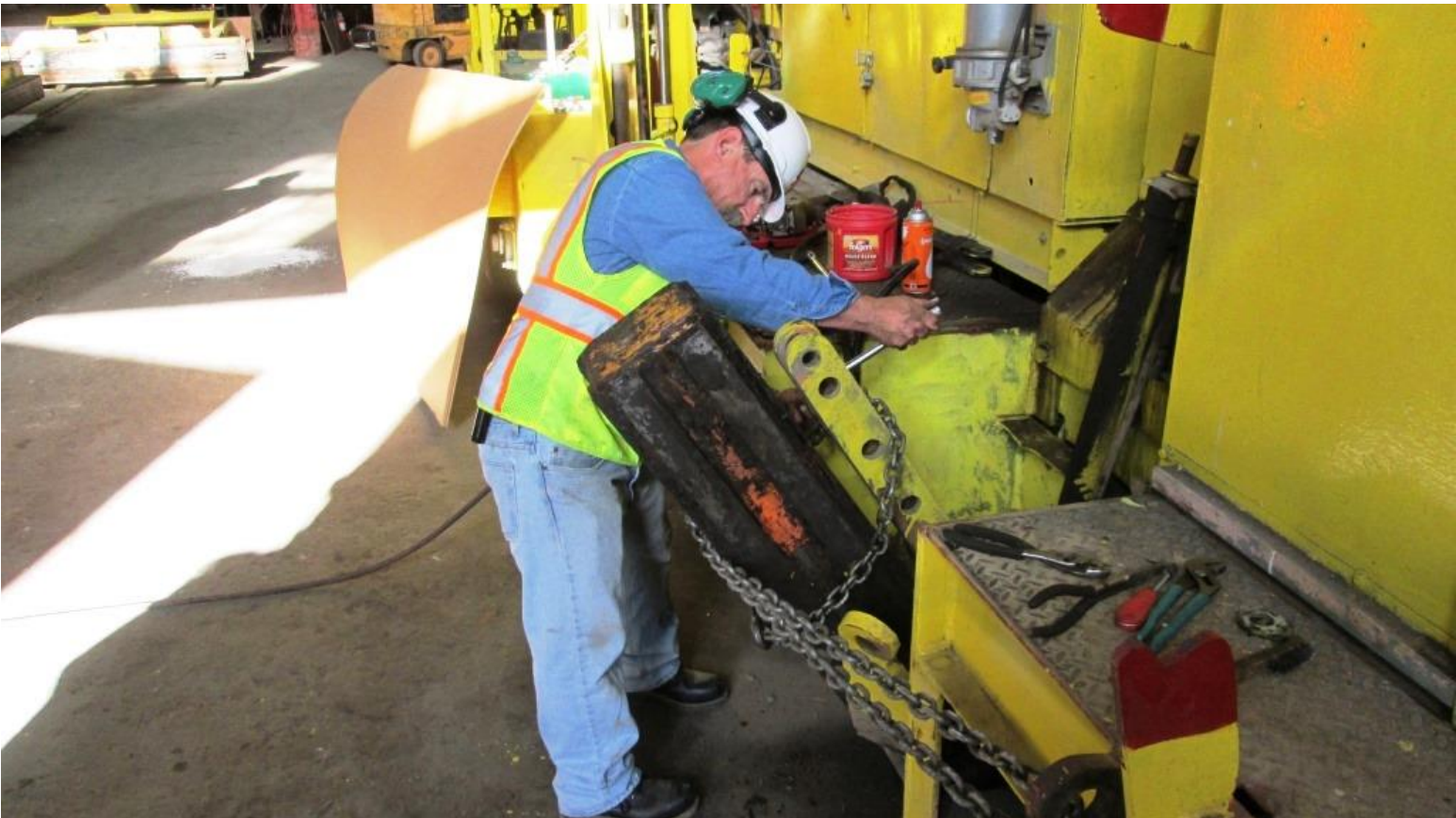
Anthony on the forklift gingerly removes the wing from the regulator as Frank, Gene, Pat, and Fred provide guidance



Up! UP! And Away! The wing and regulator are separated



...And safely set down out of the way



Joe removes the hydraulic line assemblies from the pivot-arm



Meanwhile, Heather works in the materials yard



Joe holds the nut on tight with a ratchet as Fred (legs) uses the impact-wrench under the machine to remove the bolt



Frank shines a light at the bolts Fred is unscrewing under the machine for Fred as Joe holds the ratchet on the nut in place



Cliff sparks-up his torch to heat stubborn bolts



Anthony on the forklift holds the pivot-arm up as Fred places cribbing beneath it



Mike H. sparks-up the torch...



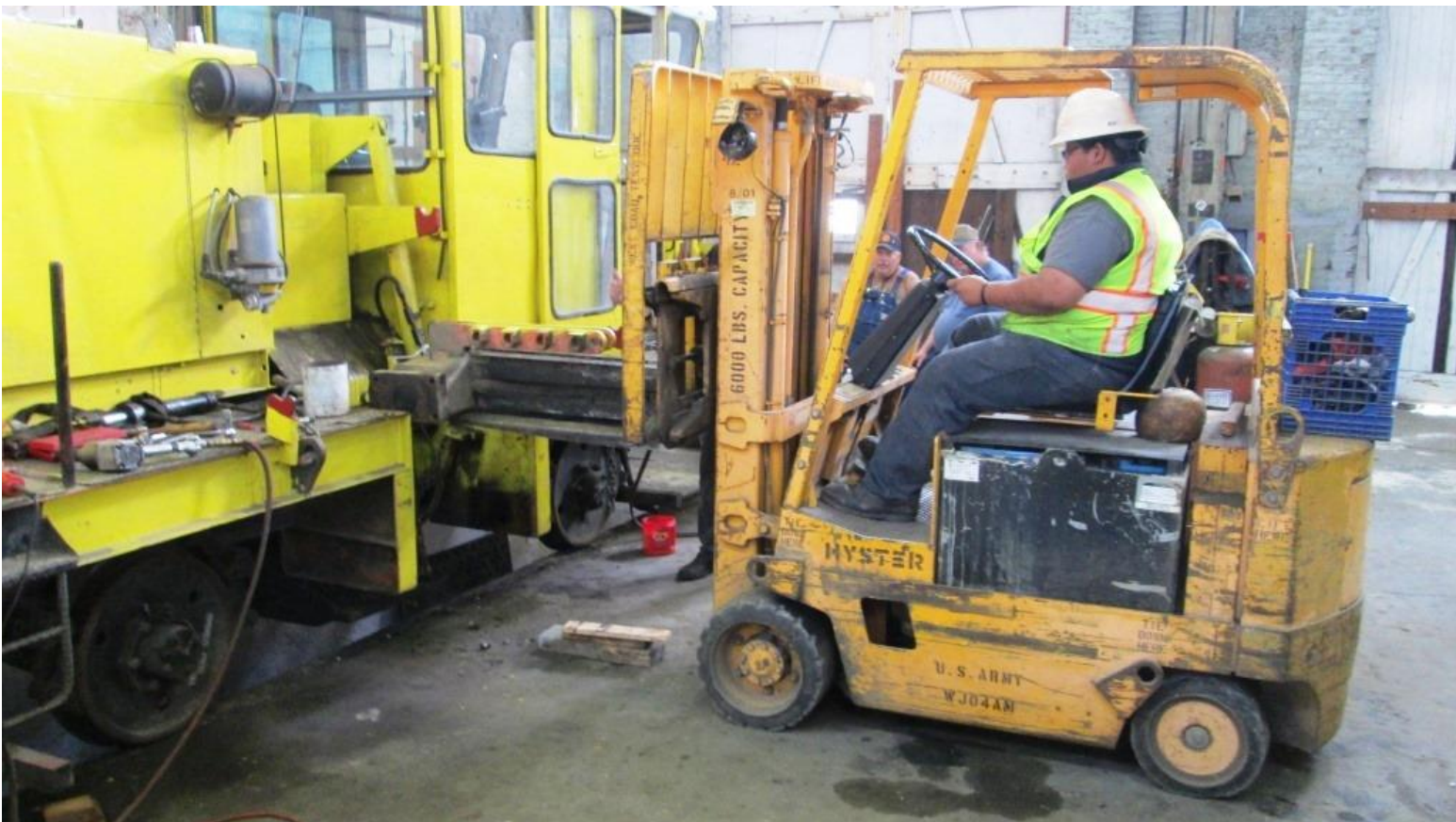
...To cut the heads off stubborn bolts



With the head of the bolt severed, Fred works under the machine to remove the rest of it



Is that a hot-dog? No, it's a torch-cut severed bolt!



Free at last! Anthony removes the pivot-arm



Professional engineer, Mike H., assesses the damage



That's half-inch steel that ripped like tissue paper



Heather installing a new hour-meter on the back-hoe



Final act of the day: moving the tractor into the Erecting Shop for servicing



Why did the bolt-machine cross the road?



...To reach the nut on the other side! *Ba-da-boom!* Mike F. and Anthony head south with the yellow bolt-machine



Clem and Joe head north with the orange bolt machine



Pam clears away ballast-rock from around joints so that it won't interfere with the bolt-machine



As a loyal Weedie, Heather can't help herself...



Steve on Big Green grabs the yellow bolt machine and, with Anthony and Mike F.'s help, spin it around to tighten bolts on the east rail



Anthony yanks on the pull-start. Mike F. and Jose get the machine moving. Chris M. stands by with the mattocks to clear debris at joints



With joints clear of debris further south, Chris M. joins Pam up north to help clear away rock from around the bolts



As train-time approaches, Mike F. on Big Green comes to collect the orange bolt-machine from Clem and Joe



Speaking of train-time, the MOW Team waves to the passing train



The Signal Department picnic is in full swing. Our wholehearted thanks to Team Signals for inviting us!



Here comes the train! What a perfect place for a picnic!



On its way back north, the Granite Rock 10 stopped at the picnic site for pictures



Steve demonstrates proper switch-grease application protocols



Joe enjoying some quality time with the grease-brush



Anthony with the "huff-'n'-puff" machine clears organic debris from between the switch-points



Yumm! Switch grease. Almost as tasty as ice-cream...



Steve demonstrates his world famous as seen on TV windmill spiking technique on a couple of spikes at Switch 20



Lookout Heather looks out for the rest of the Team servicing Switch 17



The MOW Team greets the northbound 3 o'clock train as it moves through the newly serviced switches at Baths