

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for September 1, 2013. Holy hot chocolate, Batman! It's September already? Polar Express is just around the corner! Well, before dancing waiters sling cocoa and cookies at believing children, we better get started with this important update.

Tuesday, Alan Hardy and Pat Scholzen spent the afternoon and evening organizing the MOW tools. It may be hard to believe but, sometimes we at MOW are slightly organizationally challenged. It is mindboggling, I know but, our tools get spread hither and yon which can lead to frustration from time to time. But, Pat and Alan took on the Herculean task of putting everything in its right place. They did us all a tremendous favor and deserve our sincere appreciation! Also Tuesday, Chris Carlson, Mike Harris, DJ Chapman, Cliff Hayes, Gene Peck, Mike Taylor, and Heather Kearns were on hand building a better railroad. Mike H. and DJ continued working on removing the front end of the "new-old" tamper. They got the work-head slide brackets off which will be serviced and any necessary welds done. Cliff built our new "red-flags" which we inaugurated on Saturday. Gene Peck, Heather Kearns, and Mike T. finished up work on the man-lift in preparation for its deployment out on the line. Trusty track inspector, Frank Werry conducted a track inspection.

Thursday, Heather, Dave Megeath, and Bill Taylor coordinated with the SSRR Freight Crew to take the man-lift and chipper across the UP Main to Old Sacramento. The Weed Team's summer recess is drawing to a close, the Purple Martins have vacated their nests, and the man-lift is now good as new, ready for some tree-trimming action!

A special shout-out to MOW Team member and State Parks staff, Matt Blackburn, who cleaned the organic debris out around Switch 1 (turntable) on Friday. Many thanks to Matt for going above and beyond to help us out!

Saturday Clem Meier, Heather, Mike Miller, DJ, Chris, Michael Florentine, Alan, Frank, and Harry Voss (in sign-in order) gathered to devour two boxes of doughnuts (thanks Chris and Harry) and work on the line. We planned on mitigating the slow order between Mile Posts 1.2 and 1.3. However, unbeknownst to us, a Union Pacific "Hazmat" training train had been spotted on the Clunie Siding preventing us from stowing our track-mounted equipment there when the SSRR entered our work limits. This unexpected development proved quite an impediment to our operation. Nonetheless, your MOW Team rose to the occasion. Alan built a new spiker trolley and hose caddie which Mike M., Mike F., Clem, DJ, and Harry found very useful in their plating and spiking efforts. Frank ran the tamper and got the squishiness out of as many of the new ties possible. However, once the train started running at 11, stowing our equipment on the Miller Park Siding proved untenable. It took too long to get there and back between train runs. So, we packed it in and went to lunch.

In the afternoon, Harry, Chris, and Heather headed over to Old Sac to affect some repairs on the tamper. DJ, Frank, and Mike F. journeyed to the Erecting Shop to bring the fire truck over to the Boiler Shop in preparation for its operation next Saturday at the Caboose Club Ice Cream Social. It was quite a challenge, indeed, to maneuver it around various obstacles – support columns, the track mobile, and the Polar Express "Santa's Village" which was spotted on Track 25 in the Erecting Shop. Luckily Leonard Jones was on hand working on the Granite Rock 10 at the north end of the building. He was able to use the "tug" to shove Santa's Village onto the Transfer Table Lead out into the summer sunlight (no, it didn't melt) so that we could shunt the fire truck over to Boiler Shop. Your MOW Team is very grateful to Leonard for lending his assistance. After that, Heather, Chris, and Harry gave the fire truck a needed wash.

Now to next week. Tuesday, the crew will meet in the afternoon and evening. Preparing the fire truck will be top priority. **Special Announcement: On Thursday, Chris will be leading a crew starting at 1:30 p.m. The plan is to try to finishes plating and spiking the ties at MP 1.2 in an attempt to lift Train Order 109. Please, if you're available for a couple of hours, come on out on Thursday and help with this important task.** Saturday will be a special day for your MOW Team. We will meet in the Boiler Shop for doughnuts at 8 o'clock a.m. then take the fire truck over to Old Sacramento for the Caboose Club Ice Cream Social. We may even take the doughnuts with us! During the day, we will be interpreting and demonstrating this unique artifact. Come on out and join the MOW Team for some fire truck fun!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Cliff and his artistry: our new red flags



Mike H. and DJ work to remove the work-head sliders from the "new-old" tamper



DJ and Frank nip and spike



Mike M., Frank, and Mike F. spiking using Alan's new spiker trolley and air hose caddy.



DJ on the forklift, Mike F., and Frank attempting to maneuver the fire truck around the Erecting Shop



More shifting around obstacles



Finally out we got it out on the transfer table



Santa's Village returning to its nest – Hot Chocolate for Mr. Jones, please!



Harry and Chris wash the fire truck