

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for September 10, 2017. The Team continued steaming down the railroad of progress with another successful week. So, let's keep those drivers spinning by giving this update the "highball!"

Tuesday, Pat Scholzen, Cliff Hayes, Harry Voss, Alan Hardy, Frank Werry, Heather Kearns, and Mike Harris stepped right up for an evening of MOW fun. Earlier in the day, the railroad switching crew reported that one of the rails on the turntable had shifted again and was jamming against the apron wall. So, Mike H. and Heather dropped everything scrambled to Old Sac. to see what they could do. Mike H. climbed aboard the propane-powered forklift and managed to shove it back into position. Frank and Alan loaded the rail-mounted air-compressor onto the white trailer for its journey to Valley Power where the engine will be overhauled. Gene and Mike H. continued working on the Big Green Machine. Pat, Harry, and Cliff began planning the modifications being made to the tamper for the restoration of the light-reference system. That system allows the tamper to undertake track-raises without the use of manual track-jacks, the spot-board, and "hound" and "hare". It should expedite track-raises and reduce the manual labor involved. Indeed, it was a good evening of great progress.

Thursday, Alan, Heather, Joe Margucci, DJ Mandella, Frank, and Chris Carlson kept the progress going. The Jackson 125 tie-exchanger is experiencing alternator problems again. It's not producing any charge. So, Joe commenced a thorough investigation to diagnose the problem and make sure everything was wired correctly. Once that was confirmed, he removed the alternator and began assessing it. He has determined that there is a defect with the unit, itself. When Quartermaster in Chief Heather acquires a replacement, Joe will have that fixed in no time. DJ took on adjusting the sloppy brakes of the A-6 motorcar. The brake-rigging was out of adjustment so DJ made the proper repairs. Speaking of brakes, Chris, Frank, and Heather checked out why the tamper's braking system was failing. They found that one of the brake-pods has a worn bushing. Next on the list was to get the motorcar and flatcars ready for their journey down the Sutterville track to the Zoo on Saturday. So, DJ climbed on the forklift, grabbed the stinger and headed to the north end of the building where the flatcars were stored. With Chris and Frank guiding, DJ grabbed the flatcars and took them into the building to hook up to the motorcar. Then DJ grabbed the pallet with the hydraulic tools and loaded them on the flatcar. This would help us make a quick departure for the Zoo on Saturday morning – or so we thought...

Saturday didn't quite start as anticipated. First of all the doughnuts were delayed. But, that's because of a major accident on I-5 right over the Rail Yards that had both north and southbound directions closed. In addition, one of the vehicles involved in the accident had fallen onto Rail Yards Boulevard and caught fire which led to its closure. This impeded Scott Dunn, Clem Meier, DJ, Heather, Steve Nemeth, Mike H., Michael Florentine, Robert Jones, Kyle Blackburn, Anthony Filamor, Pam Tatro, and Frank from getting to the Shops. Despite the impediments, this fantastic group of volunteers persevered and got there eventually. Unfortunately, this delayed our departure for more adventures down on the Sutterville Line to the Zoo. But, depart we did. Steve climbed on the A-6 and pulled the flatcars over the UP Main where he joined Frank and Anthony in Old Sac., who had deployed the needed equipment out of the container. Mike H. and Mike F. opened up the tie-shear and fired it up. The plan for the day included gathering tie debris and taking it to Setzer for disposal. But, in order to get the tie-debris down there, Switch 15, the Setzer Lead Switch, needed to be repaired. It was not throwing properly to the Lead. In addition to adjusting it, this would give us the opportunity to "initiate" our newest volunteers with the joy of greasing the switch. Quality time with the switch-grease is a rite of passage for MOW Team members. First on the grease brush was Scott. Then DJ picked up where Scott left off. DJ handed it off to Robert and then to Kyle who won the award for getting the most grease on himself! He could teach Weston a thing or two...

Following the successful fixing of the switch, the Team headed south. Mike H. piloted the tie-shear and flatcars to the bottom of the hill where Mike F., Scott, DJ, Kyle, and Clem loaded the flatcars with sheared ties. Meanwhile, further up the hill, Steve, Robert, Frank, and Anthony took on driving spikes down on about three-dozen ties where the spikes had been set but not driven. Soon the flatcars were loaded to the max with dead ties so, as the spiking got done, all the equipment was taken up the hill to Baths where some switching took place in order to hook the flatcar to the motorcar. Steve and DJ climbed aboard for the journey to Setzer where they disposed of the tie-debris in our dead-tie pile. Down near the Zoo, Mike H. operated the tie-shear and Mike F. spotted for him. They chomped away at old rotten ties like nobody's business.

Back in Old Sac., Heather and Pam headed up the MOW Team's presentation at the volunteer docent Open House. This is a new volunteer recruiting event for the Museum where each department had the opportunity to present its wares. Pam and Heather did a fantastic job presenting the MOW Team to potential new volunteers and demonstrating MOW fun to all the potential recruits.

By now, however, it was getting late. So the Team packed up its wares and prepared to head back to Old Sac. and the Shops. A slight mechanical mishap with the tie-shear prevented us from heading north behind the 3:30 train. But soon, with the help of Leonard Jones from the Railroad's Mechanical Shop, we were soon on our way. Back in Old Sac., the equipment was stowed. The motorcar needed to return to the Shops so Conductor Heather arranged for a quick crossing of the UP Main. Despite the challenges on Saturday, this crew of volunteers was fantastic. They stuck together and solved problems as they arose demonstrating that they can handle any out of normal situation.

This coming week, the MOW Team will meet as usual on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at or before 5 o'clock in the Erecting Shop. Saturday, we'll attempt to have a more normal day starting with on-time delivery of doughnuts at 8 o'clock a.m. Again, thank you to all entire MOW Team for your hard work and perseverance as we strive to build a better railroad.

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard.



Mike H. uses the propane powered forklift to shimmy the wayward rail back into position

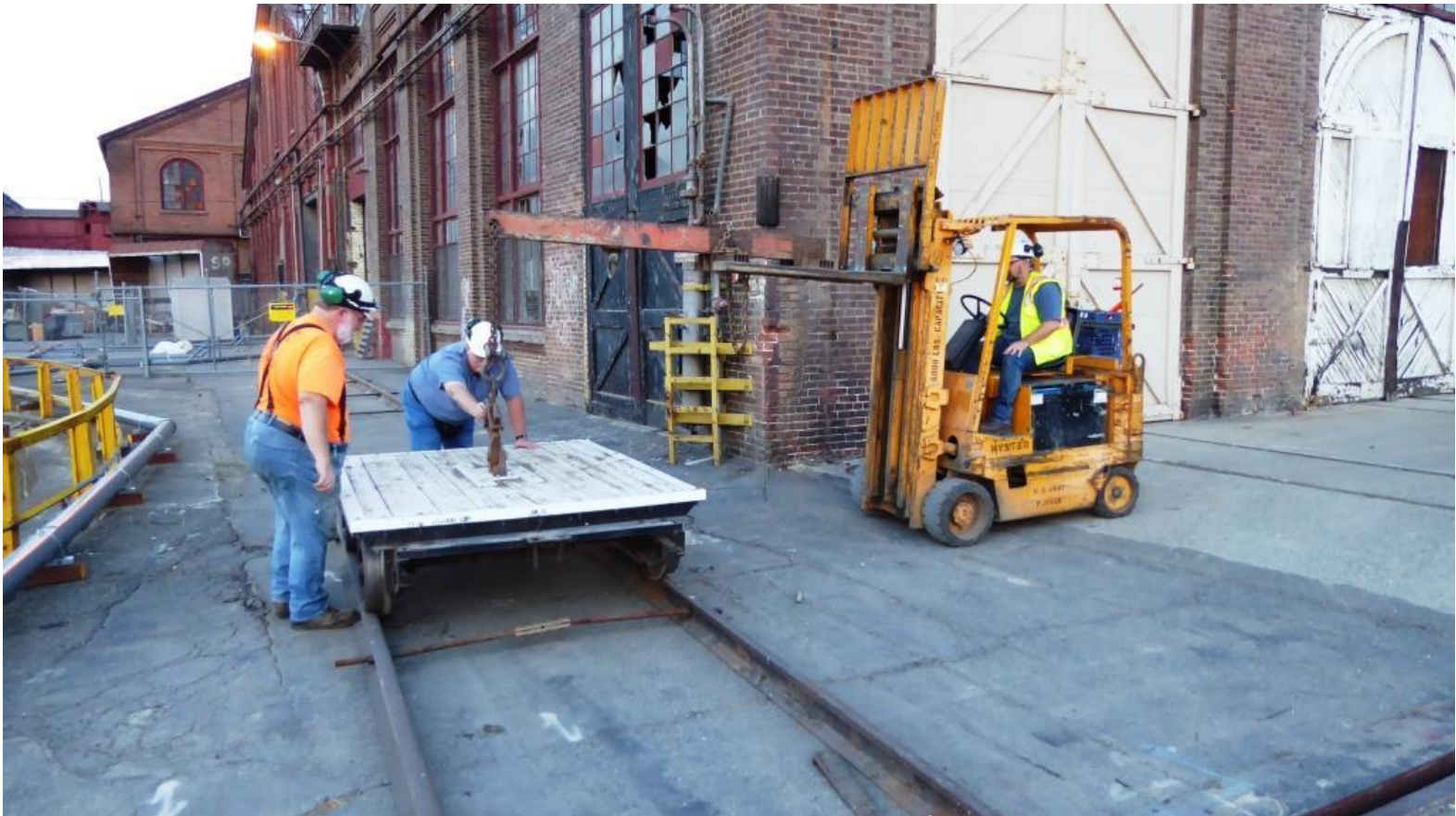


Joe has removed the malfunctioning alternator on the Jackson 125





DJ adjusts the brakes on the A-6 motorcar – it's so much nicer now that we can actually stop...



Frank and Chris hook stinger up to the flatcar which DJ, on the forklift, will move to the building





DJ brings the hydraulic tools over for loading on the flatcar



Chris and Heather work on the brake-pod of the tamper



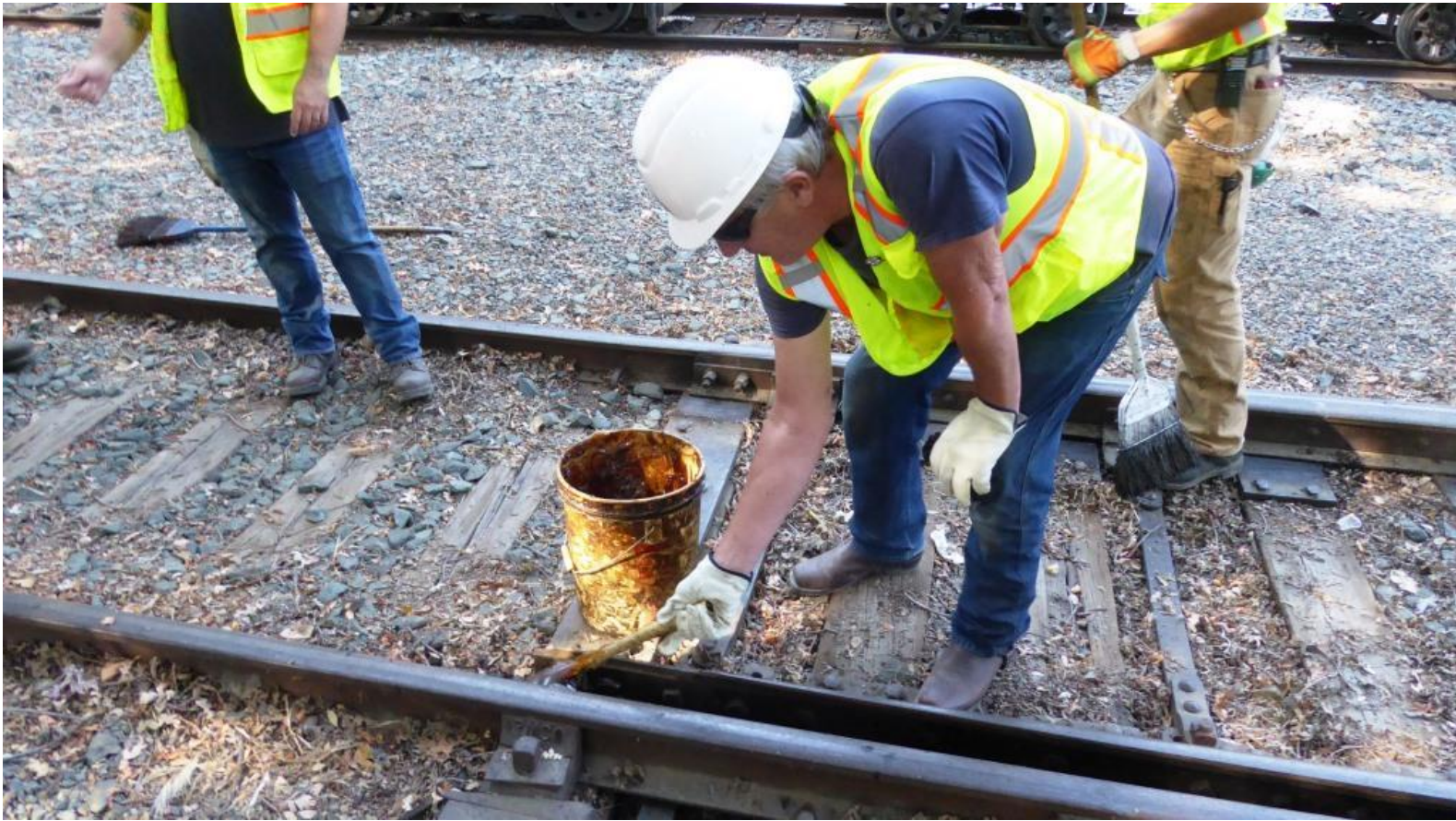


Better late than never – despite the delay in getting things going, the Team has work-train ready to leave town

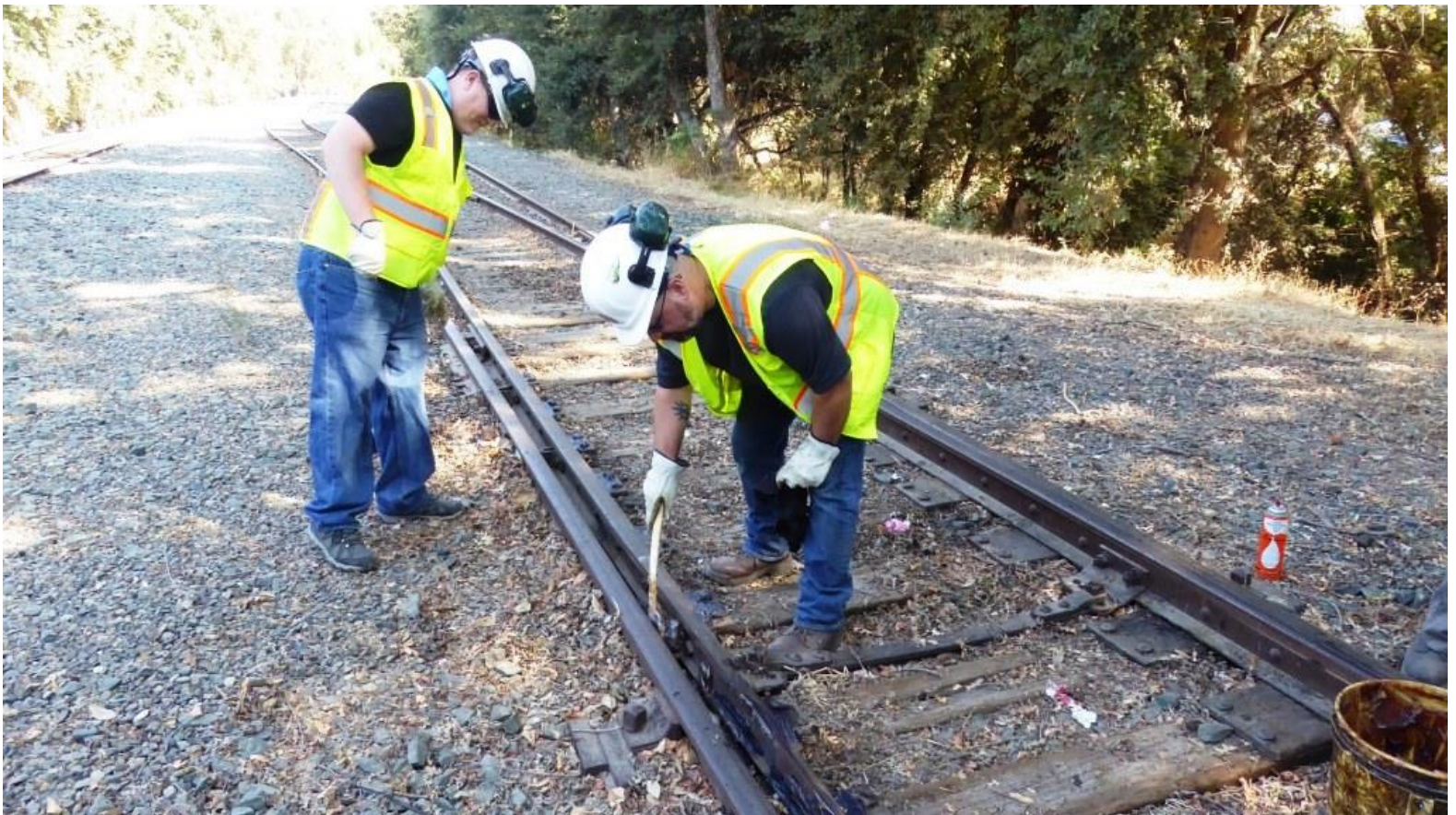


At Switch 15 (Setzer Lead) Kyle sweeps debris out from between the point and stock-rail as Scott goops up the grease brush with switch-grease



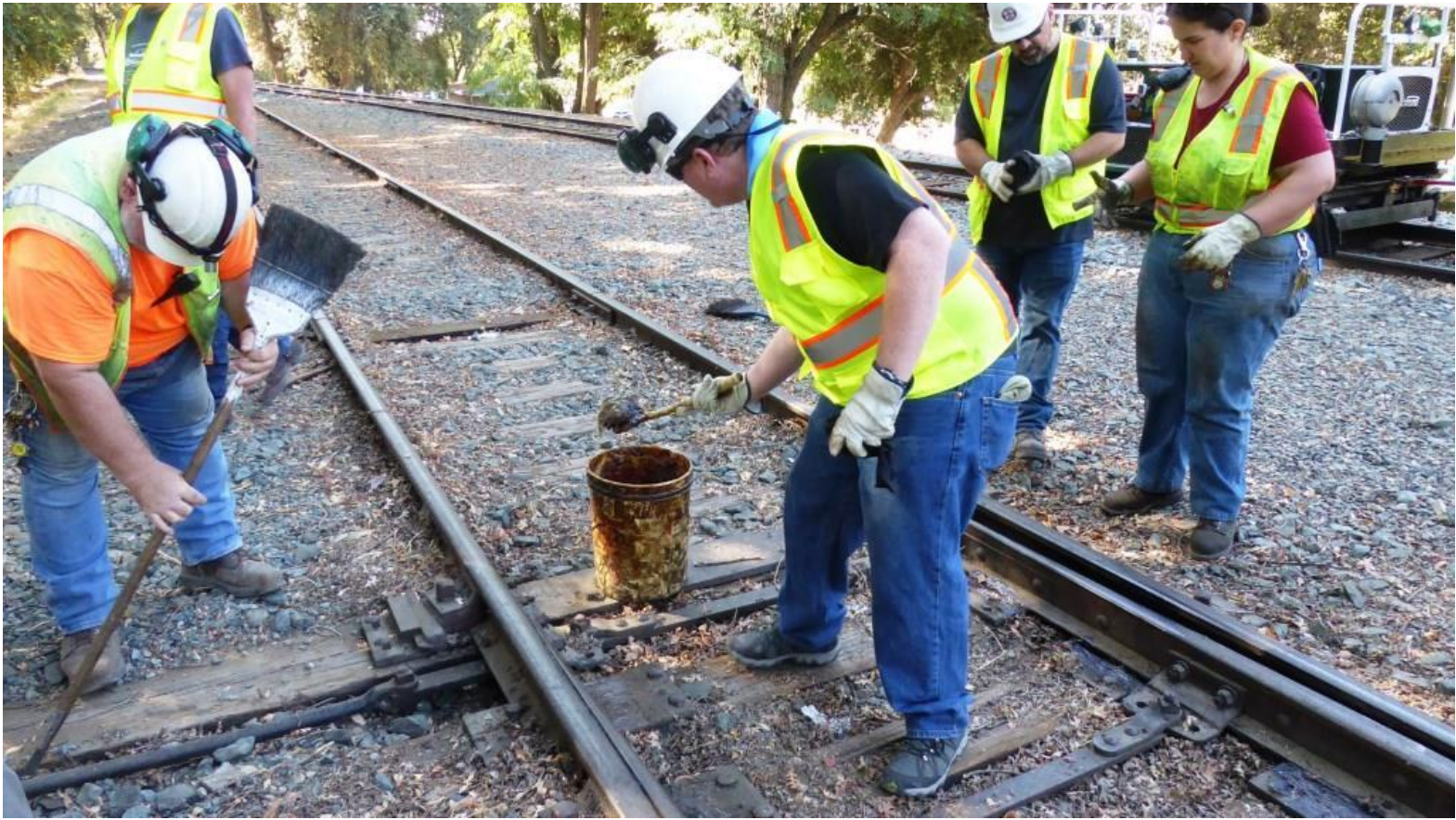


Scott greases the switch-plates



Next, DJ greases the plates between the point and stock-rail





...Then hands-off the greasy brush to Robert while Frank removes debris from between the head-block and switch-rod

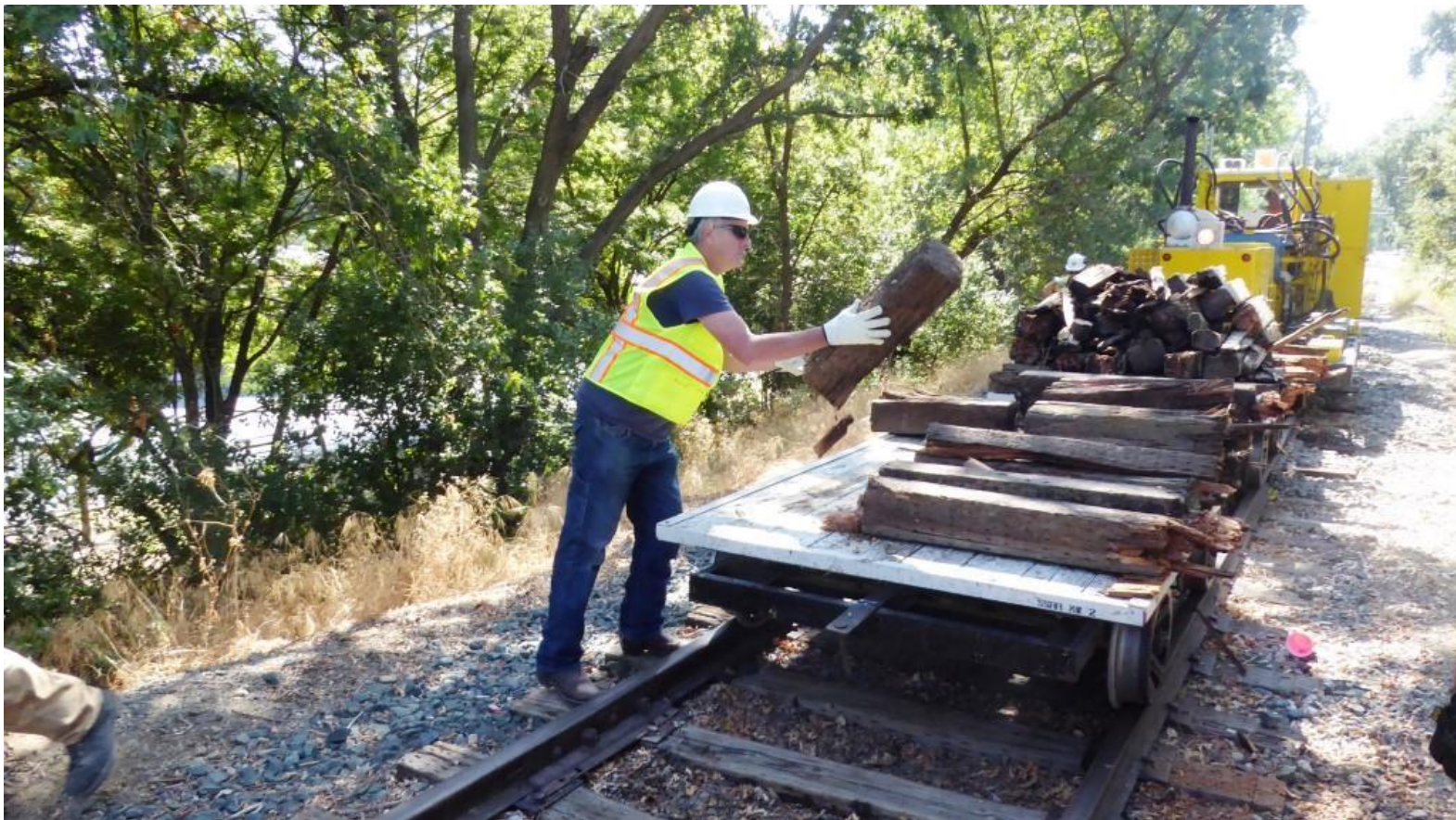


Steve and Frank clear obstructions from around the switch-rod and head-block





With the switch properly serviced, Heather demonstrates how easy it is to throw

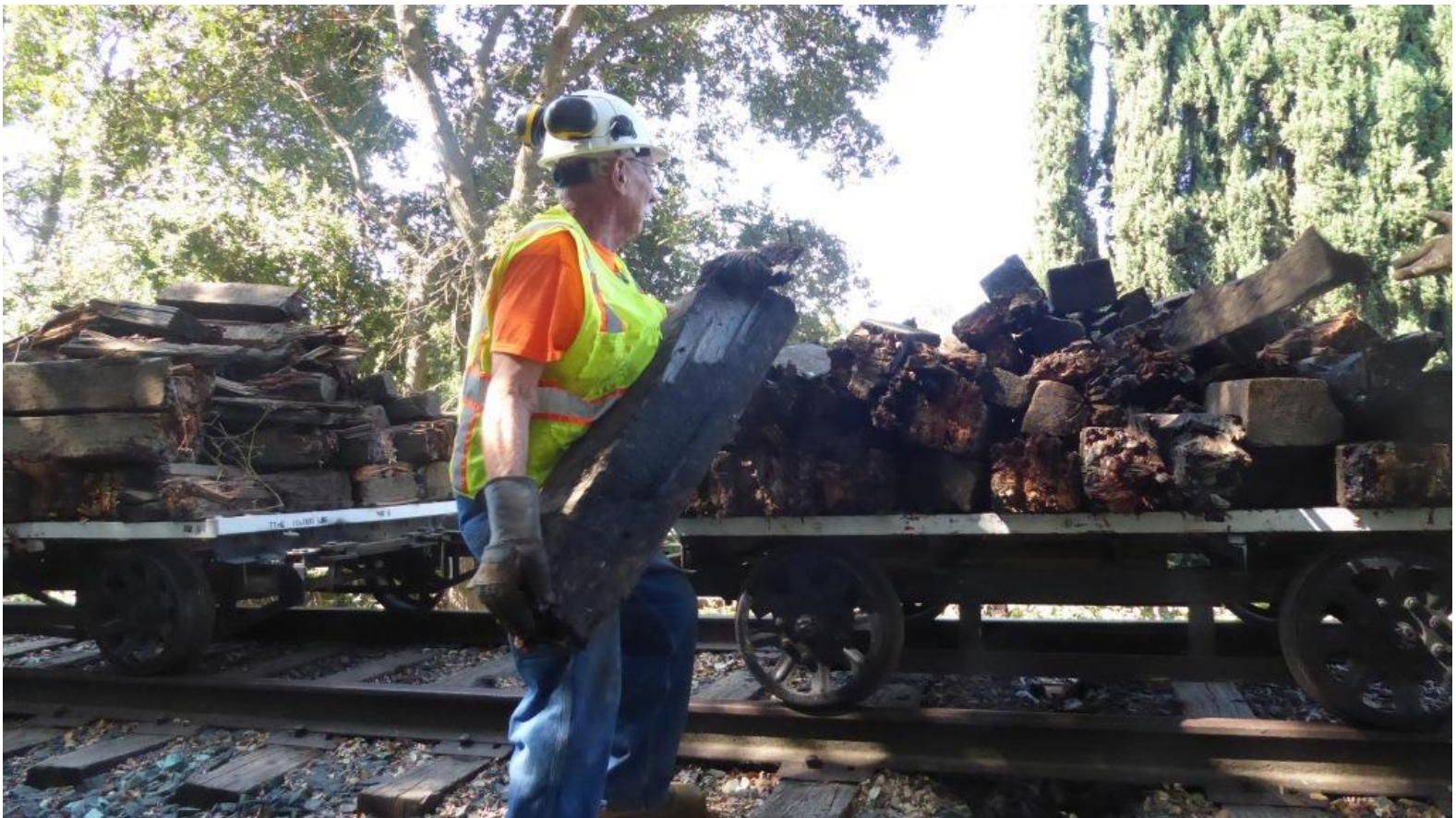


Down on the Zoo Line, Scott loads dead tie debris onto a flatcar





Always smiling when out on the line, Kyle obviously enjoys working with the MOW Team!



Clem helps make the pile bigger





Mike H. at the controls of the tie-shear slowly moves up the line as the Team loads dead-tie debris on flatcars



Although very disappointed that he couldn't drive spikes by hand with a spike-maul, Steve gives in and takes the hydraulic spike driver in hand as Frank minds the hydraulic hose





Steve hands over the hydraulic spike-driver to Robert



Anthony, at the helm of the A-6, is very glad that DJ fixed the brakes





Meanwhile, Team Tie-debris loads the flats to capacity



With the flat-cars loaded to capacity, it's time to switch them out for their journey down to Setzer





At Setzer, DJ and Steve unload the dead-tie debris...



...Then DJ sweeps the flat-car clean





Meanwhile, down near the Zoo, Mike H. chomps ties to tiny bits as Mike F. guides the operation

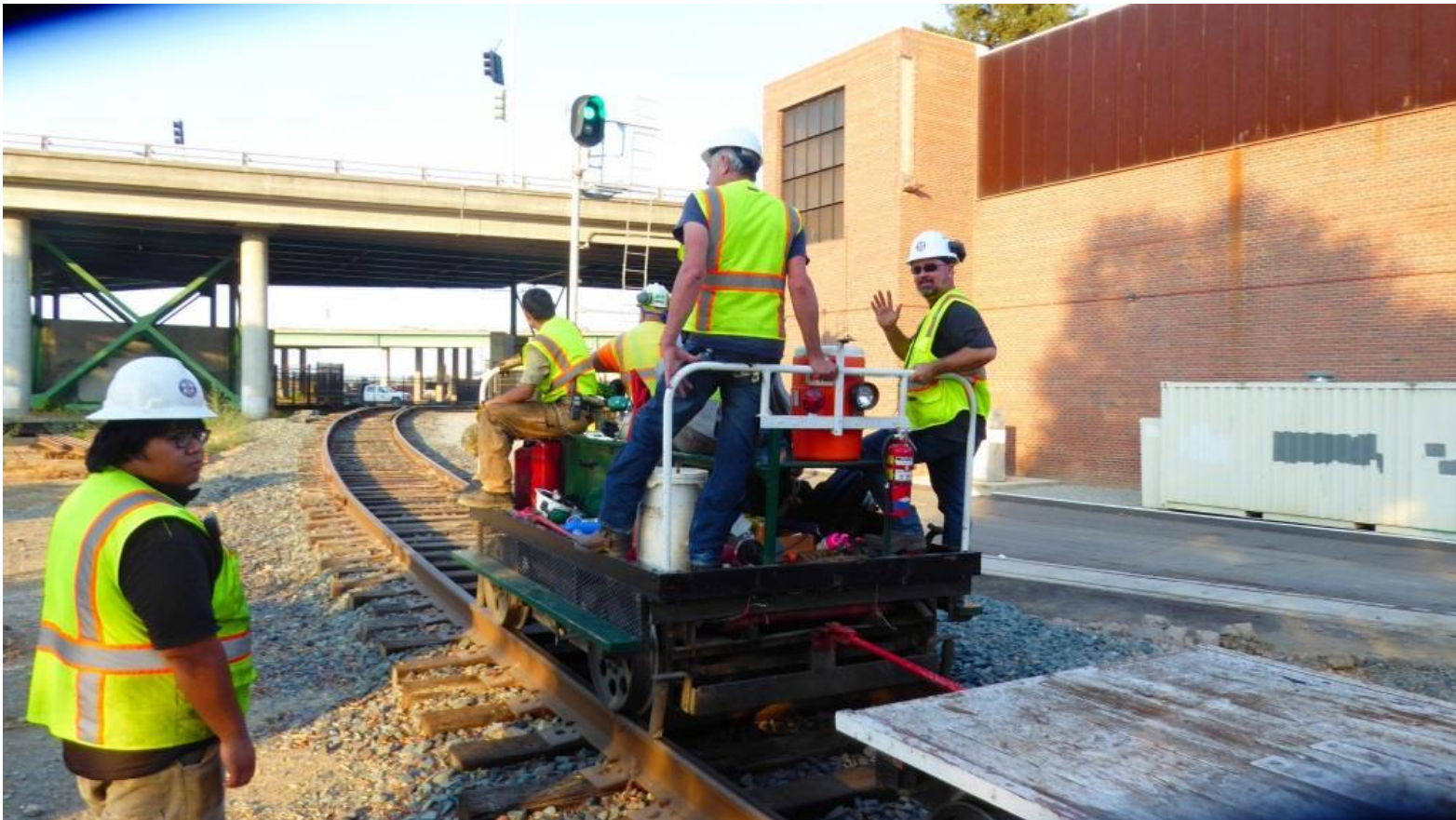


Pam handles the duty of recruiting of new volunteers at the Open House





Wait a sec! That's Matt Blackburn. He doesn't need recruiting. We've got him hoodwinked, already!



At the end of a long day, Conductor Heather arranged to get the Team back to the Shops on the trusty A-6 motorcar