

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for September 14, 2014. It's always an adventure volunteering with the MOW Team and this week was no different. But, when interesting and unusual things happen, your MOW Team adjusts on the fly to make the best out of the situation. So, without further delay, let's get this adventurous update underway.

The MOW Team adventure started on Tuesday with Alan Hardy, Josh Ilac, Pat Scholzen, Heather Kearns, Frederick Carr, Mike Harris, and Chris Carlson. The big event of the evening was the firing-up of the tie-shear. The shear, which literally "shears" ties into three pieces then scoops away the debris for easy removal, was a key component of our mechanical operation until a catastrophic failure of the hydraulic system occurred about two years ago. But, thanks to the Team's persistent work on it, led by Chris, it starts-up once again. And, man, does it roar. We hope to have it out on the line again soon. Mike H. continued the re-wiring effort on the Kalamazoo. Heather and Josh headed over to Old Sacramento to prep the man-lift for its annual inspection, which it passed with flying colors. The inspector praised the man-lift, which was built in-house by MOW crews, as, "a well-balanced, nicely designed machine." Indeed it is. Another good day for the Team.

Thursday, Mike H. continued wiring the Kalamazoo. Alan and Josh started building the frame and installed the axels on a new MOW flat-car. We're building it for the purpose of hauling bundles of ties down the line. Heather ran over to Old Sac. to replace a malfunctioning red-light on the back of the scarifer. It was an evening of progress, that's for sure.

Saturday is when the real adventure began. It was to be a general track maintenance day. Our plan was to deal with several fairly minor issues at various locations out on the line. Chris, Josh, Clem Meier, Michael Florentine, Alan, Fred, Pam Tatro, Harry Voss, Frank Werry, John Rexroth, and Heather enjoyed their traditional Saturday morning doughnuts and headed over to Old Sac. where they fired-up the tamper along with the MOW motorcar work-train consist. While we were collecting our orders and clearances from the Crew Center, a red sports-car drove past us on the board-walk by the *Delta King*. Somehow, it managed to get through the bollards and headed towards the L Street crossing. When it was unable to get through the bollards down there, it tried to back-up along the tracks in front of the Rio City Café. Train Master, Mike Collins, called for a Ranger as something was clearly wrong. The car, while backing up, smashed into the ramp at the Garbage Crossing. When it tried to pull forward, its front-left tire climbed over the rail at which point, it was stuck. Wheels started spinning in both directions, ballast was flying, and the clutch was burning, all to no avail. When the driver became belligerent with the ranger, "back-up" was called for and every branch of law enforcement in the area descended on the scene – including the mounted patrol. Yes, this was all very exciting but, the real issue concerning the MOW Team was that we were now blocked in and could not get our equipment past the red sport-car which was straddling the rail.

The driver was arrested and tow truck called in. The tow-truck took a while to arrive which necessitated the cancelation of the 11 o'clock train. As the MOW Team was there anyway, once the car was removed, we were able to take a look at the track, cleanup the wayward ballast, and make a couple minor maintenance repairs that were unrelated to incident. The track was just fine. Remember, track is designed to handle the extreme weights and lateral forces of locomotives and loaded train cars. One small sports car is nothing in comparison and hardly left a scratch. Nonetheless, with three certified track inspectors on the crew Saturday, the segment of track affected was well inspected and deemed safe for service.

Meanwhile, back in the Shops, Clem finished work on the restoration of the Interpretive Handcar Program's motorcar/speeder. It purrs like a kitten now and is running like new. Clem did a magnificent job bringing this near dead machine back to life. In the afternoon, Chris, Harry, and Frank continued working on the tie-shear. Alan got the wheels installed on the new flat-car. Heather, Mike F., and John headed down to Switch 17, the north switch at Baths, to re-spike the gauge-plate and switch stand which had become loose. Thus, our interesting and adventurous day came to an end.

This coming week, the north door of the Erecting Shop will open promptly at 5 o'clock in the evening on Tuesday and Thursday. Saturday, we plan on taking care of the issues down the line that we had intended to deal with this past Saturday. Doughnuts will be on site at 8 o'clock a.m. It should be a good day – although, we hope for a little less excitement in the morning, however. As always, many thanks to all our great volunteers and supporters who keep the MOW Team moving!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris, and Richard



Mike H. re-wires the Kalamazoo



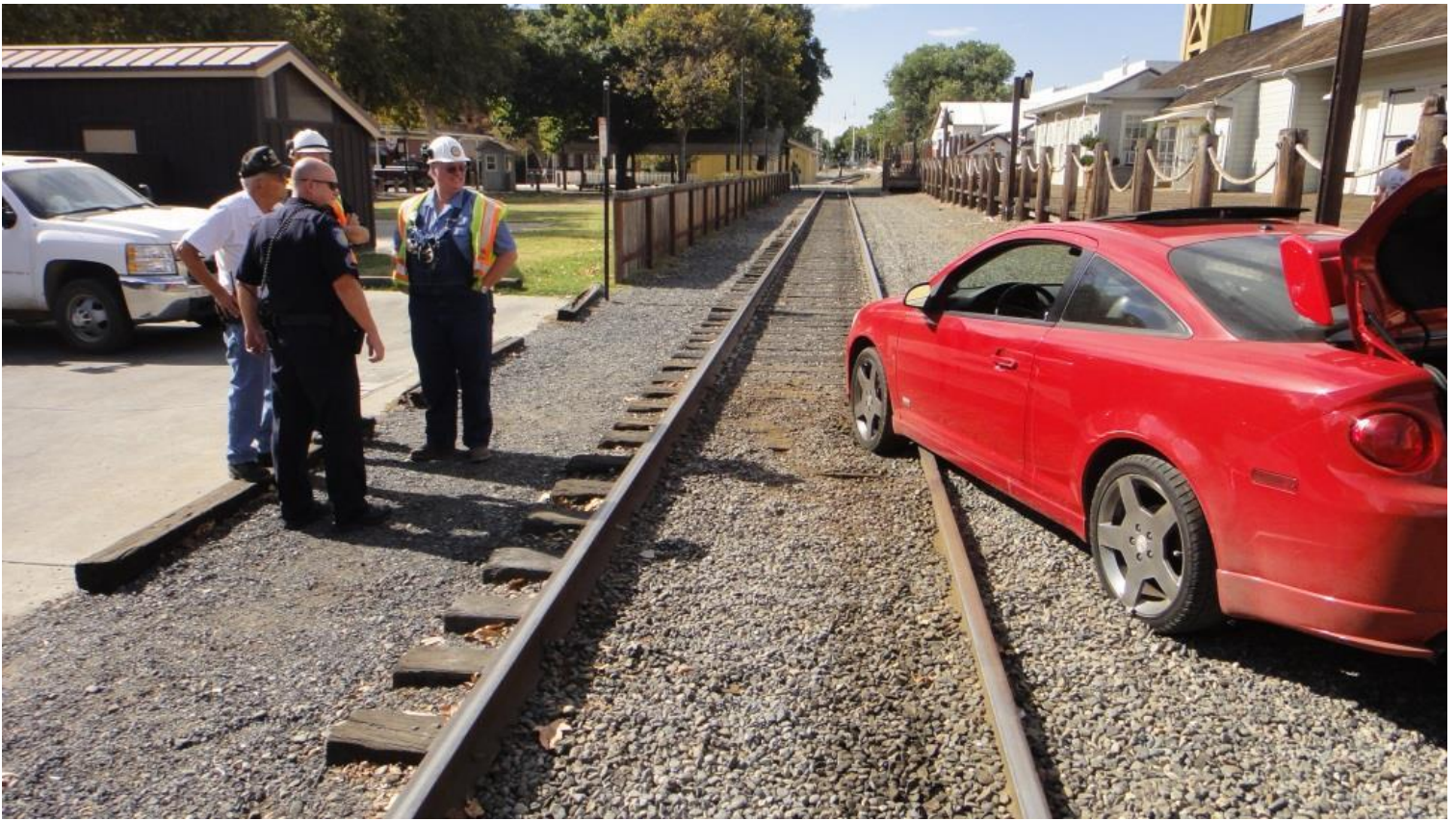
It's alive! The tie-shear roars into action!



Heather replaces the red-light on the scarifer



Alan and Josh work on building the frame for the new MOW flatcar



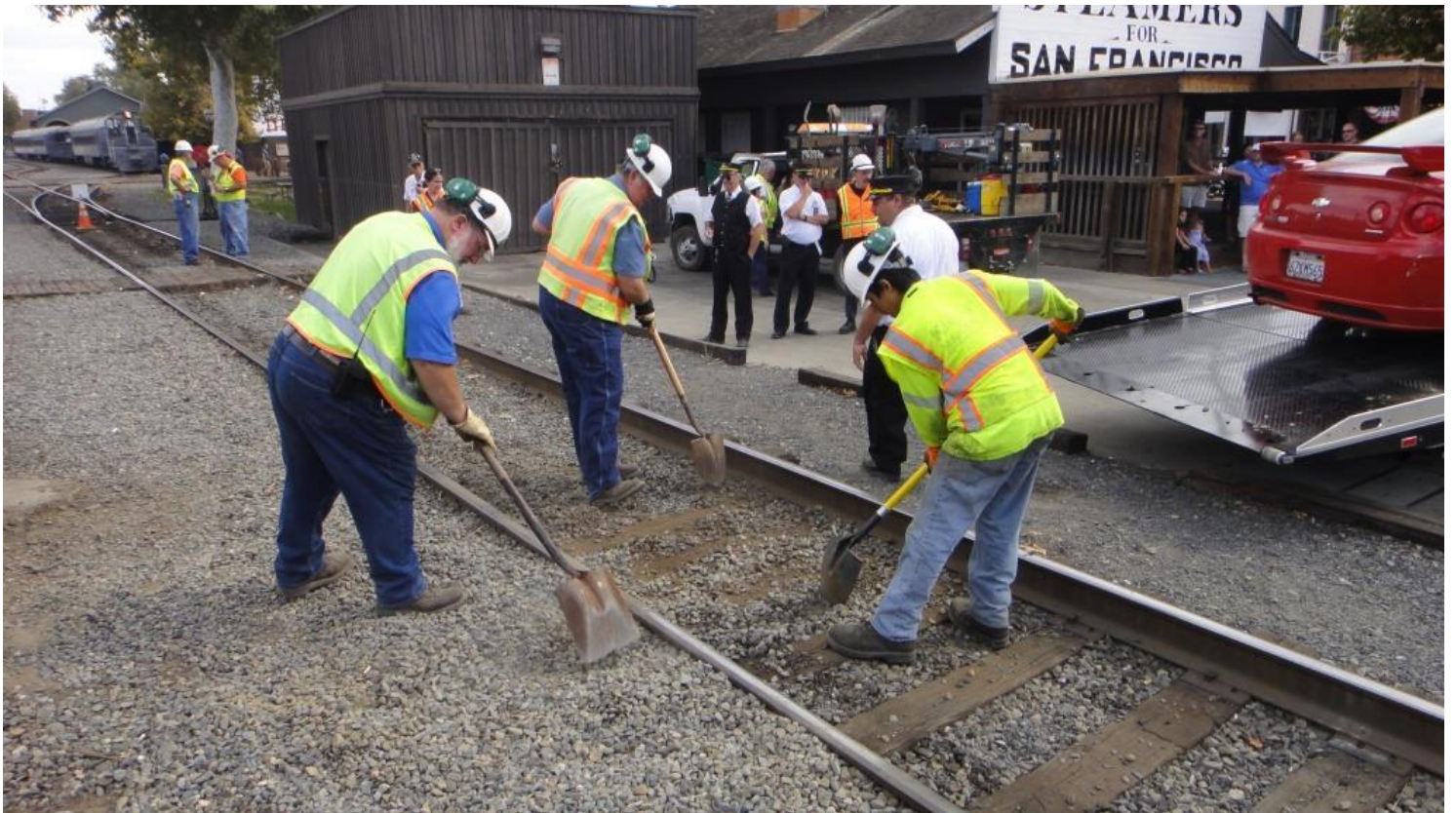
Chris and Fred discuss the situation with Train Master Mike Collins and the Sacramento Police



Your MOW Team, Harry, Fred, Josh, Train Master Mike Collins, Heather, Chris, and Frank, on the scene!



Tow truck on the arrives and hauls away the impediment



Frank, Chris, and Josh straighten-up the displaced ballast after the car is removed



While there, we dealt with some minor maintenance issues. We replaced a tie-plate that had become dislodged. Chris and John nip the rail as Pam puts the tie-plate back into position.



Mike F. and Chris replace wayward spikes



Clem finishes the restoration of the Interpretative Handcar Program's motorcar/speeder



Mike F., Heather, and John stabilize the wobbly switch stand at Switch 17