

Greetings!

This is your Maintenance of Way Team update for September 18, 2016. They say that there's no need to join a gym when volunteering with the MOW Team. Well, the Team sure proved that adage this last week. So, before we lose our muscle tone, let's get this update started.

The work-out began on Tuesday for Pat Scholzen, Chris Carlson, Alan Hardy, Anthony Filamor, Weston Snyder, Frank Werry, Jose Gomez, Gene Peck, Harry Voss, Joe Margucci, and Mike Harris. The Kalamazoo tug's engine has been running hot lately so Chris C. arrived early to assess the problem. He found that the fan-belts were in bad shape. Frank, Weston, Harry, and Gene removed the shroud over the engine and managed to get the old belts off. Mike H. continued his work on the transmission of the second Big Green Machine. The machine's transmission was last worked-on by a highly reputed professional outfit that had donated its services. Mike H. discovered that the "professionals" had used the wrong fluid in it. The machine has a hydraulic transmission. The "pros" filled it with standard automotive dextron transmission fluid instead of hydraulic fluid – so much for the professionals. So, Mike H. spent the evening syphoning out the dextron. Over in Old Sacramento, the removal of concrete over the tracks between the turntable and I Street continued. Anthony, Jose, Joe, Chris C., Frank, Harry, and Weston deployed the concrete saw to cut-out the remaining area to be removed. This would give Saturday's crew a head start for the day. Yes, it was a productive evening with lots of good progress.

The Weed Team reconvened on Thursday for another adventure on the Hood Line. Mike Taylor, Heather Kearns, Anthony, and Ed Kottal headed south to continue its ongoing effort to keep the Hood Line free of vegetation overgrowth. In addition to chopping through countless branches and other fauna infringing on the line, the Team "harvested" grapes. Vines grow wild along the Hood Line and they were bearing fruit. Perhaps not so surprisingly, the Weedies found that the grapes were quite sweet. Look for The volunteers of the Weed Team work incredibly hard to keep the Hood Line – as well as the SSRR Mainline – free of vegetation defects.

Meanwhile, back at the Shops, Mike T., Heather, Anthony, and Ed joined Alan, Frank, Chris C., Mike H., Joe, and Weston for some Thursday night MOW fun. Chris C. re-plumbed the hydraulic tool reel on the Kalamazoo to get it working then tested our new hydraulic spike-puller. Then, he managed to get the new fan-belts installed. Heather and Joe headed over to Old Sacramento to undertake some electrical repairs on the man-lift. The cab-fan wasn't working so Joe soon got that sorted out. Chris C. and Mike H. took a gander at the transfer table runway as some modifications may in the works to extend it further north. But first, all the nasty invasive species of vegetation needs removal so Mike T.'s was consulted. Mike H. continued his efforts at flushing the dextron out of the second Green Machine's hydraulic transmission. He removed and replaced the filters then pumped five-gallons of hydraulic fluid into the system. Anthony and Weston staged for the Team's work on Saturday getting everything ready for a quick start. Yep, the Team was traveling fast on the road to progress.

The MOW gym was open for service bright and early Saturday morning. But first, Joe, Heather, Steve Nemeth, Clem Meier, Harry, Chris C., Ed, Anthony, Jose, Michael Florentine, and Chris Machado had to fuel-up with a proper MOW breakfast of sugary fried-dough goodness. With the pink box now empty, the Team headed over to Old Sacramento to continue breaking up the undulating concrete over the tracks between the turntable and I Street. While waiting for the locomotive and El Dorado to get out of our way, Chris M. and Ed began with a little team sledgehammering of the concrete where the tracks converge. Steve brought the Big Green Machine to area where the Team had used the concrete saw on Tuesday. Mike F. served as guide from the ground as Steve positioned the forks under the six-inch slabs of concrete. With a touch of the level, the forks lifted a rather large chunk. Then four jackhammers were deployed running off of two compressors. There was plenty of quality time with the jackhammers for Alan, Chris C., Chris M., Mike F., Anthony, Jose, Joe, Ed, and Steve who kicked-up more dust than a hootenanny in a holler. At the jobsite, dust masks and bandanas were the fashion rage. Prodigious amounts of concrete were shattered by the chorus line of jackhammers. Then, much of the concrete debris had to be removed by hand as it was below the level of the rail-head. So Harry brought in the back-hoe and Heather and Clem loaded the concrete chunks into the bucket for disposal in the dumpsters which filled up fast. Jose go ahold of the pneumatic chipping hammer and chipped out concrete under the head of the rails. In the afternoon, concrete removal continued. Also, as a precaution to help reinforce the uncovered the track structure, the Team installed several gauge-rods on the track leading to the Central Pacific Passenger Station. Joe, Steve, Ed, and Mike F. dug out cribs for gauge-rods, gauged the track, and tightened them down. Meanwhile, Chris C., Anthony, Heather, and Harry were getting the area cleaned-up so that the train crew would have no obstructions (other than the holes in the ground) to interfere with their operations. Folks, your MOW Team broke-up enough six-inch thick concrete to fill two twenty-yard dumpsters. That's a lot of concrete. Talk about a work-out. People get paid big bucks to do this kind of work that we, as volunteers, are doing. It's amazing how much progress can be made by a group of volunteers who enjoy each other's company, while getting a little exercise all in the name of building a better railroad.

The Lovely and gracious Ramsay Harris at the All Aboard Desk issued the list of new hour-bar recipients for August and our own Mike F. is amongst them. Mike "The Machine" Florentine has wracked-up 4,000 volunteer hours mostly with your MOW Team. Congratulations and thanks to Mike F. as well as to all docents and volunteers who donate their time and skills for the betterment of the Museum and Railroad.

This coming week, more work will continue in Old Sac. Tuesday and Thursday, the Team will get together at or before 5 o'clock. The Weed Team will return to Hood on Thursday. Saturday, the MOW gym opens at 8 o'clock a.m. Again, thanks to all!

See you out on the line,

Alan, Chris C., and Richard.



Mike T. takes on the green menace along the Hood Line



Ed and Mike T. harvest grapes. Look for *Chateau Weed Team 2016* on the shelves of your favorite wine store soon!



Mike H. siphons dextron out of the second Green Machine's hydraulic transmission



Chris C. and Frank deploy the concrete saw



Jose slices concrete along the west rail



Joe's next on the concrete saw



Chris demonstrates the hydraulic spike-puller to Alan



Guilty as charged! Mike H. points to the dextron-filled filter, the root of all the second Green Machine's maladies. Fortunately, we have volunteers to fix the professional problems...



That sure ain't hydraulic fluid...



Frank works on removing the bad fan-belts on the Kalamazoo



Saturday's work-out commenced with uncovering ties in the area opened up last week



Once the locomotive is out of the way, the Team can really go to town on tearing up concrete



Mike F. guides Steve on Big Green as he gets the forks under the concrete slab



Mike F. uses the jackhammer to chisel off a slab for Steve on Big Green to haul away





After Mike F. cut through the concrete, Chris M. pulls it onto the forks of Big Green



Clem waits to grab some debris while Mike F. and Anthony use jackhammers and Chris M. chips away at the concrete with a mattocks



Mike F. guides Steve on the Big Green Machine over to the dumpster to dump large slabs of concrete



Lots going on here. Harry is on the back-hoe. Steve is on Big Green. Mike and Clem get a concrete slab onto the forks. Chris M. and Anthony jackhammer. Joe breaks out the concrete where the tracks converge with a mattocks



Chris M. and Anthony kick some dust up



Jose and Ed remove concrete from the track convergence



Chris C. and Heather remove concrete



Steve and Joe are the next to experience some quality time with the jackhammers



Chris M. employs a sledgehammer and Clem and Joe use mattocks to break up the concrete within the frog. Mike F. and Steve use jackhammers and work into the frog from the north



Heather and Chris C. remove concrete debris while Chris M. and Ed continue blasting at it with jackhammers



“Stick ‘em up!” Jose brandishes that jackhammer like he means business!



Joe, Alan, Chris M., and Chris C. form a chorus line of jackhammers. The next act will include high-kicks...



Clem shoves a rather large chunk of concrete onto Big Green's forks



Jose gives Chris M. a helping hand to keep from slipping while chiseling out the cement at the track convergence



"It's stuck!" Chris M. and Chris C. chain a stuck jackhammer to the back-hoe to pull it out of the ground



Heather takes on a stuck jackhammer the old fashion way: dig it out by hand...





Steve tightens down a clamp on a gauge-rod



Joe and Ed clean out debris from between the rails



Joe sprays some Kroil on a frozen nut of the gauge-rod



Mike F. and Steve clear space under the rails for the gauge-rod to be installed



Ed tightens down a clamp on one side of the gauge-rod as Joe stands by to tighten the other



The MOW Team's masked-bandits