



# Mud Ring Monthly

Cinder Sniffers News

March 2014



## Dave Sams – Engineer in any scale

Dave Sams tells me that some 30 years ago when watching a locally produced TV program, he heard the name *Cinder Sniffers*. Time passed but that name stuck. Then two years ago he Googled *that name* and Voila. He came by for a visit and soon thereafter, June 2012, he and his wife Nan became members.

You may know Dave as the 'Hot Dog' man, or as the Boy Scout Merit Badge advocate, or now ... as our Corresponding Secretary. And Nan, you have seen her in the Diner and at meetings providing drinks and snacks. The two have certainly made a difference.

Dave acquired his interest in railroading from this father. As I hear the story, his father gave him a Lionel O-27 train set when he was quite young. But his father obviously enjoyed it too; he traveled frequently and often brought back a new accessory or piece of rolling stock for *their* layout -- the layout that is now set up in Dave's **railway experience** room for *his* grandkids ... the fourth generation to enjoy it.

The noise of the moving train (on plywood) and the hundreds of lights that Dave has installed make up the *experience* that Dave (and his kids) enjoy. ... If you want to know how to install LEDs, just ask Dave.





Last spring, Dave and Nan visited Roaring Camp & Big Trees Narrow Gauge RR in Felton California where Dave was **Engineer for the Day**. The locomotive, pictured with Dave in the Cab, is *Sonora*, Engine #7, a three-truck, 60-ton Shay built in 1911 by Lima. It is oil fired ... and, according to Dave, the fireman continually manipulated the firing valve to maintain the correct boiler pressure while he, as engineer, controlled the engine's speed with the reverse lever.

Dave reports: "The above photo was taken about 9:30am while the engine was being prepared for the day's run. The red hose carried natural gas for heating the boiler. Then, once they had enough pressure, they switched

to the engine's steam atomizer/burner with 'used-engine-oil' as fuel." ... The photo, above right, shows Engineer Dave at a rest stop watching and answering passengers' questions.

The scenic narrow gauge line, originally built in 1875, traverses a virgin stand of coastal redwoods in the Santa Cruz Mountains south of San Jose. Visit it if you can.

Dave loves trains and he loves the out-of-doors. But, his family tops his list. Why did Dave and Nan join Cinder Sniffers? He says this train load of Sams tells it all: one daughter-in-law, two of their three sons and five of their six grandkids. ... Harvey sold a few extra hats that day.



Photo Credits: 7 photos: Sams' collection, 2 photos: Jim Keith