

SOUTHERN PACIFIC NEWSLETTER
Edited by Bill Fowler
May 2024



Louis (Louie) Verdugo Jr
September 14, 1934 - March 3, 2024

Louis (Louie) Verdugo Jr, 89, of San Luis Obispo, California passed away on March 3, 2024. Louie touched many lives, both family and friends, who will miss him dearly, but his legacy will continue to live on in our hearts.

Louie is survived by his wife of 69 years, Evelyn; daughters Patricia, Elizabeth V Martinez, and Lois Perez (John); two granddaughters; and three great grandchildren.

Louie served in the United States Army and United States Navy (Seabees). After his military service, he pursued a career in the railroad industry retiring as long-time supervisor for Southern Pacific/Union Pacific, overseeing operations from Bakersfield to Mexicali. He was also in various organizations: Elks Lodge No. 322, American Legion Post No. 66, and the San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum. His passions included his 1962 Ford Ranchero, antiques, and making sure the fridge had treats for all.



Charles Joseph Scudella
April 8, 1946 ~ April 10, 2024

Charles Joseph Scudella passed away on April 10, 2024 in Tucson, Arizona surrounded by family.

He was born to Harry and Stella Scudella on April 8, 1946.

He is survived by his beloved wife Diana Sue

Scudella, his children Kristine Chandler and Charles (Amanda) Joseph Scudella II and his cherished grandchildren.

Charles and Sue were married soon after graduating from high school on August 28, 1965. He worked for the Southern/Union Pacific for 42 years as an electrician and supervisor until retiring in 2006.

He grew up playing many sports, but wrestling was always his favorite. He was named Most Valuable Wrestler in the 1964-1965 season. He was an avid baseball fan.

Charles was a very generous and loving man and will be missed greatly by all those who knew him, especially his family.

Editor's request: When changing email addresses, please send your new address to billfowler@southernpacificjourney.org.

Ernest Nunez
1932 ~ 2024

Ernest Nunez, passed away on April 17, 2024 in Ogden, Utah. He was born and raised in Green River, Wyoming to Parfiria and Santos Nunez.

He met the love of his life Mary in Green River, and they were married on October 25, 1952.

Dad was the most loving and caring man ever; he

loved his family dearly and worked hard to take care of them. He also enjoyed helping other people and judged no one. Everybody was his friend.

Ernest worked for the Southern Pacific/Union Pacific for 43 years.

Ernest is survived by his son Ernest V. Nunez; daughter, Jeanne Barnes, son in law Ken Barnes; five grandchildren; four great grandchildren; and family friend Jason Lucero.

Ernest was preceded in death by his wife Mary and granddaughter Amanda.

Do you have a story about your Southern Pacific career that you wish to share with others? If so, please submit your outline to Bill Fowler at billfowler@southernpacificjourney.org.



Eric "Rick" Wilson
September 18, 1952 ~ April 17, 2024

Eric Merrill Wilson passed away on April 17, 2024 at home in Omaha, Nebraska surrounded by family. He was 71 years old and known for his kind and gentle demeanor. His love for the Lord anchored a life defined by strength and determination in what he believed was important.

Rick grew up in Durham, North Carolina in the shadow of Duke University where his father, Tom, was a professor. His mother, Nancy, was a brilliant woman who passed down a love for engineering to all three of her sons.

From the time he was a young boy, Rick had a passion for trains. Anyone who took a road trip with Rick for any distance knows his famous 'short cut' of driving by the train tracks – prolonging the transit time but more importantly, enhancing the experience and highlighting his love for trains. His path initially led him to Boston

where he attended Harvard University for an undergraduate degree in electrical engineering and an MBA. He subsequently moved to Oregon to begin his lifelong railroad profession with Southern Pacific. From there, the tracks took him to San Francisco, Denver, and eventually Omaha where he finished out his career with Union Pacific.

As much as Rick loved the rail, his life was marked far more by love for his family. He and Suzanne met in Boston and eventually married in Durham in 1981. They had three children, and the family fondly remembers numerous road trips, riding trains in Europe, camping in Maine, and Dad never missing a kids' sporting event. He will always be remembered as "the best of men."

Rick is survived by his wife, Suzanne, and their three children, Shannon (Matt), Jennifer, and Patrick; brothers, Tommy (Jane) and Andy (Phyllis); foster brothers, Linh (Dang) and Tien; and five grandchildren.

Wallace Clarence Wilson
December 29, 1943 ~ April 21, 2024

Wallace "Wally" Clarence Wilson, age 80, of Tucson, Arizona passed away on April 21, 2024 in Salem, Oregon.

Editor's note: Jon Hurst says, "Southern Pacific/Union Pacific Tucson-based conductor Wally Wilson, 80, passed on April 21, 2024 in Salem, Oregon. Wally was born in Salem in December of 1943 and was employed at that location in 1962. He moved to Tucson in February of 1997 with his system seniority, and has been retired since 2004."

Carroll James Pepper
February 26, 1950 ~ April 22, 2024

Carroll was 74 when he entered eternal rest at his family home in Duson, Louisiana surrounded by his wife and children, on April 22, 2024.

Carroll was born on February 26, 1950, in Lafayette, Louisiana to Willis and Dora Breaux Pepper, and was the youngest of four children.

After graduating from Northside High School in 1968, Carroll went on to work for the Southern Pacific/Union Pacific as a Conductor, from 1969 - 2005.

He met his wife, Donna, in 1974, and they were married on May 15, 1976.

For the past 14 years, he served as a town Alderman/Mayor Pro Tem in Duson, Louisiana. In this role, he consistently advocated for the betterment of the beloved town he called home. He was a proud father and grandfather, enjoyed spending time with his wife and family, supporting local high school football, woodworking, and other home projects, and was always willing to lend a hand to neighbors and friends in need. Although he had many interests in life, one of his greatest passions was being a gun enthusiast.

He is survived by his beloved wife of 48 years, Donna Richard Pepper; and four children, Colby Pepper (Angie), Adonia "Doni" Pepper (Terry Dale), Nicholas Pepper (Jerry), Elliot Pepper (Sarah); 16 grandchildren; one great-grandchild; one sister, Jane Pepper Romero; and numerous dear nieces, nephews, and friends.

Carroll was preceded in death by his parents, Willis and Dora Breaux Pepper; his brother, Purgy Pepper; and his sister, Ruth Pepper Guidry.

Please feel free to explore the Southern Pacific Railroad History Center's website: <https://www.splives.org/>. If you believe any content is inaccurate, missing, or requires expansion, or if you have Southern Pacific-related documents, photos, maps, or drawings for posting on the website, send your comments or content to administration@splives.org.

