

Creating at the Inspiration Station



There are many unique people who are part of the Napa Valley Wine Train Family: skydivers, pilots, marathon runners, linguists, comic book illustrators, and more. The company has attracted a diverse group of employees, including Kim Powers, the Wine Train's Content Coordinator, who also knits, races Porsches, and welds.

After interning with the Wine Train for the summer of 2011, living abroad, and graduating college with a Degree in Marketing and a Minor in Studio Art, Kim returned to the Train's Marketing Department as a full time member in July of 2013. With a background in sculpture, jewelry, and marketing, Kim's creativity has been a huge asset to the Train.

While documenting maintenance efforts on the Train, Kim found piles of discarded railroad spikes and felt it was a shame that such historic and beautiful pieces were not being put to better use. After seeking input from the Wine Train's Facebook fans, Kim proposed a sculpture combining both wine and train themes: a railroad spike vineyard.

As part of the Wine Train's Arts in April efforts, the sculpture was greenlighted, along with the "Inspiration Station" Art Show on display all April. Kim went to work, using her background in sculpture, welding 70+ spikes into each grapevine and attaching it to a spare train wheel as a base.

Usually seen dressed for the office with pencil skirt and tights, Kim's first appearance at the Train Yard in her steel toed boots and work clothes was met with some surprise and double takes from the Train maintenance crew. But they were quickly impressed with her welding ability and artistic application. And the vines slowly grew, one spike at a time.



It has been a lifelong dream of Kim's to create an installation art piece and she couldn't be happier with the result.

Approximately 18 hours of labor went into each vine. Comprised of roughly 70 railroad spikes and a genuine retired train wheel, each vine weighs upwards of 2,000 pounds. The intent is to leave them outdoors and allow the vines to rust and patina on their own, to achieve a natural finish with time.

While the "Inspiration Station" Art Show will end, *The Iron Vineyard* will be a permanent addition to the Wine Train's art collection on display at the McKinstry Street Station, or maybe on a flatbed rail car being displayed along the tracks. The Wine Train is happy to facilitate artistic endeavors and to help beautify the Napa Valley.

In the Wine Train's continued efforts to support the arts, \$1 will be donated to the Napa Valley Arts Council for every rider on board in the month of April, 2014.

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