

THE SIGNAL TOWER

The Newsletter of the Largo Central Railroad

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Happy Holidays

December 2005

President's Message

Greetings!

So far we had a pretty busy month – repairing, making track panels, installing the panels, night runs with Christmas decorated trains, public runs and a display setup at the Children's Museum in St. Petersburg.

The month is not over yet. There is much work to be done on the track and yard before our Winter Meet. We will need help and cooperation from all members to meet our goals.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Don Newberry
President

Mainline Track

In the November issue of the Signal Tower, I mentioned that the mainline track, going east just before the main cross walk, had to be replaced.

On Saturday, November 19, the track was replaced in record time. Four track panels and installation of the panels were done the same day. We had a good turn out. Present were; Mark Zielinski, Sandy Drayer, Don Mann, Warren Jamison, Vince Rizzo, Bill Donati, John Eason, Tom and Matt Lawrence, Marty VanZanten, Howard Pike, Bob Wolf and Jerry Smithson. Chuck Lisner was working on the vent turbines on the tunnel. Thanks to all.

By the way, if I missed your name, get a ticket from Jean Carter to throw rocks at the editor. Rock throwing day will be announced. Anyone know where I can buy a suit of armor?

Election Reminder

For those who are not voting via proxy ballot, there is a ballot box and ballots at the Clubhouse. Proxy ballots must be mailed to Jean Carter by the twenty third (23) of December. Voting at the Clubhouse will end on January 7th, 2006, at 2:00 PM.

Back from the Northern Hinterlands:

Ralph and Marian Tucker
Otis Lawrence

Welcome Back!

Who is Building What?

Get a load of this – we have a member who is building three engines. One is the famous GG-1 electric locomotive, the other is a S3 Switcher and lastly a SD-45 which is almost complete.

Who is this dynamo? – Non other than Bob Conklin. While doing all this, he also built a railroad on his property in Spring Hill.

Heck, I have been building an engine for 10 years now – it's in my head. I call it a "head project". One thing about building things in your head is, you do not get tired.

Good luck Bob, can't wait to see your engines at the track.

Mark Your Calendar

Annual Winter Meets for 2006

February 11 & 12	West Toco & Bostwick RR	FLS Winter Meet
February 13 to 19	Big Boots and Western RR	FLS Winter Meet
February 18 & 19	Tradewinds & Atlantic RR Run Days	FLS Attendees are invited
February 20 to 22	Manatee Central Family Lines RR	FLS Winter Meet
February 23 to 26	Ridge Live Steamers	FLS Winter Meet & Annual Banquet

For further information, log on the FLS web page

www.floridalivesteamers.com or contact Larry Laird, 229-465-3402

Largo Central Railroad Winter Meet

March 21 to 26 Banquet March 24th. 6:00PM

Further Information: Contact Angelo Cantalupo, 727-531-8651

Saturday, December 10th

A crew worked on the mainline track at High Point near the Park Clock Tower.

The track was starting to wash out from work being performed by park personnel; the track was leveled and graded after ballast was shoveled in. Present were: Tom Eckert, Mark Zielinski, Terry O'Neill, Tom Kaufman, Greg Boden and Ralph Tucker.

Christmas Night Run

The orders read, "Dress up your trains with Christmas lights, presents and ornaments for the Christmas Tree Lighting in Largo Central Park on the evenings of Friday, December 2nd and Saturday, December 3rd". Signed, *Gizmo, Superintendent of Operations, LCRR.*

Caption 1 is a photograph of Superintendent Gizmo on his decorated private train. Gizmo lives with Bill and Emilie Donati.

I went to the track early Friday afternoon. Bill and Emilie were busy decorating their train. They put in a lot of work and effort into the decorations. For this reason, I have to say, it was the best looking train at the night run. Not that others didn't look good, they were all dressed up for Christmas and the multitude of people who attended the park really enjoyed watching them.



Caption 1

We had crossing guards stationed at the crossings with lanterns to keep the crowds out of the way from oncoming trains. At times, there were so many people crossing, we had to stop the trains. Anyway, things worked out real well and we had enough members to do the job.

Caption 2 shows Vince Rizzo and his ten wheeler pulling one of the trains. On the side track, is Nick Damalos' brand new Dash 9 twin locomotives.

Caption 3 shows the above mentioned Superintendent of Operations' train being pulled by a Dash 9 over the pond. Engineer is Bill Donati and conductor, Emilie Donati.

For the *techie* types, Bill used two 750 watt inverters powered by two large deep discharge storage batteries for lighting up his train. Most of the other trains used inverters except one. Tom Lawrence dressed up the club train with large Christmas tree bulbs and powered them with a 1000 watt Honda generator. There is just a murmur of sound emitted from this power source.

Thanks to all who participated in the Christmas Night Runs – a job well done.



Caption 2



Caption 3

Credit for photographs goes to Mark Zielinski, our club photographer. Mark is an avid photographer and has thousands of photographs of prototype and model trains. He doesn't say much, but I can tell you he has a great deal of knowledge stored in his brain files. He has been a member of the club for many years and a very hard worker. We are lucky to have him in the club. Thanks a bunch, Mark!

New Years Day

Let's say the weather is nice on New Years Day and you just want some place to go and relax a few hours with the family.

Well, you are in luck – the Manatee Central Family Lines in Parish has an informal run on this day. Ride on a train, relax and enjoy. Bring your lunch as that clean fresh air will give you an appetite.

If you see Larry Smith, say Hya to him for me. *Angie*

Children's Museum

On Saturday, December 10th, George Taylor and other members set up a display of railroad equipment at the Children's Museum, located on the grounds at Sunken Gardens in St. Petersburg.

Caption 1 shows Dolores Pike guarding the 700 pound engine Howard Pike built so no one would take off with it and run it under their Christmas tree.

Caption 2 shows the sky train. This is a working model partially built by George Taylor. He built the mechanism that drives the hanging gondola. A group of individuals are using this model to sell their idea to the state for transportation.

Caption 3 shows a caboose built by George Taylor. They are great looking and fine running. If you are interested in one of these handsome cabooses, contact George.

Thanks to Howard and Dolores Pike, Sandy Drayer, Alex Watson, Jean Carter, and George Taylor for representing our club.



Caption 1



Caption 2



Caption 3

Renewal Membership

As stated in last month's newsletter, my goal is to present to the members an accurate Membership Listing which will be sent out with the April 2006 newsletter. In order to obtain an accurate list, I am requesting members to complete a new application when paying dues for 2006 membership.

An application to renew your membership is included with this newsletter. **Please follow instructions on the application.** If you wish to renew your membership in person, just bring the form to the Clubhouse and give to me or Wally Hebel.

Your cooperation will ensure an **up-to-date and accurate membership list.** *Jean Carter.*

Editors Note

As I mentioned in the November Newsletter, I only report news about the Public Runs when there is something unusual to write about.

The December 3rd and 4th Public runs put us to a real test. When we have an event like the Christmas Tree Lighting on December 2nd, you have wall to wall people attending the festivities. Many of them find out for the first time you can ride trains at Largo Central Park.

The next day, December 3rd was Public Run Day. Before we even started getting ready, binoculars were needed to see the end of the line of people waiting for a ride.

Lucky, we had enough members to get a good number of trains on the track. When the day was done, we clocked 1875 passengers.

The same thing happened on Sunday, December 4th – we clocked 2407. All of us were sure ragged out from the ordeal.

I have to add one more thing; when the children disembarked from Donati's train, Emilee gave them Christmas goodies.

Superintendent Gizmo received tons of attention from the children. Many Thanks, Bill and Emilie for showing the kids what Christmas is all about.

Thanks to all for getting the job done.

Public Run Weekend

Saturday..... January 7th, 2006

Sunday..... January 8th, 2006

Annual Meeting....

After Saturday Public Run

Birthday Runs for January 2006

January 14th, Saturday Morning: 10:00 to 11:00 AM Afternoon: 3:30 to 4:30 PM	January 15th, Sunday – Open – Check Board in Clubhouse..
January 21st, Saturday Morning: 11:30 to 12:30 Afternoon: Open	January 22nd, Sunday – Team 1 Afternoon: 2:15 to 3:15 PM
January 28th, Saturday No Birthday Runs	January 29th, Sunday – Open – Check Board in Clubhouse..

Unpaid Political Announcement

Allow me to introduce myself – I am member Earl C. Mueller. Many people in the club know me and of course new members do not.

I freely admit that talking is an important part of my life. When Herr Mueller speaks, ears stand up at attention.

I am asking members to put me on the ballot for President and vote for me. It is time for some one like me to start kicking ears and straighten this club out.

The first thing I will do is to have the trains run on time. The only train to run on time was on a Sunday some years ago. Come to find out, it left the yard the day before.

This has to stop!

The membership meetings are a three ring circus. I will stop members from swinging on the chandeliers and throwing bananas at each other.

If I am elected, the membership meetings will start at 5:00 PM sharp after the Public Run and will last until 6:00 AM the next morning whereupon Don Mann will have breakfast ready for us.

I assure you, I will bring this club to new heights!

The statements made in the above political announcement do not express the opinions of Earl C. Mueller when he is awake.

Happy Birthday to You!

Following are names of members who had a birthday this month (December).

Nick Damalos

James Moore

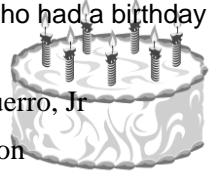
Roddy Springer

Shirley Teerlink

Anthony Gruero, Jr

Jerry Smithson

Danny Thompson



We may have missed your name because our records show no listing for your birthday. If we missed you, consider yourself in the above list as we say, "Happy Birthday and may good health and good fortune shine on you."

Shirley & Al Toona

Submitted by Don Koerner

I remember this girl up north that I hung around with,
 her name was Shirley Toona,
 Her brother's name was Al, he liked to play horseshoes -
 In baseball he always threw a curve
 Shirley was always making a mountain out of a mole hill.
 They came from somewhere in Pennsylvania
 I think her ma was from PA
 I remember she drove a car that looked like a box, and was
 always revving the engine,
 Her mom was big with a large caboose; but she was OK,
 she always stayed on track

Shirley worked in a Museum near a National Historic Landmark
 I wish I could remember what city in Pennsylvania they lived in.

FLS Membership Dues

Remember Florida Live Steamers (FLS), membership dues are due at the end of December. Join now or renew your membership. As I have mentioned before, there is strength in numbers. If a problem should come up, like a proposed state law or ordinance that will be detrimental to our hobby, FLS will be our voice. The more members you have, the louder the voice.

Call Joan Smith 941-776-2109; dues are \$14.00 and will also include membership for your spouse.

Merry Christmas! See you next time,
 Angie

