

THE SIGNAL TOWER

The Newsletter of the Largo Central Railroad

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April 2006



Time for some Fun!

We have worked very hard getting ready for the Winter Meet – Now it is time to have some fun! So come on out on April 29th our fifth Saturday of the month.



President's Message

Greetings!

Well, the 2006 Winter Meet is over and it was a real success. Thanks to all who gave their time and effort to make it so. I especially want to thank, Ralph Tucker, Meet Chairman, and Terry O' Neill, Food Service, for making all the gears mesh properly. We can't forget our Dolores Pike who was in charge of Registration and putting every thing together for the Banquet. Bruce Teerlink and Gail Komar did the Yardmaster operations and Tom Eckert kept the tracks in good shape. Of course, there were many others involved and their names may pop up as the newsletter progresses.

Since there is "No Rest for the Weary" we now have to get organized for next years meet. That's not all, we have to appoint an elections committee for next years club officers. We waited too long last year to get some of these things done. Let's do it right this year!

Come on out with the family for the 5th Saturday, April 29th and have fun.

Don Newberry

President

Mark Your Calendar

Mini Meet, April 29th

Saturday, May 6th, Public Run Day – We will run trains from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM. The Membership Meeting is cancelled for May.

Friday, May 19th, Concert Day – This will be a special fund raiser for charity. It will be the same as a Public Run Day, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

June 1st and June 2nd – We will be running two trains for about 4 hours each day from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. This event is happening during the week days. We will need help for this gig.

Fifth Saturday – Fun Run Day

I am sure you know by now about April 29th our 5th Saturday for club festivities. All club members and members from other railroads are welcome.

Dolores Pike was recently in the hospital and is now recuperating and will not be able to do lunch. Don Mann, who puts out the fabulous breakfasts, volunteered to do lunch also. How about that? Don has one request, however, he wants some of the **members to bring in dessert for lunch.**

Breakfast will be from 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM.

Lunch will be from 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM.

Don will appreciate help from the ladies.

Greg Boden is running the, Card Order Run contest. According to Greg, card order is something prototypical railroads do. The conductor picks up a card with train orders on it. The orders are to drop off and pick up rail cars at different locations along the rail line. Schedules have to be kept as there are other freight and passenger trains running on the same line. You can see this can become quite complicated with no room for mistakes. Greg is going to start off on the easy side to begin with and make it harder as we continue the contests on fifth Saturdays to come. Each train will have a conductor, engineer and a brakeman. A card order will be given to the conductor and all three crew men will be on their way.

In the meantime, Chuck Hackett will be running his Northern with passenger cars at the same time. If you want to see what happens and who wins the contest, you have to come to the festivities. See you there!

Secretary's Report

1 April 2006

The meeting was called to order by President, Don Newberry. The minutes of the preceding meeting, as printed in the SIGNAL TOWER, were accepted as printed. The Treasurer's report was presented and accepted, subject to audit.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Dolores Pike reported on the Meet registration and banquet.
2. Meet Chairman, Ralph Tucker, gave his report on the overall Meet, which was a success, both in attendance and financial.
3. Bill Donati reported that "Friends of the Railroad" has enrolled 141 members at \$20.00 for a total of \$2,850.00. Bill suggested that donors be rewarded with a free pass to go to the head of the line. This was discussed and referred to the Board of Directors.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Chuck Lisner has donated his locomotive and riding cars to the club. In appreciation, it was moved, seconded and carried that he be given a lifetime honorary membership.
2. Fifth weekend was discussed with ideas for running and a picnic.
3. Ralph Tucker presented changes to the bylaws of the club for discussion by the membership. Following a spirited (and sometimes heated) discussion, a vote was called for and the changes passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Gail Komar, acting as Yardmaster during the meet, presented changes to the numbering system in the yard tracks. Motion made, seconded and carried to adopt these changes.
2. Jerry Smithson presented suggestions for relocation of yard tracks when the fence is moved about 4 feet to the east.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned to partake of a meal given by the Park Department in appreciation for the services done by the Club for the city.

Alex Watson,

Secretary

Final 2006 LCRR Meet Report

Submitted by Ralph Tucker

The LCRR meet was very successful thanks to the hard work of many members. Some members went above and beyond in their effort at the meet, some carried their share of the work and another group didn't do their share. You know where you fit in and to those that worked — a big "THANK YOU"!

By any standard the meet was a success. There were no complaints from any of the 285 registered guests. We had 21 steamers, 19 Diesels, 7 Electrics, 25 passenger cars, 62 Freight cars, 2 Army cars and 12 Caboose.

There was a major shift in the way we ran the meet. In the last four years, the best *guess-ta-mate* was that we spent about \$2,000.00 out of the Club Treasury to put on the Meet. This year we provided food service thanks to Terry O'Neil and the Ladies of LCRR who manned the food concession trailer that the Largo Parks Department lent the club. This proved to be our biggest source of income. We also raised money with a raffle, auction, train water bucket contest and donations. The Banquet sold 128 tickets and provided meals for our Largo City and Park Department guests. One reason the banquet was not able to break even was the \$400 cost to rent the hall. The bottom line on the 2006 LCRR meet was \$3,066.62 profit. If you add that to the past \$2,000 out of the Club Treasury, there is an improvement of \$5,067 over past meets. Thanks again to all those who helped make the meet a success.Ralph Tucker -Retired 2006 Meet Chairman

Thanks Ralph, Well done!

Kind Words

Dear LCRR,

Cathy and I [SW-1500 U.P. 1975] would like to thank everyone for the hospitality you extended to us during our visit to your club last week for your Winter Meet. We realize how busy it can get during an event of this magnitude. The track plan is superb and the operations are flawless. We are new to the hobby, and having never run on a track set up for bi-directional operation, found the experience absolutely fantastic!

Special thanks to Don Newberry and Bill Behrens for their expertise in resolving my on-going locomotive brake problem. With only 20 minutes of total run time on my new locomotive prior to Don and Bill's help, we were up and running within an hour of unloading!

Bruce and Gail kept the Yard running with clockwork precision. My hat is off to them for their unflinching dedication and enthusiasm. Dennis' switcher operation always seemed to be busy moving the rolling stock to clear the yard for the next steam or diesel locomotive to enter the Main Line.

The evening banquet was wonderful. Thanks to Dolores and everyone else who contributed to the event.

The relationship the club has with the community and the City of Largo is great, beautiful setting and tremendous track plan integrated into the park. We learned a lot from all the club members we met. We look forward to returning and operating again at LCRR . . . minus running out of fuel 150 feet from the yard!

Sincerely,

AJ and Cathy Cetel

3452 Flint Tavern Pl.

Woodbridge, VA 22192-1023

P.S. I kept an eye on the fuel gauge during our return to Virginia! Cathy"

Email Received



My name is Wally Houston and I am the locomotive engineer on the local Clearwater switcher that comes by your yard on a daily basis. I have been on this job for quite a few years and always enjoy seeing how the LCRR grows. I am also the editor of our CSX safety magazine "The Tampa Tracker".

I was able several years ago to do an article for our magazine about your railroad when you were having your Winter Meet. I believe John Beard was the president at that time. I was invited over to do the article and told to bring my family as well. The red carpet was rolled out for a CSX employee and I must say it was greatly appreciated. Bruce was around at that time as well.

I know you just had your Winter Meet and I was looking onto the web page for photos. I must be honest and say I had not been there in a while. Well when I opened it up, was I surprised! BRAVO on your new website. It looks great and very easy to navigate through. Just wanted to drop a line and say "HI". Please pass this on to your President, Don, and tell all others "Hello" as well.

Wally Houston

Thanks

We thank all the members of Manatee Family Lines and all other railroaders, including their families, who attended our Winter Meet.

TRUE DEDICATION

The club now owns three locomotives. Thanks to Chuck Lisner who recently donated his entire train and some auxiliary equipment to the club.

Chuck's train has probably carried more passengers than any of the others. When you consider Chuck lives in Port Charlotte, Florida, hours away from our track, and attended most all of our Public Runs and work Saturdays for years, that's dedication. His train was always the first one out and the last one back in the yard during our run days.

Chuck was given a lifetime honorary membership. We sure owe him a debt of gratitude. We are very fortunate to have this World War II submariner as a member. Many thanks, Chuck.

FLASH

Submitted by Bruce Teerlink

Hi All,

Just got off the phone with Chuck Lisner. Turns out the bulk of his sinking episodes, they believe, have been caused by a blockage of the left carotid artery. He is going into the hospital sometime next week, he thinks, and they will bypass the bad part of the artery and put in a stent. He says he'll be in and out in two days.

Other than that, he sounds fine and in good spirits.

Bruce the Larger

Other Members on the Mend

Dolores Pike was in the hospital and is now at home recuperating.



Charlie Lyons was also hospitalized and is now at home recuperating.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery.



For Sale

The motorman in the above caption is none other than our Marty VanZanten. Marty has just acquired a steam locomotive and wishes to sell his trolley. The trolley was built by Roll Models Inc. and is a "Gas Light" model. Roll Models is still in business and going strong. They advertise in Live Steam magazine.

Marty has kept this machine in immaculate condition. Your editor has been in the electrical and electronics field most of his life and can tell you this is a well made trolley. The electrical wiring, components and mechanical equipment is top notch industrial grade. It is really smooth running and a big hit during our Public Run Days. Marty has documentation on the electrical and mechanical workings of the trolley. The top half can be removed for transporting the trolley in a van. Two deep cycle batteries are included.

If interested, please contact Marty VanZanten at 727-938-6248 or his home address, 4048 Ligustrum Drive, Palm Harbor, FL 34685.

Water Bucket Contest

During our meet, we had a "Water Bucket Contest". So, what's a water bucket contest?

A train is made up with a crew, conductor, engineer and brakeman. They have to bring their train to a designated area and back up to couple to a rail car, usually a flat car. Now, the flat car has a large coffee can filled with water resting on it and it has been weighed. The idea is to take this train around the track with obstacles, like a passenger train also running. The train has to get into sidings to keep out of the way of the passenger train. Every time they do this, water splashes

out of the coffee can, depending on how smooth the engineer handles the train. Eventually, you come back where you started from and the coffee can is weighed again to see how much water is lost. The crew who loses the least amount of water, WINS.

A number of crews participated in the event. The winners were: Dave Johnson in the steam class and Ken Hammer for diesel.

Thanks to Gail Komar for helping me out on this. Heck, I had no idea what a water bucket contest consisted of!

Public Run Weekend

Saturday..... May 6, 2006
 Sunday.....May 7, 2006

Membership Meeting:...

Cancelled by Board of Directors

Birthday Runs for May 2006

May 13th, Saturday Afternoon: 2:30 to 3:30 PM	May 14th, Sunday Open Happy Mother's Day
May 20th, Saturday Afternoon: 2:30 to 3:30 PM	May 21st, Sunday Afternoon: 4:00 to 5:00 PM
May 27th, Saturday Morning: 10:30 to 11:30 AM Afternoon: 3:30 to 4:30 PM	May 28th, Sunday Afternoon: 3:00 to 4:00 PM

Check the Birthday Run Schedule Board in the Clubhouse for Team assignments on Sundays and any other changes or additions.

More Teams Are Needed

Volunteers for the Birthday Run Teams are as follows:

Team 1: Angie Cantalupo, Alex Watson, John Ruper
Please note, Angie is out of commission - A substitute is needed for a while.

Team 2: NONE

Team 3: John Eason, Warren Jamsion, Kevin Stransky

Team 4: Ed King, Howard Pike, Don Newberry

Team 5: NONE

Alternate: Dennis Mills 813-996-0381

We need volunteers to fill all the Teams. Please help!

Happy Birthday to You!

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

John Eason

Don Koerner

Tom Lawrence

Dennis Mills



Terry O'Neill

Lorne Rolph

Ralph Tucker

Chuck Analetto

"Happy Birthday and may good health and good fortune shine on you."

Now Hear This!

1. Even though printed on the first page, please mark your calendar for the, "**CONCERT DAY" run on Friday, May 19th**". This is an important run for charity. It will be the same as a Public Run, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Some of our members will be working on their daytime jobs. So, we have to scrape up even our cooks, bakers and candle stick makers to do this gig. **Please come out and help.**

2. Two of our club engines now have new spool valves installed.

A spool valve is a hydraulic valve with the attached control handle you operate the locomotive with — forward, neutral, reverse and speed. The engines are the Largo and the Seaboard. The Seaboard is the locomotive recently donated to the club by Chuck Lisner.

The new valves operate a little different than the old ones — they have a hydraulic braking feature built into them. As you back off the operating handle while in the run position, hydraulic braking is being applied. This means that when you are in the neutral position, the wheels are locked. It takes some practice to get it right. It is for this reason you have to be checked out before you operate these engines for the first time. **See Terry O'Neill.**

The valve was designed and built by Ron Taylor from the **Hesston Steam Museum**, La Porte, Indiana. Jerri Wendt made arrangements for us to try the valves.

Membership Corner

Enclosed in this newsletter is your new membership list. This represents an up-to-date list as of April 1st. If your address, telephone, email address changes, please let me know by phone at 727-531-8651 or emailing me at angnjean2316@gate.net. This will ensure continued receipt of the newsletter and an up-to-date Membership List.

During the year when changes are made to the Membership Roster, it will be posted on our website under the category **Members**. You must have a User ID and password to access this portion of the website. Instructions are on the website.

Jean Carter, Membership Chairperson

There is no room for Angie's shenanigans. I was going to tell you about another Card Order Run. Remind me and I'll tell you about it next month.

See you next time, Angie

