

# THE SIGNAL TOWER

The Newsletter of the Largo Central Railroad

P. O. Box 823

Largo, FL 33779-0823

Club Telephone: 727-585-9835

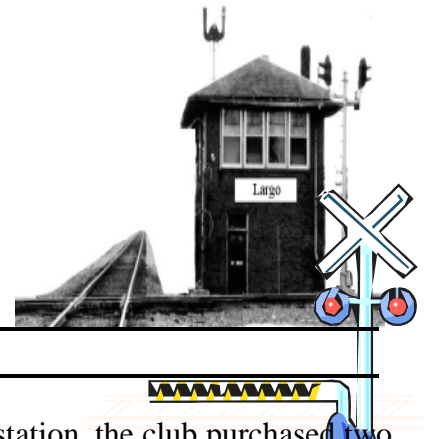
Website: [www.lcrailroad.com](http://www.lcrailroad.com)

Webmaster: Terry O'Neill

Managing Editor: Angelo Cantalupo

Email: [angac2723@gate.net](mailto:angac2723@gate.net)

Telephone 727-531-8651



April 2007

## President's Message

Greetings!

Summer is quickly approaching and we are working very hard to get the track in shape before the blistering heat starts up. Our members from the North are on their way home. Our ranks get thinned out, some, so we have to put in extra effort to get things done.

Our Fun Run Day, Saturday, March 31, 2007, was a great Fun Day. Gail Komar ran the 'Card Order' run and it was a 'hoot'. Gail has more about the run as you read on. Thanks to all who participated and helped to make the Fun Run Day a success. Special thanks to Gail and her hubby, Greg, — also Don Mann for breakfast and Dolores Pike for lunch.

*Warren Jamison*  
President

## Mark Your Calendar

**Card Order Meet – June 8, 9, & 10 at the Big Boots and Western Railroad.**

Capt. Boots and his crew have added many additions to the railroad. It is really growing, leaps and bounds. Check in on the Captain's website for pictures and information on how to get to the track.  
[www.bigbootsrr.com](http://www.bigbootsrr.com)

So, pack up your locomotive and drag it out to 'Big Boots and Western Railroad' for a great time.

## 5<sup>th</sup> Fun Run Day

*Submitted by Gail Komar*

On March 31, we had another one of our 5<sup>th</sup> weekend Fun Run Days. Those that attended had another great day at the track. The weather was wonderful.

Eating is always a big part of the day. We started with breakfast (8-9am) with Don Mann in charge, and lunch (1-2pm) was a good feed with Dolores Pike handling that assignment. Members graciously brought desserts to satisfy the sweet tooth desires.

Instead of eating at the station, the club purchased two picnic tables, and set them up in the yard under the shelter of a canopy. The new location was a big hit, because it allowed members to sit and relax between meals while being able to see the yard work taking place to setup the trains for the operating session scheduled for after lunch.

Members pitched in helping unload the storage sheds for the 38 cars (6 box, 4 reefers, 4 tank, 4 flat, 1 stock, 4 hop, 7 gon, 4 riding cars, and 4 cabooses) needed for the operating session. These cars were unloaded onto track 1. Another crew pulled track 1 cars and placed them on four other tracks depending on which train the cars needed to be on. Train orders for the engineer and conductor for each train were prepared and placed on the first car of each train.

Meanwhile, with the help of the Tijuana Taxi (Howard Pike driving the golf cart), Gail Komar stopped at each spur on the railroad, drove the industry name sign into the ground next to each spur and added red bumpers to the track. (These are used to restrict switching direction of the trains.)

At 11:15am, the industry spotting train left the yard with Chuck Analetto and John Ruper in control. They stopped at the 14 industries to make their deliveries, and made their way back to the yards with only their caboose remaining in the train.

After lunch, crews added their locomotives to the three trains ready to go. Marty had his steamer fired up and decided to run one of the trains instead of just being a class 1 train annoying the local freight guys. About halfway through the job, he was sweating bullets. He never thought switching was such hard work! His wife enjoyed videotaping as his train made its way around the track. I wonder if we will see the hard work and antics sometime, or it will be buried to hide any evidence?

The train crew of Chuck, John, and Greg hold the record for the longest and fastest run-a-way car. The club members sitting in the yards witnessed a streaking white gondola coming from the backside of the tunnel and flying across the pond bridge. The three-member crew insisted that they spotted the gondola at the clock tower bypass and it was fine. The run-away must have been caused by another crew. Anyone believe that story? In either case, Ripley's has been contacted.

It seems that there were a couple other unexplained movements of spotted cars. Teenage kids in the park were fingered, but it actually might have been some big kids in blue shirts!

Lots of fun for all involved during a great day spent having a good time enjoying friendship and playing with trains.

Thanks to all who made it possible, *Gail*.

*Many thanks Gail for this great report*

## Birthday Runs for May 2007

**Attention:** We need members who are available on Tuesday, May 12, 2007, to help out for the St. Paul School children run from 9:30 to 10:30 AM.

<b>May 12, Saturday</b> Morning: 11:00 to 12:00 AM Afternoon: 4:30 to 5:30 PM	<b>May 13, Sunday</b> Afternoon: 4:30 to 5:30 PM
<b>May 19, Saturday</b> Morning: 11:00 to 12:00	<b>May 20, Sunday</b> Afternoon: 2:30 to 4:00
<b>May 26, Saturday</b> Open	<b>May 27, Sunday</b> Afternoon: 3:00 to 4:00

**Check the Birthday Run Schedule Board in the Clubhouse for changes or additions**

## Manatee Central Railroad

Manatee Central had their Spring Meet on April 14 and 15. Your editor is not one who likes to travel. Pete Newcomb made me an offer I could not refuse. He offered to pay me the toll money for the Skyway Bridge because I am cheap. Well, when I arrived at Manatee, Pete was nowhere to be found. He owes me two bucks.

All kidding aside, it was a great meet and I had a chance to ride on the new track addition. I was really surprised because it was quite a long ride. The day was just beautiful and relaxing.

Anyway, I found myself spending time at the gauge 1 elevated track – something I never done before. The longer I looked at the trains being pulled by live steam locomotives, the more interested I was getting. There were some neat locomotives built by their owners. Believe me, they are not toys. Ray Egerton, an Associate Member of LCRR, has a steam locomotive that is fully automatic and radio controlled. You put in water and propane fuel and push a button. The gas valve opens, the burner ignites and sends out a flame into the boiler. The throttle and reverse are servo controlled.

Okay, why has my interest built up in gauge 1? I was one of the blowhards who would say, "If I can't ride the train, forget it".

The fact is, I am getting so I can't ride the trains, because of arthritis in my knees. Old blowhard just can't forget it – so gauge 1 seems like a good alternative.

Thanks to Larry and Joan Smith and Pete Newcomb for their wonderful hospitality.

## FOR SALE

### Crocodile – Electric Mountain Locomotive

7½ gauge, contains two electric motors, two storage batteries, electric controller and a riding flat car with two seats.



This locomotive has been run on the Manatee Central Railroad tracks in the past.

It was scaled down from the prototype made and used in the Swiss Mountains. Some of the particulars from the prototype are as follows: Gauge – 3 feet 3 3/8 inches, propulsion – single phase at 11,000 volts 16 ½ Hertz via pantographs and overhead catenary feeding a step down transformer to two 313 HP motors, each connected to three driving axles by jackshafts and coupling rods.

The first one – CC 401 was built in 1921 and ran for 26 years. A steam locomotive took 4 hours to climb a 3 ½ percent grade from Chur to St. Montz (50 miles). The Crocodile took 2 hours and 45 minutes. The run from Landquart to Davos has a 4 ½ percent grade and treacherous curves. The Crocodile had automatic oilers to

oil the flanges of the drivers when negotiating these curves.

Interested in this mountain climber? Call Geoffrey Gibbs, 941-377-3045 for more information. Geoffrey lives in Sarasota.

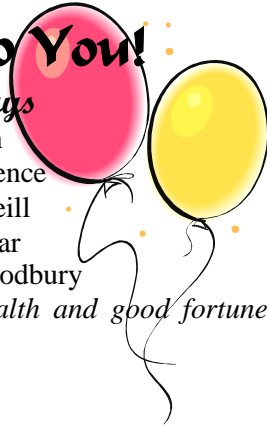
## Happy Birthday to You!

### April Birthdays

Chuck Analetto  
Don Koerner  
Dennis Mills  
Lorne C Rolph  
Ralph Tucker

John Eason  
Tom Lawrence  
Terry O'Neill  
Larry Schear  
Norma Woodbury

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



## FOR SALE

Here is your chance to get into the hobby with a smooth running 7½ inch gauge electric. The builder of this engine could not complete it because he lost his workshop area due to a move. Complete this engine and paint it to your color scheme and you will have a something to be proud of. The engine is in great running condition.

Okay – here’s what you get – a GP-35 shroud the builder paid \$500.00 for. The engine is equipped with commercial trucks. Each truck is powered by a one horsepower 24 volt electric motor. A commercial Curtis pulse width motor controller with dynamic braking controls power to the motors. All wheels are powered. An automatic top grade on board heavy duty marine battery charger keeps the two, “deep discharge” 875 cranking amperes marine batteries in tip top shape. Stanchions, handrail fixtures, bronze air horn and 3 fan housings will be supplied.

The builder is LCRR member, Sandy Drayer. Sandy has about \$2,700.00 sunk into this engine. He will sell it for \$1,700.00 or best offer.

Need more information – call Sandy in the evening, 727-733-0936.



## Public Run Tally

Saturday, April 7, 2007, 1617 passengers were given rides.  
Sunday, April 8, 2007, Easter Sunday – Holiday, no trains.

## Public Run Weekend

Saturday May 5, 2007  
Sunday May 6, 2007

## Membership Meeting:...

*May 5, 2007 after the Public Run  
Be certain to attend.*

## Board Meeting

May 4, 2007 at 7:30 P.M.



## ADULT MODEL RAILROADING

*Submitted by Club Member, Tony Windsor*

Let me start with the definition of the title, the majority of model railroading is tabletop. This is defined as trains that have a track gauge from ½” to 3 ½” between the rails, the larger gauges are usually installed outside of homes and referred to as garden railroading.

The trackage can be installed at ground level or elevated from 18” to 48” above ground for ease of accessibility and preventing frost, snow and water, heaving the trackage. The electrical systems can be run under the elevated tracks as you expand the layout. I have seen carports, awnings, and pole sheds over the central portions of the layouts, like the freight yard. Almost all tabletop railroading is electric motor powered. Live steam powered locomotives are popular on outdoor garden railroading – but you can’t ride on them!!! Adult model railroading track gauge is from 4 ¾” to 24”.

The most popular gauges in the world are 7 ¼” and 7 ½” – west of New England States are predominantly 7 ½”. There are about 15 railroad clubs listed in Florida, over 200 clubs listed in USA and Canada. (see [www.7plusrailroader.com/links/clubs\\_frame.htm](http://www.7plusrailroader.com/links/clubs_frame.htm))

About 1/3 of the locomotives of the clubs are live steam powered, 1/3 are gasoline/hydraulic powered, 1/3 are electric battery powered and my Plum Cove Studios loco the generic electric is battery powered. Most have neat sound systems installed for realism to the real world. The length of trackage of most clubs runs from 1 mile to 3 + miles. Train Mountain, in Oregon, is 20+ miles long, a 4 hour roundtrip!!! (average speed is 5 mph ). That is a lot of track!

Track gauges larger than 7½” tend to be far and few because of the much higher locomotive costs and track grunt work involved. 7½” gauge locomotives and tenders weigh anywhere from 200 to 2,500 pounds, freight cars run from 80 to 200 pounds. Locomotives with tenders cost from \$2,000 to way over \$150,000. The live steam locomotives fuel is real coal, fuel oil, or propane gas. But the real fun is that we ride on our trains – sitting on the tender or flat car behind the locomotive!!!!!!

.....TONY WINDSOR tony.barb7@verizon.net

Thanks, well done Tony.



Tony Windsor is also a member of Bay Area Electric Boaters Club [www.bayrcboaters.com]. The club meets on the second and forth Sundays of the month at Lake Seminole Park, Shelter #1, 10:00 AM. Tony also sails at Freedom Lake Park and at Parrish. He has three boats 36", 42", and a 48" stern paddle-wheeler. All three boats are powered by live steam engines. All boats were built from kits. The 36" took one month, the 42" took six months, and the 48" took thirteen months to build.

## The Doers

The following members showed up for Saturday chores.

### Saturday, March 24

Bill Boyd, Ralph Tucker, Sandy Drayer, James Salerno, Marty VanZanten, Alex Watson, Chuck Analetto, Tom Lawrence, Otis Lawrence, Terry O'Neill, Warren Jamison, Tom Eckert and Don Mann.

### Saturday, April 21

Gail Komar, Jean Carter, John Ruper, Chris Janks, Sandy Drayer, Warren Jamison, Don Mann, Alex Watson, and Tony Windsor.

At Noontime, Don Mann whipped up hot dogs and hamburgers with all the fixings. Dolores Pike had a tray of her delicious baked beans. Many Thanks, Don and Dolores.

## Reminder Corner

### Remember:

If you need machining or metal for the project you are working on, contact member, Robbie Tielemans at 352-797-0123. He owns a commercial machine shop and has built steam locomotives.

### Visitors/Friends Riding Trains

We want our members to enjoy the club, the track and bring friends and family. Just remember when bringing people to enjoy riding the train and the facilities and they are not your immediate family, please have them sign a release form, just in case something goes wrong.



God Bless,  
See you next time, Angie

