

# THE SIGNAL TOWER

The Newsletter of the Largo Central Railroad

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March 2007

## Fifth Saturday Fun Run Day March 31, 2007

### President's Message

Greetings!

My comments this month will be very short. I want to thank all who helped out with the Meet, especially those who put in more than their share. The Meet went very well and it seems our guests had a good time.

I have to run – we are installing a switch up at High Point and we have to get it done before dark. See you at the track.

*Warren Jamison*  
President

### Mark Your Calendar

March 31, 2007

#### Fifth Saturday of the Month – Fun Run Day

All railroaders welcome! According to the Lady of the Railroad, Dolores Pike, we will have roast beef for lunch. Bring in dessert to share. There will be a 'Card Order' run as in the past. Lets' make it a real FUN DAY!

#### Ridge Live Steamers – March 23, 24 & 25 – Spring Meet.

Allen Newcomb writes: Please join us at the Ridge Line Track, Dundee, Florida for a fun weekend of train activity with 7½ inch gauge, G gauge and Gauge 1 running. The campground with water and electricity is available on a first-come first-served donation basis. There will be a hamburger cookout at 5:30PM on Saturday for a \$5.00 per person donation. For further information, contact Allen Newcomb at 863-665-0482.

#### Manatee Central Railroad – April 14 & 15 – Spring Meet

You are invited to two days of relaxation and a taste of the old South. Elevated track for gauge 1 and 0 gauge; 7½ inch gauge and 4¾ inch gauge mainline track. Take your pick. Cookout on Saturday evening – bring a covered dish to share. On Sunday – about 1:00 PM there will be lunch – we finish up the leftovers from Saturday night. No one will go hungry.

Come on out and have a great time. For further information, contact Larry Smith 941-776-2109.

**Sunday, April 15, 2007 – Heart of Largo –  
1:00 to 6:00 PM**

We need all the help we can get on this caper.

### Guess What? 😊



Our club treasurer, Gail Komar and hubby, Greg, became grandparents for the first time. Gail's daughter, Karen gave birth to Benjamin Ross on Monday, February 12, 2007.

Grandmother Gail is so happy she just flutters around like a Butterfly. Happy '**Spoil your Grandson Days**' have arrived.

### Check This Out!

In last month's newsletter, (February), a model 1911 Oil Electric 1 Box Cab Locomotive was for sale. One of our members, Charlie Brilliant had his eyes on this locomotive for a long time. Bob Wolf, who owned the locomotive, was in the yard while Charlie was there during the Meet. Well, when Charlie spotted Bob, he ran over to him yelling – "I'll buy the Box Cab". There were other railroaders around and Charlie wanted to make sure he was the first to give Bob his money for the locomotive. All you could see was a blur when he went for his wallet in his back pocket. The friction from this speedy Gonzales act put his thumbnail on fire. A live steamer near him was filling his tender with water and quickly put out the thumbnail fire with a well aimed shot of water.

Charlie's thumbnail became as tough as hardened steel. The same process is used to make steel super hard. Now, when Charlie uses his lathe to turn metal, he just puts his thumbnail on the metal and watches the chips fly. According to Charlie, his thumbnail cuts better than carbide cutting tools.

Good Luck with your Box Cab Locomotive and keep your thumbnail nice and sharp.



# Minutes of Membership Meeting of Largo Central Railroad, Inc.

Place: LCRR (Largo Central Railroad) Club House, Largo Central Park, Largo, FL

Date: 03-03-2007

The President called the meeting to order at 4:25 PM

Minutes for the month of February 2007 Motioned by Terry O'Neill and seconded by Howard Pike to dispense with the reading of the minutes since it was posted on the website. All were in favor.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's Report for the month of February. Gail Komar stated that her report is not complete because she doesn't have the amounts posted from the Winter Meet. She read the report as it stands without that information. She read the Profit and Loss for February. Today's run had 1,088 riders. We didn't have the Store table set up today. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Marty VanZanten and seconded by Chuck Analetto. Warren stated that we should be able to pay off the member loans within the next few months.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND GENERAL ORDERS:

Winter Meet: Delores Pike gave her report for the Winter Meet for Registrations and the Banquet. Warren Jamison stated that he was very pleased with how the meet went and with the participation of members in the meet. He has heard from several people that the meet was outstanding. There is some more work that needs to be done on the track. We will try and replace most of the outer curves with the heavier rail this year. There were 22 steam locomotives, and close to 19 diesels at the meet. The engines came and went, so counting was a little difficult. Warren stated that he has been contacted by FLS who stated that they would like us to have the main meet next year including the FLS banquet. Warren is going to get with them to discuss it because there may be some problems, i.e. not enough room for motor homes. Warren wants to congratulate everyone for a job well done.

Things to be done: Riding car refurbishing need to be finished. Certain areas of the track need to be done. We need to install the switch that will tie in the new crossover (for card operations), and change out outside rail to heavier rail. We purchased 2,000 feet of rail during the meet. We have all the track materials we need except one more order for ties and ballast.

City of Largo: We are to have a meeting with the City Manager in the not too distant future where they are going to present to us what the city is going to do to help us financially.

## NEW BUSINESS:

New Members: The following prospective members were recommended by Board members last night and their names were presented to the membership tonight. Associate Membership: Larry Schear, John Bortz, Sr. and Loretta Bulloch. Regular Membership: Michael Piechota and Robert Tielemans. Jerry motioned and Chuck Analetto seconded to approve their membership. All approved.

Bank Account Monitor: Last night at the BOD meeting it was approved to appoint someone to act as a monitor to the Treasurer. This entails going into the website to check what's going in and out of the accounts monthly. Warren Jamison motioned – seconded by Vinnie Rizzo. All present approved. This sets up a set of checks and balances.

Tax Return Preparation: Jere Wendt suggested that we use Donati's accountant to do our Tax Return this year – if it is \$300-\$500 to get it done. Jere Wendt made a motion to hire the accountant who did our taxes last year to hire him this year to do our taxes – give our Treasurer authority to call him. Jerry Smithson seconded the motion. All present approved.

Fifth Weekend: Delores would like to do a Roast Beef Dinner. Warren told her to file a request to the Treasurer for an advance to pay for the dinner.

Batteries: Someone told the membership that there are some 16 volt batteries on sale. They decided to purchase two.

Breakfast in the Park event: John Eason wanted to know if anyone wanted to run the trains for the Seniors on April 10th or 11<sup>th</sup> during Breakfast in the Park. John Eason made a motion to table this until the next weekend.

Adjournment: A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Jerry Smithson, and seconded by Delores Pike. All present were in favor.

Meeting was ordered adjourned at 5:05 PM

Respectfully Submitted

*Mary K. Brady*

Mary K. Brady, Secretary

## Happy Birthday to You!

### March Birthdays

Bill Behrens	Bob Reese
Bill Boyd	Joe Schuler
Londal Thorpe	Marty VanZanten
Alex Watson	Tony Windsor

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



## Winter Meet

From the reports received from other clubs and our Meet Run Days, the Florida Live Steamers February Winter Meet of 2007 was a complete success. From the score sheets of locomotives present, it seems the steam locomotives won out. Who said, "Steam is on the decline?"

Florida Live Steamers had their yearly election at the Ridge Track. President, George Johnson; Vice President, Foster Bond; Secretary, Rich Dobler; Treasurer, Joan Smith who is also the Membership Chairperson.

Newly elected Board Members; Don Scheetz and Harold Dunsford.

As far as I know, the dates for next years Winter Meet have not been finalized yet.



# Sympathy

*We have lost another comrade.*

*It is with great sorrow to report the passing of Jim Moore – a long time member of our club. Jim passed away on March 13, 2007.*

*Jim was a kind and pleasant gentleman who will be missed by all of us. We extend our deepest sympathy to, Jeanne Moore, and family.*

*Memorial Service will be held Sunday, March 25, 2:30PM, at the First Baptist Church, 525 14<sup>th</sup> Ave, Safety Harbor.*

## Birthdays Runs for April 2007

<b>April 14, Saturday</b> Morning: 10:00 to 11:00 Afternoon: 3:00 to 4:00	<b>April 15, Sunday</b> Heart of Largo 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM
<b>April 21, Saturday</b> Open	<b>April 22, Sunday</b> Picnic – PODS 2 hours
<b>April 28, Saturday</b> Picnic MTS 2 hours 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM	<b>April 29, Sunday</b> Afternoon: 3:00 to 4:00

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

## Public Run Tally

Saturday, March 3 2007, 1088 passengers were given rides.  
 Sunday, March 4, 2007, 1439 passengers were given rides.

## Now Hear This!

1. The clubhouse is still in its cleaning stage. There is still personal items being found like, sweat shirts, cooler lunch box, hats, etc. Please come to the clubhouse and claim them. In about one week, these items will be sent to the dumpster.

2. I don't know about other tracks, but we sure have a coupler fiasco going on at our track. Couplers are disappearing and others seem to be moving to other members' trains by themselves. Alex Watson found his locomotive had a coupler that was not his. Where his coupler went is a mystery. Sandy Drayer had the same coupler missing twice. The first time it was returned, now it is missing again. There has been a number of missing coupler horror stories.

Maybe members should pick a color and paint their couplers. A different color paint for each member. This may not solve the problem for missing couplers, but it may help with the musical couplers that wind up on some one else's train.

## Did You Know?

We have a member, Robbie Tielemans, who is a full time machinist and owns a commercial machine shop in Brooksville, Florida.

Robbie has built two 7 ½ inch gauge steam locomotives. He is a very pleasant and easy to talk too individual. If you need metal – even cast iron for making pistons and cylinders – see Robbie. Likewise, if you need machine work done, he can handle any job. He is in our hobby and can answer questions about the workings of your locomotive. Call him at 352-797-0123.



## Public Run Weekend

Saturday..... April 7, 2007

Sunday.....Easter – NO RUN

## Membership Meeting:...

**April 7, 2007 after the Public Run**  
*Be certain to attend.*

## Board Meeting

April 6, 2007 at 7:30 P.M.

## What the Hey!

Observe Caption 1. Seems like someone is trying to get his caboose out of the drink. Not so, the unidentified young man was using his caboose as a boat. He was having a great time sitting on the cupola paddling around in the pond.

The authorities decided his caboose was no longer a piece of railroad equipment, but a pleasure craft. Since it was not registered as a pleasure craft, it had to be removed from the pond. Gee, a guy can't do anything anymore – bummer!!



Caption 1

# 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.



## The Doers

The following members showed up for Saturday chores.

**Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup>** – Bill Boyd, Sandy Drayer, Tom Eckert, Alex Watson, Don Newberry, James Salerno, Otis Lawrence, Vince Rizzo, Howard Pike, Dolores Pike, Fred Clepper, Matt Clepper, Charlie Lyon, John Eason, Jerry Smithson, Warren Jamison, Lottie Ruper, John Ruper, Terry O'Neill, Don Mann, Jean Carter, Chuck Analetto and Danny Thompson.

**Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup>** – John Ruper, Alex Watson, Bill Boyd, John Eason, Tom Eckert, Sandy Drayer, Chuck Analetto, James Salerno, Jean Carter, Terry O'Neill, Bill Boyd, Howard Pike and Warren Jamison.

**Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup>** – Tom Eckert, Bill Boyd, Gail Komar, Jean Carter, James Salerno, Terry O'Neill, Chris Janks, Sandy Drayer, Alex Watson, Warren Jamison, Don Mann, Eric Sitico.

## Train Ride to Oblivion !!!

Submitted by Tony Windsor

Sunday, February 11, 2007, I boarded the train with 158 other passengers and we left the station of Parrish around 12:30; heading north with the train running backwards, the bright Red Caboose leading the way to Willow, 6 miles up the track.

As we approached Dickey Road, a valve packing nut split in two and hot steam engulfed the cab blinding the engineers and firemen. I jumped back as I was in the open gondola car next to the engine. The engineer, on the throttle, fell backwards grabbing the throttle on the way to pull it to wide open. We picked up speed and soon reached 50 mph. We roared past Dickey Road still gaining speed. The engineer recovered his composure and tried to close the throttle, but it was jammed wide open. He grabbed the Johnson bar [forward/reverse] but the linkage to the Stephenson gear would not budge; so reverse was not an option - this was probably caused due to the high speed we were traveling now hitting close to 70 mph. The train careened, clattered, and bounced crazily down the tracks towards Willow!!

Everybody in the cab finally got a towel wrapped around the valve stem so they could now close the leaking valve. By opening the free blow steam valves, they hoped to slow down the runaway train. We passed Willow at 50 mph and the engineers applied the brakes!! They worked fine at 10 mph, but not much help at this speed - we were now headed for the bridge across the little Manatee River and Saffold beyond!!

Some years ago the CSX Railroad removed the tracks on the bridge because the bridge was falling apart - a real old wooden bridge being consumed by the ravages of weather and termites. We careened crazily towards the bridge at a speed of 40 mph. The caboose bounced on the bridge with the two passenger cars and the gondola with the heavy engine collapsed the rickety bridge in a gigantic booming swoon!!!

At this point, I woke up at 3 AM soaking wet in sweat and in a panic as the locomotive crashed into me ! ! ! ! Best nightmare I've had in years and years, railroading is such fun!!! *Tony Windsor*

## Sick Call Update

➤ Chuck Lisner came to visit us. He seemed in good shape and did not stay too long. It was good to see him. He sure is a tough bird.

➤ We expect Ralph and Marian Tucker to be back in Florida any day now. As you remember, Marian had back surgery. We will be glad to see them back.

# CSX Train Tracks Departing in St. Petersburg

Submitted by Doug Fulthorpe

The bumpy condition of the railroad tracks near the police station on Central and First avenues between 14th and 15th streets has prompted lots in inquiries from readers. We checked with the city's transportation department on the status of the tracks and surrounding roadways.

Thomas Gibson responded that city representatives are in contact with CSX. The company is in the process of abandoning rail operations south of Seventh Avenue N.

"Once rail operations on this line have officially ended, approval from CSX is expected to allow removal of the rails, and the crossing area will be paved," Gibson said.

## DOUBLE RATS

The following has just been released.....

It seems the Federal Government is now making changes on how smaller gauge railroads have to be operated. There are about a dozen requirements, but I will only expound on two of them as the rest will make you cry.

The Feds feel our brakes are not adequate. They say the best and most reliable brakes have always been shoe brakes. Hence, the engineer and conductor will now have to wear specially designed shoes, Model M23-2.

Observe Caption 2, this drawing was taken off the patent application and is now in production. Here's how it works: 'A' is a leg saddle tank filled with water; 'B' are holes the water spurts out from; 'C' are bellows for pumping up pressure to make the water spurt out in force.

OK - The train is running along and a squirrel suddenly appears on the track - the engineer starts sending out many short blasts on the horn for the conductor to start braking. The engineer already has his shoes dug in. What happens is, as soon as you stomp down hard on the shoes, a centrifugal valve opens up to let the water flow and it comes out under pressure as the bellows are being pumped at the same time. The water cools the trainman's heels and also puts out any fires.

Hey, do not blame me if you think it's not going work - the Feds say it will.

Lets' get on with another Federal brain storm. Observe Caption 3 - All trains must at least have one dining car. So, they went about and designed a special tray for this purpose. It is the Model M35-0. Well you say, suppose there is a derailment and people have food splattered all over them? The answer is, the railroad will have to pay all cleaning bills. Their reasoning is, if you derail, the railroad is not safe and you will receive a citation.

The rest of their so called improvements are just as bad. These new rules have to be implemented by April 1, 2007 - Wait a minute! Hold the phone - who sent me this - It's one of those April Fool things. I really don't need these headaches!! The editor's job is still for sale.



Caption 2



Caption 3

## Reminder Corner

### Gasoline Donation

There is a metal box for your gasoline donation and also a Log Book (Red Binder type) to record number of hours of engine use on the desk in the Clubhouse. The Log Book will help with scheduling maintenance.

A \$2.00 donation, for gasoline, is suggested for each hour the engine is used for your personal use.

### FOR SALE Members Blue Shirts

At \$10.00

Size Available - Medium

These shirts have the imprint of FLS and Largo Central Railroad. For purchase, see Jean Carter.

God Bless,  
See you next time, Angie

