

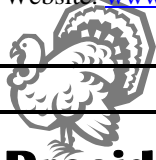
THE SIGNAL TOWER

The Newsletter of the Largo Central Railroad

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Happy Thanksgiving

November 2005

President's Message

Greetings!

The Christmas Holidays are just around the corner. Let's have a good show of decorated trains at the Christmas Tree Lighting festivities in the park.

We also need to get the damaged mainline track repaired. Come on out on Saturday and help. Thanks.

Don Newberry
President

Mainline Track Replacement

The mainline track going east just before the main crosswalk, where the crossing signals are placed, has to be replaced as soon as possible. Warren Jamison estimates it will take three track panels and about 4 hours to install. We will need all the help we can get as the weather has taken its toll on the ties.

Secretary's Report

November 5, 2005

The meeting was called to order by President Don Newberry.

The minutes of the preceding meeting were read and accepted as corrected. The Treasurer's report was presented with all bills paid. It was noted that the correct amount of donations for hurricane relief was \$674.42. Motion to accept, seconded and carried.

NEW BUSINESS: The following items were taken up during the course of the meeting:

1. Dolores Pike called for a vote on preferences for meat at the banquet in March. The choice was ham, beef, or chicken – beef and chicken were selected.
2. From a discussion of the field trip for the meet, a trip to the Florida Gulf Coast Railroad Museum was selected. George Taylor and Bill Donati were appointed to set this up.
3. George Taylor spoke about the Sun Coast Children's Museum at Sunken Gardens on Saturday, December 10th. Volunteers and equipment will be needed.
4. Bill Donati suggested we attend train shows in the area as a means for attracting new members.
5. Don Mann proposed that the club build a maintenance facility at the lower part of the yard.

Following discussion, Don was tasked to prepare plans for a workshop.

6. Jean Carter presented a junior member in the club. John Cantu was voted in as member.

7. Angie Cantalupo discussed the coming election of officers and the recommended way it will be handled.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Alex Watson
Secretary

Public Run – November 1st and 2nd

We had help for this run and everything went along smoothly.

Bill and Carolyn Behrens came back from vacation and pulled quite a number of passengers with Bill's great running gas-electric box-cab engine. Many thanks to Tom Lawrence and also Pete Newcombe and Ray Egerton from the Manatee Family lines for helping.

We also trained two new conductors, Conrad Mueller and John Jankowich who relieved other conductors for breaks. The well known Brad Smith and his wife, Sherrie, gave us plenty of help. Thanks to all for responding to the call for help. Things worked out just fine.

Dolores Pike and Don Mann had a scrumptious meal waiting for us on Sunday evening. It doesn't get any better than that!

Fifth Saturday Fun Run Day, October 29th

It was a perfect day, plenty to eat and great camaraderie. Don Mann cooked and served a delicious breakfast. Dolores Pike, and her helpers served lunch and Don Mann grilled the spareribs. It was absolutely superb. Gee, spareribs – I wonder if we will have lobster next time.

Tons of Thanks to Dolores Pike, Don Mann and helpers, Ruthann Tile, Alice Koster, Jean Carter; and all who brought a covered dish to share.

It was great to see Bill and Alice Koster and Bruce and Cheryl Elder. They are pioneers of model railroading in Florida.

I owe Bruce Elder an apology. For some reason, when I see him, I call him Foster Bond. It happened twice. They are two great guys, but in no way resemble each other. According to the rules, Bruce can now throw rocks at the editor. Bruce, you can cash in your marker the next time you see me. Thank you all for visiting.

We also had a visit from members of the **HB Plant Railroad Historical Society** from Plant City. They had a great time and one of them, John Jankowich, President of the club, signed up to be a member of our club. He showed up on Sunday, November 2nd, Public Run Day as a conductor.

Members attending were Bob Tile, Ruthann Tile, Paul Hoopes, Lee Earder, Art Chappell, Shelby Senkarik, Cole Senkarik and John Jankowich. Many thanks for visiting us.

LCRR MEMBERS ATTEND RR MEETS

Ridge Live Steamers Meet

LCRR members who attended the Ridge Live Steamers Meet had a great time and really enjoyed this first class railroad. Everyone had plenty to eat, rides on trains and hospitality galore. You couldn't ask for a better day at the railroad. Thanks to Foster Bond and all members of the Ridge Club for inviting us.

Manatee Family Lines Meet

A number of LCRR members attended the Manatee Family Lines, Veterans Day Meet. LCRR's two club engines, Jerry Smithson's speeder and Bill Donati's switcher were also there. As usual, we all had a wonderful time and were well fed. Southern hospitality at its best. Thanks to Larry and Joan Smith, Bev and Bill Kiser, and Pete Newcombe for an enjoyable day at the railroad.

Hold the phone! I received word that Larry was really pleased to see the gals and guys in blue. He sends his thanks to all for attending.

Election

There will be a proxy voting ballot included with your newsletter if you are eligible to vote. Follow the instructions on the ballot.

There will also be 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.

Sun Coast Children's Museum

George Taylor has setup a teaching visit for the Sun Coast Children's Museum at Sunken Gardens on December 10th between 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. We need volunteers to participate and bring equipment down to the museum. Teaching youngsters about railroading and safety is one of our missions. More will be said about this event at the December 3rd membership meeting. For further information, contact George Taylor at 813-655-7249.

Big Boots and Western Railroad

Capt. John's Birthday and Christmas Party Meet – Friday, December 9th, through Sunday, December 11th. Campers welcomed. There will be a bonfire every night, party on Saturday, December 10th, 1:00 PM. Food and beverages will be supplied – bring a covered dish or a dessert. Bring your favorite after hour beverage and a camping chair for a set around the fire. Of course, bring your locomotives too – if you have one. For those who like real railroading, we will hold our second card order session.

The BB & WRR is located at 11701 SE 108th Terrace Road, Bellevue, Florida 34420 on 160 acres at beautiful Bowers Lake. Phone 352-288-2278 for further information and directions on how to get to the railroad. If you have a Florida Live Steamers membership book of 2003 or 2004, there is a map showing the location of the BB & WRR.

If you can make Capt. John's meet, I am sure you will have a wonderful time.

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.

Christmas Festivities

The Public Run dates for December are Saturday, December 3rd and Sunday, December 4th.

On Friday, December 2nd, the day before the Public Run, members decorate their trains with Christmas lights, Christmas packages and mockups of Santa Claus, etc. The trains run on Friday and Saturday evening (after the Saturday run) to join the festivities going on in the park. The public will **NOT** be given rides during the evening runs. Members' families can ride, however.

We will also need crossing guards with flashlights at the crossings to keep people from crossing when a train approaches. It is a big event and requires cooperation from all members that can make themselves available. The trains will start running at approximately 6:00 or 6:30 PM.

Public Run Weekend

Saturday.....December 3rd 2005
Sunday.....December 4th 2005

Membership Meeting:...

After Saturday Public Run

Birthday Runs for December 2005

December 10 th , Saturday Open – Check Board in Clubhouse.	December 11 th , Sunday – Team 5 Afternoon: 2:30 to 3:30 PM
December 17 th , Saturday Afternoon: 3:15 to 4:15 PM	December 18 th , Sunday – Team 1 Afternoon: 3:00 to 4:00 PM
December 24 th , Saturday Christmas Eve	December 25 th , Sunday – Christmas
December 31 st , Saturday New Years Eve	January 1 st , Sunday New Years

Notice

► Greg Boden informed me that the Largo Hampton Inn will open on December 20th, 2005. Reservation number is 1-800-Hampton. We will discuss reservations further at the membership meeting.

► There are five Saturdays in December. We will **not** have any activities on the fifth Saturday due to the Christmas and New Year Holidays.

Happy Birthday to You!

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

Sandy Beard

Carolyn Behrens

Angelo Cantalupo

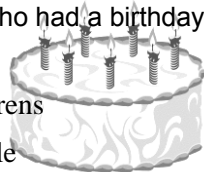
Teresa Conkle

Harold Powell

Brad Smith

Mark Zielinski

We may have missed your name because our records show no listing for your birthday. We are trying to get birthday dates and it looks like it is going to take some time. 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."



Prayers Are Needed

Member, Edie Watson, is in the hospital and is very ill. Please take a moment and say a prayer for this sweet lady who always has a big smile for everyone and never complains.

Renewal Membership

When I joined the LCRR in June 2005, I was appointed the membership chairperson. My goal is to present to the members an accurate Membership Listing.

After compiling a list from previous lists and calling several people, I came to the conclusion the best way to obtain an accurate list would be for members to complete a new application when paying dues for 2006 membership.

Payment of dues will start January 1st; therefore, in the December newsletter, an application will be included to renew your membership. Please follow instructions on the application.

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

Who is building What?

The captions on page 4 show the under carriage of a NYC 4-8-2 Mohawk L2-C locomotive constructed by member, Earl C. Mueller and his son, Conrad.

Earl started collecting parts for this rather large locomotive a number of years ago. While collecting castings and different parts, he noticed something unusual about these larger size locomotives. Many of them did not stay on the track. There was always trouble with the leading or trailing trucks. He was at a track in Georgia and noticed two large locomotives actually had their leading trucks removed in order to get around the track. Tight curves were not a problem because they were all greater than fifty-five degrees.

What gives? This question put Earl into high gear to find out, "What Gives".

The first thing he found out was many of the prints have wrong dimensions or no dimensions on the critical areas of the trucks. The makers of the prints did not know and expected the builder to find out by trial and error.

The second thing he found was something most of us have done in building a project. It is the, 'hurry up and get the locomotive running syndrome'. The idea is to fix any of the problems later. Well, later in this case is a nine hundred pound locomotive with a boiler and all the plumbing staring at you. It is almost impossible to diagnose or fix a problem under the boiler without it becoming a *federal case*. It's like they build automobiles now days – you put the radio and CD player on a stand and build the car around them.

This was not going to happen to Earl; he would use his *noggin* and take it one step at a time.

He first built a track with a fifty foot radius on a large piece of plywood to prove out his modifications on the leading truck. He spent considerable time to make mock-ups and templates as the building progressed. Earl is a meticulous mechanic and machinist. He kept going until he made it work the way he wanted it to. Caption one is the leading truck, - a work of art.

He started on the trailing truck and found areas where heavier metal for reinforcement was needed. He also made modification for easier equalization adjustments. Caption two is the carriage with the leading and trailing trucks attached. You really have to see it for yourself to appreciate the workmanship that went into this machine.

We now come to Caption three. The carriage is being pulled around the track at Largo Central Railroad. From left to right, Jack Outlaw and his box-cab engine, Conrad Mueller and Earl Mueller supplying the weight for the test. There was absolutely no trouble with the front truck. The rear truck had a spot where it was rubbing on the tighter curves. Earl took care of this and again tested the carriage at LCRR. It passed all tests better than expected.

Earl took the unit down to Manatee Family Lines on their Veterans' Day Meet. He started at Larry Smith's steaming bay that has an approximately 38 degree curve to the mainline. Earl knew he was at the limits of the trucks. The trucks took the curve and all the curves on the mainline without any trouble.

He now knows this part of the construction is working properly. His next step is to install the brake system, cylinders with pistons, crossheads and rods. The carriage will go back to the track for testing. If there is any trouble, he will know the added parts are causing it. The problem will be taken care of and then tested again. *One step at a time.*

If you are building a larger engine or contemplating on building one, you may want to get in touch with Earl and pick his brain. He is a good hearted chap and is always willing to help someone. Earl Mueller, 4954 36th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33710; Telephone, 727-525-9038; Email, earls-in@ij.net

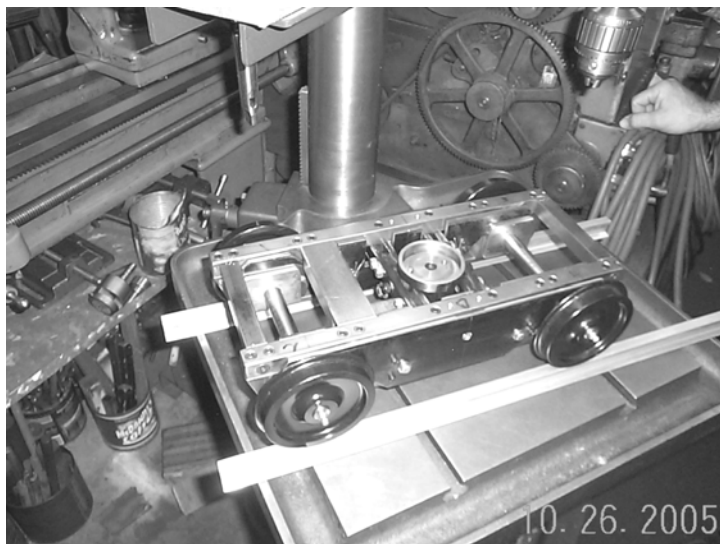
Good Luck, Earl.



Caption 2



Caption 3



Caption 1

Unpaid Political Announcement

In the last few issues of the newsletter, I have been writing about a member in the Board of Directors who has the same initials as your editor. This 'skell' has given me nothing but problems. **Do Not** – and I mean **DO NOT** vote for this *noodle kugel* for re-election to anything. He is a menace. *Thank you, Editor*

This unpaid political announcement does not in anyway implicate or express the opinion of the Chinese Government.

Have a great month! See you next time, Angie