

# LALS ENGINE BOOSTER



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ "NEWS OF YOUR FRIENDS" ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

September 2004

www.lals.org

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## President's Message

By Lew Soibelman



The Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum is elected each year with a mission to represent the entire membership. I am proud to be associated with the men on the Board who unselfishly give of themselves to serve the membership.

Each year four elected members are added to the Board. The members who have served two years and have fulfilled their term leave the Board to allow the new directors to take a position on the Board. The current members of the Board are from all walks of life and include professionals, businessman and retirees. They take responsibility for the management of our corporation very seriously when making decisions that affect the entire membership. The Board attempts to be as objective as possible when choices must be made. It is at time a very difficult task when a serious situation is addressed. There will always be a small percentage of members who are not pleased with a decision that has to be made.

It is important at this point to explain how the decisions made by the Board are relayed to others. The *Engine Booster* is mailed to all members (resident and non-resident), live steam clubs and other political and ancillary groups. Usually only 20-30 persons attend the Board and General Meetings. This makes it difficult for the Board to interface and discuss the concerns and decisions to be made with the majority of the members. Since only a fraction of our members are able to avail themselves of participating at the Board or General Meetings, the remaining members sometimes rely on all the information given to them as factual and relevant. This information is not the same as if one had heard it first hand. The truth has a strange way of changing as it travels from mouth to ear.

Recently, this appears to be a problem around our Museum. A small group of dissenting members has disseminated misinformation to others that causes consternation and discontent.

### Fall Meet Dinner Reservations

Included with the issue of the *Engine Booster* is the Saturday Night Dinner Reservation Form. If you will be attending this dinner, save yourself some time and pre-register now by filling out the form and sending it to Dan and Fran O'Brien. Pre-registering will get you stickers to reserve the seats of your choice.

The Board was informed over one year ago of an offer by Lindsey McDonald and the live steamers from Burnaby,

(Continued on page 5)

## Member Calendar

Sep. 4	<b>Change Directions</b>
Sep. 17	<b>PSR-NMRA Run</b>
Sep. 13	Board Meeting
Sep. 18	Work Day
	General Meeting
	<b>Nominations</b>
Sep. 25	Extra Workday
	<b>Potluck/Bi-directional Night Run</b>
<hr/>	
Oct. 1-3	<b>Fall Meet</b>
Oct. 4	Board Meeting

Board/General Meetings begin at 7:00 pm.  
Potluck/Night Runs begin at 6:00 pm.

## Public Service Schedule

Sep. 5	Public Rides
Sep. 12	Public Rides
Sep. 19	Public Rides
	Disney Barn Open
	Steam Plant Open
Sep. 26	Public Rides
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Oct. 10	Public Rides

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## Splinters from the Board

### August 9, 2004

By Donald Frozina

President Lew Soibelman called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm. Lew Soibelman asked Donald Frozina to take the minutes of the meeting since Secretary Bass was absent. All BOD members, except George Bass were present. The minutes from the July BOD meeting were approved as written. Rowland Fogarty presented the Treasurer's Report, which was also approved. Ron Bergmann reported for Secretary George Bass: six party requests were approved.

Steve Harris reported on two new resident members: Charlie Jett and Robert Quinn. Charlie Jett (later) introduced himself to the Board. Bernie Harris has completed probation. Steve asked the Board to formulate a Bylaws amendment to eliminate membership-related things we do not currently enforce. Steve also talked about shed credit. Several members have been putting down their starting time as 10:30 am. The Board reaffirmed their position that credit can only be accrued from 11:00 am on. The Board also discussed changing the public gate opening to 10:45 am.

Willie Wilhelm mentioned that the 10" seat height rule is a recommendation, and not an absolute. The Board decided that the host of any special run decides which line (high or valley) will be used exclusively with the other being locked out, and that all public rules will be in effect during the run. The motion passed with 6 "yes" votes and 1 "no" vote. Willie recommended that 100' sections of track be pulled up each week, the roadbed re-graded, and the track be re-layed to correct track issues. Willie talked about the brakes on the center bench cars. Rowland gave the breakdown of the costs of the brakes to date: vacuum: \$1,650.78; automatic air: \$618.16 for a total of \$2,268.94. The addition of a manually operated circuit breaker on the electric locomotive was again discussed. Willie reported that there are no legal requirements for a manual cutoff on electrical vehicles running under 60 volts; the electric locomotive runs at 30 volts.

(Continued on page 6)

## General Meeting Highlights

### August 21, 2004

By Donald Frozina

President Lew Soibelman called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm. Approximately 18 persons were in attendance.

Lew read Martin Becker's obituary from the newspaper.

Steve Waller got up and spoke about the success of the Toy Train Operating Society Run on August 14<sup>th</sup>. Steve mentioned that this was the 4<sup>th</sup> time TTOS has had their picnic at the Museum, and was the best. Steve thanked the members of both organizations for their help and support. Steve then introduced Larry Pearson, TTOS President, who made a presentation of an LGB "New Orleans" #952 street car model to LALS. President Soibelman accepted this donation on behalf of the Museum.

Lew announced the members of the Nominating Committee: Peter Fuad, Steve Harris, and Dick Jensen.

Lew reported that Jay Carsman sent a letter indicating that he would not be able to chair the Webb/Stutson Run this year. Lew has asked Roger Bacon to chair this run.

A committee, like last year, will organize this Fall Meet.

Lew reported for Sam Calderwood on today's workday activities: several track panels were worked on, a dutchman replaced, boiler water leak fixed, landscaping performed, souvenir stand painted, smaller gauge switch built to replace stub switch, smaller gauge prestle bents installed, and the new metal cabooses were prepped and packaged for shipment to the powder coaters.

Lew reviewed the happenings at the last BOD meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm.

### Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum Engine Booster

The *Engine Booster* is the monthly publication of the Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Museum/track are located in Griffith Park, 5202 Zoo Dr., Los Angeles, CA. Mailing address: PO Box 2156 Toluca Lake, CA 91610.

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### Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum Board of Directors 2004

**President**  
**Vice President**  
**Secretary**  
**Treasurer**



**Board Members**

Lew Soibelman  
Ron Bergmann  
George Bass  
Rowland Fogarty

Eric Fields  
Dave Johnson  
Fred Lack  
Doug Young

Phone 323/661-8958

FROM THE **General Superintendent**

By Sam Calderwood



Well, I would like to thank all that showed up for the workday. We had a small but mighty crew this weekend. The track gang fixed the lead into the station and repaired the track going to the west end. We had a broken water line that was driving me nuts, but we found the problem and all is well with the water. We also got a final coat of paint on our new souvenir stand, boy does it look sharp. Some guys just love to paint.

When you are working around the Museum please **DON'T DUMP DIRT IN THE GREEN PILE!!!!** They will not pick up our green waste if it is full of dirt or rocks and broken concrete. Dump all of this stuff in the pit that is just in front of the green waste pile.

Gary Baker came to out aid on Saturday, he had the magic key to feed us all. Thanks Gary for you life saving help—some of us were fading away to nothing. Next month is the last workdays before the Fall Meet. We will have **TWO** workdays please come for both. Next workday is in 18<sup>th</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup> Lunch is free for all of those who come out and work for 4 hours.

All new members make sure to fill out your time cards so you'll get credit for your probation. I don't want to see people kicked out because they forgot to fill out a time card.

## Smaller Gauge Trestle Reopens

By Ted Berg  
Photo by Willie Wilhelm



All small gauge tracks will be open for the Fall Meet. The east outer loop has been temporarily closed for an upgrade of the trestle. New steel

bents (under supports) are installed with side supports thanks to Chris Mahony, John DeRosa and David Markowski. Please bring out all your smaller gauge engines and cars. Let's make this Fall Meet a big one for us "little guys"!

## "All Aboard" for the Fall Meet

By Donald Frozina



Shine up your steamers, diesels and electrics: the Fall Meet is fast approaching! As like last year's Fall Meet, this year's Meet will be organized by a committee.

Dan and Fran O'Brien will handle the Saturday Night Banquet, Gary Baker will handle the portable restrooms and ice, Jim Baker will handle waste management, Dick Brennan will handle unloading and loading, Donald Frozina will handle the gate and photos, Eric Fields will handle locomotive registration, Mike Romanucci will handle the Kountry Kitchen, Chuck Mohr and Ray Secara will handle the raffle, Joe Powell will handle the President's Auction, and Donna Skowronski will handle souvenirs.

If you will be camping out on the Museum grounds during the Meet, a suggested extra donation of \$5/day for trailers and \$2/day for tents would be greatly appreciated.

## Steaming Bays ≠ Ashtrays

By Lew Soibelman



In my recent tours of the facility I have noticed an increase in cigarette butts thrown on the ground, especially around the steaming bays. As cigarette butts are not very biodegradable, please throw your cigarette butts into a metal trash can after they are extinguished. Doing so will alleviate many man-hours of time in picking them up.

## Nominating Committee

By Donald Frozina

At the August BOD meeting, the members of the Nominating Committee were appointed. The appointees are: Peter Fuad, Steve Harris and Dick Jensen.

Their task is to locate and recommend at least 6 resident members in good standing to run for the four BOD seats being vacated at the end of the year.

If you are approached by a member of the Nominating Committee, please consider donating your time and energy to a position on the Board!

## Engineers and Conductors July 2004

Date/Passengers	Engineer	Conductor	Engine Owner
07/04/2004	Doug Ward	Larry Sack	LALS
935 passengers	Chris Solak	John Newbill	Solak
	Peter Fuad	Gail Woodward	Fuad
	Al Way	Fred Geirrine	Way
	Tracey Beattie	Sam Calderwood	Beattie
	Roger Bacon	Fred Lack	LALS
	Mike Murphy	Duncan Cushing	Murphy
	Andrew Held	Andy Skowronski	Burdorf
	Andy Blake	Bart Sissons	Sissons
	Fred Lack	Roger Bacon	LALS

Opening Station Master/Opening Site Manager: Eric Fields  
Station Assistant: Pat Miller

07/11/2004	Roger Bacon	Ted Naimy	LALS
1,306 passengers	Chris Solak	Mike Murphy	Solak
	Steve Harris	Bernie Harris	S. Harris
	Ron Bergmann	J. DePhillip/F. Geirrine	Bergmann
	Doug Ward	Larry Sack	LALS
	Peter Fuad	Roberto Lopez	Fuad
	Rory Hawkins	Rob Lamont	Hawkins
	Sam Calderwood	Tracey Beattie	Calderwood
	Andrew Held	Tom Downing	Burdorf

Opening Station Master/Opening Site Manager: Eric Fields  
Station Assistant: Pat Miller

07/18/2004	Ted Naimy	Gail Woodward	Naimy
1,061 passengers	Roger Bacon	P. Fowler/C. Westphal/L. Mitchell	LALS
	Peter Fuad	Roberto Lopez	Fuad
	Al Way	P. Miller/R. Hawkins	Way
	Chris Solak	Andrew Held	Solak
	Bonnie Kaufman	M. Gibson/DJ Sandler	Kaufman
	Mike Murphy	Monica Gibson	Kaufman

Opening Station Master/Opening Site Manager: Eric Fields

07/25/2004	Ted Naimy	T. Moore/M. Bruce	Naimy
927 passengers	Peter Fuad	Roberto Lopez	Fuad
	Al Way	Thys Way	A. Way
	Doug Ward	F. Geirrine/T. Crawford	LALS
	Roger Bacon	<i>unknown</i>	LALS
	Ron Bergmann	Larry Mitchell	Bergmann
	Chris Solak	Fred Geirrine	Solak

Opening Station Master/Opening Site Manager: Dick Brennan

4,229 Total passenger for month  
24,584 Total passengers for year to date

## Women In Railroading

By Diana Manchester



"All Girls Like Trains" declared the vintage advertisement for train stewardesses at a recent exhibit at the San Diego Model Railroad Museum. The International Society

of Women in Railroading (ISPWR) sponsored The Harvey Girl Symposium at the Museum August 8-9. Interspersed between the panoramic O-scale, HO-scale and Lionel layouts were women and men dressed in period costumes, railroad collectibles for sale, and exhibits depicting railroad history including the Harvey House story, train advertising and women in railroading. But the real stars of the show were actual Harvey Girls (one was 93 years young!!) and other HH employees who were honored at a special luncheon and awards ceremony. Several retired Harvey Girls regaled the appreciative audience with their experiences during the glory days of the Santa Fe Railroad.

Entrepreneur Fred Harvey, appalled at the lack of decent amenities for rail travelers headed West, struck a deal with the AT&SF Railroad in 1876 to build fine restaurants and hotels along their routes. His high standards brought culture, comfort and fine cuisine to whistle stops all across the West. The AT&SF line flourished and the Harvey Girls became known as "the women who civilized the West."

Our Fall Meet is just around the corner and it would be fun to do something special and/or historical. Your ideas, questions AND presence are needed!! Anyone who is interested in the Santa Fe Railroad, the Harvey House and Harvey Girls, women in railroading or in period costuming, please contact Bonnie Kaufman at 626/833-9315.

## Training Classes

**Conductor:** Want to learn to be a conductor? Call Gary Burdorf at 310/573-2019, or Kevin O'Neill at 661/259-6586 to schedule a class. There is an excellent video available to either borrow or own (\$5). The conductor class typically meets on a Sunday.

**Diesel Engineer:** Want to learn to operate the organization's diesel locomotives? Call Gary Burdorf at 310/573-2019, or Kevin O'Neill at 661/259-6586 to schedule a class. The diesel class typically meets on a Saturday with the Check Ride on the following Sunday. Note: You must have completed all your conductor requirements to attend this class.

**Steam Engineer:** Want to learn to operate the organization's steam locomotive? Call Kevin O'Neill at 661/259-6586 to schedule a class. Note: You must have completed all your diesel engineer requirements to attend this class.

**President's Message** (Continued from page 1)

BC, to assist us in our endeavor to build an electric locomotive which would be a replica of their locomotives. Willie Wilhelm was appointed chairman of this project and was given approval to proceed. At midyear (2004) and at a cost of approximately \$15,500.00, the Museum welcomed the locomotive and its control car into our stable of railroad equipment. Automatic air brakes will add the final touch to the five center bench public riding cars that are designated to offer our Sunday passengers a safe ride.

I am writing about this locomotive so that the entire membership will be aware of a persistent problem that continues regardless of the actions of the Board. One of our members has proposed adding a circuit breaker/switch in the new electric locomotive. It would be installed in the main power line in series with the existing fuses, contactor and controller. His objective is to have a manual cable from the control car to the locomotive so that there would be a way to disconnect primary power in the event of a simultaneous failure of both the contactor and the controller; i.e., the contactor has welded closed (on) and the controller has failed in a closed (on) manner. The proposal was reviewed two separate times by the Board and rejected. The membership needs to know the basis for this rejection, particularly due to the continued agitation to install such a switch.

The contactor is a switch operated by a coil that is used to shut off the primary power when needed either in an emergency or when putting the locomotive away for the day. The controller provides the means for the engineer to control the speed and braking of the locomotive. The fuses provide additional protection in the event of a current overload.

The contactor is a heavy-duty current device that can break a current of 1,500 amperes, much above the 200 amperes maximum the locomotive draws. It has been argued that the contactor's contacts can get dirty, creating a problem. The air pressure inside the locomotive is higher than the outside air, so that dirt cannot come up inside the hood. A failure of this contactor is very unlikely. The controller is designed such that the most likely failure is an open circuit. The result is that the probability that either the contactor or controller will fail in a closed manner is extremely low, plus the even lower probability that they would both fail at the same time.

A specification of the US Department of Energy Transportation Technology for low speed vehicles specifies that no such switch is needed below a battery voltage of 60 volts. Our battery voltage in the electric locomotive is 30 volts.

At Descanso Gardens in La Canada, there are four Taylor Dunn electric vehicles, three electric golf carts (a two, four and six seater) and none of them have any manual disconnect switch. Also there is an electric forklift, which also does not have a manual disconnect switch. Our electric locomotive is certainly not an electric car that zips along the

**The Firebox**

By John Smith



The BOD met on the 9<sup>th</sup> to discuss ways to cut the budget for next year, since the dues increase did not pass. Give the board or me any advice you have. Don't leave any thought out. A few little changes could add up greatly. I think that a donation when we pay dues would really help.

We now have a very functional souvenir stand thanks to Roger Bacon. He had his men build the stand using his own materials and an air conditioner supplied by Steve Altmayer. It is just beautiful, go check it out. And we need to thank Donna for staffing the Sunday sales. She seems to handle things well and has a good personality. Go and meet her if you haven't already. You'll make a good new friend.

We also have the Kountry Kitchen open again thanks to Mike Romanucci and his helpers. Mike has a big selection of snacks and cooks a good burger. All his snacks are just 50 cents so I always donate the rest of a dollar to the Museum. That is one of those little things that could add up.

Martin Becker passed away on Friday, August 13<sup>th</sup>. He will be missed by everyone who knew him. Martin, age 49, left us way to early. He left behind his loving wife Diane and two children, Mike and Gabriella. God bless you.

freeway at 65 MPH, but rather it lumbers along our track at four to six MPH.

Statements have been made in regard to our financial soundness by a small group of members. Our financial records have been excellent, always above board and posted along with Board minutes every month in the Union Pacific caboose. These consist of two copies; one is clipped on the wall and the other set is placed in the special notebook above the mailboxes. These documents are always available for our members to review at all times. It has also been suggested by this small group that these books be audited. The existing Board would welcome any such inspection. An agreed to, qualified committee, approved by the membership, could undertake this.

If any other problems, questions or suggestions regarding Museum business arise, please ask a Board member or come to a Board or General Membership Meeting for discussion and clarification. This approach will get your issue(s) resolved in a straightforward manner!

The Board has many difficult and time consuming tasks that it performs and it needs the cooperation and support of the membership in fulfilling its obligations. A spirit of cooperation and friendliness will enable us to enjoy this wonderful and satisfying hobby!

### Splinters from the Board *(Continued from page 2)*

Donna Skowronski asked the Board to limit the number of keys that can open the souvenir stand. Only 3 keys will be available: souvenir stand manager, key master and the president. Donna will do the ordering for the stand.

Dave Johnson presented the safety plan. Suggestions by Eric Fields were reviewed and discussed. A new committee was appointed to review the plan. The members are: Eric Fields, Rowland Fogarty, and Peter Fuad.

Lew Soibelman proposed the following members for the Nominating Committee: Peter Fuad, Steve Harris, and Dick Jensen. Dave Johnson so moved and Rowland Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Rowland Fogarty presented a list of items that could be changed/modified to reduce expenses, or to increase revenue for the Museum. 1) Kountry Kitchen: Provide a hamburger (or hot dog), chips and a drink for a \$4.00 donation. No action taken. 2) Sodas: Raise fee to \$1.00. So moved by Ron Bergmann and seconded by Rowland Fogarty. The motion passed unanimously. 3) Steam Plant & Boiler Water: No change. 4) Souvenir Stand: Pass on the sales tax directly to the customers. No action taken. 5) Point of Sale Terminal: To improve inventory control and provide credit card service. Rowland Fogarty to continue research. Tabled. 6) Parties: Charge a fee for having parties at the Museum. Dave Johnson moved and Rowland Fogarty seconded to charge \$100.00 per party, effective with any new request. The motion passed with 6 "yes" and 1 "no". 7) Engine Booster: Establish an *Engine Booster* Subscription category for \$5.00 over the actual costs of printing and mailing the *Engine Booster*. Tabled. 8) Restroom Cleaning Service: Drop the current vendor and have members clean the restrooms. No change. 9) Parking Permits: Establish parking fees for the inner lot and along Crystal Springs Drive. No change. 10) Personal Storage: Charge members who have personal storage cabinets at the Museum. No change. 11) Employee Costs: No action taken. 12) Shed Lease Fees: Change the lease rates. Tabled.

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 pm.

## In Memoriam

*By Donald Frozina*

Martin Becker, a 6-year member of the Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum, passed away on August 13, 2004. Martin was the Membership Chairperson for the last 2 years, and was instrumental in starting the Modeler and Member of the Month programs that ran last year. Martin's primary business was special effects for the film industry. Martin was also co-owner of Coles Power Models. Memorial services were held on August 28<sup>th</sup> at St. Marks Episcopal Church in Glendale.

## Souvenir Stand Completed

*By Donald Frozina  
Photos by Donald Frozina*



Roger Bacon and his crew recently completed our new portable souvenir stand. The stand was sketched by Donald Frozina, who also wrote the FCR, and the

full set of building plans were produced by Dave Johnson and his crew of designers. The stand is small in size so that it can be moved as needed on its skids. The stand will improve the efficiency of the sale of Museum t-shirts and logo patches, along with other logo-related items.

Roger was the project manager and oversaw the ordering of materials, building, wiring, and painting. (Of course Roger lent his own elbow grease in doing these things too!) Color schemes were presented at the August 2004 General Member Meeting, and the one most favored was used on the stand.



Donna Skowronski will be staffing the stand on public run days and during special Museum events.

Also contributing were: Steve Altmayer (air conditioning), Dave Artinian (locks), Dave Clark (painting), Rowland Fogarty (demolition), Joe Hayes (painting), Chuck Mohr (floor tile) and John Smith (electrical).

## For Sale

**4¾" gauge (1" scale) self-contained riding "speeder"** this is a stable machine, 1 freight truck and 1 powered axle under a heavy frame, \$300.00. Will deliver to LALS. Contact Joe Powell, 702/434-8710.

*For Sale ads are limited to current members and are printed on a space-available basis.*

# LALS 2004 Fall Meet Dinner Reservation Form

Fill out the name of each person attending:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

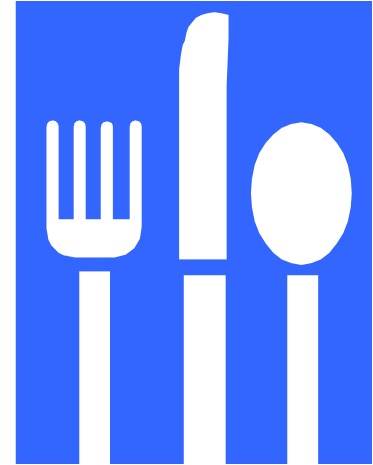
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Total the number of dinners and complete the following:

# \_\_\_\_\_ dinners @ \$15/dinner = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ total

Please make your check payable to "LALS" and remit the total amount calculated above by September 24, 2004 to:

**LALS 2004 Fall Meet Dinner Reservations**  
**c/o Dan and Fran O'Brien**  
**9652 Duke Drive**  
**Westminster, CA 92683-6954**



Caterer: **Chris' & Pitt's Bar-B-Q**  
Includes: **Ribs, chicken, salad, dessert, and a drink**

Pre-registering will get you stickers to reserve the seats of your choice

For more information, please contact:  
Dan or Fran O'Brien  
714/531-2253