

LOCO NEWS

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Tunnel Portals

This project received a massive jump start during the last week in October, thanks to *Gene, Truman, and Earl*. *Earl* had donated enough rock to do at least one, maybe both, tunnel portals; and the three spent several days taking multiple pickup loads from behind *Earl's* house to the track. It has all been transported and is awaiting placement. During a Saturday work session, *Earl* set some rocks in place using different methods for comparison. On the left (west) side, the rock was laid flat like what one most often sees in rock walls. On the right (east) side, the rock was placed on edge which covers more area per rock and ensures that both portals would be covered with the available rock. Comments received so far favor the "flat" method by about 5:1. However, the jury is still out. If you have a preference, please let it be known soon. The goal is to have at least one portal done by the end of November, so a decision will need to be made within a week or so.



Hello to all. This is the last article I will be writing as the president of LOCO. After six years of helping to lead this fine club, it's time to hang up the president's badge and turn it over to some folks with new ideas. So, I would like to talk a little bit about what is happening around the track and then finish with a couple thoughts.

THE LOOP

We've made tremendous progress on the LOOP down front. *Lloyd Cowger* brought his mini Bob Cat out to the track several times and did a superb job taking dirt from the west side where it wasn't needed to the east side where it was needed as fill. Dirt moved, Lloyd "attacked" the east side with a vengeance and smoothed the new right of way to prepare it for final grading work. After *Lloyd* had worked his magic, *Robert Swift* and *Delbert Scott* spent a day with transit and grade stakes to set the final grade. *Lloyd* had done such a fine job that only minor regrading was necessary. Then, with all of the dirt work done, *Joe, Truman, Gene, Brian, Earl,* and *Spencer* worked marking the final "bottom-of-tie" grade. When you see the tops of red painted stakes in the middle of small piles of gravel along the center line of the right of way, you'll know these folks were there. They also helped install the railroad tie walls and the landscaping timber walls needed on the West side.

Since we have the right of way staked out to show bottom of tie, we can change our way of laying track just a little bit. From here, *Gene* made a jig 2' X 8' and 1.5 inches high that we can use to put ballast at the correct height in between the stakes. This will be the sub-ballast, and we can put it down and level it at the same time. Once we have it down, all we need to do is put the track panels directly on top of the compacted sub-ballast and then finish with a topcoat of ballast between the ties.

Since we wanted to keep as many trees as possible, the track on the west side along the driveway goes outside the line of trees for about 40 feet and then cuts back in. A retaining wall of railroad ties was put between the new track and the current loop running from the driveway to Huth Hollow. Because the new, lower part of the loop runs between some excellent shade trees, we exca-

vated around them and then created "boxes" of landscaping timbers to keep the dirt in place for them. This part of the project was finished the third weekend in October.

The West Coast rail jig is almost complete. *Delbert* had to machine a few more thousandths off the aluminum rail holders, and *Gene* is just about ready to install them. Once in place, we can begin the process of building track panels for the loop. Since we do not yet have a rail bender for this size rail, *Dave Suenram* has graciously offered the use of his until we can get one of our own.

Now, as the track will consist of different types of rail, special adapter plates are necessary for those places where the dissimilar rails join. *Truman Hefner* came up with the design and made a prototype from which *Roy Kline* manufactured a suitable amount to do the loop plus a few more connections. Problem solved!

The last piece of the groundwork that needed to have been accomplished before the ballast went down was the placement of the bridge on the northeast side of the loop. On Oct 29, *Gene* and *Truman* excavated the footer for the bridge piers. Then *Gene, Brian,* and *Joe* selected a set of two double railroad ties that will be used for the end piers and then put them into place. The bridge was tentively set on the piers to check for any final adjustment. As of this writing, the bridge has been set on the piers but still needs to be leveled and set to the correct grade. Two or four bolt holes will be drilled in each end of the bridge, and lag bolts will be installed to secure the bridge to the piers.

Of course, before we can get serious about laying track on the loop, several West Coast rail switches have to be built. *Truman* is currently working the plans to make this happen and is busy locating the material needed to build the points. Additionally, a few months ago *Gene* built new patterns for frogs that can be used with the West Coast rail; and the club had some castings made. *Truman* is completing the final calculations on how these need to be machined. One good thing is that the switch machine situation is under control. The team of *Joe, Roy, Delbert,* and *Dave* completed the machine work/parts for six switch machines and will complete another six in the near future.

So, we are getting much closer to making that additional 700 feet of running a reality. If enough members could come out to the track, we might even be able to put some track in before the snow flies this year. If not, it's going to take a bit longer.

BRIDGE WALKWAYS

Roy Kline was able to cut a majority of the pieces needed to begin fabrication of the walkways that will go on either side of the truss bridge. Since the club liked the "open" feeling going over the bridge, we decided to go with metal "open" decking. All the metal was already purchased, but the support tubing needed to be cut to size, and it will still need to be welded together. This project is progressing well.

NEW SIGNS ON THE WAY

With all the new main-line track and sidings being added to the track, the time has come to mark the "places." To date, *Truman* has cut enough material for about 60 signs, *Joe* has welded the pieces together, and *Gene's* son, who works for a powder coating company, has been able to have the 50 of them done. Now we need names so the lettering can be cut and the signs put in place. Make your ideas/suggestions known ASAP!!!

WIRING FOR THE SIGNAL LIGHTS

Charles Parker and *Brian Lacock* have been working hard to get 110-volt service to the train control box at the crossing south of the station area. Power is required to the

box so that *Bob Bogardus* can hook up the electronics needed to get operational flashing lights into the full-sized train signals. Additionally, *Bob* and *Robert Bogardus* have been working for months installing concrete piers for a light system that will allow us to run bidirectional with little or no intervention by a tower operator over the radio. How neat this is going to be!!!

OKC TRAIN SHOW

Brian Lacock has graciously accepted the challenging job of being the 2005 LOCO Train Show coordinator. His goal is to make this the best show so far, but he WILL need YOUR HELP! This will include getting equipment and supplies to the fairgrounds, setting it all up, manning the displays during the show, then taking things down and putting it all away after the show. ALL MEMBERS NEED TO VOLUNTEER THEIR SERVICES FOR THIS PROJECT FROM FRIDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 2, THROUGH SUNDAY NIGHT, DECEMBER 4. And as we have done the past-few years, we will have both a club display and a picture taking display. Give your participation some thought now and expect to hear from *Brian* real soon!

Joe



Things Done



Left: The new girder bridge is in place awaiting track.

Below: New right-of-way on "shady lane," thanks to the new tree "boxes."





CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

November 6
First Sunday Fun Run
LOCO track

***December 10**
President's open meeting
LOCO track

***November 12**
President's open meeting
LOCO track

January 1
First Sunday Fun Run
LOCO track

December 3-4
Oklahoma City Train Show
OKC Fairgrounds

***January 14**
President's open meeting
LOCO track

Every Saturday
Work session
LOCO track

NOTE: Everyone is invited to meet at Ashley's in MWC every Saturday at 8 a.m. for breakfast before heading to the track for a productive day.

*The President's open business meeting will be conducted during lunch (around noon) at the track on the second Saturday of each month.

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ABOUT LOCO

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