

LOCO NEWS

January 2007



Volume 20, No. 1

Words From the Top

The President

It is hard to believe, but here we are entering into a new year and looking forward to more fun at LOCO. In fact, having more fun at the track will be one of our 2007 goals! Another goal is to establish new and effective safety procedures. Some changes are also in the works, but one you have already seen is LOCO NEWS. Not only does it have a new look, but our intention is to publish it monthly in order to keep members as current as possible on LOCO concerns. Another change is that the Board of Directors will hold

regular meetings. The meetings will take place at 11:00 a.m. on the first Saturday of each month. While these will be open, in accord with the LOCO by-laws, only board members will be able to discuss issues and vote. A general membership meeting will take place at 12:30 p.m. following the board meetings. Please support your club by coming out for the Saturday work days and by attending the meetings.

Truman Hefner

The Secretary

First, you will not want to miss the general membership meeting to take place in our "new" meeting room at 12:30 p.m. on January 6. The new year for LOCO will begin with three newly elected officers and three returns.

Second, in regard to the "new" meeting room, the club-house living room has been cleaned out and refurbished; and the old furnishings must go. The idea is to conduct a "garage sale auction" where any interested

member is invited to send e-mail bids. At the next general membership meeting, additional bids will be taken from the floor. Then the e-mail bids will be opened; and the highest bidder gets his stuff! Items not sold through this bidding process will be advertised in a local paper, donated, or scrapped. Please look over the pictures and descriptions and e-mail you bids to: harvbrennann@brightok.net.

Finally, don't forget the January 7 public fun run from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Your support is needed to make it a success. See you there.

Harvey Cannon

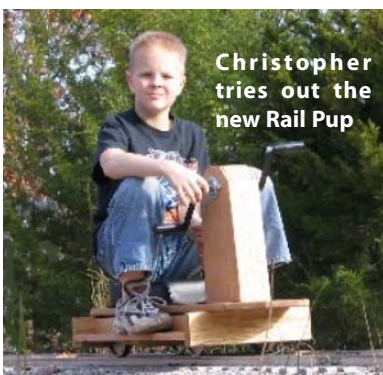
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Foster Kid's Run

In the evening of December 12, Charles, Delbert, Art, Truman, and Brian showed up at Vo-Tech in Oklahoma City with the Double Aught to give thirty plus foster children a Christmas party they will probably never forget. The festivities began with pictures aboard Double Aught; then, thanks to the Pipe Fitters Union, 40, two-foot Christmas Stockings were presented to each of the children. After the party, the group was invited to the LOCO track for a ride on the rails.

On Sunday, December 17, those who had accepted the invitation—13 adults and 24 kids—showed up at the track for an afternoon of train fun. While Brenda got busy passing out hot chocolate and cookies, Truman went to work supervising the train operations. Charlie performed his normal station manager duties while Art ran the GP-7 with John as his conductor. In the meantime, Stephen offered the seats of the "Big Red" train; and Jason and Brian continued working with Double Aught. One of the highlights for the kids was their getting a chance to take the "Rail Pup" for a spin. For those who have not seen it, the Rail Pup is a new, hand-operated riding car recently donated to the club.

I know I have left some folks out because, being a relatively new member, I must admit there were members there I did not know. At any rate, as a result of this event, we picked up at least one new member. It is at events like this where we show what we are all about—offering a service and having fun doing it. Thanks to everyone who helped to make LOCO really shine!



Along the LOCO Rails Easel for LOCO

Many times during meetings and lunches members actively discuss plans for both new and ongoing projects. In order to facilitate these exchanges, several years ago the club installed a white board to put down those random thoughts of greatness. However, something more was needed; and a large tablet of poster-sized paper was attached to the east wall. That left something to be desired because it was hard to turn the pages to get a new sheet of paper. Recently, *Gene Berger* came to the rescue by building an easel for the club to use during these thought sessions. Three toots of the LOCO whistle to *Gene* for this new brain-storming tool.

Train Show

Between the snow that had pretty much shut things down just a few days before and the reduced amount of equipment available for display, it looked like the 2006 Oklahoma Train Show was going to be a bust for the club. However, such was not the case. Although the attendance was down by some 15 percent, when all was said and done, the LOCO photo booth had realized several hundred dollars MORE than in 2005. A big part of that was due to Jason McManus agreeing to be the dedicated computer operator and putting his talents to work producing new photo offerings that included a Christmas border with a customized message. Then there was the LOCO "sweaty" Santa. Charlie Parker had agreed to wear a Santa suit and pose with the kids. Unfortunately, the suit was hot, hot, HOT! But to his credit, Charlie stuck it out (probably lost ten pounds) and put many a smile on the faces of the Junior Engineers who posed aboard Double Aught.

LOCO and Money

By Joe Fawcett

Bottom line—LOCO needs money to operate. It takes around \$19,000 a year to maintain the house, the buildings, the infrastructure, and, of course, the track. Membership dues are nowhere close to this figure, so other sources of revenue have been and always will be necessary. Let's examine our current money makers:

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE - Good for around \$3,000 a year but is dependant on the number of hours LOCO members donate as well as ORM continuing to sponsor the event and inviting LOCO to participate.

SWITCH MACHINES - While putting an extra \$1,000 into the LOCO account each year is certainly a good thing, during the decade the club has been making switch machines, the profits have shown a steady decline. Not only that, the entire operation revolves around just a few members who have the necessary machining equipment, expertise, and time—plus it's LOTS of work! On top of that, there have been increasing problems and costs getting the castings. In short, this is quickly becoming a questionable activity.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES - On the good side is that this is an all-profit operation. That is, they take place on site, and the club spends nothing to make them happen—the only investment being members' time. Annual incomes have been in the \$1,200 range, and the potential for much more is there. However, the down side is that birthday parties increase our exposure; and as several clubs have recently discovered, it only takes one lawsuit to shut everything down. While our 501(c)(3) status requires public involvement, we can certainly mitigate the situation by being safety minded at ALL times. Truman and the board will be addressing this vital issue in order to keep this activity

viable. PLEASE don't work around their efforts!

TRAIN SHOW PICTURES - Thanks to the efforts of several members, LOCO has realized upwards of \$800 a year after expenses simply taking pictures of kids sitting on Double Aught at the train show. When you consider this only involves two days a year, it is definitely a solid money maker for the club. As of now, the club, through some timely donations and expenditures, owns a computer and printer. The only big expense left is a good digital camera. After that, the only expenses will be for materials like photo paper and such. This is a keeper that deserves more attention in order to maximize profits.

As you can see, not all of our current money-making activities offer guaranteed incomes for LOCO. We will need to be exploring other sources of revenue. One currently in the works is a portable track to be taken to various locations such as other train shows or malls where it can be quickly set up for kids to buy tickets to operate or ride on small electric locomotives or small hand crank cars. In fact, the club already owns the proper equipment, a Super Mack and a Rail Pup, an easy to operate, kid-sized, hand-cranked car. Once the initial expenses have been met, it is an all-profit deal. I am aware of at least one club that makes around 30K each year doing mall rides during the Christmas season. The only thing required is the donation of members' time.

But it can't stop with Thomas the Tank, switch machines, birthday parties, picture taking, and portable track. There are sure to be other ideas out there on how we can generate cash flow for the club. If you have one, please pass it on to the board. Who knows? Maybe YOU already have the money solution for LOCO!

AND SPEAKING OF MONEY . . .

Don't forget that your 2007 dues must be received no later than January 31. The roster will be finalized as of February 1, so please don't go missing! Send your dues check to:

**Earl Bean
6409 Beaver Creek Rd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73162**

LOCO Projects

The year 2006 was a good one for LOCO projects. Among them were getting the front loop operational, realigning and landscaping the Dolese siding, continuing the prep work for the high-line, not to mention the new landscaping and scale buildings that appeared along the right-of-way. Here are updates on some of the latest and greatest.

MAINLINE TRACK - Expanded tree roots, rotted ties, worn rail, and poor drainage had dictated that the road bed between the diamond and the 4S bridge be rebuilt and the track replaced. Tackling the project were *Truman*, *Gene* (and *Sugar*), *Robert Simmons*, and *Stephen McClure*. Together they made sure that the ride through the woods would be a smooth one for years to come.

SWITCH REPLACEMENT - The switch at Main Yard South had been an issue for some time and was found to be seriously out of gauge due to rotted ties. *Truman* and *Harvey* insured smooth running by rebuilding the switch and returning it to the highest of LOCO standards.

WELL HOUSE AND WATER LINE - This project had actually been long in coming, but what finally got it off the ground was the replacement of the leaking water line between the house and the well made necessary by the SWLS meet in June. One thing led to another, and the *Charlie/Delbert* team were soon revamping the well house plumbing. In the process, they discovered how REALLY rotted the well house was; so down it came. Although the finishing touches like siding and a new roof remain, the well and plumbing are now protected against winter's freezing temps.

LOCO — A Family Affair

By Joe Fawcett

I knew I was among friends from my first briefing on the LOCO equipment when *Robert Swift* said the most important thing about a steam engine is “water, water, and more water,” and *Truman* set me at the throttle of the GP-7. However, I also realized that LOCO was a family organization with trains being the binding agent holding all together. As my association with LOCO progressed, I have become ever more convinced that LOCO is evolving into an even greater family unit. Whether young or maturing (which, by the way, is just a matter of perspective), the bottom line is that it matters not who you are—parent, grandparent, kid, or grandkid—or where you are from. What matters is that you like trains and enjoy working together on meaningful projects related to trains!

What got me thinking about all of this are the images of LOCO members and their families that keep rolling around in my head as I sit thousands of miles away. To name just a few: I see three generations of the *Bean* clan running trains all at the same time; I see *Gene* with his daughter and grandkids at the track helping finish the Dolese siding; I see *Delbert's* grandkids running the GP-7 around the track and the engine getting away from them and one running as he could to catch it; I see *Brian*

and *Christopher* working together laying track and running trains; I see *Brenda* and her granddaughter planting and watering; and I see so many other members and their families working and having fun together. Then there are the pictures being sent to me like the ones of *Steve McClure* creating another three-generation train family by giving his new daughter, *Shyann Rose*, her first ever train ride.

But what does this mean for you and LOCO? Well, each generation learns from the previous one; and when our younger folks are out at the track, they are getting lessons in life values. They are exposed to people from all walks of life, and they can tune in to conversations that range from building and racing dune buggies to how to repair parts for a steam engine and the processes necessary to accomplish the task. And to think, all is accomplished while doing productive work instead of sitting in front of a TV! Yes, the kids coming to the track do receive mental stimulation. Beyond that, the club taps into their young, creative minds. Simply put, LOCO is providing an excellent environment for family and friends to grow and enjoy quality time involved in productive and meaningful activities. You owe it to yourself and your family to continue coming out for some really unique, fun-filled quality time!

Items Up For Bid

You are sure to have seen these things but probably never gave them much thought. Well, now the club has found it necessary to “clean house,” and you can help! Look over the following “offerings” and decide if you can make use of any of it.



Drapery Rods



Drapes (need serious cleaning)

WATER AND ELECTRICITY TO PEE-

WEE PARK - Like was said, one thing leads to another. In the process of digging out the LOCO lake, it was discovered the water and power lines to Pee-Wee Park had been installed incorrectly and were deteriorated to the point of being unusable. *Sugar*, supervising *Truman*, *Gene*, and the *Dr. B*, made sure new lines were installed and that frost-free water taps and new power outlets were made available for use.

TIES, TIES, AND MORE TIES -

Because there always seems to be a need for used railroad ties at LOCO, *Truman*, *Gene*, *Harvey*, and *Art* took on a long-term project to get them. In a series of trips to ORM, they retrieved over 65 ties and stacked them NEATLY on the west side of the property where they would be out of the way but easily accessible.

MEETING SPACE - The time had come to provide adequate space for more than a few members to meet and visit. The place to start was the old living room in the house, and the first order of business was to set aside all of the furnishings for eventual sale or disposal. The next thing was to drag the old wood-burning stove out and replace it with the book case. Now, while just taking down the old blinds, removing the storm windows, and washing the windows did wonders for the lighting in the room, *Gene* got busy installing new fluorescent ceiling lights and painting appropriate surfaces. The clean and bright room can now seat 16 eating and meeting folks and more if the tables are replaced with chairs.



Matching Lamps



Lamp (collector's item)



Director's Chair



Overstuffed Chair



Clock



Matching Chairs (one in good shape, other needs repair)



Book Case



Fireplace Tools



Fireplace (in good shape)



14-inch TV



17-inch TV

If you are interested in being the new owner of any of these items, do one of two things:

1. Send your bid(s) via e-mail to Harvey Cannon: harvbrenn@brightok.net
2. Make your bid(s) in person at the Membership Meeting at the track at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, January 6.

NOTE: Be prepared to take items home after the January 6 meeting. Items not sold through bids will be available for purchase by LOOC members until either sold or donated to an outside organization.

ABOUT LOCO

LOCO NEWS

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS

Resident — \$100
Associate — \$25 (optional
for anyone living more than
60 miles from the LOCO
facility)



Calendar of Events

Scheduled Events

January

- 6 - Saturday
Board Meeting, 11:00 a.m.
Membership Meeting, 12:30 p.m.
- 7 - Sunday
Public Fun Run, 11:00 a.m.

February

- 3 - Saturday
Board Meeting, 11:00 a.m.
Membership Meeting, 12:30 p.m.
- 4 - Sunday
Public Fun run, 11:00 a.m.

Proposed Events

(Times and dates to be announced)

Membership trip to the Railroad Museum of Oklahoma
Membership ride on the Quartz Mt. Flyer
Invitational runs for local railroad clubs
Bi-directional run
Night run

Picture of the Month



Leon Risenhoover checks the tracking of the front half of his UP Big boy. He says that, by NEXT Christmas, the back half will be ready for the same test but offered no estimates when steam will be moving them.

Return to Station