

# LOCO NEWS

MARCH - APRIL 2005

VOLUME 18, No. 2



## We've Been Workin' on the Railroad

*Gene Berger (L) and John Reiff (R), caught here spreading ballast along the “re-tracked” front loop, were only two of the many LOCO members who took part in getting this section of the mainline back into shape. A locomotive tip over several months ago made it abundantly clear that the track between the Huth Hollow Bridge and Hefner Haven needed to be replaced. Upon closer inspection, it was determined that the track from the switch on the west end of the property near the gravel pit and the track on the Huth Hollow Bridge also needed to be replaced so the decision was made to take the plunge, put the Lacock Loop on hold, and get to it! On February 12, the almost 300 feet of track was pulled out and work began preparing the new roadbed. In addition, the rotten portions of the*

Huth Hollow Bridge were removed and replaced with new pressure treated lumber. As they say, “waste not, want not.” So as soon as the track panels were out of the ground, the remnants of the rotten ties were removed from the rail and any inside rail that could be re-used was bent so that it could be used with its “fresh” side facing inwards. Thanks to the hard work of LOCO members who cut ties and pre-built panels, the replacement has gone fairly quickly. On February 19, the new track panels were roughly laid into place and the LOCO team

attached the first 140 feet. On February 21, a few LOCO folks (*Gene, Delbert, Truman, JD, and Joe*) returned to the track to finish repairs on the Huth Hollow Bridge and attach the remaining track sections together. On Saturday, February 26, LOCO members finished putting the siding track at Hefner Haven together spread some eight tons of ballast, and tamped the first 140 feet of track into place. The weather was kind and *Joe's* tamper kept working so that all remaining track work was completed in time for the March First Sunday Fun Run.

## PrezSez



Happy March and April to all LOCO members

### 05 MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

With this newsletter you should also receive the annual LOCO membership roster. Those that have renewed their dues, or have promised to have their renewal dues sent in short order, were included in the roster. A few folks opted out this year, but we still have a strong, growing membership.

### PUTTING ON A MEET

I have asked *Tony Wasson* to head up preparations for the June 23-26, SWLS meet at LOCO. *Tony* has graciously accepted the task. In the upcoming months, he will be contacting you to help with the annual projects to make the meet a success. I ask that you give him your time and support this year.

### LACOCK LOOP EXTENSION

The loop is coming along, but very slowly at this point. Switches have been made to tie in both ends to the existing track but grading has been temporarily halted for other mainline track replacement projects. Since the placement of the switch on the driveway (west) side of the loop could not be placed where originally staked, we still need someone to re-stake and recalculate the grade leading down to the parking entrance. Once we have that, we can continue with the grading.

A decision has been made concerning what type of bridge we will have on the north side of the Loop in the Hefner Haven area. *Truman Hefner* was able to work a great deal with a local steel company who, for \$325, supplied the metal, cut it, and formed it to make the parts

for a 10-foot-long girder bridge like the ones we have in the Pee Wee Park area. *Roy Kline* has indicated that, in the next few months when his work slows down a bit, he will weld the bridge together for us. Three toots of the LOCO whistle for both of these gentlemen!

### TRACK REPLACEMENT

As noted earlier in this issue, the track on front loop of the LOCO mainline has been replaced. The next section scheduled to receive such attention will be the 240-foot stretch between SSSS Bridge and the far northwest corner of the property. Our target dates are April 9-30 or May 7-June 4. Part of this project will be to wire brush and repaint the bridges around the pond. For this effort, we will need the help of the FULL LOCO MEMBERSHIP so that we will only have to close the track for a minimal amount of time.

### ADDITIONAL PURCHASES

Because prices are going up on everything, and we are taking steps to buy things now! The club recently purchased another 100 sections of TREX material for ties which will give us ties for at least 500 feet of track. At the current spacing, it takes two 12-foot lengths of 2x4 material at a cost of \$20 per piece to make ties for one 10-foot track panel. The screws bought for the Lacock Loop have been “diverted” to the track replacement projects so those, about 20K, will have to be replaced soon in order to beat the inevitable price increase. Finally, we had hoped to be able to re-use a majority of the inside rail when we replaced the worn outside rails. Unfortunately, this will not be possible as we have found that the track in use is actually a combination of several old types of rail made from a die that no longer exists.

Therefore, we have ordered 250 feet of rail through Cannonball. This should see us at least through the Pee Wee Park track renovation.

## WEST COAST RAIL USE

The track panels for the Lacock Loop Extension will be built using the heavier West Coast Rail on TREX ties. This combination should last 15+ years before the rail will need to be replaced.

An upside to this is that the beefier rail can handle increased tie spacing which will bring our cost of track down significantly. For example, in our current configuration where we space ties 1.5 inches apart, we use 40 ties per 10-foot panel which is 2,000 ties per 500 feet of track. At today's prices, the TREX costs the club \$2,005. However, increasing the tie spacing to two inches equates to using six fewer ties per panel or 286 fewer per 500 feet of track for a savings of (at current prices) \$280.70. Going further, increasing the tie spacing to three inches will save \$501.25 for the same number of panels. *Gene, Charley, Truman, and Delbert* are primed and ready to make a

new track jig for the West Coast rail. All that remains is to decide on the spacing we want to use.

## MORE LOCO FUN RUNS?

I've been asked to poll the membership to see if there is any interest in having two Fun Runs a month during the spring, summer, and fall. The idea is that we would still have the traditional First Sunday Fun Run open to the public and a Members and visitors with equipment only function on the third Sunday. With our track improvements, bi-directional running during these meets could be a possibility. What are your thoughts?

Oh well, I believe I've run out of hot discussion topics for this newsletter. There is a lot of fun running this year at both LOCO and SWLS tracks. Please mark your calendars accordingly and remember to reserve Saturday to come out and help your club. It takes all the members to make LOCO a truly great club!

*Joe*

# LOCO Passing

*Loren L. Jennings*

*1 9 2 3 - 2 0 0 5*



Having passed away within a few miles of where he was born and raised, Loren was truly a hometown boy. However, no one can say that he didn't go far! He and Fleda did live in Washington D.C. for a year toward the end of WWII, but Loren's real claim to fame was his family (two sons, six grandchildren, and one great-grandchild) and his founding a successful trucking business. Of course, he was also a live steamer. In 1982 while riding the narrow gauge in Chama, Loren met *Tom Bleckensop* who talked his ear off about the live steam hobby. Through him, Loren was introduced to *Truman Hefner, Jim Murray, and Harold Staples* and his involvement in the hobby was sealed. His announcement that he intended to create a railroad was met with a certain amount of skepticism; but three years and a lot of personal sweat later, the Gotebo, Cooperton & Saddle Mountain Railroad opened for business. His interest and involvement in LOCO almost from the start earned him a place name

on the railroad—Lake Jennings—and the status as an honorary life member. He also joined SWLS and traveled to many meets. Harry "Scorcher" Bean remembers meeting Lorne at a meet in Manor in 1988 and asking if he could put his riding flat, the only piece of equipment he had at the time, into his train. Not only did Loren encourage it, he helped unload the car and get it onto the tracks. It was this sort of welcoming and friendliness that made Loren so well-known and well-liked throughout the hobby. For a while, Loren, Fleda, and the GC&SMRR played host to the traditional September SWLS meet. The last meet was held in 2000, the year the temperature hit 107 in the shade! A 2001 meet was planned but health considerations forced its cancellation. Although Loren had every intention of getting back on the meet schedule in 2002, it never came to pass. While the September spot on the SWLS schedule has been filled, Loren and the GC&SMRR will most certainly be missed!



## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

**March 6**  
First Sunday Fun Run  
LOCO track

**\*April 9**  
Breakfast &  
President's open meeting  
LOCO track

**\*March 12**  
Breakfast &  
President's open meeting  
LOCO track

**May 1**  
First Sunday Fun Run  
LOCO track

**April 3**  
First Sunday Run run  
LOCO track

**\*May 14**  
Breakfast &  
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 (except Open Meeting Saturdays) 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 breakfast (around 8:30 a.m.) at the track on the second Saturday of each month.

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**ABOUT LOCO**

### LOCO NEWS

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### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS

Resident — \$100  
Associate — \$15 (optional  
for anyone living more than  
60 miles from the LOCO  
facility)