

ENGINE BOOSTER

October 2019

SINCE

1956

www.lalsrm.org



The candidates at General Meeting on Saturday. (Laura Holman photo)

Hearing From the Candidates

By Diana Manchester

Earlier this Fall we sent a questionnaire to each candidate with ten questions to answer so we could learn more about them and their reasons for wanting to serve on the Board. In this issue you will be able to read their answers. The nine candidates are: Jim DeBiasio, Martha Figueroa, David Holman, Bear Mustoe, Alex O'Donnell, Steve Rodstein, Brandon Ruiz, Nick Suncin, and Roger Williams.

At our General Meeting on October 19, we invited the candidates to attend and briefly provide some background about themselves and tell what they hope to accomplish should they be elected. The floor was then opened up to the members to ask questions. Bill Schirmer was moderator. All candidates participated at the meeting except Roger Williams, who was working.

Some of the audience questions were: "What is your long-term vision?"; "How do we get back to live steam?"; "Can we build a machine shop?"; and "How can we grow and involve the community more?" The candidates shared their goals about training and mentorship, encouraging volunteerism and pride of workmanship, and focusing on Club priorities. It was a lively and thought-provoking discussion and many members took part.

(Continued on page 5)

Operations Meet November 9

By Bill Walker

Hello, LALS members. It is time to test your Railroading Skills.

We will be having an Operations Meet on Saturday November 9, 2019 beginning at 9:00 am and running till 3:00 pm. This program will be for all members who want to participate.

This event will be lots of fun and sometimes challenging. Those that choose to participate will increase their knowledge of our layout and operations while picking up and delivering club cars from and to specified locations on the layout.

Each train must have an engineer and a conductor and will consist of a locomotive and a caboose. All trains will be run-

ning one way starting eastward out of the station, but watch those signals as there maybe a train backing up for a runaround!

There will be some rules that need to be followed which will make things more challenging, such as the locomotive

Steam Day November 16

By Harrison Hitchcock

Our third Steam Day Run will be held on Saturday, November the 16th at LALS RM. Members, guests and visiting railroaders with steam equipment are invited — all live steam scales from ride-on to Gauge 1, as well as stationary steam. It's for one day starting at 9 am and continuing into late evening. Please observe the spirit of the event: we ask that no non-steam equipment be run on the tracks for

(Continued on page 8)

Longtime Friends and Members, Jim Logan and Bob Woodward Pass
See pages 6 and 7

Public Service

November

- 3 Public Rides/Time Change
- 10 Public Rides
- 17 Public Rides; Disney Barn Open/Steam Plant and Gauge 1 operating
- 24 Public Rides

SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD



By Diana Manchester, Secretary

October 2019

At 7:03 pm on October 7, 2019, the October BOD Meeting was called to order by Vice-President Bill Schirmer. Seven Directors were present as well as 37 members.

Secretary's Report – the September Minutes were approved unanimously, with a motion made by Les Kovacs and seconded by Drew LaGaly. We received a request from Richard Ronne to make Jim Kreider an Honorary Member for his contributions to both the Club and to the live steam fraternity. A motion was made to accept by Les K., seconded by Bill S. We also received a request from Jim Kreider to make Bill Schirmer an Honorary Member for his contributions to the Club. Les made a motion to accept and Wayne seconded. Both motions were approved unanimously. These proposals will be added to the November Ballot.

Membership Report – Wayne Crabb announced that Tim Silver passed probation and was accepted into full membership. Congratulations, Tim! Lester Bernell is a longtime member returning after an absence. He used to run his CP 173 and LE Pacific at LALS RM in the 1990's, but later moved to Arizona and joined the Maricopa club. He has now moved back and bought a 3/4" Pacific steam 4-6-2 locomotive from Bill Schirmer. The Board discussed and decided he didn't have to go through full probation, but pay the new member fees and take both the conductor and safety tests. Welcome back, Les!

Superintendent's Report – Jeremy Steinert reminded members renting track in the Alkire and Richardson Sheds to clean out non-railroad items prior to our October 19 work day.

Eagle Scout James Femino, Troop 5 of Pasadena was in attendance. He will be building the shed for our outdoor washer and dryer for his Eagle project. He asked

for, and received, permission to postpone the project until after January 1, so that he can concentrate on his SAT's and college applications this Fall. Les can oversee the pouring of the concrete; he asked for the dimensions from James.

Retaining wall, Crystal Springs, north side – Les has submitted an FCR for the project. The first step will be removing the rotting ties, and 20 feet of dirt from the track side of the north wall. We plan to make the pit 20 feet wider, and then install a new wall of cement legos, two blocks to four blocks high. When done we will submit an FCR for the south side. We may need to rent an excavator and rigging, and a roll-off for disposing of the ties. The cement blocks were free and we hope to have members volunteer the labor. We will contact "DigAlert" to make sure we bypass the water and gas mains. A motion to approve the budget and plan was made by Tim LaGaly and seconded by Doug. It passed unanimously. We are thinking about installing storage tracks in the pit for Club riding cars and maybe a workbench and maintenance area, and cover the area with a metal roof. Drainage will be an important consideration, too.

New Electric Doghouse – Tim LaGaly and Frances Barnes are planning the specs. They will jackhammer the old

cement pad and pour a new one. We will use the roll-off for the debris while it is here.

Operations Meet – Bill Walker shared his plans for a simplified Operations Meet, scheduled for Saturday, November 9, from 9 to 3. We will skip the idea of cardboard buildings, and make it a switching game. There will be no dispatcher, no food and no Board involvement. It will be one direction only. Club cars will be used. There is more information in this issue in an article by Bill.

GPS Tracking System – is working great per Miles. There is a new reference point on a small tower on the narrow gauge barn. Batteries for the trackers are kept and charged in the Ticket Booth; simply go there when your consist is ready and ask for one. We are making modifications as we go along. He thanks everyone who has been participating.

Riding cars – Miles reported we have a new supplier in Santa Ana for valves. We will repair any cars that are leaking and replace all the valves on all riding cars during our annual inspection in January. Miles also encouraged engineers and conductors to clean the riding cars on their consists before running each Sunday.

Historical Signage - William Stewart has been designing and producing sample signage to identify our tracks and bridges in keeping with the Club's heritage. Some have been put in place. Your feedback is appreciated.



Operations Meet

Sat., Nov. 9 • 9 am - 3 pm

Run our layout like a real railroad!

At the Meet Table you will be given orders to complete

Two-person crew • Operate at your own pace

Contact Chair Bill Walker for more info

LOADANDGOTraindepot@juno.com • 626.664.7507 cell



From the SUPER



By
Jeremy
Steinert

This last month has been quite productive. We've moved a number of car loads of dirt, fixed a bunch of track, and kept on top of the leaves!

Leaves. However, the trees will continue to drop their leaves as we get closer to winter and it seems that fire season has already started. Besides keeping the track clear, we also need to make sure the roofs of the cabooses, Pullman cars, and Phil West Barn are clear of leaves, as well as the slopes near the horse trail.

Running Coal. Anyone running coal should put on a spark arrester and oil and propane make sure you aren't accidentally igniting any leaves between the rails.

Fire Extinguishers. Jim DeBiasio has been working to get fire extinguishers refilled and replaced so use them if needed before things get out of hand! We plan to add extinguishers in every caboose as well as attaching them onto or near signal boxes (we have 15 on the property; can you find them all?).

Critters. On a different note, please remember to close up if you are the last one to leave. As it gets colder, our resident critters will seek any warm location they can find. In the last month, I've had to chase a raccoon out of Phil West, a couple juvenile opossums out of the UP caboose, as well as carefully negotiate with a skunk in the work car. Most of our critters are active in the evening so keep an eye out when turning the corners or entering the club bathrooms.

Thanks for Working. As always, thanks to everyone who helps keep this place clean and operating! I've seen a number of you out there during the week working on various projects. Our members make LALS the wonderful place that it is!

President's Message



By
Ted
Merchant,
President

Hello Railroad Fans!

We are winding down another year and approaching our elections. I want to share some thoughts regarding Board members. I have no intention of recommending specific candidates, but hopefully these thoughts will help you make your personal decisions. Maybe not:

I desire Board members that are thoughtful, particularly regarding the Club in general. I am not impressed by bluster

or immediate reactions to situations. I am not impressed by "drive-by criticism" from people who are not accountable for their words or actions. I am not impressed by "alternate facts". I am impressed by honest humble people who step back, take time to understand the truth, make thoughtful calculated decisions.

I desire Board members that know the Club: the vision, the idiosyncrasies, the strengths and weaknesses. In short, I desire Board members who know what they are doing.

I desire Board members that look forward and want to create a desirable future. Anyone can moan about the past, but the Board's responsibility is to carry us into the future.

It has been my outstanding pleasure to work with our current Board. Ours is an outstanding Club, one that can thoughtfully and responsibly move forward. Please think before you vote.

So those are my thoughts. I'm not sure everyone agrees with me, but I'm sticking with them. What are yours? Your comments and concerns are always appreciated. I'll see you at the rails.

Ted Merchant
EdwardBMerchant@gmail.com.



Steam Day Run

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

9 AM THROUGH EVENING

MEMBERS, GUESTS, VISITING RAILROADERS

All scales from 7.5" Gauge to Gauge 1 • Stationary steam

Lunch at the KK Grill • Thanksgiving Dinner

Movie after dinner: "The Train" with Burt Lancaster

CONTACT CHAIR HARRISON HITCHCOCK FOR MORE INFO

harrison.hitchcock@gmail.com • 323.656.0757 cell



Big Boy in Action ▲ At Mormon Rocks on Cajon-Pass. ▼ Leaving Barstow. (Alex O'Donnell photos)

Big Boy 4014 Thunders Through Cajon Pass

By Alex O'Donnell

On Saturday, October 12, Union Pacific 4-8-8-4 Big Boy 4014 steamed up Cajon Pass with a 25-car Rail Giants Museum excursion in tow.

Rail Giants and LALS member Jeremy Steinert was one of many volunteers onboard, and countless other LALS members including myself were trackside

watching it charge up the hill. I carpooled with two railfan friends of mine Dustin Nguyen and Anthony Williams as we chased it up the pass into the desert.

We caught 4014 barking up the mainline at Mormon Rocks, then raced up to Oro Grande where it coasted downhill out of Victorville after a brief oiling stop. After driving up to Barstow and having

lunch, we saw it backing into Barstow Station after having been delayed on the wye at Lenwood.

After dropping off the hundreds of passengers onboard, 4014 steamed out of Barstow back onto the mainline, then backed up all the way to Yermo since it is not accessible to the public.

After that, we drove onward to Las Vegas and still managed to see 4014 parked at Yermo in the far distance from the freeway. After spending the night on the Las Vegas strip, we headed over to the Nevada State Railroad Museum in Boulder City and got a ride in a UP caboose very similar to our own UP CA-3 next to the Kountry Kitchen.

There was also plenty of vintage equipment on display from the historical Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railway, Oregon Washington Railway and Navigation, Department of Energy, and Heber Valley Railway.

Also, next door was the newly formed Nevada Southern Live Steamers which was closed that day –I'll have to bring one of my engines there in the future.





Welcome to another edition of **BLOCK TALK!**, bringing you the latest news and adventures of the LALSRM Signals Division. This month we're excited to tell you about an upgrade to the signal system that we've begun deploying.

As you may know, in order to determine the occupied state of a block on our railroad, the system relies on Block Detection circuit boards that are installed inside panels throughout the railroad.

Designed by our very own 'signals yoda' John Smith many years ago, these boards have been earning their keep by working reliably for several decades. What we've done in 2019 is to redesign and add new features to these boards, while maintaining much of their original functionality. As such, we think of the new boards as a continued iteration of John's original design.

The new boards, which we're calling version 1.1, are on printed circuit boards that are manufactured overseas to our own specific design specs. Here are some of the new features:

- An improved modular design makes

them much easier to replace quickly in the field.

- The solid state output stage has less mechanical parts that can wear out Better electrical isolation
- One new board can manage up to 4 blocks, thereby freeing up valuable space in our signal panels
- Colored LEDs on the board show us the occupied state of a block and help us to

diagnose problems including broken feed or bond wires

The new boards were designed and assembled by Signals Division board member Stevo Brock, with valuable input from Jeremy Steinert and Charles Rhoades. Over the past few months, we've begun installing these new boards in a few panels and have been very encouraged by the results. If these boards pique your interest, come talk to the Signals Division at an upcoming work day.

The LALSRM Signals Division is headed up by Jeremy Steinert, Stevo Brock, Charles Rhoades, Wayne Crabb, Steve Sauber and signals yoda John Smith, with invaluable assistance from Mark Vreeken, Scott Hoagland, Lisa Lipton, Jack Streit and others. Our threefold mission is to ensure the safe operation of trains at our club, to educate members about the signal system, and to maintain and upgrade the system so it continues to operate reliably for years to come. You'll find us at the club during Saturday work days or Sunday Public Run days. We'd be happy to discuss any topic regarding the signals system with you. If you're aware of a signal problem that we might not know about, come find

us and give us the details. We'll do our best to get it fixed quickly.

Look for another installment of **BLOCK TALK!** in an upcoming issue of the Booster. See you trackside!

◀ Block Detection Board v1.1

(Steve Sauber photo)

New Conductor Course November 3

The next Conductor Course will be offered on Sunday, November 3 at 10:30 am. This course is for new Conductors or anyone who would like a refresher. Please bring a radio that can be tuned to the Club channel 8.2.

We will meet in the Kountry Kitchen. Please bring a radio set to 8.2 and a whistle with a pea in it. (The Station has whistles, if needed, for no charge).

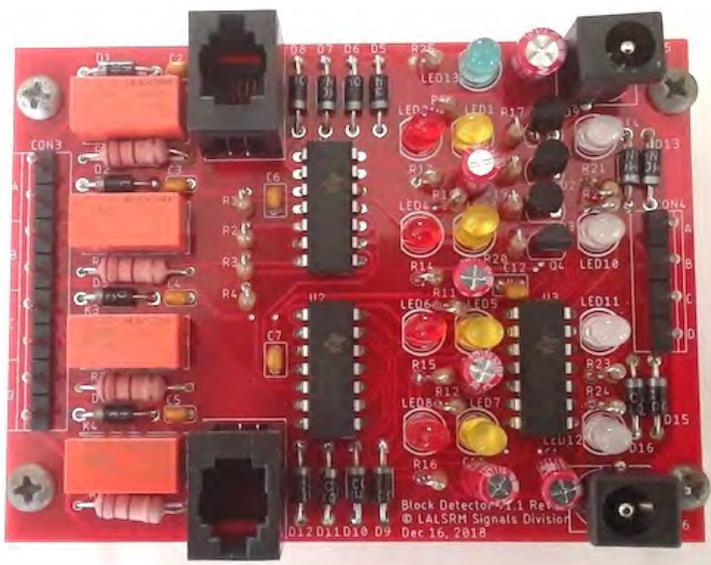
Please contact Fred Lack to make an appointment, or if you have any questions: atlantis90230@yahoo.com, cell: (310) 213-0722.

Elections

(Continued from page 1)

We hope these endeavors will provide more insight into what each nominee brings to the table and will help you vote with more clarity. Also on this year's ballot are the two members recommended for Honorary Membership (Jim Kreider and Bill Schirmer), and you can also read in full the proposed Bylaw changes.

The ballot materials will go out in the mail on November 7. The ballots are due back by November 23, the day of our next General Meeting and when we will count the ballots and announce the four new Board members. Ballots can be mailed back or brought to the Club up until noon on November 23. Please be sure to follow the instructions in the package so your vote will count.



Alex O'Donnell with Big Boy at Colton. See more photos on page 4

Longtime LALS Members and Friends Each Pass within a Week



Ray Buren Photo

Jim Logan, 55, 25-Year Member, Passes October 17

By Diana Manchester

Jim Logan and Shannon Balster grew up in the same Santa Clarita neighborhood and met when they were 11.

Later Jim joined the Marines, hoping to get out of California, and got stationed in Camp Pendleton. He served two tours overseas and spent time in Japan, Hong Kong and Korea during the Reagan administration.

Jim and Shannon married on December 26, 1987 and their daughter Shaunna was born in 1988. Jim worked in a factory for several years and then as an electrician with John Smith. He got his truck driver's license in 1999 and began a 20-year career, first as an owner-operator and the last 10 years with Celadon.

Jim's stepbrother, Andy invited Jim and Shannon to come to LALS and play trains; they enthusiastically joined in

(Continued on page 7)

Bob Woodward, 64, 46-Year Member, Passes October 22

By Diana Manchester

You gotta love a guy born on Valentine's Day who is also passionate about trains.

Bob was born February 14, 1955 and discovered LALS when he was 18 years old. There he met some of the founders of the Club and fell in love with live steam. After high school, he joined the Navy and served on an aircraft carrier, which took him away from the Club for a few years.

His military occupational specialty was sheet metal work, which enabled him to land a job with Amtrak a year later. He married the love of his life, Gail on August 27, 1977, and began a 37-year career with Amtrak on August 28. They took their honeymoon later.

Eventually Bob returned to LALS and began a lifelong friendship with Jim Lesovsky, a charter member of the Club.

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A Memorial to Jim and Bob

By John Smith

Bob Woodward and Jim Logan were two of my closest friends. And they were also very close friends. So close that when Bob and Gail had a new house built a few years ago, they included an additional room reserved for Jim and Shannon while visiting. When the Logans were in the area they always stayed there.

Jim

Jim, a former Marine, was married to Shannon. He served his working career driving a long haul truck. I was very proud of him when he started. We met in 1995 at LALS. Back then, he was unemployed. He was a special type personality, so am I, so we meshed well. Jim stood way out to almost everyone who knew him. At the LALS club for the President auction, Jim would spend hundreds and have a ball. A few times he would win an auction and give the item away.

Jim and Shannon have a daughter, Shaunna. She was seven years old when we met; I loved her at first sight. She and her husband, Charlie, gave the Logans two grandchildren; blessings to his remaining family who are heartbroken. Jim and Shannon were a match made in Heaven.

Bob

Bob, as a young man was a sailor, a Navy man. He and Gail were a perfect pair. Both have a strict personality. We met in 1991 and became good friends. I remember their two young sons Chris, and Charlie. Bob worked and retired at Amtrak. He worked in the coach maintenance shop; he always had great stories to tell. He knew many of the good ol' boys at the Club; I remem-

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Jim Logan

(Continued from page 6)

1994, and built a little gas switcher with Marine colors. They came to almost every Spring Meet; you knew they were there when you saw Jim's tractor in the members' parking lot. Jim was most famous for his bidding generosity during President's Auctions. He was also well known for his gift of gab; his wife likes to say "he was a pain in the ass." A blus-tery façade hid a heart of gold; Jim had many loyal friends.

The family moved to Arizona in 2001 to be near Jim's mom. Shaunna went to high school there and joined the Army after graduation. She met her husband Charlie Sunkes while at Fort Riley, Kansas.

Move to Tennessee

The couple bought a home in Tennessee, and have two children, Eian, age 8 and Emma, age 4, who were the light of Jim's life. Jim and Shannon moved to Tennessee to be near them. Jim shared his love of trains with first his daughter, then his grandson.

He fought a two-year battle with cancer, and even gave up smoking. Things were looking up, then took a turn downward in late summer.

He, Shaunna and Eian were able to attend our Fall Meet and had a special time. He passed peacefully in his sleep October 17. The family would love to hear from you. Reach out to them by Messenger or on Facebook. They hope to come to the Spring Meet in 2020.

Memorial

(Continued from page 6)

ber them sitting on the bench talking. Bob had lots of fun, and that made me happy. Gail invited us over several times for a homemade Italian dinner. Bob made us ice tea and we played trains on his backyard G-scale layout. The Woodwards go way back in the Club. They knew and were good friends with Doug Chancey, owner of Bittercreek. I pray Gail will be at peace knowing that Bob was a good man and happy in Heaven. I know it will be hard.

Both these Men were a big part of the Club. And a big part of my life. Will be missed by many. I sure will miss them.

Bob Woodward

(Continued from page 6)

Jim helped mentor Bob in steam, and later Gail and Jim became co-owners of the Smog Belt train. Bob was active with maintenance around the Club.

Bob and Gail had two sons, Christopher and Charlie (and now, three grandchildren: Brett, Grace and Colin). They were regulars at the Club every week. Gail worked as Stationmaster most Sundays. Every Spring Meet found them and their red Doberman in their RV along Crystal Springs Drive, and on the rails, maybe doubleheading with Skeet Simpson. They were no strangers to other clubs, either, including Riverside Live Steam, Bittercreek & Western and Ridgecrest.

Move to Piñon Hills

Bob retired from Amtrak in 2014 at age 59 and he and Gail moved to Piñon Hills where they owned land. They built their dream home and set aside a bedroom for an N-scale layout. They liked riding their dune buggies in the high desert and talked of building a backyard railroad. Once a month, they would make the trek

to the Club on a Sunday. Gail would reprise her role as Stationmaster and Bob would sit on Gordon Sherwood's bench and talk to friends old and new about trains, politics and everything under the sun.

Bob made many other good friends at the Club, including Jim Logan. Jim's death from cancer on October 17 really tore Bob up. Less than a week later, Bob was gone of a heart attack.

Gail hopes to help out at Sherwood Station in the new year, and she will keep all their trains. You can keep in touch with Gail on Facebook or by phone and email; she loves hearing stories about Bob. A celebration of life is being planned for February.

Pick Up Your New Badges

The new name badges are in, and can be purchased at the Souvenir booth for \$10 each.

We're making a new list of names for a second order. Contact Fred Lack or Diana Manchester to order.



Holiday Banquet & Officer Installation

Saturday, December 14

\$35 a person

6 pm – No Host Bar • 7 pm – Buffet Dinner

Viva Rancho Cantina

900 W. Riverside Drive, Burbank

Reserve your seats now

Purchase tickets at Kounty Kitchen or Souvenir Booth

Or contact Martha Figueroa

fig3@msn.com • 626.232.7053 cell

Who's been Working on the Railroad

Jeremy Steinert, General Superintendent

Alex O'Donnell	Lisa Lipton
Andrew LaGaly	Les Kovacs
Bear Mustoe	Mark Vreeken
Bill Schirmer	Mel Bresee
Bob Crone	Michael Mahan
Charles Rhoades	Miles Kristman
Dave Holman	Nick Suncin
David Clark	Nick Guzman
Darrell Payne	Ray Burden
Diana Manchester	Roderick Fritz
Don Kallgren	Ross Harper
Doug Young	Ruth Payne
Frances Barnes	Ryan Hechinger
Michael Murphy	Scott Hoagland
Glen Manchester	Steve Sauber
Jack Streit	Steve Rodstein
Jeremy Steinert	Stevy Brock
Jim Baker	Ted Merchant
Jim DeBiasio	Tim LaGaly
John DePhillip Jr.	Tom Lang
Joseph Clow	Wayne Crabb
Larry Tighe	Zak Holman

SUNDAY EXTRA BOARD

September 2019

September Ridership

September 1	459	September 15	621
September 8	630	September 22	588
September 29		689	

September 2019 — 2,987
Total YTD 2019 — 23,894
Total YTD 2018 — 24,335

Souvenirs and Tickets

Kathy Crabb, Martha Figueroa, Jeanne Olson, Greg Olson, Carolyn Hoagland, George Becker, Roderick Fritz, Tristan Fritz

Engineers and Conductors

Andy Blake	Nico Amato
Bob Quinn	Peter Fuad
Darrell Payne	Roderick Fritz
Derek Benedict	Ron Nelson
Don Donaldson	Sean Donaldson
Francis Barnes	Scott Hoagland
Gregg Olson	Steve Harris
Hugo Budd	Bernie Harris
Jeanne Olson	Tim Silver
Jim Dubensky	Tom Harwood
Joseph Clow	Wayne Crabb
Mel Bresee	

Safety Coordinators

Jim Cammarata, Michael Murphy, Wayne Crabb

Station Masters

Robert Guzman, Gail Woodward, Wayne Crabb, Don Donaldson, Martha Figueroa, Tom Crue, Ron Nelson, Bill Walker, George Becker, Greg Pschaida



Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum

In Griffith Park
 Mailing Address—PO Box 2156,
 Toluca Lake, CA 91610
 Phone (323) 661-8958
 Website: LALSRM.org

2019 Officers and Directors

President	Ted Merchant
Vice President	Bill Schirmer
Secretary	Diana Manchester
Treasurer	Tim LaGaly

Directors

Wayne Crabb	Diana Manchester
Les Kovacs	Ted Merchant
Tim LaGaly	Andrew LaGaly
Bill Schirmer	Doug Young



The *Engine Booster* is the monthly publication of the Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

Editor Peter Fuad
 Associate Editors:

Diana Manchester • Alex O'Donnell
 Christie Edinger • Drew LaGaly

Steam Day

(Continued from page 1)
 this one day.

Hamburgers and hotdogs will be available for lunch in the Kountry Kitchen, and a turkey dinner that night by Martha and Diana. Dinner tickets will also be on sale at the KK cash register for the December Holiday Banquet.

Steamers: make sure you bring spark arresters for those pesky sparks, since we will still be in fire season. Propane will be available on site for fill up. For more information, please contact Steam Run host, Harrison Hitchcock: cell 323.656.0757 or email harrison.hitchcock@gmail.com.

Member Schedule

November

- 3 Public Rides/Time Change
- 4 BOD Meeting 7 pm
- 7 Ballots mailed
- 9 Operations Meet 9 am-3 pm
- 10 Public Rides
- 16 Steam Only Run 9 am-evening
- 17 Public Rides; Disney Barn Open/Steam Plant and Gauge 1 operating
- 23 Workday/General Meeting; Ballots due; ballots counted
- 24 Public Rides
- 28 Thanksgiving

December

Save the date!

- 14 Holiday banquet: Viva Rancho Cantina 6 pm

