

ENGINE



BOOSTER

December 2020

SINCE

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www.lals.org

Caboose Christmas

Jeremy Steinert Photo

COVID-19 AND LALSRM

From Ted Merchant, President

The incidence of new COVID-19 cases in Los Angeles is surging. In December that incidence is about 50% greater than the peak incidence noted last summer. The Los Angeles Department of Public Health estimates that now 1 in 145 residents are infected with the coronavirus, a six-fold increase in the last two months.

Los Angeles County has issued a limited stay-at-home order prohibiting all public and private gatherings with individuals not in the same household. Parks are open, but gatherings of people from more than one household are BANNED. Governor Newsom has suggested that aggressive restrictions from the state level may be necessary.

We are all aware that the severity of COVID-19 symptoms vary and tend to be worse in older people. The incidence of death for a person in his 70s is over 16 times that of a person in his 40s. Younger people, even if asymptomatic, can spread the virus and cause someone else to experience a fatal outcome. Therefore, younger people need to be as cautious and proactive as the rest of us. This is particularly important at LALSRM where the average member is in his or her sixties.

So, what do we do with this information?

- 1) Do not come to LALSRM unless absolutely necessary.
- 2) If you visit the Club, wear a mask, come alone and stay alone.
- 3) Call your doctor and get tested immediately if you have any suspicion that you have been exposed to coronavirus.
- 4) Please advise the Board if you acquire COVID-19 or test coronavirus-positive. We can discuss means by which we can respectfully keep other members safe.
- 5) Practice the physical distancing measures we all now know.
- 6) PLEASE, always wear a mask if you anticipate encountering anyone outside your family.

Please stay safe . A vaccine is coming and the pandemic will eventually end. Let's all do what we can for a healthy holiday and new year.

2021 Officers Announced

The LALSRM Board of Directors is pleased to announce your Club officers for 2021: Ted Merchant will remain President. Bill Schirmer will remain Vice President. And Steve Rodstein will remain Secretary. Tim LaGaly elected to step down as treasurer. He is replaced by Martha Figueroa.

I am sure the entire Club joins the Board in thanking Tim for his many years as Club Treasurer and Bookkeeper, responsibilities he bore for the last 1 ½ decades. LALSRM is indebted to both Tim and Martha for their faithful and extensive service.

Best wishes for your happy, healthy and prosperous 2021. *Ted Merchant*

Inspections, Direction Change Postponed

The January equipment inspection will be postponed until a future time to be announced. Also, we will not be changing our present track direction.

SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD

By Steve Rodstein, Secretary



December 2020

President Ted Merchant called the December BOD meeting to order. Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) the meeting was teleconferenced on Zoom, with participants connected by computer and cell phone. Seven of the Directors were present (Nick Suncin was unable to attend the meeting) as well as 41 members.

President's Report: Ted again mentioned that the December BOD meeting would follow the agenda, and once adjourned anyone was welcome to stay and talk informally.

Ted opened the meeting by reviewing the letter emailed to all of Club members on November 30th concerning COVID-19 and the stricter safety precautions. The entire Board agreed that the membership needs to follow the LALSRM COVID-19 safety procedures now in place.

Ted then presented the LALSRM officers for 2021, and they are as follows: Ted Merchant will continue as the President, Bill Schirmer will continue as the Vice-President, Martha Figueroa will become the Treasurer, and Steve Rodstein will continue as the Secretary. Tim LaGaly stepped down as Treasurer as of 11/30/20, so Martha Figueroa started one month early on December 1, 2020. Lastly, Ted briefly discussed the 2021 membership renewal process.

Secretary's Report: The November minutes were approved. There are no events scheduled at the Club due to the Coronavirus and Diana will continue to update the Calendar as necessary. The Secretary also reconfirmed the safety procedures described in Ted's letter which must be followed when members are at the LALSRM facility.

Treasurer's Report: Tim presented

the prior periods financials. There was minor discussion and then the Board approved them. Also, Tim confirmed that State (DOJ) Registry of Charitable Trust (RCT) had received all of the necessary documents from LALSRM for the period ending 11/30/19 and the Club was in good standing.

Membership Report: Nick was unable to be at the meeting, so he will follow up with any new membership information at the January meeting.

Superintendent's Report: Les Kovacs filled in for Drew, stating that he had nothing new to report on. There was a brief conversation regarding the dumping of trash at the Club, as well as disposal of green waste. Les said he would discuss the green waste issue with the parks department and resolve the issue.

Website Update/communications: Diana and Les Bernell discussed the 2021 membership renewal that the IT Committee is working on, and that members can pay 2021 membership dues on the website. There was also some discussion with Zak of how the website works. Diana announced we are looking for an IT web manager and asked for any qualified volunteers or recommendations.

One Inch Shed Rentals: The Board directed the shed manager, Michael Murphy, to bill members that rent track at the 1" barn and all other 1" storage locations \$10.00 per foot a year for track rental. If those members do the additional 40 hours of work at the Club each year, they will receive a discount of \$4.00 a foot. (See *Flimsies* column on payments.)

New Phone Line: The Board approved Greg McMurry's proposal to change the AT&T account, which now has two land lines, to a VOIP type of phone line system. LALSRM will delete the old fax line and keep the main line number, 323-661-8958, which will work on the VOIP system. Greg stated the new changes would result in substantial savings.

Other Items: Ted stated that James Femino has completed his Eagle Scout project at the Club, and it will be wired shortly by a Club member.

Ron Hitchcock updated the Board on the renewal of the supplemental member insurance policy that comes up for renewal

on January 13, 2021. After some discussion the Board approved the renewal of this policy.

It was agreed that the blue recycle bins will be removed from the Club grounds.

A number of members brought up how family memberships are charged and who is included under a family membership. It was agreed that this matter required further discussion before any changes could be implemented.

Ross Harper's FCR for upgrading the rear of the billboards was approved.

Bill Walker reviewed the progress of the renovation of the Mountain Division landscaping and the upcoming completion of the Blue Rock Mine relocation and renovation. The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 pm. The next BOD meeting will be January 4, 2021 at 7:00 pm.



Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum

In Griffith Park
Mailing Address—PO Box 2156,
Toluca Lake, CA 91610

LALSRM.org
(323) 661-8958

2021 Officers and Directors

President	Ted Merchant
Vice President	Bill Schirmer
Secretary	Steve Rodstein
Treasurer	Martha Figueroa
David Holman	Les Kovacs
Tim LaGaly	Nick Suncin

President's Message



By Ted Merchant, President

Hello Railroad Fans!

2020 is now coming to a close and none too soon! Our Club has been shut down for the last 10 months. COVID-19 is increasingly threatening our county. And what have we done? My answer is "PLENTY!!"

First and foremost, we conducted ourselves responsibly. We closed to the public. We eliminated all our parties. We eliminated all organized, on campus activities. We practiced physical distancing. And we wore masks and continue to do so. BUT we continued to have our monthly open Board meetings via Zoom. Each meeting was followed with a Zoom social hour, some of which lasted over two hours! Members continued coming to the campus, maintained physical distances, and independently swept leaves, mowed lawns, trimmed hedges, cleaned the Kountry Kitchen, rebuilt the retaining walls and expanded the space at the west end of Crystal Springs Drive, rebuilt the electrical shed previously known as the "dog house", supervised an Eagle Scout project

building a laundry shed, finished off the one inch storage barn, organized and increased the capacity of our 1 ½ inch storage barns, changed out our legacy phone line, supervised the removal of a legacy Aleppo Pine tree, supervised the pruning of five oak trees, and repaired multiple track panels (to name a few). Not bad for a bunch of guys and gals avoiding the ravages of COVID-19. LALSRRM members remain united and active because they have the right stuff. Please give yourselves a pat on the back. We made it through 2020!

2021 should be a transitional year. Nothing is going to change overnight. COVID-19 is an increasing threat, especially considering the advanced age of most our members. Please pay attention to the COVID-19 related article elsewhere in this Booster. We can expect COVID-19 to become less a threat as vaccines become increasingly available. We can realistically hope for an exciting Fall Meet that celebrates trains, the conquering of the novel coronavirus and 65 consecutive years of railroading at Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum. Now I'm excited!

And that's the way it is. Stay safe. Stay well. Think railroads. And please accept my best wishes for a happy 2021. Your comments are always welcome. I'll see you at the rails.

Ted Merchant

edwardbmerchant@gmail.com



2021 Member Renewals – We will continue to be using the lalsrm.org website for renewal payments. You can pay by check or PayPal, same as last year. If you already have an account, simply log in and follow the prompts. If you have not paid yet for 2020, please do so before the end of December so you will not owe double in 2021.

One Inch Shed Rentals – the track rental rate for one inch storage at the one inch barn and other barns will be \$10/ foot per year. Members can earn discounts by shed work hours; 40 hours a year will yield a 40% discount which results in a rental of \$6/foot per track per year.

Shed Rental Payments can be mailed in or dropped in the Treasure's Box in the U. P. car. All reimbursements need original receipts and approval from the Board before purchasing. Do not send anything to Bookkeeper (Sara Morris) everything must go through the Treasurer.

Museum Ticket Booth – will be open Sunday, January 10 and 17 from 11 am to 2 pm. You are welcome to come purchase and pickup your name badges. They are \$10 each.

Facility Winter Maintenance – with the leaves falling, we have quite a need for raking and cleanup through March. With the coming wind and rains, we'll also see more dirt and rocks coming down the hillside. We welcome your help, but please be safe and take proper precautions (masks, distancing, hand washing) during this winter COVID, cold and flu period.

Propane Tanks Safety – Please check the dates on your Propane Tanks; we cannot refill expired tanks. All propane tanks are good for 12 years then a hydrostatic and visual inspection or tank replacement is due. At Costco, propane tanks are reasonably priced. As always use "Extreme Caution" when working with or using propane. It bites real good warns Bill Schirmer.

Museum Dumpster – please do not bring trash from home and put in our dumpster. We have very specific guidelines from the Park what we can dump, especially in the green waste containers.



Caution Around the Gauge 1 Drawbridge

The gauge-1 drawbridge is 900 pounds of steel and 7,000 pounds of concrete! The balance weights may cause one to forget: this is a massive, swinging structure! The potential for someone to crush a hand, hit their head or bend the pivot point is very real, so please keep the bridge locked in the down position whenever it is not in use. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.



Additional Vintage Railroad Art on Billboards

By Ross Harper

Tom Hansen built these new billboards on the back sides of the existing ones, so they face the Smith Valley lines. (The billboards are four feet wide by two feet high.) I again selected vintage designs with a railroad theme that had connections to Southern California. Since we already had Southern Pacific and Pacific Electric represented, we needed one from Santa Fe. Their El Capitan economy streamliner service debuted on February 22, 1938 between Chicago and Los Angeles. It was advertised as the swiftest all-Pullman trip at 39-3/4 hours and cost \$39.50 (plus \$5 extra fare).

The "Old 97" is a 1940's fruit crate label from Jolly Jack Farms, which was based in Los Angeles. Labels were an important part of marketing the produce and the art needed to be bright and eye-catching so that the perishable contents would sell in time. I hope these nostalgic billboards will help you appreciate the glory days of our railroad history.

Tom Hansen added, "The billboards are completed! On December 7 I finished the white wooden frames around the other two billboards, and with the great artwork already in place, the billboard project is now completed on all four sides."



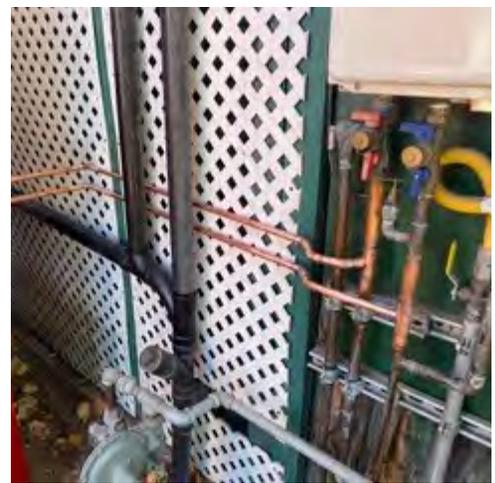
Eagle Scouts Complete Shed

By Beth Worthy Femino

Completing a BSA Eagle Project during a pandemic is no joke. James had planned to do his Eagle project last Spring. Pre-COVID, the project would've been done entirely on site with a lot of help from other Scouts and friends. But due to the pandemic, James had to buy all supplies, prep them, then drop them off at the Scout volunteers' houses.

When they finished their part, we picked up the pieces to assemble on site, like a big lego. It was a huge team effort. A lot of hard work for the entire Femino family! It's finally complete after six weeks of spending every weekend at LA Live Steamers!

Thanks for everyone's help on the project.



Shed Connections

By Roger Williams

Water and electrical hookups continue for the new laundry shed. Photo above shows the hot and cold water is connected as well as the drain line. The electrical trench has been dug, and electrical rough-in has been started in the building.

