



## West End Signals Upgraded

By Jeremy Steinert

**S**unday, May 2, Stevo Brock and Wayne Crabb upgraded signal panel J in the Smith Valley with new signal head, LEDs and controllers.

These PCBs (printed circuit boards) are developed by the crew, and a couple of prototypes were deployed in Panel S near Stutson Crossing as a real-world beta test a year ago. These boards are more robust, have on-board diagnostics, have adjustable brightness, and can drive brighter LEDs. Some minor issues were found and fixed and the second round of tests were successful!

The next set of boards were ordered and hand soldered by Stevo and Wayne, then deployed into panel J! All attached signal heads were upgraded as well with brighter, longer-lasting LED bulbs. The

(Continued on page 4)



Stevo Brock works on control box.

## Ron Bergmann, 74, Past LALSRM President, 26-Year Member, Passes

By Diana Manchester

**T**wenty-six-year LALSRM member and former three-term president (1998, 2007, 2008), Ron Bergmann passed away in Prescott, AZ on May 14 of a heart attack.

Ron, age 74, had served as San Fernando Valley Deputy Chief of Police prior to his retiring. Before that he was a commanding officer of LAPD's Operations Valley Bureau, where he pioneered local gang intervention programs.

## Paul Sheedy Passes

**P**aul Sheedy a member from 1993-2005 and 2009-2019, a LALS Board member and Secretary in 1996-1997. He moved to Grants Pass, Oregon and then to Idaho Falls where he passed away. He was an active member owning a Baldwin electric which he took to meets. His son-in-law was also a LALS member. *Wilbur Dong*

Ron was an active live steamer, well known as an honest, hard-working gentleman and an outstanding administrator.



Pam Dong, LALSRM past president 1996-1997, shares her memories:

"Ron was kind, supportive and focused. As a neighbor of mine who worked with Ron at the LAPD said, "He was a good

(Continued on page 4)



— SAVE THE DATE! —

## LALSRM Fall Meet

### October 8, 9, 10

## Member Schedule

### June

- 7 BOD Zoom Meeting 7 pm.
- 21 Gen Membership Zoom Mtg 7 pm
- 30 Souvenir Booth open 11 am—2pm

### SAVE THE DATES

**Special Fundraising Event** —Tunnel, Cut & Trestle backyard railroad: July 31 and August 1

**Fall Meet:** October 8, 9 and 10.

# SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD



By Steve Rodstein, Secretary

## May 2021 Meeting

**P**resident Ted Merchant called the May 3, 2021 Board of Directors meeting to order at 7:02 pm. The meeting was teleconferenced on Zoom. All directors except Martha Figueroa participated. Forty-three members participated.

**President's Report:** Ted reminded everyone that the current direction of travel for all trains is westbound from Sherwood Station. On July 1, 2021 the direction of travel will change to eastbound. He also stated that Club locos are for Club-sanctioned events and member education only, and not for members' personal use.

All COVID-19 LALSRM safety procedures remain in effect. Members must continue wearing face masks and practice social distancing. Even though Travel Town and the Griffith Park Southern Railroad appear to be operating on a limited basis, LALSRM has no firm date for reopening to the public for now. Ongoing facility cleanup and repairs should continue. In anticipation of LALSRM's future reopening to the public, all station crews should be contacted. Jim Cammarata will start the process of recertifying all LALSRM equipment and making sure that all engineers have taken the annual engineers certification test.

Ted and the Board drafted a grant application to be submitted to the Ludwick Family Foundation (see more on this below).

**Secretary's Report:** The April minutes were approved. The only event scheduled is the Fall Meet on October 8, 9 and 10.

**Treasurer's Report:** In Martha's absence, Ted presented the financials which, after brief discussion, were approved by the Board.

**Membership Report:** The Board approved a proposal by Jeremy for new members wishing to join LALSRM. Applications will be accepted two or three at a time, and once their applications are approved, they would become probationary members with the understanding they could complete their probationary requirements after CV-19 restrictions are lifted. Diana was asked to look into members who have not paid dues for one or more years.

**Superintendent's Report:** Tim LaGaly discussed the ongoing plans for the electrical grid expansion and power upgrade that Greg McMurry, Ted, and he have been working on.

The Board approved a proposal by Ted to remove a pine tree and a Chinese elm at the west end for safety reasons. Three bids will be obtained for Board approval.

Ted stated that he had obtained two bids for repairing the perimeter fence, as well as for an option to extend the fence into the east parking lot. Ted is still waiting for the third bid.

Ted stated that we could use a pending grant from the Ludwick Family Foundation to paint all stationary railroad cars and structures, as well as the cost of covering the Crystal Springs Pit. The Board was to meet again to finalize the application.

Larry Tighe has been reviewing construction costs for the proposed roof for the "PIT" and was asked by Ted to draw up rough plans. The future of the Richardson and Alkire sheds was brought up again. Ted outlined three possibilities, as he had done at prior meetings: 1) just repair their roofs, 2) demolish the existing structures and replace them with new two-story structures, and 3) demolish the existing structures and install cargo containers in their place. After discussion, Tim presented a new rough draft for the second option. The Board decided to discuss this further at the next Board meeting. Larry Tighe also reported on the ongoing efforts of the track crew.

**Other items:** Insurance Chair Ron Hitchcock reported that the Club's current insurance carrier will not renew our insurance policy which expires this month. It was suggested that Rob Nuccio, who is an insurance agent, review with Ron the pro-

posed new policy before it is presented to the Board. Ron said he would obtain the insurance proposal shortly for the Board. Jeremy and his wife will be vacating the caboose this month. The Board agreed that Jeff Pardee could move in.

The next public BOD meeting will be Monday, June 7, 2021 at 7:00 pm.



**Rattlesnakes:** I learned several things today: A baby rattlesnake at LALSRM does not necessarily have a diamond back pattern. A baby rattlesnake has no rattles. A baby rattlesnake can bite you even if it is cut in half by a model train. A baby rattlesnake can kill you. Now is baby rattlesnake season. I'm glad I didn't let it bite me! Ted.

**Need Storage Track?** The Board is working actively to make storage track available to members who need it. If you need storage track because you have equipment at home or if you have delayed the purchase of equipment due to lack of storage, please notify Ted Merchant at [EdwardBMerchant@gmail.com](mailto:EdwardBMerchant@gmail.com) and tell him what you need to store and how much track you need. This will greatly help our planning for the future. Ted.

**Masks Remain the Rule:** The latest word from Sacramento is that wearing masks remains the ruling, even outdoors. Griffith Park and LALSRM are obliged to conform to this standard which, hopefully, will be lifted in another month. Please continue mask wearing for now.

**2020 Shed Hours Accrual Ends June 30:** Members renting shed space have until June 30 to accrue volunteer hours for 2021 shed rental discounts. Please contact Michael Murphy if any questions.



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# President's Message



**Ted Merchant,  
President**

Hello Railroad Fans!

**H**appy 65th anniversary to all of you! That's right! Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum is 65 years old. We are one of the biggest and best large-scale model railroad clubs in America due to our talented and dedicated membership. Diana Manchester has designed a new logo, on the masthead of this newsletter, which we will use this year to celebrate. Your Board of Directors congratulates and thanks you all.

More good news: It's Spring, and Summer is around the corner! The COVID-19 pandemic appears to be coming under control. We cannot predict the future with certainty, but we can make plans.

All this brings me to my favorite topic: the reopening of Los Angeles Live Steamers Railroad Museum! The Board's recommendation is that we not reopen until restrictions regarding mask wearing, physical distancing and sanitizing equipment are lifted. My prediction (guess?) is that we will be able to pull the public, without such restrictions, by late August or early September. We need to be prepared. We have work to do.

We need to clean up the campus. This is progressing well. Several volunteers are working independently. We may start organizing workdays, again, depending on COVID restrictions.

We need to restore our track, particularly the main line. Larry Tighe is assembling a good crew and moving forward. This group has the Board's full support.

We need to restore our signal system. The signal guys are doing all they can. Hopefully these benchmarks will help them tune their strategies.

We need to reassemble our Station Crew. Every Sunday we haul the public, we need at least 4 engineers, 4 conductors, 1 safety inspector, 1 station master, 2 in the ticket booth and 2-3 in the kitchen. We should have "practice runs" with members and family prior to hauling the public.

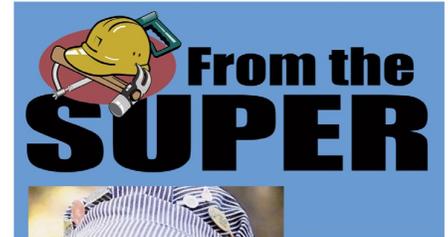
We need to safety check our locomotives and rolling stock. This requires another large team.

We need to market our reopening when we are sure of the date.

I have not discussed projects unrelated to reopening, repairing our perimeter fence, upgrading our electrical grid, repairing our irrigation, and repairing the leaking Richardson-Alkire-Bresee Shed roofs to name a few. We need your help.

Come down to the Club. Play trains. Wear your mask when on campus. And help us move into the future. Your comments are always appreciated. I'll see you at the rails.

Ted Merchant  
[edwardbmerchant@gmail.com](mailto:edwardbmerchant@gmail.com)



**By  
Ross  
Harper**

**G**reetings, Fellow Railroaders - Things are starting to open up in Griffith Park, so LALS RM is preparing to re-open, hopefully, at the end of summer. Several projects to get our Club ready for public operations are already underway. I've seen Stevo and Wayne repairing the signals and putting in new circuit boards on the west end. Nick Guzman and crew have been rehabilitating the 1" track. We appreciate everyone who comes out to pick up leaves, mow the lawns, remove trash, recycle materials and repair sprinklers. This continual but necessary maintenance makes the Club more safe and enjoyable.

**News from the Western Front:**

The west end looks good now that the big piles of leaves have been hauled out. The new portable sprinklers should keep the west meadow grass green throughout the summer. Recently, repairs were made to the covered bridge where some of the siding had fallen off. Another spot that could really use some restoration is Grandpa's Cabin.

**Track Projects:**

Three major track projects going on this summer will provide opportunities to learn some new skills. First, now that the **McKelvey Loop** has been put back together, the next priority is to cut and install some plastic material to put between the rails so that section of track doesn't get damaged when the tractors drive over it to access the pit area. Richard Ronne has volunteered to cut the material and oversee this project. Second, we will install some temporary track in the pit to get the **Maintenance-Of-Way** equipment out of the Webb yard. The track panels have already been arranged in the potential layout, similar to what was there originally, to fit under the existing green canopies without

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Railroad Museum**

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**2021 Officers and Directors**

|                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
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| David Holman          | Les Kovacs      |
| Tim LaGaly            | Nick Suncin     |

blocking access for the heavy equipment to the rest of the area. The third track project is to **re-gauge and level** several spots on the mainline. If you would like to help with the track team, please contact Larry Tighe ([bottleflyblue@gmail.com](mailto:bottleflyblue@gmail.com)).

Spring is a great time to fulfill volunteer service hours toward your shed rental before the summer heat arrives! Lend a hand as we get ready to run our trains and re-open to the public. Try one of the opportunities listed above, or give me a call if you need suggestions or notice something that should be fixed. See you at LALS!

Ross Harper  
[panmanross@aol.com](mailto:panmanross@aol.com)  
818-786-7380

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# Ron Bergman

(Continued from page 1)

man.” Ron and I served on the BOD from 1996 through 1997; he as Vice-President and I as President. Together we worked to resolve the Travel Town Zoo Railroad controversy. With his many contacts with the City, Ron opened doors for us to negotiate with the Recreation and Parks Commission, the City Council, and the Department of Recreation and Parks. During our many negotiations, I felt confident that Ron had my back. We had a mutual respect for each other that carried us through those challenging times. We were able to stop the Zoo Railroad from entering LALSRM, and in exchange, the Commission gave us additional land for the Travel Town spur at our facility’s west end.

“Ron’s love for railroading was very much on display at his office at Parker Center. He had railroad memorabilia on his desk, his windowsill, and walls – many given to him by colleagues who knew he loved trains.

“My heart goes out to his wife Joyce, and to their daughter Elizabeth. It is so nice that she has taken up his hobby and love for railroading. I recall many Sundays where she rode with Ron while he pulled the public. I will miss Ron.”

Ron’s daughter, Elizabeth, joined the Club in October 2020. Last Fall, Ron came to town and she and he worked on some minor repairs to his Allen Mogul steam locomotive. His Santa Fe GE 8-40 CW and rolling stock are now part of her 1.5” collection. We offer her and the family our sincere condolences.

## One Inch Track Rehab

By Nick Guzman

**S**unday, May 9 we spent the day continuing the rehabilitation effort and removing switches to nowhere and fixing the outside loop mainline by the trestle.

We dug down past the original roadbed to regrade this section. Amazing how that secret sauce blend to make the DG waterproof is still holding it together after all these years. William Stewart remarked, “That was the mix that Buss Sutch applied to the right of way every six months for years.”

A big thank you to Dean Gordon and David B. Lazarus for helping out. I don’t have pictures of it, but that same morning Jim Dubensky helped me regrade the outside loop curve to the right of Sherwood Station. I think the project gave him a quick lesson on track work.



David Lazarus working on one inch.

## West End Signals

(Continued from page 1)

Signals Division will monitor the upgrades for any additional issues before rolling out the upgrade to all panels.

Additionally, the crew reached another milestone last month: all block detectors have been upgraded on the layout! If you are looking in a panel and see a red-colored circuit board, this is one of the upgraded boards. These boards also add more diagnostic features and are more resistant to lightning strikes and other environmental problems (such as squirrels). We are also developing new power supply board, switch motor controller, and a digital logic board.



### Ride the Tunnel, Cut & Trestle Railroad!

Trains will run again after 30 years on a spectacular and historic private railroad in the Valley! Fundraiser for the 2021 Olympic Swim Team.

Stay tuned for ticket info & more details.



## For Sale!

Hello all! Do I have the deal of the lifetime for you. Right now, I have for sale an Alco PA along with riding car. The best news you ask? You can be proud of the new owner of this wonderful piece of machinery.

I'm asking for \$12,000 or best to offer the engine and riding car. Please email me at [RJGW1409@yahoo.com](mailto:RJGW1409@yahoo.com).

Also selling one inch UP engine for \$5,000.

I would like a cashier check only for both of them.

Gail Woodward