

## 2009 Florida OL Annual Meeting – November 2, 2009 – Turnpike Headquarters

Annette Lapkowski, Florida OL State Coordinator, welcomed participants and provided the OL mission statement. Each participant introduced themselves, providing their organization, time with OL, and last book read.

Annette provided a safety briefing identifying safety officer-in-charge, CPR contacts, and location of exits and hospital.

- Annette provided overview of the following statistics:
  - (Slide 3) Florida rail-highway crossing Incidents on public and private crossings from 2000-2009
  - (Slide 4) Florida crossing incidents from January 2004-July 2009, the most incidents occur in Broward, Dade, Duval, Hillsborough, Orange, Palm Beach, and Polk Counties (25+ incidents)
  - (Slide 5) Florida trespass casualties from 2000-2009, trespass casualties are increasing
  - (Slide 6) State crossing incidents 2005-2008, Florida ranks 9
  - (Slide 7) State trespass incidents 2005-2008
  - (Slide 8) Florida tress deaths not at crossings January 2004-July 2009, the most incidents occur along the FL commuter rail corridor
- George Bollinger, Northeast Florida Regional Coordinator, presented the following report (handout):

North Florida Train Safety Awareness Week was held April 19-25, 2009, during which 5 blitzes were held involving Amtrak, Florida East Coast Railroad, Norfolk Southern Railroad, and First Coast Railroad. The locations were Orange Park, Jacksonville, and Yulee. The following law enforcement agencies were involved: FDOT Motor Carrier Compliance along with District 2, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, Nassau County Sheriff's Department, Troop G of the Florida Highway Patrol, and the Orange Park Police Department. Two thousand, seven hundred, seventy-five (2,775) people were reached. First Coast Railroad gave out 800 brochures standing in the median of A1A, Yulee. Eight presenters participated. CSX Rail Safety Tips cards along with Tips at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings brochures were handed out. Linda Carter, CSX, set-up the Disney event which resulted in contact with approximately 7,000 people. The Florida Times Union, TV Stations 12 and 25, and WJXT radio have sought rail fan stories, especially the restoration of the steam locomotive at the Prime Osborn.
- Michael Jones, South Florida Regional Coordinator, presented the following report: South Florida Train Safety Awareness Week held April 19-25, 2009, with participation from Operation Lifesaver Volunteers, South Florida Regional Transportation Authority, CSX Corporation, RailAmerica / FEC Railway, and Amtrak, was held April 19-25, 2009. Law Enforcement Agencies from North Palm Beach to Miami, along with the Federal Railroad Administration, the Florida Department of Transportation, Bombardier Transportation, and the G4S Wackenhut Corporation also participated. Volunteers handed out more than 12,000 flyers and brochures to the public and Law Enforcement handed out more than 1000 citations to willful violators at the crossings and along the right of way. Broward Sheriff's Office School Resource Officers conducted 215 presentations to more than 5000 students and approximately 3 million people throughout

Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties received the TSAW message from local media. Train Safety Awareness Week was a success. Local law enforcement agencies and community leaders are strengthening their liaison with the rail industry in a combined effort to improve safety and enforce Florida Statutes. OL also participated in the Boca Raton Police Department VIPER community safety fair. Operation Lifesaver trained and "inducted" 9 new presenters in South Florida. A Cub Scout pack and their families were treated to a 1/8<sup>th</sup> scale train ride along with an OL presentation. OL participated in a recent West Palm Beach Rail Safety Blitz at the train station with the focus on trespassers and rail/grade crossing violators. OL is joining forces with the FRA, Volpe Center, SFRTA and the City of West Palm Beach on an initiative to reduce trespasser incidents. OL presenters received update training and materials at SFRTA. Broward County Transit's Safety Committee is becoming increasingly aware of the need to include rail safety in their bus operator programs. A presentation is being scheduled. OL will be conducting a Highway/Rail Grade Crossing Collision Investigation course at SFRTA in Pompano Beach, December 9 – 10, 2009.

- Annette introduced the Florida OL Board of Directors, explaining Board members were voted into office in July 2009. Five to seventeen members are required. The Board meets three times annually. The Board is comprised of: Kay Kanupp, from the Department of Education serves as Chair; David Maddux, Florida East Coast Railway, is the Vice Chair; Allen Yoder, SFRTA, is Secretary/Treasurer; Katie Chimelewski, CSX Transportation; Brian Dornbush, Florida Central Railroad; Mike Elias, Veolia, Former OL Area Coordinator. Not in attendance were Board members: Ben Biscan (resigning), Florida Railroad Association; Nelson Berrios, Lantana Police Department; Sandra Lambert, Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles; Alvin Richardson Sr., Amtrak and Fred Wise, Department of Transportation. Terms are 2 years, but directors are eligible to serve unlimited successive terms. Any vacancy may be filled by an affirmative vote of a majority of directors present at an annual meeting. (Slides 14-15)
- (Slides 16-21) Annette presented an overview from the April 2009 OL Summit held in Albuquerque, NM  
Information: D.C. In the past 2 years, ten new state coordinators have been appointed. Annette attended orientation with new coordinators from California, Indiana, Louisiana, Nebraska, and Pennsylvania. New presenter manual and slides, along with a new Professional Driver video were made available. OLI is trying to film one new video per year to maintain currency. Annette stresses the use of the OLI website for reporting presentations and volunteer opportunities. There will be a new OLI web site by the date of next year's symposium in August, 2010.  
Technology: National OLI is pushing the new on-line training. Florida's OL on-line training is for volunteers only, not presenters. OLI is seeking funds to evaluate the OL training program, in order to merit federal funding for the overall OL program. OLI has produced new trespass videos, which were shared, along with the introduction of the national Common Sense campaign.  
Engineering: 2009 MUTCD changes have not been adopted. Emergency Notification Signs will be required. There is a proposal to eliminate short-lines from the 800-number requirement.  
Industry Ideas: Amtrak is using video enforcement. Amtrak is also training their law enforcement officers to become OL presenters. Some rail companies provide near miss

data. James Andrews stated that he gets “near miss” data from CSX and applies it to his signal safety program.

Federal Railroad Administration (FRA): As number 9 in crossing collisions, Florida is required to submit an Action Plan to FRA for rail safety improvement. National OL is can providing funding to the top 10 states (which includes Florida) with the highest number of crossing collisions over the last three years. The funding is to be used for community outreach through a Public Awareness Program.

2010 OL Symposium: Everyone is invited to the 2010 OL Symposium to be held at the Hyatt Baltimore Harbor, Baltimore, Maryland. The focus of the 2010 Symposium is on leadership. Amtrak is offering a free ticket to Symposium travelers; coordinate through Florida OL office.

- Jan Bordelon, DOT Rail Office, presented the Northwest Florida Update, including: 1) the use of administrative leave through the Florida Mentoring Program for OL presentations and volunteer work; 2) the introduction of the OL emergency rescue video and quiz to 15 field units and training and state offices with the Division of Forestry; 3) development of Florida OL public service announcements by the Department Public Information Office; 4) OL presentation update training by Katie Chimelewski, CSX, and Annette Lapkowski; 5) Grade Crossing Collision Investigation classes; and 6) Driver Education OL presentations in Gainesville and (five) health and safety fair booths at Southwood School, Department of Revenue and Department of Transportation.
- (Slides 23-29) Annette reviewed the Presenter Update training requirements and history of classes. All presenters must have received the refresher class by December 31, 2009. If you have not received the training, you can not present after December. Goals for 2009 include outreach to Northwest and Central Florida areas and creating a new FL website with the assistance of the Department’s Public Information Office. The website will be updated on a two-week schedule. Kay Kanupp stated that she would work on recruiting Presenters from the Pensacola area. Annette has become a member of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan Leadership committee. Rail fan groups are great opportunities for OL participation. Allen Yoder and Charlie Miller have successfully involved OL into rail fan clubs. Bob Patterson keeps a tally of all presentations with the National Railroad Historical Society. R.W. Willaford reported that he and his wife use a Spanish interpreter during the Christmas Red Caboose program for Spanish speaking children. Several attendees requested Spanish brochures.
- Before lunch, Annette showed the new PSA’s and Common Sense website. She stated that 3 million hits had been received on the Common Sense site.

## **LUNCH AND RAIL WHEEL OF FORTUNE**

- James Andrews, Central Florida Coordinator, reported that the Central Florida region has 22 presenters, 3 associates, and have acquired 5 new presenters and 2 new associates. Lois Earle, Jim Ganey, and James Andrews manned an OL booth in the 3-day National Safety Expo in the Orange County Convention Center the week of October 26, 2009. Walt Disney World, Orange County Police and Fire Departments, and New York Fire Chief’s Association were among the visitors to the booth. International visitors included Ireland, England, Mexico, and Nigeria. The Highway Patrol Office in Tampa participated and recommended that the train dynamic envelope for TSAW include stop bars painted on both sides of the track for queuing. The State OL Coordinator has

requested that areas be identified for purposed of piloting the stop bars in District 7. Orlando, Tampa and Lakeland will be participating in a review of pedestrian crossings. The Federal Offices of highway, railroad, and transit, along with the Department, are teaming up to identify local issues concerning pedestrian access. The Department District 7 worked with CSX to resolve a pedestrian traffic issue through the donation of 7 feet of right-of-way by CSX for the construction of a 6-foot sidewalk and the installation of a 6-foot chain length fence by the District. The Willaford's Little Red Caboose program was cited for their involvement with the grade schools. James reported the site reviews conducted by Central Office Rail with CSX and the District to identify inactive crossings for removal of signals and track to eliminate the necessity of school buses having to stop. He also stated that Plant City, in conjunction with CSX, is building an observation deck for train buffs that visit the rail site where 5 tracks converge in downtown Plant City at the depot.

- Trespass Fatality Reduction Study: (Slides 40-46) Allen Yoder, South Florida Regional Transportation Authority Project Manager, reported that the Volpe Center, with funding from the Federal Railroad Administration, was conducting a Trespass Fatality Reduction Study. Five fatalities occurred in the first 8 months of 2008 on 7 miles of the Tri-Rail Corridor in West Palm Beach. In 2008, the total number of trespass incidents in this area was 21. The Toronto program of CARE, which stands for Community Analysis Response Evaluation, was reviewed for possible implementation. With CSX on the west and Florida East Coast Railway (FEC) on the eastern side of the neighborhoods, there is a critical need to address trespassing. There is a Boys/Girls Club located right near the tracks and 3 schools near FEC. The South Florida Rail Corridor has been double-tracked and there are now approximately 100 trains a day. The Team members to participate in the Study were identified from local and rail police, school boards and officials, local businesses, local governments and agencies, OL, parent and community groups, professional community resources and the media. The objective was to have the team community led. The Team went to the Community and began their analysis. They sent mail outs in utility bills, visited schools, ran PSAs on TV and radio stations. Police from W. Palm Beach, Amtrak, CSX, and FEC participated in blitzes, made several arrests, and talked with residents. The Team looked at fencing, audible alarms in the rail right-of-way, among other options. They wanted the solution to be effective and not just result in moving the problem further down the track. The meeting held by the Team last month identified the stakeholders as a key. Some of the enforcement issues identified were that trespassing fines vary in different jurisdictional areas and some prosecutors give law enforcement a hard time for issuing fines. It was decided a positive approach by law enforcement was to first warn the trespasser that if they came back or did not immediately leave they would be given a ticket. Direction from the Governor's Office has been to increase signage. It was determined that city and county leadership are critical in the efforts to reduce trespassing. After the pilot project on the 7 to 7.5 mile West Palm corridor, the Team will take the model and apply it to each jurisdictional area on the 72 miles of corridor. The Governor did not sign the bill for trespassing stating that he hated for kids to receive a misdemeanor. However, the bill will be re-introduced. Today for trespassers to receive a ticket there must be posted signs every 500 feet. The ticket is a first degree misdemeanor.

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Breakout Groups worked on public service announcements targeted to specific groups. Following brainstorming, the groups came back and presented their ideas.

**The Grade Crossing Group presented:**

Outreach Ideas:

- 1) Twitter with a celebrity sponsor
- 2) Safety advocates for film and television production
- 3) Billboards (donated) with graphic but simple messages
- 4) Burma shave signs as safety messages
- 5) DOT ATMs – short OL messages such as “Just don’t X”
- 6) Open up a contest for kids to write PSAs
- 7) Concert sponsored by OL – Tour throughout North America
- 8) Message on Amtrak, FEC, CSX locomotives

Poster/PSA ideas:

- 1) Don’t Get Caught Dead in the Tracks
- 2) “Friends don’t let friends . . . STAY OFF THE TRACKS”
- 3) “Some people give an arm (or a leg) for a shorter route” or “faster light”
- 4) “Don’t get caught with your tail out – stay off the tracks.”
- 5) Baseball turning into a locomotive as it’s thrown into a catcher’s mitt with the slogan “You’re OUT!”

**The Homeless Group presented:**

Outreach Ideas:

- 1) Place posters in soup kitchens, shelter.
- 2) Organize Outreach Team comprised of United Way, Schools, Churches, government, Fire Rescue, Hospitals (ER and County Health Departments), Law Enforcement, Rail Agencies, Non-Profit groups.
- 3) Track database of individuals.
- 4) Provide alternative living areas.
- 5) “Trespassing on Railroad Tracks is Illegal” brochure identifying statute and important numbers for help in finding shelter

Poster/PSA ideas:

- 1) THIS / NOT THIS Camping Next to Tracks is illegal and dangerous
- 2) Nightmares can become reality if you choose to sleep next to the tracks
- 3) Drinking and Tracks don’t MIX
- 4) A boxcar is not a home or a hitch (shows boxcar as a coffin)
- 5) We’ll Work To Keep You Alive (Homeless will work sign)

**The Kids Group presented:**

Outreach Ideas:

- 1) PSA contest at the schools (using media, art, film, photography). The winner will be featured in a TV or Radio show.
- 2) Child narrating a PSA
- 3) Junior OL Volunteer Program

Poster/PSA ideas:

- 1) "What's wrong with this?"
- 2) "It's a tough thing to live with"
- 3) Train entering a cemetery - "It's just a shortcut . . . or are you DEAD WRONG?!"

**The Trespass (Teens) Group presented:**

Outreach Ideas:

- 1) Music: "Don't Walk the Line" to the Johnny Cash song, "I Walk the Line".
- 2) Blast text messages on RAILROAD safety
- 3) Partner with ATV and fishing retail companies to offer and promote safety DVDs
- 4) Drivers Education DVD promotion
- 5) Links to Google and music sites
- 6) One on one communication about the following:
  - iPods distract and create barriers to train sounds
  - Learn other languages so you can communicate to different teenage groups.
  - Tell real life stories.

Poster/PSA ideas:

- 1) How would you feel if you lost a friend on the track?
- 2) "Don't die today – Trains and Railroads are Dangerous"
- 3) How would your parents feel if they lost you?

**Wild Card group presented:**

Poster/PSA ideas:

- 1) Kid on tracks with ear buds and train approaching from behind ringing its bell "Dead Ringer"
- 2) Tractor trailer hanging over tracks or cars going around stopped vehicles at the crossing "Dying to Get Ahead"
- 3) Children trespassing "A Shortcut to Eternity"
- 4) Person fishing on a bridge "Fishing for a Bad Idea"
- 5) Jogger running down the tracks "Jogging is Not Always Good for Your Health" or "Jogging Can Be Detrimental to Your Health"
- 6) Double track crossing "Two Tracks, Two Trains, Two Chances" or "Double Jeopardy"
- 7) Person sitting on the platform with their laptop and their feet on the track "Catch the Train, Don't Let the Train Catch You" or "Hit Delete"

**Professional Drivers/Emergency Responders group presented:**

Outreach Ideas:

- 1) From the State level add OLI instructions to the regular CDL training and include in the FL Drivers License Manual.
- 2) Contact Police and Fire Chief Associations.
- 3) From the Florida Department of Transportation get the names of trucking associations.
- 4) Put National OL advertisements in fire, police, and trucking magazines.
- 5) Place brochures and Veritable Message Boards at weigh stations and truck stops.
- 6) Add ITS signs at TSAW.

Poster/PSA ideas:

- 1) Ride the Road Not the Rail Road
- 2) Don't Become the Emergency Response (show picture of train t-boning EMS vehicle)
- 3) You're Saving Lives, Don't Risk Your Own
- 4) Get It In Gear, Or Lose Your Rear (Show trailer hanging over tracks silhouetted by headlight of train)
- 5) Don't Compete at the Crossing (train and truck wearing helmets)
- 6) Score Board – Trains 100 / Trucks 0 (Picture of train pushing semi down the tracks)

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PSA Ideas suggested after the meeting – these can be used for any applicable brainstorming group:

- 1) Forgot something essential? Common sense.
- 2) Rushing? In a rush?
- 3) I'm invincible!
- 4) Why change?
- 5) Got legs?
- 6) Graffiti - the illegal part - that's the rush
- 7) Show shadows (ghosts) over tracks with "Have you seen me?"
- 8) Four dead in Ohio ... What if you knew her and found her dead on the ground
- 9) Maybe you got away with it last time ...

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Awards presented to:

- George Bollinger for the most points
- James Andrews for the most presentations
- Ben Biscan for serving on the OL Board
- Cliff Stayton for his leadership as Chairmen of the Board
- Mark Van Hala and Don Levine for certification reviews
- Katie Chimelewski and Jan Bordelon for assisting in training

Mike Elias thanked everyone for allowing him to return to the Board.

Everyone was encouraged to attend next year's meeting.

Meeting adjourned.