

The histlestop *News February* *2022*



*Newsletter of the Central Operating Lines
Model Railroading Club
50A Carlough Avenue,
Bohemia NY 11716
By Larry Laskowski*

Club Meeting Friday February 11th 7:30PM

From the Editor's Desk..... Mid-Winter

February is and interesting month. In our area, this month is notable for the largest snowfalls. And we have already had one to well exercise your snowblower. Maybe not as bad as past storms. So, as you might imagine, we haves some musings about snow and the rails.

And mid-month February 14th, we celebrate love. It might be our favorite sweetie or maybe our passion which is rail related. Or it can be both. On February 14, 2020 my best friend and myself visited with a favorite love, Norfolk and Western Class J 611 at the Spencer shops in Marth Carolina. So, do something train related with your love on Valentine's Day.





The President's Column

..... by Joseph Mancusi

Dear Members,

So, in this area we would find a message concerning an overall vision and perspective of the club from our president Stay tuned and look for information in subsequent newsletters

Remember it's our club and its progress and future direction is what we make it together. We welcome your thoughts and ideas.



Joe Mancusi

President Central Operating Lines



A Report from Our Treasurer.....

.....by Al Schick.....

The report for January is in progress Please check this space in the next newsletter for an update on club financial info.

Please stay current with your dues so that we can meet our ongoing rent and other expenses. Please contact me if you have any questions concerning your dues owed.

Dues can be paid via PayPal or can be mailed directly to

Al Schick
3 Greenway Drive
Middle Island, NY 11953



Club Sad News

Joe Nicolosi

we learned of the passing of longtime COL Member Joe Nicolosi's on January 9th. Last February, Joe contracted Covid and was hospitalized and placed on a respirator. Joe fought a good fight and was taken off the respirator after 5 months and appeared to be on the mend, even being transferred to a rehab center and speaking on the phone to one of our members as recently as 2 months ago.

Joe was a true gentleman and will be missed by the club. Please keep Joe and his family in your prayers.

Al Holmes

On January 15th, long time member Al Holmes passed away. AL was a member when the club layout was in Ronkonkoma. Al had worked placing illuminated signs on various structures on the layout which were among the many details Al had placed on the layout. As I recall, all was a long time Chesapeake and Ohio fan and often ran his C&O equipment on the layout. WE will miss his smile and sense of humor.

Club News, Events and Model News

Hello to all Central Operating Lines members,

Hope that this report update of our club's happenings finds everyone well, or the best that can be expected in these extraordinary times.

Keep in mind that club meetings and the swap meet may be subject to cancellation due to Covid. Check for emails noting such cancellations.



The following topics were discussed at the COL General Meeting which was held this past Friday, January 14, 2022:



1. Due to the current rise of Covid cases due to the Omicron variant, VP Mike Block has undertaken a routine of disinfecting the club's premises. It is imperative that the premises also remain in a sanitary condition at all times to ensure a proper cleaning and disinfecting. The author of this letter notes that our regular attendees have been adhering to these requests. In particular, kudos to member Tom Gray for his constant attention to this matter.
2. President Joe Mancusi has donated a smart TV for the club meeting room
3. Repairs: Roger and Pete continue to do yeoman's work handling the repairs, despite the repair area being in the midst of a major reorganization of inventory, billing, etc. Members should be aware that with the paucity of MTH repair centers and technicians, our repair technicians provide an excellent incentive for customers to join our club, especially when they drop off and pick up their items and have a chance to meet members and view the layout.
4. Renovation and updating of our main city area continues. Much of the work is focused on rewiring and simplification of the building and street lighting, New to the city area will be an updated and an intricately detailed Grand Central Terminal, and a trolley line.
5. Our lease will expire at the end of this Year and we will be in the process of negotiating a new one with the owner.
6. Our last few Swap Meets have been well attended with customers and all vendor tables have been sold out. Those members who have yet to attend a recent swap meet and have attended those in the past that were located in the bingo hall, should note that the AmVets Hall where the swap meets are now held is a major upgrade in both appearance and condition.
7. For all those members that are currently up to date in their dues, we thank you, and we ask that those who are behind, please get up to date as soon as possible. These are certainly trying times with Covid, and now inflation is another issue that hurts our efforts to maintain our membership and remain fiscally solvent.



All-Gauge Swap Meet

Sunday, February 13th 2022. The location will be the AmVets Post 18, 141 Carleton Ave, East Islip, NY 11730. We have spoken to the Veteran Post Members, and they have informed us beverages and food will be available for purchase. The Swap Meets are an excellent time to inform

So, if you have yet to avail yourself of a visit to our new swap meets, here are a couple of photos to give you a coming attraction. I will bet you will want to be part of the scene now to meet with members, fellow train folks and find the long-awaited item needed for your collection.

Come on down!







CLUBROOM PROTOCOL DURING COVID-19

As you may know, New York State has ended the Covid-19 state of emergency. Look for revised Covid 19 protocols and requirements. Club practices and requirements may change but for now, please follow the existing club protocol until advised otherwise.

- ALL members are required to wear masks when at the club
- No more than 4 people are to congregate in any area of the club.
- Maintain social distancing of a minimum 6 feet while in the club.
- Coffee will no longer be made at the club. Feel free to bring one with you
- Limit food consumption while at the club. Members who eat, can remove their masks in the work room. maintain 6-foot distancing. Do not leave food at the club. The refrigerator is empty and has been cleaned.
- If a member leaves the work room, for any reason, you must re-mask.
- Clean your area when you are finished
- Kindly wipe down all surfaces you have touched with cleaning wipes or similar. Especially important at the transformers. Wipe controls with the wipes available
- DO NOT spray disinfectant directly onto electrical devices
- Hand sanitizers and wipes are at the club.
- Many members are still worried about the numbers of people who may be at the club. Be considerate of their worries and follow safe meeting procedures.

If you enter the club, and someone is there NOT wearing a mask, simply ask them to do so.

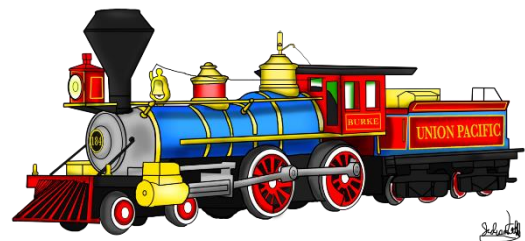
You can do this and Win!!!!!!!

Five step Corona Virus Good Personal Practice

Here is a very simple set of personal behavior that you can follow to keep yourself at minimal risk. Think of it as "...doing the Five...."

- 1 HANDS-- Wash them often, use soap for 20 seconds and rinse with warm water.
- 2 ELBOW-- Cough into it if you need to cough or clear throat
- 3 FACE--- Don't touch it, especially nose and eyes and mouth.
- 4 SPACE--- Keep safe distance, at least 6 feet from others in public
- 5 HOME--- Stay there as much as you can. Run your trains! ***It is the membership that***

makes our club succeed. Let's do it together!!!





Scene on the Long Island Railroad

Well February is the month for Snow it seems. Our beloved Long Island Railroad had weathered many a storm over its history and traveling on it in the snow can be picturesque or quite an experience depending on your perception. I can recall a personal experience from the 1970s. The snow started to fall on Sunday evening. The Morning commute on Monday was not bad in spite of a large of snow having fallen by Monday morning. I left my Manhattan Office following an important project meeting. Left about 11 am, made it to Flatbush Avenue and rode to Jamaica for a Huntington train. There were hordes of travelers on that platform. As luck would have it, the next train on the platform was the Huntington connection. The doors opened directly in front of me so I was able to get on. About Noon. At 5 or so that evening we were stuck on the cold spring Hill when a diesel came and pushed from behind into Huntington. I was able to get on a Port Jeff diesel at Huntington and made it to Northport about 7:30 Pm to get into the car for the drive home in the still falling snow. The next morning, the news aired reports of rescue trains working to get stranded passengers into nearest stations. There was no service until Thursday of that week. I was one of the lucky ones to get through.

The railroad has had some interesting snow fighting equipment over the Years. WE probably all have seen "Jaws" the big snow plow nor out at Greenport on display. There was once a steam powered rotary plow, which I remember seeing at Morris Park in the early 1970s. Today it looks like there are fan driven vacuum type snow blowers. And



those smudge pots at crossovers have long been replaced by gas fired snow melting jets.

So here are a few photos of our LIRR in the snow,











How is your Train Feeling?

Well hopefully, all your locos are doing well and running fine. You know because you have been running them at the club, right?

So, what if things not all that good for that loco. Maybe sluggish response, poor or no smoke, sounds not so good or maybe silent? Or just needs a tune up after a long sleep.

Not to worry. Central Operating Lines is now an Authorized repair station for Lionel and MTH trains. Yes. we have access to all the parts from these folks to make your trains run like new. And we can also handle other brands such as K Line, Atlas, Williams et all. TMCC, Legacy, or DCS, doesn't matter. WE can handle it as the Union Pacific would say. And Conventional is np problem either. All non-command-controlled trains are welcome in our shops, even those Lionel Postwar trains.

As you know, those PS-1 and newer PS-2 versions form MTH were dependent on the famed white Nicad battery. This is an area that should be addressed on these older MTH locomotives. The COL shops have just the answer for you. Yes, we have our own line of BCRs to allow elimination of the battery and never worry about the battery condition in your MTH loco again.

So why not give us a try. Tell your friends not in the club about COL shops services. Or better yet, bring them down to the club and maybe they will become members as well. See Roger Herzog, Pete Lorre or Tony DeAngelo for all your train repair needs.

Keep Those Trains Rolling at the Club and At Home!!!!



Snowbound in the Sierras

The **City of San Francisco** was an extra-fare luxury streamliner operated jointly by the Chicago & North Western, the Union Pacific, and the Southern Pacific. It traveled on C&NW rails from Chicago to Omaha; then to Ogden UT *via* UP; finally on SP rails through Nevada to Sacramento and ultimately to Oakland CA.

Record snowfalls and 100-mph winds pounded the Sierra Nevadas seventy years ago today. Highway passes in the north Sierras were closed, and only the Southern Pacific Railroad was still running. But even SP's rotary snowplows were hard-pressed to keep up with drifts in Donner Pass, and only the eastbound track was open across the summit.

On this date in 1952, the westbound **City** paused at Norden CA near the summit of the Sierras. Its fifteen streamlined cars were powered by a 6750-hp lash up of ALCO PAs (SP #6019, #6914 and #6013). Engineer Tom Sapunor and fireman Gordon Painter took advantage of the delay to refill their diesels' steam generators with water.

While they did so, M. L. Jennings, superintendent of the Sacramento Division, explained to the crew that their westbound train would be routed down the eastbound track, against normal traffic flow. Yesterday's westbound **City** had stalled in a snowslide at mile post 182, ten miles down the mountain. It had been dragged back to Norden, and it eventually got through the pass using the eastbound track; the westbound track remained obstructed. Sapunor's train would cross over to the westbound rails at Crystal Lake, about fifteen miles downhill. Roadmaster J. T. Fulbright climbed into the diesel's cab and seated himself; and around 11:23 a.m. PST they received clearance to proceed.

The weather station at Donner Summit (elevation 7000') registered a wind velocity of 100 mph and a barometric pressure of 22.88". Sapunor stopped for a red fusee as he approached the Crystal Lake snowshed. Bill Brennan climbed up the ALCO's cab ladder long enough to warn the crew of possible snow slides beyond Crystal Lake. He dropped off again as #101 threaded its way through a crossover to the westbound main.



As the train neared Yuba Pass, it suddenly encountered deep snow. Sapunor reversed his motors and attempted to back his train out of the towering drift, to no avail. The **City of San Francisco**, its 196 passengers and 30 crew members were stuck in 8- to 12-foot drifts in a howling blizzard, just outside Tunnel 35 in an area known as Smart Ridge.

J. T. Fulbright climbed down from the cab and tramped through the snow to a telephone shed at Yuba Pass. He got through to Norden, and Assistant Superintendent Bob



Mallet right away. By the time Fulbright returned to the train, its brake rigging and under-floor tanks were frozen solid. The storm raged on with no signs of easing up.



Rotary snowplow #7222, shoved by Mallet #4188, plowed up the eastbound main, past the frozen train, through tunnel #35, and crossed over to the westbound track at Crystal Lake. The rig halted within 120' of the stalled train's observation car. Using hand shovels, the crew of three managed to dig right up to the **City's** marker lamps. But the icebound train would not budge. Then an air pump failed on rotary #7222, immobilizing it.

Earlier that morning, rotary #7205 and Mallet #4245 had worked the eastbound line uphill from Roseville CA. They reached Norden around noon, and soon afterwards their crews heard about the **City of San Francisco**.

They returned to the Gap, picked up Bob Miller, turned, and plowed up the westbound track to the snowbound train. Everyone began digging with shovels. Engineer Sapunor personally dug snow away from #6019's pilot to get at the coupler. He tried again to pull the **city** free again under its own power, but to no avail. So, Miller sent for a four-unit diesel from Norden. But the disabled plow would have to get out of the way before anything could couple to Sapunor's train. A caboose hop from Norden brought section foreman Nelson with 35 men. They would dig all night as the wind lashed them and froze fingers to gloves. Stalled rotary #7222 proved a blessing in disguise; her boiler provided steam to heat the train after the diesels' steam generators ran dry.



21st-century rotary action on Donner Pass
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RjBQ3MaBYiU>

As night fell on the **City of San Francisco**, the situation was still a lark to most of the 196 passengers, who were sure they'd be free before long.

Southern Pacific train #101, the westbound **City of San Francisco**, had been stuck in a snowdrift near Yuba Pass since shortly after noon on Sunday, January 13, 1952. Several rescue attempts had already been foiled by mechanical failures or inclement weather. Both tracks of SP's main line through Donner Pass were blocked by snowdrifts, and four of the six rotary snowplows on SP's Sacramento Division were either buried in snow or mechanically out of service.



An engineer named Rolland Raymond, who had been operating a rotary snowplow, was killed by an avalanche within one-quarter mile of the stranded passenger train. A rescue attempt by the U.S. Army had failed when their three "Weasel" vehicles got mired in the deep, soft snow. Helicopter pilots stood by helplessly, grounded by gale-force winds.



Most of the 196 passengers and 30 crew remained in good spirits. Railroad employees and their customers worked side-by-side to solve problems that cropped up.

Fortunately, a physician, Walter Roehll MD, was among the passengers. He was traveling from Ohio to accompany a patient to San Francisco. The train's conductor reported to the doctor that a passenger was screaming, cursing and tearing up his compartment. Roehll recognized the symptoms of a drug addict entering



withdrawal, and he administered morphine. The addict was then locked in his compartment, but he would escape from a rescue train two days later when it reached Sacramento. During the snowbound ordeal, Roehll was also called upon to treat three passengers with respiratory infections, as well as several cases of carbon monoxide poisoning.

The carbon monoxide incident occurred after crew members used a portable generator that had been brought in from Crystal Lake by an SP section crew. The locomotives' diesel fuel had long since run out, and the cars' batteries were almost dead, so crews were running the generator to provide lighting and to recharge the batteries. However, passengers became ill from the fumes. The crew then opened some windows to ventilate the car. Passengers bundled up in drapes from the car windows and bedding from the sleepers to keep warm.

The dining car served what food was available, but supplies were running short, and so food was rationed. Steward Ed Tschumi ordered that milk be reserved for children. Cooking stoves in the galley burned coal. When the coal ran out, crews collected the ladders that were used in sleepers to climb into upper berths and broke them up for firewood.



Water aboard the train was in short supply. In order to conserve water, toilets could not be flushed. Assistant Road Foreman Charlie Carroll found cans in the baggage car and organized a latrine patrol. Engineers, firemen, conductors, a brakeman and a baggage agent all took turns emptying the cans.



A relief train had been dispatched from Reno NV with dog sleds, supplies, and a medical doctor. It was supposed to follow rotary snowplow #7210 and Mallet #4173 west from Norden, but the rotary derailed west of Soda Springs, so the relief train never arrived.

The only motor vehicle that succeeded in reaching the train that day was a Sno-Cat owned by Pacific Gas & Electric Company. A Sno-Cat had two sets of bulldozer-like treads fore and aft, and it could operate on deep snow without sinking in. Skiers, dog sleds, and the Sno-Cat delivered supplies from the relief train. However, a Sno-Cat could not begin to transport hundreds of people away from the scene of the disaster. As night fell 70 years ago today, the marooned travelers still had no place to go.

Southern Pacific train #101, the westbound **City of San Francisco**, had been stuck in a snowdrift near Yuba Pass since Sunday, January 13, 1952. Both tracks of SP's main line through Donner Pass were blocked by snowdrifts. Four of the six rotary snowplows on SP's Sacramento Division were either buried in snow or mechanically out of service. Several rescue attempts had been foiled by mechanical failures or by inclement weather. An engineer named Rolland Raymond had been killed by an avalanche after the rotary snowplow he was operating got within one-quarter mile of the stranded passenger train. Another rescue attempt by the U.S. Army had failed when



their three “Weasel” vehicles got mired in the deep, soft snow. Helicopter pilots had stood by helplessly, grounded by gale-force winds.

Seventy years ago today, the blizzard finally subsided. A Coast Guard helicopter flew in from Colfax with a doctor, medical supplies, and food. Conditions in Yuba Pass prevented it from landing, so supplies were dropped to the train. The doctor, however, wisely remained aboard the aircraft and refrained from parachuting into 20’ snowdrifts.

SP rotary snowplow #7220, which had been brought in from the Portland Division, cleared a path from Colfax to a highway overpass west of Emigrant Gap, near Nyack Lodge. But the passengers and crew aboard train #101 weren’t yet aware of its progress. One crew member momentarily cracked under the strain. “Dat cook! My third



cook! He's crazy—look at him go!” exclaimed the dining-car chef. A terrified Negro dove through an open window and was all but engulfed by a snowdrift. Ed Hardison got a ball of twine, tied one end to the train, and ran in pursuit of the man, laying a trail of string behind him so that he wouldn't get lost himself. Hardison somehow persuaded him to follow the snowdrift up to the diesel locomotive. The cook returned safely to the train—and even to his duties in the kitchen.



Meanwhile, snow removal crews from the California Highway Department had opened U.S. Highway 40 as far as Nyack Lodge in Emigrant Gap. At 3:20 p.m. PST, the passengers of the **City of San Francisco** walked 1,500 feet from their train to the nearest accessible point on highway 40, then they were driven five miles to Nyack Lodge in private automobiles. There, SP officials had arranged to have everyone fed, and provided an opportunity to send telegrams to their families.



The passengers then boarded a rescue train which had followed rotary #7220 uphill from Colfax. Pulled by four F7 diesels, it consisted of eight Pullman sleepers, two fully stocked dining cars, a club car, and a coach for railroad employees. Several doctors and nurses were aboard. The rescue train departed Emigrant Gap at 8:30 pm PST. Most of the railroad employees detrained at Roseville, and the snowbound travelers

finally reached Oakland early the next morning.

1952 newsreel:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tG59X7bMDpA>