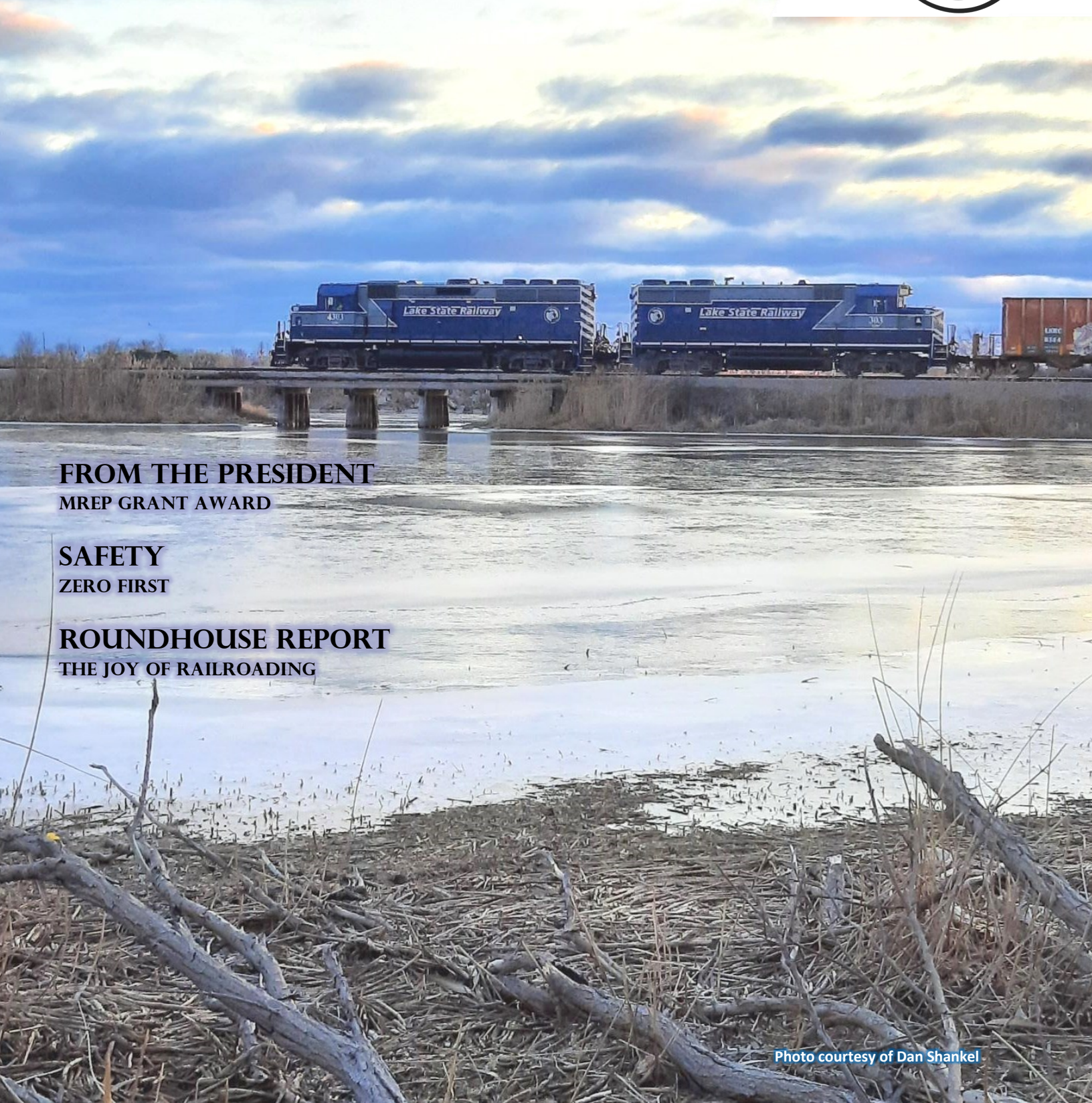


2024 ISSUE 1

Lake State Railway

The Turntable



FROM THE PRESIDENT
MREP GRANT AWARD

SAFETY
ZERO FIRST

ROUNDHOUSE REPORT
THE JOY OF RAILROADING

Photo courtesy of Dan Shankel

From the
President
--
MREP Grant
awards

Recently, Lake State Railway Company (LSRC) was notified by the Michigan Department of Transportation - Office of Rail that it was awarded four projects under the Michigan Rail Enhancement Program (MREP). This marks the second year where LSRC has been awarded grants under this program. The MREP made its first awards in 2023. LSRC is extremely grateful for these awards as they help us accelerate the rebuilding and modernization of critical infrastructure needed to serve the coming growth of traffic while ensuring safe operations. Steady improvements in rail, ties and ballast along with the use of technology will help ensure not only the ability to handle the new and growing business along our lines, but also enhance our safety.

The awards from 2023 allowed LSRC to install 4000 ties, add ballast and surface track between Pinconning and Linwood. This work coupled with work performed over many previous years allowed LSRC to increase track speed to 40 miles per hour from 25 miles per hour. The second project allowed LSRC to install a new Equipment Defect Detector (EDD) on our Huron Sub-division where no such device has ever existed and improve and relocate other EDDs on the Saginaw Sub-division and the Dean Sub-division. All of this work improves our coverage of EDDs as part of our long-term plan to use technology to help ensure the safety of equipment moving on LSRC. Lastly, as part of this EDD work some of these locations also have Automated Equipment Identification (AEI) incorporated into them which allows LSRC the ability to better track the movement of railcars across our system.



Michigan Department of Transportation

www..Michigan.gov/mdot/travel/mobility/rail

Freight Economic Development



The 2024 awards consist of four projects with two being on the Huron Sub-division and two on the Saginaw Sub-division, all of which have significant importance to future growth as well as continued safe operations. Working North to South these projects include the following:

Project 1: Alabaster Branch Rehabilitation. A complete rebuild of the Alabaster Branch (approximately 4 miles) utilizing relay rail, all new ties and ballast. This project is setting the table for the growth coming from mining operations located in that area.

Project 2: Huron Subdivision Improvements. The installation of 10,000 ties (including ballast and surfacing) between M.P. 18 and M.P. 28 on the Huron Sub-division. The Huron Sub-division will see a significant increase in traffic in the next 5 to 7 years. This project lays the base for future continuation of LSRC's rail replacement programs on the Huron Sub-division.

Project 3: Flint Coldwater Yard Improvements. Significant work will be done to improve the lead at our Coldwater Yard in Flint. This work is primarily focused on the rebuilding of the main switching lead including continuing the replacement of switches, ties, hard rock ballast and surfacing. In addition, there will be some reconfiguration including the locomotive layover track. This work will provide significant improvements to the switching operation and its completion will allow us to focus on the yard tracks in the future.

Continued on page 3)

Project 4: Wixom Transloading Facility. Significant improvements will be made at the Wixom Yard in preparation for new trans-load business. The replacement of ties, ballast and surfacing are the main needs so that tracks that have been out-of-service for a number of years can be put back into service. In addition, work will be done to manage specific commodities in an efficient manner. This work has been contemplated since we took over the operation five years ago. It is part of our plan to grow business along this line segment.

The MREP has quickly been embraced by all classes of railroads in Michigan and is helping to promote the continued growth of rail use by existing and new customers. The use of rail helps customers grow or secure their business, eliminates the need for long truck hauls or truck hauls entirely which in turn reduces wear and tear on roads, promotes safer roads and greatly reduces carbon emissions. While the MREP is a grant program it only provides funds up to 70 percent of a project’s cost with a maximum amount given to a single company during an award year. LSRC will be funding a significant portion of the above-named projects while also continuing on with the significant capital work already budgeted for in 2024. The MREP allows for projects to be completed over a two-year period although LSRC currently expects to complete these projects during 2024.

In closing, I would like to thank all involved in helping LSRC grow and be successful. It is an honor to provide service to you, employ you, and work with you while helping Michigan and those who live here be successful.

John Rickoff
President & CEO

Quick History D & M Railroad

The Detroit & Mackinac Railway (D&M) nicknamed the “Turtle Line”, ran in the north-eastern part of the lower peninsula of Michigan, with the main line running from Bay City north to Cheboygan from 1894 to 1992. The main offices were located in Tawas City

and in the 1940’s, it became the first all diesel haul railroad which reported enough revenue to be a Class I. The D&M was one of the first railroads to eliminate steam locomotives in 1948.

In the 1930’s the D&M offered passenger service complete with sleeping quarters and meals, but by 1951, passenger service was eliminated completely. In 1976, the D&M acquired a combination of trackage and operating trackage rights from the bankrupt Penn Central which created an alternate mainline route from Bay City North through Gaylord and Cheboygan to Mackinaw City. In 1992, the D&M was acquired by Lake State Railway Company.

On pages 4 and 5 you can view a side by side map comparison showing the changes and significant growth from then (D&M) to now (LSRC).

For more details and photographs on the Detroit & Mackinac Railway, you can visit any of the following & more:

- The Library of Michigan for, *My Story of the Detroit & Mackinac Railroad* by George L. Wakeman.
- En.Wikipedia.org
- <http://www.michiganrailroads.com/dmhs/Programs/Map.htm>



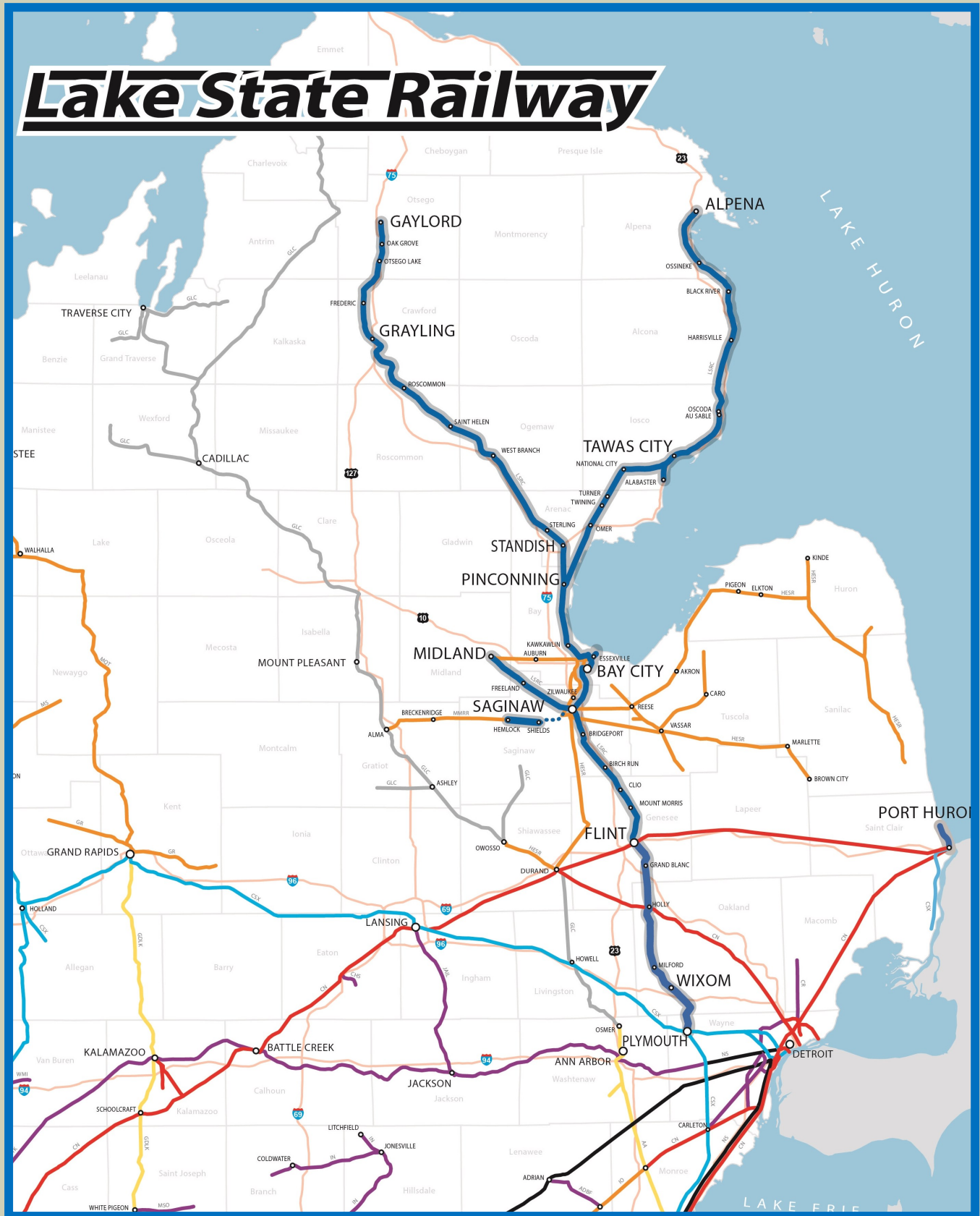
Quick
History
D & M
continued
....

THEN (D&M)



Map from: www.dailydetroit.com

NOW (LSRC)



Roundhouse
Report
--
The Joy of
Railroading

Why do we love railroading so much? For some, it's all we've known. For others, it's a generational thing. Others dreamed of working for the railroad when they were growing up. Some of us stumbled into it as a career. Very few could see themselves doing anything else, especially after they get hooked.

Hooked, like an engineer on a Class 1 railroad, one lifelong railroader retired on May 1st of 2023 after working for 65 years. He caught the tail end of mainline steam when he hired out. The only electrical items were his headlight, and cab lights back then. He retired with highly efficient diesel locomotives equipped with AC traction and multiple computer systems. Cabs that exceeded 120 degrees in the summer were now climate-controlled, relatively quiet cabs when he retired.

Another gentleman worked for a railroad industry supplier for 60 years and retired at 87 in early 2024. He was a Hungarian Freedom Fighter who fought against the Russians in that country's failed 12-day revolution to gain their freedom. He sought asylum and arrived in the United States on February 28th, 1957. He lived through the aftermath of World War 2: no food, no heat, and occupation by the Soviet Union. He could have been a casualty of the times and location he lived in, but he never let that keep him from finding his place in this world.

Those who witnessed the humble beginning in those early years of building up Lake State Railway are approaching 32 years and beyond. Many from those early days have moved on, retired, or passed away, but the railroad continues to roll on. A railroad not just rolling on as one would think when stuck at a crossing, but more as a neighbor serving communities and, in some cases, enhancing communities for a better tomorrow. Without the railroad, how would so many customers we serve

be able to stay in business, provide their services, provide employment, or make life sustainable for Michigan residents and beyond? Everything from food on the table to the heat in your house, Lake State Railway gets it done.

I don't believe anyone will make the 60-65 years of service at Lake State Railway within our lifetime; however, the dedication and commitment it took to work all those years is the same commitment we bring each day to moving freight here in Michigan and beyond.

At the locomotive shop, we live that commitment daily on the foundation of those who came before us. You can see it when walking through the 102-year-old roundhouse and during the upgrades that we've made to the facility. Surprises with repairs/upgrades to our turntable to a hidden vault between number two and three tracks that appears to be an old drop table for replacing wheels from steam locomotives. We will open that vault very soon to facilitate additional concrete work for 2025. What will we find as we uncover a hidden tool of the steam locomotive trade? It is likely an empty hole that will need backfilling. From our best estimate, the C&O Railroad sealed it up over 75 years ago. What stories could that open pit tell?

Miles of rail, ties, spikes, and tie plates have been replaced over the last several years, and more will be replaced as time marches on. Each foot of the railroad told a story of the blood,

sweat, and tears of the men who paved the way for the next generation. In this case, the Lake State generation.

The towns and cities we live and work in today grew up around our rails. Today's railroad looks similar to "as built" in the mid to late 1800s. Still, two rails separated by 56-1/2" on wooden ties. Compared to other industries, the concept

of our foundational infrastructure has stayed the same for over 150 years.

No industry or factory buildings have stood the test of time along our rails from those early days. The dominant lumber industry needed to build this nation is no longer the backbone of the railroad up north, nor is the domination of the automobile industry that sustained the south end for so many years. Forms of those industries are still on our rails based on changing times, technology, or both. In 2024, building materials, automobiles, and other commodities are still crucial

Designed Based on Post War Locomotives (WWII)

• Why?

- Instilling the early principles of the original design.
- Basic principles are still in place from the early Geeps and Switchers.
- Newer systems are an overlay of several circuits in older locomotives.
- Easier to learn later control systems such as Dash 2 and aftermarket systems.



(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

to our daily operations. Markets will constantly change, and we at Lake State will be a part of that change.

Time will wait for no man, nor will the railroad, as Lake State Railway keeps supporting the current customers and those yet to be discovered, not for just today but for generations that follow. With good people and robust marketing solutions for changing commodities, we will continue to see towns and industries change around our rails.

So why do we find joy in railroading? The railroad is the consistency that connects the past to today and today to tomorrow. Those who walked these railyards turned those wrenches, pounded those spikes, and pulled out on that throttle, built this country that we love.

What makes someone stick with railroading for 65 years? It must be that connection to the past as he handed off the baton to the next generation.

Then, sometimes, with all the turmoil in the world and division in our own country, we need a reminder from a man who

witnessed his world crumble, fought for his freedom, and found a new birth in the United States—tied to the railroad industry for 60 years and blessed that he could use his talents with each customer he served.

To find contentment and joy in his or her place in history along with the love of family is all one could ask for in this life.

From all of us at the Saginaw Locomotive Shop, and the rest of our railroad family, thank you to our customers who help us each day, to live up to the legacy of Lake State Railway and those who came before us.

**Be Safe,
W. Roger Fuehring
Chief Mechanical Officer**

FROM THE TREASURE TROVE

Jesse Moore, the Great-Grandfather of Kevin Mityrzk (CFO and Executive V.P. of Lake State Railway) , as engineer on one of the last steam locomotives leaving the LSRC Saginaw Yard.



LSRRC LET'S REALLY COUNT SAFETY

On the heels of receiving an ASLRRRA Jake Safety Award for an exemplary safety record in 2022, we saw even fewer injuries in 2023, however, our goal shouldn't be merely to perform below the industry average, but rather to eliminate injuries altogether.

As an industry veteran across multiple roles, territories, and (now) companies, I've seen a myriad of different situations, but most *preventable* injuries seemed to have one thing in common - They were typically soft tissue injuries, likely as a result of utilizing improper body mechanics, over exertion, or taking an unnecessary short-cut.

With that said, anyone familiar with me knows that I'm a realist, and I'll readily admit that we may not be able to prevent every single injury, and while that may sound absurd from a safety manager, anyone who has woken up with a sore back, or a stiff neck, simply because they slept awkwardly, or felt the uncomfortable twinge of back-pain after a simple, everyday motion, such as sitting up from a chair, will empathize with the accuracy of that assessment.

I'll share an anecdote that was told to me by an ex-railroad executive:

"We were celebrating a few years injury free, and so we put on a massive barbeque for all of the employees, and we had a little bit of everything. Pulled pork, ribs, pork chops, and all the fixins. Everyone was having a great time, and then it happened. An individual bit into a pork chop, and I don't know if it was a piece of bone, or what, but he ended up breaking a tooth, and our injury free streak came to an end. So I like to say that you can put in all the effort in the world, but sometimes you just can't prevent those pork-chop injuries."

This does not mean, however, that we should not endeavor to do our due diligence in our quest towards ZERO injuries. Prior to the advent of federally mandated safety regulations in the early 20th century, one in every 50 railroaders would be injured, and worse, one in every 300 would be killed (compared to 1 in every 11,122 employees as of 2022) so to say that we've come a long way as an industry is an understatement.

It is often said that railroad rule books are written in blood, meaning that the words contained within those pages come as

the result of someone else's incident, or injury, and as I'll tell anyone that will listen, we must learn from the mistakes of others as we'll never live long enough to make them all ourselves.

So, what can we do in our quest towards ZERO? The first thing I'll state is that I firmly believe compliance with the spirit of the rules and regulations that govern our industry can ensure everyone goes home safely every day.

One way to monitor such compliance is by utilizing observational testing. With that in mind, the Lake State Railway Safety Department is in the process of revamping our testing expectations to better align with the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association guidelines, while still exceeding the Federal Railroad Administration requirements. This testing ensures a fundamental understanding is being executed in practice at all levels, while creating an opportunity to mentor and educate where knowledge gaps exist.

Additionally, there are a few other steps that can be taken by employees to mitigate soft-tissue injuries specifically, such as stretching, ensuring proper hydration, remaining physically fit, as well as taking our time to perform the tasks at hand while utilizing proper body mechanics, and taking caution not to over-exert.

While the future remains bright at Lake State Railway, it's a wonderful notion to acknowledge that our business growth is mirrored by our safety culture as we carry the momentum of two very successful years into 2024, and with everyone's efforts, we can continue to drive our injuries towards zero.

Dave Foster
Manager of Training & Safety

"What's the most excellent thing I can do today?" –Neil Peart

Corey Violette: A Lifelong Railroader

"I don't think I've ever seen Corey without a smile on his face. He always has such a great attitude and is a true pleasure to have on our team." - John Rickoff

With over 25 years of service, Corey Violette stands as one of the stalwart employees at Lake State Railway. As a Track Foreman in the Maintenance of Way Department, Corey's responsibilities are crucial to the safe and efficient operation of the railway system. Let's delve into the details of his remarkable journey involving a blend of precision and dedication. Track Maintenance is a relentless task—a job that never truly ends:

- **Changing Rails:** Corey helps oversee the replacement of worn-out rails, ensuring the integrity of the track.
- **Rail Tie Installation:** He helps coordinate the installation of new rail ties and replaces old ones, maintaining the stability of the track.
- **Vegetation Management:** Cutting encroaching trees is part of Corey's routine, preventing vegetation from obstructing the rail lines.
- **Weather-Related Repairs:** When weather events impact the track, Corey steps in to help fix any washouts or damage caused by storms.



His big catch of the day! :)

Corey's roots lie in Michigan. Born in Bay City, he was raised in Omer, MI, alongside his older brother Craig and their parents, Dave and Andrea. His educational journey led him to Arenac Eastern High in Twining, where he honed his skills in welding at the Arenac Skill Center.

Before joining Lake State, Corey explored different paths. He briefly worked in fast food and later found himself at CMI-Equipment & Engineering in Au Gres, MI, welding pipe. However, the shop atmosphere didn't resonate with him. His true calling awaited him in the world of railroads.

Corey's railroading journey began with Tryban Rail Service, a contractor at that time for Lake State Railway. He then transitioned to National Track Service (NTS), another contractor. Finally, in 1999, Corey found his home at Lake State Railway.

His family legacy is steeped in railroading. His grandfather, Biz Greanya, dedicated over 30 years to Tryban, NTS, and D&M. Corey's uncle, Randy, followed a similar path, retiring after 41 years of service. And who could forget Corey's father, Dave Violette, who retired from Lake State Railway in 2018 after an impressive 42-year career spanning D&M, Tryban, NTS, and LSRC?

Corey's love for the outdoors is infused in his work. Working alongside his co-workers, covering vast territories, he gets to witness ever-changing landscapes. Corey's primary goal remains simple: "Keep the trains safely rolling."

Beyond the railroad, Corey maintains his outdoorsman spirit. Whether it's golfing, hunting, or sucker fishing at his private fishing camp, he embraces the natural world. And when the asphalt calls, Corey hops on his Harley, exploring

"Corey is a great guy He's a State fan, a WWE wanna-be, and a deer slayer all wrapped up into one. One of these days we'll make a railroader out of him! LOL!"
- Mark Pennell



Michigan from end to end. Corey has a unique side gig—assisting local farmers in safeguarding their crops. Armed with Crop Damage Permits, he hunts deer that infringe upon farmland, devouring and damaging crops. After a successful hunt, he keeps a

Employee
Spotlight

Corey
Violette

Track
Foreman
Cont...

(Continued from page 9)

few deer for himself, storing them in the walk-in cooler he personally built then gives away the rest of the meat, as selling it is not permitted. The record for the most deer he bagged in a single year remains an impressive feat at 205.

If you can't tell by the quotes from his co-workers how they feel about Corey, let's just say they have fun bantering back and forth like true brothers.

"I've known Corey since he was a little kid when his Dad worked for the railroad. Sometimes it feels like I helped raise him. Sure glad I'll be retiring soon -LOL" - Kevin Filarski

Lake State Railway has a dedicated guardian of the tracks in Corey Violette—a man whose commitment echoes through the rails and across the Michigan landscape. We honor his legacy as a true railroader and we hope to keep him even longer than his kin before.

Deanna Hennessy
HOS Compliance Mgr., A/R
Newsletter Editor



*With sincere condolences to Roger Fuehring and his family.
Heaven gained an angel!*

*In Memory
of
Cathy Fuehring*



REMINDERS upcoming dates

- May Day—May 1**
- Mother's Day—May 12**
- Armed Forces Day—May 18**
- Memorial Day—May 27**
- D-Day—June 6**
- Father's Day—June 16**
- Summer Begins—June 20**
- Independence Day—July 7**



New Hires!

*We'd like to give a warm welcome to our newest Lake State
Railway team members!
Welcome Aboard!*

1st Quarter—2024

- Devin Russell – Flint MOW*
- Dade Beidler—Car Shop*
- Joshua LaBean—Transportation*
- Alex Kreiner—Transportation*
- Joshua McNeill—Transportation*
- Cole Pennell—Car Shop*
- David Strezo—Administration*

PROMOTIONS!

- Brent Keeler—Senior Trainmaster*
- John Agnew—Risk Management & Property Mgr.*

Congratulations!

Updates for Lake State Mates

**Lake State Railway
appreciates our loyal and
dedicated employees!
Through your diligence, we
continue to prove that we
are the premier regional
railroad of Michigan by
providing Excellence in
Transportation!**

2024 ANNIVERSARIES

QUARTER 2

EMPLOYEE.....	YEARS
Benson, Brian	25
Baker, Scott	23
Hanson, Richard	18
Wolgast, Trista	17
Agnew, John	13
Kent, Kristopher	12
Pennell, Mark	12
Eickholt, Mark	10
Joles, Richard	10
Davis, Michael	7
Esseltine, Andrew	6
Forrest, Brendan	6
Smith, Travis	6
Leaman, Thomas	5
Sweet, Nicholas	5
Dault, Brenda	5
Kalinowski, Devlyn	5
Adams, Pete	3
Ryan, Michael	2
Foster, David	2
Krieger, Johsua	2
Fowler, Kevin	1
Baker, Seth	1
Joles, Nathan	1
Galgoci, Ethan	1
Dusenbery, Charles	1
Lathrop, David	1
Shumaker, Michael	1
Adkins, Robert	1

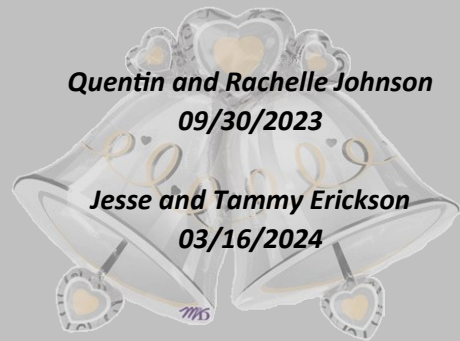


Look who got Hitched! Congratulations Newlyweds



*Quentin and Rachelle Johnson
09/30/2023*

*Jesse and Tammy Erickson
03/16/2024*



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU....

If you have any interesting railroad facts, stories, pictures, or exciting news to share, please submit an article (with corresponding pictures if possible) for a chance at having your story published in LSRC's "The Turntable".

EMAIL SUBMISSIONS TO:
hennessyd@lsrc.com

*Please note, not all submissions will be accepted and those that are approved for publishing will be subject to editing.

Lake State Railway Company

750 N. Washington Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48607

Phone: 989-393-9800
Fax: 989-757-2134
E-mail: info@lsrc.com

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE



Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5

LSRC Train Crew Working Through the Night



Photo: Courtesy of Kevin Burkholder

To be added to “The Turntable” email distribution list or to make changes to how you receive the newsletter, please contact hennessyd@lsrc.com. ☺