

This is the official newsletter of **Operation Lifesaver Utah**, a highway-railroad grade crossing safety program and a railroad trespass prevention program. To unsubscribe to this newsletter, please contact Vern Keeslar at [olut@digis.net](mailto:olut@digis.net) or call 801-310-1035.

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## State Coordinator's Message – Next OL Utah Quarterly Meeting

Our Operation Lifesaver program in Utah is going strong. However, to keep it going and have the training and association that we need, we need to meet together. We generally hold quarterly meetings for all presenters, safety partners, and other volunteers to receive updated training and information. We set goals and coordinate activities. Presenters should be attending at least one of these meetings per year, along with doing four presentations a year.

The next Operation Lifesaver Utah quarterly meeting will meet on Tuesday, December 4, 2007 for the final quarterly meeting of the year. This meeting will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Salt Lake Community College Miller Campus located at 9750 South 300 West, Sandy, Utah. **Because lunch will be served, please RSVP with Jennifer Keeslar at 801-473-1444 by November 30, 2007.**

## UTA Tests FrontRunner Commuter Rail

Utah Transit Authority (UTA) is testing their red, white, and blue FrontRunner commuter rail trains. Many elected officials and other dignitaries were invited to ride FrontRunner on October 25, 2007.

I also had the opportunity of riding FrontRunner which went from Woods Cross to Clearfield and back. It was very comfortable, smooth, and fast.

The new FrontRunner trains are scheduled to begin operation in the spring.



Operation Lifesaver Utah has trained 12 new UTA presenters. We are excited to have UTA on board (pun intended) with our safety program.

UTA is also advertising safety as FrontRunner test trains are making their way up and down the tracks. If you look closely, you can see the Operation Lifesaver Utah logo on the billboard. UTA is partnering with Operation Lifesaver Utah to spread its message of safety at highway-rail grade crossings, around railroad property, and on the platforms of the commuter rail stations. This year alone, Operation

## 2008 OL Symposium to be in Cincinnati

Save these dates! The next *Operation Lifesaver International Symposium and Training Seminars* is scheduled for **July 20-23, 2008**, at the Cincinnati Marriott RiverCenter, located just across the river from downtown Cincinnati, Ohio. This beautiful hotel is connected to the Northern Kentucky Convention Center. Symposium sessions and meal functions will be held in both the hotel and the convention center. The Operation Lifesaver rate is just \$129 (the same rate we paid in San Antonio in 2004). Parking and high-speed internet in the rooms are complimentary for One highlight - the Norfolk Southern Lawmen will be the entertainment at the closing banquet. More information will be coming your way soon!

## OL Utah Attends Conferences and Model Train Show

Operation Lifesaver Utah is busy as ever attending conferences and displaying our booth. On October 29 and 30, 2007 our booth was at the Utah Education Association conference at the Salt Palace Convention Center in Salt Lake City for two days. Many teachers stopped by to visit with Bev Thrall (pictured right) and

find out more about our organization. We also attended the Wasatch model train show of the National Model Railroad Association on November 1, 2, and 3, 2007 at the Utah State Fairgrounds. Special thanks to our volunteers who worked the booth.

Bev and Vern attended the first annual "Zero Fatalities Safety Summit" in Park City on November 8 and 9, 2007. Bev represented us very well as she attended the sessions and visited with several safety partners. And finally, we had another booth on November 8 and 9, 2007 in West Valley at the Utah Cultural Celebration Center for Utah's Prevention Dimensions Program (formerly known as the K-12 Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco Prevention Education Program). Larry Jacobs attended the sessions and talked to many student leaders from various high schools.

## Guest Commentary by Andrew Cheng

After attending the annual American Public Transportation Association (APTA) conference for the 2007 year in Toronto, Canada, I found many things that are done different with the Operation Lifesaver program in Canada. I attended the booth at the conference for a few hours, and found that they use an advanced interactive program that teaches people of all ages the importance of rail crossings and railroad safety. After



using this interactive program on each age level, I found that it is much more helpful than the standard handouts that are usually used at our own booths. I believe that if possible, we should try to implement and use the Interactive Program. My supporting reasons are as follows:

First, as our world progresses and technology becomes more prominent, children of all ages are more drawn to computers and hi-tech things. This program is purely computer software-based, so it will promote the number of people being educated about rail safety. As you may know from experience, children often skip text-based information, or read it, but don't absorb the information.

Second, with computers being used to organize almost everything, it would be very useful to have as a presentation tool. Placed onto a computer and through a projector, it would provide a very in-depth experience, and if the disc were given to the people attending the presentation, it would add an incentive to check out the information on the disc their own.

Finally, from what I saw, I noticed that the information from the disc was just as informative, if not more so, than the pamphlets that we hand out. Having read the pamphlets myself, some of the information does get a little dull to read. If the interactive Operation Lifesaver program has even more detailed information about rail crossing and rail safety, I don't see why we shouldn't incorporate this program into our ever-increasing Operation Lifesaver job, to better educate the public on rail-safety.

To recap, I think that it is an interactive program that is extremely beneficial to educating the public. The reasons for this are that computers are almost the backbone of our society, that presentations would be very simple to organize, and that there is more information to be learned in the program than in our current pamphlets. For these reasons, I hope you consider incorporating the Interactive Operation Lifesaver Program into our booths and presentations.

Andrew Cheng, age 15, is an Operation Lifesaver Utah volunteer.