



# The Semaphore

## December 2019

### Official Newsletter of the Chicagoland Lionel Railroad Club

## The December Open House Events

Our December Open House Events were a huge success. Many new and repeat visitors enjoyed a clubhouse that was decorated for the holidays.

Visitors young and old enjoyed a holiday train and the Polar Express on the center layout, and the Union Pacific “Big Boy” and a long intermodal train on the beltline. Upstairs, visitors enjoyed a second Polar Express as well as the North Pole Express.

The highlight of both events was a visit from Santa Claus. You could see the spirit of the season in each child’s eyes as they shared their wishes and wants with the man from the North Pole. Every young person left the clubhouse with a goody bag filled with train related surprises.

Our already fantastic layout is extra special during the holiday season. Many thanks to the club members who operated trains, fed our visitors in the dinner car, staffed the retail shop and the back shop. Without everyone’s help, the Open House events would not be possible.



Santa explains “You must go to bed early on Christmas Eve”



The Thomas layout is always a hit



The layout dressed for the holidays  
Thanks to Herb K. for the input and pictures

## Polar Express Railroad Trivia Question

In the Polar Express movie, what was the “First gift of Christmas”? The answer is found later in the newsletter.

## The CLRC Supports Historic Pullman Foundation

On December 8th, four current CLRC members and one former member came out to support the 2019 Candlelight House Walk sponsored by the Historic Pullman Foundation. Stop number 2 was all about trains. It was in the Florence Lowden Miller Historic Pullman Center. Four different layouts were in operation and everyone entering the exhibit was transported back in time to when "Railroads were King". Tom and Mike Mc Mahon were operating a vintage 12' by 8' 1950's and 60's Lionel layout with period correct accessories while Kevin and P.J. and a former CLRC member were operating on a more current 12' by 8' layout. A member of the HPF was busy shepherding an HO Budweiser train and a double oval of "N" scale freighters. Highlights on one of the O/27 layouts were an operating skating rink, the Roseland Theater and a smoking log cabin that burned a pine scented incense stick, just like the 1950's. Premier rolling stock included the 1,000,000th Pullman box car, a Pullman Troop Train consisting of Troop Sleepers, a Troop Kitchen and a

Hospital Car and an M 1,000 articulated streamline passenger train. All of these pieces were originally built at the Pullman Works.

The official count for the Day was 160 visitors and many took the opportunity to take a CLRC card and said that they planned on visiting our Clubhouse.

Thanks to **Kevin Barry Jr.** and his team for supporting this great cause.



## Lionel Ambassador Club

We also have completed our Fourth Lionel Ambassador's Club activities. We are scheduled to be listed in the Early 2020 Lionel Catalog.

Thanks to **Herb K.** for the update

## Social Media Update

The number of “Likes” on Facebook continues to increase year after year. Here is a breakdown for the last four years from January through December:

2016 - 530 Likes

2017 – 875 Likes

2018 – 1,200 Likes

2019 – 1,650 Likes

2019 was our best year of adding “Likes” as we increased our Like count by 450.

This increase is a testament that people

are interested in wanting to know what is happening at our clubhouse. A year from now we should easily be over 2,000 Likes.

In addition, we had over 6,200 visits to our website at CLRCTrains.com this year. While this is 300 less visits from last year it still is a very strong number. The major reason while people go to our website is to look up our Open House dates. And if you haven't check, our 2020 event calendar has been posted.

Thanks to Joe S. for the update

## Trivia Question Answer:

A bell from Santa's sleigh

## CLRC 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Club Car Two

Our Anniversary Club Car Two was featured in the latest issue of Classic Toy Trains. It is Lionel's modern LionScale 57' O-Gauge Refer Car, with Rotating Bearing Cap Trucks, separately applied extras, including the ladders and more. This car will enjoy riding with the rest of your CLRC consist on your railroad or enjoyed on your wall of other CLRC trophy cars.

This car is made in the USA at Lionel's Headquarters, Concord, NC. With the advertisement in the magazine, the remaining cars will go fast. Sales are first come first serve. Get yours before they are gone.



## 2020 Club Dues

As a reminder, club dues were due by the end of December. If you have not renewed, it is not too late. If you have questions, please reach out to Bob Ciolino at [robertciolino@att.net](mailto:robertciolino@att.net)

## Modeling Tip

Last year I found a plastic Elf on the Shelf at Walgreen's for \$4.00 and put it on a flat car. I told a friend who models in "G" gauge and he did one as well. My friend recently was asked to run his trains for a church sponsored Breakfast with Santa. Two young men were watching the train go around the track and one was overheard saying, "That's not a real Elf on the Shelf, it's generic". My friend had to turn away before he broke out laughing. Thanks to Kevin B for the tip



## Classified Ads

This space will be used to advertise items for sale by the Club or by members.

Club owned items may be purchased by seeing **Bob Ciolino** at the clubhouse or contacting him via phone at 708-828-2041 or e-mail at [robertciolino@att.net](mailto:robertciolino@att.net). For member owned items, the seller must provide contact information. Member listings are restricted to two specific items, or a general listing identifying the type(s) of items for sale. Listings will continue to appear in the newsletter for two consecutive months, or until sold,

whichever is the shorter time. Member listings shall be submitted to **Curt Ward** either via e-mail at [cward508@msn.com](mailto:cward508@msn.com) or via snail mail at 1211 Prairie Creek Trail Joliet IL 60431

1. Lionel FM Santa Fe diesel good condition. \$100



2. Lionel FM Southern Pacific good condition \$100



3. Lionel Santa Fe F3 ABA condition 9, horn, bell.\$325



4. Mth 4 6 4 Hiawatha condition 7. \$150



Offered by **Jim Ammirati** 815-370-1963

## Do you have something you want included in the newsletter?

Club member Curt Ward will be creating and distributing the newsletters. If you have material for the newsletter, you can send it to Curt via e-mail at [cward508@msn.com](mailto:cward508@msn.com). To help Curt please use MS Word to create the information and format it into a two column page.



## Coming Down the Tracks

Important upcoming events:

Open House Event – January 18<sup>th</sup>

Open House Event – February 15<sup>th</sup>