



# The Semaphore

## February 2019

### Official Newsletter of the Chicagoland Lionel Railroad Club



### CLRC 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Banquet Sunday May 5<sup>th</sup>

The Club is having its 25th Anniversary Banquet. There will be prizes, gifts and much, much. The event will be a buffet style dinner at SAWA's Old Warsaw Inn on 22nd St in Broadview. The party will be from 2:00 until 8:00 on Sunday May 5th, 2019. The cost will be \$25.00 per person; however, members and their wife or guest will receive a \$10.00 per person credit courtesy of the Club and therefore will only pay \$15.00 per member and \$15.00 per one guest for a total of \$30.00 per couple. If you bring more than one guest, the additional cost will be \$25.00 per additional guest. Seating is very limited, and the restaurant can only accommodate 80 people. So, make your reservations soon.

Send your reservation with a check to:  
CLRC  
c/o Bob Ciolino  
19906 Pine Hill Road  
Frankfort, IL 60423

Thanks to Herb and Bob for the information

### February Open House Event

The February Open House was a very busy Saturday. Our guests started arriving early and stayed until the end.

Our members did their usual great job of sharing the club and their love for trains. We had many first time visitors who learned about the Club on Facebook or from a friend who had recently visited. Our return visitors were excited to see the many changes in the scenery. As always, the kids enjoyed Thomas and his friends upstairs on the Island of Sodor.

Plan to be a part of the next open house event. It is a great way to share our love for trains with the community and help out the Club at the same time.



The farm scene has been a popular return from the old layout.

## February Clubhouse and Layout Update

A highlight of the February clubhouse and layout update is the work of Bill and Tommy on the upstairs layout. Our Sodor Island layout now has its very own Sodor Steamworks Roundhouse thanks to Bill and Tommy. They started off with nothing but the kit and a set of instructions that weren't very helpful. To make it an even bigger challenge the pieces did not fit cleanly. It took Bill and Tom months of work to glue, cut, trim, paint, and stain to finish the job. The outcome is awesome. The level of detail they added is just amazing. The children will love seeing Thomas, Percy, and James in their roundhouse, just like on the TV series. If you have not gone upstairs yet to see their masterpiece you need to do so.



Thanks to Joe S. for the story and pictures

## Chicago & North Western 6464-555 Boxcar 52081-555 Revisited

In honor of the Club's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the story of the first club car is revisited.



The Chicago and North Western, 6464-555, 52081-555 was our first car produced. It was challenging because Lionel was not offering "Club Cars" to regional "small" clubs and we had no financial history. I went to Lionel on a tour with the Milwaukee Club and our founder **Gerry Brettschneider**. I met with **Mohamed Anusha**, the Lionel Club Car Coordinator alone. Lionel was still concerned about working with a regional club and our club that had no long term financial history. Our discussions generated a compromise. We would deposit \$5000 up front for the C&NW club car that we wanted. It was a huge sum of money. Fortunately, we had a lot of enthusiasm as a small club which was breaking into producing a Lionel Club Car for our new club. One of our members loaned us the money needed. We were on our way to be in the big leagues of Lionel Club Cars. Next, we needed to finalize our design of the car. **Tom Svestka**, of Berwyn Toy Trains, a Director at the time, advised that we would do well if we numbered and styled our car in the 6464 boxcar theme. We also decided on Chicago and Northwestern as a road name popular in the Midwest and recognized nationally. **John Flynn** recommended the number 6464-555, which was not used yet in the 6464 numbering sequence and fit well into the numbering series. (The 555 suffix also became the beginning of our Club Car numbering sequence.) To have it stand out, we also enlarged the C&NW logo to be as large as possible. It really popped! I also wanted to see

something unique that Lionel had never been done before, lettering on the ends of the car. Lionel agreed to put the car number, 6464-555 at each end. We also added our initials to the car "CLRC".

Things were going smooth until July 25, 1995 when we were advised that the 6464 number was not available to us. It was reserved only for Lionel. Jim Bunte, Director Product Development, confirmed. We counted very much on having the iconic number and new it would affect sales. We needed the number. Eventually we were able to prevail, and Lionel made good on their commitment to build our car to our full expectations.

You may think that everything is all set, but much more needed to be done. We set up a timeline to promote the car, get checks, and finally ship the car. We decided to advertise in both Classic Toy Trains and O-Gauge Railroading. This was a huge investment, but one necessary since no one nationally new us. We also needed a place to ship the cars. John Flynn was able to coordinate his facility were the cars were shipped to and later we were able to ship from. We were very fortunate to have a successful first club car with Lionel. It got our juices going and we knew we were building a club that would have a building in the future.



**Any recognize these faces?**

Thanks to Herb K. for the story and pictures

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

Our Anniversary car TWO 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. We only have 100 cars on order with Lionel. Sales are first come first serve.



## **The CLRC Receives a New Laptop Computer**

Club member Tim Flaherty donated a new Laptop Computer for any club members use. This donated was formal accepted and recognized at the recent CLRC board meeting.

Once the formal rules of use are defined, Club members will be able to check-out the notebook computer. It will be available to all Club members in order to save you the hassle of lugging your own computer to the Train House.

The intended purpose of this computer is to have all Lionel equipment manuals and catalogs available; have a an internet connected computer to view train videos and order pizzas.

Thanks goes to club Member MICHAEL FRADIN who help to facilitate this donation.

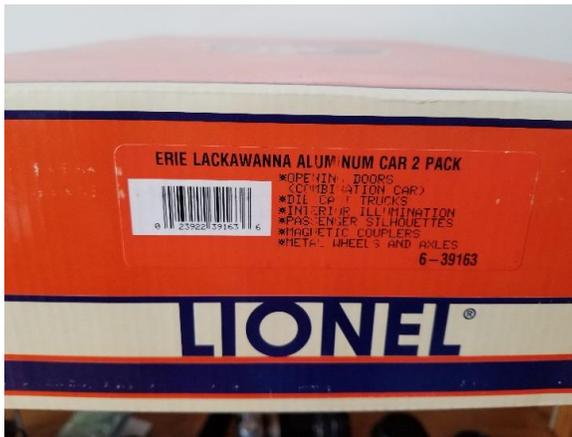
Thanks to Tim F. for the story



## Classified Ads

For Sale

Lionel Erie Lackawanna Phoebe Snow 2 Car Passenger Add On Pack. Brand New. Asking \$175.00. Contact Joe Smolinski at 815-922-6689 if interested.



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

## 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 – March 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Open House Event – April 20<sup>th</sup>**

**25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Banquet – May 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Open House Event – May 18<sup>th</sup>**