

lxinfo.org

June 2011

online magazine

**Campaigns and Education**

CS info Online Magazine

Spotlight on Community Safety

World-wide: Results of children's drawing contest for ILCAD 2011 announced

The International Union of Railways (UIC) has announced the winners of the children's drawing contest organised to raise awareness of the International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD) which is being held on June 9th, 2011.

The international competition, with the theme of safety at level crossings, attracted 380 participants from around the world competing in four age bands. The winners of the completion are:



Sara Novosel from Croatia in the age 4 to 7 category



Shibaivoti Choudhury from India in the age 8 to 11 category



Ishak Anis Ghalous from Algeria in the age 12 to 15 category



Patrycia Jablonska from Poland in the 16 to 18 category

To see the winning drawings and others please click on:
<http://www.ilcad.org/spip.php?article97>

The majority of the drawings from Poland, Portugal and Italy will be exhibited by ILCAD partners in their respective countries on the June 9th, 2011 when ILCAD is marked around the world or later.

(June 1st, 2011)

Marton, New Zealand: Chris Cairns takes the safety message into school

Former New Zealand test cricketer and level crossing safety campaigner Chris Cairns took the rail safety message to children at schools in Marton.

Of concern, was the number of students who admitted that they took a short cut on their way to or from school. However, at the end of the talk, no-one indicated that they would be taking the short cut again.

Supported by a train driver and a police officer Cairns explained how to cross the railway safely having asked students if they used a level crossing when walking to and from school.

"While your friends and parents may think crossing the tracks is convenient or quicker than going to the level crossing, part of your influence is to show them that they should go to the proper crossing," Cairns said.

Students were also asked if any of them listened to their iPods while walking or riding their bicycles. Many put up their hands. Cairns said it can be the biggest distraction and that it only takes three seconds to pop out one of the earphones when at the level crossing. Those three seconds could save a life.

In 1993, Cairns' sister, Louise was killed when a cement truck failed to stop at a level crossing in Rolleston and collided with the passenger train on which she was travelling.

(May 31st, 2011)

East Troy, Illinois: Partnership raises awareness of railway safety

A joint initiative between Canadian National (CN) and the heritage East Troy Electric Railroad joined forces with the East Troy and Mukwonago chambers of commerce and Operation Lifesaver volunteers to run a weekend-long awareness raising initiative.

Children were the focus of the initiative within which CN deployed Little Obie, a miniature locomotive, to attract the interest of children to an awareness event which was held on May 27th and 28th, 2011.

(May 28th, 2011)



Budapest: Level crossing safety blitz at hot-spot crossings

Railway Police are taking the lead in a safety blitz at a number of level crossings around Hungary, including two in Budapest itself. Prior to the safety blitz each of the level crossings to be targeted has been inspected to ensure that in every respect the arrangements in place were in a good condition, in particular that signs, road markings and the level crossing system as seen by a highway user.

An earlier phase of the drive for the responsible use of level crossings took place on April 21st, 2011. With two or three level crossings in each county targeted, more than 5,000 motorists were observed by both railway staff and the police at 38 problem locations.

In addition to targeting red light runners and cyclists and pedestrians who zig-zag around lowered level crossing barriers, the police enforce a wider suite of road safety law including improper use of a mobile telephone while driving and a failure to wear seat belts as required by law.

In 2011, there were 345 level crossing accidents on Hungary's level crossings leading to trains being delayed for 18,000 minutes with each incident typically taking between one and two hours to resolve to a position where rail services might resume. Level crossing accidents in Hungary have accounted for the loss of approaching 500 lives in the decade to December 31st, 2010.

(May 26th, 2011)

Memphis, Tennessee: Norfolk Southern helps zombies stay safe

America's growing zombie population might be dead, but as long as they're shuffling among us, they at least should understand the importance of being safe at level crossings.

That's why "Brainy," Norfolk Southern's (NS) giant pink ambulating public safety ambassador, will join more than 1,000 zombies in the fifth annual Zombie Walk in Memphis on May 27th, 2011. This year's parade is being held in support of the Mid-South Food Bank.

"It's important to understand that train-car collisions and trespass injuries and deaths are preventable," said David Julian, NS vice president safety and environmental. "By paying attention to our surroundings and to the warning signs and signals -- maintaining situational awareness -- we can keep ourselves and our families safe from harm."

Brainy's participation in the Zombie Walk was the brainchild of Bruce Downs, an engineer in NS' real estate department in Atlanta. Downs has had a fixation on zombies ever since the network television show "The Walking Dead" started filming near NS' former office buildings in that city.

Norfolk Southern launched Brainy and the campaign to "Train Your Brain" in 2007 in Memphis and so far has taken the message to high-traffic corridors in North Carolina, Indiana, and Ohio. NS' safety, law, operations, and corporate staff deliver the programme.

(May 25th, 2011)



Brainy in action, source Norfolk Southern

Acton, United Kingdom: Police release images of misuse in appeal for witnesses

British Transport Police (BTP) is appealing for information after CCTV cameras caught the moment a driver carelessly drove across the tracks at the Churchfield Road CCTV equipped full width barrier level crossing adjacent to Acton Central station as the barriers were lowering. The incident in question occurred shortly before 14.00 on May 9th, 2011.

A lowering barrier was wrenched off its mounting and ended up in the path of an approaching train. The driver of the white van drove away, rather than stop at the scene of the collision with the level crossing barrier.

Andrew Munden, Network Rail's route director, said: "Yet again, an impatient motorist has caused disruption and delays for road and rail users and left Network Rail to pick up the tab".

"Too many motorists continue to break the law in London by jumping the lights or swerving around barriers at level crossings. Hundreds of pedestrians are also risking their lives just trying to save a few seconds. It's just not worth it."

(May 24th, 2011)



Acton Central crossing misuse, source BTP



Eichenzell, Germany: Police mount an awareness drive

On May 24th, 2011, railway and federal police officers mounted an awareness drive at the Eichenzell-Sachsenhausen level crossing, Kreis Fulda. The focus on this level crossing was because it had been the scene of a serious accident. The approach adopted was to stop motorists on the approach to the level crossing and explain the rules for the safe use of this and other level crossings equipped with lights or lights and barriers.

More generally, the police action is a function of the number of level crossing accidents having risen since 2009. Thus in East Hesse a total of 30 officers have been deployed at level crossings of the railway between Fulda and Gersfeld.

(May 24th, 2011)

Wanganui, New Zealand: Chris Cairns presence to raise awareness

Former New Zealand test cricketer and long-standing level crossing safety campaigner Chris Cairns was in Wanganui on May 25th, 2011 to raise awareness about safety at level crossings.

The visit follows KiwiRail's recent re-opening of the railway line between Taupo Quay and Castlecliff on which trains pass through level crossings which had been mothballed for many years.

Chris Cairns knows personally the tragic consequences that can occur when a driver fails to stop at a level crossing as his sister was killed in an accident at a level crossing. The Chris Cairns Charitable Foundation works to raise public awareness of the responsibility of all users of level crossings on New Zealand's rail system.

(May 24th, 2011)

London, United Kingdom: Network Rail recruiting for internal campaign

Network Rail, Britain's national rail infrastructure manager is behind the recruitment of a marketing services specialist on a contract basis to work on a new internal awareness campaign to link with the company's external level crossing safety media campaign.

(May 23rd, 2011)



Brisbane, Queensland: Photo-enforcement is the way ahead

New cameras have been installed at the Queensport Road, Murarrie and Cavendish Road, Coorparoo level crossings in an effort to cut level crossing abuse. Motorists caught running red lights at these level crossings face a fine of AUD 2,000. These level crossings are recognised black-spots with a disproportionate concentration of crossing misuse and abuse.

The new cameras have been introduced as Queensland Rail conducted a safety blitz at level crossings across the southeast of the state.

(May 19th, 2011)

Riverside, Illinois: Police take the lead in targeting crossing misuse

Police in Riverside with support from the fire department joined forces on May 18th, 2011, to raise awareness of the rules for the safe use of level crossings of which there are five in Riverside.

Both motorists and pedestrians will be targeted and reminded that a citation of USD 250 is likely to be imposed on those misusing the town's level crossings while police apply a zero tolerance approach on May 26th, 2011.

Both phases of this campaign are funded by a grant made available through the Illinois Commerce Commission.

(May 18th, 2011)

Abilene, Texas: UP mounts a CARES initiative to counter misuse

Union Pacific Railroad (UP) has run a Crossing Accident Reduction Education and Safety (CARES) initiative at level crossings along the UP right-of-way which bisects Abilene. The CARES programme which is run in cooperation of local law enforcement agencies seeks to counter loss of life through misuse and abuse of level crossings. Since 2006, there have been six fatalities in Abilene, the most recent in April this year.

Abilene police officers will be strategically located near level crossings along North and South First streets, as a Union Pacific locomotive runs back and forth to activate the crossings. Citations were issued to motorists misusing level crossings. When the one-day exercise was mounted in 2010, two citations were issued for disregard of the lights protecting level crossings.

(May 18th, 2011)



Japan: JR Tokai mounts level crossing safety blitz

JR Tokai's annual spring level crossing safety campaign is under way with a crossing blitz to remind motorists, cyclists and pedestrians of the arrangements for the safe use of level crossings.

(May 18th, 2011)



JR Tokai's safety blitz

Grand Prairie, Texas: Collaborative level crossing enforcement blitz

Officers from the Union Pacific (UP) Railroad Police along with officers from the Grand Prairie and Arlington forces joined forces to crack down on motorists and pedestrians misusing level crossings. In particular, in the initiative which began on May 17th, 2011, officers were looking out for motorists who disregard the flashing red lights protecting crossings and weave around lowering level crossing barriers.

A blitz approach is adopted twice-yearly in Grand Prairie under the UP CARES banner which stands for Union Pacific Crossing Accident Reduction Enforcement and Safety.

Back in 2005 and 2006 Grand Prairie had the highest level crossing fatality rate in Texas. Since then, the city of Grand Prairie has moved ahead with a red-light photo enforcement programme at several level crossings, similar to the more widely adopted photo enforcement programmes involving use of red-light cameras at signalised highway intersections. The result with red-light cameras in use and the regular UP CARES initiatives is that Grand Prairie has less motorist abuse of level crossings than had been the case a few years before

(May 17th, 2011)



Washington, DC: Funding for Operation Lifesaver on the table

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has published a notice of its intended grant of USD 1.015 million for Operation Lifesaver. The notice requires Operation Lifesaver to apply for the grant before June 17th, 2011. This is the latest in many years of federal contributions to the work of Operation Lifesaver which requires matching funding to be provided from the rail industry.

(May 17th, 2011)

Akita, Japan: JR East on the road with crossing safety campaign

JR East's spring 2011 level crossing safety campaign has two dimensions. The first is to talk to level crossing users as they wait to cross the railway. The second target emergency responders with the intent of reminding them that they too must never use a level crossing once the crossing has been closed to road traffic.

(May 17th, 2011)

Terrace, British Columbia: Rail Safety Week crackdown on errant motorists

Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) joined forces with Canadian National's railway police to crack down on errant motorists during Canada's national Rail Safety Week.

The initiative will however continue throughout the month of May as the partners have agreed that by extending the campaign beyond Rail Safety Week, motorists will learn that they need to get it right year-round and not just during Rail Safety Week.

Police officers are out to get motorists who fail to stop as required, do not approach level crossings at a speed that enables them to stop for crossings and who cross when the level crossing closure sequence has initiated at active crossings.

Worse still, the campaign is targeting those who think it an acceptable practice to weave around already lowered level crossing barriers.

Another aspect of the campaign during Rail Safety Week is the blatant trespassing across the railway and in particular through CN's yard facilities.

(May 16th, 2011)

Hinsdale, Illinois: Police target abuse of level crossings

Police in Hinsdale and neighbouring jurisdictions are working together with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) to counter misuse of level crossings. May 26th, 2011 will see rigorous enforcement of the law as it relates to the use of level crossings by both motorists and pedestrians. This follows on from a public information awareness raising exercise held on May 19th 2011.

The joint initiative is branded "Police on-board for safety" and is the fifth annual blitz on level crossings to root out user misuse and abuse. Grants made through the Illinois Commerce Commission have made this initiative possible.

(May 12th, 2011)



BNSF train at a level crossing

United States: OL participates in National Train Day celebrations

Operation Lifesaver (OL) participated in National Train Day on May 7th with activities in 20 states and the District of Columbia.

"Amtrak marks 40 years of operation this year, and Operation Lifesaver's 40th anniversary will follow next year," said OL President Helen M. Sramek. "So on National Train Day, as we do every day, Operation Lifesaver reminds the public to 'Look, Listen, and Live' around tracks and trains."

OL participated in Amtrak's major National Train Day events in Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington D.C. and at smaller events in locations across the country, including the following:

- Alaska OL staffed a booth at the Alaska Railroad's depot in Anchorage in conjunction with the railroad's open house
- California OL deployed volunteers and had displays at six different Amtrak stations throughout the state: Los Angeles, Bakersfield, Sacramento, Oceanside, Martinez and Fresno
- In other western states, OL participated in events at Amtrak stations in Albuquerque, New Mexico; La Junta, Colorado; Reno, Nevada; and Ogden, Utah
- Louisiana OL had a Safety Town layout at the New Orleans Amtrak station to teach children how to behave safely around the railway; OL volunteers were also at Louisiana State Police's Public Safety Expo in Alexandria and at the Kiwanis Kid's Health and Safety Fair in Baton Rouge
- In Kansas, OL was on hand in Topeka at the Amtrak station and at the Emergency Services Showcase with a crashed car on a trailer; they were also at the Douglas County Fairground in Lawrence
- Wisconsin OL staffed a safety booth at the Amtrak depot in Milwaukee.
- Ohio OL participated in an event at Toledo's Amtrak station
- In Chicago, Illinois OL took part of festivities at Union Station
- In Tennessee, OL volunteers took part in celebrations at Twin City, Chattanooga and Jackson, as well as appearing at the Central Railroad in Nashville with the Tennessee OL caboose. Additionally OL ran safety public service announcements on the big screen at the Jackson Generals minor league baseball game
- In Georgia, OL was a part of celebrations in Toccoa and Dalton's historic train stations
- South Carolina OL had a display at the Columbia Amtrak station

- In Florida, OL participated in an event at the Amtrak station in Tampa
- Virginia OL participate in the Washington, DC, Union Station events
- New England's activities include Maine, where OL had small 'speeder' train cars at the Bath station and other activities for children in Bangor; Massachusetts saw OL at Amtrak's Boston South station and the train station in West Barnstable; in Vermont OL participated in events at Amtrak's White River Junction station
- In New York State, OL was at the Rensselaer/Albany Amtrak station.

Vehicle-train collisions have dropped by approximately 80% nation-wide since OL began in 1972, due to an on-going safety partnership among federal, state and local governments, law enforcement agencies, traffic safety organizations, railway companies and OL.

"We've made great strides, but preliminary statistics show that pedestrian rail trespass incidents rose nearly 10% nation-wide in 2010 from 2009, and crossing collisions increased 4.5%," Sramek noted. "Our on-going mission is to educate people about the importance of putting safety first, whether they're at a crossing or on or near railroad tracks."

National Train Day commemorates the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in 1869. For more information on National Train Day, see www.nationaltrainday.com.

(May 7th, 2011)



Wem, United Kingdom: 33% improvement but still 96 incidents in a year

Figures released by British Transport Police (BTP) show that in the year to March 31st, 2011, there were 96 incidents of level crossing misuse reported on the level crossing in Wem, Shropshire, at the intersection of Aston Street and Soughton Road. While this is a 33% improvement on the 143 incidents recorded the previous year, BTP have made clear that motorists caught misusing this and other level crossings will be prosecuted as a matter of course.

BTP and Network Rail, Britain's national rail infrastructure manager, have invested considerable time and effort to raise awareness in Wem of the risks associated with crossing misuse and the penalties that can be imposed by the courts. In the past year, motorists have been successfully prosecuted for failing to comply with the red lights, careless and inconsiderate and dangerous driving.

(May 6th, 2011)



Regina, Saskatchewan: Rail Safety Week push for crossing safety

With 180 level crossing accidents across Canada in 2010 there is considerable room for improvement in motorist behaviours at level crossings, particularly as these accidents led to the death of 24 and serious injury to a further 28 persons. Add to this the 55 fatal trespassers killed along the railway right-of-way and it is clear why Canada's annual Rail Safety Week (LXinfo April 2010) has a nation-wide reach.

By way of example, in Saskatchewan there were 24 level crossing accidents which led to five fatalities and two serious injuries. In addition there were two trespasser fatalities and one serious injury during 2010. Against this backdrop, Canadian Pacific (CP) and partners worked tirelessly throughout Rail Safety Week 2011 to raise awareness of the risks of misusing level crossings and trespassing on railway rights-of-way.

Officers' from CP's police service have been raising awareness of safe behaviours at level crossings in the Regina area as part of a nation-wide company initiative targeting 100 level crossings. In parallel with education, CP and Regina officers stepped up their enforcement efforts at the targeted crossings.

(May 5th, 2011)

Kiev, Ukraine: Police undertake a level crossing safety drive

Police in Kiev are mounting a major initiative to ensure that motorists and others who misuse level crossings understand the harm that can result when level crossings are misused. The campaign running from May 4th to May 30th, 2011 provides for the traffic police to first check the conformance of level crossings with the applicable standards and then to target those who choose to misuse level crossings.

Penalties handed out by the courts are typically between UAH 255 and 425 for failing to stop at a level crossing as required. More serious offences, for example wilfully zig-zagging around lowered barriers carry a financial penalty of up to UAH 680 accompanied by a driving ban of up to two years. Additionally penalties of up to 50 hours unpaid community service can be imposed.

(May 5th, 2011)

Jefferson City, Missouri: 6,800 level crossings make the case for Rail Safety Week

With more than 6,800 level crossings spread across more than 4,000 miles of railway, level crossing safety has taken centre stage in Missouri's annual rail safety week.

In addition to the key messages which build on the look, listen and live mantra of Operation Lifesaver, the Missouri campaign has sought to raise awareness of the toll-free telephone numbers posted at each crossing to allow the public to report issues with the crossing's condition and importantly a crossing or other emergency.

The awareness raising drive was a partnership between state and local police, railway company staff and Operation Lifesaver volunteers.

(May 1st, 2011)

