



**OPERATION  
LIFESAVER®**

**Look, Listen & Live**

## Maine Quarterly Newsletter

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[www.MaineOL.org](http://www.MaineOL.org)    [www.OLL.org](http://www.OLL.org)

Maine Operation Lifesaver was represented at June's Operation Lifesaver leadership conference where major changes in O/L's future will gradually be phased in over the next 18 months. State Coordinator Fred Hirsch networked with leaders from other states at the Denver conference and returned with a better understanding of how the organization will be able to reach many more through the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Some changes



Maine O/L's Fred Hirsch at the recent leadership conference flanked by fellow Region 1 colleagues Evan Eisenhandler of New York and Barbara Lazarro representing New Jersey O/L.

have already taken place; others will follow:

-The media will deliver the message, and not solely from the presenter. Certified presenters will become "authorized volunteers." Maintaining certification is becoming a burdensome drag on the organization – time-consuming and expensive. Half of new presenters under the current system

drop out of Operation Lifesaver during the first year.

- Training of new volunteers will be handled differently.
- Class One railroads have stepped up to help finance day-to-day operations of the national support staff replacing lost Federal Highway Administration funds.
- Federal Railroad Administration money to the tune of \$1 million annually will continue indefinitely to support state assistance grants, videos and print material, and TV/radio public service announcements among other programs.

*A presentation on Operation Lifesaver changes will be made at the appreciation/training meeting on Saturday, October 6 at 10:00am at the GFMRR Club in Auburn.*

**The countdown continues** towards the arrival of Amtrak's extension of passenger service between Portland and Brunswick. At the most recent Maine Operation Lifesaver meeting, Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority Project Director and certified presenter Jim Russell briefed other volunteers on progress along the 38-mile corridor including work thus far, initial operations when service begins this fall, and long term goals.



NNEPRA's Jim Russell (far right) discusses progress along the Portland-Brunswick corridor at a recent Maine Operation Lifesaver meeting in Brunswick.

Meanwhile, rail safety education along the line through Portland, Falmouth, Cumberland, Yarmouth, Freeport, and Brunswick continues in high gear:

- Public works departments and school bus garages have been contacted about presentations.
- More schools are scheduled for presentations this fall.
- Several more service clubs are scheduled for programs.
- Supermarkets and big box stores are being asked to allow Maine O/L to set up displays.
- Contacts with fuel dealers, lumber yards alerting drivers.

**A team of presenters** made the four-hour trip north to Madawaska and Fort Kent in June to bring the rail safety message to elementary and middle schoolers there. Four hundred students were among the audiences led by Norma Griffiths, Bill Soule, Barbara Wilbur, and Fred Hirsch. A number of other County schools have asked Operation Lifesaver to visit when the new school year begins. Also in



*Presenter Bill Soule captures the attention of Madawaska Elementary students.*

June, Aroostook County school bus drivers picked up rail safety brochures and key chains at their regional training conference held in Fort Kent.

**The Maine Eastern Railroad** is partnering with Maine Operation Lifesaver again this year to fill seats on their excursion trains. Letters have gone out to more than a dozen retirement communities and YMCAs inviting groups to board for the 112-mile from Brunswick to Rockland and return at discounted fares. A portion of each ticket sold will go towards Maine O/L. If you're aware of an organization, church, or similar group which may be interested in riding the train, contact Maine Operation Lifesaver at 945-6878.

**Briefly...**

**-A special thanks to Time Warner Cable.** With the help of the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority's Natalie Allen, 1,800 :30-second Operation Lifesaver public service announcements are airing on various cable channels at no cost.  
**-Congratulations to presenter/trainer Norma Griffiths** who has returned to the railroad industry as Safety and Administrative Coordinator for the Maine Northern and Eastern Maine railways. Norma is based in Oakfield in Aroostook County where Maine O/L has been

concentrating efforts.

**-Congrats again!** This time to presenter Bill Soule and wife Lois who have just celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.  
**- An Operation Lifesaver video** is frequently playing in the Brunswick train station/visitor center. Volunteer Diana Forsyth flips on the DVD when she doubles as ticket agent for the Maine Eastern Railroad.

**Where we've been April 10-June 30, 2012**

- Brunswick Downtown Association
- Yarmouth Elementary
- Sanford Train Show
- Merrymeeting Adult Education, Brunswick
- Ocean Ave. School, Portland
- Falmouth Lions
- Maine Driver Ed and Traffic Safety Ed Assn., Bangor
- Topsham Train show
- YMCA safety fair, Bangor
- Transportation Security Administration, Wells
- Vacationland Driving School, Falmouth
- Maine Driver Education Association conference, Augusta
- Medomak Valley High School Cruise-In, Waldoboro
- Greene Fire Department
- Freeport Lionesses Club
- Greely Middle School, Cumberland
- National Train Day, Bangor and Brunswick
- Can-Do Driving School, Brunswick
- Maine Discovery Museum, Bangor
- Northeast Technical Institute, Bangor (2x)
- Penobscot County EMA Expo, Brewer
- Mast Landing School, Freeport
- Bowdoin College Store, Brunswick.
- Madawaska Elementary
- Fort Kent Elementary
- Madawaska Middle School
- West Paris Old Home Days
- Community Driving School, Skowhegan
- Leonard Middle School safety fair, Old Town
- American Public Works Association, Skowhegan
- Western Maine Driving Academy, S. Paris (2x)
- Falmouth Middle School
- Proper Turn Driving School, Westbrook (2x)
- Bair's Driving School, Bangor (4x), Bar Harbor, Hermon
- Central Maine Driving Academy, Augusta
- Brunswick downtown sidewalk sale
- P&M Driving School, S. China (3x)
- Portland Kiwanis
- Falmouth Fire Department

**Always Expect A Train!**