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# Maine Operation Lifesaver Quarterly Newsletter May 2010



## East (Eastern Maine) meets West (Western New Brunswick)

earlier this year when Maine Operation Lifesaver volunteer Gordon Riordon from Pan Am Railways crossed the border to join Canada Operation Lifesaver volunteer Lorrie Johnston from New Brunswick Southern Railway and other Canadian officials. In Saint Stephen, NB, drivers were briefly stopped near a railroad crossing and handed out rail crossing safety information. It's the first time in recent memory that Operation Lifesaver volunteers from the state and province have worked together in the name of safety.



Gordon Riordon and Lorrie Johnston at the Maine-Canada border.

**Four new individuals successfully completed** the Operation Lifesaver certified presenter course in April. They include Andrew Eckman, utility infielder with the American Red Cross; Dwyann Williams, yardmaster with Pan Am Railways; Maine Department of Transportation track inspector Jeff Pitcher; and Harry Pellett, a retired Army National Guard helicopter pilot.

Instructing the course were presenter trainers Norma Griffiths and Bob Davids.



Front row from left: Harry Pellett, Dwyann Williams; back row from left: Andrew Eckman, Jeff Pitcher

**With the recent announcement of funding** to upgrade tracks between Portland and Brunswick in preparation for Amtrak service, Maine Operation Lifesaver is readying itself to educate the public in anticipation of more trains at higher speeds. Though start-up of the new service is not until 2012, early education this year will focus on preventing rail trespassing on and around track equipment.

**Two giant banners** which bring railroad trespassing to light have recently been added to the inventory of educational material which volunteers take to various community events. The idea of the eight feet-long banners evolves from messages which first showed up as billboards along highways in North Carolina. The billboard messages were so powerful that the Operation Lifesaver national office decided to offer them to state organizations.



**We stand ready to deliver the railroad safety message statewide.**

E-mail: [info@maineol.org](mailto:info@maineol.org) or  
Call 207-827-7367

Here's where we've been recently through May 8, 2010:

Brunswick Fire/Police Auburn Mall  
Sanford Model Train Show Lincoln Business Show  
Aroostook Community Action, Presque Isle  
N. Yarmouth Fire Department  
Scarborough Middle School  
Ron Fox Driving School, Fairfield  
Parsonsfield Area School Bus Drivers  
Dawn Richmond Driving School, Orono  
Safety Blitz, St. Stephen, New Brunswick  
Topsham Model Railroad Show  
Partners in Emergency Preparedness, Augusta  
Medomak Valley H.S. Car Show, Waldoboro  
National Train Day, Saco and Bangor  
Maine Driver Education Association, Augusta  
Western Maine Truck Driving School, S. Paris  
Northeastern Emergency Numbers Association, Lewiston

## Briefly...

- Maine Operation Lifesaver earned itself a \$1500 grant from the Federal Railroad Administration by way of the O/L national office for turning its 2009 annual report in a timely fashion. Use of the grant has not been yet determined.
- Two 30-second TV public service announcements focusing on distracted driving approaching railroad crossings have been distributed to all of Maine's commercial television stations. Though produced through our national office, locally the New England School of Communications added a five-second ending noting the PSAs are sponsored by Maine Operation Lifesaver and gives our website address. The PSAs can be viewed on the Maine O/L website homepage.
- Darry Nile was reelected to a two-year term as treasurer and government representative to the Maine O/L board of directors.
- Congratulations to Len Mulligan who recently retired from the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority, but will continue as an O/L volunteer. His successor, Brian Beeler, is taking a similar interest in Operation Lifesaver.