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## VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER SPRING 2025

### Please meet our newest volunteer, Kevin Saville

Hello! I'm Kevin Saville, a new OLAV and new rail safety investigator with the Utilities and Transportation Commission. I was born and raised in the Kittitas Valley, graduated from CWU, and worked 24 years in the manufacturing sector as a product and quality assurance engineer.

Having a lifelong interest in railroading, I subsequently turned my attention to railway signals on short lines and worked nearly eleven years as a signal maintainer. I'm glad to transition to the UTC and to promote rail safety both on the job and as a volunteer with various groups involved in railroad history and with Washington Operation Lifesaver.



### New OLAV coach Lora Foster

Congratulations to Lora Foster for completing OLAV coach training last fall in Nashville, TN! Lora serves as our board secretary, lives in northeast King County, and is the Rail Operations Coordinator in the Rail, Freight, and Ports Division at the Washington State Department of Transportation. Lora is very active as a volunteer and has also taken on the role of WAOL Area Coordinator for King and Snohomish Counties.



## Highlights from January Board Meeting

In January we resumed in-person quarterly board meetings. Here are some meeting highlights:

- Goals and budget approved for 2025 calendar year.
- Executive Committee elected for 2025-2027. Our new officers are:
  - Martin Young, Chair
  - Dan Amaya, Vice-Chair
  - Lora Foster, Secretary
  - Mike Turcott, Treasurer
- Thank you Steve Mills for your many years of service on the board of Washington Operation Lifesaver.
- Report on 2024 OLI Competitive State Grant - \$20,000
  - Digital advertising campaign July 1 to September 29 focusing on Spokane, Tri-Cities, and Yakima resulted in over 1.1 million impressions.
  - Hispanavision TV ad campaign July 1 to September 31 on four TV stations in Kittitas, Yakima, Benton, Franklin, and Walla Walla counties with 750 PSAs played.
  - Social Media campaign managed by UTC Communications team resulted in almost 1.1 million impressions.
- New OLI vendors Generate and Kalos are on board.



### **Lunch at Anthony's Hearthfire Grill after the board meeting.**

Clockwise: Martin Young, Tim Fredricksen, Jeff Stewart, Lora Foster, Bob Boston, Mike Turcott, Kevin Saville, Tyler Whitcomb, Kathy Hunter, Patti Mills, Steve Mills, and Patrick Christian

## **Railcamp 2024** **By Gary Emmons**

To kick off the National Railway Historical Society sponsored youth RAILCAMP 2024, west coast RAILCAMP director and retired Amtrak engineer John Cox requested an Operation Lifesaver presentation on opening day to set the tone of safety awareness for the entire week-long event. I made the presentation on behalf of Washington Operation Lifesaver Sunday evening, August 4, at the RAILCAMP center in Gamma Phi Beta sorority house at the University of Puget Sound.

Twelve youth 14 to 19 from across the county attended this rail industry sponsored, hands-on event which included Amtrak operations center in Seattle, Sounder Commuter Rail operations in Seattle, Tacoma Rail switching yard and rail maintenance, Northwest Railway Museum, and the Oregon Rail Heritage Center, home of the famous Southern Pacific 4449 and the Spokane, Portland & Seattle 700. This was an educational and interactive once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for these young folks. Many are considering rail careers. I encouraged all the attendees to embrace the goals of Operation Lifesaver and volunteer with their local state programs.

### **Railcamp 2024 group photo by Michael Sawyer**



### **Live from Vashon Island on KVSH 101.9 FM!**

Longtime Tacoma area volunteer Eric Zeigler made a special guest appearance in December on Vashon Island's community radio station KVSH, reaching hundreds of listeners to talk about rail safety and Operation Lifesaver, with a particular emphasis on looking for the ENS sign when there is a problem at a crossing.



### **Oregon Operation Lifesaver Face-to-Face Training**

Our neighbor program and good friend to the south Oregon Operation Lifesaver is growing quickly and recently brought on 15 new volunteers. We were asked to assist Oregon State Coordinator Jessica Keene with the mandatory face-to-face orientation/training and on March 13, one of our coaches, Mike Turcott, travelled to Salem to do just that.

Mike reports that it was a diverse and highly motivated group representing various Class 1 and shortline railroads in Oregon, historical preservation groups, first responders, rail related industries, and railfans. It was a good central location in Salem between I-5 and the Union Pacific Brooklyn Subdivision with train activity right outside the back door of the meeting room.

As we recruit new volunteers in Washington we hope to return to the traditional group face-to-face orientations.



**Oregon Operation Lifesaver – 15 new OLAVs!**



**Region 8 State Coordinators Meeting with OLI and FRA staff**

**January 29 & 30, 2025 in Vancouver, WA**

**Alaska, North/South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Arizona, Washington, and Oregon represented.**

## Upcoming events:

May 6-8	Safety City at WSP Vancouver
May 9	National Train Day – Pasco
May 17-18	Lacey Spring Fun Fair
June 21	Tenino Family Day
June 24	ENS Sign Awareness Day
June 30	WAPT Conference- Pasco
July 11	Nisqually Health Fair
July 15-17	Washington Traffic Safety Summit – Spokane
July 19	Summerfest – Lakewood
August 9	Open House at Inland NW Rail Museum – Reardan
August 12-17	SW Washington Fair – Chehalis
August 14-17	Pend Oreille County Fair – Cusick
September 5-14	Spokane Interstate Fair
September 15-21	STTT Week
September 19	Rail Safety Night – Tacoma Rainiers

### Reminder of Required eTraining for 2025

In keeping with Operation Lifesaver's practice of conducting mandatory update training, current volunteers will be required to complete new online classroom training, the Authorized Volunteer eLearning (AVE).

This 2025 update includes:

1. New terminology
2. Updates to safety messaging
3. New module on presentation skills and presentation building

Your learning journey will consist of four modules and is expected to be completed in 25-40 minutes. You do not need to complete the training all at once; the system will remember where you left off. To complete the update you should:

1. Look for the email you received on or about February 20 from [community@oli.org](mailto:community@oli.org) that contains a unique-to-you link.
2. Click the link and begin! If you complete the AVE in its entirety, no further action is required. If you stop before completing, you will need to return to the link in the body of the email to complete. The system will remember where you left off.
3. You will need to complete the update training within 30 days of opening your link.

Link expired? Or no email received? Reach out to Moriah, at OLI, [mwhiteman@oli.org](mailto:mwhiteman@oli.org).

**Special Event Scrapbook  
2024 and first quarter 2025**



**Monroe Train Show**



**Lewis County Safety City**



**Monroe Train Show**



**Lewis County Safety City**



**Puyallup Train Show**



**Lewis County Safety City**



**Spokane Train Show**



**Guadalajara!**



**Winchester Rest Area, I-90, headed to Spokane!**



**Puyallup Train Show**



**First Quarter Board Meeting**



**Spokane Train Show**



**Spokane Train Show**



**T-Town, Tacoma Dome**



**Fall Spectacular Car Show - Pasco**



**RiverFest, Kennewick**



**Tri-City Family Expo**