

# 2015

# ANNUAL REPORT



## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



2015 marked Operation Lifesaver's 44th year and we are proud of all the work that has gone into reducing deaths and injuries at crossings and rail rights-of-way. As we look back on the important work we have done together, we are thankful to so many allies for their continued support.

A few of the year's highlights that demonstrate the power of lifesaving partnerships:

Operation Lifesaver state member programs across the country observed International Level Crossing Awareness Day with enforcement blitzes, ad campaigns and other events, alongside 42 countries around the world to get the word out about how to stay safe at railroad crossings. We were proud to have administrators from our funding partners at the Federal Railroad, Federal Highway and Federal Transit Administrations participate in a media tour to promote the launch of OLI's "Can" PSA. See details on page 3.

We greatly value ongoing partnerships with major freight railroads, short lines, commuter rail and transit agencies that allow us to extend rail safety education to critical audiences across the country. Operation Lifesaver and New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority entered into a new collaborative agreement in 2015 to increase awareness of rail safety among riders and residents in MTA's service area. MTA had 45 Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteers (OLAVs) at year's end, as well as cobranded ad campaigns running throughout the busy systems.

OLAVs are our largest group of partners, totaling 2,600 in 2015. We are pleased that so many of these wonderful volunteers are "on the ground," giving free safety presentations, connecting in-person with groups across the country and tailoring rail safety education messages where we need them most.

Together, with all these strong partners, we will continue on our mission to reduce collisions, fatalities and injuries at highway-rail crossings and prevent trespassing on or near railroad tracks. Please join us on this lifesaving mission.

Sincerely,

**Bill Barringer, OLI Chairman**

### Our Mission

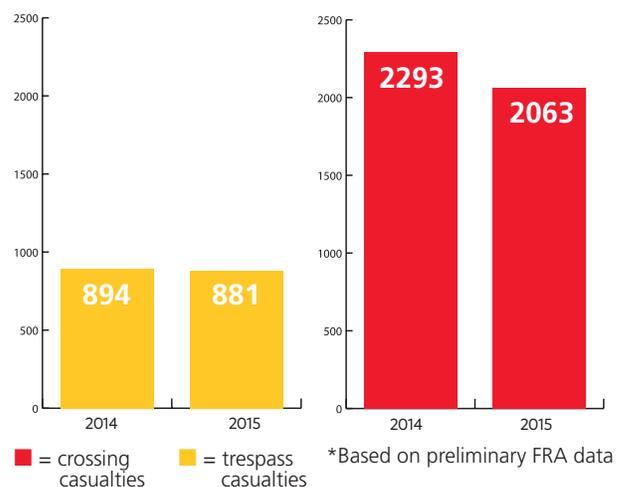
Operation Lifesaver is a nonprofit public safety education and awareness organization dedicated to reducing collisions, fatalities and injuries at highway-rail crossings and trespassing on or near railroad tracks.

With a nationwide network of passionate volunteers, Operation Lifesaver provides free safety presentations and creates award-winning education programs and public awareness campaigns to reach audiences of all ages.

Our safety partners include federal, state and local government agencies, highway safety organizations and America's railroads to promote the three E's—education, enforcement and engineering—to keep people safe around tracks and railway crossings.

### Rail-related Incidents

2014 vs. 2015\*



### Education Reach Overview:

In 2015, Operation Lifesaver reached **2.5 million** people directly via **22,000** safety presentations, **402** training sessions and **921** special events conducted by state programs nationwide.

# EDUCATION & TRAINING



## 2015 State Coordinator Summit: People, Purpose and Passion

Operation Lifesaver, Inc. gathers leaders of state OL member programs every other year to provide training and share ideas. 44 state coordinators joined the OLI staff in Orlando, FL in April, pictured here. Highlights included media training from Orlando's WFTV reporter Jorge Estevez and sharing of grant project success stories.



## 2015 New State Coordinator Orientation

New leaders of state OL member programs from Idaho, North Carolina, New Mexico, South Dakota, Delaware, New Hampshire and Pennsylvania gathered at OLI Headquarters outside of Washington D.C. for a 2 ½ day orientation. Sessions covered legal and finance aspects of running a successful state program; recruiting and managing Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteers; media training; an overview of our federal partnerships; and other valuable topics. This in-person training also allows the state coordinators to develop strong working relationships with the national staff to ensure success in each state program.

## Transition to OLAV System Empowers Volunteers, Expands Safety Messages

In April, OLI transitioned to the OLAV (Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteer) system. All OLI educational materials are available online, allowing greatly expanded access to Operation Lifesaver's safety messages. The safety messages are now embedded in slide presentations (pictured below), on videos, and in other materials volunteers use with audiences. OLAVs have online access to facilitation guides for their safety presentations.

People who are interested in becoming an OLAV may apply online and must complete an online classroom experience and standard or optional face-to-face instruction to become an Authorized Volunteer. OLAVs report their activity online via an updated, improved national database.

In 2015, Operation Lifesaver completed these activities for the OLAV program:

- Made a number of materials, videos and facilitation guides available online for OLAVs to download and use in safety presentations.
- Continued to improve features of the online OLAV database through which volunteers report their presentations and hours, allowing state program leaders to track activity.
- Held two OLAV Coach classes for training new OLAVs.
- Offered face-to-face training at the May APTA rail conference in Salt Lake City.

### Any Time is Train Time



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# SHARING OUR SAFETY MESSAGE



## Joining Forces for Global Crossing Safety

Operation Lifesaver observed International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD) with the launch of a new video public service announcement about grade crossing safety called "Can." As part of the "See Tracks? Think Train!" campaign, the "Can" video was released with the help of our campaign partners at the Association of American Railroads, Federal Railroad Administration, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. Former OLI president Joyce Rose and OLI spokesperson Dr. Lanny Wilson joined Administrators from all three Department of Transportation modes for a satellite media tour that resulted in 119 television and radio airings, 2.5 million viewers in 37 media markets, with an estimated publicity value of approximately \$132,000.

Twenty-two OL state member programs participated in ILCAD activities, partnering with railroads, state DOTs and other partners on advertising campaigns, enforcement exercises and publicity efforts.

## 2015 Website Results

656,476

Pageviews up **+16%** from 2014

## 2015 Social Media Results



**Twitter:**  
1.4 M impressions,  
followers up **34%**



**Facebook:**  
3.2 M impressions,  
likes up **35%**



**Pinterest:**  
72 K impressions,  
followers up **51%**



**Instagram**  
Followers up **115%**

## Dangerous Trespass Trend Featured on The "TODAY Show"

A tragic trespass death in Maryland spurred NBC's "TODAY Show" to feature the all-too-common trend of photography on train tracks in

November. Popular reporter Jeff Rossen admitted on air that he has taken photos of his children on the tracks, which led him to pursue a segment on the deadly behavior, featuring OLI's Libby Rector Snipe discussing the dangers. A similar story aired on ABC's "Nightline" in October increasing exposure for Operation Lifesaver's rail safety education efforts and the deadly risks of taking photos on the tracks.



## IN MEMORIAM



Operation Lifesaver mourned the loss of former OLI board chairman **J. Reilly McCarren**, who died April 26, 2015 at age 58 after a long battle with cancer.

McCarren was majority owner and chairman of the Arkansas & Missouri Railroad Co., and majority owner of Allied Enterprises Inc. He began his railroad career with Conrail in 1978, helped found the Gateway Western Railway, and was president and CEO of the Wisconsin Central from 1996-2001.

As OLI's board chair from 2007-2012, McCarren was a strong advocate for Operation Lifesaver and its volunteers and was instrumental in streamlining organizational processes while ensuring careful stewardship of resources.

## OLI GRANTS

In 2015, OLI provided grants to states and transit agencies in a three-tiered effort to spread critical safety messages and multiply the impact of our rail safety education initiatives. Below are details of the three grant programs, which provided a total of **\$557,500** for campaign activities nationwide.



1. Competitive grants were funded by the **Federal Railroad Administration** to 13 states for grade crossing safety and trespass prevention initiatives. Most of the grantees leveraged funds to multiply the impact of the ongoing "See Tracks? Think Train!" campaign, targeting key audiences to address safety issues in their states. Grants totaled \$205,000 for various public education and awareness projects, including PSA and billboard campaigns, special events, enforcement blitzes, and other outreach activities.
2. OLI awarded competitive state grants for crossing safety education projects, funded by **Federal Highway Administration**. The projects ranged from "See Tracks? Think Train!" PSA and billboard campaigns to special events, enforcement blitzes and other outreach activities. Thirteen states received grant awards totaling \$204,000.
3. OLI partnered with transit agencies across the country on public awareness campaigns as part of competitive **Transit Safety Education Grants**. Eight applicants received grant awards totaling \$148,505. The resulting projects featured Operation Lifesaver and/or "See Tracks? Think Train!" campaign messages and materials, including train wraps, station posters, and signs inside rail cars. Some awardees also created new video PSAs and artwork that reflected the transit system's own trains, light rail vehicles, or streetcars, including Valley Metro's Guardian Angel campaign, pictured above.

## PARTNERSHIPS



## PEOPLE

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