



This is the official newsletter of **Operation Lifesaver Utah (OL Utah)**, a highway-rail grade crossing safety program and a railroad trespass prevention program. To unsubscribe to this newsletter, please contact Vern Keeslar at olut@digis.net or call 801-310-1035.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dave Goeres, Chair

Utah Transit Authority

Clint Ashmead

Utah Railway Company

Dave Beach

Utah Highway Safety Office

Eric Cheng

Utah Department of Transportation

Nick Jones

Utah LTAP Center

Linda Mayne

Utah State Office of Education

Michael Rapich

Utah Highway Patrol

Terry Smith

Utah Trucking Association

Todd Walters

Union Pacific Railroad

Chris Weesner

Salt Lake, Garfield & Western
Railway

STATE COORDINATORS

Vern and Jennifer Keeslar

Operation Lifesaver Utah

2867 North 675 East

Lehi, UT 84043

(801) 310-1035 Vern

(801) 473-1444 Jennifer

olut@digis.net

OPERATION LIFESAVER

UTAH WEBSITE

www.olut.usu.edu

OPERATION LIFESAVER

NATIONAL WEBSITE

www.oli.org

State Coordinator's Message – 2014 OL Utah Appreciation and Awards Dinner

This quarterly message is about the people and safety partners that made 2014 a successful year. OL Utah held its 2014 Appreciation and Award Dinner at the Gathering Place in Gardner Village in West Jordan on Monday, March 30, 2015. First, I would like to recognize and thank our wonderful safety partners. Without their financial and in-kind support, we would not have a program. The following safety partners were recognized at the Appreciation and Awards Dinner:

2014 Operation Lifesaver Utah Safety Partners

Gold Spike Safety Partners (\$20,000 and above)

- Union Pacific Railroad
- Utah Department of Transportation
- Utah Highway Safety Office

Silver Spike Safety Partners (\$10,000 to \$19,999)

- Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (National Office)
- Utah State Office of Education
- Utah Transit Authority

Iron Spike Safety Partners (\$1,000 to \$9,999)

- BNSF Railway
- InterPlan
- Salt Lake, Garfield & Western Railway
- Utah Railway (Genesee & Wyoming)

Laurelwood Tie Safety Partners (\$100 to \$999)

- Hostlers Model Railroad Club
- Outdoor Promotions, Inc.
- Safety Awareness for Everyone (S.A.F.E.)
- Utah Local Technical Assistance Program at Utah State University
- Utah Trucking Association

There were several awards presented to volunteers and others associated with the OL Utah program. The following awards were presented:

The **Outstanding Media Award** is presented to an individual or organization that has reported a story, either in print, on radio or television about safety at highway-rail grade crossings, or trespass prevention on railroad property, or about Operation Lifesaver's mission of the three E's – Education, Engineering, and Enforcement.

The Outstanding Media Award went to **KSTU Fox 13 TV** for the story about the Operation Lifesaver Utah/Union Pacific Safety Train Event. The story aired on June 27, 2014 on Fox 13 TV. Representing KSTU Fox 13 TV was Renai Bodley, Vice President/News Director at Fox 13 Utah. Renai accepted the award with professionalism, friendliness, warmth, and gratitude. Renai stated, "It is an honor to part of tonight's program and to receive this award on behalf of Fox 13." She

continued, “I am converted to rail safety education and Operation Lifesaver. What an outstanding organization.”

The **Safety Partner Presenters of the Year Awards** are given to presenters whose employers provide time for the presenters to participate in the OL Utah program while on company time. Safety partner presenters demonstrate high activity in the program by the number of presentations given, booths worked, or other involvement with OL Utah.

The Safety Partner Presenter of the Year Award was **Vic Saunders**, Utah Department of Transportation. Vic gave 55 presentations to 2,059 people.

The Safety Partner Presenter of the Year Award 1st Runner-up was **Kent Jorgenson**, Utah Transit Authority. Kent gave 46 presentations to 832 people.

The Safety Partner Presenter of the Year Award 2nd Runner-up was **Marc Bowman**, Utah Transit Authority. Marc gave 29 presentations to 6,500 people.

The **Volunteer Presenters of the Year Awards** are given to presenters who are true volunteers, not being compensated for their time, and have demonstrated high activity in the OL Utah program. This high activity is demonstrated through one’s activity in the number of presentations given, booths worked, or other involvement with the OL Utah.

The Volunteer Presenter of the Year Award was **Phil Lavorgna**. Phil gave 73 presentations to 2,195 people. Phil retired at the end of December 2014. He has been a presenter since 1996 giving

hundreds of presentations to tens of thousands of driver education students during the 18 years volunteering with Operation Lifesaver. Thank you Phil for all that you have done in saving lives in Utah. You truly are a LIFESAVER PHIL!

The Volunteer Presenter of the Year Award 1st Runner-up was **Terri Fontaine**. Terri gave 46 presentations to 909 people. Terri has been a presenter since 1994. She is currently serving as Area Coordinator for Salt Lake, Summit, and Tooele Counties. THANKS TERRI for all that you continue to do for rail safety education!

The Volunteer Presenter of the Year Award 2nd Runner-up was **Andy Glad**. Andy gave 26 presentations to 652 people. Andy retired from volunteering in February 2014, but still finished in the top three for volunteer presenters this past year. We very much appreciate the wonderful work that Andy Glad has done for Operation Lifesaver over the past 18 years. THANK YOU ANDY!

The **State Coordinator’s Award of Excellence** is presented to an individual or an organization that has demonstrated excellence in participating in or supporting the Operation Lifesaver Utah program through activity, in-kind support, and/or financial contributions.

The State Coordinator’s Award of Excellence was awarded to **Dave Beach**. Dave started working with Operation Lifesaver in 2002 as a member of the Board of Directors. He served on the Board for 12 years, eight of those years as Chair of the Board. Under Dave’s leadership, the Operation Lifesaver Utah program has excelled. He has overseen the increase of volunteers from 75 to 150, the appointment of an assistant state coordinator (Walt Webster), the expansion of public outreach, and program financial stability – increasing the budget by 400 percent. Dave retired after 38 years with the state of Utah as a model employee engaged in public service. Thanks for your leadership, example, and friendship over these many years Dave and for all you did for safety in Utah!



Pictured from left to right: Kent Jorgenson, Vic Saunders, Renai Bodley, Vern Keeslar, Jen Keeslar, Phil Lavorgna, Andy Glad, Terri Fontaine, and Dave Beach.

OL Utah Booth Update

Thanks for all those who participate in the booths sharing the Operation Lifesaver safety messages. Operation Lifesaver Utah attended public and private events all over Utah during the first quarter of 2015.

- OT&W Model Train Show on January 16 & 17, 2015 at Thanksgiving Point in Lehi.
- Safe Kids Fair on February 21, 2015 at the Expo Center in Sandy.
- Hostlers Model Railroad Festival on March 6, 7, & 8, 2015 at Ogden Union Station.
- West Valley Family Safety and Emergency Fair on March 27 & 28, 2015 at Valley Fair in West Valley.

New OL Utah Booth Policy

We continue to get many requests for Operation Lifesaver to participate in safety fairs, model train shows, health fairs, conferences, and trade shows. It can be challenging trying to provide OL representatives at the booths.

So, the State Advisory Council has decided to incentivize those volunteers working the Operation Lifesaver booth. Gift cards from local restaurants and retail stores will be sent to those who volunteer a shift at the various booth locations.

Operation Lifesaver Utah Board of Directors Recognizes Vern Keeslar with Board's Award of Excellence

To say that Vern Keeslar was surprised to receive the Operation Lifesaver Utah Board's Award of Excellence would be an understatement! As Vern and Dave Goeres finished the awards at the annual OL Utah Appreciation and Awards Banquet, Vern turned the podium over to Utah Transit Authority's Chief Safety Officer and Operation Lifesaver Utah Board Chair Dave Goeres, and suspected nothing. Dave announced that they were not finished with the awards yet. Dave announced a new award called the "Board's Award of Excellence."

Dave talked about Vern's contribution to Operation Lifesaver Utah for the past 20 years. Vern started volunteering with Operation Lifesaver in 1994 and became a certified presenter in 1996. In 2000, Vern became the Assistant State Coordinator to Bret Barney and then the State Coordinator in 2004 and has now served 10 years in that position. Vern has educated more than 40,000 people about rail safety education through presentations and booths. Vern has served on several committees at the national level of Operation Lifesaver including Symposium Silent Auction Committee Chair twice, State Coordinator's Election Committee twice (once as Chair), and the F. Tom Roberts Memorial Volunteer of the Year Committee twice (once as Chair). Dave stated that Vern is well respected among the other state coordinators and Utah serves as a model for other Operation Lifesaver state programs.

Vern stated, "I was very surprised, honored, and moved by the show of generosity by being awarded the Board's Award of Excellence for 10 years of service as State Coordinator." He continued, "The letters of recognition and kindness from Utah Governor Gary Herbert, OLI President and CEO Joyce Rose, Utah DOT Executive Director Carlos Braceras, Utah Transit Authority Trustee Board Chair David Burton and UTA President and CEO Michael Allegra, State Superintendent of Public Instruction at the Utah Office of Education Brad Smith, and Union Pacific Utah Service Unit Superintendent Richard Wells was humbling for me."



Pictured from left to right: Renai Bodley, Vern Keeslar, Jen Keeslar, and Dave Beach.