

FALL 2021

Lake State Railway

The Turntable



FROM THE PRESIDENT
SAFETY FIRST

OPERATIONS UPDATE
THINKING INSIDE THE BOX

SAFETY
WINTER PREPAREDNESS

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARLIE WHIPP



Lake State Railway Company (LSRC) continues to evolve. Recently, a review of our Safety and Training activities resulted in a decision to grow the Safety and Training Department. The factors that played into this decision were based on the growth LSRC is experiencing in both business levels and in the overall employee count. The number of employees at the company that have less than 3 years of experience with LSRC and, in some cases railroading altogether, is very high. It is extremely important for the safety of our workforce, the customers we serve

and the general public that LSRC provides a safety and training program that is capable of providing the level of training needed to ensure our team is focused on performing in a safe manner no matter the situation.

“Safety First has been a long-used term in the rail industry for good reason.”

LSRC took the step to add John Junga to the Safety and Training team. The addition of John when added to the experienced personnel (Brian Edwards and Ryan Krengel) already in place puts LSRC in a better position to keep up with all FRA requirements as well as ensuring an ongoing training curriculum that keeps our team on top of all rule changes as well as meeting the needs of our own stringent programs.

Safety First has been a long-used term in the rail industry for good reason. While railroading is very safe when employees and the general public follow rules and obey signals/warning devices it can also be very unforgiving when rules, signal or warning devices are not followed. Loaded railcars commonly weigh between 130 and 143 gross tons. Coupled together our trains commonly haul 3,000 gross tons to as much as 17,000 gross tons, with many exceeding 10,000 gross tons. Any mistake can be tragic. This is why rules and training compliance are so critical and why we are expanding our department.

LSRC urges all employees, customers and the general public to be focused when dealing with rail equipment or when near any tracks. Remember when around rail tracks, movement can occur in either direction at any time.

**EVERY CROSSING.
EXTRA CAUTION.**
Always Expect a Train.



John Rickoff
President & CEO



Thinking Inside the Box—Lake State Railway has consistently grown our leased boxcar fleet over the last five years. Historically, LSRC owned a small fleet of 50' boxcars for the support of the Georgia Pacific plant in Gaylord, which closed in 2006. LSRC added 15 Plate F 60' boxcars about 10 years ago to support the Weyerhaeuser OSB facility in Grayling. Since that time, we have worked to add new lanes out of Weyerhaeuser, and now are supporting the massive ARAUCO facility with system boxcars. We have increased our lease fleet of boxcars over ten-fold, with approximately 175 cars in the fleet, over half of which are 60' Plate F 286K boxcars. Even with the growth of our fleet, we have found ourselves in deficit for the demand of our customers. However, a solution has been found in an unlikely place.



LSRC has been working with a steel processor on our newly leased line south of Flint to convert truck lanes of steel coil rod to rail transportation. This product traditionally moves in gondola cars, but we were finding that gondola cars did not have the cubic capacity to maximize the weight on railcars and maximize the economic savings for the customer. While researching other options, our marketing team found a loading pattern in a traditional 60' Plate F boxcar that would allow for 25% more product per load than in gondola cars. This spring, we facilitated some test loads which proved to be successful and will continue into the future. What makes this win even better is that the product will arrive in a TBOX (60' Plate F Boxcar), which is the exact car type in short supply for our customers

loading in Grayling. We will be able to move these TBOX cars as a load into Flint and a load out of Grayling, capturing more volume off of the highway and helping our customers have more consistent car supply going forward.

Thinking Outside the Box—Interchange traffic with our Class I partner CSX has grown significantly since our acquisition of the Saginaw Subdivision south of Flint in 2019. This volume increase has caused our train size to outgrow the siding lengths in the Wixom area, which delays the interchange by having to yard the train in multiple tracks. Yarding the train also contributes to crossings being blocked longer than we would like as trains are doubled up and air tested by CSX and LSRC crews. Additionally, it is difficult for one set of CSX power to make a full cycle to/from Toledo in a 24 hour period given the delays in Wixom.

Recently, leadership from the transportation department at CSX visited our offices in Saginaw to discuss options to improve our interchange. We had a productive meeting which concluded with commitment to do something very unusual, but with great efficiency benefits for both railroads. We started a test program with run-through power on our interchange trains. LSRC and CSX locomotives will run through from Toledo to Flint, and return, with two sets of power consisting of one unit from each railroad. This arrangement will greatly reduce the dwell in Wixom, reduce crossing delays in Wixom as the trains will maintain their initial terminal air test, and improve locomotive utilization. We give a lot of credit to CSX for being a good partner and allowing a creative solution to improve service for our customers and reduce crossing delays for the citizens of Wixom.

Photo: The first carload of inbound steel coil rod being unloaded in Flint. This boxcar represents four truckloads worth of material.

Mike Stickel
EVP & COO

Buick City is BACK!

In 1999, the last automobile rolled off the lines at the famed General Motors “Buick City” assembly plant and since that time, a majority of the former plant site has sat idle, with the associated railroad infrastructure slowly deteriorating. That all began to change in the summer of 2020, when amid Coronavirus, Lake State Railway began a major rehabilitation project to bring some life back to over 20 acres of the famed site.



In March of this year, Lake State’s new Flint Vehicle Distribution Center (VDC) opened for business, allowing auto racks to once again be spotted at the new VDC for the loading and unloading of new cars and trucks. There are currently four tracks at the site, which allows for access to 40 multi-level auto racks at any given time, with additional capacity available as the business grows. The VDC is utilized as an origin and destination mixing center for automobiles as new vehicles are received from proximity assembly plants, loaded onto railcars and interchanged to CSX Transportation for furtherance to multiple destinations, as well as, receiving and unloading inbound railcar shipments of new vehicles destined for Michigan dealer delivery. This site is the northern most vehicle distribution facility in the state of Michigan, which makes it a key distribution location for the shipment of inbound railcar loads with units destined for northern dealer deliveries, some up to 200 miles away.

Ron Chadwick, LSRC’s Director of Automotive Services, manages the day-to-day operations at the ramp, ensur-

ing that it all flows smoothly. He tells us that “working here makes it come full circle for me”, as he has family members that worked at the original “Buick City”. Ron has railroad industry experience dating back to 1978, beginning with the Ann Arbor Railroad. What makes him a good fit for this role is that Ron already has years of automotive industry finished vehicle logistics experience, serving the customer and working with the railroads, vehicle processing contractors and trucking companies seamlessly throughout the distribution process.

LSRC’s transportation, mechanical and track departments must all work together to ensure success and fluidity at the ramp. For example, the transportation department must spot and pull cars efficiently, there are AAR guidelines that require auto racks to be spotted a certain distance between each railcar to allow for the proper placing of bridge plates. Bridge plates are placed between railcar openings and decks to allow for automobiles to be driven between railcars. LSRC’s mechanical department is hard at work at the VDC, mechanical personnel inspect and prepare the railcars for the efficient loading and unloading of the finished vehicles. It all adds up to a lot of steps and a lot of hard work and dedication for LSRC employees to get the job done correctly and safely.

Tom Scott
LSRC Conductor/Engineer



Capitol Improvement Updates

LSRC has had yet another busy year with significant progress made on the CRISI projects for the Mackinaw and Huron Subdivisions (see “From the President” Spring 2021 Edition). Other smaller scope projects have been completed or are near completion that allow for either significant operational improvement or maintaining suitable infrastructure for growing traffic.

LSRC undertook the replacement of a deck plate girder (DPG) bridge on the Saginaw Subdivision over Thornton Creek near Novi, MI. This replacement was necessary in order to maintain the existing traffic and accommodate future tonnage. The complete DPG span was replaced with a concrete ballast deck span over the course of 2 days with minimal interruption to traffic. Though LSRC has replaced bridges and spans in the past, this was one of the most prominent projects as of recent due to the location, both from the significant amount of weekly train traffic and site access challenges.



Within LSRC’s Bay City Yard, two projects geared toward increasing capacity and fluidity in the Bay City area will be completed in the coming weeks. First, LSRC and Straits Wood Treating will complete the construction of a new side-track to accommodate the growing customer traffic. Previously, Strait’s loading/unloading location was a yard track passing through the customer’s complex. Use of this yard track by Straits proved challenging as it often hampered the fluidity of running and meeting road freight trains through Bay City Yard. The new track will diverge from the main line and enter into Strait’s complex, reducing the challenging switch moves previously required. Additionally, LSRC will complete the rehabilitation of a second yard track in Bay City Yard. Earlier this year, LSRC completed the rehabilitation of an operationally significant track primarily used for meeting road freight trains by upgrading it with newer, heavier relay rail and new ties, along with the replacement of two lead turnouts. The second, more recent track improvement has a similar scope with rail and tie replacement placing the out-of-service track back in service. With this track in service, train crews will have increased flexibility switching within the yard and have the ability to more efficiently stage cars for local Bay City customers by restoring yard track capacity.

Lastly, at LSRC’s far north terminal in Gaylord, a second phase for increasing capacity at the Milbocker Road transload was completed. This project included the extension of an existing transload track, which allows for accommodation of approximately 3 more cars on-spot for transload, and the construction of a new runaround track for storage and staging of cars for transload customers.

Lake State Railway

Sean Pengelly
Engineer—Projects & Development

Milestone reached and cold weather

First, I want to say congratulations to the Transportation Team and its employees for making it a year injury free. The dedication shown to safety and the task at hand is evident in this goal being met.

Second, as fall approaches it that time again to look at winter preparedness, the winter months will bring us frigid temperatures, snow and ice. These conditions can cause an impact on rail safety by causing injuries and derailments. By following these simple practices below, we can help mitigate the impact the cold weather can cause.



Before Winter Weather Arrives:

- **Inspect gutters, drains and walkways.** Check gutters and drains to make sure they aren't blocked or leaking, which may result in the formation of icicles that could fall and cause injury or obstruct track. Inspect walkways and clear any debris or clutter to ensure snow can be safely removed once it falls.
- **Check crossings, track and structures.** Check for proper drainage around switches and rails. Clean all switches, derails, frogs and flangeways.
- **Prepare your equipment.** Check to see that all gates and locks are functioning properly before snow hides potential hazards. Ensure all snow and ice removal equipment is in good working order and you have plenty of de-icing supplies on hand.

After a Winter Storm:

- **Clear walkways.** Remove snow and ice to ensure the safety of railroad and company employees.
- **Clear switches, track and structures.** Ensure switches and derails are operable, clear of snow and ice, and are not frozen. Switches are most susceptible to snow and ice build-up, which can cause delays and even derailments. Track switch heaters can help keep switches clear and operational. Ensure rods are clear and operable.
- **Check and clear crossings and flangeways,** especially in places where cars, equipment and foot traffic may compact snow and ice. Flangeways at road crossings should have clean grooves to reduce the potential for train wheels to derail.
- **Regularly inspect track.** Metal contracts in cold weather and expands in heat, which means temperature fluctuations can cause small cracks that can eventually lead to broken rail. This is especially true for welded joints, which are particularly vulnerable. Inspect track frequently throughout the winter and repair defects immediately to prevent broken rail that can lead to derailments.
- **Inspect equipment and remove snow.** Check all gates and locks to ensure rail crews can operate properly. Remove snow from gates, walkways and tracks.
- **Provide adequate clearance.** Make sure snow piles are placed at least 12 feet away from tracks and crossings. Do not pile snow where it restricts visibility. Ensure rail cars on site are clear of built-up ice and snow.

Together we can help to prevent winter injuries and incidents.



John Junga

Director of Operating Practices

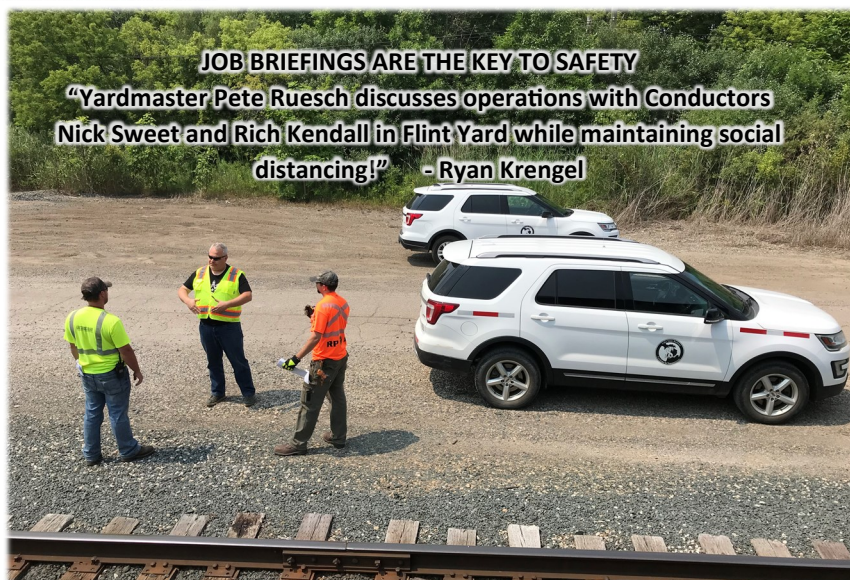
LSRC **LE SAFETY** **REALLY COUNT**



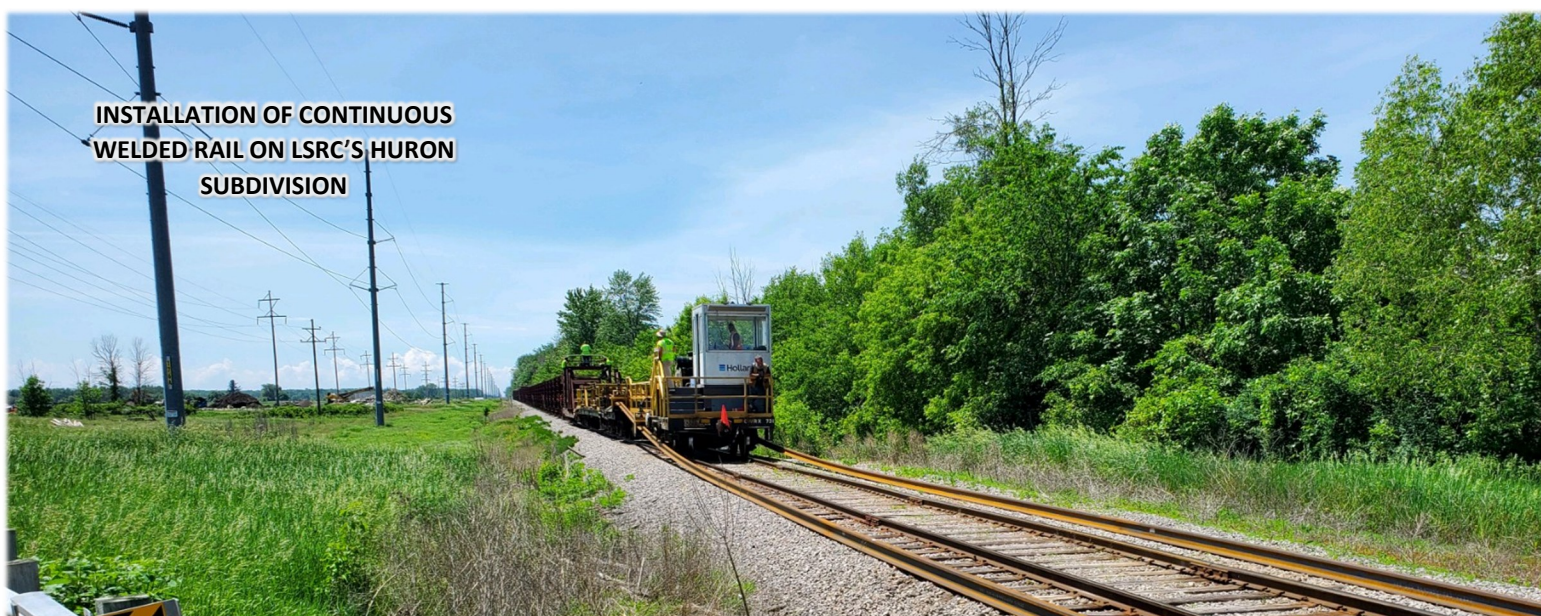
SFI is honoring 26 developments announced in 2020 valued at nearly \$356 million that will create and retain 583 jobs. These projects represent significant growth in manufacturing and service industries in communities throughout Saginaw County, especially with all of the challenges of COVID-19



**EXPANSION OF LSRC'S
TRANSLOAD TRACK IN GAYLORD MI**



JOB BRIEFINGS ARE THE KEY TO SAFETY
"Yardmaster Pete Ruesch discusses operations with Conductors Nick Sweet and Rich Kendall in Flint Yard while maintaining social distancing!" - Ryan Krengel



**INSTALLATION OF CONTINUOUS
WELDED RAIL ON LSRC'S HURON
SUBDIVISION**

June 14th started out like any other day at the Saginaw locomotive facility. We had two individuals off work for personal time on that Monday. One of them was Ken Schramm of our inspection crew. Around lunchtime, we were surprised to see Ken along with his wife stop by the shop. There was no doubt that Ken had a bounce to each step he took. Why would anyone come into work on their day off? Now one could look at Ken and mistake him for Santa Claus, and on June 14th, that was especially true as he had a sparkle in his eye. He was smiling like he just got away with something. The reason for that Joy? Retirement. That's right, after ten years of railroading and many more years working for other employers that utilize rubber tires instead of steel wheels, Ken was retiring. His papers came through sooner than he expected. After weighing his options with our Director of Human Resources, Ken said it was time. Time to enjoy his adult children, grandchildren, and, more importantly, his wonderful wife.

It was fun watching Ken tell the guys as we observed several reactions from those present that day. The first one was happiness for Ken and his family. A lifetime of work and accomplishments coming full circle. The second one was a little bit of envy from those left behind. It's not that we don't enjoy what we're doing, but that sounds like a great time—spending more time with your loved ones and enjoying a schedule of your own making: the last reaction, PANIC. If there is anybody in that locomotive shop that can find a missing part, it's Ken. He knows the location of every part, big or small, in inventory, and there's not one of us that hasn't called on Ken to rescue us.



Railroaders tend to create legacy railroaders within their families. Something draws us to those steel wheels on steel rail. It's like that line in the Arlo Guthrie song, City of New Orleans; "and the sons of Pullman porters and the sons of engineers, ride their fathers magic carpets made of steel." Ken has that legacy in his son Ben who works for Lake State in Bay City, making sure our crews and commodities are making it safely over our swing bridge (in addition to other tasks Ben takes on). Like father, like son, Ben has saved us many times by catching defects and issues with trains, tracks, and other potential problems. And what about that next generation after that? Ken's grandson was in the shop not too long ago discussing his desire to work on the railroad one day.

We at the locomotive shop wish Ken and his family a long, healthy, and happy retirement. Well Done, Well Done Indeed!

How do the rest of us make it to retirement? Working safely with every step we take. Have situational awareness of our surroundings and working efficiently to keep the trains rolling.

W. Roger Fuehring
Chief Mechanical Officer

RAY STOMBERSKI III – ROADMASTER/INSPECTOR

Meet Ray Stomerski, better known around here at Lake State as “Sweet Baby Ray”. Ray is our Roadmaster for the Saginaw area going south to Mount Morris, northwest to Midland and northeast to Essexville. Ray has been with Lake State for over 13 years now. Inspecting the track, performing routine maintenance, and providing protection for contractors are just a few of his many responsibilities.

Ray grew up in the small town of Omer, MI with his older sister Angie where he attended Standish-Sterling Central High school. The School District at the time had a machine trade program where he would attend school half of the time and work in the trade program the other half. The program was designed to teach the basics of equipment and how to run different types of machinery. After high school Ray went to work for J & M Kusch running a mill and lathe. After about a year, he realized he didn’t enjoy being cooped up indoors and went to work for Tri-City Railcar Repair where he got his first taste of “railroading”. In 2008, Ray joined the Lake State Railway team in our Maintenance of Way Department and has been a valuable asset ever since.



When asked what he enjoys about his job, Ray replies that there is a variety of work every day so it never gets monotonous. No matter how tough his day may be (track work is hard work), Ray always manages to have a smile on his face.

Ray and his fiancé Alisa currently reside in Whittemore, MI with their 3-year old son Raymond Stanley IV and, Alisa’s 15-year old daughter Sydney. Proud papa Ray says he tries very hard not to spoil his son, but it’s kind of hard not to. In his free time, Ray is an avid bow hunter focusing on whitetail and enjoys fishing for brook trout in McMillan, MI. In the winter, you will find him snowmobiling the trails throughout the Upper Peninsula (UP) every chance he gets.

Ray is always one of those guys who will go out of his way to help. Not only is he a great worker on the railroad, he is also very mechanical and enjoys helping friends and family fix anything that is broken. His kindness does not end there, he even endured a momma duck attack while trying to save its baby ducks stuck between the rails (we have it on video but provided a picture for your viewing pleasure).

We are very proud to have Sweet Baby Ray on our team here at Lake State. His hard work and dedication have helped him to become one of our most valued employees.

“Ray loves to eat, he’ll even work for food.” – “Ok, Ray!” – K. Filarski

“After the momma duck attack, Ray lost his Sweet Baby Ray status, he’s now called Quacker.” – M. Pennell

“Ray is a total coffee snob.” – D. Fitzgerald

“Ray epitomizes the term “team player”, he is always willing to help.” – J. Rickoff



Deanna Hennessy
HOS Compliance Manager/AR

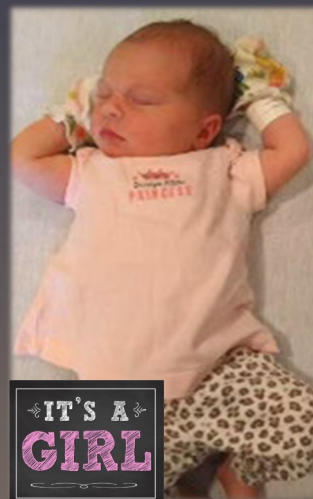
WELCOME ABOARD!



Melissa and Dennis Podgorski
proudly welcome
Wyatt James Podgorski
June 29, 2021
6 lbs - 13 oz, 18.5 inches



Ben Schramm and Kayla Pratt
proudly welcome
Kash Carter Schramm
Aug 25, 2021
6 lbs - 12 oz, 19.5 inches



Rick Krajniak and Brittany
Wilburn proudly welcome
Sawyer Mae Krajniak
Sept 17, 2021
7 lbs - 14 oz, 19 inches

HITCHED!

CONGRATULATIONS NEWLYWEDS



ELLIOT and RASHEL HUBBARD
SEPT 18, 2021

LOGAN and LAURIE SCHUPP
AUG 28, 2021



SAVE THE DATES



SATURDAY, DEC 4th
SOARING EAGLE CASINO
MT PLEASANT, MI



SATURDAY, DEC 11th

PLANNED STOPS:

GRAYLING MI
ROSCOMMON MI
WEST BRANCH MI
STANDISH MI

ADDITIONAL INFO INCLUDING STOP TIMES
 WILL BE POSTED TO WWW.LSRC.COM SOON



WELCOME

Welcome aboard! We'd like to give a warm welcome to our newest team members who joined Lake State during Q2 - Q3 of 2021. We look forward to all the great knowledge and workmanship you will bring to Lake State Railway.

Bolen, Matthew	MOW FLINT
Himm, Kieran	AUTO RAMP
Jeffries, Colton	AUTO RAMP
Kendall, Richard W.	TRANSPORTATION
Kimmel, Zachary	TRANSPORTATION
Mills, Hayden	AUTO RAMP
Munsey, Brandon T.	TRANSPORTATION
Ross, Brian	TRANSPORTATION
Smith, Spencer	TRANSPORTATION
Trepasso, Joseph	AUTO RAMP

PROMOTIONS

Trista Wolgast
 Railcar Fleet Manager

Kelsey Fetter
 Revenue and Compensation & Benefits Manager

Deanna Hennessy
 HOS Compliance Manager & Accounts Receivable

Michael Ewing
 Vice President - Transportation

John Junga
 Director of Operating Practices

Matthew Bradley
 Conductor

Jason Loomis
 Conductor

Shaun Morrison
 Conductor

James Kane
 Conductor

Richard Kendall
 Conductor

Congratulations! LRSC thanks you for your commitment to Excellence in Transportation!

2021 ANNIVERSARIES

QUARTER 3 ANNIVERSARIES

EMPLOYEE	YEARS
Bucholtz, Jarod W.	1
Collins, Darrell W.	5
Currie Jr., Edgar C.	13
Douglas, Lloyd M.	16
Fetters, Kelsey J.	5
Hnatiuk, Michael R.	3
Huneycutt, Helen R.	15
Johnson, Joshua L.	16
Junga, John A.	1
Kent, Phillip L.	2
Kepich, Jonathon C.	1
Klepser, Kevin T.	5
Miller, Sandra L.	20
Mott, Troy A.	16
Murringer, David D.	10
Neumeyer, Amber M.	5
Podgorniak, Kevin D.	18
Reed, James C.	6
Reilly, Kyle T.	3
Rickoff, John A.	11
Ruse, Richard S.	13
Schramm, Benjamin N.	7
Smith, Christopher J.	4
Stickel, Michael A.	8
Stomberski III, Ray S.	13
Vaughn, Christopher D.	1
Vongrey, Joseph J.	16
Weise, Andrew D.	3
Zelev, Charles B.	19

QUARTER 4 ANNIVERSARIES

EMPLOYEE	YEARS
Balenda, Brian T.	22
Beach, Nathan A.	4
Campbell, Gregg	16
Copp, Christopher T.	11
Dowdy, Jade S.	3
Duffey, Shasta D.	5
Edwards, Michael S.	4
Erickson, Les J.	20
Fitzgerald, Dora D.	7
George, Judy A.	12
Johnson, Quentin S.	5
Krabbe, Rebecca L.	3
Krajniak, Rick	16
Laurin, Jack K.	16
Mahan Jr., Forrest W.	1
Marhesic, Johnathan R.	1
McLennan, Alec D.	5
Pennington, Brandon J.	6
Rainey, Steven	16
Rose, William M.	4
Tremble, Louie	16
Wiggins, Dylan L.	4
Willford, Addison W.D.	2
Wirtz, Nickolas A.	4
Wiseheart, Cody J.	2

“The Turntable” - Lake State Railway Company's Official Newsletter

Lake State Railway Company

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Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5

