

# *DuPage Railroad Safety Council*

*Never doubt that a small group  
of thoughtful committed citizens  
can change the world.  
Indeed, it's the only thing  
that ever has.*

*~ Margaret Mead*



# *DuPage Railroad Safety Council*

*It is the mission of the DuPage Railroad Safety Council to prevent deaths and injuries at railroad crossings and along railways.*

*~ adopted December 16, 1995*

The DuPage Railroad Safety Council exists because **Jonathan Goers** was so severely injured and **Lauren Elizabeth Wilson** was later killed at a quiet little railroad crossing in Hinsdale, Illinois.

On the stage of life, history has assigned them each the role of inspirer.

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It is important that the statistics be given names ...  
a few others we know intimately are:

*Lori Most*

*Michael DeLarco*

*Victor Olivera*

*Kristen Bowen*

Each of these children have families who suffer.  
Each of these children have stories that need to be  
told.

# *DuPage Railroad Safety Council*

Much of our work is about “The Story”.

Our work is fueled by passion and persistence.

It is important to show the human side of railroad safety.

We always seek integrity in our members.

We are unbiased and non partisan.

Our opinions are often sought out by politicians and the media because our concern is for the common good.

# *DuPage Railroad Safety Council*

The DuPage Railroad Safety Council meets on the third Saturday of every month to heighten awareness, network and improve safety conditions at railroad crossings and along railways.

Membership is open to anyone who has a deep concern for railroad safety.

Operation Lifesaver is one of our partners; we appreciate their “3 E” approach to solving railroad safety problems ~ **Education, Engineering and Enforcement.**

We adopted a fourth ‘E’ ~ **Eliminate** grade-level crossings because it is virtually impossible to create a completely safe crossing at grade-level.

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We want the railroad industry to be successful because we believe in the following:

It is much safer for people to be transported by public transportation than in private vehicles.

It is much safer for goods to be transported in railroad freight cars rather than in trucks.

It is better for the environment, and much more fuel efficient, to use trains rather than individual transport vehicles – whether they be cars or trucks.

The more successful railroad companies are, the better they are able to fund safety improvements.

# *DuPage Railroad Safety Council*

## **Examples of our accomplishments:**

Video enforcement pilot project (DuPage County)

Expansion of video enforcement (Paul Froehlich)

Fines for violating RR crossing laws

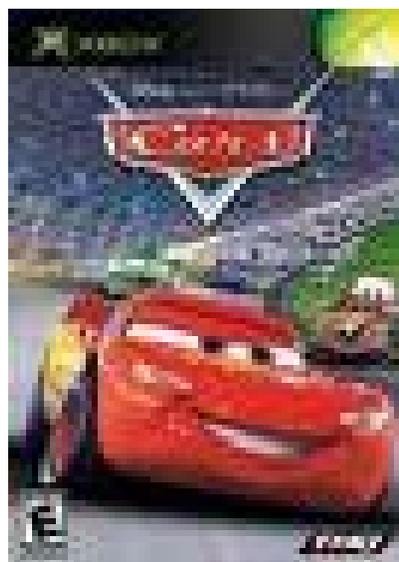
Clarification of RR crossing violations

Created a RR safety video and distributed it to every high school in Illinois

International exposure of RR safety after the Disney “CARS” movie

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## **Lightening McQueen**



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## **AARP Magazine** (September & October 2007)

Article: Better Balance



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## **The Jim Kveton story:**

Elmhurst Police Department developed a model education and enforcement system, much to the credit of Jim Kveton.

He was one of our first safety champions (1996).

Jim was Officer, rather than Commander, at that time.

We are proud to call him one of our own.

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## **Pedestrian Underpass**



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## **THE PEDESTRIAN (OR TRESPASSER) PROBLEM**

**by Lanny F. Wilson, M.D.**

One cannot address railroad safety without realizing a simple fact: pedestrians and vehicles are both struck by trains. However, preventing pedestrian incidents requires one set of solutions while preventing vehicular collisions requires another. While the statistics continue to improve at vehicular crossings because of engineering improvements and grade crossing closures, the pedestrian fatalities have not fared so well.

On the railroad tracks, pedestrians should not die -- they are crossing the tracks at the appropriate time and place after they have stopped, looked and listened. Trespassers, on the other hand, are where they should not be. To use the words of Operation Lifesaver, "Railroad tracks, trestles, yards and equipment are private property. Walking or playing on them is illegal – trespassers are subject to arrest and fines." Too often the penalty for trespassing is disability or death!

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(con't)

To insure that disability or death is not the penalty paid because this particular law is broken, the DuPage Railroad Safety Council has analyzed the trespassing issue on multiple occasions. Although not all-inclusive, the following list suggests promising ways to address this serious problem because **there should be no ambiguity about where to cross tracks legally and when to cross tracks safely:**

- Signal passengers of another train/trains in the area.

- Inform passengers and pedestrians of another train's approach, with on-train and/or at- station, voice or visual alert.

- Teach persons with disability how to safely cross tracks.

- Reward community informants who call police when they see trespassers.

- Educate the public through schools, internet, media, etc.

- Recruit more Operation Lifesaver presenters.

- Encourage and assist police officers in their law enforcement capacity.

- Coordinate train schedules (e.g. with GPS and Positive Train Control systems) to prevent a moving train from entering a station when a stopped train is present.

- Design mathematical, computer models for train coordination for minimal impact on schedules.

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(con't)

- Install pedestrian gates and signals at all highway-rail grade crossings where appropriate, and at designated pedestrian crosswalks.
- Build pedestrian underpasses and overpasses.
- Construct fences, either intertrack or external to the tracks, which are impermeable to vandalism and which **channel pedestrians** to designated crosswalks.
- Plant pedestrian blockades with 'curb' appeal e.g. thorn bushes, barberry hedges or roses.
- Cue pedestrians with L.E.D. light systems for quick, unambiguous visual directions.
- Increase 'trespasser' awareness and prevent 'pedestrians' from becoming 'trespassers'.
- Find where pedestrians are choosing to cross tracks illegally; then engineer safe, legal solutions when appropriate.
- **There should be no ambiguity about where to cross tracks legally and when to cross tracks safely.**

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## **The Kristen Bowen story**

14 year old high school student

She was a pedestrian death in Villa Park in February 2006.

Village President Joyce Stupegia began their President's Committee on Public Safety, April 2006.

Family and friends (Tiffany Davis has been especially noteworthy) have been raising funds.

They are paying for fencing and a memorial.

The memorial is for Kristin and others who have lost their lives.

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## **Media Activity**

NBC Dateline...Full Length Piece

Bill Kurtis – “Danger on the Tracks” – (1995) Cable T.V.

Interviews on radio, television, newspapers.

We have not sought media attention.

We are sought for our advice and information.

College and high school radio programs.

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## **The Dave Franson story:**

High School principal at Lyons Township High School  
in LaGrange, IL

His commitment, after joining our organization, has  
helped to make his school and his community safer.

Intertrack fencing near his school

Public service announcements (PSA's)

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## **Four Quadrant Gates**



## **Railroad Safety Summit - 2008:**

We would like our conference to answer the question, “How do we make the Chicago metropolitan area a closed corridor for passage of railroad trains?” This would involve extensive use of four quad gates, closure of some existing crossings, video cams, barriers, etc.

When we look at the safety record of four quadrant gates in Illinois, there have been no deaths or crashes. Between Chicago and St. Louis, there are currently 69 four quad gate systems in high-speed areas and 11 in Chicago for a total of 80.

It would be interesting and enlightening to study the closed corridor systems implemented by other U.S. states and in other countries.

Sweden implemented a closed corridor between Oslo and Stockholm. They have had much success and this would be a good system for us to study.

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## **Railroad Crossing Safety Summits**

1996 ~ Prevent Tragedy on the Tracks

1998 ~ Today's Successes... Tomorrow's Challenges

2000 ~ Countdown to Zero in the New Millennium

2002 ~ High Speed Rail: Overcoming the Barriers

2004 ~ The Chicago Connection

2006 ~ Teaming Up For Pedestrian Safety

2008 ~ A Closed Corridor Railroad System in Chicago

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*[www.drsc.org](http://www.drsc.org)*