

## Train Wreck Mars January Chicagoland Lionel Railroad Club Open House

(Note – No humans or real trains were involved. We're just having a bit of fun although this really happened.)



Reporter, Photography, and Eye Witness – Casey Joenes

At 12:27 PM on Saturday 01/21/2017 at the Chicagoland Lionel Railroad Clubs monthly Open House, a steam locomotive rammed into a BNSF (Burlington Northern Santa Fe) train that was heading southbound. Somehow the steam locomotive was on the same track as the BNSF. The road name of the steam locomotive is being held at this time pending the investigation. The Regional CLRC National Transportation and Safety Board met on Sunday, 01/22/2017, to determine what happened. However, at this time is it unclear if it was a mechanical malfunction or engineer error.

The RCLRC NTSB plans to publish their findings at the end of the month. One thing is for sure is that the Regional CLRC NTSB will want to interview Casey Joenes (CLRC Member, reporter, and photographer) who witnessed this accident from the mezzanine at the CLRC Clubhouse. From his eye in the sky, Casey Joenes said he yelled that the two trains were on the same track but there was too much noise for the engineers to hear and not enough time to take corrective action. Per Casey Joenes what he saw was horrific. He saw the steam locomotive slam into the rear of the BNSF. At the point of impact Casey saw the last five cars of the BNSF fall unto the ground. Yardmaster Dave retrieved the cars. One of the tanker cars was severely damaged as the truck assembly (the wheels) were no longer attached to the frame. Fortunately the tanker was empty and there was no explosion. Below are a series of pictures of the scene.



Despite the wreck, it was a beautiful day outside with temperatures in the low 60s that brought many visitors to the Clubhouse. If anyone had cabin fever when they walked in, they were cured when they left.

Following are pictures of some of our patrons that attended the open house.



**Member Don and his Grandsons Kellen and Kasson**



**Bob, with Grand Children Kayla, Mya, and Joey**



**L. J. Lee and Grandson James**



**The LaBoy Family**



**The DeJong Family**

Once again, the CLRC Members went all out to make the visitors welcome. It was the last chance to see the clubhouse still decorated for Christmas. Many of the visitors were thankful that the club left the decorations up for an additional month as they couldn't make to the December Open Houses.

Story and Pictures by Joseph Smolinski