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Press Release

September 3, 2019

LIRR

IMMEDIATE

MTA and Labor Officials Commend Employees Who Found \$9,000 In Cash Left on LIRR Train

Long Island Rail Road President Phillip Eng, SMART Union General Chairman Anthony Simon and Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen General Chairman Kevin Sexton joined together at Atlantic Terminal, Brooklyn, to commend LIRR train crew members who returned \$9,000 to a very grateful customer last Thursday, Aug. 29.

"This is emblematic of the diligence and concern for our customers that employees exhibit every day," President Eng said. "In this case, they saved a customer from potentially days or weeks of anxiety through the quick action and smart handling of lost property."

On Thursday, Aug. 29, at around 6:35 p.m., LIRR Conductor Jerry Savino spotted a file-folder style suitcase in the overhead rack of a car on train #765, the 6:20 p.m. departure from Hempstead, due into Atlantic Terminal at 7:10 p.m. The LIRR believes the case had been left on the train set's prior run, train #764, the 5:19 p.m. departure from Atlantic Terminal, due into Hempstead at Hempstead at 6:08 p.m.

The case contained a wallet, tax documents, checkbooks, and \$9,000 in cash that appeared to be business proceeds.

"I was worried about securing the money and needed to make sure the owner got all his belongings," Savino said. "After I went through the suitcase; I saw the wallet, a checkbook, important documents, along with an envelope. The envelope had a dollar sign on it. When I read the label that said \$9,000, I knew the owner would want me to take good care of it."

Savino and his fellow crew members reported what they had found to supervision, who asked that they bring the item to Jamaica on the train's next eastbound run. Supervisors met the train crew at Jamaica at 7:40 p.m. They brought the case to the MTA Police's Jamaica district office, where they handed it to MTA Police Officer Thomas Garland.

Per normal procedure, Garland used the contents of the case to identify its owner. Garland reached the customer on the phone within minutes. The customer confirmed he had left the property on a train and was desperately trying to locate it. He gave an extremely detailed description of the property. At 9:36 p.m., the owner arrived at the Jamaica office and retrieved the property, and he departed ten minutes later.

SMART Union General Chairman Anthony Simon said: "The Conductor and Crew that stepped up and safeguarded an extremely valuable lost item which included a significant amount of cash exemplifies what our crews do on a daily basis. I can assure our riders that each and every day our employees are taking measures to provide for the safety of our customers as well as their personal belongings. It is nice to see that in this case a customer and the Agency are taking a step to acknowledge the integrity and dedication of one example of what our front-line workforce does each and every day."

Kevin Sexton, General Chairman of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, said: "We are glad that the individual who lost his bag was able to get it back. Although remarkable, the actions of the locomotive engineer and train crew are not surprising. LIRR employees go above and beyond their duties on a daily basis and this is another example of that."

Though Savino found the bag on a westbound Hempstead Branch train, he believes that the customer had left the bag on the previous run of that train set. "The bag was on the rack and was actually not closed all the way. There were other customers on the train. We checked and it didn't belong to any of them. I took it and brought it to a secure location on the train and then it didn't leave my sight. I thought If that was my money, that is how I would want someone to handle it," Savino said.

"We find dozens of items every day," Savino added. "We always return them to the lost and found department. But we never hear back from the customers. In this case, I know it got back to the customer's hands. I am sure the customer who lost the money really needs it and I am glad our crew was able to give it back to him. We really care about our customers and we put a lot of dedication into our job. It was not only me; it was the entire crew who followed the procedure and went beyond it to help find the owner."

The Long Island Rail Road's Lost & Found takes in about 16,000 items per year and returns about 53% of the items. Customers who believe they may have left an item on board a train are urged to file a report by visiting this link: <https://new.mta.info/lost-and-found/long-island-rail-road>