



The PLS GAZETTE

A newsletter of the Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.

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The Wheel Count

Dear Friends:

In this issue of the Gazette, I wish to bring up two current items under discussion.

Safety Assessment Document- Mark Cahill has done an exemplary job of crafting a Safety Assessment review to gain a sense of the level of awareness our membership has with regards to the safe operation and awareness during run events. This assessment will be made available on the club web site. This is a completely volunteer and anonymous quiz that I encourage all members to participate in. Only through a majority participation can we better identify the level of safety awareness within our membership.

Tie Replacement Project

The second issue involves the ongoing discussion of tie replacement for the 1.5" track. The primary objective is to address the diminishing labor force needed to maintain the track standards by considering replacement of wood ties with plastic tie that require less long-term maintenance.

As we all know, membership attending to maintenance is an ongoing struggle and will continue to be so. We need to either invest in longer lasting materials or expect track standards to diminish unless a new dedicated, experienced 1.5' track gang is identified. In short, embrace better materials or provide more labor.

We have three options of tie to consider, assuming we replace the ties of the entire 1.5" mainline of 3,200 feet (the yard can be addressed in other ways such as existing materials). Let's review the pro and cons of each product. To illustrate the costs let us use a simplified list of assumptions that are slightly different from the membership meeting of 11.18.23.

Track panels = 40 ties per 10' panel
10 panels per block (400 ties)
320 track panels = 3,200 feet of mainline. (12,800 ties)

Option 1 – **Wood** – In ground 2 x 4 lumber.

\$1 per tie +
\$40 per panel
\$400 per block
\$12,800 for mainline
Advantage - inexpensive - easy to work with.
Disadvantage will require physical labor and follow up maintenance for the foreseeable future.

Option 2 - **Accu-Tie system**

\$1.87 per tie (in bulk includes SS screw)
\$75 (\$74.80) per 10' panel
\$750 per block
\$24,000 for mainline

Advantage – Tie would have an integrated tie plate and screw assembly. Track panels can be assembled extremely quickly – about 15 min per track panel. This tie is, however, only cost-effective if we buy it in large bulks. It is used throughout the hobby with no complaints in performance.

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**PLS Membership
Renewals for 2024
Now Due**

PLS renewal notices have been sent and are due by the end of December. Please complete the form in its entirety and return it with your payment in the envelope provided. Membership cards will be sent in early February to all those who renew. If you have not received your renewal notice, please email:

secretary@palivesteamers.org

Also, please consider completing the "ASSUMPTION OF THE RISK, RELEASE OF LIABILITY, AND INDEMNIFICATIONS" form for all family and guests. This will eliminate their having to do so at the gate each time they visit.

Questions on completing this form may be directed to: secretary@palivesteamers.org

PLS Tentative Events 2024

Wed, January 17 Board of Directors (Zoom) Meeting - 7:30 PM

Wed, February 14 Board of Directors (Zoom) Meeting - 7:30 PM

Sat, March 16 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM
Annual Elections

Sat, April 20 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM
SPRING CLEAN-UP in AM
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM

Sun, April 28 Run Day - 9:00 AM
BOILER TESTING
Rain Date May 5

**Donation
Acknowledgements**

PLS wishes to thank the following for donations received since Sept: Nikolaus Kwaznjuk, Vincent D'Amico, Mayland Crosson, Jim Stapleton, and Douglas List in honor of Bill and Ruth Morewood.

**Club Membership
News**

PLS welcomes new Associate Members Thomas A. Brady, Jr and Nicholas Pautler.



Membership Gauge

As of November 30, 2023 PLS has:

- 102 Regular Members**
- 152 Associate Members**
- 3 Honorary Members**

**Pertinent Dates
for the 2024 Election**

The 2024 election of all officers and 3 non-officer directors will take place at the Annual Business Meeting on March 16, 2024. Pete Brown and Jim Gotlewski have volunteered to be this year's Nominating Committee. They will contact all eligible members. Regular Members who attended at least half of the membership meetings in 2023 are eligible to be nominated for election to a seat on the Board and to any office except President, which requires prior service of at least one term as an officer or non-officer director. Nominations close on January 16, 2024 with final slate of nominees to be posted in the clubhouse by February 15, 2024. Absentee ballots must be requested by March 1, 2024.

Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.

President	Pat Murphy	2439 Overlook Drive, Gilbertsville, PA 19525	president@palivesteamers.org
Secretary	Mark Cahill	22 Tice Lane, Perkasio, PA 18944	mark.cahill@verizon.net
Treasurer	Robert Morris	3034 Black Swift Road, Norristown, PA 19403	rmorris1171@verizon.net
Gazette Editor	Lawrence Moss	815 Maplewood Drive, Harleysville, PA 19438	LarryMoss@outlook.com

Board of Directors

Steve Mallon, mallonmusic@gmail.com - Term Expires 3/25	Paul Rice, ricepaul@verizon.net - Term Expires 3/25
Ross Magee, mrrmagww@gmail.com - Term Expires 3/24	Peter Brown, peteprivate@yahoo.com - Term Expires 3/25
Paul Miller, pava77@comcast.net - Term Expires 3/24	Jim Salmons, jjjshay6@gmail.com - Term Expires 3/24

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Disadvantage - It will require that Accu-Tie produce a proprietary die made to accept PLS rail. It will also require us to replace all of the Buddy "L" rail with "PLS" rail from existing inventory. This purchase requires a minimum commitment of \$16,830 (9,000 ties) for die cost offset. Can be paid for on an as-used basis (so I understand from the manufacturer).

Option 3 – **Plastic 2 x 4** (currently being used)
\$4 per tie
\$160 per 10' panel
\$1600 per block
\$51,200 for mainline

Advantage - Solid material currently being used. This is a high-quality product that should provide many years of maintenance free service. Can be cut to length and used on turnouts.

Disadvantage – Expensive!

Whatever option is chosen, the facts remain the same; we must fashion a plan to begin the fund-raising next year. Please consider contributing to this project by the end of this year for a charitable donation. You can indicate your preferred project in the memo.

The Board of Directors will need to recommend a choice of product in the new year. Consider purchasing a track panel or even a block when the choice is made.

Lastly, I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New 2024!
Hope to see some of you at the January 1st gathering.

Pat Murphy
PLS President



Ron Henderson

Dear Friends,

Ron Henderson peacefully left us on Sunday, November 26th. He is a beloved husband, father, Pop Pop, and friend. Anyone who knew Ron knew how proud he was of his family, his loving wife and best friend Roberta, doting daughters Marjorie and Jennifer, and his adoring grandchildren. Ron's family is his greatest pride and joy, and we are the luckiest people in the world that we got to have him.

Moments of profound sadness are accompanied by the overwhelming feeling of love for Ron, and how lucky we all are to know him. It is a blessing to have someone so wonderful in our lives to grieve for. Ron had such passion for learning and tinkering, and truly loved the community and friendships he found at both NJLS and PLS. He always looked forward to what he could help work on next to improve the club, and took a lot of pride in what he was able to help build for everyone to enjoy. As many of you know, Ron had a playful zest for life and loved a joke, good or bad.

Our family thanks you all for your loving friendship and support over the many years, and especially in the recent months. We find so much comfort in our memories with him, and please know that you all are part of many of those memories.

The Henderson Family



2023 Gauge 1 Turkey Trot



Ross Magee Photo



Ross Magee Photo



Mike Moore Photo



Mike Moore Photo



Ross Magee Photo

Great weather and a good turnout made for an excellent day for a last run of the Gauge 1 trains for 2023.

PLS Calendar of Events for 2024

January

Saturday Jan. 20 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM

February

Saturday Feb. 17 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM

March

Saturday Mar. 16 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM

Annual Meeting - 12:30 PM

Annual Elections

April

Saturday Apr. 20 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM

SPRING CLEAN-UP in AM

Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM

Sunday Apr. 28

BOILER TESTING

Run Day - Members & Guests -
(Rain Date May 5)

May

Saturday May 18 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM

Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM

Friday May 24 **SPRING MEET** - Members & Guests

Saturday May 25 **SPRING MEET** - Members & Guests

Sunday May 26 **SPRING MEET** - Members & Guests

June

Jun. 1 **Perkiomen Community Day**
Run Day - Township Residents

Saturday Jun. 15 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM

Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM

Sunday Jun. 23 Run Day - Members & Guests
(Rain Date June 30)

July

Saturday Jul. 20 **Annual PLS Picnic - 12:00 Noon**
(Train rides will be available from Noon
until 3 PM)
(Picnic Rain Date Sunday July 21)

July (continued)

Sunday Jul. 28 Run Day - Members & Guests
(Rain Date August 4)

Note:

No meetings in July

August

Saturday Aug. 17 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM

Sunday Aug. 25 Run Day - Members & Guests
(No Rain Date)

Friday Aug. 30 **FALL MEET** - Members & Guests

Saturday Aug. 31 **FALL MEET** - Members & Guests

September

Sunday Sept. 1 **FALL MEET** - Members & Guests

Friday Sept. 21 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM

Saturday Sept. 22 Run Day - Members & Guests
(Rain Date September 29)

October

Saturday Oct. 19 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM
FALL CLEAN-UP in AM
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM Sunday

Sunday Oct. 27 Run Day - Members & Guests
(Rain Date November 3)

November

Saturday Nov. 16 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM

Friday Nov. 29 Turkey Trot Run - Gauge 1 only
(Rides not available)

December

Saturday Dec. 14 Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM

***Note:** Rides may not be available at afternoon/evening run days following membership meetings due to possible limited participation by equipment owners. All members and their guests are welcome to attend with the understanding that rides are not guaranteed at these events.



The PLS GAZETTE

P.O. Box 26202
Collegeville, PA 19426-0202

FIRST CLASS

PLS Club Train Engineer/Conductor Qualifying Pilot Program

In 2023, the PLS Club Train Engineer/Conductor Qualifying Pilot Program was created to establish a roster of members qualified to either operate (engineer) or conduct (conductor) the club train.

During the 2023 season, 16 members applied to the program with 6 members being promoted to club train engineer. These 6 graduates helped operate the club train at every 2023 scheduled event. As a result, the program achieved its goal of keeping the club train in continuous service throughout each run day.

The Board of Directors intends to continue the program into 2024 in the hope of recruiting additional engineers and conductors.

This program is open to ALL PLS members (regular and associate) age 21 or older.

A study guide containing the PLS operating rules, railroad territory, signal system and club locomotive will be made available to prospective engineer/conductor “students”. All students will be required to pass a written exam based on the study guide. Engineer students will also be required to pass a check ride on the club locomotive.

Qualified students will be added to a roster of qualified engineers/conductors. During the season, qualified engineers/conductors will be called to operate the club train during scheduled events.

Interested members may contact Secretary Mark Cahill for more information (secretary@palivesteamers.org).