



# The PLS GAZETTE

September - October 2016

**A newsletter of the Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.**

**SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER TOPICS:** Green Signals Ahead **1** Fall Meet Thank You **2**  
Membership News **2** Membership Gauge **2** Donations **2** Upcoming Events **2**  
Membership Renewals **3** Do You Remember **4**

## Green Signals Ahead

**S**ummer is over and it sure was a HOT one! It is also fair to say it slowed down some of our project work at PLS. Now as we enter the fall months we are hopeful that we can once again work outside before it gets too cold and the ground freezes making it difficult to do any needed track maintenance or repair. The PLS Project List still has a good number of active projects that needs our attention, but that's not to say we didn't accomplish anything this past season. Here are some highlights of items we either completed or made good progress on: The Core Wall Restack – Bruce Saylor lead this project and with the help of a number of PLS members; Bob Hillenbrand, Henry Blanco White, Frank Webb, Jim Salmons and others we were able to complete the first and most critical section of the wall and stop the ballast (stone) from running away from the 7 ¼ inch gauge track just west of the trestle entrance. The importance of this project was to keep the 7 ¼ inch track from shifting out of alignment both horizontally and vertically. One more project that was completed under the lead of Paul Quirk was the repair of the Club House (Bldg. 1) roof. With the help of Bob Hillenbrand, rotten purlins were replaced, the metal roof reattached and the rain gutters realigned. Another project that was completed was the removal of a very large tree stump in the 4 ¾ inch gauge yard area. For years tree roots had been pushing the 4 ¾ inch gauge track out of alignment. Bruce Saylor rented a stump grinder and with some hard work ground the stump below grade. This not only allowed the track to be reset vertical-

ly, but made room for some new track as well. The 4 ¾ inch track work was led by Jim Miller with the help of Ron Shupard who made up new track sections to replace 10 foot section with rotted wooden rail ties. Another project lead, by Ron Henderson, that was completed was the addition of a dwarf signal that shows the occupancy of the 4 ¾ inch gauge siding on the north side of the railroad just past the top of the eastern tunnel. This new signal alerts a train operator that the siding is occupied. This was an important project because the train operator that may want to enter the siding cannot see around the curve in the track and through the view blocking trees and bushes to see if another train has already occupied the siding. The new signal will prevent an operator from switching to the siding and possibly blocking the mainline track if there is no room for another train to fit behind a train that is already in the siding. The result would be having to back out of the siding to clear the switch to continue on the mainline track. If for no other reason this new signal makes operating on this part of the railroad much safer as backing around a curve on the mainline with limited visibility is difficult. A very large project led by Lee Nonnemacher that took place over two seasons and was completed this year with the installation of a new curved dual gauge replacement switch that connects Building 3 and the 7 ¼ and 4 ¾ inch gauge track to the northwest side of the yard. The old switch which had been in the ground for many years was worn out with rotted ties and in need of updating and replacement. In addition to the listed projects we had the normal issues of repair. We had a fair number of work days dedicated to compressor maintenance and

repair, thank you Ken Evasew, as well as repair to underground airline leaks that needed to be found dug up and repaired. We have to thank George Cooper for digging up most of the leaky pipe in 98 degree plus weather. Jim Salmons and Bob Hillenbrand worked in the turntable area and added a new 7 ¼ inch track along with fixing interference between the turntable and the bays that was most likely caused by frost heave or tree roots. Don't forget the signal system that also needed a fair amount of maintenance to keep it up and running correctly. And by all means don't forget about all of the unexpected glitches that takes man power too. This brings us to our current project list as it stands today.

1. Core wall restack – Status: Critical portion completed. More work is needed west of the trestle entrance on core blocks that have shifted and need to be restacked. Skills: Able to pick up 25 lb. cores and restack. Lead: Frank Webb
2. Railroad Tie Curbing – Status: Not started. Lead TBD
3. Porch Extension – Status: Started, Variance approved, Building Permit issued. Looking for concrete contractor to dig post footings and complete concrete slab before freezing temperatures arrive.
4. 7 ¼ inch Yard to mainline to yard-merge in front of 7 ¼ inch station – Status: Started
5. 4 ¾" Switches at Brown Box – Status: Started, Completion ~ 40%. Switch work to insulate and/or jumper around switches and some electrical work remains. Lead: Ron Shupard – Frank Webb

(Continued on page 3)

## Fall Meet Thank You!

Despite an uncertain weather forecast, the weekend was perfect for our Fall Meet. Thanks to volunteers who manned the gate, staffed the kitchen, provided the Pot Luck, and more, visitors enjoyed their time at PLS.

Once again, Rich Poletto and Gayle Keir worked many hours before, during, and after the Meet. PLS is deeply grateful for all their efforts. We also wish to acknowledge the support of Redner's Market and the Philly Soft Pretzel Factory.

Among others who helped with set up, take down, kitchen staffing, and/or donated baked goods were: Rose Ann Wagner, Walt Mensch, Bob Morris, Hank Riley, Joe Gotlewski, Bruce Saylor, Paul Rice, Ross Magee, Delaney Wagner, Hollye Wagner, Cathy Barker, Jenn Reinhold, Dawn Kendter, Pat Heller, Gita Talmage, Pete Brown, Barb Moore, George Cooper, Sue Webb, Mike Moore, Mary Magee, Carl Miller, Roy Nelson, Becky Runge, Bruce Barrett, Carol Quirk, Cindy Smelser, Terry Weinstein, Fran Shirey, Lee Nonnemacher, Ed Faller, and Dave Laird.

Macaroni salad and pickled eggs made by Mary and Bruce Saylor and baked beans made by Barry Shapin continue to be crowd favorites.

Sincere thanks also to Jay Shupard for organizing the Saturday night Pot Luck. Jay, his family, Joe Gotlewski, and others, provided another dinner enjoyed by many.

*Kathy Parris*  
Kitchen Coordinator

## Upcoming Events

Saturday, Oct. 15	Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM <b>Fall Clean Up in AM</b> Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM Afternoon/Evening Run*
Sunday, Oct. 23	<b>Run Day - Members and Guests</b> (Rain Date October 30)
Saturday, Nov. 12	Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM
Friday, Nov. 25	<b>Turkey Trot Run - Gauge 1 only</b> (rides not available)
Saturday, Dec. 17	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.

## Club Membership News

PLS welcomes new Associate Members Donald Way Jr, Robert Weltyk, Kevin Fleisher, Robert Winkel, Horace Reinford III, Joseph Hancher, Alexander Petersen, and Christopher Langill. Horace Reinford, Jr. has applied for Regular membership.



## Donation Acknowledgements

PLS wishes to thank Doug Eddy for his donation of a laser level. It is a newer model, with additional features, than the laser level donated several years ago by Doug's father, Don Eddy.

## Membership Gauge

As of September 30, 2016 PLS has:

**105 Regular Members**

**204 Associate Members**

**7 Honorary Members**

## Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.

<b>President</b>	Frank Webb	77 Roundwood Circle, Collegeville, PA 19426	president@palivesteamers.org
<b>Secretary</b>	Lee Nonnemacher	1474 North Wales Road, Blue Bell, PA 19422	lee_n@msn.com
<b>Treasurer</b>	Robert Morris	3034 Black Swift Road, Norristown, PA 19403	rmorris1171@verizon.net
<b>Gazette Editor</b>	Lawrence Moss	815 Maplewood Drive, Harleysville, PA 19438	LarryMoss@outlook.com
<b>Board of Directors:</b>	Peter Brown, peteprivate@yahoo.com; Robert Freer, W3YLT@juno.com; Bruce Saylor, bgsberk@comcast.net; Bob Hillenbrand, RDH7917@comcast.net; Larry Moss, l.moss256@gmail.com; Paul Rice, ricepaul@verizon.net		

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6. Backhoe Lean-to east side of Bldg. 3  
Status: Not Started, Lead: Paul Quirk
7. Caboose paint restoration – Lead TBD
8. Move Flag Pole – Status: Project underway, Lead George Cooper

The question now is what needs to be completed before we get into the freeze of winter. We have two project that should take priority; The Porch Extension and the Railroad Tie Curbing (Originally part of the Core Wall project).

The Porch Extension is now a time sensitive project since the building permit was issued. As a minimum we must have the 6 footing holes that must be dug and inspected before the first week of January or our Building Permit will run out! We have several options for having these holes dug. Dig them ourselves with rented equipment, 12 inches in diameter and a minimum of 36 inches below grade. Hire the footing dug or hire a concrete contractor to dig the holes and pour footings. If we are going to hire a concrete contractor we will most likely have them do the slab too. We can rent a machine to dig the holes, but it takes some skill and members willing to run the equipment. It would be nice if one of our members has a friend or associate that could do this work for us, if any member can help with this work please let us know. However, before any holes can be dug the locations of each hole must be accurately located on the ground. We have work to do to keep this project moving forward!

Railroad Tie Curbing. This project is part of the south side project that included the Core Wall and the existing railroad tie curbing to the west of the trestle and core wall. Several old ties are rotted away and need to be replaced. Several new ties need to be added to extend the curbing towards the trestle. We have the ties, we have the shovels, and we have the stone all we need are the people power to get the job done! If we do not take care of this area of the track the ballast stone that supports the track will continue to run away causing the track to sag and go out of alignment. A stump that was in the way of placing the new ties in place was removed earlier this summer by

Henry Blanco White. Now that the weather has cooled down it is time to complete this track repair. Hopefully this project will be led by Bruce Saylor.

As I look at the Regular Membership of PLS I am both surprised and disappointed because what I see are those that take and those that give. I look at members like Paul Rice that has a demanding full time job and yet takes his time to shows up on our scheduled work days to pick up his tools and go about the business of track repair. For the past several years Paul has replaced thousands and thousands of old failing track nails with new stainless steel track screws on thousands of feet of aging PLS mainline track. No one told Paul to do this work, but as a PLS member that runs his equipment on the rails at PLS he knows how important it is to keep our (his) track in good operating order. On the other hand I look at Regular Members that only show up on run days or after a run day has ended to take full advantage of the many hours of work our dedicated members have put in to keep the railroad in the excellent condition that all members both Associate and Regular as well as our guests have come to expect. I ask all Regular Members to take a look in the mirror and ask yourself, are you a taker or giver? If your answer makes you feel a bit guilty maybe you should consider giving back a little of your time to help keep PLS a place we can all continue to be proud of. Paul is just one of 25 – 30 very dedicated members that understands that we can only have the excellent railroad we do by putting in the work that it takes to keep the property and the railroad in good running order. If you are part of the 70 - 75 Regular Members that have forgotten what it takes to keep the railroad running I ask that you please come out and give us a hand with the project that the BOD or you the Regular Membership have approved.

I know the closing of my message above may seem harsh, if you find it that way than I have gotten my point across. What I failed to tell you that this was a difficult year at PLS as a number of our very active members have had health issues keeping them away from the work at PLS they truly love. With a reduced work force and the

hot weather we were not able to accomplish as much as they would have liked. Even the mowing of our grass was not up to its normal standard of looking perfect for much of the year. Please don't forget PLS is your railroad and nothing happens unless you come out to make it happen.

*Frank Webb*

President



## 1.5 Scale Wheels for Sale

Eight 1.5" scale machined cast iron train wheels, for your next 7.x project. These have a fluted back and are machined to IBLS wheel standards with 4" tire diameter and a 5/8" center hole for a press fit. Asking price is \$175.00 for all eight. Free delivery to PLS Run Day on October 23.



**Please contact Sean Skelonis**

by text message only at 484-280-3130  
or by email at [ssmachine7@hotmail.com](mailto:ssmachine7@hotmail.com)

## Upcoming Membership Renewals - Please Pre-register Family Members

Membership renewals for 2017 will be sent in early December. Included with the renewal material, as in past years, will be a copy of the "ASSUMPTION OF THE RISK, RELEASE OF LIABILITY, AND INDEMNIFICATION" form. **If you have family members who may want to attend run days**, we encourage you to have this form completed and return it with your renewal. If you do so, a **guest card** will be sent to you along with your membership card. That card will allow family members to enter without having to sign in at the gate when they visit. It will also help to reduce paperwork for PLS volunteers.





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## FIRST CLASS



## DO YOU REMEMBER



**Remember this?** It was the original sign for the new Rahns location and was mounted on a telephone pole on Gravel Pike near the driveway entrance to the club. Circa 1970