



The PLS GAZETTE

A newsletter of the Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.

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Green Signals Ahead

Please take a few minutes to read this Gazette article as it has an **IMPORTANT MESSAGE** to all

Regular PLS members and may be of interest to our Associate Membership.

I am sorry to have to report that during the month of June and July PLS had a number of trespassings, attempted break-ins and three break-ins in three of our Buildings. Building 1, Building 6 and Building 8, where all entered resulting in damage or loss of property in excess of \$1000.00. In two instances the State Police were called resulting in written incident reports. Here is a list of the loss and damage that was caused:

1. The door on Building S, our lawnmower shed, had the door handle and lock broken off. It did not appear that anyone entered into the building. Nothing was taken. We replaced the lock and had the new lock keyed to our Regular Members keys.
2. One riding lawnmower with our stone/dirt cart was taken out from our covered storage between Building S and Building 2. The cart was left at the top of the hill by Building 2 and the mower was left under the covered area next outside the shop doors of Building 1. There was no damage.
3. Building 1 – Clubhouse was entered and left open, nothing was taken and we are not sure how entrance was made. The Building was found open on the next work day.

4. Building 1 – Clubhouse was entered on the south side by pushing in the window air-conditioner into the building and entering through the window opening. The air-conditioner knocked our printer-copier off the bookshelf and it was damaged beyond repair. Two of four hand held radios were taken. Why only two radios were taken we do not know or understand as all four were sitting side by side. A key ring was taken from the computer desk. This required we replace the Key/Lock on our soda machine. Nothing was taken from the soda machine. A new key had to be handmade to replace the key to a shop storage cabinet next to the milling machine. Our welding hood was taken. The air conditioner was neatly placed in the corner of the meeting room. Although the air conditioner hit the floor hard, damage was only to the plastic surround and once reinstalled was found to be in working order.



Photo 1

5. Building 6 and Building 8 - On the evening of July 19th, 2018 these two building had the doors forced open. Building 8, the 4 ¾” car storage building had the

rollup door pushed in and forced open about a foot high, see photo 1. The door was knocked off its tracks causing damage to the roller brackets. The door would not move any farther up or down. Although one car was trapped under the door no equipment was damaged and no equipment was removed. PLS members did some repair and closed the door until the overhead door repair from Collegeville came to fix the door and return it to service. Building 6 had two doors on the east end forced open. See Photo 2. Two pieces of equipment, a speeder and a flat car, were hand carried from the building and placed on the track facing east against the normal direction of 7 ¼” equipment flow. The only damage was an electrical charging cord was broken off the speeder



Photo 2

6. Gnome Crushed - one of our Gnomes was crushed on the 7 ¼” track next to Building 8. See Photo 3 This was just a pure act of meanness and served no purpose other than to show disdain for PLS.

(Continued on page 3)

Donation Acknowledgements

PLS wishes to thank the following for donations received during June and July: Jerusalem Lutheran Day Care, North Penn "S" Gauge Club, and Hubert Becker.

2018 Fall Meet

As we prepare for our 2018 Fall Meet, it is again time to remind all members, Regular and Associate, that we depend on you to help the weekend run smoothly. Our need for volunteers to perform gate duty and/or staff the kitchen/snack areas seems to be more difficult to fill each season. So please sign up when you arrive on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday of Labor Day Weekend. Thank you.

Also, PLS donations of baked goods for our snack area, either home made or store bought, **are greatly needed.**

REMINDER: During the meet, the clubhouse refrigerators are used for food and drinks sold by PLS throughout the weekend. Should you need refrigeration for either personal use or items brought for the potluck dinner, please use your own cooler.

Club Membership News

PLS welcomes new Associate Members Herbert Blake, Adam Matza, Hubert Becker, James Gainor, David Klotz, Joseph Matthews, and Alex Sluzas. Daniel Siegele, Charlie Radford, Mark Cahill, and Matthew Langbein have applied for Regular membership.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, August 18	Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM Afternoon/Evening Run*
Sunday, August 26	Run Day - Members & Guests (No Rain Date)
Friday, Aug. 31	Fall Meet - Members & Guests
Saturday, Sept. 1	Fall Meet - Members & Guests Pot Luck Dinner at 5:30 PM
Sunday, Sept. 2	Fall Meet - Members & Guests
Saturday, Sept. 15	Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM Afternoon/Evening Run*
Sunday, Sept. 23	Run Day - Members & Guests (Rain Date 9/30)
Saturday, Oct. 13	Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM FALL CLEAN-UP in AM Afternoon/Evening Run*
Sunday, Oct. 21	Run Day - Members & Guests (Rain Date 10/28)

*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.

Membership Gauge

As of July 31, 2018 PLS has:

112 Regular Members

182 Associate Members

6 Honorary Members



Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.

President	Frank Webb	77 Roundwood Circle, Collegeville, PA 19426	president@palivesteamers.org
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Photo 3

After the first break-in of Building 1 Pete Brown installed surveillance cameras that have a continuous recording to a cloud account. In reviewing the camera footage for the evening of the July 19th break-in we can see one of our members that arrived to work on the signal system that afternoon. We can also see three young men that were on the property around 8:30 PM. They were nice enough to give us a good look at their faces as they walked past the camera on their way towards Building 8. We forwarded two video segments and close-up photos of the faces of the three trespassers to the State Police who are now looking at persons of interest.

We are lucky, no one was injured and although we have had a monetary loss the damage could have been much greater. We have been on our Perkiomen property for 48 years and throughout those years we have had little in the way of vandalism, damage or loss of property, but within the past six week period we had much, much more intrusion/damage than that occurring in 48 years. We have taken and will take more steps to improve our security, but you the members must do your part too. During the summer months we sometimes become lax in keeping the property "Locked Up". Examples: The chains on Mercer Bridge and the Trestle are often left open. The chains are there to keep unauthorized rail equipment, bicycles, skateboarders and snowmobiles off these great PLS assets. The transfer tables at Building 3 and the Turntable have been left unlocked. Even the turntable itself has been left

unlocked. Although rare, Building 2 has been found open. The cage to the compressor room has been found open and even bays in Building 3 have been found open. Building 1 has had one or both locks left open and power to the outbuildings, track and steaming bays has not been properly turned off. **It is the last person on the properties responsibility to make sure all is secure.** You must make a walk around and make sure that the property is secure. It is easy at the end of the day for the last few persons to be standing around talking when one walks away, than another and before you know it someone is left to close up our property. We get it right most of the time, but most of the time isn't good enough. Example: Because the chains were down on July 19th the speeder had access to the entire railroad. This could have resulted in someone being injured or the speeder could have sustained greater damage than just a ripped off electrical cord. If the turntable were to be left unlock this would allow equipment to be transferred to the loading and unloading track. The outcome could be the loss of member's equipment. This is why we lock the transfer tables and the turntable.

If you do not know or are unsure of how to close up the property please see one of the Board Members, the Secretary, Treasure or Me the President, and we will give you a lesson in what is to be done. I only ask that you be courteous and not wait until the last minute to ask for our help. And please remember, the front gate needs to be pulled closed by the last members leaving the property. It is easy to park on the PECO side and forget the gate needs to be rolled closed. Don't forget to check the gate.

PLS is looking at ways we can beef up security on the property and strengthen the doors on our buildings. This may require the use of bars across doors new hardware and more hasps and padlocks we are working on it. We are also looking at adding addi-

tional security cameras to help us keep an eye on more of our property. I recommend that if you are a train operating member at PLS that you come to the next several Membership Meetings to find out what steps are being taken to better protect our property. Changes, additions or lock changes are possible and you don't want to drive to PLS only to find that you cannot gain access to the property. I also suggest that if you come on an off day you have your PLS membership card with you as the State Police are keeping a closer eye on our property and have our permission to enter as needed.

It is our property and it is our responsibility to keep it secure. Yes, it can be a little uncomfortable to walk to Mercer Bridge and the Trestle on a hot afternoon to put the chains up, and yes, it takes a few minutes to check the turntable and transfer tables and to walk by the compressor cage, Building 2 and Building S to be sure the doors are locked. And please don't forget Building 1, the clubhouse. The "GREEN" water valve needs to be closed and turnoff the power to the pump, Building 2, Building 3 and the water heater if on. Look up at the Light Board over the clubhouse door. Are all the lights off? (Summer months). In the winter the light for the heater is to remain on and the thermostat is to be set at 50 degrees F. Switching off the power requires several circuit breakers to be turned off. **This DOES NOT MEAN ALL THE BREAKERS** as we do not want to turn off our security, or refrigerators. Remember.... If you don't know what to do **ASK**. And don't forget the front gate! One last item, if you see something, say something. If someone is on our property that does not belong on our property ask them there business with PLS and if they have none ask them to leave.

See you on the mainline,
Frank Webb, President



WESTWARD HO!

E-Mail from Arizona

by Bob Thomas

An e-mail recently received from Bob Blackson had the subject line: "Joe Fego carries the 1-inch flag west." It included an attachment for the May edition of the *Sahuaro Central Newsletter* with an illustrated article, "1-inch scale comes to Adobe Mountain," describing a new 4¾ gauge track being constructed by Joe Fego. Joe is a former member of PLS and was employed by the Strasburg Rail Road when he lived in nearby Quarryville. When time permitted, Joe ran his handsome 1" scale Atlantic (built by Ed Woodings) at Rahns. He moved to Phoenix a few years ago and joined the Maricopa Live Steamers, who

operate an elaborate 7½" gauge railroad in a public park. The club is exclusively 1½" scale so Joe, with nowhere to run his Atlantic, obtained permission from his new club to construct a 4¾" track at his own expense. His e-mails below tell how he is expending enormous effort (and no little money) in going about that monumental task.

June 11, 2018:

Hi Bob, It is great to hear from you. It is nice to hear from old friends from back east, I miss the great conversations we used to have. I began constructing the one-inch track last year. The club really did not want it. I told them that I would put up the money and construct and maintain it myself. Finally, they agreed with the plan of the railroad

which I had drawn up. After struggling for about six months making track panels and grading I began to put down track. I met a guy who became a member who was also is into one-inch trains; he is from upstate New York. He began helping build track and put it down, and things began to move along at a good pace.

When we get the first stage completed, we will have about 1500 feet of main line to run on. I have already buried conduits for water, air, and electric to the location of the steaming bays. The steaming bays are being welded up during break time of laying track, giving my back a rest. I am planning to have the main line connected and steaming bays in by October. I have to form up the transfer table pad for concrete, 10' by 38', area for unloading. Construction now at this time of the year will slow down due to the hot weather. I get at the club about 6am and work till about 11am when the temps begin to reach 103 plus. It is the best time to lay track in the hot sun, the track has expanded, and leaves a small joint the rail has room to grow in.

The club has jigs to place the ties in to build the panels. I constructed the one-inch the same as I build the panels for the inch and half, except the gauge is moved in to four and three quarters. I use two by fours on end and inch-high rail, same as the inch and half. The rail is screwed down with #10 by inch screws. Two hundred screws per panel. All the screw holes are drilled before the ties are sent out to be pressure treated. The panels are 20' long, making them a little heavy. All my curves were rolled to the radius I needed on the railroad, starting at 50' up to 100'. I pull-up the outside rail a half a bubble on the level making a smooth ride. I built the rail bender in my shop - the club does not have one. They have a jig which is adjustable, so when placing the rail down you bend it as you tie it down. It is ok, but when you take it out of the jig it tries to straighten out,



Joe Fego with his Atlantic at PLS, June 2012

the rail. We have to cover up the ties with ballast to protect them from the sun, if you don't they will dry up and crack apart in three years. What they call ballast out here, looks like brown dirt with fine stone in it. The ballast is shoveled onto the track, then it is smoothed out and the track is leveled and tamped, more ballast placed, smoothed out and watered down. The water soaks in and hardens the ballast like concrete, giving a great hold down for the track. After tamping for four hours a day and four days a week, my arms were getting sore. Well here goes another project! I designed and built a ballast tamper to help out, it works great and my arms feel better.

Take care,
Joe Fego



Joe sporting an Arizona Tan takes a short break from track laying*

August 9, 2018:

Hi Bob,

I have six twenty-foot panels to install and the loop will be connected. I am hoping to get some of them installed this week, it is going to be cooler, 104 degrees instead of 115 degrees. I am beginning to get a little help on laying out the transfer pad. When it comes time to pour the pad, we have the truck pour the concrete, then we have a Mexican guy who comes to do all the finish work and he does not charge much. Have to go I will be in touch with you.

Take care,
Joe Fego

*Photo courtesy the *Sahuarid Central Newsletter*, June 2018, Don Bauer, Editor



One-Inch Scale Bobber Caboose

Mr. E. Fred Brecher, of Ardmore, PA, has offered to donate to PLS the four-wheel bobber caboose, shown in the accompanying photos, to be used as a club fund raiser. It will come with two wheel/axle sets and all details to complete the project, except for axle journal boxes, which will need to be fabricated. Mr. Brecher began building his caboose in the early 1960's but the project has sat idle since 1967. Former PLS member Harold Geissel was the impetus for this project and he provided Mr. Brecher with the wheel sets.



PLS will accept offers for this caboose and expect it to go to the highest reasonable offer, received by noon on Sunday of the Fall Meet, on September 2. It will be available for inspection at the meet.

Anyone interested e-mail: secretary@palivesteamers.org.



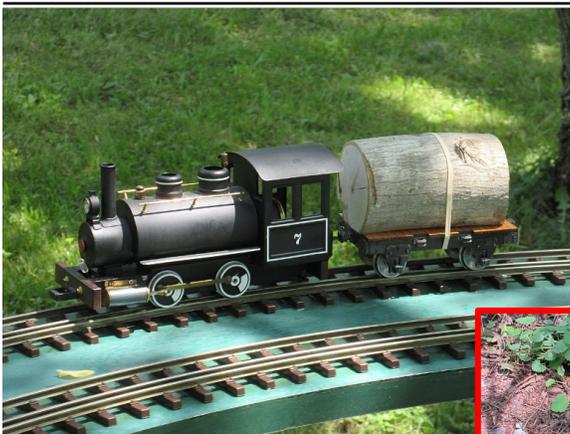
Annual Gathering of North American Members of the Association of 16mm Narrow Gauge Modellers

by Rob Kuhlman

The Association of 16mm Narrow Gauge Modellers, which began in the U.K. over 40 years ago, is a group of (mostly) live steamers who model narrow gauge railways to a nominal scale of 16mm to the foot. At this scale, 0 gauge track (32mm) scales to 2' narrow gauge, and gauge 1 track (45mm) scales to 3' narrow gauge; we often use the shorthand SM32 and



Two gauge 1 British narrow gauge locomotives visiting from Michigan



Generic Baldwin narrow gauge tank locomotive visiting from New Hampshire

SM45, respectively, to represent the modeling of these two distinct narrow gauge prototype domains. Of the over 4000 worldwide members of the 'Association' the vast majority reside in the U.K.; fewer than 100 live in North America. Last year, as the 'Association' celebrated its 40th anni-



O gauge representation of a workers' train on the 2' Ffestiniog Rwy in Wales

versary, several of us decided to have a multi-day Annual Gathering steamup of North American members which we held in Columbus, Ohio. The Board of Directors of PLS were kind enough to approve my request to host our Second Annual Gathering over a portion of the Spring Meet.

For the Friday and Saturday of the Memorial Day weekend, we used the recently-completed rebuilt gauge 1 double track main line and supplemented it with two portable railways generously loaned



Snapping Turtle spent all day Friday laying eggs near the narrow gauge steamers

by Mike Moore. These portable railways are both dual gauge, so SM32 trains had plenty of opportunity to run alongside of their SM45 cousins. The weather both days was perfect, so good that on Saturday an uninvited guest stopped by – a large snapping turtle who decided to lay her eggs on the embankment of the multi-gauge railway alongside Mike's track. On the Sunday and Monday of the weekend we ran trains on my home railway near Pottstown.

Participants in the Annual Gathering came from well beyond the Mid-Atlantic states; we had folks from New England, the Midwest, the Northwest, Canada, and even one registrant who flew in from Australia. The variety of locomotives which they brought was quite diverse, representing the work of model lo-



O gauge model of a British narrow gauge loco built for the Bowater Paper Company mills in Kent

comotive builders over the last 40 years. Many locos were whimsical, but many represented prototypes of locos which ran on either narrow gauge 'common carrier' lines or in industrial settings around the globe.

Most of the registrants for the event had never visited PLS before. All weekend long I heard compliments regarding what a fine facility PLS has and how lucky I was to be a member and to live so close by. We extend our appreciation to all the members of PLS for being such fine hosts for our event.



O gauge coal-fired narrow gauge plantation loco visiting from Canada passes in front of Bruce Saylor on his 1-1/2 inch scale C&O 4-6-2 Pacific

PLS Library

Recently the club decided to sell the video tapes stored in the Caboose. This is due to the temperature conditions in the Caboose and the age of the tapes. Sales began during the Spring Meet and will continue during the Fall Meet. There are a variety of tapes including some that were individually recorded. Check out the selection.



For information contact:

Joe Gotlewski, Librarian
joegotlewski@gmail.com

Join the PLS 75th Anniversary Committee



2021

Proposals are already underway. Get on board and join the fun.

Contact Larry Moss at LarryMoss@outlook.com



The PLS GAZETTE

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FIRST CLASS



Still Need Your Help

Filling our staffing needs during Spring and Fall Meets continues to be a challenge. PLEASE consider volunteering. Just one hour of your time will allow the PLS kitchen to function smoothly.

The kitchen will be open until 3 pm on Saturday and 1 pm on Sunday. Below is a sample of activities where help is needed:

1. Friday 9 am 1 or 2 people, set up, etc.
2. Saturday 9 am – 10 am 1 person kitchen prep
3. Saturday 11 am – Noon 2 people serving & 1 cashier
4. Saturday Noon – 1 pm 3 people serving & 1 cashier
5. Saturday 1 pm – 2 pm 3 people serving & 1 cashier
6. Saturday 2 pm – 3 pm 3 people serving & 1 cashier
7. Saturday 3 pm – 4 pm 2 people clean up
8. Sunday 9 am – 10 am 1 person kitchen prep
9. Sunday 11 am – Noon 2 people serving & 1 cashier
10. Sunday Noon – 1 pm 3 people serving & 1 cashier
11. Sunday 1 pm – 2 pm 2 people clean up/tear down



Please contact Kathy Parris via email at parrisk415@gmail.com with any questions and to indicate your availability for volunteering.