



September– October 2024

THE PLS GAZETTE

A newsletter of the Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.

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The Wheel Report

Dear Friends:

This evening, as I was pondering what to discuss in this issue of the gazette, I happen across a briefcase found in a closet in our house, that I used during my first term as president back in 2008. In addition to a splendid congratulatory note of my election from Bob Thomas, I began to review the past meeting minutes and reflect upon all of those persons involved with the club since that time, who are no longer with us. I found it interesting to note the similar topics discussed then as now- how to manage the building projects with diminishing members.

This gives me pause as I now reflect on my final five months of presidency (and pending, semi-retirement), to ask where has the time gone?! Each and every one of us come to the club for purpose. To spend time accomplishing maintenance projects, to forget about life's time, and to have fun. Hopefully when any of us get together at the club, we do so sharing a common experience that enforces a newfound appreciation of each other, even in times when there is great social division.

I want to extend my sincerest thanks to many of you who have responded with donations towards the roof project as well as the several other projects underway.

Today I began to personally consider the club steam locomotive (did you all forget that we have one) after a member expressed interest in seeing this forgotten project be resurrected.

Once again please give generously to any number of projects that are underway (Building 3 roof and tie replacement) under consideration by the Board of Directors. You can be specific in the memo section. And to everyone I say Thank You, for your continued support of the Pennsylvania Live Steamers.

Patrick J Murphy
President PLS, Inc.

PLS - Repairs



The Roof on Building 3 was removed and replaced on October 14, 2024. Photo shows the old roof removed and the plywood is prepared to receive the new roof.

2024 PLS Upcoming Events

- Sat, Oct 26 **Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM**
FALL CLEAN UP in AM
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM
- Sun, Oct 27 **Run Day - Members and Guests - 9:00**
Rain Date Nov 3
- Sat, Nov 16 **Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM**
Membership Meeting - 12:30 PM
- Fri, Nov 29 **Turkey Trot – Gauge 1 only**
- Sat, Dec 14 **Board of Directors Meeting - 9:30 AM**

Club Membership News

PLS welcomes new Associate members: Whit Yost, Stephen Martino, Umdehav Salapu, Lawrence Colletta, Robert Lemmo, Karl Meck, Edward Lloyd, and Geoff Littlefield. New Regular applicants include: Gabriel Miranda, Nathan Heffner, and David Strouse, who is upgrading from Associate membership.

Membership Gauge

As of October 16, 2024

- 94** Regular Members
- 11** Probationary Members
- 151** Associate Members
- 2** Honorary Members



Donation Acknowledgements

PLS wishes to thank the following for donations received by October 16: Bob Blackson, Fred Daddi, Vincent D'Amico III, Barry Shapin, George Fitzgerald, Nikolaus Kwasnjuk, Jack Evans, Nathan Heffner, Erich Boldt Sr, John Forsythe and Paul Miller.



Pennsylvania Live Steamers, Inc.

President	Pat Murphy	of Gilbertsville, PA	president@palivesteamers.org
Secretary	Paul Miller	of West Chester, PA	secretary@palivesteamers.org
Treasurer	Mark Cahill	of Perkasio, PA	treasurer@palivesteamers.org
Gazette Editor	TBD - Paul Miller (Interim)		

Board of Directors

- | | |
|---|---|
| Steve Mallon, mallonmusic@gmail.com - Term Expires 3/25, Events | Paul Rice, ricepaul@verizon.net - Term Expires 3/25 |
| John Forsythe, john@tcsdcc.com - Term Expires 3/26 | Peter Brown, peteprivate@yahoo.com - Term Expires 3/25, Buildings |
| Bonny Mallon, quiltnewlady@yahoo.com - Term Expires 3/26 | Fred Daddi, F_Daddi@yahoo.com - Term Expires 3/26 |

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PLS Club Train Engineer/Conductor Qualifying Program

The PLS Club Train Engineer/Conductor Qualifying Program was created in 2023 to establish a roster of members qualified to either operate (engineer) or conduct (conductor) the club train. The primary goal of the program is to have a sufficient number of engineers and conductors available to operate the club train on run days and special events. A secondary goal of the program is for Associate Members who lack the privilege of operating their own equipment to have the opportunity to experience the fun of being an engineer while simultaneously providing a valuable service to PLS. To date, the program has promoted 7 engineers. Our most recent graduate is Dave Strouse. Congratulations Dave! This program remains 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 Treasurer Mark Cahill for more information (treasurer@palivesteamers.org).

Upcoming Membership Renewal

Please Pre-register Family Members

Membership renewals for 2025 will be sent in late November. 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. Also, a credit/debit card may be used "*in person*" for payment of dues and donations. There is a 3% fee added to dues only (no fee for donations). The membership renewal and waiver of liability forms must still be completed and returned to PLS (forms can be accepted at the time of "in person" payment).

Building 3 Roof Update

I am pleased to say building three roof replacement is finished and it was a job well done.

JMS roofing confirmed it was good timing to get it done now. There were two damaged plywood sheets from water leakage that were replaced. He said, "Better to catch that now before small problems turn into big problems."

The board made a good decision to get this job done now. The contractor has been fully paid.

I was present in the morning to inspect the job and the materials and all the important prep and underlayment before the shingles were laid. The contractor did everything as he promised and there were no shortcuts. He used snow and ice shields on all edges and valleys and along the ridge vent. He used the proper underlayment before applying the shingles. He properly made the roof vents with all the right materials.

John Forsythe

Just another Run Day at PLS



Number 5 asked a few friends if they wanted to enjoy a day out and a ride. Actually it's John Kelly MD who invited some colleagues out to enjoy his hobby.



Workdays at PLS

Workdays are every Wednesday and Saturday typically 9 AM to Noon. Work includes Track, Grounds and Buildings.



The starting point at Mercer Bridge

Project Remove & Replace Phase 1 is now completed. The R&R Project stabilizes the Track in place with Plastic Ties. Phase 1 was the 1.5" Main going south from Mercer Bridge to a point just past the next Signal Bridge (208 feet). The process has been getting better as the project moved on. One of the main things found was to only remove the Ballast to bottom of the existing Wood Ties. Also, it was found to only do about 5 or 6 Ties at one time. This helped to preserve the existing grade and not to change the existing Track geometry. After each short section was completed, it was hand tamped. Then we would bring out the PLS Work Train and complete the tamping with the Air Tool Tamper. To finish off the process fine Ballast would be inserted, and the gauge sweep clean with brooms.



South going from Mercer Bridge



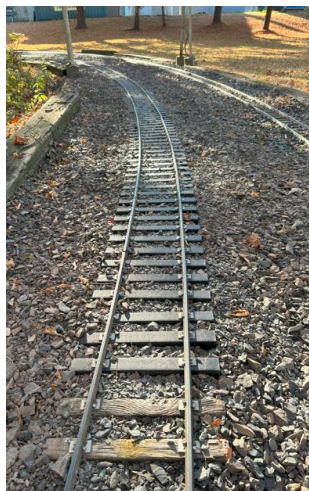
Just past Mercer Bridge



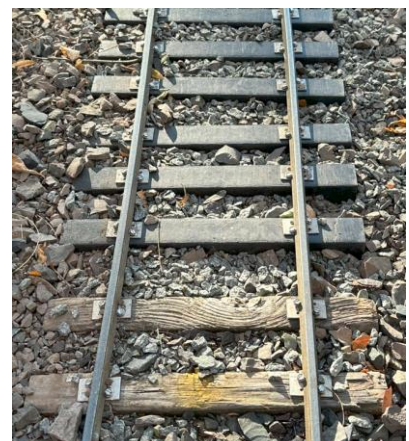
At the Washout location



The other side of the Washout



Just past the Signal Bridge



End of Phase 1

Workdays at PLS



As time went on the process kept getting better. At first most of the work was done kneeling on Pads. That was hard on the knees and moving the Pads around took a little extra time. We tried sitting on a stool, but you still had to stop to move it periodically. We even tried mounting a 2 x 6 Wood block on top of an old Arch Bar Truck. That kind of worked but you needed to get your balance, so you did not fall over.



I came up with the idea of a MOW Cart with the top the same size of the large kneeling pad. Top is just 2 pieces of 0.75" Plywood glued together (16" X 22"). The 2 Trucks made from 3 pieces of 0.75", 3.25" wide Poplar. The Journal Boxes are a piece of 1.75" thick Poplar. The Axels are LSS (Live Stem Station) Universal and the Wheels LSS 33" steel. I used heavy duty 12 MM sealed Bearings, that are pressed into the Poplar Journal Boxes. I built 2 of the MOW Carts and donated them to the Club. They are painted the Reading Yellow and are lettered PLS 03 MOW and PLS 04 MOW.

Paul Miller



Tip: when viewing the PLS Gazette electronically you can Zoom In and Out to see the Images in better detail.

Stuff Happens @ PLS



Photo 1



Photo 2

Wednesday October 2, 2024, I was pulling the PLS Work Train from Bldg. 9 to go around to the Ballast bins to reload for the R&R Project. Much to my surprise the Main was partly blocked (Photo 1). As I started clearing the Main I noticed what caused the debris. An old dead Tree on the County property dropped a very large branch. It fell on one of our Pine Trees and they both landed on the Tracks (Photo 2). I then retrieved our 36" Bow Saw and began cutting up the larger pieces. By then Terry came over and helped clear the Tracks so we could assess any possible damage.

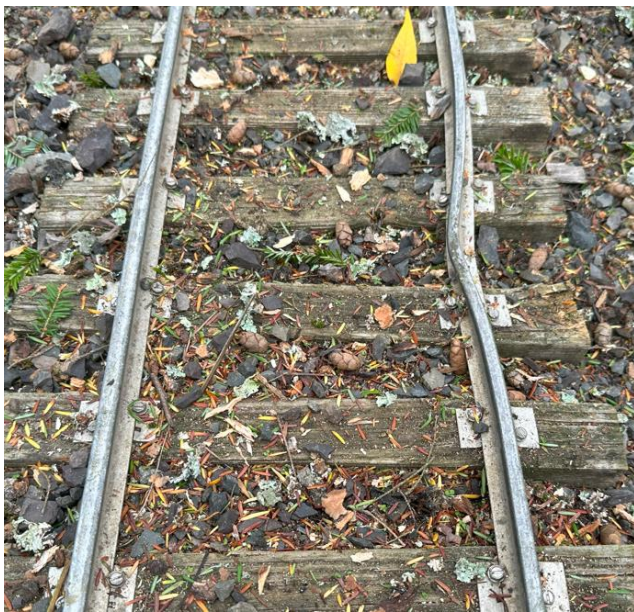


Photo 3



Photo 4

Photo 3 shows the 7.25" Main took the worst hit bending the North Rail. Photo 4 shows the North diverging rail of the 4.75" Turnout was also bent. The Wednesday Crew then fixed both bends in place. The 7.25" Main also required the alignment and regrading on Saturday to return the Mains to service. It was very nice to see how well we can deal with issues as they happen.

Thanks to all that helped get the Railroad back to fully operational.

Paul Miller



The PLS GAZETTE

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FIRST CLASS



Our first Turnout rebuilt on Plastic Ties in place. We created a cut list for the long ties and bundled them by size. We then removed the ballast along each side to help with Tie removal. Then we started at the Throw Bar Ties and worked towards the Frog. We only removed 2 or 3 Wood Ties at a time and replaced them with the Plastic Ties.