

Ridge Live Steamers

January 2012

CALENDAR

Ridge Regular Run Day And Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting	Saturday	January 28, 2012
West Toccoi and Bostwick	Friday – Sunday	February 3 – 5, 2012
Big Boots and Western	Monday – Sunday	February 6 – 12, 2012
Central Pasco and Gulf	Friday – Wednesday	February 10 – 15, 2012
Largo Central	Thursday – Saturday	February 16 – 18, 2012
Manatee Central	Sunday – Wednesday	February 19 – 22, 2012
Ridge Live Steamers Winter Meet And Board of Directors Meeting, if necessary, Saturday	Thursday – Sunday	February 23 – 26, 2012
FLS Banquet at Dundee Civic Center	Saturday, 6:00 PM	February 25, 2012
West Toccoi and Bostwick Open House	Sunday – Tuesday	February 26 – 28, 2012
Sebring Systems	Friday – Sunday	March 9 – 1, 2012

Signals on the Ridge With the completion of the main line, a long-time dream has finalized with the installation of the last signal block. (Some of us really do dream about signals, usually in the form of nightmares when a wire is crossed and a two-day trouble shooting session is in store.) This means that now the signal system is on 24 hours per day so that work trains and fun trains can run in any direction at any time. The signals are powered by batteries recharged by solar cells.

We use a very SIMPLE system consisting of a capture button and a release button operated by the engineer. Looking at a green signal before entering a block, the engineer LIGHTLY taps the capture button, turning both ends of the block red, thus blocking oncoming trains. After proceeding through the block, the engineer LIGHTLY taps the release button, turning the signals at both ends of the block green for the next trains. The buttons are covered by soda bottles to weatherproof them and so that wasp nests can be seen. Just LIGHTLY tap the soda bottle to activate the signal.

A new feature is an electric turnout throw at Summit. The steep hill at Summit (called Farmer's Hill due to the furrows made by engineers' heels who have ignored the warning to have the train under control before proceeding) is now a CUTOFF that goes directly to Coachwhip Cut. When the signal button for Coachwhip is LIGHTLY tapped, the turnout automatically moves to the Cutoff route. When the train passes the turnout, it automatically returns to the normal mainline route. Trains following the trains taking the Cutoff route should wait behind the yellow tie or the turnout will not return to normal. Jim Reid donated the switch machine to RLS.

Future plans include a circuit designed and built by Stephen Marshall, which forces trains to alternate through blocks.

Due to the heavy traffic during the February Meet, the signal system will probably be turned off during the day and possibly turned on at night depending on decisions by meet officials.

Please come to the track and try out the signal system. It is very simple and easy to understand.

Completion of the Main Line Extension, Saturday, December 31 2011.

The project to complete our Main Line has been slightly over a 4-year project. A Bequest by Leon W. Johnson, Jr. has allowed us to finish this expansion. The Bridge has been named after him.

Bill Hays and John Bortz with other helpers have built the track panels and finished joining the track.



Here they are installing the final rail joiners



Tom Pfister installs the last screw; Richard Dobler in background



Bill Hays and John Bortz apply ballast with our new ballast car.



John Tribble installs track support. Behind Bill Hays runs power tamper.



Tim Meyer Engineer in charge of the Expansion rides Richard Dobler's Speeder over the completed track.

So when you next visit Ridge Live Steamers you will be able to ride the completed loop.

Pictures by Tom Pfister
Submitted Harold Dunsford, President

The completion of the Mainline Expansion occurred on Sat Dec 31, 2011.

So this year was not a complete bust. Thanks to the Legacy provided by Leon Johnson we have finished this mainline expansion without having to ask the membership for capital improvement funds. Unfortunately cost over runs have occurred in order to complete the bridge, provide the expanded metal and build the 9 additional steel bridges needed to complete the project. As this letter is being written additional steel has been purchased to add supports to the 4 20 footbridges used to reach the

ground level track. These extra expenses have produced a \$7000 cost overrun. This will be our first deficit if we cannot raise additional funds. So this letter is an appeal to the membership to make a tax-deductible donation to Ridge Live Steamers to help us with this major capital improvement. All donations will be gratefully received. I have personally donated \$200.00 toward this capital improvement fund. I hope all of you will donate what ever you can.
Sincerely, Harold Dunsford, President

Second Annual New Year's Day Picnic a Success. The day was picnic perfect and word had traveled about the gathering. The potluck offerings included salads, vegetables, beans, meat dishes, and desserts and nobody went away hungry. The tender beef sandwiches Harvey and I served met with lots of compliments. After the meal, people stayed around and many visited for the whole afternoon, playing board games, talking, riding the trains, and thoroughly enjoying themselves. It was reported that there were between 37-43 attendees. See you next year, same time, same place. -Judy Ulch (Ed. Note. A great big "Thank You" to Harvey and Judy for a day filled with good friendship and a great time.)

Steaming Bays Get Facelift. Thanks to Tony Mazurek, on one of his stopovers before the Winter Meet, the sideboards of the steaming bays got a new coat of paint. It really brightens up the steaming bay area. Thanks Tony.

Sitting Pretty. Thanks to Jim Reid, with help from Harvey Ulch and Rich Dobler, for installing new "Senior" height and water efficient toilets in the three toilet areas. This is an upgrade that has been needed for quite a while. Hopefully the reduced water consumption will help keeping the toilets in operation during the Winter Meet.

Bowen Branch Gazebo. Thanks to Jim Burby, Jim Reid and Pat McCarthy, the Gazebo at Bowen Branch received a major makeover. Jim purchased a gas powered pressure washer and completely cleaned the gazebo, getting rid of the dirt and mildew that has accumulated over the past four years. Jim Burby has stripped the old deteriorating screening repaired loose boards and installed brand new screening. Members and guests have used the gazebo as a place to relax and enjoy the view of the layout and surrounding area

General Membership Meetings will be held the fourth Saturday of each month, unless otherwise noted. They will be held at the pavilion after lunch. This is to satisfy the Requirements of Article 1, Section 4 of the Ridge Live Steamers By-Laws.

Board of Director Meetings will be held on run days in January, April, July and October. This is to satisfy the Requirements of Article II, Section 3, Paragraph (1) of the Ridge Live Steamers By-Laws. By direction of the President additional Board of Director meetings will be held right after lunch on run days during the intervening months, if necessary.

Emporium: The Emporium will be fully stocked for the February Meet. All shirts will be available in all sizes. RLS logo hats and striped engineer hats will also be available. Purchase yours early before your size is sold out.

Switch Yard Sale: Back by popular demand, the SWS will be under the big top. The “Terms and Conditions” printed below apply only to the SWS. They do not apply to independent vendors. If you have items to sell, and do not wish to adhere to the T&C, you may set up your own table to display your items away from the SWS.

Switch Yard Sale

Terms and Conditions

1. Items brought for sale on consignment should be railroad or hobby related.
2. The Yard Sale manager has the right to refuse to accept any donated or consignment item for any reason.
3. If you bring an item to sell on consignment, 10% of the selling price or \$1.00 (whichever is greater) will be retained by RLS as commission.
4. You may donate an item for sale. 100% of the sale price goes to RLS.
5. You must establish a suggested selling price for any donated or consignment items. You may indicate a minimum selling price for consignment items.
6. Any consignment items not sold must be picked up by the consignor as soon as possible at the end of the meet. RLS will not be responsible for items remaining beyond the close of the meet.
7. Consignment items may not be brought to the club prior to the day before the first day of the meet.

Electronic Distribution. In light of the current budget deficit, electronic distribution has become more important. Any communication electronically helps the budget. It also provides a faster way to get special announcements out to the members. Help the Treasurer and the Secretary/Editor to save money, and time. If you do not already get the newsletter, and more recently the 2010 Membership List, via e-mail, please e-mail me at allenpn@tampabay.rr.com with your e-mail address. Please be sure to add me to your mailbox so that I won't be blocked. Please be assured that only RLS mail will be sent to you and it will be as a “blind copy” to prevent anyone else gaining access to your computer.

