

# Ridge Lines

## Voice of the Ridge Live Steamers

March 2013

Dundee, Florida

### CALENDAR

RLS Work Day	Saturday	March 30, 2013
RLS Work Day	Saturday	April 6, 2013
RLS Work Day	Saturday	April 13, 2013
Manatee Central RR Spring Meet	Friday – Sunday	April 12 – 14, 2013
RLS Work Day	Saturday	April 20, 2013
RLS Run Day	Saturday	April 27, 2013
And the April Quarterly BOD Meeting		
RLS Work Day	Saturday	May 4, 2013
RLS Work Day	Saturday	May 11, 2013
RLS Work Day	Saturday	May 18, 2013
RLS Regular Run Day	Saturday	May 25, 2013
And BOD Meeting if necessary		
Manatee Central Memorial Day Meet	Sunday – Monday	May 25 – 27, 2013

**The Winter Meet Wrap-up.** The weather was perfect. The track ran well and everyone had a great time. 361 people signed in at the Registration Desk, I am sure there may have been others that did not. It is the opinion of several that this was the largest crowd of people that we have had for a Winter Meet. Foster Bond's annual equipment count is as follows: 32 Steam engines, 26 Coal, 6 Propane; 60 large Diesel engines, 28 Gas or Gas/Hydraulic, 32 Electric; 48 other types, Rail Bus, Rail Trucks, Trolleys, etc. for a total of 130 pieces of motive power; 48 Caboose; 241 Passenger and Freight cars. Over 140 people feasted at the Friday Pot Luck Supper. Dana Bliss recorded 3 tent campers, 3 dry campers and 41 water/electric campers for a total of 47 campers. The banquet on Saturday was enjoyed by more than 150 people. Members from Ridge fared well in the door prize drawings. Among the other winners were Mike Richards, Gwen Leslie and Sarah Ernst each winning a flat car donated by the Big Boots and Western track. Most importantly, THANK YOU to all folks that worked so hard to make this meet a success.

**The Spring Meet Wrap-up.** The weather was almost perfect, a little less wind would have made it perfect. The Spring Meet in contrast to the Winter Meet is time for the Ridge Live Steamers to play. The Winter Meet as hosts for the Florida Live Steamers Winter Meet is a working meet. At any given time there were 10 to 12 trains running bi-directionally. The mood was relaxed. The Pot Luck Dinner on Saturday fed 36 happy people. If anyone who went away hungry it was their own fault.

**Newsletter of the  
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**Newsletter  
Ridge Lines**

Editor/Publisher: Allen Newcomb

Submissions: *Ridge Lines* welcomes articles, news items, digital photos, and other contributions. Please contact the Editor.

**Membership**

Anyone interested in joining the Ridge Live Steamers should contact the Secretary.

**Electronic Distribution.** Help the Treasurer and the Secretary/Editor to save money, and time. If you do not already get the newsletter e-mail, please e-mail me at [allenpn@tampabay.rr.com](mailto: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.

**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.

**Where Have All of the Flagmen Gone?**

When I started in this hobby some couple of centuries ago, flagging moves on the main and/or congested areas was common and expected. Now when I see a train about to back up and I say "I'll flag for you," I usually get a look of bewilderment or even a "What do you mean?" response. Even searching on the internet does not get much in the way of a list of duties for flagmen since that job has long disappeared from the prototype railroad.

Today on our 7 1/2" railroads we see lots of short trains consisting of a small engine and an operator's car with the engineer being the only train crew and we are used to just zipping around making forward moves in blind areas or backing moves anywhere at any time. Many of us are older, stiffer, and less likely to turn around far enough to adequately view what is coming behind us, making the use of a flagman even more important.

What does flagging mean? In non-prototype terms, it simply means have someone walk in front of or behind trains

making moves on the mainline or in congested or view restricted areas of the track. The flagman should be in such a position to communicate with the engineer of the train making the move and with any oncoming traffic simultaneously. The flagman does not even need a flag, although red and green flags are sold at the Emporium at the Ridge Club during meets. The flagman can check turnout alignments so that repeated moves will not result in splitting switches, etc. The flagman also protects any oncoming traffic from obstructions on the main line. Remember what happened to Casey Jones.

Our steam engineers are their own firemen and there are lots of times when heads are directed toward the firebox and not at possible obstructions on the track. Running a steam engine in our hobby is a very busy job, so any safety help we can give to the engine drivers and to the overall operation at the tracks is beneficial to all. In addition to all of this, we now have radio controlled trains with engineers sitting further back on the longer trains which further reduces their view of track obstructions.

The nice problem we now have in Florida is that there are lots of great tracks and the meets are full of traffic on the railroads. Let's get back into the safety mode and think "FLAGGING."

(This article is by Richard Dobler and also submitted to the TRAINLINE for publication.)

# President's Page

**Presidential Ponderings:** A new administration, new ideas, a “new” newsletter.

Thank you for your tremendous support during my campaign for the presidency of RLS. It was a landslide victory. I won all one vote. That's what happens when you are unopposed. When several friends (non RLS members) learned of my election, they congratulated me. I was quick to inform them that in lieu of congratulations, condolences are in order. The leadership of any group is often a thankless position. I know, I've been there. The same people who say they don't care how you do it “up north” also may say that just because two people do things differently doesn't mean one is right and one is wrong. I'll be the first to admit that I make many mistakes. The first meetings were clear examples of that (I left out some agenda items in each meeting). So please give me a chance to grow into this position, to adapt my ways to your ways and vice versa. Remember, nothing is constant but change. Your support and cooperation are appreciated. Thank you all – **Bruce M. Rauch**, President

**“New” Newsletter?:** I wanted to give our newsletter a more consistent form and provide more information in each issue. To start, we have a name for the newsletter – “*Ridge Lines*”. I don't know if it will make it into this issue or not but, there will be a list of officers and directors of the corporation, their terms in office, and their contact information. That way, when you get really mad, you'll have a lot of people to yell at. I'd also like to try, with Allen's help, to get the *Ridge Lines* out monthly, if possible. I'm going to give myself a deadline to get articles to Allen by the Saturday following our monthly meeting. I suggest others do the same.

**Git 'er dun:** I have been talking about forming various committees to be responsible for various jobs around the property. Don't think of these committees as onerous tasks. The idea is to get the job done consistently and in a timely manner. Each committee will have a chairperson. The prime responsibility of that person will be to communicate. If you have a problem, talk to the chairperson responsible for that area. The chair will know who to contact to get the job done, if he/she doesn't do it himself. The chair may also bring the problem to the attention of the board. This whole concept is just for the membership to know who to contact and to get the jobs done.

**MegaMart to take over Emporium:** The Emporium isn't quite big enough to merge with one of the “big box” stores but, it does serve a function and a need. After being told it couldn't be done, I started the RLS Emporium at the 2007 Winter Meet. It almost didn't get done as that first year I set up in an “Easyup” tent next to the pavilion and was almost blown away. Moving to the current location inside the pavilion made for a more stable (literally) and more productive store. Having operated the store for seven years, I feel it is time to retire and let someone else breathe new life into it. I'm looking for someone willing to completely take over full operation of the Emporium, from purchasing to sales. If no one wants to continue the store, we'll sell out the existing stock and slowly fade away.

**Another new tradition?:** The Christmas night-run was so successful I'd like to try another special event. How about a 4<sup>th</sup> of July picnic? The details would need to be worked out but it would go something like this: Come to the track anytime during the day. Run your trains, play games, etc. Late afternoon we would have a picnic pot-luck. We may be able to provide hot dogs and hamburgers, rolls and condiments. Attendees should bring summertime salads, chips and dips, deserts, etc. Stay until after dark. From the gazebo at the summit you can see fireworks in the distance all around you. There should be NO fireworks at RLS. Shall we do it?