

Ridge Lines

Voice of the Ridge Live Steamers

September 2014

Dundee, Florida

CALENDAR

RLS Work Day	Saturday	September 20, 2014
RLS Run Day	Saturday	September 27, 2014
Ridge Model Railroad Club Cookout	Saturday - Noon	October 4, 2014
Northeast Florida Live Steamers Fall Meet	Thursday-Sunday	October 9 -15, 2014
RLS Work Day	Saturday	October 11, 2014
Scheduled Board of Directors Meeting		
Big Boots & Western Fall Meet	Monday-Sunday	October 13-19, 2014
RLS Work Day	Saturday	October 18, 2014
Ridge Fall Meet	Friday – Sunday	October 24 – 26, 2014
and General Membership Meeting	Saturday	
RLS Work Day	Saturday	November 1, 2014
Central Pasco & Gulf Fall Meet	Sunday-Thursday	November 1-6, 2014
Manatee Central Fall Meet	Friday – Sunday	November 7-9, 2014
FLS Board Meeting at Manatee	Saturday	November 8, 2014
RLS Work Day	Saturday	November 8, 2014
RLS Work Day	Saturday	November 15, 2014
Scheduled Board of Directors Meeting		
RLS Run Day	Saturday	November 22, 2014
Thanksgiving	Thursday	November 27, 2014
RLS Work Day	Saturday	November 29, 2014
Sebring Systems	Thursday-Sunday	December 4-6, 2014
3rd Annual Christmas Run	Saturday	December 13, 2014
Card Order Session	Saturday	January 3, 2015
Card Order Session	Saturday	January 17, 2015
Ridge Winter Meet	Thursday – Sunday	February 26-March 1, 2015

Parking Lot Power Progress, a/k/a Campground. Over the years upgrading the electricity in the “Parking Lot” had gone back and forth until successes with the water and septic systems have allowed thought to resume with the electrical system for the winter RV’ers by upgrading to a 30 amp system. At a recent Board of Directors meeting it was decided, “If we are going to do it, let’s do it right.” An additional benefit to the separation of “Parking Lot” power from the rest of the property is a safety issue. With additional storage barns being built and a major storage barn for the organization proposed, removing the “Parking Lot” from the rest of the electrical system is of major safety concern. As a result Duke Energy was contacted about an upgrade to the system and the cost of bringing in power directly from the road. Charlie Piantieri, with help from Dave Funk, electrician turned letter carrier, was contacted about the material, and cost, of upgrading to a 400amp 3-phase system allowing a choice of 50-30-20-amps to the middle 20 parking spaces, and a choice of 30-20-amps to the fence line parking spaces. The result is an estimated cost of just under \$20,000.00. In the past, several RV’ers had indicated a willingness to donate to the project. So far things were working well, pledges of approximately \$8,000.00 had been received. Although the Board has neither approved nor rejected the proposed upgrade, a suggested \$5,000.00 commitment from RLS and a few more pledges would make the project possible. Duke Energy informed us that the cost of installation would not be the previously projected cost of \$3,200.00 but would be the cost of \$5,000.00. Only time will tell if we can get enough pledges to make the upgrade possible.

NALACA Believe it or not, there are still a couple of areas on the Ridge Lines track that are still under development. One of them is the southeast corner and the 8% “goat slide” grade leading down to the pine trees that Tim Meyer has been laying track for the turpentine town of NALACA. Tim had been talking about the southeast corner for several years and he had envisioned a steep grade to the pine trees that could be used by geared locomotives, double headed engines, or doubling of the hill. When cooler weather gets here, Tim will be at work again to finish the track work to the town of NALACA. The 8% grade is pretty exciting both going down and getting back up. We have learned to “make a run” with the electric engines in order to minimize the current it takes to make it back up the grade. One fairly large electric loco with a seven-car train pulled 90 amps making a standing start at the bottom of the grade and then pulled 50 amps by making a run.

Following is an article by Doug Carman that details the history of NALACA:
“Avon Park Air Force Range – Before cattle and citrus took over the area’s economy, turpentine and lumber literally created and dismantled a string of towns.

Here at the Avon Park Air Force Range, more than 10,000 clay cups, dated from the 1920’s, are the clearest remnants of an industry that has disappeared from South Florida and our own back yard. Thousands of broken pieces of clay cover mounds that once were shaded by tall pine trees. While those native trees supply lumber, many don’t know that their trunks were once stripped for turpentine. Ronald L. Grayson, an archaeologist based at the Avon Park Air Force Range, has been studying the abandoned site, once the town of NALACA.

Also spelled Nalacka, the town existed for only 6 to 10 years as the now-defunct Consolidated Naval Stores Company dismantled it and moved. The company’s operations shifted further south, and eventually it lost its turpentine market to petroleum substitutes, according to Grayson’s research. While the site was known sometime after the U.S. Air Force took over the range during the 1940’s, little information was available on it until this point.

Nalaca And The Chippers

Founded in 1918 according to records Grayson held, the town had 250 people at its peak. At the Avon Park Depot Museum on Sunday, Grayson said that the town likely had a post office, a school, and separate churches for black and white laborers.

Elaine Levey, the museum’s director, said that turpentine collectors, or “chippers,” worked the pines throughout Central Florida since the 1880’s. Nalaca, therefore, came and went at the tail end of the era. Nalaca didn’t decline so much as it was simply dismantled and uprooted.

“If it was a tree worth getting turpentine out of, it was usually good for lumber,” Grayson explained. The turpentine operations usually came before the trees were cleared, and once the area was cleared, the town was disassembled. By April 1929, it moved to Hicoria, south of Lake Placid.

The turpentine industry, however, was in a tailspin by this point. Turpentine from trees was always a labor-intensive job, and with labor costs increasing and petroleum-based substitutes becoming cheaper, the demand for wood-based turpentine plummeted.

Gene Brown, who “turpentine,” or “chips” trees to historically interpret the old trade, also blamed its decline on the demands for lumber, which directly conflicted with turpentine production.

Today, other than Brown, the trade is extinct.

Brown, from Sebring, took interest in how the turpentine tactics evolved, leading up to Nalaca’s founding. At first, chippers bore cavities in the pine trees and stuck stool gutters into the trunk after peeling off the bark. The “cat face,” as the gutter arrangement was called, would pour the raw turpentine into the cavity where they could collect it.

Then, the clay Herty cups replaced the cavity so that the process wouldn’t kill the tree. But Consolidated chose to log the trees after turpentineing them for their lumber.”

There was also railroad activity in that area of Polk County associated with the Herty clay pots and the lumber industry.

Tim Meyer has done a great job in developing an area of the layout that creates operating interest and also preserves some of our history.

Newsletter of the Ridge Live Steamers, Inc.

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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.

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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 are scheduled on the second Saturdays of every month, subject to cancellation with at least one weeks notice by the President. This is to satisfy the Requirements of Article II, Section 3, Paragraph (1) of the Ridge Live Steamers By-Laws.

Name Badges. Please wear your name badges when at the track, especially during run days, so that we may all learn the names of members we don't know, and new members may get to know us. Additional, or new, badges may be purchased for \$6.50.

The Florida Live Steamers is an umbrella organization that coordinates the railroad activities around the state. If you don't belong, it is time you did. If you do belong, dues are due. \$20.00 a year should be mailed to FLS, 9111 Erie Lane, Parrish, FL 34219.

2015 Winter Meet Schedule (Subject to Change)

Big Boots & Western	Monday-Sunday	February 7-15, 2015
Central Pasco & Gulf	Thursday-Wednesday	February 12-18, 2015
Largo Central RR	Saturday-Friday	February 14-20, 2015
Trade Winds & Atlantic RR	Saturday	February 21, 2015
Manatee Central RR	Thursday-Wednesday	February 19-25, 2015
Ridge Live Steamers	Tuesday-Sunday	February 24-March 1, 2015
FLS Annual Meeting at Ridge	Saturday	February 28, 2015
Northeast Florida Live Steamers	Sunday-Sunday	March 1-8, 2015
Sebring Systems (Tentative)	Friday-Sunday	March 13-15, 2015

NEWS SNIPPITS:

Second July 4th Pot Luck. Morning rain and the threat of afternoon rain kept all but the hardy away from our Second 4th of July Pot Luck. Despite all of that 18 friends showed up to enjoy what turned out to be a wonderful day. Dave Ehly handled the cooking, the rest brought enough food to make everybody happy. Five trains dared the weather, all had departed before the fireworks around the area started. Rich Dobler noted that it had been a couple of years since he had watched the fireworks from the gazebo at Bowen Branch only to discover that the trees in the area had grown and the great vantage point to watch fireworks had disappeared. Nevertheless, the day was a great success. As the Boston Red Sox used to say, "Wait 'til next year."

Mow and Trim, Trim and Mow. That has been the norm for this summer. Thanks go out to Al and Lorraine Schneider, Gary Bales, Michael and Matthew Bales, Randy Nothdorf, Gary Penglase, Dave Ehly, Mason Michael, John Tribble, Bob Peppel and Jim Burby for keeping our track looking so good. Thanks go, again, to John Tribble for keeping the mowers in working order, even though he suggested that we stop mowing to preserve the mower blades. Rich Dobler, Bruce Rauch and Tom Pfister have kept the weeds from overtaking the track. Mikey Starck has kept the Silver Thorn bushes from encroaching over Long Barrel.

"L" Barn Progress. Rich Dobler has built the remaining track sections necessary to connect the "L" Barn to the main line. With a little help from Gerald Cain and Allen Newcomb the ballasting has been accomplished. A little rain to settle the ballast and the trains are ready to roll.

Track Ties. Rich Dobler and his minions prepared three baskets of ties, ready for pressure treating. And, thanks to Gary O. Bales for dragging the trailer to and from Stark for pressure treating. They are stacked and ready for punching and restacking to air them out.

Signal System. John Forte is working diligently to get the new signal system installed, hopefully in time for the Fall Meet. John has had help pulling the new wire necessary for the new system, but the arduous task of installing the new control boards and connecting the wires is time consuming and worst of all, doing it all in the Summer heat.

Fall Meet. No, it is not too soon to begin to prepare for the Fall Meet, October 24 thru the 26th. Time has a way of flying by. There will be a Pot Luck on Saturday the 25th at 6 pm. As usual there will be lots of running time. John Forte hopes to have the new signal system installed by then to allow bi-directional running. Bi-directional night running will be possible.

Ridge Model Railroad Club's annual picnic will be October 4th with a cook out at noon. As usual any member of the Live Steamers who care to provide rides for the visitors are invited to the cook out. If you are interested please notify Rich Dobler.

Card Order Sessions. This year there are only two operating sessions planned. This is to avoid conflict with other organization's Winter Meet schedules. January 3rd and 17th are the dates. If you plan to participate and bring rolling stock, please provide the type, road name, color and car number to Allen Newcomb so that the proper car cards can be prepared.

3rd Annual Christmas Run, Saturday, December 13th. With a Pot Luck dinner at 5:00 pm and night running with trains decorated and lit up for the holiday. Last year many trains were decorated and bi-directional running certainly made for a pleasant ride around the track to see so many trains lit up.

Emporium. The Emporium has been restocked with the popular sizes in T-shirts, Polo shirts and Denim shirts. Just place your orders with the Emporium Manager (Allen Newcomb) and the shirts will be delivered at the pavilion on the following Saturday.

President's Page

By Bruce M. Rauch

Summer is just about over which means we only have about six more weeks in the 90s. Love bugs will soon be upon us and our cars - the joys of living in Florida. With cooler weather comes the migration of snowbirds and the many works-in-progress will actually progress. We can turn our attention from cutting grass, spraying weeds, trimming trees and bushes, and other landscaping chores and concentrate on the railroad. I want to thank the hardy souls who labored all summer to keep the property from being overgrown. Despite high temps and humidity, the ever present gnats, the blinding sun, the torrential downpours, the cacophonous thunder and lightning, etc. the dedicated core of "regulars" continued to keep the railroad open to traffic and keep the property looking good. It is no easy task.

I went to Cheyenne, WY for a family wedding in June. While there, I tried to see Big Boy #4014 which is being restored to operating condition by the UP. No luck - the steam shops are not open to the public, even Presidents. However, there is another Big Boy on display in Cheyenne, # 4004, in Holiday Park. I did see that and took some pictures. Rail traffic through Cheyenne is almost non-stop. Most of the trains are hauling coal or double-stack containers.

Denver was my next stop. While in Denver, I took a day trip to Pike's Peak Cog Railway. Arriving at the summit, 2 ½ mile high, I found the temperature to be 31° and the oxygen to be sparse. After walking around, taking pictures, for about twenty minutes, I decided it was best to sit in the coach and wait for the return trip.

A visit to the Forney Museum of Transportation in Denver was worth the trip. A highlight was Big Boy #4005 stored indoors. The cab was open to the public. Every valve, lever, and gauge was labeled. The fire box is approximately eight feet wide by twenty feet long. A mechanical stoker delivers the coal and jets of air distribute the fuel throughout the fire box.

The Georgetown Loop Railroad was next on my agenda. The train on the relatively steep grades through the loop and valley was pulled by a sure-footed Shay. It was a very pleasant trip on a cool day.

The Colorado State Railroad Museum rounded out my Colorado rail adventures. It has a decent collection of locomotives from very old to fairly new. A coal fired steam loco takes visitors on a short loop around the property. I think that loop is less than half the length of our mainline.

Spoiler Alert! Hogwarts Express Train at Universal Studios Florida/Islands of Adventure. I always tell people that I live in central Florida because I'm a tourist at heart. I love the theme parks. The war among the parks to come up with the best attraction, using the most innovative technology, keeps guests coming back for more. The Hogwarts train is no exception. I have never seen an attraction like it. The train itself could have been in the Harry Potter movies. The coaches were built in Switzerland and appear to be genuine European coaches with enclosed compartments, each seating eight guests off a hallway running the length of the car. I won't go into much detail but, riding the train is like being in the movie.

The train pulls into the station with no one in the cab. Steam escapes from appropriate places and the sound effects are authentic. After a couple visits and a close inspection of the train, I discovered that it is actually a level funicular. A loop of heavy steel cable powers the train, actually two identical trains. There is a train in the station at each end of the line at the same time. They both leave their respective station at the same time and pass each other, on an undetectable passing track, in the middle of the run. When you visit USF/IOA look closely at the locomotives. Their drivers aren't even touching the rails. It's a grand illusion that really works.

Now, let's get over our summer travels and get back to work and play on our own railroad.