

# ***THE CHRONICLE***

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NEWS OF THE RIVERSIDE LIVE STEAMERS

**Celebrating  
Sixty Years of  
Live Steam**



February 2026



## **Fallen Flag**

The Live Steam Hobby has lost one of it's builders.  
Member Bruno Platzer (in the blue vest) passed away this  
January.

**SAFETY FIRST**



## From the President...

Having joined RLS at the end of 2017, I still consider myself still fairly new to the club. I've been slowly learning about what it takes to "keep the lights on." Since becoming president, that rate of learning has accelerated drastically!

I knew someone did something at sometime and now I get to show up and ride the rails and have fun. I never really thought about all the behind the scenes pieces that have to go together to keep things going.

I'd like to thank everyone for the time and effort they put into the club. THANK YOU! Thanks for whatever you do to contribute. Some of us have more time available to contribute, or machining abilities, or (like me) a slightly younger body for grunt work. Even if you are only able show up and talk and hang out and share stories, you are part of what makes our club worth being a part of.

- Jonathan

Jonathan Rohrbach  
President

Photos from the Chronicle, Run Days and more can be found at the Club's website:

<https://riversidelivesteamers.com>

**SAFETY FIRST**



## 2026 RLS Dues are past due!!

If you haven't gotten them in yet get you dues in!!

Per the Club Bylaws, you can be dropped from the Club and may be subject to the initiation fee to restart your membership.

**Dues can be paid online through the Club's Square account, there is an added processing fee to do so. You can use the links below for the appropriate membership dues:**

Resident Member:

<https://square.link/u/IVglU63z>

Non-Resident Member:

<https://square.link/u/DzVYcOle>

Junior Member:

<https://square.link/u/8pfYodxt>

Get your dues in!

## Chefs Wanted



With the RLS Spring Meet only three months away we need your help!!

Morning

Chefs are needed for Saturday and Sunday if you are interested in helping out please let Bill Hesse know. [whesse@pacbell.net](mailto:whesse@pacbell.net)



## Along The Tracks

Saturday January 17<sup>th</sup> Work (fun) Day

was a tremendous success!!

The Westbound Safety Reverse track project got off to a grand start with tie cutting operations, development of curve track panels, and preparations for groundbreaking on the track alignment.

With many members working in the compound, a small track crew transported the new left-hand switch for replacing CY-8 switch in Columbia Yard where the squirrels had damaged the railheads in several locations. All engineers can remember running over the switch with the vibrations and noise, it always felt like you were on the ground. No more noise, Richard Ronne's well-designed switch dropped into place with minimum effort. An interesting side note on the track crew: Brook Adams dropped a socket for track screws in the grass. All six adult members of the track crew searched for the socket. Junior Member Thomas Lucero was enlisted for help. Thomas walked over and picked up the socket with no effort. Helps to have young eyes!!

The never-ending clean-up of the compound was also accomplished. We are still looking for a Compound Supervisor. Since we do not currently have a supervisor, it is responsibility of all members to keep the compound clean.....that means YOU!

Lunch was provided by Chris Enright and family to the workers at noon and a very efficient Board Meeting was led by President Jonathan Rohrbach to complete day.

Members out helping around the railroad were: Chris Neiman, Richard Ronne, Tom Brody, Bill Hesse, Bob Roberts, Paul Lavacot, CJ Payne, Dan Williams, Paul Lucero, Thomas Lucero, Mark Spaulding, Brook Adams, Tom Crue, Jerry Vargas, Jonathan Rohrbach, Randy Chase, Ken Adamson, Chris Enright, Joan Adams, Glenn Maness, and Rich Casford.

Mark your calendar to join your fellow members on Saturday February 14, 2026, starting at 8:00AM for another FUN workday. Lunch at Noon by Chef Bill Hesse. The Board of Directors meeting will follow at 1:00PM.

2026 Work (FUN) Days have started off with good momentum. Plan now to join your fellow members to continue the efforts to improve the railroad.

Rich Casford, Roadmaster

## FULL HOUSE!! RLS STORAGE 2026

### Opening soon, third level car storage tracks

Please do not bring equipment to RLS thinking you saw an open space. All tracks are rented to members, and the buildings are filled to the end of each track. Any open space has been rented, and you cannot place your equipment on those tracks.

If you are interested in storing your equipment, please send me an email [rich@wmp.net](mailto:rich@wmp.net) or call me (575) 756-4413 so I can put you on the waiting list.

We have three engines on the waiting list now so if you need space or want to reduce your space, please contact me.

We are working to get the Third Level Lift installed in early 2026 to open more space, however until that happens the NO VACANCY sign is still lit!!

Rich Casford

Storage Manager

## Thoughts on the passing of Bruno Platzer



*By Jim Kreider*

The live steam world lost a craftsman extraordinaire. Bruno Platzer died on the January 24th of a heart attack. Bruno would have been 73 in May.

He and his wife Trudy were childhood sweethearts, known each other since they were 17. Their birthdays were on the same date as they were born 6 hours apart.

They grew up in Austria and both spoke fluent German. Bruno was a frequent visitor to RLS. He was the founder of Alco-West Locomotives.

Among the locomotives he built.

- 4 Berkshires, working on a 5<sup>th</sup>.
- UP 4-6-6-4 Challenger
- 3 Mikados'
- At least one Atlantic
- DRG&W narrow gauge K27 Mikado
- Several 2-1/2" scale Diesels and a Galloping Goose

## RLS Annual Awards

This years Annual Awards banquet was held as a luncheon at Habanero's Mexican Grill in Riverside.



About 30 members and guests showed up. Jim Kreider provided entertainment with videos of Southern Pacific steam rolling through the Southern California area. There was even a shot of a train rolling by a large warehouse with the word "Hunter" written on it!



Awards were presented to:  
*Chris Neiman - Live Steamer of the Year*  
*Doug Prescott - Hogger of the Year*  
*Richard Miller - Hogger of the Year*  
*Brook Adams - Gandy Dancer*

As we had a tie for Hogger of the Year, Doug and Richard were presented ties along with their award.

Calendars and mugs were raffled off. There was a 25-25-50 raffle and a good time was had by those in attendance.

## Air Down There...

At the December 28<sup>th</sup> Run Day, the air compressors were cycling off and on during the end of the day when no one was firing up. A possible area of concern was identified (steaming bays 1-8).

With rain in the forecast the thought was to wait for the storm to wet out the steaming bay area, fire up the air system and see where the bubbles appear. We ended up with a mild all day shower instead of the deluge that was forecast.



At the January 11<sup>th</sup> Run Day the compressors were unable to keep up and bays 1-8 were turned off. Towards the end of the January work day Bob Roberts and Paul Lucero took a crack a leak location and flooded steaming bays 1-8 with a hose. As they were hunting for bubbles in between and under the steaming bays, Paul noticed bubbles popping up outside of the bay area along the small safety fence.



A couple of shovels and a few minutes later the air leak was uncovered. We ran the Run Day of the 25<sup>th</sup> with no air on bays 1-8 as parts were on order for the repair.



That following Monday the repair was made and the steaming bays were back on line. Thanks to Bob and Paul for their work on this. For those of you that may be wondering, the “new” underground air system has been in place for 8 years as of this year.

## Quite the Turnout

With the WSRL project starting to take shape, your RLS switch building crew of Rich Casford, Chris Neiman, Jonathan Chase, Randy Chase and Brook Adams led by Richard Ronne jumped into action on Sunday January 18<sup>th</sup> to assemble two new right hand turnouts.



Two switches were built, stacked, covered and tools put away in under four hours. Just as most things in this hobby the prep before the project makes the actual work sail by!

**Photos from the Chronicle, Run Days and more can be found at the Club's website:**

<https://riversidelivesteamers.com>

## Run Day January 11th

Richard Ronne was Operating Superintendent for the Run Day of the 11<sup>th</sup>, operations were Westbound outside loop. Starting off the new year in passenger service were Sean Hagen and Anthony McBride they switched between Engineer and Conductor throughout the day. The Keith Hudson was fired up for passenger service with the Hunter Straddle cars. Morning service was Engineer Jonathan Rohrbach with Conductors Jim Wood and Tom Crue, afternoon shift was covered by engineer Chris



Neiman and Conductor Dan Williams. Station operations we taken care of by Station Master Glenn Maness, Merchandise Supervisor Tiffany Love, Marty Berg was at the four track



crossing, Chris Neiman and Jake Weiss kept an eye on the platform.

Freight for the day was represented by Bob Chamberlain running his 4-4-2 and Richard Miller operating Charlie Kennemer's 2-6-0.

In all, 23 members made it out to help and enjoy the live steam hobby!

## 2025 RLS Conductor's Training Class

Mark your calendar and sign up for the 2026 Conductors Training Class March 7th from 9:00am to 2:00pm



RLS Conductors are a huge part of our passenger train operations. If you haven't attended a class, or it has been awhile since you did and want a refresher, sign up now!!

A sign up sheet will be posted on the soda machine.

You can also sign up online at:

<https://forms.gle/1VDzUKAn1PsY6ymk6>

## Run Day January 25th

Operations for the second Run Day of January were Westbound figure eight. The O.S. for the day was Vice President Randy Chase. Passenger service for the day was taken care of by Sean Hagen and Anthony McBride running Sean's mighty Consolidation, and Engineer

Brook Adams on the cushion of the #305 Hudson with Tom Crue and Jake Weiss taking care of Conductor duties. Your Station crew of the day was Marty Berg on the four track crossing, Chris Neiman and Jake Weiss tending the platform, Tiffany Love at the merchandise cart and Station Master Glenn Maness.



Quite the assortment of freight trains were on the right-of-way throughout the day with Richard Ronne on his 4-6-2. Jonathan Chase running the Borsuk Prairie locomotive, Doug Prescott, Kyle Teixeira and Scott Horgan were at the throttle of Doug's 2-8-2, Richard Miller was on the cushion of the Kennemer Mogul, Mark Spaulding was out on the railroad on his 4-6-2, Ken Adamson made several laps at the throttle of his 2-6-0 and Dan Williams took his ten Wheeler out for a bit as well.



Also out enjoying the day were Jerry Roth, Kira Kaufman, Mike Harris, Paul Lucero, Thomas Lucero, Tom Lebs, Joan Adams, Bill Hesse and new Jr. Member Abraham McBride (who also got some throttle time behind Richard Ronne's Pacific). Non member guests

for the day were Demtra Harris and Mike Adamson.



With a cool morning and warm day it felt more like Spring than almost the midpoint of Winter. All in all it was a very good day to enjoy the live steam hobby.

## Events Outside of the Club

**The Great Train Show** Ventura, CA, January 31<sup>st</sup> and February 1<sup>st</sup> 10:00am - 4:00pm Ventura County Fairgrounds and Event Center - 10 E Harbor Blvd, Ventura, CA 93001 <https://www.greattrainshow.com/gts-show-landing-pages/ventura-01-26>

**Metrolink** - Ride Free on Feb 4<sup>th</sup> In honor of Rosa Parks, Metrolink will be offering free rides on Feb 4<sup>th</sup>. More info here: <https://metrolinktrains.com/>

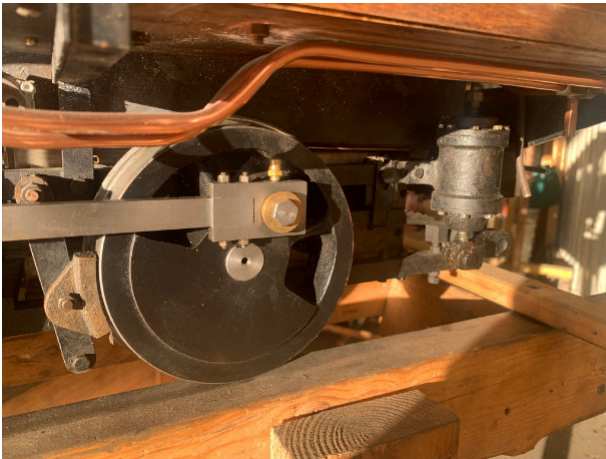
**The Big Boy** - The Big Boy tour starts Sunday, March 29, 2026 with this steam locomotive departing Cheyenne, Wyoming with several historical passenger cars from Union Pacific's Heritage Fleet. This special train will be traveling west to California from Cheyenne, Wyoming and return on Friday, April 24, 2026. Tour Info: <https://www.traintrips.biz/1-union-pacific-big-boy-steam-locomotive.php>

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# For Sale



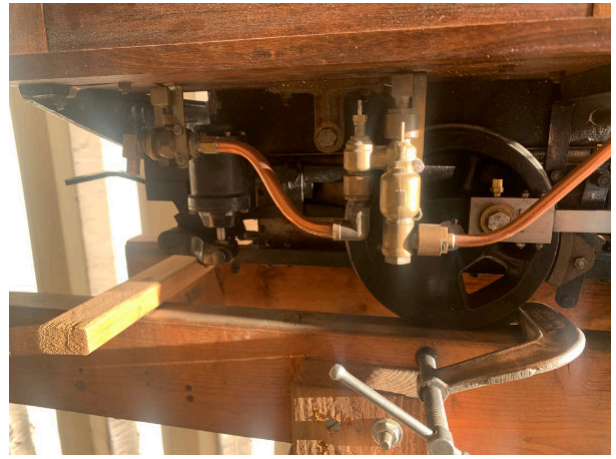
For Sale is an Allen Models, Fitchburg Northern built by Johnny Hoffman appx in 2012. 2.5" Scale 7.5" Gauge Has 3 ways to inject water, Steam Injector, Cross Head Pump and Manual



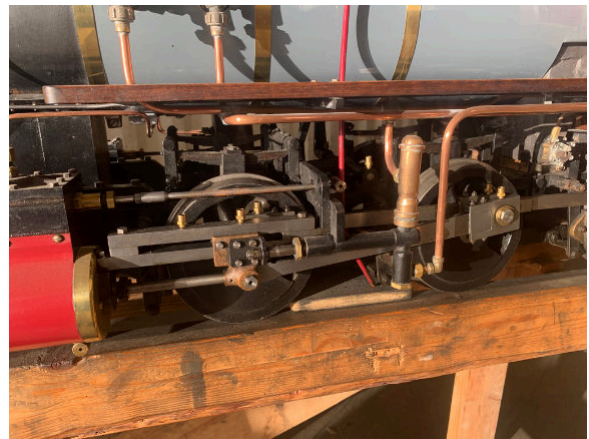
Pump on tender. Comes With two firing grates, Wood Pellet and Coal (though she runs great on wood, never could get a



successful coal fire to not clunker and loose heat) Has a Steam Brake system on the locomotive only. Included in the sale is a 50' scale ridding car that attaches to the tender with



a draw bar and a standard coupler on the other end



and additionally a modified Motorcycle trailer set up to haul the locomotive and flat car included. Locomotive is in The High Dessert east of Lancaster CA, Near Phelan CA to be picked up only Asking \$25,000 O.B.O., Contact Victor D'Agostino 310-313-1249



## February Calendar "Who is it ?"



**Top Left:** Charter Member Leo Young readies his Atlantic on the steaming bay in 1965.

**Top Right:** Track at the Iowa Tunnel.

**Lower Left:** Foundation and footer forms in place for the overpass

**Lower Right:** At the steaming bay area.

**Thanks to Joan Adams, Rich Casford, Jonathan Rohrbach,  
and Jim Kreider for the photos in this months Chronicle.**  
If you have photos, an article or anything else you'd like to submit to the Chronicle  
please email the Editor at: [editor@rlsrr.com](mailto:editor@rlsrr.com)

## *Upcoming Important Dates*

**February 8<sup>th</sup> Run Day Eastbound  
Outside Loop**

**March 8<sup>th</sup> Run Day Westbound  
Outside Loop**

**February 14<sup>th</sup> Work/Fun Day 8:00am to 3:00pm, Meeting 1:00pm**

**March 14<sup>th</sup> Work/Fun Day 8:00am to 3:00pm, Meeting 1:00pm**

**February 22<sup>nd</sup> Run Day Eastbound  
Figure Eight**

**March 22<sup>nd</sup> Run Day Westbound  
Figure Eight**

The R.L.S. Chronicle is published by The Riverside Live Steamers, Inc.,  
P.O. Box 5512, Riverside, CA, 92517.  
The railroad is located at Hunter Park, 1496 Columbia Ave., Riverside, CA.  
Call (951) 779-9024 during a Run Day or Work Day for more information.  
Public Run Days are the 2nd and 4th Sunday of every month, Work Days (Fun  
Days) are held the Saturday following the first Run Day of the month.

## **THE RIVERSIDE LIVE STEAMERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **Officers**

President: Jonathan Rohrbach

Vice Pres Randy Chase

Secretary: Brook Adams

Treasurer: Joan Adams

### **Directors**

Director: Mark Spaulding

Director: Kevin Zamp

Director: Richard Ronne

Director: Wes Peterson

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