Conductor's Report for the May 5th Ride Day

Problems:

On the forth train, there was a child on 201's loading platform as we were pulling into Bonsal.
I did not see it myself. It was reported to me by Fred on Car 100.

On the first train run we detected a slight burning smell. When we reached New Hill I checked the temperature of all of the brake shoes on the train with an IR thermometer. I found that all four brake shoes on the south truck of 308 were 10 to 15 degrees hotter than the other shoes. An adjustment of the brake linkage on this car may be in order.

Car Hosts. Although we had a sufficient number of car hosts for most of the rides there was no surplus by any means.
Car 201 John Betz and Tom Bauman
Car 101 Scott and Chris Tilley's son
Car 100 Fred and Chris Tilley's daughter
Car 200 David Mathews and Ted Richman with
For the last train we boarded passengers on cars 201,101 and 308 only. Cars 100 ran 200 empty. Fred operated the brakes on both 100 and 200.

Training

We had several people in training on this ride day.
Chris was working with Rich Opalucht and Brandt Wilkus as break man.
I was working with David Bib and John Tredway as conductors and BJ Anderson as a brakeman.
Rich, David Bib and Brandt worked the first four trains. The rest of us worked all five trains.

First train:
I conducted, David Bib was brakeman, John and BJ observed.

Second train:
David Bib conducted, John did his first try as brakeman, BJ observed.

Third train:
John made his first attempt as conductor and brakeman David Bib and BJ observed.

Forth train:
David Bib conducted, BJ made his first attempt as brakeman. John observed

Fifth train:
John Tredway conducted going north. BJ made is second run as brakeman.
Since there were 29 passengers in the caboose, I did not want to leave BJ alone in the caboose.
John stayed in the caboose and I conducted the south bound return with BJ on 201.

David Bib has been training as a conductor in the past and is progressing nicely. He needs a couple of days more of training and practice to build up his confidence and familiaritiy with the procedures.

John Tredway just started his training today. He is a quick learner and will progress rapidly.

BJ showed significant progress on his second attempt as brakeman. We all know what his weak area is besides his age. Since I think, our policy should be to encourage young people to be active in our organization, we should make an effort to guide and mentor these members while being very mindful of maintaining high safety standards.

Dave Mathews and Ted Richman were taking turns in the cab of 1686 and car hosting on 200.

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Hand signals

Here are my thoughts for your consideration. I believe that the hand signals in the rules book are based on the original RR signals when the crews used lanterns for signaling.

Swinging the lantern horizontally in front of you is STOP
Raising and lowering the lantern vertically is proceed forward.
Rotating the lantern in a circular manner is move train in reverse.

I think that these hand signals along with the concept that:
The front of the engine and the front of the train be defined by the lit headlight.
This will make the signals logical and natural and as such user friendly.

Case 1. First train of the day.
The engine is coupled to the train and the north end headlight is on.
To move the train northbound use forward signal.

Case 2 Train has just arrived in New Hill.
Brakeman signals the engineer to proceed to the switch by using forward signal.

Case 3. Train stops past the north switch at New Hill.
Switchman changes switch to siding. Engineer turns on south headlight. This now becomes the front of the engine.
Switchman signals the train to move onto the siding by using the forward signal.

Case 4.Train stops at the New Hill south switch.
Switchman sets switch to siding and signals engineer to move south onto the main line using the forward signal.

Case 5. Train stops on main line.
Switchman sets switch to main line. Engineer turns on the north head light
Engine proceeds north to couple up to train.

Case 6
Brakeman on caboose 308 signals engineer to proceed forward and stop 10 feet from caboose using the forward signal.
After the coupler is checked, brakeman signals engineer to proceed to couple to caboose using forward command.
After engine couples to caboose, brakeman signals engineer to stretch the train using the reverse command.
After train stretches engineer stops. Engineer turns on south head light to start the return trip to Bonsal.

Whistle or horn signals.

It is my understanding that at present we use :

1 Blast for Stop.
2 Blasts for north bound travel.
3 Blasts for south bound travel.

These signals can remain unchanged and are compatible with the hand signals.

Ted Dunn