

R & N Magazine

Official Magazine of the Employees and Customers of the Reading & Northern Railroad

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2014
ASLRRA MARKETING AWARD WINNER



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COVER PHOTO

THE TRANSLOAD OPERATORS WAIT WITH A LOAD OF ALUMINUM AS THE CREW OF THE 5014 SPOTS A BOXCAR FOR LOADING AT THE CRESSONA TRANSLOAD DOCK.

THE READING AND NORTHERN RAILROAD IS HONORED TO HAVE RECEIVED THE AMERICAN SHORTLINE AND REGIONAL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION MARKETING AWARD, PLEASE SEE PAGE 4 FOR MORE DETAILS.

EDITORS

JOLENE BUSHER • FRANCES KARYCKI • FRANCES MULLER

KEEPING ON TRACK

BY: WAYNE MICHEL, PRESIDENT

Recently Reading & Northern has been in the news. We announced our record-breaking 2013 results (see news release on p. 3), the press covered a presentation Dan Gilchrist and I gave to the Manufacturer's Association (see article on p. 5), the press reported on our late year buying spree of 105 coal cars and 4 locomotives, and in late February Governor Corbett announced that we had received a \$700,000 grant to repair the track through the Buck Mountain tunnel on our M&S Branch.

Additionally, last December we received press coverage for a lawsuit we filed against a local railroad authority that refused to consider our request that they put their rail operations up for bid. (Our press release follows this column. Since our lawsuit raises some very important public policy issues we wanted to take this opportunity to explain our position.

As most of you know the railroad industry was in serious financial shape thirty years ago. Many rail lines were being abandoned and entire railroad companies had gone bankrupt. In this environment a number of counties stepped up and purchased rail lines in order to maintain service to regional employers and communities. Since these counties knew nothing about running a railroad they appropriately turned to the private sector for qualified operators. The counties followed the appropriate process of issuing requests for proposals and choosing among the qualified bidders before entering into contracts.

But what happens if an authority never rebids the contract? That is the situation we faced last fall.

The authority in question is the Pennsylvania Northeast Regional Railroad Authority. PNRRA was created in 2006 by the merger of prior Lackawanna and Monroe County rail authorities. It owns 100 miles of rail line including its main, which runs from Scranton southeast to East Stroudsburg and the Delaware Water Gap.

In 1993 PNRRA's predecessors chose the Delaware Lackawanna (DL), a company out of western New York, as the operator. Although the initial contract was for only five years, it has not been put out for bid over the last twenty years. Instead every few years the Board, without notice and comment opportunity, continues to renew

the contract. Despite all the changes occurring in the region as Conrail sold the connecting rail line to the Reading & Northern in 1996, and as Conrail was then split and Norfolk Southern took over service to this territory in 1999, the Board kept renewing the contract.

During this twenty year period officials in Lackawanna County knew that Reading & Northern had an interest in this railroad.

From 1996 until late 2001 RBMN handled all of the traffic between the DL and Conrail and then Norfolk Southern. We took the cars from Conrail/NS and delivered them to our Pittston

“...there is no railroad better prepared to coordinate freight & commuter operations.”

Yard where DL was able to come in and pick them up. We believe this was a very efficient way to handle the DL traffic as most of the business was near Scranton and the RBMN interchange enabled DL to avoid dragging the loads up and over the Poconos.

Moreover, we had made written multi-million dollar offers to purchase the railroad in 2004 and 2005. Although we were led to believe that Lackawanna County was interested in our proposal, negotiations never occurred. Instead, the County merged the property into PNRRA.

Once the County created the new PNRRA we focused on making RBMN the best railroad in the region. We succeeded. We are the ONLY railroad in the nation to twice be named Regional

Railroad of the Year. Our traffic growth (9% percent in 2013), employment growth (34% over last three years), and passenger business growth (over 50,000 tourists a year ride our excursion trains) all speak to our success.

Yet we kept our eye on the many County-owned railroads that surround us. Last fall when the multi-County authority to our west, known as the SEDA COG Joint Rail Authority, decided to put its railroads up for bid for a new operator, we quickly announced our intention to submit a bid.

We then turned our attention to the east. Given SEDA COG's decision to put its properties up for bid, we decided to let PNRRA know of our interest in bidding on their property, given the coming expiration of the DL contract. On November 6th we sent them a letter expressing our interest in bidding on the property. In the letter we noted our proximity to the operations and our track record of success as a locally-owned and operated shortline.

Given the chance to have a potential bidding war which could improve the return to taxpayers and provide excellent service to the shippers, we assumed PNRRA would react favorably to our letter. We were horribly naïve.

Instead of responding to our letter and talking to us, PNRRA held its next regularly-scheduled monthly meeting, went into Executive Session and then came out and announced that it had decided to renew the existing contract with the DL for another five years!

Obviously we were not pleased. We tried to reason with the Authority's President. We let the Authority know that if we had been allowed to bid we would have GUARANTEED the taxpayers a much higher return on their investment as well as GUARANTEED the customers a superior service.

Our guarantees fell on deaf ears and so we reluctantly filed our suit. Since we continue to prefer to resolve this matter without litigation, we are using this column to attempt to mobilize public opinion.

Continued on page 3.

Continued from page 2.

We hope that our many readers who live in Lackawanna and Monroe counties will recognize that the PNRRA Board is wasting substantial money that could help them and their fellow taxpayers.

We hope that the shippers on the line will let the Authority's members know that they are interested in hearing from a railroad that:

- provides scheduled service with a guaranteed two hour service window to all of its customers,
- offers the lowest demurrage rates in the region,
- constantly invests in its railroad as evidenced by the 35,000 ties purchased and installed last year with our own money,
- seeks the opportunity to participate in industrial development projects with its customers, and

- owns over 1,000 pieces of rolling stock and is always willing to buy more in furtherance of its customers' business

We hope that our many readers who are rail fans, and enjoyed seeing our 425 steam engine at Steamtown last fall, and who would be excited to see us run to Mount Pocono and the Delaware Water Gap, will let the PNRRA know that you want us to have a chance to bid to operate this line.

We hope that all of those who have longed for the possible return of daily commuter service to the area understand that the RBMN fully supports that goal and had conditioned our 2004 purchase offer on the understanding that commuter trains would have priority over freight. Given our experience operating a heavy excursion schedule throughout the summer and fall while maintaining our scheduled service to customers, there is no railroad better prepared

to coordinate freight and commuter operations.

We hope that if enough people cry out for change, the Authority will change its position and decide to do the right thing and open this contract up for bid.

For our part, Reading & Northern is going to exhaust all of its legal remedies. We are committed to having an opportunity to bid for this property. If we are given that opportunity, we are convinced that we will win the bid and we will provide the shippers with an unprecedented level of service and help the Authority in its quest to bring commuter service to the region.

We still hope that responsible people will behave responsibly. We still hope that PNRRA will do the right thing and put the property up for bid.

After all, if people do the right thing, we all keep on track. ♦

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



COUNTY AUTHORITY REFUSES TO CONSIDER HIGHER BID

PORT CLINTON, December 12, 2013 – Reading & Northern Railroad, the largest privately-owned railroad in Pennsylvania, today filed a lawsuit seeking to stop a regional authority from proceeding with a “no-bid” contract for rail service.

The suit filed in Lackawanna County Common Pleas Court notes that the Pennsylvania Northeast Regional Rail Authority (Authority) has a fiduciary obligation to the taxpayers of Lackawanna and Monroe Counties to get the best financial deal possible. Reading & Northern points out that the Authority refused to even consider its request to make a bid to be the operator. Instead, without notice and with no opportunity for public comment, the Authority decided to renew a contract with the existing operator for another 5 years. The Authority took this action even though the existing contract does not expire for over 20 months.

The last time the Authority sought bids for this operation was 1993, over twenty years ago. Since then it has continually renewed the contract with the current operator without notice and without consideration of whether other operators could increase the value for taxpayers.

“We realize that given an open process with fair bidding that there may be others who win the right to operate,” said Reading & Northern’s President, Wayne Michel. “However, we know taxpayers and shippers will be better off as a result of this process and we will have had a fair opportunity to participate.”

Reading & Northern has a direct physical connection with the Authority’s property and has extensive operations in the area today. Locally owned and operated, Reading & Northern has twice been named Regional Railroad of the Year since 2000, the only railroad in the nation so honored.

AMERICAN SHORT LINE & REGIONAL RAILROAD MARKETING AWARD

BY: DENNIS SHAFFER, VP BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Reading and Northern is honored to have been chosen by the American Short line and Regional Railroad Association to receive its 2014 Marketing Award. The award recognizes our innovative marketing effort in establishing transload and storage terminals structured to meet customer needs at Cressona, Pa and Penobscot (Mt. Top), PA. Success was based on our ability to move quickly to make the necessary investments to transform unused property into productive transfer and storage terminals. Both terminals are managed and operated by R&N employees to provide a seamless, all-inclusive service direct to our customer's plant.

This is the second time in the last five years Reading and Northern received this prestigious award, having been recognized in 2010 for the development of our D&I sand transload terminal in Pittston, PA.

Tyler Glass, Executive Vice President – Operations, and Tina Muller-Levan, Vice President – Asset Management, will be attending the Association's annual meeting in San Diego in April to accept this award on our behalf.

BY: WAYNE MICHEL, PRESIDENT

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The Reading and Northern Railroad has just completed the most successful year in its thirty year history.

The railroad grew its carload business by over 14% and its overall traffic, which included export coal business, was up almost 9%. This growth far outpaces the growth of other shortline and regional railroads this year, which was about 5%.

Although the export market for anthracite coal was weak in 2013, the railroad showed double digit gains in domestic coal movements and its merchandise business, which includes woodpulp, paper, metals, food products, plastics and frac sand for Marcellus Shale drilling.

RBMN was aggressive in industrial development in 2013 with two new rail terminals opened to handle inbound metals for local customers. These new facilities took significant truck traffic off the roads and helped support local industries depending on this business which employs 1200 people in Schuylkill and Luzerne counties. The railroad also continued its unique practice of investing in off-line coal terminals by partnering with a terminal on the Ohio River to increase the movement of anthracite coal by barges.

The railroad is currently working on at least four industrial development site searches along the railroad, and has recently rehabilitated the rail infrastructure to provide rail service to the newly expanding Cambridge Lee manufacturing facility in Leesport who employs approximately 400 people in Berks County.

Overall the Reading & Northern Railroad serves forty-one customers on its lines, which provide jobs for over 8000 people. The railroad receives high marks for customer service because it runs a scheduled railroad. Reading & Northern provides each customer with a two hour service window, and in 2013 its on time performance was 98%!

In 2013 the railroad embarked on an unprecedented capital expenditure program. "Our philosophy is to buy when other people are selling. We are doing very well and now is the perfect time to reinvest in our railroad." explained Andrew Muller, owner/CEO.

Wayne Michel, RBMN President, listed some of the 2013 investments. "In 2013 we purchased and installed 35,000 ties in our tracks, all without government funded assistance. We also purchased 4 locomotives, 105 coal cars, a number of trucks and electric cars for our fleet and a prime piece of industrial property near our headquarters for potential development. All of these purchases were made with future growth in mind."

Reading and Northern Railroad, with its corporate headquarters in Port Clinton, is a privately held railroad company serving major businesses in nine Eastern Pennsylvania counties, (Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Northumberland, Schuylkill and Wyoming). The railroad runs about 320 miles from Reading PA to Mehoopany PA and it also operates the seven mile rail line from Towanda to Monroeton in Bradford County. In 2012 Reading & Northern entered into an agreement with CAN DO to purchase the rail assets of the Humboldt Industrial Park in Hazleton, the region's largest rail-served industrial park. Reading & Northern is scheduled to take over service to Humboldt in 2017 at the latest.

Reading & Northern has twice been named Regional Railroad of the Year since 2000, most recently in 2011. It offers both freight services and passenger excursion operations and it currently employs over 150 employees.

RBMN

PRESENTATION TO

MANUFACTURER'S ASSOCIATION

BY: DAN GILCHRIST, EXECUTIVE VP MARKETING & SALES

On January 30th, Wayne Michel and I addressed the Northeast Manufacturer's & Employers Association of Pennsylvania luncheon meeting in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. Almost two dozen business leaders from the region came to hear us talk about doing business with the railroad and our industrial development process.

After sharing some of our background we discussed recent RBMN case studies of successful industrial development projects.

We first described the D&I Silica sand transload facility in Pittston. We noted that from the time we first met with D&I in October 2009 to the first delivery of rail cars that December took about six weeks. In that time RBMN forces resurfaced 5200' of track, replaced 250 old ties, and added 2000 tons of stone. We did all of this work based on a handshake deal. In 2010, over 1500 cars moved through the terminal. D&I remains a valued customer and partner, and we are pursuing additional terminals with them in 2014.

In 2010, we pursued our first significant off-line industrial development project. Prior to that year all export anthracite coal moved through the Port of Baltimore. But in 2010 Baltimore closed for anthracite exports and RBMN needed to find a port to handle our QIT and other export business. After an exhaustive search we decided to partner with the Kinder Morgan facility in Fairless Hills, Pennsylvania. RBMN funded the purchase of rail car unloading conveyors to enable Kinder to unload coal cars. By the end of 2010 we had done a successful test move of sixty-five cars, and in 2011 we moved 657 loads to the port. By 2012 volumes exceeded 2000 cars. We continue to work with Kinder to make this facility more efficient. Recently, Kinder put in a new rail car unloading system and RBMN purchased 248 Rapid Discharge Cars to support the new infrastructure. We will continue to work with Kinder to make sure we have a state of the art export facility for anthracite shipments.

In 2011 we had the opportunity to help locate a new facility for Packaging Corporation of America. The site that was chosen was problematic for rail. First, the existing rail siding needed to be relocated to the other side of the building to allow PCA to be able to use this site. Second, the necessary curvature and grade exceeded normal railroad specs. We reviewed the situation and determined we could operate safely as long as we put in place proper operating rules. Then we helped the customer with financial incentives so we could get this customer on-line. We now handle several hundred cars a year at this location.

We then discussed some exciting industrial development projects in 2013. Close to home we established two aluminum transload terminals on the RBMN, one at Cressona and one at Penobscot. After identifying the need, we cleared and repurposed two rail yards in sixty days. In many ways this project was reminiscent of how we set up the D&I transload a couple of years earlier. But in this instance we went one step further. We became

the transloader and we manage every aspect of the operation. We manage the rail shipments, the unloading, the storage, the inventory control, and reshipment by rail or truck depending on the customer's needs. We made these investments and hired personnel without any contracts or guarantees. We knew that if we did the job we were capable of, we would make the customer happy, and with a happy customer we had a good shot at getting the business. We succeeded in getting that business diverted from truck.

If the transload opportunity was similar to our D&I project, the off-line project was remarkably similar to our work with Kinder Morgan. As we reviewed our anthracite business we saw an increasing demand for material to go west towards Pittsburgh for loading on barges. Given the nature of the unloading process we came to realize that our rapid discharge cars could make the operation more efficient. But our partner at Leetsdale, Mol-Dok, did not have an unloading pit properly sized to handle the rapid discharge cars. We quickly reached an agreement with Mol-Dok to help pay the cost of the expansion. The work was done and now we have a more efficient and competitive facility to send material to for barge loading.

In summarizing our efforts we noted the key points for the Reading and Northern when we work on Industrial Market Development Projects:

1. Focus on the customer.
2. Work with good partners.
3. Move fast and be aggressive.
4. Invest in what you believe in.
5. Be flexible and creative.

After our presentation we had some excellent discussions with the attendees. We are confident that we will be enjoying new business for years to come thanks to those conversations.

We are very appreciative that Darlene Robbins and Gina Whalen of the Northeast Manufacturers & Employers Association invited us to speak at this forum. We thank them and all those who attended.

Recent Changes to RBMN's Car Fleet

BY: MICHAEL SHARADIN, AVP COAL TRAFFIC

The Reading and Northern is always looking to adjust our fleet of railcars to better handle the needs of our shippers and receivers. The market for anthracite coal is always changing, and since we're "The Road of Anthracite," we have to be prepared to change as well. This means constantly reviewing our fleet of nearly 1,000 railcars to make sure we have enough cars to handle each segment of the business. Over the past twelve months we have been extremely active tweaking our fleet. Some of these changes have been obvious and others have been a little more subtle, but just as important.

One of the more subtle adjustments to the fleet took place last spring. After reviewing the loading schedule for one of our unit train shippers it became quite evident, due to some very tight windows, that a second car set would be needed to handle all their shipments. Working with the car shop, a plan was put in place so that fifty to sixty of our aluminum, rotary-dump cars would be modified so they would work at the unloading terminal. The modification was fairly simple, and within a few weeks we had a second set of cars that could be used in unit train service. The extra car set was used a few times throughout the year, and the shipper was very appreciative that none of their shipments were delayed waiting for cars to return from unloading.

Another adjustment involved our rapid discharge fleet. In 2013 we saw substantial growth in our domestic business, which we consider as all non-unit train business going to receivers in the United States and Canada. A large percentage of this growth was due to an increase in shipments going to Mol-Dok, which is a transfer terminal located on the Ohio River near Leetsdale, Pennsylvania. At Mol-Dok, coal is transferred from rail to barge for further movement along the US river systems. With the domestic business doing so well, our supply of standard bottom-dump cars that we use in this type of service was extremely tight. In order to overcome the car supply issues, the railroad worked with Mol-Dok to upgrade their facility so they could efficiently handle rapid discharge cars. As they were upgrading their facility, we were modifying some of our rapid discharge cars so they could be used to handle every size of material shipped to their facility. Now for 2014, we are in a position that we can use rapid discharge cars for every shipment going to Mol-Dok. In turn, this will allow us to use our standard bottom-dump for all our other domestic shipments.

The biggest upgrade to our car fleet occurred towards the end of last year. This past November, Mr. Muller purchased 105 3-pocket, bottom-dump hopper cars. These cars are in very good condition and a welcome addition to the fleet. Then, in February of this year, Mr. Muller purchased an additional twenty-three hopper cars, almost identical to the 105 that were acquired in November. All these cars will be used in domestic service, replacing 100+ similar type cars that were recently retired. This type of car is extremely versatile, so it can be used for any of our shipments that use open top hoppers. They can even be rotary dumped!

The transformation of our car fleet over the past twelve months has been astonishing. We have modified well over fifty cars to help fulfill the needs of our customers. At the same time, we have also been able to increase the overall flexibility of our fleet. With the acquisition of the 128 bottom-dump cars, we were able to retire over 100 older cars, greatly improving the overall condition of our fleet. As I said in the beginning of this article, we are always looking to adjust our fleet. As I write this, we are currently reviewing our covered hopper fleet to ensure we have enough equipment to handle the dried coal segment of the market. So do not be surprised if you see new covered hoppers traversing the railroad in the near future.



Car Shop personnel is in the process of restenciling some of the hopper cars that were just purchased over the winter.



Locomotive #425 pulls through the yard at Port Clinton with some newly painted hopper cars in its consist.

RBMN Coal Car Fleet

Car Type	Number Series	Qty	Service Type
Steel Tub Rotary Dump	(7000 – 7113)	114	Export Coal
Steel 3-pocket Bottom Dump	(7200 – 7499)	71	Domestic Coal
Steel 4-pocket Bottom Dump	(7500 – 7599)	98	Domestic Coal
Aluminum Tub Rotary Dump	(7600 – 7786)	187	Export Coal
Aluminum Rapid-Discharge	(7800 – 8047)	248	Export Coal
Steel 3-pocket Bottom Dump	(8100 – 8204)	105	Domestic Coal
Steel 3-pocket Bottom Dump	(8500-8522)	23	Domestic Coal
Steel Covered Hopper	(9500 – 9999)	110	Domestic Coal
Steel Flat-Bottom Rotary Dump	(42085 – 42099)	15	Domestic Coal

Total: 971 Cars in Coal Fleet

PROACTIVE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT



Baver Property showing RBMN RR at bottom and Rt 61 on right.

BY: DENNIS SHAFFER, VP BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Having new industries locate on our railroad is the lifeblood of our future. We cannot depend on our current customers to always be there. For reasons totally unrelated to rail service loyal customers may relocate, close their plants, or change their production processes and traffic flows. When this happens business disappears.

RBMN employees who have been around awhile can probably name several shuttered industrial plants which used to provide us with a considerable amount of steady business. Likewise we can name a number of new customers that didn't exist several years ago but now provide a steady stream of business to the Reading and Northern.

To stay ahead of this inevitable trend it is important to always be working to develop new business and have new plants locate on our line. It's like a perpetual race where we have to keep running just to stay in place, and we have to run even faster to get ahead. An important part of this race is industrial development, which simply said is the process of encouraging new plants to locate on our railroad.

Industrial development is a long-lead-time, highly competitive process. An important aspect for successful industrial development is having properly zoned property available next to our railroad with utilities and good highway access. Railroads have traditionally depended on private developers and economic development authorities to develop and make these properties available. We are fortunate to have a number of very professional, highly successful industrial development organizations in our region who have developed properties and worked to bring in new businesses, and we work very closely with these organizations to put together all of the pieces needed to encourage new businesses to locate on our railroad. And, we have a very good track record of in bringing in new customers at a faster rate than we have lost old ones.

Our railroad has taken this process one step further. Last year we became aware of a 20+ acre property located next to our railroad at the intersection of Routes 61 and Route 895 north of Port Clinton. This site, known as the Baver property, might have been acquired for commercial development (gas stations, restaurants etc.) which produce nothing for the railroad. Realizing this, our owner moved quickly to purchase this property for industrial development; specifically for businesses requiring rail service.

Or, the site can also be used for future expansion of our shop and office facilities. In the interim we are making productive use of the site by having relocated our Police and Community Relations Department to the former farm house on the property

The Baver property is available to potential new businesses interested in locating in our area. It is flat land ideally located from both a highway and rail standpoint with utilities available. An important element to our success is our owner's willingness to move quickly to take advantages of opportunities as they arise, and to make long term investments in our future. The purchase of the Baver property is another example of why we have been so successful.



View of property looking south. Rt. 61 in background.



READING AND NORTHERN RAILROAD INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY AVAILABLE

**RAIL AVAILABLE — RBMN MAINLINE ADJOINS PROPERTY
21 ACRES • PPL POWER**

**LOCATED AT INTERSECTION OF RT. 61 AND RT. 895
3 MILES FROM INTERSTATE 78 VIA RT. 61**

CONTACT:

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Action Selection

Please select an action that you would like to perform by clicking on the following link or choosing from the above menu.

Action	L	E	Total	Haz	Net Tons
En Route (Cars En Route To Railroad)	18	0	18	0	1114
Inbound (Cars On Serving Railroad)	22	0	22	0	1435
On Hand (Cars At Your Facility)	1	5	6	0	66

En Route screen: Cars on other railroads that are en route to the RBMN (These cars are not available for placement.)

Inbound Screen: Cars that are on the RBMN and are available for placement on the customers siding.

On Hand screen: Cars that are currently on the customers siding.

At the summary screen customers can go into the On-Hand, Inbound, or En Route screens to view the cars in each section. The summary screen also provides a snapshot of the number of Loaded, Empty, and Total cars in each category.

“Shipper Connect” Program Simplifies Car Releasing & Car Ordering Processes

BY: DAREN GESCHWINDT, AVP MERCHANDISE

We are very excited to introduce the “Shipper Connect” program to our customers in 2014. Shipper Connect is a web-based program that allows customers to view cars consigned to their account, as well as interact directly with the railroads database system.

Customers using Shipper Connect can view cars that are currently on their siding, view cars that are on RBMN property and are available for placement, view cars in constructive placement, and view cars that are farther out in the rail network and enroute to the RBMN. Since the program is internet based, customers can log into the system from the office, their home, or even their mobile device, and have real time visibility of their rail shipments.

The program also allows customers to interact directly with our database system to release empty cars. To release a car, the customer simply clicks a check-box next to the appropriate cars, enters the date and time, and clicks submit. After submitting the car release, a dialog box appears with a confirmation message. In addition, the program sends a confirmation email to a pre-determined distribution list that includes both railroad and customer contacts. Releasing cars through Shipper Connect could not be easier and increases accuracy by eliminating the potential for entering wrong car numbers or transposing numbers. It also eliminates the need to fill out the normal car release form, and send emails or faxes to

the railroad office. At present, Shipper Connect is only available to release empty cars. Billing and releasing of loaded cars will continue to be handled through the normal car release process.

Customers can also submit placement requests through the program. When viewing cars that are available for placement, the customer can select specific cars and submit a request to have the cars placed on their siding. The car placement process is as simple as selecting the cars, entering the date and time, and noting the track and spot number where the car is to be placed.

We began introducing the program to customers during February 2014, and the program has been very well received. Customers who are using the program have reported that they find it very easy to use, and that it has simplified the process for releasing cars, as well as requesting cars for placement.

Throughout 2014, we will be contacting customers to schedule meetings to review the various screens, and provide training on the processes for releasing cars and requesting cars for placement. Any customer interested in learning more about Shipper Connect, or interested in scheduling a training session, should contact their customer service representative to obtain more information.

Car	L/E	KD	Commodity	Shipper	NT	Placement Date/Time	Road	AI	WG	Destination Station	Track	SP	Current Spot	Product Group	H	Car Order Number	Car Order Want Date	Block To	Car Length	Tare Weight	Load Limit
CSXT 137746	E	A	PULPBOARD	[REDACTED]	0					125					H			NS REA	55' 05"	62000	157200
CSXT 158054	E	A	PULPBOARD	[REDACTED]	0					125					H			NS REA	55' 05"	62000	157700
BEC 008712	E	A	PULPBOARD	[REDACTED]	0					125					H			NS REA	57' 01"	62500	157800
LRS 000717	E	A	PULPBOARD	[REDACTED]	0					125					H			NS REA	59' 01"	75400	187600
SOU 531951	E	A	PULPBOARD	[REDACTED]	0					125					H			NS REA	55' 05"	67000	152200
CHA 412650	L	A	PULPBOARD	[REDACTED]	66	2/21/2014 10:00				10567					H			[REDACTED]	55' 07"	67000	195200

Action Code Date Time

e.g. mm/dd/yyyy e.g. 0001 (Military Time)

In the “On-Hand” Screen customers can view the cars on their track, as well as submit car release information to the railroad. Once cars are released they are shaded in gray.

SUCCESSING THROUGH TEAMWORK

BY: BRIAN O'NEAL, VP TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY

Now that the record snow falls and below average temperatures winter of 2013-2014 had brought us are coming to an end, I would like to recognize the hard work of our employees that kept the railroad running during those long, hard days and nights. As you can imagine, keeping a railroad running under these extreme conditions presents a unique set of challenges. As the temperatures start to drop and snow begins to fall, switches become encased in snow, wheels begin to slip on the rails, and simple tasks, such as walking, become almost impossible feats. If it were not for our maintenance of way forces keeping the routes clear, our mechanical department employees keeping the equipment running, our signal maintainers keeping the signal and communication systems functional, the perseverance of our train crews and coordination with our customers by the traffic department, we would have never been able to succeed.

Normally, one snow storm can be weathered relatively easily and then it is back to business as usual. However, this winter we have been pounded by multiple storms back to back, which has caused a buildup of snow and ice. Dealing with these issues day after day really starts to take a toll on the folks out there doing their best to keep the trains running on time, and after a while a thirty degree day starts to feel warm.

New for this winter, an inclement weather policy was developed and implemented, which has helped to make operations safer and more efficient in the winter months. While these policies and procedures do help to give structure to operations and serve as guidelines for everyone to follow, enough cannot be said about the employees that carried out these plans. We have learned some lessons along the way, which we will incorporate in our plans for next year, but overall everyone has done an excellent job working safely and keeping our scheduled railroad running at the same high performance levels that our customers have come to expect.



Chad Frederickson, engineer, and Kerry Kehler, conductor, look on as John Brown and Zach Simpson put the final touches on cleaning the snow from the switch. Near Haucks on February 7, 2014. Photo courtesy Hardcoal Chronicles.

The successes of the past few months can be directly traced to the good decisions that have been made by the employees in the field and the coordination of all the various departments at the Reading and Northern. Moving forward into the spring and summer, it is important that we stay focused and maintain the same level of situational awareness on the bright, sunny days of spring, as we did during the cold dark nights of winter.

WAR ON GRAFFITI

BY: TYLER GLASS, EXECUTIVE VP OPERATIONS

“Treat it like it’s your own backyard.” That is one of Andy Muller, Jr.’s favorite lines when he talks to the team about anything associated with railroad property. Whether it is trash thrown on the property, materials laying over the right of way, or illegal digging on the property, Andy’s point is that you would not allow it on your own property, therefore it cannot be tolerated on railroad property.

Railroad property is not just fixed assets, it is also rolling stock. Therefore it is not surprising that Andy has had a long standing desire to stop graffiti from appearing on rail cars. Anyone who has been around railroads, particularly in urban neighborhoods, would know that the graffiti problem has become progressively worse everywhere. In fact, it has become downright disgusting! Take a look at photographs of a mixed freight train in the 1950s and compare it to one of today’s trains, and you will see what I am talking about.

Graffiti is not an easy problem to address in an age of maximizing asset utilization and turning equipment quickly. However, the Reading and Northern has never been known to throw their hands up when faced with a challenge. Wayne Michel recently gathered together the company’s managers with the goal of developing a process to eliminate graffiti on RBMN owned railcars while we keep traffic moving.

“Treat it like it’s your own backyard.”

The team had many factors to consider when developing the process. Who would identify the problem? How is it reported? How and when is it fixed, and by whom? For a company with over 130 full-time employees, operating over 320 miles of track throughout nine counties,

the team had many obstacles to overcome. In the end, we developed a process that designated the responsible parties for inspecting, reporting, and removing the graffiti on each type of railcar. Brian O’Neal, our VP - Transportation, was put in charge of the overall project to ensure that all parties are working together.

During the meeting we also discussed graffiti in a broader sense. We noted that some of our facilities have also been vandalized. We agreed to work to eradicate graffiti on our bridges, signal boxes, and other equipment throughout the railroad.

To us, eliminating graffiti is yet another part of making sure we are protecting the environment and the communities we serve. It may not be on the top of the list of the biggest problems we face, but graffiti eradication will make the world a little nicer to live in. If you want to help us by reporting graffiti you see along our property you can do so by contacting me, or any of our managers so we can address it.

Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway

Conductor Takes the Polar Plunge!

BY: JOLENE BUSHER, RECORDS ARCHIVIST



Bill Solomon emerges from the frigid waters of Mauch Chunk Lake.



LGSR Conductor Bill Solomon plunges into Mauch Chunk Lake to benefit St. Joseph's Regional Academy in January 2014

RBMN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

BY: BEVERLY HESS, DIRECTOR OF EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Soon it will be time to send out information for anyone interested in the RBMN Scholarship Fund. This fund was created to provide student aid to the children of our full-time employees.

A letter will be sent via email and hard copies will be mailed to those who do not have an email address with all the details of eligibility in the beginning of April 2014.

If you are interested in applying and have not received this letter by April 15, 2014, please let me know as soon as possible and I will make sure you get all the information to apply.

PULL APART

BY: FRANCES KARYCKI, AVP REAL ESTATE



Frank Sebelin and Matt Minnich repairing a pull apart on the Lehighton branch.

Real estate operations typically occur at utility work sites in the field, and it is some of the everyday jobs on the railroad that prove to be the most exciting to see on the railroad. These jobs can range from welding a joint, installing a grade crossing, installing a tie, or repairing a tie plate that has come loose.

But in this case, while I was in the field this winter, the work I found absolutely fascinating was repairing a “pull apart.”

What is a pull apart?

A pull apart occurs when extreme cold temperatures contract the rail which causes the bolts in the joint to break and pulls the rails apart. This happens at the weakest part of the track, which is usually a joint. As we all know, this winter season brought extremely cold temperatures and our Maintenance of Way Department took on the task to fix pull aparts along our lines.

How do you fix it?

This is where pull aparts really catch your attention. In order to correct a pulled apart joint, you need the rail to expand or it will not reach the points it needs to connect in the joint. The MOW crews use burn ropes to heat the rail up to the installed rail temperature. Burn ropes are rolled out along the base of the rail and then the entire roll is lit on fire. As the fire heats up the rail, it makes the rail expand and allows the crew to close the gap at the joint, reinstall the bolts, and fasten the rail back in place to prevent it from contracting back. This is a diligent process that allows trains to continue to operate safely and efficiently.



Before being heated and repaired.



After being heated and repaired.

Showcasing the Past:

Preserving Your Railroad Photographs and Ephemera

BY: JOLENE BUSER, RECORDS ARCHIVIST

Railroaders take pride in their collections of old and new photographs, postcards, ticket stubs, timetables, and railroad maps – but are you protecting these artifacts for long term preservation? Photographs and ephemeral materials cannot stand the test of time without a little bit of preservation care.

These basic preservation steps can be easily accomplished and are worth the effort to protect your collection of railroad memorabilia!

- Colored and black and white photographs can be safely stored in acid free file folders interwoven with acid free interleaving paper
- Paper documents can be stored similar to photographs in acid free file folders
- Oversized documents – like railroad maps – can be stored in large format acid free file folders
- Remember not to crowd too many pictures or paper documents into one folder, and to keep pictures filed with other pictures, and paper documents filed with other paper documents
- To keep your file folders secured, store them in an acid free box or carton.
- Remember to never store pictures or paper documents in plastic bins, photo albums, or in laminate sleeves! Plastic will deteriorate the quality of your document over time!
- Store your documents in a place in your home where the temperature and humidity levels will be stable throughout the year – never store documents in your garage, attic, or basement! The change in temperature and humidity levels will quickly destroy your collection!



From the Collection of Jeff Knadler, Reading Company I10sa #2014 has its tender topped off with water and is ready for its next assignment on the Shamokin Division. This photograph was captured a short distance north of "Middle Yard" on the current Reading and Northern Main Line.

A collection of railroad memorabilia and ephemera is both a financial and a historical investment. You can protect your investment by taking these basic preservation precautions for little effort and minimal costs! Helpful suppliers of acid free file folders, interleaving paper, storage cartons, and other supplies include Hollinger Metal Edge (<https://www.hollingermetaledge.com/>) and Gaylord Brothers, Inc. (www.gaylord.com/). You can also find acid free file folders at <http://www.staples.com/>.



From the Collection of Jeff Knadler, an original Reading Company Photograph of Four Reading Company "F-Units" stand ready to depart St. Nicholas Yard with a train load of "Black Diamonds" for Newberry Junction. Today, this location is known as "Mahanoy City Yard" and is located on the Reading and Northern M&S Branch. This classic photo was captured on Wednesday, August 5, 1953.

2014 Brought Change to the Finance Department of the Reading and Northern

BY: ANDREA COLLER, VP FINANCE & CHRISTINA MULLER-LEVAN, VP ADMINISTRATION

Katie Bonner



Charles Darwin once wrote, "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."

The end of 2013 brought the retirement of our Purchasing Agent, Del Jean Saylor. None of us wanted to see her leave, however, her retirement forced change. We are excited about this change and feel it will greatly improve the Finance Department.

We would like to take this opportunity to share with you the changes made within the Finance Department and give you an overview of our staff and their roles.

Denise Kascur



Katie Bonner was looking for an opportunity to grow within the Reading and Northern. The beginning of 2014 was her chance! She moved from accounts payable into the exciting and challenging role of purchasing. Along with the new desk (which I suspect was her reason for applying for the position), she is now responsible for all of the Reading and Northern's bidding. As if that decision was not ambitious enough, she recently accepted the additional responsibility of co-managing our State projects along with Erik Yoder in the Maintenance of Way Department.

Diane Leiby



Kate's decision created a vacancy in our accounts payable department. We were fortunate to have Denise Kascur accept the Accounts Payable Clerk position. She is responsible for managing all of the accounts payable invoices for the Reading and Northern as well as its sister companies; in total she handles eight companies!

Elizabeth Neifert



There are three other individuals that did not have a recent change to their position, however without them the railroad would not collect money, employees would not receive paychecks, and financial reporting...well it just would not happen.

Diane Leiby is our Payroll Manager. Although her description is short and sweet, I would venture to say her hard work is enormously appreciated... especially every other Friday!

Phil Geschwindt



Elizabeth Neifert is our Accounts Receivable Manager. Liz is responsible for the billing and collections for the railroad and its sister companies. Andy Muller, Jr. might say this is the most important position!

Phil Geschwindt is our AVP of Accounting. He wears many hats, but his main focus is financial reporting. We are very fortunate to have such a friendly and accommodating group to work with us.

Thank you for all of your hard work, dedication, and being responsive to change.

Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway.

BY: TYLER GLASS, EXECUTIVE VP OPERATIONS & LAURA KENNEDY, PASSENGER DIRECTOR



The year 2014 is the tenth season for the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway and the twenty-ninth year of operating passenger excursions. This year, the LGSR has a full schedule of train rides and special events planned throughout the season.

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, 2013 was our best year to date for our passenger operations. We had great receptions for our Santa trains that we operated in Minersville and Tamaqua. So as you can imagine, we started to think about the potential for Santa trains and other excursions in the great communities we operate in throughout the nine counties served by RBMN. Even before the trains stopped running at the LGSR in December, we were already in the planning stages for the 2014 season.

It takes a great deal of planning to come up with the schedule for the year. In addition to our excursions, we also work with many communities and organizations who sponsor various excursions. The passenger team reviews the various proposals for excursions and makes the best possible decision while weighing demand, equipment, and staffing.

Revenue is not the only consideration when we think about our passenger business; there are many intangibles associated with the passenger business. The passenger operations allow us to have a more intimate interaction with our neighbors in the community, and it lets people see a different part of railroading. Whether it is seeing and riding behind an operating steam locomotive or riding the train with Santa Claus, the memories generated will last a lifetime.

Our equipment is something we take great pride in. We offer rides in standard coaches, open air cars, and we also have a full length dome car. We are constantly looking to add to and improve our fleet so we can have multiple sets of equipment operating on a given day. A third open air car is currently in the works, and will make its debut in early June.

Steam locomotive 425 is one of the stars of the Passenger Department. The 425 was built in 1928 when steam still ruled the rails. We have a very talented group of employees that performed the specialized maintenance

necessary to keep this beautiful old machine operating in tip-top shape. As I write this article, the locomotive is receiving extensive work on the piston valves. Many of the parts needed for any type of work on the locomotive are custom made and, therefore, projects can take some time to complete as we wait for the parts to be fabricated.

Another project this year at the LGSR is the updating and renovating of our gift shop. This shop will have a more open layout, improved lighting and accessibility. We are very excited to be taking the gift shop to the next level. So, let's look at the way the excursion season is shaping up.

On May 3, the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway is partnering with the Lackawanna and Wyoming Valley chapter of the National Railway Historical Society to run a photo freight excursion, called the "Vosburg Flyer." This rare-mileage train will be pulled by SD38 engines, and will include a variety of freight and passenger cars. The excursion is departing from the VFW in Duryea at 10:00 AM, and will travel over some branch lines, including a run to the Vosburg Tunnel. This trip will include some photo run-by stops. Please visit <http://laurelinesspecials.org> for more information and to purchase tickets.

On May 17, the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway will be partnering with the White Haven Rescue Unit to run an all-day excursion as a fund raiser for the organization. This trip will run from White Haven to Jim Thorpe for the Jim Thorpe Birthday Festival. Tickets for this ride are \$30 each and can be purchased from the White Haven Rescue Unit.

The Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway will begin its tenth season in Jim Thorpe on Memorial Day Weekend on Saturday May 24 and will run at 11:00 AM, 1:00 PM, and 3:00 PM on weekends and holidays through Sunday December 21, 2014. As we did last year, from Fourth of July Weekend through Labor Day, the LGSR will be running trains on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 11:00 AM, 1:00 PM, 3:00 PM, and 4:30 PM.

During the month of October trains will run seven trips a day on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays into the Lehigh Gorge State Park, and trains will

“The 425 was built in 1928 when steam still ruled the rails.”

Gearing Up For Another Great Season

Passenger train in Lehigh Gorge.

also be departing the Jim Thorpe Train station at 10:30 AM and 1:20 PM on Saturdays and Sundays for a ride to the Hometown High Bridge and back.

The LGSR will run two Pennsylvania Dutch Treat Trains in 2014. These very popular trains run from Jim Thorpe to White Haven and back, and they include a snack of Pennsylvania Dutch favorites, such as ring bologna and cheese, olives and pickles, pretzels, shoofly pie, and birch beer along with other beverages options. These rides are approximately 2-2.5 hours long, and are scheduled to depart the Jim Thorpe train station on May 30 and September 20 at 4:30 PM. Tickets for these rides are \$35 each.

On June 7 and 8, the Lehigh Gorge is pleased to offer our first-ever Bike Train in conjunction with Pocono Biking in Jim Thorpe. These trains will depart the Jim Thorpe train station at 10:30 AM and 2:30 PM on both Saturday and Sunday. Riders have the option of bringing their own bicycle onto the train or renting one from Pocono Biking. The one-hour train ride will drop bikers off in White Haven for a leisurely 25-mile bike ride back to Jim Thorpe through the Lehigh River Gorge. We are also offering round-trip train tickets for those who would like to enjoy the extended train ride through the gorge without the bike ride. Please contact the LGSR at 570-325-8485 or Pocono Biking at 570-325-3654 for more information and to purchase tickets.

On June 15, the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway will be running one-hour round-trip train rides from Tamaqua for their annual Summerfest at 11:00 AM, 1:00 PM, and 3:00 PM. The first ride is scheduled to go south to New Ringgold while the two afternoon rides will be going to the Hometown High Bridge.

We expect to be in Scranton on Labor Day weekend to participate in the Railfest at Steamtown National Historic Site.

On September 27, the LGSR will be running our annual one-hour round-trip train rides from Schuylkill Haven to Kernsville for the annual Schuylkill Haven Borough Day. These rides will depart from the Schuylkill Haven train station at 11:00 AM, 1:00 PM, and 3:00 PM.

Of course, the LGSR will be running its annual Autumn Leaf Train Excursions from Port Clinton to Jim Thorpe in October. On October 4 and 18, these rides will be pulled by diesel engines, and tickets are \$39 per person. On October 11 and 12, steam locomotive No. 425 will power the train, and tickets are \$69 per person.

In addition to its Santa Claus train rides in Jim Thorpe on Saturdays, Sundays, and Black Friday from November 28 through December 21, the LGSR is planning to run one-hour Santa Claus rides from various communities along the railroad, including the towns of Tamaqua and Minersville. More details will be released later in the season, so keep an eye on our website!

A few more events are in the early stages of development, so keep an eye out on our website and our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/LehighGorgeScenicRailway) for updates. For tickets or information about any of the above mentioned trips, call the Passenger Department at 570-325-8485, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM. Information about the company and our scheduled trips can be found on our website at www.LGSR.com. ♦



Red Creek Wildlife

BY: PEGGY HENTZ, PRESIDENT/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

There has been quite a bit of excitement this winter over owls. It started with the rescue and release of the great horned owl along the Tremont Branch at Thanksgiving, and continued with sightings of the snowy owl at the Reading Airport hangar around New Year.

Pennsylvania hosts eight species of owls of various sizes. Schuylkill and Berks counties have good habitat for owls and most of the eight species are present here. Red Creek has treated and released seven of the eight species over the years.

Some owls are quite common, like the great horned and eastern screech owls. Although rarely seen, these owls are quite vocal and boisterous, especially during their breeding months. Early nesters, the great horned owl sounds the booming hoots heard especially during the winter. The mournful, sometimes eerie, whistle of the screech owl is very prominent in spring, although can be heard year-round. Red Creek has received and released hundreds of these birds over the years. Several great horned and screech owls reside permanently at Red Creek and serve as foster parents or are used in education. The most famous of these is Gabby, our resident great horned owl since 1994.

The snowy owl only visits Pennsylvania during the winter when food supplies diminish in their arctic home. Because they are daytime hunters and prefer large open areas such as they would find on the arctic tundra, they often frequent airports, parking lots, and farm fields. Snowy owls have visited both the Reading and the Schuylkill County Airports over the years and each time it is a spectacle. The snowy owl has been the only species lucky enough to not need our help locally.

The barn owl is the most recognizable due to its heart shaped face, and although not listed as threatened or endangered, it is feeling the pressure of habitat loss. Due to the lack of large, hollow trees these birds often nest in old barns and silos. As older buildings disappear or are upgraded to modern farm buildings, further habitat loss is felt. Red Creek receives a few barn owls each year and has been fortunate enough to have released both adults and juveniles. We are always careful to place these in established territories where they are welcomed by farmers who supply nest boxes.

The saw-whet owl is the smallest owl in Pennsylvania and has been the subject of extensive study. These birds are often netted and banded in the winter months when they are migrating. One such owl was found in Wyomissing, stunned after flying into a building. The owl was banded prior to release. A few years later that same owl was netted and its band logged, informing us that our rehabilitation efforts are successful and can have a lasting effect for an individual animal.

A common, but not as well-known, owl is the barred owl. This deep-woods bird is fairly large but secretive. They are rarely seen and are extremely nocturnal but can be identified easily by their unique vocalizations. There is a stable population in Schuylkill and Berks counties and barred owls are occasional patients at Red Creek. One nesting pair of barred owls can be seen regularly in Nolde Forest southeast of Reading. The male of that pair was once a patient at Red Creek and had suffered a fractured pelvis after venturing into the city to hunt.

The short-eared owl is listed as endangered in Pennsylvania and is rarely seen this far southeast in the state. Few know nest sites have been identified. Winter is the best time to see one of these rare, northern birds as the population shifts in response to winter food shortages in the north. Like the snowy owl, the short-eared is active during the daytime and frequents open areas. It is medium sized owl with barely visible ear tufts and yellow eyes.

The long-eared owl is a threatened species in Pennsylvania but a breeding population has been identified in Berks County. This winter Red Creek received two females from Bern Township in Berks County. Since these birds often nest close together, receiving two females from the same area is promising for the Berks County population.

The first was a female who flew into a wall at St Joseph's Medical Center. Hospital employees rescued the bird and it was quickly admitted to Red Creek. Having suffered only a mild stun, it was released shortly thereafter in the Blue Marsh area. The second girl was not as lucky. She had been struck by a vehicle and lost part of her wing. She did survive however and now resides at Red Creek. She is currently being trained for our educational programs and will one day be an ambassador for wildlife, taking the message of protecting our environment to local school children.



Long-eared owls



2014 RBMN'S ANNUAL PICNIC AT KNOEBEL'S

BY: BEVERLY HESS, DIRECTOR OF EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

I just checked to see what I had written last year at this time to remind everyone about our upcoming picnic. Would you believe that the weather man had predicted a snow storm that would bring one to three inches? I also stated that we were all getting tired of the cold, windy weather. Well, little did I know what the winter of 2013 – 2014 would portend for us at that time. Today the weather man is predicting 6 – 10 inches of snow in the next few days. We have already had approximately fifty inches of snow this winter, so last year's winter was a cake walk compared to this winter.

So let's start thinking about warmer weather for our upcoming annual picnic at Knoebel's Amusement Resort in Elysburg, Pennsylvania on Saturday, July 19, 2014. We almost always have good weather and you can bet we will not have to cancel because of snow!

Save this date for you and your family to have a great time, good food, and fun rides for everyone. An announcement will be sent to everyone sometime in May explaining all the details to sign up. I hope to see all of you there that day!



Dave Evely and Andy Muller, Jr. pose with Penny the Skunk a few years ago when she came to visit the railroad for Christmas.

CONDOLENCES FOR "PENNY" THE SKUNK

Dave Evely and Gaylene Ebling would like to thank everyone from the railroad for their condolences and sympathy cards after they had to put Penelope "Penny" the Skunk to sleep on Valentine's Day due to liver failure. Both of us really appreciate all of your care and concern during this very sad time.

A FEW MOMENTS CAPTURED

OUR EMPLOYEE'S FAMILIES ENJOYING THE WINTER SEASON



(Left to Right) Katie, Kailyn, Quinn, and Tom Bonner spending quality family time with their delicious donut snowman.



Children of Erik and Deb Yoder's showcasing their snow masterpiece.
Left Enya (Chinese exchange student that never saw snow); Right Aubree (Daughter)



Lucy, daughter of Jon and Angie Barket, checking out how she's going to walk in that strange white substance.



Ben Cole's dog, Shara, standing guard of their special snow fort.



AJ and Kaia Muller, son and daughter of Aaron and Tia Muller, hitting the slopes in style!



Elliot, son of Matt and Deanna Johnson, having fun sledding!



Charlie, daughter of Wesley & Jaymin Westenhofer, hugging her giant snow friend!



Evan Westenhofer, son of Wesley & Jaymin Westenhofer, ready to throw a giant snowball at anyone coming his way!



David and Tristen, children of Ben & Carly Cole, ready for the 4-wheeler to take them for a wild ride.



Quinn, daughter of Tom and Katie Bonner just double checking that the snow doesn't taste like ice cream!



(left to right) Autumn and Kayla, daughter and friend of Crystal Arndt, frolicking in the mountains of snow outside their home.



Mindy and Wesley, daughter and son of Erik and Deb Yoder, taking a very appropriate seasonal picture.



Crystal Arndt's dog, Mama, loving the white stuff as well!



Reese, daughter of Christina and Justin Levan, sliding down on her belly, or face, whichever is touching the snow!



Sierra Levan, daughter of Christina and Justin Levan, crawling her way through a secret passage way.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

SPRING 2014

BY: CRYSTAL ARNDT, HR ADMINISTRATOR



I am pleased to introduce this quarter's "Spotlight Employee" - Jonathan Barket. Jon came to work for RBMN in May of 2003 as a Signal Maintainer within our Signal Department and became the Manager of Signals and Communication in October of 2009, to later be promoted to AVP of Signals and Communication in June of 2011.

Jon was born and raised in Lebanon, Pennsylvania and graduated from Lebanon High School in 2002. Prior to coming to work for RBMN, Jon was working at the Redner's Quick Shop in Wyomissing and was a Front End Supervisor at Kmart while attending Penn State Berks for Electrical Engineering.

Jon is married to his "gorgeous high school sweetheart," Angela, and has a fourteen month old "fun filled little girl" named Lucy. Also part of his family is Angela's twelve year old "energetic son," Cole. Jon and his family currently reside in Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania along with his two "very rambunctious cats" Nugget and Tiger.

In his spare time, Jon enjoys spending time with his family, especially their newest addition, Lucy. He is a member of the Reading Company Technical and Historical Society, and is the committee chairman of the traveling modular model railroad display. Jon also enjoys integrating computers to the model railroad to make a fully functioning signal and dispatching system in miniature size.

Jon would like to close by saying "I highly enjoy my job and position with new projects and adventures every day!"

(As the "Spotlight Employee," Jon will receive a \$50.00 gift certificate to dine at a local restaurant.)

WELCOME ABOARD

NEW EMPLOYEES — SPRING 2014



Ray Zweizig was recently hired as a Conductor within our Operations Department.



Alvin Rineer was recently hired as a Conductor within our Operations Department. He attended Wyomissing area High School. Prior to joining our team, Alvin was a Cook at McDonalds for one and a half years.



Tony Weachock was recently hired as a Conductor within our Operations Department. He attended Pottsville Area High School and Penn State Schuylkill Campus. Prior to joining our team, Tony worked at SAPA in the Pack/Load/Ship Department.

5-10-15-20-25 YEAR ANNIVERSARIES ACKNOWLEDGED

20 YEARS



Hire Date – March 9, 1994
Daren Geschwindt, AVP Customer Service

10 YEARS



Hire Date – January 12, 2004
Justin Levan, VP MOW



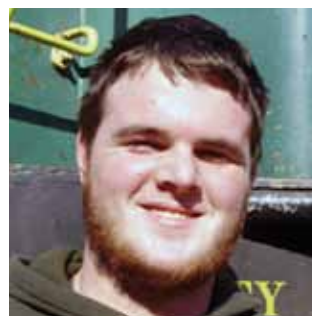
Hire Date – March 15, 2004
Tony Verbyla, Engineer

5 YEARS



Hire Date – March 16, 2009
Katie Bonner, Purchasing Agent

3 YEARS



Hire Date – February 16, 2011
Brent Jacob, Conductor

1 YEAR



Hire Date – January 07, 2013
Chris Goetz, Inspector/Track Worker



Hire Date – January 07, 2013
Zachary Simpson, Inspector/Track Worker

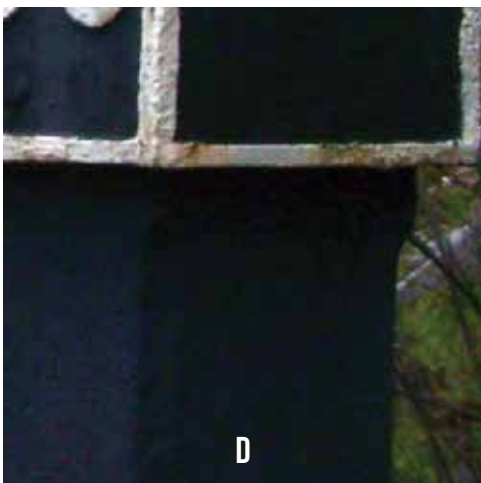
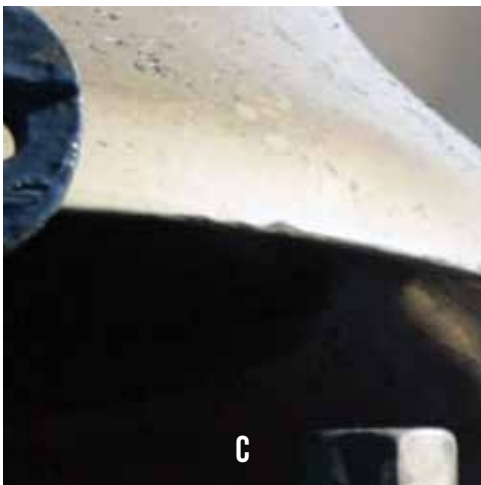
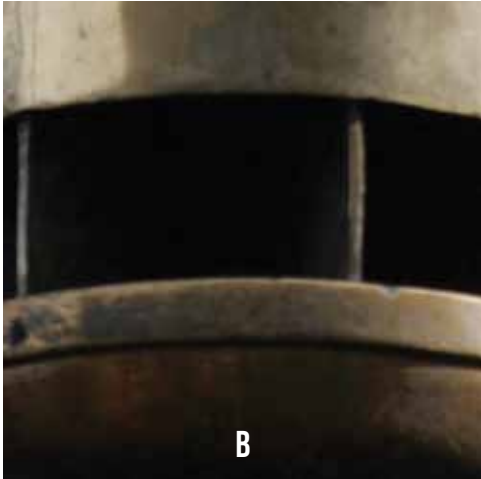
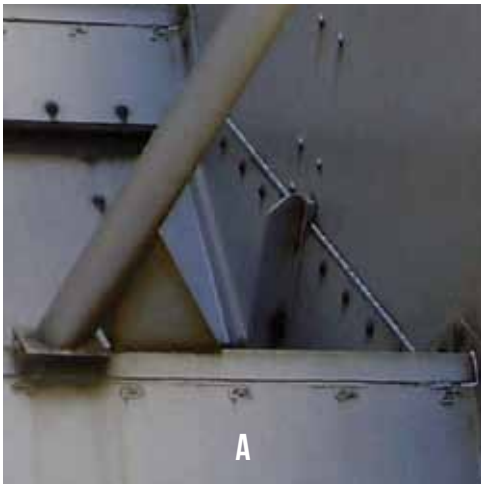


Hire Date – February 18, 2013
Jeffrey Sondag, MOW Mechanic



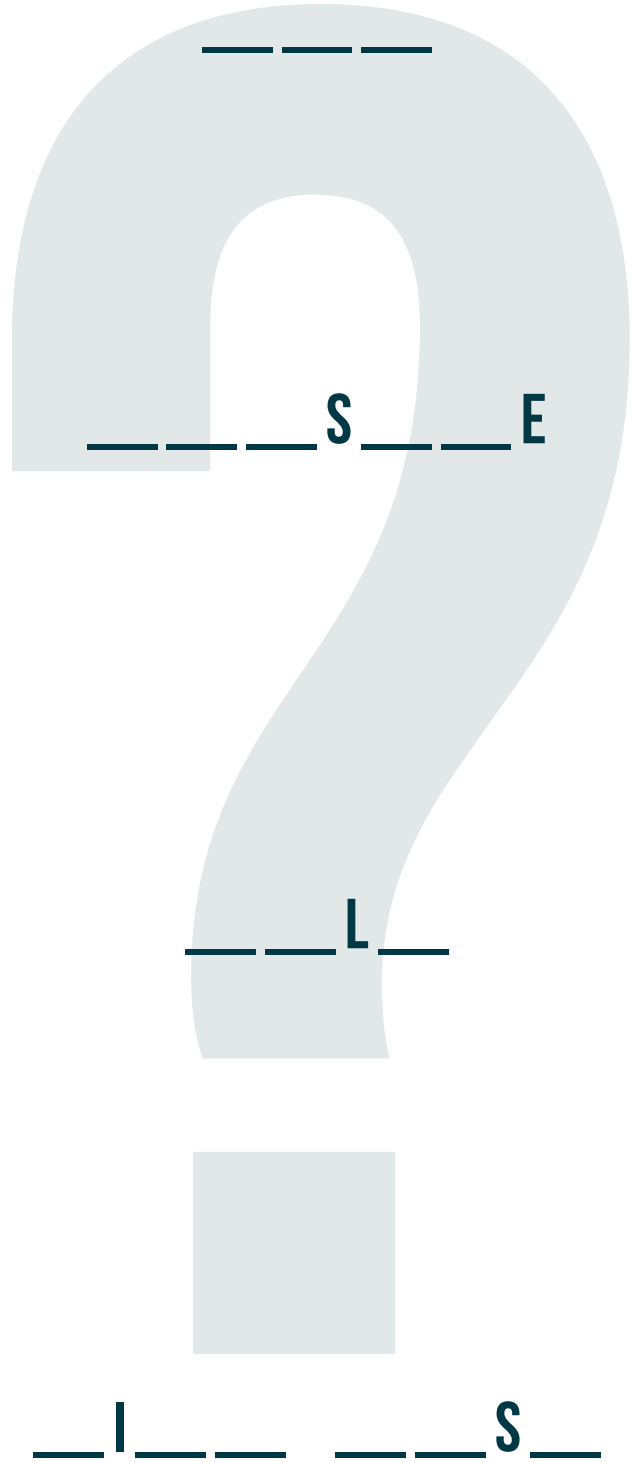
Hire Date – March 11, 2013
Alicia Borger, RJC Office Manager

PHOTO ZOOM PUZZLE



FILL IN THE BLANKS BELOW TO FIGURE OUT THE ZOOMED IN IMAGE.

R _ _ I _ _ IS _ _ AR _ _



“A Dream is a Wish Your Heart Makes”

BY: STEPHANIE CIBELLO

My name is Stephanie Cibello, and I am the wife of Curtis Cibello, a conductor for the Reading and Northern Railroad in the Pittston Coxton Yard in Duryea. This year we had the amazing privilege of choosing a vacation from the very generous Muller family. We decided to go on the Disney trip, since I have never been to the park. We knew, however, that it would not be a normal trip because we would have to make special preparations just for me. I am disabled, and I use forearm crutches as well as a wheelchair, and the wheelchair is becoming a more permanent fixture in my life.

I was born with an external rotation of my right leg. I have had multiple surgeries including a Tibial Osteotomy. During that recovery time I suffered mini strokes. They took a lot from me, and I lost a lot of use of my right side. My right leg now requires a brace. I had to learn to read again. I lost my ability to count money and change, which is embarrassing at stores because not too many people are patient in this world. Physical, occupational, and speech therapy became a regular part of my life for a few years.

During my recovery time I learned of an organization that I thought maybe able to help make mine and Curt's lives easier. Canine Companions for Independence is a nonprofit organization that provides free service dogs to individuals with special needs. I thought this could be it for me – at the time I had to rely on nurses to help me at home so Curt did not have to do everything for me and work a full time job.

I waited a little over two years to get the phone call from Canine Companions for Independence that a service dog was ready for me. When Curt and I started packing for Disney this year we got the call that we had a match! The timing was unfortunate, but the kind of service dog I needed only comes around about once a year or so. We did not want to wait another year, so Disney had to wait.

I was matched with a yellow Lab named Kirk. Kirk is amazing and I no longer require help from visiting nurses. I was sent home with fifty commands for him. He can pull my laundry down the hallway for me, help me to balance if I get too wobbly even to stand still. Kirk can retrieve my phone to call 911 in the case of an emergency. He can open doors for me, turn lights on and off, and pick up things off the floor that I still drop frequently.

At the training exercise with the Canine Companions for Independence to receive our dog, we shared with others Curt's fascinating job as a conductor and the railroad he works for. I explained the generosity of Andy Muller, Jr., and how it is all about family to him. Never had anybody heard of working for an exceptional bunch of people like the Muller family.

If Curt could not attend the two week training exercise with me then I would not have been able to take Kirk home. Thank you from the bottom of



Family photo the day before graduation.

my heart to all who helped make this possible. Thank you to Jason Trainor, who wrestled with the schedule, and to Curt's co-workers who worked his schedule for two weeks. Most importantly, thank you to the Muller family for their amazing generosity towards their employees. As unfortunate as it was to miss Disney World, I was able to gain my independence back and that feels just as good. Without the support of the Muller family and their commitment to allowing their employees to let their families come first, this never have happened. I hope one day Curt, Kirk and I can come down and show our appreciation. It may come as a slobbery wet dog kiss but I think Kirk appreciates ya'll just as much as Curt and I do!

Canine Companions for Independence needs puppy raisers! They are volunteers who raise puppies that will go on to become service dogs. They teach them basic commands like sit, stay, and introduce them to society. If you think you are interested in learning more, visit WWW.CCI.ORG to find out what you can do to help individuals with special needs.



Our graduating class, November 8, 2013 whom are all family now.

WHAT IS IN A NAME?

BY: JO EVANS AND ERIC QUIMBY, LGSR PERSONNEL

Plenty! When we adopted our dog, we pondered what to name him. Together, Eric, being a railroad fan and myself a children's librarian, we both agreed that finding an appropriate name would be important. At that time a recently published children's book, "Owney, U.S Mail Rail Mail Mascot," caught our attention. What a story to tell!

In 1888 a stray dog was found in a mail pouch at a railroad station in Albany, New York. The dog was friendly, needed a home, and was well liked by the railroad employees. Owen, the employee who found the lost pup, became the dog's namesake. The railroad adopted Owney, who traveled the railroad extensively across the United States. A map in the front of the book illustrates his travels from New York to Tennessee, to Florida to Iowa, to Montana to Washington, and to California. He also traveled abroad to Europe, Africa, and Asia. He was awarded medals for his service on the railroad which he wore on his collar. When Owney passed away he was preserved and he can still be visited at the Smithsonian Institution's National Postal Museum in Washington, D.C.

When we saw Owney's picture in the book, we realized that our new dog is very similar in appearance. We agreed to name our dog Owney and therein do honor to the original Owney by retelling his story.

Dogs are welcomed on the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway. Because of the time span which we would be leaving Owney at home is lengthy while we are working in Jim Thorpe, I received permission from Laura Kennedy, Passenger Director, to bring Owney with me while I work as clerk in the souvenir car. He stays behind the counter in the car. Owney is very sociable, and many visitors admire him and give him extra loving and smiles, especially from our younger customers.

Discussions often occur as to the origin of his name. I have learned that in addition to the book, a folk song has been composed on this noted dog of the past century! Thank you LGSR for allowing Owney to be shared with others!



Owney sits atop the LGSR 426 with his owner Eric Quimby, LGSR Car Host. Photo by LGSR Conductor Bill Solomon.



BY: BEVERLY HESS, DIRECTOR OF EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

The photo shown here takes me back to 1986, when the Blue Mountain & Reading Railroad (now the Reading, Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad) was just thirteen miles long and was just beginning to make a name for itself in Berks County. We were small, close knit, and willing to do anything to make our company grow. This is a crew from one of our Santa trains that ran from Temple to Hamburg, Pennsylvania and return.

Kneeling in front is Greg Pawelski, station agent. The three elves in front are from L – R: Jamie Wetzell, Tina Muller and Andy Wood.

The three gentlemen in ties with black hats standing are L-R: Grant Printz, Car Host, Frank Bryson, Conductor and Alan Hunsberger, Car Host; Shane Frederickson (in bib overalls) Fireman; Carla Hess (in Santa hat) popcorn server; Tom Hughes (in black hat) Car Host; Beverly Hess, Gen. Mgr.; Jeff Fry, Food Service; Carol Muller, Elf Manager; Andy Muller, Jr., Chairman & CEO; Aaron Muller (in Santa hat), Souvenir Sales; Charlie Kachel (light blue hat) locomotive engineer; Dennis Reppert, (in black hat mostly hidden) Conductor; Jerry Stump (in baseball cap) Food Service; Harold Clevestine, Car Host; Rick Kantner, Car Host; Therman Madeira, President and Passenger Agent; Paul "Sleepy" Vollmer, Fireman.

Even though we were very small, everyone was a paid employee, no volunteers.

Happy Birthday!

APR 3	DAREN GESCHWINDT	MAY 11	AARON SCHLOSSER
APR 5	ADAM STUMP	MAY 11	DEANNA JOHNSON
APR 6	CRYSTAL ARNDT	MAY 13	KYRA DALE
APR 7	JARED COLLER	MAY 22	GERALD FEISSNER
APR 8	JOHN WALAITIS	MAY 24	LISA MATZ
APR 10	KASEY HERMAN	MAY 26	MARIO DeMARCO
APR 11	LEO DAVIS	MAY 29	THERESA KATTNER
APR 12	AARON CASSEL	MAY 29	JEFFREY SONDAY
APR 14	GENE BUECHLE	MAY 31	KATIE BONNER
APR 15	AARON SNYDER	JUNE 2	WILLIAM SOLOMON
APR 16	JEFFREY BAVITZ	JUNE 3	CURTIS CIBELLO
APR 18	EDWARD PHILBIN	JUNE 4	TRISHA ANDERSON
APR 19	AARON MULLER	JUNE 5	ERIC QUIMBY
APR 23	KERRY KEHLER	JUNE 7	TIMOTHY BARNES
APR 30	EDWARD KOPECK, III	JUNE 8	ALEX MAURY
MAY 2	TONY WEACHOCK	JUNE 10	PETER COLLINS
MAY 6	JOANNE EVANS	JUNE 11	JEFFREY SEIDEL
MAY 8	VICTOR GAVINSKI, III	JUNE 12	CHRIS DRIESBACH
MAY 8	ANTHONY VERBYLA	JUNE 18	DENISE KACSUR
MAY 9	EUGENE BOYLE, JR.	JUNE 27	CHRISTOPHER PETERS
MAY 9	GORDON CLARK	JUNE 30	JASON WITNER
MAY 9	WES WESTENHOEFER		

PHOTO ZOOM PUZZLE ANSWER KEY



Rapid Discharge Car



Whistle



Bell



Mile Post



Eastern Painted Turtles
basking in Landingville, PA 2009

SPRING RENEWAL

BY: ELIZABETH NEIFERT, AR MANAGER

Despite spring's scheduled arrival within just a few short weeks of this writing, the current 5-day forecast is showing a top high of only 31 degrees. Although the guys in RBMN's Maintenance and Operations departments have experienced this winter's weather more than the rest of us, I think we could all agree this winter has been nothing short of extraordinary!

Nonetheless, whether you are happy or sad to see winter wind down, I got to wondering how some of our animal friends manage the extremes of winter. And since I find turtles fascinating, they will be the topic of my discussion.

First, you should know turtles are considered ectothermic, meaning their body temperature is dependent on their surroundings. When temperatures fall, turtles' metabolisms drop as well, causing them to slow down and less able to forage, and more at risk for predation. Nature works to protect them by allowing them to go into a state of hibernation, or brumation.

Turtles will find an appropriate and thermally-safe place to hide for the winter, called a hibernacula, where their metabolism continues to drop drastically. During this period, breathing through the lungs stops, heart rates slow, digestion stops and they cannot voluntarily move. Because they require some oxygen however, they are equipped with special areas in their throat cavity and oddly enough, their hind end that allow for them to 'breathe' in some oxygen.

Turtles hibernate in one of two areas:

Underground Hibernation

Even though Tortoisereserve.org states that nearly all North American turtles (even the terrestrial wood turtle) spend their winters underwater, those that do head underground do so by either burrowing their own haven, using rotted tree stumps, or using shelters dug by other animals.

The extent to which they go down is dependent on their area's climate. Turtles in the northern latitudes understandably must go farther beneath the earth's surface to escape freezing temperatures. Amazingly, some wild turtles have been found hibernating at depths of two feet!

Underwater Hibernation

Aquatic turtles, as well as many land turtles, head to the bottoms of ponds for their period of dormancy. Some of water's interesting qualities make it a fine choice for hibernation.

Because water both absorbs heat and cools slowly, it helps to maintain an environment not subject to wild fluctuations. Additionally, at 39 degrees Fahrenheit, water achieves its greatest density and sinks to the bottom of ponds, thus allowing for a safe, non-freezing haven; at all other temperatures, it rises. This means that so long turtles seek bodies of water deeper than the local frost line, they greatly improve their chances of survival.

Dangerous Sleep

Though some of us might think animals such as turtles are lucky to be afforded the time to 'sleep' during winter's reign, we should recognize it truly can be a time of danger.

Turtles hibernating on land are prey to animals that might find them, or, if the ground around them freezes deeply, they will freeze to death. Turtles that have sought refuge underwater risk freezing to death as well, if the pond or body of water they chose turns out to have been too shallow and freezes all the way.

Awakenings

As with many of us, when the days grow longer and sunshine begins to melt the ice away, our turtle friends will become active again. So when you happen upon a turtle this spring, take some time to appreciate just what that turtle has had to endure to be with us again. And finally, Happy Spring!



Box Turtle



Blanding Turtle

TURTLE-BITS

Most turtles hibernate for about 10-20 weeks, though up to 8 months is possible.

If temps rise above 50, turtles will not lie dormant.

Turtle hearts that might have beaten 40 beats a minute on a warm day in the summer can drop to one beat every 10 minutes in the winter.

Though turtles have been around for over 215 million years, many species today are endangered.

Turtles live on every continent except Antarctica.

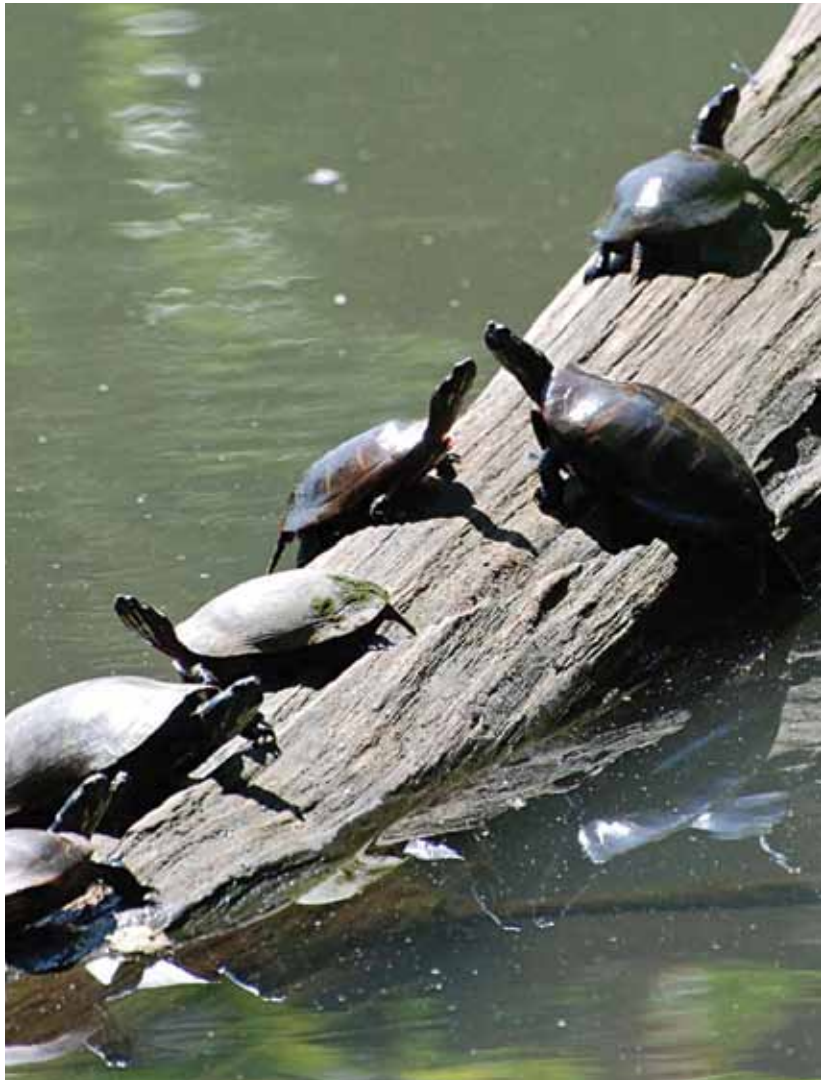
The largest known turtle to date is the leatherback sea turtle, which can weigh up to & over 2,000 pounds!



Box Turtle



Eastern Painted Turtles

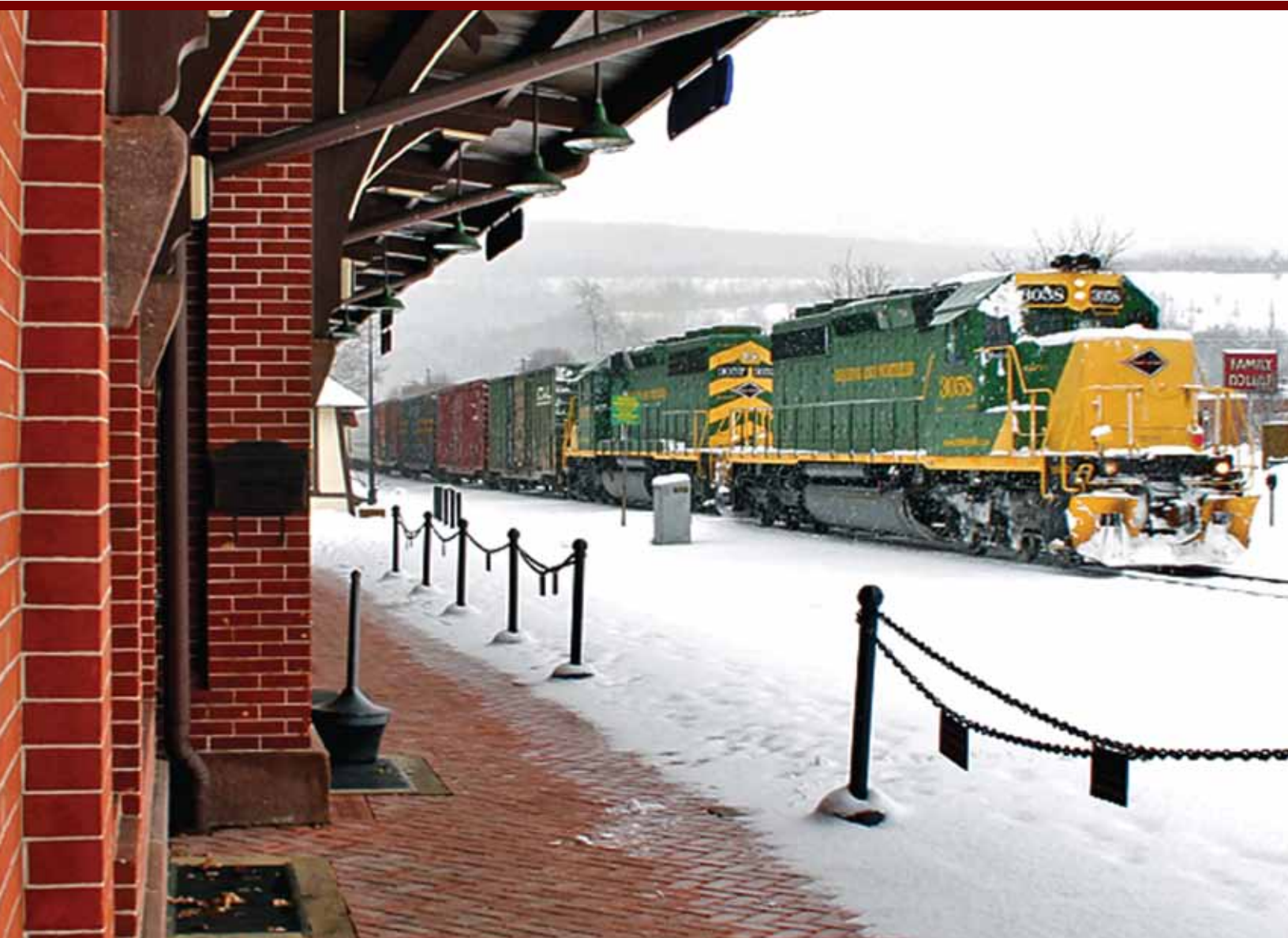


Eastern Painted Turtles

**Reading Blue Mountain &
Northern Railroad Company**

PO Box 218

Port Clinton PA 19549



With a fresh blanket of snow covering the area, the Reading and Northern “Mountain Job” comes through downtown Tamaqua with two SD40-2’s leading the way. The restored 1874 Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Tamaqua Station is the setting for this photo. The train will be tied down at “MY” to await the 16:30 “Reading Turn” (QARG) crew to come on duty. Photo by Jeff Knadler.