

R&N Magazine

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

WINTER 2019 | VOL. 21, ISSUE 1



TABLE OF CONTENTS



Keeping On Track.....	P. 3-4
RBMN Press Release.....	P. 4
2018 Coal Group Recap.....	P. 5
2018 Year in Review.....	P. 5
Forest Products Year in Review 2018.....	P. 6
RBMN Purchases New Transload Warehouse.....	P. 7-9
Ransom Warehouse Ad.....	P. 10
Facilities Review of 2018.....	P. 11
Operations Year in Review.....	P. 12
Safety Year in Review.....	P. 13
Signal Department Year in Review.....	P. 14-16
Looking Back & Building the Future.....	P. 17-21
Real Estate Departmental Restructure.....	P. 22-23
2018 Ridership Highlights.....	P. 24-25
Loyal Customers are Valuable Customers.....	P. 26
A Day in the Life of Line Service.....	P. 27
Red Creek Wildlife: Helping Woodpeckers Every Day.....	P. 28-29
Twenty Nine Years Ago.....	P. 30
Congratulations!.....	P. 30
Employee Spotlight.....	P. 31
R&N's Family Recipes.....	P. 31
R&N Helps Deserving Pets Find a Home.....	P. 32
RBMN 2019 Calendars for Sale.....	P. 32
John Byassee's New Addition.....	P. 33
Happy Birthday!.....	P. 33
RBMN at Work.....	P. 34-35
Welcome Aboard.....	P. 36
Anniversaries.....	P. 37
Wellness Corner.....	P. 38-39

COVER PHOTO: Friday January 11, 2019, was the first day of service to the Ransom Warehouse transload facility recently acquired on October 31, 2018. Pictured together are Operations, Maintenance of Way, and Facilities crews. Onboard locomotive: Tom Cook, Andy Muller, Jr. (on steps), James Cerulli, Rian Nemeroff, John Smolczynski. In front of locomotive: Tyler Glass, Ray Chippa, Chris Goetz, Russ Monroe, Josh Rodney, Matt Mizkoski, Ryan Rupprecht, Brad Handling, Ryan Davis, Randy Reber, Steven Balthaser, Cole Handling, Tim Billet, Ray Schwenk.

EDITORS
JOLENE BUSHER • SABINE FIDLER

ALL PHOTOS ARE THE PROPERTY OF THE RAILROAD UNLESS OTHERWISE MENTIONED. THIS MAGAZINE IS PROUDLY PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER.

KEEPING ON TRACK



Friday, January 11, 2019 was the first day of operations at the newly acquired Ransom Transload Facility.

BY: WAYNE A. MICHEL, PRESIDENT

At our recent company holiday party one of our guests asked me, "How do you do it?"

I knew what he meant. He had just heard Andy Muller and I spend 40 minutes talking about the company's 2018 accomplishments and showing pictures of same. And while 2018 was pretty special it could also be said that there was a sameness in our presentations because each year we break records for freight cars and excursion visitors transported.

Our pictures this year were of our new warehouse, our new pipe unloading facility, our Hazleton Shaft project (which won a shortline marketing award in 2018), our new passenger depot at Outer Station, our new Pittston Yard office addition, and many of our signal projects.

So, this is how I answered our guest.

"There are three basic reasons for our success. First, we take care of our customer. Second, we take care of our employees. And, third, our owner has the guts and brains to constantly invest in the railroad."

I know these points seem obvious, but the reality is it takes great discipline to stay focused on those three objectives. It requires taking the long-term view over short-term gains and it takes a transparent sort of management that tells customers and employees what it is going to do and then delivers on the promises.

For example, lots of companies, including railroads, talk about customer service. The question is whether they consistently walk the talk. We do. Reading & Northern guarantees our customers a two-hour service window. We began this program years ago and since then we have met that guarantee over 98% of the time.

Think about that. Regardless of weather, delays

caused by customers or derailments, Reading & Northern delivers the customers' traffic within its two-hour window 98+% of the time.

And let's be clear, this window is designed to meet the customers' needs. Lots of railroads talk about service windows but those windows are often designed around when the railroad says it can deliver. Our schedule is based on what the CUSTOMER says it needs. We met with every customer, and with every new customer, and we discussed what would work and together we designed a service plan. And then our Operating team went out and met that plan.

We also offer every customer 5 days a week service, double switches, storage capacity, and reasonable demurrage rates. And in a further effort to meet our customers needs we have expanded our transloading options by purchasing a 83,000 sq ft warehouse, starting an in-state trucking company and opening additional transload locations. Each and every day all of the employees of the Reading & Northern prove that the customer comes first.

The main reason we are able to keep our customers happy is that we keep our employees happy. At our holiday party many employees and their spouses came up to me to say thank you. I could tell they were offering genuine appreciation for the fact they had a very good job at a growing company that has always taken care of its employees. In our corporate history we have never laid a person off or furloughed employees. Even during the recession, we kept all our employees on the payroll with excellent benefits.

These days lots of companies are desperate for help and are promising good pay and benefits. But we are different because Andy Muller from day one made it a core tenant of the company

that employees would be treated like family. All of our fulltime employees have the same healthcare as he and his family. Andy has shared his success with the entire company and the employees return his loyalty with their own. That is why we have almost zero employees leave us for other positions. Our goal is for an employee to retire from the Reading & Northern after a long and healthy career.

Having great employees is a good start to providing great customer service. A critical part of that magic formula is ongoing investment in your company. At Reading & Northern putting back into the company has been Andy Muller's modus operandi for as long as I have known him.

There's a saying that a little goes a long way. Andy Muller has expanded on that at RBMN. His motto appears to be, "a little goes a long way, but a lot goes further."

Andy is always investing in the company. Coming out of a Class 1 environment I initially found his investment strategy hard to fathom. He didn't wait till a bean counter told him that his return on investment would be paid back in a specific period of time or that the purchase met an internal capital hurdle rate. Instead Andy used the skills he honed as a commodity trader and purchased based on instinct. And his instincts have proven time after time to be golden.

Take for example his decision to buy a barely used branch line from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Pennsy Branch. Miles of track went basically nowhere with no active customer for the last few miles. Instead of cannibalizing the track and making millions scrapping it he kept it in place.

Continued on page 4.

Continued from page 3.

And in a few years when the recession hit and companies needed a place to store their empty rail cars Reading & Northern was able to put the asset to good use. At various times we have had more than 600 cars lined up back to back along that line earning good daily storage fees.

This year we saw another example. For well over a year we had been considering building or purchasing a warehouse to use for our growing woodpulp storage business. Dennis Shaffer had found a good location and begun discussions but we did not think the time was right to execute. After Dennis retired Andy and I decided to go for it and I quickly made a deal. Within days of closing on the purchase Rian Nemeroff got a call from a colleague in the Forest Products industry wanting to know if we could store over

150 carloads of material for a short term. Before our purchase the answer would have been NO. But now the answer was yes even though the warehouse needed work done to the rail siding and the building before we could begin using it. As detailed in Daren Geschwindt's story on p.7 Reading & Northern went to work and got the facility open for business in record time. And this one deal, that came out of the blue and before we had even advertised for business, will provide us with good business months ahead of our originally scheduled grand opening!

Andy is a true entrepreneur. We just purchased four more locomotives at a CSX auction in December even though we don't currently need them. We are upgrading our signal system and building a new Nesquehoning Bridge because these moves will improve our operation for years to come. The moves are not critical to our

existing operation but they are an investment in our future.

And our investments will not slow in the future. Already on tap for 2019 is purchase of a rail train, completion of the Nesquehoning Bridge with a RBMN price tag of \$4 million, purchase of hundreds of coal cars for our growing coal business, and installation of 8 switches and two miles of track for four different customer locations. And that's just the stuff we know about today.

So, when people want to know how the Reading & Northern keeps growing year after year you all now know the answers. If you take care of your customers, take care of your employees, and constantly invest in your business you will be able to keep on track. ♦

"The Road of Anthracite" FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Reading & Northern Breaks All Traffic Records

Port Clinton, PA – January 8, 2019

Reading & Northern Railroad (R&N) broke all of its records for revenues, freight carload traffic and passenger excursion guests in 2018.

Ending the year with double digit growth in both freight and passenger revenue R&N was able to continue its unprecedented streak of annual growth.

Once again, the movement of anthracite coal showed the most growth. R&N's coal business grew in response to increased demand by domestic Electric Arc Furnace Steel producers. This growth was enough to overcome losses in certain lanes due to fires at an originating coal processor and one of its key destination customers as well as a decline in the movement of export coal to the Ukraine.

2018 was the year when R&N began to see the true promise of delivering dried coal to steel producers. In 2017 R&N began service to Hazleton Shaft, a project that took 7 years to reach fruition. In 2018 Hazleton Shaft originated over 1300 carloads of business, most of it going to domestic steel producers. R&N business out of Hazleton Shaft, now known as Atlantic Coal, is set to dramatically increase in 2019 and beyond. Another coal dryer, Kimmel Coal, has gone through bankruptcy procedures and has come out much stronger as part of the Rausch Creek family of companies. Rausch Creek has huge coal reserves, sits right on R&N's Good Spring branch, and is very strong financially. Reading Anthracite suffered a fire at its coal dryer in 2018 but is now open for business with the ability to produce more dried coal than ever. And finally, we have begun working closely with Mid-Continent, a long-time major supplier of non-anthracite products to steel mills. In 2018 R&N handled over 1000 cars for Mid-Continent and that number is expected to increase significantly.

This growth in the coal business reminds all that

R&N truly is "The Road of Anthracite."

R&N success covered other commodities. Forest Products business remains its largest single source of income. In furtherance of handling that business, R&N recently purchased its first warehouse in Ransom, PA. This warehouse will allow woodpulp and other forest products producers to ship their raw materials by rail off of Norfolk Southern or Canadian Pacific origins to a central location in northeast PA from where it can be shipped out by rail or truck. Within days of announcing the purchase R&N was approached by a new customer, which promptly took advantage of the site to stage over 150 carloads of product in advance of expected price hikes. All of this was business R&N would not have handled if not for this purchase.

The warehouse acquisition is part of a broader R&N strategy to get more involved in transloading and distribution services. In addition to acquiring the warehouse R&N also opened a new transload site for pipe and went into the intra-state trucking business in 2018.

As good a year as R&N had hauling freight, its success in the passenger excursion business was even more notable. In 2018 R&N, and its sister company Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway, smashed all of its ridership records. In 2018 143,000 people had the pleasure of riding in one of R&N's many passenger train offerings.

The continuation of growth year after year at R&N does not come naturally. It takes hard work from a dedicated team. In 2018 R&N added 18 men and women to its ranks and now employs well over 250 people.

Led by its entrepreneurial owner/CEO, Andy Muller, Jr. R&N continued to invest in the future. "Our customers in both the freight and passenger worlds

demand more service. That's why we purchased a warehouse and built more freight facilities this year and that is why we opened Outer Station in North Reading and expanded our passenger offerings this year. I will continue to give our employees the tools they need to succeed, and I will continue to take our profits and invest them into making our freight and passenger experience second to none."

On tap for 2019 is even more investment into the railroad. Four large customer development projects are already booked requiring construction of eight switches and two miles of new sidings. In December the company purchased four additional locomotives and it plans on purchasing 150-250 additional freight cars in 2019 for its growing coal business. As Muller explains, "To grow the business and satisfy your customers you have to invest. We invest in our people and in our infrastructure. That's how we provide a safe, dependable service day in and day out."

And that's how the Reading & Northern Railroad continues to grow each and every year.

Reading & Northern Railroad, with its corporate headquarters in Port Clinton, is a privately held railroad company serving over 70 customers in nine eastern Pennsylvania counties (Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Northumberland, Schuylkill and Wyoming). It has expanded its operations over the last 30+ years and now handles well over 30,000 carloads of freight and 120,000 excursion train riders over 340 miles of track. Reading and Northern operates both freight services and steam and diesel-powered excursion passenger services, owns almost 1,300 freight cars, and employs over 200 dedicated employees. Reading & Northern has repeatedly been honored as one of the premier railroads in the nation. ♦

2018 Coal Group Recap

BY: WILLIAM CLARK, SENIOR VP COAL

For RBMN, 2018 continued positive results in the coal group from 2017. Even with reductions in export shipments and interruptions at two of our mines, carloads increased by double digit rates. We expect our domestic shipments to continue to grow in 2019 and may see a strong export market as well.

The main consumers of anthracite in the United States are Electric Arc Furnace (EAF) steel producers. Anthracite is used to increase the strength of steel and because of its' chemical composition, saves the steel mills in electricity and maintenance costs. As steel production grows at US EAF mills, demand for PA Anthracite should increase as well. In fact, domestic steel production (million short tons) grew by 16.2 million tons from 2016 to 2018, from 86.5 to 102.7. Over those same three years our coal carloadings have increased 67%!

Without getting too political it is fair to say that steel demand is being fueled by manufacturing growth driven by deregulation, tax fueled economic growth, and the impact of steel tariffs. In short, domestic steel production is up, EAF mills are increasing market share and capacity rates are up (signaling potential capacity increases). All these foreshadow positive changes for our producers.

So how is RBMN participating in the steel business? For starters RBMN is now blessed with four coal producers having invested in coal drying plants. At present the three major producers are

Hazleton Shaft, which partnered with Hiller Carbon to build a new state-of-the art dryer a couple years ago, Reading Anthracite, which has just reopened its dryer after a silo fire earlier this year, and Rausch Creek Coal who just completed the purchase of Kimmels Coal from bankruptcy at the end of 2018. Our on-line producers have succeeded in greatly expanding their market share, which in turn helps our car loadings.

One particular example of teamwork is SDI Butler. Working with Hiller Carbon and Norfolk Southern we were able to devise a routing the local NS TBT (Thoroughbred Bulk Terminal) in Ft. Wayne, IN. In 2018 volume increased from 203 cars to 825. This terminal has been so successful that NS is using our model as a template for other opportunities in Indiana, Virginia, and South Carolina.

Another development this year that will soon pay dividends is that Kimmels Coal was purchased in bankruptcy by Rausch Creek partners. Rausch Creek has long held bountiful reserves right along our railroad near Good Spring. With Rausch Creek's financial strength and coal reserves we expect there will be growth in years to come.

In addition to our on-line customers we have also entered into an excellent relationship with another company that delivers dried anthracite to steel mills. Mid Continent has long been a big player in delivering carbon to steel mills. Recently they decided to start shipping Pennsylvania Anthracite by rail. Their model is different.

They buy wet coal and have it railed to a series of satellite dryers closer to steel mills. We have been pleased to work with them to move unit trains of wet coal to inland port facilities where it is offloaded and barged to dryers near steel mills. We handled over 1000 carloads with them in 2018 and we expect that business to grow dramatically.

Even our export business is beginning to get aimed at foreign steel manufacturers. Although 2018 was a soft year for exports, especially as the Ukraine did not purchase American anthracite this winter, we see positive trends for the use of Pennsylvania anthracite for international steel production.

Putting it all together things are looking good... unless there is an economic slowdown. As has been the case for years, RBMN's coal business is very heavily dependent on international events.

Even so I am optimistic 2019 will continue our growth. Investments Andy Muller has made and continues to make, combined with service that is second to none, make the job of growing our coal business much easier. Our expanding customer base and partnership with our mines and other key partners will provide RBMN with many new opportunities. I expect 2019 will continue the cycle of increased carloads, expanded business relationships and additional investment. These will set RBMN up for continued growth into 2020 and beyond. The Road of Anthracite is back! ♦

2018 Year in Review

BY: DANIEL R. GILCHRIST, EXECUTIVE VP MARKETING & SALES

Another year has come and gone and time for another review of our major focus which is always on our efforts to develop new business on the railroad.

We do that for existing customers of course but we always need to be looking for new customers as well...remember Techneglass or Berks Products? These were good sized customers now long gone. Our coordination with Penn's Northeast and the Can Do organization has been very helpful to make us aware of potential customers looking for expansion or relocation sites on our railroad. These groups are tied into the Governor's action team which helps companies looking for good sites to locate or expand. The relationship with these folks has given us a larger exposure and more opportunities to show what RBMN can do with our customer service and site development assistance. This last year we started off in January

working on twenty six projects and my latest count at the present time is still thirty projects!

We have had some good successes announced in 2018, like IRIS locating in Humboldt, our new pipe yard in Penobscot, and a new warehouse in Ransom. IRIS should break ground in 2019, the pipe has begun to arrive at Penobscot and the new warehouse has just opened.

Some of the projects have dropped off the list of course and another few are admittedly long shots but as you know, we don't give up easy and are willing to work on these for the long term. It is not unusual for some of these projects to take three to five years to develop. They can easily go from "active" to "dormant" and back to "active" again.

The good news of course is that we continue to add additional new projects into the mix as well. As usual some of these are smaller and some are

pretty big. Some will never happen and others will happen but may take years.

As noted by Daren Geschwindt in his article on our new warehouse in Ransom, we are often working on transloading options for customers not directly served by rail. Our portfolio of transloading options at Cressona, Penobscot, Old Forge and Ransom have been some of our biggest successes of late. Of the thirty projects on the books at this time at least eight of them involve some kind of transloading operation.

These projects may not involve as much actual building infrastructure, but they do involve a fair amount of unloading equipment, ramps, docks, track and other infrastructure to make the logistics work. Our additional capacity, and aggressiveness to help put these facilities together are what give us a good shot at making these successful. ♦

Forest Products Year in Review 2018



Train PIME traveling north along Coxton Road in Duryea on a snowy winter's morning. The temperature was just right for the snow to melt at lower altitudes. Photo by Anthony Verbyla.

BY: RIAN J. NEMEROFF, VP FOREST PRODUCTS

Reading & Northern Railroad is known as “the road of anthracite”, but as important as coal is to the railroad’s past and future the facts show that our Forest Products business provides more carloads and revenue than any other market segment. At RBMN Forest Products includes wood pulp, paperboard, recovered paper, printing paper, lumber, wood panels, crane mats and wallboard/sheet rock. In 2018, this group accounted for 31% of RBMN’s carloads, or 9,925 carloads. Our business actually declined a bit in 2018 due largely to the loss of a directory paper receiver that received many hundreds of rail cars from Canada that was used to print yellow page telephone books. We knew this was a decaying business but did not project it to die abruptly in 2018. Nonetheless, we had a good year in 2018 and set the stage for business growth in 2019.

Some of our future growth will come from the expansions that occurred this year for many of our on-line customers. Many customers added finishing lines, or did corrugator replacements and corrugator upgrades. If you know corrugators

you know we are talking about corrugated boxes and the so-called Amazon effect. With the huge demand for on-line shipping there is a growing demand for boxes and our customers are working to fill that demand.

An interesting side benefit for us from the expansions is that oftentimes our customers needed to take space from their warehouse space for raw materials. We were positioned to help address that problem with our huge expansion in our warehousing capacity with the purchase of our warehouse in Ransom, see Daren Geschwindt’s article on the next page. We anticipate that our warehouse may sell out quickly and we are already thinking about expanding the existing building as we do have the real estate to grow.

Remarkably before we even opened our new warehouse, called Reading Railroad Transload, a non-customer industry friend called asking if we could help them take advantage of market conditions and buy more raw material at 2018 prices to offset price increases in 2019. To assist that NEW customer, we accelerated our

infrastructure work at the warehouse and began receiving inbound railcars in January 2019. This new business came to us months before we even had planned to be open for business! In 2019 and beyond much of our focus will be on getting more business for this warehouse. For more information on that warehouse please see the advertisement on p.10. We think the warehouse business is going to explode as customers are forced to look at options to interstate trucking and they are forced to deal with the moves by Class 1 railroads to reduce free time and significantly increase demurrage costs.

In closing, the Forest Products business at Reading & Northern is very important to us and we will continue to work with our customers, new and old, to grow that business. We will provide excellent service including guaranteed two-hour service delivery, double switches, weekend service if needed, reasonable demurrage rates and excellent warehouse options to help our customers serve their customers. Come grow with us! ♦

RBMN Purchases New Transload Warehouse

BY: DAREN GESCHWINDT, AVP MERCHANDISE TRAFFIC

Over the last few years, Transload Operations have become an increasingly important component of the Reading & Northern’s business model. RBMN first entered the transload business in 2012, when Dennis Shaffer set up our Cressona Transload, to handle the trans-loading and storage of aluminum ingots. Since that time, we have expanded to include additional transload facilities at Penobscot and Old Forge, and handle other materials, which include baled woodpulp, aluminum logs, wooden crane mats, and steel pipe.

We have found that the transloads are a great way to extend our market reach to non-rail served customers, which allows them to enjoy the economic benefits of shipping by rail. In other cases, customers want to bring material into the facility by rail, store it for a period of time, and then ship it out by rail to the final destination. Our facilities fill a critical link in the logistics chain for the customer, while enabling RBMN to handle the traffic by rail.

In October, we purchased an 83,000 square foot warehouse in Ransom, Pennsylvania. When originally constructed, the building had a rail siding, and a 400 foot long interior rail dock. However, over the years, the building had changed ownership, and over twenty years ago, the rail dock was filled in to create additional warehouse space.

The purchase, and set-up, of this warehouse has truly been a team effort, with many departments having a hand in the process. Our Transload, Customer Service, Maintenance of Way, Operations, Real Estate, Finance, and Police Departments have all handled various aspects of the project.

On October 31st RBMN purchased the building from Penn Foster, and developed a plan to work closely with them while they transferred their operations to one of their other facilities in the Scranton area. Over the course of the next three and a half months Penn Foster would move out of the building, and RBMN would prepare the area for our use. Much work went into preparing the building. When we took ownership, the building was filled with metal racking, conveyor lines, small offices, and various other items, all of which needed to be removed to create a clear floor space to warehouse material. In addition, a switch and track needed to be built, doors installed, and the concrete and dirt fill needed to be removed from the building to re-establish the rail dock.

Work began in November by clearing the brush around the building, and from the area where the siding would be built. Once the brush was removed, you could clearly see where the rail doorway had once been located.

Ground needed to be removed where the siding was to be built, in order to allow the siding to enter the building at the proper elevation. When the backhoe started removing ground from the area, they discovered that the track was still in place. To everyone’s surprise, the rail siding was intact outside of the building, albeit buried under four feet of ground. It turned out that when the previous owner filled in the rail dock, they had only covered up the rail siding, instead of tearing it out. Once the ground was removed Maintenance of Way could get to work restoring the track. Over the course of two weeks in December, they installed a new switch on the Susquehanna Branch, built new track from the switch to the existing siding, and rehabbed the siding up to the building.

Continued on page 8.



Alex Scubelek Jr. uses a backhoe to remove ground at the Ransom warehouse, and discovers that the track is still in place, and was just buried below four feet of ground. Brad Handling, Chris Goetz, and Jason Winwood look on.



Brad Handling, Ray Schwenk, and Ray Chippa work to disassemble racking at the Ransom warehouse.



Ray Schwenk and Ray Chippa stack pieces of racking as Steve Balthaser looks at a rack to be disassembled. All racking was disassembled and palletized for ease of handling.



View of the Ransom siding after the ground was removed.



Ryan Davis looks as Josh Rodney works on the track. Shawn Slusser, Matt Minnich, and Alex Scubelek, Jr are visible in the background.



Matt Minnich, Shawn Slusser, and Josh Rodney are spiking track, as Duane Zimmerman passes in the background.



Matt Minnich is nipping the tie as Josh Rodney starts the spikes with a spike maul. Shawn Slusser waits with the hydraulic spike gun, to drive the spikes into the rest of the way into the ties. Alex Scubelic, Jr. is seen operating the excavator in the background.



MOW forces installed this new switch at Ransom to reconnect the warehouse siding to the main track. The switch was installed in only five days.



MOW forces built a new switch and approximately 150 ft of track to connect to the warehouse siding.



MOW forces are seen building track, to connect the existing siding to the main track switch.



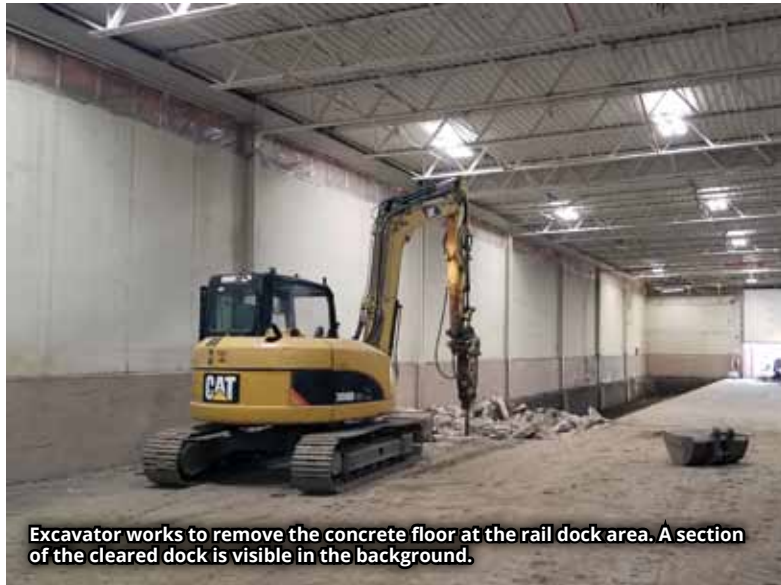
Jason Witner gives a big thumbs-up at the Ransom construction site.



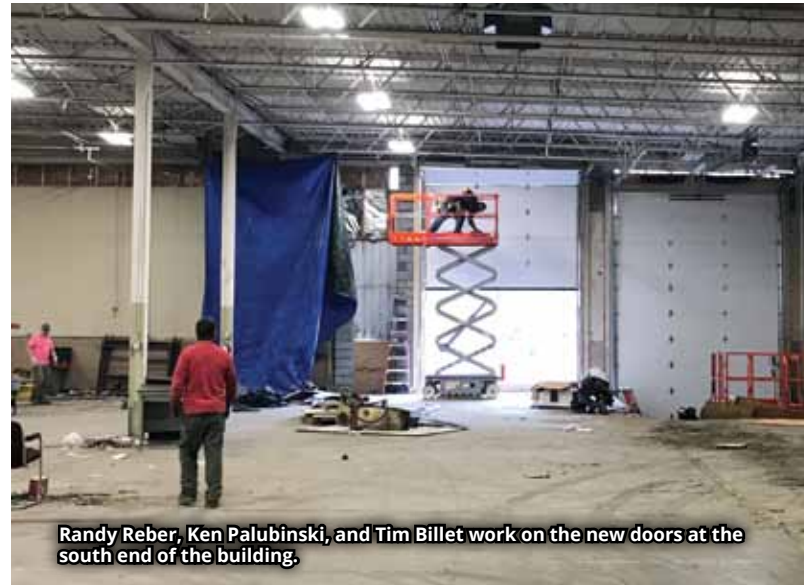
Alex Scubelek, Sr uses a backhoe to move a piece of rail for the Ransom siding.



An excavator was used to remove the eight inch concrete floor and ground that was used to fill in the old dock over years ago.



Excavator works to remove the concrete floor at the rail dock area. A section of the cleared dock is visible in the background.



Randy Reber, Ken Palubinski, and Tim Billet work on the new doors at the south end of the building.



Here we see the new doorway and track at the Ransom warehouse. The concrete was removed to expose the existing track below. In the foreground you can see a section of the concrete floor that is yet to be removed. The new switch and track are visible in the distance.

Continued from page 7.

While all of this was occurring outside, the Facilities and Transload employees were hard at work inside the building. The team began systematically disassembling the thousands of square feet of racking inside the building. The

crew disassembled the racks, stacked and banded the components on pallets, and consolidated the pallets into one area of the building, in order to clear the floor space at the dock area. During this time, Randy Reber and Ken Palubinski were also at work cutting openings for doorways in the south wall, and preparing for the installation

of the doors. Openings were cut for the twenty foot high rail-bay door, a twelve foot garage door, and a standard man-door, and the doors were installed on December 21st.

Once the floor was cleared and the doors installed, the most exciting aspect of the project could begin which was the excavation of the

dock area. On December 22nd our contractor began the work of removing the concrete and fill material from the dock area. After finding the track intact outside of the building, we were hopeful that we would be fortunate to find the same situation inside the building. It didn't take long to discover that this was indeed the case,

and the track was intact throughout the entire length of the 400 foot long interior dock. It was like getting an early Christmas present.

As I write this article, the dock excavation is nearly complete, and the Facilities team is continuing to free up additional floor space in order to ready the building to receive railcars of material for

storage. The Transload staff has acquired the necessary equipment, and developed plans for the storage and handling of material. The set-up of this warehouse has truly been a team effort, and by the time you read this article, we will be unloading the first railcars in this new facility. ♦

Reading Railroad Transfer, LLC

Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad

Ransom, PA Warehouse

34 Main Street, Ransom, PA

www.RBMNRR.com

Warehouse details

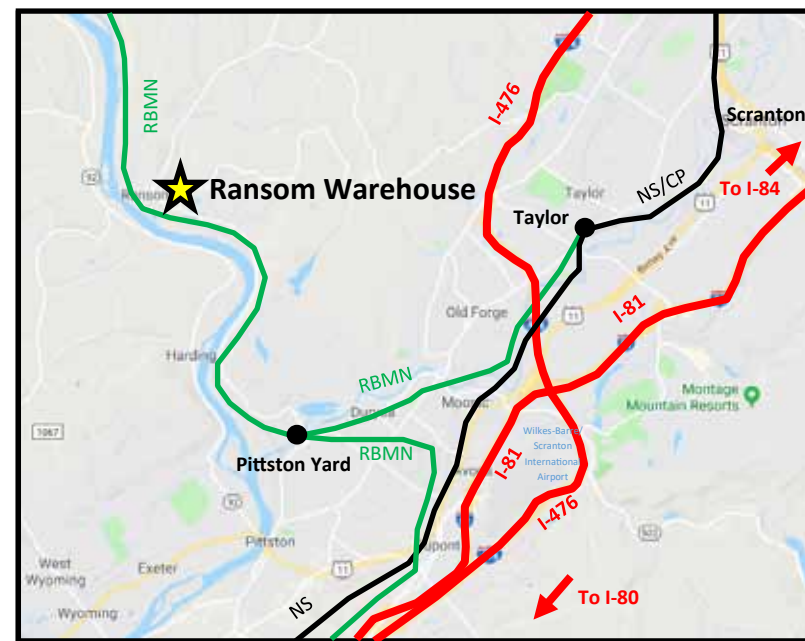
- 83,000 square ft paper grade warehouse
- 30 acres outside storage space
- 400 ft inside rail dock
- 8 truck docks

Services

- Railcar loading
- Railcar unloading
- Rail to truck trans-loading
- Truck to rail trans-loading
- Inside and outside storage
- Private fleet for local truck delivery

Transportation Logistics

- Direct access to Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad, with connections to Norfolk Southern and Canadian Pacific
- Truck access
 - Located 8 miles from I-81 and I-476 (PA Turnpike)
 - Located 16 miles south of I-84
 - Located 33 miles north of I-80



Contacts

- Rian Nemeroff
 - Ph: 484-793-3783
 - Email: RNemeroff@readingnorthern.com
- Daren Geschwindt
 - Ph: 484-332-1015
 - Email: DPGeschwindt@readingnorthern.com

Facilities Review of 2018

BY: STEVE ALLEN BALTHASER, VP FACILITIES

Along with regular maintenance, 2018 brought three major projects to the Facilities Department. The expansion of the Outer Station was a top priority because passenger ridership was increasing and the facility was not sufficient to properly handle it. Our second project, the Pittston Yard Office was in similar need. The railroad's growth was out pacing the proper facility to handle increased personnel at that location. A total makeover of the existing building was needed. The last project of the year entailed rehabbing the Mainline bridge traversing Route 61 in Muhlenberg Township.

Late winter, Facilities started to tackle the Outer Station project. This entailed demolition of an existing building formerly used as a restaurant, adding two new covered staircases, extending the loading platform and landscaping. Removing the restaurant would give the much needed parking spaces and the added staircases and platform extension would allow for a better boarding experience for our customers. This proved to be a total success throughout the passenger season of 2018.

The Pittston Yard is a very busy location made up of both MOW and Operation personnel on site. We had been utilizing an old 24'X24' block house as a crew reporting facility and we out grew it. Plans were drawn to double its size with new crew room, installing a new heating/air conditioning system, and new siding and roof. As we left 2018 everything stated was accomplished, the crews now have a new additions with new lockers and amenities. In 2019 we will be totally remodeling the interior of old

section creating an office, upgrading the restroom and fax room.

The Route 61 bridge was our most interesting and engaging project. We had to have the traffic diverted for several months, work to be done could only utilize the area closed to traffic (one lane), and train traffic had to be restricted at certain times. Built in 1930, the bridge serves our system by providing access to the Reading Interchange with NS. Over the years the bridge has shown its age and needed revitalization. Rebar was exposed in different areas; concrete had broken away and was deteriorated at other locations. All problems were rectified along with the bridge getting a fresh coat of paint affording many more years of carrying the cars of the Reading and Northern Railroad.

The last big project of 2018 was the new warehouse in Ransom, Pennsylvania. The Reading and Northern has been looking for several years to own a warehouse. The former Penn Foster building was purchased in late fall providing 83,000 square feet of floor space; formerly having an inside the building 400 feet rail dock. This had been buried and cemented over – facilities were called on to excavate and reclaim the dock. Also the warehouse was filled with racks, conveyors, and other equipment used by former tenant; all of which needed to be removed to serve our customers. By the end of year, one third of floor space was made available, new garage doors installed and the rail dock is totally functional. ♦



Bridge before rehabbing.



Final day of bridge rehab.



Excavating inside rail dock.



Razing restaurant for additional parking at Outer Station in Reading



Preparing Ransome Warehouse floor space



Pittston Yard Office Addition



New garage doors at Ransome Warehouse



Four crews line up for a quick picture on a beautiful Spring morning at Pittston. Left to right are Tony Verbyla, Michael "Breezy" Bischak, Brent Jacob, Aaron Aigeldinger, Travis Prevost, David Lapallo, Michael Voorhees and Curtis Cibello.

Operations Year in Review

BY: TYLER GLASS, EXECUTIVE VP OPERATIONS

So begins another calendar year and that means it is time to look back on all that has happened in 2018. Once again it was an action packed year and I'm ecstatic when I think about the level of performance by the Operations personnel and the other departments in the company that support us. Operations is the service end of the railroad and it takes many folks in other departments to ensure that we can provide the level of service we are expected to. Operations also has a tremendous team that is well trained and works hard to ensure we meet our customers expectations and try to have some fun while performing our everyday functions.

Both freight and passenger had a record year in 2018.

We ended the year with a 99% on time arrival rate for our freight customer obligations. That number speaks for itself and I applaud our train crews for the high level of service we provide to the customers. On certain days there can be many obstacles, such as weather, that can create challenges in meeting the schedule. But our dedicated personnel always work to best of their abilities to ensure our

customers come first.

One item that really jumped out this past year was train crew starts. In September we had an all-time daily high of crew starts, twenty one crews operated across the RBMN system on September 27th. Just to give you some perspective on how much we have grown in the past three years we have doubled the average weekday crew starts from nine in 2015 to eighteen in 2018. To support this growth we added five additional train crew personnel in 2018. Human Resources has been a tremendous help finding good candidates as we continue to expand our ranks. We also trained two dispatchers and four engineers amongst our existing personnel. Our engineers, conductors and dispatchers did a fine job teaching our newest employees as well as our employees learning new positions.

MOW has been an excellent support throughout the year. With the tremendous amount of rain we had this year we were faced with numerous washouts and downed trees. MOW worked extremely hard to keep the railroad in fine order during some extreme

downpours we experienced throughout the wettest year on record for our system. MOW also completed significant trackwork on our Scranton Branch which resulted in an increase in track speeds. Infrastructure was added at North Reading Yard, Mohrsville and Humboldt Industrial Parks, adding capacity and greatly enhancing efficiency at these locations. MOW has already started work on new projects that will come to fruition throughout 2019.

The Communications and Signals Department also continue to install more signaled railroad. We added another piece of signaled territory on a four mile section between Coal and Independence in 2018. They also have a great head start on signal installations between Port Clinton and Outer Station, this sixteen mile section is slated for completion in early 2019. The C&S Department also installed an additional AEI tag reader at Schuylkill Haven, this is a piece of our network that tracks movements of railcars on our system and is a valuable tool for our train crews.

The Engine house continues to work at a high level to keep our fleet working as intended.

Our fleet continues to expand as we recently added four EMD SD50s to top the roster. The engine house personnel also maintain excellent communications with the operations team to ensure that any issues that may arise with a locomotive are properly diagnosed to ensure a repair is diagnosed or repaired in a minimal amount of time.

Facilities completed a new office at Pittston this year which was greatly appreciated by the train and MOW crews that report there. The new office is nearly double the size of the previously used office space.

The train crews also work closely with our Customer Service and the Car Shop teams. As the year 2018 began to close it was evident that 2019 would continue our successes and prove to be another busy year. With additional coal opportunities, a new warehouse at Ransom and the anticipated completion of the Nesquehoning Bridge Phase II project, our railroad will most certainly take on a new look. It will create many new challenges for our railroad but with our team, we will quickly adapt to the ever changing landscape. ♦

Safety Year in Review

BY: TOM COOK, VP SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION

As this is written, our December man hours are not yet available. Based on 11 months of man hour data and full year projections, the reportable injury Frequency Index per 200,000 man hours should be about 4% improved over 2018. This was driven by our growth and the resulting increased man hours. It will be our second consecutive year of improvement in Frequency Index, and we have seen improvement in this metric 3 out of the last 4 years.

The Maintenance of Way department was the most improved department in safety performance over 2018. Maintenance of Way saw a 66% improvement in their reportable injuries which is very impressive given the hard physical work that they do and the tough conditions that they work in. If they continue that same improvement trend in 2019, they can go injury free or come very close to it.

The vast majority of our injuries are mistakenly considered to be "minor" by some people because they result in minimal or no lost time and minimal or no work restrictions. If Medical treatment is required, it usually involves a prescription or a few stitches. In reality, there is no such thing as a "minor injury". Most injuries are caused by a temporary loss in concentration or situational awareness, a shortcut, or an uncorrected unsafe condition. Those of us who have been around long enough know that enough of these minor injuries will eventually lead to a serious or catastrophic incident because the key factors causing serious accidents are the same as those causing "minor accidents". The only difference is that circumstances happen to be slightly different in the serious accident, probability kicks in and luck runs out.

That happened to us in June when one of our teammates was involved in a serious switching accident. We are all thankful he is able to return to work after many

months off. It's a reminder to all of us that the stakes are very high in our work. We can't afford any bad judgements, lapses in our situational awareness, lapses in concentration and inadequate job briefings. Please remember this so that this type of accident never happens again.

One thing all departments can be proud of is that we hired 25 field and shop employees since July of 2017 (Operations, MOW, C&S and Locomotive). So far, none of these new employees have been injured on the job. That is a strong testament to the training and mentoring they are getting. We need to maintain the focus on training and mentoring new employees in 2019 in order to reinforce safe work habits. Those safe work habits taught to new employees will pay safety dividends in the years to come. One message that I would like to give all of our new employees is that they need to work very hard at avoiding complacency in 2019. I know from experience that there tends to be an increase in injury frequency when new employees approach and pass their two year anniversary. This is because they become comfortable and lose the edge and situational awareness that kept them safe when everything was new to them.

We implemented a couple of programs in 2018 which should drive improved performance in 2019. Slip trip and falls have always been a leading cause of our injuries, and we have offered non slip traction spikes to field employees to reduce the frequency of these in the winter months. Lacerations and cuts are also a leading cause of injuries, and we recently began offering company provided work gloves to our operating department employees. I'm looking forward to seeing how effective these programs are in reducing these injuries. ♦

Signal Department Year in Review

BY: JONATHAN BARKET, AVP COMMUNICATIONS & SIGNALS



Maintainer Dave Hutton working on completing the wiring at the newly install gates at Gilberton Private Crossing on the M&S Branch.



Operator Alex Scubelek, Jr. operating excavator with a hydraulic hammer to break up the rock on the Northumberland Crossing project in White Haven.



Maintainers Darnell Young and Mike O'Connell working on finishing assembly on the newly erected cantilever over Main Street Schuylkill Haven.



Officer Mike Painter assisting with traffic for the Main Street Schuylkill Haven cantilever installation.



Maintainer Ed Kopeck working high above the tree canopy to remove a large dead tree that endangers our Seidel Interlocking Bungalow.



AVP Jonathan Barket, Maintainers Mike O'Connell, Graham Hantz, and Operator Brendle Stufflet working opening ground for cables to installed as part of the Mohrsville Interlocking Project.



AVP Jonathan Barket, Maintainer Mike O'Connell, Operator Dale Homm and Operator Brendle Stufflet working to complete site cleanup and assemble around the bungalow and southbound signal at Mohrsville Interlocking.

With each passing year, I look back to see changes in advancement since my first day in 2003. It has been nearly sixteen years since I was hired on and the accomplishments of this company are extraordinary. Going from maybe five train crews a day to twenty one this year is a very good representation that the Reading and Northern continues to grow. With this tremendous growth, the Communications and Signal Department is no exception. Our department's responsibilities and territory has also blossomed. We continue to upgrade and install crossings, signals, radio bases, yard lights, and many other aspects of our department; most of which are behind the scenes. However, with the increased business and train traffic, we are on a mission to re-install miles of signaled territory, install highway warning protection at many unprotected crossings throughout

our system, and add to our existing train detection devices. The year 2018 started out like many of the more recent years with no visible slowdown in projects. During the deep winter months, our crews were working feverishly in some of the more extreme conditions to complete a project that was started the year prior. We were working to connect the signal system between Coal and Independence on our Lehigh Line that runs in the lower portion of the Lehigh Gorge. Through the ice and snow, our crews were able to get all necessary hardware installed including bonding nearly three miles of railroad. The system we installed is known as "rule 261 territory" and will allow for direct reporting of any track problems to our main office and allow for easier control of train traffic. As we were wrapping up the signal system

extension installation, we worked closely with our Maintenance of Way Department to assist in the speed increases on our Scranton Branch, which runs between Scranton and Pittston. This speed increase affected numerous crossings. Our forces once again needed to bond countless joints to be able to expand approach distances to all crossings and allow for the faster speeds to be able to warn approaching motorists about the oncoming train in a timely fashion. Towards the end of winter, RBMN conducted a crop and slide program, which is a job to remove track joints while leaving most of the rail in-tact. This heavily affected our department as each location needed to be identified, any crossings being affected needed to be turned off, and any wires that were attached to the rail needed to be disconnected and protected for the day's

work. At the end of each day, we had to complete all work in reverse order, repairing any additional damage. This was a several week program which expanded to a major tie installation requiring most of the same attention. However once this project was complete, it turned many miles into welded railroad that requires far less maintenance. One major issue our department faces is outages, whether it is a power outage, communication outage or other uncontrollable event. We take massive strides to keep our systems up and running throughout some of the worst conditions to keep our traffic moving safely and efficiently. This typically includes adding battery and communications backup at our more heavily used sites. This year we have been focusing on all communication equipment to prevent outages as best we can.

Once the weather started to break, it was all hands on deck in Schuylkill Haven. We were tasked to replace Main Street, Union Street, and Williams Street crossings with new updated equipment. With the new equipment came some of the most technologically advanced locations. Each crossing is connected via fiber internet and is able to report its full status from the power being off to stuck gate arms. This was a very fun but labor intensive project. Our forces moved right from Schuylkill Haven to White Haven where we started at Berwick Street. The crossing surface was being replaced and we took the opportunity to replace an aging cable for one of the crossing gates. After Berwick Street was completed, we moved to Northumberland Street. Again this location got a full crossing surface replacement and we were able to renew the

entire crossing with new cables as well as a rewiring of the control case. At the same time, we were able to bring all our equipment into specs for the single track. Originally they were installed when two tracks went through town. Again, this project turned very labor intensive as when we were excavating for cable and foundations, we hit solid rock. However, our crews worked through the problems with the proper equipment and produced a great final product. In an effort to improve communications between our trains and dispatchers, we also relocated our one radio base from East Mahanoy Junction to Haucks. This base was originally installed with a small antenna attached to the Interlocking bungalow.

Continued on page 16.

Looking Back and Building the Future

BY: CHRIS GOETZ, VP MAINTENANCE OF WAY



Maintainers Dave Hutton and Mike O'Connell work to verify that cables from existing crossing at Mohrsville Interlocking don't get damaged as new cable trench is being opened.



Maintainer Hantz and Operator Dale Homm working late into the evening to complete backfilling of the newly installed northbound signals and cables at Rick Interlocking.



Maintainer Mike O'Connell on the northbound three head mast at Industrial Drive Hamburg working to assemble the mast.



Maintainers Dave Hutton and Mike O'Connell work to tighten down the northbound signal mast Industrial Drive Hamburg after it has just lifted into place.



Continued from page 15.

When it was moved to Haucks, we installed a forty foot pole with an extension for better coverage allowing a higher powered antenna to be installed nearly fifty feet above ground. While continually focused on safety, we were tasked to update a private crossing located in the coal region. With previously completed track work, our speeds for trains went from 10 MPH to 30 MPH. To keep both the crossing users and our train crews safe, we replaced a standard flashing light crossing with a gated crossing and LED lights.

With our Pottsville Branch noticing a large uptick in traffic, it was determined that another tag reader be installed on the

line. This tag reader is a system that allows tracking of railcars.

And to finish out the year, we started our biggest project for 2018. After months of design and preparation work, we began deploying material in the field to re-install signaling equipment between Reading and Port Clinton. This section of railroad may be one of the most heavily traveled sections in our system with ten plus moves a day. We were able to install most of the cable, signals, and equipment housings within four weeks. At the moment, this project includes four interlockings, six hand thrown switches, and three automatic block signals. With the ground being frozen, it allows us to continue

to work on this project by hooking up cables and wiring locations in preparation for cutover in 2019.

The year 2018 was once again a very busy and diverse year with many different upgrades and additions. The year 2019 is already shaping up to be another year with quite a few different projects. Our team in the Communications and Signal department is made up of seven people total including myself – Jonathan Barket, Matt Collins, Darnell Young, Dave Hutton, Edward Kopeck, Graham Hantz, and Mike O'Connell. We all work extremely well together and accomplish any task that is put in front of us. Once again, I look forward to another exciting year and please stay tuned. ♦

Maintenance of Way has come a long way in 2018; we not only look back to see our accomplishments, but we also see some "firsts" for this department as well. It's like piloting any mode of transportation—one checks their mirrors prior to proceeding forward. In MOW's rearview, we see various projects from working with state and local governments that have allowed us to improve the safety and quality of our crossings along our Railroad. Schuylkill Haven, Corestates, and the Johnson Street Crossing for GMS Piling were large undertakings, just to name a few. We have recovered from seemingly

never-ending rains over the spring and summer that caused miles of washouts, changed out long stretches of rails/ties and we have built additional tracks for our passenger trains at Reading Outer Station. All these big projects were in between the normal maintenance and repairs that pull MOW in many directions.

One of our "firsts" is that we have acquired equipment that allowed us to put together our first tie gang. This gang consists of a tie crane, tie inserter and spiker, all of which allow us to install ties at a much more efficient rate. Other equipment additions

include a Trailer Truck, Low Boy Trailer, Dump Trucks and various loaders. We not only added additional equipment, but we have also seen the largest increase in hiring personnel to handle our exponential growth within the MOW Department. This growth is fueled by the hard work of everyone, and his or her talents, within our department. Much like adjusting the rearview mirror to look back, MOW constantly adjusts to adapt and overcome obstacles to move forward building the future of a bigger, stronger and highly productive department. ♦

Main Line tie project done by one of our contractors (Frontier).



Schuylkill Haven Union St Xing (before).



Schuylkill Haven Union St Xing Backhoe operator removing timbers and excavating ballast (Dale Homm backhoe; Duane Engle, John Brown).



Corestates Continental Drive Xing MP 7.82, Scranton RT, a rebuilt crossing that was previously paved over.



Tremont Branch wash out from summer heavy rains. Crews install larger pipes to handle the drainage (Rebecca Engle, Brandon Wagner).



Schuylkill Haven Union St Xing MOW crew spiking up new ties, plates and rail (Duane Zimmerman, Justin Hughes, Dakota Reber, Eric Thompson, Jason Witner, Ben Cole, Shawn Himmelberger).



Schuylkill Haven Williams Street Xing New ballast and Concrete crossing panels installed (Duane Engle, Rebecca Engle, Dakota Reber, Ben Cole).



Tremont Branch washout repaired with new pipes installed along with large rocks to prevent the erosion of our banks.



Schuylkill Haven Union St. Xing (finished).



Corestates SDG with ST-1 tamping ties and leveling out track.



Tremont Branch, powerful storms dumped more rain than our culverts could handle



Tremont Crews loading pipe to haul to washout locations. (Matt Sloskey, Brandon Wagner, Dale Homm in backhoe).



Tremont Branch before.



Middleport Running Track (before).



Reading Outer Station coach track, our crews hard at work building new tracks for storage of passenger cars and engines (Dale Homm in backhoe, Justin Hughes, Brandon Kalbach, Chris Nefos, Dakota Reber).



Tremont Branch installing additional pipes adjacent to our culverts to prevent another washout.



Reading Outer Station switch crews work to install new switches for our coach and engine tracks (Ben Cole, Brandon Kalbach, Ron Collins-West, Dakota Reber).



Reading Outer Station switch, this switch is being laid out by crews as there are numerous parts to install (Cody Henn, Brandon Kalbach, Dakota Reber, Ben Cole, Ron Collins-West, Dale Homm in backhoe).



Reading Outer Station.



Middleport Running Track (after)



Newly acquired equipment to create our own production tie gang (Matt Sloskey, Alex Zimmerman, Brock Krumanocker, Charles Carl on Tie Inserter).



Enos Bleiler running HS-4 spiking up new ties on tie gang.



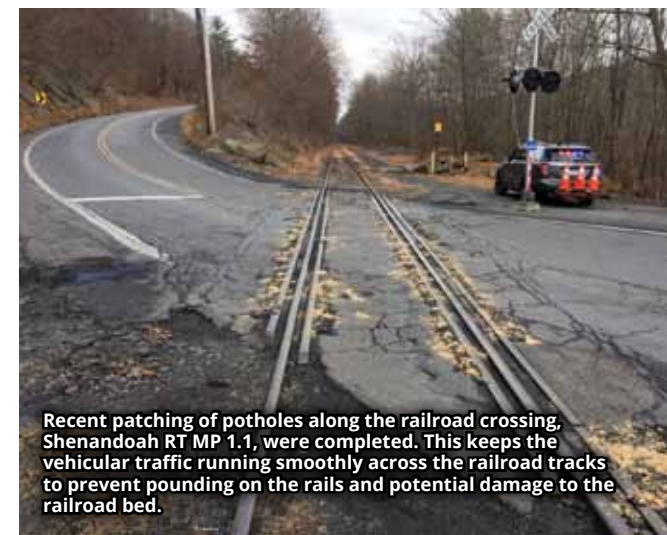
A blocked ditch along our ML MP 115.7 was identified impacting the railroad with standing water. Real Estate department contacted the owner of the pipe to clean it up to maintain proper drainage around the crossing.



Recent rehabilitation of a private crossing on our ML MP 94.9 has been raised to eliminate a low spot collecting water, as well as deep ditched and approaches reprofiled to protect the substructure of the track.



Roadway for vehicular traffic is regraded to eliminate potholes or low locations that hold water along the Lehigh Branch MP 122.



Recent patching of potholes along the railroad crossing, Shenandoah RT MP 1.1, were completed. This keeps the vehicular traffic running smoothly across the railroad tracks to prevent pounding on the rails and potential damage to the railroad bed.

Real Estate Departmental Restructure

BY: MATTHEW JOHNSON, VP ASSET MANAGEMENT

As many of you have read over the past few years, the Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad has experienced tremendous growth. To continue to learn and grow, various departments have reorganized team members to promote cross departmental education. This will aid in a few different ways from maintaining a mutual working relationship between departments, expanding the knowledge base of railroad employees, and gaining a greater understanding of the whole business picture as the railroad and each department grows. The Real Estate Department was part of a recent restructure in 2018.

Jolene Busher continues to assist in her concurrent role as well as taking on additional public project responsibilities as Department Office Manager. Erik Yoder moved out of the Maintenance of Way Department and joined the Real Estate Department as Assistant Vice President Real Estate. Erik brings his track experience to the department to aid in the growth of the department. Together with a strong team of Real Estate Inspectors, the Real Estate Department is well equipped to safe guard the railroad's property and right of way. The Real Estate Department handles many different aspects of the railroad. These responsibilities include the following: coordination of outside contractor jobs across the railroad, protecting our right of way and

trains along our right of way, coordinate repairs to railroad crossings, interact with the PA Public Utility Commission, coordinate railroad inspectors to oversee various agencies performing work within our right of way, as well as the normal handling of railroad real estate property management.

This past year we upgraded three railroad crossings to include new signals and gates as well as repaved roadway approaches to several other crossings. The primary focus of these crossing upgrades is the safe passage of trains. Vehicular traffic also benefits from new crossing rehabilitation with smoother approaches into and across the track surface. Our department is also working with roadway owners to maintain/fix any potholes that appear near railroad crossings.

Eight Real Estate Inspectors are scheduled across the 300 plus miles of right of way each day of the week to match the daily requests for work along the railroad right of way. The role of the inspector is to maintain the safe passage of trains, ensure the track structure is not compromised in any way for train movements, keep the workers near the railroad safe from oncoming trains, and make sure the job is performed to railroad expectations/specifications.

Some of the major upcoming projects we anticipate starting soon would be overhead bridge rehabilitation. These are projects over

the railroad that can last up to three years in length while the bridge is demolished and rebuilt over our rail line all while maintaining our rail traffic to our customers. We have one of our Real Estate inspectors present to make sure the trains are unhindered to maintain rail service throughout our system.

I also act as the railroad community relations liaison. I work with surrounding communities to resolve potential issues and guide residents in response to illegal trespassing or dumping along the right of way.

Jolene Busher is also the inhouse records archivist. She maintains, protects, and organizes the many different documents, maps, and agreements that the railroad holds. She is also involved in the quarterly production of the RBMN magazine as well as other media-based items that railroad produces on a yearly basis.

As the railroad grows, so does each department within the company. Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad is committed to providing the best level of service we can to our customers and to the environment. Each department head within the railroad is vital to make sure our mission is met. The recent reorganization within the Real Estate Department is a way RBMN works to keep all the leaders and departments on track. ♦



Neighbors that own property next to the railroad are responsible to clean up trash/debris. Recently cleaned ROW along ML MP 97.7.



Buildings along the railroad, like the QA office on our ML MP 98.3, are identified to rehabilitate to keep the railroad looking well maintained and cared for all.

2018 Ridership Highlights

More People Riding the Rails than Ever Before

BY: MATT FISHER, PASSENGER GENERAL MANAGER

Last year saw two main objectives: focus on getting more tourist to ride the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway in Jim Thorpe, and, build a totally new ridership base at Reading Outer Station. Both turned out better than expected.

Every Reading Outer Station to Jim Thorpe Rail Diesel Car (RDC) train excursion from Memorial Day through November sold out. This was amazing due to the fact that we added twice as many trains running both Saturdays and Sundays. Just under 5,400 people rode these RDC weekend trips. Many were local families along with people looking to do a day trip with a different twist. What better way to sit back, relax, shop, and take in the historic town of Jim Thorpe? This was also the case with nearly every ticket selling out in October. Fall Foliage excursions were powered by diesel locomotives, RDCs, and steam locomotive 425. Thousands of people boarded primarily at Reading Outer Station, with additional choices to board at Port Clinton, Schuylkill Haven, and Pottsville. The Reading and Northern Railroad also had a very successful Santa Claus season. Trains departed Tunkhannock, Minersville, and Reading Outer Station. The highlight was the seven days out of Reading with the 425 powering the Santa Trains. The grounds were decorated with many eye catching displays. People were drawn to Outer Station to take pictures with family in front of the decorations. Many decided to purchase tickets while checking this new Christmas attraction. In total, nearly 5,500 very happy families rode the Santa Outer Station trips. Special thanks to all the full-time and part-time staff that worked all those weekends and Christmas Eve.

The Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway in Jim Thorpe continues to show amazing ridership gains. Approximately 18% increase in ridership on LGSR trains in 2018. Even with near-record rainfall along with very poor and late fall foliage, the Hometown High Bridge Trains and Bike Trains continue to be popular. In total, nearly 115,000 people rode an LGSR train in Jim Thorpe during 2018. When adding the Reading and Northern numbers to the LGSR, a grand totals of 143,000 people rode the rails with us, much higher than years past.

We look forward to a busy 2019 season with a similar schedule of RDC and Fall Foliage Excursions on the Reading and Northern from Outer Station. Look for an even bigger holiday display at Outer Station. Also, the work on steam locomotive number 2102 will continue into 2019.

Finally, a major focus will be on the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway to boost spring ridership. There will be more days for people to ride than ever before. Winterfest Trains will return on Presidents' Day Weekend this February, then trains will run every weekend through Easter. In May, trains will operate Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. In June, trains will be scheduled Thursday through Sunday. July, August, and October will see daily train excursions. September, November, and December will include Friday trips with weekend schedules. We will boost our service in early November in hopes of another very strong November.

All of our Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway trips will be found on www.LGSR.com. The Reading and Northern trips from Outer Station can be found on www.ReadingNorthern.com. Also, look for us on social media. Looking forward to "riding the rails" with you in 2019! ♦

Please check out this YouTube video of our 425 Steam Engine courtesy of Blue Comet Productions. "Reading & Northern 425: Santa's Christmas Rambles" https://youtu.be/VkQ__07Sspc

Year	Total Riders
2018	142,991
2017	118,351
2016	105,315
2015	99,775
2014	72,295
2013	59,536
2012	52,458
2011	53,816
2010	53,026
2009	41,049
2008	37,236



Billy Riegel, conductor and engineer, getting ready to board a Santa Train in Minersville, PA.



The finale of 2018 was a strong ridership on the seven dates for Santa Claus Special train rides at Reading Outer Station.



The finale of 2018 was a strong ridership on the seven dates for Santa Claus Special train rides at Reading Outer Station.



The grounds of Reading Outer Station were decorated with beautiful results. Many people were taking pictures with the decorations as they boarded and detrained the Santa Claus Specials. Also, people stopped to take pictures during the night. Take notice how the steam locomotive is working on the final shifts of the day behind the decorations



On an otherwise dreary day, the star of the show was the steam locomotive, along with Santa, Mrs. Claus, and all their helpers.

Loyal Customers are Valuable Customers

BY: CRYSTAL ARNDT, HOSPITALITY MANAGER

It is hard to have a bad day in “the office” when your office is mainly aboard an RDC (rail diesel car). This year, we ran forty-eight sold out RDC excursions.

We get the honor of meeting many people, traveling from near and far. While talking with the customers, we learn that many people ride our RDCs to bring back memories; memories of their great grandfather, who worked for the Budd Company and helped build such cars by hand, memories of riding the same or similar cars many years ago, memories of watching these cars travel past their hometown as a child. It is a great feeling to see the excitement in a customer's eyes while telling you their stories.

Our passenger presence is growing in communities, thanks to our advertising team, word of mouth, and positive reviews coming from happy customers. Often, we hear “I think my friend would really enjoy this trip with their family, I am going to take this brochure home and show them!”

This season, we learned about the value of a loyal customer when we met Mr. and Mrs. Thorpe. In 2018, Stephen and Denise purchased tickets to over half of the forty-eight RDC excursions, several Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway excursions, several locomotive cab rides, and checked out the Parlor Car during Fall Foliage. The crew was always excited to have them aboard as they are some of the friendliest customers we have met (and we like Stephen's jokes).

We wanted to learn a little more about Stephen and Denise, as well as some insight on what keeps them coming back, so we asked them the following questions.

1. Please tell us a little about yourself.

I (Stephen) am 70 years old and will be celebrating my birthday and 47th wedding anniversary this coming April. I am a Lifelong NJ resident, and I served in Vietnam (OCT 1969 – Oct 1970) as a crew chief on the UH-1 (Huey) helicopter, flew numerous combat assaults, and handled resupply missions as a door-gunner. I attended Catholic grammar school and public high school and graduated from RCA institute in New York as a Radio and TV Service Technician. I retired from Union County, NJ, with 28 years of service as Supervising Communications Technician, I was



Stephen Thorpe (right) waiting to board the RDC, next to RBMN CEO Andy Muller, Jr.



RDC crew in Jim Thorpe from left to right: Rich Bernhardt (Engineer), Sierra Wanamaker (Car Host), Crystal Arndt (Hospitality Manager), John Rizzo (Conductor), Denise Thorpe, Stephen Thorpe.

responsible for telephone, two-way radio, and alarm systems for public safety and the Courts. I am Currently employed as Network Administrator at St. John the Apostle School in Clark, NJ, and am responsible for computer networking, telephone, and Radio systems. I Married to the former Denise Shipkowski, who I met 3 days before leaving for Vietnam. We have four Children: Michelle (deceased), Stephen, Ryan, and Heather, and six grandchildren (in age order) Samantha (20), Kaylee (17), Hunter (7), Sophia (3), Jake (2), and Travis (newborn).

2. How long have you been riding with RBMN/LGSR?

We started riding the Fall foliage excursions as far back as 2001 or so.

3. What is your favorite RBMN excursion to ride?

Hands-down, the RDC trips!

4. What motivates you to ride with us so frequently?

I ride so frequently for multiple reasons:

a. You get a decent length ride for a great price. Most tourist railroads give you a 70-90-minute trip to nowhere and back. Here, I get a four-hour train ride that not only gives me a place to take my wife, but a trip that brings back many memories of riding the RDCs when they were in regular service back in the 1960's between Bethlehem and Philadelphia. In other words, It's a real train ride!

b. The service and the people who provide it are first-class. We feel like a part of the Reading and Northern Family!

5. Do you have any comments or suggestions to share with our team?

Yes, how about a season ticket? (ongoing joke between Stephen and the crew)

The Reading and Northern is grateful for all past, current, repeat, and future customers. As we prepare for our upcoming season, we plan to continue our top-notch customer service, and provide every rider with a memorable experience. We hope to see you aboard! ♦



Denise Thorpe getting ready to enjoy a cab ride with the Engineer.

A Day in the Life of Line Service

BY: SHANNON ANDERSON, HR SPECIALIST

The Reading Jet Center (RJC) is a 24/7 fixed-base operator (FBO) located at the Reading Airport that provides a range of services for private and business aviation clientele. The RJC first class facility features quality and professional handling for aircraft and passengers. What sets RJC apart from other FBOs is the friendly, reliable staff and inviting facility from the ramp to the parking lot and the parking lot to the ramp which makes any traveler feel at home and every customer experience one to remember.

Being a line service technician is what some kids might dream of... being able to spend a day around airplanes, operating fuel trucks, tugs, transport vehicles, and communicating with air traffic controllers and pilots. Line service technician, David Fiechtl, who has been with RJC since 2013, enjoys what he does because, “the airport environment is really unique.” Line service technicians are the first people a pilot sees when arriving at Reading Jet Center. An arriving aircraft would see one of our line service technicians marshalling them to the correct parking position safely, chalking their plane, and welcoming them as they exit their aircraft and head into the FBO. Once there, they are greeted by our customer service representatives.

There isn't a dull moment in the life of a Line Service Technician. To fulfill the needs of our customers, we have a total of four line service technicians, including a line service supervisor, Gordon “Gordy” Clark, who's been with RJC since 2008. Gordy is passionate about the team environment and says, “they all have the passion, drive, and do-what-it-takes attitude to be here for the customers even if that means working twelve hours a day on a holiday. They do it just to be here for the customers.” First shift line service technician, Kevin Fry, has been with RJC since 2009. He has established a relationship with the pilots whom he knows by their first names. His favorite part of the job is to put a smile on their faces just by greeting them and ensuring they are taken care of.

Every day is different in the life of a line service technician. The team keeps a whiteboard displaying the days scheduled arriving and departing aircraft so they can prepare. At the same time, there are often flights that will arrive unannounced with celebrities on board such as celebrity Jim Carrey. Walter Greusel, who has been in line service for nineteen years and with the Reading Jet Center since 2005, said, “we didn't know he was coming, and he was the most interesting guy I have ever met.” Jim didn't crack any jokes, but he did spend time chatting with Walter. As you exit the FBO, you will see our Wall of Fame displaying pictures of celebrities who have flown in and out of the Reading Jet Center. Meeting RJC customers, whether it be celebrities or business people, is what makes the job fun according to Walter. Similarly, David's favorite part of the job is the people – the pilots, his coworkers, and the various personalities.

The line service technicians must always be alert and prepared to marshal in aircraft, refuel, and deice should the customer need it. When there are several planes to service at

one time, Kevin says, “you've got to have a visual on how to plan it, prioritize, and take care of everyone.” Oftentimes, a customer will request their vehicle be accessible on the ramp, and our line service technicians accommodate that request. Because we are a 24/7 operation and our customer service representatives are at the front desk during normal business hours, our line service technicians can also process sales transactions, provide shuttle service for customers, arrange for catering, rental car and hotel reservations, and continually meet our customers' requests.

One of line service technicians' greatest challenges is the winter weather which is a “totally different world” according to line service technician Walter Greusel who works second shift. They have snow to plow on the ramp, parking lots, sidewalks, and in front of four hangars. Line service technicians also expertly tow aircraft into and out of hangars which vary in size in addition to deicing aircraft on the ramp. According to Kevin, one of the most challenging parts of being a line service technician is deicing aircraft, because you have to know exactly where to position the deicing cart and, “it's pretty critical to get it done right.” It takes two people to deice a plane - one person up top spraying the plane and one person running the deicing cart. When Kevin is deicing with Gordy, he can read what Gordy wants and what he's going to do so they can accomplish the process in the short window of time to get the pilots out safely.

A line service technician's job at the Reading Jet Center doesn't confine them to the ramp and hangar. Once customers are taken care of and the pace has slowed down, they perform all custodial duties inside our facilities as well as those of tenant customers. This includes cutting, trimming and maintaining the company grounds in the summer, snow removal in the winter, maintaining building infrastructure, inventory, and inspecting and performing routine maintenance on all vehicle equipment. In addition to all of the above, line service technicians must adhere to all requirements in accordance with FAA fuel handling directives. Walter said he does “housekeeping every day, and part of it is walking around and looking for light bulbs that need to be replaced and making sure reception and bathroom areas are in good, clean condition.” Walter is in the process of training recently-hired line service technician, Bailey McElroy. Bailey enjoys communicating with the customers and says, “it's the simple things like holding the door for the customer and asking to carry their luggage. It all adds up in the end.” He enjoys meeting different people who come in and hearing where they're from, their stories, and providing good service – all confirmation they're doing a great job.

From checking light bulbs to greeting you with a smile, no job is too big or too small for a line service technician. They build long-lasting relationships in a matter of seconds which shows no matter who you are, where you're from, or how far you've traveled, one thing is certain; our line service technicians provide a customer service experience that brings customers back. ♦



Reading Jet Center Hangar 1 (Photo Credit Francine Calafaty).



Reading Jet Center's Line Service Technicians, from left: Bailey McElroy, Walter Greusel, Gordon Clark, Line Service Supervisor, and Kevin Fry (not in photo - David Fiechtl).



David Fiechtl and Kevin Fry fueling an airplane.



Gordon Clark towing an airplane on the ramp in preparation for departure.



Kevin Fry marshalling an arriving airplane to park on the ramp.



A Pileated Woodpecker enjoying his freedom after being released



Glue residue from Spotted Lanternfly tape is removed from the feet of a female Pileated Woodpecker.



A female Pileated Woodpecker recovering from a wing fracture after flying into a window.

Red Creek Wildlife Helping Woodpeckers Every Day

BY: PEGGY HENTZ, PRESIDENT/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RED CREEK WILDLIFE

One of the things I love most about living in Pennsylvania is the four seasons. Each season brings an abundance of wildlife, ever-changing in their presence, behavior, and activity. Winter is no exception. Many animals that remain hidden during other times of year become more active. Squirrels and deer appear foraging as food becomes scarce. Eagles work fervently on their nests while owls hoot throughout the night, sounding the beginnings of the breeding season. A woodpecker's pounding rhythm echoes through the valleys. With the absence of leaves, listening to and viewing wildlife becomes much easier.

Woodpeckers are a frequent winter visitor at bird feeders, especially feeders that offer suet and fresh water during frigid weather. Pennsylvania is home to seven woodpeckers that reside year round. Two arctic species also visit in the winter. The smallest of these is the downy woodpecker, which also happens to be the most common. The largest is the pileated woodpecker, a black and white, crow-sized bird with a triangular red cap.

Red Creek receives over fifty woodpeckers each year. Those admitted often need help for the same few reasons: window strikes, poisonings, tree removal during nesting seasons, and more recently lanternfly tape. Understanding the reasons that causes distress and what they need to thrive is valuable information for those who want to help woodpeckers.

Window strikes are the most common reasons for woodpecker injuries. Birds arrive with fractured wings and head injuries requiring extended rehabilitation. Many of these accidents happen near bird feeders when a woodpecker flies into a viewing window. To help prevent window collisions, position feeders at least twenty feet from the window.

Birds have difficulty seeing glass. What they see instead is a reflection of the sky and the surrounding area. Reflective ultraviolet stickers

attached to the window can alert birds to the presence of a solid surface. Hanging sheer curtains or blinds inside the window can help reduce reflection, as can allowing windows to remain dirty.

Woodpeckers are insect eaters. Pest control methods that kill insects with insecticides can be eaten by woodpeckers, as well as many other birds, resulting in secondary poisoning. When pesticides are necessary, using pyrethrum-based insecticides is less harmful than applying those containing organophosphates and carbamate. Insect growth regulators, such as methoprene, prevent insects from reaching the adult stage and are virtually non-toxic to birds.

The spread of the spotted lanternfly into Berks and Schuylkill Counties has spurred great efforts to slow or treat the invasion. The most common treatment is to apply tape to tree trunks. This tape often traps birds and small mammals such as chipmunks. To help prevent accidental capture of non-target animals, we recommend placing chicken wire or one-half inch hardware cloth around the taped areas of the trees. The spacing in this wired fencing allows the lanternflies to pass through while preventing mammals and birds from coming in contact with the tape.

Each year, Red Creek receives nests of baby woodpeckers that have been displaced when a hollowed tree is removed. Delaying tree removal until mid- to late-fall eliminates the chance of baby birds from being disturbed. When hollow trees endanger nearby structures, top the trees and allow ten to fifteen feet of the trunk to remain. This provides valuable nesting and food sites for wildlife.

With a little effort, we can reduce our negative impact on the wildlife around us. Walking softly and saving wildlife every day is a lifestyle, and the efforts are worth it. For every single animal that avoids rehabilitation because of careful and thoughtful planning, one more animal is free in the Pennsylvania Wilds. ♦



Northern Flicker nestlings.



A male Pileated Woodpecker enjoying a meal after his broken beak was repaired.



Two Downy Woodpecker fledglings being hand fed.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Congratulations Steven!

BY: SHANNON ANDERSON, HR SPECIALIST



I am pleased to introduce this quarter's "Spotlight Employee" Steven Kolbe. Steven has worked for RBMN full-time since June of 2014. Steven is currently a small engine Mechanic within our Passenger Department where he focuses on the generators in our passenger cars. Prior to working at RBMN, Steven worked as the mascot for the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway for three years.

Steven was born in Pottsville and raised in Orwigsburg. Steven graduated from Blue Mountain High School in 2013 and attended Schuylkill Technology Center for Small Engine Technology.

Steven works a lot of long hours, all weekends most of the year, and holidays during the ever increasingly busy passenger season. When he isn't on special projects for the Passenger Department or working on passenger car generators, you can find him high railing or conducting.

In his spare time, Steven likes to go fishing and hunting, and enjoys spending time off road with his dirt bike and Jeep.

Steven is ambitious, a fast learner, possesses a great personality, and is a valued member of the Passenger Department. We look forward to Steven continuing his professional growth with the Reading and Northern Railroad.

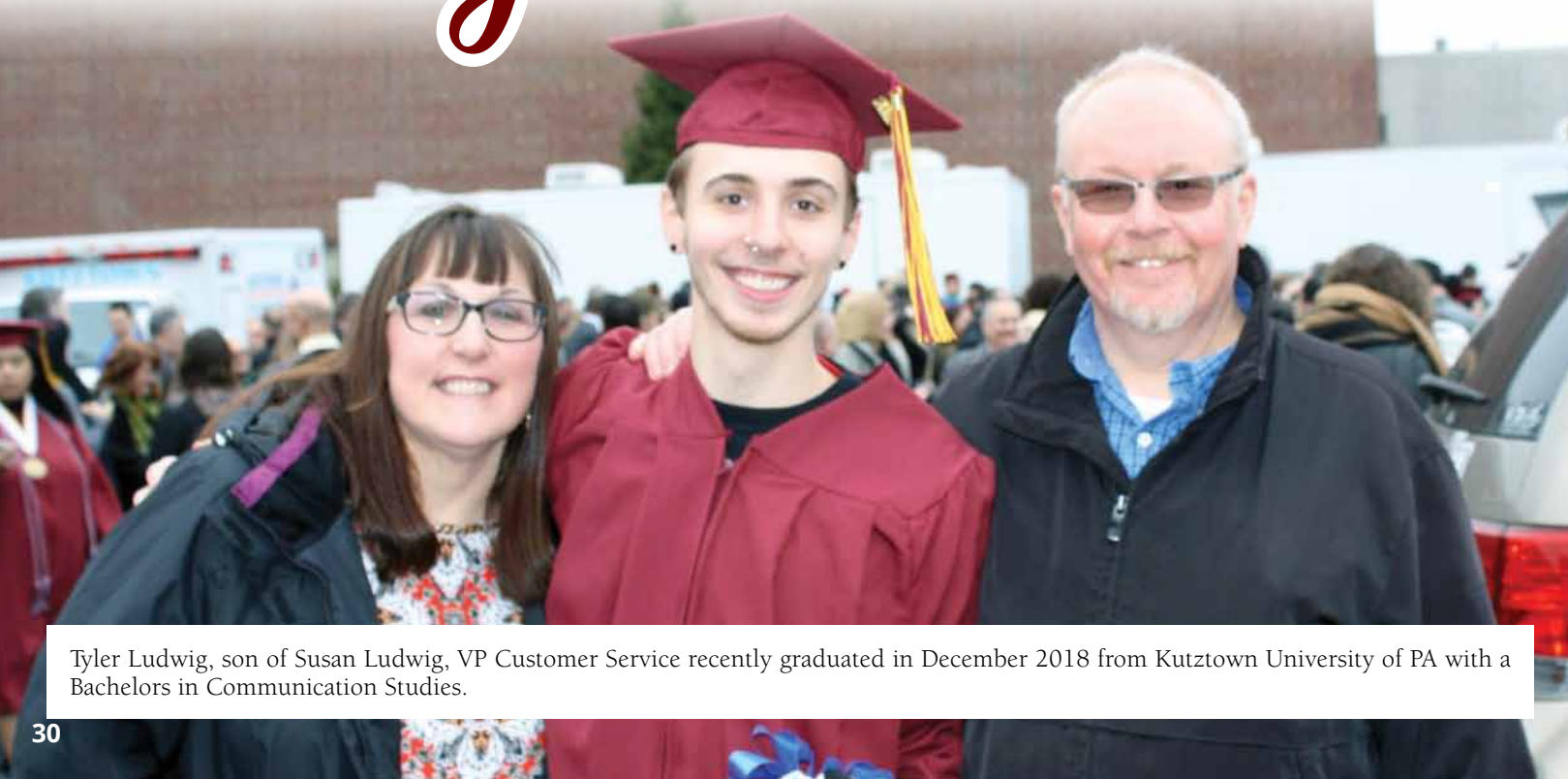
As the "Spotlight Employee," Denise will receive a \$100 gift certificate to dine at a local restaurant. ♦



Twenty Nine Years Ago ...

A wintery scene from December 16, 1990, with our own Andy Muller Jr., moving equipment from Temple to Port Clinton. This was our first day of operations as Reading, Blue Mountain, & Northern Railroad after we acquired over 150 miles of branch lines in the Anthracite Coal Regions from Conrail, the day prior at settlement held in Philadelphia on December 15, 1990.

Congratulations!



Tyler Ludwig, son of Susan Ludwig, VP Customer Service recently graduated in December 2018 from Kutztown University of PA with a Bachelors in Communication Studies.

Reading & Northern's Family Recipes

Snickerdoodles

Raymond Chippa, Transload Forklift Operator, shares his "most requested cookie during the holiday season."

Ingredients

- ½ cup butter, softened
- ½ cup shortening
- 1 ½ cup white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 ¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Coating

- 2 tablespoons vanilla sugar*
- 2 teaspoons roasted ground cinnamon

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (200 degrees C)
2. Cream together butter, shortening, sugar, eggs, and vanilla. Sift in the flour, cream of tartar, baking soda, and salt.
3. Refrigerate mixture for at least an hour.
4. Mix the 2 tablespoons vanilla sugar and the cinnamon. Shape dough by rounded spoons into balls. Roll balls of dough in cinnamon sugar mixture, and place 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets.
5. Bake 9 to 11 minutes, or until set but not too hard. Remove immediately from baking sheets, and place on cooling racks.

** Vanilla Sugar Recipe**

Clean one whole vanilla bean. When dry, cut off the ends and split lengthwise. Using the recipe of 1 bean per cup of white sugar, scrape the inside of the vanilla bean into the sugar and shake to mix. Add vanilla bean pod to the sugar and cover. Store in a cool, dark place removing only to shake daily. For best results, the vanilla bean should sit in the sugar for a minimum of one week before using. Before using, remove the vanilla bean pod and shake the sugar mixture well.

We would like to encourage everyone to send us their favorite family recipes to sfidler@readingnorthern.com.

Reading and Northern Helps Deserving Pets Find a Home

BY: KYLE BARRELL, HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

Over the years, the Reading and Northern Railroad has given back to the many communities it touches across eastern Pennsylvania. This time around, the focus was on finding the region's homeless furry, feathered, and hairy friends a permanent home by sponsoring a free adoption weekend November 16th-18th at the Animal Rescue League in Berks County. Reading and Northern paid the adoption fees for animals which were chosen to be adopted by the public. We even had some Reading and Northern employees add to their family head count by adopting some new four-legged friends.

Being at the ARL was quite an eye-opening experience. The lobby was constantly filled with people looking to foster or adopt animals, animals being brought in that may have been found, sick animals to be tended to by the veterinarians who donate their time, and animals who were surrendered to the ARL to allow them to find a more suitable living environment. We got a tour of the facility and were astonished to learn all the time and effort that is put in by the vast number of volunteers who donate their time and effort to make the ARL possible. On our tour we encountered dogs, cats, kittens, a horse, and even a sheep. All of these animals are fed, loved, walked, bathed, given medications, and trained numerous times on a daily basis all because of the kindness, dedication, loyalty, and love of the volunteers who tirelessly give their time and attention to these deserving animals.

As the weekend progressed, the number of animals adopted rapidly increased. Reading and Northern employees volunteered at the table that was set up throughout the weekend. The table was there to provide pictures of families and their newly adopted pets, a kids' coloring station and to provide some general information about Reading and Northern. The flow of people was so intense on Saturday, that the original purpose of the table quickly transformed. Jess Melochick,

Sabine Fidler and Shannon Anderson found themselves assisting visitors with applications and pointing them in the direction of animals they were interested in adopting while Ben Cole was assisting with tending to the animals being fed, cleaned up after and cared for in the various kennels throughout the facility.

The shelter had an abundance of cats and kittens in four large rooms throughout the shelter. Given the large number of cats and kittens available, the majority of people came in looking to adopt a kitten or, in some cases, multiple kittens. One of the shelter's front desk volunteers was bottle feeding a few kittens until they are old enough and ready to be adopted. There were even more kittens being dropped off by someone who found them abandoned. Also, we witnessed a local farmer who came in and said that he lost a sheep and was told that it might be at the ARL. As his luck would have it, the sheep was there and was reunited with its owner.

The railroad-sponsored adoption weekend was a huge success. The grand total of animals adopted over the three days was eighty two animals: fourteen dogs, nineteen cats, forty five kittens, three chickens and one rabbit. The volunteers and Executive Director were ecstatic that the we chose to make this event happen and couldn't thank us enough. The donations of money and items from the employees of Reading and Northern were greatly appreciated and were immediately put to good use keeping the animals warm, fed, or giving them a new toy to play with. The volunteers from Reading and Northern and the ARL, who donated their time throughout the weekend, provided all the visitors to the ARL with a great experience and compatible, new member of their families. We eagerly anticipate the next weekend that is sponsored by Reading and Northern Railroad so that we can help more deserving animals find "fur-ever" homes. ♦



Jess Melochick, Director of MOW and Shannon Anderson, HR Specialist, assisting visitors at the Reading and Northern table.



Jess and her new buddy, Carolina.



Mario Carannante, IT Administrator, and his daughter, MauriAnna, with their new addition, Harry Potter.



Mario Carannante, IT Administrator's newest addition, Flash.



John Byassee, a Reading and Northern Car Shop employee, and his family recently adopted a Mastador Mastiff Lab mix named Finn. Finn was adopted from Pibbles Paws Safe Haven dog rescue in Bath, Pennsylvania on November 14, 2018. He is currently four months old and in perfect health.

Happy Birthday!

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| FEB. 3ANDREA COLLER | FEB. 25DANIEL HOSLER | MAR. 29ELIZABETH NEIFERT |
| FEB. 5MICHAEL PAINTER | FEB. 25BRENDEL STUFFLET, JR | MAR. 29BRANDON WAGNER |
| FEB. 6LIAM MARSH | FEB. 26CAROL MULLER | MAR. 31JOLENE BUSER |
| FEB. 7JOHN SMOLCZYNSKI, SR. | FEB. 28STEPHEN GILBERT | APR.2SAMUEL HOLLOCK |
| FEB. 8JAMES CERULLI | FEB. 29JOHN SMOLCZYNSKI, JR | APR. 3.....DAREN GESCHWINDT |
| FEB. 9JAMES COOK | MAR. 1MATTHEW FREDMONSKI | APR. 5.....ADAM STUMP |
| FEB. 9AMY MILLER | MAR. 1KAIA MULLER | APR. 6.....CRYSTAL ARNDT |
| FEB. 11MICHAEL KOHL | MAR. 2STEVE BALTHASER | APR. 7.....JARED COLLER |
| FEB. 12BENJAMIN COLE | MAR. 3DAN PUKSAR | APR. 8.....JOHN WALAITIS |
| FEB. 12DUANE ZIMMERMAN | MAR. 3DARNELL YOUNG | APR. 11LEO DAVIS |
| FEB. 13PHILLIP SCHAEFFER | MAR. 3JOSEPH ZIMMERMAN | APR. 12AARON CASSEL |
| FEB. 15MATIA MCKEEVER | MAR. 8JAMES DANNER | APR. 12ANTHONY DEBELLIS |
| FEB. 17DAVID EVELY | MAR. 14EDWARD MOUL | APR. 14GENE BUECHLE |
| FEB. 17MARGARET SMITH | MAR. 15ROBERT KEMPES | APR. 15JOSEPH BROWN |
| FEB. 18BILL FREDERICKSON | MAR. 19MARY CULP | APR. 15AARON SNYDER |
| FEB. 19TIMOTHY BILLET | MAR. 20NATHAN BISSEY | APR. 15JENNIFER WOODSHICK |
| FEB. 19RICHARD SCHAEFFER, II | MAR. 20MATTHEW MIZIKOSKI | APR. 16JEFFREY BAVITZ |
| FEB. 21KENNETH MILLER | MAR. 22RICHARD BERNHARDT | APR. 18EDWARD PHILBIN |
| FEB. 22CHARLES (CHIP) ALLEN | MAR. 23WALTER GREUSEL | APR.19AARON MULLER |
| FEB. 22TYLER GLASS | MAR. 24ENOS BLEILER | APR. 20BOYD LENICH |
| FEB. 22MICHAEL O'CONNELL | MAR. 24RYAN RUPPRECHT | APR. 28MARK CANTAFIO |
| FEB. 24JONATHAN BARKET | MAR. 27WILLIAM KEIM | APR. 30EDWARD KOPECK, III |

2019 Reading & Northern Calendars for Sale!

Our long awaited, 2019 Calendars have arrived! Calendars can be purchased at our corporate headquarters in Port Clinton, Pennsylvania, located at 1 Railroad Blvd., Port Clinton, Pennsylvania 19549. Mail orders are also accepted, please send payment of \$12.99 per calendar, and your return mailing address to PO Box 218, Port Clinton, Pennsylvania 19549, c/o Jolene Busher. ♦



Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad
♦ 2019 ♦



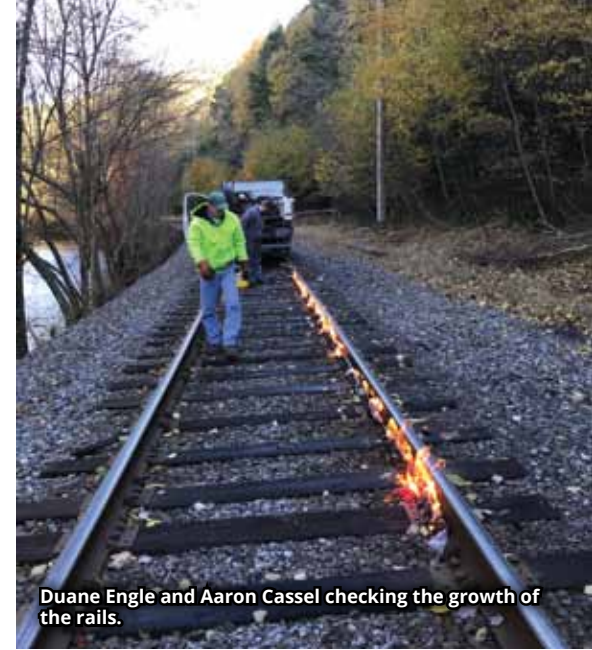
Aron Cassel and Duane Engle replace a broken joint bar on RDG ML MP 84.80.



Aron Cassel and Duane Engle replacing broken joint bar. During this process, the rails pulled apart due to cold temperatures.



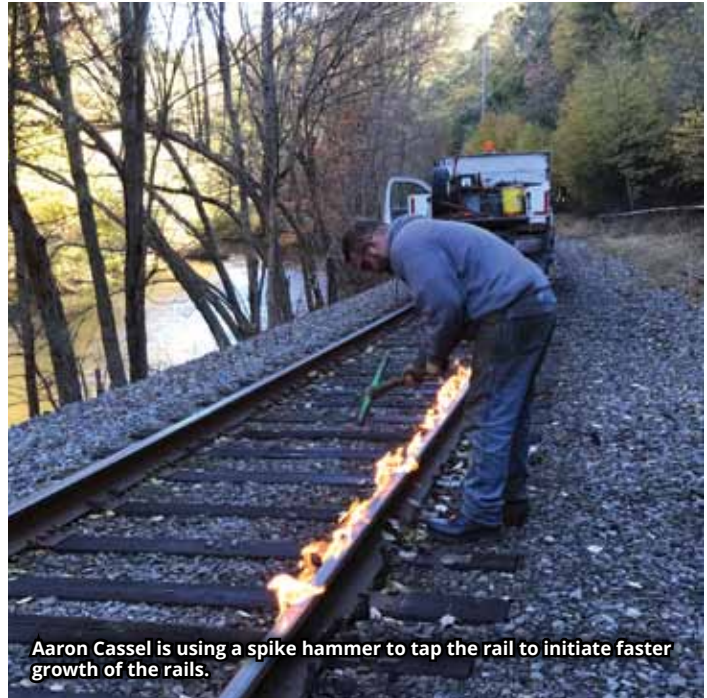
Duane Engle utilizing FIRESNAKE to heat the rails so the rail can "grow" back together.



Duane Engle and Aron Cassel checking the growth of the rails.



Duane Engle is checking the rail temperature.



Aron Cassel is using a spike hammer to tap the rail to initiate faster growth of the rails.



Aron Cassel closely monitoring the FIRESNAKE to ensure the rail is expanding.



Duane Engle and Aron Cassel are preparing to reinstall bolts in the joint bar.



Duane Engle and Aron Cassel hitting the bolts to get them set in the joint bar.



Duane Engle and Aron Cassel continue hitting the bolts to get them set in the joint bar.



FIRESNAKE is burning off.



The joint is repaired but needs tamped.



Duane Engle using the hand tamper to tamp the ties while Aron Cassel nipped the ties.

WELCOME ABOARD

NEW EMPLOYEES



Zachary Baker

Zachary Baker was recently hired as a Signal Maintainer with the Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad. He attended Marian Catholic High School. Prior to working at RBMNR, Zachary was a Tower Technician for Convergence Communications for five years.



Shawn Frederickson

Shawn Frederickson was recently hired as a Steam Mechanic with the Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad. He attended Tamaqua Area High School and North Schuylkill Technology Center. Prior to working at RBMNR, Shawn Frederickson was an Assembler Class 3 for KME REV GROUP for twenty-nine years.



Joseph Burke

Joseph Burke was recently hired as a Signal Maintainer with the Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad. He attended Mahanoy Area High School and North Schuylkill Technology Center. Prior to working at RBMNR, Joseph was a Electrician for Hayden Electric for six years.



Bailey McElroy

Bailey McElroy was recently hired as a Line Service Technician with the Reading Jet Center. He attended Wilson High School in West Lawn, Pennsylvania and Broward College in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.



Francine Calafaty

Francine Calafaty was recently hired as a Customer Service Representative with the Reading Jet Center. She attended Reading Area Community College and Alvernia University. Prior to working at the Reading Jet Center, Francine was a Customer Service Representative for Millennium Aviation for two and a half years.



Phillip Schaeffer

Phillip Schaeffer was recently hired as a Real Estate Inspector with the Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad. He attended Kutztown Area High School and Kutztown University. Prior to working at RBMNR, Phillip was a UPS driver for sixteen years while working as a subcontractor for RBMNR for five years.



Jennifer Woodeshick

Jennifer Woodeshick was recently hired as a Customer Service Manager with the Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad. She attended Wilson High School and Kutztown University. Prior to working at RBMNR, Jennifer was an Underwriter for Encompass Insurance for twelve years.

RBMN ANNIVERSARIES

ACKNOWLEDGED

30 YEARS



Correction from last magazine:

November, 1988

Leo Davis

Senior Dispatcher – Operations

41 YEARS



January 15, 1978

Therman Madeira

Executive Vice President- Special Projects

3 YEARS



January 18, 2016
Benjamin Meiser
Electrician – Engine House



January 25, 2016
Ronald Deluca
Real Estate Inspector



January 25, 2016
Joseph Matuella
Operations Administrator

1 YEAR



December 11, 2017
Elijah Wilson
Conductor



January 15, 2018
Ryan Davis
Trackman



January 22, 2018
Richard Schaeffer, II
IT Assistant



January 29, 2018
Michael Hoffa
Locomotive Mech. – Engine House



January 29, 2019
Matthew McGinnis
Trackman

Wellness Corner

BY: SABINE FIDLER, RECEPTIONIST/HR ASSISTANT

Seasonal Affective Disorder

“Even the darkest night will end, and the sun will rise.” ~ Victor Hugo, French novelist

Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD is a form of depression which is most commonly related to the changes in seasons. The disorder affects approximately 1%-2% of the population, specifically women and young people. SAD usually occurs in the Winter when the days are shorter but can also occur during the Spring and Summer. Episodes are more common in locations farther away from the equator.

The onset of symptoms is typically mild and progresses in severity over the course of the season. Many people experience mild forms of SAD, however, for those individuals whose symptoms persist and negatively affect their quality of life, medical intervention may need to be considered. SAD signs and symptoms are similar to those of major depression but differ due to remission of symptoms at the conclusion of the season in which they've occurred. Signs and symptoms may include:

- Depressed mood
- Low self-esteem
- Changes in appetite
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling of hopelessness or guilt
- Low energy
- Social withdrawal
- Problems sleeping
- Unexplained aches & pains
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities

Although the specific causes of Seasonal Affective Disorder are unknown, speculation attributes the cause to the reduction of daylight and the disruptions it imposes on the body. Circadian rhythm, serotonin production, and melatonin levels can be adversely affected. Circadian rhythm, otherwise known as the sleep-wake cycle, responds to the level of daylight and darkness. During the Fall and Winter months when days become shorter, a disruption in the body's internal clock may cause feelings of gloom, grogginess, and sleepiness at inopportune times. Reduction in the body's production of serotonin, a neurotransmitter in the brain which regulates mood, may adversely affect sleep, appetite, and memory. Melatonin, a hormone produced by the brain to aid sleep, is overproduced during longer periods of darkness during the fall and winter months. The excessive levels of melatonin lead to drowsiness and low energy.

If not treated during the onset of signs and symptoms, SAD can increase in severity; ultimately leading to complications and depression. Severe forms of depression which may require intervention include social withdrawal, school or work problems, substance abuse, mental disorders (anxiety, eating disorders), and suicidal thoughts or behavior. Self-help tips and a consultation with a medical professional is suggested before symptoms reach these levels of severity.

Maintaining motivation during seasonal depression episodes may be difficult. Making simple changes, such as the self-help tips described below, can speed recovery time and have you feeling better quickly.

Tip #1

Sunlight is free! Expose yourself to as much natural sunlight as possible. Spend time outdoors, even in short bursts. Allow natural light to infiltrate your home by opening blinds and curtains making sure to spend time in front of those windows. Simulate daylight by using daylight simulation bulbs.

Tip #2

Participate in at least thirty minutes of daily outdoor exercise. Regular exercise not only supports production of feel-good brain chemicals but may also boost self-esteem and improve sleep.

Tip #3

Relationships with friends and family are vital to the managing feelings of isolation and depression associated with SAD. Coerce yourself into socializing even when the feeling to retreat is overwhelming. Partake in an enjoyable activity, join a club, or volunteer. Assisting others is one of the most effective ways to boost self-esteem and reduce the effects of SAD.

Tip #4

Fuel your body right! Consuming smaller portions of complex carbohydrates which include fruits and vegetables will help maintain energy levels. Omega-3 rich foods such as oily fish, nuts, and flax may improve symptoms of S.A.D. and possibly improve the effectiveness of medications prescribed for depression.

Tip #5

Regardless of the season, excessive stress can aggravate the symptoms of SAD. Identify stress triggers by examining your daily routine. Devise a plan to avoid or minimize exposure to those stressors. Include relaxation techniques such as meditation or yoga into your repertoire.

The National Institute of Mental Health identifies four main types of treatment for seasonal affective disorder which may be utilized in isolation or in conjunction with one or more of the others. They include light therapy, medication, vitamin D, and psychotherapy.

Light therapy has been the most common form of treatment for SAD since the 1980s. Artificial light serves as an alternative to diminished daylight during the fall and winter months.

Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs) are frequently used to treat symptoms of SAD. As with all medications, there are side effects associated with SSRIs. A discussion with your physician may prompt suggestions for alternative medications as well as nonmedicinal treatments.

Vitamin D supplements are currently not an effective treatment for seasonal affective disorder. Its use is a result of low levels of vitamin D found in blood samples of individuals displaying symptoms of SAD. Insufficient nutrition or insufficient exposure to sunlight may be contributing factors to low levels of vitamin D.

A type of psychotherapy which has been an effective treatment for seasonal affective disorder is Cognitive Behavior Therapy. The purpose of this behavior intervention is to assist individuals in identifying positive, pleasurable indoor and outdoor activities in their quest to combat the disorder.

Seasonal depression can negatively affect an individual's health, relationships, and the function of simple, daily activities. Understanding and accepting the disorder's temporary adversity, a quote from Albert Camus offers a glimmer of hope. "In the midst of winter, I found within me, an invincible summer."

For more information, visit:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/seasonal-affective-disorder/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20364722>

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/seasonal-affective-disorder/index.shtml>

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/seasonal-affective-disorder-sad.htm>

**Reading Blue Mountain &
Northern Railroad Company**
PO Box 218
Port Clinton PA 19549



Ray Chippa, fork lift operator, is handling the first shipment of paper products at the new Ransom Warehouse.