

# R & N Magazine

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## COVER PHOTO

Lehigh Anthracite loader operators work with an RBMN Indexing crew at Lehigh's Breaker facility to load 50 Rapid Discharge cars for an Anthracite Export order destined to Kinder Morgan at Fairless Hills, PA.

## EDITORS

JOLENE BUSHER • TAYLOR HAUPT • SABINE FIDLER • KATHY GIPE

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# KEEPING ON TRACK

BY: WAYNE A. MICHEL, PRESIDENT

Thirty-five years ago Conrail had a crucial decision to make that would impact the people who mined and relied on the anthracite coal business in northeast Pennsylvania. Conrail was in the midst of selling or abandoning thousands of miles of rail lines in an effort to become profitable and shed the detritus of the Penn Central Railroad and its predecessors.

North of Reading, Conrail was looking at a collection of rail lines in poor physical condition with limited business potential outside of the core anthracite coal business mined in the region. Aware that Congress was looking to finally end the decades long practice of sending hundreds of thousands of tons of anthracite overseas to heat American army bases overseas, Conrail understood that the future of the American anthracite industry that had fueled America's Industrial Revolution hung in the balance. So Conrail decided to exit the region and sell the Reading Cluster.

But it did not want to give up on the anthracite business. So Conrail decided to look for a passionate individual with local roots, financial independence and railroad experience. Enter Andy Muller. Andy had had his eyes on these lines for years and had reached out to Conrail repeatedly. Ultimately Andy and I (I was running the Conrail line sale program) connected and by December of 1990 the sale of the Reading Cluster to Andy was consummated and the Road of Anthracite was born.

In honor of that history and the crucial role anthracite has played in our past and will play in our future, Reading & Northern has decided to dedicate this issue to the Pennsylvania anthracite industry. In the following pages you will find articles explaining what anthracite coal is and how it is different than other coals, showing how the use of anthracite in America has changed over the last two hundred years, who the rail-served producers are and where they are located and what their facilities look like, and how Reading and Northern has dedicated millions of dollars in resources to help the industry grow.

Over the 30 years Reading Northern has served the anthracite industry we have seen it grow and shrink dramatically. As the chart on page 8 shows, the anthracite business grew dramatically and then shrunk significantly over our first decade of operation. Fortunately, during that same period Reading Northern also grew dramatically. We acquired the Lehigh Line and greatly diversified our revenue streams so that a downturn in anthracite shipments was not determinative of our future.

At the turn of the century our Class 1 connection shifted from Conrail to Norfolk Southern and that has turned out over the years to be a blessing. From NS we were able to greatly expand our own coal fleet, which gave us needed control over the empty cars our customers needed. NS encouraged us to go interline, which gave us greater control of our business. NS supported all of our business initiatives. And in 2011 the NS Coal Business Group supported our efforts to access Hazleton Shaft via NS trackage rights.

Over the last twenty years the business has ebbed and flowed but RBMN's commitment never wavered. Andy Muller kept investing millions of dollars. He bought more and more coal cars, and different types of cars as the business changed. He invested in offline facilities, first at the new anthracite export facility at Fairless Hills operated by Kinder Morgan, then at the Moldok river barge facility near Pittsburgh, and more recently at a series of transload locations where covered hoppers are offloaded for truck delivery to steel and zinc mills. He invested online in 2017 to ensure that the new Hiller Carbon coal dryer at Hazleton Shaft, now Atlantic Coal, was rail-served and he invested in 2020 to build a loading facility at Locust Summit for offline coal producers like Keystone Anthracite.

From my unique vantage point of having chosen Andy to be the purchaser of the Reading Cluster thirty five years ago, I can certainly say that Andy has gone the extra mile to secure the future of anthracite movements by rail. Thanks to Andy and the Reading & Northern the PA anthracite industry and our entire region have a bright future to look forward to and the Road of Anthracite is keeping on track. ♦



A Caterpillar excavator and large bulldozer work in tandem at one of Reading Anthracite's various strip-mining sites to remove overburden as they work towards the coal seam.

# What is Anthracite Coal?

BY: BILL CLARK, SENIOR VP COAL MARKETING

## coal

[kōl] NOUN

1. A combustible black or dark brown rock consisting mainly of carbonized plant matter, found mainly in underground deposits and widely used as fuel.

So, what is coal? Simply put, coal is a rock. There are three major types of rock; Igneous (formed from magma), Sedimentary (formed by the accumulation or deposition of mineral or organic particles), and Metamorphic (Igneous and Sedimentary rock that is subject to greater heat and pressure). All coal is formed from sedimentary rock.

**Coal is “Ranked” into 4 classifications;**

1. Lignite – At 60 million years old, Lignite is the youngest of all coals. It is formed at low heat (100 degrees Fahrenheit), has the least amount of Carbon (25% - 35%). At 4,000 – 8,000 British Thermal Units (BTU's), contains the least amount of energy. Lignite is used exclusively for electric generation.
2. Subbituminous – The 2nd Ranked coal was formed at higher heat (120 – 200 degrees) and is about 250 million years old. The Carbon Content and BTU's are higher than Lignite (42% - 52% Carbon, 8,200 – 11,000 BTU's). Subbituminous coal is also used in electric generation.
3. Bituminous – Ranked 3rd, Bituminous Coal is the oldest Sedimentary coal. Formed over 300 million years, at 300-degree temperatures, Bituminous coal has a carbon content of 45% - 86%, with a BTU rating of 11,000 – 13,000. While primarily used in the making of electricity, higher grade Bituminous coal is also used to make Metallurgic coke. Coke has properties similar to Anthracite and is used in steel making.

When Bituminous coal is subjected to higher temperatures (350+ degrees Fahrenheit), over 350 million years, it metamorphosizes into Anthracite coal (making Anthracite a Metamorphic and not Sedimentary rock). Thru the process of becoming Anthracite, any remaining sediment is converted to Carbon. As a result, Anthracite is close to pure carbon (up to 95% Carbon). The heat content is higher than any other coal, but because of the high Carbon content, Anthracite is more difficult to ignite. This disadvantage, is more than offset by the lack of pollutants, making Anthracite an ideal fuel for home heating and for applications requiring pure carbon.

While much more expensive than other coals, the makeup of Anthracite is ideal for many applications. While natural gas and electricity heats most homes in the United States, Anthracite is still a source of heat for many areas that do not have access to natural gas. Anthracite is used as a medium to purify water, as an additive to improve charcoal, and, because of its' high heat, making pizza!

**From Reading and Northern perspective, we serve 3 major industries that rely on Anthracite;**

1. Steelmaking – An Electric Arc Furnace (“EAF”) uses electricity to melt scrap steel. In an EAF, electrodes are inserted into a furnace that is filled with scrap steel, pig iron, and lime. The electrodes pulse electricity, raising the temperature to at least 3000 degrees Fahrenheit.  
Anthracite provides several critical roles in the steel making process. Due to its' high content, Anthracite is used to increase the carbon level of the finished steel. Carbon not only strengthens steel, it allows steel to be more flexible, reducing brittleness. High BTU levels of Anthracite reduce the need (and cost) of electricity and natural gas. Anthracite is used to remove impurities from scrap metal and also helps protect the furnace lining. When Anthracite is injected into molten metal, it attaches to various impurities in the scrap (oils, paint, chemicals, Etc.). When combined with these impurities, Anthracite forms “foamy slag”. Foamy slag covers the top and sides of the furnace, acting as an insulator; protecting the refractory brick and helping to retain heat.  
Carbon is critical in the steelmaking process; you can't have steel without carbon. While there are alternatives (metallurgic, petroleum and foundry coke), nothing surpasses the quality and affectedness of Anthracite “the natural coke”.
2. Zinc Recycling – A byproduct of the EAF process is “EAF dust”. EAF dust is the remnants of the purification process utilizing Anthracite. Interestingly, Anthracite is used in processing these pollutants into beneficial products. The pollutants in EAF dust are amongst the most hazardous metals the EPA tracks. Cadmium, chrome, lead, mercury, lead and arsenic are present in high concentrations, as is Dioxin. Without this process, dust would be transported to hazardous waste facilities for internment; not an environmentally friendly process.  
The process to recycle EAF dust is straightforward. Anthracite is combined with dust in a long (up to 1,000') kiln. The kiln is heated to 950 degrees Fahrenheit and a conveyor moves the dust/Anthracite mixture. By the end of the kiln, Anthracite has combined with the dust to create two product streams. Slag is used for the making of Portland Cement, and Zinc Oxide is refined further to make pure Zinc. Other than a small amount of precious metals, there are no other byproducts. What was a hazardous waste, is now material used in construction and the making of steel (as well as other products).  
As with making steel; Carbon is required to the refining process. Coke can be used to blend with Anthracite, but 100% Anthracite is ideal.
3. Sugar Beet refining – 55% of the sugar produces in the United States comes from Sugar Beets. Most of this is produced in the Upper Midwest (Minnesota and the Dakotas) and the pacific Northwest (Wyoming and Idaho). Anthracite is used in the initial step to produce a dense mass of sugar crystals (I.e. “Massecuite”). Carbon is used to bind with non-sugar solids that is removed from the Massecuite; allowing the crystals to be further refined and processed.

The discovery of Anthracite helped early America grow to be a world power. From its' use propelling ships, heating homes and businesses, and in the iron and steel making process produced an incalculable amount of wealth and prosperity; not only for the United States, but for the world. The qualities that made Anthracite valuable then still hold true today. Anthracite is an environmentally friendly source of Carbon; its' value as a purification medium impacts our lives every day, from the water we drink, the sugar we stir into our coffee and the steel used in the car (or bus, or rail car) we use to go to work. With some of the largest reserves in the world; American Anthracite mined in Pennsylvania will continue to impact the world. We at “The Road of Anthracite” are proud of the small part we play in helping to get American Anthracite to customers in the US, and throughout the world. ♦

# A History of Anthracite

BY: BILL CLARK, SENIOR VP COAL MARKETING

In the 1990's, the BBC ran a series called “Connections”. The show took an alternative view of history; positing that rather than history being linear (I.e., events progressing from one stage to another in a straight line), the history of change is impacted by a variety of discoveries, world events and scientific achievements built on one another to bring about change. The discovery and development of Anthracite is a great example of the interconnectivity of events on history.

The use of Anthracite in Europe can be traced to medieval times (5th – 15th century). In 1790, Anthracite was first discovered near Pittston, PA. In 1795, Anthracite was used to fire an iron producing furnace on the Schuylkill River. In 1808, Anthracite was used experimentally for residential heat.

The availability of Anthracite was critical in the growth of America. Prior to the discovery of Anthracite, homes were heated by wood and lit by whale oil of candles. The resulting demand denuded forests, caused excessive flooding and damage from mud slides, as well as the near extinction of whale populations. By the mid-1880's, forests surrounding major American cities were almost completely harvested. Beyond the environmental damage, burning wood releases ash and other pollutants into the atmosphere.

The stored energy in Anthracite is far higher than in hardwood. The amount of heat generated by Anthracite is double that of wood. Anthracite is also much denser than wood, allowing a much smaller area to produce the same amount of energy. Anthracite is low in sulfur and has the least amount of VOC's (Volatile Organic Chemicals) of any coal. Because it burns with very little biproducts, it is ideal for home heating and for use in industrial production.

By 1842, the US was producing in excess of 85,000,000 tons of Anthracite, all in Pennsylvania. Consumption of Anthracite in the making of iron and steel, home heating, as a fuel for ships, and light industrial production continued to grow into the early 1900's. As electricity use expanded, Anthracite was used in power plants as well. By 1915, in excess of 100,000,000 tons of Anthracite were mined in Pennsylvania (the only region in the United States with Anthracite reserves).

But soon, the development of high quality bituminous reserves in the Northern, Southern Appalachia regions, and the Illinois Basin (Western PA, OH, VA, KY, WVA, IL, and IN), and later the discovery of huge reserves of Subbituminous coal in Wyoming, portended a decline in Anthracite demand. Bituminous and Subbituminous coals are easier to ignite and much less expensive to mine.

By 1950, demand for Anthracite shrank to 44,000,000 million tons. After 1950, Anthracite production declined rapidly. By 2001, Anthracite production in the US had shrunk to 2,000,000 tons. In comparison, Bituminous and Subbituminous production peaked in 2001 at 1,127,700,000 tons.

The impact of Anthracite on the development of the United States cannot be understated. Some of the major impacts of the discovery of Anthracite;

- Anthracite provided a low-cost, efficient source of heat for Americans. Saving our arboreal forests, reducing pollution, and helping people financially and extending lifespans.
- The development of the pig iron, and then steel industries in the US was directly related to the discovery of Anthracite. Because of low-cost Anthracite, the US became the world's largest steel producer; surpassing England in the late 1880's.
- Anthracite was the first, and largest user of railroads. The growth of railroading infrastructure in the Northeast US is a direct result of the growth of Anthracite production.
- Development of steamships was only possible with the availability of low-cost Anthracite. The development of our inland water system would have been delayed for decades were it not for Anthracite. The US became a world power because of Anthracite. Interestingly, by the end of the Civil War, the US had the largest navy in the world (far surpassing England). This was a direct result of US produced Anthracite.
- US Anthracite was critical to the developing world as well. Exported Anthracite allowed for economic growth in Europe and then the Far East. It allowed people all over the world to share in the benefits of low-cost carbon for decades.

America has been blessed in many ways; the abundance of natural resources, an inland water system that is unparalleled, and some of the most productive farmland are only a few of the reasons we are the wealthiest and most egalitarian society in the history of human existence. Anthracite coal was a major factor in our early development and the story of Anthracite isn't finished being told! With the largest reserves of high quality Anthracite (estimated at 7 Billion tons), the Anthracite business will continue to impact the world in ways only limited by our imagination. As the “Road of Anthracite”, Reading and Northern Railroad will continue to support this business; our “connection” to Anthracite is who we are. ♦

# The Birth and Growth of the Road of Anthracite

BY: BILL CLARK, SENIOR VP COAL MARKETING & WAYNE A. MICHEL, PRESIDENT

Over the last thirty-plus years Reading & Northern (RBMN) has relied upon and grown the anthracite business. The story of this growth is in large part the story of how Andy Muller had a vision for the Road of Anthracite and turned that vision into a reality.

Production of Anthracite in the United States peaked in 1918 at 100 million tons. Over time increased use of coke in steel production, and a shift to other types of heating (natural gas and electricity), and a transition to petroleum in transportation (first in ships, and later in locomotives), provided more economical alternatives to Anthracite. By 1950, Anthracite production has halved to 50 million tons. By 1990, total production had dropped to less than 3.5 million tons.

Facing these headwinds Conrail decided to sell the anthracite-served rail lines in a package it called the Reading Cluster. And in December of 1990 local entrepreneur Andy Muller closed on the purchase of those lines.

1991 was the Reading and Northern Railroad's first full year in operation. That year, we handled a little over 250,000 tons of Anthracite. Two thirds of RBMN's coal business was for export and it moved a short distance to Baltimore, a new port for anthracite after Conrail abandoned Pier 124 in Philadelphia that year.

While anthracite production stabilized at around 2 million tons per year from 1990 thru 2022, the tonnage moved by rail fluctuated wildly. Thanks to improved rail service, and greater attention to the needs of our customers, domestic and export shipments increased throughout our first decade of business and we regularly handled over 600,000 tons a year hitting a peak in 1996 when we originated 730,000 tons of Anthracite.

In the summer of 1999 Conrail was split between Norfolk Southern and CSX and NS ended up becoming our sole connection for anthracite coal. Unfortunately, with everything else going on after Split Date, NS did not fully understand the anthracite business. As a result, NS took a number of steps that, if left in place, would have harmed the anthracite industry and RBMN. NS raised the rates being charged for the movement of anthracite and they decided to stop the supply of empty rail cars for anthracite loading. Thankfully, the issue was quickly brought to the attention of NS senior management and NS rolled back the planned rate increases and agreed to sell the Conrail fleet used for anthracite to Andy Muller.

Moving from a situation where much of RBMN's coal car fleet was supplied by our Class 1 connection at no cost to RBMN to a situation where Andy had to invest millions of dollars and build up a car repair department meant significant risk for Andy and the RBMN. But Andy did not hesitate. Andy seized the moment as he had back in 1990 when he purchased rail lines that were in poor physical condition and set off to be the Road of Anthracite.

Despite the investment in rail cars, RBMN experienced a decline in anthracite volume over the next few years before the bottom dropped out of the market in 2009 during the global recession.

In addition, RBMN also had to deal with the loss of access to the Consol Terminal in Baltimore, which had been handling all anthracite exports since 1991. In late 2007, Consol decided it would no longer unload Anthracite. This left the industry with no alternative port to export Anthracite by rail. At that point, Andy instructed Wayne Michel and Dan Gilchrist to find another port. After exploring every port on the east coast as far south as Norfolk and as far north as Nova Scotia, they settled on the nearby Fairless Hills facility, which was operated as a port by Kinder Morgan. Although not ideal, the port did at least offer space and a willing terminal partner in KM. Upriver from the Port of Philadelphia, Fairless Hills was on the Delaware River, which is a navigable waterway and could handle many midsized vessels. But Fairless Hills had no equipment with which to unload rail cars. Again, Andy stepped up and

immediately decided to acquire undercar conveyors that he would place at the port so RBMN railcars could be unloaded. This was a huge offline investment for RBMN that was soon dwarfed by the investment Andy needed to make to accomplish the second part of the plan to make Fairless work.

Over the course of a year, RBMN, KM and the largest export receiver Quebec Iron & Titanium, now Rio Tinto, looked at many options. Given the relatively low volume expected to move, the parties quickly agreed that a rotary dump system was too expensive. Ultimately, the parties found the Ashross system still in use today. KM acquired and installed the Ashross and Andy committed to purchasing 250 aluminum rapid discharge cars to be used exclusively at that facility.

With the offline investment example fresh in his mind, Andy agreed to assist in the expansion of a river terminal owned by MOL-DOK on the Ohio River near Leetsdale, PA. The expansion allowed MOL-DOK to dump two railcars at a time, which greatly aided the growth of business to this facility. With this facility in place Anthracite receivers on the inland water system now had the opportunity to efficiently handle rail.

As Bill Clark has worked to expand RBMN's reach to the ever-growing electric arc furnace steel mills throughout the Midwest and Southeast, Andy has again stepped up by investing in undercar conveyors so that coal could be unloaded and transferred to truck for the final move to the steel mills.

Andy also signed off on two significant on-line investments to support expanded coal business. In 2017 we completed work with Hazleton Shaft (Atlantic Carbon) and Hiller Carbon to ensure tracks were in place to support the new dryer being built on the Hazleton Shaft property. That dryer now regularly ships over 1,000 carloads a year for domestic steel mills. A few years later, we finished work on a new loading location at Locust Summit to support the offline coal producer, Keystone Anthracite. As a result of the work, tens of thousands of tons of processed coal that comes from non-rail served facilities is now being shipped for domestic steel consumption.

The results of all of these investments is evident in our growth. Between 2016 and 2022, domestic shipments increased by 80%. Our export traffic exploded after the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the resulting embargoes in Europe and the US. The invasion and embargoes created a huge uptick in demand for US Anthracite. Without Andy's decision to purchase additional rapid discharge cars 90 days before the invasion, RBMN would not have been able to handle this surge in export business.

Since Andy's first investment in rail cars in 2000, our fleet has grown to over 1,500 railcars. RBMN's investment in conveyors at destinations has also fueled our growth. At this time, a majority of RBMN domestic coal shipments currently move to destination where RBMN has invested in offloading equipment. We are not aware of any railroad in North America with the willingness to risk capital at locations off our railroad.

For over thirty-five years Andy Muller has understood the importance of the Pennsylvania anthracite industry and the need for a quality railroad to serve it. And in that period Andy has risked millions of dollars to support that industry. And after all those years it is wonderful to see those investments pay off. This year we will exceed 1,000,000 tons moved by rail for the first time in our history. We have truly become the Road of Anthracite. ♦

# Coal Operations The Early Years

BY: TYLER GLASS, EXECUTIVE VP OPERATIONS

In the beginning...

For RBMN, our beginning as the Road of Anthracite stems from the decision by Conrail to sell its Reading Cluster as it saw the continued decline of export coal moving to offshore military bases.

But Andy Muller was thrilled to take over the franchise and on December 15, 1990, the Reading, Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad was born. From that time forward until we expanded with the Lehigh Line acquisition in late 1996, anthracite was king. It was both the mainstay of our current operation and it was our hope for the future. Anthracite was 60% of our business in those days so we would do whatever was necessary to keep it moving. Quebec Iron and Titanium (QIT) was the largest anthracite contract and that helped keep the anthracite business on life support.

The anthracite region was still peppered with the dormant giant breakers that were regularly churning out millions of tons per year several decades prior. However, there were still some of the smaller older style breakers in existence such as Lehigh Coal and Navigation's (LC&N) #14 breaker just east of Tamaqua and Reading Anthracite's New St. Nicholas Breaker just north of Minersville. These operations were a site to behold. With belts bringing raw coal in and moving sized processed coal out, there were a lot of moving parts while the train crews worked to spot empties behind the breakers (uphill) and then return downhill to pull whatever loaded coal was billed. The water and mud around the operations was plentiful and always provided some extra landmines to contend with.

LC&N used a small locomotive to load their domestic coal shipments in the breaker, slowly moving the cars as they loaded. They would then move the cars out of the breaker down the tracks often manned with people on the handbrakes to help keep the small cuts of cars under control. For the QIT loading, they used loaders to load off huge piles not far from the breaker.

Reading Anthracite relied on drifting railcars from the empty tracks above the breaker to the car washer. There the cars were prepped for loading. Domestic shipments loaded in the breaker were hooked to cables, handbrakes were applied and the cars were pulled through the breaker. Once the cars were loaded, men would get on the cars and moved them down the tracks and using the handbrakes on the cars to modulate their speed. The QIT cars were loaded at a ramp adjacent to the breaker. These cuts of 2-3 cars, once loaded, would be manned and drifted up to 1/3 of a mile to make room for constant, heavy loading. Looking back on this it seems crazy to believe but that is just the way things were done at that time. And yes, there were times that cars gained too much momentum and made hard couplings. Some cars were destroyed.

We had some smaller loading locations at Good Spring, Middleport, Locust Summit and Tremont. Blaschak in Mahanoy City was a regular customer as well. These locations all relied on drifting the cars short distances to spot the cars for loading.

In 1992, Conrail made a deal with RBMN to sell the branch that serves the Jeddo breaker on the north side of Hazleton. The sale was done so that all of the QIT coal was originated on RBMN, thus the outbound unit trains could be blended in a specific order when the cars were dumped at the port. With this sale, Conrail exited the serving of anthracite facilities and RBMN now had a presence in the Hazleton region. On the downside, the branch line leading to Jeddo was not in

the best shape. Jeddo #7 breaker used a small locomotive to move cars around for loading. This was an older style breaker similar to LC&N and Reading Anthracite; however, it was not perched on a hillside, so the grades were much easier.

At the outset, we used all Conrail cars for loading. There were several different size open top hoppers, and they were all used for different types of coal and sizes. So the suppliers cleaned and prepped every car.

Around the same time as the Jeddo acquisition, RBMN purchased 35 western coal gons to load silt, a fine coal byproduct of the older coal processing methods. The silt was initially loaded at Swatara and was transported to the Panther Creek facility that was located on the C&S Railroad at Nesquehoning. Eventually we would load silt at other locations.

1995 saw the purchase of 264 cars by Andy Muller for the QIT business and 26 cars for domestic loading. Early on Andy was always looking to make investments in equipment for the business. QIT being a large customer deserved a consistent reliable fleet.

Also, around this time, we started to get some of the deplorable track conditions under control.

Anthracite would be a good base for RBMN business through the 1990's. However, the company growth came with the 1996 purchase of the Lehigh Middle Cluster from Conrail. With this, the commodities handled by RBMN became quite diverse. Anthracite was still huge but much less of a percentage of our base traffic.

Norfolk Southern entered the scene in late 1996 when it was announced that NS would be purchasing much of Conrail's railroad in Pennsylvania. When NS took over the Conrail territory in 1999, the free hopper use that RBMN enjoyed as Conrail's partner was in jeopardy. By 2000, a deal was struck, and RBMN would purchase 200 coal cars from NS and 85 coal cars from CSX to take the place of the Conrail cars we used for so many years. We also purchased 50 former Pittsburg and Shawmut cars from a broker.

Over the next decade or so, we would see some changes in the anthracite region. Many of the older breakers would be torn down, that included Reading Anthracite's New St. Nicholas breaker and Jeddo's breaker. A new facility at Girard Estate on the Shenandoah branch was designed and built. Blaschak's operation at Mahanoy City would be greatly modified and expanded. Lehigh Anthracite's facility at Greenwood, formerly LC&N, would see considerable track infrastructure improvements. Jeddo would move their rail operation about a half mile from their old breaker. We would also start seeing covered hoppers being loaded with fine anthracite.

The 2010's would see more unit train operations as Xcoal and Messabi Nugget sourced coal from our suppliers. With this ever-changing anthracite business, the equipment used would change. And thus, RBMN would invest heavily in equipment that was best suited for the commodity and destination.

RBMN business evolved greatly from the first decade of operations and the safety at the breakers was greatly enhanced as RBMN would provide dedicated crews for loading of large cuts of cars for unit train loading. While some cars are drifted to this day, it is for very short distances.

You will read in other articles in great detail what the modern day coal business takes from start to finish. The evolution has been amazing to watch. ♦

# The Evolution of Coal Facilities & Producers

BY: JIM CERULLI, VP INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

For the last 30 + years, Reading and Northern has been known as the “Road of Anthracite”. It has always been an integral part of both RBMN’s history and the predecessor railroads that came before us. When railroading began in our country coal companies were early users. In fact, in most instances the coal companies and railroads were part of the same corporate structure and organization. It was only in the early part of the 20th century that these massive companies were split into separate mining and railroad operations, as they remain today.

When we took over the Anthracite cluster from Conrail in 1990, there were over a dozen active coal facilities along our system. These facilities ranged from 1 or 2 car “ramps” where trucks from small coal producers would dump directly into the rail cars, to breakers where larger coal producers would load 20-30 + cars at a time. Although many of these facilities still exist in their original or upgraded form, some have since been shuttered or repurposed for non-coal uses. With the loss of some facilities we have also had a number of new facilities come online or go through significant upgrades over the last 20 or so years. Today we have 11 active coal loadouts along our system, with the vast majority of shipments coming from our 7 largest coal producers and 9 different facilities.

One of the largest developments in the PA Anthracite industry was the addition of dried anthracite production facilities. Today we have 4 such facilities along our railroad, including 2 that have either been constructed or opened to rail shipments since 2016. These drying facilities operated by Hiller Carbon, Reading Anthracite and Rausch Creek and provide a low moisture content material to the North American steel industry. All of these shipments are moved in covered hopper cars to ensure the material remains dry and free of any sort of contaminants. Although this business has only really been around since the mid-2000’s, it now represents nearly 1/3 of RBMN’s Anthracite Coal shipments and has become an integral part of the steel industry and many of our coal producer’s business portfolios.

We have also had several other facilities either expand or build along or near our railroad over the last 2 decades. These include the expansion of Reading Anthracite’s Girard Estates property located near Girard, PA with the addition of new and upgraded rail infrastructure to support rail loadings at this location. The significant expansion of Reading Anthracite’s former ISG facility at Gilberton, where there are now 3 different Reading Anthracite/WMPI loading operations at this site. They include the WMPI-North and South Dryer’s where Dried Anthracite is loaded into Covered Hoppers and the WMPI-North Pad where Open Top Hoppers are loaded for both Export and Domestic receivers. An additional Reading Anthracite facility at Minersville, PA (New Saint Nick) has also undergone a transformation with track upgrades to the facility and a new/larger pad area primarily for loading high volume Export Coal shipments. All of these upgraded and expanded facilities have made Reading Anthracite our largest producer by carloads and volume.

In addition to Reading Anthracite, both Blaschak Anthracite and Lehigh Anthracite have undergone significant upgrades and improvements over the last 2 decades.

Additional infrastructure was designed and installed at Blaschak’s facility near Mahanoy City. This additional infrastructure allows Blaschak to load 20 + cars at a time without the need for RBMN to move cars. This greatly improved both the capacity and efficiency of Blaschak’s rail loadings. In the last decade or so, Lehigh Anthracite also underwent significant upgrades at their Breaker facility located near Tamaqua. These upgrades included the addition of a large staging yard for empty hoppers and the construction of a loading pad and lead track for loading large blocks of unit train coal.

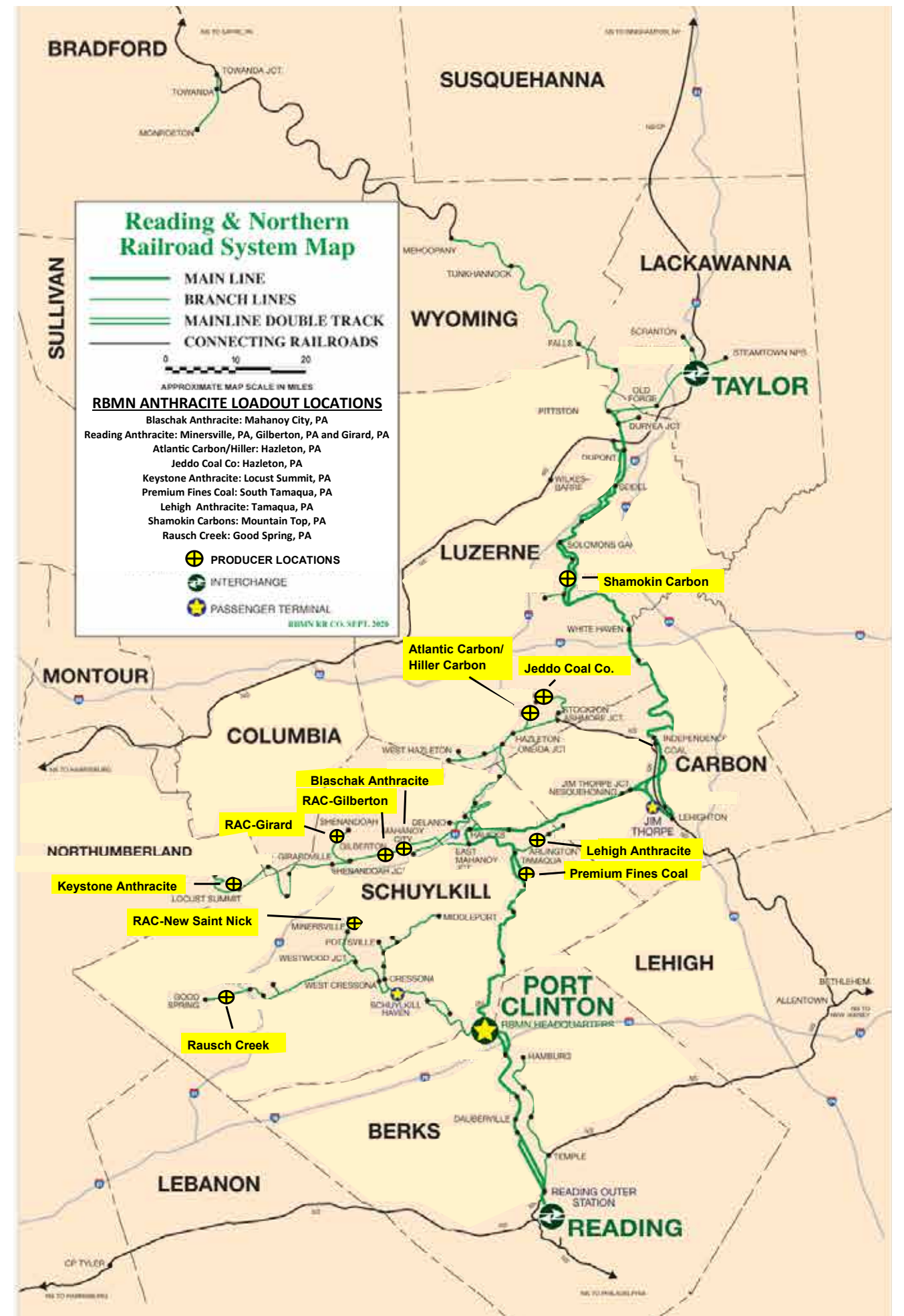
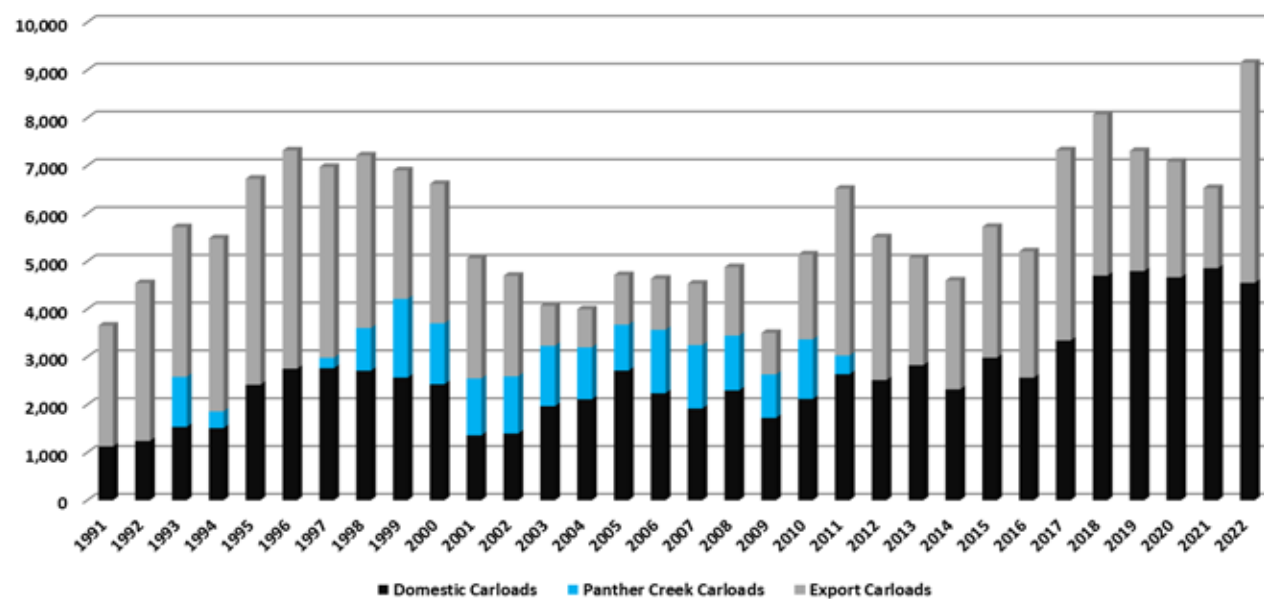
In addition to our legacy producers, we have also added several new producers or rail loading locations to our network. These include the installation of the Premium Fines Coal siding in South Tamaqua where we load small blocks of coal for North American receivers. Two of our largest and most recent coal related projects were adding Atlantic Carbon/Hiller Carbon to our network in Hazleton in 2017 and the construction of a large coal transload facility in Locust Summit in 2020 to handle offline coal from Keystone Anthracite’s new production facility near Treverton. These developments have added thousands of carloads of new business to RBMN’s coal network and are poised for continued growth in 2023 and beyond.

Although much has changed with our producers, coal operations and facilities along our railroad, one thing that has not changed is the fact that anthracite remains a significant part of Reading and Northern’s business. We anticipate this growth to continue as producers continue to expand their production and facilities. Looking ahead, we expect a second dryer to be constructed at Atlantic/Hiller Carbon’s facility in Hazleton. We also anticipate an additional Keystone Anthracite processing facility to be located near our railroad; this facility is currently in the planning stages. These new facilities have the potential to add thousands of additional carloads to our already robust anthracite business. As we have for the last 30 + years, we will continue to adapt to the changing coal business and look forward to being “The Road of Anthracite” for many years to come. ♦



A view looking North/West at RBMN's sprawling Locust Summit Coal Transload Facility operated by Bobby Burns/Keystone Anthracite. This facility is used to truck in coal from offline facilities and load onto RBMN railcars to various rail customers. In this view the first few truckloads of coal can be seen arriving at the facility in early July 2021.

**RBMN Anthracite Carload Data**



# Road of Anthracite

## RBMN Making It Look Easy

BY: ERIC PETERS, VP TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY

As the Russian Federation invaded the Ukraine, I knew the world would change, but I had no idea how close to home that change would be and that it wouldn't all be negative. As fighting intensified and sanctions strengthened, the demand for Pennsylvania Anthracite grew rapidly. With the RBMN being the Road of Anthracite, this meant things were about to get busy. Figuring out how to handle this huge surge of business is a great problem to have. However, the surge in business coincided with the fact that Norfolk Southern, with whom we interchange 100% of our anthracite coal shipments, was having manpower and in-service locomotive issues, which became another challenge to overcome.

Let's start from the beginning to get a sense of the effort and involvement each load of anthracite requires. First, anthracite is loaded in RBMN cars. This took a great deal of capital and foresight to own a fleet that could meet the needs of our customers. Locating and procuring equipment is no easy task. Once you own the cars, they must be re-numbered, stenciled, inspected, AEI tags reprogrammed, Umler updated, and added to inventory. With a fleet of over 1,500 coal cars, there must be space to stage and store them. This again takes capital and strategic investments in building track at the right locations to maximize efficiency. Once you have the cars and tracks to stage them, the real fun can begin.

To be clear, not all coal cars are created equal or designed for the same purpose. Our 1,513 cars dedicated to anthracite service are broken down into several categories and subcategories. We have open top hoppers that include rotary dump tubs, bottom dump H350s and rapid discharge cars. Within those three groups there are steel vs. aluminum and 286k vs. 263k capacity cars. We also use covered hoppers to transport anthracite that has been dried after processing. Due to how they are unloaded, there are two types, TBT and Non-TBT. A much smaller amount of the fleet are flat bottom gondolas that are loaded with anthracite and scooped out. Due to there being residual in all of the car types used, it further complicates what can be reloaded into each car depending on the size and type it last contained. All empties are weighed when they return, so the shipper can get lite weights and last contained residual information from our excellent Coal Customer Service Team.

The Mechanical Department inspects all aspects of the cars before they are spotted at any location to load. This includes brakes, trucks, wheels, car bodies, safety appliances, doors, door latches, interior braces, graffiti and more. We do everything possible to make sure when we spot a car to be loaded, there will be no issues with the car that will impact the safe and timely transportation or discharging at destination. Each rapid discharge car goes through preventative maintenance periodically to prevent failures. The Car Shop continues to elevate their knowledge through annual training and keeping up with the latest repair etiquette. This includes training by railcar manufacturers and using industry experts as resources.

Next, I will describe the steps in the process of a car cycling from empty to load. Each coal car gets handled by many train crews throughout its journey from arriving at interchange empty to going back out to interchange loaded. The train crews have been trained extensively in the safe movement of railcars along with the RBMN procedures to service each coal load out (16 locations), and the expectations on the movement and care of the equipment. The journey starts when NS has the empty car available for us to pick up from their yard in Reading. Our train crew goes to their yard and picks up all the cars available for interchange. The cars are pulled onto our property and weighed before the Car Shop inspects them. Once the car is verified to be in serviceable condition our Coal Customer Service and Fleet Team assign a serving yard based on that specific car. The Fleet Team uses last contained, car type and car size to decide where the car will most likely be reloaded based on their forecast from the coal producers for the week.

Once the car has a serving yard destination, the yard job switches the car out and builds it into the appropriate pick up. Overnight when the road trains operate, the car gets picked up and taken to the next waypoint or serving yard. The majority of our coal cars go to Tamaqua. For those cars destined for the M&S Branch, they are taken to stage at storage locations along the M&S until the car is ordered for placement to be loaded. Now the cars wait until the coal producers order the car in for loading.

When the car order comes in, Customer Service places it on the train crew's work order. The train crew then switches the car out from the track it is stored on. Now that it is switched out, the crew places the car on the customer siding so it can be loaded. At certain loading ramps, our train crew will stay and help the customer by moving cars so they can load larger blocks. We call this indexing and it allows up to 50+ cars to be loaded in one shift.

Now the car is loaded and it needs to go to interchange. The process starts with the coal load out waybilling the car to the unloading destination. The customer notifies our Coal Customer Service it is ready to be pulled from their siding. Customer Service will then notify the train crew directly or via work order that the car needs to be pulled and if it needs to be held on our property or sent to interchange. If it is being held on our property, the Chief Dispatcher will arrange a location for it to be stored until released to interchange and the train crew will place the car there. Sometimes we must hold cars to build cuts of certain sizes including full unit trains. If the car is ready to go straight to interchange, it will be pulled by the local serving crew and set up in the road train's pick up for that night. The local crew builds the pick up for the road train. The road trains will transport the car to North Reading where they weigh the car. If the car is not overweight it will be switched into the interchange cut of cars that the transfer job will deliver to NS early in the morning. If the car is overweight, it must be set out and held until a plan is developed to lighten it. Another easily overlooked critical piece to making this work is the maintenance and testing of the weigh in motion scale. The Signals Department puts a lot of effort to ensure it is accurate and communicating properly. This is the cycle of coal equipment while on our property. It is a very complex process that is only possible because the communication between departments and the execution of the plan by those in the field. Through efficiently planning the operation, this process can be done very quickly. When an empty is available at interchange, it can be spotted at the load out the following day. And once it is loaded it can be interchanged overnight the same day.

The work does not end once the anthracite car leaves RBMN property. Coal Customer Service, Fleet Management and Transportation track and monitor the shipment across the connecting railroads until it is spotted at the unloading facility. Once the cars are spotted, RBMN ensures that they are unloaded timely. If there are any issues discharging the cars, RBMN Mechanical forces will travel and assist the unloader. Once the cars are released empty, the above departments monitor them to make sure they return quickly so the process can repeat. This oversight helps decrease cycle time which is good for the customers and RBMN as the car owner.

With all the moving parts to our anthracite coal franchise, it is amazing how successful each group and individual is in doing their part to ensure a fluid operation that meets or exceeds our customers' needs. The planning and execution are key. RBMN works with the other railroads and ports to assist them. We provide concierge service from start to finish to add value to our customers. This means overseeing and managing the aspects that we do not directly control. Our relationships and knowledge are key to putting together all the pieces of the puzzle. ♦

# The Evolution of Coal Fleet

BY: JIM CERULLI, VP INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Just like with any other bulk rail commodity, rail car supply is a critical factor to the Anthracite coal business. In the early days of Reading and Northern, we were solely dependent on Conrail to supply the equipment needed for Anthracite Coal shipments. Our producers would place their orders and we would work with Conrail to identify and move equipment to our railroad for loading. In the 1990's all our rail shipments for Anthracite were completed in H350 style bottom dump coal cars, meaning we had a singular car type that can be used for any our shipments. As you will read throughout this article, standardization of our fleet is no longer a possibility given the complexity and wide variety of shipments we now handle.

Because car supply is such a critical function of our coal business, not having control of when or how many cars are available and what condition those cars were in was a challenge we continually faced. Andy Muller recognized early on that owning his own fleet of cars gave him and the railroad the best chance for current and future success. In the early 2000's Andy purchased a large group of cars from Norfolk Southern and others for use in export coal shipments to Rio Tinto, our largest single receiver of PA Anthracite coal. These cars lasted well into the mid-2000's when they were replaced by more modern equipment. During this same time period we also added hundreds of additional Steel Open Top cars from various sources to our fleet for use in Domestic Coal shipments. Included in these early purchases were a group of 100 former Rio-Grande cars that were numbered in the 7500 car number series. These cars to this day are the backbone of our steel fleet and remain in excellent condition.

As we moved into the 2000's, fleet modernization and expansion was a key part of growing and maintaining our Anthracite business. Working with one of our Port partners, Kinder Morgan, we installed a new rail unloading system known as an Ashross. The Ashross system was capable of handling a wide variety of bottom dump rail cars, including Rapid Discharge (RD) cars. In 2011 RBMN invested in a fleet of nearly 250 RD cars for use in export shipments to Kinder Morgan located near Fairless Hills, PA. This group of cars became the backbone of our Export fleet and continue to be used regularly today in this service. Around the same time we also invested in a group of Steel Rotary Dump cars which were used for shipments to the Port of Baltimore and the Great Lakes region and later added 187 Aluminum Rotary Cars for these same uses. With the purchase of the Aluminum RD's, and the Steel/Aluminum Rotary Dump cars, we were capable of handling 100% of our Export volume with our own equipment.

In the mid-2000's we had an opportunity to purchase our first Covered Hopper car, numbered RBMN 9999. Around this time there was a new type of Anthracite Coal production that was being developed in our region, the use of heated drying systems to dry Anthracite coal for use in the domestic Steel Industry. Once dried the coal could not be loaded in a traditional "open top" coal hopper and required the use of a Covered Hopper to maintain the low moisture content of the coal. RBMN 9999, along with dozens of other newly purchased covered hoppers were pressed into this service. Over the years, the dried coal business has grown to be one of our largest business segments with 4 different dryers operating along our railroad, shipping thousands of Covered Hopper shipments annually. We have

continued to purchase additional Covered Hopper cars over the last decade, while also supplementing our fleet with some Norfolk Southern cars to keep up with the ever-growing demand.

An added complication with our Covered Hopper business is the fact that not all cars are created equal. While by design or through aftermarket modifications, many of our covered hoppers have varying bottom clearances or gates. With many of our cars going to offline transload facilities that use under car conveyors for unloading, this restricts which cars can be used in each lane. Meaning that certain Covered Hoppers can only be used to transload facilities, while others can only be used to facilities that offload via a pit unloading system. This creates an added complexity to the fleet and requires our Fleet management team to carefully plan out each loading and car rotation.

Moving into the mid-2010's, our original fleet of steel open top cars was quickly aging and we needed to identify a source for additional cars. Fortunately, around that same time, PPL Electric Utilities was in the process of transitioning their fleet from steel bottom dump cars to aluminum rotary dump cars. Working with PPL, RBMN was able to purchase a couple hundred steel H350/351 style cars for use in Anthracite service. An additional opportunity arose around 2020 when we purchased dozens of additional H350/351 former PPLX cars from Talen Energy. Almost all of these cars remain in service on our railroad today, many for Anthracite coal and others that have hit their 50-year mark in Maintenance of Way service.

As we moved into the late 2010's and early 2020's, we continued to expand and modernize our fleet. Over the last 5 years we have purchased nearly 500 rail cars, many of which were built in the late 1980's through early 2000's, affording us decades of use. These purchases included 300 Aluminum Rapid Discharge cars, 100 Aluminum H350 bottom dump cars and over 50 Covered Hoppers for use in dried Anthracite service. Many of these purchases were completed during downturns in the rail car market and often cars were purchased without a clear need. With the rapid growth we have enjoyed in the Anthracite industry over the last few years, our fleet is now working at near 100% utilization with cars cycling continually throughout the shipping season.

We have positioned ourselves very well for the future, and by RBMN providing nearly 100% of the cars used in domestic Anthracite shipments, we have little to no dependence on other railroads for rail equipment. Our rail car fleet is in excellent condition and well poised to meet the demand and continued growth of the Anthracite industry. Looking ahead, our fleet of Steel H350's is not getting any younger and several cars will be aging out over the next 5 years. This in addition to finding and purchasing additional covered hoppers for growth in our dried Anthracite business, will be our fleet teams focus for the foreseeable future.

In addition to purchasing and managing our fleet of rail cars, I would be remiss if I did not mention the hard work and attention our mechanical and transportation teams put into keeping our fleet moving. Our transportation team does a superb job keeping our fleet organized and at the ready for loading. While our mechanical team handles the tall task of maintaining our fleet of over 1700 rail cars. It is truly a team effort, and I am proud to be part of that team! ♦

<b>READING AND NORTHERN ACTIVE COAL FLEET</b>		
<b>Car Type</b>	<b>Car Numbers</b>	<b>Total Cars</b>
<b>Steel Rotary Gondolas:</b>	<b>7000, 7100 series</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Aluminum Rotary Gondolas:</b>	<b>7600, 7700 series</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Steel Bottom Dump Hoppers:</b>	<b>7200, 7400, 7500, 8100, 8200, 8300, 8500 series</b>	<b>259</b>
<b>Aluminum Bottom Dump Hoppers:</b>	<b>8400 series</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Aluminum Rapid Discharge (286K):</b>	<b>7800, 7900, 8000, 8600, 8700, 8800, 8900 series</b>	<b>492</b>
<b>Aluminum Rapid Discharge (263K):</b>	<b>8800 series</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>RBMN Covered Hoppers:</b>	<b>9900, 10000, 10100 series</b>	<b>183</b>
<b>High Side Flat Bottom Gondolas:</b>	<b>42000 series</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>*NS Covered Hoppers:</b>	<b>Various Car Series</b>	<b>142</b>
<b>Total:</b>		<b>1513</b>
<b>*NS owned cars assigned to RBMN Anthracite Coal Service</b>		

# Car Shop

## Taking Care of Coal Business

BY: DAN PUKSAR, VP MECHANICAL

If someone were to ask me how the Car Shop assists the Coal group my response would be that as a shop, we dedicate roughly 95% of our time ensuring that our coal fleet is in top working order. It starts with our routine inbound inspections to ensure there are zero defects before one of our cars moves to a customer for loading. If any defects are found, they are quickly noted and shopped before ever reaching a loading facility. For the coal cars that come in when we are unable to inspect at our inbound receiving yard, the shop will do a “pre-loading” inspection of the coal cars at the loading facility to verify the cars are within the RBMN standard. During these inspections we check the entire car for any defects including safety appliances, wheels, doors, bracing, etc. If any part of the car has a defect it is quickly repaired so the car can return to service.

When a coal car does enter the shop, we have a very lengthy list of items we check for. We take the items listed above and we go a step further and do an undercar inspection with the help of our inspection pits. This allows us to visually identify and repair any defects to doors, brake rigging, or to the car pockets. We also have an overhead fall protection system that allows us to safely inspect/repair the tops of our cars all while being secured to fall protection. This allows the Carmen to make repairs to covered hopper hatches, walkways, and the car body without the limitations of being in the field. We ensure all cars are up to date with air brake testing, wheels are within spec, doors are able to close and latch as intended.

Each type of coal car has an extended inspection that is specific to its car type. For example, our Rapid Discharge cars go through an annual door inspection that includes opening and closing the door, checking the locking mechanisms to ensure they will not open under load, filter changes, and spool valve rebuilds. Our covered hopper fleet will go through the shop having each bottom gate opened/closed, hatches will be inspected to ensure they seal and latch properly, and the tops of the covered hoppers will go through inspection for leaks, since these types are typically used for dry coal.

After all of this if a car makes it to a loader or destination and an issue arises, we work with the Coal group to either get a Carman to the location to repair, assist with unloading, or work with the customer to get through the issue. We are not a one-trick shop, we will do all we can to ensure the customers are completely satisfied with our cars. If they need assistance with car operation we will be there to help, we have gone as far as sending out qualified Carmen to show customers how to properly operate and unload cars. I believe it is that type of service that sets us apart from everyone else, and it is something we thoroughly enjoy doing. Whatever the case may be the Car Shop is and always will be here to assist the Coal Group in all aspects of its operation. ♦

# CUSTOMER SNAPSHOT

As part of managing our Anthracite portfolio, a critical component of that is working closely with all our producer partners. This includes talking and meeting with all of them regularly, visiting the various facilities along our system and of course sharing and gathering information between the railroad and the producers. Since the day we took over the Anthracite cluster from Conrail in 1990, we have always had someone assigned to working with our producers, as of today that someone is Jim Cerulli. Although the faces and names may change over time, one thing that always remains constant is our commitment to helping our producers successfully and smoothly move Anthracite into the market. As part of our Anthracite coal feature in the Spring Magazine, we wanted to ensure that we gave our producer partners an opportunity to provide a snapshot of their company. In the accompanying pages, you will get a general overview of each major producer, including historical background, operations and business of each of their respective organizations. ♦



A Bobby Burns (Keystone Anthracite) Marion 7400 dragline works on stockpiling run of mine coal from an open seam at one of his strip-mining sites.

## Customer Snapshot Bobby Burns/Keystone Anthracite Company

Keystone Anthracite Company, Inc. is solely owned by Robert "Bobby" Burns. Keystone has long term leases with Girard Estate to mine all of their coal lands. Girard's land, which consists of over 15,000 acres, was originally purchased by Stephen Girard in 1829 from the descendants of William Penn. Stephen Girard was America's first tycoon and the richest man in the country when he died in 1831. Girard left all of his fortune to a trust that is run by the city of Philadelphia to build and fund a school for orphaned children. The school is still in existence today and all royalty income from Keystone's operations go to fund the operation of the school.

Keystone currently operates three mines in the western middle anthracite field and has a fourth idle and ready to go back into production in the next year. Keystone owns and operates two preparation plants and has recently submitted a new permit application to start construction of its third plant. Keystone is also 50% owner of North America Premium Anthracite which is a joint venture with Reading Anthracite and owns another plant together. Keystone has made major capital investments in 2022 by purchasing new Caterpillar excavators and trucks to expand its current mining operations. Keystone is committed to continue to grow and increase production to help meet the world's anthracite demand. ♦

## Customer Snapshot Blaschak Anthracite

Founded in 1937, Blaschak Anthracite is one of the largest US producing suppliers of Anthracite. With multiple active mine sites and two processing plants, Blaschak Anthracite has the ability to mine over 1,000,000 tons of raw coal and produce more than 425,000 tons of prepared/sized anthracite coal per year.

The “Blaschak” brand is known throughout multiple industries for its reliability, high quality, cleanliness and precise sizing. Blaschak Anthracite is proud to be a key supplier of charge carbon and injection carbon for the electric arc furnace (EAF) process of producing steel. The company is also the largest provider of bagged and bulk anthracite to the domestic home heating industry with a network over 600 dealers throughout the US.

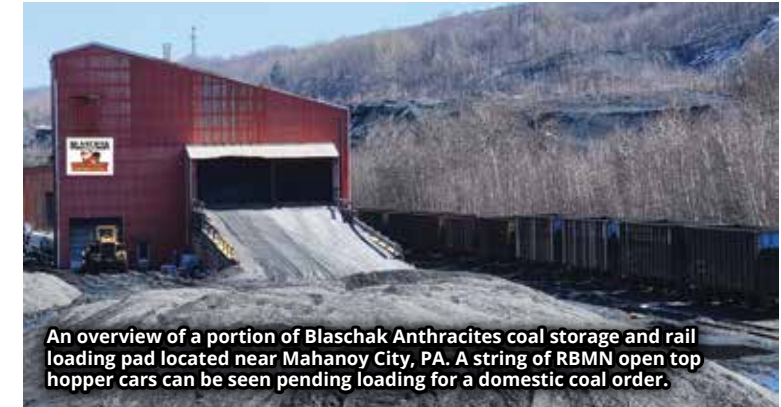
With the importance of clean water throughout the world, Blaschak Anthracite is a key producer and one of the largest US suppliers of anthracite media used for water filtration. Blaschak also supplies anthracite for such uses as smelting, the process of making sugar out of sugar beets, coal fired pizza baking and glass tinting.

Blaschak Anthracite is well situated, headquartered in Mahanoy City with onsite rail access giving the ability to ship both nationwide via rail or to East Coast ports for export opportunities.

Please visit our website at [www.blaschakanthracite.com](http://www.blaschakanthracite.com) or call 570-773-2113 for additional information on Blaschak Anthracite. ♦



Dresser/Marion 7450 dragline works on digging run of mine coal from an open seam at one of Blaschak's strip-mining sites.



An overview of a portion of Blaschak Anthracite's coal storage and rail loading pad located near Mahanoy City, PA. A string of RBMN open top hopper cars can be seen pending loading for a domestic coal order.

## Customer Snapshot Atlantic Carbon Company



An overview of one of Atlantic Carbon's strip mines. This photo is representative of how Anthracite is often strip mined using a process of creating “benches” as they work their way down to the coal seam.

Atlantic Carbon Group Inc is a leading US – based anthracite mining and processing company headquartered in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. Atlantic Carbon Group has a highly experienced management team with an unrivalled knowledge of mining, processing and the Pennsylvania Anthracite Industry. We produce high quality anthracite in a range of sizes to suit our customers' needs as a value-added ingredient in steel recycling, large-scale water filtration, zinc refining, sugar production, space heating and other industrial applications. Our strategy is to be the leading US producer of high-quality anthracite coal while mining in a safe and environmentally substantial manner. We operate in the northeast Pennsylvania anthracite coal field, the only location of anthracite reserves and production in North America, where we operate the Stockton, Hazleton Shaft, Jeddo, Jeansville and Spring Mountain Mines together with three anthracite processing plants. ♦

## Customer Snapshot *Lehigh Anthracite*

Lehigh Anthracite located at the southernmost eastern tip of the Pennsylvania Anthracite region has been operating since March 2011. The main office is located in Tamaqua PA, with mining operations in Carbon and Schuylkill counties, with three (3) active mine sites as of 2023.

Lehigh's anthracite is located on the largest contiguous permitted surface mining site in Pennsylvania of over 7,400 acres with its operations surrounding four communities of Coaldale, Lansford, Nesquehoning, and Tamaqua.

Our coal is of the highest quality, low ash, low sulfur, high carbon, and mining coal seams from the highest premium Mammoth, as well the Primrose, Orchard, and Forty-Foot seams. The anthracite is processed on-site to various sizes of coal from Egg/Stove to #5 at our preparation plant.

Lehigh's coal is produced for the purposes of retail bulk, home heating as well for bagged home heating. We also transport anthracite coal by truck and larger volumes by rail to domestic steel manufacturers, and ship by rail to nearby ports for export to various steel manufacturers around the world.

As part of the Lehigh Anthracite post mining work, land reclamation activities are implemented. The mined area is reclaimed and restored back to a vibrant landscape of grass and trees. This ensures improved soil conditions to its almost original contour, bringing new life with plants and wildlife. ♦



Lehigh Anthracite loader operators work with an RBMN Indexing crew at Lehigh's Breaker facility to load 50 Rapid Discharge cars for an Anthracite Export order destined to Kinder Morgan at Fairless Hills, PA.

## Customer Snapshot *Reading Anthracite Company*

Reading Anthracite Company has been at the forefront of the anthracite sector, leading the US market in production and marketing for over a century. Founded in 1871 as part of the Philadelphia & Reading Coal & Iron Company, the company has been family-owned and operated since 1961 and has thrived under the strong leadership of the Rich family for three generations. The fourth generation of ownership has begun their journey into leadership roles, and they remain committed to the company's long-term success. Relying on the guidance of experienced management and skilled, reliable American workers, the fourth generation plans to continue the company's success for generations to come.

The domestic steel market remains strong, allowing the company to grow its current mining operations, upgrade equipment, implement major overhauls to the processing facilities, and expand dryer operations. The company's improvements to production processes ensure that when needed most, the anthracite market can rely on the performance and dependability of Reading Anthracite. As a long-standing American company, Reading Anthracite is proud to continue operating and providing quality products and jobs to the American people.

Reading Anthracite operates out of three facilities along Reading and Northern's system including locations at Girard, PA, Minersville, PA (New Saint Nick) and Gilberton, PA (location of 2 Dryer facilities). ♦



A Caterpillar excavator and large bulldozer work in tandem at one of Reading Anthracite's various strip-mining sites to remove overburden as they work towards the coal seam.

## Customer Snapshot *Jeddo Coal Company*

Jeddo Coal Company is a family-run business and the people that make up the Company have a long history in the Pennsylvania anthracite industry. In 1934, the company's founders pooled their resources and purchased the flooded Sullivan Trail Mine located in the Borough of West Pittston, PA. Contrary to popular opinion, these men believed that the mine was still commercially mineable despite a persistent flooding problem thought to result from seepage out of the nearby Susquehanna River. The water problem, in fact, was not related to the Susquehanna River, and with the use of more powerful water pumps, the Sullivan Trail Mine became a commercial success providing the necessary capital for the acquisition, development and mining of other coal properties.

The Company's pioneers continued to aggressively expand their coal operations by acquiring additional coal properties throughout the counties of Lackawanna, Luzerne, Carbon and Schuylkill, including the prime coal properties of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company. Ultimately in 1964, the Company acquired a substantial coal reserve located near Hazleton, PA, known as the Jeddo Basin property. The Jeddo Basin property is currently the site of Jeddo Coal Company's mining and coal preparation operations. Today, the Company is run by the heirs of its founders who proudly continue their legacy of hard work and dedicated service to our customers.

Coal from our facility can be shipped by various modes of transportation, including rail via Reading and Northern railroad. Because of our long experience in the anthracite industry, we have excellent relationships with various shippers and we are always happy to assist our customers in sourcing coal and finding efficient ways to get our product into various markets. We also have extensive stockpile space to accommodate seasonal storage and shipments and the capability to provide customers with 40lb bags or 1ton supersacks for residential and commercial use. ♦

## Customer Snapshot *Hiller Carbon*



An overview of Hiller Carbons Drying facility (center) and passive coal drying shed (right) located at Atlantic Carbon's facility near Hazleton. The rail loading door and a hopper car are visible on the lower left-hand side of the blue dryer structure.

Hiller Carbon is a market-leading supplier of anthracite coal, flexi-coke, and graphite recarburiser products to the North American EAF steel and foundry industries. Four guiding principles are at the center of the Company's core beliefs; safety, integrity, reliability, and efficiency.

Our relationship with Anthracite predated our connection to Reading and Northern by 4 years. In 2012, Hiller envisioned a growing demand for anthracite coal as the steel industry shifted from Basic Oxygen Furnaces (BOF) integrated mills to more efficient EAF producers. To help meet that demand, Hiller partnered with Hazleton Shaft (now Atlantic Carbon) to construct a state-of-the-art coal dryer. The state-of-the-art fluidized bed dryer can process over 150,000 tons of dried anthracite.

Fast forward to 2016; to better serve our existing customers, and open access to new markets, Hiller and Atlantic reached out to Reading and Northern to gain access to rail. Reading and Northern helped us navigate the labyrinth of getting Norfolk Southern to install a switch from their main line. Reading and Northern also built our loading track, significantly reducing the cost for both Atlantic and Hiller.

These investments allowed Hiller Carbon to shift to a rail logistics system, with strategic rail/truck transload facilities capable of delivering carbon quickly to customers utilizing local trucking and Reading and Northern providing premium rail service at origin. This partnership has worked well for both organizations and our mutual customers.

We are currently in negotiations to add a second dryer; doubling our capacity and significantly increasing our rail requirements. Our ability to serve existing EAF customers, and the possibility of continued growth is directly related to the investments Reading and Northern has made to expand its' railcar fleet, as well as the willingness of the railroad to invest in destination transloading equipment.

Our ability to grow our Anthracite business is a direct result of the partnership between Hiller and Reading and Northern. Our goal is to be the premier Anthracite supplier. Our relationship with the "Road of Anthracite" will help us achieve that dream. ♦





Morea Pole Distribution Yard being filled with poles sourced from throughout North America. Photo credit: Brian Kwiatkowski, SJC.

# Forest Products on the Move Again! Railroad Lands New Utility Pole Distribution Customer

BY: RIAN NEMEROFF, SVP CONSUMER PRODUCTS

After many months and years of enticing Stella Jones Corporation (SJC) to locate a utility pole distribution yard onto RBMN, it finally came to fruition in March, 2023. We started showing SJC sites in March of 2021. The first car for pole inventory was received and unloaded on March 21, 2023 some two years in the making. Earlier cars delivered were for the bunks to inventory finished poles.

A number of people from SJC (the customer and their contracted trucker), Skytop Fuels (land owner), and RBMN (railroad) were on hand to celebrate this big event as shown on the photograph below. Making this deal happen was Julie Mellen, Director of Logistics and Transportation, East who was and is the key contact from SJC. She is supported by Jimmy Melton, Logistics Manager, and Brian Kwiatkowski, the site Manager. Back at corporate Jeff Brandt, Vice President Transportation and Logistics, and Tom Greene, Senior Director of Pole Sales kept the process on track and moving forward.

SJC was forced to relocate from their existing facility in Hazleton when their lease ran out. RBMN showed SJC a number of sites on the railroad but nothing clicked, until we showed them Morea last year. This site initially was a forest and later a coal load-out. It transitioned to an empty trailer storage yard for Amazon. And then, through Jim Cerulli who heads up Industrial Development for RBMN, we introduced SJC to the owner of Skytop Fuels, Ettore DiCasimirro. SJC, Ettore and RBMN envisioned a superior site compared to the existing pole yard in Hazleton. SJC signed a long-term lease with Ettore, leased property from RBMN for an unloading pad adjacent to the existing double track railroad, and negotiated a multi-year rail rate agreement with RBMN.

Currently, SJC occupies 20 acres with an option to grow their footprint significantly. There are more bunks at this site than existed in Hazleton. There have been a number of truckload shipments to the site clearing the Hazleton facility of inventory. The RBMN yard in Morea (Mahanoy City) will continue to receive cars in quarter two of this year and will be the exclusive unloading facility no later than the beginning of quarter three of 2023. Shortly, the more efficient Sennebogen machine for unloading will relocate to Morea from Hazleton.

The RBMN extends a warm welcome to SJC and thanks Ettore for being a model landlord in getting this new business operational. ♦



RBMN Executive VP Operations, Tyler Glass explaining the magnitude of rail heights based upon rail weights as to why the rails are varying heights across the entire site to Ettore DiCasimirro, Skytop Fuels - CEO and Rian Nemeroff, RBMN Senior VP Consumer Products.



The following day three loaded cars were placed for unloading without all the fanfare.

## *"The Road of Anthracite"* FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



Posing in front of the first inventory utility pole car to be unloaded at the new Morea Yard. L to R: Eric Peters, RBMN VP Transportation; Tyler Glass, RBMN EVP Transportation; Ettore DiCasimirro, Skytop Fuels Owner; Rian Nemeroff, RBMN SVP; Brian Kwiatkowski, Stella-Jones Corporation Site Manager; Susan Ludwig RBMN VP; Ettore DiCasimirro, Jr., Skytop Fuels VP; Jesse Redgate, Skytop Fuels Head of Operations; and Jim Carr, JFC Hauling, Owner/Operator.

# Reading & Northern Railroad Lands New Freight Customer

Port Clinton, PA – April 4, 2023

Reading & Northern Railroad (RBMN), Pennsylvania's largest privately-owned railroad, is pleased to announce a new customer to the railroad, Stella-Jones Corporation (SJC).

SJC, a distributor of utility poles, is now operating a new distribution yard in Morea, PA. SJC has been operating from leased property in Hazleton, PA. When SJC learned its lease would not be extended it began a two-year search for a new location. RBMN, working with Ettore DiCasimirro, the owner of Skytop Fuels and the owner of hundreds of acres of land along RBMN tracks and I-81 in Morea, offered SJC a suitable site and SJC was able to make a long-term deal to set up their operation in Morea.

The site was prepped this year through the winter and on March 21, 2023, SJC received and unloaded their first railcar for pole inventory. The next day, three additional cars arrived for unloading. More cars are in transit as the Morea site ramps up and the Hazleton site is closed down.

The distribution yard will serve utility customers throughout Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey. Poles will come into the yard via rail and be delivered to the customers and job sites by truck. This location in Morea is ideal due to the rail service provided by RBMN and the proximity to major highways.

Stella-Jones is North America's leading producer of pressure-treated wood products. It supplies all the continent's major electrical utilities and telecommunication companies with wood utility poles and North America's Class 1, short line and commercial railroad operators with railway ties and timbers. Stella-Jones also provides industrial products, which include wood for railway bridges and crossings, marine and foundation pilings, construction timbers and coal tar-based products. Additionally, the Company manufactures and distributes premium treated residential lumber and accessories to Canadian and American retailers for outdoor applications, with a significant portion of the business devoted to servicing the Canadian market through its national manufacturing and distribution network. The Company's common shares are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

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 40 years and now handles over 34,000 carloads of freight and 250,000 excursion train riders over 400 miles of track. Reading & Northern operates both freight services and steam and diesel-powered excursion passenger services, owns over 1,700 freight cars, and employs nearly 300 dedicated employees. Reading & Northern has repeatedly been honored as one of the premier railroads in the nation including being named Regional Railroad of the year in 2020 by Railway Age Magazine. ♦

# Reading & Northern RR Wins Prestigious Industry Marketing Award Again!

Port Clinton, PA – April 11, 2023

Last week the American Shortline and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA) awarded one of the industry's highest honors for marketing achievement to the Reading and Northern (R&N). This is the fifth time R&N has won this prestigious award in the last 15 years. Jim Cerulli, Vice President Industrial Development, accepted the award at a ceremony on April 3rd in New Orleans, LA.

The ASLRRA recognized R&N for its development of a large Marcellus Shale oriented transload facility in Tunkhannock, PA, the heart of Marcellus Shale gas production. To make this project a reality, R&N found a site proximate to local highways and along its Susquehanna Branch, entered into a long-term lease for the site, hired a nationally respected transloader to perform the actual transload operation, and proceeded to construct Phase 1 of the new Tunkhannock transload facility. Phase 1, consisting of two tracks with a combined capacity of 34 car spots and provisions for trucking/transloading and office space, was completed within approximately 6 months' time.

Opened in late 2021, the facility began full operations in early 2022 and handled over 2200 carloads of frack sand despite many challenges facing the Marcellus Shale region. Given its success with customers who praise the excellent service and location, R&N expects significant volume growth in 2023, potentially exceeding 5000 + carloads. Leading to its success is the fact that R&N offers exceptional service, including 7 day/365 service and double shifts to handle the changing needs for sand customers as well as hundreds of car spots for loaded sand cars at our nearby Pittston serving yard. Managing this facility for R&N is industry veteran Jim Raffa, Senior Vice President Petrochemicals & Minerals.

The construction and development of the Tunkhannock Transload facility was the largest single Industrial/Business Development project undertaken by R&N. R&N greatly appreciates the recognition of the team effort by the ASLRRA.

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RBMN accepting the Business Development Award at the 2023 ASLRRA convention in New Orleans. From left to right in photo: Chuck Baker (ASLRRA President), Jim Cerulli (RBMN VP Industrial Development) and Matt Walsh (ASLRRA Chairman).

# Evolving Reading & Northern

BY: WAYNE A. MICHEL, PRESIDENT

All organisms need to constantly grow and evolve in order to succeed. Companies are no different. And Reading Northern is certainly no different.

Since purchasing the Reading Cluster from Conrail in 1990 Andy Muller has constantly evolved the company. Much of our growth was through acquisitions especially the Lehigh Line in 1996 and the Humboldt Industrial Park in 2016. Other change was externally forced on us such as when Conrail was split and NS became our interchange partner and when NS acquired the Canadian Pacific's Delaware and Hudson Railroad. And then there are changes Andy has pushed through by force of will such as acquiring a fleet of coal cars, purchasing the Humboldt Industrial Park track, building Nesquehoning Bridge Phase 2, acquiring the Carbon County line, starting a passenger excursion business, getting into the warehouse, trucking and transloading business and even hiring me after the end of Conrail.

Recently we announced a series of management changes to set the stage for the next RBMN evolution.

Most significantly we announced that Tina Muller-Levan is our first Executive VP Strategic Planning. This position will play a critical role in defining what RBMN looks like by 2030. Tina is already very familiar with the railroad since she has been around it most of her life. And she has played a very important role at the company for many years by overseeing the HR, IT and Facilities aspects of the company. You can't grow a company without people and attracting and retaining excellent people has been critical to our success. Similarly companies can no longer thrive in our modern interconnected world without a strong information technology foundation. And as we have grown substantially, the need to expand all of our facilities has become critical. Tina has overseen all of these efforts over the last few years. Now she will take on an even bigger picture perspective as she helps define what freight and passenger services we will seek to provide in our ever-changing world and where we need to invest our capital and human resources.

To enable the company to grow we need to take care of our customers and expand our freight business. Towards that end we announced modest changes in the leadership of our Marketing department that better orient our resources with our business.

Bill Clark remains our Senior VP Coal. As this entire issue makes clear, anthracite coal is our birthright and is critical to our future success. Our business is booming and Bill is building a longterm future that significantly expands our domestic opportunities while managing our export business.

Rian Nemeroff adds food and ag to his already large Forest Products portfolio. As our Senior VP Consumer Products, Rian is responsible for over 40% of our business as well as all the business making use of our warehouse and transloading services. Rian's task is to ensure we are providing excellent customer service so we can maintain this business while taking advantage of opportunities for growth.

Jim Raffa is our new Senior VP Petrochemicals and Minerals. Jim rejoined us two years ago to open up a frac sand terminal at Tunkhannock. He has done that with great skill. In fact, we were just awarded the American Shortline and Regional Railroad Association's 2023 Business Development Award for that development and Jim Cerulli, who assisted in the development of that facility, accepted that award in April. Now Jim Raffa will also handle all of our plastics and hazmat business. Obviously the movement of hazmat on rails has gotten a lot of publicity of late. In Jim we have someone who understands our railroad in great detail. He knows our operations, our territory and he knows how to make sure we handle all of this business safely.

With these changes we are now well aligned with the Class 1 railroads and the freight industry in general. We now have three seasoned railroad professionals overseeing all of our business. And they are assisted by an amazing team. Susan Ludwig oversees what I believe is the best Customer Service group in the railroad industry. By the way, that's not just my opinion as numerous customers with facilities on multiple railroads have told me we are by far the best. Jim Cerulli oversees industrial development and so much more. Jim is also my right hand man and has been handling the producer end of the coal business as well as overseeing our freight railcar fleet for the company. Daren Geschwindt oversees our growing warehouse and transload business, which is always aggressively looking for new opportunities. He has done such a good job working with Rian that our Ransom Warehouse is currently full of product and we have prospects waiting for additional space. That success is because Daren and his team do an exceptional job handling all the material that goes in and out of the warehouse whether by rail or truck.

Our marketing team is a mix of experience and youth, homegrown talent and outside hires. The result is we have the perfect team to continue our record of consistent growth regardless of what the economy throws at us.

And in recognition of the ever-growing role of government at all levels, especially our local community partners, we have named Matt Johnson as our first VP Government Affairs. Matt brings years of experience dealing with local issues from his time leading our police force and our real estate groups. He is now going to be the face of Reading Northern with the media and government officials.

All of these changes are part of our plan to continue to grow and evolve so that Reading & Northern is around for decades to come. ♦

## Muller-Levan Named EVP Strategic Planning at Reading Northern RR

Port Clinton, PA – March 20, 2023

Reading & Northern announces the appointment of Christina (Tina) Muller-Levan as Executive Vice President- Strategic Planning effective immediately. She will report to company founder and owner, CEO Andy Muller, Jr.

Muller-Levan has been involved in various businesses during her career. Most recently she was President of the Muller family's aviation business, Reading Jet Center. During her tenure at RJC she led the company to profitability and is currently working on a plan to rationalize the assets.

At the same time as she was managing RJC, Muller-Levan was an active member of the R&N management team. For the last few years, she has overseen the Human Resource, Facilities and Information Technology efforts of the company. Under her leadership the railroad was able to navigate the effects of the pandemic while maintaining and growing its workforce. She has been instrumental in increasing compensation for hourly and salaried employees as well as improving working conditions by offering more holidays and better benefits. On the IT side, ML has led the effort to establish an affiliated company that provides software products to other railroads. Muller-Levan spearheaded the acquisition and implementation of Innovative Operations Technology (IOT), which provides customized software development specializing in dispatch control systems and passenger excursion ticketing systems. IOT is now working to expand the products and services into different markets.

In her new position, Muller-Levan will take the lead on developing a five-year plan to ensure R&N is well-positioned for the future. With 2022 being the company's most successful year in its history, 15% growth in freight carloads and passing the 250,000 rider mark for its passenger excursion business, Muller-Levan's goal is to build on the company's strong foundation. R&N is anticipating 2023 will smash both the freight and passenger records and part of Muller-Levan's job is to make sure the railroad has all the resources, including human resources, to enable R&N to handle all of the additional business with its standard high customer service requirements. In her new position, Muller-Levan, will add R&N's active real estate program to her portfolio.

"I am honored to be offered this critical position at Reading & Northern at this amazing time of growth and expansion. Forty years ago my father began the family's involvement in railroading by operating a few Commonwealth-owned rail lines. Reading & Northern now owns over 400 miles of track and we have two award-winning and thriving franchises, our freight business and our passenger excursion business. Over the months to come I will be reaching out to our customers, our connections, our community leaders and our employees to explore how we can continue to grow our businesses", said Muller-Levan.

Muller-Levan is a native of the Kutztown area and attended Elizabethtown College graduating with a BS in Business Administration. She lives on a country farm near Virginville with her husband Justin and children Colton, Sierra & Reese Levan.

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Christina Muller-Levan

## Reading & Northern Announces Marketing Leadership

Port Clinton, PA – March 15, 2023

As a result of unprecedented growth in its freight business, Reading & Northern Railroad (R&N) is announcing changes in the leadership of its marketing department.

James Raffa is being promoted to Senior Vice President - Petrochemicals & Minerals. Since rejoining R&N two years ago Raffa has been instrumental in developing a Marcellus Shale transload terminal in Tunkhannock. After a successful first year that saw R&N handle over 2,000 carloads of frac sand, R&N is poised to more than double that volume in 2023. As that business has taken off, Raffa has taken responsibility for the rest of the petrochemical and mineral business. All told this business segment handles over 10,000 carloads a year and includes one of R&N's fastest growing markets.

Rian Nemeroff is being named Senior Vice President - Consumer Products. Over the last seven years Nemeroff has successfully built R&N's forest products business into the company's largest group with over 10,000 carloads a year. In his new position Nemeroff will also handle all food and agriculture products. His business group will cover over 14,000 carloads a year.

William Clark remains Senior Vice President - Coal. R&N has long been known as "the Road of Anthracite" and Clark has been instrumental in expanding that franchise. 2022 was R&N's best year ever for coal shipments and 2023 will eclipse that mark. In fact, R&N is poised in 2023 to handle over 1,000,000 tons of anthracite coal for the first time in its history. Since northeastern Pennsylvania has the largest anthracite deposits in North America, and with electric arc furnace steel mills increasingly looking to anthracite as a source of carbon, the future for R&N's coal franchise is very bright.

With three seasoned railroad marketing officials, each with over 30 years of experience, Reading and Northern is well positioned for continued growth and prosperity.

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James Raffa



Rian Nemeroff



William Clark

# Matt Johnson Named VP Government Affairs at Reading & Northern RR

Port Clinton, PA – March 17, 2023

Reading & Northern Railroad (R&N) is pleased to announce the appointment of Matt Johnson to the new position of VP-Government Affairs. Johnson will report directly to CEO/Owner Andy Muller, Jr.

Johnson has been with the railroad in a variety of roles since 2005. In those roles, he has seen the entire railroad, dealt with numerous property issues, and worked closely with many local communities. His performance as a police officer, as head of the R&N police force, managing real estate and personally handling R&N's community affairs has made him the perfect choice to be R&N's first Government Affairs official.

As R&N continues to experience rapid growth in both its freight and passenger excursion business the need for an experienced hand to oversee R&N's interactions with government at every level, local, state and federal, has become apparent. In his new position, Johnson will work closely with CEO Muller and the rest of the R&N management team to ensure that R&N is always meeting the needs of our employees for a safe working environment, our customers for superior freight and passenger service, and the local communities we proudly serve.

In addition to his 18 year career at R&N, Johnson was a Deputy Sheriff for five years, and was a Police Officer for a little over a year prior to that.

Johnson grew up and lives in Kutztown, PA. Outside of work, Matt enjoys spending time with his two sons, Elliot and Adyson.

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Matt Johnson

# Safety Always Attitude is Everything

BY: ERIC PETERS, VP TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY

The rail industry has been receiving negative press recently for a variety of incidents and some railroads' attitude towards safety. I'm proud to say the culture at Reading and Northern provides that everyone in the company works with a safety always attitude and looks out for themselves, coworkers, and the public. The Reading and Northern goes well beyond any imposed requirements to create a safe work environment in the communities we serve.

As I have mentioned in previous articles, Reading and Northern lays the foundation for safety with intense education and training. All new employees in safety sensitive roles go through rigorous classroom work to learn the rules and procedures that will guide them in their day-to-day activities. In tandem with the classroom work, each employee goes through extensive on the job training. The length of the training is dependent on the qualifications and duties of each individual. It is only after receiving all the classroom and OJT that an employee will work on their own without a trainer supervising. As this is the foundation, there are no time limits put on training that could lead to rushing someone through. All employees train until they are personally confident, and their trainers are positive that they can do the job safely. This allows people to learn in their own way and their own pace. By going through this process, it builds trust within the company that all qualified workers can perform their duties safely.

Once the foundation is set, everyone receives continued education. The most formal of which is multiple days each year of rules and safety courses lead by the experts in each department. This gives opportunity to maintain a high level of knowledge. In these courses there are discussions and presentations on how the departments interact with each other to ensure a safe environment while maintaining efficiency. For some employees they may need some additional training or retraining and that is fostered in a Safety Intervention. This gives an opportunity to learn and grow without the threat of severe discipline. This process creates an environment in which employees feel safe to speak up and share their experiences and any concerns.

Empowering all Reading and Northern employees to speak up keeps issues from being missed or ignored. In our Safety Summits throughout the year I always say, "see something, do something." Taking action, which could be in many different forms, is how you keep a safe environment. There is a robust and formal way to report issues that are discovered. With the entire company looking and reporting, it makes it a lot harder for anything to be overlooked. It also makes everyone part of the process and encourages the safety always mentality to be part of the solution.

Another attribute to the safety always culture is how we go above and beyond hours of service regulations to ensure employees have a balance between work and home. In all departments we hire enough people to avoid forcing employees to work long hours that lead to fatigue and burnout. This is stark contrast to the do more with less employees mentality that many railroads have embraced. The

Reading and Northern does not have an on call extraboard list where employees wait for a phone call to be at work in 2 hours. These lists can make it hard for employees to properly plan rest and creates anxiety. The company has a generous vacation policy, paid personal days, and increased holidays to help give everyone time away from the railroad. Everyone on the team steps up if a coworker has an illness or a family emergency and covers the vacancy to help allow flexibility when life happens without being worried of retribution. Maintaining a schedule and not overextending people to the point of fatigue may not be the cheap alternative, but certainly it is the safest and best for the workforce.

Last year, I wrote two articles about our proactive Hazmat Training at the Reading and Northern. The Short Line Safety Institute (SLSI) taught a train-the-trainer class at Port Clinton. This increased the knowledge of those who teach the rules and safety classes and trained some other employees who could share the knowledge through peer-to-peer training in the field. SLSI also conducted an Emergency Preparation, Reporting and Response Exercise with leaders from several departments. Being prepared is key to handling an incident if it were to occur. However, we put in a lot of time and effort to prevent accidents from happening. We go above and beyond on how we handle some of our commodities and operate our trains. Taking the safest course isn't always easy or cheap, but that is what differentiates us from the rest and creates the safety always attitude.

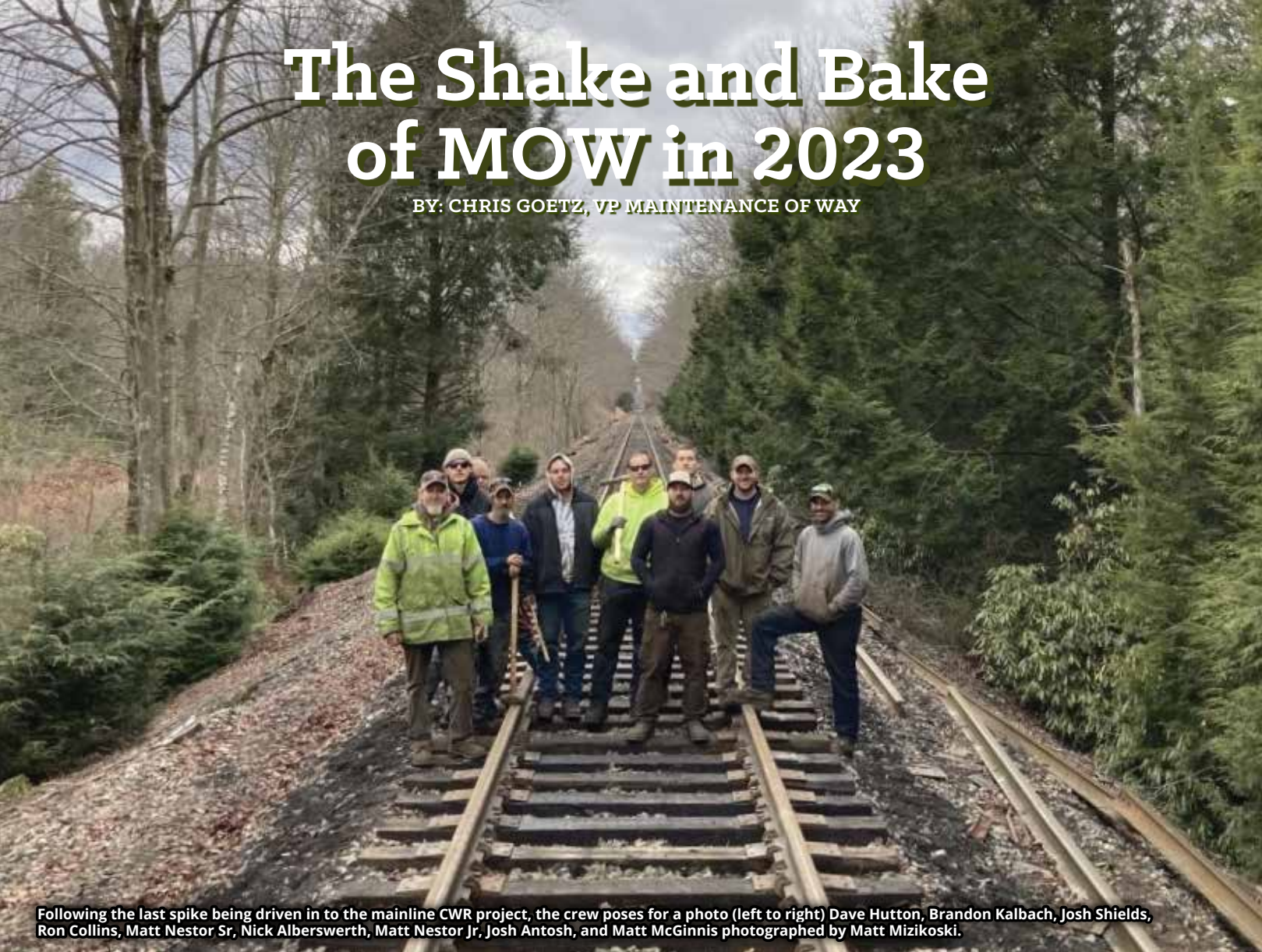
Some call for more regulations within the rail industry. When you have a leader like Andy Muller that pushes for safety for the right reasons, regulations don't matter because you already exceed them. Spending the time and money to train, foster an environment that allows employees to speak up, and take a proactive approach to risk mitigation is why the Reading and Northern will continue to have a safe environment for every member of the company and the communities we serve. ♦



Congratulations to Sam Hollock, Erik Ostroskie, Anthony DeBellis, Nick Suruskie, Tom Skrutski and Ryan Fredrickson who all made it through the grueling engineer trainee course. They are now certified locomotive engineers. This accomplishment takes hard work and effort from the trainees, trainers and DSLEs. John Smolczynski did a great job leading the classes. The DSLE team of John Hartman, Jim Cook and Jeff Knadler provided coaching in the field and phone a friend resource. All the certified engineers that assisted in the training should be proud and know the extra effort and patience has paid off. Next time you see these gentlemen extend them a congratulatory high five.

# The Shake and Bake of MOW in 2023

BY: CHRIS GOETZ, VP MAINTENANCE OF WAY



Following the last spike being driven in to the mainline CWR project, the crew poses for a photo (left to right) Dave Hutton, Brandon Kalbach, Josh Shields, Ron Collins, Matt Nestor Sr, Nick Alberswerth, Matt Nestor Jr, Josh Antosh, and Matt McGinnis photographed by Matt Mizikoski.



Construction continues on the Tunkhannock Passing siding with Josh Antosh, Mike Lojewski, and Alex Schubelek.



Ryan Rupprecht, Mike Lojewski, and Josh Shields continue Vossburg Tunnel work to keep P&G loads moving.



Gaging continues on the Minersville BT in West Cressona Yard with Daniel Webber, Ron Collins, Derek Reber, Abram Kemmerer, and Derrick Keener.



In preparation for passenger season, Corey Hamm, Brandon Kalbach, and Dennis Rosohac rehab the North Old Penn Haven switch.

Typically heading into winter for Maintenance of Way means a slow down as far as track work goes and an adjustment to the type of projects we do. Previous winters have thrown everything at RBMN from mountains of snow, sometimes in the 30" range, to freezing temperatures below zero with negative wind chills. Once the ground freezes, anything requiring subsurface work is put on pause as it is too hard on the crews and machines to do anything with the frozen ground. This has always given MOW the time to focus on more skeleton track construction, smaller switch maintenance, and brush cutting. However, 2023's winter has been an anomaly with the temperatures dipping below freezing less than 10% of the winter and the ground only being frozen for a handful of days. MOW took this opportunity to adjust our initial winter plans and continue our programs with gaging, tie installation, switch building, and surfacing through the winter season. This change has created a slingshot effect which catapulted us forward and allowed us to get ahead of work we had scheduled for the spring.

One of those projects will be the opening of the Scranton Wilkes-Barre Regional Station in Pittston that will carry passengers from Pittston to Jim Thorpe. With the onset of more traffic over the Lehigh Main Line, making sure the track profile and gage is up to snuff became a priority. MOW always strives to create the safest and smoothest ride for our passengers, and the run from Pittston to Jim Thorpe should be no different. RBMN's goal is to create a fulfilling passenger experience

from before the ride to after, and with that comes the station you first step on before boarding the train. For station construction, MOW was tasked with cleaning up hundreds of tons of material in the Pittston wye to pave the way for the parking and platform area. A complete overhaul on the inside of the Pittston Wye is currently underway including everything from leveling the Main Line track to allow for a station platform to grading acres of land to transform a former MOW yard into a first-class passenger station.

With the passenger traffic increasing, MOW was faced with adjusting the operational layout of Jim Thorpe to allow as much as four trains at one time. This winter a large undertaking was presented and tackled including the installation of nearly 600 ties, additional switches, track extension, and (an RBMN first) a diamond. The Ready Track, Wall Track, and Track 3 were all retied and a switch was added to connect Track 2 and Track 3. The diamond, originally found in Pitt Yard where the ex-Lehigh Valley West Pittston Branch crossed the Coxton engine house lead, found its home as a connector between the Jim Thorpe Wall Track and the Jim Thorpe Main allowing trains to cross between tracks in both directions in quick order.

*Continued on page 26.*



Also ahead of passenger season, major rehab of Jim Thorpe yard is underway with ties being installed on the Ready Track by Ben Cole and Chris Garcia.



Gaging continues up the Minersville with Abram Kemmerer, Chucky Carl, Danny Webber, and Enos Bleiler laying out plates.



Near final product on the Jim Thorpe Ready Track, ready to see passengers come spring.

Continued from page 25.  
Another project MOW has been on is keeping up with the increase coal traffic. With the winter staying as mild as it has, coal suppliers have been able to keep the loads moving. With this comes extra traffic along our Pottsville Branch and Minersville Branch to Reading Anthracite. MOW took advantage of the mild winter and began a gaging campaign to strengthen the branches leading to the New Saint Nick breaker. This clears the way for coal to move worry free from breaker to port. At time of print MOW gangs have gaged from "Mine" (Minersville MP 0.0) to MP 3.2 with the intention of gaging all the way to "Westwood Jct" (MP 5.1) on the Branch and continuing to the end at MP 8.5 on the Running Track. MOW gangs have also been very busy installing ties and gaging on sections of the Main Line between "Clint" (MP 78.8) to "East Mahanoy Jct" (MP 103.5).

Lastly, the mild winter has allowed MOW crews to continue switch building in Tunkhannock where MOW has built both the North and South switches for what will be a 3000' siding to help with the increased sand traffic. These 2 #10 -132# switches and siding will be a welcome addition to the Susquehanna Branch as this branch does not have any sidings north of "Hanna" (MP 8.6) and will give Operations the opportunity to stage cars at "Sand" (MP 24.4) to better serve our frac sand transloading needs.

The bottom line is, MOW shakes off whatever mother nature throws at us and we are in full bake mode, preparing for what is heating up to be an exemplary year in both freight and passenger business across RBMN. ♦



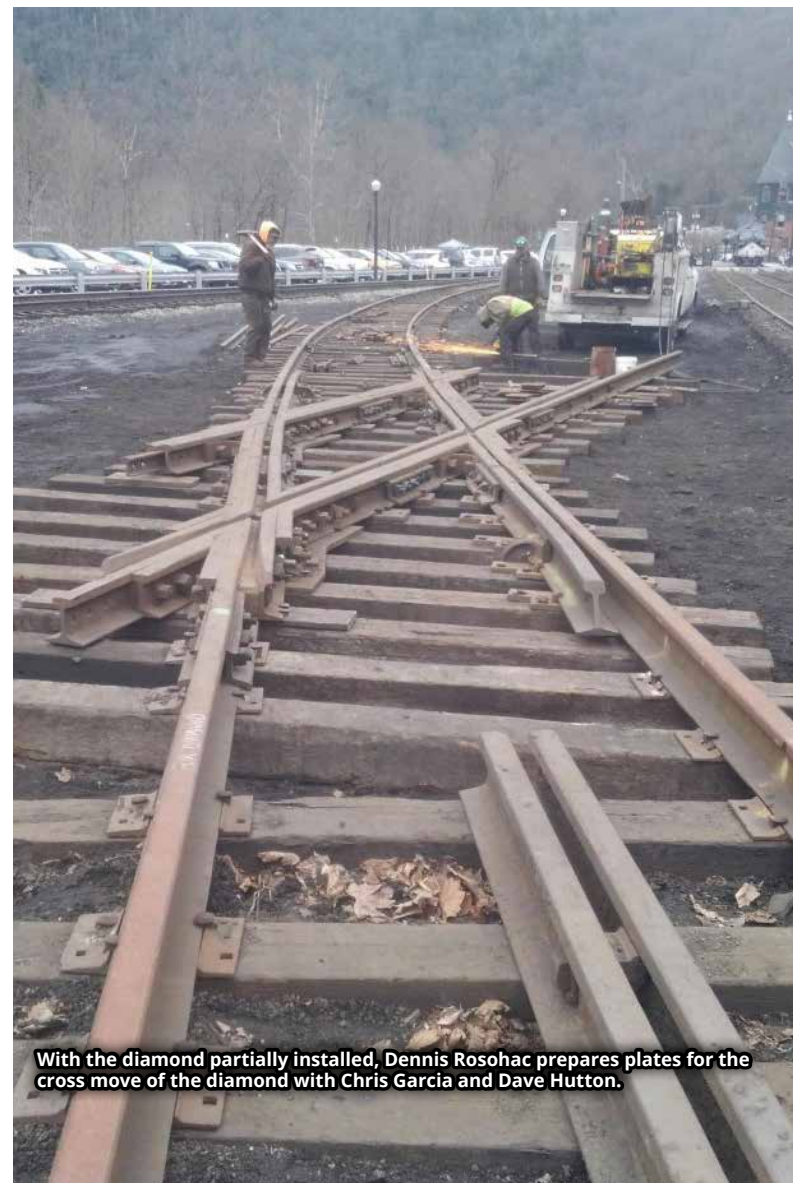
Warm weather breaks allowed us to get some cribbing and stone done in the high traffic North Reading Yard.



Gaging begins on the Bridgeport Bridge in White Haven with Nick Alberswerth, Russ Monroe, and Matt McGinnis.



The tying in of track 2 and 3 in Jim Thorpe to smoothen passenger operations begins with the construction of the switch by Nick Alberswerth and Matt McGinnis.



With the diamond partially installed, Dennis Rosohac prepares plates for the cross move of the diamond with Chris Garcia and Dave Hutton.



Included with the Jim Thorpe rehab was the install of a diamond being facilitated by Dennis Rosohac, Dave Hutton, and Chris Garcia.



Construction on the south Tunkhannock Siding switch begins with Alex Scubelek, Mike Lojewski, Josh Shields, Russ Monroe, and Ryan Rupprecht.



M. Minnich photographs the nearly completed Tunkhannock Passing Siding north switch.



Cross move of the diamond is under construction with Chris Garcia, Dennis Rosohac, and Tim L'Amie.



RBMN 2013 tests the first movement over the newly installed diamond.



## Winter Train Rides Give Way to a Busy Season

BY: MATT FISHER, PASSENGER GENERAL MANAGER

Reading and Northern Office Car Special sits at the future location of the Wilkes Barre - Scranton Regional Railroad Station at Pittston. February 27, 2023.

Winter of 2023 was a busy time in the passenger department. Pittston to Jim Thorpe tickets went on sale March 1. Meanwhile, trains operated every weekend in the Lehigh Gorge. Also, for the second year in a row, theme train excursions traveled from Reading to Jim Thorpe and Pottsville.

The winter themed trips from Reading to Jim Thorpe were very popular. The all-day round trips were on a similar schedule to the summer and fall trips, leaving Reading Outer Station at 9am with stops at Port Clinton station and Tamaqua station, arriving at Jim Thorpe after 11am. Guests now have more time, 4 hours total, to explore the downtown area before the return trip.

Themes included Valentine's Day, Winterfest, and Fastnacht Day. Traditional PA Dutch fastnachts were served on dining car 1166. So many tickets were sold on the Winterfest weekend making the railroad decide to also introduce dining car 1168 side-by-side with 1166. Immediately after the February themed trips, both dining cars went to the shop in West Cressona to be repainted, renamed, and updated. Dining car 1166 is now "North by Northwest", dining car 1168 is the "Pocono Grill", and 1167, still to be placed into revenue service is now the "Queen of the Valley".

January to March LGSR trains operated Saturdays and Sundays. Year to date, the LGSR ridership is up an amazing 50 percent. This spike is partially to do with the nice weather all winter long. But also, tourist and locals alike know that the LGSR train is a nice option to get out of the cold and spend a winter day out with family and friends.

In April the Easter Bunny trips returned with cookies handed out to all, along with a visit from the Easter Bunny. The day after Easter Sunday, LGSR trains resume a daily schedule. Trains will operate daily through early November. For those who are looking to avoid bigger crowds and traffic in Jim Thorpe, a weekday visit in April or May are ideal.

Schuylkill County saw its first excursions of 2023 with a Reading to Pottsville

Saint Patrick's Day ride. This coincided with the Pottsville Saint Patrick's Parade. The day before Easter, Bunny trains hopped out of Minersville Station in conjunction with Project 113. Steam locomotive 113, placed on the north end of the train, did the honors on its 100th anniversary of being built.

Look out for trips from Reading Outer Station to Pottsville on selected days, the next will be April 29 for the Block of Art Celebration. Pottsville trips were tested out late in 2021 and 2022 and became very successful. Guests have enough time to take the popular Yuengling Brewery tour, Jerry's Classic Cars & Collectables Museum tour, and still have time for lunch at several different eateries in downtown Pottsville.

Reading Outer Station to Jim Thorpe all-day trips will resume May 6 on weekends until December. The return of "Iron Horse Rambles" with steam locomotive 2102 start July 1. Just as last year, tickets will sell incredibly fast for the 2102 trips.

Speaking of "Sell Outs", the Pittston to Jim Thorpe trips with stops at Penobscot (Mountain Top), and White Haven, were nothing short of amazing. After two press releases got a lot of traction in the Wyoming Valley, tickets sold fast. On the first day of sales March 1, the Grand Opening trip from Pittston to Jim Thorpe sold out its original block of 350 seats in less than two hours. It was decided to continue to add seats throughout the day. By 5pm March 1, approximately 800 tickets were sold. The domino effect was on, with tickets for late May and June selling out next. Some tickets still remain for that excursion from late summer through the end of 2023. Guests and railroad workers alike are eager to see what the facilities department build at Pittston for the season.

Whether it is the new service from Pittston to Jim Thorpe, the excursions from Reading to Jim Thorpe, the Pottsville trains, or the 70-minute Lehigh Gorge trips, people have more options to ride the Reading and Northern than ever. More information can be found on Facebook, [www.lgsry.com](http://www.lgsry.com), [www.rbmnrr-passenger.com](http://www.rbmnrr-passenger.com), or by calling 610-562-2102. ♦

"The Road of Anthracite"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## Finally, Train Service is Coming to Wilkes-Barre/Scranton

Port Clinton, PA – February 14, 2023

After decades of reading blaring headlines about passenger train service coming to the Wyoming Valley, a local entrepreneur is going to do what government agencies have not. Starting this Spring, Reading & Northern Railroad, the largest privately-owned railroad in Pennsylvania, will begin weekend train service from the Wyoming Valley to Jim Thorpe. While the government keeps talking about spending tens of millions of taxpayer dollars to begin their commuter service sometime this century, local entrepreneur Andy Muller, Jr. is going to open up this train service with no public money.

Muller has already turned the Reading & Northern (R&N) passenger business into one the busiest Passenger railroads in the country with over 250,000 riders in 2022. Now he is setting his eyes

on Wilkes-Barre/Scranton by opening a new train station in Pittston PA, an area which is privately owned by the Reading & Northern Railroad.

Muller has invested tens of millions of dollars into his railroad over the last few years. Muller has purchased and rehabilitated dozens of modern passenger coaches to give his guests the best possible ride.

As part of his broader freight network, which consists of 400 miles running from Reading to Mehoopany, Muller has invested in a new 20-million-dollar railroad bridge across the Lehigh River near Nesquehoning and has also purchased and rehabilitated the entire rail-line between Reading and Scranton Pennsylvania spanning 115 miles.

Reading & Northern Railroad, with its corporate headquarters in Port Clinton, is a privately held railroad company serving over 75 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 over 34,000 carloads of freight and 225,000 excursion train riders over 400 miles of track. Reading & Northern operates both freight services and steam and diesel-powered excursion passenger services, owns almost 1,800 freight cars, and employs nearly 300 dedicated employees. Reading & Northern has repeatedly been honored as one of the premier railroads in the nation including being named Regional Railroad of the year in 2020 by Railway Age Magazine. ♦

## Introducing Wilkes Barre-Scranton Regional Railroad Station at Pittston

Port Clinton, PA – February 14, 2023

Reading & Northern Railroad (RBMN), Pennsylvania's largest privately owned railroad, will begin operating regular weekend passenger excursion train service from the brand-new Wilkes Barre-Scranton Regional Railroad Station at Pittston, PA to Jim Thorpe, PA on Saturday, May 27, 2023. Tickets will go on sale at 9:00am on Wednesday, March 1, 2023. More details regarding pricing and seating options will be announced in a future press release.

Reading and Northern boasted a quarter million train riders in the Jim Thorpe and Reading markets last year. Now, the growing company is focusing attention on the Wilkes Barre-Scranton market. According to Matt Fisher, General Manager of Passenger, "The railroad knows there is a strong demand and interest for passenger excursions in the Wyoming Valley. What better place to start up passenger service than the Pittston property at 718 North Main Street, operating excursion trains to our most popular location, Jim Thorpe?"

Mr. Andy Muller, CEO of RBMN, always strives to enact positive changes along his railroad that reflects

his appreciation of the local communities. Following influence from the wisdom of his grandfather, Andy lives by a set of quotes which guide the business practices of RBMN. One of which is, "It is not what you do, but how you do it". To summarize, attention to detail, no matter how small, matters. It shows care, thoughtful reflection, and the constant striving to operate with greater emphasis on customer experience. As such, Mr. Muller is pleased to announce that the new Passenger facilities construction is funded without any public money taken from taxpayers' dollars.

Planning and groundbreaking has already begun at the Pittston location on a station platform, ticket booth, and parking area. The remainder of the construction will be handled in phases. The area leading to the station will be lined with trees and shrubs and will be a fantastic addition to the neighborhood on 718 North Main Street. The railroad is well-equipped and maintained to handle the passenger trains, which will be the first in nearly 50 years operating from the Wyoming Valley through the Poconos.

The excursion trains will be all-day, round-trip affairs, departing 9:00am sharp from Wilkes Barre-

Scranton Regional Railroad Station at Pittston. The train will make station stops at Penobscot (Mountain Top) and White Haven enroute to Jim Thorpe. Passengers will have over 3 hours to explore, dine, and shop in the historic town – which is also home to the company's Lehigh Gorge Scenic train operations – before reboarding the train in the afternoon for the return trip north.

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 40 years and now handles over 34,000 carloads of freight and 250,000 excursion riders annually over 400 miles of track. Reading & Northern operates both freight services and steam- and

diesel-powered excursion passenger services, owns over 1,700 freight cars, and employs nearly 300 dedicated people. Reading & Northern has been repeatedly honored as one of the premier railroads in the nation including being named Regional Railroad of the Year in 2020 by Railway Age magazine. ♦

# Tickets for Brand New Passenger Excursions from Pittston to Jim Thorpe On Sale Now

Port Clinton, PA – March 1, 2023

Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad (RBMN), Pennsylvania's largest privately owned railroad, is pleased to announce that tickets are now on sale for its new regular weekend passenger rail excursions from Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Regional Railroad Station at Pittston, PA to Jim Thorpe, PA, and return. Tickets will sell quickly and are available on a first come, first served basis.

The very first excursion is scheduled for Saturday, May 27, 2023, featuring the railroad's popular streamlined F-unit diesel locomotives, #270 and #275. These engines will pull a special full-length passenger train consisting of the following seating options available to purchase:

- Standard Coach (\$49.00 round trip from Pittston, Penobscot, or White Haven)
- Crown Class Coach (\$55.00 round trip – available at Pittston only)

From May 28 to September 24, regular weekend excursions from the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Regional Railroad Station at Pittston to Jim Thorpe are led by diesel-powered locomotives. For these trips, passengers are provided with special options such as the ability to ride in RBMN's Crown Class Coaches and access to a dining car. The trains will make additional stops at Penobscot and White Haven. Tickets from May 28 to September 24 also go on sale Wednesday. Pricing will be as follows:

- \$39.00 round trip from Pittston
- \$36.00 round trip from Penobscot
- \$29.00 round trip from White Haven

Passengers will enjoy their train ride like celebrities from the bygone era of streamline rail travel. In Crown Class accommodations, passengers will enjoy large reclining fabric seats in restored six axle coaches. Clean restrooms are available in each Crown Class coach. All windows in the coaches open and shut.

During the excursion, guests can also spend time in one of the railroad's notable dining cars which was featured in Alfred Hitchcock's movie North by Northwest. While riding in the dining car, snacks are available to purchase with cash. However, food and non-alcoholic drink can be brought on board for the entire trip.

All excursions include free parking at every station, live narration, and interaction with friendly staff dressed from the rail travel period of the 1920s to 1950s. Guests will spend approximately four hours in downtown Jim Thorpe only steps away from many attractions on Broadway and Race Street. Full schedules, more information, and tickets can be found at [www.RBMNRR-Passenger.com](http://www.RBMNRR-Passenger.com) or by calling the railroad's passenger office at (610) 562-2102.

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 40 years and now handles over 34,000 carloads of freight and 250,000 excursion riders annually over 400 miles of track. Reading & Northern operates both freight services and steam- and diesel-powered excursion passenger services, owns over 1,700 freight cars, and employs nearly 300 dedicated people. Reading & Northern has been repeatedly honored as one of the premier railroads in the nation including being named Regional Railroad of the Year in 2020 by Railway Age magazine. ♦

# Real Estate Moves Office, Corporate Records to New Location

BY: JOLENE BUSER, AVP REAL ESTATE

The Reading & Northern Real Estate Department has had a busy start to the new year! Early January, Andy Muller, Jr. fulfilled a personal dream of acquiring the former Wells Fargo Bank on Fourth Street in Hamburg, PA. This bank has a long history of private ownership, going back to pre Civil War when a humble stone cottage sat on the property. In 1926 the property was sold to the First National Bank and Trust Company of Hamburg, marking the first time the property was used for a bank. Since 1926, the bank changed hands by means of sales and mergers to become the National Bank of Hamburg, then Reading Trust Bank, then National Central Bank, then Hamilton Bank, then Corestates Bank, then First Union National Bank, then Wachovia Bank, to finally Wells Fargo. Local Hamburg residents may remember a few of these banks! Andy Muller, Jr. did his banking at this bank for a time, and was such a trusted customer that he was allowed to perform his banking right in the bank's main vault!

Andy settled on the bank on January 11 and made the decision to relocate the Real Estate Department offices to the bank. The Real Estate Department oversees the management of the railroad's corporate records, which were also to be relocated to the bank as well. As early as January 20, the Real Estate Department started its transition to the new location. The Real Estate Department had a lot of help from the Facilities Department and IT Department the first couple of days of moving to the bank to get our offices set up.

Once the team of Taylor Haupt, Director – Real Estate, Kathy Gipe, Administrative Assistant, Jolene Buser, AVP Real Estate, and Matt Johnson, VP Government Affairs, were settled in our new offices, the relocation of all of the railroad's corporate records began. This was a huge undertaking, with forty years of corporate history and documentation to relocate. Without the help of three of our team's real estate inspectors, this relocation would have been long and difficult. Thanks to Phil Schaeffer, Jeff Gerber, and Spencer Buckingham, the corporate records were relocated with no disruption to our management and use of the records.

Now that the Real Estate office has settled in, meetings have been hosted in the bank's former board room. Like Andy Muller, the Real Estate team is very proud of our new residence! ♦



Ever seen one of these? A cubby-sized room to do your banking in privacy, likely original to the construction of the bank in the 1920s.



The former Wells Fargo Bank in downtown Hamburg now the new location of the Real Estate Department office.



# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

BY: SABINE FIDLER, HUMAN RESOURCES ASSISTANT

It is my privilege to introduce Robert "Bob" Kempes, Passenger Car Host, as our Spring 2023, "Spotlight Employee". Bob has been with the Reading and Northern Railroad since March 2017. Prior to his retirement and working for Reading and Northern, Bob had a dental practice for 43 years in Schuylkill Haven, PA. He says, "Before that, I had several jobs including a newspaper delivery boy, a summer help employee for Philadelphia Electric, Philadelphia Yellow Cab Driver, and an A & P Cashier."

Bob was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His dad was a Presbyterian Minister and his mom worked as a School Secretary when they moved to Huntingdon Valley, PA. He has two brothers and one sister. Bob graduated from Lower Moreland High School and earned his undergraduate degree and D.D.S. dental degree from Temple University, Philadelphia.

Bob and his wife, Claire, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary this July. He says they met at Temple School of Dentistry. They have two children. Scott, married to Shira, and Becki, married to Christopher. Bob and Claire have two amazing grandsons: Logan, age 12, and Oliver, age 20 months. Both children's families live in West Chester, PA. The Kempeses also have had a variety of pets over the years, specifically dogs. Maggie and Zoe were each with part of the family for fifteen years and their current furry friend, Casey, is four years old.

Retirement has offered Bob time to spend with his wife, kids, and grandkids. Additionally, they are planning a trip to Paris with Bob's two brothers and their wives. Bob enjoys reading, working in the yard, planting native flowers to attract butterflies, especially monarchs. He is also involved with community organizations such as the Schuylkill Haven Lions Club and the Schuylkill Haven Borough Day Committee. Bob and Claire also enjoy spending time in the Outer Banks each summer with their kids, grandkids, nieces, and nephews.

Bob says, "I must admit being surprised by this honor & recognition but not nearly as surprised as my wife (WINK, WINK). Seriously, I feel very blessed with a loving family and friends. I was fortunate to be able to serve my community as a family dentist and to find new friends in retirement as an employee for Reading and Northern. This is a top-notch organization, and the people I work with have a strong work ethic mixed with a well-developed sense of humor."

Bob was chosen to receive this honor by his Supervisor, Matthew Fisher, General Manager of the Passenger Department. Matt says, "Bob has worked several years as a car host and narrator. He has worked as a member of the Schuylkill Haven Borough Day Committee since 1991 with the Reading and Northern Railroad providing train excursions annually in Schuylkill Haven. Bob was also key in the process of RBMN buying the Reading Company station in Schuylkill Haven from the borough. He is well liked by all and puts a smile on coworkers and guests alike!"

As spotlight employee, Bob will receive a gift card for \$100 to the restaurant of his choice, Vito's Coal Fired Pizza and Restaurant. ♦



## ♥ Rescued, Adopted, Loved ♥

*Eric Peters, VP of Transportation and Safety, and his family recently adopted Lulu, a 3-month-old Staffordshire mix puppy from the Lehigh Humane Society in Allentown. Eric says she is very energetic, and the kids enjoy playing with her. Lulu loves running through the woods and exploring. Eric says, "The new edition to the Peters family is growing rapidly but thinks she's a lap dog. It had been fifteen years since I had a puppy and forgot how much work it is and how rewarding."*



It is with deep sadness and heavy hearts that we inform our Reading and Northern Railroad friends and family on the passing of our beloved Conductor, Mr. William "Bump" F. Solomon.

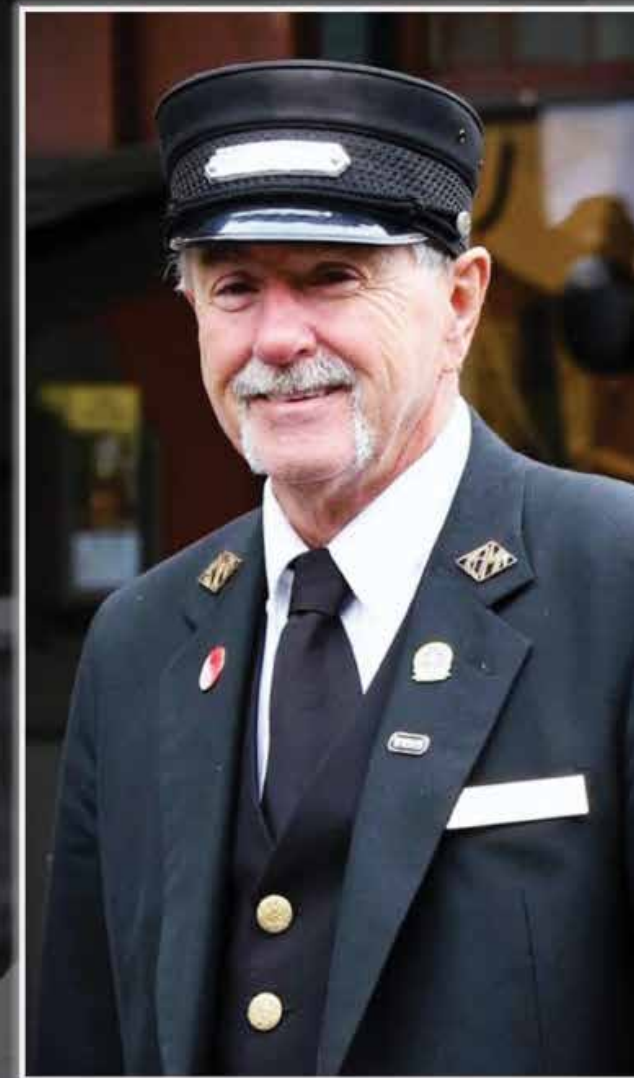
"Conductor Bill," as we all knew him, was an inspiration to every person he encountered. Bill's charming smile and loving personality made our guests feel welcomed aboard every train. Our employees absolutely loved Bill. His presence alone would brighten the gloomiest of days. He always started his day by making someone smile (and always had his morning coffee in hand).

Bill was a top-notch employee and was very important to the growth of the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway. He started with the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway in April of 2008. Bill held every position within the company - Conductor, Car Host, Ticket Agent, and Narrator. Bill was an advocate for the passenger tourism industry in Jim Thorpe. Bill and his wife Jamie often attended many festivals and train shows to promote the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway. Bill's love for children and making them happy was his ultimate motivation. Bill visited many schools and educational institutions to talk with the children about the railroad. During the holiday season, Bill would present to the children a rendition of the famous movie, "The Polar Express." Bill had a knack for punching the children's tickets with the word "BELIEVE" just as it was done in the movie. The children and their families absolutely loved it! Onboard the train, Bill always kept a pocket full of bells to handout to the children, too. His dedication to the Railroad, the employees, the customers, and everyone he met is unmatched.

In addition to his love for trains, Bill was an avid outdoorsman and loved bicycling. Bill and wife Jamie could often be found riding the trails around the Jim Thorpe area. Bill competed in numerous long-distance bicycle races and was a member of "The Jim Thorpes Bicycle Team."

We will miss Bill more than words can express. From everyone at the Reading and Northern Railroad, we offer our sincere condolences to the entire Solomon Family. We ask that everyone please keep Bill's beautiful wife, Jamie, in their thoughts as we all go through this difficult time together. ♦

*In Loving Memory*



WILLIAM F. SOLOMON  
"CONDUCTOR BILL"

JUNE 2, 1950 - MARCH 20, 2023

# WELCOME ABOARD

# *New Employees!*



### **William Richmond**

William Richmond was recently hired as a Small Engine Mechanic within our Mechanical Department. He attended Mahanoy Area High Schools and Williamsport Area Community College. Prior to working at RBMNR, William was a Municipal Fleet Automotive Mechanic at Kovatch for 28 years.



### **Brenton Bezek**

Brenton Bezek was recently hired as a Signal Maintainer within our Signals and Communications Department.



### **Jared Edmonds**

Jared Edmonds was recently hired as a Conductor within our Operations Department. He attended Tamaqua Area High School. Prior to working at RBMNR, Jared was a Loader Operator at Lehigh Anthracite.



### **Walter "Skip" Stocknick**

Walter "Skip" Stocknick was recently hired as a Car Host within our Passenger Department. He attended Wyoming Area High School, the U. S. Naval Academy, and the U. S. Navy Flight School. Prior to working at RBMNR, Walter was Pilot/Captain/Check Pilot at American Airlines for 37 years. Skip has been a Navy Pilot, Airline Pilot, Adjunct Junior College Professor, and a High School Varsity Coach. Walter, thank you for your service to our country.



### **Stephen Perrette**

Stephen Perrette was recently hired as an Engineer/Conductor within our Operations Department. Prior to working at RBMNR, he was an Engineer/Conductor at Decatur and Eastern Illinois Railroad for two and a half years.



### **Alexander Taveras**

Alexander Taveras was recently hired as a Line Service Technician at the Reading Jet Center (RJC). He attended Bronx Latin High School. Prior to working at RJC, Alexander was a Fixed-Wing Aircraft Crew Chief in the United States Marine Corps for five years and lived in Japan for two years. Thank you for your service, Alexander!



### **Joyce "Jamie" Makin**

Joyce "Jamie" Makin was recently hired as a Car Host within our Passenger Department. She attended Hillsborough High School and Western Governors University. Jamie has been a Self-Employed Technical Writer and Web Designer since 2018. She has eight cats and is an avid model maker of trains and cars (though the cats have to stay away from the models!)



### **Shelby Frederickson**

Shelby Frederickson was recently hired as a Car Host within our Passenger Department. She attended Tamaqua Area High School. Prior to working at RBMNR, Shelby was an Assistant Manager at Climb-A-Lot Clubhouse for almost two years. She enjoys spending time with her family and reading.



### **Isaac Rudy**

Isaac Rudy was recently hired as a Freight Conductor within our Operations Department. He attended Juniata Christian School. Isaac says he is a huge Pittsburgh Steelers fan. He grew up in Juniata County.



### **Timothy L'Amie**

Timothy L'Amie was recently hired as an Assistant Foreman in our Maintenance of Way Department. He attended Clatskanie High School. Prior to working at RBMNR, Timothy was an Operator/Laborer/Welder at Balfour Beatty Rail for nine years. He was born and raised in Oregon.



### **Katherine Kramer**

Katherine Kramer was recently hired as a Car Host within our Passenger Department. She attended William Tennent High School in Warminster, PA, and Harrisburg Area Community College. Prior to working at RBMNR, Katherine was a Kiosk Technician/Lot Attendant in Carbon County for over a year. Katherine says she absolutely LOVES dogs and flea markets. She is learning to play the banjo and learning sign language.



### **William Oates**

William Oates was recently hired as Assistant Vice President within our Mechanical Department. He attended Westtown High School, Drexel University, and Texas A & M University. Prior to working at RBMNR, William was Superintendent at Strasburg and worked at Union Pacific Railroads.



### **Jason Zeigler**

Jason Zeigler was recently hired as a Locomotive Mechanic within our Mechanical Department. He attended Susquehanna Township High School and Pennsylvania College of Technology. Prior to working at RBMNR, Jason was an HVAC Mechanic/Installer and an Oil Delivery Driver at Hummelstown Fuel Oil Service for over two years.



### **Richard Vogrin**

Richard Vogrin was recently hired as an Equipment Operator within our Signals and Communications Department. He attended Pennsbury High School. Prior to working at RBMNR, Richard was a Foreman at CMS for one year.

# READING EAGLE

## Railroad the Last Stop of a Policeman's 46-Year Career

Originally published on March 1, 2023.

Steven Henshaw

Reading Eagle | Reporter

Phone: 610-371-5028 | Mobile: 484-706-2206 | shenshaw@readingeagle.com



Reading & Northern Police Officer Michael Painter, center, received an award for outstanding service from the railroad police department during his retirement celebration Feb. 3. From left are, Tilden Township police Officer Ronald Mohr; Tilden Detective Frank Cataldi; railroad police Sgt. Ryan Parks, Painter, railroad Lt. Matthew Johnson, railroad Officer Angel Brazdzionis, railroad Detective Connor Hedrick and railroad Cpl. Matthew Fredmonski. (COURTESY OF READING & NORTHERN POLICE)

Over a hoagie and Diet Coke, Michael Painter decided to switch tracks after 34 years as a Hamburg policeman to become a railroad cop.

Andy Muller, owner and CEO of Port Clinton-based Reading & Northern Railroad, caught Painter having lunch at a sandwich shop 11 years ago on the same street as his other business, Muller Rare Coins & Fine Jewelry.

Painter at the time had served as chief of the Hamburg Police Department for more than a decade and was missing those bygone days of working a straight-up patrol shift.

"He asked me when I was going to come to the railroad," Painter recalled Muller saying, adding that the railroad was in need of an investigator.

"My words to him were exactly this: 'You caught me at the right time. Make me an offer I can't refuse.'"

Their discussion continued over sandwiches.

"Thirty minutes later I got up and shook his hand. 'See you in 30 days,'" Painter said.

Painter, who turned 70 in early February, told that story to the Reading Eagle shortly before his February retirement from Reading & Northern Railroad Police Department, where he spent the final 11 years of his law enforcement career. He is only the second member to retire in the department's 27-year history.

Most people don't know there is such a thing as a railroad police department, and Painter admits he had little idea what a railroad cop does when he got the offer.

### GETTING STARTED

He started his career in 1965 as a part-time Temple police officer. The department was dissolved when the borough was absorbed into

Muhlenberg Township in the late 1990s.

Painter said he had not gone through a police academy, so he was literally learning all aspects of the job, from accident reports to petty crimes, on the job. Thankfully, he said, experienced officers from surrounding municipalities, especially Muhlenberg, would show him to ropes.

"Those guys were fantastic," he said of Muhlenberg police. "I'd get a call, and they'd jump on it and walk me through it."

After about a year with Temple, he went to work part time for the Wernersville Police Department, which also no longer exists (the borough is served by South Heidelberg Township police).

At the time, he was working full time as a corrections officer at Berks County Prison.

In 1968, he was offered full-time employment with the Hamburg Police Department. The borough sent him to the Pennsylvania State Police Academy for his municipal police officer certification.

Painter served as a patrolman for two years before he was promoted to sergeant. He was promoted to chief in 2000 and was at the helm until he retired in 2012.

"I was actually retired for two days," Painter said. "I retired on Friday and started with the railroad the following Monday."

### LEARNING THE JOB

Although Muller was mainly looking to hire an investigator, he allowed Painter to choose what role he wanted to take. The department had two officers at the time.

He chose patrol, realizing he had much to learn in this area of policing, not unlike when he was rookie cop in the 1960s. He didn't feel it was right to ask to start as sergeant or chief.

As a small-town police chief, he knew the community so well that he could tell who bought a new car. As a Reading & Northern officer, he was responsible for protecting railroad property in nine counties and upholding applicable laws.

"I hadn't the foggiest idea what to do with the railroads," he said. "It's federal (law). It's totally different enforcement altogether."

He knew northern Berks like the back of his hand and was familiar with southern Schuylkill County, but most of the places Reading & Northern's tracks extend to were foreign to Painter.

"I wound up having to go to Bradford County, 20 miles south of the New York border," he said, "and now I gotta find a railroad track somewhere? I'll tell you what, thank God for the guy who invented GPS."

Instead of filing cases in one magisterial district judge, he had 27 district courts to deal with.

Preventing trespassing and catching offenders on railroad property keeps railroad police busy.

"One of the big problems was four-wheels wanting to ride the tracks," he said, noting that the off-road vehicles damage the track bed.

### BIG ATTRACTION

In recent years, as Reading & Northern added weekend passenger excursions, railroad police have to keep an eye on a different type of incursion — train enthusiasts who sometimes come too close to the right-of-way.

Some of these enthusiasts carry hand-held scanners tuned to railroad communications frequencies. On weekends they're seen along the railroad in various places with their cameras on tripods, sometimes standing on ladders, between Reading and Jim Thorpe.

The steam trains are the bigger attraction.

After one of these trains left the station along Route 61 in Muhlenberg Township on a Saturday or Sunday, Painter would head north in his vehicle and beat the train to Port Clinton.

"Just to make sure these people weren't standing on the tracks or too close to the tracks to take pictures," he said, "because they're so into this they forget where they're standing."

He would then continue to the Jim Thorpe train station to help out there as passengers boarded.

Railroad police work closely with municipal police departments and state police. Whatever happens on the railroad or railroad property is the jurisdiction of the railroad police.

"The main thing is anything owned or leased by the railroad is private property," he said.

Railroad police get their authority from the governor, just as the state police do, Painter said.

Painter, who resides in Upper Tulpehocken Township, said he loved the job, but after 11 years on the railroad beat and 46 years altogether as a police officer, it was time to retire.

He noted every member of the railroad police is on call 24/7.

"I could get a call at 1 in the morning and have to go to it," he said. "I love the job, but at 70? I'm tired."

Reading & Northern Railroad Police Department, in a statement thanking Painter for his dedicated service, said:

"You have shown us all what it means to be a police officer, and we are all honored to have worked beside you for the last 11 years. You will be remembered not just for your time served but as an example of what all police officers should strive to become as a public servant." ♦



Reading & Northern Police Officer Michael Painter, left, is congratulated by Andy Muller Jr., owner and CEO of the railroad, after receiving an award for outstanding service from the railroad police department during Painter's retirement celebration Feb. 3 at the Port Clinton headquarters. (COURTESY OF READING & NORTHERN RAILROAD)

# RBMN Anniversaries

## 40 YEARS



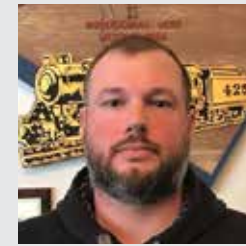
FEBRUARY 26, 1983  
ANDREW MULLER, JR  
CHAIRMAN/CEO

## 30 YEARS



MARCH 22, 1993  
JOHN RIZZO  
CAR HOST/CONDUCTOR  
- PASSENGER

## 3 YEARS



FEBRUARY 10, 2020  
DONALD MATTER  
SUPERVISOR  
- COMM. AND SIGNALS



FEBRUARY 10, 2020  
JOSHUA REHRIG  
CONDUCTOR 3/DISPATCHER  
- OPERATIONS



FEBRUARY 10, 2020  
SAMUEL TRIPP  
CONDUCTOR  
- OPERATIONS



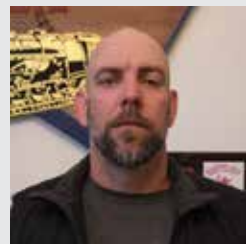
FEBRUARY 24, 2020  
ROBERT SHAULIS  
AIRCRAFT MECHANIC  
- READING JET MAINTENANCE

## 25 YEARS



APRIL 20, 1998  
JOHN HARTMAN  
ENGINEER/DSLE  
- OPERATIONS

## 15 YEARS



APRIL 21, 2008  
JUSTIN HUGHES  
MACHINE OPERATOR,  
CLASS 2 - MOW



APRIL 24, 2008  
DAVID BALDWIN  
CAR HOST  
- PASSENGER



APRIL 24, 2008  
WILLIAM SOLOMON  
CAR HOST/NARRATOR/  
TICKET AGENT - PASSENGER  
**IN MEMORIAM**

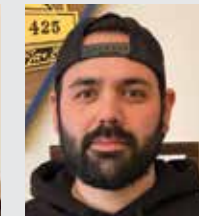
## 1 YEAR



FEBRUARY 7, 2022  
WILLIAM YANOSHIK  
FACILITIES TECH.  
- PAINT



FEBRUARY 14, 2022  
ISAAC FEENSTRA  
CONDUCTOR  
- OPERATIONS



FEBRUARY 21, 2022  
KYLE KOGOY  
SIGNAL MAINTAINER  
- SIGNALS AND COMM.



FEBRUARY 21, 2022  
MIKEAL GEOGHEGAN  
ENGINEER/CONDUCTOR  
- OPERATIONS



FEBRUARY 28, 2022  
BRADLEY AUMAN  
HVAC TECHNICIAN  
- FACILITIES

## 10 YEARS



FEBRUARY 18, 2013  
JEFFREY SONDAG  
CLASS 1 MECHANIC  
- MECHANICAL

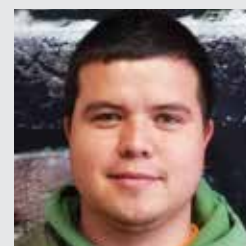


APRIL 25, 2013  
MICHAEL CAPRON  
CORPORATE PILOT  
- READING JET CENTER

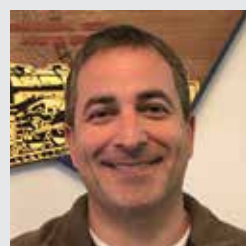
## 5 YEARS



FEBRUARY 5, 2018  
FRANKLIN DAUB  
CLASS 2 LOCOMOTIVE  
MECHANIC - MECHANICAL



MARCH 12, 2018  
TIMOTHY BILLET  
FACILITIES TECHNICIAN  
- FACILITIES



APRIL 4, 2018  
KYLE BARRELL  
AVP - HUMAN RESOURCES



APRIL 21, 2018  
EVAN GETZEY  
RESERVATION SPECIALIST  
- PASSENGER



APRIL 28, 2018  
EDWARD MOUL  
CAR HOST - PASSENGER



FEBRUARY 28, 2022  
SETH BEDNAR  
CLASS 3 LOCOMOTIVE  
MECHANIC  
- MECHANICAL



MARCH 8, 2022  
MATTHEW A. NESTOR  
CLASS 5 MACHINE  
OPERATOR TRAINEE  
- MAINTENANCE OF WAY



MARCH 10, 2022  
STEVEN SCHORR  
CONDUCTOR  
- OPERATIONS



MARCH 10, 2022  
ELIJAH WILSON  
ENGINEER/CONDUCTOR  
- OPERATIONS



MARCH 14, 2022  
JEFFREY GERBER  
REAL ESTATE INSPECTOR  
- REAL ESTATE



MARCH 28, 2022  
RYAN BOYER  
ELECTRICIAN  
- SIGNALS AND COMM.



MARCH 28, 2022  
JUSTINE BERGER  
CUSTOMER SERVICE MGR  
- CUST. SERVICE



APRIL 4, 2022  
JUSTIN SEIGEL  
CONDUCTOR  
- OPERATIONS



APRIL 11, 2022  
KRISTEN MCGOWAN  
CUSTOMER SERVICE MGR  
- CUST. SERVICE



APRIL 11, 2022  
TY MCFARLAND  
CLASS 2 CARMAN  
- MECHANICAL



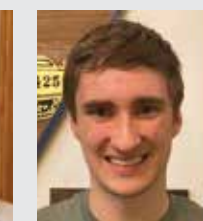
APRIL 18, 2022  
COREY REHRIG  
PAINT & RESTORATION  
TECHNICIAN - PAINT



APRIL 18, 2022  
ANDREW ZEHNER  
CONDUCTOR  
- OPERATIONS



MARCH 17, 2022  
NICOLE WOLF  
CAR HOST/TICKET  
AGENT - PASSENGER



MARCH 31, 2022  
ALEC HUMES  
CAR HOST  
- PASSENGER



Colin Gipe preparing excursion train at Jim Thorpe.



Engineer Alex Lepone making a move in West Cressona.



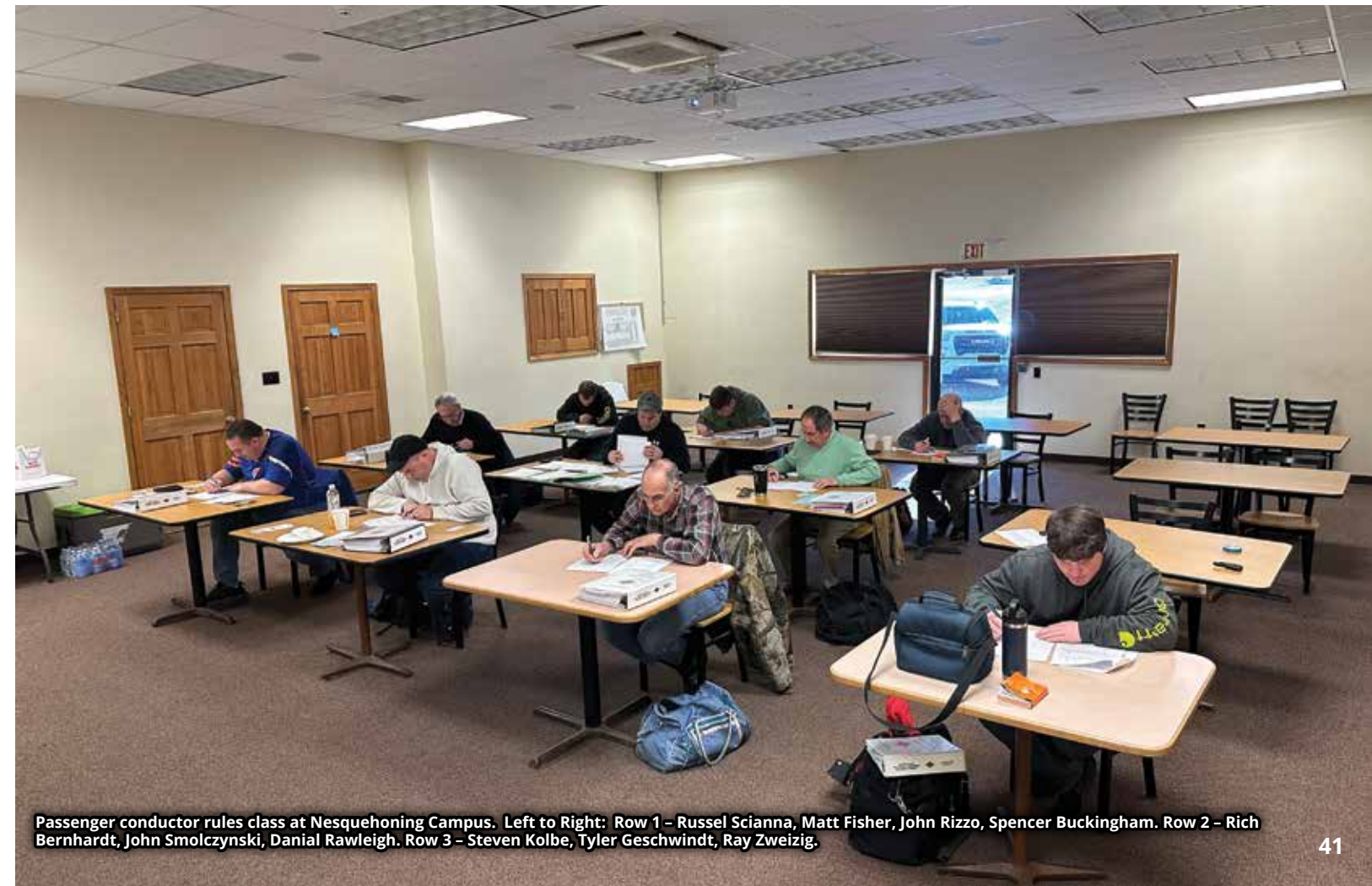
Ryan Fredrickson engineer training at Reading Outer Station.



MoW Foreman Matt Minnich and Engineer Carter Jones having a job briefing of work to be done.



Carman Devin Oswald replacing a coupler on the Shop Lead.



Passenger conductor rules class at Nesquehoning Campus. Left to Right: Row 1 - Russel Scianna, Matt Fisher, John Rizzo, Spencer Buckingham. Row 2 - Rich Bernhardt, John Smolczynski, Danial Rawleigh. Row 3 - Steven Kolbe, Tyler Geschwindt, Ray Zweizig.



Engineer Class was brought into the Diesel Shop at Port Clinton on one of the classroom days for the Locomotive Engineer Trainees. In this photo, we see Erik Ostroskie putting bearing oil in one of the locomotives over the inspection pit.



Nick Suruskie is with VP-Motive Power Dustin Berndt discussing the under carriage of one of the locomotives over the inspection pit.



Ty McFarland getting tools to finish work on a shop car.



Director of Safety John Smolczynski having a safety chat with Real Estate Inspector Jack Wassel.



Engineer Michael Kolbe will sometimes make an appearance as a Conductor. Here's Mike making a move at Mahanoy City on train SDQA.



QASD making engine move at Tamaqua. (Isaac Rudy, Mike Kolbe and John Shucavage)



Conductor Adam Boak just completed switching at Hydro in Cressona. Next move will be to get the empty cars ready for outbound interchange.



YJPN Conductor John Jennings getting cars shifted out for the Port Clinton car shop.



Conductor John Schucavage and Conductor Trainee Isaac Rudy getting the empty cars together at Maurer and Scott, Zehners.



Tony Weachock at Mahanoy City Yard double up his train for the run to Tamaqua.



1st Shift Dispatcher, Josh Rehrig training Dispatcher Trainee, Sam Tripp on the finer points of Train Dispatching.



Conductor Eugene Boyle working at Tamaqua.



All done for the day. Josh Shields on the YJPN at Port Clinton putting their power away for the night.



PIME Engineer Dave Lapallo working at Mehoopany.



YJNR1 Engineer Mike Kohl building the NRFF, WHFF and NRQA.

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

JULY 1.....JEREMY ATWELL	JULY 28.....FRANKLIN DAUB	MAY 1.....SHAWN FREDERICKSON
JULY 3.....WILLIAM BUBECK	JULY 28.....MICHAEL VOORHEES	MAY 6.....JOANNE EVANS
JULY 4.....BENJAMIN MEISER	JULY 29.....ISAAC FEENSTRA	MAY 7.....BRETZ FETTEROLF
JULY 5.....TYLER GESCHWINDT	JULY 30.....ZACHARY SIMPSON	MAY 9.....EUGENE S. BOYLE, JR.
JULY 5.....CHRISTOPHER NEFOS	JULY 31.....SHAWN SLUSSER	MAY 9.....DENNIS ROSOHAC
JULY 6.....JOHN DUBICK	JULY 17.....MATTHEW COLLINS	MAY 11.....DEANNA JOHNSON
JULY 6.....CONNOR HEDRICK	JUNE 1.....THOMAS MORASKI	MAY 11.....BRUCE KELLMAN
JULY 8.....ERNEST HENRITZY, JR.	JUNE 2.....BRANDON KALBACH	MAY 11.....AARON SCHLOSSER
JULY 8.....MELINEE WILSON	JUNE 2.....WILLIAM SOLOMON	MAY 16.....ALLY MCGINLEY
JULY 10.....JOSHUA YOUPA	JUNE 3.....CURTIS CIBELLO	MAY 17.....RHONDA BUECHLE
JULY 11.....JOSEPH MATUELLA	JUNE 4.....JORDAN RUSSELL	MAY 18.....RUSSELL SHURTLEFF
JULY 12.....ERIC PETERS	JUNE 4.....TRISHA VANDYKE	MAY 19.....CHARLES TRUSDELL III
JULY 14.....MICHAEL BAILEY	JUNE 5.....ERIC QUIMBY	MAY 21.....STEVEN SCHORR
JULY 14.....DALE HOMM	JUNE 7.....TIMOTHY BARNES	MAY 21.....JUSTIN SEIGEL
JULY 14.....JAKE STOCKMAL	JUNE 7.....JEREMY HURWITZ	MAY 21.....CHUCK TRUSDELL III
JULY 15.....VIRGINIA PIZZA	JUNE 10.....PETER COLLINS	MAY 24.....LISA MATZ
JULY 15.....DANIEL RAWLEIGH	JUNE 10.....JOHN FAUZIO	MAY 26.....MARIO DEMARCO
JULY 15.....DAKOTA REBER	JUNE 10.....ALEXANDER TAVERAS	MAY 27.....CHARLES BURNETT
JULY 18.....BENJAMIN BALTHASER	JUNE 14.....JESS GRIESSER	MAY 28.....STAN NESTOR
JULY 18.....CHASE CAPRON	JUNE 15.....NATHAN ZEIGLER	MAY 28.....SIERRA WANAMAKER
JULY 20.....DARRELL MATZ	JUNE 16.....COLIN GIPE	MAY 29.....MICHAEL GRUBER
JULY 20.....NATHAN MENGEL	JUNE 18.....DENISE KACSUR	MAY 29.....KYLE KOGOY
JULY 20.....SAMUEL WILLS	JUNE 19.....WILLIAM OATES	MAY 29.....JEFFREY SONDAY
JULY 21.....TAMMY DEBKOWSKI	JUNE 22.....ROBERT SHAULIS, JR.	MAY 31.....KATIE BONNER
JULY 22.....ALEXANDER LEPONE	JUNE 23.....MICHELE DAUB	MAY 31.....CAMERON ODELL
JULY 23.....BRYAN MEADE	JUNE 26.....JARED EDMONDS	MAY 31.....BRIAN WOLFE
JULY 24.....DAVID HUTTON	JUNE 27.....CHRISTOPHER PETERS	MAY 2.....TONY WEACHOCK
JULY 25.....STEVEN KOLBE	JUNE 28.....IAN MCKEOWN	MAY 9.....GORDON CLARK
JULY 25.....KYLE SANDERS	JUNE 28.....JOSHUA REHRIG	
JULY 28.....JAMES ALBA	JUNE 29.....JASON ZEIGLER	

## Reading & Northern's Family Recipes

### Aunt Diane's Strawberry Rhubarb Pie

Marie Knadler-Cunningham, Assistant General Manager of Passenger, shares one of her childhood favorites, just in time for rhubarb season! She says, "I always had a liking for rhubarb ever since I was a child. As long as I can remember, my parents had a large patch of rhubarb that grew in my childhood backyard. When it was in season, and ripe, my Aunt Diane would bake the BEST strawberry rhubarb pie. Every year, I would look forward to having a fresh slice with a large dollop of whipped cream on top! Fortunately, I was lucky enough to have her pass down the recipe to me, and now can share it with you all!"

#### Ingredients

- 2½-3 cups diced rhubarb
- 1 cup sliced strawberries
- 1¼ cup sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons water
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 eggs
- 2 9" unbaked pie shells

#### Directions

- 1.) Combine sugar, salt, water, flour, lemon juice, and eggs in mixing bowl to form a smooth paste.
- 2.) Stir in your diced rhubarb and sliced strawberries, mix well until all is coated.
- 3.) Pour mixture into your prepared unbaked pie crust. (I sprinkle the top with a little ground cinnamon).
- 4.) Cover the top of the pie using the second unbaked pie shell – either whole unbaked pie shell or cut into strips.
- 5.) Brush top of dough with butter. Sprinkle with sugar.
- 6.) Bake pie at 350° for about 40-50 minutes or until golden brown.
- 7.) Let cool, cut, add a dollop of whip cream, and ENJOY!

We would like to encourage everyone to send us their favorite family recipes to [mfaust@readingnorthern.com](mailto:mfaust@readingnorthern.com).





Lylee Leonard learning to intubate a turkey.

# Red Creek Wildlife Hats & Rabbits

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

There was a time in the history of Red Creek Wildlife Center when I wore all the hats. I was the wildlife rehabilitator, nursery attendant, volunteer coordinator, public relations officer, fundraiser, accountant, and public education person. However, to ensure that Red Creek continues this important work long into the future, long past my lifetime, I've had to hand off many of my hats to others. For several years, we have been working on a succession plan and putting a team in place to carry out that plan, others who are dedicated to the mission as I am.

The value of that team was evident last December when we lost our clinic building to a fire. Everyone pitched together to gather and organize equipment and create a new wildlife clinic from my old house on the property. We had hoped to reopen in April. However, because of the perseverance of this team and the generous public support we received, we were able to open sooner. On February 6th, Red Creek was again fully functional and ready to accept all wildlife species.

Today we are looking forward to a bright future. We expect to break ground on new buildings this Spring and will have more news about this in our next article. For now, I'd like to introduce you to our team members.

Greg Nason started with Red Creek in 2009, right out of high school. He had a natural talent for handling even the most dangerous animals and was keen to observe changes in behavior and health long before anyone else noticed. During his fourteen years with Red Creek, Greg has cared for almost every Pennsylvania species and helped correct almost every problem that can cause an animal to arrive for rehabilitation. He heads up our rehabilitation team and is passing on his knowledge to volunteers and staff with less experience.

Kaley Egan first interned with Red Creek as a college student in 2017. She graduated with a degree in Fish, Wildlife, & Conservation Biology, Wildlife Biology, and Zoology and is now the clinic manager for Red Creek. Her organization and leadership skills earned her the hat of overseeing staff and volunteers and creating and implementing Red Creek's standard operating protocols for the species that we treat. Greg and Kaley work together as our management team, both holding permits in wildlife rehabilitation for all species.

Philip Gunther volunteered and interned for Red Creek for three years before

being hired in the Spring of 2022. He has a degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences with a focus on mammals and wildlife management and earned his wildlife rehabilitation permit for mammals and songbirds last summer. Philip is our safety officer, keeping everyone on their toes regarding personal and animal safety. Philip is particularly interested in skunks and often takes them home for special care. His empathy and compassion for the animals are evident with every animal he handles.

Cyndi Semmel is a rehabilitation assistant and heads up our field capture and transport team. Cyndi will go anywhere, anytime an animal needs help being captured and doesn't quit until the animal is in care.

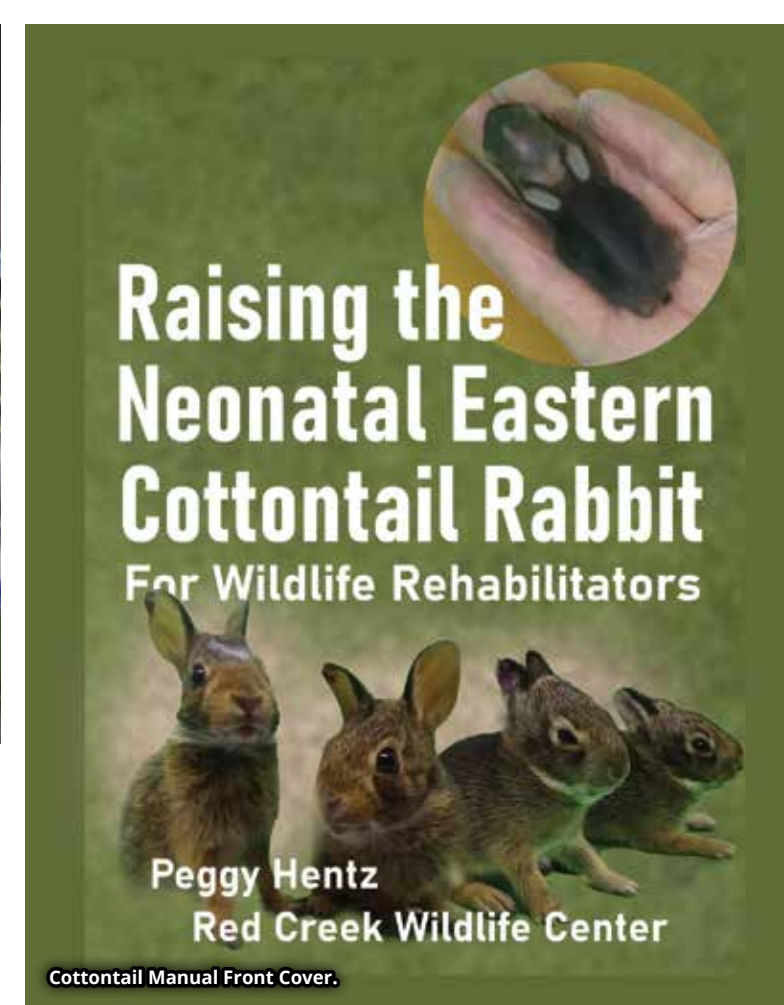
While this team of dedicated rehabilitators handles most of the wildlife cases, our newest staff member, Lylee Leonard, will take over our mission's public education program. She is currently training in public speaking and learning to handle and oversee the non-releasable ambassador animals. With her upbeat and outgoing personality, I am sure Red Creek's education programs will continue to be popular in schools and at public events.

The handing off of hats does not mean that I am retiring or leaving Red Creek. It has, however, freed me up to help new rehabilitators open, develop training classes, write curricula, and do research.

Statistically, several species of baby wildlife are difficult to hand-raise, resulting in low release rates. So, last year, we began researching these species to develop better protocols, beginning with cottontail rabbits. From March through October 2022, every neonatal and juvenile cottontail rabbit admitted at Red Creek came to my home for care. There are many reasons why I decided to focus our research on cottontails.

Eastern cottontail rabbits are the most frequently encountered baby wild animals by the public. Red Creek receives about one-thousand baby cottontails each year, one-quarter of our annual intakes. Therefore, specializing in this species significantly lightened the load of the rehabilitators at our clinic.

Historically, the success rate in raising baby cottontails is very low. The high mortality rate discourages and frustrates many rehabilitators, causing them to refuse bunnies or limit their intake. Significant research is needed on this species.



Cottontail Manual Front Cover.



Philip Gunther examining a skunk.

Cottontails thrive best in a stress-free atmosphere. By removing the bunnies from the clinic, they are not subjected to the sights, sounds, and smells of an all-species rehabilitation environment. They also respond better to a single caretaker rather than being handled by numerous staff and volunteers.

After three decades of managing a fast-paced wildlife center, raising baby bunnies at home from my dining room table has been like stepping back in time and reminds me of why I started. I also feel we are stepping into the future because I learned so much during these intense months.

The research was successful, as I discovered a natural herb that calms the bunnies down, eliminating stress-induced illness and mortality, and developed a new protocol that will simplify how cottontails are raised. The research was released in November at the New York Wildlife Conference and again at the National Wildlife Conference in March. The information was also published in November in our newest book, "Raising the Neonatal Eastern Cottontail Rabbit," available on Amazon.

2023 promises to be a year of challenges and change. As building construction begins, our work continues. Baby Season has already started, and new patients are arriving daily. This year we plan to research specific songbird species that many find difficult to raise. It will take a team to be successful, and we are thankful for our most dedicated team member, the Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad Company. ♦



Greg Nason and Kaley Egan examine a peregrine falcon.

# Wellness Corner

BY: MEGHAN FAUST, RECEPTIONIST/EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COORDINATOR

## Man's Best Friend

*"A dog is the only thing on Earth that loves you more than he loves himself."  
- Josh Billings*

For centuries, dogs have been used as hunting companions, family pets, farm help, and personal protection. They have worked alongside humans to aid in disaster relief efforts, drug and explosive identification, and search and rescue missions. Their combination of intelligence, patience, love, and loyalty also make them the perfect companion to serve people with disabilities or medical conditions, or to aid in emotional therapy for individuals in a clinical setting. People often refer to these animals incorrectly, using the term, "service dog" when they really mean "emotional support animal" or "emotional support dog" when it's really a therapy dog. The terms are often used interchangeably, but those animals have very distinct roles and qualifications.

A service dog is defined as any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. The work or tasks these dogs perform include, but are not limited to, guiding a blind person, alerting people who are deaf, calming someone with PTSD during an anxiety attack, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting someone who is having a seizure, or reminding someone with mental illness to take their medications. As of March 2011, dogs are the only recognized service animal under titles II and III of the ADA. However, in extremely rare cases, miniature horses that have also been individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities can also be service animals. These horses generally range in height from 24 to 34 inches and weigh between 70 and 100 pounds. While there are currently no nationally or legally recognized service dog trainings, certifications, or identification standards, professional trainers and organizations, as well as amateurs, may train and provide service dogs. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protects the rights of people with disabilities that require a service dog and allow them full public access to places like restaurants, shops, theaters, and government agencies. They are also allowed to travel with their service dog on airplanes, but each airline has its own rules regarding service animals, and landlords that currently have a "no pets" policy are required to make exceptions or accommodations according to the Fair Housing Act of 1968. Minimally, a service dog should be well-behaved and under control in public and should be trained in tasks that a person could not otherwise perform due to his or her disability, such as alerting a person with epilepsy when they show signs of an impending seizure or detecting when your blood sugar level is too high or too low if you are diabetic. All service dogs must be on a leash, harnessed, or tethered, housebroken and potty trained, and know verbal/hand signals. It should also be noted that if a service dog is working, you should not approach or pet them as it takes extreme concentration for the animal to perform its job properly.

Some people with mental or emotional conditions, not physical disabilities, will find that the presence of an animal helps them deal with challenges that would otherwise compromise their quality of life. An emotional support animal, ESA, is one that provides a therapeutic benefit to a person with a mental or psychiatric disability. They are not considered a service animal and are also not considered a pet, so they are generally not restricted by the type of animal. An ESA can be any age and any domesticated animal, including dogs, cats, rabbits, birds, minipigs, ferrets, hedgehogs, etc. Because they are not service animals, they do not perform specific tasks but rather, through their presence, provide relief for the symptoms associated with a person's serious mental health condition. In order for a person to legally have an emotional support animal, the owner must have a mental or emotional disability and have been provided with a letter stating the need for the animal by a licensed physician or treatment provider. Unlike service dogs, an emotional support animal does not need to be raised or trained in a specific way since they are not required to do a specific job or task. An ESA is legally allowed to be brought to college and live in housing with a "no pets" policy. However, unlike service dogs, emotional support animals are only allowed in restaurants if the restaurant allows pets and are allowed on an airplane depending on the airline's policy. Contacting the airline directly to ask about their ESA and pet policies before booking is always recommended. In some cases, people with an ESA may be required to provide documentation that they have a disability and a letter from a licensed mental health professional that states an ESA is needed.

If you have ever visited an assisted living facility, nursing home or hospice, school, or children's hospital, you may have seen a friendly, bandana-wearing dog strolling the halls or visiting patients in their rooms. These are therapy dogs, and they help people feel more comfortable and less stressed in a hospital or other clinical setting. Therapy dogs have one main job: to provide psychological or physiological therapy to people other than their handlers. The perfect therapy dog should be well-mannered and well-socialized, have a stable temperament, and have a friendly, easy-going personality. While service dogs perform specific tasks and should not be touched while they are on duty, therapy dogs are encouraged to interact with a variety of people while they are working, including petting the therapy dog. All therapy dogs must go through some training, but that training can be done by just about anyone.

However, the training must meet set standards to be certified and registered and should be actively participating in the program. Therapy dogs are usually handled by their owners but in some cases may be handled by a trained professional. The owners of therapy dogs do not have the same legal rights as those with a service dog. They may not be accompanied by their dog in public places where dogs are not permitted and may not travel on an airplane with them either.

Whether you are a dog lover or not, there are several beneficial reasons for someone with a disability or impairment to own one. They provide companionship and a calming presence, but they also serve those that would otherwise have limited range or whose quality of life would be interrupted. For more detailed information on the different types of service, emotional support or therapy dogs, or to better understand who qualifies for each, please visit the sites below.



Definition	trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities	provide emotional well-being of for people with disabilities	trained to provide comfort to individuals in specific environments
<b>Applicable Federal Laws</b>	<b>ADA</b> Americans with Disabilities Act	<b>ACAA</b> Air Carrier Access Act	<b>FHA</b> Fair Housing Act
<b>Type of Animal</b>	Dog or Miniature Horse	Any Animal (with some exclusions)	Any Animal
<b>Should Be Certified or Registered</b>	✓	✓	✓
<b>Must Have Documentation Identifying the Disability</b>	✓	✓	✗
<b>Travel in the Cabin of an Airplane</b>	✓	✓	✗
<b>Live in No-Pet Housing</b>	✓	✓	✗
<b>Able to Have in Public Places</b>	✓	✓	✗
<b>Animal Must Be Leashed or Tethered at All Times</b>	✓	✓	✗
<b>Must Wear a Leash or Vest Identifying the Animal</b>	✓	Not Always Required	✗

### For more information, visit:

[www.ada.gov/topics/service-animals/](http://www.ada.gov/topics/service-animals/)

[www.umassmed.edu/TransitionsACR/resources/emotional-support-animals-101/#what](http://www.umassmed.edu/TransitionsACR/resources/emotional-support-animals-101/#what)

[www.therapydogs.com/service-dog-vs-therapy-dog](http://www.therapydogs.com/service-dog-vs-therapy-dog)

<https://therapydogs.org/news-articles/benefits-therapy-dogs/what-is-a-therapy-dog>

[www.healthline.com/health/pet-therapy#risks](http://www.healthline.com/health/pet-therapy#risks)

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A Bobby Burns (Keystone Anthracite) Marion 7400 dragline works on stockpiling run of mine coal from an open seam at one of his strip-mining sites.