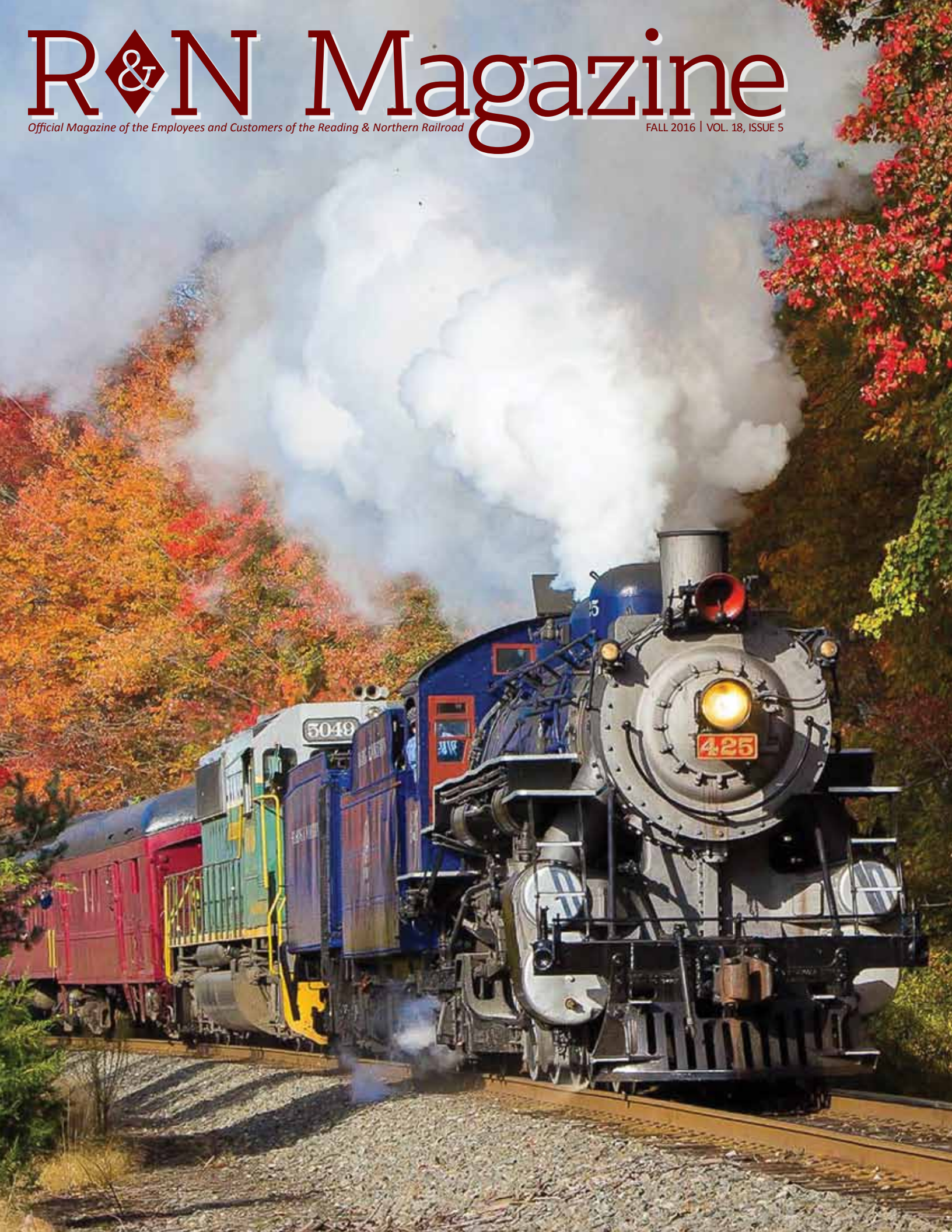


# R & N Magazine

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

FALL 2016 | VOL. 18, ISSUE 5



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## COVER PHOTO

THE 425 AT ZEHNERS DURING LAST SEASON'S FALL FOLIAGE EXCURSIONS. PHOTO CREDIT CHIP ALLEN.

## EDITORS

JOLENE FAY • CRYSTAL ARNDT

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# KEEPING ON TRACK

BY: WAYNE MICHEL, PRESIDENT



THE CONDUCTOR.

Sometimes success sneaks up on you. And sometimes it is gradual, with bumps along the road. And sometimes the hard work of decades just explodes into a glorious reality. That's how I view the Reading and Northern passenger program.

From the earliest days of the Blue Mountain and Reading, passenger service was important to Andy Muller. He was passionate about taking people out for an old-fashioned passenger excursion ride. He and Therman Madeira built a reputation for a quality passenger program. Clean cars, courteous and knowledgeable conductors and on-time rides at a reasonable rate.

Obviously a big turning point for our passenger program was when we took over for George Hart in Jim Thorpe in May, 2005. With Jim Thorpe as our focal point we started the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway. Over the years the LGSR grew and we added more bells and whistles such as open air cars and bike trains. And of course our beloved 425 steam engine went into limited excursion service in 2007.

In 2015 we accomplished what we had only dreamed of; over 100,000 visitors rode on our different trains.

And then came 2016.

It is hard to know where to begin.

For starters we rolled out an aggressive schedule of RDCs, self-propelled rail cars with dining.

We opened a new passenger headquarters at Schuylkill Haven.

We started rides from new locations such as Pottsville, Schuylkill Haven, Minersville, Tamaqua, Tunkhannock, and Mountain Top.

We scheduled regular LGSR bike trains.

We totally refurbished our new parlor car.

And, we purchased property near the beginning of our railroad outside Reading that will be converted into an amazing train depot for new riders.

And closer to home for us who do freight marketing and sales, our Passenger Department ran two very successful customer excursions this year. (see articles on pages 7 through 9).

This summer 40,000 riders (Memorial Day through Labor Day) enjoyed our various trains. That is a 15 percentage increase over last year. As a result we are on track to handle over 115,000 visitors this year. More than double what we handled in 2013. By comparison, the Steamtown Museum in Scranton funded with over \$65 million dollars of taxpayer dollars receives less than 90,000 visitors a year!

When a private company achieves this much success the credit must go to the entrepreneur behind the company. That is certainly true when it comes to our passenger program. The credit must go to Andy Muller for both his vision and willingness to bankroll his vision. It is easy now to look back and say there was little risk in pursuing this aggressive passenger program, but that is not the case. It is not cheap to put a steam engine into service. It is not cheap to acquire and retrofit cars to serve as open air cars, or gons for bike trains or RDCs. Our new parlor car is a work of art; that didn't come cheap either. Every step of the way Andy had faith that if he built it they would come. And they have.

Along the way his partner in this venture was Therman Madeira. And along the way Andy and Therman were assisted by many men and women who worked hard to build the business, to maintain the cars and engines, to take care of the customers, and to keep the trains running safely and on time. Obviously Tyler Glass has been an integral part of this success as has been his team. But I want to give a lot of credit for our recent success to Matt Fisher and all the men and women who work tirelessly in RBMN's Passenger Department and at LGSR to give our guests a wonderful ride and a special time.

To those of you who constantly go the extra mile to keep our passenger trips the success they are I say take a bow. You are the ones responsible for keeping our passenger program on track. ♦



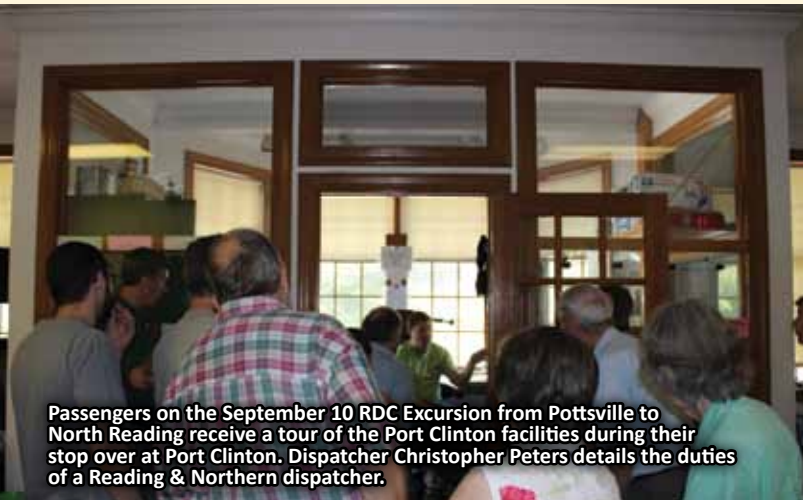
No. 425 overtakes the rafters on the Lehigh River at Glen Onoko on the Labor Day weekend. (Photo by Bernard Krebs)



Passengers take in the scenes between Port Clinton and North Reading on the RDC September 10 excursion.



No. 2102 sitting in the steam shop at Port Clinton looking nearly unrecognizable undergoing restoration. Work began this year on the 4-8-4 locomotive.



Passengers on the September 10 RDC Excursion from Pottsville to North Reading receive a tour of the Port Clinton facilities during their stop over at Port Clinton. Dispatcher Christopher Peters details the duties of a Reading & Northern dispatcher.



RDC Cooks John and Nancy Walaitis prepare and serve lunch to passengers onboard the RDC September 10 excursion.

# T-1 No.2102 Updates

BY: MATT FISHER, PASSENGER GENERAL MANAGER

A lot has happened since the Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad published a press release in winter of 2016 stating the rebuild and return of our steam locomotive no. 2102. Our steam crew employees, and volunteers have spent hundreds of hours working on the T-1 doing the following:

January through March the locomotive was disassembled. The jacketing, air/steam lines, cab, flues/tubes and super heater units were all removed. The boiler interior was cleaned out, and the locomotive was mapped out for ultrasound testing.

In April and May the ultrasound was completed and a portion of the front tube sheet was removed. The new section was cut out by water jet and is on hand at the steam shop. May through July saw work of the steam crew focus on locomotive no. 425, the steam water tank car, and various other tasks to get ready for trips including Mountain Top, Labor Day weekend at LGSRY, and fall excursions.

Work has picked back up in August after the No. 425's annual work was completed. The main focus has turned to staybolt removal and firebox work through late summer and early fall.

The restoration of No. 2102 is moving along quickly. Special thanks to Ryan Bausher and Bill Frederickson along with all the staff involved in getting this 4-8-4 back in service. Also, thank you to Mr. Muller and management for the continuous backing in running steam on the Reading and Northern Railroad. Finally, projects like the T-1 restoration are supported by the interest of the general public riding our passenger trains. We have received hundreds of emails, letters, and well-wishes from people of many ages and backgrounds and thank you for all of your support. ♦

## Another Exceptional Year

BY: MATT FISHER, PASSENGER GENERAL MANAGER

*The 2016 Season in Passenger*



No. 425 leading an all blue train consist with "Bike and Ride" gondola, open air, and standard coach cars negotiating the curve over the Nesquehoning River Bridge. Photo by Bernard Krebs.

The Passenger Department has been put to the test this season. There are more passenger trains running than ever before, more visitors than previous years, and more options available for the riding public.

The RDC (Rail Diesel Car) trips have sold out over the entire summer. Trips originated in Pottsville Union Station and went to Port Clinton for a tour of the railroad headquarters, North Reading, and Jim Thorpe. Also, in September, the Reading Company Technical and Historical Society chartered the RDCs for an enjoyable trip on the Reading Division of the Reading and Northern Railroad.

No. 425 made several appearances over the summer and autumn months. First, it powered a July trip sponsored by the Mountain Top Rotary from Penobscot to Jim Thorpe. This trip had nine coaches full of people. The ticket sales helped in making a donation to the Rotary. In August, the locomotive ran on an unannounced charter trip for the Hamburg Class of 1966. During the trip, guests enjoyed lunch served in the newly restored Schuylkill Haven Station. The station is now open to the public and houses our Passenger Department.

In September, No. 425 made a rare appearance on the seventy minute Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway trips in Jim Thorpe to celebrate Labor Day. The crowds of tourists, families, and railfans traversed to the town to ride behind the steam engine. The "Ride and Bike" gondola car was opened to riders for the first time to experience the power of riding in a truly open car directly behind the locomotive. Over 1,000 people rode the LGSRY trains each day on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday during the long Labor Day weekend. When asked to describe the attraction to the steam train ride, Monday's Conductor Bill Solomon said, "The steam locomotive is totally different from a diesel engine. It's the sights, the smell, the feel, the nostalgia of what it was years ago." That feeling, no doubt, helped attract more visitors to the railroad that weekend.

By September, our passenger business usually slows down, but not this year. No. 425 returned on the 11:00 am, 1:00 pm, and 3:00 pm Schuylkill Haven Borough Day trips. This was a chance to showcase our station as part of this very well-attended local celebration. In October, No. 425 powered four of the record eight offerings for the Autumn Leaf trips from Port Clinton to Jim Thorpe. October also was extremely busy in Jim Thorpe. People had the choice of riding the two hour Hometown High Bridge trains or the LGSRY trains. Two blue LGSRY coaches were added to the fleet allowing for more capacity on both trains.

Coming up are Santa Claus Specials. These trips will run 10:30 AM, 1:00 PM, and 3:30 PM from Jim Thorpe into the Lehigh Gorge. Santa will be on the train which lasts round trip eighty minutes. Also, Santa Claus trains will run out of Pottsville, Schuylkill Haven, Tamaqua, Tunkhannock, and the newly refurbished Minersville station. The railroad proudly partners with local non-profit organizations in the communities mentioned. Please visit [www.lgsry.com](http://www.lgsry.com) for more details on upcoming trips or call 610-562-2102 for tickets and information. ♦



Exterior of no. 2102 showing staybolts.



Interior of no. 2102 awaiting ultrasound testing.

# First Train at Koppy's Propane

BY: DENNIS SHAFFER, VP BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

On Wednesday, October 5 Reading and Northern began service to the new Koppy's propane terminal in Good Spring, Pennsylvania. These photos show the on-time arrival of the first train and cars being spotted on the two unloading tracks. ♦



RBMN #3054 spots cars for unloading.



Left to right, Dennis Shaffer, Randy Witmer – Koppy's, Tyler Glass. On Locomotive, David Koppenhaver – Koppy's, Andy Muller, Jr.



Two tracks spotted for unloading.



View of cars spotted at unloading racks.



First propane train arrives at Good Spring.



Randy Bell with Quad Graphics, Rian Nemeroff with RBMN, Joe Frawley, Joe Paris, Jeff Russ, and Gary Casale of Quad Graphics enjoy the open air car.

# Humboldt Train Trip

BY: DAN GILCHRIST, EXECUTIVE VP MARKETING & SALES

On Tuesday July 26 the Reading and Northern hosted customers in the Humboldt Industrial Park for a short train ride and lunch to celebrate the Reading and Northern takeover of rail service in the park.

RBMN took over service on January 1, 2016 and now owns the 7.5 miles of rail in the park and provides service to twelve rail customers. The transition has gone very well and customers are very pleased with RBMN's scheduled service, increased switching and very responsive customer service.

To show our appreciation we hosted over seventy guests for two ninety minute trips scheduled at 10:30 AM and 12:30 PM with an onboard luncheon of course. Guests were welcome to take either trip or stay on board for both. The consist was four passenger cars with a locomotive at each end. Passengers enjoyed touring each of the cars, including Car 1 the Black Diamond built for Jay Gould's daughter in 1889. As it was a warm day, the open air car Summer Wind was also an especially good place to catch the views. Many guests commented how different the view of the park was from the railroad tracks. The route was entirely on RBMN tracks in the park so most customers got a chance to see what their rail siding looks like from the railroad's perspective.

The CANDO organization in Hazleton is the preeminent industrial development organization in the entire region and started the Humboldt Industrial park in 1967. It has been an amazing success and the Reading and Northern Railroad is very pleased to be a part of the park's future.

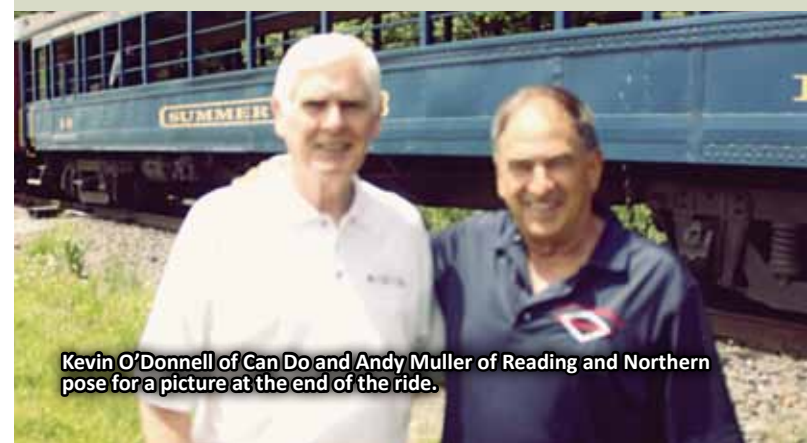
Our first trip in the park was a big success and we look forward to hosting many more customer trips in the coming years. ♦



Jane Krouse and Tracy Karchner with Karchner Logistics enjoy the view with Rian Nemeroff of RBMN and John Spevak of Karchner.



Dan Gilchrist with RBMN talks with Jeremiah Sheedy and Matthew Corra of Cargill



Kevin O'Donnell of Can Do and Andy Muller of Reading and Northern pose for a picture at the end of the ride.



Clockwise from left is William Magnotta, Can Do Vice Chairman, John Madden Can Do Chairman of the Board, Dave Haupt, Precision Design, Andy Muller Owner and CEO Reading and Northern, Jim Dino, Hazleton Standard Speaker, Dominic Yannuzzi, Alfred Benesch and E. Thomas Sandrock past Can Do President.

# Customer Appreciation Train Trip

BY: DAN GILCHRIST, EXECUTIVE VP MARKETING & SALES



Bert Sickler of First Quality Non Wovens checks out the view from the locomotive at the end of the trip.

RBMN Headquarters in Port Clinton was the scene for our customers and other guests to gather for the 2016 annual Customer Appreciation Train Trip on September 13.

Over seventy customers, guests, and local elected officials arrived to take a ride on the Reading and Northern Railroad. As attendees arrived, they were greeted with fresh donuts and coffee while being signed in. The weather had been quite hot recently but on September 13th the day was cool and very pleasant.

Departure from Port Clinton was scheduled for 10:00 AM but we held the train for about ten minutes to accommodate a few guests delayed in traffic on Route 61. After departure the train traveled north along the Main Line approximately thirty miles through Tamaqua, Pennsylvania. We followed the Little Schuylkill River through rolling hills and forests until we passed over the famous High Bridge in Hometown, Pennsylvania. This bridge is a 170 foot high trestle spanning the great valley and the Little Schuylkill River far below the railroad. The High Bridge was built in 1931 and is 1100 feet long and the view from the open air car was especially breathtaking.

The train consist was a little different this year as we included the newest car in our fleet, the first class Parlor Car 3 built originally for the Gulf Mobile & Northern Railroad. The Reading & Northern acquired this car in the 1980s and recently refurbished it in spectacular fashion. It was a tremendous addition and held dozens of guests very comfortably. In addition to the new Parlor Car, we included a Standard Coach Car and one Open Air Car, as well as Private Cars #1 and #5. Guests were free to walk throughout the train and tour the various cars while they mingled. It was a little cool and breezy at first in the Open Air Car but by the afternoon both inside and outside seating options were enjoyed by all.

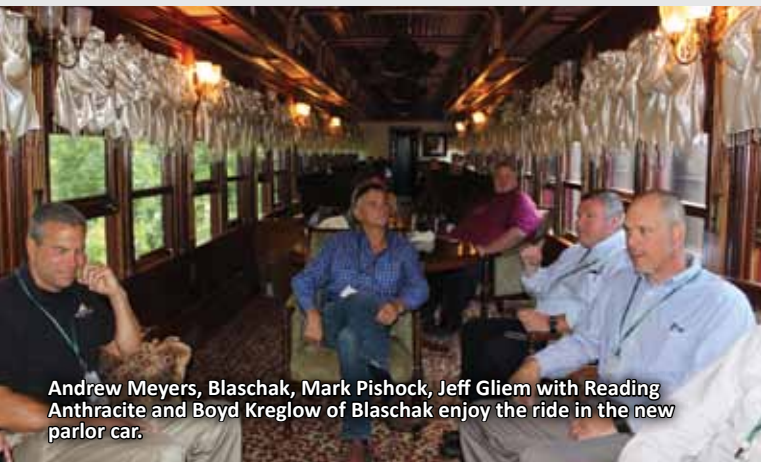
After lunch concluded the train began the journey back to Port Clinton, and our arrival was on time at 1:00 PM for the sixty mile round trip.

Upon return to Port Clinton some guests were interested to climb up to the engine for a close look and others took the opportunity to stop by the office to say "Hi" to some of the customer service folks who could not make the trip because they were in the office handling business.

It was a great day and a fine time was had by all. The Reading and Northern would like to thank all of the customers and friends of the railroad who took time out of their busy schedules to come out with us to enjoy this day. We look forward to the next trip and hope you can come along with us next time. ♦



Andy Muller and Dan Gilchrist with RBMN chat with David Fanjul and Craig Olson with the EJ Gallo Company out of California. Mike Kelly with Kane is Able has his back to the camera.



Andrew Meyers, Blaschak, Mark Pishock, Jeff Gliem with Reading Anthracite and Boyd Kreglow of Blaschak enjoy the ride in the new parlor car.



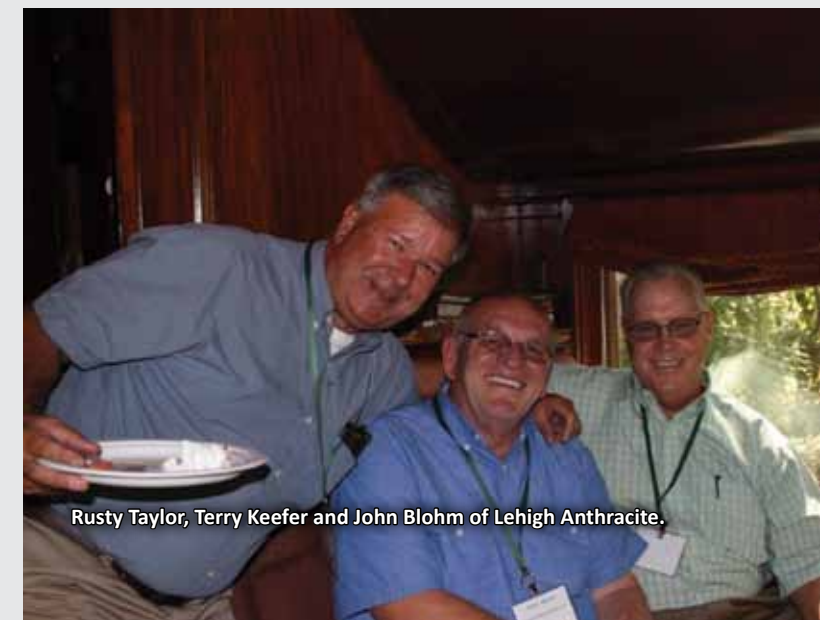
Mike Sharadin with RBMN and Jeff Gliem with Reading Anthracite have a discussion at one end of the Parlor Car.



Don Davidson and Adam Wilson with the Atlantic Carbon Group in the new Parlor Car.



Several guests enjoyed the fresh breeze on "Summer Wind," including Calvin Shellhamer from Maurer & Scott and Joe Berezwick from Reynolds.



Rusty Taylor, Terry Keefer and John Blohm of Lehigh Anthracite.



Harold Karchner with Karchner Logistics and Andy Muller with RBMN chat before boarding the train.



Kristen Snyder, Kara Tucker, and David Koppenhaver with Koppys Propane enjoy some lunch on board



Dustin is seen evaluating an EMD SW1001.



The morning of August 16 Dustin is seen overlooking the locomotive facility as we are about to check in at the yard office.



Dustin and I getting ready to fly to Roanoke from Reading Regional Airport (RDG).



All four MP15s finally made it to Port Clinton on September 22, 2016.

# Locomotive Fleet Enhanced

BY: TYLER GLASS, EXECUTIVE VP OPERATIONS

The Reading & Northern Railroad (RBMN) recently added to our locomotive fleet. As you have read in recent years RBMN has been in growth mode for some time as our freight and passenger business continues to expand and evolve. With that growth we needed to increase our locomotive fleet. So that is exactly what we set out to do this summer.

With the vast number of locomotives manufactured over the years there are many models available to purchase for almost any type of rail service application. However, purchasing for the right price and at the right time is one of Andy Muller's traits that has made him so successful in this industry. He could have purchased locomotives last year when it looked as though we needed more power but he made the decision not to move forward at that time. This forced our team to get creative and stretch our current roster of locomotives in order to meet the operational demands, all while waiting until the right deal

came along. In the end this allowed us to find the right locomotives for the right price.

Andy has always maintained that good deals can be found when class 1 railroads have locomotive auctions. Over half of our current fleet has been purchased over the years at these auctions. So when it was announced in July that Norfolk Southern was going to have a locomotive auction in Roanoke, Virginia, we immediately planned to make the trip. The locomotives in this particular auction were exclusively of the four axle variety, just what we had been looking for. Two days prior to the auction NS allowed prospective buyers to inspect the seventy six locomotives for auction. On August 16 Dustin Berndt, AVP Motive Power, and I made the trip south to Roanoke.

The drive between Port Clinton and Roanoke is a little over six hours, give or take, depending on traffic and the primary route is the busy Interstate 81. As exciting as that road trip may seem, we were able to travel via Andy's private

jet from the FBO at Reading, with Mike Capron and Larry Yoder as our pilots. This cut our travel time to approximately fifty minutes allowing us to leave the morning of the first day of the locomotive inspections, instead of the day prior. It was quite the nice experience traveling to a locomotive auction in first class style!

We arrived in Roanoke on Tuesday morning, August 16, and immediately made our way to NS's Roanoke Yard to begin our locomotive inspections. Norfolk Southern had mechanical personnel coordinating the process and ensuring prospective buyers went to the proper tracks for the inspections they were interested in making. Tuesday afternoon we quickly looked over every locomotive in the auction, to get an idea of the general condition of each locomotive. All of the locomotives up for sale were all built by EMD and consisted of one SW1001, 25 MP15's and 50 GP38-2 locomotives. Dustin's main goal that day was to a good overview of the condition of the

seventy six locomotives that were for sale. That night we went out for a nice meal in historic downtown Roanoke. Roanoke is a great old railroad town, with a rich history and I always enjoy any time that I get to spend there.

Wednesday morning we were back at Roanoke yard bright and early. Dustin spent the majority of the morning and afternoon doing more thorough inspections on the units he had determined were worth pursuing the day before. He took copious amounts of notes during his meticulous inspections and we were both pleasantly surprised at how many nice locomotives were included in the auction. I had several phone conversations with Andy throughout this process, to keep him up to date on what we were seeing and hearing. The NS Mechanical personnel did a great job ensuring that everyone was taken care of during the inspection. For the comfort of the prospective buyers, NS had coolers full of water placed at several locations on the inspection tracks

and around the yard. That was very much appreciated since it was a hot and humid August day in Roanoke. That evening we had another very nice meal and discussed Dustin's findings for the next day's auction.

Thursday morning we were up early and back at the yard for the start of the auction at 09:00. A few minutes prior to the auction getting underway, we phone-conferenced with Andy and talked through our purchasing strategy. We had our sights set on purchasing at least a few of the 25 MP15s that NS was offering and it just so happened that our top two picks were second and third on the auction list. I got Andy on the phone at the beginning of the auction and a just a few short minutes after it began, we were the owners of two of Dustin's top picks. After that Andy gave me the order to go after two more MP15's and so we did. By the time the auction concluded, we had secured 4 MP15 locomotives for about 60% of the going rate of these locomotives just a few

years ago. Andy, Dustin and I were all thrilled with the new purchases, especially since all four locomotives were in good operational condition. After the auction ended, we made our way to the airport and by early that same afternoon we were back at Port Clinton and returned to business as usual.

Concurrent with NS's August auction, we were also able to purchase two more EMD GP39RN's at a reasonable price to bring our total of GP39RN's to six. These two locomotives will be used exclusively to handle our ever increasing passenger business.

With the addition of these six locomotives we now believe we are in fine shape for many years to come, but you never know what opportunities tomorrow may bring. With the quickness in which things change and the rapid growth we have enjoyed over the last few years, I would not be surprised if we were in the market for more locomotives at some point in the near future! ♦

# MOW Building the ROW for More Service

BY: ERIK YODER, VP MAINTENANCE OF WAY

Maintenance of Way (MOW) is busy, very busy. As mentioned in our previous magazines we are busy constructing track as much as we are maintaining the track. It is difficult to walk around our railroad lately without seeing some type of construction activity along our Right of way (ROW.) Most of this activity is building the future of the Passenger Department, as well as new customer opportunities. From adding additional sidings for the storage of passenger cars when not in use, to extra tracks for passenger boarding, and even construction of new passenger stations MOW is at the start of each project. RBMN is also quick to respond to the need for new track for a customer along our railroad. Put both of these needs together and a number of projects can become a priority very quickly.

In this article, I have tried to capture a few of the various projects we have completed or are currently working on, as well as some recent developments across our railroad. I am both excited at the prospect of new projects, but also hard at work to fit them into the busy schedule MOW already is moving to accomplish. It is an exciting time to be a member of the MOW Department.

Earlier this year we started to focus on track improvements along our routes to create new passenger trips and destinations. We started on our Pottsville Branch, across our Reading ML, and over to Jim Thorpe dumping ballast and surfacing the track for a smooth ride. As we finished each section we kept moving our ballast train to keep the Tamper gang busy. Each section was also evaluated for tie work and/or rail work. We have also looked into making the necessary track upgrades to begin the process of raising the class of track and increase speeds for more efficient delivery of products to our customers. This is true of both our customers who receive rail deliveries as well as the customers who ride our passenger trains.

In addition to making track improvements, MOW is also working on building more track. We have laid out ties along the Schuylkill Haven Station for another siding to be installed. This will serve as a storage location for passenger cars when not in use as well as staging for passenger trips. We highlighted the recent transformation of the Schuylkill Haven Station in a past issue, but the transformation continues on a monthly basis as we work to improve all aspects of our service to our customers.

A recent development has been the acquisition of property along Rt 61 at the south end of our North Reading Yard. This land will be used for a new passenger station and be another start point for passenger trips. We have started clearing trees for an additional passenger siding that will parallel our mainline to the east. As the plan unfolded for this station, we have laid out an additional track into the newly purchased lots alongside Route 61. Plans continued to be revised as we see more and more potential for this great location.

We have finished another track in our Port Clinton Yard next to our driveway by the main office. The track ends next to our flagpole and proudly displays one of our steam engines. A second track is halfway built for more storage of equipment or passenger cars during our busy times of the year. MOW has been working on these projects on most weekends making the best use of our time. We continue to build tracks in areas that make the most use of what we have to improve the things we can offer in the future.

As I continue to recount some of the projects completed as well as in the works for Passenger Department I turn to our projects that benefit our rail served customers. This will mirror the type of activity we have performed for the Passenger Department.

We highlighted in our most recent RBMN magazine the construction of a new rail served facility at the end of our Tremont line. The two 900 TF of sidings are completed and ready for rail traffic. To support this new rail served location, RBMN continued the track upgrades working south on the Tremont Line. Our end goal is to continue to raise the class of tracks we own and maintain them to provide the best service we can offer.

Track upgrades were also completed on the Hazleton Line between Haucks MP 105.3 and Oneida Jct MP 118.2. Our forces retied the entire line and are in process of the final touches with ballast and surfacing. In addition to installing ties, we also installed new rail strings at MP 112.7 and 115, straightened slewed ties, installed ties in spots that were missing to gain back the tie spacing this line once had, and improved ditching along ROW as well as drainage of water away from track. Once surfacing is completed, the plan is to raise track to class 3 status. This again will improve the service we can offer to all our customers in Humboldt Park. Mirroring the Hazleton Line was the Scranton Branch between Pittston Yard and Minooka Jct. This branch is going through a major upgrade as we look to raise its track status to class 3.

Another track construction project underway for a customer is in Hazleton. This project will be the construction of a siding for Hazleton Shaft. Materials have been delivered and work started on the siding will that will measure 3000 TF.

As I end this article I am amazed again at the projects we have finished, projects well underway, and future projects that are on the edge of reality. We continue to strive to meet all of our customer's needs. In the words of our CEO, Andy Muller, "Whatever success I have had was due to my attention to my customers." This idea is what drives us and reflects in the work we have again performed this year. ♦



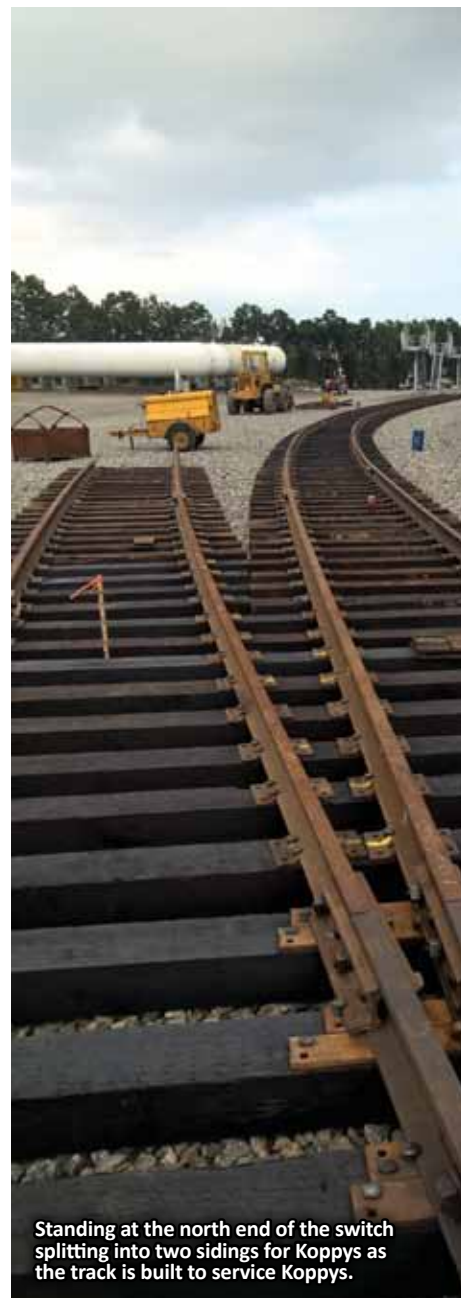
The track subgrade is prepared as materials and tools begin to be unloaded in preparation for the construction of a siding for service to Hazleton Shaft.



Prepared subgrade is ready for track construction as materials are laid out along the future track.



A week after construction began, track is constructed up to Haul Road crossing as more materials come in by gondolas to Hazleton Shaft



Standing at the north end of the switch splitting into two sidings for Koppys as the track is built to service Koppys.



Tracks being constructed at the end of our Tremont Running Track to service Koppys, our new customer.



Ramp is being built for a future switch and siding running up to parking lot to both display passenger trains and load passengers.



To the left of the N. Reading Yard sign is the prepared subgrade for a new passenger siding track for storage of passenger trains for service from our future Outer Station.

# Communication and Signal Department Project Update

BY: JONATHAN BARKET, AVP SIGNALS & COMMUNICATIONS

As I look back on my thirteen years of employment at the Reading and Northern Railroad there has been a huge increase in both freight and passenger business. As our business grew so did the Communications and Signal Department. When I was hired, there were four employees; two signal maintainers, Jeff Seidel our supervisor, and myself, a signal helper – as I started out as summer help only. Our main objective was to keep the current infrastructure in fine working order. This was not always easy as much of our signal system, including highway crossing systems, were decades old and the radio system was minimal with the major parts being maintained by a third party. Over the years we were able to upgrade much of the signal systems and many of the highway crossing systems. We also heavily upgraded our radio systems at the same time eliminating the need for a third party.

Around 2008 we started looking at adding to our signal system with an interlocking at East Mahanoy Jct. on our Main Line. This sparked what would lead to many years of construction projects to add signals and interlockings to the whole railroad. This, of course, requires the need for more personnel and as of today we are now a department of seven hardworking individuals.

In addition, I also saw substantial amounts of improvements with our facilities and infrastructure. One of our biggest changes came this year, as we moved the

headquarters for the Communications and Signal Department from Port Clinton to West Cressona. This move allows for better productivity due to more yard space for storage and indoor space for troubleshooting and building new locations and projects.

We are now better staffed and equipped to make some of Andy's wishes and dreams into a reality. He has supplied us with the resources to not only repair existing locations, but also to be able to easily install and expand our signal system efficiently. At the end of 2014, we took delivery of our digger derrick truck that also serves as a bucket truck. This piece of equipment has been vital to our effort of installing and maintaining signal systems, crossings, and 2-way radio communication.

As I write this article, we are finishing up another interlocking located at "Haucks." This is a critical location where our Hazleton Line connects into our Main Line. With the new Humboldt traffic traversing the Hazleton Line and a new Fast Freight train expediting any traffic traversing between the Lehigh and Reading divisions along the Main Line, this location is now much more heavily used than it was just one year ago. In addition, this location will allow for a full signal system to control all train movements between Haucks and East Mahanoy Jct. It will also improve safety by monitoring an additional five switches and nearly six miles of track for broken rail protection. At the same time, it will increase efficiency by

allowing our dispatchers located at Port Clinton to remotely control the position of the Haucks switch, which could be thrown more than six times daily keeping all trains moving. In addition to the ever growing freight business, this is also a location that hosts multiple passenger runs annually adding to the volume of trains that utilize this interlocking.

We have also just completed a software upgrade at East Mahanoy Jct., which was required to allow correct indications to correspond with the Haucks Interlocking. Along with the upgrade, we were also able to install an approach signal on the M&S branch allowing crews to get a better heads up for what to expect as they approach East Mahanoy Jct. Again, this additional signal enhances safety as it includes over one mile of infrastructure for broken rail protection and monitors the position of a switch and derail located at Mahanoy Siding.

In the very near future we will be installing Tamaqua interlocking, our latest addition to the ever expanding signal system on the RBMN. With cable installation planned for this fall and a hopeful cutover of late winter, this will allow our fully functioning signal system to extend from Tamaqua to Haucks. Train traffic has increased substantially between these locations as well and with a full bi-directional (261) signal system, more trains can be run closer together, cutting down on both transit time and paperwork.



Communications manager Matt Collins receiving directions from maintainers Ed Kopeck and Dave Hutton while installing the Haucks Bungalow onto its foundation.



Maintainers Ed Kopeck and Dave Hutton working to unload power cable reels that will provide Haucks interlocking with necessary commercial power roughly 2000' away from the closest connection point.



Maintainer Dave Hutton rebuilds the inside of an old bungalow while Ed Kopeck and Matt Collins continue to install cable and necessary wiring for switch heaters.



Maintainer Darnell Young checks the newly installed signal along the Main line for level. This signal will be the home signal for Haucks Interlocking, which can be seen in the distance.



All signal crews cleared the way at the Haucks Interlocking work site for a special RDC run up the Hazleton line



Interlocking "Brain" has arrived and is being prepared for installation into the Haucks interlocking.



Maintainer Dave Hutton watches as Ed Kopeck begins to backfill along the signal case at MP 107 on the Hazleton line for the 107S signal. This will be a working approach signal advising crews what to expect upon arrival at Haucks Interlocking.



New Communications and Signals headquarters located in Cressona with new warehouse and wire shop building.

We expect to extend our signal system south to Port Clinton and eventually Reading in the coming years. Andy, Tyler, and I recently met to review my conceptual plans for the eventual extension of the signal system on the entirety of the mainline and other connecting lines.

In addition to all the signal system upgrades, we also upgraded several highway grade crossings including Lofty Road near Delano, which is located on our recently rehabilitated Hazleton Line. With the increased train traffic and future speed increases, we decided it was time to install another crossing predictor. This device determines the speed of the train and activates the crossing making sure adequate warning time is achieved. By installing this predictor, we were not only able to achieve an advanced warning system, but allow for the speed increases as well. Along with Lofty, we gave a big facelift to an antiquated crossing at Main Street in Tremont. While maintaining the older railroad look, we installed new cables and a control house. In addition, we upgraded the protection from a stop and proceed scenario to a fully functioning crossing. This will also aid in safety and efficiency to all train traffic including service to the new Kopy's propane terminal in Good Spring.

The year 2016 is coming to a very busy close with 2017 already filling up quickly with new and continuing projects. With the proposed signal system extension to Reading and possibly several new crossing installations on the horizon, our forces will be busy with many more construction projects.

It's always great to see more and more infrastructure added to our ever expanding RBMN system! ♦





MOW's Shawn Slusser.



(left to right) MOW's Russell Monroe and Ryan Rupprecht starting their work day.

# Safety

Fall 2016

BY: TOM COOK, VP SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION

On a beautiful September morning, I had the chance to talk briefly about safety with an MOW (Maintenance of Way) crew working at Pittston Yard.

Every time I visit Pittston, I am always impressed by the teamwork and the close working relationship that exists between our train crews and the MOW team at Pittston.

Pittston is a very important location for the Reading and Northern. It is a place where approximately 48% of our business is concentrated and this business is handled by four train crews, which are coming on duty or going off duty at approximately the same time and same location as MOW when they start their day. The daily personal contact between teams is the reason that they get along very well together and work together well as a team.

MOW's Shawn Slusser has been with the Reading and Northern for ten years. On this morning, he was the employee in charge of a contractor track gang. The on-track worker protection that Shawn is responsible for is life critical for the men working on the tracks. Shawn must plan and coordinate train movements though his work area to ensure that we meet our customer commitments, while at the same time maximizing maintenance production and keeping everyone safe.

Shawn says that the key to keeping everyone safe is communication. Shawn goes the extra mile. He makes it a point to stop by the crew room and have a five minute face to face briefing with the train crews before they start work. He says that it is very important for both departments to know each other's plan for the day so they can safely coordinate their moves.

The other important consideration for Shawn is attention to detail. "It is crucial that you understand and properly communicate your out of service limits, and that you know exactly where you are". Shawn is absolutely correct in that passion for communication and attention to detail. If the entire work group does not have a solid understanding, the results could be catastrophic.

MOW's Josh Rodney has been with the company for about five years. The most important safety consideration for Josh is to have a good plan when he starts the day. When plans change mid shift, he knows he has to be extra vigilant to stay focused. He likes to take the time to properly finish a job before moving to the next job. Josh also mentioned attention to detail when dealing with on-track worker protection and authority for movement, "it is important to check and double check your form D's."

MOW's Russell Monroe has been with the department about a year. His safety advice for anyone starting out is to pay close attention to the danger zone around back hoes and other heavy equipment. He also told me that anyone starting out should pay close attention to how our experienced employees work and how they keep themselves safe.

MOW's Ryan Rupprecht has about ten years of service and is one of the senior employees in Pittston. He is one of the experienced leaders. Ryan's safety philosophy is direct and to the point, "Don't be stupid! If you find yourself thinking about doing something that your mother would yell at you for, it is probably not safe. Think of what your mother would say before you do anything stupid."

The Pittston MOW team has what it takes to stay safe: common sense, teamwork, communication and attention to detail. ♦

# Jim Thorpe, "The Switzerland of America" Pennsylvania's Small Town Gem

BY: JOLENE F. FAY, RECORDS ARCHIVIST

Where there are roads, there is transportation, and where there is transportation, there is the movement of peoples, cultures, and experiences. In the mid and late nineteenth century, Jim Thorpe - at the time a small, but growing industrial town known as Mauch Chunk - there were many roads. Mauch Chunk was a crossroads of canal barges, railroad tracks, and wagon roads intersecting in and out of town that streamed a consistent current of passengers. Mauch Chunk's population of immigrant workers and entrepreneurs, and later leisure tourists and adventure seekers, whirlwinded together to create a unique bustling downtown and first class resort experiences that were only surpassed by the romantic hype of Niagara Falls in upstate New York.

Nestled in the southern region of the Pocono Mountains, rich in anthracite veins, and situated along the Lehigh River, Mauch Chunk was destined to prosper as a retreat for Victorian and Edwardian era Americans. In the early days of anthracite mining near Mauch Chunk, the canal system on the Lehigh River operated together with what was the Mauch Chunk Switchback Railway to transport coal from mines in nearby Summit Hill on the Lehigh River. When the canal system was surpassed by the efficiency of shipping coal by rail, the Switchback Railway became an exclusive passenger thrill ride in the 1870s through the turn of the century. The famous Switchback Gravity Railway, deemed America's First Roller Coaster, set the stage for a tourist boom town. Thousands of Americans enjoying the Gilded Age's introduction of "leisure" time sought out the scenic and exhilarating drop

of the Switchback Gravity Railway, and brought with them the demand for more from the quaint industrial town, to which Mauch Chunk offered with lavish hotels, opera houses, emporiums, and resort retreats. The railroads, both the Lehigh Valley Railroad and the Central Railway of New Jersey, increased tourist access to the popularity of Mauch Chunk by hosting their own resorts and depots in the Lehigh Gorge and Glen Onoko Falls. Middle class Americans, with enough financial opportunity to travel, yet not enough to take the "European Tour," flocked to the "Switzerland of America," as Mauch Chunk transformed from an industrial town to an Alpine attraction with its mountainous views, crystal river and waterfalls, winding narrow streets, and exquisite architecture - all just a train trip away.

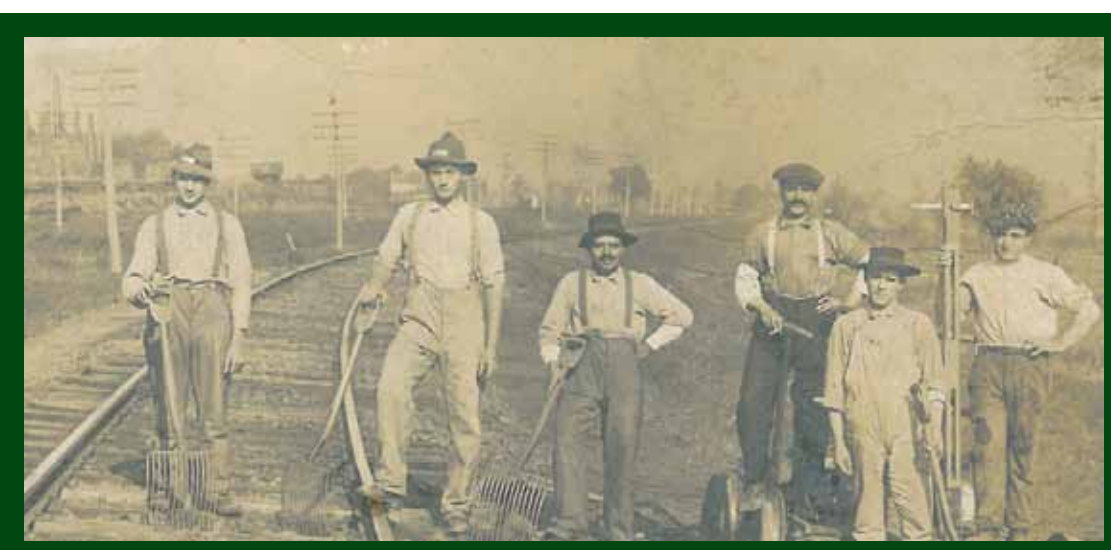
The river ways, the rail ways, and road ways collected in Mauch Chunk for a time to create a gilded playground for Victorians and Edwardians, though by the end of the 1920s, the American's budget and attention retreated from leisure with the onset of the Great Depression. The dismantling of the Switchback Gravity Railway in the 1930s harkened what seemed to be the end of an era for tourism and adventure in Mauch Chunk.

Today, however, visitors to Jim Thorpe find themselves transported back to a time when "carriages clattered down the streets, barges floated on the Lehigh River, and rail cars rolled along the rails," due to the resilient character of small town America. To turn around the economic down turn of their towns, residents of what would become the town of Jim Thorpe merged the two towns of Mauch Chunk and

East Mauch Chunk in the 1950s. Offering their newly merged town as the final resting place of famous Olympic Athlete Jim Thorpe, residents ignited public interest in the old "Switzerland of America" once again. Along with a downtown revitalization effort, new store fronts, the newly dammed Mauch Chunk Lake, joint efforts with governmental agencies to create State Park trails, local entrepreneurial efforts to offer luxurious hotel and spa retreats, and the development of historical societies, museums, and art galleries, Jim Thorpe was open for tourism again.

In 2005, regularly scheduled passenger service returned to Jim Thorpe through the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway, the sister company of the Reading & Northern Railroad. Once again, passengers can depart Jim Thorpe's Central Railroad of New Jersey's station and ride through Glen Onoko, and take in the natural wonder of the Lehigh Gorge as Victorian and Edwardian tourists did over one hundred years ago. What began as a modest passenger operation has boomed into a sold out, sought after scenic attraction weekend after weekend.

Jim Thorpe is again the intersection of the river, rail, and road ways of cultural, scenic, and historic adventure. Mauch Chunk (which was the native Leni Lenape name for "Mountain of the Sleeping Bear") has woken from its slumbered hibernation to welcome cultural excursionists. As long as there are roads to transport you away, there will always be an opportunity for adventure - just a train trip away. ♦



## Guess Who?

Can you guess who these MOW crewmen are? Let us know!



# Red Creek Wildlife

BY: PEGGY HENTZ, PRESIDENT/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF REDCREEK WILDLIFE

The frantic spring and summer “baby season” has come and gone for another year. All of the baby birds and mammals have grown strong, learned to care for themselves and were released in habitat that can support their reclaimed freedom.

The four baby raccoons found this spring hiding in Andy and Carol Muller’s barn have joined them. Discovered quite young, and suffering from dehydration, they quickly gained strength and grew. All four of the now young adult raccoons were eager to leave. They departed vaccinated for rabies, distemper and parvovirus which will help protect them for at least their first year in the wild. A volunteer placed food at their release location until it become obvious that they were coming for it less, an indication that they were finding and preferred their own natural food.

While spring and summer brings in large numbers of babies, autumn has its own challenges. Autumn is a time when animals are on the move. Whether it is a hawk migrating or a mammal searching for a new winter food supply, change brings danger and accidents. Although the daily numbers of animals arriving reduces, complicated patient cases increase.

One such case that we are currently working with is an adult male porcupine. Having been struck by a car, he arrived in shock with a fractured wrist, eye socket, jaw, and scapula (the equivalent of our shoulder blade). Although the x-rays looked grave, his demeanor was good and he was fighting to survive.

The scapula and eye socket injuries would heal well with only cage rest. The wrist fracture could easily heal with surgery and a splint. The jaw injury, however,

was not a simple fix. Since porcupines are rodents with teeth that continuously grow, he needs perfect alignment to avoid dental issues. Thankfully, one of the vets at Radnor Veterinary Hospital specializes in head and jaw injuries and was eager to try. He had two separate surgeries to repair the jaw and wrist and returned to Red Creek for cage rest, medication, and food.

Food became the main rehabilitation tool we used to handle this prickly patient. This porcupine loves to eat, and quickly became cooperative about treatment. His meds are flavored and he thinks they are treats. Volunteers eagerly offered to hand feed him the soft foods that he could handle. Everyone fell in love with him and he immediately gained a Facebook following.

We don’t often name patients, but this little guy has such a personality we couldn’t resist. He was dubbed “Cuddles,” ironic for an animal that you cannot hug without great harm, but it truly fits his temperament.

Cuddles now has weekly vet visits for follow-up x-rays, and the veterinarian is happy with his jaw alignment so far. If he heals enough to not need future care, he will be released back to his home in the wild. If a handicap becomes evident, Cuddles seems happy to forever remain at Red Creek and receive hand feedings from adoring volunteers.

Porcupines are the second largest rodent in Pennsylvania, surpassed in size only by the beaver. They are a common sight in the the heavily forested Allegheny Plateau and the Pocono highlands, and although once restricted to the northern Pennsylvania counties, they are becoming more common in Berks and Schuylkill Counties. ♦



## Renee Sheriff Promoted to Assistant Office Manager in Passenger Department

BY: MATT FISHER, PASSENGER GENERAL MANAGER

The Passenger Department has grown to include seven full-time employees. Handling over 100,000 riders a year is difficult, but doing it during our compressed season-weekends May through December, holidays, and now weekdays in the summer and October makes it more challenging. Lisa Matz is busy fielding hundreds of phone calls a day during our busy season. Thus we found ourselves with the need for someone to oversee the private cars including the recent addition of First-Class Parlor Car 3. Enter Renee Sheriff into the Passenger Department.

When Renee started with the Reading and Northern Railroad in July of 2014 it was a huge change for her way of life. She is originally from Phoenix, Arizona and moved out to Pennsylvania with Gary Sheriff, her husband, and her daughter Aricela.

Since being with the railroad, Renee has become an active member with the Wellness Committee and was named the Spotlight Employee of the spring quarter in 2015. She is now the new Assistant Office Manager to the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway. She has helped with various projects within the railroad and continues to learn more about the railroad industry as she advances within the company.

Renee’s favorite hobbies are hiking and yoga, spending time with her family and her two dogs. She loves to travel and recently enjoyed a vacation out west where she’s from. She attended Central High School in Phoenix, Arizona and attended Arizona State University, where she studied Business Management. Even though she has many ties out west she is very happy to call Schuylkill County her new home.

Renee will help Lisa with office work in Schuylkill Haven, work on trains in Jim Thorpe, and help manage the private cars in Port Clinton. We congratulate Renee for her promotion and look forward to working with Renee to help continuously grow the Passenger Department. ♦



# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

*Congratulations Nick!*

BY: CRYSTAL ARNDT, HR ADMINISTRATOR



I am pleased to introduce this quarter's "Spotlight Employee"; Nicholas Alberswerth. Nick came to work for RBMN in July 2014 as a Track Worker. Prior to coming here, he worked for Deangelo Brothers, Inc. in their railroad division.

Nick enjoys spending time with his son; Cameron, and they have a beagle named Daisy. He also has a passion for motorsports, modifying his cars and motorcycle, being an aquarist (he has multiple aquariums which are fresh and salt water), and enjoys the art of tattooing.

When asked if he has anything else he would like to share, Nick stated, "I would like to thank Andy Muller, Jr. and management for this career opportunity. I wouldn't be where I am if it wasn't for all of you."

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

## 2016 RBMN SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

BY: BEVERLY HESS, DIRECTOR OF EMPLOYEE RELATIONS



**Katherine Bischak** is the daughter of Mike and Trenea Bischak. Mike is one of our locomotive engineers. Katie is attending Marywood University in Scranton, Pennsylvania as a sophomore this year. She is continuing her education in pursuit of a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Theatre. Katie sent the following "Thank You":

To the Reading & Northern Scholarship Committee,  
I want to generously thank you once again for the great donation for my Marywood education.

In addition, I also want to thank you all for the additional scholarship award for my grades.

The scholarship will truly help me pay for my college tuition!

I'd also like to thank Mr. Muller for his generosity and support through the RBMN Scholarship Program!



**Madison Kraemer** is the daughter of Mike Sharadin and Jennifer Kraemer. Mike is Asst. V.P. Coal Traffic. Madison is attending the University of Pittsburgh as a junior this year. She is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Rehab Science. Madison sent the following "Thank You":

I am sincerely honored to be the recipient of the Reading and Northern Railroad Scholarship. Currently, I am a junior majoring in Rehabilitation Sciences with a certificate in Pathokinesiology at the University of Pittsburgh. My highly competitive program has pushed me to explore a variety of academic interests, while presenting me with a more specialized curriculum and many valuable hands-on experiences. This past year has greatly solidified my desire to continue on to Graduate School to become a Physical Therapist. Thank you so much for this generous award – not only has it allowed me to continue to pursue my goals, but it has greatly lessened the financial strain a student must take on in college. One day I hope to help others just as you have helped me.

*Congratulations to Katie and Madison!*

## Reading & Northern Railroad Holiday Party Save the Date!

Save This Date – Saturday, December 10, 2016 will be the date for our annual RBMN Company Holiday Party which will be held at the Holiday Inn Conference Center, 7736 Adrienne Drive, Breinigsville, PA 18031. This Holiday Inn is just off of I-78 and Rt. 100 in the village of Fogelsville. Please plan on joining us for a fun evening of socializing, food, and music.

# Happy Birthday!

- |         |                        |         |                     |
|---------|------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| OCT. 3  | DARREN SPARE           | NOV. 11 | KRISTINA OTTEY      |
| OCT. 4  | SCOTT BESHORE          | NOV. 17 | LARRY CURVEY        |
| OCT. 6  | JAMES DONLET           | NOV. 18 | DAVID KROZNUSKI     |
| OCT. 7  | CHRISTINA MULLER-LEVAN | NOV. 20 | RIAN NEMMEROFF      |
| OCT. 8  | DENNIS SHAFFER         | NOV. 20 | JOHN RIZZO          |
| OCT. 9  | DAWN-MARIE BUBECK      | NOV. 21 | MIKE EVANGELISTA    |
| OCT. 10 | PHILIP GESCHWINDT      | NOV. 21 | MATTHEW STABINGER   |
| OCT. 10 | NICHOLAS RICCIO        | NOV. 23 | BRITTNEY COLOMB     |
| OCT. 10 | JOSHUA RODNEY          | NOV. 23 | RONALD PAPIERCAVICH |
| OCT. 13 | JOHN BROWN             | NOV. 24 | LORI CHINCHAR       |
| OCT. 13 | MATTHEW JOHNSON        | NOV. 25 | CARTER JONES        |
| OCT. 14 | CHAD FREDERICKSON      | NOV. 27 | DAVID BALDWIN       |
| OCT. 16 | RICHARD BADER          | NOV. 28 | DOMINIC DEEBLE      |
| OCT. 17 | DAVID FIECHTL          | NOV. 29 | CHRIS ORLICK        |
| OCT. 18 | JASON READING          | NOV. 30 | FRANK SEBELIN       |
| OCT. 19 | THERMAN MADEIRA        | DEC. 2  | STEVEN WERLEY       |
| OCT. 22 | ALBERT SEILER          | DEC. 5  | AARON AIGELDINGER   |
| OCT. 25 | ALVIN RINEER           | DEC. 5  | JUSTIN HUGHES       |
| OCT. 28 | TRAVIS PREVOST         | DEC. 11 | LARRY YODER         |
| OCT. 30 | JOHN HARTMAN           | DEC. 12 | DAVID HAFER         |
| OCT. 30 | RICHARD MARKLEY        | DEC. 13 | THOMAS FENERTY, JR. |
| OCT. 30 | RAYMOND CHIPPA         | DEC. 16 | RYAN BAUSER         |
| OCT. 30 | WILLIAM RIEGLE         | DEC. 17 | CALVIN GERHARD      |
| NOV. 5  | JEFFREY KNADLER        | DEC. 17 | JAMES SOMERS        |
| NOV. 6  | MARIO CARANNANTE       | DEC. 19 | ANDREW DAVIS        |
| NOV. 7  | BRAD KUNKLE            | DEC. 19 | JOSHUA LAUGHLIN     |
| NOV. 9  | BRIAN BARNES           | DEC. 20 | JUSTIN LEVAN        |
| NOV. 9  | ROGER MESZAROS         | DEC. 26 | ROBERT HARAK        |
| NOV. 10 | DAVID KITTNER          | DEC. 29 | YASHA SIDDIQI       |
| NOV. 10 | ERIK YODER             | DEC. 30 | RUSSEL SCIANNA, JR. |

# RBMN ANNIVERSARIES ACKNOWLEDGED

## 20 YEARS



July 5th, 1996  
Michael Kolbe  
Engineer - Operations

## 15 YEARS



July 9th, 2001  
David Kittner  
Track Inspector - MOW

## 5 YEARS



July 5th, 2011  
Matthew Minnich  
Machine Operator – MOW



Sept. 15th, 2011  
Erik Yoder  
VP of MOW



Sept. 26th, 2011  
Aaron Cassel  
Welder - MOW

## 3 YEARS



Aug. 21st, 2013  
David Fiechtl  
Line Service - RJC

## 1 YEAR



July 14th, 2015  
Brad Kunkle  
Track Worker - MOW



July 14th, 2015  
Russelle Monroe  
Track Worker - MOW



July 20th, 2015  
James Cerulli  
Director of Operations



July 27th, 2015  
Dominic Deeble  
Conductor - Operations



July 27th, 2015  
James Donley  
Conductor - Operations



July 27th, 2015  
Ian McKeown  
Conductor - Operations



July 27th, 2015  
Darren Spare  
Conductor - Operations



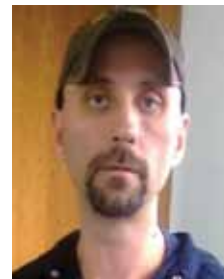
Aug. 24th, 2015  
Graham Hantz  
Signal Maintainer - Signals



Aug. 24th, 2015  
Kristina Huskey  
Cust. Service Mngr - Traffic



Sept. 24th, 2015  
Larry Fisher  
Car Host - LGSR



Sept. 30th, 2015  
Raymond Chippa  
Forklift Operator - Transload

# WELCOME ABOARD

## NEW EMPLOYEES



### Liam Marsh

Liam Marsh recently came to work at RBMN as an Intern. He has been a big help to our MOW Department and has helped out in other departments as needed.



### Lori Chinchar

Lori Chinchar was recently hired as a Customer Service Manager within our Traffic Department. Prior to working at RBMN, she was an Administrative Assistant at South Tamaqua Coal Pockets, Inc. for eight years.



### Chris Orlick

Chris Orlick was recently hired as a Track Worker/ Inspector within our MOW Department. He attended Pottsville Area High School. Prior to working at RBMN, Chris was a Route Sales Representative at Schwan's Home Service for nine years.



### John Rehrig, Jr.

John Rehrig, Jr. was recently hired as a Track Worker / Inspector within our MOW Department. He attended Blue Mountain High School. Prior to working at RBMN, John was a Mechanic/Welder/Operator at Fidler Bros. Construction for ten years.



### Caleb Fetterolf

Caleb Fetterolf was recently hired as a Conductor within our Operations Department. He attended North Schuylkill High School.



### Aaron Rentschler

Aaron Rentschler was recently hired as a Conductor within our Operations Department. He attended Hamburg Area High School, Berks Technical Institute, and Reading Police Academy. Prior to working at RBMN, Aaron was a Supervisor at East Penn Manufacturing; where he worked for ten years.



### Sabine Fidler

Sabine Fidler was recently hired as an Administrative Assistant/Receptionist within our Clerical Department. She attended Blue Mountain High School, Kutztown University, and Wilkes University. Prior to working at RBMN, Sabine was a Cashier/Receptionist for R&R Auto Group for five months. Prior to working at R&R, Sabine was a Special Education Teacher at Tamaqua Area School District for twenty-two years.



### Jason Shupp

Jason Shupp was recently hired as a Track Worker within our MOW Department. He attended Lehigh Area High School. Prior to working at RBMN, Jason was a Carpenter at Tradesman International for one year.



### Curtis Williams

Curtis Williams was recently hired as a Track Worker within our MOW Department.



### Ashley Conrad

Ashley Conrad was recently hired as a Conductor within our Operations Department. She attended Crestwood High School. Prior to working at RBMN, Ashley was an Extruder/Assembler at Cardinal Glass for over a year.



### Aaron McGeehan

Aaron McGeehan was recently hired as a Conductor within our Operations Department. He attended Hazelton Area High School. Prior to working at RBMN, Aaron was a Waiter at Alta Pizzeria (a family business) for almost two years.



### Brandon Wagner

Brandon Wagner was recently hired as a Conductor within our Operations department. He attended Blue Mountain High School and Schuylkill Technology Center. Prior to working at RBMN, Brandon did street maintenance for Orwigsburg Borough for two and a half years.

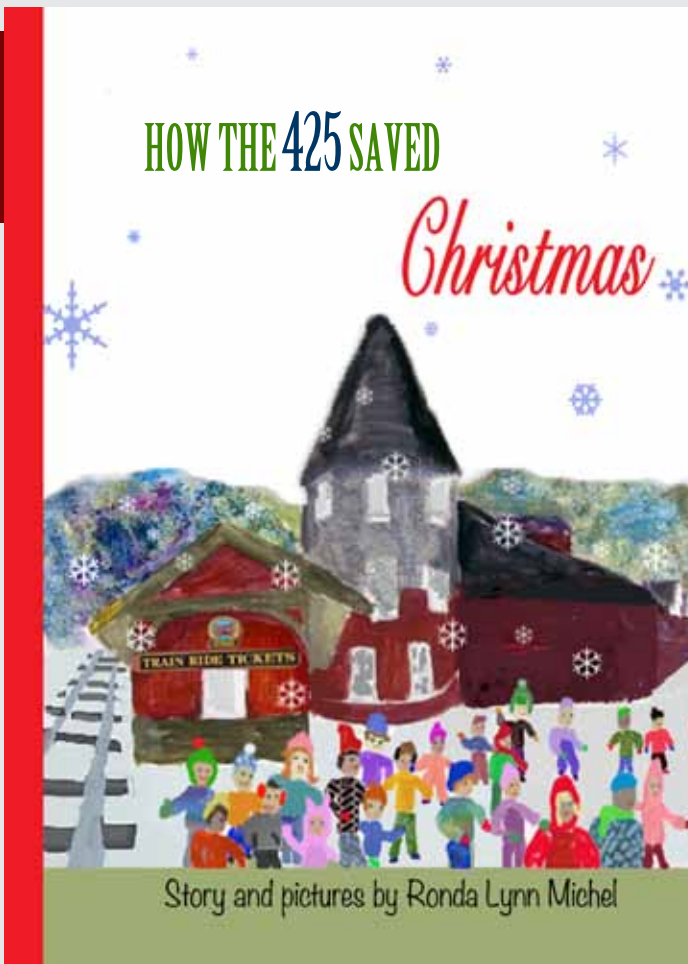
## How the 425 Saved Christmas

*Now available  
for Christmas orders!*

"How the 425 Saved Christmas", a joyous holiday tale starring the Muller family and the famous steam engine, the 425, is available for purchase. The book was written and illustrated by Ronda Michel, wife of RBMN President Wayne Michel. It sells for \$15 plus shipping and handling.

Available at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)!

For autographed or personalized inscription copies,  
visit Ronda directly at her website,  
[www.rondalynnichel.com](http://www.rondalynnichel.com)



# Congratulations!

Ryan and Sheena Parks welcomed their new addition, Emmarie Nicole Parks on September 28, 2016! Emmarie Nicole was born at 11:31 AM, weighing six pounds twelve ounces, and nineteen inches long! Congratulations to Ryan, Sheena, and big sister Nevada on Emmarie Nicole's arrival!



## Third Generation Railroaders Aboard

BY: CRYSTAL ARNDT, HR ADMINISTRATOR

## Muller Rare Coins & Fine Jewelry Aaron Muller Invites You

As most of you may already know, Muller Rare Coins & Fine Jewelry is another business within the Muller family. Aaron Muller would like to welcome you to come into the jewelry store and see what we have to offer. Aaron has many years of experience in the diamond and jewelry industry and has the ability to offer the Muller employees unique and beautiful diamonds and jewelry at wholesale prices.

Looking to get engaged? Muller's is a full service Jeweler with the ability to make custom pieces. Aaron also has a wide selection of beautiful and affordable diamonds that will make any engagement memorable. Looking for something special for birthdays, Mother's Day or anniversaries? Aaron has a wide range of stunning jewelry from rings to necklaces to estate pieces and watches, all at wholesale prices.

Aaron would like to extend an additional 20% percent off for any Muller employee. The process is easy. Come into the store, bring along a copy of this magazine and tell us what you are looking for and it will be a hassle-free experience. If you are not in the market for jewelry, at this time, but have a friend or family member that is, please pass along this magazine to them. Aaron will honor the discount for them as well, they just need to bring in the magazine. Aaron looks forward to helping you find the right diamond or jewelry for all of your special occasions.

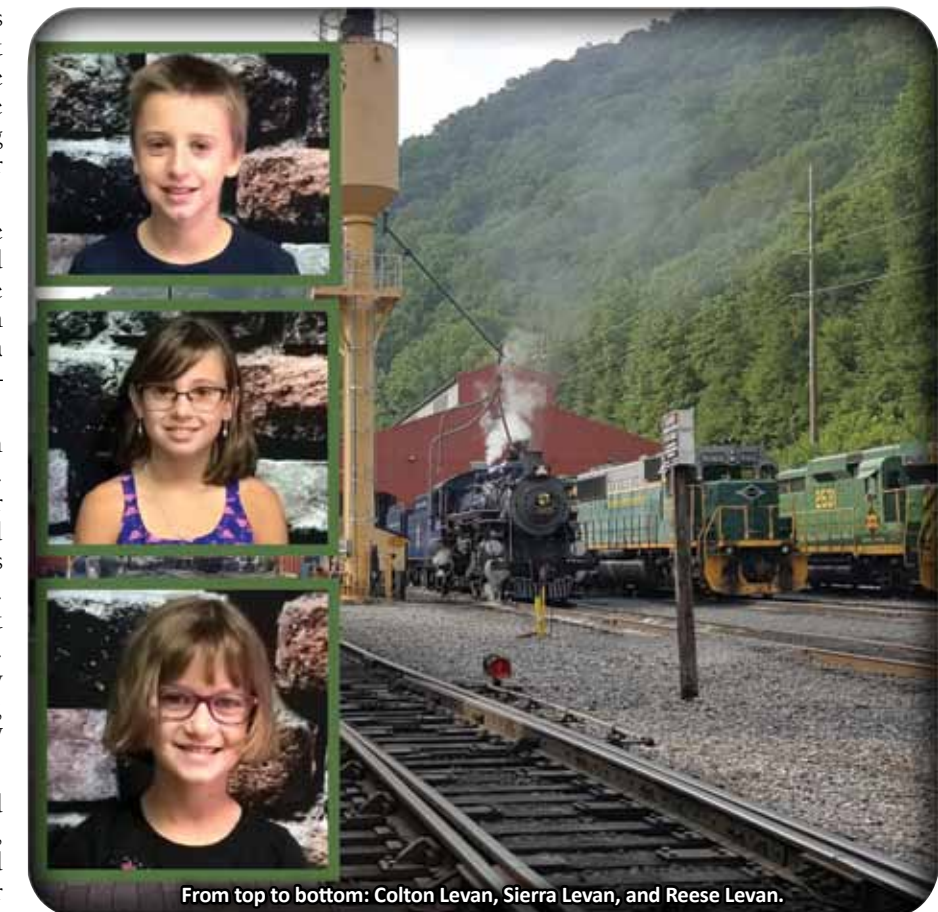
In addition to helping customers find unique and special jewelry, Muller Rare Coins & Fine Jewelry also offers investment opportunities. Aaron has a wide selection of silver, gold and platinum products for purchase, all based on fair market prices. He also offers Muller bars, privately minted 10 oz. silver bars, that he guarantees a higher buy back, at our retail location, than any other silver product. Stop by the store and we will walk you through all of the products we offer and answer any questions you may have regarding investing in gold, silver or platinum. We look forward to speaking with you. ♦

While reading an article about family run businesses and next generation CEO's, a specific quote stuck out to me. It read, "most family members lose that creative spark in subsequent generations. The reason is that the personality traits that spur a founder to create something unique- passion, hunger, obsession and others- disappear over the years."

This is far from the case here at RBMN where the entrepreneurial fire continues to burn into its third generation. I am happy to announce the hire of three new Jr. Car Hosts: Colton Levan (age 12), Sierra Levan (age 10), and Reese Levan (age 8); children of Christina Muller-Levan – VP of Administration and Justin Levan – VP of MOW; Special Projects at RBMN.

Colton, Sierra, and Reese are the third generation of Mullers to put their hard work in along our rail. When they are not serving food and providing top-star hospitality aboard our RDC train trips, they can be found spending some time at our Port Clinton Headquarters throughout the summer and during school breaks. Sierra and Reese like to help out around the office and at the least make employees smile with their artistic gifts. Colton likes to pal around with his "Pop Pop", Andrew Muller, Jr – CEO, and his father, Justin Levan. Recently, Colton even had a chance to sit in on his first MOW interview with Justin and Human Resources.

While it appears that many companies across the world struggle and flip during transitions between generations, I have no concerns that there will be a successful third generation of Mullers ready and willing to keep our family-oriented company growing and thriving for many years to come while holding the same values instilled in them by "Pop Pop". ♦



From top to bottom: Colton Levan, Sierra Levan, and Reese Levan.

# Wellness Corner

BY: SABINE FIDLER, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Welcome to Reading and Northern's WELLNESS CORNER. This edition is dedicated to our employees and their family members who have recently participated in running events for charity. The Warrior Dash and the Spartan Race showcase participants' exemplary character traits such as dedication, teamwork, and a zest for life. Erik Yoder, Tammy Debkowski, Matthew Liptak, and Matt Minnich through their participation in these events serve as positive role models displaying these traits in all aspects of their lives and a commitment to their respective charities.

RedFrog Events, an event production company credited for developing the Warrior Dash obstacle course race series, created a partnership with St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in 2010. Since then, Red Frog Events such as The Warrior Dash have raised over \$13.5 million for St. Jude's. Now that's enough to leave you THUNDERSTRUCK!

Unlike the Warrior Dash charity partnership with St. Jude, participants of the Spartan races may promote a charity of their own choosing. Matthew "Zebra Man" Liptak has completed the Spartan Trifecta to bring awareness to Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome. The Spartan Race obstacle course series offers heats from open to competitive to elite for all levels of fitness. If you're a beginner or professional looking for a challenge, the Spartan Trifecta offers The Sprint (3+ miles and 20+ obstacles), The Super (8+ miles and 25+ obstacles), and The Spartan Beast (12+ miles and 30+ obstacles) distances. In order to earn the Spartan Trifecta, an individual must complete each of the three Spartan distances in any order within a calendar year. AROO!

Congratulations on your accomplishments, Warriors and Spartans. Your families and the Reading and Northern Railroad are proud of your endeavors! ♦



Matthew Liptak (a.k.a. Zebra Man), fiancé of Andrea Collier, VP - Finance and son of Sabine Fidler, Admin. Asst. Charity: Ehlers-Danlos Foundation



Matt Minnich, MOW track worker Warrior Dash Charity: St. Jude Children's Research Hospital



Dr. Christianson attended our company picnic this year at Knoebels to conduct biometric screenings for employees. Pictured from left to right: Dr. Christianson, Wesley Yoder (age 7), Erik Yoder, VP of MOW.



Erik Yoder, VP of MOW rode his bicycle fifty five miles (From Mohrsville, PA to Elysburg, PA) to attend our company picnic at Knoebels.



Erik Yoder, VP - MOW Tammy Debkowski, Finance Manager RJC/RJM Charity: St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

# Reading & Northern's Family Recipes

## Charred Corn with Tomatoes & Basil Salad

Ingredients

- 6 ears of corn, husked
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1/2 cup thinly diced red onion
- 2 large tomato, chopped
- 1 cup fresh basil leaves, torn
- 1/3 cup fresh lime juice (or more to taste)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Grill corn for 10-12 minutes until the outside is charred but not burnt. Once cooled, cut kernels from corn, and mix all ingredients together.

**Voila!**

Renee Sheriff, Assistant Office Manager-Passenger Department, shares one of her family's favorite recipes, Charred Corn with Tomatoes and Basil Salad. She writes, "one of my favorite and easy salads to make - now that corn and tomatoes are in season." Renee has shared this healthy salad with her coworkers for many potluck lunches and has received favorable reviews. Thank you, Renee, for bringing us a taste of the Southwest! We would like to encourage everyone to send us their favorite family recipes to [sfidler@readingnorthern.com](mailto:sfidler@readingnorthern.com) to share with our readers!

## Andy's Birthday Visitor!

Andy Muller, Jr. received a special birthday visitor this August, when John Davitt, age 12, visited Port Clinton to celebrate his August 20th birthday! Andy and John have more than an August birthday month in common, as they both share a passion for railroads! John and his father Fran Davitt recently rode one of the Passenger Department's RDC Excursions in July, and John was so impressed with Andy Muller, Jr.'s model train collection, he decided to gift a model train car to Andy for his birthday. Interestingly, Andy had the same idea for John's birthday gift! John also expressed on his visit that the Reading & Northern Railroad is his favorite shortline, and he knew plenty of our company's history! Though in Middle School, John already has plans to work for the railroad someday as an engineer! We were delighted to have John visit us for his birthday! ♦



John Davitt (birthday August 20), and Andy Muller, Jr. (birthday August 13) exchange gifts on John's visit to Port Clinton to celebrate his birthday.

**Reading Blue Mountain &  
Northern Railroad Company**

PO Box 218

Port Clinton PA 19549



Conductor Rich Bernhardt and Car Host Briar Stern invite passengers to deboard in Port Clinton on one of the Passenger Department's new RDC Excursions on September 10, 2016.