

R & N Magazine

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

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COVER PHOTO

The crew on the NRFF on their turn around run to Pittston, passing through Port Clinton in a fresh snowfall.
Photo credit: John Leopard.

EDITORS

JOLENE BUSHER • TAYLOR HAUPT • SABINE FIDLER

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KEEPING ON TRACK

BY: WAYNE A. MICHEL, PRESIDENT



Brad Handling, Transload Operations Manager loading a RBMN boxcar of baled wood pulp at the Ransom Distribution Center for outbound shipping. Note the railroad, warehouse, boxcar and propane bale clamp are owned and operated by RBMN employees.

Since it's the season for checking lists to see if you got what you wanted for the holidays, let's check the Reading & Northern's wish list for 2021.

Purchase missing link of the mainline from Carbon County. Check

Purchase 100+ coal freight cars. Check.

Purchase conveyors to support building more off-line coal transload business. Check.

Increase freight traffic and revenues. Check.

Purchase more quality passenger equipment. Check.

Greatly expand passenger ticket sales. Check.

The results are in and it seems the folks of the Reading & Northern have been very good in 2021 because all of their wishes have come true.

As the trailing articles set forth, RBMN had an extraordinarily successful 2021. Despite the impacts of COVID, which showed up in supply chain disruptions and substantial truck diversion due to Class 1 railroad service failures, RBMN thrived.

Once again we broke all of our freight traffic records. Our freight revenue climbed by almost ten percent while our carloadings increased as well. We had some areas of huge growth, like Forest Products which rose almost 10 percent (Rian Nemeroff shares more details on p.5, while other traffic declined such as export coal traffic. It is a sign of the strength of RBMN that we have such a diverse traffic mix that we can grow carloads and revenues even while suffering a down year in our crucial anthracite core business. And even in coal the news was not all bad, not even close. Yes our exports were hurt by supply chain issues and Russian dumping of coal and currency manipulation, but thanks to Bill Clark's efforts and those of our customers and Norfolk Southern we have been able to continue to grow the domestic business to electric arc furnace steel mills. This market segment is critical to our future success, and yet it is challenging to penetrate. We have had to make significant off-line investments to locate transload facilities proximate to the steel mills to develop this business. All told between purchasing 150 additional coal cars, three conveyors for use as the transload for steel mills and completing our new transload out at Locust Summit, RBMN has invested over a million dollars in this business in the last year. See Bill's article on p.7.

While the freight business grew, the passenger business EXPLODED! Kudos

to Matt Fisher and his team of dedicated men and women. Andy Muller has transformed his labor of love into a tourism tornado. To go from 140,000 riders to 225,000 riders is nothing short of amazing. Matt's article on p.26 provides more details.

And for a strategic point of view the best gift of all was finally getting to buy the Carbon County-owned stretch of our Main Line. Andy and I have been working to buy that line for over twenty years. But the situation has become more compelling of late. The line had fallen into disrepair and RBMN could not justify the millions required to fix it up as a mere trackage rights tenant. After spending millions to build the Nesquehoning Bridge Phase 2, which opened in February of 2020, we knew we had to finally get control of the line. Working with all of the Carbon County Commissioners we were able to reach an agreement in principle late in 2020 and consummate in 2021. See Jolene Busher's Real Estate article. And once the purchase was completed Andy made sure MOW got right to work upgrading the line. See Chris Goetz article.

None of these accomplishments come easily. They all require a lot of teamwork across all departments. And none of it is possible without the men and women of Reading & Northern. This year we hired 31 new employees and ended the year with over three hundred full and part time employees. And these employees are treated with great respect by Andy and the Muller family. With inflation raging, Andy gave all hourly employees an additional raise. And later in the year the Muller family gave employees a \$500 Turkey gift payment from the Muller's directly.

It takes great owners, great employees and a great team of managers to constantly break records and exceed expectations. At the heart of our mission every day is taking care of our customers. And whether it is our large customer service group, see Susan Ludwig article, or our highly experienced and professional Marketing team, or our fantastic Operations team led by Tyler Glass and Eric Peters, we all know to a person that we must keep our customers happy. Whether we do that with exceptional scheduled service that we met 98+% this year, or with extraordinary extra services such as THREE switches a day, or our low charges for ancillary services, or our investments in freight cars and other equipment, the Reading and Northern family will do whatever it takes to keep our customers coming back to rail.

Making that extra effort every day of the week and year after year is how you continue to break records. And it's how we keep on track. ♦

Reading & Northern Reports Record Freight and Passenger Growth

Port Clinton, PA – January 10, 2022

Reading & Northern Railroad (R&N), Pennsylvania's largest privately-owned railroad, once again broke its own records for freight revenue, freight traffic and excursion passenger ridership.

Freight revenues rose an impressive 10 percent over both 2020 and pre-pandemic 2019 levels fueled by increased traffic and a shift in traffic mix to higher revenue moves. RBMN also earned significant ancillary revenues related to its warehouse and transloading business.

Leading the way in traffic growth was R&N's Forest Products franchise, consisting of pulp, paper and wood products. Traffic rose by approximately 1000 carloads to almost 11,500 carloads. The 9.6% year over year increase doubled the 4.7% growth of the nation's railroads. And this growth was done without any new facilities opening on R&N. Growth resulted as many R&N customers reached new highs in rail inbound volume. Much of the growth can be attributed to the so-called "Amazon Effect", the fact that more Americans are relying on home deliveries of goods thus increasing the demand for corrugated packaging. R&N is fortunate to have many manufacturers of packaging material on its railroad. Growth would have been even higher if not for the diversion of over 400 rail carloads to trucks due to various service disruptions on the nation's rail system. R&N Senior VP Marketing Rian Nemeroff is optimistic this growth will be sustained in the future.

While Forest Products leads R&N's business portfolio in volume and revenue, R&N still focuses much of its attention on outbound moves of anthracite coal. Known as "the Road of Anthracite", R&N continued its pattern of significant investment in the coal business in 2021. R&N purchased 153 additional coal cars at a cost of over \$1.5 million as well as 3 additional conveyors at a cost of over \$600,000. These conveyors are critical to R&N's strategy of assisting the movement of Pennsylvania anthracite to domestic EAF (electric arc furnace) steel mills. For the last few years, the EAF market segment has been R&N's largest and fastest growing. With domestic steel production surging; two new mills came on-line in 2021, additional furnaces were added to 4 existing mills and 6 new mills have been announced, R&N, under the leadership of Senior VP Coal Bill Clark, has been laser focused on getting Pennsylvania anthracite to the steel mills. Part of that strategy was to invest in off-line facilities where the coal could be transloaded from rail cars to trucks for delivery to the mills. That is where conveyors come into the picture. Another part of that strategy was the construction of a new coal loadout on R&N at Locust Summit where an off-line coal producer can truck coal for loading into barge-equivalent rail shipments for movement to inland

rivers. The growth of the EAF market has helped to soften the blow of the rapid decline of export coal. Over the last 5 years R&N, and Pennsylvania anthracite producers, have lost half of their export business to foreign competition. Although R&N hopes to see an increase in exports in 2022, the fact is Russia has been dumping coal into the global market for the last few years and that has made exports a difficult market for Pennsylvania producers.

While Forest Products and Coal provide the bulk of R&N's traffic base, R&N continues to handle significant Food, mostly adult beverages like wine and beer, Plastics, Chemicals/Minerals, and Metals business. And R&N continues to invest in facilities to handle these commodities through warehousing or transloading. Those commodities add close to 10,000 carloads a year for R&N as well as millions of dollars in revenue. In 2022 R&N anticipates its largest growth in business will come from these segments. R&N has just completed construction on a large Marcellus Shale-focused transload facility in Tunkhannock, PA that is in an excellent geographic location to help that region more efficiently handle the development of the area's gas reserves. Jim Raffa, Vice President Market Development, is leading the development of that facility. R&N has also signed a construction contract for another significant customer who will come on-line in the third quarter of 2022. As a result, R&N's traffic base will be even more diversified in 2022.

While R&N's success in its core freight business was notable in 2021, its success in the passenger business was nothing short of amazing. Under the direction of General Manager Matt Fisher, R&N hosted 225,175 riders in 2021, a 75,000 rider increase since R&N's pre-pandemic high! The growth in ridership was achieved by adding more train trips, more equipment, and more origins. In 2022 there will be further expansion of R&N Passenger service. R&N has ALREADY begun passenger service in 2022 as Jim Thorpe trains are now operated year-round. Later this year R&N will be starting excursion service from the Wilkes Barre/Scranton area out of Pittston. And, of much interest to rail fans everywhere, R&N steam locomotive 2102 will be entered into train service. As further proof of the commitment to the passenger business, R&N Owner/CEO Andy Muller, Jr. purchased 13 additional passenger coaches at a cost of over \$2 million. The future looks very exciting for R&N passenger operations.

Despite all these amazing accomplishments, 2021 will be remembered at R&N as the year it acquired the 19-mile rail line connecting its Lehigh and Reading Divisions. Although R&N had trackage rights over that segment for over twenty years, the lack of ownership prevented R&N from doing the significant

track upgrade that was necessary for this midsection of the R&N mainline. This year R&N reached an agreement with Carbon County to acquire the line for a total of \$4.7 million, which included \$1.7 million in track improvements and crossing upgrades at Jim Thorpe. After acquisition R&N forces began the long overdue work of upgrading the track, which is essential for both the freight and passenger business.

"The accomplishments of R&N this year, and in fact over the last two years during the worldwide pandemic, are nothing short of amazing. They are a testament to the men and women at the R&N who come to work every day dedicated to taking care of our freight customers and passenger riders. I couldn't be prouder of our workforce, and my entire family is thankful for all that they do," said Andy Muller, Owner/CEO.

In recognition of the efforts of R&N employees, the Muller family shared the company's success with them. In addition to the existing profit-sharing program, the Muller family announced a 3% pay increase for full-time employees to assist with the impact of inflation. The family also gifted all employees a \$500 "Turkey Day" check before Thanksgiving. These efforts were in addition to the decision early in the year to give all employees two additional paid holidays, bringing the total to eight.

The way R&N treats its employees has been critical to R&N's success. Not only is R&N successful in retaining its staff, but even in a tight labor market R&N was able to hire 31 additional employees this year bringing the total full and part-time staff to over 300.

In summarizing the year's success, Muller said, "The secret of our success is simple. Take care of your employees and work with them to take care of your customers. If you focus on people, everything comes together. That's the Reading and Northern way."

Reading & Northern Railroad, with its corporate headquarters in Port Clinton, is a privately held railroad company serving over 70 customers in nine eastern Pennsylvania counties (Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Northumberland, Schuylkill, and Wyoming). It has expanded its operations over the last 30+ years and now handles over 34,000 carloads of freight and 200,000 excursion train riders over 400 miles of track. Reading & Northern operates both freight services and steam and diesel-powered excursion passenger services, owns almost 1,400 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. ♦

Year in Review 2021 Merchandise

BY: RIAN J. NEMEROFF, SVP MERCHANDISE MARKETING & SALES



The making of cardboard: A corrugator makes a board combining two sheets of linerboard and one sheet of medium fluted in the center. In front of the machine is Rian Nemeroff (left), Steve Gulotta, International Paper Company Eastern Region Sales Manager, Containerboard (center) and Don Bonualas, General Manager, Freedom Corrugated (right).

What a year to be in the supply chain business. Our profession was in the news regularly, and not for good reasons. Think of just some of the challenges of 2021: intense labor shortages, port congestion, ships without berths to offload, container shortages, inability to find trucks/drivers to load, full warehouses, rail transit delays, and even Mother Nature to deliver the coup de grâce (Ida was particularly memorable for the RBMN).

Despite this environment, RBMN did not yield in fulfilling our mission and continuing to operate our network at a 98% on-time delivery performance. This means placing cars at our customers' sidings within their individual two-hour delivery windows. Unfortunately, our superior service did NOT prevent cars from being delayed prior to interchange. Such off-line delays did impact our customers' supply chains to varying degrees, but RBMN's exceptional service did allow us to be a large part of the solution by providing dependable and predictable transportation, and often by providing extra service such as triple switches in a single day, once the cars were in our network and control.

The RBMN is rightly known as "The Road of Anthracite" but the "fuel" for RBMN's success in 2021 was our Forest Products portfolio. Our Forest Products business consisting of pulp, paper, and wood products improved to almost 11,500 carloads in 2021. This is an increase of over 1000 carloads since 2020. And don't think we were just buying business at lower revenue because we were not; both revenues and revenue-per-carload also went up just as impressively.

As a point of reference, the North American railroads' Forest Products business increased by 4.4%; NS' Forest grew by 4.7% and CP's Forest grew by 1.8%. Our Forest Products increased by almost 10%. And we now have multiple large customers with one customer that exceeded 3000 carloads, another customer exceeded 2000 carloads for the first time, and a third customer exceeded 1000 carloads for the first time.

We raised the bar of service excellence in providing one of our customers three switches in a single day and we did that seven times upon the customer's request in the fourth quarter of 2021. We had record years, and I mean the

"The service and commitment by RBMN has greatly assisted in enabling our customer to effectively service and grow their business during this extremely demanding period."

Steve Gulotta, International Paper Company's Eastern Region Sales Manager for Containerboard

all-time highest annual cars ever delivered, with several customers including Packaging Corp of America, Corrugated Supplies Company of Pennsylvania, Progressive Converting and Freedom Corrugated being managed by International Paper Co. What is noteworthy about this list is that they are mostly corrugated box oriented and are riding the Amazon Effect of increased demand for corrugated shipping containers. For the second consecutive year, powered by the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a higher demand for home deliveries as many people stayed in and ordered their goods from home.

E-commerce had already launched before the world was inflicted by the virus and its variants. However, the pandemic super-charged the trend with money flowing to goods at the expense of services. This shift in buying behavior from services to goods helped RBMN's Forest Products business. The Amazon effect reinvigorated the paper business driven by more shipping to residences from online marketplaces. As more companies jumped into digital or on-line channels of distribution, the demand increased for corrugated packaging otherwise known as boxes, made right here in northeast Pennsylvania. The RBMN is fortunate to have six corrugators pumping out the base stock for this essential product to achieve order fulfillment.

The experts say that the paper business is in a secular decline. Our people even told me our annual calendar printed on high quality, 2-sided coated paper, was delayed because of a "paper shortage."

Continued on page 6.

Continued from page 5.

There were several announced paper mill shutdowns, machine conversions to board, and machine curtailments that resulted in an overall production reduction of 2.5 million metric tons. Related to the RBMN, International Paper spun off their printing paper business to Sylvamo so IP could focus on container board. Sylvamo and other paper manufacturers ship to a RBMN-served third party paper converter that brought in a record number of cars to a larger rail-served receiving facility.

Lumber, historically a sleepy commodity in terms of pricing staying within a range of \$300 to \$400 per thousand board feet (TBF), spiked to over \$1700 a TBF in May 2021. Putting this into perspective, a buyer now needed \$200K of cash to buy a railcar of lumber versus formerly \$50K on average. This volatility sidelined many sales and prospects for rail transportation. The supply chain was further hampered by wildfires in the summer followed by severe flooding in the fall in British Columbia, Canada. Also, imports from Europe and South America further curtailed rail shipment prospects. Lumber futures currently are on the way back up keeping a cloud over 2022 rail shipments of wood.

Toilet paper is a big part of my career having worked for Scott Paper Company, including a stint at the Chester PA manufacturing plant, as well as Conrail when we were "harvesting" light loading paper like toilet paper. I also worked for the Housatonic Railroad serving Kimberly-Clark's tissue mill in Connecticut. Now at the RBMN I call on the giant on-line Procter & Gamble tissue mill complex. Plus, at our Ransom warehouse we also do warehousing for Kimberly-Clark and other wood pulp manufacturers. Unfortunately, rail transit delays depressed RBMN's 2021 wood pulp volumes as substantial tonnage, over 400 railcar equivalents, were diverted to truck last year.

In the Spring of 2021 Dan Gilchrist retired and I picked up some customers he previously handled. In particular, I now work with RBMN's adult beverage business consisting of beer and wine. We tested shipping beer in boxcars this year and hope to see such shipments become a normal part of our customer's distribution channel. And we had another great year handling wine, mostly inbound but with an increasing amount of outbound wine railcars. Consistent rail service was offered every day of the week to keep the flow of cars fluid and as we say in railroading, eliminate the dwell.

We did, after a long gestation period, start shipping carloads of recovered paper and scrap metal from Corestates Processing on a more regular basis at market rates for waste products. We also picked up some carloads of recovered paper from Freedom Corrugated for the first time this year.

RBMN allows our customers to create supply chain resilience in that we own and operate a railroad, a warehouse, railcars, and a trucking company. The warehouse expanded to handle roll stock to complement our existing baled products. This required the purchase of additional material handling equipment. Maintenance of our mainline is second to none. Capital is reinvested in the form of rail, ties, ballast, and signals. These things all translate into our corporate DNA and our ability to provide Service, a core of our being.

As I tell my customers and prospects, they owe themselves and their business the time to evaluate or re-evaluate Rail Transportation and/or Transloading on the RBMN. These are two great methods to employ to reduce their escalating supply chain costs. You can call me any time to help you to analyze your options and think it through! ♦



The raw material that railroads call pulpboard: An inbound railcar ready for unloading once we vacate the area. In front of the railcar is Rian Nemeroff (left), Steve Gulotta, International Paper Company Eastern Region Sales Manager, Containerboard (center) and Don Bonualas, General Manager, Freedom Corrugated (right).

Steve Gulotta, International Paper Company's Eastern Region Sales Manager for Containerboard
"RBMN employees exemplify a CAN DO ATTITUDE and consistently provide the highest level of customer service."



Boxcars containing various forest products heading north on the NRRF passing Port Clinton. Service is overnight from interchange to customer delivery.



Recovered Paper in the form of Old Corrugated Containers at Corestates Processing baled and ready to ship in a boxcar to be manufactured into new carboard rolls.



Brad Handling, Transload Operations Manager loading a RBMN boxcar of baled wood pulp at the Ransom Distribution Center for outbound shipping. Note the railroad, warehouse, boxcar and propane bale clamp are owned and operated by RBMN employees.

2021 Coal Marketing Recap

BY: BILL CLARK, SENIOR VP COAL MARKETING

“These are the times that try men’s souls” is a quote from Thomas Paine describing the beginning of the American revolutionary war. With Covid still running rampant and the economy dealing with major disruptions, 2021 certainly was “Paine-ful”. However, amidst the uncertainty and difficulties there were some positive signs for the Anthracite business at RBMN.

The big picture for 2021 was coal; volumes were lower, yet revenue held. The continuing decline in export traffic was the reason total carloads in 2021 were down 8% from 2020. Since peaking in 2018, export shipments have declined by over 50%. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine as well as currency manipulations and unfair trade actions has negatively affected our exports. In addition, lower production caused by the pandemic and weather issues impacted shipments to the river. Our river business in 2021 was down 12.5% compared to 2020. Yet because of changes in our mix, total revenue continues to remain strong.

When we look closer at our business, we recognize that we serve four distinct markets; export, river, the domestic EAF (Electric Arc Furnace) industry and other domestic industries (primarily the sugar beet and zinc recycling businesses). Each of these markets come with distinct challenges and opportunities.

EXPORT SEGMENT

The export market is by far the most volatile Anthracite segment. Over the years this was the market segment where RBMN made its greatest investments. It was RBMN working with Kinder Morgan that helped establish the export facility at Fairless after Consol in Baltimore shut down its facility to anthracite shipments. RBMN made massive investments in freight cars and conveyors to keep the export business flowing, but for reasons out of our control the business has been in decline for years. In 2016 exports represented 51% of RBMN coal shipments by the end of 2021 this had declined to 26%, almost a 50% reduction. Exports remain an important market for our producers, and we should see an improvement in 2022. However, as long as Russia engages in predatory pricing practices, it is difficult to see any long-term stability.

DOMESTIC STEEL/RIVER MARKET

Our largest and fastest growing market segment is to the Electric Arc Furnace (EAF) producers. EAF mills use Anthracite in producing steel where it is a critical element in the steel making process. We have seen significant investments in new and expanded steel production in the US with two new steel mills coming on-line in 2021. Additionally, four existing

steel mills added furnaces last year and six new steel mills have been announced, representing over \$15 Billion in capital over the next 2 – 3 years. All these projects will use Anthracite.

Traditionally rail has not been used to deliver Anthracite to US steel mills. In 2017 RBMN took a major step to address the lack of rail capacity at our customers steel mills. In the third quarter of 2017 RBMN decided to do something rarely (if ever) done by a regional railroad. We invested in unloading equipment at an NS served TBT (Thoroughbred Bulk Distribution) center in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. By agreeing to provide this significant investment, RBMN allowed a major EAF producer to access rail. At the same time, we added substantial covered hoppers to our coal fleet so we could handle the dried coal coming from our two dried coal producers, Hiller Carbon at Atlantic Coal and Reading Anthracite. Since 2017, shipments through rail-truck transfer centers have grown dramatically and now represents 28% of our coal business. RBMN is committed to investing in destination distribution centers so we can ensure this segment continues to grow. In 2021 alone, RBMN purchased over 150 railcars; an investment in excess of \$2,000,000.

Our river business, which usually moves in unit trains, was negatively impacted by a lack of production in 2021. This business reflects “wet” coal that moves by barge to dryers located close to EAF mills. Increased demand in the Southeast US and improved on-line coal production is expected to significantly grow shipments.

NON-STEEL DOMESTIC DESTINATIONS

We saw a mixed bag in 2021. Again, due to a lack of available supply, a large customer switched from Anthracite to metallurgic coke. We may see this business return in late 2022 as more production comes on-line. On a positive note we began shipments to a large Zinc refinery that is being constructed. Similar to the EAF start-ups, this new business was only secured because of the infrastructure RBMN created by purchasing unloading equipment at an NS served TBT. Without that investment, the receiver would have had no rail option.

In summary, 2021 was, in some respects, Paine-ful. However, the long-term prospect for growth in the Anthracite business is bright. Domestic consumption continues to increase on the back of historic capital investment in EAF steel mills, production of Anthracite is going up and RBMN’s investment in assets has given RBMN a tremendous tool to help shippers and end users gain access to rail. Reading and Northern Railroad is, and will remain, the “Road of Anthracite” for many years to come. ♦



Our CAT material handler machine makes quick work of unloading steel coils at West Hazleton.



Transload operator Albert Seiler stacks paper rolls at the Ransom Warehouse.



8 Brad Handling unloads a car of wood pulp at the Ransom Warehouse.

Year in Review 2021 Transload

BY: DAREN GESCHWINDT, VP DISTRIBUTION SERVICES



Albert Seiler lifts a bundle of lumber off of a center-beam flatcar at the Cressona Transload.

2021 has been an up and down year for our transloads as we dealt with the impacts of the pandemic on supply chains. Nonetheless, we managed to end the year handling more traffic than last year or even pre-COVID 2019.

At West Hazleton our steel coil operation was adversely impacted because the origin steel mill was unable to meet the needs of our customer due to prolonged staffing shortages. This resulted in our customer looking for alternate sources to keep their plant running which they found in imports from Egypt and Germany through the Port of Camden. Since our customer was buying a large amount of steel, rail was the logical way to move the coils despite the short 100 mile rail move. We worked with the port, the customer, and Norfolk Southern to coordinate the timeline for shipments, secure car supply, and identify the loading pattern to be used. Our efforts paid off with rail cars shipping to West Hazleton through the late summer and early fall. This traffic was a welcome replacement at West Hazleton. Unfortunately, car supply issues at the origin eventually resulted in the project ending earlier than expected.

As we entered the fourth quarter the steel mill resolved their staffing issues and our customer was once again able to buy from their normal source. Cars resumed moving from this origin in Q4 and are expected to continue at the same pace throughout 2022.

At our Ransom Warehouse our customer mix changed significantly in 2021. One of our longstanding customers encountered production issues of their own resulting in them not being able to supply as much safety stock as they otherwise normally would. Another customer began pulling material that they

had stockpiled as a preventative measure early in the COVID pandemic.

Meanwhile, some new faces entered the picture as we added a paper supplier and a new wood pulp customer into the fold. One of our existing customers also began shipping product to us from a new origin in Tennessee. This was a very unique move because the mill was only being supplied with 60 ft boxcars, however the end receiver could only unload 50 ft boxcars. The solution was for us to transload the material from the 60 ft cars into 50 ft cars at Ransom for movement to the final destination. This resulted in over 650 revenue carloads for this customer alone.

At Cressona we continued to handle lumber for two local receivers. This business also felt the sting of COVID as lumber prices surged throughout much of the year, making it difficult for some customers to buy lumber in railcar quantities. Our 2021 carloads matched those of 2020, however the volume could have been greater in a normal lumber market. We are optimistic for growth in this area in 2022.

As we look ahead to 2022, it looks to bring more change. The Ransom car-to-car transfer will be going away as a result of the closure of the Tennessee mill. Meanwhile we are aggressively working with new wood pulp suppliers that will be taking their place to take advantage of Ransom as a location for safety stock.

It is clear that the only constant in this business is change, and you have to be able to adapt to the changing conditions around you. Each year brings with it new challenges as well as new opportunities for success. ♦

Coming Soon...

Re-Entry into the Marcellus Market

BY: JIM RAFFA,
VP MARKET DEVELOPMENT

It has been quite some time since short, small cubed covered hoppers hauling sand rode the rails of the Reading and Northern. The last sand cars were unloaded at the large Pittston Sand Facility in 2015 when compressed gas prices and the economics of the Frac industry were changing. Since then, there has been many bankruptcies and re-organizations of gas companies and suppliers. The Reading & Northern had a customer that was preparing to construct a new Marcellus Facility near Tunkhannock, PA back in 2012 however, the downturn of the business mothballed that project at the time. The initial concept of that plan was to use Pittston Yard as a holding or forwarding facility and unload sand in Tunkhannock which is closer to the gas fields.

Fast forward to 2021 – the industry is in better health and wells are being constructed everywhere. A large amount of sand flows through the region and so the Reading & Northern decided it was time to dust off the plans and push forward with plans to construct a new facility in Tunkhannock. Only this time it would be a Reading & Northern owned and operated facility. Construction of the multi-million-dollar facility began in September 2021. R&N chose an operator with a long-proven track record for excellence to operate the terminal. The first cars were spotted on December 20, 2021.

I expect very good things to happen at this terminal once we are in full swing. Not only will this facility be instrumental in the frac sand industry, but the location will also benefit the local community. A plus for the local citizens is that it allows a good percentage of trucks, which currently originate north of Tunkhannock, to enter Route 6 below the county seat, reducing congestion in the town. ♦

Customer Service 2021

BY: SUSAN LUDWIG,
VP MARKETING & CUSTOMER SERVICE

It's hard to believe another year has flown by. Customer Service has been quite busy this year at the Reading & Northern. In the first quarter of the New Year we added the Fleet Management duties to our department, as well as Car Hire Management. This has been a huge undertaking and to handle these responsibilities, Steve Werley was promoted to Director of Fleet Management. Steve manages our fleet of over 1800 railroad cars and 43 passenger cars. Steve needs to monitor the entire fleet for repairs when needed, managing them in and out of our Car Shop and keeping the Umler system updated, which provides secure access for equipment management and reporting tools, helping equipment owners provide high-quality data to logistics partners and customers. He works closely with our Car Shop to assure all our equipment is properly maintained. When RBMN purchases new equipment, the cars need to be inspected, painted and re-stenciled to be added into our active fleet of cars. Our fleet has grown by over 150 cars in 2021 and we continue to search for new cars to purchase for our ever-growing coal and boxcar business. We also added Car Hire into Steve's mix of duties, which involves managing all the Car Hire payables and receivables that need to be audited for all inbound and outbound traffic.

In a year where most companies couldn't find employees, we are expanding our Customer Service Department. Our business, thanks to our Marketing Department, has grown in customer base as well as how we manage and support our customers. We have taken on extra work to ensure our coal traffic continues to grow. Customer Service assists our coal customers with their offline transload facilities. We assist with the tracking of their cars and the trucking of the coal to non-rail served customers. With the addition of more offline coal transload facilities, we have added our newest employee, Mary Synnott to assist with our coal business, who will be starting right after the New Year to assist.

Michele Daub continues to handle a mix of duties including Coal, General Merchandise and Transload. Leanne Moser works with our Coal and General Merchandise customers. Jennifer Woodshick handles General Merchandise as well as our ISS system, rating our revenue traffic. Lori Chinchar is my Director of Customer Service. Lori is my right-hand person, working with General Merchandise, special projects and assisting members of our team with daily issues. Lori helps me to keep our team running smoothly and backing me up.

Customer Service has always been top priority at the RBMN and continues to be going forward. Andy Muller has always supported adding resources to our team to manage and take care of our customers. RBMN works diligently with our Operations team to achieve scheduled service times for our customers, we have achieved that 98% of the time in 2021. RBMN has a history of going above and beyond to help our customers who need unscheduled service. This year alone, we have performed almost 80 special switches for our customers, which is unheard of from most railroads. Thank you to my team and the whole RBMN team for another great year and all their hard work. ♦

Year in Review 2021 Operations

BY: TYLER GLASS, EXECUTIVE VP OPERATIONS

2021 is already behind us and again we wonder where the time went. All things considered, it was another successful and exciting year. The fine folks in our department met every challenge and overcame every obstacle that came our way, there was no shortage of either.

In 2020 we had lots of milestones that translated into key changes in our operation. The Nesquehoning Bridge completion and our new dispatcher center were two of those examples. In 2021 we did not see many of those game changers, instead one of our big stories was dealing with traffic patterns and delays from the Class 1 partners.

Class 1 railroads, for various reasons, also struggled to move traffic consistent with years past and that translated into extra work on our end. Once we finally received the delayed cars many more special shift requests were required. All this work was performed in the spirit of saying “yes” when a customer desperately needs a product to keep their businesses going.

We also had another year of dealing with COVID-19. As usual, our dedicated conductors, engineers, and dispatchers rallied together and rose to the occasion. While we certainly dealt with effects of employee or family related issues, we were able to keep the railroad operating at the same level that our customers expect from us.

We ended 2021 with 98+% on time arrival rate for our freight customer obligations. Our dedicated personnel go out of their way to ensure that the customer's needs are met daily. It is not always an easy task as weather and other unforeseen factors can complicate our operation.

Our Maintenance of Way Department has done their best to support us throughout the year. In addition to keeping up with and maintaining our

infrastructure, they were extremely busy upgrading our Main Line. Miles of new rail were installed between Hometown and Nesquehoning on the recently acquired Carbon County portion.

Engine House personnel do an excellent job communicating with the transportation team to ensure that any issues that may arise with a locomotive are properly diagnosed and promptly repaired to maintain maximum locomotive uptime. As we continue to add more locomotives into our active fleet, transportation will often test the newest additions close to Port Clinton so that any issues can be immediately addressed before the locomotives are released into the wild.

The Communications and Signals Department helped by adding some additional signals near Port Clinton, two more dragging equipment detectors along the main line and more yard lights to aid our nighttime operations. They also have begun a huge signal project in the Jim Thorpe area that will be ready to go on-line in 2022.

On the personnel side we added a full-time Manager of Safety and Development, John Smolczynski, to facilitate our robust training program. Nine conductors went through our training course this year. We also assisted other departments with the training and preparing for the new Federal Qualifications Standards.

We have been very busy on the planning end for 2022. We anticipate more volumes in our freight and passenger networks so we are making sure we have the right resources in place to handle the business.

I would also like to thank every conductor, engineer, and dispatcher; it took all of us to get through this year. It has been a pleasure. ♦

Safety Always: *Looking Back at 2021 & Forward at 2022*

BY: ERIC PETERS, VP TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY

Reading and Northern had a challenging 2021 with multiple winter storms to kick off the year coupled with late summer storms that rolled through the region. These weather events proved how every employee in each department always responds safely and urgently to achieve our number one goal of servicing our customers. The railroad was able to meet all of Mother Nature's adversity, handle large projects as well as the daily work demands while reducing the number of reportable injuries.

The railroad was busy with freight and passengers to move. In an effort to help support current volumes and position ourselves for future growth many projects were completed or are underway. Each one has a component that enhances safety. 2021 saw massive MOW work. Ties and rail were replaced in great numbers across the system, as well as miles and miles of surfacing. This will have a lasting impact on the safe and efficient movement of trains. Crossings at the Engine House and Steam Shop were upgraded and allow safe movement of materials and equipment to the various shops.

The wheel true machine saw a lot of action in 2021. This is a good example of “safety always” executed. The employees operating the machine were well trained by the manufacturer on how to safely operate, in-house fabrication of safety railings, building an electric engine mover to prevent exhaust in the building and the development of procedures including PPE requirements has

made the opening of the Wheel True Shop a success.

The Signal Department installed an additional dragging equipment detector as a way of early warning if there is an issue with a passing train. In addition, they have been hard at work installing additional powered switches to alleviate need for manual operation along with installing the hardware and software for more signals to govern train operation. The Car Department purchased new equipment for a mobile cutting operation. This equipment will enhance the efficiency and safety when cutting railcars or material. A small group was trained on the operation and are now peer trainers.

Training is an essential part of safety. John Smolczynski, the Manager of Safety and Development, trained nine conductors through our extensive course in 2021. Also, several departments completed retraining and taught new skill sets to existing team members. The level of instruction, preparation and reference materials the Reading and Northern team receives is impressive and creates the foundation to be a productive teammate.

2022 will be an exciting year as the railroad continues to grow and find ways to improve at efficiency and safety. Enhancing our training and retraining will be a cornerstone to ensure all of us have the knowledge and confidence to be successful. Safety is a team effort. ♦





A Year to Remember

BY: CHRIS GOETZ, VP MAINTENANCE OF WAY

2021 was a monster of a year for the Maintenance of Way Department. Like most, we experienced the lingering effects of a pandemic, had Mother Nature give us her annual “best shot” and, through our own ambitions, we pushed the limits on every resource we had. We finish the year looking back at some monumental accomplishments that will shape our railroad for years to come and put us in a position for our tracks to handle any increased traffic we hope to see in the future.

The year started like most years with the ground frozen and MOW focusing on alternate work while “track” work was limited. When snow was on the ground, MOW gangs focused on cutting problematic trees back in areas where we experienced falling tree issues along our main line. These leaning or dead trees often fall during the “after-hours” and lead to MOW employees being called out to clear the path. The focus of eliminating these trees was to prevent delays to our train crews and keep our employees at home at night with their families.

Continued on page 14.



Chris Garcia and Dale Homm replace ties inside the Buck Mountain Tunnel.



Chris Garcia cuts out a rail in the Buck Mountain Tunnel with Brandon Kalbach and Ron Collins pictured in the background.



Enos Bleiler, Rebecca Engle, and Chucky Carl building the new Port Clinton turntable lead.



14 Storm patrol encounters a new waterfall washing out the track structure at ML MP 158.1.



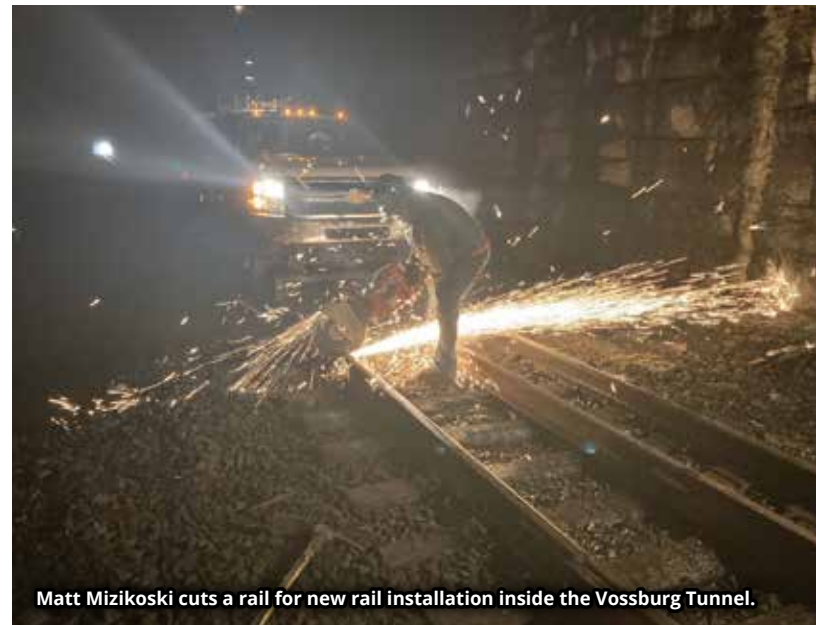
Panels being torn out by Aaron Cassel, Tyler Lewis, Justin Fetterolf, Chucky Carl, Enos Bleiler, Duane Engle, Rebecca Engle. for rail repair in the Rt. 209 crossing in Tamaqua.



A massive shoulder washout caused by Hurricane Ida is shown at Pine Run ML MP 159.3.



Foreman Mizikoski dumps recently washed-out ballast from Hurricane Ida on the Lehigh Main Line.



Matt Mizikoski cuts a rail for new rail installation inside the Vossburg Tunnel.

While the snow remained on the ground, some members of the MOW leadership team were busy marking out sections of the Main Line for rail replacement. As the snow started to melt in March, we were gifted back in December with 96,000 feet of new 136RE rail to replace worn out "light" rail from Tamaqua to Nesquehoning. Since receiving this rail, we have installed over 50,000' of rail, most of which included changing plates from smaller, single shoulder 10-inch plates to a heavier 18-inch plate. The installation of these 1600' strings of rail required a large bulk of our resources as many of the areas were in tough spots with limited, hard to utilize right of ways.

Also, in the spring we welcomed Railworks onto our property for our annual tie project. In total they replaced approx. 24,000 ties to strengthen our M&S and Tremont Branch lines. This was done to improve tracks serving our new Locust Summit Coal loading facility and our customer at the end of our Tremont Line. In addition, over the course of the year we have received 25,000 new ties and 500 relay ties. Some of these ties have been installed at multiple locations throughout our system.

During the late summer Mother Nature greeted us with torrential rains, which washed away the track structure at multiple locations along our Main Line. Other storms brought tornados that knocked down trees, littering the tracks with debris and disrupting train traffic. Due to the heavy storms, we experienced major landslides which required quick action to rebuild embankments and support structures for our railroad. In some cases, these slopes were over 60 feet down and needed to be totally rebuilt in order to secure the base around the track. Through the coordination of multiple MOW

employees, our forces were able to push through and keep our trains running. Even at the most severe washouts, our service was not disrupted for more than 24 hours.

A large focus in the fall was placed on gauging sections of our Main Line. An in-depth inspection of our entire Main Line showed multiple areas that needed to be gauged back to ensure smooth passage. Multiple MOW crews worked on areas from Port Clinton to Dupont to correct gauge. At a lot of these locations, these curves required new ties so that any track issues were not only temporarily fixed but remained secure for long term operation.

Finally, we closed out our year building our new Marcellus Shale Transload facility in Tunkhannock, PA. This was a very ambitious project requiring the clearing and grading of multiple acres with an outside contractor. The land not only needed to be leveled, but also needed tens-of-thousands of tons of stone to remedy the soft ground along the Susquehanna River. In addition to the earth work, MOW gangs built two switches while an outside contractor built the two 1000' sidings to serve the newly built facility. After months of hard work, we were able to bring this facility to life by delivering cars just before the new year.

As we look back at 2021, it is hard to imagine what 2022 will bring. With multiple large projects being planned out and thousands of feet of rail still to be installed, our ambitions will not change. Based off the continuous resolve of our MOW employees we know that we will be prepared for whatever is put in our path. ♦



Railworks using a TKO to install ties at M&S Branch MP 126.3



Railworks tie installation at M&S Branch MP 128.5.



Removal of ties and grading by Dale Homm for the White Birch Road crossing installation in the Humboldt Industrial Park.



16 Jim Thorpe Station rehab under way with Jimmy Alba, Brandon Kalbach, Ben Cole, and Ryan Rupprecht



Jim Thorpe Station cribbing and clearing for new stone and pavement with Shawn Himmelberger and Marc Aigeldinger operating equipment.



New rail being anchored by Chucky Carl, Ron Collins, Boyd Lenich, Joe Malson at ML MP 114.2.



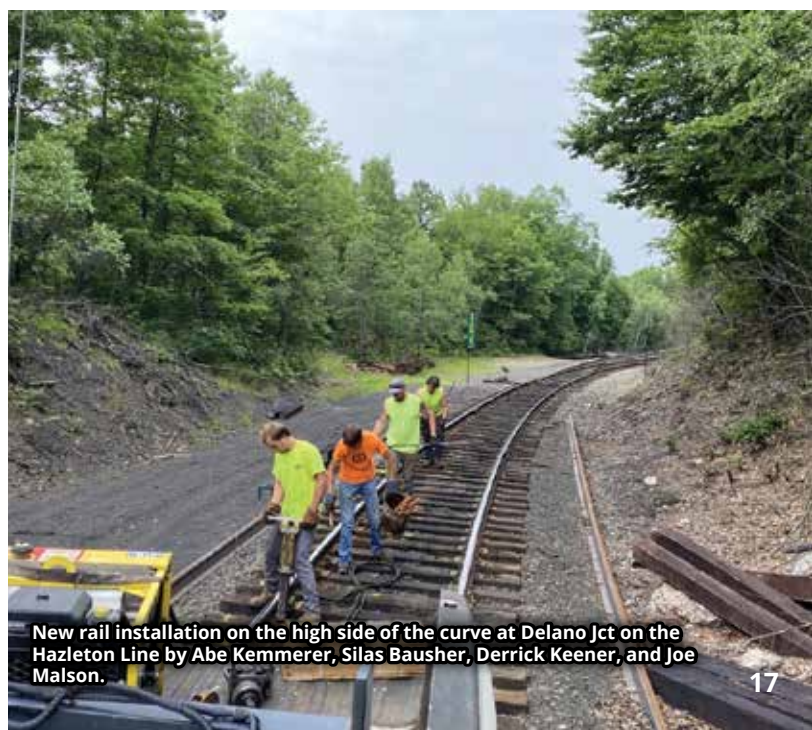
New turntable track construction in Port Clinton into the steam shops by Brandon Wagner, Cody Henn, Tyler Acker, Justin Hughes.



Under newly installed rail, new ties being plated and spiked by Boyd Lenich and Joe Malson at ML MP 114.



Penn Ag siding rail replacement under way with Boyd Lenich, Blake Handling, Brandon Kalbach, and Matt Nestor hard at work.



New rail installation on the high side of the curve at Delano Jct on the Hazleton Line by Abe Kemmerer, Silas Bausher, Derrick Keener, and Joe Malson.



Plates being laid for new rail by Abe Kemmerer, Blake Handling, Dennis Roshac, Silas Bausher on Hazleton Line MP 115.



Tunkhannock Transload switch being constructed off the Susquehanna Branch by Alex Scubelek Jr., Shawn Slusser, Russ Monroe, Ryan Rupprecht, Jimmy Alba at MP 24.4.



Inching closer to a finished product at the Tunkhannock Transload lead. Dave Hutton, Dennis Rosohac, and Jimmy Alba in the background.



New 136RE rail string being installed to remove older 100lb rail at ML MP 108.6 by Dale Homm, Russ Monroe, Dave Hutton, Ryan Rupprecht.



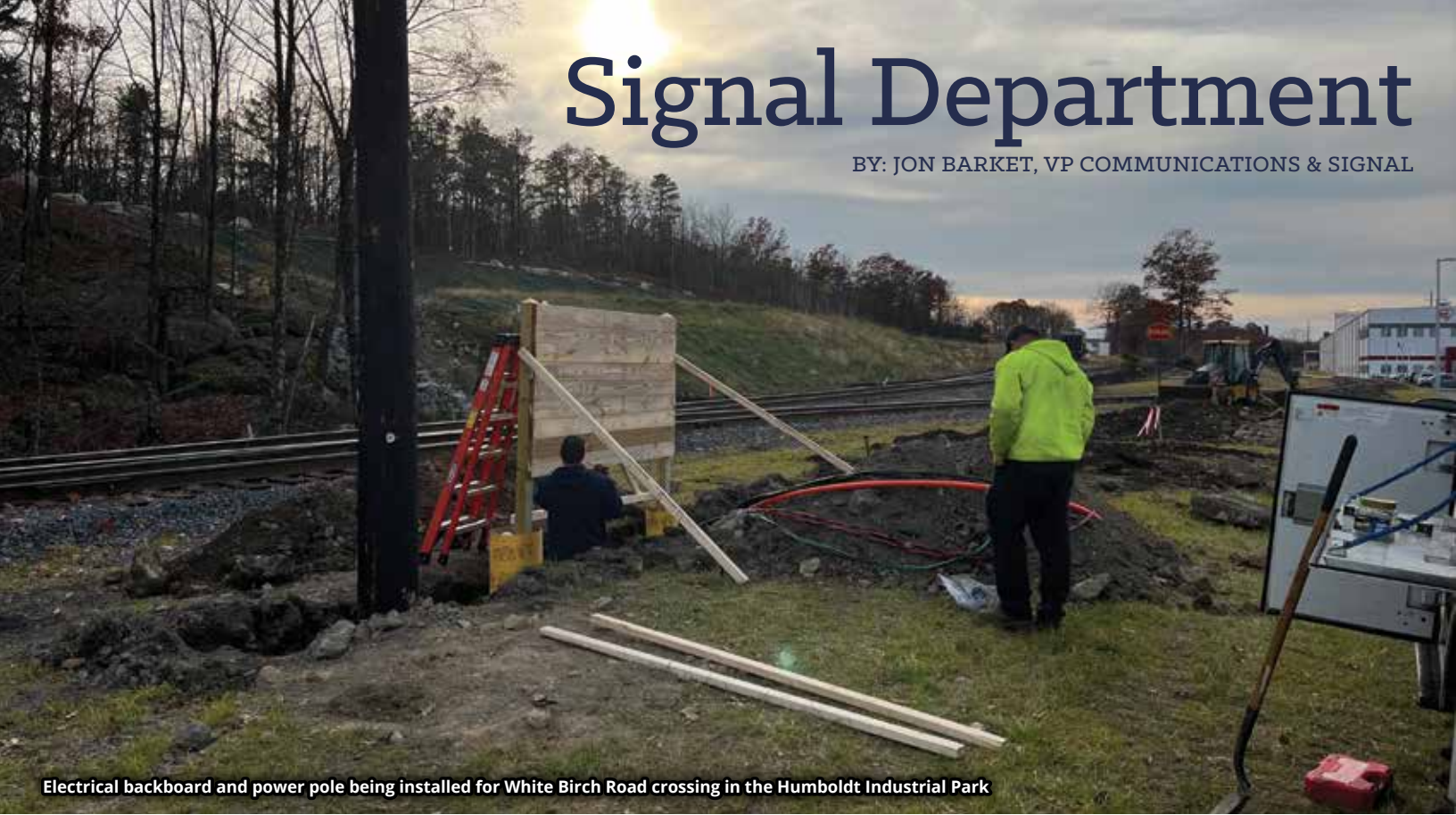
Shawn Himmelberger, Aaron Cassel, Dave Hutton plating and spiking new timbers at the White Birch Road crossing in the Humboldt Industrial Park.



Tunkhannock Transload lead being constructed off the new customer switch at Susquehanna Branch MP 24.4 by Jimmy Alba, Ryan Rupprecht, Russ Monroe.

Signal Department

BY: JON BARKET, VP COMMUNICATIONS & SIGNAL



Electrical backboard and power pole being installed for White Birch Road crossing in the Humboldt Industrial Park

As we navigate these different times these days, 2021 seemed to fly by. The Communications and Signal Department once again had a non-stop, exciting year filled with innovative projects, complicated problems, and new locations. With the wide range of aspects that the C&S Department manages for the railroad, our forces continue to learn and experience new aspects of the job on almost a daily basis.

Starting out early in 2021, the C&S Department continued to push ahead with the installation of the Main Line signal system from Muller Interlocking located in Hamburg, to Pulpit interlocking just south of the Port Clinton headquarters. In preparation for this addition, signals were installed on the southern signal bridge at Port Clinton. Switch monitoring equipment along with cable and a control house was also installed at a location called Kerns, situated just over a mile south of Port Clinton. This will enable the signal system not only to detect trains more accurately, but also monitor a pair of switches at a remote location. Due to physical characteristics and the lack of commercial power and access, we ended up installing yet another solar powered site. As Maintenance of Way was finishing work on the new #1 main line track, C&S forces began to install another powered switch at Port Clinton to help gain access remotely to the new main line track. This will enable trains to meet and pass at this location with little to no delays. Leading up to cutover, the dispatching system was updated to accept the new signaled territory along with instructions to all train crews and field personnel. The new, roughly two miles, of double track Main Line signal system went on line in early February.

Sometimes our older, lightly used locations need some attention. There is an old Lehigh Valley signal located just south of the station at Jim Thorpe. We noted that the case was in deplorable shape and the signal was in danger of falling. Most companies would see this location as not needed and the signal and other equipment would be removed and scrapped. However, at the Reading and Northern, we pride ourselves in maintaining history and overall presentation so a much better case was found and the signal was once again erected.

In an effort to continually add to the safety of the railroad and the general public, as well as adding efficiency, the task to install interlockings at the new bridge connection outside of Jim Thorpe was started. The new interlocking names were to be Nesquehoning Junction, Jim Thorpe Junction, and River.

These will become three independently controlled interlockings, protecting movements along our Main Line and Jim Thorpe Branch throughout the wye track area. This will allow for nearly seamless movements between passenger and freight trains that traverse this area on a daily basis. Work was started immediately to begin designing, wiring, and programming the new locations. An added challenge was to get power to these locations, where the nearest power source was nearly a half mile away. Working closely with PPL, we were able to get the necessary power established. Throughout the summer, these locations were being built and installed with miles of cable being trenched in. Although not in service quite yet, these locations will be on line in spring of 2022.

Dragging equipment detectors are essentially train inspection devices that check for anything dragging on passing trains. If anything is in fact dragging, there are a series of paddles that are placed between and outside the rails that would get hit by the dragging item alerting the train crew to stop and check things out. These draggers are a real addition to the safety of the railroad as they not only help notify of potential issues, but save any additional damage that could occur. This could include anything small like a chain to an unknown derailed car. In 2021, we started an effort to install additional dragging equipment detectors throughout the railroad. One of the first additional locations was just outside of Nesquehoning. One was installed just south of Leesport, and two other locations that were installed were at Milepost 127 and Milepost 134, both deep in the Lehigh Gorge. Since the Reading and Northern is known for innovative solutions, we were also able to construct and manufacture our own talking devices. These devices link up with the hardware in the track and are the brains behind inspecting and notifying the crews. Moving into 2022, many additional locations are planned.

Sometimes with new business, comes the need to make some modifications to existing locations. A new coal loading facility was being built just outside the town of Locust Gap. The access roadway to the new facility would parallel the tracks starting at the Main Street railroad crossing. However, this access was hindered with the railroad crossing equipment cases and battery box. It was determined to not only move the equipment, but upgrade all the existing cable and power service. With this move, it enabled the customer to have easy access to the new facility without the need to worry about affecting any other equipment.

Working closely with Maintenance of Way, we were able to support their projects that required C&S assistance. This ranges from the many rail changes, to tie installations, and crossing replacements. One such projects were to upgrade the Lake Hauto railroad crossing from a conventional circuit to a motion detection system. A conventional system requires at least eight insulated joints to help separate the power circuits for train detection. A motion detection system does not need any, unless within a switch. So when MOW was ready to install new rail throughout the crossing area, it was determined that a motion detector should be installed to help eliminate the labor intensive insulated joints. This is not only an upgrade for the railroad, but also helps the motorists when they encounter a train at the crossing. If a train needs to stop for some reason, the crossing gates will go back up as long as the train is not on the roadway.

Within the Humboldt Industrial park, a new entrance to the facility is being planned to help alleviate traffic on Route 924. This new entrance will require additional crossings to be installed where there is no protection currently. One of the first ones that needed to be completed was the White Birch

Extension. This crossing consisted of just flashing lights and a full control system. The equipment was pre-wired at our Cressona shops and delivered to the site for installation by our crews. Although the roadway is not currently open to traffic yet, we are ready for the unveiling of the new route.

At a request from our Operations Department, we enhanced and replaced many of the yard lights that are scattered throughout the system. This brings an invaluable amount of safety to the nighttime working crews in our yards. To further assist, we installed multiple additions to the existing yard lights in one of our busiest yards, North Reading.

As 2021 came to a close, I was once again able to reflect back on the awesome work the C&S department was able to complete. Not only were they able to handle all the additional projects that were assigned, but they also completed all the necessary Federal Railroad Administration testing and repairs to the current infrastructure. Unfortunately nearly everything will break at some point, but the C&S crews are always ready and willing to make the necessary repairs. So here's to a very aggressively planned 2022 with even more projects, plans and clear signals ahead. Stay tuned. ♦



Maintainer Don Matter watches over the installation of 1185 signal while maintainer Ryan Rhody operates the BT-2 standing the pre-built signal and placing it on the foundation.



Maintainer Aaron Schweibinz tightens down connections for the Port Clinton Powered switches, prepping for cutover.



AVP C&S Matt Collins reviewing programming and checking for issues on newly cutover Pulpit interlocking.



2021 Motive Power Year in Review

BY: DUSTY BERNDT, VP MOTIVE POWER

2021 included completing the freshly painted Locomotive 3059!

As we rolled into the end of December I started to look ahead to the beginning of 2022, but I also reflected on all that happened in 2021. While the year seemed to pass like a blur, there are many accomplishments to be proud of from the Motive Power and Passenger mechanical departments.

I believe our biggest accomplishment of 2021 would be the addition of our dedicated wheel truing building with the installation of the Wheel Machine in April. After delivery of the machine we had about three weeks of installation time and training to correctly operate it. When finished with the startup details we got the machine right into action repairing the wheels on many of our locomotives that were waiting for a truing. Also, as we have gotten our locomotives up to date with cuttings, we have offered our services of wheel truing for customers' locomotives as well. We look forward to those opportunities to pick up speed in 2022.

The year of 2021 has brought a busy year of locomotive maintenance and overhauls. In the first quarter of the year we finished the 2017, a GP38-2 that we purchased the year prior. The Locomotive Shop also dismantled the former NS 5831 locomotive that we salvaged for parts in the late spring. The remaining half of a frame from the locomotive left us the capability of creating a fully electric car/locomotive mover that we needed to use for spotting moves of locomotives getting the wheels trued. This mover uses battery power and an external handheld remote to position locomotives one wheel at a time over the truing machine. Having this advantage allows these moves without the need of running engines for movements and, most importantly, allows the operator to position locomotives by himself.

The dismantled locomotive brought many additional parts to us. We used the

engine and upgraded it for use in the RBMN 2010. In early 2021, the engine crankshaft had failed in this GP38-2, leaving us with the need to overhaul the locomotive and get it back in service. We installed this rebuilt engine, a new alternator, rebuilt air compressor and auxiliary generator. After completing all this work, we brought the 2010 back to life in the end of October and shortly after we returned the engine back to active service.

Along with routine maintenance of locomotives, which is a continuous process of 92 day inspections throughout the year, we have had many larger repairs completed in 2021. This past year has brought us plenty of turbocharger changeout work, and we have gone one step further with preventative maintenance by also changing auxiliary generators while replacing these turbochargers.

The last quarter of the year has brought some refocus to the Mechanical Department. With the potential of increased locomotive needs, we have decided to look into our storage set of SD40-2 locomotives. We are in the early stages of the process of picking out the best units to add to active service. The first selection has been the ex-NS 3397 locomotive, but this unit will now be known as the RBMN 3069. As we approach the new year, we expect to have this locomotive in active service, before moving forward to the next locomotive of our choice.

The year 2021 also brought the wonderful additions of many passenger coaches. We were very fortunate to have the chance to add these impressive coaches to our already busy RBMN fleet. We are in the process of renumbering, upgrading and even repainting a few of the coaches to add to active service. These coaches have been welcome additions to an ever-



expanding passenger service that includes many locations of the RBMN system.

Last, but certainly not least, is the always busy steam program. The fall season was a very busy time for the Steam Shop as the 425 was very busy throughout the season. With regular use working on the LGSR and throughout the October excursion season, we definitely showed off the workhorse the 425 is. Speaking of workhorse engines, we are excited to feel like we are reaching the finish line in 2022 with the 2102. The talented group of Steam employees have shown their dedication to work tirelessly to get the 2102 to be a reliable engine once again after many years of dormancy. The engine has begun to look like her old self after recently getting the cab re-installed and the bulk of 2021 was spent getting many of the cosmetics added back to the locomotive. Some of these items included reapplying much of the custom bent steel piping down the boiler, completely rewiring the engine, then getting plans together to make new jacketing to apply on the sides, but there is still more work to do. Please continue to monitor the progress of the 2102 reassembly as we look forward to a spring completion.

The Motive Power and Passenger departments continue to stay extremely busy and we don't see any let up in sight. I feel very proud that in 2021, we can now say we do all of our own maintenance in house to our rolling equipment with the addition of our 2021 wheel truing machine. As 2022 is just around the corner, please stay tuned for active additions to our locomotive roster as we always look to increase the fleet size and up the standards of locomotive maintenance. ♦

2021 Mechanical Year in Review

**BY: DAN PUKSAR
AVP MECHANICAL**

We had another productive year managing the maintenance and repair of Reading & Northern freight cars as well as our automobiles and equipment. And in 2021 we also saw some infrastructure additions that will translate into greater productivity and efficiency.

The Car Shop addition was finally completed at the tail end of the year. This allows us to work inside on five railcars instead of the three spots we had before the addition.

Throughout the year the Car Shop is asked to do more than just inspect and maintain the ever growing fleet of RBMN freight cars now numbering over 1800! Often the Car Shop needs to provide immediate help when a customer needs assistance with foreign railroad equipment whether it is a stubborn boxcar door or a covered hopper gate that needs a little TLC. Occasionally, the car shop travels out-of-state as we did this year to West Virginia to inspect and evaluate 53 covered hopper cars that the company was looking to purchase. Ultimately, these cars were purchased and they are currently being worked through the shop and getting the standard RBMN touches before going into service. We strive to have our cars in the best condition before leaving the shop to give the customers the best product possible.

We have also added another skill to our Car Shop team by purchasing a Liquid Oxygen/Propane torch set-up. This allows us to cut large heavy metal objects in house, whereas before we would have to subcontract this type of work, i.e., cutting up locomotives, wheel sets, and frames.

Meanwhile in the Vehicle Shop we installed a brand new truck lift in our second bay over the summer and also purchased a brand new computer diagnostic tool. These were a huge help to our productivity, service and repairs. An additional 12 vehicles were purchased this year and added to our growing vehicle fleet, which is now over 70 vehicles. Our mechanics do an extraordinary job at maintaining the fleet and keeping all RBMN departments on the road.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to speak about the Equipment Shop and the extraordinary work they are doing. This shop is in charge of repairing all MOW and Transload equipment. This includes tampers, ballast regulators, backhoes, telehandlers, tractors, trailers, etc. You name it, we repair it. This is by no means an easy task for a crew of three. But it's not just a crew of three mechanics, these gentlemen are highly skilled, well-versed, and have a very proud work ethic. Every day there are new tasks, bigger priorities, and new equipment being inspected/purchased. With the RBMN growing and departments needing more equipment and tools, the equipment shop will also need to grow to meet that demand. Fortunately, this year we were able to hire another equipment mechanic that will assist us in our day-to-day operation.

We are already looking ahead to 2022. No rest for the weary, we anticipate another busy year. We will get it done! ♦

Year in Review

2021 Real Estate & Police Department

BY: JOLENE BUSHER, AVP REAL ESTATE & SERGEANT RYAN PARKS

REAL ESTATE

The Real Estate Department at the Reading and Northern Railroad was proud to be a part of a monumental year in RBMN's corporate history. The year 2021 saw the purchase of the former Carbon County rail line, the 19 mile rail line through Schuylkill and Carbon counties, for a total of \$4.7 million in June. For decades, RBMN held trackage rights over this line, but Andy Muller, Jr. desired to own this line to physically connect RBMN's Lehigh and Reading mainline divisions. Following nearly two years of negotiations between Andy Muller, Jr. and RBMN's President, Wayne Michel, and the owners of the line, Carbon County Commissioners Wayne Notthstein, Chairman, Rocky Ahner, and Chris Lukasevich, the two parties came to an agreement of sale in May. When closing took place on June 24, the \$4.7 million consideration included \$1.7 million committed towards track improvements and crossing upgrades on the rail line.

Following the purchase of the Carbon County rail line, RBMN's Maintenance of Way Department spent much of the rest of 2021 working on the track improvements on this portion of the Mainline. By the time of this publication RBMN has committed much of that \$1.7 million already in improving this portion of the Mainline. Passengers on one of our many train excursions into Jim Thorpe will have already noticed the newly installed pedestrian crossing connecting the new D&L trail bridge to the town of Jim Thorpe.

The Real Estate team has assisted in other improvements at our Jim Thorpe passenger platform as well. Prior to the Fourth of July festivities in town, the Real Estate team was busy installing antique cast iron railroad signs that are both functional for rail operations and fitting to the nostalgic setting in town.

In addition to Jim Thorpe, we continue to add to the recently completed passenger platform at the Tamaqua Train Station as well. Earlier in the year we completed a new passenger platform at the Tamaqua Station in partnership with Tamaqua Borough. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held in June to celebrate the completion of the platform. Throughout the summer, the real estate team has been adding more antique cast iron railroad signs similar to what we have installed in Jim Thorpe as well.

In addition to the antique signage, the real estate team has also been supporting the Operations, Maintenance of Way, and Signal departments on a mainline milepost signage upgrade project. In addition to replacing damaged or deteriorated milepost signs, this project is remeasuring our mileposts to merge multiple rail lines (from our predecessor railroads) into one continuous Reading & Northern main line mileage. The real estate team starts by remeasuring the miles of the former Reading Railroad, Central Railroad of New Jersey, and Lehigh Valley Railroad portions of our mainline to "reset" the miles of our Mainline. Then working with the Maintenance of Way Department who orders the sign materials, Real Estate installs the new milepost signs at their newly measured locations. Until the signs are ready to be integrated into Operations and Signal Department's systems, the signs are covered. Once the newly measured mileposts have been integrated by Operations and Signals, the signs are ready to be unveiled, and the old mileposts signs are removed. This is another exciting project that involves multiple departments and when completed will have created a continuous mileage system for our Mainline.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The year 2021 was a great year for the Police Department, we kept very busy assisting various departments throughout the year both internal and external. This article will touch on some of the highlights of the past year that included growth within the department, arrests, interactions with the public, and other developments.

As the railroad continued to grow so did the Police Department. Earlier in the previous year, Officer Connor Hedrick was promoted to Detective because he possesses great skills with interviewing people, following up on leads, and

thoroughly handling investigations. He has done a tremendous job in this role. Detective Hedrick has been managing the Facebook page created for the Police Department which debuted in 2021. This page has been instrumental in helping us communicate with Facebook users informing us of such things as trespass issues, reports of graffiti, and tips provided for active investigations. We appreciate all of the help and you can find us on Facebook by searching "Reading and Northern Railroad Police".

Towards the middle of 2021 we hired another officer to assist within the Police Department. We welcomed Angel Brazdzionis who has a couple years under his belt as a police officer. Officer Brazdzionis worked full and part time for several police departments in the Pittston area and was eager to join us at the railroad. He was under the supervision of Cpl. Matthew Fredmonski and Det. Connor Hedrick and was able to immediately assist us here at the department with numerous drug arrests especially in the Pottsville area. He has been a welcomed addition to the department and is looking forward to learning the railroad, so please introduce yourself and say hello when you see him out and about this upcoming year.

We had over 150 arrests including criminal charges, traffic citations, and non-traffic citations in 2021. We also gave out numerous warnings throughout the year. We had several thefts this year regarding railroad items stolen not only from us but also from other railroads. We received tips from numerous people and many items were found at local flea markets throughout the state. With this information we worked with various agencies and police departments across several counties and were able to assist in apprehending the responsible individuals. Various railroad signs were recovered including cast iron signs. We had a theft in which an individual stole an active switch lamp. After we received a tip on the perpetrator's vehicle and with assistance from local police, we were able to locate the vehicle and driver. After an interview the defendant admitted to the theft and took us to where he had the switch lamp which was at his residence in New York. The individual was prosecuted, the lamp was recovered, and restitution was paid to the railroad. We also had train horns and number boards stolen off of locomotives and after that investigation it turned out multiple individuals were involved and it led to the discovery of other thefts which occurred on other railroads as well. We worked with these other railroads and Homeland Security regarding some of the thefts that had occurred. We recovered all items stolen from RBMN and items from other railroads were also recovered. The other railroads were happy with all of the assistance we provided. We have a few active thefts that occurred towards the end of the 2021 that we are still actively pursuing which included catalytic convertor thefts and thefts of tools from one of our work trucks. We are working with several agencies in hopes of arresting the responsible individual(s).

In patrolling the railroad this past year, we came across several people who needed help. Many of these people were homeless and we assisted getting them off of railroad property and into shelters or other places that could provide the help they needed. Several of our officers were also busy attending training classes and participating in charities such as "Shop with a Cop" which RBMN donated money towards to help children get gifts for Christmas while our officers shopped with them. We are also continuing to engage with local communities with Operation Lifesaver program to promote rail safety.

The Police Department also works closely with other departments at RBMN, including the Real Estate Department and Maintenance of Way (MOW) Department providing police protection at roadway crossings for MOW crossing work. Lastly, we were very busy this year assisting the Passenger Department with many different train trips. We had officers assisting with parking at Outer Station and Port Clinton and had officers shadowing trains and provided crossing protection at Jim Thorpe on all weekends throughout the month of October to assist with the many trains coming and leaving the station.

The Police Department is looking forward to a healthy, safe, and happy New Year. ♦

Record Passenger Ridership on the Reading and Northern in 2021

Port Clinton, PA – January 11, 2022

The Reading and Northern Railroad Passenger Department experienced its busiest season ever in 2021, breaking previous records for total amount of passengers carried. Over 225,000 passengers enjoyed the train throughout several locations in the east-central Pennsylvania region. The majority of people rode the Jim Thorpe based Lehigh Gorge trains. In 2019 over 143,000 people rode the rails. In 2020 approximately 90,000 people visited the railroad between August and December.

A more detailed recap of 2021 included approximately 4,500 people riding the ever-popular Bike Trains, which offer guests the chance to view by train the entire Lehigh Gorge and ride bikes back to Jim Thorpe. In October, the Fall

Foliage trains from Reading Outer Station to Jim Thorpe brought roughly 6,300 people to town for the annual Fall Foliage Festival. To end 2021, nearly 30,000 people rode the Santa trains on the Reading and Northern system, a sharp increase from previous years.

With the 2022 season already underway, the railroad is excited to host an even bigger calendar of events with the reintroduction of massive steam locomotive number 2102 later this year. Lehigh Gorge trains depart the historic Jim Thorpe station Saturdays and Sundays through April. From late April until early November, LGSR trains will depart daily, giving tourist and local residents many opportunities to visit the railroad. The year will end with many Santa Claus trains on the schedule.

Reading & Northern Railroad, with its corporate headquarters in Port Clinton, is a privately held railroad company serving over 70 customers in nine eastern Pennsylvania counties (Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Northumberland, Schuylkill, and Wyoming). It has expanded its operations over the last 30+ years and now handles 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 1,400 freight cars, and employs nearly 300 dedicated employees. Reading & Northern has repeatedly been honored as one of the premier railroad in the nation including being named Regional Railroad of the year in 2020 by Railway Age Magazine. ♦

Jim Thorpe Train Rides to Begin January 1, 2022

Port Clinton, PA – December 28, 2021

The Reading & Northern Railroad is pleased to announce that it will start running trains under its Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway banner in Jim Thorpe, PA on January 1, 2022 for the season.

The trains will depart from the Jim Thorpe station on Saturdays and Sundays at 11:00am, 1:00pm, and 3:00pm. Each trip will be 70 minutes round trip, taking the route into the Lehigh Gorge State Park. The trains have clean restrooms available and the cars are heated for the winter. Live narration on the train will point out items of interest as well as providing facts about the surrounding areas during the ride. These trains will be primarily powered by diesel locomotives.

For the beginning part of 2022 at Jim Thorpe,

Reading & Northern will be offering new, additional classes of seating options. In addition to Standard Coach, the First-Class Dome offers panoramic views with comfortable seats. The railroad will introduce Crown Class Coach seating options for the first time. Crown Class Coach features plush, larger, reclining seats - similar to a charter bus.

Tickets will be available for sale over the phone at 570-325-8485, at the ticket booth in Jim Thorpe day of train ride, or on online at www.lgsry.com. Standard Coach tickets are \$17 per adult and \$9 per child aged 3-12. Children aged 2 and under will receive a free ticket. Crown Class Coach tickets will be \$18 for adults, \$10 for children aged 3-12, and children 2 and under receive a free ticket. First Class Dome Car tickets are \$35 per seat – all ages.

Reading & Northern Railroad, with its corporate headquarters in Port Clinton, is a privately held railroad company serving over 70 customers in nine eastern Pennsylvania counties (Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Northumberland, Schuylkill, and Wyoming). It has expanded its operations over the last 30+ years and now handles over 34,000 carloads of freight and 140,000 excursion train riders over 400 miles of track. Reading & Northern operates both freight services and steam and diesel-powered excursion passenger services, owns almost 1,400 freight cars, and employs nearly 300 dedicated employees. Reading & Northern has repeatedly been honored as one of the premier railroad in the nation including being named Regional Railroad of the year in 2020 by Railway Age Magazine. ♦

2021 – Over 225,000 Rode the Rails *A New Record!*

BY: MATT FISHER, PASSENGER GENERAL MANAGER



The open air car awaits another sold out trip on an early October Lehigh Gorge train ride.

The Reading and Northern Railroad hosted 225,175 riders from February through December of 2021.

To put that into perspective, during the pandemic-shortened year of 2020, trains operated between August and December with 90,000 guests. The pre-pandemic 2019 season was the past ridership high at 143,000 riders.

Thus, the extraordinary year of 2021 saw an increase of nearly 82,000 guests from our prior high in 2019! An increase no one at the railroad expected, but a success everyone at the railroad contributed to in some way or another.

These results show that people want to travel and experience a day out and about. Visiting the railroad (whether it be on the Lehigh Gorge Scenic trains, Bike trains, Fall Foliage trains, Santa trains, Pottsville trains, etc.) was a great, inexpensive activity to enjoy, no matter the season or train excursion type. Some of the 2021 ridership highlights include the following:

Lehigh Gorge Trains February through November...

174,845 (2021 was the first year trains ran daily from April through early November)

Lehigh Gorge Santa Trains...

16,546 (up substantially from 2020, several coaches added to get as many families to ride the train and see Santa as possible)

Community Santa Trains...

6,817 (Besides Jim Thorpe and Reading, listed separately, successful Santa trains operated from Tunkhannock, Tamaqua, and Minersville)

Reading Outer Station to Jim Thorpe Fall Foliage Excursions...

6,358 (this number is up from previous years due to adding several coaches to the train purchased this year)

Reading Outer Station Santa Trains...

5,948 (the ridership spike at Reading was from running trips every day the entire week before Christmas. Special thanks to the Operations department on keeping the freight trains running without any passenger train delays at North Reading Yard)

Reading Outer Station to Jim Thorpe Rail Diesel Car Excursions...

4,984 (these RDC trips ran from early May through December. The demand for these trips in November was so great that December dates were added and completely sold out)

Jim Thorpe to White Haven Bike Trains...

4,494 (for the seventh year, Reading and Northern partnered with Jim Thorpe based Pocono Biking to provide this unique trip. The vast majority of people ride the train one way then bike back to Jim Thorpe, however, some also ride the train round trip)

Honorable mention goes to Pottsville and Tamaqua. Sold out RDC trips departed Pottsville Union Station five weekends in October destined for Jim Thorpe. Also, charter trains sponsored by Black Rock Brewery were very popular in the second part of 2021. For the first time, trips also departed Reading Outer Station destined for Pottsville, a great alternative to Jim Thorpe. This happened on three separate dates, being more and more popular each time. People ate at the various restaurants and frequented the attractions including Yuengling and Jerry's Car Museum.

The newly completed station platform at Tamaqua hosted Summerfest steam train rides on Father's Day with very high demand. The platform also hosted several summer concerts. One concert even saw a special RDC trip from Reading stop at Tamaqua. Guests enjoyed the local bands and food

establishments for that event. Also, Tamaqua saw its first Santa train weekend in over three years due to the Reading and Northern platform being open and in place.

The 80,000+ rider spike from our previous all-time high in 2019 is due to the great people that work for the Passenger Department, both directly and indirectly. The Operations Department continually works with the Passenger Department keeping the trains moving on time. The Steam crews for running steam locomotive 425 while working on steam locomotive 2102. The MOW Department responsible for keeping the smooth ride and sending employees ahead of big excursions to make sure the track is passable with no issues. The mechanics maintaining the equipment and for always being on call. The IT Department for keeping the computers running and website looking good. The Police Department for helping with traffic, parking, and any other issues. The Facilities crew for overseeing several station locations. The Finance, HR, and Real Estate departments for allowing all the behind the scene work to get accomplished. The painters and contractors helping with all the other needs to make the guest's experience enjoyable. After all, running a successful train excursion is like planning a wedding. A lot of thought and detail goes into each event.

Jon Barket and his team especially helped accommodate more riders in 2021. Late in 2020, the railroad's Point of Sale provider warned it would no longer be in business. With Mr. Muller's great foresight, it was agreed the railroad would create its own POS (Point of Sale) system. Jon oversaw the creation, implementation, and updates. This is a big deal. Many tourist attractions try making their own POS to save money paying the Eventbrite type businesses of the world. Very few businesses are actually successful in having a reliable in-house POS system. The new railroad system was pushed into place by June. The first few weeks of selling tickets with the system were very stressful due to the big change and high volume of guests visiting the railroad. However, the system had only small bugs and issues, and has been working better than our old provider ever since.

The new sales system allows for people to very easily purchase tickets online and for the railroad to keep every dollar of each online purchase. That said, the railroad has begun to offer online sales for Lehigh Gorge trains and most Reading Outer Station excursions. Once steam locomotive 2102 comes back into service this year, it is essential to have online ordering to accommodate the thousands of future sales. Online sales also are very convenient to the many tourists who take a train ride on short notice. Phone sales from 8:30am to 5:00pm daily are still an option. Also, day-of-trip sales (provided there are tickets still available that day), are also sold at the ticket booth.

The Passenger Department goals for 2022 include continuing growth of ridership at Jim Thorpe (trains already started operating on January 1, and will run every weekend until becoming daily in April), improving ridership in both Pottsville and Tamaqua, and building a new passenger facility in Pittston to host Pittston to Jim Thorpe excursions. More to come in the next newsmagazine edition about Pittston. Finally, be ready to buy tickets to the "Iron Horse Rambles" powered by steam locomotive 2102, much more will be released on steam trips coming soon.

All Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway trip details can be found on www.LGSRY.com. The Reading and Northern trips from Outer Station can be found on www.rbmnr-passenger.com. Also, look for us on social media for the latest updates. Let's hope for a quarter-million riders in 2022! ♦



Car 8, "The Mauch Chunk Club" was placed into service on Santa Trains at Reading Outer Station with availability for the first time to the general public.



Bob Eulo at his finest making families happy.

Paint & Restoration Projects of 2021

BY: MEG PURSEL, PAINT DEPARTMENT MANAGER & MATT FISHER, PASSENGER GENERAL MANAGER

The Passenger Department working closely with the Paint Department and mechanics of the railroad made great progress in 2021.

The passenger mechanics completed more work this year than ever before. Several coaches were converted from friction bearing wheels to roller bearing, along with brake upgrades, additions of scissor gates and diaphragms in the vestibule areas for a safer ride. The Rail Diesel Cars continue to get many upgrades, power and heat were added on two coaches, and much work was completed on the private car fleet.

Over a dozen coaches were purchased in 2021 keeping the mechanics busy on adapting the purchased cars into the Reading and Northern fleet. Jim Raffa, Eric Peters, and the Customer Service Department worked diligently updating management to the movement of these coaches to Reading.

The Paint Department finished many major projects in 2021, but, has much more work to do. Diesel locomotives 5018 and 5019 became a matching pair. Both were finished in a black and gray "Fast Freight" livery. Diesel locomotive 3059 was painted in the famous green and yellow Reading and Northern paint scheme.

Several facilities were updated with fresh paint, including several rooms in Reading Jet Center and the floor of the new wheel true shop in Port Clinton.

The passenger fleet was greatly updated by the Paint Department as well. Over a half dozen coach roofs were sanded, prepped, and painted. Standard coach number 213 was painted red with gold lettering. Car 30, formerly private car 5, was completely redone both inside and out. Car 30 was sitting nearly two years at Schuylkill Haven in need of a new lease on life when in late August it

was decided to put the car back into service. The interior and exterior work was significant, and completed in just under three weeks. It was renamed "Glen Onoko Falls", and placed onto the fall foliage trains the first weekend of October.

Most impressive was the work completed on newly acquired Car 8, the "Mauch Chunk Club". This former Iowa Pacific car was purchased by auction in summer 2021. The car took several weeks to travel from Alamosa, Colorado to Reading, Pennsylvania. The car was interchanged with the Reading and Northern just one week before our busy fall season. At that point, car 30 was just completed in record time, however, the car 8 overhaul took even less time. In total, the refabricating, prepping, cleaning, painting, and updating of this lounge car took only nine work days. It was completed so quickly that many people thought the finished product was a completely different car. The "Mauch Chunk Club" was on eight fall foliage trips and open to the public on Reading Outer Station Santa trains.

In December and January, focused turned to car 7, the "King Coal". This car was also purchased at auction and is quite similar to the "Mauch Chunk Club". The "King Coal" was completely repainted and updated inside. Car 7 will be part of the private car fleet with some exceptions when tickets will be for sale to the general public.

Currently the paint crew is working hard on steam locomotive 2102. To this point the cab of the locomotive along with the tender were completely repainted. Some work remains before its grand reintroduction on the "Iron Horse Rambles". Please look to Reading and Northern Railroad – Passenger Facebook posts for the latest updates in 2022. ♦

A Tribute to Bob Eulo

BY: MATT FISHER, PASSENGER GENERAL MANAGER

Bob Eulo passed away suddenly in December only days after his last appearance as Santa Bob on the Reading and Northern Railroad. Bob is survived by his wife, Mary, of Jim Thorpe. The couple had a great love of Christmas. Bob worked with sick children over the years at summer camps and was asked to play Santa. He enjoyed giving all the children a reason to get better. Since then he has worked at the Hometown Auction and with "Amazing Jim Thorpe" to decorate the park at the Jim Thorpe Train Station and appear as Santa.

Many of us at the Reading and Northern will never forget his interview. He came dressed as Santa to the Port Clinton headquarters and went on to wish everyone in the building a very merry Christmas, handing out candy. That was seven

years ago, and ever since he put smiles on every employee's face. I can't think of many people I enjoyed being around more than Bob. He was always so happy and loved working with the railroad. He had great assistants that dressed as elves over the years. All of them did an exceptional job working with the public.

Most importantly, Bob made tens of thousands of children happy as Santa Claus. He worked mostly in Jim Thorpe on the Lehigh Gorge trains, but also worked in Minersville, Pottsville, Schuylkill Haven, Reading, and Tunkhannock. Tunkhannock being his last appearance on November 27 and 28. Bob, thank you for making us all believe in Santa. ♦



A Tribute to "Corky" Adams

BY: MATT FISHER, PASSENGER GENERAL MANAGER

Tribute to a man who dedicated much of his life to the railroad and the Muller Family.

Raymond A. "Corky" Adams, III

1945-2021

Corky ran crews who worked for the Reading & Northern Railroad and Moon Lake Ranch. He and his crew members painted railcars, engines, bridges and buildings, as well as, general clean-up of newly purchased properties. Corky was a guy who knew how to tackle a job and get it done.

He will be missed dearly. His legacy will live on through the projects he completed.

He is survived by his wife, Christine, his daughter, Jessica and his sister, Carleen.

We extend our gratitude for Corky's dedication to the railroad, which he was a large part of, over a few decades. ♦

Year in Review

2021 Employee Appreciation

BY: CHRISTINA MULLER-LEVAN, VP ADMINISTRATION & SABINE FIDLER, HR ASSISTANT

Reading and Northern Railroad has always been a family-oriented company, a value that Andy Muller, Jr. and his family take pride in and have always maintained. Andy and Carol recently shared this sentiment with their employees, "As 2021 comes to an end, Carol and I find ourselves reflecting on the past few years and how grateful we are for our employees. The growth and success of our business, which we have been so fortunate to attain, would have been impossible without your individual hard work and dedication."

Andy demonstrated this appreciation for his employees at the beginning of 2021 with the addition of two additional company paid holidays bringing the total to eight. The day after Thanksgiving (Black Friday) and Christmas Eve were added, "so that employees could spend more time with their families and friends."

Sharing the company's success with employees is important to Andy. Profit sharing checks are periodically provided to all qualified employees based upon unit train carloads of coal. In 2021 two profit sharing checks were distributed, one in April and one in October of 2021. R&N's Coal Group is confident that the unit train business will pick up in 2022 as the world economy recovers.

Andy's generosity continued through 2021 into November when he gave

each eligible full-time employee a \$500 "Turkey Day" check for the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday. He said, "Since we believe that you all are a gift to us, we are providing a gift to you!"

As 2021 came to an end, Andy had this to say to his employees, "We are all experiencing an increase in cost for just about everything we do. These times have been experienced by very few, if any, of us in our lifetimes. RBMN has its finger on this pulse, and we are very in tune with what is going on in our country and how it impacts our employees. With that said, we are choosing to give a 3% increase to all full time RBMN employees. As always, we can't thank you all enough for everything you do to keep the trains moving."

Despite all the challenges each of us has experienced throughout 2021, we have all persevered both personally and professionally. The following anonymous quote reminded me of my boss, Andy Muller, Jr, Chairman/CEO/Owner of the Reading and Northern Railroad, "The secret to success is good leadership, and good leadership is all about making the lives of your team members or workers better." Andy Muller, Jr., thank you for everything you do for your company and its employees. Happy New Year and continued success in 2022! ♦

Congratulations Chris on your retirement!

Chris Bost retired from our railroad on December 4, 2021 due to some unfortunate health concerns.

Chris began his career in May 1986 when he was hired on the Blue Mountain and Reading Railroad. Chris would spend the next 35 years in various rolls on the railroad, including engineer, conductor and fireman. Chris was an integral part of our steam and passenger program and worked just about every corner of our freight network.

Chris was a fixture on the Reading and Northern and worked with and trained many of the fine folks that are still here today. Chris' expertise and comradery will be sorely missed by his railroad friends and family. All will remember his laid back personality, willingness to teach and how enjoyable it was to work with him during his time at the railroad.

We wish Chris all the best in his retirement and look forward to seeing him along the rails! ♦

Oscar's Adoption

BY: PHIL SCHAEFFER, REAL ESTATE INSPECTOR
& SABINE FIDLER, HR ASSISTANT

Phil Schaeffer played Santa Claus a little early this year for the Van Blargan Family. Here is Phil's story about the events that led to Oscar's adoption.

Phil's daughter's boyfriend, Bryn, was driving through Northern Philadelphia and saw an abandoned dog in a vacant lot. The dog was in poor condition – he was scared and suffering from malnutrition. Bryn walked the street block looking for the dog's owner and decided to go to the police station in case the dog was reported missing. Since no dog had been reported missing, Bryn brought the dog home. Kaley, Phil's daughter, and Bryn contacted over thirty animal rescues and shelters, but none could take in the pup. Bryn took him to the vet for the necessary physical and shots. Bryn and Kaley took care of him for ten days while they looked for the owner but had no luck.

Phil then reached out to Tina Muller-Levan, VP of Administration of the Reading and Northern Railroad, for help. She suggested that an email be sent the company's Human Resources Department in search of a forever home. Brian Van Blargan, Maintenance of Way Foreman, called Phil that evening to set up a meeting for the next day.

On October 21st, Phil took the pup to meet Brian and his family. Brian's wife and daughters were so excited to meet the pup that Brian's youngest already had a name for him...OSCAR! Oscar quickly settled into his new home with his new, loving family.

Phil concluded by saying, "I'd like to thank Brian and his wonderful family for adopting Oscar. It sure beats living on the streets! Also, much thanks to Tina for her time and help. Also, the Human Resources Department for all their help. Kyle, AVP of HR, called me off working hours to make sure I got in contact with Brian. A lot of people got together to save a dog and give him a wonderful, loving home." ♦



Phil Schaeffer, Oscar, Kali Van Blargan, & Lily Van Blargan.

Congratulations!

ON YOUR NEW ARRIVAL



Congratulations go out to Tiffany Howell, Customer Service Specialist-Passenger Department, and her husband, Jordan, on the birth of their first child. Wesley Alexander was born on October 26, 2021, at 2:01 a.m.. He weighed 6 lbs., 14 ozs and was 19 ½" long. Welcome to the Reading and Northern family, Wesley!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| FEB. 2..... SILAS BAUSER | MAR. 2..... STEVE BALTHASER | MAR. 31..... JOLENE BUSER |
| FEB. 3..... ANDREA COLLER | MAR. 3..... MEGHAN FAUST | APR. 2..... SAMUEL HOLLOCK |
| FEB. 4..... BALDWIN DE LA CRUZ | MAR. 3..... DAN PUKSAR | APR. 3..... DANIEL BOYLE |
| FEB. 5..... MICHAEL PAINTER | MAR. 3..... DARNELL YOUNG | APR. 3..... DAREN GESCHWINDT |
| FEB. 7..... JOHN SMOLCZYNSKI, SR. | MAR. 3..... JOSEPH ZIMMERMAN | APR. 3..... DEVIN OSWALD |
| FEB. 8..... MARC AIGELDINGER | MAR. 14..... JAMES GARRAWAY | APR. 5..... ADAM C. STUMP |
| FEB. 8..... JAMES CERULLI | MAR. 14..... EDWARD MOUL | APR. 7..... JARED COLLER |
| FEB. 9..... JAMES COOK | MAR. 15..... ROBERT KEMPES | APR. 12..... AARON CASSEL |
| FEB. 9..... AMY MILLER | MAR. 17..... TODD ABER | APR. 12..... ANTHONY DEBELLIS |
| FEB. 11..... MICHAEL KOHL | MAR. 17..... DERRICK KEENER | APR. 14..... GENE BUECHLE |
| FEB. 12..... BENJAMIN COLE | MAR. 17..... JACK MCCOY | APR. 14..... KARL LAUBENSTINE |
| FEB. 13..... PHILLIP SCHAEFFER | MAR. 18..... MARK HARRIS, JR. | APR. 15..... JOSEPH BROWN |
| FEB. 17..... DAVID EVELY | MAR. 19..... MARY CULP | APR. 15..... AARON SNYDER |
| FEB. 19..... TIMOTHY BILLET | MAR. 20..... NATHAN BISSEY | APR. 15..... JENNIFER WOODSHICK |
| FEB. 21..... KENNETH MILLER | MAR. 20..... MATTHEW MIZIKOSKI | APR. 16..... JEFFREY BAVITZ |
| FEB. 22..... CHARLES (CHIP) ALLEN | MAR. 22..... RICHARD BERNHARDT | APR. 18..... EDWARD PHILBIN |
| FEB. 22..... TYLER GLASS | MAR. 23..... WALTER GREUSEL | APR. 19..... AARON MULLER |
| FEB. 24..... JONATHAN BARKET | MAR. 24..... ENOS BLEILER | APR. 19..... MARK SCHMEHL |
| FEB. 26..... TAYLOR HAUPT | MAR. 24..... RYAN RUPPRECHT | APR. 20..... BOYD LENICH |
| FEB. 26..... CAROL MULLER | MAR. 25..... SHELLEY HALL | APR. 21..... GREGORY ZELINSKY |
| FEB. 28..... STEPHEN GILBERT | MAR. 27..... WILLIAM KEIM | APR. 25..... ADAM BOAK |
| FEB. 29..... JOHN SMOLCZYNSKI | MAR. 29..... KAITLYN HELBERT | APR. 30..... EDWARD J. KOPECK, III |
| MAR. 1..... MATTHEW FREDMONSKI | MAR. 29..... ELIZABETH NEIFERT | |
| MAR. 1..... TYLER LEWIS | MAR. 29..... BRANDON WAGNER | |

RBMN *Anniversaries*

20 YEARS



January 10, 2002
Dale Homm
Backhoe Op. - Subcontractor.

15 YEARS



January 9, 2007
Travis Prevost
Engineer - Op.



January 21, 2007
Michael Kohl
Engineer - Op.

10 YEARS



November 8, 2011
Eugene Boyle
Conductor - Op.



December 19, 2011
Mario Carannante
AVP Info. Technology



December 27, 2011
Adam Stump
Locomotive Mechanic
- Mechanical



January 3, 2012
Matthew Fredmonski
Corporal - Police



January 30, 2012
John Brown
Divis. Foreman - MOW

5 YEARS



December 27, 2016
Dakota Reber
Asst. Foreman - MOW

3 YEARS



November 26, 2018
Jennifer Woodeshick
Cust. Serv. Mgr. -
Customer Service



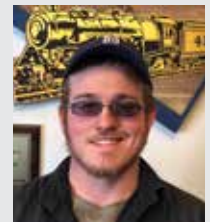
January 14, 2019
Zachary Baker
Signal Maintainer -
Signals & Comm.



January 21, 2019
Taylor Haupt
Real Estate Proj. Mgr.
- Real Estate



January 22, 2019
Nicholas Suruskie
Conductor - Op.



January 28, 2019
Bretz Fetterolf
Locomotive Mechanic
- Mechanical

1 YEAR



January 25, 2021
Luke Weight
Mechanical Logistics
Coordinator



January 29, 2021
Brian Van Blargan
Reading Divis. Foreman
- Maintenance of Way



December 14, 2020
Michael Patton
Line Service Tech. -
Reading Jet Center



January 15, 2021
Chase Capron
Line Service Tech. -
Reading Jet Center

WELCOME ABOARD

New Employees!



Daniel Webber

Daniel Webber was recently hired as a Trackman within our Maintenance of Way Department. He attended Blue Mountain High School and Schuylkill Technology Center. Prior to working at RBMNR, Daniel was a Line Lead at Amazon for nine months. Daniel is in the middle of restoring his square body Chevy during his free time.



John Jennings

John Jennings was recently hired as a Conductor within our Operations Department. He attended Salisbury Township High School. Prior to working at RBMNR, John worked at Wegmans for two years. John enjoys art and drawing.



Christopher Webb

Christopher Webb was recently hired as a Line Service Technician with the Reading Jet Center. He attended Parkside High School and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Prior to working at RJC, Christopher worked at Millennium Aviation as a Line Service/QC for eight months. He says he is an Eagle Scout and has his pilot's license.



Joshua Hassler

Joshua Hassler was recently hired as a Trackman within our Maintenance of Way Department. He attended Hamburg Area High School and UTI Extra. Prior to working at RBMNR, Joshua worked at First Choice Services as a Maintenance/Lawn Caretaker for 3 ½ years.



Colm Phillips

Colm Phillips was recently hired as a Conductor within our Operations Department. He attended O'Connell's NS in Dublin, Ireland. Prior to working at RBMNR, Colm was in the Irish Army for thirteen years. He also worked at Norfolk Southern as a Locomotive Engineer for ten years and at Amtrak for one year. Colm and his family enjoy mountain biking and watching rugby.



Rebecca Ward

Rebecca Ward was recently hired as an Air Concierge with the Reading Jet Center. She attended Cocalico Senior High School. Prior to working at RJC, Rebecca worked at Wellspan Health as a Physician's Office Assistant for one year. She owned a third generation Dodge Cummins diesel truck.



Mark Cain

Mark Cain was recently hired as an Electromechanical Locomotive Technician within our Mechanical Department. He attended Cedar Crest High School and Penn State Berks. Prior to working at RBMNR, Mark was a Locomotive Electrician with Norfolk Southern for over thirteen years.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

BY: KYLE BARRELL, AVP HUMAN RESOURCES

Congratulations Sabine!



I am happy to introduce Sabine Fidler, HR Assistant, as our Winter 2022, "Spotlight Employee". Sabine has been with RBMN since June 2016, where she plays a pivotal role within the RBMN HR Team as she covers the front desk, manages paid time off for RBMN and the Reading Jet Center/ Reading Jet Maintenance, assists all departments with miscellaneous office requests and tracks and manages the FRA screening results.

Prior to joining RBMN, Sabine (pronounced Sa-bean'-a), worked as a Special Education teacher in the Tamaqua Area School District for 22 years before retiring in 2015. After her career in education, Sabine worked for R & R Auto Group, of Schuylkill Haven, as a Receptionist/Office Assistant.

Sabine was born and raised in Ontario, Canada, and immigrated to the United States in 1974 with her parents and two siblings. Once in the U.S., Sabine graduated from Blue Mountain High School in Orwigsburg in 1979. She went on to receive her undergraduate and graduate degrees in Elementary Education and Special Education from Kutztown and Wilkes Universities in 1993, 1998, and 2005.

Sabine currently resides in Orwigsburg with her husband, David, where her son, Matthew, and daughter-in-law, Andrea, are her pride and joy. Sabine would love some pets but is highly allergic to them which we can attest to when Tina Muller-Levan brings her contingency of dogs to PN, Sabine's sneezing fit begins.

Sabine is always on the go and loves to hang out with Matt and Andrea, as well as going hiking, biking, kayaking, running, hanging out at any available beach or pool and running iron steps with Erica Lutz when they get the chance.

Sabine shared, "Every day I try to live my best life which includes keeping a positive attitude, maintaining a sense of humor, staying active and healthy, and appreciating the people and places that are important to me. Oh, and I love disco music...it's my jam!!!

Sabine is being recognized by Kyle Barrell, AVP- Human Resources, who said, "Sabine has a spark in her personality that most people don't have- even when people pronounce her name wrong (LOL). She is kind-hearted and is always willing to lend a hand but is firm when she needs to be to get the job done. Sabine is always willing to add her perspective to the wide variety of HR topics we discuss and has a great rapport with RBMN employees. I'm grateful for her RBMN knowledge and appreciative of her get-stuff-done approach with the HR team."

As spotlight employee, Sabine will receive a gift card for \$100 to the restaurant of her choice and she has decided to patronize the Nutty Pear in Orwigsburg, with her gift.

Congratulations Sa-bean'-a!

Reading & Northern's Family Recipes

Chicken Marsala

This is one of AVP of IT, Mario Carannante's favorite dishes that he's been making for a while now. One of the things he likes about this dish is being able to make it all in a single pan, provided the pan is large enough. Mario says, "whenever I am in the kitchen, one of my goals is to make as few dishes as possible. My wife and I thoroughly enjoy this recipe, kids not so much as they are not fans of mushrooms. You can't win them all, I suppose." Mario hopes that you get a chance to make this recipe and enjoy it with your family.

Ingredients

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves (about 1½ pounds), pounded to ¼ inch thickness
- ⅔ cup flour
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 tsp. dried parsley
- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tbsp. butter
- ½ pound fresh button mushrooms, cleaned and sliced (portabella or shitake work, as well)
- 4 tbsp. marsala wine, more as needed (any quality dry white wine will work)
- 3 Tbsp. chicken stock, more as needed
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley (optional, for garnish)

Directions

- 1.) In a bowl, mix 2/3 cup all-purpose flour, pinch of salt, pinch of black pepper, and a teaspoon of dried parsley.
- 2.) Dredge the chicken in the flour mixture, evenly coating the chicken. To get a thicker coating on the chicken, continue this step a couple times.
- 3.) In a larger skillet over medium-high heat, add 1 tablespoon butter and 3 tablespoons olive oil. Cook chicken evenly for a few minutes on each side until nicely browned.
- 4.) Lower the heat to medium. Add in ½ pound sliced mushrooms. Sauté mushrooms until they are tender and brown. Add in about 4 tablespoons of marsala wine. Let wine reduce a bit and add 3 tablespoons chicken stock. Add more wine or broth to taste. Continue to cook until the liquid is reduced, and sauce is slightly thicker.
- 5.) Remove the chicken and plate with some sauce from the pan and garnish with fresh parsley. Serve with your favorite pasta and vegetable. Sprinkle some Parmigiano Reggiano on top and enjoy!

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

RBMN AT WORK



Michael "Breezy" Bischak keeping his conductor skills sharp at Mehoopany on the PIME.



Jeff Knadler and Shawn Billings preparing to depart Pittston Yard with loaded sand for Tunkhannock Transload.



Mark Harris and Ben Leonti stenciling open top hoppers in the Car Shop.



Charles Trusdell and Greg Zelinsky working on putting another engine in service.



Conductor Trainees in class at Port Clinton. (left to right) Colm Phillips, Josh Cascarella, Jennifer Krieg, John Jennings, Tim Matushoneck, and instructors Kyle Sanders and John Smolczynski



Jim Somers getting the job done.



Jerry Binder servicing coal fleet in the Car Shop.

RBMN AT WORK



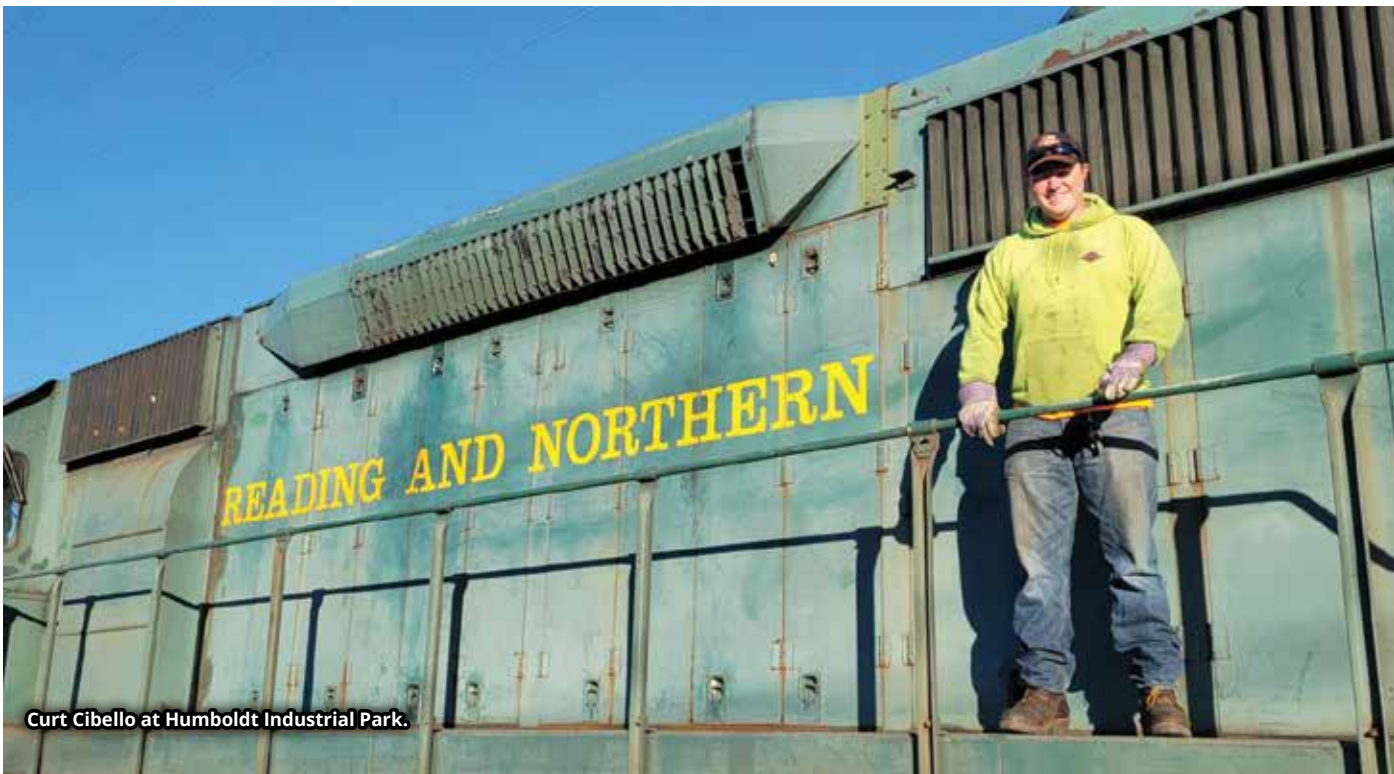
Engineer Ian McKeown explaining information to a cab rider.



Gene Boyle conducting the QAMC at Locust Summit.



Ron Papiercavich coupling to empty boxcars on the Scranton Running Track.



Curt Cibello at Humboldt Industrial Park.



Travis Prevost at the throttle on PISB.



Dumping ballast with Russ Monroe, Matt Mizikoski and Shawn Slusser on the mainline at milepost 170.



Evan Kerr pulling storage train off the Middleport Running Track.

RBMN AT WORK



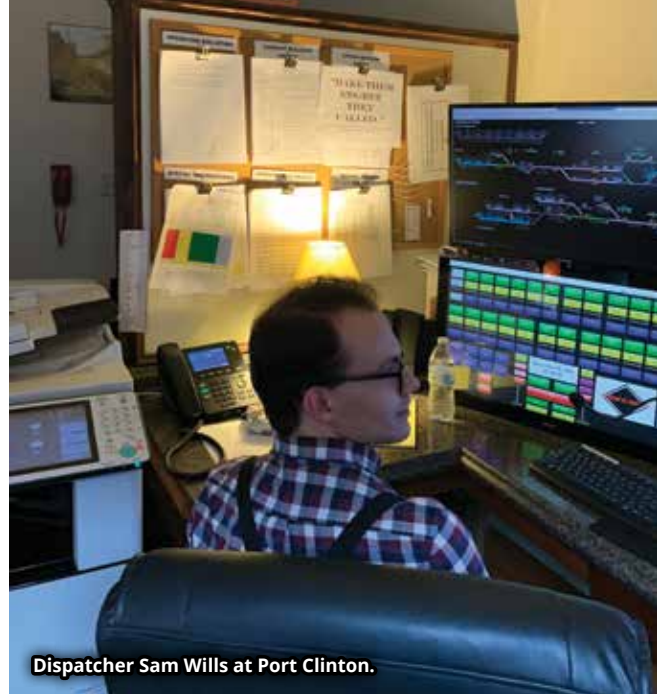
Chris Peters topping off the 3055 with sand at Port Clinton.



Sam Hollock at Humboldt to serve our customers.



Engineer Tom Moraski and Conductor Spencer Buckingham working the LGSR.



Dispatcher Sam Wills at Port Clinton.



Eric Slekovac working at Port Clinton.



Ed Philbin working at Penobscot.

Red Creek Wildlife *Wildlife In Need*

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



Michael and Melissa Descant with their two children, Maggie and Nikolai.

Red Creek Wildlife Center's non-profit mission has three parts: Rehabilitation of Pennsylvania wildlife, Public education about wildlife, and Helping expand wildlife rehabilitation services by providing training and classes. Over the past thirty years, we have consistently expanded on these missions in hopes of saving as many animals as we can.

While Red Creek's animal admission numbers have climbed to well over 4,000 animals each year, additional animals are getting the help they need through our training and outreach program.

Becoming a wildlife rehabilitator in Pennsylvania is a complicated process. An individual needs to pass state-issued written tests and needs to be sponsored by another wildlife rehabilitator, as well as a veterinarian. Red Creek supplies the training, both through classes and hands-on volunteering. We also mentor and sponsor individuals applying for a permit. This past year, Red Creek helped two new wildlife centers open.

Betsy Shank has wanted to become a wildlife rehabilitator for many years. For eleven years, she has worked under numerous wildlife rehabilitators and had gained a vast amount of experience, but she couldn't get through the red tape to venture out on her own. Betsy is a specialist in squirrel rehabilitation but needed training in other mammal species to pass the state written exam. She also needed a sponsor. Within months after offering our help, Betsy opened Acorn Acres Wildlife Rehabilitation in Millersville, Lancaster County. She focuses on squirrels, cottontail rabbits, and woodchucks. Betsy has also become an active member of the wildlife rehabilitation community, helping others learn optimal squirrel care throughout the state.

Melissa Descant and her husband Michael have been active in wildlife and domestic animal rescue for over a decade. Pennsylvania natives, they lived in Tennessee for several years while Michael completed his veterinary training.

Then, they moved to Berks County in the hopes of establishing a wildlife center here.

Red Creek helped Melissa with her training and sponsored her wildlife rehabilitation permit. The couple opened Cricket Wildlife Center in Alburts in the spring of 2021. Rescuing wildlife is a family affair for the Descants. Melissa runs the wildlife center while Michael attends to the veterinary aspects of their work. Their two children, Maggie and Nikolai, help with feeding and cleaning and learn about caring for all animals. Michael is also the attending veterinarian for Lehigh County humane Society.

Cricket Wildlife Center accepts all species of Pennsylvania wildlife and admitted just under six hundred animals in their first year.

Another organization trying to help wildlife in Pennsylvania is (WIN) Wildlife in Need. Founded by Susan Dearment, a retired wildlife rehabilitator from the Erie area, WIN helps capture injured wildlife and transports the animals to wildlife centers. The organization is all-volunteer and helps wildlife throughout the state.

Red Creek has had an active field rescue team for many years and was one of the first centers to partner with WIN. I joined the board of directors at the beginning of 2021 to help the organization grow.

In 2021, WIN received 1,900 calls, with 60% resulting in an animal needing rescue or transport. Today WIN has 160 volunteers who serve as dispatchers, couriers, or capture and transport permittees assisting wildlife through the state.

Pennsylvania is fortunate to have many passionate people dedicated to helping wildlife in distress. Everyone at Red Creek is devoted to supporting these individuals, extending our ability to help wildlife far beyond our own reach. ♦



Betsy Shank, with Snags the education gray squirrel.



WIN volunteers rescue an injured goose.



WIN volunteer, Mark Catalano, rescuing an injured cooper's hawk.



WIN volunteer - Janine Tancreti rescues a fox trapped in a basement.

Wellness Corner

BY: MEGHAN FAUST, RECEPTIONIST

I'd Cook If I Could Find the Can Opener

When we hear the word “diet,” a few things typically run through our minds: weight loss, starvation, or depriving ourselves of the foods we enjoy, just to name a few. We don't often think about the health benefits of simply changing our existing eating habits. Specific diets can help lower cholesterol, control blood pressure, reduce dementia, and prevent heart attacks, strokes, and type 2 diabetes.

Keto, Paleo, Whole30, and intermittent fasting are popular diet trends for weight loss right now, but most of them are unsustainable and do not offer much in the way of living a longer, healthier life. The Mediterranean, flexitarian, DASH, MIND, and Ornish diets are specifically designed to manage existing health conditions and prevent new conditions from arising, as well as help with weight loss.

One of the most popular, and healthiest, diets is the Mediterranean diet. It is based on the foods that people in countries like Greece and Italy ate in the 1950's, who had a much lower risk of heart disease than those in the U.S. Studies have shown that this diet can help prevent strokes, type 2 diabetes, heart attacks, and premature death. By eating a foundation of plant-based foods and using healthy fats and oils instead of butter, you can reduce inflammation and reduce the risk of heart disease.

- **Eat:** Vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, legumes, potatoes, whole grains, breads, herbs, spices, fish, seafood, and extra virgin olive oil.
- **Eat in moderation:** Poultry, eggs, cheese, and yogurt.
- **Eat only rarely:** Red meat.
- **Don't eat:** Sugar-sweetened beverages, added sugars, processed meat, refined grains, refined oils, and other highly processed foods.



Tied for number two on the best overall diets is the flexitarian diet. As the name indicates, it is a “flexible vegetarian” diet with a cross between full vegan and vegetarian while allowing you to eat animal products every so often. In the flexitarian diet, you focus on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and legumes, but you can still enjoy meat. By limiting your intake of animal products, you will lose weight, have a decreased risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes, and possibly prevent cancer. Always try to eat the least processed, most natural forms of food as you will not need to count calories for weight loss this way. If you think that this diet is something that interests you or would be beneficial to you, be sure to follow these general guidelines:

- **Load up on:** Fruits, vegetables, plant proteins (beans and tofu), whole grains (brown rice, quinoa, oats, barley), plant-based milk (dairy milk is OK in moderation), eggs, dairy (cheese, yogurt, or dairy alternatives), nuts, nut butters, seeds, healthy fats, oils, herbs, and spices.
- **Limit:** Meat and poultry (lean cuts of beef, chicken or turkey breasts), fish (salmon, cod, tilapia, shrimp), and anything with added sugar or refined carbohydrates.

A newer diet with such great health benefits that it tied the flexitarian diet, is the DASH diet. DASH stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension and it is designed to help treat or prevent high blood pressure in as little as two weeks. It can also lower your lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol levels. The premise of the DASH diet is to lower your sodium intake, therefore reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke. The average American consumes 3,400 milligrams of sodium or more each day. The standard DASH diet limits sodium intake to 2,300 milligrams a day and a lower version of the diet restricts it to 1,500 mg a day. DASH is rich in vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. On this diet, be sure to choose food that is rich in potassium, calcium, magnesium, fiber, and protein, and low in saturated fat and sodium. Do not use added salt when cooking rice, pasta, or hot cereal, choose fresh or frozen skinless poultry, fish, and lean cuts of meat, and opt for plain fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables. Be sure to note that as you start to cut back on high-sodium foods, it may take time for your palate to adjust to the lower sodium diet.

If brain health is a concern or dementia runs in your family, the MIND diet may be a great option for you. MIND stands for Mediterranean-DASH intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay. The diet aims to reduce dementia and the decline in brain health that often occurs as people get older by combining foods from the Mediterranean and DASH diets that have been shown to benefit brain health. While there aren't any set guidelines for how to follow the diet, researchers say to simply eat more of the ten foods that are encouraged and eat less of the five foods that the diet recommends you limit. You should try to eat less than 1 tablespoon of butter or margarine daily, and cheese, red meat, and fried food should be limited to less than once per week. Pastries and sweets should be limited to no more than four times a week. On the contrary, the diet recommends you eat plenty of the following foods:

- Green, leafy vegetables
- All other vegetables (choose non-starchy vegetables)
- Berries
- Nuts
- Olive oil
- Whole grains
- Fish
- Beans
- Poultry
- Wine (aim for no more than one glass daily)



One of the lesser-known diets that has been proven to reverse the progression of heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and prostate cancer is the Ornish diet. This diet also lengthens telomeres, the ends of our chromosomes that regulate aging, therefore beginning to reverse aging at a cellular level. The general rule for the Ornish diet is to consume foods as they're found in nature, limit bad carbs, eat mostly plant-based proteins, and get approximately four grams of good fats a day. Like the other diets, plants and plant proteins are the foundation of meals. The Ornish diet allows no more than 10% of calories from fat. Because fat contains minerals and nutrients that our body needs, the Ornish diet recommends a low-dose multivitamin and mineral supplement with B-12, and fish oil.

While genetics play a role in our health, the larger factor is our diet, and by making some changes to the things we already eat, we can stave off certain illnesses and diseases. These diets can be lifestyle changes, but they are extremely beneficial to our health and well-being. In general, the key to living a longer and healthier life is to eat foods as we find them in nature and avoid foods that are processed or have added sugar or fat.

For more information, visit:

<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/mediterranean-diet-meal-plan>

<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/what-is-the-flexitarian-diet>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/dash-diet/art-20048456>

<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/mind-diet>

<https://www.ornish.com/proven-program/nutrition>

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Our CAT material handler machine makes quick work of unloading steel coils at West Hazleton.