

R & N Magazine

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

WINTER 2016 | VOL. 18, ISSUE 1

BREAKING NEWS

**READING NORTHERN & LEHIGH GORGE SCENIC RAILWAY PASSENGER TRAINS
CARRIED OVER 100,000 RIDERS IN 2015!**

WATCH FOR DETAILS IN THE NEXT READING NORTHERN MAGAZINE



RBMN Acquires Humboldt Industrial Park

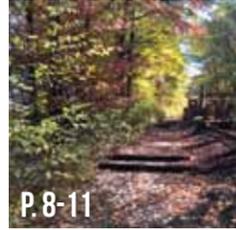
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BY: WAYNE MICHEL, PRESIDENT



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Its that time again. Writing my year end column before Thanksgiving for an issue that will come out in January 2016. Writing this I put myself in a holiday mood. I think of the lights and music of the season. And since I love movies and TV I think of holiday classics. **Miracle on 34th Street, It's a Wonderful Life, A Chistmas Story** and for pure laughs **Elf**. One of my favorites growing up was **Mr. Magoo's Christmas Carol**. I didn't realize it till I started to research this column but this tv special was the first time the world was introduced to Mr. Magoo. However, it certainly was not the first time we met Ebenezer Scrooge. In fact, Scrooge was introduced to the world by Charles Dickens in 1843.

And with his introduction the world welcomed the term "bah humbug" into our lexicon.

There is something about those words that always amuses me. Probably the dismissive tone towards all things bright and beautiful and sweet and loving. The tone that we all know will be changed by the end of the tale.

But this year when "Bah Humbug" is spoken my mind does an alliteration. "Bah Humbug" becomes "Ah Humboldt". For this is the season of Humboldt.

After over fifteen years of conversation between RBMN and CAN DO, the regions most successful industrial development organization and the owner of the Humboldt Industrial Park, RBMN finally took over ownership of the rail line in the Park and began rail service on January 1, 2016.

It is appropriate at this time of year to recount our blessings and good fortune and our Humboldt acquisition certainly would be counted in their number.

Candidly while we always thought RBMN should serve Humboldt, and in fact all of Hazleton, our friends at Norfolk Southern felt otherwise. And since NS owned the line going to Hazleton we had agreed to sit on the sideline and watch this park grow in our backyard.

For me this was especially bittersweet since in 1995 while I was managing the Conrail line sale program Conrail had decided to sell the Hazleton lines to RBMN. However, before Conrail could get around to that sale NS and CSX purchased Conrail and split its assets.

Fast forward to 2011 and CAN DO decides it wants to get out of the railroad business; it wants to sell the 7.5 miles of railroad it owns at Humboldt. It approached NS, which decided it was not interested in buying the lines, perhaps because it already had an exclusive contract to operate through 2016. Shortly thereafter CAN DO was approached by a shortline entrepreneur seeking to purchase the lines. When NS gave CAN DO the green light to pursue a sale CAN DO asked RBMN if we would be interested. After checking to make sure NS was okay with our acquisition interest we agreed to bid on the property. Ultimately we were the successful bidder and in June 2012 RBMN entered an agreement to purchase the tracks.

Since NS had a contract to operate on the tracks through 2016, we began performing track maintenance while NS continued to operate. We also began talking with NS to arrange for a smooth transition. Assisted by CAN DO, the shippers and most notably Congressman Louis Barletta, we were able to come to an agreement with NS to allow us to begin operations on January 1, 2016.

In order to ensure an efficient operation NS also agreed to allow us to interchange the Humboldt traffic at our existing Reading interchange. Tyler Glass has written an article detailing how we will serve Humboldt and we have a map showing the route over our newly renamed Hazleton Branch. Erik Yoder details the work we have done this year to ensure that the Hazleton Branch is ready to handle the estimated 5000 carloads of new RBMN business.

Dan Gilchrist and Dennis Shaffer have led the effort to reach out to each Humboldt customer and help them design a guaranteed service schedule that meets their needs. We believe these customers will see a greatly improved service with a substantial reduction in transit time for their inbound materials.

Included in this issue is a map of the Humboldt Industrial Park, a brief overview of the customers, and an advertisement for one of the many excellent rail-served locations in the park. RBMN and CAN DO will be working hand in hand to aggressively market these sites.

In preparation of this acquisition RBMN has hired over a dozen new employees. In

addition to new conductors and engineers, we needed track people, car repair mechanics and customer service representatives. All of this has been done to make sure that the Humboldt customers receive our high quality guaranteed service while our existing customers see no degradation in their excellent service.

As this year comes to a close we can celebrate not only our expansion to Humboldt but also completion of another record breaking year in both our freight and passenger business. While most of the rail industry suffered serious declines in business, our freight business was up over thirty percent. And our passenger business showed a similar gain as we should exceed 100,000 visitors this year.

Hard work, commitment to our employees, focus on our customers; these are the elements of our continued success. Thanks to our dedicated workforce we remain not only on track but ready to start a new track in 2016. And for that we say "Ah Humboldt". ♦



THE CONDUCTOR.

COVER PHOTO
W. E YODER TIE GANG INSTALLING TIES ON HAZLETON LINE JUST SOUTH OF MAIN STREET QUAKAKE MP 1.84. AS THE GANG INSTALLS NEW TIES, 18" DOUBLE SHOULDER TIE PLATES ARE ALSO INSTALLED ON EACH TIE.

EDITORS

JOLENE FAY • FRANCES KARYCKI



To: All Media

From: CAN DO, Inc. and Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad

For additional information, please contact Precision Design at 570-455-3533 or Reading & Northern President Wayne Michel at 610 562-0227.

Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad to take over service to Humboldt Industrial Park on Jan. 1

Hazleton, PA – Nov. 24, 2015

Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad will take over ownership of the rail infrastructure at the Humboldt Industrial Park beginning Jan. 1, 2016 through an agreement with the park's owner, CAN DO, Inc., according to CAN DO President Kevin O'Donnell and Andrew Muller, Jr., owner and CEO of the rail company.

In addition to owning and maintaining all of the track, Reading & Northern will also provide service to all of the customers in the industrial park.

CAN DO entered into an agreement in 2012 with Reading & Northern to take ownership of the more than seven miles of rail line inside Humboldt at the end of 2016. As a result of negotiations between the park's current rail provider, Norfolk Southern Railroad Company (NS), and Reading & Northern, the timeline was accelerated to Jan. 1, 2016, O'Donnell said.

Reading & Northern is the largest privately owned railroad company in Pennsylvania and was the only railroad to be named Regional Railroad of the Year three times by Railway Age Magazine, receiving the honor in 2002, 2011 and 2015.

Muller said Reading & Northern plans to run a scheduled service, but will provide additional rail switches when business needs warrant them. The company will also offer railcar storage and personalized service for each business customer. Muller noted that all traffic to Humboldt Industrial Park will be received at Reading and move directly to Humboldt via Tamaqua and that no traffic to Humboldt should move through downtown Hazleton.

"Each customer will have their own local account representative who can assist them with all their rail needs and any issues that arise," said Wayne Michel, Reading & Northern's President. "At Reading & Northern the customer comes first and Humboldt customers will learn what our existing customers already know... our service is superior to that of any other railroad. Every Humboldt customer will be visited at least twice before we take over service. During those visits we will get to understand their needs. We will then design a service plan that guarantees every customer a service window and up to six-days-a-week service that meets their needs," Michel said.

O'Donnell said CAN DO is excited to have Reading & Northern as a partner in its economic development efforts to attract new industry to Greater Hazleton. "Rail service is critical to many companies and has been instrumental in the growth of our industrial parks. The new provider promises to be an asset in our future growth."

"As for potential customers, we will follow-up on all opportunities with our award-winning industrial development team. Reading & Northern, like CAN DO, has a national reputation for its innovative approach to economic development. We have won national awards for our efforts to attract business to the railroad," Michel said. "We make investments in plant and equipment and we assist customers with their development. We also work to make rail infrastructure decisions easy by charging less for the needed rail work and being more flexible on track design. We have a strong team focused on industrial development and that team will work hand in hand with CAN DO."

CAN DO constructed the 7.5 miles of track in its Humboldt Industrial Park, which is the region's largest rail-served industrial park. CAN DO launched the rail service more than 40 years ago with a \$165,000 matching grant from the Appalachia Regional Commission and has extended the track numerous times since. Currently, more than 15 industries are dependent on rail service to the park. In 2013, 4,569 rail cars moved through Humboldt and the number increased to 4,633 last year.

Reading & Northern is known nationwide for its commitment to working closely with economic development organizations. Michel said the company is proud to continue this approach in its partnership with CAN DO.

Reading & Northern Railroad, with its corporate headquarters in Port Clinton, serves major businesses in nine Eastern Pennsylvania counties. It handles freight to and from all points in the United States, as well as import and export traffic, and transports a variety of materials including anthracite coal, plastics, wine, lumber, paper, grains, chemicals, metals and sand.

Reading and Northern owns more than 1,000 rail cars and 35 locomotives and employs more than 200 people. Through its sister company, Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway, passenger excursion service is offered. This year more than 90,000 guests will ride on the LGSR trains. Reading & Northern can be found on the web at www.rbmnr.com. ♦

Reading & Northern Railroad Takes Over Rail Service to the Humboldt Industrial Park



BY: DAN GILCHRIST, EXECUTIVE VP MARKETING & SALES

The Humboldt Industrial park is one of the premier industrial parks in the entire state of PA with outstanding infrastructure, an excellent location, great highway access, outstanding rail service, and the best industrial development team in the region.

There are about 69 companies located in the park and currently there are eleven active rail customers. There are also nine open sites with rail access ready to be developed and also about nine current facilities with inactive rail sidings that can be started up again. With Reading and Northern's aggressive business development focus and Can Do's Industrial development expertise the potential growth for this location is tremendous.

The Reading and Northern Railroad is very pleased to welcome our new customers at the Humboldt Industrial Park to the Reading and Northern family. These include:

Cargill Cocoa and Chocolate in Humboldt North.

First Quality Nonwovens Inc., who is part of the First Quality Group of Companies and manufactures high performance nonwoven fabrics for the Hygiene, Medical & Industrial Markets. First Quality Nonwovens has been located in the Humboldt Industrial Park as a successful manufacturer for over 17 years and currently has over 300 employees.

Freedom Corrugated produces corrugated sheets and containers. The Hazleton plant employs 100 people and is one of the largest and most modern plants of its kind in the USA. Freedom Corrugated receives boxcars of Kraft paper.

Graham Packaging

International Paper is a global company involved in all segments of producing and marketing paper and related products. We already serve IP's Mt. Carmel plant so the Hazleton plant will be the second IP facility to be served by Reading Northern. IP's Hazleton plant employs 107 people and produces corrugated sheets and containers. They receive boxcars of rolled Kraft paper.

Karchner Logistics and Distribution is a local family owned company with several warehouse and distribution facilities in the Hazleton area. Karchner provides warehousing, trucking and logistics services for its customers. Karchner's employs 86 people and operates three facilities in Humboldt. They currently receive boxcars of paper and other commodities at their food grade and paper warehouse for distribution throughout the region.

Office Depot /Office Max is a nationally known retailer. The Hazleton Distribution Center is responsible for warehousing and distributing a full line of products to their retail stores in the Northeast and Midwest United States. Two Hundred people are employed at the Hazleton facility. Office Depot / Office Max receives boxcars of copier paper at the Hazleton Distribution Center.

Pretium Packaging has 12 locations across North America and is headquartered in Chesterfield MO. They are a major producer of plastic containers for a wide range of consumer products. The Hazleton facility employs about 150 people and produces plastic bottles for the food and beverage industry.

Pro Con, with headquarters in Appleton, WI is a paper converting, warehousing

and distribution company serving the paper industry. The Hazleton facility which employees 115 people is one of five Pro Con locations in the United States. The Hazleton facility receives boxcars of rolled paper.

Pretium Packaging has 12 locations across North America and is headquartered in Chesterfield MO. They are a major producer of plastic containers for a wide range of consumer products. The Hazleton facility employs about 150 people and produces plastic bottles for the food and beverage industry.

Quad/Graphics is a leading global provider of print and media solutions that is redefining print in today's multichannel media world by helping marketers and publishers capitalize on print's ability to complement and connect with other media channels. The Hazleton plant, which employs more than 200 people, prints over 75 million directories and guide books annually using the most advanced print-production technology available.

Vita Line, a subsidiary of American Nutrition, is a manufacturer of high-quality dry dog and cat food producing products for some well know pet food brands. The Hazleton, PA plant employs 70 people. Vita Line receives dried grain and other raw ingredients used to produce their pet food. ♦

Humboldt Industrial Park

East Site 103



For Sale
46.8 acres
 440 Forest Road
 Hazle Township, PA 18202

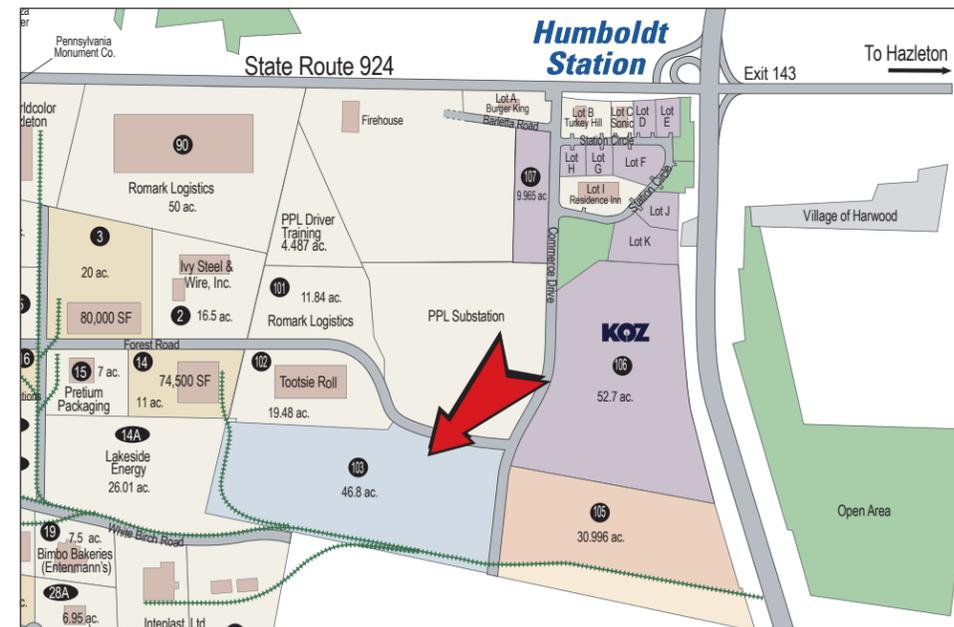


Industrial site suited for
 Manufacturing / Distribution / Warehouse



*State and Local Taxes
 abated through 2017!*

Humboldt Industrial Park East



OPERATIONS

BY: TYLER GLASS, EXECUTIVE VP OPERATIONS

As Wayne discussed in his article, we knew for several years that the day would come that we would be taking over the operation of CAN DO's Humboldt Industrial Park. Since then we've had many internal meetings on the transition to ensure that all departments were in sync so we could make a smooth transition for the railroad and the customers.

From the operating point of view, there are multiple ways to determine what is needed to serve the customers. So we listened to what the customers had to say, we hired the industrial park and we rode with the Norfolk Southern crews.

During our meetings with the customers we were able to get a feel for what level of service they received in recent years and what service they preferred going forward. We were also able to determine what car storage needs they had for cars coming for various suppliers or for cars that could not be delivered directly due to constraints at the facility or fluctuations in traffic. For car storage needs we were able to determine that we had plenty of room on hand at the industrial park and any overflow could be handled at North Reading Yard or Tamaqua.

Multiple hirail trips also were invaluable to give us a feel for the lay of the land and answer basic operations questions. This park is set up like a dream. Multiple runarounds and relatively new infrastructure was not something we are used to when we take over segments of railroad. In decades past Conrail

sold RBMN some tired pieces of railroad so the infrastructure at Humboldt was a real treat and was truly appreciated.

By far, one of the best ways to understand the operations in the park is to ride with a train crew serving the customers. Norfolk Southern was generous and allowed RBMN to have a representative ride with the NS crews. Tom Cook spent three days riding with NS crew. These rides provided priceless information that we used in our planning.

With all of the information we gathered we were able to develop a firm service plan on how best to handle start up train operations at Humboldt. We determined that Monday through Saturday schedule will address the immediate needs of the customers. The crews serving the customers at Humboldt will be reporting to Humboldt where RBMN will have crew quarters and locomotives. Our comrades in the MOW Department will be by our side during the winter months to help keep the railroad fluid while battling the extreme weather that is inherent in the Hazleton area.

Traffic for our Humboldt customers will now be routed via our Reading interchange with NS. NS had used the route from Allentown to Hazleton to serve Humboldt, which required the traffic to move through the heart of the city of Hazleton.

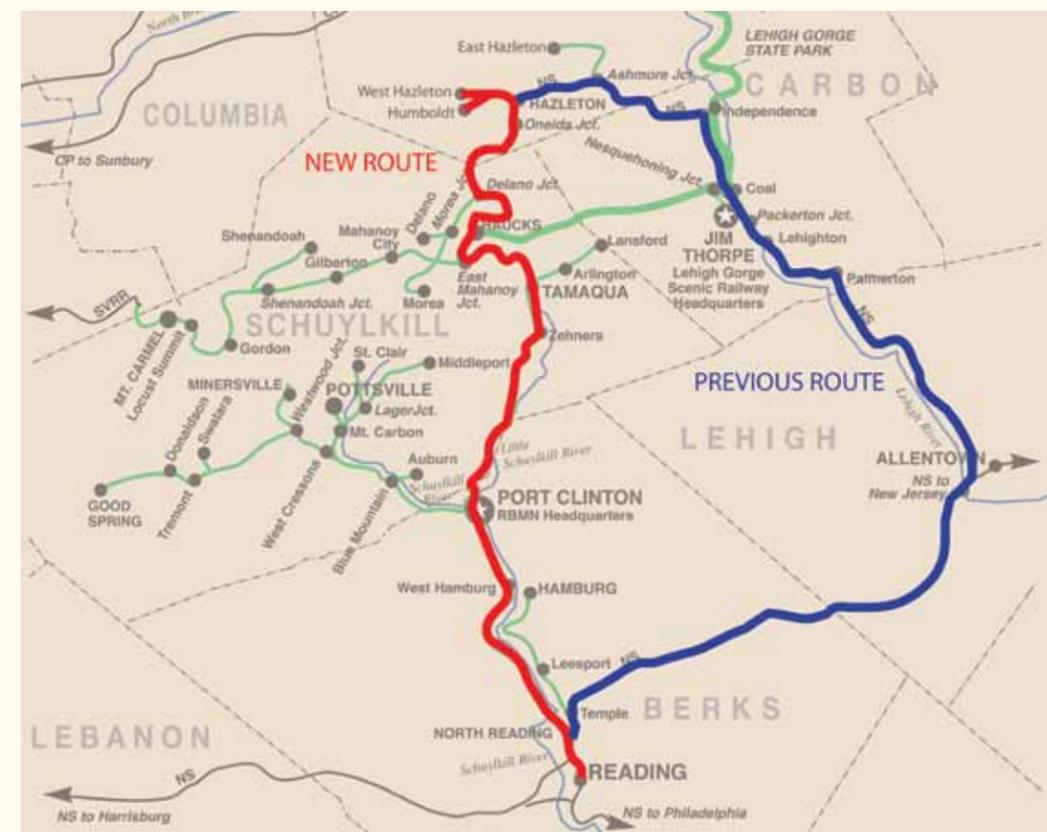
This last 15 miles is an interesting hodge podge of formally disconnected tracks. This segment

of track consists of a former main line, a secondary branch line and relatively new piece of track in terms of railroad history. Heading north from Haucks, the first four miles are a tiny portion of one of the former Reading Railroad main lines between Philadelphia and Williamsport. The next two miles, known as the Lofty Connection, were constructed in 1987. This new section was built to give access from the Carbon and Schuylkill County railroad to two customers in the Delano area. The final nine miles were part of the Lehigh Valley Railroad's coal network in the region. RBMN has long had its own route to Hazleton. Starting with our Mainline we move 45 miles from Reading to Haucks.

Formerly RBMN had called this branchline from Haucks to Hazleton the C&H Branch, that stood for Catawissa and Hazleton. Now that it is our artery to Humboldt and Hazleton we have renamed it the Hazleton Line.

As discussed in Erik Yoder's article on page (), the Hazleton Line is getting a facelift with new ties and surfacing in order to raise the track speeds. In addition, the junction at Haucks is receiving a full blown interlocking which will allow trains to keep moving at Haucks instead of stopping to manually line the switch.

This transition to taking on the Humboldt service is another fine example of teamwork, within our organization and outside as we've had great cooperation from many parties. ♦ 7



The 3,000-acre Humboldt Industrial Park is located at the on/off ramp of Exit 143 of Interstate 81, via State Route 924 and is minutes from the interchange of Interstate 80 - putting it in the center of 25% of the population and total production of the entire nation. Humboldt is home to industries like Amazon, American Eagle Outfitters, Auto Zone, Hershey, Michaels Handcrafts and Cargill.



For more information, contact CAN DO
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 Hazleton, PA 18201
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 www.hazletoncando.com



Building the Road to Hazleton

BY: ERIK YODER, AVP MAINTENANCE OF WAY

W. E. Yoder tie gang working on inserting ties and installing 18" double shoulder tie plates along the Hazleton Line. Gang is just south of Main Street Quakake MP 1.84.

Continued on page 10.



Freshly dumped ballast just south of Tamanend Road Crossing at MP 1.24 prior to being tamped and regulated for a finished look on the newly installed ties.



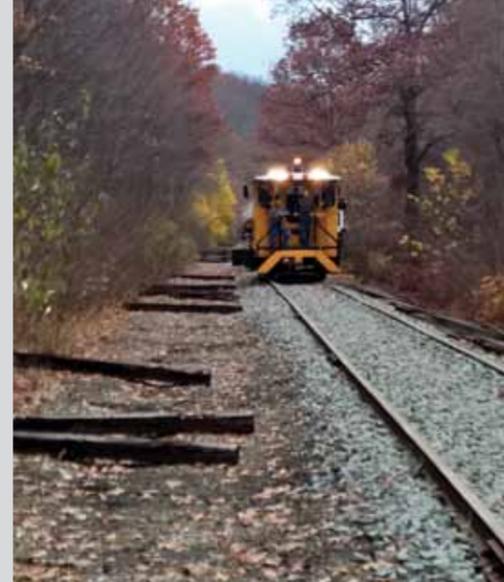
W. E. Yoder tie installation gang in full swing to install ties north of Tamanend Road Crossing MP 1.24. Andy Muller stands just right of center of photo on the track inspecting the work.



North end of curve on Hazleton line just north of Mauch Chunk Junction MP 0.63 before the ballast regulator completes the surfacing on a 3 inch raise.



The Mark IV tamber hard at work finishing the work area after ties have been installed, ballast dumped, and a 3 inch raise applied to the track north of Mauch Chunk Junction MP 0.63.



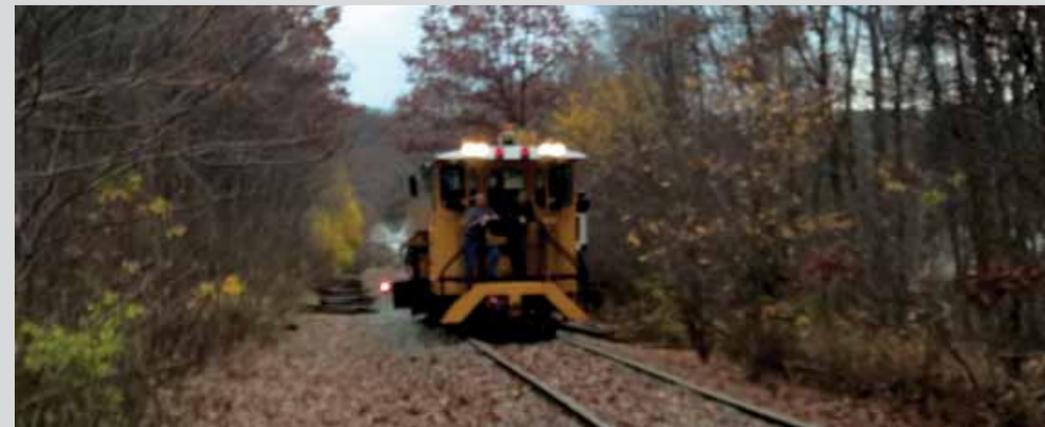
Mark IV performing 3 inch just south of Tamanend Road crossing MP 1.24. Andy Muller and Tyler Glass ride the rear of the tamber as John Brown works in the Mark IV.



W. E. Yoder tie gang installing ties on Hazleton Line just south of Main Street Quakake MP 1.84. As the gang installs new ties, 18" double shoulder tie plates are also installed on each tie.



Mark IV with buggies out in front to raise 3 inches, line, and tamp the track. Tamber is following the tie work gang just north of Mauch Chunk Junction MP 0.63. Andy Muller and Justin Levan along the ROW watching John Brown work in the Mark IV.



Mark IV surfacing Hazleton Line with 3" raise. The light boards can be seen off the side of the Mark IV as it continues to line the track. Andy Muller and Tyler Glass ride the rear of the tamber as John Brown works the Mark IV.

Continued from page 9.

Each year Maintenance of Way (MOW) embarks on our yearly mission of keeping all the trains on track servicing customers. This year we had an additional mission; we needed to prepare for RBMN's takeover of service to the Humboldt Industrial Park and its many rail-served customers.

Arrangements were made with Norfolk Southern to interchange cars at North Reading. At that point RBMN would take the cars to delivery to the 7+ miles of new track we acquired at the Humboldt Industrial Park.

The main route up to Humboldt was formerly known as our C&H Branch (Catawissa & Hazleton Branch). Tyler's article on p. – gives a great background on the history of that line and how it was cobbled together over the years. Reflecting the critical importance of this line to RBMN's future the line has been renamed the Hazleton Line.

As far as MOW was concerned our job was simple. We needed this line of railroad to ride as well as our other main track corridors. Beginning in September, MOW began work on upgrading the route for more efficient train operation. For starters, MOW programmed to install over 8,000 ties between Haucks MP 105.29 to Oneida Jct MP 118 with the goal to raise track speed thus improving operational efficiency.

As MOW got into full swing to complete this project we tightened roughly 1,500 joints in anticipation for the programmed tie work. As part of tightening joints, all missing bolts are replaced, broken joints bars replaced, and all 6 bolts in a joint are tightened. This significantly improves the overall ride quality of trains and railcars.

The project will span both the 2015 and 2016 work seasons. It not only includes tie installation, but new rail installation as well. We

have identified 3 locations that will have new welded rail installed next year. The tie work will continue as soon as the spring weather arrives.

MOW is well underway as we have over 1,000 ties changed by early November. We have divided up the project into sections covering track between two landmark locations. Each section of track will be gauged, ballasted, and groomed along with the tie installation. As we move north from Haucks, each completed track segment is surfaced and speeds increased from 10 MPH to 25 MPH.

The Surfacing gang will be raising the track 3 inches in coordination with ballast trains dumping new ballast. This tandem machine pair always adds the finishing touches to any project. Being a fan of neat looking track, there is nothing better than a beautifully groomed track after new tie work. The shoulders are sloped away from the ties, tie

cribs are filled up to the top of the ties, and the top of the ties and next to the rail are swept clean of any stone or debris.

As we reach each road crossing in progression of the tie work, it is also received an upgrade. The old asphalt was removed, the crossing was gauged, surfacing gang tamped through the crossing, and new asphalt laid down on the approaches. Keeping the track in good shape at crossings keeps the trains moving efficiently. Following the MOW work on this line has kept the Signal Department busy as well. They installed new flashers at Main Street, Quakake as well as a train predictor. A train predictor can read the speed of an oncoming train into a crossing and activate the crossing warnings to match the speed of the approaching train. This crossing went from having standard crossbucks to an advanced warning system in a matter of less than a week.

Another project the Signal Department has been tasked to install is a new interlocking location at Haucks. An interlocking will display signals to trains as they approach a junction in rail lines. Haucks joins the Hazleton Line with the RBMN mainline. The switch can be remotely controlled from the central dispatch center to move the switch depending on which direction a train is traveling. This allows the train to keep moving through the switch instead of stopping the train to move the switch manually. All of these upgrades provide train efficiency along this rail line.

This November the Signal Department worked on installing the necessary power and communications lines that are needed to operate this remote location at Haucks. Once the power is installed, the switch will receive electric switch heaters, allowing the switch to remain clean during snowy weather. Along

with the Haucks Interlocking installation, 2 additional working approach signals to Haucks will be installed, allowing nearly 6 additional miles of broken rail protection as well as gapped switch protection on 5 additional hand thrown switches.

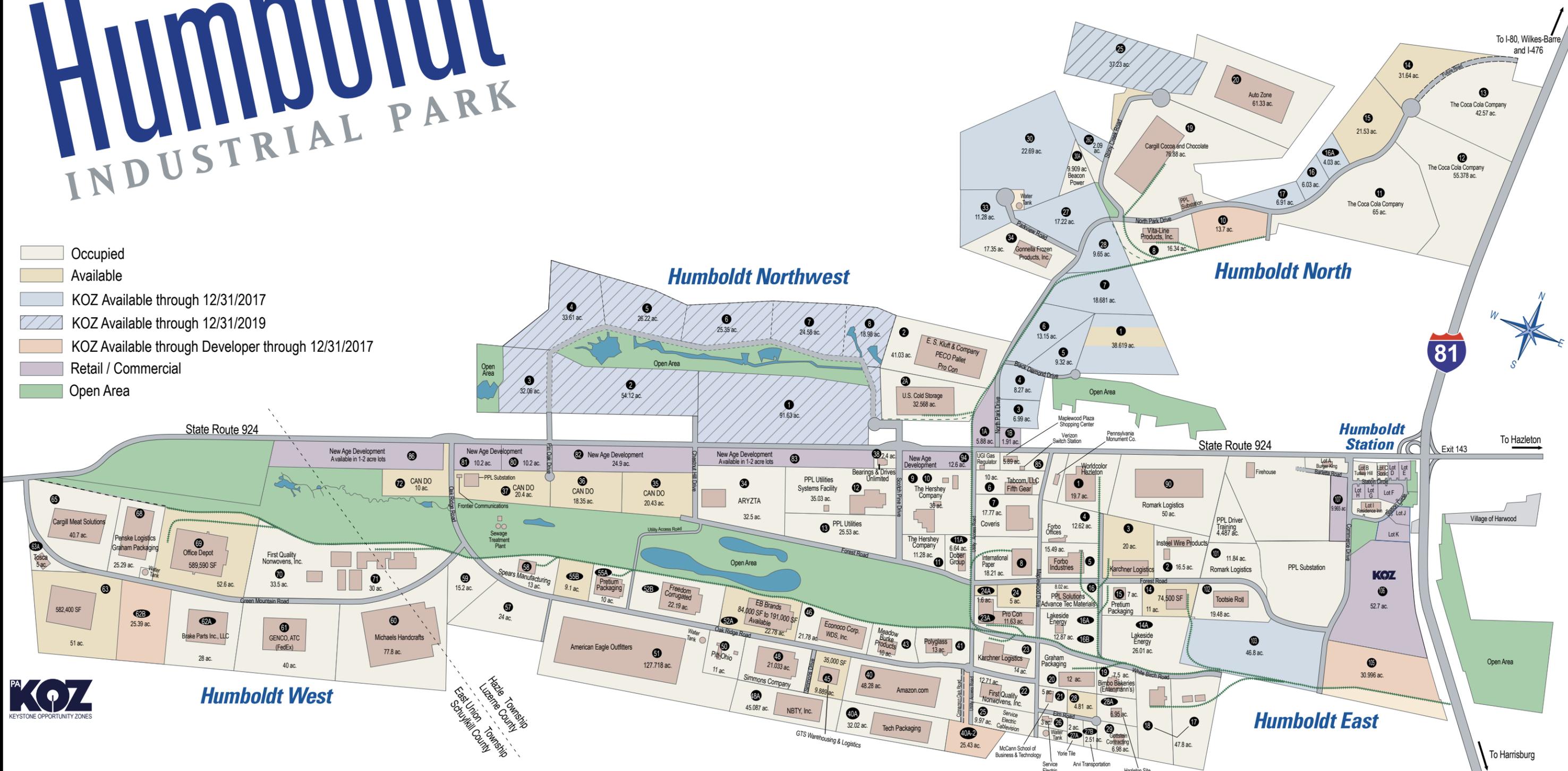
In addition to grade crossing upgrades and interlockings, our dispatching system also needed modification. This modification includes the new Humboldt track segments as well as prepping for the remote control ability of Haucks Interlocking.

Building the Road to Hazleton has been the focus the past few months. It is another project that testifies to the hard work and dedication of our MOW forces. It also highlights the cooperation of our department with other departments to build the Road to Hazleton. ♦

Humboldt INDUSTRIAL PARK



- Occupied
- Available
- KOZ Available through 12/31/2017
- KOZ Available through 12/31/2019
- KOZ Available through Developer through 12/31/2017
- Retail / Commercial
- Open Area



CAN DO
 1 South Church Street, Suite 200
 Hazleton, Pennsylvania 18201
 (570) 455-1508 | (570) 454-7787 fax
 www.hazletoncando.com

Total Acres: 3,000
 Revision Date: 08/13/2015

Speak for Ones Without Voices

BY: ANDY MULLER, JR.



Met ED crews installing the protection devices on the wires where the hawks rest.



A close up of the rubber pieces that are being installed on the wires to prevent a circuit from going through a perched hawk.



What the line looks like with a protection device installed.



What a line looks like without the device installed.

This is a story about how two corporate CEOs worked together to save red-tail hawks from electrocution while perching on utility line poles.

For the last few years I, and many of my neighbors, have been watching red-tail hawks perching on utility line poles at a place called the Hexedanz Hill. This means Witches Dance Hill. I drive by this high hill every day and night going to and coming home from work and I see those hawks sitting on the cross arms at the top of these poles.

It's not possible to see these beautiful hawks atop these poles without thinking how dangerous it would be if one of these hawks spread their wings. It would not take much for one of these hawks to be electrocuted because the cross arms have wire and they are fairly close together.

As someone who appreciates all wildlife, I decided I could not just sit there and watch a hawk die when there must be something that could be done to make sure these hawks are safe. Normally red-tail hawks would not sit on top of a pole like this but apparently this particular area is so high up along the woods and at the top of this hill that is must be an advantageous area for them to hunt.

I decided I was going to try and do something to guarantee these hawks would be safe.

I call my friend, Chip Brightbill of Stevens & Lee, and ask him if he could get me a phone number for the head of First Energy. I wanted to see if I could talk to someone at the electric company to have the wires insulated so that no matter what happened the hawks would not be in danger.

Shortly thereafter I was in the office when I got a call from a gentleman by the name of Chuck Jones of First Energy Company. We got to talking and I explained to him about the hawks. I then asked him what his role was in the company and he told me he was the CEO. I was quite impressed that I got called back by the CEO of a large company like that. He was genuinely concerned and quite interested. Since we're both CEOs of companies we found out we had much in common and we talked quite awhile. As the call ended he asked me if I knew of a gentleman by the name of Ed Shuttleworth.

I said I did not, but he said he was going to have Ed give me a call.

It turned out, Ed is the new president of Metropolitan Edison, a young man who just moved into this area with his family from Ohio and is now taking over the job. Chuck said he would have Ed get in touch with me to discuss the situation.

I was quite surprised this large electric company would show so much concern over a few hawks but I was very happy about it. A couple of days later I got a phone call from Ed and I explained the circumstances to him. Ed asked if he drove up here to Port Clinton would I have time to go with him to the area I was talking about and see if we could come up with a solution. I was quite shocked, because ordinarily you generally don't get this kind of cooperation from a large company – I was very much impressed.

About a week later Ed called me again. He asked if I'd be available if he came up to Port Clinton, which I said I was. He came up and we drove out to Hexedanz Hill and I identified about 15 poles that I regularly see the hawks sit on. I said, "I think if these poles would be insulated then it would be guaranteed the hawks would be safe." Ed asked for each pole number and said we'd figure something out. Well, again I was quite impressed.

The next morning with the help of Frances Karycki, we wrote down the numbers of 15 poles and we got this information back to Ed. I even volunteered to pay to have this done even though Met-Ed isn't my company but Ed said this is something Met-Ed is also very concerned about and it's their responsibility to make sure these birds are safe and they would take care of paying for the costs.

I really didn't know how to do this but I knew it was what needed to be done.

While I was on my way to work a couple of weeks later I saw three Met-Ed trucks putting insulation on the center wire of this transmission line. I later learned these wires are a 7,000 volt transmission line which is a very heavy voltage. By insulated the center wire there would be no way the hawks could come in contact with two wires. As some of you probably know, touching one wire will not electrocute you if you're not

grounded. Of course, hawks sitting on a cross arm are not grounded. The only way they can be electrocuted is by touching two wires with their wings extended. That was now no longer a possibility. Within the next week Met-Ed crews had replaced some of the cross beams, done some work on the poles and on each pole they installed a 6 foot insulator on both ends of the center wire, which now made it impossible for a red-tail hawk or any other large sized bird, even an eagle, to be able to electrocute itself now.

These poles are now safe all the way from the top of the Hexedanz Hill halfway down to Windsor Castle. I was quite excited about this and I was really amazed at the environmental ethic that First Energy and Met-Ed have. I was very, very impressed with Chuck Jones and Ed Shuttleworth. I couldn't believe that one person could get this accomplished. I think if all of us would do one little thing like this, although this wasn't such a little thing, we certainly would have a better world.

In the meantime, I got another call from Ed, he understood the work was all done and he'd like to meet me for lunch to sit down and talk about this. The next day Ed, myself, my son Aaron, Therman Madeira and Josh Youpa met at Hecky's in Hamburg for lunch and had a really nice conversation. Since Ed is newly moved from Ohio he was happy to meet some people from our area. He really impressed me as a quality guy and I can understand why First Energy chose him to lead Met-Ed.

After lunch, we all drove out to look at the completed poles. Ed explained the voltage going through the poles, how it's transmitted and all the safety features. It was quite a lesson and very impressive. Unfortunately, while we were there, there weren't any hawks on the poles. Since then I've been taking quite a few pictures of the hawks perching on the poles and emailed them to Ed.

I consider this whole project a complete success. I'm very happy I was able to accomplish my goal. Everyone I know that watches these hawks are feeling so much better now, knowing these hawks are safe and will never have to worry about them being electrocuted or have any problems on top of these poles. ♦

THE READING AND NORTHERN RAILROAD'S SCHUYLKILL HAVEN STATION

BY: FRANCES KARYCKI, AVP REAL ESTATE



One thing a growing company always needs, is more space. As the Reading and Northern Railroad grows, we are always on the lookout for new office space. If you have visited the Port Clinton, Pennsylvania headquarters, you would have noticed growing departments busting at the seams!

This past spring, Schuylkill Haven Borough approached the Reading and Northern about our interest in purchasing the Schuylkill Haven

train station. At the time, the borough had been using the building for its offices. Although the station was a beautiful building at a great location, they had outgrown the available space and were looking to relocate.

The Schuylkill Haven Borough had already selected a new location for their offices. They had their eye on an empty bank on Route 61, however, they did not have the funding available at that time to purchase the building.

Importantly, it was appealing to council to see this station return to its original use. The borough believed, that because the Reading and Northern Railroad offers passenger excursions out of Schuylkill Haven on occasion, it would be the perfect fit for the new Passenger Department office.

After reviewing the situation, Andy Muller decided that the Reading and Northern could purchase the bank building and then preform

a swap when the borough was able to come up with the remaining funding. The proposal to do the swap went back to borough council for a vote where it was voted in favor unanimously. In mid August, the swap was completed. The borough has now relocated to their new home, the bank on Route 61, and Reading and Northern is now at work making alterations to restore the train station to how it originally appeared in the early twentieth century.

The Reading and Northern has plans to reconstruct the loading platform from the front of the station to the rail. On the interior, the station will be emptied to turn the office area back into the waiting area around the fire place. There will also be a second rail installed to store passenger equipment. Once all alterations are completed, the public will be welcome to visit the station. We hope to keep the station a part of the community and

we plan to keep all of the borough activities that occurred on these grounds alive. The first of these events will be Schuylkill Haven Borough Days. The Reading and Northern will offer train trips as usual and will be allowing vendors to be set up in the parking lot. The Reading and Northern Railroad is looking forward to being a bigger part of the Schuylkill Haven community. ♦

SAFETY

BY: TOM COOK, VP SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION

In my first six months at the Reading and Northern, it has been clear to me that pride in their work is a cornerstone of employee performance in all areas, including safety. I would like to share some examples with our readers.

The most visible example is our passenger service during our October peak season. Many of our employees voluntarily work extra hours on the weekend to pull this off. The amount of passenger activity around Jim Thorpe is impressive. Ten arrivals and departures on a tight schedule with switching moves intermingled is a very exciting thing to be a part of. For those involved, it is like a team sport.

Our employees don't have to be motivated by managers or closely supervised. They know what they need to do and execute flawlessly.

The key to their performance is their pride in being a professional railroader. They know that they represent the Reading and Northern and take great pride in their performance.

Another example is the way our employees rally to handle a volume surge or make a special move to help our customers when they need it most, when a car is delayed and inventory is low. On a weekly basis, our crews handle out of the ordinary moves on schedules that leave little room for delay or error. They pull it off with ease time and time again because they know they represent the company to the customer.

A final example is the way our maintenance of way department responds to a derailment. The re-railing and recovery time is almost always same day, and you can sense the

urgency to get back up and running to serve our customers. No one has to ask for urgency, it comes from pride in delivering for our customers.

This pride carries over to our safety culture. Our employees work safely in some very challenging conditions. They know that an accident or injury is a reflection of their professionalism. They also know that our team is running harder than ever, and we can't afford to have a single team mate sidelined; that would let the team down.

We are going to accomplish great things this year with the tremendous opportunities in front of us. Our pride will push us to execute professionally and safely. ♦

Congratulations!

Easton Jay Bausher was born to Ryan Bausher (Locomotive Shop – Steam) and Megan Finley on September 14, 2015 at 5:16pm. Easton was born weighing in at 9lbs 9oz. and 21 inches long. Congratulations!



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Congratulations Renee!

BY: CRYSTAL ARNDT, HR ADMINISTRATOR



I am pleased to introduce this quarter's "Spotlight Employee"; Renee Sheriff. Renee came to work for RBMN in July of 2014 as an Administrative Assistant/ Receptionist. Previously, she worked for Pierce-Eislen in Scottsdale, Arizona; a multi-family real estate research company that specializes in detailed data and market analysis.

Renee was born in Grants, New Mexico and was raised in Phoenix, Arizona. She graduated from Central High School in Phoenix, Arizona and attended Arizona State University.

Renee and her "wonderful" husband are raising a daughter; Aricela (Ari) who is now a junior at the age of 17 and attends Minersville High School. Together, they have two dogs; Maverick and Lilly who are rescue dogs from the

inner city of Phoenix, Arizona.

In her spare time, Renee loves to listen to music, hike, do yoga, cook, barbeque, shop, and spend time with friends and family.

In Renee's words, she offers advice to all; "Be Happy. Live and eat well. Think Positive. Don't be angry or sad and look towards the future. Kind of Hippie, I know, but that is me."

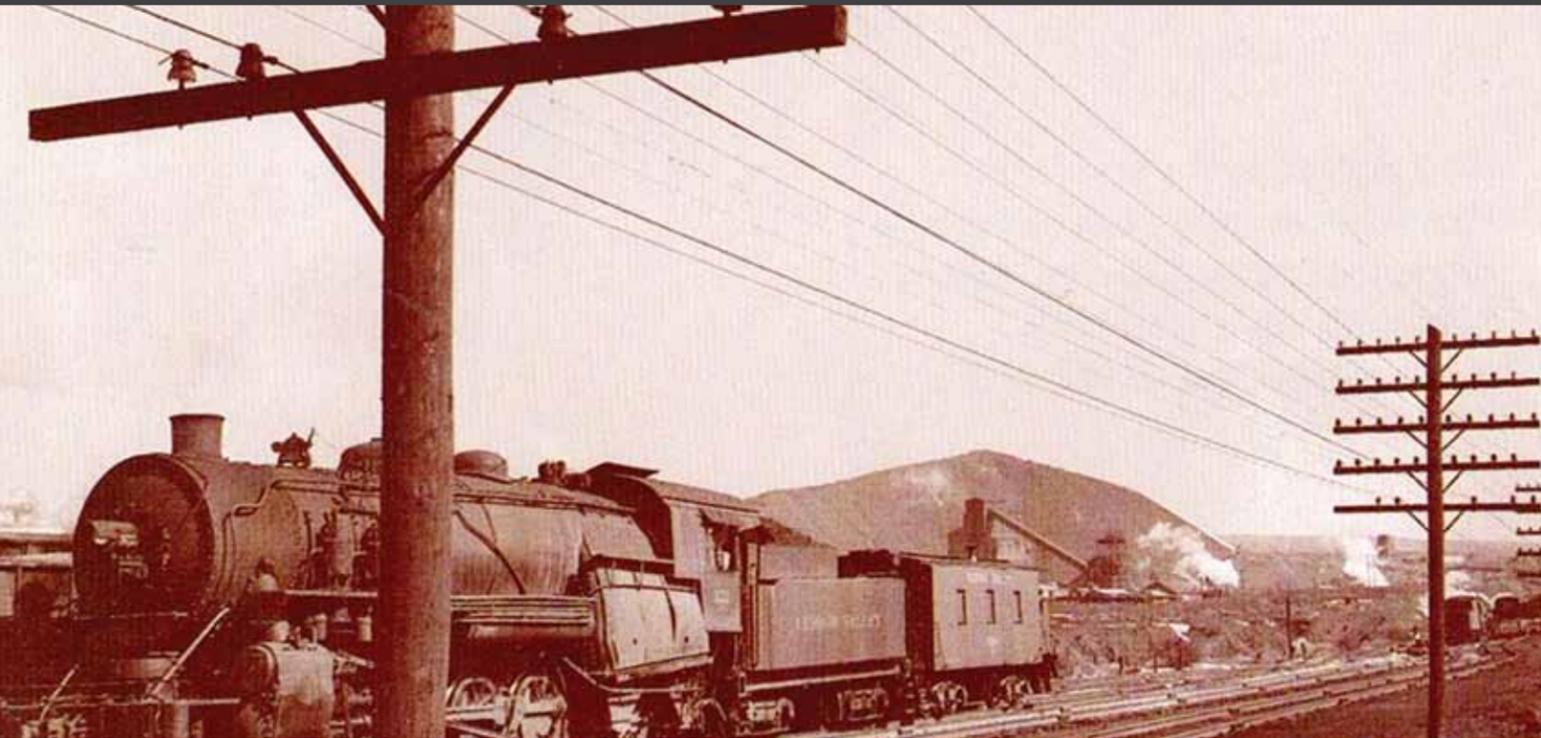
(As the "Spotlight Employee," Renee will receive a \$50.00 gift certificate to dine at a local restaurant.)

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



REPRINT - Pictured with Matthew Fisher, General Manager, Passenger Department, and Beverly Hess, Director of Employee Relates, is Titus A. Miller III, Program Chairman of the Hamburg Rotary Club. Titus invited Matthew and Bev to speak to the Rotary Club earlier this year on behalf of the Reading and Northern Railroad. Bev discussed the history of the company and how far the Railroad has progressed since she started working with the Reading and Northern nearly thirty years ago, while Matt presented to the Club the many excursion experiences the Passenger Department has to offer.

The Industrial Legacy of Hazleton, Pennsylvania



The Lehigh Valley Railroad at an anthracite coal colliery in the Greater Hazleton area, circa turn of the nineteenth century. Photo courtesy of the Greater Hazleton Historical Society and Museum.



The Lehigh Valley Railroad passenger station in downtown Hazleton, circa mid twentieth century. Photo courtesy of the Greater Hazleton Historical Society and Museum.



Lehigh Valley railroaders at the turn of the nineteenth century in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. Photo courtesy of the Greater Hazleton Historical Society and Museum.

BY: JOLENE FAY, RECORDS ARCHIVIST

An anthracite boom town, the city of Hazleton, Pennsylvania junctions at the borders of Schuylkill, Carbon, and Luzerne Counties. Hazleton illustrates the history of the Northeast Pennsylvania coal region as a city born out of the wilderness from the ever burning spark of anthracite. Once a lonely rest stop for settlers traveling from the Lehigh Valley to the Wyoming Valley, the discovery of anthracite coal in the early nineteenth century in nearby Beaver Meadows and other parts of Northeast Pennsylvania positioned Hazleton to build an industrial legacy for generations of laborers.

As anthracite coal collieries quickly developed, the demand to ship coal to market was answered by the railroads, which in the Greater Hazleton area, was the Lehigh Valley Railroad. The Lehigh Valley Railroad rolled through Hazleton, Harwood, Lattimer, Stockton, Jeddo, Eckley, and the many other patch towns that fueled the Industrial Revolution. As the city developed, its commerce diversified as well. The city was supported by silk mills, bakeries, breweries, and a thriving downtown. It did not take long for the Lehigh Valley Railroad to add passenger

service to and from the city of Hazleton.

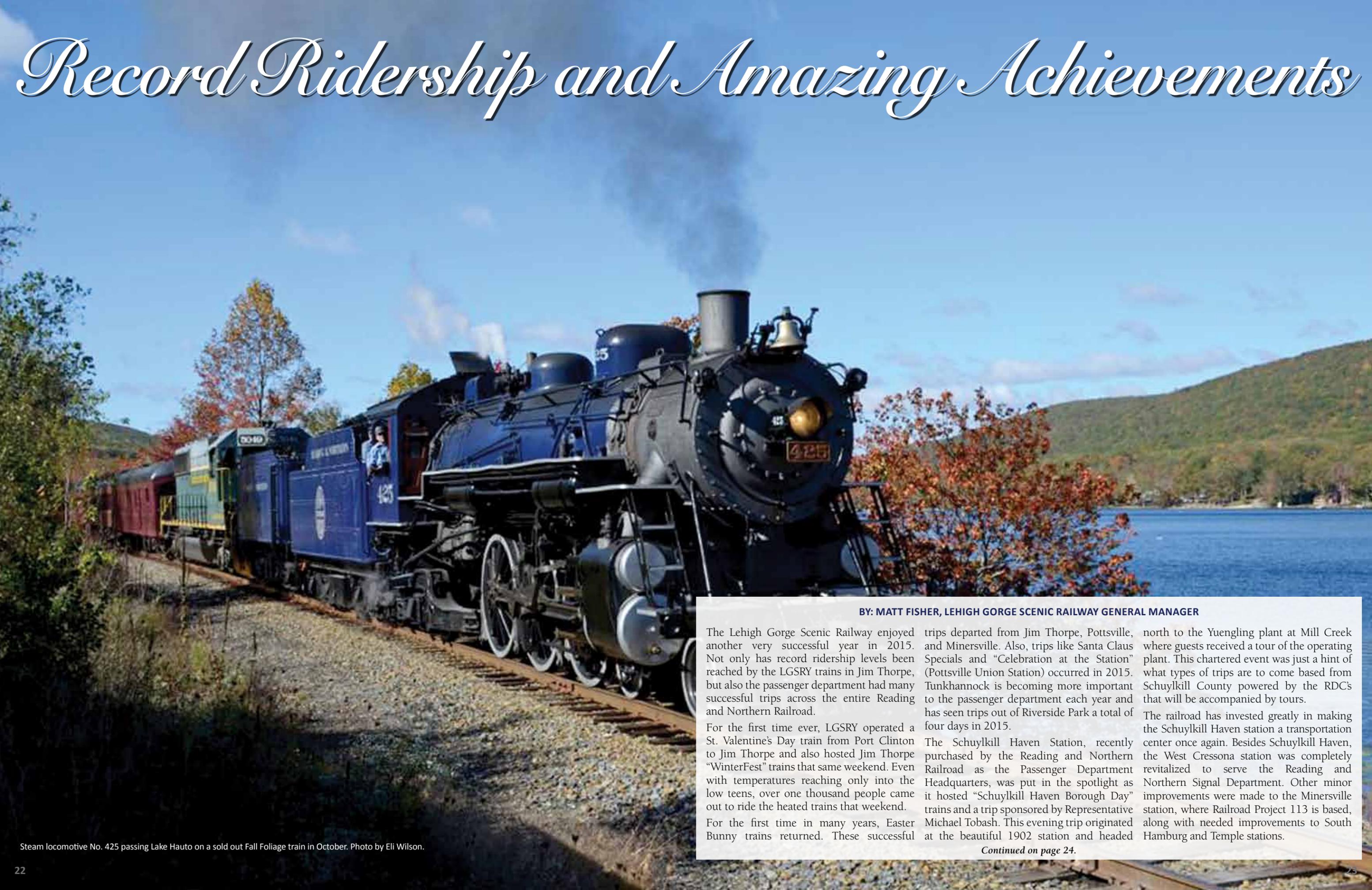
Anthracite coal is the industry that quite literally put Hazleton on the map, and it was also the reason Hazleton was almost erased from it. After World War II when technology turned from coal to alternative energy options, the anthracite coal industry, the only major industry supporting the city, plummeted. Local business and community leaders volunteered their efforts to organize the Community Area New Development Organization (CAN DO) to raise funds to encourage other industries to settle in Hazleton. By the mid 1950s, CAN DO purchased land to develop commercial opportunities, and therefore, to increase job opportunities for Hazleton laborers. The success of these first efforts led to the development of the Humboldt Industrial Park in 1970, which introduced several new industries and job opportunities to the Greater Hazleton area.

Around the same time, the railroad industry surrounding the Greater Hazleton area was experiencing changes as well. The decline of the anthracite coal industry was also felt by

the Lehigh Valley Railroad in the 1970s. In the Hazleton area, Lehigh Valley lines were sold to the Consolidated Rail Corporation as well as regional rail authorities. Overtime, the efforts of CAN DO and similar organizations in Northeast Pennsylvania introduced such a diversity of industries, that by the 1990s, rail service was back in business. Present day, Hazleton industrial parks are serviced by Norfolk Southern Railroad, and at the Humboldt Industrial Park, the Reading and Northern Railroad provides rail service.

It is often remarked that “coal is why they came,” expressing that the immigrant laborers and their families that developed the Greater Hazleton area sought job opportunities provided by the many anthracite collieries. Coal may be why they came, and it is certainly how the city of Hazleton came to be. But coal is not how Hazleton survived. A strong sense of community and the willingness to adapt preserved Hazleton’s industrial heritage. Hazleton’s “can do” attitude revitalized the city’s own job market, and has promised industrial opportunities for many more generations to follow. ♦

Record Ridership and Amazing Achievements



BY: MATT FISHER, LEHIGH GORGE SCENIC RAILWAY GENERAL MANAGER

The Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway enjoyed another very successful year in 2015. Not only has record ridership levels been reached by the LGSRY trains in Jim Thorpe, but also the passenger department had many successful trips across the entire Reading and Northern Railroad.

For the first time ever, LGSRY operated a St. Valentine's Day train from Port Clinton to Jim Thorpe and also hosted Jim Thorpe "WinterFest" trains that same weekend. Even with temperatures reaching only into the low teens, over one thousand people came out to ride the heated trains that weekend.

For the first time in many years, Easter Bunny trains returned. These successful

trips departed from Jim Thorpe, Pottsville, and Minersville. Also, trips like Santa Claus Specials and "Celebration at the Station" (Pottsville Union Station) occurred in 2015. Tunkhannock is becoming more important to the passenger department each year and has seen trips out of Riverside Park a total of four days in 2015.

The Schuylkill Haven Station, recently purchased by the Reading and Northern Railroad as the Passenger Department Headquarters, was put in the spotlight as it hosted "Schuylkill Haven Borough Day" trains and a trip sponsored by Representative Michael Tobash. This evening trip originated at the beautiful 1902 station and headed

north to the Yuengling plant at Mill Creek where guests received a tour of the operating plant. This chartered event was just a hint of what types of trips are to come based from Schuylkill County powered by the RDC's that will be accompanied by tours.

The railroad has invested greatly in making the Schuylkill Haven station a transportation center once again. Besides Schuylkill Haven, the West Cressona station was completely revitalized to serve the Reading and Northern Signal Department. Other minor improvements were made to the Minersville station, where Railroad Project 113 is based, along with needed improvements to South Hamburg and Temple stations.

Continued on page 24.



The Schuylkill Haven Station purchased by the RBMN in August. The station became the new home of the Passenger Department for the RBMN and Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway.



Continued from page 23.

We welcomed a small shed as a new addition to Railroad Headquarters at Port Clinton. This Reading Company-style shed served an important purpose for the record seven Fall Foliage Excursion trips held in October. Also, stone was laid at White Haven to improve the unloading location of our popular Bike Trains. The Passenger Department greatly appreciates the time and effort put into improving all of these facilities. Few railroads take as much pride in maintaining their facilities as the Reading and Northern Railroad. Even fewer railroads have operating steam. Our steam locomotive received a new paint scheme and overhaul in 2015. These

improvements to No. 425 made it possible to have successful LGSRY trips meeting Nickel Plate Road No. 765 this summer, which was the first time these locomotives have met since the 1980's. Also, No. 425 powered the Greater Pittston Charity Trip from Duryea in September. It made its final appearance for the year heading the sold out Fall Foliage Excursions from Port Clinton to Jim Thorpe. Passengers rode trains during the season that had both Ladies and Men's restrooms and brand new narration systems. The process has begun to repaint all blue and red coaches for next season. Finally, the private car fleet was repainted in 2015 and now includes the addition of Car 3, a former Gulf, Mobile, and

Ohio Railroad coach.

Having a passenger division to any railroad requires additional work by all. As was seen once again in 2015, this hard work greatly improved the overall company's positive reputation and direct relationship with the general public. Our reviews on social media have never been better. We look forward to improving the quality of our train trips while serving an enormous amount of people in the 2016 season.

Visit our website at www.LGSRY.com for upcoming trips or find us on Instagram and Facebook. ♦

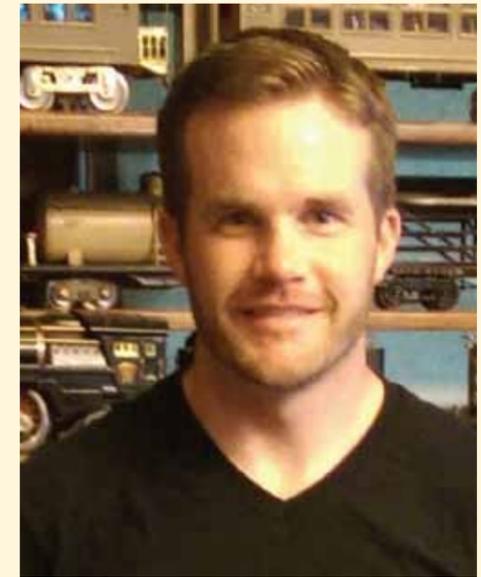
Happy Birthday!

JAN. 1	LOUIS BUGNO	FEB. 12	DUANE ZIMMERMAN
JAN. 1	BRIAR STERN	FEB. 15	MATIA MCKEEVER
JAN. 2	DUSTIN BERNDT	FEB. 17	DAVID EVELY
JAN. 2	NANCY WALAITIS	FEB. 18	BILL FREDERICKSON
JAN. 2	LARRY WELLER	FEB. 21	KENNETH MILLER
JAN. 3	NICHOLAS ALBERSWERTH	FEB. 22	TYLER GLASS
JAN. 4	STANLEY BURCZY	FEB. 24	JONATHAN BARKET
JAN. 5	PAUL MEEHAN	FEB. 25	BRENDLE STUFFLET, JR.
JAN. 6	RYAN LAMM	FEB. 26	CAROL MULLER
JAN. 15	KEVIN FRY	FEB. 28	STEPHEN GILBERT
JAN. 16	DANIEL GILCHRIST	FEB. 29	JOHN SMOLCZYNSKI, JR.
JAN. 17	DAVID LAPALLO	MAR. 1	MATTHEW FREDMONSKI
JAN. 17	ELIJAH WILSON	MAR. 2	STEVE BALTHASER
JAN. 17	MARIE KNADLER	MAR. 2	RICHARD BERNHARDT
JAN. 28	JOHN WASSEL	MAR. 3	DAN PUKSAR
JAN. 29	ANGELA POTTS	MAR. 3	DARNELL YOUNG
JAN. 29	RAYMOND SCHWENK	MAR. 3	JOSEPH ZIMMERMAN
FEB. 3	ANDREA COLLER	MAR. 8	JAMES DANNER
FEB. 5	MICHAEL PAINTER	MAR. 19	MARY CULP
FEB. 7	JOHN SMOLCZYNSKI, SR.	MAR. 20	NATHAN BISSEY
FEB. 8	JAMES CERULLI	MAR. 20	MATTHEW MIZIKOSKI
FEB. 9	JAMES COOK	MAR. 23	WALTER GREUSEL
FEB. 9	AMY MILLER	MAR. 24	RYAN RUPPRECHT
FEB. 11	MICHAEL KOHL	MAR. 29	ELIZABETH NEIFERT
FEB. 12	BENJAMIN COLE	MAR. 31	JOLENE FAY

WELCOME ABOARD NEW EMPLOYEES



Kristina Ottey was recently hired as a Customer Service Manager within our Traffic Department. She attended Stroudsburg Area High School and Temple University. Prior to working at RBMN, Kristina was a Server for three and a half years at the 3rd Street Café.



Graham Hantz was recently hired as a Signal Maintainer within our Signals Department. He attended Whitehall Area High School, Pennsylvania College of Technology and Lehigh Carbon Community College. Prior to working at RBMN, Graham was a Chaplain Assistant for the U.S. Army for four years, a Machinist for Demco Automation for two and a half years and an Electro-Mechanical Technician for Access Ability, CEC Entertainment, and East Penn Manufacturing for two and a half years.



Larry Fisher was recently hired as a Car Host within our LGSR Division. He attended William Allen High School in Allentown, PA, Westchester University for his BA and MS, and Penn State University for his D.ED. Prior to working at LGSR, Larry was a Professor of Music History and Dept. Chair for East Stroudsburg University for twenty years.



Raymond Chippa was recently hired as a Forklift Operator within our Transload Department. He attended Carbondale Area High School. Prior to working at RBMN, Raymond was a CNC Press Operator for over seven years at Hendrick Manufacturing.



Charles Trusdell was recently hired as a Locomotive Engineer within our Passenger Department. He attended Archbishop Wood High School. Prior to working at RBMN, Charles was a Trainmaster/Engineer for nine years at New Hope & Ivyland Railroad, Strasburg Railroad, and SMS Rail Service.

Railroad Operations Return to Schuylkill Haven Station

BY: JOLENE FAY, RECORDS ARCHIVIST

The Reading and Northern Railroad recently acquired the Schuylkill Haven Reading Railroad station, which was formerly used by the Schuylkill Haven Borough as the Borough Hall. "The Little Town That Could" boasts a long history of railroad operations, beginning in the 1840s with the early construction of the Mine Hill and Schuylkill Haven Railroad, to later, the dominating presence of the Reading Railroad into the twentieth century. Schuylkill Haven, in the center of the southern anthracite coal field of Pennsylvania, was a bustling center of freight operations moving coal to junctions that would eventually carry anthracite to markets across the eastern seaboard. As Schuylkill County's population grew, as did passenger operations out of Schuylkill Haven. In 1901, the construction of the Reading Railroad's passenger station was well under way, poised to carry passengers to and from Schuylkill County. By the 1960s, passenger

service was introduced to Budd RDC self-propelled cars, instead of locomotive powered passenger trains. As passenger operations declined after the 1960s, the Reading Railroad Station in Schuylkill Haven was converted into the town's Borough Hall, which served the town as such until the recent acquisition of the station by the Reading and Northern Railroad. The Reading and Northern plans to use the station to house the office of the Passenger Department, as the station was originally intended for when it was constructed at the turn of the twentieth century.

Schuylkill Haven has held their annual Borough Days since the early 1990s, to which the Reading and Northern Railroad participates in every year to bring passenger excursions out of Schuylkill Haven, sometimes surprising residents with a special appearance by our 425 steam engine. ♦



Helping Birds Survive the Cold

BY: PEGGY HENTZ, PRESIDENT/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF REDCREEK

Birdhouses are not just for nesting season. Hanging birdhouses now or cleaning out those already on your property can help birds survive the winter.

During blustery winter weather, songbirds can be found huddling together in groups inside birdhouses. It shelters them from the wind and ice, and their shared body heat turns the nesting area into a warm room. Plug up the ventilation holes with dried grasses to prevent drafts. In March, clean the birdhouses and unplug the holes for the spring nesting season.

Another way to supply shelter is with your Christmas tree. Instead of throwing it out after the holidays, place it in a quiet corner of your yard until spring. This will provide natural shelter for birds and protect them from the wind. Before placing the tree outside, remember to remove all tinsel and garland that could be unsafe for the birds.

Along with providing shelter, supplying fresh shallow water can make life

easier for your backyard birds. During frigid weather, natural open areas of water may not be safe. The unfrozen water of lakes and rivers may be too deep for songbirds to enjoy, and are often found out in the open where predators can see them. Placing a heated birdbath in your yard will attract a larger variety of songbirds that don't regularly visit feeders. An inexpensive alternative to a commercial heated birdbath is a heated water bowl for dogs. Placing the bowl on the ground under bushes or on top of a regular cement birdbath will work just fine. Put a clay flowerpot saucer in the center of the water as a platform for the birds to stand on and you can be certain you will have many feathers visitors enjoying the safety of your yard.

Water and shelter are precious commodities in the freezing weather. Providing a safe haven will not only help the birds but will also attract many more species of wintering birds for your viewing pleasure. ♦

25 YEARS



Hire Date – Dec. 11th, 1990
Tyler Glass
Executive VP of Operations



Hire Date – Nov. 14th, 1990
David Kroznuski
Machine Operator - MOW

15 YEARS



Hire Date – Oct. 17th, 2000
Ronald Papiercavich
Engineer - Operations



Hire Date – Nov. 27th, 2000
James Cook
Dispatcher - Operations

10 YEARS



Hire Date – Nov. 28th, 2005
Edward Philbin
Engineer - Operations



Hire Date – Nov. 28th, 2005
Jason Trainor
AVP of Field Operations

5 YEARS



Hire Date – Oct. 12th, 2010
Roger Meszaros
MRC



Hire Date – Nov. 9th, 2010
Kyle Sanders
Conductor - Operations

1 YEAR



Hire Date – Sept. 25th, 2014
Spencer Hockman
Mascot - Passenger



Hire Date – Dec. 1st, 2014
Scott Beshore
Mechanic – Mechanical

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

BY: PEGGY HENTZ, PRESIDENT/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF REDCREEK



Coyote pups upon arrival.

When speaking with individuals about wildlife, I often encounter “value judgements” based upon limited information or personal opinion. People tend to like animals that are cute or majestic and apply great worth to these species. Animals considered ugly to an individual are too often valued less. I come across this most often when teaching about vultures, and have seen many perceptions change once someone meets Hannibal, our educational turkey vulture.

Personal experience and childhood stories can also cause a person to believe an animal is “bad.” Fox, raptors, and coyotes are frequently labeled as evil because of their status as predators.

I’ve seen these same attitudes suddenly change when someone finds an animal in distress, especially if it’s a baby. Rescuing a wild animal can be extremely emotional, and the bad and ugly become as precious to the finder as the cute and magnificent. A perfect example happened this past spring when we received four orphaned coyote puppies.

A coyote hunt near Jim Thorpe ended with hunters and dogs facing an adult coyote that stood its ground. One of the hunters killed the animal but they wondered why it hadn’t tried to run away. One of the dogs quickly found the reason in a den nearby: four pups, only days old, snuggled together waiting for their mother who would not return.

With great remorse, the hunter removed the pups and made the decision to get them help. Several in his party argued that they should be destroyed, but this hunter’s values had changed and he would no longer hunt when there was a chance of this happening again. Within hours he was talking to me and making arrangements for them to come to Red Creek.

The pups, three boys and one girl, were healthy. We posted their pictures on Facebook as we often do with new arrivals to keep our followers and supporters informed and interactive. Most postings receive numerous comments with positive emotional sentiment and well wishes for the featured animal. This posting, however, resulted in a backlash of value judgements. Although there were only a few negative remarks posted publicly, privately we received harsh comments from those who condemned our rehabilitation of this species.

Although the origin of the eastern coyote is steeped in mystery, it is believed to be a hybrid of the western coyote and the



Three of the coyote pups.

eastern or red wolf. Filling the niche left void by the extirpation of the eastern wolf in Pennsylvania, once a common predator in the state, the eastern coyote is more wolf-like than its western namesake. Often hunting in packs, the eastern coyote is larger than western coyotes, averaging between thirty and forty pounds or more.

Discovered in Pennsylvania as early as the 1930s, its rapid expansion in the last thirty years has increased our awareness of its presence. It can now be found throughout the state in the remotest of areas, as well as in city suburbs. Its predatory nature, along with its willingness to live close to people, has created a great deal of human-wildlife conflict, and the coyote is considered by many to be an undesirable species.

Red Creek does not place such good or bad judgements on animals. We will take and rehabilitate ALL species of Pennsylvania wildlife, and an opossum will receive as much attention and care as an eagle.

Once the pups arrived, we put together a plan to raise them to be the wild creatures they are, while decreasing the chances of them becoming a nuisance once released. They were immediately sequestered from anyone that was not involved in their immediate care. Their time with us was uneventful; they grew rapidly and became a bonded pack. By six months old they were wild coyotes that ran and hid even from

those few who supplied their daily care.

Finding the right place for their release was extremely important. A secluded area, deep in the wilds of Pennsylvania would give them the chance to live a normal life away from people, farm animals, and pets. Greg and Kat spent weeks searching google satellite maps, identifying locations, then following up with phone calls requesting permission to release in private areas. A site was finally chosen and a September release date planned.

It was a warm and beautiful morning when the coyotes were caught and crated for their trip to freedom. The three-plus hour drive took Greg and Kat into one of the remotest areas of the Pennsylvania wildlands. The last half hour of the trip found Greg’s Jeep Cherokee climbing dirt mountain roads and dodging rocks and gullies. When a large fallen tree finally blocked their path they stopped and unloaded their precious cargo. The coyotes handled the ride quite well and their release was as uneventful as their rehabilitation. Known only to a handful of people involved in setting them free, it was a beautiful location, on a beautiful day with nothing but forest for many miles. There was no fanfare or music or rainbows, just four wild creatures slinking silently into the bush, taking their rightful place in the wilderness. ♦



One of the three males crated for release.



Female coyote being taken for release.

2015 Christmas Party

December 12, the Reading and Northern Railroad held its annual holiday party. Despite the unusual warm temperatures, spirits were high as we all gathered for a night of fun with friends over dinner and dancing. In total, we had 275 attendees this year. This was the highest attendance on record at our holiday party. The night kicked off with a happy hour followed by dinner. Wayne Michel, President, gave a speech highlighting the 2015 achievements of the railroad. Since we had 20 new employees, Andrew Muller, Jr., CEO, gave an overview of how he came to own the railroad. Once the speeches came to a close, the dance floor opened and the night carried on full of dancing, laughter, and conversation. ♦



Darnell Young picking up Matt Stabinger with Holiday Spirit!



From left to right: John Smolczynski Jr., Kyle Sanders, Nate Mengle, Travis Prevost, Andrew Muller Jr., Tony Verbyla, and Eric Slekovac.



From left to right: Patricia and Willis Stump, and Jason and Justine Reading.



From left to right: Deb and Erik Yoder, Brad Kunkle, Duane and Lynn Engle, Chuck and Trissin Trusdell.