

R & N Magazine

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

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Keeping on Track P. 3

Press Release: R&N Nesquehoning Campus Updates P. 4

Nesquehoning Campus Expansion P. 4-5

Safety Always: Nesquehoning Campus P. 6

2024 Might "Turnout" to be Our Best Year P. 7-9

Press Release: R&N Announces Another Pay Increase for Employees! P. 10

Nesquehoning Train Trips Added to the Schedule P. 10-13

Press Release: Three Iron Horse Rambles Featuring Steam Locomotive #2101 Slated for Summer 2024 P. 14

Reading & Northern Railroad Reintroduces the Black Diamond Company Store P. 15

Keeping the Bald Eagles Safe P. 15

Reading & Northern Railroad Nesquehoning Campus P. 16-17

Welcome Aboard! P. 18

Happy Birthday! P. 19

Rescued, Adopted, Loved! P. 19

Anniversaries P. 20

Employee Spotlight P. 21

RBMN at Work P. 22-27

Red Creek Wildlife: Going Nuts Over Squirrels P. 28-29

Wellness Corner P. 30-31

KEEPING ON TRACK

BY: WAYNE A. MICHEL, PRESIDENT



Artist rendering of Nesquehoning Campus passenger developments by Steve Gilbert.

Spring has sprung.

Mid-March and we are surrounded by yellow blossoms from daffodils and forsythia.

And at the heart of our railroad in Nesquehoning PA, an entire complex of rail-served facilities is coming to life.

Although it's only been a little over two years since we acquired the Nesquehoning campus in a friendly condemnation. It's been close to 30 years since Andy began putting the pieces together for the expanded Reading & Northern.

As 1996 began the RBMN consisted of its Reading Division acquired from Conrail in December 1990 and some ancillary properties. But in that year Conrail decided to sell its Lehigh Line from Sayre NY to Allentown. And that sale got Andy's attention.

Because of Andy's excellent relationship with Conrail, RBMN was chosen to be the buyer of the Lehigh Line starting with the middle segment from just south of Mehoopany, the site of Procter & Gamble's largest manufacturing facility in the world to Lehighton. That sale closed in August of 1996.

Even before that deal closed Andy was working on means to connect his existing Reading Cluster with the Lehigh Line. To make a connection RBMN needed to get across a 19 mile line owned by Carbon County. The County had leased that line to a start-up operator, the C&S Railroad, but Andy was able to get the railroad and County to grant RBMN perpetual overhead trackage rights to connect RBMN's two divisions.

But that wasn't enough for Andy as the connection required a substantial move over NS and the trains leaving Reading would be heading south, the wrong direction, when they entered onto NS. And so Andy embarked on a multi year effort with a number of departments in Pennsylvania state government to restore to service a rail bridge that could connect to the Lehigh Line much further north. Because that connection would also require RBMN to run over NS for a short amount of track, Andy simultaneously designed and built additional track on RBMN property to allow for a direct connection. That track created a Junction appropriately named Independence and the new track and renovated Nesquehoning Bridge 1 was put in service in late 2003.

But Andy was a constant dreamer and even as this new connection allowed traffic to move from one RBMN division to the other without running over NS tracks, it was

not an efficient move. In order to have an efficient, progressive move, one that would allow train departing Reading to move constantly northward towards Scranton, Andy needed to design and build a new bridge over the Lehigh River.

After 16 years of lobbying state officials for support and working on different designs RBMN was able to put into service a brand new bridge over the Lehigh River. We believe that project, which cost in excess of \$14 million, was the only bridge built over a major river in Pennsylvania in many years. Nesquehoning Bridge 2 was put into train service on February 4, 2020.

With the bridge completed Andy turned his attention to acquiring the missing link, the County-owned line needed to connect RBMN's two divisions. For over twenty years Andy had talked to Carbon County Commissioners trying to make a deal. During that time Andy had purchased the interests of one of the C & S owners and the new owners had chosen to hire RBMN to provide the local service and track maintenance. But even though Andy had effective control over the track, he knew that without ownership he could not make the necessary investments in the line. Given the growth in RBMN freight traffic and the absolute explosion in RBMN passenger business, Andy knew it was critical that RBMN own the line. And finally on June 24, 2021, RBMN acquired the property from Carbon County.

Immediately Andy went to work to upgrade the track and signal system. And RBMN also began looking for development opportunities along the track.

A few months later we found out that the company that had purchased the major Kovatch facilities that had manufactured fire engines and similar equipment for decades in Nesquehoning, was closing their facilities. We immediately reached out to see if we could purchase the buildings along our track. An agreement was reached and we took possession March 16, 2022.

And now in the pages that follow you can see Andy's vision come into full flower. When completed the Nesquehoning campus will consist of numerous repair and maintenance facilities, offices, classrooms and meeting locations. We even use it for our Company parties!

Sometimes it seems like facilities, like flowers, bloom overnight. But at Reading & Northern we know the true story. These success stories take vision, time, risk, and hard work. The Nesquehoning Campus is just the latest example of Reading & Northern keeping on track. ♦

COVER PHOTO

Standing on RBMN 2013, CEO Andy Muller, with Jason Winwood, Chris Garcia, Matt Minnich, Sebastian Hess, Matt Mizikoski, Derek Reber, and Tyler Glass for the first engine to make it inside building 3.

EDITORS

JOLENE BUSER • SABINE FIDLER • KATHY GIPE

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"The Road of Anthracite"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Reading & Northern Nesquehoning Campus Updates

Port Clinton, PA – March 11, 2024

Since acquiring the former KME properties in Nesquehoning in 2022, the Reading & Northern Railroad has made great progress in shaping the campus as its own. Many departments have established a presence at the Nesquehoning Campus; however, there is lots more work to be done.

The location of the Nesquehoning Campus is most ideal, as it is situated right in the middle of our busy main line between Reading and Scranton, PA. Tracks are under construction to lead into select existing buildings, some of which are tailor-made for the servicing of our ever-expanding fleet of diesel locomotives, which currently totals 63. This will mark the first time in over 75 years where locomotives would be maintained and repaired in Carbon County. In addition to our locomotives, we own a vast array of company vehicles varying in size from common automobiles to large trucks; all of which are serviced and maintained at the Nesquehoning Campus. The campus even has its own classroom, used for the training and qualifying of employees, primarily in the Transportation Department.

The other buildings on campus house our Maintenance of Way, Signals, Real Estate, and Passenger Departments, totaling over 30 people working at the site already. Maintenance of Way (or MOW) and Signals work together to ensure the overall safety of the railroad. MOW's focus is the upkeep of the track structure on the entire railroad. The Signal Department maintains not only the signaling system that helps control train movements along said track, but also the automatic warning devices at our highway grade crossings that help keep the public safe in the communities we serve. Real Estate handles all matters related to company property, which encompasses far more than just our existing trackage.

The Passenger Department has a building of its own at the Nesquehoning Campus, and big plans are in the works for the future. Reading & Northern will be introducing the Nesquehoning Regional Railroad Station in 2024. Plans for a station platform are underway right now, as well as an additional main track to accommodate more train traffic. This will create numerous opportunities for new excursion routes. Tickets for two such excursions are on sale now. The railroad's famous Iron Horse Rambles, featuring its largest steam locomotive, 4-8-4 T-1 class #2102, will operate from the new station in Nesquehoning on June 22 to Tunkhannock; and on August 17 to Pittston. Another excursion, featuring the handsome streamlined F-unit diesel locomotives, on August 18 to Pittston is planned as well. The railroad will also seek to connect Nesquehoning to neighboring Jim Thorpe (home of the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway) during peak times to cut down on traffic congestion and parking issues in the popular and historic town.

Finally, after a decades-long hiatus, Reading & Northern will be relaunching the Black Diamond Company Store, based at the Nesquehoning Campus. This store, which has already established an online platform, will offer customers the chance to browse and purchase numerous long-requested railroad-related items such as t-shirts, hats, and even puzzles depicting artwork and photos of our trains. On busier weekends, the store will also have a display at the Jim Thorpe station.

Reading & Northern Railroad, with its corporate headquarters in Port Clinton, is a privately held railroad company serving over 80 customers in nine eastern Pennsylvania counties (Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Northumberland, Schuylkill, and Wyoming). It has expanded its operations over the last 40 years; and now handles nearly 40,000 carloads of freight (which removes over 200,000 trucks from the highway), while its Passenger Department handles over 300,000 riders annually. Reading & Northern operates its freight and steam- and diesel-powered passenger excursions over 400 miles of track, owns over 2,000 freight cars, and employs over 350 dedicated people. Reading & Northern has been repeatedly honored as one of the premier railroads in the nation, including being named Regional Railroad of the Year in 2020 by Railway Age magazine. ♦

Nesquehoning Campus Expansion

BY: TYLER GLASS, EXECUTIVE VP OPERATIONS

The transformation at our Nesquehoning Facility took a drastic step in early February. A switch was installed on the Main Line and a stub track was completed. This allowed us to place our first car at the facility and thus more track materials started rolling in.

Over the next month MOW would construct the siding leading to building 3. Another switch and track was also completed. So we now have access to two tracks in building 3.

It has been our intention to use building 3 for locomotive work as well as freight and passenger car maintenance. On March 12 our first railcar was placed inside the building.

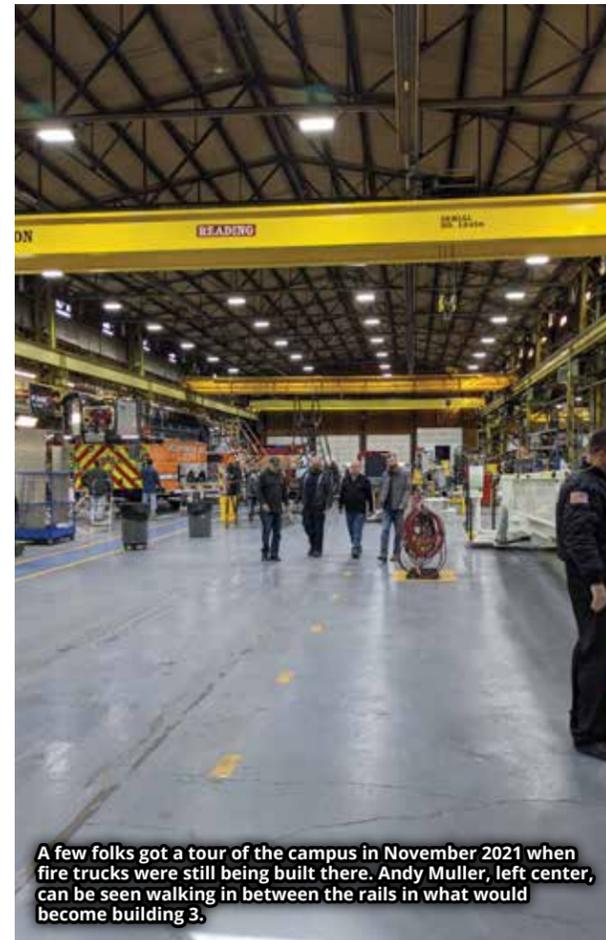
Fun fact, we placed a railcar in the building but we did not install any tracks. Turns out that the previous owner of the complex, Kovatch Mobile Equipment, had tracks installed in that building despite the fact that they weren't anticipating any rail service. Two tracks were installed in the floor solely for the purpose of using track carts, used typically for railroad track maintenance, in the building for moving parts back and forth. There are some coincidences in life that are just too surreal..... this is one of them.

Building 3 is also equipped with fall protection and three overhead cranes ranging from 7.5 tons up to 20 tons.

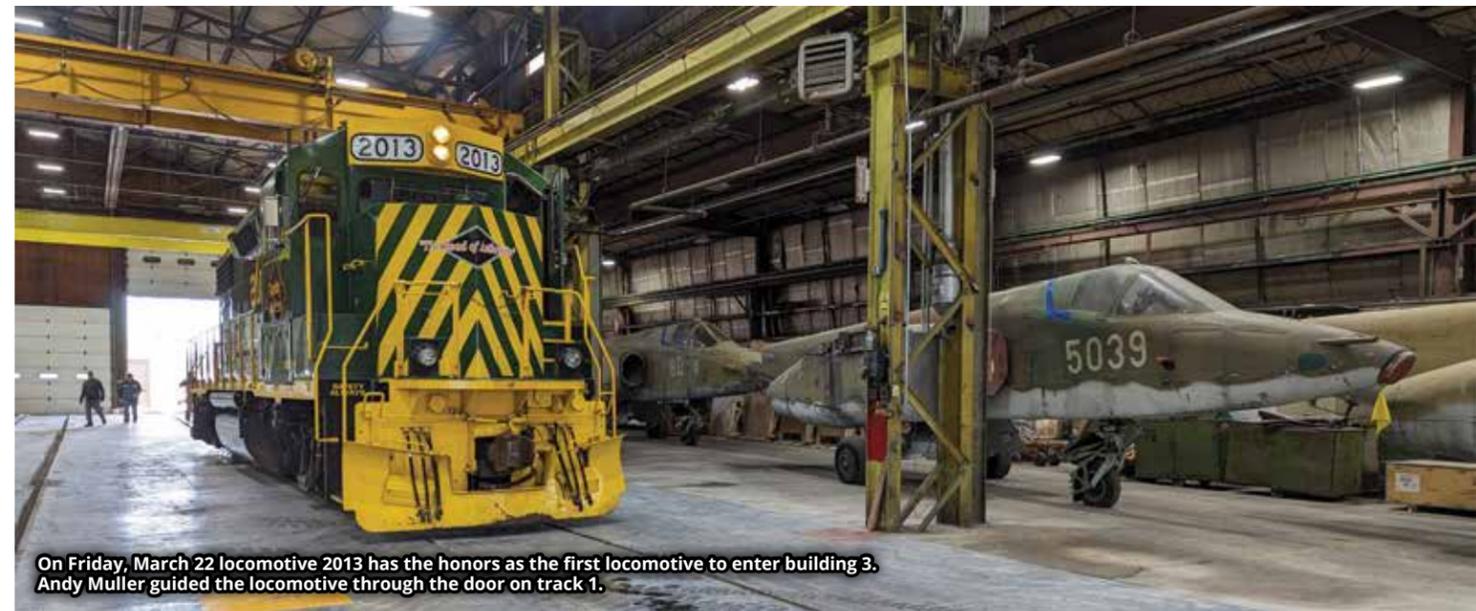
We are in the process of getting larger 18 foot doors installed on tracks 1 and 2 so that we can take locomotives and taller equipment into the building.

Starting in April we will have some heavy locomotive maintenance and passenger car restoration work being performed in building 3.

More updates and pictures to come! ♦



A few folks got a tour of the campus in November 2021 when fire trucks were still being built there. Andy Muller, left center, can be seen walking in between the rails in what would become building 3.



On Friday, March 22 locomotive 2013 has the honors as the first locomotive to enter building 3. Andy Muller guided the locomotive through the door on track 1.



Interior of Building 3 soon after purchase of Nesquehoning Campus by RBMN in March 2022



Conductor Hudson Henry rides the point as the very first railcar gets spotted at the Nesquehoning Campus on Friday, February 9.

Safety Always

Nesquehoning Campus

BY: ERIC PETERS, VP TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY

This year the Nesquehoning Campus became the primary training center for safety and rules classes. The campus is located in middle of system making it convenient for both Divisions. The campus has a large classroom with a projector to display training material and the ability to incorporate Teams virtual participation. As we grow as a company it is important to have ample capacity to hold training classes. It is hard to find a week when the room is not in use educating new conductors, engineers, or other departments.

The Safety Always attitude is evident in the purchase of the Nesquehoning campus. The training center was identified and developed immediately to educate employees. But safety goes beyond the classroom. Each building on the campus is being set up with safety and efficiency in mind. The vehicle shop has lifts and space indoors to work on all types of vehicles and includes a nice section for small engine repair. Maintenance of Way has all their materials and tools organized both in their storage building and outdoor material yard. The largest buildings are equipped with overhead cranes to assist in large scale projects and provide a safe method for the literal "heavy lifting". Even the entrance was designed with safety in mind as a new crossing was established and warning protection has been installed.

It is impressive to see the Nesquehoning Campus transform into a true hub for the Reading and Northern. As the campus evolves each project will continue to embrace the Safety Always philosophy. ♦



Lively discussion the Nesquehoning Classroom during Safety Training.



Learning on the big screen.



Nesquehoning Campus Classroom.



Conductor Trainee Class learning signals.



Lunch break at 2024 Transportation Safety and Rules Training at the Nesquehoning Campus.



2024 Might "Turnout" to be Our Best Year

BY: CHRIS GOETZ, VP MAINTENANCE OF WAY

As MOW puts away our snow shovels and backpack blowers after yet another mild winter, we look to "switch" our mindsight with big infrastructure plans for 2024. This year's focus is to begin taking on the installation of fifteen additional switches on our Main Line and across our system to support the railroad's surge in traffic.

When Reading & Northern purchased the Nesquehoning campus in 2022 we knew the large undertaking that would be needed to develop, design, and build the infrastructure to access each of the buildings along this half-mile complex. Over the past year we have developed plans that include a half-dozen new turnouts that are needed to access tracks leading in and out of 3 buildings, along with two #20 switches on either end that will connect this property to a new secondary main that will run along the entire complex.

In Tamaqua, we have started to build a lite yard which will require another half-dozen switches to provide a staging area for train crews to build and organize customer loads and an engine track fit to hold at least eight locomotives. This required extensive work by MOW crews clearing and grading away the land along Sewer Plant Road to make way for the yard extension. Along with the yard tracks and engine tracks, an additional runaround will be created to further assist the efficiency of the local crews out of Tamaqua Yard.

In North Reading Yard, we find ourselves changing out a worn #10 turnout

to a #20 at Rick interlocking to support our increased traffic volume. This work complements the extensive rehabilitation we did in the fall to the Tuckerton crossover a few hundred yards to the south. While in the area, we will combine this project with general tie work and upgrades on the customer switch for PCA and Novipax to further solidify the north end of our yard. Once the work is completed on the north end, we will transition to the south end of the yard at Reading Outer Station where we are scheduled to add a switch to Station Siding and connect it back into the main just north of our interchange with Norfolk Southern at Belt.

With our ever-growing passenger business, switches and storage tracks to support our tourism operations are also a focus in 2024. In Jim Thorpe, we will be adding an additional crossover to support our passenger business in the region. In Pittston another storage track with switches will also be installed to accommodate our ever-growing passenger needs to the north. In Nesquehoning, we will begin construction on the future home of the RBMN Nesquehoning Passenger Station.

As the clocks change, the days get longer, and Spring inches closer, we begin our ambitious list of projects for 2024. While our aspirations are always high, these plans would not be possible without the hard work and commitment that the men and women in MOW put forth daily to ensure that these plans come to fruition. ♦

Images continued on page 8.

Dennis Rosohac runs the switch tamper through newly installed #20 switch at Rick.



Ben Nelson operates the backhoe with Matt Minnich on the roller grading for track #2 construction at Nesquehoning Campus.



Alex Scubelek Jr. works on grading out ahead of Pittston Passenger Track 3 construction.



View of newly constructed track into Building 3 at our Nesquehoning campus.



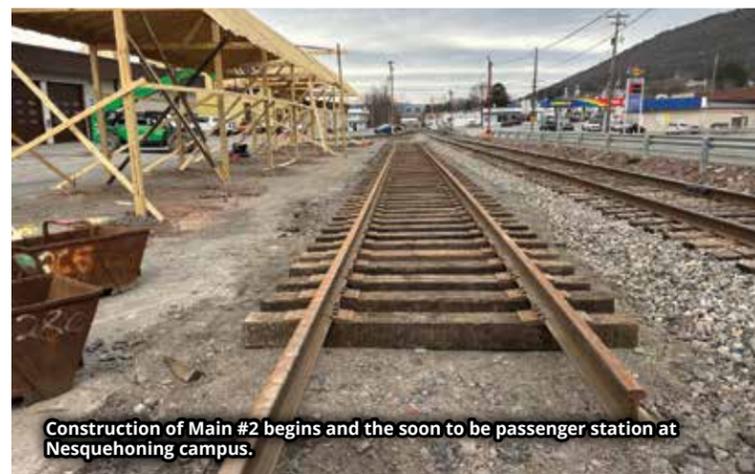
Newly installed timbers are spiked at the switch upgrade at Rick to #20 is completed by Tim L'Amie, Dave Hutton, Chuckie Carl, Dennis Rosohac, Tyler Acker, and Enos Bleiler.



Chris Garcia, Sebastian Hess, Brandon Kalbach, and Jared Edmonds work on the frog for the 1/2 switch in Nesquehoning for Building 3.



Looking railroad North, Alex Scubelek Jr is nearly complete with grading for Pittston Passenger Track 3.



Construction of Main #2 begins and the soon to be passenger station at Nesquehoning campus.



Newly installed #20 switch at Rick at North Reading Yard seen in the foreground compared to the #10 in the background.



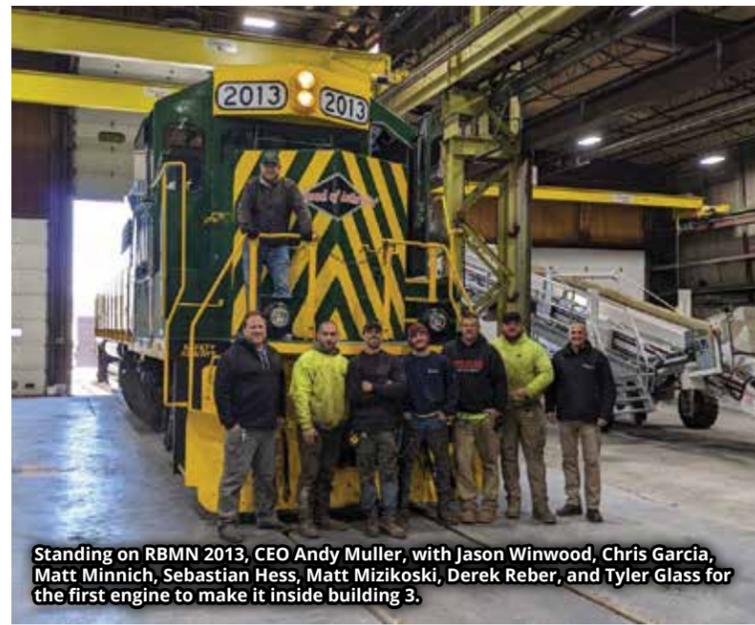
Brandon Kalbach and Chris Garcia finish anchoring the Nesquehoning Lead switch while Dennis Rosohac assists welder Mike Lojewski on the frog.



Backhoe operator Ben Nelson places pipe extension in Tamaqua yard with the help of Josh Antosh ahead of lite yard track construction.



Grading is completed for 2 tracks leading into building 3 at Nesquehoning campus.



Standing on RBMN 2013, CEO Andy Muller, with Jason Winwood, Chris Garcia, Matt Minnich, Sebastian Hess, Matt Mizikoski, Derek Reber, and Tyler Glass for the first engine to make it inside building 3.



Dennis Rosohac cleans out freshly cut flanges as Matt Mizikoski makes the cuts so engines and cars can be brought inside building 3.



Dennis Rosohac operates the loader with Matt Nestor and Corey Hamm laying out materials for Main #2 construction at Nesquehoning.

"The Road of Anthracite"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Reading & Northern Announces Another Pay Increase for Employees

Port Clinton, PA – March 15, 2024

The Reading & Northern Railroad has always strived to hire, and, of equal importance, retain the very best employees. Owner/CEO Andy Muller firmly believes that to do this, employees must first and foremost be well compensated and know that they are appreciated.

The company for years has awarded profit sharing checks, equal to 1% of the employees' annual salary, every time 1,000 carloads of export coal are interchanged. Two such checks have been issued to employees in the first quarter of 2024 alone. Employees receive healthcare benefits that are unmatched by most employers nationwide. As a direct result of employee participation to divert high-cost healthcare services, the company maintains health insurance at no cost and no deductibles for individuals and families. Low-cost vision and dental benefits, and Railroad Retirement, have also been staples of the Reading & Northern employee benefits package. A 2022 increase in paid time off for employees was followed in 2023 by the inception of a 401K plan for those who wish to bolster their retirement savings. The company matches employee 401K contributions up to 3%. This, coupled with employer contributions to Railroad Retirement, equals 16% invested in the employees' future.

However, Mr. Muller realizes that undoubtedly for all his employees, it is the bottom line on their paychecks that matters most. That is why, effective February 26, 2024, all employees received a 3% pay increase. This is the fourth such pay increase in the last two years. Prior increases were conferred to employees in March 2022, February 2023, and August 2023. In announcing this latest increase, Muller said "We know there are companies offering competitive incentives for new hires right now and feel it is important to continue to show that we appreciate your choosing to work with us. We continue to assess where we can increase benefits such as additional time off, 401K contributions, and continued raises."

Enhanced benefits and compensation notwithstanding, Muller points out quickly and with validity that "It is also important to be aware of our track record of never laying off employees, never cutting hours, and never reducing benefits like many other companies have. Despite the economy around us, we continue to offer the best healthcare coverage available along with increasing benefits in other areas such as retirement. Our goal is for you all to continue benefiting from the growth that would be impossible without you."

Executive Vice President of Strategic Planning, Christina Muller-Levan, noted "Since 2021, the company has experienced a 17% employee growth rate. The company values and rewards hard work and a great attitude. Employees who display these attributes and excel in their roles are regularly promoted from within the organization."

Human Resources Director, Jack McCoy, added "RBMN recently invested hundreds of thousands of dollars to increase pay rates for dispatchers, engineers, and conductors. We will be systematically reviewing all departments over the next several months. We are constantly monitoring and researching the company's pay scales to remain competitive."

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Nesquehoning Train Trips Added to the Schedule

BY: MATT FISHER, SVP
& GENERAL MANAGER PASSENGER

Winter of 2023 was a busy time in the Passenger Department. Pittston to Jim Thorpe, and Reading to Jim Thorpe trains operated three weekends in February. The Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway ran every weekend this past winter. After the Easter Bunny trains in late March, LGSR trips will run daily from mid-April until the end of 2024. Full focus is now turning to the Nesquehoning Campus of the Reading & Northern Railroad. Two big excursions featuring steam locomotive #2102 will originate from the new station at Nesquehoning; one to Tunkhannock on June 22, and one going to Pittston on August 17.

The Nesquehoning Campus is nearly equidistant from Reading as it is from Scranton. The former KME/REV Group facility was purchased by the railroad over a year ago. Heavy work has started not only for passenger operations, but also for many mechanical and maintenance of way functions. Several other railroad departments also have facilities at Nesquehoning including Police, Signals, Transportation, Real Estate, and Car Shop.

The Passenger Department will focus on two main objectives at Nesquehoning. The first is to run excursion trips from the center of the railroad system in both north and south directions. The second is to serve as a shuttle location running short train rides from Nesquehoning to downtown Jim Thorpe on select dates.

The location offers plenty of parking, therefore excursion and charter trips starting from here are ideal. On June 22, the second Reading & Northern Iron Horse Ramble of the year will traverse the mainline from Nesquehoning to Tunkhannock (the first Reading & Northern Ramble will be May 25 from Reading to Jim Thorpe). This day-long trip will travel to Riverside Park in Tunkhannock where passengers will get off the train and walk into downtown Tunkhannock for the annual Founder's Day Festival. While the passengers enjoy the festival, the train will be prepared for its southward return trip via Pittston to Nesquehoning.

Continued on page 12.



Artist rendering of Nesquehoning Campus passenger developments by Steve Gilbert.



Lounge Car #7, the King Coal, departs Penobscot Yard on a February Pittston to Jim Thorpe train. Special thanks to the Passenger, MOW, and Transportation crews that worked very hard to clear the snow for these winter trips.



#2013 seen on the new portion of track in the heart of the Nesquehoning Campus on March 22, 2024.



After a successful test run, #2013 is backing out of the Nesquehoning Campus and returning to Jim Thorpe Yard. The new platform can be seen to the right with downtown Nesquehoning in the center background of the picture.



Seen left to right front table: Russell Shurtleff, Joe Gramlich, Larry Curvey are attending the Passenger department meeting in March. The department holds two meetings a year for the entire staff at Building 8 in Nesquehoning. Photo by Mary Culp.



A young Christina Muller-Levan and Justin Clapper working on a Blue Mountain & Reading Easter Bunny excursion train circa 1980s.



The Reading & Northern MOW department began work in late winter to connect Building 3 at the Nesquehoning Campus with the main line. Tracks will be laid into the pavement at this location.



Beginnings of the Black Diamond Company Store. The store will be open on days excursions or shuttle train trips operate from the Nesquehoning Regional Railroad Station. The counter, under construction, will be the main area where guests can purchase items.



Freshly painted diesel locomotive #2013 sits in Building 3. This building, originally constructed by KME with standard gauge track, was the perfect location for a railroad facility.



This early April shot shows the roof nearly completed on the platform structure.



Coach #454, formerly the George Washington, will be the first passenger coach to be worked on in Nesquehoning. The car is seen here on the brand-new track awaiting restoration.



The Facilities department hired contractors to build the platform at the Nesquehoning Regional Railroad Station. Progress was happening quickly in March 2024.



Platform work was very fast. Looking in the north direction on the Reading and Northern mainline.



The platform area at Nesquehoning Regional Railroad station March 2024. Passengers will board the first Reading & Northern Iron Horse Ramble at this location in June 2024.



Nesquehoning Regional Railroad Station looking in the south direction.



At the Nesquehoning Campus, a new main track is being built on the left side of the picture. The new track will join the original main track just north of this location.



Jason Winwood is talking to Chris Goetz on locomotive #2013 as Tyler Glass manages the first diesel locomotive move into Building 3 at Nesquehoning Campus.



This gondola was one of the first pieces of equipment in Building 3.



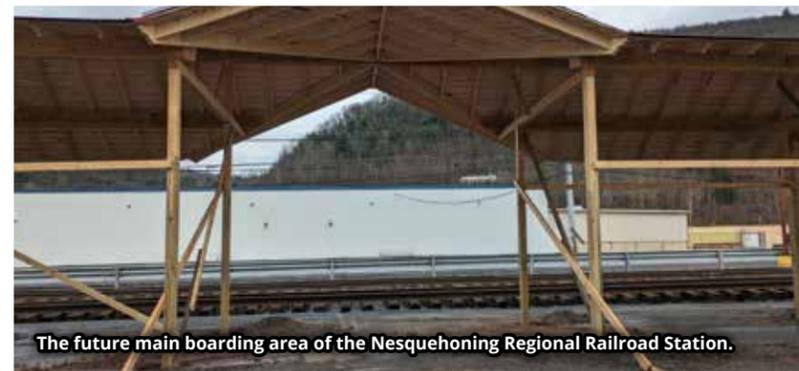
This work area will be the future location of a new switch interlocking on the mainline where both freight and passenger trains will be able to pass one another.



Andy Muller, Jr., engineer of the first diesel locomotive into Building 3, is seen to the left of Chris Goetz and Tyler Glass. Photo by Matt Fisher.



This switcher, #801, will be the first diesel locomotive assigned to the Nesquehoning Campus.



The future main boarding area of the Nesquehoning Regional Railroad Station.

Continued from page 11.

On August 17, the third and final Reading & Northern Iron Horse Ramble will operate from Nesquehoning to Pittston. This will be a shorter trip compared to the Tunkhannock Ramble, but will nonetheless feature many opportunities for riders. Once the train reaches the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Regional Railroad Station at Pittston, guests will transfer to free shuttle buses to go into downtown Pittston. Arriving in downtown Pittston, guests will take in the annual Tomato Festival before shuttling back to the train station and returning south to Nesquehoning.

Both steam-powered Rambles will travel the entirety Lehigh Gorge State Park, pass through two tunnels, and ascend and descend the grade over Penobscot Mountain on the northern end of our main line. These will be very popular trips; evidenced by many premium seats having already sold out, with some Standard Coach seating still available.

As of this writing, the exact date for Nesquehoning to Jim Thorpe shuttle trains to begin is still to be determined. The Nesquehoning location will be a great spot to supplement Jim Thorpe. It will allow tourists to park at the Nesquehoning Campus, and take one of the frequent shuttle trips into downtown Jim Thorpe. More planning and details need to be resolved before this begins, but the railroad is excited for this opportunity to continue to increase tourism in Jim Thorpe.

The Reading & Northern will also reopen the long-inactive Black Diamond Company Store. One of the buildings near the boarding platform at Nesquehoning is being renovated into the physical location of the company store. More information can be found on page 15 about the store. Currently, the store has an online platform. Adding a physical location for people to buy railroad-related merchandise is a goal that the Passenger Department has been working toward for quite some time. The store will be open on select days when excursions or shuttle trips are departing from Nesquehoning.

Aside from the Iron Horse Rambles and shuttle trains at Nesquehoning, the railroad will run Reading Outer Station to Jim Thorpe Rail Diesel Car (RDC) trips on weekends from April through December. The trips will also stop at Port Clinton and Tamaqua to board more passengers.

Following enormous popularity in their inaugural year of 2023, Pittston to Jim Thorpe trips will once again operate and feature our 40th anniversary diesel locomotive #2023, along with Crown Class Coaches and a dining car. Lounge Car #7, the King Coal, will also be on the train. This train makes additional station stops at Penobscot and White Haven.

For the third consecutive year, Reading Outer Station to Pottsville trips will operate on selected Saturdays. The train runs nonstop from Reading to Pottsville in approximately one hour. Arriving in Pottsville, guests will get off the train and immediately be greeted by an open-air farmer's market at Pottsville Union Station.

Bike Trains begin in late April and will operate one weekend each month through September, with one additional weekend in November. The Bike Train is just as popular now as it was when it was introduced in 2014. People can bring their own bike; or, with one ticket, rent a bike from Pocono Biking. The Bike Trains depart at 9:15am and 12:30pm from Jim Thorpe and operate northward and uphill to the newly improved White Haven Station. People can then ride their bikes 25 miles downhill back to Jim Thorpe on the Delaware & Lehigh Trail. Round-trip tickets are offered for the Bike Train as well for those who simply wish to take a longer train ride. Also, special train rides in Minersville, Tamaqua, and Mahanoy City will be featured this spring and summer.

More options to ride the Reading & Northern Railroad are being offered than ever before this year, especially for those in Carbon County looking to ride all-day excursions from Nesquehoning. More information can be found on Facebook, www.lgsry.com, www.rbmnrr-passenger.com, or by calling 610-562-2102. ♦



Three Iron Horse Rambles Featuring Steam Locomotive #2102 Slated for Summer 2024

Port Clinton, PA – February 14, 2024

The Reading & Northern Railroad will continue the tradition of Iron Horse Ramble excursions in the summer of 2024. These excursions will feature one of the largest operating steam locomotives on the east coast, 4-8-4 T-1 class #2102, built in 1945 in nearby Reading, PA. Passenger Department Senior VP/General Manager, Matt Fisher, states "We listened to feedback from our loyal passengers and fans and decided to carry on with these great steam excursions. One of the Rambles will be over the familiar Reading-to-Jim Thorpe route; but the other two will be to exciting new destinations never before visited by the #2102."

Tickets for these exciting steam excursions which will take place on May 25, June 22, and August 17, go on sale at 9:00am on Thursday, February 15, 2024, at 9:00am by phone at 610-562-2102, or online at www.rbmnr-passenger.com.

The first Iron Horse Ramble on Saturday, May 25, 2024, will operate from Reading Outer Station to Jim Thorpe, PA. The train will depart at 9:00am sharp, make a station stop at Port Clinton, and continue to the classic destination of Jim Thorpe; where passengers will have over four hours to explore the town, take photographs of the #2102, meet the crew, and experience a ride on the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway. The train will return to Reading Outer Station in the evening. To help make this trip even more affordable, Reading & Northern will offer Standard Coach tickets for \$79.00 (previously \$99.00) per passenger, and Crown Class Coach tickets for \$99.00 (previously \$110.00) per passenger. Additional upscale seating options will also be available by calling our ticket office.

The second and third Iron Horse Rambles for this year will be all-new. Both will feature the #2102 operating over the entire length of our Lehigh Division Main Line. On Saturday, June 22, 2024, #2102 will power the very first steam passenger excursion from our Nesquehoning Campus to Tunkhannock, PA, for the town's 43rd Annual Founder's Day Festival. This lively event, sponsored by the Tunkhannock Business and Professional Association, will feature food and craft vendors, live music, entertainment, and more. Departure will be at 9:00am, and passengers will receive ample time to enjoy the festival before returning to Nesquehoning in the evening. Along the way, railfans will marvel at the power of steam locomotive #2102 as it pulls the train upgrade through Lehigh Gorge State

Park, over Penobscot Mountain, through the Wyoming Valley, and along the east bank of the Susquehanna River to Tunkhannock. Tickets will be priced at \$99.00 for Standard Coach and \$110.00 for Crown Class Coach. Limited additional premium seating options will also be available by phone.

Expanding upon the theme of new destinations for 2024, the third and final Iron Horse Ramble will operate on Saturday, August 17, from Nesquehoning to Pittston, PA for the annual Tomato Festival. This one-of-a-kind event features great food (including a spaghetti eating contest), rides, bingo, live entertainment, and the Little Mr. and Miss Tomato contests. As always, departure will be 9:00am, and once more feature #2102 thundering through the Lehigh Gorge on its way to Pittston. Passengers will of course have lots of time to take in the Tomato Festival before returning to Nesquehoning in the evening. As with the June Ramble from Nesquehoning, tickets will be \$99.00 for Standard Coach and \$110.00 for Crown Class Coach. A limited number of premium seating options will be available by phone.

Do not miss your chance to experience steam passenger railroading at its finest on the Reading & Northern Railroad over some familiar and new brand-new routes. Tickets are sure to sell quickly – be sure to be online or at your telephone Thursday morning! There will, of course, be steam-powered excursions to Jim Thorpe during our popular Fall Foliage Season, but information regarding those will come at a later date.

Reading & Northern Railroad, with its corporate headquarters in Port Clinton, is a privately held railroad company serving over 80 customers in nine eastern Pennsylvania counties (Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Northumberland, Schuylkill, and Wyoming). It has expanded its operations over the last 40 years; and now handles nearly 40,000 carloads of freight (which removes over 200,000 trucks from the highway), while its Passenger Department handles 300,000 riders annually. Reading & Northern operates its freight and steam- and diesel-powered passenger excursions over 400 miles of track, owns almost 1,800 freight cars, and employs over 350 dedicated people. Reading & Northern has been repeatedly honored as one of the premier railroads in the nation, including being named Regional Railroad of the Year in 2020 by Railway Age magazine. ♦

Reading & Northern Railroad Reintroduces the Black Diamond Company Store

BY: MATT FISHER, SVP & GENERAL MANAGER PASSENGER & RUSSELL SCIANNA, JR., OFFICE MANAGER, PASSENGER

With the ever-increasing popularity of its passenger operations and the railroad in general, Reading & Northern has decided to expand its marketing portfolio and bring back an old favorite. The Black Diamond Company Store, which offers a variety of oft-requested railroad-related items, has returned after a nearly twenty-year absence.

The company store was previously operated as a mail-order only platform, with its limited selection displayed on the railroad's main website. Customers would print an order form and mail it in with a check to pay for their items. We see many customers each year wearing their hats from the original company store with its distinctive "Black Diamond Company Store" cast iron crossbuck logo. This time, the store has a new look, emphasizing the anthracite industry's importance to the railroad and the region in general.

The Black Diamond Company store already has complete online functionality; and will ultimately grow into a full-fledged brick-and-mortar retail operation

at our Nesquehoning Campus. On busier weekends, the store will also have a presence at the station platform in Jim Thorpe. The on-campus retail operation will coincide with the introduction of the Nesquehoning Regional Railroad station in mid-2024. Customers will be able to browse and purchase not only hats, T-shirts, puzzles, and more; but also tickets to ride any of our numerous passenger excursion offerings.

Initial online sales have been strong, and new items will be added as the store gains its footing. Passenger Department Assistant General Manager, Marie Knadler Cunningham, says "The Black Diamond Company Store is not just about the opening of a building, but it is also the opening of a new chapter in the perfect location. This is the beginning of a new journey, and we look forward to seeing it come to fruition. We hope that everyone who passes through Nesquehoning pays us a visit to explore our new store and all that the Reading & Northern Railroad Passenger Department has to offer." ♦

Keeping the Bald Eagles Safe

BY: MATTHEW A. JOHNSON, VP GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Perhaps many of our dedicated readers have driven southbound on State Route 61 through Hamburg, PA. Driving northbound on SR 61, as you pass over the Schuylkill River you are driving past what is known to RBMN as our "Canal Property" (as it was formally owned and used by the Schuylkill Navigation Company) on the western side of SR 61.

For many years now we have had the pleasure of enjoying nesting bald eagles on the railroad's canal property. Many people have stopped to admire these majestic birds, and I have witnessed several people stopping to take photos.

PennDOT has planned to perform upgrades to the SR 61 bridge spanning over the Schuylkill River. As some of you may have wondered, a part of this construction planning, PennDOT was required to install fencing along the west side guardrail on SR 61. This fencing was installed for the sole purpose of eliminating construction disturbances to the bald eagles on the canal property. Sometimes human activities can disturb the eagles and cause them to relocate their nests. This can include visual activities and loud noises. This fence will help to minimize disturbances to the eagles. Also, the height of the fence will help the eagles when they fly over SR 61 to maintain a safe elevation above construction to avoid being struck by any vehicles.

I was asked by Andy Muller Jr., what is this fence was for? When I explained it was required by PennDOT for their upcoming project he was very pleased that someone had thought of this. Andy has love for all animals, so he came up with a brilliant idea that I proposed to PennDOT. Andy offered PennDOT his commitment to the eagles and is willing to maintain the fence in perpetuity after PennDOT's project is finished as long as the eagles are nesting on the canal property.

This commitment was well received by Penn DOT, and they have agreed to let Andy and the Reading and Northern Railroad continue to keep the fence in place well after the project is complete.

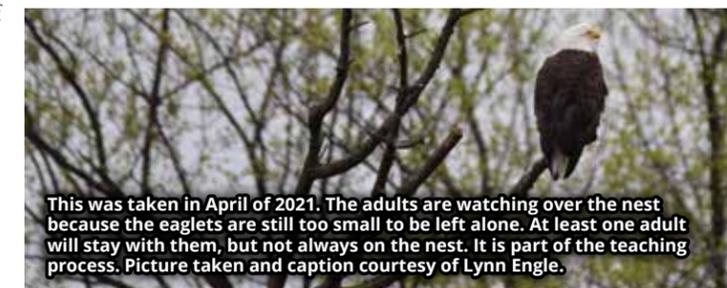
This commitment shows Andy Muller, Jr., his family, and the railroad's philosophy of preserving all wildlife for a greater future. ♦



This picture is from 2020. It is doing what is called "branching". Picture taken and caption courtesy of Lynn Engle.



The eagle "family" from 2021. The eaglets in the nest don't have all of their feathers and are still somewhat fuzzy. At this point, the adults take complete care of them, including keeping them warm if necessary. Picture taken and caption courtesy of Lynn Engle.



This was taken in April of 2021. The adults are watching over the nest because the eaglets are still too small to be left alone. At least one adult will stay with them, but not always on the nest. It is part of the teaching process. Picture taken and caption courtesy of Lynn Engle.



Picture of protected bald eagle fencing installed by PennDOT on SR 61 southbound lane. Picture taken by Jeff Gerber, Real Estate Inspector.

Reading & Northern Railroad Nesquehoning Campus



WELCOME ABOARD

New Employees!



Matthew Phillips

Matthew Phillips was recently hired as a Conductor in our Operations Department. He attended Coughlin High School and King's College. Prior to working at RBMNR, Matthew was a Conductor at Norfolk Southern for 12 years.



Zachary Schwalm

Zachary Schwalm was recently hired as a Trackman in our Maintenance of Way Department. He attended North Schuylkill Junior/Senior High School. Prior to working at RBMNR, Zachary was a General Construction Laborer at Local Laborers Union 1174 for three years. Zachary has been a local volunteer firefighter at multiple fire companies within the Tamaqua area since he was 14 years old.



Geric Wallace

Geric Wallace was recently hired as a Trackman in our Maintenance of Way Department. He attended Commonwealth Charter Academy. Prior to working at RBMNR, Geric was a Pipe Fitter, Welder, and Foreman at Schadler Industrial LLC for two years. Geric likes bikes, classic cars, and Jeeps.



Sebastian Hess

Sebastian Hess was recently hired as a Trackman in our Maintenance of Way Department. He attended Carbon Career and Technical Institute.



Conrad Schlenker

Conrad Schlenker was recently hired as a Car Host in our Passenger Department. He attended Cumberland Valley High School and will attend Penn State Altoona in the Fall. Prior to working at RBMNR, Conrad was a Porter at Colonial Crafts Private Railcar for six months. In his spare time, Conrad models railroad prototypes with LEGO bricks and his scale models are award winning. Conrad currently holds two Global Awards in the Brick Train Awards competition for participants under 18 years of age, winning them in 2022 and 2023.



Dominic Steidle

Dominic Steidle was recently hired as an Equipment Mechanic in our Mechanical (Vehicle Shop) Department. He attended Pottsville Area High School and Schuylkill Technology Center for Precision Machining. Prior to working at RBMNR, Dominic was a CNC Machinist at MAE Eitel for one year. Dominic is in a grunge/alternative rock band, called BLISS, where he plays the bass guitar. He loves music, cars, and pretty much anything with wheels.



Tyler Kovach

Tyler Kovach was recently hired as a Conductor in our Operations Department. He attended Greater Nanticoke Area High School and Wilkes Barre Vo-tech for diesel and welding. Prior to working at RBMNR, Tyler was a Foreman at Buranich Excavating for one year. In his spare time, Tyler builds and works on diesel pickup trucks and works with the horses he owns.



Ethan Schaeffer

Ethan Schaeffer was recently hired as a Conductor in our Operations Department. He attended Hamburg Area High School and Reading Area Community College. He was also in the United States Army. Prior to working at RBMNR, Ethan was a Sales Manager for three months.



Landon Trutt

Landon Trutt was recently hired as a Conductor in our Operations Department. He attended Conrad Weiser High School and Bryn Athyn College. Prior to working at RBMNR, Landon was playing hockey as a goalie in France for two years. Landon left for Europe six years ago to follow his dreams of playing professional hockey. While he was overseas, he met the love of his life and they recently got married.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

MAY 1.....	SHAWN FREDERICKSON	JUNE 3.....	CURTIS CIBELLO	JULY 7.....	ETHAN SCHAEFFER
MAY 1.....	ZACHARY SCHWALM	JUNE 4.....	TRISHA VANDYKE	JULY 8.....	ERNEST HENRITZY, JR.
MAY 7.....	BRETZ FETTEROLF	JUNE 5.....	ERIC QUIMBY	JULY 8.....	MELINEE WILSON
MAY 9.....	EUGENE S. BOYLE, JR.	JUNE 7.....	TIMOTHY BARNES	JULY 10.....	JOSHUA YOUPA
MAY 9.....	DENNIS ROSOHAC	JUNE 7.....	JEREMY HURWITZ	JULY 11.....	JOSEPH MATUELLA
MAY 9.....	ALLIE SANDERS	JUNE 10.....	PETER COLLINS	JULY 12.....	ERIC PETERS
MAY 10.....	MATTHEW POSTHUMUS	JUNE 10.....	JOHN FAUZIO	JULY 14.....	MICHAEL BAILEY
MAY 11.....	DEANNA JOHNSON	JUNE 14.....	JESS GRIESSER	JULY 14.....	DALE HOMM
MAY 11.....	AARON SCHLOSSER	JUNE 15.....	ROBBY RUSSELL	JULY 14.....	JAKE STOCKMAL
MAY 16.....	ALLY MCGINLEY	JUNE 15.....	NATHAN ZEIGLER	JULY 15.....	VIRGINIA PIZZA
MAY 17.....	RHONDA BUECHLE	JUNE 16.....	JULIUS DUDASH	JULY 15.....	DANIEL RAWLEIGH
MAY 18.....	RUSSELL SHURTLIFF	JUNE 16.....	COLIN GIPE	JULY 15.....	DAKOTA REBER
MAY 19.....	CHARLES TRUDELLE III	JUNE 18.....	DENISE KACSUR	JULY 15.....	MICHAEL SHARADIN
MAY 21.....	STEVEN SCHORR	JUNE 19.....	WILLIAM OATES	JULY 17.....	LANDON TRUTT
MAY 21.....	JUSTIN SEIGEL	JUNE 22.....	RICHARD MAJORINO	JULY 18.....	BENJAMIN BALTHASER
MAY 21.....	CHUCK TRUDELLE II	JUNE 22.....	ROBERT SHAULIS, JR.	JULY 20.....	DARRELL MATZ
MAY 24.....	LISA MATZ	JUNE 23.....	MICHELE DAUB	JULY 20.....	NATHAN MENGEL
MAY 26.....	MARIO DEMARCO	JUNE 26.....	JARED EDMONDS	JULY 20.....	SAMUEL WILLS
MAY 27.....	CHARLES BURNETT	JUNE 26.....	LISA PERUGINO	JULY 21.....	TAMMY DEBKOWSKI
MAY 28.....	JASON ANDREAS	JUNE 27.....	CHRISTOPHER PETERS	JULY 23.....	ZACHARY LESHER
MAY 28.....	STAN NESTOR	JUNE 28.....	IAN MCKEOWN	JULY 23.....	BRYAN MEADE
MAY 28.....	SIERRA WANAMAKER	JUNE 28.....	JOSHUA REHRIG	JULY 24.....	DAVID HUTTON
MAY 29.....	MICHAEL GRUBER	JULY 1.....	MATTHEW COLLINS	JULY 25.....	STEVEN KOLBE
MAY 29.....	KYLE KOGOY	JULY 1.....	JEREMY ATWELL	JULY 25.....	KYLE SANDERS
MAY 29.....	JEFFREY SONDAY	JULY 3.....	WILLIAM BUBECK	JULY 28.....	FRANKLIN DAUB
MAY 31.....	KATIE BONNER	JULY 4.....	BENJAMIN MEISER	JULY 28.....	MICHAEL VOORHEES
MAY 31.....	CAMERON ODELL	JULY 5.....	TYLER GESCHWINDT	JULY 29.....	ISAAC FEENSTRA
MAY 31.....	BRIAN WOLFE	JULY 5.....	CHRISTOPHER NEFOS	JULY 30.....	ZACHARY SIMPSON
JUNE 1.....	GERIC WALLACE	JULY 6.....	JOHN DUBICK	JULY 31.....	JACOB BITTORF
JUNE 2.....	BRANDON KALBACH	JULY 6.....	CONNOR HEDRICK	JULY 31.....	SHAWN SLUSSER

♥ Rescued, Adopted, Loved ♥

Samuel Tripp, Conductor/Dispatcher, and his wife, Liz, recently took in a one-year-old gray tabby cat and named her Sylvie. Sylvie was found at our North Reading Yard in November 2023 by one of our Engineers/Conductors, Nick Suruskie. After checking all the local Facebook groups and getting her scanned for a microchip, no one seemed to be looking for this sweet furball. Sylvie's story was emailed across the company and Sam immediately jumped at the chance to add her to his family. According to Sam and Liz, Sylvie has settled in very well, and the Tripp's couldn't have asked for a better addition to their family.



RBMN Anniversaries

40 YEARS



APRIL 21, 1984
STEPHEN GILBERT
GRAPHICS LETTERING AND SIGNS
PASSENGER

35 YEARS



MARCH 1, 1989
DUANE ENGLE
AVP – TRACK STRUCTURES & FIELD
OPS – MAINTENANCE OF WAY

30 YEARS



MARCH 9, 1994
DAREN GESCHWINDT
VP – DISTRIBUTION SERVICES
TRANSLOAD



APRIL 18, 1994
JACK WASSEL
INSPECTOR – REAL ESTATE

15 YEARS



MARCH 16, 2009
KATHERINE BONNER
AVP – PROCUREMENT
& FINANCE - FINANCE



APRIL 19, 2009
MATTHEW STABINGER
A&P MECH./GSE MGR
READING JET
MAINTENANCE



APRIL 25, 2009
MARY CULP
ASSISTANT OFFICE
MANAGER -
PASSENGER



APRIL 25, 2009
BRIAR STERN
FACILITIES TECH./
CONDUCTOR -
PASSENGER

10 YEARS



MARCH 3, 2014
ALVIN RINEER
ENGINEER 3 - OPERATIONS

5 YEARS



FEB. 1, 2019
THOMAS SKRUTSKI
ENGINEER/
CONDUCTOR -
OPERATIONS



MARCH 14, 2019
JAMES GARRAWAY
CAR HOST/
CONDUCTOR -
PASSENGER



MARCH 14, 2019
ALLY MCGINLEY
QUALITY CONTROL
COORDINATOR -
PASSENGER



MARCH 19, 2019
ADAM BOAK
CONDUCTOR 1 -
OPERATIONS

3 YEARS



MARCH 22, 2021
JOHN FAUZIO
CLASS 2, STEAM
MECHANIC -
PASSENGER



APRIL 5, 2021
JACK MCCOY
AVP – HR – HUMAN
RESOURCES



APRIL 26, 2021
DERRICK KEENER
REAL ESTATE SAFETY
COORDINATOR
REAL ESTATE

1 YEAR



FEB. 13, 2023
TIMOTHY L'AMIE
ASST FOREMAN -
MAINTENANCE OF
WAY



MARCH 13, 2023
JARED EDMONDS
TRACKMAN -
MAINTENANCE OF
WAY



MARCH 16, 2023
SHELBY
FREDERICKSON
CAR HOST/TICKET
AGENT - PASSENGER



MARCH 16, 2023
KATHERINE KRAMER
CAR HOST/TICKET
AGENT - PASSENGER



MARCH 16, 2023
JOYCE "JAMIE" MAKIN
CAR HOST/
NARRATOR/TICKET
AGENT/CONDUCTOR -
PASSENGER



MARCH 20, 2023
WILLIAM OATES
AVP- MECHANICAL -
MECHANICAL



APRIL 4, 2023
JOHN BRINICH
CONDUCTOR -
OPERATIONS



APRIL 19, 2023
BONNIE FREDERICK
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE/
PAYROLL CLERK -
FINANCE



APRIL 26, 2023
RONALD MOHL
POLICE OFFICER -
POLICE



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

BY: MEGHAN FAUST, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SPECIALIST

It is my privilege to introduce Ernest Henritz, Manager of Vehicle Fleet, as our Spring 2024 "Spotlight Employee". Ernie has been with the Reading and Northern Railroad since October 1999.

Born in Lehigh and raised in Jim Thorpe, Ernie has always been a local guy. He graduated from Jim Thorpe High School in 1990. While in high school, Ernie used to pump gas at Leffler's Auto Service and gas station. He learned a lot of skills hands-on at Leffler's and even took a few courses on electronic fuel injection, anti-lock brake systems, and electronic ignition and fuel management systems at both Northampton Community College and Lehigh Carbon Community College. Prior to working for Reading and Northern Railroad, Ernie was a mechanic at Kovatch Ford in Nesquehoning for five years from 1994 to 1999.

Ernie met his lovely wife, Susan, in February 2005 and have been together since. Susan has been a Physical Therapist Assistant at St. Luke's Sacred Heart Campus since 1994. They got married in July 2011 and had their now 11-year-old son, Hudson, in September 2012. The family also has two Dachshunds, Lizzy and Tucker.

When they aren't camping or taking their dogs for a walk, Ernie, Susan,

and Hudson like to drive around in one of his old cars. He owns a 1947 DeSoto sedan, a 1963 Chevy Impala, and a 1970 Dodge Charger. Along with supporting Hudson in Scouts, they enjoy watching him compete in archery. Hudson is on the West Penn Archery Youth Team and has brought home 4 gold medals at regional competitions and a silver medal at the S3DA State Indoor Championship in Lebanon, PA. Ernie and Susan are very proud parents.

This honor was given to Ernie by his supervisor, Dan Puksar, VP of Mechanical, who said, "Ernie has a long history at the railroad of being a dedicated, hardworking mechanic. He goes above and beyond to ensure vehicles are repaired correctly and safe for everyone. He is the go-to guy for questions on anything with a motor, whether that be helping an employee with a problem with a company vehicle, or a question about their own vehicle, Ernie is quick to assist!"

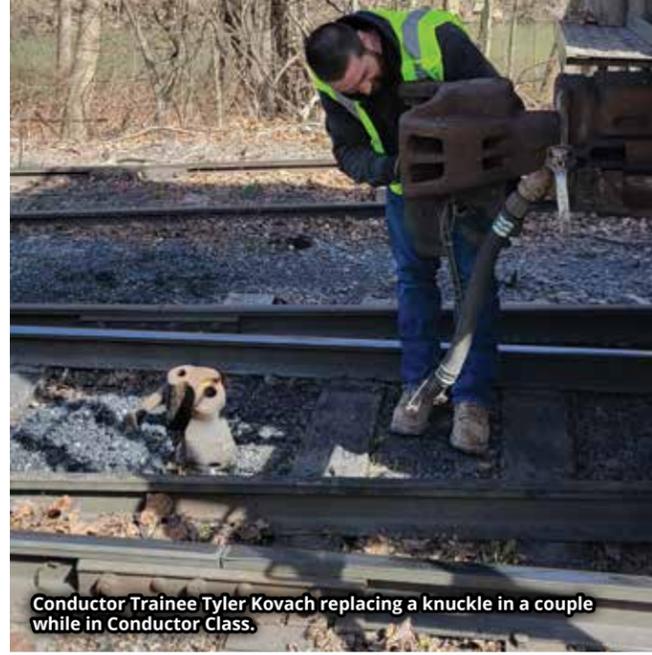
Ernie says that he "is proud to be a part of the Reading & Northern team since October of 1999."

As our Spotlight Employee, Ernie will receive a \$100 gift card to Tamaqua Station Restaurant in Tamaqua, the restaurant of his choice. ♦

Congrats Ernest!



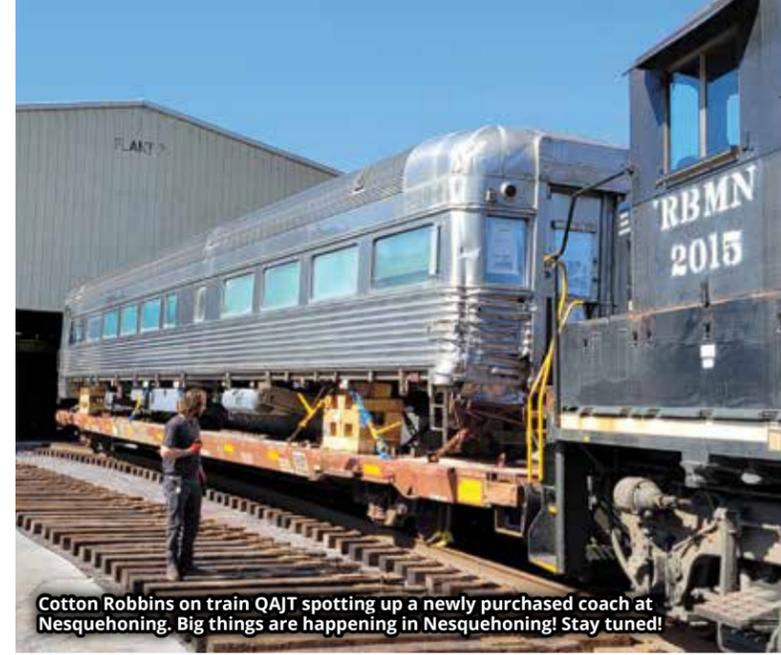
Ryan Lamm getting coal cars ready in Tamaqua to take to our customers.



Conductor Trainee Tyler Kovach replacing a knuckle in a couple while in Conductor Class.



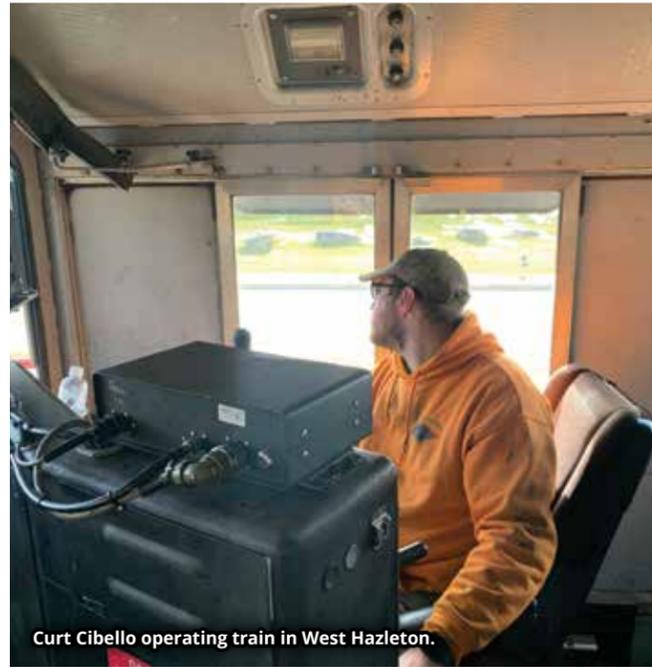
Travis Prevost running train YJPI1 back to Pittston Yard going through Old Forge.



Cotton Robbins on train QAJT spotting up a newly purchased coach at Nesquehoning. Big things are happening in Nesquehoning! Stay tuned!



Dynamic duo Jagger Gradwell (left) and Aaron Aigeldinger switching the Taylor inbound at Pittston Yard.



Curt Cibello operating train in West Hazleton.



Alvin Rineer brings train NRFF7 through Hauto. Right on time!



Conductor Tim Matushoneck making a move at Humboldt Industrial Park.



Working together to get cars repaired in the Car Shop. (Left to Right: Landon Trutt, John Jennings, Kyle Sanders and Ben Leonti.)



Making it happen in North Reading at night, Xavier Robinson directing a move.



Matt Posthumus staging coal cars at Dauberville Yard.



Amber Peiffer shoving back to spot a boxcar at one of our warehouse customers.



Erik Ostroskie on the JTQA at Barnesville.



Getting locomotives together in the Pittston Engine Track with Jagger Gradwell.



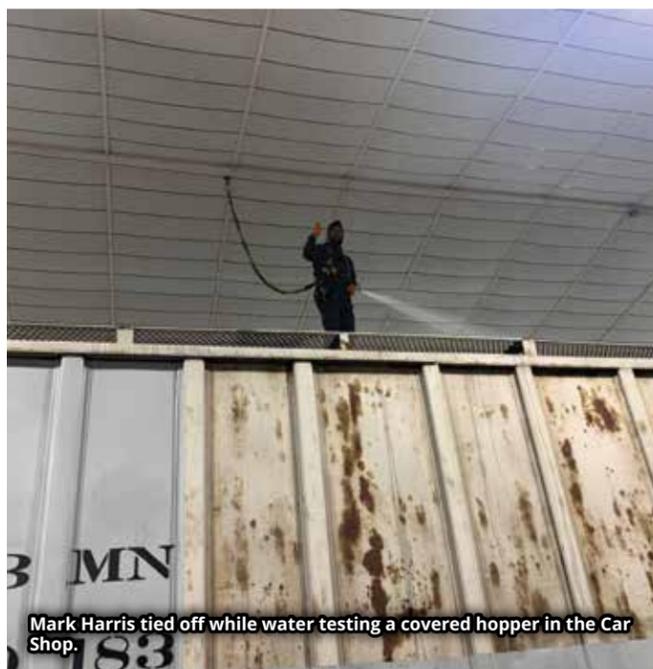
2023/2024 Locomotive Engineer Training Class pose on the 3068 at Port Clinton. The class just passed their Engineers test. Seen here left to right are Samuel Tripp, Jason Andreas, Bart Crary, Adam Boak, Lucas Reichard, Matthew Posthumus, John Shucavage and their instructor, John Smolczynski.



Conductor Trainee Matthew Phillips being observed by Conductor Thomas Skrutski coupling cars at Morea.



Engineer Jeff Bavitz enjoying a busy day serving customers.



Mark Harris tied off while water testing a covered hopper in the Car Shop.



DSLE James Cook and Transportation Manager Ryan Trexler discussing the moves train DEQA is going to make.



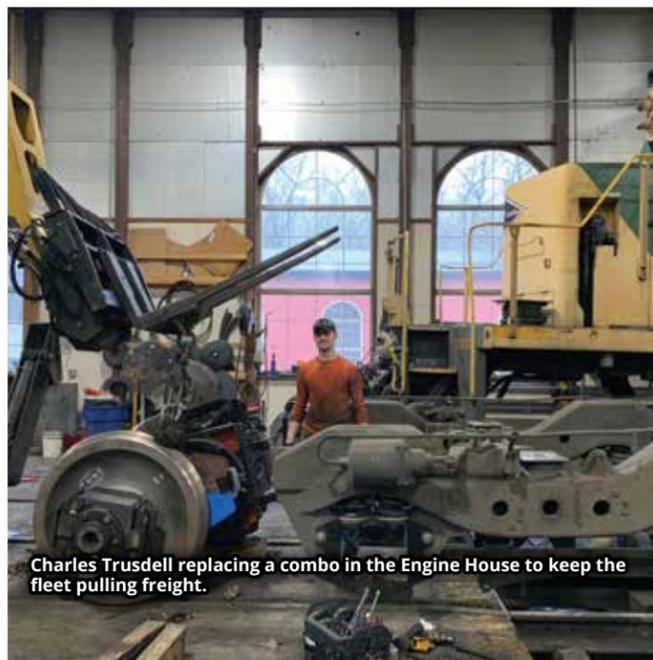
Michael "Breezy" Bischak on the SBPI going through Taylor.



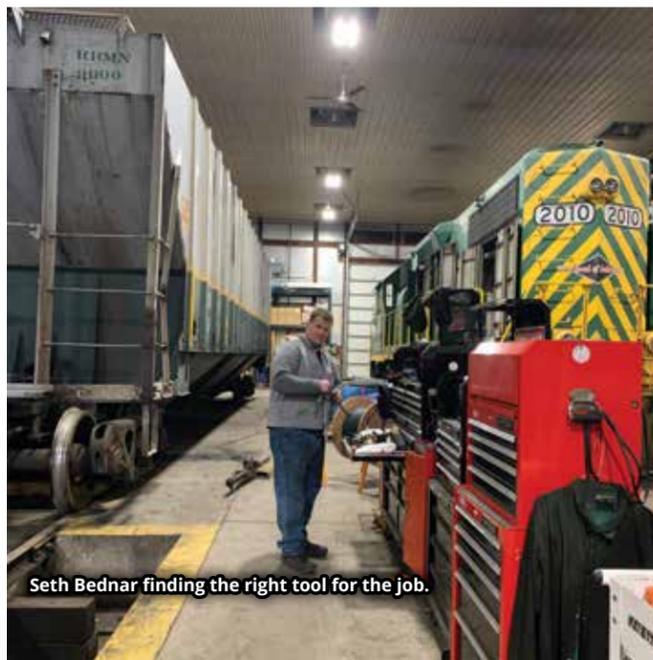
Steven Schorr working at Mahanoy City Yard on train SDQA.



Erik Ostroskie making moves at Pittston Yard with Michael Bischak.



Charles Trusdell replacing a combo in the Engine House to keep the fleet pulling freight.



Seth Bednar finding the right tool for the job.



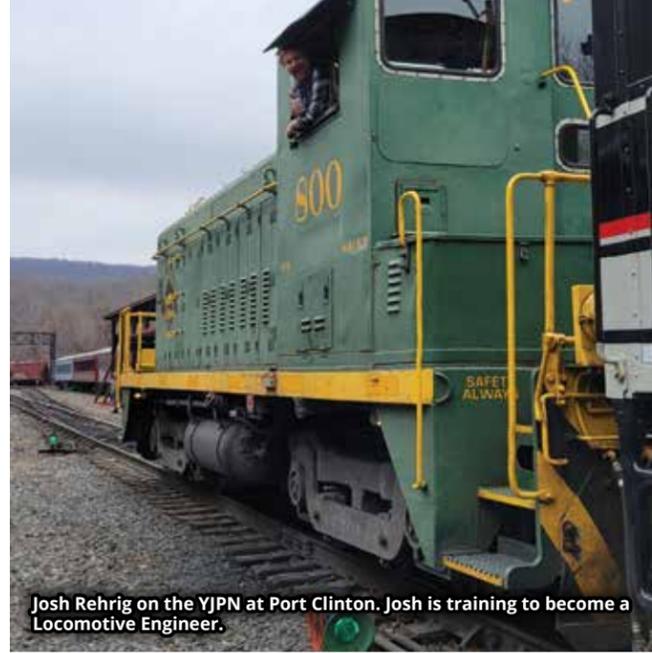
Nick Suruskie having a job briefing with 1st shift Dispatcher Aaron Schlosser and Chief Train Dispatcher, Kyle Sanders.



Michael "Manny" Voorhees going over a game plan with Erik Ostroskie at Pittston Yard.



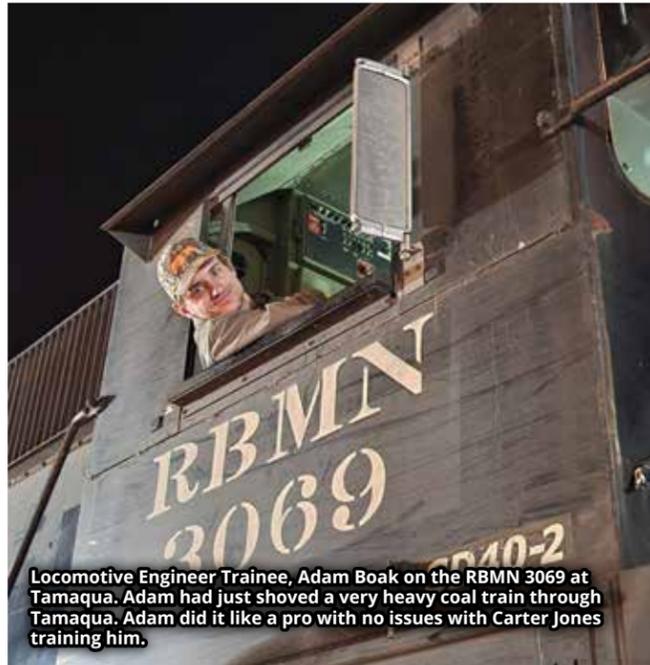
Locomotive Engineer Training Class at Port Clinton spent a day servicing Locomotives at Port Clinton. This is part of the Mechanical Day lesson Engineer Trainees go through to get a better hands on understanding of the Locomotives. John Shucavage and Adam Boak are seen replacing brake shoes with their Classmates watching.



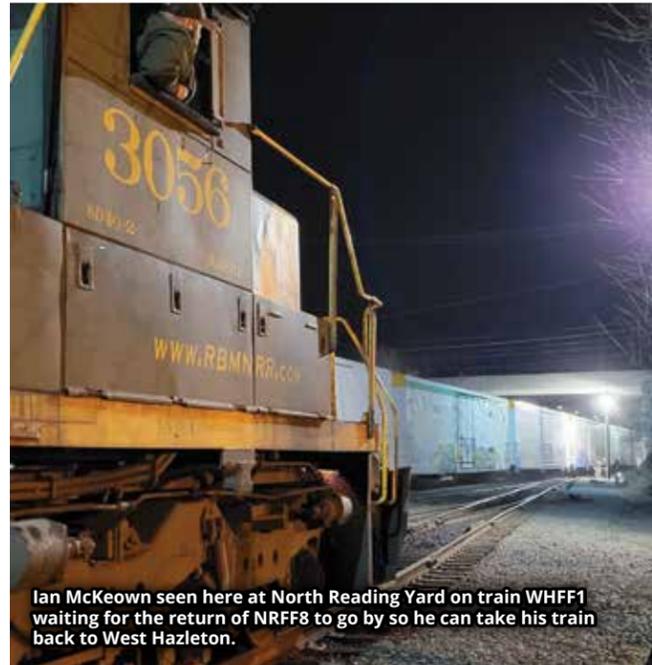
Josh Rehrig on the YJPN at Port Clinton. Josh is training to become a Locomotive Engineer.



Kyle Sanders and Mikeal Geoghegan having a job briefing at KERNS after having a rules check performed. Train crews are required to have regular rule checks done to maintain a safe and efficient work environment. Mikeal and his Conductor do a great job!



Locomotive Engineer Trainee, Adam Boak on the RBMN 3069 at Tamaqua. Adam had just shoved a very heavy coal train through Tamaqua. Adam did it like a pro with no issues with Carter Jones training him.



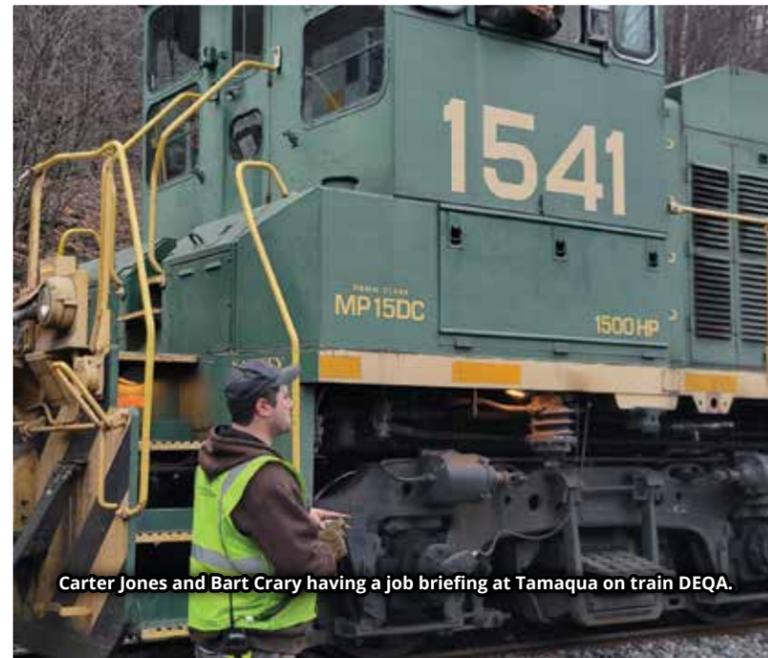
Ian McKeown seen here at North Reading Yard on train WHFF1 waiting for the return of NRFF8 to go by so he can take his train back to West Hazleton.



Carter Jones and Bart Crary on the DEQA at Tamaqua shoving a loaded car of coal through Tamaqua Yard. They are setting up the car to be put in the nighty outbound QANR train to North Reading for interchange.



Locomotive Engineer Training Class in the Wheel True shop at Port Clinton getting shown how the machine works. The RBMN Locomotive Engineer Training is very hands on.



Carter Jones and Bart Crary having a job briefing at Tamaqua on train DEQA.



RBMN 3061 shoving by with engineer Dave Lapallo at the control stand



Botstiber Clinic.



Wildlife Training Center.

Red Creek Wildlife

Introducing Red Creek's New Wildlife Training Center

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

It has been 16 years since the Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad began supporting Red Creek Wildlife Center through monthly contributions.

In that time, Red Creek has grown from me rehabilitating wildlife from my garage to a staff of five wildlife rehabilitators working out of a small house on adjacent property. The number of animals that we care for has increased as well. Red Creek admitted about 800 animals in 2008. Today, we receive over 4,000 animals annually, stretching our facilities to the limit.

My lifetime goal has been to build a modern wildlife rehabilitation clinic that is an education center to train others, expanding these services to other areas. It has been a journey of growing pains, and the Muller family and the Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad have supported us throughout the process. This year, we completed construction on two new buildings, making that goal a reality.

The new Botstiber Clinic is a 4,000-square-foot, two-story structure made possible by a one-million-dollar match grant from the Botstiber Foundation. It has 13 small animal rooms, a large raptor area, a kitchen, a wash area, a lab, and offices.

The new Wildlife Training Center houses a public nature center and a classroom, expanding public programs and rehabilitation training.

And this training center will be busy. This year, we will host six five-day

workshops for twenty students seeking training in wildlife rehabilitation. Fifteen summer interns will get hands-on experience and classroom training in wildlife careers. And we are planning a full year of public events where people can learn about our native wildlife.

In March, Andy and his daughter Tina Muller-Levan, son Aaron Muller, and VP of Finance Andrea Collar visited Red Creek. We toured the training center, outdoor enclosures, and the clinic, met with ambassador animals, and viewed a few patients from a distance.

The tour ended in my office, where I painted the sign for the new training center building. The sign wasn't complete because I needed permission to add the last part. In honor of Andy and his unwavering support for so many years, I wanted to name it the "Andrew Muller, Jr. Wildlife Training Center." Being the humble man I know him to be, I worried he would decline. Visibly touched, he accepted with one slight change. I'd like to introduce you to The Carol & Andy Muller Wildlife Training Center.

In the tradition of this environmentalist family and the RBMN Railroad, these new facilities will help wild animals throughout the coming decades.

Many thanks to the Muller Family and the Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad for 16 years of continued support. We would not be where we are today if it were not for you. ♦



January 2024 - PGC Cadet Class learns about wildlife rehabilitation.



Public Nature Center.

Wellness Corner

BY: MEGHAN FAUST, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SPECIALIST

Home Safety

Our homes are our safe spaces; places for us to unwind, relax, and feel comfortable without worry. Sometimes, nothing feels better than coming home and kicking up your feet after a long day at work or an extended stay away from home. Thinking about the safety inside our homes isn't always at the forefront of our minds, but it should be something that each of us continues to improve upon or makes a conscious effort to work toward. A few of the many things we take for granted every day such as medication, falls, and fire hazards, can be health or safety concerns for ourselves or our loved ones.

If you have small children that live with you or stay at your home from time to time, there are many hazards of which you need to be conscious. Your medicine cabinet is most likely filled with what kids see as candy. If you have never taken a close look at what over the counter or prescription medicine looks like, they can be eerily similar to the sugary candy that kids love to eat such as Skittles, M&M's, Good N' Fruity, and Smarties. Be sure that your medicine is kept in its original bottle or container, with the safety cap locked, and stored out of sight in a high cabinet that children cannot see or reach. If you are someone that keeps medicine in your purse, coat, or bag, make sure that you keep those items out of reach of children, as well. If someone has accidentally ingested a medication that is not prescribed to them, be prepared and call Poison Control at (800) 222-1222. The Poison Control center provides no-cost professional help 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and uses the same phone number anywhere in the United States.

As we age, our stability declines, and we are not as steady on our feet as we once were. One in five older adults who fall suffers a broken bone or a head injury. Hip fractures for older adults are a serious problem and can possibly lead to long-term care and serious mobility issues particularly for those age 75 and older. Stairways should always be kept free of obstructions such as toys, shoes, laundry, or magazines and they should all have solid handrails, adequate lighting, and securely affixed flooring. If there are children in the house, you should also have safety gates at the top and bottom of the staircase to ensure they do not take an unexpected tumble. When outside of the house, be sure that all stairs are clear of debris and hazards like leaves, snow, and ice. Should you need to climb a ladder or stepstool to get to something out of your reach, be sure that you are wearing shoes with backs to prevent sliding or falling. Children are also extremely susceptible to falling downstairs so if you have children in the house, be sure to have a gate at the top and bottom of the staircase to prevent them from falling and injuring themselves.

Approximately every twenty-four seconds in the U.S., fire departments respond to fires which can ignite almost anywhere – inside buildings, outdoors, and in vehicles, but the fires which are the most tragic and preventable occur at home. The most common causes of home fires are cooking, heating equipment, and electrical fires involving lighting, washers and dryers, space heaters, air conditioners, ranges, and water heaters. Although most people fear burning to death, more people die of smoke inhalation in a fire. Due to the potential tragedy, the U. S. Fire Administration suggests the following steps to prevent home fires:

1. Installing smoke alarms on every level of your home
2. Changing smoke alarm batteries at least annually
3. Testing smoke alarms monthly
4. Have a fire extinguisher
5. Making a home fire escape plan and practicing regularly

Keeping your family safe is priority number one. Although it is impossible to be always on duty, being precautionary and proactive will make your position as protector of the family much less challenging.

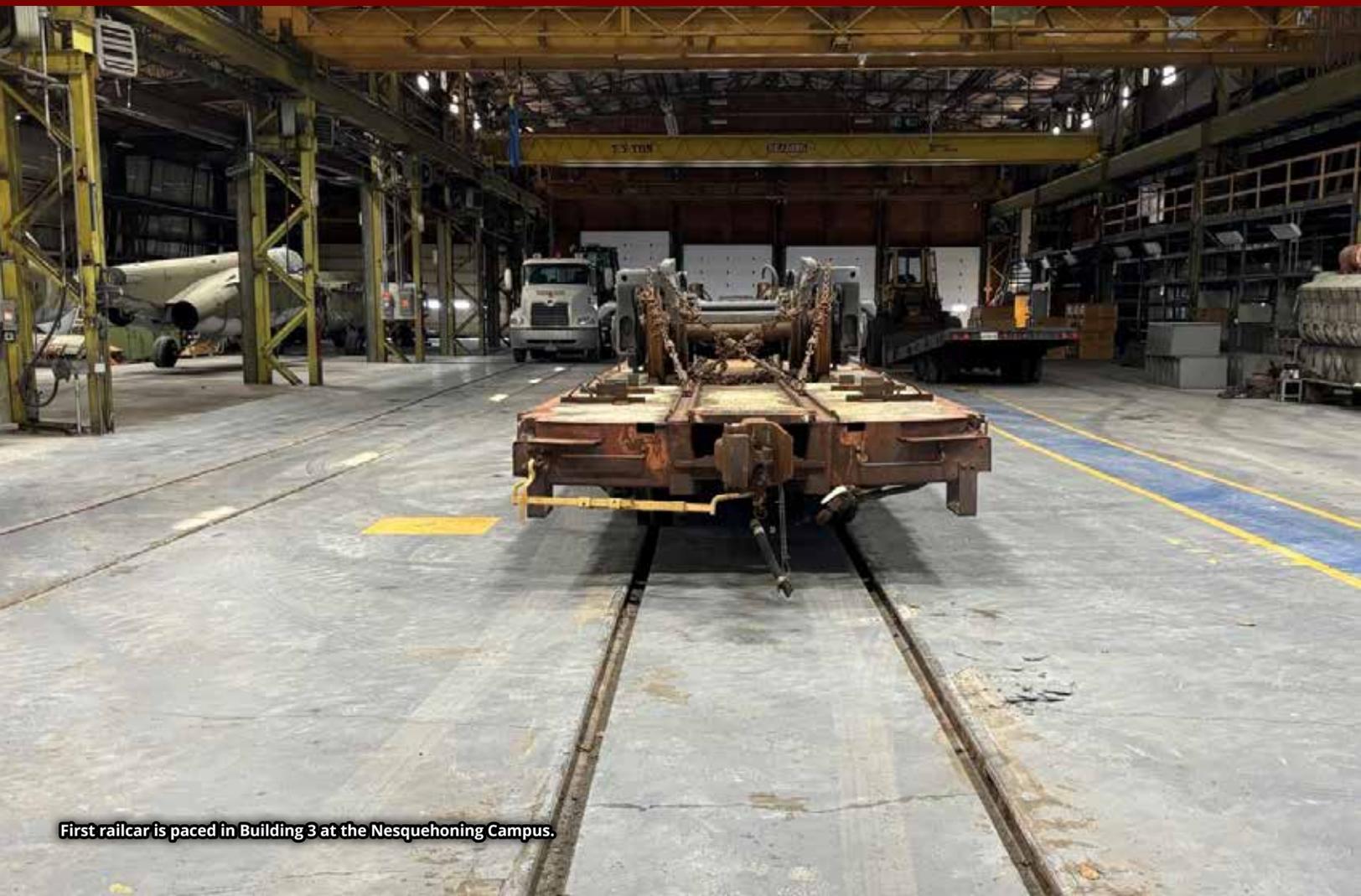


For more information, visit:

- www.greenandhealthyhomes.org/home-and-health/home-health-hazards
- <https://staysafe.org/safety-at-home-10-common-safety-hazards-around-the-house>
- www.safewise.com/blog/safety-hazards-to-watch-out-for-around-the-house
- https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/healthy_homes/healthyhomes/homesafety
- <https://sdpoison.org/education/public-education/pills-or-candy>
- <https://www.centerlighthealthcare.org/blog-1/medicine-or-candy>

**Reading Blue Mountain &
Northern Railroad Company**

PO Box 218
Port Clinton PA 19549



First railcar is paced in Building 3 at the Nesquehoning Campus.