

R & N Magazine

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COVER PHOTO
NEW SIGNAL SYSTEM AT EQUILATERAL, MAINLINE MILEPOST 95.30.

EDITORS
JOLENE BUSER • CRYSTAL ARNDT

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KEEPING ON TRACK

BY: WAYNE MICHEL, PRESIDENT

Excuse me if I run out of breath before finishing this column.

You see all of us at the Reading & Northern are running on fumes these days. Never in our history have we been so busy. Busy is good... but it is also exhausting.

To begin with we already were on pace for a record-breaking year thanks to traffic growth at a number of existing customers and faster than expected growth with some new accounts. And then we went into turbo-charge mode.

On July 31, 2017 two Trump Administration cabinet secretaries announced at the White House a huge deal to sell American coal to the Ukraine supplanting Russian coal. We soon learned that half of the coal would be anthracite coal. That meant that Reading & Northern would be moving 350,000 tons, about 35 unit trains, over the next 12 weeks. See article by Bill Clark. By the end of September we have handled ten trains. RBMN is supplying all of the equipment for this business and we are serving over half dozen different origin locations to fill this order. And we are keeping our fingers crossed that the business is continued in 2018 and beyond.

Of course, even with excess capacity, it is not possible to just add that much new business and train starts without stretching our crew and power resources. For a good handle on what a typical workday looks like this season read Tyler Glass’ article on pages 8 and 9. And then remember our extensive passenger business as referenced in Matt Fisher’s article on pages 12 and 13.

We are NOT complaining. We love new business... and old business. And we love challenges. In the near future we will be announcing that a project we began working on this winter will begin construction soon on a major new manufacturing facility on our railroad at the Humboldt Industrial Park. We worked very hard with CAN DO to land this facility, which will bring many jobs to the region.

Growth without constant investment and hiring will not work for long. And so in the midst of all this activity Andy Muller, Jr., made sure we were active in the purchasing and hiring areas. We purchased three additional GP 38-2 locomotives at an NS auction, an additional 121 covered hoppers to handle the growing dried anthracite segment of our business, and a rail train with 62,400 linear feet of new rail... collectively an investment of many millions of dollars in 2017 alone. On the hiring front we have hired an additional customer service representative and at least 5 new conductor-trainees.

None of our accomplishments would be possible without the dedication and hard work of the men and women of the Reading & Northern. We know that all of us are working long hours and we appreciate that everyone is working safely during this busy time.

I have never been prouder of the men and women of the Reading & Northern family. THEY have done everything needed to make sure we are keeping on track. ♦



THE CONDUCTOR.

Reading & Northern Railroad Helps Anthracite Shippers Open New Coal Markets

BY: BILL CLARK, SENIOR VP COAL



A 110-car Xcoal train heads south through Port Clinton bound for interchange at Reading, PA.



Ernie Thrasher (left) and Andrew Muller (right) in front of an RBMN covered hopper at Port Clinton.

WHITE HOUSE. WASHINGTON D.C. JULY 31, 2017; U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross and U.S. Secretary of Energy Rick Perry welcomed the announcement from the Government of Ukraine that Ukrainian state-owned power generation company Centrengo PJSC will purchase American thermal coal ahead of the upcoming winter season.

With this announcement Reading & Northern was plunged into one of the most exciting business ventures in our history. Over the remainder of 2017 Reading & Northern would be asked to ship 350,000 tons of anthracite in RBMN cars. Just to put that in perspective that was more coal tonnage to be shipped for this one new move than had been shipped in the first eight months of 2017.

Within a few days of the White House announcement, Reading & Northern and Norfolk Southern ramped up our operations to begin shipping train loads of anthracite coal to CNX Baltimore for loading in vessels for delivery to the Ukraine. Pennsylvania based coal exporter Xcoal Energy and Resources had put together the deal. Ernie Thrasher, Xcoal's CEO, had put together a winning bid that called for blending 350,000 tons of anthracite coal with 350,000 tons of bituminous coal to meet the customer's requirements.

As I write this article in late September, ten unit trains have been loaded. Eventually thirty-five trains will be loaded on our railroad. All this coal will move in Reading & Northern equipment. Although it will ship out on NS as unit trains, it is not being loaded as unit trains. In fact the coal will be loaded at a total of eight different facilities. Sometimes we will load as few as ten cars from a facility and other times we will load as many as fifty cars in a shift. Sometimes we will stay with the cars and index them and other times we will drop the cars and come back and pick them up when they are loaded. The coordination of the loading of these trains, as well as the separation and placement of the returned empty trains, has required a great deal of coordination and planning.

Encouragingly, the first vessel was delivered to a major Ukrainian utility on time and within the specifications required by the utility. This puts our anthracite producers in position to possibly handle a significant amount of this business in 2018 and beyond.

The fact that Reading & Northern could handle a dramatic increase in our coal business with no notice speaks to the dedication and hard work of our operations, dispatching and coal group. It also speaks volumes about the value of investing for the long term; something Andy Muller, Jr., our CEO and owner has done since purchasing the railroad. It is that focus on investing in the railroad and the people who run it that has caused Reading & Northern to grow to one of the most successful regional railroads in the industry and it is the philosophy that will help us continue to grow and prosper. ♦

RBMN Maintenance of Way Department Increasing Work Capabilities

BY: ERIK YODER, VP MAINTENANCE OF WAY

Embedded in our DNA, the Maintenance of Way Department looks to maximize our work in every aspect. From the management of our money to purchase materials, to selecting the equipment for our track needs, to building track to suit our growing company, to keeping our right of way free of trash, we want our railroad to be as busy and pristine as your model railroad at home. We love to see the increase in traffic. The downside to increased traffic usually results in more maintenance needs. To assist in this maintenance endeavor, we have begun to acquire more equipment to handle the increase in maintenance needs.

Our department made some acquisitions this year to aid in our ability to maintain and upgrade our track structure. As we continue to grow as a company and see the growth of the traffic levels, we also see the increased maintenance work to handle these traffic levels. We recently purchased two spiker/gaugers to enhance our work efficiency and capability to maintain our track. Both these pieces of equipment allow our forces to install greater lengths of new rail in a day. They also enable our gangs to install ties and gauge ties with a smaller work force. It additionally saves our guys the strenuous effort of gauging and spiking ties by hand.

An additional purchase of a brush cutter to replace our old and unusable one will enable us to continue to clear our right of way from weeds/brush. We can now cut back brush in the winter with this new brush cutter to supplement our weed spray in the spring and brush spray in the fall. Our vegetation management has also grown over the years. We still use good judgement in keeping the track clear of weeds, brush, and trees in a way that keeps the railroad scenic as well as keeping the trains moving.

As a result, we continue to add men to our work gangs. With more men, our vehicle fleet grows as well. We recently purchased two more work trucks, one of which was a larger truck dedicated to our thermite welding gang. This truck was equipped with more space, a lift gate, as well as the storage for the thermite kits. This enables the thermite welding gang to carry all needed tools and supplies on one truck instead of the two trucks they previously used.

Another result of increasing our work capabilities with new equipment is to focus on raising track speeds. We continue to work through our rail system to take class 1 tracks and rehabilitate them to class 3 status. This greatly increases the efficiency of the Operations Department to meet our customer needs. It is very exciting to be part of a team that maintains our track structure which includes upgrading track classes.

Ultimately, it is the men within Maintenance of Way Department that continue to raise the bar when it comes to getting work completed. As we get more equipment, the men are excited to use them to expand our capabilities. ♦



Jason Shupp and Matt Minnich are happy to be able to use the new hydro spiker. This machine has been a welcome addition to the Maintenance of Way gangs. This machine is currently being used on new rail installation on the Reading Division.



This second hydro spiker is being used on the Lehigh ML for rail replacement and tie work. Another welcomed addition to the equipment we use on RBMN.



Justin Hughes, Jason Shupp, and Matt Minnich are taking a small break between action on the job site. No more spiking 1600 LF of rail by hand or gauging an entire curve by hand.



Friends and guests gather at the Schuylkill Haven Train Station.



Passengers were able to de-train at Outer Station in Reading to see the new station before heading back to Schuylkill Haven.

Reading & Northern Customer Appreciation Train Trip

BY: DAN GILCHRIST, EXECUTIVE VP MARKETING & SALES

On Thursday September 14, 2017, the Reading and Northern ran a special train trip for over seventy customers, friends and other guests out of the newly refurbished passenger train station in Schuylkill Haven, PA.

As guests gathered for the trip and checked in, they had time to admire the restored passenger station which was built by the Reading Railroad in 1901. The weather looked to be rainy at first but it cleared up and the sun came out just in time for the train's departure at 10 AM.

This was a new route for our Customer Appreciation Trip and we ran along the Schuylkill River through Port Clinton and on to the new Passenger Station RBMN is completing in Reading, PA. The new station is called "Outer Station" and is originating regularly scheduled passenger trips to Jim Thorpe, PA.

The train consist included a mix of our historic cars, the former Gulf and Mobile & Northern parlor car, as well as one of our open air cars which allows guests to sit or stand with an unobstructed view of the scenery rolling by. There was plenty of room for folks to walk through the train and mingle or just sit and enjoy the ride.

A delicious buffet lunch was served on board and after running the engines around the train at the Outer Station in Reading, the rain arrived back at Schuylkill Haven on time at 1:00 PM.

Thanks very much to our friends and customers for taking the time to be with us, and we are happy they enjoyed taking a ride on the Reading and Northern railroad with us. ♦



The Schuylkill Haven Train station was originally built for the Reading Railroad in 1901.



Reading and Northern Customer Appreciation Train Trip originated at Schuylkill Haven on Sept 14, 2017.



The Parlor Car has plenty of room for guests to spread out and talk.

Operations in Full Swing

BY: TYLER GLASS, EXECUTIVE VP OPERATIONS

I wrote an article in 2016 that celebrated a historic event in the Operations Department, we had seventeen crew starts in one day along with two Norfolk Southern train crews for a total of nineteen trains on the railroad for the day. Since our last article, having 17 crew starts in one day has become more of a normal occurrence these days especially given some unanticipated coal business from Xcoal that has been greatly publicized.

So I thought I would write something about what has become a typical day on the Reading & Northern, this particular day is Tuesday, September 19. This day saw many unit trains moving to and from various locations for a total seventeen RBMN jobs and four Norfolk Southern train crews operating over RBMN territory on this day.

For ease of following along with the storyline for this day, I am going to mention trains in order of their initial report time, but keep in mind that the railroad is constantly moving and this is a show already in progress from the previous day. Our system map details how expansive our train lines are.

At 05:00 the QAMC starts their day in Tamaqua. Today it is Shane Frederickson and Caleb Fetteroff. Liam Marsh, conductor, is also with the crew today assisting with a very heavy work load at a number of coal customers on our M&S Branch.

Just thirty minutes later Bill Riegle and Carter Jones start their day in Tamaqua at 05:30. Their objective for the day is to index coal cars for loading at Lehigh Anthracite. This is a part of an export unit train that will be interchanged to Norfolk Southern later in the week.

At 06:00 Chris Bost and Mike Kolbe sign on at Port Clinton for a round trip to Good Spring for the scheduled Tuesday work. A little shifting at Port Clinton then it's off to Cressona for an additional pick up before blasting off for Good Spring to serve three customers.

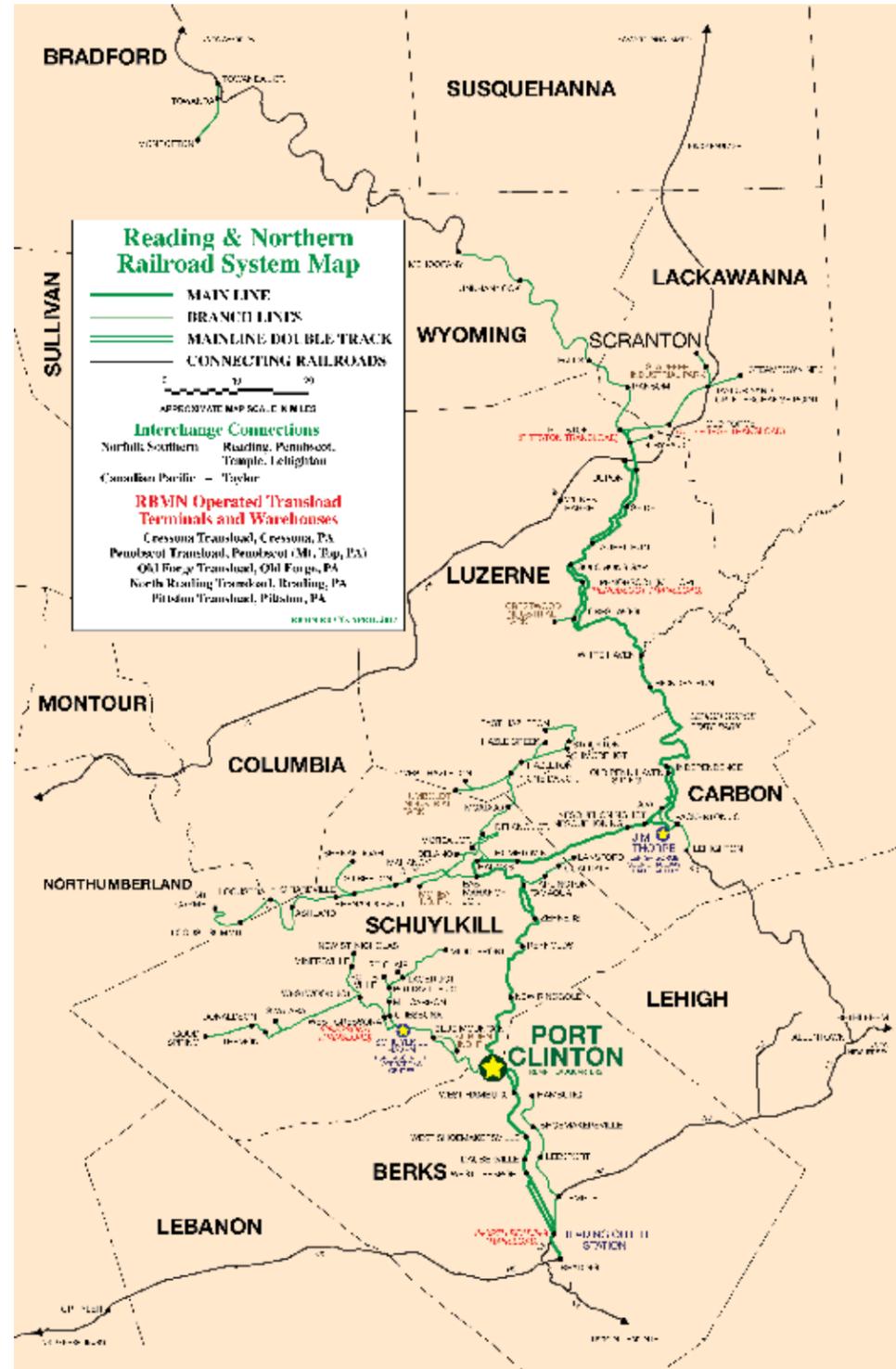
Mike Kohl and Nate Mengel are next up, 06:15 at Temple for the YJNR. Their main objective is to pull all cars available for RBMN in NS' Reading (Spring St.) yard and shift them into proper blocks for the Fast Freights. They will also have customer work for the industries at North Reading Yard. This job has become an integral part of our entire system as it funnels the vast majority of traffic destined to many of our customers on both divisions of the railroad.

At 06:30 there is a dispatcher change. John Smolczynski, Jr. takes over the desk from Leo Davis.

At 07:00 we have four different crews starting their day. We have Travis Prevost and Mike Voorhees at Pittston for the YJPI. Their function will include breaking down the inbound PIFF

train, making up the train for the Scranton area customers, serving some customers along the Scranton Branch and interchanging Canadian Pacific traffic at NS's Taylor Yard. At West Hazleton we have Jim Cook and Jeff Knadler on the WHHB-1 crew starting their day. They will work with the WHHB-2 crew that comes on duty a little later to ensure all

Humboldt customers are served. At Tamaqua Chad Frederickson and Darrin Keip are on duty for the QAJT crew. This crew shifts cars at Tamaqua Yard, serves customers in the Tamaqua area and also serves three customers on the C&S portion of our Mainline between Hometown and Nesquehoning. Finally at 07:00, Steve Gilbert and Ron Deluca start their



Eight members of the Operations team from Pittston take a quick moment for a group photo. This group of employees represents four train crews, three of which were just going to work for the day and one crew was getting ready to go home after a long night working the Pittston Fast Freight. From left to right, Tony Verbyla, Mike "Breezy" Bischak, Brent Jacob, Aaron Aigeldinger, Travis Prevost, Dave Lapallo, Mike "Manny" Voorhees and Curt Cibello.

day at Port Clinton on the PNRB (Port Clinton Roustabout). Their objective for the day is to shift out and organize Port Clinton Yard, shift various customers between Hamburg and West Cressona and complete the Shop Shifts at the Port Clinton Car Shop and Engine House.

On this particular day, we also had one of our Operations Managers, Joe Matuella, stationed at our West Cressona Yard to assist with and organize a number of complicated yard moves and switching around our West Cressona Yard.

At 08:00 we have four additional crews come on duty simultaneously at four different reporting locations. The WHHB-2 job with Jeff Bavitz and Darren Spare came on duty at West Hazleton. Their main objectives for the day are serving a large plastics customer in the Humboldt Industrial Park and running across the City of Hazleton to shift a fairly new coal customer on the North side of town. Next we have the PIME crew "Breezy" Bischak and Dave Lapallo at Pittston. This crew spends their day running cars to and from Mehoopany Yard and serving one of RBMN's largest customers, the sprawling Proctor & Gamble plant in Mehoopany, Pennsylvania. Also on duty this day are two Unit train crews, one for moving an empty coal hopper train from North Reading and an additional crew for moving a unit storage train from Tamaqua. First up is the NRMV crew, this crew made up of Engineer Kyle Sanders and Conductor Tony Weachock on duty at Port Clinton, ran their engines South to North Reading Yard and worked together with an NS crew to retrieve an empty

open top hopper train from interchange. The crew then ran this train to Minersville and spotted the cars for the next Unit Train loading at this location. Simultaneously, the QALE crew came on duty to move 100 storage cars from Tamaqua Yard to the Norfolk Southern interchange at Lehigh.

At 09:30 the PISB job under the direction of Ron Papiercavich and Andy Davis came on duty at Pittston. This crew retrieved their train that was made up by the YJPI crew earlier in the morning and made their way North to the Keyser Valley Industrial park to serve six customers. The PISB crew is also responsible every day for setting up the nightly PIFF (Pittston Fast Freight) in order to ensure the Fast Freight crew departs at their scheduled time each night.

At 10:15 the highest priority train on the RBMN system, NRFF (North Reading Fast Freight) came on duty with John Hartman and Alvin Rineer doing the honors on this day. This job holds the highest on time percentage of all Fast Freights and is closely monitored to ensure the schedule is kept. The main objective of this job is to expedite the movement of Interchange cars from the Reading Interchange to customers on the Lehigh Division. Although this train was originally started to serve the needs of one particular customer, it has now taken on a much more important role as more and more Lehigh Division customers receive carloads through the Reading Interchange.

Time for another dispatcher transfer at 14:30. Nathan Bissey takes over for John Smolczynski Jr. At 16:00 hours the first of our overnight Fast

Freights, the WHFF (West Hazleton Fast Freight) comes on duty at West Hazleton with Engineer Chris Peters and Conductor Ian McKeown. Just like every night, the WHFF crew took their train of Hazleton cars destined to the NS interchange at Reading South to Port Clinton. At Port Clinton they set off their outbound cars for the QAFF and pick up any cars from PN that are destined to North Reading Yard to be shifted into various trains the next day. Once the crew arrives at North Reading, they set off their Port Clinton block and pick up their train of Tamaqua Yard cars and West Hazleton cars. The crew makes a setoff at Tamaqua Yard and ends their day at the West Hazleton crew office with all of the cars for the next day's Humboldt shifts.

At 18:30 hours the next Fast Freight that comes on duty is the QAFF (Tamaqua Fast Freight) with Ryan Lamm and Gene Boyle. This crew interchanges all outbound traffic to NS-Reading. This crew collects cars at Tamaqua, Port Clinton and North Reading and handles cars from both the Lehigh and Reading Division. They are also responsible for distributing inbound interchange to Port Clinton for West Cressona customers and also cars destined to Mahanoy City and Mt. Carmel. This crew often interacts with a number of NS and RBMN crews throughout their nightly routine.

Continued on page 10.



Mike Kohl just “threw” a switch at North Reading Yard as he prepares to shift a customer. Nate Mengel is in locomotive 1543 waiting for Mike to give the ok ahead signal.

Continued from page 9.

The final scheduled RBMN job of the night came on duty at 22:00 hours in Pittston. The PIFF (Pittston Fast Freight) under the control of Engineer Tony Verbyla and Conductor Aaron Aigeldinger is our only Lehigh Division Fast Freight. This crew departed Pittston Yard, made a setoff and pickup at Penobscot Yard and continued South to Jim Thorpe. At Jim Thorpe the crew sets off all cars destined to the Reading Interchange and continues South to Lehigh. At Lehigh they set off all cars destined to the NS at Allentown. At this point the crew turns back North, made a pickup at Jim Thorpe of all Reading cars destined to Pittston and runs North to Penobscot Yard. At Penobscot Yard the crew picked up a block of cars setoff earlier by the NS 37T train which completes RBMN interchange at Penobscot each night. After making their double, the PIFF runs North to Pittston Yard and hands the train off to the patiently waiting YJPI crew the following morning.

Although they were not working on this particular day, I have to mention a number of the other valuable members of our Operations team Ed Philbin, Dominic Deeble, Eric Slekovac, Chuck Trusdell, Jim Donley and Steven Perette. All of these employees were on their rest days after working numerous days earlier in the week and over the previous weekend.

At 10:30 it is once again time for another dispatcher change, Aaron Schlosser takes the controls from Nathan Bissey.

In addition to our own Operations, we handle NS trains. On this particular day, we handled two NS trackage rights trains on our Lehigh Mainline, as well as two NS unit coal train empties at our North Reading Yard from Fairless Hills and Baltimore respectively.

This was one of the busier days on the railroad and that didn't even include any passenger trains. On any given day there may be three different passenger trains running on the system at any given time.

I am very proud of our team, we continue to make the ever increasing workload look so easy. Tom Cook, our VP of Transportation and Safety, is out in the field on an almost daily basis assisting crews and overseeing moves around our system. Jim Cerulli, our AVP of Operations Planning, works hard every day to ensure that all customers are served, organizing unit train movements and keeping operations moving smoothly. It definitely takes a team effort to keep things moving as smoothly as they do. ♦



Dustin Berndt is seen at Roanoke, Virginia with a locomotive RBMN purchased about an hour before.

Locomotive Fleet Expanded—Again

BY: TYLER GLASS, EXECUTIVE VP OPERATIONS

The Reading & Northern Railroad (RBMN) recently acquired locomotives to add to our fleet. Since we continue to see rising carloads in our freight operations we decided to take advantage of another Norfolk Southern locomotive auction in Roanoke, Virginia.

The auction as advertised was predominantly EMD GP38-2 locomotives, which are 2000 horsepower, four axle locomotives. Also there were supposed to be two MP15 locomotives, 1500 horsepower four axle locomotives, several hybrid locomotives and five passenger coaches.

In August 2016 we purchased four EMD MP15 locomotives from an NS auction so we were looking to add some more of these units to our fleet as the locomotives were hailed by our train crews.

Dustin Berndt, AVP – Locomotives, and I headed to Roanoke. Matt Fisher, General Manager – Passenger, joined us so that he could inspect the passenger coaches. On the way to the auction it was posted on the auction website that NS decided not to include the hybrid locomotives or the MP15s in the auction. So as far as locomotives were concerned we would be inspecting GP38-2s only.

EMD GP38-2 locomotives were one of the most successful and reliable locomotives built between 1972 and 1986. The locomotives in the auction were originally built for the Southern Railway and therefore the construction was a bit different from the conventional design. Southern built their locomotives with the long hood as the front of the locomotive and the control stand was on the opposite side of the cab from the standard design. The short hood was a high nose which accommodated a stand up bathroom in the nose of the locomotive.

Although we didn't absolutely need additional locomotives Andy Muller, Jr. has always maintained that good deals can be found when class 1 railroads have locomotive auctions and this auction would be proof of his thoughts once again.

We arrived in Roanoke on Monday evening, August 14.

Tuesday morning we made our way to NS's Roanoke Yard to begin our locomotive inspections. Dustin's main goal that day was to get a good

overview of the condition of the sixty two locomotives that were for sale. After that inspection we made a quick trip down to the nearby passenger station to give the five coaches a good inspection. Although the coaches were in extremely fine condition we ultimately decided they did not meet our needs. After a long day of equipment inspections we went out for a nice meal in historic downtown Roanoke.

Wednesday morning we were back at Roanoke yard bright and early. Dustin spent the majority of the morning and afternoon doing more thorough inspections on the units he had determined were worth pursuing the day before. He took copious amounts of notes during his meticulous inspections and we found several locomotives that were worthy of pursuing. I had several phone conversations with Andy throughout this process, to keep him up to date on what we were seeing and hearing. That evening we had another very nice meal and discussed Dustin's findings for the next day's auction.

Thursday morning we were up early and back at the yard for the start of the auction at 09:00. A few minutes prior to the auction getting underway, we phone-conferenced with Andy and talked through our purchasing strategy. We had our sights set on purchasing at least a few of the GP38s that NS was offering. We had the opportunity to see many locomotives get auctioned before we got to the locomotives we were interested in. I got Andy on the phone as the auction progressed. By the time the auction concluded, we had secured the purchase of three GP38-2 locomotives. After the auction ended, we made our way to the airport, hopped on the company jet and by early that same afternoon we were back at Port Clinton.

Four weeks after the auction our new locomotives finally arrived at Port Clinton. For the time being we will operate the locomotives in their current configuration and condition. Over time we will be modifying the high short nose, moving the control stand to the other side of the cab and giving them a fresh coat of paint to be consistent with our other locomotives in the fleet. ♦

• Safety •

BY: TOM COOK, VP SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION

The Reading and Northern has made considerable investments in safety during 2017 to support our rapid growth. Our customers expect safe and efficient service and we are doing all we can to deliver on that expectation. The most important safety improvement this year is the expansion of our signal system on the Reading Division Mainline, and that percentage keeps growing as traffic, particularly our coal traffic, increases.

When I first arrived at the Reading and Northern two and a half years ago, the Reading Division

was entirely “dark territory”. The rules in effect were DCS Rules, and train movements were governed by written train orders, often delivered verbally and copied by a train crew on a piece of paper called a Form D. Written authority for movement has many safeguards built into it. Our crews and dispatchers have strict radio procedures and read back procedures to ensure that authority for movement is properly communicated and physically copied by the train crew. Our train crews and our on-track maintenance vehicles have an excellent safety record operating in dark territory under DCS

rules, but there are some things that can go wrong when operating in dark territory.

Human error is a possible concern in dark territory. One remote possibility is that a train crew or maintenance vehicle loses focus and exceeds their written authority. In a worst case scenario, that could result in a collision. The signal system provides warning that trains are nearing the end of their authority because trains get a signal called an approach signal (or a less favorable signal) approximately three miles from a stop signal. This informs and reminds crews that they need to be prepared to stop at the next signal. The approach signal is kind of like a yellow traffic light we all experience on the highway, which provides a warning and focuses our attention that a stop will soon be required. The ensuing stop signal is a final physical reminder that crews get in signaled territory that their authority has ended. There is no physical reminder in dark territory other than the words on the form D.

Another remote possibility in dark territory is that a conductor or maintenance employee forgets to restore a main line switch to the normal

position required for Mainline movement. We have strict job briefing rules that prevent that from happening, but human error is possible. The worst case scenario is that a switch is left open lined for a siding, and the next train encounters an open facing point switch and could have a collision with equipment left in the track. The signal system prevents that from happening because it automatically senses track conditions ahead and warns train crews of the condition of the track ahead. Signals provide the crews with visibility of the track conditions ahead compared to dark territory. In signaled territory they now get a warning if there is a possible open switch ahead.

The signal system is able to do this because each block between signals is a closed electrical circuit and the track physically conducts the electrical current. When a switch is open, this breaks the circuit and causes the signal governing entrance to the block to go to red or stop and causes the signal in the block ahead of that to cascade down to approach telling the next crew to proceed prepared to stop at next signal.

The track circuits controlling the signal system also protect our crews from many other hazards. One of the most important benefits is broken rail protection. Rails can break, and that risk is greatly increased during the coldest months of the winter. There is no way for a train crew to detect a broken rail ahead of them in dark territory. If there is a broken rail in signaled territory, the track circuit will be broken and this will cause a the signals governing entrance to the block to red and cascade the advance signals to approach or be prepared to stop at next signal.

The signals also protect our crews in case a train exceeds its authority. Any rail equipment entering a block will shunt the track circuit and the trains ahead will get warning that something is wrong.

Automatic block signals allow for greater efficiency, which is also a powerful safety benefit. Signals allow for closer train spacing for traffic moving in the same direction than is possible in dark territory. The automatic signals space the trains, not the dispatcher. This means that trains will suffer fewer delays, which results

in less train crew fatigue and better morale. This is important because our traffic has been constantly increasing. On a busy weekday afternoon it is not uncommon to have six trains moving south through Tamaqua in a three hour period. That is twice as many trains as we had in that area three years ago. There is nothing that takes the wind out of our crew's sails like being stopped waiting for a train ahead to receive a form D over the radio and then wait for it to report clear of a block. That is a time consuming and radio intensive practice that demands a dispatcher's total attention for several minutes and ties up valuable radio capacity. The signal system frees up radio capacity and allows the dispatcher to focus on the bigger picture and improves his ability to respond to crews more efficiently.

There are not many railroads our size building new signal systems, and we are very proud that we are growing fast and that we are progressive enough to do it. ♦

Meeting the Goals Set by the Passenger Department

BY: MATT FISHER, PASSENGER GENERAL MANAGER

The Passenger Department has several goals that we work hard to attain. One of the biggest goals is to entertain the general public whether it be on the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway, Rail Diesel Car (RDC) trips on the Reading and Northern Railroad from Berks County to Jim Thorpe or Fall Foliage trips, etc. Over 100,000 people will visit Jim Thorpe this year, nearly 6,000 people alone rode the sold out October Fall Foliage Excursions. We added six October Fall Foliage RDC trains in September, and sold them all out in less than two weeks!

Another goal is to help promote the freight business by running customer service trips on various portions of the railroad. This year alone, we coordinated three trips with Dan Gilchrist and Wayne Michel. A customer service trip in September started at our beautiful passenger operations center in Schuylkill Haven (the former Reading Railroad station built over 100 years ago) and traveled to the new Reading Outer Station. (See Dan's article page ---) This was a great way to show our freight customers our busy railroad, along with the major investments the railroad has made over the last few years. Every train since the inception of passenger rail service in May has sold out from Reading Outer Station.

Another very important goal of the railroad is to have great public relations. The Passenger Department on any railroad would be an ideal way to drum up positive PR. However, the Reading and Northern Railroad achieves great relationships seen by few, if any, other railroads. Many passenger trains are coordinated with the communities allowing ticket sales money to go back to the community.

For example, the Mountain Top Rotary ran a steam trip from Penobscot Yard to Jim Thorpe and return. Over 600 people rode the train, raising thousands of dollars with a percentage donated to the Rotary. Specifically, the Rotary will donate that money to Mountaintop Hose Co. #1, Wright Township Fire Co., Kirby Library in Mountain Top, Crestwood School District scholarships, Mountain Top Little League, “Africa Mercy Ship”, golf tournaments, Mountain Top Food Bank,

“Liv with Autism”, “Make a Wish Foundation”, and the local police departments around Mountain Top.

Later in September, the 29th annual Schuylkill Haven Borough Day had the steam train visit the celebration. Again, the railroad worked with a local non-profit organization, Schuylkill Haven Borough Day Committee. The committee worked with the railroad through its long-time volunteer Bob Kempes. Bob recently retired and joined us as a Car Host. The Borough Day was very successful and highlighted the good things happening in Schuylkill Haven.

We thank the passenger staff who served their country in the military and National Guard along with those who volunteer with their church or local fire company. Also, other staff should be mentioned for their recent charitable donations of time and money. Car Host Chip Burnett and Lehigh Gorge Conductor Bill Solomon volunteered to raise money for “Tour de Shore”. After raising the money, they both bicycled from Philadelphia to Atlantic City. Congratulations to both men, Bill biked the entire sixty five mile journey at a much faster time than he anticipated. Bill also speaks to local elementary classes about the railroad. Santa Claus trains are always the big topic! Look for several Santa trains late November and December. We always look forward to working with non-profits during the Christmas Season.

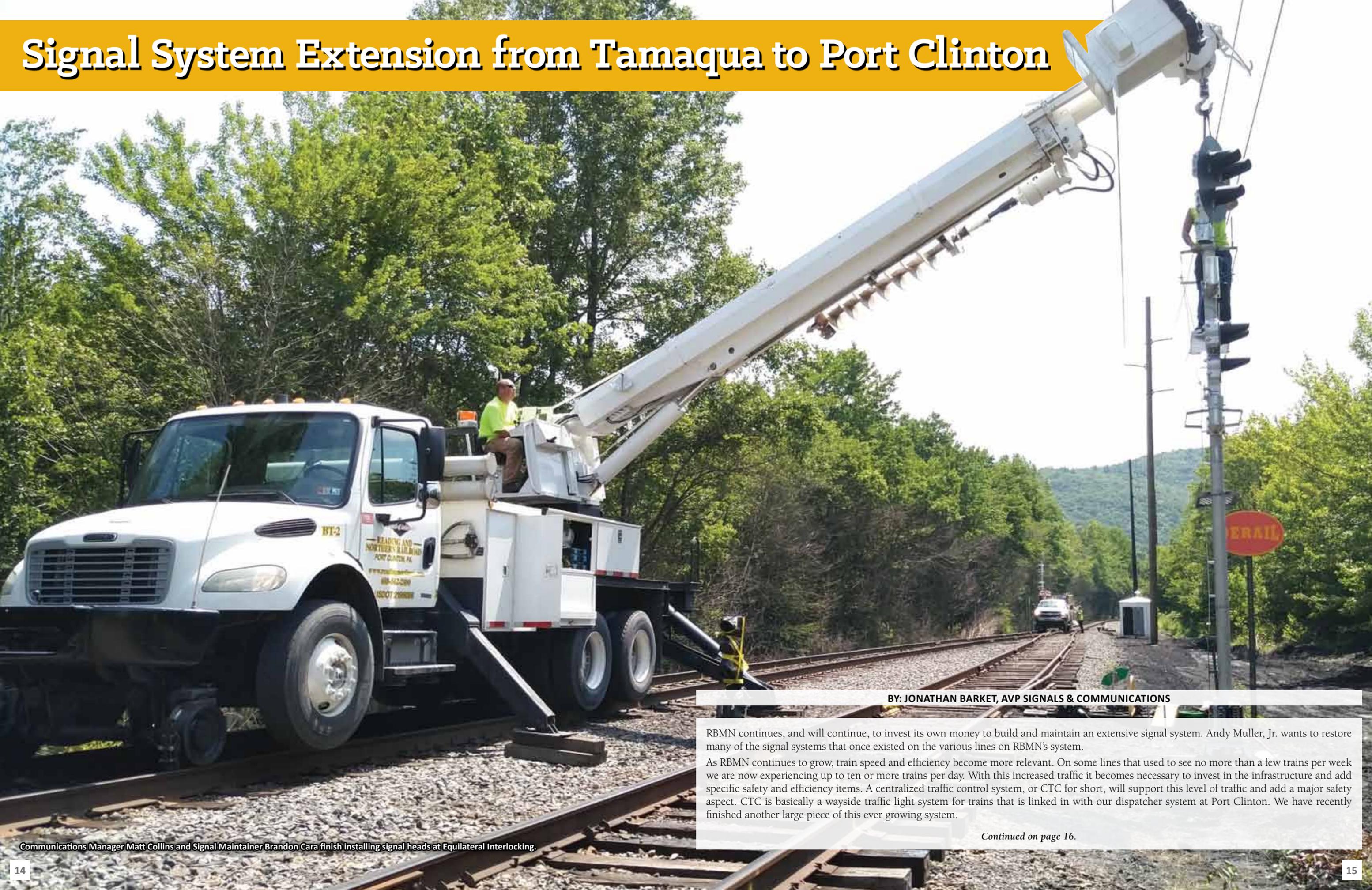
Finally, the Passenger Department would like to thank Christina Muller-Levan. The department works closely with her to process the hundreds of donation requests we receive each year. These charities focus on a very wide range of topics including the environment, church donations, youth organizations, etc. Many of which are given money or tickets to raffle off at their respective charity events. It is a great feeling watching people enjoy a train ride while learning about our railroad knowing how much we help our community.

Visit the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway online at www.lgsry.com and the Reading and Northern Passenger Department at www.rbnrr-passenger.com. ♦



Pictured at Schuylkill Haven Borough Day are (left to right) Darrell Matz, Deb Schwenk, Carl “Bimbo” Schwenk, Bob Kempes (coordinator of Borough Day), Matt Fisher, and Larry Fisher. Deb and Bimbo paid off their mortgage and celebrated by burning it in the firebox of 425, congratulations!

Signal System Extension from Tamaqua to Port Clinton



BY: JONATHAN BARKET, AVP SIGNALS & COMMUNICATIONS

RBMN continues, and will continue, to invest its own money to build and maintain an extensive signal system. Andy Muller, Jr. wants to restore many of the signal systems that once existed on the various lines on RBMN's system.

As RBMN continues to grow, train speed and efficiency become more relevant. On some lines that used to see no more than a few trains per week we are now experiencing up to ten or more trains per day. With this increased traffic it becomes necessary to invest in the infrastructure and add specific safety and efficiency items. A centralized traffic control system, or CTC for short, will support this level of traffic and add a major safety aspect. CTC is basically a wayside traffic light system for trains that is linked in with our dispatcher system at Port Clinton. We have recently finished another large piece of this ever growing system.

Continued on page 16.

Communications Manager Matt Collins and Signal Maintainer Brandon Cara finish installing signal heads at Equilateral Interlocking.



Communications Manager Matt Collins begins loading cable onto BT-2 to take to job site at Equilateral interlocking. Location was only accessible by rail, complicating installation.



Installing bungalow, cables, and foundations at Clint interlocking, just north of the Port Clinton Headquarters.



Solar array being installed for automatic signal location at MP91.40.



Maintainer Brandon Cara installing signal heads at 91S signal.



Maintainer Graham Hantz installing the signal heads for northbound moves out of Clint Interlocking.

Continued from page 15.

Back in October 2016, we completed the Haucks Interlocking project, adding nearly seven more miles of signaled territory. After Haucks was completed, we moved to Tamaqua Interlocking and added another five miles of CTC which was placed in service at the end of February 2017.

After the installation of Tamaqua, we immediately began the installation of another section of signaled territory from Tamaqua to Port Clinton as we continued to push south on our main line. This next section between Tamaqua and Port Clinton was one of the largest installation projects to date, including two

interlockings and over seventeen miles of track with four automatic block signal locations. As with most projects, there were several hurdles to overcome, including obtaining power for each of the signal locations. Our railroad traverses some of the more desolate terrains throughout eastern Pennsylvania. One location in particular, at milepost 91.50, required a solar array because commercial power is non-existent anywhere near this location. In addition to acquiring power each location needed to be prepped, built, tested and installed, which was all completed during the summer months. The track needed to be prepped to accept the electrical pulses, which

included over fifteen hundred bond wires along with track wires at each location. Thirty insulated joints needed to be installed to be sure each section would be electrically isolated for proper results. At each hand thrown switch a device called a circuit controller needed to be installed as well to monitor the switch to be sure everything is lined correctly and working as intended. Twelve of these circuit controllers were needed to complete this section.

Two interlockings were installed with this project, designated as “Clint” and “Equilateral”. An interlocking is a location within signaled territory that the dispatcher can control to route equipment to the desired location. These

are basically the anchors of the signal system. All signals between these interlockings are considered automatic locations, which are not controlled by the dispatcher but are controlled by each interlocking. The interlocking at “Clint” is located just north of the Port Clinton headquarters. This signal was installed to allow trains to be held prior to gaining authority into Port Clinton Yard. It consists of a bungalow and two signals, one for northbound and one for southbound control.

“Equilateral” interlocking is situated just south of our double track territory around South Tamaqua. Here the double track combines into single track to continue south to Port Clinton.

This interlocking allows the dispatcher to route trains to and from the double track without having the trains stop to throw any switches, which adds efficiency.

These seventeen plus miles of signaled territory will now be monitored for gapped or misaligned switches along with joints that may pull apart and the occasional broken rail that can occur during the winter months. If any issues occur, the signal system will automatically notify our dispatching center and display downgraded signal indications in the field to slow or stop train movements.

After seven months of building and installing, we were able to prep, test, and cutover these

locations on September 13th, 2017, which was ahead of a self-imposed October 1 deadline. We now have a Rule 261 full signal system between “Clint”, milepost 78.80 at Port Clinton and “Haucks” milepost 105.30 in Hometown on our Reading division; a compliment of our Lehigh division signal system that runs from Jim Thorpe to Pittston.

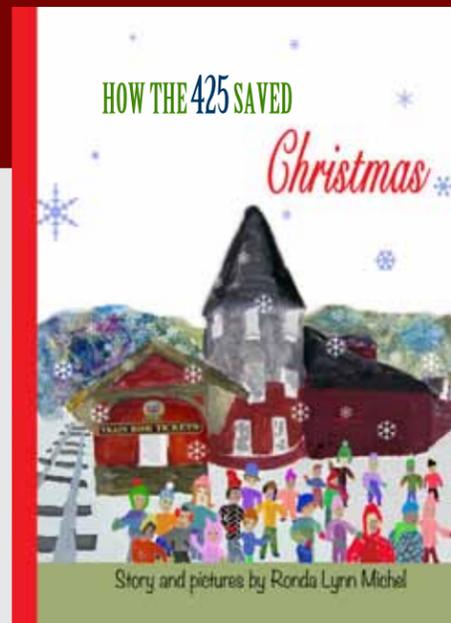
With that said, we are now on to the next phase of our project between Port Clinton and North Reading. Stay tuned. ♦

How the 425 Saved Christmas

Now available for Christmas orders!

In time for the holidays Ronda Michel, wife of RBMN President Wayne Michel, is once again offering her illustrated children's book starring the Muller family and the famous steam engine, the 425.

This book, as well as Ronda's other books, is available at Amazon.com!
For autographed or personalized inscription copies, visit Ronda's website:
www.rondalynnichel.com



Congratulations!



Benjamin Meiser, a Locomotive Electro-mechanical Technician, and wife Karen welcomed their baby girl Grace Ann to the world this September! Grace arrived 37 days early on September 8 at 9:54 AM, weighing 4 pounds, 15 ounces, and 18.9 inches long. Welcome Grace!

WELCOME ABOARD NEW EMPLOYEES



Justin Mengel

Justin Mengel was recently hired as a Car Host within our LGSR division. He attended Hamburg Area High School and Lebanon Valley College for Music Education.



Mark Cantafio

Mark Cantafio was recently hired as a Trackman within our MOW Department. He attended Holy Redeemer High School and Pennsylvania College of Technology. Prior to working at RBMN, Mark was a Floor Worker/Welder for James Egan & Sons.



Eric Thompson

Eric Thompson was recently hired as a Trackman/Welder within our MOW Department. He attended Panther Valley High School and the Welding Training & Testing Institute. Prior to working at RBMN, Eric was a Welder III for Valmont-Newmark.



Lynn Engle

Lynn Engle was recently hired as a part-time Administrative Assistant within our MOW Department. She attended Tamaqua Area High School and Kutztown University. Prior to working at RBMN, Lynn was a Teacher at Reading Area School District.



Shane Heck

Shane Heck was recently hired as a Conductor within our Operations Department. He attended Pottsville Area High School. Prior to working with RBMN, Shane was a Chief Caster at SAPA Industrial Extrusions.



Michele Daub

Michele Daub was recently hired as a Customer Service Manager within our Traffic department. She attended Pine Grove Area High School. Prior to working at RBMN, Michele was a Logistics/Inventory Coordinator at Quality Stone Veneer.



John Smolzynski, an Engineer and Dispatcher, and wife Serena welcomed baby Wyatt Robert when he finally made his appearance on September 4, weighing 9 pounds, 1 ounce, and 20 inches long! Proud Papa John expressed it was the "greatest day of my life!"

Travis Prevost, an Engineer and Conductor, and wife Jan celebrated the arrival of their baby girl Charlotte Esther on October 5! Charlotte was born weighing 5.41 pounds, and 18 inches long. Welcome Charlotte!



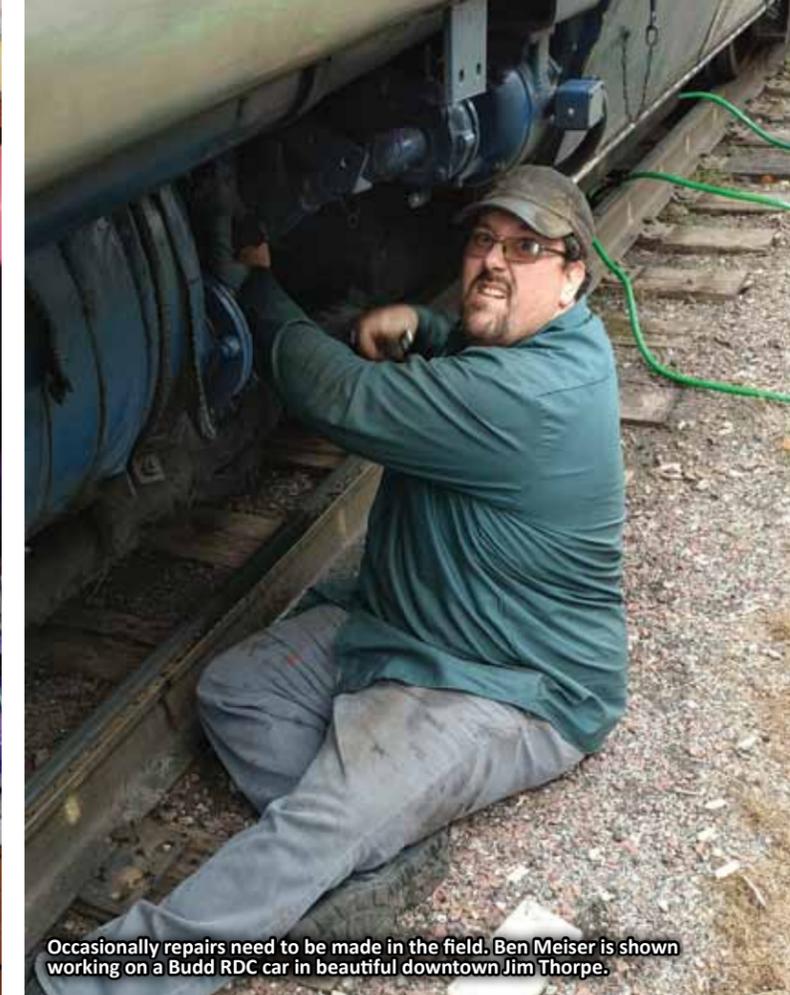
Eric Slekovac, an Engineer and Dispatcher, and wife Christi celebrated the birth of their son Gavin, on August 5! Gavin was born weighing 7 pounds, 11 ounces, and 20 1/2 inches long! Congratulations Eric and Christi!



LGSR Conductor Bill Bubeck brings the 425 into Schuylkill Haven Station on September 30's Schuylkill Haven Borough Days.



We couldn't miss the birthday of the woman who remembers all of ours! The office celebrated Bev's birthday on August 11.



Occasionally repairs need to be made in the field. Ben Meiser is shown working on a Budd RDC car in beautiful downtown Jim Thorpe.



Ready to greet the many visitors on Schuylkill Haven's Borough Days, LGSR's Josh Laughlin bears a friendly face for all on a chilly fall morning!



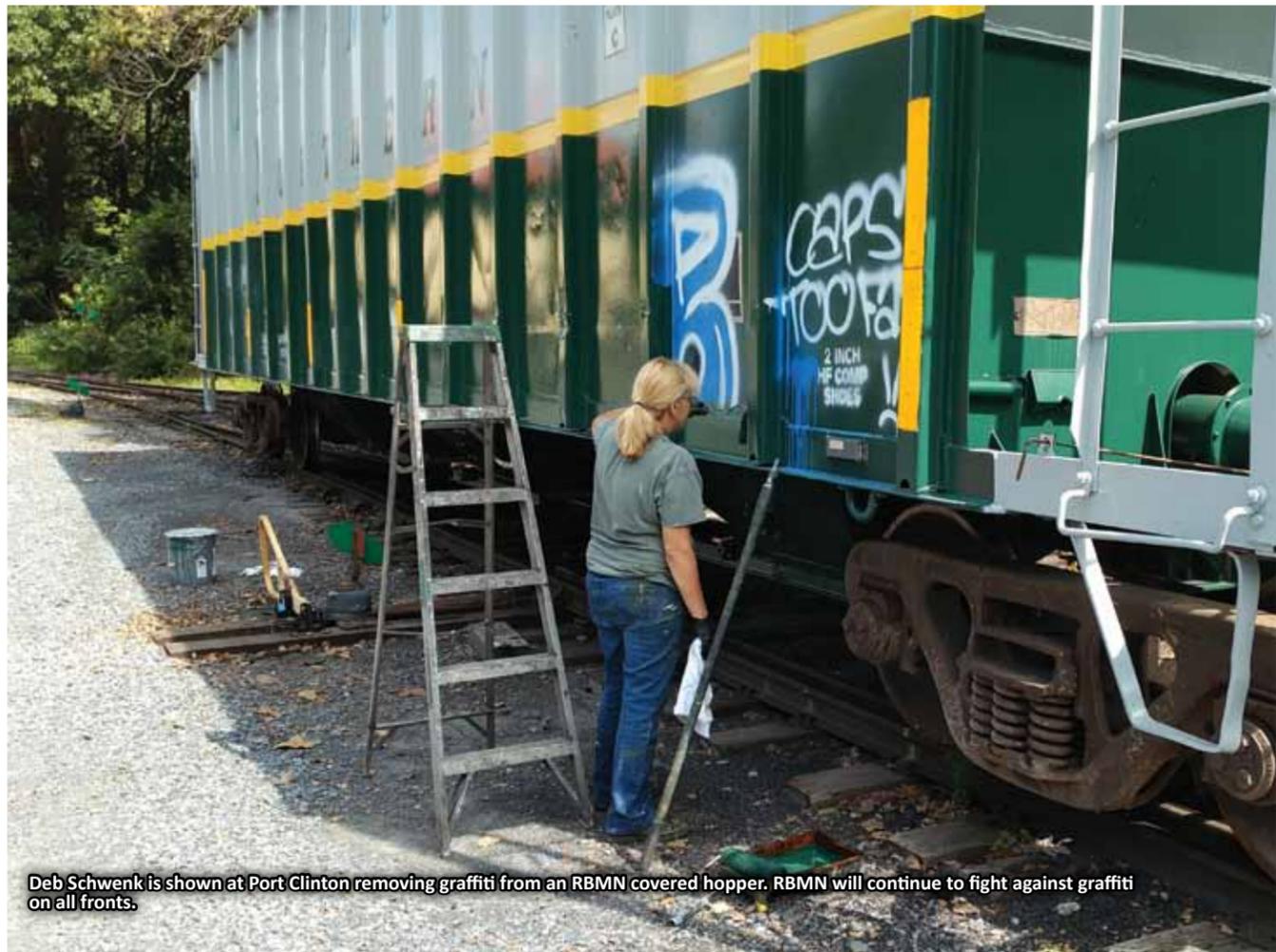
You never know who you're going to run into at work! This was the case for Jim Danner, inspecting the Jim Thorpe Pedestrian Bridge Project on September 20 when he was surprised by Governor Tom Wolf, who was visiting Jim Thorpe that day!



Kyle Sanders waits for his conductor to get back on board. They just completed a set off at Port Clinton.



Randy Reeber (left) and Tim Billet (right) are performing some concrete work at the new Reading Outer Station complex.



Deb Schwenk is shown at Port Clinton removing graffiti from an RBMN covered hopper. RBMN will continue to fight against graffiti on all fronts.



Before heading off to serve one of RBMN's largest customers, Dave Lapallo and Mike "Breezy" Bischak proudly show off the locomotive they are inspecting for their day's work.

LGSR Conductor Participates in Tour De Shore Fundraising Event



Start of the course in Philadelphia.

On Sunday, July 30, Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway Conductor Bill Solomon completed the Tour De Shore cycling fundraiser to benefit the families of fallen police officers. The course started in Philadelphia, and ended in Atlantic City, New Jersey! Bill completed the ride in four hours and fifty minutes, and with the help of the Reading & Northern Railroad, was the top fundraiser in his team of 149 riders. Two thousand five hundred riders participated in the event, and the Reading & Northern is very proud to have had one of our own a part of such an honorable fundraising campaign! ♦



Bill Solomon, LGSR Conductor, gives the 'thumbs up' to his fans on the sideline!



Bill is greeted by wife Jamie, LGSR Car Host, at the finish line in Atlantic City.

2017 RBMN HOLIDAY PARTY

Our annual Holiday Party will be held at
 The Center at Holiday Inn, 7736 Adrienne Drive, Breinigsville, PA 18031
 (just off Rt. 100 near the I-78 Interchange at Fogelsville)
 on Saturday, December 9, 2017.

We had a wonderful venue there last year and we're hoping that you'll make plans to join us for a night of socializing with your fellow employees, good food, and good music.

Happy Birthday!

NOV. 5	JEFFREY KNADLER	DEC. 2	STEVEN WERLEY	JAN. 2	LARRY WELLER
NOV. 5	PATRICIA RICHARD	DEC. 5	AARON AIGELDINGER	JAN. 3	NICHOLAS ALBERSWERTH
NOV. 6	MARIO CARANNANTE	DEC. 5	JUSTIN HUGHES	JAN. 4	MICHAEL BOYLE
NOV. 9	BRIAN BARNES	DEC. 7	JOEL WENRICH	JAN. 4	STANLEY BURCZY
NOV. 9	ROGER MESZAROS	DEC. 11	LARRY YODER	JAN. 5	JOSEPH GRAMLICH
NOV. 9	CLARK SMITH	DEC. 12	DAVID HAFFER	JAN. 5	CURTIS WILLIAMS
NOV. 10	DAVID KITTNER	DEC. 12	SUSAN LUDWIG	JAN. 6	RYAN LAMM
NOV. 10	ERIK YODER	DEC. 13	THOMAS FENERTY, JR.	JAN. 12	RONALD DELUCA
NOV. 17	LARRY CURVEY	DEC. 16	RYAN BAUSHER	JAN. 15	KEVIN FRY
NOV. 18	DAVID KROZNUSKI	DEC. 17	CALVIN GERHARD	JAN. 16	DANIEL GILCHRIST
NOV. 20	RIAN NEMEROFF	DEC. 17	JAMES SOMERS	JAN. 17	DAVID J. LAPALLO
NOV. 20	JOHN RIZZO	DEC. 19	ANDREW DAVIS	JAN. 17	ELIJAH WILSON
NOV. 21	MIKE EVANGELISTA	DEC. 19	JOSHUA LAUGHLIN	JAN. 18	DAVID CROMYAK
NOV. 21	MATTHEW STABINGER	DEC. 20	JUSTIN LEVAN	JAN. 21	SABINE FIDLER
NOV. 23	BRITTNEY COLOMB	DEC. 26	HARAK ROBERT	JAN. 22	MICHAEL CAPRON
NOV. 23	RON PAPIERCAVICH	DEC. 29	YASHA SIDDIQI	JAN. 27	MARIE KNADLER
NOV. 24	LORI CHINCHAR	DEC. 30	RUSSELL SCIANNA, JR.	JAN. 28	JOHN A. WASSEL
NOV. 25	CARTER JONES	JAN. 1	LOUIS BUGNO	JAN. 29	ANGELA POTTS
NOV. 27	DAVID BALDWIN	JAN. 1	BRIAR STERN	JAN. 29	RAYMOND SCHWENK
NOV. 28	DOMINIC DEEBLE	JAN. 2	DUSTIN BERNDT		
NOV. 29	CHRIS ORLICK	JAN. 2	NANCY WALAITIS		

For the Love of Steam



Debbie and Bimbo Schwenk pose with a commemorative chunk of coal from the 425 after burning their mortgage Saturday morning, September 30.

BY: SABINE FIDLER, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

The year 2003 became a momentous year for Carl “Bimbo” Schwenk and his sweetheart, Debbie. They married on October 4th of that year and also became homeowners. They’ve graciously allowed me to share their story.

Bimbo worked full time for Top Gun Window Installations and during his employment, began working part time for his friend, Corky, painting a few days a week. Eventually, Top Gun closed its doors, and the Schwenks began working for Corky full time. Corky then introduced Bimbo and Deb to what would become their next love, the Reading, Blue Mountain, and Northern Railroad where they’ve been working now for six years as private contractors painting engines and passenger cars...their labor of love. Deb began doing the lettering on the passenger cars. Her work was so remarkable that she was entrusted to continue the mission.

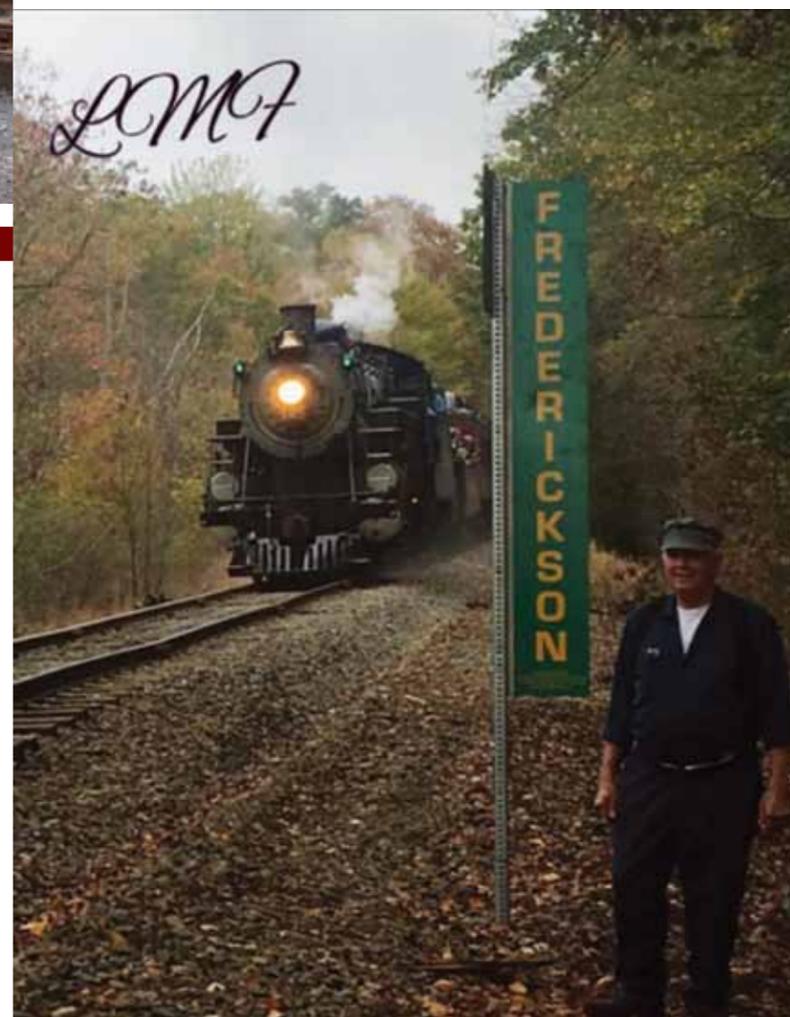
The longer they worked for RBMN, the deeper their love grew for the railroad. On September 20, 2017 after fourteen years, the Schwenks finally paid off their mortgage. Debbie had a brainstorm to burn their mortgage, a tradition in these parts, aboard Steam Locomotive 425. Deb and Corky approached Therman, Executive Vice President of Special Projects, with Deb’s idea who then presented it to Andy Muller, Jr., Chairman and CEO. Andy’s response... “Of course!” The mortgage burning was set to take place on Schuylkill Haven’s Borough Day September 30, 2017.

Steam Locomotive 425 was to make its appearance at 10:00 AM in preparation for the day’s train rides commencing at 11:00 AM. When asked how they felt that morning while waiting for the 425 to arrive, the Schwenks said they were nervous but anxious. The smiles on their faces as they heard the sound of the whistle and bellowing plume of steam come around the bend to the station was priceless. The crowd that had gathered greeted the massive locomotive with cheers of excitement. Bimbo described that moment for himself like this, “I was happy like it was MY day. I felt like a celebrity!” When asked how she felt hearing the approach of the steam locomotive, Debbie replied, “I got goosebumps! It was a proud moment because I helped paint the 425.”

Chad Frederickson welcomed the Schwenks and me to climb into the cab. Chad instructed Debbie to open the fire pit door. With copies of their mortgage paperwork in hand, Bimbo and Debbie took turns tossing the documents into the fire squealing with delight as the fire transformed the papers into dust. To signify that the mortgage burning had taken place, Chad told Debbie to pull the cord sounding the whistle which caused the crowd to cheer even louder. Indeed, Bimbo and his lovely wife were the celebrities of the day. As a souvenir of the occasion, Chad presented the couple with a chunk of coal from the 425’s coal bin. Bimbo cradled it like it was gold. The Schwenks mingled with the crowd to enjoy Borough Day. Bimbo and Debbie, your RBMN Railroad family sends its sincere best wishes for a happy, healthy, and prosperous future! ♦



Debbie throws their mortgage into the flames of the 425!



Thank You!

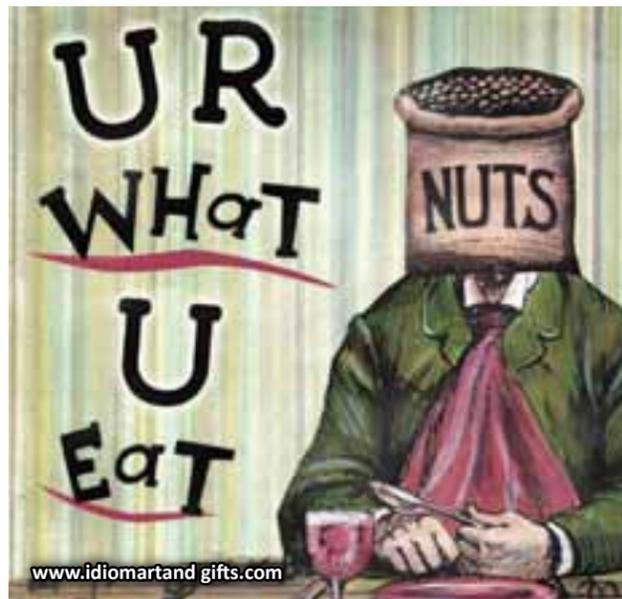
Bill Frederickson is seen standing along the right of way next to a station sign that was named for his family, with steam locomotive 425 is approaching. Four generations of the Frederickson have been involved in our company since its inception in 1983. The sign is a token of our appreciation for their hard work located not far from the homes of the Frederickson’s in Hometown. Charles “Duke” Frederickson, Bill’s father, passed away in 2002. Bill Frederickson works in the Mechanical Department. Bill’s sons Chad and Shane work in the Operations Department and Shane’s son Ryan is now working for the LGSR. Photo courtesy of Lisa Frederickson, wife of Shane Frederickson. ♦

Wellness Corner

BY: SABINE FIDLER, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Staying Healthy at Work—An “Idiom” Perspective

Because the majority of our conscious hours are spent at work our physical, mental, and emotional health are profoundly impacted by the activities in which we partake during those wakeful moments. Healthy individuals are more productive and consume less sick time which, in turn, reduces concomitant health care costs. If you are on your “last straw” and want to become healthier, let’s “get down to brass tacks”! Instead of “working your fingers to the bone”, you may wish to incorporate some of the following suggestions into your workday routine.



“Jump-start” your day with a healthy breakfast. If you’ve ever felt that “crash and burn” by noon, it may have been because you neglected to have a healthy breakfast or didn’t have breakfast at all. A healthy morning meal should consist of complex carbohydrates such as potatoes or oatmeal, low fat proteins such as almond milk or yogurt, healthy fats such as pastured eggs or almond butter, and organic fresh fruit or vegetables. Avoid white starches, such as bagels and pastries, which are loaded with empty carbs and loads of sugar; otherwise that “crash and burn” will cause you to “run out of steam” before you “know what hit you.”

“You are what you eat.” People have a tendency to get up and walk around aimlessly when the hunger pangs begin to “rear their ugly heads”. Avoid vending machines or snack bars which usually lure us with unhealthy snacks. Instead, keep a supply of healthy snacks at your desk such as fruit, crudité, or nuts.

“Brown bag it”. Having a desk job does not always promote healthy eating habits. Before long, you may find you have “fallen off the wagon” after eating that morning Danish or those French fries, but don’t “cry over spilt milk”. “Every cloud has a silver lining”, so “crack the whip” because “the ball is in your court”.

Don’t “be caught dead” “cutting corners” buying cheap, unhealthy food that will eventually make you “feel under the weather” or “sick as a dog”. Instead, “bite the bullet” and invest in yourself. Choose foods that are naturally occurring in nature and do not have artificial ingredients. Be mindful of your portions, however, because “chowing down” on nutritious food in excess may “sideline” even someone with a “cast iron stomach”.

“Drink like a fish.” For our purpose, drink plenty of water during the course of the day. Staying well-hydrated promotes sustained energy levels, enhanced productivity, and alertness. Many times, our craving for a snack is mistaken for our need to hydrate. WebMD suggests drinking 8-10 glasses a day. Try filling up your water bottle only ¼ of the way so you have another excuse to get moving more often throughout the day. Some food such as grapes, watermelon, cucumbers, and oranges contain a high-water content including “packing the punch” of additional nutrition. If your only form of exercise during the day will be “trotting” to the loo, DRINK UP!

Get up and “pound the pavement”. If you’re going to take walking breaks, make them productive. “Put the pedal to the metal” every



hour, or set your alarm to take brief walking breaks throughout the day. “Hit the ground running” by parking as far from the building as possible upon your arrival to work. Taking the stairs instead of an elevator may seem like “climbing Mt. Everest” at first, but it’s actually a “blessing in disguise”. Before long it will seem like a “piece of cake”, and you’ll “feel like a million bucks”!

Keep moving throughout the day. Hook up with a walking partner that won’t “beat around the bush” for a stroll at lunchtime. Rely on someone who will convince you to get out in the fresh air and sunshine “at the drop of a hat” when you’ve “bitten off more than you could chew” and could REALLY use a break.

Deskersizes! Not everyone has the luxury to close their office door to get some alone time. If you’re stuck behind a desk, you can still get in some exercise “at the drop of a hat”. Gentle exercises such as leg raises, squats in and out of your chair, tricep dips, and inclined pushups against your desk will “get that blood flowing”. Don’t forget to stretch periodically throughout the day to “blow out the cobwebs”.

Remember hearing your mother telling you to sit up straight when you were “knee high to a grasshopper”? Even though you probably “let it go in one ear and out the other”, Momma knew what she was talking about. Proper posture not only helps to prevent injury by supporting core muscles but also promotes self-confidence.

Managing stress at work: Working long hours or “burning the candle at both ends” can cause you to “run out of steam” in no time resulting in a suppressed immune system and interrupted sleep cycles. A relaxing vacation or time off may be “just what the doctor ordered”. “Make no bones about it”, studies have shown that having a pet helps to relieve stress and lower blood pressure and anxiety. So, if you’re fortunate enough to work where bringing your furry friend to the office is encouraged, “have a field day”! You’ll be “finding your feet” again before you know it.

“Elvis has left the building”.



For more information, visit:

- <http://health.usnews.com/health-news/health-wellness/slideshows/8-ways-to-stay-healthy-at-work>
- <http://www.webmd.com/women/features/10-tips-to-improve-your-health-at-work#1>
- <http://www.activebeat.com/diet-nutrition/infuse-your-workday-with-wellness/>
- <https://smallbiztrends.com/2015/12/how-to-stay-healthy-at-work.html>

Reading & Northern's Family Recipes

Always the prolific chef; our very own Therman Madeira, Executive Vice President of Special Projects, shares his love of fishing and cooking with this carp recipe. Enjoy!

Carp

Ingredients

- ¾" x 9" x 12" cherry wood plank
- 1 medium carp, fileted
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- Old Bay seasoning
- Panko breadcrumbs

Directions

Preheat oven to 250°F. Cut dark mudline out of filet. Place filet on cherry plank. Spread the 2 tablespoons melted butter over filet of carp. Lightly sprinkle Old Bay seasoning and panko breadcrumbs on top of fish. Place in oven for 3 hours. During cooking time, check for crispiness on the edges. After cooking for 3 hours and edges become crispy, remove from oven, sprinkle filet with fresh parsley and lemon wedge. Then, scrape the fish off of plank, throw away. Serve plank to guests.

Brittney Colomb, Private Car Assistant within the Passenger Department, has shared this Italian-American dish native to the New York state area of Utica-Rome. She says, "I acquired this recipe from my mom. She always used to make it for our family when we had family night. It was a favorite dish to bring to all our family gatherings."

Utica Chicken Riggies

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons butter
- 2 ½ lbs. chicken breasts (approx. 3 or 4)
- 8 ounces baby bella mushrooms, sliced
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1-2 jarred hot peppers, chopped
- 1 onion or 2-3 shallots, chopped
- 2 cup water
- 2 tablespoons chicken bouillon
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- ½ pint heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon parsley
- salt and black pepper
- crushed red pepper flakes to taste
- ½ cup black olives, sliced
- 1lb. rigatoni pasta, cooked and drained
- grated or shredded parmesan

Directions

Melt butter in a large pot, and then add chicken. Cook chicken over medium heat just until they begin to turn white. Add mushrooms to chicken, and cook for 5 minutes. Add peppers and onions. Cook 5-7 minutes (season with salt and pepper). Add water, bouillon, tomato sauce, heavy cream, and spices. Bring to a boil. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add olives, and simmer for 5 minutes. In a small bowl, mix corn starch with 2-3 tablespoons cold water until dissolved. Add corn starch to sauce, stirring continuously until thickened. If it is very runny, just let stand to thicken. Stir in cooked pasta and serve immediately, sprinkling each serving with grated or shredded parmesan cheese. Enjoy!

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

Red Creek Wildlife Sister Love

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

In late July, Christina Muller-Levan found a tiny baby raccoon in the center of the floor of her horse barn. It was cold and unresponsive, with no sign of its mother or any indication of how it had gotten there. She placed the raccoon in a box with a heating pad and called Red Creek.

By the time I arrived, the raccoon was already responding to being warmed, and the barn had been searched for its family. No other raccoons had been found.

I was not very hopeful for this baby's survival. It was dehydrated, underweight, and had suffered severe hypothermia, a dangerous combination for such a young animal. Its weight was barely five ounces, and it appeared to be about ten days old.

The first week of rehabilitation presented extreme challenges to this raccoon's survival. An intestinal infection hindered her ability to digest food. Internal parasites took advantage of her weakened condition blocking her digestive system, further complicating her ability to absorb the nutrients she needed. She was put on a regiment of fluids and medication and slowly gained strength. By the end of the first week, she had finally gained her first ounce and showed signs of growth and hope.

Once past these critical health conditions, we faced another problem with caring for this girl: she was alone. A single raccoon raised alone will bond to its human caretaker becoming tame and non-releasable. Keeping infant mammals in groups helps them develop an attachment to each other, keeping them wild.

It is not unusual for Red Creek to receive single raccoons. We typically admit fifty or more baby raccoons each year, and singles are placed with each other or in with small litters of the same age. What is unusual was the lateness of the season when this little girl was found. By July, all of our baby raccoons had already grown and been released. We had no other raccoons to keep her company.

Pennsylvania rehabilitators network together through email lists and a private Facebook group. I put out a notice looking for another raccoon of this age and size. Many centers responded saying that their raccoons had also been released and the few raccoons remaining at other centers were much too old for this little girl.

By mid-August, her eyes opened. She was in good health and now weighed over one

pound, but the danger of imprinting on humans increased now that could see the world around her. Limited handling, puppets, stuffed animals, and a mirror were the only tools we had to try to keep her wild.

We limited her exposure to people, and I was her only caretaker. She was bottle fed several times each day, and my heart broke for her every time I saw her look for me. I could see the emotional bond she was forming for me, knowing that attachment could cost her any chance at freedom. Each day that connection would increase until eventually, it would be too late to reverse.

In early September, I received a call from Robyn Graboski, a fellow rehabilitator who runs Centre WildCare, a wildlife rehabilitation center west of State College. She admitted a single late-season raccoon about the same age as our little girl and remembered my plea several weeks earlier. Also a female, this raccoon was in good health but was already showing signs of becoming friendly. She needed a sibling just as badly as did our little girl. I made the five-hour round trip to State College to pick her up.

Introducing two raccoons of any age can be stressful and is often accompanied with growls, hisses and ferocious posturing. Often they need to be kept separate and gradually brought together over time. This was not the case with our two girls. They took to each other the very first day, played together then fell asleep tightly holding each other. They are now inseparable. The Centre County raccoon is slightly older and larger, and much lighter colored than our dark-furred girl, so they are easy to tell apart.

As they graduated from bottle feeding to eating out of dishes, my need to interact with them has lessened. After only a week together, I noticed an attitude change in both of them – they are becoming shy of people. They hide in their box while I am cleaning their cage, and our little girl from the barn no longer runs to me for attention. It was not too late for her. It was not too late for either one of them.

Both raccoons will remain at Red Creek through the winter, giving them a chance to grow and offering them both the very best chance of survival when released in the Spring. ♦



Ten days old and only weighing five ounces.



A mirror as company!



Christina's foundling on the right.



Because of safe handling from the beginning, this baby raccoon had a second chance at life.



The Reading & Northern was proud to serve as Premier Sponsor of the River Fest event.



Jim Danner, LGSR Car Host, spoke with visitors about upcoming RBMN excursions running out of Outer Station in Muhlenberg Township.

RBMN Sponsors Muhlenberg Township's RiverFest 2017

Muhlenberg Township hosted their second annual River Fest at Jim Dietrich Park on a beautiful, final days of summer weekend on August 26 and 27. The Reading and Northern Railroad, with our new presence in Muhlenberg Township at our passenger's Outer Station complex, joined in on the fun by serving as a Premier Sponsor of the event, organized by Muhlenberg Township Parks & Recreation. Endless music on two stages, dozens of food vendors, craftsmen and entertainers brought the Jim Dietrich Park to life for the weekend as over 25,000 visitors came to the park, all of which visited with railroad representatives at the entrance of the park. Of the Reading & Northern's involvement with River Fest, Muhlenberg Township Parks & Recreation said, "the words THANK YOU just do not seem like enough to express our true appreciation to the Reading Blue Mountain (and) Northern Railroad and its impact in the Muhlenberg community. Step by step, event by event, challenge by challenge, together we can continue to make this community strong. We thank you for helping us do just that." The Reading & Northern Railroad is already looking forward to next summer's River Fest! ♦

Jim Danner, LGSR Car Host, spoke with visitors about upcoming RBMN excursions running out of Outer Station in Muhlenberg Township.



Matt Johnson, VP Asset Management & Community Affairs worked closely with Muhlenberg Township Parks & Recreation for this year's River Fest.



25,000 visitors enjoyed the weekend at Jim Dietrich Park with lots of food and entertainment!



25,000 visitors enjoyed the weekend at Jim Dietrich Park with lots of food and entertainment!

RBMN ANNIVERSARIES ACKNOWLEDGED

15 YEARS



October 21st, 2002
John Walaitis
AVP of Bridges
and Structures
- MOW

5 YEARS



August 13th, 2012
Tammy Debkowski
Finance Manager - RJC



August 20th, 2012
Dennis Shaffer
VP of Bus. Development
- Management



September 11th, 2012
David Lapallo
Conductor - Operations

3 YEARS



September 10th, 2014
Brock Krumanocker
Trackman - MOW



October 25th, 2014
Spencer Hockman
Car Host - LGSR

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September 11th, 2012
Aaron Snyder
Customer Service Mgr.
- Traffic



September 17th, 2012
Edward Kopeck, III
Signal Maintainer - Signals

1 YEAR



August 1st, 2016
Ryan Frederickson
Mascot - LGSR



August 22nd, 2016
Curtis Williams
Trackman - MOW



September 26th, 2016
Caleb Fetterolf
Conductor - Operations



September 26th, 2016
Brandon Wagner
Trackman/Tamper Trainee
- MOW



October 17th, 2016
Daniel Hosler
Lead Facilities Technician
- Passenger

In Loving Memory

John Willever, friend and fan of the Reading & Northern Railroad, passed away on August 29, 2017. Pictured here is John with Reading & Northern Chairman & CEO Andy Muller, Jr., on an RDC excursion in 2016. The Reading & Northern extends its happy memories and prayers to the loved ones of John.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Congratulations Graham!

BY: CRYSTAL ARNDT, HR ADMINISTRATOR



I am pleased to introduce this quarter's "Spotlight Employee", Graham Hantz. Graham came to work for RBMN in August of 2015 as Signal Maintainer. Prior to working at RBMN, Graham worked as an Electro-Mechanical Technician at East Penn Manufacturing, a Technical Manager at Chuck E. Cheese in Wilkes Barre, a Service Technician at Access Ability, a Machinist at Demco Automation, a Sergeant in the US Army, where he was deployed to Iraq in 2007 and Afghanistan in 2010 while serving our country, and as a Missionary at Campus Crusade for Christ.

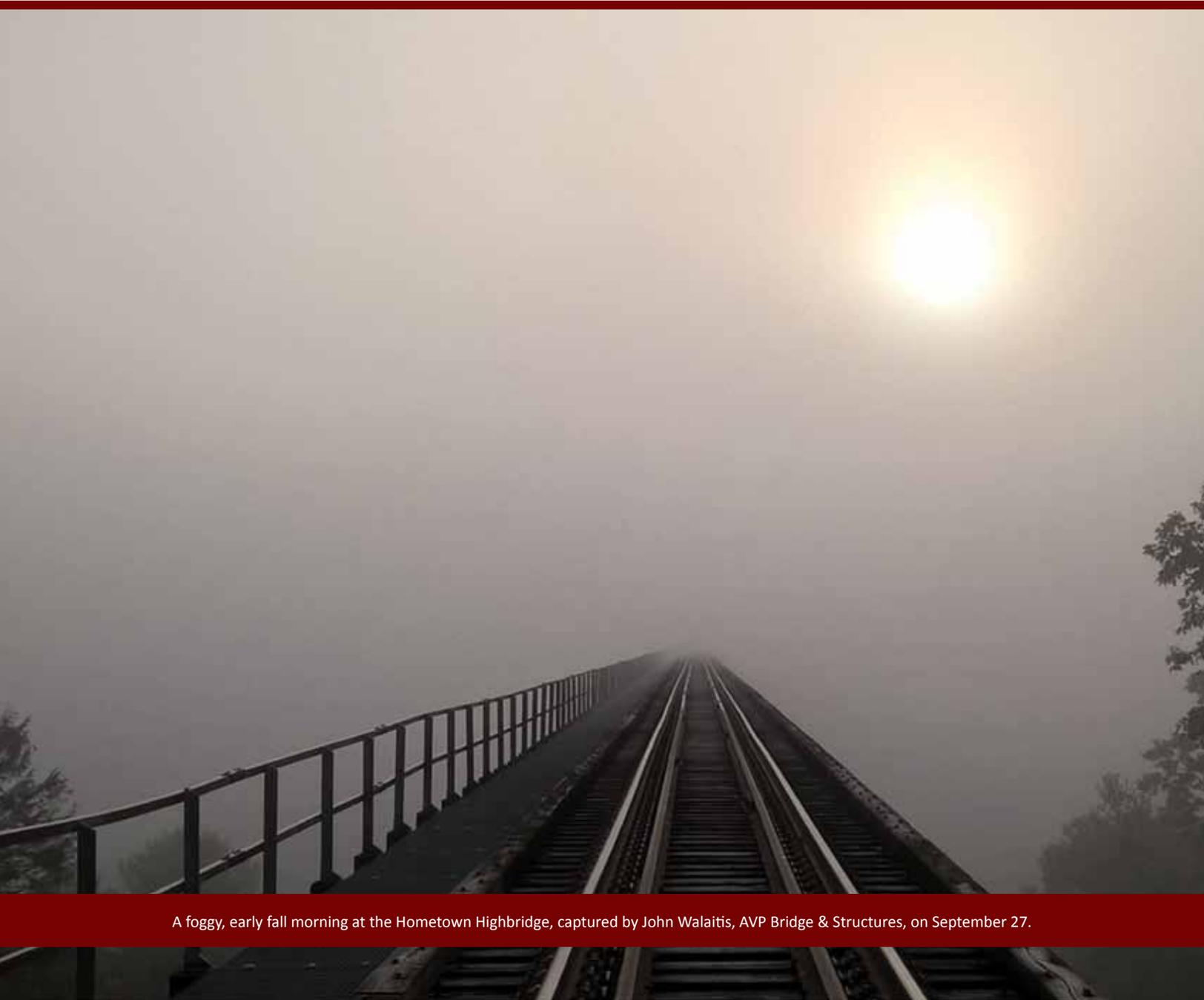
Graham was born and raised in Coplay, Pennsylvania. He graduated from Whitehall Area High School. Graham also attended Lehigh Carbon Community College for Industrial Automation and Pennsylvania College of Technology for Manufacturing Engineering Technology.

Graham has a brother who lives in York, PA, a sister who lives in Los Angeles, CA, one niece and one nephew. In his free time, he likes to volunteer for Big Brothers & Big Sisters of Schuylkill County, participate in his church softball league, hiking, hunting with his dad, break dancing, playing guitar, and bible study. Graham's favorite TV show growing up was MacGyver.

Congratulations to Graham for being our "Spotlight Employee", and thank you for serving our country!

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

**Reading Blue Mountain &
Northern Railroad Company**
PO Box 218
Port Clinton PA 19549



A foggy, early fall morning at the Hometown Highbridge, captured by John Walaitis, AVP Bridge & Structures, on September 27.