

R&N Magazine

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25 YEARS of NS & RBMN Partnership



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COVER PHOTO

RBMN and Norfolk Southern working together in the North Reading Yard. See Eric Peters article on page 16.

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KEEPING ON TRACK

BY: WAYNE A. MICHEL, PRESIDENT

Twenty-five years is a long time. And 25 years ago, something called “Split Date” happened and changed railroading throughout much of America.

On June 1, 1999, the Conrail experiment ended. Formed from the collapse of the Penn Central and other bankrupt carriers, Conrail grew to be a great success. When it was sold by the Federal government in March of 1987 it was the largest initial public offering in history. And yet a little more than 12 years later Conrail was history as it was split between Norfolk Southern and CSX.

And so, it seemed fitting that Reading & Northern mark this 25th anniversary because it truly represented a major transition for our company. After all Reading & Northern was born out of Conrail. Its Reading Division was spun off by Conrail in December of 1990 and its Lehigh Division was sold in August 1996. And RBMN was a charter member of the Conrail EXPRESS franchise group, a designation limited to a few of the 150+ Conrail shortlines.

For RBMN the shift from Conrail to NS represented many challenges. Throughout this issue you will read how RBMN adapted and grew its relationship with NS. And the stories will be personalized as the writers share where they were 25 years ago. Many of them were in the industry and impacted by the shift at the time. Others were still in school with little thought of railroading beyond hearing a distant whistle.

Personally, I was in limbo as the end of Conrail approached. Since the Fall of 1985 I had worked at Conrail. Initially I ran the line sales program, which included the 1990 sale to RBMN, and then I branched out into commercial ventures such as forming the industry’s first Solid Waste business group and running Conrail’s large Industrial Development program. In 1995, however, I was asked by senior leadership to develop a new shortline franchise program and to oversee a massive line sale program of profitable trunk lines. In the Spring of 1986 Conrail rolled out its line sale program, and announced the initial group of Conrail EXPRESS shortline franchisees. Over the next six months Conrail sold a handful of properties, including the Lehigh Line to RBMN.

But in the Fall of 1996 Conrail announced its intent to merge with CSX in a strategic merger of equals. NS was not amused and after the dust settled Conrail’s future was sealed. By Spring of 1997 it was decided that Conrail would be split between NS and CSX.

As you can imagine the dissolution of Conrail left many of us uncertain of our futures. Adding to my uncertainty was that I was recently divorced and newly housed in an apartment across from the Art Museum in Philadelphia, not far from the Rocky statute! And now I was about to be unemployed for the first time since the end of my first year at law school. Adding to my uncertainty I had no real employment prospects. For ethical reasons I had not sought work from any of my friends in the Shortline community since I was still head of Conrail’s Shortline group until Split Date.

Initially I contemplated becoming a public school teacher in Philadelphia. I quickly abandoned that idea when I found I had to go back to school for my teaching certificate. After 7 years of higher education, I had zero interest in going back to school.

And so, on Split Date I was sitting in my new office in my new apartment drafting emails to a select group of Shortline friends. Within days I was helping the Housatonic Railroad in Connecticut handle its transition to CSX. And shortly thereafter Andy Muller called. After a great initial meeting with him and his team I got to work for the RBMN. In a short period of time, it became clear that working for RBMN would take up most of my time and so by the Fall I was only working for Andy.

From the first day I joined RBMN a critical part of my job was managing the interline relationship with Norfolk Southern. I will be the first to admit that both companies had adjustment periods. The fact is Conrail treated shortlines very differently than NS or CSX, as I learned while running the Conrail Shortline group during the two-year pre-Split Date transition period. In fact, I recall telling my counterparts at NS and CSX they might find the more aggressive tendencies of many of the Conrail shortlines a tad off putting. But I also noted that same aggressive nature is what made so many of the shortlines successful.



Part of that difference was cultural, but a lot of it was that Conrail had created dozens of shortlines since 1985 when I joined the company to run its massive line sale program. As part of the Government’s effort to assist Conrail with becoming a viable business, Conrail was given a green light to abandon any track it wanted with no right for shippers or communities to object. The only option for concerned groups was to buy the line and turn it into a Shortline. And so, by 1996 Conrail connected with over 150 shortlines, most of them less than 10 years old and all of them very hungry for business.

With so many shortlines, and with those shortlines so important to Conrail’s business, Conrail had created its feeder line program to simplify rate making and payments to shortlines. And, Conrail also created the Conrail EXPRESS program, which created a franchise situation for a small select group of shortlines, including the Reading & Northern.

These programs were outside anything done by NS or CSX. As a result, there was a lot of adjustment needed by both sides. That became very clear for RBMN when issues arose with NS related to our critical anthracite business. See the excellent coal article on page 8. A different perspective comes from our largest customer, Procter & Gamble, which experienced split date from the customer perspective. John Hamm’s excellent article shares what he saw from his P&G vantage point when he tried to get NS to allow RBMN to provide the local service to P&G’s largest manufacturing facility in Mehoopany, PA.

Despite some initial tensions the fact is that NS quickly became a trusted RBMN partner. Over the years there were hiccups, but as we got to know each other we began to grow our business together.

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Today our relationship is excellent. Ever since NS requested that we become an interline carrier 7 years ago we have been able to develop strong relationships with the men and women in NS marketing. And the relationship that Bill Clark has built with his former colleagues in the NS Coal department is amazing. Truly we work as one to build the business. I can't say enough about their support. Similarly, Eric Peters with his prior NS Division Superintendent experience has been able to take our already solid relationships with NS transportation to the next level.

But what has really been exciting is the new outreach Alan Shaw has implemented by bringing in Stefan Loeb. Personally, I think that was a brilliant move as Stefan had a phenomenal reputation in the Shortline world. We have already seen a true sense of working together in partnership with Stefan and his team as well as Mike McClellan and his Strategic Planning team. The excellent relations that our EVP Strategic Planning, Christina Muller-Levan, has developed with Mike and Stefan will be critical to our long-term success.

So, this 25 year anniversary is a period of reflection for me personally. So much of my professional life has been tied up with the Conrail franchise and shortlines. When I began my career as an attorney in 1978 one of the first areas I specialized in was the creation of shortlines. This was shortly after 1980 and the passage of the Staggers Act, which helped jumpstart the creation of shortlines. And when Congress in 1981 gave Conrail its exceptional powers to abandon or sell lines, the shortline revolution was turbocharged. As an attorney I drafted the regulations governing abandonments and line sales and I also oversaw the implementation of the massive Conrail abandonment/line sale program. Over 40 years later it feels great to be able to say that I have watched the Shortline revolution work from the three different perspectives of government regulator, Class 1 line sale and short line manager and now presidency of a hugely successful class 2 railroad.

On a personal level Split Date turned out to be the best thing that ever happened to me. First going to work for Andy who has been a mentor, partner and friend for the last 25 years. Then a year later I met the love of my life Ronda. Within a year we were getting married by a Justice of the Peace on Andy's private rail car while the snow was falling.

Today I'm older and far happier than I have ever been in my life. And as for the railroad, we are also older and far happier. I need to pinch myself when I look at RBMN's accomplishments over the last 25 years. Read the stories inside this issue and you too will be greatly impressed by what this team has built over the last 25 years.

The story of the RBMN during the NS era is a story of resilience, hard work and entrepreneurial vision. It is the story of hundreds of men and women working together to build this hugely successful company. It is the story of loyal customers and strong supporters at every level of government. But most of all, it is the story of how one man's vision and willingness to take risk has made a dream come true.

Thanks to the entire team's effort over the last 25 years, RBMN has stayed on track and we are on target to power on into the future.. ♦

“The Road of Anthracite” **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

RBMN Adds Management to Oversee Growing Coal Business

Port Clinton, PA – July 16, 2024

Reading & Northern announces changes in its corporate leadership structure to better deal with the unprecedented growth in its anthracite coal business.

On February 24, 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine. As western sanctions were imposed on Russia a seismic shift occurred in international purchasing of anthracite, a key carbon source in steel making and other industrial production. Anthracite producers in northeastern Pennsylvania responded by making significant investments in their facilities to fill the void. Since almost all North American anthracite originates along RBMN tracks, RBMN also made investments to handle the increased international demand. At the same time, domestic demand increased as electric arc furnace steel mills shifted to anthracite as their carbon source. And with domestic steelmaking booming due to tariffs on imported steel and increased infrastructure spending that requires “Buy In America” steel, domestic steel mills sought additional anthracite.

Over the last two years RBMN has responded to these demands by increasing its train service to coal producers, purchasing more coal freight cars and hiring additional customer service staff. In light of the fact that the demand for Pennsylvania anthracite will increase by double digit levels in the years to come, RBMN is realigning its senior management resources in order to better manage this growing market segment.

Eric Peters, currently VP Transportation, is now taking on the role of also managing the RBMN coal fleet. RBMN currently owns 2,000 coal cars including aluminum and steel open top hoppers, aluminum rapid discharge cars and covered hoppers. These cars will handle over 12,000 cars of business in 2024. With demand increasing and the fleet aging RBMN has decided to move management of the car shop and related facilities under Eric. “With his experience at Norfolk Southern and his recent experience overseeing the day-to-day transportation network that has handled RBMN's 60% surge in coal business over the last two years, Eric is the perfect choice to handle this assignment,” said Wayne Michel, RBMN's president. “In his new role as EVP Transportation and Fleet Management Eric will report to me on fleet management and continue to report to our EVP Operations, Tyler Glass, as he manages the transportation network.”

Tyler Glass will continue to oversee all operations including freight and passenger trains as well as the movement of work trains for the maintenance of way department. Glass also oversees the locomotive shop that maintains 70 locomotives and the communication and signals department.

On the coal marketing side of the house, Jim Cerulli has been added to the team as VP Coal Business Development. Jim joins SVP Coal Marketing Bill Clark, another veteran of Norfolk Southern, and recently hired Mike Sharadin, VP Coal Sourcing. Sharadin focuses on the supply side by working closely with producers to make sure they have the infrastructure and equipment resources they need to ship the coal. Cerulli will focus on working with Bill Clark to handle the demand side. Critical to their work is establishing service to new and expanding steel mills by developing direct rail options as well as establishing transload centers with truckers.

“With Eric and Jim joining the existing Coal team we are confident we have the management in place to continue expanding our coal business. Last year we moved one million tons for the first time in our history. We hope to eclipse 1.5 million tons in the next three years and perhaps 2 million tons by the end of this decade! To do this will require additional RBMN investment in equipment and people and I am committed to providing us with the resources to continue our growth.” Says Andy Muller, Jr, Owner/CEO.

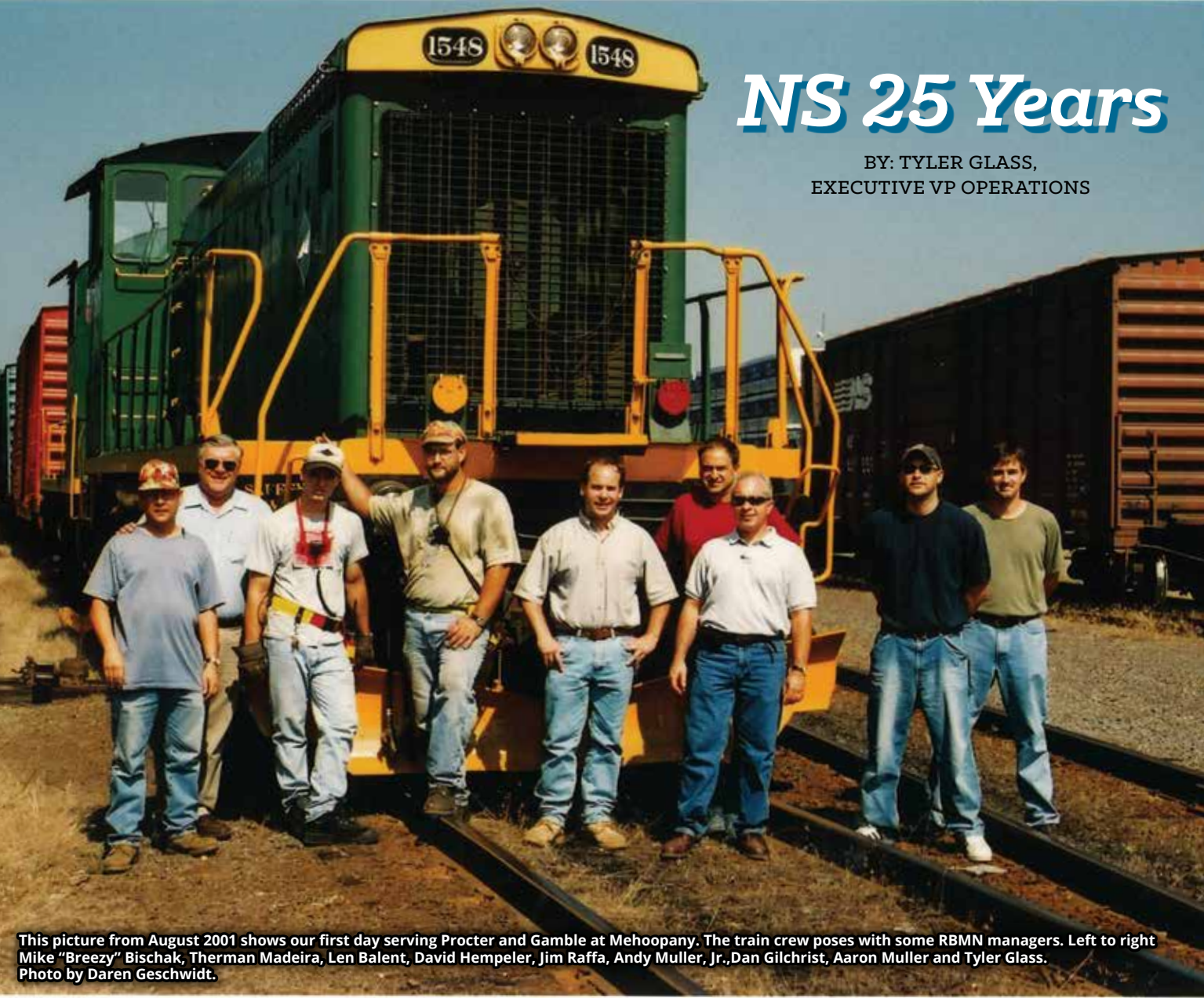
Reading & Northern Railroad, with its corporate headquarters in Port Clinton, is a privately held railroad company serving over 80 customers in nine eastern Pennsylvania counties (Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Northumberland, Schuylkill, and Wyoming). It has expanded its operations 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. ♦



**Eric Peters,
EVP Transportation &
Fleet Management**



**Jim Cerulli,
VP Coal Business
Development**



This picture from August 2001 shows our first day serving Procter and Gamble at Mehoopany. The train crew poses with some RBMN managers. Left to right Mike “Breezy” Bischak, Therman Madeira, Len Balent, David Hempeler, Jim Raffa, Andy Muller, Jr., Dan Gilchrist, Aaron Muller and Tyler Glass. Photo by Daren Geschwidt.

Seems like yesterday when I remember hearing the news that Conrail was going to be carved up CSX and Norfolk Southern (NS), that was 1996. When the dust settled RBMN was thrust into a partnership with NS. Conrail as we knew it was gone on June 1, 1999, often referred to as split date. Twenty five years already?

In mid 1999 I was in my ninth year on the RBMN and was a few months into my new role as Assistant General Manager. I was relatively new in management and had never experienced any sort of rail merger. Ignorance is bliss, as they say. Things would change rapidly and drastically over the next five to six years and then we would see less frequent changes as time went on.

When I look at our current operation versus that of 1999 the first thing that comes to mind are the people. Many of our current employees had yet to be born, while many were too young to remember the transition away from the days of Conrail. There are several around that certainly remember.

As if the merger wasn't causing enough stress in 1999, we also had to worry about Y2K concerns. IYKYK.

Our employee roster consisted of twenty eight operating employees and we had a total of forty five train starts per week. With a few exceptions that year it was all freight trains.

The railroad was divided into two large pieces, the Reading Division and the Lehigh Division.

The Reading Division consisted mostly of the anthracite lines purchased from Conrail in 1990. By 1999 we were well past the days of daily derailments. The

business was steady but there wasn't much growth to speak of.

The Reading Interchange schedule was four times per week. We interchanged the coal cars for Baltimore at our North Reading Yard.

The Lehigh Division was comprised of the Lehigh Line and our northern portion of the system in the Greater Wilkes-Barre/Scranton area purchased in 1996. We had been maintaining whatever business Conrail had on the lines prior to our takeover. The Lehigh Line hosted Canadian Pacific (Delaware & Hudson Ry) as a trackage rights tenant operating one train per day in each direction. We interchanged three or four times per week at Lehighton.

The transition from Conrail to Norfolk Southern was as rough as any major rail merger was in those days. Railroadng in the northeast was tough for the first two years. Traffic moved slow, trains were often way behind schedule and people were getting used to a different style of management.

As you can imagine, this had a large impact on many of the rail customers and stressed many of their supply chains.

The Procter and Gamble plant in Mehoopany was not immune. They were looking for a rail service solution that would meet their expectations and in 2001 RBMN was chosen to help bring some continuity to their plant operations. In August 2001 we began seven days per week service to the facility.

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August 2002 NS began operating a pair of trains over the RBMN route between Lehighton and Scranton, resulting in four daily trackage rights trains of both Canadian Pacific and NS operating over RBMN's Lehigh Line.

Late 2003 and the early part of 2004 we would see some big changes that would begin to give our railroad a more unified look and feel. Nesquehoning Bridge Phase I was completed. This restoration of an old railroad bridge across the Lehigh River and a new connection to our Lehigh Division would give us a direct connection from the C&S Railroad without using NS tracks or talking to the NS dispatcher. We had trackage rights on the C&S and we also dispatched the operation. Shortly after the bridge connection was completed we built a new connection to bypass an NS owned and controlled interlocking, this new connection and interlocking would be called "Independence". And in early 2004 RBMN took over the freight operations on the C&S as Andy Muller had become part owner of the C&S.

Passenger excursions have always been a part of our company since day 1. In May 2005 the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway operation would start in Jim Thorpe. This would be the start of what has now become an extensive passenger excursion service that we offer throughout the system and virtually year round. Today we operate an extensive network of passenger trains, hauling in excess of 200,000 people per year.

By the mid 2000s business had really started to pick up and was trending in the right direction.

Our coal business took off in 2010 and 2011 as some major companies began to source anthracite coal, it was the beginning of a renaissance in this sector of our business. At this time we took on some additional indexing of cars for our coal customers to load for unit train operations and some new coal loading facilities have popped up and prospered on our lines.

October 2012 we rolled out our scheduled service to our customers. We already had structured service but kicked it up a notch by introducing two hour service windows that were negotiated with our customers. This allowed some customers to better schedule their respective operations and gain efficiencies on their end.

NS purchased 200+miles of the former Delaware & Hudson Railway properties from Canadian Pacific Railway in 2015. This was the largest impact on Northeast rail operations since the Conrail split in 1999. RBMN saw some immediate changes. Taylor Yard near Scranton was now set up as an interchange point. With the exit of CP from the region we saw the end of the CP's two trackage rights trains per day, which meant we were back to just two trains per day operating on trackage right on our system.

January 1, 2016 we took over service to CAN DO's Humboldt Industrial Park near Hazleton. This expansion ultimately added three crew starts per day and gave RBMN a huge presence in the Hazleton region.

Concurrent with the Humboldt Industrial Park start up we had implemented our Fast Freight network which was designed to expedite freight to and from the interchanges and keep our local trains focused on our scheduled service deliveries.

Late in 2018 NS would start Precision Scheduled Railroad process. In many ways this would rock the NS traditional management style we had become accustomed to. RBMN would see some direct impacts over the next couple of years.

In 2019 RBMN would begin construction on the Nesquehoning Bridge Phase II, a project decades in the making.

And then there's 2020.

As NS continued to evolve with PSR they had decided that it no longer made sense to have their trains operating between Allentown and Binghamton, NY. In mid January 2020 we saw the last of the NS trains operating over the RBMN.

Just a couple of weeks after that we saw the completion of the Nesquehoning Bridge Phase II. This brand new bridge over the Lehigh River would give RBMN a progressive route and really cemented the connection of the Reading and Lehigh Divisions. In many ways the railroad seemed much smaller now that we could move from Reading to Pittston with extreme efficiency. We had a six day per week train that would haul traffic between Reading and Pittston, the North Reading Fast Freight (NRFF). This scheduled freight is operated on a tight schedule, similar to a passenger train.

Then just a month or so later the pandemic hit. This rocked the entire nation and put a strain on EVERYTHING. Within a few weeks we found a good groove

and the railroad kept the trains running consistently. This was not easy and it was not possible without great people!

In 2021 we were back to some better news stories. In June we acquired the twenty one mile line from Carbon County. We had already taken over the freight operations in 2004. However, this acquisition allowed RBMN to start huge investments in infrastructure and really bring the track up to much higher standards. RBMN also built a sand terminal in Tunkhannock that year. Late in the year that started operation and sand unit trains became part of our operations. Unit sand trains from Reading to Pittston, who would have thought?

Then in 2022 Ukraine was invaded by Russia. This had a deep impact on the global anthracite supply and RBMN was in a great position to handle the increase in business.

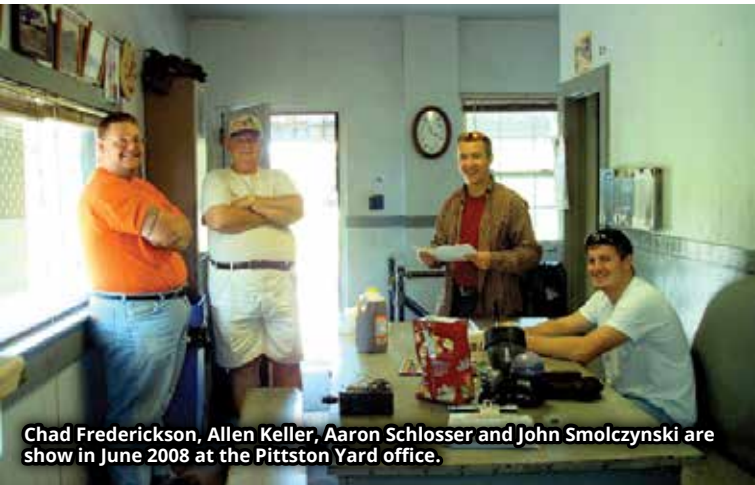
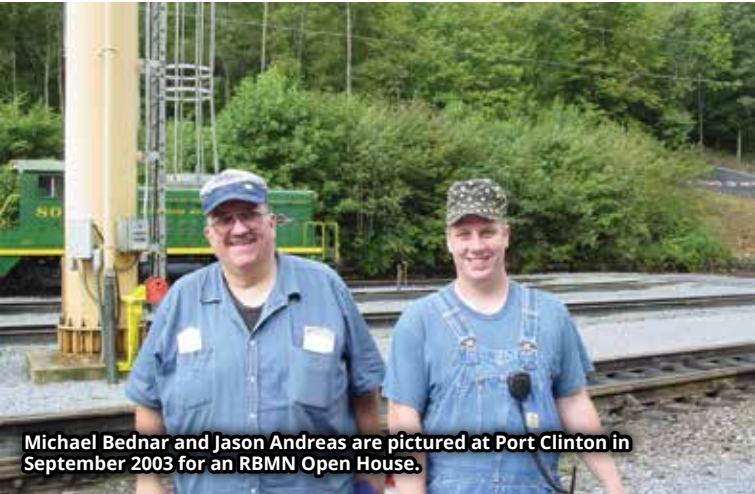
Also in 2022 RBMN purchased an entire complex of buildings in Nesquehoning, part of the former KME fire truck complex. This has allowed us to finally expand some of our facilities and has really changed the feel of the railroad. Now all of our conductor and engineer classroom training is done at the state of the art training center in Nesquehoning.

We have seen tremendous growth since 1999. We went from a roster of twenty eight operations folks to a roster of sixty eight and our crew starts per week went from forty five to 130! Our interchanges at Reading and Taylor are now seven days a week. We have transformed from a shortline railroad to a regional powerhouse.

It was done with some fantastic women and men. As I write about the different changes on the railroad I always visualize the people that made those new ventures work. And it is easy to type away writing about the accomplishments, but I know what it took to get it done. It wasn't always smiles and hugs, many times it was blood, sweat and tears.

As you can see RBMN has really evolved over the twenty five years since NS took over the Conrail operations in our area. We went from operating two separate divisions to a main line that extended from Reading to Pittston.

NS went through some transformations as well. They went from a predominantly bituminous coal hauling road to one that continues to evolve with different energy plays, a fairly large acquisition and different management styles. Our relationship with NS blossomed over that time as well. ♦



25 Years of RBMN System Growth and Development

BY: JOLENE BUSER, VP REAL ESTATE

In June 1999, as I prepared to enter the sixth grade, the game of Monopoly was the only kind of property acquisition and strategizing that I was familiar with. Since I started working in the Real Estate Department of Reading & Northern Railroad in 2013, I have witnessed a variety of acquisitions and property developments that as I have stacked below, it really shows how the Reading & Northern's Monopoly board has filled up!

Prior to the June 1, 1999 "Split Date" the Reading & Northern had already acquired its Reading and Lehigh Middle Clusters of main line trackage, along with various branch lines in Schuylkill, Carbon, and Luzerne counties. What happened after June 1999, was a series of line acquisitions that filled our board squares with opportunities to service two industrial parks in Luzerne County, service markets north of our Lehigh Division, solidify our foothold in Berks County, and strategically connected our Reading and Lehigh divisions via ownership in Carbon and Schuylkill counties.

RBMN Line Miles as of June 1, 1999:

- Reading Cluster line miles acquired December 15, 1990: 134.60
- East Mahanoy & Hazleton line miles acquired July 21, 1992: 9.80
- Schuylkill County Rail Transit Authority line miles acquired August 7, 1992: 13.30
- Lehigh Middle Cluster line miles acquired August 19, 1996: 104.22
- Total Owned Line Miles: 261.92

RBMN Line Miles Acquired after June 1, 1999:

- Pennsy line miles acquired April 17, 2000: 12.50
- Auburn line miles acquired May 4, 2000: 1.30
- Crestwood Industrial Park line miles acquired November 30, 2001: 1.22
- Towanda Monroeton Shipper Lifeline line miles acquired December 30, 2009: 4.70
- Humboldt Industrial Park line miles acquired January 1, 2016: 7.50
- Locust Valley line miles acquired May 11, 2016: 5.50
- Carbon County line miles acquired June 24, 2021: 19 .00
- Total Owned Line Miles (as of June 1, 2024): 313.64

Whether for customer development, passenger facilities, or for operational space, what the line miles do not account for are our many more track miles of sidetracks and yard tracks that give us over 400 miles of track that we have built and maintain.

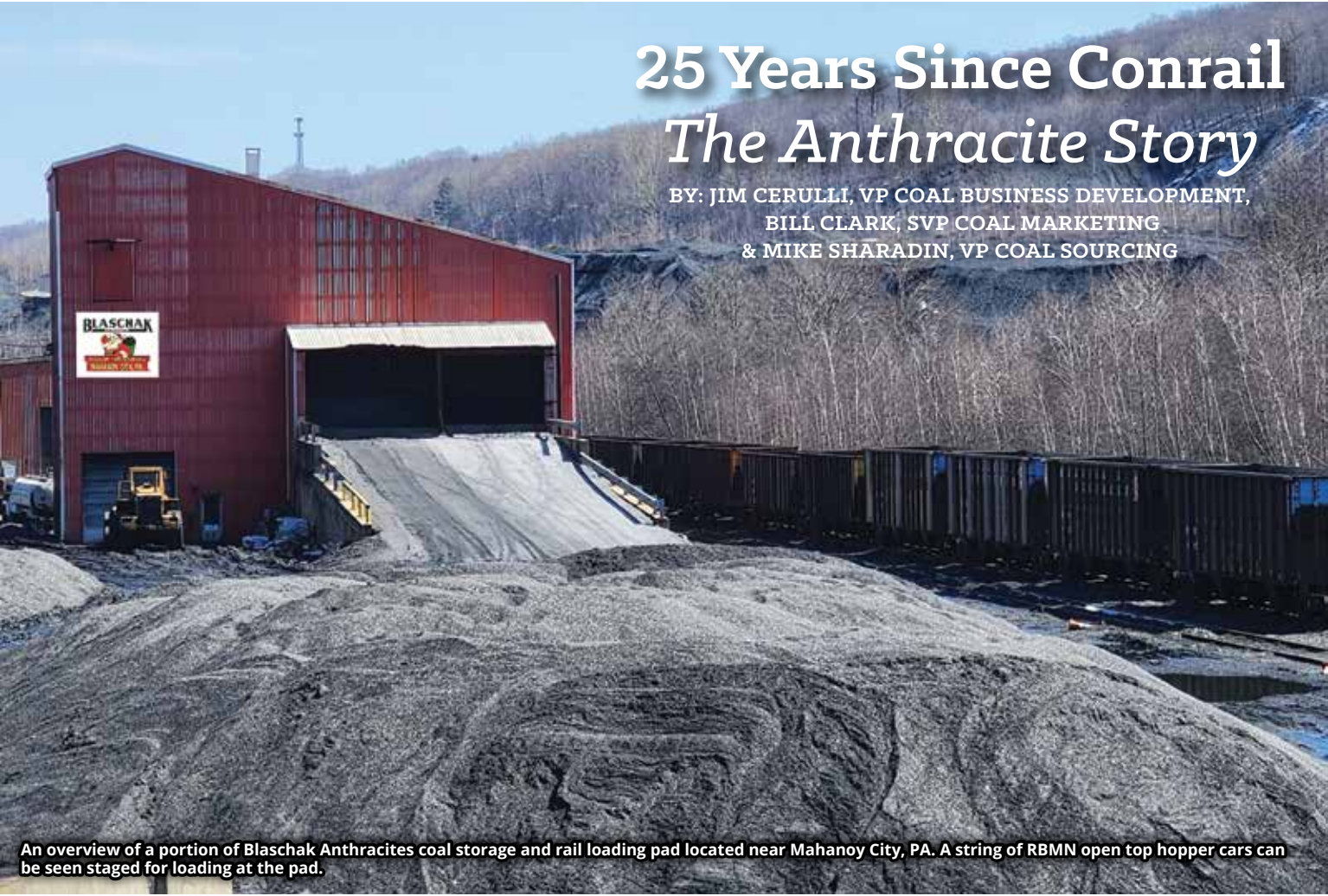
We're not building houses or hotels on our squares, but are our facility development really has us Advancing to Go! In June 1999 our Port Clinton Headquarters had been completed just a few years prior in 1995, with additions in 1997. But since 1999, our facilities have expanded to allow for many industrial and passenger opportunities. At Port Clinton alone, our headquarters have developed to include mechanical and vehicle shops, an engine house, steam shop, and in recent years, our own wheel truing facility.

But across our system, since 1999, we've developed our own properties and acquired new Park Places along the way:

- Penobscot Reporting Office – Developed March 31, 2006 Luzerne County
- Schuylkill Haven Station/Passenger Headquarters – Acquired February 4, 2015 – Schuylkill County
- Reading Outer Station – Acquired August 12, 2016 – Berks County
- Ransom Warehouse & Transload – Acquired October 31, 2019 – Lackawanna County
- Locust Summit Transload Terminal – Developed July 9, 2021 – Schuylkill County
- Tunkhannock Sand Terminal – Developed December 20, 2021 – Wyoming County
- Nesquehoning Campus – Acquired March 16, 2022, - Carbon County, our own Boardwalk space! A ten acre industrial complex to expand our facility operations and newly developed passenger platform!
- Wilkes-Barre Scranton Regional Railroad Station – Developed May 27, 2023 – Luzerne County

What does the union of our various line acquisitions and ambitious facility development put forward? That the Reading & Northern has played our cards right to utilize the spaces we have, so to speak, and have amassed a strong hand of industrial development and a passenger boom that at the end of the game, we're poised to win. And not to worry, we're still looking to draw Advance token to the nearest Railroad.

And for those wondering, my favorite Monopoly token was the Scotti dog. ♦



An overview of a portion of Blaschak Anthracites coal storage and rail loading pad located near Mahanoy City, PA. A string of RBMN open top hopper cars can be seen staged for loading at the pad.

From the formation of “The Road of Anthracite” in 1990 when Reading and Northern took over the Reading Cluster from Conrail, we enjoyed an excellent partnership with the Conrail team. This partnership included consistent and competitive pricing, good interchange service and a steady supply of coal cars to meet demand. 1991 was the first full year of RBMN operations in the anthracite fields and we handled a little over 250,000 tons of anthracite primarily for export. As we worked with our customers and Conrail, improving rail and customer service on the former Reading Cluster, anthracite shipments to both domestic and export receivers increased to 600,000 tons per year regularly and reached a then peak of 730,000 tons in 1996. The partnership we built with Conrail continued all the way to the Summer of 1999 when Conrail was split between Norfolk Southern and CSX and NS ended up becoming our sole connection for anthracite coal.

The three of us that handle RBMN’s coal business all experienced Split Date, but from very different vantage points.

After 17 years in the railroad industry, Bill Clark joined Norfolk Southern in the spring of 1998 as market manager for utility coal. After Split Date NS was trying to implement its plans for combining Conrail into its network and he recalls how bad things were. “I was responsible for our utility business in Illinois, Indiana, most of Ohio, as well as shipments to the river. What I most remember about that time was working 7 days a week just trying to keep power plants from shutting down (we got close at a number of power plants). It was a challenging time, especially as a newly minted NS employee.”

Mike Sharadin was a junior employee at RBMN three years into his railroad career when Split Date occurred. “I was a freight conductor at the time, working a variety of crew starts that served the anthracite region. What I recall the most was the uncertainty of how the change would affect the flow of traffic across Norfolk Southern’s network and the impact it would have on RBMN customers. One of the bigger impacts to RBMN was the use of open-top cars for our anthracite shipments. While RBMN owned a fleet of cars to handle our export business, we relied heavily on Conrail’s open-top hoppers for our domestic shipments. I remember how tight car supply was at times and not being able to fulfill orders. Fortunately, Andy Muller acquired nearly 300 cars

from NS and CSX to add to our fleet and we were able to work through the car supply issues.”

Jim Cerulli was still a bright-eyed youngster in grade school with an interest in trains and the railroad industry when Split Date occurred. “My interest in trains wasn’t so much the trains themselves, but rather the business end of things. So, at the time I was paying particularly close attention to the happenings of the Conrail split. One thing I can distinctly remember was driving down Rt. 11 between Enola, PA and Duncannon, PA along the former Conrail Middle Division and seeing train after train parked front end to hind end as far as the eye can see going both directions. For a several day period of time, this section of triple track railroad remained single track with very little train movement as the system melted down. Watching it from an outsider’s perspective was interesting enough, after being in the railroad industry for nearly 10 years now I can only imagine what it was like to be in the middle of it as an employee.

In retrospect it is clear that at the time NS took over Conrail it did not have a good understanding of the anthracite business. That’s not surprising because all of the anthracite moving in the United States originated on RBMN and all of it was interchanged with Conrail. As a result, NS began treating anthracite like other coal products and it raised the rates being charged to move anthracite coal and made the decision to stop supplying empty rail cars for anthracite loadings. These decisions had an immediate impact on the anthracite producers who were fortunately able to quickly get Pennsylvania political figures to intervene and bring these issues to senior NS management. This gave NS an opportunity to revisit many of their early decisions and to learn more about the anthracite industry, resulting in a rollback of rate increases and a sale of former Conrail coal cars to Reading and Northern.

Coal has always been the backbone of the Reading & Northern, especially during its first decade. After Split Date the diversification of RBMN’s business took off. We entered into an agreement with NS and Procter & Gamble to provide the local service to P&G’s Mehoopany facility adding thousands of cars to our lines. We enjoyed Canadian Pacific and Norfolk Southern trackage rights trains. And we grew our merchandise business. All the while the coal

business just kept moving along with the occasional dip or bump.

However, there were two very significant events that have occurred since the NS takeover. The first was the decision by Consol to no longer allow anthracite exports to use its facility in Baltimore. That decision in late 2007 caused a flurry of activity. When the dust settled RBMN agreed to work with Kinder Morgan to develop its facility at Fairless Hills, northeast of Philadelphia, as an anthracite export terminal. RBMN made the initial investment in conveyors to get the facility operational and also purchased a fleet of rapid discharge cars to be used once Kinder Morgan acquired an Ashross unloading system. Throughout this process NS was our partner to make sure this business continued to flow.

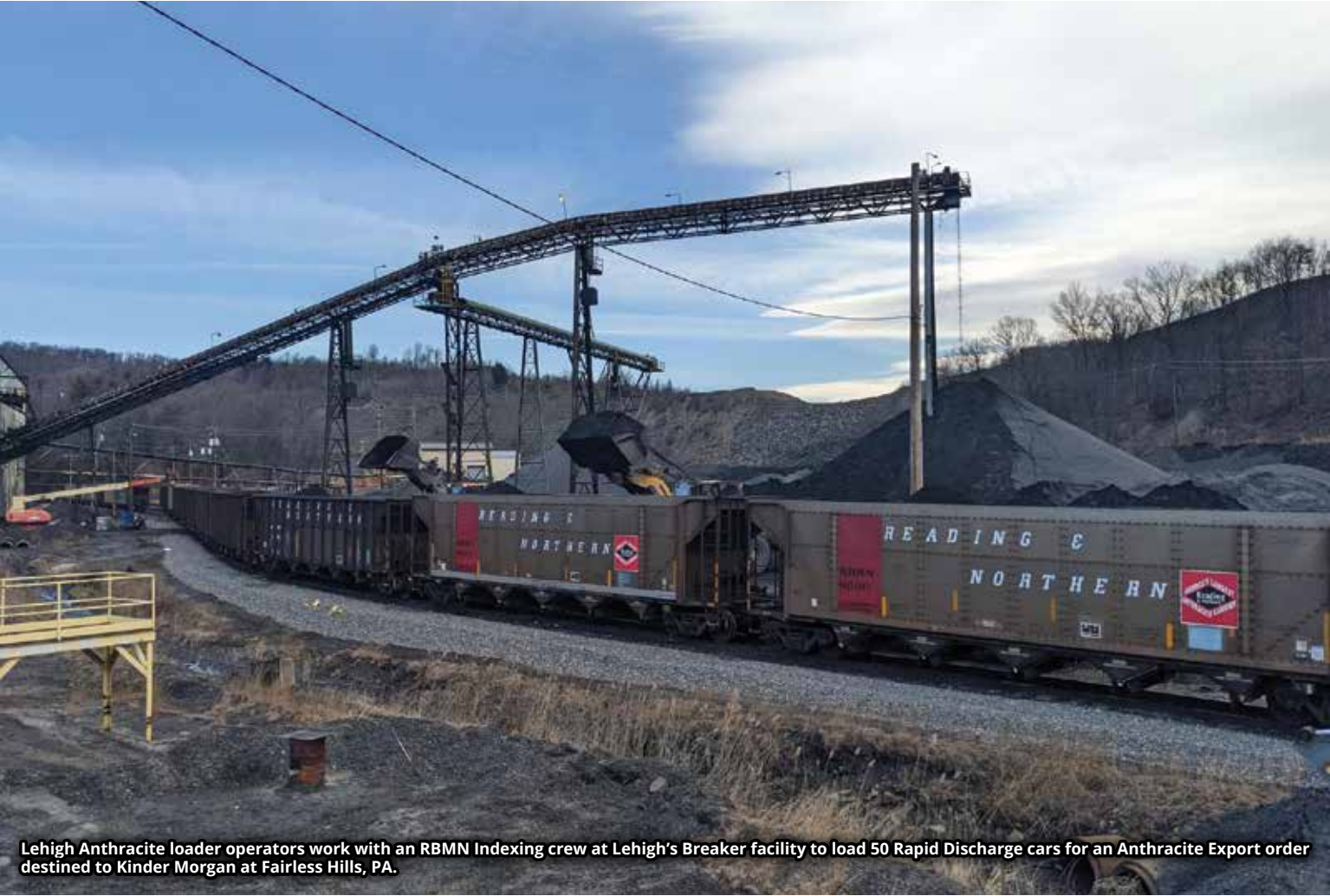
A few years later a quieter development took place, one that has had, and continuities to have, huge consequences for the RBMN. In the 2000’s, our online producers recognized that there was a market for dried anthracite coal, a low moisture content material, going to electric arc furnace (EAF) steel mills. Initially the material was trucked but today thanks to tremendous efforts by Bill Clark with the mills, NS, trucking and transload partners, and large investments by Andy Muller in covered hoppers and conveyors significant tonnage moves by rail. Today we have four dryers, with at least two additional facilities in the early stages of development and dried anthracite accounts for nearly 1/3 of our total anthracite volume and has created a significant shift in the industry.

Over the last twenty five years we have also worked on some large industrial development projects in the coal fields to bring more capacity to our customers. The two most noteworthy were connecting Atlantic/Hiller Carbon in Hazleton in 2016 and the construction of a large coal transload facility in Locust Summit in 2020 to handle offline coal from Keystone Anthracite’s production facility near Treverton. We should note that the Atlantic connection does not happen without the direct support of the highest levels of the NS Coal business group. Thank you again NS!

All this success has not come without challenges, but we have found many ways to seize opportunities and continue to grow the anthracite market. Over

the last twenty five years we have invested tens of millions of dollars in rail cars and conveyors, designed service packages to compete with trucks and made significant investments in destination transloads and port facilities to make truck conversion easy and ensure a seamless supply chain for our customers. The impact of successfully converting truck shipments to rail, along with rapid growth in our export market caused by outside geo-political issues in the world, has resulted in tremendous growth. All of this has culminated in Reading and Northern shipping 1 million tons of anthracite in a single shipping season in 2023, a four-fold increase from our first full anthracite shipping season in 1991. This marked the first time in Reading and Northern history and the first time since the height of the Conrail anthracite era in the 1980’s that this milestone was achieved. We see this growth continuing for years to come and expect to beat last year’s record by nearly 200,000 tons in 2024.

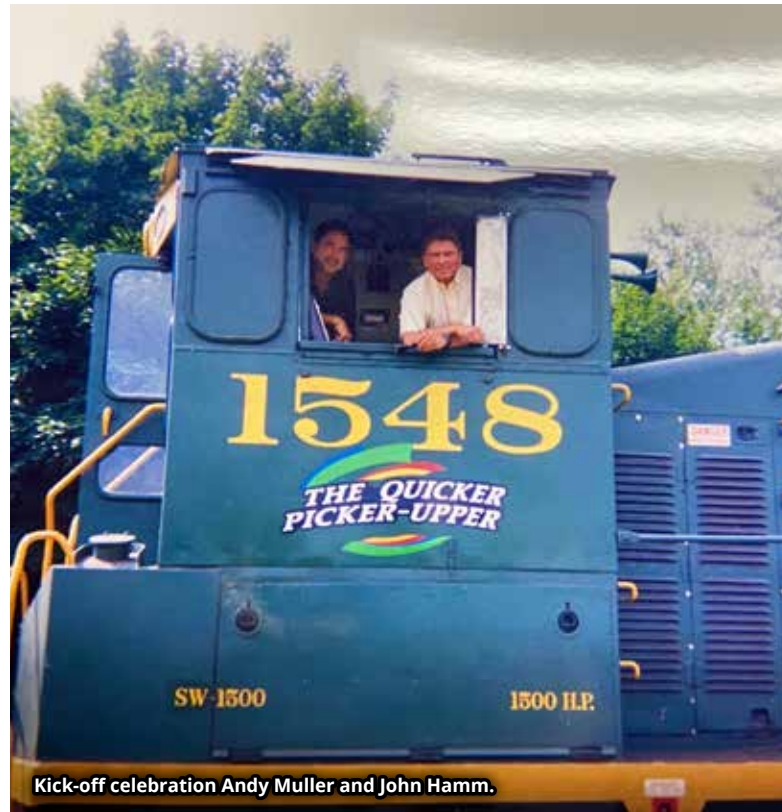
It’s amazing to think how far we have come over the last twenty five years. All of this would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of our employees, the partnerships we have forged with the anthracite producers and of course our customers. And we cannot forget the partnerships and support from our Class I railroad connections both past and present. Just as Conrail served as an excellent partner in our first decade in the anthracite business, Norfolk Southern has been an equally great partner for the last twenty five years. NS has gone above and beyond in recent years working to understand the anthracite business and supporting our efforts to build market share and new business. Whether working with us to create competitive pricing to compete with trucks, assisting with providing or moving newly purchased rail cars or working with destinations on integrated transload solutions and investments for anthracite coal. We are grateful for the legacy we have built in the Anthracite Industry and look forward to many years of continued growth and success. After all, we are “The Road of Anthracite”. ♦



Lehigh Anthracite loader operators work with an RBMN Indexing crew at Lehigh’s Breaker facility to load 50 Rapid Discharge cars for an Anthracite Export order destined to Kinder Morgan at Fairless Hills, PA.

Finding the Right Partner: *P&G and the Evolution of Rail Service at Mehoopany*

BY: JOHN HAMM, VP MARKETING



Kick-off celebration Andy Muller and John Hamm.



Kick-off celebration Dan Gilchrist and John Hamm.

Twenty five years ago, I was working for P&G as a Logistics Manager in Cincinnati. One of my key responsibilities was to ensure the timely and cost-effective delivery of raw materials, such as wood pulp, to all five Family Care plants across the U.S., including the facility in Mehoopany.

In 1999, the pulp supply chain at P&G's Mehoopany plant faced challenges following the Conrail acquisition by Norfolk Southern (NS). Industry-wide effects led to network congestion and delays, which in turn impacted P&G's paper machine operations. As most of you know, if there is no wood pulp, there's no Charmin or Bounty.

Not long after the acquisition, the plant was informed that they would no longer receive a switch on weekends, alongside experiencing crew shortages and a significant rise in daily demurrage costs, things were getting bad. This triggered a series of events, the most severe being the shutdown of paper machines, prompting Mehoopany to reach out for a solution.

Looking for a solution that could adapt and grow with Mehoopany's paper machine expansion and improve switching operations, I reached out to the Reading & Northern Railroad, and Norfolk Southern to see if we could all work together to have RBMN handle the local plant switching while NS handled the interline movements.

Well, those discussions didn't exactly go as planned. NS was not interested in having RBMN take over switching the plant on their trackage. So I needed to switch to plan B: a physical infrastructure build-in, starting from scratch.

The strategy was to connect P&G yard infrastructure with the RBMN once it cleared the Vosburg rail tunnel and establish a two-mile track leading into the plant. This ambitious project brought together a wide range of experts from P&G's industrial engineering, government relations groups, attorneys and of course all the hard-working folks at Mehoopany. It also involved tasks such as extensive site preparation, archaeological studies, securing permits, and much more. In February 2001, with full backing from Family Care's leadership, the build-in commenced.

Six months later, the project was progressing smoothly with much of the preliminary work nearing completion. It wouldn't be too long before they would start preparing to lay the railroad tracks, and I wanted to be there to see some of it! But in a surprising move, Norfolk Southern called a pivotal August 2001 meeting that would change everything.

At that meeting an agreement was reached that had RBMN and NS working to align rail service with P&G's growth strategy. Instead of the build-in and physical track expansion, NS provided RBMN with trackage rights to serve the plant. And RBMN and P&G entered into a long-term agreement providing for reliable seven-day-a-week service and a continuation of the Conrail demurrage program, which included six free days of demurrage.

This project stands out as the longest, most exciting and most exhausting I undertook during my career at P&G. My involvement spanned nearly every facet, requiring me to navigate interactions with senior and executive management, including the CEO.

For the past 25 years, Reading & Northern has thrived as Mehoopany's primary rail provider, consistently putting P&G's needs first. The successful partnership between RBMN and Norfolk Southern exemplifies the importance of having the right transportation partner who can work collaboratively toward the goal of providing Procter & Gamble with the best possible rail service. ♦

25 Years

BY: RIAN NEMEROFF,
SVP CONSUMER PRODUCTS

Over twenty-five years ago, in late 1998, the writing was on the wall. Conrail (CR) was about to be split between Norfolk Southern (NS) and CSX Transportation (CSXT). Both railroads offered me a job. CSX gave me a choice of working in Florida in either Forest Products or Short Line Marketing. NS was offering me an administrative position in Short Line management in Roanoke, VA. I didn't want to move so I instead chose to work for the Housatonic Railroad (HRRC). I know I made the right choice for me and my family.

I left CR in November of 1998 to join HRRC who had rail and reload operations in MA, NY and CT. HRRC only interchanged with CSXT, and it had an enviable accounting relationship with CSXT. HRRC set its own rates and was shown in the route on the waybill. However, CSXT was the settling railroad doing the customer billing and interline payments to the railroads in the route. As a result, marketing at the HRRC was a lot of fun!

At split date in 1999 the interchange service between CR and HRRC was not good. Customers could not predict when their cars would depart Selkirk, NY, the big classification yard that funneled all cars into New England. As a short line railroad that tried to customize service to customers HRRC had to improvise to keep cars moving to customers with no remaining transit time slack.

I enjoyed my time at HRRC, but I also stayed in touch with Wayne Michel, who was my last boss at Conrail. We often discussed potential jobs at RBMN, which would be a far closer commute for me than Connecticut! Finally in 2016 the stars aligned when RBMN took over rail service within the Humboldt Industrial Park in Hazleton, PA. With many new RBMN Forest Products customers at Humboldt plus established Forest customers like Procter & Gamble, Mariotti Building Products, 84 Lumber, 7-D Wholesale and Universal Forest Products, it was clear there was a need at RBMN that I could fill given my broad background in Forest Products. In March 2016 I joined RBMN and renewed my connection with Wayne as well as my former Conrail colleague Dan Gilchrist.

Today Forest Products is a large segment of RBMN's business. In fact, until Coal barely beat it out last year, Forest Products was our largest market segment. And last year it was decided that I would handle all large boxcar customers, regardless of commodity. Today I am responsible for four legacy customers from Conrail days those being Procter &

Gamble, Kaytee Products, International Paper in Mount Carmel and Kane Warehouse now known as ID Logistics. In addition, I cover the packaging business for RBMN, which shows up as boxcars containing rolls of paperboard that railroads call pulpboard destined to one of our five corrugated packaging customers be it Packaging Corporation of America in Reading, International Paper in Hazleton, Corrugated Supplies Corp-PA (CSC) in Hazleton, and Freedom Corrugated in Hazleton.

During my tenure RBMN made a huge move into warehousing when we purchased an 80K square foot building in Ransom, PA in 2019. This facility operated by RBMN employees escalated our commitment to P&G for a safety stock program. The staffed facility in addition to the purchase of 50' boxcars allow RBMN to provide warehousing, transportation, and cross-dock services. It was a grand slam when I landed Kimberly-Clark for their storage and rail transportation of raw material before we even opened for business. RBMN responded to quick work to consummate a great deal for both companies.

Since I joined RBMN we landed CSC, which makes corrugated sheets and an ingenious product called fanfold, and Stella Jones Corporation (SJC) that opened a wood utility pole distribution yard in Morea, PA. This yard is exceeding SJC's expectations, and they have already expanded their rail siding to receive more cars to unload.

Two additional customer additions are the Patton Warehouse that acquired a former Office Max distribution center for a paper company without a rail siding, and Corestates Processing, a customer that has a high-density baler to make OCC, old corrugated containers, for paper companies to make recycled linerboard and/or medium.

A couple of significant disappointments in my brief career here were customer closures that we were helpless to remedy. I remember the many carloads we delivered to Cascades Paper Company in Ransom, PA and Quad Graphics in Hazleton, PA. At their respective annual peaks, we delivered and lost a combined 1300+ cars.

What a great run it has been to match my Forest Products expertise with the plethora of RBMN customers engaged in pulp & paper. My career has spanned two paper companies, one Class I RR, one Class III short line and concluding my career now with RBMN, the premiere Class II regional RR. ♦

25 Years Since Conrail RBMN's Transload Operations

BY: DAREN GESCHWINDT, VP DISTRIBUTION SERVICES

Much has changed in the twenty five years since the Conrail split, both for me personally and for the Transload Department. Twenty five years ago I was working as a train dispatcher, handling train movements across the RBMN system. I had five years of experience under my belt and a newborn son at home. Over the course of twenty five years, I moved from being a dispatcher to taking on various management roles within the Operations Dept, to running our Customer Service Dept, and finally to being in charge of our Transload Operations. Meanwhile, my son grew up, graduated from school, and is working as a manager for a manufacturing company. My, how things have changed.

On the Transload Department side, the change is just as profound. Twenty five years ago the Transload Department didn't even exist. Reading & Northern's entry into the world of Transloading would occur in 2012 in response to a need from one of our customers. We began by opening a transload in Cressona, PA to handle aluminum ingots.

Industrial Development 1999-2024 at R&N

BY: JIM RAFFA, SVP PETROCHEMICALS & MINERALS

I was asked to write an article on Industrial Development Projects at Reading & Northern from the Conrail split date to now. Being I was not employed by Reading & Northern for the majority of this time, I thought to myself, what do I write about? How many projects could there have been in that time frame? To answer my questions, I started out by reading twenty five years of informative RBMN newsletters. What I found was simply astonishing! In my eyes, RBMN brought approximately forty Industrial Development / Business Development projects since 1999. Additionally, there were also quite a few prospects that just didn't pan out for reasons not related to Reading & Northern but had enormous time inputs by RBMN staff.

While all the projects are noteworthy, an article detailing forty projects over twenty five years would simply be too long for this medium. It is important to mention that in 2010, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2023, Reading & Northern won awards from the American Shortline Railroad Association. The awards were for "demonstrating innovative service and outstanding marketing achievement".

The 2010 award was for the development of the Pittston Marcellus Terminal. Eight hundred car spots worth of track were rehabilitated, and access roads constructed to allow Frac Sand to flow smoothly into the Marcellus region via a state-of-the-art transload terminal.

The 2014 award was for the development of two transload terminals. One in Penobscot serving the Wyoming Valley, and a second one in Cressona serving the Upper Schuylkill Valley. Both terminals are highly successful and have taken a significant amount of long-haul trucks off the road.

The 2016 award was for the development of a transload / warehouse in Old Forge. This project allowed RBMN to enter the warehousing / cross docking business which further developed when RBMN purchased a warehouse in Ransom, PA. That purchase allowed the business to expand and reach a larger diversity of customers.

The 2018 award was simply jaw dropping. Reading & Northern Coal Marketing was able to work with Norfolk Southern to access a non-rail shipper on a portion of NS track that Reading & Northern operates on via trackage rights. New sidings were constructed and literally thousands and thousands of carloads have been originated since the opening. In addition, Reading & Northern invested heavily on rail equipment to handle the traffic. Both NS / RBMN benefit from this enduring partnership.

The 2023 award was for the development of the Tunkhannock Transload Terminal. This terminal is heavily dependent on the Marcellus Industry and wouldn't have been possible without the work done in 2010 on the Pittston Terminal. Tunkhannock terminal relies heavily on the Pittston Terminal for its track structure for support of heavy rail traffic. To date Tunkhannock has

Fast forward to the present, and the Transload Dept has also grown up and looks very different from the small operation that it was back in 2012. We now own and operate a fleet of trucks, and operate transloads in Cressona, West Hazleton, and Penobscot, as well as our warehouse in Ransom, PA. Collectively, our transloads handled over 1700 carloads last year. A far cry from thirteen years earlier when our Cressona transload only handled roughly 300 cars in its first full year of operation.

The commodities we've handled also expanded. Over the years we acquired the necessary equipment to handle lumber, plywood, wood pulp, paper rolls, crane mats, aluminum logs, steel pipe, and steel coils.

Over the last twenty five years we have taken our transload from a small niche operation, and turned it into a vehicle for growth. We are always working with potential customers on new opportunities. As a result, it won't surprise me if twenty five years from now the Transload Department looks different from what it is today. As they say, the only constant in this world is change. ♦

handled close to ten thousand cars.

We have had more than our share of major Industrial Development projects over the years. Some noteworthy projects include Kane/G3 development which has moved thousands of railcars into this region from California since its inception in 2003. IRIS is an important customer that located on RBMN in 2020 due to the persistent efforts of my predecessors in the Industrial Development Department. JVA Deicing was a project I managed way back in 2007. This customer has brought in thousands upon thousands of carloads since its inception. Koppy's Propane was a project managed by Dennis Shaffer in 2016 which has brought in thousands of carloads of propane to the region. Stella Jones, a utility pole distributor located to Mahanoy City under the Guidance of Jim Cerulli and Rian Nemeroff. Stella Jones is in their second year of operation and moves significant carloads of poles. AZEK, formerly known as Compression Polymers was located on our Scranton Branch back in 2005 and has brought in hundreds of plastics cars for their production of decking material. In addition, we regularly reach out to AZEK in the hopes of gaining their outbound lumber business in the future. PCA was located at our North Reading Yard in 2012. They purchased a facility that required very specific engineering due to property limitations and track curvatures. RBMN was able to engineer specifications outside of normal class 1 specifications that allowed this new customer to handle its traffic via rail. CSC was courted and purchased a non-rail facility in Hazelton in 2019. RBMN was able to design a siding to get into the location and was able to market inbound rail to the customer.

While all this success is awe inspiring, it doesn't always work out. There have been several projects which Reading and Northern has invested thousands of hours of time in that simply didn't work out.

For example, in 2006, Reading and Northern was deeply involved in the development of an Ethanol Facility near Good Spring. The plant would have brought thousands of carloads of corn to RBMN from the Midwest and would have seen significant outbound loads of Ethanol leaving via rail. When the project was put on hold and eventually closed out, we were deeply disappointed.

Industrial Development is a fascinating side of railroading that many people don't think about. It involves layers and layers of analyzation, critical thinking, knowledge of commodities, knowledge of geography, ability to research market conditions, and sometimes a little luck. As a Career Railroad employee that has worked in different regions of the country, I can say that Reading & Northern has a higher success rate than most railroads due to their dedicated staff and employees. The Marketing Managers past and present contributed to the vast success of Reading & Northern Railroad, and I personally want to congratulate them on a job well done. ♦

25 Years Since the Conrail Split, A Commodity Reflection

BY: JIM RAFFA, SVP PETROCHEMICALS & MINERALS

1999, seems like yesterday but, also seems like an eternity ago. Many people were beginning to worry about Y2K. But the bigger worry to many Railroad employees was how was the split of Conrail going to their work and their lives.

In 1999, I settled into a life, a routine, and a job. I had been with the company since the 1980's. My job allowed me to enjoy my hobby of collecting railroad history, and a career of working for a railroad both at the same time. I worked for Reading & Northern Railroad. My job included overseeing our Customer Service Department as well as managing our Real Estate Department. Sometimes a challenging job but always interesting as the history was woven into the R&N fabric.

From a standpoint of Customer Service, I managed a staff to handle the day-to-day interaction with our customers as well as oversaw the behind the scenes parts of railroading such as car hire, demurrage, Umler, DDCT, collections, and the informational systems we used to get the job done. The Real Estate job was management of the hundreds of leases and properties. In addition, I managed all of the projects and inspections we had at the time.

In 2007, I received an offer to join in on a business opportunity. That opportunity took me from R&N to the Southern Tier of Pennsylvania. It is the Southern Tier which educated me on Natural Gas and the process of extracting it from the earth, better known as fracking.

Fracking, or Hydrofracking has been around for centuries. Some date it back to the 1860's while others say the true start was in 1947. It is a process of fracturing rock formations to help release gas and oil from deep rock formations. The process fractures rocks utilizing high pressure frack fluid, then holds those cracks open with sand or ceramics (proppants) so that gas and oil can flow more freely from the rock strata.

Regardless of when the beginnings of Fracking are thought to be, Fracking was non-existent in our region in 1999. This region being called the Marcellus Gas Field. While it was a well-known fact that huge deposits of natural gas existed deep below the surface in certain parts of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio, the ability to efficiently get it out of the ground wasn't yet perfected. Local railroads were not yet experiencing rail traffic from this soon to blossom industry.

My first hint to the future was in 2008 when I saw seismic boxes being placed all over Bradford County, Pennsylvania. I was told these seismic boxes were measuring the depths and

rock strata below in relation to natural gas deposits. Soon thereafter, I was experiencing visits from "Land Men" who were busy locking up gas rights and easements for what was deep below. One particular land man that I talked to regularly told me "You have no idea what is about to hit you". He was so right.

A visit to the Bradford County Courthouse in late 2008 to research a property that I was about to acquire for my company was met with standing room only and long waits to review property records. This was a much different situation than a year prior when there were only a handful of people in the sleepy courthouse. My land man friend was beginning to look correct.

By 2010, I was in the process of developing my first of four Marcellus Terminals for this new blossoming business. Soon after, business started flowing. Carloads of Cement, Lime, Sand, Pipe, and Chemicals started pouring in. Additionally, outbound drill cuttings (waste) started flowing outbound to Ohio and Utah. Literally tens of thousands of cars poured in and out of the region for an industry that didn't even exist 10 years prior. The amount of traffic was staggering, and that large amount of traffic drew attention. Eventually, it was that level of traffic that led to the sale of our company in 2020 to a larger short line conglomerate and my exit from the Southern Tier.

In 2021, I came back to Reading & Northern. My first plan of action was to develop a Marcellus Terminal that could handle multiple commodities. The Tunkhannock Terminal was completed in late 2021 and we started to receive Frac Sand at the end of that year. The terminal is designed to handle other commodities as well however, the industry has been slow for the past year and there hasn't been much of a demand to ship other materials.

The good news is, despite a major downturn in the industry due to primarily low gas prices and some other influences, we have moved over 8000 carloads for the Marcellus Region since 2022. That is 8000 cars that didn't exist in 1999. The potential exists to far exceed those numbers if and when gas prices rebound to levels seen from 2010-2020.

Conrail in 1999, didn't have the privilege of handling this new Industry. Conrail operated in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and parts of West Virginia. These states are the heart of this Marcellus business. As I reflect, I can only wonder what would have happened if this boom in traffic existed at the time of the Conrail split. I think things could have been much different. ♦



Customer Service Team: left to right – Lori Chinchar; Leanne Moser; Sherry Primrose; Justine Berger, Chrissy Martin, Amy Brobst, Michele Daub, Susan Ludwig, Kristen McGowan

Customer Service Growing with the Railroad

BY: SUSAN LUDWIG, VP MARKETING & CUSTOMER SERVICE

Twenty-Five years ago, I knew very little about the railroad or even thought about working for a railroad. I was working part time as an Office Manager and being a mom to a 3-year-old. Almost thirteen years later I am at my forever job with a company we can all be proud of. Over the past twenty five years the Reading and Northern Railroad has seen many changes in every department. Customer Service is one of the departments that has grown by leaps and bounds. In 1999 Customer Service, which back then was known as the Traffic Department, had a total of three employees, Bev Hess, Jim Raffa (both of which are still working at RBMN), and Ed Heck.

Prior to Conrail Split Date, RBMN handled less than 19,000 carloads. Today RBMN has almost doubled that volume. A huge growth that was attributed to all our employees' hard work and dedication. The varied customer commodities that we handle existed twenty five years ago and continues to be a major factor in our success. Although our company has grown a lot in the last twenty five years, we have many customers that were served 25 years ago and are still being served by the RBMN today. We have always had a focus on Customer Service and that is one thing that hasn't changed over the years.

In 2024, Customer Service has nine full time employees. The Customer

Service department consists of my direct back up, Lori Chinchar, Director of Customer Service, she oversees the daily day-to-day needs of the other Team members in their daily duties. Besides customer needs, our department manages the entire RBMN fleet. Kristen McGowan is the Director of Fleet Management. Michele Daub, Senior Customer Service Manager, takes care of both Coal and General Merchandise customers and manages our car hire. Leanne Moser handles both Coal and General Merchandise. Justine Berger works with General Merchandise as well as our ISS rating. Sherry Primrose handles our Ransom Transload facility as well as General Merchandise. Chrissy Martin is primarily handling coal customers. Our newest team member is Amy Brobst, she is handling General Merchandise and learning all the transload facilities as her main job.

As we continue to grow over the next 25 years and beyond, business will evolve, and new customers will come onboard. The one thing that will never change is our dedication to our customers. Andy has always put our employees and customers first. We all look forward to seeing what the future holds at the RBMN. ♦



25 Years Since Conrail The Evolution of Our Fleet

BY: JIM CERULLI, VP COAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The evolution in the anthracite business since Split Date does not happen without an even greater evolution in the coal fleet. Today we have over 2000 cars dedicated to the coal business representing multiple car types, including over 500 H350 style open top hoppers, both steel and aluminum, over 450 covered hoppers, 550 rapid discharge cars, 275 gondolas and other distinctions too numerous to list.

So, let's start at the beginning. RBMN entered the realm of car ownership in the mid-1990's when we purchased a group of 264 cars to better handle shipments to our largest export coal receiver. Nevertheless, throughout the 90's we relied on cars supplied by Conrail.

On Split Date that changed when NS initially decided not to supply cars for the anthracite business. Although that decision was quickly reversed it made it clear to Andy Muller that he needed to develop his own car fleet. Within months Andy purchased over 300 coal cars bringing our total car ownership to nearly 600 H350 style bottom dump coal cars. It is noteworthy that at the beginning of this century our entire fleet was standardized on one car type. Things were a lot simpler back then!

The next big hiccup came when the Port of Baltimore refused to handle export anthracite coal. When the dust settled, we agreed to work with Kinder Morgan to develop the port of Fairless Hills as an export coal terminal. Ultimately, Kinder decided to purchase a new rail unloading system known as an Ashross and RBMN purchased a fleet of nearly 250 RD cars for use with the Ashross system. Around the same time, we also invested in a group of Steel Rotary Dump cars which were used for occasional shipments to the Port of Baltimore (one customer was still allowed to export anthracite through that terminal) and the Great Lakes region and later added 187 Aluminum Rotary Cars for these same uses. With the purchase of the Aluminum RD's, and the Steel/Aluminum Rotary Dump cars, we were capable of handling 100% of our Export volume with our own equipment.

In the mid-2000's there was a new type of Anthracite Coal production that was being developed in our region, the use of heated drying systems to dry Anthracite coal for use in the domestic Steel Industry. Once dried the coal could not be loaded in a traditional "open top" coal hopper and required the use of a Covered Hopper to maintain the low moisture content of the coal. We purchased dozens of covered hoppers for this business. Over the years, the dried coal business has grown to be one of our largest business segments with four different dryers operating along our railroad, shipping thousands of Covered Hopper shipments annually. We have continued to purchase additional Covered Hopper cars over the last decade, while also supplementing our fleet with some Norfolk Southern cars to keep up with the ever-growing demand.

An interesting complication with our Covered Hopper business is the fact

that not all cars are created equal. Whether by design or through aftermarket modifications, many of our covered hoppers have varying bottom clearances or gates. With many of our cars going to offline transload facilities that use under car conveyors for unloading, this restricts which cars can be used in each lane. Meaning that certain Covered Hoppers can only be used to transload facilities, while others can only be used to facilities that offload via a pit unloading system. This creates an added complexity to the fleet and requires our Fleet management team to carefully plan out each loading and car rotation.

In the mid-2010's, our original fleet of steel open top cars was quickly aging and we needed to identify a source for additional cars. Fortunately, around that same time, a Pennsylvania utility was in the process of transitioning their fleet from steel bottom dump cars to aluminum rotary dump cars. Working with the utility, RBMN was able to purchase a couple hundred steel H350/351 style cars for use in Anthracite service. An additional opportunity arose around 2020 when we purchased dozens of additional H350/351 cars from this same group. Almost all of these cars remain in service on our railroad today, many for Anthracite coal and others that have hit their 50-year mark in Maintenance of Way service.

As we moved into the late 2010's and early 2020's, we continued to expand and modernize our fleet. Over the last seven years we have purchased nearly 1000 rail cars, many of which were built in the late 1980's through mid-2000's, affording us decades of use. These purchases included 300 Aluminum Rapid Discharge cars, 276 Aluminum H350 bottom dump cars and over 150 Covered Hoppers for use in dried anthracite service. Many of these purchases were completed during downturns in the rail car market and often cars were purchased without a clear need. With the rapid growth we have enjoyed in the Anthracite industry over the last few years, our fleet is now working at near 100% utilization with cars cycling continually throughout the shipping season.

We have positioned ourselves very well over the last twenty five years, and by RBMN providing nearly 100% of the cars used in domestic Anthracite shipments, we have little to no dependence on other railroads for rail equipment as we have had in the past. We have positioned ourselves well to meet the demand and continued growth of the Anthracite industry. After twenty five years of growth and evolution since the Conrail split, our fleet now exceeds well over 2000 rail cars, and we see a need for hundreds more in the years to come.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the hard work and attention our mechanical and transportation teams have put into keeping our fleet moving over the last twenty five years. Our transportation team does a superb job keeping our fleet organized and at the ready for loading. While our mechanical team handles the tall task of maintaining our fleet of over 2000 rail cars. It is truly a team effort, and we are all proud to be part of this team!♦



RBMN and Norfolk Southern working together in the North Reading Yard.

Reading and Northern has seen many changes over the past twenty-five years, but the Safety Always attitude has remained at its core. Conrail was split up between Norfolk Southern and CSX in 1999. As a result, Norfolk Southern became RBMN's largest interchanging partner. This came with operational challenges, but safety was never sacrificed. Over the last twenty five years both NS and RBMN have expanded their footprints in the Region.

RBMN had to integrate into Norfolk Southern's safety and operating culture due to interchange activities occurring on their newly acquired property at Spring Street Yard. NS has consistently been a huge advocate for safety and shares with us a common goal of wanting all employees to make it home to their families at the end of their shift. NS has a compliance-based safety culture with a foundation in enforcing their rules manuals. This approach had worked for them for many years as they led the Class 1 railroads with the lowest injury ratios in the industry. In our region, around 2008, NS switched from NORAC (Northeast Operating Rules Advisory Committee) operating and safety manual to their own. This meant that all the RBMN employees interchanging on NS property had to learn and comply with a set of different operating and safety rules that contained some nuances. This presented a new step in the RBMN's evolution of education and training. The Reading and Northern has since developed our own Operating Manuals in 2022 with strong influence from NORAC and Norfolk Southern but tailored to our unique operation.

With RBMN being familiar and trained on NS rules it made the transition easier when NS purchased the northern interchange location from Canadian Pacific in 2015. This was another step in the relationship between our railroads. With multiple interchange locations and NS trackage rights trains, our operations were very integrated; but it was about to get even more intertwined with RBMN beginning the service at the Humboldt Industrial Park. The service of the industrial park proved our commitment to customer service as RBMN doubled the days of week the park was serviced. It also demonstrated the Safety Always culture that empowered a highly trained workforce to use their skills to make efficient moves to be able to accommodate all the customers' needs while completing their tasks safely. This success is a testament to RBMN's safety philosophy to educate, train and empower employees to work safely. Each employee is accountable for their personal safety and that of their coworkers, customers and the public.

The relationship between RBMN and NS continues to grow while each company leverages the other's strengths. We work together on interchange plans to keep everything fluid on both properties and each railroads' employees safe. Teamwork and safety continue to improve through the two companies' cooperation. I'm excited to contribute and be part of the next twenty five years at Reading and Northern. ♦

25 Years Since Conrail was sold to NS, and How the Reading & Northern C&S Department Has Transformed Since the Sale

BY: MATT COLLINS, VP COMMUNICATION & SIGNALS

Changes in class one railroads are defining moments in railroad history and bring on an entirely new era for both class ones and shortlines. The Reading & Northern Railroad as a whole and the Communications and Signal Department have experienced such changes since the sale of Conrail to CSX and NS in 1999.

Many of us have a nostalgic attachment to what we know and see daily. I know I did when the news reported the sale in 1999 while stationed at Fort Carson, CO, as part of the 4th Infantry Division. I felt that nostalgic loss of the blue and white locomotives I had seen most of my childhood, growing up along Conrail's Pittsburgh Line.

Over the past twenty five years, the Communications and Signal Department has undergone a remarkable transformation. What was once a team of three, responsible for eighty crossings and 44.9 miles of signaled territory in 1999, has now expanded to eleven members, overseeing approximately 103.2 miles of signaling and 111 crossings in 2024.

Some of our significant milestones over the years have been the addition of

the signal system upgrades between Dupont and Laurel Run, White Haven, and Independence around 2006. Following those projects was the addition of East Mahanoy Junction in 2009. With Coal Interlocking being added in 2015, Hawks, Tamaqua, Clint, Equilateral, and Pitt Interlockings added in 2017; Equilateral, Rick, and Mohrsville Interlockings added in 2018; Muller and Pulpit Interlockings added in 2020; and Nesquehoning, Jim Thorpe, and River Interlockings added in 2022. Other growth areas have been the installation of an additional nine dragging equipment detectors to the existing five before the sale. We also have been steadily working on upgrading all of our Main Line crossings from flashers to gates and flashers for public safety.

As you can see, the Communications and Signal Department has grown significantly in the last twenty five years. We have no intention of slowing down. We are committed to expanding our signal system and crossings across our network in the coming years, ensuring the safety and efficiency of our operations. ♦

25 Years Ago Mechanical

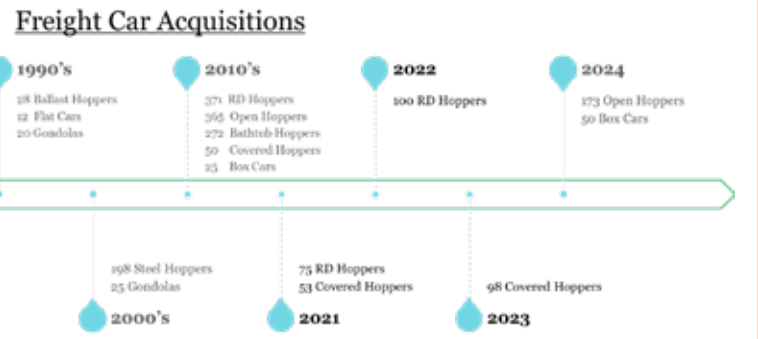
BY: DAN PUKSAR, VP MECHANICAL

When I received the email on this newsletter topic, I was a little nervous about how exactly I would be able to lend any data or information going back twenty five years, after all, I was only ten years old at the point where Conrail sold to NS. For this article, just like when I was a 10-year-old and in school, would require me to dust off my homework skills and start digging into the topic. When I started at the RBMN in 2009 I was working in the Engine House as a mechanic, it wasn't until 2018 I took over the responsibilities in the Car Shop and grew into the position I have today. So even with fifteen years at the railroad, six of those years being in the Car Shop I knew I would need to acquire some knowledge from previous generations of Vice Presidents, Managers, and those that worked here a lot longer than me. With that generational knowledge and information saved in our archives I was able to come up with a good history of the Car Shop and how it became what it is today.

The Car Shop was built in 1999 and was not initially a repair facility for the RBMN, it started out as a warming shed for locomotives, with two tracks running through the building with a dirt floor. Inside was storage for the 425, Budd Cars, and other items. Tom Stemko one of the original car shop welders who is currently the Foreman for the Car Shop remembers working outside in the beginning stages of the shop. The crew would work on the shop lead with a torch table, gas powered welders, and a crew of contractors. This continued up until the later end of 2000 when the floors were poured, and three work bays were created. The contractors were used to assist the shop up until the mid-2000's, at that point RBMN would hire on more welders to formulate its own crew

of welders and carmen. Today as the shop stands it grew from a shop of four Carmen to ten Carmen, five inside work bays, and a work pit for each working bay.

Throughout the years RBMN has purchased a lot of cars to build the fleet up to what it is today. Starting in 1997 with the first purchase of cars being thirty five open top hoppers from NS to what it is today. Today's fleet ranges from a wide range of years and car types, each being utilized in RBMN's ever-growing business. As you can see in the graph below, over the decades the fleet size continually grew, and will continue to grow to match the demand for cars. It will be exciting to see what the next twenty five years will bring to the Car Shop and to RBMN. ♦





RBMN 2003 was a locomotive purchased in early 2000, as shown in the Port Clinton Engine House receiving repairs after twenty four years of reliable service.

25-Year Review on the Reading & Northern

BY: DUSTIN BERNDT, VP MOTIVE POWER

When I reflected back on twenty five years ago at The Reading and Northern, I immediately thought of the amount of locomotives and maintenance equipment we have purchased to increase our fleet and maintain them throughout the years. So, looking back to 1999, which was just one year before the beginning of my career in August of 2000, it was also the year things started to change dramatically in the locomotive industry for smaller railroads. Although I didn't fully understand the reasons for these changes many years ago at the beginning, I quickly started to recognize it and now it's evident to me why Class 1s made these sales of older locomotives when they did.

In 1999 and leading up to 2002, we were relying on a mix of GE and EMD 4 axle locomotives with a few 6 axles sprinkled in there, that totaled approximately fifteen when I came on board. This power existed of mostly lower horsepower roots blown EMD locomotives, two aging SD45s and a few tired GE turbocharged 4 axles. After the turn of the century, we realized we needed to look towards upgrading our fleet and we took advantage of some timely Class 1 auctions to do just that. First in early 2000, came the addition of 5-SD38 Ex- Grand Trunk and Western blower locomotives to add to the fleet. While these needed work for service, they were instrumental to begin the 6-axle locomotive ownership and the transition of our locomotive models to handle our ever increasing freight loads.

Next, in 2001 and 2002 we attended various Class 1 auctions and purchased a handful of SD40-2 and SD50 6 axle EMD locomotives. These acquisitions changed our fleet dramatically with 7- SD40s locomotives numbered 3050 through 3056 being acquired this year alone. Not to be outdone, we also added a total of seven SD50 locomotives at these same sales which were numbered the 5014 through the 5049. We ended up parting two of these locomotives out, but the other five still exist today on the RBMN. We spent the next few years working towards getting these units in service only to act again in 2009. The UP decided to sell more SD40 locomotives and we were again on the prowl to add power. I was personally involved in this trip to Little Rock, Arkansas to inspect roughly seventy five SD40-2 locomotives. We had the approval to purchase two of them which we did and now know them as the 3057 and the 3058. Although most of these locomotives needed immediate work for service, these purchases began to see impactful changes to our roster as we started to do the necessary work throughout the years to return these locomotives to active service on the RBMN after being retired from the UP and NS. These locomotives would gradually begin to replace our older GE units and some older switchers that were no longer getting the job

done due to increasing traffic.

As we fast forward to 2024, we have diversified our models of exclusive EMD freight and passenger locomotives exceeding sixty units. These more recently purchased models have included acquired MP15s, GP38-2 and GP39 four axle locomotives, four SD50-2s and eleven more SD40s in 2020. These thirty one four axles and twenty nine six axle locomotives make a well-rounded fleet fitting our operational needs. With the large fleet of freight locomotives in place, we also have a few dedicated to passenger service. In the past few years, we have freshly painted up a few GP38-2 diesel locomotives 2013, 2014 and the 2023 that were sent to regular Passenger service to join the famous F-units 270 & 275 that lasts throughout the year. These locomotives join the existing three RDCs we use on the weekends for Outer Station to Jim Thorpe Passenger trains. Also, on occasion throughout the year we roll out the Steam locomotives 425 and 2102 to join Passenger service. These two locomotives have also returned to active service within the last twenty five years when they were also tired in 1999 and looking for plenty of work to return them to the impressive force they once were. These giants have since received the extensive work needed and it's safe to say they have now returned to the prominence they once enjoyed.

While it's easy to focus on the locomotives while mentioning the changes of the last twenty five years, it would be incomplete without recognizing some additions to the maintenance facilities to maintain this massive fleet of engines. We are very fortunate to have the facility we have at Port Clinton for maintenance which includes the building of the Engine house around 1995 and throughout the years adding countless improvements to the facilities. I am also proud of the purchase of the wheel truing machine along with a new building in the year 2021. The wheel machine was a real game changer for us with locomotive and passenger car maintenance to properly manage wheels and extend the life of them with regular reprofiling. Most recently, we have also expanded our capabilities of maintenance regularly using overhead cranes with the addition of the Nesquehoning Campus acquired in 2022.

Lastly, after all of this activity throughout the years, we feel we have the quantity and the quality of locomotives along with facilities to move our increasing traffic base, but we would always be keeping an eye out on any available opportunities to make additions to our company. So, in the next twenty-five years I wouldn't be surprised if we could make some more timely acquisitions if the opportunity presents itself to continue to modernize and upgrade our company, locomotives and infrastructure to stay on top of our game. ♦

“Don't Run Over Roy”

BY: JASON WINWOOD, AVP MAINTENANCE OF WAY



Fast forward to 2024 an example of a modern RBMN hi-rail truck is found next to Chris Garcia as he cut a rail on the Greenwood Running Track near LNR.

In June of 1999, as Norfolk Southern took ownership of roughly 6000 miles of the old CONRAIL track, I was busy getting ready for my senior year of High School right outside Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. As a kid I remember hearing the train that ran the NS Main Line through the North Huntingdon and Greensburg area. Little did I know that twenty five years later I would be a part of the Reading and Northern Railroad and the best Maintenance of Way Team in the country. Just as I have grown over the past twenty five years, so has our Maintenance of Way Department.

Back in early 1999 on any given day you could hear Andy saying, “Don't run over Roy”, as a running joke about one of our Reading Division Foreman Roy Hess. Duane Engle was overseeing projects as Reading Division Supervisor and Dale Homm was busy ditching somewhere along the railroad in his backhoe. Duane and Dale still work at RBMN and are our only two holdovers still in the department from 1999. Looking back in the summer of 1999 the MOW Capital Projects consisted of tie work on the Tremont Industrial track (now called the Tremont BT/RT), tie work on the C&S Railroad (now our Cross Line from MP 106 – 121), and the newly acquired Lehigh Division was preparing the Main Line for an upcoming welded rail installation.

Back then our MOW Dept was much smaller consisting of only approximately twenty people, a few hirail trucks and six pieces of on track equipment, mostly related to a tie gang that Duane ran. The Department had a non-hirail flatbed truck that they used to get materials to job sites. The focus back then was keeping the trains on the tracks. Often you could find a chase crew behind a train following it to assist any time a car would derail.

Today we alone employ fifty people in the Maintenance of Way Department, covering an area of over 400 miles of track with an arsenal of twenty three hirail trucks and forty one pieces of equipment at our disposal, allowing us to not only maintain our tracks to the class standard but also continue the building and expansion that has defined RBMN over the past twenty five

years. Included in our equipment are three production style Mark IV tampers and two ballast regulators that run all spring, summer and fall surfacing different sections of our tracks making sure the ride for all our passengers is a smooth one. We also have three hirail Prentice Style trucks that are constantly on the move, staging materials for upcoming projects, cleaning up after work is done and actively assisting crews with repairs.

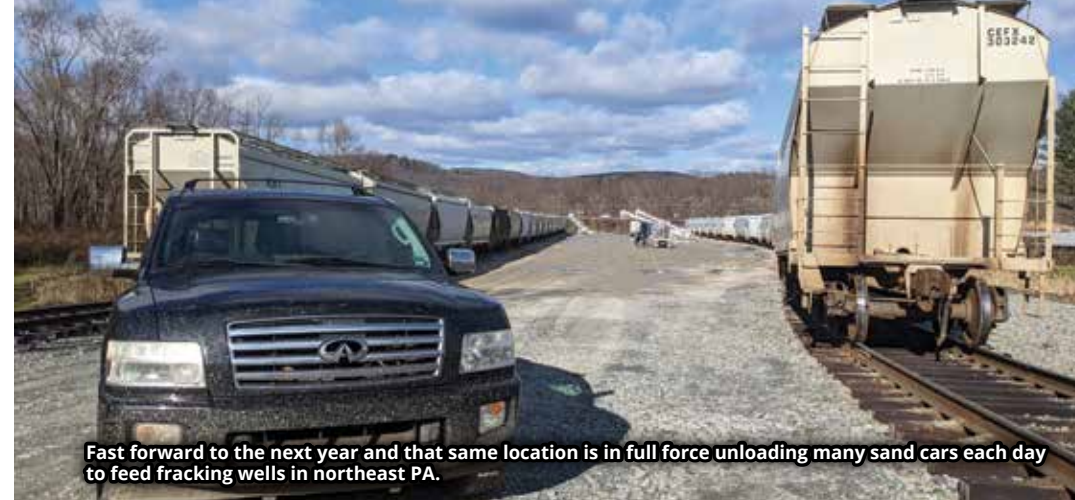
Since 1999, MOW has completed many major milestone projects, some of the most notable are upgrading the old C&S railroad (2021 – today), completing both phases of the Nesquehoning Bridge (2003 & 2020) and the Tunkhannock Transload facility (2022). In talking with Tyler Glass, EVP of Operations, and Andy Muller, Owner and CEO, though they both said the biggest accomplishment to our infrastructure was continuously upgrading the rail on the Main Line. Over the years Andy has invested in four welded rail trains and completed over thirty three miles of crop and slide work, a process of welding jointed rail together. These enhancements to the Main Line rail have given us the ability to raise train speeds and improve efficiency on the RR.

Recently, over the past few weeks MOW completed the first set of tracks into Building 3 at our newly acquired Nesquehoning campus. While we will highlight construction at the Nesquehoning campus in many future articles, MOW now has our own centralized building to store equipment and a yard to centrally house all our materials, I can't think of a better springboard for our MOW Department to set us up for the next twenty five years. All of these achievements could have only been made possible by all the people that not only have worked in MOW over the years but the fifty people that call MOW home today. Their daily efforts are what keep our trains on the tracks and getting to their destination safely and on time. ♦

Pictures continue on page 20.



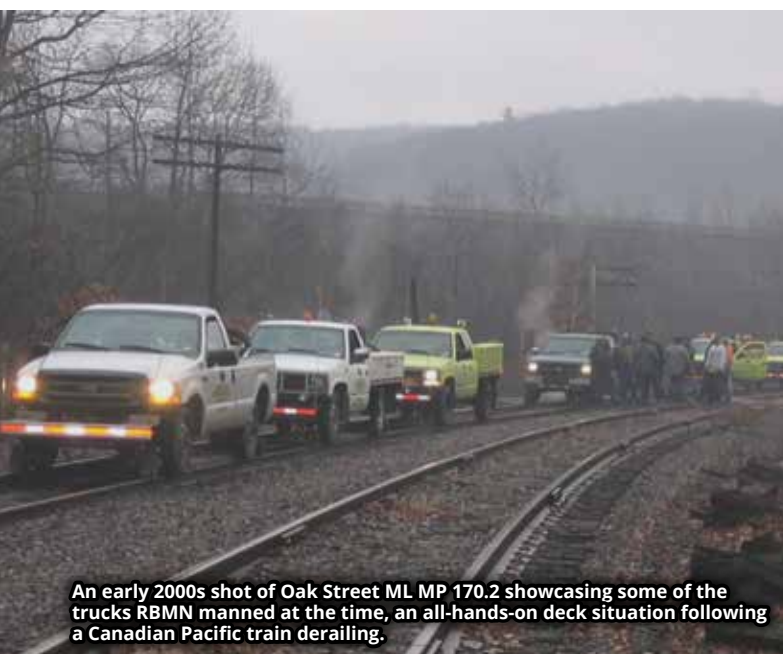
One of RBMN's largest capital projects since the Conrail split, the Nesquehoning Bridge making RBMN a continuous mainline for the first time in our history is photographed from above



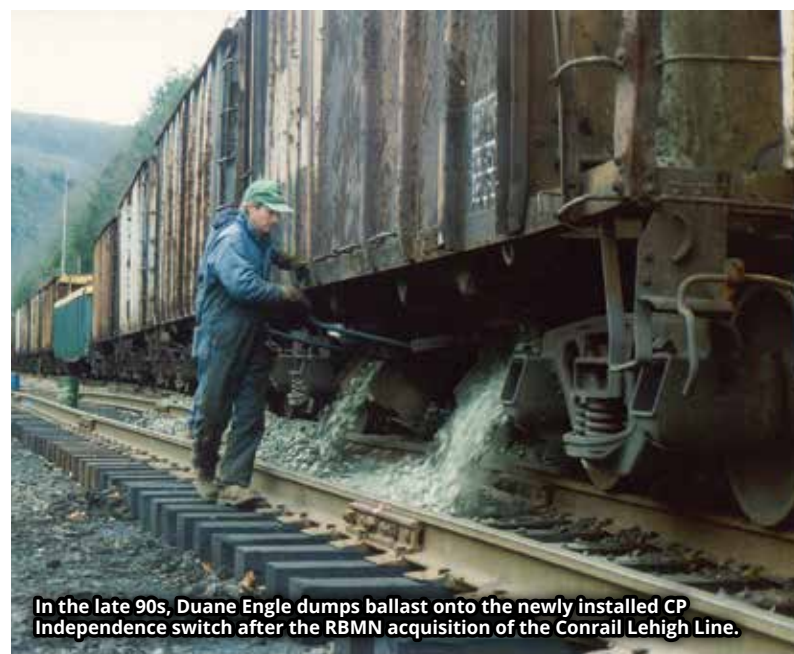
Fast forward to the next year and that same location is in full force unloading many sand cars each day to feed fracking wells in northeast PA.



The most recent capital improvement since 1999 in its beginning in early 2024. Geric Wallace, Chris Garcia, and Steve Shanton lay ties out for the switch to Track 2 in Nesquehoning.



An early 2000s shot of Oak Street ML MP 170.2 showcasing some of the trucks RBMN manned at the time, an all-hands-on deck situation following a Canadian Pacific train derailling.



In the late 90s, Duane Engle dumps ballast onto the newly installed CP Independence switch after the RBMN acquisition of the Conrail Lehigh Line.



A few weeks later those ties are now ballasted and raised, spiked up with rail ready for passenger service from the Nesquehoning Regional Railroad Station.



One of the more recent capital projects, the Tunkhannock Sand Pad, in its infant stages at the Susquehanna Branch MP 24.5.



Jason Moyer, Chucky Carl, Brian Van Blargan, and Dennis Rosohac use a tie inserter to put ties in on the M&S BT at MP 123.2 an example of equipment being used in the modern iteration of RBMN saving labor on the trackmen



Twenty five years later, Matt Nestor dumps ballast at ML MP 114.5 with a different method using a 7500 series hopper using chains and binders.



RBMN's investment in welded rail on the mainline is highlighted as one of our top improvements since 1999. Here is a string of 136RE about to go in at ML MP 108.9.



Mario Demarco and Nate Ziegler use the PT-4 and PT-3 to unload materials out of a car in Nesquehoning, the PT Trucks are one of the most valuable tools of the modern RBMN MOW fleet.

Changes on the R&N Over Twenty-Five Years

BY: SERGEANT RYAN PARKS

When I started with the R&N railroad in the summer of 2003 it was a much smaller company. I was employee number 44 and I started out working in the Maintenance-of-Way Department before transitioning over to the Police Department. It is a great feat to reflect and see how the railroad has blossomed over the years to what it has become today with over 300 employees and approximately 400 miles of track. In the following paragraphs I will go over a few of the bigger changes and exciting things I remember happening on how the railroad has evolved into the premier railroad it is today. This article will only scratch the surface of how many changes took place and cover how the police department has grown.

In my first year at R&N I was part of the track gang working in the Lehigh Gorge when we separated our track from NS at the location currently and fittingly known as Independence. Around that same time, construction was happening to connect the Coalport bridge linking the Mainline so we could move seamlessly without having to wait on NS. These were big achievements for the railroad laying the groundwork for future growth.

The biggest change for me early in my career here at the railroad occurred in the fall of 2004. Having an interest in police work while taking college classes in criminal justice in the evening hours I became aware the railroad had its own Police Department and I was approached by Mr. Muller and Mr. Madeira about working for the railroad Police Department. A few weeks later, after some meetings and talking with one of the officers at the time and Therman Madeira I was enrolled at the Allentown Police Academy to begin classes in January 2005. While attending the academy the officer who I would be working with and training under had resigned. Just prior to graduating from the academy the railroad hired Matthew Johnson who is currently the Lieutenant of the Police Department and Vice President of Government Affairs. Matt had a background in police work coming from the Berks County Sheriff's Department and had experience at the Fleetwood Police Department. After getting commissioned by the Governor's Office and sworn in by the Recorder of Deeds in Berks County my law enforcement career began with the railroad.

Matt and I worked very closely together for years and continue to do so till this day. Matt helped me out working on the police side of things and I was able to help him out with understanding and learning the railroad system. We were very busy over the first five plus years covering both the Lehigh and Reading divisions of the railroad. We worked very closely with many local and state agencies as we relied heavily on them to assist us. Over this time, we got to meet and talk with these officers' developing relationships with them. As the railroad continued to grow it became apparent that we needed additional officers to help with the various tasks we do at the police department with the railroad.

At the end of 2011 Matthew Fredmonski was hired. Matthew was a local police officer with the Duryea and Avoca Police Departments and was exactly what we needed to help in covering our northern counties. He also had a lot of local contacts in the area and was knowledgeable of the area he was going to be covering the most. He found out quickly however that he was needed all throughout the railroad. With his years of service as an officer he became a perfect fit and is now currently the Corporal in the department. A few months later in 2012 Michael Painter who was then the Chief of Hamburg Borough Police Department located in Berks County was retiring and already had his

foot in the door here at the railroad as he knew Andy and Therman very well from Muller Rare Coins store which is located in the Hamburg Borough. After speaking with Michael, he came on with us as a patrol officer. Michael brought his thirty plus years of policing to the railroad and became an excellent fit to assist us with the growing company.

Speaking of the growing company, every department at the railroad was hiring additional personnel to keep up with the growing needs and new business opportunities occurring. In 2012 talks were occurring about taking over the Humboldt Industrial Park in Luzerne County from NS and this became effective in 2016. When this takeover occurred, the police spent many days and weeks up there working on trespassing issues as many different utilities went over, under, or around us and they had different agreements set up. There was also heavy ATV activity along the ROW. We worked closely with the Real Estate Department on getting these issues addressed.

As the railroad continued to grow, we hired Connor Hedrick in 2018 who became a great fit in our growing department. Connor came to us with six years of experience and several of those years were spent at smaller departments so he understood about working alone, in remote areas, and knowing that backup may be a long time away. His eagerness and attention to detail in solving crimes was excellent and became a perfect fit to become the Detective within the department.

In 2023 after Officer Painter retired from service, we hired Officer Ron Mohl from Berks County who had an extensive career and brought thirty plus years of experience. He has been a welcome addition to the department, bringing dedication and professionalism to the department.

As I look back on my twenty-one years here with the railroad it has been astounding to see the growth of the company. Over the years the Police Department transitioned out of the main office in Port Clinton to our office in Molino for several years while our northern officers had an office in Mountain Top. In the spring of last year, we all moved into our current office located in building 6 in the Nesquehoning Campus. The Police Department has and continues to assist almost all departments within the railroad in various capacities and always jumps in to lend a hand. On the passenger side of the R&N it has grown exponentially and has been a pleasure to be a part of this growth assisting the Passenger Department during busy excursion events. In conclusion, speaking not only for myself but for the rest of the department it has been a privilege and honor to work here and be a part of the continued growth of the company. We are all very appreciative and thankful of the benefits received over the years here and shown to us for our dedication and hard work including bonuses, vacations, and giveaways. I look forward to seeing where the next twenty-five years takes the R&N railroad! ♦

25 Years of Growth Human Resources

BY: HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Amazing how times have changed! During the past twenty five years, Reading and Northern has seen significant growth in every department, and Human Resources is no exception.

In 1999, Christina Muller-Levan received her Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Elizabethtown. Before blinking an eye, she created the HR Department, and became the “Lone Ranger”, so to speak. Fast forward to 2024 and there are now five people working behind the scenes supporting employees and the Muller Family's visions for the company.

As the railroad continues to grow, so do the services and benefits offered to our dedicated employees. Over the last few years, we increased the amount of paid time off given to employees, instituted an additional retirement 401K savings program, and continue to maintain zero premium/zero deductible healthcare coverage.

Our plans moving forward are to continue to support and develop our employees. We will all work together to create a working environment that is safe, effective, and fun!

Not only has the railroad changed, but life, in general, has changed for us as individuals and the world. Here's to another twenty five years! ♦

Finance Department

BY: ANDREA COLLER,
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO CEO/VICE PRESIDENT-
FINANCE

RBMN's Finance Department has always operated under the core principles that Andy Muller designed. Even with years of additional complexity, expanded interests, increasingly larger volumes of business endeavors, and navigating local and national economic trends, we have remained calculated, methodical, and flexible.

However, as growth progressed, more and more information needed to be accounted for as well as organized granularly. A major task was to streamline all this so that upper management had sufficient and actionable data to drive business decisions. In addition, influx and exchange of finances became so rapid and the scale became so large that certain systems required refinement to operate optimally.

One such solution was the introduction of Quickbooks for payroll management, accounts payable, and accounts receivable. This allowed for Andy's business models and allocation of capital to move as requested, with alacrity, and with minimal errors. While this system worked well for us, the current and future demands of the railroad require an even more powerful platform. We are pleased to say that we are diligently working to lay the foundational work for this implementation.

Staffing in the Finance Department has also grown to support the aforementioned expansion of RBMN and the companies under the RBMN umbrella. As of last year, we doubled our finance professionals.

One only has to look at the recent history of the railroad's perpetual record-breaking years to infer that business trajectory is constantly escalating. Although the Finance Department has more of a supportive role, we are always excited to be an integral part of the many major victories RBMN's departments have accrued. ♦

RBMN Staffing Comparison from 1999 to 2024

DEPARTMENT	Employee Count 1999	Employee Count 2024	Percentage of Growth
Executive/Administration	3	4	33%
Customer Service	2	10	400%
Facilities	3	8	167%
Finance	3	9	200%
Human Resources	1	5	400%
Information Technology	0	2	NEW
Maintenance of Way	18	55	206%
Marketing	2	6	200%
Mechanical	4	40	900%
Operations	28	72	157%
Paint & Restoration	0	6	NEW
Passenger	15	88	487%
Police Department	2	4	100%
Real Estate	2	7	250%
Signals	5	12	140%
Transload	0	6	NEW
EMPLOYEE TOTAL	88	334	280%

Facilities

BY: STEVE BALTHASER VP FACILITIES

In 1999 the Reading and Northern Railroad System was supported by five main buildings. They were the main office, office annex, engine house, car shop and a Maintenance of Way garage. They were all designed with growth of the railroad in mind. Who would have known what was forthcoming?

By early 2000 the steam engines needed a new home, where the mechanics could share some of the infrastructure benefits occurring in Port Clinton. The original turntable pit was cleaned and a turntable from Western Pennsylvania was purchased and placed in operation. This made the way for RBMN to build a steam shop serviced by the turntable.

Keeping up with the growth of RBMN concerning facilities, was always ever present and fast paced. Between 2003 to 2009 every building had additions or improvements made. Personnel and supplies needed to keep this ever-growing enterprise moving fluently required offices and storage capabilities. Additions were built onto the annex (four offices and a classroom), MOW garage (two storage bays), and a storage bay onto the steam shop. Every building had improvements to keep pace with the exponential growth.

By 2009 the growth was now exceeding the existing facilities capabilities of what the railroad was requiring to stay efficient. More buildings were now a priority for the freight and passenger departments. The railroad had outgrown the early vision used in building to this point. New horizons were now in view, which included expanded passenger, transloading, warehousing, trucking, and wheel truing.

These last fifteen years have seen more expansion than the first twenty years. RBMN built four new buildings- signal warehouse, Outer Station Tower, paint/restoration shop, and wheel truing shop. Three passenger platforms have been created to meet demand. Ransom Warehouse was repurposed for RBMN customers. Two major additions with work pits were made to the steam shop and car shop. Finally ending this summation with the Nesquehoning Campus- nine buildings being repurposed for this ever-growing enterprise known as the Reading and Northern Railroad. ♦

“If it plugs into a wall, IT typically takes care of it.” - MC

Twenty-Five years ago, you would have found me making pizzas in Kutztown with no thought of working for a railroad. I was working excessive hours to save up for school to pursue a degree in audio engineering. This was my first real introduction to the power of computer hardware and software working together to produce something that was more than just tabulated numbers in a spreadsheet. I later realized though I loved the music we were making and recording, the music industry was ultimately not for me.

I returned to the restaurant business for a few more years also doing side work programming point of sale systems and cash registers, fixing computers whenever I could, as I really enjoyed working with computers. I later went back to school to pursue another degree, this time in network engineering. I graduated with honors and began looking for a career path in Information Technology. I had not really thought about the railroad as being a field where I could grow and develop my skills. After seeing a post on Craigs list for an IT administrator at the Reading & Northern Railroad I decided to apply. Since joining RBMN, it has been quite a ride now that the world revolves around and is more dependent upon technology. The heart of IT involves interconnections and communications on both micro and macro scales. Shared communications pass one ubiquitous and highly valuable concept. That is data.

How does this relate to RBMN's technological evolution over twenty-five years? With progressively increasing employee numbers, enhanced infrastructure, a plurality of reporting locations, expanding data streams, significant record-keeping demands, and reliance on software services which enhance business productivity, the company's needs ran parallel with IT. To put it simply, even something as banal as pencil and paper logs and timesheets were modernized by IT for ease of use and quick turnover of data to other departments. All these advancements occurred incrementally as a result of thorough planning and time.

Even as recently as a decade ago, it was vastly different. Prior to having a dedicated IT Department, the railroad was attempting to use equipment and communication solutions that were relatively cost-effective, but highly independent from each other. This is analogous to the idea of sewing a traditional patchwork quilt. It will work, but it will have clear deficits compared to a seamless (pun intended) solution. Two of the most obvious problems were

the impracticality of management and the inflexibility of the current in-place systems. Streamlining had to occur.

However, there was only one “tiny” problem. When I started, I inherited a singular computer that was responsible for managing... well... everything the railroad (electronically) had at the time. Even more concerning, there were no backups or safety mechanisms in the event of a failure or catastrophic incident, no methods of auditing historical information, massive amounts of manpower to perform simplistic tasks, and speed of execution for basic business tasks was severely hampered.

With some investments in hardware and software, I was able to make the company's infrastructure more redundant and easier to update. Even initial improvements incentivized other departments to improve the quality of their independent operations. For instance, operations crews were provisioned rugged tablets to move their cars in near real-time all while reducing the need for added paperwork.

As of this year, IT has increased our security posture by totaling about 150 cameras across the network, reducing the need for remote access, and closing any unneeded ports on our networks. Other security measures, such as conditional access, only allows access to our services by geographic location. User risk policies have also been implemented to automatically block any suspicious activity.

IT has also developed several applications over the years to help departments streamline data entry and retrieval. Some applications for MOW included a track inspection application, a switch inspection application, and several other small utilities to help track items and time. We have developed a lease database for real estate and developed an application for HR to manage company users and healthcare information. For customer service, IT created an app to manage their carloads to streamline the retrieval of data. This one customer service app consolidated thousands of entries previously held in an outdated spreadsheet. Most recently, digital timecards were developed for all departments.

I am pleased to say that the IT Department has been able to improve RBMN's daily operations both foundationally and holistically. However, the nature of tech is one of entropy as well as constant flux, so evolution into the next phases of RBMN's future is going to be challenging but equally exciting. ♦

A Quarter Century of Change in Passenger

BY: MATT FISHER,

SVP & GENERAL MANAGER PASSENGER

Twenty-five years ago, I was a young railfan looking to take as many train trips from as many locations as possible. The Reading & Northern, at that time, was only available to visit a few times a year. Therefore, I would be sure to take at least one of the trips, such as Schuylkill Haven Borough Day.

The late 1990s were the slowest time in the nearly forty year history of the Passenger Department. This was well before the introduction of the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway (2005), and the part-time hiring of myself and several current employees.

Only around a thousand guests would ride the rails in those years. Many of them were long-time employees who started in the Blue Mountain & Reading days and worked on a volunteer basis only. Luckily, many stayed with the railroad through this time and witnessed the creation of Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway and the astonishing growth ever since.

Borough Day festivals in Schuylkill Haven and Tamaqua, along with a few fall foliage trains from Berks County to Jim Thorpe, accounted for all the excursion offerings in those years. Today, there are many instances where we have as many trips in one weekend as we did in an entire year twenty five years ago! One thousand people in one year now compares to one thousand people on a "slow" weekend day at Jim Thorpe on the Lehigh Gorge train! There were only about a dozen employees in the Passenger Department then, versus more than eighty today. Unfortunately, the ravages of time also meant that we lost many talented and loyal people over the years.

We owned only fifteen coaches then but are approaching sixty today. Passenger trains on the main line from Port Clinton to Jim Thorpe operated in October a handful of times then. Today, passenger trains from both Reading Outer Station and Pittston operate to Jim Thorpe every weekend. Jim Thorpe went from a struggling tourist town to being one of the heavyweights of tourism in the Mid-Atlantic region. The Passenger Department was losing money then but is making money now. There were barely enough resources to get by then. Passenger has now expanded to several departments including mechanical, paint and restoration, all the while maintaining focus on customer service.

Some things have not changed. Steam locomotive #2102 was still operating into the 1990s, but that was the twilight of its operating years. It was placed out of service in 1991 and remained that way until two years ago. Today, the #2102 is the star of the Iron Horse Rambles trips from new locations such as Nesquehoning Regional Railroad Station and Reading Outer Station. The Passenger Department continues to see strong leadership from railroad ownership. The department is one of the few that is still directly overseen by Mr. Muller. "The Route of Friendly Service" was the slogan used then, and it is still what we strive for every day. People from far and wide enjoyed visiting then, just as I did as a high school student. To this day, people enjoy coming from everywhere one can imagine. It is a dream come true to be managing the Passenger Department twenty five years later! ♦

“The Road of Anthracite”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

2024 Fall Foliage Excursion Tickets On Sale Next Week

Port Clinton, PA – July 18, 2024

Tickets for the highly anticipated 40th season of Fall Foliage passenger excursions on the Reading & Northern Railroad will go on sale at 9:00am Monday, July 22, 2024. Customers will be able to purchase their tickets online at www.rbmnrr-passenger.com or by calling the railroad's passenger office at 610-562-2102. Five weekends of excursions to Jim Thorpe originating from Reading, Pittston, and Pottsville will be offered beginning Saturday, October 5 through Sunday, November 3, 2024.

Reading Outer Station, located at 3501 Pottsville Pike, Reading, PA, 19605, will host its eighth Fall Foliage season in 2024. Trains departing from this location will feature the vintage F-Unit diesel locomotives from the 1950s; or, on Saturdays October 5, 19, and 26, steam locomotive #2102, which was built by the Reading Shops in 1945 and restored to operation in 2022. These excursions will also make a station stop at Port Clinton on their way to Jim Thorpe. Seating in Standard Coach, Crown Class, Vista Class Dome, Lounge, and Parlor cars; as well as Pullman rooms, will be available.

Ticket prices will vary dependent on seating option chosen. All trains from Reading Outer Station depart at 9:00am sharp.

The Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Regional Railroad Station, now in its second year of operation, will once again host fall train excursions as well. The departure time for all fall trains from Pittston is 8:45am. Standard Coach, Crown Class Coach, Vista Class Dome, and Lounge Observation seating will be offered. As with excursions originating from Reading, ticket prices vary by seating class. The station is located at 718 North Main Street, Pittston, PA, 18640. An additional stop will be made along the route at Penobscot (Mountain Top) to board more passengers.

Finally, Pottsville Union Station will feature Fall Foliage trains bound for Jim Thorpe. Union Station is located at 1 Progress Street, Pottsville, PA 17901. Our self-propelled rail diesel cars, or RDCs, will be utilized on this route. Additional station stops will be available at Schuylkill Haven and Port Clinton for passenger convenience. Trains depart Pottsville at 8:30am and will be the first of the three excursion trains to arrive in Jim Thorpe each weekend day during Fall Foliage Season. All tickets for trains operating along this route are \$49.00.

As always, the 45-minute Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway trains will be departing from Jim Thorpe Station every hour on Fall Foliage weekends beginning at 10:00am, with the last departure at 5:00pm. Tickets for LGSR trains during this extraordinarily busy time must be purchased the same day, in-person, on a first come/first served basis. Standard Coach, Crown Class Coach, and Open-Air Car seating will be available.

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. ♦

First Passenger Train Departs from Nesquehoning Regional Railroad Station

BY: RUSS SCIANNA, JR., DIRECTOR OF PASSENGER ADMINISTRATION



Briar Stern backs Office Car Special train into the Nesquehoning Regional Railroad Station on Track 2 only a day after the concrete platform area was poured. June 21, 2024.

Passenger service from Reading & Northern's new Nesquehoning Regional Railroad Station is off and running. To launch service from the new station in spectacular fashion, an Iron Horse Ramble excursion powered by 4-8-4 T-1 steam locomotive #2102 did the honors on the morning of Saturday, June 22, 2024. The trip took passengers to Tunkhannock for the annual Founder's Day Festival. This was the longest passenger train excursion of the 2024 season to date, logging an incredible round-trip distance of 160 miles.

Eager customers arrived early to claim their tickets, browse the new Black Diamond Company Store for souvenirs, and watch in awe as the 17-car train pulled into the station for boarding. The star attraction was, of course, steam locomotive #2102; but photographers also had a chance to capture shots of our handsome streamlined F-unit diesels #270 and #275, along with GP38-2 diesel #2014. Having assisted #2102 with spotting the train in the station, the diesels took a siding to allow the massive 4-8-4 T-1 to assume its starring role for the day.

Our friendly car hosts assisted passengers with boarding the variety of cars that were offered on the trip. Standard Coaches, Crown Class Coaches, Pullman rooms, and the elegant and very popular Parlor Car were in the lineup. Under the command of conductor Rich Bernhardt, the trip departed right on the advertised at 9:00am. The train eased through the Borough of Nesquehoning to the amazement of onlookers. Within minutes, the moment everyone had been waiting for had arrived. The legendary steam crew of Shane Frederickson, Ryan Bausher, and Chuck Trusdell proceeded to put on one of the most memorable shows in the history of the Reading & Northern

Railroad as #2102 chugged mightily into Lehigh Gorge State Park under its own power for the first time in several decades. The rugged grade up and over Penobscot Mountain was no match for the monstrous machine and its long passenger car consist. As the train approached the Rockport and White Haven tunnels, passengers were directed to close all windows and doors on the train each time to prevent the entrance of smoke and ash emanating from the hard-working engine into the interiors of the cars.

Approaching the top of the mountain at Crestwood, passengers viewed the southbound excursion train headed for Jim Thorpe from Pittston as it awaited the steam train's passage. This train was powered by GP38-2 diesel locomotive #2023, which dons a unique twist on our green and yellow four-axle diesel paint scheme heralding the 40th anniversary of the Reading & Northern Railroad.

Much as the passengers and staff on board the train on this hot early summer day, the #2102 had to be kept well hydrated for it to complete its conquest of the mountain. Brief water stops were made at Penobscot both northbound and southbound. These water stops afforded passengers the chance to visit car #1168, the Pocono Grill, to purchase beverages, snacks, and souvenirs. Diesel helpers in the form of Fast Freight Service SD50-2 locomotives #5018 and #5019 were coupled to the train northbound at Penobscot for additional braking power as the train embarked on its descent down the mountain into the Wyoming Valley.

Arriving in Pittston, passengers were able to see the new Wilkes-Barre/



Amy Miller and Ed Coll were the first ticket agents at Building 4 to greet over 700 guests. June 22, 2024. This was the first Reading and Northern Ramble to operate from Nesquehoning to Tunkhannock.



Rich Bernhardt was the first conductor to operate an excursion train out of Nesquehoning Regional Railroad Station. Giving his legendary "thumbs up" right before departure time at 9:00 am sharp.

Scranton Regional Railroad Station up close. Shortly thereafter, the diesel helpers were removed, and it was on to Tunkhannock. The #2102 coasted along the Susquehanna River for more than twenty miles as the destination drew closer. The train made a grand entrance into Tunkhannock right on time. The car hosts did their usual outstanding job of detrainning everyone safely. Smiles were on the faces of every passenger as they headed for the Founder's Day Festival, having thoroughly enjoyed the big-time steam show they had just been treated to.

Reopening for boarding at 3:30pm, and departing on time at 4:00pm, the second act of the steam extravaganza was just ahead. Having to run tender-first to Pittston due to a lack of turning facilities in Tunkhannock, #2102 retraced the route along the Susquehanna River. A stop was made at Pittston to turn the #2102 on the wye at the south end of the yard for it to face the proper direction for the southbound trip. Passengers were once again invited to visit the Pocono Grill during this stop. Cruising through Duryea and then Avoca, #2102 commenced its battle up the north slope of Penobscot Mountain.

Once again, the #2102 had no trouble bringing the heavy train upgrade. Near the top of the grade at Solomon's Gap, the Ramble once more encountered the Pittston-bound excursion train returning from Jim Thorpe. After a final intermediate stop at Penobscot to top off the water, the train descended the mountain into Lehigh Gorge State Park. Passengers were given a detailed account of the history and natural beauty of the park on this leg of the trip since the #2102 did not have to work nearly as hard.

At the south end of the Lehigh Gorge State Park, the steam crew put on a grand finale for the passengers and railfans as it chugged majestically over the new Lehigh River bridge and into Jim Thorpe Junction. Soon after, the train arrived back at Nesquehoning, having completed one the biggest and best steam excursions the railroad has ever hosted. Appreciative passengers thanked crew members they encountered on their way out of the train for a great day. Many stopped at the Black Diamond Company Store for one last purchase of railroad-related items to remember their trip by.

If you did not get a chance to ride this spectacular steam trip, Reading & Northern will be operating its third Iron Horse Ramble of 2024 from Nesquehoning to Pittston on Saturday, August 17. This trip will mark the grand opening of Nesquehoning Regional Railroad Station and feature all the excitement of the route through Lehigh Gorge and over Penobscot Mountain. The destination this time is the annual Pittston Tomato Festival. Tickets are still available at www.rbmnrr-passenger.com/rambles or by calling the railroad's passenger office at 610-562-2102 (8:30am – 5:00pm daily).

Finally, if you would like to relive this great excursion, our very own Jamie Makin is working on a six-part video documentary chronicling her experience from start to finish. Part I is available on YouTube now and more will have been posted as of the publication of this newsletter. A condensed version featuring the best of all six segments will be posted on the Reading & Northern's YouTube channel soon. ♦

WELCOME ABOARD

New Employees!



Katie Vacula

Katie Vacula was recently hired as a Forklift Operator in our Transload Department. She attended Emmaus High School. Prior to working at RBMNR, Katie was a Forklift Operator at Patton Warehouse for four months. Katie and her family love trains.



James Joyce

James Joyce was recently hired as a Car Host in our Passenger Department. Prior to working at RBMNR, James was a Sergeant for the Luzerne County Sheriff for 25 years.



Clare Shaud

Clare Shaud was recently hired as a Car Host in our Passenger Department. She attended Nativity B.V.M. High School and Floral Design School. Prior to working at RBMNR, Clare was a Sample Specialist at Omnova Solutions for eight years. Clare has two daughters, and in her spare time, she loves to read, garden, and ride her bike with her brother.



Frederick Kindler

Frederick Kindler was recently hired as a Conductor in our Operations Department. He attended Greater Nanticoke Area High School. Prior to working at RBMNR, Frederick was a Machine Operator for Leggett and Platt, Inc. for nine years. He is very grateful to have the opportunity to work for RBMNR.



Amy Brobst

Amy Brobst was recently hired as a Customer Service Manager in our Customer Service Department. She attended Pottsville Area High School and Miller-Motte College. Prior to working at RBMNR, Amy was a People Operations Partner at Service Access and Management for 27 years. Amy is heavily involved in her friend's dog rescue, DAWGS Prison Program. The rescue saves dogs from high-kill shelters and transports them here, where they live with inmates 24/7, while providing basic obedience training in preparation of adoption. DAWGS appeared on an episode of Pit Bulls & Parolees on Animal Planet because they partner with Villalobos Rescue.



Damon Dougal

Damon Dougal was recently hired as a Mascot in our Passenger Department. He attended Greater Nanticoke Area High School. Prior to working at RBMNR, Damon was a High Volume Freight Associate at Tractor Supply Company for a year and a half. He is always eager to help everyone, loves the outdoors, and enjoys working on and volunteering on locomotives.



Stephen Biscardi

Stephen Biscardi was recently hired as a Conductor in our Operations Department. He attended Wayne High School and Sinclair Community College, both in Dayton, OH. Prior to working at RBMNR, Stephen was a Police Officer for the Camden Police Department in Camden, Ohio.



Keith Hahnel

Keith Hahnel was recently hired as a Locomotive Mechanic in our Mechanical Department. He attended Bethpage High School in New York, Nassau Community College, and Engine City Technical Institute. Prior to working at RBMNR, Keith was a Diesel Technician for Republic Services for five years. Keith grew up around boats and worked in many boat yards, as well as setting up boat shows. He and his three kids love farming life as they have some livestock of their own.



Michael Kelly

Michael Kelly was recently hired as a Car Host in our Passenger Department. He attended Monseigneur Bonner High School, West Chester University, and Widener University School of Law. Prior to working at RBMNR, Michael was the Executive Director at CCRES Educational and Behavioral Health Services for over seven years. In his spare time, Michael enjoys hiking and biking along rail-trails throughout Pennsylvania.



Rebecca Dauber

Rebecca Dauber was recently hired as a Snack Counter Attendant in our Passenger Department. She attended Daniel Boone Area High School, Lesley University in Cambridge, MA, Alvernia University in Reading, PA, and Northeast Broadcasting School in Boston. Rebecca has been the Vice President of Creative Services for Tango Multimedia for the last 13 years and counting. Rebecca is an avid geocacher and spends her spare time finding geocaches and completing Adventure Labs across the tri-state area.



Michael Jamicky

Michael Jamicky was recently hired as a Conductor in our Operations Department. He attended Northampton Area High School and Pennsylvania College of Technology. Prior to working at RBMNR, Michael worked as a Technician at Foley Cat for two years.



Joshua Krick

Joshua Krick was recently hired as a Conductor in our Operations Department. He attended Hamburg Area High School, where he also attended Berks Vo-Tech. Prior to working at RBMNR, Joshua was a Furnace Operator at Materion for two and a half years. Joshua is a single father with one awesome son. They love to spend their spare time outdoors. Joshua is excited to start his new career at RBMNR.



Richard Brown

Richard Brown was recently hired as a Conductor in our Operations Department. He attended Jim Thorpe Area High School and Lehigh Carbon Community College. Prior to working at RBMNR, Richard was a Consultant for Temes Consulting for four years.



Collin Reppert

Collin Reppert was recently hired as a Station Attendant in our Passenger Department. He attended Hamburg Area High School, Berks Career and Technology Center, and York College of Pennsylvania. In his spare time, Collin enjoys playing the violin.



Sabrina Kennedy

Sabrina Kennedy was recently hired as a Conductor in our Operations Department. She attended The Hill School and Lehigh University. Prior to working at RBMNR, Sabrina was a Conductor and Brakeman at Colebrookdale Railroad and East Penn Railroad. Sabrina is a nationally certified ski instructor, and she received her pilot's license before she even knew how to drive.



Steven Shanton

Steven Shanton was recently hired as a Trackman in our Maintenance of Way Department. He attended Lehigh Area High School and Wilkes University. Prior to working at RBMNR, Steven was a Furnaceman at Blue Ridge Pressure Castings for 8 years.



Jamie Dunlop

Jamie Dunlop was recently hired as a Mascot in our Passenger Department. He attended Hazleton Area High School. Jamie was a volunteer firefighter for 12 years.



Joseph Pachorkowsky

Joseph Pachorkowsky was recently hired as a Car Host in our Passenger Department. He attended Bangor Area High School, Lackawanna College, and Pennco Tech. Prior to working at RBMNR, Joseph was a Laborer/Foreman at Journeyman Union Gas Utility Mechanic for 15 years. Joseph is a train enthusiast and a certified federal pyrotechnician. His favorite bird is a flamingo.



Xaviar Yeagley

Xaviar Yeagley was recently hired as a Car Host and Conductor in our Passenger Department. He attended Pine Grove Area High School and Penn State University - Schuylkill Campus. Xaviar has been watching RBMNR 425 and 2102 since he was 7 years old.



James Noll

James Noll was recently hired as a Conductor in our Operations Department. Prior to working at RBMNR, James was a Lot Porter at Camping World for two years.



Chase Longacre

Chase Longacre was recently hired as a Station Attendant in our Passenger Department. He attended Salem Christian School and Lehigh Carbon Community College. Chase has been a Barista at Dunkin' Donuts for three years and counting. Chase plays seven different instruments and enjoys photography.



Elijah Johri

Elijah Johri was recently hired as a Seasonal Trackman in our Maintenance of Way Department. He attended Northwestern Lehigh High School and Penn State University Main Campus. Prior to working at RBMNR, Elijah worked as a Bail Stacker on local farms and on the Field Maintenance Crew for softball tournaments for the past two summers. In high school, Elijah was a wrestler and played football. He previously did and continues to participate in theater and singing and he enjoys meeting new people. Eli's major in college is film production. He loves movies and enjoys hearing about people's favorite movies, as well.

RBMN Anniversaries

35 YEARS



JUNE 1, 1989
LISA MATZ
RESERVATION SPECIALIST -
PASSENGER

25 YEARS



MAY 3, 1999
RICHARD BERNHARDT
ENGINEER/CONDUCTOR -
PASSENGER

20 YEARS



MAY 3, 2004
DAVID EVELYN
CLASS 3 LOCOMOTIVE MECHANIC -
MECHANICAL - ENGINE HOUSE

15 YEARS



MAY 4, 2009
MATTHEW MIZIKOSKI
DIVISION FOREMAN -
LEHIGH - MAINTENANCE
OF WAY



MAY 26, 2009
BENJAMIN NELSON
SR. MACHINE OPERATOR,
CLASS 1 - MAINTENANCE
OF WAY

10 YEARS



JUNE 20, 2014
STEVEN KOLBE
MANAGER OF
PASSENGER EQUIPMENT
- PASSENGER



JUNE 25, 2014
MATTHEW NESTOR
REAL ESTATE PROJECT
MANAGER - REAL
ESTATE



JULY 14, 2014
MICHAEL BAILEY
CLASS 2 CARMAN -
MECHANICAL - CAR
SHOP



JULY 14, 2014
BENJAMIN BALTHASER
FACILITIES TECHNICIAN
- FACILITIES



JULY 14, 2014
NATHAN BILLET-DIAZ
CLASS 2 MECHANIC -
MECHANICAL -
VEHICLE SHOP



JULY 21, 2014
NICHOLAS ALBERSWERTH
MANAGER OF VEGETATION
- MAINTENANCE OF WAY

5 YEARS



MAY 20, 2019
TIFFANY HOWELL
TICKET AGENT/CAR HOST -
PASSENGER



JUNE 17, 2019
TYLER ACKER
TRACKMAN &
EQUIPMENT MECHANIC -
MAINTENANCE OF WAY

3 YEARS



MAY 3, 2021
JAMES RAFFA
SR. VP -
PETROCHEMICALS &
MINERALS - MARKETING



MAY 10, 2021
LUCAS REICHARD
CONDUCTOR -
OPERATIONS



MAY 10, 2021
JEREMY GREEN
MANAGER OF BRIDGES
& STRUCTURES -
MAINTENANCE OF WAY



MAY 17, 2021
ABRAM KEMMERER
WELDER TRAINEE
- MAINTENANCE
OF WAY



JUNE 2, 2021
RICHARD BUTTERWORTH
STEAM HOSTLER/
FIREMAN - PASSENGER -
STEAM SHOP



JUNE 14, 2021
MEGHAN FAUST
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS
SPECIALIST - HUMAN
RESOURCES



JUNE 14, 2021
JOSEPH MALSON
MOW COORDINATOR
- MAINTENANCE
OF WAY



JULY 6, 2021
BLAKE HANDLING
TRACKMAN -
MAINTENANCE OF
WAY

1 YEAR



MAY 1, 2023
TIMOTHY WRIGHT
DIRECTOR - PASSENGER
OPERATIONS (PITTSBURGH)
- PASSENGER



JUNE 4, 2023
MICHAEL SHARADIN
VP OF COAL
SOURCING -
MARKETING



JUNE 5, 2023
JASON MOYER
TRACKMAN -
MAINTENANCE OF
WAY



JUNE 14, 2023
THOMAS FARMER
CAR HOST -
PASSENGER



JUNE 21, 2023
ROBERT LYNCH
CAR HOST/
NARRATOR/TICKET
AGENT - PASSENGER



JUNE 26, 2023
SHAWN REICHART
MACHINE OPERATOR
CLASS 1 TRAINEE
- MAINTENANCE
OF WAY



JULY 5, 2023
JOSEPH GARELLI
CONDUCTOR -
OPERATIONS



JULY 5, 2023
JOSEPH SWORD
PAVING MANAGER
- MAINTENANCE
OF WAY



JULY 17, 2023
CHRISTINA MARTIN
CUSTOMER SERVICE
MANAGER -
CUSTOMER SERVICE

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

BY: MEGHAN FAUST, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SPECIALIST



It is my privilege to introduce Shawn Frederickson, Senior Class 2 Steam Mechanic, as our Summer 2024 "Spotlight Employee". Shawn has been with the Reading and Northern Railroad since November 2018.

Shawn was born in Cordell, Oklahoma and moved to Barnesville when he was about four years old. He graduated from Tamaqua Area High School in 1982 and North Schuylkill Vocational Technical School in the machine shop department the same year.

Shawn and his wonderful wife, Kelly, got married in 1992 and have been married for 31 amazing years. Together, they have 21-year-old twin daughters, Ariel and Shelby. Following in her father's footsteps, Shelby also works for Reading and Northern Railroad as a Car Host and Ticket Agent. The Frederickson family has four dogs named Nala, Lyra, Lady, and Piper.

In his spare time, Shawn has a variety of different hobbies. He enjoys drag racing his Monte Carlo and working on his 1959 Buick Invicta and 1986 Monte Carlo SS. He also loves to spend time outdoors, riding his minibike. Shawn DJ's for different events around Tamaqua, such as the Heritage Festival, Summer Fest, and the No. 9 Coal Mine. He also spends a lot of his spare time

working as the car cruise director and organizing car cruises for the Anthracite Region Chapter (AACA) Antique Automobile Car Club of America.

This honor was given to Shawn by his supervisors, Tyler Glass, EVP of Operations, and Ryan Bausher, Manager of Steam Shop, who collectively said, "Shawn is a machinist and fabricator in the steam shop. He is very proficient and very capable of making parts for our steam locomotive. He has the ability to fabricate anything thrown at him and completes everything in short order. In addition to his work on steam locomotives, Shawn also supports other departments on the railroad by making custom parts." Tyler went on to say, "his attitude and skills are second to none."

Ernie says that he enjoys his job working with the railroad because "I enjoy working with the people within the company, especially being able to work with my family daily. This includes both my brothers, my niece and nephew, my daughter, and father when he was alive. I also get to do one of my favorite things every day: tinkering with things to make them work."

As our Spotlight Employee, Shawn will receive a \$100 gift card to Hoss's Steak and Sea House, the restaurant of his choice. ♦



Conductor Andy Davis securing cars at Ransom Warehouse.



YJNR Weekend crew preparing to switch the inbound interchange from Spring Street. (L-R: Jake Stockmal, Tim Williams and Hudson Henry)



Steven Schorr and Conductor Trainee, Landon Trutt shoving cars into the South Dryer at Gilberton



Tim Williams and Justin Seigel give a wave as they are all finished and tying down their power for the day at Port Clinton.



Conductor Trainee James Noll reviewing territory qualification quiz with Director of Safety John Smolczynski.



Locomotive Mechanic Frank Daub working in the Engine House.



Andrew Zehner copying a Form D from the Train Dispatcher on train QAJT.



James Noll, Sam Hollock and Ryan Lamm at Girard walking back to the engine after making a pick up.



Fast Freight engine receiving maintenance work by Chris Holland and Keith Hahnel.



Nesquehoning being utilized by Locomotive Mechanic Seth Bednar. Overhead cranes making it safer and more efficient.



Jim Somers takes a quick break from welding in the Car Shop.



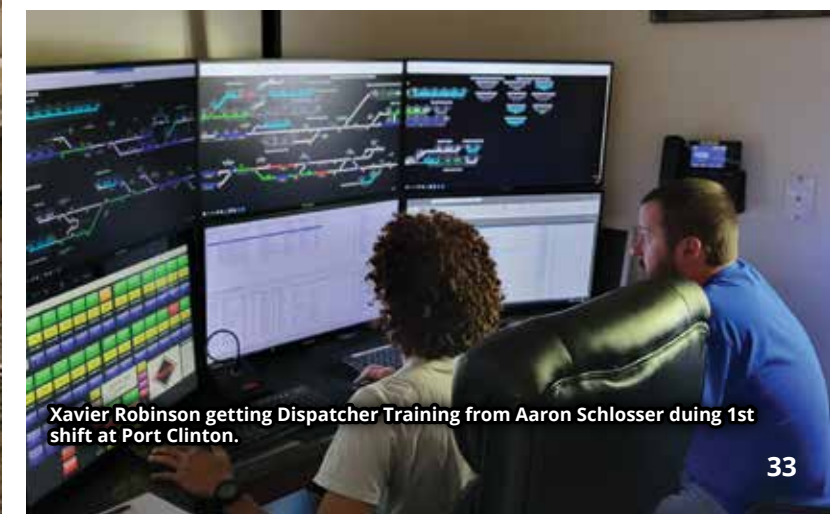
Crew change at Mount Carmel Jct. The MCQA "Mountain Job" crew is getting re-crowed by the QASD crew due to a tie project going on between Mahanoy City and East Mahanoy Jct. Seen in the photo from left to right: Sabrina Kennedy, Steven Schorr, James Cook, James Noll and Eugene Boyle.



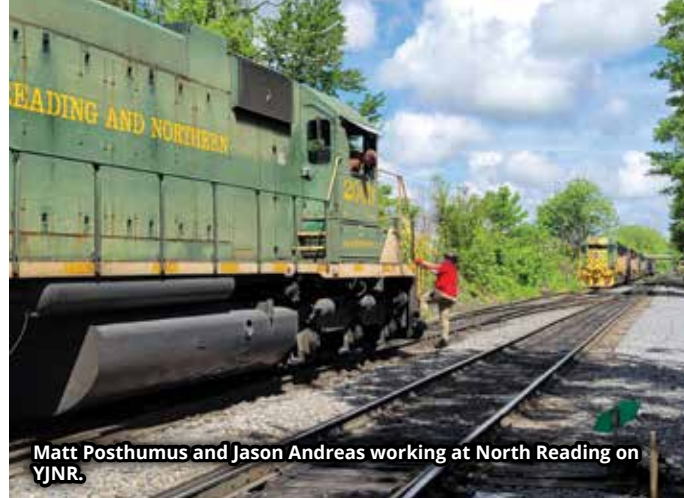
Engineer Ryan Lamm servicing our coal suppliers on the M&S Branch.



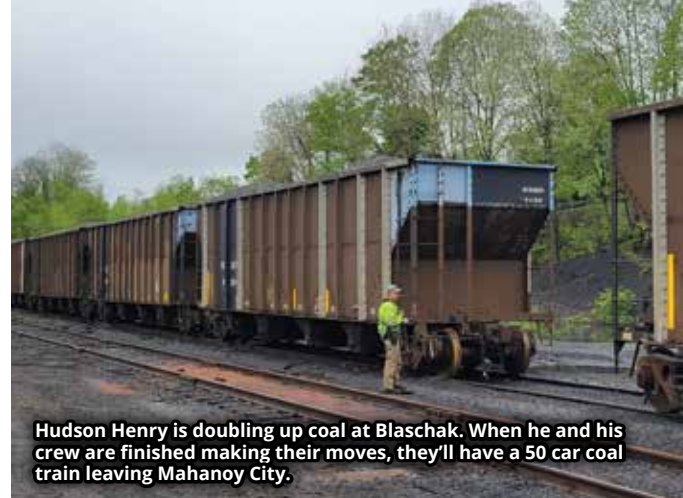
Hand signals being given by Adam Boak as the crew pulls cars from coal customer.



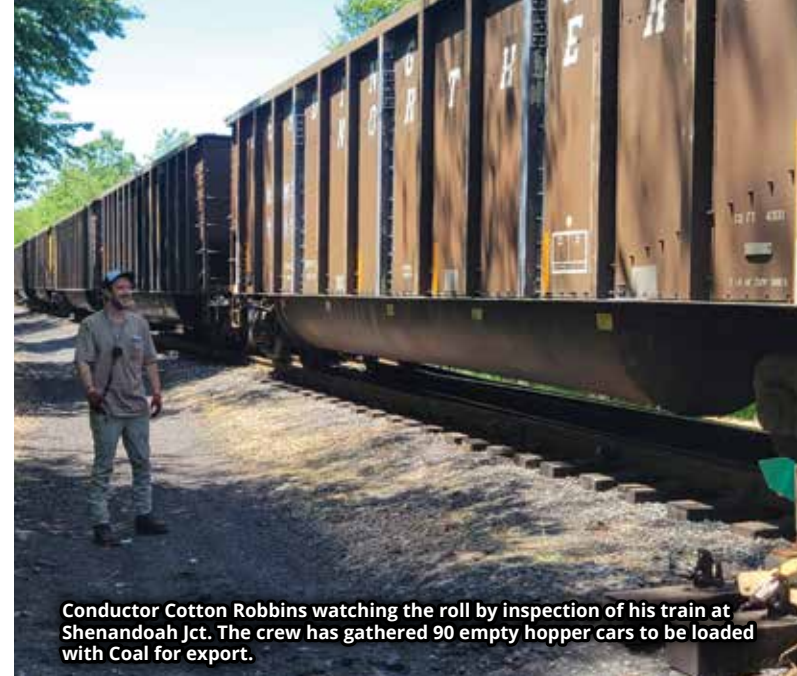
Xavier Robinson getting Dispatcher Training from Aaron Schlosser during 1st shift at Port Clinton.



Matt Posthumus and Jason Andreas working at North Reading on VJNR.



Hudson Henry is doubling up coal at Blaschak. When he and his crew are finished making their moves, they'll have a 50 car coal train leaving Mahanoy City.



Conductor Cotton Robbins watching the roll by inspection of his train at Shenandoah Jct. The crew has gathered 90 empty hopper cars to be loaded with Coal for export.



Matt Phillips is on the QADE "Delano Jct." working at Tamaqua Yard. He's getting ready to build his train before running up the mountain to serve Stella Jones and Poly Plastics.



James Cook, Bart Crary and John Smolczynski at Nesquehoning. Bart has just completed his Locomotive certification ride. Congratulations, Bart!



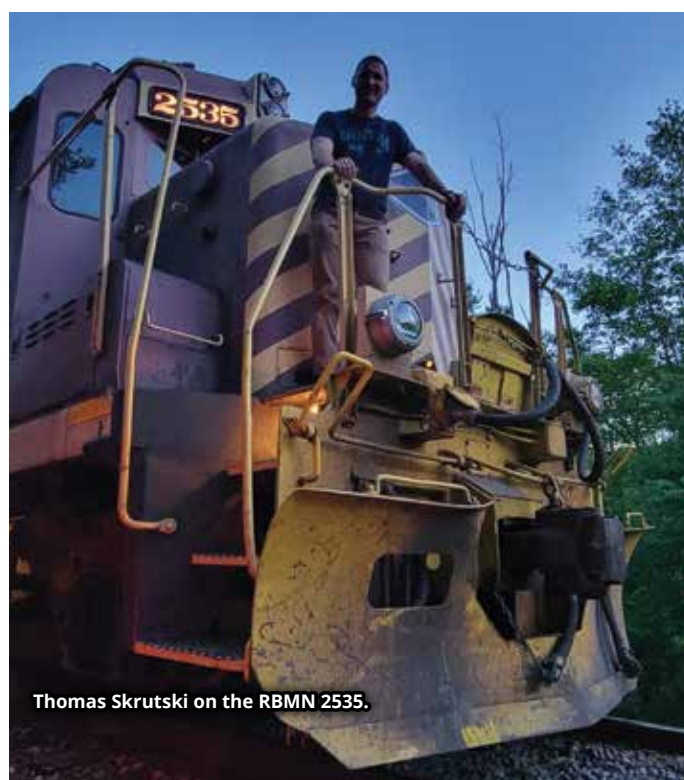
James Cook conducting at Jim Thorpe. He's getting his train together before heading back to Tamaqua.



Chad Frederickson helping out Conductor Trainee Landon Trutt spotting empty hopper cars ready for loading at Blaschak in Mahanoy City.



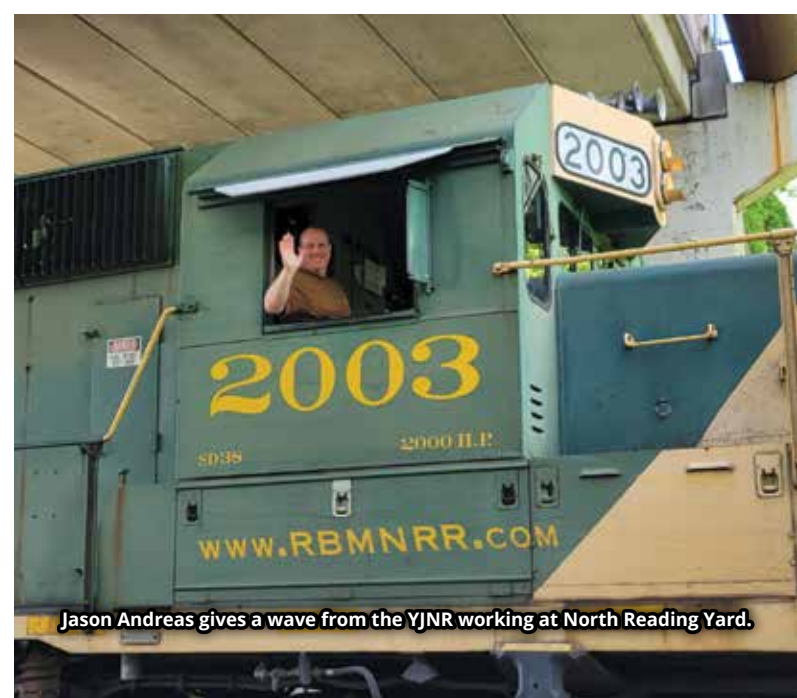
Engineer David Lapallo spotting cars at i2M in the Crestwood Industrial Park.



Thomas Skrutski on the RBMN 2535.



Bart Crary on the LGSR at Jim Thrope.



Jason Andreas gives a wave from the VJNR working at North Reading Yard.



WHBB1 Conductor, Jagger Gradwell observing his Conductor Trainee, Frederick Kindler coupling up to their train in Humboldt.



Tim Williams departing Port Clinton with the RDC's on train OSJT. Next stop, Jim Thorpe!



Sabrina Kennedy on her first day of Conductor training at Nesquehoning.



WORK train crew Jason Moyer and Carter Jones wait in the clear on the new #2 track at Nesquehoning for the NRFF7 to go by. After the NRFF goes by, the WORK train will open up and make the run back to Tamaqua. In the background is construction of the new Nesquehoning Station.



2024 Beverly Hess Scholarship Award

BY: SABINE FIDLER, BHSA ADMINISTRATOR



Kali Van Blargan is the daughter of Brian and Carrie Van Blargan. Brian is the Reading Division Forman in our Maintenance of Way Department. Kali will be attending Pennsylvania State University in the Fall to study Nursing. Kali writes, "Dear Muller Family and Committee of the Beverly Hess Scholarship Award, I am honored to be this year's recipient of the Beverly Hess scholarship. This very generous award will help me achieve my goals of one day becoming a nurse and taking care of my community. I want to thank you for your support of my educational endeavors."



Emily Bryant is the daughter of Tyler Glass and Diane Glass. Tyler is the Executive Vice President of Operations at RBMN. Emily will be a freshman in the Fall at Lebanon Valley College where she will be studying Accounting. Emily writes, "I am deeply grateful to the Reading and Northern Railroad for awarding me this scholarship. This support will significantly help me start my first semester on the right foot. I would also like to extend my thanks to my family for all of their unwavering support. Thank you all!"



Ryan Collins is the son of Matthew and Noreen Collins. Matthew is the Vice President of Communication and Signals at Reading and Northern. Ryan will be attending Wilkes University to pursue a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English. Ryan writes, "Thank you, Reading and Northern Railroad! This scholarship will greatly help me pursue my dream of practicing law and afford the education to achieve it. I am looking forward to this fall when I will be able to embark on the next step of this journey. With your support, the financial stress I must face due to the high costs of college and law school will be eased, allowing me to focus more on achieving my dreams. Once again, thank you for your time and consideration!"

Congratulations to Kali, Emily, and Ryan!

Reading & Northern's Family Recipes Spinach Feta Cheese Bites

When Kristen McGowan, Director of Fleet Management, is craving Spanakopita but doesn't have the time to make it, she pulls this recipe together. She calls it her "lazy Spanakopita." Kristen said she is "just a Greek girl that loves all Greek food, with the exception of olives." She also mentioned that she usually uses more feta cheese in this recipe. "Measure with your heart" were her exact words.

Ingredients

Spinach filling:

- 1-10oz. package of frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained
- ¾ - 1 cup Greek imported feta cheese (must be in the brine so it doesn't dry out)
- 1/3 cup scallions, chopped
- 1 tsp. fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tsp. fresh garlic, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 large eggs, separated
- Salt & pepper to taste

Crust:

- 1-2 sheets frozen puff pastry, thawed but still cold

Directions

- 1) Press the thawed spinach against a strainer with your hands to remove all the water. You want to do this, so the filling is not soggy.
- 2) Combine spinach, feta cheese, scallions, olive oil, parsley, garlic, and salt & pepper to taste.
- 3) Beat 1 of the eggs in a small bowl and then fold into the spinach mixture.
- 4) Roll out the defrosted pastry dough on a floured surface and cut into 12 squares.
- 5) Place a square of dough into a muffin tin and push against the side, with the corners draped over the edge. Spoon some of the spinach mixture into the center and fold the corners of the dough over the filling and pinch them together in the center.
- 6) Repeat until you have used up all the filling.
- 7) Beat the remaining egg with a Tbsp. of water and brush the tops of the pastry with the egg wash.
- 8) Bake at 400F until the pastry is golden and puffed, approximately 20 minutes.

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

AUG. 1.....MICHAEL BISCHAK
AUG. 1.....MATTHEW MINNICH
AUG. 2.....COREY REHRIG
AUG. 2.....DANIEL WEBBER
AUG. 3.....MARK CAIN
AUG. 3.....JOSEPH PACHORKOWSKY
AUG. 4.....SAMUEL TRIPP
AUG. 5.....STEPHEN PERRETTE
AUG. 5.....ALEXANDER SCUBELEK III
AUG. 8.....MATTHEW FISHER
AUG. 8.....CHRISTOPHER GARCIA
AUG. 8.....ABRAM KEMMERER
AUG. 8.....MICHAEL KOLBE
AUG. 8.....JAMES RAFFA
AUG. 10.....LARRY FISHER
AUG. 11.....WILLIAM CLARK
AUG. 11.....ZACHARY FRYE
AUG. 11.....BEVERLY HESS
AUG. 12.....WILLIAM BUCKINGHAM, JR.
AUG. 13.....SHANE FREDERICKSON
AUG. 13.....RONALD MOHL
AUG. 13.....ANDY MULLER
AUG. 14.....RONALD COLLINS-WEST, II
AUG. 14.....DUANE ENGLE
AUG. 14.....ERIK OSTROSKIE
AUG. 16.....SPENCER BUCKINGHAM
AUG. 17.....RYAN TREXLER
AUG. 19.....CHRIS GOETZ
AUG. 21.....JUSTIN MENGEL
AUG. 21.....CHARLES MINER
AUG. 23.....DAVID JOHNSON
AUG. 25.....STEPHEN BISCARDI
AUG. 25.....JOHN BRINICH
AUG. 25.....THOMAS FARMER
AUG. 25.....RYAN PARKS
AUG. 26.....SEBASTIAN HESS
AUG. 27.....JIM MIZNER
AUG. 30.....JAMIE SOLOMON

SEPT. 2.....MATTHEW NESTOR
SEPT. 3.....LEANNE MOSER
SEPT. 3.....AMBER PEIFFER
SEPT. 4.....COREY HAMM
SEPT. 5.....KIM REED
SEPT. 6.....NICOLE WOLF
SEPT. 7.....JUSTINE BERGER
SEPT. 8.....DIANE LEIBY
SEPT. 9.....BRAD HANDLING
SEPT. 9.....SPENCER HOCKMAN
SEPT. 10.....NATHANIEL BILLET-DIAZ
SEPT. 11.....TIFFANY HOWELL
SEPT. 11.....THOMAS STEMKO
SEPT. 12.....WAYNE MICHEL
SEPT. 12.....MARCUS SEARS
SEPT. 14.....MATTHEW LIPTAK
SEPT. 15.....DEREK REBER
SEPT. 16.....SETH BEDNAR
SEPT. 16.....RUSSELLE MONROE
SEPT. 16.....LINDA SEIGEL
SEPT. 16.....KATIE VACULA
SEPT. 19.....CHUCK CARL
SEPT. 19.....EVAN KERR
SEPT. 21.....XAVIAR YEAGLEY
SEPT. 22.....RYAN FREDERICKSON
SEPT. 22.....JAMES JOYCE
SEPT. 23.....CONRAD SCHLENKER
SEPT. 24.....JEFFREY JONES
SEPT. 25.....REBECCA DAUBER
SEPT. 25.....COLLIN REPERT
SEPT. 25.....JOSEPH SWORD
SEPT. 26.....THOMAS SKRUTSKI
SEPT. 29.....TYLER ACKER
SEPT. 29.....DOMINIC STEIDLE
SEPT. 30.....BRIAN VAN BLARGAN
OCT. 1.....JOSHUA SHIELDS
OCT. 3.....DARREN SPARE
OCT. 4.....SCOTT BESHORE

OCT. 5.....JEFFREY GERBER
OCT. 5.....JEREMY GREEN
OCT. 6.....KAITLYN BECHLER
OCT. 6.....JAMES DONLEY
OCT. 7.....TINA MULLER-LEVAN
OCT. 8.....ZACHARY BAKER
OCT. 9.....DAWN-MARIE BUBECK
OCT. 10.....PHILIP GESCHWINDT
OCT. 10.....NICK RICCIO
OCT. 11.....JACK KALINICH
OCT. 11.....SHERRY PRIMROSE
OCT. 11.....NICHOLAS SURUSKIE
OCT. 12.....RYAN BOYER
OCT. 12.....RONDA CHIVINSKI
OCT. 13.....JOHN BROWN
OCT. 13.....MATTHEW JOHNSON
OCT. 13.....ROBERT LYNCH
OCT. 14.....CHAD FREDERICKSON
OCT. 14.....JENNIFER FREDERICKSON
OCT. 16.....BRENTON BEZEK
OCT. 18.....JOSHUA CASCARELLA
OCT. 18.....JASON READING
OCT. 19.....THERMAN MADEIRA
OCT. 19.....KIMBERLY REED
OCT. 20.....BENJAMIN BIBIK
OCT. 22.....XAVIER ROBINSON
OCT. 22.....ALBERT SEILER
OCT. 25.....ALVIN RINEER
OCT. 26.....BONNIE FREDERICK
OCT. 28.....TRAVIS PREVOST
OCT. 28.....JOHN SHUCAVAGE
OCT. 29.....CHRISTINA MARTIN
OCT. 30.....RAYMOND CHIPPA
OCT. 30.....JOHN HARTMAN
OCT. 30.....BENJAMIN LEONTI
OCT. 30.....WILLIAM RIEGLE
OCT. 30.....LUKE WEIGHT
OCT. 31.....TIMOTHY MATUSHONECK

Congratulations!

ON YOUR NEW ARRIVAL



Congratulations go out to Jeffrey Knadler, Senior Director – Passenger Operations – Jim Thorpe, and his fiancé, Vicky, on the birth of their first child. Madison Hannah was born on April 2, 2024 at 3:05 a.m. She weighed 7 lbs. 12 ounces and was 19 ¼” long. We would like to welcome Madison to the Reading and Northern family!



Andy Muller, Jr. is pictured at Nesquehoning Campus in late December 2023 when RBMN took delivery of 5 Tesla Model 3s.

It's Electric!
BY: TYLER GLASS, EVP OPERATIONS

RBMN has really ramped up the use of electric cars in the past year. This initiative has been pushed by Andy Muller and he is excited to give people exposure to a different, but normal, driving experience.

In the past year Tesla was offering great deals on their Model 3 and Model Y vehicles. RBMN took advantage of those incentives and as a result you may have noticed an influx of gray Tesla Model 3s and Model Ys in our parking lots.

We have increased use of electric cars and as a result many more of our employees are getting a taste of driving an electric vehicle. It is always a positive experience and it will typically result in a smile on their face after driving one of the electric vehicle for the first time.

Not only are they fun to drive but they are very economical in terms of electric prices versus the equivalent gasoline prices. I think most people are surprised that you can just treat them like any other car. Yes, they can drive through a large puddle and have zero issues.

There are very few wear items on the vehicles. Just change your tires and windshield wipers when necessary. No more oil changes!

It is refreshing for me. I have owned a Tesla Model 3 since March of 2019. I have had to handle most of the questions from enthusiasts and skeptics alike. So with a bigger group of folks being exposed to the electric car I now feel like there is a team of people that can answer questions or be an advocate. Also of note is the fact that I recently hit the 200,000 mile mark on the car since my purchase in 2019, and the car is still going strong.

The Muller family also is all in on driving electric vehicles. A few GMC electric Hummers, a Rivian and a Tesla Model S Plaid are among their fleet of automobiles.

When you visit an RBMN facility you will also notice that we have multiple level 2 chargers strategically located for the long trips on the railroad.

As the battery technology advances you can be sure to see a more diverse variety of electric vehicles moving around the railroad. If you have any questions, just ask someone who drives an electric car. They will be happy to talk for minimum of thirty minutes on the subject. ♦



This x-ray revealed that only a single fishhook was present, and we could remove it without worrying about multiple hooks and lures further down the digestive tract. kVp : 45 mAs : 2



Followup x-ray to map the progress of a wing fracture that was surgically repaired in a red-tailed hawk.



A nestling eagle chick is x-rayed to determine why it cannot stand.

Red Creek Wildlife

Taking a look inside - Literally

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

The staff works quickly to stabilize an animal when it is admitted at Red Creek Wildlife Center. After a cursory exam and a short rest to destress, the animal receives a complete examination, and a treatment plan is developed. Fluid therapy is needed in most cases, along with wound care and fracture stabilization. The more we know about an animal's injuries, the better care it can receive.

I've often wished for two things when an animal arrives: for it to be able to tell me what happened and to take a look inside for problems not evident in a physical exam. No, I still can't talk to animals, but because of a generous donation from the Muller family and the Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad, we can now take that look inside immediately after an animal comes to us. This spring, Red Creek was gifted with a new veterinary x-ray machine, allowing us to x-ray any animal, from the tiniest songbirds to fawns and coyotes.

We've had the benefit of x-rays in the past through our veterinarians at Radnor Veterinary Hospital. Dr. Len Donato, the practice's owner, is a wildlife enthusiast who donates his time and services to any wild patient who needs care. However, each visit involves over a three-hour round trip to his hospital, which is time-consuming for our staff and very stressful for the animal. Sometimes, animals had to wait for an open appointment and for us to be able to make the trip, and many animals needed multiple appointments to monitor their progress.

That has changed with the arrival of our own x-ray equipment. We no longer need to rely solely on an external physical exam. We can take a look inside the animal at any time and as often as needed.

Our first patient to benefit from the new equipment was a snapping turtle. It arrived with a string of heavy fishing line exiting its mouth. We didn't know how far down the hook was or if there were multiple hooks and tackle involved. An x-ray revealed a single hook inside its mouth that was easily removed. It recovered completely and was released soon after.

A baby bald eagle was admitted after its nest blew down in a storm. It had weakness in the legs and couldn't stand. The eaglet was extremely stressed after the accident and the two-hour car ride to reach us. Another car ride for the evaluation would have only added to the bird's stress. After a brief calm-down period, the bird was x-rayed, and the pictures were emailed to Dr. Donato. No fractures were seen in the spine, pelvis, or legs. The bird was placed on pain and anti-inflammatory medication, given fluids, and started on nutritional supplements. A few days later, it was standing and getting stronger. After a few more days, the bird fully recovered and was returned to the nesting site, where the parents immediately began caring for it again.

One of Dr. Donato's specialties is avian orthopedics. He developed a pin and external fixator system that speeds the healing in leg and wing fractures. Following surgery, the bird should be x-rayed at least once a week to monitor healing. This resulted in multiple trips now avoided by monitoring directly from our center.

Many thanks to Andy Muller and Family and the Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad for this valuable gift. As Red Creek steps into the future, we continue to grow in offering the very best of care for the animals that need us. Maybe one day, I can still learn to talk with the animals so they can tell me their story. But in the meantime we have the diagnostic tools needed to discover that story inside and out. ♦



Eagle chick x-ray emailed to our veterinarian for evaluation

Wellness Corner

BY: MEGHAN FAUST, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SPECIALIST

Is It Just Sleep Deprivation?

We have all had days that are a little more sluggish than others. You know those days: one day, you are running the kids to practices or games, running errands, cleaning the house, doing yardwork, and making dinner and the next, you are so tired, you don't seem to have enough energy to get yourself moving, let alone doing all the projects that sit on the "honey-do" list. While a good reason could be that you are worn down from everything you did the day before or because you didn't sleep well, if you are experiencing frequent or chronic fatigue, there could be a much deeper cause.

Fatigue is a deep-rooted exhaustion that leaves you with a lack of energy and motivation, making daily tasks much more difficult. It is a very common symptom during short-term illness and usually goes away once the illness is gone. However, there are times that fatigue does not go away when you start feeling better and no amount of sleep or rest makes it subside either. There isn't one single cause for fatigue, but it can be a result of several different underlying conditions.

There can be three different types of causes for fatigue: medical conditions, medications, and lifestyle habits. Sleeping disorders, such as sleep apnea, are an obvious reason for feeling exhausted, but there are other medical conditions that contribute to having an extreme lack of energy. Anemia, or low iron levels, thyroid disorders, depression or anxiety, autoimmune diseases and chronic infections are all very common medical problems that can cause fatigue.

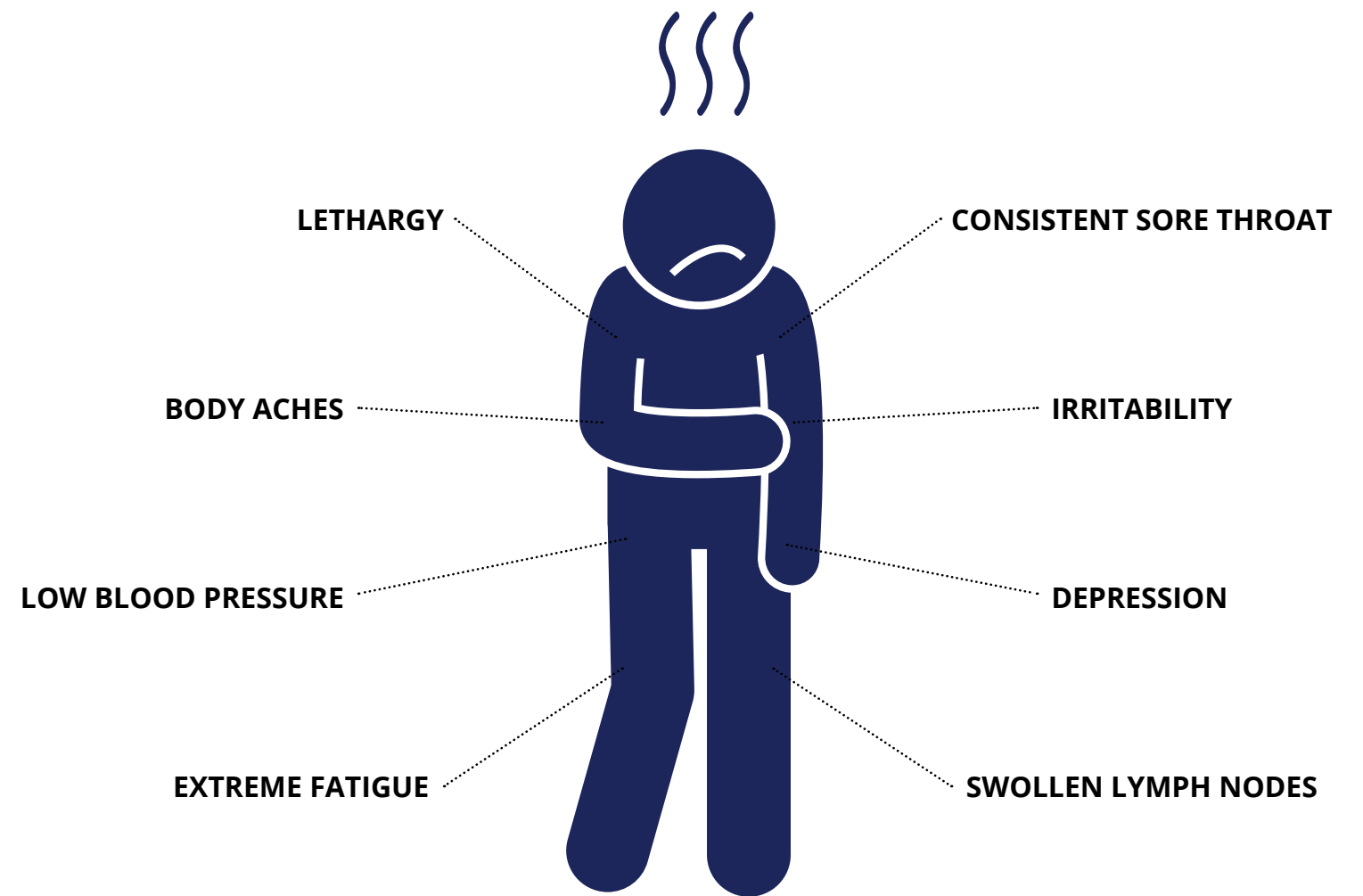
Some medications that you may be taking can also have tiredness as a side effect. Be sure to check the side effects of any medication you may be taking and if this is a concern, consult with your doctor to talk about your symptoms.

Your daily choices may also play a role in how fatigued you feel. Not only can poor sleep quality or lack of sleep play an important role in how energetic you feel, but so can a diet lacking in important nutrients, high stress levels, dehydration, and a lack of physical activity. If you've ever eaten a large meal and felt the "food coma" afterward, it is due to the shift in blood flow from your brain to your digestive system. Additionally, foods that are high in carbohydrates and fats can trigger the release of sleep and relaxation hormones, serotonin and melatonin. Alcohol can also be a major disruptor in sleep quality. REM sleep is the stage of sleep responsible for memory and emotional processing. Alcohol can severely suppress this stage of sleep and without sufficient REM, you're more likely to wake up feeling fatigued, no matter how many hours you lay in bed.

To combat chronic fatigue, getting regular exercise is crucial. Even though it sounds counterintuitive, getting enough exercise can increase your energy levels by boosting your cardiovascular health and improving the circulation of oxygen and nutrients in your body. Exercise also triggers the release of endorphins, the mood-boosting hormone, to help counteract the mental fog you may feel when you are fatigued. On average, adults should aim for at least 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise or 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise spread throughout the week according to the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.

Along with a regular exercise program, if you are experiencing fatigue, be sure to limit your alcohol intake and drink enough water throughout the day. Studies suggest that being dehydrated by just two percent can affect how well you focus, think, and remember information. The National Health Service recommends drinking six to eight cups of water a day to maintain general health. Smoking is also a major trigger for insomnia, leading to fatigue. The nicotine in tobacco speeds up heart rate, increases blood pressure, and stimulates brain-wave activity associated with wakefulness, making it more difficult to fall asleep. Overwork, stress, anxiety, and depression can all cause that severely exhausted feeling. Consider doing things that improve your mood, such as yoga, meditation, listening to music, spending time outdoors, talk therapy, getting a massage, dancing, or reducing your workload at home and at your job. Reducing stress in your personal and professional life can drastically improve how well you feel and how productive you are.

SYMPTOMS OF *Chronic Fatigue*



For more information, visit:

<https://newhealthjournal.org/news/low-energy-tired-fatigue-guide-quiz>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/symptoms/fatigue/basics/definition/sym-20050894>

<https://www.ncs.org/workplace/safety-topics/fatigue/fatigue-home>

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/9-tips-to-boost-your-energy-naturally>

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/wellbeing/boost-energy-levels>

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



P&G Kick-off celebration Andy Muller and John Hamm.