



LAUREL LINES

Celebrating 51 Years!



Vol 52, Issue 1 - January, 2025

A PUBLICATION OF THE LACKAWANNA AND WYOMING VALLEY RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC

Sperry Rail Service Detector Car # 118 Southbound on the D&H Penn Division at Thompson, PA.
Al Jacobson Photo from the Collection of Mike "Breezy" Bischak.



A.C.Jacobsen photo
Thompson, Pa.
Mike Bischak Collection

The Chapter Meeting will be held January 9th, 2025 in the Iron Skillet Restaurant at the Petro Truck Stop in Dupont, PA. Dinner is a-la cart at 6 PM (buffet not available). Meeting at 7 PM, program to follow.

This Month's Program:
A Presentation from Alex Strausser & Aiden Matkosky from RailCamp 2024

Mission Statement:

Through fellowship, community and educational outreach to affect rail preservation and appreciation of railroad history focusing on Northeastern Pennsylvania

Presidents Message

Well, after many weeks of preparation, the 2024 Holiday Trains to Moscow Train Station are history. The weather was appropriately cold (more hot chocolate sales) and on Friday, a small snow squall added to the festivities. I think adults and children alike had an enjoyable time. Santa was busy listening to the childrens' requests and the Grinch was a big hit. I would like to extend a *Big Thank You* to everyone who helped make the three days successful. I would especially like to thank the 12 first-time volunteers to the Holiday Trains. I hope you enjoyed yourselves and will be willing to come back for future events.

By the time you read this, the station will be shut down for the winter. Believe it or not, Spring will be just around the corner and the grass will start growing. Do you get the idea this is a never ending cycle? At this point we do not know what next season at the station will look like - hopefully more excursions!

Keep warm, drive safe and don't forget the Seasonal Reminder.

Vee Pauli, President

“DESTRUCTION OF A ‘HEAD HOUSE’ ON THE MOOSIC MOUNTAIN”

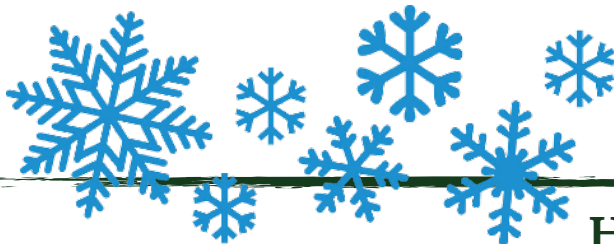
From *The New York Herald*, Jan. 20th, 1877

Submitted by Bob Young

“SCRANTON Pa., Jan. 10, 1877.

About one o'clock this morning the "head house" at No 8 plane of the Pennsylvania Coal Company Gravity Railroad, on the Moosic Mountains, seven miles east of this city, was destroyed by fire. The cost to the company and its' employees is a severe one, since it will compel the road and mines to be Idle until the house can be rebuilt. The burned building was located at the highest point of the steep plane, and was one of a series located at regular distances between Scranton and Hawley, in connection with the machinery used to draw coal and passenger trains of the company up the lone inclines which occur among those wild and rugged ridges of this picturesque mountain railroad

A tramp named Donnelly was seen in the engine house at eleven o'clock, and is supposed to have been burned to death in the building. It is thought that he turned on the draught of the stove to warm the room, then lay down to sleep and was overtaken by the flames. Another theory is that he set the house on fire and escaped. The company's loss will probably reach \$40,000. The Superintendent, John B. Smith, with a force of workmen. proceeded to the scene of destruction to-day and commenced preparations for building another engine house. This is the fourth engine house belonging to the company which has been burned on the Moosic Mountain Railroad within three years,



HUMOR ME

An office worker decided to make a News Year's Resolution to lose some weight. He took his new diet seriously. even changing his driving route to avoid his favorite bakery.

One morning, however, he arrived at work carrying a gigantic coffee cake.

“I accidentally drove by the bakery this morning,” he said,

“and there in the window were a bunch of goodies. I prayed, Lord, if you want me to have one of those coffee cakes, let me find a parking place right in front of the bakery.”

“Sure enough,” he continued *“the eighth time around the block there it was!”*

Minutes of the December 12th Monthly Chapter Meeting at 7pm Iron Skillet Restaurant, Dupont, PA

The meeting opened with a moment of silence for **Ken Gorski** who passed away in November. This was followed by the Pledge to the Flag led by President Vee Pauli.

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the November 2024 minutes as they appeared in the December 2024 *Laurel Lines*. **Treasurer Ed Zech** read the treasurer's report for November which was also moved, seconded and approved via voice vote.

Norm Barrett was absent therefore no report.

Calendar Committee: Jim Kilcullen reported that the photos have been selected for the 2026 calendar and have been sent out for enhancement.

Membership Committee: Ken Kertesz was absent but **Paul Hart** reminded members to please get their dues in ASAP.

Moscow Station: Station Director Roy Pauli thanked all the volunteers who helped with the Holiday Trains, as well as throughout the past year. The water will be turned off next Wednesday by Aqua PA, and then the plumber will be scheduled to winterize the station. Once those two things are accomplished, the station will be closed for the season. Roy expects to have an annual report for *Laurel Lines* prepared in the spring.

National Advisory Council Representative and VP Ed Fortuna reported we have raised enough money through donations and 50/50 raffle for one rail camper for next year, but hope to be able to send 2 campers. The Rail Camp application should be available in January 2025. He noted that our chapter number is C132. He reached out to National for a list of our members who are also members of National. The list -

includes 112 members, (*Vee's note: In scanning the list, quickly I noticed some names of deceased members as well as others who probably are not National members.*)

Ed strongly urged chapter members who are not members to National to consider joining National.

Laurel Lines: The *Laurel Lines* was mailed on December 6, 2024. Submit your information for the January issue to **Katie Bischak, Editor**, by December 19, 2024.

Katie noted that contrary to E mails circulating, she does not have the AV equipment in her possession for upcoming presentations for Chapter meetings. The AV equipment has not been acquired yet, and is still under discussion by the Board.

Chapter Historian and Program Director Neil Weinberg reported tonight's program is Members Choice Slides and next month our rail campers, Alex and Aiden, are scheduled to present a program on their adventures at 2024 Rail Camp.

Webmaster Alex Strausser reported the web site is up and working well.

Old Business

The Holidays Trains were successful. The actual passenger count was 468 for the three trains, 109 of which were youth. While the number was less than the original count we were given, those who made the trip to Moscow had a great time.

New Business

Steamtown gave post cards to the children on Friday and Saturday's trains (but none on Sunday). They made for a very active Letter Writing Table. Vee read some of the cards and letters and showed some of the drawings. She also told some of the things she overheard the kids telling Santa.

Paul Hart mentioned that Dave Laskowski, a railroader many chapter members knew, passed away December 11, 2024.

Everyone was wished a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and Happy Healthy New Year.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 PM. There were 30 in attendance.

The evening ended with Member's Choice presentations by Ed Koehler, Jim Kilcullen, Breezy Bischak, and Alex Strausser.

Respectfully submitted by Vee Pauli for Ken Kertesz, Secretary

LOOKING AHEAD TO RAIL CAMP 2025

Article submitted by Vice-President/NRHS Advisory Representative Ed Fortuna

In the NRHS News December 2024 edition, an article mentioned Rail Camp 2025 is underway. Plans are being made now and will be finalized by the end of December 2024. Applications will be available on January 1, 2025.

Rail Camp is open to boys and girls entering 9th grade to those graduating from twelfth grade. Camps fill up very fast and we have to let NRHS know in January 2025 who we would like to send to Rail Camp 2025. In June 2024, our Chapter sent two junior members, Aidan Matkosky and Alex Strausser. They both enjoyed the experience and learned there is a lot more to railroading than running trains.

The cost per rail camper in 2024 was \$1,575. No price has been mentioned yet for 2025, as it has to be finalized by the end of the year. The Chapter has been selling 50/50 chances at Chapter meetings with the proceeds going to our Rail Camp fund. Also, the Chapter has included a donation line on membership renewals, too.

With Rail Camp 2025 soon to be underway, we're asking our members to consider making a donation to benefit Rail Camp 2025. We would like to send two junior members in 2025. The more donations we receive, the less money individual campers have to raise. Donations are an investment in our junior members and not only the future of our chapter, but the future of the rail industry as well.

Our January 2025 program will be by our June 2024 rail campers, Aidan Matkosky and Alex Strausser. You will see and hear the experiences they both had. I think it's rewarding not only to the Chapter, but for the members who donated to Rail Camp to know we made it happen.

Some of the activities our junior members participated in with our Chapter in 2024 was cutting grass at Moscow station, helping with the station re-dedication, attending and planning the Chapter picnic and helping with the holiday trains. They are willing to help and assist wherever and whenever they can.

NRHS gave each of our rail campers a \$1000 scholarship towards their costs in 2024, however, their funding is limited and cannot always be counted upon. The Chapter appreciates any donations to make Rail Camp 2025 a memorable, lifelong experience for future campers from our Chapter.

Please send your Rail Camp donations to
Secretary Ken Kertesz, 30 Harford Avenue, Shavertown, PA 18708.

Thank you for your time and attention to this worthy cause.

Holiday FUN



ABOVE:

The Winner of the Train Raffle with Roy Pauli. He was sure glad his mom bought the ticket! - 12/1/24

ABOVE:

The Grinch and President Paul compare their Holiday Stanley's! - 11/30/24
Photo by Sarah Lester

BOTTOM:

Santa awaits the arrival of the children. 11/29/24
Photo By Vee Pauli

BOTTOM RIGHT:

Picking the winner of the Train Raffle, Roy Pauli and Ava B. Photo by her Grandfather - 12/1/24





ABOVE LEFT:

Santa & Mrs. Claus greet visitors at Steamtown with the B&O #26 on the turntable behind them.
Photo by Alex Strausser

ABOVE RIGHT:

The Lehigh Valley Heritage Santa Train continuing it's journey through Archbald, PA.
Photo by Mike "Breezy" Bischak



Seasonal Reminder

If the Scranton School District is closed for a snow day or goes to virtual class because of bad weather the chapter meeting is cancelled.

Any questions please contact
Vee Pauli - 570-344-9728.

**MY CAT "REGGIE" SAYS,
"HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!"**

*-Kat Bischak
Editor*



IS SCRANTON RAILWAY 107 PAINTED THE WRONG COLOR?

BY EDWARD M. KOEHLER

On October 5, 2024, I captured the left image of Scranton Railway 107 as it was the seventh entry in the Museum's Fall Spectacular 'parade' of trolley cars. As I looked at this image, I remember that I was told that this snow broom was painted in the wrong colors. The cover image of the 2025 Lackawanna and Wyoming

Valley Chapter NRHS calendar suggests that the paint scheme of the car may actually be correct!

But first, a little history. The 107 is a four wheel single truck double ended steeple cab snow sweeper built in the shops of the Chicago and Joliet Electric Railway by its Chief Mechanical Officer J.W. Fowler. This car was built using a Peckham truck as the number 99 of the Chicago and Joliet Electric Railway and was built to the standard gauge. The 99 served this Chicago area line until it was shut down during 1933 after which it was sold to the Scranton Railway as their 107. During 1934 the Scranton Railway Company was reorganized as the Scranton Transit Company. The 107 served in the 'Electric City' until December 19, 1954. The 107 was then acquired by the Rail City Museum in upstate New York, it was merely displayed by that organization. On the closure of Rail City, the 107 went to the Magee Transportation Museum in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. In 1972, Hurricane Agnes flooded the Magee Museum, forcing its closing. The 107 was then acquired by the Rockhill Trolley Museum during 1973 at the auction of Magee Transportation Museum assets.

Take a look at the image below - The enlarged, non-cropped photo appeared on the cover of the 2025 Lackawanna and Wyoming Valley Chapter Calendar. The image is taken from Mulberry Street and was acquired from the Ontario and Western Railway Historical Society's archives. I call your attention not to the steam locomotive in the foreground, but the Scranton Railway rail yard in the background.

Notice all the blue with white trim trolley cars except on the nearest track in the rail yard.

There appears to be a total of seven snow brooms in this picture. The five cars nearest to the photographer are orange with red trim, the same paint scheme as the 107 at Rockhill. The two furthest cars in the lineup are painted blue with a white stripe.

A review of Ben Rohrbeck's "SCRANTON'S TROLLEYS" shows that there were no less than ten snow brooms on the Scranton Railway Company roster; nine of the box body design and the steeple-cab 107. A picture in that book (page 83) shows the 107 in Scranton in the orange with red trim scheme.

So, is the 107 preserved in an incorrect paint scheme? Well, absent a photo of the car circa 1954, it is probably in the paint scheme that it finished its service life in Scranton. As an alternate answer, the car is in a scheme that it did carry during its existence here in the Electric City.



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Visit us online : <http://www.lwvrhs.org>

*Please Remember to Renew your
Membership with us for 2025!*

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