

Whistle Stop



Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum
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Preserving Our Region's Railroad Heritage

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Pictured above is WVRHS&M 's ex-N&W motor car W64075 which is being restored by member Terry Worley. Once completed, the motor car will be a fine addition to our future museum.

October 27th General Membership Meeting **** Safety and Car Host Training ****

The next General Membership Meeting of the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum will be held on October 27th, starting at 6:30 p.m., and located at the Johnson City Public Library, 101 West Millard St., Johnson City, TN. This meeting will be dedicated to Safety and Car Host Training for our November excursions. All workers are required to attend this meeting to be trained on the safety rules. The meeting is mandatory by AMTRAK; all attendee names will be turned into AMTRAK after the safety meeting. Besides the safety meeting, we will discuss details about the trip and other helpful items. **EVEN IF YOU'RE NOT WORKING THE TRAIN, YOU ARE WELCOME TO SET IN ON THE MEETING.** We look forward to seeing everyone at this very important meeting. We know many of you live a couple of hours away and we plan on getting everyone out of the meeting ASAP so you can get home at decent hour. We appreciate your willingness to work these trips and look forward seeing everyone.

Member Notes

By Nancy Jewel

Our sympathy is extended to Tony King and his family in the death of Tony's father, Bruce A. King, on September 24, 2014. Mr. King was a long-time employee of the Clinchfield/CSX Railroad.

Please keep the following folks in your thoughts as they deal with various concerns: Sidney Blankenbeckler, Carrie Denny, Bob May, Bob Yaple, Lois Tilley and her sister Grace Brink.

As always, let us know of any member, friend or family to whom a card might be sent or a phone call made. The office phone number is 423.753.5797 or call Nancy Jewell at 423.282.0918. Your help is always appreciated.

Spring Street Coach Yard Mechanical Report

By Bob Yaple

IN GENERAL: All cars now have their PC-1 inspections along with the ultra sound wheel testing and are certified for AMTRAK. All cars passed the UT (ultrasound) testing of wheels and axles except the Crescent Harbor which has a bad wheel with flat spots; another wheel has been ordered and will be swapped out before the Spencer excursions.

100 CLINCHFIELD business car: AMTRAK has notified Watauga Valley that Car 100 is a candidate for AMTRAKing. This means a lot of work is ahead for us. Plans on upgrades will be announced at a later date.

400 MOULTRIE diner: An extensive cleaning session was performed by the membership on Saturday, September 21. All systems are being checked out for the upcoming excursion season. The signage and a new paint job were done on the roof.

500 ST AUGUSTINE coach: All systems were checked out with the 500 for a busy autumn season before it left the yard. Trips for the cars include Thomas the Tank Engine (September); New River Train; Autumn Train at Spencer; and the Polar Express at the North Carolina Transportation Museum.

539 POWHATAN ARROW coach: 539 got a new Tuscan Red paint job before it headed out for a busy fall schedule. Trips for the car include Thomas the Tank Engine (September); New River Train; Autumn Train at Spencer; and the Polar Express at the North Carolina Transportation Museum.

2351 CRESCENT HARBOR sleeper / lounge: The Gen Set work is now complete and all systems checked out. Crescent Harbor had a wheel that failed the UT Testing and will be changed out during the week of October 20.

FALL EXCURSIONS

As of Press Time, Autumn Train Excursion tickets are close to selling out for all classes. Everyone is looking forward to a great weekend and some beautiful scenery. If you know of anyone who wants to purchase a ticket, please call 704-636-2889 ext. 237.

In the News



Future of NRHS Uncertain as Board Votes Down New Business Plan Proposal

Justin Franz, TRAINS News Wire, September 22, 2014 [Copied in its entirety but reformatted]

MOUNT LAUREL, N.J. – In what was described as a “long and tiring” meeting, the National Railway Historical Society's board of directors voted down a proposal to reinvent the group that some say is on the brink of extinction. While those who cast ballots against the New Business Model proposal say the NRHS will survive, those who supported it say its failure could signal the beginning of the end for the 80-year-old organization. The group met at the offices of its legal counsel in Mount Laurel, New Jersey on Saturday Sept. 20. According to attendees, the daylong board meeting covered a wide variety of topics, but mostly focused on the NRHS' financial standing, which has been described as “dire.”

The board also installed Al Weber, who was elected earlier this summer, as president to replace Greg Molloy, who has been at the helm of the organization since 1994. The sudden transition of power, which was originally set for November, came as a surprise to many, but supporters of Weber note that the NRHS by-laws call for a new president to be installed within a few weeks. Molloy however will remain on the board of the directors until November.

The final few hours of the meeting featured a debate and vote about the proposed New Business Model. The model proposed that the NRHS become a donor based organization that would solicit donations from members and outside parties that it would distribute to various preservation efforts. The group would also have worked on becoming a unified voice for rail preservation in the U.S., something the committee argued has been lacking nationally. The chapter model would have also been retired and existing chapters, as well as museums and other organizations, would have been invited to become affiliates that would operate independently of the NRHS. The board turned down the proposed business plan late Saturday, with 12 members voting against it and 10 voting for it.

“You have two groups of people on the board,” says board member and NRHS Bulletin editor Jeff Smith, who voted in favor of the proposal. “You have one group that is loyal to the chapter model and the idea of the NRHS remaining a fraternal group and a social group and you have another group who realizes the NRHS needs to change and the votes went along those lines.” Steve Barry, editor of *Railfan & Railroad*, has been a member of the NRHS for more than 30 years and an off-and-on member of the board of directors since the late 1980s. Barry was part of the five-person reinvention committee that created the proposal. He says he was disappointed with how the vote turned out and says that one of the reasons it failed is that some members didn't get a fair and balanced view of the plan. He also blamed the NRHS' own history.

“The NRHS has always been adverse to change, that's the way it's been for 80 years,” Barry says. “If the NRHS is still around a year from now I see it being in the exact same position it is today – struggling to make ends meet.” In 2013 the group lost \$72,000 and more than three times that amount the year before. Membership has also taken a hit and in 2013 the NRHS had 11,573 members, a 7.2 percent drop from the previous year.

Weber says the NRHS has the ability to stay afloat financially, telling *Trains News Wire* that many members have pledged donations to help the organization through its current financial crisis. Weber plans on spending his first week in office working with various vendors to ensure that they will stick with the NRHS for the time being. Weber voted against the New Business Model, but he says that there are parts of the plan that he hopes to implement in the coming weeks and months. He also says he is going to work on bringing the board back together to help stabilize the society.

“We all want the society to continue and all of us on the board are working to that goal,” Weber says. “Yes, some have had their feelings hurt and some think that we are not going t[he] correct way. But that has been the case on all the board[s] that I have been on over the years.” But Barry says it would be nearly impossible to implement parts of the new business [plan] without implementing all of it. Those who helped craft the new business plan said it would have brought the organization into the 21st century and helped modernize the organization. Smith believes those changes must happen sooner rather than later.

“I don't think the new leadership understands what they're facing and how to make the old model work,” Smith says. “They are reverting to a model where everyone licks envelopes and then puts stamps on those envelopes.” In previous interviews, Weber has said he too believes that the NRHS needs to modernize its system, however he also believes that some things should stay the same. “We will not change for the sake of changing but we'll change to improve our 80-year-old society,” Weber says.

NOTE: Additional information should be available after the NRHS Fall Conference, Advisory Council and Board of Directors' Meetings in Johnson City, TN on November 14-16, 2014

 *N&W 4-8-4 #611 Restoration Almost Halfway Complete*

The Virginia Museum of Transportation and the Fire Up 611! Committee is pleased to report that the restoration of the NORFOLK & WESTERN Class J 611 steam passenger locomotive is approximately 45 percent complete.

"We are pleased with the professionalism, technical expertise and passion our mechanical team and volunteers are bringing to this project," says Beverly T. Fitzpatrick, Jr., executive director of the Virginia Museum of Transportation.



Staybolt caps have been inspected, cleaned and are almost all installed.

In the next few weeks, the mechanical team, led by Scott Lindsay and Tom Mayer of Steam Operations Corp., will install a new rear flue sheet and finish installing the stay bolt caps. Bob Yuill is continuing the repairs to the superheater units. The air compressors are close to being reassembled and the feed water systems are being inspected and made road ready.

Work also continues on 611's tender. Within the next few weeks the tender's stoker screw and tender deck will be made as good as new.

The big question: When will she be ready to steam? With the restoration nearly 45 percent complete, all want to know the date when we can Fire Up 611! "We have not set a completion date just yet," says Preston Claytor, chairman of the Fire Up 611! Committee. "The mechanical team is making good progress and we still anticipate the 611 to be ready for Spring 2015 excursions."

 *GSMR 2-8-0 #1702 Update* [GSMR via Kati Phelps]

Things are moving right along at the GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS RAILROAD steam shop! The guys are preparing for a few days of sandblasting that will follow at the end of this week [9/24/2014]. The work has been focused on cutting the overhead crown bolts from the internal wrapper sheets, along with washing the rivets. Equipment has begun to arrive, ready to be put to use as everything moves forward.



 ***Chuckey Depot Report***

WVRHS&M has been notified by the Town of Jonesborough that plans are for the Jonesborough Railroad Museum to be up and running in Summer 2015. The Town apologized that this work has taken longer than expected, due to expenses; getting everything in order regarding the land; and the grant money not arriving until January.

 ***2015 WVRHS&M Officer and Board of Directors Election***

The following members will be on the ballot for the 2015 WATAUGA VALLEY RHS&M elections:

PRESIDENT - MIKE TILLEY **VICE PRESIDENT** - BOB SCHUBEL, NICK WHITE
SECRETARY - JIM SMALLWOOD **TREASURER** - JEANIE WALKER, DAN RING
HISTORIAN - GARY PRICE
BOARD of DIRECTORS - TONY KING, CLINE KNOWLES, PENNY MAY, SCOTT WISE

Ballots will be mailed out very soon. Candidate position statements received by Whistle Stop are appended to the end of this newsletter.

 ***Greenbrier Railroad Project Dies at Auction***

The dream of establishing luxury rail service between the nation's capital and the storied Greenbrier Resort in West Virginia - and of building that train in Pottstown, PA - died on the auction block on Thursday, September 18th. Ross Rowland, president and CEO of the *Greenbrier Express*, said the auction of the nine passenger cars, equipment, tools and railroad ephemera marked "the end of the Greenbrier Project."

Bidders, cell phones glued to their ears as they consulted with buyers, prowled the cement floor Thursday morning while a small crowd followed the bid call of the Blackmon Auction Company auctioneer as he made his way down the row of equipment, ranging from a pallet of fire extinguishers, to metal cabinets, to massive wheel trucks and suspension springs. Some of the cars had been gutted, "tunneled" in railroad lingo, down to the aluminum and steel floors and arched roof, while others still had elements of dining cars and sleepers

"That's less than a Honda Civic," the auctioneer joked as he tried to goose the bidding upward on the auction's main event, the nine passenger cars. With names like *Istanbul*, *Monterey* and *Grand Canyon*, the cars sold for as much as \$135,000 a piece to as little as \$10,500. That was what Chuck Jensen, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the M&E Railway in Morristown, NJ, paid for the last car, named *Paris*.

The Greenbrier Project had been bankrolled by Appalachian coal billionaire Jim Justice, the owner of the resort, as a way to attract more high-profile visitors to the resort and restore some glamour to rail travel. What killed the *Greenbrier Express* was economics, said Rowland. When the recession combined with the fall in the price of coal - due to Chinese competition, environmental regulations that closed older coal-burning power plants and competition from cheaper natural gas - the cash Justice had available to continue the project dried up.

[Evan Brandt, "The (Pottstown) Mercury", via "High Green", Chesapeake Railway Association]

Upcoming Events



OCTOBER 25th, 26th and NOVEMBER 1st: Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum's "Summerville Steam Special"
 Southern 2-8-0 #630 or 2-8-2 #4501 leads a trip from Chattanooga to Summerville, GA.

More information: <http://www.tvrail.com/pages/summerville-steam-special>



OCTOBER 25th, 26th: "New River Train": The Collis P. Huntington Railroad Historical Society is once again presenting the world-renowned New River Train excursions through the beautiful New River Gorge in southern West Virginia. As one of the newest national parklands, the "Grand Canyon of the East" along the New River is majestic and breathtaking in fall colors in mid to late October. It is during this peak autumn foliage time that our train traverses the former Chesapeake & Ohio mainline from Huntington, WV to Hinton, WV, allowing for a front-row seat to some of the most spectacular scenery in the country. See <http://www.newrivertrain.com/nrt.shtml>

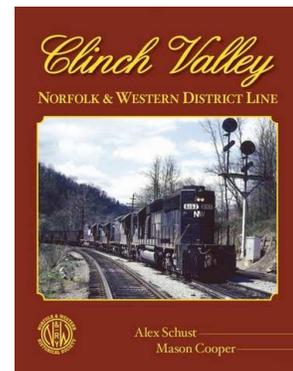


NOVEMBER 1st and 2nd, 2014: The very popular **Autumn Train Excursions**, co-hosted by WVRHS&M in conjunction with NCTM. Saturday, November 1, the train will travel from Spencer, NC to Charlottesville, VA and return. On Sunday, November 2, a roundtrip from Spencer to Toccoa, GA for their Fall Festival is scheduled. . Details can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/8bhqjhn>



NORFOLK SOUTHERN recently introduced a second heritage caboose. The NORFOLK & WESTERN herald compliments the newly rebuilt caboose #555006. [Gary Price]

The N&W Historical Society's book on the **N&W Clinch Valley District** is now shipping. For more information, go to <http://www.nwhs.org/commissary/books-nwhs.html>



Tony King

Candidate for Board of Directors

I am a 24 year member of the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society and Museum. I was brought into the chapter by the late Curtis Simmons, who paid my first year's dues for my high school graduation present in 1990. I started as a Car Host for a year, then served three years as a Safety Director during the Norfolk Southern steam excursions. I also served with the mechanical committee during the initial restoration of our Norfolk & Western P3 coach #539. I am a 21 year veteran at CSX Transportation, where I am currently a Locomotive Engineer in Erwin, TN. I am 2nd Vice Local Chairman, and safety representative, for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen Division 781. I was the engineer for the Watauga Valley's first Amtrak excursions on the former Clinchfield Railroad in 1997. I am very interested in our club's future. I think we should be progressive in our thinking and strive to keep our equipment the best that it can be. I am particularly interested in the future restoration of Clinchfield Office Car 100. I am very proud that we have that car, and I think it will be our showpiece. We have the best railroad historical group that I have ever been a part of, and I think we will be vital to preserving our area's rich railroad history in the years to come. Thank you for your consideration for the Board of Directors.

Cline Knowles

Candidate for Board of Directors

Cline Knowles is a retired computer programmer.

Cline is on the WVRHS&M Mechanical Team and can be found every Tuesday at the Spring Street Coach Yard helping to maintain our rolling stock. He is also a car rider when our rolling stock hits the rails around the country as he enjoys riding the rails.

Cline is a present Board member.

Scott Wise

Candidate for Board of Directors

Scott Wise is, and has been a Field Manager for BurWil Construction located in Bristol, TN for 33 years. Scott is a graduate of Ashford University's Forbe's School of Business holding a Bachelor's degree in Business Leadership and Organizational Management. December 7th of 1991, Scott was commissioned as a Pastor for the Holston Presbytery (PCUSA), and continues to serve as a temporary pulpit supply today. Scott and his wife Becky have participated as members of the Watauga Valley for many years, serving as dining host, ticket sells, souvenirs sells, car host, and other tasks as requested. Scott was one of the founding members of the Piney Flats Kiwanis Club, and President of other civic groups in the past. Scott enjoys the adventures of seeking out new railroad travel opportunities, and especially steam train excursions.

Penny May
Candidate for Board of Directors

Nick White
Candidate for Vice President

Want a team to represent you, we are that team! We are here to represent you, the members of Watauga Valley RHS&M. Penny May and Nick White have always and will continue to have an open door policy to hear your suggestions on how to make the Watauga Valley RHS&M the organization you want it to be.

Penny and Nick's combined service to the Watauga Valley RHS&M include but not limited to, Safety Director and Diner Director on the Fall Amtrak Trips, sitting on the bylaws committee that helped lay the foundation for the Watauga Valley RHS&M. Involved in the overall planning of Watauga Valley excursions. New Uniform redesign for the club. Taking care of the publicity needs of Watauga Valley through different media sources and actively trying to recruit new members. Working with other club members to create fun new van trips for the membership to get out and fellowship with one another.

In closing Penny and Nick ask for your vote for Penny as Board of Director, and Nick as Vice President in the upcoming election. Let's make Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum "THE PLACE TO BE".

Bob Schubel
Candidate for Vice President

Bob has been a member of the Watauga Valley for over 25 years. Bob has been Vice President and CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD for over 10 years. Has the experience to lead the chapter down the right road of success. He has been on many WVRHS&M committees through out the years helping direct the WVRHS&M the right directions.

Bob has been a business man all his life working up North and coming to Greeneville working many businesses throughout the area. His greatest experience is working with people since he has been in the real estate business for years.

VOTE FOR EXPERIENCE IN THE WVRHS&M
VOTE BOB SCHUBEL VICE PRESIDENT.

Dan Ring **Candidate for Treasurer**

I am Dan Ring and I have been nominated for the 2015 office of Treasurer for Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum. I have been asked to provide the following list outlining my credentials for this position:

- Became a Certified Public Accountant in 1987 (currently non-practicing status)
 - Currently employed as accountant for DTR of Tennessee, Inc. - an approximately \$500 million subsidiary of a multi-billion multi-national corporation in the auto industry
 - Have been a public auditor with one of the largest accounting firms in the world
 - Have an accounting background in the Financial, Service and Manufacturing segments of business
 - Graduated from the University of Cincinnati with a Bachelors Degree in Accounting
-

Jeanie Evans Walker **Candidate for Treasurer**

Jeanie has been a long standing member and hard worker of the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum (and the NRHS Chapter) for 26 years. She has a love for trains and understands what is needed to keep the WVRHS&M strong.

Duties over the years:

1. Has been the WVRHS&M treasurer for 4 years.
2. Souvenir & Concession Chairman on Excursions for nearly 25 years.
3. Purchasing Agent for WVRHS&M for our excursions, spending countless hours traveling to different stores to get the best price.
4. Takes care of stocking and arranging the supplies in the white trailer at the WVRHS&M coach yard, and constantly keeps up with the heavy demands from the WVRHS&M Mechanical Department in keeping money available for everyday purchases
5. Keeps all the office equipment in the WVRHS&M office stocked with supplies.
6. Serves as the Administrative Assistant to President Mike Tilley, helping with the everyday WVRHS&M operations. Interacts with officers and board members to keep the financial side of the organization operating smoothly.
7. Works closely with the WVRHS&M CPA to get our yearly reviews done.

BACKGROUND

Over the years worked at businesses around the area as administrative assistant and many other duties in the office. Worked on Church Staffs around the area. Volunteers in organizations in the Tri-Cities.

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Opinions or viewpoints are those of the writer and may not necessarily reflect those of the organization members, officers or directors. Items of interest are welcome and will be credited to the author; however, because of space constraints, all submissions are subject to editing. Permission to reprint *Whistle Stop* articles with the exception of photographs is granted if proper credit is given. Reuse of photographs must receive permission by the editor and the photographer.

Fred Waskiewicz, Editor



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME VALUE MATERIAL