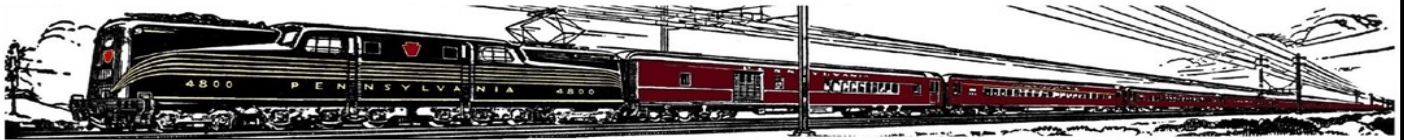


# LANCASTER DISPATCHER

1935-2024



LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC., NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 57 NUMBER 12

DISTRICT 2—CHAPTER WEBSITE: WWW.NRHS1.ORG

DECEMBER 2024





*'twas the night before Christmas...*

...And this little miss asleep in a cozy roomette, her stocking hung high in great expectation, symbolizes the spirit you find aboard Pennsylvania Railroad's great East-West Fleet at this season of the year. Step into cars aglow with good cheer and good fellowship . . . glance at the array of beribboned gifts heaped high in racks and rooms. Stroll

into the Dining Car and enjoy the festive foods of the day . . . get a good night's sleep in a comfortable bed—arrive refreshed. And above all, enjoy the peace of mind that comes from knowing your train will get you there—conveniently, and at low cost. All aboard . . . to a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

## PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD

 *Serving the Nation* 



## Railway News Flash

By Steve Ferrell

Gathered from press releases and revised for this publication

**December, 2024**

Septa has awarded the first of three critical construction contracts for the Zoo to Paoli Electrification Line Program. HNTB was selected for the project and construction management support for the substation at Bryn Mawr and the Bryn Mawr to Paoli segment of the project. This task will upgrade the electrification system along an 18-mile section of track between the Zoo substation in Philadelphia and the Paoli Substation in Chester County.

On October 27th, The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) together with the New York Transit Museum celebrated the 120th anniversary of the New York City subway system by hosting two vintage train rides along portions of the city's first ever subway route. The 1917 Lo-V subway cars departed from the decommissioned Old South Ferry Station and traveled north along the 1,2 and 3 lines to the Bronx before returning via the Lexington Avenue 4,5 and 6 lines.

The MTA unveiled the new state-of-the-art 4200 horsepower locomotives that will replace Metro North Railroad's existing fleet used for trains to Poughkeepsie, Southeast, Danbury and Waterbury. With a model number of SC42-DM, these new electric and diesel-powered locomotives by Siemens Mobility North America will travel much farther under electric power than their predecessors and are rated Tier IV compliant, slashing airborne pollutants by more than 85% while in diesel mode.

The members of Transport Workers Union Local 234 voted unanimously in favor of authorizing a strike effective November 7th when their current contract expires. A septa spokesman said the agency has been working to reach an agreement but the funding crisis it is experiencing has been a major crisis in negotiations. As of this writing, it appears that the three unions have agreed to tentative contracts.

Another step in the long-running effort to launch Amtrak service between Mobile, Alabama and New Orleans are set for Tuesday, October 22, 2024. U.S. Transportation Secretary, Pete Buttigieg and other officials will take part in a ceremony for an Amtrak layover track and platform in Mobile.

November 18th, 2024: Amtrak marked the completion of the Harrisburg-Lancaster Keystone line track project. This is a \$122 million, eight-month undertaking that rebuilt the Harrisburg-Lancaster portion of the route. Forty-three miles of track were replaced along with the installation of 113,000 concrete ties. Thanks to Dan Cupper for this item.

Amtrak has received funding for thirteen northeast corridor related projects, including expanding and modernizing major stations, such as New York's Penn Station and Washington's (DC) Union Station and Baltimore's Penn Station. Also supported in this funding is renewing rail infrastructure and support systems, plus replacing aging bridges. From Dan Cupper – The Horseshoe Curve's funicular has finally reopened after a \$150,000 overhaul. Mechanical, electronic, software updates end a nearly five-year delay. A final inspection by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry on Friday, November 1st, gave the all-clear to reopen the ride to the public.

East Broad Top (EBT) Foundation has been awarded a \$1.6 million grant to restore two steel bridges on a portion of the narrow gauge East Broad Top tourist railroad's dormant main line. SMS Rail Service's heritage rail operation, Woodstown Central's Alco 0-6-0 Steam locomotive No. 9 is set to debut on November 30th to power "Santa Claus Excursions" for this tourist railroad.

**THIS MONTH ON THE PENNSY****PRR, PRSL & LIRR EVENTS IN DECEMBER**

Source: Pennsylvania Railroad Technical & Historical Society (permission of Christopher Baer, PRRT&HS).

December 29, 1920 PRR establishes Employee's Representation Plan for engine & train service employees (the four Brotherhoods); plan has elements of a company union, with grievances being heard by a committee composed of half labor and half management representatives; labor members are elected at the local level without regard to union status; Joint Reviewing Committees exist at Divisional, General Divisional and System levels to handle appeals; later extended to other trades.

December 15, 1925 First LIRR diesel, No. 401, Class AA2, a 600 HP GE/Ingersoll-Rand switcher, leaves Erie Plant for New York.

December 15, 1930 PRR begins program to allow vacationers using long distance trains to Southern resorts to ship their automobiles by preferred freight train at special rate of 4 cents per mile; primarily aimed at luring persons who drive to Florida to take the train; fare is five rail tickets for car and two persons; autos are to be shipped 7 days in advance of passenger departures.

December 27, 1930 Last passenger train operates between Downingtown and Lancaster, Pa., via New Holland.

December 7, 1935 The *Congressional* celebrates 50th anniversary; ceremonies include cutting a birthday cake in the Penn Station dining room before southbound departure.

December 6, 1940 Train "MAIN 7929" consisting of a baggage car, 6 tourist sleepers, and one standard sleeper departs Fort Dix for Fort Niagara, N.Y., with 11 officers and 234 draftees; runs via Harrisburg to the NYC at Canandaigua, N.Y.; one of the first big moves of inductees that will soon turn into a flood; "MAIN" stands for "Military Authorization Identification Number."

December 13, 1945 One millionth returning soldier passes through Camp Kilmer on PRR troop train.

December, 1945 PRR monthly passenger revenue highest on record.

December 11, 1950 PRR leases three 2-8-4's (Nos. 573, 576, 580) and nine 4-8-4's (Nos. 551-555, 601-604) from the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad for short-term use.

December, 1955 Last Class G5s No. 5741 retired for display; all others scrapped prior to Oct. 31, 1955.

During 1955 GG1's Nos. 4886, 4872 and 4880 are repainted in a short-lived new scheme with a silver body and a single red stripe with a large red keystone on the sides; No. 4885 is painted in Brunswick green with a single buff stripe and large red keystone, which becomes the new standard to reduce the cost of painting; Nos. 4907 and 4916 are painted Tuscan red with a single buff stripe.

December 11, 1960 Heavy snow storm hits New York-Philadelphia area; 14.6 inches in Philadelphia; PRR forced to hire 1,000 maintenance of way workers.

December 27, 1960 PRR accepts GE No. 4400, first of 66 Class E44 4,400 HP C-C electric freight locomotives; first 36 have ignitron rectifiers; last PRR electric locomotives; replace last P5a's, FF2's, and some GG1's in freight service.

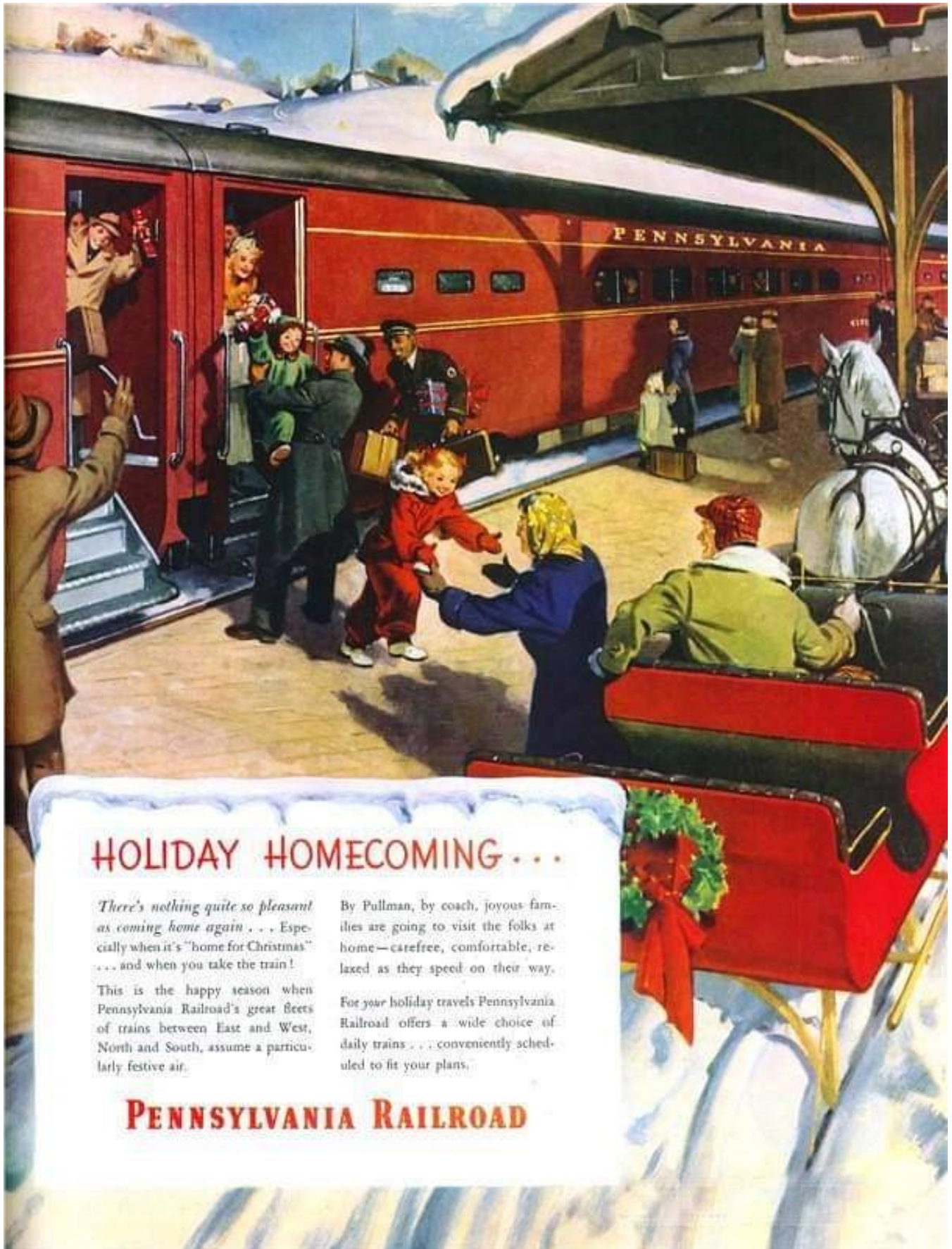
December 3, 1965 Philadelphia-Parkesburg and Lancaster-Harrisburg commuter trains make last runs.

December 5, 1965 "Silverliners" assigned to all local trains between Philadelphia and Harrisburg under new SEPTA program; schedule increased from 3 to 8 round trips with SEPTA funding; time cut from 2:00 to 1:45; 600-series Harrisburg trains take over Philadelphia-Parkesburg and Lancaster-Harrisburg commuter traffic; separate Lancaster-Harrisburg and Philadelphia-Parkesburg commuter trains discontinued.



PRR P-5A 4765 at Paoli in January, 1936 Chicago-New York "*The Rainbow*."  
Photo Credit: Lancaster Chapter member John J. Bowman Jr., collection of Fred Schneider III.





## HOLIDAY HOMECOMING . . .

*There's nothing quite so pleasant as coming home again . . . Especially when it's "home for Christmas" . . . and when you take the train!*

This is the happy season when Pennsylvania Railroad's great fleets of trains between East and West, North and South, assume a particularly festive air.

By Pullman, by coach, joyous families are going to visit the folks at home—carefree, comfortable, relaxed as they speed on their way.

For your holiday travels Pennsylvania Railroad offers a wide choice of daily trains . . . conveniently scheduled to fit your plans.

## PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

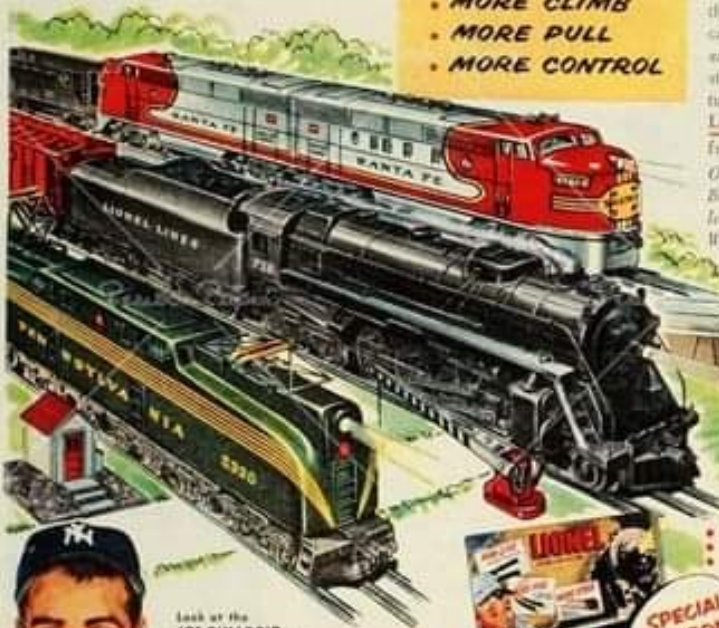
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## Perhaps you shouldn't "Ride with me Steve", or the trip with a hiccup!

By Steve Ferrell

I had a great plan that really looked to be exciting when we departed. We were heading up the Hudson River to Poughkeepsie to see the fall foliage and tour the 22 stories high Walkway over the Hudson. The weather was about 50 degrees and clear as seventeen riders departed southeastern Pennsylvania for New York! Arriving at Moynihan Hall of Penn Station, we grabbed snacks and caught our Empire Service train that went all the way to Niagara Falls, with our stop being Poughkeepsie. Amtrak placed the majority of the Poughkeepsie riders in the last passenger car before the café car to simplify things

The way up was incredible! After exiting the tunnel our locomotive switched from electric to diesel operation, the line traversed up Manhattan's west side and past the George Washington Bridge and Spuyten Duyvil, where the Harlem River flows into the Hudson. The water was gleaming with sailboats, ferries, barges and freighters heading to and from Albany. Heading upriver we saw the impressive cliffs of the New Jersey Palisades.



**The Palisades of New Jersey on the west bank of the Hudson- Photo by George Rowell**

The newer replacement for the Tappan Zee Bridge, now called the Mario Cuomo Bridge soon came into view

Continuing up the Hudson, we notice lots of barge and freighter traffic and a couple of beautiful sailboats and motor yachts. Passing Sing-Sing Prison (a maximum-security facility), the group joked about placing me in line for immediate incarceration. (It is interesting to note that the prison's property is bisected by the four track Metro North Hudson Line).



**Sing-Sing – Photo by John Smith**

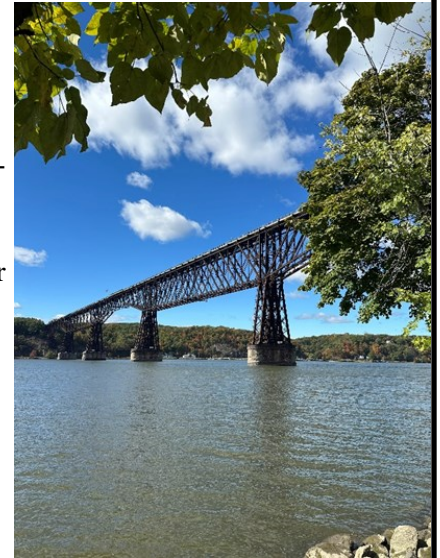
As we traveled northbound, the fall foliage was increasing in intensity – but not quite peak yet. Bear Mountain and the Bear Mountain Bridge came into view along with a short tunnel for our train. It was a very comfortable ride on Amtrak and this train had a café car at the rear for anyone needing a drink or a pre-lunch snack. We then noted that West Point came into view. Its massive buildings climbing the west bank of the Hudson impressed everyone. We also saw the eerie ruins of Bannerman Castle on an island in the river and it was quite mysterious looking. The building which was built in 1901, was used by Bannerman to store munitions as well as other materials.

### Perhaps you shouldn't "Ride with me Steve", or the trip with a hiccup! (continued)

Soon the Mid-Hudson Bridge and the separate (to the north) Walkway over the Hudson bridge came into view and we coasted into the classic Poughkeepsie station and detrained. Most of the "Ride with me Steve" trips include a meal at a favorite or interesting new restaurant. We walked through the parking lot to Mahoney's Irish Grill, a favorite of mine during my previous three trips to Poughkeepsie. They sat the group together and gave us our own wait staff! After having a scrumptious lunch, we walked to the elevator of the Walkway and lo and behold we were surprised; it was closed for the day due to bridge construction and elevator maintenance!



Left, At Mahoney's Irish Pub  
– taken by our waitress with  
John Smith's phone



Walkway over the Hudson –  
Photo by Dan Murray

Several of our group walked the ¾ mile hill through town to the beginning of the walkway and found that the walkway itself on the east side only was closed for construction. (It would take about a half hour uber ride to reach the west side, so we wouldn't make our return train in time if we did that.) A few of the hardy folks that tried the climb only made it halfway before turning around and giving up as the walk was such a steep climb.

After walking around the riverside park and taking pictures, we returned to the train station to check out the classic vintage train station. We purchased our Metro-North tickets for our ride to Grand Central and soon boarded the waiting train. This was a slower trip than Amtrak was coming up (as Metro-North makes many more stops), but this return ride offered a better connection.



Above, Tanker heading southbound from Albany –  
Photo by George Rowell.



Right, Poughkeepsie, NY Station –  
Photo by Dan Murray

Arriving at Grand Central Terminal, several of our riders took a short tour of the impressive restored concourse after which we boarded the Grand Central Shuttle subway and then transferred to the red line subway for Penn Station, just one stop away. Arriving at Moynihan Hall, a few of our riders had passes for the Metropolitan Lounge where we enjoyed drinks, craft sodas, snacks and sandwiches.

Soon, our Keystone Service was announced and we boarded and departed for our home stations. While people were disappointed that the trip didn't include the walk over the Hudson, they all said they all thoroughly enjoyed themselves and look forward to trying again to do the Walkway over the Hudson!



## Railroad Slogans

Aberdeen & Rockfish Railroad – “The Route of Personal Service”  
Akron, Canton & Youngstown Railroad – “Ohio’s Road of Service”  
Alaska Railroad – “McKinley National Park Route”  
Alton Railroad – “The Only Way”  
Apalachicola Northern Railroad – “Port St. Joe Route”  
Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway – “Ship and Travel Santa Fe, All the Way”  
Atlanta & St. Andrews Bay Railroad – “The Bay Line”  
Atlantic Coast Line Railroad – “Thanks for Using Coast Line”  
Bangor & Aroostook Railroad – “Serving Northern Maine”  
Boston & Maine Railroad – “Minuteman Service”  
Canadian National Railway – “Serves All Canada”  
Canadian Pacific Railway – “World’s Most Complete Transportation System”  
Chesapeake & Ohio Railway – “C and O for Progress”  
Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad (Burlington Route) – “Everywhere West”  
Chicago & North Western Railway – “Route of the 400’s and the Streamliners”  
Chicago, Milwaukee, Saint Paul & Pacific Railroad (Milwaukee Road) – “Route of the Hiawathas”  
Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad (Rock Island) – “Route of the Rockets”  
Conrail – “Keep it Moving with Conrail”  
Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad (Rio Grande) – “The Action Road”  
Delaware & Hudson Railway – “The Bridge Line to New England and Canada”  
Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad – “The Route of Phoebe Snow”  
Florida East Coast Railway – “Speedway to America’s Playground”  
Great Northern Railway – “Route of the Empire Builder”  
Illinois Central Railroad – “Mainline of Mid-America”  
Lehigh Valley Railroad – “Route of the Black Diamond”  
Long Island Rail Road – “Route of the Dashing Commuter”  
Louisville & Nashville Railroad – “The Old Reliable”  
Maine Central Railroad – “The Pine Tree Route”  
Minneapolis, Saint Paul and Sault Saint Marie Railroad – “The Soo Line”  
Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad – “The KATY”  
Missouri Pacific Railroad – “Route of the Eagles”  
Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway – “The Dixie Line”  
New York Central Railroad – “The Water Level Route – You Can Sleep”  
New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad (Nickel Plate Road) – “Nickel Plate High Speed Service”  
Norfolk & Western Railway – “Precision Transportation”  
Northern Pacific Railway – “Main Street of the Northwest”  
Pennsylvania Railroad – “Standard Railroad of the World”  
Pittsburgh & Lake Erie Railroad – “Serves the Steel Centers”  
Reading Railroad – “Bee Line Service”  
Rutland Railroad – “Green Mountain Gateway”  
St. Louis Southwestern Railway (Cotton Belt) – “Blue Streak Fast Freight”  
Saint Louis-San Francisco Railway (Frisco) – “Ship it on the Frisco!”  
Seaboard Air Line Railroad – “Through the Heart of the South”  
Southern Railway – “Southern Serves The South”  
Southern Pacific Railroad – “The Friendly Southern Pacific”  
Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway – “The Northwest’s Own Railway”  
Toledo, Peoria & Western Railway – “Links East and West”  
Wabash Railroad – “Follow The Flag”  
Western Maryland Railway – “The Fast Freight Line”  
Western Pacific Railroad – “The Feather River Route”

### Lancaster Chapter 2025 Dues - Renew Now

**Mail to:** H. L. SHAAK, JR  
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**Make check payable to: LANCASTER CHAPTER NRHS**

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2024 Chapter dues \$20.00 – plus \$2.00 if you have a family member \_\_\_\_\_

Student Dues – ages 13 to 24 \$ 10.00 or Youth ages 05 – 12 \$5.00 \_\_\_\_\_

PAPER COPY OF NEWSLETTER - \$12.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Donation to Lancaster Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

**Total amount of check payable to Lancaster Chapter NRHS \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**LAST DATE FOR RENEWING 2025 MEMBERSHIP IS APRIL 30, 2025!!**

**DO NOT ADD YOUR NATIONAL DUES TO YOUR LANCASTER CHAPTER CHECK!  
INCLUDE YOUR NATIONAL DUES NOTIFICATION LETTER FROM NATIONAL WITH  
YOUR CHECK**

If you would like us to forward your National Dues, **please make a 2<sup>nd</sup> check payable to NRHS**

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Student Dues – ages 13 to 24 \$ 16.00 or Youth ages 05 – 12 \$5.00 \_\_\_\_\_

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**Total amount of check payable to NRHS \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Questions: Contact Helen Shaak 717-484-4020 – email [hshaak@dejazzd.com](mailto:hshaak@dejazzd.com)

"INSIDE THE BACK PAGE"  
UPCOMING LANCASTER CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

DECEMBER 5, 2024 - THURSDAY, 7:00 PM CHRISTMAS DECORATING AT THE CHRISTIANA FREIGHT HOUSE

DECEMBER 15, 2024 - SUNDAY, 5:30 PM ANNUAL CHAPTER CHRISTMAS PARTY  
 AT CHRISTIANA FREIGHT HOUSE  
 10 RAILROAD AVENUE, CHRISTIANA, PA

Members are requested to bring a covered dish and place setting. Beverages will be provided.

**Annual Chapter Banquet—November 22nd, 2024**



**A special thank you to our guest speaker, Mr. Don Fisher, President of The Railroad Museum of Long Island. Don spoke on the early years of the Long Island Railroad and it's ownership by the Pennsylvania Railroad.**

**Chapter Election Results**

Congratulations and *thank you* to our officers for 2025:

Tom Shenk - President  
 Harold "Smoke" Shaak - 1st Vice President  
 Glenn Kendig - 2nd Vice President  
 Tom Fluck— Secretary  
 Richard Rutledge - Treasurer  
 John V. Smith—Historian

Chapter member Dennis Allen of Quarryville, passed away unexpectedly on November 11, 2024, He was the beloved husband of Susan M. (Pleger) Allen, with whom he shared 43 years of marriage. Putting together trips around the world by cruise ship, bus, or train for Armstrong World Industries Lab Association and the Lancaster Chapter NRHS was Dennis' passion. His reward for the trips he organized was seeing his plans come together and having fellow colleagues, railroad fans, family, and friends experience new places and cultures. Dennis felt he was very blessed to have traveled to at least 102 countries.

Acknowledgement: We would like to thank Katelyn Harro, who completed a required non-profit 501(c)(3) college volunteer project for the Lancaster Chapter freight station. Katelyn applied 12 hours of labor, on October 25th and 26th, to assist in cleaning 50 hard dining-area chairs plus another 75 padded chairs. She is the grand-daughter of Stephen and Linda Himpsl.

*Happy  
 Holidays*

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**NEXT CHAPTER MEETING**

**LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC., N.R.H.S.  
 DECEMBER 15, 2024– SUNDAY, 5:30 PM  
 ANNUAL CHAPTER CHRISTMAS PARTY  
 CHRISTIANA FREIGHT HOUSE  
 10 RAILROAD AVENUE  
 CHRISTIANA, PA 17509**

LANCASTER CHAPTER, INC.  
 NATIONAL RAILWAY  
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
 10 RAILROAD AVENUE  
 CHRISTIANA, PA 17509-1416  
 PHONE: 717-917-5137  
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