

# Whistle Stop



Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum  
P. O. Box 432, Johnson City, TN. 37605-0432  
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[www.wataugavalleyrrhsm.org](http://www.wataugavalleyrrhsm.org)



Preserving Our Region's Railroad Heritage

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Santa has traded in that clunky old eight-reindeer-powered sleigh for the comfort of the rails. We also suspect the head end power has a little more oomph to it. Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum wishes you and yours a **very, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**

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## *No December General Membership Meeting*

Don't forget that there will not be a General Membership Meeting this month due to the holidays. We'll see you at our next meeting on January 28, 2019.

## *Member Notes*

*by Edna Kay Carter, Membership Chairperson*

Please continue to remember all of those who have lost loved ones during this year. Keep the following in your thoughts and prayers as they deal with various health concerns. They are Nancy Jewel, Gary Price, Bob Schubel, Gail Zimmerman, Tom Phelps, Sharon Slagle, Anita Worley, Gary Street, Bob Mushet and Sharon Eaton. 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 number is 423-753-5797 or call Edna Carter at 423-571-4612.

Welcome new member Carey Lynn Holtsclaw.

Wishing all of you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

## *WVRHS&M News*

### **2019 OFFICER AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS**

The Nominating Committee reports that the following were elected as 2019 Officers and Directors:

Mike Tilley – President	Bob Schubel – Vice President	Jeanie Walker – Treasurer
James Smallwood – Secretary	Historian – Gary Price	Board of Directors – Art DeVoe, Megan Kegley

Welcome aboard and thank you in advance for your service.

### **WATAUGA VALLEY CHRISTMAS GALA**

Great food, fun and fellowship were had by all at the Watauga Valley Annual Christmas Dinner on Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at the Food City Depot Banquet Room in Johnson City. There were approx. 90 plus attendees packing the house. President Mike Tilley conducted a short business meeting, followed by Gary Price presenting an entertaining program on his experiences working with Norfolk Southern for 20 years. Great food and fellowship. If you missed this event, you missed a good time. Photos on page 4.

### **WEB SITE REDESIGN**

Work is underway to redesign our museum's web site. Look for a refreshing, improved new site that you'll not only be able to access from your desktop and laptop but also easier to navigate from your mobile devices. The goal is to have it up and running next month.

### **2019 Membership Dues**

The 2019 dues notices were sent out last month; please return your dues and payment by December 31, 2018 before your current membership expires. Dues are:

Individual Membership	\$20.00
Family Membership	\$5.00 per family member

Membership benefits include: full membership and privileges in the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum; 12 issues of the "Whistle Stop", the WVRHS&M newsletter; and participation in all WVRHS&M functions.

# Mechanical Team Report

by Jim Magill

## ROLLING STOCK

**“Powhatan Arrow” coach (WATX 539), “St Augustine” coach (WATX 500), “Crescent Harbor” sleeper / lounge (WATX 2351), and “Moultrie” diner (WATX 400):** In Spencer for the Christmas Poplar Express trains out of the North Carolina Transportation Museum.

**“Clinchfield 100” office car (WATX 100):** Major interior work is ongoing for Car 100. The bedroom walls are being torn out along with electrical upgrades. Pictures below give just a hint of the major work being undertaken.



David Denny removing bedroom doors.



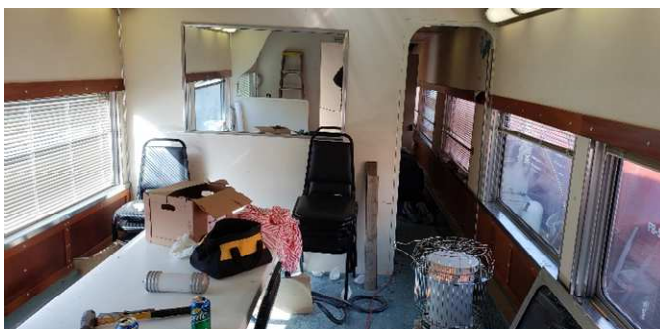
Gary Lombardi removing commode.



Art Devoe and Jim Sutterlin working in the CRR General Managers’ bedroom.



Jim Smallwood at work on the bedroom wall.



New work room for 100. Here is where new windows in frame are being installed.



Waiting room space for dining room is temporary workspace.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!** An extra pair of hands always comes in handy as there’s plenty of work for all skill levels. And what a unique opportunity to help remodel this historic railroad car. If interested, call us at 423-753-5797.



## *Chuckey Depot & Rail Museum*

Attendance at the Chuckey Depot/Museum has been very good during the holidays in Jonesborough. We have about 78 Watauga Valley members that have taken the training host session to work the depot. We plan on having another class in January and already have several signed up for it. If you would like to volunteer a day a month at the depot, please email [wataugavalley@embargmail.com](mailto:wataugavalley@embargmail.com) or phone 423-753-5797 to get signed up. Everyone that host enjoys volunteering at the depot.

The December 18<sup>th</sup> Santa Caboose event at the Depot was a big hit for the Watauga Valley Railroad Historical Society & Museum and the Town of Jonesborough. We had a large group visiting that including parents and children in just 4 hours. We want to thank all WVRHS&M members that helped with this event and especially Junior and Gwen Risner who performed wonderfully as Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus both days.

## *Photo Gallery ...*



90 membes and guest enjoyed tasty food, wonderful fellowship and a good time at this year's Christmas Meal gathering.



And that was not all. We were treated to an entertaining talk from Gary Price on his time and experience while working with NORFOLK SOUTHERN

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*Visit us on our Facebook page for more great photos and videos.*

## *In the News ...*

### *WVRHS&M Excursion Update*

We've scheduled our Spring 2019 Excursion for Saturday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019 on the Great Smoky Mountain Railroad, operating the full length of the GSMR from Dillsboro, NC to the Nantahalla Gorge and return. Visit the WVRHS&M web site [www.wataugavalleynrhs.org](http://www.wataugavalleynrhs.org) in January for more information. Online ticket sales will begin January 15<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm on that site. Sign up to host the trips will begin at our January General Membership meeting.

### *CSX Is Not Ruling Out a Merger*

CSX CEO Jim Foote said he would not rule out a merger with another Class I railroad. The comments, made at Credit Suisse's 6th Annual Industrials Conference, followed a question by analyst Allison Landry on whether the company would consider joining up with Union Pacific or Norfolk Southern to help the two railroads implement precision scheduled railroading [PSR, see <https://tinyurl.com/y8ncjspe>]. "I am of the camp we'd have to weigh the two and see if there was true value that came out at the end of the day," Foote said. "To do that you need two willing partners to dance."

When Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern announced they would implement "principles" of the PSR model, one question loomed large: Who would lead the charge. In the past, every railroad that implemented PSR did so under the leadership of the late Hunter Harrison, who brought the model to Illinois Central, Canadian National, Canadian Pacific and most recently CSX. But it was a merger that first brought PSR to the big leagues: Canadian National bought Illinois Central, and Hunter Harrison, to help replicate the small railroad's success at Class I railroading scale. A new merger is not inconceivable as the remaining Class I railroads look to adopt the model.

"I have been in the business a long time and I think there were 50 Class I's when I started," Foote said. He added the wave of mergers that led the industry to have just seven Class I's have improved service, freight networks and efficiency. "And one could make the argument that another consolidation would prove beneficial from a pragmatic standpoint." One of the biggest benefits to a merger, Landry suggested before asking CSX the merger question, would be securing talent from competitors. Landry noted there are a limited number of individuals in the industry with significant experience with PSR. Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern may need to find a way to acquire these to succeed, which a merger could provide. But in its most recent earnings call, Union Pacific suggested it was not concerned about the talent question.

"When you think about the expertise that we have in-house on PSR, we do have employees, some at high levels like a Cindy Sanborn [a regional vice president at Union Pacific] who is now going to be running the entire northern region of the network, along with others, particularly in the operating team and also in the network planning and optimization team who have experience and in some cases deep experience in PSR," said Union Pacific CEO Lance Fritz.

Union Pacific has stated it expects to achieve \$500 million in productivity from its transition to PSR. Norfolk Southern said it would roll out its transition plan on Feb. 11, 2019. [article via the "Interchange", Baltimore NRHS]



## *Megan's Manifest*

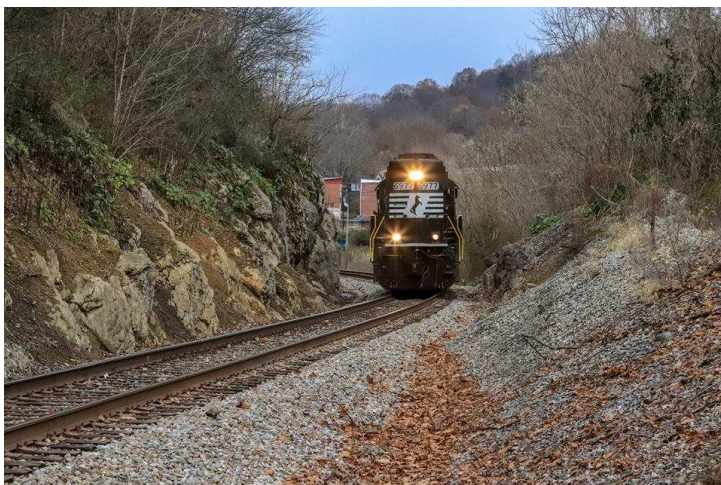
*by Megan Kegley*



First off, where did this year go? It seems like just yesterday it was the beginning of 2018. I hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Enjoy this photo of our Christmas train under our tree!

I got a new camera for an early Christmas present and this was the first train photo I took with it. I was quite excited to shoot a train with it lol. My clogger friend from Sevierville was on her way up to go dancing with me in Coeburn,

VA. While I was waiting on her, I went and caught two trains that were cleared for the NS Appalachia District. It had been pouring rain and it was starting to get super foggy but that doesn't stop me from taking photos. I love how the fog and rain adds to the headlights. The photo above is the first of the two trains that I was waiting on - NS 79K in Gate City, VA on its way to Andover Yard.



At left is Norfolk Southern T74 running long hood forward on its way back to Frisco Yard from Duffield. T74 was a lone SD60E and I figured that since these locomotives are more endangered than they used to be, I would just come on out and shoot it anyway. Honestly, I will go after anything as long as it is a train. I love being trackside and taking photos, but most importantly it makes me happy to see the trains going by.





On a cold and snowy evening, I braved it to Appalachia, VA to the model Railroad Club for a while. I was told ahead of time that this was sitting on the side track on the backside of town. I decided to take up the opportunity to shoot this loco and caboose in the snow. At this point, this was the first snow of the year, so I was immediately thinking “YES TRAINS AND SNOW!” That is every railfan’s favorite words to hear LOL.

A little earlier in the evening than when I shot the previous picture of NS 4121, I got my Lensball out and started experimenting with it. This photo has been so popular across my social media accounts; I honestly wasn’t expecting it to be that popular. This is NS 4121 and the caboose shot through my Lensball while it was snowing. I hope you guys enjoy this as much as others have!



*Thank You!!!*

I want to thank everyone for allowing me to write for you guys every month! I enjoy sharing my photos and stories with all of you. Thank you all for the kind words about the monthly articles, I really appreciate it! When I first started typing for the newsletter, I honestly had no clue what I was doing. Thanks to your input, I finally figured out how to go about this every month. I also want to thank you all for allowing me to be your program director! I hope everyone has enjoyed this year’s programs as much as I have! If anyone has any programs or any ideas of a guest speaker they would like to see come and speak at one of our meetings, please send me an email at [megank99684@gmail.com](mailto:megank99684@gmail.com). Remember there are only 12 slots for programs! So, let me know ASAP if you have any ideas! THANK YOU ALL!

***Whistle Stop***

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