

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS - 10/30/2019

BY

Hugh R. Harris, Membership Administrator

We are still adding new members though the rate has gone down over the past month or so. Jon Baake, the Membership Director, has a good supply of the new tri-fold brochure - if your Chapter or other local organization is having a train show or supporting some train event, please make sure you have plenty of the brochures to hand out. Jon can send them to you - just send the request to membership@nrhs.com and I'll forward the request to Jon for processing.

Please note that we maintain you as a current member until the end of the year after your membership expires - you can renew, without penalty, any time within that year. However, at the end of the "year of grace" your Membership will be considered to have expired when it actually ran out, so, if you want to keep your Membership continuous, and keep your 'Join Date', you will have to pay for the year that you missed! So, if your Membership expired at the end of 2017, we kept you on the system until the end of 2018 - but you would need to pay for BOTH 2018 and 2019 to keep your Membership current.

Current data shows that we have 5,737 Members who will receive mailings, of those 4,874 are current full or family members and 853 are Members whose membership will be terminated on 12/31/2019. We have 228 Members already renewed for 2020 or later and Membership renewals can now be for as long as you want. Our old system didn't permit multi-year renewals but the new one does.

Looking at Membership defined the same way; our Membership today is about 200 higher than it was at about this time last year. There are about 633 Members whose Membership was terminated on 12/31/2018, so we have added a total of about 850 new Members this year - but only increased the ongoing Membership by 200 due to the losses.

We are losing too many Members - the average "length of service" in the 'At Large' class of Members is substantially less than that in the Chapter Members group. It's tough to measure this since it takes a lot of Membership searches to gather the data, but it appears to be only about four years for At large Members but about twelve years for Chapter Members. I guess I'm not really surprised by that since the encouragement of associating with other railfans would, I think, tend to encourage the Chapter Members to stick with the group. We need to encourage Chapters to recruit new Members as actively as possible.