



NRHS TELEGRAPH

News For Leadership

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CALENDAR

November 14 - 16, 2014

2014 Fall Conference

Advisory Council and Board of
Directors' Meetings
Johnson City, TN
George L. Carter Chapter

January 10 - 11, 2015

2015 Winter Conference

Advisory Council and Board of
Directors' Meetings
Roanoke, VA
Roanoke Chapter

April 15 - 19, 2015

2015 Spring Conference

Advisory Council and Board of
Directors' Meetings
York, PA
A joint conference of the
NRHS & ATRRM

June 14 - 21, 2015

2015 NRHS Convention

Rutland, VT
www.nrhs.com
Registration opens soon.

Bids are being accepted for future
Conferences.

Contact Bob Bitzer for informa-
tion. Gopullman@prodigy.net

It's time to start making plans for 2015 chapter dues renewals.

Greg Molloy

At this time, we still can't give you a firm plan for national renewals. The NRHS is converging on important decisions regarding the Society's business model and services, and we expect some major changes. But the designs are not final and the decisions are not officially made, so we really can't announce any specifics until late September.

But the NRHS Chapters should be making plans for their own dues renewal campaigns. To help with those plans, here are some things we do know at this point.

Chapters should bill their own members for chapter dues and chapter donations. Do not attempt to collect national dues or national donations.

NRHS does not have up-to-date information about chapter dues. Any questions received at the national office regarding a chapter dues question will be referred to the chapter in question for a response.

NRHS will solicit members for national donations, membership (not necessarily as currently defined) and optional purchases in the weeks and months to come. The exact schedule and the range of options offered are not yet final.

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Inside the *NRHS Telegraph*

- **New Business Model**
- **Spring Conference Synopsis**

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As plans are developed, the information will be shared primarily through e-mail and the NRHS website. As a service to your chapter members, we ask that chapters share this information with your chapter members who do not have electronic access.

Chapters will no longer have to fill out renewal status spreadsheets. As new communications systems are developed, we will share the information with the chapter electronic billing contacts. We have not yet finalized a system for updating member information.

NRHS recognizes that there is a lot of change in progress, money is tight, and there will undoubtedly be a lot of rumors flying around. There will certainly be some major changes ahead. But some of our major programs are going to continue and will still need your support:

- We just completed two very successful RailCamp programs, and we plan to be back with more great programs in 2015.
- Planning for the 2015 NRHS Convention in Rutland is moving into the final laps, and we remain targeted to open registration and sales in early Fall.
- The NRHS Railway Heritage Grants program and other preservation activities will continue and expand in 2015 and beyond.

So please, start planning for your chapter renewal programs, look for RailCampers in your areas, encourage members to continue to support NRHS and its programs, and be prepared for a convention program in Vermont. (Much) more will follow.

Update on New Business Model for NRHS

Elrond Lawrence

As you may have read, the NRHS is at a crossroads and we need to form a new identity to survive. The society can no longer operate with the same financial and membership model that we've used since 1935. Cost-cutting alone won't be enough.

In June, we formed a New Business Model Committee that is designing a vision for our future, including a new financial model that provides long-term stability while focusing on our mission of rail preservation. This new model will be presented to the NRHS Board of Directors in September. The board will then make their final decision to approve or reject the new business model.

If successful, the new model will radically transform our organization. This means substantial changes to our governing structure, our membership model, our financial model and our chapter relationships. What will not change is the society's primary mission: to preserve and promote America's railroad heritage so it can be enjoyed by future generations. We're also 100% committed to our 2015 convention to be held next June in Rutland, Vermont.

At this time we can't say which programs will be appropriate or affordable in the new business model, but we intend to continue the following:

- The annual Railway Heritage Grants program, which has awarded nearly \$650,000 to restore and preserve historic equipment, structures and collections.
- Our successful RailCamp summer program, which filled to capacity in 2014, and provides hands-on railroading experience to young people.
- Our national advocacy of railroad preservation, including our Most-At-Risk list of endangered railroad landmarks.
- The *NRHS News* and *Bulletin*, although the frequency and format may change.

The business model committee is made up of experts in finance, preservation, railroading, marketing and management. They include:

Steve Barry has a varied background in both the "train world" and in the business world, thanks largely to his role as editor of *Railfan & Railroad* magazine. He has been active in NRHS for over 30 years, serving as a National Director and Regional Vice President; he is currently a Global Director.

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He has also been a writer and photographer of railroad subjects since 1984 and has edited *Railfan* since 1997. His prominent role as both a professional and hobbyist has given him the opportunity to observe the many aspects of railroad preservation and to know the key players. Prior to working for *Railfan*, Steve worked in accounting for varied industries, including non-profit organizations and a transportation company.

Bob Ernst is Operations Manager at Nuance Solutions, a position he has held since 2002. Nuance Solutions, an ISO 9001:2008 certified company, is a specialty chemical manufacturing facility located in southeast Chicago; Bob has been in the operations portion of the company for over 30 years. Actively involved in the NRHS since 1985, he brings to the committee a deep knowledge of business management and operations. Currently he is serving as the society's National Secretary, Global Director and Editor of the *NRHS Telegraph*. He was a founding member of the Chicago Chapter and has served in the positions of Chapter President and Trustee.

Gary Reinbolt spent 30 years creating illusions for public broadcasting in various parts of the country as an engineer, producer/director, development officer and administrator. Gary's experience included a stint as Executive Director for The History Center of Tompkins County, 19 years in progressive positions for WSKG Public Broadcasting that culminated in six years as CEO, involvement in two not-for-profit mergers, and participation on numerous grants review panels. He is well versed in New York State and Federal labor law, as well as human resources issues. Gary aims to use his comprehensive experience to help the society restructure to enhance its role and services with limited resources.

Jeff Smith brings a variety of perspectives to help define a new NRHS business model. For the past 15 years he has worked in information technology and marketing consulting; he currently leads the global technology practice for Razorfish Healthcare. Jeff has focused on helping clients use technology to transform their business to be successful in the dig-

ital world as customer demands become more varied and complex. His work frequently covers long range planning, business assessment, financial/business modeling and the planning and implementation of new governing structures and IT systems. For nearly 15 years he's been involved in NRHS management, most recently helping to understand where NRHS can fit into the national rail preservation landscape.

Wesley Weis is President and CEO of the Morristown & Erie Railway, a role he's held since 1998. He was one of four investors who purchased the bankrupt M&E in 1981 and revitalized the company, purchasing new locomotives, improving track and facilities and expanding freight traffic. He continues to actively manage the executive portion of the M&E operation in concert with the railroad's chief operating officer and vice president. Prior to the M&E, Wes formed the Mikab Corporation in 1971, which constructs towers and installs all types of antenna systems ranging from small two-way antennas to 4G LTE for cellular telephone carriers.

These individuals are volunteering their summer to remake an 80-year old society into a stable and successful organization for people who love railroad history and preservation. We realize that rapid change and uncertainty are a great concern; however, this is a crucial time for NRHS that will shape our survival and success. The committee's September deadline was chosen so we can share our plans before the 2015 dues renewal period.

We promise to share updates between now and September, as we work to remake the NRHS for the 21st century. If you have any questions, please email us at info@nrhs.org. Thank you for your support of rail preservation!

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Send all submissions to: extra.editor@sbcglobal.net
Robert Ernst (Overland Chapter), Editor
Ellen Pinsky (Iowa Chapter), Editorial Assistant.

Synopsis of the Board of Directors' Meeting

Submitted by Bob Ernst - Secretary

The NRHS Board of Directors met on Friday, June 13, 2014 in Springdale, AR.

Vice President Joe Maloney gave a report on the **8mm Film Digitization Project**. The project is underway and the initial work will finish ahead of schedule.

Joe also reported that all Chapter Anniversary Certificates and membership awards have been distributed for 2014.

Secretary Bob Ernst reported on the status of the **election process**. The ballots were mailed on schedule and the vote will be certified on August 22, 2014.

Walter Zullig reported on the **historic plaque** presentation at Utica Union Station in Utica, NY. Tony White was present for the dedication. The NRHS will receive a reimbursement for the costs associated with the plaque.

Greg Molloy gave a report on the conventions. The 2014 convention in Springdale, AR has approximately 330 registrants and all indications point to a profitable event. Plans for the **2015 convention in Rutland, VT** are progressing. Registration should open in early Fall.

Upcoming **conferences** include Fall 2014, on November 13 - 16, 2014 in Johnson City, TN, Winter 2015 on January 10 -11, 2015 in Roanoke, VA and Spring 2015 on April 16 - 18, 2015 in York, PA.

The **NRHS Fund** has its required bank accounts in place and open. The NRHS Fund Borad of Trustees will meet during the Fall 2014 conference in Johnson City, TN.

The Board went into an Executive Session to discuss items related to the 2014 Budget, Strategic Planning and the ongoing litigation.

The Board acted on a number of business items. The Board accepted the **2013 Audit Report** as presented and accepted a new audit agreement with Padden, Guerrini & Associates through December 31, 2016.

The Board created a **New Business Model Committee** to create a new top-level business model that can enable the NRHS to be successful in the rail preservation field. This committee will bring a plan to the Board by September for action. President Greg Molloy appointed Jeff Smith, Steve Barry, Wes Weis and Bob Ernst as members of the New Business Committee. Greg also appointed John Fiorilla as Counsel to the committee and Gary Reinbolt as a consultant to the committee.

The Board voted to delegate to the Officers of the NRHS to take whatever steps are necessary to keep the Society functioning through January 11, 2015. This is to keep the NRHS functioning as the Society works through the changes.

The Board also rescinded the **2015 Dues Renewal Processing** motion from January 2014. An interim due process will be created based on the future changes.

A full version of the Board of Directors' Meeting minutes will be available on the NRHS admin site upon their approval by the Board.