

DIGEST

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So close, Only the paycheck is missing

Projects on the move

- Hawthorne station move and restoration moving forward and committee members needed.
- Easter Bunny Train Ride March 26th, Glen Rock Boro Hall station. Ticket sales to start soon. Volunteers needed.
- 501(c)3 application moving forward.
- Next meeting February 18th, 7:30pm. Larry Ten Hoeve will be putting on a video of some great old movies and stills from all around our area.

Inside this issue:

Operations Report	2
WoodMont Rental Co.	2
More Station Preservation	3
More 501(c)3	3
Easter Bunny Train	4
RPCA comes to N.J.	5
Meeting Notice	6

Hawthorne Station Restoration and Preservation Moving Forward

We are getting closer to our goal of moving and preserving the Hawthorne Station. One of our newest members Lou DiGeronimo has made it a personal goal to see to it that the work gets done. We have a letter out to the NYS&W to ask them to get on board and allow us to do all the needed work. We are looking to get the structure put on the State Historic Register, which Lou has lots of experience with. We then are looking to get the building moved about 50 to 70 feet west, away from the corner of Royal and Diamond Bridge. As part of the move we want to repair the roof, do some other repairs and maybe take out the back door and rebuild that end of the building to include the coal bin that used to be there. We then need to do some cosmetic work and paint the building. I know this all sounds very adventurous and in many ways it is, but we have the backing of the town and a great bunch of people in our group who want to see this all through.

We are looking to get donations and grants as well as local, state and maybe



Hawthorne station back in the 1970's

federal funding to pay for it all.

We have wanted to do this for many years and a few things have made us go after this all again. First is the buildings roof continues to be hit by trucks making the turn on that corner. This has caused a bit of damage and we are afraid that

(Continued on page 3)

501(c)3 Application

The complete application package was submitted to the IRS on December 30. We have received confirmation that they have received our request and if all goes well we should hear from them in about 3 to 4 months. I will have a copy of

By Chris Vitz

the documents at the meeting that will remain in the station, which is the address listed as our main office. I will also give it to anyone whom would like a copy, just let me know in advance. Once approved, we will need to ad-

(Continued on page 2)

OPERATIONS REPORT By K.C. Smith

Well here we are in 2005, the year that could see us accomplish more than any year in our past. The biggest thing is the saving of the Hawthorne Station and its placement on the States Historic register. But that's not all; we have an Easter train planned for March 26th, at least 6 days of motorcar trips, a Santa train, restoration of our L&NE car and the creation of our group as a 501(c) 3. All of these projects and goals are going to require lots of man hours, effort and money to make happen and I am going to venture a guess that none of it will happen without you, our membership, getting involved. I know we are all busy in our daily lives and this all seems like a lot to do, but if we all do a little no one will have to do it all. So pick a project or two and help out. You don't need to spend a lot of time you just need to spend enough time that you can make a difference.



Our MT-19 joins the 40B at CNJ Terminal in 2003

You will find a report on most of the projects we are working on in this newsletter, read those reports and get an idea which ones you would like to participate in. Then call, write or speak personally to the people running the project and say you want get involved. When we all see the station saved, the kids happy faces, the motorcars running and the tax exempt donations coming in you will know why you took a little time out of your lives to make it all happen.

See you along the rails,
KC

WoodMont Rental Co.

By Dick Ray and K.C. Smith

The following was written to be published in The Setoff, the newsletter for NARCOA.

The VRA has a little-known program going that is for the benefit of the members. We own a Fairmont MT19 and a Woodings CBL, both of which are fully NARCOA compliant. We have five or six members who do not own their own cars but are qualified to operate them, are insured, and have been mentored. In addition we have two trailers that can carry either motorcar. We call the

program the WoodMont Rental Co. and it allows those members to take the cars to meets. The plan, for now, calls for the renter to pay a fee of \$25 per day on the rails for the usage, return it with a full tank of gas, and do whatever minor maintenance that is needed. Some improvements such as the replacement of the curtains on the Woodings are taken out of the usage fee. The cars are stocked with some tools, spare spark plugs, fire extinguisher, first aid kit, two flags, and by arrange-

(Continued on page 3)

501(c)3 continued

here to a set of bylaws that guide our group as a non-profit. We have put together a new set of by-laws, which we loosely adapted from a few other railroad related groups. I will have copies of the bylaws at the next meeting for everyone as well. If we need to reword or adjust certain items we can do so as needed. The IRS requires that a not for profit group

must have a set of bylaws in place to receive the 501(c)3 designation. The bylaws outline voting rights and privileges for members and sets up a Board of Directors and other officials of the group. Subcommittees are also addressed but no specific subcommittees have been named. Perhaps we will need committees now for motorcar operations and passenger trips. We can amend the bylaws to list other committees at any time. As soon as I hear from the IRS I will let everyone know.

Hawthorne Station Restoration and Preservation

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one of these times the damage will be fatal. Then along came Lou, who many years ago had tried to save the building and use it as his architectural office, the railroad would not let him do that at the time. He saw us at the Jersey Central Terminal festival and he immediately said he wanted to get involved and help save the building. Then the Boro of Hawthorne has decided they want to do a downtown rehabilitation project that would have a railroad theme complete with railroad style lamps and benches. As part of that plan they would like to see the building moved off the corner to protect the building and increase visibility at the corner. A small park like area is to be built where the building once stood. This by the



Our NYSW NARCOA run stops at the station for a break.

way is the same idea we came up with a few years ago and was adapted from our plan. For you G scale modelers, part of the idea is to include an operating layout to be run on special occasions.

With all these things pointing in the same direction it is time to make it happen. This is going to take lots of work, time, money and effort to make happen and it will not happen without you. We need to get a dedicated group of members together and have them stay together to see that everything that needs to be done will be done. If you would like to help out talk with a board member, e-mail us or drop us a note in the mail and say, "I want to help save the station."

WoodMont Rental Co.

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(Continued from page 2)

ment, a five-watt radio. At this point all renters are expected to have a two-inch trailer ball and a flat-4 electrical plug on their vehicle. The trailers are registered to individual members and our investigation of the liability showed that when someone else is using the trailer the registered owner is at minimal risk.

Having the NARCOA insurance, or even membership is not required at the uninsured meets. There are several of those available, the most notable being the two-day Hobo Railroad Meet which is in Lincoln NH on the first weekend of June. If we can get a meet on the BR&W this spring the plan is to have it be a non-NARCOA and non-insured meet. Last fall at their Railfan Weekend, several VRA members had a chance to participate. We do expect that potential renters have some experience operating the cars. That is most easily gained during our brush control days on the M&NJ. All in all, the program has been a success, allowing persons who cannot own their own motorcar to participate. Some of the reasons for non-ownership include limited participation, limited mechanical skills for restoring a motorcar, no storage space, and others. Reservations are on a first-

come, first-served basis that has not yet led to any ill feelings. We recognize that some group members could abuse that policy but it has not happened yet. Besides being qualified and mentored, the renters are expected to be a full participant in the other VRA programs such as our rail preservation efforts, our fan trips, railfan days and other programs we do to benefit the proposed New Jersey Transportation Heritage Center.

The WoodMont Rental Co. also allows members who think they might want to get into motorcars to get some experience with the whole concept, from towing hundreds of miles, fast food, long days, rain, cold, loading up in the dark, and everything that goes with it. Some of our members who have taken part in this program have gone onto buying their own cars, proving that the program has the added benefit of expanding our hobby even further.

To get involved in this great program ask one of our motorcar operators to get you qualified on car operations and safety and then you too can be out there running the rails.

EASTER BUNNY TRAIN RIDE

March 26th is the date we have set for our 2005 Easter Bunny Train ride. This year, as in 2003, we are going to run out of the Glen Rock Boro Hall station. The times we have requested are 10 am, 12 noon, 2 and 4 pm. We could have as many as 500 people on each train, which means we have lots of work between now and then. The jobs that need to be filled are station agents, sign and poster hangers, car and station



The Easter Bunny is coming to town.

hosts.

The station agents will be responsible for coming to the Hawthorne station on Tuesday and Thursday nights between 7 and 10pm and Saturday and Sunday afternoons from 12 to 4 pm. No one is expected to come every day, but is asked to come as often and for as long as they can. While you are there you will need to take phone calls from perspective customers, answering question, taking and filling orders. In addition take all the messages off the machine and return the calls.

The sign and poster hangers will go out and distribute the signs and posters in store windows and along busy roads and highways so that we can spread the word about the train. This is a very important job because without advertising no one will know we are running the train. This job will most likely be done on an early weekend but can also be done during the week for those who have time then.

Then on train day we are going to need people to work the platform to greet passengers and keep them informed on where to go and what else may be going on. *Cont. below*

The on board car hosts are responsible for getting passengers on and off the train safely, keeping their passengers safe and happy and to make sure that everyone stays in their assigned car.

This is important because we don't want to have any young eyes to be surprised by seeing more than one rabbit, since we will have 3 or 4 on board. Speaking of that we need 3 or 4 members (friends or wives) to volunteer to be a bunny. Keep in mind that each bunny will see up to 300 kids on the 4 trips, so please be the kind of person who is good with such things. The one

plus is that unlike Santa, Easter bunnies don't talk but they do hop, so good legs are important too.

This will probably be the years biggest fund raiser and will help refresh our treasury so we can do all the other projects we have on the agenda. We plan on using the bulk of the money to seed the Hawthorne station project as well as fund the restoration project of

our Lehigh and New England 40 B Sheffield motorcar.

This project also gets us back to our roots of running passenger trains. Over the years we have run many trains with many thousands of people on board them. We raised thousands of dollars

for historic preservation of railroad equipment and made a name for ourselves for being one of the best in the hobby. Lets get behind this project and get us back where we belong... ON TOP!

**March 26th is the date
set for our 2005 Easter
Bunny Train.**

Election of Officers Coming Soon

When we are approved for our new federal non-profit status we will need to change the structure of the group a bit. Part of that change will include election of board members. We are looking for a few people who would like to step forward and help lead our group into the future. The jobs are not very hard, but do re-

quire a commitment from you to see that all the work gets done. In addition to our membership meetings, board members are expected to participate in board meetings. Unlike in the past you, the member, will elect who runs the group and there by steering the direction the group goes in.

Those people who are interested should contact a current board member and express your interest. Then a ballot will be made up and all members will get a chance to vote. Why not step forward and help lead the VRA into the future. As you can see from what is proposed, the future looks very bright.

Railroad Passenger Car Alliance Meet in Morristown

By Gary Kazin

The RPCA came to Morristown in the middle of January. This group gathers once a year for a national convention, usually on Martin Luther Kings Birthday weekend. The 3 days are full of seminars and meetings pertaining to passenger cars, steam and passenger engines were held. In addition most conventions include a trip to a shop or just a train ride for fun. The M&E being a working railroad did not have the personnel to serve as car host's, this

is where we come in. The VRA was asked to help, principally by providing car hosts for the 'main event' - a private car trip from Morristown to the NJT Meadowlands Maintenance Center.

The volunteers assembled at the M&E shop at 9:30 on Saturday, January 15, and then headed over to Whippany to distribute box lunches and beverages to the cars used for seating. Each car host was assigned a car to take care of and to make sure

that each passenger with a lunch ticket got there lunch just after boarding. The train was towed backward to Morristown behind ALCo C420 4223, which cut off after Ridgedale Ave. Consist for the day was:

FL9's 488, 489 in the new M&E passenger scheme

M&E 2006 ALEXANDER HAMILTON observation/lounge car

M&E 1001 Maine Eastern (M&E owned) PINE coach

Cont. below

PRR Alder Falls sleeper/observation

Santa Fe EPICURUS lunch counter/diner

M&E MORRIS COUNTY parlor

MOUNT VERNON sleeper/lounge

KITCHI GAMMI CLUB Pullman sleeper/lounge

After NJT's trains due in Morristown about 12:20

passed, the train backed through BAKER interlocking and pulled forward to the station, stopping just short of the platform for photos. About 200 people boarded and were soon underway. The car hosts went right to work handing out the lunches and making sure everyone was happy. The train stopped west of Summit as NJT had trains for Gladstone and Dover in the station, with the Dover train running 10

minutes late. This created a minor thrill as trains simultaneously passed our train on both sides, with horns blaring. By the time we were east of Newark everyone was full and the cars cleaned up, our main job was now done. The train continued to its only station stop, SANFORDS, the employee station at the MMC, and everyone went in for a tour.

Cont. below

While the passengers were inside, the train pulled into the Bergen Tunnel, backed up former Boonton Line track 4 and pulled around the wye at West End. After NJT traffic cleared, it was spotted at SANFORDS about 2:45 as the tour finished, with three cars left



RPCA caters to the hands on car and engine owner.

on the center track. Everyone boarded and the train left the MMC soon after 3pm, ahead of the next Gladstone train. Once past Newark Broad Street, the train was put on the center track and ran swiftly to Morristown, arriving about 3:45 to discharge the RPCA group, then pulled

ahead to BAKER and backed onto the M&E. ALCo 4223 then returned to pull the train backward to Whippany.

A good time was had by all and as usual the VRA did a great job and had many compliments on its professionalism and courtesy. Many thanks to NJT, the M&E, and RPCA for inviting us to help!

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So close....only the paycheck is missing.

*On the web at
www.vratrips.org*

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5

MEETING and PROGRAM NOTICE

Larry Ten Hoeve, will be putting on the show at our meeting on February 18th. The show will follow a short business meeting and promises to be very entertaining. As many of you know Larry has shot videos for many years and has a production company that puts them out. He also takes old movies and stills and combines them into video's to remind us all what once was. To see what he has to offer just stop by his store in the old caboose next to the Wortendyke Station. Larry explains this new production as follows.

"I will do a show on the Susquehanna railroad and most of the railroads that it interchanged with. This will be the railroads like the Erie, DL&W, Erie's New York & Greenwood Lake, CNJ's Wharton & Northern, M&U and now the M&NJ, L&HR, the DL&W line to Branchville, Lehigh & New England, the Lackawanna Cut Off and the WB&E railroad,

plus more. This video will take us from the old CNJs terminal and will run us all the way into Pen. The video has lots of live and still footage and alot of footage that was not ever seen before.

This is a video that I put together but know one has seen it yet."



Well I for one am privileged that Larry has chosen the VRA to be the first to view this new video. So grab a chair and a friend and come on down, the meeting

