

**NEXT MEETING:**  
**April 17**  
*Rudy Garbely presents*  
**"Lehigh Valley Railroad**  
**and the Case for Conrail"**



ABOVE: Livonia, Avon & Lakeville Alco RS-1 20 and S-2 72 will lead trips celebrating the LA&L's 60th Anniversary on April 12. OTTO M. VONDRAK PHOTO

# Here We Grow

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The museum has been in a flurry of activity over the last few weeks, as we work towards opening for the season! Every department has been busy. Adam Lloyd and the Construction Department have done a fantastic job on the washout repair at Milepost 0.4. Joe Nugent and the Mechanical Department have been working hard to ensure all of our equipment will be fit for the upcoming season. Charlie Marks and the Buildings & Grounds Department have the museum ready to accept visitors, and Otto Vondrak and the Marketing Department are busy promoting our schedule of events to draw in more sold-out crowds.

Also in the last month, we hosted our annual Rules Class, organized by David Scheiderich and the Operations Department. This class is the first step to becoming an active volunteer at the museum, and

we are constantly training new volunteers on proper use of tools, maintenance, and safe operation of the railroad. There's many ways to get involved, and it doesn't always mean heavy lifting. Speak to any one of our department managers (see **page 3**) to learn more about how you can get involved. Our museum is constantly growing, and expanding our activities and programs wherever we can. Your contributions this year will ensure the success of the museum and allow us to continue our great work for decades to come.

Where do we go from here? Your ideas for our museum's future are always welcome. You can always reach out to any of the Officers and Trustees listed on **page 2**, or any of the museum department managers listed on **page 3**. ☺

—Jackson Glozer, Vice President



[www.rgvrrm.org](http://www.rgvrrm.org)

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# 2025 Museum Schedule

Sign up: [rgvrrm.org/volunteer](http://rgvrrm.org/volunteer)

**April 11 — LA&L 60th Anniversary Media Day**

**April 12 — LA&L 60th Anniversary Trains**

**April 19 — Easter Bunny Train Rides**

**May 10 — Mother's Day Train Rides**

**May 17 — Princess & Superheroes Trains**

**May 24 — Rails & Ales Train Rides**

**June 14 — Donut Day Train Rides**

**June 21 — Ice Cream Trains**

**June 28 — Wine & Chocolate Train Rides**

**July 5 — Trains & Trolleys at Twilight: 1**

**July 12 — Donut Day Train Rides**

**July 19 — Ice Cream Trains**

**July 26 — Trucks & Tractors Train Rides**

**Aug. 2 — Trains & Trolleys at Twilight: 2**

**Aug. 9 — Donut Day Train Rides**

**Aug. 16 — Ice Cream Trains**

**Aug. 23 — Railfan Day Train Rides**

**Sept. 13 — Princess Tea Party Train Rides**

**Sept. 20 — Oktoberfest Rails & Ales Train Rides**

**Sept. 27 — Rush Fall Festival (joint NYMT)**

**Oct. 11-12 — Pumpkin Patch Train Rides**

**Oct. 18-19 — Pumpkin Patch Train Rides**

**Oct. 25-26 — Pumpkin Patch Train Rides**

**Nov. 28-29 — Santa Train Rides**

**Dec. 5-6 — Santa Train Rides**

**Dec. 12-13 — Santa Train Rides**



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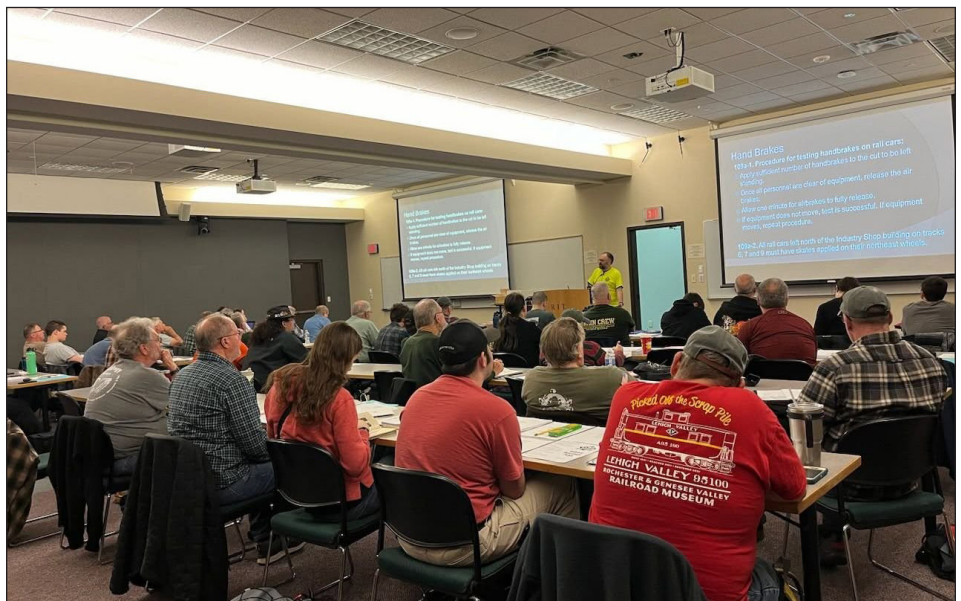
Dave Drury  
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## UPCOMING MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Monthly meetings return to the 40&8 Club, 933 University Ave., Rochester, N.Y. Doors open at 7:00pm, and the meeting begins at 7:30. Cash bar available. Programs begin after a brief business meeting. All meetings are FREE to attend and open to the public. Bring a friend!

On **April 17**, publisher and historian Rudy Garbely will be presenting "The Lehigh Valley Railroad." Rudy has authored a new book studying the Lehigh Valley's last years and the conditions that led to the formation of Conrail.

On **May 15**, member Duncan Richards will present "50 Years on the Southern Tier" documenting years of change including the end of Erie Lackawanna transitioning to Conrail, with Delaware & Hudson and Susquehanna trackage rights trains included, up to the present day operation under Norfolk Southern.



Annual Rules Class was held on March 15 at RIT, conducted by Operations Supt. David Scheiderich. More than 60 volunteers attended the class, which consists of Safety, Operating Rules, and Air Brake and Train Handling. JUSTIN CARMONA PHOTO

For the summer months, meetings move to Industry Depot on **June 19, July 17, and August 21**. Meetings start earlier at 7:00pm, followed by a ride on our museum railroad and a tour of our latest projects in the Restoration Shop.

If you have ideas for railroad-related programs for future monthly meetings, please contact me by phone or email.

—Dave Drury,  
Program Committee Chair

## LIVONIA, AVON & LAKEVILLE 60th ANNIVERSARY - APRIL 11-12

The Livonia, Avon & Lakeville operated their first train on April 7, 1965, and in the 60 years since has grown into a successful regional short line operator spanning 400 miles over four lines including LA&L, Bath & Hammondsport, Western New York & Pennsylvania, and Ontario Midland.

Our season starts a week earlier as we will help LA&L kick off their 60th Anniversary with a special Media Day at 10am on April 11, where we will dedicate LA&L 20 to the memory of Gene Blabey, followed by a night photo session at LA&L Lakeville Shops at 7:00pm (SOLD OUT!).

On April 12, we will be operating special train rides at the museum, using our vintage LA&L equipment from 10am to 2pm. The railroad will be providing a special exhibit of their own equipment parked alongside Industry Depot. For tickets and details, please visit [www.RochesterTrainRides.com](http://www.RochesterTrainRides.com).

## EASTER BUNNY TRAIN RIDES APRIL 19

Easter Bunny Train Rides return on April 19! Enjoy fun train rides, friendly petting zoo, an egg hunt, complimentary juice and cookies for the kids, and a visit with the Easter Bunny himself! Trains depart every 30 minutes from 10am to 2pm. For tickets, please visit [RochesterTrainRides.com](http://RochesterTrainRides.com).

## MOTHER'S DAY TRAIN RIDES MAY 10

Enjoy a fun day out with mom on May 10! All moms enjoy complimentary coffee or tea and pastry (while supplies last) with their visit. Trains depart every 30 minutes from 10am to 2pm. For tickets, please visit [RochesterTrainRides.com](http://RochesterTrainRides.com).

## PRINCESS & SUPERHERO TRAIN RIDES - MAY 17

Children come dressed as their favorite princess or superhero! Kids will enjoy our bounce house and other activities. You never know what costumed characters may join us! Costumed performers provided by Royal Promise Productions. Complimentary juice and cookies for kids. Trains depart every 30 minutes from 10am to 2pm. For tickets, please visit [RochesterTrainRides.com](http://RochesterTrainRides.com).

## RAILS & ALES TRAIN RIDES MAY 24

All Aboard for Rails & Ales! Enjoy complimentary tastings from more than a doz-





**ABOVE:** On March 29, David Gwilt removes rust and debris from the roof of the cab of Despatch Shops 5. The cab will be evaluated either to be rebuilt, or to use the original as a pattern to make a new one.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** Rand Warner and Bernie Beikirch working on Rochester Subway Car 60 on April 1.

**RIGHT:** Mary Strodl and Jackson Glozer replace air hoses and perform inspections on LA&L 20 prior to the locomotive entering active service later this month.

**BELOW LEFT:** Brandi Marino helps restock the Gift Shop in Industry Depot to get us ready for the upcoming season.

**BELOW RIGHT:** Snackmaster John Guglielmo arrives on April 5 with fresh supplies to get us ready for the beginning of the season.



en local craft breweries on May 24 from 12pm to 3pm. Ride the train to visit all of the tasting stations! Train rides depart every 30 minutes so you can ride between the two tasting stations as often as you like! Discover great craft beverages in all styles, from mild to wild. Ticket purchase includes museum admission and free souvenir tasting glass. Refreshments available for purchase. Free soft drinks for Designated Drivers. Advance ticketing required, visit [www.RochesterTrainRides.com](http://www.RochesterTrainRides.com) for details.

## FUNDING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Your museum has established the Funding and Development Committee. This committee will serve to coordinate and direct development efforts for our museum. This will assist us in working on grant and fundraising opportunities, as well as to foster relations with local elected representatives and others who may support our Museum's efforts. We are currently working on

the large NYSDOT grant awarded in 2024 for track reconstruction, fundraising efforts to cover the cost of connecting to Monroe County Water, accessibility programs that may include better walkways and access to our exhibits, and improvements such as fire protection, energy efficiencies, archival support, and equipment. Jeremy Tuke and new member Michael Storey will be coordinating these efforts with the Board of Trustees and appropriate superintendents and project managers as we work to continue to enhance and improve our Museum.



Michael brings to us years of experience with fund-raising and the grant application process. Chaired by Jeremy Tuke, members include Michael Storey, Charlie Marks, Dave Peet, Charles Rothbart, Jackson Gloz-



er, and Dave Shields. If you have any leads for projects or funding for the committee to consider, please email [jktuke@gmail.com](mailto:jktuke@gmail.com).

—Jeremy Tuke, Committee Chairman

### BOARD APPOINTMENT

In accordance with our museum by-laws, the Board of Trustees has nominated Rob Burz to fulfill the term vacated by Trustee David Kaiser upon his passing earlier this year. Rob is a long-time active volunteer and past board member. Upon completion of the term, Rob will be eligible for election if he chooses to run for another term.

### DAVID KAISER MEMORIAL FUND

At the March Board of Trustees meeting, a proposal was entered to establish the David Kaiser Memorial Fund as a way to preserve the memory of Trustee David Kaiser who passed away following brief illness in February. David spent his entire legal ca-

reer tirelessly advocating for those who couldn't, including the elderly and other marginalized groups. While he earned his law degree from Syracuse University in 1979, he first attended Rochester Institute of Technology where he earned his B.S. in Social Work in 1974. The proposal would establish a memorial fund that would help pay the membership fee for any active RIT student who wants to become a member of the museum. Not only would this help break down financial barriers for interested new members who want to join us, but it would also honor David's spirit of helping others, volunteering for causes he believed in, and his roots as an RIT undergrad. The motion passed at the March meeting, and further updates will follow.

### CULVERT REPAIR

In February, our volunteers discovered a drainage culvert had failed just north of MP 0.3, making the track unsafe for the

passage of trains. Over two weekends at the end of March, our Construction Department dug out the failed pipe, and replaced it with a new one. Several loads of stone were brought in to pack around the new pipe for stability. By April 1, ties had been reinserted, and one rail spiked up. The repair job should be complete by the end of the month, reopening the track north to the current end of service at the property line.

### YOUR DONATIONS HELP

As an all-volunteer non-profit organization, support comes in many forms. While financial donations in any amount are always welcome, there are other ways to contribute. Inexpensive consumables such as paper towels, shop towels, cleansers, rusty metal primer and various base color spray paints help keep our museum running. Check with our Superintendents and project managers about other ways you can pitch in and make a difference. ☺

## CULVERT REPAIR

The old pipe was dug out and removed on March 22 (LEFT AND BELOW LEFT). Loads of stone were brought in to pack around the new pipe (BOTTOM) on March 29. By April 1, the west rail had been spiked in place (BELOW), waiting for clear weather to complete spiking, and then tamp the ballast before the track can be opened to traffic again.

OTTO M. VONDRAK PHOTOS







## Bath & Hammondsport Alco 5 Preserved by R&GV

Thanks to the combined efforts of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum, the Steuben County Industrial Development Agency (SCIDA), and the Livonia, Avon & Lakeville Railroad (LA&L), a historic 75-year-old diesel locomotive from the Bath & Hammondsport Railroad (B&H) will be brought to the museum to be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

Built as New York Central 872 in March 1950 by the American Locomotive Company (Alco) in Schenectady, N.Y., the 660-horsepower diesel switcher is one of 71 Alco S-1 units built for the railroad. It was reassigned to the freight car manufacturing and repair facility known as Despatch Shops in East Rochester, N.Y., in January 1965, where it was renumbered 5. After the shops closed in 1970, the locomotive was sold to Steuben County for operation on the B&H.

The Bath & Hammondsport Railroad can trace its roots back to 1872, connecting Hammondsport at the south end of Keuka Lake with the Erie Railroad and Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad at Bath. By 1903, B&H had come under control of the Erie Railroad, until a major flood in 1935 caused significant damage, ending service. Local businessmen purchased the railroad, made repairs, and resumed service in 1936. Thanks to the agreeable climate, a robust wine industry developed around the Finger Lakes, and many wineries were

customers of the B&H, nicknamed “The Champagne Trail.” In 1976, B&H expanded when they became the operator of SCIDA-owned track between Bath and Wayland. In 1996, the county named Livonia, Avon & Lakeville as the new operator of the combined B&H lines, which included a 2001 expansion from Bath to a connection with Norfolk Southern at Painted Post.

As freight traffic increased on the B&H under LA&L in recent years, more powerful diesel locomotives were required, and No. 5 was set aside. Designated as surplus by LA&L, the locomotive was identified as a good candidate for preservation. Buffalo, USA Foundation’s Flour-by-Rail Legacy Project presented the opportunity to acquire B&H 5 to R&GV, and the museum negotiated with SCIDA to purchase the locomotive in February 2025.

“We are excited to preserve this historic diesel locomotive and return it to Rochester,” said R&GV Museum vice president Jackson Glozer. “Besides helping preserve the history of Bath & Hammondsport Railroad, this diesel also worked locally at Despatch Shops in East Rochester, replacing a steam locomotive of the same number which we also just added to our collection a few years ago.”

“The Steuben County IDA is pleased to be working with our partners at the Livonia Avon & Lakeville Railroad and the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum



**TOP:** Bath & Hammondsport 5 at Cohocton, N.Y., February 4, 2025. OTTO M. VONDRAK PHOTO

**ABOVE:** Despatch Shops 5, East Rochester, circa 1970. COURTESY EAST ROCHESTER HISTORY

to preserve this important piece of local railroad history. Engine 5 helped transport goods throughout the region playing a vital role in supporting our economy and the efforts of the railroad museum will help educate the public on the role the railroad has and will continue to play in our business development activities.” said Jamie Johnson, executive director of the Steuben County IDA.

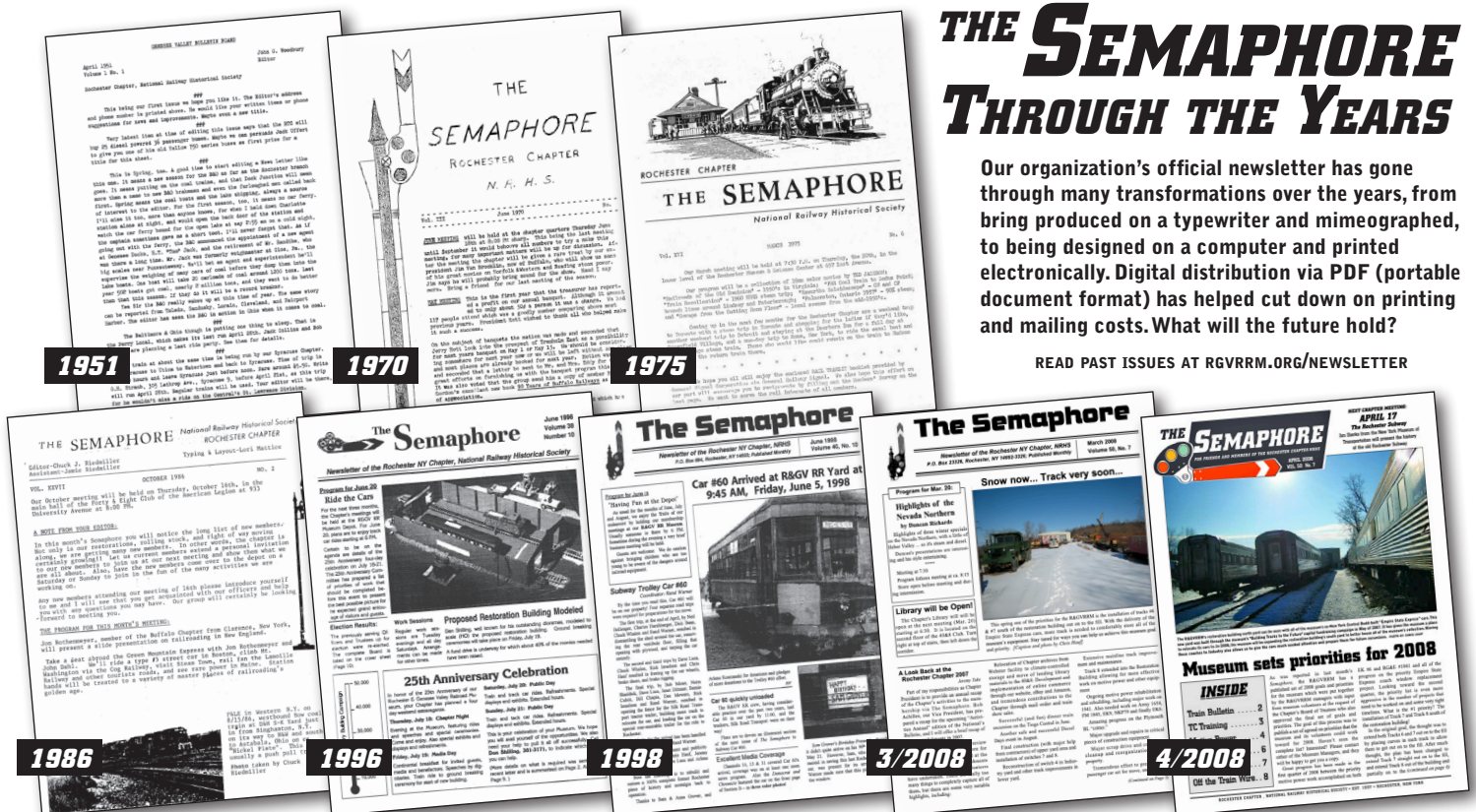
The locomotive is currently stored on private property, not accessible to the public. We look forward to moving B&H 5 to the museum later this year, and we are soliciting donations to help offset the cost of transportation. You can donate through GoFundMe at <https://gofund.me/b41ff72d> or you can send a check care of the museum.



# THE SEMAPHORE Through the Years

Our organization's official newsletter has gone through many transformations over the years, from being produced on a typewriter and mimeographed, to being designed on a computer and printed electronically. Digital distribution via PDF (portable document format) has helped cut down on printing and mailing costs. What will the future hold?

READ PAST ISSUES AT [RGVRRM.ORG/NEWSLETTER](http://RGVRRM.ORG/NEWSLETTER)



## Editor's Corner

I have been your Editor of THE SEMAPHORE for 17 years. It has been an honor to assemble the news and accomplishments of our museum and share them not only with our members, but with other organizations around the country. I took over from Gale Smith in April 2008, and he had been doing it for more than 13 years starting in 1994. Dave Luca filled in for a few years between 1990 and 1992. After 1986 it was Chuck and Jamie Reidmiller. Arlene Koscianski was editor starting in 1971 (helped early on by a young Peter Gores). John F. Collins, Jr., was editor in 1964.

The history of our house publication can be traced back to April 1951, with the first edition of the *Genesee Valley Bulletin Board* published by John Woodbury. In 1958, the name was changed to THE SEMAPHORE, and it has stuck ever since.

My friends and I started coming around the museum while we were students at Rochester Institute of Technology around 1996 or so. We soon became regular vol-

unteers, getting involved in track car operations and other projects around the museum. I moved back to New York around 2002 for work, but I made regular trips to visit and help out during special events.

By 2008, the museum was going through some rapid changes. We had arranged to bring our *Empire State Express* train set from the Ontario Midland in Sodus down to Industry in hopes of running regular trips on the LA&L. With the help of R&GV volunteers, construction was advancing on NYMT's overhead wire south of Giles Crossing, which meant regular trolley operation would soon be a reality. We had just paid contractors to construct the Upper Yard to provide a permanent home for our equipment, connected to the Restoration Shop. It soon became apparent that the museum was no longer a "side project" of the Rochester Chapter NRHS.

Even though at the time I was living 400 miles away in Harrison, N.Y., I offered my assistance to help produce the monthly newsletter to then-president Jeremy Tuke. Gale Smith was struggling with computer issues and keeping up with the publication schedule, and I was a young graphic designer with too much time on his hands. Gale was grateful to have the help, and chose to retire from his post.

In 2011, I joined the staff of *Railfan & Railroad* magazine as Associate Editor, then published by Carstens Publications. A year later I moved back to Rochester and joined the board as a Trustee. In 2019, I was elected to my first term as museum president, plus I took on a second role as editor of *Railroad Model Craftsman* magazine. Together we navigated the complexities of pandemic restrictions, and managed to restructure our museum to complete more restoration projects, host an expanded event schedule, and welcome in many new members and volunteers.

A museum's newsletter in many ways is the pulse of the organization. It's how we communicate not only to our members, but to our donors, supporters, and colleagues in railway preservation. As our communications footprint expanded into social media, I had great fun sharing our accomplishments through photos and stories online as well. Unfortunately, I find myself having less time to devote to "news gathering" each month as my responsibilities increase at work. I have asked the Board of Trustees to find a replacement so I can focus on other tasks. Thank you all for your support over the years, and thanks for reading THE SEMAPHORE. See you down the line.

—Otto M. Vondrak, Editor (Ret.)



THE **SEMAPHORE**

ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM

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**NEXT MEETING:**

**Apr. 17, 2025**

933 UNIVERSITY AVE., ROCHESTER, N.Y.

**PLAN AHEAD:**

**May 15, 2025**

933 UNIVERSITY AVE., ROCHESTER, N.Y.

Find us on Facebook! [facebook.com/rgvrrm](https://facebook.com/rgvrrm)



**ABOVE:** Conductor John Iler uses a pickaxe to clear the flangeways at Stone Hill Road in Lakeville so the very first LA&L train could proceed on April 7, 1965. GE 44-tonner No. 10 was acquired second-hand from Vermont Railway, and was sold to a Cargill elevator in Ohio in 1978. GENE BLABEY PHOTO