

# THE SEMAPHORE

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM



**NEXT MEETING:**  
**September 18**  
*Greg Lund shares some of his railroad photography*



## INSIDE:

*Restoration Project Updates . . . . . 2*

*Program Update . . . 3*

*How to COTS a Locomotive . . . . . 3*

*Remembering Lynn Heintz . . . . . 5*

*CSX Donates Boxcars . . . . . 6*

*Events . . . . . 6*

On June 18, 2025, the Museum experienced extreme rainfall, with over 3 inches of rain in one hour. Suffering from washouts and landslides, we were forced to shut down and cancel the events that not only bring the public to our museum, but keep the lights on and the trains running. Since then, our volunteers have stepped up to ensure that the museum is safely repaired, and have tackled large scale projects throughout the campus. Some of these include: cleanup of the stored materials from the mezzanine area, track repair and maintenance at switch 6, and the full replacement of a culvert located in the hill block. Just this past weekend, we installed over 30 new ties, reinstalled two sections of rail, and spiked 50 feet of track over our newly replaced culvert. Throughout these projects, many local companies have provided invaluable input, professional analysis, materials, and more to help us reach the finish line and reopen for a successful fall season.

We would specifically like to thank the Livonia, Avon & Lakeville Railroad, Genesee Valley Transportation, C. P. Ward, Dolomite, Heidelberg Materials, Tartaglia Railroad Services, and Caledonia Diesel for their help! Community relationships like these are vital to the success of our museum.

We look forward to reopening to the public on September 20, with our Welcome Back train rides. The next event is the Rush Fall Festival on September 27, and then we will hit pumpkin patch season. These first two weekends in September are a great opportunity for train crews to get re-familiarized with operations before the busy season starts. Please reach out to any Museum Officer or Trustee if you have any questions. Thank you for your continued patience as we work through these necessary improvements; the museum has come back stronger and safer than ever!

*—Jackson Glozer, Vice President*



# Restoration Project Updates

## Museum Officers

### President

Mark Bowen  
(585) 770-4079  
mfb750@gmail.com

### Vice President

Jackson Glozer

### Treasurer

Charlie Marks

### Recording Secretary

Charles Rothbart

### Corresponding Secretary

Dave Drury

### Trustees

Rob Burz  
Justin Carmona  
Dana Fuellhart  
Adam Lloyd  
Bill Marcotte  
Joe Nugent  
David Shields



The official publication of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum

Volume 68, No. 3

### EDITING TEAM

Madi Murphy  
Jackson Glozer

### PRINTING AND MAILING

Jackson Glozer

©2025 Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum. The Semaphore is published monthly by the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum. Electronic distribution by e-mail is free. First-Class mailing is available for \$20.00 a year. Non-member mailed subscriptions are \$25.00 and run from January 1 to Dec. 31. Member meetings are held the third Thursday of each month, and the Board of Trustees meets the first Thursday of each month. Any items related to the activities of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum, and regional railroad history and current events are gladly accepted for publication.



RGE 8 gets a fresh coat of paint

With the museum closed to the public while volunteers work to repair the damage caused by the storm in June, there has been significant progress on a number of projects in the shop!

**RGE 8:** The locomotive is currently being prepared for paint work by volunteers Chuck Whalen & Kyle Loveland. As of August 30, the first coat of GE demonstrator red has been applied to the locomotive! Mary Strodl has been hard at work on the brake system, replacing a bad reducing valve and ordering some compressor tune up kits to ensure they are functioning correctly. Thank you to all involved with this project. It is nearing completion!

**Despatch Shops 5:** Approximately 90% of the locomotive has been needle scaled. Peter Gores is preparing to take thickness measurements of the boiler with an ultrasonic thickness gauge. The data collected could be useful for future restoration efforts. Rob Burz is working on repairs to the cab of the locomotive. The steel angle iron along the floor will need to be replaced, as well as a portion of the vertical angle iron members where they meet the floor. The sheet metal at

the rear of the cab has been removed, returning the cab to its original shape. The door on the west side of the cab has also been reframed.

**Car 60:** The north truck has been rolled out from underneath the car. Jim Johnson and Michael Guglielmo have been inspecting, cleaning, and repairing the electrical systems on the truck, while the rest of the project team are working on cleaning any remaining rust from the truck in preparation for paint.

**USA 1843:** Joel Poplawski has finished repairs to the fireman's side door and has given the door a fresh coat of paint. Joel is currently working on reinstalling the window glass with the new gasket material he sourced. Completion is expected by August 30, 2025. Mary Strodl performed a preliminary test on the locomotive's air brake system. She found that the independent valve borrowed from B&H 5 has issues/leaks even though it was serviced only a few years ago by Multi Service Supply. It's possible that the valve is contaminated with dirt or chunks of mud wasp nest.  
—Joe Nugent, Mechanical Department Superintendent

## Museum Contact Information

**MUSEUM PRESIDENT**

Mark Bowen  
(585) 770-4079 [mfb750@gmail.com](mailto:mfb750@gmail.com)

**BUILDINGS & GROUNDS SUPT.**

Charlie Marks  
(585) 260-5015 [ctmarks328@gmail.com](mailto:ctmarks328@gmail.com)

**MECHANICAL SUPT.**

Joe Nugent  
(585) 944-1047 [joe.r.nugent@gmail.com](mailto:joe.r.nugent@gmail.com)

**OPERATIONS SUPT.**

David Scheiderich  
(585) 301-1019 [hoblenon@gmail.com](mailto:hoblenon@gmail.com)

**TRACK AND RIGHT-OF-WAY SUPT./CONSTRUCTION SUPT.**

Adam Lloyd  
(585) 662-7295 [adamfj45lloyd@yahoo.com](mailto:adamfj45lloyd@yahoo.com)

**SAFETY MANAGER**

Ernie Cole  
(585) 732-1400 [mrmet1969@hotmail.com](mailto:mrmet1969@hotmail.com)

**MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN**

Sam Rosenberg  
[ALCO251@frontiernet.net](mailto:ALCO251@frontiernet.net)

**PROGRAM COMMITTEE/TRIPS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN**

Dave Drury  
(585) 943-1520 [drury.dave@gmail.com](mailto:drury.dave@gmail.com)

# Program Update

Our monthly meetings return to the 40&8 Club, 933 University Ave., Rochester, NY, (across from Gleason Works) on Thursday, September 18. Doors open at 7:00pm, and the meeting begins at 7:30. Cash bar available. The evening program begins after a brief business meeting.

### Fall Meeting Schedule:

September 18: Greg Lund's Railroad Photography  
 October 16: Steve Boerner Historical Modeling  
 November 20: Member Slide Night  
 December 18: Leanin' Tree Greeting Cards  
 Please note that most meetings are streamed on Zoom. Make certain your email is in the members list to receive links for each month's meeting.

—Dave Drury, Program Committee Chairman

# How to COTS a Locomotive

If you're reading this, you probably know that locomotives use air pistons to apply the brakes through a somewhat complicated systems of levers. What you might not know, is that those brake cylinders are required to be serviced every few years. We recently worked through this process on our ex US Army #1843 FM H-12-44, and it's pretty brutal.

Based on all the manuals we've read through, it seems like this is designed to be done with a drop table, where you drop the whole truck out from under the locomotive, and replace the cylinders as a whole unit with spare parts. Unfortunately, they gave very little thought to how to service these cylinders with the locomotive still attached to the trucks!

Our FM is equipped with duplex brake cylinders, which means each cylinder has two pistons in it (pressure is admitted in the center). To release, the high pressure side is vented to atmosphere, and huge springs push the pistons back to the release position. To actually service the brake cylinders, we need to remove both pistons from the cylinder.

The first thing to do is to get the brake lever out of the way so we'll have enough clearance to pull the piston out. We adjusted the slack out about the width of the slack adjuster thing, making sure to mark with a sharpie where it started so we could avoid redoing the adjustments when we put it back together. Then, we removed the cotter pin and knocked out the pin connecting the piston arm to the brake lever. We found we then had enough clearance to push the arm back a bit and wedge something (we used a wrench to hold the lever out of the way).



From there we hit what is likely the best indicator that FM didn't plan for this to be done with the trucks still under the locomotive:



Notice the pipe interferes with the low pressure head, preventing it from being removed. This pipe is what connects the two cylinders on the truck together and attaches them (through a flexible hose) to the brake valves on the locomotive. We found we could remove the pipe hangers and detach just the flange fittings on either end of the pipe to shimmy it up and out of the way.

Once we had the pipe out of the way, it simply became a matter of wiggling and tugging the cylinder out. On the rear end (where there's no pipe in the way), this whole ordeal was pretty challenging, but altogether not that bad. On the front end, however, there were like a zillion things (that's a technical term, by the way) in our way, which made it pretty challenging to get the piston out. For the front piston, we ultimately had to tilt the piston down (low pressure head towards the ground) and squeeze it through the small gap available between the pipes and shielding for the zerk fitting.



This is the high-pressure side of the brake piston. The rubber thing is the packing cup, which is responsible for making the seal against the brake cylinder, so that when pressurized air is

admitted to the high-pressure side, there will actually be a pressure differential, causing the brake piston to push outwards, and apply the brakes.

Once both pistons were removed, we continued like any other COTS:

1. Remove all old grease from inside the cylinder using a kerosene-soaked rag
2. Remove the rubber packing cup from the piston, being careful not to use any metal tools that might score the piston
3. Inspect the packing cup to make sure it was still flexible and not brittle.
4. Remove any grease from the piston and packing cup. Make sure to not use any solvents like kerosene on the rubber packing cup.
5. While it's apart, take the opportunity to check and remove any crud that may have accumulated in the exhaust port filter on the low-pressure head.
6. Also check the piston assembly for any cracked castings, broken springs, etc.
7. Reinstall the packing cup, making sure to avoid any air pockets between the piston and packing cup which could cause the packing cup to pop off in service.
8. Apply liberal amounts of new grease to the cylinder. Avoid getting any in the air inlet.



Reassembly was pretty much the same as disassembly but in reverse. When reinstalling the piston, we found it worked best to first put the high-pressure side into the cylinder at a pretty harsh angle, which enabled us to then push the piston fairly deep into the cylinder before eventually straightening it out.

—Mary Strodl, Mechanical Department

# Remembering Lynn Heintz

We have all lost a great friend, and very long-standing member of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum and the Rochester Chapter National Railway Historical Society, Lynn Heintz. Lynn was a great historian and had an encyclopedic memory and knowledge about all things railroad and industrial concerning our local region, and well beyond. In addition to the groups mentioned above, he was active in the New York Central Railroad Historical Society, as well as the Erie-Lackawanna, Pennsylvania, and Lehigh Valley groups.

Lynn was heavy into automotive as well as the railroad, and had over the years owned many antique cars and trucks; including a Kissel Gold Bug Speedster from the early teens or twenties, and an Auburn boat tail speedster from the thirties. He had a number of old Ford trucks and middle-aged Chevy pickups. He also owned a NYC maintenance of way screenside pickup and track car, and had done lot of body and mechanical work on our RGVRM Railway Express Agency delivery truck stored on his premises. Lynn would qualify for one of those auto license plate brackets that says “my other car is a locomotive,” as he owned a rare and unusual Cincinnati four-wheel critter type loco that had come out of service from a local industry in the Western New York area.

He was an avid railroader collector, and had keys, locks, lanterns, signs, maps, and paperware. He also was into HO gauge model trains and had pieces for all the railroads mentioned above. Many of us had the opportunity to go on road trips with Lynn, enjoying his company, and getting an earful of rail history in the process.

Lynn was an accomplished instrument and model maker, and retired from Eastman Kodak after many years of service at their Camera Works, Hawk-Eye, and Elmgrove Plants. After retirement, Lynn invested in a multiple unit storage building and ran this business for quite a few years. Lynn had several barns for his vehicle collection, and recently was building an additional barn, with help from Joe Nugent, which he unfortunately didn't get to complete. Lynn was a real hands-on type of guy, and a good one to have on any type of project. We sure will miss him. Our sincere thoughts and condolences to his wife Fan, and his son Ben, and all his extended family.

Surely missed, but never forgotten!

—Rand Warner & Joe Nugent



Lynn hoops up orders to the passing train during an event at RGV.

## CSX Donates Boxcars

On the afternoon of May 16, the Livonia, Avon & Lakeville delivered three 50-foot boxcars to our West Siding. These boxcars were built in 1975 by Pacific Car and Foundry for Railbox, before being sold to the C&O. These boxcars will be utilized for storage of track materials, signal hardware, and mechanical parts. Thank you to Jeremy Tuke for putting in the donation request with CSX. We would also like to thank Robert Rohauer at CSX for organizing the donation the boxcars to us, and the LAL for delivering them free of charge!



# Superintendent Changes

While much of our attention has been focused on flood recovery this summer, there have also been some important changes in our museum's volunteer management team. Over the summer, Track Superintendent David Kehrer stepped down from managing the department. We are grateful for David's years of dedication and hard work to keep us "on the right track"! Construction Superintendent Adam Lloyd has taken David's responsibilities going forward. Otto Vondrak resigned from his position as Marketing & Events Superintendent, a role he has filled since 2010. We thank Otto for his many contributions in helping enhance and strengthen the museum's position in the community! The board is currently seeking volunteers to help fill this position in 2026. The role includes responsibilities such as media outreach, event planning, ticket sales, and volunteer coordination.

# Upcoming Events

**Welcome Back Train Rides:**  
September 20

**Rush Fall Festival:**  
September 27

**Pumpkin Patch Train Rides:**  
October 4-5  
October 11-12  
October 18-19  
October 25-26  
November 1

**Santa Trains:**  
November 29-30  
December 6-7  
December 13-14

# Dog Days

Volunteers may remember the little dog who was found roaming the construction yard in June. He had no collar and looked pretty grubby. He was taken home by Charles Rothbart, at the insistence of his partner Madi, who loves dogs (as long as they belong to other people). Madi gave the dog a much-needed bath and a good square meal. They called the dog "Wellie," after the Stillwell car that Charles has been restoring. Wellie enjoyed the many smells that the Swillburg neighborhood has to offer. He spent the night in the big city, and slept on the porch so the cats wouldn't bother him. Madi said of the event, "It was like having a foreign exchange student!"

The next day, they brought Wellie back to the Museum and took him to nearby houses in search of his owner. Lo and behold, he was claimed and returned to his family. His real name is Jack. Thanks for visiting our Museum, little dog!





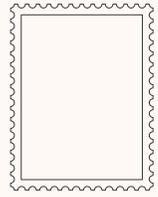


**THE SEMAPHORE**

Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum

P.O. Box 23326

Rochester, NY 14692-3326



---

---

---

