



# IRONHEAD GAZETTE

A Publication of the Railroad Model and Historical Society of Southeastern Ohio, Inc.

PO Box 1, Albany, Ohio, 45710

June 2015

## Upcoming Events:

**June 9, 2015**

Club Meeting  
7:00pm

Ohio State Highway Patrol Post  
13600 Della Drive, Athens

Bring something for  
show and tell!

**June 13, 2015**

Bradford Railroad Festival  
Bradford, Ohio

Admission: \$5

Celebrating 130 Years of  
Railroad History, Telegraph  
School, Lincoln Funeral Train  
Exhibit, Operating Layout,  
Speeder Display

**June 27-28, 2015**

10th Annual Miami Valley Rail  
Festival  
Dayton, Ohio

Admission: \$5 - \$8

Model Train Displays, Historical  
Displays, Live Steam, Flea  
Market, Miniature Train Rides

**July 11-12, 2015**

Model Train Show and Swap  
Van Wert, Ohio

Admission: \$3

100+ Vendor Tables, Operating  
Layouts

**August 8, 2015**

Summerail

Cincinnati, Ohio

Admission: \$25

Cincinnati Union Terminal,  
Tower A, Railroad Show and  
Sale, Multi-Media Presentations

**September 13, 2015**

NETS - Swap & Trade Model  
Train Meet

Painesville, Ohio

Admission: Free

Depots Railfanning Days,  
Collectors, Operating Layouts,  
New/Old, Buy/Sell/Trade

## Mom and Trains

By: Kirk DePeel

My mom is dying. Cancer is slowly taking her life surely as I sit here and write these words. It's a terrible feeling knowing someone you are close too will soon be gone and there's nothing you can do to prevent it. You try to put these feelings aside and go on with your life, but normal isn't possible. Trust me; I've tried. With every work call I answer, and every email I send; my mother is on my mind.

These past few weekends with her has allowed me to reminisce about certain events in my life. As many of you know, I have a deep love/passion for both model and real trains. I think this had more to do with my dad who also shared those feelings, just not as strongly as myself (although I think he could have if he had met the right people). But my mother also encouraged and occasionally indulged me with my love affair. Two of them really stand out.

The first was when I was eight. We had just moved to Ohio and lived in a small house that had seen its better days. This house didn't have a washer and dryer nor my parents couldn't afford to buy one so this meant weekly trips

to the laundry mat. There were several around the area, but my mom choose to go to the one in Glendale, Ohio which happened to be a few buildings up from the busy B&O main line. Although it was farther from the others, my mother knew how much I enjoyed watching the trains. In those days (late 60's) there were three tracks through Glendale. Two main lines with a third, middle siding that they shared. I remember standing there for an hour watching an engine switch the siding while other freights roared pass on the main. What a sight and a great memory. Another day I stood outside the entire time the clothes were being cleaned watching the workers install the B&O signals onto the cantilevers towers. Now the middle siding is gone and signals have been replaced by Dark Vader's, but northbound CSX and NS freight trains still prowl the line. It was a magical and happy memory compliments of my mom.

**Continued on Page 2**

# Mom and Trains

Continued from Page 1

My second memory was in the summer of 1983. My father had just passed away after a short bout with cancer and to be honest, my life was in shambles. Events I won't go into had left me in a deep depression and I was, if you excuse the expression, a train wreck. I needed a break from my situation, and decided to relive one of best memories I had as a child which was our family trip out west. When I told my mother of my plans she also wanted to go. So a few days later we packed up her car and headed west.

I can't say we did a lot of train watching on this trip. There was some, as I tried to retrace some of the route my father took before the Interstate system. On that trip we spent hours on straight roads with the RR tracks paralleling us. I remember whenever my dad saw a train he would say, "I think I see another train coming down the tracks". Hearing those words I would drop my coloring book and

stare out the window in excitement trying to catch every detail of the passing train. But I degress.

On this evening we were in the Petrified Forest National Park, Arizona, near I-40 and Rt. 66. There the park road crosses over the double track mainline of Santa Fe Railroad on a bridge. As we drove over the tracks, I spotted in the far distance the light of an eastbound freight and mentioned it to her.

"Let's stop and wait for it," she suggested.

"Really?" I replied while quickly pulling off on the beam before she had a chance to reconsider. Only problem was, the train was struggling and barely moving. For the next twenty minutes we stood silently in the warm, Arizona heat as the sun slowly started to set. In the dying light the train passed under us, and I knew each of us had different thoughts on our minds. I was thinking about the future and what it would bring. My

mother was thinking about the past, and the husband she had just buried. No words were spoken, but I do believe it was a turning point in both our lives.

I find these memories even more pronounced now watching her. Like the railroads, my life has changed in the past 30+ years. Yet I can still close my eyes and feel that hot diesel exhaust blowing on me in that warm, Arizona air or the hear the sounds of the engine switching at Glendale. All possible because of my mother's love for me.

Thanks Mom! I love you.

Postscript: My mother passed away on Good Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 11 am. She was a rock to our family and will be missed.

## New Club Shirts

The Railroad Club is planning on placing an order for new club shirts for members. The cost will be about \$14.50 to \$16.50/shirt with the member's name on the shirt. More information will follow in upcoming newsletters.

## "Hobo Speak"

<http://www.angelfire.com/folk/famoustramp/terminology.html>

**Airedale** - Someone who travels alone rather than with other tramps.

## Safety Key Concern for WNY&P Railroad

By: Rick Miller | Olean Times Herald

Recent news about derailments and exploding oil rail cars trigger questions about Southern Tier rail safety.

The Southern Tier Extension Rail Authority owns the old Erie Railroad tracks, which travel east-west across the region, which is operated by the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad.

The Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad encompasses 190 miles of track between Hornell and Meadville, Pa., as well as about 90 miles of track between Driftwood, Pa., and Machias.

Carl Belke, chief operating officer and president of Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad, said all the rails the railroad operates are inspected annually by the Federal Railway

Administration.

In addition, the railroad checks every mile of its tracks once a week for any loose bolts or spikes, or any other obvious safety concerns, Belke said. A federal inspector will go along on an inspection of a random railroad section. Bridges are also inspected regularly and maintenance records are archived.

Belke said that whenever an inspector flags a section of track, the speed for that section is downgraded and that section is scheduled for remediation as soon as possible.

All railroads in the country maintain their track to Federal Railroad Administration standards, Belke said. It is primarily based on speed. In the case of the WNY&P, there is class 2 trackage, which has a maximum speed of 25 mph,

and class 3, which has a 40 mph limit.

Track condition is also based on the number of failed crossties, the proper spacing of the track, and track geometry, which includes the levelness of the track, whether it is properly elevated on curves and smoothness of the ride.

Another annual test involves “inductive testing” which looks inside the rail to determine if there are any defects.

The recent increase in business has put more wear and tear on the rails, Belke said. The railroad is continuing to replace both ties and rail where it is needed most.

**Continued on Page 4**

## Interested in Membership?

Interested in becoming a member? Join today! Membership dues are as follows:

- \$40 for a single membership for 1 year
- \$60 for a family membership for 1 year

Benefits of becoming a member:

- Voting
- Several great trips throughout the year
- Friends who share a common hobby and interests

# Safety Key Concern for WNY&P Railroad

Continued from Page 3

In the past month, more than 8,700 crossties have been replaced along a 9.2-mile stretch of the former Pennsylvania Railroad from Olean to Portville. Four crossings along the route were also replaced — Fourth Street, Coleman Street, Dugan Road in Olean and Barbertown Road in Portville.

After the Olean to Portville crossties are completed, a surfacing machine will level and align the ballast, the stone that keeps the ties in place. Another machine will go through to add ballast and the surfacing machine will go through a second time. “That section will be good for another 5 to 7 years,” Belke said.

A second major project, the track from Olean to Kill Buck, is scheduled to start this fall. The 12-mile track realignment project will involve 10,000 ties and 12,000 tons of new ballast at a cost of \$2.5 million. However, a national shortage of crossties could push the

project back until spring, Belke said.

The railroad also plans bridge work on six rail bridges across the system this summer, including a large bridge at Larabee, Pa., according to Belke.

Regarding rail cars containing Bakken oil from North Dakota, Belke said, “We do not run oil trains loaded with Bakken oil on WNY&P.”

Most of the oil trains on WNY&P are loaded with a heavy, waxy oil that is headed for Farmers Valley, Pa., for processing to remove the wax. “It’s not explosive. It doesn’t even flow. It’s real goeey crude.”

The WNY&P does get questions about the Bakken oil cars parked on rail sidings across its system, including Olean, Hinsdale, Franklinville and Cuba. “There are 700 empty Bakken cars on our railroad. There are more coming. It’s all in relation to

what is happening in the oil and gas world.” As oil and gas prices dropped due to a glut from hydrofracking, fewer rail cars were needed to move the oil.

“Some of the cars are brand new from Mexico, never had a drop of oil in them,” Belke said. There are about 300 new rail oil cars on WNY&P sidings and 400 that have been in service, which have some residual oil in them. To make them safer, nitrogen gas is piped into the cars to remove the oxygen and any chance of an explosion.

“They are heavily armored,” Belke said of the oil cars. “They are routinely inspected for seals. These cars are perfectly safe.”

## Our Mission

*To Teach...*

*Those who want to know more.*

*To Educate...*

*Those who want to learn the history.*

*To Promote...*

*The hobby with enthusiasm.*

*And to share and enjoy the pleasure of all that is Railroadng.*



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## Have stories, articles, or pictures?

Want to see them in a future edition of the Ironhead Gazette?

Send them to us!

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Albany, Ohio 45710

Your contributions keep the Ironhead Gazette moving!

All Aboard!