

# The Railyard Local

Volume 5, Issue 4

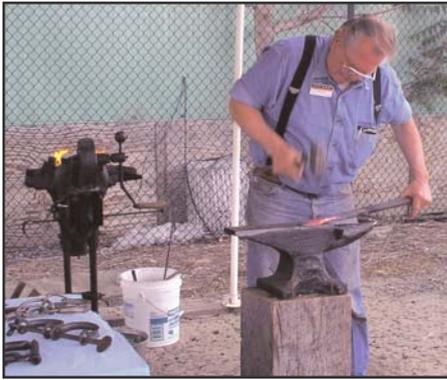
-The Monthly Newsletter of the Danbury Railway Museum-

April 2006

## Hammer-In 2006

Blacksmithing Event April 29 & 30, 10-5pm

Skilled blacksmiths will be demonstrating their craft once again in the railyard at the DRM. Bill Scheer is shown below at last year's event. The response to last year's event encouraged us to schedule it again. Come be entranced by metalworking at portable forges and our vintage New Haven forge. There will be opportunities to purchase blacksmith's wares. We hope to have an area for new enthusiasts to try their hand at a forge under the supervision of skilled arti-



sans. All this will be in addition to our regularly scheduled train rides and attractions at the Museum. Those wishing to participate should call Skip Kern at 203-642-4111.

## Little Engine That Could Event Committee Hard at Work

Members say "We know we can!" as they meet weekly to organize the BIG event

Many of our most active volunteers are working diligently organizing the Museum's **BIGGEST** event of the year which will be held June 17-18 & 24-25. There are several subcommittees involving: advertising & marketing, train operations, overall site preparations, attractions & entertainment, gift shop & sales, food, and volunteer recruitment/deployment.

Each aspect of the event will have specific needs for volunteers. This event will require volunteers on a large scale to help out in one way or another, even if in small ways. If one of these areas listed above appeals to you as a way to help, please call the Museum at 203-778-8337.

This promises to be a hugely popular and successful event for the Museum, and a major attraction for Danbury. It will take the coordinated effort of a large number of volunteers to make it happen. Please step forward to participate.

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plus . . .

DRM Express Track and Library News

## DRM Annual Meeting 2006

Wednesday evening March 15<sup>th</sup> featured the Museum's Annual Meeting, in addition to Ed Blackman's always interesting program of slides from his collection. DRM President Ira Pollack began with his weekly update on goings-on at the Museum, then addressed the assembled audience with a review of the past year at the Danbury Railway Museum. This address to the membership is featured in his column *DRM Express*



*Track on Page 3 of this issue. Our Treasurer, Patty Osmer, gave a financial overview of the DRM's past year, and volunteer statistics update. The Museum worked within a balanced budget, and gained signifi-*

*Continued on Page 7*

## Reminder: Expanded Hours

Spring is here! The DRM hours for April-October: Tuesday through Saturday 10am-5pm; Sunday 12-5pm. Closed on Mondays. Open on certain holidays, and expanded hours for some special events, so call for information or refer to our flyers.

## New Members

We are delighted to welcome our new members this month. All members, as well as the general public, are welcome to attend the weekly meetings and free programs held Wednesdays, 7:30pm, at the Museum, 120 White Street, Danbury. We invite all members to become involved in Museum activities as soon as possible!

Maria Nascimento	Danbury, CT
Larry Deming	Bethel, CT
Francis Casale	White Plains, NY
Linae Wutzl	Brookfield, CT

Life Member:

Thomas W. Derwin	Kent, CT
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Bill Scheer was one of the blacksmiths participating in last year's Hammer-In at the DRM. Here he is in action with his portable forge fired up.

## RPO News and Notes

By Bill Britt

The window replacement project is not quite done but so close we can almost "taste it", as they say. We need less than \$100 in order for us to turn this part over to the glazer.

As the weather is about to break (we hope) our next major project on the car will be the exterior, starting with the roof. Those that have seen the car can attest that the roof is extremely rusty. However, with the exception of some small holes that can be patched and covered, it is in fair shape. When we start this we will need some manpower.

Did you know? That the postal clerks working in the railway post office cars were alerted to upcoming stations that the train was not scheduled to stop at by whistle signals from the engineer. These signals allowed the clerks to prepare for mail sack pick-up from the "crane", as well as delivery of sacks at those stations while the train was in motion.

Again thank you for your continued support. We always look forward to hearing from you; not just with the financial support we need, but also with railway post office tales and facts.

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## Ten Years Ago

By Stan Madyda

The April 1996 "Danbury Railway News" started off by reporting on the April Open House Weekend. Saturday began with Mayor Gene Eriquez arriving at the station in a Stanley Steamer. By 11:30, 500 riders were on board the special excursion train to Beacon. Activities continued throughout the day ending late in the evening with our first ever Night Photo Session conducted by Dan Foley and Ed Blackman. Our RS-1 was decorated in a temporary Rutland scheme. Also in the yard were engines from Metro North and Providence & Worcester. On Sunday we



The colorful Providence & Worcester 2209 locomotive graced the DRM railyard for the Spring Show 1996. This photo, as well as the ones on the back cover of this issue are from the DRM Library's collection of photos of that event taken by Bob Westerfield.

welcomed more visitors, including 1,000 riders on shorter excursions to Dykeman's. The final estimate was that 5,000 people visited the Museum over the weekend.

On April 19th, Mayor Eriquez and Peter Cornwall signed the lease for the station set to terminate in 2015. The initial plans for allocation of space has been followed for the most part over the last 10 years. The only real change was the Telegraph Office was slated to be exhibit space.

There was a call for volunteers to help staff the station. The station and yard were to be open six days a week. Some optimistic hope was indicated that at sometime in the future we would be in a position to have paid staff.

Our first exhibit was not a railroad related exhibit, but one on the Still River, set to open in June. The exhibit was put up by the Danbury Preservation Trust and faculty and students from West Conn. The theme of the exhibit was to show how Danbury developed around the river, how it was abused and ultimately how it was coming back to life. The floods of 1955 were well documented. The exhibit was to be on

*Continued on Page 6*

# DRM Express Track

By Ira Pollack, President

*This month's column features my address to the Danbury Railway Museum's membership at the Annual Meeting on Wednesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>. It summarizes the past year at the Museum beginning last March.*

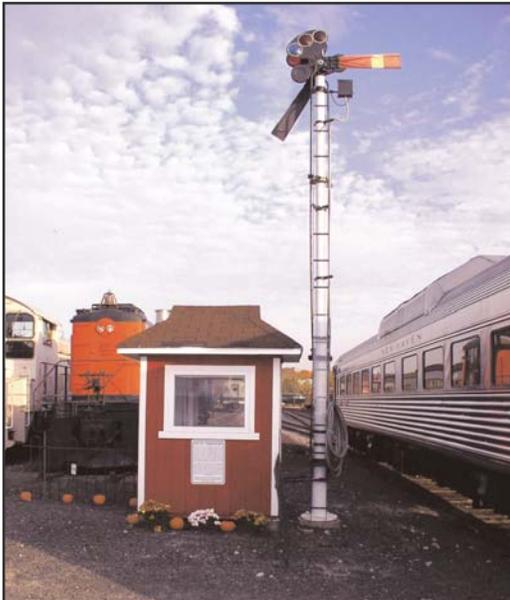
Tonight I'd like to look back over the year 2005 and talk to you about some of our successes. To start with:

This past year is probably the first year that the Museum has worked within a planned, balanced budget. Although there were some small overspendings, for the most part we were able to follow our planned expenditures. This is a major accomplishment for our organization. My thanks to our financial officer, Patty Osmer, for her diligence.

Our membership at this time stands at 592. We now have many different people who have joined. Many are families with children, joining our traditional railroad buffs.

As always, we have many projects going on both outside and within the station. To list a few projects and accomplishments from 2005:

- 1) NYC caboose work continued up to the frost. Work on the north side and roof will continue this year.
- 2) Through a \$4500 Meserve grant, we were able to enhance our signage in the yard and building. This is the best the Museum has looked since its beginnings.
- 3) The Wilton semaphore, while still needing electric wiring, is almost complete, and is an operational exhibit.



- 4) We have a regular crew of 5-6 people on Tuesday nights working on new HO layout and upgrading the O-gauge layout.
- 5) A G-gauge layout has been donated and is almost ready to be unveiled within the Museum.

- 6) Our turntable has been given Historic status by the federal government.
- 7) Two ACMU cars were donated by Metro-North; a Rail Post Office car was a gift from the Housatonic RR.

- 8) Large directional signs for the DRM were erected on I-84.

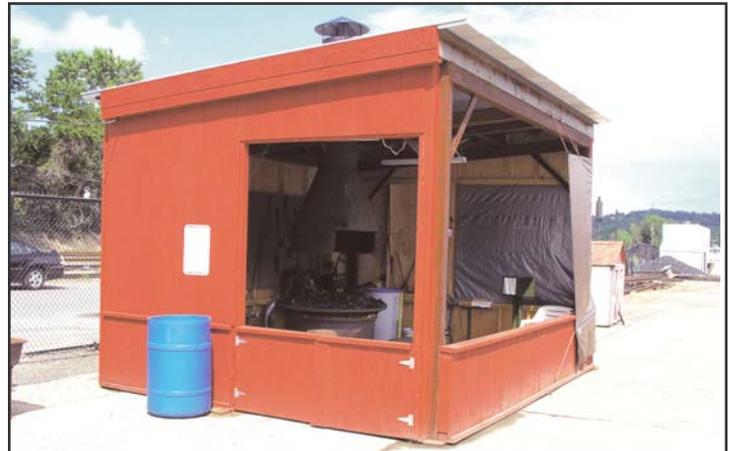
9) Through efforts from outside sources, unusable railroad ties were removed and rail was donated.

10) The DRM Library has grown to the bursting point. It has acquired many large collections through donations and purchases.

11) The birthday party room is now being used year-round.

12) Two 44-ton locomotives are being donated by Electric Boat.

All in all, it has been a very successful year for the Museum. Unfortunately we have lost some key players in our operation, but we must continue to grow and move forward. We have many challenges to meet in these months to come. We have track work to accomplish: replacing ties on the turntable lead switch



The sheathing for the vintage New Haven forge was almost completed last year. We just need a bit more funding and work to finish it.

and tracks 34 & 42. These are major challenges for the Museum and its staff. We must remain positive and work on it methodically, even if it is a little at a time.

We also must fill the open positions of Advertising Director and Operations Director, and add to the Volunteer Committee. These are vital positions to help our operations run smoothly, efficiently, and to market our unique product.

As you well know, we have new events planned this year, including *Rockin' on th Railroad* and *The Little Engine That Could*. *Rockin' on the Railroad* will be a fund raiser for the track work at the Museum. *The Little Engine That Could* will be a large event along the lines of Thomas the Tank Engine. This event will require the participation in one way or another of a high percentage of our membership.

In closing I'd like to thank you all for your help during this past year. Always realize that it is you, the members, that have made this Museum what it is today.

# The Yard Inside

By Wade Roese

Hello again. We haven't updated the column in ... too many months, but lots of exciting things are going on with the displays within the Museum.

Beginning with the layouts which continue to be an active and growing part of the DRM:

**N-Gauge:** Thanks to Bill Britt's fatherly attention, the N gauge continues to quietly entertain our many young (and older) visitors. Gradually we continue to add new structures and that gives me the opportunity to invite anyone and everyone interested in contributing a structure to give one a try. We can always use assistance.

**HO-Gauge:** The HO-gauge layout is steadily progressing, and has been documented by photos thanks to our editor Carolyn Taylor. Currently the layout has the bench work for the three levels completed; track



Three levels of track, at left. Below, a closer look at some of the scenery and track-work in progress.



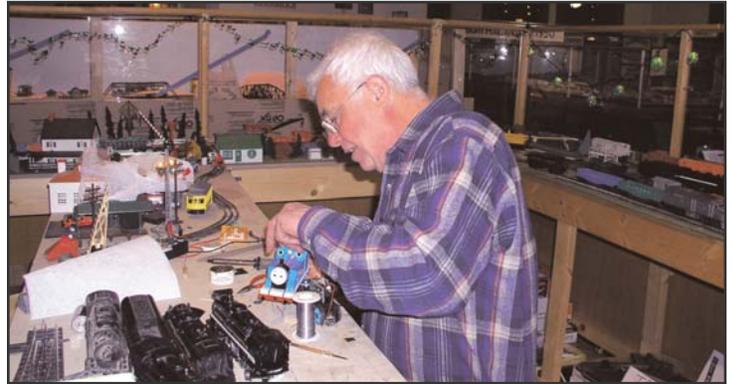
laying and ballasting is complete on two of the three levels, bridges are in place with more to follow, the yard turntable is in place, foam landscaping is sculpted and ready for painting, electronic control circuits are designed and being built, and Steve Mayerson is performing his weathering magic on some donated scratchbuilt structures. There still remains much work to be done on the HO. We invite anyone interested in joining the fun by being part of our crew to come to the Museum on Tuesdays at 7pm.

**S-Gauge:** Although the S-gauge layout has been removed, we are planning an S-gauge static display that will focus on this historical and popular

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scale.

**O-Gauge:** Lots to report this issue. Richard Shubar has grabbed a hold of the ever faithful Lionel O-gauge. Every Tuesday "Rich" joins the Tuesday "Yard Inside" crew to repair, renovate, fix, and maintain the O equipment. He has impressed Marty Grossman away from the HO (temporarily, Rich!) to build a new timing circuit for operation of the O-gauge. This will



Marty works on the Museum's own Thomas the Tank Engine within the confines of the O-gauge layout.

extend the lifespan of this equipment. Rich sequesters himself inside the layout each Tuesday.

**G-Gauge:** The big, **BIG** news is the addition of this big gauge to The Yard Inside! Graciously, a friend of yours truly and his grandson, Al and Cody Kellogg, donated to the DRM a 10ft x 14ft operational and fully landscaped G-gauge replication of an historic logging



Wade installing the protective barrier for the G-gauge.

operation. It was quietly moved by Mr. Kellogg and Tuesday's "Yard Inside" crew into the Museum, where the "Yard Inside" crew has been enclosing the layout with a protective barrier and incorporating new timing circuits. By the time you read this news the new G-gauge should be operational. Come have a look!

Again, we invite you to join us on Tuesday for the N, HO, O, and G gauges. Lots

of choices; lots of fun, and we welcome your assistance and participation. Tuesday evenings or anytime during Museum hours stop by the Yard Inside to see what is happening, or drop a note to tell us what you would like to see. It is your Museum. We want and welcome your ideas.

Thanks for your support. Wade

# Library News

By Stan Madyda

Since it was 10 years ago that Terri Stramiello visited the California State Railroad Museum, bringing back many ideas for the DRM Library, I thought it would be a good idea to write more about our beginnings and how we got to where we are today.

When Terri came back from her trip to the symposium on collections at that museum, she brought us a wealth of information on their library and other museums in Sacramento. She sat down with the Library Committee, sharing notes on what she learned and saw. We began to adopt similar policies for our Library and collection. With help and guidance from DRM Director Lucy Boland, Alice Knapp of the Bethel Library, Kathleen Collins of the New York Transit Museum Archive, Ellen Halteman of the California State Railroad Museum Library and Terri, we were well on our way to establishing our Library.

Early on, we decided that we would not be a lending library but a reference and research library. There was opposition to this but we demonstrated to the Board that this was the right way for us to go. If we did become a lending library, we would have to staff it and fully catalog its contents. With collections coming in nonstop, that would have created much more work for the people we had on the committee. There was also the risk of having books damaged or lost. In fact, early on, the Library was not a secure room and I do remember two valuable books disappearing off the shelves.

We do find from time to time people who think we only collection material on Danbury and the New Haven Railroad. This is not really true. While railroading in Danbury and the New Haven Railroad and its



Metro-North FL-9 #2007 in stealth scheme at the 1996 Spring Train Show. Photo by Bob Westerfield.

successors are important components in the collection, we do collect material from across the United States. The emphasis of the collection is railroading in the Northeast, including the New Haven, Boston & Maine, New York Central, Delaware & Hudson, Pennsylvania, Penn Central, Conrail, Metro North and many of the smaller railroads. What makes our collection stand out is that we do have a growing catalog of information on railroads outside of the Northeast. If a researcher is

interested in material on the Southern Pacific, for example, we have a sampling of books, timetables and annual reports that can provide useful information.

One of our policies has been to keep only one copy of an item. We prefer to receive donations as unrestricted gifts allowing us to transfer or sell duplicate items. If we have material that we feel is not pertinent to our collection, we will contact other museums. Recently we sent bus timetables to Motor Coach Society and in the past have given material to the New York Transit Museum and the Connecticut Antique Machinery Association. Duplicate items (dupes) can also be sold at attractive prices with money going to the Library Fund. This Fund allows us to purchase supplies and railroad material/collections such as the Harry Vallas Collection. New issues of duplicate magazines and some timetables are put in the "freebie" boxes outside of the Library. We find that it is hard to keep the boxes filled with duplicate magazines.



The DRM Library has graciously provided numerous photos from its collection (such as this one by Bob Westerfield of locomotives at the Spring Train Show in 1996) for use in *The Railroad Local*.

Does the Library get used for research purposes? Yes it does. Over the years we have had members and the general public use the Library. Members come in on a regular basis asking questions about railroad history they are interested in or projects they are working on. Many times, the Mechanical Department has referred to our collection of operating and instruction manuals. Members working on restoration projects have also used our archives. We have had students on all levels come in and research papers and homework they are working on. Non-members have visited and asked questions on subjects they are interested in. We also receive inquiries from time to time over the internet for information people feel we might have in the collection.

Accessioning and cataloging the material we have received over the last 11 years, approximately 700 donations, is an ongoing process. More and more data is being entered into our database. We will be upgrading to a program specifically designed for museum collections. At some point down the road, we could have part of the collection digitized. We may not be at the level of the California State Railroad Museum Library yet, but we continue to make progress in that direction.

# DRM Volunteers in 2005

By Patty Osmer

Volunteers are perhaps the most important asset the Danbury Railway Museum has. It is thanks to all of you that events can be held, the Railyard Local runs, the Gift Shop and Front Desk are staffed, yard tours are conducted, equipment is maintained and restored ... just to mention a few of the many things that our volunteers do.

Volunteer hours which have been turned in show 86 volunteers giving 15,079 hours; some recorded as little as two hours, others over 900. But each and every volunteer hour is essential to our operation. We know that not all volunteers record their hours, and that many who do record their hours, don't include all of them. If everyone who volunteered recorded every hour, there would no doubt be triple these figures.



Sue Thomas, one of our most active volunteers, has been very busy recently processing Easter Bunny train reservations at the Museum

In order to keep track of volunteer hours, which are often required for grants, the Board of Directors urges everyone who volunteers to fill out a volunteer log, either at the Front Desk, the Library, the Crew Trailer, or with the Project Manager. Or, you can keep track of your hours in a pocket calendar (the Museum will even BUY the calendar ... just leave a note for Patty Osmer or Jerry Lawlor) and leave a copy of the month's hours for Patty or Jerry. We ask that you record your hours, and the project you worked on. If you worked on the restoration of a specific piece of equipment, please note that, too.

Volunteers for whom we have received hours in 2005 are listed below:

Bob Andrews; John Andrews; Roberta Ballard; Peirce Behrendt; Chris, Ed & Suze Blackman; Bill Britt; Bob & Bobby Broderick; Harry Burke; Joe Calabrese; Dan Carlton; Justin Chapin; Jim Daly; Rich Edwards; Kathie Fay; John Fegley; Dan Foley; Franz Gerencir; Ilarie Giurgescu; Steve Gould; Marty Grossman; Tom Haessler; Warren Hagenkotter; Sean Harte; Nancy Hennessey; Gerry Herrman; Ed Holowinko; Peter King; Goeff Knees; Don Konen; Alex Krizan;

Dana Laird; Matt Landau; Ken Landsiebel; Jerry Lawlor; Dave Lowry; Stan & Mike Madyda; Matt Manske; Eric & Steve Mayerson; Desmond McCann; Tom McCullough; Matt McDonald; Fred McKenna; Peter McLachlan; J.R. Mitchell; Randy Natale; John O'Hern; Brendan & Ed Olena; Patty Osmer; Howard & Shirley Peatfield; Ira Pollack; Jeremy Rice; Dave Rist; Dave Roberts; Wade Roesse; Marie Salata; Lincoln Sander; Marty Scalota; Stan Schoonmaker; Richard Shaboo; Ann Marie Shannon; John Silbert; Dave Simington; Brenan Skinski; Nancy Sniffen; Alex South; David & Judith Stavans; Carolyn Taylor; Sue Thomas; Bruce VanWyk; Jeff VanWagenen; Al Vieira; Joe Ward; Bob Westerfield; Tony White, Kenn Williams; Dave & Carol Wilson

Thanks again to all our volunteers!

*Ten Years Ago, Continued from Page 2*

display at the Danbury Public Library but needed to be moved due to the fire at that library. Admission fees were to go to the DRM. The track lighting over the Lionel layout is all that remains in the station of the exhibit.



Pioneer Valley live steamers giving rides at the Spring Train Show in 1996. Photo by Bob Westerfield.

There was a lengthy article on Terri Stramiello's trip to a symposium held at the California State Railroad Museum entitled "Collecting Railroad History - A Discussion of Railroad Museum Collections: What We Collect and Why." The three-day meeting was attended by representatives from many other railroad museums throughout the country and featured noted speakers from the preservation community. It was an excellent opportunity to network and share ideas. Terri brought back quite a bit of material on policies and procedures which we still refer to today.

**Editors Note:** Refer to the Library News column on Page 5 in this issue for more information.

# DRM Represented at School Science Workshop

Steve Gould, DRM Secretary, was a guest speaker at the New Canaan (CT) Country School "Science Scene 2006" workshop for K- 4 grade students on February 8, 2006. There were eighteen speakers in all, including a noted heart surgeon. Steve, representing DRM, spoke on "The Science of Railroads: How Trains Work" to three different classes each of 18 4th graders. The presentation consisted of a 30-minute interactive lecture showing photos of the various types of steam, diesel-electric, electric, and dual-powered locomotives. He stressed that several pieces of equipment were unique to Connecticut, such as the dual-powered FL9's, dual-powered P32ACDM's, and MU commuter cars that require pantographs and third rail capability. This was followed by a thirteen minute video showing examples of locomotives, types of freight and passenger trains, and an example of the Doppler Effect on sound waves.

Based on the types of questions and comments made, the presentations were well received.

If any member in the local area has a need for a guest speaker from the Museum, contact Steve at the Museum or at GouldSL@aol.com.

**Editors Note:** Thank you Steve for representing the DRM at this school event, for submitting this article, and for agreeing to be the DRM's contact for outreach!

## Rail Fan Entertainment

Would you like to present a program to an appreciative audience of rail fans? The DRM features a variety of entertaining and informative programs on Wednesday evenings beginning at 7:30pm at the Museum.



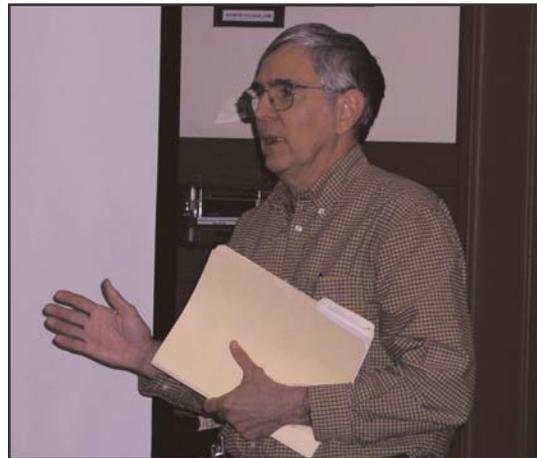
Ed Blackman recently entertained with interesting slides from his collection, accompanied by his commentary.

Presentations have included slide and video shows, modeling clinics, and historical presentations, etc. If **you** (or if you know the name of someone) would like to do a presentation of about 1-1 1/2

hours please contact Dan Foley c/o the Museum, or at dfoleyfoto@aol.com with a brief description of your proposal (s), and when you might be available. Presenters do NOT have to be DRM members.

cantly in restricted funds donations and grants. Her article recognizing our volunteers is on Page 6 of this issue.

Secretary Steve Gould announced election results for members of the Board of Directors. All of



the candidates were incumbents and re-elected to two year terms on the Board: Ed Blackman, Don Konan, Dave Lowry, and Randy Natale.

Congratulations, and thank you for being willing to help this organization move forward during the next two years of your term!

## News of Note:

**Wade Roese** was elected to the DRM Board of Directors at the monthly BOD meeting on March 16<sup>th</sup>. He will fill a two-year term vacancy still left unfilled after the annual election by the membership. Congratulations, Wade, and we look forward to your participation on the Board!

**Reminder:** Our Easter Bunny event will be held April 8, 9, 14 & 15, with train departures frequently from 12 noon to 4:30 on the Saturdays. First train at 12:30 Sunday the 9<sup>th</sup>. Tickets \$7 ages 3 and up. Reservations recommended. Call 203-778-8337.

## Help Wanted

**Advertising Director**, to work with others in promoting and marketing our unique Museum and events.

**Operations Director** to direct the train operations, crew, and rolling stock maintenance.

More detailed requirements of these positions are listed in the February and March issues in the DRM Express Track column or available by calling the Museum.

**Volunteers to help** spruce up our four passenger coaches this spring. Come join us on Saturdays beginning at 9:30am in the railyard, or call the Museum to find out how and when your help can be utilized.



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## MUSEUM CALENDAR

- Apr 19(7:30pm) Steam Locomotive Fan Trip Slides - Peter McLachlan
- Apr 20(7:00pm) Board Meeting (Open to Members)
- Apr 26(7:30pm) Four Decades of New England Rails - 50's-80's (slides) - Bob Kessler
- May 3(7:30pm) Housatonic North to the Berkshires - Sue DelBianco
- May 10(7:30pm) Slides of CNE Stations - Roger Liller
- May 17(7:30pm) Slides of People Movers in Action - Roger Coleman

Be sure to look for the full color version of this newsletter on our website: [www.danbury.org/drm/](http://www.danbury.org/drm/)



### Contact Information

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### **Change of Address**

If you move, please send your change of address to:  
 Danbury Railway Museum,  
 Attention: Membership Chairman  
 PO Box 90, Danbury, CT 06813  
 Via Email to [drmmembers@aol.com](mailto:drmmembers@aol.com)

