



# Moving Forward

2020

## Message from James Bonner



News for Customers, Employees & Friends of the New York & Atlantic Railway



Together with all our valued partners, we are enduring unprecedented events and realizing what is most important in our lives. My sympathies go to all who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am proud of our workforce for continuing to perform their duties safely and effectively despite the ever-present challenges and distractions.

We will continue to assess service needs and make any possible adjustments to ensure our customers and community are supported. We are fortunate to be part of Anacostia Rail Holdings, which is committed to keeping operations safe and efficient. Our president and CEO, Peter Gilbertson, asks that everyone “stay focused on your own health and that of your family while doing your job safely. Let our values and integrity guide us through this.”

The content of this year’s newsletter speaks to the great spirit of everyone at NYA.

We are proud to feature another valued customer, Newhaven Distribution Services. Their president, Bill Schiffer, explains that the company was born nearly 40 years ago to bring the then-new

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## Deregulation Success Story: Newhaven Distribution



Photo courtesy of Newhaven Distribution

*A convenient location with frequent rail service works well for Newhaven Distribution.*

### ***Some 40 years later, deregulation of the transportation industry continues to produce everyday benefits for rail shippers.***

An embodiment of that is Newhaven Distribution Services (NHD)—a NYA customer since last year, but a company that got its start soon after passage of the Motor Carrier Act of 1980. That landmark legislation opened new opportunities for more responsive rail shipping services.

NHD President Bill Schiffer, who has kept the company growing, says, “We work directly with manufacturers to move their goods through and to customers in the densely populated New York metropolitan area with rail, bypassing much of the region’s highway congestion.”

Established to help shippers benefit from the rate and service innovations made possible by deregulation, NHD has fulfilled the promise of coordinating highly efficient freight rail with the flexibility of last-mile truck delivery. NHD makes this happen with efficient cross-dock warehouses at key rail delivery locations in the New York area. These facilities quickly transfer inbound rail shipments into trucks for final delivery. NHD also provides the option of product storage for rail shippers who need to maintain an inventory buffer close to their customers.

NHD opened an additional warehouse location on NYA in March 2019

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## Message from James Bonner

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advantages of transportation deregulation to shippers. The success of Newhaven created the need to expand its operations again last year, and we were glad to help.

Within our own ranks, Roadmaster Tim Lesniak was named to the *Railway Age* group of “10 Under 40” honorees.

We were also featured in a major story by *Trains* magazine, which takes an in-depth look at how we successfully operate in a very busy environment.

Even during the challenges we now face, our investments continue to keep NYA safe and efficient. The implementation of PTC is moving toward completion with the installation of equipment on 10 locomotives. Also, a project to ease the radius of a curved track at our main yard will cut noise, plus wheel and rail wear.

All this gives me confidence that we have the resources and the determination to see our way through this pandemic. We will be an even stronger team when it’s over.

James Bonner  
President  
New York & Atlantic Railway

## Capital Improvements Continue at NYA

***With the onset of the pandemic and resulting economic downturn, we had to look closely at our plans for capital improvements this year and make some necessary reductions.***

Fortunately, we are able to continue two important projects with the support of the federal Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement (CRISI) Program. This funding justifies our use of management, material, oversight, and our own cash—even in a time of greatly tightened budgets.

“These are the partnerships that help rural and urban communities thrive economically,” says Federal Railroad Administration Administrator Ronald Batory, explaining the reason for providing these funds to short line railroads, including NYA.

One project that will be started and completed this year is the construction of 650 feet of new track on an alignment that will reduce the severity of the curve on the Fresh Pond wye track. This project will result in less noise for the nearby



***The wye at Fresh Pond***

community, as well as reduced wear on wheels and rail.

This year’s other CRISI project is the ongoing installation of PTC equipment on 10 locomotives, as well as support training and testing for our operations on the Long Island Rail Road.

“Projects that support safety, reliable service, and reduce impacts on the community are important, even in today’s challenging environment,” says President James Bonner. “I am happy we are able to undertake these two important programs in 2020.” ♦

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***The challenge posed by the coronavirus pandemic demands continued operation of the nation’s railroads, and our work is essential for the health and safety of everyone.***

***We are proud of the care and persistence our workforce demonstrates each day.***

A top priority is staying focused on required job safety and operating rules and coaching each other to do the same.

Part of this priority is helping our employees keep themselves and their families healthy. We endeavor to follow all CDC directives. Through our insurance provider, our employees and families have access to professional counseling services to help

## Pulling Together

**Anacostia ‘On the Move’**

***by Peter Gilbertson  
President & CEO  
Anacostia Rail Holdings***



them deal with personal problems such as substance abuse, emotional distress, and other issues.

ARH was fortunate to enter this challenging period financially strong,

with no debt and a sound balance sheet. While we continue to carefully watch our costs, we are also establishing funds to help local communities. By pulling together our team, customers, communities, and other partners, we are focused on protecting everyone’s health, doing our jobs safely, and adjusting our operations. Through all this we remain dedicated to providing our customers with the high standards of service they have come to expect from us. ♦





# NYA's Success Featured in *Trains* Magazine

*Trains* magazine visited our property, and their writer was so impressed with what NYA has accomplished that we are featured in a lengthy article published in the June 2020 edition.

The article focuses on the complexity of NYA operations and how we "thread the needle" safely and efficiently to deliver freight while operating on the busy commuter lines of Long Island Rail Road (LIRR), and through our densely populated service area.

"The NYA's entry point to most of the LIRR system is at Jamaica, not far from Kennedy Airport," the article notes. "About 400 commuter trains a day move between Jamaica and New York's Penn Station—roughly a train every 3½ minutes—as part of around-the-clock service."



*Trains* credits the deep knowledge and dedication of NYA employees for safe and efficient operations.

"NYA crew members [need] to be rules-qualified for LIRR," *Trains* says. "This is no small feat, since the commuter line has a rule book reflecting its specialized needs."

"Spend any time at all around someone from the NYA, and they'll mention the extraordinary number of signal aspects on the LIRR rules test."

It's the special NYA team that makes

it possible to successfully serve our diverse receivers and shippers. We've grown from carrying 10,000 carloads at the start of our operations to some 30,000 annual carloads today, all while working in an environment that requires a laser focus on safety and dedication to satisfying customers. We're proud of the recognition we've received from *Trains* magazine, as well as other industry leaders.

Congratulations to everyone in the NYA family. ♦



## FDNY & NYA Team Up for Emergency Training

*Last year, NYA hosted the New York Fire Department (FDNY) as it held a training at the East New York (ENY) Tunnel. The joint event was one of many in a five-year partnership between the FDNY and the NYA.*

The ENY tunnel allows FDNY to create a scenario with a scale and level of realism that cannot be reproduced at the department's academy. Twice a year, the tunnel is transformed to simulate either a hypothetical combined rail-and-road tunnel, or an underground parking garage next to a New York City Subway tunnel. Using a combination of prefabricated obstacles and the occasional rail car, a one-mile long training course is created.

Fire, rescue, and EMS personnel are tasked to shore up collapses, cut through steel obstacles, extract live victims or mannequins, assess injuries, perform

triage, and remove casualties. It also drills communications staff on providing quality radio communications between the forward command post and the FDNY Recon, Rescue, Support and Logistics teams.

"The drills at the ENY Tunnel are the latest in the ongoing liaison between the FDNY and our railroad," says NYA Manager of Operations Support James Nunes. "As our relationship grows, the FDNY can provide additional training and exercises to its companies."

Nunes says the railroad is also exploring expansions of the Safety Train HazMat Familiarization classes to other NYA territories and additional technical classes in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. ♦



**Newhaven Distribution**  
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as the result of a growing demand for products—primarily food and paper—that originate at western U.S. locations. The length of haul across the continent is well suited to boxcar shipment.

Needing to expand, Schiffer discussed the possibilities of a vacant 25,000-square-foot warehouse on NYA property close to our main rail yard with Director of Sales and Marketing Chuck Samul.

“I’ve known Chuck for years,” says Schiffer, “and he understands our business, which led him to suggest that the available warehouse facility might be helpful to us.”

With 28 truck doors and a rail dock that can hold up to five rail cars, NHD’s newest location is already essentially at capacity for product storage. Schiffer notes, however, additional cross-dock movements from rail to truck can be handled. Demand had grown to about 10 cars a week by the first quarter of this year, and now the facility can handle 25 cars weekly.

Schiffer says equipment turnaround by NYA is very quick—typically within 24 hours—allowing NHD to offload product and make it quickly available to its customers. Utilizing NYA’s Shipper-Connect Services tracking application, NHD is able to provide its customers with accurate railcar location status from the time a car is loaded at origin.

“We then can watch it march across the country,” Schiffer says. “Also, we are fortunate to be located close to the NYA yard because when a car arrives, it is delivered to us virtually without delay.”

Schiffer likes that fact that most of NHD’s business with NYA can be easily managed online—something made possible by today’s modern information technology systems.

Human connections continue to be important, though. As he says, “If there is an issue I need help with, I can always call Chuck. We’ve known one another for decades.” ♦

**'Eagle 1' Donald Carman Retires**

*Locomotive Engineer Donald Carman is retiring from NYA after 23 years of stellar service. He was one of the railroad's first hires, and has held the top spot on the seniority list for almost 20 years.*

Nicknamed "Eagle 1," the Long Island native had never worked for a railroad when he hired on with NYA—but, he did come from a rail family. His grandfather was an engineer for the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) and served as LIRR chairman for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the precursor to the BLET. His father and uncles also worked for LIRR.

In 1997, NYA was just starting up and advertising for crews. The "no experience necessary" line caught Carman's eye. He had a well-paying job at the time, but knew he would regret not applying at NYA.

"I took a big gamble in changing jobs, but it paid off," he said.

Within two years, Carman was a qualified engineer. He is the first NYA employee to retire off that original employee roster. He also served as a BLET union rep for three years.

"I took to it right away. My time in the



Navy, and the jobs I had after that, had given me a lot of experience with large machinery and heavy equipment," he said. "I really liked it."

Looking back, Carman is proud of mastering the biggest challenges all engineers face, such as: obtaining his Locomotive Engineer's license; understanding and memorizing the hundreds of rules and regulations; and passing recertification tests every two years.

"The schedules of the NYA and LIRR are so intertwined that you have to know by the minute all of the arrival and departure times of the passenger trains. It's like a cat and mouse game," he said.

He and his wife Andrea are looking forward to time together that does not revolve around early morning alarm clocks and long work days.

"Overall, working for NYA has been a great experience," said Carman. ♦



**Carman is one of several military veterans**

who have supported NYA's success over the years. He enlisted in the Navy when he was 20 and served for four years on aircraft carriers and at Naval air bases with a Helicopter Rescue Squadron. His unit responded when the American Embassy in Beirut was attacked by terrorists in 1983.

Years later—in the months following the September 11, 2001 attacks—it was an emotional experience for him to engineer the locomotive NYA painted with a memorial to those who died on 9/11 (photo at top of page). ♦



# 2019 A Year of Giving for NYA



## Borden Avenue Veterans Residence

NYA provided both financial assistance and Operation Life Saver personal safety education for those living at the Borden Avenue Veterans Residence, a short-term housing facility in Queens.

*Here's a round-up of some ways we helped out in the past year. President James Bonner says that although things will be different in 2020 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, "we are proud to be a company that cares about the communities we operate in."*



## Island Harvest Food Bank

Not only did NYA donate dollars to the Island Harvest Food Bank's "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive, our employees also donated their time to sort food for distribution. Later in the year, the railroad participated in the annual turkey drive for the food pantry that was sponsored by a local credit union.



## Breast Cancer Research Foundation

In 2019, NYA continued its ongoing support of the New York-based Breast Cancer Research Foundation (BCRF). It is the largest private funder of breast cancer research—and metastatic breast cancer research—in the world.



## Out and About

NYA had an information booth with railroad and safety handouts at two big events last year. We were at the National Night Out Against Crime sponsored locally by the 104th Precinct at Juniper Valley Park in August. Then in the fall, we participated in the Myrtle Avenue Street Fair in Ridgewood.

## Little League

Although the 2020 season did not get its usual spring start, NYA continues to support the Ridgewood Glendale Middle Village Maspeth Little League—and sponsored a team in 2019.



## Pronto Long Island

As a long-time supporter of the Pronto food pantry on Long Island, NYA was a donor for the agency's 2019 "Golden Gala Celebration."

Donations raised through the gala provide food, clothing, and essential resources for people in need.

## Waste Management's Green Day

During Climate Week NYC 2019, NYA customer Waste Management showcased its clean-operating locomotive that NYA uses to haul material from Department of Sanitation of New York transfer locations to their landfill in upstate New York.



Photo by Mitch Waxman

## VFW Post 123

NYA Vice President Marlon Taylor made a donation delivery to Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 123 in Ridgewood.



## Community Awards

In 2019 and 2020, NYA supported the community awards for the YMCA and Cop of the Year (CoTY).

Sponsored by the 104th Precinct Community Council, the CoTY fundraiser is an opportunity to honor an outstanding police officer and community partner. The Greenpoint YMCA "Spirit of Community" honorees are recognized for their contributions toward healthy living and youth development in the North Brooklyn community.

## College Scholarships

Scholarships were awarded to four local high school seniors in 2019



Vanessa Arguela  
Wyandanch High School



Jessica Finkel  
Farmingdale High School



Charles Pierre  
Longwood High School



Annisha Wazed  
Longwood High School



## Milestones

***NYA employees celebrated the following milestones through May 2020. We thank you for your service.***

### ***Anniversaries***

#### ***20 years***

Marlon Taylor

#### ***5 years***

Steven Cobo  
Amy Louk

#### ***1 year***

Tyler Brown  
Jerich Gabriel  
Ryan Madaia  
Antonio Velez  
Lyeovyen (Leo) Ward

### ***Promotions***

#### ***LIRR Book of Rules***

Tyler Brown  
Jerich Gabriel  
Ryan Madaia  
Anthony Minieri  
Jorge Nunez

#### ***Certified Yard Engineer***

Jeffrey Huelstrunk  
Philip Preeo  
Rommel Primus

#### ***Fully Qualified Engineer***

Alan Acevedo  
Brian Day

#### ***Fully Qualified Track Inspector***

Michael Gonzalez

#### ***Assistant Trainmaster***

Raul Sanchez

### ***Welcome***

Najee Okomba

## Employees of the Month

NYA congratulates and thanks our Employees of the Month over the past year for their accomplishments and teamwork.



***April 2019***  
Anthony Minieri



***May 2019***  
Richard Buonomo



***June 2019***  
Joseph Maci



***July 2019***  
Lyeovyen (Leo) Ward



***August 2019***  
William Callahan



***September 2019***  
Karim Mostafa



***October 2019***  
Donald Carman



***November 2019***  
Michael Gonzalez



***December 2019***  
Alexander Raia



***January 2020***  
Ubaldo Ortiz



***February 2020***  
Rommel Primus



***March 2020***  
Andrew Hamrlicek

## Lesniak Honored



NYA Roadmaster Timothy Lesniak was selected as one of the “10 Under 40” recipients for 2020 in *Railway Age* magazine’s annual search for rising stars in the railway industry.

In its February issue, the magazine reported, “Tim Lesniak has consistently demonstrated a keen focus on developing, training and inspiring his engineering team. He’s a highly focused team player who is committed to improving safety by ensuring that infrastructure is maintained beyond federal standards.” ♦



***At the '10 Under 40' Award Ceremony***

## NYA Team Celebrates Together

Our employees are hard workers when they are on the job, but they are also a fun-loving bunch. We were happy to host an employee appreciation event for families at Dave & Buster’s in Westbury.



Then in December, our team enjoyed a great holiday dinner at Vivo. ♦

