



Q1-Q2 2026 Jan.-June
 "Seven point four" is the newsletter of the Friends of the Stewartstown Railroad, Inc.. A Pennsylvania non-stock, not for profit organization, tax exempt under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

President's Report

Hello again from your volunteers of the Stewartstown Railroad!

There has been a lot of work going on around the railroad, even in the wicked cold winter we had here this past year. Track work, as always. We have been replacing ties at the west end of the class I track, and past Five Forks Road up towards bridge 5, where we hope to reach this year. We're also replacing ties along the line where they are really needed. We've spent a lot of time on the Class I section of the track, but we need to keep the line in good shape for motorcar rides, work trains, and weed spraying.

Speaking of which, the line was recently treated for weeds, which should keep new growth down for a while. We performed some temporary repairs to an area of track near the Mann and Parker Lumberyard. They have a huge, paved parking lot there, and the runoff during heavy rains has been eroding our right of way. We created a temporary crib and filled it with stone, but we need a more permanent solution.

Locomotives numbers 9 and 10 continue to work well for us, after some needed maintenance over the winter. Locomotive number 12 is currently missing one of its trucks, which is being sent for re-profiling of its wheels. When that's done, we'll do the same to the other truck, and then get the locomotive blue carded.

We are currently using two coaches for the majority of our cold-weather rides: 1341 and 1158. 1341 is going through a sort of rolling restoration, where we can still use it in revenue service. We recently joined in Give Local York, a fundraising event, where we raised about \$2,000 of the \$15,000 we think we need to finish the restoration. There's a big push for fundraising on every May 1st, but the website accepts donations year round. Check it out: <https://www.gly365.org/organization/Friends-Of-The-Stewartstown-Railroad>

As always, thanks again for your support and encouragement, and your help in all the ways that you do. We have seen some new volunteers this year, and we are very happy and grateful to have them – but we can always use more help! So, if you would like to come out to the railroad

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Train Schedule 2026

Celebrate America 250 w/Uncle Sam & Capt. America July 11: 11:00am, 1:30pm
 HOTT Seat July 12, 19, 25, 31, Aug. 1, 14: 10:00am, 11:00am, Noon, 1:30pm, 2:30pm, 3:30pm
 New Freedom motor car July 18, Sept. 27: 11:00am, 1:30pm
 Petting Zoo Special.....Sept. 13: 10:00am, 11:45am, 12:30pm, 2:30pm

2024-2025 Friends Officers

President - Mike Ruane

Vice President - Dave Watson

Treasurer - Donna Kuhlman

Secretary - open

Assistant Secretary - open

Director-At-Large - Larry Morgan

Director-At-Large - Jim Kuhlman

Director-At-Large - Miles Weaver

Director-At-Large - Jim Whipple

Director-At-Large - Ken Bitten

Newsletter Editor - Joe Krepps

(President's Message, cont. from page 1)

and help with these trains, or at the gift shop, or man the Toy Train layout or if you would just like to come out and ride, please do!

Hope to see you soon!

Mike Ruane

Progress Continues on Locomotive No. 84, by Dave Watson

Exciting progress continues on bringing Locomotive No. 84 back to life, and we are pleased to report several major accomplishments over the past few weeks.

We are very happy to welcome back Jack Sanford, who has once again taken the lead in preparing No. 84 for service. One of Jack's first major tasks was addressing the locomotive's stuck injectors. Out of twelve injectors, nine have already been successfully freed up — a tremendous step forward in returning the engine to operation.

Special thanks go to Jason Tarasenko of Midwest Powersource Inc. for generously donating EMD injector linkage pins along with hairpin clips needed to re-attach the injectors. Their support has been invaluable to this effort.

As part of the restoration work, the old fuel will be drained and replaced with fresh fuel. The de-

teriorated fuel was likely one of the contributing factors behind the stuck injectors. In addition, Ken Bitten has generously donated a replacement injector to substitute for one that was found to be badly worn.

Jack has also pre-lubed the engine and carefully barred it over by hand, another encouraging milestone in the process. The next major test will be filling the locomotive's cooling system with water. During inspection, it was discovered that an old guru plug dating back to the G & W days had failed, causing a minor water leak. Jack has since replaced several seals that should resolve the issue.

We would also like to extend our sincere gratitude to the Baltimore Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society for their very generous \$5,000 donation toward new batteries for No. 84. In addition, the Ma & Pa Historical Society contributed another \$2,500 toward the battery fund. Thanks to these generous donations, we have officially ordered a new set of batteries from East Penn Manufacturing.

While the progress has been very encouraging, additional funding is still needed to complete the work required to have No. 84 blue carded and operating once again. If you would like to help us cross the finish line and see this historic locomotive return to service, please consider making a donation to support the project.

Thank you to everyone who continues to volunteer, donate, and support the restoration of No. 84.

It's Show Time! by Dave Watson

Stewartstown Railroad was represented again at The Great Scale Model Train Show at the state fairgrounds in Timonium, Maryland. The most recent train show was held on January 31-February 1, 2026. Approximately 4,300 rail fans and model railroad buffs attended the event, which is one of the most popular train shows in the mid-Atlantic region.

Jim Tapley reserved table space for Stewartstown Railroad with three goals in mind: 1) To promote the Stewartstown Railroad, 2) To generate more ticket sales, and 3) To recruit new volunteers to help at the railroad.

This is the third year in a row that Jim Tapley has organized Stewartstown Railroad's participation at the train shows. There are actually three train shows per year. They are generally held in the months of January, April, and October. There are many different types of railroad related vendors at the shows, including a couple of local tourist railroads.

Jim Tapley and Miles Weaver have been the stalwarts at the train shows. Other Stewartstown Railroad volunteers who have helped include Larry Morgan, Nathan Filak, Amber Weaver, Tom Hiers, Bruce Bindon, Kim Bisset, Sam Bisset, William Ward, and Christine Tapley. The volunteers greeted people and handed out hundreds of rack cards, train schedules and information about the Hands on the Throttle (HOTT) program. The volunteers emphasized the family oriented events and theme trains that the Stewartstown Railroad runs throughout the year. Jim, Miles and William often wear their Stewartstown Railroad conductors' uniforms or engineers' attire to give the presentation a feeling of authenticity. The friendly and engaging approach used by the Stewartstown Railroad volunteers makes a good impression on the patrons at the train show.

Stewartstown Railroad's table looked sharp with green table clothes and a colorful table top display (donated by Mike Ruane) which was decorated with pictures from Miles Weaver and ticket information from Dee Bush. Miles Weaver set-up a laptop that presented the "Big Jim Productions" video about the Stewartstown Railroad. Many people were attracted to the table by the sounds of Might Mo clanging its bell and singing its whistle. William Ward brought historical information for people to look at which helped tell the story of the railroad.

There was also a free raffle for a free locomotive cab ride. Typically, 120-150 people fill out raffle entry tickets at each of the train shows. A winner is selected at the end of each day. Jim contacts the winners and makes arrangements for their free cab ride. The main point of the free cab ride raffle is to create an opportunity for the volunteers to engage in a conversation about the railroad with patrons who are visiting the train show.

In the past two years, about two dozen people have expressed an interest in volunteering at the Stewartstown Railroad. About half of those people have become very dependable volunteers who have contributed their time and effort in different ways at the railroad.

Speaking of contributions, following a conversation at a train show in 2024 with a couple of people who wanted to know more about what the railroad is trying to accomplish, two separate philanthropists donated about \$10,000 dollars to the Friends of the Stewartstown Railroad. While that huge donation was an anomaly, it would not have materialized had the Stewartstown Railroad not been present at that train show.

The volunteers at the table also sold Stewartstown Railroad history books and videos, along with hats donated by Jim Tapley. The money made goes to the Friends of the Stewartstown Railroad. But the main point of the sales is to promote the railroad. Jim also had custom pens and miniature screwdrivers made as little gifts for the people who entered the raffle or who signed up to be a volunteer. Getting these items into the hands of the public will help with brand recognition.

Stewartstown Railroad has signed up for two more train shows in 2026: April 11th-12th and October 31st-November 1st. Any STRT volunteers who would like to help promote the railroad by manning the table are asked to please contact Jim Tapley.

A Day on the Stewartstown Railroad in 1969, by "jay bird"

Editor's note: The following was found by accident on the Model Railroad Hobbyist website. In October, 1969, "jay bird" as he's known on the website, took his Instamatic camera, on an overcast day, and followed the train back to Stewartstown. Everything following is copied verbatim from the website. I obtained his permission to use his photos and words for the "7.4". -Joe

In October, 1969, I followed the Stewartstown Railroad's freight job from New Freedom to Stewartstown, Pa. At this time, there was still enough business that they ran pretty much Monday through Friday. Their Class I connection, the old Northern Central/PRR was the recently minted Penn Central.

All of this came to a sudden halt with Hurricane Agnes in June, 1972. The SRR was unscathed, but the NC line had numerous washouts north and south of New Freedom. I'm not going to recount all the stuff around that event, except to say that interchanged rolling stock trapped on the property was trucked out; I read that there were eleven cars involved. The SRR had purchased GE 44 Tonner no. D-2 from the Coudersport & Port Allegheny RR as they wound up their affairs. The future SRR no.10 arrived in York on the same day the last PC York-New Freedom local ran, but too late to be sent to New Freedom.



Stewartstown No. 9 is ready to leave for home.



The railroad's depot at Hungerford was at the busy road crossing with Susquehanna Trail, the main road from Baltimore to York, Pa until I 83 was built in the 1960's. The railroad climbed a steep grade through here, and they stationed a flagman here so the crew didn't have to stop to flag. This station is still standing.



Here's the PC local, behind Geep 7030, still lettered for PRR.

• OCT • 89



A light rain is falling as the no.9 is tugging two loads of grain. They have just cleared the Trail. The station is on the right.



My poor attempt at a pan shot. There wasn't much choice as I didn't have any room to back up.

• OCT • 89



I didn't have much time to set this photo up, and it was raining. But this is the famous iron bridge near Tolna. (The iron work still had a builder's plate dated in the 1870's, before the RR was built. Prolly moved here from elsewhere. The iron work supports its own weight; the deck long ago was replaced by steel girders.)



The no.9 is blowing through the metropolis of Tolna:

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The train is arriving in Stewartstown.

• OCT • 69



Cars spotted, no. 9 has dropped down to the station. That boxcar on the left is on the team track, originally a single stall engine house was on here until it burned to the ground.

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A railroad employee had lined the switch in the yard that took the train up the left leg of the wye. Here they are backing those two cars around the far back leg so they can shove the cars straight into Stewartstown Milling. That's the right hand leg of the wye in the right foreground.



This is the working engine house, and that's the man I mentioned who lined the inbound train up. The track trailing off to the right is a leg of the wye; the track in the left foreground runs into the old engine house. I took a picture, but there isn't much there. The remains of Plymouth no. 8 were inside.



This is the original station of the 1880's, leased out to a local business. It's long gone today. That's the switch between legs of the wye in the foreground.

restored. It is in far better shape now than it had been in several generations, at least!



Another look at the station, looking south toward Baltimore. Yes, you're seeing in-service block signals protecting the main track. This one on the right was still standing last time I was up there; the lights long gone. And I had no way of knowing at the time, but forty years on, my baby sister would live just down the tracks on the left, in a railroad cottage built by the NCR for their employees in the 1840's.



Here is an unfortunately fuzzy picture of the PRR depot at New Freedom. This was a standard Northern Central station; there were a number of very similar depots along the NC all the way up into New York. This photo shows the only thing in this thread that is in much better shape today. The station got even scruffier than this until a few years ago, when it was totally



Easter Trains



Number 12 progress



Number 13 returns to Stewartstown



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Dedicated to Preserving the Stewartstown Railroad—An Authentic American Antiquity
VISIT US ON THE WEB AT: stewartstownfriends.org

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail address: _____

Phone number: _____



The Friends of the Stewartstown Railroad, Inc. invites all who are interested in preserving the Stewartstown Railroad to join the Friends organization. The railroad was founded in 1884 and opened in 1885.

One of the goals of the organization is to support our members as they perform their volunteer work on the railroad upgrading and maintaining the railroad's properties. Our volunteer's efforts help the railroad continue its operations over its 7.4 miles of track between Stewartstown and New Freedom, Pa., via the Deer Creek Valley.

The Friends organization is a Pennsylvania non-stock, not-for-profit organization. The Friends organization is tax-exempt under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. The Friends organization owns a minority equity interest in the Stewartstown Railroad Company.

Please send completed form and check to:

Friends of the Stewartstown Railroad, Inc.

P.O. Box 456

Stewartstown, Pa. 17363-0456

We're on the web at:

www.stewartstownfriends.org

You can join online too!

www.stewartstownfriends.org/join/

Membership Classifications & Dues (Full year, Jan.-Dec.)

- ☐ Individual Membership..... \$20.00
- ☐ Family Membership (all members at same address)..... \$100.00
- ☐ Corporate Membership (business/organizational) \$300.00
- ☐ Optional: General Fund donation \$ _____
- ☐ Optional: Endowment Fund donation..... \$ _____
- ☐ Optional: Equipment Fund donation \$ _____
- ☐ Optional: Right of Way/Track Fund donation..... \$ _____
- ☐ Optional: Other donation, please specify \$ _____

(You may specify a specific project on the line above for your optional donation, if you wish.)

Total enclosed: \$ _____