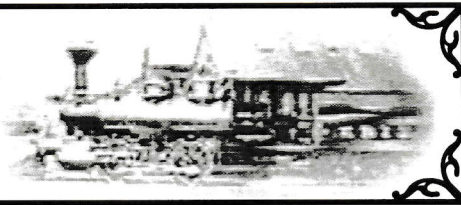


# French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society

P.O. Box 632 Meadville, PA 16335



SPRING 2022

Newsletter of the French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society

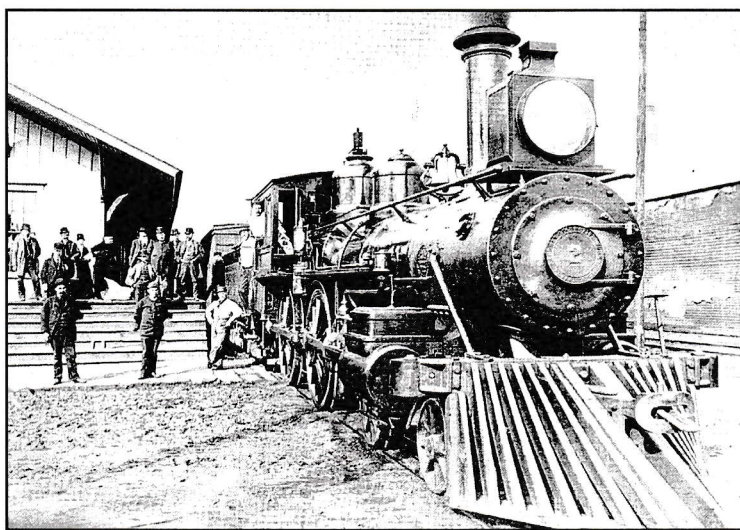
Volume 17 Number 1

# VALLEY EXPRESS

## The Meadville & Linesville Railway

by Carl Timko

The stockholders of the Meadville Railway met in the summer of 1883, to try to come up with a plan to stave off the creditors. Their efforts failed. The unsecured creditors formed a plan of their own to pool their money to purchase the railroad. Every unsecured creditor received the offer, but only two actually accepted it. Meadville Railway board members Arthur C. Huidekoper and George W. Delamater bought the railroad for \$150,000 at foreclosure on January 3, 1884. They reorganized the railroad as the Meadville & Linesville Railway Co. on February 12, 1884, with Mr. Delamater, who had the majority interest, as president of the company. Mr. Huidekoper was vice president and John E. Reynolds was secretary and treasurer.



Meadville Conneaut Lake & Linesville RR 4-4-0 #2 at Meadville Depot, 1890. Note link and pin coupler.

The railway operated the same rails between Meadville and Linesville, with 20.54 miles of trackage. Evidently, the M&L was operated with success, likely due to the absence of the heavy hand of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Businesses that were served, such as the Conneaut Lake Ice Co., the Belgian Glass Co., the Union Express Co. and hauling passengers to and from the namesake towns were vital to the welfare of the railroad.

The Belgian Glass Co. had a factory on 2 acres of land on the west side of French Creek, two miles south of Meadville along the M&L. The Union Express Co. came to Meadville about the same time the Meadville Railway opened in October 1881. It was housed in the Meadville Railway depot and it must have been a small express service, whose competitors were the U.S. Express and Adams Express which were housed at the Meadville depot of the Atlantic & Great Western Railroad (and then the New York Pennsylvania & Ohio) at that time.

## Holidays at the Depot

The Meadville Railroad Depot was open to the public during the holidays to display three layouts and the depot itself. The depot was open on Friday evenings, from 4 to 7 p.m., and on Saturdays, from noon to 4 p.m. There was a fairly steady flow of traffic through the depot. Most everyone commented that the depot is looking fantastic after the renovations. The appearance of the depot may have had a lot to do with the number of new members that signed up. We appreciate whatever reason in which we receive new members. This will be another feather in the FCVRRHS's cap. The organization will have renovated the depot, the B& LE boxcar, painted the Erie Railroad S2 and the Conrail Russell snowplow.

Sales were brisk at times. Our new depot t-shirts were selling very well, along with our normal clothing lineup and model railroad equipment. The sales team was kept quite busy at times.

Many visitors gave material and monetary donations. Those donating artifacts were more than happy to have some place to share a piece of their life or a loved one's life with the public. Some of the visitors also shared their stories relating to the railroads, all of which were quite interesting. These stories are one of the many reasons for the existence of our railroad museum. It isn't just the artifacts that tell the story, it's the people who lived these stories.

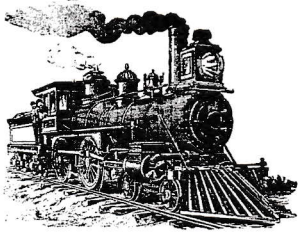
Our two raffles were quite busy. The 50/50 raffle winner was Gordon Valentine, and the winner of the Toys for Tots train set raffle was Brian Memmert. Congratulations to you both! And thanks to all who purchased the tickets. The other half of the 50/50 helps fund our renovation efforts. The Toys for Tots raffle raised \$200 to help the less fortunate kids have a gift for Christmas.

Look for our next scheduled opening during the Memorial Day weekend. Our Grand Opening has been set for July 16 and 17. **See you then!**

- Carl Timko

(continued on page 5)





## From the Stationmaster's Office

2022 looks to be a great year for the Meadville Railroad Depot and the French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society. Our first Christmas layout show at the depot was very successful. Our efforts in renovating the depot over the past few years are paying off. We had a wonderful attendance record over the holiday season.

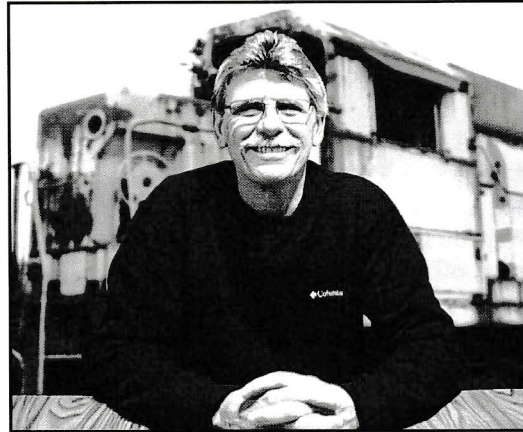
From the reaction of those that attended, it's accurate to say they were impressed. So much so that many became new members. Our new tee shirts were a hot seller and the model railroad equipment was selling very well. This is a good start!

But there is a lot more work to be done. The interior of the north end of the building is our current focus right now. We have the walls done, had a bathroom and furnace room installed. We are now working on the ceiling. Later this spring, we will work on the exterior and get it painted thanks to at least one generous donor.

Thank you to our work crews. They come in and get things done. It would be nice to have more members come in to help, but it is realized that not everyone has extra time to come in and help. Nevertheless, the depot will be open during the Memorial Day weekend and we'll have our Grand Opening on July 16 and 17. Details are still being planned for that event. We also will try to have the railroad display open at times, if not by appointment. Only the caboose will be open to the public when the gate is open. We will need members for both the depot and display park when we open them to the public. We also are scheduling private events for a donation.

Thanks to all our donors, visitors, and members that help the French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society in its efforts to preserve railroad history.

*Bernie Hanmore*



## French Creek Valley Express

A Publication of the  
French Creek Valley Railroad  
Historical Society

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Crawford County Convention  
and Visitors Bureau

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Website: [www.fcvrhs.org](http://www.fcvrhs.org)

**French Creek Valley Express** is published Spring and Fall. Those wishing to submit material must do so no later than 30 days prior to publication, i.e. by April 1st or October 1st. All submissions are subject to editing for length and clarity. Queries must include full name, address, and daytime phone number or e-mail address.

#### Memberships:

\$20 individual; \$35 family;  
\$5 student under 18

The corporate Gold, Silver, and Bronze memberships and Lifetime memberships have been eliminated.

All members with lifetime memberships will not lose them.

## CONTRIBUTORS

- Elizabeth and Bruce Angstadt
- Deanna and Paul Attardoo
- Carl Belke
- Linda Bollensen
- Huntington Christie
- Alberta Cole
- Conneaut Lake Lions Club
- Brenda Costa
- Crawford Gives
- Ed and Suann Cronin
- William and Linda DeArment
- Karen and Val Eiler
- Dennis and Dianne Frampton
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- Jennifer and Paul Mohtashemi
- Lyle and Sandra Mook
- Laurie and Bob Motzing
- Jason Nesbitt
- Stan Niwa
- Blaine Ohn
- Peter and Elizabeth Oven

This Special List is continued on Page 5!

Check out our website at [www.fcvrhs.org](http://www.fcvrhs.org)





### Budget / Finance / Insurance / Compliance

A two-year reserve has been established for the purpose of funding the operation expenses of the museum. This will help with the utility bills and taxes (if applicable by then). Repairs and renovations are funded from sales, grants, and donations.

A grant application from the National Railway Historical Society will be sent in. The grant is a \$5000 matching grant, which, if awarded requires the FCVRRHS to match the awarded sum. The purpose of the grant will be for exterior painting of the depot.

Another possible grant source is a Pennsylvania Route 6 Facade Program grant. The grant would be another \$5000 matching grant for improving the structures facing U.S. Route 6, which the east side of the depot does. The grant would be used for painting the depot.

The FCVRRHS is close to sending in an application for tax exemption. This will happen once the museum is open and has regular hours.

- Ed Cronin

### History & Archives

In the research for the featured articles of the Valley Express, there have been quite a few notes in area history that would catch an historian's eye. One of the resources that was used noted where a lot of the businesses were located in the late 1880s and into the 1890s. A project may come from this information some time in the future.

Carl Timko, the curator of the FCVRRHS/Meadville Railroad Depot, is researching ways to automatically transfer scanned QR codes to an Excel spreadsheet. It is likely that a professional program may be required to do the tasks that are needed.

- Carl Timko

### Membership

If any member has not received any notifications via email, please send an email to the editor of this newsletter at [blebuddy@yahoo.com](mailto:blebuddy@yahoo.com) to verify your email. There have been four emails that come back regularly, most of them are newer members. We want to keep you notified of events, meetings and

work sessions. The best way for the FCVRRHS to do so is via email.  
**Thanks!**

- Carl Timko

Please note that board or membership meetings are scheduled for the second Monday of the month. The March meeting was held on the 7th, due to an error in a reminder that was sent to the membership. Apologies for any inconvenience.

- Carl Timko

Members should keep in mind that all annual memberships expire on June 30. Your memberships will be due by then. There are three ways to renew. You can mail your renewal to FCVRRHS, P.O. Box 632, Meadville, PA 16335. You can give it personally to one of our board members, or you can visit the website ([www.fcvrhs.org](http://www.fcvrhs.org)), and use the Paypal button to renew. This notice may be a couple of months early, but the next newsletter does not come out until October, at the earliest.

- Carl Timko

As editor, I have a great deal of difficulty in reading text in print and on the computer screen, even at 300% magnification. Most of our members are likely to need vision aids of one sort or another. This publication has been using 10 point Garamond font to make the newsletter look professional and to get as much information into six pages as possible. I have had conversations with our graphic editor, Kevin Pipp, who also thinks a larger font is warranted. If we move to a 12 point font, the text will be easier to read. It is the same size font that your word processor on your computer (if you have one) uses without modification. The down side of switching is there will be less content. As a test, one column of this page was copied and pasted to a blank page and then enlarged to 12 point type. The 12 point font caused the same one-column content in 10 point to expand to one and a half columns. So, the question is: Would you like to see this newsletter in a bigger font? Please contact me with your personal answer by e-mailing me at [blebuddy@yahoo.com](mailto:blebuddy@yahoo.com). For those that have no computer, stop in at the depot and leave your answer with whoever is on duty at the time.

- Carl Timko

At the first membership meeting in nearly two years (March 7, 2022), Treasurer Ed Cronin asked the board to consider a new candidate for treasurer. Ed has been the treasurer of the FCVRRHS since 2007. His replacement will have a tough act to follow.

- Carl Timko

### Model Railroading

John and Lynda Snyder have been sprucing up the HO layout that the Model Railroad Club built a few years ago. They have installed trees, different buildings, and a camping scene on the hill. They have been spending several days a week on the layout.

- John Snyder

The north loop of the O scale layout has been dismantled in order to renovate the north end of the depot. It will be reinstalled after the work is complete.

- Carl Timko

A new hobby shop is coming to the area. The Wye Bridge Hobbies is coming to Oil City with a real brick and mortar store. It is being operated by CMR Products and will carry model trains, remote control cars and gaming products. An address hasn't been determined as yet. Details will be forwarded as they come in.

- Stephen Wilson

### Museum

The work is well into Phase II of the planned renovations of the depot. Currently, the focus is on the north end where the walls have been framed, spray-foamed and covered with tongue and groove boards. The ceiling is receiving the same treatment. A new restroom and a furnace room have also been installed. Sixteen large warehouse pendant light fixtures have been ordered and will be installed before July. The floors will be installed by an outside source soon after the walls and ceiling are completed. This room will be used for events such as meetings, parties, and programs. Such programs, such as slide shows or videos, would likely take place before a board or membership meeting.

- Bernie Hanmore

### Property and Equipment

The only work at Pomona Park since the last edition of the *Valley*



Express is some glass window panes have been installed in the snowplow. There are still a few left to replace.

- Carl Timko

### Public Relations & Education

The Christmas Layout Display at the depot was very successful in that the visitors were very appreciative of the work done on the depot. Many were impressed enough to enroll as members. Several visitors donated their railroad artifacts, knowing the artifacts will have a good home and be shared through the displays in the museum.

The FCVRRHS once again raised funds for **Toys for Tots**. In doing so, an N scale train set was won by Brian Mummert. Congratulations, Brian! We thank all who bought tickets for the raffle and the 50/50 raffle. We thank everyone who stopped by to see how the depot is coming as a museum and event center.

- Carl Timko



FCVRRHS president Bernis Hanmore presenting the N scale train set to Brian Mummert, who won the train set raffle that helped support Toys for Tots -12/24/2021  
- photo from the camera of Bernie Hanmore

The website ([www.fcvrhs.org](http://www.fcvrhs.org)) suffered a shut-down in March due to some miscommunication with the web host. Our webmaster, Dianne Jones, spent several hours trying to straighten out the problem with the web host. A motion was made to recognize her efforts to get the website back up and running.

- Carl Timko

### Special Events & Programs

The depot will host a private VIP party soon, to honor those who have made considerable donations and help in acquiring and renovating the depot.

The Meadville Railroad Depot will be open during the Memorial Day weekend, Saturday May 28, and Sunday May 29. The railroad display

at Pomona Park will be open as well.

The official Grand Opening of the depot will be Saturday and Sunday, July 16 and 17. The depot will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. The Grand Opening will feature crafters and vendors, a tour through the museum, a blacksmith that will demonstrate his trade, entertainment and food and merchandise available for purchase.

We are looking to have several retired railroad workers come in to tell the stories from their career with the area railroads. Other events may occur.

We will need as many volunteers as we can get to be tour guides and parking assistants. Parking will be extended into the Prism Manufacturing parking lot, across French Street, which ends at the south door of the depot.

- Bernie Hanmore



Christmas tree in the depot, December 2021

### Local News

WABTEC, which is located in the former General Electric Locomotive Division complex in Erie, PA, has announced the development of an all-battery electric locomotive called FLX Drive. The locomotive uses 20,000 lithium-ion battery cells to power the locomotive and can recharge the cells through a standing recharging station and by capturing the energy from dynamic braking. Most railfans have heard the whirr and whine from the dynamic brakes, such as when a loaded train is descending a hill. Now, that energy that once was lost is now used to

recharge the batteries. The FLX Drive locomotive has saved 11% in fuel and significantly reduced carbon emissions during tests in Colorado. The FLX Drive locomotive is designed to operate with fueled locomotives.

Local railfans won't have to travel too far to see one in action, as Canadian National has purchased one for use on the Bessemer and Lake Erie Subdivision. The locomotive can produce a full 4400 horsepower rating for 30 to 40 minutes at 2.4 mega-watt hours. Other railroads already purchasing the FLX Drive locomotive are Roy Hill Mining of Australia, Rio Tinto of Australia, and Union Pacific, who purchased ten units so far.

- Source: WABTEC

<https://www.wabteccorp.com/locomotive/alternative-fuel-locomotives/flxdrive>

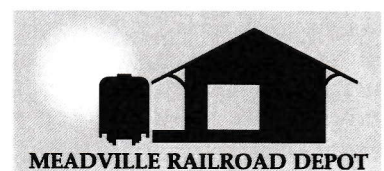
The Lake Shore Railway Historical Society received another General Electric locomotive. Former GECX AC6000CW #6002 was donated by WABTEC and delivered by CSX to the museum property in North East. The locomotive was one of three AC6000CW demonstrators built in October 1998. This unit was then sold to Union Pacific and renumbered #7511. It served briefly with the UP, then was returned to GE to begin its life as a test bed locomotive. It is only one of two AC6000CWs that have not been modified and still exist. It is the first AC traction locomotive to be preserved anywhere.



GECX AC6000CW #6002 being delivered to LSRHS, North East, PA  
- photo clipped from LSRHS video

The Lake Shore Railway Historical Society will be opening on Memorial Day weekend. The #6002 will not be open to viewing until then.

- LSRHS, Ray Grabowski



MEADVILLE RAILROAD DEPOT



## Meadville Railway History

(continued from page 1)

Another business was Harry McClure's Lumber Company near Harmonsburg. There was a slight misunderstanding with this business when a switch to a siding was dismantled. Mr. McClure had to lease the land from the owner, Samuel Parks, to get the switch reinstalled.

Conneaut Lake Ice Co. set their business up on August 1880, to cut ice from the frozen lake then store or ship it to markets all over the country until the last block of ice was cut from Conneaut Lake in 1929, after the production of the electric refrigerator began. That statement shows that the Meadville Railway served the Ice Co. as well. The president of the Conneaut Lake Ice Co. was James J. Shryock, who, in his lifetime, was an officer in a multitude of area railroads, including as president of the former Meadville Railway.

(Editor's Note: One mention was found that a Meadville company, likely a grocer, by the name of Green & Baker, sold Conneaut Lake Ice Co. ice to the public.) The Meadville and Linesville Railway hauled over 100,000 tons of ice annually from the Conneaut Lake Ice Company until the railroad was sold at foreclosure on May 23, 1891. The likely cause was Mr. Delamater's banking firm, Delamater & Co., (established on May 22, 1876), collapsed. The bank was owned by George, his father and brother. The Delamaters were accused of receiving deposits while knowing their firm was insolvent.

The Meadville & Linesville Railway was sold and reorganized as the Meadville Conneaut Lake & Linesville Railroad on June 23, 1891. Then on July 1, the Pittsburgh Shenango & Lake Erie Railroad contracted a lease of the line for 99 years. But, better times were ahead for this line, as when an installment on the Meadville Conneaut Lake & Linesville is covered in the *Valley Express*.

(Editor's note: During the extensive research for this article, not many notations regarding businesses served by the Meadville & Linesville Railroad were found.

There were likely more than the Conneaut Lake Ice Co., Union Express, possibly some businesses that sold dry goods, coal and lumber. The M&L also served as sort of a bridge line, connecting with the NYPANO and the Pennsylvania Railroad's Erie & Pittsburgh branch. If it seems a lack of mention of businesses during the time the M&L was in operation, it wasn't for lack of effort.)

### Sources of information:

"History of Crawford County - 1885"

"1888 Crawford County History and Biographies"

"Meadville Illustrated" (1912)

"The Bessemer and Lake Erie

Railroad - 1869-1969" by Roy Beaver

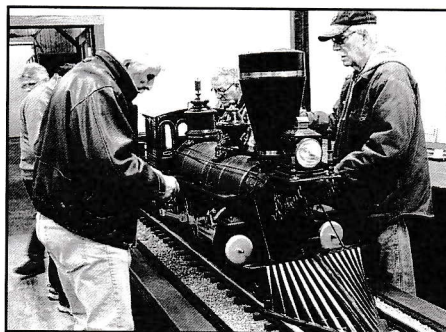
"Pennsylvania Railroad Lines West - Erie & Pittsburgh Branch"

by Al Buchan

"Pennsylvania Railroad Chronology" from PRRTHS.com

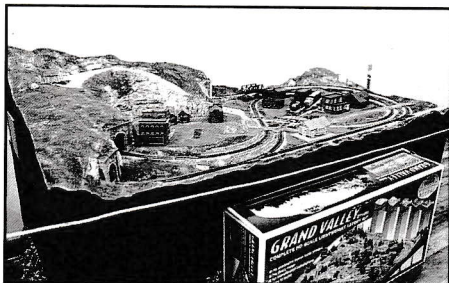
Meadville Railway minutes (1880 to 1885)

Thanks to Scott Woods for the loan of the historical documents.



Richard Roberts, Jack Sheets and John Snyder working on the A&GW 4-4-0 #5 model built by the Erie Railroad Meadville shop in 1938. The locomotive was moved from the Downtown Meadville Mall to the depot on January 13, 2022.

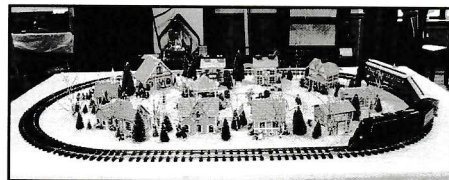
- Dan Pfeiffer photo



HO layout at the depot, now being refreshed  
- Dan Pfeiffer photo



Crowd at the depot on the first weekend of the Holidays, November 27, 2021. This was the first opening since the "soft opening" in September 2021. Over head is the railroad map overlay. - Carl Timko photo



G scale Polar Express layout in the depot during the Holiday layout display event. November 27, 2021 - Dan Pfeiffer photo



Ceiling of north end of depot nearly finished  
- Dan Pfeiffer photo

## CONTRIBUTORS

(continued from page 1)

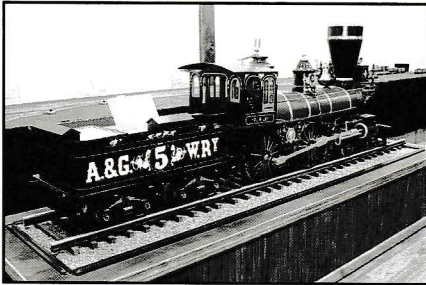
- Jim Pettengill
- Carol & Craig Powell
- Lynn Sandieson
- Howard & Luann Schroeder
- Jack Sheets
- Rob & Nancy Smith
- Larry Spencer
- Samuel Spencer
- Dr. & Mrs. Chris Thomas
- Margie Thompson
- Gordon Valentine
- Larry Weigel
- Roger Willis
- Patricia Winsor
- E. Ziegler

On behalf of the French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society, thank you to all who have donated funds, materials, and talents to our renovation of the Meadville Railroad Depot





French Creek Valley  
Railroad Historical Society  
P.O. Box 632  
Meadville, PA 16335



Erie RR-built AG&W model of 4-4-0 #5  
- Dan Pfeiffer photo

French Creek Valley Railroad Historical Society  
Calendar of Events  
Spring 2022 to Fall 2022

**April 2 - Iron & Steel Model Train Show**

St. Mary's Assumption Social Center  
356 S. Belle Vista Ave., Youngstown, OH  
Admission \$7, children under 12 free; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**April 3 - Medina Model Railroad & Toy Show**

Medina Co. Community Center  
775 Lafayette Rd, Medina, OH  
Admission: \$7; Hours: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**April 3 - Youngstown Model Railroad Assn.  
Model Railroad Flea Market**

Salem Center Plex, 1098 N. Ellsworth Ave., Salem, OH  
Admission: \$5, children under 12 with an adult, free  
Hours: 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**April 3 - Great Batavia Train Show**

Genesee Community College  
1 College Rd., Batavia, NY  
Admission: \$6, 18 and under free  
Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**May 7 - Painesville Railroad Museum**

Model Train Flea Market & Household Items Garage Sale  
475 Railroad St., Painesville, OH  
Hours: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**June 25, 26 - 2nd Annual Northeast Ohio  
Large Scale Train Show**

375 N. Park Ave., Warren, OH  
Admission: \$5 ; 40 tables. Hours 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**July 9 - Painesville Railroad Museum  
Hobo Day Train Flea Market**

475 Railroad St., Painesville, OH  
Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (outdoors)

**July 16 - Jefferson, OH Historical Society  
Train Swap & Sale Event**

Jefferson Community Center  
11 E. Jefferson St., Jefferson, OH  
Admission: \$2; Hours: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**July 16, 17 - FCVRRHS Meadville Railroad  
Depot Museum Grand Opening**

136 Mead Ave., Meadville, PA  
Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sat.  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sun.

**May 13-15 - Steam in the Valley Excursion**

**May 20-22 - Cuyahoga Valley Scenic RR  
NKP 2-8-4 #765**

Independence to Akron, OH  
[www.cvsr.org/steam](http://www.cvsr.org/steam)

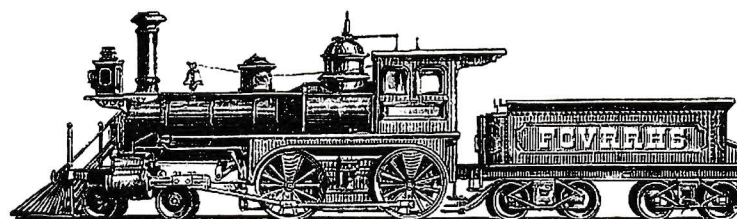
**May 21 - Everett RR - Steam in to the Cove  
Everett RR ALCO 2-6-0 #11**

Hollidaysburg to Martinsburg, PA  
[www.everettrailroad.com](http://www.everettrailroad.com)

**June 15-19 - National N Scale Convention**  
Sheridan Music City - 777 Gavock Pike, Nashville, TN

**June 19-26 - National Garden Railway Convention**

Crowne Plaza Denver Airport Convention Center  
15500 E. 40th Ave., Denver, CO



**French Creek Valley  
Railroad Historical Society**