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Rail Festival Day needed in West Chester this summer

Mar 9, 2021

This is in response to West Chester Mayor Jordan Norley's guest column ("All aboard for a rail service to West Chester," Feb. 28, 2021, Daily Local News).

It should be noted that after rail passenger service to West Chester ended in 1986, the West Chester Railroad Heritage Association (WCRHA) later formed making it possible for SEPTA to allow the West Chester Railroad to operate a 6.4 mile section of the line between West Chester and Glen Mills in 1996.

Without any governmental assistance, the 100 percent non paid WCRHA volunteers, all by manual labor, rebuilt that section which included correcting drainage problems, restoring washed out areas of the former railroad right of way, replacing rail plus ties, building a railroad yard, and refurbished acquired passenger cars plus diesel locomotives to reopen passenger excursion service in 1997 between West Chester and Glen Mills.

As the author of 46 books on trains and trolley cars, it was a unique opportunity for me to write my 47th book titled "West Chester Railroad" which will be available later this year.

Railroad volunteers provided pictures and Mrs. Beth Keates, WCRHA President, served as onsite editor for the book. Our objective is to showcase the work of these volunteers who have created a living rail history operation in the Chester/Delaware County area of Pennsylvania.

We hope that there can be a Rail Festival Day this summer in downtown West Chester, because railroads have contributed to the development of this thriving region.

Ken Springirth



Erie

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