



## It's a new day at the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad!

Written by: **Dan Whetzel**  
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John Garner, Superintendent, proudly announced the new beginning as the 27th operating season began rolling amid a variety of recent changes.

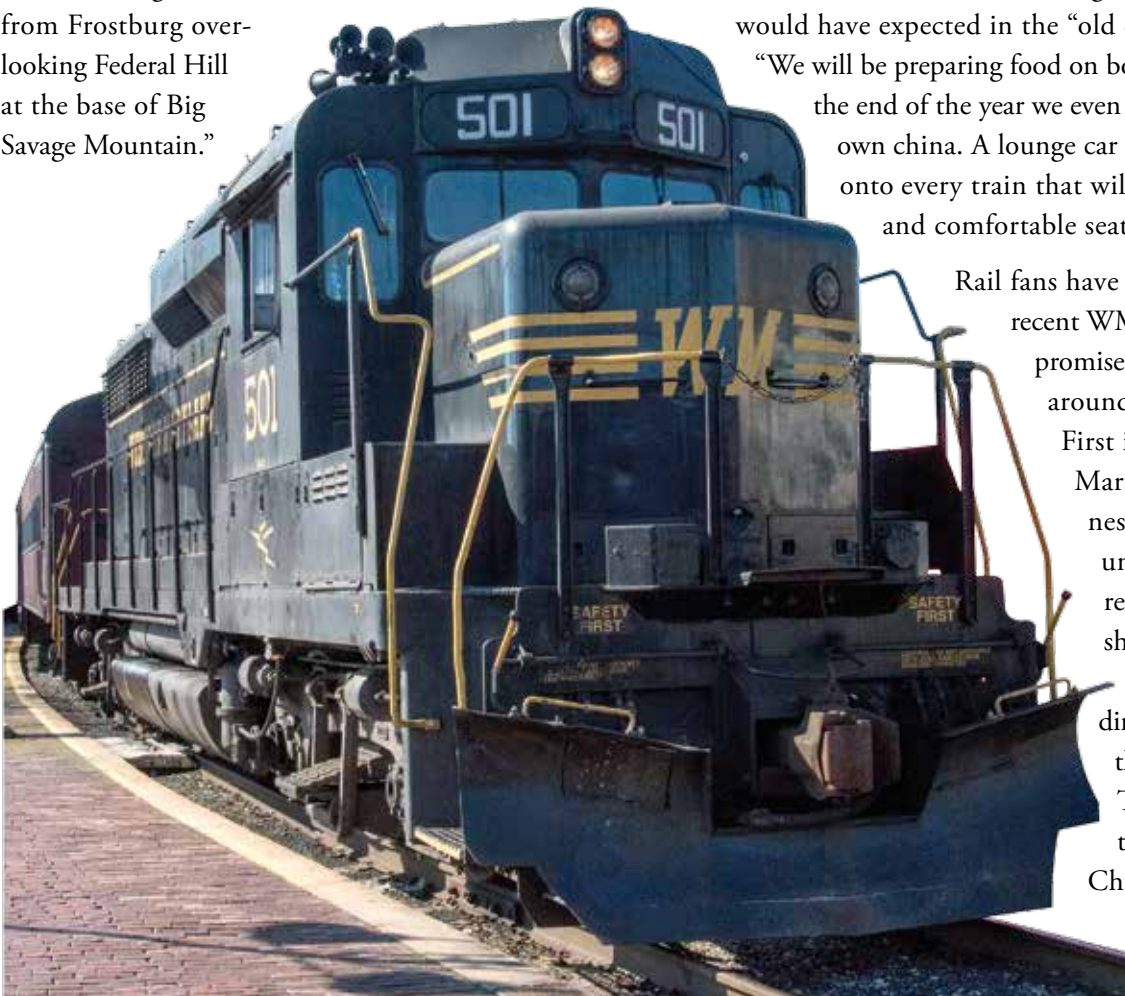
“We have gone through challenges, particularly this winter when land erosion damaged our track near Frostburg. But spring is here, there is new growth on the railroad, and we want everyone to know that the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad is running. Until the tracks are repaired, the western terminus of the excursion will be Mountain View, a siding about two miles from Frostburg overlooking Federal Hill at the base of Big Savage Mountain.”

The fresh growth of springtime is mirrored in the enhanced dedication to service. According to John, “We are going back to our roots and the new WMSR mission statement ‘When Service Mattered’ reflects the direction we are heading. We are a 1940-1950s heritage excursion railroad that captures the essence of that era. Our staff is dressed appropriately for the time period and blends perfectly with the Western Maryland Railway station that helped build Cumberland’s railroading heritage.”

The new service includes a dining experience that one would have expected in the “old days,” stated John. “We will be preparing food on board the train, and by the end of the year we even expect to have our own china. A lounge car will also be blocked onto every train that will offer refreshments and comfortable seating.”

Rail fans have also been following recent WMSR acquisitions that promise to draw guests from around the United States.

First is the #204 Western Maryland Railway Business Car that has been undergoing extensive restoration in the local shop. The most recent efforts have been directed to redeveloping the car’s superstructure. The second acquisition, the former #1309 Chesapeake and Ohio



articulated engine and last commercially built steam locomotive in the United States, is progressing nicely. The locomotive is being reassembled and, according to John, “We will have steam this year. Until the #1309 is ready, we will be running our Western Maryland heritage diesels, one from the Reading Railroad and the other from the Pennsylvania Railroad.”

The new WMSR schedule also brings a variety of new offerings for guests. The mainstay “Mountain Limited” will continue the day service while “Evening Paradise,” a 1950s nighttime train reminiscent of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad’s Capitol Limited, will feature a white tie service dining experience out of the Cumberland hub. Additional holiday trains have been added to the schedule and complement the already popular Murder Mystery and North Pole Experience runs. Valentine’s Day, New Year’s Eve, New Year’s Day, and Dinner with Santa are already scheduled for the season. The most important announcement by the WMSR is the setting of a goal to make the WMSR a year-round operation.

To accomplish the new and ambitious goals, John is relying on a dedicated staff. “We are a team effort at the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. Everyone wants to be here and contribute to our success. I certainly appreciate our dedicated staff because everything that happens depends on their hard work. Everyone is excited and on board with the changes.”

**Western Maryland Scenic Railroad**  
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