



Rail Tales

Winter 2011...A Year in Review



NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME! If interested in joining All Aboard Westcliffe, call Doris Porth at 719-783-2217.



Members of All Aboard Westcliffe kept busy during the year hosting fundraisers such as pancake breakfasts, yard sales, several dinner & movie nights, antique show & tell and a spaghetti dinner. Besides the money earned from the fundraisers, everyone also had lots of fun.

Antique Show & Tell

The Antique Show & Tell held on Saturday, August 27th was a tremendous success. Many community members attended, bringing their

“prized heirlooms” and items that were reviewed and a “good faith estimate” given by Willie’s Antiques and



Collectibles from Florence, Colorado. A good time and great refreshments was had by all.

Visit the All Aboard Westcliffe website:

www.allaboardwestcliffe.org

Wet Mtn. Valley Community Foundation

Each year, AAW is the recipient of donations and matching funds received from the WMVCF. We are again asking our community members, families and friends for your help. These dollars help AAW to continue with the restoration of rail cars and memorabilia, providing educational opportunities and preservation of the local railroad heritage with the Interpretative Center and Engine House Museum.

Depot update

Get on board to help purchase the historic Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Depot in the 100 block of Main Street in downtown Westcliffe.

The All Aboard Westcliffe organization is seeking large and small donations to purchase and restore the state historical designed



building which is now privately owned.

Built in 1901, the depot is a part of the Valley's railroad legacy. A narrow gauge line of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad ran up Grape Creek from Canon City to Westcliffe in 1881.

When it washed out eight years later, a standard gauge line came into the Valley via Texas Creek in 1901 until it was abandoned in 1938.

Tax deductible donations can be mailed to: All Aboard Westcliffe, P. O. Box 145, Westcliffe, CO 81252. YOUR SUPPORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!!

Improvements/Repairs for the year:

- ✓ Sidewalks needed some attention so a company was hired to do the mudjacking process for repairs.
- ✓ The kitchen in the Interpretative Center was evaluated and licensing approved for it to be classified as a "commercial kitchen". We will be able to rent out the kitchen to help recover the costs associated with the licenses. Members of AAW will participate in a Food Safety for Food Handlers training to comply with the Health Department regulations.
- ✓ Train car repairs & painting done

Grant Work Continues



Diane Zarra, Tim Thrun, Jim Schulz and Trudy Norris (taking this photo) participated in the El Pomar and Central Peaks Regional Council grant writing

workshop in Salida. Jim Little, Wet Mountain Tribune editor is an El Pomar council member.

Tribute to AAW Deceased Members 2011

Dave Stubbs and Pat Ramer, both long time members passed away in 2011. Their countless hours and huge volunteer contribution of service to AAW helped to make the organization a great success. They are both sorely missed.

AAW Volunteers recognized

A potluck meal was hosted on October 29 to honor and recognize all the volunteer docents and workers that help AAW.

A fabulous variety of foods were brought in for all to enjoy. Bingo games provided the fun for the evening.

Rail Cars Progress

An application of new roofing material was completed on the outfit car early this summer. Finally, the mess that has been serving as a roof for years is now replaced, weather-tight and secure. In the process, a 2"x6" reinforcement member at the roof line on both sides of the car was replaced and the end of the car upper trim boards were repaired or replaced as needed. By the skilled hands of Jeff Curry, four of the windows were repaired for installation.

Two of these had enough of the original wood intact to be repaired and restored as is, while the other two are near complete recreations using



the originals as a template. Amazingly some of the pieces of the window frames were discovered in the rubble and trash on the floor of the car and are incorporated into the reproduction of the two new windows. Two doors of the original 1890's era were scavenged from a caboose presently being partially dismantled. These installed very nicely in the appropriate openings of the outfit car. Louis Kimball is presently rebuilding the sliding freight door for the east side and Curry is working on two more windows necessary to fill the openings and complete the "drying in" of the car.

Taking advantage of warm days in October, a work crew consisting of Robin, Ron, Diane, Anna, Trudy, Mary Lou, Eula, Larry and Nancy applied primer as needed and then the



final coat of red paint to both the restored caboose and the outfit car. Trudy finished it off by detailing the

Denver Rio Grande logo with a fresh coat of white paint.

Welding crew, Bill Uhland and Mike Sprengel then fabricated and welded in place two reinforcement trusses on the inside for the purpose of holding the car stable. History records this car involved in a derailment and thrown on its side sustaining the usual damage. The trusses prove to be the proper stabilizer resulting in the removal of a cable and turnbuckle arrangement previously needed to hold the car in shape. Further work to be completed this year is the installation of a wood stove and metal heat shield, replace damaged and rotten flooring boards, install interior wall siding material and the two remaining windows. The welding crew is busy fabricating steps, ladders and grab bars for the caboose and numerous outside hardware for the outfit car.



(From left to right – box car, outfit car & caboose)

An explanation follows regarding the difference between a box car and an outfit car. Observe above picture displaying from left to right - a box car, an outfit car and a caboose, all of 1890 – 1900 vintage. The box car is built with ends and sides totally covered with wood and having a large freight door in the middle of each side which slides open, being suspended on a roller and track at the top. In contrast, an outfit car has windows and ordinary swing entry doors provided at the ends and sides. In the late 1800's to early 1900's it served as the boarding house for section hand workers sent out to repair extensive damage to a rail line caused by derailment or wash out from a flash flood. The workers slept and ate their meals, remaining on site until the work was completed. The caboose is a bit more plush and provided quarters for the conductor, engineer, supervisor of the work crew and other ranking members of the work party.

Westcliffe Model Rail Road Club

The Westcliffe Model Rail Road Club continues to plug along at its steady slow pace (Canon City "wasn't build in a day" = somebody's famous quote). The club has spent gobs of dough (\$402.12 to be exact) this past summer on modeling kits for the Canon City dioramas on the East End of the Arkansas River Section of our D&RG HO scale layout. The only trouble with "HO kits" is you've got to put the small suckers together and that takes enormous amounts of patience along with steady hands and calm nerves. If you know of anyone with such virtues please have them call Tim Thrun @ 783-0423 and he will be happy to give them a practical test of such virtues as he has his all used up.

LET'S KEEP THEM TRAINS ROLLING.

And for the end of the year...

The Annual AAW Christmas Party/Meeting

Our annual Christmas party/meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 15th at the AAW Interpretive Center. Appetizers and cocktails (BYOB) start at 5:30pm and a buffet dinner begins at 6:15pm. This year the Alpine Lodge will cater a special chicken dinner with all the holiday trimmings for \$20.00 per plate followed by a visit from a special guest after dessert.

Hope everyone has made your reservations. It will be lots of fun!

We wish everyone a very
Merry Christmas and a
prosperous New Year!

Happy Reading and keep watching for
more news and events for 2012!!!

The following news release was sent to the Colorado Time
Table Railroad Magazine for publication.