



C&TS Dispatch

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ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR THE FRIENDS' DOCENT PROGRAM

by Frank Yockey

2005 was another successful season for the Friends' docent program. Thirty-three docents put in over 3300 hours assisting and visiting with guests on 177 train departures. We had at least one docent on every train for the second year in a row. An additional 400 hours were invested guiding our guests on tours of the Chama yard. Our on-site coordinator worked 540 hours keeping everything running smoothly. In total approximately 4300 hours were spent helping visitors enjoy their visits to the railroad. On average each docent worked 113 hours or roughly 14 days during his or her stay in Chama. Seven new docents were trained, certified, and added to the program in 2005. We start the 2006 season with 31 active, experienced, dedicated docents. An active docent is someone who has worked at least five days in the past two years and has committed to continuing with the program. Over the eight years there have been over 70 volunteers involved with the program at one time or another.

The docent program has come a long way since it started in 1998. It has become an integrated part of the railroad operation. Not only have the guests come to expect a docent on the train, they have been vocal in their praise of the docents and how they have enhanced their experience riding the train. This in turn has resulted in strong support from the railroad

operator. For example, we received the following note from long-time Friends member, Bill Kepner.

"I just wanted to report that I recently rode the train, and I can say the docents added a tremendous amount to my experience during the trip. As you know, I consider myself to be quite knowledgeable about the railroad, the people who run it, and the area in general. However on my recent trip, I must say I learned a significant amount from the docent's presentation. My purpose in writing is to express how valuable this program has become. I will say that normally the Antonito-Big Horn section is good for a nap in the afternoon, but on this day, I found myself really impressed with how many folks on the train were still paying attention to the scenery,

and apparently enjoying themselves as the trip went on."

The docent program had a very different look and feel back when it started. In 1997 Howard Bunte and Spencer Wilson started testing the concept of having Friends ride the train to talk with passengers about the Friends' story and history of the railroad. A short write-up appeared in the 1997 fall Dispatch describing the concept and asking for Friends who would be interested in joining the program.

For the 1998 season there were seven hardy souls who were willing to try the new program. There was no training, nor did we have a model from other railroads to follow. It was "learn as you go" that year. The

See **Docents**, page 4



Jim Ward, left, from Albuquerque, New Mexico was a first year Docent working with Ray Crist from Pleasant Hill, California, a 5 year Docent. Their assignment for the day was the Chama to Antonito train. Jim was our star this year with 370 volunteer hours. (Chuck Heroneme)

C&TS Dispatch

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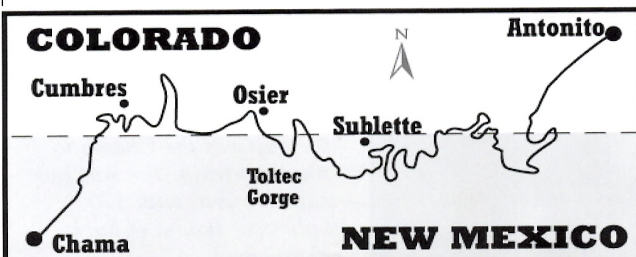
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The Friends is the official museum arm for the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, a 64-mile-long operating railroad and museum of railroad history and technology between Antonito, Colorado, and Chama, New Mexico. The railroad is owned by Colorado and New Mexico. As the museum arm, the Friends is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of the railroad. The Friends is an Affiliate Member of ARM (Association of Railway Museums) and a Member of TRAIN (Tourist Railway Association).

Family membership in the Friends is \$25.00 per year; outside the USA membership is \$35.00. All contributions are fully tax deductible and will be gratefully accepted. Please write us in Albuquerque or call us at (505) 880-1311 for information about the Friends. The Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad is both a National and a State Registered Historic Site.

Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad



Denver & Rio Grande Railway—1880 to 1886
 Denver & Rio Grande Railroad—1886 to 1921
 Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad—1921 to 1970
 Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad—1970 to 2005
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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Getting the Word Out!

Calling all members, calling all members! Yes, ask not what the C&TS Railroad can do for you but what you can do for the C&TS Railroad. With all that has transpired this past winter on the railroad, we need your help. As a Friends member, you can help us regardless of age or location and you don't need to travel to a work session.

We need your assistance in getting the word out. Come ride the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad for the 2006 season! This is a critical year and everyone reading this column can lend a hand in marketing the railroad. Tell a relative or a neighbor about the C&TS and the wonderful experience awaiting them in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico May 27 through October 15!

In 2005, the C&TS hauled 33,023 passengers, which represented an approximate 10% increase over the 2004 season. On the bright side, the railroad will be going into the 2006 season with three operational locomotives again, 484, 487, and 488. As I alluded to above, the C&TS did encounter some speed bumps over the off-season. My time and that of other Friends directors and members have been spent finding solutions for a myriad of challenges while working with the Commission to navigate through a winter filled with uncertainties.

With these uncertainties come tasks and initiatives that have not been fully executed during the off-season. One of these areas is the engagement of a basic marketing plan for the season to come on the C&TS. Although some 2006 preseason placements and ad purchases were made before the 2005 season ended, **we do need to focus on promotion of the railroad.** This is where each and every one of you can do your part.

Enclosed in this issue of the *C&TS Dispatch* is a copy of a news release about the 2006 season on the Cumbres & Toltec. We would ask for your help in dispersing the word to as many people as you can including the placement of this news release into the hands of your local newspaper. (See note below.) With approximately 2,300 members worldwide, the Friends are in a position to impact our ridership numbers. If every member could somehow be responsible for putting five more passengers each on the C&TS for 2006, we would push an additional 11,000+ riders through the gates.

I believe we are going to have an exciting year on the C&TS. In addition to running seven days a week, the railroad is introducing more *Cinder Express* trains that will operate on Thursdays from June 22 through August 10. This service, which proved successful in its inaugural year, caters to children and families and provides a shorter trip up to Cumbres Pass with an opportunity to hob knob with *Cinder Bear!* The *Galloping Goose* will also be making an appearance for the second year in a row during early June, plus the Friends *Moonlight Train* will run on Saturday August 5th. Another event taking place will be the National Narrow Gauge Convention to be held in Durango during August. The C&TS will be hosting a special train on Monday August 21 for attendees to the Convention.

As I pen this column, most of you are aware that the Friends were selected by the C&TS Railroad Commission on February 3rd to manage the railroad for the 2006 season. We are in the process of negotiating a management agreement with the Commission to cover this period. The tentative name for the newly formed non-profit corporation will be C&TS Management Corp. The board composition of this company is still being discussed. I suspect some members will serve on both boards while other members will have no prior affiliation with the Friends but have ties to the communities of Chama or Antonito.

The bottom line for this new company, the Friends, Commission, and myself personally is that we all work together to have a successful year. It will take everyone's best effort to attain the success we are seeking. To reiterate what I stated above, each one of you needs to be involved. We can't have anyone sitting on the sidelines! Please do your part and help us promote that treasure we call the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad. I appreciate everyone's time and thank you for the continuous support you provide.

— Tim Tennant

Making the C&TS RR a Household Name

Anticipating the C&TS Railroad's 2006 operating season, the Friends want to do as much as possible to help make it successful. We are calling upon our members to help us get the word out. We have created an article hyping the upcoming season to appear in newspapers and magazines around the country. A black and white copy is inserted in this issue. The presentation includes something for everyone – the rail fan or history buff, families, volunteers, or adventure seekers. The story is accompanied by several photos from which the publication may choose. We are requesting our members to personally contact their local or regional newspapers and provide them with either an electronic version of the article by email and/or a copy of the article on CD. Please contact Nan Clark directly to obtain either version – cinerail@aol.com or Nan Clark, 1107 Eagle Creek Drive, Floresville, TX 78114.

It will take all of us to make this work, so thanks in advance for participating!

— Nan Clark

Dispatch Deadlines

To establish a dependable schedule for mailing the C&TS Dispatch, the following deadlines will be observed for material to be received at the Friend's office.

Spring Issue: Mail on March 25

All material must be received by February 15.

Summer Issue: Mail on August 8

Work sessions A and B reports and photographs must be received by June 22.

All other material must be received by June 29.

Fall Issue: Mail on September 25

Work sessions C and D reports and photographs must be received by August 8.

All other material must be received by August 15.

Winter Issue: Mail on December 25

Work sessions E and F reports and photographs must be received by November 1.

All other material must be received by November 8.

program was focused around the work sessions for the first few years. New docents would meet for a couple of hours with those docents who had some experience, even if the experience was only a couple of days. There were no requirements for becoming a docent or expectations of performance. It truly was a "seat of the pants" operation at the beginning.

Howard Bunte coordinated the program for the first few years. One of the first problems was identifying the docents on the train. Since the program started during work session time, Howard decided that docents should wear a hard hat just like all the other Friends volunteers. Guests on the train did not understand why a docent had to wear a hard hat on a tourist train. The hard hats disappeared from the program rather quickly.

This still left the problem of identification of the docents on the train. Before the 1999 season, Spencer Wilson came up with the dark blue apron with the large Friends' insignia on the front. This is the apron that we still wear today. With the three large pockets on the front of the apron, a docent can carry literature and other items with them while on the train. There are a few drawbacks to the apron such as weight around the neck and being somewhat awkward for walking, but it still remains the standard for identification. All docents are required to wear the apron when

assigned for duty on either the train or while working in the yard.

Four years ago, to improve identification and to provide a more consistent, professional appearance, the docents began to wear blue denim clothing. The new look fits with the railroad environment, yet it differentiates the docents from train crewmembers. We have recently added the distinctive docent patch that is worn in one of several places on the docent uniform.

Training has also come a long way. The first material included a reading list with such books as *Ticket to Toltec* and other historical articles. A frequently asked question list was compiled. Individuals developed various helpful aids to use during the train trip. Many of these were shared with other docents. Performance expectations and standards were added. Eventually a training manual evolved. Last year the entire manual was re-written and distributed to every docent, new and old alike. What an improvement!

Two years ago a formal training program of five to six days was started. The trainee is teamed with experienced docents as part of the program. The final examination is on day five. Most trainees are accepted into the program. By the sixth day, new docents are ready to go out on their own with confidence that they will be credible with our guests.



Don and Nancy Schneider in the Chama yard. Each docent brings unique talents and perspective to the group. For example, Nancy works well with children. If you look carefully at the picture, you will see an attractive bobble hanging from her neck. This is a small vial of soap and water for blowing bubbles for the guests, thus giving Nancy the nickname of "bubbles" by the rest of the docents. (Chuck Heroneme)



Tom Farmer, left, and his daughter, Catherine, from Rome, Georgia, were working with first year Docent Jim Mount from Estes Park, Colorado. Jim had just finished his week of training and was working with Tom who has been aboard since 2002. (Chuck Heroneme)



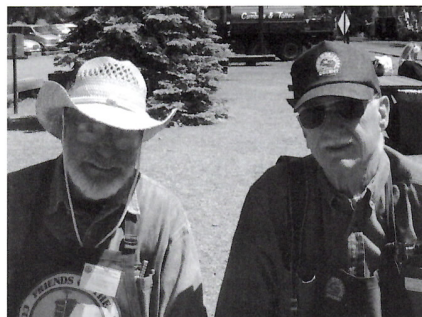
From left to right are Pat MacKenzie, Spencer Wilson, Howard Bunte, Frank Yockey, and Bob Hey at the 2001 work session D. Spencer and Howard were responsible for starting the program. Howard is wearing his hard hat that he thought would identify docents. You can see the wide variety of clothing worn versus the pictures of the 2005 docents when on duty.

To ensure the program works smoothly, we have an on-site coordinator who is responsible for scheduling, training, problem solving, etc. We have been very fortunate to have Chuck Heroneme serving in this position the past three years. He and his wife, Sandy, spend the entire season in Chama while he performs his duties. They stay in the Rio Chama RV Park and he enjoys a mix of coordinating the docent program and visiting friends.

The 2006 season will be challenging for the docent program. First we need to establish a good working relationship with the new management team for the railroad. We will work to make sure the docent program continues to enjoy a good, close relationship with the railroad operations team. A major challenge will be the scheduling of docents to cover all trains. There are several periods during the season when the program is short of docent staff. Late June and late August are two such periods and we have been working hard to persuade volunteers to work during the slack times outside of the work sessions.

The docent program has grown from a small beginning. It will continue to

evolve as an important program for both the Friends and the railroad. We have a core group of experienced, well-trained, professional docents. We expect the program to continue to expand as the Friends strive to have the railroad recognized as an outstanding, "living" railroad museum. An



Ed Neubaum, left, was a first year Docent and was going through his first week of training. Ed is a retired dentist and lives in Florence, Colorado with his wife Beverly. Keith Shostrom is a 15 year volunteer of the Friends with the last 5 years as a Docent. He and his wife Joyce (tool car) live in Deadwood, South Dakota. (Chuck Heroneme)

example of this evolution is our work with several geologic experts from Adams State College and the Forest Service. We expect this work to lead to a compact guidebook that docents can carry with them to explain to our guests the various features along the railroad. The Friends are also looking at the possibility of a visitors' center in Chama. When completed, additional docents will be needed for yard tours and helping at the center.

We continue to look for dedicated volunteers who enjoy working with guests to enhance their experience while visiting the railroad. This is a close, dedicated group that fully supports the continuance of the railroad and enjoys the camaraderie. We fully expect the railroad to expand the schedule in the coming years and we will need additional staff to cover the expanded schedule. If the docent program is something that you might be interested in, additional information can be obtained by contacting the Friends office.

Frank Yockey is a director of the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad and team leader of the Docent Program

2005 DOCENT VOLUNTEERS

Name	State	Hours
Ward, Jim*	NM	370
Hagan, Hilton	TX	260
Muth, Rich	CO	260
Morse, Mike	Roam	180
Yockey, Frank	CO	170
Crider, Billy	MS	150
Heroneme, Chuck	KS	150
Hey, Bob	WI	140
McKeel, Jim	KS	140
Neubaum, Ed*	CO	140
Shostrom, Keith	SD	140
Schneider, Don*	CA	130
Schneider, Nancy*	CA	130
Ross, Bob	IN	110
Crist, Ray	CA	90
Ford, Glenn	NM	90
Farmer, Tom	GA	70

Name	State	Hours
Samuels, Jay	NM	70
Baker, Jim	CA	60
Faith, Mike	NC	60
Hatch, Larry	FL	60
Kaylor, Bob	NY	60
Brendle, Bob	TX	50
Mount, Jim*	CO	50
Proudfoot, Chuck	AZ	50
Tower, Rich	IL	50
Aust, Jim*	TX	40
Fockler, Rex	CO	40
Garrison, Butch	TX	40
Miller, Phil	KS	40
Porco, John	CO	40
McKenzie, Pat	CO	30
Halaska, Chuck*	CO	10

* New Docent in 2005