

scorpions back under the booth. Don't step on nests of yellow jackets. Unlock (if necessary). Enter. Look up in the ceiling corners for wasp or hornet structures. If they are present and you must use the phone, do so quietly and unobtrusively—do not disturb the permanent residents.

The old wall-style telephone (once a telegraphphone) was on the wall, somewhat lighted by a window whose light came in from an angle to the side. Someone had been smart enough to not put it directly opposite the phone because the user's body would block the light.

### Cresco Booth

[Mr. Norwood believes that all the booths other than Cresco, including the phone box at Toltec Siding, were built on-site by the D&RGW B&B (Bridges & Buildings) Gang.] But the booth at Cresco is exactly like any of the outdoor toilets at agents' or section house locations where living quarters were provided.

About 1942–43 the Cresco Section was eliminated and the buildings removed. The phone would have been in the foreman's house, and a structure being then needed for the phone, I think the Chic Sale, was converted into a phone booth. The location might have been changed, maybe only the throne removed and the pit filled in. Narrow Gauge people were noted for doing things like this, using what was available and converting it, thus saving money and material or labor.

*Mr. Norwood's valuable contribution of knowledge about these phone booths is greatly appreciated. It informs and guides the Friends in presenting accurate information to visitors to the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad about how the restored booths were actually used by the D&RGW.*

*Member Bob Bergstrom resides in Keizer, Oregon—the editor.*

### Work Sessions, continued from p. 1

Beginning with **Antonito** and going west along the line, projects scheduled are:

- Caboose 0579 restoration
- Car repair facility planning and initial construction
- Engine house storage rack construction
- Drop-bottom gondola 859 restoration
- F&CC 60 security pending sale or trade
- Big Horn and Rock Tunnel telegraphphone booth restoration
- Coal bin expansion
- Ft. Knox improvements
- Display cars repairs
- D&RGW stone depot cleanup
- Train order signal installation

#### Sublette:

- Section house and speeder shed repairs

#### Osier:

- Section house and depot restoration
- Stock pen restoration and repair

#### Cumbres:

- (Depot) spring house restoration
- Pump house roof and wall repair
- Car inspector's house outbuildings restoration
- Car inspector's house floor joist repair
- Section house utilities planning
- Section house furnishings design and plans
- Historical markers for four defunct historic structures
- Archaeological investigation of sites of defunct historic structures

#### Chama:

- Car lettering
- Car and structure painting
- Cook car 053 interior restoration
- Jordan spreader OU restoration
- Terrace Ave. stairway construction
- Chama River bridge guard rails repair
- Telephone pole replacements near depot
- Coal tipple maintenance and repairs
- Pipe gondola and idler flat car restoration

- Flat car 6314 rebuild
- Site landscaping
- Car shop roof repainting
- MW02 damage repairs
- Locomotive cab interior restorations
- Cars 0252 and 065 cover construction
- Short reefer 55 restoration
- Night watchman's house floor and vent repairs
- Structural carpentry and repairs
- Car 05635 conversion to caboose
- Temporary RIP track shelter
- UTLX tank car preparation and repainting
- Engine house shelves construction
- Vegetation clearing in north yard
- Depot platform deck repairs
- Los Pinos telegraphphone booth restoration
- Caboose 0503 restoration
- Oil storage building repainting
- Speeder trailer construction
- Engine house window repair and replacement
- Log bunkhouse window construction
- Oil dock repair and restoration
- Flag pole installation
- Caboose 0306 renovation
- Baggage cart restoration

#### System wide:

- Tree trimming
- Mileposts and whistle board maintenance
- Vegetation control
- Train Host/Docent program, May 29–October 17
- Historical interpretation planning

And, in support of all of these projects, volunteers will provide:

- Written and photo documentation of the work
- Lunches
- Registration and administration
- Tool car operation and tool servicing
- Carpentry shop operation
- Preparation and loading of tools and materials
- Ordering, unloading, and storage of tools and materials
- Fork lift operation





*At the Chama depot, Bob Hey talks with Ken and Helen Hart from Amarillo, Texas. (Photos by Tom Cardin.)*

## So You Want to Be a Train Host?

*by Frank Yockey*

In the summer of 1998, the Friends started the new volunteer Train Host/Docent program. This idea, which has continued to grow each year, was generated and developed by Howard Bunté and Spencer Wilson. Twenty-three volunteers were active in the 2003 season, which began on May 26 and ended on October 19. The total hours worked by these volunteers was approximately 3100. Our goal is to have at least one host on every train and to have a host in the yards whenever possible. Unlike the traditional Friends' work session program, the Train Host/Docent program needs to be staffed every day from the first to the last day of the season whether the train is running or not. We need to add Friends members to the program, and with that in mind, we present the following story describing what a Train Host/Docent does during a typical three-day sequence.

### Day One

It is 7:00 a.m. and the day is clear but cool as the sun peeks between the trees in the Rio Chama campground. There is just enough time to quickly shower and pack a lunch for the day. The work sessions are not in progress this week so I cannot pick up one of "boxcar Mary's" fantastic lunches. Because

weather is always unpredictable, I pack an extra sweatshirt, light jacket, and rain gear. I also put in a couple of bottles of water and a can of pop, add some cookies and a piece of fruit along with my sandwich, and I am ready to go.

I'm out the door for a brisk walk to the depot. I arrive in time to check the 8:30 bus to Antonito and chat with the train host who will be on the westbound train from Antonito. Today will be a busy one because I'll be the only host on the eastbound train from Chama. We will doublehead up the hill with nine coaches, a concession car, the open gondola, and the parlor car. I put on my Friend's apron for easy identification and fill my pockets with walking tour brochures and a few trip maps for my preboarding duties.

A few guests have already arrived. I greet as many as I can. My questions are simple: "Where are you from? Have you ridden the train before?" The enthusiasm is building. It is going to be a great day for a train ride. There is still an hour before the train leaves, plenty of time for passengers to walk around the yard and take photographs before boarding. I explain the walking tour brochure and encourage guests to

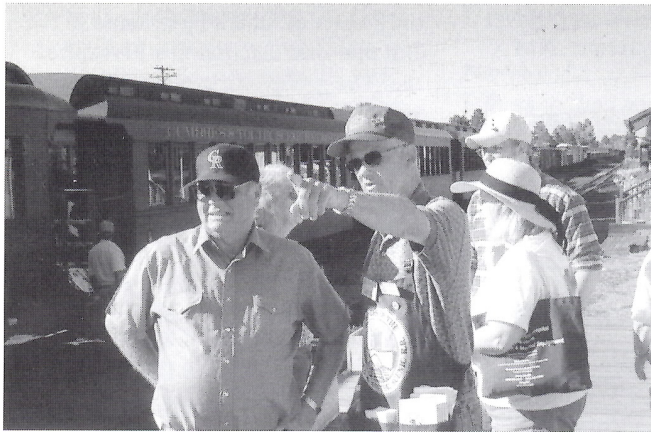
walk around. I give them a few common-sense safety instructions as I watch them head down to the coal tipple. Then I'm on to the next group of guests.

Talking to guests is always fascinating. I remember during June 2002, when the train was not running, that we kept track of where people were from. We counted guests from 27 states and 14 foreign countries. Meeting such a diverse set of people provides one of the most rewarding aspects of the program. Each day I work as a host is a new experience. I never know who I will meet. That same month in 2002, I ran into a couple of old friends from Massachusetts who I had not seen in years. What fun!

I am also challenged by the questions that our guests ask. Their knowledge may range from total novice to avid railfan. One moment you might be asked for a simple explanation of a steam engine and why we burn coal. The next moment someone might ask why the engines have both hydraulic and hydrostatic lubricators and what are they used for. Each question is important to our guests. Equally important is our ability to answer each guest taking into account his or her knowledge of railroading.

The train is ready for boarding. It is time to help the guests board and get settled. Less than ten minutes before departure, there is just enough time to walk the train, do a quick introduction, and let everyone know that I will be around to help answer questions and enhance their enjoyment of the trip. I make sure each family group has a trip brochure. The conductor has given the engineer a "high ball" and we are underway. I finish talking to guests in the last of the coaches as the conductor and brakeman check tickets. The conductor makes the announcement that the passengers are now free to move about. The rush is on and the open gondola fills up quickly. Enthusiasm abounds. I find this is a good place to spend a few minutes as people have questions and are enthusiastically looking around and watching the engines work.





*At Chama, Ray Crist shows passenger Ted Walker from Mesa, Colorado, how to find his coach.*

For the remainder of the trip up to Cumbres, I walk through the train talking to passengers, answering questions, pointing out features along the way, and suggesting good picture-taking opportunities. Time passes quickly. We are now at Cumbres to take on water and drop the helper engine. This is a great opportunity to talk about the restoration and preservation work of the Friends.

The remainder of the trip to Osier is more relaxed. The passengers are settling down and a few are asking about stopping for lunch. The Los Pinos valley is beautiful today, and there are lots of cattle and horses grazing in the valley. At Osier, it is time to help passengers off the train and direct them to the food line of their choice. After a quick lunch, it is time to head out to talk to the guests about this historic site.

As we leave Osier heading east for Antonito, I try to build enthusiasm for the next 40 minutes, as we will be going through Toltec Gorge, Rock Tunnel, Calico Cut, Phantom Curve, and Mud Tunnel. This is exciting railroading!

After Mud Tunnel, passengers are relaxed with many of them taking naps. Walking through the train, I have plenty of time to chat with family groups. To keep interest up, I have special little questions for them to think about and to be answered on my next pass. This is also a good time to obtain feedback about their trip

experience, both the good and the bad. Most of the feedback is very positive, but I do receive good ideas for improvements.

Upon arriving in Antonito, I help our guests off the train and direct those returning to Chama to the waiting bus. Today there are more guests than

the first bus can carry; thus I'll wait with them for the second bus to arrive from Chama. I'm back at my RV at 7:30 p.m. I have been gone for 12 hours. There is time left to take a shower, have a light meal, and enjoy a beverage. It will be a short evening because tomorrow I will take the trip from Antonito to Chama, and I have to be at the depot at 8:00 a.m. to catch the bus to Antonito.

### **Day Two**

Although it would seem the trip from Antonito to Chama would be just the reverse of the trip from Chama to Antonito, it really is an entirely different trip. First, there is the bus ride in the morning. Our guests are excited about the day and have many questions. The morning is a good time to see wildlife from the bus. On the last hour of the trip from Chama to Antonito, guests are quiet and often napping. Compare this to the first hour out of Antonito when our guests are excited and are enjoy viewing the sagebrush and the open prairie in the cool morning air. Even standard features like Lava Tank and Sublette take on a different character from this direction. Features such as the sand dunes can usually only be seen in the

mornings. I will be back to my RV by 5:00 p.m., with plenty of time to relax.

### **Day Three**

My third work day will also be relaxed. I will work as a host in the Chama yard. After seeing the train off in the morning, I "hang out" around the depot to greet people who stop in for one reason or another. I put out the Friends' sign offering free tours of the yard and set the next tour for 10:45. The tours may have only a couple of people or as many as 15-20. It just depends. Each tour is a little different and is customized to the needs of the group and what is going on in the yard that day. Yes, just another beautiful day in paradise.

### **Volunteers Needed**

I hope that this story gives you an idea of what one might expect if participating in the Train Host/Docent program. Each host brings his/her own special uniqueness to the position. There are some general guidelines, but each person has special talents and skills that add to the diversity of the group.

We are looking for more Friends' volunteers to join the program. Train hosts enjoy talking with people in a one-to-one environment. They have a passion for customer service and for helping our guests enjoy their experience on this very unique treasure called the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad. Standing and walking most of the day on a train that is constantly rocking and rolling can be hard on the



*Chuck Heronome talks to Ron and Barbara Sievers of West Frankfort, Illinois, before the eastbound train leaves Chama.*



back and legs. For this reason we offer volunteers the opportunity to be yard hosts only. The rewards can be just as great without the physical demands of riding the train.

So how does one become a host? First, you need to be a member of the Friends. Next, you sign-up through the Friends' volunteer registration program just like members have been doing for the work sessions except that there is a special section on the registration form for the Train Host/Docent program. Every host is expected to know at least the following three reference works: *Ticket to Toltec*, *Friends Walking Tour Guide*, and the information in the *Trip Map*. Training for new hosts needs to be scheduled ahead of time to ensure that an experienced docent will be available to mentor the new host for a minimum of five working days. The training starts with an orientation covering safety issues and general policies when working with train crews, and most importantly helping our guests enjoy their visit to the railroad. This is followed by five days of working with his or her mentor and as many experienced hosts/docents as possible. After successfully completing this training period, the new host will be eligible to work alone either in the yard or on a train.

### Host or Docent?

What is the difference between a host and a docent? It is mostly the experience of the individual and his or her depth and breadth of knowledge of the railroad, this "living museum" between Chama and Antonito. It is far more than just about a scenic railroad. A docent must be knowledgeable not only about the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad, but also about railroading principles and the history of narrow gauge railroads in Colorado and New Mexico. In addition a docent should have knowledge about foliage (flowers especially), wildlife, geology, and the history and culture of the area. Docents will have primary responsibility for training of new hosts.

If you have questions about the program, please e-mail to [carhosting@cumbrestoltec.org](mailto:carhosting@cumbrestoltec.org), or

write to the Friends' office—6005 Osuna Rd. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109.

*Frank Yockey is a director of the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad and team leader of the Train Host/Docent program.*

## Interpretation Committee Underway: Volunteers Wanted

by Terri Shaw

As my presidency of the Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad was ending in early 2003, incoming president Brian Shoup and Board Chair Jim Herron asked me if I would take on a new assignment—bringing into being a standing committee to oversee the interpretation program analogous to what the Projects Committee does for our restoration program. This part of the Friends' mission has always interested me and I agreed to do it.

The railroad hooked me when I got excited about old machinery (derrick car OP to be exact) that still worked. As someone without a history as a rail enthusiast, I had a lot to learn. And it was fascinating. I was like the visitors who come to the railroad without much knowledge of what they're seeing. I wanted the Friends' interpretation program to become as active as its restoration program.

I added two interpretive activities to the 1998 work session schedule to kindle such programs. Howard Bunté and Spencer Wilson, who for several years had been giving historical background to passengers on the train in the mornings before departure, became leaders of the "Yard & Train Host" project (now known as the Train Host/Docent program). And I inaugurated the Exhibit Planning & Design program. In five years, the Host program has attracted an interesting and talented group of volunteers and grown from providing on-train volunteers only during work sessions to a season-long presence.

Exhibit Planning & Design started with four people new to work sessions. We brainstormed many ambitious ideas,

only some of which have come to be. But that first discussion still inspires me. The group's first project was to revise the walking tour for the Chama and Antonito yards. It was first published in June 2000. A Spanish version followed in 2002.

Our attention then turned to Cumbres Pass. We sought out maps, photos, personal recollections, walked the site to visualize what is no longer there and how we would want to present it to visitors. The preparation for a walking tour of the Pass dovetailed with discussions about use of the section house as an interpretive center. This past summer I moderated several discussions about the site and started developing an interpretive plan. I presented our ideas informally to the Railroad Commission and received encouragement to proceed.

In August the planning group completed the draft of the walking tour, developed ideas for how to mark the historic location of the structures no longer extant, made recommendations to the Projects Committee about structures that needed restoration work, and developed a dozen ideas for exhibits to be placed in the section house.

It was time to create a "home" for these activities and the many other ideas that are being generated about our educational mission. Participants in these two initial activities have become members of the new committee.

The Friends' Board approved the concept for a standing committee to be responsible for all of the Friends' interpretive projects at its March meeting and appointed a committee in June. Frank Yockey and I are the co-chairs, and the members are Chuck Heronome, Ed Lowrance, Frank Martindell, Rich Muth, Dan Pyzel, Dick Ross, and Jerry Sahnd. The committee will make decisions about policy and project priorities and supervise individuals and groups carrying out specific programs. We will coordinate our planning with the Friends' Projects Committee, RGRPC, and the Railroad Commission.

The activities falling under the umbrella of this committee are