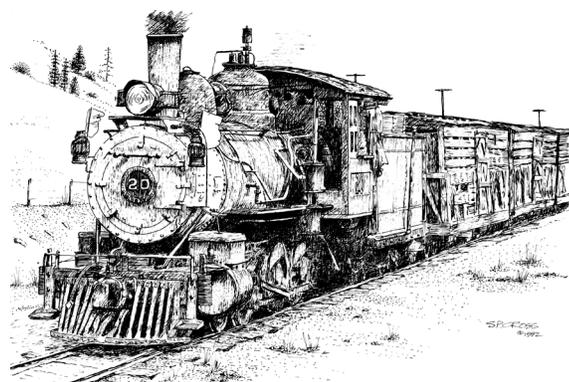


# ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAIL REPORT



MARCH 2006

No. 558

ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB • ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

## Amtrak

Presented by Bob Andrews

March 14, 2006 • 7:30 PM

Bob starts with the beginning of Amtrak showing both eastern and western scenes. The history continues through the western states up to about the year 2000. Bob has traveled all over Colorado and to many other states to take train pictures. Bob was born and raised in Denver. He and his wife were school classmates and have been married for 56 years. They have four children.

Please come join us for an enjoyable, educational evening at Christ Episcopal Church at 2950 South University Boulevard, University at Bates, where there is plenty of off street parking at the rear of the complex. Enter into Barnes Hall, where we hold the monthly meetings, on the mid-south side doors. Please bring a guest. **All programs are intended to provide an educational experience on railroading. The general public is welcome to attend. There is no charge for this meeting.**

## Choose Your Slides Now

Erwin Chaim will host the annual slide potpourri at the May meeting. You may give your selection of 15 to 20 slides to Erwin at the March or

April Club meeting. You may also arrange with Erwin to deliver your slides to the Caboose Hobbies repair department or at his home at 560 Emerson Street. Please have your slides to Erwin no later than April 30th. Erwin will not accept slides the night of the meeting. Please call Erwin at 303-777-7682 with questions.

This member night is an opportunity to showcase your talents. New talent is always welcome. Our Club has many excellent photographers and members always like to see their work.



## Tracks Across Wyoming

Tracks Across Wyoming is the name for the first annual Wyoming Historical Society railroad trek. The treks will cover a three year time span, ending at the western end of Wyoming in 2008. This year the group is covering the eastern 100 miles, ending at Laramie. The dates are set for June 16, 17 and 18. On the 17th, special arranged tours of the Cheyenne UP shop and roundhouse, as well as the depot will be part of the itinerary, then participants will motorcade to Ames Monument and a visit to the site of the famous Dale Creek Bridge afterwards.

Final details are not complete. The public is invited to participate. Information will be available through Jim Ehernberger at PO Box 28, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003, or e-mail jimtrain@sisna.com and details (including fee structure) will be sent by US mail on or about May 1st.

## 2006 RMRRC Events Schedule

April 11 Meeting	Excursions of the 60s
May 9 Meeting	Slide Potpourri
June 13 Meeting	Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow – Denver Rail Transit
July 11 Meeting	Dome Car Magic
August 8 Meeting	1961 Club Trips – San Juan Express and C&S - Great Western
September 12 Meeting	To Be Announced
October Event	Annual Banquet
November 14 Meeting	Video Potpourri
December 12 Meeting	Annual Meeting

The deadline for items to be included in the April Rail Report is 3/20/06.

Steve Cross at Colorado Railroad Graphics (303-699-9174) provided the drawing of club engine number 20 for the Rail Report cover. Other railroad artwork is available.

## From The President

By Jimmy A. Blouch

We are finishing processing membership renewals. It was decided to allow a little extra time for last minute payments. The next step will be the assignment of membership numbers for the year 2006 then new membership cards will be printed. Year 2006 membership cards will be mailed during March. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

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## LARAMIE BOOMERANG

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Laramie, Wyoming

Wednesday, September 2, 1903

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### A MIRACULOUS RAILROAD WRECK

**Freight Train Runs Away Through  
the Ute Pass.**

**ENGINEER LOSES ALL CONTROL**

**Enginemen Jump, But Conductor And  
Brakemen Spend a Very Bad  
Time in Caboose**

Colorado Springs, Sept. 1. The most miraculous railroad wreck which has occurred in this part of the state for years took place this morning on the Colorado Midland, when freight train No. 42, due in this city at 11:45 a.m., collided with a switch engine after a dash down six miles of 4 percent grade through Ute pass. Two engines, sixteen box cars and one caboose are piled in a heap at the Sixth street crossing at Colorado City and there is not a piece of timber in the entire mess more than half the size of an ordinary stick of cordwood. By nothing short of a miracle no lives were lost.

The runaway train passed through eight tunnels and rounded all the curves and what is generally regarded as the most treacherous six miles of railroad in Colorado. The impact, with which the switch engine on a side track in Colorado City received the runaway train sent the switch engine, or the biggest part that remained, every inch of 600 feet, driving it from the Sixth street crossing to a point about half way between Fourth and Fifth streets.

The train was six hours late in leaving Cascade. It was thoroughly inspected and was supposed to be in proper condition to make the descent of the pass, but Engineer

Frank Watts declares that just before he reached tunnel No. 8 a short distance below the safety switch, he discovered that his air would not work. He declares that it was all right when he whistled for the switch. His statements are borne out by Fireman James Brandenburg. Immediately upon the discovery that he could not control his train he told Brandenburg that they must jump for their lives and with the train going at a speed of not less than forty miles an hour, Watts and Brandenburg took a leap out of the cab on the lower side and neither man received a scratch. It was only a moment later that Conductor William Brown and Brakeman Joe Fisk and Sam Vaughn, who were in the caboose at the rear end of the train at the time, discovered that something was wrong. A hurried examination revealed to them the fact that the engine had been abandoned and they realized that they were on a runaway train and that there was only a very small chance for them to escape with their lives. The speed of the train was rapidly increasing and the men declare that the last half of the run was at a rate of not less than 100 miles an hour.

The crew got together in the caboose, not daring to jump from the train, and after throwing out through the doorway the stove, desk, coal box, chair and everything else that was movable, except their bedding, moved all the bedding into the front of the caboose, piling it up against the front wall, but the collision came after a few moments of an experience that none of these men will ever forget in its minutest detail.

The three men who had laid down upon the floor with their feet to the front plunged feet first into the pile of bedding and although

Continued on page 3, column 1

### Publishers Statement

#### Rocky Mountain Rail Report

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#### Club Information

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club  
PO Box 2391  
Denver, CO 80201-2391  
Website: <http://www.rockymtnrrclub.org>

#### Membership Information

Membership in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club may be obtained by sending the annual dues to the club address listed above. Regular membership dues are \$35.00. Overseas regular membership dues are \$45.00. Contributing membership is \$50.00. Sustaining membership is \$70.00. Patron membership is \$100.00. Golden membership is \$500.00. An associate membership for spouses and children is \$25.00 additional. Members joining after April may send a payment of \$3.00 for each month remaining in the year.

Members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club are also members in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation, the non-profit arm of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club.

#### Club Officers

President	Jimmy Blouch
Vice President - Projects	Darrell Arndt
Vice President - Programs	Don Hulse
Secretary	Roger Sherman
Treasurer	Jean Gross

#### Board Meetings

Members are always welcome to attend any board of directors meeting. They are held on the first Tuesday of the month. Please contact any Club officer for the date, time and location.

#### Newsletter Contributions

Newsletter contributions and items for publication should be sent to:

Bruce Nall, Editor  
Rocky Mountain Rail Report  
PO Box 620579  
Littleton, CO 80162-0579  
Fax: 303-978-0402  
E-mail: [selectimag@aol.com](mailto:selectimag@aol.com)



## A No. 25 Update

By Darrell Arndt

After much design work by Tom Peyton and with the assistance of Des Sainsbury, Carlos Seegmiller and others, the installation of interior low voltage circuits and components has begun. The interior lights are now powered through a new control box on the platform that was designed and built by Tom. Temporary

wiring has been removed from the platform areas to allow installation work on the exterior doors.

John Russell is doing the detailed wood working as part of that effort. Brass door hardware is receiving final machining by Mike Bigger who has helped with such

needs in the past. Bob Dunmire is doing wood repairs in the door areas.

Since the No. 25 helps us to remember our local traction heritage, we thought you would enjoy this view of Denver Tramway Company Car 373 on 16th St. at Tremont next to the Arapahoe County Courthouse.

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## Laramie Boomerang – A Miraculous Railroad Wreck

Continued from page 2, column 2.

their car was shattered to kindling wood not one was hurt.

The railroad company immediately hurried its wrecking outfit to the scene, but at noon comparatively little progress in clearing away the mass of debris under which the track is buried has been made.

It will take all of today and all night and probably tomorrow to remove the wreckage.

The loss to the railroad company will be somewhere around \$20,000, nearly all of this amount being on rolling stock. They are building a spur around the wreck and hope to have trains passing by this means some time tonight.

Ten cars which were demolished were heavily loaded, some of them with gold ore and one or two with silver bullion, there being about thirty tons of the latter cargo, and the wreckage is now under guard to prevent theft.

*Copy furnished by James L. Ehernberger*

## OS Colorado

### Current Railroad Happenings

By Chip Sherman

“OS” are the initials for On the Sheets, a reference to what station agents did to notify the train dispatcher that a train had passed his/her station and been noted on the train register. OS Colorado is a joint effort to note the rail activities occurring in and around Colorado.

### Summer Excursion Trains On The San Luis & Rio Grande

The San Luis & Rio Grande Railroad, now operated by Permian Basin Railways, had a trial run Thursday, 2/9/06, on what is expected to become a daily excursion train this summer from Alamosa to La Veta, Colorado. Ed Ellis, president of Permian Basin Railways contacted La Veta about the summer season train excursions. The trips would take passengers 63-miles eastward across Forbes Ranch over seldom seen Le Veta Pass.

Ellis is opening another excursion line this summer between Alamosa (cottonwoods in Spanish) and Antonito, a town on the Colorado - New Mexico border. Passengers on that line will be able to connect to the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railway at Antonito.

The excursion trains would begin operation May 24th and operate into September 2006. The train will run once a day from Alamosa to La Veta and back to Alamosa after an hour and a half stopover. Travelers would also have the option of staying overnight. The train will go over the highest standard gauge railroad pass in the country, La Veta Pass, at 9,242-feet.

SL&RG currently operates trains between Alamosa and Walsenburg hauling perlite, barley and potatoes at night. The line handles more than 6,000 freight car loads each year. Interchange with the Union Pacific is made at Walsenburg.

A small ticket office and waiting room have been added to the railroad's old freight office across the street from the former D&RGW Alamosa Depot. The proposed round-trip adult fare from Alamosa to Antonito is \$12. The proposed fare to La Veta is \$40.



Privately owned business car CARITAS was next to the former Denver & Rio Grande Western RR's Alamosa station 2/8/06. The station, built in 1909 by the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad, is now used as the Alamosa County Department of Social Services office. – Photo © 2006 Chip.



San Luis & Rio Grande RR is leasing Helm GP40X 4300 and GP40 4301 which work out of Alamosa, CO. They were used on the Antonito Turn 2/09/06 shown passing Independent Locomotive Service (reporting marks ILSX) GP39-2 1390. The 1390 and another ILSX unit, 1389, pulled the one car passenger special to La Veta. – Photo © 2006 Chip.

The rail route was chartered in 1870 by the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad as part of a never-realized narrow gauge line connecting Denver to Mexico City. As standard gauge lines took over the country, the Denver and Rio Grande converted the route from narrow gauge in 1900.

Locomotives operating on the SL&RG in February 2006 were all leased. Helm Leasing power was HATX GP40-3 804 and 805 still painted in the Rocky Mountaineer scheme. HLCX lettered GP40X 4300 (ex-Southern Pacific 7230), GP40 4301 and 4302 have been working out of Alamosa since Union Pacific sold RailAmerica the 163-mile line in June 2003.

The latest leased power is from Bethel and

Thief River Falls, Minnesota, based Independent Locomotive Service (reporting marks ILSX). They rebuild and lease locomotives to short lines and industrial customers around the country. Two EMD GP39-2s in different paint schemes are used – 1389 and 1390 (both operated by Kennecott Copper in Utah). The 1389 retains Union Pacific yellow and gray scheme. The 1390 is painted burgundy with yellow lettering.

The crew on this rare daylight special were conductors Paul Lisac and Carlos Llamas. Running the ILSX GP39-2s 1390 and 1389 out of Alamosa was engineer Mark Widener. The privately owned business car, CARITAS, came from the St. Paul - Minneapolis, Minnesota, area. A photo stop was made on the eastward



BNSF “Green Goat” model GG20B 1213 and 1212 rolled into Denver on the Billings, Montana, to Denver train of 1/21/06. The two remote control switchers were part of a BNSF order being assigned to Texas. The units departed Denver the evening of 1/22/06 on the Denver to Amarillo, TX, train. – Photo © 2006 Chip.



The “B” end of Green Goat switcher GG20B 1212 1/22/06. – Photo © 2006 Chip.

trip at tunnel one with ILSX 1390 in the portal.

“Although there have been special trains over the route throughout the years, the last regular passenger train chugged down

the tracks June 1, 1953,” Steve Rasmussen said. His book, *The Rio Grande’s La Veta Pass Route, Gateway to the San Luis Valley* provides an excellent reference to this portion of the former D&RG.

### **Railpower Technologies GG Series Yard Switchers**

The GG Series yard switchers, available in power ratings of 1,000 and 2,000 horsepower, are noted for the innovative way they reduce operational and fuel costs, while also bringing about major reductions in emissions and noise.

Hybrid technology is ideal for locomotives, due largely to the absence of weight constraints. Switchers are deliberately designed to be heavy to gain maximum traction and they operate in an inefficient “stop-go” manner that is hard on the large engines of conventional units. Unlike traditional switching locomotives, GG Series switchers have very small diesel gensets, large banks of long-life, recyclable batteries, and do not idle.

The small, efficient Tier 2 compliant diesel generator only operates when the batteries need to be recharged to their optimum levels.

For more information, see:  
[http://www.railpower.com/products\\_gg.html](http://www.railpower.com/products_gg.html)

### **Cañon City and Royal Gorge Repainting Passenger Equipment**

New paint based on the simplified Denver & Rio Grande Western passenger car scheme had been applied to the Cañon City & Royal Gorge Railroad passenger cars in January 2006. The first cars repainted from the VIA blue and yellow are the CRRX 9618 kitchen car and the head end power car. The paint scheme looks sharp behind the Grande gold painted F-7As, 402 and 403.

The CC&RG is operating two of the three Holland America domes they purchased in September 2005. An ex-ATSF Budd built full length dome was placed in service on 11/30/05. An ex-Milwaukee Road

Continued on page 6, column 1

## OS Colorado

Continued from page 5, column 3

Pullman-Standard built full length dome entered service 12/17/05.

The CC&RG is closed each January. They resumed weekend operations on Saturday, 2/4/06. They operate every weekend at 12:30 PM along with dinner and murder mystery trains every Saturday evening at 6:00 PM. The 1950s era train departs the Santa Fe Depot in Cañon City daily during the summer season (May 21st through October 8th, 2006) with up to four departures at 9:30 AM, 12:30, 3:30 and 7:00 PM.

UP continues to “rail bank” the former Denver & Rio Grande Western RR’s Tennessee Pass line from Parkdale – “just outside the Royal Gorge” to milepost 334.6 east of Gypsum, Colorado.

### China National Railways GE Model C38AChe Tested In The Colorado Rockies

General Electric Transportation Systems sent a China National Railways prototype locomotive, model C38AChe (AC/DC/AC, AC transmission) to Colorado for high altitude testing. The Qinghai-Tibet Railway model C38AChe locomotive was moved to East Portal, Colorado, on January 25, 2006. The NJ 20004 along with GE Dash 9-44CW 905, test car GECX 100 and a boxcar with locomotive parts was parked on the UP’s East Portal Wye. The locomotive engineer controls are on the left hand side of the cab. Since trains will operate at over 13,000 foot elevation, the locomotive is equipped with oxygen for the crew members.

The unit is a 6,000-horsepower export unit destined for China. It is built around a 16-cylinder version of the GEVO engine which itself is a mix of the FDL and HDL (AKA an AC6000 prime mover).

Here are the operating details in metric:

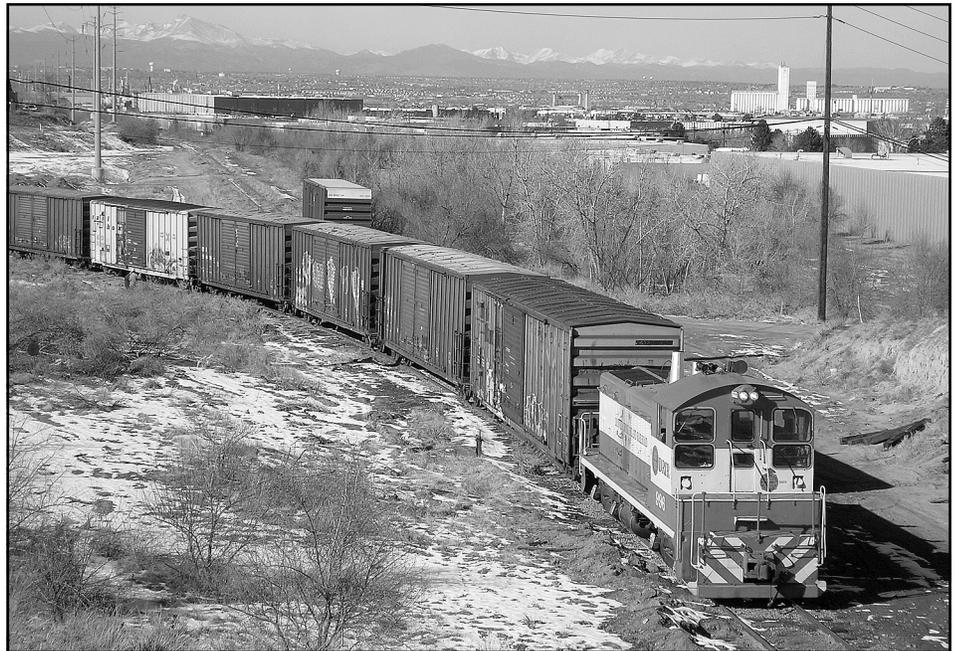
#### Environment:

Running Sections Golmud-Lhasa PRC  
(Approximately 1144 km)  
Altitude 2800m to 5100m

#### Equipment:

GE-C38AChe AC/DC/AC, AC  
Transmission  
Axle Arrangement Co-Co

Track Gauge 1435 mm  
Maximum Weight 138t  
Axle Load 23t  
Minimum Curving Radius 250m  
Length Over End Plates 19914 + 6mm  
Width 3119 + 6mm



Denver Rock Island RR (DRIR) NW-2 996 was switching boxcars on the old Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific RR main east of Denver along I-70 & Quebec Street on 1/24/06. This line was built in 1951 between the Union Pacific’s Limon line (Kansas Pacific) and Denver & Rio Grande Western RR Belt Junction. This view looks northwest from I-70.

Above at left is where fill dirt is being dumped. Aspen Petroleum will have a one or two track transload facility there, east of Monaco Street. Note the new ties and fresh ballast under DRIR 996 installed in January 2006 by DRIR. The two men were part of the track gang working on that track. DRIR has taken advantage of the mild winter with several track improvements in this area and around the Old Stockyards northeast of Denver. – Photo © 2006 Chip.



General Electric Test car GECX 100 accompanied the China National Railways prototype model C38AChe locomotive. Denver, CO, 1/22/06. – Photo © 2006 Chip.



Business car KANSAS passed BNSF GP60 114 at Utah Junction north of Denver on 2/17/06. BNSF 114 was on an empty Department of Defense flatcar train moving north on the BNSF's Front Range line. The Ski Train only made Crescent Siding that day. – Photo © 2006 Chip.

Height 4765 + 6mm  
 Fuel Capacity (usable) 9000 L  
 Traction Power at Rim 2560kw AAR  
 Standard Conditions  
 Maximum Tractive Effort (TE) 534kn  
 AAR Standard Conditions  
 Continuous TE 427kn AAR Standard  
 Conditions  
 Maximum DB 338kn  
 Maximum Speed 120 km/h  
 Engine GE 7FDL16

The test set had General Electric Dash 9-44CW 905 built in May 2005 painted in primer gray. GE Test car GECX 100 accompanied the two locomotives.

The GE locomotives were moved with BNSF 7770 from St. Louis, Missouri to Denver, Colorado arriving 1/22/06. The BNSF moved the GE test set to Union Pacific's North Yard. UP was to send the test set west for high altitude test on the Moffat Tunnel Line. Once testing was completed, the GE test set was to move south to Avondale, Colorado, and visit the Transportation Technology Center.

The Chinese locomotive, NJ 20004, had the frame and trucks (Co-Co, United Goninan General Electric Transportation Systems part 463609130) recently been painted black. The rest of the unit was in primer gray. One end had a cab with four headlights above the cab windows. – Craig Z

### About The Qinghai-Tibet Railway

The 1,118-kilometer (650-mile) railway, the first linking Tibet with the western China, will extend from Lhasa to Golmud and will be the longest and highest highland railway in the world. Construction started in June 2001.

More than 960 kilometers, or four fifths of the railway, will be built at an altitude of more than 4,000 meters (13,120 feet).

Setting off on June 29, 2001, the railroad started from Golmud in the north, stretching over a distance of 1,142 kilometers to end at Lhasa in the south. All along the way, a section of over 960 kilometers are over and above 4,000 meters above sea level, the highest altitude being 5,072 meters, of which about 550 kilometers are in the frozen earth region. It will take six years to finish the project.

The route of the Qinghai-Tibet railway has been confirmed following the completion of a survey by the China State Railway Ministry. The railway, which is seen as marking the further integration of Tibet into China, will extend from Golmud in Qinghai to Lhasa, passing through Nagchu, Damshung county and Yangbajing county.

It will be 1,110 km in length, including 30.6 km of tunnels, according to the survey, the findings of which were

announced on the Tibet People's Broadcasting station on December 3, 2000. The Qinghai authorities are pushing for construction work on the railway to begin as soon as possible, arguing that it is essential for economic development and "stability and security" in the region.

The Tibet Himalayas are some of the highest and most difficult terrain on earth, i.e. Mt Everest. Tibet is also home to some of the highest commercial airports in world. The airport in Bangda, Tibet, is at 14,219 feet and is served by China Southwest Airlines with Boeing 757s. The airport in Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, is the third highest in the world at 11,621 ft.

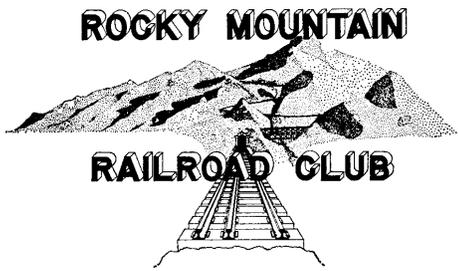
### Ski Train Turned Back

Union Pacific was unable to get the Anasco Ski Train to Winter Park Ski Resort on Friday, 2/17/06. The train left Denver in good shape, but only made it to Crescent Siding, 31 miles west of Denver Union Station. Train's power (Ski Train F40PH 242, 283 and 289) ran around the train and coupled to business car KANSAS for return trip eastward. Contributing to the decision by UP Omaha were frozen switches and congestion with numerous trains parked on sidings in the frigid winter weather. The Ski Train passed Leyden Siding, Arvada, CO, at 3:00 PM.

Business car KANSAS now wears a fresh coat of Rio Grande gold on its sides and silver painted trucks. The car was shopped in late 2005. It did not run on the first Ski Train trips in late December and early January 2006. January 14th was the first trip KANSAS made on the 2005-2006 Ski Train.

### Santa Fe Park Line

The Santa Fe's Park Line came off the Joint Line's northward main track just north of today's Mineral Boulevard overpass. There was a 25 to 30-car siding there with switches at both ends. The branch line took off to the east off that siding. It ran up hill about two miles serving a Michelin tire warehouse, not too far from where the branch crossed the Highline Canal.



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Operation Days**

For information call 303-279-4591  
Or See [http://www.crrm.org/train\\_trips.htm](http://www.crrm.org/train_trips.htm)

April 15	Bunny Express
May 13 - 14	Mother's Day
June 17 - 18	Father's Day
July 14	Wine and Cheese Train
July 15 - 16	Armed Forces Day
August 19 - 20	Steam Up
October 29	Ghost Train
December 2 - 3	Santa Claus Special

The Club's equipment committee works on the Club owned equipment at the Colorado Railroad Museum on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month. Any Club member is invited to join in the restoration and maintenance of historic equipment.

Call Bob Tully at 303-428-2322 for details.

**Intermountain Chapter, NRHS 2006 Event Schedule**

For information call 303-298-0377

Friday, March 17, 2006: Dinner meeting at Rossi's Catering. Chapter member Steve Fowler will entertain us with slides of his December 2004 trip to inner Mongolia and China. We will see the Jing Peng Pass area between the cities of Jing Peng and Linxi. There will also be photos of revenue freight service pulled by steam engines, Chinese QJ-class 2-10-2s. Steve lives in Colorado Springs and has been a Chapter and NRHS member since 1981.

Dinner reservations required. No drop-ins. Call the Chapter office (303-298-0377). All reservations and any cancellations must be made by Noon, Friday, March 17. If you must call Rossi's (303-296-1144), please be sure they take your name along with the number in your party. No-shows are billed by the Chapter. Cost for dinner meetings is \$14 per person. Cash bar opens at 6:30 PM, dinner is at 7:00, and the program is at 8:00. If you are not joining us for dinner, but want to see the program, you should arrive by 7:45 PM.

**Trains Unlimited, Tours 2006 Tentative Trip Schedule**

For TUT information call 1-800-359-4870

or visit our web page at: [www.trainsunlimitedtours.com/rmrrc/](http://www.trainsunlimitedtours.com/rmrrc/)

April 2-4	The Siskiyou Express	July 22-26	Rocky Mountain Express
April 6	Rogue River Local	July 29 - August 12	Great Peruvian Rail Adventure
April 6-12	Siskiyou Coos Bay Daylight	August 13-29	Great Brazilian Railfan Adventure
April 14-16	Coos Bay Flyer	August 25-27	Domes To Feather River Railroad Days
May 7-21	The Last Chinese Steam	September 2-4	Camas Prairie Adventure
June 2-4	Coos Bay Flyer	September 29-30	Durango Photo Special
June 9-11	Coos Bay Flyer	October 2-3	Rio Grande Photo Freight
June 25 - July 2	Great Western Rail Spectacular		
July 3	Domes Down The Valley		