



NEW MEXICO STEAM LOCOMOTIVE RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CELEBRATING NEW MEXICO CENTENNIAL 1912-2012

Mailing Address: P O Box 27270, Albuquerque NM 87125-7270
Restoration Site: 1833 8th St NW, Albuquerque, NM
Web Site: www.nmslrhs.org E-mail: nmslrhs@nmslrhs.org

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HIGH TECH HELP

AT&SF 2926 Has Very Helpful Friends From Albuquerque's Research Laboratories

In a 21st Century high tech environment, the restoration of a mid-20th Century steam locomotive is generally considered a low tech project. Though not high tech by today's standards, 2926 is a very complex machine.

Added to the complexity is the fact that the nationwide infrastructure that once supported repair and maintenance of high speed steam went away long ago. That presented a major challenge for a small handful of rail heritage fans with limited funds.

A few historic big steam operations do exist in various parts of the country. Some, such as the San Bernardo Railroad Historical Society, owners and operators of AT&SF 3751, have been very helpful. But they are not close at hand, and their valuable time must be devoted to their own issues at home.

Enter members of Albuquerque's renowned high technology community. Two organizations, Kirtland Air Force Base and Sandia National Laboratories have long been an integral high-tech part of the Albuquerque community. Help from those sources went far beyond the community support normally seen emanating from two such large organizations. It came from personal volunteer efforts of a lot of individuals employed by those facilities.

To date, more than twenty current and former employees and staff members of KAFB and SNL and their contractors have joined—and continue to join—as volunteers. The range of talent, experience and abilities is extensive.

The contributions of these high-tech volunteers is as varied as the talents and skills they bring to the project. Most of them are direct hands-on contributors. They show up for work sessions that include hard physical work—work that often takes place in conditions that may be confined, greasy, sooty, sometimes hot, sometimes cold.

Others, who may not be able to attend work sessions, provide technical consulting

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COUNTDOWN TO LAUNCH

After a decade of hard work, NMSLRHS members are beginning to plan for the day when AT&SF 2926 can be set in motion to bring BIG STEAM back to the New Mexico and neighboring states.

May 2, 2002, Moving Day : AT&SF 2926 was resting on a siding next to the BNSF mainline, a few yards south of Menaul Blvd. It had been parked there for almost two years after removal from nearby Coronado Park by Messer Construction Co. of Hereford Texas.

A few hours later that day, thanks to help from BNSF and a number of other supporters, the huge locomotive would be in its newly acquired home—a secure siding between 8th and 12th Sts NW, behind the USGSA warehouse.

At the new site, after almost a half century of inaction, during which it suffered weather exposure, abuse, and vandalism, 2926 would be given new life. The classic locomotive would undergo complete restoration, bringing it back to operating condition.

Pictures below are from that day ten years ago. 1. On moving day, AT&SF 2926 waits patiently on the siding next to the BNSF main line at Menaul Boulevard, as NMSLRHS members gather to discuss plans for the move. 2. Two BNSF units—with Santa Fe Warbonnet paint—arrive on the scene and stand by to escort 2926 onto the mainline, and then west on the Sawmill spur to its new home just south of I-40 at 1833 8th St NW. 3. AT&SF 2926 at its new home, a bare lot with no infrastructure, but with dreams that time and hard work will make it a viable restoration site.



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This newsletter is published quarterly by the New Mexico Steam Locomotive & Railroad Historical Society, a New Mexico Non-Profit Corporation.

President _____ Michael F. Hartshorne
Vice President _____ David Traudt
Secretary _____ Gail Kirby
Chief Mech. Officer _____ Rick Kirby
Chief Safety Officer _____ Jon Spargo
Newsletter Editor _____ Doyle Caton
Web Master _____ Marlin Allison

MAIL ADDRESS: NMSLRHS
P. O. BOX 27270
Albuquerque, NM 87125-7270
Tel: (505) 246-2926 Web: www.nmslrhs.org

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TEN YEARS LATER

May 2, 2012 will mark ten years since BNSF 2628 eased AT&SF 2926 through the 8th St gate onto a bare lot divided by a long unused siding. The picture is very different now—a bare, vacant lot no more. The site, outfitted with equipment, tools, materials, machine shop, and other infrastructure needs, is a buzzing center of 2926 restoration activity.

Those ten years have seen an amazing amount of support from many of individuals and organizations. Support has come in the form of donated materials and equipment, as well as all important cash contributions from a few dollars to several thousand. The support has come not just from New Mexico, but from other states and even other countries such as Britain, Germany, and Australia. With such support, and tens of thousands of hours hard work by a hard core group of members, the decade-old dreams are coming to life.

BOARD ELECTION 2012

Call for Nominations for 2012 Directors

This announcement is a formal call for nominations of members wishing to be candidates in the 2012 Board of Directors elections.

The Board of Directors are elected from the membership, by the membership. These individuals serve unpaid, as do all our members. They are responsible for conducting the business of the Society.

Terms: Directors serve three-year terms, staggered to provide continuity for the Board. Two terms expire this year, those of Dave Traudt and Rick Kirby.

Election Committee: The 2012 Committee members are Nate Phillips, Doyle Caton, Gail Kirby, and Frank Gerstle, Chairman.

Petition: A petition for nomination shall contain the name of the nominee, the nominee's consent to serve, the seconding signatures of two (2) members in good standing, and the nominee's statement of candidacy.

Timing: Members in good standing interested in serving on the BoD must submit a Nomination Petition to the Election Committee or before **May 14, 2012**. The petition may be hand-delivered on Site to a Committee Member or mailed to: **NMSLRHS, PO Box 27270, Albuquerque NM 87125-7270**

Criteria For Election: A person seeking a Board position must have either performed a minimum of 500 hours of work for the Society or obtained a Board of Directors' endorsement by a 2/3-majority vote.

Ballots: A ballot will be prepared after Nominations are closed on May 14, 2012. Voting is by paper ballot only. A printable version of the ballot will be available on the NMSLRHS web site. Paper ballots will also be produced and available at the Site. A copy will

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These two photos depict regular work activities at the 2926 restoration site.

Above: Chuck Mangold, a highly skilled C-130J pilot tries his hand at our crotchety 1945 fork lift to move heavy parts. Also a good proposal writer, Chuck usually works long distance since his recent transfer from Albuquerque to the Florida Panhandle.

Below: Dick Downing, Dave Van De Valde, and Bob DeGroft inspect the Baldwin reverse mechanism. Dick comes out regularly from Indiana where he had a machine shop business before retirement.



Though 2926 is still two or three years from operation, the project is no longer just a grease, grime, nuts and bolts operation. One team of members is developing a long range business plan for our planned operation of a large piece of living history. Another group has become active in reaching out to public and private interests. We want to alert everyone that we are starting a countdown to launching Big Steam operations.

Current Activity

Meanwhile, work at the restoration site continues. A few years ago, most work consisted of taking things apart, looking for replacement parts, making others, and seemingly endless cleaning, grinding, scraping and scrubbing.

A review of the First Quarter of 2012 reveals that disassembly and cleaning is giving way to repair, reassembly, reinstallation, painting, and other tasks that bring the dream of operating 2926 closer to reality.

Significant activity during the 1st Quarter included:

Stayrod preparation and installation. The new stayrods were cut from stock, and the ends were prepared for welding. They were then tack welded into place. With *MANY* stayrods to replace, this task demanded the attention of several volunteer workers during a number of work sessions.

Welding cracks in counterweights. Close inspection had revealed some cracks in the drive wheel counterweights. Preparation for welding the cracks began at a work session in early January. The cracks were then welded during later sessions in February.

Cab restoration work. Most of the metalwork to restore the cab was completed a couple of years ago, and the cab (metal shell only) was refitted to the locomotive. It was now time to begin restoring the woodwork. In early February, the cab was removed, placed on a wooden frame with rollers, and moved to a covered area for the cab's interior woodwork to begin. With Randy Mc leading the way, that task will continue through many work sessions.

Appliance, accessory, and component work. This seems to be a never ending task. Compressor lubricators, feed water pumps, control valve assemblies, reverse gear actuator, various bearings, pipes, pipe unions, and other items received careful attention. They were cleaned, checked, repaired where necessary, and reassembled. At any given work session, there are enough tasks of this type to keep a couple of dozen volunteers busy. AND there are still many such tasks remaining.

Machining and fabrication tasks. The above mentioned tasks generate a lot of work for Ralph Johnson and the machine shop crew. Machining of the tapered retaining pins for one of the timing gear arms is typical of such work.

A closely related task is the design and fabrication of tools necessary to carry out the variety of removal and assembly work. For instance, it was necessary to fabricate several different bearing removal tools. Additional tool making will be necessary to complete reinstallation of the bearings.

Equipment, tool, and site maintenance. Tools break, machines and equipment require regular service, and the worksite calls for regular housekeeping. Though not directly related to work on 2926, they create a need for important infrastructure tasks. A number of hours each work session involves fork lift repair and maintenance, broken tool repair and replacement, and such mundane tasks as trash pickup and disposal.

Administrative and management activity Ask any of the NMSLRHS Board members, and they will expound on how much this function has grown since the restoration project began. Membership affairs, financial management, data base maintenance, safety, outreach, and other activities of a normal business operation demand attention.

First Quarter Admin activities included; annual safety refresher training, new member safety training, presentations to public and private organizations and individuals, cataloging of recently acquired engineering drawings, upgrading the computer system, records maintenance, proposal writing, etc, etc.

The above paragraphs provide just a glimpse of the regular activities of our band of volunteers. A few photos of that activity can be found on the last page of this newsletter. Many more photos can be found on the NMSLRHS web site, www.nmslrhs.org. At the top of our main web page, just click on **PHOTOS**. For more details of work activity, click on **WORK STATUS**, and read the TW3 work session reports under the Title **"Banging On A 2900"**.

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be mailed to those members who do not have Internet access.

Voting Privileges: Each Individual, Family, or Lifetime Membership shall have one (1) vote. Voting privileges will be extended to all members making the "minimum contribution" 30 days prior to the mailing of the ballots.

Voting Procedure: For your vote to be counted it must be signed and hand delivered or mailed to the Society PO Box above. If you wish vote secretly, use two envelopes whether you are mailing or delivering your ballot to the Election Committee in person. The inner envelope should contain no name or return address. The outer envelope must include your name so that your vote can be recorded.

Voting Period: Voting will remain open from the time the ballot is posted/mailed until the Saturday July 7. Those mailing their vote should mail early enough to ensure its arrival at the NMSLRHS P.O. Box by 8:00 AM July 7.

Vote Counting: The Election Committee will tally Votes and winning candidates announced at the Annual Meeting July 14, 2012.



National Train Day In Albuquerque Alvarado Transportation Center May 12, 1:00 to 5:00 PM

National Train Day was started by Amtrak in 2008 as a way to spread information to the general public about the advantages of rail travel and the history of trains in the United States. It is held each year on the Saturday closest to May 10th, anniversary of the founding of the Golden Spike at Promontory Utah, marking the US first transcontinental railroad.

National Train Day is celebrated at train stations and other sites in cities across the US, with activities and exhibits highlighting past, present and future of trains and travel.

This will be Albuquerque's second National Train Day celebration. There will be educational exhibits, model train displays, tours of locomotives and other railroad equipment, and activities for both children and adults.

PLANES AND TRAINS

Many members of the New Mexico Steam Locomotive and Railroad Historical Society have a background and interest in aviation as well as railroading. Some are still active USAF, while other's resumes include time at Cannon, Holloman and Kirtland AF Bases, White Sands Missile Range, and other aviation/aerospace facilities in New Mexico and other states. Whether in war or peace, there has always been a common link between individuals in these two modes of travel. The attached print and narrative—with just a bit of fantasy and hyperbole—bring back memories of one link by highlighting a couple of 'War Babies' built in 1944.

Dr. Mike Hartshorne, former active duty US Army, longtime aviation fan, and current President of the NMSLRHS, became acquainted with members of the Sierra Hotel A-26 Group of the CAF in Oklahoma. The parallel restoration of two WWII classics led to a number of conversations and a continuing relationship.

One story growing out of that relationship was a recounting of hi-jinks that fly-boys and steam hoppers engaged in. Steam locomotives operating in the southwest, (especially Oklahoma), made an inviting target for pilots training in the A-26. The trainees would often buzz the speeding locomotives.

After collaborating with the Sierra Hotel A-26 Group, Mike convinced artist (and NMSLRHS member) Jack Ostrum to depict the locomotive buzzing on canvas. Mike risked an excellent reputation in radiology and nuclear medicine try his hand at a bit of prose to spice up the story behind the art. (NOTE: The names of the individuals in the story are real. Only their locations, roles, time and other narrative have been changed to make a good story.)

Ed Bukove is the founder of the NMSLRHS. He did actually spend some time working for the AT&SF, and his father was a steam engineer who operated AT&SF 2926, a state-of-the-art oil-burning high speed steam locomotive.

Glen Powers, (now living in Belen) was a young AT&SF engineer based in Clovis. He recalls being called to work and told to — “get that string of empty passenger cars to Belen as quick as possible”. The engine, with oil and water tanks full, was under steam and ready to roll was 2926. Glen didn't waste time. At one point between Vaughn and Mountainair, he was 'rockin' and rollin' at 108 MPH.

Tom is Tom Parsons, Director of Maintenance for the Sierra Hotel A-26 Group. Mike is Mike Rangel, USAF Retired C-130 pilot, Finance Officer and Group Adjutant of the Sierra Hotel A-26 Group.

Perhaps a good subtitle for Mike's story should be: **“Dreams Of Oil, Smoke, & Maria's Chili”** —*Editor*

The Red Hot Chili Buzz Sometime In 1945

For a couple of bucks TSgt Mike Rangel had done a pretty nice job of painting the girl of 1Lt Tom Parson's dreams on the nose of the new A-26 Invader recently built at the Douglas plant in Tulsa with serial number 44-35643. “Lil Twister” featured a raven haired beauty holding a bomb and a lightning bolt overhead while an Oklahoma tornado was rising up from below where it would soon have its way with that black negligee. She was sweet and fast and agile – the airplane that is.

Tom would not fly that particular hot machine for long. In May 1945 he had orders to fly her to McClellan Field near Sacramento. It would go to the The 319th Bomb Group and probably the invasion of Japan. That ferry job would at least be a cross country adventure. The tracks of the AT&SF Railway made navigation easy. Flying the iron compass of the Belen cutoff would get him to Albuquerque once he left Texas. Out in the middle of nowhere he might even find a train to buzz. Oklahoma was his comfortable home but this jaunt could be fun. He would divide the trip into two days and spend the night in transient quarters at Kirtland Army Airfield. He would be hungry when he got there. He did not like eating while flying.

El Modelo restaurant did not look like much but the guy from Kirtland Operations with the '32 Ford coupe that dropped him off there at 2nd and Bridge St. told him it had authentic New Mexican food. When in New Mexico eat as the New Mexicans do he figured. Maria and Salvador waved him in a welcome and suggested he try the tamales. For 75 cents he got that unfamiliar order in one hand, a soda in the other and found an empty spot at a rough outdoor table where a Santa Fe Railroad engine crew sat.

“Howdy, the name's Tom.” he said.

“Have a seat, sir. I'm Glen Powers and this here is my fireman Ed Bukove. Where ya from?”

“Oklahoma City born and raised” said Tom proudly. “I'm flying an A-26 to California.” “You boys run trains out of here?”

“Yep. Got us a troop train headin' to California come mornin'. Gonna run one of the new 2900s.” said hogger Glen proudly.

“Y'all ever get buzzed by the Army Air Corps?”

“Naw. That never happens” said Ed. “The pilot would get in big trouble.”

“You mean as if he buzzed some hot chili?” said Glen watching the wild eyed expression on Tom's face as he chewed on his first bite of tamale. The table shook as Glen and Ed whooped it up and pounded with their fists.

“Damn! What is that stuff?” croaked Tom with new sweat covering his face.

“That's Maria's fine red hot New Mexico Red chili sauce. Hotter than a firebox. They grow it here special.” said Glen.

“Maria! Got any milk?” cried Ed, “we got us a flyboy in big trouble!”

The 2800 Double Wasp 18 cylinder radials had warmed up nicely as Tom waited for takeoff clearance from the tower. He gained a few thousand feet after take off, then out over the so-called Rio Grande and swung south looking for the tracks that would take him across Arizona to San Bernardino, California where he'd head north for Sacramento. And there it was! What luck! 'ATSF 2926' was painted in silver Railroad Roman font on the side of the tender. An engineer waived back at him as the locomotive picked up speed down the valley. That had to be Glen. By reflex Tom nudged the throttles and pushed the yoke forward with airspeed sneaking up toward 250 knots. In a long shallow dive he corrected right to intersect with the cab just above the smoke and any telephone poles that might be around. As he pulled back hard and started an aileron roll to the right for a better look at Ed's side of the locomotive he yelled, "Red Chili".



WAR BABIES: A-26 'Lil Twister' over AT&SF 2926 depicted by Navy veteran and Albuquerque artist Jack Ostrum.

Fast Forward to 2012

Red Chili? Tom Parsons woke up swallowing hard against the heartburn alarm which told him again that he shouldn't eat that stuff before he went to bed. What an exciting dream! He was rolling inverted when he was rudely snatched from the cockpit. And what about that cutie WASP who had unwittingly inspired that fine nose art. What happened to her? Would she ever notice him? Did railroaders Ed and Glen and that monster locomotive really exist? Tom wanted to go back to sleep and finish that dream. But the "Lil Twister" A-26 Invader restoration project needed him today to help with mounting an engine so he kicked off the sheets and made some coffee.

As Mike Rangel floated above a broad river valley he wondered at the neatly cut double "U" left in the smoke lingering behind a fast moving troop train while ignoring a familiar looking A-26 pulling away in a victory roll at speed. He did not believe that the twin prop wash could do that. After all, that wouldn't happen with the tornado behind a C-130. Not that you would ever buzz a steam train in a C-130. Even if you could find a steamer. Someone would talk and the Air Force would have your ass. Come to think of it you would never do a victory roll in a C-130. That probably would pop a lot of rivets. Really bad Report of Survey. He was trying to remember a possible wake turbulence explanation when the alarm went off and the smoke abruptly disappeared. Oh well, it was just a dream. He was looking forward to working on a real A-26 after breakfast.

Crazy damned flyboy! That buzz scared Glen right out of an old dream. One moment he was pulling on the throttle and waving at the approaching airplane and the next a radial engine roar shook the cab. Ducking instinctively he bumped the pillow off the bed and almost went with it waking abruptly. Even money it was that Okie pilot who they met at El Modelo. Maria's red chili didn't agree with him. God help him if he ever tried her green chili.

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Ed laughed out loud in his sleep waking himself up. He remembered the look on young pilot's face when he tied into that tamale. It was better than the best slapstick movie. He never got tired of the image. Things were a bit dull in his Illinois retirement, so far from New Mexico. Perhaps he should call his buddy Glen and talk over old times. Maybe he could get down to Albuquerque this year and see how things were doing with the 2926 restoration.

"Good morning, Ed" Glen answered the phone. "I was just thinking about you."

"Hey Glen, do you remember that flyboy that buzzed us after he had a hot tamale back in World War II?" asked Ed.

"Do I ever!" Laughed Glen.

Mike met Tom at the hanger where "Lil Twister" awaited her rebuilt radial engines.

"Hey Tom! You wouldn't believe the dream I had last night" said Mike.

"Yeah, I would" said Tom.



Logo of Sierra Hotel Group, Commemorative Air Force, The folks restoring A-26 'Lil Twister'.
Logo of New Mexico Steam Locomotive and RR Historical Society, restoring AT&SF 2926.



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services, or send regular cash contributions. They all help by spreading the word about a part of New Mexico history that is being brought back to life.

Two Sandians and one Sandia contractor were among the 23 people in late summer 1995 at a meeting called by founder Ed Bukove. That meeting, at which Ed told of his desire to save 2926, led to the creation of the NMSLRHS.

Two years later, when NMSLRHS was formally incorporated, more Sandia and Kirtland employees had joined the group. A few years later, one of those first three, Frank Gerstle would succeed Ed Bukove as the second President of the NMSLRHS. It was during Frank's tenure as President that NMSLRHS finally acquired 2926 from the City of Albuquerque.



Mechanical Engineer Frank Gerstle, a Sandia Lab manager nearing retirement working to prepare 2926 for the first move.

Now, fifteen years since incorporation, 2926 is within two or three years of operation. Unfortunately, three Sandia employees, Dick Sons, John Gieske, and Frank Zanner, and Sandia contractor Jim Hills will not be around to see the result of their contributions. All four, as well as several other early members, are deceased. The following pictures show two of them at work.



Surplus equipment was acquired from SNL to perform ultrasound testing on parts of 2926. With the equipment came volunteer ultrasound specialist John Gieske. Here, he is checking the wheels of the 2926 water and fuel tender. The yellow car mover in the background was donated to WHEELS Museum by SNL, and leased by NMSLRHS. NMSLRHS member Dick Sons operated the car mover at SNL.



In this picture, Jim Hills, a SNL Contractor works on the brakes from the tender. His workbench is a very heavy steel trailer that was used to shuttle parts around the AT&SF backshops. Jim also restored the metal portions of the 2926 cab.

Many of our members have long had an interest or involvement in planes as well as trains. That is certainly the case with the several employees from Kirtland Air Force Base who joined the effort early on. One of them is Steve Bradford, now retired from the Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center (AFOTEC). He served several years as NMSLRHS Board Secretary. A lifelong steam fan, he is a long time member also known as ‘Pigpen’ for his ability to get dirtier than anyone else when working on the site. He now spends more time in a cleaner environment—working on fundraising and outreach efforts.

Another Air Force member, still on active duty, has also proven to be a valuable asset in more ways than one—sometimes working from a great distance. That is USAF Lt. Col. Chuck Mangold, who joined NMSLRHS while stationed at KAFB to train crews for the C-130J, the US Air Force principal tactical cargo and personnel transport aircraft. While based here, he was a regular at the site, working at whatever task to which he might be assigned.

Now stationed in Florida, but moving about the nation and the world frequently, Chuck only gets by to work on site occasionally. When dropping into KAFB or Clovis’s Cannon AFB on a temporary duty assignment, a good portion of his off duty time will be spent at the site. However, he is also a very good proposal writer. That is something he can do anywhere when he finds a bit of spare time. In that role, his contribution may prove far more beneficial than a few hours getting dirty on the site.

Albuquerque and the State of New Mexico have always taken pride in the presence of such world class operations in our midst. There is now another reason to be appreciative. Their involvement in a community project, the technical knowledge and skills they bring to the effort, and their hard work are helping to recapture an important piece of New Mexico’s heritage.

Only a few examples of the work done at the 2926 site by members of SNL and KAFB facilities are mentioned here. For more on this blending of 21st Century High Tech with 20th Century Low Tech, check out our web site at nmslrhs.org. Or better yet, drop by for a visit any Wednesday or Saturday at 1833 8th St NW in Albuquerque.

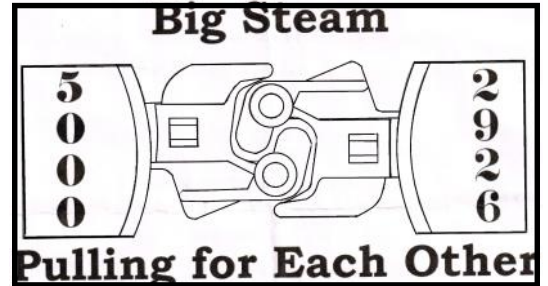


Chuck Mangold joins Ken Dusenberry in a painting task during a recent visit to 2926.

NMSLRHS AND RAPS

Agreement Expands Amarillo-Albuquerque Rail Heritage Connection

For almost ten years, there has been a friendly relationship between the Railroad Artifact Preservation Society of Amarillo (RAPS) and NMSLRHS.



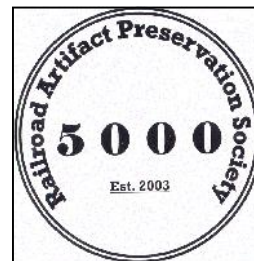
Much like our experience with 2926 in June 2000, RAPS rescued another historic steam locomotive from deterioration in Amarillo a few years later. AT&SF 5000, more affectionately known as ‘The Madam Queen’, built in 1930 was the railroad’s first 2-10-4. It served as the prototype for all further 2-10-4 locomotives operated by the railroad.

Along with various classes of 4-8-4 types, the 2-10-4 types represented the pinnacle of modern hi-power/high speed steam on the Santa Fe Railway System.

In August 2005, two of our members spent three days in Amarillo assisting RAPS when Messer Construction moved the Madame Queen from long time display to a more secure location. Since that time numerous members of both groups have visited back and forth between Amarillo and Albuquerque.

With RAPS moving toward operational restoration of the Madame Queen, the two groups have established a closer relationship. Presidents Sam Teague of RAPS and Mike Hartshorne of NMSLRHS have announced that their Boards of Directors have agreed to give members of each group an option of honorary membership in the other group.

With RAPS and NMSLRHS moving in the same direction, it is possible to envision the two grand locomotives providing a double header event reminiscent of the glory days of the Atchison-Topeka-and-Santa Fe.



THE FOLLOWING PHOTOS DEPICT JUST A FEW OF THE ACTIVITIES DURING THE FIRST QUARTER 2012.

1. Machinist Ralph Johnson, (retired from Boeing Company) at work in his 'office'. 2. Work begins on cab interior after (3.) it is removed from the locomotive and placed under canopy. 4. John Taylor, retired nuclear engineer (SNL) catalogs engineering drawings on loan from Temple (TX) Railroad Museum. Drawings pertinent to 2926 are scanned to digital format. 5. CMO Rick Kirby and Clem Harris (in car mover) discuss moving 2926 tender. 6. Staybolt welding seems to be a never ending task. 7. Albert Lefler (center) introduces Ernie Robart, Gail Kirby and Jon Spargo to Microsoft Excel 2010. Excel is used to manage membership, parts data, safety training, etc. 8. Fundraising Committee members Andy Rutkewic, Steve Bradford, and Doyle Caton discussing outreach activities. Photos 7 and 8 show both ends of our Office/Data Center/Education Center, a 1930's era refrigerator car.

