



**NEW MEXICO STEAM LOCOMOTIVE
&
RAILROAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
MAILING ADDRESS
P.O. Box 27270
Albuquerque, NM 87125-7270
Restoration Site: 1833 8th St. NW, Albuquerque
Web Site: www.nmslrhs.org Email: nmslrhs@nmslrhs.org
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THE SUMMER OF 2013 HAS BEEN GOOD FOR AT&SF 2926

The year started slowly, but increasing support for 2926 has accelerated the restoration.

After thirteen years of hard work, and a lot of help from supporters around the U.S. and abroad, the 2926 restoration crew entered 2013 with high hopes and strong spirits, but very little money in the bank. We were also seriously in need of more highly skilled welders. Though still committed and making progress, that progress was slow. The Society members were disappointed. It appeared the restoration could drag on for another four or five years without additional monetary and human resources. An appeal to members and other supporters resulted in some increased monetary contributions, but more help was needed.

Then came summer. Help began to appear from a number of sources. There were offers of skilled welders, cash contributions and grants. In short, what some of our members had considered *'the worst of times'* quickly became *'the best of times'*. * Articles describing the source of a few cases of the increased support are included in this newsletter.

The increased support means we just might have 2926 under steam in less than two years—in time to respond to an invitation to pull an excursion to the Grand Canyon in 2016 in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service... *Editor*

* ***An Obscure Rail History Note:*** *The phrases in bold print are a reversal of the quote, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times" from 'A Tale of Two Cities' by Charles Dickens. Rail was a new travel mode in Dickens time. He often wrote about the new mode, critiquing various aspects of rail transportation in 'The Signalman', 'Dombey and Son', and 'The Boy At rugby'. Dickens barely escaped death in the Staplehurst Railway accident of 1865 in which there were several deaths and many injuries.. He also dodged a possible scandal. Not many people knew he had a mistress. He was traveling with the mistress Ellen Ternan and her mother at the time. That fact was overlooked as Dickens helped rescue wounded and received publicity for his heroism.*

* * * * *

NEW SUPPORT FOR THE 2926 RESTORATION

ABRAM AND RAY KAPLAN FOUNDATION PROVIDES A TIMELY GRANT

By Mike Hartshorne (with serious help from Jeannie Dowis)

Representatives of the Abram and Ray Kaplan Foundation recently checked us out, visited the ATSF 2926, and took the restoration tour. Several of us had long chats with the grandson Nick and his wife Jeannie Dowis. They had learned of the continuing success of the Society's effort to restore a piece of New Mexico rail history.

Turns out they had family connections to some of New Mexico short lines associated with the AT&SF.

In response to their questions, I said, "Jeannie, There are only two things that count in the restoration of the 2926 - dirty hands and money!"

That notion fits with the Kaplan Foundation's legacy. Abram Isaac Kaplan was a successful New York businessman in the 1920s. Through his association with an Albuquerque promoter named Sidney Weil, he learned of the lumber and mining operations in New Mexico. He also learned of the numerous feeder and industrial railroads linked to the AT&SF and serving those industries in the Jemez Mountains.

The railroads included the Santa Fe Northwestern Railroad (SFNW), the Cuba Extension Railway, (also called Santa Fe Northern), and the Santa Fe, San Juan & Northern. The short lines dated from the 1920-1921 period, and were aided by AT&SF with technical services not otherwise available to SFNW promoter Sidney Weil.

By the time Kaplan entered the scene in 1928, timber operations, mining, and the railroads that served them had encountered financial and legal problems. In September 1929, Kaplan and his associates acquired SFNW and several related operations including the White Pine Lumber Company served by the SFNW in the Jemez Mountains.

The acquisition of the SFNW and related business activities was a smart move for a person with Kaplan's skills. His New Mexico assets thrived and Kaplan rode out the 1929 stock market crash that wiped out other holdings in hotels, real estate, and ocean-going tankers.



Abram Isaac Kaplan in the cab of SFNW 103, in 1933. The sturdy ALCO 2-8-0 road engine was built in 1911 for the Marion & Rye Valley railroad in Virginia. It was purchased by SFNW in July 1926, and retired just prior to WWII..

(Continued on Page 2)

A.I. Kaplan was married to Ray (Rachel). Joel, Judy and Ezra (Nick's father) were the three Kaplan kids. It was Ezra who started the Abram and Ray Kaplan Foundation in his parents' names in 1996.

Ezra was a thrifty, philanthropic individual who was a regular volunteer at a Halifax Urban Ministries' soup kitchen in Florida.

In fact, Ezra volunteered at the kitchen so often that folks thought he was one of the homeless who came to the kitchen for their meals. Ezra wore threadbare clothing, owned one blanket, one pillow and kept sparse furnishings. He probably learned this from his family. The Kaplan family was notoriously thrifty and thrived on hardship.

Today the Abram and Ray Kaplan Foundation supports 30-40 organizations each year with small grants totaling about one million dollars. Most are feeding and sheltering programs. Lord knows we need them. Education of low-income and low-access students is also supported by the Foundation.



Rachel (Ray) Kaplan



Kaplan kids and 103 in 1933: Judy (on step), and Nick's father Ezra, in the cab.

Since much of the money that funds the foundation was associated with New Mexico railroads Jeannie and Nick wanted to honor Abram and Ray Kaplan in a new way.

I figure it was a short step to Jeannie and Nick finding the New Mexico Steam Locomotive and Railroad Historical Society. Our purpose, organization, and dedication appealed to Jeannie and Nick. Fundraising Committee member Ed Kibel did the paperwork and the Foundation presented the NMSL&RS with a check for \$15,000 in July, 2013.

I promised Jeannie and Nick that we would use our "dirty hands" to stretch the Abram and Ray Kaplan Foundation's contribution as much as possible. I know that they will be proud of our work as we honor all those who came before us "working on the railroad". We will thank them best with our success.

Note: You can read more about A. I. Kaplan in Vern Glover's book: *Jemez Mountain Railroads – Santa Fe National Forest* published for the Historical Society of New Mexico in 1990. We have a copy in our Education Center (the reefer) and it can be easily found online by searching on SFNW, Kaplan, or NM Logging railroads at <http://www.foresthistory.org/>

MORE NEW SUPPORT

NEW YORK VISITORS BOOST SUMMER 2013 SUPPORT

Model railroader Nicolo Plata and wife Marie, of New Hyde Park, New York visit Albuquerque on occasion. When they do, they check on the progress of the 2926 restoration. After returning home from their last visit this summer, they wrote to CMO Rick Kirby, complimenting the 2926 group on progress in the restoration.

During their July visit to the 2926 site, they were given a site tour by Martin, Anthony and Henry. They said they were impressed by the amount of work accomplished since their last visit a year and a half previous.

Nicolo says that he follows our weekly updates on the NMSLRHS web site. As a model railroader, he understands and appreciates the long and difficult job in which we are engaged. He wishes that he lived closer so he could help with the rebuilding process.

That sure sounds like some of our other model railroader friends who would like to get hands-on with a full scale model. Involvement with model railroading is certainly contagious, regardless of the size of the model.

Upon returning home to New York, Nicolo and Marie decided that if they couldn't be here to help on site, they would help by sending a donation to the project. This month, we received a \$5000 check from them. Rick will contact Nicolo to discuss how their donation can be used to make the most impact on the restoration of 2926.

Our whole crew appreciates Nicolo and Marie's support. We look forward to showing them how their donation was used on their next visit. Maybe we can find a way to let Nicolo get his hands dirty right along with the rest of the 2926 crew.



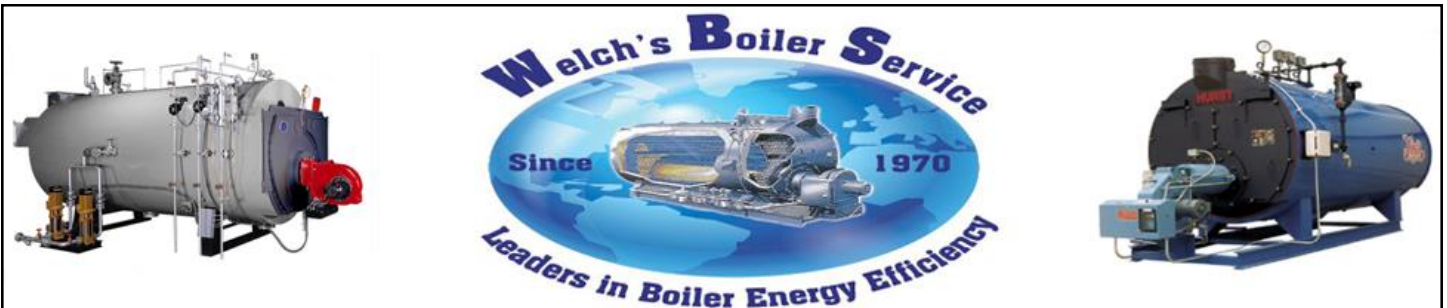
AT&SF 2926, Late Summer 2013: A composite of photos taken during the September Open House represents what impressed Nicolo and Marie. The photo was produced by Jim and Debbie Van Drunen, our video coordinators from Ft. Lauderdale Florida, who came out for the Open House.

STILL MORE NEW SUPPORT

LOCAL BUSINESS PROVIDES ON-SITE WELDING SERVICE

Since the Society acquired AT&SF 2926 almost fifteen years ago, we have had an incredible amount of help—cash, tools, materials, and services—to support the volunteer labor of our members. The help came from individuals, foundations, large corporations and small businesses. The first major donation was much needed service, not cash. It was when Messer Construction Company, a family owned Herford, Texas business with equipment based in Belen, moved 2926 from Coronado Park to a rail siding. Messer's service met what was at that time a critical need. The company subsequently provided crane services when needed.

Entering the year 2013, the Society was facing another critical need—skilled welding on the locomotive's huge boiler. Only a couple of the Society's volunteers were qualified to perform the boiler's extensive flue tube and stay bolt welding tasks. It appeared that the project would drag on for months or even years unless we could find a way to speed up the welding process. Enter Welch's Boiler Service of Albuquerque, another family owned business offering to help with the restoration.



Welch's Boiler Service (WBS) is owned and operated by Albuquerque natives Kenneth and Keith Welch. It was established as a sole proprietorship in 1970 by their father Thomas Welch, a former Merchant Marine boiler specialist. WBS was later incorporated by Thomas and his brother Dave. Kenneth and Keith grew up in the business with their father passing on his knowledge to them. After the passing of their father and retirement of Dave, the brothers continued operation of the company. Offering a comprehensive package of services, delivered by highly educated and trained technicians, they continued the family tradition that is summed up in their slogan, '*Small Enough to Listen - Big Enough to Deliver*'.

The Society CMO, Rick Kirby, and other members were impressed by the experience and skill of Welch's Boiler Service, but with our slender cash balance early in the year, hiring them to do all the welding was beyond our reach—until a summertime visit to the site by Keith Welch and his wife. After a tour of the restoration site, Keith offered to perform the flue tube and staybolt welding as a contribution to the 2926 restoration. The generosity of the Welch family will have a significant impact on the project. Their donation of the welding service will mean that \$80,000 to \$90,000 of the cash assets we raise can be directed to other expenses of the project. That will definitely have a positive impact on the restoration time line.



The two pictures above show only a small portion of the welding that will be necessary to bring the 2926 boiler up to Federal Rail Administration (FRA) specifications.

In the photo at left, two Welch Boiler Service welders are working on a few of the many flexible staybolts. The sleeves on most of the 500+ flexible staybolts must be replaced due to years of corrosion.

In the photo at right, WBS employees are getting a look at the inside of the 2926 firebox. In the top center of the photo, the rear flue sheet reveals a portion of the flue tube welding that will be necessary. Each hole in the flue sheet represents the point at which highly skilled welding is necessary to secure the firebox end of one flue tube. There are 270 flue tubes that must be welded to the rear flue sheet. Since 2926 is a superheated locomotive, additional welding is necessary for the superheater tubes that fit inside 250 of the flue tubes.

A GOOD SUMMER FOR MOTIVATED 2926 VOLUNTEERS

The 2926 volunteers are, and have been for more than a decade, a highly motivated group. As outside support for the project began to increase during the summer, the volunteers only became more motivated. Replacing parts stolen in the burglary last year, preparing for the September 2013 Open House, reinstallation of restored parts, and drudge duties like grinding and painting were attacked with alacrity. The active summer might best be summed up with the warning on the T-shirt that Karla DeGroft provided for assistant CMO Bob DeGroft. The T-shirt warning simply said: **“Stand Back, this could get Awesome!!!”** The following task summary and accompanying photos reveal just how awesome is the work of an eclectic bunch of 2926 volunteers.

OPEN HOUSE PREPARATION

Reinstalling the cab

Preparation for the annual 2926 open house always means a lot of cleaning, scrubbing, equipment securing, and related manual labor. We want our visitors to be able to tour the restoration site safely, see the progress we are making, and have an enjoyable day with New Mexico’s flagship locomotive.

First, since Randy McEntire and his crew had recently finished the nice woodwork in the 2926 cab, it was to be reinstalled for our visitors to get inside and view their craftsmanship. Without the huge cranes and related equipment that was once available in the AT&SF shops, some improvisation was necessary.

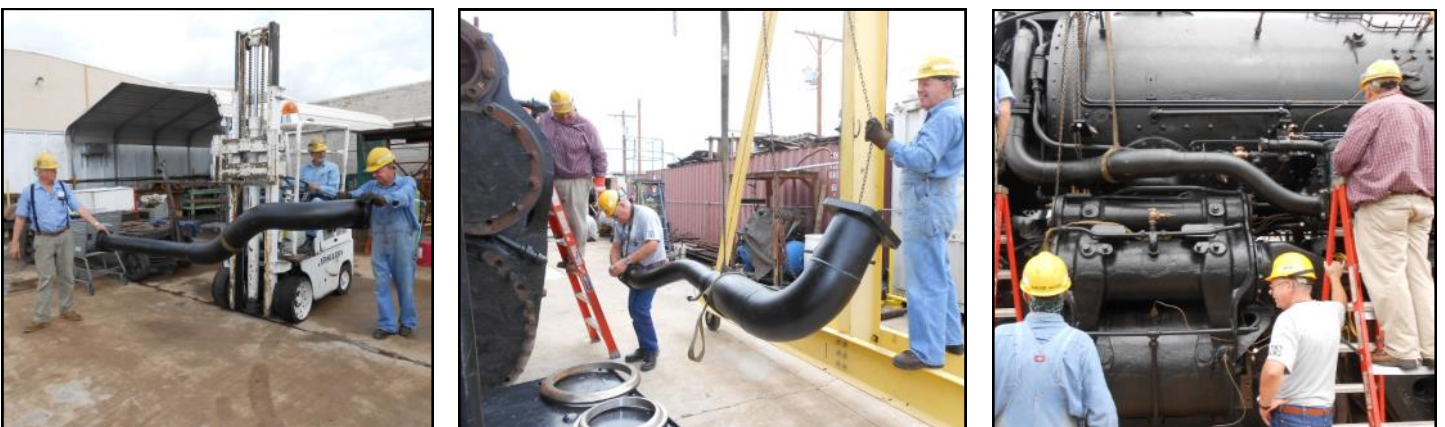
A special work session was scheduled, and our gantry crane, Big Bird, would be used to set the cab back on 2926. That meant moving 2926 away from Big Bird while the cab was hoisted by Big Bird. The locomotive would then be rolled back under Big Bird, and the cab dropped in place. Sounds simple and easy. However, except for using our car mover to reposition 2926, the rest is all muscle power and hand operated hoists. That activity is shown in the following pictures.



Left: Car Mover ‘Lurch’ pulls 2926 westward next to the GSA warehouse to clear ‘Big Bird’, the gantry crane. Center: Volunteer muscle power moves cab (mounted on a dolly) to the tracks at the rear of the locomotive. Right: After repositioning ‘Big Bird’, more muscle power is applied to hoist and steady the cab as 2926 is nudged under the cab by Lurch. With a lot of jiggling and tugging, the cab is then eased into place.

Replacing Large, Heavy Restored Parts

Like reinstallation of the cab, replacing other large parts cannot be done as easily as it once was “in the backshops”. Once again, except for a short ride on the small forklift, putting the large, crooked hot water boiler supply pipe back into place was done with a chain hoist and volunteer muscle power.



Left: With Ken Dusenberry on the forklift, Ron Taylor and Dave Van de Valde steady the large hot water boiler supply pipe as it is transported to the front fireman’s side of the locomotive. Center: A chain hoist mounted on Big Bird is used to lift the pipe to the side of the locomotive. Right: The pipe is then guided into place by a couple of volunteers on ladders. As with the cab, the pipe required a lot of jiggling, prying, and even a few choice words to get it into place.

REPLICATING STOLEN PARTS

SOME OF THOSE GUYS “BANGING ON A 2900” EXHIBIT OUTSTANDING SKILLS

NMSLRHS president, Dr. Mike Hartshorne has written profiles of Society members for previous newsletters. The purpose of the profiles entitled, “Banging On A 2900” was to highlight the varied skills and talents resident in the Society membership. The theft last year of critical 2926 parts has revealed even more skills. It also brought valuable assistance from other rail organizations.

Among the parts stolen were the 2926 cab mounting brackets, and components of the radial buffer used to couple the water and fuel tender to 2926. Those are not the type of items available at a local parts store. The only existing parts were on other historic locomotives, and acquiring those was out of the question. The only answer was to replicate the parts by casting or machining.

The cost of having the parts replicated by commercial metalworking firms is very high. Such companies are set up for mass production, and one-of-a-kind items can be very costly. We chose an alternative method—the Society version of do-it-yourself. There was help from the owners of AT&SF 2912, located in Pueblo Colorado. They loaned us cab brackets and radial buffer parts, and our volunteers went to work. That is where the outstanding skills of the “Banging on a 2900” crew really shined.

Cab Brackets Fabrication

Using the borrowed parts as a pattern, the 2926 team created templates, and our machinists and welders replicated the parts. The original cab brackets were made by an expensive casting method. Replication of the brackets was a cut, drill and weld process carried out by our skilled volunteers. The final product, shown below looks very original, and works fine.



A cab bracket borrowed from the 2912 group in Pueblo is used to make a jig for fabricating one for 2926.



Using the pattern created from the 2912 cab bracket, raw material is cut and drilled to create pieces for welding.



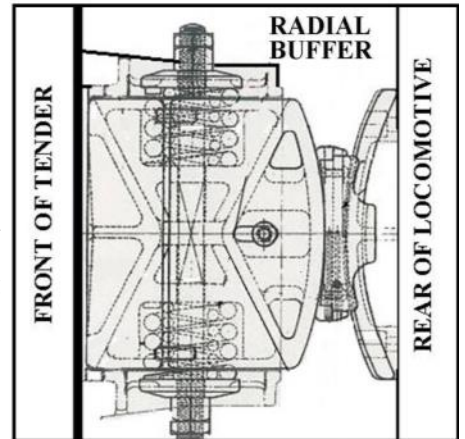
Jigged up on a welding table, the cut and drilled parts are welded into the final shape of the cab bracket.

Radial Buffer Fabrication

The radial buffer is a complex assembly of cast parts and huge springs designed to keep the tender attached snugly to the locomotive, and still allow flexibility during movement. The spring side of the assembly is attached to the front of the tender. The springs are held in place by retainers with large nuts to allow adjustment of tension to keep the tender and locomotive snugly connected via curved buffer plates on each.

The drawing pictured at right shows the variety of springs, wedges, bolts, nuts and curved buffer plates in a typical buffer assembly. At the time the metal thieves hit our site, the buffer was completely disassembled for restoration. A number of items including wedges, curved buffer plates and other critical parts were taken by the thieves.

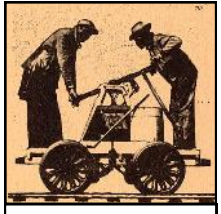
Steel to make new spring retainers was ordered. The Society’s volunteer machinists got to work using the parts borrowed from the 2912 to produce patterns. Soon two large, heavy cylinders of of steel arrived on site, and machinist Eric went to work. The result is shown in the pictures below.



LEFT: A retainer borrowed from 2912 is pictured next to the large cylinder of steel that will be turned into a 2926 spring retainer by Eric. **RIGHT:** Two brand new finished retainers, with one snugly fit into its space on the buffer assembly.

RAIL MAINTENANCE CREW TRANSPORTATION

Most folks can remember seeing old movies, (often in a comedy routine) of two guys on a small cart-like device on rails. The two are pumping like mad on what looks like a small see-saw to move their crude machine down the track. That small cart-like machine called a handcar, rail car or section car was used to transport rail crews, (gandy dancers) who kept the track in repair. Today, not so often called gandy dancers, the rail maintenance crews ride more comfortably—in trucks or vans. Those road vehicles are equipped with rail bogies that drop to allow them to travel on rails as well as streets and highways. The ride is much more comfortable, less work, and probably a lot safer.



Early handcar.

The labor intensive handcars were succeeded by similar vehicles powered by small engines. Called speeders, or motorized rail cars, they could move faster and carry more crew members. For more comfortable transportation (Perhaps managers, doctors, et al.) automobiles were fitted with bogies to allow them to ride on the rails.

It just so happens that, thanks to a couple of our members, there is now a perfectly restored Fairmont Speeder at the restoration site. After many years of rusting in a yard in Albuquerque's north valley, the speeder was acquired by Albert Leffler. It was taken to Indianapolis by our master machinist from Indiana, Dick Downing. He and Jim Sering spent several years restoring it to perfect condition and delivered it to the site in September. It is really not that surprising that our two young members, Anthony Padilla and Henry Roberts latched on to it immediately and soon had it running up and down the siding between the tender and 2926.

Below are some pictures of the Fairmont Speeder, along with a few pictures of earlier speeders and contemporary bogie equipped automobiles used on the short lines discussed elsewhere in this newsletter. The bogie equipped automobiles certainly don't appear to be easily converted back to roadworthiness for highways and streets.

Speeder Photos

Clockwise from top:

1. Unloading speeder
2. Everyone wants to get a look at it.
3. Anthony and Henry fire it up and give Ernie a ride.
4. Speeder is parked at Site entrance
5. Open House visitors wait to see it run.



THE WAY IT ONCE WAS

In the early to mid parts 20th century, access to the mountainous areas of New Mexico was often inaccessible to automobiles. Rail was the only way to reach remote lumber camps and mining operations.

Much of the travel by rail maintenance crews was by small motorized rail vehicles called by a variety of names—i.e. section cars, speeders, track cars etc.

Doctors, managers, and other necessary personnel traveled in modified automobiles using bogies in place of the front wheels and steering, and stamped steel railroad wheels on the rear axle.



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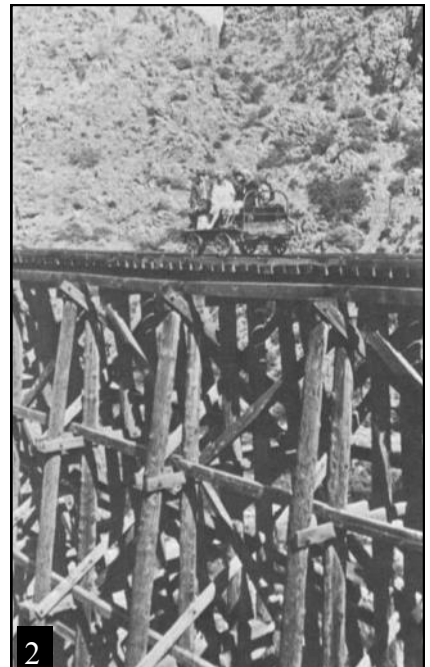
Photos: 1. Track maintenance man Melisandro Martinez with his 'Speeder' or track motor car, circa 1937 - 1941. 2. A motorized rail car crosses a high trestle near the Guadalupe Box.

3. A Buick automobile modified with rail bogie and steel wheels.

The Buick coupe was often called the 'Doctors Coupe'.
(Source: Jemez Mountains Railroads, Santa Fe National Forest, New Mexico by Vern Glover.)



3



2

OPEN HOUSE 2013

The weather was picture perfect. With 2926 looking more like an operating locomotive than it has in many years, the 2013 Open House was our best public event yet. There was something for everyone—model trains, games, and bell ringing for the youngsters, and with 2926 as a centerpiece, a great look at New Mexico rail history for all. For members of the NMSLRHS, it was a wonderful chance to show the progress we have made in bringing an icon of that history back to life.

The pictures below and on the next page tell the story of AT&SF 2926 Open House 2013.



Open House September 2013: New Mexico's Flagship Steam Locomotive, AT&SF 2926, is surrounded by rail fans. With the cab back in place, and the locomotive's jewelry (bell, lights, etc.) reattached, it was easier for visitors to see 2926 as it was originally, rather than the rusty hulk of previous years. It was the largest crowd ever, and with perfect weather, it was the best Open House yet.



Left: Randy sits in the 2926 cab to welcome visitors who come up to see the new interior woodwork he and his crew installed.

Below: With a background of shiny side rods, huge drive wheels, and a new coat of paint, visitors stop to take a look at detailed pictorial layout of the 2926 design features.



(OPEN HOUSE Continued page 8)

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

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MAIL ADDRESS

NMSLRHS
P. O. BOX 27270
Albuquerque, NM 87125-7270

OPEN HOUSE (Cont.)

The 2926 Open House had something for everyone, young and old alike. For the older folks, it refreshed memories of the days steam locomotives operated throughout the country.

For the younger set, it provided entertainment that is very different from their current high tech digital environment. It also adds an important historical aspect to their education.

We are encouraged by the number of young people coming out to take a look at, and learn about, an icon of New Mexico's history. It is hoped that some of them will continue their interest and join the 2926 effort.



Members of the Harvey Girl Society sponsored by BNSF Railway Co. were on hand all day to refresh memories, and educate youngsters.



Left: The Anslover Family Band with NM State Fiddle Champion Emily Anslover wows visitors with Orange Blossom Special. **Right:** Society Toolmeister Ed Strebe instructs a young visitor on how to ring the bell as Mom and Sister watch.

Below: Just about every part on 2926 is heavy, including the bell. Here, members are using gantry crane "Big Bird" to hoist and install the bell in its place at front of the locomotive, so the younger set could ring it. Once they ring the bell, they are presented by a certificate identifying them as members of the 2926 Ding-a-ling Club.



Popcorn Guru: Young George Buffett, (G3 to family and friends) provides popcorn for Open House visitors to encourage 2926 donations.

The G3 title derives from the fact that he is the family's third George. G3's father manages the family owned B&H Supply. His late grandfather, founder of B&H and Buffett's Candies, was a New Mexico State Senator for more than 20 years.

Looks like G3 is well on his way to following in the entrepreneurial footsteps of his father and grandfather.





Pacific & Southwest Rail Adventures

We cordially invite you to join us

to usher in the New Year while riding
the rails to beautiful San Diego

Travel in style
as you relax in comfort

aboard 2 of the Santa Fe Super Chiefs historic railcars,

The Acoma

&

The Palm Leaf



Relive the splendor and excitement
of a past era

while you celebrate the incoming of a brand new year.



In the evenings while in San Diego,
relax with family and friends in elegant style
as you unwind on the acclaimed Acoma lounge car
where you will be served complimentary
hors d'oeuvres while enjoying the house wines, beers,
and spirits served at our open bar.



Each night, you will sleep in style and comfort
aboard the classic accommodations of the Palm Leaf sleeper car
with a buffet breakfast to greet you in the morning.

Of course during the day while in San Diego
you will have the opportunity to enjoy the many sights
and opportunities that this beautiful city has to offer.

You will be served a buffet breakfast each morning,
lunch and dinner will be on your own with
drinks and snacks available on
your return to the cars.

Schedule:

Monday, December 30, 2013:
Depart from the Los Angeles Union Station at 3:00 pm
on the Pacific Surfliner (580) arriving in San Diego at 5:47 pm.
Dinner will be on your own.
Tuesday: you will have the opportunity to explore San Diego
and all it has to offer.
You will return to enjoy a festive New Year's Eve party
on your private rail cars.
Wednesday: you will be able to have a leisurely day to
continue exploring San Diego
Thursday: January 2, 2014 we depart from the San Diego Amtrak
station on the Pacific Surfliner (565) at 7:05am
arriving back at the Los Angeles Union Station at 9:50 am.

Fares:

\$530.00 per person
Deposit of \$100.00 per person to reserve
Balance due by December 1st

Checks payable to:
Palm Leaf LLC
P.O. Box 952
Denair, CA 95316

FOR INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS CONTACT

Frances at: mccauleymf@msn.com
Ron at: 505 220-3780