

DISPATCH



Passengers enjoy a meal while soaking in the scenery during the Western Train Robbery. The production includes magicians.

Whodunit entertains Mount Hood passengers

Although solving the classic murder mystery may stump people riding aboard the Mount Hood Railroad on Saturday nights this summer, understanding why it has entertained audiences is easier to ascertain.

Every Saturday through October, a “whodunit” mystery, set to a 1970s disco theme, unfolds from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. For \$82 per person, people can participate in the act while enjoying a four-course, fine-dining experience.

After passengers watch the trials and tribulations of Johnny Fever, the final act turns into a full-fledged disco bash where the audience can let loose on the dance floor. Dressing in disco attire is encouraged, but not required.

“Everyone fits right in,” said Ron Kauffman, Mount Hood Railroad general

manager. “It’s well-received. There’s lots to watch; lots of boogie. The customer doesn’t have to feel like they have to come in ‘70s attire.”

However, the summer fun along Mount Hood Railroad doesn’t stop on Saturday nights. In fact, the entertainment starts again for brunch every Sunday through October, when passengers find themselves in the midst of the Western Train Robbery. It involves a singing sheriff trying to thwart the Gilhouley Gang’s diabolic scheme. The train departs at 10 a.m. and returns at 2:45 p.m.

Onboard during the three-course brunch are various fast-action gamblers who deal out impressive magic tricks, including card



The Western Train Robbery train crosses the Hood River.

stunts that mirror those of the TV character Brett Maverick and quarter tricks for kids.

“They do a little bit of everything,” Kauffman said. “This isn’t sixth-grade birthday party stuff. It’s sophisticated.”

He said the rides feature the perfect mix.

“Anytime you can mix a great train ride, service, entertainment and food, it’s hard to beat that for family and special events,” Kauffman said.

Miller's movie message finds a big audience

As director of safety and operations standards for Iowa Pacific Holdings, Art Miller is rarely unprepared.

However, he found himself caught off guard in April when he arrived for a three-day speaking engagement at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts in Durham.

"There were more than 300 people," Miller said. "I didn't think it would be that big of a deal."

The topic he came to discuss has become increasingly important in the film world. As a visiting industry professional, Miller discussed how trains and locations make their way into films, commercials and TV shows.

The visit was arranged by Carol Winstead Wood, associate professor of production design.

"In the early 1990s, Miller was instrumental in getting major studios to recognize the importance of having a railroad professional involved in project development and working set," Wood said.

Before he left the business in 2010 to focus energy on his new role with Iowa Pacific, Miller was one of North America's premier railroad coordinators and had worked on 75 production projects.

"We design the action and control the set for the scenes with trains," he said. "It helps advance the story."

Before the 1990s, railroad scenes were set up by location people



Art Miller, director of safety and operations standards, provides a presentation at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts in Durham.

and prop departments. After detailed government regulations were put into place, trains no longer could be used merely as film props.

This resulted in fewer unused tracks. Therefore, the film industry and railroads began to work together to ensure action sequences could be filmed on trains. Miller's presentation explored difficulties the two industries experienced adapting to one another and the work needed to remedy issues.

"There needed to be a liaison," he said. "There were communication problems because the railroad industry didn't speak the movie production's language, and

the railroad certainly didn't speak Hollywood."

Miller became involved when he visited the set of "The Coal Miner's Daughter" in West Virginia during the 1980s.

"I guess you can say I was bitten by the bug," he said.

After that, Miller worked on movies including "October Sky," "Courage Under Fire," "Under Siege 2: Dark Territory," "Schindler's List" and "The Fugitive."

In more than 125,000 hours of filming under his watch, no incidents were ever experienced.

"Staying safe around railroad equipment and locations are challenges for even well-trained professional railroaders," Miller said. "The laws of gravity and inertia are not repealed for film crews."

WTLC wins safety award

In April, West Texas & Lubbock Railway's team secured a prestigious safety award from the Association of American Railroads.

During the two-day Railroad Safety Leadership Forum in Chicago, the AAR highlighted the railroad industry's outstanding practices in personal safety and injury prevention.

"It was a safety-innovations award program," said Art Miller, director of safety and operations standards. "It was the replacement of the decades-old Harriman awards. This was the first year they were awarded, and 11 railroads were honored."

The WTLC team's Pursuit of a Higher Standard program was celebrated and shared.

Implemented in September 2011, the program went beyond FRA requirements to fully emphasize individual and team responsibility

for safety. It also added employee training programs that focused on communication, mentoring and coaching of the most important safety principles.

"The objectives were to reduce employee turnover and make sure WTLC is a great place to work," Miller said. "We want to involve employees at all levels, create a real team and exceed FRA standards. FRA regulations provide minimums; if they are exceeded, safety will follow."

Participants appreciated the recognition, but the positive increase in safety numbers and environment that followed the program is what makes WTLC most proud.



West Texas & Lubbock Railway representatives accept an award for its Pursuit of a Higher Standard program. Receiving the award are, from left, FRA Administrator Joseph Szabo, Arthur Miller, Matt Jackson, Reymundo Villanueva, Ray Don Reeves, Brady Sansom and Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Transportation Gabe Klein. Photo courtesy of Stephen Gross.

The program helped result in an 80 percent reduction in injuries and a 60 percent drop in human-factor incidents. WTLC employees worked more than 1,000 consecutive days without a reportable injury.

The railroad also received a Jake Award With Distinction for 2012 from the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association. The award is given to railroads that have not experienced events that merit FRA reports.



Schlumberger expands in Monahans, Texas.



New track is under construction in Hobbs, N.M., for Nova Mud Inc.

TNMR continues expansion

As businesses in the Southwest keeps growing, so does the activity of the Texas-New Mexico Railroad and West Texas & Lubbock Railway.

Both railroads have experienced a substantial increase in business this summer.

“The continued strength in the oil market has led to expansion,” said Bruce Carswell, vice president of Permian Basin Logistics. “Drilling activity is staying strong. Crude production continues to increase. We are benefiting from that.”

In Monahans, Texas, Schlumberger, a company that caters to the oil and gas industry, recently completed major facility improvements. These include an increase in new storage and silos, and enhanced truck-loading facilities.

The improvements resulted in the need for an additional 2,500 feet of track to accommodate increases in bulk transfer. The project is expected to be completed in August.

In Hobbs, N.M., Nova Mud Inc., which serves the oil and gas industry, now has 8,000 feet of new track to support an increase in transloading activity.

In Lovington, N.M., BioUrja Trading LLC, through its subsidiary, LogiBio, has doubled the track capacity of its crude oil facility.

TNMR has issued a Notice to Proceed to its contractor, Trac-Work Inc., to construct 4,000 feet of additional siding tracks in the Monahans area and a new 4,500 siding near Hobbs.

“These tracks will support the rail growth being generated by the customer expansions,” Carswell said.



Conductor Certification Program approved

Iowa Pacific's new Freight Railroad Part 242 Conductor Certification won FRA approval in early February.

It was an 18-month developmental project that applies to all IPH properties and crews.

Conductor certification is one of 17 initiatives contained in the 2008 Rail Safety Improvement Act.

“Conductor certification provides small railroads with the most benefit of any RSIA safety initiative,” said Art Miller, director of safety and operations. “The training process is much more structured, and both knowledge and skills development are carefully documented.”

Conductor certification also features a final exam. This gives the trainee an opportunity to review the information covered during the 12 required classes.

“The exam covers hazardous material, freight car mechanical equipment, air brake tests, and switching and switch-handling rules,” Miller said. “There are even a few questions on the conductor certification program, as required by another RSIA section.”

The goal of the program is to ensure employees have the knowledge needed to work safely and efficiently.

“Private and public technical schools charge \$20,000 to train a conductor,” said Mike McConville, executive vice president of Operations. “Those selected as IPH conductor trainees will be paid quite well while learning. That's a great deal in today's world where educational qualifications are a career essential.”

The program also allows conductors to move to other railroads easily.

“It gives IPH management the flexibility they need to transfer conductors among properties in response to seasonal and other traffic changes,” McConville said.

This newsletter appears under the direction of the president. For news coverage, contact Tommy at the newsletter office by phone at 402-475-6397, mail to 2201 Winthrop Rd., Lincoln, NE 68502-4158 or email thomas.dahlk@newslink.com. This material is intended to be an overview of the division news. If there are any discrepancies between this newsletter and any collective bargaining process, insurance contracts or other official documents, those documents will govern. Iowa Pacific Holdings continues to maintain and reserves the right, at any time, to alter, suspend, discontinue or terminate all plans and programs described in this newsletter. This newsletter is not an employment contract or any type of employment guarantee. Thanks to everyone at Iowa Pacific Holdings who took time to contribute to this newsletter, including but not limited to, Bruce Carswell, Justin Gonyo, Ron Kaufman and Art Miller.

Iowa Pacific
118 South Clinton Street
Suite 400
Chicago, IL 60661

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Saratoga & North Creek Railway: Teddy Roosevelt Weekend

SNCRR welcomes renowned Theodore Roosevelt re-enactor Joe Wiegand for a series of themed events in North Creek to commemorate the president's history with the region, and the 1901 ride on horse-drawn buckboard when he learned he would succeed President William McKinley following his assassination. Activities include:

- Historic crafts and trade demonstrations.
- "First-person" talks by Roosevelt.
- Rough Rider pony rides.
- Olde Tyme Barbecue in Kellogg Park with barbershop quartet performances.

- Teddy bear tea and story time for children.
Many events are free and take place rain or shine. Hop on board and meet the 26th president.

When: Sept. 13-15.

Where: 26 Station Lane, Saratoga Springs, NY, 12866-6067

Times: All day

Tickets: Standard

For more information, call 877-726-7245 or visit <http://www.sncrr.com/trips/special-events/teddy-roosevelt-weekend.html>

Mount Hood Railway: Elvis

Elvis Presley lives on the Mount Hood Railroad.

While enjoying a delicious, four-course meal, an Elvis tribute band will perform the king of rock and roll's greatest hits, from "Heartbreak Hotel," to "Love Me Tender."

The event costs \$82 per person and begins at 5:30 p.m. The meal is served table-side during the performance while the train passes by gorgeous scenery.

Mount Hood Railroad: Polar Express

Coming Nov. 9, The Polar Express will take over Mount Hood Railroad.

Passengers will experience the recreation of the classic Chris Van Allsburg children's story about a young boy who takes a train to the North Pole.

The memorable characters are followed on the voyage to the North Pole. Dancing chefs will serve hot cocoa and cookies to passengers en route to seeing Santa Claus.

Saratoga & North Creek Railway: No. 63 Leviathan steam engine

A rare and sought-after train will make its debut appearance on the Saratoga & North Creek Railway tracks in September.

The Leviathan No. 63 is a steam engine reproduction, faithfully recreated from the original Schenectady Locomotive Works design from 1868. Central Pacific Railroad utilized only four of these unique engines.

The full-sized, standard-gauge Leviathan No. 63 took a decade to build. Rather than wood to power the engine, this reproduction relies on fuel.

SNCRR welcomes this train Sept. 7-8 and 14-15. Tickets for this unique opportunity are \$175 each.

The ride departs from Corinth, N.Y., at 9 a.m. and arrives in North Creek at noon. In addition to the ride through scenic locations, the package includes entrance to

the 1871 Historic North Creek Depot Museum, admission to the D&H Railroad Fair and a barbecue lunch in the park. Additional photo opportunities will be available as the steam engine is parked on the turntable.

The ride is scheduled to trek back from North Creek at 2 p.m., then return to Corinth at about 5 p.m. Snacks and beverages are included with the afternoon ride.

Passengers will ride aboard a 1928 Canadian National open-window day coach. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to snap pictures of the Sacandaga bridge in Hadley.

