

Santa Fe Railroad Depot On Homes Tour

What little boys or girls don't open their eyes in wide amazement when seeing a miniature train set? What adult hasn't wanted a train to circle round the base of the family Christmas tree, just like pictures of Christmas past?

Ever since Ken Stavinoha got his first toy windup train as a Christmas present years ago, he had big dreams of the distance his fascination with trains could take him.

He began collecting train models at an early age, and in 2000 he purchased the Eagle Lake Santa Fe Railroad Depot, beginning to live that dream of many years ago.

The depot, located on the corner of Lake and Main Street, was built for the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Railway and opened in September, 1911. It was a passenger and freight depot until passenger service discontinued in 1956. The freight service closed in 1970.

Only three pieces of furniture that are original to the depot still remain: the operator's desk (which is built into the bay window), one section of the cabinets in the office, and the pigeon-holed parcel cabinet located in the baggage room.

The rest of the furniture and equipment used in railroad service has been procured from other depots, collections and antique dealers. Ken has worked and collected items diligently for years to bring the depot to its present authentic state.

Presently, the Eagle Lake Depot, Inc. is a non-profit organi-



The Santa Fe Railroad Depot will be on the Eagle Lake Civic Garden Club's Holiday Tour on Saturday, Dec. 5th from 10 a.m.-7.

zation, with Ken as property manager still overseeing restoration.

Visit the website at www.eaglake depot.com to absorb the interesting facts about this local landmark.

Where did this interest in trains develop? "My maternal grandfather worked for the railroad for a few years, and I was four or five years old when I took my first train ride," explains Ken. At an early age he can remember being fascinated with the depot at Thompsons, near Richmond. He collected his first true artifact in 1992, and beginning in 1993 was involved with the Rosenberg

Railroad Museum.

Ken will tell you it helps to be a true "history detective" in desiring to have everything in the museum authentic.

When you walk into the depot, you'll feel as if you have stepped back in time to when the railway operations were crucial to small town travel and commerce.

Just how authentic is the depot? You probably won't see any Christmas trees or decorations at the depot during the home tour. "We present the look of a working depot. Small stations did not have the room or the money to be decorating for Christmas or

any holiday. Perhaps some of the larger stations in the cities had a tree, but the small town depots did not," contends Ken, always accurate in his details.

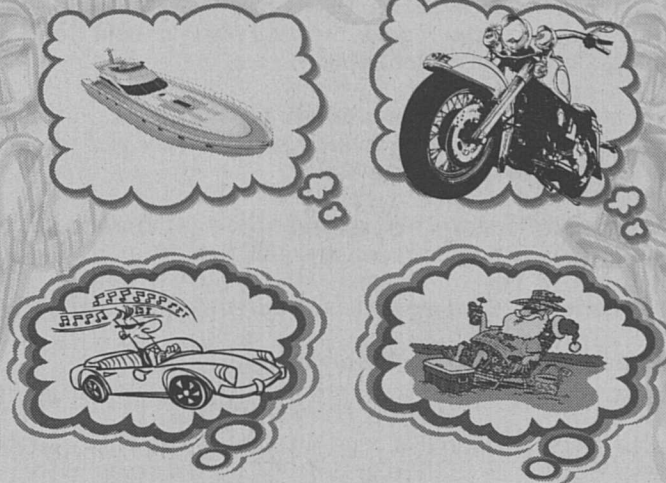
The train may not be running, but don't miss the journey in time that a visit to the depot provides. This will be one of six locations to visit during the Eagle Lake Civic Garden Club's Holiday Tour on Saturday, Dec. 5th from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. See www.visit eagle lake.com for more information. Tickets may be purchased in advance from any Garden Club member or at the Prairie Edge Museum on the day of the tour.

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Views Around The Lake by Cindy Klopsteck

It's getting personal now. It's always an awakening when a person absolutely knows something as real, true - as reality - but then brushes up personally with the fact. Then it becomes...well, personal. You can read about war and military engagements in the newspaper but emotions creep in when someone you know is involved.

I went to my niece's Washington state wedding in early August.

Her husband left for service in Iraq two weeks ago.

I went to a friend's local wedding in late August.

Her husband leaves for Afghanistan within a week after Thanksgiving.

I had a doctor's appointment a few weeks ago and Dr. Russell Thomas shared that his son would be leaving within days for Iraq.

A neighbor in my subdivision saw his son deployed for his second tour of duty in Iraq just weeks ago.

And there are a lot more local people involved than these

mentioned.

It's getting personal. We all shared the horror at Ft. Hood on November 5th.

We all remembered our soldiers past and present on Veterans Day November 11th.

We all celebrate Thanksgiving this week.

Maybe we need to combine the thoughts of all these past days in November.

We need to truly remember and simultaneously give thanks.

It was good to note in last week's Headlight that Rice High School held a very successful and noteworthy Veterans' Day program for veterans, the community and students on November 11th.

A Fallen Soldier's monument to be installed at the school campus was unveiled.

It's great to know the school district and community are involved and will not forget the sacrifices made for all of us.

As the holiday season approaches, let's not forget Ft. Hood soldiers in particular, all soldiers in general and our veterans. And let's not forget to take the opportunity to give thanks. A recent email suggested when sending Christmas cards this year to include one or two to the following address:

A Recovering American Soldier
C/o Walter Reed Army Medical Center
6900 Georgia Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20307-5001

That's a great idea. To someone, it could mean a lot and be a very personal touch of remem-

brance...letting that soldier know that he or she is not forgotten.

"It is easy to take liberty for granted when you have never had it taken from you."

---Unknown (sometimes attributed to M. Grundle)

Let's hope it never gets that personal, and let's thank - and not forget - those who are ensuring our liberties.

Comments are appreciated @ cindyj_k@hotmail.com



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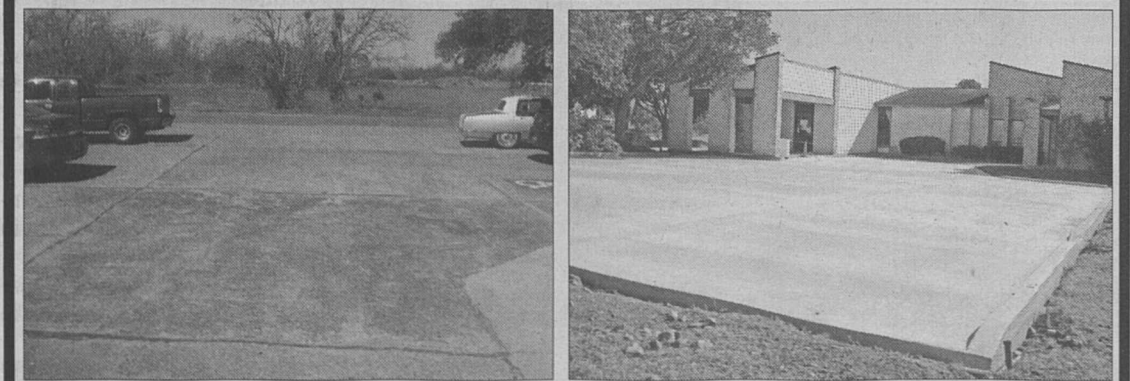
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