

# Whistle Stop



**Volume 29 No. 11**

Mike Jackson, Editor

**November 2009**

Duane and Harriet Swank, Printing/Circulation

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## **Chapter Meeting November 23; Program on the 1956 Wreck of the N&W 611**

### **SPECIAL NOTICES**

The next Chapter meeting will be held Monday, November 23, 2009, at 6:30 p.m., at the Johnson City Public Library, 100 West Millard St. Mark your calendar so you will not miss this meeting. The program will be presented by Duane and Harriet Swank on the wreck of N&W 611 in 1956 in West Virginia. Find out at this program why the 611 was saved on the account of this accident. Also, the Watauga Valley's Chapter car 539 was involved in this accident and can be seen in the program. At the November meeting we will also discuss our Amtrak Fall Excursions to Charlottesville and Asheville. This will be a great program. Come out and bring a Friend.

### **CHAPTER FALL AMTRAK EXCURSIONS**

President Mike Tilley would like to thank the Chapter members for their devoted time in making our Charlottesville and Asheville trips some of the best excursions operated by the Watauga Valley Chapter NRHS. If it had not been for all of you, we could not have pulled-off these trips. All of you worked the trips in a professional manner. We had 1100 people on board each day with 25 cars and three locomotives. The dining crew served over 1300 meals during the two day trips in two dining cars. If you missed these trips, just ask one of the following volunteers if they enjoyed the trip. We want you to join us next year for more memorable trips. THANKS TO ALL OF YOU!

#### **NICK WHITE – SAFETY DIRECTOR**

NYC 38 - BOB & JANICE MCPHERSON - HAROLD SMITTER – PAUL MARKEY  
BRADDOCK INN - MIKE & BETTY JACKSON - PAUL FEIST  
HAGERSTOWN INN - TOM & KATI PHELPS  
MOHAVE - DUANE & HARRIET SWANK - JIM & CHARLOTTE PARHIS

#### **SKIP BANNER – SAFETY DIRECTOR**

KITCHI GAMI CLUB - DAN & CHARLENE MCLEOD  
SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY - JIM & HELEN CALHOUN - EDNA CARTER  
NYC DINER - LOIS TILLEY – PENNY MAY – SHARON PEAKE – JANE EDDS  
MOULTIRE Diner - FRED & BONNIE WASKIEWICZ

#### **GARY PRICE – SAFETY DIRECTOR**

OBSERVATORY DOME - GEORGE RITCHIE – SUZIE & EMILY PRICE  
J PICKNEY HENDERSON – FRANK ROHRER – BILL BEAGEN - CHARLES & DIANNE  
WILLIAMS - BARRY LEFEVER  
HOLLYWOOD BEACH – BOB SCHUBEL – RANDY MOORE – CHRIS HARMON  
GOLDEN TOWER - SKIP OLDHAM – PAUL HAYNES-KAY HAYNES  
TRIP DIRECTOR – MIKE TILLEY

MECHANICAL – BOB YAPLE

SUPPLIES – DUANE SWANK – JACK MALONEY – CASEY PRICE – JIM PAHRIS

COMMUNICATIONS – WALTER BYRD - MIKE JACKSON

### WYNONNA JUDD RETURNS ON THE 67th ANNUAL CSXT SANTA TRAIN

**JACKSONVILLE, FI—BUSINESS WIRE—**Country music superstar **Wynonna Judd** will revisit her Appalachian childhood when she joins CSX, Food City and the Kingsport Area Chamber of Commerce as the special guest on the 2009 Santa Train. Wynonna, a native of Ashland, KY, is celebrating the release of her recent album, “Sing: Chapter 1,” and the anniversary of her 25th year in the music business. In celebration of the holiday season, Wynonna will launch her third annual ‘A Classic Christmas’ tour the weekend after Thanksgiving. “Sharing the joy of the season with children who grew up just like I did is something that I am so privileged to have the opportunity to do,” Wynonna said. “Appalachia has always been close to my heart, and participating in the Santa Train is something very special to me.”

The Santa Train will make 14 stops in the mountains of Kentucky, Virginia and Tennessee on Nov. 21, 2009. Wynonna, along with Santa Claus and volunteers from CSX, Food City and the Kingsport Area Chamber of Commerce, will deliver 15 tons of toys, including six pallets donated by the Children’s Miracle Network, to thousands of residents who live along the route. This year will commemorate the 67th anniversary of the Santa Train.

Wynonna also has previous ties to the Santa Train through her mother, Naomi Judd, who rode the train in 2005 and passed down some of her fond memories of that day to her daughter. “With more than 30 million records sold worldwide, we are honored to have Wynonna aboard this year’s Santa Train,” said **Tori Kaplan**, director of corporate citizenship and special events for CSX. “We know she will brighten everyone’s spirits in these tough economic times.”

Patty Loveless, Alison Krauss, Naomi Judd, Travis Tritt and Kathy Mattea are among the celebrity guests who have participated in the Santa Train in recent years. Several governors, U.S. senators, representatives, and other local, state and federal officials have also participated in this annual event.

“The Santa Train means so much to the city of Kingsport,” **Miles Burdine**, Kingsport Area Chamber of Commerce president and CEO, said. “Adding Wynonna to the list of prestigious celebrity guests only adds to the legacy of this special event.”

“Being able to be a part of this project is a privilege for Food City, and we are so pleased to share it with Wynonna this year,” said **Ed Moore**, Kingsport’s Food City manager. “We know that she will brighten the Christmas season for so many.”

For continuous updates about the Santa Train, please visit us on Facebook and Twitter. Find us on our Facebook fan page, The Santa Train, and on Twitter @TheSantaTrain.

The **Kingsport Area Chamber of Commerce** and **Food City** are proud to announce they are selling a special children’s book inspired by the Santa Train, one of the region’s most anticipated holiday traditions. The well crafted children’s book was written by local author **Leigh Anne W. Hoover**, a longtime Kingsport resident, and beautifully illustrated by **Carol Bates Murray** of Marion, VA. The popular book made its debut last Christmas season in Food City stores along the 110-mile route. Back by popular demand, the book has been reprinted with a new green cover. The story and photos are exactly the same. The original red cover is now a limited edition. **The Santa Train Tradition** tells the story of seven-year-old Ben Massey and his annual family tradition of walking to meet the Santa Train on the chilly Saturday morning before Thanksgiving. “Capturing the essence of this renowned, Appalachian Christmas tradition in a children’s book has been my privilege and my pleasure,” said Hoover. “I hope that **The Santa Train Tradition** will become a treasured holiday keepsake for many families.” Cost will remain at \$11.99. Books are available for sale now until January 2, 2010, at Food City locations along the Santa Train route and within the Tri-Cities. Books can also be purchased at the Kingsport Chamber of Commerce. “This is the first children’s book about the Santa Train and the rich history behind it,” said Food City Store Manager and Santa Train Co-chair **Ed Moore**.

### SCHEDULE FOR THE SANTAS TRAIN

KENTUCKY	Arrive	Depart
Shelby		6:30am
Marrowbone	6:45am	7:00am
Elkhorn City	7:25am	7:45am

VIRGINIA	Arrive	Depart
Toms Bottom	8:05am	8:15am
Haysi	8:27am	8:42am
Clinchco	9:00am	9:15am
Fremont	9:28am	9:53am
Dante	10:28am	10:48am
St. Paul	11:08am	11:28am
Dungannon	12:13pm	12:33pm
Ft. Blackmore	12:53pm	1:08pm
Kermit	1:48pm	2:18pm
Waycross	2:30pm	2:45pm

Arrive in Kingsport, TN at 3:08 pm

Depart Kingsport, TN, Deadhead 3:55pm

Arrive Erwin, TN, 4:50pm

#### **DUES NOTICES**

The 2010 dues notices have been sent out, so please return your form and the fee ASAP. This makes it easier on the membership chairman, and she won't have to send you the second notice.

#### **CHRISTMAS DINNER**

Please see the attached form for our annual Christmas Dinner at the Jonesborough Visitors Center on Saturday December, 5, 2009. Due to the Chapter's Dining Car being on the road in December, we have changed the location for this year's dinner. We are trying something new in having the annual dinner at the beautiful and historic Jonesborough Visitors Center. Everyone will get to eat at the same time, and there's easy access to the Center. SEE THE ATTACHED FORM. BRING YOUR FRIENDS AND COME OUT FOR AN ENJOYABLE DAY.

#### **EXCURSION PHOTOS**

**Want to see some photos of the excursion?** The following web site has photos on-line [www.suzieandbob.com/trains/asheville/](http://www.suzieandbob.com/trains/asheville/). A note from Bob Elliott: "We really appreciate all the volunteers who helped to make Sunday's Asheville trip as good as it was! We will certainly be back next year, and will bring more friends with us. We have posted some photos online at: <http://www.suzieandbob.com/trains/asheville/>."



## **Watauga Valley Chapter NRHS Minutes for Chapter Meeting, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

The Chapter meeting came to order at 6:30 p.m., on October 26, 2009, at the Johnson City Public Library. Mike Tilley, President, presided. Attendance was 39 members.

Paul Haynes moved to dispense with the reading of the August minutes, Jack Maloney seconded. The motion passed.

#### **Old Business**

The North Clinchfield tour is scheduled for Saturday, 11/14/09. The caravan will leave at 7a.m., from the Cherry Street parking lot and will stop briefly in Kingsport at the Main Street Chamber of Commerce in downtown Kingsport and leave there at 7:30.

Mike Tilley conducted the safety meeting for the fall Amtrak excursions. Both trips are SOLD OUT. He stated there will be 25 cars with three Amtrak engines this year. There will be over 1300 meals served during the two days. Eight buses will be available for the layovers in Asheville and Charlottesville for the passengers to go to restaurants and shopping areas during the layover. The members working the excursion will be able to ride the buses at no charge. The bus transportation for members not driving to Spencer will leave at 7:45 a.m., on Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>. For members driving to Spencer, there will be parking available at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer. All workers must attend the Safety session at the NC Transportation Museum on Friday, at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

**Betty Jackson, Secretary, Mike Tilley, President**



## Mechanical Report by Bob Yaple

**GENERAL:** The clean-up continues. A scrap drive produced several hundred dollars for our coffers. We are finding parts and materials—apparently forgotten—that can be used on current projects. They are being organized and labeled.

**ROLLING STOCK:** All cars have now been on several fall trips. With the exception of some very minor problems, they performed exceptionally well. The *Moultrie* 400 and the *Clinchfield* 500 have been winterized for the season, and the *Powhatan Arrow* 539 will be winterized after the Roanoke trip. The *Moultrie* 400 will stay at Spencer for the private car owners' meeting, and the 500 and 539 will go on to Dennison, Ohio, for the Polar Express on Ohio Central. Randy Moore deserves our thanks for his help with mechanical chores and herding the cars from place to place. All cars will return to the coach yard in January.

**CRESCENT HARBOR:** Little additional work has been done of late due to the rolling stock preparation and a low level of manpower. Traditionally, manpower becomes sparse during the holiday season and burn-out from the excursions. Hopefully things will return to normal next year. **By Bob Yaple, Asst. Chief Mechanical Officer**

### Member Notes – November *Whistle Stop*

**WELCOME** Cecilia McIntosh, Johnson City, and Ed and Sara Penn, Greenville, SC, as the newest members of our Chapter. Ed and Sara are members of the NRHS Greenville Chapter. We hope they will enjoy the Whistle Stop and meetings and Chapter activities.

**Best Wishes** for a speedy recovery for Anna Banner after her November 6th surgery; and to Doug Zimmerman after his October 29th surgery. Please keep these folks and others you may know in your thoughts. As always, let us know of members or friends to whom a card might be sent or a call made. The Chapter phone number is 423-753-5797 or call Nancy Jewell at 423-282-0918 and leave a message. We do want to keep in touch.

**Thank You** to the following people for making a donation to the Watauga Valley NRHS and to the National Railroad Historical Society: C. Howard Capito, Coy Buddy Edwards, Barry LeFever, Paul Marcum, C. Ray Master, and Walter Newton. Thank you very much for your generosity!

**Nancy Jewell, Contributor**



### My Railroad Bucket List

#### Gary Price, Keeping the ole' N&W safe...one tie at a time

Last year a movie came out called the "Bucket List" that chronicled two older men who when faced with death decided to travel the world and accomplish a list of things that they had always wanted to do in their lifetimes but never had a chance.

Whenever you get a group of railfans together, you start hearing about their railroad bucket lists, that is the trains they have ridden, the ones they hope to ride one day, and the ones that got away with no chance of ever riding again. This got me thinking about my own "Railroad Bucket List" and how full it is getting. Being a Norfolk and Western fan from an early age, most all of my list items were N&W related. Already checked off my list are: I rode behind the J class 611 and the A class 1218 as well as the M class 475 in Strasburg, PA. I have visited all on display but two of N&W steam locomotives left in existence, (6,7,11,433 and 578), including the four that were removed from the junkyard.

Getting a job with Norfolk Southern was at the top of my bucket list, too, and when I checked that item off, it opened up the doors to some others on my list, items like watching coal being loaded onto ships at Lamberts Point in Norfolk, crossing the famed Blue Ridge grade near Roanoke, walking through the massive mile long Elkhorn tunnel west of Bluefield, crossing the High Bridge near Farmville, Va, and working in all the Eastern states from Buffalo, New York, to New Orleans, Louisiana. I have even had the thrill of working across Southern Railway's famous seven mile long Lake Pontchartrain Bridge.

However the one place that had eluded me for 13 years was just across the mountain in Princeton, West Virginia. I have never had the opportunity to work the Princeton-Deepwater line (MP. V327 to MP. V428) on the Pocahontas Division. About mid year our schedule was re-arranged and immediately I noticed that tie work on this line had been added to my schedule, and I was excited to finally be able to check this one off my list. I knew that this line held some of the most rugged terrain, high bridges and numerous tunnels (20), more than any other line in the former N&W territories. Coal trains are the dominate commodity on these tracks, and I did not see a single boxcar the entire time I was there. This line also included the 930 feet long trestle that dizzily spans Interstate 77 just south of Princeton, West Virginia.

We broke ground at Kellysville, West Virginia, and for the entire month of October 2009 we steadily worked deep into the mountains of West Virginia through the coal mining towns of Princeton, Kegley, Matoaka, (the old N&W line is still visible in the weeds), Clarks Gap, and Herndon before doing ties in Elmore Yard at Mullens. Then we turned northwest and worked on to Maben, Slab Fork, Lester, Surveyor, Pax and on to Page, where we finished our work at Milepost V428 and loaded our equipment. One thing that I enjoy on my journeys is visiting communities with strange or unusual names, and along this line I found Algonquin, Hoo Hoo Hollow, and Cow Hollow.

So as I check the Deepwater line off my Railroad Bucket list, a few items remaining on my list are.... Visit N&W Y6a 2156 in St. Louis, MO., and N&W Y3 2050 in Union, Ill. and lastly take a trip around Horseshoe Curve. Then my bucket will be full....until NS brings steam back.



**Even M-O-W has one of those days!  
Gary Price, Keeping the ole' N&W safe...one tie at a time.**

## Rail News from Jeff Jones

**KNOXVILLE** - Tennessee is seeking \$81.2 million as part of a coalition of states applying for \$300 million in federal stimulus funds to make railroad upgrades linked to development of intermodal rail terminals, where trailers and containers are transferred between trucks and trains. Although the coalition's application for stimulus money is based on reducing truck traffic along Interstate 81, whose southern terminus is in Jefferson County, Tennessee would spend its entire share on an intermodal facility being built near Memphis, some 400 miles from I-81.

Norfolk Southern's primary interest in Tennessee is long-haul traffic from Harrisburg, Pa., to Memphis and farther south to Birmingham, Ala., said Julie Oaks, Tennessee Department of Transportation spokeswoman. Also, work on the Memphis-area terminal is moving forward, whereas the railroad company has yet to make a firm decision on an East Tennessee intermodal site. "They are substantially further along in Memphis than in East Tennessee," Oaks said. "They have already determined a site in Fayette County and have started environmental and design work." Norfolk Southern announced in July that it would build a \$129 million intermodal facility in the Memphis area as part of the railroad's Crescent Corridor, the name for the New York-to-New Orleans route. The facility will be built on 570 acres and is to open by 2012.

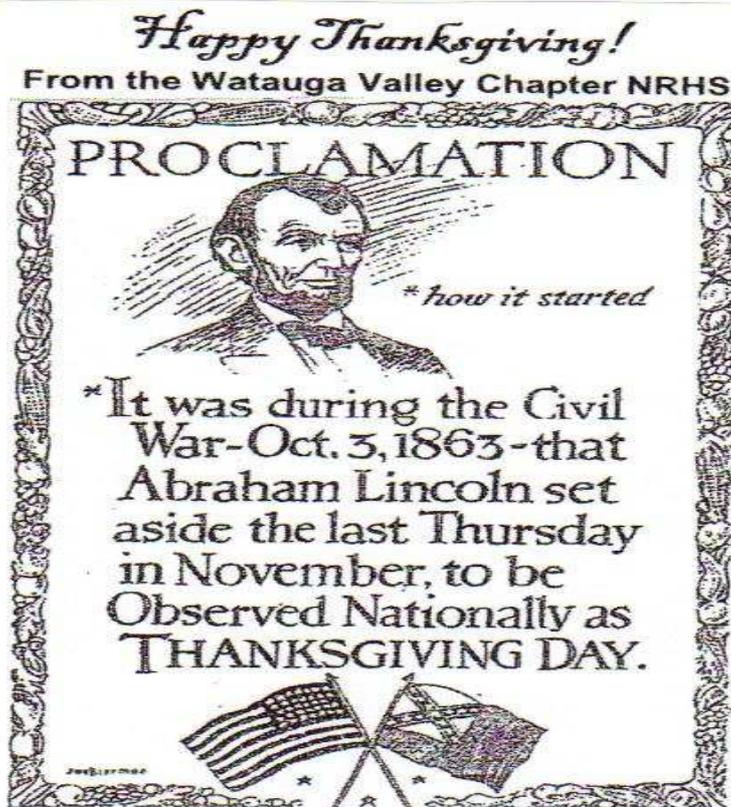
Norfolk Southern has been looking at a 400-acre site along Highway 11E in New Market as a possible location for a \$60 million intermodal facility, but even though it has outlined the plans at public meetings, Jefferson County Mayor Alan Palmieri said the county has received no firm commitment that the railroad will build the facility.

Led by Pennsylvania, which made the application, Virginia, Tennessee, New York, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana are seeking funds through the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Act to reduce traffic congestion on the 855 miles of I-81 running through those states by developing intermodal facilities to move truck traffic off the highway and onto rail. Palmieri said he was not surprised that Tennessee's Department of Transportation would target the Memphis terminal because more progress had been made there. Even if Norfolk Southern picked a site in New Market today, it would be at least three years before a terminal could be built, he said. Also, TDOT is looking at the state as a whole and not just East Tennessee in terms of reducing traffic on I-81, and the Memphis facility would have a greater impact than the one proposed in New Market, Oaks said.

"The facility being discussed in East Tennessee would be a smaller, second-tier center whose value is that it has access to both I-40 and I-75," she said. "There will be some cargo that would stop at Knoxville, but a larger proportion would be making a longer trip." If the Jefferson County facility became a reality, it might be possible to seek federal funds to help with the project, but things are in limbo until Norfolk Southern reaches a decision, Palmieri said.

**OMAHA, NE, and JACKSONVILLE, FL**—Union Pacific Railroad and CSX Transportation (CSXT) are proud to announce the launch of RailChem Connect, a coordinated rail service for expedited transport of chemicals between the Texas Gulf Coast region and the Southeast. The new RailChem Connect service is the result of increased coordination and re-designed interline service by the two railroads for their chemicals market customers. The service allows shipments to bypass smaller rail yards for expedited transit between major hubs. These changes, along with increased operations coordination between the railroads, increase reliability of east- and west-bound service between Union Pacific-served chemical markets such as Houston, southern Texas and Louisiana, and CSXT-served consumption markets in the southeastern states. RailChem Connect offers more consistent transit times, faster equipment turns and a shorter route than previously available for chemical shipments in this corridor. "Our teams are coordinating efforts to focus on an improved service product for chemicals customers by reducing transit times and tightening the variability in our delivery, significantly improving reliability for customers," said Diane Duren, vice president and general manager of Chemicals for Union Pacific. The two railroads have reduced the transit time between major markets by 25 percent in the last three years while improving consistency by 23 percent. The improvements provide more reliable service, enabling chemicals customers to optimize their fleets of privately owned rail cars.

**From CSXT News**



From the "Clinchfield Link" Magazine, Clinchfield Railroad, November 1961



" . . . It has seemed to me fit and proper that [our blessings] should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American people. I do, therefore, invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States . . . to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the

heavens." Abraham Lincoln, 1863

*The Blue Ridge Stemwinder*, or the *Stemwinder* as it is more commonly known, is the journal created for members of the East Tennessee & Western North Carolina Railroad Historical Society by originator John R. Waite in 1988. The publication was produced for 20 years by Mr. Waite and Chris Ford. A CD is now available of all the issues of the *Stemwinder*. Please go to the following link to order and for more information:

<http://cfordart.com/20yearsofthestemwinder/info.html>



**2009 Autumn Excursions!** Left, Kelly Alexander of the North Carolina Transportation Museum and Watauga Valley NRHS President Mike Tilley conduct the Safety Meeting, Friday night, October 30<sup>th</sup>. **Below left**, former Amtrak Conductor Bennie Macentire, who has worked the two previous NCTM/Watauga Valley fall excursions, was promoted recently to trainmaster and was aboard our two day trips again this year. **Below right**, a picture of the Andrew's Geyser at Dendron that the passengers saw on the Sunday trip to Asheville, NC. Photos by Betty Jackson



**Left is a photo** of the Watauga Valley's *Moultrie Diner* sent to us by Michael Ridenhour. Michael's family, pictured left to right, are 18 month old daughter Maggie, wife Kasey, and 4 year old daughter Kiersten. The picture was taken at Claremont, NC, westbound on November 1st. Michael and his family are from Rockwell, NC, about 10 minutes south of Salisbury. He is an engineer with the Winston Salem Southbound Railway and has been a Railfan since birth, having "converted" his wife, and they are now training the little ones. Michael wrote us: "We regret we didn't have the funds to ride this year but we do try and support the NCTM. We were able to ride the first trip to Charlottesville in the Milwaukee Dome car in 2007. The Watauga Chapter NRHS has always done a fantastic job and I hope these types of trips can continue." Thanks, Michael, for the photo submission and for the kind words!

**Photographer Nick D'Amato** took this scenic picture of the NCTM/Watauga Valley NRHS "Blue Ridge Special" Sunday, November 1, 2009, as the excursion worked its way through the beautiful mountains of western North Carolina from Spencer to Asheville. Permission is granted for one-time use of this image in the Watauga Valley NRHS newsletter; additionally, all rights are retained by the photographer, Nick D'Amato of Durham, NC. Nick says, "I now have a gallery of all my shots from that day on my website, [www.diamonddphotography.com](http://www.diamonddphotography.com)." Thanks to Nick for this beautiful picture of our 2009 Asheville trip!



Three P42DC locomotives for Amtrak 40, the Virginia Autumn Flyer, led by engine number 56, at the North Carolina Transportation Museum on Friday, October 30, 2009. See more pictures and read about the excursions to Charlottesville, VA, and Asheville, NC, inside the *Whistle Stop*. Photo taken by Watauga Valley NRHS Chapter Member Bill Beagen.



**Railway Historical Society  
Watauga Valley Chapter  
P.O. Box 432  
Johnson City, TN 37605-0432**

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Three P42DC locomotives for Amtrak 40, the Virginia Autumn Flyer, led by engine number 56, at the North Carolina Transportation Museum on Friday, October 30, 2009. See more pictures and read about the excursions to Charlottesville, VA, and Asheville, NC, inside the *Whistle Stop*. Photo taken by Watauga Valley NRHS Chapter Member Bill Beagen.



**Railway Historical Society  
Watauga Valley Chapter  
P.O. Box 432  
Johnson City, TN 37605-0432**

# WATAUGA VALLEY CHAPTER NRHS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER IN HISTORIC JONESBOROUGH, TENNESSEE'S OLDEST TOWN



**CHRISTMAS DINNER.** It's time once again for the Chapter's annual Christmas Dinner, and this year we plan to gather at the Jonesborough Visitor Center 117 Boone St., at 12 noon until 3pm on Saturday, December 5. Please bring your food to the center by 11:45 and serving line will open at 12:15. The Chapter will provide meats, drinks, and desserts. Members are asked to bring vegetables and/or salad. Please bring enough food for yourself, for your guest(s), and for several others. To make reservations, please cut out the form below and mail to Watauga Valley NRHS Annual Dinner, PO Box 432, Johnson City, TN, 37605-0432. You can also call your reservation to the Chapter's answering service at 423-753-5797 or turn in your form at the November 23 meeting. There will be good food and good fellowship! Please have your reservations in by Monday, November 30, 2009.

## **YOU'LL see US in Jonesborough for *Christmas Dinner***

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Number Attending \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

We will bring Vegetables \_\_\_\_\_ Salad \_\_\_\_\_