

Niwot Historical Society

2011 - 2012 Annual Report

February 29, 2012

The following members of the Board of Directors were elected at the Niwot Historical Society (NHS) 2011 Annual Meeting:

President:	Laura Skaggs
Vice President:	Meri Gibb
Secretary:	Connie Herbst
Treasurer:	Darwyn Herbst
Membership Chair:	Donna Sinor
Members-at-Large:	Anne Dyni, Rob Gordon

In May, 2011, NHS concluded its first professional exhibit of artifacts and photographs at the Longmont Museum & Cultural Center's "Niwot on the Rails." The exhibit launched in March, 2011, with a record-breaking crowd at the Opening Reception, and steady public attendance continued throughout the exhibit's run. This exhibit was a collaborative effort between NHS and the Longmont Museum, with NHS' financial support provided through a grant from the Niwot Local Improvement District Advisory Board (LID) and "duck sale" proceeds from the Left Hand Valley Courier Duck Race.

Upon the closing of "Niwot on the Rails," artifacts returned to the Left Hand Grange storage closet, but not before dedicated volunteers created a display of select items in NHS' Firehouse Museum. While the Firehouse Museum's small size limits its ability to host exhibits, the view through the museum's front window now offers a sampler view of the artifact collection. Volunteers also updated the museum's outdoor display case, providing more historical information for local residents and visitors to Niwot.

In similar fashion, the 32 framed photographs that were reproduced for "Niwot on the Rails" were also headed back to storage until the NHS Board offered to lease them at no charge to members of the Niwot Business Association for hanging in their shops or offices. The NBA readily responded, allowing continued public viewing of historical photographs.

The Longmont Museum exhibit clearly sparked NHS' appetite for sharing educational activities in the community. At last year's NHS Annual Meeting, members suggested the idea for a lecture series. "Niwot ~ Now & Then", the lecture series of the NHS, resulted and has become our premier public activity. The series opened on September 28th with CU's Patty Limerick addressing an engaged, full capacity audience. The second speaker, Larry Dorsey, spoke on November 30th to another full house crowd on the history of the railroad in Colorado. Two more lectures remain on this season's calendar: Donlyn Arbuthnot on February 29th and Ava Hamilton on April 25th. Based on the popular

response, NHS Board Vice President Meri Gibb and her Program Committee are making plans for a second season of “Niwot ~ Now & Then” for next fall and winter.

Perhaps the year’s most exciting report is that **the NHS membership total now stands at a record high with 118 individual members (80 households)**. The new total of **118** individuals, representing *80 households*, is up dramatically from **70** individuals from *51 households* less than one year ago. This marked up-tick in membership serves as the strongest indicator of the Lecture Series’ success. The Lecture Series is free of charge to all NHS members and provides tangible value in exchange for membership dues. The response of new members encourages the Board that a welcome service is being provided for Niwot residents. A proverbial “win-win” appears to be in effect, and all NHS members share the credit and satisfaction.

The following are some of the other activities conducted by NHS during the past year:

- The NHS Board met six times to conduct historical society business.
- Four issues of the Niwot Gazette Newsletter and several topical updates were distributed by mail or email and posted on our website.
- NHS participated in Rotary Club’s Fourth of July parade, the Niwot Community Association’s Nostalgia Day, and decorated the Firehouse Museum for the Niwot Business Association’s Enchanted Evening and the holiday season.
- The NHS website, www.niwohistoricalsociety.org, launched in 2011, continues to be updated, and Paypal is available as a vehicle for joining or paying annual renewal dues.
- Nine images from the NHS photo collection were provided for authorized use in Niwot retail locations.
- Four additional artifacts were donated to the NHS during 2011-2012 and have been archived. Diane Karash serves as Chair of the Collections Committee, which is reorganizing the artifacts and categorizing all items.
- Board Member Anne Dyni’s new book *Niwot, Birth of a Railroad Town*, debuted at the NHS booth on Nostalgia Day; 10% of her book sales were donated to NHS.
- Walking Tours of Niwot were given to thirty Boy Scouts and their parents and to members of the Louisville History Book Club.
- NHS advertises each “Niwot ~ Now & Then” lecture in the Left Hand Valley Courier. Promotional flyers and posters are posted in local businesses.
- The Left Hand Grange provides secure storage for NHS artifacts; in appreciation, the NHS Board volunteers at each Grange Book Sales during the year.
- NHS continues efforts with the Niwot Sculpture Park Steering Committee and wrote a letter in support of a grant application to designate Niwot as a “Creative District.”
- In conjunction with the new county-wide “One Action/One Boulder” project, including the choice of author Margaret Coel’s *Chief Left Hand* as the 2012 “community read,” NHS will be selling copies of Coel’s *Chief Left Hand* in Niwot.