



N.C. Transportation Museum News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Santa rides the rails in Spencer

SPENCER, NC - This Christmas season, when Santa hands you an orange on board the N.C. Transportation Museum's train ride, you might think he wants you to be healthy. But there's another reason the jolly ol' elf gives out this sweet treat—it's a railroad tradition.

During the Depression of the 1930s, when most Americans didn't have much money, and often didn't have enough to eat, railroad workers would throw out oranges to children as the train passed. Today, the museum remembers that history during its annual Santa Train event, when Santa rides the train, passing out oranges and candy canes to young passengers. This train ride also features a reading of two Christmas stories, *Santa's Christmas Train* by Joseph Caro, and one written by NCTM volunteer Bill Speer, *The Christmas Ribbon*.

The Santa Train has become a highlight of weekends in December at the museum, but it is just one of three special Christmas events at the site. A popular draw for school groups is the Jingle Bell Express. This train ride, which runs especially for student groups, features Christmas carol singing and a reading of Christmas stories. Students are also encouraged to wear their pajamas. Teachers who are interested in bringing their students should call in advance to schedule a ride.

Cookies & Cocoa with Santa is a nighttime event that allows visitors to take a train ride to the Roundhouse, then enjoy a treat with Santa and hear Christmas stories read by one of Santa's elves. Limited tickets are available, and advance registration is required.

Event dates and times are below. For more information, call 704-636-2889, toll-free at 877-NCTM-FUN, or visit www.nctrans.org.

A Railroad Christmas At the N.C. Transportation Museum

Santa Train

When: Dec. 2-3, 9-10 & 16-17

Ride Times: 10 & 11 a.m., 1, 2 & 3 p.m. on Saturdays and 1:30, 2:30 & 3:30 p.m. on Sundays

Cost: \$6 per person for ages 3 and up or \$5 per person with the donation of a new, unwrapped gift for Toys for Tots

Cookies & Cocoa With Santa

When: Dec. 8-9 & 15-16

Ride Times: 5:30 & 7:30 p.m.

Cost: \$10 (Limit 200 riders per trip. Advance reservation required)

Train rides are approximately 25 minutes long, and depart from the museum's Barber Junction Visitor Center. The museum is located at 411 S. Salisbury Ave., Spencer, N.C., just a few minutes from Interstate 85 at exit 79.

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