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**FIRESIDE CHAT ILLUMINATES COLORADO RAILROADING**  
*Fictional first person characterization at Chats in Norwood and Telluride*

**Telluride, Colorado (August 8, 2012)** -- The Rio Grande Southern Railroad first debuted its Ridgway to Rico route in September of 1891. The event was recorded by a local newspaper and the account was later reprinted in the book, "Silver San Juan." This week the Telluride Historical Museum will bring that story of early Colorado railroading to life with two Fireside Chats, in Norwood and in Telluride.

Steve Lee, an educator and performer from Denver, delivers Fireside Chats presentations via a first-person of characterization of Hiram Wheeler, a fictitious railroad conductor. Lee, dressed in a Denver & Rio Grande Western conductor's uniform, shares the story about the golden days of Colorado railroading.

This year marks Lee's second foray as a Fireside Chat presenter. Last year he delivered, to packed audiences, a first person characterization of Otto Mears, famous in the region for pioneering toll roads and railways.

This summer—the seventh season of Fireside Chats—the museum aims to bring their vivid, educational and engaging history presenters to Telluride, Mountain Village and Norwood.

In lieu of special grants, the 2012 Fireside Chats are completely funded by community support, in-kind donations and sponsorships from individuals and organizations.

Wednesday and Thursday's Chats are sponsored by the Norwood Chamber of Commerce, Peaks Resort and Spa and the Telluride Rotary Club.

Lee's Fireside Chat, "Hiram Wheeler: Conductor of the Rio Grande Southern Railroad," will be held on Wednesday in Norwood, at the Livery and again on Thursday, in Telluride, at The Peaks Resort and Spa. Lee's Chat lasts about 30 minutes, leaving time to answer questions. Both Fireside Chats begin at 5:30p.m. and are free.

For more information about Fireside Chats, visit the Museum at the top of Fir St. or online at [telluridemuseum.org](http://telluridemuseum.org).