

An Awful Wreck



This is from a 1909 newspaper. My friend Jack Anthony has studied the towns along the railroad that are now on the

Air Force Academy. He knows more about the general history of that area than anyone I know. However, he does come to me and a couple others when he is looking for railroad history. This wreck is part of the Academy's history; I want to share a bit about it today.

In late August, 1909 a northbound Denver and Rio Grande train was watching for a train they were to meet at Husted, a southbound passenger train. This was a deluxe D&RG passenger train, which that day was divided into two trains, there were so many cars. The train had already passed the first section of the train down near Pikeview, as we know that area now between Woodmen Road and the Rockrimmon exit on I-25. The crew on the northbound train saw the headlight on a train waiting on the side track at Husted but in the dark could not see that it was not the train they were to stop for!

There is a bit of a curve at that spot, just about where Ice Lake is on the Academy. The train coming south saw the headlight of the northbound train, and stopped. The northbound train could not see his headlight and working up hill, continued to speed on. Suddenly, around the curve they saw the other train's headlight. They tried to stop but crashed into the southbound train. The engines turned into a classic "nose up" wreck, and toppled over towards Monument Creek. The first car in each train was crushed behind their engines.

In the wreck were about 400 people. Nine people died and nearly 70 others were injured. Most of the dead were from the engines; however, a few crewmen managed to survive. Passengers were thrown around in the cars, a few ejected out the windows! One of the dead was fireman J.A. Gossage, who lived on a ranch east of Husted. He was on the southbound train. You may recognize the name Gossage. Goose Gossage of Colorado Springs, the famous baseball player, is a grand nephew! He was not born yet, but I thought you might like that information.

It was not the only wreck in the area. My favorite is one from the 1880s era trains that blew off the tracks in one of our memorable storms. Like the semi trucks, trains with empty cars often stop when there is high wind, even today.

Pages of the Past

(1958 - Present)



Sixty Years Ago (1962) CARSON RETAIL STORE

Stocking shelves in the Fort Carson property disposal retail store was Miss Beverly J. Paulsen, clerk, and Anton B. Chavez, supervisory clerk, at right. The store was a part of a million-dollar disposal operation where anyone could buy. (U.S. Army Photo)

Fifty Years Ago (1972) TV GUIDE

The Advertiser & News in 1972 made a weekly Valley TV Guide that people could put on their TV for a handy reference. Simply fold it in half and in half again, slit the top, and voila! A nice sized TV guide!

(Fountain Valley News file photo)



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Forty Years Ago (1982) AFTERMATH

"Why did they have to do this to our school?" Brandi Cochran, who was a fourth-grader at J.A. Talbott Elementary in 1982, asked while she examined charred debris of books and desks outside the school. A fire caused \$300,000 in damages to the school. (Photo by Jane Forsberg)

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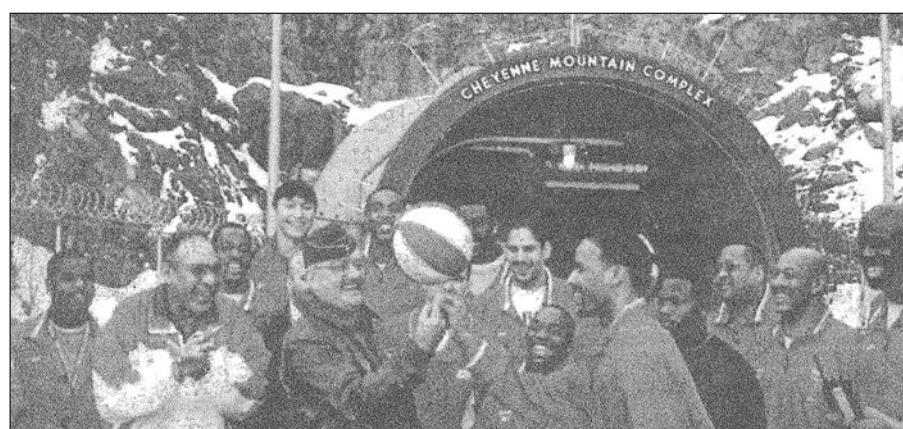
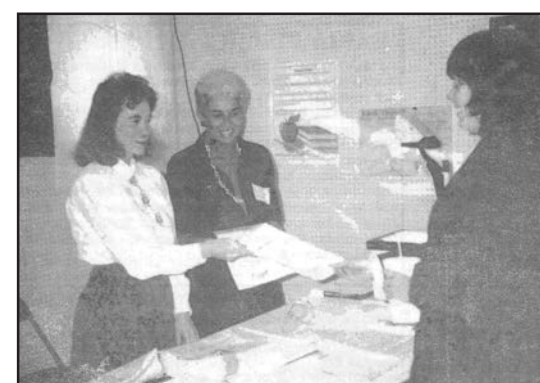
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Thirty Years Ago (1992) MODELS OF TEACHING

Learning about Models of Teaching: Freedom Trail Elementary School teachers Ann Shelby, left, and Jane Starritt went over the Models of Teaching book with fellow teacher Jane Merritt at one of Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8's booths at the Festival of learning in 1992.

(Photo by Geoffrey Clark)



Twenty Years Ago (2002) HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS VISIT NORAD

The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) invited the world —famous Harlem Globetrotters to tour their facility in 2002. (Photo by Karen Johnson)