



Above: The completely restored Stone Lake depot, taken September 9, 2009—*Tim Martin.*

Right: A harbinger of good luck? A double rainbow greets the restoration of the Soo Line's Stone Lake depot by the Stone Lake Area Historical Society on October 4, 2008—*Carol McDonnell.*



town hall, meant that everyone coming to or through town could watch the progress. As folks stopped to cheer the volunteers on, work continued at a steady pace, and soon they had a beautiful building to show off. Replacing the chimney was the last hurdle, and the volunteer fire department helped with that on October 1st.

On October 4, 2008 the museum opened to the public during the 30th annual Cranberry Festival. Over 300 people toured the museum that day, thoroughly enjoying the many artifacts and exhibits already put in place by loyal members of the historical society who were always sure this day would come. They were amazed at the amount of original depot furniture and equipment that has been returned to the museum, and had no idea how many people were preserving precious items to be displayed in a future museum. They also have several local folks planning to work at the museum, to keep it open for all to enjoy.

A most rewarding part of this entire project is that every bit of the project was accomplished with no tax dollars at all. Volunteer labor and donated funds cov-

ered the entire project cost of \$50,077. Over the course of the project, more than 1,400 hours of volunteer labor were spent during the four-month period of restoration, with the base of volunteers coming from the same group that had built the Stone Lake Community Wetland Park over a three-year period from 2004 to 2007. In that project, these volunteers had built 500 feet of boardwalk through a wetlands, a brick memorial walk, a gazebo, a covered bridge, and one and one-half miles of woodland trails. At the end of the depot/museum project, the volunteers all agreed that, by comparison, this newest project had been like a walk in the park. And, as a special treat, this beautiful double rainbow appeared in the sky over the depot as if to

say "a job well done."

As a footnote, readers of *the SOO* are invited to visit Stone Lake during the 2010 season to see if they have been successful in completing Phase II of the project. They may not have mentioned this, but they are now on a quest to obtain a wooden Soo Line caboose to sit proudly on the new railroad line which is now under construction in front of our depot/museum. And, believe it or not, they have eager volunteers just waiting to restore it! 🚂

(The volunteers of the Stone Lake Historical Museum didn't stop with restoring just a depot, as we will see in the next issue of the SOO—Editor.)