



New Members

MCRHS would like to welcome some new members: Adam & Suzette Yungeberg, Barnes KS; Matt Henry, Blue Rapids KS; and John & Karen Hager, Idaho Springs, CO

The origins of MCRHS

(Note: the following appeared in the June 2024 newsletter but is reprinted here because this is our 25 anniversary and we have several new members since then.)

On August 25, 2000, Kyle Railroad Company (KYLE) and Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) jointly filed with the Surface Transportation Board a petition for UP to abandon and KYLE to discontinue service on a line of railroad known as the Frankfort Branch, between milepost 409.1 near Frankfort and milepost 472.0 at Ames (a rural unincorporated community in Cloud County). The Blue Rapids Depot is at milepost 425.6 and the Waterville Depot was at milepost 430.5.

As one might expect, the acquisition of abandoned railroad property is no simple or short task. Larry Parsons, a 1958 graduate of Blue Raids High School was very helpful in an advisory capacity. Larry is the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Wheeling and Lake Erie Railway in Ohio. The W&LE RR is a class II railroad and the largest railroad in Ohio and one of the largest regional railroads in the United States. As president of the MCRHS, Ann Walter sent a letter to the National Surface Transportation Board indicating the intent to purchase a section of the track from 12th Road west to the Marshall-Washington Count line. When the negotiations had reached an agreement, Ann Walter, a special education teacher at Valley Heights Jr-Sr High received a phone call from the National Surface Transportation Board. Ann recalls that personal phone calls were somewhat frowned upon during school hours but due to the nature of the call she was allowed to take the call. The MCRHS was given seven (7) days to raise \$45,000 dollars in order to acquire the rails from 12th Rd (4 miles East of Blue Rapids) to the Marshall-Washington County line (3.5 miles West of Waterville).

Charlie Weickert (Marysville) recalls that Ed Wiegers (Marysville) called him and asked if he would want to go with Gene Lott (Blue Rapids) and Ed to the Union Pacific headquarters in Omaha, NE and meet with Ray Alamong, a UP real estate representative. Charlie remarked "I had no idea what we were doing except it would be fun to see UP headquarters in Omaha!". They left the meeting with the understanding that in order to stop the abandonment, they would need to send a letter offering to buy the RR property. A Union Pacific contractor was already taking up rail East of Frankfort.

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Raising \$45,000 in seven days was a huge task but 17 donors, including the Helvering Trust Fund, for which Ed Wieggers was the executor, contributed a total of \$48,850 and the MCRHS became owners of 11.98 miles of track and right-of-way in early 2001.

Author unknown, but probably was Randy Rundle, former president of MCRHS.

MCRHS 25th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday, October 18 has been selected as the date to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Marshall County RR Historical Society and the Central Branch RR. The tentative plan is to have rides at 3pm and 4pm followed by a meal and entertainment from 5-7pm.

Blue Rapids Community Foundation “Match Day”

This will be the 7th year of the BRCF Circle of Giving Match Day event. The original Match Day was just that, a single day event. They eventually went to a week long event online with the final day being an in person event. This year it will be a weekend online event on Saturday September 13 and Sunday the 14th followed by an in person event at the Blue Rapids Community Center on Monday, September 16. Additional details will be provided in September.

MCRHS email groups

An email listserv or mailing list is a way to send one message to a single email address which is then forwarded to all members of the list. For several years MCRHS has been using a service specifically for non-profit organizations called gaggle email. We have maintained one email list for volunteers and another for the board of directors. Like many other things, this is now transitioning to a paid subscriber service. We formerly used google groups but were having too much trouble with emails being flagged as spam. We will let you know if we obtain a solution but it is likely that the addresses of cbrr@gaggle.email and mcrhs-board@gaggle.email will no longer be valid after August 3, 2025.

MCRHS Board Members

Sandy Harding (Waterville), President
Charles Weickert (Marysville), Vice President
Ann Walter (Waterville), Secretary
Gene Harding (Waterville)
David Wessel (Frankfort)
Jim Turner (Olsburg)
Cassey Campbell (Waterville)