



January Meeting

The January meeting of the Heart of the Heartlands was held on January 14, 2023 in the Webb Center at Carona, KS. There were 19 members present. Minutes of the meeting can be found at the end of this newsletter. Members in attendance were: John Chambers, Jack Evans, Don Richardson, Larry & Kathy Spahn, Bryson Spahn, Brian Carlson, Rob McKnight, Bob Capps, Kevin Love, Jay Hastings, Ed Brinkmeyer and Paul Morgan.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be February 11, 2023 at 1:00 pm at the Webb Center in Carona.

Heartlands - YouTube

Check out our YouTube channel:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMIkqWyCxfDlf_ezgw3UyQ

Watco First Grader Christmas Ride

Due to the large number of first grade students this year, two Holiday Express Train rides were ran this year. This allowed us to put a class from each of the schools in their own coach without exposing them to the other classes as an extra precaution to the Covid virus. Watco employees were dressed as Santa Claus and elves and Santa spoke with each and every student on the train and



asked what they wanted for Christmas. Each of the 252 students on both rides received a large sugar cookie, a beverage and a “Do you believe bell” while aboard the train. In addition, KOAM-TV and Fox 14, were on hand to cover the event as was the Pittsburg Morning Sun newspaper. Heartland members assisting with the rides were: Kathy and Larry Spahn, Jim McKeel, John Chambers, Jack Evans, David Wallace and Brian Carlson.

- Photos by Brian Carlson

KCS Holiday Express

The 2022 KCS Holiday Express Christmas train was on display in Pittsburg, Kansas on Saturday, December 10th. This is an annual even that the KCS has done in Pittsburg for many years. However, due to the Covid pandemic, the train did not make an appearance anywhere on the KCS line in 2020 or 2021. Therefor, this was the first time the train was back in Pittsburg in three years. Heartland members that worked as elves on the train were: Kathy and Larry Spahn, Ivan and Denzel

From our Past

We will be featuring photos from our past for awhile.



This photo was taken in 2011 on Sunday of Little Balkans Days. This is the Chicken Dinner ride arriving in Carona with the Cherryvale Charger locomotive in the lead.

Announcements

- An anonymous individual that lives down the road from the Carona Museum donated a gasoline powered track drilling machine.
- The attic stairs in the original part of the museum are in need of replacement. The spring on the right side has broken. When temperatures reach a more stable and warmer level, replacement of the attic door and stairs will take place.

Heart of the Heartlands

Any questions, comments or suggestions, contact:

Brian Carlson

bcarlson@ckt.net

620-820-9665 (leave message)

Voorhees, Dave and Connie Wallace, John Chambers, Nick Ybarra, and Bill Houser and his granddaughter Alexa. There were 2275 people that toured the train in three hours. Those who volunteered to assist on the train received a limited edition KCS Christmas ornament for their assistance. Again, KOAM-TV channel 7 and Fox 14 were on hand to cover the event. The Pittsburg Morning Sun was also there.

East Gate Damage

On the morning of January 13th, Larry received a phone call from a Watco employee asking Larry if we were aware that the cable gate on the east side of the tracks was down and laying on the ground. According to the employee, it appeared the gate cable and post had been ripped out.



Larry headed out to the museum to meet with the Watco employee. Upon arrival Larry saw that the cable was torn down and the west rail post had been pulled completely out of the ground. It was lying on the ground and the cable was torn and twisted. The rail post on the east side was pulled sideways for about five inches. There were plastic parts of a car or truck and what appeared to be a rod support for a hood lying on the ground. After surveying the damage, Watco had a couple of their employees come and put the gate posts back up on the following Monday. Larry was on hand to meet with the group that facilitated the repairs. We are thankful and grateful for the help Watco provided to us in reporting the incident and aiding us in getting the gate back together.

- Photos by Brian Carlson

Sewer Drain Blockage

A major problem with the sewer drain caused a back up of sewer water into the restrooms. After the mess was cleaned up the site of the blockage was located but could not be removed. CDL was called and a technician came out and used a roto-rooter machine to clear the root ball accumulation at the entrance into the septic tank. It was recommended that we use a copper sulphate cleaner to keep the roots from causing any more problems.

Museum Furnace

The sub-zero temperatures at the end of December caused a concern with the furnace in the original part of the museum. It would not operate and the building's temperature was down below 40 degrees. Initially, the furnace would not reset or operate. However, the next day, Larry was able to get the furnace working and it has been running fine since.

Joplin Union Depot Meeting

On February 10, 2023, there will be a Union Depot Community Roundtable to discuss the future of the Joplin Union Depot. The roundtable will be held at the Chaos Brewing Company, located at 112 South Main Street, Joplin, MO. It is slated to start at 7:00 pm and run till 8:30 pm. There will be small group sessions led by Kansas State University to provide input and ideas for the future of the historic depot.



For more information, call 417-501-9649 or email info@downtownjoplin.com. Also, you can check out Facebook, search for the Union Depot Community Roundtable.

The depot is of historical significance in many ways. It was completed in June of 1911 with the first train arriving from the Katy Railroad. Not only was the Katy a contributor to the project and used the depot so did the Kansas City Southern, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe and the Missouri & North Arkansas. (Note: The Missouri & North Arkansas was reorganized in the 1930's and then became the Missouri and Arkansas.).



Since the last train departed on November 3, 1969, the depot has sat idle, at the mercy of time and the elements. There have been attempts to renovate and save the structure but all of them have failed to get traction and progress made. Perhaps this time, progress will be made.



- Photos from the Nick Muff Collection

January 14, 2023 - Heart of the Heartlands - Minutes

The January 14, 2023 meeting of the Heart of the Heartlands was brought to order by President Larry Spahn at 1:00 p.m.

Minutes of previous meeting: John Chambers moved to accept the minutes as mailed. Jack Evans seconded the motion, the motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: After the presentation of the treasurer's report created by treasurer Brian Carlson, Don Richardson moved, John Chambers seconded the motion to accept the treasurer's report. The motion was passed by the membership in attendance.

Old Business:

Watco First Graders Train Christmas Train:

Due to the large number of first grade students this year, two Holiday Express Train rides were ran this year. This allowed us to put a class from each of the schools in their own coach without exposing them to the other classes as an extra precaution to the Covid virus. Watco employees were dressed as Santa Claus and elves and Santa spoke with each and every student on the train and asked what they wanted for Christmas. Each of the 252 students on both rides received a large sugar cookie, a beverage and a "Do you believe bell" while aboard the train. Heartland members assisting with the rides were: Kathy and Larry Spahn, Jim McKeel, John Chambers, Jack Evans, David Wallace and Brian Carlson.

Internet connection:

Brian Carlson gave a summary report on the status of the internet project. The project has not been completed yet but internet service has been up and running since August 23. Some additional wiring will need to be completed to complete this phase of the project.

Kansas City Southern Holiday Express Train:

The 2022 KCS Holiday Express Christmas train was on display in Pittsburg, Kansas on Saturday, December 10th. Heartland members that worked as elves on the train were: Kathy and Larry Spahn, Ivan and Denzel Voorhees, Dave and Connie Wallace, John Chambers, Nick Ybarra, Bill Houser and his granddaughter, Alexa. There were 2275 people that toured the train in three hours. Those who volunteered to assist on the train received a limited edition KCS Christmas ornament for their assistance.

Trial Opening of Museum Report:

John Chambers reported on the additional museum hours that took place from the middle of October through the middle of December. John was on hand each Friday-Sunday from October 14 through December 18th with the museum open from 10-4 each of those days. There were visitors to the museum throughout the time frame with several making donations. During the times that there were no visitors, John cataloged the donations from Nick Muff and began the process of organizing and cataloging the thousands of items we have acquired over the years.

New Business:

East Gate Damage:

Larry received a phone call at 10:00 am Friday morning, January 13th. A Watco employee had called and asked if Larry knew that the cable gate on the east side of the tracks was down and laying on the ground. He said that it appeared the gate cable and post had been ripped out. Larry told him that we were not aware of the cable issue and he would be out there within the next ten minutes if he could wait. Upon arrival Larry saw what the Watco employee was talking about. The cable was torn down and the west rail post had been pulled completely out of the ground. It was lying on the ground and the cable was torn and twisted. The rail post on the east side was pulled sideways for about five inches. There were plastic parts of a car or truck and what appeared to be a rod support for a hood lying on the ground. Watco has plans to have a couple of their employees to come and put the gate posts back up on Monday. Larry was hoping to be able to be there to help them. Any other members are welcome to come out.

Sewer Drain Blockage:

A major problem with the sewer drain caused a back up of sewer water into the restrooms. After the mess was cleaned up the site of the blockage was located but could not be removed. CDL was called and a technician came out and used a roto-rooter machine to clear the root ball accumulation at the entrance into the septic tank. It was recommended that we use a copper sulphate cleaner to keep the roots from causing any more problems.

Sub-Zero Temperatures:

At the onset of the below zero temperatures Larry went out to start the water dripping from the faucets in the rest rooms. He noticed that the furnace was not working and the inside temperature was already at the freezing mark. He tried to reset the furnace controls with not luck. He then lit the small heater in the south rest room and closed both doors to hold in the heat. When he came out the next day he reset the furnace controls again and the furnace has been working since that time.

Attic Access Door:

While John Chambers was attempting to open the access door, the rivet holding the right side, spring support assembly, broke. It appears that we will have to replace the door. Larry checked the price online at the Home Depot and the cost for the door was around \$120.00. This does not include installation cost if we cannot do it ourselves. Larry will check on costs.

Railroad Track Drilling Machine Donation:

John Chambers reported that a resident down the road from the museum complex donated a gasoline powered railroad track drilling machine. The individual wished to remain anonymous.

Extended hours:

John Chambers brought up continuing the extended hours. It was agreed to have the board meet in the next couple of weeks to work on a long term solution.

Communications:

- Larry read Dave Calwell's Christmas letter to the group.
- The Missouri Pacific Historical Society's annual convention will be held this fall in Wichita, KS. The dates are October 5-8, 2023.

Don Richardson moved to adjourn the meeting. Paul Morgan seconded the motion and it passed by the membership present.