



## November Meeting

The November meeting of the Heart of the Heartlands was held on November 9, 2024 in the Webb Center at Carona, KS. This was the annual meeting that was preceded by a lunch. There were 30 members present. Minutes of the meeting can be found at the end of this newsletter. Members in attendance were: John Chambers, Larry & Kathy Spahn, Paul Morgan, Ruth Maxwell, Dick Rauinker, Gary Brown, Brian & Dawn Carlson, Jack Evans, Guy & Brenda Ferguson, Connie & Mike Payton, Jim McKeel, Rob McKnight, Denzil & Ivan Voorhees, Jim & Lois Carlson, John & Brenda Randall, Don Richardson, Carol Lewis & Darrell Cave, Bob Capps, Paige Capps, Bryson Spahn, Ed Brinkmeyer and Bill Gillfillen.

## Next Meeting

The next meeting will be at 7:00 pm, January 8, 2025 at the Webb Center in Carona. There will be no December meeting.

## Heartlands - YouTube

Check out our YouTube channel:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMlkqWyCxftDlf\\_ezgw3UyQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMlkqWyCxftDlf_ezgw3UyQ)

## Enhancements Around the Museum

Heartlands member, Rob McKnight has been a busy man helping with various endeavors. He has been going to several train shows this year selling souvenirs and advertising our presence to those in attendance. The shows he has attended has taken him through all of the four states with his most recent show in Springfield, MO. The next show on his agenda will be in Joplin, MO at the end of November.



- Brian Carlson photo

In addition to Rob's road trips, he also has built several items for displays and other needs at Carona. Earlier this year, he built the frame that holds the Missouri Pacific Emblem that came from the Coffeyville, MOP building. Prior to that, he repaired the window



- John Chambers photo

sills in the Carona depot as well as made new steps for the loading dock of the depot. Recently, he finished installing the plexiglass around the model train layout in the Morgan Center. He also installed a railing with a gate to help protect the contents in the Carona Depot. The Heartlands' members all have talents that helps us grow and function. We thank Rob for his contributions.



- John Chambers photo

## Upcoming Train Rides

### Watco Santa Express Train -

The 2024 Watco Santa Express Train ride will be held on Monday, December 9th. This annual event is for the first grade students in Crawford County. Two train rides are scheduled with the first leaving at 9:00 am and the second at 10:30 am. Both will depart from the usual boarding area at the intersection of Monroe and Elm Streets in Pittsburg. Members wishing to help on this ride need to be at the boarding site by 8:30 am.

## From our Past

We will be featuring photos from our past for awhile.

*These pictures were taken in December of 2014 while the KCS Holiday Express was being spotted in Pittsburg.*

- Larry Spahn photos



## Board of Directors

- Larry Spahn (Pres)
- Connie Payton. (VP)
- Brian Carlson (Sec-Treas)
- Darrell Cave
- Jack Evans
- Paul Morgan
- John Randall
- Kathy Spahn
- Ed Brinkmeyer

### Heart of the Heartlands

Any questions, comments or suggestions, contact:

Brian Carlson

[bcarlson@ckt.net](mailto:bcarlson@ckt.net)

620-820-9665 (leave message)

## Museum Director Report for October

### Report by John Chambers

- Total visitors for the month was 78 from Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Oregon, Florida, Illinois, Tennessee and Ontario, Canada.
- I was sick with a mild case of Covid for four days and the museum was closed which impacted our count.
- We have slowed down though due to school being back in session and the end of the regular tourist season.
- On Oct. 31, I had two young men from the BNSF Maintenance of Way department stop by. They were in a company truck and toured the museum. Both live in Missouri. They were impressed with all of the items we have.
- On Nov. 3, I had two engineers from the UP visit. They were from Hutchinson and McPherson and were on their way to Big Brutus and decided to check us out. They too were very impressed with the museum.
- On Oct 20, we had two of our local neighbors come by and ask if they could take pictures of their Ford Mustangs with the 1023.
- Had to replace the batteries in the outside alarm. Larry came out with some and we installed them. Took a little time from both of us to figure out why the alarm code wouldn't clear but we finally got it done. The system has worked fine since.
- I finished up cataloging all of the recent donations which we have received quit a few within the last several months.
- I went to the SEK Museum Alliance meeting on Monday Nov 4th in St Paul. I distributed brochures to several area museums. The speaker was with the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area and she described what they are and how to join, which is free. They also give out grants up to \$3,000 with no matching needed. We may want to look into this and join. They cover much of eastern Kansas from the KC area to the Oklahoma border and several counties in Western Missouri. They are a Federally recognized organization which receives funding through the National Park Service.

## Election of Board Members

At the annual meeting, election of board members was held. This year, board members Ed Brinkmeyer, Connie Payton, and Brian Carlson terms were expiring. All three agreed to continue as board members and there were no other candidates for the positions. All three were chosen to continue for another three years by acclamation. We thank them as well as all of our board members for their time and service to the Heartlands.

## November 9, 2024 - Heart of the Heartlands - Minutes

The November 9, 2024 meeting of the Heart of the Heartlands was brought to order by President Larry Spahn at 1:00 p.m. The meeting took place after the group enjoyed lunch that was served at 12:00 pm.

**Minutes of previous meeting:** Lois Carlson moved to accept the minutes as mailed. John Chambers seconded the motion, the motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** After the presentation of the treasurer's report, Jack Evans moved and Guy Ferguson seconded the motion to accept the treasurer's report. The motion was passed by the membership in attendance.

### **Old Business:**

#### **CD Expiration:**

Discussion was held in regards to the expired CD that the club has at the Labette Bank. Larry Spahn and Brian Carlson are going to look at investment options for the money from the CD.

#### **Highway Signage Project:**

Darrell Cave updated the group on the Heartland's application with the state of Kansas to have signs erected along nearby highways advertising the museum. The state contact for the project inquired about the name for the signs. Confusion had arisen due to the various names that we have listed on our website, on the Kansas tourism website, etc. Darrell informed them that we are going with "Heartlands Railroad Museum". We will work on getting the name consistent across our different advertising venues.

#### **Train Show Report:**

Rob McKnight reported that he will be at the train show in Joplin on November 30. He is already looking at 2025 with two possible shows in February. He also mentioned using a small TV to play some videos showcasing our facilities and activities.

### **New Business:**

#### **Outdoor Lighting:**

Many of the flood lamps on the grounds are in need of replacement. The shelter on the 1023 locomotive and the Carona Depot are not functioning. It was estimated that we need a minimum of 16 flood lamps to replace the current ones. As soon as the bulbs can be obtained, a lift will be secured to replace the bulbs on the 1023 shelter. The ones on the Carona Depot will be replaced then as well. All replacement bulbs will be LED bulbs.

#### **December Train Rides:**

The 2024 Watco Santa Express Train ride will held on Monday, December 9th. There will be two rides, the first at 9:00 am followed by a 10:30 am ride. Both will depart from the usual boarding area at the intersection of Monroe and Elm Streets in Pittsburg. Members wishing to help on this ride need to be at the loading area no later than 8:30 am.

### **Monthly Museum and Visitors Report:**

John Chambers gave his museum and visitors report:

- In addition to the attendance numbers, the following information was given:
  - John talked about the Freedom Frontier organization that is available in our area. This organization has grants up to \$3,000 available to members. There is no cost to join the group. He is going to gather more information.
  - John also mentioned the possibility of advertising on the fence at Big Brutus.

### **Other Items:**

#### ***Jim McKeel***

- Mentioned that the Abilene and Smokey Valley Railroad had a meeting that was attended by the lady from the Kansas Tourism office. She shared information with them.
- Jim inquired about our plans in regards to being opened for Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. It was decided that we will be closed on all three of those days.

#### ***Lois Carlson***

- Mentioned information from the recent SEK Museum Alliance meeting.
- During that meeting there was discussion about the 2026 World Cup Soccer event being held in Kansas City and Dallas. There is belief that people attending these two venues will be looking for places to visit while in the area. Local attractions were encouraged to keep this in mind.

#### ***Don Richardson***

- Donated some items to the museum.

### **Election of Board Members:**

With the term expirations of board members Brian Carlson, Connie Payton, and Ed Brinkmeyer, elections were held for these positions. John Chambers moved to nominate and accept the three current board members by acclamation for the next three years. Don Richardson seconded the motion and the motion was passed by the members present.

John Randall moved to adjourn the meeting. Jack Evans seconded the motion and it passed by the membership present. Meeting adjourned at 2:20 pm.

## **November 9, 2024 - Heart of the Heartlands - Board of Directors - Minutes**

The annual meeting of the Heart of the Heartlands Board of Directors was held November 9, 2024 at 2:30 p.m. President Larry Spahn called the meeting to order.

Board members in attendance were:

Officers: Larry Spahn - President, Connie Payton - Vice President, Brian Carlson - Secretary-Treasurer

Board Members: Darrell Cave, Ed Brinkmeyer, Paul Morgan, John Randall, Kathy Spahn and Jack Evans.

After a brief discussion in regards to officers of the board, Darrel Cave moved by acclamation to have Larry Spahn - President, Connie Payton - Vice President and Brian Carlson - Secretary-Treasurer remain in their positions. Jack Evans seconded the motion and it was passed by the Board.

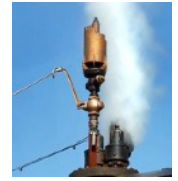
Jack Evans moved to adjourn the meeting. Paul Morgan seconded the motion and it too was passed by the board.



### Got a spot?

Don't hesitate to send something in if you have a place you have been or would like to go to. Our members would love to hear about it!

# Whistle Stop!



## The Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad

- Article and photos by Heart of the Heartlands member, Brian Carlson

In the August newsletter, I talked about the Conway Scenic Railroad in North Conway, NH. The CSR was one of the stops on our summer trip to Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. As we worked our way to the coast of Maine in enroute back to Boston, we stopped in Portland, ME. There we visited the Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad.



Our Train for the Ride

The MNGR operates about 1.5 miles of track along the Casco Bay coast in Portland. The Maine Narrow Gauge is not your typical narrow gauge. As most of us know, the standard gauge for almost all trains in the country is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. Most narrow gauge railroads in the United States have a gauge of 3 feet apart. The Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad has track that is 2 feet apart. The history of how the 2-foot gauge came about is an interesting part of their history.

In the latter part of the 19th century, Maine, like other parts of the country were expanding in trade and commerce. However, the hilly and heavily woody terrain made the cost of putting in a standard gauge railroad extremely high. Railroad engineers discovered that a narrow gauge line was much cheaper to construct and easier to build in the terrain unique to Maine. The rails could be laid quicker and would allow the train to go around tighter curves and navigate the hilly and rocky landscapes. Narrow gauge offered an affordable option to reach mines, quarries, factories and isolated towns, reaching places the standard gauge lines could not.

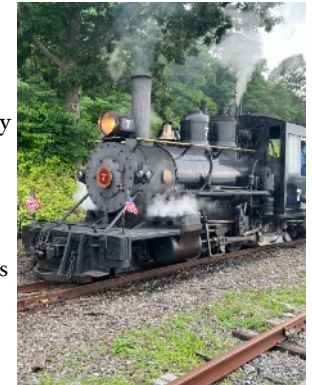
Taking inspiration from narrow gauge lines in Wales, the 2-foot gauge was found to be the best fit for construction, maintenance and traffic flow for Maine. Estimates were that it cost 1/3 to 1/2 as much to construct the 2-foot gauge than a standard gauge line. Although, more affordable, there were disadvantages. Locomotives, passenger cars and freight cars had to be scaled down. As a result, this limited their power and speed. However, during the late 19th century, high speed was not a concern for most customers.

From the 1870's to the 1940's about 200 miles of narrow gauge lines had been laid in Maine. There were eventually five railways: Sandy River & Rangeley Lakes (1879-1935), Bridgton & Saco River — Bridgton & Harrison (1881-1941), Monson (1992-1943), Kennebec Central (1890-1929) and the Wiscasset, Waterville & Farmington (1894-1933). Like other areas, automobiles and better public roads spelled the end of the Maine narrow gauge lines. The last to close, the Monson, is where the present day Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad's locomotives #3 and #4 came from.

As the narrow gauge railroads shut down and dismantled, enthusiasts and entrepreneurs saved as much as they could from being scrapped. One individual, Ellis D. Atwood purchased a large number of locomotives, passenger cars, freight cars and additional supplies. In the mid 1940's he began operating his "Edaville Railroad" which lasted 50 years. The operation closed and the equipment was sold off. Most of the equipment found a home with the newly established Maine Narrow Gauge Railroad & Museum in Portland, Maine.

The MNGR, founded in 1992, is a 501(c)3 nonprofit educational organization to educate the public and preserve historic equipment related to Maine's two-foot gauge railways. My wife and I really enjoyed our ride on the route. Even though it is a 3-mile round trip, the experience is definitely worth experiencing.

- Historical information is from: <https://mainenarrowgauge.org/mission-history/>



Our Locomotive



The 2-Foot Gauge



Caboose



Coach Car & Caboose