

GREAT PLAINS DISPATCHER

**The Official Newsletter of the Great Plains Transportation Museum
and the Wichita Chapter National Railway Historical Society**

FEBRUARY 2013

Volume X II

Number 2

ANNUAL MUSEUM BUSINESS MEETING

The annual Great Plains Transportation Museum business meeting will be held
Friday, February 15, 2012 at 7:00 PM.

Location of the meeting: Wichita Toy Train Club, 130 S. Laura, Wichita, Kansas.

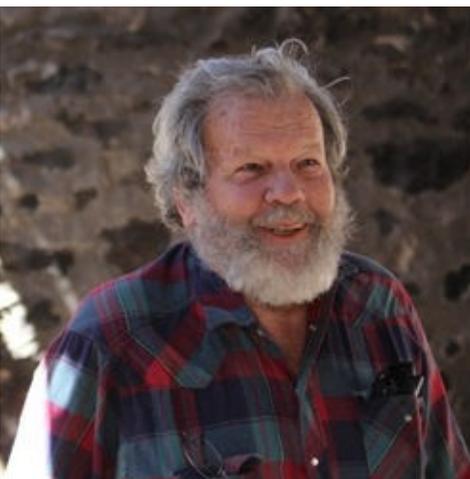
END OF THE LINE FOR MUSEUM'S FOUNDER DR. JOHN C. GRIES

Gries, Dr. John C., Professor of Geology at Wichita State University for over 40 years passed away last Friday (Jan. 18) following a short illness. A teacher known to thousands of general studies students and many of WSU's finest athletes through his popular Introductory Geol. 300 class on Energy, Resources, and the Environment; he will be particularly remembered by the many Geology majors he mentored and encouraged in their careers.

John was born and raised in Rapid City, South Dakota where his father, Paul Gries, was a long-time, highly-regarded professor of geology at the South Dakota School of Mines. He was introduced to well site geology at the age of five and accompanied many of his dad's field classes. Dr. Gries' education included a BS in Engineering and a Master's degree in Geology from the University of Wyoming and a Ph.D. from the University of Texas. His dissertation centered on mapping portions of the northern Mexico region near Ojinaga —work which still ranks as the definitive map of that area, perhaps in part due to the fact that drug cartels and smugglers have prevented access to any other geologists. Summers at UT provided a diversity of ex-

perience working for US Geological Survey (including a bit of mule skinning in Idaho) and surface mapping for Humble Oil. He joined the faculty at Wichita State in August 1971.

At WSU he taught in a variety of fields, with specialties in Structural Geology, Ground Water Management and Geo-tectonics; but virtually all WSU Geol. grads will best remember their five weeks at Field Camp based in Colorado which he led for most all of that 40 years. Known for his expertise with a Dutch oven and his seemingly unlimited delicious menus produced over the campfire - come snow, rain, or dark of night, he also got to



know field camp students on a personal level not usually found in the University environment. He receives regular up-dates from former students throughout the world- - and downtown Wichita. He served multiple terms as Department Chairman. His teaching and research have been recognized by numerous awards including George Lewis Teaching award, selection for the two-year Berg fellowship to support his fracture studies in the Silverton caldera, and the recent 2013 Teacher of the Year award from the Kansas Geological Society. He also took second place in the highly coveted Geology Society of American National Meeting Campfire Cook-off competition.

Besides his teaching career, John has been very involved in a number of other activities: He is founder and president of the Great Plains Transportation Museum, located on East Douglas near the old Union Station (look for the steam Locomotive on the overpass); participated in a number of steam technology shows, and is an active member of the Great Plains Blacksmith Association and sometimes Mountain man re-enactor. He has been

(Continued on page 4)



**THE MISSION OF
THE GREAT PLAINS
TRANSPORTATION
MUSEUM**

To be *THE* Railroad Museum
Of Kansas.

Dedicated to record and exhibit the importance of railroad transportation in the human, agricultural, commercial and industrial heritage of Wichita, Kansas and the Great Plains.

To showcase that heritage with an "Action Display" of rail equipment operation. Giving visitors an exciting learning experience through motion, set in a unique, historic and scenic urban location.

To enhance the action display with significant and appropriate railroad locomotives, rolling stock, equipment and structures; through interpretive displays, dioramas, exhibits and media; and educational and community programs.



The GREAT PLAINS DISPATCHER is the official monthly newsletter of the Wichita Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, Inc. and the Great Plains Transportation Museum, Inc. Members receive the DISPATCHER as part of their membership. All material submitted for publication should be submitted by the 25th of the month for publication in the next months DISPATCHER. Submissions may be sent to the editor at: editor@gptm.us, 316-744-7259 or 700 E. Douglas, Wichita, KS 67202-3506

FEBRUARY NRHS MEETING

The February NRHS meeting will be held in conjunction with the annual GPTM membership meeting. The program after the museum's annual meeting will be a review of this past year's activities at the museum and a short tribute to Dr. Gries.

The meeting will be held Friday, February 15, at Wichita Toy Train Club, 130 S. Laura in Wichita. Meeting time is 7:00 pm.

There will be the 5:30 p.m. informal dinner gathering at the Riverside Cafe, 739 W. 13th, Wichita before the meeting.

The starting time for NRHS meetings has been changed to 7:00 PM.

NRHS PROGRAMS FOR 2013

March: *Santa Fe Steam Locomotive Development by Bob Walz*

April: Topeka Chapter Exchange Program

May: Australia.

June: Lance Garrels.

July: Annual Platform Meeting

August: Open

September: Chapter Annual Picnic

October: Kansas City Chapter Exchange Program

November: Confederate Railroads Generalship by Chris Gabel

December: Annual Slide Free-for-All

MUSEUM BOD MEETINGS

The museum BOD meetings are currently being held at Wm. F. Hurst Co., 2121 S. Southwest Blvd.

OTHER EVENTS

Feb. 9-10, 2013 - Wichita Train Show & Swap Meet; 9-6 Sat., 11-4 Sun. Cessna Activity Center. Info: Phil Aylward, 316-830-3498.

Feb. 16: Lawrence Model Railroad Club Train Show & Swap Meet, Douglas Co. Fairgrounds.

Mar. 16-17. Great Train Expo, Wichita Century II.

Apr. 24-26: Katy Historical Society Convention, Bartlesville, OK.

www.katyrailroad.org

Sept. 13-22, NRHS Convention, Fairbanks & Anchorage, Alaska, www.nrhs.com

CENTRAL KANSAS RAILWAY

By Sam Andrews

During February, 1993, Central Kansas Railway began running a tonnage transfer job between McPherson-Newton. The railroad was brand new, having started up a month earlier when nearly 900 miles of Santa Fe branchline trackage in Kansas were sold to the new shortline. At McPherson the CKRNEW train would go to work at 5:PM on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, make a trip to Newton over Union Pacific rails, head into the Santa Fe yard to swap traffic and depart back home as the NEWCKR train. In July, 1993 the job changed to a Tuesday. Thursday, Saturday going to work at 6:AM. This remained the method of operation until the railroad was sold to WATCO in 2001, becoming the Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad.

Most of the time, but not always, two former Santa Fe switch engines worked the job. The 2239/2243 became the first pair to do so.

A engine change in February, 1994 brought 713 on board. This former Colorado shortline unit worked the job for nearly a year and was decked out in solid red and lettered Central Kansas Railway across the engine body.

During 1993-1994 all former Santa Fe engines in the fleet were painted into the solid red and keeping their Santa Fe numbers. The first such unit to start working into Newton became 2016 in October, 1994. Other former Santa Fe engines that worked the local were 2083, 2084, 2199, 2232, 2242.

A couple engines from sister shortline Kansas Southwestern did brief work on the job. These were 4285/4294, former Chicago Northwestern that now were painted into KSW colors of red, white & blue.

In a perfect world we all would have preferred Santa Fe staying active with the branchlines. The brief period of the CKRY though did provide interesting train movements and photo shoots which now is all a distant memory of Kansas railroad past.





LOOKING BACK

By Michael M. Bartels



50 YEARS AGO

A retirement party was held Feb. 5, 1963, for Charles E. Hall, employed at Union Station since 1918, the first 31 years as ticket clerk and the past 14 as agent in charge. (Wichita Eagle, Feb. 6, 1963)

The Midland Valley Railroad agreed to sell nearly five acres at the southwest corner of Douglas and McLean for \$200,000 for the new Metropolitan Baptist Church if it may keep an easement for its tracks cutting through the southeast portion. (Wichita Eagle, Feb. 18, 1963)

70 YEARS AGO

The city traffic commission yesterday recommended to the city commission that a device be installed in the front of city buses to prevent overloading to the right of the driver, which obstructs his vision. (Wichita Eagle, Feb. 2, 1943)

The North Topeka and Riverside bus lines will be added to the skip-stop system beginning tomorrow. (Wichita Eagle, Feb. 7, 1943)

The Feb. 21, 1943, Eagle had an article about one of the first woman bus drivers in Wichita, Neva McDonald.

The Feb. 28, 1943, Eagle described in detail the weekly winding and maintenance of the clock in the tower of city hall. Lying criss-crossed on a platform beneath the clock and gong bell are several rails that used to be embedded in the streets when old mule-drawn cars were in operation here. They were

placed in their present position so they could catch clock weights or the big bell in case their supports should break, thus preventing them from plunging through to the floors below.

90 YEARS AGO

Eight new freight and switch engines, which were to have been delivered to the Wichita Division of the Missouri Pacific, have been delayed indefinitely because of pressing needs on other divisions. (Wichita Eagle, Feb. 6, 1923)

Three U.S. government locomotives, at present operated by the Wichita Falls and Northwestern Railroad, are to be purchased within the next few days by the Orient. One is already at the Wichita shops undergoing repairs. They are known as Russian locomotives because they were built during the war for use in Russia. But when the Russian government fell, they were employed for U.S. use. (Wichita Beacon, Feb. 6, 1923)

Signs warning drivers a streetcar is about to discharge passengers are being attached to the doors of all one-man Birney cars. The signs, which are red and bear the word "STOP" in white letters, swing out when the doors are opened. (Wichita Beacon, Feb. 7, 1923)

Fourteen lots in the Payne Park addition, west of the Midland Valley station, were purchased by that road for \$10,000 to be the site of a new water treatment plant. (Wichita Eagle, Feb. 11, 1923)

Operators of the jitney bus lines who bitterly fought legislation that would remove them from streets traversed by

streetcars have found the change to be a boon. Under the old system a large license fee was charged and buses and routes were being sold or exchanged weekly. Today, with buses paying a smaller license fee, but serving an area where streetcars do not penetrate, greater profit has come and there have been no route sales in months. (Wichita Beacon, Feb. 12, 1923)

A College Hill streetcar and a White Star jitney bus collided last evening in the first block on North Market. The streetcar had to be hauled to the shops for repairs. The jitney, somewhat damaged, backed out of the wreckage and left the scene, but not until the coal oil stove that kept it warm exploded and the few passengers kicked out the windows for fear they would be burned. (Wichita Beacon, Feb. 14, 1923)

Beginning about March 1st, MoPac will take over operation of all the eating houses on its system, which now are managed by the Van Noy company. (Wichita Eagle, Feb. 23, 1923)

Title to the Douglas Avenue bridge cannot be found and proceedings toward a contract with the streetcar company will have to be dropped until this is settled. County commissioners had withdrawn objections to placing tracks on the bridge but said any improvements to the bridge will automatically belong to the county and not impair its title to the bridge. (Wichita Beacon, Feb. 14, 27, 1923)



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Technical Advisor to the City Manager of Wichita on Groundwater Pollution and worked on pollution issues at McConnell Air Force Base.

His work and interests have taken him at one time or another to all of the Rocky Mountain states, many of the other states, and the occasional jaunt to Morocco, Ethiopia and the East African Rift, often in the company of his long-term companion and wife of 13 years Toni Willis-Jackman, a former diplomat and now lecturer in Environmental Geology at WSU. He had no immediate plans for retirement and was actively planning the next year's field season.

John was predeceased by his parents, Paul and Virginia Gries, and his younger brother, Don. He is survived by his wife, Toni, his daughter, Lynn Gries, who practices and teaches trauma surgery at the University of Arizona School of Medicine in Tucson; his first wife and friend, Robbie Gries; his sister-in-law, Neella Gries, and two nephews, Nathan and Mark.

A public visitation will take place, 4:00 – 6:00 P.M., Thursday, January 24, 2013, Downing & Lahey Mortuary East, Wichita, KS. Celebration of Life will be Saturday, January 26 at the WSU Geology Department, Room 101 at 2:00 PM. Memorials have been established at: the Great Plains Transportation Museum, 700 E. Douglas Ave., Wichita, KS 67202; and the Wichita State University Foundation, 1845 Fairmount St., Wichita, KS 67260.

Vaya con Dios, my friend.

RAILROADING IN WICHITA **FEBRUARY 1913**

By Fred Tefft

February 4

Report that Orient Railroad is planning to add a second story to its freight depot on East Douglas and move its divi-

sion headquarters there. The latter at present are located in rented quarters at 813 East Douglas.

February 6

A cross-over between the main line and one of the two house tracks of the Orient in the east yards is being put in. It will aid greatly in the switching of freight and passenger cars.

Article -- union station building beginning to take shape. Work progressing on third story and stone columns on front of building are being put in.

February 11

Asked why the cars of Wichita street railway company are not equipped with straps, superintendent Charles R. Lewis said yesterday, "We have never had enough traffic to make strap hangers necessary as yet, although some of our cars are supplied with them." Conference to be held between city and railroad officials about putting in more "wig wags" at grade crossings. There is one already installed at Murdock and Missouri Pacific tracks and this has served well, so that city wants other important crossings similarly equipped: a second already installed at 13th and Santa Fe tracks.

February 12

Missouri Pacific will soon start taking up old light 56 pound rail between Yates Center and Ft. Scott and replacing it with 75 or 85 pound new steel. Seventy-five pound steel was laid between Yates Center and Wichita several years ago.

February 14

Petitions being circulated to pave Fairmount avenue with brick from 13th to 17th. If passed, the Wichita Street Railway company will pay a share of the cost. It takes about \$10,000 to pave a single track one mile, so their share will be about \$5000. There are about twenty and a half miles of street traversed by single and double street car tracks in Wichita, and at present sixteen and a half miles are paved.

Article urging support for "Kinsley Air Line" Railroad from Kinsley to Turon and ultimately to Wichita as a shorter route to Denver.

Article about plans for further installation of "wig wags" and "thank you, ma'ams" at railroad crossings.

February 18

With the securing of a franchise from the county commissioners of Harvey county for an extension of its rail line in that county, the Arkansas Valley Interurban company will begin work on an extension within 30 days. The company will build a two mile extension north from the Newton terminus to Bethel college. Franchises secured from Newton city and the county give the company a right-of-way in the Main street Although a definite schedule has not been made out, the general belief is that only one car will be used. It will make the round trip several times a day and will pick passengers up at all the corners and deposit them anywhere on the line, the same as a street car system.

February 20

Rock Island Railroad has decided to place wig-wag signals where Rock Island crosses following streets: 17th, 13th, 9th, Murdock, Central, Harry, and Lincoln.

February 27

Superintendent Lewis of the street car company expects that the six new "near side" pay-as-you-enter cars, which have been ordered for the Wichita service for some time, will be here in about 30 days. They will be put into service on the Riverside line. The cars have no back platform, the entrance and exit being in front. The cars are now in the paint shop of the St. Louis Car company and should be turned out in about a month.

Dr. Edward N. Tihen's Notes from Wichita Newspapers, Special Collections and University Archives, Wichita State University Libraries

DINNER TRAIN BEGINS OPERATION

The Kansas Belle Dinner Train made its first revenue run on January 26th, 2013 on the Midland Railway at Baldwin City!

Big Band era music playing in the background, tables set in a grand fashion and waiters/waitresses dressed the part! That is right, we back in the 1940's taking a train trip down the tracks, eating a five course meal aboard one of three dinning cars on the Kansas Belle Dinner Train. What a better way to dine!

The Kansas Belle Dinner Train was the Fremont Dinner Train in Fremont, NE for the past 24 years, operating on the Fremont and Elkhorn Valley Railroad. Bruce Eveland and his investors moved the train to the Midland Railway's tracks in late 2012 after months of negotiation. Since then, much hard work has been done to get the operation up and running once again.

The Kansas Belle Dinner Train plans to operate Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons to start, hopefully adding Friday evening runs as the year progresses. As of now, the Dinner Train has several dining options that you can add for a minimal fee with your evening trip when available. Murder Mystery shows are very popular and add a wonderful level of entertainment to the evening. Other times of the year, the Dinner Train offers WWII USO Shows or a melodrama.

The Dinner Train's five and three course meal is a wonderful combination and well presented. Prime Rib, Chicken Marsala, and Salmon on Saturday night with Beef & Bison Meatloaf, Catfish, and Chicken Parmesan Pasta being your choice on Sunday right now. The Dinner Train also has a full bar, serving mixed drinks, numerous selections of red and white wine, beer and more.

Please take time to welcome the Kansas Belle Dinner Train to the Midland Railway and Baldwin City, KS. The Dinner Train can be found on their website at www.kansasbelle.com

Kansas Belle Dinner Train office is located at 215 Ames Street, Baldwin City, KS 66006. 785-594-8505 or 1-800-942-RAIL (7245)



Central Kansas skies were overcast Jan. 10, 2013 when the BNSF and AMTRAK operated the Southwest Chief Charter from Topeka to La Junta. Purpose of the trip was to raise awareness of the communities on the line about the deteriorating track conditions. Passing the Halstead, Ks depot is Amtrak 156 pulling 4 BNSF business cars: 800581-Snoqualmie Pass, 800661-Marias Pass, 800648-Topeka, and 800075-Glacier View. Photo by Fred Tefft.

**THE GREAT PLAINS
TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM
Membership and Volunteer Application**

Membership Categories

Regular Memberships

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$35

Supporting Memberships

<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Contributing	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor	\$250
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$1000

I want to volunteer in the following areas:

- Shop & restoration Gift shop
- Interpretive guide/Tours Fund raising
- Displays & artifacts Library
- General Maintenance Office
- Planning & Development Newsletter
- Other: _____
- Add me to your special activities mail list
- I would like to receive my newsletter via E-mail

I am paying by

- Cash Discover Visa
- Check Master Card

Account Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Signature: _____

Date Received: _____

Please remit to:

Great Plains Transportation Museum
Membership Coordinator
700 E. Douglas Ave
Wichita, KS 67202-3506

February 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Museum Open Work Day
3	4	5 Evening Work Session	6	7	8	9 Museum Open Work Day
10	11	12 Evening Work Session	13	14 	15 NRHS & GPTM Annual Meeting	16 Museum Open Work Day
17	18 President's Day	19 Evening Work Session	20 GPTM BOD	21	22	23 Museum Open Work Day
24	25	26 Evening Work Session	27	28		

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