

The Dispatcher November/December 2023

President's Message, By Eric Dilbeck

At the end of December, we wrapped up our Polar Express Train Event. This is the fourth event since we started in 2019. Every year our attendance has grown and every year it seems to get smoother. I say smoother even though we still run into issues, we have contingencies in place that keep issues from becoming a crisis. This is due to all the great and resourceful people we have at the museum. We truly could not host an event this size or long with them. You, our volunteers, have put in over 3,000 hours in November and December. This does not include the many hours Anne and Amanda worked. This is truly an all-hands-on event. I cannot express how appreciative I am of all the hours everyone put into this event.



Our museum expansion is progressing with our campus electrical project. In January, the final cutover from our aerial electric service to the new underground should be finished. This project has taken over a year. This was mainly due to supply issues with the new electrical equipment. This project is a major milestone to our infrastructure upgrades to support all the planned building in our expansion plan. Not only will this increase our power capacity, but we will also have the ability to power our passenger cars while in the shop building. This will allow us to do repairs and troubleshooting without running a generator to power the car.

Also In 2024, we hope to finish the Le Flore Depot with the County ARPA Grant we received last fall. This will include all the exterior trim and paint along with the electrical, plumbing, and HVAC system. Other projects planned for 2024 are track expansion projects either in the yard or off Main 2 to allow us more storage.

2023 was another great year for the museum. We continue to move forward with making our museum better. Sometimes its large projects like the new Oakwood deck or electrical upgrades. Sometimes it is little things like a new sign for a display or getting a storage area organized. No matter how small or large the project, every project our volunteers complete makes the museum better. And we would not be here without the many volunteers that have contributed over the last 20+ years!

Upcoming Events

- **Reading the Rails Book Club:** January 27th, 2024 (Join the Book Club [Here](#))
- **Annual Members Meeting:** March 23rd, 2024
- **Easter Train Ride:** March 30th, 2024

Trustee Meeting: November 28th, 2023

- Approved Minutes of October 31st meeting • Treasurer's Report & Expenditure Review • Financials Review and Budget
- Status of Grants and Donations
- Employee and Department Reports • Acquisitions Report
- Train Show Report
- Hensel Phelps Trailer Space • RS-3 Oil Cooler Replacement
- ARC Civil Engineering Update
- No meeting in December, Next meeting January 30, 2024

For a full copy of the minutes email Anne Chilton at annem@oklahomarailwaymuseum.org

Renew your Membership for 2024!

Once again it is time to renew your membership with the Oklahoma Railway Museum!

We want to thank all of you for your support and hard work this past year. It is because of you, our members and volunteers that we continue our mission to provide an educational experience of railroads and how they shaped Oklahoma and the nation and that the museum is in a great position for the coming year.

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to the New Year!

If you have already paid your dues for next year or are a Life member and receive this email, please disregard

You may mail in your dues [Printable Form](#) or [Pay Online](#)_____

With your membership you receive:

- Free train rides on regular run days (Does not apply to Special Events)
- Emailed copy of the ORM newsletter, The Dispatcher
- Member's picnic and train ride Opportunities for other rail trip activities
- Eligibility to become a train crew member or car host
 - Discount in museum gift shop • and much more

Membership dues are outlined below:

Regular Membership (Includes Spouse).....	\$40.00
Senior (Age 65+) Membership (Includes Spouse).....	\$35.00
Student (Full-time)?Membership?.....	\$35.00
Family Membership (Two Adults and Four Children).	\$50.00
Sustaining Membership (including Spouse).	\$150.00

Please update any contact information that may have changed.

We look forward to seeing you in the coming year, so we can show you what we've been working on. Please visit us soon!

Anne Murray Chilton Museum Administrator
annem@oklahomarailwaymuseum.org 405-424-8222

Larry Dodd, ORM Member

Several years ago I nominated Eric Dilbeck to replace me as Vice President, then he became President. He contacted me and said my 'penance' for drafting him was that I was to write an article monthly for "The Dispatcher". I did so for a while as we traveled in our RV. I tried to find a railroad museum every month to visit and photograph it and write an article about the rail line and how the museum came to be.



Well..... We quit traveling as much and I have been remiss in my article duty so here is one that I recently stumbled across that has a particularly interesting tie to our MK&T heritage at ORM.

We stopped in LaGrange Texas on our way to our winter home. Ostensibly it was for Loretta to shop at a quilt store, but right behind the store was the LaGrange Katy Depot. It was closed when we arrived as it has limited hours. But I was able to photograph the unique building as well as a few pieces of rolling stock that were near the station.

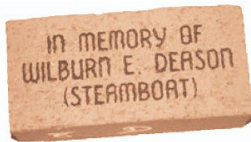
The former MK&T station is now on the Union Pacific and on active track. LaGrange is on a line from Waco Texas to Houston. The rail lines in that area are kind of a spider web as Union

Pacific has absorbed many smaller lines (i.e. Missouri, Kansas & Texas) and updated the existing lines and abandoned others.

The building itself has a unique bay end for the waiting room area and the traditional freight house end on the other. The station has an active semaphore signal that trains now disregard it's permanent "Stop" position.

I submit the photos attached for your browsing. If you wander towards LaGrange (and I plan to return) check it out. I hope to get back there and tour during open hours. Maybe I will submit a second article about the LaGrange Katy Depot.





Donation Box

In anticipation of our new museum expansion project, we are in need of donations more than ever before! Brick purchases and donations will make a real difference in helping us to achieve our goals.

Please visit our website if you are able to give! [DONATE](#)

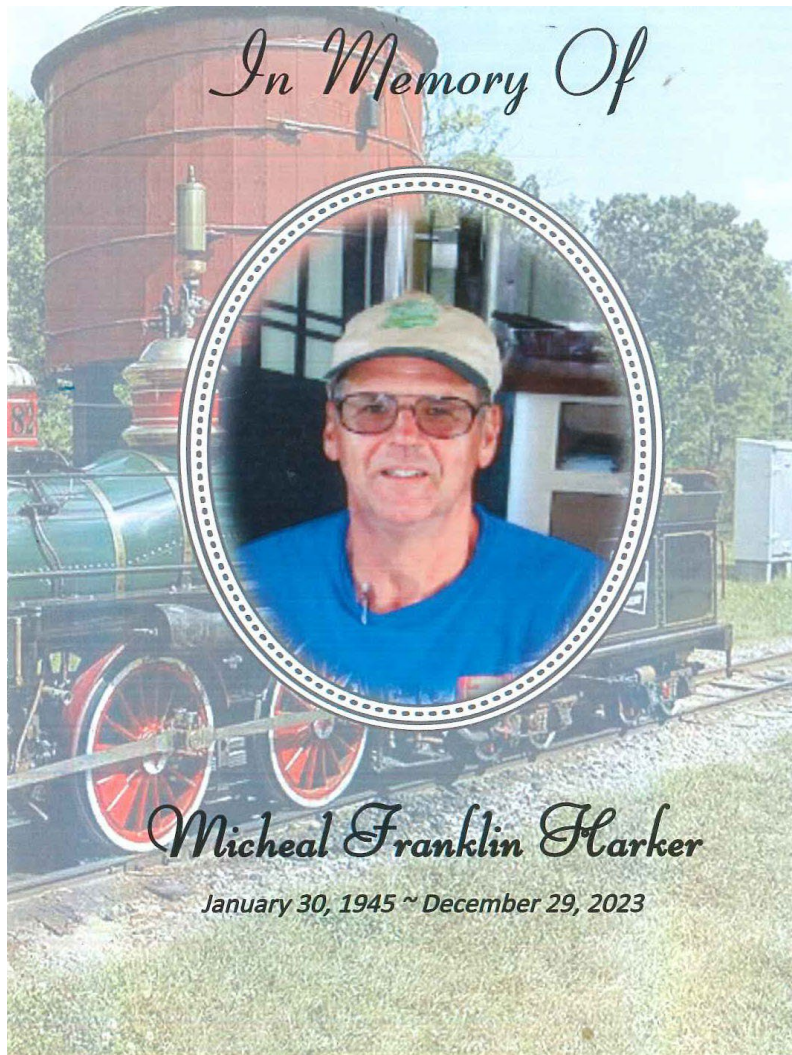


The museum needs the following items:

Contact Anne Chilton 405-424-8222 annem@oklahomarailwaymuseum.org if you would like to purchase anything on this list.

To donate funds click link [DONATE](#) and mention what funds are for in the note section of donation form. You can also mail us a donation if you prefer.

- Plants and bushes for landscaping • 6 & 8 ft plastic tables
 - 6 ft. plastic picnic tables
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With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of ORM Member, Micheal Franklin Harker.

Micheal Harker was born on January 30th, 1945 to Melvin and Evelyn Harker. Micheal was a journeyman electrician for Jerry Depron Electric, The OKC Baptist Hospital, and General Motors Corp. before he retired. He enjoyed retirement and loved tinkering with CB radios and model trains. He loved telling stories and spending time with friends and family. He will greatly missed by all who knew and Loved him.

He played a critical role here at the museum setting up the electrical for many museum buildings and with The Day Out with Thomas events.

He passed away on December 29th, 2023 at age 78. His funeral services were held on January 4th, 2024 at Martin-Duggar Funeral Chapel in Elk City, Oklahoma. He is remembered by his sons, Matthew and John Harker, his brother, Charles Harker, his sister, Kaye Harker-Hansen, and many other friends and family.

Around the Museum



John Nave and Greg Hall(L-R) is assisted by Paul Stephens above on repairing a air leak on the Santa Fe CF-7.This was during the tech rehearsal for Polar Express.



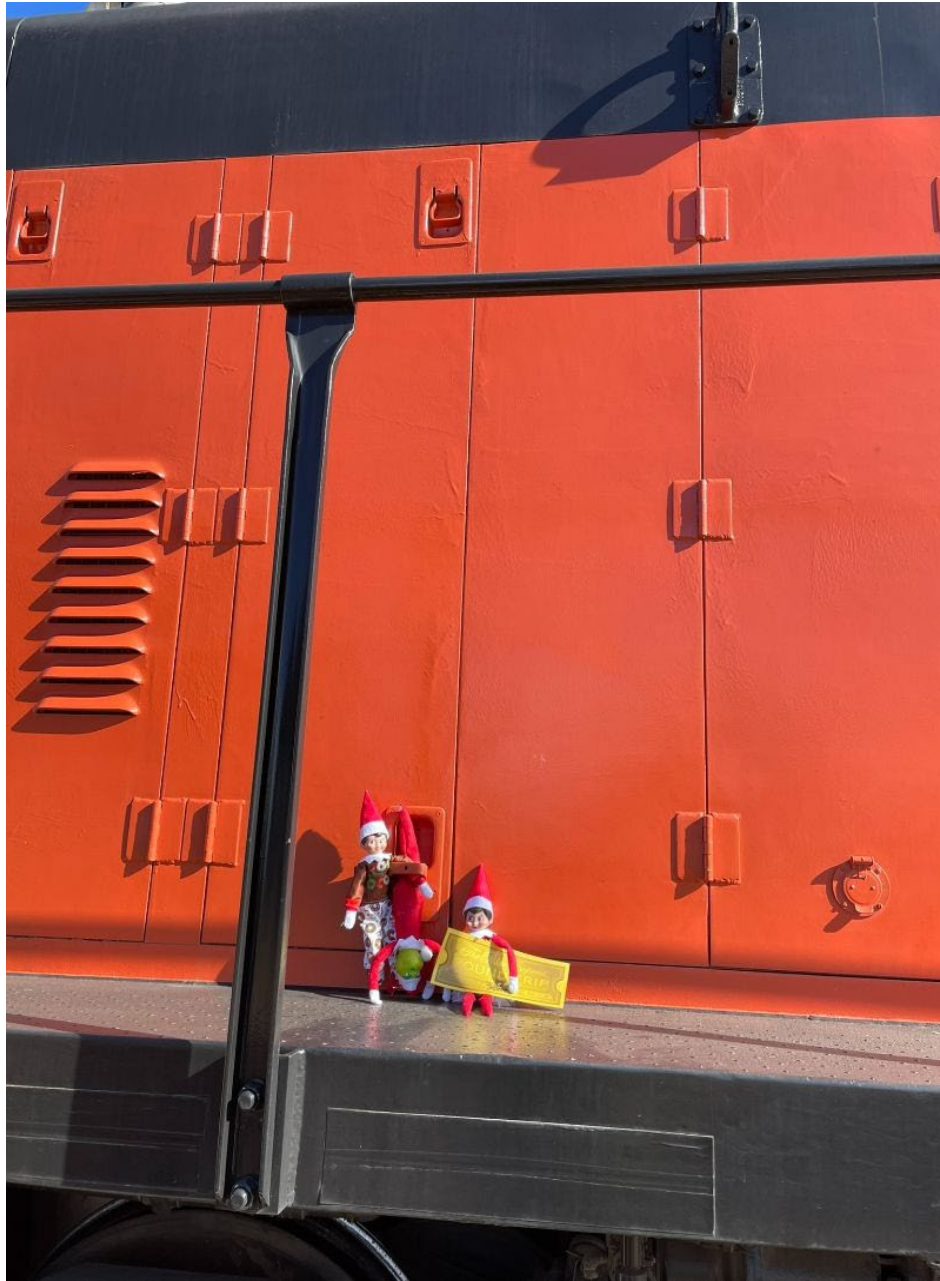
Vice President John Nave is busy welding up a deck plate that was removed to repair a air leak on the CF-7.



Volunteer Randy Bruton is in the Christmas spirit during our Polar Express event. Randy helped in several areas during Polar including the gift shop and janitorial.



Volunteer Coordinator, Amanda Resnick, and Museum Administrator, Anne Chilton, show varying levels of enthusiasm for The Polar Express.



Looks like the Elves are taking care of the Grinch that tried to take over our engine!

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Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in Oklahoma Railway Museum. Don't forget to add info@oklahomarailwaymuseum.org to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

Our mailing address is: Oklahoma Railway Museum 3400 NE Grand Blvd Oklahoma City, OK 73111



Oklahoma Railway Museum, Ltd.
3400 NE Grand Boulevard
Oklahoma City, OK 73111-4417

Return Service Requested

The Dispatcher

Timetable

Oklahoma Railway Museum (ORM) - Open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM
Closed on major holidays.

ORM Train Rides - First and third Saturdays, April through August at 9:15 AM, 11:15 AM, 1:15 PM and 3:15 PM

ORM Board Meetings - Last Tuesday of every month at Oklahoma Railway Museum - 7:00 PM

Oklahoma "N" Rail - For information call Rick Inselman (405) 412-1552

Oklahoma Model Railroad Association - For information contact Phil Howell via email omratrains@gmail.com

Central Oklahoma Garden Railroad Society Contact information:

Steve Lemcke (405) 703-0209 e-mail steve.lemcke@att.net

Marshall Douglas (405) 290-8989

Steve Kamm (405) 685-3755 email skamm@college.occ.edu

Passenger Rail Oklahoma - Passenger Rail Oklahoma volunteers provide Amtrak depot hosting for the Hartland Flyer in City of Norman, OK most evenings, holidays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
The depot opens at 7:50 AM. Contact Evan Stair at sfrr@aol.com, www.passengerrailok.org, or (405) 366-8957. Depot volunteer opportunities are available.

Oklahoma S.W. Division NMRA - 2nd Saturday of each month, 1:00 PM, Goldman Room, Kirkpatrick Center,
Jim Heidon, President

Yukon's Best Railroad Museum - Thursday/Saturday/Sunday and by appointment. Located 1 block north of Main and UP tracks
in Yukon. Call John Knuppel, (405) 354-5079, for times and information.

Waynoka Station/Waynoka Historical Society - 202 South Cleveland, Waynoka, (580) 614-1896. If you can help,
call Charlene Bixler.

Corrections

Any changes to the above information or articles in "the Dispatcher" should be directed to the editor, at info@oklahomarailwaymuseum.org. For information on upcoming programs contact Anne Chilton at annem@oklahomarailwaymuseum.org.