



New Member

On Friday, April 26, Greg Tyner happened to be driving past the rail yard in Blue Rapids while work was being done. He stopped and offered to help and ended up paying for a family life membership in MCRHS. He and his wife Terry live south of Blue Rapids. Greg drives past the Blue Rapids rail yard on his way to and from work and is already getting quite familiar with our operation.

NRHS Ride

On Monday, April 8, Lewis Ableidinger and Joel Jensen took a ride from Waterville east across the Big Blue River and back. They are with the National Railway Historical Society and were in Kansas gathering research for an upcoming article on railroading in Kansas. It was on that ride that board members Jim Turner and Charles Weickert discovered damage from the recent wildfires SE of Blue Rapids.



Wildfire Damage

The weekend of April 6-7 was a busy one for area fire departments and fire department task forces from across the state. On Friday, April 5 a fire broke out in Pottawatomie County and later spread into Riley County. This fire became known as the Axelton-Burkland Fire and burned 8,305 acres at an estimated cost of \$275,000. The fire that ended up affecting the CBRR was the Big Blue River 2 fire. This fire was discovered on Saturday, April 6 around noon. This fire burned 5,569 acres at an estimated cost of \$151,000. In addition to the area volunteer fire departments that fought these fires, the Kansas Forest Service Wildfire Task force assisted with units from Johnson County, Wichita, and others task forces around the state. Air support was provided by fixed wing aircraft contracted by the Kansas Forest Service, Heinen Ag in Seneca and Blackhawk helicopters from Fort Riley. The fixed wing aircraft operated out of the Manhattan Regional Airport with the Manhattan Fire Department assisting

with the taking on of water by the aircraft. The Blackhawk helicopters took on water from Tuttle Creek Reservoir. William Schwindamann, MC County Emergency Coordinator reported that 126 pieces of equipment and 255 personnel were involved with fighting the Big Blue River 2 Fire.

The CBRR suffered extensive damage at the east end of the rails (12th Road). Inspection on Monday, April 8 determined that there were two sections of burned ties. The west most section included 48 ties and the east section included 143 ties. On Wednesday evening, April 10, it was reported that there were ties smoldering at 12th Road. The wind had changed to the north causing an additional burn of about 20 ties, making the total number an estimated 211 ties.

The cost and time frame for repairing the burned section is presently unclear. The good news is that rides can still cross the Big Blue River.



The above photos were taken on Wednesday evening, April 10 after the wind had shifted to a north wind. The left photo is looking west towards the bridge and the right photo is looking north in the right of way.



Other News

- Kenny Winkenwader and Robert Shanek recently gave the shed in Waterville a new paint job.
- The MCRHS board recently signed a limited mineral lease with DownUnder Ventures LLC.
- The Waterville Lions Club held their annual ride and picnic at "Somewhere" on Monday, May 6. The Lions Club donated the 20' x 20' shelter to the RR in 2015.
- To schedule a ride, call Sandy at 785-562-8803