



## June Meeting

As of this newsletter, the plans are to have the June meeting of the Heart of the Heartlands. It is scheduled for June, 10, 2020 at 7:00 pm at the Webb Center in Carona. If the meeting will not be held, there will be an email notification sent to inform everyone.

The first weekend of June, the 6-7th is our first scheduled weekend to be open for visitors for the 2020 year. A final determination of whether or not we will be open for that will be coming this week. That will also be sent out via email to inform members of the status the museum being able to receive visitors.

## Heart of the Heartlands

The monthly newsletter is constructed by Secretary-Treasurer Brian Carlson. If you have any questions, comments, suggestions you may reach him at: bcarlson@ckt.net  
620-820-9665

## Covid-19

As we move into June, the COVID-19 pandemic is still influencing things everywhere. All NARCOA rides were originally cancelled through May 15. That was later moved to June 15th. So far, there has not been any additional announcements made in regards to motorcar rides. We are currently looking at the things we will need to do and working on a determination of being open for our first scheduled weekend of visitors on June 6-7th. We hope to be able to make an announcement in regards to that this week. Our hopes are that all of you have remained healthy and safe.

This newsletter is a bit different than previous letters. Since we have not had a meeting in the last two months, we have a couple of bits of information to pass along. The bulk of this newsletter includes articles written by Heartland members Dusty McCoy and Jay Hastings. Thank you to both Dusty and Jay for their contribution!

## Recent Activities

- In the last few weeks, members Jay Hastings and Ed Brinkmeyer along with new Heartland's members Mike Sypult have been to the Webb Center to use the library for research they were doing for upcoming publications.
- Dave Calwell donated a "commercial glass display case" to the Heartlands. It is 70 inches in length, 20 inches deep and 20 inches from base of case to top of the glass. The overall height of the case is 39 inches. The case includes two glass shelves that are 40 inches x 7 inches. There are also several extra shelf support for more shelves. We currently have some more glass shelves that might work in the case. Thank you Dave for your donation!

# Katy's Joplin Subdivision: A brief history of an M-K-T branch line

- by **Dusty McCoy**

Growing up in the Tri-State mining district and living a part of my childhood in the mining town of Galena Kansas early on I began to take an interest in the railroad that utilized the shabby old depot on North Main Street. Soon I began to study more about the history of this interesting railroad called the Missouri-Kansas-Texas or "The Katy" for short. Over time my interest in the branch line that served the Tri-State mining district became a passion for researching history of this part of the Katy System.

Construction on the Joplin Subdivision began in 1895 by the Southwestern Mineral Railway as a branch off the Katy mainline north of Labette Kansas at a station called Garvin located at MP S-394.4 or

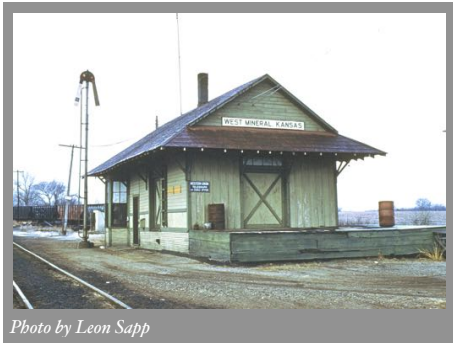


Photo by Leon Sapp

7.8 miles south of Parsons. The letter "S" was used by the Katy to note milepost markers on the Joplin Subdivision. The line was originally constructed to serve coal mines located near the community of West Mineral Kansas. By the turn of the century the lead and zinc mining boom was in full swing in the Joplin Missouri and Tri-State area. In 1902 the line was extended to downtown Joplin to tap into the mining business by the Missouri, Kansas, and Northwestern Railroad that after the completion of the extension became Katy property. Business was such in Joplin after the turn of the century that the construction of a new Union Depot was planned. In 1910 the

Katy began construction of an extension to serve the new Joplin Union Depot from near Shifferdecker Avenue to the new joint station and yard located on North Main Street. The new complex contained a turntable, five stall engine house, and locomotive serving facilities in addition to the new passenger station. The first train to arrive at the depot was the Katy passenger from Parsons on July 1, 1911. Katy ended motorcar service to Joplin from Parsons with the discontinuance of trains 115 and 116 in January 1940. One however could catch a ride in the caboose aboard the "mixed local" into the 1950's.

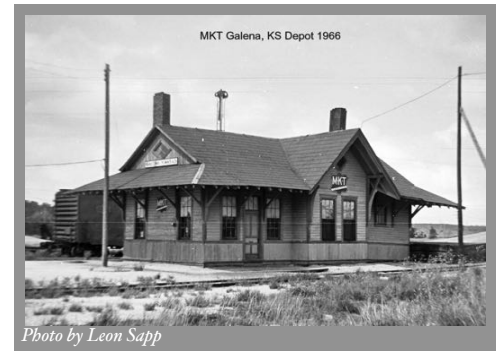


Photo by Leon Sapp

With the late construction of the line into the area a couple of interesting crossings had to be built to access Joplin. At Columbus Kansas MP S-418.7 the Katy crossed both the Frisco's Carthage and Afton Subdivisions at grade. A unique three-way diamond was constructed at the location along with an



Photo from Dusty McCoy Collection

interlocking tower for protection. Only three examples of this style of crossing diamonds were ever constructed with the two others located in Pennsylvania and Germany. The 1910 extension for the new Joplin Union Depot created another unique challenge for Katy engineers. The line would have to cross the Frisco's Joplin to Girard Kansas line that set at a lower elevation in a hollow and crossing Turkey Creek over a wooden trestle. As a result a high

elevation wooden trestle was constructed over a location known as Opossum Hollow at MP S-438.7 above the Frisco Turkey Creek trestle. This resulted in a unique inter-connecting wooden trestle arrangement at the location between the competing railroads. I have been told that this was the highest wooden trestle built on the Katy's Northern Division.

Over the years several industries would open on the line even as the lead and zinc mining in the area began to decline after World War II. The line was

consistently a stable revenue producer for Miss Katy and helped keep the cash flowing during the lean years of the late 1950's and 1960's when the line flirted with financial disaster. During the mining years the Priscilla, Geronimo, and Bear Mountain Mines located west of Joplin at Chitwood MP S-437.3 provided the railroad with loads of mine chat tailings. Eagle-Picher constructed a large lead smelter at Galena that provided carloads for the railroad until its final shutdown in the late 1970's. West Mineral

Kansas located at MP S-410.0 was located in a major coal field that over the years had several coal tipples served by the Katy. Pittsburg and Midway Mine #19 tipple was constructed in 1950 and was served over a near two mile long spur by the Katy off of the Joplin Sub from a station called Nettels MP S-406.2. At its busiest time the coal tipple and mine would generate fifty loads to be shipped out over the Katy daily. When the mine closed operations in February 1975 the massive electric Bucyrus-Erie shovel named "Big Brutus" that worked the area coal strip mines was left abandoned in place.

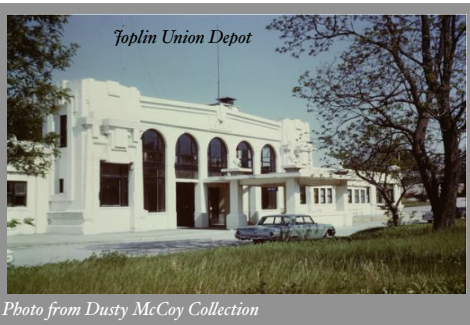
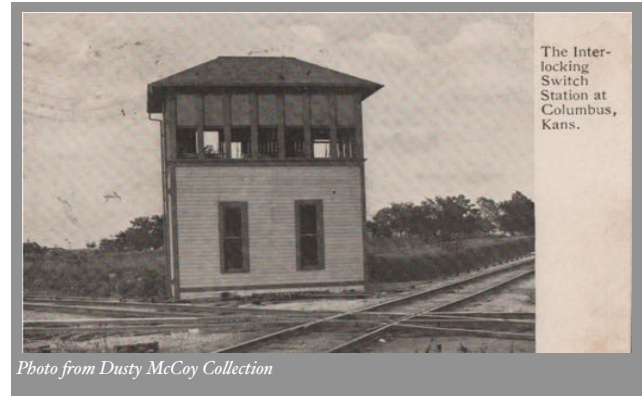


Photo from Dusty McCoy Collection

Chemicals have long been the mainstay business over the years after the lead and coal mining business in the area disappeared. When World War II broke out the US government partnered with Pittsburg native Kenneth A. Spencer to construct the Jayhawk Ordnance Works near Crestline Kansas at Military Station MP S-429.3. The plant was constructed to produce weapons-grade ammonia nitrate for the allied war effort. After hostilities ceased Spencer purchased the plant and produced ammonia nitrate for agricultural purposes as the Spencer Chemical Company. In 1964 Spencer sold the Jayhawk Plant to the Gulf Chemical Company which remained a major railroad customer not just for the Katy, but also the competing Frisco and KCS that served the plant. By 1983 Gulf Chemical had scaled down operations and sold what remained of the chemical plant at Military. Spencer Chemical also constructed a fertilizer plant east of Galena in 1954 on the Missouri-Kansas state line at MP S-433.9 that was called Horn both by the Katy and the Frisco that each served the plant.

With the closing of area mines by the mid 1970's the 46.3 mile branch line was still served six days a week by Parsons to Joplin locals #131 and #134 to serve the chemical plants at Military and Horn along with remaining interchange business with the KCS at Joplin, Frisco at Columbus, and the Mopac at Cokedale. Trains operated 10 MPH or slower over the route in the darkness overnight and would tie up



The Interlocking Switch Station at Columbus, Kans.

Photo from Dusty McCoy Collection



Gulf #316 Military KS 11-75 C.G. Parsons Photo. D McCoy Collection



around sunrise and layover in the Joplin Union Depot Yard. Severe flooding in 1976 between Garvin Junction and Columbus damaged trestles and washed out roadbed in places forcing the MKT Joplin locals to utilize the Frisco from Oswego Kansas over the SL-SF Carthage Subdivision to reach home rails. With the closing of the Pittsburg and Midway Mine #19 the previous year the line was soon abandoned by the Katy and crews began pulling up rail in 1978. The Katy secured long term trackage rights over the Frisco to access the orphaned Columbus to Joplin section via Oswego. In 1981 the Katy began a rehabilitation project on the line bringing it up to a 25 MPH speed restriction from the 10 MPH or slower speeds that had plagued the line from years of deferred maintenance. The work was completed from the BN connection at Columbus to the Missouri state line at MP S-434.2. 1983 brought further changes to the line as the Katy closed the branch lines last open station and train order office located in the historic Galena depot. The line east of Galena near the Farmers Chemical plant at Horn was abandoned between MP S-434.2 and the Joplin Union Depot Yard MP S-440.7 officially March 17 1983 officially ending Katy's service into Joplin Missouri. The railroad continued to serve the remaining industries on the branch after 1983 via an as needed Parsons to Horn turn or local up until the carriers August 1988 merger with the Union Pacific. Burlington Northern secured trackage rights over the Katy from Columbus to Galena and Horn in the mid 1980's. Union Pacific spun off the line and turned over the remaining MKT traffic to the BN a short time after merging the Katy into their system.



MKT Joplin Local Departing J.U.D. 4-22-68 and Joplin Union Depot 1968. - Dusty McCoy Collection

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In closing, the Katy's Joplin Subdivision is very much a Class I branch line survivor in 2020. It is the only BNSF regularly operated branch line remaining in the area and one of the few branch line operations that has not been turned over to a short line operation by a Class I railroad. The BNSF operates a Monday through Friday local job out of Columbus out to Horn and over former Frisco rails to Joplin via a connection at Galena. Business is good on the line with the addition of an Owens-Corning plant west of Joplin in 2016 and the ag chemical fertilizer plant at Horn now operated by Nutrien supplying a healthy load of hazardous material loads and business for BNSF. Carloads have increased so much that a tie replacement project has been going on over the past several years and in late 2019 welded rail was installed on the lines sharper curves.

10 JOPLIN SUBDIVISION - JOPLIN TO LABETTE										
Capacity of Order Not-Carload, Stop Production Other Facilities	SOUTHWARD			Station Number	Mile Post to Lath	TIME TABLE No. 7 Effective September 12, 1965	Office City	NORTHWARD		HOURS OF TELEGRAPH SERVICE
	SECOND CLASS	31	Capacity of Bridge					SECOND CLASS	34	
Yard N	4:20PM	34	881	394.4	PH	LABETTE	10.1	8:00PM	11	
Yard S	7:00	44	8:05	413.0	MT	WEST MINERAL	10.1	7:00	11	* 8:30AM to 1:00PM * 8:30AM to 1:00PM
Copartition				413.0		{				
Not-Carload, Stop				413.0		COKEDALE				
60-55			8:24	419.0		Mo. Pac. Crossing	0.2			
Connection				419.0		ABBEY	0.2			
Galena				419.2		NEO Crossing	0.4			
Auto. Transfer				419.7		SL-SF Crossing	0.5			
Connection	8:30	21	8:25	419.9	R	COLUMBUS	0.5	5:00	11	* 8:30AM to 1:00PM
Yard W				417.6		KEN Crossing	0.6			
Galena				417.6		MILITARY	0.7	4:20	11	* 8:30AM to 1:00PM
Yard Y	9:30	25	8:35	419.9	RI	GALENA	0.8	3:30	11	* 1:30AM to 1:00PM
Galena				419.9		JOPLIN	0.8	3:00PM	11	* 1:30AM to 1:00PM * 1:30AM to 1:00PM
Yard	9:45	28	8:38	421.2	AM		0.8			
Connection	11:59PM	34	8:45	441.7	JO		0.8			
Yard-S-T-W										
Connection										
	31					41.2		34		* 1 Hour for Lath * 1 Hour for Lath
	1:00							1:00		

Time in Parenthesis

Northward trains are superior to southward trains of the same class.

STATIONS AND TRACKS NOT SHOWN ABOVE							
STATION NO.	MILE POST	CAR CAPACITY	IND. CONNECTED	STATION NO.	MILE POST	CAR CAPACITY	IND. CONNECTED
Sherman City	S-402.0			Horn	S-433.9	12	South
New Mine Lead	S-403.8	Mine Spur	South	Bear Mountain	S-437.5	5	Both
Crain	S-33	S-427.8	11	Nettles	S-406.2		

From Dusty McCoy Collection

# Osage County and Santa Fe Railroad

- by Jay Hastings

Growing up in Bartlesville, Oklahoma as a young boy in the 70s, I recall memories of my parents taking me on car rides to the Hulah Lake area in Osage County. I always looked for the old wooden depot sitting in the field near the highway and wondered why it had been left in the wind all alone on the Osage prairie. The depot was located on property owned by the Mullendore's Cross Bell Ranch and the tracks that once passed the depot had long since been pulled up.

In 1984 the Hulah depot was restored by the Landmark Preservation Society and moved from the prairie to the big city of Bartlesville. By that time, I was well aware of the Santa Fe Railroad line that was still active through Bartlesville and wanted to know more about the branch line that ran through Osage County, the original location of the Hulah depot.

The earliest records I have found are newspaper articles dated November 30, 1901 stating, "The Pawhuska Journal does not seem to be on friendly terms with the Santa Fe Railway Company and doesn't



*Pawhuska Oklahoma ATSF depot - John McCall photo  
Springer Archives - Temple Texas Railroad & Heritage Museum.*

care a darn whether the Pawnee extension touches the Osage Capital or not". The article goes on to say "There is no doubt, in fact it is an assured thing, that the Santa Fe is going to build through the reservation for they are grading now. The only thing the people here can be thankful for about this is the road does not come any nearer Pawhuska than two miles west of Gray Horse." This would have been the Pawnee to Ralston line which was completed north through Fairfax and on to Kaw City in 1902 - 1903. It was part of the Eastern Oklahoma Railway which was absorbed into the Santa Fe Railway in 1907. The line ran across the western edge of the Osage Reservation. Town folk in Pawhuska would have to wait another 20 years for the Santa

Fe to build through the Osage Capital town, this time from the north.

The Osage County and Santa Fe Railroad was incorporated on February 24, 1917. The 62.5-mile line was built in two phases, laid with 85- and 90-pound rail. The first section was built from Owen to Pawhuska between 1917 and 1923. Trains began running to Pawhuska on August 12, 1923. The second phase, Pawhuska to Osage Junction, was built between 1926 and 1927 with trains running south of Pawhuska beginning July 1, 1927. That line connected the Santa Fe's Southern Kansas First District with the Oklahoma Division. During many research trips to the area I have found 1925 date nails in wooden ties north of Pawhuska and 1926 nails to the south.

The Osage County and Santa Fe line was instrumental in the transportation of oil during World War II, keeping the shipments off the sea. The oil shipments were



*ATSF & Midland Valley crossing Pawhuska Oklahoma July 30 1927 -  
Construction photo.  
Springer Archives - Temple Texas Railroad & Heritage Museum.*

routed from Pauls Valley on the Gulf lines to Osage Junction on the Oklahoma Division Second District, then on to Owen on the Pawhuska District and from there to the Southern Kansas First District. The line was also used for shipping cattle from ranches along the Osage prairies to the north.

Passenger service was provided by mixed trains running Caney, Kansas to Ralston, Oklahoma as Train #71, and Ralston to Caney as Train #72. Typical run times across the branch were five hours. Different start locations from the north were tried a few times but always seemed to revert back to Caney. Mixed train service was discontinued in 1958.



Bigheart Oklahoma May 20 1930 - Construction photo.  
Springer Archives - Temple Texas Railroad & Heritage Museum.

Two important locations along the line were Bigheart and Strohm, both in Oklahoma. The towns had section houses for boarding as well as water tanks for filling steam locomotives. Strohm was also the location of a wye for turning locomotives, as well as a 10-room bunk house for railroad workers. Pawhuska is where the Santa Fe crossed the Midland Valley Railroad, and was the location of an interlocking tower built by the Santa Fe.

Long time Chanute, Kansas resident Walter Aday began his career with the Santa Fe in 1952. Walter told a few stories about working on the Pawhuska District as a brakeman when steam locomotives were still in use. Walter said the trains would originate out of Chanute and arrive very early in the morning. He talked about how still, peaceful and quiet it was when they arrived at the Mullendore cattle pens, wondering where the livestock was.

Walter said before long, they would hear a rumble and see a cloud of dust on the horizon as the herd to be loaded was brought in by the cowboys. He recalled one specific time when they were loading in a large herd and the engineer let off steam from the locomotive, which startled the cattle and nearly caused a stampede.

One Hulah station agent was nicknamed "Hulah Bill". A young woman named Billie Siebold who dressed like a boy and carried a side arm. Rumored she liked the loneliness of the job going days sometimes without seeing people. Her sister Ethel taught morse code which was a good skill to have for a job on the railroad. By 1939 W.H. Higgins was the station agent and lived in a boxcar behind the depot.



Strohm Oklahoma May 20 1930 - Construction photo.  
Springer Archives - Temple Texas Railroad & Heritage Museum.



Strohm Oklahoma depot May 20 1930 - Construction photo.  
Springer Archives - Temple Texas Railroad & Heritage Museum.

Walter described a large rock cut the railroad ran through between the Boren and Hulah pens across the Mullendore ranch. He said he always thought the rock cut would have been a good place to film a western with a train robbery.

Wilford Aday, Walter's brother, also worked on the Santa Fe line and lived in Chanute as well. Wilford reminisced about the last years on the Pawhuska District before abandonment. He said trains would run from Chanute or Independence, Kansas to Ralston, OK just west of Osage Junction across the Arkansas River. Wilford said the crews would lay overnight in Ralston and sleep either in the caboose or the depot, depending on the weather.



Sometime in the 1950’s another Santa Fe employee, Monte Edwards, who was described as quite a character, actually shot some 8mm footage. The film shows the view riding an eastbound train out of Ralston across the Pawhuska District. Another shot shows the crew stopping at a diner near the tracks in Pawhuska. Monte lived in the community of Longton, Kansas.

March 5th 1965, during the filing for abandonment the railroad attorneys showed cause for abandonment. Regular scheduled trains had not been operated over the line since 1958. Passenger service was not being provided. Freight trains were operated only when required. During the past five years the available traffic necessitated an average of 66 trips per year. Not more than 3 trips per year traversed the entire Pawhuska line. The total number of carloads which moved to and from the Pawhuska line in 1962, 1963, and 1964, are shown as follows.

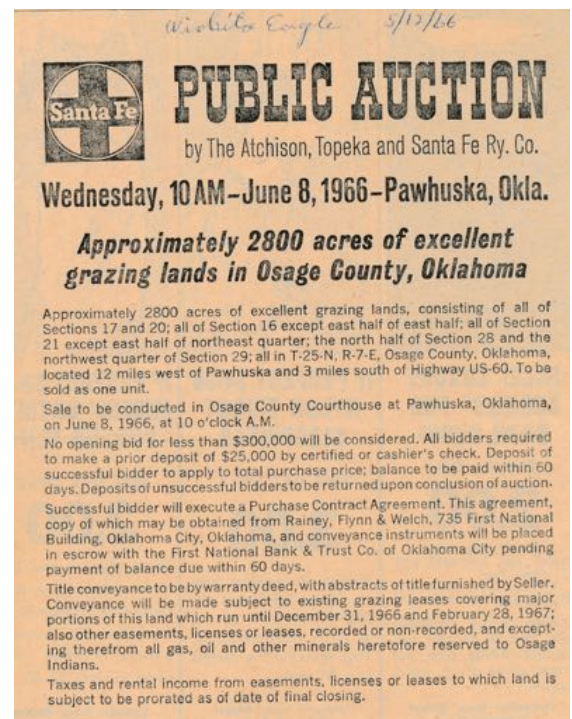
	<u>1962</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>1964</u>
Originated on line	390	303	210
Destined to line	147	139	134
Overhead	2	2	0
Total carloads	539	444	344

Even with differed track maintenance the railroad was continuing to operate in a deficit each year. Some ranchers expressed the belief that railroad weights of shipments generally were more reliable than those supplied by truckers from commercial scale operators located away from the ranch. But in the end the railroad noted several reasons for the abandonment stating growing numbers of privately owned trucks for cattle shipment Typically one truck could haul more cattle than one railroad car. There were also changes in ranching practices when it came to cattle. There were more feed lots purchasing cattle and in such transactions the order or buyer arranged the shipping methods not the ranchers.

Most of the right of way is still visible and the cattle loading pens can be found. Some have been untouched for 50 years. For instance, exploring Keefe I found the open well sight next to the windmill and storage tank. The 10-room bunk house still remains at Strohm. The scales still exist at Bigheart along with two of the section forman’s houses.

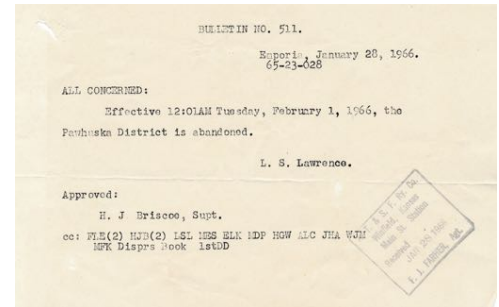
Another interesting note is the June 8th 1966 auction of land the Santa Fe railroad owned. 2,800 acres of cattle grazing land was sold at auction to a Drummond Oklahoma man. Fredrick Ford who had leased the land from the Santa Fe since 1929. Ford bid \$390,000 for the tract of land. Ford’s bid was \$140.00 an acre. Bidding against Ford was Cecil Charles, Bartlesville Oklahoma, a trustee for K.S. “Boots” Adams, President of Phillips Petroleum.

January 1st 1966 was the last trip on the Santa Fe’s Pawhuska branch. M.T. Walker, freight agent at Pawhuska



had been with the Santa Fe for 48 years and planed on retiring after locking up the depot. The last train north carried desk, chairs, safes, files, and other office equipment from the Pawhuska depot which was the only open station left along the line.

The line was abandoned on February 1, 1966. Several of the cattle loading facilities remain today and are still used by local ranchers for loading cattle onto trucks. A few of the original scales remain as well. The old right of way is easy to follow along Highway 10 west of Copan Lake and south on Highway 99 into Pawhuska. The Pawhuska depot survives today as a local museum. An interesting note, there are no active rail lines in existence today within the borders of Osage County, which is also the largest county in Oklahoma.



### Pawhuska District Names

- MP 0.0 — **Owen** — A railroad junction named for Robert L. Owen, United States Senator from Oklahoma (1907-1925) whose extensive ranch adjoined the site
- MP 2.7 — **Boren** — named after Kathleen “Boren” Mullendore’s family. Cattle loading facility with cattle pens and a siding that would hold 18 cars
- MP 7.2 — **Hulah** — 1918 Osage word meaning Eagle. 6 pens with a 17-car capacity siding and a 9-car house track with depot
- MP 13.8 — **Bowring** — 1923 Named for two ranchers, Mart Bowhan and Richard Woodring
- MP 20.0 — **Bigheart** — 1906 – Named for Osage Chief James Bigheart
- MP 25.1 — **Nanos**
- MP 28.4 — **Opah**
- MP 34.9 — **Pawhuska** — 1876 Named for Osage Chief Paw-Hiu-Skah – means “white hair”
- MP 35.2 — **Midland Valley crossing**
- MP 41.8 — **Betts** — Named for C.E. Betts, general auditor of the Santa Fe
- MP 45.8 — **McInnis** — Named for E.E. McInnis, Santa Fe railroad attorney
- MP 49.9 — **Strohm** — Named after Charles B. Strohm, Santa Fe railroad official
- MP 57.0 — **Keefe** — Named for J.H. Keefe, vice president Santa Fe railroad
- MP 62.4 — **Osage Junction** — Railroad junction