

# Midwest Central Railroad ORDER BOARD

*Distributed to Friends and Members of the MCRR*

August 2004

## Midwest Central Railroad Hosts Alive After Five Event in August

Midwest Central Railroad hosted Alive After Five earlier this month, on August 4, 2004. Alive After Five is a monthly social event organized by the Mt. Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce, with local businesses and organizations taking turns hosting the evening and highlighting their activities in the community.

The MCRR Board of Directors decided to run one of the trains during the event, allowing Chamber members the rare opportunity to include their entire family in attending Alive After Five.

As is the custom at Alive After Five, a drawing was held and several of the attendees won prizes ranging from a certificate for a free ride on the train during the Reunion, to t-shirts, jewelry, books and other items from the Red Caboose Gift Shop, to the grand prize of a 1920s-era Santa Fe replica Conductor's step made by Marvin Crull.



*MCRR President Matt Crull welcomed Chamber members and their families to Alive After Five.*



Despite the muddy grounds due to heavy rains the prior day, attendance was good, and many of the Chamber members and guests commented positively about the progress on the new South Station and Museum and Education Center.

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The Order Board is a newsletter of the Midwest Central Railroad. Photos and articles may be submitted to the Midwest Central Railroad office or to the Editor. The Order Board reserves the right to edit for length and clarity. Any opinions expressed are those of the author and may or may not reflect the opinion of the Board of Directors.

The Midwest Central Railroad was incorporated in 1960 as a non-profit educational organization, dedicated to the preservation and operation of narrow gauge steam powered railroad equipment. Donations of cash or materials are welcomed and are tax-deductible under section 501(c)3 of the federal tax code.

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**If you have articles, photographs, or story ideas for the next issue of the Order Board, please send them to the Editor or to MCRR at P.O. Box 102, Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641**

## MCRR Hosts Alive After Five, continued...

I would like to especially thank Dan Hagist, Deb Crouch, Jennifer Crull, and Joni Brown who served with me on the Alive After Five planning committee. Thanks as well to all of the volunteers who worked above and beyond to ensure the building was ready to host an event, and to the engine crew and conductors who made it possible to run the train that evening. Everyone who pitched in and helped out contributed to making our evening as host of Alive After Five a success!

— Amy Frantz



## In Sympathy

Midwest Central Railroad expresses our condolences to MCRR volunteers Stephen and Dianna Burden and their family on the passing of Dianna's father Donald Wagner of Montrose, Iowa. Donald's first job following high school graduation was with the Santa Fe Railroad, and he was involved with many activities and organizations in the community.

MCRR also conveys our sympathy to volunteer Mona Engebretson and her family on the death of Mona's mother.

### Fundraising Postcards

Larry Raid has found a supply of color postcards showing the Shay as she was when she arrived in Mt. Pleasant in 1966, and is offering a postcard for free with your \$10 donation to the South Station project. If you are interested, contact Larry at his home at 503 South 2nd Street, Denmark, IA 52624.

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## FROM THE SHOP by Greg Roth — *“The Show!”*

The “Midwest Old Thresher’s Reunion” means many things to many people. For some it is the sights and smells of the once a year event, and for others it is time to volunteer or display private collections. As a child I remember it as “Old Threshers” and it meant seeing cousins, riding bikes, riding the trains and the trolleys, and walking the grounds. I did not realize it then but it was a very unique place. It is unique not because of the very rare farm machinery, steam traction engines, trains, trolleys, tractors, etc., but because of the atmosphere.

The over-riding memory I have of “Old Thresher’s” is that I, as a kid, was allowed to roam the grounds with nothing more than a promise to be back at our camper at a certain time. As an adult I now realize what a special aspect this is. There are few places in America where a child can be set free to see the sights, smell the smells, and just enjoy themselves. The Old Thresher’s Reunion, and all of those directly and indirectly involved, has created a safe place for everyone, of any age, to come and enjoy the reunion. In this time of home instability and youth violence this is truly unique. As my child grows older I hope the reunion retains this atmosphere so he can enjoy the reunion as I grew up with it – my cousin and I, on our own schedule.

Now what was to me “Old Threshers” has become known as “The Show.” This re-labeling came about due to the manner in which I now view it. I have come from the unknown observer or tourist, to an active participant. I now see all the effort it takes to prepare, organize, and run “The Show.” The thousands of human hours that go into the five day event are unfamiliar to most of the thousands that attend, even though some attend yearly as I did. So, I thought for this episode of “From The Shop” I would attempt to summarize, in the railroad vernacular, what “The Show” means.

Earth moving, grade leveling, rock ordering, rail hunting, tie ordering, tie plate locating.  
 Standing around, talking, discussing, deciding.  
 Tie moving, tie laying, rail moving, rail laying, spike hammering.  
 Discussion. Frustration. Decision changing. Standing.  
 Cat tugging, “M” (John Deere) spinning, “D” (John Deere) popping, rail realignment.  
 Looking. More discussion. Looking.  
 Rock hauling, track leveling, rock moving, track tamping.  
 Exhaustion.  
 Board ordering, gravel smoothing, dirt digging, ladder locating, tool hunting.  
 Swearing.  
 Stud setting, beam raising, nail shooting, board cutting.  
 Discussion. Directions/orders.  
 Frog hunting, switch setting, rail hunting, rail bending, air-hose melting.  
 Fun.  
 Tender mending, valve packing, boiler plugging, water filling, leak fixing.  
 Fireup!  
 Leak fixing, injector healing, leak fixing, valve “in-flight” packing, leak fixing...  
 Fixing ....

I now see “The Show,” and steam, in a more informed manner, and have come to realize that the old saying, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it,” does not apply. For steam, and maybe “The Show,” it seems more applicable to state, “If it ain’t broke, just wait.”

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**MCRR Dates of Operation — 2004**

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Old Threshers Reunion  
September 2 - 6

Ghost Train  
October 15, 16, 22, & 23 - 6-10 p.m.

North Pole Express  
December 3, 4, & 5

***Reunion Reminders:***

Have you renewed your Midwest Central Railroad membership for 2004-2005? Return the membership form to the MCRR office or contact Deb Crouch for more information.

A Safety & Information meeting has been scheduled for all MCRR Reunion volunteers on Wednesday, September 1st at 7:00 P.M. in the South Station conference room.

The MCRR Volunteer Dinner will be Friday, September 3rd. Time and location T.B.A.

Midwest Central Railroad  
P.O. Box 102  
Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641

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