

# LIFESTYLE

## LITTLE BALKANS CHRONICLES

### Friend family vs the railroad at Cato

I recently discovered another Southeast Kansas history lover and author in Linda Baker from Ft. Scott. Today I'm sharing the first of two episodes from her book, "The Adventures of Aunt Linda." It details the fight of her family, and other early settlers around Cato, to keep their land from being stolen by the railroad. — J.T.K.



**J.T. KNOLL**  
Morning Sun Columnist

"I do not advise violence to be used to prevent the construction of the Missouri River, Fort Scott & Gulf Railroad through the lands occupied by the settlers; but I do advise you to stand firm and united to a man, and no road ever can be built without your consent. Why? Because if a weary traveler should come along, and wishing to rest, sit down upon a pile of railroad ties, and, while smoking his pipe, a spark should happen to fall and burn up the ties, could anyone blame you for it, and say that you were using violence to prevent the construction of the road? I reckon not.

"Or suppose the prairie grass should, by some such accident, take fire and burn up the wagons, tents and instruments of the engineers, could that be charged to you? I think not. Now, who ever heard of railroad cars running through a country without rails or ties? I never did. Yet I don't advise force to prevent this most damnable railroad swindle, but I know that these accidents do and will happen in the best regulated communities. Now, gentlemen, if any such thing should happen to this swindling road, you must all be in bed and asleep when it happens."

These words were spoken by the Hon. Sidney Clarke about July 8, 1869, to settlers in Crawford County, Kansas. Among these settlers were my ancestors, Harmon Moore Friend and his family. Harmon had served honorably with the 152nd Regiment, Illinois Infantry during the Civil War. Shortly after the war ended, Harmon had packed up his family and everything he owned and made his way to the Cherokee Neutral Lands in Kansas in hopes of homesteading 160 acres.

The Cherokee Neutral Lands were first intended to be a neutral area between the Cherokees and the white settlers. However, as more and more settlers moved into the area, the Cherokees decided to sign a treaty with the United States government, ceding the land over to government officials. Part of the treaty read, "The lands herein ceded shall be surveyed as the public lands of the United States are surveyed ... And the secretary of the Interior shall, from time to time, as such surveys and appraisements are approved by him, after due advertisements for sealed bids, sell such lands to the highest bidders for cash, in parcels not exceeding 160 acres..."

Proceeds from the sale of these lands were to be invested for the benefit of the Cherokees.

Harmon Moore



**Harmon Moore Friend**

Friend legally bought one of these 160-acre parcels of land and set about making improvements on his land. But on Oct. 9, 1867, the secretary of the interior, Orville Browning, sold the entire parcel of land - around 800,000 acres - to his brother-in-law James F. Joy who represented the Missouri River, Fort Scott, and Gulf railroad. About 3,000 settlers demanded that they had legally homesteaded and the validity of Joy's title to the land was questioned.

The public land law "... gave a homestead on five years' occupation, but service in the army was counted in, and the soldier who had served three years got title in two years, with the right to buy the land at \$1.25 per acre."

But the Senate cut off these rights retroactively from all settlers coming in after July 19, 1866.

The real effect of this "legality" was to give the railroad the "right" to come in and take the settler's land. Harmon did not take kindly to this decision and

neither did the other homesteaders.

The survey of the railroad began in 1869, and then the "trouble began in earnest". The settlers organized a "Neutral Land Home-protecting Corps". The situation became so threatening that the governor sent in a detachment of United States troops to preserve order on June 10, 1869. Some of the troops were stationed along the creek which now flows into Crawford State Park. Stone remnants of cabins can be seen along Spider Leg Bridge Trail below the dam.

But the troops could not calm the settlers who were fighting for the right to stay on their own land. The presence of troops seemed especially "galling" to the settlers, and this only served to deepen the feelings of hatred and bitterness toward those in authority and the "tyranny exercised over them".

—Linda Baker (to be continued)

If you have a story or photo for Little Balkans Chronicles, contact me at 620-704-1309 or jt-knoll@subell.net

### Daughter levels with mother about her future plans

**DEAR ABBY:** I am 67, and my husband is 68. For the past six years, we have been caring for aging parents. My father-in-law, who had Alzheimer's, passed away a few years ago. We went through a lot with him as his illness progressed. My mother-in-law is 87 and does not want to go into a nursing home. She still lives by herself, but my sister-in-law and I take turns cooking and bringing her food, and my husband works his tail off cutting the grass and doing maintenance and repairs she can no longer do. Although we are retired, our lives revolve around her needs.

I recently had a conversation with my daughter, my only child. She has three sets of parents -- us, my ex and his wife and her husband's parents. She said she loves us, but she doesn't want to take care of any of us. When she retires, she wants to enjoy her retirement, travel and not have to worry about caring for anybody.

Having gone through it myself, I understand her feelings. Nobody WANTS to do this. At the same time, I'm a little hurt. All that we have -- money, cars, house -- is set up to go to her after we pass. Now it looks like we may need it to pay for assisted living. Abby, is it normal for kids these days to refuse to help aging parents? -- REVISING PLANS IN MISSOURI

**DEAR REVISING:** I don't know whether it has become "normal," but it is not unusual. Woe to any parent who assumes their children will take care of them, because it doesn't always turn out that way. Be glad your daughter is speaking up now, so you can plan accordingly.

**DEAR ABBY:** I lost my beloved mother-in-law five years ago. Since then, my father-



**DEAR ABBY**  
Abigail Van Buren

in-law has become engaged to a woman who, frankly, is not liked by anyone in our family. She's unkind and dismissive, and her presence creates tension at family gatherings.

They have now announced their wedding date, which happens to fall on my birthday. This has hit me hard. My parents have both passed away, and my birthday has always been a cherished day, filled with memories and meaning. It was one of the few days I felt truly celebrated. Now, I worry that every future birthday will be overshadowed by their anniversary and the complicated emotions tied to it.

Would it be selfish or inappropriate to ask them to consider a different date? I don't want to cause drama, but I also feel deeply hurt. How do I navigate this without making things worse? -- TORN BETWEEN GRACE AND GRIEF

**DEAR TORN:** I am sorry for your disappointment, but the date of your birth does not belong solely to you. It's clear that you disapprove of your father-in-law's choice of a second wife, and I sincerely hope you will be able to adjust. I do not think it will go over well if you approach the happy couple and ask them to change the date of their nuptials to accommodate you.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

## From our HISTORY Sponsored by



### 'Area misses legal malpractice suits'

Compiled by Brady Cloud  
news@morningsun.net

Excerpted stories in Crawford County newspaper archives

**100 Years Ago**  
February 19, 1926  
Girard, Feb. 19. - Carl Wanda who escaped from the county jail here last night by making his way down the wall from a second story window, still was at large today and members of the sheriff's force were unable to find trace of him. Wanda was to have come to trial at the March term of court in Pittsburg on a grand larceny charge for the alleged theft of an overcoat.

With only one game remaining after tonight on the 1926 basketball schedule, athletic endeavor at the Pittsburg high school is turning toward preparatory work for the track season. More than half a dozen tracksters already have been issued outfits and are practicing

daily in the sprints to be ready for the interclass meet early in April, Coach Charles H. Morgan said today.

**50 years ago**  
February 19, 1976  
A growing national phenomenon of legal malpractice suits has yet to hit the Pittsburg area, according to a survey of several local attorneys this week. While national reports indicate that Americans are finding it increasingly profitable to sue their family attorney for legal negligence or incompetence, the Pittsburg lawyers said there has yet to be a legal malpractice suit filed in Crawford County. "I haven't noticed malpractice being a particular concern in this area," said Garry Lassman, a Pittsburg attorney. "Generally, it's something you're going to run into more in large metropolitan areas."

Two Pittsburg men were arrested Wednesday

morning for the burglary of the Cash Grain and Feed Co., 202 W. Third, that occurred earlier Wednesday morning, Pittsburg police said. Michael Church, 20, and Charles Lucas, 20, both of 906 1/2 N. Broadway, were spotted at Fourth and Broadway shortly after the burglary occurred between 5:30 a.m. and 6 a.m., police investigator Al Locke said. Police frisked the two men and found a large amount of change in their pockets, Locke said. In a follow-up investigation, police obtained enough evidence at the scene to charge the men with burglary and theft of \$30 from the store.

**25 years ago**  
February 19, 2001  
FRONTENAC - His love affair with Harley-Davidsons isn't what makes Robert McElwee the rarest of Roman Catholic priests. What sets him apart is that he shares this passion with his wife.

As Catholic leaders in America confront a worsening shortage of priests, McElwee is one of a handful of reinforcements to arrive, family in tow, from the ranks of Protestant clergy. He is revered for his energy, devotion and humor by most of his parishioners in Frontenac, a predominantly Catholic town of 2,600 in southeast Kansas.

**TOPEKA** - A bill to allow slot machines at some Kansas racetracks could go to the Senate for debate soon, but it's no sure bet. Of the nine members of the Senate committee considering the measure, four oppose it, three support it and two - Republicans John Vratil of Leawood and Ruth Teichman of Great Bend - are undecided. The legislation would permit slot machines at dog and horse tracks if voters in their home counties approved. Most of the revenue would remain with the tracks, but the state would receive 20 percent.

## SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

2		8	6		5	7	
	5		4	2			
1			5	7			
		7	3		2		5
	6				7		
7	4		2	9			
		4	9			3	
		2	7		1		
4	2		1	3			9

2/19

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### PREVIOUS SOLUTION

3	8	7	1	9	6	5	2	4
5	9	2	4	3	8	1	7	6
4	6	1	2	7	5	3	8	9
2	4	5	3	6	7	9	1	8
8	1	6	9	4	2	7	3	5
9	7	3	5	8	1	4	6	2
1	3	4	8	2	9	6	5	7
7	2	9	6	5	3	8	4	1
6	5	8	7	1	4	2	9	3

**HOW TO PLAY:**  
Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.