



MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

For Immediate Release
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CONTACT: Sandy Rusch Walton
414.286.3032 (w)
414.303.3686 (c)
slrusch@milwaukee.gov

Milwaukee Public Library's Milwaukee Road Archives on Hiatus For 2009
Railroad materials in the general collection will still be available

MILWAUKEE – The Milwaukee Public Library (MPL) today announced that public access to the extensive Milwaukee Road (Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad) archives will be limited beginning January 1, 2009 to enable library personnel and volunteers to re-organize and catalog the thousands of items in storage.

MPL was designated in 1981 as the official archives of the Milwaukee Road, and has since been receiving historical materials from the Road as well as the Soo Line, which took over the line. The collection has grown to be quite large, with tens of thousands of items – valuable material for historians and train buffs. Several books have been written using the corporate documents, drawings, maps, photographs, negatives, slides, car records and more in this archive.

Volunteers have assisted MPL staff members in the past with the enormous task of assessing, organizing, preserving and indexing the resources. However volunteer assistance has dropped off in recent years, and limited MPL staff time could not be devoted to pick up the workload.

To free up time and resources to properly assess storage needs, create new and digitize existing indexing, MPL staff will no longer take inquiries about the Milwaukee Road archives by telephone, e-mail, written correspondence and/or in-person requests after January 1. Staff members will continue to respond to requests for information received by December 31, 2008.

Library personnel also will use this time to seek grants and other funds for on-going support and to develop policies for future service of this valuable collection.

Milwaukee Road materials in the library's general collection – many books, maps and periodicals – will continue to be accessible by the public during normal hours of operation. Please consult the library catalog at <http://countycat@mcfls.org> or contact the Frank P. Zeidler Humanities Room at Central Library, 814 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee 53233 (414.286.3061) for more information.

Please visit the MPL website at www.mpl.org in January 2010 regarding the re-opening of the archives. To offer financial support for this important community resource, please contact the Milwaukee Public Library Foundation at 414.286.8703.

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Upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities. Make requests to the Library Director's Office at (414)286-3021, 286-2794 (FAX), 286-3062 (TDD), ADA@mpl.org or Central Library, 814 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53233 Attn: Accommodation Request.