



# THE Lantern

September 2008

Volume 13 Number 9

Meeting Entrance

## September 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting: at the OLD Tallahassee Antique Car Museum

The OLD Tallahassee Antique Car Museum is located on Mahan Drive just east of the intersection of Capital Circle and Mahan Drive. The meeting will begin with a catered dinner at 6:45 and continue with a regular meeting at 7:30.

**Menu: beef roast, mashed potatoes, fresh vegetables, biscuits, desert and a drink, all for \$6.50 per person.**

We need as good a body count as possible, so please RSVP to me (John Sullenberger) by Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup>: I can be reached by telephone at (850) 562-5137 (h) or (850) 544-1870 (c) or (850) 410-8425 (w) or via e-mail at [sullyjws@aol.com](mailto:sullyjws@aol.com).

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## The TACM's Train Room Has Opened!

Albeit a week late. Tropical Storm Fay rained out the Tallahassee Antique Car Museum's (TACM) initial opening night reception and all of the activities therein. All activities were pushed back to August 29<sup>th</sup>, August 30<sup>th</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup>. The layouts were operated with minimal problems. A good weekend was had by all who attended.

### A Thank you from the Tallahassee Antique Car Museum:

Dear Mr. Johnson, On behalf of my parents, I want to thank you and the Big Bend Model Railroad Club for all of your effort to help make the Train Museum Opening so successful. The history and knowledge you and others in the club shared with us are greatly appreciated. Please extend our thanks to the members of the club.

Sincerely, Tiffany Moore Hosford



## 2008 BBMRA Layout Tour – A Large Scale Event

Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup> is the BBMRA's next scheduled layout tour. This year is different; it's a Large Scale affair. Three G Scalers and one 2 foot gauger make up this year's tour. The stops do not overlap this year. Please note that there is a one hour

gap between Eric & Ina Ecklund's and Bill McCord's stop, this allows members to travel from Crawfordville to Tallahassee, perhaps getting lunch without having to miss anything.

Please contact me (John Sullenberger) if you have questions about this year's tour: I can be reached by telephone at (850) 562-5137 (h) or (850) 544-1870 (c) or (850) 410-8425 (w) or via e-mail at [sullyjws@aol.com](mailto:sullyjws@aol.com).

### OCTOBER 18<sup>TH</sup> SCHEDULE:

Time	Name	Address	City	Scale	
10 am	12 noon	Eric & Ina Ecklund	252 Bay Pine Dr	Crawfordville	G
1 pm	2 pm	Bill McCord	2757 Fox Hollow Ct	Tallahassee	G
2 pm	4 pm	Live Steamers	4702 Highgrove Rd	Tallahassee	G Live Steam
4 pm	6 pm	Veteran's Memorial	14043 NW CR 12	Bristol	2' Live Steam

Veterans Memorial Railroad is offering members/interested engineers to take a turn at the throttle of a "Big Boy" toy.

The Apalachee Cafe in Bristol would be the final stop for dinner. The Apalachee Café has a pretty comprehensive menu. Several seafood choices, steaks, ground steak, chicken, fried or grilled, a fair salad bar, lots of good home-made desserts. Not a place for dieters. Deep fried stuff is their specialty. Prices are reasonable. No alcohol.

## BBMRA E-Mail List

Members, please honor the privacy of fellow members. Do not use the membership list to disseminate personal information and feelings and/or political messages.

## Spooktacular Halloween Train Rides

Veterans Memorial Railroad is set to host their annual "Spooktacular" Halloween train rides on the following dates: October 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>. BBMRRRA members get to ride free.

## TACM Operations: by Sam Miller (first paragraph) and Sal Martocci

Sal Martocci has rightly challenged the club to operate our layouts on weekends on a regular basis at the Tallahassee Antique Car Museum. We would have to work out a formal scheduling arrangement.

**Sal's message:** Our work at the Train Museum, at least this phase seems complete. And a hearty round of applause to those that made the difference. I believe we should not rest on our recent accomplishments but move into expanding the Railroading experience to more of the general public.

We, the BBMRA have close to one hundred members and with the help of most of these members we can/could operate our layouts from Noon to 5PM every Saturday and Sunday. No more than three members each day would be required to staff this operation. So any give weekend we would "consume" six volunteers. But with a pool of 80 or 90 members the rotation would take 3 months to complete a cycle. It seems to me that 5 hours every 3 months would not be a burden to anyone. If the public knew that the Railroads were in operation during that time frame it would add to the excitement of all the visitors both grown up and youngsters.

Let's have a discussion on how we CAN make this happen.

## Minutes of July 2008 BBMRA Meeting

The August 19, 2008 Membership Meeting was called to order by Vice-President John Sullenberger at 7:30 p.m. in the Banquet Room of the old Antique Car Museum. Thirty-six (36) people were present.

### New Members:

Our newest member, Elaine Whittington, was introduced. Elaine is very excited about joining BBMRA. She has been a long time member of the Mountain Dew Cloggers. She has worked for Tallahassee Memorial Regional Hospital for 25 years, married to husband Greg for 20 years and has a young son, Jacob.

### Special announcements:

Paul Beverly underwent triple by-pass surgery yesterday (July 18<sup>th</sup>). He seems to be doing well considering. Jack Herzog is out of the hospital, however, his Mom passed away. Our thoughts go out to Jack. Bob Hargrove was at Heritage Rehab for about a month and came home in early August. He developed pneumonia but is doing much better now. He was disappointed that he could not come to our 2008 train show, but is looking forward to the train tour this Fall.

**Minutes:** Minutes of the July 2008 meeting, as published in *The Lantern*, were accepted.

**Treasurer's Report:** There was not a Treasurer's report tonight.

**Division Reports:**

**Small Scale:** No report.

**HO Scale:** Sam Miller announced DeVoe contacted Barrett and requested some of the more collectibles be labeled before the Grand Opening this weekend. Cal (Ogburn) will be at the Museum at 9:00am to start working on the project and will appreciate anyone that can help.

**Large Scale:** No report.

**Veteran's Memorial – Bristol:** No report.

**Switching Layout:** No report.

**Antique Car Museum Update:** John passed around the sign-up sheets for any one to add their name to a shift for this weekend's Grand Opening at the Museum. We need at least one person to run the inside (power controls) and 1 to run outside (derailments/other problems). At least three (3) a shift will be better. BBMRA members (includes family membership) get in free and all other's pay \$6.00. Members are reminded to wear their badges or BBMRA shirts and sign in at the door.

Friday night from 6:00 to 8:00 is the kick off banquet. The menu is supposed to be finger style food. They are expecting a large crowd. DeVoe sent out 2800 invitations and there will be at least 100 BBMRA members. No food or drinks are allowed outside of the Banquet Room. Friday dress is business/casual, BBMRA shirts okay, no coats and ties,

The question was asked – what about bad weather with the storm moving into the area? John said calls will be made to those signed up and requests those that are called to please call others they may know are coming to the Grand Opening to work.

John reminded everyone that any time you go out to the Museum to work the layouts or run trains to sign in at the door and wear your badge or club shirt for identification. Our agreement with the Museum is we will not walk around the Museum without paying.....we are just there to run trains or work on the layouts.

**Program: None**

**Good of the Group:**

Sam Miller passed out a handout for a resource website for scale modelers. The website is [www.mikeashey.com](http://www.mikeashey.com).

Paul Moon and his wife sent several boxes of train items for members to go through and pick out what they wanted.

Eric Ecklund brought coupons for members from Hobby Town.

**Our Annual Tour of Layouts is scheduled for October 18th.** Three (3) members have agreed to run their layouts. Veteran's Memorial in Bristol would like to be included in the Tour. They will run the diesel for the BBMRA Tour. There's a good restaurant in Bristol, where we could end the Tour, that's not expensive. A tentative schedule for the tour is: Eric Ecklund (G) 10:00 – 12:00; Bill McCord (G & N) 1:00 – 2:00; BBMRA Live Steamers (G scale live steam) 2:00 – 4:00; Veteran's Memorial – Bristol (24" narrow gauge) 4:00 – 6:00.

FSU is not playing 10/18 and Alabama is playing Ole Miss (not sure what time).

Joe Haley brought up the risk of showers this late in the year may put a halt on the planned Tour.

The next meeting will be at **7:30p.m., Tuesday, September 16, 2008**, at the **Old Antique Car Museum**. Dinner will be catered again for \$6.50 at 6:30p.m. Please contact John Sullenberger if you plan to eat dinner so he can give the caterer a headcount.

The meeting adjourned at 8:17p.m. Respectfully submitted, Lyn Heath, Secretary.

## **Interstate 40 from Memphis** by Bob Ruggles

A trip on Interstate 40 from Memphis to Williams, AZ to catch a train to the Grand Canyon provides a lot of time to think, and my thoughts turned to transportation, especially trucks (there seemed to be at least four or five for every passenger car on our route), and trains (in the Texas Panhandle, New Mexico and Arizona, I-40 parallels BNSF's double-tracked Transcon (*The Transcon is BNSF's 2,239-mile long mainline connector between Southern California and Chicago and points in-between.* – from [www.bnsf.com](http://www.bnsf.com)) and, in one place, a UP main line).

Given the difficulty all of us are having paying for fuel, I wondered why the trucks were so numerous when it is obvious that their cargo could be transported more efficiently and cheaply (and, potentially, maybe faster) by rail. Yet, BNSF at least appeared to have pretty much saturated its Transcon. We saw many trains, several stopped, making me wonder if congestion ahead was the cause. And because some of those trains were going the same direction, my suspicion seemed to be confirmed. Most of

the eastbound trains were container trains; only one westbound was a container train. Does that speak to our trade deficit? Is there somewhere on the east coast where a mountain of shipping containers is occupying real estate, unused?

U.S rail mileage was 254,251 miles in 1916, history.com tells me. Today, the Federal Railroad Administration reports we now have but 141,000 miles used by seven major railroads and 33 regional railroads. They produced over 1.77 trillion ton-miles and revenue of \$54 billion in 2006, the last year figures are available from FRA.

The National Association of Railroad Passengers maintains on its website that "for the railroad freight industry to maintain its existing market share will require massive increases in track capacity and a doubling of carload traffic by 2020." BNSF has recently opened a fourth track from the coal-laden Powder River Basin, and UP recently double-tracked a small portion of its Los Angeles-New Orleans line assumed in the Southern Pacific purchase. The latter expansion was funded by California's rail passenger program, however.

What is happening, says NARP, is that freight train congestion is causing miserable freight and passenger train on-time performance.

So, as more and more people flee their cars and eschew the airlines because of fuel-cost- fed fare increases and general hassles, the logical place for us to turn is Amtrak. In May, Amtrak enjoyed its best month ever, in terms of passenger numbers and revenue, **The New York Times** reported on June 21<sup>st</sup>. Some future trains are even sold out, the **Times** wrote. But, the number of passenger miles has dropped by two-thirds since 1960, and the number of companies that produce passenger cars and locomotives has also dwindled, the newspaper reported.

In May, Amtrak trains racked up 354,244 tardy minutes, or 5,904 hours, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation reported. Some 1,666 hours were attributed to freight train interference and 846 hours to passenger train interference. Another 1,510 hours were attributed to slow orders. As examples, the Sunset Limited averaged 9.38 hours of delay per trip, and the Texas Eagle racked up an average of 9.6 hours of delay per trip.

All this seems to say we are in a crisis with no easy solution. The railroad situation is no less important certainly than crumbling bridges and roads. Once the Iraq and Afghanistan wars are over, will we have the fortitude to spend the trillions necessary to shore up our infrastructure? Our national commerce seems to demand it.

See, I told you there is a lot of time to think when you drive 4,211 miles across the country.

## **Timetables of the Past**....Amtrak's Floridian from Chicago, Illinois to St. Petersburg, Florida

**By R. M. Lombardo, Large Scale Crew Chief**

As you drive to The 18th Annual Wiregrass Train Show in Dothan, Alabama, scheduled for Saturday, September 20, 2008, from 9am to 5pm & Sunday, September 21, 2008, from 10am to 4pm, adding to the excitement & if you have some extra time, exploring part of the route could be beneficial to your over 100 mile journey from Thomasville, Georgia/Tallahassee, Florida.

The following Amtrak Timetable is Effective November 14, 1971, (Renamed from The Pennsylvania Railroad's (PRR) South Wind), showing the daily train serving 6 states (Illinois, Indiana; Kentucky; Tennessee; Alabama & Florida). The connection for Miami was made via Jacksonville, which may confuse you & is explained in later editions.

A brief history shows throughout most of its 8 years of operation, enduring many detours around the state of Indiana because of poor track conditions by bankrupt Penn Central (PC). (The Federally Mandated (1973) Conrail (CR) assumed control on April 1, 1976.), relocation from Central to Union Station in Chicago; I recently learned, The original Auto-Train between was combined in 1976; Amtrak vacated Louisville & Nashville (L&N) depot in Louisville, Kentucky on November 1, 1976 (Moving to 7727 National Turnpike).

The Floridian lived for nearly 3 more years eventually, adding stops in Logansport (Van. Station); (with service temporarily suspended) & Bloomington, Indiana; service was also suspended to Indianapolis, Indiana; for some reason the train numbers changed from # 52 Southbound to # 57 & Northbound from # 53 to #56. The (Jimmy) Carter Administration finally wielded the axe on October 1, 1979. However, a Wichita, Kansas judge's order kept the train operating until October 8, 1979, when service finally ended.

There's currently no service to Logansport, Indiana, Louisville & Bowling Green, Kentucky; Nashville Tennessee (Capital), Decatur, Montgomery (Capital) & Dothan, Alabama; Thomasville, Valdosta & Waycross, Georgia. The Station in Sanford, Florida was recently closed for safety reasons. Whether some of these stations still exist is another story.

The Tennessee Association of Railroad Passengers (TARP) & a group from Alabama, have tried for years to revive the service but with Amtrak receiving no increase in yearly funding by The Federal Government, service looks bleak unless, all of the states affected get together to discuss how to raise the money.

The Original Auto Train/Amtrak's Floridian between Montgomery & Dothan, Alabama, photo by Mike Woodruff (used with Permission).