



THE Lantern

August 2015

Volume 20 Number 8

Show Report; Elections Update; Member Profiles; Pay your Dues!

The 24th annual Tallahassee Model Train Show & Sale, our first without John Sullenberger, was a good one because of hard work by Club President Andy Zimmerman, Show Coordinator Marc Beshara, other BBMRA officers and so many members of the club.

If John had still been with us, I am guessing he would have been happy and would have wondered where all of the extra help came from.

“Despite the lower numbers, I was pleased and pleasantly surprised at the outcome, but I know we can probably do a little better,” Andy says.

The kids were happy, responding to the most impressive operating layouts BBMRA has had in some time. Most vendors thought they did well and actually better than at some larger shows. The paid gate was down a little, but still substantial. The 24th annual Tallahassee Model Train Show & Sale, our first without John Sullenberger, was a good one because of hard work by Club President Andy Zimmerman, Show Coordinator Marc Beshara, other BBMRA officers and so many members of the club.

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“Despite the lower numbers, I was pleased and pleasantly surprised at the outcome, but I know we can probably do a little better,” Andy says.

Andy Zimmerman has agreed to run for his first full term as BBMRA president and, hopefully, other current board members will seek new terms as well – Vice President Sheldon Harrison, Treasurer Drew Hackmeyer and Secretary Doug Gyuricsko.

The Divisions will select their coordinators, who also sit on the BBMRA board. They are currently – Garth Easton, N Scale; Art Wilson, HO; Randy Lombardo, Thomas; and Sam Miller, Large Scale. Anyone, of course, can run for office.

Andy and David Brazell, who is chair of the nominating committee, will outline the timeline for the elections during the meeting Tuesday night, August 18, at 7:30. Because of notice requirements in the bylaws, the actual 2015/16 elections may not take place until September, but we will have a full discussion of the elections.

BBMRA Meetings

Third Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. “Old’ Tallahassee Antique Car Museum, 3550 Mahan Drive.

August 18, 2015: Elections ; 2015/16 Dues; Member Profiles; Running T Traks.

**September 15, 2015:
All Aboard Florida – Rusty Roberts,
AAF Vice President for Government
Affairs**

Pay Your 2015-16 Dues

BBMRA Treasurer Drew Hackmeyer will be accepting members’ dues payments for the current fiscal year – July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016 at the August 18th meeting. Dues for this year are \$20 and may be paid by cash, check or money order made payable to BBMRA.

You have until August 31 to pay your dues. After that date, members who have not paid their dues will be considered in default and their membership privileges will be suspended until their dues are paid. If you can’t make this month’s meeting, please send in your dues to the BBMRA Post Office Box:

BIG BEND MODEL RAILROAD
ASSOCIATION
Post Office Box 3392
Tallahassee, Florida 32315-3392

TALLAHASSEE MODEL RAILROAD SHOW & SALE

Saturday June 25, 2016 – North Florida Fairgrounds, Buildings 2 & 4 – 9 am to 4 pm
Adults & Children 13 and older: \$6 – Children 12 and younger are free – Free Parking



Andy stepped up following the tragic, sudden passing of long-time President John Sullenberger last fall. John would have been 58 last Tuesday. He was born August 11, 1957, in Durham, NC. He passed in Tallahassee on October 27, 2014. As Andy Z stated following John's death, John "was the BBMRA". Also tragically passing a few days earlier was Sandy Scott, our treasurer.

The club has moved on under the leadership of Andy and the other members of the board.

It is time to pay up or shut up. Not really, but it is time to pay the \$20 membership dues for 2015-16. Collection of dues is a priority for the Tuesday meeting. Dues must be renewed by August 31. Drew Hackmeyer will be taking your money.

Andy and other officers will continue updating member profiles as well as completing profiles for new members. This will enable the BBMRA to issue a new, current club roster as well as separate division rosters.

Finally, it is time to run trains. Division members are encouraged to bring their T-Trak layouts and operate them. Large Scale members are encouraged to come early and learn how to set up, using the special innovative table constructed by Doug.

BBMRA Thomas Layout Huge Hit at WFSU Festival

Randy Lombardo's Lionel Thomas layout played a big role in making the August 1 Thomas and Friends Day at WFSU studies a huge success. Thomas was operated by Randy, and two other Large Scale Division representatives - Doug Gyuricsko and Sam Miller.

"Thank you so much for being a part of our Thomas Event. Quite a few people came up to me and mentioned that you were their favorite part of the event. Mine as well!" says Becca Piers, Education and outreach Coordinator for WFSU. "I hope we are able to partner again in the future!"

BBMRA was listed as a sponsor in articles on the event in the Tallahassee Democrat and posters produced by WFSU and invited back when WFSU received another Public Broadcasting grant for a Thomas the Tank Engine activity.

WFSU created a special report on Thomas and Friends Day at flickr.com. It includes many photos of Randy's Thomas Layout. You can reach it through this URL, which you would have to type into your computer:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/wfsumedia/sets/72157656706722586>

Randy has always allowed kids to operate the power pack on the Thomas layout and throw the switches. This is a big reason Thomas is so popular. We went a little further.



Randy, Doug & Sam Were Never Lonely



Sam Miller and Grandson Logan

In addition to the Thomas layout we put out things kids could handle and play with. These included extra Lionel Thomas rolling stock and Thomas Wooden Railway items .

We had to grit our teeth a little bit, but the kids loved it. A mom who had taken her children to our show at the Fairgrounds noted this big difference. Her kids could not touch any of the trains out there, but they were having a ball playing with Thomas toys here.

Joe Haley's HO Time Saver is built around hands on participation. Creating additional opportunities for kids to pick up and play with model trains is certainly worth exploring.

Sam Miller

State Board Approves \$1.75B in All Aboard Florida Bonding; AAF Official Briefing BBMRA Sept. 15

All Aboard Florida took a giant step forward in early August when the Florida Housing Finance Corporation agreed to issue \$1.75 billion in tax-free bonds needed to finance the rail's construction. "The 3-0 decision by the Florida Development Finance Corporation greatly increases the likelihood that the Coral Gables-based operation will have its trains running in South Florida by early 2017 and into Orlando by late 2017," the Orlando Sentinel reported.

Rusty Roberts, AAF's Vice President for Government Affairs, will speak to BBMRA during the September meeting, September 15 at 7:30 p.m. He is bringing along photos and possibly video as well. Most of our club members are interested in passenger rail and this should be an excellent program.

AAF, which is under the Florida East Coast Railroad, would become the first private interest in the U.S. to develop passenger rail in 100 years.

Palm Beach Post: All Aboard Florida Could Become a Reality

August 8, 2015

It's been a momentous week for All Aboard Florida. The controversial, privately owned venture got the blessing of a key environmental impact report and, more important, the OK to issue \$1.75 billion in tax-exempt bonds it needs to proceed. Now it's up to the company, descended from Florida business and rail pioneer Henry Flagler, to make good on its optimistic vision of high-speed passenger rail service connecting the high-tourist cities of Miami and Orlando in three hours, by way of West Palm Beach and the Treasure Coast.

If All Aboard Florida succeeds, it would be a benefit for the most populous part of this still-growing state. It would boost the prospects for high-speed rail elsewhere in the United States. And if it fails, it will be a business failure that is the company's and its investors' alone. Neither taxpayers nor the counties and towns along the route will be stuck with the debts.

The critics have had their say. Now it's time for residents of South Florida and the Treasure Coast to begin to learn to live with the reality of this project.

We understand those who fear the noise, delays, safety hazards and property depreciation that will accompany the 32 daily trips of All Aboard Florida trains. But it is disingenuous of Floridians to act as though they've never lived with a railway going through their cities before. Those Florida East Coast Railway tracks were carrying noisy freight before most of the towns were here.

And let's get a grip about those feared disruptions. The high-speed trains that will carry passengers will be much shorter and much lighter than freight trains. They will create far less rumble and noise. Those delays? As the company shows in a video, when a train comes through, the gates will fall, the train will pass and the gates will rise, all in less than a minute.

Clematis Street is closed to through traffic at Quadrille Avenue Monday, August 3, 2015 as railroad workers prepare for the coming of All Aboard Florida passenger service. The intersection has closed in order to work on sections of the railroad tracks in preparation for the construction of the 60,000-square foot West Palm Beach station for All Aboard Florida (Lannis Waters / The Palm Beach Post)

Clematis Street is closed to through traffic at Quadrille Avenue on August 3 as workers prepare for the construction of the 60,000-square foot West Palm Beach station for All Aboard Florida (Lannis Waters / The Palm Beach Post)

The company projects that 5.3 million people will be riding these trains in 2020, paying \$34 for a standard ticket from West Palm Beach to Miami or \$110 for the 235-mile trip from Miami to Orlando. Realistic? Maybe not. But at least it will be the market that tells us, not a government planner or your know-it-all Uncle Harry.



And with the highways becoming ever more crowded in what is now America's third most populous state, we're glad that somebody is trying to develop a mode of transportation that doesn't involve the automobile.

We do, of course, harbor some skepticism about the business plan, mainly because no private intercity passenger railroad has operated in the U.S. for

decades; the nation no high-speed rail other than the Acela on Amtrak's Northeast Corridor (which runs at less than full speed because it lacks a dedicated high-speed track) – and because the history of Florida is pitted with grand schemes gone bust.

We remain uneasy about the safety of the 90-year-old railroad bridges at the Loxahatchee, St. Lucie and New rivers. All Aboard Florida intends to upgrade the rails and the drawbridge mechanisms, but not replace the structures, according to the Federal Railroad Administration's Final Environmental Impact Statement, because it says they are "structurally sound." We'd like to see independent engineering assessments that prove that.

But for all that, we hope All Aboard Florida succeeds. We hope its example inspires a broad expansion of passenger rail, particularly the talked-about Coastal Line, which would use those same FEC tracks not for long-distance travel but to connect our local downtowns.

Florida, after all, was practically invented by a railroad – Flagler's, which took genteel visitors south from Jacksonville to the new resorts of Palm Beach, Boca Raton and Miami, and then improbably all the way to Key West. It is remarkable to see Flagler's railroad being reinvented for high-speed passenger travel in the 21st Century.

This is innovation. It spawns skeptics. It risks failure. It seems like folly. But when it works, it changes the world.

I've Been Working on the Railroad

Drew Hackmeyer and his wife, Michele, spent their vacation this summer working on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, which operates between Chama, New Mexico, and Antonito, Colorado. They were part of a volunteer program to restore and maintain the historic railway.

Drew briefed the club during our July meeting and provided many good views of numerous areas and RR items showing the work in progress. Drew has a favorite green hard hat that was used on many unique projects, and the food was great at 10,000 ft elevation. They have been there more than once, and the work will go on.

Doug Gyuricsko



Drew Recounting Adventures on the Cumbres & Toltec.
Photo by David Blodgett.

BBMRA Important Events for 2015!!

BBMRA Meetings: 3rd Tuesday of each month, 7:30 p.m., Old Antique Car Museum, 3550 Mahan Drive.

Lionel Interest Group Operating Sessions: Most Sunday afternoons, 1:30 p.m. – Sam Miller's, Woodgate. Call 850-459-3012.

August 18: BBMRA Meeting: Elections Update; Member Profiles; Pay Your Dues; Running T Traks.

August 22-23: The Villages Summer Train Show, 9a to 4p on Saturday, 10a to 3p on Sunday. The Villages near Leesburg.

September 15: BBMRA Meeting: All Aboard Florida, Rusty Roberts, AAF Vice President for Government Affairs.

September 19-20: Wiregrass Annual Model Railroad Show & Sale, National Peanut Festival and Fairgrounds, Dothan, AL.

September 26-27: Mobile train Show, Mobile VIA Health, Fitness & Enrichment Center, 1717 Dauphin St., Mobile, AL.

October 3: Florida Rail Fair, Volusia County Fairgrounds, Deland.

October 20; BBMRA Meeting

October 22-25: NMRA Sunshine Region 2015 Convention, Jacksonville.

October TBD: Farm Day, Tallahassee Museum of Natural History (Junior Museum),

November TBA: Garage Sale or Flea Market – Model Trains, Toys, Hobbies. Sam Miller, Doug Gyuricsko and anyone else interested. Either sam's house in Woodgate or the Tallahassee Flea Market.

November 17: BBMRA Meeting.

December 11: Sam Miller/Linda Medlin Holiday Reception, Woodgate. Call 850-459-3012.

December 19-20: 14th Tampa Model Train Show & Sale, Florida State Fairgrounds.

January 9-10, 2016: 54th Florida Rail Fair, Volusia County Fairgrounds, Deland.

January 16, 2016: Atlanta Model Train Show.

THE NEW YORK, NEW HAVEN, AND HARTFORD RAILROAD COMPANY					
EASTBOUND			WESTBOUND		
No.	Due	Remarks	No.	Due	Remarks

BBMRA Meeting Minutes for July, 21, 2015.

With our President Andy Zimmerman visiting the West Coast to celebrate a new grandchild, our Vice President Sheldon Harrison was called on to step up to take over. Sheldon called the meeting to order at 7:44 p.m.

Guests: Mathew Blair, with his mom's support will be a new member. They both are interested, and knowledgeable about HO scale trains. They found us at the show this year. Welcome. Meeting minutes for June 25th 2015; accepted as is.

Treasurer's Report: Drew Hackmeyer listed our payments and assets. We are in the black; the report was accepted. Drew was also accepting dues.

Good of the Group: Dan King asked to make a statement about the show. From Dan's past experience, he gave "attaboys" to the amateur group of show workers. Andy Zimmerman did an outstanding job taking the reins after the passing of John Sullenberger, who had planned and staged the show for so many years.

A report of issues with our Internet site is being addressed, said Drew Hackmeyer. Randy Lombardo reported that the train station in Thomasville is now a restaurant that specializes in Cajon cuisine. David Brazell reported part of his sales at the show have been donated to the BBMRA in John Sullenberger's name. David also brought a large box of RR items, mostly HO for the taking. "I don't want to carry the box out!" he said.

Division Reports/ Small Division: Garth Easton thanked all who helped at the show this year. He noted even more may be needed next year.

HO Division: Art Wilson thanked the members who helped with the show; and he liked what was being done with the HO T Traks. Art also reported a need for space to work on modules. Dan King asked to make it a priority to find space.

Switching: Joe Hayley reported he had 50 to 70 "YOOTS" (youths) receive certifications. Some parents were helpers and some were not. It takes two to earn the cert; one on the bells and horn control and one to operate the switcher. Joe thought he needed to be set up closer to the incoming table area to be more effective. The switching is educational and needs more attention to optimize the experience.

Large Scale: In Sam's absence, I noted he wanted to thank all who helped to make the Large Scale Division a success at the show. Randy Lombardo reported the Thomas Layout was a success; a hands on hit allowing young folks to touch and operate the trains.

Veterans Memorial: Mitchell Green said the trains in Bristol are running the second Saturday every month. They expect to be running the Halloween & the Christmas specials this year. Tom Keenan, who founded the VMRR, along with his wife and family, passed away in June.

I counted 34 people present for the meeting.

A personal note; the A/C will be turned on even sooner if we still have the heat like it was.

Next meeting will be August 18th. Remember dues, and name badges!

Respectfully submitted by **Doug Gyuricsko**.

Sam Retiring and Moving to New email

I am retiring from the Florida Insurance Council, in a couple of weeks and will be moving to a new email address. It is sammiller61113@outlook.com. I will be reading this one plus my current one smiller@flains.org for a while, but you can go ahead and make the change if you like now. Send Lantern items to me or Doug Gyuricsko at akdoug@mindspring.com

Sam