



THE Lantern

February 2020 – Happy New Year!

Volume 25 Number 2

Show Committee Busy on 29th BBMRA Annual Show & Sale June 27

Andy Zimmerman and the Show Committee have kicked off full-scale planning for the 29th Annual Show & Sale June 27 at the North Florida Fairgrounds, with a special goal of generating momentum to carry over into a special 30th anniversary event next year. The Show Committee meets Tuesday at 7 p.m., just prior to the February BBMRA meeting. (Any club member is welcome to attend.) And Andy will lead a discussion on the show during the regular meeting.

“Thank you to all who served and made last year a success. This year we will have some additional challenges, with retirements, illnesses and competing shows,” Andy said in a note to the Show Committee. “So we will need to get on top and stay on top. With our 30th anniversary coming up next year - and we will want to do something to commemorate it - we can ill afford a poor showing this year. Word of mouth travels fast. But with some planning and attention, we can pull this off.”

TCA, the national group for collectors of Lionel and other vintage O Gauge trains, is holding its national convention with Department 56 Collectors, another national group, in Jacksonville June 21-28. One of the highlights will be a train show and sale Friday, the 26, and Saturday, the 27th. This is an unfortunate overlap with the Tallahassee show. While at least one of our major vendors, All About Toy Trains from Melbourne, has decided to participate in the TCA convention, several others confirmed with Andy and Sam Miller during the Golden Spikes Show in Jacksonville February 8 they would be returning to Tallahassee.

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Children’s Day, 2020, Museum of Florida History: HO T-Traks, Thomas

From HO Coordinator Phil Weston:

On Saturday, January 25, 2020, members of the Big Bend Model Railroad Association participated in the Museum of Florida History’s Annual Children’s Day at the R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street, Tallahassee, FL.

Randy Lombardo hosted the “Thomas the Tank Engine large scale layout and was swarmed by children wanting their turn to operate the friendly locomotives. Randy did a great job dealing with all those rascals and keeping the locomotives operating. Sam Miller and Doug Gyuricsko provided support and helped transport modules and other supplies between the distant parking lot and the display site. We appreciate the help of all of the participating members sharing in the timely set up and takedown of the displays.

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***** BBMRA Meetings *****

February 18, 2020, 7:30 p.m.
“Third Tuesday” BBMRA Meeting. Capital City Christian Church, 6115 Mahan Drive. Program is running trains. Show Committee meets at 7 p.m.

Work Ongoing on 2020, 39th Annual Show

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Porky and Avon Bacon from Port Orange, who have helped anchor the Tallahassee show for years with t-shirts, hats and other special items, informed Andy they are retiring and will not be at the 2020 Tallahassee show. Andy reached out to Dal Cook and Mohawk Design, from North Carolina, which had a huge railroading clothing apparel display at the Jacksonville show, and Dal is very interested in coming to Tallahassee next summer.

Jonathan Latchbury with JLD Trains in Atlanta, confirmed he will be buying four tables as he has the last several years, featuring Lionel and other O Gauge trains and once again is bringing his test tracks. We want to place Jonathan in one building and the BBMRA test tracks in the other building and publicize to vendors there will be testing facilities in both buildings.



Lewis Collier with Memory Station, another strong anchor of our shows in the past with eight to 10 tables, will return to Tallahassee if at all possible, although family commitments could keep him in Watkinsville, GA (the Athens area) that weekend. Lewis won't know until later this spring.

Todd Tait from Hahira, GA, confirmed at the Jacksonville show he wants one table to continue selling off his HO collection. Todd also will be joining other south Georgia modelers in bringing their N Scale T-Trak modules to Tallahassee.

Andy recently sent out the initial 2020 show communication to previous show vendors and potential new ones and immediately got two commitments - Larry Weigel from Homestead, FL., featuring HO, and Robin Cain from Cains Trains in Oneonta, AL. Larry and Robin will be buying four tables each. Sam Miller will be following up Andy with another solicitation email.

There is an important change to the vendor contract this year. Table rental fees will be \$20 per table until May 15 when they will increase to \$25. "In years past, we have had vendors ask to participate right up to days before the show. This creates some issues as we have to rearrange to fit people in," Andy noted in his memo to vendors. "Any request for tables after the cutoff will be at \$25 per table if we can accommodate."

During the January club meeting, BBMRA President Zimmerman re-appointed these members to the 2019 Show Committee, if they are willing to serve:

- Sam Miller and Carlton Ingram to assist Andy in communications with potential vendors and registered vendors.
- Bob Parmenter to assign tables and locations in the two buildings to confirmed vendors, exhibitors and operating layouts.
- David Brazell to handle publicity, including articles for the Tallahassee Democrat, Chronicle, Tallahassee Magazine and releases for Channel 6, WCTV, and other important local media.
- Phil Weston to contact event calendar people.
- Paul Schneider and Sheldon Harrison to coordinate people to work in the admissions booth and help vendors unload and then load up again after the show.
- Stacey Elliott and Bob Feuerstein, to work on Facebook and other Social Media communications and in areas not handled by Phil or David.

There is room for still more committee members. We never have enough. And then every club member will be asked to step up during the weekend of the show.

Thomas, HO T-Traks at Children's Day

Continued from Page One

HO Division members Scott Garner, Paul Schneider, Sheldon Harrison, Brandon and Jackson McKenna and Phil Weston operated a "medium size" HO T-Trak layout including 10 modules. We showcased one of our new Bachmann Spectrum Russian Decapod steam locomotives with Tsunami2 sound decoder hauling a 10-car load of logs and stubby caboose; a Western Maryland F7 diesel locomotive hauling a five-car load of coal hoppers; and a Southern Pacific Dash 8 with Lok Sound decoder.



There was plenty of interest from the children and parents and an almost constant stream of visitors to the layouts. We appreciated Joe Haley lending his support, talking with visitors and distributing advertising cards for the 29th Annual BBMRA Model Railroad Show & Sale slated for June 27, 2020 at the North Florida Fairgrounds.

Randy Lombardo's Thomas the Tank Engine is always a big hit



This & That: Bright & Sunny Children's Day, Thomas Update

From Randy Lombardo:

Scott Garner and his two kids, Millie and Beau

A cool bright morning greeted Randy Lombardo and Sam Miller as we made our way to the Museum of Florida History (R. A. Gray Building), for the 37th year of this annual event, held the last Saturday in January.

Putting together a Thomas and Friends switching plan seemed easier with the new Lionel G Scale play mat cataloged from 1994-1995, which covered most of the two six-foot tables. We still had to swap out several pieces of track and relocate the transformer connection to slide under curve track instead of straight track to finally get things rolling.

It seemed a long time before what seemed to be largely grandparents and their grandchildren lined up to take their turn as engineer. Thomas wasn't a useful engine, refusing to ever really work right. Percy and Diesel helped out, operating smoothly and even racing together. One of our young visitors was a diehard Harold the Helicopter fan. Another spun the Thomas wind mill so hard that she wound up landing on the mat –

unharmful! They were several train derailments, but none too serious, and one girl was saddened by the fact that Thomas, still sputtering, was being put away for the day.

My First Hess Toy Truck: New for 2020, this plush Fire Truck with lights and sound will delight children from newborn to who knows how old? It's only \$29.95 plus shipping. Supplies are limited. Visit hesstoytruck.com for more details.

Lego Masters Debut: On Wednesday, February 5th, at 9 p.m., Fox (Comcast/Xfinity Channel 10), aired this one-hour show, where several contestants added to an existing Lego monorail that runs above Dream Land Park, building modules of amusement rides. Several turned out to be duds. A male duo won "the Golden Lego Brick". View the first episode @ YouTube.com

Wheel of Fortune: Railway Week aired during the week of January 27-31, on WCTV (Comcast/Xfinity Channel 9), where contestants could win trips around the world by rail. The large backdrops featured, especially a set of switching tracks, gave me an idea this would benefit our annual show. An area could be set aside for photo shoots.

Upcoming BBMRA Programs

From Program Director Andy Millott:

The Classic Florida Trains program for January went great. For February, we will be running trains. I talked with David Brazell about the possibility of presenting something in March and he is going to let me know if he works up something. I can do a presentation in March on Layout Design Elements as a backup if David is not ready, which would be timely given that the club is moving in the direction of T-Trak modules.

At this month's meeting, I plan to bring a sign up list just to see if anyone has decided if they want to be on the March 21 Layout Tour. Gary Edwards has signed up for his vintage Lionel layout. I am hoping to add more people on the list soon.

If you have ideas for a program you will present or a program which others might help create, let me know. We have several empty program slots for 2020.

2020 Folkston Train Fest is April 4.

This year's Folkston Funnel Annual Train Fest is Saturday, April 4. Many club members have attended this wonderful event on a regular basis over the years, including David Brazell, who reports on the activities for the Lantern. The festival includes a free meal and special booths and exhibits, but the main attraction is train after train, including Amtrak. Folkston is about 40 miles north of Jacksonville.

The following comes from the Inn at Folkston webpage:

Folkston is located on the CSX Transportation double-track main line 40 miles north of Jacksonville FL.

To many rail fans, it is known as the CSXT funnel out of Florida, or [The Folkston Funnel](#). The double track from Jacksonville to Folkston, and north to Savannah, Georgia, and beyond is the Nahunta subdivision. Within viewing distance, just north of town, the rails split. The Jesup subdivision cuts off and goes west to Waycross GA (Burt Reynold's home town!) and on to Atlanta.

The main scanner frequency here is 160.590 MHz for road traffic.

During a 24-hour period, train watchers may see an average of 60 trains, at times more, depending on the movement of freight into Florida. A wide variety of trains can be seen during the 24-hour period. Six Amtrak trains pass daily, including the [AutoTrain](#), which runs from the nation's capital to Florida and back. Numerous

intermodal and mixed freight trains going north and south keep the Nahunta and Jesup subdivisions busy. Numerous unit trains pass through nearly every day, carrying coal, phosphate, grain, molten sulfur, auto rackets.

A covered train viewing platform became reality in 2001 to the delight of train fans from near and far who come to visit the famous Folkston Funnel. As part of this city-sponsored service, a scanner is active where visitors can listen to train engineers as trains pass through the area. Free WiFi service for laptop computers was added during the summer of 2006. In addition, the city provides benches, chairs, picnic tables, BBQ pits and rest rooms.

In October, the Orlando Society of Model Railroaders sets up its elaborate train layout inside the restored historic depot during Folkston's annual Okefenokee Festival. The city of Folkston welcomes rail fans to the area, but asks that they practice good railroad safety while here!

The City of Folkston hosts an annual train festival in early April each year.

Remember the Sunset Limited!

From Mike Sassard, BBMRA member who now lives in Paso Robles, CA:

It's odd that for a city to have such an avid railroad and super train club, the BBMRA, Tallahassee, Florida was perhaps greatly a passenger train wasteland. Not entirely though. The original passenger train was the Sunset Limited which ran from Los Angeles to Orlando. In 1925, it had the longest train run of all, from LA to New York, turning north at New Orleans. In 1950, the Sunset Limited came through Tallahassee on its way to Jacksonville. Then came Hurricane Katrina in 2005, which wiped out tracks and stations. Tallahassee still does not have passenger traffic.

The Sunset Limited is an Amtrak passenger train that for most of its history has run between New Orleans and Los Angeles, over the nation's second transcontinental route. However, up until Katrina, it ran between Orlando and Los Angeles, and between 1993 and 1996, continued on to Miami (via the *Silver Meteor's* route). It is the oldest named train in the United States; it was first introduced in 1894 by the Southern Pacific Railroad, and was handed to Amtrak upon its formation in 1971.



Service on the *Sunset Limited* between New Orleans and Florida has been suspended since August 29, 2005 because the rail line in the path of Hurricane Katrina east of New Orleans was washed out. The operating railroad CSX restored the line itself between New Orleans and

Sunset Limited.

Jacksonville. However, in 2006, Amtrak said it was deemed too expensive to rebuild to modern passenger rail standards. In 2016 Amtrak proposed to return the *Sunset Limited* service to Florida in the near future.

The Sunset Limited is the oldest named train in the United States, operating since November 1894 along the Sunset Route (though originally named the *Sunset Express*). The Sunset Route (originating in New Orleans) is the southernmost of the three gateways to the West Coast envisioned through the Pacific Railroad Acts. The other two embarked from Chicago and St. Louis.

The train was dieselized in late 1949. In August 1950, it was the last major American luxury train to become a streamliner. Also in 1950, the train got a new look, with stainless steel cars with red letterboards and white "Southern Pacific" lettering. All cars except the RPO-Baggage (which had six-wheel trucks) had four-wheel trucks.

April 21, 2020, 7:30 p.m.: BBMRA "Third Tuesday" BBMRA Meeting. Capital City Christian Church, 6115 Mahan Drive.

April 25, 2020: NMRA Sunshine Region Northern Division Workshop, 9:00 a.m. through 3 p.m. Program and location to be announced later, but it will be in the Jacksonville area.

May 19, 2020, 7:30 p.m.: BBMRA "Third Tuesday" BBMRA Meeting. Capital City Christian Church, 6115 Mahan Drive.

June, 2020: Tampa Model Show, Saturday & Sunday, Florida State Fairgrounds, Tampa, FL. We don't have the exact date yet.

June 13, 2020: NMRA Sunshine Region Northern Division Workshop, 9:00 a.m. through 3 p.m. Program and location to be announced later, but it will be in the Jacksonville area.

June 20-28 TCA and Department 56 Collectors national convention in Jacksonville. More information on this major event later. Includes train show and sale June 26-27. Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront.

June 23, 2020: "Third Tuesday" BBMRA Meeting. The third Tuesday is June 16, but the meeting will be shifted to the 23, which would be the final Tuesday before the 2020 show at the fairgrounds for final planning for the show.

June 27, 2020: a Saturday, the 29th Annual Tallahassee Model Railroad Show & Sale. Leon County Fairgrounds. Set-up is Friday, June 26.

August, 2020: The Villages Summer Train Show, 9a to 4p on Saturday, 10a to 3p on Sunday. The Villages near Leesburg. Not sure of exact dates yet.

July 21, 2020, 7:30 p.m.: BBMRA "Third Tuesday" BBMRA Meeting. Capital City Christian Church, 6115 Mahan Drive.

August 18, 2020, 7:30 p.m.: BBMRA "Third Tuesday" BBMRA Meeting. Capital City Christian Church, 6115 Mahan Drive.

September, 2020: Wiregrass Annual Model Railroad Show & Sale, National Peanut Festival and Fairgrounds, Dothan, AL. Not sure of exact dates yet.

September 15, 2020, 7:30 p.m.: BBMRA "Third Tuesday" BBMRA Meeting. Capital City Christian Church, 6115 Mahan Drive.

October 1-3, 2020: NMRA Sunshine Region 2020 Convention - SUNSHINE EXPRESS. The John Trinkle Center, Plant City Campus of HCC 1206 North Park Road, Plant City, FL 33566. Hotel: Holiday Inn Express & Suites 2102 Park Road, Plant City, FL 33566

October 20, 2020, 7:30 p.m.: BBMRA "Third Tuesday" BBMRA Meeting. Capital City Christian Church, 6115 Mahan Drive.

October 24, 2020: NMRA Sunshine Region Northern Division Workshop, 9:00 a.m. through 3 p.m. Program and location to be announced later, but it will be in the Jacksonville area.

November 17, 2020, 7:30 p.m.: BBMRA "Third Tuesday" BBMRA Meeting. Capital City Christian Church, 6115 Mahan Drive.

November 2020: TCA Southern Division Toy Train/ Christmas Show: Jacksonville, Morocco Shrine Auditorium. Exact date to be announced later. Open to the public from 10a-3p. Open to TCA members beginning at 9a. Exact date to be announced later.

November 2020: Tallahassee Museum of Natural History Farm Days, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Exact date to be announced later.

November 2020: Woodgate Lionel Open House: a Sunday, 1:30 to 4 p.m. at Sam Miller and Linda Medlin's home, 3008 Stillwood Court, Woodgate in Tallahassee. Sunday Lionel Group Therapy folks are helping. Exact date to be announced later.

December 2020: 6th Anniversary Pensacola Railfest Model Train Show & Sale: Saturday and Sunday. Pensacola Interstate Fairgrounds, 6655 Mobile Highway, Pensacola, 32526.9 to 5, Saturday, 10 to 4 Sunday, Central. Admission \$6 for adults. Exact date to be announced later.

December 11, 2020: 6:30 p.m. BBMRA Holiday Reception, Sam Miller & Linda Medlin, Woodgate.

December 12, 2020, Sopchoppy Winter Holiday Festival: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., HO T-Trak set-up at the City of Sopchoppy Train Depot.

December 18-19, 2020: Winter Tampa Model Show, Saturday & Sunday, Florida State Fairgrounds, Tampa, FL.

December 2020: Christmas Trains, Veterans Memorial Railroad in Bristol. The Polar Express will run this Christmas. Details will be announced later.

Big Bend Model Railroad Association Minutes for Meeting of January 21, 2020

President Andy Zimmerman called the meeting, held on January 21, to order at 7:32 PM at the Capital City Christian Church, 6115 Mahan Drive. The meeting was well attended with more than 30 folks present.

Minutes – The minutes from the November meeting were accepted and passed without objection.

Treasurer's Report – Drew Hackmeyer was absent and President Andy delivered the Treasurer's Report on behalf of Drew. The main theme was that the club is solvent. In keeping with club policy, detailed financial numbers are not published in the Lantern. Should a club member require the details, they are available upon request from paid members. The club has 62 paid members, down from 64 members and 69 in previous years.

Division Reports

Large Scale –Sam mentioned the upcoming Children's Day at the R.A Gray museum and that the hours have been reduced to 10 am to 2 pm rather than to 4 pm as done in previous years. He mentioned that HO and Randy with large scale will participate in the event and stressed the need to expedite the packing up process when done.

Robert Feuerstein mentioned the upcoming Jacksonville show on the 8th and 9th of February which will be held at the Prime Osborne Convention Center, the old train depot, downtown. President Andy encouraged members interested in attending to carpool.

HO – Phil Weston the HO coordinator, mentioned the Sopchoppy outing last December in which HO and N scale participated. He mentioned that it was a great outing for all involved and that we would be interested in doing it again. Phil also mentioned a setup at the Capital City church in commemoration of Don Meek's 80th birthday which was also a good time. Phil mentioned the 33" radius curves and that they have caretakers in preparation for the show and the HO division is getting ready.

Small Scale – Garth mentioned the Sopchoppy outing and also the upcoming Woodville Founders Day event in March in which N-Scale will be participating.

Sam Miller asked about the June show flyers for exhibiting at the R.A. Gray building during the upcoming event there. Sam asked about show committee participation and expressed the hope that previous participants are willing to continue.

Several club members requested flyers as they have trips to upcoming shows planned. There was then discussion about the various shows and the fact that often our flyers are snapped up even for shows that are somewhat distant. The Amherst, MA train show was specifically mentioned as an upcoming show though geographic distance from FL will necessarily limit participation from the club.

Good of the Group – Andy Millot mentioned the change in date for the layout tour in March (being moved to March 21st from March 28th) and asked for input and communication re desire to display and participate. He plans to finalize the schedule by the end of February. He also described a book in his possession describing passenger train consists of the 1940's and passed it around the room.

John Sykes described operating heavy equipment that is now in place at a club in Germany. He described some of the innovations used to get the equipment working at such small scales as HO and there was some follow up discussion on this.

Ed Schroeder added mention of the Miniatur Wunderland and described various elements in it, including moving vehicles on roadways, trucks, airplanes landing etc. There is a large computer control room to coordinate everything.

Dave Blodgett then mentioned a book describing a special run of FL equipment between Orlando and Tampa on the Seaboard system.

The business portion of the meeting was then concluded at approximately 7:58PM.

Submitted by Secretary Sheldon Harrison.

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