



# THE Lantern

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## 2021 Two-Day Show Tentatively Set for June 26-27, 2021; BBMRA Meeting Via Zoom Tuesday Night

BBMRA President Andy Zimmerman, in consultation with the Board and Show Committee, was forced to cancel the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Show & Sale because of concerns from members, vendors and exhibitors surrounding the Coronavirus pandemic. Andy said, "This was a tough decision and as heartbreaking as it was to do, it was the right decision." As he has noted in President's Reports to club members, we are planning a two-day show in 2021. Here is an update from Andy:

### From Andy Zimmerman:

The June 2021 show is our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary show and we want it to be bigger and better than ever. We already have commitments from several vendors for what will be our first two-day show in the history of the BBMRA. People are excited at the prospect of making it a two-day show and while this may be the one and only time we do this, we want it to be a memorable one.

We need to focus over the next year on what we can do to set this show apart from all others. We plan on having clinics and raffles as well as setting up large N, HO and O T-Trak layouts and also Z-Trak, Garden Railroad and Live Steam layouts. My challenge to the club is, Think about what made a show awesome for you, and is that something we could bring to our 30<sup>th</sup>-anniversary show?

The show is tentatively scheduled for June 26-27, 2021

## BBMRA May 19 Meeting Being Held Through Zoom

BBMRA is holding its May 19 meeting through Zoom. Some 16 of you got through on Zoom in April. Others had problems, but hopefully you have figured them out by now. We are distributing with this Lantern a PDF document on how to set up and test your Zoom account. See this link or the attachment.

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1SyAPMOMOnX2ILbLzPO7zqzsj4NmSaCX8>

**You can download Zoom Here** <https://zoom.us/>

BBMRA members received a report from Andy on May 13 informing you that the meeting this Tuesday will be through Zoom and formally inviting you. If you did not receive that email, contact Andy or Sam Miller. As a formal invited participant to the meeting, you will receive a second notice Tuesday by about 7 p.m. with all of the meeting details and will be asked to join the meeting which will begin at 7:30. Andy will be online to assist participants still having difficulty.

"So welcome to the new platform, Zoom," Andy said in his May 13 report. "If you are on this invite then please feel free to attend. This month we will discuss what happened with the show and why and what our plans are for the 30th Annual show next year. We will also talk about setting up a Trivia night between meetings to get together and just visit, maybe have a virtual raffle for an HO Broadway limited Cattle Car with Sound! Lastly we may have or set up a Virtual tour of layouts... So don't miss out!"

## Bob Feuerstein New BBMRA Membership Coordinator

Andy Zimmerman announced during the April Zoom meeting he was filling the long vacant position of Membership Coordinator and Bob Feuerstein has volunteered to take on the role and its many responsibilities. "Bob will be taking an active role in gathering member data and populating the Membership database as well as setting up new members with a welcome packet," Andy says.

Bob and Andy have been consulting and they developed these responsibilities and tasks for the Membership Coordinator:

- Create, compile and export databases containing all information for club.
- Process reports for BBMRA members as well as officials.
- Collect database of contacts with local media outlets, both online and off for the following years past and present.
- Keep roster current.
- Be able to report on whose birthday is coming up, how many years the member has been in the club, what scale they work in, what is members expertise to give clinics or help another club member.
- Following up with members about what help if any they would like.



Photo Bob Feuerstein

## Model Railroading While You "Stay at Home"

How many of us have reverted back to our childhood doing quarantine!? 🚂



### Tallahassee Support Group on Master Model Railroader Electrical & Landscaping Awards

From Sam Miller:

Several of us have decided during this largely stay-at-home episode in our lives to build or rebuild and enhance our model train layouts. We also have begun dreaming of being an NMRA Master Model Railroader, recognizing this is a pretty lofty goal. There is strength and greater collective knowledge in numbers, so we are forming a support group to work on the Master Model Railroader designation through the NMRA Achievement Program. We are focusing initially on the Electrical and Landscaping awards.

The group right now includes me, Andy Zimmerman, Doug Gyuricsko, Bob Feuerstein and Barrett Johnson. We welcome other NMRA members from BBMRA to join us. We certainly are going to be asking those of you with electrical and landscaping modeling skills to help us when we get stuck on some challenge, as I am certain we will do.

This is consistent with a new initiative to promote the Achievement Program by the NMRA Sunshine Region and Northern Division AP Director Ken Hoot from Jacksonville Beach. Ken has developed a chart with information on AP awards earned so far by members of the Northern Division, which includes BBMRA. Contact Bob Feuerstein or me if you to make sure your information is correct and up to date.

Our working group is strategizing by email mainly now, but we will get getting together once it is safe and appropriate to do so.

## Early Tallahassee Area Train Group Activities And a Few of the Folks who were Involved

### From Jack Herzog

My family and I moved to Tallahassee in early 1971 after I finished college at the University of Florida in Gainesville and took a job with the Legislature. At that time I was not familiar with the Tallahassee area so I looked at a map, saw a large National Forest and some big lakes on the map so I thought the move would be OK. So now 49 years later I am still here.

From childhood I had an interest in model railroading and looked forward to reading Model Railroader magazine and Railroad Model Craftsman magazine each month. Back then a fellow had written a book called "Riding the Tinplate Rails" and the Train Collectors Association (TCA), a national club, was formed and had been around for awhile.

Tallahassee had a hobby shop called Carters which was in a building where the EC Allen complex now stands, and an employee who was the resident HO expert. I believe his name may have been Campbell, perhaps Bill or Tom, I am no longer sure. In those days if you wanted parts for Lionel Trains you went to Colonial Photo and Hobby in Orlando and asked for Bud Albers. In Tallahassee there was a Little Folks store near the old library and they had a Marx handcar in stock. Otherwise there was little or no evidence of old toy trains being marketed in Tallahassee, at least that I could find. There was a Buddy's Hardware and a Wrights 5 & 10 cent store downtown, but no sign of model trains there, at least in those days.

One day someone decided to form a Railroad Historical Society in our area and I went to a meeting to help get it off the ground becoming a charter member. I remember Ed Schroeder was involved in this effort. I did not stay involved for long. At the meeting I met Ray Lewis, a WW II veteran of many missions in B-17s in the European Theater of the war. Ray was from Onionta, NY and his dad, whom I met, was a retired railroad man, I believe an engineer.

I got together with Ray one cold winter's night to talk toy trains and he showed me his childhood Lionel trains dating from the 1930's. Much of his track was marked with red paint since the boys of his childhood would pool their stuff to build larger train layouts in each other's attics in New York.



One of Ray's trains was the Lionel 253 locomotive which needed work. I acquired and restored it and still have it. Ray and Shirley Lewis lived over by the airport on Cates Road since Ray was a retired National Airlines employee.

### Ray and Shirley Lewis

Well, we started meeting at Ray's house and others joined our little group. We were assembling a portable HO railroad. However, that soon ended when Ray bit the bullet and had a 12-by 20-foot building set up in his back yard, complete with electricity and a window AC unit. Drew Hackmeyer, about 16 years old back then, started coming and he was a great asset to the group due to his modeling skills and knowledge of wiring. Clause Hinson also joined. Our group grew, but Ray, for some reason, tore out the HO and started building a large Lionel tinplate railroad.

Steve Pollack, Mel McCarthy, Harry Steffen, a WW II Pacific Navy veteran, Steve and Roy Avena, who owned the Midas Muffler business on N. Monroe St., and Don Howard all joined up and we started meeting at each other's homes to run trains. Don built a large layout and I remember hours spent cleaning old dirty track for his

layout and the group wiring it up. When we met at his house, Don's wife, Annabelle, always served delicious cake to the group. At Ray's house it was Coca Cola.

It was about then when we discovered Larry Laird, a retired airline pilot who had constructed a fabulous 7-and-1/2-foot gauge railroad on his farm near Atapulgus, Ga. It was complete with beaver pond, trestle and tunnel. One exciting event was when his gas powered diesel loco caught fire in his tunnel, but all ended well with no serious damage.

David Barth of Bagel Peddler fame joined our group at some point and he built some of the best layouts of all. He now lives with his family in the Seattle area, while Mike Sassard, another Lionel collector in our group, has moved to California.

We decided to build a large weekend train layout at the old Tallahassee Mall in one of the pits they had in those days. Claude spent the night with the trains as the train guard. On another occasion, we set up a display at the Junior Museum which included a Standard Gauge layout, an O Gauge layout and an S Gauge layout, Steve P. and Mel were, as I remember it, the driving force behind the O Gauge layout. Claude built the SG layout and the S gauge layout was my responsibility.



**David Barth, Claude Hinson, Jamie Herzog**

We met two fellows named Ray Prim and Jeff Crew, one had HO running all over a major part of his house and the other had Marklin trains from Germany. Marklin was fairly common back then since many Americans cycled through Germany with the Army in the early Post-War years and brought Marklin back with them. Back then, the Post-Wwar Marklin trains ran very well and were probably better than the American HO trains. My HO F3s from my childhood were rubber band drive. Marklin trains seldom derailed and were HO in size, but ran on three rail AC. I had such a layout back in the 1970 and 80s.

Well, the group grew and branched out. Sim Deckle and Mike Sassard came on the scene, joined by Ray Lewis and others and built the Heartland Express, a marvelous traveling Lionel layout under Sim's leadership. I was not involved in this endeavor.

The city got involved and I remember a train display in the Civic Center but was not active in those efforts. I believed they set up for Christmas displays as well in a trailer or something. Someone else needs to tell those tales.

I remember an early BBMRA meeting at the Elks Club with Sam Miller running the HO layout. Sam has since branched into the tinplate arena but still has his HO layout.

Walter Pampillian, a retired "carney," came along. He lived in Cottondale and we traveled over there to see his Lionel layout. We often carpooled with Jim Jones, whose Dad was a former FEC engineer. It was from Walter that Mel acquired the outdoor train ride that was recently featured on my John Long's Silver Railz YouTube channel as an article in the Lantern a few years ago. Walter, was very active in the TCA to the degree that a Gulf Wind Chapter was formed with meets in Cottondale, Dothan, Montgomery, Milton and Tallahassee. Walter also became a Lionel parts dealer.

One of our most serious old toy train collectors was Harry Steffen, with whom we had many train trading sessions. You see, we did not like to sell our trains, but like children with trading cards, we loved to trade them to the point that each of us thought he had got the best of a trade.

Well, these are my memories of the model railroading hobby in Tallahassee, back in the 1970s and 80s. There are still others around who have memories to add and I hope they will do so in future editions of the Lantern.

Please forgive me if you feel I have gotten any of this wrong as my memories grow dim. Dave Kerns and Vernon Parramore were involved in the hobby at a much earlier date but it is too late to ask them. So let us try to preserve those memories of our great hobby while we still can.

## **Minutes and Special Reports:**

### **29th Annual Tallahassee Model Railroad Show & Sale Cancelled**

Here is **BBMRA President Andy Zimmerman's** report to the club last month that the **June 27** show was being cancelled because of the **Coronavirus pandemic**.

After a long thoughtful process, polling our vendors, members, exhibitors and even some of our regular attendees, it pains me to say that for the first time in the history of the show, we have decided that in the best interests of all we must cancel. Neither the Tallahassee Model Railroad Show and Sale crew nor the BBMRA made this decision in haste or without careful consideration of all involved. The cancelation is in the best interest of the BBMRA members, our vendors, exhibitors, you and your family members, and everyone involved.

It is noteworthy that the BBMRA has never cancelled a show in all of its history. While we remained cautiously optimistic, and hoped the curve would bottom out sooner rather than later, we determined that even if the "curve is flattened" and this initial wave does dissipate, many people will remain vulnerable for a while, and we can't risk it. There is also some discussion of a "second wave" after the first one clears with unknown consequences and impacts.

Frankly, the BBMRA leadership, like most people, does not know what is going to happen in the future, I wish we were clairvoyant or that I was precognitive so we could make the best decision that would result in the best outcome. All we have is what we know in the here and now and with what we know now, we know we need to cancel.

"The size of your success is measured by the strength of your desire; the size of your dream; and how you handle disappointment along the way."

— Robert Kiyosaki

As unfortunate as this is, there is a ray of sunshine!! Since 2021 will mark our 30th-anniversary show, we will be stepping up our game. We may only do it this once but we are determined to bring you the best show of the season. In the summer of 2021 we will be bringing you a two-day show - the first in the history of our show.

While we are down, we are not out! When life knocks you down, you need to get up and step up your game!! We are committed to making the 30th anniversary show the best show we have ever had!! Don't miss out.

Thanks for listening...

Andy J. Zimmerman  
ATCS AW USN Ret.  
BBMRA President  
850-524-4399

### **Big Bend Model Railroad Association Minutes for Meeting of April 21, 2020**

President Andy Zimmerman called the meeting, held on April 21<sup>st</sup> to order via Zoom at about 7:35 p.m. The virtual meeting was attended by about 16 members.

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

**Treasurer's Report** – Drew Hackmeyer mentioned he had nothing to report. Andy added that we are in the black and we are good. There was no official report and thus no motion to accept the official report.

### **Division Reports**

**NMRA – Bob Feuerstein** mentioned that the NMRA annual convention has been canceled for this year but some events will be held throughout the summer and fall, via Zoom and, hopefully, at some point, live and in person.

**Large Scale –**Large Scale Coordinator Sam Miller was unable to participate in the Zoom conferencing, so he did not give a report. There was discussion about a show and tell for May if the next meeting still has to be virtual. There was then discussion about the logistics of doing this regarding time and length of presentations etc. One suggestion was a cell phone walk around.

**HO –** Phil Weston the HO coordinator, was unable to participate and there was no report.

**Small Scale –** Garth Easton, the Small Scale coordinator, mentioned that he did not have much to report on except some lingering items like switches to be installed/adjusted etc. for the show, if the show is still proves feasible.

**Switching Layout –** There was no switching layout report.

**Good of the Group –** James Dodson mentioned that John Sykes made progress on the HO Scale remote control vehicles, mostly of European prototype. There was then discussion of the June 27, 2020 show itself and whether club members will be inclined to participate. The logistics of a possible alternative summer date, fairground payments, etc. were also discussed. The overlying theme is uncertainty about how the epidemic will unfold; will the public participate?

Bob Feuerstein brought up the topic of a centralized database and President Andy then elaborated on it. Bob and Andy mentioned issues with code compatibility with new versions of MS Access etc. and plans to resolve it. They described the anticipated items to be included such as pictures etc. all neatly organized and easily accessible. One of Andy's chief concerns is the aspect of continuity should club members depart the scene with their vast knowledge.

Barbara Donner has a proposal that will be announced to the club when we next meet in person. David Brazell mentioned that his contact with FG&A railroad has departed the railroad but he is looking into other options to get someone from the railroad to speak to the club.

There was then discussion about using the Zoom web meeting functionality even with the in-person meetings to enhance participation and attract presentations and speakers who otherwise would not be able to attend otherwise.

The business portion of the meeting was then concluded at approximately 8:47p.m.

**This is an abbreviated issue of the Lantern because so many of the normal BBMRA activities have been disrupted by the Coronavirus. There is no calendar because right now every event is up in the air. Things will return to normal, perhaps a new normal – and, hopefully, sooner than later. If you know of railroading events which have been cancelled or rescheduled or are planned to go ahead as normal, please let Lantern Editor Sam Miller know. Email Sam at [sammiller61113@outlook.com](mailto:sammiller61113@outlook.com)**