



THE Lantern

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BBMRA June 16 Show & Tell Meeting Via Zoom

BBMRA is continuing to meet through Zoom, including our regular monthly session June 16 and a special Railroad Trivia Night July 7 with a prize for the winner. More and more of you are participating in the Zoom sessions and we are hoping for a really fine turnout Tuesday when club members talk about what they have been doing in model railroading while staying at home during the Coronavirus pandemic.

We are distributing through the link below a PDF document on how to set up and test your Zoom account: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1SyAPMOMOnX2ILbLzPO7zqzsj4NmSaCX8>

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

BBMRA members will be receiving a report from club President Andy Zimmerman informing you that the meeting this Tuesday will be through Zoom and formally inviting you. 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.

Andy Millott, the club's program director, has been developing a Zoom Powerpoint for the Tuesday meeting. BBMRA members have been submitting photos and written comments on how they have been keeping busy building, rebuilding or expanding their model train layouts and T-Traks, or doing special projects related to the fine hobby. "Be ready to share with the club what you have been building or creating over the last couple of months while "sheltering in," Andy Zimmerman says. "It does not have to be just modules or layouts. It can be electronics like DCC boxes or models like buildings, or vehicles or other items that you will be using for Model railroading."

There is still time to get in on Tuesday's show and tell, but you should send your photos to Andy Millott ASAP at millott32073@hotmail.com

Tuesday night during the program segment of the Zoom meeting, the two Andys will begin to roll through the Powerpoint and call on each member to describe what is in the photos and provide more information on what they have been doing. David Barth, a long-time BBMRA member until he moved to Edmonds, WA, ten years ago, will be participating. David has one of the best vintage Large Scale collections anywhere and still has a lot of friends in Tallahassee.

Zoom Trivia Night July 7 with Prize

The second BBMRA Zoom Railroad Trivia Night is Tuesday, July 7, and this time, there will be a prize for the winner. Because club members cannot physically get together as normal, President Andy Zimmerman and the other officers have been planning some special events. Vice President Stacy Elliott was the moderator two

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



weeks ago for the first Zoom Trivia Night and about a dozen club members participated. Sheldon Harrison was the winner. In a tie for a close second were Andy Zimmerman and Sam Miller.

Stacey will be back with new questions July 7. "During this next one, we will give away an HO BLI DCC cattle Car with sound. If you are in a different scale and something like this is not available, you will get a gift card," Andy Zimmerman says.

Club members will receive Zoom notices from Andy as they have been getting for the regular Third Tuesday meeting.

September 19-20 Dothan Train Show May be Cancelled

The Wiregrass Steel Wheels 30th Annual Model Railroad Show and Sale scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, September 19-20, may be cancelled. Dan Adams, one of the organizers, says a decision will be made soon.

Dan and George Baum had begun recruiting vendors and layouts and planning for what would be their 30th anniversary show. They have to figure out how the show could comply with Coronavirus reopening regulations by the State of Alabama and haven't gotten past all of the hurdles to ensure a safe reopening so far. While it is possible the show will be held, it is beginning to appear more and more likely, it will be cancelled, as BBMRA was forced to cancel its June 27 show.

The Dothan show at the National Peanut Festival Fairgrounds is a huge favorite of BBMRA members, partly because they get in free, as Dothan club members receive free admission to the Tallahassee show.

Happy 80th Birthday Joe Haley!

From Sam Miller:

Joe Haley turned 80th June 11 and if he is slowing down, it is only a little bit. Joe and Susan Brock, his long-time companion, celebrated quietly.

Joe survived 26,000 flying hours as an airlines pilot – amazingly, he confesses – and nothing has seemed that challenging in recent years. "I may be moving a little slower now, but like Vernon Parramore used to say, 'I will go till I can't!'"



Joe retired as superintendent of the club's switching layout at the end of last year, but will be bringing it back out on special occasions, including BBMRA's two-day 30th anniversary next summer.

Joe is not sure exactly how long he operated the switching layout, or Timesaver, as many club members came to call it. A guess is 10 to 15 years. Joe built it, with help later from Roy Mantooth and other club members. "It was designed for club members could take on various switching challenges when we

What it has always been all about.

needed a program at one of our monthly meetings," Joe says. "The old guys didn't really take to it, but the kids sure did."

Joe and the Switching Layout became a staple during the Annual Show and Sale and other BBMRA operations. Kids would operate it and receive Junior Engineer certificates. Joe handed out hundreds over the years.

Doug Gyuricsko constructed a second Switching Layout, which the HO Division will be operating from time to time in the future. Joe remains as caregiver for the old one – which is wise because he is the only person alive who can really run it.

Joe also finally is focusing on his personal layout in a shed behind his house: “I have done a little work recently on my layout; mostly cleaning it up and working on the new backdrop. I got tired of looking at the wall studs. I am still in the process of covering them up with sky board. The plan is to go through a wall in an eight-foot extension, and then back through to my big mine that is still in the box.”

Joe is a Crusty Yard Boss and Santa Claus

From Doug Gyuricsko:

Many BBMRA members have wanted to share with the public what railroads do, past and present, along with our modeling them. Some displays are vintage toy-like; some are more realistic, some run around; and then there is Joe showing what needs to happen to make and break up trains in a yard.

Of course we all have to "compress" the real thing to do this. He would begin the demonstration to young and old interested people by saying, "I'm the yard boss and you are the engineer and do what the yard boss says."

Both the old and new switching layouts have controls to sound bells, and horns that signal what the engine is going to do. Many times one person would press the buttons to make the signal in coordination with the engineer. The engineer controlled the forward and reversing of the locomotive by one lever on the front of the layout. The engineer had orders to move rolling stock of various kinds around the yard either to unload, load, or service the engine.



Spectators and operators both would learn about the jobs and what the switch engines needed to do. They also learned what sand did, how diesels used the engine to produce electricity and why!

I'd watch sometimes to see how Joe did these things. (I like to think I want to operate more than running trains around.) What I found was he had a knack of sounding like a grumpy, crusty yard boss, but at the same time being a Santa Clause figure! The kids felt it because I never saw one cry, and the parents would smile while he taught anybody who wanted to try.

There are times when a few kids can be a test of human endurance (for me, anyway), yet he could bring them around easily. Joe has a bad back and I saw him having more and more trouble moving the big layout around. Since I liked seeing him continue this important teaching lesson, I figured at the time maybe I could build a new lighter weight, and more compact layout. These projects help me learn more steps to build my own layout someday. Modules give us the same option to test ideas of all kinds.

I know I have too many other projects now to take over for Joe. I also lack that ability he has to be a crusty Santa figure which I think is needed. We all overlook the work it takes to put these projects into an effective demonstration like he did. Yet as BBMRA continues to introduce model railroading's great lessons and carry on the best hobby on earth, we need someone to take over where Joe left off.

Who was that Killed Man?"

From Phil Weston:

Here's a "Tip of the Cap" to BBMRA's Joe Haley on his 80th Birthday. Joe has worn many hats over the years including Conductor, Yardmaster, Astronomer, Historian and I'm sure others that I'm not aware of.

Joe has been a faithful, consistent BBMRA and HO Division member involved in our many activities, shows and displays that highlight model railroading to those around us. His role as Yardmaster of the BBMRA Timesaver switching layout has been particularly noteworthy.

Joe has excelled in his outreach to children helping them to embrace the fun of model railroading while passing along his tidbits of learning. I've often scratched my head over his patience with those fiery rascals as he helped guide them through the whistle commands, the forward and reverses, the slow and steady movements and figuring out the moves to get the boxcar to its destination. His Timesaver layouts always received enthusiastic attention from the many children and adult attendees. It's been very rewarding to see lots of future train operators going "hands on" with Joe" (I wonder how many "Little Engineer" certificates he's awarded over the years).

Since he resigned his role overseeing the Timesaver Joe has continued to support BBMRA and been right in the thick of distributing show cards, mingling and interacting with the visitors and fellow members as they pass through our various event displays. Thanks Joe!!

As Joe celebrates his 80th Birthday he only leaves one question... "Who was that killed man?"

21 Years of Thomas and Still Going

From Randy Lombardo:

My 21 straight years as a vendor and member at the Tallahassee model train show were disrupted this year. No, I am not moving to New Jersey – yet. I have extended my lease until next year and hope to participate in our 30th anniversary show in June 2021. But not having this year's show caused me to reflect on my 21 good years as a BBMRA member.

Here's a brief history of my activities as a member of our club.

I attended several shows in the late 1990s, before becoming a vendor with my father during the 1998 & 1999 shows at the Elks Club. We sold an assortment of MATCHBOX Vehicles, a plastic G Gauge Christmas Set, a radio controlled truck and CSX & Amtrak Tee Shirts.

I wanted access to operate several layouts so, I joined in early July 2000 and was sent a letter from then-Vice President Larry Benson welcoming me to the club.

In 2002, to promote our show, then-President John Sullenberger arranged for the club's O gauge layout to travel 25 miles to Monticello for set-up at the old library. (Previous O gauge layouts were operated by Ken Brock with his Gulf Coast Limited or the Duo of Eric Ecklund's and Sim Dekle and the Heartland Express.)

Member Louis Stokley met us there. I shook hands with him and told him, "I was glad to be in Jefferson County". The display was on the top floor and he also brought his Marx key-wound O gauge Train.

Lionel's Cannonball Express Freight was the club's equipment along with a station platform, United States Flag Accessories and back-up rolling stock from my collection. Engine 8625 had seen better days and managed to run most of the entire time there.

The librarian gathered quite a collection of all the books about trains she could find and treated everyone to lunch at Jake's, while Louis showed us parts of the city where the railroad used to serve. I also purchased some 45 (RPM) records at a local antique store.

In 2005, Lionel's Thomas & Friend's Set was purchased to start a trend for children to get involved with operating a layout. This was slightly different from the 1997 version that Ken Brock operated for several years at the Elk's Club because it had a whistle & movable eyes.

In 2006, when Larry Benson suggested I should run for vice president and I was elected, the Thomas layout was in full swing. It was running at our new show location at the Tallahassee/Leon County Fairgrounds and making appearances at Children's Day at the R.A. Gray Building/State Museum, Day Out with Thomas at WFSU Radio and TV's Red Barber Center, and club set-ups at the North Florida Fair and the Tallahassee Museum of Natural History (AKA the Junior Museum). New and used equipment joined the roster including, Diesel, James, Percy & Troublesome Trucks.



I am looking forward to my 22 consecutive BBMRA show and sale next summer.

NMRA Northern Division Meeting Moved to August 15

The NMRA Northern Division Saturday meeting and workshop scheduled for June 13 in Orange Park has been moved to August 15, according to Superintendent Richard Segall.

“Our August meeting will be at Island View Baptist Church, 900 Park Avenue, in Orange Park,” Richard says. “The Fellowship Hall provides ample room for social distancing for a meeting of 25 to 30 people. Larry Eggering returns with the next in our series of programs on using the Arduino. This time, we will learn how to connect input devices to provide data the program can use to modify what it does to reflect changes to the environment.”

A Northern Division meeting is still planned for Tallahassee in October.

Former Member Ron Eudy Passes Away From COVID-19

From Randy Lombardo:

The only person I knew who has died from the Pandemic sweeping the world is Ron Eudy. He was born on May 25, 1954 in Concord, North Carolina and passed away on April 12, 2020.

He is survived by his wife, Kimberley Chadwell Eudy; daughters Amanda Buchanon and Cinda Eudy; mother Peggy Lee Napier Eudy; and step-sons Keith Cline & Austin Cline.

Ron worked at Alcoa Aluminum for 36 years as a millwright and electrical engineer. He was also president of the steelworkers local. He was a commander in the U.S Coast Guard Auxiliary, retiring on Jan. 1, 2020. He was a member of The New London Methodist Church.

He was an avid model railroader and long-time member of the Big Bend Model Railroad Association. Ron and John Edrington and Jim McGill lived on Shell Point or in the Crawfordville area. They were involved together

not only in model railroading activities, but as members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Ron wrote several articles for The Lantern.

Some of the information in this report came from The Wakulla News from May 13 to June 12, 2020.

M.T.H. Electric Trains Announces Closure, President Mike Wolf to Retire; New Company May Emerge

Columbia, Maryland, June 9, 2020 --- M.T.H. Electric Trains president Mike Wolf has announced his retirement and the closure of his business effective June 1, 2021. Below is the text of his announcement sent to the M.T.H. Electric Trains Authorized Retailer network on the evening of June 8, 2020.

Dear Loyal M.T.H. Customers,

First, on behalf of M.T.H. Electric Trains, I want to thank you for the support and encouragement you have shown my company over our 40-year journey. From humble beginnings and a lot of hard work, we were able to build one of the world's largest model train manufacturers - one unquestionably buoyed by your unwavering support.

In particular, I am proud that M.T.H. has released more models than any train manufacturer in the history of our hobby. The variety, quality, and infusion of technology throughout our offerings allowed M.T.H. Electric Trains to help bring enjoyment to all who share our wonderful hobby.

It is, therefore, with mixed emotions that I tell you I have decided to retire in 2021 and close the business. The last two M.T.H. catalogs, our 2020 Volume 2 O Gauge catalog, and our 2020 HO catalog and all non-delivered items from our 2020 Volume 1 O Gauge catalog, 2020 Ready-to-Run Train Set catalog, 2019-2020 S Gauge catalog, and 2019-2020 G Gauge catalog will feature the last products produced by M.T.H. Electric Trains.

The new items featured in all these catalogs will be available beginning Summer 2020 through April 2021 and will carry our limited one-year warranty supported by our Authorized Service Center network and the M.T.H. Service Department. Upon our closing in May 2021, our ASC network will provide warranty coverage through April 2022. A list of M.T.H. Authorized Service Centers is available on the M.T.H. website and will be updated as M.T.H. Authorized Retailers join the program over the coming months.

...With thousands of tools and molds and a wealth of intellectual property, a new model railroading company may arise from my former company as I entertain various options and buyers. One scenario is a new company organized and owned by members of my current staff. Their decades of experience, work ethic, and creative talent will ensure success regardless of who owns the assets while providing a welcome bridge between the past 40 years and the future.

The remainder of my time will be busy as we clear out inventory and other miscellaneous items accumulated over the past 40 years. As that process evolves, we'll be offering consumer and retailer purchase opportunities.

Funding awarded for Gulf Coast Amtrak Expansion

From "Big Bend Ties," the monthly newsletter of the Gulf Wind Chapter, NRHS

The much-anticipated return of regular passenger service between New Orleans and Mobile moved a step closer this month, now that the Federal Railroad Administration has awarded a grant of \$5.45 million to help cover the operating costs of the service.

The grant to the Southern Rail Commission will allow Amtrak to run two daily round trips from New Orleans to Mobile with stops in four Mississippi cities: Bay St. Louis, Gulfport, Biloxi and Pascagoula, the FRA said.

The federal funding covers operating costs for the first three years of the expanded service. Louisiana, Mississippi and Mobile will provide additional funding to restore the route. The line has had no passenger operations since Hurricane Katrina damaged tracks along the Gulf Coast corridor in 2005. Service previously was available 3 times a week on Amtrak's *Sunset Limited* train.

"Restoring passenger rail service on the Mississippi Gulf Coast has been a long-held dream for the past 15 years," said U.S. Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith, R-Mississippi, in a statement from her office. "This grant, along with a lot of hard work by many people, brings that dream closer to a reality."

The actual start of the train service is still a few years away. Improvements to tracks, sidings and switches are needed, and the City of Mobile will be building a new station. Another matter now under study is the passenger service's effect on freight operations, a question raised by officials with the Alabama State Port Authority in regard to cargo movements at the busy Port of Mobile.

The grant is part of a total \$22 million the FRA made available through the federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act for fiscal years 2018 through 2020. That rail funding also included grants for additional weekday passenger trains between New Haven, CT, and Springfield, MA, and for additional service between St. Paul, MN, and Union Station in Chicago.

Big Bend Model Railroad Association Minutes for Meeting May 19, 2020

President Andy Zimmerman called the meeting, held on May 19 to order via Zoom at 7:32 p.m. The virtual meeting was attended by 17 BBMRA members.

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

Treasurer's Report – Drew Hackmeyer gave the Treasurer's report. He mentioned that we are solvent. Note that the BBMRA does not report financial details in the minutes but club members may obtain the details upon specific request. There was a question regarding payment of dues given the Coronavirus info and the consensus was that we will handle that bridge when we get there. There was also a question regarding refunding of table fees for the cancelled show. The plan is to carry forward the credit to next year's show, which is currently planned to be a two-day show for the 30th anniversary of the club. The report was accepted and passed without objection.

Division Reports

NMRA – Robert Feuerstein mentioned additional activities and programs that the Sunshine Region of the NMRA has in progress and gave a brief presentation that included a timetable of upcoming events, among other things. Sam also added that a few club members are looking at cooperating on electrical and other items with the aim to qualify for certificates, etc. There was then extensive discussion about the requirements of the NMRA AP programs, getting speakers to talk with the club etc.

Large Scale – Sam Miller mentioned that TCA cancelled their event in Jacksonville. Sam also mentioned that Large Scale would like to participate in the Bannerman event, a recent addition to BBMRA's schedule, given the inability to participate at the annual show owing to cancellation. There was also discussion about disposition of Ken Brock's O-Scale equipment following his passing.

HO – Phil Weston the HO coordinator, mentioned that he notified several relevant persons etc. about the cancellation of the 2020 show. He also mentioned that work continues on the modules for the next show. There was also discussion about the labels for the models with Stacy Elliot who assists in this regard.

Small Scale – Garth mentioned that he had nothing to report.

New Computer – President Andy is looking around at possible computer configurations to assist with various club activities and housekeeping. Club member database, JMRI etc. are things that we are looking at regarding the requirements of the machine.

Switching Layout – Nothing was available to report. So far, no one has been designated to succeed Joe Haley in this important club task.

Good of the Group – Sam asked if anybody knows of shows or other events still on the calendar. The Pensacola show that is held in December was mentioned. President Andy then proceeded to discuss the MS Access database of club membership that he has been working on over the past few months. He discussed the various features and capabilities following which there was extensive discussion of the pro / cons etc. of various approaches, features etc. There were a few suggestions offered from experienced MS Access programmers on streamlining aspects of the setup.

President Andy then mentioned some ideas to retain club interest such as a trivia night and a virtual layout tour, such that there is a club event every two weeks or thereabouts. Also mentioned was a suggestion of taking pictures of members' projects and other virtual documentation of activities while in lockdown. The meeting was then concluded at approximately 9:08PM.

So many of the normal BBMRA activities have been disrupted by the Coronavirus. There is no Lantern 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