

The *EAST COAST CHAMPION*

December 2002

THE TRAIN AND TOY SHOW – SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH

Saturday, December 7th is the Train & Toy Show at the Eau Gallie Civic Center. This event is where we have a display table to promote our chapter and the NRHS. We will need some volunteers to help man the table to speak to people about our organization. Please, if you can, show up between 8:15 a.m. (set-up) and 2 p.m.

PRESIDENT'S MEMO TO STOCKHOLDERS

What can I say? The annual dinner meeting was a *huge* success. It was a good place to have dinner, and Seth Bramson was a great speaker and entertainer. It was nice of Seth to come from Miami to provide his program on the history and background of Henry Flagler and his railroad to Key West. Several people have expressed to me what a wonderful evening they had. I also want to thank Jerry Sheehan for providing the table decorations (artifacts) again this year. He has done this so many times that I believe people look forward to it.

Attending the dinner and program were 47 chapter members and their guests plus 11 non-chapter guests – a very good turnout.

The December meeting will be the election of officers for 2003. The candidates presented by the nominating committee are:

President -	Walt Smith
Vice-President -	Hal Greenlee & Don Pirson
Treasurer -	Bob Selle
Secretary -	Harlan Hannah
Director -	Tom Hammond

The floor will be open to additional nominations with prior consent of the nominee.

Since we did not have an opportunity to have a book raffle at the November meeting, we will do it at the December meeting. *Chicago North Western Railway Steam Power 1848-1956* by C. T. Knudsen is in good condition, has lots of good pictures and interesting text plus a 46" foldout picture of a 1929 Baldwin 4-8-4 – a nice book to have.

This month's program will be a new video Dick Alkus will show – *Chesapeake and Ohio 614 T*. This is about the coal industry's effort to develop a steam engine to compete with the diesel. Also showing will be a video on Union Pacific Big Boys.

Since this will be my last memo as club president, I want to acknowledge those who helped make this chapter a functional organization. Thanks to the folks who have served as officers providing their time and effort to jobs that needed to be done. I hope I do not hurt anyone's feelings by not mentioning them by name, but there are some people who put forth extra time and effort, and I do want to mention them. Our newsletter editor, Jim Heidel, who really puts together an interesting and newsy newsletter – this I know requires time and dedication. While on the subject of the newsletter, a couple of other thanks come to mind – Neil Moran of Brick, NY, who writes the "Stack Talk" and submits it for us to print, and Dave Klein who periodically submits the "Electric Notepad."

Also an extra thanks to Jerry Sheehan who always provides the bulk of railroad artifacts to display at the various library displays and the annual December Fred Rose Train and Toy Shows, and, not to forget the table centerpieces for our annual dinner. I wonder – we have never had a drawing for the centerpieces at the end of the evening! It has been rumor such a raffle would be \$500 a ticket, so have your checkbooks ready.

There is another big thank you I do not want to overlook – the people who have donated books to raffle at our meetings, Bob Sowden who has donated several books. Bill Hurst, Fred Rose and others whom my memory

does not allow me to remember at the moment. It is these donations that build the extra funds in the treasury which allowed us to be able to have our special speaker at our November dinner meeting.

Thanks to all those who put together programs for our meetings over the years, and those who provided videos for viewing at our meetings.

A big thanks to all the membership for belonging to the chapter and the NRHS and for attending the meetings. I think sometimes we have more members at our meetings than some chapters have in their total membership. To keep our chapter strong and viable, we should keep recruiting new members – ask someone you know to come to a meeting and consider joining.

Well, I have said a lot of thanks here. It might be because I am writing this on “Turkey Day”, but I really do mean it. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Until the 9th,
Stop, Look, & Listen,
Chuck

MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER MEETING

Chapter President Chuck Billings called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM on October 14, 2002. President Chuck Billings introduced guest Mike Green who again was visiting us from the Philadelphia chapter.

Approval of Minutes Jerry Sheehan moved to approve the minutes as printed in the newsletter. There were multiple seconds for motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer’s Report – Bob Selle gave the Treasurer’s report.

Book Raffle – Fred Rose who produces the Melbourne model railroad show donated the book *Western Railroads* for the October book raffle. Mr. Rose also donated a T- shirt with the chapter logo for the monthly raffle. Chuck Beckner won the T-shirt.

Old Business – None.

New Business –

- President Billings asked for a show of hands from those interested in visiting a large model railroad and model train collection in Ormond Beach. A majority of members present expressed their interest.
- The November dinner meeting tentatively will be November 12 not November 11 as previously announced.
- Dick Alkus suggested that we apply for grant money from the NRHS national headquarters to prepare and present a slide show for the public schools. The subject would be the history and importance of American railroads. Dick also suggested that we request a grant to provide electric lighting for our FEC tool-shed interior.
- Jim Sleeth and Tom Hammond were appointed the nominating committee for next year’s slate of officers.
- Tom Hammond announced that there would be a National Board of Directors meeting November 1 through 3 in Mt. Pleasant, IA.
- Chuck has brochures describing next nears Trains Unlimited tours for anyone interested.
- Our chapter has been invited to the Ft. Myers chapter’s October 22 meeting. The speaker will be a young man that the Ft. Myers chapter sponsored to rail camp at Steamtown.

Reports and Announcements –

- Jim Sleeth reported on his New England Fall trip on the *American Orient Express*.
- Dave Klein reported that the Ybor City streetcar has started operation.

Program – Hal Greenlee spoke on his trip to the NRHS convention at the Grand Canyon. Hal illustrated his talk with slides and video.

STACK TALK

by Neil Moran

The opening line in Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, it was the best of times, it was the worst of times, seems to fit the bill perfectly for a summation of this year's steam activities.

Pasco, Spokane and into Sand Point where the excursion actually began. This was the longest trip for the #700 since her restoration, and from what I heard from two parties it was her most successful. The 4-8-4 lifted 16 cars up and over the Continental Divide and Bozeman Pass albeit down to 10 mph. There was a diesel behind the auxiliary tender, but that was for only emergency situations., which I'm happy to report there were none. From the description of her performance going up Bozeman Pass, it was just awesome. The rocks shook with thunder and echoed off every mountain in the pass. By the way both the Continental Divide and Bozeman Pass reach an elevation of between 12 and 15,000 feet. The return trip proved much of the same results, with the #700 putting on the same kind of show. Acclamation was pouring into Montana Rail Tours who ran the trip one day after the excursion ended. It seemed everyone thoroughly enjoyed the round trip, and hoped it would be done again. I might add that BNSF and Montana Rail are to be highly commended in their support of the #700 and the crew. Many thanks to Mr. Terry Gainer for the first hand information.

Of course further back in the year we had ex-Southern Pacific #4449 romping around Oregon in her Daylight colors, under the guise of the "American Freedom Train." All thanks again to the BNSF and especially to Rollin Bredenberg, Executive Vice President of that railroad.

Our neighbors to the north, namely Canadian Pacific Railroad, were also spreading good cheer around western Canada with their Hudson #2816. This graceful 4-6-4 had several projects to address this past year, and she did it in fine style. Running mostly between Calgary and North Vancouver, with a couple of adventures out of Kamloops. Years ago during the steam era the cry in the west often heard was "the God Damn CPR," over farmers' concern about the steam engines' noise and whistles disturbing their cattle and other animals. One of the trips CPR sponsored this year was "Rockin' the Rails" over at High River, Alberta. This was the final stop of a tour that lasted two weeks in Alberta Province. The Hudson steamed into this town pulling seven cars plus an auxiliary tender and put on a concert that knocked their hats off. Many other stops were made along the line to promote this "good will" concert between the farmers and the CPR. And what more of a good will ambassador could there be but the #2816. With promotions being put out well in advance of the Hudson stopping by, thousands of people poured out to see this event. So, what was the purpose of the rail show? It was simply the idea of CPR's Communications and Public Affairs Vice President Paul Clark to promote the name of Canadian Pacific, and to draw attention to CPR's financial sponsorship of child nutrition programs across Canada with the railroad's three-year partnership in "Breakfast for Learning." The travelling concerts, featuring some of Canada's top entertainers, are perhaps the Railway's way of giving back to the communities something of the good old days of steam. Especially when that cow wouldn't give milk when the steam whistle blew.

Now for the worst of times, and we have a few stories on that. Starting off with the final excursion last October by the ex-Frisco #1522. This was certainly a new "low" for all lovers of steam. An engine that was in reasonably good condition, and had performed very well on her rejuvenated final days in the sun. It's truly a sad day when you see a locomotive taken off to a museum to be stuffed and mounted, and not knowing if she'll ever run again, all due to outrageous insurance rates.

Now arise two major problems that we must face next year. Will we see the Cumbres & Toltec and the East Broad Top run again? First we'll look at the C&T. The Rio Grande Railway Preservation Corporation, formed by the Friends of the C&T Railroad to operate the line, appears to be finished. The C&T RR Commission does not appear to be interested in renegotiating its contract with the RGRPC, and has started the process of seeking a new operator. All this due to the serious drop of ridership in last June's shutdown of the railroad into July. Neither the Commission nor the RGRPC can start a significant work plan this winter. Federal money may become available for locomotive repairs early next year. But then again it may smashed into a double-tanker truck at a level grade crossing in Benalla, Australia, in Northern Victoria. The force of the collision sliced the B-double truck in half, with the locomotive derailling and sliding on its side for 40 meters. The injured woman in the cab was actually a guest and getting a cab ride. She luckily was thrown clear but suffered severe burns from escaping steam. The truck driver was the luckiest; he only received minor back injuries. Fortunately none of the 49 passengers travelling in five coaches were injured, but it could have been far more serious had the coaches tipped over. A spokesman for Transport Minister Peter Batchelor said West wishes to add a second steam locomotive to its roster. Operations manger Howard Grieve attended a meeting with BC Transportation Minister Judith Reid to pitch the Society's bid. Grieve stated that the ministry is expected to publish a request for

proposals to rebuild and operate the #3716, an 80-year-old former CPR 2-8-0 Consol. The engine you may remember ran on the BC Rail between North Vancouver and Squamish, BC, spelling the Royal Hudson #2860 when she went in for repairs. She also ran fall trips up into the Fraser Valley which proved quite successful.

One more bit of news from across the 39th Parallel. After being displayed for 33 years at Québec Steel Products in Longueuil, Quebec, former CN 4-6-4T #46 was moved to the Center of Interpretation at Ferroviaire de Vallée Junction. No. 46 was built by the Montreal Locomotive Shops in 1914 as Grand Trunk Railway #1541, and spent most of her career with her five sisters in commuter service between Montréal and Vaudreuil, Québec. Presently it's not known if the #46 will undergo further repairs.

Moving into our own country, Nevada officials are going ahead with plans to rebuild 17 miles of the famous Virginia & Truckee Railroad. Work will begin on 2003 and will cost around \$25-30 million. Bob Hadfield, a member of the Northern Nevada Commission for the Reconstruction of the V&T Railroad, said "We are hell bent to get the construction started." The most difficult part will be the first section which will include 400,000 cubic feet of earth to fill part of the Overman Pit, an abandoned open pit just outside Gold Hill, at a cost of about \$5 million. Since 1993, officials have talked about relaying track along the historic route from Carson City to Gold Hill. The economic benefit would be significant at a time when tourism is down, and looking for other attractions beside gambling.

Over at the Durango & Silverton, they featured Thomas the Tank Engine on December 20-22 and December 27-29. This is a very popular attraction, and would be for children and grandchildren alike. Having acquired two locomotives this year, the railroad is reaching out to put their name on the map. The D&S which survived heavy fires and a curtailment of regular service during the summer months, is again instituting their steam train trips out of Durango up to Cascade Canyon where they can wye the train. This daily event started after Thanksgiving and will run into May. This gives many riders a chance to ride behind steam during the winter months, with lots of snow on the ground. Steam and snow: a combination hardly beaten.

The National Railway Historical Society (NRHS) and the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society (R&LHS) will hold a joint convention, named Star Spangled Rails, in Baltimore, Maryland, July 1-6, 2003. This affair will be hosted by the Washington DC Chapter and the R&LHS. The convention will offer mainline excursions, fun rail-oriented trips, educational seminars, and a banquet. Star Spangled Rails will coincide with the 175th Anniversary of railroading in the United States. The highlight of the museum's celebration will be a recreation of the 1927 Fair of the Iron Horse. Presumably five steam engines will be appearing at this majestic event.

This last story ends my news on a "high" for this month, and rightly so, after all this is the holiday season, and we all must have high hopes for the future year. What will 2003 bring? Well, we can only hope for the best. On a given weekend we had about 120 locomotives running in North America this year, and as Bette Davis said to Paul Henreid in the final scene of "Now, Voyager," "let's not ask for the moon when we have the stars."

Now it's time to thank several people whose information along with mine took the time to send me the news you just read about. John Biehn (Dayton RR Society), Steve Barry (*Railfan & Railroad Magazine*), Don Clark (Dayton RR Society), Ed Emery (Toronto, Canada), Rich Taylor (Camden & Amboy RR Society) and your most humble servant in steam.

Happy holidays to all, and very happy and healthful new year.

UNTIL OUR TRACKS CROSS AGAIN.

THE ELECTRIC NOTEPAD

by Dave Klein

Since my last diatribe, I have been to The Big Apple to visit my brother and eldest niece. As always, some free time was also spent visiting some hobby shops. I even rode the subway for the first time in years (the IRT down Lexington Avenue) and took it to the Wall Street area. I wanted to see Ground Zero at least once. It is really a VERY big hole, ready to be filled. And that is the problem: what do you fill it with. The New York papers have lots of articles about memorials, parks, and/or buildings. I guess the final result will be a mixture of all of them, but emotions are still high. One must remember that a hundred years from now, after the *children* of the victims are gone, there still will be a need for an extensive rail terminal linking the subways and the PATH trains, plus all of the amenities required to support the tens of thousands that will fill the office buildings that will be built there. The final result will probably be new buildings, but not as high as, nor on the sites of, the two WTC towers; a park and some memorials will also be there. Underneath will be the rail terminals and shops for the commuters. Additional office space will come from the new buildings that will replace the smaller ones abutting the site. That's what I think will happen, but then again, I'm not running for office and have to get votes.

Apparently, I owe Fred Rose an apology. I guess I shouldn't compare other train shows to Fred's. I didn't mean to slight him; putting on four shows a year must be a very large undertaking, with all of the advertising, insurance hassles, and other stuff that seems to hammer you at the last minute. I've been to at least half of his shows in the last 18 years, and have enjoyed every one. Keep up the good work, Fred!! If you didn't know, Fred's next show is scheduled for December 7th.

One of the things that keeps your intrepid reporter busy at this time of year is to check out the train toys, books and other stuff that shows up for Christmas. Most of the model stuff is based on Thomas and His Friends; plus there are a few Hogwarts Express sets again, anticipating the December release of the next Harry Potter movie. (I mentioned last time that Wendy's restaurants will have some "spooky" Lionel train toys come Halloween. The hard part will be to convince the kid at the register that the Kid's Meal is for you!) Again there are those battery-powered trains for under the tree and starter G-scale sets from Lionel are out again. Much better stuff is found at one of Fred's shows.

As for books, all three bookstores in the area have some; some are new. Barnes and Noble has a few near the store's front, but lots more are in their "Transportation" section (mixed in with the airplanes and cars). Books-A-Million also has about a dozen books, most in the \$10-\$25 range. Waldenbooks also had a few in the same price range. Note that only Waldenbooks (in the Merritt Square Mall) had a trains calendar (*Those Magnificent Trains*, about \$13). Only *one* calendar between the three stores, but the "calendar kiosk" wasn't in the Mall yet, so maybe next time....I get my trolley-specific calendar through the mail; there are many available at certain train book web sites as well, such as my friend Kevin Farrell at www.kevin@trainbooks.com. Speaking about books, I received another warning from Kalmbach Publishing that only *they* from Milwaukee or Waukesha, WI, are authorized to handle subscriptions to their magazines (*Trains*, *Model Railroader*, *CTT*, etc.). I brought this up at the last meeting, but I know not every one was there.

From my "Electric Railway Clubs of Florida" contact, the status of the Tampa trolley line is very good! The grade crossing over the CSX is in place and almost all of the overhead has been hung. My friend says that three of the GOMACO-built cars are being run on the lower section (below the CSX crossing) to train the operators. As of the middle of September, a car barn is being erected and track into it being laid. (I'm told that the building that was to be used was found to be in too bad a shape and was condemned! The building was torn down and the new one is being built on the same site.) Provisions for the future extension into downtown were laid in some streets. The opening date for the system will be the weekend of October 19 and 20, so watch the newspapers and TV. The "first" car is set to be an original Tampa Birney that was restored by the Tampa trolley museum group. The Birney is a two-axle car; the GOMACO cars are four axle, air-conditioned Birney replicas. The ceremony will start about 9 AM that Saturday. As each of the stops are sponsored by businesses, there will be a ribbon

cutting ceremony at each station along the line. After the ceremonies, free rides will be available for the rest of the weekend. Not sure what the regular carfare is. Perhaps one of these days, Orlando's OSCAR open car will be running there, too. I guess a trip to Tampa will be in order. See you next time!

INTERESTING RAIL NEWS

from trains.com "News Wire" (www.trains.com)

Amtrak test train speeds over flatlands

An Amtrak train hit 109.6 mph in Illinois on Thursday, October 31 as part of a test of the positive train control system that will protect the state's 110-mph route between Springfield and Dwight. The test train – a pair of P42s and three cars carrying Illinois Department of Transportation officials, politicians, contractors and media representatives – operated between Normal and Ballard siding, just north of Lexington.

The run evaluated the PTC system's location determination system, which can pinpoint a train's location to within nine feet, IDOT officials have said. No other tests are planned for this year. The PTC project is expected to be completed in the middle of next year, which would allow IDOT to seek Federal Railroad Administration approval of 110-mph revenue service on the Union Pacific route. Three Amtrak trains currently use the route: the Chicago-Kansas City Ann Rutledge, the Chicago-St. Louis State House, and the Chicago-San Antonio Texas Eagle. Amtrak engineer Steve Fleming was at the throttle of the test train. "Didn't feel anything different – until you see the cars you're passing," he told the Chicago *Sun-Times*. The current top speed on the line is 79 mph.

Amtrak partners with cruise line

Amtrak and Windjammer Barefoot Cruises are offering a discount of up to 20% off the rail fare for passengers who take the train to and from a cruise out of Miami. The special fare is good for travel through December 31, 2003. To qualify for the discount, the trips must be booked through a travel agent.

CSX Santa Special gets ready to roll for 60th year

The CSX Santa Special – the granddaddy of Christmas trains – will make its 60th annual run through Appalachia on November 23. The special will make 15 stops in former Clinchfield Railroad territory to distribute more than 15 tons of gifts to needy children in remote areas of Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee. The train's 110-mile route begins in Shelby, Ky., with stops in Marrowbone and Elkhorn, Ky., and the Virginia communities of Toms Bottom, Haysi, Clinchco, Fremont, Dante, St. Paul, Dungannon, Ft. Blackmore, Speers Ferry, Kermit, and Waycross, before arriving in Kingsport, Tenn. Country music star and Kentucky native Patty Loveless will ride the train this year and perform in Kingsport. The Santa Special is co-sponsored by the Kingsport Area Chamber of Commerce and CSX.

Noted photographer James P. Gallagher dies

James P. Gallagher, 82, a lauded photographer who chronicled the last days of steam power in Maryland and West Virginia, died Saturday, November 9, in a Baltimore hospital. Although he initially considered himself more of a photographer than a railfan, Gallagher set out to document the waning days of the steam locomotive around his native Baltimore in the years following World War II. His expeditions in search of steam – often aided by a pass given him by the Baltimore & Ohio – took him across Maryland, West Virginia, and southern Pennsylvania.

"I knew what I wanted and just waited," he told the Baltimore Sun in a 1992 interview. "My basic approach was to plan, set up, shoot, and return if that instant did not produce results to my satisfaction." Gallagher's work was published in TRAINS Magazine, the Sunday Sun Magazine, and B&O Magazine, among others. (Most recently, his photos of the Maryland & Pennsylvania were featured in the September 2002 TRAINS.) A collection of his work, "Trackside Maryland: From Railyard to Main Line," was published by Greenberg Publishing in 1992. In 2000, Gallagher received the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society's Lifetime Achievement Award. His photos are among those in the permanent collection of the Center for Railroad Photography and Art in Madison, Wis.

Gallagher, who served in the Army Air Forces during World War II, in 2002 had a book published by Johns Hopkins University Press, "With The Fifth Army Air Force: Photos from the Pacific Theater." He is survived by a brother, A. Norman Gallagher Jr. of Baltimore; a stepson, Michael C. Muller of Atlanta; a stepdaughter, Karen M. Casanova of Catonsville, Md.; and four grandchildren.

Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern to launch new Blue Streak

Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern on December 10 will expand their joint Blue Streak transcontinental intermodal service to include a train linking Northern California and the Northeast. This service expansion will connect Oakland and Lathrop, Calif., with Harrisburg, Pa., and the Erail terminal in Northern New Jersey, with the interchange occurring in Chicago.

UP and NS launched the joint Blue Streak service linking Los Angeles and Atlanta, with interchange in Memphis, in October 2001. They subsequently expanded it eastward to include Charlotte, N.C., and Jacksonville, Fla., plus Miami, Fla., via regional Florida East Coast. That service is operating at 99% on-time performance, the railroads say. The California-New Jersey trains will provide sixth-morning service eastbound and fifth-morning availability westbound. The eastbound service will run five days a week, while the westbound will be daily. Like the L.A.-Atlanta counterpart, the Northeast Blue Streak will offer an on-time or free guarantee and three levels of service: standard, premium, and the guaranteed "SuperFlyer." The service is aimed at double-stack container traffic, but also will carry private trailers, say UP and NS.

The name of the former Cotton Belt/Southern Pacific hotshot freight train, Blue Streak Merchandise, was discarded shortly after UP acquired SP in 1996. The name was revived, albeit without the "merchandise," with the launch of the premium intermodal service, in 2001.

Electro-Motive Division unveils advanced locomotive monitoring

General Motors Electro-Motive Division has added enhanced equipment monitoring capabilities to its IntelliTrain locomotive monitoring service. The system uses Equipment Condition Monitoring software from SmartSignal Corp. to proactively monitor locomotives to provide the earliest possible alert into potential problems. A locomotive equipped with the IntelliTrain system automatically issues an alert when it encounters an abnormal condition and sends its number, plus condition and type of fault, to a central monitoring server. The server automatically notifies mechanical officials, who can remotely diagnose the problem. "We are pleased to offer this predictive maintenance service to our railroad customers," said Curt Swenson, Director of Marketing and e-Business for Electro-Motive. "Now, with IntelliTrain locomotive monitoring with enhanced predictive diagnostics, we can provide even more value to our customers."

Quotable

"While performing some tasks on the train may seem reasonable, they may offend your fellow passengers. In response to many requests from passengers the following announcements will be on the trains this week. 'At the request of your fellow passengers, VRE would like to remind you that personal hygiene is best performed at home. Putting on cosmetics, shaving, brushing or flossing teeth, clipping or picking toenails, spraying perfume or cologne or the like is not appreciated by your seat mates. If you don't have time to do these activities before boarding, please utilize the available restroom facilities. Thank you for your cooperation and your courtesy.'" -- Virginia Railway Express, in an advisory to passengers headlined "Courtesy on Trains."

"A number of you have asked my thoughts on last week's election. My view is fairly simple. Regardless of who controls Congress, no one will support an inefficient operation, but they will support a businesslike, professional company. So while our friends change, our issues and challenges remain the same." --Amtrak President David L. Gunn, in a November 13 memo to employees. The Democratic-controlled Senate has passed a bill that would give Amtrak the \$1.2 billion it requested for this year, while the Republican-controlled House version would provide Amtrak with only \$762 million.

"The other guy before him -- I never even knew what he looked like. He never even got on the train." --Amtrak train attendant J.C. Adams, quoted in a *Sacramento Bee* story on Amtrak President David L. Gunn's cross-country trip by train. Gunn during the second week of November rode the *Cardinal* and *California Zephyr* from Washington to California. While in the Golden State, he rode on the San Joaquin and Pacific Surfliner corridors before climbing aboard the *Sunset Limited* for New Orleans. He's scheduled to take Tuesday's *Crescent* for the final leg of his trip back to Washington, D.C. Since taking the helm of Amtrak in May, Gunn has also ridden the *Empire Builder* and *Coast Starlight*, plus other regional trains.

"I believe in management by walking around. You have to understand the physical and human reality of these places. Given all of the uncertainty surrounding Amtrak, it's incumbent on me to give employees access." -- Amtrak President David L. Gunn, quoted in the *Times-Picayune* newspaper of New Orleans, regarding his trips

around the Amtrak system. Gunn was in New Orleans earlier this week while connecting from the *Sunset Limited* to the *Crescent*, and spent time listening to Amtrak workers at New Orleans Union Passenger Terminal.

CHARTERING THE FLORIDA EAST COAST CHAPTER OF THE NRHS

by Walt Smith

In 1973, I was working as an engineer at the old Auto-Train in Sanford yard. I lived in Cocoa and drove back and forth. I had done a talk on comic books of the '50s at the Cocoa Public Library (the old building next to the Porcher house) that was pretty well attended and the head librarian, Lois Pierce, asked me to do a talk on railroads for children since I was a locomotive engineer. I agreed to do this and assembled a slide presentation, and the library had a notice in the TODAY paper.

The evening of the talk, I was amazed to see not just children but a large number (70 or 80) of adults. Some of these people were retired men who had worked on or about the railroad business. I'll mention a few: Mr. Joe Williams – a longtime FEC agent whose career went back to the 30s; Mr. Hewitt (in his 80s) who'd lived in New York City and had several large scrapbooks filled with postcards of sidewheel steamships, tugboats, ferryboats, and ocean liners mostly from the turn of the century and the '20s. I often wonder what became of that collection. There was another man who'd worked at Alco – Schenectady and had several scrapbooks filled with builders fotos from the '20s, '30s, and early '40s. This man's name slips my mind and once again I wonder where the fotos got to.

The slideshow went very well with many questions about the Erie-Lackawanna (my alma mater) and Auto-Train, so many in fact, that the library folks put the lights out. Afterward on the street outside, it was like the Pied Piper with folks following me to my car and asking for 'more'.

Several thoughts struck me at this point: 1) There was a big interest in railroad history here. 2) There was a LOT of what the historians call 'The Primary Source' in the person of men like Mr. Williams, and the artifacts that reposed in the trunks and closets of retirees in the area. 3) A good way to preserve and share these things would be to start a chapter of NRHS here.

I first came into contact with NRHS at the Gold Coast RR museum in 1972 when they were still at the Fort Lauderdale location where they ran the FEC 4-6-2 Pacific type back and forth to meet the SCL trains at Dania siding. At that time, for a couple dollars extra, you could ride the cab with the engineer and fireman. Picture that happening nowadays!! In their giftshop, they were selling back issues of the Bulletin and when I purchased 10 or 15 of them, the cashier encouraged me to join the organization – which I did. Later, when I'd done the talk at the library, it was an easy decision to send away for the charter for our chapter.

I forget all the names of the original members, but among them was Bob Selle, Joe Williams, Bill Robinson and myself. Some of our founding members are no longer with us. One of them, Joe Williams, gave one of the first presentations...a short talk about his time as an agent/operator on the FEC RR. There is a videotape somewhere in the Brevard County Library system since one of the library people had the foresight to set up a camera and tape it.

Joe spoke about working in West Palm Beach in the 1930s and recalled seeing "Those Ford boys, Edsel and young Henry putting a quarter on the track for the trains to run over and flatten." Joe was appalled since at the time an operator made \$.32 an hour so this represented almost an hours wages to him.

By far the most interesting anecdote was when he worked as a type of joint agent at Union Station in Washington, D. C. in the early days of WW2, just before Pearl Harbor. In his words, "The advance man from the White House came in and said 'Joe, I need you to write a bunch of reverse tickets (not originating in D. C.) They will be Maine Central, Boston & Maine, New Haven and Pennsylvania for the Presidential party to return here.'" Joe then very casually mentioned that "Roosevelt had been to that meeting with Churchill up in Newfoundland and was coming back by train" (although he'd gone up on a U. S. Navy ship).

It struck me that this was the famous meeting, which led to the North Atlantic Treaty and indirectly to the U. N. Talk about historically significant!! History books are full of the photographs of the two wartime leaders on the deck of a battleship at this famous event.

Joe then very casually said, "I decided to get up early and went down to Union Station and sure enough, they had the Secret Service men and the wheelchair and all at track 11 and I watched the train bring him in." I don't mean to be sacrilegious, but it's like a casual observer on Mt. Sinai when the Tablets were handed down.

After the talk, I said to the man from the library "You know what he talked about, don't you?" He replied "Yes, and thank heaven I set up the camera. Talk about a piece of history"

I guess moments like this are why we have the Chapter.

THE ORGANIZATION OF TIME

from *Profile America* for Monday, November 26, 2001

The organization of time across the country is something we all take for granted. But as the frontier closed, and America truly became a nation from coast to coast, travel schedules became chaotic. So, on November 26, 1883, a Connecticut school teacher named Charles Dowd proposed the idea of dividing the nation into time zones to standardize railroad timetables. A year later, an international conference applied the same concept to the entire world. In the U.S., time zones weren't made law until 1918. Keeping time is not only important – it's also a fashion statement. The U.S. exports nearly 350-million dollars worth of watches and clocks a year – but we import more than 3-billion dollars in timepieces. *Profile America* is a public service of the U.S. Census Bureau.

PROGRAM MANIFESTS

UPCOMING CHAPTER PROGRAMS

DECEMBER – MONDAY the 9TH, 7PM. Program will be both a "new" and an "old" video from the vault of Dick Alkus' collection – *Chesapeake & Ohio 614T* and *Union Pacific Big Boys*.

JANUARY – MONDAY the 14TH, 7PM. – Program to be announced at upcoming meeting.

CURRENT & UPCOMING FLORIDA EAST COAST EVENTS

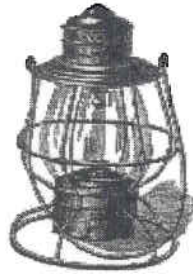
DECEMBER – SATURDAY the 7TH, 9am - 2pm. Train & Toy Show, Eau Gallie Civic Center, 1551 Highland Ave, Melbourne. Admission - \$3.00. Children under 10 free with parent. (321) 453-4125. Chapter volunteers needed to help man the NHRS table.

<http://www.ribbonrail.com/art/images/yd-limit.gif>



**CHAPTER OFFICERS
FLORIDA EAST COAST CHAPTER, NRHS**

President	Chuck Billings	(321) 783-7049
Vice-President	Jim Sleeth	(321) 267-5839
Treasurer	Bob Selle	(321) 632-0944
Recording Secretary	Harlan Hannah	(321) 636-7986
Historian	Jerry Sheehan	(321) 452-8649
Newsletter Editor	Jim Heidel	(321) 259-0641
National Director	Tom Hammond	(321) 267-8339



<http://www.ribbonrail.com/art/images/lamp.gif>

Florida East Coast Chapter, NRHS
P.O. Box 2034
Cocoa, FL 32923



Bob Selle
1013 Woodsmere Pkwy
Rockledge, FL 32955

NEXT MEETING: Monday, December 9, 7:00 p.m.
Central Brevard Library & Reference Center
308 Forrest Avenue, Cocoa (321) 633-1792
PROGRAM: *Dick Alkus shared videos:*
CHESAPEAKE & OHIO 614T and
UNION PACIFIC BIG BOY

12-4-02

