



Railway & Locomotive Historical Society, Inc.

Southeast Chapter

Newsletter No. 104 – December, 2007

Southeast Chapter 2008 Elections

At our November meeting the Nominating Committee (Jim Smith, Art Towson and Reid Adams) presented the following slate for the officers for 2008:

Chairman - Bill Howes
Vice Chairman - John Leynes
Secretary - Reid Adams
Treasurer - Robert Van Nest

As information, we did not receive any replies to our appeal in the October *Southeast Limited*, for volunteers to fill these positions. As a result, the slate presented by the Nominating Committee will be “elected” by Acclimation by Proclamation. Consequently there will be no voting ballot since only four members agreed to apply for the four available positions (see August *Southeast Limited*). Bill, John, Reid, and Robert will be installed at our January banquet

January Banquet to include Train Watching from the Trestle House

The R&LHS Southeast Chapter’s Annual Banquet will be held this year at the Trestle House on **Saturday, January 12, 2008**. The home, which was described in the October *Southeast Limited*, is being rented for the day, which means that chapter members and their guests can arrive early on Saturday (any time after 7:00 AM) train watch from the house, enjoy the banquet at 12:00 Noon, and continue to train watch until our check out time at 3:00 PM.

All of the trains that pass through the “Folkston Funnel” also go by the Trestle House which is located off US Route 1, on the Florida side of the St. Mary’s River about four miles south of Folkston, GA. It is approximately one hour’s drive from the Jacksonville area. Chapter members are encouraged to car pool for the Saturday festivities.

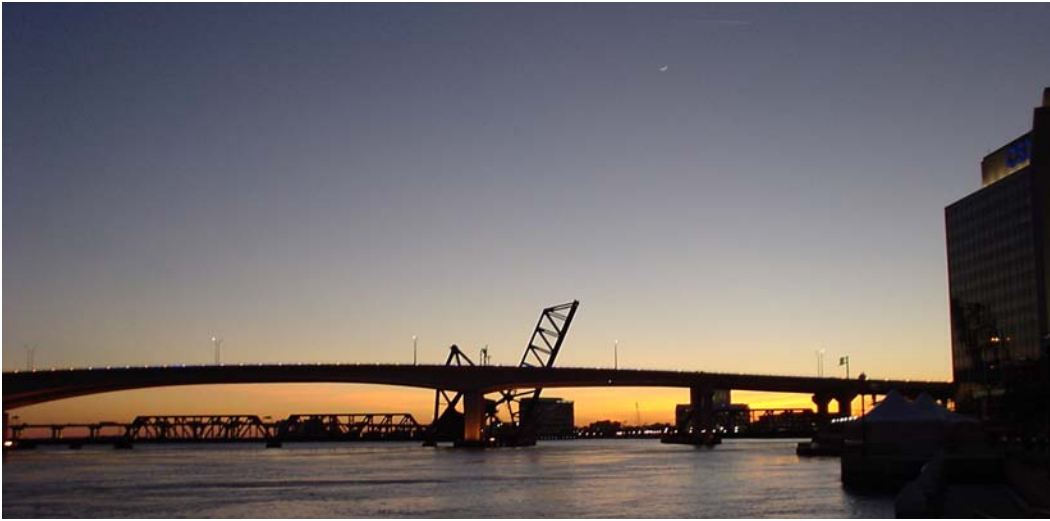
Food for the banquet will probably be purchased from a local supermarket, so there will be a charge for the noon meal of approximately \$10.00 per person. At this time, there are no plans for a formal banquet program other than installing the chapter officers for 2008.

In conversation with Chairman Bill Howes, we agreed that **due to the Saturday banquet there will be NO regular R&LHS meeting on Thursday January 10th**.

We need to know if you plan to come to the banquet in order to have food for everyone. Please respond to Jim Smith, SE Chapter Vice-Chairman (904-276-2972), no later than January 4th. He can then give you more detailed directions.

So, plan NOW to come to the Trestle House early on Saturday the 12th, watch trains, enjoy the noon banquet, and watch more trains until our 3:00 PM checkout time!

Southeast Limited



The Florida East Coast Railway Bridge, St. Johns River, At Sunset. Photo by John Leynes.

Southeast Chapter - Meeting Minutes Recap:

The **October 11, 2007** meeting was called to order by Treasurer, John Leynes at the CSX General Office Building. Due to other commitments, there were only four members present. John reported that there was approximately \$9,000 in our various saving/checking/CD accounts. Under Old Business, Robert Van Nest advised that he is still trying to find a suitable location for Richard Dickenson's book collection. No other business was discussed. The evening's program was a DVD provided by Reid Adams on Milwaukee Road electrics and a DVD produced by John Leynes of Ed Mueller's work "Steamboats of the Suwannee". Submitted by acting Secretary, Reid Adams.

Happy Holidays!

The R&LHS Southeast Chapter officers and editors are wishing you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! May we all experience a great 2008 with no Florida hurricanes, beautiful weather whenever we go railfanning, reduced gas prices so we can go railfanning, great meeting programs (any volunteers?), more Amtrak train rides (to Tampa?), peace in the middle east - or - just peace on earth and goodwill to all!

Announcements:

- January 10th - Regular SE Chapter meeting, 3rd floor CSX GOB, Jacksonville, FL 6:30PM
- January 12/13th - Model Train Show, Deland, FL
- February 14th - Regular SE Chapter meeting, 3rd floor CSX GOB, Jacksonville, FL 6:30PM
- February 23rd - Prime Osborn Center train show, Jacksonville, FL
- March 13th - Regular SE Chapter meeting, 3rd floor CSX GOB, Jacksonville, FL 6:30PM
- April 10th - Regular SE Chapter meeting, 3rd floor CSX GOB, Jacksonville, FL 6:30PM
- April 12th - Model Train Show, Deland, FL
- May 3rd - Prime Osborn Center train show, Jacksonville, FL

SOUTHEAST CHAPTER OFFICERS

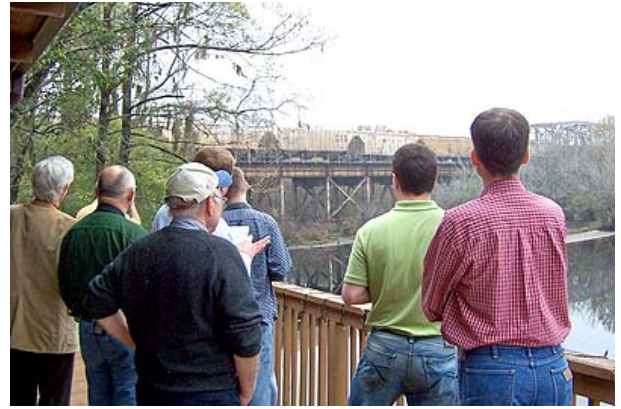
William F. Howes, Jr.	President
James A. Smith	Vice-President
Arthur L. Towson	Secretary
John Leynes, Jr.	Treasurer

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From the Deck – View of a Southbound Freight - Chris Frank photo



Members watch a Northbound Freight – Jim Smith photo



Northwest side view of trestle house – Robert Van Nest photo



Southbound CSX Intermodal - Chris Frank photo



Southbound Silver Meteor early in the morning – Reid Adams photo



We had fun AND talked business – Robert Van Nest photo



View of trestle from lower deck – John Leynes photo



Bill Howes advises new members – Robert Van Nest photo

Baldwin Steam Locomotive No. 43



1910 Negative No. 3243
Baldwin Locomotive Works.
Class 10 36 D 565
Road No. 43 Built for
Seaboard Air Line Railway Co.
Class T – 80 – K
Cylinders 21" x 28"
Driving Wheels 72" Passenger
Engine Weight 173,700 #
Total Weight 295,000 #



Multiple images joined for a panorama off the deck at the Trestle House & St. Mary's river, left/west, right/east – John Leynes photo



View facing east from below the trestle house. Robert Van Nest photo.



View facing west from below the trestle house. Robert Van Nest photo.

Andy Kirk's Southeast Train News:

Gannett Fleming To Take Close Look At Commuter Rail For Northeast Florida.

By Leo King

JACKSONVILLE, Nov. 27 - When Gannett Fleming begins looking into the potential for commuter rail in a few days on Florida's "First Coast" and within six counties, it will be a look-see that will include a myriad of details. The region ranges from the Georgia border to about 30 miles south of Green Cove Springs at Palatka, Fla. and over to St. Augustine.

Gannett Fleming was awarded the job today. The firm was selected from a field of seven bidders, and over the last two months have been working out contract details with the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA). Bids were opened on May 11 to begin looking into commuter rail, but the selection was not made until August 30 when the JTA directors selected Gannett Fleming. JTA project manager James Boyle said "The actual contract amount agreed upon is \$394,739. We should have the study concluded by February" 2009.

Some of the bidders were heavyweights in the design-build process, including Parsons-Brinckerhoff and Wilbur Smith Associates. Boyle said JTA had \$400,000 allocated for the study - \$250,000 this fiscal year and \$150,000 in fiscal 2009. The results from Gannett Fleming's study will be known in about 14 months, according to the 2004 study outline written by the First Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization (FCMPO), so that will be sometime in February 2009.

In the big picture, CSX's "S Line" originates in Jacksonville and travels westward to Baldwin, and continues to Tallahassee and beyond, but a branch line, which is really a heavy-duty main freight service track, heads southward from Baldwin toward the middle of the state at Lakeland and several various routes, and on to Miami. Also Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, and St Johns counties will be studied.

Some of the railroad characteristics the planners will have to examine include whether existing rail lines are active or not, passenger and freight capacity, dispatching control, track conditions, bridges, speed limits and speed restrictions. Eventually, at least three preferred corridors will be selected, along with a no-build option. Other considerations will include planned stations, adjacent land ownership for new station construction, total acreage, access (car, transit, bike, and pedestrian), parking needs, and neighborhood impact.

Colorado Railcar double-decker trainset pauses briefly in Jacksonville, Fla., on Florida East Coast Railway iron the day the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) said it would be conducting a commuter rail study. Gannett Fleming was the eventual successful bidder, and they signed the contract with JTA on Nov. 27. The trainset moved on to Miami's Florida Tri-Rail the next day via CSX. Photo by Leo King.



Commuter Rail For Northeast Florida - Continued

The consultant will also have to recommend what will be the best solution for equipment - diesel multiple units, locomotive-drawn trains or some other kind of power. How much will it all cost is a big consideration, and the Federal Transit Administration's "New Starts" program should go a long way in helping out - up to half, in practical terms.

The state Transportation department will be another source of funding. The rest will come from county coffers. They will also consider public-private partnerships to own, operate and maintain the commuter system - including the railroads involved. The JTA issued a request for proposals in April 2007 that would include CSX Railroad lines west of St. Johns River, and the Florida East Coast Railway (FEC) east of the river. FEC operates from Jacksonville to Miami east of the river, which is a three-mile wide divider between the two carriers until they get south of St. Augustine, and Palatka on CSX.

The overall idea is to operate commuter trains from St. Augustine to Jacksonville to the former Seaboard Jacksonville Terminal built in 1919. It is currently called the Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center, named after a former CSX CEO. He was chairman of the task force that put the convention center concept together and nurtured it to fruition. Early in 1986, a resolution from the mayor and city council named the convention center after him, according to The Florida Railroad Co., Inc. website, at <http://www.flarr.com/jtc.htm>. The last passenger train rolled out of the station on January 3, 1974.

On CSX in today's situation, commuter trains could originate in Palatka, Gainesville, or Hilliard. The First Coast Railroad would handle trains from Fernandina Beach as far as Yulee then hand them off to CSX. All the trains would go to a common point: Jacksonville Terminal. Now, stated JTA from FCMPO's 2004 document, the contractor will have to "identify the demand for commuter rail service for the years 2005, 2015 and 2030," assess the interregional and commuter travel demand in the study area, and "identify and evaluate preferred alignments and potential station sites."

Another task will include providing "capacity analysis of existing rail system[s] to accommodate commuter rail and the effect of commuter rail service on existing and planned rail freight operation, and Amtrak service." They will also be required to "assess other potential corridors including existing highway and new corridors for commuter rail implementation and operation," and to explore the possibilities of private-public partnerships "to operate and maintain the commuter rail system."

Other plans will also be reviewed, including Florida Intercity Passenger Rail Vision Plan, North Jacksonville Rail/Port Access Study, waterborne transit study, rapid transit, Jacksonville's downtown master plan and its Better Jacksonville Plan, and several other plans including I-95 notions in Nassau County.

The consultant will have to coordinate with several other agencies besides the project manager - a project task force, a citizen's advisory committee and various public agencies. County and agency staffers will make up the task force, and the citizen's group or advisory committee "will be created to enhance the public involvement process."

Meanwhile, Gannett Fleming will be required to take a close look at some peer cities "that have demonstrated successful commuter rail operations," including Nashville's Music City Star, the Austin-San Antonio commuter rail system now under development and New Mexico's Rail Runner Express as well as Miami's Florida Tri-Rail and the developing Central Florida Commuter Rail system. The Northeast Florida planners are expected to create a website as well. The state is buying some 60 track miles in the Orlando area from CSX and its A Line.