

# ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Chapter No. 188 founded in 1987



## 2009 DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS

President	Gary McCullah
Vice President	David McDonald
Secretary	Clare McCullah
Treasurer	Bill Longston
Program Director	David McDonald
Editor	Bill Merrifield
National Director	Chuck Girard
Board Director	Mike Sypult

NRHS Chapter leaves at 6:30 PM, December 17, 2009 at the A&M Depot.

Christmas Dinner Party and White Elephant at the Parlor Car (107-Explorer) at 6:30 to 8:00. The run is from Fayetteville to Chester and back. Departure time is 6:30 SHARP!

ARKANSAS-BOSTON MOUNTAINS CHAPTER  
NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 1303  
SPRINGDALE, AR 72765-1303  
Address Service Requested

# The Scrambler

Volume 23, No. 3

December, 2009

Monthly Newsletter of the  
Arkansas-Boston Mountains Chapter, National Railway Historical Society

## CHAPTER MINUTES November 19, 2009

The regular scheduled meeting of the Arkansas-Boston Mountain Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on November 19, 2009 by President Gary McCullah, at the Shiloh Museum General Store in Springdale, AR. There were 28 members present and 2 visitors, Gordon Christisen and Al Green.

Secretary, Clare McCullah's minutes from the October 2009 meeting were approved as stated in the *Scrambler* dated November 2009.

National Director, Chuck Girard, stated he didn't have any news from the National Organization at this time.

Membership Chairman, Chuck Girard, stated dues for 2010 are due. Mr. Girard stated he has received a good response from the letters sent to the Chapter members requesting dues for next year. He stated the dues are \$48.00 for the member and \$5.00 for each additional family member.

*Scrambler* Editor, Bill Merrifield, stated he mailed out 62 *Scramblers* plus he gave 2 to our visitors this evening. He stated has newsletters from other Chapters to look over for suggestions to improve the current *Scrambler*.

Treasurer, Bill Longston, read the financial report to the members. The report was approved as read.

Program Chairman, David McDonald, declared the following programs:

December 17, 2009 - Christmas Party and White Elephant (At the Parlor Car (107-Explorer) at 6:30 to 8:30, which maybe a run from Springdale to Winslow and back. We are to meet at the Springdale Depot to depart Springdale at 6:30 p.m.).

January 2010 - Mitch Marmel- Transit – The life blood of A City

February 2010 – Mike Sypult – Rock Island in Arkansas

March 2010 – Tom Duggan-Kansas City and Memphis

April 2010 - Bob Oswald

May 2010-Bob Stark & David McDonald -Rock Island in Western Arkansas

Special Events Chairman and Activities Chairman, (Named as needed), stated

**Old Business:** On December 5, 2009 is the Children's Train from 8:00 to 4:00. This is a fund raiser in conjunction with JB Hunt and the Arkansas and Missouri Railroad that will benefits hundreds of the children through local Children's charities in the Northwest Arkansas area. In past, the Children's Trains has raised \$30,000 to \$40,000. A&M runs trains all day long and gives rides to adults and children. Prior to the departure of the trains and when they return other games and things of interest will be available for the children to do. We are invited guests because children enjoy our trains G scale, N scale, and trolleys. The display will be in the parking lot at A&M depot. Al Kaepfel passed out a sign up sheet at tonight's business meeting. He reminded everyone that this is an event that is a lot of fun for the adults and children alike. Mitch Marsel stated he would be present with his trolley layout. The G scale and N scale layouts will be set up if we have enough volunteers to assist with them. Mr. Kaepfel suggested that we need to hope for a warm day.

Chuck Girard stated he received an e-mail from Mike Sypult stating that Mr. Sypult has upload January 2001 to June 2002 *Scramblers* to the Chapter's website. [www.arkrailfan.com](http://www.arkrailfan.com)

Bob Stark brought the issue of a new computer for the Chapter since Clare McCullah will no longer be secretary and she has been using her own computer for Chapter events. Mr. Stark stated that Mike Sypult was checking into the purchase of a laptop computer for the Chapter's use. The motion to look at purchasing a new computer was approved at the last business meeting.

On December 12, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. the Kansas City Southern's Christmas train will pass through Siloam Springs, AR. Santa will be available on the train.

Bill Merrifield congratulated those who completed the painting on the Frisco caboose in Rogers. They did an excellent job.

The nominations for officers of the Chapter for the 2010 years are as follows: Bob Stark as president; vice president - David McDonald; Chuck Girard - National Director, Secretary - vacant; Bill Longston - Treasurer; and Larry Cain - Chapter director. President McCullah reminded everyone that a nominee for Secretary will need to be found.

Tom Duggan took payments for everyone who wanted to ride the Christmas Train to pay for the dinners on the train on December 17, 2009 from 6:30 to 8:30. He stated we will board at the Springdale Depot.

**New Business:**

Jack Brown stated the Rock Island Bridge is in bad shape and they are trying to raise money for its repair.

Bill Ussery announced that he and his wife, Ernestine will be celebrating their 60th anniversary on December 17, 2009. On Sunday, December 19, 2009 at 2:00 they are having reception at Mill Creek retirement center for Mr. and Mrs. Ussery.

Mitch Marmel stated we have reserved for tables for the Spring Creek Train Show in February 2010.

The meeting was adjourned by President McCullah. President McCullah reminded the membership to donate to the coffee kitty.

The presentation for the evening was from: Show N Tell by various Chapter members

Clare McCullah  
Secretary of the Arkansas-Boston Mountain Chapter  
National Railway Historical Society

## **FROM THE HEAD END**

As I write this, we have just celebrated Thanksgiving and we are looking forward to the Children's Christmas Train and our own Christmas banquet/excursion. Tom Duggan is THE point of contact for this.

This year has ever so stealthily slipped away. All of the things we said we were going to do this year are still to be done. I don't know about you, but it is both depressing and challenging to realize that this year is coming to an end. The depression results from the realization that we did not follow up on opportunities (taking pictures of an east-bound double-stack on the BNSF Springfield-St Louis line) and the challenge from using the winter months to get all the articles, layout work, etc completed before the weather warms again and we go return to outdoor activities. I am hoping to finish the C&NW themed N-scale layout that I have been working on for a year and then start on my S-scale layout.

The big news of late is Warren Buffet/Berkshire Hathaway buying the BNSF. There are BIG bucks being paid for 100% ownership. From what I have read this is an "all in" bet on rail traffic, but not necessarily rail travel. I hope you all have access to one or the other of the rail-related magazines and/or their websites in order to keep

up with the changes that are occurring in the railroad industry. And don't think that those changes will not impact museums and excursion operators. The San Luis and Rio Grande has purchased F-40's in slug-mother combinations for their operation over La Veta Pass. This may hint at increased freight traffic on this ex- Rio Grande line.

If you see or hear of anything newsworthy concerning the A&M, KCS, BNSF, UP (in Arkansas) or the Fort Smith Railroad, pass it to Bill for the Scrambler. It does not have to be a big item, just something that would be of interest.

This is my next-to-last column. It has been both a challenge and a pleasure to write these little blurbs. I hope you have found them enjoyable or useful.

Remember, the chapter will be holding elections in December.

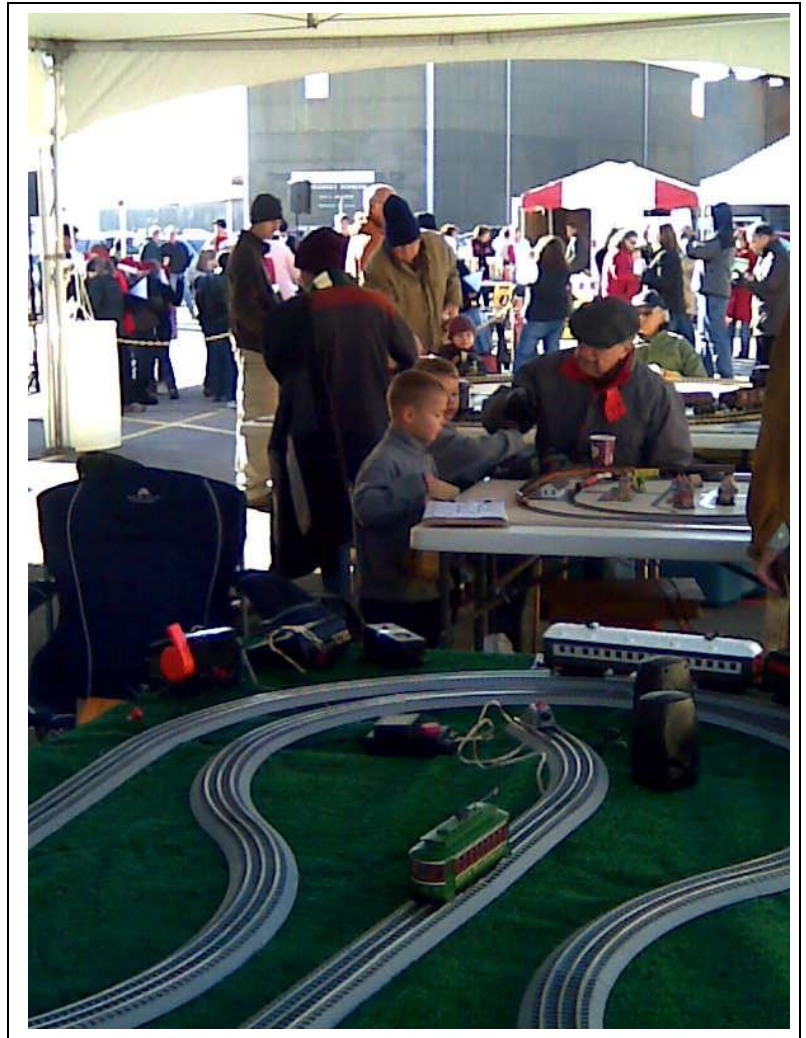
Gary

## LOCALLY ON THE BEAM

### **The Christmas Train Brings Holiday Joy to Northwest Arkansas Children**

The annual Christmas Train at Springdale drew throngs of children, parents, grandparents, and other adults despite the cold and winds on December 5<sup>th</sup>. Our chapter provided part of the entertainment for the children while awaiting the train. Parents were particularly grateful for the diversion that seemed to keep their offspring focused on something other than the cold and the waiting to board and as usual we had a great time helping a worthy cause. Our congratulations to the A&M and Hunt staffers and others who made the event so successful!

For us, we were shrouded in heavy coats and caps and gloves. For kids, the weather was no bother when it came to operating our trains! I would wager that their teachers would love to get that kind of attention to class work!



Al Kaepfel and his N-scale with facinated boys.

Our last month's program featured member's Show and Tell during which an excellent variety of railroad related items were shown and discussed. One of the items was a print of a painting by Charles Summey depicting a winter night scene from the 20's or 30's with a Frisco RR 4-8-4, No. 4524 stopped at the Rogers, Arkansas depot. Almost immediately, huge flaws in its historical accuracy were noted. Geologist Bob Oswald noted that the painting put the moon to the north of Rogers placing the depot on the west side of the tracks instead of its actual location on the east side. Others doubted that a locomotive that size could have ever passed through Rogers given the weight limitation of the track and bridges. Tom Duggan went further and researched the following and sent it to us by e-mail:



A photo of Frisco 4524 at Grant Beach Park, Springfield, Mo.

The engine depicted is 4524, a 4-8-4 Baldwin that entered service in 1942. The engine and tender weighed 811,050 pounds with a full load of boiler and tender water and oil fuel.

Frisco employee timetables show that the maximum bridge class for engines between Monett and Paris was 53. The 4500 class engines were rated at 70.4, the highest in the Frisco system. If the 4524 had ever operated to Rogers it likely would have had to survive bridge collapses commencing almost immediately after it left Monett.

The artist has also taken a liberty with the engine colors. When the 4500 class operated in passenger service they carried an attractive blue and white engine scheme with a tender that carried a large white script Meteor lettering. Attached is a recent photo of Frisco 4500 that shows the passenger service paint scheme. When the 4500 engines were replaced by diesels in 1947/48 they reverted to a plain color scheme for freight service.

I think the artist used 4524 because it is on display at Grant Beach Park in Springfield. Tom Duggan

**We still do not have a nominee for Chapter secretary. We need a volunteer!**

## **HISTORICAL OPERATIONS**

### Santa Fe No. 940 to move this week

December 08, 2009

Employees from Taylor Crane and Rigging prepare to install the first set of chains on the frame of AT&SF No. 940, one of multiple sets that will be used to lift the 300,000 lb., 47-foot-long locomotive.

BARTLESVILLE, Okla. — Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe 2-10-2 No. 940 will move to a new home adjacent to the Bartlesville depot this week aboard an eight-axle highway trailer. The engine is to be loaded onto the trailer today and will physically move the four blocks from its current site at Johnstone Park to the depot tomorrow.

No. 940 has been on display at Johnstone Park since Santa Fe donated the engine to the city in 1956. Backers of the move have been working for two years to plan and raise money for the move. The city's chamber of commerce now resides in the depot.

The 106-year-old engine is the only surviving Santa Fe 2-10-2 out of a class of 342 engines. The railroad retired the 300,000-pound steamer in 1954.

For more information on No. 940, visit [www.bartlesvillelocomotive.org](http://www.bartlesvillelocomotive.org).



## Vandals strike Kentucky rail museum

December 07, 2009

ELKHORN CITY, Ky. — Vandals broke into the Elkhorn City Railroad Museum on the evening of Dec. 3, smashing a glass door and a display case, the *Appalachian News-Express* has reported. They also broke windows in a caboose displayed outside the museum building.

The museum, in downtown Elkhorn City, is located in a relatively secluded area, which has made it an attractive target for vandals. The museum estimates it will cost \$1,200 to \$1,400 to repair the damage. The group relies on donations from individuals and from those who visit and deposit money in a collection box.

This is not the first railroad museum to be targeted by vandals this autumn. On Nov. 3, vandals extensively damaged the Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum in Willimantic, Conn.; the damage tallied several thousand dollars.

## Railroad Museum announces partnership with NMRA

December 02, 2009

SACRAMENTO — The National Model Railroad Association and California State Parks have signed an agreement to develop a model railroad exhibit at the California State Railroad Museum. The anticipated 3,500-square-foot exhibit is to be designed and constructed by the association in the museum's Roundhouse Gallery.

With a working title of "The Magic of Scale Model Railroading," the proposed exhibit will complement the subject matter already covered in the museum's "Small Wonders" toy train exhibit. It will trace the hobby of scale model railroading from the early 19th century to the present. Vintage models created in machine shops will be included, contrasting with today's models and layouts to illustrate the constantly changing nature of the hobby.

The proposed exhibit is expected to cost between \$500,000 and \$750,000 to develop; the association is providing the funding. In addition, both parties have agreed to explore possible relocation of the association's library in Chattanooga, Tenn., to Sacramento. The museum library staff would administer the collection.

## Steam star sidelined again

December 01, 2009

OWOSSO, Mich. — Pere Marquette 2-8-4 No. 1225, which blew a boiler tube during Trainfestival 2009 last July but got emergency repairs to put the Lima Berkshire back on the road this fall, has been sidelined again with a similar problem.

Steam Railroading Institute Chief Mechanical Officer Greg Udolph said Tuesday that the engine suffered a tube leak Friday night on a Polar Express trip. The engine will not make additional Polar Express trips this year, but the trains will continue to run behind diesel power.

The organization planned to run the engine through next May when its Federal Railroad Administration-

required 15-year inspection is due. Additional operations in 2010 before that deadline will take place if a sponsor steps forward with the funds to replace the failed tube.

## No. 261 will return to museum

Published: Wednesday, November 18, 2009

No. 261 makes its last run under steam, climbing BNSF's Westminster Hill in St. Paul, Minn., on Sept. 14, 2008. The engine is on its way back from La Crosse, Wis., on an excursion. *Photo by: Steve Glischinski*  
GREEN BAY, Wis. - Milwaukee Road 4-8-4 No. 261 will return to the National Railroad Museum after the locomotive's owner and operator were unable to work out an agreement. The museum said it will explore options that would see the engine rebuilt and restored to service.

The group Friends of the 261 had been operating the engine under an agreement with the museum, which owns it. The museum asked friends Chief Operating Officer Steve Sandberg for increased rent money to continue operating the engine, a request Sandberg balked at. Negotiations had been ongoing, but today's news reveals they've been unsuccessful.

Sandberg told the NRM he rejected the latest offer because, "At this point, our organization has lost too much time on the overhaul of the locomotive and almost four years discussing the lease extension. The mechanical requirements of the locomotive and the risk associated with running mainline steam are too high at this time to consider such an investment."

Michael E. Telzrow, the museum's executive director, said in a news release today that the museum "wishes to see No. 261 continue its excursion operations. The locomotive is a living piece of America's railroad heritage and offers a unique perspective on a bygone era. For these reasons, the museum is exploring options which involve continued operation and eventual exhibit at the National Railroad Museum."

Sandberg's group had operated the engine as one of the most successful excursion steam engines in the country. Through the years, it pulled employee trains for BNSF, movie trains, and private excursions in partnership with Amtrak [see "Milwaukee Road 261, the Energizer Bunny of Steam," TRAINS, September 2007]. The museum said Sandberg's group is responsible for returning the engine to the museum.

The conclusion of 261 operations does not spell the end for the Minneapolis-based Friends organization, however. The group is hoping to bring another "guest" main line steam locomotive to Minneapolis in 2010, and in the long run may acquire another locomotive to restore to operation. - *Steve Glischinski*

**Our thanks to Trains Newswire for the above preservation news items.**

### **RAY'S RAMMBLINGS**

By Ray Toler

One day switchman Pat Casey, with hat on his head and pipe in his mouth, burst into the office of Stuyresant Fish, president of the Illinois Central Railroad, and rudely asked for a pass. Casey was told to go out and try again with hat and pipe removed knocking politely on the door.

There was this scene two hours later:

(Knock on the door,)

*President Fish:* **“Come in.”**

(Door opens and Casey walks in without hat and pipe.)

*Switchman Casey:* **“Are you President Fish of the ICRR?”**

*President Fish:* **“I am. Who are you?”**

*Switchman Casey:* **“I am Pat Casey, one of your switchmen.”**

*President Fish:* **“What can I do for you?”**

*Switchman Casey:* **“You can go to hell! I got a job and a pass on the Wabash.”**

## **SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT RAILROADS?**

As you may recall in last month’s November *Scrambler*, Cowboy Joe Barnes reacted to a telegram from his sister in Fort Smith that his brother was falsely accused of horse theft and was about to be lynched by angry ranch hands near Blackey’s Station in the Indian Territory. Joe with the help of his friend, Charlie, attempted to come to the rescue by releasing an empty observation car from a northbound Frisco passenger train stopped at Winslow, Arkansas and riding it by gravity the entire distance to Fort Smith, roughly 75 miles dropping thirty four hundred feet in elevation. Charlie continues his story:

### **JOE’S ADVENTURE**

#### **A TALE OF THE WILD WEST and the 1889 Central Division, Fort Smith Subdivision of the Frisco.**

The two red lanterns hanging on the rear end (of the observation car) —now the front end—fastened themselves in my brain like the eyes of a Gorgon. The lightning had flashed as I ran by the car, and the number on the side printed itself in my memory forever. The sulphurous smell in the air, together with the momentary glimpse which another lightning flashed furnished of the great black mouth of the Winslow tunnel which yawned not twenty yards before me, made me think I was plunging into the abysmal depths of eternal night.

Did you ever think you were going to suffocate? I hope not. For the next two or three moments the air I breathed was full of smoke and carbonic dioxide from the smoke-stack of the locomotive which had just passed through the tunnel. My nostrils were burning, my eyeballs scorching, my throat was tortured. I could not breathe, yet I could not keep from breathing. A ton of weight seemed to be pressing on my chest—my senses reeled as I groped about for the car door.

It opened, and with an exclamation of surprise, in which was also mingled vexation, Joe Barnes received me in his arms. “Hello, Charlie! Why are you here? Thought I threw you off at Winslow! While you’ve been in all that horrible smoke, I have been cozy here inside.” As I gasped for air, he continued, “You’ll be all right soon; we are out of the tunnel, and in ten minutes will be going like lighting.”

He pushed me out on the platform, and the cold air blowing in my face speedily revived me. We were probably going at the rate of forty miles an hour. The car reeled to and fro, and staggered like a drunken man. At times, whirling around some curve, she threatened to leave the track but then she righted, and with scarcely an oscillation or lateral motion, shot like an arrow through the darkness, occasionally vibrating like an aspen-leaf, severely testing her strength at every joint.

“Yonder is where ‘Forty-five’ and her engineer went down last week!” shouted Joe in my ear, as the lightning disclosed a precipice, a deep canyon, and a stream ordinarily beautiful, but which was now madly plunging and foaming five hundred feet below. On either side were mountains, and from this point, in former days, had we looked with wonder and admiration on mountain, and hill, and valley, extending mile after mile as far as the eye could reach. Down from that precipice, on just such a night as this, went poor Jim Bates and engine Forty-five!

Joe need not have reminded me of this spot and this accident, for every station, every section, every creek and bridge, almost every tie, was well known to me. I was one of the surveyors who ran the first lines among these mighty rocks and through these primeval woods, and had been on the road ever since. No one knew better than I the dangerous nature of the descent when the utmost care was taken by experienced engineers; and now was it instinct, a new sense, latent save once or twice in a lifetime, or simply that all my powers were preternaturally acute. Whatever it was, I was painfully conscious of everything about me, and knew localities, though we were going in the darkness nearly a mile a minute. It was too evident that if we left the track we would be hurled a by a catapult over a precipice, as was poor Jim Bates, or dashed to pieces against a wall of solid rock. I was becoming exhilarated like soldiers felt when making a brilliant charge when the odds were against them.

The lights of Chester came into view as we swung around the curve. I thought of the up freight then due, and instinctively my hand sought the brake. “Stop!” said Joe, who understood my thought and my action. “Stop! We are going to catch that down passenger at Fort Smith, or die! If she keeps the track, we will make it. Besides, at this speed your brake would not be worth the effort.”

For the first time I fully perceived his plan. I thought it was simply to let the car run as far as it would, and then get a horse, and go on; but now I understood it all. He wanted to overtake the west-bound passenger train at Fort Smith, ride to Blackey’s Station arriving at three in the morning; then, with horses obtained from his sister Kate, follow the road up to “C. C.” ranch.

Solutions to tough situations nearly always came easy to Joe, and I thought of our college days in the East, when big, handsome Joe Barnes was foremost on the campus and in sports, high in the estimation of professors in the class-room, and the beau-ideal of many ladies in the parlors. Transferred to western plains, his quick perception, skilled hand and brain, as well as genuine appreciation for and admiration of bravery, honesty, and true worth, though clothed in buckskin and sleeping in saddle or on the ground, made him prince among cattlemen!

The sky was clearing now; the stars were coming out as on we went with the speed of the whirlwind. As we flew by Chester, the end of the division, and gained a glimpse of the sidetracked freight, Joe pulled me inside, saying “Don’t let the crew see us. They’ll think it simply a brake loose, and runaway. They’re wired as far as the river, and we’ll have a clean track.” To be continued.

Next month the conclusion: Are Joe and Charlie going to survive in the runaway observation car? And what of Joe’s brother, will he hang? And what of our question: **From your knowledge of the Frisco (now A&M) Railroad tracks from Winslow to Fort Smith, Arkansas, do you think it is (or was) possible for a gravity accelerated car to make or even survive the above trip? Be specific with your reasons.**

**Have a wonder filled Christmas with all that your family and you could want to share together! Editor**