



Switchlist

GULF, MOBILE & OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Messages from President Joe Petric... It was announced at the Annual Meeting in Burr Ridge (and news of this reached others via the internet), but to the rest of our members I would like to inform you that an agreement was recently reached to sell the Society's GP35, GM&O no. 631. As for the sale itself, it was prompted by the circumstance that Frascati Shops Incorporated (FSI) is losing its lease at the end of this year as the Port of Mobile is assuming control of the property for development. This, of course, necessitated the exploration of options for relocating the locomotive.

This was not altogether unwelcomed news, as discussions of moving the unit away from the deteriorating effects of the salt air had already been occurring between Board Members. The original thought was to possibly move the locomotive to a new location in partnership with a municipality. The most promising of these locations was Union City, TN where there is a restored depot and caboose already present. However, terms for financial support in moving the locomotive were not reached with the town, nor were restoration expenses that would follow.

Quite by happenstance, we were contacted by **Ed Bowers** of **Vintage Locomotives (VLIX)** who expressed an interest in restoring no. 631 to operating condition and keeping her in historically accurate paint and configuration (Alco trucks, etc.). As this outcome had been the original plan for no. 631 when the Society purchased it in 1995, it seemed like a perfect opportunity to relieve our organization of the long term financial burden that maintaining a locomotive has represented, and avoiding the immediate costs of removing/repairing the unit in the near term.

Once restored, members will be able to see no. 631 operate at the **Southern Appalachia Railroad Museum** in Oak Ridge, TN. Besides the obvious move from static display to working locomotive, the benefit of this location is that it is a more centralized region for our membership. Hopefully, more people will be able to enjoy what the Society has accomplished in the preservation of this piece of GM&O history.

The 35th Annual Meeting of the Society, which was held on September 28-30, 2007 in suburban Chicago, was a resounding success. My thanks for a job well done go out to **Dave Wagner**, who chaired the event for our group, and **Steve Suhs** from RITS. Special thanks to Board Member **Ken Donnelly** and **Dan Kohlberg** who organized and ran the model contest and Secretary **Marc Liberta** who managed the GM&OHS Commissary tables. I also wish to express my thanks to Society founder **Bob Schramm** who acted as an impromptu tour guide on the Friday Metra fantrip and member **Lane Venardos** who gave us a great show on the operation of the **Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus** train and then provided gratis DVD's of the presentation to those in attendance at the Friday night Hospitality Suite.

A big thank you also goes out to **Wylie Robinson**, President of the **Lake Shore Model Railroad Association** and LSMRA's Executive Council, who opened up their club layout to our members for a visit and run session on Saturday afternoon. Thanks is also extended to **Greg Kelley**, **Tony Kovac**, **Tim Lloyd**, **Pat Mehegan**, **Brian Strom** and the several other LSMRA members that acted as pilots for the guests, dispatched and overall made the trains run on time. Thanks guys!

As always, our vendors played a major part in the success of this event and we wish to thank them. Over 100 tables (106 to be exact) of railroadiana, memorabilia and models were available for the interested railfan. Thanks to all the vendors that participated and made the weekend such a success.

Last but not least, thanks to noted railfan photographer **Paul Hunnell** and Joliet native **Dan Tracey** who provided Saturday evening's outstanding entertainment with a GM&O equipment slide show and a Rock Island audio-visual presentation respectively.

Overall the meeting was a huge success with members from as far away as the United Kingdom, Hawaii, Virginia and several from Mobile and other Gulf Coast locations. Participation from members in the Chicagoland area however was a bit lackluster. Though several members from Chicago proper and the surrounding suburban areas did attend (and we sincerely thank you for that), we were disappointed with the numbers considering the concentration of members in the 600-606 zip codes.

The Society has always relied heavily on local members participating regardless of where the Annual Meeting is held. In these financially strapped times, if the Society can not get better local participation at Society sponsored events, we may be placed in a position to where they will have to be annulled. That being said...

The 36th Annual Meeting of the Society will be held over the weekend of **October 10-12, 2008** at the **Hampton Inn** on Highway 51 South in Union City, TN. This show is being hosted by current Board Member and former President **Darren Doss**. The weekend will follow our traditional schedule of events with the Friday night Hospitality Suite, Saturday morning Swap Meet, Saturday evening Banquet and Annual Meeting Dinner and Sunday morning Board of Directors meeting.

We hope to see a plethora of members from the great State of Tennessee, as well as members from southern Illinois, southeast Missouri, northern Mississippi and all other points in between and beyond. Union City is located about one hour north of Jackson, TN and about ninety minutes northeast of Memphis. If you're counting, it is 445 miles north of Mobile and just about a like number of miles below Chicago making it truly a centrally located Annual Meeting. We hope to see you there!

Secretary's Report by Marc Liberta... As you hold your renewal notice in hand, you're looking at the easiest way you may do your part to minimize Society expenses. Renew on time. If you haven't guessed yet, this is part three of my Postal Service trilogy concerning the rate increase instituted in May of this year and the way they have impacted the day-to-day expenses of the Society. There were over 100 persons at the beginning of 2007 that did not renew in time to be included in our first bulk mailing of the year (at our non-profit rate). A similar number of tardy renewals this Spring will now result in an expense over \$120.00 to mail out individual packets of the *NEWS* to late members. There is no reason that this should be the case, as nearly every member will have over three months to get their renewal into the Society so they may be included in the first mailing of the new year. Let's try to do better this time around, and renew now while it is on your mind. No excuses, and yes your one membership makes a difference.

With the renewal notice, you see that there is no change in our membership dues amounts. This makes the seventh year that dues have remained unchanged. In reading the President's report on page one, the disposition of the Society's locomotive has been announced. And, as you will recall, the Society's caboose was sold earlier this year. While these pieces of equipment represent Society assets and not membership revenue, it has been decided to use a small amount of this converted property to supplement any shortcomings in publication expenditures for 2008. This is a one time occurrence, as it is inappropriate to cannibalize the Society's holdings in order to pay for publications which should be covered by members' dues. Members can help stave off future dues increases by supporting the various

projects produced throughout the coming year. In 2007, this included Dr. Lemly's book, the Adlake Commemorative Switch Key, the 2008 calendar, and two Special Edition HO car projects. Revenue from these and future projects supplement what we receive from membership dues, and are in large part the reason we have been able to keep dues where they are for the past seven years.

Election Results for Membership Year 2008-09 are as follows;

President: **Ken Donnelly** of Joliet, IL (two year term)
Vice President: **Dave Wagner** of Chicago, IL (two year term)
Secretary: **Marc Liberta** of Marion, IL (one year term)
Treasurer: **David Johnston** of Memphis, TN (one year term)
Director: **David Bridges** of Philadelphia, MS (one year term)
Director: **Darren Doss** of Union City, TN (one year term)
Director: **Joe Petric** of Morris, IL (one year term)
Director: **Art Richardson** of Clinton, MS (one year term)
Director: **Louis Saillard** of Baton Rouge, LA (one year term)

A final reminder that the GM&OHS Members Directory is available for those members who have a red "Y" on their mailing labels. This indicated participation in the project, and only those persons included in the Directory may purchase one. The final number of members listed is just shy of 300. To order your Directory, please send a \$3.00 check/money order (made out to GM&OHS) to, Directory, P.O. Box 1753, Marion, IL 62959. PayPal may be utilized by e-mailing the Secretary for an invoice.

Publications Committee Report by Dave Wagner... Enclosed with this mailing is Issue 116 of the *NEWS*. This is the second year in a row that the Society has been on schedule with publications and we wish to thank all the authors, photographers, researchers and layout people that made this possible. As Secretary **Marc Liberta** mentioned in his column, please make every effort to renew on time so we can minimize our expenses in 2008. We will look forward to seeing your renewal!

Modeling Committee Report by the staff... Thanks to all the members that participated in the Model Contest during the Annual Meeting. We had the privilege of seeing some outstanding models including the following:

Best Freight Car: **Vince Robinson** for his string of "0" Scale cars
Best Passenger Car: **Pat Coughlin** for his c.1948 passenger train
Best MOW/Caboose: **Dan Kohlberg** for his GM&O MOW tie service gondola
Best Locomotive: **John Kohlberg** for his super detailed GM&O GP35
Best Structure: **John Kohlberg** for his CTC Board of Sparta, IL
Judges Award: **John Kohlberg** for his combined CTC Board, Sparta interlock and post GM&O era freight train.

Our thanks to all that participated.

Special Modeling Note: The Annual Meeting Committee in conjunction with the Modeling Committee produced a three car set of Bowser covered hoppers (two gray revenue service cars, each with a different GM&O scheme, and one black GM&O MOW service hopper) for sale at the convention. Only 40 sets were produced of this truly limited run set and we are fortunate to have approximately a dozen and a half sets remaining for sale. There will be no order form issued for these cars. If you would like a set, please remit \$55.00 to Annual Meeting Cars, P.O. Box 1753, Marion, IL. 62959. You may also visit our website and use PayPal. Don't delay, as once they're gone, they're gone!

In Memoriam... **William Donnelly** of Crest Hill, IL passed away in early August. Billy, to his family and friends, had been a long time member and supporter of the Society.