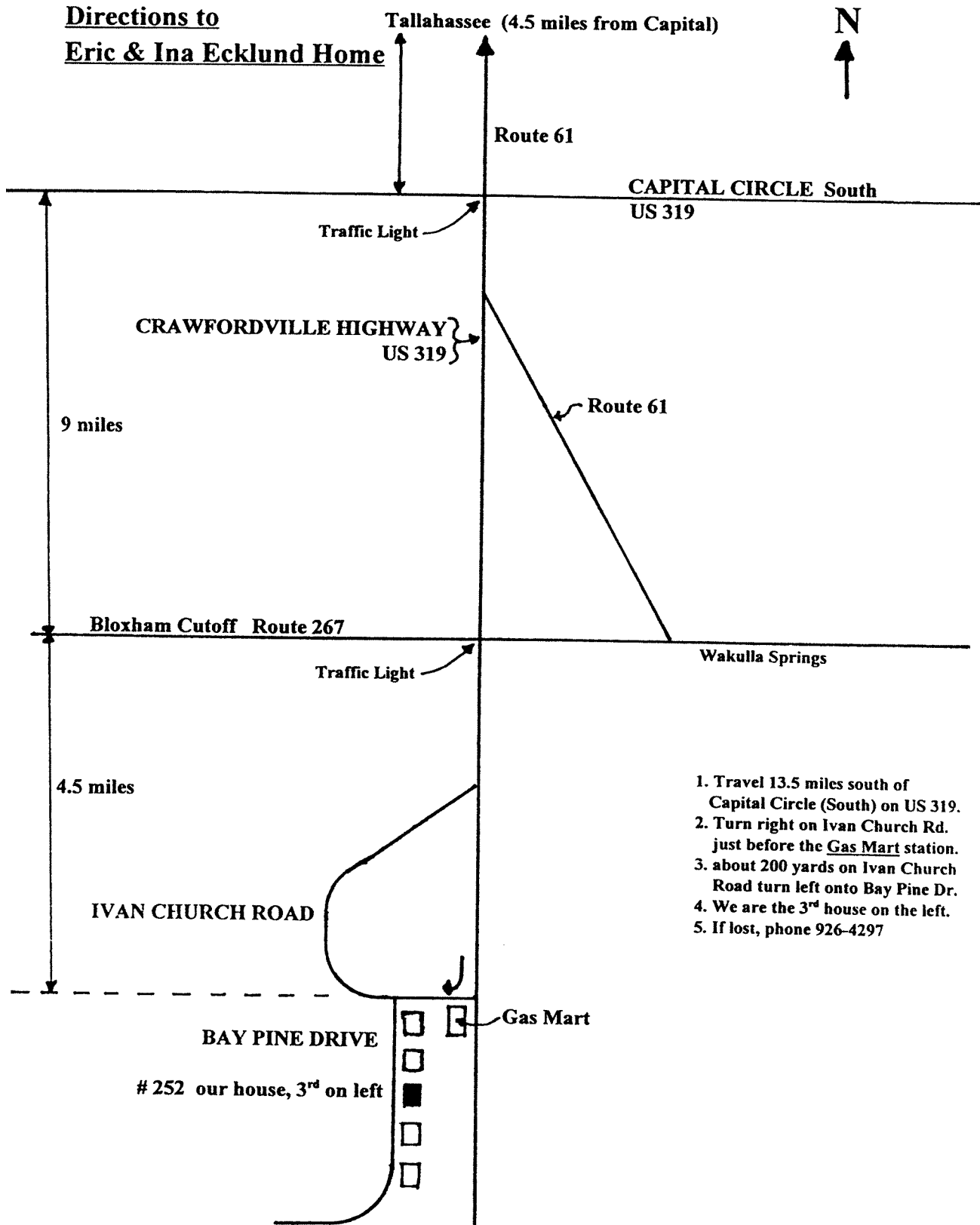




Eric & Ina Ecklund's arden Railroad Open House

Saturday, April 26, 2003



What's behind the fence at 252 Bay Pine Drive?

Ponds, waterfalls and an outdoor garden railroad!

in Paris, Bob Woodard, David White, Harold Cohn and Sam Miller. A schedule and map will be included in the letter. If anyone else is interested in hosting a "Stop", please contact John at (w) 410-8425 or (h) 562-5137.

THE FOLKSTON FUNNEL- By Larry Benson: There are trains a plenty, enough to satisfy even the most avid railfan, at the Folkston Funnel located not far from Tallahassee in southeast Georgia. I'm told around 60 trains pass through CSX's double-track main line including Amtrak and the famous Tropicana Juice Train. At a "Y" where the tracks diverge - one running north along the east coast and the other northwest towards Waycross.

On the third weekend in March, Shirley and I were on our way to the tiny port city of St. Mary's situated in the northeast corner of Georgia. A quick look at our maps showed we could plan our route through Folkston. I had been with other BMMRA members on our way home from GATS in Jacksonville, but it got dark while we shivered watching trains roll by.

The stopover would be even more fun on a warm sunny day. And, so it was on a clear, blue-sky Saturday we extended our trip long enough to enjoy some railroading. We bought "whoppers" and drinks at Burger King the next morning and took the short blocks to the Funnel overlook. I say "overlook" because there sits a huge covered, platform elevated area where watchers can perch for a superb unobstructed view of passing trains.

Seating areas on this spacious deck include ceiling fans, lights, lawn chairs, and a radio scanner sound system over which you can hear the work between trains, dispatchers and defect detectors located up and down the line. Also, there is a schedule of route maps and small shelves mounted on the support posts where visitors can stand to eat. Right next to the overlook are limited parking spaces, a picnic table, charcoal grill and garbage can. What else could a train buff want for a day's course.

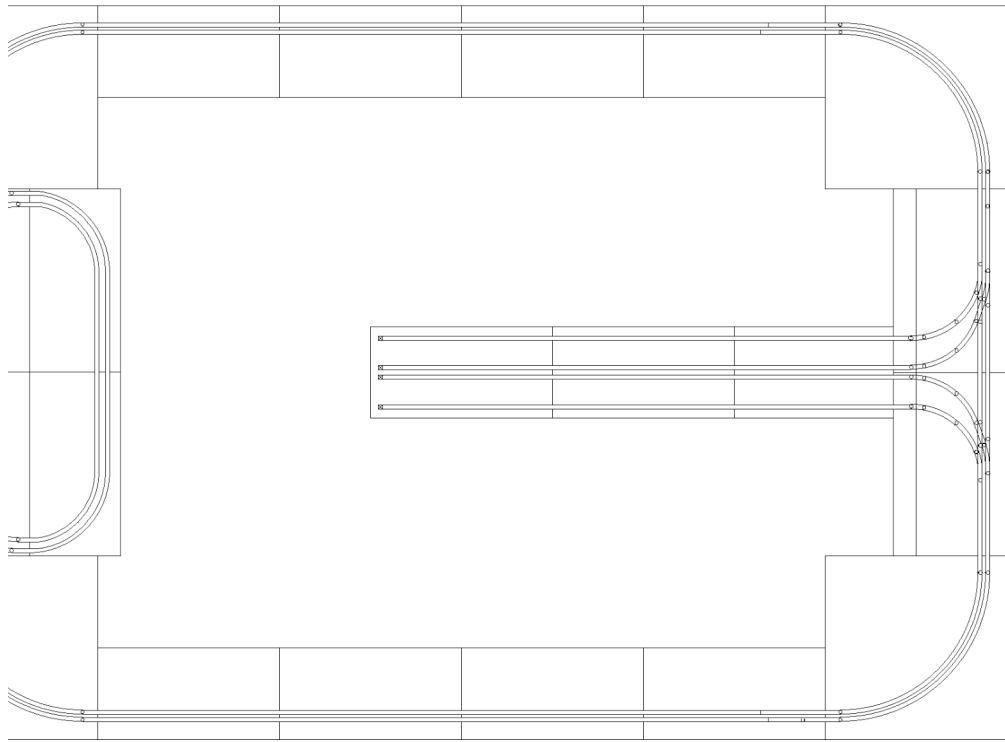
For hours, we gawked at six freights being towed by diesels painted in three different colors: CSX, Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern. The last two were surprises because I expected most all locomotive power to be that of CSX.

Just north of the tracks to the south, nestled under gigantic oak trees dressed in Spanish moss, is the restored A.C.L. depot. It is closed so we couldn't go inside.

The drive from Tallahassee to Folkston takes less than three hours. Take I-10 east to exit 335 at MacClenny. Follow I-10 north for 42 miles through St. George to Folkston. The highway is 2-lanes wide, smooth with very little traffic. Just north of Folkston, you'll cross the tracks and see the Funnel on your right a block away.

For more great color pictures and descriptions, go to www.google.com and search on "Folkston Funnel". Select interesting sites. It's the next best thing to being there!

STAGING YARD DESIGN – STAGING YARD: A Review: To the HO Division members, check out the two designs below. Currently the HO Division utilizes the "T" staging yard design.



After seeing the staging yard not being used at the North Florida Fair next to GATS in Jacksonville, the HO Division began to rethink the design.

The "loop" design would not require as many modules and would be easier to use.

The "T" modules would have to be flipped, but they are not showing scenery, that should not be a problem.

The "loop" design is smaller as well, then the operators would have no problem walking around them.

3 SCHEDULE & TIMETABLE: all meetings 7:30 to 10pm



April 15th	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community R
May 20th	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community R
June 17th	3rd Tuesday	To Be Annou
July 15th	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community R
August 19th	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community R
September 16th	3rd Tuesday	To Be Annou
October 21st	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community R
November 18th	3rd Tuesday	Myers Park Community R
December 16th	3rd Tuesday	To Be Annou