



Circus of Wonders Event Put the Fun in Fundraising

One hundred twenty of ASTA's best friends crowded into the ballroom of the Hyatt Place Austin / Cedar Park the evening of Nov. 7, and had a circus-load of fun in addition to raising more than \$72,000 for ASTA's railroad-preservation mission.

Executive Director Lil Serafine pronounced the association's first full-scale fundraising event, dubbed the "Circus of Wonders," a "tremendous success."

Net proceeds from the Circus will go toward completion of restoration on the railroad's historic Alco diesel ATCX 442, as well as funding three scholarships for high-school students in Leander ISD's Culinary Arts and Hospitality Programs.

Before sitting down to dinner, guests enjoyed a happy hour that featured the evening's signature cocktail, the "Vapeur Merveille," or "steam wonder."

The evening was further enlivened by circus performances staged by Epic Entertainment, and throughout the event talented jugglers, acrobats and magicians circulated through the room.

The end of the meal featured desserts prepared by the Leander ISD culinary-arts students. ASTA's scholarships for the high-schoolers, representing the association's commitment to area education, were awarded to Elliott



ASTA supporters enjoyed a festive evening of dining, fun and fellowship while raising some serious restoration money.

Martin, Madison Davies and Summer Storm Pate.

Sponsors underwriting the event were led by a \$10,000 contribution from Etix, the firm that provides ASTA's ticketing services, and included as well a \$5,000 gift from Cedar Park Fun, \$3,000 from Janis and Joe Pinnelli, and \$2,500 each from Dennis Kearns and Union Pacific Railroad. A dozen other friends of ASTA sponsored tables at the \$2,000 level (all detailed on the next pages). Sponsorships for the event totaled \$48,000.

A silent auction with items from 29 generous donors was open through the evening and brought in \$3,845. A live auction generated \$2,150, and a "paddles-up" auction aimed specifically at 442 restoration brought in \$12,850.

Other funds came from

donations, a wine-toss event, and a magic show, and after expenses, the Circus netted \$40,550 for the evening.

Plans are already in the works for next year's event, to be held Saturday, Nov. 7, at the Sheraton Austin Georgetown Hotel and Conference Center!



Special guests were students from Leander ISD's culinary-arts students, who also prepared tasty desserts for the crowd.

A New Year! Come Volunteer!

If you're a supporter of ASTA and its historical-preservation mission, but haven't tried hands-on involvement with the railroad operation, please come join us in 2020!

There are exciting opportunities in train operations, passenger service, mechanical operations and elsewhere, so let us know what might appeal to you!

It's easy to get involved with our volunteer corps. Just contact our volunteer coordinator Erin Hoff at volunteers@austinsteamtrain.org or (512) 477-8468 ext. 205!

Thanks to our generous friends!

(Donations from July through December, 2019. If we have left anyone off, please accept our apologies and contact us at director@austinsteamtrain.org so we can make sure we recognize you in our next edition.)

\$3,000 plus:

Burdine Johnson
Foundation

\$500 to \$999:

Randy Leo

\$200 to \$499:

Lee and Kathy Crain

\$50 to \$199:

Burnet Gunfighters Inc.
Gerald and Jan Halstead
Kathy T. Rider
Spates Family Fund
Thomsen's Root Beer
West Lake Beach

\$20 to \$49:

Steven Burns
Andrew Diefenthaler
James Q. Foster

Less than \$20:

Ray Rylander
(in memory of Bert
Dockall)

We'd Love to See Your Name Here!

For building and investing in the future of historic railroad preservation in Central Texas, ASTA depends on the kindness and dedication of its friends! To make a donation or sign up as an ASTA member, call **512-477-8468** or visit our website, www.austinsteamtrain.org.

'Circus' Auction and Other Supporters

Linda and Mark Ayotte
Mike and Ethel Barnes
Bill and Carolyn Bingham
Ana Breest
Jimmie and Kathy Burleyson
Sean Christopher
Dave Dech
Charlie and Sharon DeWeese
Timothy Giardino
Chris and Erin Hoff
Diane Holloway
Jeri and Ben Jarrett
(includes Apple match)
Janie Lively
Ken and Caryn Price
Dennis Scanlon
Jane Schoen

David Schoen
Robert and Lu Schoen
Lil and Pat Serafine
Dave and Eileen Shannon
Amanda Stevenson
Mike and Tracy Sullivan
Brian and Virginia Urban
Dianna Velasquez
Lee Walker
Rich and Li Wise



North Pole Flyers Make a Cheerful End To Another Busy Year on the Railroad

What has become a holiday tradition for many Central Texas families, the A&TC North Pole Flyers that round out the railroad's annual operations, once again entertained happy crowds on 28 gaily decorated two-hour trains over the course of five weeks, some departing from Cedar Park and some from Bertram.

Some 9,537 passengers, many in Polar-Express-inspired pajamas, enjoyed visits from Santa Claus, cookies from

Ms. Claus, and entertainment by singers, storytellers and balloon artists as they rolled through the Hill Country. Passengers were treated to hot chocolate and holiday cookies, part of the support once again generously provided by HEB, and support for the trains also came from Cedar Park Fun, the tourism-advisory board for ASTA's home town.

If it's your first time or tenth, come join us for next year's North Pole Flyers!



Helping Here.



'Paddles Up' Auction Donors to Engine 442 Restoration!

\$ 5,000

Dave and Eileen
Shannon

\$2,000

Carlos and Patricia
Manzano
Jane Schoen

\$1,000

Ben Sargent
Robert and Lu Schoen

\$500

Taylor Griswold
Brian and Virginia
Urban

\$250

Jeanie and Rodney
Lively
Rich and Li Wise

Our Generous 'Circus' Sponsors!

Big Top (\$10,000)



Tightrope (\$5,000)



Juggler (\$2,500-plus)

Dennis Kearns
Janis and Joe Pinnelli



Roustabout (\$2,000)

Austin American-Statesman
Capital Metro
David and Laura Gracy
Gulf Coast Chapter, National Railway Historical Society
Lower Colorado River Authority
Larry and Lindy McGinnis
William Osborn
Prosperity Bank
Sargent Brothers, Printers and Typographers
Schoen Family
Brian J. Smith
Larry Springer Consulting, LLC

Scholarship Table Sponsor

Jeri and Ben Jarrett
Michael Kentor and Mandy Dealey

Wine Toss Sponsors

Randy Leo and Colleen Waring



Supporters Mike and Sally Ward and ASTA President Robert Schoen take advantage of the evening's visiting opportunities.



Staffers who worked so hard on the event also had fun; pictured are Lil Serafine, Erin Hoff, Ana Breest and Zena Vaughn.

Silent Auction Donors!

Austin Book Arts Center	Red Horn Coffee House and Brewing Company
Austin Spurs	Sargent Brothers, Printers and Typographers
Balcones Country Club	Micki Scott
Mike Cox	Lil and Pat Serafine
David Gracy	Brian J. Smith
Greenhouse Craft Food	Nancy Springer
Hyatt Place Austin, Cedar Park	Springhill Suites Austin, Cedar Park
Kendra Scott	Mark Staerkel
Lake Travis Zipline Adventures	Stone House Vineyard
Lower Colorado River Authority	Wedding Oak Winery
Linda McDonough	Colleen Waring and Randy Leo
Michael Martin	Whitestone Brewery
Murphey	YETI
Omaze	Zach Scott Theatre
Amado Peña	
Ben Sargent	

Thanks to ASTA Volunteer Marc Opperman for all the fine photos of the 'Circus of Wonders'!

Pedernales Electric Co-Op Steps Up for New Power Car

Pedernales Electric Co-op, supplier of electric power to a wide area of Central Texas including ASTA's home yard, has brought the railroad a giant step closer to upgrading our trains to a new, more reliable system for onboard power.

ASTA applied for a grant through PEC's community-grants program in September, and in December was awarded \$5,000.

The grant will go toward equipping ASTA's trains with a power car carrying an 800-kilowatt generator that will provide more than enough power to run an entire train's lighting and--most importantly--heating and air conditioning.

ASTA's trains are all cur-

rently climate-controlled, but the necessary 480-volt power is supplied by one 150-kilowatt generator that powers a maximum of six cars, with each extra car carrying its own generator. While generally reliable, this system is always working at 95-per-cent capacity.

The new generator, to be housed in an historic Santa Fe baggage car, will be capable of powering the entire train at a more prudent 80-per-cent capacity.

Pedernales Electric Co-op provides electricity to an 8,100-square-mile area of the Hill Country and Edwards Plateau (including Cedar Park), with 23,000 miles of line serving 328,000 accounts.



Pedernales Electric Co-op's grant committee presents its check for \$5,000 to ASTA's power-car project to Executive Director Lil Serafine (center). To her left is Caroline Tinsley Porter, PEC's community-relations coordinator.

A Special Thanks to Our Friends and Supporters,
the City of Cedar Park and Cedar Park Tourism Services!



Your Winter CALL BOARD!

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401 E. Whitestone Blvd., Suite C-100
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