

Meridian Railfest and Soule Steam Festival

Amtrak probably still has individual tickets for sale (www.amtrak.com, 1-800-USA RAILS). The train is the CRESCENT and it leaves around 7am on Saturday, getting to Meridian MS about 11am. The Southbound section comes through town about 3pm and gets back to N.O. around 7pm. You can eat dinner in the Dining Car on this run.

At the time I first posted information on the trip, the round trip GROUP rate was:

Adults @ \$54.40 each

Children @ \$27.20 each

(Check with Amtrak for current prices).

Unfortunately, the Pack cannot cover the cost of this trip for any Scouts. With the \$80 we collect from each Scout as yearly dues, we have to fit everything else in and this is just too big a chunk. As such, this is of course totally optional and up to each family. This trip takes the place of the Hammond trip, which will not be offered this year.

There will be no bus service with this trip (too expensive), so everyone would have to get a ride to and from the New Orleans station, or park your car there. We had no issues parking our car at downtown at the terminal last year. You can park in the lot (I think it is \$5/day) - patrolled by Amtrak Police and NOPD. The day will be about 12 hours long from departure to arrival back at the station.

Attractions include a huge working HO scale Model Railroad layout, Railroad Museum, various un-restored passenger cars and cabooses, a beautiful new passenger station, and various vendors with railroad related mdse. Among this year's attractions are other pieces of railroad equipment including a Norfolk Southern display car and a newly restored freight engine from a local gravel company.

There is also a "Soule Steam Festival" held in conjunction with the Railroad Festival. They have a huge antique blacksmith shop with various "belt powered" machines and live demonstrations of blacksmithing. Other attractions include live steam machines (corn threshers, tractors and such). All of this is within walking distance. Food is good, place is safe, weather while not guaranteed was beautiful the day we went.

I have pictures I can share with you from last year if you are interested.

http://billhamblinjr.myphotoalbum.com/view_album.php?set_albumName=album08

If you have any questions, contact me or see the link and contact info below.
<http://www.meridianms.org/events.html>

October 31 - Nov. 1, 2008

Event: Soule' Live Steam Festival and Railfest "Whistlestop Weekend"

Friday, Oct. 31 - "Sparks in the Dark" at dusk

Sponsor: Soule' Industrial Museum Association and City of Meridian Railfest

Location: Soule' Steam and Feed Works and Union Station's Singing Brakeman
Park

Address: Soule' - 402 19th Avenue - Downtown Meridian Union Station- 1900
Front Street - Downtown Meridian

Time: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Information: Call Greg Hatcher 601-917-3471 or Lauderdale County Tourism
601-482-8001 or Mark Naylor at 601-485-1895