

TCA Mission: To develop an appreciation of and to preserve an important segment of history – Tinplate Toy Trains –through research, education, community outreach, fellowship, establishment of collecting standards, and to promote the growth and enjoyment of collecting and operating toy, model and scale trains.



Desert Division

DISPATCH

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Volume 44, No. 8

September, 2015

LET TRAIN SEASON BEGIN

Fall may be only three weeks away but we may need to buy the weatherman and Mother Nature a new calendar, seems like summer and the monsoon season here in Arizona, just continues to drag on, and on, and on. When will it end? Why with train season of course.

Here in the Valley of the Sun and throughout the Division, September means it is time to get together again as all of our activities begin to ramp up. September will be doubly busy since we will host our first meet of the season and follow that up the next week with an auction.

Over at the Rio Grande Chapter our members are all getting excited as well, since the New Mexico green chili harvest season is underway. You may think I am kidding, trust me I'm not. There is a lot of New Mexico pride in those green chilis. In fact I will be delivering a batch of the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad cars to Albuquerque in the next week or so and I plan to have a nice load of roasted Hatch Chili's accompany me on my trip home, oh wait, this is a train club and not my regular bunch of foodies. I need to check my enthusiasm, my recipes and appetite about those marvelous green packets of pleasure, let's get back to trains and the fall activities. The Chapter will get together for their first meet of the fall season as well on September 19th.

I saw a lot of folks up in Prescott for the Central Arizona Model Railroad Club's Beat the Heat Meet. The Grand Canyon Model Railroad's bus was quite full and more and more folks are taking the bus and leaving the driving to someone else. What a great idea the guys over at GCMR have come up with. Talking with the folks who made the trip complimented the organizers for how well everything flows. Consider this an option for you next year if you need a ride up the hill.

The Beat the Heat Meet was in a new location and it was much better all the way around. I pulled in late due to family commitments arriving just before 10:00 AM and had a heck of a time finding a parking spot. I must have orbited the lot four times before I caught a break as someone pulled out and I could pull in and begin my shopping spree. I had a few things on my wish list. I am introducing a friend of mine to toy trains and he is on a very tight budget. He found a few 1960's era train cars at a Thrift Store he was at with his wife and that got him wishin' and hopin'.

Unknown to me at the time, the Beat the Heat Meet happened to fall on his birthday, so he talked his wife into driving up from the Valley so he could go to his first ever train show. He arrived at the opening and told me he walked through the show like you would walk through a Park-n-Swap. He mentioned that his wife was

MARK YOUR CALENDAR – UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept 12 – **Desert Division Meet** - 8:30 AM member only swap – 10:00 AM Business Meeting – Phoenix, AZ

Sept 19 - **Rio Grande Chapter Meet** – 10:00 AM - Albuquerque, NM

Sept 19 - **Desert Division HO/G Gauge Auction** – 10:00 AM G Gauge preview 11:00 AM G Gauge Auction -
12:00 noon HO preview 1:00 PM HO Auction

October 10 - **Desert Division Meet** - 8:30 AM member only swap – 10:00 AM Business Meeting – Phoenix, AZ

October 10-11 – **RAIL FAIR 2015** – McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park – Scottsdale, AZ

getting a bit “antsy” and I told him they all are like that the first few shows. He told me he left after looking around for an hour so I completely missed him, not even knowing that he had been there until our paths crossed later the next week. When they did he mentioned to me that he bought a few items including a few pieces of track so he could at least display his train on his desk at work. Although he was rushed a bit he did mention that he stopped and saw John Craft’s Standard Gauge items and then hit me with a dozen questions about those during our quick meeting. I figured I must be a pretty good salesman and I am looking forward to bringing him along to the next local swap meet we have here in town. Maybe I will even introduce him to one of our auctions. That might get him really hooked.

But as I mentioned, I was unaware that he even attended the show so I had a few items on my list to help get his first train rolling down the line. I was looking for a little Scout engine since he told me he would like to have a steam engine. So typical of a flea market find, the set he bought had a tender but no engine, imagine that. Since I still don’t know how long this new hobby will last I didn’t want to spend a whole lot of money and in pretty short order I found him a postwar tank, hopper and operating boxcar, an MPC engine and a 154 crossing signal, all for under \$25. I began to think to myself that I probably could have done a bit better if I had just arrived just a little earlier. But that is part of the fun, the chase. I have an old 1033 transformer I am giving him along with a few pieces of track, enough to make the classic loop to get him started. Who knows we just might have a new Division member in a few months.

I really enjoyed the new facility that the CAMRC moved into for the show. It really wasn’t that hard to find. Although, like I mentioned, because of my late arrival I had to do a few parking lot orbits to find a spot to park, it most certainly beat the long hike up the driveway from the back forty we used to hike over at the Armory.

Once I stepped inside and paid my admission I was immediately greeted by, yes air conditioning. How wonderful. Yes, I know it is Prescott but this is still Arizona and it is definitely monsoon season. How nice to have the meet air conditioned and not only that but the lighting was great. No glare from the windows, casting funky shadows over everything. I must give a huge tip of the hat to the CAMRC for breaking with tradition and trying something new. What a wonderful experience for all of us who attended.

Like I mentioned I found John Craft quite easily up on the platform. A quick chat (he and Bob Dennison were discussing the current Standard Gauge valuations)

and I was off looking for more. It didn’t take long before I stumbled on what seemed like the entire bus load of members and friend who took the GCMR bus ride up. Lots of chat with so many folks and as a wise man once said, “It is these little toy trains that bring us together”. Is that ever true, since I find myself swapping jokes with Art Triant or Dave Brown, discovering what is new down in Tucson way with George Sokol (who I made a very nice purchase from, thank you George) or finding out about the latest political rumors from, well everybody.

Being the editor, I am always looking for new stories, new thoughts, new ideas, and me just being me, is always curious about what is going on with you. That said, I can’t take a few steps and see someone I know and start to chat. Lordy, I love to chat with everyone so much I often forget what I made the drive up the hill for. Well, not really, I mean we do talk about trains most of the times...

Beat the Heat was a lot of fun. If you haven’t been for a few years put it on your calendar for next year, I think you will be quite surprised on how the new facility and old friends makes for a wonderful new experience. I had fun and I didn’t see any unhappy faces on those around me.

As I mentioned, September brings not only the start of the fall train season but this year we will have two auctions before the Christmas Holiday Party. The September Auction will be a new experience for us as we host a combined G and HO gauge auction. The auction committee, after picking up several mixed consignments, decided to break out from our normal tradition of having them mixed in with our usual O and S gauge items and hold a separate auction featuring just these items. We are looking forward to this auction and depending on its success hope to present more specialized auctions in the future.

Also in the mix for the fall and winter will be a downsized, trains only, meet. As mentioned last month, the Arizona Toy Train Show is taking a one year hiatus because of hall availability. While this is not what we wanted, there has been enough feedback from our members for us to proceed with plans for a simple train meet. As you can imagine trying to secure a hall this late in the season has been very challenging. We will keep everyone posted and as soon as we get the date and location inked, we will let everyone know.

As we mentioned, September begins our fall train season throughout the Division. There is a lot of activity on tap, so keep your eyes open for those special early season deals and don’t forget to wear your name badge at the Division Meet. The Mystery Greeter will be back from summer vacation as well.

PICTURES FROM THE CAMRC "BEAT THE HEAT MEET"



Familiar Banner – New Home



Geore Sokol was happy about the new location, shaved many extra minutes off his drive from Tucson



Bob Dennison talking with John Craft about his beautiful table full of Standard Gauge



Best smile I could get from Pat Eiff, things were slowing down when I stopped by



Terry Haas on the other hand is all smiles while decked out in the 2009 Convention garb



Peter Atonna working the table while Mary Jane works on Sudoku

PICTURES FROM THE TCA 61st NATIONAL CONVENTION



Angelo Lautazi took this picture from his tour of the NJ Transit Meadows Maintenance Facility



No Light Rail here, another picture from Angelo's tour of the NJ Transit



I've been looking for a \$50 Blue Comet only to find one on a layout



Late Night TV host Tom Synder's layout found a new home at the NJ Hi-Railer's



Standard Gauge was everywhere! Here is an operating layout in the trading pit area



The Sommerset 4-H club had an HO layout running on top of a "tunnel" over their mainlines

President's Message

So many things to talk about, where do I start? Well, I can't help being a TCA politico, part of it is my job and why you elected me as your Division President so let me pick a point and roll on from there. By now all TCA members should have received their September National Headquarter News. It's important for many reasons, the most important of which is the minutes from the National Convention Board of Directors meeting.

Next, it has a ballot for you to fill out and return. All five amendments are important, and four of the five passed unanimously. Amendments one, two and three are mainly housekeeping to bring the TCA Rules and Regulations into alignment with the TCA Bylaws. This past year I had the privilege of serving on the committee that worked on that project. Five Division Presidents, myself, Rupert Campbell from Cottonbelt, Pat Halpin from Lone Star, Bob Keller from Dixie, and Ken Mitchell from Southeastern met nearly every week via teleconference along with incoming President Wayne Sheriff and TCA Parliamentarian Jim Williams.

This was a massive effort to insure that the TCA Rules and Regulations, which are passed by the Board of Directors, were in complete compliance with the TCA Bylaws. Amendments 1, 2, and 3 will see that our work gets adopted.

Both Amendment 4 and 5 were proposed by me. I believe that elections should be fair and qualified candidates who wish to serve TCA be elected. Our current Bylaws require that we must find a candidate for the office of President-elect if no one steps forward to challenge that office. Quite simply, why? In all but the distant past history of TCA, the currently serving Vice President runs for the office of President-elect, why must we find someone to run against that person if no one else challenges the office? I did not propose that we eliminate the possibility of someone running nor did I eliminate the write in position, all I proposed was the sacrificial goat that was needed when no one wished to challenge the candidate.

Amendment 5 also passed, although there were a few dissenting votes. When the new Bylaws were passed in 2009 the second and third Past President lost both their vote and their voice. Past Presidents Bob Keller, Jim Burke, myself and Clem Clement all served our terms as second and third Past Presidents without being able to vote or even enter into discussions yet TCA reimbursed us for air fare, hotel and per diem. On average that amounts to approximately a \$2,000 per year. At a time when the Board of Directors is asking everyone in TCA to tighten their belts, I believe it is also time for the Board of Directors to look within and realize that these largely ceremonial positions no longer need to be part of the Board. I hope you will join with me and vote "YES" on all five Bylaws Amendments.

Enough about politics, let's talk trains. The long awaited arrival of the Culmbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad Boxcar has come. If you preordered your car and opted to pick it up at either the Chapter or Division meet, you can do so this month. That also means that if you waited until you could plunk down your money and take home this beautiful car without waiting, you can do that as well this month. Both the Division and Chapter will have a small inventory of these cars available at the meet for you to buy and take home with you that day. For the rest of you, well when you hear Bob Herman's treasurer report this month you will see quite a big hit to our finances. We need about 30 more cars sales to breakeven and from there everything else will be gravy for the Chapter to begin their nest egg for the 2019 National Convention.

Exciting days are ahead I hope to see you this fall at either the Division, Chapter monthly Meets, our auctions or even the Pumpkin Meet. I love fall train season!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Chris', written in a cursive style.



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TCA Rio Grande Chapter News

By David Nycz – TCA 94-38787

On May 23, 2015 the Chapter had a sales table, display case, along with Tom Lawler's Magic Mountain layout. We sold raffle tickets for the Thomas & Friends train set and had the C&T convention box cars for sale.



The sales table with our new box car banner.



Magic Mountain Layout



Display case with Dale Schafer's beautiful Standard gauge trains.



Tom Lawler's at work on his layout.

Thanks to all the volunteers

Our next TCA Chapter meeting will be on September 19, 2015- Los Altos Church at 10:00am.

TCA MEMBERSHIP AND THE FUTURE - Pt. 1

Chris Allen TCA 95-40580

If you have attended any Division meet in the past year you are aware that we have been talking at every meeting about declining membership in both TCA National and the local Division. While at the local level we can still host trains shows and auctions to help supplement our annual dues, TCA National does not have that option. The vast majority of operating revenue is derived from our annual membership dues. This is important for many reasons since we exist primarily as the local representatives of the national organization, much like a Boy Scout troop is a physical presence of the national organization.

TCA membership means different things to every member. In the pre-internet days, those who lived on the east coast it meant a ticket to the largest train show on earth, the Eastern Division York Meet. Those too far away to travel to York, TCA membership meant a second avenue of friends and more importantly, personal connections, as they built their collections and were looking for certain items.

The internet and eBay has changed all that. I've been on eBay a long time. eBay turned 20 this month and I've been on it for 17 1/2 of those 20 years. As it got better and more reliable at online auctions another change was also taking place. More and more TCA members began to get online. As I mentioned last month, Desert Division went online with our own website in early 2002 mainly because more of our own Division members began to use computers and emails.

The technology growth of the past two decades has been so rapid that it would be almost impossible to chart. Although my work pager was replaced by a Motorola "flip phone" that year, my computer was running Windows 95 and connected to the internet with a dialup modem capable of 28.8, which was blazingly fast.

Why this trip down technologies memory lane? Where there is a very big correlation between the growth of television in the late 1950's into homes across the country and the nose dive in children's outside activities and hobbies in general. I propose much the same thing is affecting us today.

TCA membership peaked in the year 2000 and has been on a fairly steady 1-2% yearly decline ever since, that is until the recent dues increase. There is no doubt in my mind and many others that the dues increase was handled poorly. An incremental increase while at the same time addressing budget cuts and informing the members where the funding would be going and what steps TCA was taking to implement changes would have been far better approach.

Much has been accomplished with the increased dues revenue, but again TCA is not doing a good job letting all the members know and quite honestly much of the blame can be put on me. As your president and editor I should have been more vocal about many of the long overdue and postponed maintenance projects on the National Headquarters building were accomplished. Former Treasurer Bob Mintz, along with a very dedicated crew of committee chairs and volunteers, worked hard in getting these delayed projects prioritized and accomplished without incurring any additional long term debt. In fact TCA is debt free having paid off the loan on the sewer project early. There continues to be many challenges ahead.

The TCA Board of Directors recently appointed Atlantic member Rick McKenny as the National Treasurer following Bob Mintz's recent resignation for personal reasons. Although it is not required by TCA Bylaws, the current Board of Directors is working towards a balanced budget so we would not need to dip into our reserves. We also did something in which you can help.

If you know a member of TCA who dropped out of the organization because of the dues increase talk to them. For a very limited time, members who dropped out of TCA after June 2012 can rejoin TCA and get their original TCA number back without paying any back dues or processing fee. Those members must contact the TCA Business office directly and request this option and it is only available until March 31, 2016.

That's where we are today. Next month let's discuss some ideas for the future.

ELECTION TIME

Hard to believe that it has been two years since our last election, but as we all know, the only constant in life is change. The Election Committee will be announced at the September meeting. They will have one month to solicit candidates for the various offices. At the October General Meet they will announce the candidates and take nominations from the floor. Elections will take place in November with the results announced at the annual Christmas Holiday Party.

The Board of Directors meets the Wednesday before every Division meet at various Board members home throughout the valley. Board meetings typically last about one hour with a little socializing and informal chat before and after each meeting. Board members serve for a two year term in office.

If you would like information about any office, the responsibilities or time commitments please feel free to email or call Chris Allen. You may also wish to contact any of the other officers directly about their job.

AUCTION HELP NEEDED

You've read about it, you're curious about it, now you too can be part of the Division Auction Team. The Division has three auctions slated between now and January 30th and we can always use an extra hand.

There are several areas where you can help for just a few hours or maybe even for the full auction.

Before the auction the items need to be unpacked at set out on the tables in auction order. During the auction we need "runners", well in our case "walkers" to bring auction items up to the front to be staged and then once the bidding is complete taking them back and grouping them by bidders. When the auction is complete we need help checking our bidders out quickly and accurately.

If you can help at one of our auctions talk with Chet Henry at the September Meet. Being part of the Auction Committee is a easy way to volunteer a few hours of time to the Division and it is always a lot of fun.

SEPTEMBER EDUCATIONAL SEGMENT ANNOUNCED

There have been several months of train meets all over the Division and several National Conventions held. Many of you also travelled to and from the conventions by car or maybe visited a tourist railroad during that time. If so bring your new finds, souvenirs, and stories to the September Meet. You may think of this as a "What I did during my summer vacation" but with the Labor Day weekend behind us September is usually the get your engines running for the fall train season. As always you do not need to stick with our suggested theme. If September is your wedding anniversary you can bring along the train your wife bought you as an anniversary gift... Ten raffle tickets will be awarded to the best story of the day. See you at the Meet.

DESERT DIVISION BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014-2015

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Please return form with payment by October 19, 2015

Visit our web site at: www.tcadd.org

STILL MORE PICTURES FROM THE TCA 61st NATIONAL CONVENTION



Angelo Lautazi visited Phil Klopp's layout as one of his tours and saw a very detailed layout



The attention to even the smallest of details is visible in this scene



The Somerset 4-H club members working on their module layout



Each member of the Somerset 4-H club has their own section of the module to build and maintain



A view of the "Tank Farm" which was part of the refinery section at the NJ Hi-Railers



One of the displays in the trading hall featured homebuilt trains, this one featured a spray paint can "boiler"

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Lionel and American Flyer Parts - Expanded selection now includes numerous parts for postwar locomotives including pilot wheels, trucks, and side rods - Call or stop by my table at the Meet - DeLon Freije 701-331-2837

FOR SALE: OB's. My basement cleanout yielded a few boxes that no longer have their accessories: #334 Dispatch Board \$5, #182 Magnetic Crane \$5, #64 Street Light \$1, #97 Coal Elevator \$8, #342 Culvert Loader. Peter Atonna email: mjatonna@gmail.com.

FOR SALE Lionel 332, 337, 338 Passenger Cars red body, red roof, cream doors, nickel journals \$250 - 219 Standard Derrick peacock, dark green, red boom, nickel knobs, \$135 - 2203T Tender only, black Lionel Lines slope back tender, light.BJ KC \$135 - 6026W Tender only, for 2016 or 2018 \$50 - 263W Oil Tender only, Gunmetal, 6 wheel \$175 – MTH 20-93283 & 20-93284 Seattle North Coast 50' Box Car pair \$100 - Must see to appreciate Wardie Jay Circus Set Professionally built from wooden kits, pictures available \$150. Please call/email for additional info and bargains. Dannie Martin 520-360-0519 dannieaz@cox.net

FOR SALE: Out of print Greenberg books: Lionel, American Flyer, Marx, etc. Call Bruce Greenberg at 703-461-6991 (9-5 Eastern Daylight) or visit his web site, www.sykesvillehistory.us, for a current list.

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WANTED: Neon Lionel sign used in hobby stores – I have the bell now I am looking for a cradle and yoke for a 12" locomotive bell – semaphore working or pieces – do you have a real RR crossbuck? Call me Chris Allen 480-820-9559 sparkyshome@cox.net

This page is provided as a service to our members for trading among themselves on a space available basis. Contact them directly for items listed above. Contact Editor when your item sells so space can be made available to other members. ****DEADLINE FOR AD's – THIRD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH****

THE BACK PAGE

FOR THINGS THAT DIDN'T FIT ELSEWHERE or BREAKING NEWS



A few more pictures sent in from Angelo Lautazi's visit to the Phil Klopp layout



So much attention to detail you can understand why the scenes comes alive



During the Dinner Cruise I snapped a picture of One World Trade Center just before we crossed under the Brooklyn Bridge



The Lady in the Harbor. To me this was the pinnacle of my trip to the convention, seeing Lady Liberty in person

The 62nd [TCA National Convention](#)
Houston, Texas



DIVISION MEET LOCATION

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church
1500 W. Maryland Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85015



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