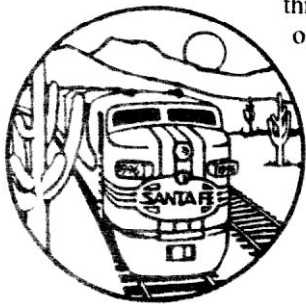


TCA Mission: To preserve an important segment of history – Tinplate Toy Trains – through research, establishment of collecting standards, education, community outreach, fellowship and to promote the growth and enjoyment of the hobby.



# Desert Division

ARIZONA • NEW MEXICO • WEST TEXAS



Volume 33, No. 6

Summer, 2004

## JULY'S A SCORCHER

July is not usually thought of as a TCA Desert Division train meet month, but no matter, with the word out to the faithful, a roomful of members jammed the Jaycees Hall for a 100-degree train fest. Tom Stange had previously pronounced, "Have a train meet, and they will come." His words were prophetic, and tables of trains of all vintages appeared for display and sale. As this was a "mini meet," there was no treasurer's report or raffle drawings, but there were coffee, donuts, and good cheer.

Paul Wassermann reported upon the recently completed National Convention. Over 1600 members registered for the event and nearly 60 Desert Division members made their way to Pittsburgh for what proved to be an outstanding week of fun. Paul reported that the membership meeting passed a motion to eliminate the two sponsoring signature requirement as part of our new member application. Since, to go into effect, this would require a bylaws amendment, the proposal will be forthcoming on a national ballot.

Paul is also anxious to hear from any TCA members who attempted to reserve a room at the Marriott Hotel in Ontario for the 2003 Convention. If you tried to get a room at this hotel and were told there was no space available, please get in touch with Paul at once. He will want to know the dates you requested, and if possible, the approximate time you made the request.

Desert Division members in New Mexico are pursuing the possibility of forming a Chapter within the Division. In order to do so, the Division Bylaws need to be changed to address this issue. After a great deal of discussion a motion was passed which, if approved by the general membership, will result in the mechanism by which a Chapter may be formed within the Desert Division boundaries. Since this is an amendment, it will be published three times in our Division Dispatch prior to an actual mail ballot. This is not a motion to actually form a Chapter; it is simply a change to the Bylaws which will allow a chapter to be formed.

George Bean, President of TTOS, has secured a bus for the "Beat the Heat" Meet on August 21. It will leave Paradise Valley Mall at 6:30 AM, stop for breakfast along the way, drop people off at the meet and pick them up afterwards. proceed to a Prescott visitation layout, and arrive back at the Paradise Valley Mall about 6:30 PM. Anyone who wants to ride the bus should call George Bean (602-788-7031) to see if there is still space. The cost is \$20 round trip, per person.

The Educational Segment included Paul Wassermann's 1938 Gilbert Erector Set, a 10½, which includes an electric train locomotive. He also displayed his recent acquisition of a Marx Anti-Tank Set, a shooting gallery toy. Jerry Sienkiewicz displayed three nearly identical Marx sets, but each was made in a different country: The 49er Train is US made; Wells Fargo is English; Plastimarx's "Ferrocarril 1948" was made in Mexico. Gordon Wilson showed his Lionel beer glasses, the Heinz Pickle Car fund-raiser from the Pittsburgh Convention, and the Welcome Party gold hopper car (one to a table) signed by Lenny Dean and Bill Bracy. Chuck Archbold brought his Faller Set, made by Marx in the '60's. Though made in England, it used some German parts. Clearly Marx, it has the Marx logo on the box and the instruction sheet. Katie Elgar brought a Barclay figure and a stretcher. She is looking for the second figure to carry the stretcher, as the poor injured soldier is being dragged along the ground!

As there were no raffles, the "mini-meet" ended on that note.

### COMING UP...

**AUGUST 21**

**"BEAT THE HEAT" MEET – Prescott, AZ – 9 AM to 2 PM**

**ENROLL YOUR CHILD(REN) IN KIDS CLUB**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to you All!

Wow, take a month off from the President's column and I doubt that I'll be able to fit in all the Association and Division Happenings on just one page. Let's start with the June General Meeting, which had a few familiar faces missing due to an early start of summer vacation road trips. If you missed it, you missed the Spring Drawing for the K-Line Black Santa Fe F-3's, Lionel Berkshire, and Hobo Hotel. Last minute ticket buyers helped make this a successful raffle but we'd like your input for next year. What road name and diesel motive power would you like to see in 2005? E-mail, call, or let one of your Directors know your preference so we can begin looking for that new addition to your layout. A record number of Division supporters who purchased a Hudson ticket were missing when we started pulling out names. It took six tries, but Bill MacDowell was happy that Mike Brill, Fred Hunter, Peter Atonna, Paul Wassermann, and Brad Martin missed the meet and were on their way to Pittsburgh a bit early.

The end of June brought the 50<sup>th</sup> National convention. What an absolute wonderful time everyone had! I recognized and talked with more than 60 of you during the week and was glad to see a turnout from all three states in the Division. Ft. Pitt did a magnificent job! Jim Burke and his entire crew did not miss a gold plated trick. We were definitely taking notes as the Desert Division was awarded the 55<sup>th</sup> National Convention in 2009 at the fabulous J.W. Marriott Desert Ridge Resort. During the business meeting a proposal to drop the two signatures from the TCA application was defeated by the National Board of Directors. However, later in the week, during the membership general meeting the proposal was again brought up and there was a most spirited debate. When the vote was called this time, it passed. The proposed By-Law amendment is now in the hands of the TCA Rules and Regulations Committee to see if it can qualify for the upcoming ballot. Let me soapbox for a moment: the TCA is nothing if it doesn't maintain its standards and traditions, but the need for two signatures on an application really serves no purpose other than make the application process cumbersome. Having two signatories is not really a part of the tradition of tinplate toy trains, but rather, remnants of a bureaucratic process that has long ago outlived its usefulness. The Association will still publish names for review while the new member is on probation for a year. Local Divisions will still be alerted of potential members in their area, and most importantly, the membership will still be protected in

case of any unscrupulous activity. The Standards and Membership Committees will both continue to have all the power they presently have to enforce and maintain the discipline, values, and principles that have made us one of the premier collector organizations. We are just making it easier for other interested collectors to join. Your vote and voice on this matter counts! Make sure you look for your ballot in the upcoming National Headquarters News.

The July meet was a real surprise to those of us who hunker down for the summer in the Valley of the Sun. My thanks to Tom Stange who said three years ago if we'd have a meet the members would show up. It started out slow but it has increased every year to where it was quite a full house, as the pictures from the meet will attest. A tip of the cap to Randy Efros and DeLon Freije who showed up early and helped me get the hall in shape for all who had a second cup of coffee Saturday morning. By ten o'clock the Jaycees Hall was filled with quite a collection of desert rats. The business meeting brought on the much-anticipated recommendations of the Bylaws Committee regarding the formation of chapters within the Desert Division. The energetic debate that followed was not if we should allow a chapter, but rather how close and how many, and as one pundit told me later, "We should have several chapters so we could have a meet every weekend! What's better than spending time with your friends AND trains?" The amendments all passed in the general membership meeting and now will be published for the next three issues of the DISPATCH, and then voted on in November with the Division Officer elections. My thanks to Keith Swett and the Committee for their time and efforts in making this happen.

August in the Valley isn't really about the Valley but rather the Central Arizona Model Railroad Club's "Beat the Heat" Meet. When our kids were younger my whole crew enjoyed the day up in Prescott, with a family picnic being the culmination of a great day with friends before the trip home. Now that the little ones aren't little anymore, they have been replaced by Laurel's sister and mother. The antique and craft stores in Prescott get a real good workout, and the trains I buy get lost in the shuffle of bags and boxes of all their treasures. The way I see it, that's a pretty good trade-off, as I'm not the only one coming home with something. I'll be up in Prescott peeking in boxes and looking under the tables. I hope to see you there too!



Editor's Note: As this bulletin covers both June and July, a copy of the June meeting minutes follows. Some of the items may seem a bit outdated, but we felt the members not in attendance deserve to know what transpired. Pictures from the meet follow this page.

## DESERT DIVISION MEETING MINUTES

June 12, 2004

Division President Chris Allen led the meeting. He reminded us that the July 10<sup>th</sup> meeting would be held at the Jaycees Hall as usual, but we would not have a \$100 drawing or a Hudson Raffle Ticket for the raffle. In fact, the meeting will consist of trains, tables and conversation.

Treasurer Bob Herman reported that we have a checking account balance of \$6,885.14, and savings account balance of \$13,953.19. The Trains for Kids program has received \$126.90 to date from the monthly raffle sales.

There are roughly 300 lots for the Turkey Meet in November. We often go over the 300-lot number, so if you have items you wish to enter into the auction, contact Chet Henry. All items or a list of items committed must be to Peter Atonna by the July 10<sup>th</sup> meeting date.

Keith Swett is the chair of the Bylaws Committee. Bylaws amendments will be presented at the July meeting, published in the Summer, September, and October issues of the newsletter, and voted on in November.

The Desert Division made a donation of \$500.00 towards the repair of the Jaycees Hall .

In the Education Segment of the meeting, Jerry Sienkiewicz gave a presentation on Marx, showing the 16 different numbers that Marx would make in their numbered series on identical cars. Marx 7" and 5" cars were made in numbered series. Plastimarx were only made in 1 number car: 4484. Marx used the numbers 4485-4500 for their numbered series. Robert Mancus brought in a 1917 Ives wind-up set. He pointed out that Ives included a governor in their engines, to determine the speed, adjusted for the load it was pulling. Bill Schulte shared his three flag bearers, all made by Manoil, but different in some minor detail, such as shirt or belts. Charles Archbold brought in three Plasti-Marx sets to show. They were not marketed in the United States, due to high tariffs. Marx also manufactured in Brazil, as well as Mexico. Gerry Klei demonstrated the working train set that he is building for the Turkey Meet in November. With the Heisler engine, he also has a log-dumping car and is working on a tank car to be included.

Greg Palmer, a division member from Albuquerque won the trivia contest. The answer is Belen, N.M. Greg works for Trains West, a train store in Albuquerque.

The 2003 Annual Report has been mailed to the National Officers and the Division Presidents.

Today's mystery greeter was Keith Swett and the lucky winner of tickets was Marty Wik.

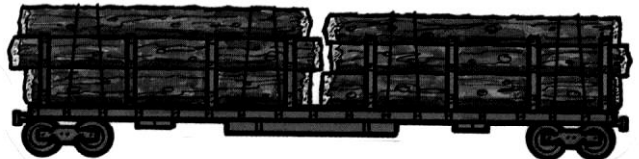
Winners of raffle prizes were as follows:

Hudson Raffle Ticket	Beth Stange
UP Flat Car w/ trucks	Margaret Butler (donated to Kids Club)
Lionel Flat Car w/ Logs	Tom Stange
UP 4 Bay Hopper	Paul Anstett
Duluth S S & A Box Car	Beth Stange
Remote Switch (donated by Robert Dymacek)	Werner Hennig

The Hudson \$100 winner for the meeting was Bill McDowell.

Spring Raffle Winners:

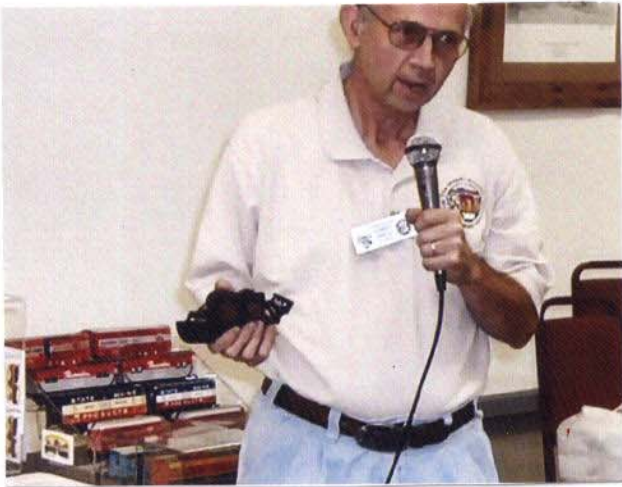
K-Line Black Santa Fe	George Smith
JC Penney Berkshire	Katie Elgar
Hobo Hotel	Janet Mattern



Thanks to all who supported the division by purchasing Spring Raffle tickets.



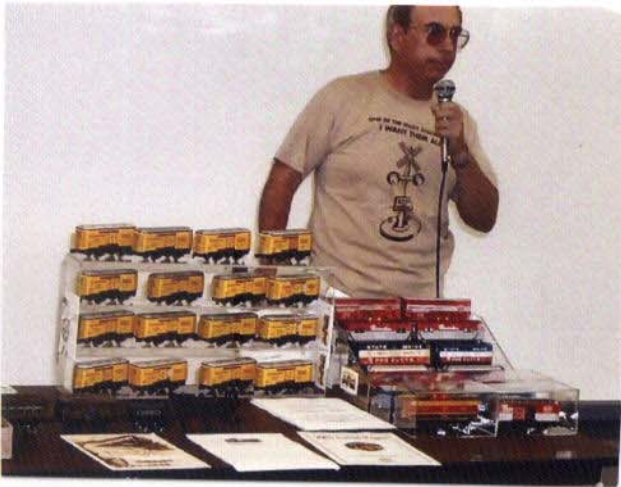
## JUNE'S JUMPINGS



Robert Mancus shows us his still operating 87-year-old Ives clockwork locomotive.



Gerry Klei gives the assemblage a preview of what's in store for his Turkey Meet Erector display.



Jerry Sienkiewicz brought with him quite a varied display of 5" and 7" Marx rolling stock.



"Good things happen to those who stand and wait." Bill MacDowell's name was the 5<sup>th</sup> one drawn for the Hudson hundred dollar bill.



### Two Winners In our Spring Raffle

Left: George Smith took home the K-Line "Black" Warbonnet Santa Fe F-3 ABA's.

Right: Janet Mattern was the recipient of the Lionel "Hobo Village" operating car and accessory.





## JULY'S JOLLITY



New member Earl Rasmussen and his wife Janice busy checking some of the table goodies



Randy Efros' sales table very predominantly displays an array of Pre and Post War Marx items.



Chuck Archbold tells us about an unusual internationally manufactured Marx/Faller Train Set.



Gordon Wilson's newly acquired Lionel Beer glasses, some Convention souvenirs, and a baseball he caught at a Cincinnati game.



Paul Wassermann's Convention find, a very rare Marx Anti-Tank shooting gallery Set in a perfect OB.



A portion of the Gilbert Erector Set #10 1/2.



## TCA NATIONAL CONVENTION 2009 GOES TO THE DESERT

by Ed Micale TCA #93-36857

Yes, it is almost five years from now, but mark your calendars for June 28 - July 5, 2009! Congratulations are due to the Desert Division as it was officially awarded the TCA National Convention for 2009. This will surely be a "Star-Spangled" Convention. Gordon Wilson did a terrific job giving the final bid presentation at the National Board of Directors meeting on June 24th during the 50th anniversary Convention in Pittsburgh. The National BOD voted immediately after Gordon's presentation and the vote was unanimous. I would like to thank the entire steering committee (Chris Allen, Bill Mack, Paul Wassermann, and Gordon Wilson) for assembling a comprehensive package of information that was given to each member of the national BOD. Each package included a JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa brochure, Discover Scottsdale magazine, 2004 Official Visitors Guide of Phoenix magazine, Arizona Highways magazine, Highroads magazine, Desert Ridge Market Place brochure, Desert Division 2009 convention business card including our web site URL, and a CD with fabulous photographs of the JW Marriott. Thanks to Dominic Micale for burning the 40 CD's. Each national BOD member also received a jar of Sting-n-Linger medium strength salsa with a colorful label of an F3 made and donated by Mitch Kuhn - thank you Mitch. We still have a couple of hotter levels of salsa to go for future presentation gifts.

Now we have a lot of work to do in the selection of the various committee chairs and members, planning of the convention events, tours, displays, fund raising, and associated activities for the execution of the convention. We will be looking for approximately 20 committee chair positions to fill and probably close to 100 people (nearly 1/3 of our club membership) in total that will make up the convention team. The Desert Division put on a 1st class Convention in 1997. We have a very good understanding of what has to be accomplished by June 2009, and everyone can make an important contribution to this effort. So, don't hesitate to help out. The 2009 "Star-Spangled" Convention will be a success due to the active participation of each of our members in the Desert Division.

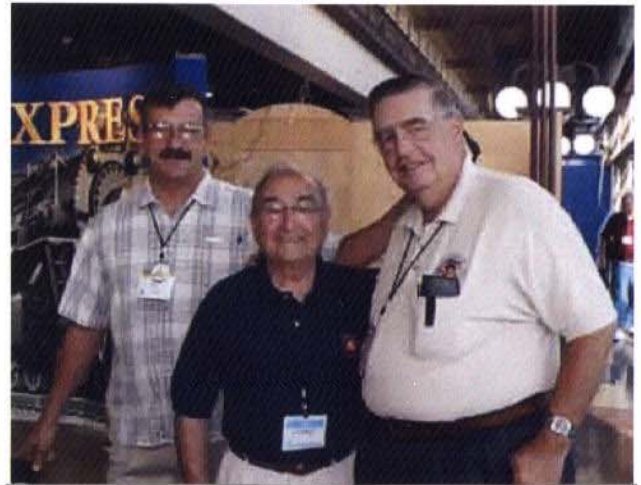
## NOMINATION WITHDRAWN

A few days prior to the announcement of all candidates for the 2004 TCA National offices, I had my name withdrawn from consideration as a candidate for TCA National Secretary.

I appreciate the support I received from everyone here in the Desert Division. A personal situation unexpectedly arose which made my pursuit of the office at this time highly impractical to both me and the TCA. Perhaps the situation will correct itself and I will be able to pursue this National Office again at some time in the future. I wish to thank the Division once again for your support and faith in my candidacy.

Cordially,  
Gordon L. Wilson

## 2004 CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



Above: Chris Allen, Lenny Dean, and Gordon Wilson meet at the Lionel display.

Below: Doug and Vi DuBay attend the 50<sup>th</sup> TCA National Convention in Monroeville, PA.



## SUMMER TRIVIA

The previous trivia question survived two months of attempts by many members but was finally won by Greg Palmer, a Desert Division member of Albuquerque, New Mexico. The correct answer was Belen, New Mexico. The photo and entire story of the Doodlebug that traveled between Belen and Albuquerque, New Mexico can be found at the following link: [www.news-bulletin.com/lavida/39163-03-20-04.html](http://www.news-bulletin.com/lavida/39163-03-20-04.html) The photo used in the article and reprinted in the DISPATCH was courtesy of the Denver Public Library, Western History Department. Unfortunately Greg's ticket was not pulled from the hopper during the June meet, so let's try again. No photo this month, but another bit of history for those of us lucky enough to call the Desert Division home. The answer to this month's trivia will doubtless change your view of the Arizona Territory, the New Mexico Badlands, and maybe even El Paso City.

What appeared throughout the West as a result of the railroads and is frequently seen in western movies, but did not exist within the Arizona Territory until the early 1900's?

Too vague a question? Well, let's give you a little hint. There is a direct connection to the trivia answer and the "Beat the Heat" Meet. First correct answer to Chris Allen at 480-820-9559 or email at [tcadd.org@cox.net](mailto:tcadd.org@cox.net) gets 10 free raffle tickets for the September Meet. However if you are the first with the correct answer AND you can also tell me how it ties into the "Beat the Heat" Meet, I'll buy you an additional 10 raffle tickets out of my own pocket! Remember, you do not need to be present to win. If your trivia ticket is pulled and you're not at the meet, the best prize on the table will be mailed to you at the Division's expense.

## DID YOU TRY TO BOOK A ROOM AT THE 2003 TCA CONVENTION?

Both in 2004 and 2003, the Desert Division was superbly represented at the TCA National Conventions. If you went to Ontario, California last year AND tried to obtain a room in the Ontario Marriott Hotel, we would dearly like to know about your success OR lack or same.

If you tried to book a room in that Marriott up to the early part of June, 2003, and were unable to do so because the hotel informed you that they were "sold out," please contact Paul Wassermann, President of TCA, immediately – if not sooner. Paul's phone number is 480-949-1620 and his e-mail address is [tinplater@aol.com](mailto:tinplater@aol.com).

## PADE PROMOTIONS

The Desert Division thanks everyone who made a PADE donation during the past months. Kids Club thanks Jerry Calkins for the donation of several notebooks, Bill Schulte for Classic Toy Train magazines to use in the Turkey Meet Information Kits, and Margaret Butler for donating her raffle prize for use on their layout. Bob Dymacek's donated remote switch and Bob Dennison's TCA National Golden Anniversary plate will both be used as raffle prizes. The efforts of Laurel Allen, who staffed the kitchen this month, were greatly appreciated. Finally, as a result of your generosity, the Kids Club has earned \$126.90 so far this year.

Your name could appear in this column. You need only do something generous to improve the Division.

## EASY WAY TO "BEAT THE HEAT"

by Gordon Wilson TCA #76-10233

"Let Greyhound do the driving" was a very successful advertising ploy, especially because of the sudden explosion of fuel prices. Once again a similar thought and idea makes a lot of sense. Are you thinking of attending the "Beat the Heat" Meet in Prescott on August 21? Well, think no longer. Our sister club, TTOS's Grand Canyon Division, has engaged a 47 passenger, air-conditioned Motor Coach for the Trip. What is even nicer is the price – a mere \$20 per person round trip.

The coach will leave from the J. C. Penney area of the Paradise Valley Mall (Northwest corner of Tatum Blvd. and Cactus Road) at 6:30 AM. On the way north will be a stop in Rock Springs for breakfast. (Sadly we must report that the "4-B's" has closed their doors.) Breakfast cost will be the financial responsibility of each person.

Arrival in Prescott at the Old Armory Hall on Gurley Street will be prior to the opening of the "Beat the Heat" Meet. For anyone wishing to go "Antiquing" rather than enter the train meet, they may walk the few blocks west and do so. At a designated time, all will once again assemble back on the Coach and there will be at least one planned layout visitation, to "le famille d'Atonna." Bring your cameras, as Peter's layout is a sight not to be missed and LONG remembered. On the way back to Phoenix, a stop at Young's Farm in Dewey, AZ is planned.

To make your reservation, contact George Beam (602-788-7031) at your very earliest convenience. A limited number of places are still available.



## MY TWO CENTS WORTH ON THE TWO-SIGNATURE DISCUSSION

by Gordon Wilson, Past TCA National President, TCA 76-10233

Years ago I wrote a monthly column for the Dispatch called "As I See It." As the late pianist/comedian Victor Borge said during his one-man show, "with your permission or maybe entirely without it," I am going to revive that column for this issue of the Dispatch. I have very definite opinions on the upcoming TCA Bylaws proposal. I ask you to read what follows. I am prepared to answer any questions that you might have.

I first saw the insincerity of the signature idea many years ago, when I was allowed into the TTOS and LCCA. Both applications to these groups were picked up at a train meet in Hamburg, PA in the summer of 1976. I had just joined the TCA and as I walked through the hall of trains in Hamburg, I picked up applications to both the TTOS and LCCA. They were already signed by members, none of whom did I know nor did they know me. I thought this to be rather lax, since I had to know and have vouch for me, two TCA members.

Now, let's fast forward to when I was the Chairman of the TCA Membership Committee. I was adamant that a TCA application didn't need two signatures -- it needed four or more! A very serious case of fraud and deceit surfaced in Northern NJ. A TCA member had defrauded some dozen members through an ad he had placed in the National Headquarters News. Trying to locate him became a major problem. The USPS couldn't help, nor could the local police in Passaic County, NJ. I was at a real dead end, and these members were out close to \$10,000 as a result of an ad which ran in our publication. As a last resort, I had his application to join TCA located at the NBO in Strasburg and proceeded to contact the two members who had "vouched" for his good character. Call me naive, stupid or whatever, but I was totally shocked when both men were unable to help me. They said that at a meet in Garfield, NJ, they had been asked to sign an application for this man, so they did. They did not know him, and knowingly had never seen or heard from him again. "Hmmm," I thought, "what was the purpose of those signatures anyway?" I then began paying close attention to people who were joining TCA. I found out that at YORK, if someone wished to join the TCA at the Registration desk, it was as easy as getting the person doing the registering, usually the TCA Secretary, to sign on one line and finding another member nearby who would sign on the other. Neither of the signatories knew a thing about the "good character" of the new member.

While I was on the BOD, a motion was passed to allow new members to apply through their Division, but at the same time it withdrew the Division's previous right of investigation of the new person. The Division Secretary was now required to send the application of the new member directly to the NBO. A few years later, even that procedure was streamlined, so that all applications, after obtaining the signatures, would be sent directly to the NBO. The NBO would then notify the Division Secretary that a new member from that Division had applied for TCA membership and that that person should be contacted immediately by the Division. In short, a person joining the Desert Division (for instance) needed only to get two TCA signatures from any TCA member to become a member. Those signatures did not even need to come from anyone in the Desert Division. Aside from the two signatures, there was no requirement to become a member other than to have the correct amount of money to pay the dues. One thing did remain constant, however. That was that the probationary members name and address would be published in the National Headquarters News. That is done so that the membership can check who is joining and if they have had a "problem" with this prospective member, lodge a complaint. The problem with that is that it takes 3 such complaints to even begin an investigation. In my five years as Membership Chairman thousands of people joined the TCA. I can remember but two who were complained about, and only one of those was found to be sufficient enough to deny membership to.

Since the signature requirement really did nothing but keep people out, as President-elect I penned a motion to put before the BOD which would point out the lack of importance of the 2 signatures in today's time and age. This was done two years after a previous President had presented a motion to reduce the requirement of signatures to one. Needless to say, both his motion and mine were overwhelmingly defeated. What amazed me was that many of the people voting against the motion were persons I knew for a fact had signed applications for persons whom they did not know from "Adam." I had to ask myself, what was their reason for voting "no?" Tradition??? In Pittsburgh, this past June, that same motion was again presented for consideration. And again, it was defeated, but not as overwhelmingly as before. Instead of 26 - 1, this year it was 14 - 11. Then came the Manufacturers Forum discussion about the Two Signatures. Eventually the current motion (essentially the same one as was voted down by the BOD) came to the floor during the Membership Meeting in Pittsburgh. When the members in the audience had an opportunity to vote, the motion passed. That is where we are at the moment. We are free to discuss all of its "pros and cons."

During my year as the TCA President (2000) our membership did reach what I think was its highest number ever, somewhere close to 33,000 members. From someone, and I do not remember who, I was given a statistic which said that roughly 80% of our members were primarily interested in what is known as "tinplate." To me that means persons who are basically interested in Lionel, Ives, American Flyer, Marx, Thomas, KMT/AMT, Unique Art, all the pre & post war toy trains larger than HO gauge, plus all of the contemporary O, Standard, G and S gauge manufacturers of toy trains. If that figure is even close to correct, then some 26,400 of our members are Tinplate prone. CTT (also primarily Tinplate oriented) has a circulation of somewhere between 70 and 80,000 per issue. If we take the lower number as more accurate, then that would mean that there are about 44,000 persons out there in "Train Land" who are NOT members of the TCA. The question then becomes "why not?" A huge assumption has to be that they don't know about the TCA. Our TCA ads in the CTT have not



generated a big response to getting new members, so there has to be another reason. Yes, some people are just NOT joiners - of any organization. But probably the difficulty of getting the two signatures must be a contributing factor.

If one lives on the East Coast, particularly in the Northeast, getting those signatures is no big deal. I lived until 1988 in NJ, just outside of Philadelphia. On any given weekend I could stay around locally and go to at least 2-3 train meets, or if I wanted to visit friends in the Washington, DC area, I could hit probably 4 meets. If I wanted to go north, I would plan a trip to visit my parents in Morristown, NJ and be able to not only go to about 6-7 shows on the weekend, but also visit some enormous train stores in the New York Metropolitan Area. Anyone who said they couldn't get two signatures and who lived in these areas, either wasn't trying very hard or they were extremely shy about speaking with new people. Since moving to the other side of the country, I know for a fact that such is not the case. States like Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Colorado, and in some cases, California, have enormous distances between population centers, and not every city/town has a convenient Train Store. As an example, in the 5th largest population venue in the USA, Phoenix, AZ, we have a grand total of TWO train stores and neither of them is located in Phoenix proper. Both are reasonably difficult to locate, and one even has limited hours of operation. The next closest Train Store is two hours south of the Phoenix area in Tucson, and again, it is difficult to find. While all will willingly sign TCA applications, most people will not make the effort to try and go out of their way to find these stores. I suspect that same scenario is true in some of the other non-populated parts of the USA, most especially now with the cost of fuel being so high.

So, what exactly does the two-signature requirement accomplish, in reference to a TCA new member application? As I see it, nothing positive. It is an intimidating tool to keep people away and set up the false premise that the TCA is "an elitist organization" who will only allow in new members, IF they are approved by two current members. Since a person can come to York and have two perfect strangers sign their application (and now, you can even do that at TCA Conventions - another "sacred cow" that has bitten the dust) what, pray tell, is this continued requirement accomplishing? I propose to you that it is serving absolutely no purpose at all. It gets in the way of persons wishing to join and not willing to approach a total stranger for the required signature. (Psychologists tell us that people do not wish to put themselves in a position of being "rejected").

Let us assume that the two-signature requirement goes away. How will that impact TCA's membership? First of all it should increase, which is good. Will it allow an influx of "undesirable" people into the Association? No more than currently enter. We have, unlike all of the other clubs, a very active committee called the Membership Committee which investigates all claims of dubious transactions between members. Please note, that in EVERY one of those complaints against a member, THE member being complained about for doing something "not so nice" became a member of the TCA by getting the required TWO SIGNATURES. This means that the signatories either thought the person was worthy of a TCA membership or they signed the application rather haphazardly, without knowing the person. In either event, those two signatures allowed the person to join the TCA. (Remember my example of the man in Northern New Jersey).

The one thing which will NOT change, with or without the two signatures, is that the Probationary Members name and address will be printed in the National Headquarters News for the next year, or at least a good part of it. Many people say that the only things which they read in the National Headquarters News are the Buy, Sell & Trade Ads. If that is so, then they are giving up their right to know about what is going on in the TCA, which includes a listing of all prospective NEW members. If "John Doe" from "Anywhere, USA" has applied for membership and YOU know that this person has committed some bad acts regarding Toy Trains, then it is your responsibility to contact the Chairman of the Membership Committee and let your concern be known. As I have pointed out, getting two signatures has not kept out the "bad apples," and they even slipped through the Probationary period without being detected. If members are not going to supervise their own "new member list," then do not blame the officers or Bylaws for allowing less than ethical persons into the Association. An application blank cannot tell provide any clues about the integrity or "sterling intentions" of an applicant. Our current members MUST become much more involved in the day-to-day activities of the TCA and help police the organization.

I hope this dissertation has provided some insight into why I support the current motion to eliminate the requirement of two signatures on a TCA application. In short, the original need for having such a regulation has long ago disappeared. Members seemingly sign applications for anyone, without regard for knowing or vouching for them, thus voiding the reason for the signature requirements' original intent from the early days of TCA. Other persons are unable to get signatures, and thus we lose them as members forever.

All membership applications are now handled by the NBO, as the Division's part in serving as a "clearing house" has long ago been taken away. Thus, the two-signature requirement is totally irrelevant and unnecessary. It only serves to discourage persons unable or unwilling to pursue them, from joining the TCA. Finally, by allowing persons to join the TCA at Major Meets and Conventions (by having total strangers sign their applications) says to me that even the BOD, in approving or allowing such methods to occur, realizes that the two-signature requirement is no longer a relevant or valid item. A "Positive" aspect during the report in Pittsburgh about our membership numbers, was that about 40 new members had joined the TCA at the Convention. I ask, did the persons who signed those Probationary Members Applications really know anything about these people? A rhetorical question to be sure, but I think most of us can fill in the answer to it. Thank you for reading this. I hope you agree with me and that you will vote accordingly.

## YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The Bylaws Committee, chaired by Keith Swett, has proposed the following changes to the current Desert Division Bylaws. Please compare the items below with your copy of our current Bylaws. Copies of the current Bylaws will be available at the next two Division Meets for your perusal and comparison. These revisions will be published in this and the next two issues of the newsletter, then be included on the ballot for your approval in November. What appears below allows for a group of members to petition for Chapter status. It also allows the Division to have a Media/Relations Chairperson.

## PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES

*Change Article II Section I to Article II Section 1A.*

Add sections B and C to read as follows:

*B. A Chapter may be formed by filing a petition to the Desert Division Board of Directors with the geographic boundary, proposed name, and 25 signatures pledging membership as outlined in Article II Section 1A.*

*C. Final approval of the petition for Chapter formation resides with the Desert Division Board of Directors.*

Change Article III Section 3 as follows:

Add the words "all Chapter officers" so that Section B reads as follows:

*B. The terms of office for the Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Directors, and all Chapter officers shall be for one calendar year.*

Reletter "C" to "D"

Reletter "D" to "E"

Reletter "E" to "F"

Insert a new section "C" as follows:

*C. The elected President of a Chapter becomes a Director on the Desert Division Board of Directors.*

Article VII – Add a new Section 3 as follows:

*A Media Relations Chairperson shall be appointed by the President for a one-year term. He/She shall promote the growth of the Division through exposure of meets, events, and activities.*

## IN MEMORIAM

It is with deep regret that we must announce that Desert Division member Ray Cripps has passed away. He loved trains and train collectors to the end. Our heartfelt condolences go out to Lori and the rest of Ray's family at this time of grief.

We were also saddened to learn that John Craft's wife died after a long bout with cancer. Our sincerest sympathies to John and his family.



# Desert



# Division

## NO CHILDHOOD SHOULD BE WITHOUT A TRAIN

### KIDS CLUB NEWS

By Rob Davis, John Huber, and Tom Plies

Kids attending the July 10 Meet were Nathaniel Davis, Allison and Mark Huber. Birthday boy Mark was presented with a Santa Fe HO train set and a big birthday cookie, which he shared with his friends and co-chairs. He enjoyed the off-key singing of "Happy Birthday" and also picked from the grab bag. Happy Birthday, Mark.

Do you want to enroll someone "FREE" between the ages of 4 through 18 in the Kids Club? Use the form below. Give it to one of the Kids Club Chairs at the Meet on June 12, and we will see to it that it is sent on to the TCA National Business Office.



Mark Huber's  
Birthday Party

Left: Allison Huber, Rob Davis behind his son Nathaniel, John Huber behind Mark, Tom Plies, and Mary Jo Huber.

Right: Mark Huber (center) shares his birthday cookie with friends and Kids Club Co-Chairs.



### Kid's Club Registration Form

PLEASE PRINT

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

### SPONSOR INFORMATION

Sponsor Name \_\_\_\_\_ TCA No. \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Kid's Club Member \_\_\_\_\_

## TRAVELS TO THE 50<sup>th</sup> TCA NATIONAL CONVENTION

by Gordon Wilson TCA 76-10233

What a trip! Since moving to Arizona, we have driven to all but one TCA Convention. That one was in Atlanta, when we rode Amtrak. That was a mistake we will never repeat again. This year we left Arizona on May 28 and some 8,240 miles and 16 states later, we returned late on the evening of July 3, 2004.

Needless to say, by driving, we are able to stop, go, visit or not visit things along the way. One of the really great things about northern Arizona and New Mexico is that the railroad more or less parallels Interstate 40, from Holbrook all the way to Tucumcari. Tucumcari, New Mexico, is a town made up primarily of motels, from "bare bones" to luxury. While the main lines of the BNSF and UP continue east toward Amarillo, Texas, a major spur at Tucumcari takes a left hand turn and heads northeast toward Wichita, Kansas. Coincidentally, that is how we were going also. Across New Mexico, the Texas and Oklahoma panhandles, and into Liberal, Kansas, the trains continue unabated. The loads change from auto carriers and trucks to grain hoppers, as those large grain elevators dot the horizon in a never-ending pattern. There are three big highlights in Liberal. One is the display dedicated to Dorothy, Toto, and the Wizard of Oz. There is a world-class air museum with an emphasis on the planes of WW II. The final attraction is an antique mall on US 54. I have never been disappointed in finding toy trains and related items at this site. It is on the east side of Liberal and very hard to miss. Plan to spend at least an hour.

In Wichita, you can indulge yourself with a wonderful Railroad Museum at the former AT&SF station/yards in the restored downtown area. Not too far away is an extremely interesting museum devoted entirely to Coleman lamps and camping equipment dating back more than a century. A bit further from the railway tracks is something one would NEVER expect to see in Kansas. Would you believe the "America" and the America's Cup? A boathouse on the Arkansas River has been restored by KOCH Industries and turned into a free exhibit dedicated to the America's Cup Yacht Racing Series.

Leaving Kansas, our next stop would be at the Missouri Museum of Transportation just southwest of St. Louis. Here is everything from a super customized car of Bobby Darin to General Motors Turbo Locomotive, made for the Rock Island Railroad. A trolley serves as a people mover around the expansive grounds. There is a real F-3, the prototype developed by GM; a Camelback loco from

the Lackawanna; one of the last 7 Big Boys and the last articulated steam engine made at the N&W shops in the early 1950's. Rolling stock is plentiful and varied and is "rail fan" friendly, allowing you to walk through the interiors of tank and refrigerated cars. Plan to arrive early and stay late. To see and grasp everything, you'll need at least half a day.

From here we headed further east to Louisville and a visit with a former New Jersey neighbor. She is a recent widow and asked me to check out her late husband's toy trains. They will be in the Turkey Meet – an amazing array of Lionel Post War and American Flyer Pre-War O gauge, mostly 3/16 size, plus some Marx and really nice Lionel accessories.

Train wise our next stop was in Cooperstown, NY, known for its National Baseball Hall of Fame. Just south of Cooperstown is a combination excursion and commuter train ride. Because Cooperstown, a very small town, has limited parking and there are many baseball fans, this train, "The Cooperstown and Charlotte Valley," will move people to and from Cooperstown on really busy days. It is a scenic and smooth 15-minute ride pulled by one of several diesel locomotives. The passenger cars are "bare bones," apparently suffering from a lack of funds to make them really first class.

Just northeast of Troy, NY, is the Erie Canal Village. Around its grounds runs a 2-2-2 steam locomotive and about 6 open air passenger cars. It operates from a very nicely restored, but original, New York Central depot. The trip, well narrated, takes about 20 minutes. To complete the Erie Canal experience, one must take a voyage on the canal in a packet boat pulled by a team of mules.

Continuing northeast toward Lake Placid, you will arrive at Thendara, NY. Here works the Adirondack Scenic Railroad. I was able to talk my way into the cab of the SD-38, while Christie rode in one of the exquisitely restored New York Central Pullman cars. It was a three-hour trip and the engineer, a man named Tom, never stopped talking to me during the whole trip. Quite an experience!

We next went to Lake Placid and while looking for the luge and bobsled rides, accidentally discovered yet another excursion railway which was not listed in the May issue of Trains Magazine. We got lucky, for as we were inquiring about it, it pulled into the Lake Placid Depot (which also serves as an area museum). All I can say is "WOW." The locomotives were two F units, one an F-7 and one an F-9. Their paint scheme was spectacular. There was



no doubt that we'd be on the next trip out, which just happened to be in less than an hour. That time was spent exploring the train and photographing just about every square inch of it. Unfortunately, talk as I might, I couldn't talk my way into the cab of the head-on F-7. That was really an unexpected trip and quite a bonus! As I've said, sometimes you just get lucky.

From here it was on to Vermont and a ferry boat ride across Lake Champlain. The excursion trains in and around Vermont had not yet begun their summer runs, as it was only early June. The next train didn't happen until passing through central New Jersey. It was near Flemington, NJ, and no, it was not Northlandz, the huge model railroad exhibit. This was in Ringoes, NJ, a very small burg just north of US Route 202. There is a delightful excursion railroad called the "Black River and Western," which makes several trips daily between the Ringoes depot and the one at Station Square in Flemington, NJ. If Flemington sounds familiar to you, it should. On many TV game shows, prizes from Flemington Furs have been offered and it was in Flemington that the famous Lindberg baby kidnapping trial was held some 70 years ago.

Amazingly there were no more real trains for nearly a week. We did, however, pay a visit to long-time friend and Desert Division member Rich Bimmer. Rich operates Antique Trains in Turnersville, NJ, and has been a great supporter of the Division with donations for our Turkey Meet and other activities. Today was no different, as Rich handed me an MTH Log Loader (looks like an old AF) for our use in an upcoming raffle or as a prize at the Turkey Meet.

Actually, the next trains did come earlier than a week later. A flea market in Lambertville, NJ, has always been a great source of toy trains for us, and this time was no different. Lionel, K-Line, and American Flyer were there in abundance and some pieces have made their way back to Arizona.

Now, back to the real trains. The last surviving narrow gauge railroad east of the Mississippi River is in Rockhill Furnace, PA. The East Broadtop Line runs a steam loco and a long string of restored wooden Pullman cars along a picturesque river valley. Across the street from the train ride is the Rockhill Trolley Museum. Following a 20 minute ride in an open air trolley came a visit to the gift shop. What a bonanza! Toy train catalogs were for sale and at prices you simply could not believe! I had to pinch myself to see if I were not dreaming. Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus.

Obviously next came the TCA Convention, where trains were the norm. A Marx Train Museum in nearby Wheeling, WV, was a real eye opener and the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum was equally wonderful. Station Square in downtown Pittsburgh provided an endless array of CSX freights, plus a spectacular restaurant in an old PL&E passenger terminal. It was called the Grand Concourse and is a real "don't miss" stop.

Following the Convention, it was "let's get home" time. A stop in Cincinnati took us by the famous Union Station. A trip to the ballpark gained me a foul ball hit by Barry Larkin. Branson, MO, is known for its variety of shows, but the best thing by far was the Branson Scenic Railroad, pulled by yet another F-7. For the two-hour trip, we rode in a former Burlington Zephyr Vista Dome Car, one of 3 such cars on this train. Another "Don't miss!"

Now on the real road home, we once again entered northern New Mexico, and, as when we left some five weeks earlier, we paralleled endless strings of BSNF and UP consists. It made us feel right at home to learn that nothing had changed in the desert, except a nasty forest fire near Payson. We have many fond memories from the trip East, some of which you have just read about and shared.

For your culinary information, here are some restaurants you should (or should not) investigate:

1. Rudy's Country Store and BBQ, Albuquerque, NM
2. Amarillo Grill, Wichita, KS
3. Triple E Barbeque, Mt. Vernon, IL
4. French Lick Spring Bistro, French Lick, IN
5. Stan's Fish Sandwich, Louisville, KY
6. Lake Front Restaurant, Cooperstown, NY
7. Old Mill, Old Forge, NY
8. Boat House, Lake Placid, NY
9. Perry's Fish House, S. Burlington, VT
10. Ferretti's, Clifton Park, NY
11. The Station, Mountain Lakes, NJ
12. Cambiotti's Tomato Pie, Landing, NJ
13. Reservoir Tavern, Boonton, NJ – AVOID, WORST SERVICE EVER, on any trip!!
14. Captain Jack's, Ocean Grove, NJ
15. Ritz Seafood, Voorhees, NJ
16. The Full Moon, Lambertville, NJ
17. Hillside Café, Yocumtown, PA
18. The Grand Concourse, Pittsburgh, PA
19. Jay's Seafood House, Dayton, OH
20. Doe Run Inn, Brandenburg, KY
21. Hammett House, Claremore, OK
22. Hoffbrau Steaks, Amarillo, TX
23. El Nido, Tesuque, NM
24. Tonto Verde Country Club, Tonto Verde, AZ