

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*

ARIZONA • NEW MEXICO • WEST TEXAS



Volume 39, No. 10

Visit our web site – [www.tcadd.org](http://www.tcadd.org)

Winter, 2009

## “SLEIGH BELLS RING” Holiday Party – 2009

Once again the Holiday Party was a huge success. The Marriott staged a magnificent buffet; the club had raffle prizes and centerpieces galore; the members enjoyed the camaraderie that is a trademark of the Desert Division. After everyone had eaten all the goodies, from salad to entrée to dessert, the fun began.

Each child received an age appropriate gift, every member was handed a paper bag with a fork lift inside, and each spouse/significant other received a Hallmark snowman ornament. Janet Mattern was in charge of raffle tickets, and she did a spectacular job of selling them to all the attendees. Prizes were arranged into categories, with some appropriate for children, some designed more for spouses, and others of interest to all members. As soon as all the raffle prizes were awarded, Peter Atonna, auctioneer extraordinaire, began plying his trademark skills. First went extra member gifts, then spouse gifts, and finally centerpieces. Each table had a Santa, a snowman, or an angel, with extras on a side table for all to view. One unusual piece was a Santa on a tricycle; another was a donation of a Department 56 gift basket.

Each club announced the results of their elections. The Desert Division Board of Directors is as follows: President, Jonathan Peiffer; Vice-President, Bob Johnston; Secretary, Fred Hunter; Treasurer, Bob Herman, and Directors Ralph Treichel and Marty Wik. Rio Grande Chapter President Greg Palmer remains as a Director, and Katie Elgar will serve as a Past-President Director during 2010.

Door Prizes were next, with Laurel Allen winning from amongst the women and Dwane Turner being the lucky recipient from among the men. Last was the awarding of the “Member of the Year” Award, to a most surprised Christie Wilson.

Everyone went away filled with good food, at least one gift or prize, a happy smile, and most important, that wonderful holiday spirit which characterizes this time of the year.



Everyone enjoys a good buffet.



Auction pieces for any budget.



Three of six raffle prize lots.



2009  
Holiday Party  
Decorations  
Provided by the  
Marriott Hotel.

## COMING UP . . .

**JANUARY 9, 2010 – Regular Division Meet – Phoenix, AZ – 9 AM**

**JANUARY 16 – Rio Grande Chapter Meet – Albuquerque, NM – 10 AM**

**JANUARY 16 – 44<sup>th</sup> Biannual Winter Toy Train Show & Meet – Tucson, AZ – 9 AM**

**FEBRUARY 13 – Regular Division Meet – Phoenix, AZ – 9 AM**

**FEBRUARY 20 – Rio Grande Chapter Meet – Albuquerque, NM – 10 AM**

**MARCH 13 – Regular Division Meet – Phoenix, AZ – 9 AM**

**MARCH 20 – Rio Grande Chapter Meet – Albuquerque, NM – 10 AM**

## ASK AND YE SHALL RECEIVE Turkey Meet – 2009

The members of the Desert Division asked for a two-day swap meet, and that is what we had. Never say that the Desert Division Board of Directors doesn't try to please the membership. November 28 and 29, 2009, turned out to be one of the best attended Turkey Meets in recent memory. The gate on Saturday was phenomenal, and this without the promised television coverage. Sunday morning saw the Turkey Meet featured on Channel 12 from 8 to 10, with trains running, interviews, and even a visit from "The Train Doctor," Gerry Klei.

Tables filled with trains for sale and layouts in every corner of the Mesa Convention Center drew large crowds. Many dealers sold out on Saturday and had to bring more merchandise on Sunday. Trains were literally "running" out the door. The huge raffle prize selection and an enthusiastic vendor encouraged raffle sales topping all expectations. Between record attendance and raffle ticket sales, the Division hosted a very successful Turkey Meet, 2009.

It all began last winter when Fred Hunter negotiated a contract with the Mesa Convention Center for a two-day hall rental for the weekend after Thanksgiving, plus the adjoining Marriott Hotel for the Holiday Party just one week later. Chris Allen and Gordon Wilson agreed to co-chair the event, which took a great deal of coordination amongst them and the various club members. Fred and Jonathan Peiffer designed fliers and \$1 off coupons for distribution at the "Beat the Heat" Meet in Prescott and Railfair at the McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park in Scottsdale. Jonathan also designed our posters, registration forms, fliers, and tri-folds, the latter being sent to everyone on our Turkey Meet mailing list, as well as TCA members in California, Arizona, and New Mexico. Ads were placed in Classic Toy Trains and Model Railroader, just to name a few. The Convention Center folks helped with advertising by placing our event in their Calendar of Events and on their electronic billboard on the street. Even the Arizona Republic got us into their Calendar section this year. Christie Wilson procured a record number of raffle prizes, not the least of which was a pass for two on the Verde Canyon Railroad. Art Triant contacted the Arizona Rangers for us, and Mitch Kuhn designed exhibitor buttons which incorporated the 2009 TCA National Convention logo along with the familiar turkey.

Set up on Wednesday, November 25, brought out many volunteers (Ken Barnes, Terry Bunish, Dallas Dixon, Katie and Ruth Elgar, Terry and Jan Fagan, Richard Gayle, Bob Herman, Ron Kuhn, Jonathan Peiffer, Art Triant, Dwane Turner, John Wiley, and Gordon Wilson), plus a few vendors with multiple tables were able to get a head start on Saturday by leaving their wares in the hall on Wednesday. Bob Herman, ably assisted by Bev Locke, had Registration under control on Saturday morning. All the vendors were in and ready to open by 9 AM. At the Registration Table, we had the able assistance of Barb Lautazi, Bev Locke, and Diane Martin, among others. Brad Martin used his position at the Registration Table to urge attendees to purchase raffle tickets. It worked out perfectly. He was also able to sell a few Convention Store left-overs.

Always a trial for Christie Wilson is the sale of the remaining Hudson Raffle tickets. With about 30 remaining on Saturday, and about 12 on Sunday, she scurried from table to table, cajoling members to "buy the last one." Brad Martin bought the winning ticket on Sunday afternoon. He placed it in the can and an anonymous child pulled his ticket as the winner of the 1964 Hudson. Now all he needed was a display case. Good thing Terry Fagan was still in the hall with just the right size case.

At this point, Turkey Meet 2009 is just a memory, another feather in the cap of the Desert Division.

Gerry Klei fixed your trains for free.

Kids loved the user-friendly layouts.

One of three tables of raffle prizes.



## PRESIDENTS' MESSAGES

Greetings!

It's that wonderful time of the year when, even if you don't have room for a layout, there may be an opportunity to run trains somewhere. Remember that playing with trains can be very relaxing, and we all can use some relaxing time in our lives. Take it easy; play with trains!

We have had a great Fall. A successful Turkey Meet, which ran for two days in November this year. We had a lot of people through the doors and enjoying at the operating layouts as well. Vendors have been sent a survey to try to plan for next year. The Holiday Party in December went well! Good food, Good folks, Good times! Sorry if you weren't able to make it to the party.

We also have Boyd's Bears available for purchase at \$20.00, as well as 2010 TCA Calendars with monthly pictures of TCA members' layouts. Great gift ideas!

Remember that we have changed our meeting location. It will be at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, 1500 W. Maryland, located at the NW intersection of W. Maryland and 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Maryland is between Bethany Home and Glendale, North of the Christown-Spectrum Mall). We will be meeting in Burns Hall. Hope to see you there on January 9, 2010. Bring a friend with you to the meet!

Hopefully, you've placed your order for Convention Cars for the 2010 TCA National Convention in Baltimore. Remember the ordering deadline is December 31, 2009. Also don't forget to make your room reservations for the Convention early in January.

The Desert Division won a grand prize of \$500.00 in the 2008-2009 TCA WIN BIG!! Membership Drive contest. Desert Division had the highest percentage of new members recruited during the drive with a 7.92% increase. Good job and **Congratulations** to all those who helped recruit new members! Remember the hobby grows when you share your enjoyment of trains with someone else!

After four years serving as your Division President, I now turn the reins over to your newly elected president, Jonathan Peiffer. I have had a lot of fun working with each and every one of you and I appreciate your willingness to help me by volunteering to help out as many of you did. The Desert Division is a great division. But it runs smoothly with the assistance of so many helpers. Keep up the good work! Thank you so very much. Happy trains!



### FROM THE INCOMING PRESIDENT

It's hard to believe that 2010 is nearly upon us already! In 2009 we pulled off an amazing National Convention and the most successful Turkey Meet in the last four years. This would not have been possible without the careful leadership of those who have served in this role before me and I want to thank everyone who has provided insight, guidance, and support. I'll certainly continue to need it in the years ahead! Before deciding to run for this office, some careful thought went into some goals that we might work through in the coming year:

**A Public Hobby:** We have members collecting and operating in more scales and ways than at any time in the past. It's hard to believe, but even N gauge turns 50 in 2010. Is there a place for new members who collect these now officially antique trains? 2009 showed us more than ever that public events are the face of our organization and a growing number of members are making the effort to get out to events with trains, modules, and literature to promote the Division, the TCA, and the hobby. Let's work on growing the public side to TCA in the coming year.

**Cooperation:** Many of us are members of more than one club and often working towards the same goals. How can we retain our individuality while working together to the benefit of all the various groups promoting this hobby?

**Kids Club:** When was the last time you saw a child attend a Division meet? What can we do to change that? It is time to rethink how we work with children in our community to bring a wonderful, healthy and life-long hobby into their lives.

As your incoming president, I am looking forward to working with all of you to keep Desert Division the most active Division within the TCA. I do not come into this position with all the answers, nor even all of the questions. The most important question is always the one that you have not asked yet. Trains are best enjoyed as a team sport. Together, we can make 2010 another memorable year of celebration of the greatest of hobbies and most importantly have fun while doing it! See you all in January.





## RIO GRANDE CHAPTER NEWS

by Gregory Palmer TCA#94-39039

The TCA Rio Grande Chapter has just finished its fourth annual Pumpkin Meet, Toy Train Show and Swap Meet. In these past four years, the Rio Grande Chapter has grown from a group of just 18 members, and a Pumpkin Meet with 20 tables, to a Chapter with 40 members and a Pumpkin Meet held at a large Hotel venue, and 54 sellers' tables. The 2009 Pumpkin Meet was the largest ever. The Sheraton Albuquerque Uptown Hotel was a wonderful venue. We are shooting for this same Hotel for next year's Pumpkin Meet. We also had a wonderful turnout from all over the Southwest. Gordon and Christie Wilson and Tom and Beth Stange represented the Phoenix, Arizona area. We had a table seller from the Denver area, Col. John Pease, plus table sellers from all over the state of New Mexico, including Las Cruces. We also had a group of Rocky Mountain Division members drive all the way from the Denver area to attend the Pumpkin Meet. Being 7 hours away from both Phoenix, AZ and Denver, CO, the Pumpkin Meet is in the center. Soon we will be meeting with the Sheraton Uptown Hotel personnel to see what dates are available in the fall of 2010.



Table sellers and modules highlighted the 2009 Rio Grande Pumpkin Meet.



The Chapter will have total attendance numbers and other financial information at the January 16th Regular Chapter Meet. Please make sure you attend, because planning for the 2010 Pumpkin Meet starts at this Chapter Meet. I would like to thank the entire TCA Rio Grande Chapter, and the Board of Directors of the Desert Division TCA for their help with our 2009 Pumpkin Meet. However I want to single out several people who gave special help to the Chapter. Bill Spofford was the 2009 Pumpkin Meet Chair, and without him we would not have been able to have the contract at the Sheraton Albuquerque Uptown Hotel. A big thank you to the door crew, Scott Eckstein, David Nycz, Everett Hagan, Carl Soderberg, Marlin Janzen, and Don Kuster. Another big thanks to all who donated prizes. Scott and Elaine Eckstein, Trains West Inc., Carl Cataline-The Train Room, MBJ Lock and Hobbies, Charles Incendio, and Gordon and Christie Wilson. We also had a great response from the TTOS New Mexico Division and their Module Group, and once again Jon Spargo and James Jackson brought their Kids-Friendly Module. If I missed anyone, please call me and I will put you in the next issue of the Chapter News. The winner of the Grand Raffle Prize, the Lionel Bloomingdales Starter Set was Jon Spargo. Guess where that wonderful set is headed. Yes, to the TCA Rio Grande Chapter's Trains for Kids Project in Socorro, New Mexico. Christie Wilson came to Albuquerque with the Desert Division's Lionel Hudson Raffle Tickets. She sold 12 tickets so a drawing for a \$25.00 prize was held and Jon Spargo won the \$25.00 prize. I was also very proud of the Rio Grande Chapter. Various members donated Raffle Prizes to the Division to support the 2009 Turkey Meet in Mesa, Arizona. Christie Wilson will give everyone who donated Turkey Meet Raffle Prizes a thank you in this issue of the Dispatch. We only have 40 members, but everyone in the Chapter is willing to help each other have fun and succeed as a Chapter and Division.

Also at the January 16th Chapter Meet, the Rio Grande Chapter will hold its election of Officers and Directors. The following members are running for Office:

President: Gregory Palmer

Vice President: George Swajian

Secretary: Scott Eckstein

Treasurer: Bill Harris

Directors at Large: Carl Cataline, Art Lites, Jon Spargo

If any other Chapter members want to run for any office, please come to the Chapter Meet on January 16, 2010, at the Sombra Del Monte Church, at 2528 Utah N.E., Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Regular Meet on January 16th needs some show and tell items for our Education Segment. Bring items you are interested in, interested to learn more about, or maybe items you bought at the 2009 Pumpkin Meet. Just bring something. Everything you are interested in is fun for the Chapter to view and learn about. We are also looking for 2010 after Meet Activities. If you have a collection, layout, or even a skill to share, please let me know ASAP. We had a super response to the Toy Train Repair Seminar after the September Meet. We have had requests to have more Seminars after Meets such as Scenery, Layout Building, toy Train Restoration-Cleaning, and value Appraisals. Come to the January 16th Meet with ideas and let us brain storm. As you can see the Rio Grande Chapter is very busy. We need everyone's help in the coming year. Please bring your ideas to the January 16th Meet at the Sombra Del Monte Church at 2528 Utah N.E. in Albuquerque, NM at 10:00AM. Last but not least I would like to welcome new Chapter and Division member John Harnisch from Santa Fe, New Mexico. Welcome to the TCA Rio Grande Chapter. See you all at the January 16th Meet, and I hope you all have a great Holiday season.

## THE RIO GRANDE OVERFLOWETH

by Gordon Wilson, TCA 76-10233

The name of our New Mexico Chapter's special fall meet, the Pumpkin Meet, makes it ripe for all manner of clichés. Just as the Turkey Meet's name makes reference to Thanksgiving, this meet was held on All Saints Day and was, after all, the day after Halloween – Trick or Treat anyone? As one who was there, there were no tricks, only treats. The meet was well advertised, utilizing electronic, print, and telecast media. A plethora of raffle prizes adorned two large tables at the front of a spacious ballroom in one of Albuquerque's luxury hotels – the Sheraton Uptown. The Desert Division was provided a table to display and sell Convention items, such as Copper Hoppers, hats, shirts, Uncle Sam figures, and Celebrate Arizona cars. Also 773 Hudson Raffle tickets were available for sale.

Joining Christie and me from Arizona were Tom and Beth Stange, who planned to stay past the meet and visit the homes of members Dale Schafer and Greg Palmer before returning home the next day. We were pleased to also meet several TCA members who ventured down to Albuquerque from the Denver/Rocky Mountain Division area. I didn't physically count the number of sales tables, but I did note that there were no empty spaces. I would guesstimate that there were approximately 75 sales tables, plus several very unique operating layouts, which kept the small fry (of all ages) amused and busy. Jon Spargo's layout, which adorned our Convention in July, held me and my camera captive for quite some time. Jon even offered to "stage" some scenes for me, had I wished. Appropriately enough, Jon won the Lionel Bloomingdale's Starter set, which he donated to the Kids Club, and then also was the recipient of the special \$25 prize given as a stimulus for Rio Grande members (in excess of 10) to buy Hudson Raffle tickets on November 1.



No wonder the Middle School kids love Jon Spargo. His operating layout is nothing short of "mesmerizing."

Not only were the vendors all very friendly and eager to sell trains, but they were also generous to the Desert Division. They purchased 12 of our Hudson Raffle tickets during the Meet, and offered many train items to us to take back to The Valley of the Sun. We came away from the Pumpkin Meet with 15 donated raffle prizes for our Turkey Meet and/or other events.

I will express my personal thanks to several members who came to my aid as we were preparing to leave the meet. I was busy moving from one side of my vehicle to another when suddenly, my hand cart moved into my path, knocking me head over heels onto the ground, causing a great deal of injury and discomfort – my body doesn't do well against macadam and cement, causing me to make a trip to the doctor's office the next day for evaluation and x-rays (nothing broken, just bruised and sore). Anyhow, several of the vendors saw it happen and came to my aid. They offered to take me to the Emergency Room (which I refused) but then were insistent on helping Christie and me load the remainder of my boxes into my vehicle. I am truly grateful for their concern and assistance.

A note to travelers from Phoenix to Albuquerque, if you choose to use the Bee Line Highway, Route 87, it will take you to the town of Winslow. In Winslow is one of the remaining Harvey Houses, La Posada, which was an integral part of the Santa Fe Railroad from the '20's through the '50's. La Posada has been restored to its previous elegance, including a magnificent restaurant. It is situated a scant 70 feet from the main line of the BNSF Railroad. The room we prefer is #101, named for President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. It is the closest room to the trains and has a door which opens directly onto the main outdoor patio. Should you take the other route from Payson, it will bring you to Holbrook via the Petrified Forest National Park and one of the last original Route 66 motels – called the Wigwam Motel, a series of 14 units all in the shape of Native American tepees, but with very comfortable contemporary bedding. Just half a block away is a wonderful Steak House which, unlike Ruth Chris's, doesn't require a second mortgage for a meal.

Obviously on Route 40, by going west a few miles from Winslow, you'll come to Meteor Crater, where our moon astronauts did their training. If you are a National Park "buff," heading east there are 6 National Historical Sites and Monuments just a stone's throw off I-40, and all are an integral part of our National Park system. These include the Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site, Petrified Forest National Park, Navajo National Monument, El Malpais National Monument, El Morro National Monument, and Petroglyph National Monument. It wouldn't take much to persuade me to write an article about all of these in a future newsletter.

Finally, in Albuquerque proper are two "don't miss" restaurants, one of which has national prominence. The local one is a 1950's style eatery called The Route 66 Diner. It is located within the grounds of the University of New Mexico. The one with national significance is a Barbeque "joint" located about ¼ mile north of Exit 160 off of I-40. It is called Rudy's and it seems to be busy no matter what time of day or night you are there. Their piece de resistance is their brisket. Enjoy your next sojourn to Albuquerque, New Mexico.

## WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE?

by Bill Jenkins, TCA #85-22097

Well, maybe it's more than a Lionel Freight Car placed on the closest rail I could find. Maybe there's a story behind it – to me, at least. This fall I've been traveling once a month to Danville, PA, specifically the Geisinger Medical Complex to take continuing education classes. Danville is a hidden little town in rural Pennsylvania, Montour County, about 85 miles from Carlisle and birthplace of Jonathan Peiffer, our Desert Division incoming President.



Basically, one has to travel north following the wide Susquehanna River for quite a way. I had briefly noted a single track railroad line paralleling my road east from the river in the final leg of the journey. On an early October morning, I began to ponder this line in more detail. I felt it probably was an old line of the Pennsy coming out of Northumberland. Back home, perusal of some vintage railroad maps surprised me, though. This was the Lackawanna Railroad, a single line coming due west from Scranton and ending at the Susquehanna at Northumberland, where it joined the Pennsy. Wow! This was the farthest point west in Pennsylvania this railroad ever reached. An oddly placed stretch, for sure. A single, lonely line straight to rather far-off Scranton! That gave me an idea.

This month, early in the morning before the drive to November's class, I slipped down to the basement and pulled out my 2420 DL & W work caboose. This is the 1947 Lackawanna version with the OEM searchlight and dark, not light, gray exterior. I always thought this was a very well-made and not all that common piece. Now, if only the weather would cooperate.

Well, it did – nice and sunny. As I was driving, I mused over the fact that, as a kid in western Pennsylvania, I never really knew much about the DL & W, other than I presumed it was somewhere near the state of Delaware. Anyway, when I got to that final stretch and along that lonely line, I knew what I needed. I found it, a dirt grade crossing out in the countryside. The sun was behind me, and the work caboose was, after all these years, on Lackawanna rails for sure. If you look carefully at the other rail, you can see it says "Lackawanna 1919," A nifty mile marker (See photo at right) was also at this crossing. The 210 may be indicating the mileage from its terminal port at Hoboken, New Jersey.

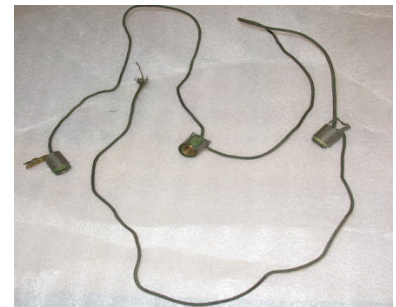


In any case, it was my attempt at some "artistic" photography and personally closed a circle from sixty years ago.

## MY "BOTTOM OF THE BOX" STORY

By Jerry Dzara, TCA #95-42479

I have strayed from the path of W. O. Coleman and H. C. Ives a few times by purchasing Lionel Std. Gauge. One of the last purchases was a group of 180, 181, 182 passenger cars. I received them, looked them over, and put them away, without much thought. A few (OK, four) months later, I decided to run my Lionel # 53 loco with these cars. As I picked up the combine to lube the trucks, I noticed that there was something wrapped up and stuck in the baggage section. I removed the roof for the first time since buying them and saw the object was neither the pink slip to J. L. Cowen's Hispano-Suisa nor a mummified rat, but a bundle of old wire. I removed the wire and discovered that it was a Lionel #217 "Pullman Illuminating Outfit." These Christmas tree light contraptions were made to add lights to coaches before Lionel designed pick up rollers. I'm not very knowledgeable about Lionel, but I believe these are scarce. All in all, it was a nice surprise from the "front of a combine car."



Inside my new combine was a tangled mass of wires. Upon closer inspection, I learned Just what it was – a Lionel #217 "Pullman Illuminating Outfit."



## THE FEATHER TREE

by Gregory Palmer TCA 94-39039

My Sister Mechele always wanted a Christmas Feather Tree. This October while attending the Eastern Division Meet in York, PA, we traveled to Gettysburg, PA, and went to a few antique shops and malls. Just outside of Gettysburg she found a 2-foot Feather Tree. Just in case you do not know what a Feather Tree is, it is the world's first artificial Christmas Tree. They came in many heights, from 2 feet to 6 feet. The Feather Tree is made, as the name implies from Duck, Goose, and Chicken Feathers, then painted green. The limbs are wire so they can bend, and the older ones from the 1880's through the early 1900's had candle holders soldered to the metal limbs. The later ones used snap-on candle holders, and you could use the new electric Christmas Lights on the tree in the 1920's. So, we now have a Feather Tree. We have placed early 1900's Christmas Ornaments on it, as well as original reproduction candles made out of Beeswax, which were made for me by hand in Pennsylvania. I even have an original hand-blown Christmas electric light bulb that lights. This Feather Tree now has a place of honor in the Train Room.

Now I guess you are asking what does a Feather Tree in the Palmers' Train Room have to do with TCA or collecting toy trains. Well, as I looked at the Feather Tree, I began to wonder how many Christmases this Feather Tree has seen in 90 to 100 years. How many children played around it, how many toys and trains ran around the room it was in. Considering that this tree has seen a lot of children and adults playing with toys and trains makes one think. It is proven that everyone needs to play to improve their health. Children as well as adults need play time. As an example, on Christmas Eve, my family and I will be going to Santa Fe, New Mexico, for dinner at the La Fonda, a Fred Harvey House, looking at all the sights of Christmas Eve in one of the oldest cities in the United States.



The Feather Tree on Greg's Layout.

Then we will drive to the Town of Madrid, New Mexico, to look at the Christmas lights, which in the 1920's were world famous. Even Walt Disney used this display of Christmas Lights to invent the magical Light Parade at Disneyland. Then I go home and spend several hours, until about 1:00AM in my Train Room playing with trains and toys. I also might work on repairing trains, for clients, getting them ready for the day after Christmas. With Christmas music playing on a 1940 Detrola AM Radio, I am stress free and I am 6 years old again.

We all need more play time. We all have great things to play with, so invite a Division member or members to come over and play during this season, or anytime. I think we all need to play more, and we have a great Division with tons of play things.

I will be thinking of all of you as I look at the Feather Tree, while I play in my Train Room Christmas Eve.

## WIN BIG

Over a year ago, TCA National announced a membership challenge, where members and divisions could "win big." The goal was to increase TCA membership by about 2000 members within a year. This is essential if we are to remain a vital force among toy train clubs. Now that the program has ended, the Desert Division is proud to announce that we were the recipients of three of these prizes.



First was the announcement that the Desert Division was drawn in a random drawing in the spring. That prize was a \$200 gift certificate to be used in the TCA Museum Store. Katie Elgar and Greg Palmer selected items to be used as raffle prizes for the Division and the Chapter. Next was the Convention, when it was announced that the Desert Division had recruited the largest percentage of new members to that date. Finally, on October 31, 2009, the contest ended. Desert Division had recruited the largest percentage of new members, at 7.92%. We gleaned several nice raffle prizes and our Treasury is now \$500 richer because of the combined efforts of all of our members in this endeavor. Maybe next year we can recruit another 8% or so of new members.

## DUES ARE DUE

It's that time of year again. Check the label on the front of this newsletter. If your label is highlighted in blue, you owe dues. The cost remains \$10 per year for up to 5 years in advance. Please fill out the form on Page 9 of this issue of the Dispatch and mail it along with your check, made payable to TCA – Desert Division, to the address on the bottom of the form. Should you wish to change any of your information in the Division Roster, please fill in the same form, as it will be used to create the roster during the early part of March, 2010.

### DESERT DIVISION BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2010-2011

President:	Jonathan Peiffer	602-561-4131	Directors:	Katie Elgar	623-580-6957
Vice-President:	Bob Johnston	623-582-2110		Greg Palmer	505-898-3840
Secretary:	Fred Hunter	480-947-3639		Ralph Treichel	602-863-6985
Treasurer:	Bob Herman	480-948-2730		Marty Wik	480-488-8625

### BOARD MEETING

The next meeting of the Desert Division Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, January 6, beginning at 7:30 AM at the home of Jonathan and Robyn Peiffer. Members are welcome to attend. Please call 602-561-4131 to be sure there are enough chairs.

## TCA LAYOUT CALENDAR AVAILABLE NOW!

By now you've surely heard how the Desert Division has come up "smelling like roses" financially. The National Convention was a huge success and the Banquet Auction netted us nearly an extra \$10,000. Our fund raisers, while not the success we'd hoped for, have wound up in the black, and most recently, our Division was determined to be the Grand Prize winner in the WIN BIG National Recruitment Contest. We had the largest percentage of increase in membership of any of the 20 TCA Divisions. This brought in an additional \$500 to our treasury.

To give back to our members, the Board has purchased a limited amount of First Edition TCA Toy Train Calendars. These sell for \$12.95 plus \$5.00 for shipping, for a total of \$17.95, if you order them from the TCA headquarters in Strasburg, PA. Until they are gone, we can sell them to you for \$15.00 or two (2) for \$25.00. You can pick them up at our first meet of 2010 on January 9<sup>th</sup>.

What sets this calendar apart from all the other railroad calendars on the market? First and foremost, it has professional photos of 24 TCA members' toy train layouts, including two (2) from our very own Desert Division. Yes, the layouts of Peter Atonna and John Wiley were selected for inclusion in this First Edition of what is a highly desirable TCA collectible.

Here is your opportunity to obtain some really nice quality calendars – one for your train room and one for a gift or to be used elsewhere in your home. In addition to the spectacular photography, scattered throughout are significant dates and happenings in the history of our hobby and the 55 year history of TCA. Fill out the attached form and return it with your check, made payable to the Desert Division TCA. For those of you who would like to have it mailed to you, please add an extra dollar (the Division will add the extra postage) and we'll mail it to you. This is going to be a "break even" project for the Division. We are sure you will be very pleased with this Toy Train Layouts Calendar. Photos for the 2011 calendar are now being accepted for consideration. Perhaps yours might grace one of the months of next year's calendar.

\* \* \* \* \*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of Calendars @ \$15 for 1, \$25 for 2.

\_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed



## DESERT DIVISION REGISTRATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_ TCA No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse's first name \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a check made payable to TCA - Desert Division in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to cover my dues for the next \_\_\_\_\_ (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) years at \$10.00 per year.

The following is a list of categories from the Registration Form representing your preferences in toy trains and accessories. Circle numbers of all categories that apply.

### TRAIN ERA

- 1 PREWAR (1850-1942)
- 2 POSTWAR (1945-1969)
- 3 MODERN (1970-Present)

### GAUGE

- 4 SCALE/ NMRA
- 5 STANDARD
- 6 G or #1
- 7 O or O-27 TINPLATE
- 8 S
- 9 HO
- 10 OO/AMERICAN
- 11 N
- 12 Z
- 13 LIVE STEAM

### MANUFACTURER

- 14 AMERICAN FLYER/GILBERT
- 15 LIONEL/WINNER
- 16 MARX/MARS/ALLSTATE
- 17 IVES
- 18 DORFAN/FANDOR
- 19 MTH
- 20 WILLIAMS
- 21 K-LINE
- 22 AMT/KUSAN
- 23 OTHER - PLEASE SPECIFY
  - 23A BASSETT/LOWKE
  - 23B BING
  - 23C BOUCHER
  - 23D BUB/KARL
  - 23E BUDDY-L
  - 23F CARLISLE & FINCH
  - 23G ELLETREN
  - 23H HAFFNER
  - 23I HOGE
  - 23J HORNBY
  - 23K ISSMAYER
  - 23L LGB
  - 23M MARKLIN
  - 23N METZEL
  - 23O MINI-SCALE

- 23P PHOENIX LTD.
- 23Q PLASTICVILLE
- 23R LITTLETOWN/SKYLINE
- 23S PRIDE LINES
- 23T REA/ARISTO-CRAFT
- 23U RIGHT-O-WAY
- 23V ROKAL
- 23W VOLTAMP
- 23X WEAVER
- 23Y McCOY
- 23Z NATIONWIDE
- 23AA USA TRAINS
- 23BB S-HELPER SERVICE
- 23CC ASTOR
- 23DD FLEISCHMANN
- 23EE CARETTE
- 23FF EASTWOOD AUTOMOBILIA
- 23GG AMERICAN MODELS S GAUGE
- 23HH DOWNS S GAUGE
- 23II COLBER
- 23JJ UNIQUE
- 23KK SAKAI
- 23LL BOWSER
- 23MM T-REPRODUCTIONS

### DO YOU HAVE A LAYOUT?

- 24 YES
- 25 NO

### PERIPHERALS

- 26 FIGURES
- 27 TOYS
- 28 PAPER/BOOKS
- 29 BUILDINGS
- 30 RAILROADIANA

Mail to: **Christie Wilson**, Secretary  
16231 E. Ocotillo Drive  
Fountain Hills, AZ 85268

## ORDER YOUR APACHE BEER CAR NOW

Use the order form on page 11 of this issue of the Dispatch to be sure you get your Desert Division Fundraiser Car, an Atlas production to be out this spring. At the time of this printing, there are fewer than 60 cars left and orders are pouring in from the ads placed in CTT and the National Headquarters News. There is no shipping or tax for members who opt to pick their cars up at a Desert Division Meet. Don't be left out. Order yours today.

## DONORS – THANK YOU

by Christie Wilson, TCA 91-32878

One reason the Turkey Meet and Holiday Party were so successful was the plethora of Raffle Prizes available. I wish to thank everyone who donated any item for either event. The list is long, so if I missed your name, I apologize.

The list of donors for the Turkey Meet included all of the following: An Affair with Trains, Bob Kocher, Proprietor; Burling's Ton of Trains, Ken Burling, Proprietor; Carl Cataline; Country Trains, Jan and Bob Bernier, Proprietors; George Domeny; Bill Harris; Hobby Bench; Hobby Depot, Dick Christ, Proprietor; Scott Horner; Paul Hurford; Charles Incendio; Kalmbach Publishing Company, Carl Swanson, Editor; Vincent Kole; Ron and Mitch Kuhn; Mesa Models, Craig Hallbourg, Proprietor; Bill Miller; Greg Palmer; Mark Piccirillo; Roy's Train World; Art Sena; Bill Spofford; Tom and Beth Stange; George Swajian; Angela Trotta-Thomas; TM Books & Videos; The Train Station, Don Shaw, Proprietor; John Upshur; USA Trains, Charles Ro, Proprietor; Verde Canyon; Doug Waller; Gordon and Christie Wilson.

Additional donations came in for the Holiday Party. Thank you to Jan and Terry Fagan, Loren Hess, Sam McElwee, Wayne Ross, and Kay and Jim Vokac.

## YES, VIRGINIA, THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS CELL PHONE COLLECTION CONTINUES

As we read in the news every day, there are folks who need help, and there are fewer and fewer volunteers to help them. We, as a Division, have been collecting cell phones for several years now, and we are still collecting them. The phones go to people who cannot afford a phone, but need a way to contact 911 in an emergency. We get back a small fee for doing this service. Up until June of this year, the proceeds went to the Convention Treasury. Now the proceeds come back to the Desert Division to use as we see fit.

You can help. Bring in that deactivated cell phone and donate it to the Division. We will submit it to the company which reprograms the phones for 911 calls only and distributes them to those most in need. Yes, Desert Division, there IS a Santa Claus, and you are it. Please bring those cell phones to the Meet on January 9. Give them to Ken Barnes or Katie Elgar. They will definitely be put to good use.

## ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

The Division is growing, and so is the number of bulletins we send out each month. You may choose to receive your bulletin electronically in full living color. All you need to do is fill out the form at the bottom of this page. Please note, for those receiving the bulletin via snail-mail, this page is on the back of the Desert Division Registration Form. If you are filling out both forms, please write "OVER" on the page so that your request will be noticed. Send the form to Christie Wilson, 16231 E. Ocotillo Drive, Fountain Hills, AZ 85268. Your next issue of the Dispatch could be sent to your e-mail address, at which time you will see what a difference a bit of color can make in the contents.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

TCA Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_



### JANUARY AFTER-MEET VISITATION

Hot news just in – there will be an after-meet visitation on January 9. We will traverse to the Paradise Valley part of the Valley for a close-up look at an extraordinary collection. Plan to be at the meet to procure a map to the site.

# CELEBRATE ARIZONA!

With the second Apache Beer 40' woodside reefer by Atlas  
sponsored by the Desert Division



Now in 3 rail and 2 rail! - Two car numbers available

Delivery expected - end of 2009

Only 250 to be made in 3 rail - 24 in 2 rail

Qty.	PLEASE SEND ME:	Three Rail	Two Rail
_____ 3 rail	\$77.95 - 2 rail \$82.95	\$ _____	\$ _____
_____ Second road number		_____	_____
Shipping @ \$8 per car		_____	_____
(AZ residents sales tax: \$5.50/3 rail; \$5.90/2 rail )		_____	_____
TOTAL ENCLOSED		\$ _____	\$ _____
Name _____			
Address _____			
City/State/ZIP _____			
Make checks to: Desert Division Mail to: Desert Division 25375 N. Feather Mountain Rd. Paulden, AZ 86334 Or order from: <a href="http://www.TCAdd.org">www.TCAdd.org</a>			



## TRAIN DISPLAY IN FOUNTAIN HILLS

Memories of Christmases past with toy trains under the tree are etched in the minds of generation after generation of children. As a child growing up I can still recall my anxious anticipation when the weather turned cold and our town would begin to get decorated for Christmas. Many store window displays would disappear behind plain paper as the stores readied their displays for the post Thanksgiving unveiling.

Today however, it seems that Christmas displays show up in stores after Labor Day or not even at all, as my email “In-box” gets filled with all the hype over “Cyber-Monday.” It appears that the heritage of trains and the Christmas season seem almost unrelated anymore, that is except for a few die hard folks who work to keep those memories alive.

Division member Ken Burling has, for the past several years, worked to keep the Christmas and train tradition spirit alive up in Fountain Hills. Ken has been setting up several layouts in the Fountain Hills Community Center and running trains for the enjoyment of all who use the center and their many visitors. Enlisting help from friends, neighbors, and Division members, the layouts are manned Monday through Saturday during peak hours of the Community Center for the enjoyment of all.



Two loops of “G” gauge trains, each running Christmas themed consists, greet visitors as they enter the Community Center atrium. In the center of the layout is a two-sided display case of Christmas trains, trolleys, and hand cars, all festooned in their holiday best, featuring characters from Disney to the “Jolly Old Elf” himself. Behind this layout is a compact 027 layout that allows visitors a chance to imagine just how small and compact, yet packed with fun, a train layout can be.



However the main event is the large “O” gauge layout with two main lines, one using GarGraves 5 rail Standard Gauge/”O” gauge trackage, the other with a switchable siding for staging trains. The main layout also features an elongated figure “8” and an end-to-end trolley track. But Ken did not stop there. He filled up the perimeter with interactive operating accessories to keep little hands busy (and off of the trains!)

The day we stopped by to take these pictures we had just missed a busload of children who were attending a Christmas Party in one of the Community Center’s adjoining rooms. Needless to say, but thanks to Ken and his crew of Christmas elves, the tradition of trains, Santa, and Christmas is still very visible in Fountain Hills!

**TRAIN COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION  
DESERT DIVISION**

Gordon Wilson, Editor  
Desert Division Dispatch  
16231 E. Ocotillo Drive  
Fountain Hills, AZ 85268

**POSTMASTER:** This Federal 501c3 Newsletter  
contains **DATED MATERIAL** requiring action  
by members. **PLEASE DELIVER** on or before  
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## DUES ARE DUE

### JANUARY MEET LOCATION

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

**Every Childhood Should Have A Train**  
**Enroll your children in Kid's Club Today!**

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [www.tcadd.org](http://www.tcadd.org)**  
**Click on the link to our e-Bay offerings.**

### COMING EVENTS

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| January 9, 2010 | Regular Division Meet – Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ – 9 AM<br>Join us for free Coffee and Donuts, compliments of the 2009 Convention Committee. |
| January 16      | Rio Grande Chapter Meet – Sombra Del Monte Church, 2528 Utah NE, Albuquerque, NM – 10 AM<br>Contact: Greg Palmer 505-898-3840   |
| January 16      | 44 <sup>th</sup> Biannual Winter Toy Train Show & Meet – Grant Inn Event Center, Tucson, AZ – 9 AM<br>Contact: Bud Stewart 520-749-0228                                 |
| February 13     | Regular Division Meet – Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ – 9 AM  |
| February 20     | Rio Grande Chapter Meet – Sombra Del Monte Church, 2428 Utah NE, Albuquerque, NM – 10 AM  |
| March 13        | Regular Division Meet – Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ – 9 AM  |
| March 20        | Rio Grande Chapter Meet – Sombra Del Monte Church, 2428 Utah NE, Albuquerque, NM – 10 AM  |

### JANUARY MEET LOCATION

After a concerted effort on the part of the Desert Division Board of Directors, we have found a location for the Regular Division Meets for the year 2010. It is the Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, 1500 W. Maryland Ave., Phoenix, AZ 850151.