

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



# Desert Division

## DISPATCH

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Volume 44, No. 4

April, 2015

## APRIL PICNIC TIME

For those of us in the Valley of Fun the weather is a constant topic of conversation. March weather this year has been great, unlike those picnic's of yesteryear when we were huddled around the grill trying to keep warm. For those of you with short term memories, the March day this past year would have been a picture perfect Visitor's Bureau day, but then again we never had spring, and I think winter this year happened on the weekend of the Phoenix Open. I hope you will be able to join us Saturday April 18 for our annual multi club spring picnic. We work together with the Grand Canyon Model Railroaders and the Paradise & Pacific to provide an open picnic for all members to enjoy a great picnic lunch and time at the Scottsdale McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park with family and friends. We have a few surprises in store this year and hope you can attend.

There was a full house of fifty-five plus members at the March meet when it was called to order. Secretary Lautazi reported that we had three visitors and one new member. Stan Ulman and Jim Hockley were visiting from Michigan and members of the Great Lakes Division of TCA. Janet Mattern brought in a friend and potential new member Paul Jenkins, who just retired and is looking for something to keep him

busy with all his new found "spare" time. National President Katie Elgar brought along Dennis McAllister a long time friend and new TCA and Division member. Angelo reported that our current active Division Membership stands at 246 and that we have lost over 40 members since last year. Some of this was expected fallout from a few of the "free" trail memberships we gave away at the 2013 Arizona Toy Train Show. Only three members of the eighteen made available decided to renew their memberships for a second year. We did not offer any free trial memberships last year, waiting instead to see how the initial test went. ATTS Chair John Upshur has indicated that the cost versus the return means the program will not likely be revisited.

Treasurer Bob Herman reported that the Savings Account had a \$27,797.68 balance and the Checking Account had a balance of \$21,749.76. (There was a question about the balances that came up later during the meeting. Desert Division has a signed contract with Lionel for the C&T fundraising car. The invoice will be due in full when the cars arrive on shore in late spring and is expected to be \$15,600. The checking account reflects roughly \$12,800 in pre-order funds. At present time we are about 80 units shy of breaking even. – ed.)

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR – UPCOMING EVENTS

April 11 – **Desert Division Meet** - 8:30 AM member only swap – 10:00 AM Business Meeting – Phoenix, AZ

April 11 - **Rio Grande Chapter Meet** – 9:00 AM member only swap – Business Meeting follows - Albuquerque, NM

April 18 – Multi Club Annual Spring Picnic 11:00 AM Asti Ramada – McCormick Stillman Railroad Park

May 9 – Desert Division **PIZZA MEETZA!** 8:30 AM member only swap – 10:00 AM Business Meeting  
11:00 – 12:00 Free All You Can Eat Pizza! 12:00-12:30 Auction Preview 12:30-?? 100+ Lot Auction

May 29 & 30 GPD TTOM Toy Train Show 1PM – 6 PM Fri & 9 AM – 2PM Sat – Tucson, AZ

Before the heavy discussion Marty Wik stepped up and we held the 50/50 drawing. Since there is no Spring Raffle this year we will hold four 50/50 drawings starting in March and running until June. Glenn Gordon held the winning ticket and walked away with \$85, which was quite a nice jackpot.

Once the excitement settled down President Allen welcomed everyone and a serious discussion began on two key issues, mailing the DISPATCH and declining membership which resulted in one of the best insightful meetings I have attended as a member of Desert Division.

I wear several hats for Desert Division. I am a fanatic about Division and TCA history, I love working on the Auction Committee and I enjoy being the editor of the DISPATCH. However I am most proud to be elected your President because I can take your views and have them heard on the national level.

What started out as a simple disclosure that the BOD might have to begin a surcharge next year if you wanted to receive a printed copy of the newsletter became one of the most interesting interchange of constructive ideas I and the members of your Board of Directors have heard. Our Division members in the Rio Grande Chapter also had some comments about this proposed idea so please read about their thoughts on Page 7.

Your editor pointed out that the average cost of a printed and delivered DISPATCH was about \$1.40 per issue, \$1.15 printing plus .25¢ postage at the Non-Profit Standard Class Rate. However the catch was we need to mail 200+ copies to get the Non-profit Rate. First Class postage for the same newsletter is .70¢, so the newsletter now costs \$1.85 per issue. With \$10/yr Division dues and the newsletter costing \$18/yr per member you can see that those members getting the newsletter electronically are subsidizing the printed edition. Chris also pointed out that over 50% of the newsletters are mailed to members who live outside of a reasonable commute to a Division or Chapter Meet.

Comments and ideas came pouring from the members and it soon became apparent to all, that we needed to find an alternative to a surcharge. Many members collect and save the DISPATCH, for others it was a way to keep in touch with what was going on if they missed a meet. We also have over forty-five Division dues paying members who live outside of the true Division boundary. Some of these are winter visitors and others are just long time friends.

Although the newsletter cost is approximately 10% of our overall annual budget and alone consumes our entire dues income revenue the Board of Directors will actively look at alternative funding sources to keep dues unchanged and still maintain the DISPATCH as a

ten issue newsletter promoting TCA and the Desert Division to all our members in both printed and electronic format.

Next was the issue of membership recruitment and retention. Recruitment of new members opened the floor to several great ideas. Sam McElwee suggested that the club supply some type of publicity flyer that Division table sellers could handout if a buyer wanted info about other clubs in the area. Dallas Dixon showed a business sized card that the Paradise & Pacific Club uses to hand out when the public wants additional information. Myles Lynk had several insights (including several thoughtful emails to yours truly) with ideas about where our membership would most likely be built from. Gordon Wilson also brought up the fact that membership retention needs to be in the form of phone calls inquiring why someone dropped out so that trends can be identified and possibly reversed.

President Allen pointed out recent efforts of the numerous workshops and the trailer module in response to members input and thanked everyone for their input and ideas.

Under announcements it was revealed that approximately 50 lots of overflow from the winter auction will seed the Pizza Meetza. In the mix are items that arrived too late to be in the catalog and included several prewar Lionel catalogs along with accessories, train room signage, and a nice mix of prewar and postwar trains. Contact Chet Henry to get in on this get Auction in May.

The educational segment hosted a wide variety of items. DeLon Freije had a Western Pacific 6464 boxcar with red lettering. DeLon admits the piece is far from pristine but when the seller asked \$8 for the piece DeLon couldn't reach into his pocket fast enough. Phil Todd's main story was about his time working on the railroad. The Rutland Railroad to be specific, which ran near his childhood home. Phil worked for them as a summer job there. Gordon Wilson had the K Line crane car from the 1997 Convention and retold the story about how the Arizona & California Railroad contacted him to get permission to paint their crane in our color scheme. Paul Wasserman displayed what appeared to be an ashtray but turned out to be a rare paper clip holder for Lionel Dealers in 1937. Jonathan Peiffer had his latest project from 3<sup>rd</sup> Rail a Santa Fe ABBA which he dubbed the steam locomotive "killer". Dan Palaschak had a unique new era Marx "Queen's Café" diner marked "sample diner whole" and was looking for information about it and was told that many of the factory items have been auctioned off on eBay. No space for individual raffle winners this month but Terry Fagan won the Hudson ticket and Ralph Treichel won the Hudson Hundred.



**Ivan English chatting with Chris Allen and John and Darlene Wiley**



**Looks like everyone was in a talkative mood**



**UP's 2023 now in compliance with TCA Standards**



**Eva Upshur pulled Glenn Gordon's ticket for the first 50/50 drawing while idea maestro Marty Wik looks on**



**Dan Palaschak and his unique Marx "Queen's Café"**



**Delon telling the story about the red lettered 6464-1 that he picked up for only \$8**



## **TCA Desert Division BOD Meeting – March 11, 2015**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM at the home of Mike and Michelle Dietrich

In Attendance; Chris Allen, Michael Dietrich, Bob Herman, Angelo Lautazi, Beth Stange, Phil Todd, on teleconference Greg Palmer and David Nycz

**Approval of Agenda** - The agenda was approved as distributed

**Approval of Previous Meetings Minutes** – The minutes from the previous meeting were approved as amended.

**Treasurers Report** - Treasurer Bob Herman reported that the Savings Account has \$27,797.68 and Checking has \$21,749.76. Bob submitted the Income/Expense Report for February 2015.

**Membership Report** - Angelo reported that membership stands at 244 members. This number represents a total of 43 members that have not yet renewed their Division dues. The Quarterly drop list from TCA is usually issued within 30 days of the end of the Quarter and former TCA/Division members will be contacted.

### **Old Business:**

**Rio Grande Fundraiser Sales** – Chris reported that after contacting Rocky Mountain Division President Kent Schwarz, they have agreed to a reciprocal advertising agreement where they will begin advertising the C&T car for us and we will advertise auctions and shows for them.

**Arizona Toy Train Show** – Chris has been in contact with Chair John Upshur. John reported that the date of Saturday December 5<sup>th</sup> has been confirmed with the hotel. John and Fred Hunter are working out the contract with the Renaissance Hotel over the particulars and hope to have a contract ready to sign in 30 days.

**2015 Turkey Meet Auction** – With the confirmation of the date for the ATTS, Desert Division has secured the Shepherd of the Valley Burns Hall for the November 28<sup>th</sup> Auction. At present time the auction is over 75% full, with several large consignors being deferred to the January 2016 winter auction.

**HO and G Scale Auction** – We have a large consignment of quality HO and G scale trains that have been culled from the November auction. The Auction Committee has decided to hold a separate auction of these items in the fall/winter period.

**50/50 Raffle** – Chris contacted Marty Wik who had several ideas about holding several 50/50 auctions during the spring. Several of his ideas were discussed as well as a few from the BOD and it was decided to let Marty have full control of the raffle and that we would monitor the results.

### **New Business**

**Division Newsletter** – The loss of a substantial number of members will affect the costs of our newsletter mailings. Some possible ways forward are to go totally digital, have a member surcharge for printed newsletters or continue to subsidize the mailing as a membership benefit. Chris will bring the issue to the membership for a club discussion.

**Storage Unit Update** – Chris and Chet are planning to meet at the storage facility this week to move and empty the remaining items from the smaller old one and close out the unit. This will leave us with a single large storage unit and about a \$1,700/yr savings

**Trailer Work Party** - Chris will try to organize a small work party to complete the electrical work on the trailer

**Lionel Service Station Parts** - Peter is in discussion with a retired Service Station owner to sell his parts inventory in a sealed bid auction. The Division will be responsible for packing and shipping the items for the consignor.

**Collection of Member Dues** – This year's trial to have the members dues be paid to their respective Division or Chapter did not work out as planned. After much discussion it was decided that next year all dues monies will be sent to the DD Secretary and the DD will send one check to the Rio Grande chapter for their member's dues received.

**Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM. The next board meeting is scheduled to be on April 8<sup>th</sup> at the home of Angelo and Barbara Lautazi

Minutes submitted by: Secretary, Angelo Lautazi

## President's Message

Well it has been a very interesting month and the input I have received from members and former members have been very enlightening. Open forum discussions or brainstorming as the phrase goes, works best when only one problem is discussed. At the March Meeting we handled two, newsletter cost and membership recruitment/retention although the first was over quite quickly.

The newsletter issue really struck a chord with many of our members at the meeting and I have also heard from quite a few members who live a distance away from our "hubs" of Phoenix and Albuquerque. For many of them the newsletter is their only tie with us and many of their friends after they have moved away. Some also stated that they prefer the written format rather than sitting in front of the computer to read it. Yes, they have email and use the computer, but they like the portability of the printed copy.

The comments and emails I have received will be forwarded to the other officers and Directors of the Division at our next Board Meeting. For the remainder of this year we will try several options and test out the cost benefits of all the ideas presented.

What was most enlightening was not only the conversations I had with you during the meeting, but also members who emailed me or called following my article about the future of TCA and membership recruitment and retention.

We need to separate recruitment from retention. Both TCA and Desert Division have done a good job of recruiting members but we can still improve. Sam McElwee pointed out that he like many other members travel to quite a few non-TCA train shows in the area. Sam wished there was something he could give to the public when they inquire about local clubs to join. Dallas Dixon said that the P&P uses small business cards with key club and contact information on the card. That idea seemed to resonate with many members and they liked that better than an 8x11 flyer to hand out. Secretary Angelo Lautazi is working to have something available shortly. Myles Lynk spoke (and also sent me a very

detailed email) about membership recruitment and where future member growth would most likely come from. Many of you share Myles' thoughts, our immediate need to shore up the fortress will be from like minded and aged members in the general train community. The next generation of members will need to be a coordinated effort between TCA national and the local Division and Chapters.

Retention however, is a bigger can of worms. Blaming all of TCA's woes on the dues increase is wrong. What the dues increase did was cause our members to look at the value was in that membership dollar. Buying trains online has certainly hurt. Selling the value of TCA's complaint resolution is de-emphasized by those like auction giant eBay. Quite simply TCA has not responded to these business challenges and kept up with the times.

Desert Division has always prided itself on being the friendly small train club where everyone is welcome and that regardless of whatever your collecting or operating interests might be, we want you to be part of our family. We enjoy just hanging out with each other and probably have more activities based around food, fun, and trains than any group I know of.

We have some hard work ahead of us. Rebuilding our membership after a 15% loss will not be easy but it can be done one member at a time. The Division Board of Directors will continue to work on the details but we will always need individual members to help. From the conversations I had with many of you I know that many of you are willing to join in and help wherever you can. That is the spirit that founded this Division and the spirit that will help to keep it the "Little Division that Could".

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil", is positioned to the right of the President's message text.

## RIO GRANDE CHAPTER EDUCATIONAL PICTURES



**John Trever had a display of Lionel 6446 Covered Hoppers in three color variations**



**Art Lites talked about attending the recent Rocky Mountain Train Show and displayed his purchase**



**Greg Palmer had many windup trains including this Hafner classic from the early 1950's**



**Jim Trever had a hard to find Marx missile launcher flat car and a RMT AEC Budd car**



**Ross Jordan displayed his handiwork on this beautiful restoration of a 292 set**



**After meet visitation to the home of Scott and Elaine Eckstein and Scott's multi-gauge layout**



## TCA Rio Grande Chapter News

The March Rio Grande Chapter meeting was held on March 21, 2015 at Los Altos Christian Church with 16 TCA members attending. Several members made the trek to Denver for the weekend and the TCA Rocky Mountain Division Auction that was held on the same day as our meeting.

**Show and Tell:** Scott Eckstein showed his Knox, Kane, Kinzua Railroad T Shirt from northwestern Pennsylvania. Greg Palmer brought in several items including an American Flyer windup steam engine, a Hafner windup train from 1951, a Hafner prewar engine, a Marklin 3 rail track and a boat and submarine from Strombacker. John Trever displayed and talked about color variations of the Lionel 6446 Covered Hoppers. Art Lites gave a report on the Rocky Mountain March Train Show that he and David Nycz attended. He proudly displayed a General #1872, 1865 & 1866 that he purchased (at a great price) at the show. Russ Jordan had a very nice 292 prewar set that he has restored and repainted, it looked fantastic.

**President's Report:** George Domeny reported for David Nycz. He stated Division membership stands at a recent all time low of 244 paid members. George also reported that Ron Rosen is currently in the Mayo Clinic.

**Secretary's Report:** Minutes from the February Meeting were approved as distributed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Don Kuster reported a balance of \$2,355.80 in our checking account.

**Board Members at Large:** Greg Palmer reported on the auction of Phil Nerkowski's train collection which may take as long as 1½ years to complete.

**Convention Chair Report:** 154 C&T cars have been sold to date. Scott and Elaine will work with David Nycz and Chris Allen to have the information in the Annual Report for the June National BOD Meeting.

**Old Business:** We are still looking for raffle prize donations for our meetings.

The test run for paying dues locally did not go as well as expected. There was a lot of extra work involved between the Division and Chapter to keep the books straight. Next year all dues will be sent to the Division and they will issue us a check for our member's dues.

Greg Palmer will work with Stephen Parker and George Domeny on a phone tree to get info out to our members quickly.

**New Business:** George led a discussion regarding the Division newsletter which the Division Board of Directors is seeking input from the members. With the loss of so many members the Division may have to add a surcharge next year if members wanted to receive it in a hard copy printed format. The discussion was lively. Several said they just preferred to have the hard copy even if they did have email while another member stated he did not have email at all. Boyd Reasor wanted a dues reduction for those that took the newsletter electronically. After much give and take the unofficial consensus of those present felt they understood the need for a surcharge.

The next topic was that both the Division and the Chapter need to be more diligent in member retention and suggested that a letter be sent out to those members that have dropped. The answers might help us determine if there are local issues to be addressed and not automatically blame it on the recent TCA dues increase.

The 2015 Pumpkin Meet will again be held at the Sheraton Uptown. We are looking to update our flyer design so contact David with any ideas Jon Spargo will try to get the mailing list for those working on the 2926 restoration project.

The next meeting is April 11, 2015 Los Altos Church – Before the meet we will hold a members only swap meet. It would help if you would bring your own table to setup and sell trains. Regular business meeting will follow.



## More Photos from the March Meet



Gordon Wilson telling the story about how the Arizona & California Railroad contacted us about a paint scheme



If the Division would have an official storyteller we all agree Phil Todd would give Gordon a good run for his money.



Paul Wassermann telling the tale about the 1937 Lionel Dealer's paper clip holder.



That smile must mean that Ralph Treichel just won the Hudson Hundred for the month

## APRIL EDUCATIONAL THEME

No Foolin' we really will award 10 raffle tickets to the member who brings in the cleverest item that either makes us smile or groan the loudest this month. The theme? Well with April 15<sup>th</sup> around the corner what train did you put off buying the longest, or was the biggest return on your investment, maybe even harder to get running than filing your taxes? Getting some the ideas? And no, don't show up at the front table with no trains saying your filing for an extension.

## The Pizza Meetza is coming!

This year the Pizza Meetza plans to be better than ever before. We have a select group of items that arrived too late to be included in the catalog and auction in January. Several prewar and postwar trains, some accessories and even some signage that would look nice in your train room will be at the start of the auction, but there is still room for you. Auction lots are \$5 each so to make it worth your while leave the rusty track at home. Plan for a fun day in May, see Chet Henry at the April Meet to sign up for your lots.



## 2015 SPRING PICNIC



The 2015 Multi Club Spring Picnic will be held on Saturday April 18 at the McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park located at the southeast corner of Indian Bend Rd and Scottsdale Blvd. in Scottsdale. Plan to arrive early for a behind the scenes tour of the Model Railroad Building including access to all three of the layouts. Tours for the Model Railroad Building will begin at 10:00 AM. We will have members at the Aste Ramada setting up so you can bring your items and drop them off there before the tour. We anticipate food service to start at 11:15 AM with raffle prizes at 12:30. At 1:00 PM there will be a behind the scenes tour of the Roundhouse. This is a private tour available only to members of the clubs and their immediate family. No Children, pets, or drinks will be permitted on this exclusive tour. While that tour is taking place we will have a limited number of tickets available for children and their chaperones to ride on the wonderful park carousel or park train. The Spring Picnic is an offshoot of the Ray Korte Open House that Ray would host each year. While the Desert Division Pizza Meetza now takes place of the afternoon auction that was held in Ray's backyard, the spring picnic continues to bring together many of the local clubs under one roof for the fellowship of operating and collecting trains that we all share. Ray must be proud looking down at us that we have continued his tradition all these years. Plan to join us for a great mid-day picnic of food, fellowship and of course trains. The Clubs have provided for the Ramada, the burgers and hot dogs along with the chips and ice cream. We ask that you bring a side dish to share or dessert to delight all our taste buds. Hope to see you there!

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**Summer Show & Meet**

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# TOY TRAIN SHOW

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RAILROAD



-CHANGE



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**3<sup>rd</sup> RAIL & GOLDEN GATE DEPOT DISCOUNTED TRAINS:** Now accepting pre-orders for the 10 car Sunset Limited for the first time in true scale O! Introducing the first 17” true scale Harriman cars in many roads. Also new, SD7s & SD9s in too many roads to list. Budd Slumbercoaches for the first time in O with only 50 reservations remaining. Call Jonathan Peiffer at 602.561.4131. Your Arizona authorized 3rd Rail and GGD Dealer. Now accepting credit cards.

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

**For Sale** 6-52408 The End of The Line Gary Lavinus Maintenance of Way Caboose \$50. 2000 TCA National Convention Grand Rapids & Indiana Woodside reefer and reverse color Banquet Car both for \$100, 2008 Burlington, VT Cabot Creamery Reefer by Weaver Banquet Car \$200, 2010 Baltimore American Brewery Inc. Banquet Car \$150, 2011 Sacramento Banquet Spreckles Sugar PS-2 Covered Hopper Gray/Red GACX 42692 \$125, 2012 Atlanta TCA Convention 34’ Box Car Banquet Car \$100, Please call/email for additional bargains. Dannie Martin 520-360-0519 [dannieaz@cox.net](mailto:dannieaz@cox.net)

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

**FREE TO A GOOD HOME - LAST CALL!** -Magazines: Classic Toy Ttrains 1988 to 2014; TTOS Bulletins from 1972 forward; a box full of Lionel and MTH Catalogs; Classic Trains issues from the 1990's; and 15 issues of Garden/Outdoor Railroading. Please call Glenn or Nancy Hill at 602-810-2605 to save these from a trip to Goodwill.

**FOR SALE:** Lionel 6-24177 Balloon Ride \$200/obo - K Line UP MP-15 Switcher w/lighted caboose \$80 - Lionel 6-52078 TTOS 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary SD9 w/matching SP Division caboose \$175 - Scale O 6-52500 Desert Division ATSF Grand Canyon Reefer \$50, Lionel 6-18562 SP GP9 w/TMCC \$150 – 356 Freight Station w/carts no box \$50- Chris Allen 480-820-9559 [sparkyshome@cox.net](mailto:sparkyshome@cox.net)

**WANTED:** Looking for neon Lionel sign used in hobby stores – Chris Allen 480-820-9559 [sparkyshome@cox.net](mailto:sparkyshome@cox.net)

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



## THE BACK PAGE

FOR THINGS THAT DIDN'T FIT ELSEWHERE or BREAKING NEWS!



Here is a close-up of the Lionel paper clip holder that Paul Wassermann brought to the meet. Very Unique!



Loren Hess and Terry Haas seem to have Glenn Gordon surrounded, maybe counting his 50/50 winnings?



Here's a nice assortment of trains for sale. A little bit of everything for every taste



Dan Palaschak's new era Marx Queen's Café, truly a one of a kind item

The 61st [TCA National Convention](#)  
New York, New York



### DIVISION MEET LOCATION

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



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