

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 49, No. 6

June 2020

## “SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER”

Boy, don't we all wish we could set our "Wayback Machine" to 1966 and hear the song by that same title on the radio? While this song from The Happenings was more about a school year crush, I think we all can agree, "bye-bye, farewell" spring 2020!

In late May the Division Board of Directors met via teleconference and decided that there just is not enough information available on how to conduct a meeting safely. Yes, the governor did not renew the "Stay at Home" order for the state of Arizona but non-essential travel is still restricted. Meetings are still discouraged, and churches are still struggling trying to get a grip on how do reopen safely. (I know this one by own personal account)

With so many questions and still so early in the reopening cycle and so many of us in the high-risk category the Board decided to pass and **cancel the June Meet** and work towards a September and fall 2020 train season.

While we did not have any meetings the Board and various Division committees are still working behind the scenes. Let us update you on all the latest news.

**Rail Fair 2020** is in Limbo at the moment. The Railroad Park is opening slowly with restrictions; however the Model Railroad building is closed. Paradise & Pacific is working with the city of Scottsdale for new guidelines so their members can get access to the building and begin to run trains again. It will be quite sometime before the public can get access again. We were asked by the city if we would participate in Rail Fair this year. Our trailer module sits well underneath the 20'x20' tent, so if we were to set up a barrier using the tent polls around the perimeter, we could have an effective "social distance" barrier. For me personally, it would be a different feel since I like to get up close and personal with the public, but I've adjusted so far so this will take just the same determination to do

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR – UPCOMING EVENTS

**June 13 – June Division Meet - CANCELLED**

**July 25 – GCMR SUMMER CACTUS MEET – CANCELLED**

**AUGUST 15 – Beat the Heat Meet - CANCELLED**

**September 12 – September Division Meet**

8:30 AM member only swap – 10:00 AM Business Meeting - Location to be determined

**September 26 - GCMR Mini-Meet" – 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM**

Our Saviors Lutheran Church 1212 E Glendale Ave. Phoenix

**October 3-4 Rail Fair 2020** 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM Saturday and Sunday

McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park, Scottsdale, AZ

it as well. The fun will be running the trains for everyone to enjoy, and it has been a long, long, time since I have been able to do that.

**The Auction Committee** continues to get ready for a spectacular fall auction. With all the train shows cancelling and grabbing dates in the fall we had to move the auction up quite early in the month. It will be on Saturday November 7<sup>th</sup>. The location is Paradise Valley United Methodist Church on Lincoln Drive where we held the January 2017. There will be another nice selection of trains from the Bill Mack collection along with trains from about ten other consignors. With the auction happening before all the fall and winter train shows you just might get lucky and be able to buy low and turn around and sell it at the show.

**The November Train Show at the Shrine Auditorium is still a go** at the moment. Although in this crazy time things can change on a dime hopefully in the next five months we will have a better grip on mass gatherings. Train Shows are a beast onto themselves. I cannot imagine one-way aisles (yes, I know York has them) or social distancing by the buying public. I have deep concerns for our volunteers working the front door, an area I call the front end, along with raffle and other areas where the public will be massed together. We are discussing constructing clear plexiglass shields for some areas and just eliminating things like raffles because of the health risks involved. The bigger question is, will the public come out? Recent polls indicate only 49% of families will send their children back to school this fall. How does that translate into show attendance when the majority of table buyers and the public are in the high-risk age category? At the rate Train Shows are being cancelled right now it is hard to tell who will be the first to put their toe in the water.

**The Christmas Holiday Party on December 6<sup>th</sup>** will round out our year. We are working with the DoubleTree to insure a safe event for the members. Like the other events, we do not know if there will be a bounce in the fall and winter or not. If there is a bounce how restrictive will the rules be or will it be up to an informed and personal choice to go out in public? Our deadlines are always months in advance of

the actual event date, and we will be working closely with the staff to ensure your safety and yet protect us financially.

If you want to **purchase the Lenox Ornament the deadline is rapidly approaching**. This is the last newsletter before the deadline, and you will get no other reminders. Look for the reminder in this issue and if you want one at basically 50% of what it will cost you to buy it directly from Lenox then get your order in to Fred Hunter today.

We go full circle all the way to **the January Souper Bowl Auction**. Yes, I told you everyone has been busy. The Souper Bowl Auction will be held on January 30<sup>th</sup> back at the Paradise Valley United Methodist Church on Lincoln Drive. This one will take some planning and might have to deviate from tradition. Without me making my usual sarcastic comments about the heat of Phil Todd's curry or nothing able to live in my pozole, the food issue is a serious concern. Instead of our usual member made soups and chili, it might be catered, but we will have the food issue worked out well in advance.

But what about the trains? Isn't that what the auction is all about? Well, I am glad you asked. The January auction still has some spots available. As you can imagine with everything shutting down and no meetings we have not been contacted by many consignors, so if you have cleaned out the train room and have some items that "have to go" the **January Auction has openings**, But you need to act quickly. That auction is put to bed in October. Contact Paul Malek and let him know you have some items you would like him to find a new home for.

As we and the other clubs work to bring our members back together again safely, we will continue to work together to keep our train club community united in fellowship and the joys of this hobby that we have enjoyed for so long. Once all the clubs get organized, we will decide if we can still pull off our planned picnic, albeit indoors, air conditioned and very informal. So to with the Pizza Meetza. Once we are sure the churches will again be renting space to us, we will plan for that great day of friendship, pizza and of course some good old fashion auction fun.

## LAST CALL Christmas Party Lenox Snowman Ornament



Photo © 2020 Lenox Corporation.

As we mentioned last month, we are no longer able to offer the Lenox Snowman Ornament to the spouses at the annual Christmas Holiday Party. Both members and spouses who attend will still receive a nice gift, but with reduced attendance and the cost of the ornament going up, we just were not selling enough raffle tickets to cover the cost and continue to give this unique gift.

Many of our spouses and families have made this 20-year tradition a part of their Holiday planning and gift giving. If you are one of them you can still continue your collection. The Division will offer the ornament at our cost of only \$30, but on a subscription basis only. You must pay and order your ornament no later than July 31<sup>st</sup>. Fred Hunter is the contact person for the Christmas Party Committee and his contact information is in the recently mailed Division roster.

Because we are not holding any meetings make your check for \$30 payable directly to Fred and drop it in the mail. He has already placed one order for the ornament for those that responded **to last months'** notice. We will hold all the remaining orders until right

before the deadline and then that is it, you are on your own. We are not ordering ANY extras. There is no newsletter next month, so this really is your last call and reminder.

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## FALL TRAIN SEASON UPDATE

This is the last newsletter for two months. We normally take the month of July off as a Division by having no meets in July and August. We also take a break with the newsletter. Our next issue will be the summer issue (July & August) which gets distributed sometime early in August. Although it normally has news from the National Convention and summer activities such as the Cactus Summer and Beat the Heat Meets, it will likely be a small issue this year with all the cancellations. **That's an overt hint that I need to hear from you, others have filled in the issues the past few months now it's your turn to help fill in these pages.**

As you can imagine trying to keep up with all the changes that come in almost daily can be quite an undertaking. As of this printing on June 7<sup>th</sup> here is what we know about the September - December train season.

The Division plans to reopen September 12<sup>th</sup> with the General Meet. Later this month the Division BOD will discuss if this will be the Pizza Meet and auction, so stay tuned. At a minimum it will be a blast to get together again, so expect a few surprises!

September 26, the GCMR hosts their Mini-Meet. This is scheduled as the first post covid meet in town, somebody has to be first.

October 3-4 Rail Fair, if the McCormick Stillman Park hosts it, we will operate the module, no ifs, ands, or buts.

October 10, Division October Meet.

November 7<sup>th</sup> November Train Auction, Paradise Valley United Methodist Church

November 13-14<sup>th</sup> GPD TTOM Train Meet Tucson

November 21 Desert Division November Train Meet Shrine Auditorium

November 28 AZRHS Train Meet, Glendale

## **TCA Desert Division BOD Teleconference May 21, 2020**

A Desert Division Board of Directors Teleconference was held on May 21, 2020.  
The meeting was called to order at 6:15 PM MST

In Attendance; Chris Allen, Mike Dietrich, Mark Thompson, Angelo Lautazi, Steve Bienstock and Greg Palmer

**Approval of Previous Meetings Minutes** – Since they were not distributed with the agenda they will be approved at the next meeting.

**Secretary's Report** - Angelo reported that current Division active (dues paying) membership is 183. With print shops closed as a non-essential business the Division roster was printed on the Division laser printer. The membership cards could not be professionally printed and laminated for the same reason. They were mailed to the membership in mid-May.

**Treasurers Report** - Treasurer Mark Thompson reported on the continuing issues he is having with our bank and getting access to the accounts. Chris explained that he and Mark will go over the issues in detail later in the meeting.

### **Old Business:**

**El Tovar Fundraising Car** – Financials were distributed, and the car will be in the black with three more sales.

**2019 TCA Banquet Cars** – Financials were distributed, the car is currently in the black making a slight profit.

**Desert Division Anniversary Car** – Lionel USA production is on hold, Peter will be given a new production and delivery date when Lionel reopens.

### **New Business:**

**June Division Meeting** – After much discussion about the lack of information currently available, the concern for our members health, and the cleanliness of the new facility it was decided to cancel the June meeting. It is hoped that better cleanliness information and protocols be in place when we plan to resume meetings in September. Angelo will send out an eBlast informing our members of the cancellation of the June Meet.

**Rail Fair 2020** – The park is slowly reopening although the Model Railroad Building remains closed. They are sending out feelers to the clubs to see if they would participate Discussion followed that since the module sits under a 20'x20' tent it could be roped off to prevent the public from getting too close and maintain current social distance protocols. With that in mind Chris will notify the park that we would participate if the event will be held.

**November Train Auction** – Date is set for November 7<sup>th</sup> before all the local train shows begin. There are over 300 lots and the catalog will be on sale in September at the meet or by mail. The auction will be held at Paradise Valley United Methodist Church on Lincoln Dr. where we held the January 2017 auction.

**Desert Division Train Show 2020** – Shriners will follow CDC and local regulations regarding occupancy. The event is still scheduled for November 21. Chris wants people that are not in the high-risk group to handle the front door, even if that means hiring outside help. Other options are also being explored.

**Christmas Party 2020** – Interest in the Lenox ornaments is high. Fred has 21 orders already and commitments for more. It is too early to determine how the party and member registrations will play out so we will work with the DoubleTree to take that into consideration in our contract.

**Division Incorporation** – New Treasurer Mark Thompson is having issues getting with our bank. The laws have changed making transfers without an IRS EIN for the club almost impossible. To get an EIN, we need to be incorporated in the state of Arizona. Discussion followed about the pros & cons of incorporating Director Steve Bienstock was able to provide many answers and offered to help review all the documents. Motion by Mike Dietrich: "I move that the Desert Division should incorporate in Arizona as a Non-Profit as the Train Collectors Association Desert Division Inc." Second, Mark Thompson. The motion passed unanimously.

**Adjournment:** It was agreed to have another teleconference meeting at the end of June. Meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM

Minutes submitted by: Secretary, Angelo Lautazi

## Presidents Message

Dear Friends,

By now you know the June Meet was cancelled. TCA has also cancelled the National Convention, along with the NMRA, LCCA and most if not all the other national clubs.

Locally, all the summer shows have all been cancelled with the Summer Cactus and Beat the Heat joining an ever-growing list of meets and shows. Over in Albuquerque, the Rio Grande Chapter had some dire conversations with the hotel and decided to call off the Pumpkin Meet for October this year which you can read about in Greg Palmers article in this issue. They are looking to restart again in 2021.

2020 is certainly one for the books and flexibility will be the name of the game as we look to work on our own fall train schedule.

This past month, I and the Division lost a close friend. I have a short memorial to Shirley Hunter and if you have a favorite story or remembrance of Shirley please send it to me for the next issue.

With spring and summer 2020 pretty much in the books as a no-show, I still hope we can pull off the fall and winter shows and meets. A lot will depend on how the reopening goes and the confidence level of you, our members. We can do all the planning and work with the various vendors to secure locations, but if you don't feel comfortable coming back out to the shows and meets, well the end result will be a troubled fall train season.

This is not a simple, "No risk it, no biscuit" cliché we have heard before. When it comes to our health and the health of our family members, we cannot be complacent. If you do not feel comfortable coming out to the meets or shows there is no reason for us to commit Division funds and resources to have one. The next few months will give us a little bit of guidance and we will continue to monitor and decide on events as things move on down the line. Many of our wives are volunteers for

the Division and the Division will not risk the health of our members or our volunteers over a hobby.

But all the news in the Division is not about the Covid-19 virus and the cancellation of shows throughout the state. If you have been reading the minutes of the Division Board of Directors meeting including our last teleconference meeting you know that our Treasurer Mark Thompson has been having several issues with our bank, JP Morgan Chase.

This is not an issue with Mark, but rather the longevity of our past Treasurer Bob Herman. Bob was elected Treasurer in 1998 when Fred Hunter became Division President. A lot has changed in those twenty-two years, especially in terms of banking and non-profits.

Currently our Savings account earns about twenty cents a month on a balance of about \$20,000. That is just a huge waste of the resources we have in reserve. When Mark tried to move the savings account to a higher yielding account he ran into several obstacles.

He has worked for several months trying to find banks or Credit Unions that would allow us to move the funds but has run into issues that we do not have a tax id for the state of Arizona. In the past we simply used TCA Nationals tax id and it was sufficient, but it no longer is allowed.

Long story short during the May Division BOD teleconference it was decided that the Division should incorporate in the state of Arizona as a non-profit and file for an IRS EIN tax number. That has been done and we now wait for the Arizona Corporate Commission to review our paperwork and hopefully grant our request so we can move forward.

No we won't be investing our savings in Amazon or BitCoin, but we will be moving our resources into higher yielding CD's and other Money Market Accounts to give us a better yield. Stay tuned as we move forward. -- *Chris*



## Running the REMCO Mighty Casey



Dale Schafer visited York and took pictures of the Kids Club area there and the spark was born in the Chapter!



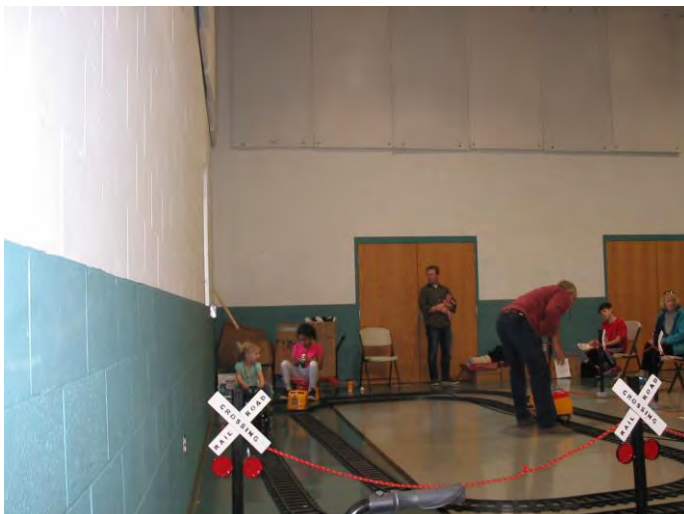
Chris Wieclaw took over the project from Dale and has been adding rolling stock and trains to the fleet



In February, Chris setup two Might Casey's at the New Mexico TTOS Show



The Mighty Casey was made by REMCO Toys in 1969 and 1970, so are they postwar or modern era?



Regardless of the era, they are 50 years old and with a little TLC, still run fine today. Chris has modified, repaired, and repainted several of the Casey's he owns



If you look closely at the "tender" you will see it is a Mighty Casey engine painted black, while the engine is actually a "Dummy" engine shell. Great Job Chris!



## TCA Rio Grande Chapter News

By Gregory Palmer TCA 94-39039



Well I trust you are all well. I also expect you took this time at home to work on your collection, layouts or other projects. We all have had a bad Spring, but I hope we have a better Summer, and Fall.

Speaking of the Fall I have been in contact with Bill Spofford our Pumpkin Meet Manager. He told me to contact the Sheraton Uptown Hotel ASAP due to the fact that all of the folks we did business with, were no longer with the hotel and I did.

As your President it is my job to make sure that the Chapter moves in a positive direction, has funds to operate, and to make sure the Chapter members have a Chapter that is fun and educational. Working with the Chapter Board and Committee Chairs we want to make sure that any event or activity we participate in is safe for our members.

After talking with the Hotel they made the Chapter an offer to move the 2020 Pumpkin Meet a year out, to October 2021 with no penalty. The penalty for waiting would be \$600.00. After talking to each Chapter Board Members, we all agreed to move the Pumpkin Meet to October 24, 2021.

The main reasons we did this was that the Sheraton Uptown informed us that they predict a maximum occupancy of one hundred people in the Hall we rent from them at the time we are scheduled to hold this years Pumpkin Meet. We have around sixty people in the Hall for the length of the show as Table Sellers, Module Operators, along with our normal volunteer crew. Taking that in consideration we could only let thirty to forty of the public in at one time.

We would have to monitor occupancy loads to stay within the limits and hold people at the door until someone leaves. This would require more volunteers than we normally have and we

would also be putting our members at risk by having them close to the public while they wait to go in. Most of our members look forward to being a table seller at our show so we would be putting an extra burden on our few volunteers.

In addition our goal was to increase attendance this year, but by requiring the public to wear masks and the most likely to attend would be in the high risk age category, it would be hard to predict what our actual attendance would be.

You can see what a logistical nightmare this years Pumpkin Meet would be. **We've decided to error on the side of caution** and we will wait until 2021 to see what happens.

If things get better, we will try to have some type of event, in October, for Chapter Members. The September Chapter Meet and Meeting is also up in the air. We will be checking, at the end of the Summer to see if the Church will give us permission to Meet.

Most Churches are reopening to their members but with greatly reduced attendances of only at 25%. I hope we can Meet in September and we will keep you posted.

Please stay safe, enjoy our hobby and run your trains. Please give Chris Allen any new projects you have finished to go into the next Newsletter.

I would also like to say goodbye to David Nycz, our past Rio Grande Chapter President. David did a lot of work supporting the Chapter and Division and he was among the hardest working members of this Chapter. David is moving to Oregon the first week of June. The Pacific Northwest Division will be a better Division with David there. Once again, thanks David for all your work.

Hope to see all of you very soon.



## Memoriam Shirley Hunter

By Chris Allen

Desert Division and I lost a dear and longtime friend. Shirley Hunter, wife of Past Division President Fred Hunter, lost her battle with cancer surrounded by her family on May 25<sup>th</sup>.

Shirley was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. There she met and married Fred and began raising their family. In 1969 they moved to the Phoenix area where she worked in Real Estate for the next 28 years.

It was towards the end of her Real Estate career that Laurel and I first met Fred and Shirley. I joined TCA a few years earlier and was running and eventually became the Chairman of the Division Module.

By the mid 1990's Shirley was already well known as the "First Lady of Plasticville", because of her ability to remember all the odd variations and her ability to pull out unique pieces from the boxes of rubble that Plasticville was often jumbled up with. I was setting up the module at the Turkey Meet at the Centennial Hall in Mesa when she stopped by and started to rearrange all the pieces on the layout. To me, Plasticville was just old buildings that were donated to the club to fill in the blank spaces on the module,



**At the 2014 Arizona Toy Train Show, I wanted just a simple scene with trees and ceramic buildings, Shirley wanted snow. Her smile tells you who won the argument (it did look better her way after all)**

but to Shirley they all needed to be grouped correctly within a chosen scene or how they were sold.

I learned something that day that many of us who worked with Shirley over the years learned and loved, don't argue with the lady, you'll lose and it's a lot faster to just agree and get it done her way.



**It's hard to name all the volunteers in Shirley's kitchen decorating trees for the Division Christmas Party in 1999**

It is hard to remember when she wasn't organizing or volunteering. When the club was meeting at the Scottsdale Jaycee Hall it was Shirley that organized the "Coffee Club" after our friend Bill Leach became ill and could no longer "tend the bar". Shirley was the one that saw to it that the club purchase the coffee pot and organized a committee of volunteers to keep the coffee flowing. We are still using that same coffee pot today.

Christmas was always her favorite season and it showed not only in the effort she put into the Christmas Party, but also the way she decorated her home. How many of us have not been awestruck at the annual Hunter January Open House when we were asked to "count the ornaments!" And we knew that was only the beginning from the Britains, ornaments, Plasticville, there were so many displays throughout the house for



only one reason, to share the joy of her collection with others.

She loved celebrating and hosting the Division Christmas Party, and I can't remember how many times she "retired" only to come back for another year. This past Christmas Party I was sitting at the next table when Amazon slipped in a country western Christmas song into the music mix we were playing during dinner service. If you were there you know she did not care for the song and we never heard the end of it, the song that is.

Over the years my love for this lady always grew. We laughed often over my miscues and her victories. She was the Division Volunteer of the Year for her tireless dedication to all of us several times. I knew anything she was upset about was not against me personally, and I never took it that way. I would get a phone call, email or just

"that look", if things were not going a certain way. The Division Christmas Party Committee lost a tireless worker, and we all lost a good friend. I bet right now she is telling St. Peter how to organize the party when we all join her down the line, and if he is smart, he will just nod in agreement.



**Santa (Tom Stange) posing with Shirley in 2004**

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## **What Have I Been Doing?**

### **By Phil Todd TCA 95-41411**

On January 2, 2020 I arrived in Alaska and flew on a 207 Cessna for a 45-mile flight to a remote power generation plant west of Anchorage. I have worked twelve hours per day since January 5th providing technical direction for the inspection of two industrial gas turbines generator units.

My experience during the COVID-19 period was a little different than most club members. We had no visitors unless they flew into the Beluga gas field airstrip. However, the workers were on a seven day on and seven day off schedule and they went home. Because of the overall distance and flight time involved, I did not. I departed Beluga on April 9.

I joined the General Electric Gas Turbine Division in June of 1968 and reported to building 53 of the Schenectady, New York plant. My office

was above the manufacturing space where these units were built and tested.

I first saw these two GE gas turbines in 1985 after moving to Alaska as the Service Manager. They were started



**With the maintenance "skins" removed you can see the turbine with the horizontal split case**

up in 1968 and have been the only black start units on the Chugach Electric system.

A black start is the process of restoring an electric power station or a part of an electric grid to operation without relying on the external electric power transmission network to recover from a total or partial shutdown.

These two units have diesel engines and DC battery power for the controls. This was important after the 2018 earthquake when the entire electrical grid for Anchorage and the South-Central area went black. Since the gas field also needed electrical power to drive compressors that feed natural gas to Anchorage residents and businesses including the Municipal Electric Company, it was extremely important that one of the units would start. One did and the city did not freeze up.



**With the case removed you can see the old turbine about to be removed**

How does this information relate to trains you might ask? General Electric got into the industrial gas turbine business because of two companies. El Paso Natural Gas Pipeline wanted horsepower to drive compressors to move natural gas to the northern cities and the Union Pacific wanted horsepower to move freight from Cheyenne to Ogden and back. Hence the UP 85 gas turbine powered locomotives were built. They were called the BIG

BLOWS and you can see them in action on YouTube. There are also several great model locomotives of these same UP units that you can own.

The original units were made with a non-horizontal split case arrangement. The utility industry wanted units that could be maintained at sites all over the world. What started out as 5500 horsepower turbines have grown to be the primary source of electric power in the



**Turbine going back in and getting ready for reassembly**

world.

Phillips Petroleum actually used one of the UP turbines to drive an off-gas compressor at their Kenai, Alaska LNG plant and I had several opportunities to hear it run.

The two units at Beluga had not been overhauled since 1992. Many of the original employee's had retired, so this old guy with experience and memory, had an opportunity to assist and at the same time increase my personal BIG BOY fleet.

These turbines were designed when there were no computers and the calculations were done with slide rules. The same design was done for units in Saudi Arabia and the North Slope of Alaska, so the metal growth and cooling were able to withstand 120 degree F ambient as well as minus 50 degree F without rubbing. From pushing the start button to synchronization of the generator takes less than 8 minutes.

For all you technical geeks out there here are some specifications:

The turbine rotor weight is 19,980 lbs.

It rotates at 5100 rpm.

Axial compressor blade tip clearance is .035" to .055"



**All buttoned up and I am heading home!**

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## Shutdown Stories

### By Dave Cristofani TCA81-16401

**Editor's note:** I've mentioned how easy it is for you to send an article in for publication. Both Phil Todd and Dave just sent me an email and some photos, and I just cut and pasted it into the newsletter. Don't worry about the content or spell checking, the computer fixes most of those errors. Just drop me a line and share your story. We are all in this storm together.

Chris, If I recall your comments in the last Dispatch, you were looking for stories of what we did or are doing during the shutdown of the state that we are all experiencing. I feel I worked on two interesting projects that might be of interest.

Several weeks ago my wife Ann and I were contacted by a fellow "train guy" that said he knew of a lady that wanted to dispose of a group of Lionel trains that her great grandfather played with. He knew nothing about the items and asked if we would attempt to assist in the sale of the collection.

Ann has become quite an eBay seller of our excess hobby items, so we jumped at the chance to assist. Our friend delivered the items and they consisted of

several Lionel and Ives trains from the 1910's and 20's.

These were not in my area of expertise by any means but using TCA reference material and other publications we determined what every piece was and its approximate age.

We listed everything on eBay and the TCA website and within a few weeks it was all sold. Everything went to collectors in the Mid-West or East Coast. It appears



**One of the treasures we sold was this rare Lionel  
#5 NYC&HRRR Steam Engine**



us West Coasties do not have a lot of interest in the old stuff.

**The greatest item was Lionel's #5 Steam Engine.** From what I could determine it was the first style of Steam Engine Lionel produced and it was from around 1910. It was in fantastic condition, ran great and brought a super price. The buyer lives in Pennsylvania. The other significant piece was an Ives Tender and although it was not in the best of condition it also brought a super price.

We think we did well for the lady and enjoyed learning about the items and preparing them for sale.

The second project was purchases I made at the November meet in Phoenix and the Cactus Meet a few months later. I purchased seven very rough, in need of TLC, Lionel Alco units that were made in **the early 1950's.** There were three powered and four **dummy A's.** Most were very dirty, wires missing or broken, but all motors did barely run. I also purchased two Alco shells.



**These Alco's now sport Cristofani livery. It's not about the value but more about the fun**

Many hours were spent cleaning everything, taking the power units apart to clean gears, the motors and do a lot of wire replacement. I even had to clean out battery damage on one.

I was able to bring everyone back to life and several of the shells cleaned up very nicely and I was able to get

windshields, decals, etc. One pair I repainted green and grey to somewhat match the green and grey 2400 Series passenger cars Lionel produced in the late **1940's.** I found John Deere green to be a decent match and the green car is a Williams reproduction. Another pair I painted grey and put them on Erie chassis and with the yellow stripe they look nice.



**Here's another set of postwar Alco's Dave repainted. I like the yellow stripe as well and hope you can see it in the photograph**

I then took three run of the mill silver 2400 Series passenger cars and painted the roofs a matching grey. I know some collectors would cringe at changes like this, but with values decreasing, not increasing, I did not lose anything. The rest of them cleaned up so nice I left as original and are now in my collection.

As a side note, I need to get to more train meets to restock my project inventory.

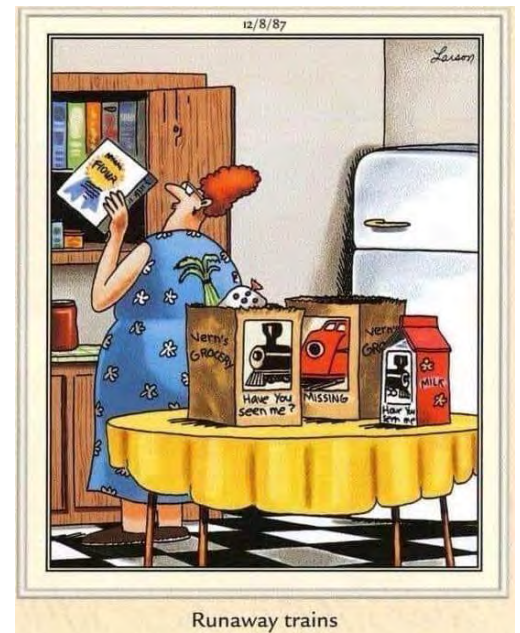




## THE BACK PAGE

Thanks to Dave Christofani and Phil Todd for sending in updates. This would have been a very skinny newsletter without their help. Unless you want me to reprint some dreary travelogue or have Gordon Wilson wax poetically about some of his dining experiences, some of you need to send in some updates. **I am completely out of material for the Summer edition.**

As I am wrapping this issue up on June 8<sup>th</sup>, we've just learned that Mike Wolf is retiring and shutting down MTH Trains in May of 2021. Although this story is just developing and I'm sure there will be more information coming, this was quite a surprise, even in a year that has been full of surprises.



### MARY COULTER'S GEM: EL TOVAR

The Desert Division's  
Harvey House tour  
concludes with a stop at  
the El Tovar Hotel and the  
Grand Canyon Santa Fe  
Station

**CARS ARE AVAILABLE FOR  
IMMEDIATE SHIPMENT**



*Side B*

**THE CARS ARE HERE!  
ORDER YOURS  
TODAY!**



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### DIVISION MEET LOCATION

**We will announce the date and location of  
the next Division Meeting once the current  
virus situation is resolved to allow  
meetings again**