

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

AUSTRALIA • NEW ZEALAND



Visit our Website: [www.tcadd.org](http://www.tcadd.org)

Volume 55, No. 2

February 2026

## WINTER? WHAT'S THAT?

While the calendar technically shows that The West is in Winter, the weather certainly has not indicated any signs that this season is upon us. As we enjoy the season, Desert Division has started the year off as we always do with lots of activities and fellowship.

The annual business meeting was held on January 10<sup>th</sup> along with our regular meet. President Mike Dietrich opened the meeting at 10:02 AM with approximately 40 members in attendance. Secretary Angelo Lautazi announced that the current membership is at 172 members of which 64 also belong to the Rio Grande Chapter. Treasurer Mark Thompson reported on the Division's finances which remain healthy. President Mike also welcomed Steve Bienstock to the Division Board of

Directors who was appointed to the board due to the resignation of Russ Howry for health reasons. We thank Russ for his service and send well wishes for improved health. Mike closed the business meeting at 10:05 AM.

In old business, the November auction was successful and went very smoothly. Those of you who frequently attend that every now and then we must track down a lot that may have gone to the wrong buyer, but we can report that this auction had no such issues!

The Holiday Party was well attended at the new venue, however the feedback was consistent that the space could be a little more festive. Several ideas such as more festive décor, better table

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR – UPCOMING EVENTS

#### February 14th – Desert Division Meeting

9:00 AM – Paradise Valley United Methodist Church – 4455 E Lincoln Dr, Paradise Valley, AZ  
Meeting in Room H-1

#### February 21 – TCA Rio Grande Model Train Swap Meet

9:00 AM to 2:00 PM - Netherwood Church, Albuquerque, NM  
5101 Indian School Rd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110

#### March 14th – Desert Division Meeting

9:00 AM – Paradise Valley United Methodist Church – 4455 E Lincoln Dr, Paradise Valley, AZ  
Meeting in Room H-1

#### March 14th – Railfair

8:00 AM to 5:00 PM – Scottsdale-McCormick Railroad Park  
7301 E Indian Bend Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85250

spacing, and ugly sweater contest were discussed if we elect to return to the same location this year. Use of disposable dinnerware was also suggested to help with cleanup as this task mostly fell to our cook and treasurer, Mark Thompson. Of course, the food was outstanding.

The new venue, Living Streams Church, worked out very well for the November Train Show. It is the Division's goal to return to this venue for 2026. One change will include the Division utilizing the table rental company for setting up and tearing down tables. As we all know, none of us are getting younger and it was reported that with the few volunteers we have, having an outside group responsible for the tables completely will help with the success of this show immensely.

In new business, the annual Hudson Raffle was discussed. The Division does not currently have a 1964 postwar 773 to raffle off. Due to rules for non-profits, the maximum amount the Division can pay for this locomotive is \$699.99, which is below market value. The meeting attendees were asked for feedback on what might be a desirable raffle item, and many stated that a modern Lionel Hudson would be of interest. The Division will explore this idea and more information is forthcoming.

Railfair has been moved to Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup> and is a one-day event. Desert Division will be attending with the Division trailer. Setup is on Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>. This will likely be the last run of the trailer as the Division is looking to sell the trailer to free up storage space. This is also the same day as the Division meet, but if you have a raffle ticket pulled and you are volunteering at Railfair, you still will qualify for the \$100.00 cash prize.

The annual tri-club picnic is officially scheduled for April 4<sup>th</sup> at the Railroad Park. Location and times will be forthcoming in the March issue of the Dispatch.

For the educational segment of the meet, Kevin Brey gave a detailed presentation on maintenance of the MTH locomotives that run constantly on the Paradise & Pacific Layout. One of the challenges

specific to MTH locomotives is axle wear and the need to replace bushings. Parts are not available from MTH, but Kevin has found a source in the UK that has parts that can be modified to keep your locomotives running properly. He offered to provide part numbers to anyone who was interested.

Paul Wasserman brought a like new 1948 Lionel Scout set with all the original boxes. He explained that it was a replacement set for the original Lionel set given to him by his grandmother when he was 5 years old and sold at 15. When he got back into train collecting in 1973, he started searching for this set again and was able to find a suitable replacement.

Terry Haas presented a 3D printed G gauge auxiliary tender of which the prototype often runs behind Union Pacific's Big Boy. It was gift from friends for his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and it took 6 months to complete. Terry also discussed his recent appearance on Channel 12 that featured one of his open houses for his many train layouts.

Christie Wilson presented a Christmas Tree ornament that featured a train. She talked about intentionally bringing something small as the usual educational segment presenters bring larger items.

Jonathan Peiffer presented three variations on the new Siemens Chargers recently produced by 3<sup>rd</sup> Rail. The real locomotives are currently still in production and are replacing Amtrak's current fleet of GE Genesis locomotives. Two variations were presented with the SC-44 commuter version and the ALC-42 version used on Amtrak's long-distance trains.

Chris Allen closed out the educational segment with a "bottom of the box" story. As part of a recent consignment of trains to Desert Division, there was a wooden train that he initially thought was junk and planning on disposing of. After some research he was surprised to find that this was a highly collectible wooden car by R. Bliss from circa 1880. Great catch on Chris's part! It sold well at the Souper Bowl Auction!

## JANUARY 10<sup>TH</sup> MEET PHOTOS



An R. Bliss Wooden Pull Train from Circa 1880!



Terry Haas's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday Present, a 3D printed auxiliary tender.



A table full of interesting items for the educational segment.



A well-attended January meet!



Christie Wilson showing off her new Christmas Tree ornament.



Scott Russel was the winner of the 50-50 raffle and once again donated his winnings back to the Division. Thanks Scott!

## SOUPER-BOWL AUCTION PHOTOS



*Many thanks to the cooks who created all the wonderful soups for the auction!*



*Lots of trains for sale!*



*A hall full of trains of all eras ready for auction.*



*Peter getting ready to give "the speech". If you attend these auctions, you know it by heart.*



*Bidding got interesting on several items.*



*A good crowd of bidders.*

## MINUTES JANUARY 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2026 TCADD BOARD MEETING AT MARK THOMPSON'S HOME

**In attendance:** Mike Dietrich, Mark Thompson, John Craft, Paul Wassermann, Steve Bienstock and Angelo Lautazi. On the phone: Chris Allen and Art Lites.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

**Membership:** The Desert Division has 108 members and the Rio Grande Chapter has 64. Division total is 172.

**Treasurer's Report:** Checking \$7346.30, Savings \$499.13, Paypal \$370.12, Ebay Acct \$1611 and Wells Fargo \$25991.93.

### **Old Business:** Recap

- Train Show Nov22: the new location at Living Streams church was well received by the vendors. Notes for the next show: 1) need a PA for announcements, 2) have the table rental company set the tables, 3) more raffle prizes and, 4) raise the table sales to \$30 per table.
- The November Auction went smoothly without issues.
- The Christmas Party: most feedback was positive. Food was terrific but the room needed more Christmas décor.
- Mike will ask the members at the Saturday meet for their feedback. Steve suggested that we consider a cocktail venue instead of a sit-down dinner.

### **New / Ongoing Business**

- The Board welcomed Steve Bienstock to the Board as a Director. Steve is replacing Russell Howry who stepped down for health reasons.
- At the Saturday meet we will conduct our annual business meeting as required by TCA National.
- The Souper Bowl auction will be held on Sat. Jan. 31st. Chris will have a signup sheet for the volunteers to list the soups they will bring.
- Railfair's new date is Sat. March 14th, and it is a one-day event. We will set the trailer up on Friday. We will still have our regular meeting that Saturday.
- The Annual Picnic will be on Sat. April 4th at the Railroad Park.
- Trailer Sale – the Board still wants to sell the trailer. We will create a sales offering and use Facebook, Craigslist and Ebay to advertise the sale.
- Hudson Raffle – we do not have a Hudson to raffle currently. Do we continue searching for one or switch to a 50/50 raffle. Last year the club netted just \$200 on the raffle.
- We will not auction an Atlas car at this meeting.
- We reviewed the dates for this year's events. Mike will contact the church to schedule the April meet.
- The next elections should be held in the Fall and officers would start their new terms in 2027.

Board meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

The next Board Meeting on Wednesday Feb 11, 2026, will be at Mike Dietrich's home.

**Minutes submitted by: Secretary, Angelo Lautazi**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

What did you score at the Soup-er Bowl Auction? It was a great auction with lots of out-of-town bidders. I hope you were able to go home with a treasure or two (or maybe an autoloader...)

I'd like to highlight a few amazing events in the valley in February. Despite being the month that's shortened by a day or two, we have the golf tournament, and pitchers and catchers reporting for Spring training and weather that makes our friends and family across the nation jealous. The Desert Division is busy at this time of year as we are back to our regular meetings and planning for the Picnic and new Rail Fair date!

Its dues season and I hope you will take the time to renew both your TCA and Desert Division (\$15/year and you can pay up to 5 years in advance) dues. The Board works tirelessly to make sure you receive maximum value for your membership. This year we are redoubling our efforts to continue to offer auctions, a fantastic Train Show/Meet, a picnic, and a fun Holiday Party. As we did last year, we will make all these events "can't miss". If you're reading this newsletter, it's the season of love so we would love for you to attend our meetings, the picnic, an auction, the Train Show and the Holiday Party. Showing up to these events can help rekindle the friendships and the spark of why you joined the hobby. The Division is not about trains, it's about people.

### Ear to the rail:

- February 8<sup>th</sup>: Regular meeting and member sales tables
- March 14<sup>th</sup>: Regular meeting and member sales tables with Rail Fair!
- April 4<sup>th</sup>: Annual tri-club picnic at the McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park
- April 12<sup>th</sup>: We will have a regular meeting in H-1

As I will close each newsletter, I hope to welcome you to one of our events or meetings and I'd like to add two more "C's" to the Chamber of Commerce slogan: Collecting and Camaraderie, as the latter is what keeps us going!

### February's education segment: What train is your newest love?



## DESERT DIVISION BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022-2026

President:	Mike Dietrich	623-572-3538	Directors:	Art Lites	505-463-1951
Vice-President:	John Craft	480-785-2432		Terry Haas	602-319-0499
Secretary:	Angelo Lautazi	480-580-5950		Russ Howry	864-419-9354
Treasurer:	Mark Thompson	307-631-4474		Paul Wassermann	480-949-1620

## LIONEL'S MODEL RAILROAD PRINTING KIT

By Bruce J Brown TCA #95-41451

In November of 1953, this ad appeared in the Sunday Funnies throughout the country. At the lower right of the page, it had an enticing offer.

Great Day in the Morning!..

LIONEL TRAINS ...WITH MAGNETRACTION

SPECIAL BIG-3 OFFER! ALL FOR ONLY 50¢

NEW TRACK LAYOUT PRINTING KIT  
PLUS SET OF EIGHT FULL-COLOR BILLBOARDS  
WITH THE NEW 1953 LIONEL CATALOG...40 PAGES IN FULL COLOR

LIONEL TRAINS, P. O. Box 9, Dept. P, N. Y. 46, N. Y.

I enclose 50¢ for Big-3 Coupon offer above.  10¢ for Catalog

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zone \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

St. Louis Post Dispatch, November 15, 1953

You get a Track Layout Printing Kit, eight billboards and the 1953 catalog for just sending in 2 quarters. Unbelievable deal!

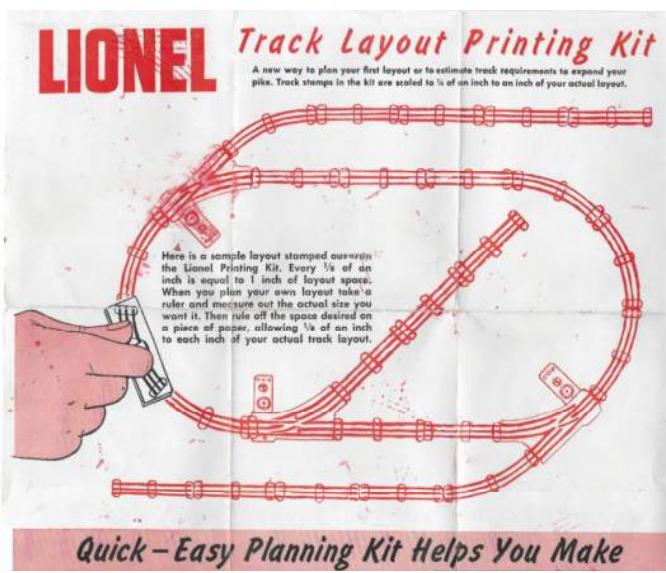
Lionel tried to come up with a simple tool—more of a sales gimmick-- to ostensibly help youngsters plan out their dream layout. Of course, the real Lionel intent was to kindle kids' interest so they would beg their parents for a train set at Christmastime.

I was one of the many who mailed off the two quarters. Here is what arrived:



(My original kit was lost through the annals of time, but this is one I purchased at York.)

Here are the instructions...



There were stamps for both O and O-27 to include straight, curved, half sections, and crossovers. The clear plastic stamp was supposed to make it easy to visualize and connect the track sections. In truth, I never recall printing a complete layout. It must have been too challenging for a 7-year-old to get the tracks properly aligned and properly fit. Nevertheless, it was a product I always remembered.

The printing kit never appeared in the 1953 catalog nor any other Lionel catalog. Nothing more was advertised or said about the kit until, strangely, five years later.

In newspapers ads from local Lionel sellers throughout the country, ads like this appeared in December 1958:



Baltimore Evening Sun, December 11, 1958

The kits were given away for free without buying anything. Obviously, Lionel manufactured more kits in 1953 than they could sell and warehoused the rest. Someone at Lionel thought up a way to jettison the surplus supply, short of throwing them in the dumpster. Lionel apparently shipped the boxes to most of its sellers throughout the country.

Today, you can still find plenty of these kits all over eBay or Etsy. Some are in unopened boxes without an address. Those are probably the giveaways from 1958.



# Desert Division Membership Form



Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ TCA No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues are \$15.00 per year. (Members may pay up to 5 years in advance). No. of Yrs.  X\$15.00=

A Desert Division Badge is \$18.00 (optional):

The Desert Division Newsletter, "The Dispatch", will be sent to your email address.

Make your check payable to: **TCA - Desert Division**

**Total \$=**

Mail your check to the Division Secretary:

**Angelo Lautazi**, Div. Secretary 6109 E Sonoran Trl Scottsdale, AZ 85266

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member or Applicant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please Indicate Your Hobby Preferences from the Categories Below. Check All that Apply.**

**TRAIN ERA**

- 1. Pre-war (1850-1942)
- 2. Pre-war (1945-1969)
- 3. Pre-war (1970-present)
- 4. Scale / NMRA
- 5 Standard
- 6. G or #1
- 7. O or O27 Tinplate
- 8. S
- 9. HO
- 10. OO
- 11. N
- 12. Z
- 13. Live Steam

**MANUFACTURER**

- 14. American Flyer
- 15. Lionel
- 16. Marx/Mars/Allstate
- 17. Ives
- 18. Dorfan/Fandor
- 19. MTH
- 20. Williams
- 21. K-line
- 22. AMT/Kusan
- 23. Other-please specify
- 23A. Basset/Lowke
- 23B. Bing
- 23C. Boucher
- 23D. Bub/Karl
- 23E. Buddy-L
- 23F. Carlisle/Finch
- 23G. Elletren
- 23H. Hafner
- 23I. Hoge
- 23J. Hornby
- 23K. Issmayer
- 23L. LGB
- 23M. Marklin
- 23Q. Plasticville
- 23R. Littletown/Skyline
- 23S. Pride Lines
- 23T. REA/Aristo-Craft
- 23W. Voltamp
- 23X. Weaver
- 23Y. McCoy

**PERIPHERALS**

- 26. Figures/Vehicles
- 27. Toys
- 28. Paper/Books
- 29. Buildings
- 30. Railroadiana
- 24.YES
- 25.NO

**Do You Have a Layout?**

RAILROAD



- CHANGE



**ARENELL SERVICE & REPAIR - FACTORY AUTHORIZED MTH AND LIONEL SERVICE.....1825 E. LAUREL ST. MESA AZ 85203.**  
CALL RAY 602-565-6603 FOR SERVICE APPOINTMENT. [ARENELL@AOL.COM](mailto:ARENELL@AOL.COM) TCA#97-45797 Repairs on Postwar Lionel, MPC, LTI as well as MTH "O" Gauge and "G" Gauge. Certified MTH upgrade center Discounts to members of all local clubs. I pay cash for train collections old or new, large or small. VISA & M/C

**BUILDING A LAYOUT?** - We can furnish all GarGraves products at discount prices. Flex and sectional track, uncoupling tracks, and accessories in all gauges; the new 072 and 100" and 042 switches; DZ1000, Rix, and Tortoise switch motors, Acme controls, NJ signals, and the new Z Stuff optical crossings. For a list, contact Peter Atonna 928-636-4228 or e-mail at [mjatonna@gmail.com](mailto:mjatonna@gmail.com)

**THE TRAIN STATION** - Mountain Lakes, NJ. Top 10 Authorized Lionel and AF Sales and Service since 1974. New, Used, Bought, Sold, Repaired. 973-263-1979 [www.train-station.com](http://www.train-station.com).

**WANTED:** New or used Hallmark ornaments, vintage toys, & collectibles. I buy collections large or small. Give me a call and lets chat. Renee Schornack (TCA Rio Grande Chapter) 505-720-5953.

**FOR SALE:** Lionel 38071 SP Cab Forward 4-8-8-4 Brand new, never run \$750. Lionel 51008 Burlington Pioneer Zephyr brand new, never run \$900. Lionel 38014 D&RG Challenger 4-6-6-4 OB \$750. Lionel Prewar STD Gauge #10 set, Peacock, 332, 339, 341 cars. Individual boxes and set box \$325. Lionel Prewar STD Gauge #8 set, Red, 337, 338 cars plus transformer. Individual boxes and set box \$250. Lionel Santa Fe 2333-20 P X AB Diesel, battery compartment clean. Individual boxes and set box \$250. Chet Henry 480-532-3065 or [bchenry@cox.net](mailto:bchenry@cox.net).

**FOR SALE:** TRACK SALE - New: Case of GarGraves phantom rail track, 50 sections OB, \$350 (retail \$635); case of Midwest cork roadbed, 25 pieces OB, \$50 (retail \$75). Can be shipped at actual shipping costs. Peter Atonna [mjatonna@gmail.com](mailto:mjatonna@gmail.com)

**FOR SALE:** TMK Lionel Prewar 0 & Standard 1900-43, Lionel Postwar 1945-69 TM Lionel 1970-89, 3-Rail price guide, Lionel 1901-95, Lionel 1970-1992, Lionel 1901-1997 each \$20, Greenberg's Repair & Operating Manual 736 pages \$30, Lionel Train Book 131 pages \$20, Hess Toy Truck & Racer 1997 \$15, Southern Crescent Limited 9530-34 new \$75, MDH Track Layout & Accessory Manual 64 pages \$20, MDH Operating 0&027 Trains 237 pages \$20. Dan Martin 520-360-0519 [dannieaz@cox.net](mailto:dannieaz@cox.net)

**FOR SALE:** Lionel Model Builder magazine, complete run #1 thru #80 (1937-1949) plus the pre-release Sample Copy of Lionel Model Engineering. All with covers, no cut-outs; \$495 + S/H, or I'll bring to DD meet. Tim Halchuck, Fountain Hills, AZ. Cell 213-700-5455 or email [tim@sound-sources.com](mailto:tim@sound-sources.com)

**FOR SALE:** MTH Premier 20-20340-1 DC-3 w/PS3 \$300, MTH MT-6019 UP Four Car aluminum passenger set \$100, MTH 20-6538 Five car ABS passenger set \$150 -- PayPal & credit cards - Chris Allen 480-820-9559 [sparkyshome@cox.net](mailto:sparkyshome@cox.net)

**WANTED:** for my collection. Lionel prewar and postwar engines in master cartons, scarce separate sale items such as Lionel scrapers, bulldozers, boxed autos, Lionel 6464-700 Santa Fe, -900 New York Central, -250 Western Pacific, -450 Great Northern boxcars in Type III body molds, mint freight cars in high grade original boxes, 6414 Autoloaders with autos in yellow, brown, or kelly green with grey bumpers, following cars in separate sale boxes: 6352 Culvert car, 6352-1 PFE icing car, 3460-25 Piggyback car, any rare Lionel items. Bill Sivley 281-804-3629 or [mrwls911@yahoo.com](mailto:mrwls911@yahoo.com)

**WANTED:** VHS Tapes, Lionel - The Great Years 1955 & 1956 by Joe Algozzini/Don Varda (I have 1954) - Marx 51100 Southern Double Deck Auto Carrier or Flat Cars with trailers/tractors, Marx E-7's - 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 \*\***

# This car has landed!



From the award winning Saddle Mountain Brewing Company Home of the Taildragger and those stationed at nearby Luke Air Force

The Desert Division is offering this Atlas 0 Master series 3 bay cylindrical hopper in a custom run of 125 cars

**BUY YOURS NOW: ONLY \$79.95!**  
ships to you now!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity @79.95, \_\_\_\_\_ Shipping @\$15 for one \_\_\_\_\_ or \$20 for two \_\_\_\_\_

Pick up at a meeting \_\_\_\_\_, no shipping cost: Enclosed: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Make checks to: Desert Division and mail to:  
Desert Division

25375 N. Feather Mountain Rd.

Paulden, AZ 86334

You can order online: go to [TCADD.org](http://TCADD.org)



# TCA Rio Grande Chapter

Invites you to a

## MODEL TRAIN SWAP MEET

BUY \* SELL \* SWAP

Trains, scenery, track, collector's items from Lionel, American Flyer, K-Line, MTH, Marx, Hallmark, HO, O, and S Gauge & other scales too.

# Saturday, February 21, 2026

## Netherwood Park Church of Christ

5101 Indian School Road NE, Albuquerque, NM

### See our Modular "O" Gauge Train Layout

**SCHEDULE:** Setup : Building opens at 7 am (Member Swap 8am to 9am) Meet Opens to Public@ 9am  
Meet closes 2pm

**RESERVATIONS:** Size 6' long tables, chairs provided. **Tables reserved by submitting the form below with a check made out to TCA Rio Grande Chapter and mailed to the swap meet coordinator by February 14, 2026. Reservation forms submitted after the deadline are subject to an additional \$5 late fee per table.**

**GENERAL GUIDELINES:** Tables assigned by the Meet Coordinator and special requests treated on a first come first served basis; Electrical setup provided as requested. Vendors will please set up for the entire Swap Meet. We will do everything possible to make the event a pleasant experience for vendors as well as the general public.

**Swap Meet Coordinator :** Scott Eckstein 505-270-0516

10805 Snowheights Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112

NAME..... TCA##.....

ADDRESS.....

PHONE..... EMAIL.....

TCA MEMBER #TABLES..... @ \$15.00 EA.....

Non MEMBER #TABLES..... @ \$20.00 EA.....

I hereby agree to be bound by the rules of the TCA Train Meet in regards to buying, selling, ethics and behavior. In case of dispute the Meet Coordinator shall arbitrate the dispute.

Signed.....

**DEADLINE: February 14, 2026**