

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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CONGRATULATIONS, CONVENTIONEERS

by Gordon Wilson, TCA 76-10233

Sunday, July 5, 2009, 10:30 PM brought to a conclusion one of the most unique TCA Conventions EVER! What began on a Tuesday afternoon in mid-November of 2001, a scant few weeks after one of America's "darkest" days, concluded on a moonlit evening at a luxury resort in America's 5th largest city, Phoenix, Arizona.

Two close friends had just concluded a round of golf at the brand new Arnold Palmer designed Wildfire Course when an artist's conception of a new, yet to be built J. W. Marriott Resort was noticed near the temporary clubhouse. These friends, Paul Wassermann and Gordon Wilson, were also Past TCA Presidents and members of the 2009 Desert Division 55th TCA National Convention Steering Committee. Three days later, Paul had a tentative contract. At the time of the original agreement, there was one golf course, an artist's conception of the resort, and acres of barren, flat Sonoran Desert near the North Phoenix/Scottsdale border. Intuition, faith, and progressive thinking, the three main ingredients of the Desert Division, resulted in what we're sure the 900 plus attendees to the 55th Annual TCA Convention, an experience based on Southwestern Hospitality, will remember as an experience that will rank among the finest of its kind, ever!

Nearly 80 years ago, Sir Winston Churchill spoke to his nation under far different circumstances and said, "Never have so many owed so much to so few." The five-member Convention Steering Committee of the Desert Division can confidently repeat those words to the 20 Committee Chairs for the fine work done by them and their "worker bees." Without their tireless efforts and sleepless nights, many things which the conventioners came to take for granted just never would have happened. To say Thank You or Gracias seems so inadequate for the job that was done, but that is all we have. Please accept the public Thank You from a very grateful Steering Committee. Once again, the Desert Division has shown the TCA that at least in the case of Conventions, size does not make a difference. The Desert Division is one of TCA's smallest (member wise) Divisions. We are pleased to be of service to the TCA and some younger members are already looking forward to the next Convention to be hosted here in the Valley of the Sun, sometime in the future. The gauntlet has been tossed!

This was truly a TCA Convention of firsts, the most obvious of which is that it was held over a major Holiday weekend, specifically July 4, Independence Day, which led to our mottos of "Celebrate America" and "A Star Spangled Convention." TCA Conventions are always held in fine upscale facilities' however, none has ever been held in a World Class Resort. The J. W. Marriott Desert Ridge Resort and Spa is synonymous with luxury: from your very first step into its "larger-than-life" lobby until you walk into your oversized room, each with a patio or balcony and a scenic view, magnificent bathroom, storage space, bedding, and a 27" plasma flat-screened TV.

The Welcome Party featured nearly as many silent auction items for the spouse or family member as it did for the TCA member. There were docents and DVD's on every tour, no matter how long or short. In lieu of a riverboat trip, we treated our group of merry makers to a Southwestern Fiesta – a sumptuous repast of American and Mexican food followed by a combination American/Mexican Rodeo, while a Mariachi band entertained the crowd.



J. W. Marriott Desert Ridge Resort and Spa,
as seen from the Lazy River.

Now for some Banquet firsts. A large 48-star American flag was draped above the head table. It had been rescued from a U. S. Navy World War II Battleship. After the Pledge of Allegiance to that “battle worn” ensign led by Major General and Past TCA President Robert Davenport, another first presented itself in the person of Rory Majenty, Public Relations Officer of the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, whose tribal lands are located near the resort. He first gave the invocation in his native tongue, Yavapai, and then translated it for the masses on hand for the Convention’s closing Banquet.

Angela Trotta-Thomas has donated framed prints and lithographs of her art work to countless TCA Conventions in the past. Never has she created a new, one of a kind, oil painting for a Convention. The Desert Division was able to impose upon Angela to make an exception, which she did and for which we are grateful. Some very spirited bidding from this “Celebrate America” oil developed between two former Desert Division Presidents, Gordon Wilson and Fred Hunter. Fred emerged as the successful bidder, so this first ever oil painting for a TCA Banquet will be staying in The Valley of the Sun.

Now for a synopsis of the whole Convention. I hope these brief recollections will help cement your own experiences between June 28 and July 5, 2009. The Desert Division thanks everyone who attended and in any way contributed to this outstanding team effort. Sit back, relax, read on, and Remember!

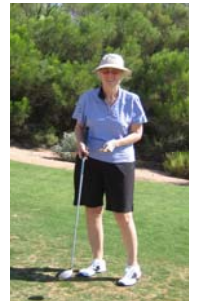
As a member of the Steering Committee of the 2009 TCA National Convention, I guess it would be considered somewhat prejudiced if I were to say I think we outdid ourselves from 1997, and by nearly everyone’s account, our first Convention in 1997 was the bell weather by which all subsequent TCA Conventions have been measured. I guess that means this one was even better than that one. If it wasn’t, it wasn’t because we didn’t try to make it so. What began as a family adventure in a five-star resort, the J. W. Marriott Desert Ridge Resort and Spa, would end as a memorable vacation for families from around the country.

Buses didn’t break down. They didn’t get lost, and everyone was on time with plenty of time to spare. We started the Convention with a baseball game at Chase Field between the Diamondbacks and the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. Chase Field is very unique, what with its swimming pool, retractable roof, and mega choices of foods ranging from Philly Cheese Steaks to Sushi, and nearly everything in between. Another group of Conventioneers headed north for a ghost town high in the mountains north of our Territorial Capital, Prescott, and then descended into the Verde Valley for a wonderful ride on the Verde Canyon Railway, where they were treated to all manner of native Arizona wildlife, including some nesting Bald Eagles and a herd of wild horses.



Richard Tashjian
shot the best
round of golf.

The next day, Monday, June 29, busloads of persons were delighted to feast their eyes on America’s largest and most magnificent “hole in the ground,” *better known to the rest of the world as the Grand Canyon, some 10 million years* in the making and still not finished. Each movement of a cloud brings a new and spectacular view never before seen upon the mile deep canyon walls of this, the most visited of America’s National Parks and one of the TRUE natural wonders of the world. Getting there on the old Santa Fe railway line is only half the adventure. It is one thing to see it on the Discovery Channel – quite another to experience it up close and personal with friends and fellow members of the TCA. A few folks stayed around to play a round of golf in the TCA Convention Tournament. Everyone was a winner, with Richard Tashjian having the best scratch score and Lynne Martin and Bill Kotek tied for best adjusted score under the Callaway Handicap System.



Lynne Martin
tied for best
adjusted score.

It continued like this all week long. Trip after trip, tour after tour. Folks toured Luke Air Force Base, noted for its association with the NASA Space Program. Those with a scientific mind enjoyed the Challenger Space Museum, with its space mission challenge appropriate for adults. The Heard Museum houses one of the finest collections of artifacts and informed docents regarding our Native American Heritage and available only in Phoenix, Arizona. It truly is a world class facility – if you took this trip you surely know why, now!

Phoenix is also home to one of only two edifices devoted to firefighting in the whole of the USA. Fire apparatus dating back to the 17th Century right to the present will give you a true appreciation for those men and women who daily risk their lives so that others may live. A visit to the Hall of Flame contains not just fire trucks, but a touching memorial to the men and women who gave their all on September 11, 2001. Meteor Crater and the La Posada Hotel, one of only two remaining operating Harvey Houses from the heyday of the Santa Fe Railroad, combined a natural wonder with the opulence of a bygone era.

Peter Atonna's layout is legendary. A trip north to see it and three others was the first to sell out. Western art, antiques galore, complete collections, and a vivid imagination gave folks more to view in one day than most see in a month. Lunch, catered by a local civic group, was served in Peter's barn, freshly cleaned and ready, decorated for a Fourth of July celebration. Other attractions took folks south to Tucson. Here the world-famous Arizona Sonoran Desert Museum featured native flora and fauna. A photo stop at the "Dove of the Desert," Mission San Javier del Bac, preceded an afternoon of playing with trains at Tucson's largest miniature railroad, the Toy Train Operating Museum. What a wonderful way to spend a day!

Wednesday night's Welcome Party was unlike any other ever – not only were there wonderful trains and model railroad accessories, but there were dozens of items for the spouses and children of the TCA members to bid on – things from all over the world: leather goods, jewelry from Austria, silken items from China, dolls from the Caribbean, blown glass from Central America, original oil and water color paintings of trains with wonderful matting and frames. Why, there was even a tool box filled with hundreds of dollars worth of brand new tools. On top of that, there were plenty of tables and chairs to sit and kibitz with attendees, both past acquaintances and new found friends, while casually sipping a beverage and consuming some Fourth of July "fare" like hamburgers, hot dogs, chili, and other normally expected holiday goodies.

The next day was a cacophony of events from which to choose, including several G Gauge layouts in Mesa, Arizona, which must have been an illusion to many who imagined a "garden layout" as just that - a single train running through a little garden. Who would have ever thought about a 110 car consist being pulled over several acres by a plethora of GP-7's? Those who were even more adventurous set out on their own to visit the Open House offerings. Several local members hosted guests at their homes, while the Scottsdale Railroad Park and its three clubs provided non-stop toy train activity.



Frank Lloyd Wright was alive and well that day too! His school for budding Architects in Scottsdale was topped off by a visit to a layout with approximately 700 figures doing various things, including a group of dogs lined up waiting their turn at the town's ONLY fire hydrant. Others ventured to the most beautiful part of Arizona, Sedona with its unusual red rocks and the exciting Pink Jeep Tour. After a box lunch, folks could enter Tlaquepaque for up-scale shopping before heading back up tree-lined Oak Creek Canyon. Cameras were operating non-stop. Many people were ready to call it a day, but most were just warming up, as a jaunt south took them to the Corona Ranch and a Mexican Fiesta, complete with a joint American/Mexican Rodeo. Keeping everyone in fine spirits for the whole evening was a 5-piece Mexican Mariachi Band.

Though the trading pits were open on Friday, several attendees took advantage of the tour offerings for the family. Out of Africa is a wildlife theme park with a zoo, safari caravans, chances to feed the animals, and "Tiger Splash," the only act of its kind, with tigers cavorting in the pool with their trainers for an afternoon of fun. Another activity was the Gourmet Cooking Class, with a selection of fine offerings that folks could create and then eat. The children loved the Challenger Space Museum, with its program for youth. Those conventioners with children found entertainment in the Kids Club Room, filled with everything from Brios to games and puzzles, as well as a child-high layout for the "youngens" to operate.

The Public Display area was filled with layouts appropriate for everyone from the very young to the seasoned toy train lover. New Mexico was represented with a "child-friendly" layout and a game for the kids to find various items. Our own Division Module, with steps for the younger children to stand on (made by our own Bryan Rench), was a popular two-day attraction. The S-Gaugers had their module going full tilt, with trains and scenery to thrill both the members and the general public. Lionel had a 20' x 20' layout and display, manned full-time by their personnel to answer any questions about new production for 2009.



Friday and Saturday saw many persons visit our Public Display Room, which contained many extremely sought after pieces. Among these were the famous Ives White Passenger Set and an even rarer Boucher Blue Comet Passenger Set. All the way from New Jersey came a Lionel 2 7/8" #300 Trolley Car from 1903, presumably the oldest item at the Convention. If you thought that, you were wrong. In one of the cabinets, if you looked closely, you would have seen the only known copy of the very first Lionel 1900 Catalog. Ironically, it contains not a single Toy Train item, although it was later that year that J. L. Cowen put together his famous "cigar box" looking train running

in a Department Store window, allegedly advertising the items in its box. The problem was that the “buyers” wanted the train, not the boxes of soap and batteries and whatever else was for sale. Thus was born the Electric Lionel Train – a pretty good electrical toy accident, wouldn’t you say? In that same case was the 1915 very first Lionel prototype Passenger O Gauge Set, pulled by a #703 Electric Locomotive. The large cabinet contained just about every Lionel toy train item made in 1971. Why 1971? Well, that is the year the Desert Division of the TCA was granted full Division Status. If you bought a Lionel train that year, what was in that case is what you would have been buying. Looking out the door of this hallway, it would have been easy to compare the Lionel exhibit of 2009 with the Lionel catalog items of 1971 and wonder how they ever made it to where they are today.

Friday night is traditionally Layout Tour night for TCA Conventions. We had four different tour offerings. Those interested in Live Steamers went to the northwest to see exhibits running the gamut from an HO layout to the trains one can actually sit on. A second trip went north east to see the Cole Gibbs collection, plus two layouts which had been filmed just a month earlier for a Rails Ahead program, featuring Hi-Rail and S Gauge. A third bus headed for Fountain Hills to see Ken Burling’s house-sized layout, Gordon Wilson’s complete Post-War collection, and Paul Wassermann’s classic collection of Pre-War treasures in the “ultimate train room,” a sunken room overlooked by a 1950’s bar and a Lionel Binnacle from a World War II ship. The fourth trip made a circuit of the Scottsdale area, where Fred Hunter, Tom Stange, and Paul Wassermann exhibited what can be done in a large setting.



The Banquet on Saturday night was a huge success. A large 48-star flag from a World War II Battleship was draped behind the head table and saluted in our Pledge of Allegiance by Major General Robert Davenport. A Native American, Rory Majenty, Public Relations Officer of the nearby Fort McDowell/Yavapai Indian Nation, gave the Invocation, and dinner commenced. After some introductions, the concluding Banquet Auction began and the bidding was quite spirited from beginning to end.

Angela Trotta-Thomas created a first-ever Original Oil Painting for the 55th Annual TCA National Convention. Entitled CELEBRATE AMERICA, it depicted the Desert Southwest in its cowboy heyday, complete with stagecoach, Santa Fe Engine, and the Lionel Celebrate America wavy flag Mint Car (a Desert Division fund-raiser). From the beginning of the bidding, it was evident that the painting was going to stay in the Valley of the Sun. Two serious bidders emerged, Gordon Wilson and Fred Hunter. When all was said and done, Fred was the winning bidder by a scant margin. The two men shook hands and the Banquet ended, but not the Convention.



There was still one more trip. Just as the 1997 TCA Convention had ended with a Sunday trip to the Verde Canyon Railroad, so would the 2009 Convention. At 9:00 AM on Sunday, July 5, 2009, the final two buses of the 55th TCA National Convention pulled out of the J. W. Marriott Desert Ridge Resort and Spa and headed for northern Arizona. The train ride, again, did not disappoint. The scenery was as spectacular as ever and the Bald Eagles made several appearances for our guests. Instead of a ghost town on this trip, we opted for some cowboy “Hi-Jinks.”

At dinner that evening, the guests were treated to some superb Western “grub” at the Blazin’ M Ranch in Cottonwood, Arizona. Concluding the meal was a fine show of Tall Tales, hilarious stories, and even funnier skits, plus some wonderful Country & Western music performed by a quintet of very talented musicians. We even came very close to getting Nancy Swan married off to a really “handsome” dude who had a voice like an Angel – literally! He had recently retired from the Broadway (as in New York City) stage.

When the buses arrived back at the Resort at 10:30 PM, everyone aboard agreed that it had been a spectacular Convention, about the best they’d ever attended, AND they couldn’t wait until next June 20 when they’d all meet again in Baltimore’s Inner Harbor.



**A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS
2009 TCA NATIONAL CONVENTION – SCOTTSDALE, AZ**



Peter Atonna's Layout in Paulden, Arizona

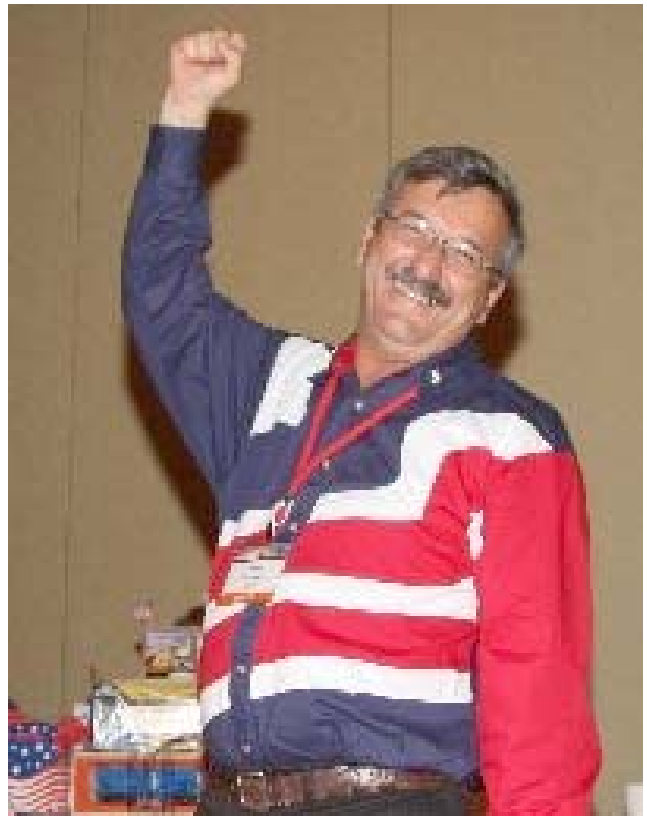


The Welcome Party live auction drew a huge, enthusiastic crowd.



Above: Convention Chair Bill Mack looks on as Rory Majenty offers the Invocation in his native language, Yavapai.

Right: The Star-Spangled Convention draws to a successful close, as indicated by Registration Chair, Chris Allen.



COMING UP...

JULY 25 "IN THE HEAT" MEET – Phoenix, AZ – 9 AM
AUGUST 15 "BEAT THE HEAT MEET" – Prescott, AZ – 9 AM
SEPTEMBER 12 - Regular Division Meet – Scottsdale, AZ – 9 AM
SEPTEMBER 19 – Rio Grande Chapter Meet – Albuquerque, NM – 10 AM
OCTOBER 10 – Regular Division Meet – Scottsdale, AZ – 9 AM
OCTOBER 10-11 – Railfair – McCormick Railroad Park – 9 AM
OCTOBER 15-17 – Eastern Division Meet – York, PA
NOVEMBER 1 – "PUMPKIN MEET" – Albuquerque, NM – 9 AM
NOVEMBER 28-29 – TURKEY MEET – Mesa, AZ – 9 AM

55th TCADD-KC CONVENTION FOLLOW-UP

By Thomas Plies, TCA #01-52481

Had it not been for the many volunteers, the Kids Club could not have been as fantastically successful as it was. With close to two years in the planning stages, many donations, time spent working out the details and then changing and tweaking them again, the Kids Club events rounded out to become a program full of fun activities, even fun for the big guys and gals. Kids Club started out with 22 events. After reality checks, the list was brought down to 16.

Located in the large Pinnacle Peak #2, at the Desert Ridge Resort & Spa, Scottsdale, AZ, the Kids Club room had three track layouts for running trains: one Polar Express with Christmas tree and accessories, one with Nania and Mickey Mouse flat cars, and third table with various engines and cars. Kids usually picked what they wanted to run but mostly trying their hand at each table. Golf was a big hit and every kid who played won something. At the Crafts table we showed families how to make telephone poles on a yard stick, Pay 5 cents Toilet door signs, and how to make billboards. Another table was set up for age group coloring and puzzles for prizes with all who entered winning something. We also had Brio for the little kids with funny train TV films for adults who monitored their mini-kids. Gummy candy bags and information kits were handed out as families left the room.

Following Rocky Mountain Division's idea of a Convention Car for Kids Club, we followed suit with our own Kids Club car, "Fang, the Rattle Snake." We enclosed our Snake freight car in a dome, to make kids feel safe, and placed it on a center table for all to see as they walked in door. There were only 200 made. You might find one on e-bay if you're lucky.

The Kid's Club Banquet was put on by the hotel. Parents checked out the food to make sure there wasn't anything their child should not have. All went well. Games for prizes, candy, funny train films, catalog kits, and framed train pictures for each child member were part of venue. Two signed big Brown "Cuboose" bears were awarded to winners. After two hours of eating and fun, kids were escorted down to the main dining hall. Their entrance was announced into the eating area by the auctioneer, to the delight of the kids and their parents.

A two-man TCA team, Jim Jackson and Jon Sprago, brought with them all the way from Albuquerque, NM, a 10' x 10' kid-sized train table. Those who wanted to, took a short quiz about the layout and received a prize.

Kids Club set up a sales table in the trading pits. The two day sale went well. Thanks to Barbara Turner and Scott Russell, they took in enough donations to almost buy two each 027/O train sets. These will be given out to charities like Ronald McDonald house, battered wives facilities, Children's Hospital, etc. Tom Davis from the east coast put together many hand-out kits and passed out candy.

A big plus for our Kids Club efforts was that we signed up as members two families. Seems they were so impressed with our kid's club activities, they joined immediately.



Jon Sprago at the Albuquerque Kids layout.



Sarah Russell operates the train.



Brios for the youngest fans.

PHOTOS NEEDED

Jonathan Peiffer is making a DVD of Convention photos. If you have any, please send them to him. All photos are welcome, including Registration, Kids Club, trip shots, poignant moments, just plain fun. Please include your name so Jonathan can assign credit for all the photographers.

HUMMER WOODS

by Gordon Wilson, TCA #76-10233

The title of this article is the name of a fine wooden toy company whose home base was in Arizona. Did you ever hear of it? Probably not, as the craftsman works in “Geppetto’s Workshop” (named for the wood craftsman in the story of Pinocchio) in his own home. I first ran across it at the world famous Fountain Hills (Arizona) Arts and Crafts Fair in 1993. I had just moved to Fountain Hills, and along with Christie, Cathy and Ron Kuhn, the four of us were walking up and down the aisles of this incredible venue. Twice a year (November and February) Fountain Hills’ population swells from 20,000 to roughly 175,000, as people from all over the USA flock here for this unique, upscale, superb quality craft fair. The vendors go through a tremendous “jury” before being accepted as the lucky ones who may sell or exhibit their wares at this all-weather, three-day event.

I’ve singled out Hummer Woods Company because most of you reading this know the proprietor and the man behind the making of the product – incredibly creative wooden toys aimed at “the child in each of us.” During a moment after our recent Convention Banquet, I happened to overhear what could have been interpreted as a semi-negative remark concerning one of the “give-away” items on each Banquet table – the centerpiece. A Division member was asked what she had “won” at the table and she replied, “Oh, just the centerpiece that (blank) made.” Had that centerpiece been for sale at the Fountain Hills Fair in the Hummer Woods sales booth, it would’ve been selling like the proverbial “hot cakes” for roughly \$45-\$75 each. Each one was handmade, each one was uniquely different although roughly similar, and each one was professionally crafted by an incredibly artistic man who is now retired and no longer goes to the Fountain Hills Fair as a vendor.



You know him as the Treasurer of the Desert Division, Robert “Bob” Herman, and it was his business, Hummer Woods, that my wife, friends, and I first discovered at that Fountain Hills Fair so many years ago. Bob has a wonderful, hidden talent, which folks like me can only dream about. This Division is indeed fortunate to have as members people like Bob, who are so creatively talented and willing to give and share their abilities for the benefit of all of us. Next time you see Bob, please thank him and his wife Joan for their continuing generosity to the Desert Division TCA.

My “Convention Centerpiece” will be prominently displayed. I hope yours is too.

WARD KIMBALL SAVES THE DAY

The story of the plate drawn by Ward Kimball that Gordon Wilson purchased at the March Nor-Cal Meet in Santa Clara, California, appeared in the April 2009 Dispatch. David Otth supplied us with the details of that plate.

TTOS Southwestern Division started Cal Stewart in 1971. In 1981 the California State Railroad Museum was approached for a major exhibit of Toy Trains by TTOS Southwestern Division. The Toy Train Historical Foundation funded the whole event, as that foundation was a 501C corporation allowing donations to support the exhibit. Each banquet was unique, but always first class and always a fundraiser. That particular year they needed about \$2K to cover the exhibit related costs and only one night to raise the funds. Talk about pressure! Richard Kughn had brought Lionel’s newest Santa Fe Train Set, complete with all the passenger cars as part of the display. Maury Kline had provided F-3 Santa Fe box car centerpieces for the 25 tables. Winners were selected by lottery, and extra cars sold for \$20 each to raise money.

After the winning raffle ticket for Lionel’s Santa Fe Set was pulled and before the number was read, they realized that they were down about \$1200 for the evening. Someone asked Richard Kughn whether the set was a donation. Kughn agreed, leaving then down only \$800. Ward Kimball was sitting next to Kughn and was asked to draw something to raise the needed \$800. He requested a dinner plate from the banquet, on which he drew a Mickey Mouse cartoon image. As he finished, it was offered for bid and brought \$400. Ward promptly did another one, which sold for the same amount. They had reached their goal. Ward continued to draw and the banquet ended with a roar. What a memorable evening – class, fun, charity, and all with key ingredients to make toy train collecting a great hobby.

At the 2009 TCA National Convention, another Ward Kimball impromptu drawing, donated to the Desert Division by Lou Redman’s daughter, Carol McGinnis, was offered as a Banquet Auction prize. Framing for that picture was done by Hang-Ups, a Fountain Hills frame shop. It too “saved the day,” as it caused spirited bidding and a sizable final bid. Thank you Carol and the late Ward Kimball for providing this memento of a bygone era.



JUNE MEET MINUTES

“A packed house” is the best way to describe the June Meet. After swapping trains and train tales, the business meeting began with the Treasurer’s report: \$12,143.30 in savings; \$4,526.30 in checking; and \$576.90 in the Trains for Kids program.

The Desert Division Module has had a few changes since it last ran. For the Convention it will be huge, requiring another set of Lionel TMCC Controls. Additionally, we have added a set of steps for kids to use so that they can better view the trains running on the Module. Thank you to Bryan Rench for making this for the Division.

The Division needs a couple of volunteers. The Election Committee will need a Chair, as this is the year we elect officers for the next two years. Also we need someone to publicize the Turkey Meet, a two-day swap meet. We need to bring in 500 additional members of the public to make this a “break-even” event. The Mesa Marriott is holding a room block for us at \$79 per night, for those who reserve rooms for the weekend after Thanksgiving by October 31, 2009.

Bill Mack, Convention Co-Chair announced that we are just two weeks away from the “Grand Opening” of the Convention. Ralph Treichel still needs volunteers to help with Security (checking badges at the doors of the Trading Pits), docents for some tours, and Kids Club. Bill has secured ice chests for us to use on the buses for the tours. After the Convention, members may buy these 17x17x28 ice chests for \$20 each. Chris Allen, Registration Chair, reminded folks that we will be setting up at the Hotel on Saturday, June 27. A few tours will take late-comers. These include the Garden Railroad tour and the Corona Ranch dinner and Rodeo. In the Trading Pits, there must NOT be any boxes on the floor in front of the tables, which will be skirted, by contract with the resort.

Terry Haas brought his scrapbook of photos of his Garden Layout. He encouraged folks to visit as part of the Convention Garden Railroad tour. His layout features Arizona and Ohio themes, while Dennis Serrine’s is huge, probably 15,000 square feet.

The Welcome Party Silent Auction is coming along nicely. There will be 4 tables of items, going off at half hour intervals, beginning at 7:30 PM. Two of the items for this auction are an Angela Trotta-Thomas print and the station repainted by Bob Dennison. President Elgar reminded everyone that the Welcome Party is not a dress-up affair, though the Banquet requires “Sunday Best” or Business Casual. The Vests are completed. Thank you to Katie and Ruth Elgar for spearheading this project. Vests may be borrowed during a volunteer’s tour of duty, or purchased for \$10 each.

August 15 is the “Beat the Heat” Meet, and the Grand Canyon Model Railroad Club is sponsoring a bus, at a cost of \$15 per child under 14 and \$30 per adult. Lunches are available at \$6 each. Anyone interested in using this mode of transportation should see Bill East.

July 11 is the Desert Division Mini-Meet. There will be no Hudson raffle drawing and there will be no after-meet visitation, but the rest of the events will go on as usual.

Due to the length of the Convention presentation, there was no “Educational” segment, so we proceeded directly to the raffles. Prizes were awarded as follows:

Bryan Rench	Lionelville Water Tower
Bob Dennison	Hudson ticket
Jack Eaton	Trains DVD & die-cast truck
Diane Martin	Lionel 6464-296 Erie Box Car
Jack Eaton	Trains DVD & figures
Diane Martin	K-Line Southern Box Car
Angelo Lautazi	<u>Trains Illustrated</u> and catalogs
John Wiley	<u>Lionel – Standard of the World</u>

Spring Raffle Prizes were awarded as follows:

Fred Hunter	TCA Bicentennial Special Set
Terry Haas	#164 Log Loader
Wayne Ross	1997 Convention Gondola

This month’s \$100 winner as part of the Hudson Raffle was Bob Herman.

The after-meet visitation for June, with food, was held at the Locke home in Mesa.



Bob Herman presents himself a \$100 bill.

SPRING RAFFLE PRIZE WINNERS



Fred Hunter won the TCA Bicentennial Special Set.



Terry Haas won the \$164 Log Loader.



Wayne Ross now owns a 1997 Convention Gondola.

JULY MINI-MEET MINUTES

New member Barbara Turner joined us for the mini-meet on July 11. The turnout was large, and most of the discussion centered around the recently completed TCA National Convention. A surprise from that Convention was the announcement that the Desert Division won a \$200 cash prize for recruiting the largest percent of new members, based upon its membership at the beginning of TCA National's Win Big campaign.

In a corner of the meeting room was a computer with a slide show of the Desert Division modules, as they ran during the Convention. Bill Mack offered a huge Thank You for all the hard work done by the members, their spouses and families. As they say in the military, "Job well done." Chris Allen announced that there are a few left-over Convention items available for sale, while Brad and Diane Martin continued to peddle Convention Store items. Anyone who wants a Convention shirt should contact Brad or Diane (480-837-1618) to place an order. Ladies – there are small shirts which will fit you. Medium, XL, and XXL are also available. Chris Allen read a letter from Past President Jim Burke stating many positive things about the Convention, calling it an exceptional production, concluding that the thing which impressed him most was that the Desert Division workers always had smiles on their faces. Ralph Treichel announced that we had three out-of-division helpers whose efforts on behalf of our Convention deserve a reward of some kind: Fred Claassen of Phenix, Alabama; Bob Carney of Plainville, Massachusetts; and Tom Davis of Garden City, New York.

Once again, it was announced that the Turkey Meet needs a Publicity Chair. Ads need to be placed in CTT, O-Gauge Railroading, and various web sites; fliers need to be created and circulated; and word of our two-day meet needs to be disseminated. Anyone who can help should see Katie Elgar, Chris Allen, or Gordon Wilson.

On the National scene, Katie Elgar announced the Bylaws changes which will be included in a ballot in the September National Headquarters News. Copies will be available before the vote is cast. Chris Allen talked about the major changes. 1. Members will no longer vote on whether or not to increase dues. 2. Memberships can be offered to commercial businesses, like Lionel, or special needs persons. 3. Everything which is Policy has been removed from the Bylaws, and they have changed to be in compliance with IRS laws. 4. The new fiscal year will be July 1 through June 30.

Another outcome of the Convention is that Australia and New Zealand have been approved to be part of the Desert Division. We have been in contact with some of the New Zealand collectors, who are eager to join with us.

The latest word from Lionel is that the Celebrate America Flag Mint Cars are made, but they haven't left China yet. We await word of their arrival. Peter Atonna is working on another Atlas Beer Car, and will have details for us at a Meet in the fall.

Upcoming events include the "In the Heat" Meet on July 25 at the Phoenix Baptist Church and "Beat the Heat" in Prescott, Arizona, on August 15. There will be a bus for those who want to ride to Prescott. The cost is \$30 per adult, \$15 per child under 14, with box lunches available for \$6 each. For more information, call Bill East (602-374-3255), Dave Brown (480-423-8725) or Katie Elgar (623-580-6957).

The Educational Segment started with Gordon Wilson, who announced that the DVD's in the Banquet Goodie Bags were donated by The Train Station, of which Don Shaw, a member of the Desert Division, is the owner. He then went on to explain the bidding on the Angela Trotta-Thomas original oil painting which was sold at the Banquet Auction. Though Gordon did not have the final bid, the painting DID stay in the Desert Division boundaries, with Fred Hunter being the highest bidder. Gordon had "covered his bets" by purchasing the original sketch paintings from which Angela made the final copy.



Jonathan Peiffer explains his 2-rail O-Gauge purchases.

Jonathan Peiffer brought in a few items which he gleaned from the Convention. These were 2-rail O-gauge items from the '30's, '40's, and '50's. Two were Walther's pieces and one was by Athearn. Jonathan's K-4 Pacific is actually 17/64th scale, which would be the correct scale side for the 1 1/4" track. It is a bit larger than today's items. Len Gordy, visiting from New Jersey, added that most commercial offerings of the '30's are 3-rail, and that 1 3/16" gauge is called Q scale. Proto 48 has very narrow wheel treads, and is truly authentic. This is a fascinating subject, worthy of more time than we have here.

Sarah Russell pulled the first winning raffle ticket. It belonged to Gordon Wilson. He selected a DVD and layout figures.

Other prizes are as follows:

Katie Elgar	Leatherman Tool Kit
Tom Stange	DVD & Touring Car
Jonathan Peiffer	Lionel NP Ore Car
Phil Todd	TCA Hat
Art Triant	Lionel Southern Box Car



Gordon Wilson won the first raffle prize at the July Mini-Meet.

REMINDER

by Peter Atonna TCA #75-7578

Now that the Convention is all done and we can resume a bit of normality, how about a weekend to kick back and just relax with some trains and a weekend getaway. How? Well, the "Beat the Heat" Meet is next up on the agenda and would make a great way to reward yourself for all the work you did in helping at the Convention – or in just attending for that matter. So, if you haven't yet, get your sales table reservation in and book a nice room for the weekend. Plan now to reward yourself with a couple of Prescott days. The flier (See Page 12) and article were in the last issue of the Dispatch, but if you need any additional information, just e-mail me at mjatonna@commspeed.net.

PROTOTYPE CAR FOR SALE

Due to a glitch in the Convention Banquet Auction, the Atlas Beer Car prototype is available for sale, at a minimum of \$250. Anyone interested in purchasing this car should call Marty Wik at 602-710-5667. He will accept the best offer over \$250 and see to it that this car is delivered to the highest bidder.



BOARD MEETING

The next meeting of the Desert Division Board of Directors will be held on Saturday, September 12, beginning at 7:30 AM at the Jaycees Hall. Members are welcome to attend.

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

If you want to enjoy the Dispatch in color, sign up for the Electronic Newsletter program. All we need is your name, TCA number, and e-mail address. Contact Christie Wilson (christie1wilson@aol.com) to arrange for your newsletter to be delivered via the internet, rather than the US Post Office.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings!

The 55th National TCA Convention brought a great many people to our Desert Southwest. We were able to showcase many natural tour attractions of our state, as well as a great number of places nearer to the Convention Hotel. A big thanks to all who volunteered to help in many ways and to all those who participated in the Convention. A Convention does not just happen by itself. Hosting a Convention depends on a great number of people who are willing to step up and pitch in when needed. And I thank you all for doing just that.

This was also the inaugural showcasing of the Division module. Thanks to Jonathan Peiffer and Dallas Dixon and their crew. They did some major work to come up with three awesome operating modules. The little ones seemed to enjoy standing on the stairs, made for us by Bryan Rench, as they watched for the trains coming around the bend!

Congratulations to the Desert Division, as once again we won in the Membership Drive Win-Big contest. We had the largest percentage increase (5.3%) in members. Keep up the good work! Share the fun of TCA membership with your friends and bring them to the next meeting with you.

The July mini-meet was very well attended by about 50 members who defied the warmer weather forecast, as well as the numerous street closures. A bit of train trading, visiting, and a garage sale, as well as brisk soda and water sales! Chris Allen shared some information on the upcoming proposed TCA National Bylaws revisions. They will come out in the mail to you in September. The next meeting of your Desert Division will be in September and the educational segment of the meeting will be "Something I found in the Trading Pits at the Convention." There will be a home to visit after the meet as well.

Don't forget the "Beat the Heat Meet" up in Prescott on August 15th. If you would like to ride the bus up there, contact myself, Bill East or Dave Brown for details.

Have a great summer and see you at the next Desert Division meeting!

Happy trains,



DESERT DIVISION - TCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 2008-9

President:	Katie Elgar	623-580-6957
Vice President:	Jonathan Peiffer	602-561-4131
Treasurer:	Bob Herman	480-948-2730
Secretary:	Fred Hunter	480-947-3639

RIO GRANDE CHAPTER NEWS

by Gregory Palmer TCA#94-39039

The Rio Grande Chapter has been on Summer Vacation, with no Meets since May. However, some of our Chapter members enjoyed the wonderful TCA National Convention in Scottsdale, Arizona. The tours and events were great fun. The trading pits were full of toy train selling action. Traveling to Scottsdale for the 2009 TCA National Convention were Jon Spargo, who brought his wonderful module layout, and James Jackson. Scott Eckstein and his wife Elaine also came to the Convention, along with Bill Harris. If I missed anyone, please let me know. The Desert Division did a fabulous job of planning and running the 2009 TCA National Convention.

The Rio Grande Chapter's next Meet will be September 19th, 10:00AM, at the Sombra Del Monte Church. Please bring items for the educational segment and show and tell. We will also go over the plans for the TCA Rio Grande Chapter's Pumpkin Meet, at the Sheraton Uptown Hotel at the corner of Manual and Louisiana. The Rio Grande Chapter, thanks to Bill Spofford, our Pumpkin Meet Manager, has arranged for room rates at the Sheraton Uptown Hotel, of \$99.00 per night. Phone numbers and further information will be on the Pumpkin Meet fliers which will be in the next issue of the Dispatch. Also after our September 19th Meet, I will give a seminar-workshop on diagnosing problems and Preventive Maintenance of Toy Trains. Please bring in your sick Lionel, Marx, American Flyer, MTH, or K-line items. I will give you ideas on how to repair and take good care of them. This will take place at 1:00 PM at Trains West, which is at 3351 Candelaria N.E., Albuquerque, NM 87107. Space is limited so call 505-881-2322 and sign up for the September 19th Lionel workshop. Also bring in your Locomotives or other toy train operating cars and accessories, so that I can give you ideas on how to repair and maintain them. Next month I will call or e-mail you about the New Mexico Railrunner Express trip to Santa Fe. I hope to firm up dates in a couple of weeks.

Do not forget to come to the Rio Grande Chapter Regular Meet on September 19th, at the Sombra Del Monte Church, 2528 Utah N.E., Albuquerque, NM. See all of you there.

Directors:	Steve Bienstock	480-998-9227
	Sam McElwee	480-838-5847
	Greg Palmer	505-898-3840
	Gordon Wilson	480-837-5344



Prescott's Beat the Heat

Model Trains & Old Boys Toys

SWAP MEET

Saturday, August 15th, 2009 9am to 1pm

Adults \$4.00, under 12 free with adult

**At the Prescott Activity Center 800 E. Gurley
Presented by:**

The Central Az Model RR Club

For information call: Norm Delucchi 928-445-5379

Brent Schnitzius 928-445-6560

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Table sales subject to availability

1 free admission with each table

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Number of Tables ____ (Limit 4 tables per seller) @\$23.00 each ____

Helper Name _____ @ 4.00 each ____

Helper Name _____ @ 4.00 each ____

Lunch Reservations (sandwich, chips, soda) ____ @ 6.00 each ____

Total \$ ____

Special Requests _____

Please mail payment to:

Norm Delucchi, 242 Thoroughbred Dr, Prescott Az. 86301-6688

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ARIZONA TRAIN DEPOT - Lionel UP 4-6-2 w/Railsounds \$224.99 - Lionel Santa Fe Mikado w/Railsounds, TMCC, Odyssey \$699.99 - MTH Waddell Coal 6-car Hopper Set \$224.95 - MTH 3-car 64' Passenger Set (real nice) \$233.95. Consignment MTH Amtrak F-59 w/PS2 \$199.95 - More consignments arriving daily - Ask for your TCA club member discount - AZ TRAIN DEPOT 755 E. McKellips Road, Mesa - 480-833-9486 Mon-Sat 9-6 open late Wed. until 9 PM.

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 complete list, contact Peter Atonna 928-636-4228 or e-mail at mjatonna@commspeed.net.

BURLING'S TON OF TRAINS - Authorized Lionel, MTH, K-LINE & Mantua Dealer. Pat Eiff has joined our staff to better serve our customers in sales and service of both new and pre-owned trains. With the largest selection of Post-War through new Lionel in Arizona, we invite you to see our different "Set of the Month" each month. We also buy trains. Hours: 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM, M - F and by appointment. 16924 E. Colony Dr., Fountain Hills, AZ 85268 Phone: 480-816-6501 Website: www.tonoftrains.com

GERRY'S TRAINS - Complete parts & repair service for Lionel, American Flyer, standard gauge pre & post war and Marklin HO trains. I buy old trains and toys, one piece or entire collections. Gerry Klei, 8608 E. Cheryl Drive, Scottsdale, AZ Phone (480) 998-5349.

MESA MODELS - O-Scale building and structure kits, layout details and accessories. Now accepting consignments with optional website and/or Ebay exposure. Visit our website at <http://www.mesamodels.net>. Our store is located at 6032 E. McKellips Rd., Mesa (NE corner of McKellips & Recker - take 202 exit at Recker Rd., 1.5 miles south). Store hours M-F 10-5, Sat. 10-4. Ph. 480-357-8800

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

AVAILABLE - **QSI 3-rail Products** information, including QS3000's, QS2+, QSI Reverse Units, Hooters, Tooters, and other QSI accessories, please go to: www.The-Scaled-Tin-Rail.com. Art Boynton, The Scaled Tin Rail, Inc. 928-525-0755.

REPAIRS - Pat Eiff, 28 years of toy train repair experience, does train repairs in his home. Also trains for sale. Call him at 480-816-9624 or visit his website <http://www.toysthrutime.com>.

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

FOR SALE - Lionel 227 0-6-0 (C-7) w/Tender (relettered) and the semi-scale 2954, 2955, 2956, 2957 (C-7/8) - \$3200. Presidential Passenger Cars 2521, 2522, 2523 (C-10) - Boxed \$775. 2363 Ill. Central F-3's (C-7) \$850. Following are all Mint/Boxed - Nickel Plate FF#6 Set - 18505, 17612, 19602, 19318, 19527, 19411, 19235 - \$550. 18304 Lackawanna M. U. Commuter Set (1991) - \$400. 11733 Feather River SSS (1992) - \$325. 19138 S. F. Roomette \$100. 19128 S. F. Full Vista Dome - \$175. 18115 S. F. "B" Unit - \$150. Tony Griskowitz 928-717-1206.

FOR SALE - Lionel 1700E, 1701 (2), 1702, C-7, \$395. Lionel 440N Signal Bridge & 440C Panel Board C-6, P-4, \$475. Lionel 6-7515 1981 Denver Mint Car C-8, P-9, \$65. 6-25026 R. I. High Cube C-10, P-10, \$25. 6-26401 NP Ore Car C-10, P-10, \$20. 6-26197 D&H Tank Car C-10, P-10, \$20. 52077 TCA Great Northern High Cube C-10, P-10, \$300. Marx 7096 Mercury Passenger set C-7, \$450. Marx 3993M Commodore Vanderbilt Freight set C-7, \$175. Marx 490 Union Pacific set C-7, \$90. Marx 666 2-4-2 SP 8-wheel tender C-6, \$25. 666 2-4-2 Penn Central 8-wheel tender C-6, \$25. Marx 254000 scale Gondola C-7 & 20102 scale Caboose C-7, \$15 each. Marx 59 UP Stock Car C-7, \$25. American Flyer: 322AC Hudson w/AF 6-wheel tender-link C-7, \$150. 283 4-6-4 Northwestern Lines knuckle C-7, \$80. 210(88) FY&P Franklin C-7, \$100. Dannie L. Martin 520-360-0519 or e-mail dannieaz@cox.net.

This page is provided as a service to our members for trading among themselves.
Please contact them for items you may have, want, or need.

**TRAIN COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION
DESERT DIVISION**

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

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COMING EVENTS

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| July 25 | "In the Heat" Railroad Swap Meet – 9 AM - North Phoenix Baptist Church, Phoenix, AZ |
| August 15 | "Beat the Heat" Meet – Central AZ Model RR Club – 9 AM – Prescott, AZ
Contact: Norm Delucchi 928-445-5379 |
| September 12 | Regular Division Meet – 9 AM – Jaycees Hall, Scottsdale, AZ
Theme: Something I Found in the Trading Pits at the Convention |
| September 19 | Rio Grande Chapter Meet - 10 AM – Sombra Del Monte Church, Albuquerque, NM
Contact: Greg Palmer 505-898-3840 |
| October 10 | Regular Division Meet – 9 AM – Jaycees Hall, Scottsdale, AZ |
| October 10-11 | Railfair – 9 AM – 5 PM - McCormick Stillman Railroad Park, Scottsdale, AZ |
| November 1 | "Pumpkin Meet" – 9 AM - Sheraton Uptown Hotel, Albuquerque, NM
Contact: Bill Spofford 505-821-4051 or Greg Palmer 505-898-3840 |
| November 28-29 | Turkey Meet – Mesa, AZ – 9 AM
Contact Bob Herman 480-948-2730 |

Have You PADE Your Way?

Purchase raffle tickets

Author an article for the Dispatch

Donate something to the club

Enlist to help

PADE PROMOTIONS

There are way too many persons who helped with the Convention to name them all. Just know that every effort by you and/or your family was most sincerely appreciated. Special thanks to Ivan English for rescuing the Banquet Committee at the 11th hour.

The July Meet saw Barb Lautazi and Lenora Stein in the kitchen, and after the meet, the Upshurs and Vokacs helped sort trains.

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