

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



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Click on the link to our e-Bay offerings.

Volume 39, No. 5

June, 2009

MAGNIFICENT MAY MEET

A bright beautiful sunshiny day greeted the Desert Division on May 9, National Train Day. Guests Don Dudas (Gulf Wind Chapter of the Southern Division of TCA) and Don Knox joined renewed member Ed Mertz at a meet that was filled with fun and frolic. Treasurer Bob Herman announced that we have \$12,143.21 in savings, \$5,459.07 in checking, and \$552.75 in the Trains for Kids Account.

President Katie Elgar announced that the After-Meet Visitation today is a dual treat – Angelo Lautazi (with food) and Marty Wik. Both of these gentlemen will be featured in an upcoming Tracks Ahead program, and a 2010 issue of Classic Toy Trains. We still need a publicity chair for both the Convention and the Turkey Meet. Volunteers welcome.

Bill Mack announced that there is only one more General Convention Meeting, before the regular Division Meet on June 13. Chris Allen cleared up some misconceptions about the Convention Trading Pits. They are open ONLY to TCA members. Because of this, there is no license required to participate in the sales part of the Convention. Spouses, significant others, and medical help companions are free; all other non-family members are guests and must register as such. Registrations stand at 350 as of today, with 95 of them being Desert Division members. Ed White, a Parts Dealer, will be here; an East Coast American Flyer dealer has purchased ten tables; this will be a new audience for the train items you have to sell.

Katie Elgar reviewed the 3 R's (Rails, Runways, and Roads) show in late April. The new module measured 12' x 20'. Thanks to Dallas Dixon, Jonathan Peiffer, Thomas Plies, Tony Saulina, John Wiley, and Katie Elgar, everything went like clockwork, from set-up to running trains to tear-down. In an attempt to add 16' to the layout, the Module Committee is asking whether anyone would care to "adopt" a section, scenic it to his/her liking, and add it to the module for the next showing. See Dallas Dixon for details.

TCA National continues its Win Big promotion, in an attempt to boost TCA's membership numbers. Every Division who signed up a member had its name put into a hat for a drawing. During the most recent drawing, Desert Division's name was pulled out of the hat. As such, the Division has a \$200 credit to be used in the Museum store. How did we win? Simply by signing up one new member. (Actually we had more than that, but it only took one to win.) Fred Hunter reminded everyone that the Convention would be a great time to sign up even more new members, and further enhance our odds of winning such a prize again at the next drawing.

This year's "Beat the Heat" Meet will be on August 15. Dave Brown is organizing the bus to take folks up to the Prescott Meet. It is \$30 for adults and \$15 for kids. Sack lunches are \$6. See him for more details.

Ivan English announced that June 6 is the Tucson Summer Meet, D-Day, and his birthday. Desert Division members are invited to attend the show (\$5 for admission; \$25 for an 8' sales table) and bring a cake to help him celebrate this once-a-year occurrence. There will be layouts, sales tables, and lots of items for sale.

COMING UP...

JUNE 6	ROADRUNNER MEET, Tucson, AZ – 9:00 AM
JUNE 13	CONVENTION GENERAL MEETING – Jaycees Hall – 7:30 AM
JUNE 13	DESERT DIVISION MEET – Jaycees Hall – 9:00 AM
JUNE 28-JULY 5	TCA NATIONAL CONVENTION – J.W. Marriott Resort
AUGUST 15	"BEAT THE HEAT MEET" – Prescott, AZ – 9 AM

May's Educational Segment was highlighted by Tom Stange's "bottom of the box" find. During a recent toy train purchase, he acquired a NYC AA F-3 1950's freight set and a huge box of track. After two days, Tom got around to cleaning out the track box. In the bottom was a pair of pliers. Upon closer inspection, it turned out that they were Lionel ST 343 o-gauge track crimpers, made by Kreuter Company. Tom demonstrated how most of us straighten out pin ends of pieces of track and how much easier it is with this tool.

The first winning raffle ticket belonged to Chris Allen, and he chose the Hudson ticket. Other prizes were as follows:

Ken Barnes	Ready Made Toys Lionel Auto Transport
Tom Stange	Road Signatures car and layout figures
Angelo Lautazi	Lionel Lines #5733 Box Car
Roger Miller	Book: <u>Lionel – Standard of the World</u>
Bob Dennison	Layout figures
Shirley Hunter	DVD and Road Signatures car
Bryan Rench	Lionel catalogs

The \$100 Hudson Raffle prize went to Chris Allen. No, not the ticket he has won today, but one he had purchased earlier in the year.

Tables and chairs were put back and folks left for points north to visit the layouts of Marty Wik and Angelo Lautazi.



L – Bob Johnston sports his Convention vest, while Barb Lautazi, Sally Treichel, and Shirley Hunter serve coffee and donuts from the kitchen.

R – Katie Elgar hands out vests to Convention workers. Members were sized to match the red-white-and blue vests.



Fred Hunter and Ivan English admire Angelo Lautazi's layout.



Marty Wik's layout also shared the visitation on May 9.

SUPPORT THE CLUB

Buy your Spring Raffle Tickets (See Page 12) and your Hudson Raffle Tickets at the Meet on June 13.

The Dispatch is published monthly except July and December by the Train Collectors Association, Desert Division, 16231 E. Ocotillo Drive, Fountain Hills, AZ 85268. This issue is Volume 39, No. 4 (May, 2009).

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings!

CONGRATULATIONS! The Desert Division has won the quarterly "WIN BIG" membership drive. We have received a certificate from the NBO and a \$200.00 award for items at the National TCA Museum for raffle prizes. As you continue to invite your friends to join the club, we are able to share and grow the hobby. Keep up the good work! We will be sharing this with the Rio Grande Chapter.

The May Desert Division meeting was a busy one, with the Convention Committee meeting first thing in the morning. Many people brought trains to sell. Over 70 members were in attendance, and a lot of guests as well. The friendly coffee and doughnut shop did a brisk business. Also, 30 people picked up their volunteer vests for the Convention.

After the meet there were two homes with "nearly world famous train layouts" to visit! It was great to see so many people out and continuing on for the home visits. Part of the fun of trains is sharing your collection with others. You can always pick up ideas from seeing other layouts, as well as just enjoy seeing the trains run. Even though Don Locke has arranged for the visits for 2009, we need someone to step up and volunteer for this for 2010.

The 55th National TCA Convention is less than a month away...Starts June 28th. The National TCA Convention is a great way to meet new friends from other parts of the country that share the same interest in trains as you do. Get involved in more than just the Division. Go to the 55th National TCA Convention, nearly in your own backyard! I hope that all of you will make the effort to attend. If you haven't volunteered to help, contact Ralph Treichel at salmud@aol.com. If you have registered, and you need a sales table, contact Chris Allen and he'll be glad to help you. If you haven't registered for the Convention yet, Chris will help you with that as well. If you still need a volunteer vest and haven't tried one on for size, let me know, as we will be winding down the production soon. For those who are still waiting for theirs, we will have many more at the June meeting.

A group got together to work on the Division Module on May 16th at Dallas Dixon's house. Dallas, Tony, Jonathan, David, Jack, and I had a great time decorating, sanding, painting and wiring the parts of the module. There is still work to be done before the Convention. Some sections still need scenery. Contact Dallas or Jonathan to find out about the next

work party. The module could use a set of steps to allow the little ones to safely watch the trains. Let Dallas know if you have some of these, or want to build some.

There is a train swap meet at the Phoenix North Baptist Church July 25. August 15 is the date of the "Beat the Heat Meet. GCMR will once again be planning a bus trip to Prescott for this event. Contact Dave Brown for details. The cost is \$30.00 per adult, \$15 for child. Don't forget October York. Our Turkey Meet in November will be in Mesa for 2 days of sales, and we still need volunteers to help.

See you on June 13 for the Desert Division Meet and at the end of June at the 55th National TCA Convention!

Happy Trains!



TCA DESERT DIVISION BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 2008-2009

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	Gordon Wilson	480-837-5344

BOARD MEETING

The next meeting of the Desert Division Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, June 10, beginning at 7:30 PM at the home of Gordon Wilson. Members are welcome to attend. Please call 480-837-5344 to be sure there are enough chairs.

NOTICE

We are asking that all of you check the 2009 Desert Division Roster. If your e-mail address is incorrect, please let Christie Wilson know (480-837-5344 or christie1wilson@aol.com) so that we can reach you with an e-mail and so that the 2010 Roster will be accurate. Thank you in advance for taking the time to do this.

RIO GRANDE CHAPTER NEWS

by Gregory Palmer TCA#94-39039

The Rio Grande Chapter Meet was held in conjunction with the 2009 New Mexico Rail Fair. Over 15 Chapter members took part in the Meet. A wide variety of Toy Trains and Railroadiana items were for sale. The Chapter Meeting portion happened at 10:00AM. We have approx \$1200.00 in our Treasury, which includes the Pumpkin Meet loan from the Desert Division.

Jon Spargo reported on the TCA Rio Grande Chapter's Trains for Kids program. He had great news: the Principal of the Middle School in Socorro, New Mexico, wants to continue the program next school year. He also wants to give Jon and the kids more room for the layout, which pleases Jon, because he plans to expand the project. He once again asked anyone who wishes to donate items to please call him. He needs ASAP the following: a Plasticville Bank, Lionel Crossing gates, and any other items you might want to donate. Please call Jon Spargo (575-418-7534) if you can help. Jon told us the parents want to bring the layout to our 2009 Pumpkin Meet for display, with the kids. This sounds like another great Chapter outreach activity. Good going Jon.

Jon Spargo reported on our Wheels Museum project. The completed inventory of all the Toy Trains is on a spread sheet. We are now waiting for the managers of the Museum to let us know what they want done next.

It was mentioned, at the Meet, to please contact Ralph Treichel (602-863-6985) if you are going to the TCA National Convention in Scottsdale, to schedule times to help out with Convention Activities. The Division needs your help!!

The topic of our 2009 Pumpkin Meet was next. The contract is in hand, and the 3800 square foot hall, at the Sheraton Uptown Hotel, will be the site for our 2009 Pumpkin Meet, Sunday, November 1, 2009. We will have lots of room for lots of seller tables, and lots of room of multiple module layouts. Bill Spofford and I have great ideas for spreading the word, from Newspaper ads, to fliers in Churches, to Coronado Center Toy Stores, and ABQ Uptown Shops, as the site of the Pumpkin Meet is right next door. If anyone wants to help with our advertising campaign, please call me (505-898-3840) or Bill (505-821-4051). Since we are at the Sheraton Uptown Hotel, out-of-town TCA members will have a great place to stay. We will have the special rates on the flier which will be in the next Dispatch. The Sheraton Uptown was one of the original Maloof Family Hotels, which also included the Palms in Las Vegas, NV. It has recently been remodeled and upgraded, so that it is a first class Hotel, and a great venue for a TCA Meet. Restaurants are located within 5 minutes of the Hotel. Plan to make it a weekend of fun.

We are also looking into having a New Mexico Rail Runner trip to Santa Fe in July or August. We will E-mail all Chapter members when I can find a good day for all to ride to Santa Fe, and have lunch or dinner at Tomasitas Restaurant in Santa Fe. The restaurant was the old D&RGW Santa Fe New Mexico Station on the famous Chili Line. This would be a fun activity. We will let all of you know of the day time and Rail Runner Station we will leave from.

Our next Regular Meet will be Saturday September 19th at 10:00AM, at the Sombra Del Monte Church at 2528 Utah N.E., in Albuquerque, NM.

I hope to see you all this summer at the TCA National Convention and September 19th at our Regular Chapter Meet.



Some of the Railroadiana items at the NM Rail Fair.



A few of the sales items on the 25 tables at the Chapter Meet at the NM Rail Fair.



Jon Spargo shows photos of the Trains-for-Kids project to Everett Hagan, Carl Soderberg, George Domeny, and Bill and Bonnie McIntyre.

UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

July or August – NM Rail Runner Express trip to Santa Fe, and lunch at Tomasitas Restaurant

September 19 – 10 AM – Regular Meet at Sombra Del Monte Church, 2528 Utah NE., Albuquerque, NM

November 1 – 9 AM – 3 PM - Pumpkin Meet at the Sheraton Uptown Hotel, Albuquerque, NM

LIONEL'S STYROFOAM AMBIGUITY

by Gordon Wilson, TCA #76-10233

How often has your lack of being impressed by something done in the industrial world been so incredibly plain and simple that you thought to yourself, "What high paid executive thought of this?" Well, that's exactly how I felt when Fred and Elaine Goulden dropped by to deliver a large portion of items from the Lionel 1971 Catalog. If you recall, I had stated that I had never so much as seen the Lionel Foam Buildings that are shown on the back inside cover of the 1971 Catalog.

Fred and Elaine advised me that not only did they have the Foam Buildings, but they had nine (9) of them. My job was to find them, as, like in the name of the new TV show, they were "In Plain Sight." Since my golfing group relies on my eyes to see where and how far their drives go, I was sure that this chore would be a "slam dunk." Then I remembered Fred's sense of humor – rather sly and subtle. It turned out to be not nearly as easy as I had imagined. As a matter of fact, I couldn't locate any of them, and I don't think I would have been different than most 1971 purchasers of Lionel trains. Lionel had taken squares, actually rectangles to be geometrically correct, of Styrofoam and culled out an interior the size of whichever piece it would hold. There are four sizes in all that will hold everything from a Pacific sized steam locomotive to a flat car with a load. Then they carved on the exterior several different roof shapes, some with chimneys, some with dormers, and some with just pointy roofs. This was the part that fooled me, and I'm sure many other people as well. If one is not looking for Styrofoam shaped buildings sitting in a train set box upside down, then they can easily be missed, especially after seeing what they're supposed to look like in the 1971 Catalog. In the Catalog, Lionel illustrates three of the shapes, but they are professionally decorated. I could try a thousand times with paint and crayons and never could I make one look as fine as they look in the Lionel Catalog. Recently Fred Goulden called me to explain some ways that these "buildings" could best be painted. This is where things got really "spooky." I was watching a baseball game on TV and it went to a break as we were talking. Fred was telling me that Krylon had just begun marketing a new paint called "Fusion" that he had found worked well on Styrofoam. He had no sooner said that than, lo and behold, what should appear on the TV screen? Why, an advertisement for Krylon's new paint, "Fusion." Truth is stranger than fiction!

If you have a 1971 Lionel Catalog, look at what Lionel thought was going to compete with the likes of Plasticville, Marx, Walther kits, Skyline kits and pre-built buildings, or even a "scratch built" piece by a school kid for a Science project. Crude and primitive is probably the best way to describe them, but "to give the devil his due," they were something new and original.

Fred Goulden, a former President of the Desert Division, and his wife Elaine, a doll collector and former elementary school teacher in Fountain Hills, have a museum of many items dating to the '40's and up through the late Twentieth Century. One of the sets Fred is lending the Division for the Lionel 1971 Catalog display at the 2009 TCA National Convention is still in its original 1971 Factory Shrink Wrap. The Museum, which has a small admission fee, is located next to the U. S. Post Office at 297 West Central Avenue, Coolidge, AZ 85228. Plan to stop by to see what treasures, both train related and otherwise, they have amassed through the years.



The small "house" held a Pacific sized steam locomotive.



Another "house" held a flat car with a load.



A third "house" was designed to hold a tender.
There were four styles altogether.



MAKING PROGRESS ON MODULES

by Jonathan Peiffer, TCA #01-53047

For those of you attending the TCA 2009 National Convention, expect a pleasant surprise on the behalf of the Desert Division. Some of you have seen some of the variations of the modular 0-gauge railroad that has been run by members of the Division for the last nine months. For those involved, it has been truly a memorable experience to gather, work on and operate the modules. The team has made some significant progress to allow for a 32 foot by 12 foot operating module at the Convention. In

addition to three operating mainlines, one entire side of the module will be desert landscaped modules using Gar Graves track, while the other entire side will feature traditional style track and lots of structures. This event will mark the first time that a modular setup of this size has been operated by the Desert Division in many years and will be an opportunity to continue the progress into the future and put the Desert Division back in the public eye. Additionally there will be a smaller modular layout, with some incredible detail that you'll just have to attend the Convention to see.



everyone's level of availability will be hampered by the amount of volunteering necessary to make the Convention a success. With the right amount of effort though, it we should be mostly set-up with trains running in a little more than two hours and it will take a similar amount of time to tear down and pack-up.

While a flawless operation at the Convention is certainly a laudable goal, the larger picture is to have more of you out and operating trains at future events. The more people who have the ability and interest to help, the more events we can attend. There is no better promotion of the hobby than seeing these trains run and run well. In the meantime, look for us in the public display area at the Convention. At this size the layout won't be hard to find.



AN E-BAY SURPRISE

by Peter Atonna, TCA #75-7578

I am not a big E-bay purchaser and have never sold there. But, there are some items over the years I have done pretty well in finding. Often they are paper items (although never anything like Paul's 1900 Lionel catalog - that probably will never be bested!). One of the items I have on my perpetual search list is the Lionel in house publication, All Aboard at Lionel. This magazine was devoted to articles about Lionel employees as well as Lionel dealers and service stations or other companies with which they did business. It offers a wonderful insight into the daily world of the company and its employees.

Unfortunately, although they do show up every so often, my top bid is almost always half of what they eventually sell for. But a couple of times I have been lucky, and last week was one of those. I was the winner of a September 1957 issue.

The feature article was the story of participation by Lionel's Vice President, Phillip Marfuggi in a delegation that toured Italy as part of a US Trade Commission. The purpose of the trip was to view the economic rebuilding progress in Italy, particularly as a result of US foreign aid. The article included details of the locations and factories toured by the delegation, including Marfuggi. It is also interesting as it illustrates the ongoing link with Italy that Lionel and many of its employees had.

The story was pretty dry reading until I got to the last page of the article, when out slipped from the magazine a carbon copy (remember what those were?) of a letter to Marfuggi from John O'Donnell, Jr. the American Council to Italy. It was pretty much a bread and butter letter thanking him for his sending the article in All Aboard about the trip. But the question is, "HOW DID IT GET INTO MY MAGAZINE?"

Was this Marfuggi's personal copy? There is no way I will ever know, but the letter alone makes this issue a treasure and will of course stay with it.

Phillip Marfuggi was one of the long term Lionel executives, with the company from the 1930's along with the legendary Joseph Bonnano and Mario Caruso. At the time of this letter he was the vice president for personnel. He along with Bonnano resigned from Lionel in October 1959, the day Roy Cohen took control of the company. This issue of All Aboard was among the last published in light of the declining fortunes of the company in the late 50's. (A list of published issues is contained in Robert Osterhoff's fine book, Inside the Lionel Trains Fun Factory.)



Alexander Matturei, U. S. Representative at the Italian-American Conciliation Commission, was present at the airport to welcome Lionel Vice President Phillip H. Marfuggi, Company President Lawrence Cowen and Mrs. Cowen to Italy.

Speeches played an important role in tour through the provinces.



Page Four

Italy Revisited

By PHILIP H. MARFUGGI
Vice President, The Lionel Corporation

MANY years ago, at the end of the war, I returned from a trip to Italy appalled by the task which lay ahead. Fortunately, we in America escaped the economic and political upheaval faced by nations still floundering under the effects of a devastating war that engulfed most of our civilized world. This small but courageous country was such a victim and the cessation of hostilities found her engaged in a desperate struggle for survival. Unemployment was rampant, communism was gaining a foothold—poverty was the common lot, for all but a select few in higher income brackets.

Since then I have had occasion to travel abroad many times. During those times I was aware of gradual changes taking place over the past decade. Slowly but surely, this nation was rebuilding, not only her physical properties but her economy as well.

A New Life in Evidence Everywhere

I revisited Italy recently as a member of a U. S. Trade Commission, a program inaugurated by President Eisenhower and operated by the Foreign Relations Commission of the U. S. Department of Commerce. The transformation I had noticed in process was almost complete. As usual her cities were delightful, her shops smart and her food magnificent. Beneath all this, however, is an undercurrent of new life in evidence everywhere. Modern industrial plants are cropping up throughout the central and northern provinces, progressive production techniques are being

Plant visits included a trip to the Innocenti (Lambretta Motor-Scooter) firm.



American Consulate,
Florence, Italy,
July 15, 1957.

Mr. Philip H. Marfuggi,
The Lionel Corporation,
28 Sager Place,
Irvington, New Jersey.

Dear Phil:

On my return today from a short vacation at the shore I found your letters of June 19 and June 28.

I anticipate no difficulty in arranging for Mr. Weisenfeld to visit the Ginori Plant, and I hope he will call on me. Should I be out of town I will leave word for Mr. De Zigno to take care of him.

Your article in ALL ABOARD was indeed of interest and to my mind it expresses the "personality" of the Milan Mission which really was "simpatico".

I am looking forward to seeing you in the fall and meanwhile best regards.

Sincerely,

John F. O'Donnell, Jr.
American Consul



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

Not responsible for lost or stolen items

Table reservations \$23.00 per table in advance

Table sales subject to availability

1 free admission with each table

Dealer setup time 7am to 9am-No Early Public Admission

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

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

BEAT THE HEAT MEET

by Peter Atonna, TCA #75-7578

By the time August rolls around, I will bet you will want to just take your Convention memories and spend some quality time on a weekend where somebody else does all the work!

Yes, it is time to mark your calendar for this year's edition of the Beat the Heat Swap Meet in Prescott on August 15th. Sponsored again by the Central Arizona Model Railroad Club the meet features almost 100 tables of goodies, an afternoon of layout visiting and an invitation for you to take a weekend in the Prescott area. The meet will be held at the Prescott Activity Center, 800 E. Gurley in downtown Prescott. If you haven't come before, the Activity Center is right on the main street, a half mile after you enter town on SR 69 or 89, just follow the signs to Gurley Street. There is still construction on the interchange of SR 69 and 89 as you come into town, but just stay on Gurley as usual and you will get right to the Activity Center.

Each year we have been selling out the 100 sales tables so you will have a great selection of trains. Admission is \$4 with kids under 12 free with an adult. The show starts at 9am and runs to 1pm. We are taking table reservations now in case you want to make sure you have one waiting. They are still only \$23 each and that includes one admission. Table reservations must be paid in advance. Dealer setup is 7 - 9am. Send your reservation with your check to Norm Delucchi at 242 Thoroughbred Dr. Prescott, AZ 86301-6688. If you have questions, call him at 928-445-5379 or email to: nodelucchi@cablone.net.

Now here are the rest of the weekend's activities.

Shopping - Prescott has one of the finest antique and arts districts in the state. Located conveniently downtown, less than a mile from the Activity Center, the district lines Cortez and Marina Streets.

Museums - Next door to the Activity Center is the Smoki Museum, while downtown is the Sharlott Hall Museum and just north of town is the Phippen Art Museum

Cowboy Poets Gathering - Weeklong events featuring western themed poetry, entertainment and music. Held at Yavapai College. For information and tickets: www.azcowboypoets.org/.

Train Rides - Both the Grand Canyon Railroad and the Verde Canyon Railroad are less than two hours from Prescott and would make a great Sunday activity. If you like train watching, there are a couple of superb locations near Williams and Ash Fork. Just check with me for the locations.

Outdoor activities - The Prescott area is a jumping off point for camping and fishing in the Bradshaws, bike riding on many of the area highways, hiking Thumb Butte, Granite Mountain or the Peavine Rails to Trails.

Farmers Market - For those of you who miss stopping at Young's Farm, Yavapai College, located on Sheldon St. just north of the Activity Center, hosts a farmers market Saturday's 7:30 till noon.

Open Houses - This year we have seven fellows who have generously opened their layouts and collections for your enjoyment. The time for visiting starts at 2pm on Saturday, after the meet. There will be maps available at the meet registration. We have:

- Mike Nelson - An O scale layout with multiple tiers and an including operating On30 layout. Large collection of O scale locomotives on display (note: Mike is open from 3 to 7pm)
- Jim Hanna - A large HO scale sceniced layout complete with multiple layers and bridges. Jim operates multiple trains with DCC
- Ray Dextraze - Early 20th Century American and European toys and trains all displayed in a beautiful setting.
- Marlin Benson - Two huge train rooms filled with tinplate trains and displays. His two room high rail layout is operating with multiple trains. A Large Scale loop lines the walls of one train room.
- Stan Cedarleaf - An outdoor Large Scale layout over 100 feet long with multiple trains running. Be sure to enjoy the "crow's nest" viewing spot.
- Warren Webster - Another outdoor Large Scale layout, just down the street from Stan with multiple loops and spectacular wooden bridges.
- Peter Atonna - O gauge high rail and prewar O and Standard gauge fully sceniced layouts.

We hope you plan to spend the weekend in Prescott. If you would like a nearby motel for your stay, here are some suggestions (the Prescott area code is 928):

A short distance from the Activity Center are:

- + Heritage House Motel (across the street from the Activity Center) 819 E. Gurley 445-9091
- + Apache Lodge (a genuine 30's motel) 1130 E. Gurley 445-1422
- + American Motel, 1211 E Gurley 778-4322
- + Super 8 (on the next street to the north) 1105 E. Sheldon 776-1282

If you would like to stay at a beautiful historic downtown hotel, we have:

- + Hotel St. Michael 205 W. Gurley 776-1999
- + Hotel Vendome 230 S. Cortez 776-0900
- + Hassayampa Inn 122 E. Gurley 778-9434
- + Marriott Spring Hill Suits in Depot Square 776-0998.

Don't forget the downtown hotels are right in the middle of Prescott's arts and antique shopping district.

MURPHY'S LAW STRIKES AGAIN

or

“How I Survived a *Tracks Ahead* Video Shoot”

by Angelo Lautazi, TCA #93-37260

There are certain givens in the Toy Train hobby. The item that you want in an auction will be bid on by every person in attendance. That rare train that you have been searching for shows up on a table at a swap meet and you forgot your checkbook. Your train layout that has been working flawlessly decides to implode when you have visitors over for your open house. However, all these events can also be chalked up to Murphy's Law: “Anything that can go wrong will go wrong”.

My most recent brush with Murphy's Law occurred when a film crew from the *Tracks Ahead* TV show visited my layout. *Tracks Ahead* is a PBS series that explores all aspects of railroading including toy train and model train layouts. The crew was in town to shoot video segments on four local layouts, three of which belonged to TCA Desert Division members. Peter Atonna, Paul Wasserman and I were the “lucky” three Desert Division members. Lucky in the sense that your layout was selected as being unique and interesting enough that it was deemed worthy of filming and being included in this nationally distributed PBS television series. But it also puts the owner under the microscope and the pressure of having his work critiqued by his peers in the model railroad hobby. The greatest pressure of course is to have the layout running at its optimum level. This means that *all* the trains should be able to run on *all* the tracks without derailing. Switches and operating accessories should perform perfectly and most of all, the layout should be free of dust and cobwebs.

A few months earlier, *Classic Toy Trains* magazine had come to Arizona to do a photo shoot of my layout as well as Marty Wik's and Peter Atonna's. The CTT visit had prompted me to work at full throttle on landscaping the layout so it would look great and merit being included in *Classic Toy Trains* magazine. I installed lighting and signals, added numerous vehicles and a multitude of tiny figures to bring the layout to “life.” I had ordered model figures from many different suppliers, but as the dozens of “people” arrived on site it seemed as if they evaporated into the layout. I reordered figures twice more before I was satisfied with the density of my population. The day before the CTT visit I spent dusting and cleaning the layout and the trainroom. When Roger Carp and Steve Crise from CTT saw the trainroom they were quite pleased and I spent a very interesting day experiencing a CTT photo shoot. It was more work than I expected, especially for Steve the photographer. Repositioning the lighting and camera for the many scenes was quite a chore. My job was to move the trains into position and pull spare trains from my spare stock under the table to give Roger and Steve more choices for the scenes they were staging. It took a full day to complete the CTT shoot and I enjoyed it immensely.

A few weeks passed when I received a phone call from David Baule, the producer of *Tracks Ahead*, and he explained that they were interested in filming my layout. It seemed that Roger Carp had mentioned that there were some interesting train layouts in Arizona and *Tracks Ahead* was planning a visit. I excitedly agreed to the filming and David gave me a tentative date. I thought the timing was great because I just had the CTT shoot and the layout and trainroom were in good shape. It was the next day when it finally dawned on me that the *Tracks Ahead* visit was shooting video and video meant action and action meant trains running on the layout. No staged scenes, the trains had to move and the accessories had to perform.

I thought I was ready. Marty Wik, a fellow TCA member and train collector spent a half day with me as we repaired and tweaked the many switches on the layout. On the day before the visit, I went through my thirty operating accessories, corrected some problems and found just two that couldn't be fixed in time. The final step was to test the DCS command control system and make sure all the available engines would be working if needed. A few test laps on all levels and we were ready to go. Oh, and I remembered to clean and dust the layout and display shelves one more time.

The *Tracks Ahead* crew, David (executive producer), John (cameraman) and Jeff (audio tech) arrived at 9 AM and after some introductions and pleasantries we proceeded to the trainroom. Their initial reaction to the trainroom is very positive and they all quickly moved around the room to check out the various areas. John, the cameraman was particularly engrossed as he tried to decide how best to shoot certain scenes. To assure them that my layout was more than just a pretty face, I said, “I tested everything yesterday and everything worked just fine.” They all stopped and responded in unison, “Oh, we hear that line a lot. Right after the first meltdown.” Hoping that I hadn't jinxed myself I crossed my fingers and powered up the layout.

They sat me on a stool with the layout as the backdrop and Dennis asked me three or four questions for the interview portion of the shoot. I was a little nervous and I'm not sure how well that went. Marty said it was good, but I'm sure he was just trying to be encouraging. John then setup to film the layout and instructed me as to what train to run and when it should pass a certain area. The layout's operating accessories were to be featured and we would work around the room getting each one to perform its routine. The car wash, check; gas station, check; coal loader, check. The log dump car got hung up but the log loader worked great. Down the line we went and everything worked fine, except for the horse corral and that thing never works right. The rest of the morning went smoothly. I had to reset the DCS system a few times but that's no biggie.

After a fine lunch that my wife Barbara had prepared, we confidently proceeded with the video shoot. John asked that I run the Santa Fe consist on the lower level onto a siding so it would be a backdrop to another accessory. I started to back the train across a switch onto this seldom used siding and it derailed amid a spray of electrical sparks. Reset the DCS, place the cars back on the track and try again. Once again, sparks and derailling. After a third unsuccessful attempt we proceeded to a different scene. I made a mental note, must rework that switch and track section. A while later, someone mentioned that he smelled something burning. I noticed that the street lighting and lamps were out and on checking I found a KW transformer red hot and dead. Time out! I swapped out the dead transformer with a spare and we continued. John was filming wide shots and we had the On30 Bachmann Climax engine and consist running in the background. It was doing just fine and had made numerous loops when all of a sudden the engine just fell over sideways. Time out! I placed the engine and cars back on the finicky HO tracks and started them off again. We next tried to stage a scene by having one train cross the Hellgate Bridge while another ran underneath. The Santa Fe on the lower level started to emerge from a tunnel when we heard a disturbing sound from within the tunnel. The Santa Fe continued down the track but it had left half its consist in the tunnel. Time Out! Seems that this caboose hadn't been run on this particular track before and it caught on a low hanging wire in the tunnel. I rerail the trains, reset the DCS, and we continue.

The ETS trolley on the upper level worked just fine and John and Jeff finished shooting the accessories in the town of "Woodhaven." The rest of the shoot went fairly smoothly, with just a few switch glitches and some DCS resets. Dennis conferred with John to make sure that they covered everything mentioned in the script, then stated "It's a wrap." I powered down the layout and the crew started to pack their gear. Starting at 9 AM and ending after 3 PM, it was a long day. The *Tracks Ahead* fellows all assured me that this was a good shoot and were quite pleased with how things went. John mentioned that my layout was one of the cleanest that he'd ever seen. It's a good thing I did that last minute cleaning and dusting.



It's been a hectic month, a *CTT* photo shoot and a *Tracks Ahead* video shoot. I feel privileged that my hard work has been recognized so soon after my layout's "completion" (we all know that a layout is never truly completed). Next was the open house for the Desert Division members. Finally a TCA National Convention tour is scheduled for July. We will gladly welcome these visitors to share our layout, but hopefully we can keep that pesky Murphy from returning.

NEWS FLASH

An Affair with Trains, long a generous donor to the Desert Division's activities, has moved. As of June 1, 2009, their new address is 301 W. Deer Valley Road, Suite 4, Phoenix, AZ 85027. They are across the street from the Deer Valley Airport, collaborating with and sharing space with John Braun of Alchemy Models Inc., specializing in architectural modeling and rapid prototyping, and Jaime Johnston of Arizona Model Aircrafters, specializing in airplane and aerospace modeling and prototyping. This union of similar hobbyists brings different abilities, knowledge, and experience to the table, benefiting all three businesses and offering unique products and opportunities to all customers.

We thank An Affair with Trains for all of their past donations and services to our club members. Now we ask our members to visit An Affair with Trains in their new location, and let them know that you are there as a result of reading about this "merger" in the Desert Division newsletter.

*** Desert Division's ** Spring Raffle 2009 ***



1st Prize

TCA Bicentennial Special

No. 1976 "Spirit of 76" Lionel Diesel

No. 1975 Pullman car AMERICAN EAGLE

No. 1974 Pullman car STARS & STRIPES

No. 1973 Observation car FREEDOM BELL

2nd Prize **Lionel 6-12915** **#164 - Log Loader**



3rd Prize

Lionel 6-52105

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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>.

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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.

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FOR SALE – Painted 4x8 HO layout board with electronic control board - \$35.00 – track already in place with some switches – no landscaping – will need some work to finish. Contact Phil Webster evenings 623-877-0754 or e-mail pwebs10319@aol.com.

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

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| June 6 | Roadrunner Meet – Tucson, AZ – 9 AM
Contact: Bud Stewart 520-749-0228 or bud@at.tuccoxmail.com |
| June 13 | Convention General Meeting – 7:30 AM and Regular Division Meet – 9 AM – Jaycees Hall
8102 E. Jackrabbit Road, between Chaparral and McDonald |
| June 28-July 5 | 2009 TCA National Convention - J. W. Marriott Desert Ridge Resort and Spa, Scottsdale, AZ |
| 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 |
| September 19 | Rio Grande Chapter Meet - 10 AM – Sombra Del Monte Church, Albuquerque, NM
Contact: Greg Palmer 505-898-3840 |

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PADE PROMOTIONS

Thank you to Vince DiVito for his donation of a Marx Station, the proceeds of which will help pay for the Welcome Party at the 2009 TCA National Convention. Also, Scott Russell and Ed Heil gave us several items to use in the Silent Auction. Thank you also to all those who offered 1971 Lionel Catalog items for the Convention Display.

Your name can appear in this column. You only need to do something helpful for the Division.