

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. 7

September, 2009

* * VOTE * *

by Gordon Wilson, TCA # 76-10233

Recently, assuming you are “on line” and get a York bulletin from Eastern Division, you received an “E-Blast” from three members of the Eastern Division. One of these, Debbie Geiser, is the wife of the Eastern Division President who voted 100% in favor of the TCA motion to approve the Revised Bylaws and send them to the membership for a vote. She, as did I and every other person attending the National Convention this past June/July, could have gone to the BOD meetings and been recognized and raised any objections she, as a TCA member, had to these Bylaws changes. They have not been a secret – their changes began under former President James Burke, two years ago and continued on through Chris Allen’s Presidency last year. Debbie is not a “shrinking violet,” intimidated by Sam Geiser’s position of President of Eastern any more than I cower in fear because Christie is the National Secretary of TCA. I know and like Debbie. She runs the York Meet, an awesome challenge. She was an enormous help to the Desert Division this past year as we promoted the TCA Convention at York. However, in this issue about VOTING against the Bylaws, she and her two fellow Eastern Division officers are DEAD WRONG. I do not understand her thinking or rationale on this issue.

In 2000, as your TCA President, I attempted to start the procedure for changing and revising our Bylaws. These Bylaws basically were written in 1954. Ask yourself if you would care to use for your own business, health, or well-being, things that were done 55 years ago. Why, 55 years ago, it was considered “Kool” to be a regular cigarette smoker. These Bylaws, for the most part, addressed issues when they occurred. What was a relevant issue in 1960 is in all likelihood just the opposite in 2009. As a 14 year old in 1954, I bought with my own \$35.00 a brand new, mint, OB Texas Special AB F-3 Diesel Unit. Can the average 14 year old of 2009 do the same thing with his/her own money? I think not. That was then – this is now! Things change! So must the Bylaws.

In 1993, TCA formed a Management Committee to handle the business of the TCA in lieu of the once a year Board of Directors Meeting at the TCA National Convention. I had the privilege of being elected to that committee three times prior to becoming a TCA officer. The first objection in that E-Blast you received is aimed at the formation of an EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. Well, folks, we already have one, only it is called the MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE. A recommendation was made to the Bylaws Revision Committee that a name change from one to another would better describe the committee’s function. It does not circumvent the full Board of Directors, but simply acts on behalf of the Board when it is impractical and TOO EXPENSIVE for the full BOD to meet. The full BOD has the power and right to VETO any decision made by the Management/Executive Committee. It has since 1993, and will upon the approval of these changes.

Another objection in the E-Blast states that Past Presidents, by being permitted to run for President again, will become a Nominating Committee of one. Is that ever wrong! I have no desire to ever run for TCA National President again, and I can’t think of any other person who served before or after me who has such a desire. I have, however, served these past few years as the Election Supervisor, which essentially was a nominating committee member. Sometime, ask me how difficult it has been to get members to run, especially for the Executive Offices of President-Elect and Vice-President. A sitting President must serve a term as Past President before he or she can once again run for the office of Vice-President; hence, the second term would be long after the first term had ended.

I urge you to vote YES on the Bylaws changes when you receive your ballot. They have needed to be updated and made relevant to the 21st Century for a long time. Sometimes change is scary. This is one time when it is LONG overdue. I floated the idea in 2000. It is finally done.

Along with the “up or down” vote on the issue of the Bylaws Revision, you will also be asked to vote for the officers for the upcoming fiscal year of TCA. Running for President-Elect are Paul Edgar from the Keystone Division and Wayne Sheriff, President of nearby Western Division. For the position of Vice-President is Carol McGinnis, daughter of the late “Mr. TCA,” Lou Redman, and a member of the WB&A Chapter, hosts of the 2011 TCA Convention, and our own Desert Division President, Katie Elgar, who is seeking to become yet another National President from this Division. Running unopposed for Treasurer is a former National President, Bill Kotek from New England. At the office of Secretary, also unopposed, seeking her third term, is my wife, Christie Wilson. Running for a non-voting, three (3) year term on the Investment Committee is Desert Division Secretary, Fred Hunter.

Who you vote for is naturally, your business, as there are provisions for write-in selections in each position. I do, however, strongly encourage you to vote YES for acceptance of the Revised Bylaws. It is rare indeed when every member of the National TCA BOD votes unanimously to accept any motion presented to them. This is one motion that each member of the TCA Board of Directors voted to accept. They are your elected representatives and I believe you should trust their judgment.

While on the topic of the Bylaws Revision proposal, the following was just received from current TCA President, Richard “Clem” Clement. I urge you to read it thoroughly, as it too addresses the issues mentioned in the incorrect “E-Blast” that was sent by the three persons from the Eastern Division.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All Corporate entities periodically examine their By-Laws and operating policies to determine if they are in compliance with Federal and State statutes. In recent years there have been many new requirements to consider which necessitated a thorough review of the TCA By-Laws.

There have been a few changes included in the proposed revised By-laws that will bring TCA into compliance. These revisions will also allow our organization to function more efficiently and effectively for you. Your officers and Board of Directors are asking your approval of these proposed revisions.

The current Management Committee's name would be changed to Executive Committee. The membership on this committee would be increased from 6 members of the BOD to 7 members of the BOD. The new addition is the Immediate Past President. This change was made to provide a smooth transition from one administration to the next administration. A requirement is included to assure that the Executive Committee meets at least 3 times per year between scheduled BOD meetings. The Executive Committee can meet via telephone conference calls which saves money for TCA. The Executive Committee is directly responsible to the BOD. It does not have the power to modify or change any BOD policy. The committee can only suggest changes which can be presented to the BOD at its next scheduled or called meeting.

The cost to TCA of running one BOD meeting exceeds \$50,000.00 each year. Another objective of the revised Bylaws is to reduce these costs and streamline future meetings.

Currently we have a BOD which consists of a total of 28 people, including 3 Immediate Past Presidents as voting members. The proposed revised By-laws modify this to only the most immediate past President having a vote at BOD meetings.

Currently, a past President can run for National Secretary or National Treasurer yet is prohibited from holding other elected offices. Frequently, there is difficulty in locating candidates to nominate for National Office.

In regards to the question of parliamentary authority, the current bylaws are out of date. The new language is from the most recent edition of Roberts Rules of Order. It is self explanatory and Roberts Rules of Order recommend this language be included in bylaws.

The Bylaws Review Committee presented the proposed revised By-Laws to the BOD and addressed and answered all BOD members' questions. The BOD voted to accept the report and directed that a ballot be prepared for the membership.

If one aspect or another of these proposed new bylaws needs to be changed, the membership and/or the Board of Directors still retains that power. The proposed new bylaws are a living and breathing document created to serve the membership of TCA.

As always, please feel free to direct any additional questions, comments or concerns to your elected National Officers or our National Business Office.

Once again, your officers and Board of Directors ask for your approval of these proposed revised By-Laws.

Richard “Clem” Clement, National TCA President

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings!

As we go into September, as a train club we have several things to be looking at. Locally, we will be participating with our Division Module at Rail Fair. Also, we have our new 2-day venture for the Turkey Meet in November. This is our biggest event of the year, and also where we hope to reach out to the community to generate more interest in trains as well as have a chance to display our modules, other club modules, have a swap meet, as well as fun. We are returning to Mesa Convention Center for this event. The traditional Turkey Meet Auction on Sunday has been rescheduled to be held in February. Hopefully the information flyers and registration forms will be available at the September Division Meeting.

Desert Division has generated a sizeable balance in the Trains for Kids Program. If there is a way that we can distribute trains to kids who would enjoy them, please let the board know ASAP. This could be a special needs program, a pre-school program, a city program, whatever. Also the Christmas Trees will be going up in the stores soon. Spend a bit of time reading the cards on the trees.

Our 2009 Convention was a success, thanks to the hard work of the committee members, as well as the hard work of the volunteers! The Convention's success was dependent upon all of your hard work to pull it off. A "tip of the hat" to you all and a big thanks!

Nationally there is an election for the new board, wherein I am running as a candidate and would appreciate your support. Also you are being asked to vote on new By-laws. Changing bylaws is always a time of angst for any organization. These proposed bylaws need to be approved. We are running this organization on bylaws set up in the mid-'50's. Though they have been amended by membership over the years, they do not comply with changes in the IRS codes, which have changed dramatically over the past 8 years. We need the bylaws to be compliant with new IRS reporting statutes regarding non-profits and Pennsylvania statutes for non-profits as well. There will be a presentation on the bylaws at the meeting.

Also in this newsletter is a reprint of an article by Art Tate, WB&A's president. Frank Geczi, president of PNW Division, has challenged all the western divisions to step up to the plate on this.

This month's educational segment can include "What I bought at the TCA National Convention." Many of you have shared with me your finds, so bring one or two of them to the meeting and share with everyone.

Happy Trains!



The following is reprinted with permission from Art Tate, President, WB&A Chapter of Eastern Division, TCA.

I joined TCA twelve years ago and frankly, the main reason I joined was simply to enable me to attend the wondrous York Meet I had heard so much about. If I had to join the national organization to get to York, that was just the price of admission to me. In the following years I have, of course, become much more appreciative of TCA and the great things it has brought to our hobby. In fact, if not for TCA, the York meet might not be the "greatest train show in the world." TCA, with its 30,000 members, is the parent organization of Eastern Division and exerts a tremendous influence on nearly every aspect of our great hobby. I think it is safe to say that without TCA's leadership, our hobby of toy train collecting and operating would not have the appeal and diversity that has brought so much pleasure and fellowship to so many people from so many different walks of life.

Having said all of the above I must state that TCA needs us, its members, to help it to maintain itself as the premier institution we all expect it to be. Unfortunately, our difficult economic climate and litigious nature of our society have severely undermined the finances of our parent organization and so I find myself doing something in this newsletter I promised myself I would never do during my tenure as president of WB&A, asking for money. I ask not for WB&A, but for your financial support of TCA which has furnished us all with many years of leadership, information and just plain fun for a small contribution of dues. Lawsuits and the requirement of a hugely expensive sewage system for its headquarters have placed the leader of our hobby (TCA) in a financial dilemma that our president and board of directors have addressed but will take years to put it on a sound financial footing. If we, the members, contributed a mere ten dollars each, the financial struggle of TCA would disappear overnight. And so I request that everyone reading this newsletter extend a helping hand to put the national representative of our magnificent pastime back on a sound financial footing. It is time to give something back to an old friend.

Sincerely,
Art Tate,
WB&A President

1971 – THE YEAR OF THE DESERT DIVISION’S BIRTH

by Gordon L. Wilson, TCA #76-10233

The Desert Division was founded during the TCA Convention of June, 1971. I thought it would be an interesting display, especially knowing that the current Lionel L.L. C. would be bringing a “State of the Art” display to the 55th TCA National Convention, if we were to somehow gather together the items that Lionel/Fundimensions was marketing in 1971. It would make for an interesting comparison.

Desert Division members are normally a great source of information to seek out such material. However, a brief scan through a 1971 Lionel Catalog revealed some material that very few of us would consider “durable.” As a matter of fact, the late Jim Fenley, the man who was lured by Lionel in 1974 to put them “back on track” equipmentwise, said to me that in the early ’70’s, “They were making junk with a lower case j.” When I first conceived the idea of gathering together all of the component parts of the 1971 Catalog, I’ll be the first to admit that I wasn’t too terribly hopeful of pulling it off.

What I underestimated was the “due diligence” of our Desert Division members. Those of you reading this “Epistle according to Lionel/Parker Brothers/Fundimensions” are to be praised and commended. In all, a total of 22 members stepped forward to develop this display. When all was said and done, the members of this Division were able to lend the Display and Exhibits Committee all but three very inconspicuous pieces available for sale in the 1971 Lionel Commercial Catalog. Of the items shown in this catalog, there were two I would have “bet the farm” we never would have found. One of them, a “Foam Village Container” was one I had never knowingly even seen, let alone actively sought for my own collection.

Allow me to elaborate about this “foam village container.” Lionel set boxes of the era were rectangular in shape, generally a cardboard or Styrofoam base with cutouts of the sizes of the trains and accessories in the set. In select sets, they placed a foam Styrofoam piece shaped like a building. It was all white and came in 5 different shapes and sizes. It was not solid, but was reamed out to allow a train car, locomotive, tender, transformer, or small accessory to be placed inside the carved out area. This part was facing upwards for easy removal when the set box was opened. It was Lionel’s intent that this foam container was to be removed and turned right side up, thus exposing the piece as a house ready to be painted and placed on a toy train layout. Absolutely ingenious, except someone like me would have left it in the train set box and probably thrown it out. This is why it probably never “caught on” – that and the fact that Plasticville was much more realistic looking and already painted! I was totally taken back when Fred and Elaine Goulden and Ken Burling provided me with a plethora of these 1971 Lionel innovative foam buildings. So much for “Never having seen them!”

I must admit I never thought the Lionel/Plasticville kits of 1971 would survive to this day for one very good reason. The boxes in which they were marketed were very flimsy, with little or no support to allow for much movement of any kind, let alone nearly 40 years of careless movement. Once again, I was pleasantly surprised, having been left one, an Alamo Junction Set #6-2793, in absolute mint/c-10 condition. There is no accounting for the habits of a truly serious collector!

Many people are probably aware of the fact that Lionel made several “Plug Door” small 027 box cars. One of these was a Hershey’s Chocolate Car and I have a story to relate to everyone that was told to me by the late James Fenley, who in the 1970’s was employed by Lionel/Fundimensions. Few of us are inclined to give Lionel of that era credit for doing anything “intelligent and with forethought.” According to Jim, the Hershey’s Car had a method to its madness. You may remember that it came in two shades of brown – a very dark brown and a sort of milk chocolate brown. Jim once told me that Lionel did that color difference deliberately because Hershey’s actually made two kinds of chocolate: dark and milk. Believe it or not! I tend to believe it simply because I knew Jim quite well and he was NOT prone to exaggeration. Most other Lionel color variations were and are total accidents. This one was intended. Someone at General Mills must have liked the Hershey candy bars!

I can’t thank the members of this Division enough for their help in putting this display together. Paul Wassermann and I are deeply indebted to you for your diligence for this project. All of your names follow in a list for all to see. Again, many thanks for your help in making this display the success it was during our 55th TCA National Convention from June 28 to July 5, 2009.

Marlin Benson
Terry Bunish
Ken Burling
Pat Eiff
Katie Elgar
Mel Firestone

Fred Fishman
Chuck Ganucheau
Fred & Elaine Goulden
Terry Haas
Scott Horner
Fred & Shirley Hunter

Clark McClure
Bryan & Charlotte Rench
Don Robinson
John Upshur
Jim Vokac
Gordon & Christie Wilson

TAKE A WEEK OFF – GO TO A RESORT AND RELAX. RIGHT!

by Angelo Lautazi TCA#93-37260

Spending a week at the Desert Ridge Resort sure sounded like a relaxing vacation. Barbara and I stayed at the resort during the recent TCA National Convention that the Desert Division hosted. It turns out that being a Desert Division convention volunteer changed that “relaxing” vacation into a hectic week of non-stop activities. Don’t get me wrong, we had a good time, but it sure wasn’t relaxing. Barb and I both took the week off from our jobs because we planned on helping at the convention for the entire week.

Helping at the registration table was fun. Some visitors always managed to ask a question that we couldn’t answer. All we heard that first day was, “We need to ask Chris”, or “Chris will know the answer to that”, or usually, “Where’s Chris”? Our registration team leaders were Chris and Laurel Allen and thankfully they had a lot of patience and cheerfully solved any problems that arose.

A fact we discovered early on was the Desert Ridge Resort is a very large facility. It was a trek from the parking lots to the registration area or from the storage rooms to the banquet halls or from the loading docks to anywhere. By the end of the week I had blisters on my feet, no joke. I haven’t moved that many cartons and boxes since my days as a Woolworth manager in Brooklyn. Of course, I was much younger then and had a strong back. I had all I could do to keep up with Bob Herman; boy, is he in good shape! During these tasks of moving “freight” around, we discovered the lower level of the resort where the “behind the scenes” activities occur. The kitchens, housekeeping, and the maintenance facilities occupy this hidden area in a maze of rooms and passageways. The floors of the hallways had different colored tiled stripes running their length to provide a guide path. So from the loading docks you would take the “blue” hall to the “red” hall into the “green” hall which brought you to the elevator. Marty Wik said that he and Bob Herman had ventured into some “mighty scary” areas. He suggested that we might shoot a video similar to the “Blair Witch Project.” “Marty and Bob’s Adventures beyond the Red Tile Floor” is the current working title.

As the week progressed, it was clear that our Division volunteers were performing very well and many stepped up big time to handle the unexpected glitches that arose. There were mostly smiles and agreeable nods even when confronted by a difficult situation.

Barbara and I hosted one of the Friday night layout tours and we had a blast. We only had one bus of conventioners visit but they were a great group of TCA’ers. Barb put out a nice spread of snacks and refreshments which were thoroughly enjoyed by our guests. The layout ran flawlessly for the entire visit and “Murphy” was nowhere to be found. I give a lot of credit to my trainroom helpers, Rick Stein and Ralph Treichel, who kept the whistles tooting and the wheels on the tracks. Many thanks to Sally Treichel, Lenora Stein, Brad and Diane Martin, who helped with the refreshments and crowd control. Our friend, Judd, video taped the visit and he captured some great memories. (I have made a DVD with some Convention video and my layout visit and if anyone is interested I can make copies). Our group effort contributed to a great visit and layout tour.

I also want to thank everyone who helped us with the Welcome Party and the Convention Banquet. We had an enthusiastic group of volunteers who did a great job, especially in prepping the banquet hall and setting the table decorations. I don’t think many people realize how much effort is required for an event like the banquet until they actually work it. We had a great team and their combined efforts made the task easier for everyone. Thank you all.

Well, it might not have been a relaxing week, but it was memorable and fun. We met a lot of nice folks from all parts of the country. We attended some great Convention activities. We enjoyed some fine meals with our fellow Desert Division members. We finally did have a “relaxing day” on Sunday and spent some time poolside with friends, enjoying the Marriott’s beautiful amenities.

It was great. It was fun. It’s over. Good luck Baltimore!

J. W. Marriott Hotel and Spa



Banquet Set-Up



APACHE BEER CAR AGAIN!

by Peter Atonna, TCA 75-7578

When we researched the history of the Arizona Brewing Company, we found two neat sets of graphics from the '30's, one for that used on the bottles and one used on the shipping cases. The first issue of the Apache Beer Reefer had the Indianhead design used on the bottles, and we are now ready to issue the second car using the shipping box logo. Fortunately Atlas is making a run of their 40-foot wood reefers this fall and we will be getting our car as part of that run. That means that (hopefully!) our car will be in your hands before the end of THIS year!

Because of many requests when doing the first car, I have added a few to be available in two-rail and each version will also be available in two road numbers. So, if you would like more than one car, you could have two separate road numbers. And don't forget, local Division members who would like to pick up their car(s) at a meet can save the shipping costs. When you order your car, just leave off the shipping costs and I will have it brought to a meet when they arrive. Also, Arizona Desert Division members do not have to pay the sales tax. This pertains only to current members of TCA and the Desert Division. Non-TCA members living in Arizona, or TCA members who reside outside of Arizona will be required to pay the tax.

Because of the short lead time before they are produced, I had to preorder a set number. We will be able to take orders only for the first 250 three-rail and 24 two-rail cars. After they are committed, there will be no more available. The national ads will run in the December issue of Classic Toy Trains (due out November 1) and in the November Headquarters News. So if you would like a car, be sure to get your order in early, before the national advertising comes out. You may use the order form included in this issue of the Dispatch.

FLASH

Orders are already coming in, and by the time you read this, the car will be at least 25% sold out. Therefore, if you are interested in this offering, do get your orders in immediately, and certainly before the national advertising comes out.

ALL THINGS CAN CHANGE

by Peter Atonna TCA #75-7578

I wanted to let you know of some upcoming changes to the Seligman and Paulden Lines here in the Paulden basement. But, a bit of personal introspection first. One of the features of any hobby, but in particular with model railroading, is the wide range of interests you can pursue. It allows our interests to never stagnate - if we keep looking ahead. I admit, my lifelong fascination with all things trains has led me down many, many pathways - each of which left great enjoyment and memories.

Now, even on my "ultimate" layouts here at home, they keep evolving. My enjoyment of S gauge reached the point of fulfillment and I wanted to try something new. So, the Lowell branch and Hell Canyon scene took the place of it - and gave me three years of trying to perfect my scenery making skills. And there are always new "projects" on the remaining layouts. This last year brought the new diorama, the Best Friend of Charleston, to life. Those who joined us on the Beat the Heat layout tour hopefully noticed only a foundation where the Seligman train station used to be (to become a new model of the real Seligman Harvey House and depot).

Over the last few months, conversation with Mary Jane during our afternoon tea sessions in the train room has turned to "what's next?" This year saw dreams come true that few can hope for - a visit from CTT, a videoing session from Tracks Ahead, and then sharing the layout with our TCA Convention visitors from around the country. So, what's next?

I have always said, "Know yourself." Know what you enjoy in the hobby and then go for it. Well, in my case I have two feelings. First, I still find I really enjoy my high rail layout more than any other facet of the hobby. But it has reached the point of only small retrofits, such as the new Seligman station. On the other hand, my prewar layout has long reached the point of completion and I almost always do something with it only for visitors. Other than one set of standard gauge passenger cars, there are really no other items on my prewar "want list" either.

So we put the two themes together and decided that it is time to remove the prewar layout and add a new section to the high rail layout. A plan is drawn and bridging an aisle. The main line will climb new mountains, run along a new river and pass a new town - all as yet unnamed. High up the mountain, a narrow gauge line will pass in and out of the fall aspens to an old Arizona lumbering town.

What will become of the prewar? First, the trains themselves will never go. Well, almost, I do have to make room on the shelves for trains now on the layout, so will be selling either of my two repro sets, the LTI green State Set or the MTH bicentennial gold President's Special. Only the accessories will have to be sold as I simply have no room to display them. So, I have lists of all and would like to see if there is interest among our Desert Division members. I can send people the lists and will take some items to Cal Stewart and the Turkey Meet. Then if there remains a significant amount (and there is a lot to begin with!), I will probably contact one of the national auction houses. After all, I do get restless to start my next "project."

CELEBRATE ARIZONA!

With the second Apache Beer 40' woodside reefer by Atlas
sponsored by the Desert Division



Now in 3 rail and 2 rail! - Two car numbers available

Delivery expected - end of 2009

Only 250 to be made in 3 rail - 24 in 2 rail

Qty.	PLEASE SEND ME:	Three Rail	Two Rail
_____ 3 rail	\$77.95 - 2 rail \$82.95	\$ _____	\$ _____
_____ Second road number		_____	_____
Shipping @ \$8 per car		_____	_____
(AZ residents sales tax: \$5.50/3 rail; \$5.90/2 rail)		_____	_____
TOTAL ENCLOSED		\$ _____	\$ _____
Name _____			
Address _____			
City/State/ZIP _____			
Make checks to: Desert Division Mail to: Desert Division 25375 N. Feather Mountain Rd. Paulden, AZ 86334 Or order from: www.TCAdd.org			

RIO GRANDE CHAPTER NEWS

by Gregory Palmer TCA#94-39039

Hope everyone had a great summer. It is now time to get back to Toy Train business. During the past few months, your Board of Directors have been very busy planning the 2009 Pumpkin Meet. The Board has decided to let non-Chapter members purchase tables. However they will have to follow TCA rules for Standards and conduct. The table fee will be higher for non-members. TCA Members can purchase tables for \$10.00 each; for Non-Members the fee will be \$20.00. The plan is to encourage more table sellers. Since we are at the Sheraton Uptown Hotel and Conference Center, the public attendance should increase. The Flyer for the 2009 Pumpkin Meet is included in this issue of the Dispatch. Please mail your checks early to make sure you are not left out of the Pumpkin Meet. The price per table for TCA members, at \$10.00 each, is the cheapest table fee at a Hotel Toy Train Swap Meet, in the Southwest. The Sheraton Uptown Hotel also has a great rate for out-of-town visitors at \$98.00.

At our September 19th Regular Meet we need a good turnout of members. We need ideas on how to blanket the area around the Sheraton Uptown Hotel with our Pumpkin Meet Flyers. This area has many Hotels, Restaurants, and stores, all of which have large numbers of people there every day. We need to get the word out at these venues, and we need the Chapter's help. Please plan on attending the September Regular Meet at 10:00AM at the Sombra Del Monte Church, 2529 Utah N.E., in Albuquerque. Also at the September 19th Regular Meet, we will be looking for ways to help Jon Spargo with the Trains for Kids and our Kids Club Projects. We need all of you there. It is the last Regular Meet before the Pumpkin Meet. Hope to see all of you on September 19th.

WHOOPS

Not too often, but every once in a while, the editors let something slip through that is not correct. This happened in the Summer, 2009 issue of the Dispatch. In the Convention article which covered pages 1 through 5, there is a reference on page 4 to two layouts which were recently filmed. The name of the program was incorrect. The layouts referred to belong to Angelo Lautazi and Marty Wik. Angelo's layout was filmed by Tracks Ahead, and both layouts were photographed by Classic Toy Trains for articles to be published in 2010.

CELEBRATE AMERICA MINT CAR UPDATE

Because of the lateness of the arrival of the Celebrate America Mint Cars, we have some leftovers. These were to be sold at the Convention, but we didn't have them in time. Desert Division members will have the first opportunity to buy the extra cars at \$75 each if picked up at a meet or \$82 mailed.

Peter will keep a list of people who contact him to purchase the extra cars, first come – first served. Orders must be placed via e-mail (mjatonna@commspeed.net). After the pre-orders are filled, he will know how many extras there are. At that time, he will start filling Desert Division post-orders. You will be notified if you are to receive any of the extra cars. Remember, post-orders are based on the date and time that Peter receives your request.

SEPTEMBER THEME

The Educational Segment in September will feature "Treasures I Found at the Convention." Bring your items for Show and Tell at the Scottsdale Jaycees Hall on September 12, 2009.

DESERT DIVISION - TCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 2008-9

President:	Katie Elgar	623-580-6957	Directors:	Steve Bienstock	480-998-9227
Vice President:	Jonathan Peiffer	602-561-4131		Sam McElwee	480-838-5847
Treasurer:	Bob Herman	480-948-2730		Greg Palmer	505-898-3840
Secretary:	Fred Hunter	480-947-3639		Gordon Wilson	480-837-5344

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.



TRAIN COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION
RIO GRANDE CHAPTER
PUMPKIN MEET
TOY TRAIN SWAP MEET



SUNDAY NOVEMBER 1st
9:00AM TO 3:00PM

SHERATON UPTOWN HOTEL
ON THE CORNER OF LOUISIANA AND MANUAL N.E
IN ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

ADULTS \$2.00 UNDER 12 FREE WITH ADULT
TCA MEMBERS FREE WITH CURRENT TCA CARD
TCA MEMBERS CAN SHOP EARLY FROM
9:00AM-10:00AM
OPEN FOR THE PUBLIC FROM 10:00AM-3:00PM

DEALER SETUP FROM 8:00AM-9:00AM-TCA RULES WILL APPLY
FOR INFORMATION CALL: Greg Palmer 505-898-3840 or Bill Spofford
at 505-821-4051.



NAME _____ TCA# _____
ADDRESS _____
PHONE _____
TCA MEMBER TABLES # _____ @\$10.00EA. _____
NON MEMBER TABLES# _____ @\$20.00EA. _____
SEND A CHECK PAYABLE TO TCA-RIO GRANDE CHAPTER. MAIL TO:
GREGORY PALMER. 9633 2nd St. N.W., Albuquerque, NM 87114.

I agree to comply with all of the rules and regulations of Train Collectors Association (TCA) and its Divisions and Chapters in effect from time to time, specifically including all rules and regulations of all TCA committees and any actions and rulings of TCA committees. I also agree that all items sold by me to any TCA member at any TCA sponsored meet shall be sold on the basis that I represent that all such items are authentic and in the manufacturers original condition unless I have caused any such item to be appropriately marked as a restoration or reproduction.

Signature

Date

THE TRAIN THAT BLEW AWAY IN THE TORNADO

By Tom Adams, TCA #85-22982

Things change as time goes by, and so has my train hobby. My train history is similar to many others. I had an American Flyer S Gauge train at the age of seven. Through the teenage years and early adulthood, I was very serious about HO trains. Then, about 1970, the train collecting bug bit. At first I didn't know I was a collector. I thought I was just a buyer/seller. I sold my old American Flyer set to get money for HO trains. Then I started buying old trains and selling them at train meets around the Midwest. The old trains could be found and the money was good. I had a hobby. I would load up the car, wife and kids, and off we would go to the big city for the weekend. I sold trains, we stayed in nice hotels and ate good meals, and we all had a great time. What a great hobby this was!

Then, while I wasn't looking, a change took place. I noticed I had started saving many of these trains. I would still sell, but only the extra items. I collected Lionel, American Flyer, Marx, and just about anything that caught my eye. Now my train hobby had changed and I was a serious collector. I had very little interest in operating, only in collecting. Buy one each of everything ever made and place it on the shelf or in a glass case. Well, that was great fun, but I soon ran out of both money and space - a serious problem that we all can relate to. I started thinning out and getting this hobby under control. Going back to my roots, I collected only American Flyer S Gauge.

As time went by, I began to realize that what I had become was a treasure hunter of sorts. I still liked the trains, but what I really liked was the HUNT. It was an adventure. I would spend hours, days, weeks, or even in some cases years tracking down trains. Now I was a serious hard-working train hunter. One of these many train adventures is the subject of this story: The Train That Blew Away in the Tornado.

About January 1978, while I was having breakfast with a fellow worker, he mentioned that his sister-in-law had an old train she would like to sell. Word of mouth, I thought. This is good. As Dr. Watson would have said, "The game is afoot." It didn't take me long to arrange a meeting with this lady to check out the train. It was an American Flyer S Gauge passenger set made up of a Silver Comet A unit and three blue striped cars. The train included the original boxes and was in like-new condition. Negotiation did not go well. She really only wanted me to appraise the train. If it was worth a small fortune, she would sell it; if not, she would keep it. I told her the value and she decided to keep it for her boys. But, this is not the end of the story.

I continued to ask about the train about once a year over the next four years, with no progress. Then, on May 29, 1982, this story took a serious turn. Marion, Illinois, 3 PM, an F-4 Tornado. Now, I am not afraid of storms, but I do respect them. This was the first tornado I was able to see up close. I saw it form and travel from west to east about 1½ miles from our house. Thankfully we were not in the path of the storm, only close observers. I could actually see buildings being sucked up into the air and then explode into millions of pieces. It was a terrible storm, on the ground for 17 miles and about 30 minutes. When it was over it had damaged two schools, 648 homes, and 52 businesses; caused 10 deaths and 181 injuries; and left 1000 people homeless. We were all in shock. The next day as I began to realize the extent of the damage, I realized the storm had apparently formed over the area where the owner of the train lived. Later that day, I drove out to see how her house had fared. Everything was gone, except the floor and one interior wall of a bathroom and one closet wall. Fortunately the family was out of town on a Memorial Day weekend vacation. They were all okay, but had lost everything. The house had just exploded, leaving nothing but very small pieces of debris spread over a square mile. Of course, the train was gone. But I wasn't thinking about that. I was gaining a whole new respect for mother nature and her fury.

Now, as Paul Harvey would have said, "for the rest of the story." About four years later, 1986, my friend called me and said his sister-in-law wanted to know if I still wanted to buy that train. I'm sure there was a long silence on my end as I tried to piece together what he was saying. Finally I blurted out, "It blew away in the tornado."

"No, it didn't," was the reply. After the tornado, neighbors, knowing the family was out of town, went to the site, gathered up all the personal items, and placed them in a storage facility. Remember, two partial interior walls were still standing. This is where the train and other items had been stored. We all know that we have been told that if you don't have a basement, go to a small interior room during a tornado. This was absolute proof of that theory. The trains and several other personal items had survived. Not only did they survive; they were covered with clothes and were not damaged or wet.

I bought the train and it is a very special part of my collection. I always tell everyone that this is the train that blew away in the 1982 tornado.

The hobby still changes today. Three grandsons have come along and PaPa and the three boys have a large operating layout of O-Gauge trains with all the sounds, bells, and whistles. Now after 50 years my train hobby has a whole new meaning and direction. Isn't this fun!

RAILROAD



-CHANGE



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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.

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FOR SALE - 2010 Lionel and American Flyer Greenberg Pocket Guides. Contact Gordon Wilson 580-837-5344 or e-mail christielwilson@aol.com.

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Please contact them for items you may have, want, or need.

**TRAIN COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION
DESERT DIVISION**

Gordon Wilson, Editor
Desert Division Dispatch
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COMING EVENTS

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 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 |

THANK YOU

by Thomas Plies, TCA #01-52481

My personal thanks to all those volunteers who stepped up to the plate to assist in helping with the venues that Kids Club had. Many kudos to Barbara Turner and Scott Russell for earning \$324 at the Kids Club sales table. Monies go to the Trains for Kids program.

Thanks also to the volunteers who did multiple tasks with Kids Club: Terry & Keineth Bunish, Clark McClure, Doug Gilliatt, Jonathan Peiffer, Chris Allen, Dwane Turner, Sarah Russell, and Tom Davis. Jim Jackson and Jonathan Spargo worked the Kids Club popular module from New Mexico. Let's not forget Mrs. Dianne Schnobelen, who escorted the Kids Club tour #20 to the Challenger Space Center and worked the evening Kids Club Banquet.