

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



VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.tcadd.org
Click on the link to our e-Bay offerings.

Volume 36, No. 6

Summer, 2007

“JUNE IS BUSTIN’ OUT ALL OVER”

June brought out members and friends alike. Our newest member, Phil Waszak, joined us from Arizona City. Additionally, members who had missed the May Meet were given Convention buttons to wear from now until June of 2009.

Treasurer Bob Herman announced that the savings account has \$21,343.01; checking has \$3,139.89; and Trains for Kids has \$324.45.

Marty Wik, with the help of Ivan English, displayed posters of the Desert Division’s proposed cars for the 2009 Convention. These include the G-Gauge Apache Dynamite Car (Benson, AZ), a wooden boxcar in red with a black roof, to be produced by Charles Ro. Next was the O/S/Standard Aztec Water Tower (based on the American Flyer 596 tower) with the blinking light on top. This is a copy of one on I-8 at Dateland on the SP Railway near Yuma. It will be produced by MTH. Third is the Hot Eddy’s Salsa smoking tank car, featuring the New Mexico Chili Pepper Line, to be made by MTH. The American Flyer S-Gauge car is a transformer car with a Lionel transformer on top and space for a special surprise inside, honoring the Hoover Dam Company. This will be made by Lionel. Last is an O-Gauge Grand Canyon Line, to go with TCA’s 50th Anniversary Set. It is a copy of a 1936 car, rebuilt in 1946, with the slogan “Santa Fe All the Way,” to be made by Lionel.

Thank you to all cell phone donors. We had enough to send in another batch after the June Meet. Unfortunately there was no after-meet visitation. We had a very interesting impromptu visit in May, when John Bahne volunteered to open his home and his ON30 layout. Members are urged to contact Don Locke to sign up for a date. There is no need to worry about the layout being finished, as toy train layouts are NEVER finished.

The TTOS Grand Canyon Division is offering TCA members the chance to ride the bus to Prescott on August 18 for the “Beat the Heat” Meet. The cost is \$25 and the stops will be Arizona Mills, PV Mall, Metro Center, and Carefree Highway. To be included, call Dave Brown (480-423-8725).

In response to the Desert Division’s floral arrangement and plant for Cole Gibbs’ funeral, Fran Gibbs sent a thank-you note, which Katie Elgar read to the members in attendance.

Shirts with the Convention Logo have arrived. Anyone who ordered one (or more) should see Chris Allen, with money in hand, to pick them up. Chris is also taking orders for more shirts. Please note: Ladies’ shirts are cut very small, so order accordingly.

Paul Wassermann showed off a huge poster advertising the 55th TCA Star Spangled Convention to be held over the 4th of July weekend in 2009. Jonathan Peiffer offered to help Paul create a similar poster to promote the Celebrate Arizona Weaver Apache Beer Car for sale by the Division. Signs, the prototype car, and order forms are available for the Convention in Denver, as well as the York and Cal-Stewart Meets this fall.

COMING UP . . .

AUGUST 18 “Beat the Heat” Meet – Prescott, AZ – 9 AM
SEPTEMBER 8 Regular Division Meet – Scottsdale, AZ – 9 AM
SEPTEMBER 15 Rio Grande Chapter Meet – Albuquerque, NM – 10 AM
OCTOBER 13 Regular Division Meet – Scottsdale, AZ – 9 AM
OCTOBER 13-14 Railfair – McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park – Scottsdale, AZ
OCTOBER 17-20 Eastern Division Meet – York, PA
NOVEMBER 3 Pumpkin Meet – Albuquerque, NM
NOVEMBER 10 Desert Division 19th Annual Golf Tourney – Green Valley, AZ

The Educational Segment featured “Things I Got From Cole” as this month’s topic. Paul Wassermann brought in his #7 Limited Standard Gauge loco from 1913. Though Paul did not get it from Cole, Cole repaired it so that it would run. From then on, every time Cole saw Irene, he would ask “Are you ready to give me the 7 yet?” Next Paul showed an orange car, of which most are a dark red. This one came from Jim Flynn, via an antique store. The Cole connection is that Paul took it with him when he visited Cole in the hospital. Cole grabbed it, mouthed “Thanks,” and put it under his bed sheet. That was Cole – upbeat until the end. A Cole addition to this car is that it is coded on the bottom with the price it cost. Paul used Cole’s system of letters to represent numbers so that only Paul can read the information. Bob Mancus brought in a Dorfan hopper car purchased from Cole, whose greeting was “You have to buy this because you need it.” Two other cars, a Dorfan Crane and a #54 engine brought memories of Cole, as it was at Cole’s house that Bob first saw the two items. Tom Stange brought in his 1912 Lionel Standard Gauge engine, made in 1910. He acquired it from Cole last October. This item reminds Tom of two of our departed members. Bill Schulte owned it, and Tom coveted it. After his passing, Cole got this item, as well as the rest of the trains, from Bill’s widow. He then sold it to Tom. Phil Monahan remembers Cole from when he first moved here. At a Prescott “Beat the Heat” Meet, he met this scratchy looking individual with trains on his three tables. Not knowing whether or not to trust this man, Phil hemmed and hawed until late in the meet. Cole finally said, “I’ll make you a deal. This engine is free, if you take all the stuff on the three tables. The terms of the deal included that Phil had to pack up the trains and take them home. This he did, even though the car he was driving at the time was a Thunderbird. Later, at Cole’s house, Phil noticed that every time Cole opened a beer, he would swear, stating that it always exploded. Phil asked him whether his beers were stacked on end or on their sides. Cole said that they fit better in the refrigerator if they were on their sides. This, Phil explained, is why they exploded. Most imported beers are not pasteurized, so additional fermentation takes place after they are sold. A beer on its side has more air space for that fermentation to take place, causing more explosion when it is opened. Phil laughs about the fact that, just this once, he knew something he could impart to Cole, instead of the other way around. Katie Elgar brought in a table which her father had made in Wood Shop in the 1920’s. What did this have to do with Cole? Cole brought it from New Jersey to Arizona in his van, just one of many items Cole transported for his friends in the Desert over the years. Gordon Wilson brought in the last item he purchased from Cole – at the Nor-Cal Meet last spring. It was a New Haven EP5, which he spotted three aisles away. Upon closer inspection, Gordon noticed that it was the rare variation. The common one has decals on the nose; this one is painted. Though Cole was an expert on Pre-War and European trains, he was also knowledgeable about Post-War items. Being a good toy train collector, Gordon didn’t ask the price, but rather, “What will you take for it?” Cole and Gordon worked out a mutually agreeable price and now that engine has a home in Fountain Hills.

The Wilsons reported on their recent trip to South America. Gordon held up the Orlando Sentinel, with Christie’s picture on the front page. She was getting a baseball signed by Sammy Sosa that day. Gordon also showed those in attendance what dolls from Peru and Bolivia look like; then he presented them to Diane Martin to add to her doll collection.

Paul Wassermann thanked Chris Allen for the great job he did of putting the June issue of the Dispatch together. Paul suggested that members go to the Desert Division’s website to see all the photos in color. Chet Henry made another plea for lots for the Turkey Meet Auction.

Next came the raffles. Melissa Peiffer pulled the first ticket, which belonged to Werner Hennig. He chose the Eastwood truck with orange and blue automobiles. Other prizes follow:

Chris Allen	Hudson Raffle Ticket
Bill MacDowell	David Doyle’s book <u>Standard Gauge Lionel Train Sets 1945-1969</u>
John Upshur	Lionel #252 Auto Crossing Gate
Werner Hennig	Lionel #2357 Caboose
Beth Stange	Lionel #71 and smoke pellets
Bob Dennison	Greenberg book <u>Lionel Trains 1901-1942</u> , Vol. III
Gordon Wilson	Bumper and Turkey Meet Buttons

Melissa Peiffer then pulled the first Spring Raffle ticket. Chris Allen won the RailKing Alaska Set, which he promptly donated to the 2009 Convention. Ralph Treichel won the FA-2 AA’s. Fred Hunter won the Lionel Operating Coaling Station. Melissa then pulled the Hudson Ticket for the \$100 prize. As Terry Haas was not in attendance, he will receive \$25 and the other \$75 will go to the Convention Fund.



Melissa Peiffer pulled the winning ticket.



Chris Allen won the Alaskan Set in the Spring Raffle.



Behind the Convention Logo, Gordon Wilson presented South American dolls to Diane Martin.

JULY MINI-MEET MINUTES

We welcomed Len Gordy and Bob Miazga, both members from “out of town,” as well as newcomers Russ Mosser and Steve Gerstenfeld. About 50 members attended our mini-meet, which was a huge success. Chris Allen had shirts for all members who ordered them in May. Later orders have not yet arrived. The Celebrate Arizona cars from Lionel have arrived. Those who said they would pick them up at a meet could do so; others will be shipped. Orders for the second Celebrate Arizona offering, an Atlas Apache Car, are due by November 15. This will allow us time to promote them at October York and at Cal Stewart (November 2-4).

November is filling up, as the Desert Division Golf Tourney will be November 10, at a course in Green Valley, with a meal hosted by Lynne and Dannie Martin at their home.

Annual Reports from all the Divisions are in the possession of President Katie Elgar. Anyone who wishes to peruse them should see Katie. Paul Wassermann reported on the Denver Convention, saying that we went with an eye for what to imitate or improve upon. Thanks to Jonathan Peiffer, we had a huge photo of the Apache Beer Car, as well as the prototype itself and loads of order forms. Katie reported that we had 4½ tables full of Desert Division people at the Banquet.

In preparation for the 2009 TCA National Convention, we will be offering more items on e-Bay. Check the Desert Division Web Site to find out what’s up for sale.

Railfair will be held at McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park the weekend of October 13-14. Anyone who can work those two days should let Katie Elgar know immediately. TTOS has offered their display area at Railfair to advertise the Turkey Meet.

Dave Brown reported on the bus to the “Beat the Heat” Meet in Prescott on August 18. At a cost of \$25 per person, with an optional sack lunch for \$6, the seats are selling out fast. Contact Dave at 480-423-8725 if you want to be included. He also announced that Paradise and Pacific is having its Club Picnic on November 17, and Desert Division members are welcome to attend.

Marty Wik presented our Convention Car ideas in Denver, and was given approval to go ahead with these offerings. The Convention Car offerings for Vermont are varied and can be ordered at a 5% discount by October 31, 2007. Later orders MUST be postmarked by December 31. The order form for these cars will be in the September issue of the National Headquarters News.

Chris Allen reported on the TCA Board Meeting at Denver. Of paramount importance is the rewriting of the National Bylaws. Issues to be considered include membership for those under 18 and those over 18; a special category for handicapped persons; the possibility of a 6-month trial membership in a Division before joining TCA. A parliamentarian will help in organizing items so they can be found more easily. Paul Wassermann is a member of the committee, so any ideas or suggestions should be directed to him. Members will be asked to vote on the new Bylaws once they are completed. Second is the e-Train. It is now the official electronic publication of TCA. Bob Mintz needs your articles. Its thrust is more about real trains and restorations, and the modern operator, rather than tinsplate items. Third is that the monies for the sewer project have been approved. The port-a-potties will soon be gone and the project should be finished by the fall of 2009. Why the delay? EPA and the State of Pennsylvania are involved and “the wheels of government move slowly. . . .”

The 2009 Convention Committee Heads were officially announced today. They are as follows:

Ed Micale and Bill Mack - Convention Co-Chairs

Chet Henry – Treasurer

Gordon Wilson – Tours/Events, Publicity, Member of Steering Committee

Chris Allen – Registration, Member of Steering Committee

Christie Wilson – Recording Secretary

Marty Wik – Convention Cars

Dannie Martin – Hotel Liaison

Paul Wassermann – Displays, Member of Steering Committee

Angelo Lautazi – Banquet, Web Site

Peter Atonna – Fund Raising Cars

Cathy Kuhn & Irene Wassermann – Convention Store

Art Triant – Security

Jonathan Peiffer – Photographer

Thomas Plies – Kids Club

Bob Johnston – Hospitality



Marty Wik and Ivan English with computer graphics of our Convention Car offerings.

Vermont is having a unique registration procedure. To register for the Hotel, you must first register for the Convention. Once you are registered, you will be given a number, which you must report to the Hotel in order to get a room at the Convention rate. Also, take your Passport to the Convention. If you decide to go on the tour into Canada, you MUST have a valid Passport to be readmitted to the USA.

The TCA e-Interchange is on line. Go in and check it out. Sign in, get a password, and then you can buy. This is an example of our “membership dollars at work,” and is in response to the West Coast members who object that they receive notice of sales items two weeks after East Coast members. With computers all members can see what is for sale at the same time.

Our Educational Segment started with Gordon Wilson, who brought in two items from the recent Denver trip. The trip can be made in 16 hours, but with all the trains, parks, and activities along the way, it took ten days to get there. On the Durango and Silverton Railroad we rode in the covered Pullman with the nice seats, snacks, a guide, and nicely painted cups. In Denver, we rode the Ski Train, and purchased two more mugs with that logo. At the Banquet Auction, Gordon bought the Mike Wolf California and Arizona loco, only to learn that the other bidder was also a Desert Division member. Jonathan Peiffer brought in a 4th of July red/white/blue GG1, made by Riverosi to imitate Conrail’s paint job in 1976. Dubbed, “The gaudiest of the ’76 trains,” it was part of a limited edition, and you know you have the real set if all the parts (engine, box, and belt buckle) have the same number. Paul Wassermann ended a 27-year quest at the Denver Convention. In 1980 he procured the prototype for the 1915 #703 set. However, regular production had a different engine from the prototype. At York, Paul found one for \$7000. In Denver a gentleman had about 10 of this engine on his table. Paul looked at the first six to find that they were all numbered 156. Finally, the seventh one said 703. Paul bought it on the spot. Tom Stange was about 30 seconds behind Paul. He bought the nicest of what was left, a 156-x in maroon, with no front or rear wheels. Paul went back later and bought the #156 with the gold ventilators, an item almost as rare as the 703. It is stamped 156-x, so it is from 1917 or so. On the Internet, he asked for the correct wheels, with white tread. Someone sent them, but they’re wrong. Paul needs the white tread with axles long enough to screw nuts onto the ends of the axles. He brought in the Lou Redman article from the 1970 Train Collectors Quarterly to show what he meant. Club member Bob Dennison told Paul that he can thread the axles for Paul; so another quest is on the way to completion. Finally, Paul mentioned that since 1985 he has been looking for a green tank car with a maroon base. He and Terry Gibbs bid on one on e-Bay, but Terry won it. Two weeks ago, a wreck of this tank car appeared on e-Bay. Paul got it for \$24, and at that price, you can guess that it is “the worst looking train on his layout.” In fact, it is probably the worst looking train on anybody’s layout. Paul’s last acquisition is the Denver Mint 2007 Banquet Car, with real coins inside. Katie Elgar mentioned that her mother had been looking for horses to go with the Sulky Set made in 1963. At the Convention, Katie found the sulky horses for Ruth. Now all it needs are the rubber tires!

As this was the mini-meet, there was no after-meet visitation, so folks went home with fond memories of another Desert Division example of what TCA is all about – friendship, camaraderie, and a love of the hobby of collecting toy trains.



Chris Allen distributes shirts ordered in May.

Jonathan Peiffer’s R/W/B GG-1.

Paul Wassermann ends a 27-year Quest.

DESERT DIVISION - TCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 2006

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Vice President: Gordon Wilson 480-837-5344
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Secretary: Christie Wilson 480-837-5344

Directors: Steve Bienstock 480-998-9227
Don Locke 480-854-2546
Phil Monahan 480-607-3956
Greg Palmer 505-898-3840

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

-5-

DENVER DOINGS

Greetings!

What an eventful June and July for trains! Our June meet was well attended. The theme of the educational section was "something I received thanks to Cole Gibbs." This man touched many of our lives in many ways and long will remain sweet in our memories.

The 53rd National TCA Convention was in Denver, CO this year. The Denver area has a great deal of train history and many of the Desert Division were there to take it all in! The Rocky Mountain Division did an outstanding job to organize exciting tours for the conventioners and their families. There were 30 or more Desert Division members and their families in attendance taking part in many of the events throughout the week. A tip of the hat to the RMD for a memorable event!

Next year's convention will be in Burlington, Vermont. It sounds like it will be a super event to attend. You may also want to pack your passport for this one, because looking at the tours they will be having, a trip to Canada may interest you. Also, your Desert Division will have a table there to promote the 55th National TCA Convention, which we are hosting here in Phoenix in 2009. Going to the conventions is a great way to meet more train enthusiasts and experience some train events that otherwise you may miss on a casual trip on your own through that part of the country.

The July meet is a growing event. We had over 50 in attendance. It was great to see some of our newer members out to this meeting! Generally referred to as a "mini-meet," it is becoming a full size meet with many tables of members selling, and interesting education segments. Chris Allen gave a report of the National Board of Directors meeting, and related that the National Bylaws are going to be updated and revised this year.

Remember, we don't have a meet in August, but we take this time to visit Prescott for the Central Arizona Model R.R. Club's "Beat the Heat Meet" on August 18. Contact Dave Brown if you are interested in taking a bus up there. We will be back at our own meetings in September. Look for the educational segment topic in the next newsletter.

I hope that each of you is having a great summer. Trying to keep comfortable is a challenge this time of year. I am looking forward to seeing you at your next Desert Division Meeting in September!

Happy trains!



The Desert Division had a definite presence in Denver for the 2007 TCA National Convention. Most of the 2009 Convention Committee Chairs were in attendance, as can be seen from the fact that the Division needed 4½ tables to accommodate all our attendees and their family members. Listen to the talk at Division Meets, and you will note that the phrase "a good time was had by all" most assuredly fits the Denver Experience.

Our responsibility this year was to present our plans for 2009 to the Board of Directors during their Business Meeting. Another jar of Salsa, this time referred to as "Atomic," set the scene for our (no pun intended) warmly received presentation. A folder of things to do in Arizona highlighted the trips to which we are committed for the 55th Annual TCA Convention, the Star-Spangled event to be held in Scottsdale from June 28 through July 5, 2009. Paul Wassermann served as the Convention spokesman, while Gordon and Christie Wilson held up the gigantic poster made by Jonathan Peiffer. Marty Wik spoke about the computer graphics created by Barbara and Angelo Lautazi to represent the Convention Car offerings for our Convention.

All of the graphics were warmly accepted by the TCA Board, which now will work with Marty to determine pricing and quantities. Actual prototypes will be presented at the 2008 TCA National Convention to be held from June 23 through 28 in Burlington, Vermont. At that time, pending TCA Board approval, we can begin selling our offerings in the trading pits on June 27 and 28. Be aware, we may be tapping YOU to help operate the sales table at the Burlington Convention. Also available will be golf style shirts with the Star-Spangled Convention logo, as well as any other merchandise the Convention Store Chairs decide to include.

The Steering Committee thanks everyone who has helped to organize and promote the 2009 Convention, and we look forward to continued and additional help in the months to come. We have a long way to go to improve upon the 1997 Convention in Phoenix, but with YOUR help, we will make the 2009 TCA Convention the best one in the history of TCA.

BOARD MEETING

The next meeting of the Desert Division Board of Directors will be held on Wednesday, September 5, beginning at 7:30 PM at the home of Gordon and Christie Wilson. Members are welcome to attend. Please call 480-837-5344 to be sure there are enough chairs.



Prescott's **Beat the Heat**

Model Trains & Old Boys Toys

SWAP MEET

Saturday, August 18th, 2007 9am to 1pm

Adults \$3.00, 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 Schnitzuis 928-445-6560

Not responsible for lost or stolen items

Table reservations \$20.00 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 _____ @\$20.00 each _____

Helper Name _____ @ 3.00 each _____

Helper Name _____ @ 3.00 each _____

Total \$ _____

Please mail payment to:

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

“BEAT THE HEAT” BUS

The Grand Canyon Division of TTOS is again chartering a bus to the “Beat the Heat” in Prescott on August 18th. There will four pick up points: Arizona Mills Mall in Tempe, Paradise Valley Mall in Phoenix, Metro Center Mall in Phoenix, and the McDonalds at Carefree Highway and I-17. The cost will be \$25 per person, with an optional \$6 per person for a sack lunch from the people running the meet. Contact Dave Brown at 480-423-8725 to make your reservation. The tentative times are 6:30 from AZ. Mills, 7:00 from PV Mall, and 7:30 from Metro Center. If you choose Carefree Highway, be there by 7:30 as this will be a quick stop.

The bus will take us to the Meet. Those who don’t want to go to the meet will be driven to antique stores in the area. At about noon, we will get back together. From the meet hall, we will visit 4 area layouts, including Peter Atonna’s in Paulden. We have lost our stop at Young’s farm because it is now closed.

With videos on the bus, and lots of good company, it’s a great way to get away from the valley heat for a day!

COLE REMEMBERED

My Friend Cole Gibbs

I knew Cole for most of the ten years that we lived in Phoenix. I can honestly say that he was one of the finest people I ever met. A few days ago, in remembering him, I went to my train room and took from the shelves one of my favorite trains. It was one I bought from Cole years ago. This 1946 Lionel freight set pulled by a 224 locomotive still ran perfectly once I put it on the track and gave it some power. I know that along with many others, I will forever miss Cole Gibbs.

Dick Goodfellow, TCA 83-19227



Gordon Wilson and Tom Stange shared stories about Cole at the June Meet.



CELEBRATE ARIZONA!

The second in a series of cars by the Desert Division

Buy this Atlas 40' woodside reefer with authentic graphics and share the spirit of the beer that Arizona drank in the '30s following prohibition

Order deadline: Nov. 15, 2007
Expected delivery: Spring 2008



Send me ___ cars at \$71 ea, includes shipping in the US

\$

Name

Desert Division members, pick up your car at a meet and pay only \$66 with no sales tax!

Address

Total Enclosed: Make check/money order to: Desert Division \$

Mail to: Desert Division 25375 N. Feather Mtn. Rd. Paulden, AZ 86334

You may also order from our website: www.tcadd.org

BEST YORK EVER

By George Sokol TCA #74-7091

Some years ago there was a club request to write about York experiences. I never got around to writing anything, even though it has always been fun being there. This year was my best York ever –and I wasn't even there.

I was registered and all set to go, but at the last minute I had to cancel my trip. Enter an e-mail from Gustav Taus, owner of ETS in Prague: "I will have your UNRRA engine at York." My heart sank; I wasn't going. What could I do? My savior turned out to be none other than our Paul Wassermann. I frantically called Irene, Paul's wife, but nobody was home. I called Christie Wilson next and she also became a player in this evolving saga. She gave me Paul's cell phone number. I also heard later from Irene that Paul was still there but was leaving the next day. Long story short: Before he left for the airport, Paul met Gustav and not only picked up but wrapped and mailed me my longed for UNRRA engine. Now, as Paul Harvey would say, "Here's the rest of the story. . . ."

Why was the UNRRA engine so important to me? The story goes way back to 1946 when my parents and I sailed on the USS George Washington for post-war Europe. My father, an artist, had worked in New York City for the Czech government in exile during the war and was taking his family back to assume a professorship in Czechoslovakia. I was a wide-eyed five-year-old who loved boats, trains, and planes. Boy, was I in for an unforgettable adventure! Our ship arrived in Le Havre, threading its way through sunken and capsized ships. We disembarked onto a wasteland that was literally made up of pyramid-appearing piles of bricks. Everything was bombed out, but there – on the railroad track – was my first encounter with what in my young mind became "DO DALA UNRRA" (Given by UNRRA). UNRRA stood for United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, which was, as I think back now, probably not on the engine I first saw on the quay. UNRRA was actually the way the United States helped East Europe when Stalin made them reject the Marshall Plan. The UNRRA engines were to be found further east.

I remember being glued to the window on our train trip from France to Czechoslovakia! At every station rail yard were blown up locomotives with "spaghetti" sticking out of the boilers (exploded boiler tubes)! In every ravine under temporary bridges that our train slowly creaked over were piles of railroad cars that had fallen off when the bridges were blown. At each stop through Germany I remember American soldiers checking passports and kidding us that we were going in the wrong direction!

After settling down in Bratislava (now the capital of Slovakia), we would go on picnics in fields where old anti-aircraft cannons were now children's toys. I collected bullet shells and pieces of crashed planes. My friends and I had real army trucks and tanks to play on all day long. I realize now that the army trucks and jeeps in my back yard are there because of nostalgia from playing on those old battlefields without ever having to live through the horrors of that war. But I digress. . . .

By 1947 locomotives, rolling stock, and American army trucks around me all had "Do Dala UNRRA" or simply "UNRRA" on their sides. It always made me feel at home when my dad would point out that they came from the country where I was born. When the communists took over free post-war Czechoslovakia in 1948, my parents decided to return to the United States. I was on my mother's passport, which meant that the American Embassy could arrange safe passage for us. Not so my father. The authorities wanted him to work for the new regime. With great difficulty he convinced them to allow an exhibition of his work in Paris and he joined us there. As it turned out, we were stuck in Paris for several months as the Cunard-White Star line, our passage to America, was on strike. I remember Czech NKVD (Secret Police) in their long leather raincoats (just like in the movies) coming by our place at night, trying to talk my father into returning to Czechoslovakia. Luckily for us, my dad was never a political figure and would have been a liability to them had he been forced back against his will. While in Paris my father made paper UNRRA trains for me and even a pretty good copy of my 224 set we took to Europe from New York (See Photos). When the Cunard strike was finally over, we sailed from Cherbourg on the Queen Mary and arrived in New York Christmas Eve 1948.

George Sokol and family, circa 1946



So that's the story behind my UNRRA locomotive. Thanks to Gustav, Paul, Irene, and Christie, it now resides on our credenza in the dining room, surrounded by the paper UNRRA trains my dad made for me to play with while we were stuck in Paris.

Thank you one and all for making the York I didn't go to the best one ever.



RIO GRANDE CHAPTER NEWS

by Gregory Palmer TCA#94-39039

It is summer again in the Rio Grande Chapter. The temperature is around 100⁰ and the storm clouds are dumping rain. Let us hope that this year's summer rains are not as strong as last year's record rains. I just returned from a great TCA National Convention in Denver. The trip up to Denver was great; however, the trip back was a normal Raton, New Mexico experience. My sister and I ran into quarter size hail on Raton pass. We escaped damage but noticed cars and RVs with damage. I enjoyed the Convention. I had several tables with trains for sale in the trading pits. I had a fun time walking through the trading pits, and I purchased an item I have been wanting for a long time, the Lionel set# 751E the M-10000. It was a deal I could not pass up, plus it had the component boxes as well. I also purchased a Lionel pre-war #79 Signal from Terry Johnson. I enjoyed the tour of Terrys' Standard Gauge Layout. It brought back great memories of Ray Korte and his great collection. My sister Mechele won the Banquet Car prize of the Lionel Denver Mint Car with the Denver Mint Coins inside. I ran into Chapter members Bill Harris, Tom Lawler, Paul Hurford, and Art Lites. If any other members were there, please let me know so I can mention your name in the next Chapter News. If you have not gone to a TCA National Convention, you should plan to go. Our Division is having one in 2009 so start planning ahead.

Our next regular Chapter Meet will be September 15th at 10:00AM at the Sombra Del Monte Church at 2528 Utah N.E., in Albuquerque. This meet will feature Mike Shea giving a talk on the differences between MTH, Lionel, Williams, and Weaver Locomotives. He will bring items to demonstrate. Also a plastics expert from Sandia National Labs will talk about different pre-war and post-war plastics and how to repair them. We will have a brief talk about National Standards Committee issues. Also please bring items to show and tell the members. Everybody has something to learn about each other's collections and operating layouts. Due to the amount of items to be covered, we might not have time for an after meet visit. Also Scott Eckstein has agreed to become Chapter Secretary, to finish out Brenna's term. We will have his election to office at the September Chapter Meet. We will need a person to become a Board member to fill out Scott's term. I hope we can elect someone to fill that position at the September Chapter Meet as well.

Our 2nd annual Rio Grande Chapter Pumpkin Meet will be Saturday, November 3rd. This is our public swap meet. A flyer is enclosed in this issue of the Dispatch. It will take place at the Sombra Del Monte Church at 9:00AM. This is at 2528 Utah N.E., in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I know that Cal Stewart is going to be held that weekend, but I could not move our Meet dates, and it seems that Cal Stewart moves around a lot. So we must go with these date. By the way, last year we almost sold out of tables, so mail in you applications soon. Please feel free to call Bill Spofford Meet Coordinator, or myself for questions.

I have also learned from Ted Hamler, in Las Cruces, that he is still working on a venue for a March Chapter Meet. He has found a great venue; however, he is still trying to contact the people in charge. I will let the Chapter know as soon as I have information.

Division and Chapter member Jon Spargo and his club, the Socorro Train Gang, are having a public Swap Meet with the New Mexico Division TTOS on August 25th, in Socorro, New Mexico. It will be at the Holiday Inn Express Conference Center. Sounds like fun.

I hope all of you have a great summer, and hope to see all of you at the September 15th Chapter Meet.

TRAIN COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION RIO GRANDE CHAPTER



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PUMPKIN MEET



TOY TRAIN SWAP MEET

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 3rd

9:00AM TO 3:00PM

SOMBRA DEL MONTE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
2528 UTAH N.E., ALBUQUERQUE, NM

ADULTS \$1.00 UNDER 12 FREE WITH ADULT
TCA MEMBERS FREE WITH CURRENT TCA CARD
TCA MEMBERS CAN SHOP EARLY FROM

9:00 AM-10:00 AM

OPEN FOR THE PUBLIC FROM 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

TABLE RESERVATIONS FOR TCA MEMBERS ONLY
AT \$10.00 PER TABLE - LIMIT 3 TABLES



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

NAME _____ TCA# _____
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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.

Date

Signature

TEN DAYS TO DENVER

By Gordon Wilson TCA 76-10233

As I write this, I am experiencing what can mildly be called “train overload.” Since May 14, my travels have taken me across the USA, across the equator and back, through National Parks of several countries, and across the Continental Divide of North America more times than I can count. The common thread through the past seven weeks has been trains – everything from Z gauge to the “12 inches to the foot” scale, from sea level to over 14,000 feet. So where do I begin?

At the moment my wife and I are on US-40 heading west in New Mexico, a few miles outside of Gallup and paralleling one of the busiest rail straight-a-ways in the USA. For the past few hours, since leaving Albuquerque, no fewer than three dozen long haul freights have come and gone past my vehicle. We are on the way home from the 53rd Annual TCA Convention just completed in Denver, Colorado. The displays by the major manufacturers, as well as those by clubs and/or individuals, was astounding. Everything from Z gauge to G gauge was available and running. But, perhaps the biggest attention grabber of all was the Coors “Silver Bullet,” the first of its type, exhibited by Mike Wolf! The exclamation point on that sentence proved so very true at Saturday night’s Banquet, when the “Silver Bullet” train that Mike had been demonstrating during the week was sold at the Auction for \$1100.

Wonderful train trips were the norm at this Convention. Featured were such icons as the Manitou Springs Cog Railway to the top of Pike’s Peak; the famous Georgetown Loop; the Ski Train to Winter Park, CO; a visit to the Colorado Railroad Museum, with rides on the Galloping Goose; and a lunch train to see the scenic Royal Gorge, made famous by the former Rio Grande Railroad. Interspersed throughout the week were layout tours to many members of the Rocky Mountain Division of TCA. It was, indeed, a grand and glorious Convention; and, needless to say, everyone had a wonderful time.

Since we were able to drive home in one day (Denver, CO to Fountain Hills, AZ), why did it take ten days to get there? Well, I’ll tell you! But, first you will need an AAA map of the Southwest region of the United States. There is more between Fountain Hills and Westminster, CO, than at first meets the eye. Leaving early on a Saturday AM afforded us the opportunity to stop for breakfast in Black Canyon City. Continuing from Black Canyon City north is the Grand Canyon, a place of enjoyment, no matter how often you have been there, because no two times are ever the same. That evening was spent at the Cameron Trading Post Lodge on the eastern end of the Grand Canyon, overlooking the Little Colorado Gorge. It is one of those unknown, delightful secrets, one I would suggest you look into on your next overnight visit to the Grand Canyon.

We had previously visited Monument Valley several times on our own and dared take our car on the 25 mile long winding and chuckhole filled dirt road. This time we decided to hire a native Navajo guide who would use a vehicle built for this terrain and who could provide appropriate commentary about what we were viewing. That was a very good decision.

Day 3 took us to Four Corners where, for the second time in less than three weeks, we proved you CAN be in more than one place at a time. We then headed north to an old railroad town in southwest Colorado called Dolores, home of the Rio Grande Southern Galloping Goose #5. As the day neared its end, we arrived at Mesa Verde National Park and our home for that evening, Far View Lodge, the only accommodation within Mesa Verde National Park.

On Day 4, we spend much of our time exploring Mesa Verde National Park before leaving for Durango, CO. That evening was spent at the Bar D Ranch, where we enjoyed a cowboy cookout and a highly polished Western Revue, together with a very scenic train ride around the grounds of their spacious ranch. Although the format of their show is similar to others, this particular one, in my professional musical opinion, is quite superior to the rest.

Early in the morning of Day 5, we were at the depot of the Durango & Silverton Railroad to pick up our tickets for the 8:15 train to Silverton. This allowed us roughly an hour to walk through and enjoy the displays and contents in their museum that is housed in approximately half of their roundhouse and repair facility. Finally the All-Aboard was heard for the 8:15 train, and we boarded “Cinco Animas,” a luxury parlor observation car holding only 16 persons. Having ridden the Durango & Silverton before and having to take nearly a week to remove all the cinders from my hair, I decided that this time I was going to treat myself to the luxury of an enclosed car, complete with all of its extra amenities – another good decision!



At the conclusion of our round-trip Durango & Silverton excursion, we headed east through Pagosa Springs looking for the restaurant whose name we could not remember precisely from ten years ago. We knew roughly where it was and what it looked like, but the name – ah, another “senior moment.” Amazingly we found it – Branding Iron BBQ. It is still there and the food, service, and ambiance are just as we remembered!

Having arrived in Alamosa late in the evening of Day 5, we awoke the next morning amidst an unusual weather event, for us: Rain. By the time the San Luis Express was ready to leave from the Alamosa Depot, it was a bright, shiny Day 6. We boarded the train for our trip across the mountains to La Veta, a really neat, old time “one horse” town. This is a new excursion train and is loosely connected with the established Cumbres and Toltec of northern New Mexico. We took our seats in a platform Observation Car and, for variety’s sake, rode back to Alamosa in an open RPO car. There was a great deal of daylight left when we got back, thus allowing us the time to search through the yard. It was here that we found a new (to us) freight car – a hay bale car. Alamosa, which is near the Colorado Sand Dunes National Park, doesn’t lack for restaurants. We settled for a delightful Brew Pub called San Luis Valley Brewery before settling in for the evening.



A most unusual rail car – the Hay Bale Car in Alamosa, CO

Canon City was next, a very picturesque drive north from Alamosa on Day 7. Canon City is jam-packed with things to do, most of which are centered around the spectacular Royal Gorge and the Suspension Bridge that connects the two sides of the canyon. It was our 45th Wedding Anniversary and we had dinner reservations for the Vista Dome of the Royal Gorge Dinner Train that evening. The food and service were only “so-so,” but the scenery was as advertised – second to none.

Day 8 saw us venture even further north, driving on some of the most scenic byways in America. Arriving in Cripple Creek, amid a parade of fire trucks and bands, we discovered that we had arrived during the celebration of “Donkey Days,” complete with races and beauty contests.



Magnificent scenery at the Royal Gorge

We found our way to the Railroad Depot and discovered that the late toy train manufacturer, K-Line, really had it right! There WAS such a thing as a Porter Locomotive. As a matter of fact, the Cripple Creek Railroad owns and operates two of them continuously from 10 AM to 5 PM every weekend during the summer.

A detour closed the road we were going to use, so we found ourselves in Manitou Springs late in the afternoon of Day 9. It had been years since we’d ridden the cog railway to the top of Pike’s Peak, so following the advice printed on the promo brochure of Pike’s Peak Cog Railway, we stopped at the Chamber of Commerce Office and made a reservation both for the train (the last one of the day) and for dinner afterward. Unlike the last time we rode to the summit of Pike’s Peak, this time we had assigned seats. Luckily, we were prepared for the altitude and weather change upon reaching the 14,110-foot plateau. It was COLD, especially if you were from the Phoenix area. I was also irritated that foodstuffs at the top were being sold for premium prices. To me, this was gouging of the worst type. Unlike the last time we traveled to the top, the only animals we spied were marmots, near the 13,000-foot level. Upon returning to Manitou Springs, we dined at a wonderful, first-class venue called Briarhurst Manor. One day to go and we’d be at the Convention.

As the 10th day dawned, we took our time heading north and west toward Estes Park. Like Manitou Springs, it had been years since we had been in Rocky Mountain National Park. It is a vast area, which I find quite similar to the Grand Canyon in one significant way. Each turn and twist of the road reveals a new and incredible vista. Luckily, whoever put in the roadways realized this feature also, for there are turnouts at virtually every curve and twist in the road. There is a 35 mph speed limit, but don’t worry about breaking it – chances are you’ll never reach it. The spectacular sights and scenery will not allow it.

On Day 11, we pulled into the parking lot of the Westminster Westin Hotel and Spa. For us, the TCA Convention was about to start.

RAILROAD



-CHANGE



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FOR SALE – Post War Lionel ZW Transformers in Ex Condition: 250 Watt - \$195; 275 Watt - \$245. Buyer pays shipping costs via UPS Ground. Call Marty Nickerson at 928-778-4294 or e-mail 4aztrains@earthlink.net.

WANTED – Motor for 616 Flying Yankee power car or 636 City of Denver power car. Will buy complete power car if reasonable. Call Marty Nickerson at 928-778-4294.

FOR SALE – Lionel 390E Freight Set – 5 cars restored - \$750.00. Santa Fe with 15 cars, Mint - \$650. 400 E Reproduction Engine – Mint - \$800. Contact Sam Testa, 17541 Camino Confianza, Sahuarita, AZ 85629, or call 520-625-8303.

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.

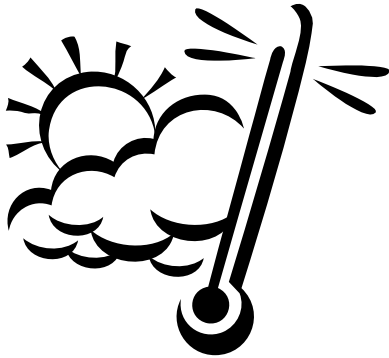
**TRAIN COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION
DESERT DIVISION**

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

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COMING EVENTS

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| August 18 | "Beat the Heat" Meet – Prescott, AZ – 9 AM |
| September 8 | Regular Division Meet, Jaycees Hall, Scottsdale, AZ – 9 AM
8102 E. Jackrabbit Road, between Chaparral and McDonald |
| September 15 | Rio Grande Chapter Meet – Albuquerque, NM – 10 AM
Sombra Del Monte Church, 2528 Utah NE |
| October 13 | Regular Division Meet, Jaycees Hall, Scottsdale, AZ – 9 AM |
| October 13-14 | Railfair, McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park, Scottsdale, AZ |
| October 17-20 | Eastern Division Meet, York, PA |
| November 3 | 2 nd Annual Rio Grande Chapter "Pumpkin Meet" – 9 AM
Sombra Del Monte Church, 2528 Utah NE, Albuquerque, NM
Contact: Bill Spofford (505-821-4051) or Greg Palmer (505-898-3840) |
| November 10 | Desert Division Golf Tourney – GreenValley, AZ
Contact: Dannie Martin (520-648-5055) or Gordon Wilson (480-837-5344) |

PADE PROMOTIONS

Have You **PADE** Your Way?

Purchase raffle tickets

Author an article for the Dispatch

Donate something to the club

Enlist to help

John Wiley, Chris Allen, and Greg Palmer made generous donations to the 2009 TCA National Convention Fund. Thank you to all of them. Bob Dennison donated some GarGraves track, and Steve Palmer donated a Harley Davidson car for Auction/Raffle. Our Division e-Bay site is up and running again. Check it out.

Thank-you to Chris Allen, Ruth Elgar, and Sally Treichel, who ably handled the kitchen in June, and to Roth Elgar, Laurel and Chris Allen for July's treats. Chris Allen deserves a huge round of applause for editing the June newsletter.

Your name could appear in this space. You need only do something to benefit the Division.