



# GRAND CANYON MODEL RAILROADERS

## MAIN LINE

APRIL, 2010

Volume 19

Number 4

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Bill East

We have been working on the trailer every chance we get. Sundays are being utilized to accomplish much of what we have done. Our Saturdays are used up between club meetings, but we also had a GCMR, TCA, and Paradise and Pacific picnic on the 18th of March.

We had a good turnout at the picnic and the cooking was great. Everybody had a good time and it wasn't too hot. We did have a problem that Saguaro Central had their event on the same day and "S" gaugers were over there instead of the picnic. Hopefully next year everyone can attend. It's a hard thing though, with meetings and Easter bouncing around at the same time to find a nice weekend that doesn't step on somebody's toes.

The Following Saturday was our club meeting. The "O" gauge module was set up for this meeting; everyone had lots of fun at the meeting. There was a report updating the club on the progress on the trailer. It has been lowered, retracked, and is in the process of being rewired. The trailer will be operational by the end of April, because the trailer will be going to Williams Arizona for National Train Day on May 8th and 9th.

The Grand Canyon Railroad has donated lot of tickets to be raffled of at our February meet, so we will be running there to help them. If you are planning to go on this road trip, contact David Brown. He needs a list of people and there are forms that you will need to fill out, plus coming up with car pools and hotel reservations in Williams. An additional bonus for those who are going, is a goodie bag made up by people putting on the event. This should be a fun event. We plan to leave on the 7th of May and return late on the 9th. Info will be at our April meeting.

After the March meeting, we were all invited to see Glenn Saber's house for the "after the meeting" visitation. Glenn has two rooms full of standard gauge trains that are neatly displayed. Glenn also fed the crowds of people that came over. Hot dogs, chips and pop went well with the train viewing. The club turnout was good. Thanks, Glenn.

On April 2, we set up the "S" gauge module and ran them on the 3rd at the Paradise Valley United Methodist Church. This normally done by the trailer, however with it down at the time, the "S" gaugers filled in. We got such a good reaction from the people, that next year maybe both will show up.

The "S" gauge module will be at our April meet. Hope to see everyone there.

Keep on Training!

### CALENDAR

*GCMR meets are held at 9:00am in the Parish Hall of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church at 1212 E Glendale Avenue in Phoenix, located on the north side of Glendale, just east of the traffic light at 12th St. It is easily reached off the Glendale Exit of either I-17 or SR 51. Go east from I-17 or west from SR 51 to 12th Street.*

**April 24** - GCMR Meeting - Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

**May 22** - GCMR Meeting - Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

**June 26** - GCMR Meeting - Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

### OTHER TRAIN EVENTS

**April 17 - 18** EagleWings Ironworks Garden Railroad Open Houses - throughout the Phoenix area.

Flyer:

[www.eaglewingsironcraft.com/pdf/2010\\_OH\\_Flyer.pdf](http://www.eaglewingsironcraft.com/pdf/2010_OH_Flyer.pdf)

**April 24 - 25** Winslow Railroad Days and ATSF Historical Society mini meet. For information go to: [home.comcast.net/~tucsonntrak/ASWMRR/ASWMRR\\_Info\\_Overflow.html](http://home.comcast.net/~tucsonntrak/ASWMRR/ASWMRR_Info_Overflow.html)

**May 8 - 9** - Williams - Amtrak National Train day event hosted by the Grand Canyon Chapter of the NRHS and the Grand Canyon Railroad featuring 45 minute steam trips behind #4960.

**June 3 - 6** The Big Train Show - Ontario, CA for info: [www.bigtrainshow.com](http://www.bigtrainshow.com)

**June 5** - Tucson - Gadsden Pacific summer train show. Event Center at the Grant Inn. For info: [/www.gpdtoytrainmuseum.com/trainmeets.htm](http://www.gpdtoytrainmuseum.com/trainmeets.htm)

**June 30 - July 3** O Scale National Convention - Santa Clara, CA Open to all. Swap meet and O, S and HO layout tours. Info: [www.2010oscalenational.com/index.shtml](http://www.2010oscalenational.com/index.shtml)

**August 14** - Prescott - Beat the Heat swap meet and layout tours. See the reservation form in this issue.

## LET'S KEEP A RECORD

by Rod Johnson

The group rebuilding the trailer thought it would be nice to have a record of this project to keep for the club. So, could you email me at [crodjohanson@hotmail.com](mailto:crodjohanson@hotmail.com) any photos you have taken of the current work of upgrading the GCMR Trailer. That is, anyone who has taken some digital shots of the progress, please email them to me so we can get those put into a scrapbook like photo album which will include the original build many years ago, past pictures of the trailer at various venues, and now the "new look" version.

All this is being done mainly by Penny (domestic supervisor and scrapbook officianado) and some by yours truly with captions, etc. It will be nice to have a fairly complete updated photo history. Well get some of these in the next Newsletter also.



Setting up the module at the March meeting

## MEETING NOTES

- + Progress on the trailer by Dave Brown.
  - The trailer has been shortened to fit in a garage.
  - We need a garage in which to store it.
  - Wiring has been completed
  - A Removable cover has been made to protect it from rain
  - Track laying is complete
  - The center structure has been totally replaced.
  - Tires will be replaced
  - Appreciation was noted for the use of the Sands facility and will be expressed through a GCMR membership and a plaque on the layout.
- + Ken Barnes indicates that he has a person who wants to donate an N gauge layout to the GCMR. Wayne Ross indicated that in the event the GCMR does not want the donation, one of our guests had indicated an interest and would be contacted.
- + The Swap Meet was a huge success. We made money on all the areas, and the vendors comments were positive and they were pleased with a successful sales day.
- + For National Train day at the Grand Canyon Railway, the layout will be scheduled for May 8 and 9. Several places in Williams will offer discounts for member lodging.
- + The location of the delayed auction from the Turkey meet will be at the Desert Division meeting

### Board of Directors

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location of the Lutheran Church at 15th and Maryland on April 10th

- + The train club's Christmas Party will be the first Sunday in December and will be in the afternoon at 4 pm.
- + The S gauge modules will run at the Paradise Valley United Methodist Church on April 3.
- + John Drafts suggested that we make the raffle available to the public. Glenn Saber indicated that we continue ticket sales to the model railroading community. Ken Barnes expressed concern that the raffle activities are a club based activity rather than a business venture.
- + There is still interest in the Beat the Heat bus trip.
- + John Draftz will again chair the Christmas run at the church hall.
- + Art Triant moved: The annual GCMR Meet be renamed for Tom Stange.  
Amended to read: The renaming to be taken under consideration.

Discussion: Dallas Dixon, Sam McElwee suggested that other members who have passed could also be honored. Glenn Saber suggests we take time to make such a decision.

Motion, as amended, was approved



### Action at the head table

### Show and Tell

- + Glenn Saber showed a 1918 Lionel.
- + Dave Brown showed a rare O gauge Consolidation made by Thomas Industries. He hooked it up to a Lionel tender. Dave shared a reference text on the Consolidation
- + Bill Rodgers shared a late 40's engine that is a reacquisition of a boyhood train.

Open House at Glenn Sabers home following the meet.

## ANGLES FLIGHT IS BACK

from Trains Newswire



Angels Flight is back. After shutting down in 2001 following a fatal accident, the one-block-long funicular railway began operating again as a public conveyance in the Bunker Hill district of Los Angeles March 15.

The original Angels Flight began operating in 1901 until shut down in 1969 while the area was being redeveloped.

In 1996, the operation was rebuilt and reopened about one-half block south of the original right-of-way. The 2001 incident, which involved the collision of the railroad's two cars, killed one rider and injured others. Before it reopened a few weeks ago, the cable operation that propels the cars was completely redesigned and rebuilt to ensure it wouldn't occur again.

A ride on Angels Flight costs 25 cents

## DCS FILTERS

by Paul Boston

When MTH introduced Digital Command System, DCS, a number of years ago it seemed to be a dramatic increase in the capabilities of model railroads. Lionel had made the previous huge step with TMCC and brought O gauge out of the toy arena full-stage into dramatic modeling.

Now we train buffs had to learn a new set of skills. If the layout under consideration was reasonably small, there was only learning of the nuances of the control system needed to make everything work as advertised. Great fun, or as my grand children would say, "funner than before".



For those not familiar with MTH's DCS control system, the TIU is an electronic box with four inputs and four outputs. The transformer(s) are connected, one transformer handle to each input of the TIU and the outputs are connected to the track, one block to each output. Just think of it as cutting the wires between the transformer and the track and sticking in the TIU. The rest is just figuring out the remote control, and we can learn that over a period of time.

When we took our new toys to larger layouts, the fun began. As operators, we are accustomed to having a reasonably simple system that can even be operated by retired people. We didn't need some ten year old to show us how it worked as we did with the half dozen TV and VCR remotes. But all that changed, and the ten year old, too, was lost when it came to large layouts. The kids were button people and the new systems are not just button pushin' stuff. I have seen kids pointing a wireless remote at a train pushing buttons that no longer work as they did a few minutes ago.

So you know, it works on radio not IR like your TV control, and simply pointing the hand held remote at the engine doesn't work!

With the original TMCC, it was a guessing game and if we waited a while the train moved to a location with better reception and control was restored. With the DCS hand held things were different! This thing is TWO-WAY communication between the hand held remote and the engine. Now the engine was responding with an acknowledgment of each and every command, and when the hand held doesn't hear back from the engine it keeps sending the same message to the engine hundreds of times. If it doesn't hear back from the engine after a while it issues a message to the user on the display of the hand held. Something like "Engine Not On Track" or "No RF Signal" or words to that effect. And we were lost, puzzled and frustrated! Not because the engine didn't do what we commanded, but because the system told us something was amiss and we didn't understand.

"Yes, the engine is on the track! I can see it!" is the often-repeated response. First with a furrowed brow to show our perplexed state, next with a frustrated disgusted look (which doesn't bother electronics stuff one wit, but you know that from the TV remote, right?). Then we realize that the whole system is just saying, "I'm in trouble here! What are you going to do about it?"

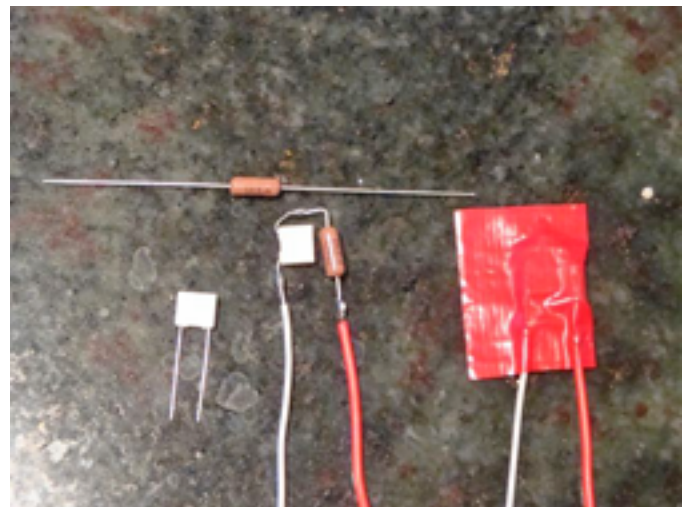
Usually the problem is short lived and we move on with just a "hope that doesn't happen again" thought. But when the layout is large and/or complex, measures must be taken to get things running smoothly. The

first thing is to ask someone who knows, but finding someone like that can be difficult. So we read and mess about with no real direction or plan because we are in an area outside our experience.

The early solution to the communication problem was borrowed from the computer industry. Put an electrical resistance joining the two wires of the offending system. For DCS that evolved into the "Magic Light Bulb", a small 24-volt lamp wired from the red to black terminals of the TIU output. Sure enough things improved and we began adding more bulbs. The layout got brighter but now the current draw by all those bulbs became a problem. And the problem didn't get much better as more bulbs were added.

What we needed was someone who knew about electronic interference.

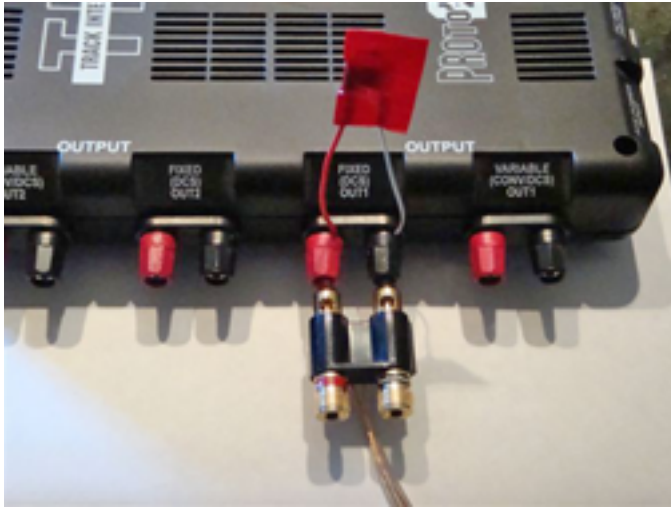
An O gauge enthusiast, Susan Deats of the Rocky Mountain Division, TCA, has a *large* layout with lots of transformers and with DCS, TMCC, as well as conventional control. It happens that her son is an internationally recognized RF interference expert who laughed at the magic light bulb solution. She challenged him to do better, so he designed a filter that is cheap, easy to build and works! (Goggle her name to see the layout!)



Here are the components, how they are wired in series and then covered in the red tape

The filter consists of one resistor, one capacitor, and a piece of duct tape. We can't do anything without duct tape! The resistor is connected in series to the capacitor and the two free ends are connected to the red and black of the TIU. The tape? That is used to make an electronic sandwich with the tape being the bread and the electronic parts the meat. This keeps the

bare wires from shorting out, and if you use red duct tape they will be easy to spot even under a dimly lit layout.



This is the unit wired across the terminals of the TIU

DCS provides a way to measure the track signal as a diagnostic for system communication health. The remote will indicate signal strength from zero to ten, ten being best. At the P&P layout there is a stretch of track that varied from zero to a high of three. Installing the above filter took the signal to between seven and ten! And that was just by attaching the filter just to the output of the TIU. An additional filter at the end of the track block will be tried next to see if a solid ten can be accomplished. And all that for 25 cents per filter.

The complete discussion from which this article was written can be found at: Susan's web site  
[http://www.slspr.net/sspr\\_run\\_room\\_006.htm](http://www.slspr.net/sspr_run_room_006.htm)

## CLOUDS AND SEMAPHORES

*We thought you might enjoy this photo and description by photographer, Steve Crise. Steve has met several area people as he was the photographer who accompanies Roger Carp from CTT when he did stories on several Arizona fellows and the GPM folks in Tucson - ED*

New Mexico is famous for its spectacular cloud formations and perhaps less so for its Union Switch & Signal style T-2 semaphore signals that still dot the old Santa Fe main line. I was driving home from Denver after completing a week long job there and decided to do some daisy picking along the Raton Sub. My goal was to document a few of the locations where the semaphores were still located, place like Wagon Mound and Shoemaker were on the list to explore. The location in this image was made just east

of Wagon Mound. I shot it solely because of the nice framing device that the clouds created around the signal head.



## WORK IS PROGRESSING ON THE TRAILER UPGRADE



We'll have a photo story next month and a report on the trailer at National Train Day in Williams





THE  
PICNIC  
AT  
SCOTTSDALE  
RAILROAD  
PARK



AFTER THE MEET  
VISIT TO  
GLENN SABER'S



## WINNERS!

K-Line Missile Carrier	Katie Elgar
K-Line Chinese Gondola	John Draftz
Lionel 85th Year Anniv.	Frank Birney
Lionel Lifesaver Boxcar	Ken Barnes
Lionel Reading Gondola	Ralph Treichel

Mystery Raffle	
Lionel Missile Car	Bill East

\$50 Drawing	Dallas Dixon
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## BEAT THE HEAT MEET BUS TOUR

It's that time again, time to "beat the heat" and go up to Prescott August 14 for the "Beat the Heat" meet. We will be leaving from four convenient locations around the valley in a 44 passenger bus with it own bathroom on board. We will get to the meet around 9:30am. Those who don't want to go to the meet will have use of the bus till about 12:30pm to go antiquing around the Prescott area. An optional \$7.00 lunch can be purchased form the people that put on the meet. After that time we will be doing layout tours in the area including Peter Atonna's great "O" gauge layout as well as many of the others that can be fit in.

The first pickup point will be at Arizona Mills at 6:30am, then Paradise Valley Mall at 7:00am, and at Metro Center Mall at 7:30am. The last pickup point will be at the Carefree Highway and I 17 area about 7:45am.

Please fill in the form below. We need your phone number because the person coordinating the pickup point you choose will contact you with instructions on where to meet for the pickup. If you have any questions, call Dave Brown at 480-650-5336. I'm looking forward to seeing you on the bus on August 14.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Pickup Location (please check your location):

< > Arizona Mills at 6:30 AM

< > Paradise Valley Mall at 7:00 AM

< > Metro Center at 7:30 AM

< > Carefree highway at 7:45 AM

Number of Adult riders \_\_\_\_\_ at \$30 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of children under 14 \_\_\_\_\_ at \$12 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of lunches (OPTIONAL) \_\_\_\_\_ at \$7 each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total. Make checks payable to "GCMR". \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form and your check to:

David Brown  
815 N. 87th Pl.  
Scottsdale AZ 85257



## THE MAIN LINE

Peter Atonna, Editor

25375 N. Feather Mountain Rd.

Paulden, AZ 863324



GCMR folks enjoying good times, good company and good food at the annual picnic at Scottsdale Railroad Park shared with the Desert Division and P&P clubs.