



GRAND CANYON MODEL RAILROADERS

MAIN LINE

APRIL, 2016

Volume 25

Number 4

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Dave Brown

Well, it's been a busy time and no business meetings. We had our Winter Swap meet, the spring picnic and a layout tour at Herb Andreen's home. Then at the end of this month we will have our spring mini meet. So things are rolling along; however we are approaching the end of our train season for 2015 - 16. The temps are going up into the 90's, and triple digits aren't far behind. Of course during the summer we have the summer swap meet in July and the Beat the Heat meet and bus tour in August for those hardy souls that brave the summers here.

Speaking of the mini meet. If you haven't got your request in yet, call John Draftz. Janet Mattern is Yorking it right now, so John will take the late entries. After the last mini meet, it was decided that Paradise and Pacific could come in and get tables, with the possibility of TCA also coming in to fill in. GCMR has first dibs, but we do want every table used so that the public won't be disappointed.

The bus tour will include some new layouts; however as of the last time I talked to Peter, Marlin Benson still was having health issues so we may miss his layout again this year. We'll just play it by ear that day.

Hopefully we will also get some time to do a work party on the trailer and modules. More on this subject at our short meeting this month.

One more thing, after the picnic at the park, we had a layout tour over at Herb Andreen's house. Thank you Herb for opening up your house to show everyone your gorgeous layout.

But we need more layout tours after our meetings. I will be twisting some arms of some of you for tours. You don't need a 55 by 22 foot layout to have a tour at your house. Every layout has something to show off and something you can learn from.

I have been working on a member of P & P's home layout that's on a four by eight plywood board. He runs traditional size trains with just a few cars, but it is a neat layout. I will see if I can get this one some month. But the point is even a small layout can show model railroading in a big way.

Have fun running your trains.

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 23 - GCMR meeting - Our Saviour's Lutheran Church. Spring Mini-Meet. Don't

forget to bring your sales items and the public is welcomed.

May 28 - GCMR meeting - Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

June 3, 4 Gadsden Pacific Summer Swap Meet, Tucson

June 25 - GCMR meeting - Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

July 23 - GCMR Summer Swap Meet, North Phoenix Baptist Church

August 13 - Beat the Heat Swap Meet, Prescott

September 24 - GCMR fall Mini-Meet - Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

ON THE ROAD AGAIN!

By David Brown

As some of you know, another part of the train hobby that I'm involved in is taking pictures of real trains. A short time ago, I took a road trip with John Pryor to Southern Arizona, on the I-10 near exit 291 to be exact. If you get to the area, look to the south and you will LOTS of Union Pacific diesel locomotives stored out in the desert.

The day John and I were there, there were 264 engines stored on this old loop of track, with another 15 set to be added that week. This siding has room for 303 engines. We talked to one of the people Union Pacific has hired to guard the engines. They have a four year contract to watch these engines 24/7/365. This guard said that they've already busted one group of train nuts that were standing on top of the engines taking pictures. Oh by the way the FBI was called in because tampering with railroad equipment

is a Federal offense. In short, stay on the public side of the fence, and you are OK.



IT ISN'T AS EASY AS IT SHOULD BE

by Peter Atonna

I think most GCMR members know that I am in the process of rebuilding my layout here at home. This all started two years ago this week! It was on Mary Jane and my extended York trip to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary. As usual, we had a nice layover

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at Chicago and during that I took one of my strolls to Roosevelt Road to take photos of the lead tracks into Union Station. This is the famous photographers spot that not only has the multiple track leads into the station, but the spectacular skyscraper backdrop of downtown Chicago.

It was then that I decided that it was time to make a major change to my layout. It was 15 years since starting and to be honest, I had run out of “projects” and ideas for improving it. While looking at the trains going to and from the station under my feet, it dawned on me that I really like big city railroading.

So, an idea quickly formed that I could do a big city theme for the layout which featured my existing Chicago Union Station building which I had bought a couple of years earlier from TW Trainworx. I could highlight a big city terminal, complete with underground platforms, a subway, passenger yards, a locomotive terminal and an intermodal yard. The track would become a double track main line in an inverted figure “8” configuration yielding a 400 foot main line run.

But to make the concept work I needed a couple of things from York - a way to cross the opening between the two sides of the layout and a train shed for my new terminal. And the stars were aligned. The Manne benchwork folks demonstrated a powered lift section and Jim at Bridgeworks was planning to reissue his train shed kits. We were off and running!

Teardown began the week after the 2014 Beat the Heat bus visitors came and reconstruction of the table-work and the new track plan was completed 18 months later.

So, this winter, I have finally begun hosting small groups and visitors. The layout is a long way from completion, but I can run trains on the double track main line.

But, it turns out that I am actually in the “beta” phase of running trains. And here is the story.

I was happily running trains for my first visitors (I think that was Dave and his nephew) when I heard a noise. Hearing it again later, I saw my Big Boy was sideswiping my City of Los Angeles passenger on the elevated trestle section.

The Big Boy was on the layout from the first time of relaying track as it is not only the most awesome loco ever, but its overhang set the standard for track spacing. I calculated I needed 5” between track centerlines on curves to avoid sideswiping. So after my guests left, I got up and measured the spacing on that section of the track - and I had goofed! On that part of the curve, it was only 4”. So track was undone and an additional section added to widen the curve.

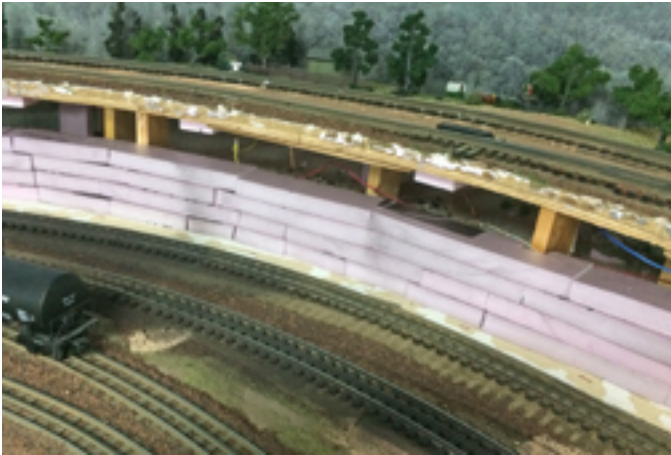
You can see the unpainted new section and the slight swing out on the outer track in this photo. I ran the trains past this section, no side-swipe. And so, I thought we were ready for the next visitors who arrived the next week.



Now, when running trains while working on the layout, I’ve never had a side swipe and was proud of my track work and the spacing standard that allows a Big Boy to operate on one track while a UP Challenger to run on the other.

And you guessed it, a loud “clunk” announced another sideswipe half way through the afternoon for the next group - in this case a half dozen visitors from the

Valley. It turns out that in this case it was a curve where I was able to use the old trackwork without rebuilding. Why did I not see the problem? It turns out that it was just chance as to when the two trains would pass each other at just the right location so that the overhang, the Challenger in this case, would hit the train on the opposite track.



At this location, I already knew there was a Big Boy overhang issue and as you can see, I had to remove the scenery along the upper section and am in the process of rebuilding a cliff section. And you can see in the outer curve, the outline of the old tie location as, again, I extended the outer curve's radius.

You can guess what is coming next - and yes they do come in three's! Last weekend we hosted open houses for my local train club members and I had about 20 visitors during the afternoon. Halfway through, one said "you'd better check this out". And of course he had discovered another sideswipe. In this case the pilot of the Big Boy had just caught the end of a passenger car and straight lined the whole passenger train!

This was at another existing track location that looked OK but obviously as not! And naturally trains had not passed right there before. So, I rerailled the trains and continued the run for the visitors. And ten minutes later (you know what is coming) they passed at that exact location and the exact same thing happened.

That ended the City's run, it headed into the terminal at Chicago and the Rail Runner took the main as I figured its speed would be different and the two trains would pass at different locations. Thankfully these two trains did not discover any new sideswipe locations.



This rebuild was more challenging as moving the right hand track out moved it onto a section of the layout without the layout's plywood/celotex base, only my foam scenery. So, I had to cut out a new section of plywood/celotex to extend the table toward the outer edges in order to re-lay the track. You can see the old track location by the light colored bare celotex and the light colored sculpta mold filling in the gaps between the edge of the new base and the edge molding.

So, if you hear any "clunks" during the Beat the Heat bus visit - just don't tell me!



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The Main Line
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Your editor shares some of the trials he is experiencing in the rebuild of his layout. To give you an idea of the inspiration for this new layout theme, here is one of the shots he took at the Roosevelt Road overpass of downtown Chicago big city railroading.