



# GRAND CANYON MODEL RAILROADERS

## MAIN LINE

**FEBRUARY, 2021**  
**Volume 30      Number 2**

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### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

by Dave Brown

2020, 2021 Whats the difference? No sooner had I sent off last months message, I got an email from John Draftz that the Arizona Railway Museum had postponed their event to sometime in the fall. Paradise and Pacific more than likely wouldn't need the trailer either.

It was decided at the January meeting that the Winter Cactus needed to be canceled. In it's place, we will have a normal business meeting at our normal place. The next big event will be the three club picnic in April. Lets hope that this event will be the beginning of events being done.

The April Mini meet will be done like the TCA has done their outdoor meets. The May meeting will be on the Forth Saturday this year because there are five Saturdays in May. As of right now the Beat The Heat Meet is on, so is the bus tour. Of coarse this one is in August, and a lot can happen between now and then. Let's hope this will be the continuation of return to normal. As for the Christmas party, no news on that front yet.

So this month we will have a normal meeting on the third Saturday, that will be February 20th . The theme for this rare meeting will be any car with a candy theme to calibrate Valentines day.

One of the subjects that will be reported on is the best way to store the layout trailer so that a

repeat of vermin food storage does not happen again. The layout trailer has been checked, and is clean for now. Ideas and costs will be discussed. One idea is the inter modal container idea of John Draftz,

For a while it was believed that no new containers could not be located out at Adobe train park. This seems not to be the case anymore. It would need to be mounted on a cement slab which is one cost, and the second is the container itself with ventilation and a side access door so that the need for the storage locker will also be gone. If you have any other ideas or comments please be at the meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

That's it for now. Hope to see you at the February meeting.

### **CALENDAR**

GCMR meets are held at 9:00am in the Parish Hall of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church at 1212 East 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.

**February 20** - GCMR Cactus Meet is Cancelled.

**February 20** - GCMR meet - Our Saviour's Lutheran Church **PLEASE NOTE THE REGUAR MEETING IS NOW ON AND THE EARLIER DATE**

**March 27** - GCMR meet - Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

**April 17** - Multi Club Annual Picnic - Scottsdale Railroad Park

**April 24** - GCMR meet - Our Saviour's Lutheran Church Mini Meet - see the upcoming Newsletter for details

## MEETING NOTES

by Bill Richardson, GCMR Secretary

January GCMR Board Of Director (BOD) Meeting Minutes.

### NEW BUSINESS:

Trailer work party time. Original plans were to have a trailer work party in the early part of the 2021 year. However, with the continued cancellations of our GCMR train events due to the covid-19 virus, and the fact that we have no immediate event need for the mobile trailer, we have postponed the work on the trailer to a later date to be determined.

John Draftz gave the BOD a lot of information about intermodal containers for storing our trailer. Sizes and price estimates were given. We currently spend about  $12 \times \$82 = \$984$  for our current storage unit yearly. Trailer clearance on the sides would be very tight at just 6 inches on each side. Heat vents would probably be required. More discussion on trailer storage will be required.

John Zaval started looking at a P.A. system that GCMR could use during our swap meets. Some discussion on whether we really need a system

followed. There would be additional work involved setting up our own P.A. system, and is it worth it? The church charges us \$100.00 dollars to use their system.

A wireless microphone interface might be what we really need to help us during the table top auctions. No P.A. system purchase was authorized at this time.

The BOD has decided that the GCMR "Winter Cactus Meet" scheduled for the 3rd Saturday in February must be "CANCELLED". The indoor covid-19 restrictions are too great for us to have a successful indoor swap meet. An outdoor swap meet at the church would be hindered by the ongoing Farmer's Market.

Because the swap meet is cancelled, GCMR will hold a normal monthly membership meeting, at the normal time, at the normal place instead. It was noted that this is on the 3rd Saturday, not the 4th Saturday of the month.

### OLD BUSINESS:

GCMR currently is still planning to rent a Bus up to the Prescott "Beat the Heat Meet" on the 3rd Saturday in August.

The GCMR mini-meet is still scheduled for 4th Saturday in April at 9:00 AM at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church. It will probably be in the parking lot.

### JANUARY GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:

## Board of Directors

President:	DAVE BROWN	480-650-5336
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## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Bill Richardson gave the Secretary's Report noting 42 club members.

Philip Scheer was recognized as a new member. A motion was made to approve the October meeting minutes as printed in the Nov-Dec Main Line.

John Kendig gave the Treasurer's Report noting the amounts of money available in our bank accounts.

## OLD BUSINESS:

No update, as of yet, on running trains at Schnepf farms in 2021.

## NEW BUSINESS:

The Arizona Railway Museum has postponed Arizona Railway Day until Fall 2021. We will re-evaluate our involvement with the mobile trailer at that time.

Trailer work party was postponed. We will re-schedule our trailer work party closer to when we actually have a mobile trailer event to go to.

RailFair in October 2021 may be our 1st use of the mobile trailer this year.

The GCMR "Winter Cactus Meet" scheduled for the 3rd Saturday in February at the Phoenix Baptist Church has been "CANCELLED".

However, we have decided to hold a normal Membership meeting on that Saturday instead.

Note: This meeting will be at 9:00

AM at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church on the 3rd Saturday in February not the 4th Saturday !!!

We are still hopeful that the GCMR "Summer Cactus Meet", scheduled for the 4th Saturday in July will occur. We have been informed that 20% of the hall will not be available. Which means we have less room for tables. Will we get a 20% discount from the church? Will we need a new floor plan? There are a lot of questions we'll need to answer between now and then.

The three club picnic will be the 3rd Saturday in April this year at McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park.

The GCMR mini-meet is still scheduled for the 4th Saturday in April at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church. Parking lot setup is likely.

The bus to the "Beat the Heat Meet" in Prescott is still on for thirrd Saturday in August.

October will bring the 3-2-1 raffle drawing, and the 2021 train drag races.

TCA President, Chris Allen, informed us that the TCA National Convention will be postponed until at least August this year.

In December we plan to run the mobile trailer layout for the three weekends before Christmas at Adobe Mountain.

John Draftz shared his information with the membership about the possible use of an intermodal container for trailer storage and club storage in general. The topic was tabled until the next meeting.

## SHOW AND TELL:

The theme was "what I got and what I've been doing since we last met".

- + Bill Richardson brought in his new American Flyer Polar Express set with a few extra cars
- + John Zaval brought in his wooden wind-up train put together without glue.

## WIRING AN UNCOUPLER TO OPRATE WITH TRACK POWER OFF

by Terry Gibbs

On my layout I don't want to mess with the e-unit not cycling correctly as I try to line a car up and then put the train into neutral. So I'm wiring my operating sections so they work when the power is off. With this wiring, I can dump cars with the track power off.

I have a relay circuit that gets a constant 12V that uses the yellow wire already in place under the layout.

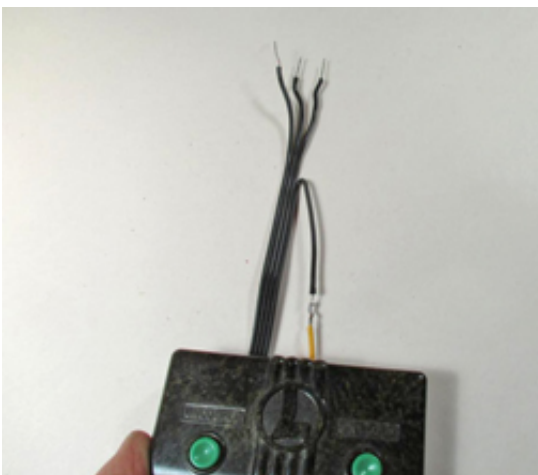
You can wire to any tap on your transformer that gives 12-14V positive. **But note, the RCS and UCS tracks are DIFFERENT.**

Hard Wiring RCS Tracks: The controller has a four-conductor cable that lays flat on the table so the leftmost wire from the controller connects to the left terminal on the RCS track. That terminal is numbered 1.

When I rewire the controllers I mark the leftmost wire with a dab of red paint after stripping and tinning the 4 wires. It looks like this:



On a RCS track, the number 4 screw terminal is connected to the center rail and provides positive current to the controller. Peel the 4th



wire back and solder a feeder wire to it so it looks like this:

A bit of 1/4" shrink tube cleans the patch up and prevents shorts.

When you wire the controller to the layout, the yellow wire is connected to positive and the other wires are connected to terminals 1 thru 3.



The dab of red paint from the paint pen helps you get the wires correct, and isn't that noticeable. You could also use black paint. I keep paint pens in my work desk.

Here's a long shot of the wired track with the controller in the front:



Hard Wiring UCS Tracks:

The UCS track uses the same 4-conductor wire as the RCS track, but the UCS has the positive feed at terminal 3.



It's the same process as the RCS, but with the 3rd wire rather than the 4th. Here's one you can see easily:



Here it is after the addition of a short section of 1/4" shrink tube:



When you put it on the layout, the yellow wire goes to a 12-14V positive source just like the RCS track shown earlier.

Simple Uncoupler Only Wiring:

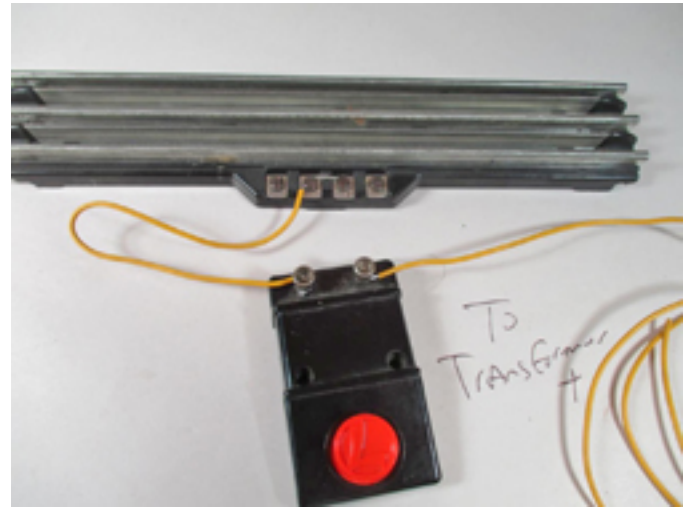
On my layout I have sidings behind the coal and log loaders and don't need the unload button so I just use only a Lionel 90 push button. The train has to be moving for the cars to uncouple, but this wiring is much simpler.

Again, the UCS and RCS tracks are different.

Wiring RCS Tracks To a # 90 Push Button:

On the RCS track terminals 2 and 3 connect to the actuator rails. A simple wire from a transformer + (plus) post through a momentary contact button to terminals two and three is all you need.

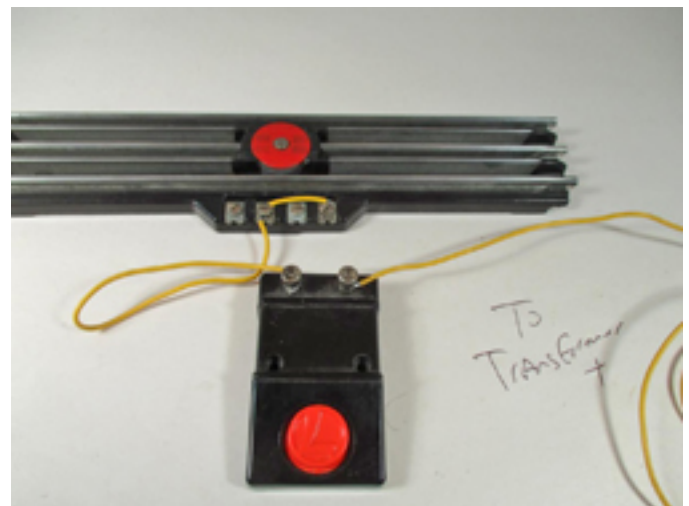
It looks like this:



Wiring UCS Tracks To A # 90 Push Button:

On the UCS track terminals 2 and 4 connect to the actuator rails and magnet. A simple wire from a transformer + (plus) post through a momentary contact button to terminals two and four is all you need.

Here's the UCS wired up:

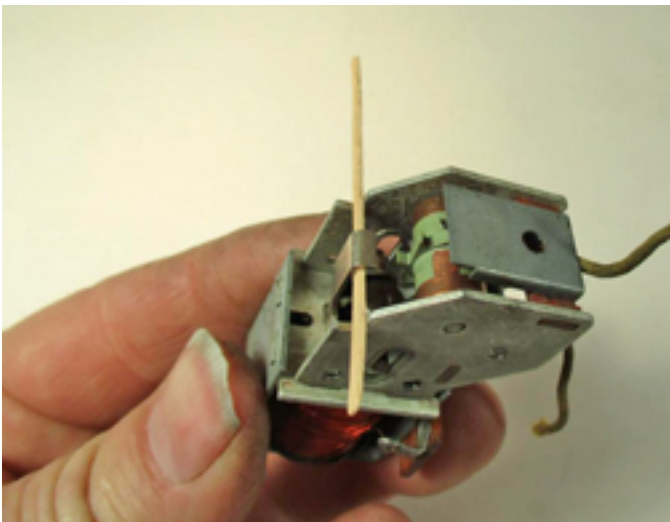
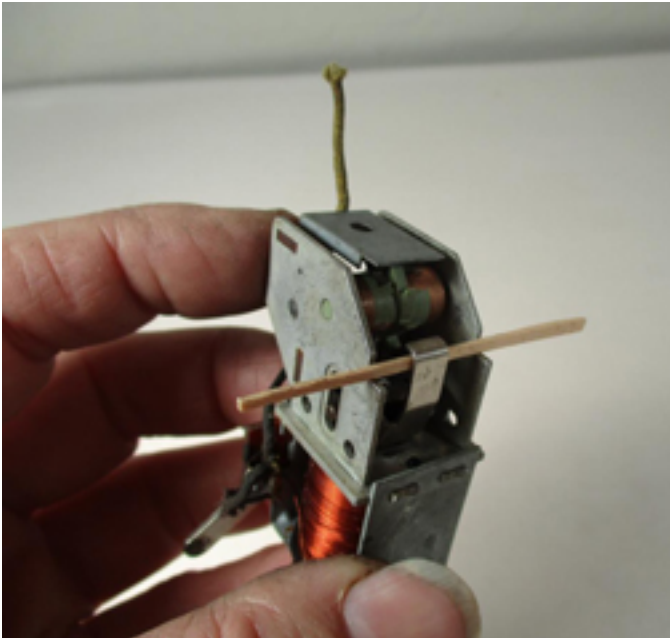


If you have more than one siding in an area, you can use one push button for all of them.

#### An E-Unit Repair Tip.

Finally for this month, I've been repairing e-units for over 40 years and recently learned something new. You can use a toothpick to hold the pawl away while you line everything up.

Here are two pictures:



I use Channel Lock pliers in my left hand while I line everything up with dental picks in my right hand so it would look like this:

## DESERT DIVISION WINTER AUCTION

As many know, the Desert Division hosts an all day auction twice a year, typically in November and January-February. The winter auction is called the "Souper Saturday" auction because many years ago, it was scheduled the day before the Souper Bowl football game. Club members would make delicious home-made soups to share with attendees during lunch hour. They have done so every year since.

Unfortunately this year, due to the Covid, that was not possible so sandwiches were ordered and brought in. But club members are already planning for that tradition to be back next year.



This auction typically offers 300-350 lots of trains, mainly O gauge, but usually most other scales as well. This is a shot of this year's tables with lots laid out prior to the start of the selling. Over 30 bidders had a great time and every one of those lots went to new homes.



## TRIED AND TRUE REVISITED

by Peter Atonna

Many years ago, I saw an article on how to make Lionel's 3927 track cleaning car actually work. You may remember it comes with a sponge rubber pad mounted on a disc turned by a handcar motor. Track cleaning fluid was loaded into a hole which was supposed to drip onto the pad to dissolve the gunk on track. It was then wiped up by a trailing cotton pad.

Sounds great but, it never really worked. Too much cleaning fluid and it drenched the track, the cleaning pad quickly got gunked up and over time the cleaning pad quickly wore out. So, like many, my car sat on the shelf forever as a display item.

Then the article suggested replacing the sponge pad with a current cleaning pad like you buy at the grocery. It has a nice, rough cleaning side and when rotated by the motor, does a good job of cleaning rails, particularly flat top rails like Gar Graves or Atlas.

So, I bought a separate 3927 as they are not expensive and most come missing the tanks, cleaning pad and have a worn out sponge. I make up mine and used it to clean the basement layout. But that track rarely gets dirty as the basement is well sealed and doesn't get much dust. So, the car sits on the shelf. Just a once a year pass with a contemporary track cleaning car is enough to keep things running on that layout.



Now there is a new layout under construction upstairs in the former dining room with Fastrack. When the last was laid down and wired, I ran my first test engine. Oh no, despite half the track being new, the test diesel just would not make it around the layout.



That is when I remembered my track cleaning car. Tuning up the motor (remember, it had not been run in probably 15 years), on the track it went. Full power got its motor spinning. Being pushed by the loco, it made three circuits of each of the two loops of track.

And did it work, you bet. As soon as I took it off the track, my diesel ran smoothly, next a postwar steamer - same result.

Lesson learned, don't forget you may have solved a problem you didn't know you had until you had it.

## WINNERS

Monthly Raffle prize winners were:

Chris Allen - Lionel 6-37914 Work House

Kendig - American Flyer 6-48805

National Dairy Despatch

Insulated box car

Glenn Saber - Lionel 6-16146 Dairy

Dispatch Reefer

Katie Elgar - MTH 30-74045 New Year

2003 Box Car

Mystery Raffle prize winner:

Dave Brown - Lionel 6-1291 Log Loader

Monthly 3-2-1 Raffle prize winner:

John Draftz - who won 3 more tickets to the 3-2-1 annual raffle



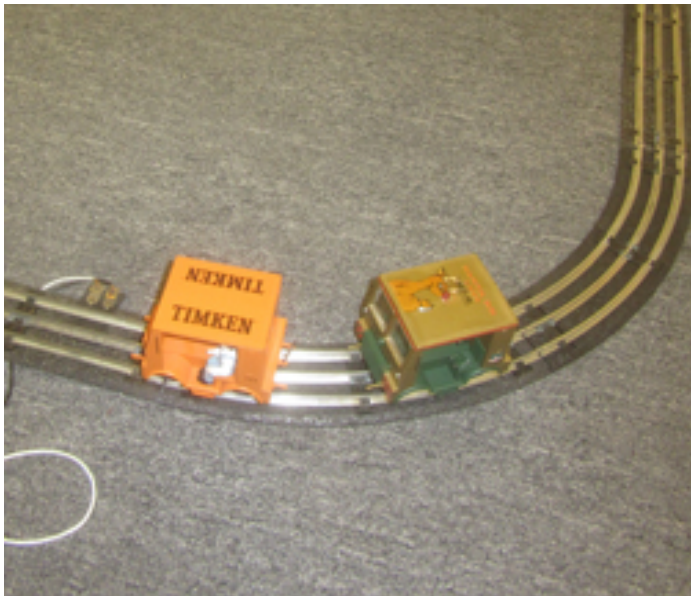
John Draftz



Chris Allen



Katie Elgar



The "Speeder"





John Kendig



Dave Brown



Bill Richardson



John Zaval