



# GRAND CANYON MODEL RAILROADERS

## MAIN LINE

**FEBRUARY, 2024**

**Volume 32**

**Number 2**

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

by John Draftz

As a reminder, 2024 dues (\$35 regular member) are due now. This is so the secretary can create a current member directory and get it distributed as soon as practical. If you haven't yet paid, please contact Chris Allen (480-820-9559 or [sparkyshome@cox.net](mailto:sparkyshome@cox.net)) as soon as practical to let him know your intentions. (The renewal form is in this issue)

We operated the mobile layout in December in the AMRS area during their open house. Katie Elgar's name was omitted from last month's list of those who helped run trains during the open house. My apology Katie.

Our upcoming Winter Cactus swap meet will be Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup>. We'll need members to help before, during, and after the meet. We plan to open the hall the Friday afternoon before the meet about 4pm to get tables labeled and otherwise to get the hall ready. From 4:30-6pm sellers wanting to set up early will be allowed in. The hall will be open to sellers from 6-9am Saturday morning with the doors open to the public from 9-noon. Starting about noon will be the table top auction where bargains are usually (always - Ed.) found. Visit our [www.gcmrr.org](http://www.gcmrr.org) web site for more details. We were sold out weeks ago and have a waiting list.

Dave is coordinating the volunteer assignments. Please let him know how you can

help (480-650-5336 or [eaglefour@juno.com](mailto:eaglefour@juno.com)) even if it's just for a few hours.

Our annual raffle will again be: first prize - \$300 cash, second prize - \$200 cash, and third prize - \$100 in cash. Tickets are \$10 each, three for \$25, or 10 for \$50. See Glenn to get yours.

We'll continue giving three more raffle tickets to the winning white ticket drawn at regular meetings. The winner need not be present to win.

Our next regular meeting will be March 23<sup>rd</sup> at our usual location, the Our Savior's church hall on East Glendale. The BoD usually meets that morning about 8:30am with the general membership meeting at 10am. The theme in March is "A Favorite Holiday Car Or Engine (you pick the holiday)" It doesn't have to be rare or exotic – just memorable to you. A goal of this activity is to give members a chance to share the hobby with other members thus increasing our appreciation for our hobby. Individual layouts are always welcome at the meetings so feel free to bring one.

The 2024 projected calendar of activities is elsewhere in this newsletter. Please review the calendar noting especially what the different themes are and when. Several entries may have question marks after them 'cause the details are not yet finalized. Mark your calendar appropriately. Also, let me know of changes and/or other entries to add that you know of.

See you on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.

## CALENDAR

GCMR meets are held at 9:00am in the Parish Hall of Our Saviors 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 17** - Winter Cactus meet. See the flyer this issue

**March 2** - Souper Saturday - Desert Division all day auction. Catalog at [tcadd.org](http://tcadd.org) (note revised date)

**March 23** - GCMR meet - Our Saviors Lutheran Church

**April 27** - GCMR meet - Our Saviors Lutheran Church

### DON'T FORGET YOUR DUES!

The form is in this issue and is sent separately for your convenience

## MEETING MINUTES

by Chris Allen

### January General Meeting

The January meeting was called to order by President John Draftz. The Secretary's report was accepted as distributed in the newsletter. Treasurer Glenn Saber gave the Treasurer's report. The Treasurer's Report was accepted.

The theme for the Educational Segment was "What I received for Christmas". John Zaval had a Lionel 00 Gauge locomotive. Although John does not operate 00 gauge he was attracted to the locomotive. He gave a brief report on Lionel's 00 gauge line and mentioned that he

did some light maintenance on it to make sure it was in running condition.

Katie Elgar received a train puzzle. She mentioned that it was a small piece count, and she will likely put it together shortly.

Michael Darius presented on the CNW

Terry Haas had a Mickey Mouse Box Car. He mentioned that it was a gift he bought himself and he loved to run it for his grandson and is a favorite on his layout during his Open House's. His grandson has outgrown the train and Terry now has the whole set up for sale.

Chris Allen brought one of the two add-on cars for his K Line Midnight Chief set. He mentioned the detailed interior and that the whole series of cars that K Line made in all the road names is highly sought after by operators two decades later.

John Draftz talked about his Lionel Clifton Observation car which was a Christmas add on to his freight set.

Old Business:

There was a brief discussion on the October Meet and the racetrack. The Meet was lightly attended because of the location change. Glenn Saber's winning entry suffered some damage because it ran into the unprotected bumper at the end of the track. Changes on how the race will be handled and the location/date were discussed and will be used this year.

There was a report on running the Kids Layout at a church "Trunk or Treat" event. The layout was received positively and might be repeated this year. John Zaval mentioned that Desert Division member, Angelo Lautazi, has a Halloween themed, small layout that he sets up in his driveway to the delight of his neighbors. John mentioned that something like that would be a real attention getter for the club.

John Draftz gave a report on the module running at the Fall Festival for the Arizona Railway Museum. There were several events that weekend in town and our resources were stretched very thin however we did run and represent the club again at the event.

New Business:

John announced that the Spring Open House at the Arizona Railway Museum has been postponed because of ongoing construction on Ryan Road and access to the parking lot is very limited.

Winter Cactus is completely sold out almost a month before the show. We will need help with security during the Farmers Market and during the setup on both days/ There will be better raffle prizes and hopefully that will increase raffle sales, which were down slightly during the fall meet.

Bylaws amendment. It was brought to the attention of the Board that there is no dissolution clause in our current Bylaws. There was much discussion on the matter with several members expressing interest regarding how the physical assets of the club will be handled.

Several proposed wording of the clause were discussed and President Draftz postponed a decision until the March Meeting since the February Meet will be the Spring Cactus Meet. He will have a legal friend review our Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and make some proposed changes to bring to the members at that time.

President Draftz was approached by the Adobe Mountain Club about erecting a Pole Barn Structure at Adobe to protect the trailer. Several cost estimates provided to the club are now dated and new ones need to be obtained. There was general agreement of those members present that some action needed to be taken to protect the trailer going forward. An updated pricing report will be given at the March meeting.

John Draftz sadly gave a report on member Bryan Jewel. Bryan has been diagnosed with inoperable cancer and is currently waiting to be transferred to Hospice care. Both John, Chris Allen, and friends of Bryan went to his apartment to take down his train layout and pack his personal belongings. John encouraged members to contact Bryan through his cell phone number listed in the roster.

John Zaval moved to purchase ground clear to spray around the trailer because of all the winter rains, to prevent grass and weeds from growing up where the trailer was parked. After some discussion the motion passed. John will purchase and spray the area several times this spring.

With no other business the raffle prizes were awarded and the meeting adjourned.

## **1989 KALAMAZOO CENTRAL PACIFIC TRACK LAYING WORK TRAIN**

by Glenn Saber

Back in the '80's, toy train manufacturer Kalamazoo was the first company to produce American outline G Scale trains to compete with LGB's short European engines and cars. They were quite successful distributing many trains before shutting down around 1995 and selling the molds to Hartland.

Only three Kalamazoo trains were hand painted and weathered at their factory, the North and South Civil War trains, that I already have in my collection, and this extremely rare Central Pacific three piece work train.

I hunted and hunted, but the only place I have ever seen this work train is in the 1989 Kalamazoo catalog ... until last month! It popped up on eBay complete except for the six people that were to come with the train! The seller was equally aware of its scarcity and stated the same, that the only other one he ever saw was in the catalog. Did Kalamazoo only make one train ... the catalog one? I'll never know, but knew I had to have this train to finish out my collection!

Then the horror. I'm an auction sniper and only bid in the last 7 seconds. Well, I overslept and missed the auction, my one chance at this rare train! I felt terrible, but a week later, it resurfaced because of a non-paying bidder! Holy Mackerel! I wrote the angry seller and stated his non-paying bidder was my Secret Santa!

The train now sits safe and proud on my shelves!



Cliff says not to worry, they will be sending trains only over the upper loop tonight!

## SUNKEN TREASURE AND THE RAILROAD

by Ken Withers

When you think of sunken treasure, railroads don't come to mind. Pirate ships, lost cities, or doomed luxury liners, maybe -- not trains. Unless you consider the sunken treasure mystery involving the Marquette & Bessemer railroad more than a century ago, which might give you an idea for a feature on your model railroad layout.

To start, we all like to model railroad infrastructure. What layout would be complete without a bridge, a tunnel, or a steep embankment? We admire the skill (and available space) of those of us who can build an operative wheelhouse or 10-track rail yard. But how many layouts feature a car ferry? The terms "car ferry" and "car float" have no relation to automobiles. They refer to powered barges or unpowered rafts that transported





railway cars over water where bridges and tunnels weren't possible. Even after the famous Eads Bridge over the Mississippi at St. Louis was opened in 1874, proving that long-span steel bridges could handle the weight of trains, car ferries were common throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and well into the 20<sup>th</sup>. The most famous – or infamous – were the various water transfer operations into and out of New York before the Hudson and Manhattan Railroad Tunnel was opened in 1908 after 30 years of engineering, finance, and political challenges.



*The Queen and Crescent Albatross midstream. The ferry was one on hundreds that crisscrossed the Mississippi Delta region well into the 1930's*



*Loading cars onto a Great Lakes ferry*

It was a year after the Hudson Tunnel was opened that our story of sunken treasure takes place. At 10:43 a.m. on December 7, 2009, the Marquette & Bessemer No. 2, a 338-foot car ferry owned by the railroad, left Conneaut, Ohio, at 10:43 a.m. bound for Port Stanley on the

Canadian side of Lake Erie. This would have been a routine five-hour trip. The captain was Robert McLeod, and his brother was First Mate John McLeod. The ferry held 30 to 32 cars full of coal and structural steel, with perhaps 30-38 crew and hitchhikers on board (non-employee passengers were not officially allowed). The ferry may have been overloaded; record keeping was sloppy in those days.

One of the hitchhikers on board was Albert J. Weiss, Treasurer of the Keystone Fish Company. He is reported to have been carrying \$36,000 for payroll and acquisition of a new facility. We don't know whether he carried cash, coins, or bullion, or whether he carried it in a briefcase, safe, or sack. All we know is that he was carrying the equivalent of \$1,213,500 in today's money.



*Marquette & Bessemer #2 car ferry*



*A typical Great Lakes car ferry, showing the back end without gate doors.*

A few months before, Captain McLeod had complained to M&B management that the ferry had no "gate doors," which meant it would often take on water that threatened to flood the boilers.

A winter storm kicked up that morning with 50 mph winds, delaying the ferry's departure by three hours. The M&B No. 2 never made it to Port Stanley that afternoon. Later that evening, winds were clocked at 75 mph.

On December 9, debris with the M&B colors was spotted floating in the lake. On December 11, a lifeboat with nine bodies was found 15 miles off the coast of Erie, Pennsylvania. All the bodies had life jackets but were otherwise poorly dressed for winter weather on the water.

George Smith, the ship's steward, had all his kitchen knives with him. Five more bodies were found in later months. First Mate John McLeod's body was found in the Niagara Falls Power Company's water intake in April 1910. Later in October, Captain McLeod's badly scarred body was found with his captain's papers, two checks he had written, and \$125 in cash, or \$4,200 in today's money.

Nothing more has ever been recovered. The shipwreck has been "sighted" many times, but never actually found, and treasure hunters are still looking for it. Great Lake historians think that it likely sunk into the geologically unstable 30-foot-deep clay sediment. And people in Conneaut claim to still hear the ship's ghostly distress horn on stormy winter nights.

A replacement No. 2 was immediately built by the M&B Railroad and inauspiciously launched the same day that Captain McLeod's body was found.

Why the company named the new car ferry "No. 2" and not "No. 3" is baffling, especially since the new No. 2 was as cursed as the previous one. It had a rich history of collisions and other

mishaps until it was moored off Cleveland and turned into a floating dance bar in 1937.

So the challenge for our fellow model railroad enthusiasts is not to find the sunken treasure, but maybe think about incorporating a car ferry or float (or a ghostly sunken one) into your layout, if you have a big enough water feature to warrant it. And if you already have a car ferry on your layout, we'd like to see it! Send us a photo!

## THE TREASURERS IN OLD PHOTOS

Here is the cover photo from a prewar issue of Model Trains, Lionel's hobby publication that lasted until 1949. This photo is obviously set up for the photo. But what are the trains being viewed by the excited boys?

OO gauge. It was recently introduced and Lionel heavily promoted it until the war. It never returned postwar and is rarely found today (except in your editor's basement!)





## FROM THE TRAILER AT THE ARIZONA RAILROAD MUSEUM



### WINNERS!

Dave Brown - S-gauge car  
Dave Brown - 3 annual raffle tickets  
Terry Haas - billboard mystery prize  
Terry Haas - O-gauge car  
Glenn Saber - accessory

## MEET PHOTOS



Show and Tell items



Chris Allen



Mike Darius



Katie Elgar



Dave Brown



Glenn Saber



Terry Haas





## 2024 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE

It's that time of year again. Dues are Due. GCMR Annual Dues are \$35.00. Please renew by filling out this form and mailing it in or bring to the next meet. Club dues are due on January 1 and are delinquent after February 1.

(PLEASE PRINT!)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SPOUSE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be interested in holding a layout or collection open house? Yes \_\_\_\_\_

How would you be willing to volunteer your time to the Club? \_\_\_\_\_

If your membership interests have changed, please fill out the following with your current interests.

<input type="checkbox"/> ERA <input type="checkbox"/> A - Prewar <input type="checkbox"/> B - Postwar <input type="checkbox"/> C - Modern	<input type="checkbox"/> K - N <input type="checkbox"/> L - Z <input type="checkbox"/> M - Other	<input type="checkbox"/> W - Other
<input type="checkbox"/> GAUGE <input type="checkbox"/> D - 0/027 <input type="checkbox"/> E - Scale <input type="checkbox"/> F - Std <input type="checkbox"/> G - LGB/G <input type="checkbox"/> H - S, Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> I - HO <input type="checkbox"/> J - OO	<input type="checkbox"/> MANUFACTURER <input type="checkbox"/> N - American Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> O - Lionel <input type="checkbox"/> P - Marx <input type="checkbox"/> Q - Ives <input type="checkbox"/> R - Dorfan <input type="checkbox"/> S - MTH <input type="checkbox"/> T - Williams <input type="checkbox"/> U - K Line <input type="checkbox"/> V - Kusan	<input type="checkbox"/> PERIPHERALS <input type="checkbox"/> 1 - Figures <input type="checkbox"/> 2 - Toys <input type="checkbox"/> 3 - Paper, Books <input type="checkbox"/> 4 - Buildings <input type="checkbox"/> 5 - Railroadania <input type="checkbox"/> 6 - Other
		<input type="checkbox"/> LAYOUT? <input type="checkbox"/> Y - Yes <input type="checkbox"/> N - N

After completion, please make a check for \$35.00 made payable to **GCMR** and bring it to a monthly meeting. You can renew online through PayPal at: [gcmrr.org/Membership.html](https://gcmrr.org/Membership.html) or mail it to:

Chris Allen  
1119 W. Plata Ave.  
Mesa, AZ 85210