



GRAND CANYON MODEL RAILROADERS

MAIN LINE

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

by John Draftz

Our next meeting is the 24th. The theme will be "A favorite holiday car or other train item". You pick the holiday. **Due to an event conflict with the church we usually use, the March meeting will be held in the hall of Lutheran Church of the Master located at 2340 W Cactus in Phoenix (just off the I-17).** Same time just a different location. The parking area is on the north (back) side of the larger building.

Our Winter Cactus swap meet was a sellout and a success thanks to those who were able to help. Buyers and sellers appeared to leave satisfied. We've already "sold" tables for the Summer Cactus.

On Saturday, February 24th, we took the mobile layout to the Arizona Railway Museum in Chandler for the Arizona Railway Day event. The layout was located next to the party caboose at the main entrance and was, as usual, a major attraction for visitors. Thanks to Dave B, Jack E, Bill E, Rick F, Rod J, Janet M, Dana P, and Bill R for running the trains that exemplify who the GCMR is.

Our next venture will be joining all at the multi club picnic on the Saturday after Easter, April 7th, at the McCormick RR Park in Scottsdale. More details will be at the meeting.

The mobile layout will be at the Rail, Rods, and Steel Wheels Show in Mesa's Pioneer Park on Saturday, April 21st, from 9-2. Note that this is a change from the normal November date. Again, more details at the meeting. Jack Eaton (623-249-7297 or jeaton@cox.net) is coordinating the staffing. Please let him know if you can help especially if you live on the east side.

Our spring and fall mini-meets will be on our regular meeting day and follow the format we've used before. The 2018 annual spring mini-meet will be April 28th. Only members can have first access to a free sale table at the meet. After April 1st, open tables will be available to members of our sister train clubs. The meet is free to the public. Contact Janet Mattern, the event coordinator, (602-569-0568 or tjmattern@cox.net) to reserve your table.

The mobile layout is usually parked with the south side (curb side) towards the sun. Over the years, that side has deteriorated to where it is torn beyond repair and a new cover is needed. Also, the snap system has become difficult to work. Glenn and Jack are looking into a suitable replacement with a more user friendly fastening system. The spare tire used with the smaller wheels was mounted to the bottom of one of the wings and covered by the tarp. This approach is not a satisfactory approach now that the trailer has

full size tires. A probable solution appears to be to mount the spare inside the trailer above the tracks for travel and fastened to an end post. During setup, the tire would be removed and stored under the trailer. It may not be the best solution, but it will keep the spare out of the elements until needed. If anyone has a "better mousetrap", feel free to share your thoughts with Glenn a/o Jack.

Our Summer Cactus Meet will be held July 28th and the fall mini-meet will be September 22nd. Please make sure they are on your calendars.

Plans are to hold a fall GCMR potluck/picnic for members and guests. Current thinking is for a weekend in November. The date and location haven't been finalized. If you have a preference, let a board member know.

See you the 24th. Plan to bring something to recognize a favorite holiday for you. Also, bring something to run (any gauge is OK) since we are an operating group.

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.

March 24 - GCMR Meeting - NOTE:for this month only - **Lutheran Church of the Master located at**

2340 W Cactus - Theme: A Favorite Holiday Car (you pick the holiday)

April 7 - Multi Club picnic - Scottsdale Railroad Park. Details at the March meeting

April 21 - Rail, Rods, and Steel Wheels Show - Mesa Pioneer Park

April 28 - GCMR meeting - Spring Mini-Meet

May 26 - GCMR meeting - Theme: Memorial Day; Space/Military Trains/Hardware

July 28 - Summer Cactus Meet - North Phoenix Baptist Church

WINTER CACTUS REPORT

by Glenn Saber

The Cactus Winter Swap went off without a hitch and had many happy vendors and buyers complimenting our well-organized meet. Final net profit was down over last winter's swap; \$3,655.55 vs \$4,507.89, that was down \$852.34. There were several reasons for the lower number.

General admission was down \$676.00 - \$2,029.00 vs \$2,705.00 (409 heads vs 449) However, it did not seem that way with a packed hall. Many times, completely unrelated people (4 and 5) abused the "family" price. Starting with the Summer Cactus, we will be switching to \$6.00 per person with available \$1 off coupon and children under 12 free with adult. No more "family" pricing.

Table sales were up \$150.00 - 153 tables vs 147 tables. Extra badge sales were up \$35.00 - \$60 vs \$25.

Fantastic Raffle net was down even with superior prizes. \$236.98 vs \$458.93 - down \$221.95. Several of our \$20 for 25 tickets buyers were not present and we spent \$65.00 for an O gauge freight set. Also, raffle sales started about 45 minutes late as Janet

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worked the door helping me with the initial crush. We need more than one person selling raffle tickets - a hall roamer and one at the raffle table. More raffle announcements are needed.

The End-O-Swap Auction netted our club \$27.50 vs \$138.60 as no one bought the higher ticket items even though they were outright bargains. Cheapskates. LOL.

Finally, more volunteers are needed. I was slammed all day at the door, many times alone and never relieved. I could not even walk the hall. The same occurred elsewhere - security, raffle, announcer, etc. This is unacceptable. Club members need to step up to the plate to make this meet enjoyable for all.

Other than the above concerns, we received many compliments and it was a great show :-). And ... \$3,655.55 is nothing to be ashamed of.

PAT IS RETIRING

by Bill Lazenby

Pat Eiff, Lionel repair technician, has decided after 40 years to retire from the Lionel repair business. As a lot of you know Pat was the repair tech for Ken Burling's Ton of Trains store in Fountain Hills.

Pat stated he has over 500 original Lionel parts in original Lionel packaging. He is hoping that someone in the local area would want original parts and price is negotiable. Please give Pat a call at 480-816-9624

TRACK SPACING

Jack Zaval sent this to us. It has been around before, but is interesting enough that he thought we might enjoy reading the story again - Ed

Could it be - The standard gauge for American railroads is a most peculiar 4 feet, 8 1/2 inches. If you are wondering if horses came up with that number, you may be closer to the answer than you may realize.

England created the first true steam locomotive, thereby getting the jump on the new railroad technology.

The very first American railroads began by importing already existing British railway equipment, which ran on a track with a gauge of 4' 8 1/2". Since there was no reason to change or modify this equipment, early American railroads also used this gauge.

But why did the British railroads choose 4' 8 1/2"? Because their railroad were built by the same people who constructed their tramways, also with that gauge.

So, why were tramways built with a 4' 8 1/2" gauge? Because people who built tramway equipment were built by the same people who used the same tools that made horse drawn wagons - also with a wheel spacing of 4' 8 1/2".

Why then, were wagons constructed with a wheel spacing of 4' 8 1/2"? That spacing ensured the wagon wheels would fit into the ruts in existing roads in England, thereby having the smoothest ride and less damage to wheels and equipment.

But, who created those ruts? The first great system of European roads were built by the Romans to move their armies. Roman war chariots, all built alike, created the "standard" of ruts all over the empire, in turn causing everyone to construct wagons to ride in these ruts.

Why then did Roman war chariots start out with a wheel spacing of 4' 8 1/2" in the first place? It turns out that spacing placed the wheels in the hoof prints of a team of horses. Over time, those hooves pulverized and smoothed two parallel paths in paving stones - centered approximately 4' 8 1/2" apart!

AT THE ARIZONA RAILWAY MUSEUM

Our trailer was present at this year's Arizona Railway Museum Railroad Days. Dave Brown and John Draftz sent us some great photos of the attendees enjoying our trains.



AND NOW FOR SWAP MEET PHOTOS

thanks to Bill Lazenby





SMOKE PELLETS

by Les Mathis from the TCA TTML Chat Line

If you go back to the TTML archives, specifically around December 1998 you will find there was a great deal of discussion on Lionel Smoke "pellets" and Dr. Chip Miller's determination that they were a waxy compound known as meta terphenyl, which melts at a low temperature and produces "smoke". Dr. Joe reiterated a few days ago what the nature of meta-terphenyl is along with the latest government findings. (which should be taken, as Dr. Joe intuitively says, with a grain of salt)

When I was employed as an Investigator for the Food & Drug Administration in the Newark, NJ

District Office the FDA was assigned the responsibilities of enforcing the new Hazardous Substance labeling Act (HSLA) and Child Protection Act (you know the one that says "not for children under xx years of age"). This was in the mid 1960's and FDA was responsible until the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) was formed.

As an aside both CPSC and EPA were started primarily using FDA conscripts significantly affecting the ability of FDA to conduct it's major responsibilities. In late 1967 I was assigned to inspect the Lionel Corp in Hillside, NJ.. The purpose of the inspection was to determine what products sold by the firm were subject to the HSLA and to make an assessment of whether the products and labeling were in compliance with the Act and

Regulations Those items were the smoke "Pellets" (actually a compressed tablet), lubricating oil, grease and cleaning solution. I truly anticipated going to the Lionel factory and being able to meet with the people who created all those wonderful trains. Talk about being Naïve. The only people I got to interact with were mid level managers who had no clue about smoke tablet composition or production.

Years later I got more information on smoke tablet design and manufacture from Ron Hollander's book "All Aboard" than the people I talked to during the inspection.. Well it took them an hour to find the data I requested and then had no idea about the manufacturing process or even who did it. They had no manufacturing equipment on-site that could have been used to produce the tablets. The plant was not in operation with many areas just plain empty or bare bones. It was a sad sight.

So in the final analysis I obtained the name of the chemical which the smoke "pellets" were composed of but not the manufacturing procedure which would have provided information of what excipients were used. i.e. a binder to create a workable granulation which could be compressed into a tablet that was not so friable that it reverted to being a powder when handled.

I suspect only good old ethyl alcohol or water was used which evaporated off leaving a "crunchy" mass suitable for compression. Tablet presses are available to produce from one at a time to several thousand a minute. I would suspect a simple press would have been used such as a Stokes F-1 which only requires one set of an upper and lower punch and a die that forms a cavity in which the granulation is compressed or a Stokes B-1 rotary table with sixteen stations, which would required 16 sets of punches and dies.

Most of the smoke "pellets" I have seen over the years have edge feathering which indicates space between the punches and the walls of the die. i.e. a worn out set of punches and dies no longer fit for pharmaceutical production. I have also observed varying weights of the tablets as well as the contents of entire bottles disintegrating into the power which indicates very poor manufacturing controls to produce a uniform product. But then they weren't looking for pharmaceutical quality were they?

TIME TO RENEW

It is getting close to the deadline for renewal of your GCMR membership. Most members have done so, but there are still a few we are waiting for. So, if you have not, please make sure Glenn Saber gets your check to renew. And, even if you have renewed, if you have had any change in your address, phone number or email address, please make sure Glenn has that, too. In this way the membership roster, which will be published next month, has the correct way for members to get ahold of you.

FROM ALL ABOARD

Here is part of an article from our All Aboard series about the annual employee layoff at Lionel

THE SEASONAL LAYOFF

A Frank Discussion of a Pertinent Topic

By the time this issue of All Aboard reaches its readers, a few hundred employees will have been laid off. By December 19, practically all production workers will be separated from the payroll. So far as manufacturing operations are concerned, activity at the Lionel plant for the 1947 season will cease a week before Christmas.

"Why should there be a lay-off at this time?" you may ask.

There are many reasons why a lay-off is necessary, and it is the purpose of this article to explain those reasons by providing a better understanding of the operation of your company.

First of all, adequate time must be allowed for delivery of Lionel trains and accessories to retail outlets early in December. In the interest of economy, merchandise must be shipped by freight, which is slow in reaching its destination. To ship by express or airplane would be far too costly, and costs are an important factor in a competitive market. Therefore, most production schedules must be completed by mid-November, as all goods manufactured after that date is limited to local markets.

Secondly, it is essential to halt production after a busy season to allow time for overhaul and repair of equipment, and a general change-over of production facilities for manufacture of next year's line of Lionel products.

The end of the season also necessitates a plant-wide inventory of all materials and parts on hand, so an accurate picture is available when plans are formulated for the coming year.

Thus, while your department is shut-down, everything possible is being done to insure adequate facilities for 1948 production and you will be recalled just as soon as the resumption of your work is feasible.

Before the 1947 catalog was released, Lionel was already touting the new loco to be introduced that year, the to-be-famous GG-1. This is the subdued announcement in the house publication, All Aboard.

NEWEST LOCO

Here is the NEWEST member of the LIONEL LINE for 1947 — a scale detailed model of the Pennsylvania Railroad's Electric Type Loco — GG-1. A magnificent new Loco, powered by LIONEL'S Silent Direct Worm Drive.



THE MAIN LINE

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Train shows are as much about sharing time with our fellow hobbyists as they are putting cash into your wallet (or taking it out!) Here George Bean and Bill East shared a sales spot and enjoyed each other's company during the Winter Cactus Meet