



GRAND CANYON MODEL RAILROADERS

MAIN LINE

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER, 2023

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by John Draftz

Saturday, November 11th, we had the mobile layout operating at the ARM fall festival in Chandler. The public attendance there was a little light due in part to the holiday but our layout was a popular attraction as usual. Michael Darus, John Draftz, Rod Johnson, and Janet Mattern were there to run trains after John Zaval brought the layout to ARM the Thursday before

The Sahuaro Central swap meet was the 28th which is our normal meeting day. To avoid the conflict, we moved the meeting date a week earlier to the 21st to the Church of the Master hall at 2340 W Cactus just off the I-17.

Unfortunately, many members were not present. The October meeting was our pizza meeting with the theme being beverage cars (beer, wine, soda pop, etc). Those present saw the drag races (fastest stock unit, fastest modified unit, and slowest) and enjoyed pizza and drinks. It was also our last club meeting of the year and thus our annual raffle drawing.

Sunday afternoon, October 29th, from 5-7 pm, we took the small 2-loop 4x6 kid's O-gauge layout along with a single loop O-gauge layout to the Life in Christ Lutheran Church for their Halloween event. Thanks to Ralph Treichel and John Zaval for being there to run trains that were popular with the people.

At present, December will have the mobile layout operating from 5-8 pm on the 1,2,8,9,15 & 16th in the AMRS area at Adobe during their open house. The MLS is planning to give train rides during those times. Details are still evolving but members are needed to help run trains.

See the www.maricopalivesteamers.com site for details on rides

Our next meeting will be January 27th at the Our Savior's hall where the October date/location will be a discussion topic.

In the meantime, have any enjoyable holiday time, stay safe and healthy, and keep on training. Individual layouts are always welcome at the meetings so feel free to bring one.

Remember, there will be NO November or December monthly meetings. See you on the 27th.

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.

January 27 - GCMR meet - Our Saviors Lutheran Church

February 3 - Souper Saturday - Desert Division auction

February 17 - Winter Cactus meet. See the flyer this issue

March 23 - GCMR meet - Our Saviors Lutheran Church

MINUTES

by Chris Allen

The October Meeting was held one week earlier on October 21 than our normal fourth Saturday at an alternate location, Lutheran Church of the Master on Cactus Rd.

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 after a discussion by the board if one should be held. Attendance was very light with only eight members remembering that we changed the date to accommodate the Sahuaro Central swap meet on the same day. However, since seven of the eight brought something to race or talk about at the Show n' Tell, we decided to forge ahead.

Secretary's report: no new members and no guests present. Treasurer Glenn Saber reported on the accounts.

On the fall Cactus Meet, there was a complete sellout of tables with several more on the waiting list. Attendance was down slightly and there continues to be a problem with the Vendor door at the back of the hall. Three out of four weeks the door opens to our room where Farmers Market vendors set up tables and sell their products. Ignoring the well-marked door

and other signage, the public still tried to enter the building. Raffle sales was also lower than expected. After some discussion it was agreed that the choice of free train excursion tickets might not be as big of an attraction as a HO train set or other train item. Also noted was the lack of volunteers to run the show. The board will meet in January to decide if Board members should hold tables at the meet or volunteer their time to the club to keep the meet organized.

President Draftz next asked those in attendance if the October third weekend date should be made permanent, even though it would mean finding a new location for the October Meet. After checking with our normal meeting location John discovered that the third Saturday is booked each year at the church, so we would have a similar situation every October with a different meeting date and location. It was decided to hold off until January when more members could provide feedback.

Show n' Tell:

+ Glenn Saber displayed his Marklin Oktoberfest gondola that he enhanced with some additional LED lights. The lights really made the car come alive.

+ Terry Haas celebrated Oktoberfest the Arizona way with two A-1 Beer reefers. These were produced by one of the other clubs in town and Terry had both one by Lionel and one by Atlas. He also brought along a die cast Pontiac and reminisced about the family's Pontiac dealership.

+ Janet Mattern had a complete Lionel Lion Chief Peanuts and the Great Pumpkin set on display. She has all the add on cars to the set which makes for a pretty impressive consist. Janet mentioned that she loves running Lion Chief and the simple Bluetooth interface works wherever she runs. She just sets up her train and connects to the remote with no fuss.

+ John Draftz had a Lionel Vat car marked Dr. Pepper, though he admitted Dr. Pepper was probably not transported that way. He queried those in attendance if anyone knew the significance of the 10, 2 and 4 on the Dr. Pepper logo and explained it was once sold as an elixir to “pep” people up at those times of the day. John also had a Vernor’s Ginger Ale reefer. If you grew up in the Midwest, especially in and around Michigan you are familiar with Vernor’s Ginger Ale and John told the tale of how this is the only “true Ginger Ale” he will drink.

+ John Zaval brought in track, transformer, and a Budweiser train to share, but forgot a track clip. Struggling to improvise and get wires into the tracks but to no avail the little MTH set just did not want to operate. So off we went to the races.

The main event of the day was the train races! Participants included Chris Allen, John Draftz. Terry Haas, Janet Mattern, Glenn Saber, and John Zaval, and many entered in multiple race categories which were: fastest stock, fastest modified, and slowest.

We tried as hard as we could but could not get Janet’s engine to answer the call.

Races were held for the fastest first. It looked like Chris Allen’s dual motor Bachmann was going to take the flag until he went up against Glenn Saber. Glenn scorched the tracks with his prewar Lionel 156 in the stock category. It literally flew down the track but unfortunately had a crushed front end by the end of the day. It beat out all the dual motor contenders in the stock category.

In the modified category John Zaval won with a postwar body running a prewar motor.

Hands down Terry Haas won slowest with his MPC DT&I switcher.

After a morning of racing, we settled down to a winners circle of Pizza. Since the attendance

was low we upgraded and had slices of Barros signature pies instead of the usual one and two item pies. More story telling unfolded as we ate and enjoyed the companionship of our friends.

Wrapping up the busy morning was the monthly raffles. John Draftz won a Lionel crossing gate and flashing signal, John Kendig won the only American Flyer item of the day and didn’t have to trade for it. Nick Schnakenberg won the Lionel Toy Fair Box Car, Glenn Saber won a Lionel Cotton Belt Box Car. The Mystery Prize was won by John Draftz. He took home a K Line NY Central smoking caboose Yard Office action plot.

Since this was the last meeting of the year the 3-2-1 Drawing was held as well. Winning the \$100 prize was John Zaval, who just so happened won the second-place prize of \$200, and the big grand winner for first place, another John, our own club president John Draftz.

John reminded everyone that we will be running the trailer at the Arizona Railway Museum in Chandler on Veterans Day Nov 11 and needs help running trains at Adobe Mountain during Holiday Lights the first three Fridays and Saturdays in December.



Terry and Glenn with the “slowest train” race

HANG OUT IN BENSON

by Glenn Saber

When traveling in southern Arizona, I made a brief stop in Benson for lunch, then decided to visit the nearby Benson visitor center to see what is available in the area. The visitor center is a Train Depot replica of the original Benson Train Depot established in 1880 by Southern Pacific.

Well ... lo and behold! Upon entering the visitor center, one is greeted by a large, G-scale train layout suspended from the ceiling on two levels. Also, there is loads of other train and model railroad memorabilia throughout the building and a radio tuned to current BNSF chatter. Bob Nilson, Tourism Supervisor, built the layout over many years and is still adding and upgrading it. Currently, several rods suspended from the ceiling are waiting for a new floating turntable.

The best part is that visitors are encouraged to operate one of the trains from a very unusual control panel. It is made from an actual diesel engine control panel that has been rewired and reconfigured to operate the G scale Bridgewater transformer! Adjacent to the simulator is a large flat screen TV tuned to a camera feed on the front of the model engine. With your hand on the throttle, it is super fun to watch the scenery whiz by at break-neck speeds, but when you glance up at the actual train, it is running at just a moderate pace.



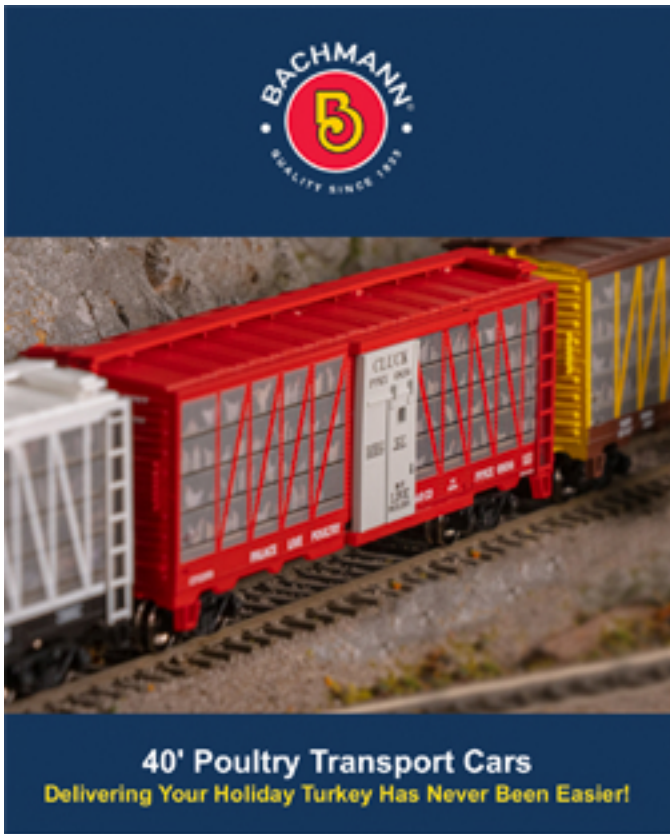
There is even a Rube Goldberg type PVC train horn to operate. After running the train, you are given a diploma and christened a Benson Train Engineer!

So, go ahead and "Hang Out In Benson" and say Hi to Bob and his great train layout!



THE HO FOLKS ARE STILL LEARNING FROM LIONEL

MIKE DARUS'S HALLOWEEN LAYOUT



THE GRAND RAILWAY HOTELS

By Ken Withers

For a hundred years, the railway hotel was a point of pride in every major city and lots of small towns. Usually built and operated by the railroad and adjacent to the passenger depot, it welcomed overnight travelers and hosted politicians, big bands, and other out-of-town attractions. Often, the hotel itself was the attraction, purpose-built by the railroad as a destination to promote leisure-time passengers.

Château Frontenac in Quebec City was built by the Canadian Pacific Railway in the 1890's and was one of a number of grand railway hotels built across Canada.



El Tovar Hotel on the south rim of the Grand Canyon was a joint venture by Fred Harvey Company and the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe. It opened in 1905 and is still served by the Grand Canyon Railway.



There are still railroad-related hotels for railfans to enjoy. You can stay at many of the Canadian grand railway hotels, such as the Royal York in Toronto, the Queen Elizabeth in Montreal, and the Banff Springs in Alberta. In the States, a few of the railway hotels survive, some quaint small hotels cater to railfans, some grand passenger depots have been saved from the wrecking ball and repurposed as hotels with railroad themes.

Much to our dismay, most of these grand hotels are gone. This year saw the demolition of the famous Hotel Pennsylvania in New York City, built by the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1916-19. It was the largest hotel in the world when it opened, with 2,200 guest rooms. Its phone number inspired the Glenn Miller swing standard, "Pennsylvania 6-5000." It will be replaced by a 68-story office tower.



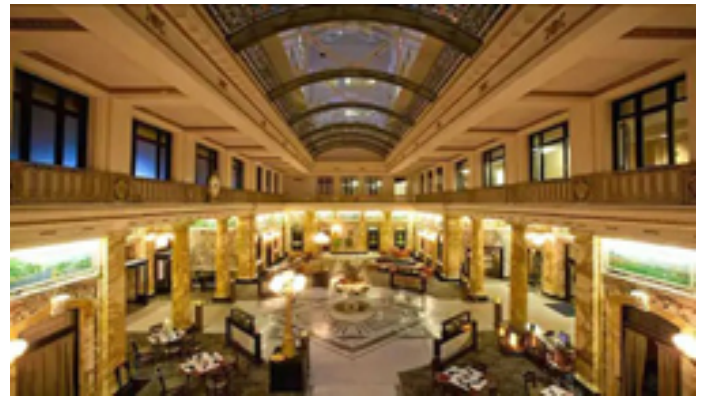
At the Station Inn in Cresson, PA, near the Horseshoe Curve, you can overnight in a railroad-themed room and spend the day watching trains on the Norfolk Southern main line from the Inn's ample front veranda, while listening to train operations radio traffic over the Inn's sound system.



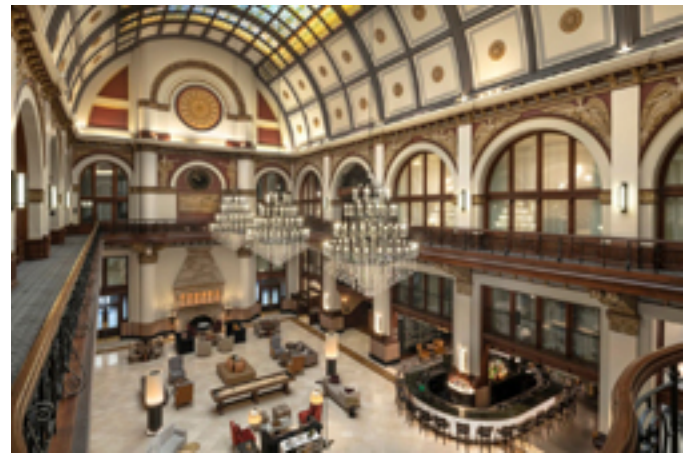
The newly-restored La Posada in Winslow is not just a destination hotel, but it is an official stop on Amtrak, with the tracks bordering the hotel's gardens and art museum. You can get off the train and walk right into the hotel.



In a few locations, creative real estate entrepreneurs have partnered with historic preservationists to not only save landmark rail passenger stations but transform them into jaw-dropping palace hotels. Three prime examples are the Lackawanna Station Radisson Hotel in Scranton, PA; Union Station Hotel in Nashville, TN; and Union Station Hilton in St. Louis, MO.



Lackawanna_Station



Nashville Union Station



St Louis Union Station

My favorite grand railroad hotel conversion is in Indianapolis, where they took the idea one step further – not only did they convert the station into a hotel, but you can stay in a Pullman car!

PART 2: NEXT MONTH

DRAFTZ PHOTOS FROM THE OCTOBER MEET

Terry Haas



Janet Mattern



John Kendig



John Draftz



John Draftz



John Zaval



Nick Schnakenberg



Glenn Saber



**GCMR AT THE
ARIZONA RAILWAY MUSEUM**

