



# Arizona Big Train Operators

## Newsletter

Club web site: <http://azbigtrains.org>

September 2007 Volume 15, No 9

### President's Message

Hello Garden Railroaders!

To keep us cool and out of the heat, last month's meeting was held at the Home Town Buffet, at Bell Road and I-17, in Phoenix. The food was good and getting a chance to socialize is part of the fun. After a short meeting, John Meyer's presentation demonstrated the different elements of "Scale" in G-scale railroading. It turned out to be so interesting and clarifying that I have asked him to repeat it at Brian Casull's this month. While we had a good turnout, many members left after the general meeting to go to a swap meet in Prescott, and so missed John's presentation. What made the demo so interesting was John's creation of three identical structures, each in a different scale. It is not often that we get a clear view of what the difference is between 1:32, 1:24 and 1:20.3. The buildings really brought home the meaning of "scale" as it pertains to G-scale railroads. Also, it was a fair amount of work that resulted in the creation of the models. The suggestion was made that the models would do well as a stand alone display at the convention to show the difference in the scales.

As you can see from the photograph, much has been happening with the railroad at the Phoenix Children's Hospital. ABTO members showed up Tuesday, Sept. 3rd to begin the renovation. Ennis Thompson, Wesley Shriver, Jim Kangas, John Meyers and myself worked in the morning to get the new deck in place. Ennis has delivered the donated artificial grass mat and we are ready to install it next. Jerry McKenzie will be overseeing the installation of the steel that will raise the trolley line over the top of the new deck. It's painted bright orange and you can't miss it...!



On a different note, Ennis Thompson had his 70th birthday party and many of you were able to attend the gala at his son's home in Gilbert. We were all asked to prepare a scrap book page that would be compiled into a book for Ennis. In looking over all our ABTO pictures, we were struck by how many club programs and events he has organized and been a part of. It was an amazing realization that he has been involved in almost everything that the club has done!

So, Ennis, HAPPY BIRTHDAY! We wish you many more to come, & Thank-you for all that you have done for ABTO...

Remember, when the trains run, we all have fun!

Bob Rauperstrauch



That's quite the birthday cake of the Bonneville Mill and Railroad!



Everyone took a trip down memory lane looking at the "Ennis Gallery".

**ABTO Board Members**President

Bob Rauperstrauch

Vice President

Glenn Sampson

Secretary

Roy Towne

Treasurer

Don Halver

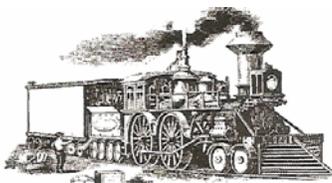
Member at LargeGerry Pfeiffer  
480-924-8844  
gerry\_pfeiffer@msn.comNewsletter Editor

Sandy Rauperstrauch

LAST MINUTE CHANGES

PLEASE NOTIFY the PRESIDENT or a BOARD MEMBER, or the NEWSLETTER EDITOR with information concerning a time, date, location change or cancellation, in order that all members can be notified by Email and the Calling Tree can be activated in a timely manner.

Constructive comments are always welcome!



# Calendar of Events

## 2007



Sept	15	8:30am - 11:00am	<b><u>ABTO General Meeting</u></b> Brian & Rebecca Casull
	27- 30		<b><u>Tehachapi Rail Fan Trip</u></b>
Oct	6	8:00am	<b><u>ABTO Board Meeting</u></b> Home Town Buffet 1312 N. Scottsdale Rd. - Scottsdale
	13-14		<b><u>McCormick Stillman Railfair</u></b> Module event
	20-21		<b><u>Botanical Garden</u></b> Module event
	27	11:00- 3:00pm	<b><u>ABTO General Meeting</u></b> Mike & Nancy Lewandowski
Nov	10	8:00am	<b><u>ABTO Board Meeting</u></b> 2730 W Bell Rd. - Phoenix
	17	8:30am	<b><u>ABTO General Meeting</u></b> Adobe Mt ABTO/AGRS joint breakfast meeting
	24	9:00am - 3:00pm	<b><u>Turkey Meet—Mesa</u></b> Jerry's Trains for kids
Dec			<b><u>NO ABTO Board Meeting</u></b>
			<b><u>No General meeting</u></b>
	1	5:00pm - 8:00pm	<b><u>Christmas Banquet</u></b> Landmark Restaurant, Mesa
	Sat 8th & Sun 9th Sat 15 & Sun 16th		<b><u>ABTO Christmas Open House Tours</u></b>
Jan	5	8:00am	<b><u>ABTO Board Meeting</u></b> 2730 W Bell Rd. - Phoenix
	19	TBA	<b><u>ABTO General Meeting</u></b>

This is a change

This is a change

2008 brings a new calendar and a new set of ABTO layouts to see. If you would like to host a meeting, please call Bob Rauperstrauch at 480-753-9690 or Glenn Sampson at 602-938-9752



## NEWS ARTICLES FROM THE RR WIRE

*by Mike Lewandowski*

The other night, I was checking the various forums and chat rooms regarding recent developments in the DCC standards. Stan Ames (well respected developer of the DCC standards) has designed a new concept called Direct Radio Control using the DCC Standards. In large scale, some users prefer direct radio control. Up to now there has been no standard. This forced everyone to be on their own and interchange ability between the locomotive and different manufacturers' versions has not been possible. Here are some of his most recent findings:

Over the past year, he has been playing around with this and has demonstrated a rather crude form of DCC Direct Radio Control using a battery to power a DCC command station that was mounted in a car behind the locomotive and a DCC radio throttle to control the locomotive. Rather large but excellent as a proof of concept.

For his second test, Stan connected a QSI/AirWire receiver module to a Lenz Gold decoder and successfully operated it using an AirWire 900 transmitter. This second test was important to ensure interchangeability between two different manufacturers.

With this latest technology break thru, Stan has quoted the following: What does this mean to the end user?

Using the same electronics within a locomotive, the user now has a choice:

- 1) DC track power
- 2) DCC track signal and track power. (with optional on-board backup to operate on dirty track)
- 3) Low current DCC track signal and on board batteries (if decoder supports capacitance pickup)
- 4) Radio DCC signal and on board batteries
- 5) Radio DCC signal and track power.

Stan still has some work left to do to completely write up the standard. He should have something completed by the DCC July meeting in Detroit. All that is left is to have a common definition of a plug for the receiver (4 pin JST socket, 2 power, 2 data) and a low voltage (say 5 volt) standard non continuous DCC signal (but perhaps unipolar).

It looks like there is a vendor with an "open systems" mindset working on this using standard as the mechanism to make RC and DCC and battery power move forward.

Thanks to CVP AirWire for producing the first TX that outputs DCC serial data.

Kudos to QSI Solutions for developing an RX for a 900 MHz DCC signal with a STANDARD plug.

Hurrah to Lenz (and any others) that have produced a decoder that separates power input from signal input.

Now we need a STANDARD connector in a loco that lets us JUST plug stuff into the engine....no wiring, no soldering. Aristocraft to the rescue!!! Most of the upgraded diesel locos have this feature.

Next month a detailed look at the QSI Solutions product. Checkout their website if your interested:

## New ABTO Members

Thanks for joining ABTO

As I work on the November '07 Roster, I see that we have 12 new members this year for a total of 91.

We hope you are taking advantage of all the train events that ABTO has to offer, including the 2008 National Garden Railroad Convention!

(I had to say that!)

## SUMMARY OF UNOFFICIAL BOARD MINUTES

September 1, 2007

Board members present were: Bob, Gerry, Glenn, Don & Roy  
 Guests were: Tony Vacek, Sandy Rauperstrauch, Jim Kangas, Ennis Thompson

Minutes: Read and Approved

Treasurer's report: Read and Approved

Old Business:

Activities: Tehachapi trip per Rich Hull - full with 26 members going. Van and hotel reservation have been made.

Modules: 2 events coming up—Next event is the McCormick-Stillman Rail Fair in October

Phx. Children's Hospital: Met with Kelly and Fred to go over budgets and future expansion plans. Remodeling of west end has begun.

Banner Desert Hospital: Don Halver: nothing to report  
Convention: Bob R for Rich Hull: Meeting of committee heads to be held on Sept 6 at Rich Hull's.

Newsletter: Sandy: no issues

Raffles: Raffle and door prize at Sept meeting

New Business: Landmark Restaurant for Christmas dinner. Gerry A. Pfeiffer making all plans and will be the reservation contact. Dinner cost set at \$28.50 per person.

B. Long term trailer storage— price of storage facility researched. Delay moving trailers until it becomes a problem where they are now.

C. Still looking into tax status

### We are in the "Count Down" to Convention lift off!

Maps for the open house tours are complete and ready to be printed. (Thanks to the hard work of Pat & John Meyers and Glenn Mitchell)

Sandy has completed 72 blue denim vests.

Vendors are reserving and filling up tent space.

Clinics and Seminars are 99% done.

(There is a terrific selection of presenters.)

Advertising is underway with good representation.

Security is set up.

Parking is taken care of.

Train layouts for the Open House tours are looking good.

Registrations are coming in steadily.

The General store merchandise has been ordered.

Cross-bucks are done for the tour hosts.

The web sight is great.

All that is left is

**for you to call Gerry Pfeiffer to volunteer your time to help.**

**Join the fun.**

**We need everyone to donate a little time.**

Gerry has a list of places that need some assistance, so give him a call. Set aside some time Wed, April 30 – Sat, May 3



## Tehachapi Trip

Trip coordinator: Rich Hull

Phone #: 480-802-5308 or 602-684-1203

E-mail: rhull@wbhsi.net

26 people are going,

**BRING SOFT LUGAGE ONLY—**

**NO ROOM FOR BIG BAGS.**

**Please, no hard sided bags!**

## What's Cooking !

### Overnight Breakfast Casserole

- 1 lb. lean ground sausage, cooked and drained or  
 1 pkg of links, fried drained and cut into small pieces
- 6 slices of white bread cubed
- 2 Tbsp. butter, melted
- 1 1/2 cups shredded cheese
- 5 eggs, beaten
- 2 cups half & half
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp dry mustard

Brown sausage and drain fat.

Toss bread cubes with melted butter and arrange in greased 9" x 13" baking pan.

Top evenly with sausage and cheese.

Combine all the remaining ingredients and mix well.

Pour over casserole dish and refrigerate over night.

Bake at 350 degrees for 40-45 minutes. Serve warm.

Optional: substitute 1 can of cream of mushroom soup for 1 cup of the half & half.

Delicious every time!

A tried and true recipe from Favorite Recipes from Quilters

My apologies to Bill Nagel for losing his information on ballast that he presented at the June ABTO Meeting at the San Marcos Resort. Good presentation and information. I have had several members ask about it and pointed them in Bill's direction. If you want information on ballast, he has a solution. Call Bill for more information. 480-899-9054

### Kits provided by Jim Kangas

Those of you who are making the kits up that were provided by Jim Kangas, please bring them to the October meeting at Mike Lewandowski's. There will be a table to show off your handy work.

## About The Newsletter

If you have something that you would like me to put in the newsletter, it is best to **email it to me**. Without beating my own drum, I wear many hats, and my office looks like a circus flew through it.

Sandy - Newsletter Editor, braup@cox.net



### ABTO/Phoenix Children's Hospital 2nd Annual Christmas Train Tours

We have a good representation from ABTO members participating in the Christmas Open House Tours:

- Sat, Dec 8th - Sun, Dec 9th, 6 :00pm - 9:00pm**  
**Sat, Dec 15th - Sun, Dec 16th, 6 :00pm - 9:00pm**
- |                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Mesa - Terry Haas          | Phoenix - Dan Hoag         |
| Ed Dunshie                 | Glenn Sampson              |
| Gerry Pfeiffer             | Scottsdale - Brian Casull  |
| Don Sorenson               | Chandler - Jack Johnson    |
| Dennis Serrine             | Bill Nagel                 |
| Roger Crooks               | Tempe - Steve Gurley       |
| Robert Johnson             | Sun Lakes - Ennis Thompson |
| Gold Canyon - Dennis Busby | Rich Hull                  |

These are the official days that will be advertised. If you want to be open other days, that is up to the individual. All donations will be donated to the PCH train fund for layout improvement and equipment.

### Phoenix Children's Hospital

Exciting things are happening at the Phoenix Children's Hospital. The project to revitalize the west end at the existing train layout is finally underway. A group of dedicated ABTO members have been meeting at the hospital to change out the current town with an expanded overhead end-to-end in more of a city setting.



ABTO's meeting at the Hospital with their new facilities manager went very well. They are very pleased and excited about the trains at the hospital. Enough so that ABTO learned that the hospital wants another train layout which will be visible from the new entrance on Thomas Rd. in the new addition. Dates for this project are uncertain, but space is being allocated for the project. The existing train layout will remain in full operation, but the Pediatric ICU rooms are moving and that space will be turned into regular hospital rooms giving children more access to view the trains.

Don't forget to buy raffle tickets for the Convention Quilt!

Buy tickets for the Raffle  
\$2.00 each or 6 for \$10.00

Yes, we will have raffle tickets at the next meeting!



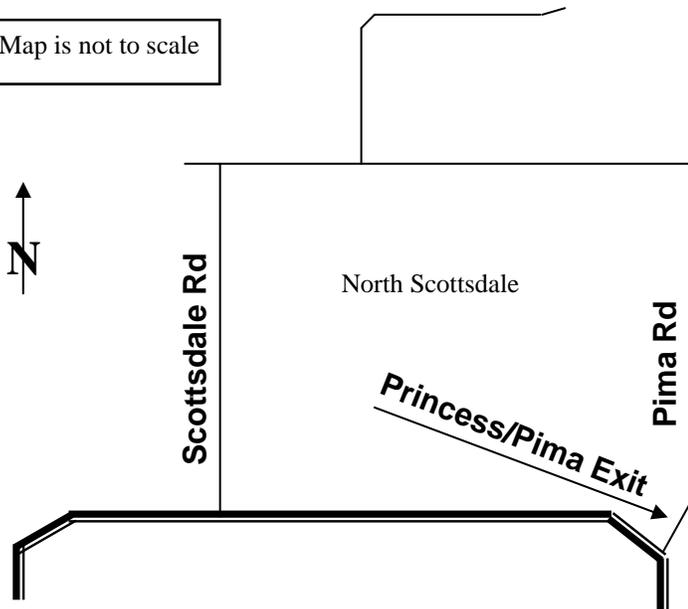
### Have you seen the 2008 Convention Car?

Quantities will be limited so put your order in when you register.  
\$100.00



Dixileta is about 8 miles north of the 101 Loop

Map is not to scale



## ABTO General Meeting

Brian and Rebecca Casull

**Saturday, September 15**  
**8:30am - 11:00 pm**

Breakfast potluck, pancakes will be served - water provided.  
Bring a dish suitable for breakfast.

# Arizona Big Train

## ABTO OBJECTIVES

Membership in Arizona Big Train Operators is open to anyone with an interest in gardening and creating, constructing, and operating large scale model railways. At our meetings, items of mutual interest associated with the hobby are discussed and demonstrated.

Our members represent a wide variety of interests ranging from gardening, collecting trains, and model building, to operating trains in the garden railroad environment.

Meetings are typically held at member's homes, where they have the opportunity to showcase their railway creations.

**Meetings are usually held on the 3rd Saturday of the month.**

## ABTO MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership fee is \$35 per family, per year, and entitles you to one vote per family membership.

Membership entitles you to attend all meetings and events and receive the monthly ABTO newsletters and one name badge. Additional badges may be purchased for \$7.00 each.

## ABTO BOARD MEETING INFORMATION

**Board meetings are usually held on the first Saturday of the month.**

Board meetings are open to members who are current on their dues and have an item for the agenda. **If you plan to attend, call a board member to confirm location, time and date.**

## ABTO NEWS CONTRIBUTIONS

Members are encouraged to contribute articles, letters, illustrations or photographs related to garden railroading to include in the newsletter. Items may be used at a later date.

ABTO Members who have hobby related items for sale or trade may submit an advertisement for publication at no charge using four lines—more if there is space;

name, Item, Phone # and Email.

**Submissions must be in to the editor by the 1st Saturday of the month by US Mail or Email using WORD.**



ABTO Newsletter Editor  
Sandy Rauperstrauch

To:

ABTO General Meeting September 15, 2007  
Brian & Rebecca Casull - Scottsdale, AZ