



Tucson Garden Railway Society's

Time Table

Society web site: <http://tgrs.homestead.com>
Editor e-mail: dizen@aol.com

December 2003

Meeting This Month

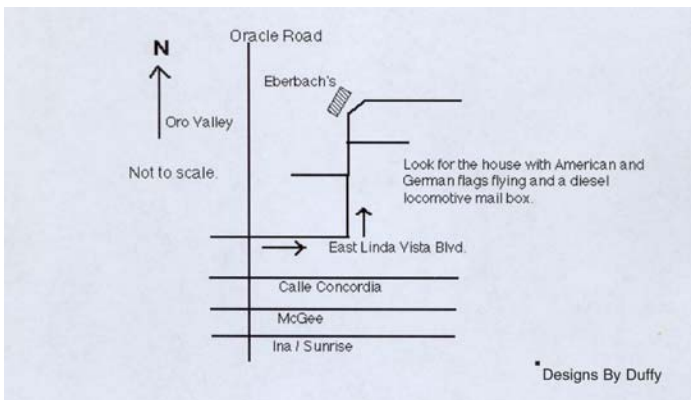
This month's meeting holiday party and gift exchange will be on December 13, at the home of:

Mary Ann and Roy Eberbach
841 E. Linda Vista Blvd.
Oro Valley, AZ 85737

Telephone 520-531-1087

See [Plans for Year End Party and Meeting](#) below for times.

Directions:



As the above map shows to get to the Eberbach's you simply take Oracle Road to Linda Vista Blvd. Turn east (to your right if you are heading north up Oracle, to your left if you are heading south down Oracle) and follow the road as it bends around.

The Railroad:

Our Gnome Valley Central Railroad is a garden-style fantasy railroad. Back in 1998 a small community of gnomes came from Germany and took over the space that we had set aside for our garden railway. They made it a whimsical place where the little people live and play. For their entertainment, they built a garden railroad which they share with us. The garden is simply a place to allow large size toy trains to play in the sun. You may see the full size (for them) Gnomes enjoying our railroad.

The Gnome Valley Central operates as a narrow gauge railroad which means that its locomotives, cars and track are smaller than standard railway equipment. Our trains

are powered by track fed low voltage DC. Control is maintained most of the time with Train Engineer transmitters and receivers. Additional power for night time viewing is 12.6 volt A.C. provided by simple transformers.

Phases 1 and 2 of the railway are almost complete. Phase 3 has working track and landscaping is underway.

Roy has been disabled for seven years and requires an electric scooter for mobility. The railway is built 24" above the ground and has a brick cap on the retaining walls. This, together with wide aisles, allows him to move about the garden and to sit on the brick cap to help work on the railway. Roy is responsible for the trains and most of the buildings and detail work on the railway.

Mary Ann works with the garden plants of the Gnome Valley Central and has of late gotten into scratch building structures. We use drip irrigation to keep our plants going. All rolling stock is stored inside for security. The building has twelve storage tracks so the trains are ready to go when called for.

On December 13th. we will drive the golden spike which will symbolize the completion of track laying. As with all of our railways there will always be much to work on. Thank you for visiting with us and seeing our railroad grow.

Plans for Year End Party and Meeting :

Our annual year end meeting and party will be held on Saturday, December 13 at Mary Ann and Roy Eberbach's this year. Roy plans to have trains running from noon on.

At 12:45 there will be a brief "Golden Spike" ceremony signifying the end of construction (though we know that never ends).

At 1:00 PM the Eberbachs plan to serve a potluck lunch. They ask that you bring the following: chairs, a table if you volunteered and a dish to pass which may be eaten without a knife. They will provide plates, silverware and drinks.

Please Note: You should have signed up at the November meeting for whatever type of dish (Main Dish, Side Dish or Desert) you are going to bring. If you didn't please call

Mary Ann so that she can be certain we have enough of each type.

After lunch the business meeting will begin around 2:30 PM, including a vote on some minor by-law changes. The gift exchange will follow (see following story)

The Eberbach's also plan to hold an Open House on Sunday, December 14, from 1:30 to 3:30 PM. Club members are welcome to attend.

TGRS Gift Exchange :

After the meeting we will hold our annual holiday grab bag and gift exchange.

Each member who wishes to participate should bring a wrapped, railroad related gift that cost less than \$10. While most members have great fun with this part of the program, you do not have to participate in the gift exchange to attend the meeting or enjoy the luncheon.

You turn your wrapped gift into the grab bag (generally a table) and take a numbered ticket.

After lunch and the business meeting, Nick, or Roy or some other moderator will call the numbers. When your number is called you go to the table and select a wrapped package.

Now the fun begins. You may now open your package and show it to the other members OR you may exchange your gift for any other gift that has already been unwrapped. In that case you give your wrapped package to the person who had the item you just took.

That person may now unwrap the gift or exchange with a third person (but not with the person who had just exchanged with him/her).

The wrapped gift can go from person to person ad infinitum until someone unwraps it.

Once unwrapped gifts must be left visible and on display (generally on top of the table) so someone else can exchange their wrapped package for it.

Because some gifts become very popular and can be passed from hand to hand for a very long time, we have set a limit of two exchanges per unwrapped gift (e.g. three owners, the person who first unwrapped it, the person who first exchanged for it and then the third and final owner).

After a gift has been exchanged twice, it is no longer in play and may be removed from display.

I THINK I KNEW THAT! #11

BY ROY EBERBACH

This column presents my ideas and is not intended as the only way or the right way of doing things. This is what works for me. If you have different ideas that work for you send them along and I will share them with the club.

This month I am changing the format of the column just a bit. Instead of answering questions I am going to deal with three Garden Railway products which I find unsatisfactory for use in our Tucson weather.

#11-1.PIKO INDUSTRIAL FENCE.

I put together two of these kits several months ago and placed them outside around a PIKO Tank Farm. The kit makes up into a good looking fence and is the only G Scale product of its type that I am aware of. It contains both fence sections and gate sections. The kit is made up of the usual plastic material for the fence posts and gates. However the fence fabric is made of a soft plastic which must be cut to fit the builders design. After being outside for several months the fence fabric became hard and extremely brittle. Even a gentle breeze will break sections of the material away from the posts and splinter them into many pieces. I am currently testing several other fabrics for use with the posts. I will let you know when we find a suitable material. My advice is to not buy this product if it is to be used outside here in Tucson.

#11-2 PIKO SMALL WATER TOWER

Piko has brought out a small ready built water tower to go with their ready built small station. These structures are attractive and should have many uses on small railways. The station is built from their earlier kit and appears to be as suitable for outside use as any other Piko building. But, take a good look at the small water tower. Piko has chosen to cut corners and the materials that they used will self destruct if left outside. To begin with the plastic used in the structure is a lighter weight material which will allow the water tower to be blown over in the slightest wind. Adding weight will help this problem. Fixing the other problems will require some work. On most model water towers the bands which are designed to hold the tank together (in the real thing) are made of metal or heavy duty plastic. On this model they are made of elastic string. Likewise the spout detail which normally is made of metal chain and weights is replaced with a single piece of string. Again, don't buy this product if it is to be placed outside.

#11-3. Aristo Craft Church

Aristo Craft has expanded its line of ready built structures to include a church and the old Delton stable. The stable was available in kit form and if you want this building, find one of the old kits at a swap meet. What the Aristo people in China have done (again to cut corners) is to replace the heavy plastic roof on these structures with a thin plastic veneer. Under this veneer they have placed a piece of soft white Styrofoam, like the kind that is often used in packing materials. I had the church outside for less than a month when the roof began to cave in. I am now in the midst of replacing the roof with a concrete one. I have seen several of these churches still in the box at stores, and the roofs are already caving in just from the weight of the steeple. All of this is too bad and a black eye for Aristo Craft. If you want one of these cute churches, plan on rebuilding the roof whether you plan on using it inside or out. Unfortunately the people in China do not make it an easy job and I messed up some of the gutter and down spout detail in removing the old roof.

Rail Bits # 9

(A stopover at the Digital Station)

by Jerry Tulino

What's Your Opinion?

In the previous 8 articles I have presented information on various subjects. I hope that it has been of help to some of you. This month, rather than a new article, I am requesting feedback on the previous ones so that I can determine the future direction and level of detail that would be appropriate.

Following is a list of articles and questions about them. Please review them and let me know your opinion. Discuss 1 or 2 or more or all of them, whatever you want. Respond back to TGRSemail@yahoo.com indicating the question number and anything you would like to say about it. Your responses can be "Need more information", "Great piece of information", "Don't understand what it is all about", "Would like to talk to you about it" or whatever you would like to say. Also, please feel free to include suggestions for other topics or add whatever other comments that you think can help define "where to go from here". Thank you.

Article 1 – April – The TGRS mailing list.

1. Are you a member?
2. If not, do you know of a better way to reach so many members with a single email message?

FYI – There is a detailed description on our web site ("Mailing List info" on the Main Menu) of how to sign up.

Article 2 – May – Spyware

3. Did you read the PC Magazine article?
4. Have you installed Spybot or Ad-Aware or any other anti-spyware program?

Article 3 – June – What is screen resolution

5. Was this article helpful?

Article 4– July – How to change screen resolution

6. Was this article helpful?

Article 5 – August – "Handy Converter"

7. Did you install it?
8. Do you find it useful?

Article 6 – September – Internet searching

9. Do you use GOOGLE?

Article 7 – October – The Newsletter Index

10. Have you used it to search for an article?
11. Would you like it to remain on the web site?

Article 8 – November – More GOOGLE options

12. Have you tried any of the additional features?

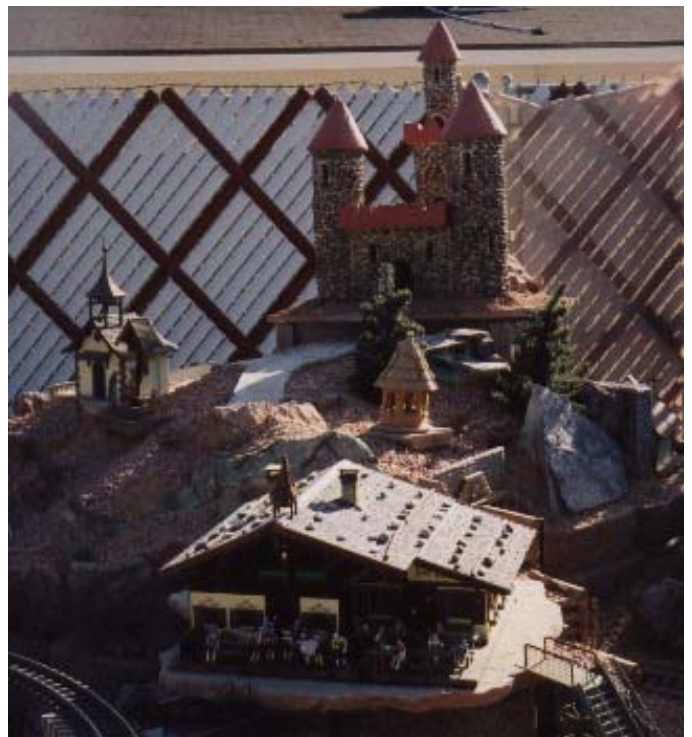
Roundabout:

Pictures for this article were supplied by Alan Oelschlager and Dick Izen

We had a good turnout for the Phoenix Round About with about 68 members attending. The bus (and following vans) got away on schedule and, after a brief roadside rest stop, we arrived at Bill and Herta Nagle's layouts. They actually have two raised layouts, one against the rear wall with two loops based on German practice and a second with three loops occupying the ex swimming pool space. This second one is based on the western U.S..



LGB 2-4-0 pulls passengers on Nagle's U.S. layout



Bavarian castle, alpine resort (complete with German band on the patio) on the Nagle's German layout

After the Nagles we visited Ed and Carol Dunshie's MMI&E railroad is in two loops and which features an LGB Beyer Garrett locomotive and many beautiful metal bridges including an 18 foot replica of New York's Hell Gate Bridge.



A Sumpter Valley with a short freight enters Hell Gate



LGB's Beyer Garrett pulling European passenger cars

Then it was on to Rodney & Janet Benner's Red Rock Railroad where we saw some nice long trains, both steam and diesel powered (and had lunch).



Aristo 2-8-2 with long Vanderbilt tender meets diesel train with 3 units, 17 cars and a caboose.



Most of 17 car freight rounding swimming pool

Glen and Katy Sampson's layout had many loops and many detailed scenes including the scratch built Toonerville Trolley.



Loops and trains on left side of the layout



The Toonerville Trolley had its own loop

Then it was on to Cal and Barbara Miller's Whiskey Flats Railroad that featured a long UP passenger train, a Tehachapi style loop, steam powered freight and most uniquely, hollow tree trunk tunnels.



Long U.P. passenger train crossed suspension bridge across drainage ditch.

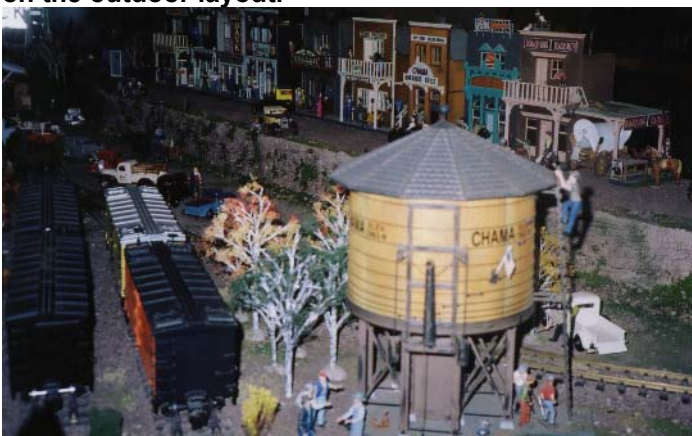


Same train emerging from hollow log tunnel.

The final stop of the day was at Jerry and Joanne McKenzie's railroad in Arizona City. This pike is actually three railroads. There is an extensive but sparsely scened outdoor railroad, a highly detailed indoor railroad and a modular layout which featured racing eggliners carefully watched by Snow White and seven vertically challenged friends (OK, seven dwarfs).



Battery operated remote control train crosses bridge on the outdoor layout.



Part of well detailed indoor layout



Eggliners race under the eye of Snow White and her seven vertically challenged friends

The few pictures included above don't do justice to the many fine scenes we saw. Many members took pictures and would be pleased to share them. In addition to Alan, check out Dottie Fagg's pictures on her web site www.KM6MV.org.

Tucson Botanical Gardens Holiday Display

Operations at the Tucson Botanic Garden began at 11:00 AM on Thursday, November 20, as scheduled. Thanks to all the members who helped to build the layout and to those who are helping to operate it. If you haven't seen it yet drop by and take a look.

Open House at the Hart's

Loyal and Marty Hart have announced that they will have an open house for the Hart to Hart railroad on December 6, 7 and 8 from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM each day. The Harts are located 7921 East Scarlett and advise that club members are welcome to drop by on any of the three days. Marty also reports that Fountain of Life Lutheran School will be visiting on Monday the 8th.

If you haven't seen the Hart's layout (or even if you have) it is well worth taking the time to visit. The layout is filled with characters from cartoons and fairy tales and finding all of the miniature groupings delights youngsters of all ages. They have several (many?) loops and there will be plenty of trains running past the playmobile castles and general fun filled scenery.

Websites of Interest

Members websites, such as the Fagg's, mentioned above can be found on the TGRS website. In addition there are a number of interesting websites that have come to the editor's notice.

John MacDougall, who authored the articles on batteries and remote controlled trains published in this news letter

some time ago has codified his experience into a battery conversion book published on the Bay Area Garden Railroad Society (BAGRS) website www.bagrs.org.

From across the pond (No, no, not that pond! The big one. The Pacific) there are several great websites. In Australia www.users.bigpond.com/huntergpm/gregs/ghome.htm will get you to Greg Hunter's Sandstone and Termite Railroad. This layout has been featured in [Garden Railways](#) and features battery operated remote control trains with locomotives heavily modified from the ubiquitous Bachmann ten wheelers. I guarantee you won't be able to recognize the source of the modified locomotives, especially the Beyer Garrett articulated. The Toenail Ridge Shortline, a 1:20.3 scale railroad with a neat battery power circuit on the site can be reached at www.trainweb.org/toenailridge/index.html.

In New Zealand, the Ashburton Forks Railway, a 1:24 scale road is at www.geocities.com/nz1in24/index/html and the very nice Rocky Creek Railway at www.geocities.com/rockycreekrailway/ but the best of all the New Zealand sites is the Driving Creek Railway & Pottery, www.webtrails.co.nz/cormandel/cormandel/town/dcrailway/index.cfm. Seems the owner bought some land, then built a narrow gauges steam powered railway, complete with loops and switchbacks, to haul the clay to the pottery. Tourist rides have far outstripped the pottery though it and an adjacent brickworks are still in operation.

Saint Marks Display:

The TGRS will once again be at the annual Christmas party at the daycare-preschool at St. Mark's United Methodist Church. We will be setting up on Sunday, December 7th, and will run on December 8th and 9th from 10 A.M. until 1 P.M.

Minutes of the Last Meeting:

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Stoesser

The meeting was held November 15, 2003 at Ken and Mary Karrel's Bread and Breakfast. Pres. Nick Buchholz called the meeting to order and thanked the Karrels for hosting.

The minutes were approved with a correction of the days that LGB was open for tours.

Treasurer's Report was read by Nick. Current account balance: \$3,453.27. Revenues to date for fiscal year 2003-2004 are \$2,352.50 and expenses \$2,253.34 for a net increase to date of \$99.16. Current balance includes final payment for the Phoenix trip and driver tip. Outstanding expenses for the trip are estimated at approximately \$110. A total of 88% of our current members have paid dues for the current year.

Vice President's Events Report: Norm Ulmer and 3 of his committee will go to San Carlos on November 20th to coordinate with Chandler on the 2008 Convention. Norm will bring a sign-up sheet in December for setting up the

Children's Layout at the TTO Swap Meet. Norm also had copies of the revised by-laws for the members to take.

Membership Committee: Ibbey Ulmer had the new membership rosters. She would like all members to check their addresses and get back to her if they are not correct.

Module Committee: Joe Duda had several more of the models that were taken home and built, returned.

New Venues Committee: Roy Eberbach is going to have a meeting with all 8 families to discuss the 1/24 - 25 fundraiser. Each family will receive a packet with flyers, poster and other info. Roy would like any one who has a place to put a poster to advertise the event, to please take one. A sign-up sheet to help in January was passed around. Tickets will be sold 2 weeks ahead at the 22nd Ace Hardware. Norm had talked to Bob Grassi about passing out flyers at the TTO Swap Meet, he said "he would take some flyers to pass out". Roy also had sign-up sheets for the Christmas pot luck.

TBG Holiday Layout: Gary Martin thanked all those that helped lay the track for the layout. There will be a training session on Monday at 1:00 P.M. to learn how to run the trains. For those who can't make the meeting there will be a written instruction sheet. If you have a problem while running you can call Gary. The train can be run either automatic or manual. If you would like to bring houses, he would prefer you bring them on Tuesday or Wednesday. There are 4000 brochures to advertise the event, if you would like one to help advertise, see Gary.

Joe Stoesser has **shirts and hats** for sale. He has received one order and is reordering again

New Business: Ken Karrel reported that Mike and Jane Dorgan's son, Robert, made a 3x6 replica of the 1920 Tucson Down town Depot. It was made in HO scale and will be placed in the Railroad Museum.

Loyal and Marty Hart are hosting an Open House on December 6, 7, and 8. The hours you can visit are 11:00 to 3:00.

Bob Dirkson would like to have some people help set-up the 12/8 - 9 Children's Layout at St Marks.

Ellen Stoesser reported, thank you's, had been sent out to our hosts for our Phoenix bus trip. She also asked for members that would like to host a meeting in the year 2004 to contact her.

Gary would like a get-well card send to Fred Wray in Green Valley. Bob Schwab is going to close his railroad and would to sell some of his stuff in the future. Gary will try to get him to host a monthly meeting. For more information, call Gary.

The meeting was adjourned.

Next Board Meeting is at Norm and Ibbey's on December 15, 2003 at 7:00 PM.

Paint and Cleanup

From time to time we all use model railroad or hobby paints to touch up a new car or model we have built. While each manufacturer provides a specific thinner, sticking with the manufacturers brand results in having many different jars of thinner. Worse, some of these jars are incompatible with other brands of paint.

Reproduced below is a "Helpful Data Sheet" prepared by a hobby shop to help you understand how to simplify thinning and cleaning up different brands of paint. The hobby shop has also provided some helpful suggestions regarding how much paints should be thinned for spray guns and what spray pressure works best.

Bruce's Train Shop

2752 Marconi Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95821
Tel: 916.485.6288 Fax: 916.485.8028
www.brucestrainshop.com

Helpful Data Sheet

Paint, Thinner & Clean-up

Brand	Thinner	Alternate Thinner	Airbrush % of Thinner	Spray PSI	Clean-up †
Accu-Paint	Accu-paint #100	Denatured Alcohol or Acrylic Lacquer Thinner*	Not Required	15 - 30	Denatured Alcohol or Lacquer Thinner
Scalecoat I	Scalecoat #48	Acrylic Lacquer Thinner	50%	10 - 20	Lacquer Thinner
Scalecoat II	Scalecoat #2048	None	50%	15 - 20	Lacquer Thinner
Floquil	Diesol	Acrylic Lacquer Thinner	25%	12 - 20	Lacquer Thinner
Floquil Rev I	Floquil Rev I Thinner	Acrylic Lacquer Thinner*	25%	12 - 20	Lacquer Thinner
Pollyscale	Pollyscale (Polly S) Thinner	Distilled Water	20%	20 - 30	Denatured Alcohol or Distilled Water
Testors 1/4 oz. PLA	Testors #1156 Thinner or #1799 Air Brush Thinner	Paint Thinner (Mineral Spirits) or Lacquer Thinner*			Mineral Spirits or Lacquer Thinner
Testors Model Masters	#1799 Air Brush Thinner	Paint Thinner (Mineral Spirits) or Lacquer Thinner*			Mineral Spirits or Lacquer Thinner
Testors Model Masters Acrylic	#50499 Acrylic Thinner	Distilled Water			Testors #50498 Acrylic Enamel Thinner
Gunze Sangyo	Distilled Water	Distilled Water			Tap Water
Badger Model-Flex	Polly S Thinner	Distilled Water	Not Required	30 - 35	Tap Water

Notes: * Lacquer thinner is not plastic compatible. Use may change paint characteristics. Caution should be used.

† Lacquer thinner may be used for clean-up on all of the above listed paints. In fact, most of the water based acrylics dry so quickly, that it may be necessary to use lacquer thinner to remove dried paint from brushes, tools and airbrush parts.

Meeting Hosts Needed

While there will be no meeting in the busy month of January, we do not yet have hosts signed up for the February or March meetings. Please consider volunteering for one of these meetings and signing up in December.

Thank You For A Great Day.

I would like to thank Norm for providing us with an exceptional tour to Phoenix. He did extra duty to see to it that the bus company took good care of me and my scooter. The day went extremely well and Mary Ann and I were able to participate fully. I have been on many tours at conventions since acquiring wheels to aid with my mobility. You the members of T.G.R.S. were super. I know that having to deal with me and the scooter inconvenienced you and yet you responded with genuine caring and support. A number of you reached out with a helping hand when you saw that it was needed. Thank you for your acceptance and friendship.

Roy Eberbach

The Tucson Garden Railway Society is a non-profit corporation incorporated in Pima County, Arizona. Society members are interested in all areas of garden and modular large scale railroading. We welcome new members and hope you will consider joining. Members help each other build layouts and learn about railroading and modeling.

The TGRS dues are \$30.00 per year and are due on June 30th of each year. For new members dues are pro-rated at \$2.50 per month remaining in the year until June 30th plus a \$15.00 initiation fee, the first year. Additional name badges cost \$1.00 for each badge after the first.

If you are interested in the TGRS please contact one of the officers at the phone number listed in the Calendar section below. If you wish to join immediately, send a check and your name, address and telephone number and the names for any additional badges to:

Ibby Ulmer
4935 N. Craycroft Road
Tucson, AZ 85718

Calendar of Events

- Nov 20-Jan 1 Operate TBG holiday layout 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM daily (some days longer hours)**
Dec 6-8 Open house by Loyal and Marty Hart, 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM daily
Dec 8-9 St. Marks Christmas Children's Layout
Dec 13 Meeting, Holiday Lunch and Gift Exchange at Roy & Mary Ann Eberbach's home – Trains from Noon, Golden Spike Party at 12:45, Lunch at 1:00 PM, Business Meeting around 2:30 PM, Gift exchange to follow
Dec 15 TGRS BOD meeting at Ibby and Norm Ulmer's home 7:00 PM
NO MEETING IN JANUARY
Jan 9-11 Possible Home Show
Jan 17 Children's Layout at Toy Train Operators Swap Meet
Jan 24-25 TGRS Fund Raiser - Public Open House / Roundabout – Noon to 4:00 PM each day
Feb 7-8 Great American Train Show (GATS) at Pima County Fairgrounds

TGRS Officers and Board of Directors

President:.....Nick Buchholz.... 520-744-4932
V-President:..... Norm Ulmer.....520-299-9401
Secretary:.....Ellen Stoesser.....520-577-1210
Treasurer:.....Willis Fagg.....520-760-0147
Editor:.....Dick Izen..... 520-498-4634

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Roy Eberbach.....520-531-1087
Bob Hoffman.....520-825-6967
Joe Stoesser.....520-577-1210

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