



# THE ABTO GAZETTE

September, 2025

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Visit at: [www.azbigtrains.org](http://www.azbigtrains.org)



Railfair, McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park, 2024

Photo by Don Sorenson

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# THE ABTO GAZETTE

## President's Message September Gazette



While growing up, this Labor Day weekend was the end of our three month summer vacation from school which is a concept that my grandchildren do not comprehend. We would spend the days out riding our bikes, playing ball and drinking out of the water spigots. Everything has changed from our youth by no drinking out of outdoor city water spigots or playing outside until the street lights came on. That was our unofficial call to dinner. Does this remind you of the Andy Griffith show? It was the life that we all lived and I miss my childhood activities so now we just play with trains.

Our next event will be here in five weeks. It is Railfair at McCormick–Stillman Railroad Park in Scottsdale. This is our biggest module event that we present to the public. In order for our participation to continue, we still need volunteers for set-up, run and tear down. Set-up will be on Friday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 8am. Running will be on Saturday from 10am to 5pm and Sunday from 10am to 3:30pm. Tear down will start at 2pm on Sunday but will maintain running two trains until 3:30pm. It's a great time to run trains and enjoy ABTO comradery with fellow members.

On September 20<sup>th</sup>, we will be having a service meeting at the Ryan House in central Phoenix. We will have a quick meeting and then perform a cleaning of their overhead layout. This is one of the two private corporate layouts that we help maintain as our public outreach. Our other project is the Banner Children's Hospital which is still closed for hospital construction. Please read the article in this Gazette about what is needed for this service project.

As always, please stay safe in this heat and stay well hydrated.

Darrell Woolfolk  
ABTO President  
480-818-1715



# THE ABTO GAZETTE

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## CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSES

**December 13, 14, 20 & 21, 2025**

**4:00pm-8:00pm**

If interested in participating in the Open Houses, please contact ASAP, need to get information completed by Railfair.

**Darrell Woolfolk**

**[dpwoolfolk@yahoo.com](mailto:dpwoolfolk@yahoo.com)**

**Cell-480-818-1715**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

|                        |             |                    |                    |  |
|------------------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|--|
| Sunday,                | Sept.       | 14                 | Noon               | ABTO Board Meeting @ Ginny Morris Residence                            |
| Saturday,              | Sept.       | 20                 | 9:00am             | ABTO Membership Meeting & Track Maintenance at Ryan House, Phoenix, AZ |
| <b>Friday,</b>         | <b>Oct.</b> | <b>3</b>           | <b>8:00am</b>      | <b>SETUP at McCormick-Stillman RR Park, Scottsdale, AZ</b>             |
| <b>Saturday</b>        | <b>Oct.</b> | <b>4</b>           | <b>10am-5pm</b>    | <b>RUNNING trains at McCormick-Stillman RR Park-Railfair</b>           |
| <b>Sunday,</b>         | <b>Oct.</b> | <b>5</b>           | <b>10am-3:30pm</b> | <b>RUNNING trains at McCormick-Stillman RR Park-Railfair</b>           |
| <b>Sunday,</b>         | <b>Oct.</b> | <b>5</b>           | <b>2:00pm</b>      | <b>START TEARDOWN Module but run 2 trains until 3:30pm</b>             |
| Sunday,                | Oct.        | 12                 | Noon               | ABTO Board Meeting @ Ginny Morris Residence                            |
| Saturday,              | Oct.        | 18                 | 5:30pm             | ABTO Membership Meeting @ John & Diane Snider's home                   |
| Sunday,                | Nov.        | 9                  | Noon               | ABTO Board Meeting @ Ginny Morris Residence                            |
| Saturday,              | Nov.        | 15                 | TBA                | ABTO Membership Meeting @ Steve & Judy Lewis's home                    |
| <u>AND ELECTIONS</u>   |             |                    |                    |  |
| Saturday               | Nov.        | 22                 | TBA                | Arizona Train Museum Module Event                                      |
| <b>Saturday,</b>       | <b>Dec.</b> | <b>6</b>           | <b>TBA</b>         | <b>ABTO Christmas Party</b>  |
| <b>Sat. &amp; Sun.</b> | <b>Dec.</b> | <b>13 &amp; 14</b> | <b>4pm-8pm</b>     | <b>ABTO Christmas Open Houses</b>                                      |
| <b>Sat. &amp; Sun.</b> | <b>Dec.</b> | <b>20 &amp; 21</b> | <b>4pm-8pm</b>     | <b>ABTO Christmas Open Houses</b>                                      |

### Welcome New Member

**Les Bolgren**

**1536 E. 21st Avenue**

**Apache Junction, AZ 85119**

**Cell 480-600-6995**

### Change of Address

**Chris Armstrong**

**8915 E. Guadalupe Road #1098**

**Mesa, AZ 85212**

**Cell 480-888-5067**

# THE ABTO GAZETTE

## **ABTO Membership Meeting, August 16, 2025 held at Val Vista Pro Shop**

**1/ Welcome**-Darrell Woolfolk, President opened the meeting at 10:08am.

**2/ New Members/Guests**-Guest Les Bolgren. Joined club after the meeting.

**3/ Grab a sheet**-Darrell passed out blank sheets for members to write how they would repurpose each of 10 items on the table. There were a lot of imagination and ideas for the items. Very interesting.

**4/ Railfair at McCormick-Stillman Park**

**a/ October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>**

**b/ Volunteers**-Darrell mentioned that volunteers are needed for each day. Friday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> Setup starts at 8am. Saturday & Sunday-Run trains 10am-5pm and Sunday-Teardown module-start around 2pm.

**5/ Arizona Railway Museum**

**a/ November 22<sup>nd</sup>-Saturday before Thanksgiving**

**b/ Volunteers**-Darrell mentioned volunteers will be needed for Setup, Run Trains and Teardown module. Darrell also mentioned he will be taking the smaller layout with dioramas and will be a good place to hand out Christmas Open House flyers. Darrell will be talking to Steve Ablonczy asking about the parking situation, advertising the event and what do they expect in attendance.

**6/ Christmas Open House participants**

**a/ December 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>**—Danny Farrow said he would be open for the last year, layout moving up state.

**7/ August Meeting**

**a/ Scrap?**

**b/ Junk?**

**c/ Repurposed of 10 items**-see Item 3 Grab a Sheet

Thanks to Danny Farrow, Vince Simpson, John Snider, Don Sorenson & Darrell Woolfolk for all the work they did prior to the topic presentations and presenting their items and Vince had put out an orange box with free giveaways. Good job to everyone and the members enjoyed all of the different ideas presented.

**8/ Cleanup Room**

**9/ Christmas Dinner-Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>-Mi Amigos Restaurant, Mesa, AZ.**

**9/ Adjourn-11:10am.**

Meeting Minutes submitted by Ginny Morris, Secretary.

### **2025 Membership Meetings-Tentative**

**October 18-John & Diane Snider's Home**

**November 15-Steve & Judy Lewis Home**

**And [ABTO Election](#).**

**December 6-ABTO Dinner**



# THE ABTO GAZETTE



**October 4th & 5th  
10:00am-5:00pm**

McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park  
7301 E. Indian Bend Road  
Scottsdale, AZ 85250

This is an ABTO Module Event

**Setup Module-Friday, October 3rd-8am**

**Running Rains-Saturday-10am-5pm**

**Sunday-10am-3:30pm**

**Teardown Module-Sunday-2pm but will  
maintain running 2 trains until 3:30pm**

Come out and join in the fun and run your  
trains, metal wheels are required.

Helping with setup of modules, run trains  
and teardown is appreciated.

Contact Darrell Woolfolk if interested in  
helping, etc.

[dpwoolfolk@yahoo.com](mailto:dpwoolfolk@yahoo.com)

**SPECIAL NOTE: 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF PARK**

*This year's Railfair is extra special—its being held in  
conjunction with their Golden Jubilee celebrating  
the 50th Anniversary of the park's grand opening.  
One highlight will be the creation of the iconic  
steam engine photo.*

**Check Website: [therailroadpark.com](http://therailroadpark.com)**

**ABTO Membership/Maintenance Meeting  
September 20, 2025**

**Ryan House**

**110 W. Muhammad Ali Way**

**Phoenix, AZ 85013**

**9:00am-Meeting begins**

**Maintenance of track, etc. follows**

Pete Lassen has requested if your planning  
to attend and help with maintenance, can you  
bring glue for repairing buildings, red or green  
scrubby pads to clean track, zip ties, etc. and  
cleaning materials.

**Also, if you plan to bring an 8' ladder (3 or 4  
ladders can be used) and a vacuum is requested,  
please contact Pete @ 602-315-8943**

**Water will be available**

**ABTO Merchandise, WHEELS and Ties For Sale**

*"Also if anyone wants to bring cars to donate,  
that would be cool." Pete Lassen*

## **ABTO 2025 DUES**

Dues: \$35.00

Name Tag: \$12.00

*The 2025 Dues may be paid at Membership Meetings or  
if you prefer to pay by mail (No Cash), mail to:*

Arizona Big Train Operators

P.O. Box 50428

Mesa, AZ 85208

Or contact Darrell Woolfolk 480.818.1715

## **2025 SWAP MEETS & SHOWS**

### **Fall Cactus Swap Meet**

Saturday, September 27, 2025—9am-12pm  
North Phoenix Baptist Church-Fellowship  
Center

5757 North Central Avenue  
Phoenix, AZ 85012

### **Adobe Mountain Desert RailRoad Swap Meet**

Saturday, October 25, 2025-9am-1pm

Adobe Mountain Desert Railroad Park  
22822 N. 43rd Avenue, Phoenix, AZ

Check [ArizonaModelTrains.com](http://ArizonaModelTrains.com) for updates

## ***WHEELS, REPLACEMENT TIES and ABTO Merchandise For Sale***

### **Bachman Wheels-31mm metal wheels-**

*6 cards-\$98.00 case*

**American Ties**-Case of 48--\$48.00

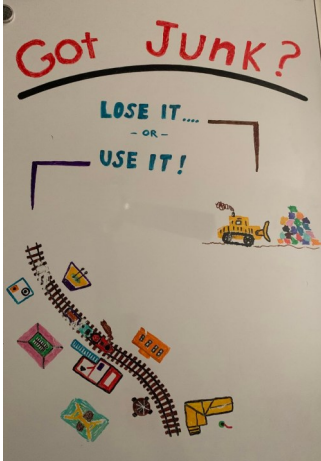
**Euro Ties**-Bundles of 20--\$23.00

**ABTO Merchandise includes hats, t-shirts,  
golf shirts, vests and patches**

## **VESTS ON SALE—\$30.00—ALL SIZES**

Cash, check and credit cards accepted

# THE ABTO GAZETTE





Arizona Big Train Operators  
1633 E. Lakeside Drive  
Unit 1  
Gilbert, AZ 85234

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## ARIZONA BIG TRAIN OPERATORS



### OBJECTIVES

Membership in Arizona Big Train Operators (ABTO) is open to anyone with an interest in gardening and the creation & operation of large scale railways. At our meetings, items of mutual interest associated with the hobby are discussed and demonstrated.

Meetings are typically held at member's homes, where they have the opportunity to showcase their railway creations. General meetings are usually held on the third Saturday of the month.

### ABTO BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings will be held on Sunday prior to the general meeting of each 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 MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The renewal fee is \$35.00 per year. This entitles you to attend all meetings and events and to receive the monthly newsletter. Each name badge will be an additional \$12.00.

Members are encouraged to contribute articles, letters, illustrations and/or photographs related to garden railroading for inclusion in the newsletter and/or posting on the club website

Members who have hobby-related items for sale or trade may submit an advertisement for publication and/or posting at no charge. Please limit each ad to a maximum of four lines. Accompanying photos will be considered for publication as space allows.