



# Train Collectors Association Western Division Newsletter

Vol. 71, No. 2

March, 2025

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"The 1st and Oldest Division"

"Celebrating 71 Years"

## Arcadia Community Center

365 Campus Dr., Arcadia, CA, 91007  
(at Huntington Drive)

9 am - Setup crew

10 am - 2 pm - Attendees



*This year's Grand Prize set includes LIONEL 2367 Diesels and 3 aluminum passenger cars. (See details at right.)*

## Upcoming Meets:

**March 29** (5th Saturday) Theme:  
Trolleys, Interurbans or Motorized Units.

**April 26** - (4th Saturday) Joint Meet with TTOS SP Division. Theme:  
Southern Pacific or Western Pacific.

**May 24** (4th Saturday) Theme:  
Antique and foreign trains.

**Aug. 23** (4th Sat.) Theme: Home-made or "kit-bashed" trains.

**Oct. 18** (3rd Sat.) Operating cars & action accessories.

**Dec. 20** (3rd Sat.) Favorite trains.

## Broguiere's Flatcars with DIVCO Milk Vans For Sale!



Purchase them at our local Western Division meets (no shipping fee) or visit [www.tcawestern.org](http://www.tcawestern.org) to order.



Extra DIVCO vans (boxed) are available!



—Steve Waller photo

## Upcoming Meets: Stop, Look & Hasten!

**Jeff Meyer reminds us about the upcoming meets in March, April & May, including the April 26th Joint Meet with TTOS-SP in the TCA Western facility at the Arcadia Community Center!**

The next few months will feature three big TCA Western Division meets, starting with our March 29 train meet. (Display theme: Trolleys, Interurbans or Motorized Units.) *Don't miss the fun!*

Join TCA Western Division now and get benefits all year long. Buy your \$20 tickets for the Opportunity Drawing and attend every one of our meets during the year to increase your chances of winning the \$100 drawing & ultimately the LIONEL Wabash set (No. 2244W from 1955, with upgraded dome car) in December. You need not be present to win the 2244W, but you must buy your tickets in advance.

The meet doors open at 9:00 am for setup, and we officially begin at 10:00 am, typically ending around 2:00 pm; free parking is in front. We'll have our train repairman here to look at your ailing toy trains.

There is no charge for sellers to use our trading tables, but you must be a member in good standing of the Train Collectors Association in order to sell. Reserve a trading table by sending an email to [info@tcawestern.org](mailto:info@tcawestern.org).

The big news is that we will be having a **Joint Meet** with TTOS Southern Pacific Division on April 26th. *This is one meet you won't want to miss!* The following month, our May 24th gathering will be the last local meet prior to the 71st TCA National Convention in Jacksonville, FL (see p.4), which runs from June 21 to June 28, 2025.

Hope to see you soon!

*- Jeff Meyer*



# TCA Western Division's First Meet of the New Year!

Photos by club photographer Roger Hill

On Saturday January 25th, 2025, the famed **LIONEL LION** joined Western Division member Stephen J. Waller to cut the cake celebrating TCA Western Division's 71st Anniversary year. (It also happened to be Steve's 71st birthday, as well.) Everyone who enjoyed a slice of the sinfully rich chocolate mousse cake said it was *delicious!* The theme of the January meet was **"New Trains for the New Year."** That might include brand-new trains or trains that were "new to you." *Please join us for all the fun at our next meet on March 29, 2025!*



*"Anyone for cake?"*



**Harold Shapiro** holds his LIONEL No. 6475 vat car, one of four unique cars in set No. 19263, which was available in 1963. The promotional set could be bought for \$10.95, with 4 labels from Libby's canned goods.



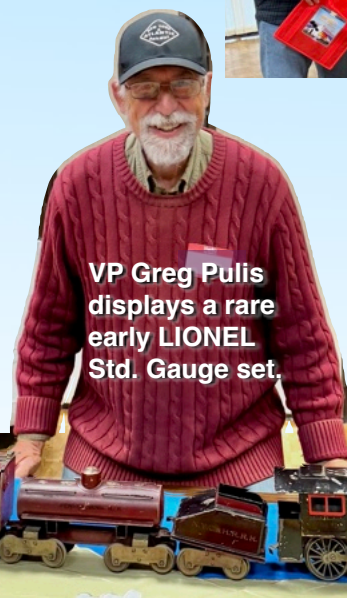
*Ed Vanderpool at the Repair Desk.*



*The winners at our January Meet.*



**Jon M. Lang,**  
TCA Western  
Division  
President



**VP Greg Pulis**  
displays a rare  
early LIONEL  
Std. Gauge set.



*Plenty of trains for sale!*



# Southern California Wildfires Impact TCA Members

- by Steve Waller, TCA Western Division (TCA# 83-20279)



**Fire approaches** Roger Hill's home on the evening of January 7, 2025 at 7:06 pm. Roger was able to escape, but his home was lost to the flames.

—Roger Hill photos © 2025

**T**he Eaton Fire was a highly destructive Los Angeles County wildfire, which began on January 7, 2025, at 6:18 p.m. in Eaton Canyon, which adjoins the cities of Altadena and Pasadena, California. The flames were driven by powerful Santa Ana winds blowing south into the foothill communities. The blaze killed seventeen people and destroyed more than 9,000 buildings, becoming the second most destructive wildfire in California history. The cause of the fire is currently under investigation.



A chimney is all that remains of Roger Hill's Altadena home.

At least two members of TCA Western Division, Roger Hill and Bill Brown, suffered heavy losses, when both of their houses were destroyed by the fires.

TCA Western Division club photographer Roger Hill (TCA #13-68712) lost his home and garage along with the contents. His collection of prewar American Flyer "O" gauge and HO postwar trains were destroyed.



Roger Hill's "O" gauge tinplate couldn't resist the high temperatures of the wildfire.

In addition to his residence, Bill Brown (TCA #79-14283) sadly lost the Jerry Brown collection to the fire, consisting of his late father's family-built Standard Gauge streamliners, which were originally produced in very low numbers more than 40 years ago. Bill Brown displayed a selection of these streamliners at the TCA National Convention in Burbank, CA, in August, 2021. (See photo below.) For more information on Jerry Brown's trains, visit <https://tcawestern.org/brown.htm>.



Some of Jerry Brown's Standard Gauge streamliners were displayed at the 2021 TCA National Convention. All were lost in the Eaton fire.

After the death of TCA Western Division member John Parker (TCA #CM-143) in 2018, Cathy Brown (John Parker's daughter and Bill Brown's wife) brought John's toy train collection to Altadena, prior to the wildfires. Unfortunately, both the John Parker and Jerry Brown collections were total losses, along with the trains that Bill Brown had collected. To learn more about the manufacture of Jerry Brown's trains, read Arno Baars' book "Not Your Daddy's Standard Gauge" (see below).



The Jerry Brown-built M-10005 streamliner in Standard Gauge was also destroyed in the fire.

Bill asks that club members who become aware of any Jerry Brown standard gauge equipment for sale to please let him know. The family would like to acquire items that are similar to what was lost. Please email: [browntrain@sbcglobal.net](mailto:browntrain@sbcglobal.net).

Our hearts go out to Cathy & Bill Brown and Roger Hill on the loss of their homes and toy train collections.



# TCA Western President's Message: Jon M. Lang



President  
Jon M. Lang

**T**he new year 2025 began with the tragic Los Angeles wildfires. Our TCA Western Division photographer Roger Hill and 45-year member Bill Brown lost their homes to the Eaton fire. Our hearts go out them and any other TCA members who suffered a loss in this tragedy. (Please see page 3.)

I hope you'll plan to join us on March 29, 2025 for our second big meet of the year. We'll have a large train layout, trains for sale, the train repair desk and a refreshments stand, along with our exciting Opportunity Drawings. The theme for our Show & Tell on March 29th will be Trolleys, Interurbans and Motorized Units. *Bring something to share!*

We are going to meet the next 3 months in a row: March 29 (5th Saturday), April 26 (4th Saturday), which is a Joint Meet with TTOS Southern Pacific Division, and May 24 (4th Saturday). In June, we will be dark, in honor of the 2025 TCA National Convention in Jacksonville, Florida. For more information, please visit the national website at [www.tcatrains.org/](http://www.tcatrains.org/).



The Western Division Board of Directors has chosen the Grand Prize for 2025. It's the LIONEL 2244W passenger set from 1955 featuring a Wabash 2367 F3 "O" gauge, twin-motored locomotive, plus a matching 2367C trailer unit. It comes with a baggage car, dome & observation.



TCA Western's  
2025 Grand Prize  
was shown at the  
Holiday Meet.

Buy your tickets early & often to increase your chances to win a \$100 bill at every meet. You must be a member in good standing to enter and be present to win the cash prize. Tickets are priced at just \$20 this year. The Grand Prize will be awarded on December 20, 2025. (You need not be present to win the train.)

**Please renew** your TCA Western Division membership, if you haven't already. We need your support! If you don't have your red badge yet, it's time to fill out the form attached or on our [website](http://www.tcatrains.org/).

*- Jon M. Lang*

**Bob Caplan's** collection of **LIONEL TRAINS** is being auctioned online by Steve Harris Toy Train Auctions of Reno, Nevada. Harris' next two-day auction is on Friday & Saturday, March 28th & March 29th, starting at 8am on both days. The auction will include pre-war & post-war trains.

If you pre-register, you can put in your bids early and even update them as the auction progresses. Besides the lots that come from Bob Caplan's collection, there will be items from other toy train collections as well. To register and log in, please visit <https://bid.harristoytrainauctions.com/>.



The Train Collectors Association – Western Division Newsletter is published quarterly by TCA Western Division. Submissions may be sent to [info@tcawestern.org](mailto:info@tcawestern.org). Deadline is the 1st day of the publication month. TCA Western logo art by Ward Kimball. ©2025 by TCA Western Division.

## **TCA Western Division Officers:**

**Jon Lang** - TCA Western Division President  
**Greg Pulis** - TCA Western Division Vice-President  
**Harold Shapiro** - Membership Secretary/Treasurer/  
Webmaster/Past President  
**Tom Watson** - Recording Secretary/Past President

**Receive free club communications via email:**  
visit- <http://www.tcawestern.org/archives.htm> and fill in the form in the middle of the page.

## **TCA Western Division Directors:**

**Bob Caplan** - Immediate Past President  
**Rudy Felix** - Director at Large/Hot Brews  
**Roger Hill** - Director at Large/Club Photographer  
**Larry Pearson** - Director at Large/Repair Clinic  
**Steve Waller** - Newsletter Editor/Past President



## **TCA Western Division Volunteers:**

**Steve Eastman** - Layout Manager/Past President  
**Denyse & Jeff Meyer** - Layout Managers

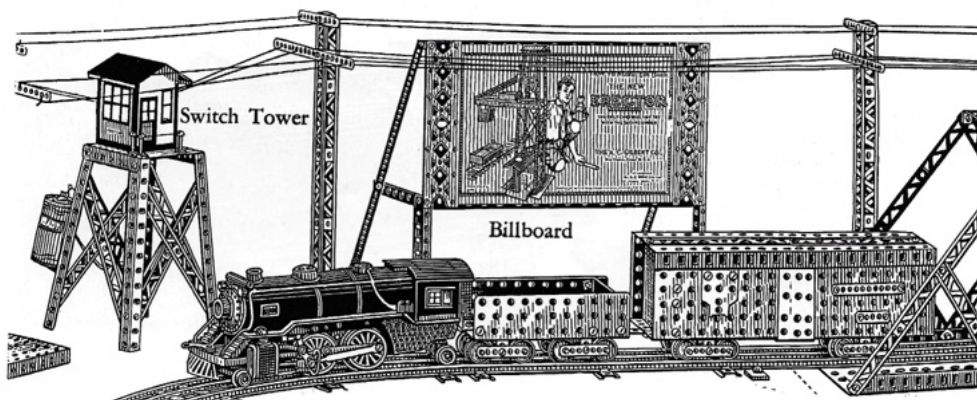
## **Join TCA National & TCA Western Division:**

Visit <http://www.tcawestern.org/membership.htm> & click on the "Adobe" forms in the first paragraph. (Search for the word "Adobe.") *Print out & mail, or join at the next meet!*



# Building Your Toy Train Layout with Erector Sets

—by **Harold Shapiro**, TCA Western Division (TCA # 93-37120)



**W**hile the majority of us in TCA focus on collecting toy trains and many of us actually have operating layouts where we run the trains we collect, there are several other hobbies that tie in closely to ours. One being the collecting of building and construction toys and sets that were popular in our youth, like the famous Erector sets made by the A.C. Gilbert Co.

In the 1930's & 40's Gilbert actually issued Erector Sets that also contained his famous American Flyer electric trains as well! Many Gilbert train accessories featured actual Erector Set pieces in their construction. (Please see photo at right of the American Flyer Macy's Trestle.)

This blending of hobbies also brings to mind some clever ways that Erector Set parts can be utilized to build out and add on to model train layouts. The steel girders utilized in Erector sets look very much like girders and beams that you would find in any railroad trestle, lift bridge, semaphore, overhead gantry signal, water tower, coal or grain elevator, yard light tower, station platform or dispatch tower.

Many train layouts also feature circuses and carnivals. Erector offered sets that featured the parts to build motor driven Ferris wheels, Merry-Go-Rounds, the Tilt-A-Whirl and even an operating Parachute drop tower ride! Take a look at the accompanying pictures to get some ideas - all of these structures, trackside accessories and even trains, were built using Erector construction set parts.

American Flyer

Macy's Trestle



Western Division is in the process of liquidating a large collection of Erector Sets and parts from both the post-war era and the pre-war era. If you are interested in acquiring a set or any parts for purposes to build out your operating layout, to display on your bookshelves, or just to have some fun using your hands to create metal objects, please send an email to: [info@tcawestern.org](mailto:info@tcawestern.org)

## Models Built with No. 10½ Erector

