

The New Desert Dispatch

Timetable

ARHS

Tempe Museum
Work Sessions

Monday & Wednesday

9:00am 4:00pm

Tempe Museum

2530 S. Rural Rd.

Tempe, AZ

Events 2025

The Hobbyist

Model Train Show

Saturday April 5, 7am

1764 W. Broadway Rd.

Mesa, AZ

ARHS Annual Picnic

Saturday April 5,

12 to 2pm

Tempe Museum

2530 S. Rural Rd.

Tempe, AZ

ARHS Swap Meet

Everything Trains

Saturday May 10, 2025,

9am-1pm

Glendale Christian
Church

9661 N 59th Ave.

Glendale, AZ 85302



From the President's Desk

By Craig Faris, President ARHS

Hello ARHS, and welcome to our first newsletter, since moving to our new home.

I cannot describe to you how proud I am to be associated with such a great group of guys. Since most of us lived through the events, of the previous year, you know what has happened. For historical reference, I am going to give a brief accounting of what has transpired.

Fortunately we were able to secure a permanent home, after leaving the Capitol. While building renovations were underway in Tempe, a few of us stayed on to dismantle the layout downtown. I am still blown away with the amount of work accomplished by the guys working on renovations. During this time, Jesse started to develop the track plans for the new layout. He held design meetings weekly, for approximately 30 weeks. Jess was able to enlist several outside experts, NMRA members with layout and operations design expertise, to ensure that our layout was the best it could be. We also reached out to the City of Tempe Museum for their assistance with the design of the Tempe portion of the space.

Continued on page 2

*ARHS Officers**2023-2025*

*President - Craig Faris
 Vice President - Ken Nelson
 Secretary - Dave Brown
 Treasurer - Dan Kubarych
 Director - Dennis Ranke
 Director - Dewayne Koltin
 Past Presidents - Don
 Stewart, Jesse Poole*

*The New Desert Dispatch is
 a publication of the Arizona
 Railroad Historical Society.
 Views expressed by guest
 authors are their own and do
 not reflect the opinions or
 positions of the ARHS.
 Editor - Dennis Ranke
 Dranke@aol.com*

Mission Statement

*The Arizona Railroad
 Historical Society strives to
 create a world class railroad
 experience which includes
 history, education and
 railroad operations centered
 around the state of Arizona.*

Arizona Railroad Historical Society



Continued from page 1

John Mick has taken Jess' design, and is developing the electrical schematic. John Clark has been doing the bench mill work at home, and bringing it to Tempe for assembling. Making the benchwork fairly easy to install, Thanks John for doing the hard work.

The layout is currently under construction, and is progressing, at a much faster pace, than I anticipated. Everyone is involved with their area of interest. Don is laying track, as well as building turnouts. Ray is installing switch machines. Ken is painting as well as building some very impressive models of buildings for the Grand Canyon. Ray, Al, Bill C, and Bob G have been involved with numerous projects on the layout, and with issues connected to our building. Dee has been very active as our quartermaster (need to find anything? Look for Dee), as well as constructing Tempe, with Al's help, and a few others. Dennis has started working on the design for Flagstaff, which will be coming soon. Dan has been researching the new JMRI version, that will hit soon. Can't wait to see what it will do for us. He has also been very busy keeping our finances straight. Thank you, Dan!! Brian S has been around but still has to work for a living. We do appreciate it when he can be there. After a lengthy recuperation, Dave Brown is back!! Welcome back, Dave. Nice to have our secretary return.

We have attracted several new members, since moving to Tempe: Bob Gibbs, John Diezel, Clyde Hanselman, with prospective members: Jim Paulson, Bill Ryan, David Smith, and Richard Lee.

In October, we lost our tenants. We were sorry to see them go; however, their departure made it necessary to renovate the rental space. Our group, once again, stepped up, and we were able to complete renovations in about a month. The

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

space is currently listed for lease. We have had a few nibbles, but no contracts yet. More updates to come. After the weather cooled off, we started to have lunch on the patio. Bob Gibbs has taken the lead on planning a meal on the second and fourth Mondays of the month. We have had a few out-of-town guests during these lunches, and they cannot believe how much we enjoy each other's company. Just another example of our camaraderie.

Once again, I cannot begin to tell each of you, how proud I am to be a part of this group. I believe we have the best group of guys in any AZ Club or Society!! I am sure, we have the highest level of participation of any group.

DEE GETS THE SPIKE



Dee Kolton receives his GOLDEN SPIKE AWARD from ARHS President Craig Faris

ARHS Member #CM7, Dee Kolton, earned his Golden Spike Award in 2024. Dee says he has gained extensive experience building various layouts at home, over the years. He applied his knowledge to construct the City of Tempe, at our former club layout in Phoenix. That qualified him for the award. Here's how you can get started in the NMRA Golden Spike Award. Most home layouts, meet at least some, if not all of the things required for this prestigious award. The modeler needs to: lay and ballast track; wire it so it works; build cars and perhaps a locomotive;

build some structures and scenery. Commercial components are fine for the track and wiring, and kits are okay for the cars, locomotives, and structures. Upon completing these requirements and having the work evaluated by two or three fellow NMRA members, the member can apply for the Golden Spike Award.

For complete details and a application form go to:

<https://www.nmra.org/education/achievement-program>



Ken Nelson remodeling the new train room



Dave, Bill and Don laying track in Tempe.



The beginning of a new tradition. The every other Monday lunch cookout.



Don Stewart doing some precision soldering in the staging yard.

News from the NMRA PSR Arizona Division Spring Meet

The Pacific Southwest Region, Arizona Division spring meet was held on Saturday March 29, at the Elle Town Flowing Wells Community Center in Tucson, AZ. The business meeting started at 10 am with a welcoming speech from Superintendent Paul Burke. Chief Clerk and Paymaster, John Mick, Gave the Treasurer's Report. The AZ Div. Is in good shape, but the Div. has been losing money on the Division meets. It will be necessary to charge a \$10. fee for the event. Paul concluded the morning session with New Business.



Dennis Ranke won the First Place ribbon for his entry in the Tucson NMRA PSR Division meet Model Competition under the LEVITY Category. Dennis was heard saying "I would have rather had second place, but I was the only one that enter."

The first workshop, John Allen's Timesaver Puzzle was conducted by Rick Watson. He gave a brief history of the timesaver, created by John Allen, to entertain guests between operating sessions on his Gorre & Daphited RR. in Monterey, CA. The audience learned how Rick operates his puzzle. There was a demonstration on a full size HO puzzle. Rick challenged the group to compete for prizes during lunch time.

Next up, was Tom Fava and his famous Trivia Quiz. The Winners received a door prize ticket. The subject was, the first train robbery in US history. The Reno Brothers, John and Simeon made off with \$13,000. on October 6, 1866. They stopped a moving train, owned by the Ohio & Mississippi RR. The robbery took place in broad daylight, in Jackson County, Indiana.

The group broke for lunch at noon. A variety of submarine sandwiches were provided. The sandwiches were served with your choice of chips, sodas, water., and chocolate chip cookies.

After lunch, Richard Dick presented the history of some interesting and now defunct railroads in Southern Arizona. He accompanied his lecture with a fine set of vintage photo slides. This was followed by a disappointing presentation from ALL ABOARD AMERICA. What we had hoped was going to be an update on The Phoenix to Tucson Passenger Route, turned into a discussion on the evils of politics.

The afternoon was rounded out by awards, for achievement and contests. The contest was seriously lacking in entries. I would encourage NMRA members to bring their models for display, merit, or achievement judging. The meeting concluded at 3 PM. There were 4 open houses to visit afterward: operated by Richard Feldman, Paul Chandler, Jack Debolt and Gordon Geiger.

Laying Track on the ARHS Layout by Don Stewart

Here are the Construction Steps for Building a Model Railroad:

- 1. Design**
 - a. Era
 - b. Type (industrial, Logging, mainline, Coal, etc.)
 - c. Track (main lines, yards, sidings)
 - d. Electrical (DC, DCC, blocks, lighting)
 - e. Industries (era, type, kit, scratch, built-up)
 - f. Equipment (locomotives, rolling stock)
- 2. Benchwork**
 - a. Basic support (legs, main structure)
 - b. Trackbed
 - c. Terrain
- 3. Track work**
 - a. Roadbed
 - b. Flex-track, sectional, hand-laid
 - c. Securing track and roadbed
 - d. Painting the rails
- 4. Electrical**
 - a. Soldering
 - b. Connections
- 5. Scenery**
 - a. Roadbed
 - b. Mountains
 - c. Water

We will discuss step 3, Track work.

Step 3 Track work

For this work, code 83 flex track will be used with cork roadbed.

First, lay out the track alignment. To do this, mark the track centerline on the layout with a marking pen. Use a straightedge and compass tool to mark the centerline accurately. Make a transition from straight to curve sections. This will be a larger radius curve leading to the final radius. Draw this in by hand, as in Figure 1.



Figure 1. The track lines are drawn on the layout base (insulation foam) using a straightedge and the curve templates. Remember to allow lead-ins from the straights to the curves on both ends of the curves.

Next, install the cork roadbed. To do this, separate the sections of cork roadbed. You will need to sand the rough edge on the top of one side of the roadbed. Then, use caulk or a cement for projects to run a bead on either side of the marked centerline. Level this out to a thin layer using a scrap piece of roadbed or a piece of cardboard. Lay one side of the cork roadbed with the vertical edge on the line drawn earlier. Use track pins to hold the cork in place. It is best to align the outside of curves first. Then place the other side of the cork to butt up to the side already laid, as in Figure 2. Use weights to keep the cork firmly pressed to the base. When dry, remove the weights and track pins and sand the surface level.



Figure 2. Lay the cork with the inside of the cork along the centerline drawn earlier.

Install the track. Prepare the track by first filing the top and inside of each rail at the ends, with a fine file to remove any burrs. This may need to be done to the bottom of the rail also. This is one of the keys to preventing derailments. See Figure 3.

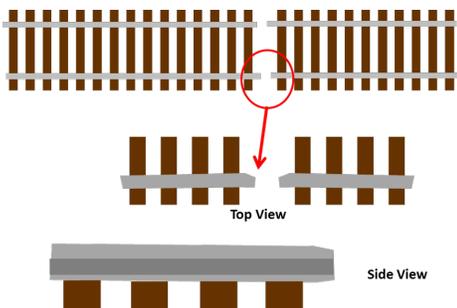


Figure 3. File the ends of the track to remove burrs and prevent derailments.

Connect two sections of flex track together using rail joiners of the appropriate size. Soldering the joints together is recommended before bending them into a curve (see Figure 4). When soldering the rails, install the joiners and solder only to the outside of the rails to prevent filling in the inside flange way. Note: the rail will need to be cut with a rail nipper on the inside, as the track is shorter on the inside of a curve. Again, file the end of the rail to remove burrs. Rail does not need to be soldered on straight.

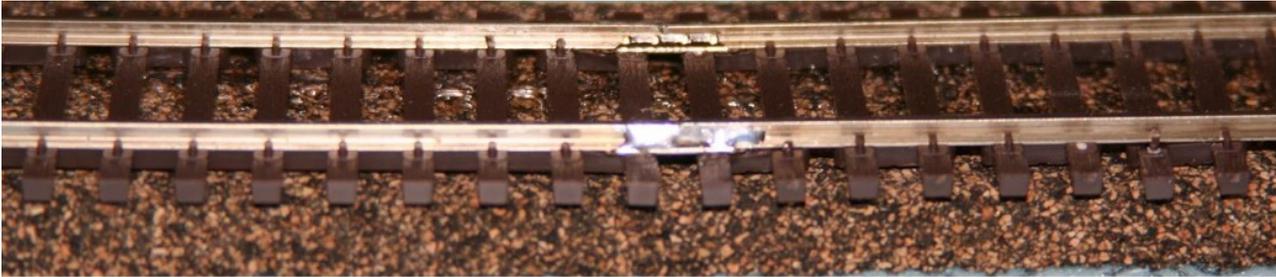


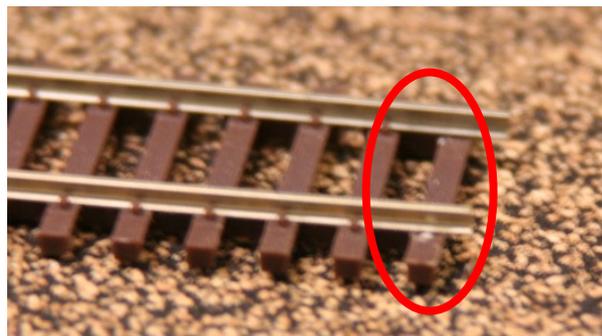
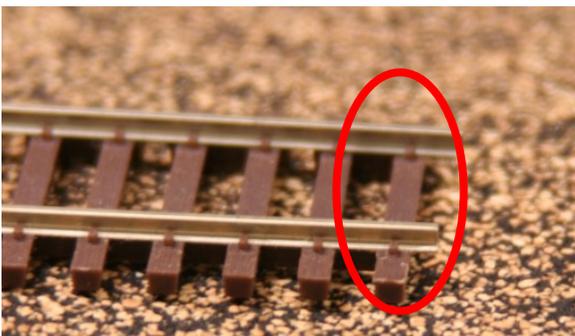
Figure 4. Solder the rails together before bending them in a curve. This prevents kinks.

Apply a bead of contact cement or caulk to the top center of the cork roadbed. Flatten the adhesive to form a thin film and lay the flex track on the adhesive. Pin it in place to keep the track aligned with the roadbed. Keep it as level and smooth as possible. Allow the track to transition into and out of curves. The track will seek the easiest curve and transitions along the centerline. Use jigs (available from Ribbon Rail) to keep track aligned, if needed, as in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Use track alignment guides to keep track straight or at the proper curve.

When connecting the flex track together you will need to trim the simulated rail spikes from the track. See Figure 6 for a before and after view of the trimmed spike heads.



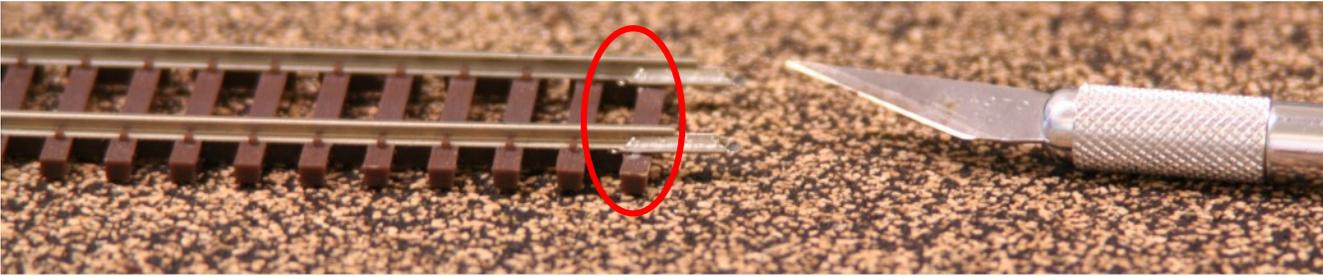


Figure 6. Trim off the spike heads to allow the rail joiners to fit and not miss any ties at the joint area.

Once the adhesive is dry, electrical drops may be installed to the outside of the rail.

After adding the electrical drops, the rail may be painted to match the prototype, usually a dark rust or reddish brown (sidings and spurs) to grimy black (mainline). Clean the tops of the rail with a cloth containing paint thinner or an abrasive track cleaning eraser.

Turnouts are installed the same way. There are a few things to remember. Do not install a turnout at the base or apex of a rise as the points may stick, or not throw at all

STOP THE PRESS !!! Late Breaking News

I was the last one out today, when I was approached by a Tempe Inspection Officer, Lester B. Ascemo. He had inquired about grilling taking place on commercial property. I showed him the patio and our beautiful grill. He asked if we were selling food. I said no, but sometimes we charge a small fee to recoup the buyers costs. CITY VIOLATION! Apparently we need a food handlers card and commercial kitchen license to continue. We will have to comply. He was kind enough, not to issue a citation. Without the proper paperwork though, he will write us up and back date the citation with fines beginning today*

* Smile, it's April Fools' Day !

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR:

I hope you enjoyed the first issue of our new newsletter. I look forward to publishing it 4 times a year at the end of each quarter. If you have any helpful suggestions, please email me at dranke@aol.com

I am always looking for photos and stories. If they are a minimum of 800 words on, Model Railroading, Prototype Railroading, Applicable to Modeling, or NMRA Administration (e.g. Officers or Committee Reports). you can use them for the Author Achievement Award. Thanks,

Dennis H. Ranke, Editor