



Gold Coast Flyer

October, 2020

## Meets

October 10  
Jim & Sylvia Eldridge

October 31  
Georges & Marie  
Arseneault

November 14  
Gary & Marilyn Siegel

Newsletter: John Lyans  
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<https://www.gcgrs.com/>

Facebook: John & Kim  
Whitaker  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/145996342219253/>

## Well, here we are in October.

It's still hot, fires are burning through out the West, we are still under restrictions from Covid, an election is imminent, and the GCGRS is getting restless.

After months of isolation some of us are getting antsy, stir-crazy or just plain bored and we want to get together to run trains. At the meets that I have attended I notice that everyone is wearing masks, no one is sharing food, and folks are maintaining social distancing, (sort of). "Social distancing," there's another new term that we can add to our lexicon along with words and phrases such as "staycation," "Instagram influence r," "unfriend," "paywall", "frenemy", and a whole host of others. My head is spinning.

Working on my railroad is a great way for me to reduce stress. I have made more progress building bridges and mountains in the last six months than I have in the last six years.

I've talked to others who are working at home and starting new projects, some of which are quite ambitious. I have communicated with several good folks who are working together to start a national , or international garden railroad newsletter. I hope most of you have had a chance to look at the sample newsletter that was sent out. I think it looked great.

This from Carla Brietner, the editor of the first issue. *"We envision a FREE e-newsletter that features great content from Garden RR Clubs and their members from the USA, Canada and overseas. The newsletter would also feature news about new products and services, including ads from vendors, giving them an economical way to reach the Garden Railroading community."* The response that I have heard from our members has been very positive. The only concern that a few have expressed is that sharing too much personal information, (like addresses, phone numbers, etc), would compromise home security. These issues will be dealt with. Already, any newsletter that I send to other clubs have addresses and phone numbers deleted.

To me it sounds like a lot of work and I wish the best to those who are organizing this project and I hope it is a huge success!

In the meantime, stay safe. John Lyans

## Siegel Meet

The Siegel's Santa Cruz subdivision is back in operation! Thanks to a crew of workers supervised by Nick Conti, John Ryan, and John and Kim Whitaker, the mainline is back in operation. The track has been repaired, new ballast laid, some of the bridges have been re-painted and some of the not so dwarf Alberta spruce trees have been trimmed. John Ryan has continued work following the meet and has just about finished the five track yard at Santa Cruz. It's great to see this fabulous railroad back in operation. Everyone appreciates the Siegels for hosting our group last week and for all of the many previous meets over the years. Thanks Siegels.





Jim Eldridge has put together this great looking tank car train. He also sent me the following information.

Some went to ALASKA and were returned to Cumbres and Toltec RR, where they are being restored, refurbished and painted GRAMPS.

Narrow frame UTLX tank car trucks were delivered in August of 2010 from the Alder Gulch Railroad. Amazingly they are still lettered with UTLX markings and will be reunited with the UTLX narrow frame tanks which are currently riding on ASF cast trucks (applied by the WP&Y). The two UTLX (Gramps) frameless tank cars currently undergoing restoration at the Friends Antonito CRF will then get the ASF trucks Lafayette M. Hughes was the owner of the oil field between Chama and Pagosa Sprs. The Gramps name came from Lafayette's children wanting to know which oil car belonged to their "Gramps," who was Lafayette's father William E. Hughes.

Gramps Oil never actually owned any of the tank cars carrying their oil over the narrow gauge. Gramps leased a number of the cars of Union Tank Car (UTLX). Numerous reports claim that Lafayette Hughes had them painted "Gramps" so that his grandchildren would know which cars belonged to their grandfather (aka the namesake "Gramps" in Gramps Oil).

"The Gramps tank cars were used to deliver oil from a loading facility in Chama, NM to a refinery at Alamosa, CO via the D&RGW narrow gauge. Both the oil field and small refinery were owned by "Gramps" Lafayette Hughes, hence the lettering specific to cars in this service. They were in use from about 1939 (four years after the discovery of the oil field west of Chama) until 1964 (when the refinery was shut down after being damaged by a fire). There's some information and photos here that may be of interest <http://teamtrack.xooit.com/t530-On3-GRAMPS-Tank-Cars.htm> .

Although the UTLX frameless cars were converted to narrow gauge from standard gauge, they didn't receive the Gramps lettering until they were in narrow gauge service. No cars with this lettering were known to have been used on the standard gauge, and thus wouldn't have been seen on any train in Seattle, at least not in actual use (scrap load maybe?).

The mid-40s sounded pretty early to me, as I had a vague memory they were a postwar thing on the Rio Grande, but I found a pic of a tank car in the full GRAMPS lettering that is dated 1940. So it's possible that some of the Gramps cars were sent to Alaska with the other requisitioned equipment that was shipped north from Colorado during WWII by the Army. This would've been separate and apart for the arrangement that the WP&Y made later in the 1960s to bring more tank cars up to Skagway after the Gramps traffic was discontinued on the Rio Grande in the early 1960s." Jim



Above: Tim Knapton had some of the coolest consists. Tim printed this 3D model of one of the early Robert Stephenson engines. It ran great! Below is his live steam Aristocraft 2-8-2 Mikado. I usually see live steam engines running around an elevated circular track so it was awesome to see a live steamer running across the bridges and through the mountains and tunnels.





Candy for the kids on the Thomas train.



Randy running his train with the B unit forward because of the loss of the balloon loop at Santa Cruz.







John Whitaker repainted several of the bridges including this through truss. I believe this is model was built by Mainline Bridges in Arizona.

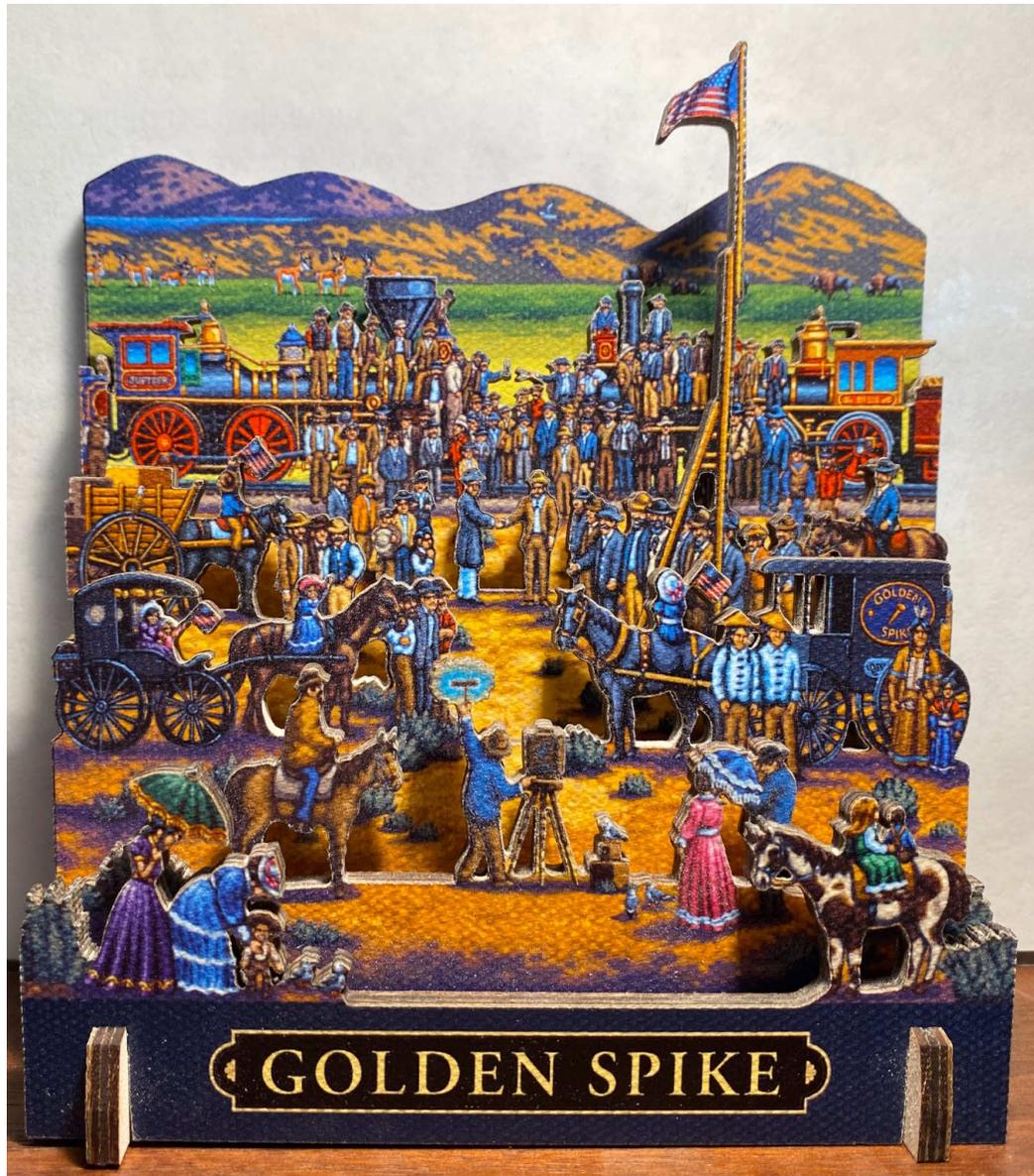




Since the meet, John Ryan has added tracks 4 and 5 next to the fence. Even though the yard is much narrower than it used to be it actually looks better than the old yard. Now someone just needs to figure out a way to turn the engines!

## A Railroad Adventure Golden Spike Site, Promontory, Utah

*John Lyans*



*Whimsical three dimensional puzzle/display by artist Eric Dowdle*

One of the things my wife and I have done since the Covid shut down is watch more streaming TV shows. I have meant to watch the AMC TV series "*Hell on Wheels*" but I had never got around to taking the time to watch the whole series. (Five seasons, fifty-seven episodes). This program tells a story, (but not the story), of the building of the transcontinental railroad. It turned out to be an entertaining drama about mostly fictional characters as they fought and faced all kinds of crises set against the backdrop of the moving city that followed the rail head as the Union Pacific moved westward. I had to struggle to keep my mouth shut about the historical inaccuracies and the cheesy running gear on the one locomotive that was cobbled together to look something like the General of Civil War fame.

So after we finished watching the series we felt like we needed a slap in the face to set our minds straight about the reality vs. the fiction. If you are interested in the history of this great undertaking I recommend reading “*Empire Express*” by David Haward Bain and “*Nothing Like It In The World*” by Stephen Ambrose.

So with nothing better to do, we drove 861 miles to Promontory Point, Utah, the site where the Union Pacific building from Omaha, Nebraska connected with the Central Pacific building from Sacramento, California. This event marked the completion of the first transcontinental railroad. The railroads joined on May 10, 1869. Union Pacific’s number 119 met Central Pacific’s Jupiter in a ceremony where the final golden spike, or as it turns out several golden spikes were driven to complete the first transcon.

The Golden Spike national monument consists of a visitor’s center complete with museum displays, documentary movies and gift shop, (But no golden spike). There are two replica 4-4-0 engines of the 119 and the Jupiter that were built in 1979 by Conner Engineering Laboratories in Costa Mesa, California. The replica engines are accurate to within ¼” of the original engines. They have steel boilers instead of cast iron for safety reasons. Jupiter burns wood for fuel and 119 burns coal. Ward Kimball did the artwork on the engines. They are steamed up daily and they meet nose to nose and the sometimes they actually drive a painted gold spike. There were not that many people at 10:00 in the morning when we visited. I didn’t see many masks except indoors at the visitors center.

This route where the railroads met go over some pretty rough hills and canyons in the desert area north of the Great Salt Lake. This route was used until 1904 when the Lucien Cutoff was built from Ogden, Utah to Lucien, Utah on a causeway across the Great Salt Lake. The new route saved 43 miles and eliminated the steep grades getting to Promontory Summit. The rails were kept in place after the Lucien Cutoff was built as a backup route. Occasionally a train would take the older route but in 1942 the rails were pulled up to recycle the steel for use in World War 2.

The replica steam engines were great but the part of the visit that I enjoyed the most was driving on the old grade. You can drive 7 miles on the old Central Pacific grade on the west side of Promontory and 2 miles on the Union Pacific grade to the east of the summit. As you drive along the grade you can easily see the parallel grade on both sides of the summit. The UP and CP actually passed each other and 250 miles of parallel grade was built from Echo, Utah to Wells, Nevada. The railroads were getting paid by Congress for every mile of roadbed that was built and both railroads were going to fleece the government for all they could get. (That sort of sounds like a familiar story)! Congress finally said enough is enough and mandated that they join the rails at Promontory.

The true story of the hardship, death, accidents, drama, politics and fraud make a far more compelling story than the movie story tells. Railfans will love this place. I highly recommend a visit.

If you watch “*Hell on Wheels*” you need to just enjoy it for the fiction that it mostly is and then make sure that you read the real story.



Central Pacific, Jupiter meets Union Pacific, 119



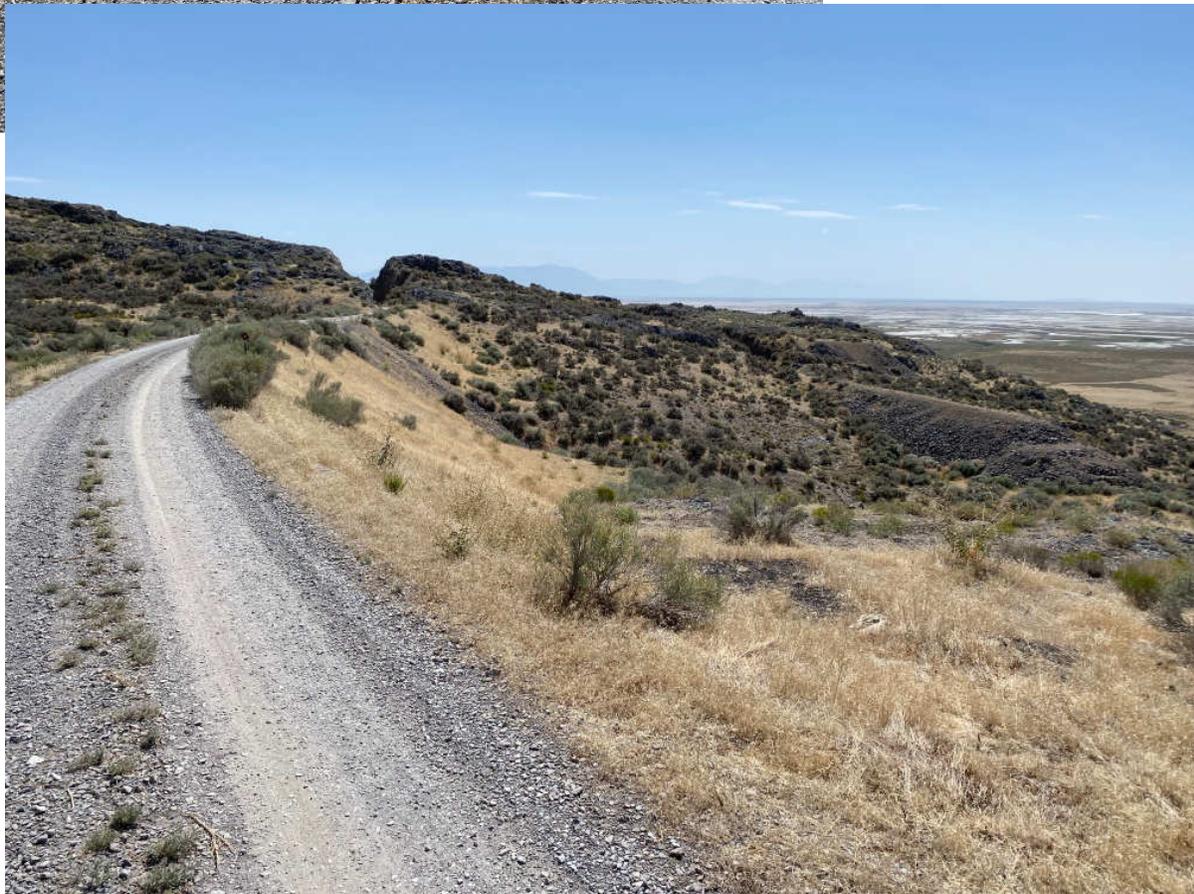


**Conner Engineering did a fabulous job of building the replica 4-4-0s in 1979. The National Park Service maintains them in pristine condition This is the Central Pacific, Jupiter engine.**



**Driving on the original grade.**

**On the picture below we were driving on the Union Pacific grade. You can see Central Pacific grade on the fill to the right. Rails were never laid on the duplicate grades.**





**In the picture above you can see the never used Central Pacific roadbed. Their intent at this spot was to build a trestle**



**A section of track has been re-laid on the original grade at Promontory**



Due to a shortage of motive power, Georges needed to add a couple of new engines to his roster. Fortunately he was able to snag these beautiful LGB models of the Central Pacific “Jupiter” and Union Pacific “119” at Hans’ store in Tehachapi last week. Thank you Georges for this addendum to my story! You can see Georges new models at his meet on October31. Please social distance like the people in the lower picture.



## *Odds and Ends*

Donations: Send \$10 to Bruce Kuebler. Make your checks out to Bruce Kuebler, GCGRS in memo.

Check out our website for more articles and past issues of the newsletters. Thanks to Gary Olmstead, our webmaster. <https://www.gcgrs.com/>

Check out the Facebook page courtesy of Kim Whitaker. Kim posts many pictures from meets. I'm sure you can find yourself in at least one of those pictures! Thanks Kim.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/145996342219253/>

Make sure you sign up for Groups.io if you have not done that yet. Make sure to look at the polls on Groups.io Again, check your email for the invite or request to join by going to <https://groups.io/g/GCGRS> and hit the 'join' button.

Please send me articles, write-ups and pictures about your projects and ideas. It works best for me if you send your articles in Word (doc, docx, etc), Open Office (.odt), Libre Office (.odt), or anything like.. .txt files. If you send me files in a .pdf format make sure they are editable. That makes it much easier to incorporate your articles into the newsletter. Thanks!

Please, everyone stay healthy,

*John Lyans*

*As a reminder, the Gold Coast Garden Railway Society is not a "club" or any other type of formal organization that schedules, organizes or sponsors meets. We are a group of friends that get together to share our garden railroads with each other. Individuals send out a notice via the newsletter, Groups.io or Facebook that they are opening their layout to others in our group and they host and organize their own meet. It is up to each host to follow state or local laws as regards to size and type of gatherings. Stay safe.*

# Gold Coast Garden Railway Society Membership Application



Membership in the Gold Coast Garden Railway Society is open to anyone who is interested in outdoor model railroading.

Dues are \$10 per year per household. Annual Memberships are valid from January through December. NEW memberships submitted after August 1<sup>st</sup> will extend through December of the following year.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

1) First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

2) First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

3) First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

4) First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

(Additional names on back)

Membership, household			\$ 10
Nametags, pin	\$6 ea x	Qty	\$
Nametags, magnet	\$8 ea x	Qty	\$
Shipping			\$ 4
<b>Total submitted</b>			\$ _____

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile/Text \_\_\_\_\_

1) Email \_\_\_\_\_ 2) Email \_\_\_\_\_

Experience with garden railroading: \_\_\_\_\_ planning stage/need help \_\_\_\_\_ under construction  
 \_\_\_\_\_ completed & operational \_\_\_\_\_ schedule meet

Name of your railroad: \_\_\_\_\_

The sharpest curve is \_\_\_\_\_ ft radius. The steepest grade is \_\_\_\_\_%

Please make checks payable and remit to:  
**Bruce Kuebler**  
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 Oak View, CA 93022-9238

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