



The Semaphore

Fox Valley Division • MWR • NMRA

Election Time!

Well, January's over and April seems right around the corner, And in between the dreaded Tax Day and RailFun '06 is our Annual business meeting and elections during the April 23 meeting. The offices up for election this year are Superintendent and Chief Clerk. Think you've got what it takes to step into these shoes? There's still time to call our Assistant Superintendent, Harry Sorenson (hsrcsconsult@juno.com or call him at 847-669-8936). He can put you on the ballot. Before you know it, you may be a part of the group that sends the Fox Valley Division down the right track next year. So, are the Bios of the incumbants:

7) *be an active member of the Midwest Region Board of Directors and participate in the region's activities.*

I have also been an advocate of the division's annual Holiday Party and the Appreciation Dinner. Since the division has the money, I believe it should be spent on activities the membership can enjoy.

Bio for Leif Hansen

I have been a member of the NMRA since 1985 and I would like to contribute a little to keep the Fox Valley Division running as a functional division.

I have a lot of computer experience and I know how to type, two items that I feel are important for a Chief Clerk to have. I have committed the time slot for the various events and I should be able to attend most of the functions as required. So, if you feel that I can do the job for you, please vote for me for Chief Clerk.

There'll still be room on the ballot for those of you who overcome the General Sherman Syndrome ("If nominated I will not run; if elected I will not serve.")

Remember, the meeting starts early - 1:00pm, and there will be pizza!

See you there!

Bio for Rich Sweet

I have been a member of the Fox Valley Division Board of Directors since 1992. During that time, I have held positions of Publications Trainmaster (Semaphore Editor), Chief Clerk, Paymaster and Superintendent. For the last five years, I have been the division Superintendent. I have also taken on the additional responsibility of Ways and Means Trainmaster (High Wheeler Show Manager) for four years.

While I have been Superintendent, I have strived to:

- 1) keep the division solvent,*
- 2) hold activities to keep the division members active,*
- 3) be sure that High Wheeler is profitable,*
- 4) keep our division meetings interesting,*
- 5) promote the hobby of model railroading,*
- 6) maintain a strong division Board of Directors and*

This Month's Clinic

This month, Dave Leider follows up on February's clinic with another clinic on research, "Railroad History: Waupaca, Wisconsin." So come on in and learn the real life back story to Dave's layout.

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Fox Valley Division
Midwest Region - NMRA
P.O. Box 1535
Arlington Heights, IL 60005-1535



This Year's Remaining Events

April 23, 2006

1:00pm, Gary Morava Center
Annual Business Meeting

Clinic – Railroad History:

Waupaca, Wisconsin

Contest– Maintenance-of-way cars

April 28-30, 2006

Midwest Region Convention
Woodfield Hyatt

Details– to be announced

Registration:

www.FoxValleyDivision.org/RailFunRegistration.htm

May 28, 2006

Field Trip – Operating session at Ted Schnepf's "Fox Valley O Scale"

No Contest

This Month's / Last Month's Contest

The April contest is MOW cars. But please, no plastic lawnmowers with bettendorfs (would a cattle car with sheep qualify?).

The February contest had tremendous participation. Over a dozen structures, each one showing tremendous detail. Judging was very difficult, but in the end Dave Leider captured first place:



Don Robinson came in second:



And Herb Renwick got third:



Hints, Tips, and Innovations

Share your expertise with others

*Rick Saviano- Publications /
Membership Trainmaster*

First, I want to assure you that this is more than the bragging of a grandfather - this month's column is being written to show how the mind of at least one Model Railroader operates.

In my "real job" I am constantly on the lookout for a thing called "Scope creep." Scope creep is when a simple task slowly turns more and more complex. Let me explain in hobby terms:

If you were to visit our house this season from December to mid-January, you would have seen the now 14-month-old less

than a foot from the tracks of the simple circle of track we had beneath the tree. While the time my grandson spends with most of his toys needs a stopwatch to be measured, he has spent at least 20 minutes at each of at least 2 sessions a day in front of the train set. (At least that's how it was before I tried to "improve things")

The problem, in my mind anyway, is that it was no more than a simple oval, and I was afraid that he would get bored soon. The wheels also stuck a lot, resulting in an obnoxious plastic-on-plastic squeal. So I first replaced the wheelsets with better spinning ones and re-gauged them to fit the track. When I found a track system safe enough, I added a few turnouts for added variety. The

Share your Expertise!

Send me your virtual Layout tour or tips and tricks

Contact me, Rick Saviano at Saviano@att.net. Be sure to include the words "semaphore" or FVD in the title. I'll include

Clinics Wanted!

We're always in need of good clinics.

Contact Dave Leider and he can set things up for your presentations. (847)253-7484 or sooauthor@netzero.net.

new track system is G gauge, so I had to re-gauge the wheelsets. A few hundred dollars later, I had a nice little layout, replacing the original engine with a radio controlled one. Wait, did I forget to mention that the original trainset cost \$20.00?

Now, the typical story like this would end with the child losing all interest in trains ever since Grampa "ruined" his fun, but I was lucky in that I was smart enough to let him "help" with all the improvements. In the true spirit of "World's Greatest Hobby," sharing the fun of what some may consider the boring details helped instill the love of the model railroading in the child. The bad news: he doesn't run the trains as often as he used to. The good news: he spends much of his time turning over the rolling stock, spinning the wheels and inspecting the underside of the

cars (something he never noticed with the oval set) and running cloth "sandpaper" like he saw Grampa do, to make sure the tracks are smooth. He's even starting to grasp the concept of how turnouts work, even though it still surprises him when he turns the knob and the train goes a different way. Soon, I'll explain to him what the sidings are all about. Has anyone out there tried to make a TimeSaver game out of Playmobil?

Based on this experience, things for the next generation of model railroading look hopeful, as long as no one puts a video game in his hands.

Saviano@att.net

[read over this article again and try to find the Freudian Slip I kept in. I'll give you the answer next month]

RailFun '06

Remember, Rail Fun '06, the Midwest Region Spring 2006 convention, hosted by the DuPage and Fox Valley Divisions, will be at the Hyatt Regency Woodfield in Schaumburg, Illinois on April 28, 29 & 30. The convention registration form was included in earlier month's *Semaphore*, or you can get one through the link from our website. See the article below.

Have You Visited our New Website Yet?

www.Foxvalleydivision.org.

Check it out!

Here are some of the important links you'll find at our website:

>> Midwest Region convention -- **Railfun '06 -- April 28 - 30, 2006 Hyatt Woodfield Hotel**

>> **Railfun '06** registration Form available at: www.foxvalleydivision.org/railfun/registrationform.htm

>> For more **Railfun '06** information go to: <http://www.FoxValleyDivision.org/railfun>

May Layout Visit - Ted Schnepf's

Don't forget to sign up at the April meeting for the operating session at Ted Schnepf's in May. I haven't the results of his remodeling, but I understand he added on to his house just to have something above the new layout. Sign-up sheets and a map to his house will be provided at the April meeting.

Fox Valley Division Board of Directors

Superintendent Richard Sweet Rsweet@pactiv.com	847-550-1399
Assistant Superintendent Harry Sorenson hsrconsult@juno.com	847-669-8936
Chief Clerk Leif Hansen lhansen@d211.org	847-437-7124
Paymaster Tim Kleimeyer kleimeyert@comcast.net	847-426-4732
Webmaster and Public Relations Trainmaster Jim Osborn jlosborn@comcast.net	847-397-4338
Membership and Publications Trainmaster Rick Saviano Saviano@att.net	847-429-0804
Achievements and Contests Trainmaster Donn Branstrator donnandanneb@aol.com	847-381-6183
Clinics & Programs Trainmaster David Leider sooauthor@netzero.net	847-253-7484
Ways and Means Trainmaster Walter Radtke wagx2@email.com	847-255-2977

