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

The Semaphore

Fox Valley Division • MWR • NMRA

Trainfest! November's Meeting

The November meeting of the Fox Valley Division will be our annual trip to Trainfest® in Milwaukee on Sunday the 12th at 10:00am. As usual, we will meet at the Regency Shopping Plaza, where our 47-passenger bus will be waiting for us. We will return between 5:00pm and 6:00pm.

Don't forget to register with our Clinics & Programs Trainmaster, David Leider at 847-253-7484, or sooauthor@aol.com
See you there!

Track Treks (a tour of local layouts)

*Jim Osborn
Public Relations and Website
Trainmaster*

Have Fun on the O&W in Modern Times

Harry Schildkraut's fascination with trains developed during his childhood. With youthful excitement, he often watched the movements of the New York, Ontario & Western railroad as it operated from New York City upward on the southern tier toward Oswego on Lake Ontario. It was these experiences and memories that were the foundation of his current model layout of the prototype NY, O & W -- or "Old Woman" -- or "Old & Weary" as it was frequently called. Every town on the mainline had a whistle stop and milk cans. NY, O & W was a life-line for the communities.

About 20 years ago, Harry built his current house and concurrently planned for his 7th model railroad. Today, an HO scale version of the "O & W" carries its original revenue tariffs of freight, coal, milk and passengers. Unlike the real O & W, Harry's HO operation survived bankruptcy and is making a profit in modern times while sporting contemporary equipment. The towns on this freelance pike are in no prototypical relationship but are simply those that are most prominent in his memories.

The original layout design goals were to follow the "O & W," develop a design that has a lot of industrial switching, use long mainline runs, have no duck-unders, and offer a creative pastime for both Harry and his son Eric. Since then, the layout has undergone multiple revisions - although Harry estimates that about 60% of the original track plan remains intact. Revisions include the addition of staging tracks and yes, one of those pesky, but sometimes necessary, duck-unders (because you can never have enough staging!). He has also found it necessary to relocate a helix and reconfigure the main line to facilitate better operations.

Today, the 45' by 30' layout features a double-deck, wall mounted, open frame design. A helix connects the two levels. The 500 foot code-83 HO scale mainline has mostly #6 and a few #4 Atlas and Shinohara turnouts; tortoise machines on all mainline switches and manual turnout control for all yard tracks and

This Year's Remaining Events

November 12, 2006
10:00am – 5:00pm
– Regency Shopping Plaza
Trip to Trainfest®
No Contest

December 17, 2006
1:30pm, Gary Morava Center
General Meeting

Clinic:
– videos from past High Wheeler shows
– Open Mike Night
 5 minute mini clinics
– Swap Meet
Contest – Diorama's

January 21 2007
1:00pm, Operating session at Ted Schepf's "Fox Valley O Scale"
No Clinic
No Contest

February 18, 2007
9:00am – 5:00pm
Trip to Mad City Train Show
No Clinic
No Contest

March 3-4, 2007
9:00am-5:00pm, Harper College
High Wheeler
No Contest

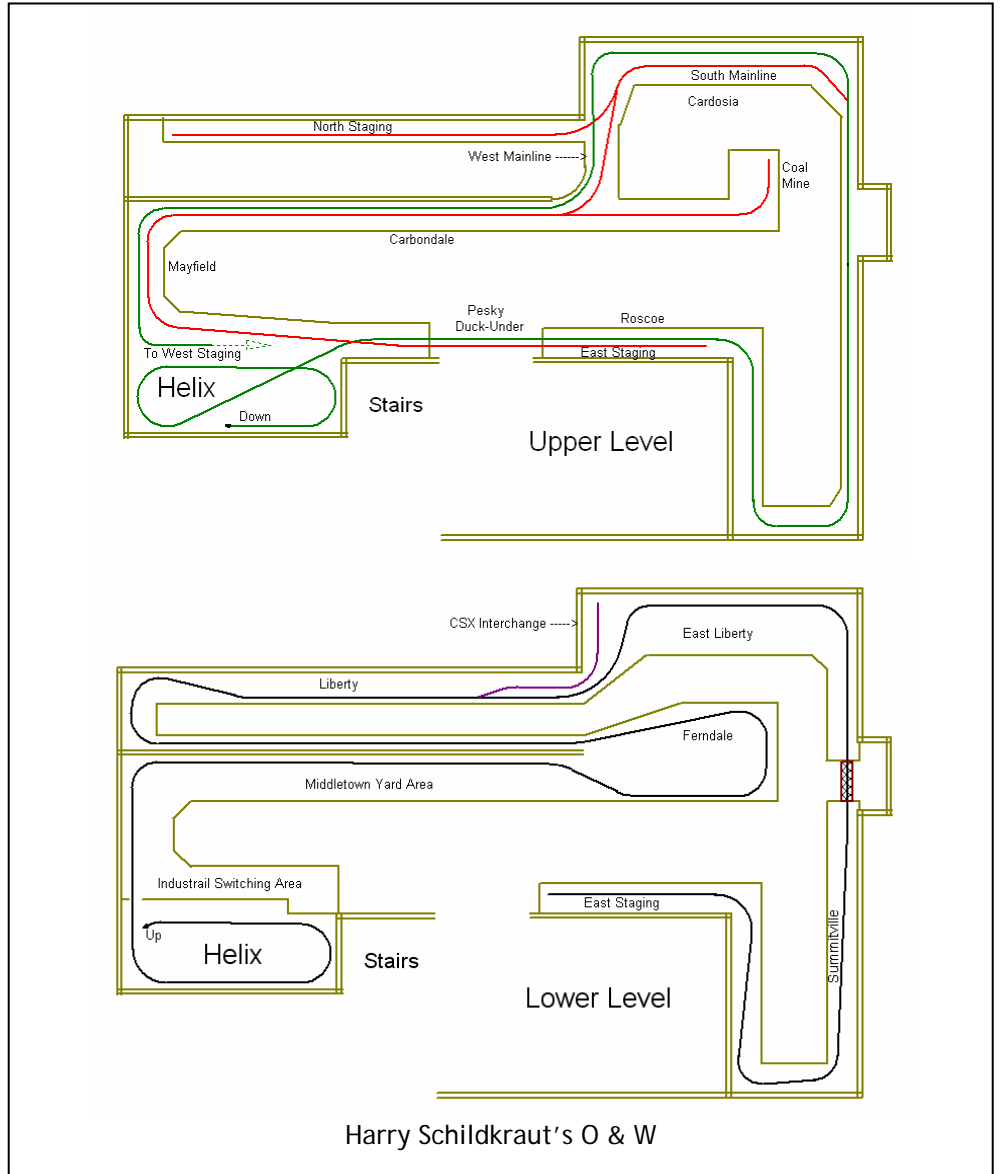
Trainfest

Did you receive a Flyer for Trainfest? Bring it with you to the Regency Shopping Plaza!!!! We'll collect the fliers so we can get all the \$2 off we can. Every bit helps for our field trip!

sidings. The Middletown classification yard and almost all of the industrial switching is within easy reach on the lower deck. Like the O & W, the point-to-point mainline interchanges with several branch lines. Scenery covers about 30% of the pike and consists of hard shell plaster over a wood, cardboard and screen support structure.

Completed scenery exists in the cityscapes of Summitville and East

Liberty as well as on 3 modules that have become integrated in the layout's town of Liberty. Future construction will bring an anthracite coal mine, a power plant, 3 or 4 modern plastic manufacturing sites, a brewery and a bakery. His motive power fleet of 30 + locos is an eclectic collection of both decorated and undecorated diesels ranging from O&W F3 A/B sets all the way through U-boats and contemporary Dash 8-40 Bs. The 600+ revenue cars on the



layout are the usual suspects up to and including modern unit trains. Passenger trains run frequently with the latest light weight equipment. As an early adopter, Harry evolved the layout electrical control from DC to CTC16 to Dynatrol and now to DCC with Digitrax controllers and throttles.

Moving into the operations aspect of the hobby, Harry has hosted three, full blown operating sessions using car cards, manifest and train order operations with a dispatcher. While Harry is quick to point out that the operation is evolving. All-in-all his last session went very well with over 25 plus trains making their runs during the 3 hour session. According to Harry, each session generated some new ideas and improvements - like that crossover linking the Middletown yard tracks directly to the mainline which facilitates more efficient track usage and speedy departures.

A life member of the NMRA and 13 SIGs, Harry's mantra is simple, "Have fun!" All he wants his layout to do is run reliably and look good enough to any operators. He is not a stickler for super details. When



A local is working Libertyville and will soon head toward East Liberty

asked, "What's the most unique and distinctive feature of your layout?" Harry quickly points to his O scale yard limit signs - "So all us old codgers can see them," - but he adds that recent operating run-through rule violations may require them to become G scale sized!! What would he have done differently? "Wider aisles!! They were okay when it was just Eric and he - but now...." Well maybe on layout number 8.

Harry's layout is one to be seen; this short article and associated pictures do not do it justice. Send Harry a note at hschildkraut@myway.com to get the timetable for the next operation session just like I did, then mark up,

Fox Valley Division Board of Directors

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This Year's Remaining Events (continued)

April 15, 2007
1:00pm, Gary Morava Center
Annual Business Meeting
 Clinic – Modeling Sears' Homes
 Contest– weathered rolling stock

May 20, 2007
10:00am, - 5:00pm
Field trip to the East Troy Electric Railway Museum (Tentative)
 No Contest

End of the Line



Our Achievements and Contests Trainmaster, Donn Branstrator, passed away suddenly October 28, 2006.

The obituaries in the Chicago Tribune and the Daily Herald listed his many contributions to various organizations and communities, but a list can't start to describe the quality of his contributions and inspirations. I've only known Donn for a few years, but I think an email I received from Fred Klinger states it best: "I have known Donn, an excellent person and modeler, going back 20 plus years. His loss will be deeply felt by is family as well as the Fox Valley Division. "

Location for General Meetings

General meetings of the Fox Valley Division are held at the Gary Morava Center in Prospect Heights (See map at right).

and get ready to "Have Fun!" If you want to learn more about the real New York, Ontario & Western, visit the historical society at <http://www.nyow.org/>. More layout pictures are also available to view at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Choprail/> under "Harry S" photos, or on the Fox Valley Division website <http://www.foxvalleydivision.org/>

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Hints, Tips, and Innovations

- Rick Saviano

Publications Trainmaster / Membership Trainmaster

Jim did such a good job with *Track Treks* that I only have a little bit of room this month. I received an email asking about the MiTrains and Waybills programs. You can get more information at <http://www.shenware.com/>. And remember, November 10, 2006 is Take a Model Train to Work Day!



Jim Osborn is the FVD Public Relations Train Master and our Webmaster. He hopes to author *Track Treks* as a continuing column featuring local layouts. Contact Jim if you would like your layout profiled in the Track Treks. His contact information is listed on Page 3.



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

