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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

Superintendent's Report

*Richard Sweet
Superintendent*

As most of you should already know, Donn Branstrator passed away suddenly on October 28, 2006. To honor him for his devotion and hard work to the division, the Board of Directors has voted to donate \$100, in his name, to the NMRA's Kalmbach Memorial Library. I knew Donn for a number of years and I will miss him. My deepest sympathy goes out to his wife and family.

On November 12, the division had its November meeting. As is the case in November, we take a bus trip to Trainfest in Milwaukee. This year there were 20 members and friends who took advantage of the free bus ride and free admission to the show. That still left 27 seats that were vacant. Since the division is paying for the bus, I would like to see more members take advantage of the trip. On February 18, 2007, the division is taking a bus trip to Madison, Wisconsin for the Madd City Train Show. If you have never been there, and I haven't, here is another chance for you to take advantage of a free trip. Let's see if we can get more people on this bus.

It's that time of the year again. Highwheeler has been kicked off and the applications have been sent to the exhibitors, vendors, historical societies and museums. Again this year, we need your help. We need volunteers to help set up

Friday night, sell and take tickets on Saturday and Sunday, and help tear down on Sunday night. Remember that you must serve four hours to bring you and a guest to the Appreciation Dinner. If you are interested, please see me.

Our December meeting is back at the Gary Morava Recreation Center on the 17th. The contest for this meeting has been changed. It will be dioramas -- big, small or some place in between; online, offline or no line. Anything goes. This is your chance to get creative. I hope to see lots of entries.

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Define Procrastination

*Walter Radtke
Ways and Means Trainmaster*

How did Shakespeare say it? "To run or not to run; that is the dilemma". Well that is the dilemma here on the West Bend Central this fall. You see it started last spring as the scenery was being created by leaps and bounds, when this 2x2 length of wood got in the way. Upon investigation it was found to be temporary piece until it could be replaced by a bridge. Simple matter, since the bridge having been built all that remained was to install it. But after the removal of the 2x2 it was noted that there was a second 2x2 to be removed. This was a problem, as the second bridge was not built. To the back shops I went [i.e. kit storage

This Year's Remaining Events

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- **Dioramas** (changed!)

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

April 15, 2007
1:00pm, Gary Morava Center
Annual Business Meeting

Clinic - Modeling Sears' Homes
Contest- Rolling Stock

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

shelf] and found a suitable bridge. It was built in record time and it was already for installation in late April. With the clock ticking all scenery efforts were at a stand still during construction period. Then it happened, spring arrived, leaving the West Bend Central with two large gaps in the main line. Nothing could be done until fall. Who works in a hole in the ground [basement] during summer?

Now fall is here and frost to coming, time to retreat to the Railroad down under. There will be no traffic on the WBC this year until the bridges are in. But, should the bridges be installed before or after the scenery in that area is completed? So the question comes back, to run or not to run? Is it better to install the bridges and run, then complete the scenery hanging from the floor rafters, or do the scenery first and then the install the bridges delaying the running of trains? This question has been sent to the Board of Directors, who will probably set up a committee to study the question. That is how you define procrastination.

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Hints, Tips, and Innovations

Rick Saviano
Publications Trainmaster /
Membership Trainmaster

As you may well know, I model in Z (Zed to those who prefer the British pronunciation), with a standard gauge of 6 mm. The scale is 1:220. Until a few weeks ago, I could confidently say I modeled in the smallest commercially available model railroad scale. This is no longer true. For some time now, there has been what

is known as "Japanese Z," or "ZZ," with a scale of 1:300, but that looked more toy-like than model-like, so my claim was still valid. However, one of the Z email groups I belong to announced some startling news: There is now a "T" scale, where the T stands for "TWO," the distance in mm between the rails! They chose T for the same reason "N" chose N (NINE MM between rails). I now quote from an email from Robert Ray:

"Yes, I do want them now, as I love anything miniature, but these look less toy like than the ZZ 1:300 trains.

"I need a set, and if it is really track powered I can hand lay some rail for it, and build all my own structures. Yes I want it now, and if it is real, I just might loose interest in Z, because Z Scale is very very big now! In fact, Z Scale is Horribly Oversized!"

Since we Z-scalers, or maybe I should say "Z-ScalerZ," are known for senses of humor (how else could we put up with the jokes from G- and O-modellers), I felt compelled to ask Robert whether or not his comment was tongue-in-cheek. This was his reply:

I have hand laid code 40 Z Scale track, and it was pretty easy, so I am sure I can do 1:450 track. I also have a laser cutter, so I can make most of what I need for 1:450, so tongue-in-cheek may have been the tone used, but I really would focus on a 1:450 layout if these trains come available.

So now, I am faced with a question that I thought I'd never have to ask

Track Treks

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.

Bring in a friend. Bring home a locomotive.

Sign me up as an NMRA member and enter me in the drawing!

_____ Regular NMRA member: \$36/year, all rights and benefits but no *Scale Rails*

_____ Regular NMRA member: \$48/year, all rights and benefits including *Scale Rails*

Other membership package options are available. Visit www.nmra.org for details.

Mail to:
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 Month Year

From November 1 through January 31, when you get someone to sign up for a new NMRA membership you'll both come out winners! Each month we'll the draw names of three new members. Those new members and the NMRA members who referred them will each win their own Atlas®, Kato®, Bachmann® or Life-Like® loco.

And even if your friend doesn't bag a prize, as a new NMRA member they'll still come out a winner because they'll have all the benefits of the greatest model railroad organization in the world.

So pass along this sign-up form along to a non-member today! Then start polishing those rails.

OFFICIAL RULES: Contest open to U.S. residents only who are either National Model Railroad Association, Inc. (NMRA) members in good standing on November 1, or individuals who haven't been NMRA members for 2 years or more. Properly completed Membership/Entry forms must be received by 1/31/07 to be eligible. Names will be entered in drawing only after new membership has been fully processed. Renewals for existing memberships will not be credited as new memberships. NMRA officers and directors, paid or contracted NMRA employees and their immediate families are not eligible, nor are contest sponsors and business firms contracted by either the NMRA or those sponsors, their employees and their immediate families. Odds of winning random drawings are dependent on the number of eligible entries received. Contest void where prohibited by law. No substitution of prizes. Winners must execute an affidavit of eligibility and release, and agree that their names and/or likenesses may be used for advertising/publicity purposes by the NMRA without further compensation, except where prohibited. By participating, entrants agree to these rules and that the decision of the NMRA President in all matters relating to the contest shall be final. Winners' names may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to: NMRA, 4121 Cromwell Rd., Chattanooga, TN 37421.



Fox Valley Division Board of Directors

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myself: How small is too (or should I say 2) small? All those manufacturers who told me Z was too small to make buildings are either crying or laughing at the prospect, and all you G-gaugers can finally have a working, to-scale G layout in your garden railroad (1:450 multiplies out to about 1:20 for 1:22.5). For me, I think I'll stick to the "horribly oversized" Z - I just don't think a 4' high Sears Tower will be satisfying. And anyway, Robert already figured out the correct weights for Z boxcars for me (8 grams for 40', 10 grams for 50').

In a nutshell, whatever you're comfortable with is the "right" scale!

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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).

Why Do You Get This Newsletter?

You are a member of the National Model Railroad Association. Thank you for joining a group of people interested in and enjoy the Model Railroading hobby. The NMRA is divided into Regions and Divisions. You live in the Midwest Region and the Fox Valley Division.

The Fox Valley Division has around two hundred members and you are one of them. Membership in the Fox Valley Division costs you NOTHING. As a matter of fact, some times we give you things. How can we do that? In March each year, we hold a train show at Harper College in Palatine. The proceeds from the show support our activities throughout the year.

If you are interested in learning more about model railroading you can come to our meetings and sign up for our events. There you will meet and hear from people who want to share their knowledge of the hobby. We meet once a month at the Gary Morava Fieldhouse in Prospect Heights. Each year (our year runs from September through May) the Semaphore is mailed to the entire membership.

Welcome to the Fox Valley Division!



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