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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

January's Meeting - Layout Visit and Operating Session at Ted Schnepf's

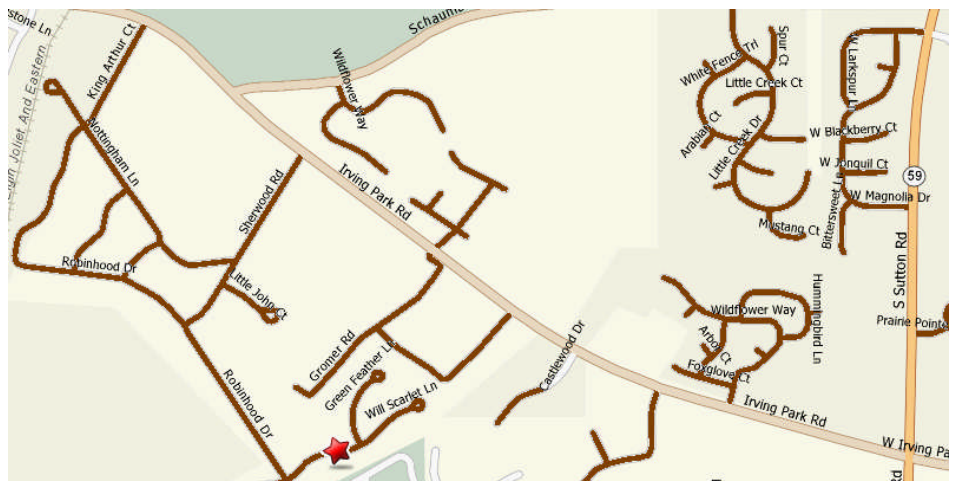
January's meeting will be an abbreviated one, with an operating session immediately following. Ted Schnepf is again opening his basement to us for an operating session on his railroad. As those of you who have attended the last few years know, even the term "basement" is an understatement when talking about Ted's railroad empire. Anyone so dedicated to operations that his 9-1/2' high basement only has 7-1/2' head clearance in order to hold over-the-head staging track and thorough enough to make sure that the session is not too hard and not too easy. Last year was amazing, and we got a glimpse of the newly expanded area. This year promises to be just as enjoyable. For those of you who can't wait, you can see a

preview at <http://users.foxvalley.net/~rajsunl/FoxValley/>. Sign-up sheets and a map to his house were provided at the April meeting.

Reservations are required, so if you didn't get a chance to sign up at the December meeting, you should contact the Clinics & Programs Trainmaster, David Leider (sooauthor@netzero.net), or 847-253-7484). Ted's address is 126 Will Scarlet Lane in Elgin. The map is below.

February's Meeting - Trip to Madd City Train Show

Plan to hop on the bus excursion to the NMRA South Central Wisconsin division's Madd City Train Show. Note: **9:00 am bus departure** for FVD members and guests from the Regency Plaza Shopping Center parking lot located at the northeast corner of Quentin and Euclid roads in



This Year's Remaining Events

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
Food!

May 20, 2007
10:00am, - 5:00pm
Field trip to the East Troy Electric Railway Museum (Tentative)

No Contest

Palatine. The bus will return to the Regency Plaza between 5:00 and 5:30 pm. Bus and Madd City Train Show admission are free to members. Refreshments will be available on the bus. A \$10.00 bus charge plus admission fees will apply to guests of members.

Reservations are required. Contact David Leider at

sooauthor@netzero.net or by telephone at 847-253-7484. The trip replaces our regular February meeting. Due to the addition of our trip to the Madd City Train Show, we will not be having a Holiday Dinner.

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High Wheeler - Volunteers Needed

We had a lot of volunteers for High Wheeler at the December meeting, but Walter still has a few time slots that need to be filled. Since there are no regular meetings before High Wheeler, please contact Walter and help this year's show run smoothly. Walter can be reached at: 847-255-2977 or wagx2@email.com.

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Last Month's Contest

Last month's contest was dioramas, and what we lacked in quantity we made up for in quality.



Walter Radke garnered first place honors with his Peeble's Garden City (thanks to Jim Osborn for this photo, which I cleverly lifted from the Fox Valley Division's website, <http://www.foxvalleydivision.org/>).



Jim Landwwehr captured second place with his picture-perfect bookshelf diorama,



and Leif Hanson rounded out the money winners with his collection

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.

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.

of hillside buildings, which you might remember from his “Hide that Helix” clinic .

Among the non-money winners were . . . well, there were only three entries. I can’t stress enough how much we encourage participation in the contests. Remember, we give cash prizes (checks, really), and the odds of winning are usually pretty good, as Leif, Jim, and Walter can attest. Now, I’m as guilty as the rest this month, and like the rest, I tried to justify not entering by convincing myself that I didn’t have anything to submit. Besides, a Z diorama can easily be smaller than an O scale structure. Maybe next time for my diorama.

But there’s Hope!

The next contest isn’t until April, so there should be plenty of time to fine-tune some of your rolling stock for competition. Let the following photo act as inspiration (or is this better for M.O.W?)



Hints, Tips, and Innovations

Rick Saviano

*Publications Trainmaster /
Membership Trainmaster*

I always look forward to Ted Schnepf’s operating sessions. In fact, I usually get the most done on my layout the week before his sessions. This time I got help from Christmas money and MicroMark: I got car card holders. Sure, I could have made my own, but I also could have just as easily

made a diorama for December’s contest. I felt that my time was better spent laying track and making sure I had six sidings so that putting three of the three-card holders made sense (additional slots for blank cards, uncouplers, and “extras”).

The thing is, we all prioritize our hobby tasks. Some of us are happy with unpainted brass engines and no track, others are all track with no room for scenery. My father had several room-sized N layouts, but only a few went beyond the Pink Foam stage, and only one had more than one block (he was pre-DCC). He had that special myopia that we all need: The ability to see what is yet to be built. Otherwise, we’d all be frustrated at those brown splotches that represent stock yards, train stations, high rises, and refineries.

Embrace the myopia: Do what you enjoy about the hobby, get help where you need it. Rivet counting can wait!

Fox Valley Division Board of Directors

Superintendent Rich Sweet Rsweet@pactiv.com	847-550-1399
Assistant Superintendent Harry Sorenson hrcconsult@juno.com	847-669-8936
Chief Clerk Leif Hansen lhansen@d211.org	847-437-7124
Paymaster Tim Kleimeyer kleimeyert@comcast.net	847-426-4732
Public Relations Trainmaster Jim Osborn jlosborn@comcast.net	815-578-8315
Membership and Publications Trainmaster Rick Saviano saviano@att.net	847-429-0804
Achievements and Contests Trainmaster	
Clinics & Programs Trainmaster David Leider sooauthor@netzero.com	847-253-7484
Ways and Means Trainmaster Walter Radtke wagx2@email.com	847-255-2977

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End of the Line

On December 21, 2006, Frances Karmele passed away. Although not a member of the NMRA, Fran provided an invaluable service to the Fox Valley Division for the past few years, acting as unofficial assistant and mailings supervisor to her son-in-law, the Publications Trainmaster. Fran made sure all the *Semaphores* were addressed, stamped, and sealed. She also acted as proof reader, and always let me know if my column was “interesting” or not, but usually not until after the *Semaphores* were mailed out. She and her sense of humor and timing will be missed.

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 enjoying 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, most 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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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

