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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

## February's Meeting - Trip to Madd City Train Show

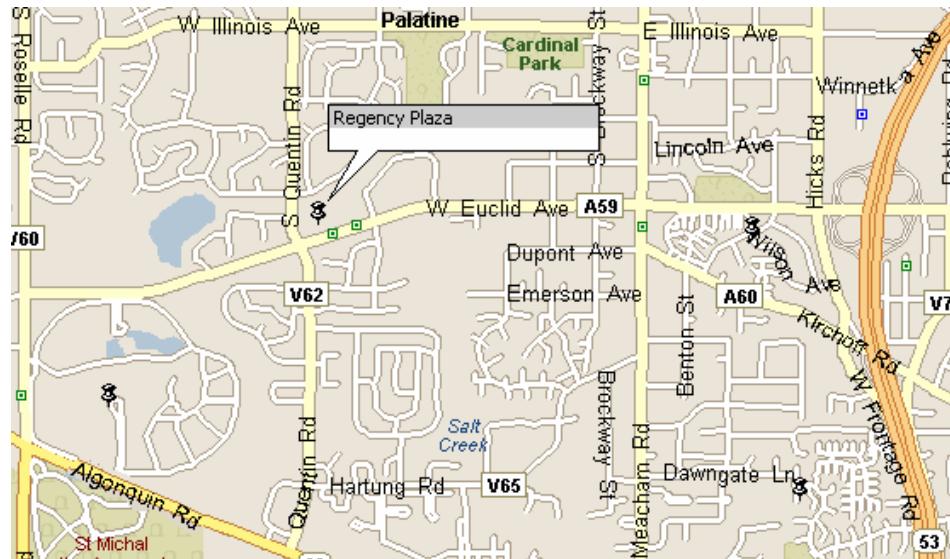
Plan to hop on the bus Feb 18 for our excursion to the NMRA South Central Wisconsin division's Madd City Train Show. Note: 9:00 am bus departure for FVD members and guests from the Regency Plaza Shopping Center parking lot located at the northeast corner of Quentin and Euclid roads in Palatine. The bus 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. Guests of members will have to pay the \$10.00 bus charge plus admission fees. Reservations are required. Contact David Leider ([sooauthor@netzero.net](mailto:sooauthor@netzero.net) or 847-253-7484). Due to the addition of our trip to the Madd City Train Show, we will not be having a Holiday Dinner.

## 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](mailto:wagx2@email.com).

## Last Month's Contest

There was no contest last month, due to the operating session at Ted Schnepp's. There will be no contest this month, due to our trip to Madd City. There will be no contest in March, due to High Wheeler. The next contest isn't until April, so there's plenty of time to fine-tune your rolling stock for that competition.



Regency Shopping Plaza

## This Year's Remaining Events

- 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

### 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](mailto:sooauthor@netzero.net).

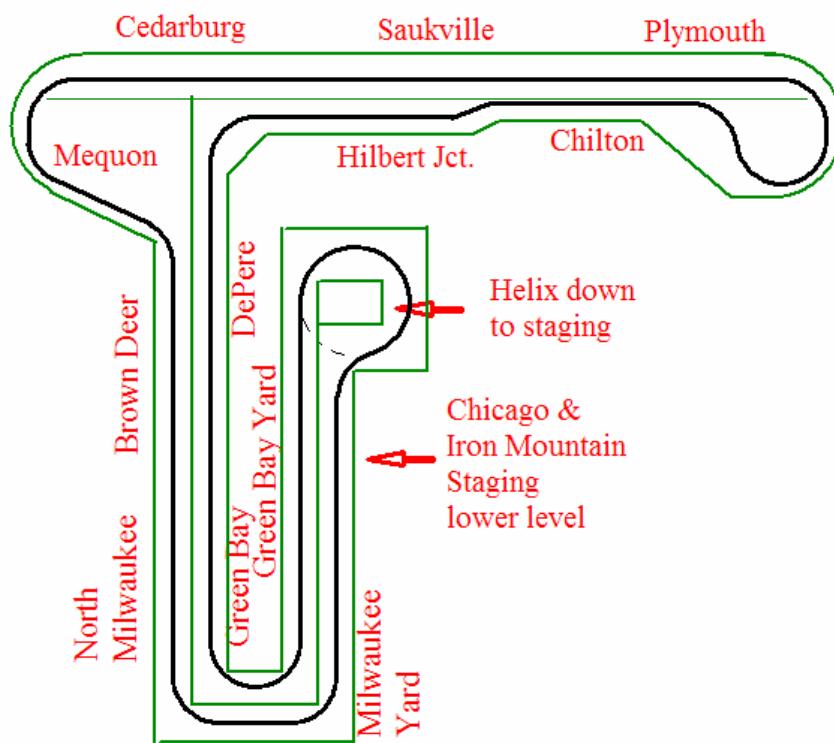
## Track Treks (A tour of local layouts)

**Jim Osborn**  
Public Relations Trainmaster / Webmaster

### A Track Plan for Switching

If you like to operate trains and enjoy lots of switching movements on model railroads, Tom Schweiss has a layout that will really get your juices flowing! His 40 x 50 foot, HO scale, Milwaukee Road -- Superior Division pike features a 300 foot, point-to-point mainline that runs through 9 towns with over 70 industries to service. He can start the operation of this sizable layout quickly due to 14 staging tracks with a turning loop loaded and ready to launch trains for a challenging session. Being active in the Lake County Model RR club, Tom felt he had plenty of opportunity to operate trains on long runs. Consequently,

the first design criterion for his home pike was a 2 x 40 foot layout module that would satisfy his desire for switching movements. That 9 year old module now cut in half and rotated 180 degrees, eventually evolved into phase 3 of the layout. The design is basically several long, 4 foot wide peninsula modules connected together. Each peninsula has a center view blocking backdrop. The result?? Everything is within easy crew reach along the meandering single track mainline. Tom has now met his final design objective of long runs and lots of switching. This freelanced design of the Milwaukee Road runs between Milwaukee and Green Bay with staging end points emulating Chicago, IL and Iron Mountain, MI. The towns are ones of particular interest to Tom but are not prototypical in design. The motive power is vintage Milwaukee Road from the 1970's. F7's, Geeps, SD40-2's, Alco's and EMD switchers



Tom Schweiss' 40 x 50 foot HO Scale Milwaukee Road - Superior Division pike

-lots of them - keep this railroad running. He currently operates with Rail Op computer switch lists but wants to get back to car card manifest trains as soon as the layout and industry design settles down.

Tom uses a Digitrax DCC system for train control with a computer controlled LocoNet for a variety of accessories, mainline switching, staging route control, etc. Currently, he is adding block occupancy & signaling to the

LocoNet system. While he discovered a number of unpublished "surprises" with this latest addition, he is working through them one by one. While Tom says he not big on scenery, he has done a nice job of getting everything covered so it does not look like a "plywood plain." He has most structures in place but admits that there are more to go and is looking forward to getting back to model building.

The track work on the first



North Milwaukee industrial corridor

module is code 83 from Microscale, but the rest of the layout has evolved to Atlas code 83 products. Tom modifies the Atlas turnout point & frog connections to make them more reliable. Turnouts are generally hand thrown except for some of the main line and staging area switches where they are Tortoise powered. Tom runs PanelPro software on his computer to command the RR Circuits "Tower Controller" for route control through his large staging area. Eventually, this computer system will also become the dispatcher board.

If you would like to see this impressive layout, contact me. I will put you in touch with Tom. To learn more about the Milwaukee Road in the 1970's, you can find a wealth of information on the Milwaukee Road Historical Association website: <http://www.mrha.com/> More layout pictures are available for viewing on the Fox Valley Division website: <http://www.foxvalleydivision.org>

## Fox Valley Division Board of Directors

Superintendent Rich Sweet <a href="mailto:Rsweet@pactiv.com">Rsweet@pactiv.com</a>	847-550-1399
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Clinics & Programs Trainmaster David Leider <a href="mailto:sooauthor@netzero.com">sooauthor@netzero.com</a>	847-253-7484
Ways and Means Trainmaster Walter Radtke <a href="mailto:wagx2@email.com">wagx2@email.com</a>	847-255-2977

## Hints, Tips, and Innovations

*Rick Saviano  
Publications Trainmaster / Membership Trainmaster*

In a recent email, a fellow z-scaler referred to a part of his layout as the village of Prüfendorf. This is where he tries out new trackwork and scenery techniques. Prüfendorf translates to "Test Village." Great name! Do you have a Prüfendorf on your layout?

## **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.

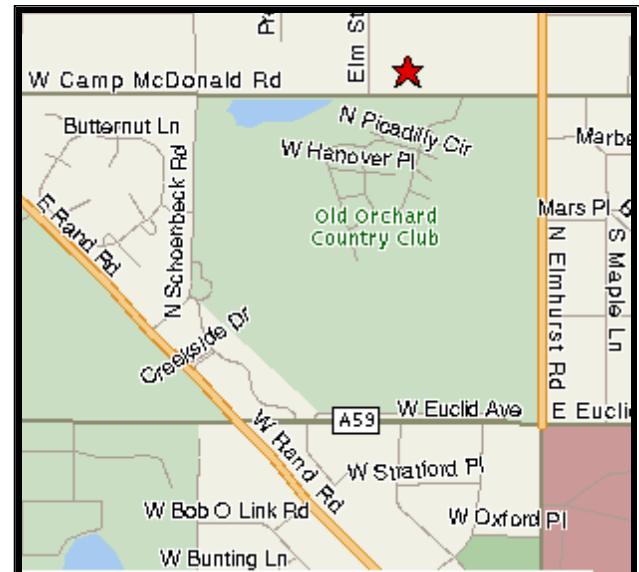
The Fox Valley Division has around two hundred members and you are one of them. Membership in the Fox Valley Division costs you NOTHING. As a matter of fact, most times we give you things. How can we do that? In March each year, we hold a train show at Harper College in Palatine. The proceeds from the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

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