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Fox Valley Division
Midwest Region - NMRA
P.O. Box 1535
Arlington Heights, IL 60005-1535
<http://www.foxvalleydivision.org>

The Semaphore

Fox Valley Division • MWR • NMRA

January's Operating Session

This month, like many Januarys for the last few years, we will be holding an abbreviated meeting at 1:00pm in the basement (the term is a real understatement!) of Ted Schnepf, followed by an operating session at his Milwaukee Road, Dubuque Division Railroad. Jim Osborn wrote about Ted's layout in last month's *Semaphore*, and there will be upcoming articles about Ted's layout. Reservations are required for the January meeting, but there might be time for a last-minute sign-up, so check with David Leider for an operating spot and logistical information. David's contact information can be found on page 3 of this issue of the *Semaphore*. A map to Ted's house is on Page 2.

Hope to see you there!

Next Month's Meeting

The North Shore and Western Division hosts a combined meet with the FVD at the Glenview Public Library. David Popp, Managing Editor of Model Railroader magazine will be discussing the "Latest Projects at MR" in a behind the scenes view of the Magazine. He is also inviting any member that wants to make the trip north to view his home layout, "The Naugatuck Valley RR" after the meeting. The railroad is about an hour's drive north from Glenview. The North Shore and Western Division will be serving refreshments and there will be contest prizes! There will be a map to the library in next month's *Semaphore*. See you there!

Last Month's Contest

The subject of November's contest was locomotives, and we had seven entries. First place went to Leif Hansen for his Ho Scale Gas Station Scene.



Second place went to Walter Radtke's HO Scale Lumber Yard



and third went to Jim Landwehr's Book Shelf Diorama.



Next Month's Contest

There's no contest this month, and the contest subject for the joint February meeting will be freight cars. At our last joint meeting in November, we were inundated with structures submitted by members of the North Shore Division. Let's return the favor

This Year's Remaining Events

January 18, 2009
1:00pm, Operating session at Ted Schnepf's "Fox Valley O Scale"

No Clinic
No Contest

February 22, 2009
1:30pm, Glenview Public Library at 1930 Glenview Road, Glenview, Illinois

Clinic - David Popp: "Behind the scenes" of MR magazine
No Contest

February 28 -March 1, 2009
9:00am-5:00pm, High Wheeler

No Clinic
No Contest

April 17-19, 2009 -- 2009 Spring Convention (Not a FVD group Outing)

Clock Tower Resort,
Rockford, Illinois.

April 26, 2009
1:00pm, Gary Morava Center Annual Business Meeting

Clinic - TBA
Contest- train related photographic prints

May 17, 2009
1:30pm, Gary Morava Center General Meeting

Clinic - Ed Rosengren, history of the Illinois Railroad Museum
Contest- TBA

and pit our freight car building and weathering skills against our Glenview neighbors! Remember, the February meeting will be at the Glenview Public Library, so bringing the cars to the Morava Center in February will only result in you and your cars in an empty room!

Hints, Tips, and Innovations

- Rick Saviano
Publications Trainmaster /
Membership Trainmaster

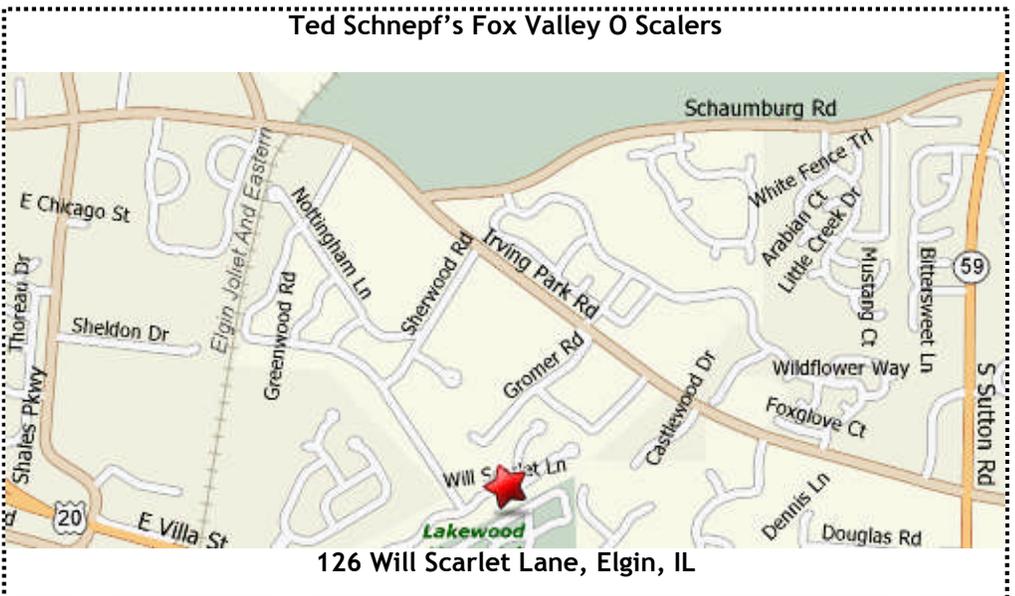
It seems like every January there are plenty of articles on New Year's Resolutions, so who am I to break with tradition. Of course, mine will have a modeling perspective:

It is better to be proud than shy - this is a twist on the "measure twice, cut once" philosophy. If a piece is a little too long, or "proud" as it is sometimes called, it can always be sanded down. If you cut a piece "shy" of what it should be, you're going to need to cut yourself another piece.

You don't always need a ruler to measure things - This is something I borrowed from airplane-builders. No, not model airplane builders, Boeing,

actually. They use very precisely-manufactured rails along the floor of the cabin. This way, they don't have to measure the distance between seats, they just have to count the "dimples" in the rails. I used this technique to build some cabinets the other day - I was using 16" pre-drilled panels. Instead of individually measuring the lengths of the boards, I cut the pieces in just inside the top and bottom holes. This also gave me the benefit of knowing that all the shelves would be aligned. There are few things more aggravating than seeing three book cases with "even" shelves at different levels, except for the case of one side being higher than the other on a single shelf. My book cases (also used as display cases) are all aligned, and the rolling stock doesn't roll off!

Look at things in an unconventional way - Have you ever passed something in a non-hobby store and wondered if it would work for your layout? I keep a "scale card" in my wallet with all my credit cards. Whenever something catches my eye for a possible addition to my layout, I measure it against my scale card to see if it will work. Now, I know that small differences don't matter, but it's nice to check if the item is 4 scale feet high or 6. This way, I can tell if the 1:22.5 General Store pickle barrel can become part of



a wooden tank car.

Don't be an elitist - You don't need to buy everything at your local hobby store! Last month I mentioned a find from a local crafts store, in the scrapbooking aisle. I also noticed an interesting item at the local office supply store: Black presentation board. So what, you may ask, it's been a long time since you had to do a science project. Well, I make scenery flats of industrial buildings by printing photos on label paper, and sticking it on foam core board. The white foam needs to be painted, and I used to use a black marker, with pretty good results. With the black presentation board, the edge is already done, and it doesn't look bad if I didn't cut the labels right.

There is no such thing as "wasted" time - So, I wanted to work on my layout, but I also wanted to finish my bookcases. The bookcases took precedence, until my almost 4-year-old grandson said "I want to run trains on YOUR layout." I have learned that any opportunity to further a person's interest in model railroading is never a waste of time. The bookcases could

wait; the curiosity of a child would not. So we "played trains" for a few hours, and I got to see how good his memory was: I changed my layout around a bit, but he remembered where the oil refinery used to be, and wanted to move the barges from their new home to the "right" place. I also got to see how his interest in operating the throttles has developed. He can now slow the trains down to spot cars properly. The next step is getting him to use the throttle to couple and uncouple the cars by the under-track magnets. I also found out that he knows how to use the little uncoupling sticks. Pretty good, considering I model in Z. I guess all that practice with his Lionel is paying off.

With these "resolutions," you may find your hobbying goes a little easier this year.

Ride the Line 2009

The members of the Rock River Valley Division are proud to host the 2009 Midwest Region Spring Convention. Once again, the convention will be

held at the Clock Tower Resort and Convention Center, located off Interstate 90 at Business U.S. 20 (State St.) in Rockford, IL. The Clock Tower is only 60 minutes from O'Hare airport. The convention will be April 17-19, 2009. There will be a Model/Photo Contest, five Friday Night Operating Sessions, Clinics, Layout Tours, as well as Non-Rail Activities. Check the *Waybill* for details.

The Clock Tower Resort has reserved a block of rooms and is offering a special convention room rate of \$104. Reservations can be made by calling the Clock Tower at (815) 398-6000, or by mail at P.O. Box 5285, Rockford, IL 61125. You may also reserve via the Internet. You must enter Group Code "NMRRRA" (note there are 2 "R's") when you place your reservation.

Midwest Region 2009 Elections

Check your copy of the *Waybill* for the Midwest Region 2009 ballot. This year we are electing a new President and Vice president, as well as several Directors. The *Waybill* has a list of candidates, their photos and bios for you to review before filling out and mailing your ballot. The deadline is February 28, 2009. Please vote early, but not often, for your choice. The ballot is in the *Waybill*.

FVD Website

Just a reminder of the Fox Valley Division's Web Site:

<http://www.foxvalleydivision.org/>

Visit often for the most up to date FVD information! It also has links to The Midwest Region and National sites of the NMRA.

Fox Valley Division Board of Directors

Superintendent Rich Sweet Superintendent@foxvalleydivision.org	847-550-1399
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Ways and Means Trainmaster Walter Radtke waqx2@email.com	847-255-2977

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).

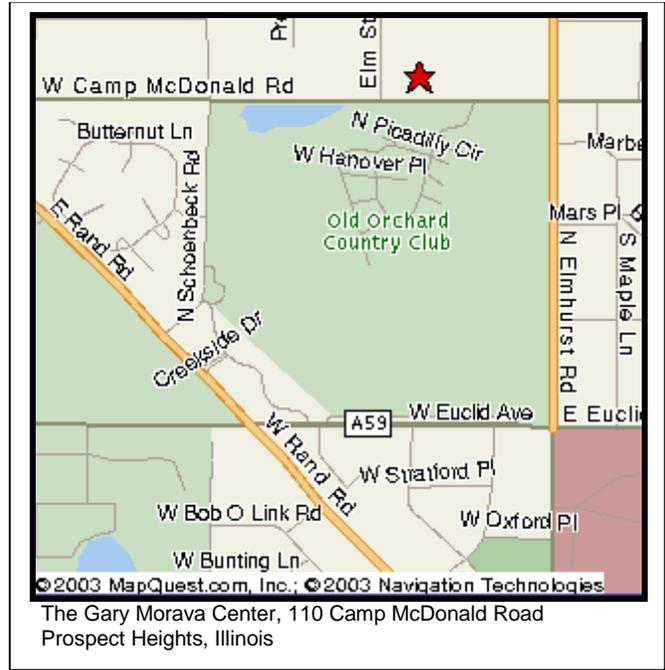
Why Do You Get This Newsletter?

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!



Next Meeting: **Jan. 18, 2009**
1:00pm, Operating Session

Clinic - NONE
 Contest- NONE



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

