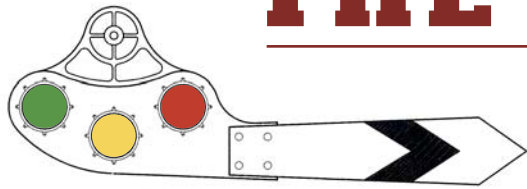


THE SEMAPHORE



September 2012

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



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FUN STUFF



The true Aerotrain.

Welcome back from summer! We hope everyone had a great one. Fox Valley Division Superintendent, Jeff Jarr, sure did. Read his report on a very active summer of "training" with accompanying photos starting on this page. Also check out our coverage of the division's trip to the Hesston Steam Museum, Mike's Minute, Jim Allen's "Fun Stuff", our 2012 - 2013 meeting calendar and more in this issue of the Semaphore. Ed.

What I Did During the Summer Break

By Jeff Jarr

Hello everyone! I hope you all had a fun and relaxing summer. Did you enjoy any rail fanning or other railroad related events this summer? I had a very exciting summer this year, thanks to the new FVD "Local RR Related Events" web page. I tried to visit as many local railroad events as I could fit in my schedule. I kicked the summer off with a trip to Rockford on June 3rd. The Rock River Valley Division had a Layout Tour Weekend, with over 20 terrific layouts open to



One of the layouts in Rockford.

fellow modelers to visit. I brought along my good friend and FVD member Mike Bychowski. Mike and I like to pal around together and Mike usually joins me for these railroad

adventures. We had a great time visiting with the RRVD members and photographing their layouts. Kudos to the RRVD for their generous hospitality.



On June 9th, Mike and I went to Railroad Daze in Franklin Park by the old Milwaukee Road B-12 Tower. There we got to walk-on and through several of the diesels, including the C&NW heritage unit, and special CN, IC and Metra passenger cars on display. The Midwest Rails group had their Large Scale modular layout out on display for the crowd as well. We even got to see several CN freight trains pass by while we were there.

Summer Break cont'd



June 16th we took a drive south of Chicago to Lockport for Old Canal Days. There we saw a huge modular layout set up outside under a tent. The layout was 25 feet wide by 125 long and ran point to point. The Will County and Bolingbrook modular clubs joined together to accomplish this massive display.

On June 23rd several FVD members, including myself helped as volunteers for the Huff & Puff Industries Garden Walk and Model Railroad Display. This is an annual charity event sponsored by Elaine Silets, also known as "The Train Lady". She has a beautiful huge garden with two separate G scale railroads, and a very large indoor O scale layout that she opens to the public for this event. The garden railroads are fantastic, with multiple trains running through tunnels, over bridges, along ponds and perfectly manicured plants and flowers. The O scale layout is housed in a building that is an authentic replica of the famous Rico Station. The theme of the layout is a visual trip through the City of Chicago, downstate Illinois farming and logging, and the oil refineries of South Chicago and Northern Indiana. It is extremely detailed featuring many animated scenes with sounds, lights, and multiple trains running at the same time. Over 3000 people attended the event this year. If you have never



seen these beautiful layouts, make sure to see them at next year's garden walk.

On June 24th I found myself rail fanning at the Rochelle Railroad Park in Rochelle, Illinois watching Union Pacific and BSNF trains take turns crossing the double diamond in the summer heat. This is a perfect place to take pictures of real equipment to study and help you with your weathering techniques when you get back to the workbench at home. On July 7th I took a trip to Adams in Wisconsin for the Railroad Centennial/ Birth of Adams celebration. The Hub City Central RR HO scale club from Marshfield, Wisconsin had their modular layout on display. I also got a tractor ride that took me for a tour of the town and pointed out all the old historical homes and buildings of the early railroad pioneers that first lived in Adams. The next day on the way home from Adams, I stopped once again at Rochelle for a few more hours of train watching.



A few weeks later on July 21st, Mike and I journeyed to the Illinois Railway Museum's in Union, Illinois. Each year during Diesel Days the IRM holds a Parade of Power showcasing diesel locomotives from the museum's extensive collection. 23 different diesels roared past the station, blowing their air horns to the crowds delight. It was interesting to see all the various engines, especially the Alco units, with their characteristic smoke belching from the stacks. I also caught CNW 4160, an EMD product, doing a great Alco imitation!

Railfanning and viewing other layouts are great ways to get ideas for your own layout, improve your modeling and recharge your modeling batteries. Next summer why not check out the Railroad Related Events page on the Fox Valley Division's web site and take advantage of some of



the many railroad and railroad modeling opportunities out there?

FVD Goes to Hesston

by Walt Herrick with photos by Jim Osborn.

Forty-four Fox Valley Division members and their guests woke up early Sunday morning, September 2nd, rubbed the sleep out of their eyes, and prepared for a 100 mile trip to LaPorte County, Indiana, home of the Hesston Steam Museum. We were off to see the museum's Steam and Power Show, their biggest show of the summer. At this show, the museum "pulls out all the stops" displaying most of their equipment and many private individual's equipment as well. The sacrifice of a couple hours of Sunday morning sleep was well worth it. Though the weather was a bit of a concern due to rain caused by the remnants of Hurricane Isaac, Mother Nature was kind. The heavy clouds above us much of the morning gave us no problems, and then yielded to sun shine in the afternoon.



Paymaster, Tim Kleimeyer, passes out train tickets to FVD line members and guests. The bus trip, admittance fee, and train tickets were paid for by the Fox Valley Division.

The trips to and from the museum were great. Trip organizer, David Leider, had train DVD's showing on our luxury bus's many TV monitors. And there were some good opportunities to rail fan the Norfolk Southern (and Amtrak) paralleling the Skyway, and the South Shore paralleling I-90/94. Our bus's seating was much higher than an automobile's giving us excellent views of the tracks. An added bonus was the bus driver (not us!) was responsible for not rear ending somebody because of train watching.

Many of us didn't quite know what to expect at Hesston. I, for one, hadn't been there in forty one years and things had changed! There was still the



Three live steamers ready to roll.

strong, sweet smell of steam as you walked through the main gate. But there were a lot more trains. In addition to the original single three foot narrow gauge line I rode on when I was twenty, the museum now had 1/4 scale and 1/8 scale lines featuring an assortment of old, beautifully restored amusement park steam engines and equally beautiful private owner live steamers, as well as several very nice gas powered "diesels". My friend, John Knoll, said, "I love these little ones! I could ride these all day!" Not me. I'll take Hesston's big, wood fired, three foot Shay #7 any day, and I did—twice! All but one of the lines ventured deep into the museum's 92 acres of heavily wooded property making for nice long rides. One other 1/4 scale line skirted the woods and then circled the museum's large open field parking lot. Double headed live steam 4-8-4's were the featured power on that line that day, and the engineers running those locos knew what they were doing.



Three foot gauge Shay #7 is Hesston's "crown jewel".

Of course, Hesston had more than just steam trains. Their 92 ton steam crane was something to behold. Originally owned by the Navy and used in ship building, the crane was (and still can be) self powered on standard gauge railroad track.

FVD Goes to Hesston cont'd



Leif Hanson talks with the engineer of 1/4 scale #3.

While still used on the track, the museum keeps it in a stationary position to load logs on skids for its amazing steam driven saw mill. Another attraction was the large steam powered generator once used to provide electrical power to the LaPorte County Sheriff's Office. Still other attractions included five operating monster steam farm tractors, a dozen antique diesel farm tractors, and another dozen antique vehicles ranging from a beautifully restored model A Ford pick up truck to a 1957 four door, yellow and white Ford Fairlane also nicely restored. County fair style food stands with good food and a flea market with many vendors having railroadians and older model railroad items rounded out the attractions. Several in our group noted how well organized the event was especially since all the staff were volunteers. They were pleasant, knowledgeable and always happy to answer questions.

A nice "Parade of Power" showcasing and describing the farm equipment at Hesston that day ended our stay there. Those of us who went on the trip want thank the division for organizing the event, and paying for the bus, the Hesston admittance fee, and train tickets. Hesston was certainly a Fox Valley Division trip we'll remember for years to come.



Hesston's standard gauge steam crane and its operator.



Cutting a large log at Hesston's steam saw mill.



Don Cook inspects a steam powered pop corn machine.

Bob Shlemon New Assistant Super

At the September FVD Board meeting, Bob Shlemon was unanimously elected to fill the vacant Assistant Superintendent position. This position opened last April when Jeff Jarr was elected division Superintendent. Bob will serve as Assistant Super until April 2013 when the division votes for Assistant Superintendent at its regularly scheduled election for this position. The Board welcomes Bob as its new Assistant Superintendent, and thanks Don Cook for also volunteering to serve in this capacity.

FVD to Host 2014 Spring Regional

After some debate, the FVD Board voted to accept an offer from the Midwest Region of the NMRA to host the 2014 Midwest Spring Regional Convention. The debate centered around the fact that the Spring Convention comes on the heels of the Fox Valley's High Wheeler Train Show in March. High Wheeler is a big undertaking, and the board was concerned that doing both High Wheeler and the Spring Regional Convention would overtax the division. Several factors ultimately convinced the board to host the convention including regional's sincere desire for us to host the convention, the DuPage Division's offer to assist us, and the willingness of FVD members to "step up" to the challenge.

A convention committee has been formed. Contact Jeff Jarr (see contact information in this newsletter)

if you'd like to serve on the committee or on the 2014 Spring Convention team. Make no mistake about it, we will need many members good efforts to host a successful convention and put on our usual excellent High Wheeler Train Show in 2014. We can do it with your help!

FVD Video Library Dropped

At its September meeting the FVD Board voted to eliminate its video library. Said Superintendent, Jeff Jarr, "We really have no choice. Our library is entirely made up casset tapes many of which are so old

they will not turn. It is illegal to convert them to CDs." The tapes will be given away at future FVD monthly meetings. Due to such infrequent use of the old library, a new library of CDs will not be started.

Glenview Library Has MR DVD

Though the FVD is dropping its video library, members near the Glenview Public Library can take advantage of their Model Railroader 75 Year Collection DVDs. Due to copyright restrictions, the MR DVDs may not leave the library, but they still may be viewed on one of the public access computers located on the library's second floor. (Thanks to Dave Johnson for this update.)

Arlington Heights Library Display

Two large display cases in the Arlington Heights Public Library children's section were filled with model trains during the month of June 2012. The displays were developed by Leif Hansen, with the capable assistance of Gene Parkhurst and Jim Landwehr. Display items were provided by Leif, Gene, and Jim, and also Jim Osborn, Walter Radtke and Mike Hirvela. A special thanks to Jim Landwehr for his double track display of Union Pacific trains that ran the full length of the large display case. The Arlington Heights Library was happy to have the displays and reported that they were well received and very popular with the public. (Thanks to Leif for this article and Jim Osborn who took the display photos.)



Mike's Minute by Mike Hirvela

I decided to do a little clearing out of my unbuilt kit shelf and took down an old AHM #5875, Crossing Scenic Accessories kit. If memory serves, I picked up this kit at a swap meet for a cheap price. This little kit has some nice gas station details like barrels, tires, tire pressure air pumps, an electrical cabinet, and also some highway crossing gates and simulated flashing lights. Alas, the gas station details were gone (which is probably why it was so cheap), but the grade crossing flashing light castings were still there. So, I commenced to putting the four of them together.

But wouldn't ya know it, when I got all the parts cut off the runners and laid out, there were four assemblies and only three cross-bucks. So, I dug out my scrap plastic bin and found some 0.010" styrene. Using one of the existing cross-buck moldings as a guide, I cut out a replacement crossing sign and glued it on. Now, I had 4 nice gate and flasher sets ready for painting and decals. The decals were on a sheet still in the box. I shook the box to get the sheet out, and out fell the sheet and the missing cross-buck! One of Murphy's Laws of Model Railroading had struck again: "When you are missing a kit part and scratch build a replacement, and then attach and glue it, you'll find the "missing" part still in the box."

Modeling Tip

This month's tip is inspired by Jeff Jarr's "Summer Break" article and the Hesston Trip article. Both point to the fact that there is no better way to learn about the prototype than to actually see it in action.

Also, seeing the prototype "live" is a great way to improve your modeling. Noted MMR and the builder of two famous V&O layouts, Allen McClelland, strongly believes modelers can help

themselves a great deal if they look to the prototype for the answers to their modeling problems. Said Allen last spring in his clinics at the Midwest Regional Convention in Springfield, IL: "The best solution to just about any modeling problem can be found by studying the prototype to see what they did."

Member News

See Jeff Jarr's article in this Semaphore to find out all the things he's been up to the past few months.... Believe it or not, new Fox Valley Division MMR, Don Cook, finally got his certification from national so he's now a "legal" MMR... Membership Records Trainmaster, Bert Lattan, reports that our division's membership has stayed constant at 241 members for past several months... Walter Radke's battles with the squirrel population on and around his garden railroad have been chronicled several times in the Semaphore. Now he's having problems with a skunk... Former FVD Assistant Superintendent, Harry Sorenson, played a part in helping to organize the National Garden Railway Association's successful National Convention held at Pheasant Run in St. Charles August 14 – 19... On August 15th the NGRA sent conventioners on buses to see Del Webb Huntley's KV&EC model railroad club including their large garden railroad... Jim Osborn hosted an Open House on his beautiful CNW layout September 11th.

The Semaphore is always interested in what railroading activities FVD members have been up to. Email editor, Walt Herrick, at wherricks@yahoo.com, with your contributions to Member News and earn a treat at the next FVD monthly meeting.

Meeting Dates

Semaphore Circulation Editor, Jim Allen, mailed every FVD member a bright orange 2012 - 2013 Meeting Dates card on August 28th. All our monthly meeting dates, clinics and contests were listed on that card. (Email Jim at jallen60@comcast.net if you didn't get yours by now.) So we don't have to reprint all that information in the Semaphore each month, right? From now on we'll just print the next three months meetings and let you refer to your orange card for any other meeting information.

Date	Clinic	Contest	Other
September 23	Basic Model Railroad Operations by Bill Kirchmeyer	Local work train. Loco, 4 cars + caboose max.	
October 21	A Train Runs Through It (part 2) by Bruce Moffat	Open or closed load; 3 car max or same type car.	
November 18	C&NW Grain Hoppers by Dave Phillips	Large structure 5,000 scale square feet or larger.	

Fox Valley Division Board

Superintendent,

Jeff Jarr jjarr@comcast.net 773-286-8755

Chief Clerk,

Leif Hansen mudhen454@att.net 847-437-7124

Paymaster

Tim Kleimeyer kleimeyert@comcast.net 847-426-4732

Achievements & Contests

Jim Landwehr JLandwehr901@yahoo.co 847-577-7984

Clinics,

David Leider MMR sooauthor@netzero.net 847-253-7484

Publications Editor,

Walt Herrick wherricks@yahoo.co 815-459-1334

Circulation Editor,

Jim Allen jallenad60@comcast.net 847-356-2061

Membership Promotions

Mike Hirvela mhirvela1@gmail.com 847-360-9579

Membership Records

Bert Lattan blattan@comcast.net 847-295-7959

Public Relations & Webmaster

Jim Osborn FVDWebsite@comcast.net 815-578-8315

Ways & Means - High Wheeler

Walter Radtke wagx2@email.com 847-255-2977

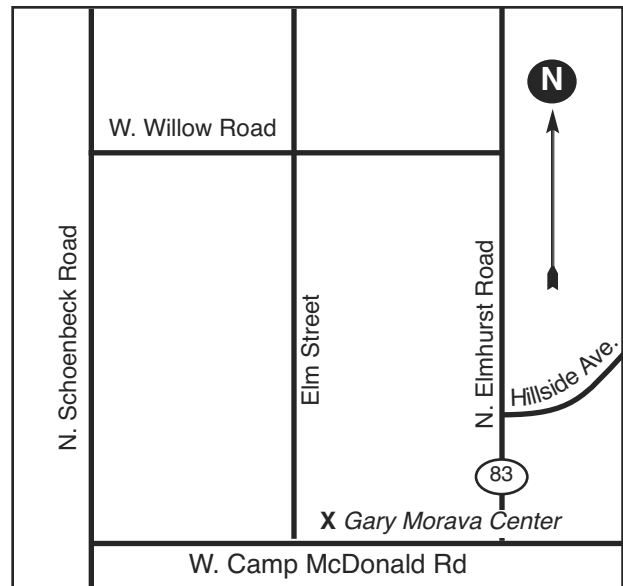
About the Fox Valley Division

If you receive this newsletter you live in the Midwest Region and Fox Valley Division of the National Model Railroad Association or NMRA. The Fox Valley Division (FVD) includes McHenry and parts of Cook, Kane and Lake Counties in Northeast Illinois. About 240 members of varied ages and modeling ability levels belong to the FVD. Almost all modeling scales are represented in our division. Membership in the division is free as are the Semaphore newsletters.

FVD general meetings are held September through May at the Gary Morava Center in Prospect Heights from 1:30 to about 4:30 pm. Each meeting features a clinic, model contest, information of interest to the membership, and a time for socializing. Outings, layout tours, and operating sessions are also held periodically in addition to, or instead of the general meetings. To promote the hobby of model railroading, the FVD sponsors and runs a large train show, High Wheeler, in early March each year at Harper College in Palatine, Illinois.

We encourage you to take advantage of all the FVD has to offer. We are here to help answer your questions, help improve your modeling, and help you better enjoy the great hobby of model railroading. Join us at a FVD meeting or outing. We'd love to see you. Or, visit us on the web at: www.foxvalleydivision.org.

Questions? Contact FVD Superintendent, Jeff Jarr or any board member listed on page seven of this newsletter. We are here to help you!



Next Meeting

The Fox Valley Division will hold their **meeting on September 23, 2012.**

Note: 1:30 pm start time to 4:30 pm, at the Gary Morava Center, 110 W. Camp MacDonald Road, Prospect Heights, IL
Lunch and refreshments served.



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