



# THE SEMAPHORE

January 2014

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



## Layout of the Month: KV&EC Club's HO layout

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Pages 1, 2,3,4 KV&EC HO Layout of the Month
- Page 1 Fun Stuff
- Page 5 Member News; Tip
- Page 6 Mike's Minute & Work on My FVD RR
- Page 7 December's Clinic and Contest results
- Page 8 Meeting Dates
- Page 9 Board Contact Info
- Page 10 About the FVD/ Meeting Map



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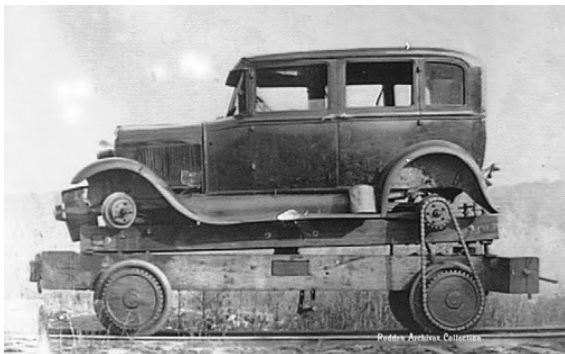
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Two eastbound trains are ready to depart the east end of KV&EC's Nelson Yard this am while two other trains are switched. KV&EC photos by Walt Herrick.

**Happy New Year!**  
 to all of our FVD  
 members. Have a  
 safe, prosperous  
 2014 everybody!

Semaphore readers saw the Kishwaukee Valley & Eakin Creek's Club's huge G scale garden railroad in the September Semaphore. This month we'll take a look at the club's HO scale model railroad located in the basement of the Millgrove Workshop on Sun City Blvd. in Sun City Huntley. The HO railroad shares a large basement train room with the KV&EC club's hi-rail O scale layout and N scale layout. Also located in the basement are rest rooms, storage rooms, a work shop and separate Sun City Theater Company rooms. The HO and O scale layouts are fully operational and about 95% scened, and the N scale layout is partially operational and about half scened. All of the KV&EC layouts will be on tour the Friday night of Railfun 2014. WH

## Jim Allen's Fun Stuff



How about this for a neat inspection locomotive project? Or maybe it's an early MoW speeder. In any case, it'd be fun to build and be a unique addition to your railroad or collection—especially if you built it to actually run!

## KV&EC Club HO Layout of the Month con't

Here's the west end of Nelson Yard. A west bound CNW mixed freight is pulling out of the yard, and an IC freight pulling in. Retired Metra employee, Sandy Hook owns the CNW units, and the IC power belongs to Ron Colson. P&W 4004 is assigned to today's yard switching duties, and is Club owned. The yellow Iowa Northern CF7 in the background on the right, is an Al Price unit.



An Illinois Central grain train is being held at Hillside Yard Tower while the main line clears. The tower is a heavily kit-bashed Con Cor (formerly Revell) kit with an Atlas signal tower roof. It was built in the late 1980's by Walt Herrick, repainted KV&EC's Railroad "structure red" last year, and then added to the layout with a new street guard rail, gravel parking lot, grass, weeds, etc.



Pete Walton and Rich Porto teamed up to build this great water front scene. The scenery was built by Pete, and the laser cut structures—including the tug boat—by Rich who is also an expert ship and boat modeler. The water front is located at the end of a long branch line that has two other small industries to switch besides the ice house and cannery shown in the photo. Pete Walton's Great Midwest layout appeared in the October 2013 Semaphore.



## KV&EC Club HO Layout of the Month con't



The KV&EC Club's HO layout in Sun City Huntley, Illinois will be on a **Railfun 2014 Friday night layout tour** along with the three other KV&EC club layouts, and Pete Walton's beautiful Great Midwest layout. All the layouts are close to each other. Al and Winfred (below) highly recommend them.



A Metra "Scoot" pulls into the brick station at Hillside



IC 3100 switches one of the many industries at Wallace.

The Hillside Yard locomotive facilities and caboose tracks are usually a beehive of activity on the KV&EC Club's HO model railroad. Almost all of the layout's locomotives and much of its rolling stock are owned by members which makes for a variety of neat equipment being run on operating nights. Annual member dues and a holiday season train set drawing at its large Holiday Display Layout in Sun City's Prairie View Lodge, finance new projects and cover the maintenance expenses on the club's four layouts.



## KV&EC Club's HO Layout of the Month con't

A current KV&EC HO layout project is installing working grade crossing signals to four road crossings on the layout. Bernie Haniszewski and Alex Bukala are the club members responsible for expertly adding the signals, their sensors and extensive control boards and wiring at each location. That's Alex's beautiful Southern Pacific Gs4 pounding through the three track crossing near Wallace Junction. The guys went all the way with this set of signals which feature operating lights, gates, bells and working lights on the high cantilevered signal arms.



### Basic Layout Information

Layout Builder:	KV&EC HO layout crew totaling 35–50 members over the past ten years
Layout Location:	Sun City Huntley, IL
Layout scale:	HO
Layout Size:	24 x 36 feet
Layout Style:	Two decks with a hidden staging and running deck below the main deck
Layout theme/locale:	Generally mid-west theme and locales. Modeler's license has allowed for mountain and water front scenes.
Layout era:	1950's to contemporary
Construction started:	2003
Bench work:	L girder on 2x4 legs bolted to the floor
Sub road bed/roadbed:	3/4 inch plywood sub road bed with cork roadbed
Track:	Code 83 commercial flex track (code 100 used in some hidden track areas) with commercial #6 and #8 turnouts
Scenery:	Hard shell base. Commercial ground covers and trees. Hand carved Structo-lite plaster and resin rock mold outcroppings
Backdrop:	Painted hard board with stenciled clouds and commercial photo back drops
Structures:	Plastic kits and kit-bashing; wood laser cut kits
Locomotives:	Most locomotives owned by members representing their favorite roads
Rolling Stock:	Kit built and RTR freight and passenger equipment mostly owned by members
Control:	NCE DCC with many member owned throttles
Other:	The KV&EC club has nearly 50 members with 25 of them being "HO members". Eddie Kelson and Ron Colson are co-HO layout Superintendents and are responsible for layout project planning, overseeing any work done on the layout, and overseeing all layout operations. The layout is run Tuesday and Wednesday nights with formal op sessions on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. Current layout projects include upgrading the layout's wiring, installing working grade crossing signals, and adding other animated lighting effects. Future projects call for signaling the entire layout and installing a large signal display panel high on a layout room wall. The KV&EC Club holds two Open Houses a year (May 18 and September 20 in 2014) and runs trains for the public Sunday afternoons during the summer. The club has built and operates a large, four scale, Holiday Display Layout at Sun City's Prairie View Lodge each year from late November through late December. The Holiday Layout is open to the public.



*"3 1/2 days of trains for only \$45 bucks for early registrants!"*

## Tip of the Month: Signs

The personal computer is an excellent tool for making all sorts of black & white and color signs for your model railroad. A large number of lettering sizes and fonts are available as well as different graphics to add to your signs. You can print your signs on standard copy paper or invest in higher quality paper or colored paper. Signs can be made for structures, billboards, roads and highways, and railroad right of ways on the layout. Signs can also be made for control panels, etc. off the layout. There really is no limit to the signs you can produce using your PC and printer. Give it a try! WH

## Member News

Membership Records Trainmaster, Bert Lattan, reports that FVD membership in December stands at 217 with six renewals and two new members....Things continue to come together quickly for both the 2014 High Wheeler Train Show and Railfun Convention. Contact Jeff Jarr to help the division put on these two great events. Jeff's contact information is on page 9 of this newsletter....As most of you know by now, the NMRA's Headquarters building has been sold to the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum and NMRA headquarters has been moved to a new office location in Chattanooga. The A.C. Kalmbach Library is being moved to the California State RR Museum and will be administered there. See the NMRA Magazine's December 2013 "President's Car" column for full details on these moves, and for a report on how the new NMRA Museum/Gallery is shaping up. As we've said in recent Semaphores, your donations are still needed to complete the funding for this great project.

**Saturday, March 1 and  
Sunday, March 2, 2014**

9:00am to 5:00pm  
Harper College – Palatine, IL

Admission and Show Details at  
**HighWheelerTrainShow.com**

\*Tickets available at the door. Cash Only.

**KIDS  
FREE!**  
WITH ONLINE  
COUPON



**Join the Fun,  
Discover Model Railroading**

### 20 Spectacular Running Model Railroads!

- Door Prize
- Demos
- Free Parking

### FREE Kids' Activities

- Make Your Own Train Craft
- Two Drawings Daily for a Starter Train Set  
*Compliments of Walthers*
- **Sunday Only 10am -3pm**
  - Face Painting
  - Mad Science Fun Stations



## Mike's Minute (and Working On My FVD RR) by Mike Hirvela

*This month and next we are combining our Mike's Minute and Working on My Fox Valley Division Model Railroad columns with a special two part "Building Tank Cars" article by Mike Hirvela. Thanks, Mike! WH*

After the Fox Valley Division monthly meeting on December 15<sup>th</sup>, I was asked by a member how I built the HO tank cars I entered in December's "Tank Cars" model contest. This month I'll briefly explain how I modeled the first three cars in the first row of Jim Osborn's photo below. Next month I'll go into some more detail on how I modeled the other three cars.



Here's what I did with the first three cars. The work was straight forward, pretty easy, and fun!

- The little DOWX car on the far left in the front row was built simulate a less than 4,000 gallon acid tank car. It is an MDC "old time" flat car frame with posts and railings around the edges and more modern trucks. The tank is from an N scale 10,000 or 12,000 gallon car. It has a reshaped HO scale man-way and a platform from an old Athearn "blue box" chemical tank car. The car's paint and lettering was stripped, the car washed in warm, soapy water, rinsed and air dried for a day. Then it was sprayed with a coat of gloss black paint, left to thoroughly dry for a day, then shot with a coat of clear gloss, again left to thoroughly dry, and decaled with alphabet and miscellaneous tank car decals from my decal scrap box. One more gloss coat, more drying time, a coat of Dullcoat, drying time, and a dusting of rust colored powdered chalk around the truck frames and springs finished the job.
- The next tank car is a straight "out of the box" Athearn 12,000 gallon tank car that has had reinforcing bands of 0.040 x 0.040 square strip styrene plastic added to it. This car simulates a pressure tank car and the thick bands found on this type of car. The styrene pieces really didn't like getting bent. I soaked them in hot water before carefully wrapping and gluing them around the body with liquid styrene cement. I first used my fingers and then some C-clamps to hold them in place while the glue dried. The car was then painted and decaled for Eastman Industrial Chemical in the same manner as the DOWX car above. Chalk weathering was also applied to the trucks of this car.
- The short, large diameter (fat) tank car is a stock Walther's "beer can" tank car with a new paint job, UTLX decals, and weathering as applied with the first two cars. It is a more modern car than the era I model but I couldn't resist modeling it even though you won't see it on my layout much.

## December's Clinic: Module Scenery by Mike Wood



FVD company photographer, Jim Osborn, caught our intrepid December clinician, Mike Wood, hard at work preparing his modules for his clinic. Mike, who is a FVD member, brought the modules to the meeting, set them up, and then did a great job telling us how he built the scenery that earned him an AP Certificate for Scenery. Basic scenery methods, some natural materials, and commercial scenery products and structures were used to produce very nice results. That Mike earned his AP certificate for Scenery with modules proves you don't have to have a big or permanent layout to earn the Scenery Certificate.

## December's "Tank Car" Contest Winners

December's contest was "Tank Cars" with a limit of six cars. The Landwehr brothers, Jim and Bob finished in first and third place respectively with Mike Hirvela coming in second. Our congratulations go to our top finishers and to the other entries in the December contest. Thanks to Jim Osborn for the contest photos shown below. Check out the FVD web site to view all the entries. January's contest is "Rescue the Rolling Stock" in which an item(s) of rolling stock has been saved by re-purposing it for another use.



Jim Landwehr took first place in December's "Tank Car" contest with these great looking, HO, 12,000 gallon tankers he painted, lettered, and weathered for his favorite road, the Union Pacific. The cars are from Athearn.



Mike Hirvela was second with this group of nicely kit-bashed HO tank cars. Mike tells how he produced these models in articles in this and the next issues of the Semaphore.

Bob Landwehr's string of neat 8,000 gallon steam and transition era tank cars was our third place finisher in December's contest.



## Railfun 2014's Prototype Tours

*Hey, Winfred! Do you know the Railfun boys are offering tours of the Illinois Railway Museum and Klock LoComotive Works on Friday of the Railfun 2014 convention?*

*Yep.*

*Are you gonna sign up for em?*

*Yep.*

*Those are gonna be cool tours. They're taking us into the work shops where no one gets to go. There'll be a ton of neat stuff to see and learn about. I just can't wait, can you Winfred?*

*Nope.*



## 2013 – 2014 Meeting Schedule

2013-2014 orange Meeting Schedule cards were mailed to members the last week in August. The complete schedule is also given below and on the FVD web site: [www.foxvalleydivision.org](http://www.foxvalleydivision.org). *Any schedule changes or additions are posted on the FVD web site as soon as they are known.*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Clinic</u>	<u>Contest</u>	<u>Other</u>
Jan. 19, 2014	Early Steel Freight Cars by David Leider	“Rescue the Rolling Stock” Re-purposed rolling stock.	
Feb.16, 2014	TBA	Hopper Train Limit 6 cars.	
<b>March 1, 2, 2014</b>	<b>High Wheeler 2014</b> Train Show at Harper College in Palatine Sponsored by the FVD. 9 am to 5 pm each day. <u>FVD volunteers needed.</u> Contact Jeff Jarr at <a href="mailto:jjarr@comcast.net">jjarr@comcast.net</a> or 773-286-8755.		
April 13, 2014	TBA	Diorama	<b>1:00 pm start.</b> Lunch provided. FVD officer elections.
<b>May 15 - 18, 2014</b>	<b>Rail Fun 2014</b> Mid West Region Convention hosted by the FVD In Schaumburg, IL. <u>FVD volunteers needed.</u> Contact Jeff Jarr at <a href="mailto:jjarr@comcast.net">jjarr@comcast.net</a> or 773-286-8755.		
<b>Note:</b> <u>there will be no May FVD monthly meeting in lieu of the Rail Fun convention being hosted by the FVD.</u>			
<b>July 13 - 19, 2014</b>	<b>NMRA National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio.</b> Check the national web site <a href="http://www.nmra.org">www.nmra.org</a> and <i>NMRA Magazine</i> for further information.		



## NMRA Web Sites

<b>Fox Valley Division</b>	<a href="http://www.foxvalleydivision.org">www.foxvalleydivision.org</a>
<b>High Wheeler 2014</b>	<a href="http://www.highwheelertrainshow.com">www.highwheelertrainshow.com</a>
<b>Railfun 2014</b>	<a href="http://www.foxvalleydivision.org/2014railfun/welcome.html">www.foxvalleydivision.org/2014railfun/welcome.html</a>
<b>Midwest Region</b>	<a href="http://www.mwr-nmra.org">www.mwr-nmra.org</a>
<b>National</b>	<a href="http://www..nmra.org">www..nmra.org</a>
<b>2014 National Convention</b>	<a href="http://www.2014cleveland.org">www.2014cleveland.org</a>

## Fox Valley Division Board Contact Information

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*Do you have a question or two? Visit our website at: [www.foxvalleydivision.org](http://www.foxvalleydivision.org).  
Or, call or email one of us above. We're here to help you!*

### 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 all of McHenry and parts of Cook, Kane, and Lake Counties in north-east 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.

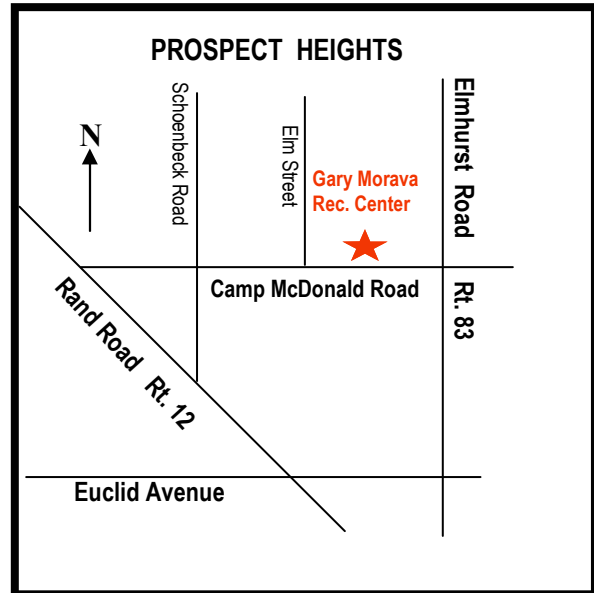
FVD general meetings are held September through May at the Gary Morava Center in Prospect Heights from 1:30 to about 4:00 pm. Each meeting features a clinic, model contest, information of interest to the membership, and a time for socializing. Outings, layout tours, and operating sessions are also held periodically in addition to, or instead of, the general meetings. To promote the hobby of model railroading, the FVD sponsors and runs the 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 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.

Visit us on the web at:

[www.foxvalleydivision.org](http://www.foxvalleydivision.org).

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



**Regular Meeting Location:** Gary Morava Center, 110 Camp McDonald Road, Prospect Heights, IL

**Regular Meeting Time:** 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. See page 8 for this year's meeting schedule.



**Fox Valley Division  
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