



# THE SEMAPHORE

October 2016

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



## Indy Convention Layouts, Part 2

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Our next FVD meeting is Sunday, October 16th at 1:30 pm. The contest is "Concealed or Closed Load" (cannot see load). The clinic is "Using Arduino Devices" by George K. See [you there!](#)

One of the highlights of the NMRA's National Convention in Indianapolis this summer was the opportunity to see five first class layouts in nearby (two hours by bus) Cincinnati. Dubbed the "Cincinnati Super Tour", the tour lived up to its billing. The layouts toured were professional model builder Jerry Strangarity's 1930's HO Reading, Bob Lawson's gorgeous HO 1940's Southern, Curt LaRue's well done 1950's Pennsy, John Burchnall's beautiful HO 1930's Eastern Loggers, and Gerry Alber's huge, incredible Virginian which also included MMR Allen McClelland's new V&O III. For me this tour was "worth the price of admission" as each of the layouts was wonderfully crafted and ran flawlessly. Super Tour photos taken by FVD members are featured on the next several pages. Enjoy! WH



This is Bob Montgomery's fantastic HO Southern Railway. Hundreds of structures and bridges—big and small—on this large layout were beautifully scratch built by Bob. Jim Allen photos.

## Fun Stuff by Jim Allen

This is the vehicle used to transport the Soviet Space Shuttle Buran to its launch location. If you look closely, you will see the four diesel locomotives used to move this mobile launch pad. The Bailonur Cosmodrome used an extensive wide gauge rail system to move spacecraft to different launch locations. Note the similarity of the Soviet shuttle to US shuttles. This space plane was not a success and the Soviets dropped out of the shuttle race.





# Layout of the Month: Indy Convention Layouts, Part 2



MMR, Allen McClelland's *third* V&O RR was the cover story of the 2013 *Great Model Railroads* along with Gerry Albers' *Virginian*. The V&O occupies a section of Albers' huge HO *Virginian* layout because Gerry offered his good friend Allen space to build V&O III after he and his wife moved into a small retirement home. "Coal is King" on both the V&O and *Virginian* which are set in the Appalachians in the 1950's. McClelland (upper right) is one of two dispatchers on Albers' large railroad today. The V&O is seen in the upper left photo, the *Virginian* in the lower two photos. Left side photos by Walt Herrick, right side photos by Jim Allen.



Curt LaRue's beautiful HO scale *Pennsy* layout also features coal railroading in the Appalachian Mountains. On the left, a big PRR 4-8-2 hauls empties back to one of the five mines on the layout. On the right, is the large *Atlas Coal Co.* mine and auxiliary buildings. Walt Herrick photos.





## Layout of the Month: Indy Convention Layouts, Part 2

Professional model builder, Jerry Strangarity's, HO Reading layout set in the 1940's, was another Cincinnati Super Tour layout. Strangarity's exquisite period oil refinery is shown to the right, while his steam locomotive servicing facilities are shown below. Scratch built row houses from Jerry's youth are shown in the below right photo. Most structures on the layout are scratch built, with some kit-bashed craftsman kits and a few plastic kit-bashed structures. His superb track work is hand laid except for hidden trackage and in staging yards. The layout was built in two rooms with the first room featuring an urban setting, and the second room featuring a rural setting. Refinery and servicing facility photos are by Mike Hirvela, and the row house photo is by Walt Herrick.



John Burchnall's beautiful Eastern Loggers layout is shown in the above photos. The era is the 1930's and when viewing the layout, you could almost smell the fresh cut logs and lumber. The layout is a study in historic logging practices. A 2-8-2 Camelback drops a couple of hoppers of coal for the mill's power plant in the upper left photo, while stacks of finished lumber await shipping in the upper right photo. The scale lumber in the stacks was all carefully cut to size on a *table saw* and then glued together into stacks. The Burchnall layout was the last stop for Bus #1 of the Cincinnati Super Tour's two busses. Walt Herrick photos.



## Mike's Minute from FVD Superintendent, Mike Hirvela

I and FVD member Dave Leider, MMR, and friends from our neighboring NMRA divisions, among others, experienced some legendary “Hoosier Hospitality” at the 2016 edition of the Michiana Division’s annual Edu-Train conference, September 30th and October 1<sup>st</sup>. This year’s event was held on the campus of Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana. The conference was held in 3 meeting rooms of the university’s Morris Inn. One room was set up for presentations, of which there were 20 clinics, on topics ranging from Flatcar Loads, Sounds for DCC decoders, JMRI and its applications, Better Modeling using Photography, and Industries along the tracks. A young staff engineer from the university’s IT department also presented an overview of 3-D printing and where the technology is going. (Hint: It’s moving toward using liquid resin rather than poly styrene, and the detail attainable is phenomenal!) The second room was setup for static displays of rolling stock and buildings, and a continuous hands-on clinic on weathering techniques. The third room had an HO scale Free-Mo modular RR set-up for observation and demonstration. Four home layouts and one club layout were open for visiting on Friday night, but with the heavy rains and darkness, I opted out. The clinics were interesting and informative and I think I finally have interlocking tower mechanical locking beds figured out. It’s always been a puzzle. The Michiana guys and the presenters did a nice job this year. Next year’s conference is scheduled for September 22 and 23, 2017, again at Notre Dame, but in the McKenna Conference Center across the street from the Morris Inn. Logistics are pending.

The conference was capped by the fall meeting of the Midwest Region NMRA Board of Directors. A number of topics were discussed, including the NMRA’s application of 501 (c) (3) status, a new Youth Committee Chair, Mr. Milton Dings; and the Midwest Region 2017 Convention in Rockford, IL, next April, among other topics. The Rock River Valley Division will be celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017 and everyone is invited to participate in their celebration and the region convention. Details are forthcoming. Check our FVD website for updates.

Before I close this month, I have a couple of questions for you and a couple of reminders. First, the questions: as FVD Superintendent, I am also your representative as a Director on the Board of the NMRA’s Midwest Region. This board meets twice a year to conduct MWR business. After being at the last meeting, two questions come to mind: 1) What NMRA items do you want me to bring to the board’s attention? This is one way we can provide feedback to the MWR. And, 2) What do you think of a future joint meet with another division here or there, and which one—RRVD, DuPage or WISE, perhaps? I’d appreciate your thoughts on this. Second, the reminders: we are still looking for a Ways and Means Trainmaster to organize and run our High Wheeler Train Show in 2018. We are also looking for a new venue for our train show in the northwest suburbs. Please contact me if you have ideas on either of these needs of the division. Thanks!



This year’s Edu-Train Conference was held at Notre Dame University in late September. It was again sponsored by the Michiana Division for the purpose of giving NMRA members the opportunity to further their model railroading education in a variety of subjects. The top photo shows a 5 x 6 foot model of the joint CE&I/PRR depot in Terra Haute, IN in HO scale. The bottom photo is of the Free-Mo layout set up at this year’s conference. Photos by Mike Hirvela.

## September's Contest Winners Contest Photos by Jim Osborn



September's contest was "Passenger Locomotives" (limit 4). Six very nice entries were received with the winners shown in Jim Osborn's photos on the left. All six of September's entries can be viewed on the FVD website. **Harry Meislahn took First Place** with his beautiful, re-detailed HO Southern Pacific 4-8-2 #4385. Harry re-detailed his locomotive to closely match the prototype SP 4385. **Second Place was Jim Landwerhr's** classic set of Santa Fe ABBA F7s. Jim added more details to his Proto 2000 models including cab and truck lights. **Third Place** went to **Mike Hirvela** for his pristine Chicago North Western 400 4-6-2 #2903.

October's contest is "Concealed or Closed Load" (cannot see load). We look forward to seeing you and your contest entry then! WH

## September's Clinic

September's clinic, "Stock Yards and Packers of Chicago" was presented by **David Leider, MMR**, (right). David gave us a fascinating, in depth look at the rise and fall of stock yards and the packing industry in Chicago. From the late 1800's to the 1950's, this was a huge Chicago industry and railroads played a big part in its growth. David's slide presentation had period photos of early stock yards, buildings, and railroads, as well as maps of the locations of packers and the rail lines serving them. Thank you, David! **October's clinic is "Using Arduino Devices" by George K.** and promises to be another interesting and useful presentation for FVD members.



## Member News

FVD Membership Services Trainmaster, **Bert Lattan**, reports that division membership stands at 227, up 2 from August....Midwest Region Secretary and FVD member, **David Johnson**, recently emailed a list of all MWR Key Personnel to those individuals and the FVD was well represented. **Jim and Bob Landwehr** are both MWR Directors-at-Large, and **Mike Hirvela** is a Division Director. Committee Chairs include **Jim Landwehr** (Achievement Program), **David Johnson** (Education), **Don Cook** MMR (Election), **Jim Osborn** (Internet), **David Leider** MMR (Publications), **Ingrid Drozdak** (Photo Contest), and **Walt Herrick** (Photographer). WH

## Modeling Tip

Here are a couple of excellent glues you may want to try in your model building:

- Micro-Mark's Detail Tack is made for gluing figures and detail parts to scenery. Put a small dab on the figure or detail part, wait a few minutes and position. The glue becomes very tacky and "grabs" nicely. Though quick and strong grabbing, it still allows you to reposition the figure or part if needed. Hobby Tack dries clear. Purchase Detail-Tack from Micro-Mark directly at [www.micromark.com](http://www.micromark.com).
- Quick Grip comes in a green and yellow tube. It is a contact type cement also with quick and great "grab". The difference between Quick Grip and Detail Tack is that Quick Grip can be made to be "average" to very strong binding depending on how you apply it. Quick Grip is available at Hobby Lobby and other craft stores and at some WalMarts. WH

## 2016 - 2017 Fox Valley Division Meeting Schedule

Except as noted under "Other", all meetings are held from 1:30 to about 4:00 pm at the Gary Morava Recreation Center, 110 W. Camp McDonald Road, Prospect Heights, IL 60070. Visitors are always welcome per the NMRA's visitor policy. Note that clinics are subject to change without notice. For the latest clinic and all FVD news and information, visit our web site at [www.foxvalleydivision.org](http://www.foxvalleydivision.org).

<u>Date</u>	<u>Clinic</u>	<u>Contest</u>	<u>Other</u>
Oct. 16, 2016	"Using Arduino Devices" by George K.	Concealed or Closed Load—cannot see load	
Nov. 20, 2016	"Modeling Under a Microscope" by Brian Williams	Structure of Your Choice—2000 min to 5000 max scale sq. feet	
Dec. 18, 2016	"Midwest Modutrak" by Mike Skibbe	Odd Consist—max 4 units	<b>1:00 pm start.</b> Pizza lunch.
Jan. 15, 2017	"Operation Lifesaver" by Dave Phillips	Refrigerated Train—Mechanical or iced; 6 car max	
Feb. 19, 2017	"Computer Modeling" by Carl Wagus	The exterior detail of a structure including walls and roof	
March 19, 2017	"GN Ore Modeling" by Bob Hammer	Structure of Your Choice—any size or type	
April 23, 2017	"A Ride on Africa's Blue Train, Rovos Rails Pride of Africa" by George Ferraro	Yard Switchers—max 2	<b>1:00 pm start.</b> Pizza lunch. FVD officer elections.
<b>April 28–30, 2017</b>	<b>2017 Midwest Region Convention "Golden Rails" hosted by the Rock River Valley Division at the Holiday Inn in Rockford, IL. Complete information on the division's website: <a href="http://rrvd-nmra.com">rrvd-nmra.com</a>.</b>		
May 21, 2017	"Introduction to Operations Under Time Table and Train Order Authority" by Chris Czyzewski	Exposed or Open Load of Your Choice	Last monthly meeting for 2015–2016
<b>July 30–August 6, 2017</b>	<b>2017 NMRA National Convention "Orange Blossom Special" in Orlando, FL. See the convention's website for complete information: <a href="http://nmra2017orlando.org">nmra2017orlando.org</a></b>		





### About the Fox Valley Division

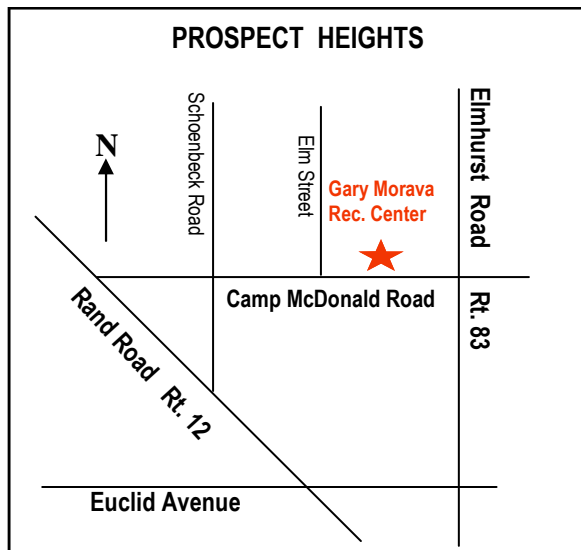
If you receive this newsletter you live in the Midwest Region and Fox Valley Division of the National Model Railroad Association or NMRA. The Fox Valley Division (FVD) includes all of McHenry and parts of Cook, Kane, and Lake Counties in northeast Illinois. About 220 members of varied ages and modeling 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 monthly 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 monthly meetings. To promote the hobby of model railroading, the FVD normally sponsors and runs a large train show called "High Wheeler" in early March each year at Harper College in Palatine, Illinois. (Note: the 2017 High Wheeler is cancelled due to a major renovation of the Harper gymnasium used for the show.)

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

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

**Questions? Contact FVD Superintendent, Mike Hirvela, or any FVD Board member listed below. We're here to help!**



- The FVD's monthly meeting is at the :  
**Gary Morava Recreation Center**  
110 Camp McDonald Road  
Prospect Heights, IL. 60070
- Our regular meeting time is:  
1:30 to about 4:00 p.m.
- 2016 – 2017 meeting dates, contest and clinic info are on page 6 of this newsletter.

FVD web site: [www.foxvalleydivision.org](http://www.foxvalleydivision.org)

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