



THE SEMAPHORE

December 2017

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



We Build a New N Scale Layout article and photos By Walt Herrick

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Semaphore Editor:
Walt Herrick, Jr.

Next FVD Meeting:
Sunday, December 17
1:30 pm* at the
Morava Rec Center in
Prospect Heights

Contest: Hopper Train—
max 4 cars

Clinic: "Ramblings of an
Old Railroader"
by Fred Henize.

***Note, regular start time;**
NO pizza lunch this year.



The KV&EC's new N Holiday layout is about half finished in this photo.

After last year's Holiday Train Display was over at Del Webb's Prairie Lodge in Huntley, the KV&EC Model Railroad Club's 4 x 8 Holiday Train Display N scale layout was looking a little tired and run down. More than 7 years of use had taken its toll. So, the decision was made to build a new N layout to fit the same foot print as the old one. Size was important because the new layout had to fit in the *con't on p.2*

Fun Stuff by Jim Allen

Though not rail related, the photo shows the transport of a huge piece of equipment on a transporter similar to a Schnabel rail car except it's used on roads. In this case Transmodal Co. is moving a 270Tm transformer for the French energy solutions company Areva. FYI, I counted 288 tires on that thing!



We Build a New N Scale Layout con't

from p. 1 exact same location as the old N layout.

Holiday Train Display Framework

The KV&EC's Holiday Train Display layout has a unique, lightweight framework which was designed and built by member Earl Maha. The entire display was built in "wedding cake" fashion with four "layers", one layer or level for each scale on the layout. The lowest level features G scale trains, ten inches above that is the O scale level, eight inches above the O level is the HO level, and six inches above the HO level is the N layout. All of the levels except for the N level break down into pieces. The N level is one 4x8 piece in and of itself. It takes about two and a half, six hour days to assemble the entire display and one day to take it down and put all the pieces in the club's storage room or under the permanent layouts in the club's train room.

Building the new N Holiday Layout

Walt Herrick designed the new N layout. The new layout's track plan is quite similar to the old layout's with a double track main line, a branch line and a trolley line. All running would be continuous display running with the trolley line being point to point under the control of an automatic reversing device stopping and starting the trolley at each end with an intermediate stop in the middle of the line. New to the layout are two staging tracks, a large mountain, a city scene deck and farm scene. The old layout's signature river crossing by four rail lines was rebuilt on the new layout.

The Builders

Builders of the new layout were:

- Earl Maha, benchwork
- Walt Herrick, design, structures, scenery
- Bob Janninck, track laying, scenery
- Alex Bukala, wiring and controls
- Pete Walton, scenery
- Dave Carrington, structures, scenery

The new layout took about 8 weeks of part time work to complete. It is now up and running on the KV&EC's Holiday Display Layout at Sun City Huntley's Prairie Lodge. It will be there through December 28, 11 am to 3 pm week days, 11 to 5 Saturdays, and 11 to 4 pm Sundays. The Holiday Train Display is closed Christmas Day and open 9 am to about noon Christmas Eve.



Here's the completed N layout in place right above the HO layout on the KV&EC club's Holiday Train Display. Pete Walton "planted" 70 some fir trees on the mountain, and says it still needs more!

Club president, Don Espeseth looks on as Bob Janninck (standing) and Earl Maha install the layout's masonite back drop in the early stages of construction. The center opening is used for access.



The layout is a bit further along now as Alex Bukala works on wiring the trolley lines's automatic reversing unit. Though Kato Unitrak was used on most of the layout, one section of the branch line has a sweeping curve using cork roadbed and flex track.



We Build a New N Scale Layout con't



A Metra Operation North Pole commuter train pulls into the station at Sunnyside (upper left) while two SDs lead a freight through town (upper right). Scenery on all the Holiday layouts is “winter” with everything covered in snow.



The old N Holiday layout featured a river crossing scene with four bridges. This scene was again modeled on the new N layout (above left). A trolley makes a station stop in Lower Sunnyside (right), while a Union Pacific u-boat slowly drags its local freight train past “the farm on the hill” (lower left). The layout’s scenery was roughed in this year. Scenic refinements and added detailing will be done in future years. Kids (and their parents!) love the KV&EC club’s Holiday Display Layout (below right) with hundreds visiting the layout each year.



Mike's Minute by Mike Hirvela

“Tis the Season!”

This week as I write this Mike's Minute on December 5th, it seems like the weather is reminding us that this is winter after all. After our mild, often warm fall, I was beginning to wonder if and when winter would ever arrive. Well, it's now here, and along with the colder temperatures, comes the model railroad events and operations season. I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunities to engage in some educational, inspiring and social activity within our hobby during this model railroading “season”. For example, here is my December (Keep in mind I'm a model railroading “addict”!):

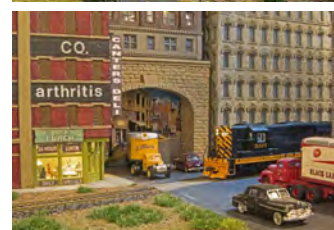
- December 1: Meeting night at the IGN Club in Zion
- December 2: Open House at the Tri-County Model RR Club in Union Grove, Wis.
- December 3: Operations at Tom Thompson's ATSF RR in Streamwood.
- December 9&10: NS&W Module RR run at the Glenview Public Library
- December 10: Great Midwest Train Show (aka: Wheaton Swap Meet) at the DuPage County Fair grounds, in Wheaton
- December 15: Operations at the AHSOME Club, Arlington Heights
- December 16: Operations at Dennis Glynn's UP RR in Kenosha, Wis.
- December 17: Fox Valley Division member meeting, Prospect Heights
- December 24-25: Christmas observances
- December 29-31: Great Train Show at the Lake County Fairgrounds, Grayslake

Then there is January 2018 and beyond. As you can see, some things on my above list have already occurred, but plenty remain for December. Our Fox Valley Division web site (www.foxvalleydivision.org) has a few more ideas for you. So, no matter whether you model railroad at home, what kind of train you have under the tree (or none), or your participation with a group at a public display, there is still more to enjoy with the wide variety of what our hobby has to offer during the model railroading season. I look forward to seeing you at an upcoming meeting, event or op session!

Until then, Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah and a Happy New *Model Railroading* Year! (Oh, and may Santa bring you your heart's desire this year.)

“Capitol 400” MWR Convention April 13-15

Madison, Wisconsin will be the site of the 2018 Midwest Region Convention on April 13-15. If you haven't attended a convention before, this will be a great one to start with. For those who are old hands at conventions, we have some excellent clinics and layouts to see. Featured clinics include Model Railroader contributing editor **Tony Koester's** "Lessons Learned Building Two -- Now Three! -- Layouts." **A unique opportunity not available to any model railroad group previously, will be Tom Garver's program on the photography of O. Winston Link.** Tom was one of Link's assistants on his Norfolk & Western night photography sessions and will share stories of how the photos were created and a broader look at Link's other photography. You don't want to miss this one! We have over **20 area layouts to tour with four open for operating sessions on Friday.** Of course the contest room will showcase some great modeling and photography as well. **Non-Rails** haven't been forgotten, with craft projects, clinics, a tour of the Epic System's amazing campus and Project Linus. Every registration includes the **Saturday night banquet with guest speaker Tony Koester.** Tony will regale us with stories of personalities he has met over his 50+ years of model railroading. His wry humor always makes for a fun time. So please join us on April 13-15, 2018 for the Capitol 400 in Madison. **Full information is available on the South Central Wisconsin Division website at nmra-scwd.org.** All Aboard!



November's Clinic and Contest Photos by Jim Osborn

November's Clinic

The Fox Valley Division's webmaster, **Jim Osborn**, presented an outstanding clinic in November, "**Signaling the CNW's Western Division**". Jim first gave division members a brief tour of his C & NW, Western Division, railroad and then an overview of the main elements of the automatic signaling system he operates on the pike. There are 19 operating semaphore heads, 45 target and dwarf signals and one smash board that protect train movements and turnout settings. He also has 6 operating grade crossings watching over the vehicular traffic on the layout. He gave division members an east-bound photographic cab ride from end to end of the mainline and showed a short video of four semaphore heads in operation at one of the main interchanges on the railroad. He wrapped up with some reference material and a discussion of things to come for modelers interested in signaling their layouts. The reference material was distributed as a handout and is also available as a download off the division website: www.foxvalleydivision.org. All in all, this was one terrific clinic by Jim Osborn, who is also the Midwest Region's webmaster. Thank you, Jim! In **December** we'll hear "**The Ramblings of an Old Railroader**" by **Fred Henize**.



November's Contest

November's contest "**Small Structure—max 300 scale sq. ft.**" drew eight excellent and varied entries. **George Trandel placed First** with his exquisite scratch built "**Handcar Shed**" featuring a removable roof and complete interior detail including tools on the work bench. **Second Place went to Art Jones** for his unique, scratch built, rolling "**Blacksmith Shop**". Art's model also was well detailed and nicely weathered. Another unique model took **Third Place** and that was **Leif Hanson's** scratch built "**Rural Post Office**". Congratulations to our winners and all those who entered the contest. And thanks to Dave Crement, MMR, for bringing a collection of his small scratch built structures for us to view. **December's contest is "Hopper Train—max 4 cars."**



Member News

Another reminder for December's meeting: there'll be **no pizza lunch served at this year's December 17 meeting**. Sorry!... Membership Services Trainmaster, **Bert Lattan**, reports that the FVD's November membership report unfortunately shows the division **down eight members** from October currently standing at **203 members**. One new member was added last month, though. Please welcome **Mitchell Wade, Jr.** to the Fox Valley Division. **Mitchell is from Chicago**.... As this is being written, plans are being made to build a model railroading display for the Mt. Prospect Public Library in March....**Finally, the FVD Board of Directors wishes you a wonderful holiday season and a peaceful, prosperous 2018.** WH

2017 - 2018 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.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Clinic</u>	<u>Contest</u>	<u>Other</u>
Dec. 17, 2017	"Ramblings of an Old Railroader" by Fred Henize	Hopper Train—4 cars max	1:30 pm start; <u>No pizza lunch</u>
Jan. 21, 2018	TBD	Large Structure—5000 scale square feet or larger	
Feb. 18, 2018	"Mid 20th Century Box Cars by George Trandel	Gondola with load—4 cars max	
March 18, 2018	"Using Ground Goop for Scenery" by Art Jones	Diorama with On Line Structure	
April 13–15, 2018	2018 Midwest Region Convention "Capital 400" hosted by the South Central Wisconsin Division at the Radisson Hotel in Madison, WI. More information at the division's web site: nmra.scwd.org		
April 22, 2018	"Two Rivers Wisconsin 20 Years Later" by Mike Hirvela	Maintenance of Way Train	
May 20, 2018	"Building My Great Midwestern Layout" by Pete Walton	Illuminated Structure—any size	Last monthly meeting for 2017 – 2018
August 5–12, 2018	2018 NMRA National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. See the convention's web site for more information: www.kc2018.org		





About the Fox Valley Division

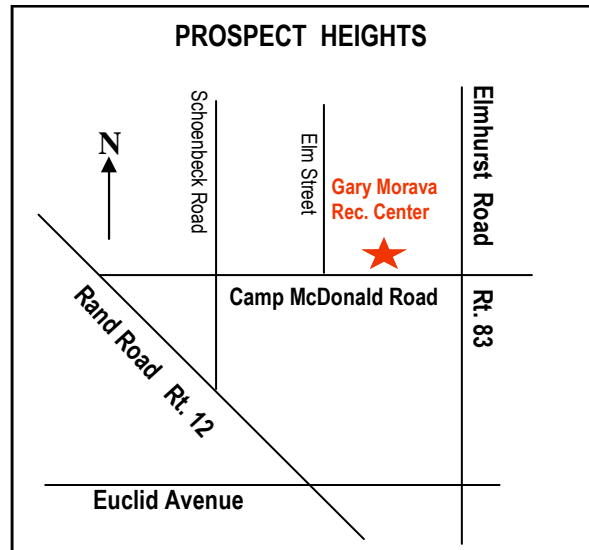
If you receive this newsletter you live in the Midwest Region and Fox Valley Division of the National Model Railroad Association or NMRA. The Fox Valley Division (FVD) includes all of Lake and McHenry, and parts of Cook and Kane Counties in northeast Illinois. About 210 members of varied ages and modeling 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 Recreation 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 sponsors and runs the large train show called "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 and bring a friend. We'd love to see you. Also visit us on the web at:

www.foxvalleydivision.org.

Questions? Contact FVD Superintendent, Mike Hirvela, or any FVD Board member listed below. We are 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.
- 2015 – 2016 meeting dates, contest and clinic info are on page 6 of this newsletter.

FVD web site: www.foxvalleydivision.org

FVD mailing address: Fox Valley Division
Midwest Region-NMRA
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Ways & Means TM—open

Note: TM designates "Trainmaster"