



THE SEMAPHORE

November 2019

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



Lake County Model Railroad Club Layout of the Month article & photos by Walt Herrick

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Next FVD Meeting:
Sunday, November 17
1:30 pm at the

Morava Rec Center in
Prospect Heights

Contest: UP 4014 or other
Steam Photo

Clinic: Electronics & Model
Railroading by George K.



The **Lake County Model Railroad Club** in Wauconda, IL was started in 1972 and is still going strong today. The club's layout, the **Wauconda Central Railroad**, has withstood the test of time and exists in basically the same configuration, in the same location it started in 47 years ago—the basement of a downtown Wauconda retail business. Above we see a ten car Burlington Zephyr powered by two E units running elephant style, gliding through Ft. Atkinson, WI. The Zephyr is owned by club member Tim Michany. *con't on page 2*

(Not so) Fun Stuff by Walt Herrick

To tie in with November's contest theme and because I can't resist telling you this little "Not So Fun Stuff" story, I've "hi-jacked" this month's "Fun Stuff" column from Jim Allen. My story centers around the grainy photo of UP 4014 to the right. (This photo will *not* be entered in November's contest!) I had chased 4014 much of the day she departed Illinois, and wanted one last shot of her. I found what I thought was a good picture taking spot on a steep embankment near a big curve just west of Dixon, IL. The embankment was completely overgrown with high, thick weeds and vegetation. After twenty minutes of waiting in the stuff, 4014 appeared and I got my shot. When I returned home and checked my shots on the computer, I was disappointed the "Big Curve" shot turned out so grainy. But, I was even *more* disappointed that night when I took off my pants for bed and discovered *two dozen nasty chigger bites all over my legs!* Ahhhhh! The things we do to get a railroad photo. Was this one worth it? I think not!



Lake County Model Railroad Club

The Lake County Model Railroad Club currently has 21 members ranging in age from 16 to some in their 80s. There are 3 father /son memberships. The Lake County Club is an *active* club. Members meet informally at the club most Friday nights from about 7:00 to 9:00 pm to run trains, work on the layout, plan projects, and talk model railroading. Visitors are welcome at these informal sessions and are free to ask questions and look over the layout. Two Open Houses are held each year in the fall and spring. **The 2019 Fall Open House will be held November 16 and 17 from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm.**

An interesting thing about the LCMRR Club layout is that, despite being built in the early 1970s, the basic walk-in/around the walls design has remained the same. That includes its single track, 360 foot, hand laid main line. “We’ve found the original lay out of the bench work and main line to be so good, we don’t want to change it. We’ve done modifications here and there, but the basic shape of the layout has stayed the same.” says club president, Trent Blasco. Though the shape of the layout and its main line have stayed the same, layout concepts have changed (see page 5, “Modeling Tip”). At present, the layout’s concept is a free-lanced, mid-western, Class I railroad set in the “transition era”. It is a concept that is serving the club very well. *con’t on page 3*



Steve Greenup’s huge D&RG 4-6-6-4 articulated steam locomotive just barely fits on the turntable at the Monona servicing facilities (top right photo). Tim Michany’s C&O Allegheny pulls a heavy ore train by 18 year old Jack Follet’s Milwaukee Road 4-8-4 in the center photo. The Wauconda Central’s main line is fully signaled. Todd Evans’ Alco RSD-15 sits beside the scratch built Wauconda Tower in the below left photo, while Charlei Burdie’s CNJ geep pulls a local freight over the wood trestle at Fox Lake.



Lake County Model Railroad Club



The top photo shows the main aisle of the Lake County Model Railroad Club as you walk into the layout room. On the left of the photo, below the top deck of the layout, is a long staging yard as seen in the middle photo. This is one of the layout's three staging yards. Below, Todd Evans' black and silver Santa Fe RS2 idles in the Wauconda industrial area waiting for workers to finish loading the Rock Island box car in the distance.



Basic Layout Information

Layout Name:	Wauconda Central RR
Layout Builder:	Many past and current members of the LCMRR Club.
Layout Location:	Basement of a down town Wauconda, IL business.
Layout Scale:	HO
Layout Size:	30 x 60 feet
Layout Style:	Walk-in; around the walls
Layout Concept/ Locale:	Class I mid-western with scenery gradually being changed from western to mid-western locales.
Layout Era:	Late 1940s to mid 1960s
Construction begun:	January 1972
Bench Work:	Mostly L-girder
Sub Roadbed:	Plywood
Roadbed:	Homasote
Track:	Handlaid codes 83,70 & 55 with some flex track in staging and hidden track.
Track specs:	360 foot main line with a minimum 48 inch radius and max 1.25% grade. 152 turn-outs with 35 powered.
Scenery:	Just about every scenery method has been used on the layout over the years.
Structures:	Kits, kit-bashing, scratch built
Locomotives:	Steam, diesel mix from various mfgs. Sound in many locos; 35% locos club owned; 65% member owned.
Rolling Stock:	Kits, RTR, scratch built
Control:	Digitrax DCC; tethered & wireless throttles
Signaling:	Layout is fully signaled with JMRI control.
Operations:	JMRI switch lists
Open House:	Fall Open House November 16, 17 from 11 am to 4 pm.
Club Address:	107 S. Main Street Wauconda beneath Honey Hill Coffee. Note! <u>Layout's entrance is in back of the building.</u>
Web Site:	http://www.lcmrr.org
Other:	The LCMRR club is one of Chicagoland's oldest MRR clubs.

Mike's Minute by FVD Superintendent Mike Hirvela

2019 Chicagoland Railroad Prototype Modelers Meet in Lisle

With the month of October comes football games, leaves turning colors, days of getting less sunshine, and children out trick or treating on Halloween. For railroad modelers, October also means the Chicagoland RPM meet held at the end of the month. This year, the Chicagoland RPM meet was held at the Sheraton Hotel in Lisle, IL, October 24 to 26. The Fox Valley Division was again asked to co-sponsor this year's meet and we again heartily agreed. It's a win-win for everyone. Our FVD and NMRA logos were prominently displayed on all publicity for the meet, and our table at the meet made us very visible to the many modelers at the show. As usual, this year's meet included attendee's models on display (whether finished or not), information sessions and manufacturer displays. Modelers submitted display items on a variety of modeling subjects and in a variety of scales, eras, and themes. As nice as the completed models were—and there were some GREAT models exhibited—the unfinished or work-in-progress models seemed to garner the most attention as the owner's efforts in research and construction techniques were observed and appreciated. There were also 24 information sessions *per day*. These are like our NMRA “clinics,” and are given on a wide variety of subjects, too many to list here. Presenters included: famous modelers and info guru's like Ted Culotta, Clark Propst, Keith Kohlman, Jack Ozanich, MR columnist Jerry Dziedzic, Mont Switzer, manufacturer Steve Funaro (of F & C), Rich Mahaney, and the FVD's own Jeremy and Kristin Dummler; along with some new comers like CGW modeler Jason Klocke. In addition, members freely exchanged questions, ideas and construction tips and techniques among themselves. The Mid-West Mod-u-Trak guys displayed their N and HO scale model railroads, and a number of manufacturers, dealers and vendors filled out the hotel ballroom. One cool activity was an L-shaped set of tables in one corner of the room, with a single track main line laid of Kato Uni-trak with passing sidings on it. This was Part 2 of an info session on Timetable and Train Order operations. Here folks were learning about the intricacies of TT-TO, with a layout to practice on! What a great idea simply executed! All in all, this year's Chicagoland RPM offered a plethora of fun and informative activities. It was a great meet.

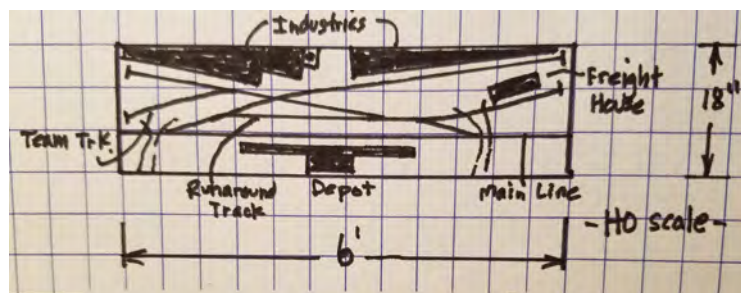
Finally, this year's Chicagoland RPM included a *special treat* which I will expound upon at the next FVD member gathering on November 17th. Nope, I'm not letting this one out of the bag. You'll hafta be there on November 17 to find out what it is! Now, it's time for me to go down stairs and run some trains!

Attend Trainfest for FREE!

That's right, *attend Trainfest for FREE!* Just donate an hour of your time helping the Trainfest staff run the show, and you get in free. You must volunteer in advance to take advantage of this offer. To volunteer go to: www.Trainfest.com and click on the “Volunteers” section on their home page. Fill out their on line questionnaire and wait for their response. Act soon as Trainfest is just around the corner and volunteer spots go fast! WH

December's Contest: Switching Layout Track Plan Explained

The question was asked at our October meet, **What is a “Switching Layout Track Plan”?** The question referred to our December Contest, “Switching Layout Track Plan”. **Contest Trainmaster, Jim Landwehr** provides us with some answers: “For me a ‘Switching Layout Track Plan’ is one where switching cars is the primary purpose of the layout. Any kind of switching is OK whether it's yard switching, industrial switching, passenger car switching—the possibilities are endless. The plan can be simple or complex, big or small, in any scale.” Below is an HO scale “switching track plan” for a small 18 inch x 6 foot, 1950s or 60s town site. Note, the plan does not have to be perfectly drawn! WH



October's Clinic and Contest Photos by Walt Herrick

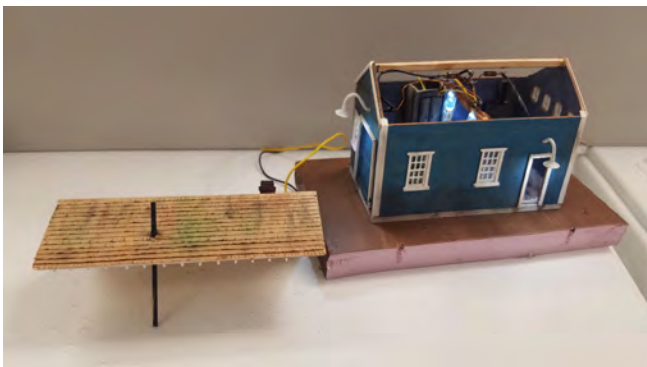
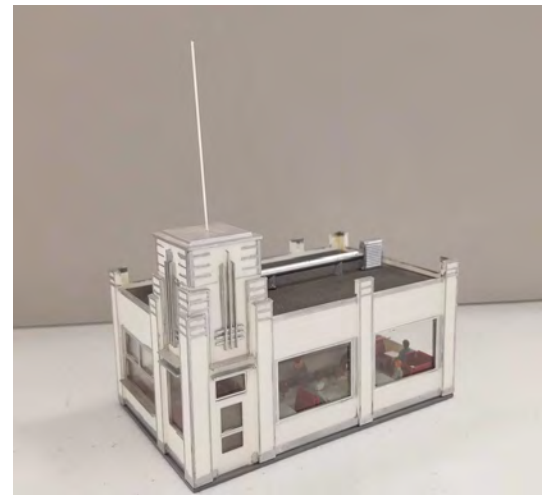
October's Clinic: Rail Travel in Japan by Mike Wood

FVD member, Mike Wood's (right) work has kept him on the road quite a bit the past two years. Much of Mike's travel has been to foreign countries, and he has spent a lot of time in Japan recently. While there he has been able to do some rail fanning and picture taking on the weekends. From his photos, Mike developed a great clinic on "Rail Travel in Japan" which he shared with us at our October 20 FVD meet. This was an excellent clinic which showed how the finest passenger railroad in the world goes about its daily business. **Thank you Mike Wood for a great clinic!** **November's clinic is "Electronics in Model Rail-roading"** by another fine FVD clinician, **George K.** Come November 17 to see what helpful electronics information and tips George has for us to improve our layouts. WH



October's Contest: One Structure

Our October contest "One Structure" drew four entries. **1st Place** in the voting went to **Mike Hirvela** for his HO scale "Grandma Bea's Snack Bar" (right). Mike took a Walther's White Castle kit and tuned it into Grandma Bea's complete with interior detailing. **2nd Place** went to **Leif Hansen** for his nicely scratch built, HO scale "Motor Car Shed" (below left) with exterior and interior lighting. **Tim Kleimeyer** finished **3rd with his** HO "Antique Store" (below middle) built from a DPM kit. The orange brick color on Tim's model was "spot on". Our fourth entry was **Chuck Rita's** "Gromer Foods" flat (below right), and also featured nice brick work using Chuck's "spackle for motar" finishing method. **November's Contest is "UP 2014 or other Steam Photo"** Bring in one 5 x 7 or 8 x 10 inch photo of 4014 or other steam locomotive for this contest. (Note: Walgreens or CVS can easily and inexpensively enlarge your digital photo in about two days.) We look forward to seeing a bunch of interesting and cool steam photos at the November 17 meet! WH



Modeling Tip: "Making Do"

We've all learned that in life we sometimes just have to "make do with what we have". Such is the case with the Lake County Model Railroad Club's scen-ery. Much of it is western Rocky Mountain type scenery that was built in earlier times when several of the layout's concepts prominently featured the Rockies. Currently the layout's locale is based squarely in the midwest, northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin to be specific. The Rocky Mountain scenery is gradually being transformed into typical mid western scenes and the club is "making do" with its old mountain scenery during the transformation. "Making do" is not such a tough task here considering how well done the old scenery is! WH



New At Our Meets! Show & Tells and Bull Sessions!

FVD members are invited to bring anything railroad related they want to “show and tell” members about to our monthly meets. If it interests you, it will probably interest others, so bring it on in! We’re also holding an informal “Bull Session” after every meet this year. Ask questions, talk about show and tell stuff, or just “shoot the railroading or model railroading breeze” following each monthly meet. You are invited to participate in both of these new activities! WH



Member News

Fox Valley Division Super Mike Hirvela also serves the division as its **Membership Promotions Trainmaster**. In that capacity, Mike is the division’s ambassador at just about every local railroading and model railroading event. He mans our division’s promotion table (right) answering questions about our hobby, the NMRA, and the FVD. In this month’s “Mike’s Minute” column, Mike talks about the Prototype Railroad Modelers meet he represented the FVD at last month. The division owes Mr Hirvela a debt of gratitude for the hours he spends promoting the FVD and our hobby. **Thank you Mike Hirvela for all your unselfish work on our and our hobby’s behalf!** WH



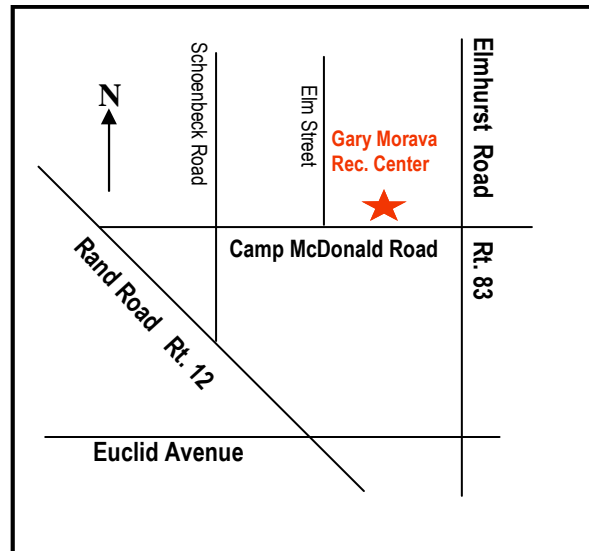
2019 - 2020 Fox Valley Division Meeting Schedule

All meetings are held from **1:30 to about 4:00 pm** (except as noted under “Other” below) 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>
November 17	Electronics and Model Railroading by George K.	UP 4014 or other Steam Photo— limit 1 photo	
December 15	Great Northern’s Mesabi Division by Bob Hamner	Switching Layout Track Plan— any scale	1 pm start with a pizza lunch
January 19	\$220 Laser Cutter by Gary Saxton	Open Loads—limit 4 cars	
February 16	Take Full Advantage of Your Layout Design Software by Steve Miazga	12 x 12 inch Diorama— any scale	
March 15	LCC by Paul Wussow	TBD	
April 19	Changing Scales by Jeremy Dummler	Weathered Model— limit 1 model	Annual elections 1 pm start with sub lunch
May 14—17	Midwest Region Spring Convention “The Peoria Rocket” in Peoria, IL Check the MWR web site www.mwr-nmra.org for more information.		
June 7	Crystal Lake, IL Diorama by Walt Herrick	Unfinished Project	Last meet for 2019-2020
July 12—18	NMRA National Convention “Gateway 2020” in St. Louis, MO For information, go to the convention’s web site: www.gateway2020.org.		



PROSPECT HEIGHTS, IL



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 190 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.
- 2019 – 2020 meeting dates, contest and clinic info are on page 6 of this newsletter.

FVD web site: www.foxvalleydivision.org

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