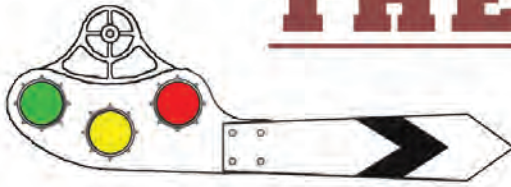


# THE SEMAPHORE



January 2020

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



Happy New Year  
Fox Valley Division!

## Jeff Jarr's C&NW

Layout of the Month article & photos by Walt Herrick

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### Next FVD Meet:

Sunday, January 19

1:30 pm at the

Morava Rec Center in  
Prospect Heights

Contest: Open Loads-limit 4 cars

Clinic: \$220 Laser Cutter by  
Gary Saxton



It's summer 1941 in this scene on former FVD Superintendent **Jeff Jarr's** free-lanced, HO scale, Chicago & Northwestern—Chicago to Duluth model railroad. A brand new CNW "slant nose" EMD E6 is idling in the Northwestern's Chicago Northside Station ready to depart for Duluth, MN with its Streamliner. Sitting on Track #1 is a freshly washed Union Pacific M10001 streamliner. Jeff Jarr has several hundred CNW locos and even more rolling stock in a wide variety of eras neatly stored in many large, wooden, custom built, drawers below his *Con't on p. 2*

## Fun Stuff by Jim Allen

The photo to the right shows a local passenger train that just "loafs" along from station to station. Ouch! Sorry to start the New Year with such an awful pun. In spite of the pun, I wish you and yours a very "Happy New Year!" anyway!



**April Election Nominations** Everyone, per our bylaws, please be advised that Chief Clerk, Carl Wagus, is now receiving nominations for the election of the FVD's **Superintendent** and **Chief Clerk**. Contact Carl at: [crwagus@gmail.com](mailto:crwagus@gmail.com) with your nomination. Elections will occur at our April 19, 2020 FVD meet. WH

## Jeff Jarr's C&NW



The above and right photos show a huge CNW maintenance facility Jeff has modeled on his railroad. The west end of the facility is seen above with a 15 stall roundhouse and diesel storage tracks for two large diesel “houses”. The right photo shows the east end of the facility with the diesel houses in the background.

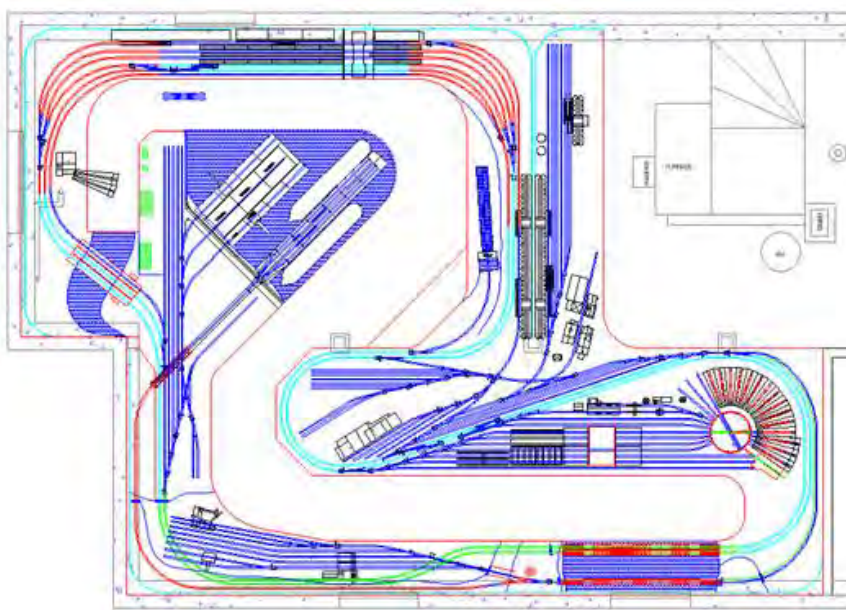
*con't from p.1* layout. Jeff has been collecting and modeling the CNW since he was 12 years old. Interestingly, he started model railroading in the house he currently lives in. It was his boyhood home, and his dad was a big model railroader. “I bought the house from my dad many years ago when he wanted to move to Janesville,” Jeff says. “We built a half dozen layouts in this basement over the years. Then, after he moved to Wisconsin, I helped him build a layout in his Janesville home. Dad passed on 8 years ago.”

The FVD has several excellent and prolific modelers in its ranks and Jeff Jarr is certainly one of them. As this is being written, he is working on a couple of North Shore and Western modular layout modules in preparation for their show at the Glenview Public Library in early December. Truth be told, Jeff is responsible for building *all* the NS&W modules seen on the layout at this time. If that isn't enough, his brother in Janesville wants him to come up and help him expand the layout he helped build for his late father. “If I didn't have all of these other modeling projects,” says Jeff, “my home layout *con't on p. 3*”



There are several large bridges on the Jarr layout including the big bridges seen in the middle photo to the right. The lower photo shows a huge triple bascule bridge crossing the Chicago River in downtown Chicago. Creative and skillful kit-bashing was required to produce the bridges seen on this page.

## Jeff Jarr's C&NW



Former FVD Super, Jeff Jarr, stands behind the large locomotive maintenance facility on his CNW layout in the top photo. Jeff provided us with the excellent rendering of his layout's track plan shown above.

### Basic Layout Information

Layout Name:	Chicago & Northwestern— Chicago to Duluth
Layout Builder:	Jeff Jarr
Layout Location:	Jeff's basement
Layout Scale:	HO
Layout Size:	22 x 35 feet
Layout Style:	Walk-in with duck under
Layout Concept/ Locale:	Chicago & Northwestern— Chicago to Duluth
Layout Era:	Varies from steam era to 1990s
Construction begun:	1999
Bench Work:	Ultra strong box grid made of 2x4s and 2x6s
Sub Roadbed:	Plywood
Roadbed:	Cork
Track:	700 feet of Atlas code 100 flex track with Atlas #4 and #6 turnouts
Track specs:	Minimum 25 inch radius with 2% maximum grade
Scenery:	20% complete. 65% urban, 35% rural
Structures:	Almost all structures are kit- bashed to some extent
Locomotives:	About 250 CNW diesel & steam; 50 foreign road from all manufacturers
Rolling Stock:	Kits, RTR
Control:	Digitrax DCC with wireless throttles
Operations:	"Railfan" running, but starting to include more operation
Favorite aspects of hobby:	Kit-bashing structures, scenery, weathering
Of note:	Jeff's dad was a model rail- roader, as is his brother. This is the 6th large layout built in Jeff's basement.

*con't from page 2 would be done by now!"*

Jeff loves everything Chicago & Northwestern no matter what the era. Depending on his mood, he will run anything from the late steam era up to 1995 when the CNW was absorbed into the Union Pacific. Besides his huge collection of CNW motive power and rolling stock, he also has some foreign road pieces in his collection such as a full Santa Fe Super Chief passenger train powered by a set of Alco PAs, and a Union Pacific M1001 passenger train. But the CNW is his favorite road, and he especially enjoys weathering its yellow and green Northwestern diesels. "Yellow and green CNW diesels weather up really well, and most of the time their locomotives were real dirty." Kit-bashing structures is also a favorite modeling activity for Jeff (see p. 6). Big structure kit-bashing is his specialty, but he has fun bashing smaller structures, too, and adding appropriate weathering. The only regret he has with his home layout is its low duck under which he finds harder negotiate as the years go by. But with a layout as nice as Jeff's, a little stooping to get at it is well worth it!

## Jeff Jarr's C&NW



A “typical” dirty CNW Alco RS3 pulls a short local freight behind the barge slip on Jeff Jarr’s Chicago & Northwestern layout above left. A modern intermodal facility is behind the Chicago urban/industrial landscape in the above right shot.

## Mike’s Minute by FVD Superintendent Mike Hirvela

### New Year Opportunities

With the turn of the year, we celebrate the momentous tick of the clock for various reasons. We may say good bye to the past year, celebrating it as a successful year and looking forward to another one; or maybe it was not such a good year and we say “good riddance” to a year that we happily consign to the dust bin of history. With the turn of the year, we have a clean slate, our future isn’t written yet. The turn of the year provides us with the opportunity to look ahead and make new plans for the new year. In my slide presentations at our FVD meetings, I include a number of upcoming model and prototype railroading events in our area. I see these as *learning* opportunities. I make the attendees at our meetings aware of the events so they can arrange to attend and participate in them. Maybe you’re stuck on a project on your layout and have not figured out how to proceed. You go to an event, and somewhere in the room, low and behold, right there in front of you, is the answer you’ve been looking for! Or conversely, you see someone’s valiant attempt at something that has room for improvement, and you know the solution and share it. It’s a win-win for everyone.

This win-win situation also occurs during participating in operating sessions on a host’s model railroad. There are a good number of operating railroads in our area, whether in individual home or club settings. An invite to one may get an invite to another and soon you’re operating on some very nice local model railroads. I can vouch for that. I’ve been fortunate to be invited to a number of layouts. If you’ve never operated your RR like the prototype, take the opportunity to participate and learn how its done. Note that while there are similarities, each layout has its own way of operating, some simpler than others. Hopefully you’ll find a couple of favorite RRs, or maybe even like them all! I was a lone wolf for years. When I started going to op sessions, I found them very enjoyable. I wondered why I waited so long!

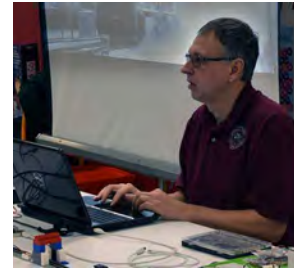
We have lots of learning opportunities coming up this year at our monthly division member gatherings. Plans are also in works for a dandy summer outing this year. If you’re not present, you’re missing out! And hey, **you** can share your knowledge at our meets, too! One way to share is at our “show and tell” table where members can bring finished or on-going project(s) and get feedback, ideas and encouragement. And, if there is a topic we’re not covering in our clinics, and you know a lot about it, why not consider telling us about it in a clinic? Talk to Gary Saxton, our Clinics and Programs Trainmaster, about your ideas and he’ll help you plan your clinic and get it scheduled. If you’re not sure how to get started, just ask and Gary will steer you in the right direction.

There is an old axiom that says “Hindsight is always 20-20.” With the new year, we have the chance to change that axiom to: “Foresight can be 20-20.” Take advantage of your opportunities this year and make it a great one! I look forward to seeing you at a FVD (learning opportunity) meet soon!

## December's Clinic, Contest and Show & Tell Photos by Jim Osborn

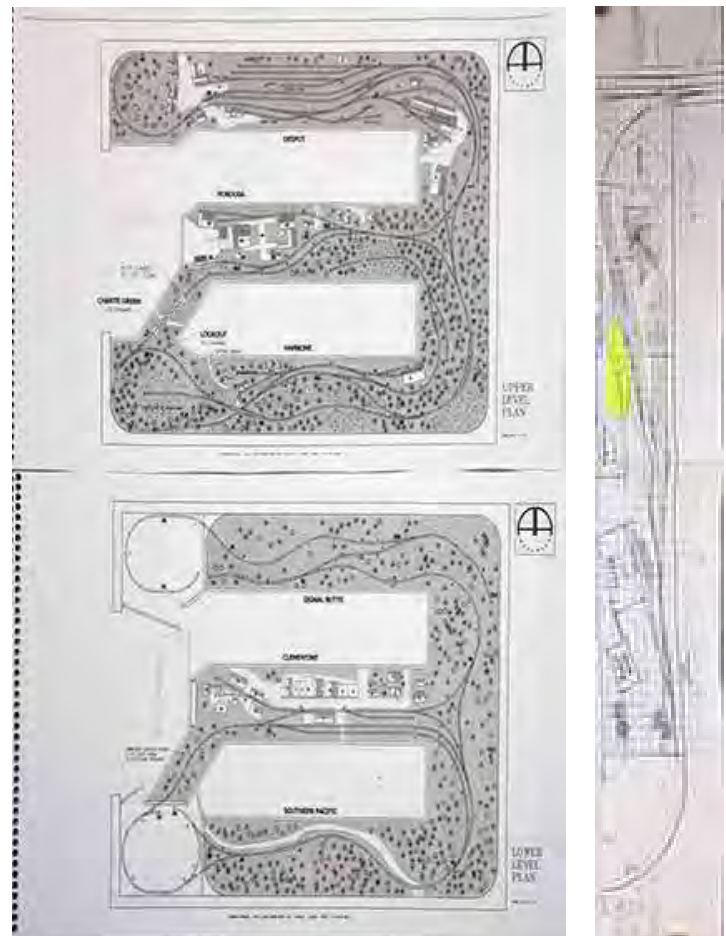
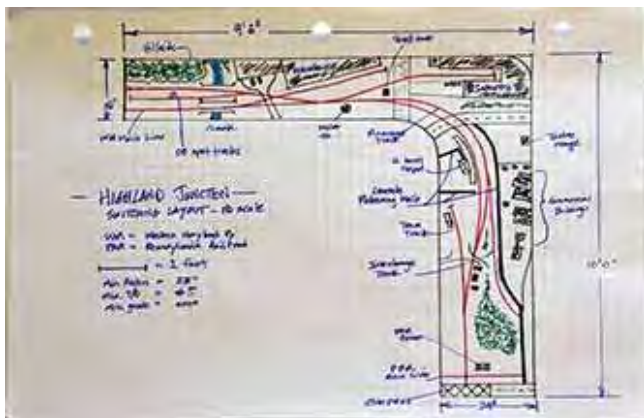
### December's Clinic:

The Fox Valley Division's own **George K.** (right) presented December's clinic "**Electronics in Model Railroading**". The first half of the clinic dealt with the various sensors that can be used in model railroading, and how they can be used on a layout. In the second half of the clinic, George showed us the circuitry that makes the sensors work. Cool stuff! Fox Valley member, **Gary Saxton**, will be showing us a neat "**\$220 Laser Cutter**" in January. This clinic promises to be another good one. WH



### December's Contest: Switching Layout Track Plan

December's contest "Switching Layout Track Plan", Drew six fine entries. **Walt Herrick's** L-shaped, 10x10 foot, "Highland Junction" shelf layout (bottom) took **First Place** honors. **George Trandel's** large, two deck "F&G RR" plan (middle right) was our **Second Place** finisher in the popular vote, while **Tim Kleimeyer's** Sleepy Creek RR plan (far right) took **Third Place**. Tim's plan came directly from a section of his home layout. All of the top finishers plans were in HO scale. See the rest of the entries at our web site: [foxvalleydivision.org](http://foxvalleydivision.org). Go to the "Contests" section. **January's contest is always a popular one: "Open Loads-limit 4 cars"**. There's sure to be some interesting entries for this contest. See them and bring yours to the January 19 meet. WH



### December's Show & Tell

Bob DiDimonico got us into the Christmas spirit by bringing in for Show and Tell, his beautiful hi-rail O scale, Pennsy K4, steam locomotive and matching caboose painted and lettered for the Polar Express. This was one sweet loco and caboose set! MMR David Leider brought in a simple sound generator to talk about and for members to see. Thanks Bob and David for showing us your cool S&Ts! WH



## Modeling Tip: Kit-bashing Structures

One of Jeff Jarr's passions in model railroading, is kit-bashing structures. He especially likes to kit-bash large structures, but just about any size structure on his layout has had some amount of modifying work done to it. "I like to make changes to my structures so they are unique," says Jeff. The large CNW transfer structure to the right utilizes kit parts from Kibri, Walthers and DPM. By painting the structure a uniform medium gray with light weathering, the structure becomes a believable part of the layout—a building that doesn't look like a model, or something seen on other layouts, but an actual facility that appears just right in its industrial setting on Jeff's layout. WH



## Member News

Fox Valley Division members enjoyed a scrumptious, holiday, pizza lunch at our December 15 meet courtesy of Lou Malnati's and FVD Assistant Superintendent, **Denis Zamirovski**. Denis placed the order, picked it up, and carried it into the meeting room just as the meet was starting. **THANK YOU DENIS!** **Jim Osborn** hosted a terrific and fun **Trainmaster Jeopardy** game a little later in the meet. Jim developed the questions and created the excellent software presentation used in playing the game. **THANK YOU JIM!....** **The Fox Valley Division Board wants to take this opportunity to wish you and yours a Happy, Safe and Prosperous NEW YEAR! We thank you for being in the FVD!** WH



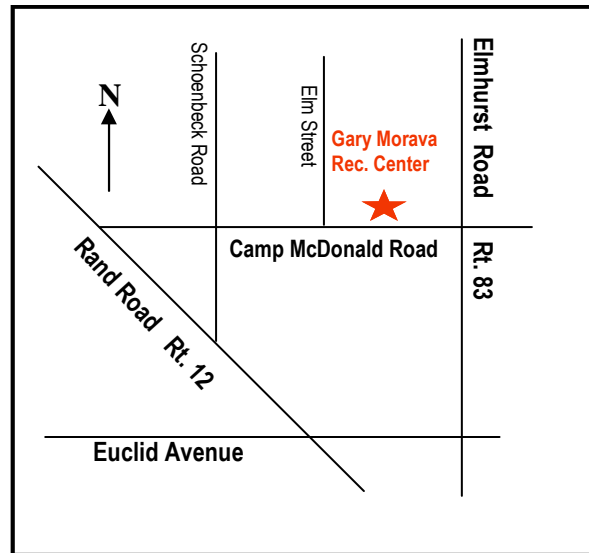
## 2019 - 2020 Fox Valley Division Meeting Schedule

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

<u>Date</u>	<u>Clinic</u>	<u>Contest</u>	<u>Other</u>
<b>January 19</b>	<b>\$220 Laser Cutter by Gary Saxton</b>	<b>Open Loads—limit 4 cars</b>	
<b>February 16</b>	<b>Take Full Advantage of Your Layout Design Software by Steve Miazga</b>	<b>12 x 12 inch Diorama—any scale</b>	
<b>March 15</b>	<b>LCC by Paul Wussow</b>	<b>TBD</b>	
<b>April 19</b>	<b>Changing Scales by Jeremy Dummler</b>	<b>Weathered Model—limit 1 model</b>	<b>Annual elections 1 pm start with sub lunch</b>
<b>May 14—17</b>	<b>Midwest Region Spring Convention "The Peoria Rocket" in Peoria, IL Check the MWR web site <a href="http://www.mwr-nmra.org">www.mwr-nmra.org</a> for more information.</b>		
<b>June 7</b>	<b>Crystal Lake, IL Diorama by Walt Herrick</b>	<b>Unfinished Project</b>	<b>Last meet for 2019-2020</b>
<b>July 12—18</b>	<b>NMRA National Convention "Gateway 2020" in St. Louis, MO For information, go to the convention's web site: <a href="http://www.gateway2020.org">www.gateway2020.org</a>.</b>		



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

FVD mailing address: Fox Valley Division  
Midwest Region-NMRA  
P.O. Box 1535  
Arlington Heights, IL  
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Ways & Means—High Wheeler Show Manager  
**Vacant**