



# the Semaphore

November 1993

Volume 21, Number 3

## *Dean Freytag to Address Division*

### NOVEMBER PROGRAM

**D**ON'T FORGET your Division is bringing in from Ohio one of the all-time giants of model railroading, Dean Freytag. He will be addressing us on November 21 at the Gary Morava Fieldhouse in Prospect Heights on Camp McDonald Road. The meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m.

Dean will present his techniques of modeling heavy industry and grain elevators. There will also be some surprises for those in attendance. You don't want to miss this program.

Now on to the December 18th El Ride. Get your money in soon. We only have 90 seats and you will never get to ride a private charter (brand new, factory clean) El Train any cheaper. Your \$10.00 only covers about half the cost, your Division is paying the rest. This is a great experience for traction buffs and railroaders of all persuasions. This is also a great family program.

Coming up January 16th, Jeff Kehoe, our caboose expert. *The caboose, the command center of all trains.* Norm Smith will present a slide show to fill us in on the happenings at the 1993 National Convention.

It has come to my attention by reading through your returned questionnaire that we have a lot of steam buffs like myself in the Division. *The real romance in railroading is the steam engine and the cupola caboose, right guys!* This old trainmaster is trying to get a clinic set up on the care and feeding of your model steam engine for February. Also a clinic on freight car weathering.

Thanks to all for making our trip to Batavia a success. With special thanks to Irv Lange for arranging our transportation. Thanks to the members of the Midwest Railroad Modelers.

### MEMBER NEEDS A RIDE!

We have a member who needs a ride to our meetings. Contact Edward Janecek, 708-884-5597. He lives at 350 W. Schaumburg Rd., Apt. D 131, Schaumburg, IL.

### FAREWELL

#### H. BERT AHRENSFELD

*Bert was an active member of the Fox Valley Division. He passed away on October 24, 1993.*

*We will miss him.*

### Superintendent's Report

Perhaps the worst part about being Superintendent is receiving a phone call from family members or friends of division members informing me that one of our division members has passed away. Such was the case this past Monday when Bert Ahrensfeld's daughter called telling me that Bert had passed away on Sunday, October 24th. Bert had suffered a stroke about a year and a half ago and had, as a result, greatly decreased his involvement in division activities. Bert had been a member of the NMRA since the mid 1940's and was a life member. He grew up in Oak Park as the son of the vice president of one of the major downtown banks. He attended Northwestern University where he was a member of the naval ROTC. Often he would tell us stories about the summer cruises he went on with the Atlantic Fleet where he was a turret captain on one of the fleet's battleships. Bert worked for Addressograph-Multigraph Corporation for many years and retired about fifteen or twenty years ago. He was preceded in death by his wife Vera and is survived by his two daughters Jan and Joyce, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Retirement gave him an opportunity to pursue his many interests, chief among which was working on his Palatine Midland Railroad. The Palatine Midland was a railroad which told the story of the evolution of model railroading. Begun in the 1950's and set in the mountains of Colorado, it started as a continuous loop with a huge plaster mountain. As point to point layouts began to be the standard, Bert determined to change

his layout to conform to the latest trends. As operation became popular Bert developed an operating scheme for the Palatine Midland that truly made sense. The railroad was a dream to operate because of the planning and careful construction Bert had put into it. The last stage of the railroad was an expansion to Salt Lake City which was completed shortly before Bert had his stroke.

Bert gave much to our division whether in terms of working at High Wheeler at the construction table, (Bert was an expert at building craftsmen kits) or offering his layout for open houses, or simply offering encouragement in our efforts at modeling. He was a gentleman and friend to many in our division including myself. His presence will truly be missed by all.

*Tom Hoffman*

## NOVEMBER CONTESTS

1. Industrial Switchers
2. Photographs of Industrial Complexes
3. Industrial Structures

## OUT OF THE PAST

The airborne coal smoke greeted us at the ticket house. The clang, clang of a trolley bell turned more than a few heads. The thump, thump of a diesel locomotive pulling a Borden milk tanker and a couple of cabooses brought out the cameras.

We were at the Illinois Railway Museum in Union, Illinois.

The museum is not very realistic. North Shore electrics and CTA 6,000 hp cars ran on the same tracks as the steam and diesel locomotives.

If the railroad line was realistic, great cars, locomotives, and trolleys would have been gone, gone for ever, sold for scrap.

While walking through a passenger car barn, my two grandsons and I struck up a conversation with a man working on one of the cars. The first question my twelve year old grandson, Adam, asked was, "How old do you have to be to work on the cars."

As we walked through the cars our new friend showed us how the hunks folded down, or pulled out here, or shoved in there. We learned about old wood sided cars, and riveted cars, and the newer welded cars. As we left he told us it was the only railroad you paid dues to be able to work for free.

On the trolley car ride Adam asked the motorman about all the valves and controls. The motorman was quite proud of the little red rocket. He was eager to tell the boys about his pride and joy.

As we walked down the tracks Bob, my other grandson never stopped jumping up and down looking into windows of the equipment.

All day long I kept looking for the Shay. I knew they had one and I had told the boys about it. We learned it was in the repair shed, but we only had ten minutes till the bus would leave. I told the boys we would have to come back and see it next time. With a yell of "Yea!" we boarded the bus.

*Richard the Lionhearted  
Richard Boettcher*



The Fox Valley Division  
invites you to a

*Christmas El Ride*

on December 18, 1993  
Bus departs at 5:00 p.m.  
from Palatine Hobby Parking Lot

Send your reservation and \$10.00 per person  
to

Fox Valley Division  
El Ride  
P.O. Box 1535  
Arlington Heights, IL 60006-1535

**Reservation Deadline:  
November 21, 1993**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS PLANNED

The Fox Valley Division is in the process of creating a Calendar of Model Railroad Events. We are looking for events that are being held at shopping centers, schools, etc. We have a list of swap meets. If you have knowledge of these events please contact Rich Boettcher at 815-653-3146.

## FVD FLYER AVAILABLE

The Fox Valley Division now has a flyer available to help tell the story of the division. The flyer includes a map of the division, a map to locate the Gary Morava Fieldhouse, officers names and addresses and the 1994-94 meeting dates and topics. This is a handy item to give to your friends who may not know too much about the Fox Valley Division and the NMRA in general.

Pick one up at the next division meeting, or, write to the division to receive some by mail. Talk up the division. Help make it grow.

## MEMBER SURVEY

Thanks to all the members who took the time to fill out the survey form and send it back. Just to let you know how the survey did; we mailed 354 copies of *the Semaphore* and received 124 back. We did learn who was interested in the division and a number of people who didn't care. As soon as the survey is reviewed and analyzed we will share the results with you.

If you didn't return yours it is still not too late. It is stamped and addressed so it is easy to return.

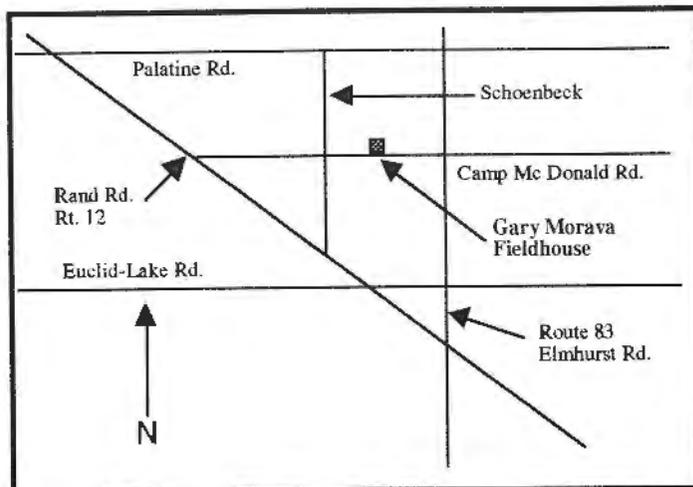
## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

At the April meeting of the Fox Valley Division the members will elect officers for a two year term. The posts include Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Chief Clerk and Paymaster. For further information you can contact Dave Flebbe. Send your requests to Dave in care of the Fox Valley Division, P.O. Box 1535, Arlington Heights, IL 60006-1535.

## HIGH WHEELER '94

The High Wheeler Committee is busy preparing for our annual train show. By the time you read this article the committee will have had its November meeting. High Wheeler will again be held at Harper College in Palatine. The dates of the show are Saturday and Sunday, March 5th and 6th. Set-up will take place on Friday, March 4th starting at 6:00 p.m. We need volunteers for set-up and take-down. Name and number of contact person to come.

## WHERE WE MEET...



Palatine Rd. ← Schoenbeck

Rand Rd.  
Rt. 12

Camp Mc Donald Rd.

Gary Morava  
Fieldhouse

Euclid-Lake Rd.

Route 83  
Elmhurst Rd.

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### FOX VALLEY DIVISION OFFICERS

Tom Hoffman .....Superintendent  
708-299-6276  
Dave Flebbe .....Assistant Superintendent  
708-825-5931  
Irv Lange .....Chief Clerk  
708-577-0015  
Rich Sweet .....Paymaster  
708-459-1037

### FOX VALLEY DIVISION TRAINMASTERS

Erich Russ .....Membership  
708-867-0223  
Art Roth .....Programs  
708-577-4430  
Rich Boettcher .....Ways and Means  
815-653-3146  
Scott Hicks .....Public Relations  
708-438-9109  
Frank Oldfield .....Contests and Achievement  
708-364-0153  
Bob Carney .....Fox Valley Railroad  
708-587-6213  
Jerry Hoffinan .....Publications  
312-725-9159

*the Semaphore* is published monthly by and for the members of the Fox Valley Division, Midwest Region, National Model Railroad Association. The September and April issues are mailed to all members. There are no issues for June, July and August. All other issues are mailed to members who attended at least one meeting the previous year or requested copies by mail. Articles pertaining to the model railroading hobby are solicited subject to editorial review. Address all inquiries and manuscripts to: Fox Valley Division, Publications Trainmaster, P.O. Box 1535, Arlington Heights, IL 60006-1535.

**THE FOX VALLEY DIVISION**  
P.O. BOX 1535  
ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, IL 60006-1535

## HOW TO BUILD A SEMAPHORE

The Fox Valley Division wants its members to feel free to contribute to its monthly newsletter. We would like you to submit tips on modeling, drawings, photographs, or stories. With one hundred and twenty active members we have a well-spring of possible contributors.

I will be happy to assist anyone in preparation of possible articles. Having edited *the Semaphore* for a total of six years, I believe working together we could build *the Semaphore* into a small magazine. *The Semaphore* could become a publication that our members would anxiously await each month.

From time to time you may see an article by Rich Boettcher. These are the type of short articles that will make *the Semaphore* a joy to read. You don't have to be an officer or a trainmaster to contribute. You just need your ideas, some imagination and a desire to share your modeling expertise.

Send your stories, tips, drawings and/or photographs to:

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Semaphore Editor  
P.O. Box 1535  
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