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Midwest Region - NMRA
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The Semaphore

Fox Valley Division • MWR • NMRA

Welcome to the Fox Valley Division's 2003-2004 season

*A Message from Your Superintendent
Richard Sweet*

Our first meeting will be September 21 at the Gary Morava Recreation Center. We will have a clinic on DCC and its software, an overview of the Achievement Awards program and a video. Also, there will be refreshments and possibly other good things to eat. The meeting starts at 1:30 PM.

In the coming division meetings this season, we will have clinics on GN boxcars, building pin people and construction of various model railroad components. We will also have a layout tour and trips to Trainfest and the Chicago South Shore & South Bend Railroad shops. The latter trip still needs to be firmed up, but we are actively pursuing it. In December, we will have our annual auction. So, now is the time to start to gather all of your model railroad "stuff" that you don't need, that you could get rid of, and that someone else would like to have. Bring it to the auction and make some money.

There will not be a meeting in March because of High Wheeler '04. In 2004, High Wheeler will

be held on March 7 and 8. Again, we will be looking for volunteers to help run the show. Help will be needed for set up on Friday night and tear down on Sunday night, and everything in between. So, don't forget to sign up when we call for volunteers and join the fun and spirit of model railroading.

This is the last year for your current Board of Directors officers. At the May annual business meeting, you will elect four new officers (Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Chief Clerk and Paymaster). If you are the least bit interested in running for one of these positions, you should give it some serious consideration. Then, inform one of the board members of your intentions. As in the past, we will have pizza at that meeting.

The meeting schedule will be posted on our web site, www.mwr-nmra.org/fvd. Go to the internet and take a look. If there are changes to the schedule, or if additional information needs to be disseminated to the membership, you will find it there.

So, it's "All Aboard" for the Fox Valley Division's 2003-2004 season. I'll look forward to seeing you at the September meeting.

Richard

Outing at the Illinois Railway Museum

Rick Saviano

Our May 2002 meeting was held at the Illinois Railway Museum. The weather was beautiful, the food was great, and the grounds provided hours of marvelous meanderings. The highlight of the day was the presentation of two checks to the IRM: one to their General Fund, the other to the Silver Car Fund. The rest of the day was spent enjoying the fresh



Superintendent Rich Sweet hands two checks to IRM's Barbara Lamphier

air, train rides, and studying prototype details.

Hints, Tips, and Innovations

Share your expertise with other members

Rick Saviano- Publications Trainmaster

I received a very disheartening letter the other day: It was from a publications Trainmaster from another division asking to be taken off the Semaphore's mailing list. He said he wasn't getting as much out of as he expected to. It was disheartening because I just became Publications Trainmaster. I'm hoping this column will help, and I'm hoping to get the help of all you ingenious modelers to change his mind. Feel free to email me with your suggestions at saviano@att.net and I'll include them in future issues.

Tip #1:

My first tip is for all you out there that haven't yet attended your NMRA division meetings: you're missing a lot! Clinics, contests, refreshments, and friendships all come together at the meetings. And we don't all debate on whether or not the trucks and wheelsets are appropriate for the time period we model.

Tip#2:

There are four basic types of layouts, based on the modeler:

- ❖ Lots of scenery, little track
- ❖ Lots of track, little scenery

Call for Layouts!

Share Your Layout with Others

Do you enjoy the layouts we've visited last year? Have they provided inspiration for your own layout? Here's the perfect opportunity to share your layout with the rest of the Fox Valley Division.

It Doesn't have to Be Perfect

The Arlington Heights Society of Railroad Engineers' layout we visited was in a major state of renovation, and one of the most detailed layouts we visited was called the NQF – Not Quite Finished. Don't think your layout has to be perfect to host a layout tour: if it's beyond the Styrofoam and plywood stage, it's worth visiting. Who knows, you may inspire others, and maybe get some ideas and suggestions from other members on how to improve your layout.

Contact our Events Trainmaster

Give Steve Martinak a call at 847-854-7545 or mart832@attglobal.net and see about adding your layout to our tours.

Fox Valley Division Board of Directors

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- ❖ A good blend of track and scenery, but a simple track plan
- ❖ A good blend of track and scenery, but a complex track plan
- ❖ The all-elusive best of all worlds: Not too much track, not too much scenery, and a track plan that is neither mind-boggling nor boring

The best way to achieve that last type of layout is to follow Tip #1. It is easier and quicker to learn from others mistakes and improvements than to make them yourself.

Tip#3:

The first step in creating interesting operation in your layout is to incorporate a "Timesaver" layout in your industrial area (more about Timesaver in future columns)

Tip#4:

Check this column often and see what suggestions others have



Clinicians Wanted!

Steve Martinak

We've lined up a few of the Rock River Valley Division folks to present their clinics at our upcoming meetings. In turn, they've asked if some of the FVD folks could do the same for them. There have been some great clinics given by members of our Division, so if you'd like to "Share Your Wealth" with our Rockford neighbors, please contact our Programs Trainmaster, Steve Martinak, at 847-854-7545 or mart832@attglobal.net.

This Year's Events

September 21, 2003

1:30pm, Marava Center
General Meeting

Video – "Building the Tunnel"
Presentations – JMRI for DCC
Achievement Program

Contest:

Flatcars with and without loads

October 19, 2003

1:30pm, Marava Center
General Meeting

Presentation by Rock River Valley
Division - Great Northern Boxcars

Contest:

Cabooses

November 21, 2003

Time to be announced
Trip to Trainfest, Milwaukee

December 14, 2003

1:30pm, Marava Center
General Meeting/FVD Auction

January 18, 2004

1:30pm, Marava Center
General Meeting

Layout Tour

(Details to be announced)

February 22, 2004

1:30pm, Marava Center
General Meeting

Presentation by Rock River Valley
Division – Open Loads

March 6-7, 2004

9:00am-5:00pm, Harper College
High Wheeler

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