

THE SEMAPHORE

OCTOBER 2014

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



Layout of the Month: CASG's Modular Layout

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October's regular meeting is October 19th. The contest is "Illuminated Rolling Stock or Structure" and the clinic by Don Cook, MMR, is "The Milwaukee Road Re-membered". See you there!

For 45 years the Chicagoland Association of S Gaugers, Inc. has existed to promote and enjoy model railroading in S scale, considered by many in our hobby to be the "ideal size scale" in model railroading. For 20 years the Association has had a modular layout to enjoy and display at shows. This layout is October's "Layout of the Month". With code 148 rail, the CASG's layout can accommodate both hi-rail and scale S gauge locomotives and rolling stock. Hi-rail rolling stock are generally the models of choice for CASG's modular layout at shows, but don't equate today's hi-rail with the old AF hi-rail equipment. Gone are the old AF track, stamped truck frames,

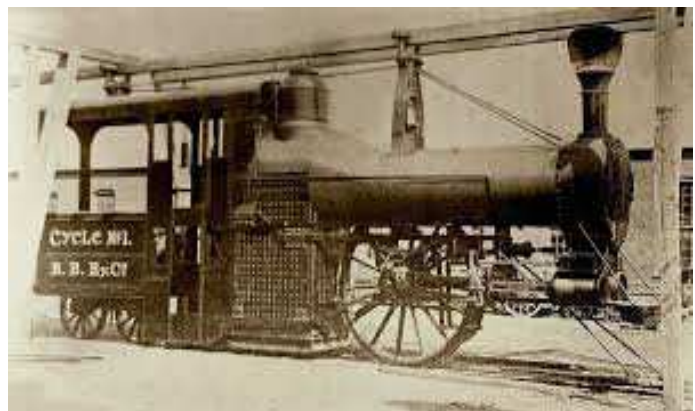


An S scale SP GE unit leads a train past a John Griffin scratch built model of a loaded Schnable flat car on the CASG's modular layout at the recent ihobby Show. Walt Herrick layout photos.

and monster couplers. "Modern" hi-rail has scale looking track, beautifully detailed rolling stock, and scale size couplers. Says FVD and CASG member Joel Lebovitz, "The new S gauge offerings are much more to scale than the old AF models of the 40's and 50's. The only ways you can tell con't on p.3

Fun Stuff by Jim Allen

"Hey, what's this thing doing here again?" you ask, "It was in last month's Semaphore!" Well, the Semaphore's editor messed up the caption in last month's "Fun Stuff", so we're doing a "do over". This loco is crazier than it first appears. It is *not* an 0-2-4 as I mistakenly said last month (by not carefully reading the caption Jim provided). It's actually an 0-1-2! It is not sitting on two rails, but only *one* rail. Note the overhead rail which looks kind of like a monorail and acts as a stabilizer for the loco. I think the one thing I did get right on this contraption was that it was most likely built sometime in the mid 18th century. Sorry for last month's mess up, Jim! WH



Layout of the Month: CASG Modular Layout



(Left and above) A Lionel Union Pacific Challenger painted in the road's gray and gold steam passenger scheme holds the main next to the O.H. Wright Equipment Co. The loco is pulling a 15 car UP passenger train which includes 8 lit dome cars. Lionel bought the tooling for Gilbert's American Flyer Lines in 1967 and has been producing old AF and its own new S hi-rail models since 1979.

On the right, a classic American Flyer Hudson steams past an airport module complete with an AF rotating beacon, and then past a Plasticville tower (right). That is 30 year CASG member, Skip Sanchez, explaining S scale to a layout observer.

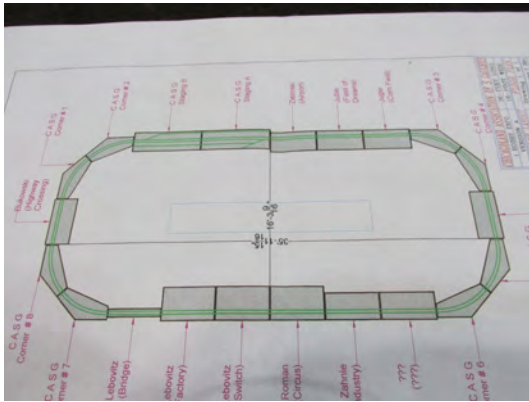


Another Challenger, this time in the UP's all black freight paint scheme, heads up a circus train which has stopped to do some unloading at the circus (left). Andy Jugle's "Lionel Track Improvement" module (right) always gets a laugh—even from the President of Lionel who saw it at a show recently!



Layout of the Month: CASG Modular Layout

(con't from p.1) scale from hi-rail is by the deep flanges and larger couplers on the hi-rail." Like the other scales, S gaugers are now seeing perhaps the largest amount of equipment ever being offered in their scale. Lionel is coming out with more S scale, and MTH has jumped into the mix, having purchased the excellent S Helper line of trains in 2013. The CASG has sister groups in St.Louis, Milwaukee, and Beloit/Rockford, and belongs to the national NASG organization. See the CASG and a lot more S scale modeling at Fall S Fest in Wheeling October 24 - 26. Also see the CASG web site for a lot of good S information at www.casg-trains.org.



Above is the CASG's modular layout's configuration for the October 3 - 5, 2014 ihobby Show at the Schaumburg Convention Center. The layout measured 17 feet wide x 40 feet long, and had 21 separate modules, forming one of the largest CASG show layouts to date. To the right, in a CASG photo, are a pair of CB&Q, Chinese red U-25B's passing through town on Will Holt's module. Will owns the U-25B's which were made by American Models.

Basic Layout Information

Layout Builder:	Members of the Chicagoland Association of S Gaugers
Layout Location:	Midwest model railroad shows
Layout scale:	S (1:64)
Layout Size:	Varies depending on the show
Layout Style:	Modular
Layout theme:	Display Layout
Layout era:	Mixed eras
Construction started:	Around 1994
Bench work:	2x4, 2x6, and 30x48 inch modules following NSAG standards
Sub road bed/roadbed:	Plywood/homasote or 1/2" foam
Track:	Code 148 commercial flex track and turnouts
Scenery:	Ground cover, ballasting, trees, etc.
Structures:	Kits, kit-bashing, scratch built
Locomotives:	American Flyer, Lionel S, American Models, etc.
Rolling Stock:	AF, Lionel S, MTH, American Models, etc., and scratch built
Control:	Lionel Legacy system and AF AC
Other:	See the CASG web site for more information: www.casg-trains.org



Modeling Tip: How About S Scale?

As modelers get older, some are considering larger scales to model in. The larger size makes for models that are easier to build and handle, track that is easier to maintain, and layouts that are less complicated (because it's harder to cram as much track into them!). While O, On3, and G are popular choices for those moving to larger scales, S scale might be a nice alternative for those who don't want to go "really big". S scale combines the size, weight and tracking of the larger scales with the look and feel of HO and N scales. A lot of beautiful S scale locomotives and rolling stock are currently available from Lionel, American Models, MTH (former S Helper line) and a host of smaller manufacturers. Excellent track systems, structure, figures, vehicles, detail parts, etc. are also available. The more you look into it, the more attractive the scale becomes, but this admittedly comes from a guy who had and loved American Flyer as a kid! WH



American Models offers this UP Baldwin S-12 switcher at the reasonable (for S scale) retail price of \$179.00. It would be a perfect starter loco if venturing into the wonderful world of S scale. American Models photo.

Mike's Minute by Mike Hirvela

Photos by Mike Hirvela

My Summer Vacation, part 2:

After the stop in Green Bay at the RR Museum, Jim Allen and I continued our trip up north and over-nighted in Iron Mountain. Starting out early the next day, we headed out east to Vulcan, Michigan to the Iron Mt. Iron Mine. We entered into the gift shop (tourist trap, remember?), and bought tickets for the mine tour. After going through the displays of various minerals, we were in the back of the shop when an older gentleman entered and asked that the next mine tour group don rain slickers and hard hats. The rain slicker had a flannel liner, and I fortunately had my IRM sweatshirt on because the mine was a balmy 43 degrees inside. Out the back we went where we were treated to a display of mining tools and a demonstration of a compressed air-powered mine skip loader. What a huge racket it made...and we were still outside. Imagine what it sounded like inside a mine shaft! We boarded a train of mine gauge tram cars, custom made with bench seating. The guide turned on the lights in the shaft and they looked like they went on forever. We entered into the 400 level (meaning 400 feet of rock above your head), and were being hauled down by an electric locomotive. Oh, boy, did the walls close in. Imagine taking all the shelves out of your refrigerator, putting a chair inside, sitting on the chair and closing the door. We went down about 1250 feet, then debarked and walked about 2 blocks inside the mine looking at the displays of tools and equipment and the ore lode. On the map of the mine shafting, we were only near the *top* of the underground shafts! My glasses fogged up when we returned up top to the sunshine, but we were relieved to be back above ground. I really had gained an appreciation of those hard working miners of times past. Seeing and reliving what those early miners did is sure to give authenticity to mining areas for those modeling the mining industry. But "seeing and reliving" can apply to any industry on your railroad. So go find some appropriate "tourist trap" museums to check out!



A skip loader (top) was one of the many pieces of mine equipment Mike and Jim saw on their tour of the iron mine. The skip loader made an incredibly *loud* racket. The mine shaft walls closed in as you went farther down into the mine (middle). Think Mike and Jim are happy to back "up top" after finishing their tour into the deep depths of a UP Michigan iron mine? (bottom).

Member News

Membership Services Trainmaster, Bert Lattan, reports FVD membership stands at 219 as of September, down 5 members from August.... FVD board members will have a treat (and no tricks!) in October when Jim Osborn opens his home and beautiful CNW Western Division layout for October's board meeting. An informal op session will follow the meeting.... Membership Promotions Trainmaster, Mike Hirvela, Jim Allen, and David Leider, MMR manned the FVD/NMRA's promotion booth at the October 3 - 5 ihobby show. Mike and Bob Teuber will also be manning our booth at the "DuPage Show" in Wheaton on October 12th.... We are sorry to report that as this was being written, we learned that former FVD Assistant Superintendent, Harry Sorenson, suffered a stroke and is in the hospital's ICU. Our thoughts and prayers are with him.

Please email your "Member News" items to Walt Herrick at: waltherrickjr@gmail.com. Thanks! WH

September's Clinic

At September's regular meeting, FVD member Joel Lebovitz treated us to a "show and tell" of a recent modeling project of his: a 53 foot, Canadian Pacific, high sided, end dumping gondola he is kit-bashing in S scale. Joel found plans for the gon in the very first issue of the Car Builder's Encyclopedia. Joel's show and tell was followed by an informative and interesting video clinic given by the NMRA's Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer, Frank Koch. Frank's topic was "Prototype vs. Freelancing: Pros and Cons" given at the 2003 NMRA National Convention. Next month our own Don Cook, MMR, will present his photo clinic "The Milwaukee Road Remembered". Don is a great photographer so plan to be there! Joel's photo by Jim Osborn.



September's Contest Winners

Photos by Jim Osborn

September's contest was "My Favorite Freight Car" and a very nice showing of 11 entries were received. See them all at www.foxvalleydivision.org.

First Place honors went to Jeff Jarr for his CNW modern box car in HO scale. This car is beautifully and realistically weathered from its roof to its trucks.



David Crement, MMR, took placed second in September's voting with his On3 flat car with load. The weathering on this car is also superb. Note the slight sway in the car.



Another superbly weathered HO car placed third in September's voting. Jim Allen's rusty Treadwell Hot Metal Car looks like it's spent some hard years in steel mill service.

October's contest is another great one: "Illuminated Rolling Stock or Structure".



2014-2015 Meeting Schedule

2014-2015 orange Meeting Schedule cards were mailed to members the second week in September. Contact the Semaphore's Editor if you did not receive yours. The complete meeting schedule is also given below and on the FVD web site: www.foxvalleydivision.org. *Schedule changes or additions are posted on the FVD web site as soon as they are known.*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Clinic</u>	<u>Contest</u>	<u>Other</u>
Oct. 19, 2014	Don Cook photo clinic on the Milwaukee Road	Illuminated rolling stock or structure	
Nov. 16, 2014	<u>TBD—check web site</u>	Anything related to trains	
Dec. 14, 2014	“	Double or triple headed diesels	1:00 pm start.
Jan. 18, 2015	“	Large structure—5000 scale feet or more	Lunch provided.
Feb.15, 2015	“	Double or triple headed steam	
Feb. 28 & March 1, 2015	High Wheeler 2015 Train Show at Harper College in Palatine sponsored by the FVD. 9 am to 5 pm each day. <u>FVD volunteers needed.</u> Contact Jeff Jarr at jjarr@comcast.net or 773-286-8755. <i><u>Note: there is no March FVD monthly meeting due to High Wheeler 2015.</u></i>		
April 13, 2015	<u>See FVD web site</u>	Open load spanning 2-3 cars	1:00 pm start. Officer elections
April 17 - 19, 2015	Midwest Region Spring Convention hosted by the Winnebago Land Division at the Holiday Inn, 4601 Calumet Ave. in Manitowoc, WI		
May 17, 2015	<u>See FVD web site</u>	Unfinished project of your choice	
	<i><u>Note: there are no FVD monthly meetings in June, July or August</u></i>		
August 23 - 29, 2015	NMRA National Convention in Portland, OR. Check the convention's web site: www.nmra2015portland.org for complete information.		

NMRA Web Sites

Fox Valley Division	www.foxvalleydivision.org
Midwest Region	www.mwr-nmra.org
National	www.nmra.org



About the Fox Valley Division

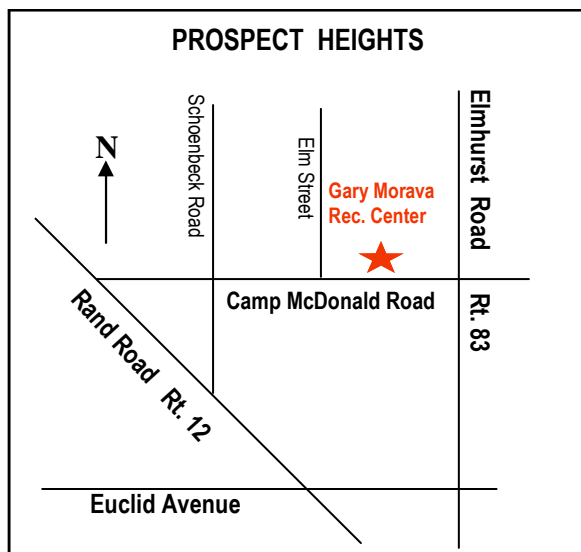
If you receive this newsletter you live in the Midwest Region and Fox Valley Division of the National Model Railroad Association or NMRA. The Fox Valley Division (FVD) includes all of McHenry and parts of Cook, Kane, and Lake Counties in northeast Illinois. About 240 members of varied ages and modeling 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 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, Jeff Jarr, 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.
- 2014 – 2015 meeting dates, contest and clinic info are on page 6 of this newsletter.

FVD web site: www.foxvalleydivision.org

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Midwest Region-NMRA
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