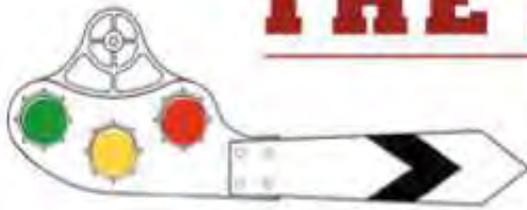


# THE SEMAPHORE



September 2016

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



## Jim Allen Wins Big in Indy!

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### Welcome Back Everyone!

2016 - 2017 looks to be another great year for the FVD.

Our first regular monthly meeting this year is **September 18th** at the Gary Morava Rec Center in Prospect Heights. Start time is **1:30 pm** and we will go to about **4:00 pm**. **David Leider, MMR will present a clinic on "Stockyards and Packers of Chicago", and the contest is "Passenger Locomotives" — limit 4 locos. See you there!**

The Fox Valley Division's own Jim Allen did us proud at this summer's NMRA National Convention in Indianapolis winning awards in nine judged contest categories, and three other Special Awards. All nine models Jim brought to Indy for judging received awards, as well as an Arts & Crafts entry he brought.

In the judged awards, Jim received five First Place Awards, two Second Place Awards, and three Third Place Awards. In Special Awards Jim won Iwata's "Most Realistic Motive Power" award, NMRA Magazine's "Most Photogenic Model" award, and the National Contest Chairman's "Chairman's Choice" award.

Jim's awards were for a wide variety of models including steam locomotives, diesel locomotives, freight cars, non-revenue cars, structures, diorama, Arts and Crafts and the light hearted "Thumbs" category. As the Semaphore's "Fun Stuff" columnist, it's no surprise Jim won two out of the three "Thumbs" awards! A complete list of Jim's awards is on page 2.



Many of Jim Allen's NMRA 2016 National Convention awards and models are shown in the top photo. His First Place Diorama is also shown below. Jim Allen photos.

A complete list of Jim's awards is on page 2.

## Fun Stuff by Jim Allen

Grasshopper Restaurant/Station/Coffee Shop. Located near Jeongseon, Gangwon Province, Korea is an unusual combination station-restaurant-coffee shop which was made from two old passenger coaches. Downstairs is the station—restaurant. Upstairs is the coffee shop. Can you guess what the design of this building represents? It's two grasshoppers mating!



# Jim Allen Wins 13 Contests at the 2016 NMRA National

## Jim Allen's NMRA National Contest Awards

### JUDGED CONTESTS

#### Scratchbuilt Steam

**On3 Single truck, 2-cylinder Shay** 2nd Place  
**On3 Freelance RGS Garratt** 3rd Place

#### Scratchbuilt Non-Revenue Rolling Stock

**On3 Water Car** 1st Place

#### Scratchbuilt Structures

**H0 "Flying A" Gas Station with DC3** 3rd Place

#### Diorama

**Forest scene with Cat 60 & log wagon** 1st Place

#### Kit Class Diesel

**H0 ATSF TR-4 Cow/calf** 1st Place

#### Kit Class Freight Cars

**H0 Hot Metal Car** 1st Place

#### Thumbs

**Grampa Percy with walker** 2nd Place  
**Supersize Egg Transporter** 3rd Place

#### People's Choice Arts & Crafts—General

**Case to transport On3 Garratt** 1st Place

### SPECIAL AWARDS

**Iwata by Anest Award—Most Realistic Motive Power,  
Single truck, 2-cylinder Shay**

**NMRA Magazine Award—Most Photogenic Model  
"Flying A" Gas Station w DC3**

**National Contest Chairman's Award  
On3 Freelance RGS Garratt**

The top right photo shows Jim's exquisite On3 single truck, 2-cylinder Shay. The middle photo is of his massive freelanced On3 RGS Garratt. The bottom photo is of Jim's 1st Place, H0 Hot Metal Car. Jim Allen photos.

Below are photos of some more of Jim Allen's National Award-winning models. More great photos of Jim's models are in the September 2016 *NMRA Magazine*, and on our division's website:

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

The entire FVD congratulates Jim on his terrific results at the NMRA National in Indianapolis this summer. *"Great job, Jim Allen!"* WH



## Layout of the Month: NMRA National Layouts—Part 1

The FVD members who went to the 2016 NMRA National in Indianapolis this summer had the opportunity to see a bunch of model railroads including some of the country's finest layouts. In the next couple of Semaphores we'll take a look at these layouts through the photos FVD members took while layout touring at the National. Since it's still officially summer, let's start with two outdoor railroads the guys photographed. WH



Above left is a long shot of the yard and on the right, a small part of the service facilities of Pete Pedigo's New Unionville & Western 1/8 scale RR. The railroad is huge sitting on 15 acres of wooded Indiana countryside. The NU&W is run in point to point fashion with a dispatcher, radios, and switch lists governing car movements. Minimum NU&W radius is 50 feet!



To the left are the ready tracks on the NU&W, and to the right is a photo of Jim Allen (black hat) and Mike Hirvela (big mustache) enjoying a train ride on the railroad's 1.5 mile mainline. Upper right and lower left photos by Jim Allen; the other 2 photos are by Mike Hirvela.



Here's Jeff Carter's Garden Railroad in #1 scale (left and right). The road features 300 feet of mainline, DCC and a switch tower from which turn-outs and trains can be controlled if so desired. "Ship It" software is used in operations. Mike Hirvela photos



## Mike's Minute from FVD Superintendent, Mike Hirvela

**Highball to Indy—NMRA National Convention Report** FVD members Jim Allen, Walt Herrick, Bob Teuber, myself, and friends from our neighboring NMRA divisions, experienced some legendary “Hoosier Hospitality” in Indianapolis, IN, at the 2016 edition of the NMRA National Convention, July 3 through 10. Or should I say, International Convention, as we met the nicest folks from all over the US, plus the United Kingdom, Tasmania, Australia and New Zealand. Chairman Steve Studley and crew from the Central Indiana Division hosted the convention based at the Westin Hotel in downtown Indianapolis. There was so much going on at the same time, it was difficult to know where to be and which to attend. But Jim Allen and I made a decision that we would be taking some bus tours around the area as our best way to visit local layouts, take prototype tours and visit special interest sites. I know Bob Teuber attended several Modeling With The Masters sessions held at the hotel, and had his home ‘dream layout’ design on the Layout Design SIG table for comments. Jim Allen entered several models in the contest room and was successful in getting more hardware for his award wall (see page 2 of this Semaphore). I’m not sure how much Walt did as I didn’t see him much, but I know he did have an early layout tour Tuesday morning. (I did great but was only able to attend a couple early days of the convention. WH.)

There were 46 layouts on the bus tours list, and 37 layouts on the self-guided list, ranging in scales from Z to G plus two 1/8”-to-the-foot-scale outdoor, 7-1/2 inch gauge ride-on railroads available. Layout sizes varied from 12” x 48” dioramas, to 1.5 actual miles of track spanning several acres! Daily bus tours departed morning and afternoon in all compass directions to home layouts, the Indiana Railroad Shops, the Amtrak Passenger Car Shop, several RR museums, tourist railroads and a steel mill. At the hotel, multiple clinics were going on from morning to night on all kinds of topics, the contest room filled up, the silent auction room had 3 double rows of tables full of items; the Operations Road Show layout room hosted op sessions 3 times a day. It was a kaleidoscope of activity. We arrived on Sunday afternoon, reviewed the schedule and our tour preferences, and planned our activities for the week as Jim had models to enter in the contest in between bus tours and clinics. Here’s a (Semaphore Editor’s greatly abbreviated) run down of our week in Indy.

Monday, we took a bus tour to local layouts, a harbinger of the Tuesday bus tour, as we noted our BIG tour bus trying to get down some narrow neighborhood lanes.

Tuesday was a long day with an early start as we had signed up for the Cincinnati Super Tour, about 2 hours away. On the schedule were 5 well-known layouts in and around Cincy. The tour needed two big busses to accommodate everyone.

Wednesday, we took a bus tour to visit two 7-1/2” gauge outdoor ride-on railroads and the Columbus, IN Model RR Club. Sadly, as we started the visit to the live steamers, it started to rain and it poured for almost 2 hours. The guide called it after an hour and we headed to Unionville to Pete Pedigo’s New Union & Western outdoor RR. Pete operates his large (1.5 mile mainline on 15 acres) 1/8th scale railroad just like a top HO scale operationally oriented model railroad.

Thursday’s tour topped our choice as the best tour. We went to Crawfordsville, IN, to the NUCOR steel mill. The in-plant tour took about an hour and a half and it was an opportunity we couldn’t pass up. In this day and age, getting into an operating plant is becoming less and less possible. We feel fortunate to have been able to do this. It was outstanding. Upon returning to the hotel we found out Jim was a winner in several contest categories. (That’s an understatement! *ed.*)

Friday, we toured Amtrak’s Beech Grove Maintenance Facility. Amtrak obtained the former “Big Four” shops from Penn Central in 1975, and it has been their primary maintenance facility since then. We toured the passenger car shops (built in 1904 – 1910) and saw cars entering the maintenance cycle (once every 4 years).

Saturday, we spent the day at the National Train Show (yes, we did find some things we couldn’t live without !) before getting ready for the banquet dinner which was held at the Union Station building, a few blocks away. After dinner speaker Shane Wilson, one of the four originators of Scale Trains.com, told the attendees about starting a model train company in today’s business environment. Interesting stuff, especially the story of how an overseas fork lift operator punched through a container of Scale Trains first models destroying a couple hundred brand new 30,000 gallon tank cars, and how they solved the problem with a lot of help from their model railroading friends.

We’re definitely glad we went to the convention. We came back better model railroaders because of it. Our Semaphore Editor tells me he’ll be running more of our Indy coverage in several upcoming Semaphores. It’s good stuff—really!

## High Wheeler Train Show Will Not Run in 2017

On September 7th the Fox Valley Division's Board of Directors officially voted to not hold the division's High Wheeler Train Show in 2017. The division was notified by Harper College on August 10th that it could host the High Wheeler Show, but it would have to be earlier than usual in February 2017, prior to the start of an extensive renovation of the gymnasium used for High Wheeler. The news came as a surprise because Harper had been advising the FVD the gymnasium most probably would not be available for High Wheeler in 2017 due to the start of the renovation project. After several on line and telephone discussions among board members regarding the feasibility of trying to run High Wheeler next February, an informal vote was taken August 15th. (Harper asked the FVD to let them know of its decision by August 15th.) On August 15 most board members voted not hold High Wheeler in 2017. At its September 7th board meeting, all members of the board—except for one who could not attend the meeting—voted not to hold High Wheeler in 2017. Three primary factors entered into the “no” votes. First, the division at present, has no Ways & Means Trainmaster to organize and run the show. Second, it appears there is not sufficient time to prepare for a show in February 2017. Several months of crucial prep time have already been lost, plus the show would be starting one or two weeks earlier than usual. Finally, the weather in February is a concern. At this time, the FVD Board wants to continue hosting High Wheeler Train Shows in the future. In the coming months the board will continue looking for new venues for the show, and a Ways & Means Trainmaster to run the show. Contact Superintendent, Mike Hirvela, if you have ideas for either a new venue or a Ways & Means Trainmaster. Mike's contact information is on page 7 of this newsletter. High Wheeler will be on the agenda for discussion at the September 18th regular meeting. WH

## May's Contest Winners

## Contest Photos by Jim Osborn



May's contest was “Interlocking or Crossing Tower on a 12” x 12” diorama”. “Tower A” (left) by Leif Hansen placed First, and Denis Zamirowski placed Second with his “NYO&W Interlocking Tower” (center). September's contest is “Passenger Locomotives”—limit 4.

## May's Clinic

May's clinic, “Stock Yards and Packers” was to be given by David Leider, MMR, but David was unable to attend the meeting. Our new Superintendent, Mike Hirvela, pinch hit for David and showed several interesting vintage *Model Railroader* Magazine videos as a substitute. Thanks, Mike! David's clinic has been re-scheduled for our September 18 regular meeting. WH

## Walter Radtke

Long time Fox Valley Division member and Ways & Means Trainmaster, Walter Radtke passed away on August 17th. Walter was also a two term Superintendent of the FVD from 2008 to 2012. In recent years, Walter dropped his NMRA membership as his interest in scale model railroading waned and his interest in garden railroading grew. At the time of his passing, he was an active member of the Chicago Area Garden Railway Society. As the FVD's Ways and Means Trainmaster, Walter was a tireless worker in organizing and promoting the division's High Wheeler Train Show each year. He was well known and well liked by HW vendors, layout owners, exhibitors and show attendees. He is survived by his loving wife, Gail, and their children Pamela, David, and Thomas. WH



## Member News

Despite intermittent gray skies and a few showers, the sun broke out enough to make for another fun Rochelle outing on August 20th. Thirty plus members showed up at Rochelle's famous Railroad Park near the UP and BNSF double diamonds for fine Bob Shlemon, Jr. grilled food, a lot of UP and BNSF trains, and excellent camaraderie. A good time was definitely had by all!.... Membership Services Trainmaster, Bert Lattan, reports the FVD's membership is standing at a healthy 225 as of August 31. WH



## 2016 - 2017 Fox Valley Division Meeting Schedule

Except as noted under "Other", all meetings are held from 1:30 to about 4:00 pm 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>
Sept. 18, 2016	"Stock Yards & Packers of Chicago" by David Leider, MMR	Passenger Locomotives—limit 4	1st meeting of 2016-17 season
Oct. 16, 2016	"Using Arduino Devices" by George K.	Concealed or Closed Load—cannot see load	
Nov. 20, 2016	"Modeling Under a Microscope" by Brian Williams	Structure of Your Choice—2000 min to 5000 max scale sq. feet	
Dec. 18, 2016	"Midwest Modutrak" by Mike Skibbe	Odd Consist—max 4 units	<b>1:00 pm start.</b> Pizza lunch.
Jan. 15, 2017	"Operation Lifesaver" by Dave Phillips	Refrigerated Train—Mechanical or iced; 6 car max	
Feb. 19, 2017	"Computer Modeling" by Carl Wagus	The exterior detail of a structure including walls and roof	
March 19, 2017	"GN Ore Modeling" by Bob Hammer	Structure of Your Choice—any size or type	
April 23, 2017	"A Ride on Africa's Blue Train, Rovos Rails Pride of Africa" by George Ferraro	Yard Switchers—max 2	<b>1:00 pm start.</b> Pizza lunch. FVD officer elections.
<b>April 28–30, 2017 2017 Midwest Region Convention "Golden Rails" hosted by the Rock River Valley Division at the Holiday Inn in Rockford, IL. Complete information on the division's website: <a href="http://rrvd-nmra.com">rrvd-nmra.com</a>.</b>			
May 21, 2017	"Introduction to Operations Under Time Table and Train Order Authority" by Chris Czyzewski	Exposed or Open Load of Your Choice	Last monthly meeting for 2015–2016
<b>July 30–August 6, 2017 2017 NMRA National Convention "Orange Blossom Special" in Orlando, FL. See the convention's website for complete information: <a href="http://nmra2017orlando.org">nmra2017orlando.org</a></b>			



### About the Fox Valley Division

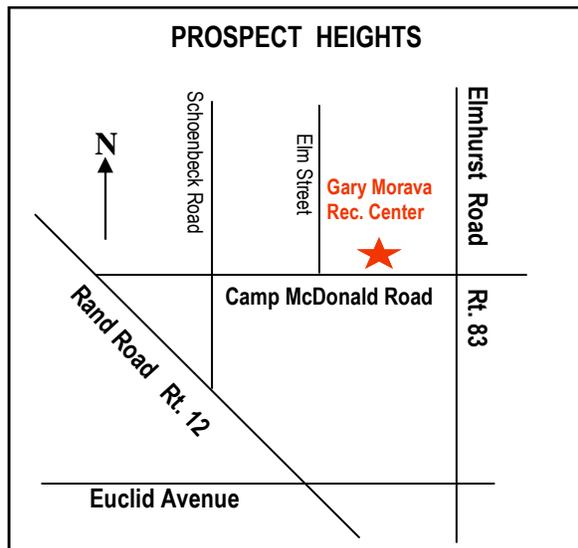
If you receive this newsletter you live in the Midwest Region and Fox Valley Division of the National Model Railroad Association or NMRA. The Fox Valley Division (FVD) includes all of McHenry and parts of Cook, Kane, and Lake Counties in northeast Illinois. About 220 members of varied ages and modeling 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 normally sponsors and runs a large train show called "High Wheeler" in early March each year at Harper College in Palatine, Illinois. (Note: the 2017 High Wheeler is cancelled due to a major renovation of the Harper gymnasium used for the show.)

We encourage you to take advantage of all the FVD has to offer. We are here to answer your questions 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're 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.
- 2015 – 2016 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  
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Ways & Means—High Wheeler Show Manager  
**VACANT**