

# THE SEMAPHORE



September 2017

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



## Pete and Walt's Big Trolley Adventure article and photos by Walt Herrick except as noted

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Pete Walton (right) and Walt Herrick pose for a photo before leaving for the FVD's East Troy Electrical Railroad outing on July 8th. Cloudy skies in Huntley turned bright blue as they crossed into Wisconsin. Laurie Herrick photo

**Next FVD Meeting:**  
**Sunday, September 17**  
**1:30 pm at the**  
**Morava Rec Center in**  
**Prospect Heights**

**Contest: "Anything Related to Trains"**

**Clinic: "Rebuilding a Layout as Modules" by MMR David Leider**

"Ring, ring!"  
 "Hello."  
 "Walt" It was my good friend, Pete Walton calling.  
 "Pete, how are you?"  
 "Great. Hey, do you know anything about the NMRA trip to the Trolley Museum up in East Troy next week?"  
 "Yep. I'm pretty sure I'm going. Want to go together?"

"I think so. I'd kind of like to see the interurbans and trolleys they've got."  
 "Great! Talk to you in a couple of days to set a time."  
 "Sounds good, Bye."

So began "Pete and Walt's Big Trolley Adventure". In a week we were leaving beautiful Sun City Huntley for *con't on p.2*

## Fun Stuff by Jim Allen

Who says the Germans don't have a sense of humor? To the right are photos of a current Metro subway entrance found in Frankfurt, Germany. Though it looks like it came from the 1910s or earlier, the structure was actually built in the year 2000.



## Pete and Walt's Big Trolley Adventure *con't*

lush, rolling Wisconsin countryside and the little town of East Troy. The temperature was perfect, and as we crossed into Wisconsin from Illinois, cloudy skies turned bright and sunny. Former Madison resident Pete said, "It always does that when you go from Illinois into Wisconsin."

The day of the FVD East Troy Outing was "Chicago Day". The railroad would be running restored Chicago South Shore & South Bend cars as well as restored Chicago Elevated cars that saw service in and outside of Chicago from the 1920' to the 1950's. The railroad also had Milwaukee Electric Railway & Light Company line car D23 on a nearby siding for visitors to see. We met several FVD members at the museum including FVD Super, Mike Hirvela who checked us in and gave us our tickets. We were impressed with the railroad's East Troy depot which was originally a power sub station for the railroad. There were lots of railroad memorabilia and photos in the depot, as well as a very nice O scale traction layout and many traction models in various scales in glass cases.

We boarded our train which was made up of two orange South Shore cars, and rocked and swayed down the track at a blistering 15 mph. Our conductor noted that the RR always runs at Yard Limit speeds to avoid a myriad of federal regulations that apply if you run any faster. The conductor was a fount of information about the East Troy Railroad including the fact that the line was in its 110th year of *continuous operation* though by various railroads over the years. Passenger service on line ended in 1939, but freight service continued until 1967. That's when the museum took over operations. We soon arrived at our stop, The Elegant Farmer Bakery/Deli/Market. What a great place this is! We ordered sandwiches and their famous "apple pie in a bag" for lunch. They gave us the pie



FVD Super Mike Hirvela chats with Denis Zamoroski outside the East Troy depot, while inside Walt Herrick checks out the O scale traction layout.



FVD members walk toward MER&L line car D23 for a closer look (left). Pete talked with a Park Ranger there to commemorate East Troy's 110th anniversary.



Pete gives me "the (no more pictures of me!) evil eye" in South Shore car #33 (above left). #33 and sister #30 are at the Elegant Farmer stop (above right).

first, and Pete ended up finishing his pie before our sandwiches even arrived! I told Pete I wouldn't tell anybody except, of course, for this little *Semaphore* article. A couple of horn blasts told us our train back to East Troy was getting ready to depart. We boarded and enjoyed another leisurely ride back in time. The conductor on this train was normally a motorman and told us of a grade crossing accident he experienced just weeks before. While on the last run of the day, he broadsided a new Ford pick-up at a grade crossing. No one was hurt, but the pickup was totaled and the trolley sustained minor damage. Why the collision? The truck driver was—you guessed it—on his cell phone! We detrained in East Troy, and both felt sure we'd be back again to visit the East Troy Electric Railroad. It is a nice "blast from the past".

## Layout of the Month: KV&EC Club's new O Scale Addition

article and photos by Walt Herrick

- Q: So, Mr. Editor, why in the heck are you featuring another tin plate layout in the *Semaphore*?
- A: Because I think it's a cool layout, it's in a scale other than HO, it reminds me of the "good old days" of model railroading, it's fun, parts of it are historic, and I like Neil Young's (Lionel, LLC part owner) music. It also doesn't hurt that I belong to the KV&EC club and the layout is 5 minutes from my house!

Anyway guys, I do *like* this layout! It's a fun layout. And, it has some features you don't often see on layouts. Take for instance the layout's outside main line. It is *dual gauge* made of standard gauge and regular O gauge tubular track. The layout's outside main is a 50 foot loop of dual gauge track. It took the guys 60 man hours to lay the dual gauge loop. It was a tedious job in which the regular O gauge tubular track was cannibalized and two rails of the track carefully fitted between the three rails of the standard gauge track. The track was then lightly belt and disc sanded so the rail heights were correct. The result is a line that can run O Standard gauge and O regular gauge equipment needing a wide radius. That is something the KV&EC O guys have not been able to do on their layout until now.



The KV&EC layout's outside main was painstakingly "kit-bashed" from USA Trains standard O gauge tubular track and USA's tubular O gauge track. The inside main is Atlas "21st Century" three rail O gauge track.

Another feature that's interesting is the new addition is *not* connected to the original layout. Why? "Because we wanted to run more trains," says Earl Maha. "If we connected this layout to the original, we still have the same number of main lines. This way we have two additional main lines to run trains on besides the original layout's lines. So there's more trains to see running." The layout has a large industrial switching area inside the two outside loops. Structures from the original layout were reused and fill the big space.

But, "fun" is the operative word with this O scale group. They built the new additional to have more fun running and displaying their trains for themselves and the public at open houses. I'd say they've succeeded admirably, but then I'm a loyal KV&EC club member and perhaps a little biased!



The KV&EC club's new hi rail O gauge layout addition.

### Basic Layout Information

Layout name:	Kishwaukee Valley & Eakin Creek club's new O gauge layout addition
Layout builder:	KV&EC's O gauge crew
Layout location:	Club's indoor layout room in Sun City Huntley
Construction started:	September 2015
Layout scales:	High rail O and standard gauge
Layout size:	8' x 17' with one end 10' wide
Layout style:	Island
Layout concept:	"Have fun with more O trains."
Layout era:	Mixed
Bench work:	Open grid with plywood top
Base/roadbed:	Plywood base covered with carpet
Track:	Commercial—USA Trains tubular, Atlas "21st Century" semi scale O
Dual gauge track:	USA tubular standard gauge fitted with tubular O gauge track
Radius:	72" radii outside main, 63" inside
Grades:	None
Main line length:	50 feet
Scenery:	75 % complete
Structures:	Kits, kit-bashed and scratch built
Locomotives & Rolling Stock:	Lionel, MTH, Lionel and American Flyer Standard Gauge
Control:	Lionel and MTH; DC and DCC

## Layout of the Month: KV&EC Club's New O Addition con't



An American Flyer standard O gauge box cab diesel leads its three passenger car consist through a 72 inch radius curve on the KV&EC's club's new O gauge layout addition. Urban scenery is 75% complete.



### Bruce Thompson's 1927 American Flyer "Maroon" Train Set

One of the standard gauge trains that runs on the KV&EC's dual gauge outside main line is Bruce Thompson's 1927 American Flyer "Maroon" set. In 1927 Flyer was in heated model railroad standard gauge competition with Lionel. Bruce's is an original Flyer train set with a box cab locomotive and three passenger cars. He has the original set's boxes, track, 2 switches, and transformer. The equipment is in superb *original condition*. Bruce inherited it from his dad Ray upon his passing several years ago. Ray was an O gauge KV&EC member for many years and received the Maroon set as a gift from a friend who wanted to give it to someone who would "take good care of it". That was Ray and now it's Bruce. The loco still runs very well and sounds great—no, not modern DCC sound equipped sound, but original "electric train" sound. Ahhh, the joys of tin plate!



The size comparison between standard O and O gauge is apparent in the photo to the left. That's the 1927 standard gauge AF "Maroon" box cab on the left, next to a "modern" Lionel, LLC B&O Pacific steam loco with sound and smoke capabilities on the right.



Here are most of the "O gaugers" that make things happen on the KV&EC club's O gauge layout. From the left, Earl Maha and O superintendent Al Schrader are deep in a layout discussion; that's Paul Strokosch at the club's work bench; and Jerry Ciecwiwa, Hank Sembdner, and Bruce Thompson take a quick break from scenery making on the original O layout to pose for a photo.

## May Clinic and Contest—photos by Jim Osborn

**May's clinic**, “Introduction to Operations Under Time Table and Train Order Authority” was presented by **Chris Czyzewski**. Chris gave us the basics of classes of trains, rights of trains, train priorities, rights and track authority under TTO rules. Chris also showed how these can be applied to model railroading. Big FVD “Thanks!” to Chris for his excellent clinic and information on this increasingly popular subject.



### **May's contest**, was “Exposed or Open Load of your Choice”.

The contest was won by **Ray Witt** with his HO 65 foot CNW gondola with a crushed automobile load (right). Ray specially decaled his gon and added appropriate bracing to replicate the prototype. **Second place** went to **Chuck Rita** (below left) who nicely modeled and weathered an auto frame load in a 53 foot B&O gondola. Chuck also added extra bracing to his gon.

**Third Place** went to **Don Zbulut** who modeled three different loads



on two separate flat cars. Super job, to our winners and the other 6 entrants! September's contest is “Anything Related to Trains”.



## Ways and Means Trainmaster still needed

The division is *still* looking for an individual to assume its important Ways & Means Trainmaster position. This position organizes and runs our High Wheeler Train Show held each year in early March. The FVD Board would like to have the Ways and Means position filled ASAP to help in finding a new location for High Wheeler and also helping to plan the 2018 show. **However, if no one steps forward to assume the Ways and Means job soon, there will be no High Wheeler 2018.** So, members, please consider serving as the FVD's Ways and Means Trainmaster and carrying on the great FVD High Wheeler Train Show tradition. Thank you! WH

## Membership News

The FVD hosted a fun outing to the East Troy Electrical Railroad on July 8th. See the lead article in this Semaphore for a little of what went on....The FVD hosted successful booths at Franklin Park's Railroad Daze and the May Wheaton Show....We're all greatly saddened by the recent passing of Assistant Super, Ingrid Drozdak, of cancer.

## Ingrid Drozdak by FVD Superintendent Mike Hirvela

I'd love to start out the new modeling year with a rousing "Mike's Minute" but I can't. You see our good friend and recently elected FVD Assistant Superintendent, Ingrid Drozdak passed away today, September 7th. She lost a courageous battle with cancer which she learned in May, had come out of remission. She is survived by husband, expert modeler, and FVD member, John. Ingrid was an avid Z scaler with a beautiful little coffee table layout she took to train shows. A dental hygienist by trade, she led a second life as the area's well known "Tree Lady" who sold scenery materials and taught modelers how to make trees. She and John enjoyed attending train shows, Ingrid displaying her Z scale layout and working on trees and John scratch building rolling stock at the table they rented. Ingrid was the Photo Contest Chair for the Midwest Region and also assisted in model contest judging and running auctions for the MWR. She was a wonderfully lovable lady with a big smile and a boisterous laugh, and she would talk to anyone about anything just about any time. Thanks for all you did for us, Ingrid. We will miss you a lot.

## 2017 - 2018 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. 17, 2017	"Rebuilding a Layout as Modules" by David Leider, MMR	Anything Related to Trains	1st meeting of 2016-17 season
Oct. 15, 2017	"Quick Industries for Your Model RR by Rick Mahoney	Billboard Refrigerated Cars—4 cars max	
Nov. 19, 2017	"Signaling the CNW Western Division" by Jim Osborn	Small Structure—max 300 scale square feet	
Dec. 17, 2017	"Ramblings of an Old Railroader" by Fred Henize	Hopper Train—4 cars max	<b>1:00 pm start.</b> Pizza lunch.
Jan. 21, 2018	TBD	Large Structure—5000 scale square feet or larger	
Feb. 18, 2018	"Mid 20th Century Box Cars by George Trandel	Gondola with load—4 cars max	
March 18, 2018	"Using Ground Goop for Scenery" by Art Jones	Diorama with On Line Structure	
<b>April 13–15, 2018</b>	<b>2018 Midwest Region Convention "Capital 400" hosted by the South Central Wisconsin Division at the Radisson Hotel in Madison, WI. More information at the convention's web site: <a href="mailto:Capital400@charter.net">Capital400@charter.net</a></b>		
April 22, 2018	"Two Rivers Wisconsin 20 Years Later" by Mike Hirvela	Maintenance of Way Train	<b>1:00 pm start.</b> Pizza lunch. FVD officer elections.
May 20, 2018	"Building My Great Midwestern Layout" by Pete Walton	Illuminated Structure—any size	<b>Last monthly meeting for 2017 – 2018</b>
<b>August 5–12, 2018</b>	<b>2018 NMRA National Convention in Kansas City, Missouri. See the convention's web site for more information: <a href="http://www.kc2018.org">www.kc2018.org</a></b>		



### About the Fox Valley Division

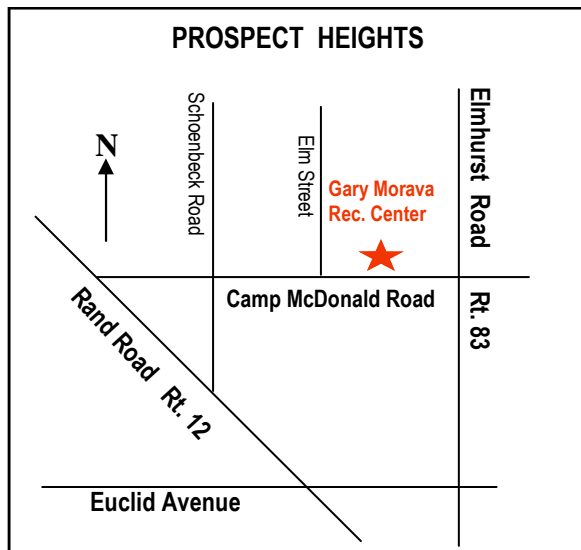
If you receive this newsletter you live in the Midwest Region and Fox Valley Division of the National Model Railroad Association or NMRA. The Fox Valley Division (FVD) includes all of McHenry and parts of Cook, Kane, and Lake Counties in northeast Illinois. About 220 members of varied ages and modeling 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 suspended 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.
- 2017 – 2018 meeting dates, contest and clinic info are on page 6 of this newsletter.

FVD web site: [www.foxvalleydivision.org](http://www.foxvalleydivision.org)

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Ways & Means—  
High Wheeler Show Manager, **vacant**