

THE SEMAPHORE

November 2021

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



The town of Sugar Camp on Steve Miazga's N Scale *Missabe Junction Railway* graces this month's *Semaphore* cover. Steve's MJR setting is northern Wisconsin and loaded with scads of excellent structures - most of which were scratch built and detailed by Steve. The 22 x 25 foot operations-orientated layout is completely decorated & runs smoothly in accordance with Steve's operating schedule and his watchful, dispatching eye. Steve, a member of the Wisconsin South Eastern (WISE) Division, recently received recognition as one of the NMRA's latest Master Model Railroaders®. (Cont'd on page 3)

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3) Field mats cut to size.



4) White glue dribbled on the top of the furrows



5) Grass flock sprinkled on the glue. Shake off excess when dry.



6) Various shades of green leaves added.

Throttle up and get those trains moving...

I have been busy decorating the area around the recent quarry addition. Before he moved to Florida, David Leider donated a nifty flower shop and green house to the layout. I've finally gotten around to integrating it into the pike. I stopped by a couple of the local green houses for ideas. They all had several fields filled with various colorful plants throughout the gardening season next to the green houses. I set out to "grow some flowers" around my green house.

I started out with a *Small Plowed Field* mat made by Busch as a basis for the plantings. It's basically a corrugated cardboard slab with one of the cardboard faces peeled off. It's covered with their earth ground cover material. Pictures are worth a 1000 words so here are some snaps of the process steps.



1) The initial layout of the building placements



2) Paper mock-ups of the garden sizes



7) Colored flower petals added with additional glue on top of the leaves. Shake the excess off between steps.



8) Finished mats tested in place.



9) Mats glued to the layout. The cardboard wanted to ripple up so I had to pin it down until dry.



10) Additional ground cover and grasses applied to blend the fields into the scene. This is a nice way to add some color to a space. Still more to do to finish the scene, but I am satisfied so far.



Here's 4 other farm fields I "planted" using the same technique and materials shown above.

I am confident you'll get the idea of the process from the photos. Materials I used were:

- 1/8" Busch Small Field Plowed Field mat 189-7183
- Busch Micro Ground Scatter Material 189-7046
- Various scenic grasses, flowers & flocking material
- White glue

Have some fun and plant something on your layout.

Page 7 features the flyer advertising the Tri-Region Spring Convention in Indianapolis, IN. The Midwest, North Central and Mid-Central Regions are all joining forces to hold a huge convention with clinics, contests, operating sessions and tours. There will also be a Railroad Prototype Modelers' (RPM) meet and a Train Show running in conjunction with the convention. It stands to be a great convention. Click the web-link on the flyer for more information, registration and hotel room reservations. Discounted registration fees for **Indy Junction** end on December 31st. - so sign-up now for what is shaping up to be a great convention. It's happening May 18-22, 2022. I hope to see you there!

Jim Osborn, MMR®, Ed.

The Missabe Junction Railway, cont'd....

The **MJR** is located in Waukesha Wisconsin about an hour north of the IL/WI border, and it is a great railroad to see. I've included a bunch of pictures I took at a recent operating session. They speak for themselves.



A shuttle is picking up tourists at Pelican Rapids for trip up to view the the northern territories of Wisconsin.



Above is a view along the northern edge of the layout. Missabe Jct. Yard and engine facility is on the right with Highland Jct. on a ridge above the yard in the middle, and a 4 track staging yard is along the left edge.



Fly fishermen are enjoying the cool waters of a stream below Fredric as well as getting some train watching in at the same time.



The Pelican Rapids Industries



The town of Fredric borders the western side of the RR. The right spur services several industries; the center main line and passing track all head to the north staging yard.



Here's an aerial view of the western side of the railroad. St. Croix Jct. is on the lower right; Missabe yard is to the rear, and Fredric is along the left side. You can follow along with the track plan on page 6.



The Eastern side of the RR features Pelican Rapids and the Rhineburgh sub.



This is Oneida and it is a real brain-twisting, switching puzzle.



A long view of Alister yard

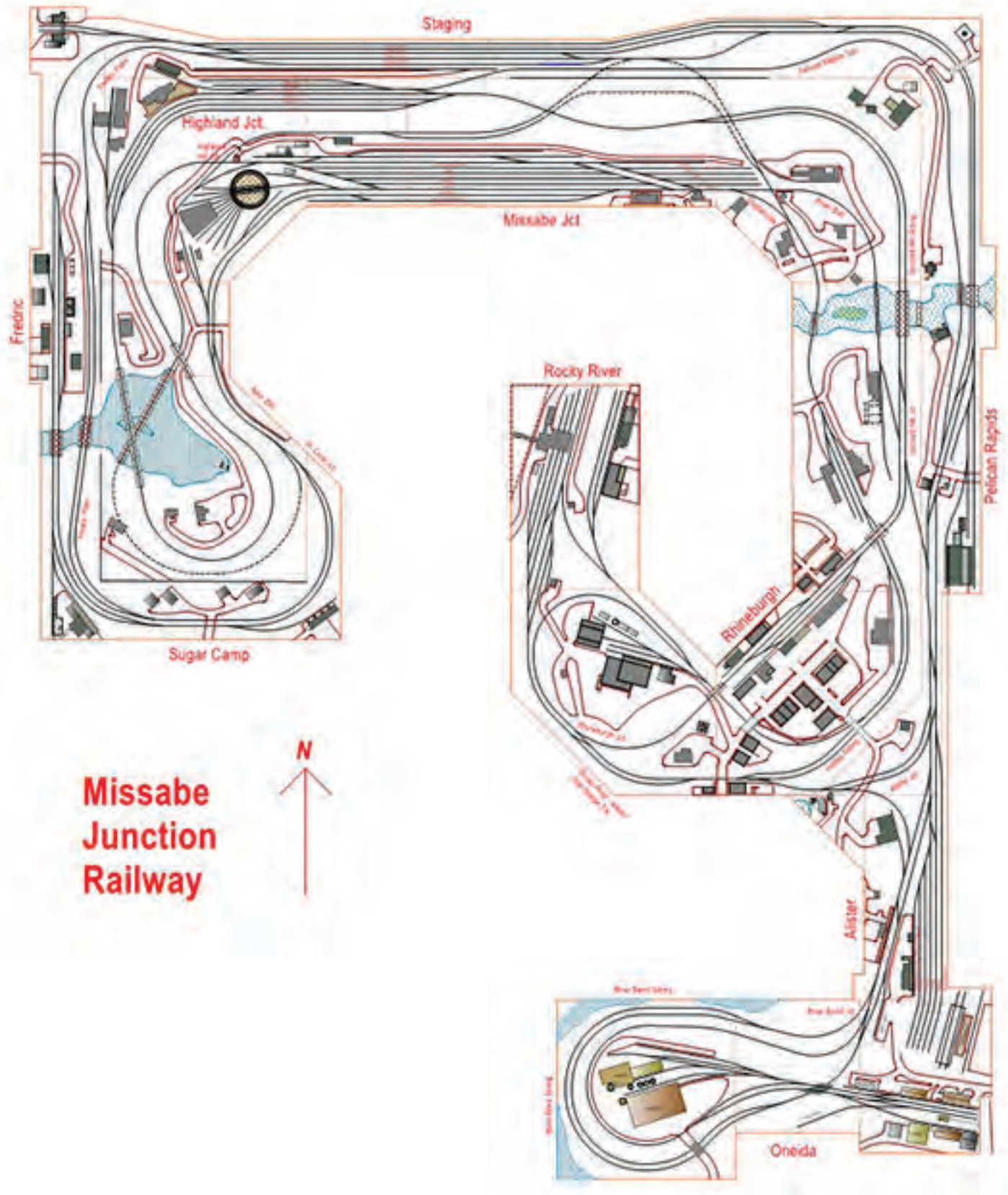


A night view of Rhineburgh: Steve employs generous lighting for great night operations - not over-done allowing for realistic views.



Here's an overall view of the eastern side of the RR.

The MJR layout is an example of planning and execution plus it is a joy to operate on. Digitrax DCC controllers, Peco track and turnouts - plus a custom car movement system make for enjoyable operations. These pictures cannot capture the entire experience - but my hope is to give you glimpses of a great layout. BTW if you visit look out for the Hodag! Jim Osborn, MMR®, Ed.





Marriott East, 7202 E 21st St
Indianapolis, IN 46219



Four Full Days
Three NMRA Regions
An RPM Conference
Three Day Train Show
One Convention
May 18-22, 2022

Clinics
Layout Tours
Ops Sessions
Prototype Tours



<https://www.indyjunction2022.org/>



RPM
CHICAGOLAND



Mike's Minute...



It is definitely fall as I make these notes. Leaves are changing color; the lawn has been cut probably for the final time this year. Trees are dropping leaves the size of dinner plates requiring another trip to the store for more leaf bags.

Time to get the outside chores done in preparation for you-know-what. And that means it's the traditional start of model railroading season. Yahoo! Of course, for us dyed-in-the-wool hobbyists, model railroad season is all year, but don't let that stop you from starting that new project that's been waiting all summer for the 'right' time. It's here!

The attendance at the Great Midwest Train Show (aka the Wheaton swap at the DuPage County Fairgrounds) indicates that model railroading is still a popular hobby. I found the folks attending the last meet as enthusiastic as ever. The FVD shares a table with the DuPage Division showcasing our members and activities. The DuPage Division will staff the table on November 14th, and we manage the table on December 12th. Thanks to FVD member Robert Teuber for stepping forward to be our representative at the December swap. We will need someone for February & April 2022. Call me if you can help!

I have nothing new to report on the COVID front. The FVD Board continue to keep its eyes and ears on future developments - and they could change on a moment's notice. We will post any changes on the FVD website time table.

It has been encouraging talking to and seeing all the attendees at our Zoom on-line meetings. If you haven't joined in on a Zoom meeting, the next opportunity is on November 21st. Also, help us keep you up-to-date with what is going on by advising our webmaster of any e-mail address changes. The e-mail update link is at the top of the website home page. In the meantime, check the website timetable page and the **Semaphore's** schedule of events for the latest program information.

www.foxvalleydivision.org

The Midwest Region is hosting a Tri-Region convention in Indianapolis on May 18-22, 2022. They are looking for clinic presenters. If you are interested in sharing your skills, please contact me.

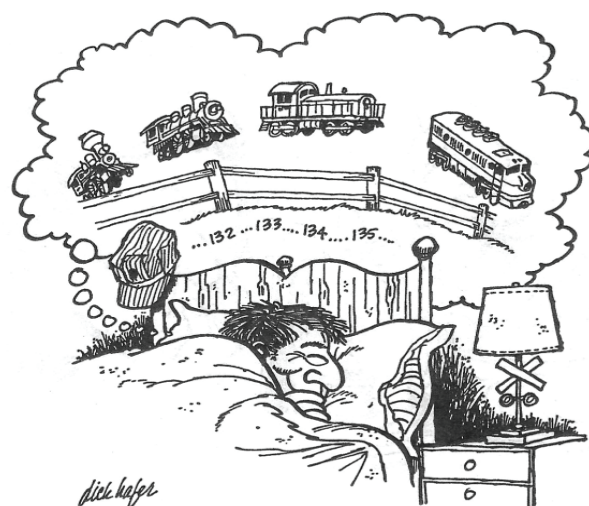
Regards, MH

Fun Stuff... What the heck is this?



by Jim Allen

Could this be a prototype sized Centerline Products Track Cleaning car? Looks like it! But maybe some type of turbine?



October Contest Results ...

Jim Osborn's HO Scale Crandic RR Gondola with scrap metal load took 1st place honors in the Gondola Load contest. The Elgin City lead water pipe replacements by Tim Kleimeyer grabbed 2nd place and Mike Hirvela's HO Scale Pipe load with simulated dunnage and banding placed 3rd. Pictures are shown below. We had entries in both HO and N scales. See more photos of all the model entries on our web site at:

<http://www.foxvalleydivision.org/fvd2016/contests.v2.html>



Jim Osborn's Crandic Gondola (top left)

Tim Kleimeyer's Lead pipe replacements

Mike Hirvela's Pipe Loads (top right)

Next Meet....















Program: *New England Trains*, by Mike Wood, FVD

Contest: Send in photos of your favorite ***Illuminated Structure*** to the photo contest website. You may submit up to three photos of your model to the web site. Celebrate and share your modeling work with the membership.

Click on: <https://form.jotform.com/201995250508962> to submit your contest photos.

*Happy Thanksgiving
to all our Fox Valley
Division Members and
Families!*

What's Happening - or not ...

-  A number of **old Semaphore issues** have been discovered. Take a gander back in time to check some out on the **Semaphore** web page. BTW if you have copies of issues not shown, contact the webmaster so we can add them.
-  The Chicago Area O-Scale meet will be held on April 1-2, 2022 at the Lombard Westin. See their web site for more info: <https://marchmeet.net/WP/>
-  The Superintendent has received the plastic templates for the billboards featured in the clinic on September 26th presented by Dave Ackmann. If anyone is interested in using them, please contact the Superintendent.
-  The **MWR** will hold a tri-regional convention in Indianapolis on May 18 - 22, 2022. See the FVD RR events web page for more details - it should be a dandy! See: <https://www.indyjunction2022.org/> There will be an RPM meet in conjunction with the convention. Book your hotel rooms now - INDY time trials are running at the same time.
-  NMRA **Gateway 2022** National Convention will be in St. Louis, August 7 – 14, 2022. Please watch the website for details as they evolve: https://www.eventsquid.com/event.cfm?preview&event_id=13724
-  The Rock River Valley division will host the 2023 MWR convention.
-  The **Illinois Railway Museum** has Holiday Train Rides Tickets in advance, \$20 each. Hot chocolate & holiday cookies. Plus: visit from Santa. November 26, 27 & 28. December 4 & 5, 11 & 12, 18 & 19. The Steam Shop is working on getting UP 4-6-0 #428 finished. The Diesel Shop is working on former UP Doodlebug M-35. A full list of dates and activities can be found at: www.irm.org/calendar.
-  The National N Scale Convention is planned for a Nashville venue on June 22-26, 2022. See: <http://www.nationalnscaleconvention.com/> for details as they become available.
-  Friends of the 2926 are completing operational restoration of ATSF 4-8-4 #2926 in New Mexico. The boiler has been steamed up, and the crew is hopeful for excursions in late 2021.
-  The WISE division tells us that the 50th Anniversary **Trainfest** originally scheduled for November has been canceled due to covid uncertainties. <https://trainfest.com/>
-  **Great Midwest Train Show** (aka: the Wheaton / DuPage Swap) is under new management and is holding swap meets at the DuPage County Fairgrounds in Wheaton, IL. The dates for future shows are: November 14, December 12, January 9, February 13, March 13, April 10, May 8 and June 12. Follow the signs to the fairgrounds entrance. See <https://www.trainshow.com/>
-  **Tri-County Train Show** (Roma Lodge Swap), in Racine, 7130 Spring Street (Cty Hwy C) on the following dates: 8am – 12 noon: (6 shows remaining): November 7, December 5, January 9, February 13 & March 13.
-  C&NW Historical Society 22nd Chicago Area Get Together is scheduled for 3:00 pm, Saturday, November 20th at the Normandy Banquets on Butterfield Road in Elmhurst. Info on <https://cnwhs.org/wp1/>
-  The Bucyrus Museum is open in South Milwaukee. Check out their web site for a host of historical photos of the iconic heavy equipment manufacturer. <https://www.bucyrusmuseum.org/>

2021 - 2022 Fox Valley Division Meeting Schedule

Meetings are held from 1:30 to about 4:00 pm (except as noted). This season all meetings will be presented online using ZOOM virtual meeting technology. See the timetable tab on the division's web site <http://www.foxvalleydivision.org/fvd2016/timetable.v2.html> for complete instructions on how to use ZOOM and participate in the meetings. For the latest clinic and all FVD news and information, visit FVD's web site at www.foxvalleydivision.org. Save the dates for now - details will follow.

Date	Presentation	Contest	Notes
Sept. 26, 2021	<i>Building Billboards</i> by Dave Ackmann	1 Diesel Locomotive.	
Oct. 24, 2021	<i>Sectional & Portable Layout Planning</i> by Eric Peterson, CID	1 Gondola with Load.	
Next Meet Nov. 21, 2021	<i>New England Trains</i> by Mike Wood, FVD	1 Illuminated Structure.	
Dec. 19, 2021	<i>New Hard Shell Scenery Method</i> by Bob McGeever, and <i>A Teen/Tween Explores Chicago's Railroads - The Sequel 1975-78</i> by Steve Brown	An Odd Consist - 2 units max.	
Jan. 16, 2022	TBA	Open Load for 1 Freight Car.	
Feb. 20, 2022	TBA	1 Large Structure. 5000 sq. scale feet or more. (eg. in HO Scale that's only 9.75 inches on a side.)	
Mar. 20, 2022	TBA	1 Steam Locomotive.	1:00 Start Business & member meeting, election of Super & Chief Clerk
Apr. 24, 2022	<i>Railroads of International Harvester in Chicago</i> by Richard Sieben	1 Refrigerated Billboard Car.	
May 15, 2022	DCC Switching by Mike Wood	1 Small Structure. 500 sq. scale feet or less. (eg. in HO Scale that's only 9.75 inches on a side.)	
May 18-21, 2022	Midwest, North Central & Mid Central Tri-Region Convention	For more information, see: https://www.indyjunction2022.org/	



Call for Articles....

Future Semaphore issues need interesting content. Consequently we are looking for model or prototype railroad related articles. Send us your content (words and photos) or even ideas. We'll take care of the editing and insertion in the publication. Contact us at:

<http://www.foxvalleydivision.org/fvd2016/contactus.v2.html>

About the Fox Valley Division

If you receive this newsletter, you live in the Midwest Region and Fox Valley Division area of the National Model Railroad Association or NMRA. The Fox Valley Division (FVD) includes all of Lake and McHenry, as well as parts of Cook and Kane Counties in northeast Illinois. About 180 members of varied ages and modeling ability levels belong to the FVD. Almost all modeling scales are represented in our division. Subscriptions to the Semaphore newsletters are free. NMRA membership in the division is available through the NMRA at:

<https://www.nmra.org/>

2020 –2021 FVD monthly meetings are held September through May on-line via the ZOOM virtual meeting technology per the schedule in this issue. Each meeting features a clinic, model contest, and information of interest to the membership. Outings, layout tours, and operating sessions may also be held when Covid-19 protocols allow gatherings.

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. Visit us on the web at: <http://www.foxvalleydivision.org/>

The *Semaphore* is published by the Fox Valley Division of the Midwest Region of the NMRA once a month, ten months a year, from September to June. The Fox Valley Division of the Midwest Region of the NMRA is registered 501(c)7 not-for-profit Illinois corporation.

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Website:

<http://www.foxvalleydivision.org/>

Until further notice, regular meetings are held virtually via Zoom generally from 1:30 until 4:00 PM per the schedule listed in this publication and on its website at:

<http://www.foxvalleydivision.org/fvd2016/timetable.v2.html>

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Need to contact any BoD members? Click this link to:

<http://www.foxvalleydivision.org/fvd2016/contactus.v2.html>