

THE SEMAPHORE

December 2021

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



Santa and a train load of reindeer, snow men and bags of toys are passing through Blairtown, IA on Jim Osborn's CNW Western Division railroad. The Class I extra made work stops and dropped a bag of toys at every town during Jim's December operating session. The Soundtraxx equipped CNW 2-8-2 Mikado made plenty of noise en-route to alert everyone it was on its way. Model Trains are Fun! Have some fun on your layout! Send in your holiday train photos for publication in a future issue of the **Semaphore**!

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Bridges of Vermont by Mike Wood, FVD ...

Mike Wood (FVD) entertained us at the November meet with an east coast photo blog including the ins and outs of booking a trip on the Conway Scenic Railroad in New Hampshire. He also rode the Mt. Washington Cog Railroad in New Hampshire. Mt. Washington claims to have the worst weather in the lower 48, and Mike's photo account documented it. 60 mph gales and snow on an autumn day - all for the love of trains! We thank Mike for taking time to share his trip experience with the Fox Valley Division.

During his trip out east, Mike visited some very scenic covered bridges. He shared a few of his excellent photos with the ***Semaphore***. Is this a future clinic presentation? Gives us something to think about.

The Fisher Covered Railroad Bridge, Wolcott, Vermont is shown in the three pictures on this page. Built in 1908, it originally carried the St. Johnsbury and Lamoille County Railroad over the Lamoille River. It was the last covered bridge in Vermont to carry railroad traffic and is a rare, surviving example of a double Town lattice truss. Something for Vermont RR enthusiasts to treasure.



Fisher Bridge over the Lamoille River near Wolcott, Vermont (above and below.) Note the stone abutments and the wood center support piles. This would be a very interesting prototype scene and structure to model.



Cole Hill Road crossing Sterling Creek in Morristown, Vermont. This 1896 red bridge is shown below.



Schoolhouse Bridge in Lyndon Vermont (below). Formerly spanning the South Branch Passumpsic River on South Wheelock Branch Road. The bridge's construction date and builder are not known.



Montgomery Bridge (below) is also known as the Lower or Potter Bridge on Montgomery Bridge Road. Off Route 109 near Waterville, Vermont, it's a 70 foot span over the North Branch of the Lamoille River. Built 1887, its builder is unknown.



The Scribner Covered Bridge, also known as the Mudgett Covered Bridge, carries Rocky Road across the Gihon River off State Route 100C in eastern Johnson, Vermont. This bridge's construction date and builder are not known.





Hopkins Bridge Lattice type near Montgomery, VT was built by Jewett Brothers 1875 shown above.

We thank Mike for sharing these excellent photos of the bridges of Vermont for all to enjoy. Jim Osborn, MMR®, Ed.

A Blast for the Past...

Not quite as old as Mike's bridge subjects, but I found some 4 x 6 street car photos while I was doing some house cleaning this past week. I am not 100% sure who the photographer was but I think it might have been my father-in-law (Matt Neary) based on the hand-writing on the back of the photos. The cars are all traveling various streets of Chicago and I am guessing the photos are about circa 1955-1960 or so. Nice find, huh?

Jim Osborn, MMR®, Ed.

Caption: The 2 top right photos are taken at the corner of State and 22nd streets.



The PCC car shown above is at Madison and Clark. The street car shown below is at Wells and Van Buren streets. Check out the distinctive Willy's Jeep *Woody* Wagon lurking at the curb in the shot below.



**Discounted registration
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An RPM Conference
Three Day Train Show
One Convention
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<https://www.indyjunction2022.org/>



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Mike's Minute & Season's Greetings to All...



With Thanksgiving gatherings behind us, we typically look forward to the upcoming seasonal events: Snow, Railroad Club Open Houses, Snow, Operating Sessions, Snow, Pre Holiday Train Shows/Swap Meets, Snow, Christmas, Snow and New Year's observances and more Snow.

I hope you had a chance to venture out and attend a model railroad club holiday open house, an operating session on your favorite model railroad(s), or a swap meet looking for that long-sought, absolutely evasive item. Then of course, I hope you will get everything on your wish list. Or is it wish lists?

Speaking of Train Show / Swap Meets, FVD member Robert Teuber stepped forward as our rep at our NMRA member table at the December Great Midwest Train Show (swap) at the DuPage County Fairgrounds on December 12. We will need someone to be our rep at the February & April 2022 GMWTS. Let me know if you can assist; I can fill you in on the details.

When train enthusiasts decide it is time to make changes in their train life, several of us are able to assist in the disposition of their equipment. I know this is something that will happen to each of us as we face the realities of getting older. Over the years, I have helped folks tear down and remove train layouts from their residences with most parts exiled to the dumpster. Recently I had the happy and satisfying experience of re-purposing a layout to a new owner. It took 5 of us to remove this layout out of a basement, up the stairs and into a transport van for delivery. That's all before we got to its new home. You'll read about the experience in the next issue of the *Semaphore*.

I do have something new to report on the COVID front. Health Departments are seriously looking at the latest mutation of the COVID 19 and are employing or planning to invoke measures to reduce the virus' impact. We (the FVD Board) continue to keep our eyes and ears on developments which seemingly can change our lifestyles on a moment's notice. We will post any changes on the FVD website. I am still hopeful we can have a face-to-face gathering sometime in the Spring.

Meanwhile, the ZOOM virtual meetings over the computer have worked for us. It does have advantages: no need to burn fuel to get somewhere, you don't have to go out into

the weather or traffic, plus we can bring in folks from other places to visit. We have had folks from Florida, Missouri, Tennessee, Indiana, Wisconsin, all chime in and participate. Ain't technology grand? Join us at the next meeting: December 19. Also, help us help you by keeping our webmaster advised of any changes to your e-mail address at: www.foxvalleydivision.org

A very Hearty and Joyous Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and your's, Regards, MH

Fun Stuff... What the heck is this?

by Jim Allen



Are tenders back? Maybe not so fast. The Florida East Coast RR operates a Liquid Natural Gas demonstration unit utilizing a LNG shipping container on a well car for port switching. Tests of the low emission, mixed fuel system have been ongoing for some time with excellent emission results; however, testing associated with the safety of the system at speed has been minimal and obviously remains an important issue. J.A.

The real reason the supply chain is interrupted.



November Contest Results ...

Wicked Wanda's with LED lighting is an HO Scale Kit-bash by Leif Hansen and was awarded 1st Place honors in the Illuminate Structure contest. The North Chicago Texaco station - an HO Scale kit-bash by Mike Hirvela snagged 2nd place and Keith Dart's N Scale Ready to Run Miss Molly's Diner 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>



Leif Hansen's Wicked Wanda's (top left) Mike Hirvela's North Chicago Texaco Station Keith Dart's Miss Molly's Diner (top right)

Next Meet - December 19, 2021....

Two Programs: *New Hard Shell Scenery Method* by Bob McGeever, plus
 A Teen/Tween Explores Chicago's Railroads - The Sequel 1975-78 by Steve Brown

Contest: Send in photos of your favorite **Odd Consist (2 units max)** to the photo contest website. Here's one example of an odd consist - there can be many, many others. Let your imagination wander....















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 Holidays to all our Fox Valley
 Division Members, Families and Friends!*

What's Happening - or not ...

-  Looking for something to do during Covid lock-downs? See what about a dozen folks did in Hamburg, Germany. On March 17, 2021 they set a record for **The Longest Melody Played by a Model Train**. There's even a bit of melody from Beethoven's 9th Symphony. Chuck Rita shared this link to a 9 minute fun video of the event. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBNHmUT3GPg>
-  The **Midwest Region** 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. Also save \$25 by registering before December 31st!
-  **NMRA Gateway 2022 National Convention** will be in St. Louis, August 7 – 14, 2022. Please watch the website for details: https://www.eventsquid.com/event.cfm?preview&event_id=13724
-  **Rock River Valley Division Train Show** at Harlem High School, Machesney Park, IL, March 26-27, 2022
-  The **Illinois Railway Museum** has Holiday Train Rides Tickets in advance, \$20 each. Hot chocolate & holiday cookies. Plus: visit from Santa. December 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.nationalscaleconvention.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.
-  **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: December 12, January 2, February 6, March 6, April TBA, May TBA and June TBA. 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): January 9, February 13 & March 13.
-  **Mad City Train Show** at the Alliant Energy Center, Madison, Wisconsin, February 19-20, 2022.
-  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/>
-  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/>
-  **Titletown Train Show** will be at the KI Center, Green Bay, Wisconsin, April 9-10, 2022.
-  The **Rock River Valley Division** will host the 2023 MWR convention. Dates TBD.
-  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.
-  Brian Tite contacted us to say he has 40 quality **Lionel** pieces, cars and loco sets from the early 1990's, new in box, never run for sale. Brian is not a Midwest Region member. Contact Brian directly if you are interested: brian_t@sbcglobal.net

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.	
Nov. 21, 2021	<i>New England Trains</i> by Mike Wood, FVD	1 Illuminated Structure.	
Dec. 19, 2021 Next Meet	<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 a little less than 3 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/>

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<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>