

# THE SEMAPHORE

April 2022

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



The Milwaukee Road interchanges with the Wabash RR (disappearing right track) at the Ottumwa depot just west of Davenport, IA on FVD members Gail and Gordy Ericksen's **Milwaukee Road Southwest Division** layout. The **Semaphore** staff was given access to the route during trial operations. This month's issue features a photographic update of the original January 2019 story by the late Walt Herrick.

Cont'd on Pg 3.



**In This Issue...**

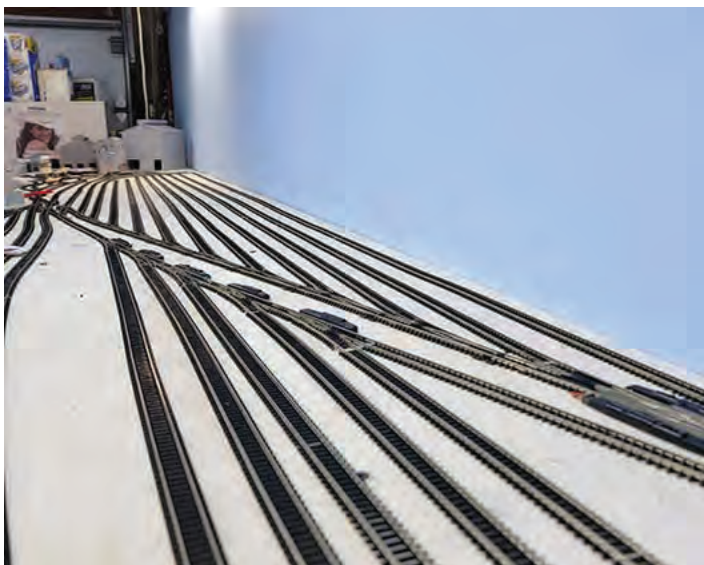
<b>Pages 1 -5</b>	<b>Milwaukee Road South West Division</b>
<b>Page 2</b>	<b>Keep Those Trains Moving</b>
<b>Page 5</b>	<b>A Bit of Nostalgia</b>
<b>Page 6</b>	<b>March Contest &amp; Next Meet</b>
<b>Page 7</b>	<b>Mike's Minute &amp; Fun Stuff</b>
<b>Page 7-8</b>	<b>Proto-Photos</b>
<b>Page 9</b>	<b>What's Happening (or not)</b>
<b>Page 10</b>	<b>Meeting Schedules</b>
<b>Page 10</b>	<b>Indy Junction Convention</b>
<b>Page 11</b>	<b>Call for Articles</b>
<b>Page 11</b>	<b>Division Information</b>

***Keep Those Trains Moving, by Jim Osborn, MMR...***

Rich Sieben has been keeping his trains moving in a big way. Last month Keith Dart reported on a mega-operating session at Rich's N Scale **Chicago Industrial Terminal Railway**. He has recently added a Steel Mill operation to the layout. The following pictures and captions are provided by Rich.



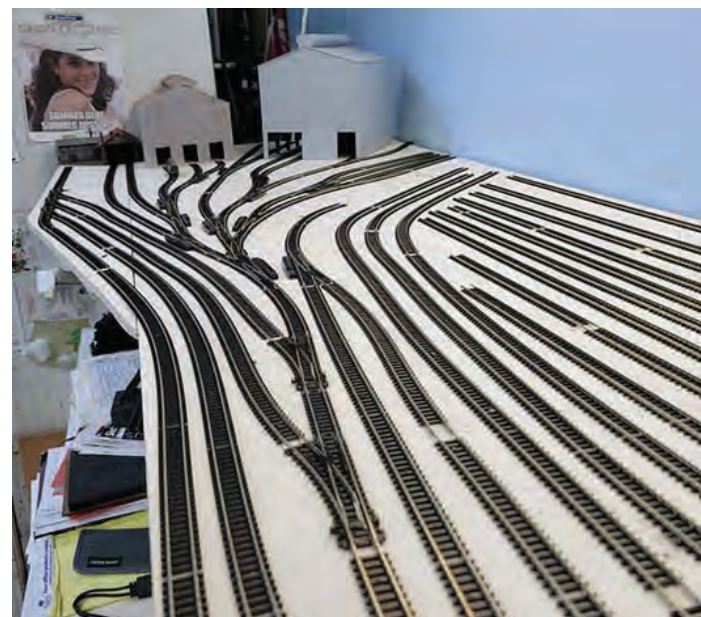
Above is the steel mill in operation; tracks in front are the industry support yard buildings from right to left, electric furnace, rolling mill and engine/ car shop. The trackage of the B Kruser yard and engine terminal are shown below.



Finally, the Royal Pane in the Glass factory and tallow rendering plant scene is being developed. The support yard to the far right is only partly visible. You can see the track crew is very busy!



Another view (below) of the Mill and Industry complex that's sure to keep the best operators challenged. Yikes!



And finally some GOOD Hobby Shop news for a change. **Ron's Mundelein Hobbies**, for sale for a long time, finally has a new owner. Norm Halford has purchased the enterprise and promises to continue in the tradition of the shop's outstanding service to all hobbyists. We wish the best of success to Norm and his staff. J. O.



### ***Milwaukee Road Southwest Division, cont'd...***

Superintendent Mike Hirvela and I had the opportunity to visit Gail & Gordy's Milwaukee Road layout for a status update this winter. Progress since the last visit during December of 2019 is significant. All the track work is in place and operating. Gordy is currently busy developing the railroad's operating scheme, schedules and associated documentation. He has 4 cycle waybills for car routing in place and has recently completed fascia town maps showing the local trackage and industries to be serviced. Gail continues to use her structure building skills to fill out the towns. She has completed over 100 scratch built, kit-bashed and kit built structures to populate the railroad. Pictures of the layout follow; they speak for themselves.



Our photo tour starts out at the staging and engine facility just west of Davenport, IA. Gordy models in the transition era.



The opposite end of the 32 foot long staging yard houses the diesel engine facility. The wye visible at the back of the scene heads east to Davenport or east to Ottumwa, IA on this layout (pictured on the cover page.) Nahant yard and engine facility is just west of Davenport and is pictured below.



Along the route toward Muscatine, we pass Gordy's ***Electric Museum*** and the Linwood Quarry and a gravel sorter. Gordy has a number of antique traction units on display at the museum.



The REX Agency shown above, along with AC Brown Mfg., Golden Valley Canning and Valley Mellon Packing. They anchor the Muscatine yard at the west end of town.

The Prairie Co-op, Prairie Star Milling Co, the Washington Depot, Purina Feed Supply and the Cities Service Oil Company are all served by the Milwaukee Road in Washington, IA. Note the underpass next to the depot. Gail put a mirror inside to reflect the traffic traveling through the underpass. It's a nice effect.







Gail has built some nice bridges on the pike. The upper photo of the small trestle is the first scratch built bridge she constructed. Note that the grass is starting to grow on the pike. The rural road bridge above is the very first kit built by Gail. We all remember our first structures!



Hurley Coal is located just outside of Lindby. The Lindby CB&Q intg. & tower can be seen in the foreground of the picture below.



### **HO Scale Milwaukee Road SW Division**

Layout designed: July 2015

Construction: 2015 – present

#### **Features:**

Prototype-based on the S W Div of the Milwaukee Road

Transition Era: 1940 - 1950

40 x 60 foot U-Shaped foot print

Mainline run: 254 feet

Total operating trackage: 1000+ feet

Track: code 83 Atlas and Micro Engineering

Single-track point-to-point mainline

Homabed Roadbed

Style: walk-in with one duck – under

Layout height: 50" – 56" - Single level

¾" Furniture grade plywood & open grid bench-work

30" Minimum Radius

Maximum grade: 2%

Main track turnouts: #5 & #6

32 foot long yard and 32 foot long staging

NCE DCC control system

Track and Structures: 100% complete

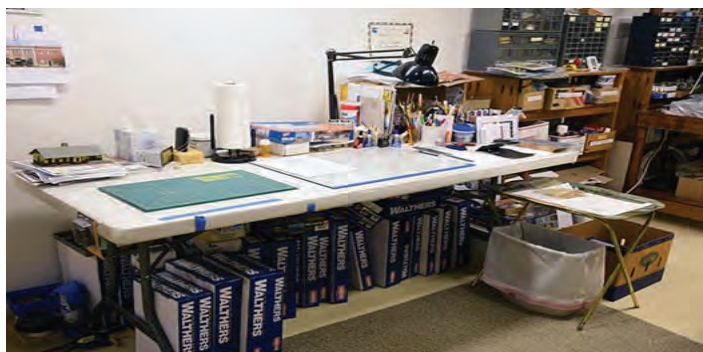
Scenery: 20% completed.

#### **Operations:**

Point-to-point

4-cycle car routing

Operating signals to be installed in time



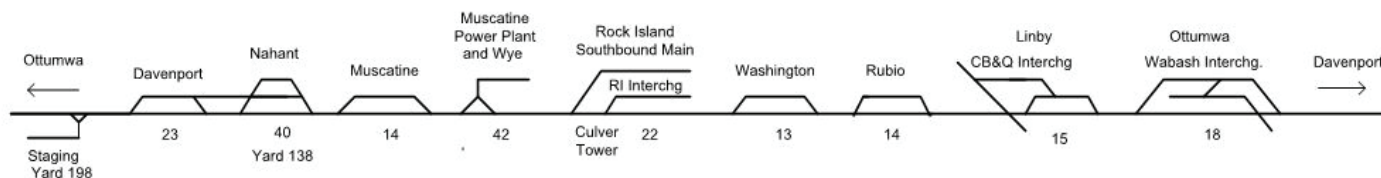
Gail's very neat work bench. She keeps detailed notes on every structure built - something we should all do. (Rats, I can't remember what color I painted that building - if I'd only noted it!)



Owners Gordy and Gail pose in front of Kansasawaukee Union Station at the end of the Kansas City/ Milwaukee staging yard. A route map of the railroad follows on page 5.

You are invited to the **Milwaukee Road Southwest Division Open House**. See this impressive layout on Saturday, April 23, 2022, 1- 4 pm. Details to follow via FVD email invitations.

Milwaukee Road Southwest Division Road Route Map



I hope you enjoyed the brief photo tour of the Milwaukee Road Southwest Division. Like all layouts, they are best seen in person. Join me & others at the Ericksen Open House on April 23rd, 1 - 4 pm in Crystal Lake and do just that. A detailed invitation will arrive by a FVD email about 2 weeks before the event - watch for it. Many thanks go out to Gail & Gordy for sharing their modeling skills. Keep those trains moving! **Jim Osborn, Ed.**

Article & photos by Jim Osborn

On a totally different topic I have a bit of nostalgia for the FVD history buffs. Leif Hansen was doing some organizing and found his FVD welcome letter from 37 years ago. We value his fellowship and contributions to the FVD over the years. He certainly has kept his trains moving! Thanks Leif! J. O.

DEAR NHRA MEMBER:

4/18/85

THIS IS QUICK, DOWN & DIRTY BUT JUST RECEIVED YOUR NAME FROM THE MIDWEST REGION YESTERDAY.

WELCOME TO THE FOX VALLEY DIVISION!

OUR LAST DIV. MEET WILL BE HELD SUNDAY APRIL 21ST AT FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH (ON ARLINGTON HTS RD, 4-5 BLOCKS SOUTH ON NORTHWEST HWY IN ARLINGTON HTS) STARTING AT 1:30 P.M. THIS WILL BE THE LAST MEETING UNTIL WE START AGAIN IN SEPTEMBER.

IN PLACE OF A MAY MEET, FVD IS HOSTING THE SPRING MIDWEST REGION CONVENTION AT THE ARLINGTON PLACE HOTEL. THE REGISTRATION FEE IS ONLY \$10.00 PER PERSON. (THE PROTOTYPE TOUR ON FRIDAY IS AN ADDITIONAL \$4.00 & THERE ARE 2 "PARTICIPATION" CLINICS ON SATURDAY COSTING \$5.00 EACH.

ON ONE YOU'LL MAKE & TAKE HOME A WORKING SIGNAL ... BRING A LOW WATTAGE SOLDERING IRON ... AND THE OTHER YOU'LL COMPLETE A BUILDING KIT IN HO SCALE TO TAKE HOME FROM MIDWEST RAIL WORKS.)

ADDITIONAL INFO ON THE CONVENTION BEING HELD MAY 3, 4 & 5 IS ENCLOSED.

PLEASE TRY TO ATTEND.

CORDIALLY,

CHARLES M. ALBERTY  
FVD MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

&  
1985 HIGHBALL CONVENTION CHAIRMAN



## March Contest Results ...

Michael Hirvela's O Scale ready-2-run "CNW E-4 #4008" was awarded 1st Place honors in the Steam Locomotive contest. The HO Scale ready-2-run "NSW Beyer Garratt" by Jim Allen was awarded 2nd place in the contest. An HO Scale ready-2-run "Tyco 0-4-0 Side Saddle Tank Switcher circa 1957" by Jim Osborn placed 3rd. Pictures are shown below. We had 6 entries in 4 scales. See more and larger photos of all the model entries on our web site at:

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



Michael Hirvela's CNW E-4 (left)



Jim Allen's NSW Beyer Garratt (center)



Jim Osborn's Tyco 0-4-0 Side Saddle Tank Switcher (right)

## Next Meet and Division Business meeting - April 24, 2022, 1:00 start....

### Programs:

**FVD Business Meeting,**  
**Election of Officers: Superintendent & Chief Clerk,**  
 and  
**Railroads of International Harvester in Chicago**  
 by Richard Sieben

**Contest:** Send in photos of your favorite and interesting **Billboard Reefer** to the photo contest website. You may submit up to three photos of your model to the web site.



An interesting Billboard Reefer made by S-Helper and sold by Walther's is shown above. Celebrate and share your modeling work and fun with the membership.

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

## Mike's Minute ...



I need your inputs regarding the formats of our future meets. With the covid restrictions easing up we would like to consider getting back to in-person meets. The camaraderie, seeing contest entries up close and the ability of being able to chat with each of you are all things I miss very much. I suspect you do as well.

The board has wrestled with this topic for a while, and we thought it would be a good idea to poll the membership on the topic. We do not want to have anyone left out of meet discussions. I have asked the webmaster to assemble a simple 3 question poll for you to express your feelings on the topic of meet formats. It is your division of the NMRA, so please take part in its direction.

If you haven't already done so, you can take the poll by clicking on the following link:

<https://form.jotform.com/220775427799977>

Please complete the survey by Wednesday April 6th.

If you participated on the poll during the March 20th Zoom meet, there is no need to complete this survey. The questions are identical and the feedback will be combined. We will let you know the results as they become available.

Our next meeting is the annual business meeting and election of officers on April 24th at 1:00 pm, with a log in time of 12:30 pm, using the ZOOM Meeting System. So far the only candidate for Superintendent is myself, Michael Hirvela. Richard Hoker is the lone candidate for Chief Clerk. If you have any interest in running for one of these offices, please contact the Chief Clerk at:

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

We always welcome and need fresh participation in the management of the division.

Our webmaster sends out the meeting notice with the Zoom log-on credentials a week before each meet. The notice comes out by e-mail, so be sure we have your current e-mail address. In case of a change please advise of your new address.

Everyone take care, and we'll see you on the 24th! M.H.

## Fun Stuff... What the heck happened here?



**by Jim Osborn**

64 years ago a freight train mysteriously disappeared from the Chicago and Northwestern yard in Manitowoc and was found later that morning in the water of the Two Rivers harbor. The engine and cars were recovered 5 days later. The train crew parked the train of 9 cars for a breakfast break. Later that day, it traveled about 10 miles -- ultimately reaching 50-60 mph. Police investigations found that the throttle had been advanced by someone never found. New track had to be laid up to the river's edge to move the "Big Hook" from Green Bay close enough to the wreck to fish it out of the river with the help of two barge cranes. (*I wonder what bait they used? Ed.*) Picture and information courtesy of the Manitowoc County Historical Society. You can also read more about the incident in the **Herald Times Reporter**.

<https://www.htrnews.com/story/life/2022/03/11/runaway-train-manitowoc-ended-up-lake-michigan-two-rivers/6988523001/>

## Proto-Photos from the Road by Keith Dart ...

I had to drive somebody from Du Page Airport to Valparaiso, IN thru Shererville on Wednesday, and in so doing, got routed by GPS to cross over the Griffith, IN, CN Diamond & 'Tri-Wye'

After delivering my passengers to their respective destinations, I was pleasantly surprised to have adequate time for a leisurely return back to downtown. Thus, I took advantage of the opportunity to:

- 1) Avail myself of their ("OMG, DELICIOUS!") sandwich suggestion, 'The Steelworker Special' @ Lincoln Carry Outs, 1002 Lincoln St., Hobart, IN 46342 Ph. 219-942-2113
- 2) See the Historical Society, housed in the retired vintage EJ&E Interlock Tower, the Historical Park w/ a vintage rail car display, a retired GTW depot, track-side concrete telephone booth and the E-L's former right of way Rail-Trail-head to capture some prototype photos for model-building inspiration.

(Continued next page...)

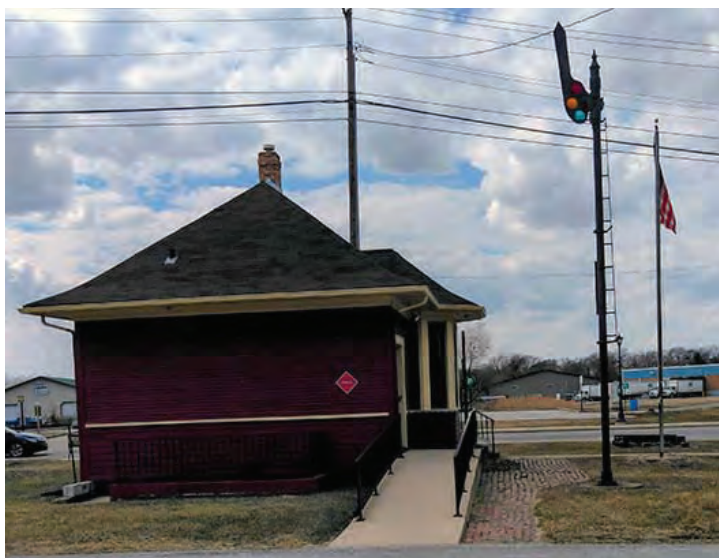


This was perfect since I've recently acquired some SD9s & Xfer caboose for my NTrak CNSM/MILW/EJ&E Interchange @ Rondout (which is ready for some more detailing!).

The other beautiful serendipity about the visit is the fact that the rail cars on display are a WWII Pullman Troop Sleeper (#8731) (which my father is utilizing 'en masse' as part of his UP North Platte [NE] Canteen) and an EJ&E Cupola caboose #503 for my own Rondout usage.

After capturing 21 photos, my time was up, & I had to move along — only to notice a local hobby shop: G & G Hobbies, 105 W Main St, Griffith, IN 46319.

Ph 219-924-6686


















(*Proto-Photo* captions: Pullman troop carrier top right, GTW Depot top left, E J & E Caboose middle right, GTW Depot and Phone booth on the bottom.)

More photos will be featured in subsequent **Semaphore** issues as my work takes me around the Chicago area.

K. D. 



## What's Happening - or not ...

-  Beginning this year, Walthers will skip the annual publication of their reference book. The next publication will be the 2024/2025 edition - available in late 2023. They will only publish every other year going forward.
-  **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: April 3, May 1 and June 5, 2022. Follow the signs to the fairgrounds entrance. See: <https://www.trainshow.com/>
-  **Rock River Valley Division Train Show** at Harlem High School, Machesney Park, IL, March 26-27, 2022
-  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. Sponsored by the Winnebago Division of the NMRA. <https://www.ttsgblc.com/>
-  Save the date: Gail & Gordy Ericksen's **Milwaukee Road Southwest Division** Open House. See this impressive layout on Saturday, April 23, 2022, 1- 4 pm. Details to follow via a FVD email invitation.
-  Fox Valley Division will hold **elections for Superintendent and Chief Clerk** at the April 24th membership meeting. Contact the Chief Clerk, Richard Hocker to toss your name into the hat for either of these positions. Join in the management of the FVD. Click this link to contact any Board Member: <http://www.foxvalleydivision.org/fvd2016/contactus.v2.html>
-  The **Union Pacific Historical Society** convention will be held on May 11-14, 2022 in Cheyenne, Wyoming. See their web site for details: <http://uphs.org/>
-  The **Rochell Railroad Park, Railroad Days** will be held on May 21 & 22, 2022. See their web site for details: <https://www.rochellrailroadpark.org/>
-  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.
-  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.
-  Marshall, Wisconsin, live steam club will hold an open house on July 16th on Rt. 19 at Hwy 73 just east of Madison.
-  Great Tri-State Rail Sale at the La Crosse Center, La Crosse, Wisconsin, will be held on July 16th in Copeland Park. Info at: <https://4000foundation.org/>
-  **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](https://www.eventsquid.com/event.cfm?preview&event_id=13724)
-  The **Rock River Valley Division** will host the 2023 MWR convention. Dates TBD.



## 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](http://www.foxvalleydivision.org). Save the dates for now - details will follow.

Date	Presentation	Contest	Notes
Apr. 24, 2022 <b>Next Meet</b>	Railroads of International Harvester in Chicago by Richard Sieben	1 Refrigerated Billboard Car.	1:00 Start Business & member meeting, election of Super & Chief Clerk
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: <a href="https://www.indyjunction2022.org/">https://www.indyjunction2022.org/</a>	



Clinics  
Layout Tours  
Ops Sessions  
Prototype Tours



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



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



RPM  
CHICAGOLAND







### **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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<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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Assistant Editor: Keith Dart

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### **Fox Valley Division Board of Directors**

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Public Relations, Keith Dart

Semaphore Editor, Jim Osborn

Ways & Means, Vacant

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

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

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