

# THE SEMAPHORE

May 2022

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



The **Lake County Model Railroad Club of Wauconda, IL** recently celebrated their 50th anniversary. Keith Dart, the *Semaphore's* roving reporter, was there to capture the event. The main engine facility is shown above with a few more of his pictures to follow on page 4. K. D. 📷  
Click on the following link to see many more, great LCMRRC photos. <https://lcmrr.org/photo-gallery>



***In This Issue...***

<b>Pages 1&amp;4</b>	<b>Lake County MRRC</b>
<b>Page 2-3</b>	<b>Keep Those Trains Moving</b>
<b>Page 5-7</b>	<b>Santa Maria Valley Railroad</b>
<b>Page 7</b>	<b>Fun Stuff</b>
<b>Page 8</b>	<b>April Contest &amp; Next Meet</b>
<b>Page 9</b>	<b>Mike's Minute</b>
<b>Page 9</b>	<b>Indy Junction Convention</b>
<b>Page 10</b>	<b>What's Happening (or not)</b>
<b>Page 11</b>	<b>Meeting Schedules</b>
<b>Page 12</b>	<b>Are you there?</b>
<b>Page 12</b>	<b>Division Information</b>

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

FVD's Jim Landwehr & I promoted the NMRA by judging an NMRA style model contest at the *O scale meet held at the Lombard Westin on April 2nd*. There were 30+ entries to judge. Here are a few of the Merit class models we saw.



Bill Heaton of Elizabethton, TN entered his kit-bashed and expertly finished *Southern RR #6350 Ms4 Mikado Locomotive and Tender*.



Greg Cygnar of Huntley, IL displayed this scratch-built and finely detailed *Abandoned Warehouse*.



Jim Zwernemann of Cedar Creek, TX entered the *SLRX #6069 Bunkerless 36' reefer* and the *Louisiana & Arkansas/Kansas City Southern Waycar #386* shown above. Both models are excellent scratch built examples.



The detailed finishing on this scratch-built *Old Factory* by Dave Field of Huntley, IL really sets off this outstanding example.





Check out the interior detailing of this C&NW Mullet River steam-era caboose by Jim Schneider of New Berlin, WI.



You almost want to go through the doors and up to the counter to buy a steak at **Herman Lohe's Meat Market**. This Display Category entry was expertly done by John Dramm of Waunakee, WI. John is a member of the South Central Wisconsin Division of the NMRA.



This scratch-built **C&NW Bi-Level Commuter Coach #67** by David Schultz of Canyon, MN has a complex and fully detailed interior. Of course, I'm partial to the color scheme!

This was my 3rd year judging the model contest at this huge O Scale show. I am always impressed by the variety of models, the expertise and the diversity of entries from all over the country.....



Jim Landwehr & your's truly at the judges table. Photo by Bob Di Domenico.

###

I will conclude with a modeling tip I picked up from Don Drum, fellow C&NW HO Scale modeler of Bayside, WI. He found a link to make a nifty **Kadee** style uncoupling tool that works great. Check out <https://vimeo.com/689003993>

The short video shows the story behind the tool and how to easily make it. All you need are some 6" long x 1/8" wood skewers and **GUM Proxa Brush** parts. I was able to find brush refills which avoided having to cut apart the brush handle shown in the video. Here's a picture of the components and finished product below that.

The uncoupling tool works great on HO scale couplers



- mixed results with N scale - but **GUM** makes a smaller brush that might do for N scale. I would guess the "tight size" or the next size up will also work fine for S and O scale **Kadees**. Give it a try - you'll like 'em!

**Model Railroading is Fun!** J. O.







## Santa Maria Valley Railroad Visit and Op Session

By Rich Sieben...

I had the chance to operate on Mike Jordan's **Santa Maria Valley Railroad** March 24, 2022. Mike is a former NMRA member and lives in White Bear Lake, MN. The HO layout depicts the **SMVRR** between Guadalupe and Santa Maria California all in a 12'x20' footprint. The only connecting railroad is the Southern Pacific. The staging yard uses 'active staging' and the yard clerk (Mike Jordan) determines the need for the specific cars and selected for outbound trains. While there are various customers on the railroad, fruit and vegetable packing is the primary purpose of the line. Mike uses a unique method for the movement of refrigerator cars that simulates steps such as pre-cooling, icing, post-cooling and even re-icing using a punch card for each car. (Who hasn't always wanted to use a conductor's ticket punch?) The system is well thought out, and it took me a 2-hour session to swap about 6 cars in and 6 cars out of the packing district (which is a really fun switching puzzle.) It is not a **"pull all cars and replace with new ones"** type of operation. Cars are typically re-spotted 3 or 4 times before they leave the packing district as per the steps above.

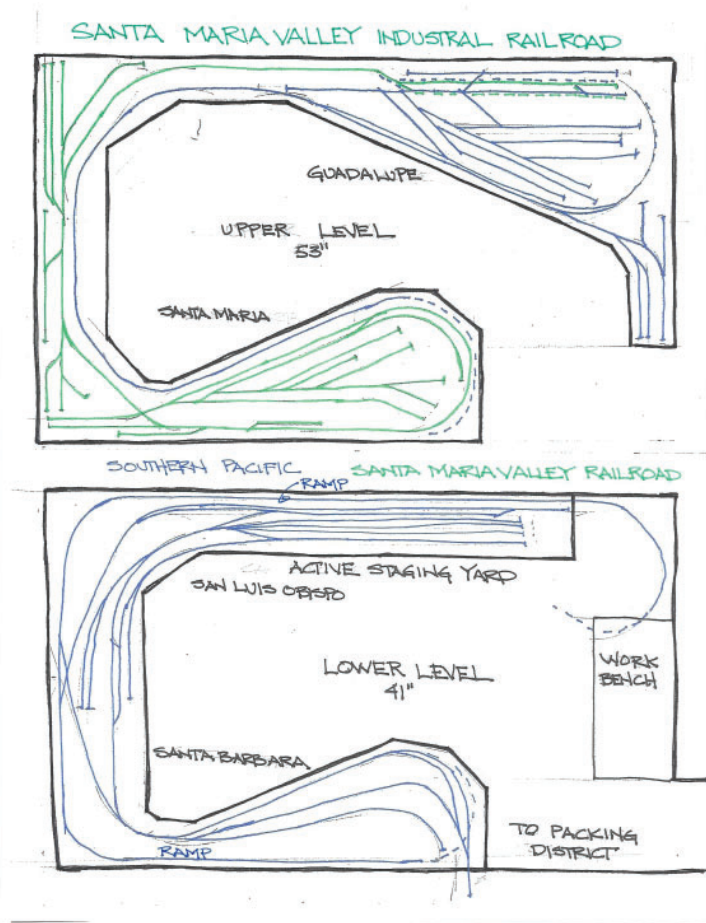


The Guadalupe main yard, with Can Can Canning to the left & Cal Coast Packing Plant #3 in left background are shown above. This is a compact yard for branch inbound/branch outbound and for East and West cars.



The Sunkist packing building (above) was designed by Bob Samus. The green truck indicates the clean out track for refrigerator cars. The Santa Maria main yard below has a cut of reefers to be iced and spotted or spotted and then iced. The pre-cooling plant is on the left by the ice dock. Note the ramp to the lower level in the foreground.

Cont'd next page...





## Santa Maria Valley Railroad Visit and Op Session continued...



Two foot by six foot packing plant module, with 4 packing plants and 13 car spots, shown above.



A switch lead out of the Guadalupe yard and the Santa Maria Valley Industrial Railroad main line along the back ground, past the water tower and through a local orange grove. Note the lower level staging below the main line.



Parts and pieces of a Walthers Gravel kit are in the back-ground and an oil loading facility in the fore-ground. The lower level shows the Southern Pacific main line connecting the lower and upper levels via an uncoiled helix, ramp pictured above.



More SMVIRR industries, Cal Coast Packing Plant #2 and Ingles Grey Oil supply company in the back-ground above.



Farmer's Supply (in the fore-ground,) Sears' distribution building (tucked in the corner) and the first indication of the Sunkist packing plant on the left.

Continued next page...



## Santa Maria Valley Railroad Visit and Op Session continued...



Lower level engine tracks, the first hint of the Pacific Ocean along the backdrop, and signs of a recent earthquake at the caboose service track above.



On the left above, another view of the ramp connecting the two levels and a shot of the main staging yard that represents, both San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara, for north and southbound trains. Finally, Holly Sugar, main customer on the Santa Maria Valley Railroad, received train loads of sugar beets and shipped car loads of sugar and tank cars of molasses. Note the G.E. 70 ton locomotive, the mainstay of power on the SMVIRR.



This was a great railroad to operate on with plenty of interesting industrial moves to make. Contact me for details and check it out if you get the chance. R. S.

## Fun Stuff... What the heck is this? by Jim Osborn



The Southern San Luis Valley Railroad D500 was built on a tender frame and driven by an International Harvester engine. This image is from RRPicturesArchive.net and was contributed by Stephanie Kolata.



Anyone know the history of the above car? We received a Facebook & web inquiry regarding the car. It appears it is from a 1993 MWR/FVD convention. Contact the editor if you have any info: [website@foxvalleydivision.org](mailto:website@foxvalleydivision.org) J.O.



From Rapido Trains, by Lynn Johnston

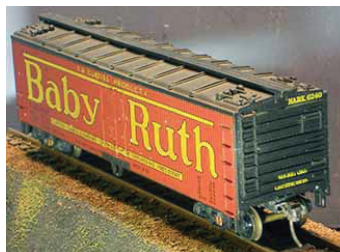
## April Contest Results ...

Wesley Martin's HO Scale **Rockford Brewing Company Reefer** kit was awarded 1st Place honors in the Billboard Reefer contest. The HO Scale **Baby Ruth Reefer** kit by Leif Hansen was awarded 2nd place in the contest. An HO Scale Greenway kit of a **National Brewing Company Reefer** by Jim Osborn placed 3rd. Pictures are shown below. We had 5 entries in 2 scales. See more and larger photos of all the model entries on our web site at:

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



Wesley Martin's 1st Place entry



Leif Hansen's 2nd Place entry



Jim Osborn's 3rd Place entry

**Next Meet - May 15, 2022, 1:30 start.... In person at the Gary Morava Center and via Zoom**

### **Clinic Presentation:** **DCC Switching by Mike Wood**

Mike will present the "how to" basics of using the NCE DCC MK2 and MK8 decoders to control accessories such as turnouts.

**Contest:** Send in photos of your favorite and interesting **Small Structure** with a foot print of 500 scale sq. ft. or less to the photo contest website. You may submit up to three photos of your model to the web site.

This O scale scratch built privy has a foot print of just 56 sq. ft.  
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 ...



My heartfelt thanks to all the members who chime in during our Zoom meetings over the last two years. It has been a challenge shifting our focus from interactive, in-person meetings to holding ones over a computer screen, but I hope that you found the content interesting and

inspirational.

Our survey of members indicated that while there is enthusiasm for in-person meetings, there are some who have some apprehension about meeting other folks given the last two years of COVID limitations, restrictions, mask-wearing (or not) and health issues. I understand the reluctance. I don't want anyone to feel left out. For the last few weeks, we (your Board of Directors) have been exploring how to incorporate participation over the computer with an in-person get together at the same time. It would seem an easy proposition given the technology that exists today, but there are some obstacles to meet and overcome. Our test of this method will be on May 15th when we hold an in-person get together at the Morava Center in Prospect Heights, IL, AND link in via the Zoom system at the same time. The proof of success will come afterward. IF we have success with this method, we may continue to incorporate this method further starting with our first Fall meeting in September. So, look for updates and follow-up on the FVD website.

The Tri-Region Convention in Indianapolis starts on May 18th and promises to be a fun event with folks coming from three regions in the upper midwest, plus participation from the RPM folks who haven't get together in over two years. I'm looking forward to the convention almost as much as I'm excited about the 2022 NMRA National Convention in St. Louis in August. Sign-up now if you haven't.

This summer is filling up with museum visits, swap meets, op sessions, conventions, and opportunities to have learning experiences from special events. I hope you plan to use the summertime to get out and enjoy the weather with family and friends. I'll be looking forward to our first meeting of the fall season on September 18th with great anticipation to hear "what you did on your summer vacation." And you could make that a little Power Point slide photo presentation that we can include in our schedule.

Keep in touch this summer and be on the lookout for the "Orange Card" with information on our 2022-2023 season.

The dates are set and the clinic presenters are being scheduled. You can review the meet dates & programs on page 11 of this and every future issue of the **Semaphore**. The meeting notices come out by e-mail, so be sure we have your current e-mail address. Please advise us of any changes. Our webmaster sends out the meeting notice with the ZOOM system log-on credentials to make it easy to use the Zoom system if you'd rather participate that way.

I just received late breaking news from **Kalmbach Media**. They announced that **Trainfest** will be held on November 12-13, 2022 at Wisconsin State Fair Park in Milwaukee, WI. The show will be open to the public from 9am to 5pm on both Saturday and Sunday. The show is being presented by **Kalmbach Media** publishers of **Model Railroader** and **Classic Toy Trains** magazines. The show is being managed by **Great American Train Shows Inc.** and co-sponsored by the **World's Greatest Hobby**. We have missed this show and welcome it back! Have a safe Summer.

Regards, MH

Marriott East, 7202 E 21<sup>st</sup> 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/>



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

-  Thanks to Jim Spice for the impromptu tour of his Sn3 railroad. He apologizes for the garbled wifi audio . He is exploring options to fix that. See more of this RR at: <https://denvercanyonwestern.com/>
-  Several people asked about the layout builder the Ericksen's used to create their design and flawless track work. His name is Darren Ferreter and can be reached at 319-573-8559 or [geu30cg@aol.com](mailto:geu30cg@aol.com) or his website: <http://www.modelrailroaddreams.com/>
-  The refurbished **East Broad Top Railroad** will kick off it's 150th anniversary starting May 6th, 2022. See their event web page for more details: <https://eastbroadtop.com/ride/150th-anniversary/>
-  **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 on the 1st Sunday: May 1, June 5, Sept 4, Oct 2, Nov 13 and Dec 4, 2022. Follow the signs to the fairgrounds entrance. See: <https://www.trainshow.com/>
-  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 **Rochelle Railroad Park, Railroad Days** will be held on May 21 & 22, 2022. See their web site for details: <https://www.rochellerailroadpark.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.
-  Dave Crement will host a 2 hour O Scale figure painting workshop. Sunday June 12 at 1:00pm or Monday June 13 at 10:00 am. Dave will supply your O Scale figure and all necessary paints, brushes & tools. You will receive the figure and detailed instruction on completion. \$20 per person to cover material & figure costs. Contact Dave by phone 847-560-3412 or email [On3@comcast.net](mailto:On3@comcast.net) for sign-up details.
-  WAMR 32st Strawberry Fest Model Railroad Show will be held on June 18 & 19 at the Waupaca Recreation Center, 401 School Street, Waupaca, WI. There will be many layouts, vendors & swap tables. Contact Roger Hildebrandt, 7693 Evergreen Dr. E, Waupaca, WI 54981, 715-258-8218 for more information.
-  The **National N Scale Convention** is planned for June 22-26, 2022. Sheraton Music City, 777 McGavock Pike, Nashville, TN 37214. 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. Marriott Grand, 800 Washington Ave., St Louis, MO. 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 **Kalmbach Media** just announced that **Trainfest** will be held on November 12-13, 2022 at Wisconsin State Fair Park in Milwaukee, WI. The show will be open to the public from 9am to 5pm on both Saturday and Sunday.
-  The **Rock River Valley Division** will host the 2023 MWR convention. Dates TBD.



Meetings are held from 1:30 to about 4:00 pm (except as noted). This season all meetings will be presented online using ZOOM meeting technology **as well as in person at the Gary Morava Center**. See the timetable 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
May 15, 2022 <b>Next Meet</b>	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>	
Sept 18, 2022	Presentation TBA	Contest TBA	
Oct 15, 2022	<b>Two Prototype Steam Engine Overhauls</b> by Chuck Rita	Contest TBA	
Nov 20, 2022	Presentation TBA	Contest TBA	
Dec 18, 2022	Presentation TBA	Contest TBA	
Jan 15, 2023	Presentation TBA	Contest TBA	
Feb 19, 2023	<b>Interchanges</b> by Scott Payne	Contest TBA	
Mar 19, 2023	Presentation TBA	Contest TBA	
April 16, 2023	Presentation TBA	Contest TBA	
May 23, 2023	Presentation TBA	Contest TBA	





### **LET US KNOW IF YOU ARE OUT THERE ....**

Send us your: Prototype or model artwork, images, cartoons, drawings, paintings photos, layouts, etc. We'll take care of the editing and formatting for 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.

### **Mailing address:**

Fox Valley Division  
P. O. Box 1535

Arlington Heights, IL 60005-1535

### **Website:**

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

Regular meetings are held virtually via Zoom and in person at the Gary Morava Center 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>

Editor: Jim Osborn, MMR®

Assistant Editor: Michael Hirvela

Assistant Editor: Keith Dart

Contributing Editor: Rich Sieben

Follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/fvdmra/>

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

**Superintendent, Mike Hirvela**

**Asst. Superintendent, Denis Zamirowski**

**Chief Clerk, Richard Hoker**

**Paymaster, Tim Kleimeyer**

**Achievements & Contests, Jim Landwehr**

**Clinics & Programs, Gary Saxton**

**Social Media Coordinator, Keith Dart**

**Membership Services, Erich Abens**

**Membership Promotions, Mike Hirvela**

**Web Technologies, Jim Osborn**

**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>

©Copyright 2022 by the Fox Valley Division of the NMRA, Inc.