

THE SEMAPHORE

December 2022

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



Duke Yerman, former Fox Valley Division member and Midwest Region Director at Large, assembled this holiday diorama with his daughter and grandchild in their Florida home. It has G and HO scale trains running on the various levels. What a great way to have lots of trains in a small space!

In This Issue...

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Page 1 | Duke Yerman's Train Tree |
| Page 2 | Keep Those Trains Moving |
| Page 3-5 | Doug Taylor's PRR & EBT |
| Page 5 | Holiday Fun Stuff To Do |
| Page 6 | Contest Results & Next Meet |
| Page 7 | Mike's Minute |
| Page 8 | What's Happening (or not) |
| Page 9 | Meeting Schedules |
| Page 10 | Division Information |

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

Last month I commented about the season's spectacular fall colors. Here's a snap I took of a crimson red maple two houses north of my home. The picture got me thinking about how to make a crimson maple for my layout. Here's the inspirational photo again:



Well I gave it a try as promised last month. I dug through a box of **Super Tree** Armatures to find a stalk with the appropriate shape. After straightening out the sprig, I did some trimming to enhance the shape. I sprayed the trunk with camouflage tan. While it dried, I searched for the right "leaves." I had some red **Woodland Scenic** "flowers" in my scenery materials bin. Unfortunately, I found them to be too bright a red. So I let the project lie idle for a day while I thought it through.

I noticed that the leaves were just coming off a Japanese Maple tree in our back yard. They had a nice, burgundy colored leaf perfect for the project. I further found that the leaves on the ground under the tree still retained their color - not yet turning brown like the other tree leaves. (Maybe because there is less chlorophyll in the red leaves?) Hence red all year round and not green? Well that's a question for another day.

I gathered the fallen leaves and let them dry in the basement for a day. I was pleased that they retained their nice burgundy color. I stuffed them in my "hobby material assigned blender" and ground the pile up. After picking the chaff out I have a nice pile of burgundy leaves.

I sprayed the Super Tree trunk with 3M "77" spray glue and rained the leaves down on the branches. Here's a close-up of the result:



Not perfect - a little droopy - but pretty close... I have more leaves to practice with - and they are staying red! As my wife Mary often says, "If a man on a galloping horse can't tell the difference, it's good enough!" I'll take that as a win in this case - she approved! Now I need to get the shovel out and do some planting on my pike.

I wish you all a Happy and Safe Holiday Season!

Take care and keep those trains moving! J. O., MMR, Ed.

Doug Taylor's Pennsylvania RR and East Broad Top by Rich Sieben...

I attended the Prairie Rail 2022 event Oct 28-30 in Kansas City. These were the first two operating sessions, EBT was run Friday afternoon and the PRR Saturday morning. Below is Doug Taylor's description of the layout: "The East Broad Top Railroad is a HO 3, foot, narrow gauge, coal hauling railroad in South Central Pennsylvania. This modern, steam-powered railroad runs south from the dual gauge interchange with the Pennsylvania at Mount Union, through the shop and headquarters town of Orbisonia, the Ganister rock quarry town of Saltillo, and terminates at the mines of Robertsdale.

The point-to-point EBT system features coal trains, rock trains, mixed freight, passenger and gas electric operations with modern steel equipment. Crew requirements are a dispatcher, Orbisonia yardmaster, Mount Union yardmaster, and 4 road crews. Communications is by vintage telephones.

The Pennsy Railroad is a fully separate, standard gauge HO layout that occupies a 36 ft by 48 ft portion of the basement. The design was adapted from a John Armstrong design and features legendary Pennsy scenic elements like the four-track Horseshoe Curve. The Pennsy is fully signaled with position-light signals.

Layout at a glance

- Eastern Pennsylvania
- HOn3 (EBT) and HO (Pennsy)
- Circa 1949
- NCE (EBT) and CTC80 (Pennsy)
- Tsunami sound
- Scale Clock Speed: 4:1
- Length of Session: 12 fast hours
- 7 operators on the EBT
- 10 operators on the Pennsy



The infamous Horseshoe Curve (above)



Pittsburgh Passenger Terminal (above)



Altoona Yards (shown above)



The PRR Dispatch Panel (shown above)



Johnstown Steel Mill Complex

Doug Taylor's *Pennsylvania RR and East Broad Top* by Rich Sieben (continued...)

As you can see from the pictures, this amazing layout shows off Doug's modeling skills. The EBT was interesting to operate because plenty of switching was involved. I operated the dual gauge yard at Mt. Union where EBT trains terminated and sent empty hoppers back up the mountain to the mines. There is an "empties out and loads in" operation. A steep grade inside the mountain leads to the upper end of the layout where the loaded cars come out of the mine.



The East Broad Top Company Stores in Robertsdale



EBT Ballast Facility (above)



The Roundhouse in Rockhill Furnace



One of the many tunnels on the EBT... a coal dock can be seen at the top of the picture. It's interesting to note that the railroad equipped all the tunnels with manned doors in order to keep the moisture and dripping water from freezing on the rails in the tunnel.



A coal trolley on the PRR



A coal trolley on the EBT

Doug Taylor's Pennsylvania RR and East Broad Top
by Rich Sieben (continued...)



An EBT engine shed and turntable



Note the dual gauge trackage at the interchange of the EBT and the PRR at Mount Union Brick works



A final picture of the PRR hugging the shoreline on this beautiful layout -- what a joy to visit Doug's RR.

Next month I will feature my operating experiences and photographs of **Jon Percy's Buffalo and Pittsburgh Railroad** at the Kansas City Prairie Rail event. Until next month Rich Sieben.

Fun Stuff by Jim Osborn

Here's a few holiday train related things to do I found on the web.

Happy Holiday Railway at Illinois Railway Museum in Union IL. - <https://www.irm.org/>

Event times: 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m., 4 p.m., 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. Dec. 10-11, 17-18, 2022

Polar Express at Fox River Trolley Museum in South Elgin
<https://www.foxtrolley.org/polarexpress>

Event time: 3 p.m., 4:15 p.m., 5:30 p.m. and 6:45 p.m. Dec. 10-11, 17-18, 2022

Holiday Express at Blackberry Farm in Aurora

<https://www.blackberryfarm.info/holiday-express/>
Dec. 8-11, 15-18, 2022

Zoo Lights & Train Adventure at the Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago, IL

<https://www.lpzoo.org/event/zoolights/>
Through January

CTA Holiday Train & Bus

<https://www.transitchicago.com/holidayfleet/>
Consult their website for schedules

Great Train Story & Holiday Exhibit at the Museum of Science+Industry

<https://www.msichicago.org/>
Consult their website for schedules

Canadian Pacific Holiday Train

<https://www.cpr.ca/en/holiday-train/united-states>
December 8 in Gurnee, IL

Franklin Park Polar Express

<https://www.fpparks.org/mc-events/polar-express-12/>
December 18 in Franklin Park

Northshore & Western MRRC at the Glenview Public Library
<https://glenviewpl.evanced.info/signup>

December 9, 10 & 11

North Central O Gaugers <https://www.ncogtrains.com/>

December 10th Mundelein Village Hall 9am - 4pm
December 17 & 18 Grayslake Fairgrounds 10am - 4 pm

Next Meet - December 18, 2022, 1:30 start.... In person at the Gary Morava Center and via Zoom.

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The December Presentation falls right in line with the December Contest. Chuck Rita will share his coverage of two Prototype Steam Engine Overhauls.

Check the FVD website Timetable for details and updates as they become available.

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

The November Contest Results



The November Contest Category was *Over, Under, Around and Through*. The HO Scale Rutledge Bridge kit built by Gale Ericksen took 1st Place Honors (Above Left). Jim Osborn's HO scale scratch built Rural Covered Bridge took 2nd Place and is shown below on the left. Bob Hanmer submitted his HO scale scratch built Mud Creek scene and received 3rd place honors.



See more and larger photos of all the models on our web site at:

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

The **December Contest Category** is a **Steam Locomotive**. The example shown at the right is FVD member Dave Cremen's On3 East Broad Top Mikado. We are accepting photographs of contest entries anytime. Send in up to 3 photos of your models using the following secure upload form:

<https://form.jotform.com/201995250508962>



Mike's Minute ...



I hope you had an enjoyable Thanksgiving with family and are looking forward to the Christmas holidays. It's that time of the year when the temperature takes a dip and outdoor things get wrapped up for the season which means indoor modeling starts in earnest. Thanksgiving

decorations get set aside for Christmas-themed ones, and Christmas villages get taken out of storage, get a little dusting while amazing, creative villages get constructed. Buildings and streetlamps get lit up and enjoyed by the whole family. If you have one of these villages in your home and get the family involved in its annual urban renewal, there is a basis for continuing the group effort on your own model RR.

So, if you have a holiday display or a holiday theme added to your RR, consider sending a photo or two to our webmaster, Jim Osborn, for inclusion in our newsletter. Show others what you have been up to and share your RR in general. With COVID canceling the opportunity to visit friends and fellow model rails over the last 3 years, it might be a thought to let others know what has been doing on your RR.

You can also get inspired by attending one of the many train shows in our area over the next several months. I hope you had the chance to get to TrainFest in West Allis, Wisconsin, last month. Final reports say there were more than 20,000 attendees this year. Trains are alive and well. At a train show, the attendees get immersed in a cornucopia of trains, trains and more trains of different scales, gauges, creative scenes and themes, and the wide breath of what this hobby is all about. See the event list in this newsletter or on our website for updates as the season progresses. I took a picture at this year's TrainFest event - see below.

Our division, region and national organization relies on volunteers -- that's you -- to get the various jobs done, projects completed, initiatives started and achieved, and grow the membership. The Mid-West Region (MWR) is still looking for one candidate for Director-At-Large. We need at least one more volunteer to fill the slate of candidates for a two-year term. The incumbents are term-limited and cannot run for office. D-A-L positions qualify for an NMRA Official certificate after 3 years in office. So, if you volunteer and get elected, serve satisfactorily, get re-elected, serve satisfactorily again, you can add an AP certificate toward Master Model Railroader. Additionally, as a D-A-L, you are

on the MWR BoD and can contribute to a 1,500 person, 5-state region, rather than just the division. A ballot and candidate bios are in the latest edition of the Mid-West Region newsletter, **The Waybill**. Click the link below to get the latest issue.

<http://www.mwr-nmra.org/mwr2016/mwr.waybill.html>

You can vote on line (and save a stamp) or you can mail in the **Waybill** ballot. Write-in candidate are accepted with both voting methods. Please take the time to vote your preference for Region officers. Click on the link below to vote on-line:

<https://form.jotform.com/223156779610965>

At this time, we are planning on holding Hybrid In-person/ Zoom meetings for the entire season. Specific meeting notice details are sent out via e-mail one week before each meet, so be sure we have your current e-mail address on file and always advise of any changes. You can update your email address at:

<http://www.mwr-nmra.org/mwr2016/mwr.address.change.html>

Each monthly notice includes the ZOOM system log-on credentials to make it easy to access the Zoom system if you choose participate that way. Details on each hybrid meeting agenda are also listed on the timetable tab of our website and in each issue of the **Semaphore**.

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











Finally, I hope you had a good Thanksgiving and are looking forward to celebrating the upcoming season's holidays as many folks do this time of year.

Regards, Mike Hirvela, Superintendent



TrainFest 2022

What's Happening - or not ...

-  The **Fox Valley Division** will be holding in-person division meets at the **Gary Morava Center**. The meets will also be broadcast via Zoom. See the next page for details on each meet. We hope to see you there!
-  **Great Midwest Train Show** (aka: the Wheaton / DuPage Swap Meet) is under new management and is holding swap meets at the DuPage County Fairgrounds in Wheaton, IL. The dates for future shows are generally on the 1st Sunday: Jan 8, 2023, February 5, March 5, April 2, May 7 and June 4. Follow the signs to the fairgrounds entrance. See: <https://www.trainshow.com/>
-  In 2023 the Midwest Region (MWR) will elect a President, a Vice President, and three (3) Directors at-Large. Please read bios & cast your vote at: <http://www.mwr-nmra.org/mwr2016/mwr.elections.html>
-  The Canadian Pacific RR will be running its annual holiday Train on CP trackage from Chicago to Milwaukee on December 8, 2022.
-  The **Mad City Train Show**, Alliant Energy Center, Rimrock Road and John Nolen Drive, (just off the 12-18 By-pass), Madison, Wis., February 18 and 19, 2023. <https://www.nmra-scwd.org/scwd-events.html>
-  WI, STEVENS POINT: CWMR 25th Arctic Run Model Railroad Show & Sale. Holiday Inn Convention Center Hotel. 1001 Amber Avenue. January 21-22, 2023. Saturday 9:00 am-5:00 pm. Sunday 10:00am-3:00pm. Adults \$4.00, \$2.00 kids 12-17, under 12 FREE. Many layouts, swap/sales tables, vendors. For information contact Jim Miller, (715) 340-0265 or email to jimbrow67@gmail.com or Don Anderson (715) 340-8105 or email to crm114@tds.net.
-  There will be no Midwest Region Convention scheduled for 2023.
-  The **Rock River Valley Division Train Show** will be held on March 25, 10 am - 5 pm & 26, 10 am - 3pm, 2023
-  The **FVD will hold its Annual Business Meeting** on April 16, 2023. The agenda will include reports from each Trainmaster and the Election of the Assistant Superintendent and Paymaster. Contact the Rich Hoker, Chief Clerk if you would like to run for either of these offices. Contact any officer at: <http://www.foxvalleydivision.org/fvd2016/contactus.v2.html>
-  The resurrected **Naperville RPM** will once again be held in the Chicago area. The dates are October 27 and 28, 2023.

*Happy Holidays and
Season's Greetings to All*

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 updates 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 |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Nov 20, 2022 | Grain & Railroads by Mark Vaughan | 1 "Over, Under, Around, or Through." | |
| Dec 18, 2022 Next Meet | Two Prototype Steam Engine Overhauls by Chuck Rita | 1 Steam Locomotive. | |
| Jan 15, 2023 | NCE Switch Cat by Mike Wood | 1 Diesel Locomotive. | |
| Feb 19, 2023 | Interchanges by Scott Payne | 1 Illuminated structure. | |
| Mar 19, 2023 | Presentation TBA | 1 Refrigerated billboard car. | |
| April 16, 2023 | Weathering with Pastels by John Drozdak Annual Business Meeting and Election of Asst. Superintendent and Paymaster Contact the Chief Clerk if you would like to run for either of these offices. | 1 freight car with an Open load. | |
| May 21, 2023 | History of Cardboard Structures by Dave Lull | 1 structure. | |
| Submit Your Contest Photos anytime at: https://form.jotform.com/201995250508962 | | | |



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>

The deadline for any issue is 1 week prior to the 1st day of the issue month.

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

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

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

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