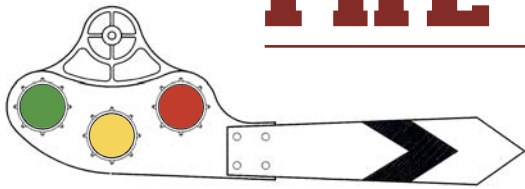


THE SEMAPHORE

January 2012

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



Woodland Scenics Fire

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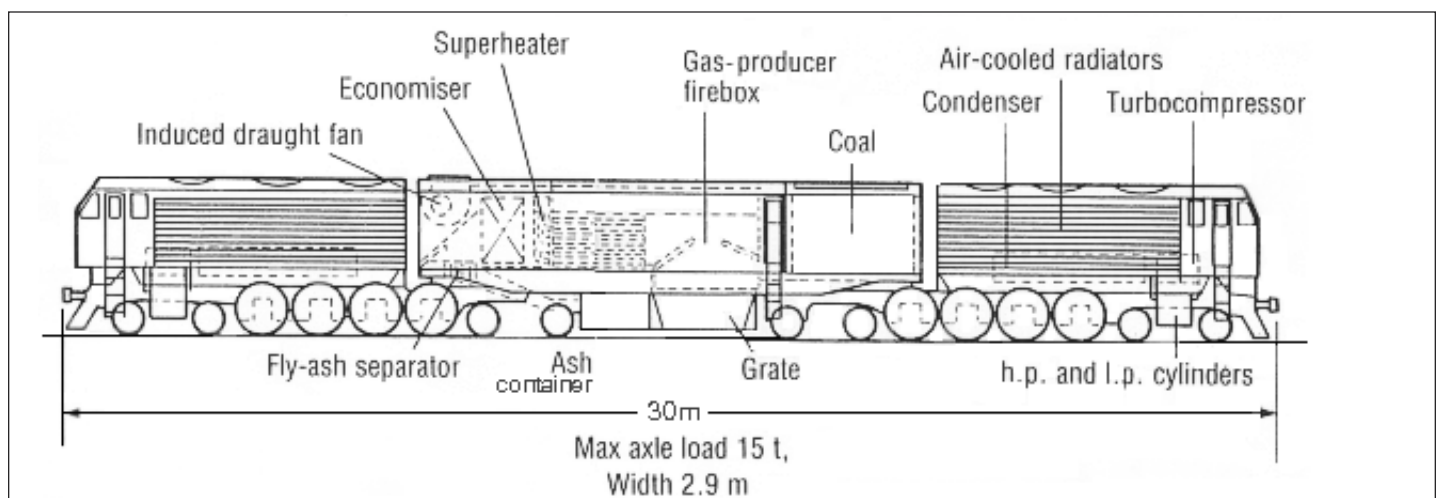
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On Thursday evening January 5, 2012 a fire consumed approximately 60,000 square feet of Woodland Scenics manufacturing, a part of Woodland Scenics facilities in the town of Linn Creek, Mo. It took 120 firefighters from more than 20 different departments to bring the

fire under control. A spokesperson for Woodland Scenics said that the business would be up and running on Friday and they would immediately begin to rebuild the facility as soon as possible. Woodland Scenics is the largest employer in Linn Creek employing about 150.

FUN STUFF A possible concept for steam in the future ?



Top Ten (Not So Serious) Model Railroader's New Year's Resolutions

In the spirit of David Letterman's *Top Ten Lists*, here are, not one but two, Top Ten Lists of New Year's Resolutions for model railroaders. One is serious, one is not so serious.

Top Ten (Serious) Model Railroader's New Year's Resolutions

10. Try a small modeling project in a different scale
9. Sign up to work one or two shifts at High Wheeler 2012
8. Learn how to hand lay a turnout, weather with an air brush, install a decoder in a steam locomotive—you fill in the blank!
7. Go rail-fanning somewhere you've always wanted to go like Horse Shoe Curve, Chama, Strasburg—you fill in the blank!
6. Attend an op session.
5. Write an article or submit a photo for the Semaphore, Waybill or other MRR publication.
4. Fix the worst, most annoying electrical problem on your layout before January 1, 2013 (better yet, before July 1, 2012 or sooner!).
3. Scratch build a structure or piece of rolling stock.
2. Attend an NMRA regional or the national convention.
1. Start building your next model railroad, or model railroad addition!

Top Ten (Not So Serious) Model Railroader's New Year's Resolutions

(With these it helps if you imagine you are watching the Letterman show and he's reading the list off with the audience laughing hysterically in the background—at least for some of them.)

10. Lose ten pounds so you can better squeeze through the small access hatch you built on your layout nine years ago when you were twenty five pounds thinner.
9. Take animating your layout to another level by modeling a Fourth of July parade complete with animated marching bands, animated floats, animated politicians in convertibles,

animated antique automobiles, marching Boy Scouts, marching Girl Scouts, animated acrobats, the Shriners racing around on their mini motor cycles, all followed up by animated fire and police vehicles with their lights and sirens. Oh, and don't forget to add sound!

8. Ask your wife to try using your new Grasshopper static grass applicator to straighten her hair. (Note: applies only to curly haired wives.)
7. Just to see what would happen, put an old, ugly brass caboos on your nearest prototype rail line just before the next train comes.
6. For garden railroad modelers, using only wire coat hangers, duct tape, *Saran Wrap*, and all your saved up horn-hook couplers from your HO days, invent a new squirrel or chipmunk trap to protect your railroad from those pesky varmints.
5. Speed up crew movement in your op sessions by having crews wear roller skates.
4. Have five or six railroad friends over, give them spray bottles of water and an electric fan, and create a scale model photo of a Mark Llanuza-like prototype "train in the rain" storm photo on your layout.
3. Using the techniques in #4 above, create a model Llanuza "train in a blizzard" photo. For this one you'll need to borrow somebody's portable diorama and go outside on a winter day when the temperature is ten degrees or less. The next 6 weeks should be perfect for this!
2. Draw a track plan based on Australia's Great Southern Rail's Indian Pacific route from Sydney to Perth focusing on the area where the railroad passes through the treeless plains of Nullabar—you know, the line with the longest stretch of straight track in the world.
1. Develop a new ground cover using lint from your dryer's lint trap. (Think about it. If you can pull this off, you may never have to buy ground cover again!)

Modifying loads for the Walthers' Ortner Rapid Discharge cars. By Mike Hirvela



The simulated limestone loads for the Ortner cars always bothered me because

if the quarry loaded these cars as high as the simulated load sits, a lot of the load would be lost by the movement of the car enroute to its destination.

Here's how I modified the loads to better fit the car.

1. Carefully remove the load from the car. They are a press-fit, and will come out easily.



2. Using a mill file, widen and deepen the two pair of notches on the underside of the load.



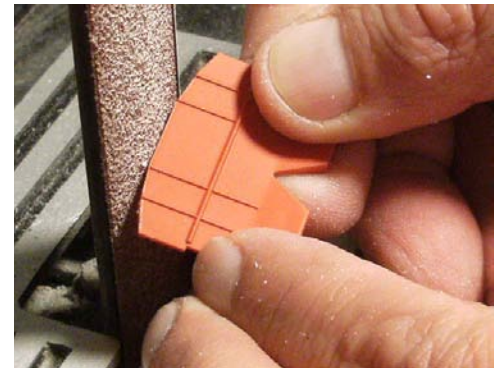
3. Then, using my sanding station, I sanded some plastic off both ends of the load at a 45-degree angle. Take off a little, test fit, take off a little more, test fit, etc., until load sits down in car. Vary the amount of material removed so that all loads don't look alike.



4. With gentle pressure, remove the two load dividers on the car interior. They are a press-fit, and will remove easily. Be careful of the two pegs on the bottom of the divider – don't damage.

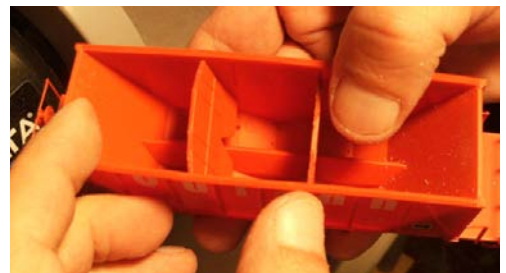


5. With a Zuron© cutter or with the sanding station, remove the top rib of the divider and put about a 30-degree angle on both sides of the top edge of the divider.



Do this to both dividers so that they are about equal.

6. Reinstall the dividers in the car being careful to get the pegs in the holes provided.



7. Test fit the load in the car; adjust as needed.



Ortner Rapid Discharge cars continued

9. The load will now sit lower in the car about where the quarry would load it, and appear more realistic.

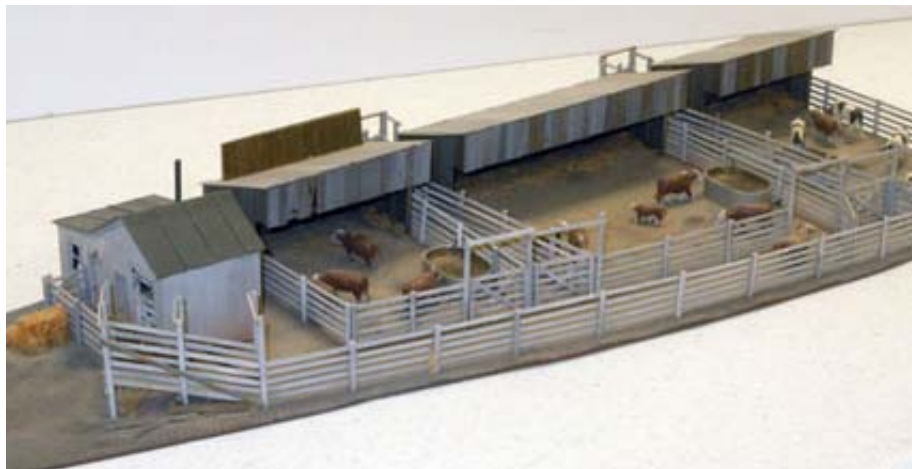


Add the car to your loadout and get it on its way! Highball.



Contest Photos

December 2011 Model Contest Winners
 Category: Coffee Stirrer Sticks
 What could you build from these?



First Place, Frank Cole's, HO Scale Stock Yard

Photos by Jim Osborn



2nd Place, Jim Osborn's, G Scale Out House



Third Place, Mike Hirvela's, HO Scale Barge

Thanks to all participants.
 We had 6 great contest entries.
 Everybody is a winner!!



Complete details are on their web site:
www.railsplitter2012.org

The Conference Hotel is the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel. Special room rates of \$89.99 (plus tax) are in effect until February 10, 2012. For reservation, call (866) 788-1860
 A free pass to the Springfield Train Fair, held Sunday March 11, is included with your registration. It is billed as the largest train show in downstate Illinois, with over 300 vendor tables. Their website is:
www.springfieldtrainfair.com

Railsplitter 2012

Start making plans for Railsplitter 2012, the annual Midwest Region Convention. It will be held March 8-11, 2012 in Springfield Illinois. You can register for only \$80.00 for all the activities, but you must do so by January 31, otherwise it will be \$95.00. So do not delay, do so today.

2012 Calendar

Future issues of the Semaphore will be on the internet at foxvalleydivision.org. If you do not have access to a computer, you can purchase a subscription for only \$8.00 a year. Contact Jim Allen for details at jallenad60@comcast.net

Date	Time	Clinic	AP Clinic	Contest
Jan. 15	1:30	Proper Car Placement by Fred Henize	Structures by Dave Crement	Detailed structure interior
Feb. 19	1:30	Dave Leider clinic on Milk Traffic in Chicago	Motive Power	On line structure
March 3&4		High Wheeler, No members meeting		No Contest
Apr. 15	1:00	Zephyr Route tours by Mike Abernethy	Cars	Vehicles
May 20	1:30	Weathering using chalks and other mediums by Paul Gehrett	Prototype Models	Best of the Best for the year 1st, 2nd, 3rd and place winners

NMRA Fox Valley Division Board Contacts

Superintendent, Walter Radtke	wagx2@email.com	847-255-2977
Assistant Superintendent, Jeff Jarr	jjarr@comcast.net	773-286-8755
Chief Clerk, Leif Hansen	mudhen454@att.net	847-437-7124
Publications Editor, David Leider	MMR_sooauthor@netzero.net	847-253-7484
Circulation Editor, Jim Allen	jallenad60@comcast.net	847-356-2061
Clinics, David Leider	MMR_sooauthor@netzero.net	847-253-7484
Public Relations & Webmaster, Jim Osborn	FVDWebsite@comcast.net	847-587-5654
Achievements & Contests, Jim Landwehr	JLandwehr901@yahoo.co	847-577-7984
Membership Promotions, Mike Hirvela	mhirvela1@gmail.com	847-360-9579
Membership Records, Bert Lattan	blattan@comcast.net	847-295-7959

Look for all FVD Board members contact information
 on line at the division's website
www.foxvalleydivision.org



Fun With Trains for all Ages

March 3 & 4, 2012



Model Train Show
High Wheeler 2012
Harper College,
Palatine, IL

Model Train Layouts Galore!
Bring the whole family
Register for a Kids Free Pass



The hobby of model railroading can be a great way for families to build their imaginations together. Your family will thank you and you just might walk away with some ideas to get started in the hobby.

Operating train layouts • Vendors • Kids Crafts
Free Parking • Food • Handicap accessible

Go to www.highwheelertrainshow.com/

For ticket prices and a valuable coupon. A map and directions to the Train Show.

Get a Kids Free coupon. See a gallery of pictures of past train shows.

Learn about the Fox Valley division of the NMRA.

Contacts for additional information about the show.

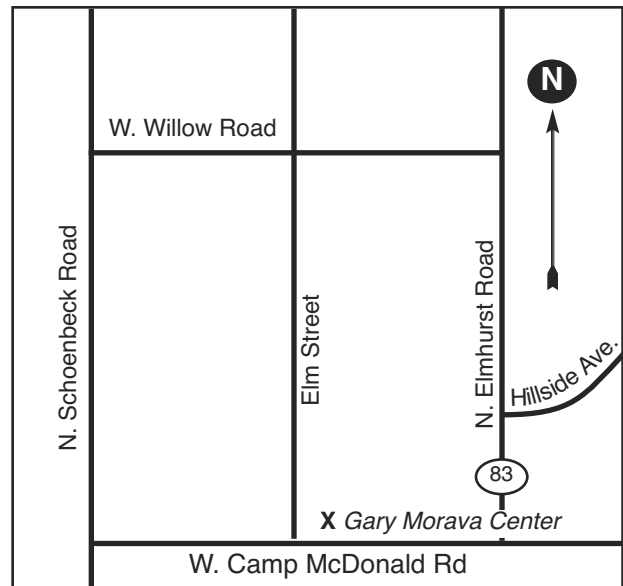
About the Fox Valley Division

If you receive this newsletter you live in the Midwest Region and Fox Valley Division of the National Model Railroad Association or NMRA. The Fox Valley Division (FVD) includes McHenry and parts of Cook, Kane and Lake Counties in Northeast Illinois. About 150 members of varied ages and modeling ability levels belong to the FVD. Almost all modeling scales are represented in our division. Membership in the division is free as are the Semaphore newsletters.

FVD general meetings are held September through May at the Gary Morava Center in Prospect Heights from 1:30 to about 4:30 pm. Each meeting features a clinic, model contest, information of interest to the membership, and a time for socializing. Outings, layout tours, and operating sessions are also held periodically in addition to, or instead of the general meetings. To promote the hobby of model railroading, the FVD sponsors and runs a large train show, High Wheeler, in early March each year at Harper College in Palatine, Illinois.

We encourage you to take advantage of all the FVD has to offer. We are here to help answer your questions, help improve your modeling, and help you better enjoy the great hobby of model railroading. Join us at a FVD meeting or outing. We'd love to see you. Or, visit us on the web at: www.foxvalleydivision.org.

Questions? Contact FVD Superintendent, Walter Radtke or any board member listed on page two of this newsletter. We are here to help you!



Next Meeting

The Fox Valley Division will hold their **January meeting on the 15th, 2012** -- Note: 1:30 pm start time to 4:30 pm, at the Gary Morava Center, 110 W. Camp MacDonald Road, Prospect Heights, IL



Fox Valley Division
Midwest Region-NMRA
P.O. Box 1535
Arlington Heights, IL 60005-1535