

THE SEMAPHORE

April 2013

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



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March Layout of the Month:

NS&W Modular Group

The North Shore and Western Modular Group began in the mid to late 1980's in the former North Shore and Western Division of the NMRA. The North Shore and Western Division is no more having merged with the Fox Valley Division in the fall of 2010, but the NS&W Modular Group has proudly preserved the NS&W name and spirit with their large and beautiful modular layout. Each year the NS&W Modular Group displays their layout four times with two of those times usually at the Glenview Public Library and the High Wheeler Train Show at Harper College. Currently the group has 36 two and half by four foot modules. The modules have a variety of themes, with some type of mid-western theme (e.g. grain elevators, stock pens, farms, "flat land" scenery, etc.) predominating. The NS&W has eight dedicated members with Jeff Jarr coordinating the group's efforts. Over the years the NS&W group has won several awards for their excellent modeling including Best Modular Layout at



The NS&W modular layout set up at a recent High Wheeler in its typical 21 x 45 foot configuration.

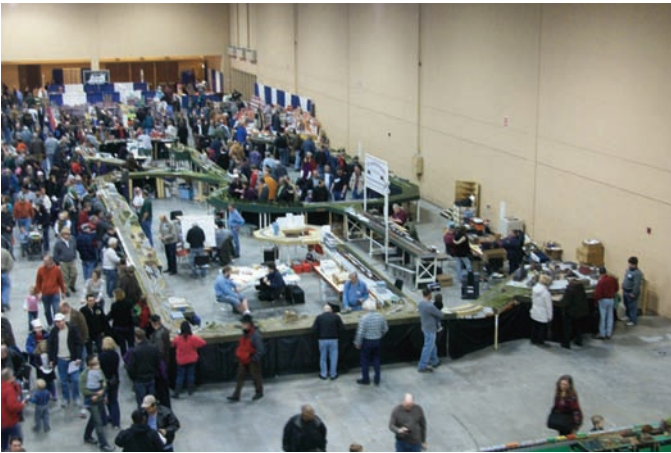
both Trainfest in Milwaukee and High Wheeler at Harper College. At the 2011 World's Greatest Hobby Train Show in Schaumburg, the NS&W group combined with three other modular groups to create a monster modular layout. The normal size of the NS&W layout is 21 x 45 feet. For more photos and information on the NS&W Modular Group, go to the FVD's web site to the NS&W listing on the left side bar. Otherwise, enjoy the NS&W photos and Basic Layout Information in this month's Semaphore. WH

Fun Stuff

This PRR GG1 #4846 to GG 1/2 is the result of a wreck. Then cut short, fitted with a rear coupler, a steel plate with headlight (to close the opening), and what appears to be a snow blower or snow melter nozzle. This resulting unit was used at the Wilmington, Del. shops. O.K. members let's see some kit bashing.



March Layout of the Month: NS&W Modular Group



Here's the NS&W layout at the 2011 World's Greatest Hobby Show in Schaumburg combined with two other modular club layouts to form a "monster modular" layout



CNW 1617 works the stock pen tracks on this module. The photo back drop adds depth to the scene.



Two beautifully modeled grain elevators are the focus of this module.



A pair of nicely weathered Chicago Northwestern RS units provide the power for this way freight.



Typical lush Illinois mid-western "flat land" scenery is depicted on most NS&W modules



A CNW 2-8-0 passes a small farm on this module. Note the three six inch Atlas Snap Track connector pieces used to connect this module with its neighbor module to the left.



The green shirted NS&W crew at High Wheeler 2010 with their Best Layout and Best Module awards.

NS&W Modular Group Basic Layout Information

Layout Builder:	North Shore & Western Modular Group
Builder's years in NMRA:	collectively more than 120 years of NMRA membership
Layout Location:	various train shows and the Glenview Public Library throughout the year
Layout Size:	30 x 48 inch individual modules; typical show size is 21 x 45 feet
Layout scale(s):	HO
Layout theme/locale:	individual module owner's choice
Layout era:	module owner's choice
Construction started:	mid to late 1980's
Type of bench work:	grid with adjustable leg heights as given in NS&S Module Specifications
Type of sub road bed:	any material 3/16 inch thick
Type of track and turnouts:	commercial code 100
Layout scenery and structures:	individual module owner's choice
Layout locomotives and rolling stock:	individual module owner's choice
Sound locomotives:	yes
Layout control system:	DC or Digitrax DCC
Favorite aspect(s) of layout building:	varies with individual module owner
Model railroad influences:	desire to share and promote the hobby with the public; camaraderie with group members; ability to build a part of a model railroad when home space is limited
Other:	for more information on the NS&W group, contact Jeff Jarr at 773-286-8755, or jjarr@comcast.net

High Wheeler 2013

The High Wheeler 2013 Train Show will go down in the history books as another excellent and very well attended show. Model railroaders, train enthusiasts, kids, parents and grand parents packed Harper College's field house Saturday and Sunday, March 9 and 10 to view the dozen model train layouts in all the popular scales, shop the many vendors' tables, and have fun at the kid's craft tables or train movies. Thanks to the Fox Valley Division's marketing efforts, more than 3,250 adults and 1,500 children attended this year's High Wheeler, an increase of 3% over last year's gate. Thanks to the division's management team, participating layouts and vendors enjoyed a more organized set up and additional set up time allotted for this year's show. And thanks to the division's excellent volunteers, the show went offsmoothly for participants and attendees. Commenting on this year's High Wheeler, Show Manager, JeffJarr, said, "This High Wheeler went surprisingly well considering the obstacles we faced last fall. We had our best attendance in



recorded history of the show! I can't thank our show team and volunteers enough for their excellent efforts." Asked what next year's High Wheeler will have in store for everyone, Jeff said, "Well, we will definitely try

to do the same early set up routine we did this year if Harper will let us. We will also go back to our regular dates with having the show on the first weekend in March." At this writing, about 40% of the 2013 High Wheeler layouts and vendors are signed up for the 2014 show. So High Wheeler 2014 is already shaping up to be another great one! (Editor's note: the article on past High Wheelers I promised for this month is being turned into a series. It will start in next September's Semaphore. I am still looking for High Wheeler show information and photos from the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's! Call me at 815-355-2003 or email me at waltherrickjr@gmail.com if you or someone you know can help here. Thanks! WH.)



Modular layout set up crews and vendors greatly appreciated this year's High Wheeler earlier set up times.

Thank You High Wheeler Volunteers!

High Wheeler simply would not happen were it not for the dedicated crew of Fox Valley Division volunteer workers that donate their time and efforts to each year's event. The High Wheeler Show leadership team recognizes that putting on the show is a "team effort" with every worker playing an important part. This year 47 volunteers did everything from publicity work, to setting up for the show, to traffic control, to selling tickets, to take down. Most volunteers worked more than one shift, and several worked all day, every day of the show including pre-show set up days. A sincere "Thank You" goes to the 2013 High Wheeler volunteers listed below for another great job this year.



Do you recognize these four FVD volunteers manning the ticket table at this year's High Wheeler? They were busy guys!

High Wheeler volunteers

Jim Allen
Michael Bychowski
Bobbie Cable
Carl Caputo
Frank Cole
Don Cook
Barry Cutaia
Bill Ebner
Gail Erickson
Gordon Erickson
Dave Flebbe
Paul Gasiorowski
Leif Hanson
Walt Herrick
Mike Hirvela
Chris Jarr

Jeff Jarr
Kathleen Jarr
Katie Jar
Charlie Johnson
Dave Johnson
Tim Kleimeyer
Dick Koch
Bert Lattan
David Leider
Stu Mankoff
Madisyn Nagy
Robin Nagy
Tara Nagy
Jim Osborn
Gene Parkhurst
Lorenz Peterson

Don Robinson
Paul Sherling
Bob Shimer
Bob Shlemon
Eddy Shlemon
Rebecca Shlemon
Norm Smith
Harry Sorenson
Bob Teubor
George Trandel
Jerry Vojtko
Will Westfall
Jim Wyrudrowski
Sandy Wyruchowski
Dennis Zamirowski

Mike's Minute

By Mike Hirvela

A recent conversation with a Life Member revealed some interesting perceptions about the current condition of the NMRA. A concern was whether the NMRA as an organization is still relevant today. We had a nice interchange as a result of this conversation. Now, let me ask our FVD members: What would model railroading be today without the NMRA?

Can you imagine it? Let's see, Mr. Peabody, how about cranking up the model railroading 'Way Back machine'? Going back several decades we had: clunky track, oversize carpet tacks as track spikes, war surplus relay switch machines and primitive car couplers that don't match in shape and style (and impossible to keep coupled!), different wheel profiles (let alone in gauge--was that 1/4" scale or 17/64ths?). We had a variety of control systems from 6 vdc to 24 vdc to outside--or inside--third rail distribution systems in varying ac voltages and amps with cloth-covered--for insulation--wires, and one inch thick, heated with big flames, soldering irons. We had battery power, live steam or dry ice (dead steam?) powering systems with primitive control systems. There were engines that didn't go the same direction on the same track, and no assurance

that your engine would work on your buddy's layout. We cleaned our engines' drive systems with rags soaked in gasoline or (horrors!) carbon tetrachloride. There was no plastic (What's plastic?), and we had scenery made from asbestos furnace cement, covered in lead-based paints. A lot of times I catch myself thinking, oh, if only we knew then what we know now.

Granted, if the NMRA didn't exist, some other organization probably would be in its place to provide some overall influence, guidance and direction for the hobby. But, maybe not. If so, who knows who or what that influence, direction and guidance may have been! I think today we have a duty to the legacy of the model railroaders of old who banded together to establish the NMRA and do the hard work of developing its standards for the various scales which make for consistency and interoperability. Materials will change and things will be developed in the hobby tomorrow that we can't imagine today. Let's hope the NMRA is around to provide standards for them.

The NMRA may be over 75 years old, but it ain't dead -- yet. Far from it. We as today's members owe a tip of the brass hat to our founders. I, for one, aim to keep this organization going and relevant today and into tomorrow. Got some ideas? Let me know at mhirvela1@gmail.com.

Modeling Tip

One of the best model railroad educational bargains going is the NMRA's Michiana Division's Education and Training Conference and Workshop to be held Friday and Saturday, April 19 and 20 in northern Indiana town of Middlebury. This event is featuring great clinics on "Designing and Building That First Layout", scratch building structures, an introduction to DCC, modeling a rolling stock fleet "on the

cheap", multi-level layout building, weathering, photo back drops, designing and building control panels and more! What is the cost for two very full days of Michiana clinics and workshops, you ask? Only \$25.00 if you are an NMRA member (plus the cost of lodging and meals)! Find out more about, or register for, this great event at the division's website: michiana-nmra.org. WH

News

This month NMRA national news includes:

- the organization reaching its first funding goal for CSRM Gallery Exhibit, thus qualifying for \$250,000 in matching funds by an anonymous donor. Funding for this project is now two thirds complete.
- popular Communications Director, Jerry Leone, resigning for several reasons. Jerry has since agreed to take on other responsibilities for national
- the passing of former NMRA President, John Roberts, after a year long illness. John was on

the NMRA's Board of Directors and was the Howell Day Museum Manager at the time of his passing.

- the 2012 National Convention and Train Show held in Grand Rapids last summer earning a profit.
- the launch of the NMRA's eBulletin web based newsletter.
- the naming of Indianapolis as the host of the 2016 NMRA National Convention.

Regional news includes:

- the Michiana Division hosting their 2013 Education Conference and Workshop on April 19 and 20 in Middlebury, Indiana. For more information or to register, go to their web site at: michiana-nmra.org
- the upcoming regional convention Mile Post 50 in Indianapolis, May 2 – 5
- continued planning and progress on the 2014 regional Rail Fun to be hosted by the FVD

Division news includes:

- a reminder from Membership Records Trainmaster, Bert Lattan, that members please keep their email address current with the division. Email Bert with any changes at: blattan@comcast.net
- Membership Records Trainmaster, Bert Lattan, reporting that the current FVD membership is 243 members.
- the FVD hosting another successful High Wheeler this spring. (See High Wheeler articles elsewhere in this Semaphore.)
- April elections and an early 1:00 p.m. start to our April monthly meeting on April 21

April Elections

Our April monthly meeting will be held earlier than usual at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 21st to accommodate this year's board elections. We will be electing an Assistant Superintendent and Treasurer. Candidate bios for Bob Shelmon, Jr., candidate for Assistant Treasurer, and Tim Kleimeyer, candidate for Treasurer, are included below. At this writing these are the only candidates running for these two offices.

Candidate for Assistant Superintendent, Bob Shlemon, Jr.

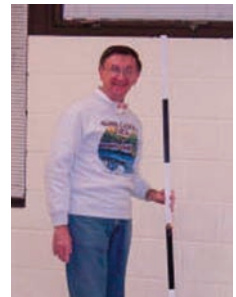
In 2012 Bob was appointed by the FVD board to fill the Assistant Superintendent position when Harry Sorenson resigned due to health reasons. He would like to continue on serving the division as its Assistant Super. The position has involved Bob in many different parts of the FVD and the model railroading hobby which he has enjoyed. Bob started in model railroading when he was given my first train at the age of six with an S Scale American Flyer. As his interest grew he switched to HO Scale, started going to assorted train shows including the 1976 National Train Show held in Rosemont (NMRA National connected). In 1977 Bob joined the NMRA and three years later upgraded to life member. He's been involved with clubs and the NS&W Division in which he served in their early years in various posts including Refreshment Chairmen, Assistant Superintendent, and Editor of the 400 Bulletin. In the last years of the NS&W



Bob and his son Eddy helped in any capacity they could, including the NS&W Modular Group. Since the merger of the NS&W and FVD, Eddy and Bob have been attending FVD meetings and helping out in any way they could, including the refreshment area.

Candidate for Treasurer, Tim Kleimeyer

Tim Kleimeyer is our current Paymaster and is running for re-election. He has been our Paymaster since being elected in 2004. Prior to that, Tim was our Assistant



Superintendent. He models the Chicago area in HO in the mid 1990's. His layout will include Metra, UP (CNW), and the Sleepy Creek Railway, part of the CNW UP did not want. Tim started with American Flyer in the 1950s and still has his original "S" scale trains all of which are in working order.

As Paymaster, Tim pays the division bills and reimburses members for approved expenses made on behalf of the division. Each month, he balances the checkbook and presents a financial statement to the BOD. He also makes the annual report to the membership at the April business meeting. For High Wheeler, Tim is on site both days of the show managing the cash flow from the ticket sellers and the door prize give away. With the new IRS rules for reporting for small non-profit organizations, Tim has been doing the IRS filing each year.

Meeting Dates

The end of the modeling year is approaching! Here's the info on our last two meeting dates of 2012-2013 and the dates of the NMRA Midwest Region and National conventions.

Date	Clinic	Contest	Other
April 21	TBD	Heavy load on a single depressed flat car	1:00 p.m. start with pizza. Elections for Ass't. Supt. and Treasurer.
May 2-5	Mile Post 50 Regional Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana. See the Central Indiana Division's web site at: cid.railfan.net for complete information.		
May 19	Dave Crement on painting figures. Dave Leider on early steel cars.	Whimsical or humorous load	Regular 1:30 p.m. start. Last meeting of 2012-2013. Have a great summer!
July 14-20	NMRA National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia. See the convention's website for complete information: nmra2013.org		

Fox Valley Division Board

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It's not too soon to start making plans for the Milepost 50 Midwest Division Spring Convention! The convention will be held in Indianapolis May 2 – 5, 2013 and promises to be a good one. See the Winter Waybill newsletter for more details and an application blank to the convention.



Join Us As We Celebrate 50 Years!

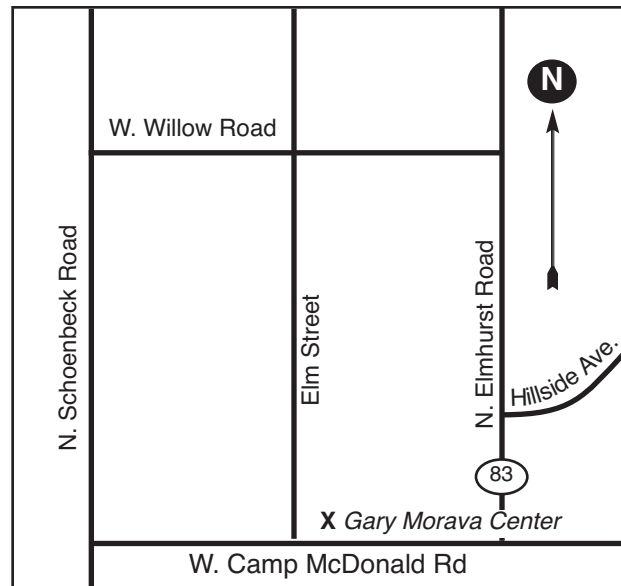
About the Fox Valley Division

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 240 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 called "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, Jeff Jarr or any board member listed on the "FVD board section of this newsletter. We are here to help you!



Next Meeting

The Fox Valley Division will hold its next regular monthly meeting **Sunday, April 21, 2013** from 1:00 to about 4:30 p.m.

Meetings are held at the Gary Morava Center, 110 W. Camp MacDonald Road in Prospect Heights, IL. We invite you to attend and look forward to seeing you!



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