



# THE SEMAPHORE

FEBRUARY 2015

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



## Layout of the Month: Garfield-Clarendon Model Railroad Club

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Page 1-3 Layout of Month
- Page 1 Fun Stuff
- Page 4 Modeling Tip
- Page 4 Mike's Minute
- Page 5 December's Contest and Clinic
- Page 5 Member News
- Page 6 Meeting Schedule
- Page 7 Basic FVD info
- Page 7 FVD Board

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**February's regular meeting is February 15th at 1:30 pm at the Gary Morava Recreation Center in Prospect Heights. The contest is "Double or Triple Headed Steam". The clinic is "TBD". See you at the meeting!**

Chicago's Garfield-Clarendon Model Railroad Club was founded in Garfield Park in 1947. Since that time it has built five different model railroads in two locations. The model railroad featured in this Semaphore was started in 1974 in the Chicago Park District's Clarendon Park Fieldhouse. With a layout size of 49 x 27 feet and 1,500 feet of hand laid HO track, it is among the nation's largest club model railroads. The layout's theme is a generic Class I Appalachian coal road located somewhere around Pittsburgh. Despite the Appalachian theme, you will see a lot of different roads' motive power and rolling stock operating on the layout at any one time due to the varied



A trio of Chicago Northwestern RS3s cross the high trestle at Gaskill Run on the Garfield-Clarendon MRR Club's large HO layout. Layout photos by Walt Herrick.

ests of the club's some 50 members. Besides the size of G-C Club's layout, probably its most impressive feature is its hand laid track. Though much of the club's track was completed in the 1970's, it still looks and runs great. The club is open for viewing the last Friday of the month from 7 to 9:30 pm, and other times during the year. Check its web site for details. WH

## Cool Stuff by Jim Allen

Thought I'd change things up a bit this month with my first "Cool Stuff" column. I'll be doing "Cool Stuff" columns whenever the mood strikes and it struck this month! What you see to the right is cool but strange to me, so strange I wanted to share it with you even though its not railroad related. The low boys are transporting a huge off road dump truck chassis. My question is, "How do you turn that thing?"





## Layout of the Month: Garfield-Clarendon Model RR Club



FVD member George Trandel's Clinchfield F unit emerges from Summit Tunnel and is about to cross the big Gaskill Run bridge (upper left). The F unit is next seen under the signal bridge at the west end of Georgetown Yard with its train splitting the lighted Union Station platforms (upper right), and then passing the depot at Summit (left). Three CNW Alcos with operating cab beacon lights are nearing the end of the sweeping curve at Summit (right). The G-C Club changed the theme of its layout to a Class I, Appalachian mountain coal hauling road in 1990.



The Garfield Club layout has a lot of big industry with much of it related to coal hauling. A red Tri-State Utility tug waits for its barge to be loaded to the immediate right. On the far right, a Rock Island MP15 switches the heavy industrial area at Bridgeport.





## Layout of the Month: Garfield-Clarendon Model RR Club



### Basic Layout Information

Layout name:	Garfield-Clarendon Model RR Club
Layout builder:	Members of the G-C MRR Club
Layout location:	Clarendon Park Fieldhouse, Chicago
Layout scale:	HO
Layout size:	27 x 49 feet
Layout style:	Huge water wings with stacked loops
Layout theme:	Generic Class I Appalachian coal road
Layout era:	Multi era
Construction started:	1974
Bench work:	Grid
Sub road bed/roadbed:	Homasote on spline sub roadbed; club cut white pine roadbed
Track and turnouts:	Hand laid codes 100, 83, 70; 42 inch minimum mainline radius; all mainline turnouts #8 or larger
Scenery:	85% complete using a variety of methods dating to the 70's. Older sections slowly being redone.
Back drop:	Hand painted on walls with photo or commercial scenes in some locations.
Structures:	Kits, kit-bashed, scratch built
Locomotives:	Wide variety owned by members
Rolling stock:	Various manufacturers kits and RTR
Control:	NCE DCC
Operations:	Formal op sessions use a detailed train sequence; also informal operating
Other:	See the club's web site for more information and layout photos at: <b><a href="http://www.garfieldcentral.org">www.garfieldcentral.org</a></b>

Being based in Chicago, the G-C MRR Club couldn't be without a hot dog stand on its layout! (upper left) A wide variety of motive power is run on the layout including the old Great Northern 4-6-0 steamer seen in the center photo above. The G-C MRR Club layout is huge with the lower left photo showing only about a quarter of the layout. The layout's large main freight and passenger terminal yard at Georgetown (lower right) has 16 long double ended classification tracks, large roundhouse, service facilities, diesel house, and Georgetown Union Station with long passenger platforms. It is one large yard!



## Modeling Tip: Don't Skimp!

The Garfield-Clarendon Model Railroad Club's hand laid track is one of its outstanding features. Much of the track was built in the 1970's and 1980's, but still looks and runs great today 30 to 40 years later. What's the club's secret for such excellent, dependable track work? Quality materials and fine workmanship. The sub-roadbed has a spline base overlaid with homasote. Custom club-cut white pine serves as the roadbed. The club cut its own ties from northern pine on a radial saw. The rails were hand spiked in place and track building was done slowly, and carefully. Turnouts were built in place to fit the location. The result is the beautiful, flowing track work seen in the photo to the right. If there is a lesson to be learned from the G-C Club's track work it is, for excellent, long term results, don't skimp on materials or workmanship! WH



## Mike's Minute by Mike Hirvela

(After a couple of months on "special assignment", Mike returns to tell us about the last day of his summer vacation. WH)

On the last day of vacation, I finally got to visit the Quincy Mine at Hancock, Michigan. This was a copper mine known for the quality of the copper ore it produced. After touring the property and museum including a nice G scale diorama, Jim and I bought tickets to tour the mine and we headed outdoors for a diesel-powered, cog-wheeled tram car ride down a 33% sloped hill to the 700 level (700 feet below the top of the hill) of the mine. We boarded a roofed farm wagon pulled by a small farm-type tractor for the ½ - mile trip into the mine. Fortunately this drift shaft had been bored out way bigger than the shaft at the iron mine at Vulcan. Again, I had on my flannel-lined slicker, hard hat, and IRM sweatshirt, as this mine was also a chilly 43 degrees F. We asked whether the mine got warmer the deeper they went, and the reply was "yes". It was noted to be in the 80 degree range at the 9200 level, but that the mine was now flooded below the 800 level. We had a good tour guide who was adept at explaining how the miners got the ore out and at one point we visited an ore vein which was at a 75 degree slope. After our mine tour, we returned to daylight, went back up the hill, and continued the tour by viewing the hoist machinery in the tippie. Holy smoke! Think of a big fishing reel with a 30-foot diameter cable winder, powered by 4 steam driven pistons, 2 high pressure, and 2 low pressure. Interestingly, the hoist operator couldn't see over the reel, and relied on dial indications as to where the skips were located along the slope of ore. This was huge machinery! I'm glad I finally made this trip and am sorry my dad never stopped to visit the sites we saw. It was very educational and enjoyable. If you've been putting off a trip like I took last summer, I suggest you go ahead and do it. I think you'll be glad you did. Photos by Mike Hirvela.



The tall Quincy Copper Mine tippie at Hancock, MI in the UP is seen in the top photo. A nicely done G scale diorama was created at the museum to show Calumet and Helca RR and mining activities at the turn of the century. Two narrow gauge C&H locos rust in peace outside the museum in the bottom



## January's Clinic: Transfer Cabooses

The Fox Valley Division's own John Drozdak was the clinician for our January meeting. His topic was a personal favorite of his: scratch building cabooses. John has built over 30 styles of cabooses over the years, in some cases building multiple models of one particular style. His clinic focused on modeling transfer cabooses, and he did a great job covering how he researches and then builds these unique pieces of rolling stock of which, on many roads, no two were exactly alike. WH



## January's Contest Winners

Photos by Bob Landwehr

January's contest was "Large Structure-5000 Scale Feet or More" and five *large* entries were received! Here are the winners. Visit the FVD web site at [www.foxvalleydivision.org](http://www.foxvalleydivision.org) to see all of January's fine entries. February's contest is "Double or Triple Headed Steam".

In close voting, our first place finisher, in the top photo to the right, was Tim Kleimeyer's nicely done HO scale "Abandoned Paper Mill". Tim created this large, unique (who would of thought of building an *abandoned* paper mill—neat idea, Tim!) structure using Walthers kits as a base and then adding extra detail parts especially on the roofs. Second place went to MMR, Don Cook, for his kit-bashed "Woods Furniture Co" seen in the middle photo. Don normally works in HO scale, but built this big structure in N scale. Finally, the third place certificate went to George Trandel for his HO scale, eight stall "Roundhouse" seen in the bottom photo. This model will be part of the Georgetown Yard steam locomotive service facilities at the Garfield-Clarendon Model Railroad Club. More on this huge club layout on pages 1,2,3 and 4 of this issue of the Semaphore. WH



## Member News

FVD member Jim Carney of Palatine passed on January 22 at home. Jim was an NMRA Life Member. Our condolences go to all of Jim's family and many friends....Membership Services Trainmaster, Bert Lattan reports December's FVD membership standing at 216 down three from November....FVD members once again are doing train displays for the Arlington Heights and Mt. Prospect Public Libraries. Mike Hirvela provided the photo of the display he and Jim Landwehr set up at the Mt. Prospect Public Library for January viewing. WH



## 2014-2015 Meeting Schedule

The remaining FVD/NMRA meeting schedule is given below and on the FVD's web site:  
[www.foxvalleydivision.org](http://www.foxvalleydivision.org).

Schedule changes or additions are posted on the FVD web site as soon as they are known. Our meeting place is the Gary Morova Recreation Center, 110 Camp McDonald Road in Prospect Heights, 60070. Our meeting time is 1:30 pm except in April as noted below.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Clinic</u>	<u>Contest</u>	<u>Other</u>
Feb.15, 2015	How to weather and Ballast Track	Double or triple headed steam	
<b>Feb. 28 &amp; March 1, 2015</b>	<b>High Wheeler 2015</b> Train Show at Harper College in Palatine sponsored by the FVD. 9 am to 5 pm each day. <u>FVD volunteers needed</u> . Contact Jeff Jarr at <a href="mailto:jjarr@comcast.net">jjarr@comcast.net</a> or 773-286-8755.		
	<i><u>Note: there is no March FVD monthly meeting due to High Wheeler 2015.</u></i>		
April 13, 2015	<u>TBD check web site</u>	Open load spanning 2-3 cars	<b>1:00 pm start.</b> Officer elections
<b>April 17 - 19, 2015</b>	<b>Midwest Region Spring Convention</b> hosted by the Winnebago Land Division at the Holiday Inn, 4601 Calumet Ave. in Manitowoc, WI		
May 17, 2015	<u>TBD check web site</u>	Unfinished project of your choice	Last meeting until September
	<i><u>Note: there are no FVD monthly meetings in June, July or August</u></i>		
<b>August 23 - 29, 2015</b>	<b>NMRA National Convention in Portland, OR.</b> Check the convention's web site: <a href="http://www.nmra2015portland.org">www.nmra2015portland.org</a> for complete information.		

## NMRA Web Sites

<b>Fox Valley Division</b>	<a href="http://www.foxvalleydivision.org">www.foxvalleydivision.org</a>
<b>Midwest Region</b>	<a href="http://www.mwr-nmra.org">www.mwr-nmra.org</a>
<b>National</b>	<a href="http://www.nmra.org">www.nmra.org</a>



### About the Fox Valley Division

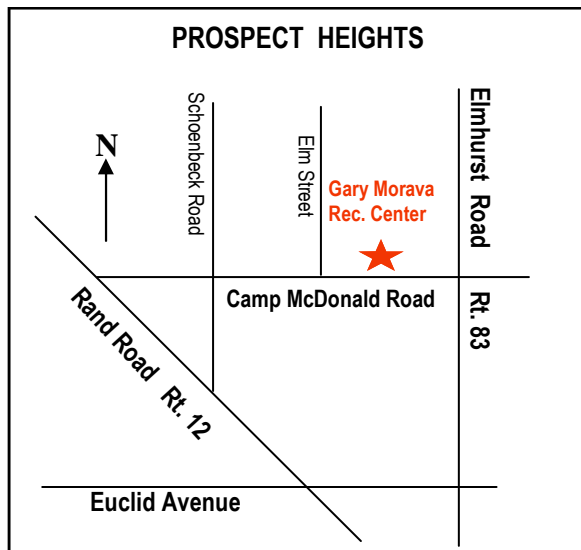
If you receive this newsletter you live in the Midwest Region and Fox Valley Division of the National Model Railroad Association or NMRA. The Fox Valley Division (FVD) includes all of McHenry and parts of Cook, Kane, and Lake Counties in northeast Illinois. About 220 members of varied ages and modeling 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 monthly meetings are held September through May at the Gary Morava Center in Prospect Heights from 1:30 to about 4:00 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 monthly meetings. To promote the hobby of model railroading, the FVD sponsors and runs the 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 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 and bring a friend. We'd love to see you. Also visit us on the web at:

[www.foxvalleydivision.org](http://www.foxvalleydivision.org)

Questions? Contact FVD Superintendent, Jeff Jarr, or any FVD Board member listed below. We are here to help!



- The FVD's monthly meeting is at the :  
**Gary Morava Recreation Center**  
110 Camp McDonald Road  
Prospect Heights, IL. 60070
- Our regular meeting time is:  
1:30 to about 4:00 p.m.
- 2014 – 2015 meeting dates, contest and clinic info are on page 6 of this newsletter.

FVD web site: [www.foxvalleydivision.org](http://www.foxvalleydivision.org)

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