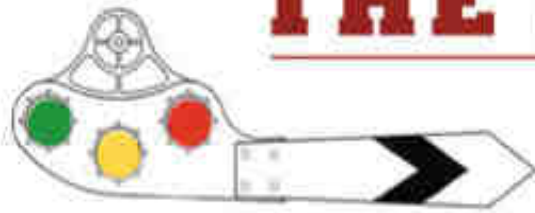


# THE SEMAPHORE

December 2015

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



*Happy Holidays  
Everyone!*

## Layout of the Month: KV&EC club's Holiday Display Layout Article & photos by Walt Herrick

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**Next FVD Meeting:**  
**Sunday, December 13**  
**1:00 pm\*** at the  
**Morava Rec Center in**  
**Prospect Heights**  
**\*Pizza lunch served!**

**Contest:** Holiday Theme of any train related model.

**Clinic:** Two great prototype slide presentations by MMR, Don Cook.



The KV&EC Model Railroad Club's 16 x 20 foot Holiday Display Layout in Sun City Huntley has become a popular holiday attraction in the northwest and western Chicago suburbs, northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin areas.

Each holiday season the Kishwaukee Valley and Eakin Creek Model Railroad Club in Huntley sets up and runs its large *con't on p. 2*

## Fun Stuff by Jim Allen

This is the amazing "Train to Heaven" sculpture located in Wroclaw, Poland. The sculpture features an actual retired, 90 foot long, 80 ton, 2-10-0, Polish steam engine on rails pointing to the sky. The "Train to Heaven" was commissioned by the city of Wroclaw and it's developer company Archicom to commemorate its 20 years of industrial activity in the city. The sculpture's creator is Polish artist, Andrzej Jarodzki, who came with up his idea while playing with his son's toy train engine! The sculpture was unveiled in 2010. It is Wroclaw's biggest attraction and said to be the largest sculpture in Poland.



## Layout of the Month: KV&EC club's Holiday Display Layout con't

*con't from p. 1* Holiday Display Layout in the Social Lounge near Sun City's Prairie View Lodge's main entrance. The layout began in 2002 as two sheets of plywood on saw horses set up by several club members in Sun City's Prairie View Lodge's Social Lounge. A more permanent layout was built in 2003. That layout was replaced by the current, totally rebuilt layout in 2007. Members took most of the fall of 2007 to build the layout.

FVD member Pete Walton (see Pete's home layout in the November 2013 Semaphore) has been the Holiday Display Layout's Coordinator since its beginnings. He works closely with KV&EC club president, Don Espeseth, and many club members to arrange for, install, run, take down and put into storage the HDL each holiday season. Club member Earl Maha created the strong, light sectional bench work on which the layout is built. It features four levels stacked like a wedding cake for the four different gauges: G, O, HO and N. Club members in each of the scales create the layout's scenery which is all based on a Christmas theme. All trains run on DC control.

It takes about 2 1/2 days to unpack, put up and prep the layout for viewing. It only takes a half day to disassemble and put the layout back into storage. The many sections of the layout are stored in a closet, and under the bench work of the layouts at the KV&EC's permanent layout room several blocks away from the Prairie Lodge. A dozen or so club members are *con't on p. 3*



The KV&EC Holiday Display Layout is set up in Sun City's Huntley's Prairie View Lodge's Social Lounge just off the main entrance. It's open 5 weeks each year.

### Sun City Huntley's KV&EC Club's Holiday Display Layout

**Location:** Prairie View Lodge  
12880 Del Web Blvd.  
Sun City Huntley, IL 60142

**Display Dates:** November 21 to December 27

**Hours of Operation:** 11 to 3 Weekdays; 11 to 5 Weekends

**Closed:** Thanksgiving and Christmas Days; open Christmas Eve 10 -noon.

**Raffle:** 3 Lionel trains sets raffled off Wednesday, December 23 at 3 pm

**Layout and raffle open to the public.**

Below left we focus on the bottom two levels of the KV&EC's Holiday Display Layout with G gauge on the bottom, and O directly above it. In the lower right photo, we see the HO and N gauge levels with N at the top to the right. All the levels are presented as a winter wonderland with "snow" covered streets, trees, and buildings.





## Layout of the Month: KV&EC club's Holiday Display Layout con't



Each year something new is usually added to each gauge's layout. This year some lighted buildings and the above "building on fire" scene was added to the HO layout using Walthers and Woodland Scenics products. Below a Christmas train rolls past lighted stores and die cast 1:24 scale automobiles on the G gauge layout's street running scene.



con't from p.2 needed to put up and take down the layout. Each year new features are added to each of the layouts such as new, upgraded structures, structure lighting, and lighted signs. It is all for fun, and, of course, for the many kids and adults who visit the layout each year to get some old time Christmas spirit only trains can provide.

### Basic Layout Information

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Layout name:             | Holiday Display Layout   |
| Layout builders:         | KV&EC club members   |
| Layout scales:           | G; O; HO; N  |
| Layout size:             | 16 x 20 feet   |
| Layout style:            | Large island with stacked levels for each scale  |
| Layout theme:            | Christmas Holiday/winter   |
| Layout era:              | Mixed  |
| Construction started:    | 2007   |
| Bench work:              | Chipboard on specially constructed chipboard and plywood beams   |
| Sub road bed/roadbed:    | G-foam board; O-foam board; HO and N-cork  |
| Track and turnouts:      | Commercial products  |
| Minimum Radii:           | G-24"; O-13.5"; HO-24"; N-11"  |
| Maximum Grades:          | No grades  |
| Scenery:                 | Display type scenery with a winter theme   |
| Structures:              | Kits, kit-bashing, ceramic   |
| Locos and rolling stock: | Various makes, many with a holiday or Thomas the Tank Engine theme   |
| Control:                 | DC for every scale   |
| Other:                   | It takes three days to assemble and prep the layout for viewing, and a half day to take the layout down and put it into storage. |
| Raffle:                  | The KV&EC club raffles off three Lionel trains sets each season which fund club activities and projects.                         |

## Modeling Tip: Teamwork II

Last month's Modeling Tip talked about the value of teamwork in model railroading. To reinforce this idea, we briefly mention that the KV&EC's Holiday Display Layout is open 170 plus hours this year and it will take about triple that number of man hours to staff the layout. Hence the need for good teamwork to make everything run smoothly. (Like the teamwork needed to put on our High Wheeler Shows!) To the right, O gaugers Bruce Thompson and Jerry Cieciva are two of many KV&EC dedicated volunteers who work lots of hours on the layout keeping trains running over the Holiday Display Layout's five weeks of operation. *WH* (Walt Herrick photo.)



## Mike's Minute by Mike Hirvela

### Your First Op Session: You're the Engineer pt.1

*This month we return to the series Mike started last spring, "Your First Op Session". In a several part series, Mike will tell us all about the job of being the train's engineer for an op session. WH*

So, you're at your first op session and the introductions and briefs are now over. It's time to run some trains and you're assignment is "engineer". Oh, my! There's that apprehension and nervousness creeping in again. But don't worry, Casey Jones. Let's keep some perspective: 1) These are toy trains. 2) We're supposed to have fun.

As engineer, initially you'll want to know some things about the train you're assigned to run. Typical questions are: What is the train's number? Does it have a name? What type or class is it? What direction is it going? Answers could be: #400 Passenger (first class); or Time-freight #282 (typically 2<sup>nd</sup> class); or the South Local [a peddler (3<sup>rd</sup> class)]; or an Extra, meaning not a scheduled train, but extra to the existing schedule. Also, what engine is assigned and (important) where is it on the layout? And (really important) what is it supposed to do? Let's use an example from my own railroad, the CNW's North Shore Subdivision. (See the December 2013 Semaphore for two stories on Mike's layout. WH.). It's a double track, Class I line running from Highland Park, IL to Milwaukee. Traffic is heavy and varied with passenger, commuter and freight.

You've drawn a freight to run: Train #483 headed north. (Note: on US railroads, odd numbered trains are west-bound or north bound; even numbered trains are east bound or south bound.) Here's the basic information for #483:

- The train's name is "The Chief". It runs from Chicago's Proviso Yard to Minneapolis everyday but Sunday.
- It is a 2nd Class freight. 2nd Class means during its run, it must be out of the way in a siding for any superior train, which could be a first class or a 2<sup>nd</sup> class south or eastbound. On US railroads, east (south) bound trains have superiority over west (north) bound trains.
- #483 is found in Proviso Yard which is represented by staging track #3 on my railroad.
- F-3's #4056A, 4056B and 4056C are the locomotives running together as a unit and called "#4056". An engine card in the clip on the layout fascia for staging track 3 gives you this information.
- #483 departs Proviso (staging) at 9:45 am. My layout doesn't use a clock yet, so we may only move on the dispatcher's authorization. We arrive at Butler Yard in Milwaukee "TBD", i.e. we get there when we get there.
- Work. "Work" is a term used by operators to describe what switching a train does en route to its destination. #483 is a daily train with certain stops en route to drop-off (set-out or SO) and/or pick-up (PU) cars at Waukegan, Kenosha Racine, Butler Yard (staging), and in theory, other cars going through to Minneapolis and points further west. The information about the train will be on a train order sheet or a card. An experienced operator will provide some guidance as you go. Again, don't worry or fret. This is supposed to be fun.
- Do we have a two-man crew or will you be the only crew? If you have a conductor, great; because you only need worry about running the train and the Conductor will handle the paperwork.

We'll make the assumption that you have an experienced operator as Conductor for this train and that he has reviewed the train orders and pack of car cards and waybills for each car in the train. These show where the cars go. You're now ready to go; stand-by for clearance. Next month we take your train out on the road. See you then!

## High Wheeler 2016 Volunteers Needed!

Yep, it's already time to start thinking about High Wheeler 2016! This key FVD event takes place on Saturday, March 5th and Sunday March 6th next year. **Volunteers are needed** to do the many jobs necessary to put on a great show. In addition to knowing you played a vital role in High Wheeler's success, you will be rewarded with an excellent meal at our High Wheeler Recognition Dinner on Sunday, March 20th at Lou Malnati's in Buffalo Grove. Contact Jeff Jarr (his contact info is on the last page) to sign up to give us a needed hand. **Thank you!**





## November's Clinic and Contest

November's clinic was an excellent and informative presentation by the FVD's own Ingrid Drozdak on "What Makes a Contest Photo a Winner". Ingrid is the NMRA Midwest Region's "Chief Photography Judge" and she explained what she and her fellow judges are looking for to make a MWR contest winner. She also explained how the judging process works. There was lots of good information here and some great tips for our FVD January contest, "Favorite Model or Prototype Photo Taken by the Member". Look on the FVD web site, [www.foxvalleydivision.org](http://www.foxvalleydivision.org), for Ingrid's clinic presentation. Thanks, Ingrid! *WH* (Jim Osborn took Ingrid's photo after some fun face painting at a FVD High Wheeler Train Show!)



Leif Hansen won November's contest with his animated Victor Gold Mine. The mine had lights in the mine shaft and shed, and the sound of ore being loaded into a gondola. Nice! Once again Leif's was the only entry in last month's contest so there were no second and third places. That's disappointing! **December's contest is "Any Train Related Holiday Scene" in diorama format. Let's get some more entries!** Also, MMR Don Cook will be presenting two slide shows featuring his excellent photography: "BN Coal Train" and "The EJ&E". **Remember, we start at 1:00 pm with a "Pizza and Pop" lunch.** So "be there or be square" (Ho, Ho, Ho!) at our December 13 regular FVD meeting! *WH* (Contest photo by Walt Herrick.)



## Name That Member

Anyone care to guess who the kid with the train is? Hint: he's a FVD member and officer. Find out in "Member News" on page 6!



## FVD Retirements Update

Retirement Memo #3 to Fox Valley Division Members. Things are looking up FVD folks. David Leider MMR, will again be taking over the "Clinics and Programs" Trainmaster position in 2016—2017, and at this writing, we have at least one candidate for "Chief Clerk" Trainmaster. Left to fill are "Division Superintendent" and "Ways and Means" Trainmaster positions. Again, we ask you to consider bringing your abilities and experience to either of these jobs. Both are important and rewarding jobs for the division. If you have questions about the positions, contact Jeff or Leif. Their contact information is on p.7 of this Semaphore. *WH*

## Member News

Member Services Trainmaster, Bert Lattan, reports our FVD memberships numbers have stayed constant the past month....Thanks to Ingrid Drozdak for her great November meeting clinic on “What makes a Contest Photo a Winner”. Ingrid’s husband, John, will present February’s clinic on “Home Built Plows and Flangers”. What an apropos topic for February!.....We are all mourning the passing of Model Railroader’s retired Executive Editor, Andy Sperandio. He will be missed.....The “Name That Member” in the photo on page 5 is none other that five year old Bob Shlemon, Jr. at Christmastime in 1963. That’s an American Flyer train set with their new, more realistic, S scale “Pikemaster” track. Bob is the FVD’s Assistant Superintendent....Last but not least, **“Happy Holidays!” to everyone in the Fox Valley Division.** Hope your holiday season is perfect! *WH*

## 2015 - 2016 Fox Valley Division Meeting Schedule

Except as noted under “Other”, all meetings are held from 1:30 to 4:00 pm at the Gary Morava Recreation Center, 110 W. Camp McDonald Road, Prospect Heights, IL 60070. Visitors are always welcome, but per the NMRA’s new policy, must join after three visits. **Important: clinics are subject to change without notice.** For the latest clinic and all FVD information, visit our web site at [www.foxvalleydivision.org](http://www.foxvalleydivision.org).

| <u>Date</u>   | <u>Clinic</u>   | <u>Contest</u>   | <u>Other</u>   |
|---|---|--|--|
| Dec. 13, 2015   | <u>Two prototype slide presentations</u> , “BN Coal Train and EJ&E” by Don Cook MMR   | Holiday theme—any train related model that has a holiday theme <u>in diorama format*</u>     | <b>1:00 pm start.</b><br>Pizza lunch.                        |
| Jan. 17, 2016   | TBD—check FVD web site  | Favorite model or prototype photo <u>taken by the member.</u>                                |  |
| Feb.21, 2016  | <u>Clinic</u> on “Home built Plows and Flangers” by John Drozdak  | Lighted railroad signal—signal bridge, grade crossing signal, etc. <u>in diorama format*</u> |  |
| <b>March 5 &amp; 6 2016</b>   | <b>High Wheeler 2016 Train Show</b> at Harper College in Palatine sponsored and run by the Fox Valley Division. Hours are 9 am to 5 pm each day. <u>FVD member volunteers needed.</u> Contact Jeff Jarr at 773-286-8755, or <a href="mailto:jjarr@comcast.net">jjarr@comcast.net</a> to volunteer. Thank you! |  |  |
| <b><u>Note: there is no regular March meeting, due to High Wheeler. Come to the show!</u></b> |   |  |  |
| <b>March 20, 2016</b>   | <b>High Wheeler 2016 Volunteer Recognition Dinner</b> at Lou Malnati’s in Buffalo Grove at 5:00 pm  |  |  |
| April 17, 2016  | <u>Clinic</u> TBD by David Leider, MMR  | 12” x 12” mini diorama. Your choice of subject and scale.                                    | <b>1:00 pm start.</b><br>Pizza lunch. FVD officer elections. |
| May 15, 2016  | <u>Slide presentation</u> by MMR Don Cook on the prototype Milwaukee Road   | Interlocking or street crossing tower <u>in diorama format *</u>                             | Last monthly meeting for 2015 –2016                          |
| July 3 – 10, 2016   | National Convention <b>“Highball to Indy” in Indianapolis, July 3-10.</b> See the web site: <a href="http://www.nmra2016.org">www.nmra2016.org</a> for more information. Note there is no MWR convention this year because the CID, a Midwest Region division, is hosting the NMRA's National Convention.     |  |  |

\*Contest entry must be presented on a diorama with a minimum surface size of 144 square inches. See page 5 of this Semaphore for details.



### About the Fox Valley Division

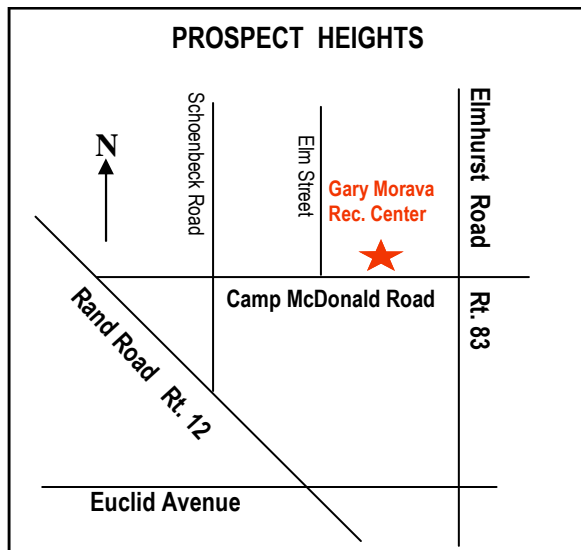
If you receive this newsletter you live in the Midwest Region and Fox Valley Division of the National Model Railroad Association or NMRA. The Fox Valley Division (FVD) includes all of Lake and McHenry, and parts of Cook and Kane Counties in northeast Illinois. About 210 members of varied ages and modeling 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 Recreation 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.
- 2015 – 2016 meeting dates, contest and clinic info are on page 6 of this newsletter.

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

FVD mailing address: Fox Valley Division  
Midwest Region-NMRA  
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