



THE SEMAPHORE

October 2025

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



The September model Celebration featured Freight Cars. This interesting model by Bob Hanmer features a drag line bucket on a heavy duty 6 axle flatcar. Bob explained that after painting and detailing the bucket he mounted it on the car -- only to discover that the load would not make the horizontal clearances on his layout! This great model is destined for the display case. Click on this link to see more photos of all the models brought to the meet.

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

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Next Division Meet - October 19, 2025 at the Gary Morava Center - Back Exercise room 1:00 start.

Clinic Presentation: *Tappets, dogs, bridles - Basics of Mechanical Interlocking - Part 1.* by Patrick Golden, DuPage Division

Part One defines mechanical interlocking, and looks at much of the component hardware - tower structure, levers, cranks, pipeline, etc. - associated with a mechanical interlocking plant. Signal aspects are covered and the basic operation of the locking bed (where all the actual mechanical interlocking takes place) is introduced as a lead in to Part Two of this interesting clinic will be featured in December.

October Model Celebration: Any Structure

Mike's Minute ...

We're off and charging down the tracks to another successful modeling season. Our next division meeting will be at the Gary Morava Recreation Center in Prospect Heights, IL, in the smaller (cozy?) meeting room. We opted for this room due to the park district increasing the rental cost for the 'Pine' Room – the room we had been using. The Board felt the increase from \$35 to \$50 per hour bordered on the unreasonable for a not-for-profit organization. The smaller room lets us stretch our limited budget to get the most benefit for our members. Sometimes it is a scramble. For example, the park district had the tables and chairs set up but couldn't find the portable movie screen even after extensive

searching. Members arriving early assisted in reconfiguring the room 90-degrees and removing some wall art to enable the program to be projected onto the wall. It worked well as the room wall is a neutral color and the chairs were a little more up close and personal. If you agree that in order to get something out of an activity, you have to put something in, I think you can see we're trying to get the best for the members.

Meanwhile, Gary, our Program and Clinics Trainmaster, has some interesting informational 'clinics' from various sources lined up for our Fall meetings and he continues to seek out presenters for 2026 and has several lined up already. A two-part clinic is coming up on a subject that has puzzled me for years, and we will all learn more about it on October 19th. The 'orange card' is out and you should have it for reference. It all works best when you participate in person or over the net. Please join in.

We did have one typo on the Orange card. Please note that the January 2026 meet was mistakenly listed on the 19th, which is a Monday. It should read the 18th.

Division opportunities: Mr. Osborn needs a back-up person who can assist with equipment set-up for the meetings and Zoom sessions and to fill in. We also need an Editor for our newsletter, The Semaphore. Here is another opportunity to participate. It is not that tough and is very rewarding.

The FVD is co-sponsoring the Chicagoland Railroad Prototype Modelers (RPM) Conference at Northern Illinois University in Naperville, IL, October 16-18. Someone to help rep the division during the conference would be nice. Please let me know. Volunteering for this gains access for no cost.

We have a great live clinic scheduled for the November 16th meet. Randy Allio is a distributor of Pan Pastels and will join us at the Gary Morava Center to share his techniques on using the Pan Pastels for modeling applications.

You can see the full schedule, clinics and model celebration topics at:

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

Always check the Timetable on the website for the latest meeting updates and locations.

Also check out other RR events at: <https://www.foxvalleydivision.org/fvd2016/rrevents.v2.html>

Looking forward to see you all at the next meeting. May all your signals be green.

Regards, Mike Hirvela, Superintendent



The 2025-2026 FVD meeting schedule:

Date	Clinic or Program	Model Celebration	Time & Location *
Sep. 21, 2025	Lighting basics for model Applications by Jim Osborn, MMR	Any Freight Car	1:00 at the GMC
Oct. 19, 2025	Tappets, dogs & bridles - Basics of Interlocking pt. 1 by Patrick Golden	Any Structure	1:00 at the GMC
Nov. 16, 2025	Pan Pastels by Randy Allio - Live Demonstrations	Any Locomotive	1:00 at the GMC
Dec. 21, 2026	Tappets, dogs & bridles - Basics of Interlocking pt. 2 by Patrick Golden	Load spanning 2-3 cars	TBD
Jan. 18, 2026	Meat Packing Plants: Protos & Models - by Douglas Harding, MMR®	1 Illuminated Structure	TBD
Feb. 15, 2026	Railroads & the Natural Ice Industry by Bruce DeYoung	Odd Consist - 4 unit max	TBD
Mar. 15, 2026	Revolutionizing Model Railroading with AI - by Pat Fleming	Billboard Reefers - 2 max	TBD
Apr. 19, 2026	TBA	A Kit-bashed structure	TBD
May 17, 2026	TBA	A Favorite Locomotive	TBD

*Location note: GMC = Gary Morava Center, Prospect Hts. - GPL = Glenview Public Library

Happenings:

Passing of note: **Bert Lattan**, long time Midwest Region, NorthShore & Western and Fox Valley Divisions member of the NMRA passed away Last October. Unfortunately, this editor just learned about his passing recently. Bert had been a member of the NMRA for over 45 years. He was active in both the local Divisions and Midwest Region during that time. If you would like to view Bert's obituary, please see:

<https://www.leonardmemorialhome.com/obituary/HubertBert-Lattan>

GREAT MID-WEST TRAIN SHOW (aka: the DuPage Swap), at DuPage County Fairgrounds, Wheaton, IL, is scheduled to operate Nov 2 & Dec 7, 2025 - 9am until 3 pm.

ROCK RIVER VALLEY DIVISION MEET will be Sunday October 12, 2025, 1- 3pm. Contest: Residential Structures. Tour: Ken Peterson's Milwaukee Road. Clinic: TBA. The meet location is Paulson's Agriculture Museum of Argyle, 6950 Belvidere Rd, Caledonia, IL 61011

CHICAGOLAND RPM CONFERENCE at NIU, Naperville, October 16-18, 2025. FVD Co-Sponsors the event.

TRAINFEST: at the Baird Center, downtown Milwaukee, November 1 and 2, 2025.

The TrainFest team is looking for volunteers. Contact Burnell Breaker if you can help out. You'll get free admission for the weekend!

wisenmra@gmail.com

FVD MEET NOVEMBER 16. PAINTING WITH PAN PASTELS by Randy Allio, MMR®. Randy will demonstrate techniques discovered using *Pan Pastels* to paint detail castings, stone walls, and wood. Models will be on display showing the results possible using this medium to replace the lost paint brands that modelers used for years. Time will be available for anyone wanting hands on practice.

THE DANVILLE INDIANA TRAIN SHOW. November 22, 2025 at the Hendricks County Fair Grounds, 1900 E Main St, Danville, IN 46122 10am - 3pm Eastern Time

The MAD CITY Train Show, at the Alliant Energy Center, Madison, Wis., February 21-22, 2026

For more details on these and other events, please visit the FVD Railroad Events webpage

<https://www.foxvalleydivision.org/fvd2016/rrevents.v2.html>



Semaphore Content and Help Wanted

Interested in keeping the ***Semaphore*** alive? Send us your model or prototype pictures, stories, modeling tips, etc. to share with others in the hobby. **We are also looking for an editor!** Contact any officer with your interest at:

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

About the Fox Valley Division

If you receive this newsletter, you are an NMRA member & live in the Fox Valley Division area of the Midwest Region and of the National Model Railroad Association (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 130 members of varied ages and modeling ability levels are in the FVD. Almost all modeling scales are represented in our division. Subscriptions to the Semaphore newsletters are free. NMRA membership is available through the NMRA at:

<https://www.nmra.org/>

2025-2026 FVD monthly meetings are held September through May on-line via the ZOOM virtual meeting technology & at various physical locations per the schedule in this issue. Each meeting features a clinic, modeling celebration of member projects, and information of interest to the membership. Outings, layout tours, and operating sessions may also be organized. 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:

<https://www.foxvalleydivision.org/>

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Regular meetings are held virtually via Zoom and in person at the Gary Morava Center generally from 1:00 until 4:00 PM per the schedule listed in this publication and on its website at:

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

Temporary Editor: Jim Osborn, MMR®

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

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

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