



THE SEMAPHORE

March 2017

FOX VALLEY DIVISION • MIDWEST REGION



Layout of the Month: AHSOME's Modular Layout Article by Walt Herrick

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Pages 1-3 AHSOME Modular Layout
Page 1 Fun Stuff
Page 4 April elections; Mike's Minute
Page 5 Feb. Clinic & Contest
Page 6 Ways & Means TM still needed
Page 6 Member News; FVD Meeting Schedule
Page 7 Basic FVD info
Page 7 FVD Board members

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Next FVD Meeting:

Sunday, March 19

1:30 pm at the

**Morava Rec Center in
Prospect Heights**

**Contest: Structure of your
choice—any size any type**

**Clinic: GN Ore Modeling
by Bob Hamner**



A nicely detailed ABBA set of Great Northern F units in beautiful orange and green paint slowly begin to make their way through modules representing the south side of Chicago on the **Arlington Heights Society of Model Engineers** modular HO layout. The modules were built by Wes and Pat Martin and the action occurred during TrainFest 2016. The Proto 2000 locos are owned by club president Jeff Golding. AHSOMES's modular layout is 25 years old and its appearance at Trainfest 2016 will be one of its last. A new AHSOME sectional layout is now being built. Photo by Walt Herrick

Fun Stuff by Jim Allen

The Romney Marsh in Kent, England has an outstanding attraction. It's the famous 90 year old Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway. The Railway is 1/3 actual size and runs on 15 inch gauge rails. The RH&DR has 12 live steam locomotives that were all built between 1925 and 1937, as well as several diesels and numerous coaches. The Railway runs 13 1/2 miles from the Cinque port town of Hythe to Dungeness. Pictured to the right is the Railway's handsome Pacific type steam locomotive, the Hurricane.



Layout of the Month: AHSOME's Modular Layout



A massive B&O EM1 articulated steam locomotive passes through Dode (above) and then toward a triple crossing with an interlocking tower and speeder shed. The locomotive is owned by AHSOME member Pat Martin and was pulling 21 cars the day these photos were shot. Walt Herrick photos.



AHSOME's Module Superintendent, John Katrenak runs a train at Trainfest (left), while long time AHSOME member and Treasurer, Wes Martin (right) does some quick track tune-ups on the layout. Both photos by Tom Seibert.



The AHSOME modular layout has several nice mini scenes including the Kaldern Ice Company and small freight station east of Dode, and an adjacent quarry scene with a rock crusher on a separate module. The new layout will feature many upgrades including new structures and new scenery though a few original structures may be saved. Another upgrade will be going to DCC control. Members are now deciding which DCC system they want, Digitrax or NCE. Walt Herrick photos.

Layout of the Month: AHSOME's Modular Layout



Tom Seibert's unique and nicely modeled coal yard sits along a siding (top). In the center photo, a Chicago Cubs "W" victory flag is prominently displayed at TrainFest 2016 after the Cubs World Series win less than a week before. Below Chuck Rita and Don Zybylut review plans for the new, lighter AHSOME sectional layout. Top and bottom photos by Walt Herrick. Center photo by Jeff Golding.



Above is a group shot of the Arlington Heights Society of Model Engineers. In the front row kneeling are Modular Superintendent John Katrenak, and Club Secretary Tom Seibert. Behind them are Club President Jeff Golding, Wes Martin (seated), Chuck Rita, Pat Martin, Don Zbylut, Jeff DeMarco, and Jack Eskoz. Members not present are Robert Kubinski and Robert Lamb. Tom Seibert's camera photo.

Basic Layout Information

Layout name:	Arlington Heights Society of Model Engineers Modular Layout
Layout builders:	AHSOME members
Construction started:	Late 1980's
Layout location:	Area train shows
Layout scale:	HO
Layout size:	20 x 28 feet
Layout style:	Modular layout with 2x4 foot side sections and 4x4 foot corner sections
Layout theme:	Generic mid-west Class I
Layout era:	1950's to modern
Bench work:	Grid of 1x4s with 1x3s cross bracing
Sub road bed/roadbed:	Homasote with cork roadbed
Track and turnouts:	Atlas code 100 with other makes as needed
Min Radius:	30 inches
Max Grade:	No grades on the layout
Scenery:	80% complete
Structures:	Kits, kit-bashing and scratch built
Locomotives:	Members' locomotives of choice
Rolling stock:	Members' rolling stock of choice
Control:	DC with Aristo-craft radio throttles
Module storage:	Modules stored in a club trailer
New Layout:	A new AHSOME portable layout has been designed and is now being built by club members. The layout will be built in sections rather than modules, and will measure 16 x 28 feet, though it could be assembled in shorter lengths, too. The new layout will be much lighter and easier to transport, and have DCC control.

April Elections

The FVD's April 23, 2017 meeting is our Annual Meeting for the year. At that meeting we will hear year end reports from our board officers, and most importantly, hold elections for two of our four board officers. This year we elect an **Assistant Superintendent and a Paymaster**. Any member wishing to run for either of these two offices should soon contact our Chief Clerk, George Trandel, and tell him of your intentions to run for office. Candidate biographies will be published in next month's (April's) *Semaphore*. WH

Mike's Minute by FVD Superintendent Mike Hirvela

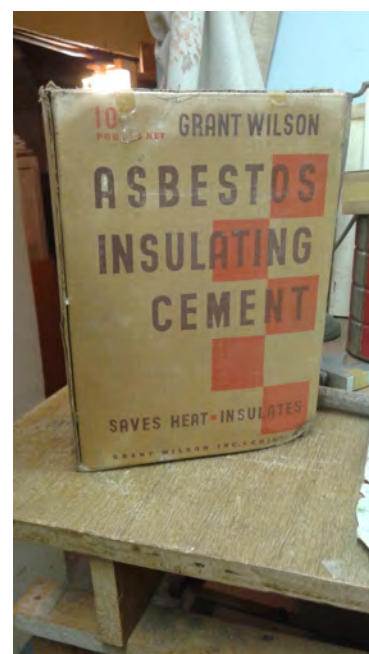
Time for a Change?

For some of us, change is disturbing. We like our routines and some of us are creatures of habit. Routine puts order in a seemingly disorderly world. It anchors us when things around us seem fraught with uncertainty. That being said, there are those of us who say change is a good thing and should be embraced as it means progress and growth and not stagnation.

Why do I write this? Well, as many of you know, we lost a great FVD member in MMR Don Cook late last year. In the past several weeks, his friends and fellow FVD members have conducted a disposition of his model railroad items including books, magazines, reference materials, buildings, rolling stock, tools, Don's L-shaped switching layout and other railroad items from his home. Soon his basement layout room and work shop will be clean and without a trace of his model railroading hobby. Sad? Yes, but thanks to Don's wife Leslie's desire to make a change, many items from Don's railroads will now live on as part of other model railroads in the Milwaukee to Chicago corridor. Leslie insisted that anyone purchasing Don's railroad items actually *use* them on their layouts as opposed to reselling them for a profit.

Don was also a member of the Illinois Great Northern Model Railroad Club which is in Zion, IL. Since Don's passing, the remaining members have decided to clean-up the club room spaces and it has been amazing what change that has brought. We have gone through file cabinets, tool chest drawers, work bench shelves and have started on a metal rack holding electrical parts and track components. To say Don and another IGNMRC past member who also has passed on, were both pack-rats would be an understatement. They saw value in everything, and kept a lot of stuff because "we might find a use for it someday, and we'll have it on hand." So, far we have removed four large trash bags of "junk" that we see no future use for, and about a half-dozen brown paper grocery bags filled with empty Half & Half brand tobacco cans. At this point we've only cleaned about half the workshop.

We did have one BIG surprise. Under the workbench was a carton about the size of a box of laundry detergent—only it wasn't. It was an old box of *asbestos* from the 1950s or maybe even the 1940s! We *very carefully* put the box in a trash bag, and then into another trash bag, and taped it closed. We've made arrangements to dispose of it safely. This is a change that was sorely (or is it sadly?) needed for a long time. Should I ask what surprises you've got hiding under your layout or workbench? Spring is just around the corner—think its time for change?

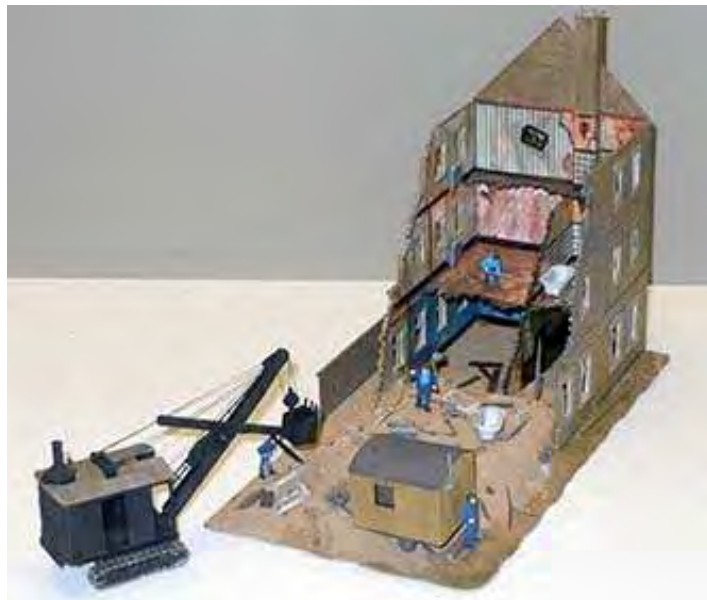


During a recent and long needed club room clean up, members of the Illinois Great Northern Model Railroad Club were surprised to find this ancient box of *asbestos* buried in miscellaneous "stuff" under a work bench. Definitely time for a change here! Mike Hirvela photo.

February's Clinics and Contest—photos by Jim Osborn

The Fox Valley Division's own Carl Wagus presented February's clinic on "Computer Modeling". This clinic was actually on track planning with AnyRail computer software. After resolving some issues with the images being presented (Carl's laptop photos were too wide for the screen provided by the Prospect Heights Park District.) Carl presented an excellent clinic on using AnyRail to develop track plans for a model railroad. Bottom line on using this software for track planning is that it is pretty easy to use, and far more accurate than hand drawing a layout plan. All the track components from many manufacturers, many commercial structures, bridges, etc. are included in the software and correctly sized. Just plug them into your track plan and you are in business with a close scale reproduction of your of your layout. (As one who has literally hand drawn hundreds of track plans over the years, I think I need to try AnyRail! WH) March's clinic will be "GN Ore Modeling" to be given by **Bob Hamner**. WH

February's Contest was "**The Exterior Detail of a Structure including Sides and Roof**". *Despite not having a roof (!)*, the late **Don Cook MMR**, took **First Place** with his HO scale "Demolition Site" entry (right). The great detailing on Don's structure accurately shows the demolition of an old three story brick building. Jim Osborn now owns the model and entered it in the contest in Don's name. The HO scale "Parker Paint Co." (below left) was built by **Leif Hansen** and placed **Second**. This nicely detailed structure also features the great lighting effects which Leif is known for. **George Trandell's** kitbashed "Small Urban Industry" (below right) in HO scale was our **Third Place** finisher. George's detailing efforts added a lot of interest to this model. The FVD's web site, www.foxvalleydivision.com, has photos of all February entries. **March's contest is "Structure of Your Choice—any size or type"**. WH



Fox Valley Division Shirts Available!

A limited number of our famous maroon Fox Valley Division polo shirts as seen at the right, **will again be available for sale at March's regular meeting on March 19th**. Several sizes are available. Cost is \$25.00 per shirt payable by cash or check. Get ready for spring with a stylish FVD maroon, short sleeve polo shirt!



Ways and Means Trainmaster still needed

The division is still looking for an individual to assume its important Ways & Means Trainmaster position. This position organizes and runs our High Wheeler Train Show held each year early in March. This year's High Wheeler has been suspended due to a major renovation project being done on the Harper College gymnasium normally used to host the show. *However*, we need a Ways and Means Trainmaster *now* to help the board prepare for (hopefully) next year's show including finding a new venue for the show. (Harper construction is expected to take another two years.) At a recent board meeting, it was agreed that the bottom line on our Ways and Means position is that **if we don't find a Ways and Means Trainmaster, we cannot organize and run another High Wheeler Train Show.** It's as simple as that. Members, please consider serving as the FVD's Ways and Means Trainmaster and carrying on the High Wheeler tradition. Thank you! WH

Member News

As mentioned in the AHSOME Layout of the Month article on pages 1–3 in this month's Semaphore, the club is now building a new modular layout to replace their well used current modular layout which, as they say, "has seen better days". Next September the *Semaphore* will periodically follow the rebuild in several articles with photos by AHSOME members....During the past several weeks many of MMR Don Cook's layout structures, rolling stock, locomotives, vehicles, etc. have been sold to his crew and local modelers. His large collection of prototype slides has been given to Soo Line Historical Society president, David Leider, who will be passing specific railroad slides on to their respective historical societies. Don's large model railroad is set for demolition in March, while his small L-shaped switching layout was sold in tact....Those interested in purchasing remaining Don Cook rolling stock or structures should contact Jim Osborn. His contact info is on page 7 of this *Semaphore*....FVD Membership Services Trainmaster, Bert Lattan, has good news and bad news to report this month. The good news is that **we have three new members: Andrew Spinelli and David Spinelli from Woodstock, and Timothy Simmons from Arlington Heights.** Welcome aboard Andrew, David and Timothy! The bad news is our membership has dropped the past couple of months and now stands at 211. WH

2016 - 2017 Fox Valley Division Meeting Schedule

Except as noted under "Other", all meetings are held from 1:30 to about 4:00 pm at the Gary Morava Recreation Center, 110 W. Camp McDonald Road, Prospect Heights, IL 60070. Visitors are always welcome per the NMRA's visitor policy. Note that clinics are subject to change without notice. For the latest clinic and all FVD news and information, visit our web site at www.foxvalleydivision.org.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Clinic</u>	<u>Contest</u>	<u>Other</u>
March 19, 2017	"GN Ore Modeling" by Bob Hamner	Structure of Your Choice—any size or type	
April 23, 2017	"A Ride on Africa's Blue Train, Rovos Rails Pride of Africa" by George Ferraro	Yard Switchers—max 2	1:00 pm start. Pizza lunch. FVD officer elections.
April 28–30, 2017	2017 Midwest Region Convention "Golden Rails" hosted by the Rock River Valley Division at the Holiday Inn in Rockford, IL. Complete information on the division's website: rrvd-nmra.com.		
May 21, 2017	"Introduction to Operations Under Time Table and Train Order Authority" by Chris Czyzewski	Exposed or Open Load of Your Choice	Last monthly meeting for 2016–2017
July 30–August 6, 2017	2017 NMRA National Convention "Orange Blossom Special" in Orlando, FL. See the convention's website for complete information: nmra2017orlando.org		



About the Fox Valley Division

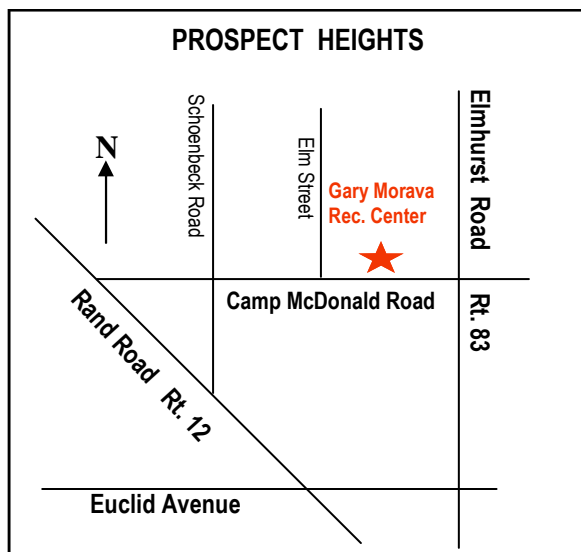
If you receive this newsletter you live in the Midwest Region and Fox Valley Division of the National Model Railroad Association or NMRA. The Fox Valley Division (FVD) includes all of McHenry and parts of Cook, Kane, and Lake Counties in northeast Illinois. About 220 members of varied ages and modeling 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 normally sponsors and runs a large train show called "High Wheeler" in early March each year at Harper College in Palatine, Illinois. (Note: the 2017 High Wheeler is suspended due to a major renovation of the Harper gymnasium used for the show.)

We encourage you to take advantage of all the FVD has to offer. We are here to answer your questions 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.

Questions? Contact FVD Superintendent, Mike Hirvela, or any FVD Board member listed below. We're 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.
- 2016 – 2017 meeting dates, contest and clinic info are on page 6 of this newsletter.

FVD web site: www.foxvalleydivision.org

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VACANT