



The Rock River Valley Division, RRVD, is a local division of the Midwest Region of the National Model Railroad Association, NMRA. The RRVD serves the NMRA members in areas of Green and Rock Counties of Wisconsin and Boone, Jo Davies, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside, and Winnebago counties in Illinois. The RRVD holds monthly meets typically the first Sunday afternoon of each month, September through May, in Rockford at the Midwest Museum Center. The RRVD also hosts an annual Model Train Show & Sale usually the last weekend in March.

Visit our website at: [rrvd-nmra.com](http://rrvd-nmra.com)

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## From the Superintendent

### Jay Kabitzke

The September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting will be our “kickoff” for the NMRA division meetings. Our usual fare will be from members who will share with us some of the projects or trips they took to gather some prototype data. The board of directors is working on the following projects:

1. The March Show and Sale planned date is March 26 and 27 but subject to change.
2. Milwaukee Trainfest Bus Trip Nov 14, we would like to fill the bus.
3. Regional Convention for 2017. We need layouts to operate and show.
4. Poplar Grove Air Rail and Auto show. Rockford Route will be displayed.
5. November Model Railroad Month Displays for our public libraries.

We are looking to involve more of our membership for these activities and we’d like to get more exposure to our youth. I wrote the paper on how Model Railroading is the World’s Greatest Hobby and will send it to the school districts in the region pending BOD approval. It is in this copy of the *Flimzie* also.

Since there is an opening for contest chairman, I’ve set the contests for this season, but would like someone to run the contests at the meetings count the ballots and do the awards.

Listed below are the contests for each month. Also, note that the April contest is a new one. I added “making a silk purse from a sow’s ear.” It involves taking a cheap Atlas, Plasticville, Walthers Trainman, Life Like kit, and dressing it up to look realistic. Detailing can make some of these models look great. Structures, freight or passenger cars, and locomotives will be eligible.

**September:** Photo contest, Model and Prototype.

**October:** Freight Cars, Tank, Box and Covered Hopper, **NO OPEN LOADS.**

**November:** Displays should have a structure, rolling stock or engine and scenery. The idea is to create something that can be shown to the public no larger than 2 ft. by 4 ft. (Coffee Table size.) I will work to have these shown during the month of November (National Model Railroad Month) at various places. I’d like to have a Blue, Red and White ribbon

attached with the display like they do at the fairs.

**December:** Annual Garage sale no contest except for those who want to sell the most items and make the most money will be the winners.

**January:** Engine contest (push pull or drag it in.)

**February:** On line structure. Industrial to team track

**March:** Off line structure. House, gas station, stores, slums.

**April:** Silk Purse from a sow's ear

**May:** No local contest. We will be meeting with the Madison group in Wisconsin.

Prizes are Ten Dollar Gift Certificates to a regional hobby shop.

We are looking for volunteers to give clinics, so if you have any methods of doing something better you'd like to share for making scenery kit construction etc., have an operating waybill system or special tricks in wiring layouts and locomotives for DCC, we'd like you to share it with us. If you would like a clinic on something of general interest please contact my good friend Jim McQueeney (815-399-3280) or [jmccqiv@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jmccqiv@sbcglobal.net)

Remember our first meeting is held at Midway Village in Rockford on September the

13<sup>th</sup>. The doors are open at 12:30PM with the meeting starting at 1:00PM. It happens that this date is the same day as the Chicago Bears and the Green Bay Packers start the season by playing each other so make sure you record the game if you are a football fan.

## 2015 Fall Clinic/Presentations

By Jim McQueeney

Again this year I have been asked to plan some clinics and or presentations for our Rock River Valley Division meets at Midway Village and I accepted. Although I do not yet have date commitments for next year, I do for this fall.

Our September meet will have an update on the Zephyr Hills Railroad and a review of the SOO Railroad Annual Convention.

In October, we will have a return of Rich Mahaney bringing a yet to be determined topic as entertaining as those in the past.

In November, Bob Storozuk of the Milwaukee Railroad Historical Association will return with another interesting presentation. Talk to me or our Superintendent about volunteering to be the Clinic Chairman for next season.

## Modeling Tips by Ken Mosny

### Refurbishing Metal Trucks

Modern Delrin trucks roll very well and require little, if any, maintenance. I still have many older metal trucks. Many truck styles on my 1903 era railroad are not available in Delrin, so I rely on some metal trucks that are now 50 years old. Most old metal trucks can be made to roll better with some work. Just a small drop of Neolube in each journal can often restore much performance. Neolube seems to work its best miracles with polished metal axles and die cast trucks. If I don't do a full refurbishment, I at least use the Neolube.

To remove the springs, pick the point of a hobby knife under the end of the spring. As you pry the spring out, slip the tip of the blade into the center of the spring and put your finger over the spring to keep it from flying away.



Examine the springs to make sure they are all the same. They should all be the same length, wire size, diameter and not bent. Hobby shops usually don't stock these springs anymore, so have some on hand.



Some me trucks are held together with rivets or staked prongs. I drill these out and replace them with a screw.



Chuck the stem of a Q-tip into a Dremel tool chuck and carve the end to a cone shape with your hobby knife.



This is the white polishing compound I use. It is a very fine liquid polishing compound for plastic or paint. You can find this or its equivalent in the auto care department of stores



Put a dab of the polishing compound in each truck journal.



Using a low speed setting of the Dremel tool to keep the compound from flying around, polish each journal to remove the black coating, corrosion or other gunk. Make the inside of the journal shine.



Check the wheel gauge. If the wheel set is a type that the out of gauge can't be corrected, replace it. Make sure the length is the same because they can vary.



Clean the wheels as required. Solvent may be needed for caked on gunk. Light polishing can be done with a jeweler's fiberglass scratch brush.



Wash everything with a toothbrush, detergent and water to remove the polishing compound. Dry all the pieces.



Examine the ends of the axles for burrs. Feel the end of the axle with your fingernail to see if it is bent. If filing a burr off the end blunts the tip of the axle a little, that is OK.



Force the square end of a Q-tip into the end of the axle. Load the hole in the Q-tip with compound and polish the axle end.



This is the Neolube I use to lubricate the trucks. It is a colloidal suspension in alcohol of extremely fine graphite particles.



Put a small drop of Neolube in each journal.



Dip the end of each axle in the wet Neolube in the journal to coat it, too. Allow the alcohol to dry.



Reassemble the truck. Make sure the insulated wheels are on the same side, that all the wheels touch a flat surface and the

side frames pivot freely.



The following photo shows how much a refurbished truck gains over a non-refurbished truck after rolling down a 1.7% grade about 2.5 feet. The trucks were selected for matched rolling speed before one was refurbished.



Sources:

1. Neolube: PBL <http://www.p-b-l.com>,  
Micro-Mark  
<http://www.micromark.com>
2. Truck springs: Kadee

<http://www.kadee.com> , Precision Scale

<http://www.precisionscaleco.com>

3. Special wheel sets: Precision Scale  
<http://www.precisionscaleco.com>,  
Northwest Short Line

<http://www.nwsl.com>

4. Axles: Northwest Short Line  
<http://www.nwsl.com>

5. Fiberglass scratch brush: Badger Airbrush

<http://www.badgerairbrush.com>

“spot touch up prep pen”, eBay or amazon search “fiberglass scratch brush”, buy a box of tip refills, too

## AROUND THE ROUNDHOUSE CORNER

By Ken Reinert

I am back in my car again traveling the Division to interview another member of the Division and view their railroad. This time I am stopping in the Wisconsin city of Beloit and visiting the Token Creek Railroad and its president Rich Woock. Many of you may know him since he was the Division Paymaster for seven years and checked us in at the table as you entered the meetings.

Unlike many of us, Rich did not start his model railroad career by receiving a Lionel or American Flyer train for Christmas. He was born on a dairy farm in Beaver Dam Wisconsin and his early interest was in modeling and collecting models of early farm machinery. He still has many farm machinery models in a display case along with numerous farm related models on his HO railroad. He actually got involved railroading when he bought a cheap Tyco train set for his son one Christmas and they started to build a railroad together on some plywood sheets. He learned early on that cheap equipment did not hold up, since their first locomotive the Belle of the Eighties stopped running by New Years. He bought better models after that. Needless his son gradually lost interest in model railroading but Rich continued on.

Rich built a portable layout which he took around and exhibited in shopping centers at various meets around southern Wisconsin. He mentioned that it was a bear to get up the basement stairs since it was eight feet long and 2 ft. wide. It did fold in half lengthwise creating a long box. Rich told me his current layout is his second large layout having built one in his former house before moving to the present house.

His layout is mostly complete. Rich showed me the NMRA Golden Spike certificate on the

train room wall he received for his effort. He also credits John Swanson, Charlie Wickhorst and Tom Maladecki for helping him.

The layout is as mentioned previously HO and is DC powered with block control and plug in walk around DC throttles. It has a single track mainline which runs through a scenic background. Rich likes building models and just like to run trains so he has no formal operating system.

Upon viewing the layout one immediately notices two things. First there are many farm machines and vehicles populating the railroad and second there are numerous Fairbanks Morris diesel locomotives on the railroad. The farm equipment was explained earlier but the Fairbanks Morris units reflect the fact the Rich worked for Fairbanks Morris in engine development and testing before retiring.

His layout's sub-base and scenery uses insulating foam sheet. Rich showed me his best tool for shaping the foam when he opened a bag and pulled out a dry corncob. He stated that it works great to create the form needed and leaves a nice texture. He also made many of his trees using ground foam and natural branch armatures. He has given clinics in the past on both techniques.

Let's begin a picture tour of his railroad.



Pictured is a pipe manufacturing facility viewed as you enter the layout room for which he won an award at a regional convention.



A logging operation has a truck with a claw loading logs. It appears that the crew needed a little more help and they brought in an elephant to help as he is seen walking up the hill. Rumor has it that the elephant escaped from Tom Maladecki's layout.



Rich has an International Harvester dealer named for John Swanson. Again this shows his early interest in farm equipment.



The dairy barn with full interior which can be seen when lifting off the upper portion of the barn.



Rich's farm house as seen in the above photo. His bedroom was the one on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor left corner. Nice model.



This is an aerial photo taken of the farm on which Rich grew up at Beaver Dam Wisconsin. Shown next are models he made reflecting his boyhood home.



Barn interior showing the dairy cattle. Rich never did say whether he or his brother or three sisters did the milking. Maybe it is Rich on the tractor.



A Caterpillar earth mover on a trailer that Rich scratch built. Hope he has a wide load permit from the proper authorities.



Panoramic view of the layout with his farm's silo in the foreground.



A view of grain silos loading covered hopper cars.

I would like to thank Rich for letting me tour his railroad.

I will be travelling the Division and who knows it may be your railroad I will be visiting next.

**As Jay stated in his "superintendent report" at the beginning we have his draft of the ideas on a handout letter he wants to send to schools throughout the area. Jay would appreciate your comments**



Heavy duty crane scratch built lifting large loads from trucks to railroad cars or vice versa.



Here is the president of the railroad standing amid his railroad empire.

## WORLD'S GREATEST HOBBY

Jay Kabitzke

As we begin our fall/spring activities, I look forward to creating more interest in our hobby. I'd like to start a reach out to schools and expose the youth in our community to how challenging our hobby can be. When I think of the possibilities this hobby offers, it's a shame more people don't become involved. This hobby allows you to display your creative

ability in three dimensions like no other hobby.

Looking at what hobbies there are such as flying models, you're limited to when you can fly which is in spring through fall, RC, gas engine, electric, and you're limited to just building an airplane and the maintenance and repair of it. When you think about it, there are only so many ways to create a flying wing and geographic areas to fly.

RC cars offer a chance to control a vehicle remotely while driving it over the terrain you can find available. There is a lot of mechanics involved but once winter comes and it's cold outside, you're done till the following year when spring comes.

What got me started in model railroading was an American Flyer train set. After getting bored with going in circles, I started to look into scenery and buildings. I then added streets and soon realized there was a limit to American Flyer. Had I known that you could buy parts to build your own boxcars, I might have stayed with S scale, but I discovered HO scale through a friend, whose dad had a trolley layout in their basement. I liked the city he created to run his trolley, and what he was able to do in the same space I had. So I went to a hobby shop and began to build a

HO layout with track I bought. I started with an oval, and added turnouts as I was able to afford them. I bought a Mantua Shifter and put together Athearn freight cars and I've been modeling HO since.

But getting back to what makes model railroading the "World's Greatest Hobby" is your imagination to create with your own artistic skills, like an artist or sculptor, your favorite scene, something you like to look at. To make a display with an engine you like and the rolling stock to go with it takes a variety of skills.

There is carpentry, you need to know how to build a foundation for your masterpiece. Then there is a bit of civil engineering to lay your track through the scene you want to create. You have to plan it, if you want to have mountains, rivers, and different kinds of buildings to set "the stage." I've heard many a modeler refer to having their trains run through scenes on their layout like actors on a stage.

There are many skill sets to learn in doing scenery, and you are never done learning how to do things in different ways. There must be hundreds of ways to make trees, just how realistic do you want to make them, and at what cost. Now there is a new skill I just added to what a modeler needs to know, budgeting.

How much do you want to spend for track, buildings, power control? Is it cheaper to buy a kit, or design your own structure, and make the parts yourself to lower the cost of buildings, or is there something about a building that you want to replicate for your own world. Again, there is that use of our brains that no other hobby offers.

Speaking of power control, here is another area that no other hobby has to offer, working with physics and ohm's law. The electrical side to model railroading can be as simple as two wires to a track, or as complicated as using computer interfacing. I've worked with people who go into signaling and should be electrical engineers instead of salesmen. I can go back to mechanics that can rebuild an engine, but love making an engine creep a 1/64 of inch per second, then hit the max speed of 80 scale mph without using a decoder.(DCC, Digital Command Control)

Here's a new area in the hobby that offers training related to today's technology, Digital Command Control. Programming a decoder is about the same as programming programmable logic controllers. You set in what you want your engine to do, and what functions you want to work as you operate your locomotive or layout devices.

And then there is the career opportunity to work in the rail industry. If you want to

operate your layout like the real railroads do, you get an understanding of the many jobs a railroad has, brakeman, engine operator, yardmaster, trainmaster, dispatcher, section foreman, operations superintendent, maintenance workers, even railroad detectives.

So why wouldn't a person who desires to be creative, expand their knowledge beyond the limits of their daily job look into this hobby? I knew a dentist in Memphis who used his spare time to build steam engines in HO. He could do an engine a month as he was skillful to make his own lost wax castings. One month he didn't have an engine done to show us, but the following month he brought in a huge NP Class Z, 4-6-6-4. Being a dentist, what did he not know about metal fabrication or mechanical aptitude to build a functioning mechanism? This hobby is challenging, to what level would you like to go to? How about a Z scale house with furniture? How about an O or G scale Pullman with working lights?

There are no limits to this hobby. What is really great is there is a group of modelers who have mastered many of these skills, and the NMRA recognizes them as Master Modelers.

I'd like to see more of our members "make the grade" and become Master Modelers.

You may know that our youth in today's world face hard choices in life. Kids without direction can pick up bad habits, drugs. I never had that problem since I was into model railroading. While in the Navy I had to attend a drug counseling course and we had to understand why people get into drugs. When I had to present my plan as to why I wasn't into drugs and substance abuse, I realized all my spare change was going into model trains golf, and bowling. I didn't spend hours at a bar because I had other things to do. I was too broke to buy drugs and if you're going to try and bowl a 300 game or golf like pro, you just don't blow your mind smoking, snorting, or getting high, to me it was a waste of time. My high would be winning a trophy or making par.

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THIS GREAT BARGIN AND  
FUN TIME.**

# ALL ABOARD FOR TRAINFEST 2015

## BUS TRIP SPONSORED BY THE ROCK RIVER VALLEY DIVISION - NMRA

On Saturday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, RRVD is again chartering a bus to Trainfest in Milwaukee. Trainfest is the biggest model train show in the Midwest, if not the country. If you have never been to Trainfest and are interested in model trains, you need to go. If you went to Trainfest years ago but haven't gone in the last few years, you need to go again. Come join us on the RRVD bus. There will be fun, the trivia test, and friendship. Join us for a fascinating day of model railroading. Even though costs have gone up RRVD is holding prices at last year's rates. The bus ride and Trainfest admission is \$30 for non-NMRA members, \$25 for NMRA members and \$15 for those under 15 years of age. Our bus will depart Rockford from the Clock Tower east parking lot (off Lyford Road) promptly at 7:30 AM. Plan to be at the bus at 7:15 AM for boarding. For the early risers who want to gather for breakfast beforehand, you may join us at 6:00 AM at Denny's Restaurant on East State Street. We will be done in time to meet the bus at 7:15. For our more northerly riders we will make a pick-up stop in Beloit at 7:45 AM at the Menards south parking lot along Milwaukee Road. We should arrive at Trainfest about 9:00 AM, just as Trainfest opens. You won't have to wait in line either. You will exit the bus and walk right in through the exhibitor entrance. Look and shop until 3:00 PM when we will depart for home. Of course, en route to Milwaukee you will have to endure the now infamous Trainfest Trivia Test but the rest of the trip will be enjoyable. With the price of gas, parking fee and admission, time waiting in line and the drudgery of driving you can't beat this deal. Only 56 seats are available so fill out the attached registration form and mail it in soon.

If you have any question about the trip, call Ray Dyreson at 815-494-0205 or RayDyr@aol.com

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### RRVD TRAINFEST 2015 BUS TRIP REGISTRATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Check here  for Beloit Depart/Return

No. of non-NMRA member seats \_\_\_\_\_ X \$30.00 ea. = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

No. of NMRA member seats \_\_\_\_\_ X \$25.00 ea. = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ NMRA # \_\_\_\_\_

No. of youth tickets (14 & under) \_\_\_\_\_ X \$15.00 ea. = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to RRVD

Mail this form with payment to Ray Dyreson PO Box 307 Winnebago IL 61088

