

FLIMZIE

*The Newsletter of the Rock River Valley Division
Midwest Region, National Model Railroad Association*



November 2023 Volume 57, Number 3

The Rock River Valley Division, RRVD, is a local division of the Midwest Region of the National Model Railroad Association, NMRA. The RRVD serves NMRA members in areas of Green and Rock Counties of Wisconsin, and Boone, Jo Davies, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside, Carol, DeKalb and Winnebago counties in Illinois. The RRVD holds monthly meetings typically the first Sunday afternoon of each month, September through May. Starting in September, we will be meeting at the **Paulson's Agriculture Museum, 6950 Belvidere Rd, Caledonia, IL 61011**. The meetings consist of various clinics on model railroading, model contests, and drawings for door prizes for NMRA members. All are welcome. The meeting starts at 1:00 PM, and the doors open at 12:30 PM.

2023 BoD & Chairman Directory

Please use the following address to contact the RRVD organization or any of the following officers:

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Office Vacancies

Division Publicity Chairman. This person would be responsible for contacting organizations (newspapers, local ad flyers, TV stations public announcements, magazines, etc.) that would publicize our meets, train shows, and other activities. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, contact Marty Hendrickx, 815-978-7326, superintendent@rrvd-nmar.org.

Flimzie Deadlines

The Flimzie is published once per month on the first of the month. It will be placed on the RRVD website for anyone that wants to read it.

The content for the Flimzie comes from you, our readers. Please submit your articles, pictures and editorial comments to the Editor, Ken Peterson, poplarken53@gmail.com, no later than 10 days before the 1st of the month, i.e., Jan 21, 2022, for a Feb 1st 2023 publication.

From the Superintendent **By Marty Hendrickx**

As I write this report it is snowing and it is Halloween, so I only expect the really hearty Trick or Treaters to be out tonight. So, this is the sign we all need to retreat to our train rooms and/or workbench to work on are models or operate our trains, but there is still plenty to do elsewhere. RRVD will be having our monthly meets at Paulson's Museum in Argyle, IL the first of Sunday of each month so be sure to mark your calendar for Nov 5th, Dec 3rd and Jan 7th at 1:00 PM. There is also a Train Show at the Bureau County Fairgrounds in Princeton on Saturday, November 18th and Capron Lions Club on December 9th.

We will also have our annual Holiday Diner at Lino's after our January meet instead of a layout tour. All RRVD members are invited to attend with the division picking up the meal. You are welcome to bring a guest and the fare for the guest is still only \$30. There will be a cash bar for those wanting adult beverages.

I recently picked up a copy of the *Cowcatcher* magazine which is a nice publication. It is complimentary at a number of hobby stores with the Midwest Rail Junction being one of them. If you would like to have a subscription, 12 issues are only \$33.95 as the complimentary copies tend to go fast. There are lots of good articles and advertisements about what is going on in the hobby.

In the most recent Nov/Dec issue there is a regular column called *Community Dispatch* which is written by Michelle Kempema who is the Executive Director of the Colorado Model Railroad Museum. Michelle goes into a great bit of detail about a recent traumatic event; she was diagnosed with breast cancer back in June. She tells how the doctors originally wanted to do her surgery in August, but she told them that was not good as she planned to go to the National Convention in Texas in August so could they do the surgery sooner! They of course were able to accommodate her, and she was able to make the convention. She of course was still recovering from this major surgery and needed a lot of assistance to attend. She needed a wheelchair for the flight and getting around; she needed help with her luggage and getting to and from the airport. She also needed to have a roommate with her at the hotel, so Cinthia Priest volunteered to be that person. (You may have heard of Cinthia, she is the editor of the NMRA Magazine and wife of Stephen Priest, owner of Class One Model Works.) The bottom line is Michelle had a great experience at the convention and on the way learned a lot. She came away knowing that everyone needs help sometimes and everyone was very supportive of her struggle.

You may be wondering why I am talking about Michelle besides it being a moving story. Well one of my roles as superintendent is to try and build a model railroad community here in the Rock River Valley. We have a lot of model railroaders here. We have a number NMRA members who rarely if ever attend meets, we have a number of lone wolves who model all by themselves and we have a number of model railroaders who are very active but only in their circle of friends. I would like our monthly meets to be the place where we all can come together to share our love of the hobby with one another. Would I like it if more model railroaders joined the NMRA, sure! But I think it is more important that we come together to support each other and to share our joy of the hobby.

From the Editor **By Ken Peterson**

Friends of the Flimzie, I need to point out that this publication is for you and by you. All the articles that appear here are written by members of the RRVD. If you don't submit articles for publishing, there is no content. When I took over as the editor, I wanted to change the Flimzie from a quarterly publication to a monthly one. Without articles from you, I may have to switch the Flimzie back to quarterly, or even occasionally, based on when I get content. This will be completely up to you.

Years that have the same calendar as 2024 **by Tom Maladecki**

It's that time of year again, time to get those railroad calendars for the year 2024. So that makes it time for my periodic article on recycling old calendars, using vintage railroad calendars for the coming year, visit great old photos and save \$12.99 to \$24.95 per calendar.

The year 2024 is a leap year. Leap years are years where an extra day is added to the end of February, the shortest month, to fix a calendar error of about 6 hours per year, giving Earth the additional time, it needs to complete a full circle around the Sun. The following leap years had the same calendar as 2024: 1940, 1968 and 1996.

This week I got a 1996 **New York New Haven and Hartford Railroad** calendar for 99 cents. It has excellent vintage New Haven photos of diesel locomotives, steam and electrics, stuff that was new over 25 years ago.

Save those 2024, 1996 and 1968 calendars for upcoming recurrence in 2052, then every 28 years after that.

What Are Friends For? Chapter 23

Gary D. Loiselle

I ended Chapter 22 with a look at a couple of signs on industries on my layout that are made from menu board letters. (Example, **Photo 1**). As usual, one-thing-leads-to-another. I'll come back to signs and other structure detail stuff another time. I knew somewhere in my collection of slides and photos that I also have a couple more uses for my Match Box cement truck collection. Option 1: Open load of complete trucks shipped on a flat car. (**Photo 2**, Galesburg). Option 2: Take the truck and frame apart and use them for scenery at your repair facility or maybe at a junk yard. (**Photo 3**, photo taken along Ill. 251. Business no longer there). Option 3: My favorite, incorporate the mixing tub and frame as part of some type of Agri-industry that needs product stirred up. (**Photo 4**, location unknown). During my search for material for this chapter, I found a photo of a load of dump trucks. (**Photo 5**). I can't say if these trucks were inbound or outbound. I can tell you that this photo was taken in Janesville, WI. at the WSOR, formerly Milwaukee Road facility. (I included this just as a small bonus).

Photo 4 was one of those things that when you see it, you just have to stop and get a picture. The water tank in **Photo 6** is another example. Again, I cannot tell you where I snapped this picture, but it is an interesting detail you don't see that often, especially in this configuration. It really gets you thinking about water towers. Right?

To me, the water tower has somewhat gone the way of the steam locomotive. There are still buildings with water towers (or tanks) on the roof. It's probably cheaper to leave it than to tear it down (**Photo 7a**). There also may possibly be some historical significance. (**Photo 7b**). The water tank pictured is right behind Nelson Knitting Co on South Main St. If you recall, Nelson Knitting's claim to fame is the Sock Monkey. If there is a safety issue or maybe too much deterioration, the tank may be gone, but the stand may still be there. (**Photo 8**). Going back to roof top signs, here's a thought, and prototype example, why not just have the sign frame? (**Photo 9**, photo taken in Chippewa Falls, WI) **WAFF**, Gary



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 5

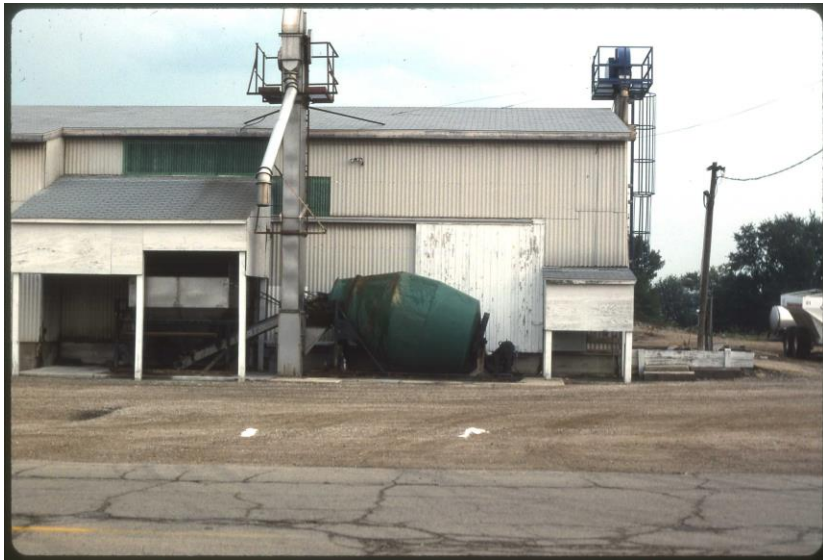


Photo 4



Photo 6



Photo 7a



Photo 8



Photo 7b



Photo 9

Resurrection

Part Two: Making a Driver Center

By Ken Mosny

The most obvious fix my newly acquired Lake Shore and Michigan Southern 4-6-0 needed was a new driver center. To refresh memories, see **photo 1**. I removed the axle and pulled the other driver off the axle so I could more easily measure it for a solid model of the center. In the process, the other center broke. Yep, it looks like the centers have a case of diecast rot usually caused by poor quality zinc used in the manufacture. This is not uncommon with old diecast models. I carefully inspected the other centers. The third one had a cracked hub with some spoke distortion so I will have to make at least three centers. The center axle main drivers, which have different patterns having larger counterweights, are OK. They probably were manufactured with a different zinc lot.

A 3d model of the new center was constructed in Fusion 360. **Photo 2** shows an overview of the modeling. First a disc was extruded. Second, a spoke was cut, and the hub raised. Third, the spoke cut edges were rounded and then copied around. Fourth, the crankpin was extruded. Finally, the counterweight was extruded. The outer diameter was made oversized and extra material was added to the back face. The model was printed and evaluated. Some changes were made in the size of the counterweight and spoke thickness. No matter how careful the measurements are, tweaking models is common to get them to “look right”. I often print models three or four times before I am satisfied. Modeling detail parts can be an art as much as engineering.

The printed centers need to be machined to true the diameters and faces. First the center is drilled about 0.05mm smaller than the 3mm axle using a wheel chuck with notched jaws I made, **photo 3**. Then the driver is mounted on a mandrel to machine the outside diameter to size, **photo 4**. I carefully machine the outside diameter to slip into the tire. I have found that printed centers are too fragile to press in with an interference fit and instead I glue them in place with water thin CA wicked around the tire joint after the tire is mounted. The last step is to machine the back face true and face the rear hub. This driver is large and has thin spokes. The fragile spokes easily break when machining the driver back face because the lathe bit is constantly hitting the spokes as it cuts. You can actually hear the driver sing as the spokes are shaved by the bit. I ruined the first four or five before I learned the right amount of feed and RPM to successfully cut the driver face. You can tell by the sound of the driver when the cut is right, and the bit must be dead sharp, **photo 5**. I ended up resharpening the bit with every driver. Printer resin is quite abrasive on HSS bits.

Next came a challenge totally unanticipated, tapping the crankpin holes. US made crankpin screws are universally 0-80 threads. The screws on this imported driver measured close to 1.5mm in diameter. Being Japanese made, I first assumed the screws were the common metric size of M1.6x0.35. Nope, the diameter was very close, but the pitch was close to 0.4mm. The pitch was difficult to evaluate because the crankpin screws only had about four full threads. Searching yielded no reference to an M1.6x0.4 or M1.5x0.4 as a manufactured thread size, let alone a tap I could buy. Examining the screw under high magnification yielded a clue. The crowns and the roots of the threads were rounded and not sharp vees as on most screws. These rounded roots and thread crowns are a distinct characteristic of Whitworth threads used in the UK. A 1/16-60 British Standard Whitworth thread looked like a likely match, so I ordered a BSW thread pitch gauge from the UK on Amazon (free shipping to boot), and bingo, that was it! Next was the challenge to find a 1/16-60 BSW tap for less than \$40. After another Amazon search, I found a tap and die set from a jeweler’s tool supply in New York City for \$20. After examining two other Japanese imported locomotives I have, I found they all have the same 1/16-BSW crankpin holes, so that may have been a “standard” crankpin thread at least through the 1960’s and 1970’s on Japanese imported brass locomotives. It is a good thing I ordered a tap and die set because I later needed the die to make new crankpin screws (more on that later).

The new driver centers were glued to the tires with water thin CA and pressed onto the axles. A Northwest Short Line quartering jig assured me all the drivers were correctly quartered while pressing them together, **photo 6**. The pressing of plastic driver centers onto the axles is easily done by hand. I have not had a problem with the plastic drivers slipping out of quarter in normal use even though the drivers can be rotated on the axle with a determined twist of my fingers. If twisting out of quarter is a problem, though, a little water thin CA will lock the driver in place on the axle. The center axle set, which I did not disturb, was checked for correct quarter to make sure the quartering of all the axle sets were the same.

I have some reservations that the resin I used is strong enough to not break or warp in the long term for a large diameter driver like this. The other driver centers I printed were for 42-inch drivers. This is a much larger center, and it seems a little fragile and flexible. We shall see. I used a “standard” printer resin which is usually fairly rigid. Time will tell how it holds up. The best solution, in my opinion, would be to print patterns from castable resin and then have investment (lost wax) castings made of them. They are also so called “engineering” resins that might be a better resin choice.



Photo 1



Photo2

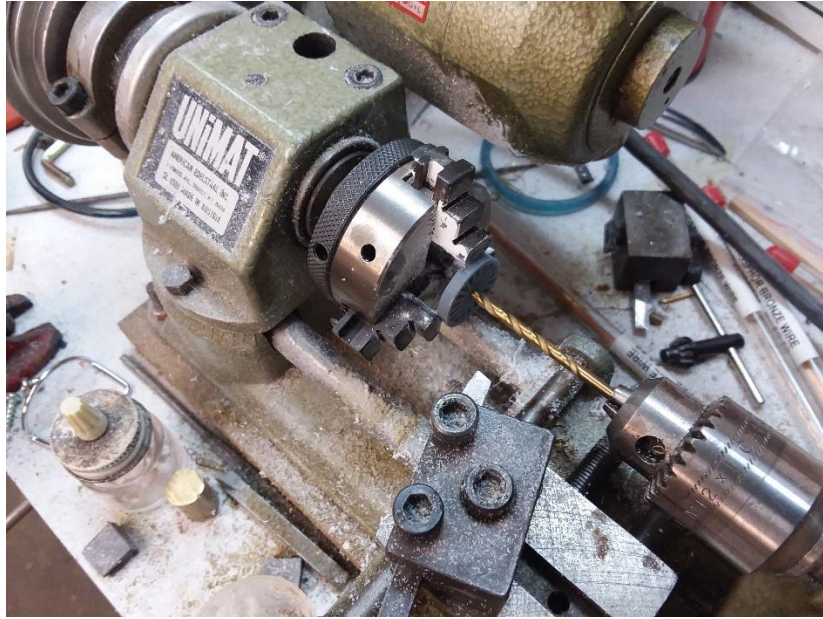


Photo3



Photo 4

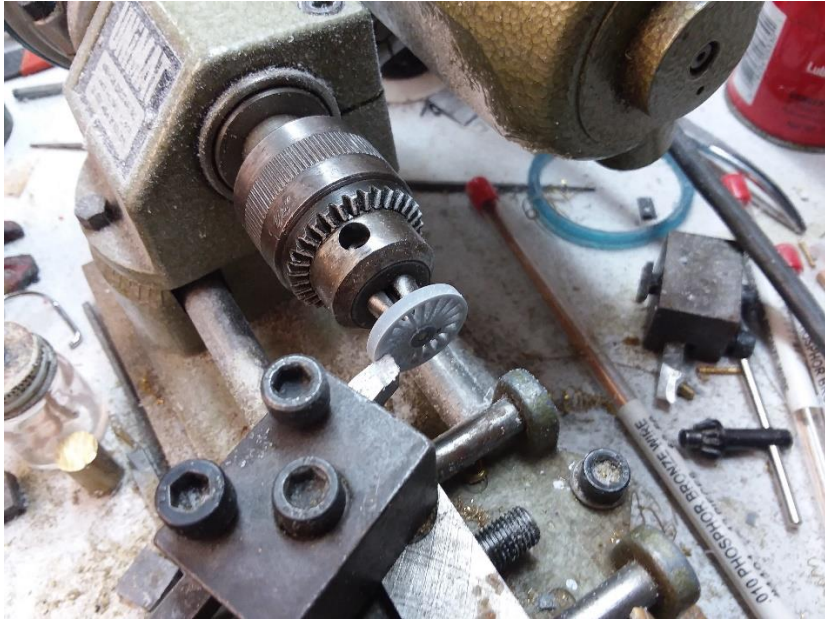


Photo 5



Photo 6
