



The Winnebagoland Whistle

The Official Publication of the Winnebagoland Division
Midwest Region- National Model Railroad association

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SPRING 2026

Photo

*Photo courtesy:
Dennis Eggert*



Dennis Eggert caught WR&N #35 in low angle perfect natural lighting as the sun was setting. Engineer Condon was pulling ahead so the switch could be thrown to allow his engine to back-up and couple onto his train after completing switching at Lake Trudie. Dennis was at the right spot at the right time to capture this rare shot.



Superintendent's Report

Paul (Tree) Hillmer



Last night, the storms with torrential rainfall are keeping me from spring yard work. You know what that means? Model Train time! A dry basement so far, but I know others are not so lucky. April showers may bring May flowers. But April floods mean lots of mosquitos this summer ugh.

The last time my sump pump failed was 2013. It was a mess under the Badger Mid-Western. I cleaned and mopped up and threw out the old carpet I had down there. Afterwards, I copied Randy Williamson's idea and began to lay "8 packs" of rubber foam 2'x2' interlocking exercise room mats instead of carpet and rugs. You can get them at various places online now. And they have worked out great.



If this happens again, I can remove them and wash up and dry and re use. In fact, two summers ago, our washer blew its hose and water poured down thru the floor by my paint shop booth and work bench area. I took them out of that area, dried them off in the sun, and set back down that evening. Plus, it is easier on the feet and keeps the basement warmer.

Since then, I have seen a lot of fellow modelers do this. They even make shop ones with ridges. Also seen some at train shows that displayers or sellers use rather than standing all day directly on cement.

WLD Spring Annual Meet at the Waupaca Depot is on Saturday May 2, 2026.

Mike Kirk reports the depot is ready. They will be serving pulled pork lunch as a fund raiser for the depot. Plus, they will have DVDs of their movie on the amazing back breaking remodeling the depot they did over years for sale. Make sure you bring along some extra cash and help them out. The Waupaca Depot is a gem!

Phil Herman has set up three morning clinics featuring Gerry Ring, Matt Holman, and Greg Condon.

We will have model and photo contest that will be in the basement of the depot.

Roger Hildebrandt and the Waupaca Club have set up 5 home layouts and depot for layout tour in the afternoon. Always a treat! And if you want to come a day earlier, Roger will be hosting an operating session on his awesome huge EH & AC Friday night May 1. Let Roger and or myself know. I will create a Facebook event for that.

Please try to attend and please enter the photo and model contest. We need to keep those judges busy!

As of now WLD FALL MEET will be on Saturday October 10th at St Peters Church in Appleton. And the Paper Valley Model Railroad Club has requested hosting WLD Members an operating session Friday night October 9th. More details to come on this during the summer but mark your calendar.

The last of the season WLD Workshop Wednesday on April 22 via Zoom. What a chatty bunch. Really fun too. We will be off for the summer but will resume this again late summer or early fall.

The Wisconsin Valley Model RR Club in Wausau will host the 30th Annual WLD Operating Day here in Wausau. It will be either Saturday 10/31/26 or Saturday 11/14/26. More on that soon as we pick a date with Tim Peterson and the club members.

And finally, the WLD board is working on a special all day bus trip to the Illinois Railroad Museum mid to late August. This will be a mid-week all access special tour of the grounds. One you will not get if you just go yourself. Paul Mastalir is working on the details and finishing picking the date with IRM. They just opened for the season. We need 40

to attend to break even so please consider this. This will be offered to NMRA Members and family members. Another reason to join NMRA. The plan is we would leave Appleton and make stops in Oshkosh, Fond Du Lac, and possibly Milwaukee. If this goes well, maybe this will be annual to various train places we can visit in the Midwest.

Hope to see you at the Spring Meet May 2!

In This Issue

Gerry Ring, Whistle Editor

This is the first issue of 2026, and we begin by adopting the new NMRA logo and color scheme. Actually, there are four official colors: blue, gold, olive and red. You probably have seen the red logo used on the NMRA web site and by the NMRA Magazine. But since there are four seasons and four quarterly issues of the WLD Whistle, we will use all four throughout the year in the order listed above.

Hope to see you at the Spring Meet May 2!

WLD Presents Richard Hanke with NMRA Master Model Railroader Award

Richard Hanke is presented his NMRA MMR #810 plaque by Paul Hillmer and John Leow at the January 24th WLD BOD meeting. Rich is one of five Master Model Railroaders in the Winnebagoland Division of the NMRA.



Richard Hanke (sitting) is presented his MMR plaque by Paul Hillmer (left) and John Leow (center).

In The Hopper

By Paul Hillmer

In this edition of In the Hopper, we visit one of the coolest prototype club layouts I have ever seen, The Wisconsin Valley Lines in Wausau. The club has built an incredible 3 deck layout of the famous historic Milwaukee Road Wisconsin Valley sub that once ran from New Lisbon WI to the far Northwoods of Vilas County up the valley of the Wisconsin River. The real line is still in operation to Wausau by the CN RR and north of Wausau to Tomahawk on the Foxy RR. North of Tomahawk to Minocqua, it is a great walking trail. I have personally hiked it around Harshaw WI.

The scenery is very realistic and features many scratch-built buildings and depots. And runs and operates as good as it looks. The club does many operating sessions and shares Facebook events on WLD page so attend sometime. They are always looking for operators. And they will be hosting the 30th Annual WLD Operating Day this fall. They are also open to the public on the third Sunday each month 1pm – 3pm. They also meet Thursday nights at 7pm. The club and layout are in the basement of the beautiful victorian Yawkey House Museum in Wausau.



Example of scratch-built buildings and scenery.

The Wisconsin Valley Model Railroad Club

403 McIndoe St Wausau WI

1. Layout name: The Valley Line. HO scale
2. Owner: Wisconsin Valley Model Railroad Club. Club started in 1960.
3. Location: Basement of the Yawkey House owned by Marathon County Historical Society

4: Size: An irregular shaped room approximately 24' X 36' (club also has workshop, meeting room, and staging workshop rooms).



Operators switching at Merrill.

5. Theme: The club operates as an independent subsidiary of the Milwaukee Road circa late 1940s to early 1950s. The layout is modeled after Milwaukee Road Valley Line from Tomah (which was the original junction with the mainline and was later moved to New Lisbon) to Minocqua. The modeled portion is Wausau north to Minocqua. In interest of operations, our mainline continues north of Minocqua to Ashland WI which provides bridge traffic. This adds to time freights to our operations. There are also several fictional branch line jobs that also adds to the operations.



Operations at Tomahawk.

6. Car Forwarding System: The club uses a computer program called STS (Shipper Driven Traffic Simulator) for car forwarding. The program was developed by Tom Edwards who lives in southern Minnesota. Our club tried car cards and waybills on previous layouts with limited interest. Next, we used JRMI for a while until covid hit. We were looking for a system that used switch lists for

the crews. STS allows users to print out waybills if they chose to. They even fit into common size car cards. You can also put the switch lists onto a mobile device or print them out as half sheet (what the club does).

16

WV/DP

Switchlist

Train: 306 Dpt (station/date/time) MINOCQUA
 Engine: 303 Arr (station/date/time) WAUSAU
 Engineer: ROGER H Conductor: PAUL H

Job: 306
 Description: Eastward wayfreight
 Minocqua to Wausau
 AT MI/Minocqua: Set out cars for Goodnow, Lake Tomahawk, Harshaw, Heafford Junction, Tomahawk, Merrill, Wausau
 At HA/Harshaw: Set out cars for Harshaw
 Pick up cars from Harshaw
 At HJ/Heafford Junction: Set out cars for Soo Line interchange, pulp spur; Pick up cars from pulp spur and Soo Line interchange for Tomahawk, Merrill, Brokaw, Wausau, Tomahawk
 At TH/Tomahawk: Set out cars for Tomahawk, MT&W, Goodnow, Lake Tomahawk, Spot cars for Tomahawk
 Tomahawk, Spot cars for Tomahawk except cars for MT&W; Pick up cars for Merrill, Brokaw, Wausau, Tomahawk
 AT ME/Merrill: Set out cars for Merrill M&RL in yard; Pick up cars for Brokaw, Wausau, Tomahawk
 At BR/Brokaw: Set out cars for Wausau
 Papers on track 1; Spot cars for teal track; Pick up cars for Wausau, Tomahawk
 At WA/Wausau: Set out cars in yard up

Car No.	Code	Loc	Contents	From	To	Pickup	Left
64732	SM	L	Submerge	MI-MINOCQUA Yard	MI-Soo Line Track 2		
44073	TA	L	acid	MI-MINOCQUA Yard	MI-MINOCQUA Harrow Coal Shop		
188067	OS	L	Coal	MI-MINOCQUA Yard	MI-Tomahawk Yard		
55943	TH	L	Pulp OS	MI-MINOCQUA Yard	MI-Tomahawk Yard		
34978	TH	L	Gasoline	MI-MINOCQUA Yard	MI-Tomahawk Yard		
77460	TH	L	Pulp OS	MI-MINOCQUA Yard	MI-Tomahawk Yard		
89729	OS	E		MI-MINOCQUA Yard	MI-Pulp Spur		
7189	OS	L	Pulpwood	MI-MINOCQUA Yard	MI-Tomahawk Yard		
87087	OS	L	Pulpwood	MI-MINOCQUA Yard	MI-Tomahawk Yard		
8261	OS	L	Pulpwood	MI-Soo Line Track 1	TH-MT&W Interchange Track 3		
9057	XM	E		MI-Soo Line Track 2	MI-ANSON Pulpwood Door 1		
8798	TH	E		MI-Soo Line Track 2	TH-Tomahawk Yard		
20233	XM	E		TH-Tomahawk Yard	TH-Tomahawk Yard		
5885	XM	E		ME-Merrill Yard	ME-Hefford House Door 1		
8791	TH	E		ME-Merrill Yard	TH-Tomahawk Yard		
473	XM	L	Windows	ME-Merrill Yard	TH-Tomahawk Yard		
5506	XM	L	Corn	ME-Merrill Yard	TH-Tomahawk Yard		
7736	XM	L	Windows	ME-Merrill Yard	TH-Tomahawk Yard		

Loads: 11
 Empties: 7
 Total cars: 18

Train 206
 Engineer Roger
 Conductor Paul H

Return to Display Switchlist page

STS generated switch list.

7. How long been doing operating sessions: As of April 10th (I was there) the club has hosted 66 operating sessions.

8. Thoughts on operating? Member Tim Peterson said that the club had to tear down the previous layout in 2006 because extensive renovations being done to the Yawkey House. We then decided the new layout would be operations oriented. We felt that the railroad would be more believable if it was stuck in a certain time. The late 40s early 50s was chosen because it was the steam to diesel transition era and we enjoy running both. However, members can bring own equipment down to the club and run it.

Tim and the gang have accomplished that and then some. It is awesome.

Please check out John Kreuger's track plans for the club's layout included with this issue of The WLD Whistle.

An Interview with Tim Peterson

By Gerry Ring

I interviewed Tim Peterson during my visit to the Wisconsin Valley Model Railroad Club on July 29, 2023.



Tim Peterson at his desk.

Tell me about The Wisconsin Valley Model Railroad Club, its history and any relevant information.

Our club was formed in 1960. Ralph Wehlitz (MMR #191), one of our charter members, is over 100 years old and lives in Merrill. We currently have between 15 and 20 members and we meet every Thursday. Our club is in the basement of the Yawkey House Museum in Wausau. We have a great arrangement with the Museum and offer tours of the layout to high school groups who visit the museum in the spring. We tie our tour to the history of railroading in the area. These tours are in exchange for our rent and utilities, but we do make a considerable cash donation to the Museum every year.

Please describe some of the details of the construction of your layout.

We have everything. The mainline is code 70, the sidings are code 55. There is a combination of various manufacturer's turnouts and built-in-place turnouts. The branch line up to Lake Tomahawk even has hand-laid code 40 rail. The bench work is all 1"x4" framework with 3/4" underlayment plywood and 1/2" Homasote or a pre-shaped product called Homabed.

When did you adopt DCC?

Our old layout, which had a DC block system, was retrofitted to convert to DCC, but the retrofit was of limited success because of the confusing myriads of wires. When we built our present layout, it was designed for operating from the start. One of our members who was a retired electrical engineer evaluated the available DCC products and recommended NCE as the easiest one to use, and it is the one we have been using.

Describe your car forwarding program.

We use STS which stands for Shipper-driven Traffic Simulator developed by Tom Edwards. Previously we had considered several other pieces of software before we found STS on the internet. STS uses a computer to randomly determine when a shipment is to be made and how many carloads are required to transport that shipment. STS produces realistic scenarios that determine where carloads are to go but requires that train operators decided how they get there.

Officers and Volunteers

<http://www.wld-nmra.com/?action=personnel>

Division Officers

Paul Hillmer Superintendent
Phil Herman Asst. Superintendent
Paul Mastalir Paymaster
Vern Ehlke Chief Clerk
Paul Hillmer Division Director

Board of Directors

(terms thru 06/2026)

Division Officers (above)

Plus:

Al Archer Fred Firkus
Dave Nitsch Mike Eiden
Gerry Ring Joe Lallensack
John Leow Mary Eiden

Committee Chairs

Gerry Ring Whistle Editor
Gerry Ring Membership Chair
John Leow AP Chair
Phil Herman Clinic Chair
Paul Hillmer Operating Session Chair
Paul Mastalir Company Store Chair
Richard Cooke Model Contest Chair
Joe Lallensack Photo Contest Chair
Michael Eiden Webmaster
Paul Mastalir Scout Coordinator
Paul Hillmer Social Media Chair

Event Calendar

<http://www.wld-nmra.com/?action=onTheReadyTrack>

May 2, 2026

WLD Spring Meet - Waupaca, WI.

May 9-10, 2026

Titletown Train Show - KI Convention Center - Green Bay, WI.

June 6, 2026

BOD Meeting at the Soo Line Historical and Technical Society Building, Appleton, WI., and on Zoom at 10:30 AM.

June 20, 2026

Strawberry Fest Model Railroad Show & Swap Meet, Rec Center - Waupaca, WI.

June 27-28, 2026

Trains, Games & Automobiles, Community Rec Center - Marinette, WI.

October 17-18, 2026

Marshfield Train Show, Oak Ave Community Center - Marshfield, WI.

October 31, 2026

WLD 2026 Annual Operating Day - TBD.

Company Store

Make sure to check out the WLD Merch store for WLD boxcars, shirts and caps: http://www.wld-nmra.com/?action=co_store

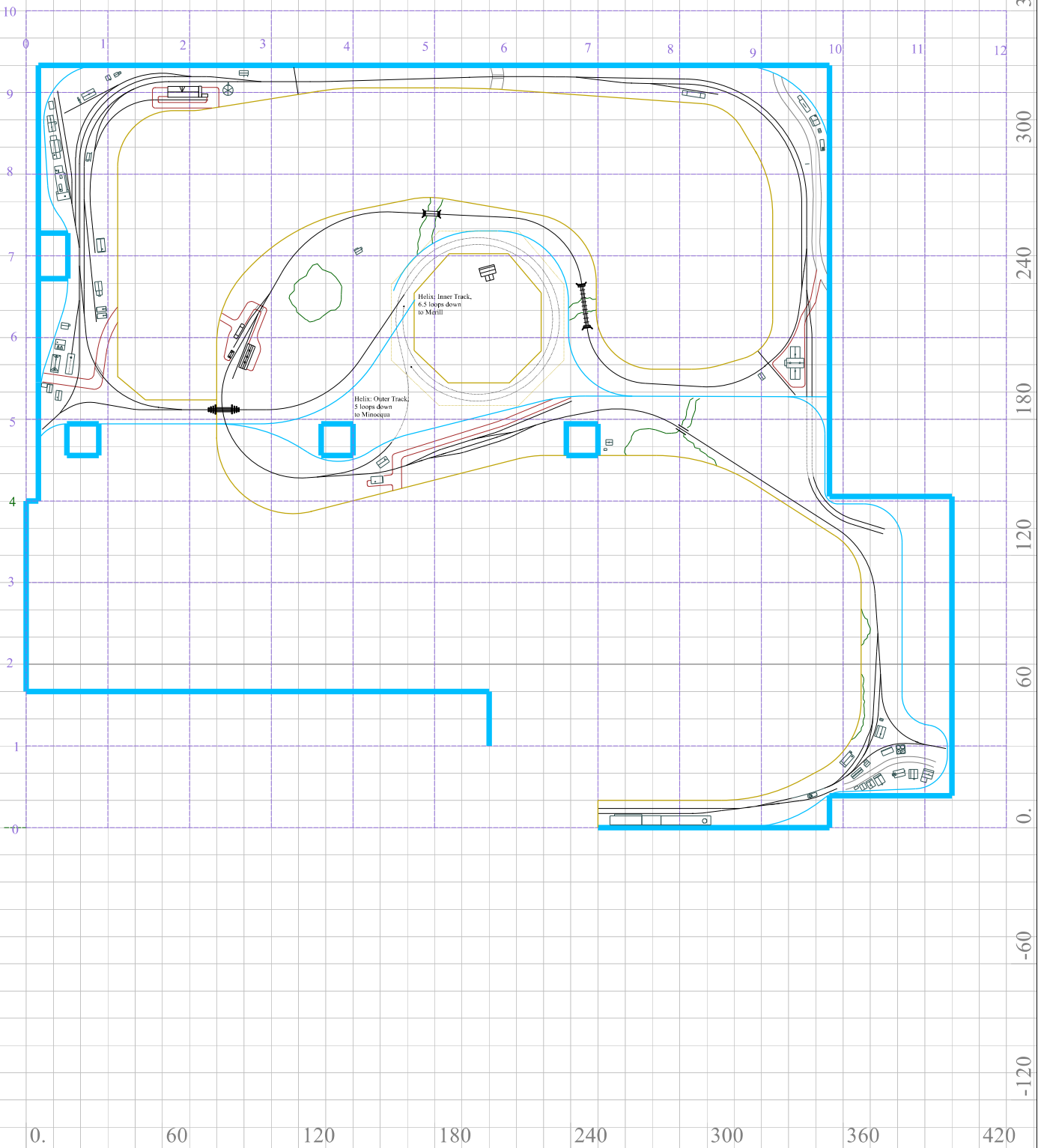


Just a few of the HO-scale WinnebagoLand boxcars are left; let Paul Mastalir know how many and he will work out getting them to you. His phone is (715) 853-7274, or email him at mastalir54166@yahoo.com or wldpaymaster@gmail.com.



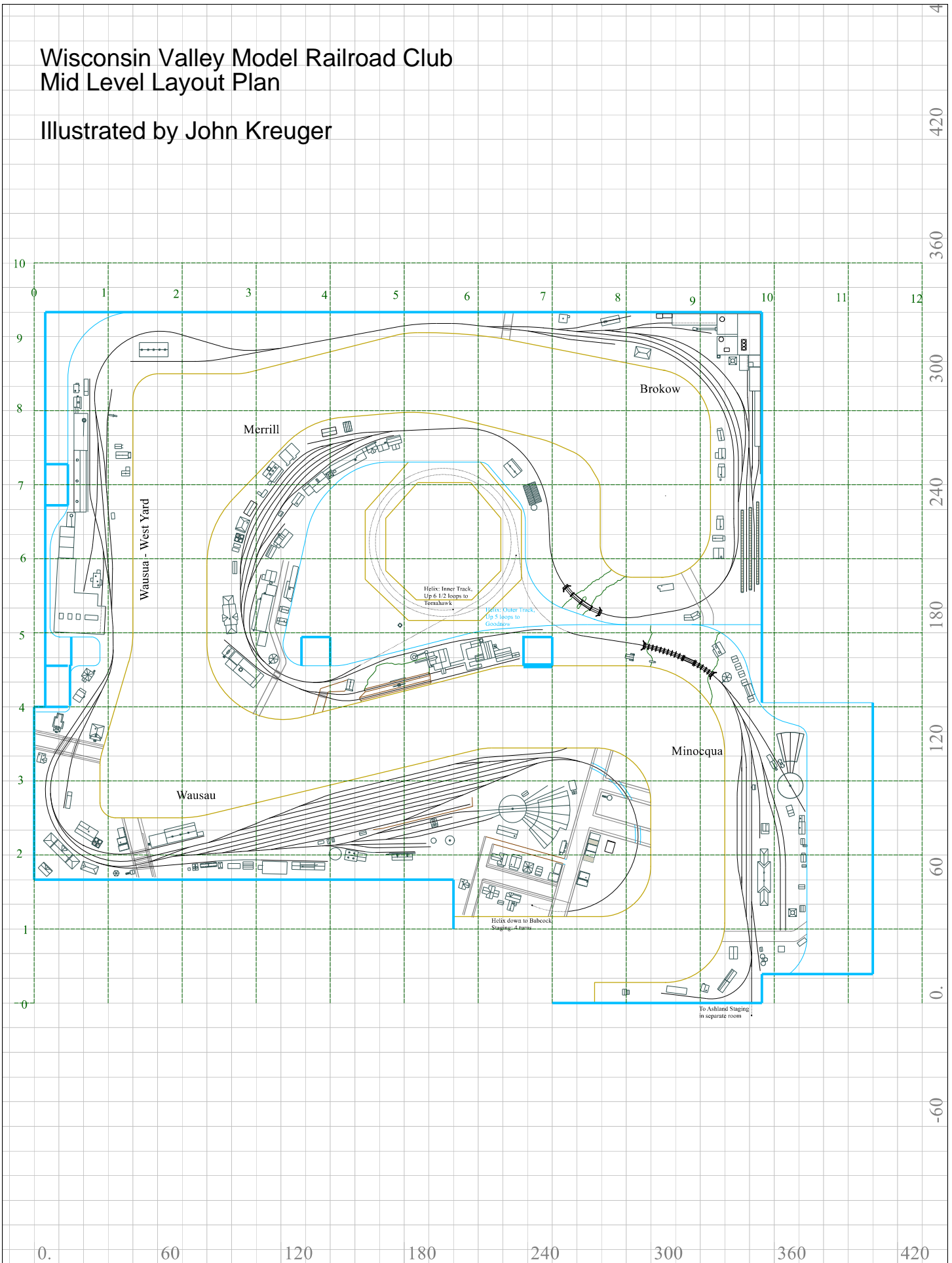
Wisconsin Valley Model Railroad Club Top Level Layout Plan

Illustrated by John Kreuger



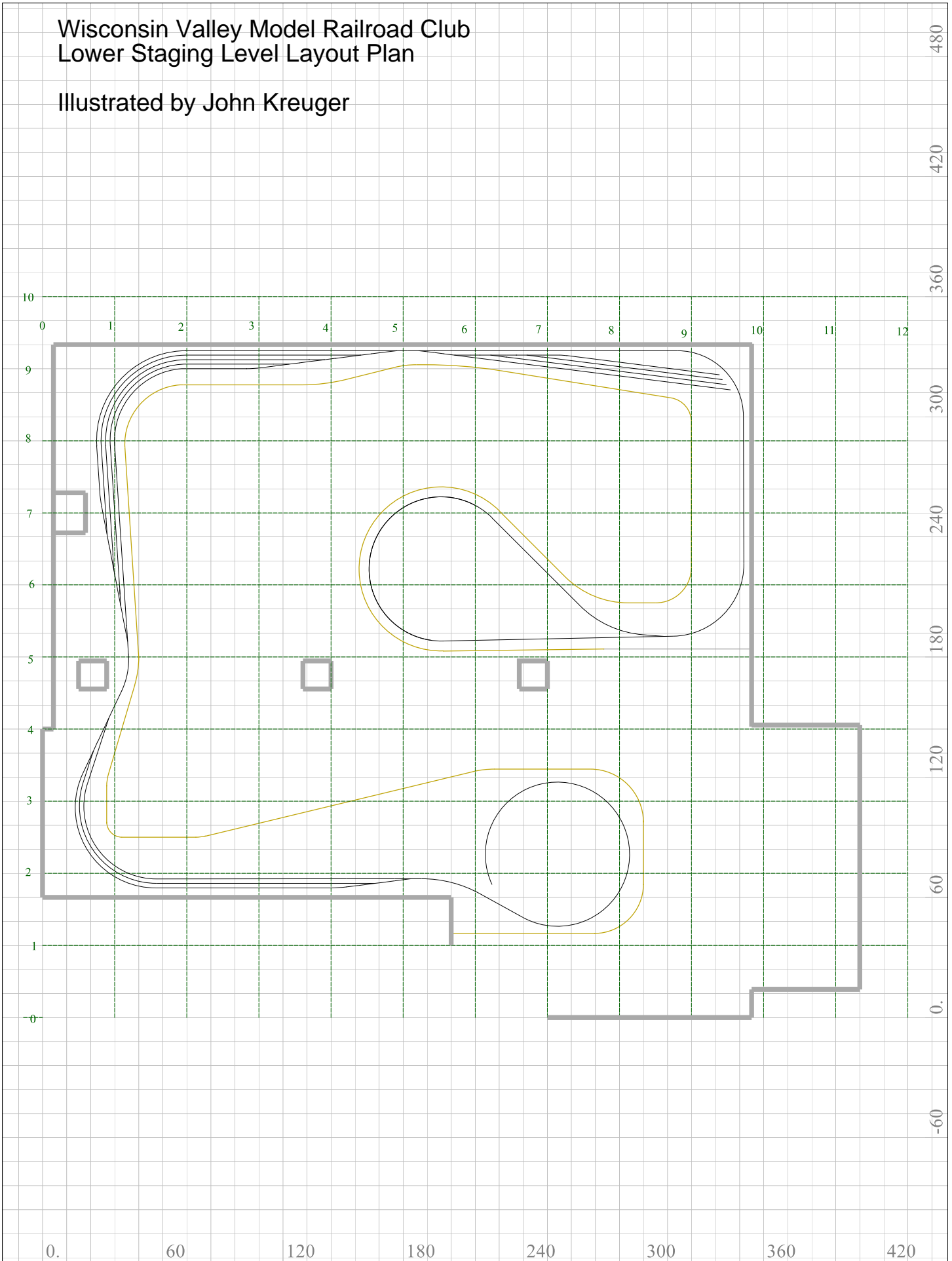
Wisconsin Valley Model Railroad Club Mid Level Layout Plan

Illustrated by John Kreuger



Wisconsin Valley Model Railroad Club Lower Staging Level Layout Plan

Illustrated by John Kreuger



**2026 NMRA
WLD Spring Meet May 1-2nd,
Waupaca Depot - 525 Oak St.
Waupaca, WI**



2026 Spring Meet Timetable

Friday, May 1st

6:00 pm Operating Sessions

Saturday, May 2nd

8:00 – 10:00 am Registration

8:00 – 10:30 Model & Photo Contest Entry

9:00 am – Noon Clinics

- Gregg's Scenery Methods – Gregg Condon
- Car Loading Reports for Prototype Operations – Matt Holman
- Locomotive Tractive Effort & Operational Range – Gerry Ring

12:00 – 1:00 pm Lunch by Waupaca Historical Society
Hamburgers and Brats

1:00 pm Model-Photo Contest Awards

2:00pm – 6:00pm Layout Tours

*Tour
Local
Layouts!!*

*Bring your
models to
display or enter
in the modeling
contest!!!*

*Bring
your
Photos of
1:1 trains
to 1:220!*

2026 Spring Meet Registration (Checks Payable to Winnebagoland Division)

NAME: _____ **NMRA#:** _____

Email: _____ **Phone #:** _____

OPS Session Friday **No. of Operators** _____

Meet Registration Fee

NMRA Member \$20 X _____ = \$ _____ **+ Non-Member \$25 X** _____ = \$ _____

Registration at the Door : Members \$25 non-members \$30

For more info and meet updates visit www.wld-nmra.com

Return this form and Payment by 4/24/2025 to:
Paul Mastalir
135 Hillside Lane
Shawano, WI 54166

Titletown Train Show



Home
Show info
Sponsors
Contest Info
Vendors
Exhibitors
Applications
About us
FAQ
Contact us



Show Information

Note our NEW dates, hours, and admission

The 25th Annual **Titletown Train Show** will be held:

**Saturday, May 9th and
Sunday, May 10th, 2026**

**The show will be taking place at the
KI Convention Center in Downtown Green Bay
333 Main Street, 54301**

Show **hours** will be:
9am-4pm Saturday
10am-3pm Sunday

Admission (subject to change):

Ages 13-64 ... \$9
Seniors 65+ ... \$7
Ages 6-12 ... \$2
Ages 0-5 ... Free
Parking ... Free

\$2 off second day with first day wristband

We will have over 35,000 square feet of trains! Including:

- Operating display layouts, in all scales
- Dozens of friendly vendors, selling everything trains
- **Register to win a complete train set given away at the end of the show!**
- Hourly door prizes
- Demonstrations
- National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) representatives
- Local model "ambassadors" to answer your questions
- Children's activities
- The Green Bay Area Model Railroaders will be raffling off a completed 4x8 foot model railroad at the end of the show Sunday; visit their booth to purchase raffle tickets!

Fun for ALL ages... Families welcome!

Waupaca Area Model Railroaders Waupaca, Wisconsin

Hosts the 2nd ANNUAL

Strawberry Fest Model Railroad

Show & Swap Meet

*In conjunction with the Waupaca Historical Society
and Waupaca Area Chamber of Commerce*

Saturday, June 20, 2026 - 9 AM to 3 PM

**Waupaca Recreation Center, 407 School Street
at the intersection of School, State & Badger St**

- Hobby Shop Dealers and Vendors
- Swap Meet (hobbyist sale tables)
- Great Food Available

For vendor tables, contact:

Jim Payton 920-407-0296

jpayton000@centurylink.net

Brandon Riedl 715-281-0883

briedl8397@gmail.com



Waupaca Area Convention & Visitor Bureau
is a proud sponsor of our swap meet.



Adults: \$3 Family: \$5

Kids Under 12: Free

Historic Soo Line Depot Open House
Saturday 8am-7pm & Sunday 12pm-5pm
It is only 7/10th of a mile away at 525 Oak St
or go north on State St, right on Mill St, and
then left on Oak St just past the railroad bridge
on your left.



Also available at the train show for purchase will be a special lola & Northern 40ft box car. These HO car were custom made by Accurail as a club fundraiser. We only have limited qty left of both car numbers.

For more information see our website: www.wamrltd.com and https://visitwaupacachainolakes.com/event/strawberry-fest provides all area Strawberry Fest events.

W&MMRRC

**TRAINS
GAMES &
AUTOMOBILES**

MARINETTE, WI

Free Admission

Saturday June 27, 2026

Trains 9 AM – 5 PM

Games 9 AM – 8 PM

Car Show 9 AM – 3 PM

Free Admission

Sunday June 28, 2026

Trains 9 AM – 3 PM

Games 9 AM – 3 PM

**Marinette Community Rec Center
2501 Pierce Ave, Marinette, WI**

Free Convention

Free Admission!!!!!!

**Operating Model Train Layouts Model Train and Game Vendors
Tabletop Board Game Event Classic Car Show Outdoor Display
Food Trucks**

Sponsored by:

Wisconsin and Michigan Model Railroad Club

Contact: Dave Rickaby (President) (715) 584-9310 wmwestdiv@yahoo.com

Game Knights Hobby Store, 2035 Marinette Ave., Marinette WI

Contact: Mike Bastien Proprietor (715) 330-6001

Enginehouse Services, 2737 N. Packerland Dr. Green Bay, WI

Contact: Justin Hendricksen (920) 490-4839

Classic Car Show Coordinator: Jay Wessely, (906) 792-5112