

# Trainfest EXPRESS

www.trainfest.com



2013  
Trainfest  
November  
9<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>

## Garden Railroading – Big Inspiration for Smaller than Life Trains

By Angela Podewils

Trainfest takes pride in showcasing model railroads in every popular scale. Dynamic G scale railroads, also known as garden scale or large scale, attract many visitors with their large size and eye-catching scenery. The size of these larger scale trains lend themselves to little hands, often becoming a young modeler's first train. Adults like to run G scale trains around their Christmas trees during the holidays. The unique elements of the Kenosha Garden Railroad Society's G scale layout appeal to train fans of all ages.

In 2001, Bill Zimmer along with four fellow G-scale modelers formed the G Scalers club. Three years later, as the club and their layout progressed, they changed their name to Kenosha Garden Railroad Society. Although Bill is the only original member remaining today, the club has grown and currently has ten members.

### Trains on a New Level

The changeover in membership contributes to the ever changing look of the layout. The Kenosha Garden Railroad layout is unique among the layouts at Trainfest. The layout is low to the ground, only 24 inches off the ground, allowing the trains and scenery to be enjoyed by young visitors, sometimes at eye level. The close interaction and dynamic scenes bring a spark of inspiration to these aspiring modelers.

The 28' X 48' layout is comprised of a series of tables built by the club affixed with two main lines of track. Each member infuses the layout with their own personal scene creations, inspired by their imaginations to wow audiences who will view them. With this module-like set up, there are no restrictions for the scenes members create. These miniature worlds may be set in any time, place or setting.

see Garden Railroading  
Continued on page 4

## What's Inside

From the Caboose  
PG 2

Bringing Railroads to Life,  
Soundtraxx®  
PG 3

Scratch Building a  
Backwoods Water  
Tower Structure  
PG 6



### November 2013

Check out the next issue of **Trainfest EXPRESS** for your pre-show guide to Trainfest 2013. And explore this issue for a sneak peek at what is in store for Trainfest 2013.





## From the Caboose

Welcome back to model railroading!

With our wet spring and dry summer, it seems like the weeds were doing better than my flowers. After hours of pulling weeds, watering the planting beds and fighting the ever present quack grass, I am happy to see autumn and the model railroad season approach.

We have several new model railroads and some new greatly detailed modules to show off at Trainfest 2013. Plus we are gaining several new model railroad vendors and manufacturers to expand Trainfest – all for your enjoyment.

Trainfest 2013 is shaping up to be a great show!

Before heading back to more Trainfest planning (after I finish cleaning up the tree damage at my lake home) I want to remind you to watch for the preview issue of Trainfest EXPRESS. It comes out about a week before Trainfest 2013. It'll be filled with details on new vendors and manufacturers, have an overview of the kid's area, and will include a map of how to find your favorite model railroad layouts.

See you in two months.

In the spirit of Model railroading,  
Clear Signals Always,

*John*

John H. Tews, MMR  
Executive Director – Trainfest

*Trainfest EXPRESS is sent free via email as a PDF or can be viewed on the Trainfest website in an interactive, online paging-style format. You can also print out the pages or articles you desire.*

### A Family Hobby

Trainfest is a family friendly weekend full of trains and fun. Returning favorites to the 2013 Trainfest Kids' Activity Zone are the highly popular giant Thomas the Tank Engine® inflatable bounce house, and acoustic performances for kids by Choo Choo Bob and the Holy Smokestacks Revue. Look for a guide to the Kids' Activity Zone in the November Trainfest EXPRESS.



**Trainfest  
2013**

# Trainfest EXPRESS

## Sponsoring Publisher

Wisconsin Southeastern  
Division, Inc., NMRA

## Publisher

John H. Tews, MMR  
john@trainfest.com

## Contributing Editors

Angela Podewils  
Bonnie Moyer Topczewski  
Jody Delie  
Bridget Klassen  
Julie Larsen

## Newsletter Design, Web & Advertising

Mercury Communication  
Partners, LLC  
262-782-4637  
www.mercuryww.com

## Photos Contributed by

Jeremy Topczewski  
Rick Hatton

TRAINFEST, Trainfest EXPRESS and the Trainfest LOGO are registered trademarks of the Wisconsin Southeastern Division, Inc., NMRA.

[www.trainfest.com](http://www.trainfest.com)

## Trainfest Committee

**John H. Tews, MMR**  
Executive Director  
E-mail: [john@trainfest.com](mailto:john@trainfest.com)

**Richard Cecil**  
Asst. to the Director

**Cedor Aronow**  
Security

**Scott Porinsky**  
Computer Services

**Gary Kamin**  
Trainfest Treasurer

**Ed Padgett**  
Volunteer Coordinator

**Kurt Wamser**  
Floor Director

**Linda Sukup**  
Ticket Coordinator

**Terry Thompson**  
HMA-MRD Advisor

**Joe Russ**  
Wisconsin Southeastern Division, Inc.,  
NMRA Superintendent

**Mercury Communication**  
Advertising Agency

Trainfest is possible due to the dedication and hard work of our volunteers and board members. If you would like to volunteer for America's Largest Operating Model Railroad Show, contact us via email: [volunteer@trainfest.com](mailto:volunteer@trainfest.com). Trainfest is sponsored by the Wisconsin Southeastern Division, Inc., NMRA

# SOUNDTRAXX™

New Dim  
Digital Sound

Sounds, Sounds  
and More Sounds

Accessories

Blackstone Models  
A DIVISION OF AMARANTHA

## Manufacturer Spotlights

Trainfest brings some of the best model railroading manufacturers to Milwaukee. In the November EXPRESS look for Spotlights on some of these great companies, also a look at the new manufacturers for 2013!



## Bringing Railroads to Life, SoundTraxx®

*Delivering state of the art sound technology to model railroads everywhere*

Realism in the model railroading hobby is as essential as coal was to the steam engine. Every last detail matters. Today's hobbyists have mastered the craft of building trains and scenery nearly indistinguishable from their life size counterparts. Trainfest manufacturer SoundTraxx is proud to be a part of bringing model railroads to life through prototypical sound.

The number of manufacturers who have chosen to place SoundTraxx systems in their locomotives truly speaks to the accuracy and realism found in SoundTraxx products. What a testimony! With an unwavering focus on prototypical sounds, SoundTraxx systems have become the "go to" sound system to be pre-installed by model train manufacturers, such as Bachmann, MTH and more.

SoundTraxx was founded in 1989 and is currently headquartered in Durango, Colorado. Their first products focused on lighting, The Hyperlight, which was the first system to use a microprocessor. In 1994, the company shifted their focus to sound systems with the introduction of the D220IR analog sound system.

In 1999, SoundTraxx introduced the "plug and play" format -- a line of Digital Sound Decoders designed to be easier to install. Since then, SoundTraxx has developed their technology to include even more features to create a rich modeling experience. These advancements are especially evident in their Tsunami line.

### Selecting the right product for your railroad

In addition to advancing the sound technology of model railroading, SoundTraxx has placed great importance on customer service and enhancing the modeler experience. At SoundTraxx, they really want to help customers select the right product to suit their needs.

The main product lines offered by SoundTraxx have unique features to fit different model scales. Modelers should keep these questions in mind when selecting a system:

- Do I have a DCC-controlled layout?
- Do I want to have onboard or under-layout sound?
- How many sound features do I want?

see SoundTraxx®  
Continued on page 8



▲ This brightly colored Carnival scene commands the attention of every visitor to the KGRS layout.



▲ A train rolls through the colorful and tasty M&M Town.



### Railroad Spotlights

The dedication and craftsmanship of the model railroading hobby is apparent in the railroads featured at Trainfest. In the November Trainfest EXPRESS look for spotlights of a couple of the clubs from across the country who exhibit their layouts at Trainfest.

▲ Race cars delight visitors to the Kenosha Garden Railroad layout.



▲ Christmas Town, a whimsical scene combining two traditions, the Christmas train and village.



### *Garden Railroading Continued from cover*

Visitors to the Kenosha Garden Railroad layout will travel through an eclectic mix of scenes with trains running from any era. Popular fan favorites are the vibrant carnival vignette complete with carousel and rides, along with a functioning race car track scene. Other favorite features include a farm, town, refinery and uniquely built M&M peanut town. The layout is constantly evolving so keep a lookout for new scenes at Trainfest 2013!

With inventive scenes such as these, one can imagine the variety of sources the members have used for finding unique and cool structures and pieces as focuses for their layout section. Some likely vendors and products used in the Kenosha Garden Railroad include Piko, Pola or Aristocraft buildings and other G scale manufacturers. To round out the layout features, some buildings are scratch built for desired feel and accentuation. The layout is powered by the Revolution system from Aristocraft.

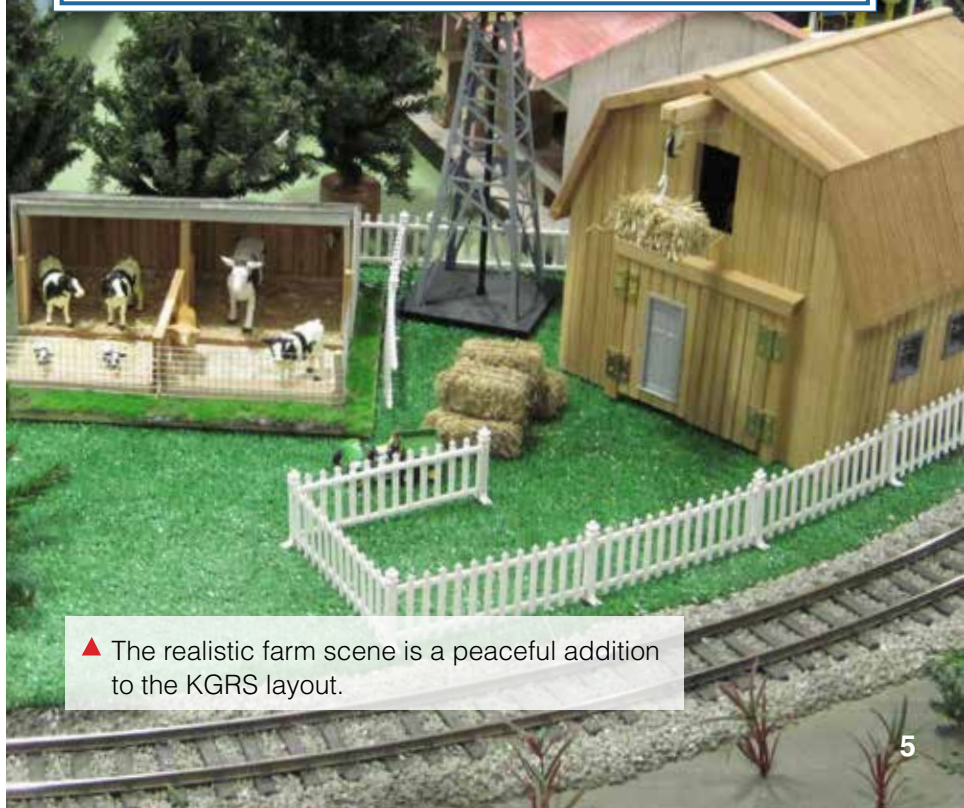
*see Garden Railroading  
Continued on page 7*



## **Advanced Tickets**

Looking for advanced tickets to Trainfest? Check out the list of participating Hobby Shops at [Trainfest.com](http://Trainfest.com)!

For the serious hobbyist looking for the complete Trainfest package, don't forget your Friday Product Showcase tickets, also available at participating hobby shops. A Friday Product Showcase ticket gets you into the exclusive manufacturers event on Friday, November 8 AND single ticket entrance to both the public show days Nov. 9th and 10th.



▲ The realistic farm scene is a peaceful addition to the KGRS layout.



## Scratch Building a Backwoods Water Tower Structure

Rick Hatton, of the Niagara Frontier Region of the NMRA, was inspired by two different kits to build a backwoods water tower for his layout. He considered kitbashing, which is “combining bits and pieces of different structures, but only scratch building will give you full control of the design footprint and material,” said Rick.

In some instances, purchasing kits can be more expensive than the materials needed for scratch building. Additionally, kits may not fit the desired era or setting exactly, missing key details that can be achieved through scratch building.

Armed with the key strength of craftsmanship, Rick began the process of scratch building the water tower. Rick has given Trainfest EXPRESS a look into his process of scratch building and the construction of his backwoods water tower.

A longtime railroad fan, Rick has been modeling for more than 5 years. Trainfest 2013 will be his 5th Trainfest demonstrating in the Niagara Frontier Region Craftsman Corner to aid and inspire other modelers.

*see Scratch Building  
Continued on page 10*

## G Scale Modeling

Bill became a lifetime model railroader after receiving his first HO set at age eight. He was drawn to modeling G scale when he was exploring ideas for Christmas decorations. After spotting and purchasing a Christmas G scale train, he began his tradition of creating a new Christmas scene each year, ultimately leading to the formation of Kenosha Garden Railroad Society.

A primary goal of the group is bringing model railroading to the general public. For this purpose, the club exhibits at about five shows a year. Bill enjoys seeing the visitors' reactions to the trains and detailed scenes. The children's facial expressions are especially priceless as they watch the trains run around the track. Bill appreciates the wide scope of visitors at Trainfest, and 2013 will mark their seventh year exhibiting at the show. They hope to see you there! 🐾

### Tip for New Modelers

If you are considering modeling in G scale, Bill recommends starting with a small layout and growing it piece by piece over time. With increasing expenses for engaging in the hobby, it is wise to plan a little first, start slowly and ease into the layout of your dreams.



### New Hobby Shop

Looking for 3-rail O gauge equipment at Trainfest? You're in luck, new hobby shop vendor Caboose Track Hobbies specializes in 3-rail O gauge equipment find their booth ahead of time on the Trainfest 2013 floor plan in the November Trainfest EXPRESS.





### New Hobby Shop

A Long time participating hobby shop for advanced Trainfest tickets, **Park Lane Hobbies** will make their premier appearance at Trainfest this year. Park Lane Hobbies carries rolling stock, locomotive, scenery and other products for your modeling needs.

**SoundTraxx®**  
Continued from page 3

By understanding the nuances in the product lines offered by SoundTraxx, decisions make themselves. For example ... when seeking sound from the locomotive itself, Digital Sound Decoders are the answer since they are designed to be installed onboard the model with a speaker. Or perhaps SoundTraxx's Tsunami Digital Sound Decoders are the best choice due to their compatibility with both DC and DCC layouts, while the LC Series Digital Sound Decoders (Now discontinued) are only compatible with DCC layouts.

Once the sound system has been chosen, modelers can browse the library for the right sounds to enhance their model prototype or layout vision.

### Tsunami® Technology

High performance Tsunami Digital Sound Decoders are designed to bring together the benefits of DCC technology with high quality onboard sound. This technology is versatile to fit all scales of model trains. Further, these systems are compatible with layout operations from NMRA – from a compatible DCC command station to a traditional power pack.

Tsunami technology puts the control into the modeler's hands. A built-in equalizer allows for cutting and boosting sound levels over several frequencies to aid in matching the selected speaker's strengths. A sound mixer enables independent volume controls. Finally, the Hyperdrive™ technology in every decoder brings precise locomotive operation.

### Prototypical Accuracy

Each Tsunami Digital Sound Decoder comes equipped with prototype sound effects selected by the modeler. The SoundTraxx engineers ensure the best possible prototype sounds by recording them directly in the field from life-size locomotives with cooperation from the railroads. These recordings are optimized and adjusted to achieve the best possible results from onboard locomotive speakers.

Steam decoders include 24 sound effects including bells, whistles, air pump, dynamo and more. Diesel decoders hold over 14 sound effects including multiple air horns, engine exhaust, bell, dynamic brakes, radiator fans and more.

Sounds of Fireman Fred are a SoundTraxx Tsunami decoder exclusive. From shoveling coal and greasing the rods to filling the water tank, a layout gains the sounds of a true working locomotive fireman.

### Blackstone Models


In 2004, SoundTraxx created a new division of their company, Blackstone Models. This division produces HO<sub>n</sub>3 locomotives and rolling stock, combining detailed craftsmanship and cutting edge technology. With the latest SoundTraxx technology, Blackstone builds detailed, quality prototypical trains.





## SurroundTraxx

At Trainfest 2012, SoundTraxx unveiled their newest latest technology: SurroundTraxx. This system, designed for use with multiple trains, brings quality sounds that move with the train as it travels throughout the layout -- all without installing speakers on board the locomotives.

SurroundTraxx uses advanced block detection technology to monitor the speed and direction of the locomotives. With this data the sound system makes a smooth transition from one speaker to another. Six sound channels allow for up to six trains to run simultaneously on one layout. Currently SurroundTraxx is designed for use only with Digitrax® command control systems, but there are plans for other command stations to be supported in the future. 

### What is HOOn3?

HOOn3 models are built to HO scale 1:87 with a narrow gauge. In this case the gauge is 3' between rails, compared to the normal track gauge of 4' 8 1/2" between the rails.

*Editor's Note: We're anxious to see what SoundTraxx unveils at Trainfest 2013. Based on their track record – no pun intended – it promises to be a modeler's dream.*

# Get the most out of the Model Railroading Hobby

Join the NMRA. Become a member of the Wisconsin Southeastern Division.



## What is the NMRA?

The **National Model Railroad Association (NMRA)** was established in 1935 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to bring model railroaders together to foster fellowship and provide resources to hobbyists. The NMRA is a worldwide non-profit educational association headquartered in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The organization is divided into geographic regions to best provide local support and camaraderie to model railroaders. Visit [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org).

## What is Wisconsin Southeastern Division, Inc.?

The Wisconsin Southeastern Division (WI-SE Division) is made up of NMRA members living in the seven Southeastern Wisconsin counties of: Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha.

With an educational mission to promote the model railroading hobby, the Wisconsin Southeastern Division creates opportunities for modelers who are "new and not-so-new" to the hobby to share new ideas and information. The Division sponsors free model railroading meets.

The Division also sponsors a group for young modelers and train enthusiasts to get started in the hobby. Visit [www.wisedivision.org](http://www.wisedivision.org).

## What is Trainfest®?

One way the Division pursues its mission is through its annual event, **Trainfest**. Hobbyists, hobby dealers, manufacturers and rail fans of all ages come together at Trainfest for two days to celebrate everything trains. Trainfest is the hub for bringing together new and experienced modelers to share ideas and pass on the passion for modeling to the next generation. What could be more fun?

## Become a Member. It's Easy!

To join, speak with a Division member or visit our website at [www.wisedivision.org](http://www.wisedivision.org). If you do not live in Southeastern Wisconsin, please visit [www.nmra.org](http://www.nmra.org) to contact your local NMRA Division.

**Trainfest**<sup>®</sup>  
America's Largest Operating Model Railroad Show.

[www.trainfest.com](http://www.trainfest.com)



Trainfest is sponsored by the Wisconsin Southeastern Division, Inc.

## Rick's Supply List:

- Wood glue
- Scale lumber (various sizes)
- Styrene
- Hydrocol
- Paper Creek Shingles
- Various detail parts
- Assorted acrylic paints
- Assorted chalks or pastels for weathering
- Campbell steel roofing
- Two part mold making compound

## Tools Rick Recommends for the Project:

- Mixing bowls
- Assorted brushes
- Chopper
- Sharp blades and cutting tools
- Square
- Assorted clamps

### 2013 Clinics and Demos

Plan ahead for Trainfest 2013, in the November Trainfest EXPRESS find the listings of Clinics and Demos for 2013!



## Preparing to Scratch Build

Once the type of structure to be built is decided, Rick then establishes the footprint and design for the structure. This step aids in determining the types of material needed, what may need to be purchased and other details of the structure. To construct his water tower, Rick determined he had to construct molds to form the four stone walls of one element of the water tower structure.

## Step-by-Step Guide



### Step One: Create Molds

Using a manufactured plastic, which best replicates the desired stone look, and adding strips of styrene to outline the wall depth, you'll then create a pattern for the mold. Make boxes from styrene to hold the pattern and fill with a two part compound to create the desired mold. Wait for 24 hours for the mold material to cure and solidify.

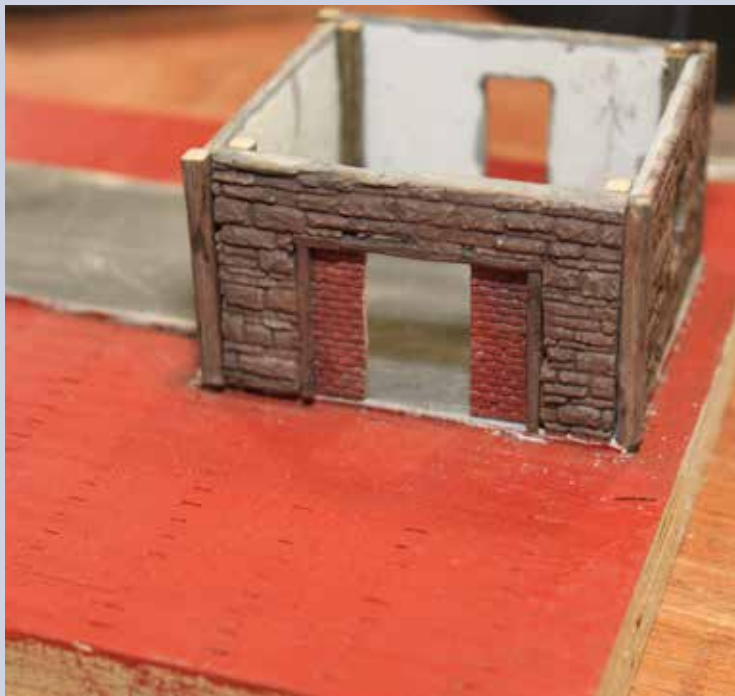


### Step Two: Creating the Stone Walls

Fill the molds with Hydrocol that has been mixed to the consistency of pancake batter. Note: fill slowly so you don't overflow the mold for best results. Wait 24 hours for walls to set.

### Benefits of Scratch Building:

- Scratch building allows for exacting of details
- Can be less expensive than kits and ready-to-run products
- Further control over footprint and design
- Freedom to create unique or obscure cars and structures
- Develop skills toward becoming a Master Model Railroader through the NMRA Achievement Program



### Step Three: Finishing the Stone Walls

After 24 hours, remove the walls from the mold and begin staining to achieve your desired look. Once the four stone walls are completed, create the stone structure by attaching the walls to scale cut posts (made out of the scale lumber).

Rick's structure design calls for a second wood-sided structure. Below are his steps for framing and finishing this building.



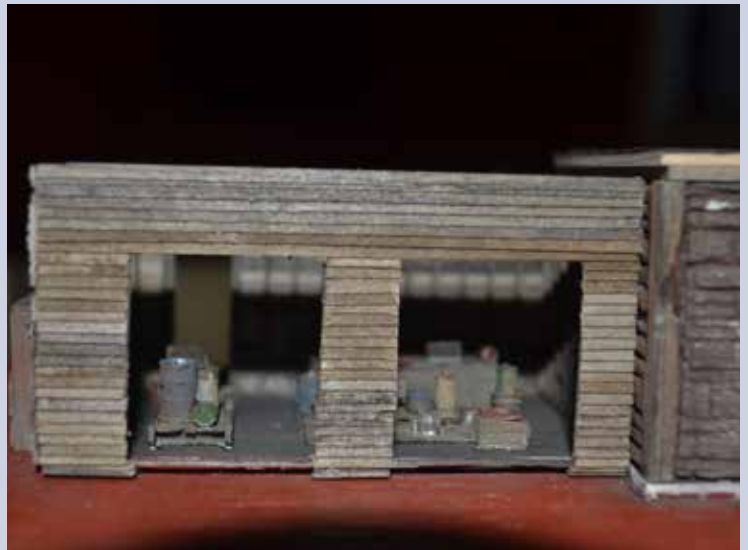
### Step One: Scale Lumber

Rick's designs for this structure frame the walls much like a real life building, only made with scale lumber. Create scale lumber by cutting wood to desired building size with a chopper and square.



### Step Two: Framing the Structure

Using the cut scale lumber, Rick framed his four walls according to his building plans using wood glue to secure the joints.



### Step Three: Siding and Roofing the Structure

Once the structure has been framed, it is ready for siding. At this stage, Rick recommends determining what siding product or process will best fit the era you are modeling. Rick utilized different techniques when building the roofing for his structure. For example, he created the rounded dome of the water tower roof using construction paper as his base. He finished the roof by layering it with Paper Creek Shingles. 🏠

*Editors Note: Want to see the final product? Rick is still working on the finishing touches on the water tower. Check out the NFR Craftsman's Corner at Trainfest 2013 to see it on display.*

# Trainfest®

America's Largest Operating Model Railroad Show.

**SAVE  
—THE  
DATE**

Saturday & Sunday  
Nov. 9 - 10, 2013  
9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.



## 60 Amazing Railroads.

## Enormous Fun.

## Endless Discovery.

Demonstrations  
and "how-to"  
clinics

•  
Learn tips and  
techniques

•  
120 manufacturers  
& hobby dealers

•  
10 historical  
groups

WI Expo Center  
at State Fair Park  
8200 W. Greenfield Ave.  
Milwaukee (West Allis), WI



Visit [trainfest.com](http://trainfest.com)