

Volume 24/25 – 3

November 2024



smdnmra.org

From the Desk of the Superintendent:

By Bob Johnson

October has been a very eventful month for the Division. For starters, we had a very good meeting at the home of Andrew Dodge. Considering the weather (it was a beautiful fall day with a lot of other activities competing for our membership's attention). In addition to seeing a beautiful fine-scale layout we had a highly productive business meeting. There was a lot of member interaction, a number of issues and concerns were addressed, and multiple ideas were presented to address the Division membership participation issue.

During the October business meeting we received an offer from a member to serve as Superintendent (president), a tentative offer for Clerk (secretary), and a commitment from Ray Price to continue as paymaster (treasurer). This is good news for the Division, and I thank those who offered their services. We are still in need of a volunteer to fill the position of *Wheel Report* editor.

Following the business discussion Andrew made an informative presentation addressing items that you should consider when planning a new layout or updating an existing one. Shortly after the meeting I received the following email from Andrew. Andrew wrote, "Please pass on to the Division that today was one of the most enjoyable days with model railroading I have had in a long long time. I was delighted to have such a turnout and that everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. It made hosting a pleasure."

November Meeting:

The monthly meeting of the South Mountain Division (SMD) will be held on Sunday, 10 November at the Cumberland Valley Model Railroad Club. The club has their own building located at 440 Nelson St, Chambersburg, PA 17201. Thanks to Division and club member John Pursell for arranging a meeting at this venue. It has been three years since we last visited their location.

The club has multiple layouts in various scales and gauges, with displays of both scale and tinplate models. In order to give us more time to take in all of the various features of the club's activities they will be opening the doors for us at 1:30 instead of the normal 2PM.

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WHEEL REPORT

SOUTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION - NMRA

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November meeting continued...

About the Cumberland Valley:

In 1996 a small group of railroad enthusiasts recognized the need for a club in the Chambersburg area, thus in April of that year the Cumberland Valley Model Railroad Club was founded. The club derived its name from the Cumberland Valley Railroad. The Cumberland Valley Railroad's headquarters, which was located in Chambersburg served the Cumberland Valley from 1836 to 1919, when it became part of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

2025 Mini Con:

Grant Berry has agreed to take the lead on the Division Mini-Con again this coming spring (April) and Mainline Hobby Supply has again offered to support the event. It will be held on a Saturday in April but as of this writing we do not have a scheduled date from the fire company for room availability. As always, Grant will need help with registration, event set-up, and of course clinicians. Start thinking now as to what sort of table clinic you could present at the event.

The Susquehanna Division has expressed interest in participating in the event with us this coming spring but details have not been finalized. More to come on this development.

2027 MER Convention:

We are still looking for two or three volunteers to form an exploratory committee to get things started for the 2027 MER convention which we are scheduled to host. Since the MER handles most of the convention arrangements the committee's responsibilities at this time will primarily be centered around locating a suitable host hotel, developing a list of potential layout tour hosts, and to identify some sort of rail related prototype tour. Again, if you are interested please let me know. Email southmountaindiv@gmail.com.

SMD Membership Promotion:

There are two initiatives currently being developed to promote Division membership and current membership participation in Division activities.

Membership Participation

In last month's *Wheel Report* I noted that NMRA membership in the South Mountain Division area has dropped from 90 plus members to only around 65. Of those 65, only around 30 to 35 are what I would consider to be active in the Division's activities (monthly meetings, Mini-Con, etc.).

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WHEEL REPORT

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Membership Promotion continued...

A suggestion was made at the October meeting for the officials to reach out to all Division members to encourage more involvement by highlighting the benefits associated with participation. The suggestion was approved and a small group of our members are currently crafting the letter. Once the letter is in its final form a copy will be sent to every member of the Division prior to the end of December.

NMRA Membership Promotion Event

As reported last month, in lieu of a regular December meeting we will be conducting an all-day event at HobbyTown USA (Frederick) to encourage model railroaders to join the NMRA.

This event is scheduled to run from 10:00 AM until 4:00 PM. In addition to an information table promoting the benefits of NMRA membership we will have several table clinics (similar to the Mini-Con) with demonstrations of technology in model railroading (DCC, 3-D printing, computers, etc.) We will also be highlighting model railroading as a form of gaming. This approach is targeted to appeal to the younger modelers in the community.

We already have several volunteers for this event but are looking for additional volunteers and/or suggestions for table clinics. If you are interested please let me know as soon as you can. Email southmountaindiv@gmail.com.

Thanks to HobbyTown USA owner and SMD member Richard Benjamin for allowing us to hold this event at his shop.

Reminder:

SMD membership meetings are always the 2nd Sunday of the month at 2PM. The only exceptions are for April, when the Mini-Con replaces our business meeting, and in May, which will take place one week later, on the 3rd Sunday.

Please consider hosting a meeting sometime during the 2024 - 2025 program year. Email southmountaindiv@gmail.com. We try to avoid back-to-back repeat visits so if you have never hosted, or it has been a year or so since you did, give it a thought.

As of this writing, with the exception of May, all of the 2024/2025 meeting dates have been spoken for. The schedule is as follows.

- December 14th (Saturday) – Membership promotion meeting @ HobbyTown USA in Frederick, MD
- January 12th - Steve King; Pond Bank, PA
- February 9th - Richard Benjamin; Frederick, MD
- March 9th - Pete and Jane Clarke; Damascus, MD
- April (date TBD) - Annual Mini-Con; Blue Ridge Summit, PA
- May 18th (3rd Sunday to avoid Mother's Day conflict) - OPEN

WHEEL REPORT **SMD**

SOUTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION - NMRA

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Renew On Line:

You can renew your NMRA membership on line at the following link;

<https://www.nmra.org/store/membership>

Remember that your national membership automatically includes membership in both the Mid-East Region and the South Mountain Division and you will receive the NMRA Bulletin electronically on a regular basis. Membership is a requirement for insurance purposes but guests can attend one or two meetings without joining. There is also a trial membership category available at a reduced cost (see link above).

SMD Officers and Officials:

Superintendent: Bob Johnson

Clerk: Alex Polimeni

Paymaster: Ray Price

Webmaster/Digital Assets Manager: Tom Fedor

Wheel Report Editor: Bob Johnson

Contributing Wheel Report Editor: Alex Polimeni

Division Achievement Program Coordinator: Jane Clarke

Mini-Con Coordinator: Grant Berry

