

# WHEEL REPORT

FALL VOL. 21/22 NO.1



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**FALL ZOOM MEETINGS**

South Mountain Division MER NMRA is inviting MEMBERS ONLY to scheduled Zoom meetings...

**Topic:** SMD NMRA **September Membership Meeting**

**Time:** Sep 12, 2021; 02:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Contact the Division by email to request detailed information on how to join this meeting.

[SouthMountainDiv@gmail.com](mailto:SouthMountainDiv@gmail.com)

**Topic:** SMD NMRA **October Membership Meeting**

**Time:** Oct 10, 2021; 02:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Contact the Division by email to request detailed information on how to join this meeting.

[SouthMountainDiv@gmail.com](mailto:SouthMountainDiv@gmail.com)

**Topic:** SMD NMRA **November Membership Meeting**

**Time:** Nov 16 2021; 02:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Contact the Division by email to request detailed information on how to join this meeting.

[SouthMountainDiv@gmail.com](mailto:SouthMountainDiv@gmail.com)

**On the cover:** SMD member Steve Johnson's Union Railroad is based around the 1980's and 90's in Duquesne, PA. Steve's HO layout is 10 x 19' with the main level at a height of 51". Open grid construction topped with 2" foam supports the layout around the walls and out to a center peninsula. Track is mostly code 83 (with some code 70) on cork roadbed. Control is NCE DCC. To see more of Steve's modeling and other's work in the Division, join our SMD Facebook group, featured on Page 7 of this edition. (Photo by Steve Johnson)

The *Wheel Report* is the official publication for the South Mountain Division of the NMRA. The newsletter is published three times annually. Please send your letters, articles, and pictures to

[SouthMountainDiv@gmail.com](mailto:SouthMountainDiv@gmail.com).

**2021/22 submission deadlines:**

Winter 2021/22.....November 15

Spring 2022.....February 15

Fall 2022.....August 15

**SMD Officers 2021/22**

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**Assistant Superintendent:**

Mike Shockey

**Clerk:**

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Tom Fedor

To reach Division officials please email us at:

[SouthMountainDiv@gmail.com](mailto:SouthMountainDiv@gmail.com)

## “Clutter from the Super's Desk”



Another summer is coming to a close, and you know what that means: the South Mountain Division year is just beginning! Although it was my hope to be welcoming you back with a long-awaited and much-anticipated in-person meeting, I'm afraid that won't be happening, at least not until 2022.

With the Delta variant of COVID-19 spreading in the United States and things set to get worse once more as the weather changes, everyone must decide for themselves what level of risk they're comfortable with. Speaking as your Superintendent, I cannot, in good conscience, ask our membership to gather in the close quarters where our hobby takes place.

That said, I believe there's still plenty for SMD to do while this terrible pandemic runs its course. To this end, you're all invited to our September membership meeting via Zoom on Sunday, September 12th. Look on page 2 of the *Wheel Report* for the Zoom meeting details. “Doors” open at 2pm, with the business meeting to commence by 2:30pm.

I'm still looking for presenters to give clinics after the September, October, and November meetings via Zoom. If you have something you'd like to share (especially if it works well as a video or slideshow!) do let me know. If we don't have a clinic, I'm looking to turn the after business time over to a round table discussion about a particular theme.

I believe SMD and the NMRA has a great deal to offer our membership even in a post-pandemic world, and I'm excited to talk with you about the possibilities these next few months. So, if you have the time, please stop by the Zoom meeting or, otherwise, drop us an email directly at [southmountaindiv@gmail.com](mailto:southmountaindiv@gmail.com)!

Harvey, Ray, and I are eager to get the Division back on the rails.

## Train Shows | Meets



[Mainline Hobby Supply](#) open house and layout tours are scheduled for 18 & 19 September this fall. The Shop will be open from 9 AM until 5 PM on Saturday and 12 PM until 5 PM on Sunday. Brian Wolfe, states that during this free event the hobby shop will offer 10% off of everything store wide. Additional consignment tables will be set up (10% discount is **not** given on consignment items). Visit the shop to pick up directions to the self guided layout tours. As of this printing 25 layouts are planning to welcome guests. Visit everything from N scale to live steam, club and private layouts, including 3 brand new model railroads this year. Please note that tours are subject to change due to COVID-19 and masks can be required for entry to some layouts.



[Great Scale Model Train Show](#) is scheduled for Saturday, 2 & 3 October. Hours Saturday will be 9 AM until 5 PM, and Sunday from 10 AM until 4 PM.

SMD's Paul Mahoney of Frederick, MD is moderating the following clinics planned for the show.

- Beginners JMRI: starting with an explanation of JMRI, installation, and basic operations. The class will demonstrate the various functions for Decoder Pro including speed matching.
- LED lighting clinic: discussion and practical application for using LED lights in our hobby.
- Soldering clinic: ISO 9000 soldering technique and best practices.

An additional clinic titled “Beginners DCC” is planned also.



[Mount Claire Junction](#) Mid-Eastern Region convention will take place Thursday through Sunday, 21 through 24 October, 2021.



South Mountain Division Achievement Coordinator Jane Clarke reports that John Pursell of Chambersburg, PA received his [Master Builder - Scenery certificate](#) this year. To earn this John demonstrated "the prototypical rendering of scenic effects from the ground up" on his layout. John has been a frequent contributor to the newsletter. His efforts at home and at the [Cumberland Valley Model Railroad Club](#) have graced the



covers of *Wheel Report* editions this past [winter](#) and [spring](#). Pursell's HO scale 12 x 28" layout is around-the-walls construction, using L-girder and plywood, set at a height of 53", and operated with MRC DCC. The back drop is painted hardboard and scenery is on foam with a glue shell. Based in the 1950's, the layout depicts the bridge crossings over the Delaware River between Easton, PA and Phillipsburg, NJ.



If you've been keeping old copies of the [Railroad Model Craftsman](#) (RMC), you'll find a better photo of this locomotive in the May 1978 issue. It's a super-detailed [Model Die Casting Company](#) (MDC) [recently part of Athearn's Ready To Roll® HO lineup -ed] "Old Time 2-8-0" simulating [Ma & Pa's No. 25](#). The piece in the RMC was written by Stanley A. Harris and in the article he

mentions living near Ma & Pa (Maryland and Pennsylvania Railroad) trackage in Baltimore, so he may still be with us.

I obtained this gem from the sale of Bob Thatcher's collection after he passed away a couple of years ago. As it turns out I have several models, some partially built, and a couple completed models of this MDC product. It's truly a great product for those who are interested in

early 20th century small railroad steam. The model is DC with an open frame motor and runs as expected, not that well. I'm thinking about how to re-motor and re-gear this to include sound and DCC. I hesitate to tinker with it because it's such a good looker, and therefore is sitting in a wall display case along with some early brass. Since my layout remains DC it's become an intellectual exercise for now.

As I've mentioned here in the past, not having a model railroad of my own doesn't preclude participating and having fun with model railroading. Thanx to the friends I've made through my participation in the NMRA and SMD in particular, I'm having more fun with model railroading than ever before.

Of the many facets of this hobby that I enjoy, one is the resurrecting of old models. "Flea Market Finds", if you will. This old 1880's



Mantua combine could have been had for perhaps 50 cents, if it wasn't in the freebee box. It had a missing truck and the truss rods, made of steel wire for some reason, were badly rusted. The model probably dates to the 1950's and was intended to accompany Mantua's "General " 4-4-0 locomotive kit. I recall purchasing one of those kits at Polk's Hobbies in Manhattan in the early 70's for \$15. Anyone remember Polk's? They later produced their own line of hobby goods under the Aristo-Craft name (if memory serves). The store itself

offered five floors of hobby goods. Each floor was devoted to a particular specialty (plastic models, model railroading, R/C, etc).



Prototype railroads often repurposed old rolling stock so I decided to do the same with this old combine. As it is now, the car is ready for detailing. The rusty truss rods have been removed, cupola is in place, the windows beneath plugged and the grab irons are slowly being installed. Much tedious drilling ahead.

Also on my bench are this pair of [International KB-6](#) box trucks. Nothing says 1950's like vintage trucks and these old Internationals are classics. I have no idea who manufactured



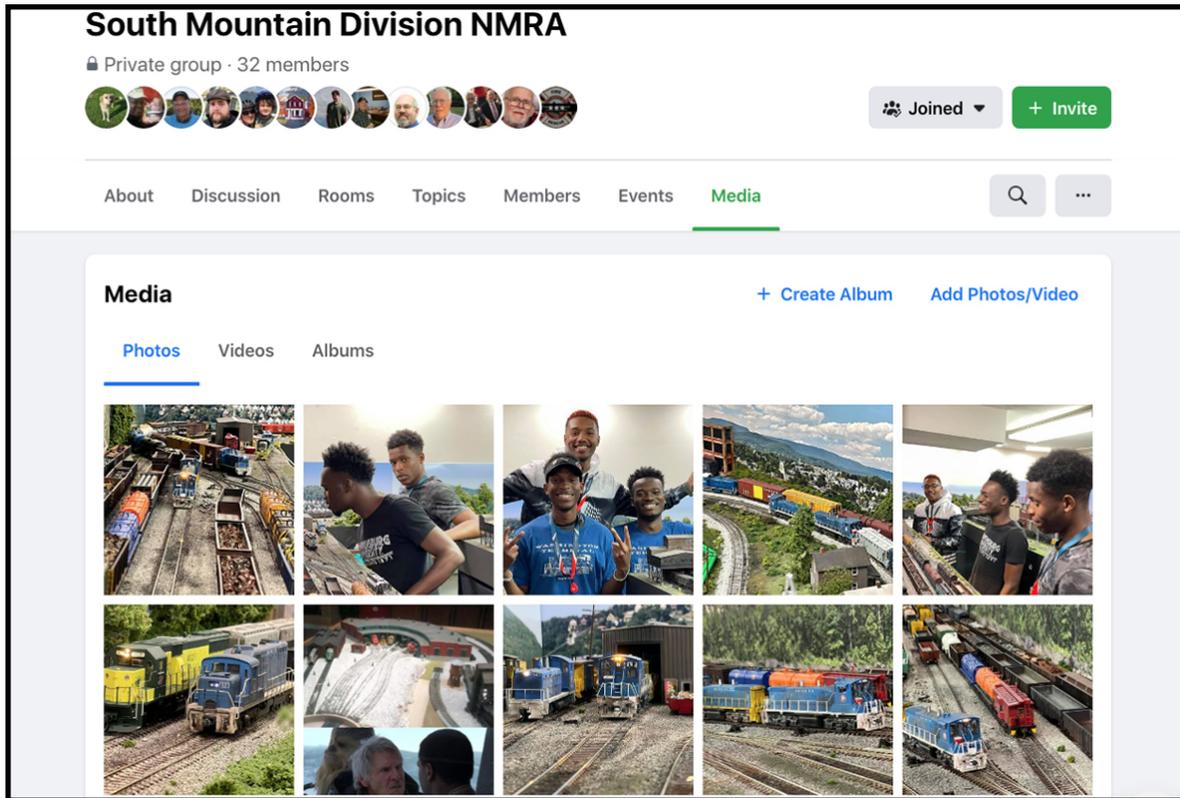
these models save that they were made in China. No idea where I purchased them either. They're nice period trucks except for the paint/graphics. I decided to strip one and see what I could do to make it more period correct. The paint appeared to be fairly thick and hard. I removed the tires and plastic wheels before using '[Strypeeze](#)' on the metal body. Unbeknownst to me, the headlights and the



roof of the cargo box are also plastic. While the box roof may be salvageable, the headlights simply dissolved.

I was able to recreate the headlights using 1/8" styrene rod. Filing a cone shape on the end of the rod and cutting it off created the headlight buckets. The stands were fashioned from styrene scraps. I'd hoped to have the truck painted for this issue of the WR but that will have to wait till I can arrange a visit to Mainline Hobby for suitable colors.





Join the SMD on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2575338559196447>. Members like Steve Johnson of Frederick, MD [*Johnson's modeling is our newsletter cover art this month -ed.*] and Jay Beckham of Berkeley, WV, (via posts from Wilbur Snyder) regularly share their amazing modeling with us. You can share too. Join the SMD Facebook community to share your modeling, ask questions, contribute rail-related news and announcements, post calls for operating sessions, and list your

for sale items (*personal ads only, no business use*). While the site is unmoderated, it is monitored, and membership to the group must be approved by Division administrators.



