



smdnmra.org

From the Desk of the Superintendent:

After skipping the December meeting due to the lack of a host we will be returning to our regular meeting schedule for the rest of the 2023 – 2024 program year.

Believe it or not, it is already time to start thinking about the 2024 – 2025 program year. First up on planning for next year is the election of officers. Normally the slate of new officer candidates would be read at the March meeting and voted on during the April meeting. Since our annual Mini-Con meeting is always held in April we need to move that process up, read the slate during the February meeting and vote at the March meeting. Therefore, I am issuing a call for volunteers at this time to run for the officer positions.

- Superintendent (president)
- Clerk (secretary)
- Paymaster (treasurer)

These are the only elected positions in the Division. There are numerous other unofficial positions (see listing at end of *Wheel Report*) who voluntarily serve at the pleasure of the Superintendent. (they are pleased to have someone volunteer).

Not listed is the position of Assistant Superintendent – I would like to re-establish this position as both a back-up for the Superintendent and to serve as a membership coordinator.

If you would like to run for an elected position or be considered for one of the volunteer positions, please let me know before the February meeting. Remember, this is your Division and your help is needed to make it function.

January Meeting:

The January SMD meeting will be hosted by Dave Thalman. It had been a number of years since Dave has hosted a division meeting so his layout will be a new experience for many of us.

Dave's 30'x15' layout represents the Pennsylvania Railroad somewhere along the Middle Division during the steam/diesel transition era. Several distinguishing features of the PRR include a four-track mainline, stone arch bridges, PRR towers, and a set of prototype signals. The unusual track plan includes a continuous-loop 4-track mainline running through a lower 10-track staging yard, two helixes within mountains, and a branch line.

WHEEL REPORT

SOUTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION - NMRA

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The Wakanda Valley branch line runs in the foreground of the PRR mainline and will feature a yard/servicing facility, station connected to the PRR, two villages, several mines and industries, a coal processing plant, and an interchange with the famed Barneytown & Scupperville RR. The layout is about 50% scened.

Mini-Clinic – Dave will share his recent mountain scenery experience using Woodland Scenics new Shaper Sheets.

Directions & Parking

Ed. - Email southmountaindiv@gmail.com and we will provide the street address.

Dave's home is in Winchester, VA. Most GPS systems should get you to his shared driveway where there will be an RR sign, as well as the address and name on the mailbox. Follow the gravel lane down past the pond and straight up the hill to his house on the right. Park anywhere in front or behind the barn. The driveway branch going left around the barn or right through the carport is a "reversing loop." Enter the house through the side door under the carport.

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.

We have had some issues with finding hosts for meetings this year. Please consider hosting a meeting sometime during the 2024 - 2025 program year. If you would like to host, please let me know. 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.

Mini Con 2024 Update:

Grant Berry is making progress with the planning for the 2024 (10th annual) SMD Mini-Con. As usual it will be held at the Blue Ridge Summit fire hall and is co-sponsored by Mainline Hobby Supply. The date for this year's event is April 6th. It will follow the same format as last year with informal table clinics in the morning followed by a short lunch break (food available on site) and a modeler's round table session. We will then return for one more round of table clinics before calling it a day.

This worked well last year with less drop-off in attendance than we previously experienced when we had formal clinics after lunch.

The emphasis on the round table this year will be layout design and operations. We are planning on having individuals from the layout design, operations and industries SIG's participating in the round table. In addition, we will have a representative from the NMRA to address the benefits of NMRA membership to the group.

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We are making a greater effort this year to use the Mini-Con as a vehicle for promoting the SMD and the NMRA in general. Don Florwick is working to place promotional information in the commercial hobby press and on various NMRA sites. There will be a large banner at the Mini-Con promoting the SMD and the NMRA will have a promotional table. Finally, we have updated the SMD brochure and have had 400 copies printed. This will allow us to give a copy to every individual that registers for the Mini-Con.

Wheel Report Changes:

Effective with this issue Bob Johnson will be serving as the *Wheel Report* editor and Alex Polimeni will be acting as contributing editor. His primary function will be to work with Division members (and others) to develop feature articles, layout photo tours, written clinics, etc. to supplement the basic *Wheel Report* content. Please consider reaching out to him and providing content.

Ed. - Email southmountaindiv@gmail.com and we will put you in contact with him.



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: Harvey Heyser

Paymaster: Ray Price

Webmaster/Digital Assets Manager: Tom Fedor

Wheel Report Editor: Alex Polimeni

Division Achievement Program Coordinator: Jane Clarke