

Volume 24/25 – 2

October 2024



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From the Desk of the Superintendent:

By Bob Johnson

A lot of things have happened Division wise over the past month. Rather than trying to address all these items in this section, I will cover each of them individually later in this issue of the *Wheel Report*.

Moving on – the first meeting of the 2024/2025 years was held at Rich Randall's in Gettysburg. The turnout was rather small but those of us who were there had a good series of discussions about some of the issues facing the Division. Thanks to Rich for hosting us.

The second meeting of the program year will be held on Sunday, 13 October. We are doing pretty good on lining up meeting hosts for this year. As of this writing in addition to the October meeting we have hosts confirmed for November and January. Our most pressing need at this time is a host for the December meeting but we will welcome volunteers for any of the other scheduled meetings (February, March and May).

Finally – Don't forget that we are in desperate need of volunteers to take over the management of your Division starting with the 2025/2026 program year and to serve on a 2027 MER convention committee (see September 2023 Wheel Report). If you might be interested, but want more information, please feel free to contact me.

Remember – this is your Division and it cannot function without your support.

October Meeting:

The monthly meeting of the South Mountain Division (SMD) will be held at 2:00 PM on Sunday, 13 October at the home of Andrew Dodge in Olney, MD. Following the business meeting Andrew will discuss layout design issues which will be of special interest to those of you who are planning a layout but have not yet started construction.

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

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WHEEL REPORT

SOUTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION - NMRA

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October Meeting, cont.

About Andrew's Central Maine:

The Central Maine Railway is a freelanced railroad modeled in O scale Proto 48 that operated in Maine in the late 1890s. Running between Bangor and Portland and west to a connection with the Grand Trunk Railroad, the main focus of the layout is the area between Belfast and Camden with a car float/tug operation from Camden Junction and Stonington on Deer Island. A steamship company also operates a passenger side-2 wheeler between Deer Island and Camden Junction. The layout occupies two rooms plus a staging area with a total area 1,000 square feet.

All the locomotives, cars, and buildings are scratch built. The engines are operated though radio controlled NCE hand held radio devices and operate on hand-laid track. The scenery is real dirt and stones with a hand-painted backdrop.

There are also more than a thousand hand-made trees. Of special interest, besides the ships, is the fully operational rotary snowplow, and a full-size Victorian Shingle Style "cottage."

Also included;

A small HO logging railroad with geared engines and a switchback located in North Carolina. It is 2'x8' with a 4'x2' leg.

Special Directions & Parking

Andrew's house is a bit of a challenge to find. GPS does not get you to his location so he has provided the following directions. Please read and carefully follow his directions. Creativity will get you into trouble.

Go to the intersection of MD Route 97 (Georgia Ave.) and Batchellors Forest Road.

Forget GPS at this point!

Come in (east) almost ½ mile on Batchellors Forest Road. On your left (to the north) is a ¼ mile long bluestone gravel driveway with two metal gates on each side. The house number is on the wood fence along the driveway, and my mailbox on the right side of the road.

Park along the right side of the driveway before you get to the red reflector. Be careful walking because this was a farm field (just rough, **no cow pies**). There is no place to park by the house.

When leaving, you can drive around the circular drive in front of the house.

Entrance for the meeting will be through the garden gate by the basement steps on the north, or right, side of the house. If it is wet, entrance will be through the front door. Look for a sign for which entrance to use.

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



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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.

NMRA Membership Promotion:

One of the topics discussed at the September meeting was the decline in Division membership. As of the last membership report from the MER we are down to a little more than 60 members (NMRA members living in our area) which is down from over 90 just a few years ago. Looking at the number of layouts on the recent Mainline Hobby Supply open house tour, and the number of people participating in the tour, it is obvious that the majority of the model railroaders in the area do not belong to the NMRA. Division member Richard Benjamin (and proprietor of HobbyTown in Frederick) has offered us the use of the meeting space in his store on 14 December to hold a promotional activity. We especially need to reach out to the younger modelers in the area. I am asking all of you for your ideas as to what type of activities we can incorporate into this event that would attract these younger people. My personal feeling is that we need to highlight the use of technology in our hobby by demonstrating things such as computer control, other forms of electronics (DCC, 3D printing, laser cutting, etc). I also think that model railroad operations can be presented as a form of gaming. I am open to all suggestions and, of course, volunteers to make the presentations.

NMRA Achievement Program (AP) certificates awarded to John Purcell.

Kurt Thompson, MMR and MER AP Manager reported in [The Local](#) that John has added Model Railroad Author and Master Builder – Structures to his list of certifications. You can read more of John's writing and see more of his modeling in past editions (years 2021/22 and later) of your *Wheel Report* <<https://portal.smdnmra.org/497-2/>>.

WHEEL REPORT **SMD**

SOUTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION - NMRA

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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.

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

