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From the Desk of the Superintendent:

By Bob Johnson

I hope all of you had a good holiday season and survived the cold and snow we recently experienced.

Thanks to Steve King for hosting the January meeting. It is always enjoyable to see his large N scale railroad. The new SMD free standing “pull-up” promotional sign was displayed at the meeting and was well received by those attending.

We had a very productive discussion concerning membership recruitment and a number of very good ideas were presented. I was very pleased with the engagement of the members present. It was pointed out that there are a very large number of train shows held in our area every year. Now that we have the promotional sign it was suggested that we reach out to the groups hosting these shows and try to get permission to set up the sign and a small table to hold SMD brochures. The intention is to have one or more members of the Division work the table during each show.

A list of possible shows to consider is included in the meeting minutes, which can be found online at <https://portal.smdnmra.org/2025/02/01/draft-meeting-minutes-12-january-2025/>.

It was also suggested that we expand the distribution of brochure racks to a number of small hobby shops and possibly even public libraries in our area. This will require the printing of additional brochures. The membership voted to fund the printing of 400 additional brochures (around \$200).

February Meeting:

The February meeting will be held on Sunday, 09 February, at Richard Benjamin’s home in Frederick, MD. AS usual, the meeting starts at 2:00PM.

Please email southmountaindiv@gmail.com to obtain the street address.

Richard has provided the following information about his railroad.

The Bedford Division of the PRR ran from the yards at Hollidaysburg, PA to the state line at Maryland. The Western Maryland connected with the PRR at the state line to carry freight to Cumberland, MD. At Bedford, there was a connection with the Huntington and Broadtop to move coal from the west side of the Broadtop mining operations.

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Meeting continued...

The current layout models from Brooksville to the State Line in the early fall of 1949. The Huntington and Broadtop is represented as a coal mine just south of Bedford. The B&O is modeled as a parallel line that diverted at Hyndman, PA that ran up Wills Creak toward Sand Patch.

The layout is a mushroom design, so named by John Armstrong when he saw the original layout at my house in Dallas, TX. I am not real happy with the layout and I am contemplating some major revisions to eliminate a low duck under and a 2 turn helix. Currently, there is a 47" duck under, so be warned.

Note that the Everitt Railway is still operating today on some of the trackage of this division.

A short presentation of the Mushroom concept will be given as a clinic following the business meeting.

Elections:

We will need to vote on our officers for the 2025 – 2026 program year at the March meeting. As of now we have one candidate for the position of Superintendent and one for Paymaster. We have a possible volunteer for the position of Clerk but it is not definite at this time. If you would like to be considered for any of these positions please let me know and/or attend the upcoming January meeting and volunteer there.

In addition, we need a number of volunteers to serve in appointed positions. A listing of the primary positions, along with a description of the associated duties, was published in the last [Wheel Report](#) and on our [web site](#).

Thanks go out to Alex Polimeni for developing this information.

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.

Please email southmountaindiv@gmail.com and we will put you in contact with Grant.

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 us know. Email southmountaindiv@gmail.com.

MA & PA Information:

SMD member Jay Beckham says that he has quite a bit of informational material about the MA & PA which he will give to anyone interested. Please email southmountaindiv@gmail.com and we will put you in contact with Jay.

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.

- 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



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).



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SMD Officers and Officials:

Superintendent: Bob Johnson

Clerk: Alex Polimeni

Paymaster: Ray Price

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Mini-Con Coordinator: Grant Berry