

NMRA Southeast Region, Central Savannah River Division 2014 Email Newsletter
Archive

JANUARY 2014

Happy New Year!

Several interesting things brewing. Don Barnes and I have invited operators from Hendersonville NC to come and operate on our layouts on **March 8**. The schedule so far is:

9AM - 9:30 Op session Briefing BH&BF

9:30 to 12:30 Op Session

12:30 to 1:00PM Cookout lunch at BH&BF

1:00PM to 2:30PM Drive to B&O, Op Session Briefing

2:30 to 5:00 Op Session B&O

If anyone who isn't a regular Tuesday night operator wants to come spend the day in the Aiken area, we'd love to have you join us in the operating sessions. This is a good opportunity for division folks who don't live close enough to catch the Tuesday night sessions to be able to participate. Drop me an email if you are interested in one or both sessions.

Jack Connors has been in touch with the Region Boy Scout coordinator, so hopefully we will get rolling in that regard.

After more discussions with members Don Barnes, Jack Connors, and myself, with additional support from the Tuesday night crew, I've thrown our hat in the ring to host the Region annual convention in 2017. So far the Region is interested, but this is very early in the planning game. Given the success of the minimeet last year, I believe we can put on a successful convention. The Region convention fund will handle the finances and will provide help with clinicians and equipment. I'll be firming up our bid at the NMRA SER Board of Directors meeting in Greenville SC on February 8. Speaking of the BOD meeting, if anyone has anything they would like me to bring up with the Region leadership, please let me know.

Three years will come and go fast! I know from experience in throwing a regional in the Pacific Northwest Region. I hope this will encourage folks to finish layouts (start layouts?) that can be shown on layout tours, and to look towards what we can do for tours. Operating sessions will be included. Even if we simply use the same venues we used for the minimeet, I believe we will be successful. We will need to decide what to call ourselves for 2017, and will need a convention logo. I'll be putting out things to be thinking about in the coming months. I'll find out the timing for when we need a presentation for the Region Board of Directors. We will need to form a convention committee.

Closer at hand will be our Fall business meeting. I'd like to include a few clinics and more activities than we have in our past business meetings. Also, a good chance to dry run 2017 convention venues. It would be interesting to see if we could swing a tour of the Aiken Railway facilities, or the TTX maintenance shops in North Augusta. But I need folks to step forward to help serve roles in convention / activity planning!

I am looking forward to this opportunity for us to come together and show what we have in the area.

FEBRUARY 2014

From the Central Savannah River Division of the Southeast Region of the National Model Railroad Association.

I have just returned from a Board of Directors meeting for the region. The big news is that our division will host the 2017 Region Annual Convention. You will here much more from me in the coming three years on this. The target is June 2017. For those who have never been to a regional, the regional convention runs on a Friday and Saturday in June. During the convention we have clinics, model displays and contest, and tours for both the model railroaders and their families. We will likely offer operating session(s) on Thursday for early arrivals.

The benefit for the division is it brings us a chance to show off our work and the area. The board favorably remembers the minimeet we threw in 2012. This would also allow us to establish a division treasury from the profits. Profits would be shared between the Region and Division per a contract that will be signed in 2015 or early 2016.

The Tuesday night operating group will also receive this message, so if you are both in OFRRA and the NMRA you will see this twice. Fred Coleman, the convention chair for the region is also copied so he may follow along with our planning.

My goal for 2014 is to establish the major venues for the event, to include the Thursday night reception, a conference center during the day Friday and Saturday, and the bannquet Saturday night. Now is also the time to start feelers out for tours.

Planning will start in earnest in 2015 and we will need to establish the convention committee at that time. We will need someone to head up clinics, tours, publicity, and other issues like the name for the convention, and convention paraphenelia such as T-shirts or hats or . . . The convention manual is available on the SER website.

Meanwhile, here are the upcoming SER conventions. This summer will be in Memphis and should be a good-size convention as it is co-sponsored by the Region adjoining us to the west. In September 2014, Huntsville AL will host a minimeet. They will then turn around and host the 2016 annual convention. The 2015 convention is close to home, in Greenville SC. We have already been approached for clinics. If anyone is interested in giving a clinic (beyond those who have already identified themselves to the convention) be sure to let me know.

It is well worth while keeping an eye on the region webpage <http://www.ser-nmra.org/>. We have a division page there, where I post collections of past monthly newsletters. Documents like the convention manual are there, as well as the Divsion SouthErneR newsletter. Details of upcoming conventions are also found there.

We are working on a visit to Aiken by operators from Hendersonville. I also talked with the new Palmetto Division Superintendent Ron Lown during today's meeting, and he is interested in visits for operating sessions also.

So, much to look forward to in the coming years. If you would like to volunteer to help out with the 2017 convention, please be sure to let me know. There are tasks such as scheduling clinics and writing the convention brochure that you do not have to be local to Aiken or Augusta to accomplish.

MARCH 2014

Here is the monthly news from your division.

We are back up to 28 members in the division. Walter Reichel and John Lacher have renewed their membership, and we have new member Tom Bailey of Augusta GA.

The winter board meeting for the Southeast Region was held in Greenville. As previously reported, I did volunteer us for the 2017 Region annual convention. I have attached the meeting minutes to this email. Preliminary planning is underway, and a primary task for this year is to choose the venue for the convention. We do need to have at least 6 meeting / class rooms available for use on a Friday and Saturday. We are currently looking at Houndslake Country Club, and USC Aiken. Certainly open to other ideas, however, there are no motels in Aiken that have more than 1 or 2 meeting rooms.

Communications is a major initiative for the NMRA. I hope you have signed up for the NMRA eBulletin, one just came out today. If you have not received one and desire to, let me know. There is a definite effort to lend transparency to decision making and keeping members informed. I do know as a small division we infrequently have "events" but if there is interest, I would certainly be interested in getting some folks on board to plan an event. We will have our required annual business meeting in the Fall, so that would be a good opportunity to put on a clinic or two or a field trip. We especially need to start scouting out local points of interest for the 2017 convention.

As usual, there is the Tuesday night operators group in Aiken.

IMPORTANT DATE CHANGE - The previously announced Saturday operating sessions in Aiken have changed from March 8 to March 22. Several operators are visiting from Hendersonville NC,

and if you find it hard to make the Tuesday night sessions, here is an opportunity to come to two sessions during a Saturday. Please contact me if you are interested and I will send you the details as they finalized.

APRIL 2014

I hope everyone is enjoying the return of warm weather. We still do have some model railroading activities going on in the area.

The Tuesday night group continues, and we continue to welcome new operators. Recently I was forwarded an email from a member in the Region not too far away (but not in this division) who was looking for home layouts and operating sessions. I gave him the run down on operations going on here, and other division activities nearby.

INVITATION: After hosting a successful ops day a few weeks ago here in Aiken, we have been invited to go to Hendersonville NC on April 26 to operate on Terry Harrison's layout. We still have plenty of openings, and will set up a carpool for those who'd like to meet in the Aiken area and then drive together. Here is a link to information (from the annual Saluda Rails operations weekend) about his layout

<http://saludarails.org/layouts/Terry%20Harrison/Terry%20Harrison.html>. His layout comes very highly recommended by those who are familiar with it. Drop me an email by next weekend if you would like to head up to Hendersonville. This will be a single-day trip.

Greg Scharfetter sent the attached set of convention documents for this summer's SER convention in Memphis which contain information on clinics, tours, and operating sessions, for distribution to each of you.

Please note: All of the forms are subject to change, so please advise your members to visit the convention website for additions, cancellations, and other changes. The convention site is available from the SER website.

MAY 2014

I hope all of you are aware that the Regional Convention is in a few weeks. I have attached the latest news provided by the Region on the convention. Also, the National Convention comes up in July, and is in Cleveland Ohio. So, plenty of opportunities to make use of your membership.

For our area, we are still looking at hosting the regional convention in June 2017. My hope is we will be able to use the USC Aiken facilities, though there were some doubts expressed to me earlier this year by the facility with respect to the future of the business center. I will be following up with USC Aiken this summer. We also are looking at holding the initial meet and greet for the convention at the Aiken Train Station.

This fall we will need to do our annual mandatory business meeting. In that subject, I will complete my second two-year term as Division Superintendent. I would like each of you to consider if you would like to be the next Superintendent. I offer that I will continue to support as an officer (if elected) and will continue to publish these news, and will continue on as Convention Chair for 2017. I have seen other groups fail when one person (no matter how great) becomes dictator-for-life. So, I would really appreciate if someone would step forward to take over the reins for a while. Perhaps we could actually have more than one person volunteer and have an election!

Recently several local modelers did visit two model railroads to the north of us and had a great time. I hope that we will have more road trips in the future, and visits from neighboring divisions for layout tours / operating sessions.

JULY 2014

The national convention in Cleveland was a great time. Coverage of the event is available through the NMRA magazine, or Kalmbach has several videos on their website for Model Railroader subscribers. I did operate in two operating sessions hosted by the Operations Special Interest Group. One was a very exciting Pennsylvania Railroad layout of the Altoona PA area,

including Horseshoe Curve. Sufficient trains were run to justify the four track main. Altoona yard had three switching crews, between the yard and industrial areas. I handled an industrial area and had enough time left over to run a few trains.

A full venue of clinics were provided. One was on how to set up a Weebly website, so I am working on that for my home layout (<http://bhbf.weebly.com/>). This clinic was given by a 13 year old! His father, a civil engineer for a city, gave a later clinic on detailing city streets. I gave two operations oriented clinics on Thursday to good-sized audiences.

If you've never been to a Regional or National convention, please consider attending one in the future. We have two regional gatherings coming up which are relatively close - a mini-meet in September in Huntsville, and the full Regional convention for 2015 will be in Greenville SC.

2017 Convention Planning. The original contact I had at USC Aiken retired, and now have made initial contact again and will hold discussions with the conference center. With the exception of the Marriott in Augusts, this is about the only location in the CSRA with multiple rooms (we need 6) available. I should know more by our annual meeting (see below).

2014 Division Annual Meeting. We are required to hold an annual business meeting by NMRA bylaws. In addition, it is time for our officer elections. I am at the end of my two - two year terms as your Superintendent. We do need at least two officers (Superintendent and Treasurer) to be NMRA-legal. If you are willing to take a turn as an officer, or would like to nominate someone, please contact the nominations chair, Don Barnes, at aikenair@aol.com. I will volunteer to be the Convention Chair but would happily turn that over to anyone interested in the position.

Having received no suggestions/input for the meeting, I will propose we meet Saturday October 25 at my house (Graniteville SC). If you have a conflict with that date, please let me know. Also, if you are willing to host the meeting and/or find a location for the meeting, I definitely encourage an alternate location, even outside the Aiken area! We have members with a fair distance to drive to get to Aiken, I'd like to see us move the location around to even out the driving distances.

If someone would like to do a clinic presentation during the meeting, or has a topic they would like covered, please let me know. The agenda for the meeting includes the 2017 Convention, elections, and planning for future division activities. If you have an agenda item you'd like discussed, let me know.

Operating Sessions. NMRA members Don Barnes and myself continue to host Tuesday night operating sessions in Aiken. Don and I have worked to modify Don's session to replicate the traffic flows actually used by the Baltimore and Ohio - Don has several B&O freight traffic documents from the B&O historical society. We continue to accept and train new operators for both layouts.

AUGUST 2014

Mark Brunton and Denise (members of the division) have offered to host this year's division business meeting. The meeting will be at their house in Allendale SC. The meeting will be at 2PM on October 25, 2014. We'll have light snacks and beverages for the meeting.

Mark does say there is a good amount of train-watching nearby - There's a CSX mainline through Allendale that parallels highway 125 from the east and 278 to the west. There's at least six trains a day (24 hour day), mostly coal loads eastbound and empties westbound. In Fairfax, about 5 miles on east on 278, that line crosses a north/south main at grade that Amtrak uses for the Silver Star (which comes through about 3:00 in the morning). There's the occasional freight on that line as well, but I've only seen one or two in the two years we've lived in Allendale. Fifteen miles west of Allendale in Hampton are a couple of rail-served industries. One is a wood chipping operation which fills and ships out giant wood chip cars. We saw that being switched yesterday. Not much action except through trains on the weekend, though. There's also some sort of flooring or countertop plant (don't remember which) that seems pretty busy. Right next to it is what appears to be an almost abandoned 3-track yard. I've been by many times, and always think I need to plan to explore it, but never have. That might be interesting, or it might be a total bust.

Also, they are building a home layout, and Mark will offer his clinic on building helixes. I will also bring my library of clinics. I'll get more details out, including directions to their house, as the date gets closer.

Remember - we need nominees/volunteers for the next round of division officers!

SEPTEMBER 2014

I hope you all are on distribution for the SER email newsletters which Rick Coble puts together. The last email provided a pretty full itinerary for the next three months of NMRA things to do around the region. A prime item coming up is the regional "mini-meet" in Huntsville AL the weekend of the 27th. I've included the program in this email. If you are not on the distribution for the SER news, let me know and I will get you added. In these days of increasing postage costs, use of electronic/digital communications is very much a necessity.

Planning continues for the 2017 convention in Aiken. USC Aiken has provided a great cost estimate and agreed in principle to be the venue for the convention. It really is the only location with sufficient meeting room space available in Aiken. The city of Aiken has a good promotional video at <http://www.visitaikensc.com/> featuring the museum model railroad in the Aiken Train Station. Speaking of videos, we recently had a visitor to division member Don Barnes' B&O model railroad who shot this video -> <http://vimeo.com/98149928>

Of course, you have all marked 2PM October 25 in Allendale SC on your calendars, correct? This will be the annual business meeting, and clinic(s) hosted at Denise and Mark Brunton's house. This will be important for organizing the effort for the 2017 convention. Also, it gives the members who live south of Aiken/Augusta a closer locale for a division get-together. I hope to see you there! And please get nominations /volunteers for officers to Don Barnes (aikenair@aol.com).

OCTOBER 2014

The annual business meeting is less than two weeks away. Mark Brunton does report that most GPS's should be able to find their way to their address. Mark and Denise (and I) would appreciate it if you could RSVP if you are coming to the meeting by this Sunday. The meeting is at 2PM on Saturday, October 25.

Please be sure to attend. We do have an upcoming opportunity to come together with a division project - hosting the 2017 Regional convention. The more folks who can volunteer up front to get things rolling, the easier it will be as we get closer to the convention date. Attached is the presentation provided to the SER Board of Directors. We need to start working on things such as "what will be the convention name?".

We will also hold our two year elections. These are mandatory in order to keep the Division going as a "legal" NMRA division.

2014 BUSINESS MEETING REPORT

Again, thanks to Mark and Denise for hosting, and thanks to Robin Riley for volunteering to be a new officer and taking the meeting minutes! We had 25% of the Division members in attendance, definitely a record for our Division. Attendees were Mark and Denise Brunton, Don Barnes, Robin Riley, Andy Chandler, Walter Reichel, Steve Pevette. Thanks to all who were able to attend. As you may note in the minutes, we would like to hold at least two Division meetings this year with clinics on topics of interest to the members. Please drop me an email or give a phone call if you have either a preference as to what you'd like to see be given, or if you have a topic you would like to present on.

Annual Meeting
Division 9
The Central Savannah River Division
Southeast Region of the NMRA

October 25, 2014

The meeting was called to order by Superintendent Steve Prevette at 2:10 PM.

- A thank you was extended to Mark and Denise Brunton for hosting our meeting.
- All attendees spent a minute or two introducing themselves to other attendees.
- Nominating Committee chairman Don Barnes presented the following slate of officers:

Steve Prevette: Superintendent

Robin Riley: Assistant Superintendent

Andy Chandler : Secretary/ Treasurer

The slate of officers was unanimously approved.

New Business:

1. At the February 2014 Regional Convention, Division 9 volunteered to host the 2017 Annual Regional Convention. As a result of feedback received on our bid to host the Convention, our proposal was withdrawn. A question was posed to the attendees as follows: Do we want to proceed on a path to present a new proposal at the February 2015 Regional Meeting to host the 2017 Regional NMRA Convention? The attendees voted no on this question.
2. A request has been made by the Augusta History Museum for Division 9 to participate in the Boy Scout Merit Badge Program in Model Railroading. After discussion, the request was approved unanimously with Andy Chandler as our Merit Badge Coordinator.
3. Discussion followed concerning activities for 2015 for Division 9 members. The following 3 activities were adopted:
 - Hold 2 Division meetings in 2015, the content of which will be determined by a poll of interest of the members,
 - Participate in the Boy Scout Merit Badge Program,
 - Arrange for periodic tours/visits to sites of railroading interest.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM, followed by a tour of Mark's impressive model railroad.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin D. Riley

Secretary Pro Tem

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2014

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to the CSRA division members and their families! We do have a New Year's Resolution that we will hold at least one division event in 2015 (hopefully at least two!). We have set **Saturday March 7** as the date of our Division Event. The officers (Robin Riley, Andy Chandler and myself) are looking at where to hold the event, and what to do.

We of course could use your help with the what to do question. Currently, we are looking at having a meeting room for 1/2 day in order to hold a few clinics, show models, socialize and have

fun. If there is interest, we could set up a layout tour and/or operating session for the rest of the day. Between Don Barnes and I, we have several operations and layout design clinics that could be done, but are always looking for other topics if anyone has one they would like to cover. So, right now we are in the planning stages. Please mark the date (that's March 7) on your calendars, and if you have ideas, opinions please let me know and we will incorporate them.

The Tuesday night Operations group continues. We are currently meeting at all NMRA members' homes - Robin Riley, Don Barnes, and myself. Although not an NMRA group per se, NMRA members are always welcome to drop by on a Tuesday night and see what we are doing. Just contact me ahead of time and I can let you know where we are meeting and how to get there.

The 2015 Regional convention will be nearby, in Greenville SC this year. They have the convention website up and running with lots of details at <http://www.palmetto-excursion.org/>.

Happy Holidays!