

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays!

December news for the NMRA, SER, Atlantic and Central Savannah River Divisions

I hope you and your families have a happy holiday season. Hard to believe that the year 2011 is drawing to a close.

Local News: There will be a road trip to the Greenville SC area to visit Palmetto Division layouts. This is primarily a layout tour, but also intended to scope out the possibility of future joint operating sessions. The trip will be January 28. Both divisions are invited to attend. If you do intend to join in on the trip, please let me know by January 14. We will arrange carpools from Aiken. If any 8th division folks are looking to carpool, I will help coordinate.

The Aiken area operators group (OFFRA) continues its Tuesday night sessions. These sessions are held at three local layouts. Recently we have begun dispatching using radios on two of the three layouts, which has added some authenticity to the sessions, and also made it easier to hear the dispatcher's orders. We will also start up "social nights" in 2012. These are intended to provide clinics, watch videos, or just socialize as a break from running trains now and then. Also in the works are some weekend day-long sessions (split between layouts). This is to make it more worthwhile for operators coming from out of town, giving more fun per miles driven, and also reducing driving in the dark.

I am working on a maintenance period for my layout during the holiday time off. I've discovered that my periodic cleaning of car wheels (a car shop is a routine destination in the freight car forwarding scheme) isn't keeping up. First indication was that pulling power of certain locos seemed to be falling off. Don't know why it is, but the build up of crud on car wheels adds friction (perhaps on curves?). So I am going through 352 cars and scraping wheelsets. I fortunately have some old dentist tools that make the job easier.

News from the NMRA: This year **registration for Grand Rails 2012 will be handled in a new way.** Instead of the large registration package inserted into *NMRA Magazine*, the full package can be downloaded from www.gr2012.org. Those who prefer a printed piece can send their request, along with their name and address to: GR 2012 Registrar, 4165 Costa NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525. There will also be a registration form and ad appearing in an upcoming issue of *NMRA Magazine*.

- Speaking of the convention, even though **Grand Rails 2012 has over 200 clinic slots filled, they're still looking for more.** If one of your members is interested in presenting, go to www.gr2012.org and click on the clinic application page. In addition, there's still some space left for modular layouts at the National Train Show. If some of your members would like to participate, have them visit the convention's website and click on the "Contact us" link and tell the Convention Committee what you'd like to bring.
- **Cruise Convention news:** Some of our members think the NMRA "invented" the idea of a cruise convention. The fact is, we're just catching up! Hobby and professional groups have been doing it for quite a while, so if your members are interested in seeing the great time others are having, check out these links:
 - Adobe Photoshop Cruise: http://www.insightcruises.com/top_b/pf05_top.html
 - Harley Davidson Cruise: <https://www.highsearally.com/>
 - American Medical Association Cruise: <http://www.continuingeducation.net/pastprograms.php>
 - Scrapbooking Cruise: http://www.cruiseandcrop.com/SB_Cruise.htm
 - Genealogy Cruise: <http://www.whollygenes.com/Merchant2/merchant.mvc?screen=CRUISE>
- **NMRA elections are coming up soon.** The official ballot was prepared by the National Nominating Committee according to the procedures laid out in the Regulations and the Executive Handbook (available at www.nmra.org). It will appear as an insert in the center of the February issue of *NMRA Magazine*, which will be mailed to all voting

members. Ballots must be returned to NMRA headquarters, "Attention Ballot Committee," and must be postmarked by April 10, 2012 and received by April 15, 2012.

Here are the job titles and candidates as they appear on the ballot. The names with asterisks were nominated by petition; all others were nominated by the Nominating Committee:

- President:
Charles W. Getz, IV, HLM
- Vice President - Administration:
Howard Goodwin
Clark Kooning, MMR
Dave Thornton
- Vice President - Special Projects:
Bill Kaufman
James "Lump" Lupfer
- At-Large North American Director
Mike Brestel
Miles Hale, MMR
- Eastern District Director
John Roberts, MMR, HLM
- Pacific District Director
Mike Bartlett
Kelly Loyd
Rob Peterson

News from You?: Drop me a note if you have any projects going on you'd like to tell others about. I will include it in these emails, and put it on the website. Also, the SouthErneR newsletter for the Region is always looking for content.

- Steve Prevette
Superintendent, 9th Division
<http://ser-nmra.org/division/central-savannah-river>
Acting Superintendent, 8th Division
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