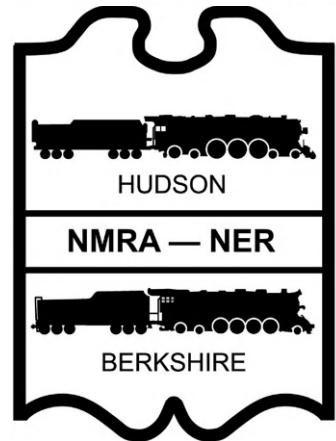


# FORM 19

**The Official Newsletter of the  
Hudson-Berkshire Division  
of the NER NMRA**



**Order Number 372**

**January 2022**

## **Next Division Meeting**

**Virtual Meeting January 21, 2022 Friday at 7pm  
“The State of the Division.”**

**Power Point Presentation By Irwin Nathanson. This will be a presentation on "The Hudson Berkshire Division"**

## **From the Editor . . . . By MARK SKLAR**

HAPPY NEW YEAR to all!

It is 2022 and the effects of the COVID-19 virus are making a comeback. I have been staying home a lot working on my train signal system. It is near completion and after all the work it is really nice to see the signal lights operating. We will be having a virtual meeting for this month so James Lauser's presentation on JMRI is postponed. Hopefully we can go back to in person meetings starting next month. This month HBD President Irwin Nathanson will give a presentation **“The State of the Division”**. This presentation will be virtual using Google Meet. All you need is a PC or smart device and an internet browser to join the meeting. Details for joining the meeting are on page 4. We hope you can join us!

Master Model Railroader Ken Nelson has an in depth article on “Working With Dry Transfers” starting on page 5. Thank you Ken!

I have a short article on the train and riverboat ride we took in October starting on page 6.

See you here next month.

-Mark



## Form19

The *Form19* is published ten times per year for members of the Hudson Berkshire Division.

The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Division. Products and publications mentioned in *Form19* in no way constitute an endorsement by the Division.

### **Contributing to the Form19**

The *Form19* staff welcomes all contributions. Letters, articles, photos, and other items may be mailed or e-mailed to the editor. Please include a note if you would like materials returned. Suggestions also welcome.

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# The Ready Line

By Irwin D. Nathanson

As I said last month, time seems to be flying by like the Doppler Effect. It's now January 2022 and we're heading into year three of the COVID-19 pandemic. Who would ever have imagined that this would last so long?

As I write this, my wife and I are just getting over our bout with COVID. Even though we've been vaccinated and boosted and have been ever so careful since this all started, we let our guards down and hosted company over the holidays who brought the virus with him. Grr... Fortunately, our symptoms have not been serious, much like mild head colds. But it does make us stop and think and to re-boot our efforts to stay safe, and to keep others safe.

As I write this, I'm still planning on attending the Amherst Model Railroad Society Show in Springfield, MA at the end of the month – assuming it's not canceled again, this time due to the rapid spread of the Omicron Variant. But I plan on being extra careful and will wear my KN95 mask the entire time. Assuming the show is on, and I attend, I will on Friday evening be attending the Northeastern Region Board of Directors dinner

meeting. I'll report on the outcome in next month's Ready Line.

Again, due to Omicron, our plans for January have changed. We're moving our in-person Division meeting to 100% virtual/remote. And, since James Lauser's original topic "JMRI Decoder Pro" is best presented in-person, we're going to table that to February when hopefully Omicron will have died down as quickly as it has spiked. Instead, for January, your Leadership Team will be presenting a Power Point themed "State of The Division."

We will introduce your 2022 Leadership Team, recall a brief history of Hudson-Berkshire Division, recap our activities this past year, kick around plans for this year and the challenges we will be facing, review our financial situation (which is sound) and celebrate the success of GTE 2021!

Your Leadership Team will be meeting (virtually/remote) the week before to refine the presentation which I will be preparing with the assistance of Ben Maggi (for the financial portion) and James Lauser (for the GTE portion).

(Ready Line Continued on next page)



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I hope that *you* can attend this meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Your Leadership Team is most anxious to get feedback from our members. As Doug Dederick keeps saying, “*You are the NMRA*,” and we need to understand your concerns, priorities, wishes, goals, objectives – you name it! With your input the results of our January

meeting can help shape a safe, productive, educational, and fun 2022 program of events.

Take care, everyone, stay safe and happy!

Irwin

## Upcoming Meetings/Events

**Virtual Meeting January 21, 2022 Friday at 7pm  
“The State of the Division.”**

**Power Point Presentation By Irwin Nathanson. This will be a presentation on  
“The Hudson Berkshire Division”  
including what took place this past year and what lies ahead of us this year.  
At the end of the presentation there will be time for questions and answers or  
anything our members would like to talk about related to our division.  
PLEASE Join us because this is YOUR Division**

### February Event

Watch for details in the February Form 19.

Please visit the  
Hudson Berkshire Division Website:  
<http://www.hudson-berkshire.org/>

And Facebook Pages:  
<https://www.facebook.com/HudsonBerkshireNMRA/>



## January Virtual Meeting Introduction

By James Lauser

Hi everyone! Since it isn't wise for us to meet indoors, and it's too cold for us to meet outside, your Hudson-Berkshire Leadership Team is continuing virtual meetings. I will be hosting the meeting on Google Meet, which is a service similar to Zoom or Webex. You'll be able to join the meeting from any computer, tablet, or smartphone with an Internet connection, and there is **no fee or signup** required. There's also no software to install; the meeting will run right in your web browser.

A few hours before the meeting starts, a link for the meeting will be sent out via Constant Contact, and the link will also be posted on the main page of hudson-berkshire.org. Simply follow the link and you'll be brought to the meeting. If you're already signed in to a Google or Gmail account, you'll be brought into the meeting immediately. If not, you'll

be prompted to enter your name. You may also get a notification asking for permission to use your camera or microphone.

Simply follow the prompts and you'll be brought into the meeting. You might need to wait a minute to be accepted, but once you are, you're all set. I'll start allowing people into the room around 15 minutes before the meeting starts.

During the meeting, I'm going to have everyone but the presenter muted by default to cut down on background noise so that everyone can hear clearly. If you have a question during the meeting that you'd like to ask, please type it into the chat, and I'll read them all at the end of the meeting. To access the chat, click the bubble icon in the top right corner of the screen, and then type your message in the box that appears.

That's all there is to it. Please join us!

## WORKING WITH DRY TRANSFERS

By Ken Nelson MMR

Many modelers have worked with decals over the years, and for some situations, and with some degree of effort, decals offer a very nice finished product for car lettering, signs, and other such uses. However some years ago I became familiar with the use of dry transfer lettering. A big reason for this was the fact that I have a freelanced model railroad, the Poco Valley, which meant that I could not go to my local hobby shop and purchase a box car or hopper lettered for my home road.

Dry transfers are available from most hobby shops, and the principal maker of them seems to be Woodland Scenics. Alphabets are available in several sized letters in Railroad

Roman, as well as Gothic, and come in white, black, and several colors. Woodland Scenics offers both small sheets of letters and numbers on the same sheet, or large sheets of one or the other. In addition, stripes are available in various colors and widths, along with railroad data to be used with freight cars. Furthermore, Woodland Scenics offers dry transfers for several railroads. Check on line for availability or ask your local hobby dealer. I have also found a rather large selection of fancy alphabets as well as designs from other companies in art supply stores. These may be used to create eye catching bulletin boards and signs, as well as original art work for the sides of rolling stock on a freelanced railroad. One of the main

features I like about dry transfers is that their shelf life is virtually unlimited. They will not become unusable as decals do.

Decals work best on a shiny surface, which means that a finished car must be sprayed with gloss, allowed to dry, then lettered, then re-sprayed with a flat finish to cover the decal shine. Dry transfers on the other hand seem to prefer a flat finish. When you are finished lettering, your car is ready for service. The larger the letter, the easier it is to work with, but even small letters can be successfully used if you are careful. Let's start with lettering a box car for your freelanced railroad. After selecting the font, size, and color you prefer, your next

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decision is to determine exactly where on the car your lettering will begin and end. Studying how various railroads lettered their cars in different eras, you can decide whether to have your railroad name on the left or right hand side of the car, where the number of the car will go, how big it will be, and whether or not you plan to include any kind of a stripe in the lettering.. Perhaps your railroad's name will be put on the left side of the car, and a slogan of some kind on the right or vice versa. You may decide to use a very large script, and completely cover the car in the center such as the Soo did in later years.

Next, get an idea of how much room a given word or words will take, by counting letters. Count the number of letters and spaces in the railroad name you plan to create. Keep in mind that letters come in different widths. A W is wider than most other letters, and an I or lower case l is very narrow. Don't forget to count spaces. With this information, determine the center letter in the name. As an example, let's use my railroad: the **POCO VALLEY**. I have no letters that vary very much in width, so I can just count them. Using all capitals, there are ten letters plus one space. This makes the V the center letter. I do not use lower case in any of my lettering for two reasons. Most railroads did not use it, and Woodland Scenics does not offer it. Next we measure the space on the car which you have chosen to use for your letters. You may mark this space in your mind with something on the car such as a row of rivets. If this is not possible, lightly mark the center with a pencil mark. Make sure that the car is clean, dry, and dust free. Now carefully remove the carrier sheet (the one with the letters) away from the tissue sheet. Position the carrier sheet putting the center letter exactly where you want it. Be certain

that the sheet is level. You can line up the letters a row or two above or below the one you are transferring, with the top or bottom of the car. Or you can line up the side of the carrier sheet with a row of rivets, the door, or some other feature on the car. Or temporarily tape a paper straight edge to the car. Rub over the letter with a burnisher or dull pencil. After removing the carrier sheet, use the tissue paper with a closed ball point pen to go over the letter. Having put the center letter in place, you repeat the process for each letter.

You can work from the center to the end, or backwards from the center to the beginning. If you have a space, or spaces in your railroad name, try to save them for last. They can be any size within reason, and might be able to help you if you find the letters not lining up properly in the chosen space. If you are working with stripes, it is best to cut the stripe to the desired length before transferring.

As mentioned above, Roman data is also available. Both black and white data comes on one sheet. The print is very small, and you must work carefully. You can experiment with dry transfers, but here you may find that decals are more dependable. When creating billboards or other signs, use the same techniques. Size is important. You want to get the attention of the person reading your work. If a word or words is lined up on a curve, you may want to lightly draw a guide line with a pencil, which can later be erased. When removing it, be very careful not to disturb any part of the letters. I have found that by first making a pencil sketch of the desired sign, I get a better idea of how large I want each letter to be. Take care to not leave large blank corners. Balance the sign. Another positive feature of transfer lettering is that you will have very little waste. This is because there are several letters

that can be made into other letters. Let's look at each letter in the alphabet, and see how other letters can be created.

**A** - An A can be turned upside down to make a V. Using a number 11 blade in your knife handle, cut both ends of the unwanted part of the A, then make sure that you remove this portion without touching the rest of the letter. By cutting first, you can be sure that the letter itself will not be pulled away.

**B** - By removing the bottom of the B, you can create a P. Use the same procedure as above.

**C** and **D** - I have not found another use for a C or a D.

**E** - An E can be used to make an F or an L.

**F** - Remove the middle horizontal line and add to the length of the top line, perhaps using part of another letter that you are not going to need. You get a T. Caution, adding anything to a letter is difficult, and you may want to just add it with a very small pointed pen.

**G** - With some very careful cutting, you can create a C. This is somewhat difficult, but it is possible.

**H** - You can cut away everything except a vertical line and get an I, but you get a large number of this letter on the sheet, and you probably will not need to create more.

**I** - A single vertical line is present in many letters. You can use this to fix a problem which may have occurred when transferring another letter.. You can also use the bottom half of an I together with the top or bottom half of an X to create a Y.

**J, K, L, M, and N** - I have not found another use for these letters except to

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create a straight line as in the letter H above.

**O** - The O can be used to make a Q by adding a curl on the bottom. It can also be used to substitute for a zero, but they are not exactly the same.

**P** - By adding a bottom curve, you can create a B or add a straight line and make an R.

**Q** - Remove the curl on the bottom to create an O.

**R** - Remove the straight line on the lower right to make a P. **S** and **T** - I find no other beneficial use for the S. The T can offer a vertical line, but this is also available in many other letters.

**U** - In a real emergency, one could create a J, but the wide part of the letter

in Railroad Roman is on the wrong side. In Gothic, this will work.

**V** - Turn it upside down and add a horizontal line to make an A. In an emergency, you can use two of them to make a W, but it is really too wide.

**W** - Use half of it to make a V, but it is really two narrow.

**X** - Use the top half, or bottom half upside down, to make an X, then add the bottom of an I to finish the letter. The larger the letter, the easier this is, but in the smaller letters, it is very difficult.

**Y** - Remove the bottom, and use two Ys to create n X.

**Z** - In an emergency, you can remove the bottom horizontal line to create a

number 7, but it does not match a real number 7. For those of you with "Valley" in your railroad name, I discovered a real time saving trick. Find a row of the letter E on the sheet. Using the technique described above, make the first two Es into Ls, and you have the middle of the word in one setting. Rub all three at once and you have done half of the word. I'm sure that there are other words like this which you may discover as you go along. Some of the above ideas will work in Gothic and not in Roman or vice versa. Why not give dry transfers a try. You might find that you like them better than decals, at least for some uses.

The End

You have probably received an email from the Northeastern Region office announcing that the latest issue of the Coupler is now online.

The NER website is - [NER Coupler](#).

## The Essex Steam Train & Riverboat

By Mark Sklar

This past fall my wife Sharon and I went to the Essex Steam Train & Riverboat in Essex, Connecticut. We had a good time even though it was a cool and overcast day. The steam locomotives were built in China and are very impressive. The Essex Steam Train & Riverboat's 2 1/2-hour train and riverboat or 1 hour train-only journeys begin at the historic 1892 Essex Station for a 12-mile, narrated round-trip into the heart of the unspoiled

Connecticut River Valley. The steam locomotive pulls vintage coaches through the quintessential New England towns of Deep River and Chester. A natural highlight is the undeveloped Selden Neck State Park, accessible only by boat. The Essex Steam Train offers unique access to several coves and preserves, immersing passengers in an on-board eco-excursion. The train travels near the tidal wetlands of Pratt Cove and Chester Creek — bountiful, natural habitats for

birds including Cormorants, Ducks, Swans, Greenland Geese, Blue Heron, Egrets, and Red-winged Blackbirds. In February and March, the majestic Bald Eagle is the star of the show when it migrates south to the Connecticut River Valley from Canada and Maine. The following are some pictures that I took at the museum. For more information go to <https://essexsteamtrain.com/>

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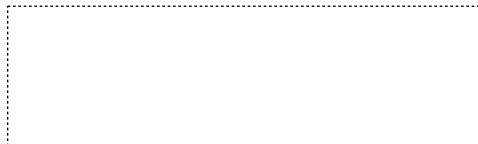
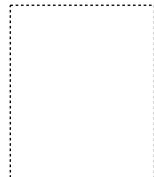
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