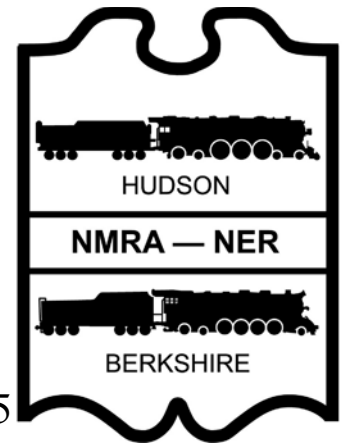


# FORM 19

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



Order Number 313

September 2015

Next Meeting Friday September 18th at 7:00

**Bob Hamm, MMR**

**“Dirt, Grass & Bushes”**

What to do with the open spaces on your layout

Saratoga National Bank, 386 Clifton Park Center Road, Clifton Park, NY

Bob is going to take us through his scenery finishing process for fields, meadows, pastures and other grasslands. Starting with the finished land form, dirt is applied first. Bob uses real dirts and has an inventory of some 70 different varieties he has gathered from all across the country. Static grass is next using an electrostatic grass applicator. Bob built his own for about \$20 and will show you how. Poly-fiber bushes are added next, right after the grass, followed by a sprinkling of various colors of ground foam. Bob's narrow gauge railroad set high in the Rockies has a number of wild mountain meadows done using this method and the results are spectacular. Open spaces blend right into the photo backdrop seamlessly, as you can see.



If you are looking for realism on your layout, you know you have to do something special with the open ground. This is your opportunity to learn a proven way of getting amazing results like those in the picture.

There will also be a Modelers Showcase, so please bring something to display.

**PLEASE READ THE  
SPECIAL NOTICES ON  
PAGE 10.**

Map and directions on page 9

[www.hudson-berkshire.org](http://www.hudson-berkshire.org)



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## Form19

The **Form19** is published eight times per year for members of the Hudson Berkshire Division and for newsletter subscribers (at \$12.00 per year).

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 Division Point By Artie Krass

I am writing this to you, the members, as the new President of the Hudson Berkshire Division. Paul Hoffman tendered his resignation as President and it was accepted by the BOD at a meeting on Friday, July 17, 2015.

Then, as per Section 5, Article IV of the Hudson Berkshire Division Constitution which states that “*Vacancies in the BOD shall be filled by appointment by the President except that the Vice-President shall replace the President. All such appointments shall be confirmed by the BOD at the next meeting of the BOD.*” I, as the current Vice-President, assumed the Office of President for the remainder of Paul’s term (until November of 2016). My appointment was confirmed by the Board at the July 17th meeting (the minutes of which will be posted on the Division web site).

The Board will now actively seek a candidate for the Office of Vice-President for our upcoming November election.

That being said, I would like to thank Paul for all that he has done for the Division, especially since becoming President in 2008. His leadership and guidance will be missed and I hope that for the next year and a half I can continue to guide the Division in a continued positive direction. I know personally I will miss Paul being around to help run the Division as he was while I was Vice-President.

For that I will look to you, the membership, for assistance with our upcoming planned events, most notably the hosting of the 2016 NER Pacemaker Convention to be held Thursday, September 15 through Sunday, September 18, 2016. More on that to follow later in this edition of the *Form 19*.

We have a lot to accomplish in the next six months – the GTE here in Albany on Sunday December 6th (with setup work on Saturday December 5th); Division elections at our November meeting for the Office of Vice-President and one sitting BOD member; Toys for Tots; our annual bus trip to Springfield for the Amherst Train Show on Saturday, January 30, 2016; and our upcoming September and October monthly meetings. As in years past all of this has been accomplished and undertaken thanks to all of you who have volunteered to help with these efforts – and we look forward to your support and participation once again.

Speaking of which – Rich Smith, Chairman of the GTE, reports that preparations are already underway. The first letters to the vendors have been mailed; the GTE web site has been updated; replacement signs have been ordered and received; and Greg Whittle and Erik Denny have agreed to assist with cleaning and renumbering the GTE road signs so that they can be ready for their placement in November. Rich also reports that he has some 100 tables already reserved for the GTE, which is on par with years past. Rich has also received a commitment from the G-scale layout along with the popular Lego layout. Be on the lookout for the volunteer sign-up sheets at our upcoming monthly meetings.

We had a good turnout and nice weather for our Division Family Outing in June hosted by our friends at Adirondack Live Steamers. Special thanks to all of the members of ALS who made our day so enjoyable – and to Sandy and Kevin Surman for making all of the food and the beverage arrangements – and to Greg Whittle who had the enviable (?) task of cooking with me on the smoky grill! The weather was great, and the train rides with the ALS member equipment and crews was “really, really fun” in the words of my grandson Ethan.

I hope you all had a good summer and I am looking forward to seeing you over the next couple of months during our busy end of the year run. I am happy being part of the Division leadership, and as Paul always said – ‘the buck stops here,’ so I look forward to your input, questions, suggestions, gripes and camaraderie.

*Artie*



## The Last Ready Line by Paul Hoffman

All good things come to an end. Unfortunately that time, for me, has come a little sooner than I expected. This will be my final Ready Line, I am stepping down as President of the Hudson Berkshire Division.

I leave the Division in good hands, Artie Krass, who has been serving as VP, will step into my role and I have absolutely no doubts he will excel as leader of our group. Please give Artie the same support that you have been gracious enough to extend to me over the years.

As many of you know, my mother passed away recently and, with that change, my father's health and well being have become a significant concern. The time needed to properly care for an aging parent has not left me much reserve to spend elsewhere. Rest assured that I am not resigning from the NMRA or leaving the Hobby, far from it. I am a firm believer in the National organization, as you all know, and I truly love and enjoy the hobby far too much to give it up. I'll just be operating at reduced capacity for the time being and, as time allows, I will start to work my way back into Division activities and in time I will ramp my activities up to my previous level, and beyond.

I have held a leadership role in this Division since 2008, when I was elected Vice President. Under the able tutelage of Greg Whittle, who was president at the time, I honed my skills and began to develop the ideals that I have used to help guide our efforts. The intervening years have been a wonderful experience and I can honestly say some of the most rewarding I have experienced. I have made some great friends and wonderful memories.

It has been a privilege to work with a magnificent team of individuals to help shape and mold this Division in to something more than the sum of its parts. I had debated, in this letter, naming people that have been a significant influence to my efforts, but that list would just be too exhaustive and I fear leaving out some of those who have had a great effect on me. Suffice it to say, running the Division is a group effort, and those who have offered help and assistance are to be praised and thanked. Thank you, for your help, your kindness and your determination to make the HBD the best that it can be.

I've modified my usual closing just a bit, but the message is still the same and just as important as ever. We are all ambassadors of the hobby and of our Division AND of the National organization. Each of us should strive to project

the goodwill and joy our hobby brings us. Feel free to disagree with how things are done, but don't just kvetch, reach out, bring your ideas to the table and help us all become better. No one is perfect and surely no organization is either, but don't let that stop you from supporting and promoting the NMRA and our hobby.

Thank you all and I'll see you on the rails.

As a member of this organization, the buck stops with each of us. If you have a problem or an issue, please work with your fellow members and do all that you can to help solve the problem. Our doors and thoughts are always open to a fellow member and we welcome all to become involved. Please remember to renew your membership in the NMRA and to encourage anyone interested in trains to climb aboard.

'The Staff' of the *Form 19* extend our best wish to Paul and his family and thank him for all the support he has given to the *Form 19* and to the Hudson-Berkshire Division.



**Special thanks to Sandy and Kevin Surman**, shown here at the picnic after their ride in Don Buesing's 1919 Ford Model T. Sandy planned the meal and prepared all the delicious salads and baked dishes that we enjoyed at the picnic at ALS in June. Kevin supported her by helping with the shopping.

Thanks, too, to Artie Krass and Greg Whittle for doing all the grilling.

See an additional picture of Don's un-restored 'T' in the extra pages.

**No new members to announce.**

**Future meetings are still being arranged.**



## Almost Hidden Treasure

By Bert Pflegl

This month the *Form 19* takes you Irwin Nathanson's Diamond Point Railway - three layouts in one.

Like many readers, Irwin started model railroading with a Lionel 0 gauge on 4 X 8 plywood, growing up in Brooklyn, NY. When his two sons were young and his family was living in New Jersey, he built a basic 8 X 12 layout. In 2001, his sons were grown and he and his wife were living in England. One weekend they visited a town famous for antique shops and he roamed into a shop which also stocked Hornby model trains. On impulse he purchased a Flying Scotsman 00 gauge starter set and he was hooked on model trains again.

They lived in a Victorian house in Ely, just North of Cambridge, that had a detached, single-car garage that soon became the train room. He built a 4 X 10 layout with the objective of watching British trains run 'round and 'round and to try out various construction and scenery techniques. He would sit with my wife watching TV in the evening and build British, American and German structure kits, which then went into storage boxes waiting for the move back to America.

He started working up plans for a dream layout. He wanted British and American trains because of his time in those countries. He'd also been to Germany many times with the Navy, on business trips and as a tourist, so he was interested in German trains, too. He decided on a design with three separate but inter-connected layouts. Each would capture the "look and feel" of each country, but not be prototypical in detail. The US and German sections would be in HO (1/87) but he wanted to keep the UK in OO (1/76).

Irwin's wife, Julie, returned early to purchase a house so that they'd have a place to return to. She selected an A-Frame style home in Diamond Point, NY. It was built as a second home for vacation stays any time of the year, but was small to live in year 'round, so they engaged an architect to design a multi-story expansion that would have a 16 X 28 foot basement, purpose-built as a train room. Now Irwin could develop the specifics of his three area layout, deciding how to make interconnections and how to include a staging area (under Germany with a helix at each end). In 2005, with design complete, Irwin realized that with years of business travel (that takes him away from home 50% of the time) still ahead of him, he would probably not finish the layout in his lifetime without assistance. So he contracted with Fasttraxx to finalize the details, create the bench work and install track, wiring it for DCC.

The layout is walk-in, table-top, with 2 X 4 legs and framework and a ¾" plywood top surface. Track is mainly Atlas code 100, with cork roadbed, because the British rolling stock has wheels 10% larger than standard HO wheels. Black, matte, "weed blocking" garden sheeting is hung for skirting. Each 'country' has a turntable: America by Walthers, Germany by Fleischmann, and UK by Hornby. DCC is by NCE with

wireless cabs and one base station. Turnouts near the edges have Caboose Industries throws with the others powered by Tortoise machines controlled from panels on the fascia. His sons gave him the backdrop of sky-blue walls with neat white clouds. Mountains are plaster-covered wire mesh on wood framing, although this makes it hard to plant trees, says Irwin. Ground cover is ground foam and static grass, where appropriate. There are lots of streets, which are thin, self-adhesive material from Busch, in Germany, that is really sticky (place very carefully).

All structures are prototypical to each country. The German buildings are plastic kits from Faller with some Vollmer and Kibri. These come molded in up to 14 colors, so painting isn't really necessary. In the USA, the buildings are mainly plastic kits from Walthers, Bachmann Spectrum and Atlas (no 14 colors) and some Woodland Scenics kits. The UK buildings are plastic kits from Hornby and pre-cut card kits, from Metcalfe. The latter are very realistic. With their three dimensional detail, it's very hard to tell them from other types of structures.

Irwin has a large collection of 'rolling stock,' often succumbing to temptation when on travel. He has steam, diesel and electric locomotives. US engines are in the Pennsy, NYC, SP and UP liveries. German locos are from German manufacturers in the Deutsches Bahn (DB) and Cargo markings while UK engines, from Hornby and others, are mostly British Rail (BR). He also has coaches and goods wagons to go with the specific rail lines. There are some UK & German passenger train sets (permanently coupled style). Some have detail features found in European models that are lacking in models for the US market. BR Pullman coaches from Hornby have illuminated table lamps inside. A DB recovery crane has three servo motors to rotate, raise boom and raise hook. A DB coach has a decoder that, when the train arrives at the station, turns on the interior lights and opens the front and rear doors on the platform side. On departure, the front door closes, the conductor sounds his whistle and then the rear door closes. There are the sounds of the doors closing; lots of detail and action. And Germany has a tram that continuously shuttles patrons between three stations.

There are bridges connecting the three countries, creating a loop around the entire layout. Although the 00 gauge stock is larger, it really does not seem oversize in the other sections. Irwin has built in a lot of action throughout the entire layout, which is much more common in European model railroading. If you have a good internet connection be sure to check out the 'Miniatur Wonderland' of Hamburg, Germany on Youtube. Also look up 'card kits' on Youtube – certainly different than what you might expect.

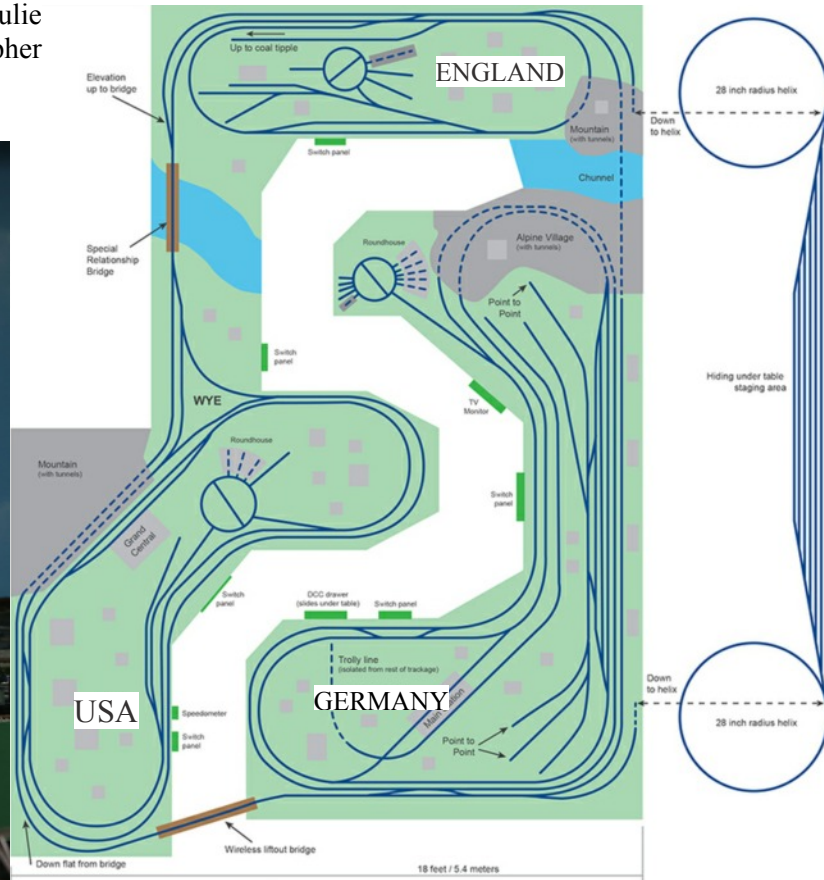
Be sure to read the captions with the pictures and check out the extra pictures in the online version of the *Form 19*. They contain some of the rest of the story.

Much thanks to Irwin for a great visit and providing a write-up on his layout (from which the above is distilled)





complete with pictures and captions. And thanks to Julie Nathanson for the fantastic pictures. Julie is a fine photographer as you can see.



Our host and the creator of the Diamond Point Railways is Irwin Nathanson, who envisioned three layouts with distinct nationalities and yet connected to run together.

Photo by Bert Pflagl

**Diamond Point Railways**  
USA and Germany HO (1:87), UK 00 (1:76)  
Country Sizes: USA 82 ft<sup>2</sup>, Germany 110 ft<sup>2</sup>, UK 68 ft<sup>2</sup>  
Staging track underneath Germany, 2ft by 16 ft, six tracks,  
Helicies at each end  
Mainline Run: USA 45', Germany 60', UK 30', around all 75'  
USA - small city, suburbs, industry; Germany - city, suburbs,  
alpine village, industry; UK - small village, industry

If you check the additional photos in the extra pages of the online edition of the Form 19, you will find photos of the Channel separating England and Europe and the much narrowed Atlantic Ocean separating England and America. These are shown in blue in the layout diagram, upper right. In these photos you will see that Irwin has some appropriate size ship models built for him by his late brother, Harold Nathanson, who was a master ship model builder.

The model of the US Constitution ship, at right, was built by Harold. The case is approximately four feet wide. The detailing is stunning. We should all be such good modelers. Thought you'd like to see.







In Ely, England the rows of terraced houses and shops are made from Metcalfe card kits. The house at right-center is a scratch-built model of the 1868 Victorian home owned by Irwin and Julie.

The single car garage-become-train-room is on the far side of the house in front of the greenhouse.

The building, top-left on the hill, is the Red Lion Inn.

The back side of the hill houses the end of the tunnel to Germany.

The airplane is half a vintage British Spitfire model glued to the wall.

Photos by Julie Nathanson unless otherwise stated.

The signal box, engine house and machine shop are card kits by Metcalfe. In the engine house is a BR Western Diesel Hydraulic. In the foreground is BR 2-10-0 "Evening Star". Behind the steam loco an operating Royal Mail coach which picks up mail sacks suspended from a track side hook and then deposits them into a track side shed; all mechanically, no electronics.



In the photo at left, the building at left-center, a large brewery, as well as those against the backdrop, left and right, are all made from Metcalfe card kits. Unless pointed out to them, visitors never realize these buildings are made from card. At the rear of the freight in the foreground is a 'brake van', somewhat like an American caboose.

The British Rail 2-6-0+0-6-2 Beyer-Garrett articulated model was made by Heljan in Denmark. Irwin fitted it with an ESU sound decoder ordered with authentic, prototype sounds custom installed by Howe's in the U.K.

Beyer-Garrett articulateds create significant traction with low axle load and were used on narrow gauge in the UK; full size in Australia, African countries and Peru.







The main German train station features a freight office (right-center) and the main station. An optical sensor inside the freight office triggers authentic German station announcement whenever a passenger train passes by. The train at the station is a Trix Articulated Passenger Train with the motor unit in the center, between two passenger coaches. The closer vehicle is a Brawa trolley on its own, point-to-point track. Isolated and running on DC, the trolley runs with timed stops at each end and at the station.

The German buildings are all plastics kits, often molded in as many as 14 colors which makes painting unnecessary. The Cathedral contains a sound system which includes two alternate “latched” bell sounds plus three different “unlatched” bell sounds to strike the hour. In the rear, the windows are reproductions of amazing stain-glass windows with striking detail. Throughout the layout there are activities and animation, most activated by push buttons on the fascia. This is more common on European layouts.



The “staging tracks” or “fiddle yard” spans the length of Germany. Helices at each end connect this level with the layout level. Track plans on fascia have buttons for switches. Red push buttons activate animation- here, smoke and flickering flames.



The German turntable, at right, services a round house, engine shed and service tracks. The crane loads steam engine tenders, often directly from the coal cars. German steam engines are still loaded this way.

The red engine to the right-center is a DB Cargo electric by ESU. The unit has functions that include operating pantographs, red LEDs underneath that flicker to represent sparks when braking, wheel squeals when going around curves, crew compartment lights with separate desk lights, and more. See page 11.





The buildings in the American City (left) and Small Town (below) are plastic kits from Walthers and others along with a few Woodland Scenics "Built-Ups."

The road material in the USA and in England are from Busch. There are lots of activities on the streets in the city and around the community.

There is a passenger train at the back of the city and lines about the community.

The old Chevy pickup's owner has used gray and red primer to try to stop the rust.

The drive in theater (below) is a slightly modified, special edition Faller kit. A DVD player is housed under the layout and connects to the screen/speaker. The neon sign is from Miller Engineering. The current feature is Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman in "Casablanca" in the original, classic black & white version.

That's Germany across the aisle in the background.



Photos directly above and below by Bert Pfleger



The staff at this US roundhouse has good expertise and takes in contract work for other lines and historical organizations. This provides added income and variety, both for the work and on the layout.

Photos by Julie Nathanson unless otherwise stated.







## Directions to the Saratoga National Bank office in Clifton Park.

As you can see on the map, the office is on the road that goes around the Clifton Park Mall complex. The most direct way to get there is to take the Northway to Exit 9.

From the South, stay to the left on the ramp as you get off and then stay in the left lane as you turn onto Route 146. As you turn towards the mall, be sure you are in the leftmost lane. Once you have completed the turn, remain to the left and take your first left after the Mobil station. The bank will be on the left.

If you are coming from the North, take Exit 9W before you go over Route 146. The ramp is short, down hill, and at the bottom you have to not only merge into traffic but cross that first lane and get into the second so that you can get into the leftmost turning lane. And all that happens in a relatively short distance. Assuming you made it to the leftmost turning lane, turn left at the light and stay in the left lane. Take your first left turn after the Mobil station. The bank will be on the left. There is a parking area for the bank.





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**Nominations for BOD and VP position:** We will be holding an election in November for 1 Board member position and for the Office of Vice President. Please contact any Board member by the meeting on September 18, 2015, if you are interested in running. Nominations will be CLOSED after that meeting so we can prepare ballots for the upcoming election. See articles on pages 2 and 3.

**Please note this special message** from Michael Romanowski-  
 “The Upstate Model Railroaders are being evicted on February 1, 2016. Please pass the word to the group. We are looking for a new home. We need approximately 4000 square feet of space. The club is 501c3 so donated space can be taken off taxes.”

If you know of any available space, please contact Mike or a Hudson-Berkshire officer.

The Almost Hidden Treasure feature returns this month with a visit to a unique layout that is actually three-in-one, Irwin Nathanson’s Diamond Point Railways. The *Form 19* Editor had the job of selecting from 26 excellent photos taken by Julie Nathanson and over 100 taken by the *Form 19* photographer, hence the extra page of photos and more in the extra pages of the online edition.

The next installment of 'The Traveling Railroad' series will be in next month's issue.

**Please bring something to display at Modelers Showcase**



- Hands-On Clinics
- Layout Visits
- Operating Sessions
- Prototype Tours
- Fan Trips
- Banquet
- On-Site Modular Layouts
- Raffle in support of Toys for Tots
- Spouse Activities
- AP Contest
- Models Showcase
- More...

# SAVE THE DATES!

The Pacemaker  
 2016 North East Regional Convention  
 Desmond Hotel and Convention Center  
 Albany, New York

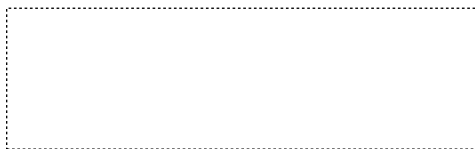
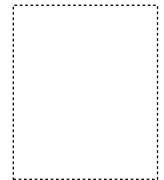
September 15 – 18 2016

A Taste of the Division  
 A Toast to the Region

Sponsored by the Hudson-Berkshire Division

## FORM 19

Hudson Berkshire Division  
 PO Box 83  
 Clifton Park, NY 12065-0083



First Class Mail





To the left is the water (representing the Atlantic) between America (left) and England (right) while below the water represents the English Channel between England (left) and Germany (right). The boats are all models built by Irwin's late brother, Harold. One has to take 'artist license' to make a layout like this happen.

Push button on fascia to turn on lighthouse beacon.  
See the caption for the ship model on page 5.

Below is the DB Cargo electric by ESU (see page 7). The unit has functions that include operating pantographs, red LEDs underneath that flicker to represent sparks when braking, wheel squeals when going around curves, crew compartment lights with separate desk lights, and more.



The row houses, along the backdrop to the left, come in the colors and decorations that you see there. One can change or add to the decoration but this is not usually necessary with European kits.

Left is the a DB crane by Roco, which won an innovation award in the year it was released. Three motors are controlled by an on-board DCC Decoder. The functions control cab rotation, jib up/down and front hook up/down. The green LED on top indicates when signals are being received. European, especially German, manufacturers put more functions into their models than we see here in US.







The beer being served in the 'Biergarten' associated with the hotel (below) most likely came from the brewery (left). The brewery and the hotel come molded in the many colors you see. If one pushes a red button on the fascia, two of the men will lift their steins in tribute. Many items on Irwin's layout have animation such as this.



This house is on fire and being tended to by the local German fire fighters. If one pushes one of the red buttons on the fascia, lights will flicker in the structure and it really does look like it's on fire in there. Press the other button and smoke rises adding confirmation. Irwin added the lights and the smoke generator. Julie Nathanson captured the diaphanous smoke in her photo.





To the left we see that Artie Krass's son, Adam, and Grandson, Ethan, shared in the rides, food and experiences of the Division Picnic. As noted previously, Ethan said it was all "really, really fun." And isn't our hobby about the fun and shared joy of trains?

Photo by proud dad and grandfather, Artie Krass, of course.

Sharing a train ride behind one of the ALS engineers is Marcel Zucchini (a founding member of ALS), *Form 19* Editor Bert Pfligl, Daisy Kavanagh, Marcel's friend Muriel Finger, and Joe Kavanagh at the back.

Many thanks to the ALS members who provided motive power, rolling stock and served as engineers.

Photo by Artie Krass

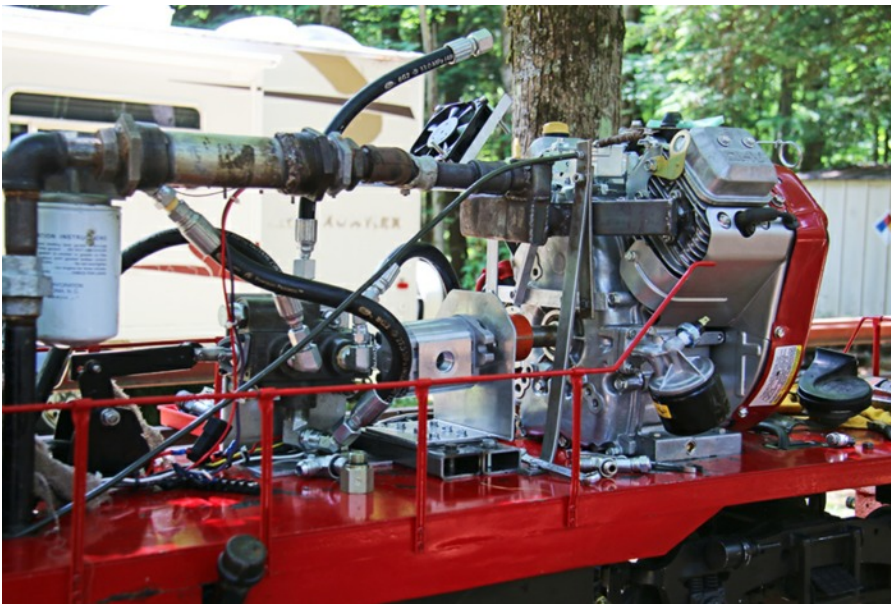


Smiling for the camera are Joe Kavanagh (left) and Ken Nelson (right) who hold dual membership in the ALS and the Hudson-Berkshire Division, NMRA. Both were active at ALS to make the picnic an enjoyable occasion.

Photo by Artie Krass







Engine insides: Inside is a v-twin, overhead-valve, gasoline engine coupled to a hydraulic pump, as these units have a hydraulic drive permitting speed regulation. The white filter is for the hydraulic fluid that is stored in the tank inside at the rear.



Here we see Don Buesing happily providing a ride in his un-restored 1919 Model T Ford.

The car has not had any major restoration work in almost 100 years of life.

It starts and runs smoothly.

Photos this page by Bert Pflegl