



# Streetcar **CURRENTS**

## SPECIAL PHOTO SUPPLEMENT

### August 2006



There are many stories that can be told about the major happenings at our two demonstration railways operated by MSM that can't fit into the regular monthly issue of the Streetcar Currents because of space constraints. So here are some photos and brief description of the events as told by the photo captions.

### No. 1239 Runs Again on ESL! July 11<sup>th</sup> Marks the First Test Run.



(Above Left) Putting No. 1239 back together entailed getting the two axles back in the trucks and lowering the motors onto the axles. The trucks were then put back under No. 1239 and the motor leads hooked up. The front truck went under the car easy enough but the rear truck had to be slid sideways to get where it needed to go. Here we see the rear truck on its transfer table and (left to right) Bill Graham, Bob Johnson and Ken Albrecht considering the next move of that rear truck that needs to slide to the left under No. 1239. (John Prestholdt photo)

Above Right. One of the finishing touches in getting No. 1239 ready for its first test run was to install the front "people catcher." Here is Tom Fairbairn (back to the camera) and Phil Settergren doing that. (Jim Vaitkunas photo)



(Above Left) We're about ready for the test run. Boy, those two cars really look good together, don't they! (Jim Vaitkunas photo)

(Above Right) No. 1239 didn't travel very far before we realized that the gauge on the two new axles was, to say the least, a little loose. Here you see the resident "experts" contemplating the situation. (Jim Vaitkunas photo)





(Above Left) No. 1239 made it to the main line and we're now ready to test the car. The car was driven slowly the length of the line with some of the guys walking along side to check the wheel gauge and to look for other problems.  
 (Above Right) That's Jim Willmore ready to put No. 1239 back into the barn after the test run. He looks happy and rightly so. Jim, and the others involved in the project are justifiably pleased with their work. Those others include Jerry Olsen, Phil Settergren, Ken Albrecht, Tom Fairbairn, Bob Johnson, Bill Graham, Dick Stoner, and John Prestholdt.

## Tree on the Wire and Track at CHSL!

Overnight between Saturday, July 15<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup>, a severe thunder storm toppled a large tree across our trolley wire and track in the "archery range" area on the north end of our Como-Harriet Streetcar Line. The downed tree was discovered during the first run on Sunday afternoon and operations were immediately suspended. The Sunday crew, supplemented by our "emergency response team" consisting of **Scott Heiderich** and **Keith Anderson** immediately got busy with the task of cutting the tree away from the right of way and repairing our overhead trolley wire—fortunately no major damage was done to the overhead. When the tree was removed the wire sprang up somewhat but a bracket arm was out of its socket on the pole and had to be eased into place. Operations were restored by 4:00 PM and the rest of the day's operations went smoothly. Many thanks to the following people for their hard work on this emergency: **Howie Melco**, **Dave VenHuizen**, **Mark Digre** (who stayed at the station to let our passengers know what was going on), **Chris Heck**, and the aforementioned **Keith Anderson** and **Scott Heiderich**. *(All three photos by Howie Melco)*



Scott Heiderich waves to the photographer (Howie Melco) as he gets ready to tackle that tree shown in front of the track car. It took a while to muster the forces and get the equipment to the site. But once our forces were mobilized the tree was removed in short order.

Here's Dave VenHuizen ready to tackle the job ahead. Dave does look a little overdressed for the task as he was in uniform and was going to work on the first shift that Sunday. But Mother Nature changed those plans and Dave spent most of the shift helping to remove the downed tree.





The final task after the tree was cut-up and removed was to raise-up the trolley wire and make the necessary repairs. On the tower car are Chris Heck, Keith Anderson and Scott Heiderich. Howie Melco is on the ladder helping to guide the bracket arm back into place. And to ensure it stays there.

Many thanks to all who were involved in getting our Como-Harriet line back into service in the shortest time possible.

## A Tribute to George



**A Tribute to George Isaacs**

(Top photo) This photo shows the employee's gate that leads from the Franklin Avenue light rail station towards Metro Transit's light rail Operations and Maintenance (O&M) facility shown in the left rear background. This gate was fabricated by Howie Melco who works for Metro Transit and who also is an MSM volunteer.

(Bottom Photo) Here's a close-up of the gate that better shows the striking likeness of George Isaacs done in steel! George was one of the founders of MTM back in the early 1960s, a renowned HO traction modeler, and a strong and tireless proponent of light rail in the Twin Cities from the first stirrings of interest in light rail in the 1970s until the line was completed in 2004. This gate is a fitting tribute to George's vision and proactive proponenty of light rail in our region.

*(Both photos by Jim Vaitkunas)*

