



# Streetcar CURRENTS



## SPECIAL PHOTO SUPPLEMENT OCTOBER - 2012

### OVERHEAD WIRE WORK AT EXCELSIOR STREETCAR LINE

(Article by **Scott Heiderich** - Photos by **Todd Bender** and **Bruce Kobs**)

**F**rom Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup> to Thursday, September 27<sup>th</sup> a crew of MSM volunteers, led by me (**Scott Heiderich**) worked on raising the overhead trolley wire at the Excelsior Streetcar Line. The wire was raised in areas where the wire was installed too low when the line was built in 1999. The trolley wire in the paved area west of Morse Avenue was in the worst condition, just 13.5 feet above the rail. To prepare for this “overhead wire blitz,” last fall we installed new back guy anchors to anchor the line poles in the area. During the seven days of the project we then raised the wire from a low of 13.5 feet to over 16 feet above the rail. After we raised the low wire in the area, we then turned to the low wire in the carbarn yard area.

**I**n the yard area we raised several span wires as well as two bracket arms. The bracket arms also had their too-long steel support arms shortened. While raising the trolley wire we also installed new full length span wires to replace the old pieced-together span wires. In the process of the work on the overhead, we also cut lots of tree limbs and in some cases cut down several trees to protect our backbone wire in the yard area.

**T**wo things made all this possible. First, we rented a 60-foot reach JGL man-lift machine with a basket capable of holding two people and tools, and able to lift the wire for attachment to the new spans. Second, I would like to thank the following people who put in lots of time, and in many cases several days of hard work on the project, that went typically from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM each day and sometimes later: **Todd Bender**, **Bob Johnson**; **Brian Krynski**; **Mike Miller**; **Don Nielsen**; **Bob Reinhardt**; **Bob Wetherall**; **Jim Willmore**; and, most importantly, **Bruce Kobs**. Bruce actually participated on six of the seven days we did the work, as well as behind the scenes support as Superintendent of ESL. Many thanks to the wives of the above volunteers for their support to their spouses. Finally, I would like to thank my wonderful wife **Kathy Heiderich** for supporting my being gone for a week—my hours usually were from 7:00 AM until after dark.

**A**s usual, there is more work to do. We have to install about a dozen more back guy anchors and then put in the back guys. Then we’ll have to put in back bone wires for the trolley wire pull offs, and finally, we’ll have to adjust the trolley wire itself. We also need to do more tree trimming along the line and around the barn. This work will hopefully be accomplished next year.



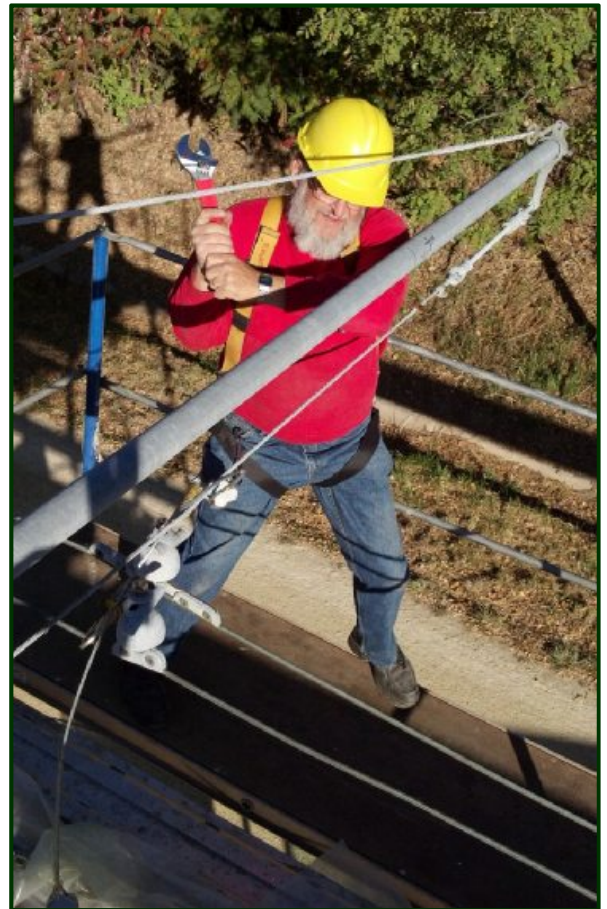
**(Above)** This “man-lift” machine was essential to the success of this project. As you can see from the photos in this supplement, much of the overhead work, and the tree trimming, was done away from the track in the area of the support poles. The tower wagon could not be used to work on the line poles themselves.

**(Right)** Here you see **Bob Johnson** (left) and **Scott Heiderich** working on wire in the area of the Lyman Lumber Company’s office building (seen in the background). **Jim Willmore** is providing ground support.





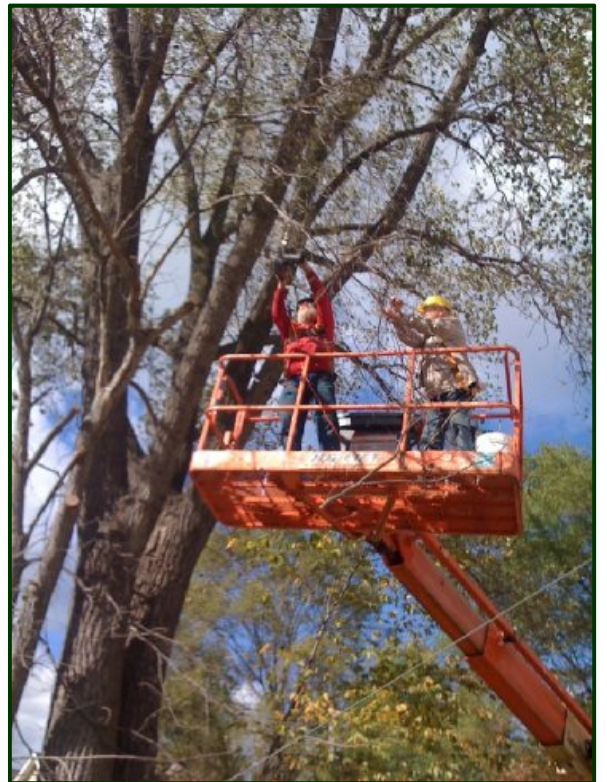
Working on the bracket arm next to the Mill Street bridge.



**Scott Heiderich** is applying a little gentle persuasion



**Mike Miller** (Left) and **Scott Heiderich** work on the overhead span wire.



(Above) **Scott Heiderich** and **Bob Johnson** are doing some tree limb trimming.



**Bruce Kobs** and **Bob Reinhardt** are hauling away the cut tree limbs.



(Left) **Don Nielsen** is seen here collecting the trimmed tree limbs for disposal.