

# STREETCAR

## CURRENTS

October 2018



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

### As our Season Winds Down—THANK YOU!!

Bruce Gustafson—General Supt.

As I mentioned at the start of the season, our Museum could not exist and would not be as successful as it is without you. In the paragraphs below I have called out a few individuals, but there are countless others who deserve our recognition and thanks. In addition to those listed below I would like to thank all of you for your efforts and support this year and hope that we will see you return in 2019.

I would like to start with some individuals that handle a lot of the “behind the scenes” work that allows the museum to function as smoothly as it does.

**Administration & Operations:** **Jim Vaitkunas** for his ongoing leadership managing the tactical aspects of Shift Planning and making sure the shifts have full crews. Many thanks to **Chris Heck** and **Tim Crain** who make sure the books balance and the bills are paid.

**Merchandise & Special Events:** **Rod Eaton** and **Karen Kertzman** for their creativity and leadership in developing and enhancing special events, which continue to generate an increasingly important portion of the Museum’s income. **Bill Arends** for management of the Museum’s store inventory, **Karen Kertzman** for enhancing the ESL sales space, and **Rose Arends** for her ability to show endless patience in teaching the finer aspects of our POS machine’s workings.

**Streetcar Cleaning:** **Jerry Peterson** for leading the volunteers and his perseverance even when the number of volunteers helping Jerry were not as many as it should have been. I would also like to recognize and thank **Ben Porter** and **Tim Layeux** for their hard work keeping our streetcars clean. Next year—I would ask that everyone consider volunteering to clean cars once during the operating season.

**Grounds Upkeep:** At CHSL, Grounds Foreman **Steve McCulloch** has done an outstanding job this season leading a talented and dedicated group of **Steve Simon** and **Ben Porter** and others. At ESL, **Scott Heiderich** continues to lead efforts to keep the property in great shape. I also acknowledge **Ben** and **Mary Porter** for their work in the Linden Hills station gardens. Next spring Ben and Mary will be leading a BIG effort to place new plantings in the cleaned-up portion of the garden (see page 3—Ed). I hope we can get everyone to come and help.

I would also like to now recognize those operating volunteers who have over 40 hours of scheduled operations this year and collectively represent 50% of the total 3,300 hours through October 16.

**CHSL:** **Rod Eaton, Bill Way, Bill Arends, Mike Buck, Bruce Allyn, Jerry Petersen, Linda Ridlehuber, Steve Simon, Pat Cosgrove, Pat Kriske, Ben Porter, Aaron Isaacs, Russ Isbrandt, John Thompson, Dave Higgins** and **Rick Krenske**.

**ESL:** **Karen Kertzman, Jim Kertzman, Brian Long, Greg Thomas, Tom Dulebohn, Rich Holz** and **John Knox**.

Finally, please remember that a significant part of our revenue-earning schedule remains, specifically the special Halloween and holiday-themed special events at both ESL and CHSL. These are a lot of fun and I encourage everyone to help and, if they can’t help, then attend the events. **Thank you for all you do.** ☺



### HELP WANTED

After 14 years of doing outstanding work as our Museum’s Membership Services Director, **John Dewitt** has announced that it’s time for him to retire. John has been the person who sends out our membership renewal notices, enters info onto our database as it changes, and sends your new membership card to you. He has done outstanding work over the years and deserves our heartfelt thanks for his service to MSM.

If you are interested in taking over from John and becoming our Museum’s Membership Services Director, please contact Aaron Isaacs: aaronmona@aol.com

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## From the Front Platform—Thoughts on Our Museum

Aaron Isaacs — MSM Board Chair

**T**eaching Streetcar History. Our museum's mission is to preserve the history of Minnesota's streetcars. Our primary tool for doing so is restoring and operating real streetcars so our volunteers and the public can experience them first hand. Multiple generations of children now know what the real thing is, that it's not a bus that looks vaguely like a trolley. By running, maintaining and repairing them, our volunteers keep alive skills and knowledge that would otherwise be lost.

But is it enough? We teach our volunteers how to run streetcars, but how well do they know the history they're trying to communicate? I've observed that many of our Operators are not confident giving a brief end of line talk, or don't have enough knowledge to vary the talk from trip to trip. This is not meant as a criticism. We are grateful that you volunteer. But could we do a better job helping you master more of the history?

**T**here's plenty of material available. We give a copy of the little Como-Harriet Streetcar Line book to all new MSM Operators. As a member you receive *Twin City Lines* and the *Streetcar Currents*. The books *Twin Cities by Trolley*, *Twin Cities Trolleys in Color* and *Twin Ports by Trolley* are available for sale in the Linden Hills station or on our website. If you can't afford to buy them, they can be checked out from the Russell L. Olson Library in the Isaacs car barn, along with *Electric Railways of Minnesota*, the *ERM Supplement*, and a big collection of books on streetcars across North America. Original Twin City Rapid Transit source materials are also found in the library.

It isn't all paper. Check out the Historic Resources & Photos button on MSM's website ([www.trolleyride.org](http://www.trolleyride.org)). It links to 2000 Minnesota streetcar photos that can be keyword searched. That number will increase to over 2600 this winter. I've done four talks on Twin City streetcar history that can be viewed on YouTube.

**S**o what else can we do to make the history accessible to our volunteers? This winter I'll be presenting a series of slide shows on different history topics, including vintage videos. They'll happen on Saturday mornings at the Russell L. Olson Library. We'll publicize the dates as we firm-up our plans and schedule. I'd like to put together a history group that can meet on an ongoing basis, do research together, edit vintage videos and create presentations that can be posted online. Interested? Contact me at [aaronmona@aol.com](mailto:aaronmona@aol.com).

**T**CRT No. 1239 Truck Rebuild. In a recent Mechanical Department planning session, we agreed to purchase four ex-Toronto streetcar motors from Halton County Radial Railway Society, a Canadian trolley museum. We've known about these motors for some time. They will go directly to local company L&S Electric (who rehabbed 1300's motors), hopefully by early November, so the assessment can happen during November. **Dick Zawacki** is the contact with Halton County to purchase and ship the motors to us.

The car swap to move No. 1239 to Lake Harriet and No. 265 to Excelsior will happen as soon as possible after the Holly Trolley finishes on December 2. We're hoping snow won't complicate the move, but we should be able to deal with a limited amount of snow. Once No. 1239 is at CHSL, it will be placed in the rear of the unheated "ready barn." The trucks will be removed, relocated to the front of the shop and the two GE-57 motors will be removed and evaluated. At that point a decision will be made to either rehab the GE-57 motors or use the Toronto motors. While this is happening, the shop will be available for No. 1300 and No. 322 maintenance.

The goal is to finish No. 1239 before the 2019 operating season, but as we know, these things can stretch out. However, all present liked this schedule because it keeps all the cars in place through the holiday events, yet minimizes the time CHSL will have to run with only one wood car.

**F**argo-Moorhead St. Rwy. No. 28. The single-truck Birney body has been stored in **Ken Albrecht's** shed in North Mankato since we acquired it in 2003. The Albrecht family wants to lease out the shed sometime next Spring, so No. 28 will have to move. We all agreed that we need to move No. 28 to another off-site location. Dick Zawacki will see if we can rent the shed it's currently in. If not, we need to find a new place to store it.

**M**esaba Railway No. 10. **Howie Melco** has proposed to turn Mesaba No. 10 and more of the Excelsior car barn into a history display. This would involve cleaning out all the stuff stored inside the car, mounting it on the trucks that are currently stored loose under the body, and repairing the body enough so people can safely walk through it. The car will be moved from track 3 to track 2. 📍



CHSL Physical Plant work On-Going



(Above) The Linden Hills station garden is now cleaned up and the irrigation system working. Next spring new plants and flowers will be planted in this area. (Jim Vaitkunas photo)

(Left) Here's Grounds Foreman Steve McCulloch cutting brush. The team this day loaded five more carts with the brush cuttings. Others who helped Steve with the brush cutting over the summer & early fall includes Steve Simon, Ben Porter, Trevor Schwarze, Bruce Gustafson and Aaron Isaacs. (Steve Simon photo)



This is a "before" photo showing the state of the car barn concrete retaining wall partially cleaned-up. (Aaron Isaacs photo)



This "after" photo shows how much better the retaining wall looks after intense and hard work to cut the weeds and brush away and treat the roots so they don't grow back. (Jim Vaitkunas photo)



The new Lakewood Cemetery platform is coming along. Here's Keith Anderson and Bill Arends working on the partially completed deck.



Bill Arends is sweeping the finished platform. In the background are Keith Anderson and Jim Willmore. A ramp on the near end and safety railings will be installed prior to the Farmer Jan & Ken's pumpkin Patch trolley in Mid-October. (Both photos by Dennis Stephens)

**What's Happening?**

- October 13 & 14 -----Farmer Ken & Jan's **PUMPKIN PATCH** at CHSL—12:30 PM to 4:00 PM
- October 20-----**TRANSYLVANIA TROLLEY** at CHSL—12:30 PM to 4:00 PM
- October 21-----Trick R' Trolley at CHSL—1 PM, 2 PM & 3 PM
- October 26 & 27-----Ghost Trolley at CHSL: **A STREETCAR NAMED EXPIRE** —7 PM to 10 PM
- October 26 & 27-----Fantastically Spooky **GHOST TROLLEY** at ESL—6 PM to 9 PM
- October 28-----**THE LATE SHOW: WHEEL OF FORTUNE** at CHSL—7 PM and 8 PM
- October 28-----Trick R' Trolley at ESL—1:30 PM and 2:30 PM
- November 23, 24 & 25----**Christkindlsmarkt** & Santa at ESL. See schedule on our MSM website for daily times.
- November 24 & 25-----**Holly Trolley** with Santa at CHSL—12:30 PM to 3:30 PM  
and December 1 & 2
- December 1-----**Vinternatt** at CHSL. See the Luminaries along our right-of-way—6:00 PM to 8:30 PM.

**Excelsior Streetcar Line Activities**

**MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM**



*The Minnesota Streetcar Museum is a non-profit, all-volunteer organization with the mission to preserve and communicate to the public the experience of Minnesota's electric street and interurban railway history. To accomplish this mission the Museum operates historic streetcars at two demonstration railways.*

**COMO-HARRIET STREETCAR LINE  
Excelsior Streetcar Line**

For more information on our Museum, our collection of historic streetcars and our demonstration railways, visit our website: [www.TrolleyRide.org](http://www.TrolleyRide.org)

The museum's business address and telephone number are:

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Minneapolis, MN 55416-0509  
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**Streetcar CURRENTS  
October—2018**

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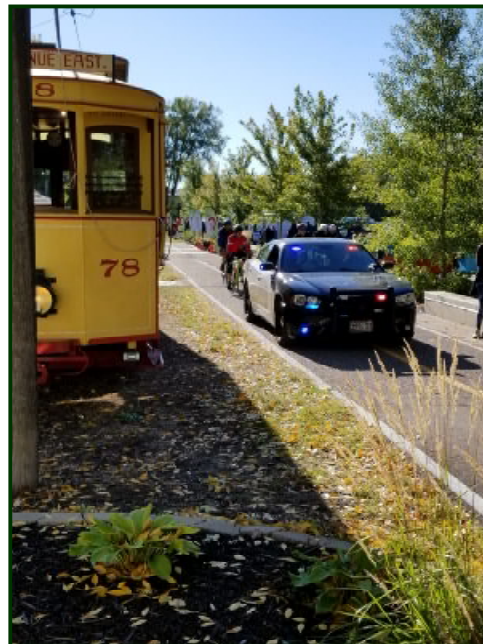
**Streetcar CURRENTS** is a newsletter published for the members and friends of the Minnesota Streetcar Museum.

Deadline for submitting items for the next edition of the **Streetcar CURRENTS** is November 20, 2018.

Please send items to the editor **Jim Vaitkunas** at the following address:  
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Excelsior's Apple Day festival held on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, brought blue skies and warm weather (for a change) with both contributing to a successful day for ESL. Duluth No. 78 sat stationary at Water Street to draw attention to TCRT No. 1239 as it offered Streetcar rides and tours of the carbarn. The finish line for The Apple of the Lake 5K run brought runners and their families right up to the ESL loading platform, and the parking lot by the ticket booth was a kids play-land with lots of fun activities. We were busy all day giving Streetcar history talks on No. 78, rides on No. 1239, carbarn tours and selling lots of MSM merchandise.

The annual Excelsior Elementary School's 2nd grade class streetcar charters were run on September 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. One-hundred forty-five students spent time exploring the Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka History Museum, riding on No. 1239 and touring the steamboat *Minnehaha*. It is always a fun time for both students and volunteers. The students share many stories of past experiences on the streetcar and it provides ESL the opportunity to promote up-coming events such as the Halloween Ghost Trolley and the North Pole Trolley with Santa. ☺



A Police car escorted the first group of 5K runners/bikers past Duluth No. 78.



An Excelsior Elementary School group poses inside No. 1239. (Both photos by Karen Kertzman)

**Streetcar CURRENTS Winter Publication Schedule**

With this issue of the **Streetcar CURRENTS**, we revert to our winter publication schedule. After this issue [October 2018], you'll be receiving the **Streetcar CURRENTS** every other month until May, 2018. Publication dates for these issues will be on or about: December 1<sup>st</sup>; February 1<sup>st</sup>; and, April 1<sup>st</sup>. If you don't receive your issue on or shortly after those dates please contact me at: [jvaitkunas@msn.com](mailto:jvaitkunas@msn.com)