

MSM Operations Newsletter

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Photo Credit: Jeff Terry



2023 – INITIAL REPORT

It is early in the season, but the season is shaping up well. We have 109 qualified operating volunteers (88 at Como-Harriet, 27 at Excelsior) with a few more working diligently to finish their training. These numbers are comparable to prior years.

Year-to-date ridership is also going well, thanks in part to favorable (albeit hot) weather. As noted in a following section, May is tracking to be in the top 10 busiest over the last 14 years.

We have noticed a couple of safety issues which we are working to quickly address with the corrective actions outlined in a new safety bulletin for Excelsior (#23-3) and some reinforcement/ clarification of procedures in the “Safety – Como-Harriet – Crossing 42nd Street” section below.

Thank you for your volunteering efforts.

2023 RECERTIFICATION QUIZ

I wanted to thank everyone for completing the 2023 recertification quiz. It is a compilation of questions from the last several years in a format I really like, which focuses on some of the actions required by the motorman and conductor. As with every annual exercise, this year’s quiz is not without its controversies / discussions on the RIGHT answer. Listed below are some key issues that I would like to reinforce. Remember, while we would like everyone to get 100%, everyone “passes” the quiz regardless of the number of incorrect answers. The purpose of the quiz is to get our operators thinking about how the car should be operated safely and, as necessary, referring to the Museum’s published operating materials. (By the way – no one got 100% - including me).

- If there is a yellow or orange cone placed near the track, the car should be slowed to 5 miles per hour?
This is true. If you see a yellow or orange cone to the side of the track it is an indication that someone is (or was) working in that area. When approaching the cone, you should be alert and be looking for someone or something near the tracks. You can, however, continue moving at a reduced speed. If a cone is placed in the tracks the car must come to a complete stop. If you are working near the tracks when a streetcar is operating, you 1) must inform the foreman of your activity and 2) when complete remove the cone.
- If a crewmember smells something burning or hears a “popping” noise in the controller or underneath the streetcar, crewmembers should immediately stop the streetcar, open doors and assist passengers to exit the streetcar, pull the trolley wheel off the overhead wire and wrap the trolley rope around the retriever, get the fire extinguisher from the front platform and be prepared to use it.
This is a good example of how to safely handle our passengers and our equipment.
- At the end of a trip, the Conductor should stand near the door on the rear platform and thank passengers for riding.
This is false. The Conductor is required to step off the car and assist passengers from the platform. This is so that the Conductor is better positioned to mind the gap and assistance down the stairs.

SAFETY – COMO-HARRIET – CROSSING 42ND STREET – ROD EATON

The crossing at 42nd Street can be very busy and to ensure the highest levels of safety, we need all operators to thoroughly understand and execute the Museum's operational procedures.

- **CROSSING GUARDS NEED TO BE PROACTIVE.**

Just as the streetcar comes to a stop – heading north or south – the guard should quickly walk to the center of the street and take control. **The crossing guard is in charge - the car operator should not wave anyone across the street.** You might think you're being polite, but it's only making the situation worse. The guard needs to clearly tell pedestrians they have to stop and allow the car to cross. Look both up and down the street, use your free hand to stop cars, and make sure the STOP sign is visible. This is a dynamic role, not a passive one.

- Once traffic has been stopped, the car can proceed. The car operator should immediately begin ringing the foot bell to warn pedestrians the car is about to move. Make eye contact with people on the right and left, tell them to wait if necessary. The more congestion there is, the more emphatic the crew needs to be to halt all movement to allow the streetcar to pass. Do not hesitate – move the car. Continue ringing the bell as the car crosses the intersection. We need to be careful, but hesitating, allowing people to walk in front of the car with the STOP sign out, permitting cars to creep up on the crossing – all cause the potential for confusion and injury.

SPECIAL EVENT SCHEDULE – ROD EATON, KAREN KERTZMAN

The program for our special events continues to evolve with small changes or enhancements.

CHSL

The Murder Mystery has changed from July to August 11 – 13

ESL

Plans for the NorthPole Trolley are complete. We will be operating from 12 P.M. to 4 P.M. on November 24th, 25th and 26th. Christkindlmarkt will once again be held in the West parking lot, across from the streetcar platform, and will be limited to the one weekend. The format will be the same as last year with songs, stories, and letters to Santa.

HUMANITY/SHIFT PLANNING UPDATE – JIM VAITKUNAS

Humanity/Shift Planning (H/SP) Reworked.

It appears that the technical crew for Humanity has made some progress in solving some of the issues with the “new” Shift Planning portion of Humanity. When I last checked the information in the new Shift Planning (Schedule Overview then List View), the information is about 97% correct. Still some strange issues remain usually in the area of missing positions on a shift. For example, the Foreman's position for Friday June 2nd afternoon shift is displayed but the evening shift Foreman position is not displayed. In another instance, I noticed a missing position on a shift but a day or so later, it's there.

Also, and this is something that probably won't be corrected, the positions for a day are sorted/displayed by position rather than by shift times. This means that all the positions on a shift are not together, so if you're doing research on who is on a given shift, note the times listed for the position and scroll down to make sure you see all the positions for the shift you're interested in.

We recommend that to get the most accurate information in a simpler, less colorful and easier to read way, continue to click on the Legacy Shift Planning on the far right of your dashboard page. And as always, if you run into problems, or need help with H/SP, call or send an e-mail to me and I'll be happy to help you

If you have any H/SP questions or need help, please contact Jim at jim.vaitkunas@trolleyride.org.

NEW HIRE TRAINING – BILL PEKARNA

The training team is led by Bill Pekarna, Training Superintendent, and includes Linda Ridlehuber, Jerry Betz, Andy Jacob, Dave Higgins, Pat Cosgrove, and Rod Eaton. Fred Beamish is handling PCC training, Karen and Jim Kertzman are providing operation training at ESL, and Rose Arends is performing POS training at CHSL. On average it takes 12-18 hours of on-car training per individual to gain Operator certification. Entering the last week of May, the MSM Training Department has conducted approximately 55 (2-hour) training sessions.

Our 2023 MSM training season started with over 30 people initially expressing an interest in becoming MSM Operators. Encouraging as this may be, it was determined that the Training Department could only effectively handle 20 new trainees. Of the initial applicants 2 expressed an interest in becoming ESL Operators, both were selected and are currently training at ESL.

Of the 18 individuals in the 2023 CHSL training class, 3 have dropped. Seven volunteers have completed training (listed below). The balance remain in the training program.

CERTIFIED:

Andy Kockelman

Tom May

Marion Garcia

Karen Noll

Jennifer Gascoigne

Faith Vickers

Tony Lebda

POINT OF SALE ACTIVITY – BILL ARENDS

Shown below is the point-of-sale activity through Memorial Day. Memorial Day is also shown separately. The weather for Memorial Day was good, which resulted in very strong performance. Overall, May activity of 3,034 fares sold puts performance in the top 10 since 2010. Note – fares is not the same as passengers as riders using passes or those that travel for free are not included.

YTD MAY 29

Category	MSM		CHSL		ESL	
	Items Sold	Net Sales	Items Sold	Net Sales	Items Sold	Net Sales
Charters	11	\$ 1,230	10	\$ 1,080	1	\$ 150
Donations	23	\$ 281	6	\$ 150	17	\$ 131
Fares	3,034	\$ 9,102	2,723	\$ 8,169	311	\$ 933
Passes	77	\$ 2,789	65	\$ 2,471	12	\$ 318
Merchandise	0	\$ 3,763		\$ 3,447		\$ 317
Total		\$ 17,164		\$ 15,317		\$ 1,848

MEMORIAL DAY

Category	MSM		CHSL		ESL	
	Items Sold	Net Sales	Items Sold	Net Sales	Items Sold	Net Sales
Charters						
Donations	6	\$ 9			6	\$ 9
Fares	502	\$ 1,506	415	\$ 1,245	87	\$ 261
Passes	19	\$ 421	15	\$ 371	4	\$ 50
Merchandise	0	\$ 384		\$ 314		\$ 70
Total		\$ 2,320		\$ 1,930		\$ 390

CUSTOMER SERVICE – JOHN DILLERY

As always, we want to stress good, dependable customer service. Listed below are some reminders from last month’s column:

- At the end of the shift, watch for arriving customers. The last departure should be at the advertised time. For example, if the shift ends at 8:30p, the last trip should leave at 8:30p. Remember, customers expect us to be available, and to not be turned away.
- Do not rush the trip. Keep moving the car at a safe and easy pace, **keep end of the line talks to two to four minutes**, and you will find yourself providing an enjoyable experience and keeping wait times at the depot manageable.

OPERATIONS BULLETINS IN EFFECT

CHSL

- None. There are no special bulletins in effect at this time

ESL

23E-1 - Operation of All Streetcars in the Excelsior Car barn Yard

The Foreman is the only crewmember authorized to operate a streetcar within the ESL car barn yard. The ESL car barn yard is defined as all track leading from the mainline switch into the yard lead with two left-hand switches, and all three yard tracks including the tracks inside the ESL car barn. Track #1 is defined as the track nearest the ESL mainline with the other two tracks numbered 2 and 3 in a southward direction.

While operating a streetcar within the ESL car barn yard, Foremen must observe the position of the switch points to ensure that the switch is correctly set for the track onto which the streetcar should go. After determining that the switch is set correctly, the streetcar can then proceed.

23E-2 - Movement of DSR Car No. 265 in/out of the Car Barn

Extreme care must be taken when moving Duluth Street Railway (DSR) car no. 265 in or out of the car bar.

Movement to/from Track 1

- *When leaving the car barn on track 1 slowly proceed through the first frog to ensure that the trolley wheel goes through the frog successfully.*
- *When putting the car away the trolley wheel will follow the track 2 wire when going through the frog. To correct for this, the Foreman must STOP the car allowing the Conductor to MOVE THE TROLLEY WHEEL TO THE TRACK 1 wire. The crew should continue to monitor the car as it slowly moves toward the car barn.*

Movement to/from Track 2.

- *It is necessary when leaving the car barn on track 2 to STOP right before the Trolley wheel goes through the first frog (2 - 3') AND MOVE THE WHEEL TO THE TRACK 3 wire. Then slowly proceed forward and the wheel should go through the frog OK. IF this is not done the wheel WILL DEWIRE.*
- *When putting the car away the wheel will follow the track 3 wire when going through the same frog. STOP AND MOVE WHEEL TO TRACK 2 wire.*

23E-3 - Required Air Brake Test When Leaving the Car barn

To avoid potential loss of braking power after the departure from the car barn for the Water Street platform, it is required that the operator conduct rolling brake test to ensure the air brakes are functioning properly.

This step is in addition to the current requirements of conducting a rolling brake test when changing directions.

OPERATIONS & SAFETY REMINDERS

We are continuing to emphasize several critical operational and safety issues.

- Slow speed zones at both ESL and CHSL call for a **maximum speed of 5 miles per hour.**
- The conductor is expected to give a brief safety announcement at the start of every trip. If the conductor is unable to make the announcement, the motorman can do so.
- If workers are present on or near the tracks, the streetcar must not pass until signaled to do so by the workers.

- A rolling brake test is required every time the car changes direction.
 - Apply power. After a moment shut power off and apply brake slightly.
 - If an air pressure gauge is available - as soon as the air pressure needle begins to move, release brake and apply power.
 - If an air pressure gauge is not available - as soon as you hear air movement or begin to feel the effect of braking, release the brake and apply power.