

STREETCAR

CURRENTS

May 2023



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

Bruce Gustafson—General Supt.

Getting Ready!

I would like to thank the Operators who have completed the recertification process and are ready to operate this season. I would also like to encourage those of you who have not completed the online quiz to work with **Ben Franske** to get access or to contact me directly if you would like to receive a “paper” copy of the quiz. In addition, recertification requires POS training: **Rose Arends** at CHSL and **Karen Kertzman** at ESL. Second year Operators and those who operated less than ten hours in 2022 will need a check ride. You had better hurry and recertify as the number of shifts in the schedule is quickly filling up – with only 525 remaining.



As I have done in prior years, I would also like to remind everyone that there is more to making our Museum successful than operating a streetcar and ask that each of you consider volunteering for one or more of the non-operating activities. These activities cannot be done by one or two people. If you are interested in helping with the non-operating volunteer efforts they are listed below along a contact person. If you are not able to connect directly with the activity leader, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator **Pat Cosgrove** or me.

- Streetcar maintenance—**Dick Zawacki**
- Track and trolley overhead maintenance—**Keith Anderson or Chris Heck**
- CHSL grounds maintenance—**Jerry Betz**
- ESL grounds maintenance—**Jerry Draeger**
- CHSL Car cleaning—**Louis Hoffman**
- ESL Activities—**Karen Kertzman**
- CHSL Gardening—**Ben Porter**

Many of the activities do not require a lot of time or an ongoing commitment. CHSL car cleaning, for example, which occurs the first Saturday of the month, requires less than 2 hours (assuming a 3 to 4 person crew) to clean the streetcars and dust and sweep out the depot. The result of the work is well worth your time.

Since the last issue of the *Currents* we have made great strides in training the 2023 Operator trainees. I would like to thank the significant efforts of our new volunteer training team led by **Bill Pekarna** and including **Linda Ridlehuber**, **David Higgins**, **Andy Jacob**, and **Jerry Betz**. **Karen Kertzman** will again lead the ESL training team, which also includes **Jim Kertzman** and **Gregg Thomas**. I would also like to thank **Rose Arends** who is providing CHSL POS training for all operators.

I would also like to recognize and thank **John Prestholdt** for his tireless energy and efforts in his many years as Shop Foreman at Como-Harriet as he has decided to step down from his leadership role. We owe much to John’s leadership, which has provided the Museum with an outstanding availability record of our streetcar fleet.

Finally, I would like to thank all new and returning volunteers in advance for their time and effort. I hope you enjoy your experience with the Museum this year. Be safe. 🍀

Inside This Issue

<i>From the Front Platform</i>	2
<i>MSM Photo Ops</i>	3
<i>Coming Events</i>	4
<i>Photos: The 2023 season begins</i>	4
<i>A word on Membership</i>	4



From the Front Platform—Thoughts on Our Museum

Aaron Isaacs — MSM Board Chair

T*ransitions and updates.* **John Prestholdt** has stepped down as the CHSL Shop Foreman. I want to recognize what a great job John has done for so many years. He has been a volunteer since 1979 and became Shop Foreman in 2005. Barring sickness or travel, you could count on seeing John in the carbarn every Tuesday and Saturday. John filled a unique position in the shop. He inventoried everything in the carbarn and is truly the only person who can tell you where everything is. He had a major role in keeping the shop records. He fixed fareboxes and trolley retrievers, reupholstered seats, repaired windows and was available for every miscellaneous job in the place. John will continue to work in the shop and run streetcars, but someone else will take over as Foreman. Thank you, John.



S*oon* there will be a little more room in the Isaacs Carbarn. On May 16 the old tower car is scheduled to leave for its new home, the National Capital Trolley Museum in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, DC. The new tower car has proved itself in service. Meanwhile, the old battery speeder is headed for the Excelsior carbarn. The bugs have been worked out of its replacement, the new “turbo” speeder, so the old one is surplus.

T*he Isaacs Carbarn* now has a reliable fiber optic wifi connection, replacing the iffy wireless connection. We hired contractor NexLevel LLC to push the fiber underground along the east side of the track from the existing wifi connection in the Linden Hills station. Our volunteers are doing the installation inside the station and the carbarn. Thanks to **Keith Anderson**, **Ben Franske**, **Karl Jones** and **Jerry Betz** for making this project happen.

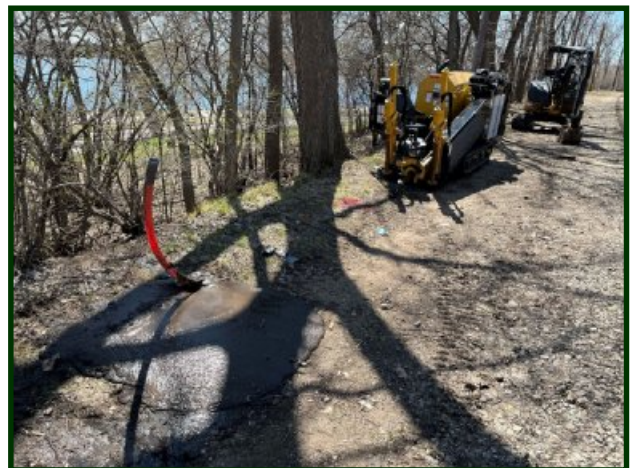
M*y thanks* to new Treasurer **David Downs** and outgoing Treasurer **Chris Heck** for setting up our new long-term investment account where surplus funds can earn a higher return.

G*rant for American Sign Language event.* The Linden Hills Neighborhood Council has approved a \$500 grant to MSM to fund American Sign Language interpreters for our new event aimed at deaf and hearing impaired persons on Sunday May 21. It will happen 1-5pm as part of the regular CHSL service. At 1, 2, 3 and 4 PM a group will board the streetcar with a guide and interpreter, get off at the carbarn for a tour and return to the depot on the next car. This event is a test to see the market potential. Thanks to **Anja Curiskis** for coordinating it.

A*re you a website designer?* The MSM website is due for a makeover to improve useability. By any chance, are you a website designer? Would you be willing to take on this job? If so, please contact **Ben Franske**, **Rod Eaton** or me. ☺



Here we see **John Prestholdt** working on installing new rattan on one of the side seats for either TCRT No. 1239 or No. 1300. (*Jim Vaitkunas photo*)



The orange pipe sticking out is part of the conduit that the fiber optic cable will be pulled through. The machinery on the right was used to install the conduit (*Ben Franske photo*)



(Above Left & Above) The new CHSL tower car in action. The spring wind storms we had brought down limbs and branches onto the trolley wire. So a crew consisting of **Bill Pekarna** and **Jerry Betz** went down the line and cleared the limbs off the overhead.
(Both photos by Jerry Betz)

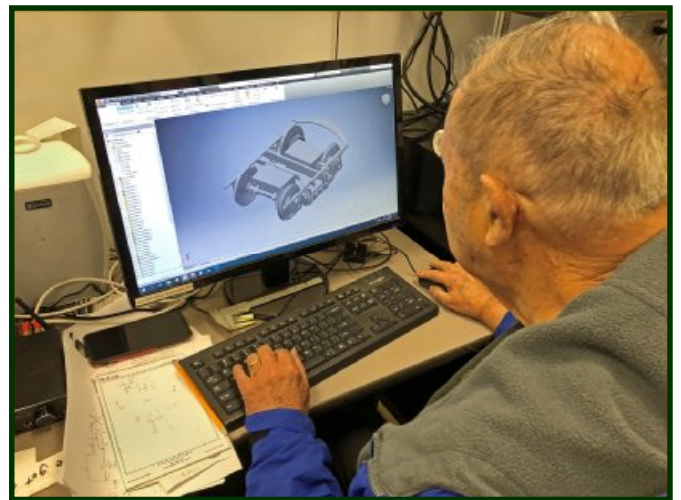


(Left) **Jim Willmore** and **Tom Schramm** consult over a machining issue in CHSL's machine shop. (Photo by Jim Vaitkunas)

(Below) In the Como-Harriet car barn **Jim Willmore** works on the design for No. 1239's new trucks. The CAD application allows the team to work out the relationship between parts. When the actual geometry of the pieces is determined, working drawings of parts can be quickly created. Parts that have to be cut out of steel are pulled out and the outline extracted in a AutoCAD 2D drawing. That drawing can be copied into the controller of a plasma cutter, providing parts with adequate precision.
(Caption by Jim Willmore — Photo by Rod Eaton)



First charter of the season at ESL featured a "mystery destination" trip for a senior citizens group (Photo by Karen Kertzman)



- May 9- ----- CHSL's special ops for neurodiverse folks & family begins. Other dates are scheduled throughout the season. Go to MSM's website for details.
- May 13 & 14 ----- Doors Open Minneapolis special event. Car barn will be open from 10 AM to 5 PM.
- May 21- ----- Special event for the hearing impaired. American Sign Language interpreters will be on board a regular streetcar and in the car barn from 1 PM to 5 PM.
- May 29- ----- Special Memorial Day operations at ESL & CHSL. CHSL ops begin at 9:30 AM.
- May 31- ----- CHSL's Wednesday afternoon ops begin—1 PM to 4 PM
- June 2- ----- CHSL's Friday afternoon ops begin—1 PM to 4 PM
- June 3- ----- Special Owl Service at CHSL—9 PM to 12-midnight
- June 6- ----- Summer Santa special event
- June 11- ----- CHSL's special ops for neurodiverse folks & family. Details at MSM's website.

MSM's 2023 operating season began on April 29th.
 Here are two photos from our opening day.

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

The museum's business address is:
 P.O. Box 16509
 Minneapolis, MN 55416-0509

**Streetcar CURRENTS
 May—2023**

Jim Vaitkunas—Editor
 Bill Graham—Distribution

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 May 20, 2023.

Please send items to the editor **Jim Vaitkunas** at the following address:
 13326 Huntington Lane
 Apple Valley, MN 55124-9481
 E-mail: jvaitkunas@msn.com



The weather on April 29th wasn't optimum to say the least. It was cold and damp. But not bad enough to curtail or cancel our first day's operations for 2023.

(Above) The crew for the first day at the Excelsior Streetcar Line are seen here: **Tim Gephart** and **Paula Callies** in front, with **Tom Dulebohn** aboard Duluth Street Railway No. 78.

(Caption and photo by Karen Kertzman)

(LEFT) Over at CHSL, here are our first four passengers of the season. The grandpa and child showed up with a season pass in hand which had been purchased online. Grandpa had planned ahead. Ridership on April 29th didn't beat any records needless to say.

(Caption and photo by Bill Arends)

A Word on Membership

Barb Gacek—MSM Membership Manager

1. **Save a Stamp!** Renew your membership online at <https://trolleyride.org/about/become-a-member/>
2. **Save The Museum a Stamp!** Renew your membership before the expiration date. That way, we don't have to mail out a reminder notice to you. Your expiration date is above your name and address near the bottom of the renewal letter.