

# STREETCAR

## CURRENTS

October 2025



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

### The Special Season

Bruce Gustafson—General Supt.

The State Fair is in the rearview mirror, and the leaves are beginning to turn, what can be next? Snow? Let's hope not. No, it's the time of year when the museum shifts gears and moves from regular season schedule to special events. As mentioned in the past, special events are a big part of the museum's operating income. It's important for you, our volunteers, to support these activities. If you are not an Operator it does not matter as there are numerous events that need your help such as keeping the pumpkin patch stocked with pumpkins, assisting with the large crowds, etc. We're also trying some new events at ESL and CHSL, so even if you can't volunteer, please come and enjoy the activities.



At ESL **Karen Kertzman** has organized three Halloween themed events.

- "Witches Night Out" (October 23 - Thursday) event at Pique Travel, directly across the street from the ESL Water Street Platform. There will be many witches (and possibly warlocks) attending the gathering for fun times, shopping deals, prizes, streetcar rides and photo opportunities.
- "Trick or Treat the Street" (October 25 - Saturday). Participating retailers, including ESL, will be handing out treats to all the trick-or-treaters. There will also be streetcar rides for all (does not include the usual carbarn tour). Last year there were over 740 riders in 6 hours.
- Trolleyween (October 26 - Sunday). This popular event sees costumed young children board the streetcar for a treat, a ride, and entertainment from Story Time Trolley reader, Miss Debra. The runs are prepaid and have sold out in the past.

At CHSL **Rod Eaton** and **Katie Barron** are collaborating to organize several events. **Leah Harp** has added a special neurodiversity event to serve an important demographic.

Last year at CHSL we had 7 special events during October (Pumpkin Patch, Transylvania Trolley, Trick 'r Trolley, Graveyard Ghost Stories, Ghost Trolley Late Show, A Streetcar Named Expire and Spirits on the Streetcar). Of course, our biggest fundraiser was the Pumpkin Patch which raised nearly \$4,200 followed by the Ghost Trolley Late Show \$1,640. Revenue from the others was Trick 'r Trolley (\$900), Transylvania Trolley (\$1,150), Graveyard Ghost Stories (\$1,012), Spirits on the Streetcar (\$1,100) and Streetcar Named Expire (previously the Ghost Trolley) had only 97 riders (\$508). The Streetcar Named Expire event over the past several years has had low ridership.

The CHSL events will be the same this year except for there will be no Ghost Trolley Late Show and we have added a second Spirits on the Streetcar and the neurodiversity Halloween Hangout events. The events are designed to focus on our broad guest population and include ones designed for kids and some for adults. The summarized schedule is listed below.

- Pumpkin Patch set-up (September 30 - Tuesday)
- Farmer Ken's Pumpkin Patch (October 4-5 - Saturday/Sunday)
- Transylvania Trolley (October 11 - Saturday)
- Graveyard Ghost Stories (October 17 - Friday)
- Streetcar Named Expire (October 24 - Friday)
- Trick R' Trolley (October 26 - Sunday)
- Neurodiversity Halloween Hangout (October 31 - Friday)
- Spirits on a Streetcar (October 31 - Friday) 🍷

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## From the Front Platform—Thoughts on Our Museum

Aaron Isaacs — MSM Board Chair

The Linden Hills station canopy is done! For years we've wanted some shade on the platform during those hot summer afternoons. The question was how best to achieve that. After considering multiple ideas, we decided to replicate part of the 1912 canopy, using the original footings. The old wood platform needed to be replaced and that was the impetus to move forward. The project took 18 months from start to finish. The first 9 months were spent on design and approval. Architect **Joe Metzler** has been interested in the 1912 "Chalet Station" for many years. He did the initial design. Architect **Tim Fuller** finalized the design, with necessary input from structural engineer **Ken Green**.



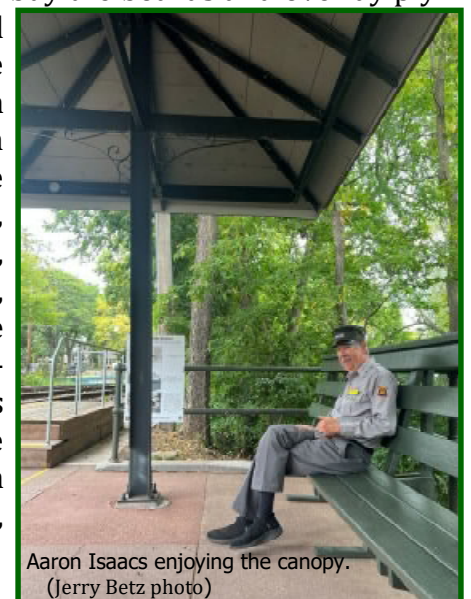
Because our Como-Harriet Line is on the National Register of Historic Places, the canopy design required approval from the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission. We received that approval, then applied for a construction permit. That required a new survey of the site, an unforeseen delay. By the time we received the permit, it was too late in 2024 to start construction. However, a break in the weather allowed us to remove the old wood platform before winter set in.

Once Spring 2025 arrived, the first step was to repair the deteriorated concrete retaining wall that supports the platform. The corner railing post was actually hanging in mid-air. Hage Concrete also laid a short north platform extension, into which we embedded three vintage Twin City Lines manhole covers.

Although a rather simple building, the project still required separate contractors for concrete, steel fabrication, steel erection, electrical wiring and roofing. We needed a general contractor and for the second time, **Glen Sandness** offered his services for free. You may recall Glen ran the 2015 car-barn expansion that added the speeder shed, machine shop and library. As before, he bid the contracts, and selected the vendors. I served as overall project manager.

Every project has a couple of surprises and this one was no different. The north and middle original canopy footings were 16 feet apart. For some unknown reason, the middle and south footings were 16 feet 6 inches apart, which we didn't learn before the steel was delivered. Concrete filled sonotubes surrounded each column base. On the spur of the moment we had to switch to a wider sonotube to accommodate the extra six inches.

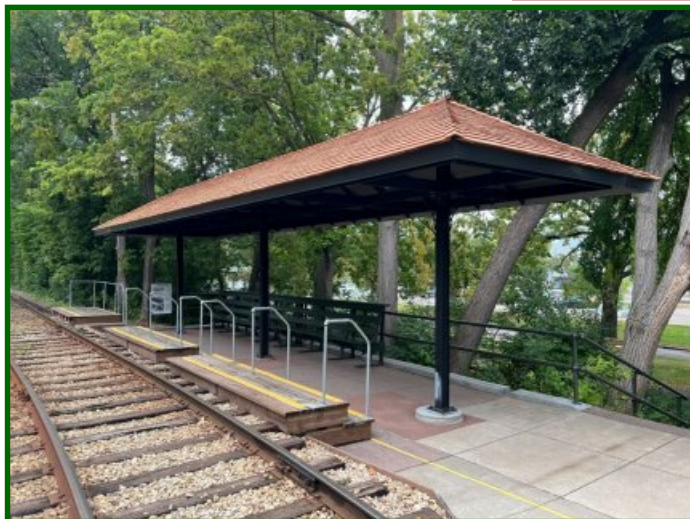
The big surprise was discovering that the roofing contract did not include installing the roof boards. Glen took it on, designing the roof board structure. He hired a man to buy the boards and overlay plywood, mill tongues and grooves in the boards, paint them, and install them. That went well until installation, when the man's rented home was sold, causing a personal crisis that made him unavailable. Glen and I took over the installation work, which was delayed by a month of near constant rain and high heat. It resumed with considerable help from museum volunteers. I want to thank **Keith Anderson**, **Miles Anderson**, **Bill Arends**, **Scott** and **Cate Benson**, **Jerry Betz**, **Pat Cosgrove**, **Ben Franske**, **Bea Funk**, **Karl Jones**, **Augie Lassig**, **Tom May**, **Ian McComb** and **Eric Werner**. Once the roof boards were up, the last steps of roof shingling and installing the ornamental iron-work went quickly. An interpretive sign was installed that explains what original and replicated at the entire station. Except for some touch up painting, the project was completed on September 20 when the benches were moved under the canopy. We finally have shade, and the depot experience is more historic than before. ☺



Aaron Isaacs enjoying the canopy.  
(Jerry Betz photo)



## CHSL Photo Update



The replica platform canopy at CHSL is finally completed. Here it is complete with waiting benches. (Aaron Isaacs photo)



**Jerry Betz** helped Aaron move the benches to their final location. Here Jerry is making history by being the first person to sit on a bench under the canopy in 71 years! (Aaron Isaacs Photo)



Here are veteran museum members **Bill Graham** (L) and **Mike Buck**. Between them they have a combined 84 years of service to our museum! Bill is retired from operating but Mike is still going strong.



Andy Jacob writes: On September 21st, a three-person crew comprised of Foreman **Andy Jacob** (middle), **Corgan Archuleta**, and **Joe Harrington** held-down the Sunday afternoon schedule. **Michael Buck**, who came to photograph the new canopy, took this picture of what I have to imagine is the youngest average age of any crew to work a shift at CHSL. I'm the oldest at 29! As Aaron has said numerous times, the health of any organization is, in part, measured by the recruitment and retention of young volunteers. I'm grateful for leadership at MSM which has helped this to be.

(Left 2 photos) The 2025 family picnic was a great success thanks to **Charon, Sara Dibble, Jennifer Gascoigne, Anja Curiskis** and **Leah Harp**. Grilling was done by **Lois Hall**. Many thanks to the George Isaacs carbarn and shop crew for transforming the car barn into a social space. (Karen Kertzman photos)

Streetcar **CURRENTS** Winter Publication Schedule

This issue of the **Streetcar CURRENTS** is the last monthly issue you'll receive in 2025. Starting with the November-December issue, you'll receive the **Streetcar CURRENTS** every other month. Monthly issues will return in May 2026. Publication date for the next issue will be on or about December 1<sup>st</sup>.



October 4 & 5-----Farmer Jan & Ken's **Pumpkin Patch** at CHSL—12:30 PM to 4:00 PM  
 October 11-----**TRANSYLVANIA TROLLEY** at CHSL—12:30 PM to 4:00 PM  
 October 17-----**Graveyard Ghost Stories** at CHSL 8:30 PM (**SOLD OUT**)  
 October 24-----**STREETCAR NAMED EXPIRE** at CHSL 7 PM to 10 PM  
 October 25-----**TRICK & TREAT** in Excelsior—10 AM to 4 PM  
 October 26-----**TROLLEYWEEN** at ESL—1 PM, 2 PM & 3 PM  
 October 26-----**TRICK 'R TROLLEY** at CHSL—1 PM, 2 PM & 3 PM  
 October 31-----**HALLOWEEN HANGOUT** at CHSL for neurodiverse folks, families and friends—5 PM to 8 PM  
 October 31 & November 1--**SPIRITS ON A STREETCAR** at CHSL—(October 31 - 11 PM) (November 1 - 10 PM)  
 November 28 & 29-----**Jingle Bells Trolley at ESL**—12-Noon to 4 PM. Carols, candy canes, and letters to Santa  
 Nov 29 & 30-Dec 6&7-----**HOLLY TROLLEY** at CHSL featuring Santa Claus—12-noon to 3:30 PM  
 November 29-----*An Evening with Santa* at CHSL—5:30 and 6:30 PM  
 December 6-----**Vinfernaff** at CHSL—6 PM to 8:30 PM

### Excelsior Streetcar Line Photos

#### 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 e-mail address are:

P.O. Box 16509  
 Minneapolis, MN 55416-0509  
[info@trolleyride.org](mailto:info@trolleyride.org)

#### Streetcar CURRENTS October—2025

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 November 20, 2025.

Please send items for the Currents to:  
[Jim.vaitkunas@trolleyride.org](mailto:Jim.vaitkunas@trolleyride.org)

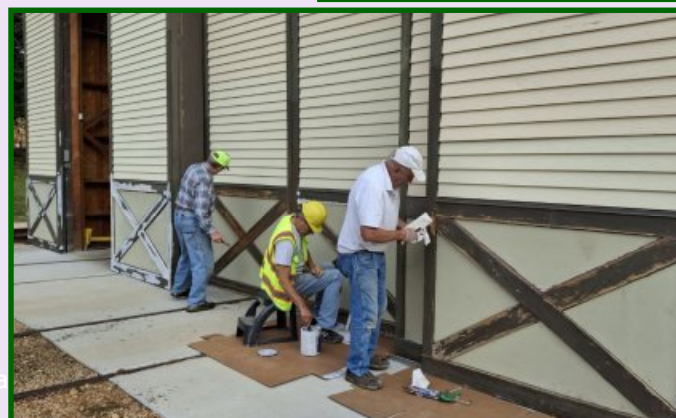


Michael Buck, Louis Hoffman, Karen Kertzman, and Dave Buckman are all ready for the first Excelsior Apple Days festival shift. It turned out to be a very busy day of giving rides, car barn tours and speaking with riders as they waited for a ride.

(Jim Kertzman photo)

The first of four charters for the Excelsior Elementary second grade classes annual outing. A total of 140 riders. Not pictured, but operating the charter: Jim Kertzman, Sarah Dibble, and Karen Kertzman.

(Sarah Dibble photo)



Jerry Draeger, Carl Floren, and Bob Geiser scraping the ESL car barn doors in preparation for some badly needed paint.

(Jim Kertzman photo)