



MSM Operations Newsletter

Issue No. 26-2
May - 2026



2026 – WELCOME BACK

The weather cooperated and the opening weekend at both locations was very successful. At Como-Harriet in addition to the regular operations, the museum participated in the Linden Hills area garage sale and sold several hundred dollars worth of “priceless gems” that were deemed surplus. Removing them from the car barn area was also part of the long-term plan for remodeling the car barn later this year. While the overall operations went well, events showed that we are a little rusty as I will point out in a “Operational Reminders” later in the newsletter.

We still have a dozen or so prior year volunteers who either have not completed the recertification process or who have not notified museum leadership of their desire not to volunteer for the 2026 season. As a reminder, the outline of the recertification process includes:

- All volunteers have been deactivated in Shift Planning/ Humanity. Volunteers are reactivated once they have completed the recertification requirements.
- Recertification Quiz. All operating volunteers (excluding station agent only volunteers) will be required to take a recertification quiz, which will be done in-person at the Foremen and Operator meetings.
- Check Rides. All second-year operators and operators who had less than 10 hours of operating time in 2025 are required to complete a hands-on check ride (in addition to completing the quiz) to ensure their operating skills meet the standard to operate the equipment safely and effectively. Since the scheduled sessions have passed, we will work with those remaining operators requiring a check ride to find a date/ time that works.
- POS Training. All volunteers are required to complete refresher training for the POS.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to welcome back all returning Operating crew members. On behalf of the Museum’s operations leadership, I would like to thank you again for your time and active participation in supporting our museum and with your help look forward to a great 2026 season.

2026 OPERATING SCHEDULE

As a follow-up to the April edition of the Operations Newsletter, the full schedule (which is in effect Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend) is summarized below

ESL

Dates	Day of Week	Hours	Comments
May 26 - Sept 6	Thursday	2p-4p	Farmers Market (starts 6/18)
	Saturday	10a-4p	
	Sunday	12:30p-3:30p	

Dates	Day of Week	Hours	Comments
May 26 - Sept 6	Wednesday	1-4p; 6:30-8:30p	
	Thursday	1-4p; 6:30-8:30p	PCC Thursday night
	Friday	1-4p; 6:30-8:30p	
	Saturday	1p-7p	PCC operating both shifts
	Sunday	1p-7p	

PCC OPERATIONS

For the 2026 Operating season we are again encouraging operators to train on the PCC. Katie Barron and her team have been working over the last month to increase the number and proficiency of PCC operators. As shown in the table above, 30% (3 out of 10) of the shifts during the peak season are PCC shifts. To ensure full crews we are trying something different this year – namely that all PCC shifts have space for a non-PCC operator in addition to the station agent. The intent is to ensure that there are two operators on the car and allow rotation and to allow a PCC operator who wants additional training/ supervision to operate.

Katie provided the following information to describe the non-PCC operator’s position: “Operators on 322 that are not certified to operate the PCC must be instructed at the start of every shift how to turn the MG switch “off” in the event of an emergency. This position (acting as the conductor) may roam the car and answer questions during forward operations, but they must be seated in the motorman’s seat and alert to the operator’s instructions during reverse operations.”

HUMANITY/SHIFT PLANNING (H/SP) UPDATES – JIM VAITKUNAS

Here are some reminders on the “new” Shift Planning and the “Legacy” Shift Planning.

- Dashboard and other screens of Humanity remain essentially like 2025’s.
- You will still click on the Shifts Available button on the left side of your dashboard screen to sign-up for shifts.
- Do not rely on the “New” Shift Planning information because it still appears to be incomplete and not especially user friendly. Please go to the “Legacy” Shift Planning button on the far right on the top-colored bar for complete shift planning information.
- To see the full schedule and who’s assigned to a shift, go to the “Legacy” Shift Planning. On the far right click on the List View button that will show the full schedule for a day, week or month.
- The profile page is essentially unchanged. Please take a quick look at your profile and update it if necessary. Especially, insert your phone number and email address if they are not shown.

IMPORTANT HUMANITY REMINDERS

Problems with Humanity? While all of us have gotten more-or-less used to using H/SP, if at any time you run into problems, or if you need any help, please contact Jim at jim.vaitkunas@trolleyride.org. There is a mobile smart phone app for H/SP that you can download onto your smart phone from the Google Play Store and use to check your schedule, sign-up for shifts, etc.

Signing Up For Shifts. We ask that you look ahead two weeks and consider signing up for a shift in advance rather than waiting for 4-5 days before looking at the schedule. Doing this reduces the length of those Tuesday vacancy e-mails and reduces the anxiety of the Operations staff.

Cancelling Your Shift. If you are forced to cancel your shift because an emergency has arisen, please let your shift Foreman know that immediately. If your shift is two weeks or more in the future, let Jim Vaitkunas know so the vacancy can be advertised. If your shift is scheduled for less than two weeks, let your Foreman and Jim Vaitkunas know, but the burden is on you to try and find your replacement by either getting someone to take your place or by swapping shifts with someone.

OPERATIONAL REMINDERS

Operations Bulletin Board

The Operations Department's bulletin board is in the CHSL ready barn and on the north wall of the cold barn at ESL. It displays all the basic information that operating personnel need to know, including reference documents such as the rule book (located in the plastic pocket below the BB at CHSL), Foreman's checklist, current operations and safety bulletins, general procedures memorandum, crew roster, etc. Please check this at every shift to make sure you don't miss an important notice or operating update.

Accident/Incident Report

Accident/Incident report blank forms are located on each streetcar and in the plastic pocket below the operations bulletin board in the ready barn at CHSL. If there is any accident/incident involving our passengers or damage to our streetcars, equipment or buildings, a report should be completed immediately on-site. If a passenger or volunteer is injured, obtain the names and contact information from all witnesses. Doing this is very important for possible insurance claim purposes. Do not wait a few days before completing and filing the report.

Defect Report Forms

If a defect or problem on the streetcar is noticed, either during the pre-shift maintenance check by the Foreman, or during operations, please report the defect or problem using the defect report form. Blanks of the form are in the CHSL shop in a holder next to the Foreman's cabinet. File completed forms in the same holder. At ESL, blank forms are on the operations bulletin board. For major problems with the streetcar, e.g., the car had to be taken out of service, call the shop personnel to inform them of the significant problem right away.

Other

We experienced a few glitches during the opening weekend.

- Please make sure your contact information in Shift Planning is current in case you need to be reached – phone number and email.

- Be on time for your shift. Foremen need to be at the carbarn no later than 30 minutes before the shift start to prep the car. Crew members need to be at the carbarn no later than 15 minutes before the shift start to allow the car to move to the depot/ ticket office and start the shift on time. (The exception is the second shift which, at CHSL, will start at the depot).
Foremen, if you are going to be late make sure your crew knows. If you are going to be late for a charter, call the customer.
Operators, if you are going to be late let your foreman know.

- Security. Foremen – please make sure that you set the alarm and lock the doors at the end of the shift.

FOREMAN DECISION TO CANCEL A SHIFT

Cancellations will happen due to a variety of factors. If a foreman decides to cancel a shift they should do the following:

CHSL

- Contact your crew
- Contact Sarah Dibble (primary) or Jim Vaitkunas (back-up) to post the cancellation on the museum's website
- Place a sign in the window of the depot – if you cannot do it, contact Bruce Allyn, Bill Arends, Aaron Issacs, or Bruce Gustafson.

ESL

- Contact your crew
- Contact Karen Kertzman. (Karen will contact Sarah or Jim to update the website)
- Put a sign in the ticket booth window

NEW OPERATOR TRAINING – BILL PEKARNA/ KAREN KERTZMAN

We continue to have strong interest in our training program with 32 candidates attending the initial meetings in March, from which 29 committed to the program. With some expected attrition, we currently have 22 active trainees at CHSL and 3 at ESL. A few of the new volunteers have already graduated. Thank you all!!

NAME TAG UPGRADE – PAT COSGROVE

I have bought a bag of pins/studs for our nametags. This style pin should be easier to use and more secure than either of the current pin type or magnet style. I have also attached a piece of 3M VHB(very High Bond) two-sided tape to each of the pin/studs. A bag of these pins are in the drawer at the CHSL depot. Karen has a supply for ESL. They are easy to install yourself. Below is my suggested procedure.

1. If you have the pin style, you will need to remove the existing pin. It is attached with a piece of white foam two-sided tape.
2. If you have the magnet style you can leave the metal plate attached to the name tag. You no longer need the magnet, but you can continue to use it with the new pins. Skip down to step 5 if you have the magnet mount style.
3. Using a sharp knife like a utility knife or x-acto knife of similar, cut the foam tape under the existing pin until the existing pin is removed.
4. No need to remove the remaining two-sided tape residue but you can if you like.
5. Clean the back side of the nametag with some rubbing alcohol and a Kleenex (removes any grease, dirt etc.)
6. Using a pin or the edge of a sharp knife, carefully remove the red backing. If the two-sided tape lifts from the pin, carefully push it back down with the tool to remove the backing.
7. Press the pin firmly to the back of the name tag in the location as shown below.
8. The adhesive is pressure sensitive, so the harder and longer you press, the better it will stick long term.
9. Wait a couple of days before using it to give the adhesive time to fully set. While immediately sticky, VHB tape develops higher bonding strength over time, reaching approximately 90% strength in 72 hours.

SAFETY REMINDERS – JOHN DILLERY/ KAREN KERTZMAN

ESL. The biggest safety reminder, that we can't say enough: Proceed with extreme caution while crossing Morse Avenue, in either direction. It can become a very busy intersection with vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles, and e-bikes. Always err on the side of caution.

CHSL. Be alert. Whether it is crossing 42nd Street or operating within the depot area – be watchful for people and vehicles. Before your first operating shift, please read and be comfortable with the operating rules and procedures.

SAFETY PROCEDURE REMINDERS:

- Phone Policy. If you have a cell phone, please have the phone in silence mode. We would like you to have your phone with you to allow you to call 911 in the event of an emergency. Foremen can also use their phone for weather and other job-related activities.
- Safely Crossing 42nd Street. We expect the crossing guard (who is wearing a safety vest at all times) to be active in securing the crossing – stopping as appropriate pedestrians, bikes, and vehicles prior to the arrival of the streetcar. The crossing guard is the only member of a four-person crew who should be signaling to pedestrians, etc. The operator has the final responsibility/ decision to move through the intersection.

With a 3-person crew, the operator has the responsibility to signal traffic in the intersection as well as the final decision to move through the intersection.

MISCELLANEOUS

Listed below are some additional items of interest.

- ESL Tree Removal. As part of the roof replacement activity, the Hennipen Railroad Authority (HCRRA) has agreed to take down the trees that Jerry Draeger identified as being in the way of getting a new roof at ESL. In fact, HCRRA identified an additional tree at the east end of the car barn whose future growth may interfere with the power to the building. He contacted the power company, and the power company's hot wire team will be removing the tree (we still plan to have the power off) shortly. At this time, there is no date scheduled for the remaining five tree removals; HCRRA is waiting on MNDOT authorization, as one of the trees is on their property and they would like to do them all at the same time.
- ESL New Exhibits. The shop crew is constructing new exhibit space in the car barn to enhance the car barn tour experience.
- CHSL New Keys - Foremen. The locks for the car barn, depot, and switch standards have been changed thanks to Ben Franske. There were some issues with the depot doors, but modifications were made on the interior parts so they work. All doors work and all the pad locks are new. You can throw out the old keys.
- CHSL. The Master Gardeners will again manage the depot gardens led by Mary and Ben Porter. We thank them for their on-going commitment.

OPERATIONS BULLETINS IN EFFECT

Both Locations

- **26CE-1 - Cancellation of Operations Due to Excessive Heat**

It is MSM policy operations will be cancelled when the heat index reaches a dangerous level. A shift should be cancelled if the heat index is 95 or greater, which is reflected by the green line in the heat/ humidity chart below.

As with other weather-related cancellations the Foreman will decide to cancel a shift. They should check local weather conditions using websites such as NOAA or Weather Underground to get the latest heat index info.

When the Foreman cancels a shift due to heat, the procedures are the same as a rain cancellation. Foremen are responsible to:

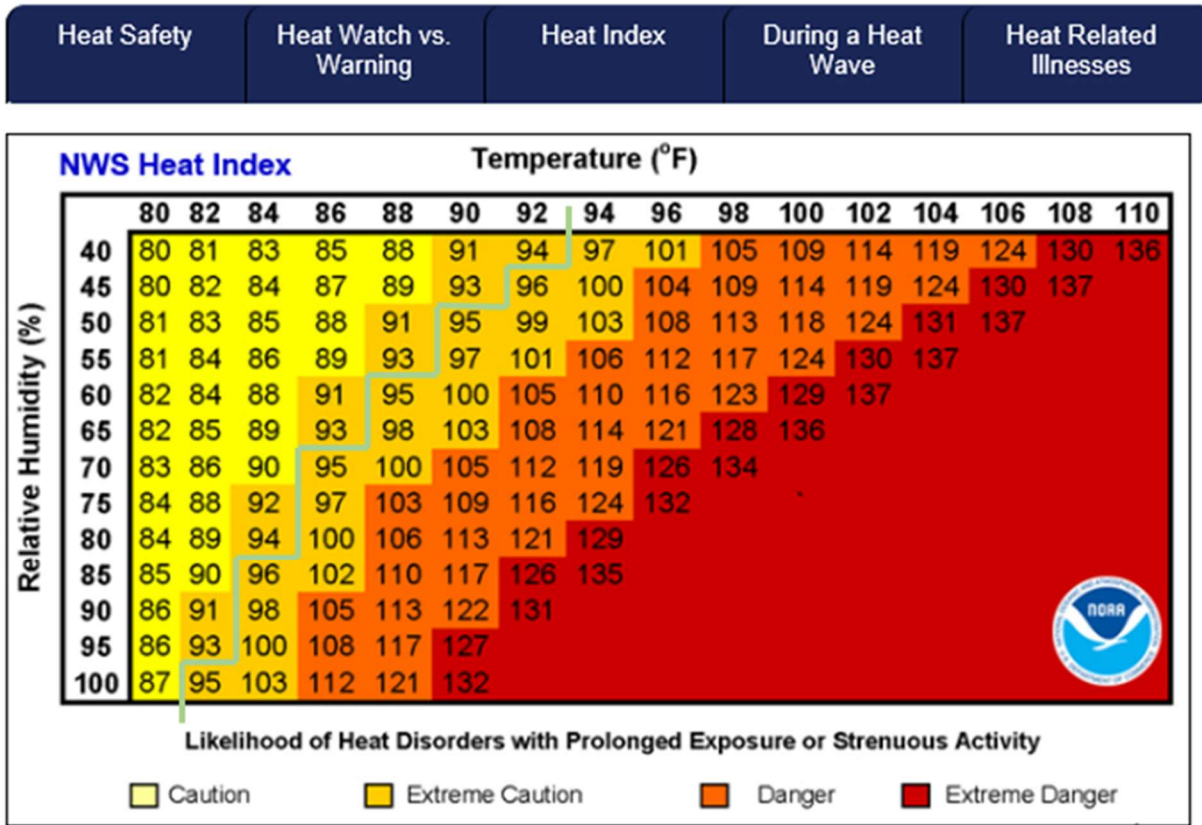
CHSL:

- 1) call your crew*
- 2) contact Rod Eaton or Ben Franke to post the cancellation to our website*
- 3) if possible, place a sign in the depot door indicating the reason operations are cancelled*

ESL:

- 1) Call your crew
- 2) Call Karen or Jim Kertzman

When temperature and humidity rise, it is critical that volunteers drink plenty of water, slow down, and watch yourself and others for any signs of heat exhaustion.



CHSL

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

ESL

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