

FOX RIVER LINES

m a g a z i n e



Issue 08-1, Spring 2008



Community Interest and Involvement # 1 - "Thank You!"

For a number of years the Village of South Elgin has been dealing with a situation concerning its logo - not to be confused with the Village Seal. The logo was too complicated or too "busy" to be used in a number of needed applications such as embroidered on village employee uniforms or placed on water tanks or on stationery and so on. But it had to be representative of who and what the village is. The same could be said of the Village's motto or slogan.

About a year ago the Village Board at the suggestion of Margo Gray, Village Clerk, authorized a committee to resolve the issue. Margo was made chair and chose committee members as representative of the various constituencies in the area. Now it has been well said and illustrated in cartoons that nothing good can come from anything designed by a committee. NOT true of South Elgin! A contest open to interested folks was announced with prizes for those wishing to submit their designs and slogans. The committee met and reviewed the submissions and the results unveiled at the June 2nd meeting of the Village Board.

Ron Herrmann, a graphics arts teacher at Harper College entered the winning

logo and Karen Cluchey the slogan "Where tradition meets the future." As reported in the June 4th edition of the South Elgin Examiner, Ron said "The trolley has been here longer than I have and it is one of the main symbols of the Village as well as the river." The slogan was chosen because it speaks of the growth taking place in the village. The committee members were looking and hoped for this result in the submissions.

The Fox River Trolley Museum and its membership sincerely appreciate the village's support for and recognition of its place in the Village according to Ed Konecki, Museum President and hopes to continue to merit that place in the future.

Don MacBean



Our History and Heritage Defined

I hope that this issue of the Fox River Lines finds you and yours well. By way of introduction, I am not Edward Konecki. I'm Luke Helm, Jr., the current Vice President and Superintendent of Operations. I am very pleased to be the guest author of "From the Front Platform" for this issue of the *Fox River Lines*.

When I was a Cub Scout, I was often told, "Leave it better than you found it". This saying reminds the Scouts to be respectful of their surroundings and suggests that they should be caretakers of their environment.

The existence of our museum is the result of perseverance and sacrifice by a small and dedicated group of individuals. As a result of these efforts, our museum is fortunate enough to be the custodian of a railroad and several pieces of equipment that have, (or soon will) surpass the 100 year mark.

Having said this, and acknowledging the almost Herculean efforts of this group to tackle all manner of projects, some pleasant and some not so; (to name a few; think of trash and dead animal patrol, track or car roof work in 90+ degree heat, or working late into the night on an issue of the Fox River Lines), we recognize that our museum is not simply a collection of artifacts, a few buildings, some land, and a series of rails.

What makes our museum a living, breathing entity is our membership and the quality of our interaction with our patrons in telling a story and engaging them in the process. Those of you who have lost a family member know that a loved one is never gone so long as stories are told, a laugh is had, or a tear is shed. So too, is this the case for us and our demonstration railroad. We exist to tell a story, share an experience, and to perpetuate the cycle for those that we hope will come after us.

Leaving our museum better than we found it means that we are merely custodians at this moment in time, and that we have taken the burden and responsibility of passing these treasures, history, and memories along to the next generation. Just as we endeavor to leave our equipment and railroad in better shape than when we first acquired them, so to must we grow and preserve our membership.

From a practical point of view this means that we must treat each other with dignity and respect, even in the most difficult of times and circumstances. If we are to be successful, the full membership must participate in the museum. We must engage our existing membership in substantially greater numbers, and we must aggressively find ways of engaging and teaching that next generation of caretakers to someday take our places.

We are fortunate to have a core of members who will always do what needs to be done because they believe in the museum and its mission. We must

leverage this commitment and experience effectively and wisely to grow our museum today, tomorrow and well into the future.

If you are not an active member, we need your help. If you are currently active, please think about how you might recruit and retain new members.

To continue moving our museum forward, what we need is YOU.

Luke Helm, Jr.

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Mission

To preserve and interpret Chicago's electric transport era that began in the 1890s and peaked before 1950. The electric transport era is significant because electric railways, including interurban, rapid transit, and streetcars, helped the Chicago region grow to be one of North America's great metropolitan areas. The Museum strives to show that electric railways were more than convenient, they were and are a way of life for generations of people from all walks of life.

The Museum fulfills this mission by preserving, interpreting, and operating historic railway vehicles on its demonstration electric railway, over the Aurora, Elgin and Fox River Electric route at South Elgin, Illinois. Furthermore, the museum preserves, displays and interprets smaller artifacts, photos, oral histories, and documents which help relate the importance of electric transport in and around the Chicago Metropolitan Area,

putting them in context with their surroundings and era.

**Cash Income and Expenses
2006 vs. 2007**

INCOME	2006	2007
DUES	\$9,369	\$7,991
DONATIONS	\$24,809	\$26,119
MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	\$7,844	\$1,946
STORE SALES	\$9,810	\$10,209
TICKET SALES	\$29,035	\$38,179
TOTAL INCOME	\$80,867	\$84,444
EXPENSES		
ADMINISTRATION (Phone, bank fees, insurance, professional fees, taxes, rent)	\$23,511	\$18,121
CAR MAINTENANCE (Lubricants, parts, repairs, restorations)	\$944	\$1,209
ELECTRICITY	\$1,904	\$3,635
FACILITIES MAINTENANCE (Property upkeep, waste disposal)	\$1,990	\$3,529
MEMBER & MUSEUM SERVICES (Memberships, advertising, publications, web site, archives, operations, community relations, development)	\$18,493	\$20,995
STORE STOCK	\$3,859	\$4,243
TRACK MAINTENANCE	\$3,783	\$15,285
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$54,484	\$67,017
INCOME LESS EXPENSE	\$26,383	\$17,427

Chuck Galitz

Help! ! !

There are many many activities going on at the Museum that should be reported in *Fox River Lines*. But they are not.

All we need to paraphrase the U. S. Marines is "*A few good reporters.*"

There are a few department heads that make reports and there are others whose "plates are full" carrying out their responsibilities which at the same time are worthy of being in print for the benefit of the membership.

Being a reporter or correspondent for the newsletter can be helpful to a members knowledge and understanding of the Museum its goal and

mission. Submittal requirements are very simple and easy to do. An e-mail addressed to me at DmacBRR@aol.com will get the story to me. It can be part of the e-mail or an attachment to it either an MS-Word or WordPerfect or a text document will do.

Pictures can be scanned and sent as JPEG files to accompany the stories.

We are also looking for pictures for the 2008 calendar. We prefer pictures that make a statement about the Museum and its Mission.

Looking forward to hear from you.

Don MacBean - Managing Editor

Community Interest and Involvement #2 "Thank You!"

Last year the venerable north oak tree, now closer to 500 years old than not, suffered substantial damage and loss of major limbs. See "*Fox River Lines*" 2007-1. The community through Kim Wascher, Superintendent of Recreation, SEP&R contacted the Museum immediately and repair of the tree and removal of affected limbs took place in a day.

Similarly, the story mentioned above caught the eye and interest of another longtime South Elgin resident, Whitney Jones. Concerned about the tree's future because of the recent damage and possibility of disease, she donated \$1300 to cover costs of disease diagnosis and remediation. Kramer Tree Specialists were called in and their arborist made his recommendations for both trees and work was completed this spring before the trees leafed out. Whitney has an extensive interest and knowledge of trees and their health and preservation as well as an interest in the preservation of the Fox River Trolley Museum and its mission. This interest has benefited South Elgin and the Museum. Both the trees and the Museum and its mission are part of South Elgin's heritage! Thanks, Whitney for your interest and generosity.

Don MacBean



Kramers's arborist and crew member sizing up the south oak tree before the three crew members climb into the tree to do their "surgery."



Kramer Tree Specialist removing dead or diseased branches from the north Oak Tree. The crew completed the job including cleanup in 5 hours.



Applied Leadership

It is not my practice to comment on articles or editorials appearing in the same issue in which I am writing. However, this is a significant and important exception. See selections from Luke Helm's "From The Front Platform" quoted below.

The following e-mail was sent in late June by Ed Konecki, the Museum's Roadmaster (and President) to members of the track team and to other friends of the Museum.

Fox River Trolley Museum Track Fun Saturday, June 28, 2008

Hi Everyone;

Roadmaster Ed and Chris Nelson invite you to our next Track Fun get together, Saturday morning, June 28, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. We will be working on cleaning out all of our switch throw rods, lubricating switch machines, and if there is time, staging some more parking lot ties for dropping along the mainline.

Track Fun Goal and Learning Opportunities

Roadmaster Ed will be ticket agent on Saturday, so Track Team Member Chris Nelson will be in charge of our exciting track day.

Saturday Track Fun is designed as a less strenuous day. It is important for the smooth operation of the Museum's switches that the switch rods be

clear of obstructions in the ballast. Therefore, the Track Team will be cleaning out the rod areas of all of the Museums switches. In addition, many of our switch machines need lubrication so while we are cleaning out the switch rods, we will also be oiling our switch machines.

This day is right up the alley for those who want to help the track team, but are not up to anything strenuous. Cleaning out the switch rods is just like doing a little gardening.

I'm hoping that we can get a LOT of Track Team Members to participate. Come out and see your name in the Latest Track Fun Accomplishments.

The Learning opportunity is to make sure that we learn to take care of our switches and that it is important to maintain our track switches for good functioning."

Our President and leader exemplifies a number suggestions raised by Luke:

- From a practical point of view this means that we must treat each other with dignity and respect, even in the most difficult of times and circumstances. If we are to be successful, the full membership must participate in the museum. We must engage our existing membership in substantially greater numbers, and we must aggressively find ways of engaging and teaching that next generation of caretakers to someday take our places.
- We are fortunate to have a core of members who will always do what needs to be done because they believe in the museum and its mission. We must leverage this commitment and experience effectively and wisely to grow our museum today, tomorrow and well into the future.
- If you are not an active member, we need your help. If you are currently active, please think about how you might recruit and retain new members.

Let us all follow our leader!

Don MacBean

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Correspondence: Comments, suggestions, and corrections relating to Fox River Lines should be directed to Managing Editor Don MacBean at the address listed above. The editorial staff appreciates your feedback.