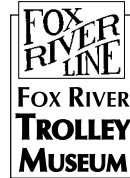


# FOX RIVER LINES

m a g a z i n e

official publication of the  
FOX RIVER TROLLEY MUSEUM



Come ride with us!  
2020-1

news from  
**UNDER  
the wire**

RECENT FOX RIVER LINE HAPPENINGS

news from  
**UNDER  
the wire**



Joseph Hazinski

## The Museum Resumes Operation During the Pandemic

The Board of Directors carefully considered resuming public operations and Superintendent *Patrick Storm* researched the requirements necessary to resume service based on the State of Illinois protocol of phase 3 which allowed no more than 10 passengers on a car at a time. Patrick prepared an extensive Transportation Advisory for the day manager and crews to follow. Later, when the State moved to phase 4, we were allowed to carry 25 passengers per car. As the operating staff gained experience the operation was fine-tuned and a greater variety of equipment was operated. *Laura Taylor* wrote a report about June operations which follows.

CTA car 43 has returned from the first trip of the 2020 season and our first three visitors descend the high level platform at Castlemuir.

### June 2020 Operations

*The Fox River Trolley Museum started the 2020 season on Sunday June 7<sup>th</sup>. Only one car, CTA No. 43 was used on a set "on the hour" schedule, starting at 11:00 AM with the last trip departing at 4:00 PM. A maximum of ten passengers were allowed on each trip.*

*Paying customers as well as museum members were very understanding regarding the Corona V-19 precautions. All crew members wore face masks and all customers over the age of three had to wear face masks. There were no problems with customers lining up to board the train and keeping "social distancing."*

*The first Sunday, the museum had 34 paying riders.*

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Editor's Notes

Beginning with this issue I am now the editor of the newsletter. Our mailing list issues are behind us and corrections and additions are now being dealt with in a regular manner by Doug Rundell, who attends to our post office box and Ed Konecki who updates the mailing list files. I am happy to say that we have two submissions written by others in this issue and encourage anyone to write an article or report that can go into future issues. Even if you only have some notes, I think in collaboration with you I can hammer a narrative out of them.

I am also glad to report that I have a number of photos from others including Mike Gilles, Doug Rundell, Ed Konecki and Jeff Bennett. This is very good as sometimes I am not at the museum when something noteworthy happens. My photo style and perspective is only five foot two inches and other viewpoints are definitely worthwhile and illuminating. Cell phone cameras are getting better as higher resolution images make Jack's job easier.

Even as this issue of the *Lines* is being "put to bed" I am sketching out the next issue which is planned to be out at the end of the year. And 2020 has been a trying year for all of us. Members' opinions on the COVID-19 pandemic range, just like in the country, from "no big deal" to "I can't participate right now" with a lot of us somewhere in between. The *Fox River Line* survived the 1918 pandemic and it will survive this one too. For those who have been unable or have felt uncomfortable about coming out to the museum, I with the help of Web Master Lorrie Nevens, have been producing periodic "News" reports on [www.foxrolley.org](http://www.foxrolley.org), our internet site. After I have enough photos it takes me about a day to organize them, write descriptions and email them to Lorrie for posting. There is also a link on the site's "Contact Us" section which will lead one to our official Facebook site. Here Lorrie and James Tarbet have been doing interactive "live feeds" from the museum which are archived, as well as others posting photos and comments. These are ways to stay connected and get to know newer members even if you can't make out to the museum for one reason or another.

Finally, a thought about donations. I am retired and fortunate to have an adequate pension on top of my social security which has allowed me to make monthly cash donations. I know many people are hurting financially during these times and if you can't afford it, I would not expect you to make a cash donation, especially if it would hurt you and your family's wellbeing. But if you are working and able, or have the means in your retirement, consider a reoccurring cash donation, no matter the amount, to help keep the "lights on" at the museum. Hopefully will we get through the pandemic and its economic effects sometime in 2021, the earlier the better. Many changes have been made at the museum in 2020 and many more are in the pipeline. Thank you for your interest, membership and support. The *Fox River Line* has been going in one form or another since 1896 and it is the Association's mission to keep it going into the future for generations to come.

Joseph Hazinski – editor

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# FOX RIVER TROLLEY ASSOCIATION, INC.

## 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Edward Konecki, Jeff Bennett, Luke Helm Jr, Douglas Rundell and Patrick Storm

## 2020 OFFICERS

President - Edward Konecki  
Vice President - Luke Helm Jr.  
Secretary - Patrick Storm  
Treasurer - Douglas Rundell

## 2020 COMMITTEES

### Management Committee -

Edward Konecki, Luke Helm Jr. and Douglas Rundell

### Collection Assessment Committee –

Not renewed

### By-Laws Committee –

Not renewed

### Nomination and Election Committee –

Joseph Hazinski chair, Barbara Bennett, Michael Giles

## 2020 MUSEUM DEPARTMENT LEADERS

### MUSEUM OPERATIONS:

**Operations Superintendent** - Patrick Storm

**Trainmaster** - Darmin Keenan

**Museum Store Manager** - Laura Taylor

**Assistant Store Manager** - James Slattery

### MUSEUM SERVICES DEPARTMENT:

**Membership Secretary** - Laura Taylor

**Assistant Membership Secretary** - Lorrie Nevins

**Membership Activities Coordinator** - vacant

**Membership Development Coordinator** - Lorrie Nevins

### MUSEUM SERVICES DEPARTMENT:

**Museum Services Manager** - Edward Konecki

**Media Relations Coordinator** - Bob Breese-Rodenkirk

**Curator** - Joe Hazinski

**Archivist** - vacant

**Education Coordinator** - Bernard Kamenear

**Capital Development Coordinators** -

Edward Konecki and Douglas Rundell

**Publications Manager** - Edward Konecki

**Community Relations Manager** - Lorrie Nevins

### CAR DEPARTMENT:

**Chief Car Officer** - Jeff Bennet

**Car Maintenance Superintendent** - Joe Hazinski

### FIXED PLANT DEPARTMENT:

**Chief Engineer** - Jeff Bennett

**Roadmaster** - Chris Nelson

**Chief Lineman** - vacant

**Building and Grounds Superintendent** - Fred Lonnes

**Electrical Supply and Signals** - Ralph Taylor

**Information Technology** - Luke Helm, Jr.

### MUSEUM SAFETY DEPARTMENT:

**Safety Coordinator** - Ralph Taylor (acting)

**Assistant Safety Coordinator** - Bruce Kuhnhofer

**ADDRESS ..** 365 S. LaFox St., P.O. Box 315, South Elgin, IL 60177

**PHONE ..** (847) 697-4676 **WEBSITE ...** [www.foxrolley.org](http://www.foxrolley.org)



Joseph Hazinski

## The Museum Resumes Operation During the Pandemic *(Continued from page 1)*

The following Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, the museum had 47 paying customers. The next Sunday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, the museum had 49 customers.

No customers were allowed into the depot to buy tickets. All tickets were sold at the ticket window with a plexiglass shield in place. The depot double doors were open with a rope barrier across the opening. Customers were allowed into the

depot on a request basis, one at a time, to buy a specific item.

All things considered, this limited one car operation was accomplished with no major problems. The car being used was cleaned and disinfected after each trip. Each passenger was given hand sanitizer by the ticket agent before boarding the train. On Father's Day, June 21<sup>st</sup>, all fathers were given a FOX RIVER LINE mug.

**Laura Taylor, Agent & Store Manager**

**Trainmaster Damin Keenan pilots CTA 43 southbound through the north Coleman Yard switch on the way to Blackhawk on June 21<sup>st</sup>.**

It should also be noted that all cars are wiped down with disinfectant after each trip in accordance with Center for Disease Control and State of Illinois health directives. During the first week-end it was determined that the dwell time at Blackhawk was too long. Also, no passengers were allowed to start their trip at Blackhawk because of the 10-person limit in force at the time. This practice continued even when the limit was raised to 25 people so that no one would be left behind due to our fixed schedule. It was also suggested that the trains leave five minutes after the hour as that reflected actual operation and a new schedule was written to reflect this. Various day managers and especially Trainmaster *Damin Keenan* made various adjustments as circumstances dictated.

There were 24 passengers reported on Sunday June 28<sup>th</sup>. Sunday July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020 there were 49 passengers while Saturday July 4<sup>th</sup> was reported as light. 715 was used for the first time on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> because of the heat. On Sunday July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 both CTA 43 and CNS&M 715 were used alternately.

*(Continued on page 4)*



## 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.

## Operations Resume

*(Continued from page 3)*

At the Saturday July 25<sup>th</sup> board meeting it was decided to suspend Saturday operations due to low ridership and difficulty in staffing the train crews. Operations returned briefly to the “on demand” model on Sunday July 26<sup>th</sup> with the cars 43 and 715 operating as extras instead of the hourly schedule. By Sunday August 2<sup>nd</sup> only one car was used, with 715 returning to the hourly schedule. Sunday August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 saw AE&FR 304 join the mix of cars operated. 304, 43 and 715 were all operated on Sunday August 23<sup>rd</sup>. CTA 43 stalled at Switch 54 during layup and 45-40 came to the rescue to pull it onto Track 1. The car was checked during the week and after the accelerator returned to its starting point when the battery switch was turned on, the car has operated correctly. For the first time this season on Sunday August 30<sup>th</sup>, one trip carried 25 passengers, the limit allowed under Illinois State phase 4 guidelines, with 304 and 715 operating alternately on that day.

**Joseph Hazinski**

**Our masked crew greets our physically distancing families as the ascend the Castlemuir high level platform for a ride on 43.**

**It's a warm summer August 23<sup>rd</sup> and AE&FR 304 is northbound passing over the Switch 54 cattle overpass as it returns to Castlemuir.**



Joseph Hazinski

**On the second weekend Doug Rundell uses disinfectant wipes to clean the railings and stanchions.**



Doug Rundell

**Motorman George Barreto wipes down the seats in 43 after the first trip.**



Joseph Hazinski



Joseph Hazinski



Joseph Hazinski

## South Shore Cars 7 and 14 Sold

South Shore car 7 and 14 waiting out their remaining days at the museum on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

The Association has sold CSS&SB cars 7 and 14 to Bob Harris who has a collection of steel South Shore cars in storage. Originally the museum obtained the cars from METRA who had them as a result of their share of the purchase of the new South Shore cars in the 1980's. They arrived on their own wheels in 1988 as the rail interchange with the Chicago Central & Pacific was still connected at that time. Car 14, which was lengthened during WWII, had a modernized interior with fluorescent lighting and linoleum covered walls that did not fare well when the car was left unheated. Fortunately, 14 had all four of its traction motors. Car 7 did not have traction motors and its foundation brake rigging was damaged so that both cars were chained together for infrequent switching moves at Castlemuir.

Two years ago, we placed new tarps on car 7 to protect it from further damage with the thought that the motors from 14 could be used to make it a self-powered unit again. It was finally concluded that the museum did not have the resources to properly care for the cars and their poor condition was detrimental to the image of the museum. Unfortunately, there was no one within the museum to take on this task and no financial resources available to proceed. *Jeff Bennett* was given authority by the board of directors to dispose of the cars and Mr. Harris turned out to be the best option.

It was determined that it would be impossible to move 14 by highway  
(Continued on page 6)



Mike Gilles



Mike Gilles

Cliff Blanch is putting Mr. Harris's tarps on the roof of car 7.

Over a period of weeks components of car 14 were removed, palatized and placed into a semi-trailer for transport to Mr. Harris's storage facility.

A salvaged and forlorn 14 shell awaits its day of destruction.



Mike Gilles

## South Shore Cars Sold

*(Continued from page 5)*

because of its length and because of its condition, a failed roof and rusted out interior ceiling, it was decided to scrap the car body. The car was highly salvaged for parts including among other things the complete control and air brake system components for use as spares for Mr. Harris's collection of South Shore cars. The powered trucks and both pantographs were also saved and transported to Mr. Harris's facility. A large tracked excavator with grapple claws removed the car from Track 3 North, one end at a time, and broke it up into sections which were placed in two semi-trailer loads which were taken to a salvage yard for recycling. Through the efforts of museum volunteers, the grounds around Track 3 were cleaned up of small debris and some damaged ties were replaced.

While waiting for 7 to be removed, all long idled rolling stock truck bearings were lubed and then Jeff, aided by *Fred Lonnes, Mike Gillis* and later *Chris Nelson* reshuffled all the rolling stock and spare trucks so that Track 0 could be realigned with the Case tractor for its eventual connection to Switch 20. CTA S-314, a non-powered flatcar with a diesel-powered crane mounted on its deck, was relocated to the south end of Track 3 North.

The museum's tarps on 7 were removed with one being immediately placed on CA&E 317 to cover a tarp showing wear. Later Cliff Blanck of KBR put tarps supplied by Mr. Harris on 7 to continue to protect it from the elements. Not to sit on their hands the Fox River crew also set out ties for the completion of the long-awaited Track 0 connection to Track 2.

Two weekends after 14 was removed, the highway permits were obtained, which had been delayed by the pandemic situation, a crew arrived to transport car 7. Locomotive 5 moved the car to the mainline where the north end of the car was jacked up with a pair of hydraulic jacks and its motor less truck was rolled out from underneath it and then loaded onto a tilt bed recovery truck. Then a dolly or "jeep" was positioned under the

**Jeff is torching off metal that is overhanging the side of the semi-trailer so it can make its highway journey safely to the scrap yard.**



Mike Gillis

**The excavator with grapple jaws took only a few hours to reduce the shell of 14 to manageable pieces of metal.**

**The scene with the north truck derailed as it took a lot of force to tip the body off of the trucks. A dumpster was also on hand for non-ferrous debris. One of the steps rests on a pallet to be saved as a spare part.**



Mike Gillis

**Here the bolster bearing is being cut off to be saved as a spare with the south motor truck in the foreground.**



Mike Gillis



Mike Gillis



Mike Gilles

**It is moving day for car 7 with the north end receiving its highway dolly in place of its truck.**



Mike Gilles

**The highway tractor is being hooked up to the dolly to pull the car forward while the tilt-bed recovery truck stands by.**



Mike Gilles

**The mover's Bobcat is in place while the jacks are set up to lift the south end of the car.**



Mike Gilles

**Here the Bobcat is positioning the road dolly or "jeep" under the south bolster of 7.**

north bolster and the car lowered down onto it. The highway truck then pulled the car 7 north and the process was repeated, removing the south truck and replacing it with another dolly under the car bolster. At this point 7 was now highway roadworthy and was pulled ahead so the south truck could be loaded onto the tilt bed recovery truck which could handle both trucks as their weight is lighter since they both lacked traction motors. That evening Jeff received a call confirming that 7 had successfully reached its storage location.

Thanks to all who have assisted in this project.

**Joseph Hazinski**



Mike Gilles

**With car 7 on its way the crew is loading the second truck onto the tilt bed truck. The pantographs will go on top and then the recovery truck to leave to undo the process at Mr. Harris's yard.**

# Two Departments - Two Related Projects

## Bringing S-314 Back to Life

One Car Department project was necessary for the Track Department to proceed with its track building project. CTA S-314, our crane on a flat car, was needed to be made functional so that rail could be moved from storage sites along the railroad. The crane has never been used since it was acquired by the museum in 1997 so after South Shore car 14 departed, it was moved to Track 3 North with a special OB Form 5 to standard coupler adaptor by AE&FR locomotive 5 the work on it began. When it was attempted to start the diesel that provides hydraulic power to operate the 1953 Baldwin Lima Hamilton crane, which was built in Aurora, Illinois, things did not go well. One of the cylinders of the engine had filled with water through the exhaust system over the years and the radiator was leaking. Fortunately, the engine is fairly common Perkins 4.326 that Chief Mechanical Officer *Jeff Bennett* was familiar with (among other applications,



Joseph Hazinski

On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, S-314's Perkins diesel engine sits in the back of Jeff Bennett's "tool" ambulance waiting to be installed on the crane.



Joseph Hazinski

Bill Wright is painting the engine shroud after having brushed a new coat of yellow on the crane and flat car frame in this June 21<sup>st</sup> view.



Joseph Hazinski

It takes three to install the engine shroud with Jeff Bennett, Chris Nelson and Mike Gilles doing the honors on June 28<sup>th</sup>.



Joseph Hazinski

CTA S-314 at rest on Track 3 North awaiting its next call to duty.



Joseph Hazinski

**Here S-314 is making its second pick of its new career at the museum. The first rail is on the deck as Art Lempke handles the guide rope while rigger Mike Gilles stands in the clear.**

this model was the heart of Minneapolis-Moline diesel farm tractors) from his years as a certified diesel mechanic. He removed the engine using the Case tractor and transported it to his shop for rebuilding which entailed replacing the #3 piston and cylinder liner, the push rods and even a replacement head for the four-cylinder engine. A replacement radiator was obtained but *Fred Lonnes* had the original re-cored as it fits exactly in the mounting on the crane's frame. After a couple of weeks, the back hoe on Casey was used again to remount the engine, the cooling system reconnected and the crane tested. The air brakes on the flatcar were serviced and made functional along with setting up the onboard 600-volt air compressor to supply air for pneumatic tools.

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020 S-314 performed its first task by retrieving sections from our stock of 70-pound rail for use in completion of Track 0 (zero). Roadmaster *Chris Nelson* had scouted several rails for use, first in the storage area along the west side of the mainline between Stops 54 and 53 and then down to Coleman Yard for two more pieces. The rail-dog we found on the crane did not work satisfactorily but Chris retrieved one from the Maintenance-Of-Way shed which worked perfectly. The trick in lifting rail is to measure out the exact center so it is balanced once the crane picks it up. *Mike Gilles* did the rigging while *Art Lemke* attached and handled the stabilization line at one end. With Jeff at the crane controls the rail needed was loaded onto the deck of S-314 and then #5 pushed it back to Track 2 where it was carefully unloaded, placing the rails down on the Track 0 ties. It was a good day's work.

**Joseph Hazinski**



Joseph Hazinski

**Setting down that second rail on the deck S-314 on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Locomotive 5 towed the crane which is on a Skokie Shop made flat car constructed from an old streetcar frame.**



Joseph Hazinski

**Putting a rail down on the ties laid for Track 0. The shroud has not been put on for easy access to the engine as this was also a shake down run for the Perkins diesel.**

# Two Departments - Two Related Projects (Continued from page 9)

## Track 0 Is Connected

Previously while waiting for 7 to be removed, all long idle rolling stock truck bearings were lubed and then Jeff, aided by *Fred Lonnes, Mike Gillis* and later *Chris Nelson* reshuffled all the rolling stock and spare trucks northward so that existing Track 0 could be realigned to the west with the Case tractor for its eventual connection to Switch 20. Ties were laid out between the north end of Track 0 and the yet to be used Switch 20. After the rail was laid down as mentioned before, it was time to start bolting up the sections. In order for the lengths to fit, the ends of two rails had to be cut. The museum's gasoline powered antique Racine rail saw was put to work slowly trimming off the ends. *Fred Lonnes* brought out an electric powered rail drill that did quick work of boring new holes so that joint bars could be installed. It was hoped to use the air compressor on S-314 to power one of our pneumatic spikers but for reasons not totally clear the unit failed when 600-volts was put to it by a stinger.



Joseph Hazinski

**It is April 19<sup>th</sup> and here is the evacuated Track 0 (zero) after it was shifted to the west.**



Joseph Hazinski

**The ties and tie plates are in the process of being laid out while CNS&M 715 and CTA 43 are laid up ahead of MUNI 1030 on Track 1.**



Joseph Hazinski

**CTA S-314 is putting down one of the rails recovered from the museum's supply on May 31<sup>st</sup>.**

**On June 6<sup>th</sup> the track crew is starting to bolt up the rails in this view taken from the train. One can see the cars stored on the barn leads in the background. Track 0 will allow for the storage of these cars.**



Joseph Hazinski



Joseph Hazinski

**Our Briggs & Stratton powered Racine rail saw is cutting the excess off of one of the two rails that needed to be trimmed.**

**Fred Lonnes and Chris Nelson monitor the progress of the rail saw as president Ed Konecki watches.**



Joseph Hazinski



Joseph Hazinski

**Chris watches as Fred and Mike Gilles set up Fred's electric rail drill which will bore out the holes for the joint bars.**

Fortunately, we have enough air hose to use the car barn's shop compressor to supply the spiker. We have some spare air compressors if S-314's needs to be changed out but that whole project has been deferred to a later time. By June 13<sup>th</sup> Track 0 started to receive new stone ballast delivered with a combination of the Case tractor loading the EZ Dumper at the driveway which was in turn towed by locomotive 5 down to Switch 54 and then pushed onto Track 0 to be dumped onto the new track work. Sunday June 14<sup>th</sup> found a crew of Chris, Art, Fred and Mike using a pair of our former CA&E Jackson electric hand tampers to push the stone down and around the ties. About a week after this, switching moves were made to place CA&E 317 and CNS&M 756 from the car barn leads to Track 0 and move the trio of CTA

*(Continued on page 12)*



Joseph Hazinski

**The ends of the freshly cut rail have been ground smooth and now await joint bars.**



Joseph Hazinski

**The joint bars have been applied and now gauging and spiking will begin.**

# Track 0 Is Connected

(Continued from page 11)

cars 43, 45 and 40 to Track 1. The long-term goal is to have Track 0 used as run around track such as we have at Coleman Yard so that such moves can be made at Castlemuir instead of going down to Coleman where such maneuvers are now done. Eventually the overhead wire will have to be redesigned and modified to make Track 0 electrified. Track 1, which was the original siding built by RELIC back in 1962, will continue to be a stub end storage track accessed from the south by Switch 21. Needless to say, this work was a major milestone in the long-term track plan for the Castlemuir campus.

S-314 also received a repainting to fresh CTA service car yellow during the summer through the efforts of *Bill Wright* and *Jeff Bennett*, the paint being donated by *Mike Gilles*. The crane currently greets our visitors on Track 3 North at the crosswalk.

**Joseph Hazinski**



Mike Gilles

**The next weekend Fred Lonnes watches as Locomotive 5 pushes the EZDumper down Track 0 to begin the ballasting process.**



Jeff Bennett

**Fred and Mike bar over Switch 21 as the switch stand was yet to be connected, so 5 can deliver another load of ballast.**

**Fred and Chris are using the Jackson electric tampers to shore up the ties while Art Lempke shovels ballast where it is needed. Once this task was completed cars could be moved over the track for storage. Subsequent tamping has been done to level or "surface" the track.**



Joseph Hazinski

**The ballast has now all been delivered to Track 0 so that the first tamping can be done.**



Joseph Hazinski

# Tie Replacement Project 2020

When emergency pandemic loan funds became available to the Association the Board of Directors decided to use some of it to replace ties in the mainline to ensure the integrity of the railroad's track for continued safe operation. We turned to Swanson Construction, our contractor in the past, only to find out they had ceased operations and liquidated their assets in December 2019.

The Association was able to find a new vendor and issued a \$59,800.00 purchase order to Volkmann Railroad Builders of Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin to install 400 new ties in the mainline and replace 28 assorted switch ties which were at the end of their service life.

Roadmaster *Chris Nelson*, *Fred Lonnes* and *Jeff Bennett* all walked the line several times in advance, marking ties that needed to be replaced with emphasis on those under rail joints.

The Volkmann firm used a rail mounted tie crane/inserter to remove the old ties and put new ones in after spikes were pulled, the old-fashioned way, by hand with a spike puller. The contractor's front-end loader would place ties on a push card connected the self-propelled crane/inserter at the driveway so they could be moved where they were needed. Because of a slight delay in getting the new 400 ties to the museum, our standby tie supply was used at first to keep the project moving and was replenished when the tie supply arrived. A high rail pickup truck with a hydraulic powered handheld spiker then was used to install all new spikes in the freshly inserted ties. Then a rail mounted self-propelled tamper was used to tamp each tie.

Finally, the tie crane/inserter picked up the old ties which were taken back to Castlemuir to be deposited into a dumpster located in the parking lot with their front-end loader. The contractor was responsible for cleaning up as well as delivering an additional 104 ties for the museum's on hand supply. Although Volkmann's equipment arrived earlier, actual work commenced on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 and was completed on June 29<sup>th</sup> with the final clean up.

**Joseph Hazinski**



Joseph Hazinski



Mike Gilles

**Volkmann Railroad Builders equipment stored on the recently connected Track 0.**

**A bundle of new industrial grade ties being picked up by a front end loader from the temporary supply in our newly graded parking lot.**



Mike Gilles

**A bundle being loaded on the tie cart which is coupled to the self-propelled tie crane/inserter.**

**The crane/inserter at work on Track 2.**



Doug Rundell

## Back to the Future at Fox River Trolley Museum

The Trolley Museum hosted a fund-raising charter in 2018 by the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research.

Michael J. Fox is the star of the 1985 movie "Back to the Future", and its sequels, in which a specially outfitted DeLorean automobile is able to travel backwards and forwards in time upon reaching the critical speed of 88 miles per hour and using a "fusion power" generator. In 1991, Fox was diagnosed with having Parkinson's Disease, and he has been a visible public advocate for research into treatments for this disease.

Volunteers from the Foundation brought their DeLorean, appropriately modified to resemble the movie car, to a convention of DeLorean owners and collectors being held in Saint Charles, IL. Through a contact with one of our Museum members, they inquired about operating their car on our tracks, raising funds through offering rides simulating the rail running depicted in later movies. We were able to accommodate them.

The car was highway driven to the Museum, where the regular tires were removed, and railroad flanged wheels were attached. They made multiple trips up and down the line, travelling between the Castlemuir grounds and a stopping point about 3 tenths of a mile to the south. Riders in the car could donate to the Foundation if they so wished.

Fox River personnel, *Doug Rundell* and *Art Lemke* were on hand to ensure a safe and enjoyable event for all involved.

The car never reached 88 miles per hour, and thus always remained in the present time.

**Doug Rundell**

**The time traveling DeLorean is ready for trips on the Fox River Line.**



Doug Rundell

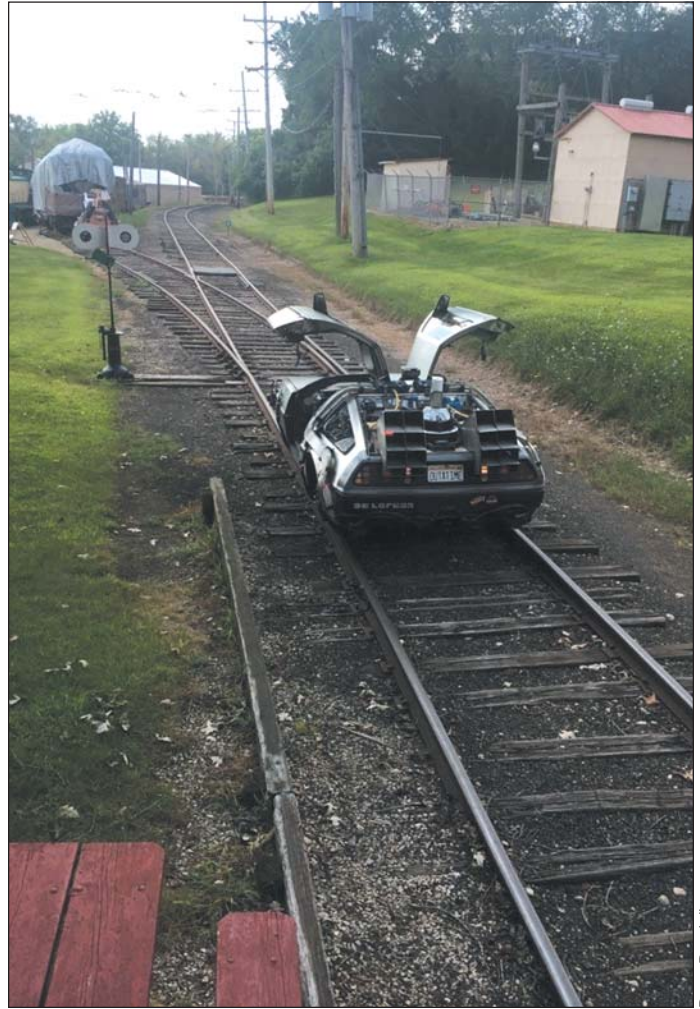
**Preparing the DeLorean for the rails. The driveway pad helps provide a good jacking surface.**



Doug Rundell



Doug Rundell



Doug Rundell

Departing Castlemuir. The gull wing doors remain open, because DeLoreans did not come equipped with air conditioning, and the side windows do not roll down.

| The car near Stop 53 heading southbound.



Doug Rundell

Fox River volunteers Art Lemke (above) and Doug Rundell (right) are about to depart on check rides.



Art Lemke

## Weed Spraying at the Museum

On Thursday July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 the annual weed spraying of the museum site and the railroad right of way was done by our contractor, Weedpatch Company, Inc. of Frankfort, Illinois. This company has been doing this for the museum annually since 1987 and was established by the late Mel Hornej and is now owned by his son John who happens to be a high school classmate of President *Ed Konecki*. John arrived at 7:00 am to do hand spraying at the Castlemuir campus. The railroad right of way spraying started at 8:30 am and was finished at 12:30 pm.

We use this professional firm as they are experts in the field and are in compli-

ance with current EPA regulations. Using their high rail truck, they can do the complete right of way from our driveway all the way to Blackhawk as well as the Castlemuir yard trackage. Often times our application is coordinated with the company's work at METRA's Elgin yard facilities. This spraying relieves the museum's volunteers of this task and having to keep up with current safety regulations as well as being done during the week when the museum is closed to the public. Weedpatch is just one of our community partners helping to make the museum a successful inviting public venue.

**Joseph Hazinski**

**The Weedpatch high rail truck at the Blackhawk platform last year on July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019.**



Edward Konecki

**On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 we find the Weedpatch spraying truck facing north at the driveway where it gets on our rails before its trip on the line.**



Edward Konecki

### FOX RIVER LINES STAFF

**Acting Editor**—Joseph Hazinski

E-mail: jrhenjine@live.com

2908 S. Clement Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207-2439

(414) 788-4357

**Layout and Graphics**— Jack Sowchin

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## Electric Power Changes in 2020

Starting in 2020 the Fox River Trolley Museum has changed the way it purchases its electric power for on-site AC and 600-volt DC traction power. We had been paying Commonwealth Edison directly for our power including a monthly fee for excess facilities charges as we had two points of connection at the substation. Our contract included a demand charge for excess power used during normal weekday business hours which ended at 6:00 pm but did not apply on weekends and holidays. This is one of several reasons we only operate on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

Over the last several decades the nature of the electric power industry changed in America with firms like Commonwealth Edison which used to do everything, decided to get out of the power generation portion but stayed in the electrical distribution business. As *Jeff Bennett* had to reorganize after his business fire in 2019, he started to explore possibilities of lowering his electric power expenses and came upon Freepoint Commodities which lowered his company's energy bill. Freepoint Commodities is a broker who is licensed to sell electric power in the District of Columbia, Delaware, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas.

Jeff saw that there was an opportunity for the museum as well, so working with the Board, Treasurer *Doug Rundell* and Chief Engineer *Ralph Taylor*, implemented a changeover to Freepoint as our power provider with the advantage of cheaper energy cost, reduction of the demand charges and dropping of the excess facilities charges. Commonwealth Edison is still responsible for distribution issues such as "lights out" and downed wires but we now pay less for electricity and with the nature of our operations we will not exceed the demand charges no matter the day of week. If an electric car needs to be moved during the week there will no longer be the need to pay an excess demand fee.

**Joseph Hazinski**