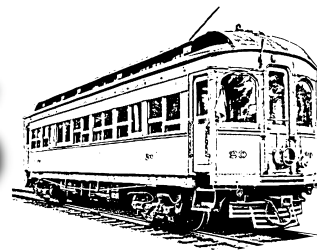


The ELECTRIC TIMES

newsletter



2025-4

Official Publication of the **Fox River Trolley Museum**
Serving The community of South Elgin



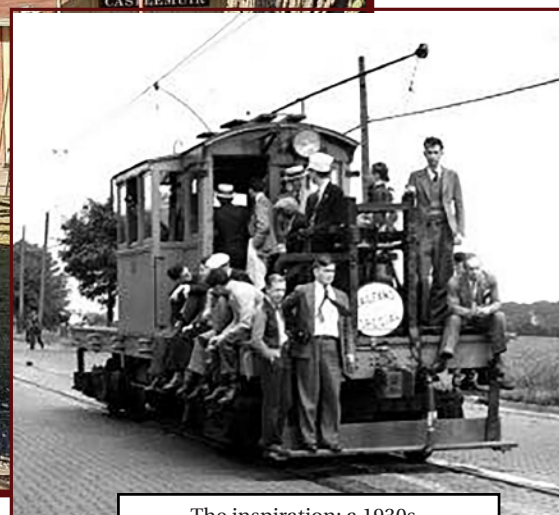
Come Ride With Us!

news from **UNDER** the wire

RECENT FOX RIVER LINE HAPPENINGS

news from **UNDER** the wire

Members Day 2025: A Showcase



The inspiration: a 1930s C.E.R.A. Railfans' Special

Ben Rohling

On September 27, 2025, the annual Members Day was held. This event takes place each year at the museum; however, this year's celebration was much larger in scale than in previous years. One of the major highlights of the day was the debut of the newly finished barn extension, which served as the center of activity. Inside the barn, members enjoyed free food, explored the new space, and attended the first-ever on-site Annual Meeting of the Membership, which included the 2025 Board of Directors election and the announcement of the results.

Another exciting highlight was the public debut of the fully restored CA&E 316, proudly showcased after years of dedicated restoration work by museum volunteers. Members had the opportunity to see this beautifully restored interurban car up close and learn about the many hours of craftsmanship that went into bringing it back to life.

Continued on Page 3



**FOX RIVER
TROLLEY
MUSEUM**

MISSION

To preserve and interpret Chicago's electric transport era that began in the 1890's 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.

Electric Times Staff

Publication Manager—**Kathleen Jamieson**

Columnist—**Anderson Pries**

Layout and Graphics— **David Peterson**

Thoughtfully proofread by **Hilary Pries**

Electric Times is the official publication of the Fox River Trolley Association, Inc., an Illinois not-for-profit corporation. It is published for distribution to members and friends of the Fox River Trolley Museum. Reproduction of the Electric Times, either in part or in its entirety, is strictly prohibited without prior permission from the editorial staff or the FRTA Board of Directors. Entire contents Copyright© 2025 Fox River Trolley Association, Inc.

Submissions: Submission of stories from members and others is necessary in order to publish the Electric Times. Feature length articles are welcome and considered as are photographs and illustrations.

Please contact the staff before undergoing a project. Contributors submit materials with the understanding that no monetary compensation is provided.

Address change: Send address changes to the museum's mailing address: Box 315, South Elgin, IL 60177.

FOX RIVER TROLLEY ASSOCIATION INC.

2025 Board of Directors
President: **Bernard Rohling**
Vice President: **Patrick Storm**
Treasurer: **Douglas Rundell**
Secretary: **James Tarbet (End of term)**
Director: **Chris Nelson**
Jeff Bennett (Newly elected)

Operations Department:
Operations Superintendent: **Patrick Storm**
Trainmaster: **Chris DeAngelis**
Asst. Trainmaster: **Vacant**
Crew Caller: **Damin Keenan**
Museum Store Manager: **Damin Keenan**

Membership Services Department:
Membership Services Manager: **Kathleen Jamieson**
Membership Secretary: **Vacant**
Asst. Membership Secretary: **Vacant**
Membership Activities Coordinator:
Jasmine Carlson
Membership Development Coordinator: **Vacant**

Car Department:
Chief Car Officer: **Jeff Bennett**
Asst. Chief Car Officer: **Dave Peterson**
Car Superintendent Emeritus: **Joseph Hazinski**

Fixed Plant Department:
Chief Engineer: **Ralph Taylor**
Chief Technology Officer: **Edward Konecki**
Chief Lineman: **Vacant**
Roadmaster: **Bernard Rohling**
Asst. Roadmaster: **Patrick Storm**
Buildings and Grounds Superintendent: **Ron Ruhl**
Electrical Supply & Signal: **Ralph Taylor**

Museum Services Department:
Museum Services Manager: **Bernard Rohling**
Media Relations Coordinator: **Lorrie Nevens**
Webmaster: **Jacob Goldberg**
Asst. Webmaster: **Edward Konecki**
Community Relations Manager: **Lorrie Nevens**
Capital Development Coordinator: **Eric Zabelny**
Curator: **Joseph Hazinski**
Electric Times Newsletter Editor: **Kathleen Jamieson**
Fox River Lines Magazine Editor: **Joseph Hazinski**
Archivist: **Jasmine Carlson, Dave Peterson**
Education Coordinator: **Fred Biederman**

Special Events Commission:
Chair: **Lorrie Nevens**
Event Operations Advisor: **Ron Ruhl**
Compliance and Permitting Advisor: **Doug Rundell**

2025 Nominating Committee: **Kathleen Jamieson, Dave Peterson, Jasmine Carlson**

Museum Safety Department
Safety Coordinator: **Ralph Taylor**

AE&FRE Company Railroad
President: **Art Lemke**
Treasurer: **Ralph Taylor**
Secretary: **Edward Konecki**

Continued from Page 1

Members Day Success!



Anderson Pries

One of the new features of this year's Members Day was the model show, which took place inside the barn extension and featured a variety of displays from individuals and groups, including the Valley Model Railroad Club of South Elgin and the Northwest Traction Group. The show was popular among members and successfully highlighted many of their impressive model collections.

The event also featured special operations throughout the day, running many rare and unique pieces of equipment for the membership. These included a CTA work train with CTA 45 and MS-65, a diesel-powered caboose train with AE&FRE 5, SOO Line 117, and IC 9648, and a Chicago Aurora and Elgin two-car train with CA&E 316 and 20. Trains operated throughout the day, with

additional night runs after the board meeting.

A group photo of all volunteers was also taken to emulate a 1930s photograph from the Aurora Elgin and Fox River Electric at the Elgin State Mental Hospital.

This year's Members Day was one of the most successful in the museum's history, marking several exciting milestones and setting the stage for an even bigger celebration next year.



Dan Ladurini

Anderson Pries





CA&E Car 316 Restoration



Jacob Goldberg

The museum's CA&E car 316 was among the four units that were shipped by the Railway Equipment and Investment Company (RELIC) to a makeshift siding on the Aurora Elgin and Fox River Electric Company railroad in late 1962. Operations started with CA&E 20 on July 4th, 1966. 316's operation started somewhat later, sharing duties as a second car along with North Shore 756.

While it had been painted in the blue, gray, and red trim "Washington" paint scheme at the Wheaton Shops after abandonment, the decision was made to backdate it to the "coffee and cream" scheme of the 1920s. Stripping the gray-painted-over interior started to reveal the mahogany walls in the smoking section and the restroom exterior walls.

As track expansion on the Castle-muir campus developed, other activities consumed the time of the RELIC stockholder/volunteers. At the end of each season, the three wood passenger cars and line car 11 would be covered with tarps to protect them over the winter. The

tarps were removed each spring to herald the next season. Then, in 1972, RELIC had to cope with purchasing the railroad from Bob DeYoung after he lost his last freight customer, the state hospital power plant. It was also obvious that the stockholder-owned company, RELIC, was no longer a viable business model, so the Fox River Trolley Association, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation, was formed and took over the assets in 1984. This allowed the group to construct the first portion of the car barn that year. By 1985, all the museum's wooden cars were able to be stored under cover.

Unfortunately, for 316, the damage had been done. As the ceiling was starting to come down inside the car, the decision was made to take it out of service. Work was undertaken on the car, and a woodworker in Virginia was contracted to make replacement ceiling panels as he had done for CA&E car 315, which resides at the Rockhill Trolley Museum in Pennsylvania. These ceiling panels were safely stored while on-and-off work was done on 316 as other challenges kept museum volunteers busy.



Gianni Polito



Continued on Page 5

Continued from Page 4



Jeff Bennett, Chief Car Officer and project lead for the 316 restoration, stands next to Ralph Taylor, for whom the car was dedicated.

Anderson Pries



Dave Peterson

New members joined the museum, and efforts were started to restore the rapid transit car CTA 4451. As that restoration was winding down on 4451 in 2022, interest in restarting restoration on 316 grew. Work was started along with heavy restoration on CA&E 458, which had been acquired in 2009. Once 458 was finished in 2023, all efforts moved to 316 as it was shifted to Track 4 in the barn so there would be access to both sides of the car. All the seats were removed so the electric heaters could be taken up and the many delaminated wall panels taken down, which allowed for the renewing of the wiring of both the heaters and light fixtures. The original “empire” ceiling panels came down, and after structural repairs, the new panels were installed. The clerestory windows were replaced, while the exterior arch windows were renewed with dead-on replicas to restore this exterior feature, which had been removed by the railroad in the late 1930s or early 1940s. The two side doors were backdated to their original appearance as when the car was built in 1913. During removal of the old roofing, a piece of original canvas was located, which provided the original color for the roof canvas. Both master controllers were completely rebuilt, and air brake piping was renewed and connected to two new reservoir tanks, which replaced the old leaking ones. New wall panels were made up, and faux inlay was applied to mimic the old. All the seat frames were completely cleaned up and repainted and eventually installed so that the reupholstered seat backs and cushions could be installed. Both trucks were cleaned up, primed, and repainted, and all four traction motors inspected and serviced. All four step units were rebuilt, and new traps were made up to replace the worn originals so the car can be accessed from both ground level and high-level platforms. The “Sunset Lines” heralds on both sides of the car have been applied, and testing has proven that both the air brake and propulsion systems are operating properly.

It is very hard in a short article to list all the detailed tasks that have gone into the restoration of 316, and much less name everyone and every source of materials. I am sure every Car Department volunteer can regale you with the many projects that have gone into the restoration of this classic interurban car. Thank you to all for your efforts and support in what has been our most intensive restoration to date.

Joseph Hazinski



316 Restoration Crew



The successful restoration of CA&E 316 would not have been possible without the generous support and hard work of the following donors, individuals, and businesses. As this restoration has spanned several decades, and with efforts passing through many dedicated hands over the years, some names or organizations may have been unintentionally missed. We extend our deepest thanks to everyone who contributed their time, talent, and resources to bringing this historic car back to life.

John H. Emery Rail Heritage Trust

\$ 10,000.00 to rebuild seats on the CA&E interurban car #316.

The Restoration Dream Team

Jeff Bennett Thee Vanpaseuth John Vanpaseuth
Andrzej Jurek Dave Peterson Kathleen Jamieson
Joe Caliendo Fred Biederman Eric Zabelny
Mike Gilles Barbara Bennett Gaby Martinez
Jason Geist Jasmine Carlson Joseph Hazinski

Individual Volunteers

Ben Rohling Chuck Galitz Paul Averdung
Dan Braun Patrick Storm Lorrie Nevens
James Tarbet Jonathan Rey Amberlynn Zabelny
Michael Kucher Rylee Bennett Tom Albright
Ralph Taylor Robert Taylor Bill Wright
Keith Bray Leo Metz Fred Lonnes

Businesses

Bruce Spillar of Classic Woodwork Inc. Kim Kostuch of Studio One Art Glass
Greg and Sue of Chicago Window and Door Solutions Kenny of LeWalt Glass and Mirror
Kyle Kunzer of Troll Tailored Fabrication LLC Cliff of KRB Construction A.B. Kelly Inc.
Peter and Jon of Datum Tool and Manufacturing Cole Stapleton of Ridgfield Flooring
Classical Glass of Algonquin, Illinois Hotrod Jen (Thomas) Ed K of Eagle fasteners
Reprographics Imaging and Art Supplies Mile Long of Datum Tool and Manufacturing
Fast Signs, Crystal Lake Valley Hydraulic Service Inc. Rick, Ceiling pinstripe work

2025 Board of Directors Election Results



The Fox River Trolley Museum is pleased to announce the results of its 2025 Board of Directors election, held during the annual Members' Day celebration on September 27. This year's event saw a fantastic turnout, with members gathering to enjoy the day's festivities and take part in shaping the museum's future through their votes.

Two Board of Director positions were open this year, and three dedicated candidates—Jeff Bennett, Doug Rundell, and Chris DeAngelis—ran for election. After the ballots were counted, the museum is proud to welcome Jeff Bennett and Doug Rundell to the Board. Doug has been re-elected, continuing his long-standing service and leadership as Treasurer. Jeff, a familiar face to many, returns to the board after previously serving as a director. Jeff

currently serves as the museum's Chief Car Officer and has been an active member since 2015. Doug has been with the museum since 1997, contributing decades of expertise and commitment. While Chris DeAngelis was not elected this year, the museum extends sincere thanks for his enthusiasm and dedication to the organization and hopes to see his name on the ballot again in the future.

The museum extends heartfelt gratitude to all members who participated in the election and Members' Day event. Your continued engagement and support make it possible to preserve and celebrate the region's rich railway history for generations to come. The Nominating and Election Committee

Kathleen Jamieson



Kathleen Jamieson

Jeff Bennett



Kathleen Jamieson

Doug Rundell

CTA and the Fox River Trolley Museum Host Fantrip



On August 30th of 2025, Fox River Trolley Museum hosted a charter on the CTA as joint-fundraiser for the CTA Heritage Fleet and the Fox River Trolley Museum. This fundraising charter used CTA #6711 and #6712, which are preserved CTA 6000 series cars built in 1959. The trip departed from the CTA's Dempster-Skokie station, and it lasted about five and-a-half hours. The excursion train ran on every CTA line except for the Pink Line, and it ran

on some rare mileage of the CTA system, including the 13th Street Incline (the exit of the State Street Subway that was in use until 1995), and the turning loop/tunnel at the Linden Station. The crew for the excursion consisted of volunteers from The Fox River Trolley Museum and the CTA/CTA Heritage Fleet.

Anderson Pries



Matthew Milligan

Top row (Left to Right) Ben Rohling, James Tarbet, Gianni Polito, Dan Braun, Anderson Pries, Jacob Goldberg, Chris Nelson
Bottom row (Left to Right) Eric Zabelny, Jasmine Carlson, Chris DeAngelis



Matthew Milligan



Matthew Milligan

Lights, Camera, FRTM!

During the summer, two different news crews visited the museum to showcase its efforts to preserve traction and railroad history in the Chicagoland area. The first filming session was conducted by CBS Chicago, using a two-car diesel train featuring Chicago, North Shore, and Milwaukee car 715 and Aurora, Elgin, and Fox River Electric locomotive 5. These two historic pieces of equipment operated along our line for the day, resulting in a wonderful CBS News segment that captured the magic of our museum.

The second session was filmed by Geoffrey Baer and the WTTW crew, featuring Chicago, Aurora, and Elgin car 458. The WTTW team was producing a special episode about the railroading history of the Chicagoland area, and the museum was honored to be part of both of these exciting productions.

Anderson Pries



Geoffrey Baer
Tours



Geoffrey Baer and WTTW film crew pose in 458

Lorrie Nevens

Museum Volunteer Takes A Trip to the Capitol

At the end of June, museum member and volunteer Ron was honored with an invitation to represent the museum at the nation's capital during a Congressional Gold Medal Honor Ceremony. He was invited by Illinois Senator Tammy Duckworth to commemorate his recognition of two WWII veterans, ages 100 and 101, at the museum's annual World War II reenactment. He traveled to Washington with his two sons, Mike and Walter, and his wife. There, he met many important and well-known politicians and did a wonderful job representing our phenomenal museum in the eyes of some of the nation's most prominent leaders.

Anderson Pries



Ron Ruhl



Ron Ruhl

When Museums Make Friends!

If you have been around the museum for a while, or are a volunteer with the Operations Department, you will know that trying to radio the Castlemuir Dispatcher from Blackhawk was very difficult on a good day. In early April of 2025, the mastermind of the radios at East Troy Electric Railroad Museum in East Troy, Wisconsin assisted our museum with making our radio system exponentially better.

This new system, put in by Jim Feyerherm from East Troy enabled the museum to use a repeater that was positioned around Stearns Road (about one mile South of Castlemuir). Now, when you radio someone South of Stearns road from a point North of there, the radio transmission is repeated to allow for better range.

Operations Department volunteers report the upgrade has transformed a once-spotty link into a reliable connection. The Fox River Trolley Museum was able to return the favor later when they supplied a spare motor for an air conditioning system to East Troy for use in one of their dining cars, #24 “Beverly Shores” and #25 “Ravenswood.” The dining cars are East Troy’s main source of operating revenue, and the Air Conditioning had recently died on one of the cars. The motor was greatly appreciated by East Troy, and they have since gotten their dining car up and running again.

Furthermore, in June of 2025, Operations Department volunteers from the Fox River Trolley Museum took a trip to East Troy to operate for the day. All of the volunteers had a great time, and worked side by side with the wonderful and dedicated volunteers of East Troy Electric Railroad.

Anderson Pries



2024-2025 Volunteer of the Year



Fred Biederman, the first recipient of the “Member of the Year Award” presented by Anderson Pries

Kathleen Jamieson

During the annual Meeting of the Membership at Members’ Day this year, the museum crowned its Volunteer of the Year for the 2024–2025 season. This year’s award went to Fred Biederman of the Car Department, who was very deserving of the honor. Fred designed and constructed the ADA-accessible platform at Castlemuir Track Two and facilitated the purchase of narrow wheelchairs for the aisles of our vintage interurban trolley cars and created special bridge plates for the gaps between the cars and platforms—projects inspired by the mobility challenges his late wife faced. More recently, Fred cast many of the small components for CA&E #316 during its restoration, using metal casting skills he first learned in high school.

Anderson Pries





SANTA'S TROLLEY EXPRESS

All Aboard for Holiday Magic at the Fox River Trolley Museum!

Step back in time and into the spirit of the season! Enjoy a heartwarming holiday train ride aboard our beautifully decorated 1950's vintage cars as you glide down a historic line that's been bringing joy since 1896. It's nostalgia, wonder, and festive fun for the whole family. Tickets are \$38 per person, and all riders—regardless of age or size—will require their own ticket. Tickets are selling fast, so don't miss your chance to make magical memories this holiday season!

Visit foxtrolley.org for details and to reserve your seats today!

FOX RIVER TROLLEY MUSEUM
365 S LAFOX ST SOUTH ELGIN, IL 60177
Phone: (847) 380-6121

**Saturday, November 29
thru Sunday, December 21**



Fun Fact

Did you know our very own Chicago Aurora and Elgin #20 is the oldest operating interurban trolley car in America? It's true! Car #20 was built for the AE&C (the predecessor to the CA&E) in 1902 and was used in service on the CA&E until 1957. It came to the museum in 1962 and has been in our collection ever since. It is also the only known car on the CA&E system to have run on both the first and last days of operation; August 25, 1902, and July 3, 1957. The car made special runs for members on Members Day, but it is temporarily out of service while remaining operational.

To donate toward the wheel replacement fund for this car and help get the symbol of the Village of South Elgin operating for the public, go to foxtrolley.com



Guess That Artifact!

It's time for Guess That Artifact! The winner of the last contest was museum member Fred Lonnes. He correctly guessed the artifact, which was Chicago Aurora and Elgin #458, a 2023 restoration. When asked about himself, Fred wrote:

"I am a long-time member of the Museum. First visited in 1963 and became active in 1965. Over the years I was involved in numerous Museum activities. I retired from the CTA in 2015 as the Assistant Chief Rail Equipment Engineer. I continue to assist the CTA as a member of the Heritage Fleet Technical Committee."

Thank you to all the members who submitted guesses! All of us at the Electric Times Newsletter have enjoyed running this special feature, and we look forward to another great year ahead. Stay tuned and keep an eye on your mailbox for the next edition of "Guess That Artifact," arriving in the Spring 2026 newsletter!



Anderson Pries

Paranormal Night Draws a Spirited Crowd

On October 4, the Fox River Trolley Museum hosted its first-ever Paranormal Night, and it was an incredible success! The event, geared toward adults, drew a large turnout and brought the community together for an evening of mystery, history, and supernatural intrigue. Different from the museum's family-friendly Ghost Story Train, which caters to children and parents looking for spooky fun, Paranormal Night invites guests to explore the more mysterious side of local lore. Riders boarded a vintage trolley and traveled down the historic line to learn about paranormal activity surrounding unmarked graves from the BlackHawk War era. Event organizers Lorrie Nevens and Ron Ruhl, members of the newly formed Special Events Commission, worked tirelessly to make the night both immersive, educational, and spooky. The Commission, led by Chair Lorrie Nevens, with Ron Ruhl serving as Event Operations

Advisor and Doug Rundell as Compliance and Permitting Advisor, has quickly become an important part of the museum's growing calendar of creative events. A huge thank-you goes out to everyone who helped make Paranormal Night possible: The Illinois State Paranormal Investigators for guiding guests through a night of discovery and mystery. The Wood Dale Historical Society for lending the trailer that made our hay rides possible. El Cokito Taqueria for serving up delicious Trakside Tacos. Phil Mendoza and all of our talented vendors and readers for their energy, insight, and creativity that truly brought the evening to life. With such an enthusiastic response, Paranormal Night is sure to become a new seasonal favorite at the museum.

Kathleen Jamieson



Have suggestions or want to get involved for next year's Paranormal Night? We'd love to hear from you!
Email: info@foxtrolley.org
Kathleen Jamieson



Lorrie Nevens

Obituaries

In this issue of The Electric Times, we introduce a new section dedicated to honoring the memory of members and friends of the Fox River Trolley Museum who have passed away. While future editions will reflect losses from the current year, this first installment reaches a bit further back to remember those whose contributions and friendship have helped shape our museum's history and spirit.

Bernard S. Kamenear January 19, 1944 - June 28, 2025

FRTM Legacy Membership Number 824

Donald MacCorquodale March 1, 1945 - February 25, 2025

FRTM Legacy Membership Number 3

Barbara Ann Biederman April 30, 1935 - January 13, 2025

FRTM Legacy Membership Number 995

Robert Wayman October 11, 1935 - August 9, 2024

FRTM Legacy Membership Number 15

Fredrick Crissey September 25, 1939 - December 24, 2023

FRTM Legacy Membership Number 18





Don't Forget to Renew For 2026

Museum Regular Membership Renewal & Application Form

Please Mail This Membership Renewal Form and Your Check to:

Fox River Trolley Museum
P.O. Box 315
South Elgin, IL 60177

1. Please fill out the following contact information:

2. Check the appropriate membership level and calendar year for which you would like to apply or renew below:

I would like to renew my membership for calendar year **202[]**

First Name

Last Name

Address 1

Address 2

City State Zip

Home Phone

Mobile Phone

Email

Price	Please Select	Membership Level	Description
\$35.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	General Member	A single person (18+)
\$50.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family Membership	A general member & family
\$25.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Member	A single person (13-17 years old) with parental consent
\$45.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Qualified Member	A single person (18+) with ≥200 Museum hours
\$50.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Qualified & Family Membership	A qualified member & family
Optional Sponsorship Donation			
\$100.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sustaining	
\$500.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contributing	
\$1,000.00	<input type="checkbox"/>	Benefactor	
\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other amount	
Total =			

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$_____ payable to ***the Fox River Trolley Association.***

Please Mail This Membership Renewal Form and Your Check to:

Fox River Trolley Museum, P.O. Box 315, South Elgin, IL 6017