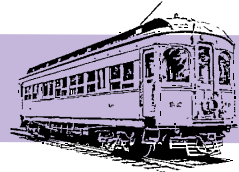


The Electric Times Newsletter

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



The Electric Times Newsletter is proudly all volunteer run and produced. For our members, by our members.

Hop Into Spring With The Fox River Trolley's Bunny Burrow Express

Follow the eggs and hop aboard a springtime adventure as the Easter Bunny returns for one of the Fox River Trolley Museum's most charming seasonal traditions. Designed for the young and the young at heart, this special Easter experience combines family fun, imagination, and history aboard beautifully restored vintage trolley cars.

Guests will climb aboard real antique electric trolleys and enjoy a scenic ride through the Fox River Valley while traveling to the Easter Bunny's "secret burrow." Along the way, excitement builds as families prepare for an egg hunt unlike any other. Once the trolley reaches its destination, children will have the chance to search for hidden eggs scattered throughout the Bunny's woodland hideaway. Every child will receive their own basket, perfect for collecting the magical eggs they discover during the adventure.

The Easter Bunny Train will operate on the three Saturdays leading up to Easter: March 21, March 28, and April 4. Each day offers three departure times to accommodate busy family schedules, with trains leaving



The Easter Bunny and conductor Tom Albright.

at 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 3:00 p.m. Each ride lasts approximately one hour and fifteen minutes, allowing plenty of time to enjoy both the trolley journey and the egg hunt experience.

This event offers more than just an egg hunt. It is a chance for families to slow down, enjoy time together, and experience a piece of living history in a festive setting. The combination of antique trolley cars, spring

scenery, and a visit from the Easter Bunny creates a memorable outing that appeals to children and adults alike.

Whether you are starting a new family tradition or returning for another year of Easter fun, this delightful trolley ride promises smiles, laughter, and a touch of seasonal magic for everyone aboard.

Kathleen Jamieson

Upcoming Events

March Rally

Saturday, March 7
7:00pm at Woodcliff

See page 4

Bunny Train

Saturday March 21
11:00 AM, 1:00 PM, and 3:00 PM at The Jon J. Duerr Forest Preserve

Saturday March 28
11:00 AM, 1:00 PM, and 3:00 PM at The Jon J. Duerr Forest Preserve

Saturday April 4
11:00 AM, 1:00 PM, and 3:00 PM at The Jon J. Duerr Forest Preserve

Board meeting
Saturday, March 21
2:00pm at The Elgin Township Offices

Open House
Saturday April 25
11:00am to 5:00pm
Sunday April 26
11:00am to 5:00pm

See page 7

Membership Renewal Grace period Ends

Thursday April 30
Opening Day (Mother's Day)
Sunday, May 10
10:00am to 5:00pm

Board meeting
Saturday, May 23
2:00pm at The Elgin Township Offices

Memorial Day
Monday, May 25
10:00am to 5:00pm

All events take place at the main museum campus unless otherwise stated.

Get To Know Your Museum

These are the people who help keep each of these departments running. If you have questions, need support, or would like to get involved, they would be happy to hear from you.

Departments & Roles

2025 Board of Directors

President: Bernard Rohling
Vice President: Patrick Storm
Treasurer: Douglas Rundell
Secretary: Jeff Bennett
Director: Chris Nelson

Operations Department

Operations Superintendent: Patrick Storm
Trainmaster: Chris DeAngelis
Crew Caller: Damin Keenan
Museum Store Manager: Damin Keenan

Membership Services Department

Membership Services Manager: Kathleen Jamieson
Membership Activities Coordinator: Jasmine Carlson
Membership Development Coordinator: Vacant

Car Department

Chief Car Officer/ Manager: Jeff Bennett
Asst. Chief Car Officer: Andrzej Jurek & Dave Peterson

Fixed Plant Department

Chief Engineer/Manager: Ralph Taylor
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 & Social Media Relations Coordinator: Ryan Prusinski
Webmaster: Jacob Goldberg
Asst. Webmaster: Edward Konecki
Chief Technology Officer: Edward Konecki
Community Relations Manager: Jeff Bennett

Capital Development Coordinator: Eric Zabelny
Curator: Joseph Hazinski
Publications Manager: Kathleen Jamieson
Newsletter Editor: Kathleen Jamieson
Archivist: Jasmine Carlson & Dave Peterson
Education Coordinator: Fred Biederman

Museum Safety Department

Safety Coordinator: Ralph Taylor

AE&FRE Company Railroad

President: Art Lemke
Treasurer: Ralph Taylor
Secretary: Edward Konecki

Mission Statement

Education Through Demonstration

The Museum's mission is 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 inter-urban, 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 that help relate the importance of electric transport in and around the Chicago Metropolitan Area, putting them in context with their surroundings and era.

The Electric Times Staff

Publication Manager—

Kathleen Jamieson

Columnist—

Anderson Pries

Layout and Graphics—

David Peterson

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Birthdays And Anniversaries

Aurora, Elgin and Fox River Electric #5 turns 80 this year. This locomotive was built for the AE&FRE by General Electric in 1946 to replace the aging electric locomotives that served the line we now operate over, and it continues to serve that same line 80 years later.



Chicago North Shore and Milwaukee Railroad #715 is turning 100 this year. It served the CNS&M, running between downtown Chicago and Milwaukee, until 1963 and came to the museum in 1989. Be on the lookout for a birthday celebration for this car on Mother's Day 2026.



Chicago Transit Authority #5001 has been part of the museum's collection for 40 years, having been acquired from the CTA in 1986. Car 5001 is an extremely rare example of a three-unit, articulated rapid transit car, as only four of this type were ever built. Two of these cars have been preserved, and they were inspired by the North Shore Line's famous Electroliners, which were built six years earlier.



Want to get involved with restorations like the one you see above? Contact Jeff Bennett in the Car Barn or via Jeff@frtm.org to learn more about volunteering in our restoration department.

Illinois Central #9648 has been in the museum's collection for 30 years. It was acquired from the Illinois Central Railroad in 1996 and is used frequently during operating days as the tail end of diesel, or electric, powered freight trains. It will be featured on even more operating days this year.



The Museum Begins Operating Trains! The museum, then known formerly as the RELIC Trolley Museum, began operations on July 4, 1966, making this year its 60th birthday. Many special events and operating days are planned to celebrate this milestone. When operations began, CA&E car 20 served as the primary service car, with North Shore Line 756 as a backup, while CA&E 316 and Rio de Janeiro 441 (later moved to Pennsylvania) operated occasionally. Early trolley operations ran only from the Castlemuir depot to what is now the end of the car barn, not due to a lack of track, but because trolley wire had only been strung that far. Trolley rides in 1966 cost 25 cents.

Join us this July 4 for the museum's 60th birthday celebration, featuring unique and historic opportunities and sights that will not be available at any other time.

Anderson Pries

Guess The Artifact

Happy New Year Fox River Trolley Museum friends and family! The Electric Times Staff have whipped up a new Guess That Artifact for the new year!

Can you guess what this is?



Rules:

Members may only submit ONE entry
The first correct correct entry wins
Winners will be mentioned by name in the next newsletter

Good Luck!

Greetings Fox River Trolley Museum family,

2025 is now in our rearview mirror, with several milestones including the completion of one car barn extension, the start of another, the unveiling of CA&E 316, CTA 45, and Soo 117, as well as the successful launch of our very own creation, Santa's Trolley Express. 2025 will be remembered for positive change and growth.

Growth of revenue and the active volunteer base during 2026 will be key to maintaining the upward trajectory of our organization. In addition to some new events for 2026, we have expanded our list of operating dates to include Saturdays for the entire 2026 season. We have the potential to make this a banner year for ridership, revenue, and, importantly, memories that will last a lifetime for our visitors.

If you are a member of the organization and are not yet an active volunteer, this is your casting call. A successful operating season takes more than just moving the trains.

Please consider joining us for our March Membership Rally on Saturday, March 7, and our preseason open house on April 25 and 26. These events combined will give both new and old volunteers the opportunity to get acquainted and build the team we need for a successful 2026. I will leave you with this quote from Henry Ford: "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."



Ben Rohling
FRTM President



You're Invited!

March Membership Rally

The Fox River Trolley Museum would like to invite our members to an evening of camaraderie Saturday, March 7, 7pm at Woodcliff for our March Membership Rally. The highlight of the evening will be video footage from the collection of Bruce Moffat. Bruce has a collection of all things Chicago transit, interurban and railroad.

Date & Time: March 7, 2026 at 7pm

Location: 7n851 Woodcliff Dr., South Elgin, IL 60177

Food: Pizza will be provided, so we ask you to RSVP by Wednesday March 4th in order to ensure nobody goes hungry.

RSVP: by March 4 to Jasmine Carlson via phone (224) 428-8446 (text anytime, call between 4pm-10pm) or email jascarlsoon@gmail.com

See you at Woodcliff!



with powered overhead wire designed for HO scale trolley cars.

During the 1990s and 2000s, the layout was displayed at train shows throughout the Chicagoland area, where it helped promote the museum to a wide audience. It is operated using a former North Shore Line interurban controller, which powers the layout and sets the trolley cars in motion when a visitor advances it

to the first point.

The layout made a public appearance at the Members Day model show in 2025, and the museum hopes to feature it more frequently on display in the future, allowing visitors to enjoy a piece of the museum's outreach and exhibition history.

Anderson Pries

Museum Acquires Historic Model Train Layout



The MacCorquodale model was on display for the first time in decades thanks to volunteer and President, Ben Rohling

This year, the museum acquired a model train layout that holds special significance to its history. The layout

was obtained from the estate of longtime member Don MacCorquodale following his passing in 2025. It features a trolley loop

Success Of Santa's Trolley Express

What A Way To End Our 2025 Season!

Happy Holidays! This year, we introduced an all-new Christmas train event, Santa's Trolley Express, and it was a huge success. The event generated significant revenue for the museum and added a personal touch that captured the attention of many first-time riders.

Event coordinator Eric Zabelny shared, "Seeing the kids' faces light up when the trolley doors opened and Santa stepped aboard is why we do this." He also noted, "We know what works, what needs tweaking, and how the whole thing flows. It's going to feel even more magical for families next year!"



Pictured here at Blackhawk Station, Car 40 stands ready to carry families on a magical journey to the North Pole to visit Santa. Lovingly decorated with festive lights, the car glows brightly in the night, adding an extra touch of holiday wonder to the experience.

Anderson Pries

Volunteer Opportunities For Every Ability

At the Fox River Trolley Museum, we often share photos of the big, dusty jobs-the track work, the restorations, the painting and power tools. But let's be clear: not all the important work happens in work gloves.

Volunteers like Barbara Bennett remind us that there's no such thing as a "small" job here. Barbara has logged hundreds of hours doing everything

from tending our gardens and washing windows to decorating trolleys, staffing events, helping in the depot, and representing the museum at community festivals. Her volunteer sheet is a masterclass in behind-the-scenes dedication.

And guess what? We need more folks just like her. If you love the museum but can't swing a sledgehammer or spend hours on your feet, you still belong here. Some of the most valuable help we need includes:

Answering phone calls during special events-especially when families have last-minute questions or need help finding us.

Helping with community outreach-chatting with visitors at our table during fairs and festivals or handing out brochures at local libraries.

Taking photos of museum life, projects in progress, or visitors enjoying the day. We love capturing and sharing these

moments on social media!

Assisting with light prep and cleanup-wiping tables, sweeping floors, or helping organize Supplies for events.

Helping with event prep-cutting, labeling, sorting, or helping make things look festive for upcoming programs.

Just being a friendly face-whether that's in the depot, during special events, or giving

Informal tours.

No matter your age, ability, or experience level, if you've got a heart for history and a little time to share, we have a place for you. Every task-big or small-helps keep the museum alive and moving forward.

Interested in getting involved in your own way? Reach out to us at Lorrie@foxtrolley.org.

Let's build the future of the museum - together.

Lorries Nevens

Renew For 2026

As we look ahead to another exciting year, we kindly remind our members, who have not yet, to renew their membership for 2026. The grace period for renewals ends on the last day of April, and memberships not renewed by that time will no longer receive member benefits, including delivery of the museum newsletter.

Looking for your membership card? Member cards are now available online year round. Simply log in to your account to view and access yours at any time.

We have many exciting events and changes planned, and we would love for you to continue being part of the Fox River Trolley Museum family. Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to another great year together.

Monticello Railway Museum Founder Visits Fox River



The group inspects CA&E 458 at Blackhawk with museum volunteers Anderson Pries and Bruce Moffat

On October 12th, Monticello Railroad Museum founder Ted Lemen and his railfan group stopped by the museum for a visit to see what the Fox River Trolley Museum is all about. On site to welcome the group were museum volunteers Eric Zabelny and Lorrie Nevens, who served

as the group's tour guides for the car barn, along with Anderson Pries, who arranged the visit and acted as the tour guide for the trolley trip aboard Chicago Aurora and Elgin 458.

Lemen said of the visit, "Getting to crawl through the barns to see what was in progress

and even tomorrow's projects for several years to come was a treat, as was the ability of our tour guide to recall a wealth of information off the top of his head." He also humorously commented on the museum's hospitality, saying, "Everyone there was primed for our arrival and they treated us like royalty, perhaps because of our hairlines."

In addition to his work in the railroad preservation community, Ted Lemen is also a ragtime pianist and vocalist. He will be returning to the museum this August to perform at the first-ever Fox River Ragtime Festival.

This visit is another great example of museums building connections and friendships. The Fox River Trolley Museum now has a valuable relationship with the Monticello Railroad Museum and looks forward to continuing to strengthen ties with other local museums throughout the year.

Anderson Pries

CTA 45 Gets Re-Painted

After a long series of recent repaints and restorations, the next car being worked on is Chicago Transit Authority Car 45, which was built for the CTA in 1959. It has been repainted in the "Mint Green and Alpine White" scheme that Car 45 carried from about 1966 until 1985. The repaint was completed by museum volunteer Eric Zabelny, who hopes to finish a full interior restoration to its circa 1966 appearance if the museum receives sufficient donations for the project.

Car 45 was used during this past Christmas season's Santa's Trolley Express, where it was stationed at Blackhawk as the "warming car." It also ran on

the deadhead moves to and from Blackhawk each day with CTA 40 and 43, serving as a control trailer for the train. Its motors were cut out so it could not move on its own, but its controllers were used to operate the rest of the train.

Car 45 remains operable, but it cannot run well and needs donor support to repair its motors. If you would like to help preserve and operate this historic piece of Chicago transit history for future generations, please consider making a donation by visiting <https://membership.fox-trolley.org/donate> or by emailing eric@frtm.org

Anderson Pries



CTA Car 45 after a fresh coat of paint

Fun Fact

Did you know that some components of our Chicago Transit Authority 1-50 series cars, such as #40, #43, and #45, which were used during this past Santa's Trolley Express, were recycled from Chicago's famous "Green Hornet" streetcars? It's true! As streetcar service in the City of Chicago officially ended on June 21st, 1958, most streetcars were being scrapped. As the Chicago Transit Authority was ordering its new 6000 series cars, many streetcars were being scrapped at the same time. The CTA saw a cost effective way to produce the new cars by incorporating some components from the recently scrapped streetcars into these new rapid transit cars. By the time our "spam cans," as they are sometimes referred to by fans and workers alike, were built in 1959, these streetcar parts were still being used in the construction of CTA rapid transit cars, so we do have some

S00 117 Gets An Overhaul

The Restoration Dream Team Strikes Again

On October 27th, 2023, the historic S00 Line caboose #117 arrived on museum property. This caboose was donated by Marty Maggio of Maggio Towing and Trucking, with assistance from museum member and volunteer Eric Zabelny. The

tired from service in May 2023 before being acquired by Maggio Towing and Trucking and subsequently donated to the museum. After its arrival in October 2023, it remained on museum property until early 2025, when restoration work began. Caboose #117



Here's a look at the "before" photo, as S00 Caboose 117 is carefully prepped for a fresh coat of paint.

caboose was built by the International Car Company of Kenton, Ohio, in 1973 and was used in service on the S00 Line until 1980, when the S00 Line was incorporated into the Canadian Pacific Railroad. From 1980 until May of 2023, the caboose remained in service on Canadian Pacific. During much of its later service life, it operated as a "shoving platform" based out of Canadian Pacific's Bensenville Yard in Bensenville, Illinois, which serves as CP's Chicago yard.

A shoving platform is a safe platform where a train's brakeman can stand, providing visibility while the train is backing up and access to the air brakes in the event of an emergency. In these movements, the locomotive and engineer are located on the opposite end of the train, making the move a "shove."

The caboose was re-



A fresh paint scheme, new to the museum but true to the car's original appearance, has now been beautifully applied.

made its first run at the end of the 2025 season and also made a cameo appearance in the caboose train during Members Day. The caboose will continue to educate the public on the railroad histo-

ry of the Chicagoland area and will be available for rides during many events and operating days this season.

Anderson Pries

NEW EVENT

OPEN HOUSE

April 25 and 26 from 11-5 pm

Come see what we do at the Fox River Trolley Museum Open House. Meet our volunteers, explore the trades that keep our trains running, and learn how we preserve and operate historic railway equipment. Whether you are curious about getting involved or simply want a behind the scenes look, everyone is welcome to come explore and enjoy.

For more information visit:
 Foxtrolley.org
 or email
 info@foxtrolley.org
 365 S La Fox St,
 South Elgin, IL 60177

See you there!






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 60177