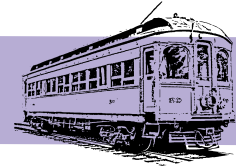


The Electric Times Newsletter

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.

Museum Enters 60th Year Operating

Thank you to all who came out
Here's to another 60 years!

On July 4, 1966, the RELIC Trolley Museum operated its first trolley, Chicago Aurora and Elgin Car 20, for the eagerly awaiting public. Rides cost just 25 cents and only traveled as far as present-day Switch 54, or the end of the current car barn. Today, the museum continues as one of the finest electric railroad museums in the Midwest, with 27 pieces of historic equipment, 13 of which are operational. A far cry from the few-hundred-foot trolley rides of our humble beginnings, the museum now operates four-mile round trips every weekend during the season over its restored two-mile demonstration trolley line.

To celebrate the museum's 60th anniversary, a special event was held on July 4, 2026, featuring rare trolley operations and seldom-seen equipment. The event included a two-car Chicago Aurora and Elgin wooden train consisting of Cars 316 and 20, Aurora Elgin and Fox River Electric Car 304, and Chicago Aurora



Upcoming Events

July

Military History Weekend

Saturday, August 1

Sunday, August 2

All Aboard Days

Sunday, August 9

Fox River Ragtime Festival

Saturday, August 22

Sunday, August 23

September

Labor Day

Monday, September 7

Steampunk day

Saturday, September 12

Board meeting

Saturday, September 13

2:00pm @ Elgin Township

Offices

Operation Lifesaver

Saturday, September 26

October

Members Day

Saturday, October 3

Annual Members Meeting

Saturday, October 3

5:30pm

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

and Elgin Car 458. The celebration drew railfans and community members alike to see these historic trolley cars, many of which are not operated regularly, and to help wish the museum a happy 60th birthday.

Anderson Pries

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 DeAngelis

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

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.

Changing your address? Send address changes to the museum's mailing address: Box 315, South Elgin, IL 60177 or Login online to update contact information.



Father's Day Car Show & All Aboard Days A Success

This year, the Fox River Trolley Museum has had a record number of special events to offer the general public. One of those events is the ever-popular Father's Day Car Show, which returned this year after a successful debut in 2025. The event welcomed many visitors from around the Chicagoland area, and numerous classic cars were displayed throughout the museum grounds. Chicago Aurora and Elgin Car 316 also made an appearance, delighting visitors who rode in it throughout the day. Another special event, new to the museum this year, was All Aboard Days.

While the All Aboard Days have not yet concluded, the first two iterations of the event have been a success. This new special event provides an inclusive museum experience with sensory-friendly elements designed to make a visit to the trolley museum more accessible. Some of these features include a "quiet train," a sensory-friendly area inside our historic 1903 Wayne Depot, and many other accommodations. All in all, these two special events have been great successes, and we look forward to introducing many more exciting events in the future.

Anderson Pries



Guess The Artifact

Welcome back to "Guess the Artifact!" Email Anderson@frtm.org with guesses!

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!

The artifact in last edition's "Guess the Artifact" was SOO Line Caboose #130!



Congratulations to our award winners:

1st Place – Otilio Roman

1955 Volkswagen Beetle

2nd Place – Ron Buchowski

1924 Ford T-Bucket

3rd Place – Daniel Zedan

1967 Shelby Cobra GT350 Mustang

A huge thank you to all of the participants who made this year's show such a success.

Election News!

Early June – Candidate Selection Begins

Qualified members who feel they are a good fit for the board of directors have the opportunity to nominate themselves. Nominations are due before the July board meeting every year.

July 25 – Candidates Announced

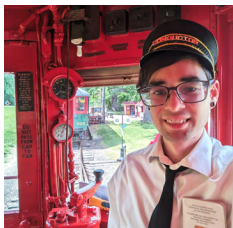
Meet the candidates running in this year's Board of Directors election. Three (3) positions need to be filled this election cycle. Each candidate brings a unique perspective and a heartfelt commitment to our mission of preserving and promoting local heritage. As valued members of our community, your votes will play a crucial role in shaping the future of the museum, ensuring that we continue to offer engaging educational programs and memorable experiences for all. We encourage you to take the time to learn about each candidate and their vision for the museum, as your participation in this election is vital to our growth and success.



Ben Rohling (Re-Elect)

President, Roadmaster, member since 1989

Since joining The Board of Directors in 2024, I have taken the approach of building and empowering our current as well as our next generation of volunteers thereby strengthening the future of our organization. Currently serving my second term as President of the Association, I look forward to helping my elected colleagues in the continued nurturing, governance and growth of the Association. A vote for me is a vote for someone who remembers our past, the people who made it possible, and understands the awesome responsibility that building a future through our present efforts carries. Thank you for allowing me to represent your interests.



Chris DeAngelis

Assistant Trainmaster, member since 2021

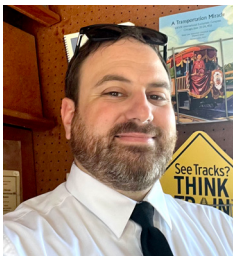
With over 800 hours of volunteer service, I have been proud to be a part of the Operations Department. I spend many weekends at the museum helping ensure our operations run safely and smoothly so our visitors can enjoy the experience. Most recently, I earned the title of Trainmaster, where I now have the privilege of training the next generation of conductors and motormen. I look forward to being part of the museum for many years to come and am excited about all the new projects and opportunities that lie ahead.



Dan Zedan

Member since 1999

After joining the museum in 1999, I became active in the operating department and served as the museum's Trainmaster from 2005 – 2012. I also served on the board from 2008 – 2010. Seeing the incredible progress being made on the grounds and equipment, I decided to reengage in 2025 with particular interest in the restoration of the Wayne Depot. I am a retired Coast Guard Officer and recently sold my company of 26 years. I have served on the River Valley Workforce Investment Board (9/12 – 8/13), served as the President and Chairman of the Board for Three Fires Council BSA (4/20 – 4/23), served on the American Pecan Council Board (10/16 – 3/21) and the National Pecan Sheller's Association Board (9/17 – 3/26). I am currently serving on the board of the Ft. Worth Montessori School in Ft. Worth, TX. It would be an honor to serve on the FRTM Board once again.



Patrick Storm (Re-Elect)

Assistant Roadmaster, Operations Superintendent, Vice President, member since 1998

Greetings to all! I am Patrick Storm and I am running for re-election for the Board of Directors. I have been a member of the Fox River Trolley Museum since 1998 when I started coming out to volunteer with my grandfather. I have held many positions and jobs at the museum over the years, most currently serving as the Operations Superintendent and Vice President for the current Board of Directors. I have served on the Board of Directors every year since 2019 and hope to continue my service at the museum for the next 2 years! I will help to continue to grow our organization and continue to build on and reinforce the solid foundation that the organization has already established. With my fellow directors, I will continue to work and ensure that the museum will flourish and be a place for all to enjoy for decades to come!

September – Ballots Mailed

Ballots will be mailed to all members with active 2026 memberships at the address we have on file. Please log in to your member portal to verify your mailing address.

September – October 3 – Voting Period

Vote by mailing your ballot or placing it in the ballot box at the museum.

October 3 – Election Day

Voting closes at 5:00 PM during the Annual Meeting of the Membership at Members Day. Ballots will be counted, and election results will be announced.

Young Fox River Trolley Museum Volunteer Receives International Recognition from the Scott Joplin Foundation

The Fox River Trolley Museum is proud to congratulate volunteer Anderson Pries on receiving the Scott Joplin International Ragtime Foundation's "Ragtime Kid" Award, an international honor celebrating outstanding contributions to the preservation and promotion of classic ragtime music.

Presented by the Scott Joplin International Ragtime Foundation (SJRF) in Sedalia, Missouri, the award recognizes individuals whose work helps preserve Scott Joplin's legacy and introduce new audiences to America's original popular music. For more than 65 years, the Foundation has promoted an appreciation of classic ragtime through educational programs,

youth outreach, concerts, archival preservation, and the internationally renowned Scott Joplin International Ragtime Festival, the largest event of its kind in the world.

For Anderson, the recognition is especially meaningful. At just 16 years old, he has already become one of the museum's most dedicated volunteers, serving as an event coordinator, columnist for *The Electric Times*, and an enthusiastic ambassador for railway preservation. His passion for history, attention to detail, and tireless work ethic have made him a respected leader among volunteers of all ages and a promising representative of the next generation of preservationists.

The award recognizes Anderson's creation of the Fox River Ragtime Festival, an event that brings together two defining elements of early twentieth-century America: historic electric railways and the music of the Ragtime Era. The festival features internationally acclaimed musicians, including Grammy-winning artists, performing aboard and alongside the museum's collection of operating historic trolley cars, allowing visitors to experience the sights and sounds of the era in an authentic setting.

From helping guests at the museum to revitalizing *The Electric Times* newsletter, Anderson has continually demonstrated that preservation depends on passion, curiosity, and a willing-

ness to serve.

Receiving international recognition from the Scott Joplin International Ragtime Foundation is an extraordinary accomplishment for someone so early in his preservation career. More importantly, it reflects the impact that one dedicated young volunteer can have in keeping both musical and transportation history alive. The Fox River Trolley Museum congratulates Anderson on this well-deserved honor and looks forward to seeing both him and the Fox River Ragtime Festival continue to grow for many years to come.

Kathleen Jamieson

New Items in Our Gift Shop

One of our volunteers you may not have met yet, but who has played a major role in the success of many of our special events, is Ryan Prusinski. Behind the scenes, Ryan has generously shared his time, creativity, and craftsmanship to help make the museum a more memorable place for our visitors. Whether assisting with event preparations or taking on special projects, he has become an invaluable member of our volunteer team.

One of Ryan's many talents is creating custom, handcrafted items for the museum gift shop. This year, visitors can browse a growing selection of unique souvenirs, including beautifully crafted railroad signs, museum-themed signs, key chains, and other one-of-a-kind keepsakes. These items

not only make great gifts for railroad enthusiasts and museum supporters but also help support the museum's preservation efforts through gift shop sales.

Ryan's work is another example of the incredible skills our volunteers bring to the Fox River Trolley Museum. Their dedication extends far beyond operating trains, with many contributing specialized talents that enhance the museum experience for everyone who visits. Be sure to stop by the gift shop during your next visit to see Ryan's handcrafted creations and take home a unique reminder of your day at the museum.

Kathleen Jamieson



Fun Fact

Did you know that our Chicago Transit Authority 5001 is one of only two cars of its kind in existence in the world? It is true! The CTA built four 5000-series trainsets, of which 5001 is a part: cars 5001, 5002, 5003, and 5004. These car numbers were later shortened to 51, 52, 53, and 54. Of these, only cars 5001 and 5002 survive today, with the former preserved at our museum and the latter preserved at the Illinois Railway Museum in Union, Illinois. Both cars were built by Pullman-Standard, and 5001 can be seen today in the museum's Castlemuir Yard.

Members Day Model Show

Show off your model trains at Members Day 2026! Once again, we will host a model train show to showcase the layouts and models of our friends and members. Email Model Show Coordinator Anderson Pries at Anderson@frtm.org for more information or to enter your model train(s) in the show! The event was a huge success last year, with many models on display, including several that traveled from out of state. We hope to see you (and your model) there!

Anderson Pries

Come see some of our special events!

SAFETY DAY
Featuring

No admission charged!



OPERATION
LIFESAVER®

Illinois

SEPT 26 10AM
TO 3PM

Join us for Safety Day
with Operation Lifesaver.
Have fun learning about
all things safety!

- Railroad and train safety demonstrations
- Train Rides
- Learn about CPR
- Bring the kids along to see emergency vehicles
- And much more!

Share Your Museum Photos with Us!

Do you enjoy photography, videography, or creating digital content? We'd love to see the Fox River Trolley Museum through your lens! Whether you've captured a beautifully restored trolley, a special event, or a favorite moment during your visit, we encourage you to share your photos and videos with us. Submissions can be made anytime through our website.

We love seeing visitors and railfans out photographing the historic cars our volunteers work so hard to preserve. Every image reminds us that our efforts are appreciated and helps tell the museum's story from a new perspective. Your next great photo could even be featured in one of our publications or on social media!

Kathleen Jamieson



Volunteer of the Year Award

Now is the time to recognise a Fox River Trolley Museum volunteer who you believe has been an exceptional volunteer for the past 2025-2026 season! The volunteer that receives the most nominations will be selected to be honored with the 2025-2026 "Volunteer of the Year" award from the Fox River Trolley Museum and the Electric Times Newsletter. Nominations are due September 1st, and nominations must be sent to newsletter columnist Anderson Pries at Anderson@frtm.org. The award will be presented to the awardee on Members Day 2026. Congrats to the 2024-2025 Volunteer of the Year, Fred Biederman!

Anderson Pries

FOX RIVER RAGTIME FESTIVAL

August 22-23, 2026

Listen to America's first popular music – classic and modern ragtime performed by world-class musicians throughout the day on historic trolley cars and on the museum grounds.



Festival Artists

Paul Asaro, Piano & Voice	Faye Ballard, Piano
Nathan Beasley, Piano	Anderson Pries, Piano
Sue Keller, Piano & Voice	The Mudcats, Traditional Jazz Band
Sammy G, Piano	Ted Lemen, Piano & Voice

Fox River Trolley Museum
365 S LAFOX ST SOUTH ELGIN, IL 60177



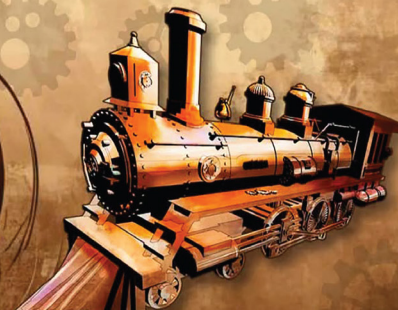
FOX VALLEY STEAMPUNK FESTIVAL

ALL ABOARD!

JOIN US FOR THE FOX VALLEY STEAMPUNK FESTIVAL—A ONE-OF-A-KIND, FAMILY-FRIENDLY CELEBRATION OF CREATIVITY, HISTORY, AND COMMUNITY NESTLED ALONG THE BANKS OF THE SCENIC FOX RIVER.

SEPTEMBER 12TH, 2026
365 S LA FOX ST SOUTH ELGIN, ILLINOIS
11AM-5PM

TRAIN RIDES
VENDORS
STEAMPUNK GAMES
COSTUME CONTEST
LIVE MUSIC
AND MUCH MORE!




SCAN THE QR CODE NOW!

FOXVALLEYSTEAMPUNK.COM

FOX RIVER TROLLEY MUSEUM PRESENTS GHOST STORY TRAIN



Climb aboard a historic trolley for a SPOOKY ride to a HAUNTED forest preserve, where an evening of family-friendly Halloween fun awaits! Gather around a roaring campfire for chilling ghost stories, sing along with our ghostly musician, and enjoy delicious s'mores, hot chocolate, apple cider, and other autumn treats. Feeling adventurous? Join our paranormal investigators for an interactive exploration into the mysteries of the Fox River. Costumes are encouraged!

Saturday's, October 10, 17 & 24
Departures: 5:00 PM, 6:15 PM & 7:30 PM
Boarding: Castlemuir Depot (Fox River Trolley Museum)

Tickets go on sale August 1
Purchase online to guarantee your seat. Limited tickets may be available at the event if not sold out.

FUN FOR GHOSTS, GOBLINS, AND FAMILIES OF ALL AGES!

Santa's TROLLEY EXPRESS



All Aboard for Holiday Magic!

Make memories that will last a lifetime aboard Santa's Trolley Express at the Fox River Trolley Museum! Ride beautifully decorated 1950's vintage elevated train cars along an authentic 1896 railway as you celebrate the magic of the holiday season with family and friends. Early Bird Pricing.
August 1 – October 31: \$46 per person
Beginning November 1: \$50 per person
Purchase early and save! As the holidays draw closer, ticket prices increase with demand. Reserve your seats today and secure the best available fare for this unforgettable holiday tradition.



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		General Member	A single person (18+)
\$50.00		Family Membership	A general member & family
\$25.00		Youth Member	A single person (13-17 years old) with parental consent
\$45.00		Qualified Member	A single person (18+) with ≥200 Museum hours
\$50.00		Qualified & Family Membership	A qualified member & family
Optional Sponsorship Donation			
\$100.00		Sustaining	
\$500.00		Contributing	
\$1,000.00		Benefactor	
\$		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