



# FOX RIVER LINES

Spring 2000

Issue 00-1

## Car Department News

Beginning in late March, John Sturtz and John Cloos inventoried the Track Department equipment and started needed maintenance and repair work. Among the highlights were tuning up the Speeder and the re-decking and painting of one of the work flats. With help from Joe Shapezia, a local welder and regular museum visitor, we were also able to get the cast metal exhaust manifold for the Tie Inserter repaired. The manifold was replaced on the Inserter, the tie boom was reinstalled and the machine was used extensively during the spring track improvement blitz. Most of the pneumatic track tools also received attention as they also saw heavy use this spring.



CTA 4451 receives a much needed paint job. It was place in service this season.

While that maintenance was going on, the operating fleet was getting attention of it's own. CA&E; #20, CNS&M; #715, CTA #43, and CRT 5001 were all inspected top to bottom. Grease, oil, and lubrication were all added as needed. Each car's controllers were taken apart, inspected and cleaned. Electrical contactors, relays, switches, etc. were all checked for wear, and cleaned and adjusted as needed. Repairs specific to each car were also made. This included the replacement of a burnt resistor grid in CA&E; #20, repair of upper window sashes in CNS&M; #715, and adjustments to the track brakes and controllers in CTA #43. The car department also prepared CTA

#L-202, IC caboose 9648 and diesel locomotive W&SR; #73 for use as needed. Finally, on the first weekend in May, all of the operating fleet was taken out on the mainline for a series of runs to check the work done and ensure it's reliability. Thanks to Ralph Taylor for heading up the repairs to CA&E; #20's resistors, and Fred Lonnes providing additional technical help and support.



CTA 4451 receives a much needed paint job. It was place in service this season.

Once the maintenance part of the year's work was complete, we began our efforts on CTA #4451. With the welcome return of Paul Boisvert and his considerable array of skills, and the addition of new museum members Eric Zabelny and Jay Affleck to the Car Department, we've been able to do much more than the simple repairs originally planned for to return the car to regular service.

Originally, the car had been pulled from regular service because of deterioration in the end vestibules and a battery box that needed to be replaced. By the time you are reading this, the car should have been returned to the operating fleet's regular rotation. The car has had it's exterior repaired and painted, the end vestibules have been repaired, a new battery box built and installed , replacement flooring installed in the interior, and a number of other repairs, cleaning and painting efforts in the interior. A complete story on the work doneto CTA #4451 will appear in a future issue of Fox River Lines. As

### **Museum Donors**

The museum thanks the following individuals and organizations for their generous contributions in cash or in kind to advance the museum's mission:

**Jane Anderson**

**Joe Hazinski**

- Don MacBean

always, the Car Department depends on the time and efforts of our volunteer staff. Without the considerable efforts of Paul Boisvert, Eric Zabelny, Ralph Taylor, Fred Lonnes and Jay Affleck, we would not have been able to accomplish all we have done so far this year. Many thanks.



The batteries and battery box for CTA 4451 had to completely reworked and in the case of the box rebuilt. John Sturtz (seen here) , Joe Hazinski, Ralph Taylor, John Cloos and Paul Boisvert worked on the project.

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## **FRTM Experiences Big Season Traffic Gain**

Castlemuir (South Elgin), IL, Summer, 2000. The Kane County Gearheads and the Northwest Bible Baptist Church of Elgin swelled the attendance records of the Museum this summer. Seven bus loads of youngsters, over 624 Sunday School students and their teachers visited the Museum. Car 5001 was used to handle the load. It was loaded to capacity with students and then run to Coleman Grove and return, and a new load entrained. The process was repeated until all of the students had had their ride. Regular visitors moved on our scheduled trains. Two unusual aspects were the weather, which was very rainy AND the excellent cooperation between the church staff and museum volunteers. Northwest Baptist Bible Church, located on Nestler Road is local to South Elgin.

Father's Day was special this year. A total of 862 riders rode the Fox River Line. A special attraction was the Kane County Gearheads, a local hot rod and automobile restoration group who helped the Museum celebrate Father's Day. There were 50 cars on display in our parking lot.

- *Don MacBean*



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## IN MEMORIAM

### **George Krambles March 1915 - November 1999**

George was a rail fan, transit manager, and friend to many Fox River Trolley Museum members. He possessed an almost incomprehensible body of knowledge about streetcars, interurbans, busses, railways in general and public transit. He spoke at Fox River Trolley Museum Members Day in 1998.

But what I remember most about him was his willingness to be a friend and a mentor to a young railfan in the early 1940's. He helped me with my first job in the accounting department of the Chicago Rapid Transit Co. in 1944. I was privileged to tag along ( I was only 16 years old at the time) on a number of impromptu fan trips to the North Shore Line, CA&E;, South Shore Line and the Milwaukee Electric. Most memorable was a pick-up trip on the 6pm North Shore Line diner train. He invited me and several others (at work) at 5pm . . . "How about steak on the North Shore?" "Sure", I said. And what a thrill to be eating steak at the window seat in the diner while passing hungry "L" riders at Adams and Wabash and other stations. And the ride back passing cars on US Route 41 as we sped toward Dempster Street.

Thanks, George for the memories and the friendship.

- *Don MacBean*

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## Department Updates

### **Development**

The activities of the Development Manager have concentrated on the

Blackhawk Forest Preserve Extension Project. As of this writing (July 6, 2000) work on the has slowed to a snails pace. Earthwork was completed in April. All track material was purchased and delivered. The initial turnout and approximately 150 feet of track were installed in April. In June Line poles and anchors were put in place along the entire route.

Due to the extent of earthwork that was required, a funding shortfall has been experienced. Work in finding additional funds has been ongoing. Currently grant funding requests are being developed to secure the funds needed to complete the Extension. If successful, it is anticipated that the work would be completed by the end of the year. Work remaining includes track installation, wire and feeder installation, platforms and a waiting shelter.

The Capital Campaign Committee has not done any additional work since the last Fox River Trolley Association Board meeting.

*Fred Lonnes*

### **Roadmaster**

Weed Spraying: Due to the lateness of the season, weed spraying will be replaced this year by brush control. At present WeedPatch have a date set for this fall.

Track Renewal: Work remaining is to install additional ties and complete surfacing work on track between Switch 54 and Switch 55.

Joint Bar Renewal: Members Don Zavacy and Doug Rundell have been working on the repair of joint bars on the mainline between Castlemuir and Coleman Grove.

*Ed Konecki*

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## **Spring Track Maintenance Work**



John Sturtz testing our tie inserter prior to it being placed in service. The Inserter is playing a major role in our track rehab program.

The initial construction of the first 200 feet for our track extension was not the only track work accomplished at the museum. While Swanson Contractors was building the track at the south end of the railroad, museum members and volunteers were replacing wood ties at the north end of our track. Railroad tie removal and replacement is an ongoing annual process for an operating railroad museum. Our museum Roadmaster coordinates the track work on different areas of the railroad each year. Roadmaster, Ed Konecki, is also the museum's President this year. The museum focuses on performing track projects in the Spring and Fall seasons when our weather is more favorable for the heavy physical labor of changing out railroad ties. Several museum members volunteered parts of their weekends, along with four paid workers, from Midwest Groundcovers, to replace 134 ties this Spring. Our Assistant Roadmaster, Andy Roth, frequently commented that the museum membership is the least expensive "health club membership" in the area!

Track department volunteers plan to change our additional ties later this year. We would like to thank the following members for volunteering time to help change the ties; Ed Konecki, Art Lemke, John Cloos, John Sturtz, Jay Affleck, Eric Zabelny, Fred Lonnes, Andy Roth, Chuck Galitz, Don MacBean. The museum also had three volunteers from the Deerfield Roundabout Live Steam Club, located in Lake Fores. They were interested in a little experience in working on full-scale railroad track (4'-8.5" gauge track) instead of their 7" gauge track. These volunteers were Jeffrey Hook, Bob Kurth, Brian Kurth and Karl Kobel.

- *Andy Roth*

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## **Coleman Grove Track Extension Progress**

Construction of the museum's extension to the former location of Coleman Grove in Blackhawk Forest Preserve continued this Spring. M.I.C. Inc. And their subcontractor Hillquist Brothers of Geneva, completed the earthwork in April.

The museum took proposals for supplying all of the track material for the extension this Spring. Swanson Railroad Contractors was awarded the contract to supply the rail, ties, tie plates, spikes, joint bars and other associated items. Rails are 90 pound weight rolled in 1940 from a Norfolk and Western Railway line being removed in central Illinois. (For those members interested, it is the old Nickel Plate Line which ran west/southwest from Cleveland to near East St. Louis, IL.) The construction of the extension's new mainline switch and the first 200 of extension track was included in Swanson's contract. Swanson delivered the track materials and installed the initial track in April immediately after the earthwork was completed.

With the earthwork completed, Kane County Forest Preserve staff began installing topsoil and mulch on the earth embankment slopes. The Forest Preserve will plant native grasses and wild flower seeds on the embankment to beautify and help hold the earth in place. The railroad embankment construction and plant seedings are the first steps in the Forest Preserve's plans to remove the weed plant species that have invaded the quarry since quarry operation stopped decades ago. The quarry's ecosystem has an interesting and diverse plant variety that will flourish once the infesting weed plants are removed and/or controlled.

Another major milestone on the extension construction was achieved in June. After receiving proposals, the museum awarded a contract to Aldrich for installing the wood line poles. Line poles are necessary to suspend the trolley wire and associated span wires in the air at the correct vertical and horizontal location over the track. Aldrich installed the 51 wood poles needed for the track extension's trolley wire.

On your next visit to the museum, one can see the extension progress made so far out of one of our trolley cars at the south end of the ride. If you drive into Blackhawk Forest Preserve, you can see the progress at the south end of our track extension from the parking lot near the picnic pavilion by the river. The construction work is far enough along that one can start to get a feel for what it will be like to ride a trolley over the extension to the picnic area of the Blackhawk Forest Preserve as trolley passengers did in the late 1890s.

- *Andy Roth*

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## **April Showers and May Flowers**

Springtime is a great time of year because Mother Nature wakes up from her winter slumber. The museum's flower plantings always get extra attention in the spring to they are spruced up to look their best for our train operating season. Our perennial flowers have flourished

over the past few years since they were planted. Museum members worked on expanding the flower beds to spread out the flowers so they would have more room to grow. A number of weeds were removed at the same time and new mulch was added to the flower beds. Andy Roth donated 3-½ dozen annual flowers that were planted in the flower beds this Spring. The museum would like to thank members Andy Roth, Ed Tredup, Helen Tredup, Ralph Taylor, Chuck Galitz, Don Zvacky and Bob Rodenkirk who worked to spruce up the flower beds this spring for everyone to enjoy.

- *Andy Roth*



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