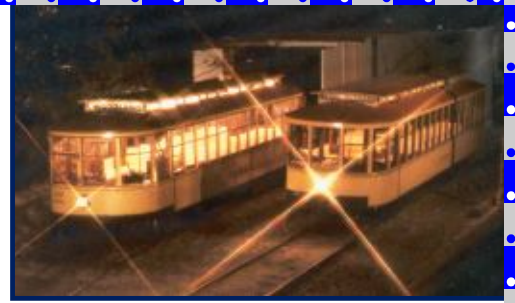




MSM Operations Newsletter

Issue No. 10-3

July - 2010



WHEN YOU ARE FORCED TO CANCEL YOUR SCHEDULED SHIFT

Invariably there comes a time when you will sign-up several weeks in advance to volunteer on a shift and then at the last minute, a minor or major emergency comes up and you have to cancel your commitment. We certainly understand when this situation arises and we'll work with you to fill the gap in the schedule because of your inability to work on the shift for which you signed-up. Here are the basic steps we ask that you follow when you forced to cancel your scheduled shift.

- First, call your assigned Foreman and let him/her know of your situation.
- Next, get out your crew roster and call someone to see if they are willing to substitute for you. Those volunteers who are willing to substitute on short notice are indicated with a red "S" (for Short notice) on the crew roster. If you can get a substitute please make sure to let your Foreman and Jim Vaitkunas (jvaitkunas@msn.com) know of the change in the shift crew assignment.
- If finding a substitute didn't pan out, then try to swap with another Operator on a later day on which you are available. Referring to the latest operations schedule, see which date you could operate instead of the shift that you can't. Then call one of the operators working on that shift and see if they are willing to swap with you. If they agree to the swap, please make sure that both Foremen are aware of the swap and also let Jim Vaitkunas know so he can update the operations schedule.
- If all of the above doesn't work and you can't find a substitute for your shift, then call the Foreman again to let him/her know that you had no luck finding a substitute; also let Jim Vaitkunas know.

CANCELLATION OF SERVICE - HOT SUMMER WEATHER IS UPON US!

Now that we're into the heart of our Minnesota summer, the temperature and humidity is going up and we'll be experiencing those afternoon and evening thunderstorms. So, please take a moment to review our policy on cancelling a scheduled operating shift because of bad weather. You can find this policy starting at the bottom of page 2 of our General Procedures Memorandum, dated May 1, 2010. A copy is located on our website if you've misplaced yours. If a shift is cancelled and the Foreman is at the Isaacs carbarn or in the Linden Hills station please take a moment to put the cancellation sign in the station door window before you lock-up and leave. The cancellation signs have several variations of wording on them depending on when the cancellation occurs and the reason for the cancellation of service. Please take a moment to make sure you've placed the correct sign in the window. **AND, don't forget to drink plenty of water on those hot and humid days.**

STROLLERS ON THE STRETCARS

From time to time a family might try to load their stroller onto the streetcar when they ride. And every once in a while we run into a family that has the SUV equivalent stroller that can be difficult to load onto the streetcar and takes up quite a lot of room. We want to discourage having strollers on the streetcar. Here is some basic guidance you should follow when one of our passengers wants to load their stroller onto the streetcar.

- Unless the family says they'll be getting off the streetcar at Lake Calhoun, politely ask the family to leave the stroller on the platform next to the station. One of our Station Agents will look after it.
- If the family insists that they want to load the stroller, even if they are going on a simple round trip, allow the stroller on the streetcar, following the general rule of "the customer is always right."
- You can certainly help the family load the stroller into the streetcar. However, never-ever load, or allow a stroller to be loaded, onto the streetcar with the infant in it. Politely ask the family to carry their child onto the car. Once on the streetcar, store the stroller in the rear "peanut seat" area if there's room there.
- Keep in mind safety when responding to a request to put a stroller on board. Large strollers may be an obstruction in an emergency situation. We need to consider safety when a passenger makes this request.

DWELL TIME AT LINDEN HILLS PLATFORM DURING TWO-CAR OPS

During two-car operations at CHSL we want to keep both streetcars moving so we can maintain our "target" of three or four round trips per hour per car. To keep things moving, the Motorman on the streetcar loading passengers at the Linden Hills station platform needs to keep an eye out for the southbound streetcar. Just as soon as the second (southbound) car is observed approaching the north passing siding switch, passenger boarding should be stopped, the doors closed and the crew should signal for the northbound departure of their streetcar. Both the Conductor and Motorman should listen for any instructions from the platform and the car should not proceed if the Starter or the shift Foreman or Platform Attendant instructs the crew to wait for passengers who are still buying their tokens and wish to Board their car.

KEEPING THE MERCHANDISE AREA NEAT AT THE LINDEN HILLS STATION

One of our Museum's major sources of income is our merchandise sales. It's important to make sure that the merchandise on the shelves and clothing bins along the south wall of the station are kept in order so our visitors can see what's for sale and so we give the impression that we have a well-run operation. Sometimes our Station Agents treat the merchandise area on the south wall of the station as an area where anything and everything is placed, including lost and found items, their water bottle, lunch bucket, coat, etc. Please keep the merchandise area behind the counter neat while you are volunteering as a Station Agent. All extraneous "stuff" should go on the floor near the east counter. Also, the boxes with the prints and maps are clearly marked with what's in them (they are also color coded). There is no need to open them to "take a peek" or to make sure they contain what they are supposed to.

MERCHANDISE STOCK AT THE LINDEN HILLS STATION

If you sell the last of an item or notice that one is out of stock, please let Charles Barthold know by email (msmstorekeeper@aol.com) or phone message (612-529-3428). Don't assume that someone else has reported the "outage." Charles would rather know about it two or three times than not at all.

CASH REGISTER OPERATIONS

We are continuing to have some minor problems with cash register operations this year.

- Station Agents are not following the normal cash register procedures as listed on the instruction card that is located right next to the cash register. Basically you need to follow each step as they are listed—no shortcuts. In short, please press the SUBTOTAL key after each entry every time, even if the visitor is buying only one item. Always enter the number of the item being purchased and then always press the QUANTITY key before hitting the item key (fares, candy, whatever). When you don't press the QUANTITY key, you end up with "cents" in your subtotal.
- Enter the amount tendered—always. Even if they give you exact change. Yes, it is faster if you skip it, but always do it to eliminate errors and "lock-ups."
- If the machine "locks up" please move the paper ribbon up (advance it) and look at what was entered. You may spot the problem. In many cases, you can't clear or back out, and then you usually owe the register a payment of some amount of money. It sometimes helps to hit SUB TOTAL. This could tell you just how much money the machine is looking for. Either enter that amount or enter a large sum like \$200 which will certainly please the machine—just don't give out the change it suggests! That will clear the machine. Save the white tape with the before and after transactions and show it to your foreman to take action if need be.
- Use the new scratch pads now available at the register to list sales made while the machine was locked up, and after clearing it, register those sales. Use the RETURN key and process to "return" any mistakes so the cash register is correct with the actual transactions.

EMERGENCY ACTION PROCEDURES

We had two recent instances where a streetcar crew responded well to an emergency while the streetcar was in operation. Remember that something you didn't plan for might occur while you are operating the streetcar. So, this might be a good time to review our accident and emergency procedures found in section 23 of our Museum's Operating Rules and Regulations. Basically, if you notice, see or smell anything unusual while you are operating the streetcar, the first thing you should do is bring the streetcar to a quick, but safe, stop. If you smell something burning, pull the trolley pole off the wire and evacuate all passengers. If the car is on fire first call 911 and then attempt to extinguish the fire. But above all keep our passengers and YOU safe.