

YVT NEWS



January-March 2015

Yakima Valley Trolley Quarterly Newsletter

YVT Progress by YVT President Ken Johnsen

Needless to say, a lot has transpired since our last newsletter! Some of it very good, some of it still waiting to get better. We'll start with the overhead wire to Selah. It has been 10 years since the first theft of our copper wire took place. During that time, we have made our annual trip to Selah (required by an agreement with the City of Selah) using motor generator cars for power, and even the yellow hi-rail truck.

Broken rail in Selah Gap was repaired in time for the centennial celebration of the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Selah line in 2013. Yakima's City Manager and Selah's mayor and other dignitaries rode the centennial re-enactment run to Selah on June 21, 2013.

Ongoing construction projects at Davis High School have stymied our efforts to get our wire back up to Selah again. Even though their contract required the project contractor to keep the trolley line open for operation, they ignored that and covered our line with dirt and took down some of our wire and poles.

The City's Debbie Cook met with the contractor and told them in no uncertain terms that they are in violation of the contract and they needed to make our track usable again. In a short time the dirt was all removed and the track cleaned. However, as of this writing, the poles still haven't been replaced. YVT has filed a claim against the contractor for damage to the overhead wire system, and lost revenues due to the inability to use our own track while the contractor was operating over it.

Once the poles are replaced, we can begin restringing wire. Eric Sitiko has purchased some wire hanging tools for YVT and he and Scott Neel are working out the details of the alarm system that is an absolute must for our operation in the future. Hopefully it is not too optimistic to think that we might be able to start restringing wire in 2015.



The 1976 and 1776 Oporto cars lined up for service.

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THANK YOU !

To our “In Kind” donation partners.

by YVT Executive Director Karl Pasten

In order to cure deferred maintenance issues in the Powerhouse, car barn and rail yard, we are asking local businesses for in kind support. Their contributions enable us to move forward before we are able to secure additional financial resources. Yakima’s business community understands the quality of life and economic potential YVT provides which is proven by their positive response. As our cash flow increases, we will further develop and intensify our marketing of this program. The local organizations that have contributed so far are:

Akland Pump and Irrigation has provided the equipment, materials and labor needed to restore the main water line from the street to the car barn.

NorthWest Handling Systems donated the use of a forklift and operator which was used to move, organize and store heavy rail parts which will free up space around the Powerhouse. Our goal is to use this rail yard area as an outside venue.

RSD (Refrigeration Supplies Distributer) offered a very significant discount on HVAC equipment used to provide heat and A/C in the Powerhouse.

Cascade Natural Gas installed underground gas service from the street to the Powerhouse.

EBJ Fencing provided a partial donation of labor and fencing in and outside the Powerhouse.

Kevin M. Sak used his creative services to produce the digital design of our new posters and rack cards.

Pacific Power awarded a grant of \$3,000 to help with track repair which allowed us to reopen YVT’s Selah trolley line.

Eagle Machine, Inc created a drive shaft for our volunteer developed powercar which will propel the Selah trolley until YVT can acquire funds to replace stolen copper wire.

ASAP Metal Fabricators, Inc designed and built a metal shroud to cover our custom built powercar.

The City of Yakima provided labor and equipment to help repair a defective rail on the Selah trolley line

Northern Pacific Railway Museum (Toppenish) volunteers delivered specialized equipment and helped in the repair of the defective track on the Selah trolley line.

Cintas Facility Services donated the labor of five employees for a day to remove trees and weeds which had overgrown YVT’s rail yard.

Marney Electric donated a portion of electrical services.

Power Clean Systems donated 250 gallons of concentrated weed control.



YVT's A- Engine on the rails for the NPRHA national convention in 2014.

Coach Project

A bus enthusiast group in British Columbia has given YVT a Fageol Twin Coach bus of the type operated by YVT during the transition from trolley to bus in 1947. The bus is basically complete, but in somewhat shabby condition. It was moved from British Columbia to Whidbey Island where YVT members Mark and Evelyn Fredrickson have stored it for a couple years. Recently, former Yakima City Councilman Lynn Buchanan has offered to let YVT keep the bus in his secure Yakima warehouse temporarily

2014 Highlights

Support from Toppenish

The Yakima Valley Railway and Steam Museum in Toppenish have become YVT's good friends and supporters. The museum's Jerry Boeckholder and Dennis Lee and others have been a huge help in track projects like replacing the broken rail in Selah Gap and other repairs of track in the roadways in Yakima.

NPRHA Convention

In 2014 the Toppenish museum hosted the national convention of the Northern Pacific Railway Historical Association, and for one full day chartered the entire YVT facility, trolleys and locomotives for their conventioners' enjoyment.

Santa Trolley

The Santa Trolley, at Executive Director Karl's suggestion, was run on four different days in 2014. Two consecutive Saturdays and Sundays in December were chosen, and they were a huge success. Where YVT usually takes in around a thousand dollars for Santa runs, in 2014 over six thousand dollars came in. Long time Santa Trolley volunteer and cookie supplier Yvonne Wilbur moved to Colorado and subsequently passed away. In her place, Kristy Pasten and new member Samantha Gaudette (a Christmas elf) helped keep the passengers happy both on board the trolley and waiting in the powerhouse.



YVT's Fageol Twin Coach Bus

Meet the Executive Director

Karl Pasten—former owner of the restaurant in the old Northern Pacific depot—was hired in 2014 to be YVT's Executive Director.



His job is to promote the trolleys and help build a broad base of

financial support.

Big Results

Karl early on scored a big coup when he persuaded the City Council to appropriate \$100,000 for repairs to the infrastructure of the trolleys. He has obtained other smaller grants and much "in kind" donation of services, work, and materials.

Improvements

Because of Karl's efforts, the powerhouse is now heated and air conditioned year round, so that it can be rented out for events and charters.

Some money from the City's \$100,000 grant has already been used to purchase the flooring wood for the carbarn machine shop. The lumber was precisely milled to the exact same profile as the original by a skillful artisan in Gig Harbor named Joe Neal. It was shipped to Yakima by Haney Trucking.

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Volunteer Opportunities

Motormen

With the increased operating season, crew caller Dan Tamsky will be needing a larger pool of motormen to draw from. So if you have ever had the hankering to operate a streetcar, please get in touch with one of the Class A motormen for training and certification. We have three Class A motormen: Ken Johnsen, Scott Neel and Larry Perrigo. At least two of them must sign you off on your written and practical exams.

Gift Shop

There are many other ways to volunteer with the trolleys. The gift shop always can use an extra hand. The grounds seem to need constant weeding in order to keep looking nice. There is upkeep work to do on the track, especially the switches that are in the street. Mechanical and hydraulic abilities would be very helpful in getting our blue bucket truck running again. And to drive it, an endorsement is needed on someone's driver's license.

Actor's Group

A different and very fun activity is our actors' group. These actors dress up in old time clothing and board the trolley from the 9th Avenue trolley stop on Pine Street. They talk with our riders as though it is 1910 (or whatever era they are depicting) and get the riders engaged in the trolleys' history. It is a good way to let the public know how historic our railroad really is.



River Road track repair in progress

Selah Run Back In Business

City workers, YVT volunteers, and track maintenance specialists from Toppenish worked together to replace damaged track on the line to Selah. After spending the 2014 season running on Pine Street only, Yakima Trolleys will proudly offer trips to Selah during the 2015 season.

Board of Directors News

Yakima City Manager Tony O'Rourke installed two new members to the YVT board of directors, replacing long time director Ray Paoletta. The new members were Bob Desgrosellier of the City Engineering Department and Sean Hawkins, the assistant to the City Manager. It was felt that these two people have direct ties to the City government and can keep up a good dialogue between the City and the trolleys.

The composition of the rest of the Board of Directors has remained the same over the last several years. President is Ken Johnsen, Vice President is Paul Edmondson, Secretary is Scott Neel and Treasurer is Larry Fournier. Other board members include Ed Neel, Bob Brown and Bill Allen.

2015 Trolley Season

In 2015, again at Karl's suggestion, we have lengthened our operating season from the first of May to the end of September. Hopefully this extended operating season, as well as the return of Selah runs, will result in greater revenues. Karl has revamped the gift shop and increased its annual sales several times over. He has set us up to accept credit cards now, and soon we will have an online store.

Active Members Making a Difference

Mark Reeves, a recent and very helpful new member, has almost single-handedly restored the inside of the carbarn bathroom and serves as a motorman on Saturdays. Ed Neel puts in countless hours fixing things on the trolleys and tending to the various matters that come up from day to day which require action from a board member. Bill and Sandy Allen joined the trolleys in 2013 and have been tremendously helpful around the plant and in producing a YVT newsletter.

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about Yakima's historic trolley system.

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www.yakimavalleytrolleys.org

Executive Director (Continued from page 3)

Road Trips

Karl has made many road trips in his efforts for the trolleys. He and YVT President Ken Johnsen and Eric Sitiko met with Yakima's consultants in Portland, Crandall Arambula, to discuss the running of trolley tracks down Yakima Avenue in the city's new redevelopment plan. Crandall Arambula got feedback from local citizenry and recommended that the City put tracks down Yakima Avenue once again. While some folks in city government seem to oppose the idea, the public seems to be strongly in favor of it, and Karl keeps pushing to keep the idea alive as the City firms up its plans.

State Budget Request

Karl has also applied for the trolleys to be included in the Washington State Transportation Budget. Senate chair for the budget committee is Yakima's senator Curtis King who has attended both of our centennials (1907 and 1913). Karl applied for 1.3 million dollars for 2014 and the matter is in committee right now. Karl, Ken Johnsen, and Scott Neel traveled to Olympia to talk with Senator King and others on the transportation budget committee. Karl has since made two trips to Olympia to lobby the house transportation budget committee members as well. We're keeping our fingers crossed!!