

YVT NEWS

Yakima Valley Trolley Newsletter

Spring 2016



BIG NEWS FOR YVT: PARKING LOT PAVING COMPLETE

The big news is the City of Yakima has paved the parking lot at the trolley barn. This greatly enhances the “curb appeal” of our property, making it more of a tourist-friendly attraction. The parking lot has never been paved in the past. It was just dirt for many years and in about 1983, the YVT railroad covered it with crushed rock.

City Engineer Bob Desgrosellier has had a lot to do with making the parking lot a reality, and we thank Bob very much. Bob is on our Board of Directors. The City has also replaced the sidewalk along Third Avenue and moved it to abut the curb so that there will be more space for parking. The asphalt used for the paving is a special porous type of asphalt that lets water drain through it, eliminating the need for storm sewers.



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YVT's parking lot has undergone many improvements, include striping, wheel stops, a handicap space and an electric vehicle charging station (Yakima's second).

Board of Directors

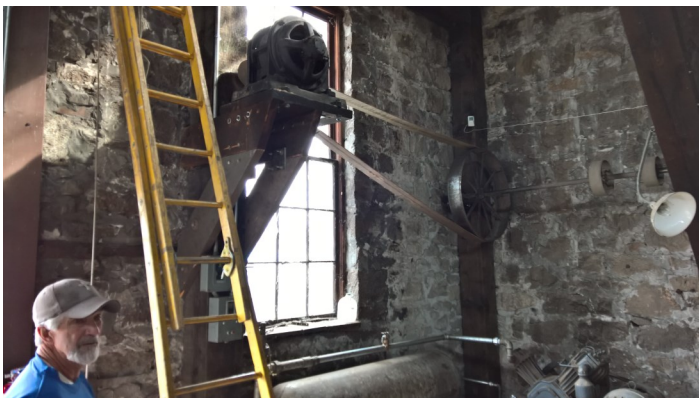
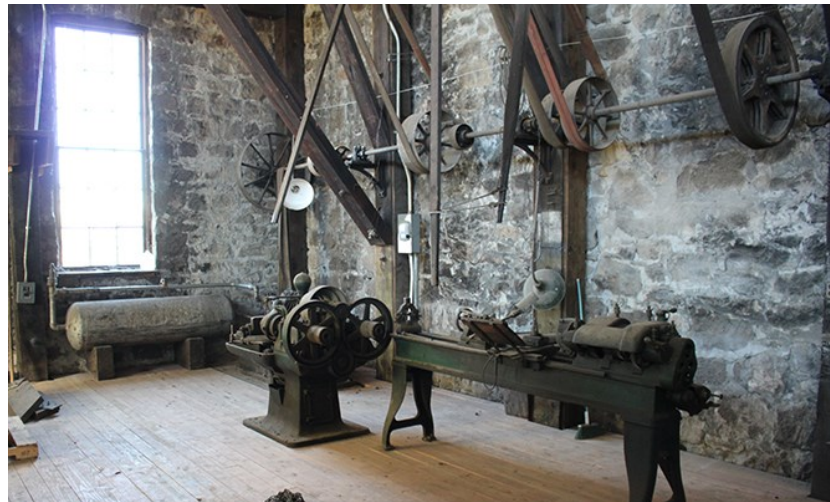
by YVT Board President Ken Johnsen

At its meeting on April the 8th, the Board of Directors set the dates for this year's operating season. Season will begin on Saturday, May 28th and continue on weekends and holidays through Sunday, September 25th, Halloween Trolleys will operate on the weekend of October 29-30. Santa Trolleys will operate on two weekends in December: the 10th-11th and the 17th-18th.

Election Results: Ed Neel was re-elected to the Board of Directors and Bob Patton was elected to fill the vacancy created by Bob Brown's passing. The Board re-elected all of the current slate of officers to another term. President is Ken Johnsen, Vice President is Paul Edmondson, Secretary is Scott Neel and Treasurer is Larry Fournier.

Car Barn Projects

Bill Allen, Karl Pasten and Gary Wirt cleaned up the air compressor in the machine shop in the trolley barn and got it running again. They also moved the original air reservoir tank back into position and plumbed it with the compressor so that we now have a working compressed air system in the barn. The machine shop area looks great once again!



Bill Allen, Karl Pasten, and Gary Wirt have put the compressor and tank back together and placed it into operation (above), as well as moving other pieces of machinery onto the restored floor. Also, the drive motor and main belt for the machine shop (left) have been remounted and are currently operating.

For a video of the machine shop main shaft belts turning, copy and paste this link into your browser:

<https://onedrive.live.com/redir?resid=ECEE41FED04CA814!7838&authkey=!AJqJzo3U3DOKdI&ithint=video%2cmp4>



An industrial vacuum was purchased by Bill Allen for use in cleaning the in-street track on 6th Avenue.

Track Maintenance

Bill Allen has purchased an industrial vacuum unit for track cleaning. He, Karl Pasten, Bob Patton, and Gary Wirt used it to clean 6th Avenue. Cleaning 6th Avenue is still a big job, though, because passing cars just redeposit the dirt back into the flange ways.



Volunteers Gary Wirt and Bob Patton clear track on Pine Street.

Motorman Recertification

Prior to resumption of trolley service, there will be a motorman recertification weekend either in late April or early May. Ken Johnsen, Scott Neel and Larry Perrigo are the Class A motormen who will be conducting the recertification.

EV Station

Ken Johnsen hired an electrician a couple years ago to install a plug on the outside of the powerhouse to charge Ken's Tesla when he comes to Yakima. In the new parking lot, this will become a full fledged electric car charging station for our guests who drive electric vehicles. The Board of Directors has decided to offer free charging to our guests during the summer months. This becomes Yakima's second EV charging station, the other one being at the Nissan dealership.

City Council & YVT Supporters Meet

by YVT Board President Ken Johnsen

Yakima's City Council met with City Staff and Trolley leaders on April 12th to consider the fate of the trolley system. City Staff has identified some problems with the street surface on 6th Avenue, as well as the ongoing problems of stolen wire and rock slides in Selah Gap.

Ken Johnsen gave a Powerpoint presentation that briefed the Council on the history of the trolleys and the reason they are still here and why it is so important to preserve and protect them. Karl Pasten spoke to the Council about ongoing efforts to find funding for repairs.

The Council received our presentations favorably, and gave us several suggestions on possible sources of funding for trolley repairs. Mayor Avina Gutierrez was especially interested and asked a number of questions and provided suggestions. Councilperson Kathy Coffee was also quite helpful. City staffers Sean Hawkins and Jeff Cutter offered their help.

One of our new members, Stewart Wadsworth, gave an eloquent statement of support for the trolleys during the public comments time.

The meeting ended with a general feeling that everyone liked the trolleys, but that funding sources are few and far between.

Farewell, Mr. Tonkin

Seattle architect Les Tonkin passed away on March 26 from renal cancer. Les was a very good friend to the trolleys. He was once president of the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation. Ken Johnsen invited Les to come over to Yakima to see the trolleys one weekend years ago, and Les immediately put the trolleys on the Trust's *Ten Most Endangered Historical Sites* list.

In 1994, Les and his firm did a monumental restoration study of the YVT. It included tasks needed, priorities, and cost estimates. This study was used in 1995 and 1996 to get almost \$800,000 in ISTEAs from the federal government.

Les came to Yakima several times after the mid-1990s to update his study and just to see how things were going with the trolleys. He was a kind, generous man who was liked by everyone who knew him. We have lost a good friend.



Project Grant Received

Yakima Valley Trolleys President Ken Johnsen joins Governor Jay Inslee and supporters of Substitute House Bill No. 2380 as the Governor signs the bill into law on April 18, 2016. The bill relates to the capital budget and allows the trolleys to receive a \$50,000 Heritage Capital Improvement Project Grant. Thanks go to Karl Pasten for applying for the grant and seeing it through.

Meet A YVT Volunteer!

Mark Reeves—a Class B motorman since 2013—travels from the west side of the mountains to drive trolley and help with

maintenance of YVT facilities.



From Tourist to Volunteer

Mark and his wife raised two sons on the "Wet Side" of the state and would come over on weekends during rainy months to enjoy activities in the Yakima area. After riding the trolley several times, he decided to join up.

Benefits

When asked about the benefits of being a YVT volunteer, Mark says he enjoys, "...seeing the excitement of kids on their first 'real train ride' and hearing a guest say that riding the trolley is 'better than Disneyland!' "

Other Interests

Mark enjoys biking, hiking, kayaking, and Washington State history.

"I have been to most museums in the state, and YVT is the best. You can see, hear, touch, and smell history." Mark Reeves

Words From Our Riders

When guests ride the trolley, the gift shop operator invites them to leave comments in the guest book. Here are some of the comments from last season's riders:

"We bought caps; love them and love the trolleys!" *Paul and Peg W., Laurie, MO*

"...thrilled to pieces to be here..." *Greta H., Seattle, WA*

"Most enjoyable!" *Gaby O., Round Lake, IL*

Other riders have hailed from California, Wisconsin, Kansas, Nevada, and Pennsylvania, and from all across the state of Washington.



Trolley Van Rolling Again

Many YVT fans will remember seeing this 1968 Chevy G10 van in parades and events in the past. Well, the trolley van is running again and made it's most recent appearance in the Yakima Memorial Day parade on May 30, 2015.

Thank You!

Former Yakima City Councilman **Lynn Buchanan** has very generously let our organization store our Fageol Twin Coach bus out of the weather in his warehouse on D Street.



Ken Johnsen has begun stripping the red paint off of it in preparation for painting it into authentic original YVT colors and lettering. We thank Lynn very much for his kindness!

Contact Us

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

Yakima Valley Trolleys

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Visit us on the web at

www.yakimavalleytrolleys.org



Future of the Selah Line

This past winter a rock slide occurred in Selah Gap, completely covering our track. It came down from the cliff above the track just north of the Naches River where our line curves around to the left into Selah Gap. Several means of clearing it up are being considered, but the City has placed a ban on anyone going near

the slide until a qualified geologist can inspect the site to see if it is safe, and to see if any more rocks might come down.

Because of the slide, we will not be able to run to Selah, at least initially. However, the Board decided we would try an abbreviated Selah run that goes from the carbarn to the Naches River bridge. As soon as our trolley wire alarm system is perfected, we will string wire up that far, so that the trolleys can run under wire instead of with a power car.